

the think tank



INTERNATIONAL
CENTER FOR
HUMAN
DEVELOPMENT

CONTACTS
ABOUT ACTIVITIES **PROJECTS**
PUBLICATION **TOOLBOX** DOCUMENTS
PARTNERS

DEVOTED TO
ICHD 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Contents

WHO WE ARE	7
Vision and Strategy	7
The Team	12
Achievements	12
ICHD Core Staff	14
WHAT WE DO.....	16
ICHD Toolbox	16
Internship with ICHD.....	20
Financial Report.....	21
PROJECTS REVIEW.....	25
PHOTOS	113
OUR CONTACTS	136



The International Center for Human Development is ten years old. This publication briefly summarizes its activities throughout past decade. It highlights our major achievements, key activities and implemented projects and the financial report presented by an international audit.

In ten years, the Center has carried out hundreds of initiatives and projects, such as research studies and educational projects, more than ten international conferences on various issues, hosted hundreds of off-the-record roundtables with the involvement of international and domestic analysts and experts, issued more than 100 “Policy Briefs” and “Viewpoints”. Within last two years three laws drafted by the ICHD have been circulated officially, one receiving vote of the parliament. ICHD worked out a number of policy documents later approved by the national government. The examples of ICHD’s policy products include the Concept on Development of Armenia-Diaspora Relations, National Anti-Corruption Strategy, and Strategy on Migration Management in Armenia, the first two adopted by the Government of Armenia. The Center led the Strategic Planning Process for the Ministry of Economy, developed the strategy on developing the Armenia-Diaspora relations. The policy advice and lobbying of the Center essentially reshaped migration policy and tobacco controls in Armenia.

ICHD has accumulated sound experience in public awareness raising campaigns through numerous Talk Shows, TV Debates, documentary production, publications, etc. The annual turnover of the Center currently totals over 1.5 million USD.

The research and analytical reports prepared by the ICHD not only serve the domestic audience, but have also found many readers in the U.S., Canada, East Asia region, and in more than 15 countries of Europe. Close collaboration with civil society organizations in Georgia and Azerbaijan aims at finding solutions for the cooperative and harmonious development of all the countries of South Caucasus, as well as in wider region with Turkey, Russia, Ukraine and Iran – a complex, but realistic task.

We are determined to keep on increasing our role in consolidating public policies and our influence on perspectives of policy makers. In this endeavor we will continue providing relevant policy analyses, developing alternative policy options through open discussions and consultative process on current political, economic, social issues on public agenda. We will progressively extending our policy communication channels and will keep on serving as a channel for voicing the opinions and perspectives of common people.

Today we look at the future with greater confidence, since we believe that the difficult stage of establishment as an institution is behind, and the rich experience and the strong team that have developed through these years will serve as a solid foundation for the realization of even the most daring ideas and projects. I do hope that such a ground is a sure guarantee for sustainable development of our institution. The International Center for Human Development will be able to meet the expectations of its supporters and partners.

Tevan Poghosyan
Executive Director



The years 2000-2010 have been a period of significant progress for the International Center for Human Development, as the Center acquired a solid reputation in Armenia and the region as a research and public policy entity, having increasingly strong impact on its areas of interest.

I am delighted to indicate that the Center's role throughout its history has been decidedly positive. It has been an unbiased and objective player in the Armenian society. I am extremely proud of the enormous string of accomplishments that ICHD's talented and hard-working staff has managed to achieve.

To sum up, the ICHD successfully met the real challenges of building a reputation of professional impartiality and making solid achievements of cooperation on regional level. We have laid a strong foundation for future of the Center for many years to come.

Armen Darbinian
Chairman of the Board of Trustees

WHO WE ARE

Established in March, 2000 the International Center for Human Development (ICHD or the Center) is a one of the leading think tanks in the region that brings together a team of highly-qualified analysts and researchers with strong academic background and substantial experience in both public and private sectors committed to professional excellence and ethics.

The Center shapes public policy agenda aimed at sustainable development for all women and men in Armenia and in the region through actively engaging the new generation of leaders in ICHD's policy assistance net, cultivating a new policy making culture and achieving change by reproduction and joint effort, communicating its policy advices soundly and effectively, as well as through utilizing its comprehensive policy analysis and communication technologies and instruments that allow us to stay a step ahead of the upcoming challenges in a dynamic global environment.

ICHD strives to strengthen civil society in Armenia and in throughout the entire region. We contribute to the regional integration and peace building. We work for developing the social sector and poverty alleviation. We promote transparent, accountable and responsive good governance and assist the democratic reforms in public sector. We generate good practices of local governance and promote participatory local democracy. We enhance free market institutions. We raise awareness of our citizens and policy makers on human rights, gender equality and gender based violence, environment and public health. We promote the Armenian culture worldwide and advocate for cultural diversity in Armenia.

Vision and Strategy

We believe that the main omission in the 19-year old reforms in our country is the fact that we have, in essence, until now failed to engage the public in and win its support for the ongoing political, economic and social changes. Furthermore, by concentrating on the creation and strengthening of a state system, we have effectively ignored the need to create and strengthen a new society, as a result of which we do

not have today an organized society seeking democratic values and demanding the development of a civil society.

And yet the time is putting forward its demands. One of the main integral parts of a developed democratic state is civic organizations that are able to foster good governance and development through their alternative research, policy feedback and other various initiatives. The activities of the International Center for Human Development are a good example of the emergence of an alternative think tank. The vast majority of the Center's experts has a rich experience with working for various government agencies and is at the same time devoid of any "mentality constraints." They form a team which believes that in this era of globalization and development of high technology we Armenians are able to keep pace with and talk to thinking units of the world in an understandable language, get our message across to the international community, and have our role in the regional and global developments. People in the United States, Russia, and more than 10 countries of Europe, Southeastern Asia, Australia and elsewhere are familiar with ICHD's research. Our close cooperation with the most active organizations of Russia, Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan is aimed at finding solutions to serious problems hampering joint and harmonized development of the countries of the South Caucasus.

We are confident that dialogue and rigorous discussion is the right way of identifying existing problems and searching for their solutions. The Center has developed a tradition of discussing current political, economic and social developments as well as acute problems with the participation of the country's renowned specialists and researchers as well as high ranking officials, diplomats and ordinary citizens. All ideas and proposals resulting from those round-table and public discussions are polished and presented to the public and policy-makers through our policy channels. We have thus tried and will continue providing a forum for various strata of the population to make their voices heard at the highest echelons of power.

We also believe in the huge potential of professional and social networks and have materialized this value in creating several large networks of young leaders.

We have often had to learn from our own mistakes because of the absence of alternatives and possibilities of learning from others. However, we are now more confident about our future because we believe that the initial period of organization-building already belongs to the past. The existence of decade-long experience and a closely-knit team give us a reason to believe in the success of the most challenging projects.

To achieve its main goal and objectives ICHD has worked out a long- and mid-term strategies. The long-term strategy covers the five-years period and the mid-term strategy is developed for the first three years.

In a long-term perspective ICHD aims at becoming a generator of the public policy agenda through utilizing its comprehensive policy analysis and communication technologies and instruments. This approach will allow us to stay a step ahead of the upcoming challenges in a dynamic global environment.

Our society will unavoidably face a genuine leadership generation shift in the coming five years. This creates both opportunities for a think tank to mobilize gaining stronger impact in shaping proactive public policy agenda and challenges like the reproduction of the former policy making and administrative culture through new generation of policy makers. ICHD's response to these opportunities and challenges require the key strategic element of actively engaging the new generation of leaders in ICHD's policy assistance net. Through such engagement ICHD will strive for streaming its vision and approaches among the new cohort of young policy makers. The objective here is rather ambitious: cultivating a new policy making culture and achieving change through reproduction and joint effort.

In a long-term perspective ICHD will strive for communicating its policy advices more soundly and effectively. Here, the ICHD strategy is anchored at enhancing its own capacity and strengthening capacities of its partners in policy communication.

ICHD envisages engaging the national parliament as a proactive recipient of its policy products and bringing the parliament to ICHD's advocacy loop in the long-term timeframe. Once again, the ICHD's cultivated networks and well established connections will be the key strategic resource.

Overall, in a longer term, ICHD will mostly build on its past achievements including networks we have cultivated, technologies and methodologies we have introduced and the knowledge we have learnt. ICHD will also continue creating innovative products and bring in new initiatives, engage new partners and boost new relations regionally and globally.

In a mid-term perspective ICHD will focus on about ten increasingly critical areas of the public agenda. Meanwhile, ICHD's mid-term strategy incorporates element ensuring its flexibility and timely response to any emerging public issue every year. For the last purpose, ICHD will reserve resources for this purpose considering the resources needed for implementing specific instruments.

Through its mid-term strategy ICHD will, firstly, work to improve the environment for financial sustainability of civil society institutions, particularly, the think tanks through developing policy recommendations and advocating for the legislative change. This element will both contribute to the overall development of civil society in Armenia, and will specifically ensure the long-term sustainability of the ICHD's work. The new legislative initiatives will particularly refer to the introduction of the institute of endowments in Armenia and will foster public-private partnership in the country.

Secondly, ICHD will keep the public anti-crisis policies in the focus of its work. ICHD's mid-term strategy in this area aimed at generating alternative policies and serve as a counterweight in anti-crisis initiatives. The ICHD strategy considers that both the impact of its policy products and the credit that the think tank will eventually gain will capitalize.

ICHD considers that the upcoming three years will be decisive to gain a critical impetus for accelerating Armenia's integration with the EU. The ICHD has well positioned itself as one of the champions in civil society striving for Armenia's progress towards EU integration, implementation of the country's commitments and following the road map drawn by the ENP and Eastern partnership frameworks. ICHD's mid-term strategy envisages identifying key challenges in EU integration process and shaping the policy response.

ICHD is one of the key messengers of the attitudes, concerns and opinion of citizenry on the process of the regulation of the NK conflict and Armenia-Turkey relations. In this area the mid-term strategy of ICHD envisages upstreaming citizens' voice through translating the outcomes of the THMs into policy language and communicating. ICHD will continue building on its partnership strategies engaging effective partners in Azerbaijan and Turkey. ICHD will also continue its Track Two initiatives.

In mid-term perspective ICHD will build on its success in engaging local communities into the participatory development planning and budgeting process. ICHD has established strategic partnership with the key government stakeholder in developing local democracy in Armenia – the Ministry of Territorial Administration of the Republic of Armenia. Being interested in financial sustainability and local accountability of the local communities, the Ministry became the committed partner of ICHD in extending the participatory process countrywide exponentially and achieving the critical mass of communities implementing the participatory decision making practices. ICHD's mid-term strategy in this area envisages building local capacities for community based organizations and local self-governance bodies, as well as cultivating a community of practitioners in participatory decision making mechanism.

ICHHD will build on its successful exercise of the scenario planning policy analysis tool on defense planning. In the mid-term framework ICHHD will build on another strategic partnership with national and international security and defense institutions including NATO. ICHHD with its partner, Armenian Atlantic Association, a member of NATO affiliated institution, plays a catalytic role in civil society to boost the cooperation between national institutions and NATO for the objectives under the Individual Partnership Action Plan generation framework, particularly for promoting civilian control over the military.

While ICHHD successfully implements its main policy communication tool; prepares and disseminates Policy Briefs, Viewpoints, THM analytical tools, etc., yet the extended scope and intensity of the issues that the think tank engages (over 25 policy documents in 2009) requires additional skilled professional staff. ICHHD intends addressing this issue in the mid-term scale through the cooperation with professional institutions offering capacity building via internal training and external mentorship. Such mentorship will also serve as a ground for establishing an internal quality control procedure for the policy products within the think tank. ICHHD will build on its partnerships with various think tanks in Eastern Europe and global networks.

Policy culture change requires consolidating short-term lessons learned through the work. ICHHD will continue promote best practices in effective policy analysis and communication among Armenian policy makers, civil society actors, political parties, media and development partners. In a mid-term perspective, ICHHD will use genuine opportunities for exposing innovative technologies, viable partnerships and its corporate culture as a leading think tank.

To secure proper funding of the resources needed for the implementation for its long-term and mid-term strategies ICHHD will continue mobilizing resources seeking further possibilities to apply for solicited and unsolicited opportunities applying to the donor community active in Armenia, e.g. Eurasia Foundation, Freidrich Ebert Shtiftung, etc., as well as mobilizing resources globally, i.e. seeking support from key multilateral and bi-lateral donors, such as the European Commission, Council of Europe, OSCE, the World Bank other etc. ICHHD has already secured funding from various sources for specific activities, as well as formulated its initiatives into the format of concept notes and applications with particular donors.

The Team

ICHHD employs a team of highly-qualified analysts and researchers with strong academic background and substantial experience in both public governance and the private sector.

The researchers, analysts and trainers of the Center are committed to professional excellence and have demonstrated high level of professionalism throughout the years. The ICHD team has always been open to collaboration and innovation. We are keen to learn new ideas and skills. The ICHD team comprises young, committed and enthusiastic professionals striving to be a part of improvement initiatives, making things happen and stimulating a change for a better society.

The experts of the Center have contributed a lot towards strengthening the regional cooperation in the Caucasus. The research conducted by the Center, as well as the personal contacts of the team members with their counterparts - experts and relevant organizations at both national and regional levels - are of a great asset for the successful implementation of any project. The ICHD core team has been trained in conflict management, effective communication, negotiations and leadership skills in the United States, at the Conflict Management Group (CMG), Cambridge, MA and New School University, New York, NY. Individual experts regularly participate in professional development activities both in Armenia and abroad. The Center feels strongly about the need to pay close attention to lifelong learning and the continued search for knowledge. ICHHD is also proud of the fact that a number of its former employees and volunteers currently hold high positions in various international organizations, NGOs and government institutions in Armenia and abroad.

Achievements

During its decade long history the Center has cultivated a culture of inclusive policy making process, has developed and introduced innovative instruments effective in the regional, national and local policy environment.

We have established trusted institutional relations and partnerships with the policy makers proving ourselves as a reliable partner through providing quality advice, policy analysis and development services to all stakeholders including government, civil society organizations, the private sector and de-

velopment partners, as well as through creating innovative policy communication tools and promoting adaptive environment for dialogue.

Our consistency and argument based persuasive approach proved to be effective in cultivating a new culture for cooperative advocacy in Armenia, as an alternative to rampant confrontative practices.

We have also championed the development and introduction of new technologies working for effective participation of citizens in decision-making in the country and in the region. The instruments that we have introduced first time ever since 2004 have been further improved to the third generation participatory tools and yet to be developed further to ensure even more effective inclusion.

Various networks in Armenia have been created in the past, and many more will be created in the coming decades. Yet ICHD has played a critical role in the evolution of the networks and networking in Armenia and in the region through bringing the change leadership into the logic and practice of the networks. Being the cultivator of the networks we have boosted the self-referential power of these networks from their birth; we have equipped the leaders with the practical knowledge and helped them to utilize and multiply this knowledge in various initiatives ranging from advocacy to track two diplomacy initiatives. The networks cultivated by the ICHD proved to be viable and long-lasting leveraging the professional and political career of their members, many of which became high level political leaders and policy makers. ICHD remains the librarian of these networks and tailors its efforts of adding value to the networks tailored to the particular needs of the network and public interest at large.

We have gained a critical level of institutional sustainability through diversifying our financial sources and ethical independence through commitment to the key values. ICHD's annual turnover reached over one million euro in 2009. While passing the tipping point of institutional sustainability and maturing rapidly in the past, we also recognize the institutional "curse of grow or fade; we strive to absorb new opportunities, enter new areas, to employ new instruments and address the emerging challenges that face Armenia and the region. We see the creativity and innovation as the key drivers for our institutional sustainability in the coming decade.

Overall, we became a center of excellence and knowledge in a broader region recognized as a credible and attractive partner internationally.

ICHD Core Staff



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Tevan Poghosyan

ASSISTANTS



Liana Aghabekyan



Shake Badalyan



LEGAL EXPERT
Monica Sargsyan



ACCOUNTANT
Armen Nikoghosyan



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Arthur Sargsyan

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Sevak Lalayan



Vahan Asatryan



Astghik Injeyan

PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT



Armen Galstyan



Paruyr Amirjanyan

EDUCATION & TRAINING UNIT



Ashot Khurshudyan



Christina Sargsyan



Sergey Chamanyan

WHAT WE DO

ICHD Toolbox

The ICHD, as one of the leading think tanks in Armenia and in South Caucasus provides policy advice on various issues on the national agenda. One of the most effective instruments that ICHD uses to voice voicing public and expert opinions on various critical economic, political, social and educational issues are Off-the-Record discussions (OTRs) followed by its “Policy Papers”. Up to date, ICHD has organized over 70 OTRs and produced over 100 policy papers.

The instrument of OTR discussions has already been acknowledged as extremely useful in decision making by many parliamentarians and government officials who keep receiving resulting policy papers after each OTR. The ICHD monitors the get feedback on various policy briefs developed and distributed. Both the quantity and quality of the feedback has significantly increased in recent years, as online data such as e-mails and offline subsequent discussions prove. In 2007 ICHD started its blog at <http://blog.ichd.org>, which has been used as a feedback platform ever since. The feedback is being provided not only by decision makers, but also by other experts and the wider public, which shows the active interest in policy discussion.

Another important instrument used by the Center is the Town Hall Meeting mechanism, one of the most effective models of facilitating public participation in decision making process in local communities. Town Hall Meeting creates meaningful opportunities for citizens to participate in public decision making. This unique process is developed to address the needs of citizens, decision makers and democracy.

Decision makers often find it difficult to gauge how the majority of “general interest” citizens feel about important issues. In turn, citizens feel disregarded and less inclined to participate in public life, creating a dangerous cycle. The THM process restores the citizens’ voice in public decision making by

creating an opportunity for the general public to give those in leadership positions direct, substantive feedback on key public issues. Each meeting effectively restores the balance of the “political playing field” by engaging hundreds of “general interest” citizens at a time, effectively and quickly summarizing citizen input and widely disseminating the results through media coverage. The strengths of the THM model, in particular include: (a) scaling up; (b) everyone participates; no idea is lost; (c) iterative discussions; (d) clear articulation of priorities. The critical success factors of the mechanism include: (a) every voice is at the tables; (b) decision-makers involved at each step; (c) right content, structure, and process; (d) outcomes that make a difference.

Town Hall Meeting focuses on discussion and deliberation among citizens rather than speeches, Q&A sessions or panel presentations. Technology transforms the individual table discussions into one large group discussion. Each table submits recommendations and ideas using wireless groupware computers. At each table there is a note-taker who records all the ideas exchanged around the table and submits to the head operator who moderates the incoming messages to display for public attention. At the end of the discussions each participant can vote on specific proposals using polling software. The entire group responds to the themes generated from table discussions and votes on their final recommendations to decision makers. Before the meeting ends, final recommendations are compiled into a report, which is distributed to participants, decision makers and the media. Decision makers actively engage in the meeting by participating in table discussions, observing the process and responding to citizen input at the end of the meeting.

The THM comparative analysis methodology ensures an indirect social dialogue over the issue of the discussion through comparison of facts expressing attitudes and positions of common citizens across the entire THM audience, hence starting a mediated parallel dialogue. Over 7,000 citizens have participated in ICHD’s about 70 THMs in Armenia and in the region since 2005.

The methodology of the comparative analysis relies on two components: (a) analysis of the results (messages) of the THMs with an emphasis on raised issues and three main dimensions of knowledge, attitude and perceptions, and (b) summary of expressed pro and con opinions (messages) over the suggested scenarios or discussed issues. This approach ensures mediated debate and dialogue among citizens through summarizing of opinions (messages) voiced by them. In some cases debate or grievance is the only possible format. When people are engaged in debate or dialogue the parties try to exert necessary pressure or gain political support for getting through their demands and perceptions. As the objectives of debate and dialogue are different both are important elements of the communications

field. Unfortunately, often the balance between dialogue and debate is significantly leaning towards the latest. The debate format dominated the public discourse due to many reasons. Indeed engaging in dialogue cannot provide all remedies, however balancing between debate and dialogue is useful and helps in overcoming many issues in the process of communication and problem solution generated through debate. A more advanced level of dialogue can promote engagement of more people in the process. Dialogue enables to enrich the discussion through examples of personal experiences, to exchange worries, concerns and confusions. In this case more information is exchanged and better understanding is developed.

ICHD systematically undertakes policy research in order to increase the stock of knowledge of the think tank, society and political culture and uses this stock of knowledge to devise new instruments of policy advise, policy communication and advocacy in Armenia and in the region. ICHD policy analysts have extensively used both qualitative methods and quantitative methods, including case studies, survey research, statistical analysis, and model building among others in various sectors ranging from public health to security. Our research team identifies the broad range of various alternatives, evaluates them and recommends the best policy option for the agenda.

The ICHD's Scenario Planning exercise has been implemented in many cases to provide policy advice and solutions for the comprehensive problems in multidimensional environments under critical uncertainties where the interrelations between various factors cannot be neglected. ICHD has implemented the Scenario Planning methodology in such complex cases like the resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh Conflict, prospects of Armenian-Turkish rapprochement, perspectives of NATO engagement in South Caucasus, policy response to the security challenges in Armenia, etc.

ICHD has developed, adapted and implemented many training methodologies and guidelines in the area of development ranging from the training in writing effective public policy papers, public policy analysis. public policy advocacy; effective communication, leadership, conflict management, negotiation; local development planning and budgeting, program budgeting; corporate ethics, anti-corruption policies and practices; corporate social responsibility, gender and development, gender based violence, media and public relations, web-based administration etc. Since 2000, ICHD has trained over 5000 professionals, women and men countrywide. ICHD has also provided mentorship to other institutions including think tanks, local NGOs and community based organizations (CBOs) in Armenia and in the region.

ICHD has developed own tools for policy formulation. These tools have been much instrumental in ICHD's work on developing the Strategic planning process for the ministry of Economy of the Republic of Armenia, drafting a number of national policy documents including: the National Policy on Developing Armenia-Diaspora Relations, National Policy on Migration Management in Armenia for 2009-2014, Government's Anti-Corruption Strategy and Plan of Action for 2009-2013, etc.

ICHD has adopted and implemented genuine evaluation tools. Utilizing these instruments ICHD has evaluated the impact of the Poverty Reduction Credits in Armenia for the World Bank, all joint programs of the South Caucasus European Commission (EC)/Council of Europe (CoE), Japanese Social Development Fund (JSDF) in Armenia for the World Bank and JSDF. ICHD experts have been included in the teams evaluating USAID's assistance to the development of civil society in Armenia, Armenian Legislative Assistance Program, etc.

ICHD's annual international conferences on Armenia's EU integrations (EI) became a genuine brand for consolidating the Armenia's progress towards integration of the country with the European Union.

ICHD has produced and broadcasted with media partners over 15 talk shows and TV debates, series of documentaries prepared in Armenia and EU countries. ICHD experts are frequent and acknowledged speakers in the events organized by local and international partners. ICHD experts are quite often guests of various TV programs and interviewees of media outlets.

The ICHD also has vast experience in creating, developing and transforming various networks including communities of practice. One of the key networks created by the ICHD is the MOMENTUM network of professionals trained in facilitation and negotiation skills. The network provides an extensive pool of highly qualified facilitators and operators of the THM mechanism.

Internship with ICHD

The International Center for Human Development regularly seeks interns to assist staff with ongoing projects in its office in Yerevan. ICHD's Internship Program offers career-related work experience to students and other individuals interested in volunteering. Internships are set up on quarterly or a semester basis, but may be extended. Interns do not receive a fixed stipend. Upon successful completion of the internship, ICHD provides interns with a certificate of appreciation and reference letter upon request.

