



**Background**

In 2018 one in every four Armenian citizens was living below the poverty line. At the same time social support and services are insufficient, offered in a non-appropriate (monetary) form or not targeted to the actual needs of vulnerable and poor families, which became once again evident during the recent crises that hit Armenia (Covid19-pandemic, Nagorno-Karabakh war). These crises also made obvious the lack of resilience and preparedness of local social programs to emergency situations and their inability to render support to those most vulnerable to poverty and marginalisation during such crisis. Social case management methodology, introduced in Armenia since January 2017, with its holistic approach to poverty alleviation, could ease these constraints and contribute to individual and community development by supporting local cooperation networks among all involved actors and connecting the poorest to services and programs. Also Armenian government is increasingly recognizing the primary role of social work in poverty reduction, as reflected in the Armenian Government Program 2017-22. Therein, increased access to social services, the introduction of an integrated social services system, as well as contracting of CSOs that deliver social services are identified as important means to tackle poverty.

**Objectives**

The project strives to combat poverty and inequality in Armenia and contribute to social change and inclusive, sustainable development. This is achieved by i) activating the inter-sectorial and inter-disciplinary cooperation of all relevant local state and non-state actors; ii) strengthening the role and leverage of civil society actors/ organisations in local social policy processes and in delivering qualitative and targeted social services; and iii) advocating for transparent mechanisms for state funding of social services. Through this we aim to create needs-based and resilient local social plans as well as sustainable civil society-led social services for the benefit of poor and vulnerable families in Armenian regions.

**Activities**

- Establishing local inter-sectorial networks and elaborating needs-based local social plans in 10 communities
- Elaborating of and advocating for social service quality standards and mechanisms for state funding of qualified social services

- Awarding min. 10 small grants for direct service provision in line with local social plans and funding standards
- Strengthening local CSOs and active citizens to participate in policy dialogue and advocacy on poverty issues, participatory monitoring of local plans and networking

**Target groups / beneficiaries**

- min. 80 local CSOs and min. 100 active citizens
- 120 representatives of local authorities from various departments, city halls, local Social Service Agencies, other local bodies related to the social field (such as schools, medical services, police) and up to 40 representatives of four local governments
- inhabitants of 10 local communities, especially 15-20.000 households registered in the state Family Benefit Program (FBP) and up to 200 marginalized poor and vulnerable families not covered by FBP

**Project details**

Project period: February 2021 – January 2024

Project implemented by Hilfswerk International ([www.hilfswerk.at/international/en](http://www.hilfswerk.at/international/en)) in partnership with Armenian Association of Social Workers (AASW) "Partnership and Teaching" Civil Society and Education Supporting NGO (P&T) Family and Community Charitable NGO (F&C)

Locations: Shirak, Tavush, Armavir, Syunik

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