

“Assist the government and civil society in resolving environmental issues, strengthening the capacities of the state agencies and CSOs in the implementation of the Aarhus Convention”

PROJECT № UB 4200665

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION DESCRIPTIVE REPORT



2015

CONTENT

1. Introduction and general information - - - - - 3 -7 pages

2. Project implementation in accordance with the set objectives,

Project Tasks, Activity 1.1

- Action 1.1.1 ----- 7 -29 pages

- Action 1.1.2 ----- 29-44 pages

- Action 1.1.3 ----- 44-48 pages

- Action 1.1.4 ----- 48-58 pages

3. Project's direct and indirect beneficiaries, partner organizations and experts - - - - -
----- 58 page

4. Project's actual results achieved, lessons learned and conclusions - - - - -
----- 59 - 61 pages

5. Emerged challenges within the frameworks of the project and new - - - - -
----- 61 page

6. Project evaluation and continuity - - - - - 62 page

7. Detailed statistical data on the activities carried out and services rendered by Aarhus Centers -
----- 62 page

8. The report enclosed materials - - - - - 62 - 63 pages

Annual Report on the Activity 2015

1. Introduction and General Information

The purpose of this project is to promote adjusting community security and environment principles of good governance, through the Aarhus Centers in Armenia with involvement of stakeholders, at local and national levels to support the implementation of the UNECE Aarhus Convention on the Access to Information in the field of Environment, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice.

Taking into consideration this fact, the mission of the Armenian Aarhus Centers is to support the government and civil society to combine efforts to solve environmental problems by strengthening state institutions and CSOs capacity for the implementation of the Aarhus Convention, during the implementation of this project, special attention was paid to the actions that are aimed at raising the level of public awareness and participation in the process of decision-making.

As usual, under this program also the centers has served as a platform for representatives of government officials and civil society to meet, discuss, exchange information on environmental and ecological security relating issues and to enter into dialog for finding ways of solutions.

Considering that only the public awareness on this or that project is still not enough to ensure the active participation of the public, this year we are focused on the works carried out towards community's motivation; interpretation of changes expected in accordance with the planned draft, formation of a relevant public opinion and joint development of alternative proposals.

Below is presented distribution of the events implemented by the centers in accordance with their types.

Events	Quantity
Total implemented events	540
<i>including</i>	
Aimed at access to information	267
Public and round table discussions	52
Public hearings	30
Practical works and responses	29

Visits, working and consultative meetings	89
Trainings, seminar-discussions, eco-educational events	75
Presentations	8
International meetings, seminars	6
National-level meetings, seminars	12
Joint working meetings of the all centers, centers staffs training	4
Board of experts meetings	10

In order to achieve the planned by the schedule project activities, as well as solutions to the problems that arose during the reporting period, on the Aarhus Centres initiative, in partnership with other organizations have been carried out 540 events, including **267** events aimed at the access to information, **52** events in direction of public participation, of which in 5 cases have been initiated extensive public debates at the national level or with the involvement of several provinces, have been ensured active participation in 30 public hearings, 2 events have been carried out in direction of access to justice and **75** eco-educational events, which was attended by a total of **4608** people, including **2136** men and **2472** women.

The information obtained on the issues discussed or drafts has been disseminated among the stakeholders. The Centers have **28** times provided venues to various civil society organizations and initiatives for holding environmental measures.

Today the centers generally have more than 1,500 books and about 100 kinds of video CD in their own libraries.

This year also the main focus of the Aarhus Centers in Armenia was the coverage of the decisions being made by Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee towards Armenia and support to activities aimed at the implementation of their requirements. About these the Aarhus Centers of Armenia has raised concerns both during the meetings with the relevant authorities and with the public sector.

They have also reflected to the Ombudsman's remarks concerning the environmental issues at his annual report for 2014 on "The activity and violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms", about unsettling the recommendations of the Aarhus Convention's Compliance Committee on the law "On

Environmental Impact Expert Assessment ", about the circumstance of more complicating the process of public participation in accordance with the new law.

Let us also note that about shortcomings in this law the Centers had raised concerns yet in 2013, sending letters to the RA President and the Chair of the RA National Assembly, noting that the government has not fulfilled its obligations in regard to compliance the national legislation with the Convention.

<http://aarhus.am/letters/letter%20to%2010.12.2013.pdf>, http://aarhus.am/letters_2015/Answer%20from%20MNP%20-%20orxuscanc.pdf/

The Aarhus Centers have taken steps in creating awareness of civil society with regard to the RA Government's first report on the decision V / 9a of the Aarhus Convention's Compliance Committee, the first conclusion assessing progress by the Committee, in which was indicated that in the case not taking into consideration comments and suggestions can be made statement about the inadequacy to deprive the party of the privileges of membership to the Convention. This was followed by numerous publications.

<http://www.ecolur.org/hy/news/officials/aarhus-convention-compliance-committee-takes-certain-measures-to-armenia-up-to-probable-convention-termination/7790/>, <http://www.azatutyun.am/content/article/27349543.html>, <http://www.panarmenian.net/arm/news/200240/>

Taking into consideration great interest and concern of civil society, on the initiative of the Aarhus Centres a public debate was held, during which due to the absence of the Focal Point of the Aarhus Convention and the relevant responsible ministries the raised questions remained unanswered.

In accordance with the decision made by the participants of the discussion the Armenian Aarhus Centers made a request addressed to the ACs Focal Point to organize a debate with the participation of the all responsible agencies.

In addition, the Public Relations Officer of that project has supported to Eco-alliance in compiling a letter addressed to the Ministry of Nature Protection, in which was stated about the willingness of CSOs to provide support in the proper implementation of the requirements of the Convention.

<http://aarhus.am/images/Yerevan/24.11.15-%20letter%20to%20focal%20point.pdf>:

During the reporting period, the centers have carried out joint consistent work towards the adoption of the draft law on making changes and amendments to the RA law "On targeted use of environmental payments paid by the companies", in particular:

- The Aarhus Centers have submitted the draft to the RA MNP to discuss it with representatives of the civil society and community members and a proposal to make amendments in it thereto they have taken it into consideration (http://aarhus.am/letters_2015/Namak_BN_11_09.pdf)

- The Armenian Aarhus Centres have submitted proposals and suggestions regarding the purposeful use of natural resource utilization and environmental charges to the RA Ministry of Finance and demanded to discuss the purposed suggestions and review the ministry's position.

(http://aarhus.am/letters_2015/18.08.15_finnax..pdf, http://aarhus.am/letters_2015/18.08.15_finnax..pdf

(http://aarhus.am/letters_2015/finnax_patasxan_15_09.pdf):

Not receiving an exhaustive response the second inquiry was sent to the Ministry on why our proposals have not been discussed and have not been reviewed their decision. However, the Ministry had once again informed about remaining unchanged his former position.