Our internship program provides interns with professional experience required by most employers and an opportunity to do substantive work including research and writing, representation at conferences, and participation in project events. The program also assists interns in the development of key skills that are valuable for their future careers. Our interns are also expected to contribute to administrative work and event support whenever needed. Interns are assigned to one or more project teams or work directly with our leading research analysts, trainers and advocacy specialists in each of our units through a fast-streaming cycle. The internship program encourages mentorship and direct engagement with team leaders. We support a hands-on approach that fully subsumes interns into the office team and encourages their creative ideas and contributions. ICHD also offers a Joint Internship Program in cooperation with Birthright Armenia/Depi Hayk Foundation.

Fifteen young women and men from Armenia and fifteen foreign young professionals from USA, France, Bulgaria, Lebanon, Romania, Canada, and UK have passed internship with ICHD since 2001.

Financial Report

Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2009 (audited)

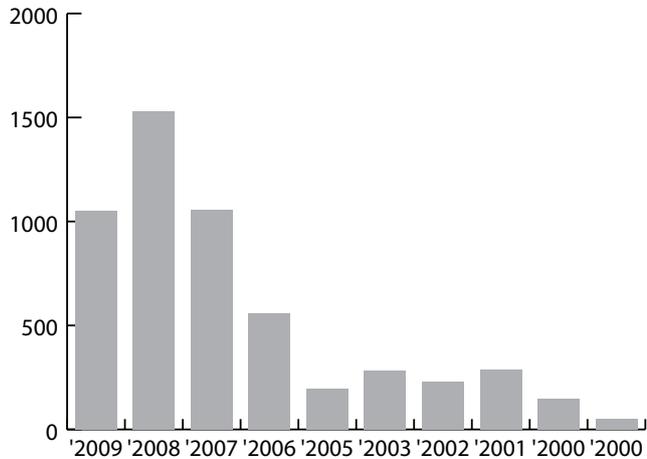
ASSETS	Thousands of AMD
NON-CURRENT ASSETS	
Fixed assets	4,128
Intangible assets	400
Total non-current assets	4,527
CURRENT ASSETS	
Current prepayments given	5,261
Trade receivables	9
Short-term receivables from budget	3,321
Cash and cash equivalents	38,829
Total current assets	47,420
TOTAL ASSETS	51,947
LIABILITIES	
Current Liabilities	
Payables on acquisitions	933
Income related grants	51,014
Total current liabilities	51,947
TOTAL LIABILITIES	51,947

Statement of Activities

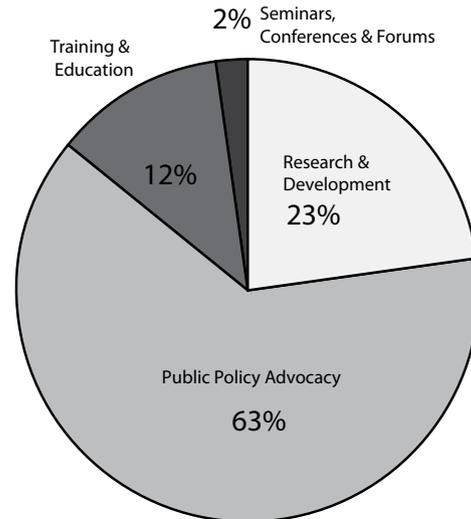
As of December 31, 2009 (audited)

	Thousands of AMD
Administrative expenditures	-217,023
Other operational income, including: grants	345,998
Other operational expenses, including: Profit (loss) from the operating activities	-135,491
Other non-operational profit (loss)	-6,517
	6,524

ICHD Revenues (thousands of US dollars)



Composition of ICHD's Expenditures



Audit reports

We care about our integrity and reputation of a transparent and accountable institution. Since its registration in 2000 ICHD passes financial audits every year. Moreover, all our major projects and programs also pass audit and expenditure verification by external auditors selected by our development partners.

Our audit reports and financial statements are available on our site at www.ichd.org.

Audit report: ending year 31 December 2009

To: members of the International Center for Human Development

Pursuant to the contract, we have carried out the audit of the balance sheet as of December 31, 2009 and the statements of activities of the International Center for Human Development according with the national standards of audit.

Audit includes analyze of data and finding grounds emphasized in the financial reports, evaluation of presentation of financial reports, as well as main accounting values counted by the organization, accounting principles applied in the elaboration of financial reports.

The management of the organization bears the liability for the elaboration of the financial reports. The audit does not find all the issues of the organization's internal supervision; therefore it cannot emphasize all cases. Our engagement is to express the opinion regarding the financial reports at the result of conducted audit.

The proper filing and verification of those initial documents that are approving data of financial reports and the organization's activities in 2009 have been audited in a selective way. We find that the audit conducted by us gives enough bases to conclude the following:

There are no serious violations in the financial reports of the organization which give real and true image about the financial outcomes of the International Center for Human Development as of 31 December 2009 and correspond to the Armenian legislation.

Director/auditor
Vardan Nikoghosyan

Auditor
Nune Aleqsanyan



PROJECTS REVIEW

Armenian-European Policy and Legal Advice Centre

2009-2011

ICHD supports the capacity building of Armenian institutions directly involved in the implementation of the EU-Armenia ENP Action Plan.

The conceptual framework of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) guiding Armenia-EU relations since 1999 has been developing in the recent years under the influence of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and Eastern Partnership initiative (EaP). To implement the ENP Action Plan, Armenia has endorsed a List of Measures for the period of 2009-2011. Armenia wishes to make full use of opportunities available under the EaP, by moving to negotiations on a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement and Visa Facilitation Agreement, which would pave the way to a new enhanced agreement with the EU.

Since April 2009, ICHD together with its partners in Consortium: Altair Asesores (Spain), the leading partner; East West Consulting (EWC), European Consultants Organisation (ECO), and European Social, legal and Economic Projects - ESTEP (Lithuania) implements a 24 months long Armenian-European Policy and Legal Advice Centre (AEPLAC)- Phase V project aimed primarily at building a long-lasting capacity in public administration of Armenia to implement the PCA and the ENP AP, in cooperation with the EU Advisory Group and under the guidance of the EU Delegation.

AEPLAC V particularly targets at: (i) assisting Armenia to strengthen the overall capacity of the administrative bodies in charge of fostering EU integration through PCA and ENP AP implementation; (ii)

supporting the EU Advisory Group deployed in selected Armenian administrations in providing advice to bodies of the RA for the implementation of the ENP Action Plan; and, (iii) promoting EU visibility and awareness in the whole country and different spheres of society.

At the end of the project we anticipate that the general capacity of the Armenian authorities to implement the ENP Action Plan will improve significantly. We also expect that the management capacities to deal with the ENP issues will increase and responsible administrations will be staffed with trained civil servants and equipped with prioritising, planning, coordination and monitoring capacities as well as screening of legislation tools. The project endeavours to achieve synergies among state structures involved in the implementation of the ENP AP and other stakeholders playing a significant role in promoting EU values and EU visibility (business community, academic community, journalists, students, universities, schools, public administration, NGOs, chambers of commerce, research centres, information centres) in Yerevan and in the regions. Eventually, the partners anticipate that the overall awareness of the EU will increase significantly among general population and specifically in the business community and among decision makers countrywide.

AEPLAC V performs three specific activities. Firstly, it assists Armenia to strengthen selected administrations and institutions in charge of fostering EU integration. This activity is developed and implemented in close cooperation with the EU Advisory Group. Based on a thorough assessment carried out during the inception phase (based as well on previous studies performed by the EC and other donors), the Consortium partners made recommendations on ways to reorganise and strengthen selected public administrations and a training map has been developed for selected administrations with the aim to build in those administrations and institutions a long lasting capacity to deal with EU integration. The partners have reflected, in close cooperation with the Armenian authorities, the EC Delegation and in cooperation with the EU Advisory Group, about the creation of a supporting unit or department within the Prime Minister office, or reporting to the Prime Minister, to enhance the strategic ability of the Government to design and implement reforms.

The partners also organise the trainings and study tours envisaged in the training map, that particularly expose relevant experiences in other ENP or in EU countries, and develop synergies with other EU funded projects and instruments, in particular TAIEX and SIGMA. The partners also promote possible synergies among entities already existing in Armenia and involved in different aspects in EU.

Secondly, AEPLAC V promotes visibility of the EU in Yerevan and in the regions. The Consortium partners have identified a working programme aiming at increasing EU visibility countrywide. The partners have provided an overview of best practices in this matter and lessons learned in the new EU member states, as well in other ENP countries or candidate states.

Thirdly, through AEPLAC V the partners provide “ad-hoc” assistance to the EU Advisory Group, at their request and after approval of the activity by the EU Delegation.

Support to Migration Management Policies and Institutions

2007-2009

Supported by the European Union, the ICHD, in partnership with the British Council and Migration Agency of Armenia, have considerably contributed into enhancing policy and institutional frameworks of migration management in Armenia. The partners implemented the “Support to migration policy development and relevant capacity building in Armenia” project anchored at three-pillar strategy aiming at policy dialogue, public awareness and reintegration assistance to returnees.

It is not a secret, that the interagency coordination and cooperation have been quite weak in this area for many years. The departmental interests, sometimes contradicting, used to prevail, while clear and sound national policy on migration management have been lacking in Armenia. This was quite tangible obstacle for the partners’ efforts in the early stage of the project. Thus, the first challenge the partners have faced was the creation of a constructive and efficient environment for a policy dialogue. Such an environment was the sine qua non for the initiation of a dialogue for a policy change on migration management. One of the major sustainable achievements of the partners was the transformation of the policy debate among the institutions involved in migration management into a policy dialogue. The partners achieved this through creating a room for continuous policy dialogue, in which the departmental interests became mutually complementing and the policy makers became collaborative.

The immediate benefit of this environment the partners and stakeholders enjoyed during the elaboration of the key national policy document in the area of migration management – the Concept of the

Strategy of the Republic of Armenia on State Regulation of Migration for 2101-2014. The Concept has been drafted by the efforts of ICHD's lead experts and reviewed by the stakeholders. The document has been fine tuned during the number of discussions with the key institutions in government, civil society, private sector and development partners. The ICHD team has shaped and agreed the principles of the national policy on migration management in-line with the international standards of the human rights and the key national strategies and policies. The mid-term goal of the national policy has been defined with the vision of Armenia's integration to the European Community. The specific objectives, tools and institutional reforms have been also outlined considering the European path of the country. The ICHD team, first time ever, provided a comprehensive assessment of the migration processes in Armenia in the past decades, consolidated the key results of government's policies in this area, as well as exposed the overall context of Armenia's commitments in the area of migration management. The ICHD experts have provided recommendations for institutional reforms inline with the policy framework, as well as outlined the key objectives and activities on improving the information management in the area of migration management. In the policy document the ICHD experts in practical details have tackled the policy challenges, objectives and activities in the mid-term perspective for each sector in the area of migration management including regulatory and institutional frameworks. The ICHD has handled the final draft policy document to the Interagency Work Group chaired by the Secretary to the Security Council of Armenia in late 2009. The Work Group from now on leads the policy and institutional change in migration management area.

In the process of promoting policy dialogue and shaping the national agenda for policy change and institutional reforms the ICHD team has extensively used its key policy instruments, off the record (OTR) meetings with policy makers and policy briefs reaching the heart of Armenia's leadership. The ICHD have organized twelve OTR meetings and issued about 20 policy briefs on various aspects of the migration management in Armenia in 2007-2009.

Through the project ICHD and its partners achieved a major institutional change in the area of migration management. In late 2009 a specialized State Migration Service has been created within the framework of the Ministry of Territorial Administration with extended mandate and functions in this area.

Along with assisting the government and other stakeholders in policy formulation, the ICHD team has created a new facility, which is providing reintegration assistance to Armenian returnees. When the project started there was significant lack of awareness among migrants regarding several key aspects of their possible return. Armenian migrants were quite uncertain about the regulations and proce-

dures on provision, change and registration of documents, opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship, social security and pension rights, health and education services, as well as on military service. The opportunities and resources for providing information to migrants have been limited to face-to-face contacts in public agencies considering that applicant have returned to Armenia, or assistance desks in Armenia's consulates and embassies abroad.

The ICHD's idea was to create a facility within the Migration Agency (MA) of the Ministry of Territorial Administration of Armenia, which would interactively provide "all-inclusive" information to Armenian migrants world-wide through a special web portal and a telephone "hot-line". The facility is run by five specialists from the MA staff, who received special training on operating a "hot-line" and the internet portal. This method has been selected, as the most effective way to reach out Armenian migrants abroad, people who are away from their home country. ICHD have designed a trilingual web portal to provide useful returnee-related information to migrants, as well as to offer personalized service, allowing users to come up with specific, non-frequently asked questions to the state agencies through the portal. The "Back to Armenia" portal won a Grand Prize in the "Third All-Armenian Contest on E-Contents" and the prize for Best E-Governance site.

Through establishing and operating this innovative institution, as a communication channel between the state institutions and the citizenry, ICHD and its partners have substantially extended and improved the quality of public services provided to Armenian migrants abroad. Based on the feedback provided by the migrants - users of the reintegration assistance facility, it is now clear that this ICHD initiative has been helpful in building confidence and trust towards the public institutions among migrants. Indeed, the facility served migrants who felt that their needs were heard and responded and their rights are exercised, while the duty bearer recognized that its services are demanded and appreciated. The facility has been also instrumental in consolidating interagency cooperation in providing services to migrants. Eventually, the ICHD approach has created a sustainable capacity within the Armenian government for providing services to extensive migrant population: the facility operations are funded from the state budget beyond the project. While creating the returnee assistance web portal a number of innovative e-technological solutions have been developed and introduced first ever, including the Armenian and Russian text entering layouts without any software installation required.

With this project ICHD and its partners have also increased awareness of Armenians on the process and various issues of migration through media campaign, in particular on issues of irregular migration and its consequences, as well as on opportunities for return and living abroad. Yet, it is more important

that the partners have developed and introduced new approaches to targeting this specific audience: migrants living abroad, their families living in Armenia, as well as people who can be involved in irregular migration cycle. Both direct and indirect methods have been used while the format of short documentaries and TV debates has been chosen. In eleven 20-25-minutes documentaries prepared in Armenia, Austria, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium and France the ICHD authors exposed the achievements and problems, hardships and emotions, intentions and choices of migrants-real people, spelling out human stories and the lessons to be drawn from their drama. From the construction facility to the refugee camps, from a year-home-away migrant to the young people born and educated in migrant families for seventeen years, from routine to survival issues; the documentaries of the series “Back to Home” opened a space for thinking about costs and benefits of migration and making choices again and again for the people in Armenia. The ICHD’s success in this endeavor opens the floor for new approach to addressing development issues in the format of short documentaries.

The 12 talk shows and TV debates that ICHD and partners prepared and broadcasted in cooperation with media producers and outlets in Yerevan and in the regions have exposed to general public the collision of approaches and attitudes of experts, policy makers and migrants on three “P”s of migration issues: policies, procedures and problems.

The ICHD have built a strong partnership through this project. Without the joint endeavor, support and contribution of the government, civil society and private sector, and eventually the project beneficiaries – migrants and their families themselves, the project would not achieve a fiver of its objectives. The Ministry of Territorial Administration, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Police, National Security Service, Ministry of Diaspora, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Ministry of Defense, the Military Police, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Healthcare, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs, as well as Armenia’s diplomatic missions in EU countries became supporters of and participants in the project. The local civil society organizations including CRRC, “Alpha plus”, “People in need”, actively participated in project activities. The development partners: EC delegation, IOM, OSCE, ILO, CoE, UNDP have significantly contributed towards the achievement of shared objectives of the project. Diplomatic missions of EU member countries in Armenia have also provided hands on support and assistance to ICHD team.

Support to Public Finance Management Reforms in Armenia

2002 – 2008

Armenia's public financial management (PFM) reform agenda aims to improve fiscal discipline and allocative and operational efficiency. This goal is reflected in Government's own documents, like the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). The Government's reform agenda covers activities across the PFM system, including MTEF and program budgeting reforms, treasury reforms, internal and external audit reforms, accounting reforms, and others. These reforms cannot be seen to stand alone, but rather as specific but interconnected interventions at different points within one PFM system including its critical elements: national and sectoral policy review and development process; strategic budgeting (policy-budget connection, resource envelope, ceilings); budget preparation; resource management; internal controls, internal audit and monitoring; accounting and reporting; external audit and accountability. Reform effectiveness in this system derives from implementing appropriate initiatives in all six processes and establishing connections between reforms in the various process areas.

The ICHD has been one of the key institutions in Armenia both advocating for the PFM reforms and providing policy advice and technical inputs in the process of the reforms since 2002. ICHD engaged all critical processes of the PFM system through 2002-2008.

In consortium with Atos KPMG Consulting, London, under the funding of the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the ICHD helped the Government to improve the effectiveness of public spending to meet the social priorities of Armenia. Through their project for 2002-2005, the partners strengthened the capacities of the Ministry of Finance and Economy (MFE) of Armenia in planning and managing public expenditures in the mid-term framework, as well as improved the capacity of the Ministry of Social Security (MoSS) to engage in the process of medium-term budget planning through policy analysis and professional assessment of the costs and priorities associated with policy choices.

Through the four-tier work-stream the partners have enhanced the Government's institutional and technical capacities in four critical processes. In policy formulation and strategic budgeting processes the partners addressed the need for consistent and realistic policies at the sector level with the MoSS as a pilot. In budget preparation the partners focused on strengthening the processes through which resources are allocated. In resource management process the partners focused on strengthening

both technical capability and processes in revenue forecasting. Through the project the partners also strengthened budget execution and control processes.

Building on the successes of this project in cooperation with the UK based Atos Consulting, its partner in Consortium, the ICHD supported improvements in the effectiveness of public spending in achieving government priorities, in particular, the public policy priorities defined by Armenia's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). The Consortium partners assisted the Government to roll out the program budgeting element of its PFM reforms to move to a results oriented budgeting system in 2005-2008. Through this project funded by the DFID, the partners have improved the impact and effectiveness of Government's policies aiming to reduce poverty, strengthened the capacities of budget agencies and improved the effectiveness of public spending at large.

The partners have strengthened the capacity of budget agencies to implement program budgeting and a MTEF and enhanced the link between the PRSP, MTEF and Annual budget processes. The project also supported the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MLSA) to plan public expenditure on the basis of policy priorities and cost benefits. The ICHD have provided local expertise and advice through forging and leading a team of local experts (the local implementation team of full- and short-time consultants) and managing the work-streams.

Supported by the World Bank, in cooperation with United Financial Services (UFS) in 2007, the ICHD developed the regulatory framework for the system of monitoring for the State Non Commercial Organizations (SNCOs) as a part of Government's PFM reforms and contributing into enhanced fiduciary framework in Armenia.

Enhancing Capacities in Policy Analysis and Formulation

2001 - ongoing

One of the major domains of ICHD's development practice focuses on policy analysis and formulation capacities of public and civil society institutions in Armenia and in the region. ICHD targets these capacities through training, study tours, expertise, discussions, networks of practitioners, etc. ICHD's

experience on assisting the government and non-governmental institutions in policy development covers a wide spectrum of sectors ranging from economic development, public finance management and anti-corruption, migration management and Diaspora relations, education and public health etc.

Promoting Policy Research on Economic Integration in the South Caucasus

Supported by the Eurasia Foundation, ICHD brought together 24 representatives of civil society institutions from the three South Caucasus countries - Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia to discuss cross-border public policy research in the economy sector (e.g. financial institutions, trade, telecommunications, tourism, etc.) in Yerevan in mid-May 2001. The two-day seminar focused on the economic issues in three countries and in the region as a whole. The participants of the seminar discussed problems, priorities, best practices, and opportunities for cross-border collaboration among public policy researchers, policymakers and others interested in the policy making process that could help to advance the concept of a Public Policy Research Institute in the region of the South Caucasus.

Policy Research Capacity in the Transition Contexts

The International Policy Fellowships (IPF) program of the Open Society Institute (OSI), established in 1998 by the Open Society Institute, joining forces with the Center for Policy Studies, identified and supported individuals advancing innovative policy research in various areas. In early 2000s IPF fellowships focused on nurturing the next generation of open society leaders and strengthening their capacities to write evidence-based policy documents, identify appropriate policy instruments, and effectively advocate policies - skills that remained underdeveloped in Armenia and the South Caucasus. The IPF program supported the analytical policy research of young leaders and connected these fellows with professional policy networks.

Three of the ICHD associates participated in the IPF program in the Center for Policy Studies in 2003 and 2005. They joined the International Public Policy Developers Network and attended a series of seminars on policy advocacy. The ICHD experts developed specific projects available at their personal project websites on IPF server.

Supporting the Ministry of Economy in Strategic Planning Process

The Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Armenia (MOE) serves as a focal point within the Government of Armenia coordinating the implementation of the EU-Armenia Action Plan (AP) under the ENP framework. Thus, the effectiveness of the implementation of the AP largely depends on strategic planning process at the MOE. Supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), ICHD launched a project to improve the effectiveness of implementation of the EU-Armenia AP through strengthening strategic planning capacities of the MOE, as well as creating tools to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the programs effectively in mid 2008.

ICHD team developed a model scheme of the strategic planning processes for the MOE, particularly developed the draft Action Plan of MOE for 2009 through involving key stakeholders in this process, including the MOE staff and expert community. ICHD initiated the harmonization the Strategic planning process with the policy formulation process, particularly through streamlining the Action Plan of MOE for 2009 with the key sector-specific policies, particularly with the Concept on the Development of Tourism and its Plan of Action for 2008-2012 approved by the Government of Armenia in November 2008, as well as with the Concept on the Development of Information Technologies and its Plan of Action approved by the Government of Armenia in August 2008. ICHD has also provided recommendations on the streamlining of the Strategic planning and Policy formulation processes. ICHD produced guidelines providing a description of related procedures, structures and indicators on strategy planning process.

Supporting Formulation of Government's Policy on Armenia-Diaspora Relations

In 2008, the Government of Armenia recognized the development and implementation of a comprehensive conceptual framework on Armenia-Diaspora relations as being an area of priority and committed to create a specialized body to ensure effective implementation of its policies in this area. The Government recognized Diaspora as a bridge for Armenia on its way of integration to international community and committed to engage human and institutional resources of Diaspora extensively. The Government also committed to foster policies aiming at repatriation of Diaspora Armenians, particularly, through introducing the dual citizenship provided by the Constitution of Armenia. The protection of the rights of Diaspora Armenians is another area of priority recognized by the Government. The political commitment towards strengthening Armenia-Diaspora relations is also clearly stated by the third President of Armenia: his election program recognized the cumulative potential of Armenians

worldwide as being the competitive advantage of the nation. A Ministry of Diaspora has been created in October 2008.

Supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Armenia and in close cooperation with the Ministry of Diaspora of RA, ICHD initiated a project aiming at enhancing national policies on relations between the Republic of Armenia and Armenian Diaspora and strengthening national institutions in this area by developing a concept framework through a participatory process in August-December 2009.

ICHD consolidated policies on Armenia-Diaspora relations into a universal conceptual framework and developed the Policy Concept Paper on the Armenia-Diaspora Relations and agreed with the stakeholders. In the Policy Concept ICHD first ever consolidated the vision of the government, civil society, businesses and the Diaspora, as well as defined the goals, main objectives and key actions in this area. The policy concept document provided clear recommendations to streamline the institutional framework of the government, as well as to introduce a management information system related to the policies on Armenia-Diaspora Relations. The policy document significantly helped the Government of Armenia to decide on the structure of the Ministry of Diaspora matching its functions with policy priorities in this area, as well as streamlining functions of other ministries and agencies with the policy recommendations. The Government adopted the Concept Paper in spring 2009.

