

OPEN SOCIETY IN

ARMENIA

The Open Society Foundations–Armenia has contributed over \$53 million to Armenia since it began its work in 1997. As the major political transition which Armenia began in 2018 continues, the foundation remains committed to the values which have defined its work for more than 20 years: justice, accountability, and transparency.

In 1997, the war in Nagorno-Karabakh and an economic blockade imposed by Azerbaijan and Turkey had left Armenia isolated and impoverished. As the country continued to adjust to the collapse of the Soviet-era welfare system, many basic institutions in Armenia were in need of funding and reform.

The Open Society Foundations–Armenia responded by supplying needed equipment, technology, and expertise to schools, universities, libraries, and health care facilities. Beneficiaries included the National Library of Armenia, as well as Matenadaran Institute of Ancient Manuscripts—one of the oldest and richest repositories of manuscripts and historical records in the world.

Since then, the foundation has supported a broad range of civil society groups, including women’s shelters, investigative journalism outlets, human rights defenders, and organizations monitoring elections and public spending.

ARMENIA: 2019 GRANT GIVING BY SECTOR



Total 2019 budget
for Armenia:

\$3.6M

Total support in Armenia
since 1997:

\$53M+

9 FACTS ABOUT OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS–ARMENIA

- 1** From 2000 to 2005, the foundation supported the creation of the first digital library catalogue of books published in Armenian, a project that included developing the first-ever Armenian keyboard and visual recognition software.
- 2** In the aftermath of the global financial crisis of 2008, the foundation allocated \$2.2 million—and raised an additional \$2.5 million of donor money—to support more than 65,000 economically struggling families with hot meals, home heating, school transportation, and access to health care.
- 3** Armenia's first community-based mental health institution, the Spitak Care House, was supported by the foundation. The house has become a model for alternatives to outdated and restrictive psychiatric institutions.
- 4** The foundation supported the development of new courses and curricula to help national universities upgrade the content and quality of their programs. Since 2012, the foundation has supported the development of accountability mechanisms in higher education and monitored the implementation of educational reforms across the country.
- 5** In recognition of the dignity of terminally ill patients, the foundation worked with the Armenian Ministry of Health to create national standards for palliative care and funded the training of new specialists focused on end-of-life care.
- 6** To date, the foundation has invested \$1.5 million to support the work of women's rights organizations, including the provision of emergency services to victims of domestic violence.
- 7** Since 1997, the foundation has spent some \$5 million to support the development of an independent media in Armenia, including award-winning investigative journalism on government corruption and the impact of the financial crisis on rural communities.
- 8** The foundation's efforts to support citizen participation have included helping local groups defend the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression, as well as using freedom of information laws to monitor and ensure the fair delivery of public services.
- 9** The foundation has supported multiple efforts to systematically monitor and improve conditions in prisons, police cells, psychiatric wards, and homes for the elderly throughout Armenia.