- The Centers have made proposals to the MNP to cover the amended draft at the municipal or provincial level http://aarhus.am/letters_2015/Namak_BN_11_09.pdf, in order to create awareness of communities and offer them opportunity to submit their proposals on this important for them project.

- Taking the proposal into consideration the Ministry has initiated a discussion inviting the ACs and communities, but unfortunately only the representative of Tavush province had arrived to Yerevan, so the AC members again expressed their support for the organization of discussions on the proposed project at the local level.

- This year Dilijan Aarhus center has submitted an application to Dilijan Mayor requesting to be engaged at the environmental protection advisory body under Dilijan municipality.

<http://www.dilijancity.am/Pages/DocFlow/Default.aspx?a=v&g=e8cdf119-3f75-4900-b94c-926983e8f59f>

- The Centers have also taken awareness-raising activities consistent with the United Nations' Climate Change Framework Convention," about the RA Government's decision draft "Planned actions/contributions set at the national level", in the communities (communities of Ararat Marz, Alaverdi and Gavar), during the seminars held for LSGs and active of the community have informed about the approval of the draft and especially about what new financial mechanisms are proposed for resolution of community-based environmental problems.

- In addition to the above mentioned meetings, information about this was disseminated via social networking sites and emails of provinces.

- During the public discussions have been mainly protected the project's provisions relating to the introduction of new financial mechanisms and the ways of formation and collection of necessary funds, with regard of this a proposal was submitted to the Ministry of Finance on reviewing its position and approving the above mentioned provisions of the draft, after which, on 10 September the government has taken a decision approving the project.

2. Project implementation according to the set objectives.

Project tasks

Action 1.1: The Armenian Aarhus Centres will continue to raise awareness and respond to environmental challenges and threats, providing comprehensive environmental information to the public: the Aarhus Centers should ensure that civil society involvement in environmental management and decision-making processes, offer an effective platform for cooperation between public authorities and civil society organizations: detailed description is provided in the Appendix 1 of the Technical Recommendation (budget).

Action 1.1.1 The Aarhus Centers should collect and disseminate information on environmental and health risks associated with contaminated water and air at the urban environment, nearby mining sites and other environmental hotspots: should increase efficiency of public participation, develop open administrative culture, which will contribute to public participation and transparency in environmental matters, evaluate them as positive contributions to democratic, effective and good governance.

Sub-Activity 1/1

To collect information regarding environmental and health risks, which are emerging in urban environments by polluted air and water, nearby mining sites and other environmental hotspots.

1/1.1 Taken steps

The centers have filed more than 99 information requests to the relevant authorities, collected information on the environmental impact of the planned actions or potential impact on the environment, simplified them, analyzed with the help of experts, provided to media and distributed through the centers website, social networks and e-mail addresses.

The majority of information requests were directed to the RA ministries of Nature Protection, Health, and Energy and Natural Resources, Regional Management and Emergency Situations, regional administrations and local self-government bodies, public services rendering organizations:

Kapan Aarhus Center coordinator has sent a letter to the city mayor about the flow of ground water contaminated with yellow-brown colored heavy metals from the mine in rainy days

1. One of the letters addressed to the RA MNP by Gavar Aarhus Center was about the precious device eliminating roots of trees and plants from the flooded area of Lake Sevan,
2. Alaverdi Aarhus Center has made numerous requests to the proper authorities and the private company to collect comprehensive information on Nahatak tailings dumps of Akhtala,
3. On the quality of drinking water in Dilijan, Dilijan Aarhus Center has addressed a letter to the relevant authorities and the water supply company;
4. Associated with the decline of the fish in Aparan reservoir the Aparan AC has informed the provincial Department of Environment and Inspectorate, filed requests to the appropriate authorities, arranged visits to the spot to ascertain whether the massive decline in fish alarm is true, as well as with the assistance of an independent expert has made water laboratory research.

Some of the inquiries were addressed to the Prime Minister, ministries of Environment, Health, Energy and Natural Resources, Regional Management and Emergency Situations regional administrations and local self-government bodies, public services organizations (AWSC, PSRC).

In particular:

5. Alaverdi Aarhus Center has sent letters to the heads of those communities, at the territory of which "Teghut" CJSC plans to carry out copper and molybdenum exploitation activities for getting more information on whether communities have given their written consent for the search works.
6. Gavar Aarhus Centre has made inquiry to the MNP and Sevan NP on the impact of cage net model for breeding upon Lake Sevan, as well as the terms of that pilot project requiring the monitoring data, which should be the basis for extending cage net expand fish farming in the lake. Despite the initiative company's assurances, these data are available and have been provided to the public, which still have not been managed to acquire.
7. Ararat Aarhus Center at the request of the residents of Azatashen, Arbat and Khachpar villages has raised the issue of constant stench giving off in those areas, asking the Ministry of Nature Protection

to carry out inspection, identify and solve the problem, but a response was received that the Prime Minister did not allow to carry out inspections in accordance with the relevant decision.

8. Kapan Aarhus Center, as a result of the joint study and discussion organized in the Center, at the participants request has addressed a letter to the RA MNP, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Attorney General demanding to bring perpetrators to justice committed illegal logging in the "Shikahogh" reserve of "Zangezur" Biospheric Complex, "Arevik" NP and at the areas of Kapan forestry.
9. Gavar Aarhus Center has carried out monitoring during the fishing ban, fixed many cases of fish selling and those along with a letter sent to the MNP.
10. Aparan Center has informed about illegal construction works carried out in Toukhmanuk gold mine of Melikgyugh by the company to Environmental Protection Department and Inspectorate of the province, addressed inquiries to the appropriate authorities, provide the information received to the public.
11. Yeghegnadzor Aarhus Center made an inquiry to the RA MNP SEI of Vayots Dzor, RA Yeghegnadzor Police Department and Hermon community leader in order to verify legality of hundreds of cut down trees and the fact of finding cut trees in Yeghegis river protective zone fixed by camera of EcoLur on October 17.
12. Inquiry addressed to the "National Center for Disease Control and Prevention" SNCO of the Ministry of Health of the RA about the leakage of sewage in the town of Kapan in Syunik marz. An interview was given by the Coordinator of Kapan AC about the leakage of sewage, the information was disseminated via "SOSI" TV, have been presented the issue and threats.
13. The Aarhus Centre in Yerevan, referring to the issue of protection of green areas in Yerevan, meanwhile responding to the protest of Yerevan residents with regard to the ongoing deep pruning of trees, has organized professional meetings with experts and holding consultation with them, submitted an application-proposal to Yerevan mayor.