ICHD also strengthened institutional capacities of the Ministry of Diaspora in policy formulation and strategic planning. Over 250 national and international institutions, as well as individuals participated in discussions, and over 30 recommendations has been received and considered in the process of elaborating the Concept Paper. ICHD has forged a network of professionals in the area of Armenia Diaspora Relations including policy-makers, civil servants, experts and civil society at large. ICHD worked closely with the Ministry of Diaspora to ensure coordination with the government stakeholders and effectiveness of consultancies. Technical expertise of organizations active in this area in Armenia, in particular, Noravank NGO, AIPRG, ACNIS, political parties, as well as Diaspora institutions has been mobilized through the Project. ICHD consolidated feedback from the citizens and civil society institutions on Armenia-Diaspora relations. The ICHD project has linked with Diaspora networks and drawn on the technical expertise of other international organizations including UNDP, EU, WB, DFID, during project implementation.

ICHHD considered major political risks, key legal and institutional constraints related to the second generation reforms and current capacities of the Government entities in the area of Armenia-Diaspora relations. To the extent possible ICHHD in its capacity of a think tank organisation managed these risks through building on commitments of the political leadership of the country and facilitating a participatory process consulting extensively with the major stakeholders in the government, Diaspora, civil society and development partners.

Supporting Formulation of Government's Anti-Corruption Policies

Supported by the OSCE Office in Yerevan, ICHHD R&D Associate participated in elaboration of the Government's Anti-Corruption Strategy and its Action Plan for 2009-12 drafted by a core team of experts in late 2008 - early 2009. The draft strategy shaped the anti-corruption policies of the Government of Armenia, evaluated the effectiveness of the first Anticorruption Strategy (2003-2007), consolidated the political commitments in this area, and defined the principles of the anticorruption policies. The draft policy document formulated the vision, goal and key objectives of the Government in combating corruption in Armenia. The draft strategy also provided the practical description of the instruments that the Government shall employ to prevent and to prosecute the corruption, as well as shall educate the citizens and officials on this matter. The recommendations of the experts also provided advice to the government on developing institutional framework on combating corruption in the mid-term and long-term perspectives. The draft policy document specifically referred to the information and human resource management issues as a part of Government's Anti-Corruption strategy. The experts have also developed a clear mid-term action plan with annual action plans and cost estimates for the actions. Supported by the OSCE office in Yerevan, experts have engaged a large variety of various interest groups and stakeholders in the discussion of the draft document. The Government adopted the fine tuned strategy document in early October 2009.

Policy Analysis as Parliament's Main Tool for Scrutiny

ICHHD focuses on enhancing the capacities of the Armenian National Assembly in policy analysis aiming at more effective scrutiny of the executive by the parliament and, thus, promoting a better balance of the governance in Armenia.

ICHD was the local partner of the USAID sponsored Consortium, led by the US based Development Associates, Inc / Development Alternatives, Inc (DA/DAI), which implemented the project “Armenian Legislative Strengthening Program” in two phases from April 2002 to October 2006.

The ALSP contributed to the development of the National Assembly in several ways. The work of ALSP I clearly helped the parliament develop systems for constituency relations and outreach and increased access to information about and from the National Assembly. Among the major accomplishments of ALSP I which contributed to this were: developing and launching the parliament’s new website, creating templates and procedures for research, reworking and expanding access to the parliamentary hour television program, improving the functioning of the citizen’s information department at the parliament including implementing the Public Inquiry Tracking System (PITS) system so that MPs could log and trace citizen complaints more effectively, and improving the hearing processes for committees, which increased public input on some issues. The ALSP II was able to sustain, deepen and even institutionalize some of the major accomplishments of ALSP I, such as the website and focus some of its other work as well in important areas, most notably in the area of budget work.

As the Consortium’s local partner, ICHD has worked out a case study on the budgeting process as part of a general assessment and for use in training programs with the National Assembly in June 2002. ICHD experts provided recommendations on the budget process and procedures as related to the functions of the parliament. ICHD team has developed the “2001 family allowances case” and developed a specific skill building training course in areas identified as deficient in the assessment of the budgeting processes. The training course incorporated the case studies developed earlier.

ICHD team provided hands on assistance to legislative staff and MPs in such areas as reading and analyzing the budget, conducting joint budget analyses, prioritizing information needs, collecting necessary data from the executive branch and other sources, and assisting in holding effective budget hearings in September – December 2002.

ICHD provided specific fiscal analysis expertise regarding budget analysis to supplement the work of the analysts and experts of the National Assembly during the consideration of the State Budget 2003.

ICHD experts prepared a comprehensive analysis of a specific policy reflected in the state budget. This analysis is an example of a fiscal analysis an elect member of the parliament can use to be more informed when making decisions about state funding policies. ICHD worked out a number of public pol-

icy papers: Policy funding analysis in the secondary education sector in Armenia for the draft budget 2003 and The peculiarities of quasi-fiscal organization's expenses efficiency analysis.

Setting Agenda for European Integration

2005-ongoing

ICHD's vision of the future of Armenia and the South Caucasus portrays the people bearing European values, regulations and institutions meeting the European standards, political and business culture of European democracy and states committed to European principles of human rights. Following its vision, ICHD strives to foster integration of Armenia and the region with European community through promoting European values, creating demand for quality public services of European standards, supporting approximation of the regulatory frameworks to EU acquis, and advocating to keep the integration policies on the spot of national and regional political agendas.

In this effort ICHD uses its entire arsenal, organizes off the record meetings, prepares and distributes policy papers, works through its networks and social media, convenes conferences and seminars, etc. With the announcement of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and its instruments, ICHD has streamlined its work on European integration to support these frameworks. The Government of Armenia welcomed the ENP program in 2004, and began developing an EU-Armenia Action Plan under the ENP since March 2005. In the same year, ICHD instituted a new tool to consolidate Armenia's progress towards its commitments under the instruments of European integration.

Supporting the Development of EU-Armenia Action Plan

Supported by DFID and the British Embassy in Armenia, ICHD launched a team of qualified professionals who studied the practices of elaborating the ENP Action Plans in Ukraine and Moldova. The objective of the team was to learn the successes and challenges in the development of an action plan and to provide a comprehensive feedback to Armenian stakeholders in the government and civil society, and particularly, to assist the inter-agency council to implement its mandate of developing EU-Armenia Action Plan effectively.

In July, 2005 the team of four experts from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and ICHD met in Kiev and Chisinau with public and civil society institutions engaged in the development of the action plans in Ukraine and Moldova. Upon their return to Yerevan, the experts have exposed the experiences in these countries to their colleagues from Armenian government and civil society organizations involved in the process through number of round table discussions. ICHD consolidated the best practices of developing action plans under ENP framework in a policy brief (European Neighborhood Policy: Principles and Perspectives for Cooperation). The EU-Armenia Action Plan for five years has been signed in November 2006.

OSCE Values and Commitments: Common Ground for Security and Cooperation

Later in November 2005, sponsored by the Yerevan offices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation of Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe, ICHD brought together over 50 representatives of stakeholder institutions from Armenia, Georgia, Russia, Ukraine, Romania and Bulgaria, focusing on issues of stability and cooperation to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act.

The participants discussed the OSCE values, principles and commitments and highlighted how those could become a basis for security and co-operation in the OSCE area at the international conference “Promotion of the OSCE Values, Principles and Commitments as a Basis for Security and Co-operation in the OSCE Area: Concrete Steps towards the European Integration of Armenia” in Yerevan, on November 21-23, 2005. ICHD have consolidated and published the proceedings of the conference.

European Integration: Means for Regional Peace and Security

Next year, supported by the Delegation of the European Commission to Armenia, ICHD in partnership with the Armenian Center for Transatlantic Initiatives (ACTI), brought together about 50 representatives of various stakeholder institutions from Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Turkey, Russia, Bulgaria and Romania as well as leading European institutions, e.g. EU, NATO, OSCE, CoE in the conference “European Integration: Ways and Means towards Integrated and Peaceful Neighborhood” in Yerevan, on July 27-30, 2006. The conference mainly focused on European values, principles and commitments as a basis for security and co-operation in the region, the opportunities and challenges for the further co-operation in the region. ICHD consolidated the open exchange of ideas and opinions and published the conference proceedings.

Transformation of Integration Toolbox: from TACIS to ENPI

ICHD's 2007 European Integration annual international conference has been devoted to the 50th anniversary of the European Union. Supported by DFID, the EC Delegation in Armenia and the OSCE country office, in cooperation with the Center for European Law and Integration, ICHD brought together representatives of various institutions from Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania, as well as EU, NATO, OSCE and CoE at the conference "European Union is 50. Integration in the ENP Area: From TACIS to ENPI" in Yerevan, on 18-19 November, 2007.

A day before the conference the delegates participated in a pre-conference workshop, a hands-on discussions of new cooperation instruments. The conference focused on the role of European institutions in enhancing cooperation between the EU and Armenia, as well as on policy issues of cooperation and integration, actions to promote European values, ensure effective implementation of country's commitments within the frameworks of the ENP, IPAP and Council of Europe, etc. The Speaker of the Armenian parliament Mr. Tigran Torosyan and the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus Mr. Peter Semneby welcomed the participants at the opening session.

Reviewing Two Years of Implementation: Lessons and Plans

Armenia presented its first annual report for 2007 on the progress of implementation of the EU-Armenia Action Plan in April 2008. Earlier in February 2008, a fully fledged European Commission Delegation Office has been established contributing significantly towards increasing effectiveness of ENP implementation. Submission of the 2008 annual report on the progress of the Action Plan implementation the Government 2009 had planned for April 2009. ICHD considered that the 2008 international conference on European Integration could be instrumental in tracking the progress of the Action Plan implementation.

Supported by the EC Delegation Office in Yerevan, DFID, OSCE, FES and the CoE, ICHD has brought together about 100 representatives of governments, civil society and development partners from Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Turkey, Moldova, Romania, and key European institutions- the EU, EC, NATO, OSCE and CoE, at the international conference "2 Years of ENP: Progress, Challenges and the Future" in Yerevan, on 28-29 October, 2008.

The five-session two-day conference opened a debate in Armenian society on the process of European Integration, effectiveness of its instruments, the capacities of engage institutions, lessons learned from through the process of implementing the Action Plan, future challenges and opportunities, etc.

The public officials have been genuinely interested in ICHD's 2008 European Integration conference as it provided a room for sharing the achievements on the implementation of the EU-Armenia Action Plan and learned of the new developments across various sectors. The extensive participation of civil society young leaders has been another new quality of the 2008 conference.

Members of Armenian parliament, Secretary of National Security Council of the Republic of Armenia, Minister of Economy of Armenia, Assistant to the President of Armenia, Ambassadors of EU member-states in Armenia, Head of the EC Delegation in Armenia, Special Representative of CoE Secretary General to Armenia, Head of the OSCE office in Yerevan, Head of the Political Affairs and Security Directorate, the General Rapporteur and Vice President of the Atlantic Treaty Association, Regional Director South Caucasus, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung have moderated and addressed with keynotes at the conference. ICHD have consolidated the proceedings of the conference and prepared and published a policy brief.

Eastern Partnership: the Next Stage in European Integration?

What happens in the countries in the Eastern Europe and in the Southern Caucasus affects the European Union. Successive EU enlargements have brought these countries closer to the EU and their security, stability and prosperity increasingly impact on the EU's. The potential these countries offer for diversifying the EU's energy supplies is one example. All these countries, to varying degrees, are carrying out political, social and economic reforms, and have stated their wish to come closer to the EU. The conflict in Georgia in August 2008 confirmed how vulnerable they can be, and how the EU's security begins outside its borders.

An important step on the road of the European integration of the EU neighbors became the establishment of the Eastern Partnership initiative by the European Union (EU) presented by the foreign minister of Poland with assistance from Sweden on 26 May 2008. It was meant to complement the Northern Dimension and the Union for the Mediterranean by providing an institutionalised forum for discussing visa agreements, free trade deals and strategic partnership agreements with the EU's eastern neighbours, while avoiding the controversial topic of accession to the European Union. Its geo-

graphical scope covered Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Belarus and Ukraine. The Eastern Partnership implies new association agreements including deep and comprehensive free trade agreements with those countries willing and able to enter into a deeper engagement, gradual integration in the EU economy and allow for easier travel to the EU through gradual visa liberalisation, accompanied by measures to tackle illegal immigration. The Partnership also promotes democracy and good governance; strengthens energy security; promotes sector reform and environment protection; encourages people to people contacts; supports economic and social development; offers additional funding for projects to reduce socio-economic imbalances and increases stability.

ICHD's 2009 European Integration International conference focused on the role that the Eastern Partnership could play on the relations between the European Union and Armenia and Armenia's European integration track at large. Supported by the EC Delegation Office in Yerevan, Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation (BST), a Project of the German Marshall Fund of the U.S, and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), ICHD brought together 150 representatives of governments, civil societies and development partners throughout the Eastern Partnership region and the European Community at the international conference "Eastern Partnership: the Next Stage in European Integration?" in Yerevan, on 29-30 October, 2009.

The six sessions of the two-day conference moderated by the high ranking Armenian and Foreign officials, focused on policy issues and the role of Eastern Partnership in enhancing cooperation between the European Union and Armenia. ICHD consolidated and published the proceedings of the conference.

Setting Regional Security Agenda

2001-ongoing

ICHD assists reforms in the security sector in Armenia and in the region through advocating for democratic governance in the security sector and promoting bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the major systems of collective security including the NATO.

Promoting Democratic Governance in the Security Sector

The Starlink Programme (Security, Transparency, Accountability and Reform: Linking the Security Sectors of Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Armenia to the European Mainstream) of the Centre for European Security Studies (CESS) of the Netherlands was introduced in Armenia in March, 2006 through a seminar and a round table which aimed at assessing the main needs and priorities in the field of defense reform and security sector governance in Armenia.

Upon this assessment CESS and ICHD organized and conducted three training courses on democratic governance in the security sector for 60 professional of defense, law enforcement and national security sectors in 2006-2007. The representatives of the Ministry of Defense, National Assembly, RA Police, RA National Security Service, media and NGOs who attended the training courses learned about the approaches and instruments for securing democratic practice of governance in the security sector.

The training courses were followed by a wrap-up conference, which brought together training participants from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine in Hague, in mid-December 2007. The conference was focused on the Starlink's progress and opportunities for further development, as well as on the discussion of democratic reform in the security sector.

Euro-Atlantic Security Prospects for Armenia and South Caucasus

ICHD have assisted the civil society initiative on establishing an institution aimed at fostering Armenia's ties with the Euro-Atlantic collective security systems - North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and promoting better understanding of NATO's mission in developing global security in Armenian society.

Under this initiative the Armenian Atlantic Association (AAA) – a non-partisan, non-governmental organization – has been established in late 2001, to inform Armenian public on the goals and activities of the NATO, as well as to inform the public in NATO member-states on political, economic and social developments in Armenia. AAA also strives to analyze the impact of the objectives and activities of NATO on the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, in particular, South Caucasus and Armenia. AAA also promotes solidarity amongst nations participating in the NATO Partnership for Peace program and develops contacts with foreign and domestic civic society organizations that pursue similar goals.

ICHD provides continuous support to the AAA providing the Association with methodological instruments, policy advice and advocacy tools since 2001. Particularly, ICHD assisted AAA in organizing various discussions with expert community and civil society representatives in Armenia by offering ICHD's instrument of the Town Hall Meeting (THMs) discussions to AAA, providing advice on THM discussion mechanism and scenario planning instruments, contributing the THM software and providing ICHD's pool of facilitators to AAA. ICHD assisted AAA in developing a series of policy papers and organizing Off-the-Record discussions.

Armenian Perspective on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline

Under the tutelage of the UK based International Alert, ICHD contributed to a wider policy and research Conflict Risk and Impact Assessment (CRIA) program to assist oil sector companies in addressing the underlying causes of conflict and contributing to long-term structures of peace (peace building). ICHD expert elaborated the Armenian perspective on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline as an add-on to filling the gaps of the conflict sensitive perspective in 2004.

Scenario-Based Planning Exercise in Defense Planning

The scenario-based planning is one of the most effective instruments in security and defense planning. ICHD initiated an exercise of medium-term (10 years perspective) defense planning for Armenia in spring 2009. One of the key characteristics that distinguish long-term defense planning from shorter-term planning is the degree to which uncertainty pervades the process.

The focal issue of the exercise is the defense response of the Republic of Armenia to various political and military situations. ICHD's scenario-based planning utilizes a set of hypothetical situations for the employment of defense resources. The situations are specified in terms of geographic, military and civil parameters. The format of the scenarios incorporate both situational-static and developmental-dynamic dimensions. The content of the scenarios depicts the development situations of bi-lateral relations with certain states in specific geographical-political contexts, which allows considering capacities and power of the states addressed. ICHD experts also try to address the political stereotypes that emerge in the discussions of such contents. The level of aggregation of the scenarios is mostly framework-based: they are flexible and enable further adaptation and localization for analytical and research purposes vs. rather detailed scenarios that provide more lucid information and conditions but provide less room for further adjustment and amendment. The ICHD limited the scenarios with

high probability and high impact situations to ensure adequate level of robustness of the exercise. The exercise considers equal level of uncertainties of the scenarios. The scenarios considered a broad range of macro-environmental forces, key factors of impact, as well as key uncertainties.

The first round of ICHD's scenario-based planning exercise resulted in four scenarios, which have been discussed with key stakeholders. ICHD plans to reiterate the process at the second round in mid-2010.

Platform for Regional Cooperation in Agriculture

2002-2004

One of the first initiatives aimed at promoting cooperation for peace and stability in the region was the ICHD's program on creation of a platform for regional cooperation in the sector of agriculture. ICHD's approach considered leveraging business interests and markets in the countries of the region for peace-building and security. Thus Track Two program that evolved through 2002-2004 has commenced with market promotion projects and accomplished with the creation of the Platform for regional cooperation in agriculture, a unique B2B/B2C catalyst for the agriculture business actors in the region. The further progress of Armenian-Turkish rapprochement will revamp the platform in a new quality.

Regional Agricultural Fair

As the first step back to October 2002, the ICHD supported by the American University's Center for Global Peace, have organized a Regional Agricultural Fair in Gyumri, Armenia's Shirak region to bring together first time ever the farmers and food processing companies from the South Caucasus countries. The fair became a genuine common ground to various businesses from different countries providing opportunities to promote their products and establish business relations with counterparts: farmers and companies from other countries. About 100 farmers and food processing companies from Armenia, Turkey and Georgia participated in the fair and established new business relations.

Virtual Agricultural Wholesale Market

As the agricultural fair has successfully echoed in various business contacts throughout the region, ICHD has moved to the second step of its program. In late 2002, ICHD in cooperation with Turkish-Armenian Business Development Council (TABDC, Turkey) prepared and launched the Virtual Agricultural Wholesale Market (VAWM), another B2B/B2C instrument to foster agriculture market development in the region further. The VAWM received the support of the American University's Center for Global Peace. Regional centers, which collected information on agricultural products available for wholesale trade in have been established throughout regions in Armenia in 2002-2003. The information provided by the farmers has then been consolidated, classified and published in an electronic database: the core of the platform. The VAWM platform has proved to be a viable and valid instrument as the first trade agreements among the platform subscribers showed up.

Marketing Network of the Caucasus

The success of the VAWM platform allowed ICHD to take the platform to the next level. The Marketing Network of the Caucasus (MANEC) has been launched at <http://www.manec.biz> replacing the first electronic database of the virtual agricultural market. Evolving from the VAWM platform, MANEC became a fully-fledged portal with advanced features. Fed by the information on available agricultural goods provided through its regional offices, MANEC became an effective platform enabling communication between buyers and sellers. Originally created to support the agricultural sector of the economy by extending marketing capacities and possibilities for local producers, MANEC successfully served as a clearinghouse on agriculture markets and regional intermediary in this sector in 2003-2004.

Shifting the Status Quo Thinking

2002-2006

ICHD strives to promote environment in the region conducive for effective conflict transformations and peace building.

The conflict over Nagorno Karabakh (NK) recharged on the last years of the former Soviet Union and soon escalated into a large scale armed conflict that took lives of thousands on both sides. The “hurting stalemate” brought a Russia mediated cease fire in May 1994. Since then the political leaders of conflicting parties heavily negotiate to resolve the Conflict over Nagorno Karabakh (NK) under the mediation of the OSCE Minsk Group Cochairmen. Meanwhile, even on the eighth year after the cease-fire agreement, the societies and elites of the countries affected by the conflict lack confidence in each other and feel distrust to any proposal that would suggest compromises for peace. The thinking prevails that the peace agreement would not bring a lasting peace but would rather transform the ephemeral stability of the status quo settled after the cease-fire into a fragile peace simply to be followed by a new cycle of more bloody warfare. Such “status quo” thinking hinders any effective peace building forcing the peace-builder to route after a while. ICHD considered that prior to engaging civil society in the region into an effective dialogue on the conflict and peace; the “status quo” thinking shall be really challenged to open the room for dynamic thinking of opportunities.

Public Opinion Environment first: Training for Journalists

With this vision, ICHD focused firstly on shaping favourable public opinion environment in 2002, building skills of journalists from three countries in the region, which would enable the media to challenge the “status quo” through social communication. Supported by the Council of Europe ICHD conducted two regional trainings for 14 Armenian, Azeri and Georgian journalists in mid-2002.

The training curricula aimed at raising the knowledge of the journalists on the stereotypes and myths over the conflict. ICHD transferred skills of dealing with problems, conflicts, process management, framing, peace building, relationship building, difficult conversations, effective communication, leadership, and persuasion to the journalists from three countries.

The training provided a hands-on experience as well. After the interactive sessions the journalists chose a relevant topic, practiced or discussed a real case representing this topic and suggested possible solutions. The journalists have been exposed to a tool called Currently Perceived Choice (CPC) enabling them to think and practice reframing of conflicting issues into possible gains for the others side/decision maker.

Policy Makers and Political Leaders: Advocacy for Changing Elites

After enhancing media partners, ICHD focused on policy makers and political elites in the conflicting societies. ICHD joined the consortium of several think tanks and NGOs with the London Information Network on Conflicts and State-Building (LINKS) as a lead partner in the Consortium Initiative, supported by the British Government's Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP) in 2003-2004. LINKS is a British non-governmental organization working for the peaceful resolution of conflicts and in support of democracy and sustainable development in societies in transition, through dialogue and innovative initiatives.

ICHD and its partner in Azerbaijan, the National Centre for Strategic Initiatives (NCSI), engaged the policy makers and political leaders into a process aiming at changing the "status quo" thinking among the elites. Both ICHD and NCSI organized ten discussions over various issues of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. ICHD consolidated the results of each off-the-record discussion into its Policy Briefs and disseminated among its partners in the government, civil society and businesses. The teams of experts of the partners met in London, Kiev and Brussels to convey a comprehensive analysis of the peace process.

The Citizenry: Talking to People through Performance

ICHD considered that the allegory of arts and performance would be the best instruments to challenge the "status quo" thinking of the large audience of citizens in 2005. Supported by the LINKS, ICHD sponsored the staging of a play by A.Grigroryan and M.Marinosyan, a story of two prisoners - an Armenian and Azeri - who had escaped from jail somewhere in Syberia. Human morality, tolerance and compromising are the preconditions for the moral victory which is achieved over the complicated political and social environment - this was the key message of the play. The play has been included in the repertoire of Stanislavski State Theatre and performed year after year.

People who Fought their War: Touching the Hearth of Thinking

Following its vision of challenging the “status quo” thinking, ICHD next focused on the least confident audience, who bears the suffer of both the conflict and its consequences till now. With physical security as the ultimate priority and concern, the thinking and attitudes of the people of Nagorno Karabakh Republic on the conflict and the patterns of its transformation are perhaps the most controversial in the entire region. On one hand, the people of NKR are deprived from many fundamental rights due to the unresolved conflict including the freedom of free movement and right for fully fledged internationally guaranteed security. On the other hand, the people of NKR compensate the lack of access to these fundamental rights through ephemeral mechanism. Any change of the status quo puts at risk the ephemeral mechanisms and status ensuring at least certain level of protection of their human rights, particularly their security. Thus, the people in NKR are the most sensitive to any change, , even the most dynamic and promising change, challenging these mechanisms ephemeral.

