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NEWS RELEASE

World Bank Yerevan Office Announces Civil Society Fund 2011 Winners

Six Local NGOs are Awarded Small Grants to Implement Projects Targeting the Vulnerable and the Youth in Different Regions of Armenia

YEREVAN, June 30, 2011 - Today the World Bank Yerevan Office announced the results of the Civil Society Fund 2011. Six Armenian non-profit, non-governmental organizations have been selected as finalists to receive grant awards to implement projects focusing on civic engagement. The World Bank Yerevan Office had received 80 project proposals from NGOs across Armenia. A committee represented by World Bank Yerevan Country Office respective staff and external partners reviewed the proposals and selected the finalists.

Under the CSF-2011, the following NGOs have been selected to implement their proposed projects:

1. Shen NGO: To encourage civic engagement of marginalized and vulnerable groups in 8 villages of Chambarak sub-region of Gegharkunik marz in development activities through capacity building, empowerment of different groups in local development, strengthening their voice and influence in development processes, and strengthening the capacities of local Civic Action Groups in these villages. In the scope of the project, the NGO will introduce the Participatory Rural Assessment (PRA) model; help identify priority problems of the community based on PRA results; provide training on project proposal writing, development of logical frameworks for projects, and their management; and do fund-raising for the top priority project(s).

2. Armavir Development Center Socio-Economic NGO: To enable citizen participation and oversight in 11 rural communities of Armavir region in the process of service provision by the Water Users Associations (WUAs), thus facilitating the improvement of the irrigation water services. In particular, the NGO will raise awareness of the target communities' population about their rights and the services provided by the WUAs; help improve the contractual relations between the WUAs and the consumers; identify the problems of the irrigation water users and include them in the local development policies; and enable oversight by water users over the services provided by the WUAs.

3. Internews Media Support NGO: To elaborate an educational program - *media literacy curriculum* and an *E-learning tool* – aimed at educating media users (specifically, young people) in the principles and functions of the media, preparing them for an active and inclusive role in the political and cultural life of the country through the media. The NGO will prepare a draft curriculum based on the outcomes of discussions with stakeholders; organize a workshop to discuss the draft Curriculum with experts and media community; finalize the curriculum and develop the E-learning tool based on it; conduct training of

trainers (ToT) on the media literacy curriculum; pilot-test the media literacy curriculum and the E-learning tool among a group of high-grade schoolchildren.

4. Young Family Support Center NGO: To improve in Vayots Dzor region (in 3 urban and 20 rural communities) access to primary healthcare for disabled people in 20 primary healthcare facilities (PHCFs) of the region by introducing a participatory mechanism for public monitoring and evaluation of services. The NGO will create a monitoring group and introduce an evaluation system for protecting the right of the disabled to free-of-charge medical care; assess the current state of the disabled people's rights to free healthcare services based on the participatory monitoring group's findings at the PHCFs; present the package of constructive recommendations for a more effective policy to the regional government's Health department and the Ministry of Health.

5. Socio-Economic Analysis and Consulting NGO: To give voice to the concerns of the poor and extremely poor layers of the population by presenting their views and problems to decision makers. The main targets are *the newly impoverished people* due to the recent global economic crises. The situation will be observed based on actions of the newly impoverished people in regard to getting out of poverty, including applying to the Family Benefit Program (FBP), and the FBP's response to these applications. The NGO will also conduct 10 focus group discussions with the newly impoverished people in selected 5 villages and 5 towns of Armenia, expert opinion survey (interviews with village heads, social workers; hold meetings-discussions with representatives of the government's Family Benefit Program; prepare a report on the findings, and organize a press conference on the project's main findings and the recommended actions.

6. Actual Art Cultural Union NGO: To raise awareness of the problems in the earthquake zone, to make them part of the public debate agenda and to give continuity to the debate. The project will organize a competition titled "*My story*" on the earthquake zone issues, at which the participants will use various forms of communication/media to tell their stories/concerns. The NGO will hold a competition (of posters, comics, video art, short movies shot by mobile phones, flash cards) on the earthquake zone issue; organize master classes on comics in Gyumri and Yerevan (conducted by local and international experts); finalize the competition results and exhibit the selected works in Yerevan; publicize the selected works in online social networks and the general media.

The World Bank Yerevan Office will closely interact with the grant recipients on regular basis during the implementation period of projects to ensure that the objectives and goals agreed upon for each project are met.

The World Bank looks forward to strengthening its cooperation with NGOs in Armenia on development issues.

This is the thirteenth year the World Bank Civil Society Fund is implemented in Armenia. During this period seventy-two local NGOs have received grants in the total amount of USD 458,000 disbursed by the World Bank Yerevan Office.

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