1/1.2 Achieved results

1. As a result of the letter filed to Kapan mayor on the flow of ground water contaminated with yellow-brown colored heavy metals from the mine in rainy days, a working group was created composed of representatives of NGOs, the municipality responsible officials, coordinator of the Aarhus Centre and

residents. After a little while a small sedimentary basin was built at the mine path and the waters were joined to sewage pipeline: http://aarhus.am/?page_id=8861&lang=en



№	Ամսաթիվ	Ժամ	Ստորագրություն	Բնակավայր	Մաս	Ստորագրություն	Բնակավայր	Մաս	Ստորագրություն	Բնակավայր	Մաս
1	2015.05.05	14:00	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ
2	2015.05.05	14:00	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ
3	2015.05.05	14:00	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ
4	2015.05.05	14:00	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ
5	2015.05.05	14:00	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ
6	2015.05.05	14:00	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ
7	2015.05.05	14:00	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ
8	2015.05.05	14:00	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ
9	2015.05.05	14:00	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ
10	2015.05.05	14:00	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ	Ա. ԲԱՆԱՆԻ	ԳԱՎԱՐ	ՍԵՆՏՐԱԼ



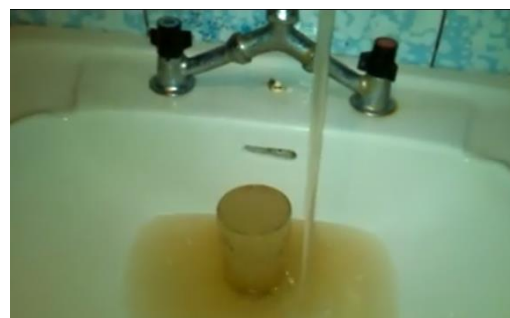
2. The MNP has invited the representatives of Gavar Aarhus Center to attend the cleaning process monitoring, through the visit, the information was made available to the interested public. http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10409&lang=en :



3. The center has collected complete information on the activity of the Akhtala Enrichment Combine, a new tailings dump project and Nahatak tailings dump, which offered an opportunity to all stakeholders, including the civil group formed in Mets Ayrum to have a real picture of the situation and the possible risks.



4. Dilijan water supply company focused on the drinking water supply issue and raised the control over water quality: http://aarhus.am/?page_id=9231 :



5. As a result: the Provincial Department of Environmental Protection and Inspectorate had conducted inspections. We will inform about the process later: http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10244



6. Tsakhkashat community was informed through the Center that their mayor gave a positive answer without their consent, after which they have protested, turned to the president and the prime minister of the RA requesting to suspend exploration works of Tsakhkashat-Akhetk mineral field. Teghut CJSC has informed about the suspension of the works. The English version of the information about the operations of Alaverdi Center is available at the following link: http://aarhus.am/?page_id=12962&lang=en :

7. The center has forced the relevant authority to collect the information necessary to complete the monitoring results.

8. The media referred to the problem once again highlighting the contradiction at the Government's decision on the inspection with regard to human rights. <http://armtimes.com/hy/read/73199>

9. The minister of Nature Protection of the RA responded that inspections are carried out in "Zangezur" Biospheric Complex "SNCO, about the results will be informed in writing form after completion, and from the Kapan's forestry of "Armenian Forest" SNCO has been informed that a criminal case was initiated, the investigation continues after completing will be reported about results.



10. The center has contributed to toughening the control of fishing, although the RA MNP minister's response has completely repeated the inquiry.



11. The information about Tukhmanuk gold mine of Meliqgyugh collected through inquiries has been provided to the population. http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10521 :

12. According to the received response the territory is a private property, and those trees were planted 12 years ago in order to cut down. The police should determine the legality of the action based on the letter of the Center.

13. Led by the deputy governor of Syunik, a working group has been created, the issue has been reviewed in the spot and then discussed at the Aarhus Center.

The problem lies in the fact that the sewage pipe is clogged; a hole has been dug from the manhole and the whole sewage is being filled to the gulch and flowing around 200-300m in open space is being filled into the river. The deputy governor raised the issue at the leadership of "Armenian Water Sewerage Company" CJSC and the problem resolution is in the process.



14. Despite of the presentation of the professional conclusions and alternative methods with regard to deep pruning of trees to Yerevan municipality, still there are no results pursued on this matter, however, Yerevan Aarhus Center is implementing consistent work in this direction.



All inquiries and responses according to the dates and the centers in Armenian version can be found at the following link: http://aarhus.am/?page_id=132.

✓ Through the centers the issues raised by civil society have been partly explained based on the inquiries made by centers, as well as were analyzed by the experts and more than 20 analysis, comments or suggestions were posted at the "Expert's Corner" section. These have been used during the coverage by the relevant media.

✓ At the Centers website have been published opinions and analysis of independent expertst on various issues relating to environment: air basin and water pollution, forest fires, mining industry, natural disasters, legislation of the field, enriching wheat flour with folic acid and iron on the initiative of the Ministry of Health and the RA relevant draft law, environmental exoteric and George Gurdjieff's teaching, as well as disaster risk reduction.

Sub- Activity 1/2

To suggest effective means and mechanisms of cooperation between state bodies and civil society organizations

1/2.1 Taken steps

In line with the paragraph 7.1 of the road map, 10 events were implemented to promote active involvement of citizens in preserving the environment, supporting their participation in the decision-making process by offering effective measures and mechanisms for cooperation between the government agencies and civil society organizations.

In this respect, is exemplary:

1. Experience of Gyumri: detailed presentation and discussion of findings in land, water and air researches conducted by the "Center for Ecological-Noosphere Studies of the RA NAS" during the last two years, the initiator of which was Gyumri AC in 2013.

http://www.asparez.am/news-hy/canr_metaxner_gyumrium-hy/ <http://hetq.am/arm/news/60427/gyumrii-mankapartezneric-meki-taratsqum-hoximej-kapari-qanaky-22-angam-gerazancum-e-tuylatreli-normy.html>

2. Gavar's experience: when was organized a meeting with the city's most active youth, presented examples of involvement more active citizens in environmental protection issue, exchange of experience was held among young people from the neighboring town and the region's youth.



Gyumri AC



Gavar AC

3. Gyumri Aarhus Center in collaboration with "Green Path" NGO has conducted a round table discussion on the theme "Problems and their solutions opportunities' in the rural communities of Shirak province".

4. The board of expert of Gavar Aarhus Center has applied to Gegharkunik governor requesting to discuss environmental component containing programs at the Aarhus Center.

([http://aarhus.am/images/Gavar/009-20.07.2015-%20Grutyun%20Gexaequniqi%20marzpetin%20\(1\).pdf](http://aarhus.am/images/Gavar/009-20.07.2015-%20Grutyun%20Gexaequniqi%20marzpetin%20(1).pdf)):

5. As a result of the debate held in Kapan municipality involving NGOs and citizens, with the support of Aarhus Center in Kapan a letter was sent to the mayor of Kapan about the stream flowing into the yard in the form of torrent on rainy days from the surrounding hillside into the residential area of the city center, which was previously filled with empty rocks of the mine, after drying by winds and threads on machines, atmospheric air pollution, where children are playing, which endangers their health.