ICHD, supported by UK based Conciliation Recourses, engaged local leaders of Karabakh civil society into a dialogue on trust, negotiations, identity and conflict transformation in early 2006. ICHD experts trained 12 civil society leaders at the Stepanakert Resource Center, NKR, transferring them skills required to engage in the conflict transformation process.

Promoting the Best Practices: Consolidating the Results

In four years ICHD has implemented various projects challenging the “status quo” thinking of the societies in the region of conflict. The Center accumulated an extensive experience through this process, targeting different beneficiaries, working with various partners, creating tools and practices, and the most important – learning lessons. Through its work ICHD realized that achieving leadership change on conflict transformation can achieved only through a collective endeavor of a broader network of local partners in the region. The experience and best practices of ICHD and other institutions working on the peace process would be catalytic in this process if consolidated and exposed to a broader audience of civil society institutions and individuals.

With this understanding, ICHD and its UK based partner Conciliation Resources prepared and presented the review of peace initiatives in the successive 17th issue of ACCORD magazine: “The limits of leadership: elites and societies in the Nagorny Karabakh peace process” in late January 2006. The

publication featured contributors from various constituencies. It presents perspectives on the peace process and analyses of the impacts of the conflict.

Building Capacity for Track Two Initiatives

2001-2004

The ICHD is one of the region's civil society Champions striving to promote regional peace and security through Track Two Initiatives.

One of the challenges to the regional peace and security are the unhealthy relations between Armenia and Turkey. As Turkey blocked its border with Armenia since 1993 and no diplomatic relations have been established between Armenia and Turkey, any effective peace-building effort in the region shall consider engaging civil society institutions in both countries in track two diplomacy (T2D) initiatives.

The joint project of ICHD and the Center for the Research of Societal Problems (TOSAM) supported by the American University's Center for Global Peace, Washington, DC (AUCGP) and facilitated in Milano School at New School University, NY, was one of the first initiatives encouraging the institutional cooperation in the region in October 2001-August 2003.

TOSAM and ICHD developed a collaborative curriculum in mediation, cross-cultural communication and collaborative problem solving. This was a joint effort which involved working sessions characterized with active brainstorming, exchange of training materials, techniques and methods.

The shared understanding of the mission of the project - institutional cooperation through capacity building - became one of its major strengths. ICHD and TOSAM had a lot in common: their overall missions regarding the regional development were quite similar; the personal characteristics and values, as well as the work ethics were so similar that designing and implementing the project became an enjoyable exercise in cooperation. The ice started to melt with the very first visit of one of the Turkish partners to Yerevan, Armenia. The hospitality of Armenian partners, the common human values they

shared and the professionalism allowed them to quickly shift to real cooperative working mode. The relations changed into a real cooperation over training activities.

The successful collaboration between TOSAM and ICHD continued further and more professionals from both countries were involved in joint activities. These were people representing various sectors of the countries, who could benefit from capacity building trainings. The project encouraged the participants to initiate specific task-based projects which would enhance the regional cooperation. About 100 participants were trained locally, using the joint curriculum developed by TOSAM and ICHD. Twenty two of these participants both from Armenia and Turkey later were chosen to participate in a joint training in Milano Graduate School in New York.

The partners recognized that directly targeting the existing conflicts would end up in a deadlock. Meanwhile, a process which discusses the essence of leadership, the new challenges leaders face in a gradually globalizing world, the importance of negotiations and innovative approaches to negotiations became an excellent framework for empowering people who for a number of reasons have been deprived of a chance to communicate, or at least start basic interaction.

The excellent communication between the partners, as well as the excellent rapport established between the individuals behind the organizations was critical for the success of the project. Both ICHD and TOSAM modeled the type of relations they would have liked to see developing among the participants. The ability to face a problem and analyze it, rather than hiding or avoiding it, shared problem solving, willingness to share information and turn to the partner for assistance were among the key indicators of the desirable behavior ICHD and TOSAM trainers were promoting.

The partners achieved a real breakthrough for all those involved in the project, since it resulted in changing the existing attitudes and perceptions towards one another. The change in perceptions was made possible through regular communication, which allowed the participants to realize the commonality of Armenian and Turkish cultures. They found out that there were far more similarities between the two cultures, than both had ever realized.

At least 80 people who were trained at both sides of Arax River now have more positive perceptions of each other. Such a change allowed developing into a real cooperative spirit especially among the implementers, which continues up to date. The participants had also developed certain relations. However, because of the lack of funding these relations did not manage to turn into cooperative projects. Strong

institutional working relations have been established between TOSAM and ICHD. These two organizations continue to communicate regularly and to cooperate whenever there is an opportunity.

Once again supported by American University Center for Global Peace, UCGD and TOSAM initiated a rapid impact project for boosting cooperation between regional business leaders in Armenia and Turkey in October 2003-January 2004. ICHD engaged over 40 local businessmen of Armenia's Shirak and Lori northern regions in two meetings. Later, in mid-December 2003, the partners brought together the businessmen engaged through the project in a regional meeting in Istanbul, Turkey. The meeting aimed at discussing success stories of various business projects and working out new ideas, as well as possible joint cross-border projects has been organized and coordinated by the Center for Global Peace.

The Resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh Conflict: People's Voices

2006 - 2010

Very few initiatives have brought together Armenians and Azeris around the table of discussions on the resolution of Nagorno Karabakh (NK) conflict since ever. Such initiatives are usually limited to conferences and meetings held in a third country resulting in personal relations among Armenians and Azeris, the participants of these events. As a result of such interaction, the most difficult issues on the conflict are being passed over in silence. Meanwhile, the most difficult issues do not vanish merely as one does not voice them. While the decision makers are engaged in effort to resolve the NK conflict at the negotiation table, the people seem to stay alienated from the issue that has vital impact on each and every family in both Armenia and Azerbaijan. People in both societies needed effective mechanisms to get their voices heard by those who led the negotiations and strike the deal.

One of the most effective mechanisms enabling people to speak loudly and being heard by the decision makers is the ICHD's Town Hall Meeting (THM) mechanism. We have used the THM mechanism to get the opinions and perspectives of the people in Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh Republic (NKR) on peaceful resolution of the NK conflict first ever in 2006-2007.

Supported by the Embassy of the United Kingdom, ICHD conducted THMs in four towns of Armenia (Ijevan, Gavar, Kapan and Meghri) in February-March 2006 and other three in NKR (Stepanakert, Martuni and Martakert) in January 2007. About 430 women and men in Armenia and 300 in NKR: teachers and health professionals, young people and students, engineers and brokers, civil servants and entrepreneurs, the working and unemployed people, the combatants of the war, soldiers and officers, participated in the discussions and generated over 3000 messages. ICHD have facilitated the discussion around five scenarios of the resolution process including: the status quo; the one ending up with NK as a part of Azerbaijan with highest level of autonomy; the third driving the NKR to an independent state or to a part of Armenia; the fourth concluding with NK under international surveillance and postponed consideration of its status; and, the final one considering a delayed final resolution along with intermediary compromises and guarantees.

“Hey, folks, don’t you mind! Through these people our opinions will reach the President”, encouraged his peers one of the participants. As the heated debates evolved people expressed more and more ideas and arguments exposing their emotions, phobias and concerns, turning again and again to their values, stereotypes and beliefs and digging deeper and deeper into interests, arguments, positions and intentions. The outcomes of the first seven THMs resonated in the Armenian decision making circles.

The ICHD and its partner “Youth for Development”, one of the leading civil society organizations in Azerbaijan, decided to recall the innovative instrument of the THM offering solutions and formats for the discussion: debate and dialogue on the resolution of the NK conflict in early 2008. The partners agreed to build on Armenian success story of 2006-2007, and engage societies in Armenia and Azerbaijan into a remote dialogue through implementing the THM mechanism. The initiative considered simultaneously engaging common citizens in conflicting societies into open discussions on possible scenarios of the resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. The partners also considered presenting the outcomes of the THM discussions to decision makers in both countries, as well as to bilateral and multilateral stakeholders. This would make them aware of the real opinions and expectations in both societies. This initiative also exposed the thinking and expectations of people in each society to people in the neighboring country.

The Embassy of the United Kingdom in Armenia has supported the initiative through the Global Conflict Prevention Pool. In the framework of a two-year project the partners in consultation with respective governments and civil society organizations have firstly developed four indicative scenarios of possible resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. Further, each partner in Armenia and Azerbaijan

has implemented ten THMs, as well as three THMs in the Nagorno Karabakh Republic, thus engaging thousands of people affected by the conflict in the discussion. The ICHD have developed a unique methodology for the analysis of the THM outcomes. The THM Results Analysis Methodology (THM/RAM) enabled turning the parallel discussions in two countries into a joint dialogue, as if the Armenians and Azeris have been in the same venue while discussing the issue. The analysts of both institutions have prepared the comparative analysis of the THM outputs published and presented to all stakeholders in mid-2010.

People's Voices on Armenia-Turkey Protocols

Fall 2009

Critical decisions on foreign policies affect people's lives just as decisions on domestic policies do. ICHD continually focuses on bringing people to the table of negotiations and critical decisions on foreign policy, conflict resolution and security, peace and stability in the region.

The unprecedented efforts and commitment of Armenian and Turkish political leaders towards completing talks aimed at restoring ties between the two neighbors resulted in agreeing a "Road Map" of normalization of relationship in late April 2009. The process retained the impetus when Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued two protocols on the establishment of diplomatic relations between two countries and development of relations signed by Armenia and Turkey under Swiss mediation on August 31. Both documents triggered controversial discussions and disputes in both societies turning into a topic of "hot" debates. The protocols have become instrumental in blaming the government for non-transparent and unreasonable decisions. These allegations are deeply rooted in reality of decision making practices in Armenia at large. Indeed, the democratic way of decision making in Armenia is still in the stage of development. The dramatic growth in power of special interest groups has both constrained leaders and squeezed ordinary citizens out of the decision-making process. As a result, many citizens feel alienated, and decision makers have lost touch with their constituents' true concerns.

To channel the voice of the citizens to decision makers on this very sensitive issue, through open public discussion, ICHD, supported by the USIAD, has launched initiative to expose perspectives of civil soci-

ety to the decision makers and to enable the consideration of people's opinions, concerns and expectations in this critical process in late September 2009. ICHD's initiative moved isolated beneficiaries from the margin of the process closer to its hearth and enabled finding valid and viable solutions to a vital issue for the country through a participatory process.

The initiative provided Armenian decision makers a unique opportunity to learn about authentic perception of common residents in all regions of the country on compromises and concessions suggested for the Armenian-Turkish reconciliation process. The Armenian decision makers have been also exposed on the results of the final vote for the most acceptable "Road Map" scenario, as well as provisions of the Armenian-Turkish Protocols.

Though Turkey and Armenia bid to de-block border, however, it is not yet straightforward that the consequences of this visible step will lead to critical improvement of the relations between the neighbors and stability in the region. Scenario planning exercise has been considered instrumental in unveiling possible consequences of the border de-blocking. We have incorporated those factors that have been critical in the international practice of similar context into proposed scenario planning process. The developments in the relations between Syria and Lebanon, USSR and USA, Pakistan and India, Mexico and USA, Egypt and Israel, China and India, Peru and Ecuador, Georgia and Russia, Macedonia and Greece, in the context of respective historical canvas etc. The international practice of the conflicts covering landlocked countries has been considered specifically.

The factors considered particularly include: the role of key international players and international relations (such as Armenia-Russia and Turkey-Azerbaijan relations), security, migration and border management issues, emerging treats caused by marginal groups and terrorism, emerging political challenges, motivation for favoring the regional stability beyond de-blocking borders, development of political economic circumstances under mutual dependences, opportunities and challenges for energy transit and joint projects, cross-border cooperation and trade, integration of the social infrastructure in the region (health, media and education services), opportunities challenges to overcome denialism and psychological syndromes, cultural integration, challenges of emerging conflicts, etc.

Five scenarios have been developed in the cross-roads of various combinations of two key factors: the economic versus political relations between two countries.

The first scenario, “Silent De-blocking”, considered minor economic relations against rather irrational political relations and agenda strictly affected by the international community. The Scenario considers that the Armenian-Turkish border is de-blocked and welcomed by the international community. Any attempt to voice the international recognition of the Genocide and border issues is recognized as harming for Armenia-Turkey relations and is “compelled down” by the international actors. No economic miracle for Armenia, rather some economic effect in border regions happens. Georgia is no more the single gate for Armenia with consequent political gains for Armenia in the region. Opportunities for large projects and investments in perspective and dependence from mere opportunities.

The second scenario, “Open Border between Debtors”, considered minor economic relations against increasingly irrational political relations. The scenario envisages open borders while no correlation with the resolution of the NK conflict. Continues complaints on the background of irrational-emotional relationships. Armenia and Armenians continue efforts to achieve full international recognition of the Genocide. The borders remain partially recognized while no actual steps taken. Turkey continue its hostile policies against Armenia supporting Azerbaijan in NK conflict, denialism, refusing large economic projects and cooperation, creating obstacles for carriers. The open border is merely a transit zone. Armenia gained power as it is not depending on the route through Georgia. The international community is overall happy with the open borders and prefers pressing Armenian side to take further “give-up”.

The third scenario, “All Quiet on the Western Front” covered the current status quo that is featured by de facto semi-transparent economic border (traffic through the third countries) and ad hoc political relations. Under this scenario the protocols have been signed but the border remains blocked. Turkey continues the policy of denialism. Armenia and Diaspora work for the full international recognition of the Genocide. Armenian-Turkish relations remain abrasive. Armenia rejects to step back in sake of open borders. The blocked border makes impossible large economic projects and Georgia remains the sole and expensive gate to the outer world for Armenia. Remittances remain the key source of income for too many of Armenian households. There is no common approach about challenges and opportunities of de-blocked borders amongst Armenian society: opinions diverge. Though the official approach rejects preconditions, voices of some Armenians suggest preconditions for improving relations with Turkey.

The fourth scenario, “Unknown Winner, Unclear Prize” envisages extended economic relations and regional economic projects against increasing pragmatic political relations and challenging dependen-

cies for the country. In this scenario both countries try to improve relations. The attempts to voice the cute angles of Armenian-Turkish common history are recognized as harmful by the international community. The Turkey becomes more active in its policy of denialism, sticks Diaspora and carrots Armenian Government. The Armenian diplomacy remains the hostage of the Turkish promises. Turkey initiates the process of clearing the border recognition issue. The cooperation in communication and energy sectors are mostly in sake of the Russian-Turkish economic interests, as the Armenian infrastructures are owned by the Russian capital. Turkey terrifies Armenia by its power to freeze possible large economic projects. Armenia little by little retreats in political sphere to save economic opportunities. Though the NK issue does not figure in the process, Turkey intervenes in the regulation using its leverages. Economic investments foster the development of Armenia.

The fifth scenario, “Knight’s Move”, considered the situation with open borders in combination with interest based pragmatic political and economic relations between the neighbors. In this scenario, the de-blocked border and dialogue brings about improved relations between neighbors. Both countries strive for pragmatic relations. Armenian diplomacy succeeds to separate the processes of international recognition of the Genocide and improving Armenia-Turkey relations. The recognition process is on its way and is a matter of international concern. The international community welcomes the Armenian approach to recognition as an international affair. Turkey continues supporting Azerbaijan and its position on NK conflict remains unchanged. Open borders create great economic opportunities. Armenia thrives to streamline its interests with the interests of the global centers of power and follows its economic interests without surrendering on political axis. Armenia becomes a player on Kurdish issue Armenian economy revamps and restructures.

ICHD organized 10 THMs in all regions of the country and in 4 THMs in Yerevan in September–October 2009. The THMs have been particularly organized in Artashat (Ararat region), Yeghegnadzor (Vayots Dzor region), Sisian (Syunik region), Martuni (Gegharquniq region), Hrazdan (Kotayk region), Ijevan (Tavush region), Vanadzor (Lori region), Gyumri (Shirak region), Armavir (Armavir region) and Ashtarak (Aragatsotn region).

Through ICHD’s initiative citizens got a unique chance for the first time ever to openly discuss own attitudes towards and possible compromises with Turkish policies. Hence, the initiative has been in the focus of the Armenian media. The reports and the cameras of 3-4 leading national TVs broadcasting in Armenia and globally have been covering the THM process and its results. The reporters have particularly exposed the opinions and voices of the local people in their interviews. The THMs were on the

news 24 hours, a week-long. It is particularly critical that general public got an opportunity to weight the messages delivered by the political leaders of the country against the voices of common citizens from all corners of the entire country during the hottest time of the discussions. On the other hand, the political leadership of the country got opportunity to consider the views and concerns of their constituency while making moves in the real time mode.

ICHD analyzed (pre-processed, disaggregated, classified, argumented and synthesized) about 3400 messages and ideas of over 1200 Armenian citizens. We also prepared the electronic publication of the outcomes of the report in Armenian and English. The analysis of citizens' qualitative response combined with the interpretation of the voting results revealed a number of preliminary key findings and observations.

Firstly, it is seems that citizens attach more importance to the political consequences of the process as they see them, rather than to the economic prospective.

Secondly, it is also clear that citizens attach utmost importance to the following key issues in the regulation of Armenian-Turkish relations: (i) International recognition of the Armenian Genocide; (ii) Armenian-Turkish border issues; (iii) Armenia-Diaspora Relations; (iv) Economic development of the country; (v) Competitiveness of the Armenian economy; (vi) Business interests, influence, competition in the local market and social justice; (vii) Relations with the United States, Russia, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Iran; (viii) Resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict and the peace process; (ix) Role of the international community and global centers of power; (x) Political initiative, responsibility and diplomacy; (xi) Timing, Pace and Vision; (xii) Public participation in the process; (xiii) Migration, trafficking and crime; (xiv) Media and education; (xv) Domestic politics; (xvi) Trust and stereotypes, and; (xvii) European integration process.

Thirdly, it is obvious that among the knowledge, attitude and perception of the citizens on the Armenian-Turkish Relations, the concerns, emotions, phobias, as well as values, stereotypes and beliefs dominate over the Interests, positions and intentions. This means that the emotional and irrational, i.e. value and/or stereotype based opinions rule over the rational-pragmatic approaches.

Fourthly, it is also clear that whether people see opportunities or challenges beyond certain issues, both the concerns and enthusiasm of people equally contribute towards shaping political expectations, thus creating a burden of duty for the political leadership in the process. While it is clear that the pro-

cess will not run smoothly even under the mediation and strict mentorship of the international community, the overall burden of expectations will become a challenge for the process, which may slow down or destabilize the process at certain milestones.

The lessons learned throughout the implementation of the project and through consolidation of the preliminary findings and observations allowed ICHD to make two recommendations to the donors and policy makers on fostering the process of normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations further.

ICHD recommended introducing and implementing mechanisms that would enable sharing and balancing the burden of the responsibility for the success of the process among the leaders in civil society in both countries. Such mechanism shall include political, economic, social and cultural layers of the process and should engage business, political, civil society and spiritual leaders. Such mechanism and initiatives will reduce the burden of responsibility of the political duty bearers and will increase flexibility in the process of making decisions. More specifically, civil society leaders shall take their share of the burden and responsibility for the success of the process.

ICHD also recommended designing interventions carefully, as the hottest issues and challenges in the hearth of the process are entangled with the identity of people both in Armenia, Turkey and Diasporas. A “first generation” direct intervention aimed at “rapid reconciliation “between societies may lead to very unexpected and even more unwanted results. Threats for identity may find a release in increased hostility. Thus all interventions shall consider the identity dimension as a critical challenge and risk.

Strengthening Capacities for Public Participation in South Caucasus

2007-2008

Democratic decision making in the South Caucasus is still in the stage of development. The practices and knowledge in the societies in transition are not adequate to the emerging challenges in fast changing environments. The societies and governments need more effective new instruments, different skills and knowledge to handle transitional challenges and enter a phase of functional democracy. One of the instruments making participatory democracy to work, the Town Hall Meeting (THM) mechanism has

been developed and introduced in Armenia by the ICHD since 2005. After being effectively used at local and national levels in Armenia, the ICHD has considered to extend its capacity throughout the entire region in South Caucasus.

Supported by the Eurasia Partnership Foundation and in partnership with our partners in Georgia and Azerbaijan, Liberty Institute (LI) in Tbilisi and Youth for Development (YfD) in Baku, ICHD has launched an initiative to transfer skills and share its experience through a three-partied regional project.

In the early stage of the project, the partners have developed a roadmap for the skill transfer and capacity building for the Georgian and Azerbaijani institutions. Following this roadmap, ICHD have trained a dozen members of the LI and YfD on implementing the THM mechanism, scenario writing, communication, facilitation and note-taking skills. The partners got an opportunity to test and practice their knowledge and skills under overall ICHD guidance while implementing a pilot THM discussion on school violence in Tbilisi. In the wrap-up stage, the partners have outlined opportunities for practicing and implementing the newly acquired skills, as well as opportunities for regional cooperation and joint projects promoting participatory democracy through the South Caucasus.

The ICHD and its partners should not have been waiting for the success of this imitative. In late 2008, ICHD with its Azerbaijani partner launched an initiative to make people's voices on the resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict heard by the leaderships in both societies. The THM mechanism has been selected as the key methodology for implementing this initiative. The skills transferred to a partner in Azerbaijan became critical for the very idea of this initiative. Since 2008, ICHD and its partners are working to develop several initiatives promoting public participation in the societies in South Caucasus region using the THM mechanism as the methodological backbone of the joint endeavors.

Since 2009, ICHD has developed and introduced a genuine analytical instrument for processing the outcomes of the THM discussions. This instrument has been successfully used in several projects through 2009. ICHD considers transferring the analytical skills to its partners in 2010-2011.

Participatory Democracy in Action

2005 - ongoing

One of the major areas of ICHD's work is promoting the participatory democracy in Armenia and in the region. Here ICHD works with national and local decision makers, building their capacity to engage the citizenry through various channels; promotes environment conducive for the participatory decision making process; develops and implements mechanism that enable the effective participation of citizens in the decision making process at the national and local levels.

The Town Hall Meeting mechanism, one of the most effective and vibrant models of facilitating public participation in decision making process both in local and expert communities. The Town Hall Meeting (THM) mechanism creates meaningful opportunities for citizens to participate in public decision making.

Armenia 2020: Tracks of Development

Supported by the "Armenia 2020" program, ICHD implemented the THM mechanism to discuss the four possible development scenarios for Armenia in 15-years timeframe in mid-2005. ICHD organized four THM discussions on this matter in Armenia's capital Yerevan and towns of Ijevan and Yeghegnadzor in June-September 2005. Using the vision of "Armenia 2020" team on future developments, ICHD experts have developed four one-page scenarios to provoke the discussion ("Coming Home to Armenia", "Dare to Excel", "From Russia with Love", "Sentenced to Thirty Years with Correspondence").

The THM model has been first piloted with 76 students, university instructors, academicians, and state officials in Yerevan on June 8. Later, on June 18, eighty-one citizens discussed the scenarios at the THM Ijevan, Northern Armenia. The citizens have also discussed the perspectives of tourism development in Ijevan. The third THM was held on August 15 in Yeghegnadzor, a small provincial town in the South of Armenia with 91 residents. The final THM brought together over 500 citizens of Yerevan in the largest hall of the country in Tsitsernakaberd on September 3, 2005. According to the Mediamax news agency: "The representatives of "ordinary people" gathered that day to take part in the special discussion and, for the first time during the whole period of Armenia's independence, to openly express their opinion about one of the possible ways of country's development". The summary of the outcomes of all four THMs have been presented at the seminar.

The Constitutional Reforms

The public discussions of the draft amendments to Armenia's Constitution have been heavily concentrated in capital Yerevan in 2005, while the citizens in the regions have been almost deprived from an effective room to discuss the draft Constitutional Reforms. Supported by Council of Europe office in Yerevan, ICHD has addressed this issue once again summoning its team, implementing the THM mechanism in Hrazdan and Gavar towns on the eve of the Referendum of November 2005. Both THMs increased the public voice on this vital issue for the country and revealed attitudes, ideas and concerns of 230 citizens (100 in Hrazdan and 130 in Gavar) towards the suggested reforms of the acting Constitution.

The public discussions evolved around seven key articles in the Constitution, which according to ICHD experts and independent analysts were the most controversial in the time of the discussions. The citizens were offered to openly express their opinions on issues such as the shift to a more parliamentary state, freedom of local governance institutions, dual citizenship, etc. In both towns people cherished the unbiased and non-partisan facilitation discussions. Many of the citizens, who had a chance to participate in other public discussions on draft Constitutional Amendments noted that all those discussions had a different agenda - to influence the decision of the citizens by explicitly advocating either 'yes' or 'no'. The ICHD's THM has surprised them with a totally different approach: none of the citizens were asked about their choice. The final question they were asked to vote for was whether they feel ready to cast their votes during the upcoming Referendum. The citizens have also cherished the presence of legal experts at discussion room ready to provide clarifications and explanations on those articles and proposed changes which the participants found rather vague. ICHD have summarized the outcomes of the THMs.

Government's Demographic Policy

In September 2006, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of Armenia (MLSA) requested ICHD assistance in organizing public discussion of the draft concept of the Government's policy on demography. Supported by UNFPA/Armenia, ICHD convened its THMs with over 350 citizens in the capital Yerevan and other towns of Armenia in September-November 2006. Through the THM discussions ICHD team revealed the opinions and suggestions of citizens on the demographic issues in Armenia. Based on the draft concept paper developed by the MLSA experts, ICHD team developed five brief overviews of the major demographic issues, including birth, mortality and morbidity, marital relations, gender and

migration. The THMs revealed that citizens were aware of key demographic issues in the country and were basically supportive of the policy suggested by the government. Meanwhile, the major comment voiced everywhere was that the policy makers needed to specify the mechanisms through which the government intended to achieve the envisaged goals. The effectiveness of the THMs proved to be high, as the MLSA team cherished their outcomes and considerably reformulated the policy document incorporating many of suggestions voiced by the citizens.

The Indirect Boosts the Direct Participation

As cycle after the cycle Armenia fails to meet the best standards of fair and free elections, the apathy of citizens towards this mechanism of direct democratic participation increases becoming a serious challenge for the integrity and security of the democratic society. Supported by the UNDP/Armenia, ICHD addressed this challenge through opening floor for the discussion of the perspectives on elections and electoral practices with young women and men in December 2007. Over 50 young people from capital Yerevan and three regions have expressed their perspectives, concerns and suggestions on the electoral processes, their role for the development of Armenian society, the ways of fostering civic participation and the role that the youth can play in this endeavor.

The Role of Men in Improving Maternal Health

ICHD focuses on every dimension of the human development. One of the major global challenges for human development in the 21st century remains maternal health. Every minute a woman dies from childbirth complications. 50% of women living in the world's poorest regions deliver their babies without the help of a skilled birth attendant. Each year more than 15,000,000 pregnancy-related complications lead to long-term illness or disability. Worldwide 78,000 women die due to unsafe abortion every year. Chronic diseases and malnutrition leave many women unable to meet the physical demands of pregnancy.

The Government of Armenia recognized the improving maternal health as one of national priorities: the Millennium Development Goal 5 (MDG5) for Armenia targets at reducing by three quarters at least, between 1990 and 2015 the maternal mortality rate, and reaching at least 99.5% in the proportion of births attended by skilled healthcare personnel by 2015 (target 6). In 2003 the Government approved a ten-year Strategy on Mother and Child Health Care that provides for strategic directions and steps

to reduce maternal and child mortality and improve health status of mothers and children through increasing the quality and accessibility of basic mother and child health services.

The maternal mortality rate per 100,000 live births has declined from 36 in 1999-2001 to 25 in 2002-2004, yet it regrettably increased to 38.8 (16 deaths) in 2008. While this rate declined back to 27.0 (12 deaths) in 2009, it is clear that under financial-economic crisis resulting in reduced public and household spending on health the MDG5 targets are at risk. The profile of maternal health also shows little progress if at all since 2005. The morbidity rate for complication of pregnancy, child birth and post-natal period (per 100 000 population) increased from 1371.3 in 2005 to 1654.9 2006. Since 2007 the morbidity rate remains steady at about 1535. The morbidity and mortality rates are higher in rural areas.

ICHD focused on one of the key dimensions of improving maternal health – the role of men. Supported by UNFPA/Armenia, ICHD initiated a public discussion on the role of men as partners in improving maternal health in July 2007. The ICHD's THM engaged over 50 civil society representatives in a discussion on various roles that major institutions: the state, the community and family, as well as men as partners can play for improving maternal health. ICHD experts developed four scenarios (State support: Don't count your chicken until the eggs have hatched; Community support: Timur and his team; Redistribution of roles in the family: facing a broken washboard and Man and healthy maternity: walk the talk) presenting the baseline situation under each scenario and key points to provoke an effective discussion. The civil society representatives have generated about 350 messages and have voted for the major duty bearer for improving maternal health at the end of the discussion. Interestingly, over the half (55%) of them believed that the state bears the overall responsibility for this issue, while no one attached the primary role for maternal health to the local community. About every 6th considered men hold primary responsibility for maternal health. ICHD have summarized the result of the discussion and provided the opinions, concerns and suggestions of civil society to the policy makers in this area.

The Global Compact: Promoting Corporate Social Responsibility

ICHD seeks to promote responsible corporate citizenship so that businesses can be part of solutions to the challenges of globalization in Armenia and in the wider region. To achieve our vision of more sustainable and inclusive economy we promote strategic partnerships with and collective action of the private sector, the state and civil society through policy dialogue, learning, networks, and programs.

One of the key global instruments in this area is the United Nations' Global Compact initiative, which involves all the relevant social actors: governments, who defined the principles on which the initiative is based; companies, whose actions it seeks to influence; labour, in whose hands the concrete process of global production takes place; civil society organizations, representing the wider community of stakeholders; and the United Nations, as an authoritative convener and facilitator mainstreaming the set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment and anti-corruption in business activities around the world.

The Global Compact initiative was born in the UN Secretary-General's address to the World Economic Forum in early 1999. Today, hundreds of companies worldwide, international labour and civil society organizations are engaged in the Global Compact, working to advance ten universal principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption.

ICHD in partnership with the Union of Manufacturers and Businessmen of Armenia (UMBA) and supported by the UN Global Compact Armenia has initiated a dialogue on the Global Compact concept and principles since early 2007. Later, in September 2007, ICHD brought together over 50 representatives of the Government, leading Armenian businesses and civil society in the THM discussion over the key principles of the corporate social responsibility as in the Global Compact initiative. ICHD experts have developed four one-page papers elaborating on the ten principles in the four areas to provoke an effective discussion. ICHD experts have again used the approach focusing on the leading roles that each of the players: the government, the businesses and civil society. The THM participants have generated over 150 messages on this matter and voted for the institution they consider shall bear the primary responsibility for the introducing and promoting the principles of the Global Compact. ICHD summarized the outcomes of the

THM discussion and provided to the key stakeholders.

The Architecture of the Public Chamber

ICHD focuses on supporting each and every opportunity in Armenia for enhancing the institutional basis for effective participation of civil society in decision making. One of the interesting episodes of ICHD's intervention in this context was the establishment of a public chamber institution in Armenia.

Presidential elections of February 2008 resulted in multiple division lines in Armenian society distorting the interaction between the state, civil society and private sector. The distortion of relations among the key institutions of the state and society became a major challenge for the national security and integrity. The President of Armenia addressed this situation through initiative on creating a public chamber, an institution that would build trust and bridge the gap among the state and civil society in May 2008. In the President's vision, the chamber should boost reconciliation of various interest groups in Armenian society. The chamber would ensure that the needs and interests of various political, ethnic, religious and social and other groups are duly considered in the process of policy making process. The chamber would also promote the protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms in the decision making process in Armenia. The chamber would also foster effective participation of civil society in governance.

While the vision and mission of the chamber have been clearly announced by the political leadership of the country, its goals and objectives, mandate and functions, composition and structure were quite vague by early summer 2008. Though almost all interest groups in the society have responded to the President's initiative, the reflections remained controversial with some groups supporting the very idea, some voicing doubts and others rather observing the developments before positioning themselves.

ICHD considered that these issues should be broadly discussed and agreed within the society: the process of creating an institution for public participation has no alternative but being participatory itself. Supported by OSI's TTF, once again ICHD has called its instrument to engage civil society and political leaders in effective discussion on the principles and process of creating the chamber in July 2008. ICHD THM discussion brought together over 120 civil society representative, experts and analysis, representatives of non-governmental organizations and political parties, and consolidated their opinions, attitudes and ideas on public chamber initiative. Overall the THM discussion proved the demand for the process of reconciliation in Armenian society and generated a large number of suggestions on improving the process of instituting the public chamber. Over 300 messages basically referred to the principles and mechanism for the new institution ensuring that it serves to drive the governance reforms to the track of democracy and to bridge the gaps within the society, as well as between the political leadership and civil society. ICHD have summarized the THM outputs and submitted the findings of the discussion and the recommendations voiced by civil society leaders to the decision makers responsible for the architecture of the new public chamber.

The Policies for Protection of the Children's Rights

ICHD promotes the dialogue between the government and civil society on policies and programs aimed at the protection of the right of the children, another key dimension of the human development. We believe that the lives our generation will live tomorrow largely depend on the lives they live today. Regrettably, the future of many children starts in a dark and distant today: every 1.2 seconds a child is born into poverty. For many children there is no future at all, their tomorrow ends today: every 3 seconds a child dies of disease and every 7 seconds a child dies of hunger or causes related to malnutrition. For many other children every tomorrow is a doomsday: every minute at least one child is infected with HIV/Aids.

The Government of Armenia announced the protection of children's rights as a national priority. Under the Millennium Development Goal 4 (MDG4) the Government committed to reduce infant mortality (under 1 mortality less than 8 per 1,000 live births by 2015), to cut the under-five death rate by two-thirds (less than 10 per 1,000 live births by 2015), and to increase the rate of immunization against measles and other major diseases (over 96 by the year 2015). The financial-economic crisis challenges this dimension of development severely.

In mid-2008 the Government of Armenia commenced the revision of its policies aiming at the protection of the right of the children. The government analysts supported by various development partners developed the draft National Program for the Protection of Children's Rights in the Republic of Armenia. ICHD considered that no successful policy called for protecting the right of the children can be neither formulated nor implemented without active participation of civil society. Supported by the OSI/TTF and World Vision Armenia, ICHD initiated a THM discussion with civil society leaders and experts to consolidate and streamline their voices on this matter in mid May 2008. Over 120 civil society leaders joined in THM discussion on June 1st, 2008 at Ani Plaza Hotel, Yerevan.

As previously, ICHD experts developed a set of complimentary/controversial scenarios to provoke and facilitate an effective discussion and dialogue through THM mechanism. ICHD developed a genuine approach of developing such scenarios related to the issues of fundamental human rights. The essence of this approach is inline with human rights based approach with the focus on the roles that various actors play. In this case, ICHD experts focused on the roles of the family (including parental education and roles), community and school, the state, as well as other actors in protecting the rights of children. The three scenarios exposed the various patterns of roles that different players can play and responsi-

bilities that different institutions can bear. The scenarios referred to the rights of children in the areas of health, education, social safety, leisure, cultural life, as well as prevention of child abuse and violence. ICHD summarized the outcomes of the discussion and provided the results to the policy makers and leading development partners in this area.

Models of Preliminary Education in Local Communities

ICHD repeatedly focuses on education reforms in Armenia as a key drive for the development of our society. The Government's vision on developing the secondary and tertiary education has been shaped and policies in these sectors have been formulated to certain extent. Meanwhile the preliminary education remains definitely the most vulnerable and poorly cared sector of education. Here the infrastructure is poor, the qualified human resources are very scarce and financial resources are fairly inadequate. Though the duties in this sector obviously do not adequately match the real opportunities of the duty bearers and other players, the current models are not flexible enough to provide a space for innovation and creativity for the local decision makers. The situation with preliminary education is even rather grave in Armenia's small communities.

The Government, civil society organizations and development partners are looking for various models and practices of organizing the preliminary education in local communities. They are also interested in principles and mechanisms beyond such models that would enable further development of preliminary education institutions in Armenian communities. ICHD and World Vision Armenia (WVA), an organizations providing essential development assistance to Armenia's local communities in education sector, agreed that the principles for such models and mechanisms could be elaborated more productively if the voices of the local experts who bear the local knowledge, would be heard. By the request and support of the WVA, ICHD invited over 100 experts and specialists, local community leaders and educators from 28 local communities of Armenia's Stepanavan region (Lori, North Armenia) to discuss the issues of preliminary education in the small (rural) communities in September 2009.

ICHD experts in close cooperation with the WVA education program team have developed four scenarios illustrating various models of preliminary education in small local communities. We have considered about 60 various key factors affecting the preliminary education in communities (e.g. budget and financing constraints, infrastructure, human resources, education programs and materials, skills transferred, trust, etc.) and developed four blends of the services that a preliminary education institution would provide with its status against other local institutions (e.g. schools). The four scenarios:

“The jug of the Danaids”, “The teeth of the gift-horse”, “Under the same roof”, “The streams of the one river” have provoked effective discussion resulted in quarter thousand messages: ideas and suggestions. ICHD consolidated the results of the discussion and prepared a report presenting the findings and recommendations of the local experts to the policy makers in this sector. ICHD have also conducted an off-the-record meeting with top experts of the Government, civil society and development partners in this area to discuss the findings and recommendations of the local people. The policy brief on the results of the later discussion have been provided to the policy makers.

Policies on the Development of Armenia-Diaspora Relations

ICHD assisted the Government of Armenia to formulate its new policy framework on developing relations between Armenia and Armenian Diaspora.

Only three million out of ten millions leave in the homeland of their ancestors. Armenians in twenty first century appear as rather a transnational network than merely a nation state and a diaspora. While the relations between Armenian and Diaspora are deeply rooted to the history, they have been boosted two decades ago as a humanitarian catastrophe emerged in Armenia and newly independent Armenian state encountered enormous difficulties and faced several challenges at once. During the past twenty years the vector of Armenia-Diaspora relations has been aimed at mobilizing Diaspora’s support to the motherland. However, this one-sided relationship is no longer effective and productive, and bears more challenges than opportunities for over 10 million Armenians worldwide. The need for a new, strategy agreed by Armenian people in Armenia and Diaspora is knocking the doors.

ICHD have ensured that the process of the policy formulation, in which we have borne a leading technical role, is inclusive to the best possible extent. While the policy document has been drafted by the group of ICHD-mobilized experts and ICHD organized several off-the-record and on-the record meetings to discuss various drafts, we considered that the principles, goals and objectives of the draft policy should be discussed with a broader audience of the stakeholders. Supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Armenia, ICHD invited over 150 representatives of the government, civil society, the private sector and political parties to its THM discussion of the draft policy concept on Developing Armenia Diaspora Relations in December 2008.

ICHD experts have developed five scenarios illustrating how various prospective developments of Armenia-Diaspora relations depend on policy options. ICHD experts have designed the scenarios on

the cross-roads of two major axis of the policy alternatives: the party that bears the responsibility for policy making process (the people of Armenia solely, Armenians in Armenia considering the voice of Diaspora, Diaspora institutions solely); and, the major flows of the resources (Diaspora assists Armenia, Armenia assists Diaspora, Armenia-Diaspora cooperation). The five scenarios titled: "A marriage of convenience and the tree of life", "Israel: the new as a well forgotten old"; "The own child and the stepchildren"; "Armenia as the office of Armenians"; "Armenia-centric transnational multicultural Armenian people". ICHD consolidated over 200 messages that the participants of the discussion have generated and delivered to the policy makers in this area.

Perspectives of Armenian-Turkish Rapprochement

Critical decisions on foreign policies affect people's lives just as decisions on domestic policies do. ICHD continually focuses on bringing people to the table of negotiations and critical decisions on foreign policy, conflict resolution and security, peace and stability in the region.

Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued two protocols on the establishment of diplomatic relations between two countries and development of relations signed by Armenia and Turkey under Swiss mediation on August 31. Both documents triggered controversial discussions and disputes in both societies turning into a topic of "hot" debates. The protocols have become instrumental in blaming the government for non-transparent and unreasonable decisions. These allegations are deeply rooted in reality of decision making practices in Armenia at large. Indeed, the democratic way of decision making in Armenia is still in the stage of development. The dramatic growth in power of special interest groups has both constrained leaders and squeezed ordinary citizens out of the decision-making process. As a result, many citizens feel alienated, and decision makers have lost touch with their constituents' true concerns.

To channel the voice of the citizens to decision makers on this very sensitive issue, through open public discussion, ICHD, supported by the USIAD, has launched initiative to expose perspectives of civil society to the decision makers and to enable the consideration of people's opinions, concerns and expectations in this critical process in late September 2009. ICHD's initiative moved isolated beneficiaries from the margin of the process closer to its hearth and enabled finding valid and viable solutions to a vital issue for the country through a participatory process.

Through the initiative citizens got a unique chance for the first time ever to openly discuss own attitudes towards and possible compromises with Turkish policies. The initiative also provided Armenian decision makers a unique opportunity to learn about authentic perception of citizens in all regions of the country on compromises and concessions suggested for the Armenian-Turkish reconciliation process. The Armenian decision makers have been also exposed on the results of the final vote for the most acceptable “Road Map” scenario, as well as provisions of the Armenian-Turkish Protocols.

Five scenarios have been developed in the cross-roads of various combinations of economic versus political relations between two countries affecting the possible consequences of the border de-blocking by Turkey and establishing diplomatic relations between two countries: “Silent De-blocking” (minor economic relations against rather irrational political relations and agenda strictly affected by the international community), “Open Border between Debtors” (minor economic relations against increasingly irrational political relations), “All Quiet on the Western Front” (covered the current status quo that is featured by de facto semi-transparent economic border and ad hoc political relations), “Unknown Winner, Unclear Prize” (extended economic relations and regional economic projects against increasing pragmatic political relations and challenging dependencies for the country), “Knight’s Move”(a situation with open borders in combination with interest based pragmatic political and economic relations between the neighbors.

ICHD organized 10 THMs in all regions of the country and in 4 THMs in Yerevan in September–October 2009. We have analyzed (pre-processed, disaggregated, classified, argued and synthesized) about 3400 messages and ideas of over 1200 Armenian citizens. We also prepared the electronic publication of the outcomes of the report in Armenian and English. The analysis of citizens’ qualitative response combined with the interpretation of the voting results revealed a number of preliminary key findings and observations. The lessons learned throughout the implementation of the project and through consolidation of the preliminary findings and observations allowed ICHD to make two recommendations to the donors and policy makers on fostering the process of normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations further.

Perspectives of the Peace Talks on Nagorno Karabakh Conflict

Another critical challenge for the security and development of the entire region is the Nagorno Karabakh (NK) conflict. The process of the peaceful resolution of the conflict largely depends on the negotiations of Armenian and Azeri top political leaders mediated by the OSCE Minks Group. However, it is

quite straightforward that in this part of the world neither lasting peace nor stability is viable without confidence of people living in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorno Karabakh Republic in the outcomes of the negotiations. Moreover, we believe that lasting peace and dynamic stability can be achieved only through the process in which civil societies of conflicting parties play vivid role.

With this vision of the peace talks, ICHD uses every opportunity to engage civil society in the regions in the dialogue on the conflict resolution process. ICHD also strives to consolidate people's voice on the peace talks and keep informed the negotiators and mediators about the needs and concerns, ideas and thinking of the people at all sides of the conflict. In this effort, ICHD employs its entire toolbox of policy and advocacy instruments.

Supported by the Mission of Her Royal Majesty in Armenia, ICHD initiated discussion of the possible developments of the peace talks over NK conflict in Armenia and in Nagorno Karabakh Republic in 2006. ICHD experts have developed five possible scenarios of the conflict resolution process illustrating various outcomes of the negotiations. ICHD team considered a large set of security, political, economic and social dimensions affecting the conflict and the negotiation process based on the factual developments in the past, as well as current agenda of the official negotiations as disclosed through the social media and networks. Our experts have designed the scenarios on the cross-cuts of the two major axis of the security of and the official status of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic. At the end of the day the following scenarios have been presented at the THM discussions: "Status Quo", "NKR as part of Azerbaijan", "NKR: independent or a part of Armenia", "The Issue of Status to be Discussed in Future", "Procrastinated Resolution – Certain Warrants".

About 430 civil society representatives, men and women living in four towns of Armenia's border regions with Azerbaijan and Nagorno Karabakh Republic (Ijevan in the Northeast, Gavar in the Center East, Kapan in the Southeast and Meghri in the South) engaged into effective discussion around these provoking scenarios in ICHD's THM format in February-March 2006. Over 1800 messages of that the citizens articulated have been further processed and provided to the negotiators at the highest level, as well as distributed to the civil society experts in the region.

Later in January 2007, ICHD continued the discussion of the scenarios of the possible development of the conflict resolution process with the people utterly affected by the conflict – with the people of Nagorno Karabakh Republic (NKR) . Over 300 citizens of Karabakh's Stepanakert, Martuni and Martakert expressed more than 1650 messages on the peace process.

ICHHD also requested citizens to vote for the preferred scenario of the developments. Surprisingly, the outcomes have exposed the local specifics of people's knowledge and attitudes towards the conflict and the negotiation process demonstrated in both the messages of the people and the voting results. At the same time, the THM discussions revealed not only the differences but also commonalities in people's thinking and attitude throughout Armenia and NKR. Thus, it was clear that at the time of the discussions people were quite supportive to the dynamic negotiation process vs. being trapped in status quo. Thus, more than 63% of Armenians leaving in Armenia and 73% of people of NKR voted for various scenarios that would change the status quo over the conflict. The discussions have also revealed that people both in Armenia and NKR care rather of their physical security than the status. The discussions have also revealed the attitude of the citizens towards various factors and guarantors of the security as achieved through the negotiation process in the future. ICHHD consolidated the outcomes of the discussions presenting the voices of people on the peace talks and provided them to the negotiating political leaders and mediators.

Later, in early 2008, supported by the United Kingdom Mission in Armenia, ICHHD initiated second round of the discussions over the NK conflict; this time engaging people affected by the conflict in the entire region; people from Armenia, Azerbaijan and in Ngorno Karabakh Republic. ICHHD experts with their partners from Azerbaijani "Youth for Development" NGO (YfD), who were trained by ICHHD earlier through a skills transfer initiative under different program, have fine tuned the five scenarios making them sensitive as to the people in Armenia and NKR, as well as in Azerbaijan.

ICHHD engaged over 1230 citizens in communities in all regions of Armenia (towns of Gyumri, Goris, Charnetsavan, Talin, Alaverdi, Berd, Ararat, Armavir, Yeghegnadzor and Masrik village) and in three towns of NKR (Hadruth, Askeran and Shushi) in March-July 2009. Over 3700 messages generated by the citizens and results of voting (for most preferred scenario) have been analyzed and presented as preliminary findings in mid 2009. ICHHD consolidated the results into the final THM analysis report.