6. The experience of Alaverdi and Hrazdan Aarhus Centres, with the support of which have been established "Young Alaverdi" and "Healthy Environment" NGOs, which have actively engaged in activities in the cities of Hrazdan and Alaverdi.



7. In Dilijan AC was held discussions on the draft of Dilijan genplani and zoning and church draft



8. Yeghegnadzor, Kapan and Vanadzor ACs supported public to present and discuss Armenia's accession process to the extractive industries transparency initiative (EITI), extractive industries transparency initiative role in Armenia's mining industry, and its impact on the economy of Armenia and the possible ways with which civil society, private sector, academic institutions and educational potential can be involved and support the initiative in Armenia. The extractive industries transparency initiative (EITI) is a world coalition of governments, companies and civil society, which jointly work towards an open and accountable management of revenues from natural resources improvement.

1/2.2 The achieved results

Both the representatives of local government and civil society, especially young people are aware of the importance of LSG-CSO cooperation in environment-related matters, about effective means and such an international experience.

1. The public of Gyumri and the responsible officials of the sector have gained full information about carried out researches and suggested to carry out design and implementation of functional landscape of the city in the case of financing.

2. Young people of Gavar decided to initiate a program which will support to the development of eco-tourism in the city.

3. Have been raised the issues existing in the rural communities of Shirak province of the RA, discussed alternative development opportunities and disseminated the positive experience.

4. Gegharkunik governor has given a positive reply to the request of the Board of Experts of Gavar.

5. Kapan deputy mayor, head of urban development department visited the given district to look for ways of solution to this problem in the spot. As a result a decision was made to build about 50 meters drainage pipeline and connect it to the existing one.

6. Acquisition of new like-minded persons, supporters and partner organizations.

7. Both the local government representatives, and the civil society, especially young people are aware of the importance of LSG- CSO cooperation in connection with finding solution to environment related matters, and about effective means and such an international experience.

8. The centers have contributed to the cooperation between the regional CSOs, the RA government and World Bank within the frames of the extractive industries transparency initiative, as well as to the process of raising awareness among the civil society about this process.

Sub-Activity 1/3

To provide a platform for ensuring public participation in public hearings, seminars, negotiations and mediations

1/3.1 Taken steps

The centers in accordance with the paragraph 8.2. of the Roadmap have supported the initiatives of other organizations, which were related to the methods public participation activities and involvement techniques. In accordance with the paragraph 5.1 of the Road Map 23 centers have supported to the organization of public hearings, or took part in them. Have contributed to the organization of public hearings, notified the public about the date and time of those holding via centers website, email, social networks.

1. In some cases, public hearings were held right in the Aarhus Centers (Dilijan, Kapan, Hrazdan, Alaverdi ACs). The coordinators have also participated in the public hearings on various topics, during which have presented the public opinions and suggestions or after hearings have presented the information obtained to the interested public.

(http://aarhus.am/?page_id=11553),

http://aarhus.am/?page_id=7207&lang=en, http://aarhus.am/?page_id=8651&lang=en http://aarhus.am/?page_id=9909&lang=en,
http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10380&lang=en http://aarhus.am/?page_id=8946&lang=en, http://aarhus.am/?page_id=8756):



Kapan AC



Dilijan AC

2. In cooperation with the World Vision Amasia organization Gyumri AC has organized training under the theme "Project proposal writing and fundraising capacity building" for youth groups of Amasia region's communities.



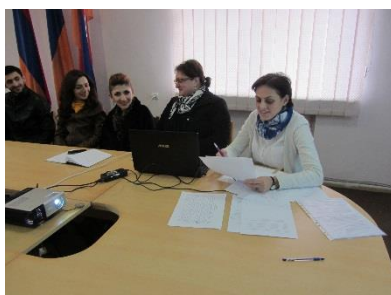
3. A meeting was held with representatives of the Japan International Cooperation Agency to discuss "Technical feasibility studies of Yeghvard Dam" project, to present the results of research and familiarize with the project's next steps and discuss cooperation issues. As a result of discussions the center has assisted in organization of public awareness events in Yerznka and Yeghvard communities.



4. In Aparan AC are regularly carried out working meetings with various NGOs to discuss issues related to Tuxhmanuk gold mine exploitation and holding events to create awareness of LSG representatives and residents of Yezidi Mirak, Rya Taza, Alagyaz communities on the gold mine negative effects and coverage of the process regarding to support participation in decision-making.



5. Alaverdi AC has organized a seminar on "Public participation in the most important decision-making process at the preliminary stage" theme for young people of the community.



6. On September 9, public debates were held on preliminary environmental impact assessment of the application on upgrading of Tukhmanuk gold mining complex, tailings dump's protective fence and tailings temporary dry storage draft submitted by "MEGO Gold" CJSC at the village municipality of Melikgyugh of Aragatsotn region of the RA, which was attended by the coordinator of Aparan AC.



7. Gavar AC has supported and participated in public hearings on the EIA of "Cage Net Model for Lake Sevan Trout Breeding" held at Kartchaghbyur Rural Municipality.



8. Dilijan AC has supported to the public hearing held over the pre-assessment bid on environmental impact of "Sustaining Parz Lake 35/6 kV power station by 35 kV air line and 6 kV cable" which was held at right in the center.



9. A public discussion was held in Hrazdan Aarhus Center within the framework of "ADB -2: improvement of water supply and sewerage systems in the RA communities "project. http://aarhus.am/?page_id=9362



10. Dilijan AC has supported to the organization of preliminarily public hearings over the bid of environmental impact assessment of "Transferring Fioletovo AL from the territory of the International School" project.



11. Yeghvard AC has supported to organization of the first public hearing on “Yeghvard Irrigation System Improvement Project Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment application” document in Yeghvard and Nor Yerznka communities, which was attended by representatives of the Water Economy Committee of the RA Ministry of Agriculture, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), “ATMS Solutions” LLC implementing the EIA, Yeghvard, Qasaqh, Ashtarak and other municipalities, regional WUAs, Yeghvard Aarhus Center, residents and other stakeholders.



c. Yeghvard



c. Nor Yerznka

12. Regularly working meetings were held in Yerevan Aarhus Centre on the EIA drafts of the planned actions engaging relevant sector experts.

13. Yerevan Aarhus Center held a public debate on "Solid waste management problems and possible solutions" and was discussed "Strategic Development Plan, roadmap for long-term investment plan" project of the solid waste management sector in Armenia. This document was prepared by the Ministry of Territorial Administration.

14. The coordinators of Hrazdan center, the expert group organized visits, meetings with the head and residents of Kaputan village and presented the possible dangers of Kaputan Iron Mine of Abovyan in Kotayk Marz and the rights of residents to participate and impact on the final decision.

http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10041

1/3.2 Achieved results

1. A number of local residents have been informed about the planned actions to be held in the environment, about public hearings to be held, have submitted proposals to the competent authorities through the Centre.

- ✓ In Kapan "Environmental and public health protection" program have been included the proposals of citizens collected by the Aarhus Centre.
- ✓ At the public request due to the consistent work of Kapan Aarhus Center, "Water and Sewerage" CJSC has pledged to eliminate sewage flow into agricultural land, private entrepreneurs have joined the issue resolution.
- ✓ Stepanavan Aarhus Centre has supported to residents of Mayakovsky district of Stepanavan to raise their issue about the environment pollution to the appropriate bodies, the problem solution is under way and so on.

2. Rural young people were introduced project proposal writing and the basic principles of fundraising and forming appropriate skills among them

3. From now on, the representatives of Japan International Cooperation Agency will cooperate with Yeghvard AC in all matters related to the construction of the reservoir, especially during the EIA implementation. It was decided to organize a meeting in the near future with the JICA engineers constructing Yeghvard reservoir project and industry experts, for discussion of project details and professional presentation.

4. An agreement was reached between Aparan AC and NGOs to continue works on issues related to Tuxhmanuk gold mine operation and LSG representatives and local population of the Yezidi Mirak, Rya Taza, Alagyaz communities located at the influence zone of the gold mine, and raising awareness about the negative effects of mine and related to the coverage events.

5. Alaverdi Aarhus Center has promoted young people to be aware of the actions planned in the field of environment at an early stage, to participate and play a role in the decision-making process. Being informed inspired young people and they have made some suggestions, conducted research and presented the results to their friends.

6. As a result of support of Aparan AC the residents have prepared a letter addressed to the Minister of Environment. In the letter residents told about the company's violations, failing to comply with its assumed obligations, about the damage caused to the village, presented problems which are the result of the mine, ore and tailings operation.

(http://aarhus.am/images/Aparan/Namak_meliq%20bnakichner_18_09.pdf):

7. As a result, the initiators informed that the all proposals submitted by Gavar AC were taken into account, a monitoring committee will be formed and the net cages installation in Lake Sevan depends on the monitoring committee's decision.

8. A number of local residents have been informed about the planned activities in the field of environment, public hearings to be taken place, had an opportunity to represent their comments and disagreements, submit proposals to the relevant authorities through the Centre.

9. After the public discussion within the frameworks of "The improvement of water supply and sewerage systems" project the water supply issues was presented to the public demanding to review the schedule of water supply, as a result the city's water supply has been regulated.

10. Community residents were informed about the planned activities in the field of environment in accordance with the program since the initial phase, on holding public hearings, the proposals submitted to the competent authorities through by the Centre.

11. The representatives of Japan International Cooperation Agency, Water Economy Committee of the RA Ministry of Agriculture, Yeghvard municipality, ATMS Solutions" LLC implementing the EIA are actively cooperating with Yeghvard AC related to the all matters in connection with the construction of the reservoir, especially at the EIA implementing phase, jointly implementing two public hearings and conducting two awareness raising seminars in Yeghvard and Nor Yerznka communities.

http://aarhus.am/?page_id=13295, http://aarhus.am/?page_id=12841,

12. Have been identified the projects risks in accordance with the water recourses, air and soil pollution, legal side, etc. As a result, have been organized visits to communities and the local residents have been informed about the possible risks.

13. The participants of the debate made a number of recommendations, which, according to those responsible persons, will be taken into account at the final version of the strategic document.



14. Hrazdan AC has greatly contributed to the public hearings in terms of participation of conscious, informed residents of Kaputan.



As a result, they have come out against the initiators and suspended the mine operation process in their community. http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10982

Sub-activity 1/4

If necessary to support to the EIA process through information dissemination, creating conditions for ensuring public participation;

1/4.1 Taken steps

The Centers coordinators and press officer not only electronically but also through direct meetings, have given explanations before the public hearing taken place, than the complete video of some public hearings were posted in Aarhus online TV. In particular

1. The video recording of the public hearing over a controversial issue on Sevan net cages fishery was placed on the TV, about which Gavar Aarhus Centre was informed too late and interested CSOs have not had the chance to participate:

2. In collaboration with Yerevan, Yeghegnadzor and Gavar Aarhus Centers have been organized discussions about the Amulsar Gold Mine Project, launching oil and gas prospecting activities adjacent to Lake Sevan area, thorough professional analysis and information have been disseminated to the public interest, promoted creating proper public awareness, after which full video recordings were made available to the public,

<http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3430&page=1&&status=all>,

<http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3405&page=1&&status=all>,

3. This year in order to make the EIA process more transparent, on the project manager's assignment, each regional coordinator has sent statements over the public hearings to be held posted on the www.mnp.am Ministry's official website to the project manager, in parallel to this has searched, found, in case of not finding has acquired the EIA project through the information request and send.

The Centers coordinators and the PR officer gave explanations not only electronically but also through direct meetings, before a public hearing takes place, then the complete video recordings of some public hearings were posted in Aarhus online TV.

In particular:

4. After the public hearing all the information has been disseminated among the interested public.

5. The video recordings of public hearings over the bid of preliminary environmental impact assessment of fish processing plant and Sevan trout breeding cage net economic model were installed at the Aarhus TV.

http://aviplatform.com/user.items.php?type=video&page=0&categoryId=159&status=all&id=185&media_id=3414/:

6. Dilijan AC not just electronically, but also through direct meetings, has given explanations before a public hearing takes place, then the information about some public hearings were disseminated through the social networks.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/dilijangroup/>

1/4.2 Achieved results

1. After public hearings all the information has been spread among the interested public of the province <http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3414&page=1&&status=all>:

Have been collected proposals for inclusion into the draft, and the full text was sent to the RA Ministry of Nature Protection: http://aarhus.am/letters_2015/Grutyun_Gavar_22_05.pdf/:

2. As a result, through dialogue with all stakeholders the all issues were appeared in the media spotlight. As well as in regard to the unanswered questions raised during the discussion have been prepared interviews with independent experts and installed at Aarhus TV:



http://aarhus.am/?page_id=8644



<http://aviplatform.com/user.items.ph>

3. The installment of statements and EIA projects complete packages at the statements section of the www.aarhus.am website has facilitated public participation process, because sometimes at the same www.mnp.am website is being posted only the statement, but the draft is being placed later after the hearings. In this way the Aarhus Centres are helping the Ministry to work more precise and conscientious. http://aarhus.am/?page_id=33 :

4. At the Web Site's statements section 58 announcements were posted about the public hearing to be held with all the documents attached, through which more than 5,000 people got informed about public hearings to be taken place, had the opportunity to learn about the project and the EIA documents in advance (each ad has been viewed on average of 87 times).