The preliminary findings have indicated that positions of people on conflict resolution toughened significantly throughout 2006-2009. Thus, the status quo in NK conflict has been supported by only one-third of the THM participants in 2006, however, over half of the THM participants (58.5%) considered the status quo a proper development of the conflict in 2009. The attitude to the conflict resolution has toughened most severely among NKR citizens: the number of supporters of the status quo has increased threefold among NKR people in 2006-2009; two third of THM participants in NKR supported the status quo in 2009. Interestingly, the status qua gained more support in Armenia (28%) rather than

in NKR (37%) in 2006, while currently 44% of Armenians support the status quo against 77% status quo supporters in NKR communities. The attitude of Armenians changed dramatically throughout 2009: while the status quo has been supported by 40% of the participants of THMs in five communities of Armenia in January-April 2009, the status quo supporters were 49% of the participants of the THMs in other five communities of Armenia in May-June 2009. The attitude of the NKR people toughened even more severely. The number of THM participants in Armenia who were dissatisfied by all of the conflict regulation scenarios, as well as the status quo increased threefold (30% in May-June against 11% in January-May 2009). This unfavorable change in people's attitudes is a particular result of the post-April developments of Armenian-Turkish negotiations. The public speeches and messages emanated by Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan, have changed the attitude of Armenian and NKR people to compromise solutions of the NK conflict dramatically. Despite to expectations that Turkey will respect the commitments on regulating Armenian-Turkish relations with no preconditions, the following controversial messages voiced by Erdoğan of Turkey since May 2009, that once again linked the improvement of the Armenian-Turkish relations with the resolution of the NK conflict, led to disappointment among Armenians and NKR people. Such a disappointment has in turn backfired on the perception of compromise solutions of the NK conflict and getting to trustable agreement with Azerbaijan. As a result, the society is currently far less perceptive to considering compromise solutions of the NK conflict than in early 2009.

YfD, ICHD's partner, brought to the THM discussion table over 580 residents of ten region of Azerbaijan (Alibayramly, Barda, Ganja, Ismayilly, Mingechevir, Sumgayit, Terter, Zagatala, Gabala and Agsu) in about the same period of 2009. Over 1800 messages generated by Azeri citizens and the results of the voting have been analyzed. The voting results indicate that the status quo scenario is refused by the vast majority of the THM participants. The absolute majority of the THM participants support the scenario of NK becoming an integral part of Azerbaijan with highest level of autonomy. Less than 1% of THM participants in Azerbaijan agreed with the independent status of NKR or saw the NK as a part of Armenia. Meanwhile, about half of the THM participants supported compromise solutions. ICHD consolidated the comprehensive analysis of the second round of the THM discussions in the region.

Piloting at the Community Level: the Case of Success

ICHD has successfully piloted the THM mechanism at the local community level in Sarnaghbyur, a rural community in Northern Armenia in December, 2005, engaging about hundred community residents in the discussion of the community budget for 2006. The six basic options for community spending

(asphalting the village road, repairing the kindergarten building, construction of a playground, partial repair of the main road, forestation of the alley, fencing the cemetery) have been formulated into six privative scenarios, through which ICHD facilitators run the discussion process. ICHD formulated over 320 ideas of the citizens into the messages exposed to the entire audience throughout the discussion. The popular vote has been given to the building of a sports playground. The community leadership has respected the outcome of the THM by revising the draft community budget. Experts consider that the credit for a major increase of the local budget revenues in this community in 2006 (local tax collection almost doubled in a year!) shall be significantly attributed to the participatory process implemented by ICHD, as well as to the consistency of the community leadership in respecting the peoples voices. The pilot project was supported by the Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative (OSI/LGI), Budapest. The experience of the pilot THM mechanism is currently offered to the George Washington University, Washington, DC. The ICHD's THM mechanism has been also implemented in Peru. ICHD extended the results of the pilot project over ten communities in all regions of Armenia through 2007-2008.

People's Choices: Discussion of Community Budgets

Following the successful pilot project on Sarnaghbyur (Shirak, Armenia) in late 2005, ICHD launched the next phase of promoting the THM mechanism in Armenia's communities. Supported by the European Commission, ICHD have introduced the THM mechanism in all regions of the country in 2006-2009. In this phase ICHD focused on three major issues: establishing strategic partnerships with national and local authorities who would Champion the public participation mechanism beyond the project; building basic local capacities for implementing the THM mechanism by community based organizations (CBOs) throughout the country; and, promoting the culture of participation in the communities.

Firstly, ICHD experts have presented the THM model to 150 local leaders during the one-day presentation in all regions of Armenia in January 2007. ICHD established partnerships with ten local community based organizations and transferred basic skills on THM implementation to them: Community Development and Social Support Center (Shirak), Sisian Development Center NGO (Syuniq), Armavir Development Center (Armavir), Development for Civil Soceity NGO (Lori), Supporting development of young families NGO (Vayots Dzor), Trade and Manufacturers Union of Gegharquniq (Gegharquniq), Forum of Non Government and Non Profit Organizations of Aragatsotn (Aragatsotn), Municipal Development Center of Charentsavan (Kotayq), Center of Training and Information Technologies system development (Ararat), "Nvachum" (Tavush).

ICHD have developed a special guidebook for basic and intermediate level training on THM mechanism implementation. In March-September 2007, ICHD trained about 140 members of these CBOs in organizing and conducting the THM discussion (providing necessary skills of effective communication and negotiation, and practicing and piloting THM, applying note-taking and facilitating skills, learning policy analyses and scenario development skills). Upon completion of the five-day training ICHD have certified the sixty members of the CBO partners as qualified facilitators and note-takers with basic and/or intermediate skills.

Later, in consultation with this new partners ICHD have chosen ten local communities in all ten regions of Armenia: Rind (Vayots Dzor), Margahovit, (Lori), Hatsik (Shirak), Achajur (Tavush), Sarukhan (Gegharqunik), Ashtarak (Aragatsotn), Nor Kharbert (Ararat), Arevik (Armavir), Ashotavan (Syuniq), Arzakan (Kotayq). ICHD established partnerships with the local self-governance (LSG) bodies in those communities.

ICHD experts in consultation with the CBOs and LSGs have identified 3-6 priorities for budget expenditures in each community (43 en total). With the scenarios on these priorities and equipment ICHD summoned its THM teams to each community in December 2007-June 2008. Over nine hundred residents of the local communities participated in the THMs and succeeded in formulating over 1630 messages - opinions, needs, thoughts, statements, attitudes, etc. The citizens have also voted for their preferred choices of expenditures at the end of each THM discussion.

ICHD developed THM reports on each case and presented to the local administrations showing pros and cons of each scenario and arguments voiced by citizens. The partner CBOs attended the sessions of the LSG councils where the community budgets were approved/ revised to observe the process of incorporation of the THM outcomes in the final decisions. ICHD have consolidated the overall experience of ten THMs and their results and published a case study book and a DVD exposing the entire process.

The Cluster Approach to Rural Development

ICHD assists the efforts of the government and civil society in developing and piloting advanced models in local governance.

Apparently, Armenian local communities chronically lack adequate capacities to deliver quality public services to local residents. It is widely recognized that one of the major reasons beyond this problem

is rooted to the process of early local governance reforms resulted in a large number of communities sizing from very small to very large while bearing same burden of both own and delegated (by the state) responsibilities. Neither the real opportunities for the development of local communities nor challenges including financial and local tax collection constraints, nor the transition challenges have been considered in these early reforms.

The Gordian knot of opportunities and challenges for the local governance development in Armenia can be untied only through innovate and adaptive approaches. Many experts believe that one of the most effective ways for Armenia's local communities to overcome development challenges is through joining the efforts and resources of neighboring communities. Creating administrative synergies in community clusters, experts think, will extend the pie and will open further opportunities for the development of the communities engaged by cutting down on costs through shared investing, operating and maintaining in infrastructures, pooling the products and finding markets together. One of the institutions committed to this approach of community development is the Hayastan All Armenian Fund, which implemented over 200 million dollars worth projects in Armenia and Artsakh since 1992. The Fund's vision for rural Armenia is anchored at cluster approach. In fact, the Fund is Armenia's Champion in this area support vision for rural Armenia which is not just to address basic socio-economic needs but also to enable families and individuals to become self-reliant and self-sufficient.

By the request of Hayastan All Armenian Fund, ICHD, supported by the OSI/TTF, organized a discussion on cluster approach in the Fund's pilot cluster in Armenia's Northeast Tavush region in mid-November 2007. The Khashtarak cluster involves three communities: Khashtarak, Azatmut and Lusahovit, bordering with neighboring Azerbaijan. ICHD's THM engaged over 150 citizens of the three communities (at least 50 residents in each community) in the discussion on the opportunities that the cluster approach opens for shared problem solving, joining scarce local human and financial resources, developing common infrastructures, streamlining administrative and financial processes, increasing effectiveness of development planning and public expenditures, etc.

ICHD experts consulting with Fund's officers have developed six scenario-type papers to provoke an effective discussion. The scenarios covered the overview of the principles, opportunities and challenges of the cluster approach, perspectives for fostering cattle breeding in the communities of the cluster, agriculture, micro-crediting, higher education, healthcare and cultural infrastructure. ICHD have prepared the resume of the meeting presenting the messages, concerns and recommendations on various dimensions of the cluster approach and its practical implementation in their communities. The results

of ICHDs THM discussion have been quite instrumental for the Fund in fine-tuning its pilot cluster project.

Enhancing Local Governance and Local Democracy

2001-2005

ICHD consistently focuses on promoting local democracy and developing the institute of local governance in Armenia through addressing various dimensions, including strengthening capacities of local governance institutions, raising public awareness on the scope and powers of local institutions, as well as promoting participation of the community residents in the local decision making.

Armenia has established fundamental democratic institutions since its independence. Armenia's local self-government is clearly defined by the legislation, instituting representative and executive bodies in each of about 930 communities. However, the local democracy in the country remains the Achilles hill of the democratic transformations in the country. Despite to consistent efforts of the Government of Armenia, development partners and civil society, the local democratic governance does not show much progress for several years. The weak capacities of the local governance bodies to deliver public services to the community residents remains one of the major obstacles hindering development of the local democracy and the institute of the local governance in Armenia. Indicatively, the level of satisfaction of citizens with the scope and quality of services delivered by the local governance bodies is rather low.

Enhancing the capacities of the local governments

Supported by the Armenian Social Investment Fund (ASIF), ICHD trained over 830 representatives of the local government in four regions of Armenia (Shirak, Lori, Kotayk and Armavir) in 2001-2004. ICHD and ASIF have enhanced through the project the skills of mayors, members of community councils, municipal servants in community development mid-term planning, preparation and management of community budgets. ICHD's training improved the understanding of local government representatives on basic concepts of tax legislation and contributed towards improved local tax collection. The training also enhanced their knowledge and skills in community asset management.

Transferring Asset-Mapping Skills to Young People in Karakert community

The integrated community development initiatives have been first ever genuinely piloted in Karakert village (Armavir region). A number of major development partners have agreed to distillate the community development assistance efforts in a way to ensure that all dimensions are addressed including reconstruction of physical and social infrastructures, development of skills, improving awareness of the residents, etc. Within the scope of this approach, the USAID funded Youth and Community Action Program (YCAP), implemented by Academy for Educational Development (AED), Junior Achievement of Armenia (JAA), aimed at increasing civic activism among young women and men, as well as enhancing community involvement in public affairs.

In 2005, by the YCAP request, ICHD conducted training for 20 young women and men of Karakert in asset mapping. The ICHD's training equipped the young leaders of Karakert community with the knowledge and skills in asset mapping model and associated tools to initiate a change process. The young leaders also became aware of social capital concept. ICHD's intervention has fostered teamwork and leadership in youth, as well as facilitated and supported the development of participants' draft action plans.

Changing Culture of Leadership: the Momentum Program

2000-ongoing

Following its mission, ICHD focuses on contributing to the transition from authoritarian leadership culture to lateral and process oriented leadership culture since early 2000. The prevailing approach to problem solving in the soviet society as zero-sum game ought to be replaced by more constructive modes of group deliberation and cooperative gain models. A successful transition to market economy and democracy requires a new democratic pluralistic political culture with a different set of basic approaches to problem solving. To address these issues in the experience of young leaders from Armenia and the region, ICHD has partnered with Conflict Management Group (CMG, now part of the Mercy Corps) in the Momentum Program: Changing Negotiation and Leadership Culture. CMG is an interna-

tional non-profit organization, which was founded in 1984 to place into wider practice joint problem solving technologies developed at Harvard Negotiation Project (HNP) of Harvard Law School.

The goal of this program is to assist young promising decision-makers from the region to acquire the leadership skills necessary to turn their respective countries into more democratic and prosperous entities that can hold their place in the world politically and economically and to apply new negotiation and leadership skills in developing cross-regional cooperative gain projects. To achieve this goal through a series of well-tailored, concentrated workshops in the US and follow up support, networking and training in region, the Momentum program equipped young leaders from Armenia and the region with skills, knowledge, contacts, and models for more effective policy development and self-governance.

Since April 2000, CMG, in close cooperation with ICHD and supported by renowned organizations of Armenian Diaspora, the Carnegie Foundation, and the USAID Mission to Armenia, developed and successfully ran eleven Armenia Momentum programs. The current outcome of this program is the extensive networks of over a hundred new style leaders in Armenia and across the region.

Participants are selected to provide mutual support for each other during and beyond the program. This approach allows ICHD and the partners to build a network supportive of the culture change (Momentum Network). Developing a critical mass of cadre from various layers of public and private sectors is a critical task of the program. Each program consisted of two local basic training workshops and one intermediate level training in Cambridge, MA. The choice of sectors for trainings has been determined through internal conflict vulnerability and regional conflict prevention diagnosis.

The curriculum for each Momentum group was tailored to the participants' disciplinary specialty, country-unique issues and includes actual examples of models that have succeeded in solving problems under conditions similar to those in their countries. The role models present their experience in person when possible, or are presented and analyzed by the instructional staff. Experienced leadership, joint decision-making and cross-cultural educators and trainers, accomplished reformers from emerging democracies, disciplinary specialists, experts with hands on experience in leadership and democratic engagement use interactive methods of participatory instruction.

Streaming the Momentum Network

The Momentum Pilot Program (Momentum I) engaged twelve young leaders from Armenia hosted by the CMG and ICHD experts in the inaugural session of the Momentum Program in April 2000.

Later a group of young leaders from Armenia and the Diaspora (Momentum II) shared their ideas and concerns in a number of deliberation sessions at the CMG at Hauser Hall of Harvard University Law School and the Monitor Company in August 2000.

The partnership between ICHD and CMG evolved to its first practical outcomes after a group of young media professionals from Armenia (Momentum III) participated in training at the CMG center in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in March 2001. The workshop “Mass Communication and State Building” addressed the difficult process of reforms in the post soviet societies through promoting a new negotiation and leadership culture.

Fifty young leaders from local governments, community based organizations, media, government and non-governmental institutions NGOs active on local governance, passed CMG’s and ICHD’s joint training on changing negotiation and leadership culture in October 2001. The group of fourteen most successful young professionals (Momentum IV) participated in training “Mastering Systemic Change and Best Practices in Local Government” offered by CMG in Boston, USA later.

Fourteen young educators from Armenia (Momentum V) have been trained in leadership skills for educational sector managers by CMG in Boston, USA, in March 2002. The training provided the participants with the knowledge and practical skills in negotiation and leadership, as well as hands-on experiences exposing how these skills are used in the educational milieu of Boston.

Twelve lawyers from Armenia representing both the public and private sectors (Momentum VI) participated in a ten-day training on leadership and negotiation at Conflict Management Group in Cambridge, MA, in March 2003. The training module, particularly have exposed to the participants use of legal case studies and other interactive training tools.

Twelve young leaders, representatives of credible intergovernmental organizations, international non-governmental and non-profit organizations (Momentum VII) participated in the “Leadership in Social Change for Prosperous Armenia” workshop hosted by the CMG in Cambridge, MA, in July 2004. Like the

previous Momentum groups this group also was trained in leadership and negotiation skills, this time enriched with the theory and practice of the past years. In addition, they were introduced to a model of organizing effective public participation, developed by an American organization “America Speaks”.

Thirteen so-called “connectors”, members of a certain network operating in Armenia (Momentum VIII), participated in a ten-day training conducted by Mercy Corps Civil Society and Conflict Management Group in Cambridge, MA, in October 2005. The training - Connecting Networks for Sustainable Change - aimed at providing the participants with essential skills necessary for maintaining sustainable networks and using the assets networks for facilitating a desirable change.

Thirteen young professionals representing various sectors of the Armenian social, economic and political life (Momentum IX) have been trained in a course “Network of Leaders: Fostering Higher Sustainability” delivered by in April 2006. The training provided the participants with essential skills necessary for ensuring the sustainability of the Momentum network and its consecutive activities.

Twelve young leaders representing various leading political institutions, as well as bearing different political visions (Momentum XI) have passed training in leadership, negotiation and policy analysis skills by Mercy Corps at Cambridge, MA, in May 2008. The skills provided to the young political leaders assisted them in analyzing and planning future steps under political crisis emerged after elections in February 2008.

Cultivating the Momentum Network

ICHHD, as the Librarian of the Momentum Network, in close cooperation with CMG and Mercy Corps and guided by CMG’s Director of Momentum program, Dr. Arthur Martirosyan have cultivated the network and regularly initiated various opportunities for the network members to interact and solve problems of shared interests through common efforts.

In Spring 2001, ICHD brought together the members of the first three Momentum groups in Olympic Camp in Tsaghkadzor. The retreat aimed at team building and reviewing the Momentum Program goals, discussing the future actions towards cultivating an interactive network and the priorities for a leadership and negotiation culture change.

Later in August 2001, ICHD conducted a joint seminar for the Momentum groups at ICHD premises in Yerevan. A case study based on Cuban Missile Crisis, some lessons in policy analysis and communication were presented by Dr. Arthur Martirosyan based on the movie “13 days”. The case was worked out by CMG. The goals of the exercise were to obtain new problem diagnostic tools, “conceptual lenses” and new skills in interest analysis, as well as to learn more on the role of communication under uncertainty and crisis.

ICHD hosted the next seminar of the Momentum members devoted to the development of adequate skills in Leadership Communication in November 2001. The case used at the training was based on the tragic events of 9/11 and the steps taken by the American leadership to overcome the crisis.

In January 2002, ICHD organized a workshop on Scenario Planning while welcoming the Momentum IV group at the ICHD office. The network members presented the case on Constitutional Amendments, which they had worked out during their training at CMG, Cambridge.

ICHD hosted the seminar of the Momentum Network on stereotypes and identity issues based on the movie “Pretty Village, Pretty Flame”- a film by famous Serbian producer Srdjan Dragojevic in April 2002.

The members of the five Momentum groups joined on April 24, 2002, to commemorate the victims of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 committed by Turkey. After visiting the Genocide Memorial Museum on Tsitsernakaberd Hill, the members of the Momentum gathered at the ICHD hosted seminar on persuasion skills development based on the movie “12 Angry Men”. The participants have discussed the Teyhleryan Case as a resource for a study on presenting persuasion skills. On the next day after the seminar, a large group of Momentum Network members leaved for a week-long retreat to discuss the issues of the development of the network in Nagorno Karabakh Republic.

ICHD led also the next retreat of the Momentum Network in Dilijan, Northern Armenia, in November 2002. A module on framing was presented by Dr Arthur Martirosyan who joined the retreat. Participants discussed the film “True Romance” and participated in various team building exercises.

In February 2003, Arlex International hosted the Momentum network members at a workshop on the role of adaptive leadership based on the movie “Malcolm X”.

Momentum Network members once again gathered together to welcome the Momentum VI at the Lawyers' Welcoming Presentation and Stand-up Reception hosted by this latest group, in particular by Mr. David Atanessian in Hotel Armenia in April 2003.

Dr. Arthur Martirosyan of CMG and ICHD's Dr. Ashot Khurshudyan presented the emotional control and three dimensional approach to negotiations at the next retreat of the Momentum Network in Tsaghkadzor, Armenia, December 2003.

Once again meeting in Zangezur, South Armenia in July 2004, the Momentum Network members discussed the preliminary findings of a survey conducted for the development of one of the scenarios on Armenia's development in future, a project called "Armenia 2020".

Earlier in April 2004, Momentum members held the first Network Conference in Yerevan, where the concept of the gap analysis have been presented to their attention. The Network members reviewed the future plans of the network.

Momentum members got together in Tsaghkadzor, Armenia, in February 2005, for another development retreat. ICHD presented them the latest theories on negotiation styles.

Over 50 Momentum members got together in Stepanakert, Nagorno Karabakh Republic (NKR) for discussing the needs of NKR in development assistance with the political leadership of the country in June 2008. The Momentum members met with President Bako Sahakyan and the Speaker of the NKR Parliament Ashot Ghulyan and discussed the opportunity of using the strong professional capacity of the Momentum members for the benefit of the NK people.

The Extension Training Program

ICHD considers that utilizing the capacity of the training, which evolved under the framework of the Momentum program should be also effectively used to boost the change of leadership culture beyond the Momentum Network as well.

Supported by the USAID and in cooperation with the Academy of Educational Development (AED), ICHD provided a series of leadership, negotiation and communication training courses to various groups.

About fifty representatives of Armenian political parties received ICHD's and CMG's joint training on negotiation and consensus-based leadership skills in 2002. The red line of the training was the coalition building as a tool for strengthening and joining different parties' efforts towards democracy building in Armenia.

Fifty-six educators - lecturers, teachers and tutors - passed ICHD's and CMG's joint training on civic education, a drive for developing democratic leadership in September-October 2002. The training contributed to the development of the education sector of Armenia through exposing new approaches to management and developing democratic leadership skills among educators

Fifty-six representatives of Armenian non-governmental organizations participated in the week-long joint training of ICHD, Arlex International and CMG on negotiation, leadership and communication in July 2003. AED assisted ICHD in targeting the NGOs and facilitating the selection process. The training enhanced the negotiation and leadership skills of the NGO representatives who then extended the leadership and negotiation skills in their activities making them more effective and dynamic.

Twenty-five members of the local community councils from various Armenian towns passed ICHD's and CMG's three-day intensive training in 2004. The training provided the local council members with skills for analyzing conflicts, promoting dialogue, building confidence, facilitating communication and developing trust necessary for improving basic services for citizens, encouraging greater tolerance, mutual respect and understanding and encouraging responsiveness, effectiveness and transparent management of local governments at large.

One hundred top- and mid-ranking officials of the social security system - Ministry of Social Security of Armenia and Regional Social Security Agencies have passed ICHD's and CMG's joint training in leadership in 2005. They acquired skills required to mitigate the adverse social effects of transition through efforts to strengthen and make sustainable the key aspects of the social safety net and health care systems, all the while providing urgently needed services to the most vulnerable groups in Armenia.

Connecting Futures – Living Together

Operating since 2004

ICHD and its partners from Georgia, Azerbaijan and Northern-Ireland have commenced preparations for establishing a regional youth forum for peace and stability: the Connecting Futures – Living Together network in April 2004. The network aims at promoting relations among youth in various countries. It is instrumental in transferring skills and knowledge on identity, communication, negotiation and other issues, and delivering skills necessary for mutual understanding and dialogue.

Supported by the British Council, ICHD and its partners conducted training for 43 young women and men from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Northern-Ireland in Likani, Georgia. The participants have developed projects for their future activities and initiatives. After the training they have announced about launching the network. Later, the ICHD and its partners have facilitated a training of trainers for 22 members of the network at Corrymeela Center, Northern-Ireland in October 2005.

The Armenian members of the network conducted three trainings for 60 young Armenian men and women locally under the overall guidance and support of the ICHD in 2005-2006. The network partners have delivered parallel training in the countries of their residence. The Connecting Futures – Living Together network engages over 300 young people from the South Caucasus and Northern Ireland, who are implementing various small-scale projects and joint activities currently.

Civil Society Leadership Network

Operating since 2008

In early 2008, ICHD with its partners in Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia initiated a forum for civil society leaders founding the Civil Society Leadership Network (CSLN). While there were several regional networks cultivated by various international organizations and mostly engaging young leaders at that time, the CSLN was the first local initiative of its kind that brought together the acting agents of change in the post soviet area.