5. The public was informed at an early stage and had the opportunity to attend and represent its recommendations.

6. The public had the opportunity to participate in the debates through Soc. Network and submit proposals online.

Sub-Activity 1/5

To promote implementation of joint activities of the Aarhus and other environmental conventions

1/5.1 Taken steps

The centers have cooperated with other organizations, which are carrying out various activities to raise awareness and facilitate the implementation of the various Conventions.

1. The experts from the Center for Economic and Legal Analysis gave professional clarification in relation to the pillar of the Aarhus Convention on access to justice, which have been spread in form of information and interview, enabling the public and stakeholders awareness;

<http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3158&page=1&&status=all>

<http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3157&page=1&&status=all>

http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10769&lang=en:

http://aviplatform.com/user.items.php?type=video&page=0&categoryId=158&status=all&id=185&media_id=3430

http://aviplatform.com/user.items.php?type=video&page=0&categoryId=158&status=all&id=185&media_id=2750



2. Close cooperation is carried out within the framework of the Convention on climate change, particularly at local level, towards raising awareness of civil society about the creation of civic circulating funds and formation such funds, which could have a significant impact on the efficient use of natural resources, increasing public rights as owners of natural resources and contribute to climate change mitigation.



3. The experts of the Center for Economic and Legal Analysis with the support of the OSCE Office in Yerevan, Aparan, Dilijan and Ijevan Aarhus Centers have conducted training courses for civil society

organizations and local authorities to raise their capacities with regard to the third pillar of the Aarhus Convention on access to justice.

http://aarhus.am/?page_id=11908, http://aarhus.am/?page_id=11985, http://aarhus.am/?page_id=11952



Aparan ACDilijan ACDilijan



Ijevan AC



Dilijan AC

4. Have been continued close cooperation within the Framework Convention on Climate Change, particularly raising public awareness towards the creation of civil society revolving funds at the local level and creation such funds, which could have a significant impact on the efficient use of natural resources, increasing public rights as owners of natural resources and contribute to the mitigation of climate change.

5. Aarhus Centres have started collaboration with the Environmental education network and became a member of the network.



1/5.2 Achieved results

1. For numerous visitors of the website have been available clarifications on the Aarhus Convention in relation to the pillar on access to justice

2. Cooperation was shaped on the same topic with "The Round Table Foundation" NGO implementing grant program with the EU and GEF support, the Aarhus Centre has been recognized not only the information partner of the project, but also a unique platform for implementing such initiatives at the community level.

3. Within the framework Convention on Climate Change.

✓ In collaboration with "Round Table Foundation" NGO were offered mechanisms to solve environmental problems associated with climate change at a local level to LSGs in Shirak and Lori regions.

✓ With the support of Gavar Aarhus Center Gavar Municipality has sent a letter to the national coordinator of the Convention to resolve the city's lighting issue through the climatic revolving fund, consulting work has been taken to implement the initiative.

✓ During the meetings with the LSGs in the rural communities of Gegharkunik and Ararat provinces have been presented the above stated new financial mechanism to solve water, land degradation and other problems, facing the community, the community leaders and council members showed great interest for getting more information about the mechanism.

5. Have been expanded the scope of the cooperation in the field of environmental education.

The Aarhus Centres are highlighted as environmental education centers, the centers contacts were included in the list of EEN, mapped as a place of practical activities, for eco educational classes and events of educational institutions and other stakeholders (map will soon be available online):
https://www.facebook.com/EnvironmentalEducationNetwork/info/?tab=page_info

Sub-Activity 1/6

Partnering with the private sector, supporting the fields, which are associated with the implementation of the above mentioned conventions.

1/6.1 Taken steps

Highlighting the permanent cooperation with the private sector, the centers regularly inform of their activities the private companies operating in the given area facilitating participation of their representatives in the events and public debates on environmental issues, if necessary they visit a particular enterprise, a good example:

1. On the proposal of Alaverdi Aarhus Center Coordinator a meeting was held with employees of Akhtala Enrichment Combine.



Previously, before the Combine's leadership has been changed, there was not a similar case, than the enterprise's management cooperated with CSOs. The new leaders began to cooperate with the Centre in Alaverdi, and engage civil society campaigns.



2. Meeting of Stepanavan Center coordinator with leadership of Armanis gold mine

3. The operation of Kapan Aarhus Centre with environmental departments local industrial enterprises and others



4. Yerevan. Working Meeting with the specialists of "Critical Resource" company, have been presented the environmental risks caused by the metal mining industry.



1/6.2 Achieved results

1. The coordinator of Alaverdi center has reached an agreement for further closer cooperation, after which the management of the enterprise has often applied to the center, at the request of providing advice, based on the requirements of the Aarhus Convention about their undertaken activity, if necessary about the appropriate environmental measures.

2. Stepanavan Center is in constant contact with the leadership of Armanis gold mine, they always invite the center coordinator to the events undertaken by them, in advance inform of the scheduled debates or public hearings.

3. Responsible officials of environmental departments of Kapan regional enterprises consult with the Center's coordinator in undertaking appropriate actions, in planning process.

4. Got informed about the risks in the field of mining industry, the facts of mines impacts upon human and surrounding environment and the public discontent. The information received will be taken into account for decreasing risks of the given company in the field during the future activity.

Action 1.1.2 Aarhus Centres will organize training and awareness-raising activities for environmental decision-makers, NGOs, experts and other stakeholders to raise awareness on national and international legislation, will continue to contribute to the implementation of the Aarhus and Espoo Conventions.

Sub-Activity 2/1

To organize meetings, discussions, press conferences, training courses, awareness-raising activities in relation to the environmental decision-making process involving responsible officials of the field, CSOs, media, educational institutions and other stakeholders;

2/1.1 Taken steps

From 15 workshops planned to hold in accordance with the project aiming at raising awareness of regional and local officials of the field, NGOs, media and other stakeholders have been conducted 6, in accordance with the points 2.1 and 2.2 of the Road map.

1. Dilijan Aarhus Centre organized an awareness event for representatives of regional administration, regional and local structures of the field
2. For media notification Coordinator Dilijan center has disseminated the information sheet prepared by the PR manager through the social network Facebook, organized online discussion, which was attended by 35 users
3. Alaverdi center has carried out an awareness-raising event for journalists of local “Ankyu+TV”,
4. Kapan Center also via information sheets prepared by the PR manager and topical presentations has conducted awareness events for reporters of "SOSI" and "KHUSTUP» TVs, local newspaper.
5. Stepanavan AC has conducted an notification event for Stepanavan agricultural college students.
6. Yeghegnadzor Center has conducted notification event for youth in Jermuk



Ankyun+TV of Alaverdy



"SOSI" and "KHUSTUP» TVs, local newspaper. Kapan AC



Yeghegnadzor AC



Stepanavan agricultural college,

7. Coordinators of Yeghvard AC have met with the members of Wikimedia club and presented the Aarhus Convention, activity of Yeghvard Aarhus Center as well as spoken about writing articles on environmental themes.