The CSLN is a floor for discussions, learning from each other and for establishing a mutual co-operation resulting in joint projects among civil society leaders in the region. The CSLN engaged its members into the process of solution of political, social, cultural and other challenges in their societies and throughout the region.

The CSLN is an effective instrument empowering a generation of civil society leaders, advocates of and agents for democratic changes, who promote European standards of human rights in the region. The network enjoys the support of the Council of Europe in developing organizational and communication skills of the members of the network, as well as in educating them in European democratic values and processes. The CSLN also connects civil society leaders with their peers from the Black Sea region countries and international non-governmental organizations. The network also serves as a forum for dialogue and confidence building among different societies and communities from the frozen conflicts in the region.

Through the CSLN network currently engages over 120 civil society leaders from Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan.

The Black Sea Peacebuilding Network

Operating since 2009

The Black Sea Peacebuilding Network (BSPN) is a project that engages leading think-tanks and NGOs from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova to motor a Black Sea regional network on peacebuilding with strong linkages at the European level. The partners of the network are Crisis Management Initiative (CMI), ICHD, Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies, Helsinki Citizens Assembly - Azerbaijan National Committee. The network enables a solid basis for the development of national and regional civil society peacebuilding forums.

The objectives of the network are: (a) to continue to foster local ownership and regional collaboration between NGOs in the Black Sea area; (b) to create linkage to civil society from specific conflict-settings; (c) to forge common approaches of key regional actors and the EU to strengthen the role of civil society and unlock their peacemaking potential; (d) to strengthen peacebuilding capacities at local policy and

grass roots level; (e) to improve efficient communication and advocacy at the EU policy level by providing opportunities for networking.

In December 2009 Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) held a one day dialogue meeting in Tbilisi that convened the representatives of CMI's regional partner organizations as well as selected members of the Peacebuilding Expert Councils from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Republic of Moldova. After the "Black Sea Peacebuilding Network" Project launch in May 2009, this was again an opportunity for all the parties involved in this initiative to discuss the results achieved by each country partner and each new established civil society expert council over the 6 months of project implementation.

Peacebuilding Expert Council in Armenia

During the 2009 project implementation, ICHD experienced several challenges in establishing a large, inclusive council due to lack of time and insufficiently polished selection mechanisms of the expert members. For this reason, the Peacebuilding Expert Council in Armenia, currently composed of 10 members is still in the process of fine-tuning its internal procedures and organizational structure. In order to consider the local organizational culture and traditions, and to adapt the Peacebuilding Expert Council structure to the needs of the civil society in Armenia, the members of the council dedicated one of their meetings to developing a Memorandum of Understanding regarding the internal work of the network. The document was aimed at detailing the procedure of the membership to the network while setting relevant responsibilities. In that occasion the members of the Peacebuilding Expert Council have reiterated the adoption of the Chatham House rules, and specified additional disciplinary issues. Despite all these structural problems, the ICHD organized 4 meetings inviting a number of speakers and consulting several external experts. According to recent estimations, approximately 80 experts have participated in the discussions and contributed to the development of four policy briefs prepared by ICHD in Armenian and English. The meetings of the Peacebuilding Expert Council in Armenia were organized around the following topics: Nagorno-Karaback Issue and the role of Europe; Will the open border between Turkey and Armenia contribute to the enhanced role of BSEC? Black Sea NGO Forum: Imitation vs. Reality; NGO Law: What Are the Next Steps?

The results of the discussions and recommendations were advocated at a national level by ICHD who kept a permanent communication with key decision makers and representatives of the Armenian political leadership. The report is available at the CMI's website.

Euroforum East/West

Operating since 2006

The youth network “Euroforum East/West” operates since January, 2006. It brings together youth organizations from the three countries of the South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia) and three countries of the European Union (France, Poland, Spain). The main goal of the network is to promote active citizenship and commitment of young people in the civil societies of the abovementioned countries. To enhance youth activism, groups of young people from the six countries regularly meet in Europe for training and experience exchange. Since 2006 thirty Armenian youths have participated in various Euroforum events in Georgia, Spain and France and have networked with 170 young people from seven countries in Europe and Caucasus. In March, 2008 ICHD joined the network and became an active participant of Euroforum events, thus involving the network of Armenian young people in its regular activities. Currently, the project partners are engaged in creating a Euroforum Platform in Brussels. More information is available at the network website at www.euroforum-eastwest.org.

Supporting Business Networks in Armenia

2000-2002

In early 2000's ICHD focused on supporting the just emerging business networks in Armenia promoting the interests of businesses. The local societies of business owners advocating on behalf of the business community in Armenia have been in the basic stage of their evolution in the beginning of the century. The regulation of the chambers of commerce emerged in late 2001, while the founding meeting of Armenia's Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Armenian (CCI) has been convened a year later in April 2002. The CCI got privileges in organizing business exhibitions in Armenia, in particular International Exhibitions and Trade Fairs. Years should have passed before the CCI became the member of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), World Chambers Federation (ICC WCF), Eurochambres, Associations of the CCI of the Black Sea Zone and the Business Council of the Organizations of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation. Meanwhile, the major business association in Armenia in early 2000's has been the Union of Manufacturers and Businessmen of Armenia (UMBA, currently UMB(E)A) founded

back in 1997, a member to various credible international organizations of business associations and partner of many national business association in different countries. In this situation ICHD focused on promoting business relations among Armenian businesses and their potential partners in various countries.

In June 2000, ICHD convened the first Armenian - Korean Business Meetings and hosted representatives of a number of Korean businesses. Opportunities for investing in Armenian economy have been presented to the Korean businessmen and partnerships between the Armenian and Korean businesses have been established.

In February 2001, ICHD hosted the first Armenian - Spanish Business Forum. Investment opportunities and the overview on starting business in Armenia have been presented to the Spanish businessmen. Four months later, in June 2001, ICHD in cooperation with The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain, the Chamber of Commerce of Spain, the Mission of Armenia to Spain have organized the second Armenian - Spanish Business Forum in Madrid (launched on June 14, 2001) and in Valencia (launched on June 19, 2001). Over twenty enterprises represented the Armenian business community in the Forum. These companies promoted their products and services in the markets in Europe. ICHD has also presented the Armenian economy and business opportunities, as well as the regulatory and institutional frameworks on doing business in Armenia to the Spanish business community.

In collaboration with UMBA and supported by the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Armenia to Spain and Portugal H.E. Edward Khojayan, ICHD organized an Armenian - Portuguese Business Forum in Lisbon and Porto, Portugal in June 2002. Through the forum ICHD and UMBA have showcased Armenian businesses to Portuguese businessmen. The leading Armenian businesses participated in the Forum and introduced their products and services. Various B2B partnership agreements have been settled in the forum.

Combating Gender-Based Violence in Armenia

2008 - ongoing

The priorities of preventing gender based violence (GBV) and promoting equal opportunities yet to be mainstreamed and incorporated into the policies of the Republic of Armenia. Therefore, it is crucial to shape adequate demand both among the general public and capacities of the decision makers and public service providers on this matter.

Since September 2008 ICHD leads a Consortium of civil society organizations striving to develop an environment conducive for the elimination of gender-based violence in Armenia and to implement the country's commitments in this area. The ICHD's partners in Consortium have been Association of Women with University Education (AWUE), Tatev-95 Psychological Support and Counseling Center (Tatev-95), and Scientific Association of Medical Students of Armenia (SAMSA). The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Armenia funded the initiative of the Consortium partners on combating gender-based violence in Armenia since 2008. The country office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR) in Armenia have supported Consortium in engaging the refugees and refugee victims of GBV.

Within the framework of this project the Consortium partners have achieved several important results. Firstly, the partners have shaped substantial capacity of delivering training on gender and GBV issues in Armenia through creating and supporting a pool of 78 skilled trainers, as well as developing innovative tools for effective training on gender and GBV. The trainers represent public institutions, local self-governance bodies and NGOs active in this area, as well as media and educational institutions. Among them there are professional educators, teachers, local leaders, journalists and students. The ICHD's guidebook for trainers on comprehensive training in gender and GBV issues provided practical basis to trainers to structure a hands-on training program for even most difficult audiences including the police, health professionals, journalists, etc.

Further, the ICHD and its partners have raised awareness of over 2,000 young people countrywide, women and men, refugees, high school and university students, policy makers, educators, local leaders and service providers, on the issues gender equality and means of preventing and eliminating GBV. Thirdly, the Consortium partners have improved knowledge and skills on gender and development,

local and international instruments for fight against GBV, promoting gender equality, communication, negotiation and accountability, of about 500 policy makers, representatives of national and local authorities responsible for the issues of gender and development and combating GBV, as well as police officers, migration service officials, public health professionals and medical doctors, NGOs, etc. The Consortium partners have increased the sensitivity of 15 journalists and media representatives on issues of GBV with the purpose of further promoting national awareness of the issue and ways to end GBV. Fourthly, the ICHD and its partners have improved knowledge of 170 women and adolescents - potential and real victims of GBV, on violence and its impact on the mental health, as well as developed their skills for dealing with violence. Finally, the Consortium partners have provided treatment to 55 victims of GBV and improved their mental health conditions.

The mutually complimenting capacities of the consortium partners were the primary key to success in this action. Thus, the ICHD, provided the overall coordination of the effort, engaged the government institutions and policy makers, led the preparation of the modules and provided its unique expertise in the area policy making. ICHD's experience in the area of migration management and its well established working relations with the State Migration Service of the Ministry of Territorial Administration of RA have been instrumental in organizing training under the integrated extension component targeting stakeholders active on refugee issues. The AWUE's decade long experience in the area of gender and capacity in delivering gender training was another asset to the Consortium. The capacity of the "Tatev-95" in providing treatment to the victims of GBV has ensured that the needs of the potential and actual victims of GBV have been addressed. Though it was not an easy task to mobilize a great variety of national and local institutions in GBV training, the consistency and working relations with the leaders in the country helped ICHD to overcome many challenges. Another challenge that consortium partners have addressed was the amending, localizing and adaptation of the genuine training guidebook (with variety of modules) prepared by the Consortium partners in 2008 to the needs of various target groups including refugees, the police, journalists, public health professionals, etc. Developing cases on gender and GBV impact on various policies was instrumental in this process.

ICHD has forged a network of professionals in the area of Gender based violence including policy-makers, civil servants, experts and civil society at large. Technical expertise of organizations active in this area in Armenia has been mobilized through the Project. A large number of local NGOs, education and healthcare institutions, law enforcement bodies, media outlets countrywide have been direct beneficiaries of the Project. At the same time ICHD and Consortium partners enjoyed the support of many local organizations in pushing the project forward: "Astghik" Association of families with disabled chil-

dren, Armenian Association for family and health, Centre for youth activities in Artashat, The School of Leadership, Yerevan State University, Yerevan State University of Economy, State Agriculture Academy, Yerevan State Engineering University and their regional branches, Yerevan State Medical University, Haybusak Institute, Syunik Institute, Goris State University, Vanadzor State Institute of Pedagogy, Gyumri State Institute of Pedagogy Yervan Northern University, Yerevan State University of Languages, Yeghegnadzor state college, Vayk college, Goris Club of Teachers, Goris Centre of English Language, a number of high schools in Kapan, Vayk, Vanadzor, Gyumri, and Yerevan, Armenian Electrical Nets company, design enterprises, municipalities of Goris, Vayk and Kapan, Armenian Apostolic Church and many other organizations. The partnership with local NGOs active on refugee issues has been very much helpful in selecting and mobilizing refugees to participate in the training courses. The offices of the regional governors (marzpetarans in three regions) have been very much cooperative and helpful in targeting and mobilizing the leadership of local communities and LSGs with refugee population in Kotayk and Ararat, Armavir regions. The Yerevan Municipality, particularly, its Department of Public Health has been very much cooperative and helpful in mobilizing the public health practitioners in Yerevan. The Police of the Republic of Armenia, has provided assistance in mobilizing the participation of the police officers and provided guidance in targeting the specific needs of this audience. Experts from the Office of the Prosecutor General of the RA and the Ministry of Health of the RA have been engaged to deliver training of the police officers and health professionals in the specific sessions covering practical aspects of preventing and combating GBV, identifying and working with the victims of violence. The ICHD project has linked with gender and GBV related networks and drawn on the technical expertise of other international organizations including UNFPA, UNDP and UNIFEM during project implementation.

Empowering Women in Economy and Politics

2001-ongoing

Gender dimension of development is one of the key areas of ICHD's work. ICHD strives to promote gender equality and empowerment of women through both mainstreaming gender dimension into its programs and initiating and implementing gender specific projects, as well as incorporating the principle of equality of men and women into its human resources and other corporate policies and practices.

Equality and non-discrimination are among ICHD's core values. Our staff is gender-balanced and we strive to further promote women to managing positions within our organization. ICHD follows the principle of equal pay for equal work principle throughout entire development portfolio of projects. ICHD Methodologies and instructions of using its instruments include specific non-discriminatory clues unless gender specific target groups or gender specific needs are addressed. ICHD have also implemented several projects promoting gender equality, empowering women in economy and politics, preventing gender based violence in Armenia.

Enhancing Skills of Women Leaders in Conflict Resolution and Peace Building

One of the key issues in Armenia and in the entire region, which requires consistent efforts of the government, civil society and development partners, remains the involvement of women in conflict resolution and peace process. Women can play a significant role of change agents in the society in conflict transformation, confidence building and reconciliation. However, women were somewhat alienated from these processes, particularly in case of Nagorno Karabakh conflict. While the political leaders - almost exclusively men - are engaged in the negotiation, various civil society initiatives in mid- and late-90s of 20th century also has not engaged women in Track Two Diplomacy (T2D) initiatives adequately. Moreover, many interventions of development partners targeting capacities of civil society to participate in T2D mostly bypassed women.

Supported by the UNIFEM's regional conflict resolution and peace building project in South Caucasus, ICHD considered that this capacity gap shall be addressed first, prior to more extensive initiatives for bringing women to the peace table and reconciliation. ICHD trained sixteen women leaders from public and non-governmental institutions, media, academia, etc. in conflict management in November 2001. Their skills in effective communication, negotiation, mediating reconciliation and peace building processes have been enhanced. Later, UNIFEM engaged the participants of the training in an exercise of developing academic curricula for university students and a training module for "Women in Conflict Resolution and Peace Building".

Enhancing Skills of Business Women

ICHD considers that economic aspect of gender equality is equally important as the political dimension. With this understanding, ICHD strives to empower women in economy through enhancing their

skills in business management and interpersonal leadership, improving their access to financial and other resources, engaging women in decision making on economic affairs.

Leadership issues are one of the main constraints for the most of Armenian women engaged in agribusiness. Supported by the USAID/Armenia SME Market Development Project (ASME), ICHD enhanced skills of 38 women in effective management skills and intrapersonal leadership development in January 2002. These skills proved to be useful in involving and strengthening agribusiness firms ran by women.

Supported by the Back Development Alternatives Inc. and Agribusiness Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Market Development Program (DAI ASME), ICHD facilitated sessions on effective management skills and intrapersonal leadership for 28 businesswomen running small and medium business in Armenia in Tsaghkadzor, in February 2003. The sessions have been a part of the second annual Women in Development (WID) workshop on development of Business Skills for Armenian SME Businesswomen. The workshop brought together wide range of businesses, including agribusiness, IT and textile sectors.

Promoting International Instruments for Women's Rights

ICHD considers that international instruments for promoting and protecting women's rights are critical for promoting gender equality and empowerment of women effectively in the entire region. In this context, we believe that prior to large interventions aimed at gender equality and empowering women, the public awareness of the international instruments, as well as the capacities of the government and other duty bearers in implementing these instruments shall be improved first.

Within the international toolbox for promoting women's rights and gender equality, ICHD considers that the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (the CEDAW Convention) is the most significant human rights treaty for women and most comprehensive critical tool for persuading the governments in Armenia and in the region. As the CEDAW Convention is being continually updated to include new insights and new issues that are brought to the CEDAW Committee's attention, through the formulation of General Recommendations by the CEDAW committee, we also consider that emerging challenges in this area in Armenia and in the region can be well incorporated and reflected in the CEDAW further. We also consider that the Beijing Declaration and

Platform for Action adopted on the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 is inter alia a sound instrument for promoting the role of civil society in promoting gender equality globally.

Millions of men and women live in the South Caucasus, a region torn by various conflicts. While the role of women in effective conflict resolution and reconciliation processes are indubitable, neither high level political negotiations nor Track Two Diplomacy initiatives engage women to the extent desirable. The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, adopted in 2000, is the first resolution ever passed by the Security Council that specifically addresses the impact of war on women, and women's contributions to conflict resolution and sustainable peace. ICHD believes that this instrument shall be widely promoted and used to persuade the political leaderships on conflicting sides and strengthening capacities of women leaders to be involved effectively.

Supported by the UNIFEM regional project in South Caucasus, ICHD has developed an advanced-level training module on the CEDAW Convention and UNSCR 1325 in December 2005. The training module aimed at raising awareness and strengthening the capacities of gender equality advocates in government and civil society in the Southern Caucasus to advocate for and support the implementation of the CEDAW Convention and UNSCR 1325. The training module specifically provides participants with better understanding of the connection between the core principles beyond the CEDAW and UNSCR 1325, as well as mechanism for their practical implementation in the region. The training module have been intensively used by the UNIFEM regional project to enhance the skills of woman leaders of the Regional Coalition "Women for Peace" in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, as well as the partners in the three national governments and local governance institutions.

Increasing the Stock of Knowledge

2001-ongoing

ICHD policy research team is carefully choosing the most suitable and effective approach to each and every problem. Thus, in the research on the tobacco taxation and illicit tobacco trade issues in Armenia, ICHD experts have mostly focused on individual problems and their solutions with the primary aim to identify the most effective and efficient solution in technical and economic terms for tax raise policy.

Further, while estimating the remittance flows and channels of remittance transfers to Armenia, ICHD analysts focused on political processes and stakeholders involved also addressing the political dimension of the problem. Through this research ICHD team have determined the processes and channels of remittance transfers, analyzed the effects of remittances on poverty in Armenia, explained the role and influence of stakeholders within the policy process and provided policy recommendations to enhance positive effects of remittances on poverty in Armenia.

In assessing the impact of the World Bank and Armenian Government funded Education Quality and Relevance Project ICHD researchers have approached the entire system and context of education in Armenia. The political, economic and socio-cultural contextual factors, as well as sub systems including links of secondary education system with pre-school and high school systems, system of assessing pupils, school graduation and university entrance examinations system, teachers training system, integration of ICT into the teaching and learning process have been considered.

Meanwhile, in each and every policy study and policy research ICHD carried out our experts tried to determine which of various alternative policies will most achieve the area and issue specific goals in light of the relations between the policies and the goals – tried to explain policies and their development, formulated policies and recommendations.

Survey on Health Expenditures in Households and Health Sector Enterprises

Financed by the World Bank, through the Health Project Implementation Unit, this project aimed at a household and health sector enterprise representative survey on health expenditures. ICHD's survey covered 1,600 households and 500 companies in Yerevan and the regions of Armenia in fall 2006. The results of the survey were presented to the group of experts and professionals in the Ministry of Health of the RA.

Employment Policies in South Caucasus Countries: Policy Development Compliant with the EU Employment Strategy

Through this project, supported by the Eurasia South Caucasus Cooperation Project in 2005-2006, ICHD and its partners - Organizational & Technical Development Society (Azerbaijan) and (The Strategic Research Institute) have aligned the national policy papers on social policy and employment of the South Caucasus countries with the European policy documents, conventions and recommendations of

the Council of Europe and European Union. The partners have also elaborated a three-years draft plan for policy development in compliance with relevant European standards and published the consolidated results of the study in a three-lingual book “Employment Policy Directions in South Caucasus Countries”. In this endeavor, ICHD experts have reviewed fifteen documents of the Council of Europe and the EU and compared against eight documents adopted by the Government of Armenia, or by the National Assembly of RA in the area of social policy and employment. ICHD also developed a special website for this project at www.employment.ichd.org to provide a broader access of the stakeholders to the policy product.

Regional Technical Assistance on Remittances and Poverty in Central Asia and South Caucasus

In consortium with the Economic Development Research Center (EDRC), ICHD have implemented this project in Armenia, with the financial support of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in 2006-2008. ICHD experts have estimated the remittance flows in Armenia by origin countries, transfer channels, and recipient household groups and revealed detailed information on key channels of remittance transfers to Armenia. ICHD conducted an in-depth analysis of the effects of remittances on poverty in Armenia and provided policy recommendations to enhance positive effects of remittances on poverty in Armenia. The country report on the financial sector and remittances in Armenia and another report on remittances and poverty in Armenia are available at ICHD.

Survey on the Drug Use among the General Population in Armenia

In close co-operation with the RA National Statistical Service and the National Institute of Public Health of the RA Ministry of Health, ICHD, supported by the Southern Caucasus Anti-Drug Programme (SCAD), an umbrella project co-sponsored by the European Union and UNDP, conducted a unique nation-wide household survey and relevant research on drug, alcohol and smoking prevalence among general population of Armenia in 2005. The survey, which covered about 4000 people in all regions of Armenia, was designed to reveal the present situation and people’s attitude regarding the use of alcohol, illicit drugs and pharmaceuticals and smoking, as well as their perception of drug users, which was the first-in-the-kind undertaking for Armenia. The results and findings of the survey served as a ground for further research and relevant initiatives for health professionals and decision-makers.

Towards New Leadership: Facilitating the Peaceful Conciliation of Groups' Interests

In 2004, supported by the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EU), ICHD developed an effective and sustainable scheme dedicated to the improvement of cooperative decision making, conflict management, joint problem solving and leadership practices. The initiative aimed at facilitated a peaceful conciliation of different group interests within the Armenian society. ICHD translated into Armenian and published two best-sellers in conflict studies: "Getting to Yes" by Roger Fisher and "Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization" by Johan Galtung. We conducted training workshops to transfer conflict transformation skills and knowledge to a number of present and future decision makers in Armenia.

Lost potential in the South Caucasus: Aspects of Interstate Trade

Supported by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and in collaboration with partners in South Caucasus - AREAT Center (Azerbaijan) and the Strategic Research Institute/SRI (Georgia), ICHD have carried out a research consolidating the trends and obstacles of economic development in the South Caucasus in 1992-2002. The partners have developed a paper summarizing the three country specific studies within the framework of the project "Lost Potential in the South Caucasus: Aspects of Interstate Trade" 2002-2003. The publication has identified the main "product groups" for potential trade and helped different businesses to recognize their real losses from the lack of the direct trade between the two of the mentioned countries.

Improving Poverty Benefit Targeting - Labor Market Aspects

Supported by the World Bank in 2001-2002, ICHD's study summarized the general trends in the formation and development of the labor market in Armenia comparing them against the processes in selected NIS and Eastern European countries in transition, e.g. Russia, Estonia and the Czech Republic. This comparison of economic indicators was performed in an attempt to identify the general trends and directions in the Armenian labor market and to elaborate policies for effective regulation including the alleviation of the problems of hidden employment and unemployment including registered unemployment.

Enhancement of Application Possibilities for the System of National Accounts

Supported by the World Bank and in close collaboration with the National Statistical Service of RA, ICHD in 2001, have elaborated a guidebook providing opportunity to the users of various statistical data to get acquainted with the methodology, usage and widespread possibilities of the national accounts system. The guidebook targets a wide range of users. ICHD have also organized a series of seminars on national accounts system.

Evaluation of the South Caucasus European Commission/ Council of Europe Joint Programme

In 2005, ICHD in collaboration with ITAD Ltd (UK) and independent human rights and evaluation specialists in Azerbaijan and Georgia have implemented an independent evaluation study of CoE/EC Joint Programme on human rights and democracy in the South Caucasus. Specifically, ICHD have evaluated the performance of CoE/EC projects in Armenia and provided appropriate recommendations on improving the implementation of the future projects in this area. The evaluation report is available at official site of the joint program at www.jp.coe.int.