8. Ararat Aarhus Center has carried out 1 event for the future journalists.



9. Gavar Aarhus Center has conducted training course on journalism for journalists of the region and the students of journalism faculty of Gavar State University. The training was conducted by the Aarhus Centers PR manager and the Coordinator of Yerevan Aarhus Center.



10. The Aarhus Centers PR manager and the Coordinator of Yerevan Aarhus Center, at the request of the Armenian Online Media and Journalists Association presented a lecture (presentation and articles) on the topic of public demand for environmental information and coverage of environmental themes in a popular language for students and lecturers of journalism faculty of the YSU. http://aarhus.am/?page_id=12306



Yerevan State University

11. Hrazdan Aarhus Center hosted "The Aarhus Convention and the media" entitled workshop, which was attended by students, young journalists, "Hrazdan" TV and members of the newly created "Healthy Environment" NGO. http://aarhus.am/?page_id=11264



12. The Aarhus Centres have disseminated special information sheets for media notification prepared by the PR manager, and Dilijan center has spread it through the Facebook social network, organized online discussions.

2/1.2 Achived results

1. Have been raised awareness of CSOs, media representatives, young people on their rights under the Aarhus Convention, strengthening knowledge of responsible persons about their obligations in making important decisions concerning environmental matters.

The total number of participants was 130.

• For example as a result of the online discussion organized by Dilijan center have been notified and actively participated in the discussion 35 users, the information has been published in Dilijan newspaper ensuring wide range of notification.



• As a result of the media coverage on not just about the training course taken place, but also the information received and the importance of the knowledge and the online discussions have been notified a larger number of people.

<http://sosi-tv.com/2164--.html>,
http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10163&lang=en,
http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10890&lang=en

• The received knowledge will contribute to the preparation of literary articles to be posted in Wikimedia on environmental issues

• The articles made by the AC representatives have been published in the manual designed for the YSU Journalism Faculty and published by the online media and the Association of journalists, which will be used by a larger number of students and practicing journalists (yet has been published the manual's test version). http://aarhus.am/?page_id=12306

Sub-Activity 2/2

To organize awareness events for employees of LSG and regional administration on the national legislation and the fulfillment of obligations taken under the Aarhus Convention, and those compliance.

2/2.1 Take steps

1. During the reporting period, all the centers have conducted 40 training courses on the obligations undertaken by the Aarhus Convention for representatives of local government, of which only in the event in Kapan was attended by representatives of the 40 communities, in the others from 1 or 2 community.

The events were held not only in the centers, but also in the rural village administration. For example,

http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10375&lang=en, http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10545&lang=en, http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10728&lang=en,
http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10287&lang=en, http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10728&lang=en,



Training for local government employees with Syunik regional administration in collaboration with Kapan AC



Kapan AC



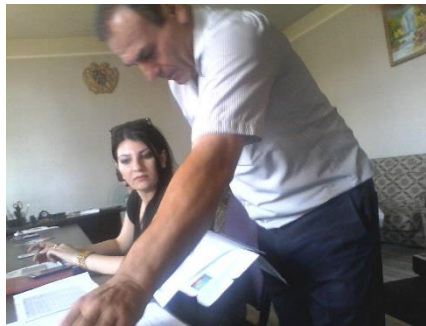
V. Ernjatap



c. Vayq



Mulqi School



v. Araqsavan



v. Mulqi



v. Yeghegnavan



v. Goravan



v. Shaghap

2. Yeghegnadzor AC in the towns of Vayk and Yeghegnadzor has presented a presentation for representatives of state bodies, students about the legal framework of disaster risk reduction.



2/2.2 Achieved results

- Have been raised awareness of Local government employees on their rights and obligations under the Aarhus Convention strengthening their knowledge.
- In particular the LSG representatives have been informed about the allotments to the affected communities from the environmental payments defined in accordance with the RA law on “Targeted use of environmental payments paid by the companies and the MNP’s legislative initiative to make amendments and fillings in the law. As well as ecological issues of the community, especially those which are closely related to the climate change, about the possibility to resolve those via new mechanism offered by the document adopted in accordance with the governmental decision.



Odzun community, Alaverdi AC



Aqori community, Alaverdi AC



Argel community Yeghvard AC



Getahovit community, Ijevan AC



Berdkunk community, Gavar AC



Aghnjadzor community, Yeghegnadzor AC

Has been strengthened the links between the given LSG and ACs, formed a new cooperation relationship.



Mulki community, Aparan AC



Armash community, Ararat AC



Dilijan community Dilijan AC



Kaputan community, Hrazdan AC



Byurakn community, Gyumri AC



Tsovazard community, Gavar AC

Sub-Action 2/3

Based on sustainable production and consumption models, on the PRTR data to support or implement training and awareness-raising activities for citizens and representatives of enterprises

2/3.1 Taken steps

Permanent consulting work has been carried out with the ecology of the "Rusal -Armenal" company, who also attended the OSCE initiated workshop on the Access to Justice in Environmental Matters at the invitation of Yerevan Aarhus Center. By the expert Eric Grigoryan to the interested companies has also been provided environmental damage calculation, and video link of the lecture on the obligation of enterprises to fulfill harmless production in other countries.

By "BLEJAN" NGO has been prepared and sent a letter asking what steps have been taken by the government towards ratifying PRTR Protocol. The information received has been posted at the

www.aarhus.am website, provided to the stakeholders. Within the framework of “International PRTR week” events held on November 24-26 in the Spain capital Madrid, information about the events dedicated to the PRTR has been posted at the website and disseminated all informational links. The centers have provided to stakeholders the separate countries PRTR websites general link: <http://prtr.net/ru/links/>.

2/3.2 Achieved results

The environmentalists of the interested enterprises learned about the existing environmental fees for environment pollution and the international experience on environmental measures undertaken by enterprises.

The CCOs, private companies and interested state agencies got informed about the actions towards the PRTR protocol ratification and obstacles of ratification by Armenia.

The CCOs, private companies and interested state agencies got informed how the other countries are managing the pollution cadastres of industrial objects and other sources planned by the PRTR protocol.

Sub-Action 2/4

To cooperate with programs or other initiatives dealing with environmental protection and sustainable development at the local and national levels

2/4.1 Taken steps

1. During the reporting period the centers have closely cooperated with the YSU Sustainable Development Center, Center for Economic and Legal Analysis NGO, ARNAP, WCC Armenia Interchurch Charitable Round Table Foundation, the NGO Forests of Armenia, "Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment" NGO, "For Sustainable Human Development" Association, "Khazer" ecological-cultural NGO, "EcoLur" NGO, Pan-Armenian environmental front initiative and with other CSOs, as well as international organizations (WWF Armenia, GEF SGP).