Policy Recommendations for Power Systems Cooperation of the South Caucasus Countries

The tremendous energy potential contained in the South Caucasus region and in its direct surroundings attracts the strongest economic and political interest of the world. All the leading global and regional players are trying to claim a stake for themselves in the region and project their political and strategic influence in the region, which is often difficult to reconcile with the national interests of the South Caucasus states. This stimulates and perpetuates the old local tensions and ambitions, laying the ground for political confrontations, which hamper not only the regional energy opportunities, but more broadly, create fundamental obstacles for economic growth and social development in the region. Supported by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung ICHD have analyzed the existing political conditions and economic opportunities for cooperation among regional power systems, and worked out policy recommendations on the main strategic directions for such cooperation in 2002-2003.

Directions of Effective Integration of the Energy Systems of the South Caucasus Countries

Supported by the Eurasia Foundation, ICHD and its partners Organizational & Technical Development Society (Azerbaijan) and the Strategic Research Institute (Georgia) once again joined to implement a policy study energy sector in 2003-2004. Through this project the partners have elaborated a set of policy recommendations regarding the power sector of the respective countries. The implementation of these recommendations will entail regional integration in this sector, and the latest in its turn will significantly affect the economies in South Caucasus. ICHD consolidated the outcomes of the study in two books.

Support for a Tobacco-Free Armenia

Supported by the Open Society Institute, ICHD's Primary Health Care Unit enhanced the capacities capacity of Armenian policy makers and health professionals on using modern information technologies for raising public awareness and catalyzing a policy change necessary for the well-analyzed economic argumentation for the creation of a tobacco-free environment in Armenia in 2004 – 2007. ICHD experts have carried out a series of economic research and issued a number of research and policy papers targeting the tobacco taxation, evaluation of different scenarios for the tax raise, as well as illicit tobacco trade issues in Armenia. ICHD provided justification of tax raise policies and provided specific recommendations currently available on the Armenian Anti-tobacco Portal at nosmoking.ichd.org.

Regional Economic Working Group

Supported by the Visit the American University Center for Global Peace Website, ICHD have contributed in the work of the “Regional Economic Working Group” in 2003. The researchers from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey engaged in a collaborative task of compiling up-to-date and complete information on the economic possibilities of the South Caucasus region, which would serve as a reliable reference for the potential investors. Numerous research papers have been elaborated through number of panel discussions available at <http://www1.american.edu/cgp/track2/rewg.htm>.

Armenia National Capacity Self-Assessment for Global Environmental Management

With the support of UNDP/GEF (Global Environment Facility) Armenian government has initiated and implemented a part of the Armenia National Capacity Self Assessment for Global Environment Management Project - "Institutional Management Strengthening Objectives in Communities" to identify the priority needs of Armenia for global environmental management and develop a plan of action for implementing the commitments of the country in the framework of three UN environmental conventions: Biodiversity, Climate Change and Combating Desertification. ICHD's research in 2003 – 2004, focused on diverse issues both in terms of the implementation of the conventions and the assessment of national capacity needs, an effort requiring a coordinated approach. ICHD team identified the national capacity needs for strengthening the institutional management both on regional and local community levels addressing the issues in a synergistic manner.

Environment Examination for the Creation of a Business Register

ICHD created a new business register of enterprises in Armenia in 2002. A nation-wide survey was carried out covering over 80% of enterprises in Armenia. The database is currently used by the National Statistical Service and provides wider and more precise basis for statistical analysis and forecast of this key institution.

Licensing Requirements to Operate a Business in Armenia

The lack of comprehensive information is a real obstacle for launching a new business activity requiring licensing. Supported by the EU TACIS, ICHD experts streamlined and clarified the procedures on acquiring licenses in 2000-2001. The policy research provides the potential applicants with clear understanding of whether licenses are required for the operation of their business and how to acquire them. The results of the study are available at www.licensing.ichd.org.

Women's Role and Status in Armenian Society

It is clear that in order to establish a democratic state based on fair legal and social grounds, it is imperative to engage women in the political, economic, social and religious spheres of Armenia, and in effect, obliterate discrimination and inequality. According to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, men and women share equal rights and liberties. Unfortunately, in the Armenian society these rights

and liberties are somehow overlooked. Women play a vital role in the Armenian society, and there is a need to match the declared legal and existing socio-legal situation.

Supported by the German Embassy in Armenia in 2000, ICHD conducted analysis of women's role and status in Gyumri, the center of Shirak region in North-West Armenia which suffered a devastating earthquake in 1988, as well as the consequences of the earthquake on the gender issues by a comprehensive survey.

Privatization of State - Owned Tobacco Enterprises in Armenia

ICHD experts analyzed the impact of the privatization on the tobacco industry in 2001. The research paper tried to answer such questions, as: Comparing the periods before and after divestiture, which significant economic variables changed? Did the privatization process increase consumption? Did quality and distribution improve? What happened to product prices? ICHD experts have considered economic factors, and their impact on different interest groups: the state, the producers and the public. This was the first attempt to create a case study on the privatization of Armenian tobacco industry.

Consolidating the Experience of Armenian-Turkish Track Two Diplomacy

Having accumulated rich experience in the sphere of Track Two Diplomacy (Unofficial or Public Diplomacy) projects, ICHD supported by Eurasia Foundation, in 2006, initiated evaluation of past experiences in T2D projects implemented in Armenia since 2001. These were projects devoted to Armenian-Turkish reconciliation and implemented with the sponsorship of various international organizations, including US agencies. The evaluation reveals that the projects have mainly relied on theories, while a serious lack in practical guidelines has been registered. Therefore, some of these projects recorded successes, whereas some others had a neutral impact. There was also the third group which ended with failure. The evaluation identified the strengths and weaknesses of these T2D projects and came up with a set of recommendations for future implementers. The project outcomes have been consolidated in a manual titled "Best Practices" which highlights the activities that can be used in the future and the mistakes that need to be avoided. An independent feasibility study for the continuation of the MANEC project was carried out. This study identified the existing opportunities for utilizing the potential of MANEC B2B/BRC project, ensuring its effective performance and sustainability.

Education Quality and Relevance Project

By the request and support of the Government of Armenia and the World Bank in 2009, ICHD experts have assessed the impact of the World Bank and Armenian Government funded Education Quality and Relevance Project. The political, economic and socio-cultural contextual factors, as well as sub systems including links of secondary education system with pre-school and high school systems, system of assessing pupils, school graduation and university entrance examinations system, teachers training system, integration of ICT into the teaching and learning process have been considered.

Assessment of Cooperation Potential in Syunik Region of Armenia

By the request and support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), ICHD provided expertise in the assessment of cooperation potential in Syunik region of Armenia in 2009. The assessment team collected, compiled and analyzed relevant information, at local, district, regional and national level, as well as formulated its findings and recommendations as to form the base for a tender process for the new SDC project. The assessment focused on the income basis for the rural population in Syunik (in particular in the agricultural sector; but also in narrowly associated non agricultural rural activities) and assessed ways and means to improve and diversify it. The team concentrated on the strengths and weaknesses of the current income basis and analyzed all its constraints and potentials. “Value chains” are important key words here, as we deal with somehow remote regions, without easy access to market information and market infrastructure. While assessing the region’s potential for the new projects the team identified, special attention was dedicated to the three following points of approach: how to create a conducive business environment for farmers; how to do so in a (natural disasters) risk conscious manner; and, how to improve the local governance, like e.g. local governments’ support for a conducive business environment.

Anti-Corruption Participatory Monitoring

In 2005 UNDP Armenia developed an Anti-Corruption Participatory Monitoring Methodology (APMM) in health and education sectors in response to the anti-corruption strategy worked out by the Armenian Government. This document recognizes the role of participation of the civil society in anti-corruption initiatives and, in particular, in monitoring the implementation of this strategy. UNDP established a Task Force on methodology, established civil society anti-corruption community groups in eight re-

gions of the country, established sectorial anti-corruption consultative groups and raised the public awareness regarding the Government's anti-corruption strategy and civic participation issues.

ICHD was engaged in this initiative since the very beginning of the process, first through contributing expertise to the Task Force on Methodology and later coordinating the implementation of the project in Yerevan. It worked with 15 community members who volunteered in the project and conducted a comprehensive survey in 3 medical institutions and 6 secondary schools in Yerevan.

Tobacco Control Program

2001-ongoing

The tobacco control is another key focus of the Center and a cornerstone of ICHD's activities since 2001. Smoking rate is traditionally very high in Armenia. About one third of Armenian adults are regular smokers. Over half of Armenian men and 3-4% of women are daily smokers. Yet, female smoking is believed to be underreported. About 3,000 deaths of smokers at the age of 35-69 years in Armenia are due to diseases caused by smoking: about 85% of patients with the lung cancer were men. The smoking prevalence is rather high among the adolescents: over one third of boys smoke and over 80% of young population is exposed to secondhand smoke regularly.

The accession of Armenia to the Framework Convention for Tobacco Control (FCTC) in 2004, triggered elaboration and adoption of stricter legislation and policies on tobacco control. However, the tobacco industry lobbying is very strong in Armenia. Both local producers and importers of tobacco products are directly represented in the National Assembly of Armenia and thus, have critical influence on the policies on tobacco control in the country. Indicatively, the local tobacco industry has successfully shelled the significant tax increase equally for all types of locally produced and imported tobacco products in 2008. The tobacco smuggling volumes are estimated to constitute from 15.6% to 18.5% of the total consumption of tobacco products. In this situation the role of civil society becomes critical in ensuring the continuous and effective advocacy for enhanced tobacco control in Armenia.

ICHD is a leading organization with its 12 projects in this area. The economic impact of stronger tobacco control policies were in particular focus of the Center. The ICHD was the key player in lobbying

for Armenia's accession to the FCTC and in recent increase of tobacco taxes. Two key ICHD associates represented the EURO region respectively in FCTC protocols on Illicit Tobacco Trade and in Tobacco Farming. ICHD has produced a number of publications and conducted the first ever comprehensive nationwide smoking prevalence survey in Armenia. The Center is a member to Framework Convention Alliance (FCA) and Coalition for Tobacco Free Armenia (CTFA). The ICHD operates a unique Tobacco Control web portal at <http://nosmoking.ichd.org>.

ICHD has conducted the evaluation of the impact of tobacco control policies on employment in 2001. It is widely recognized that a reduction in tobacco use can lead to a smaller tobacco industry, which in turn can affect, in both desirable and undesirable ways, the profile of job opportunities in the country. This is why ICHD, as a part of the public health community, initiated the assessment of the employment dimension of tobacco control measures as an argument in its evidence-based advocacy to reduce tobacco use. ICHD experts have estimated the possible impact of tobacco control on employment. The evaluation report has been provided to the policy makers. It became an evidence based instrument both in the hands of advocates for stricter control and for experts and policy makers engaged in formulating more effective policies. Juxtaposed with the arguments of the tobacco industry, the evaluation proved the overall negative impact on the economically active population and employment profile in Armenia and justified the need for a stricter tobacco control.

ICHD has continually shared its experience with other civil society organizations working for enhanced tobacco control in the countries around the world, in Eastern and Central Europe region, and in post Soviet in particular. Starting March 2002, ICHD experts participate in various seminars and conferences that aim at building capacity of such organizations and sharing experiences in anti-tobacco work.

ICHD has also continually focused on growing its own institutional capacities in this area. Supported by the American Cancer Society, ICHD has substantially enhanced its Health Unit capacity providing it with equipment and materials and turning it into a fully-fledged operational unit prepared to face the challenges of advocacy and policy advice on tobacco control in Armenia in 2003. The ICHD's Health Unit has, firstly, focused on promoting a negative attitude among young women and men towards smoking and raising their awareness of opportunities for tobacco-free life by delivering anti-tobacco messages to the public. For this purpose Unit engaged in anti-smoking campaign through disseminating print materials among young people at educational and public institutions, clinics and restaurants.

Recognizing that contesting the strong tobacco industry lobbying in Armenia is possible only through effective coalitions, ICHD has launched an initiative of promoting the collaboration among various civil society institutions and forging a coalition to shape public demand for stronger tobacco control policies in Armenia in late 2003. In the seminar in September 2003, ICHD put-up strategic partnerships, particularly with the American University of Armenia, the Yerevan State Medical University, a number of local organizations, as well as the Alcohol and Drug Information Center of Kiev.

In early 2004, ICHD extended its program agenda directly engaging the decision makers, increasing their awareness of the issue and strengthening the capacities of the policy makers and preparing grounds for the ratification of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control 2003 (FCTC) by the Armenian parliament. Supported by the World Health Organization (WHO), ICHD has essentially boosted the advocacy for the ratification of the FCTC. The economic research conducted by the ICHD's Health Unit became an effective tool in this process providing the rationale and design of the advocacy activities by the anti-tobacco community in Armenia.

Promoting Prevention and Control of Cancer

2005-2006

Since mid 2005 ICHD focused on one of the biggest killers in Armenia - Cancer. The non-communicable diseases (NCDs) increasingly create critical health and economic challenges for Armenian society and state. The cancer is one of the three biggest killers in Armenia causing about 20% of deaths. The profile and trends of cancer are even more challenging: the mortality rate for cancer increased by over 70%, while the morbidity rate increased by 19% only in the past decade. Breast cancer and cervical cancers are among the biggest killers of women in Armenia. The dynamics of cancer is particularly troublesome among adolescents and children: the morbidity for cancers among Armenians under 14 years was 115.8 per 100,000 population of this age group.

This situation is most probably caused by the late diagnosis of the disease. The profile of the cancer and risk factors in Armenia implicitly indicates the lack of national capacities to prevent and control the cancers, as well as the lack of awareness among general public about one of the biggest killers and

its risk factors. The social, economic and political transition in the past decades, the natural disasters and still unresolved armed conflicts in the region resulted in inadequate policy response to cancer, and lifestyle-related risks in Armenia. The cancer has not been adequately recognized as a major treat for the state and society. Subsequently, the prevention and control of the cancer have not been recognized as a national priority. The public health policies and primary healthcare system in Armenia do not address early diagnosis of the cancer properly.

The awareness and behavior among general public, as well as the overall environment are not favorable for reduction of the risk factors for cancer in the country. There is an obvious need to raise public awareness on cancer and lifestyle-related risk, as well as to promote supportive environment enabling effective prevention and control of cancer in Armenia.

ICHHD focused on tackling the prevention of the cancer first. The Center targeted the dimension of public awareness as the key instrument to leverage the prevention of the cancer. Supported by the American Cancer Society in 2005-2006, ICHD has engaged the key agents of change - health professionals, specifically family doctors in raising public awareness on cancer and disseminating knowledge on cancer early prevention, screening and diagnosis, as well as on the risk factors. The family doctors work directly with the population and have the best opportunities for increasing the awareness among women and men on preventing cancer and reducing its risks.

In mid 2005, ICHD has prepared and published booklets and information leaflets on cancer prevention focusing on the risk factors and the means to reduce them: tobacco use and quitting, alcohol abuse, unhealthy diets and their consequences. Further, ICHD has developed modules for training family doctors and to transfer to them skills for raising awareness of citizens on preventing the cancer and tackling its risks. ICHD have trained 190 family doctors countrywide in mid 2006 (about 40% of all family doctors in Armenia in 2006).

In partnership with the UNFPA Country Office in Armenia, ICHD addressed the cancers that directly affect the reproductive health of men and women in Armenia. ICHD have prepared and published four booklets to expose the three types of cancer – prostate, breast and cervical cancers, their risk factors as well as to urge women and men to take preventive measures including regular screening in late 2006. Over 1000 booklets have been distributed to Armenian population in partnership with public health professionals and the network of family doctors engaged by ICHD earlier as intermediaries for raising public awareness. This strategic partnership has been important throughout the entire endeavor.

Promoting Alternative Thinking through Culture and Art

2000-2002

In the conflict-torn post soviet societies undergoing economic, political and social early transformations, both agrarian and political populism prevail and remain the major challenge for the development of civil society, political institutions and society's ability to face real challenges openly. The mainstream thinking - which pits a righteous and ordinary people against a set of elites and dangerous 'others' who are together depicted as depriving (or attempting to deprive) the people of their fundamental rights, values, prosperity, identity and voice - remains the major drive of the formulation of the official policies and platforms of both ruling and opposition political elites.

ICHHD has considered that to challenge this reality and to create an environment enabling out-of-box thinking in society, unveil the official programs and expose the real interests beyond formal politics, alternative thinking should be cultivated through creating a dissonance between the core values of the society and the perception of the reality. ICHD focused on culture and art as leverage for creating such a controversy, disagreement about the interpretation and significance of the perceptions and stereotypes. The uniquely provocative style of art run counter to the stereotype perception of traditional values and juxtaposes such perception against core values through generating alternative thinking.

One of the World's Champions of alternative thinking throughout the ages is Sir William Shakespeare, whose plays and heritage are eternal resource of rethinking, reviewing and revising the attitudes against one's core values. ICHD has commenced its "Rethinking attitudes, unveiling values through culture and art" program with recalling the Shakespearian heritage quite appealing and favored in Armenian society. Supported by the British Embassy in Armenia, in close cooperation with the Armenian Shakespearean Society, Yerevan State University, and the Institute of Arts ANA, the ICHD have organized a joint event and a concert within the framework of Shakespearean Days in memoriam Ruben Zaryan, the renowned Shakespearean scholar and to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the Armenian Shakespearean Center and Library Foundation in Aram Khachatryan Concert Hall in Fall 2000.

The Gyumri Earthquake of 1988 was the most devastating disaster in the history of the Republic of Armenia, which caused even more damage to the minds and souls of the people, than it caused to their bodies and assets. The disaster-torn society is hardly following the track of civil society; its core values

sometimes retreat in front of the shocking reality living the floor to core instincts. In addition to the stress caused by the transformations that a society in transition undergoes, the Armenian people have been also subject to the shocks brought by the earthquake and the armed conflict over the Nagorno Karabakh

The ICHD considered recovering the value canvas in the society affected by the disaster more important than the recovery of the physical and social infrastructure. Even more than a decade after the earthquake the wounds of its shock still harm the people's thinking. In 2000 ICHD has focused on challenging the thinking of people in Gyumri by exposing the rebirth of values in Gyumri through a photo exhibition. In cooperation with Gyumri Development Foundation, the Gyumri Center of Contemporary Arts, and the "Stil" Museum of Pictorial Art, ICHD organized an arts exhibition of the works by Hayk Adamyan, renowned Armenian photographer, Hollywood, CA.

ICHD considered that a dynamic glance at the problems of the society survived the devastating disaster would encourage people to rethink their social, poverty and psychological issues through the prism of their core values. Following this objective ICHD organized the promotion of the film "Merry Bus" produced by Armenfilm (directed by Albert Mkrtchyan, starring - Anahit Harutyunyan, Sos Sargsyan, and Zhora Baghdasaryan) and its presentation at the Berlin Film Festival in 2001.

ICHD has once again challenged the thinking in post-disaster society by channeling it through the postmodern and contemporary art. For this purpose, ICHD used the format of Gyumri International Biennials. The first Biennial "Investigation, Time & Territory" has been organized by the Center of Contemporary Art of Gyumri, Gyumri City Hall back in 1998, engaging over 100 avant-garde artists from eight countries in the region and Europe. The second Biennial in 2000, which exposed the art of about 130 artists from 16 countries to the people of Gyumri, has been organized under the presidency of the Chairman of ICHD Board of Trustees, Dr. Armen Darbinyan. The Gyumri Third International Biennial has been organized in 2002, as a series of expeditions of artists from a dozen of countries who engaged the audience in creative activity: photo, video shooting, gathering of artistic materials, recording of music, performances, etc.

ICHD's next initiative under the program "Rethinking attitudes, unveiling values through culture and art" has focused on the work of Revolutionary of the Armenian medieval thought, the Champion of the Armenian Renaissance in X century, St. Gregory of Narek. The poetry of the author of mystical interpretation on the Song of Songs remains a booster of people's minds till our days. With the joint efforts

of the Chairman of the ICHD Board of Trustees Dr. Armen Darbinian, and the Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation M. Shvedkoy, the score of the chorus concert by the famous German composer Alfred Schnittke was brought to Yerevan and passed on to Robert Mlkeyan, the conductor of the Chorus of the Armenia Chamber Orchestra in 2002.

PHOTOS

ICHD core staff. May, 2010.





ICHD hosts an off the record discussion (OTR).

A working discussion with IMF mission experts at ICHD.





ICHD team transfers skills on Town Hall Meeting to Georgian and Azerbaijani NGOs in Tbilisi, Georgia 2007.

A working meeting in State Migration Service organized by the ICHD. Yerevan, 2007.





Opening ceremony of Euroforum Armenia. Tsakhkadzor, 2009.

Meeting with the
Minsk Group
Co-chair of the US
Matthew Bryza.
Tsakhkadzor, 2009.





Training on Gender Based
Violence with Police Officers...

...and women community
leaders at ICHD. Yerevan, 2009.





ICHD's 5th International Conference on European Integration. Yerevan, 2008.

4th International Conference on European Integration organized by the ICHD. Yerevan, 2007.





ICHD's 6th International Conference on European Integration. Yerevan, 2009.





Celebrating ICHD's 5th anniversary in Yerevan.

Armenian National Assembly hosts kids on June 1, Children's Protection Day, by ICHD initiative. Yerevan 2009.





ICHD's conference on migration management in Armenia. 2010.

At a press conference.





Presentation of Armenian version of ACCORD Magazine on Nagorno Karabakh. 2005.





ICHD hosts students of Political Science School of American University of Armenia. Yerevan, 2008.

Author David Philips at the presentation of Armenian version of his book "Unscilensing the Past" published by ICHD. Yerevan, 2010.





Community residents discussing local budget at ICHD's Town Hall Meeting. Ashotavan community, 2008.

Hot debate on community development priorities. Arevik community, 2008.





People of Sisian discuss possible perspectives of Armenia-Turkey relations at ICHD's Town Hall Meeting. 2009.

People of Karabakh discussing conflict resolution perspectives at ICHD's Town Hall Meeting. Martuni, Nagorno Karabakh Republic, 2007.





Reporters covering ICHD's Town Hall Meeting on Armenian - Turkish relations. Ararat 2009.

ICHD's Town Hall Meeting in Stepanakert. NKR, 2007.





Over 500 residents of Yerevan discussing possible tracks of Armenia's development at ICHD's Town Hall Meeting in Karen Demirchyan Sport and Concert Hall, Yerevan, 2005.

ICHD's seminar for political leaders. Vanadzor, 2007.





Momentum 11 in Boston at Roger Fisher House. USA, 2008.

Momentum 9th group in Cambridge. USA, 2006.





Momentum retreat in
Nagorno Karabakh Republic.
Stepanakert, 2008.

Momentum members
after the meeting with
NKR President Bako Sahakyan.
Stepanakert, 2008.





ICHD lead trainer debriefing on “tower exercise” on creating a common good. Yerevan, 2004.

Young leaders at ICHD’s training. Sevan, 2005.





ICHD team shooting documentary in Armenian Embassy to Austria, Vienna, 2008.

ICHD's study tour for migration management specialists. Munich, 2008.





Armenian official at ICHD's study tour to Lithuania. Vilnius, 2009.

Family doctors at ICHD's seminar on cancer prevention. Yerevan, 2006.





Local community authorities
at ICHD's training.
Tsakhkadzor, 2004.

Young leaders, members of
"Connecting Futures - Living
Together Network". Sevan, 2006.



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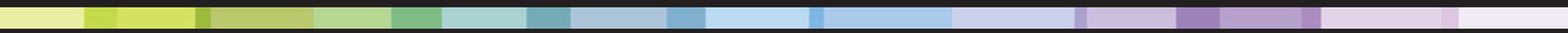
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YEREVAN, 2010