2. It's noteworthy the cooperation with the Disasters Risk National Platform.

3. Coordinator of Yerevan Aarhus Centre was included in the Coordinating Committee of "Support to the SHPPs regarding reforms aiming at sustainable use of river ecosystems, through dialogue with the public and the RA Ministry of Nature Protection" program.

4. Within the frameworks of the "Development of the Armenian project strategy within the 6th functional phase of the GEF SGP in Armenia" with the stakeholders of regional consultative meetings and capacity building training courses have been conducted with the support of Gavar, Kapan, Yeghegnadzor and Vanadzor ACs.



Gavar AC



Kapan AC



Yeghegnadzor AC



Vanadzor AC

5. In Dilijan AC, with the assistance of the Center and in cooperation with the Caucasus Wildlife Foundation have been discussed prospects of ecotourism development in Dilijan National Park.



6. With the support of Alaverdi and Kapan Aarhus Centers, in collaboration with the the Center for Responsible Mining of the American University of Armenia (AUA) and Caucasus Environmental NGO Network (CENN) workshops were held under the theme "The mining industry risks upon the human health and the environment" aiming publicize the results of the research in the communities, striving to minimize the impact of toxic substances in mining industry in communities.



Alaverdi AC



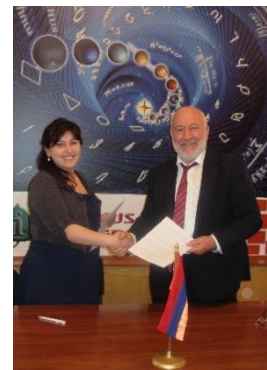
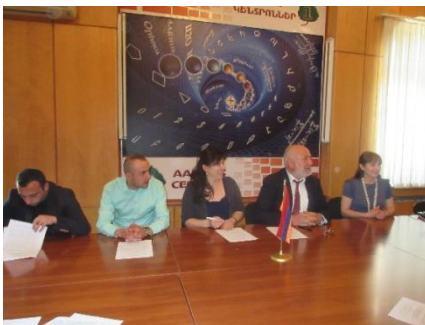
Kapan AC

2/4.2 Achieved results

1. As a result of cooperation with the the above mentioned structures have been planned and performed a number of measures directed to control the exploitation of mines, prevention and reduction of possible environmental impacts on the environment of the existing and new SHPPs, the process of Rio + 20, sustainable development, increasing the influence of CSOs in environmental issues related decision-making processes etc., involving as well state institutions.



2. It was signed a memorandum of cooperation and established closer collaboration in the field of reducing threats posed to the environment and raising awareness about it among the Armenian Aarhus Centers and the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.



Within the framework of the cooperation in June, 2015 the representatives of Vanadzor, Alaverdi, Stepanavan, Aparan, Yeghvard, Idjevan Gavar, Kapan and Yerevan Aarhus Centers took part in “Environmental emergency management and integration into FEAT” training course organized in the UN Armenia Office. (details at: http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10750&lang=en):

The President of the ARNAP Foundation, along with three representatives of the Armenian Aarhus Centres has participated in the annual meeting in Vienna.

Afterwards on June 11, at the this year's second working meeting of the Aarhus centers have been discussed the next joint steps of the foundation and the centers. (details at: http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10745&lang=en):

At the third and fourth meetings of the Aarhus centers, the centers had also another course designed by the expert Nver Poghosyan, in order to strengthen previously acquired knowledge (details at: http://aarhus.am/?page_id=12215&lang=en):

Within the scope of the cooperation in the field the Centers have been included in the Emergency information network, at the fourth meeting Nikolay Grigoryan, Deputy Chief of the RAESM Rescue Service presented the idea of creation of the “Emergency Network” in terms of providing dissemination of accurate, beyond anyone’s interest, very useful information aimed at public from the one point of the state in case of an earthquake or other major disaster, the role of the Aarhus Centers in its extending and increasing its efficiency.

http://aarhus.am/?page_id=13244



3. As a result of cooperation with the the above mentioned structures have been planned and performed a number of measures directed to control the exploitation of mines, prevention and reduction of possible environmental impacts on the environment of the existing and new SHPPs, the process of Rio + 20, sustainable development, increasing the influence of CSOs in environmental issues related decision-making processes etc., involving as well state institutions.

4. Only one of 75 surveyed SHPPs complied with the project.

5. Three of regional consultative meetings with stakeholders and capacity building training courses within Development of Armenia’s project strategy under "The operational phase of the GEF SGP 6th" program have been conducted in Gavar, Kapan, Yeghegnadzor ACs, with the Centers support, and the implementation of 1 training course and public involvement has supported Vanadzor AC.

6. Participants highlighted the transparency of activities carried out in Dilijan National Park, which will enable the interested institutions to take part in eco-tourism strategy development in Dilijan National Park with their offers. It was decided to organize a discussion with a larger representative group.

7. In total, 45 participants from Alaverdi and 30 participants from Kapan were informed both about the sampling methods, and the laboratory research, and the used instrument, got acquainted how to mitigate the health risks caused by heavy metals.

Sub-Action 2/5

To promote to the involvement of more active citizens in environmental protection processes, supporting their participation in the decision-making process, organize events highlighting environmental issues, in particular issues related to the Aarhus Convention.

2/5.1 Taken steps

The centers have worked in formation of conscious civic groups, which have in-depth understanding of the problem and are able to implement their own awareness and participation rights.

1. Hrazdan and Dilijan Aarhus Centre, getting informed about the exploitation of Kaputan iron mine have informed the public of Kaputan, explaining for them the EIA project, their rights protected by the Aarhus Convention, the expert clarifications. http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10158&lang=en,



2. Stepanavan Aarhus Center Coordinator paid visits to Fioletovo community and supported the residents of Fioletovo community populated by Russians considering as national minority, to carry out correct, organized actions on the process of public hearings and to make their voices heard in terms of decision-making.



3. Alaverdi Aarhus Centre has supported to the organization of a media tour to Nahatak called tailings dump in Mets Ayroum, actively supported the formation of a civil group, as a result the company will fulfill its obligations in terms of the exploitation and recultivation of the old tailings dump and then only planning to build a new tailings dump.



4. The civic active group formed previously with the support of Aparan AC in Melikgyugh, during the public hearing held in 16.04.15 has raised founded issues and spoke against to the place and the method of operation of the mine: http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10735



5. On the basis of Hrazdan AC have been created a new "Healthy environment" CSO, for development of environment, health, agriculture and tourism.



6. Stepanavan Aarhus Center has continued to cooperate with the active group of Fioletovo community guiding them in protection of their rights because, although the mine operation has been suspended, but people regularly visit the mine area, carry out measurements or other actions.



7. Alaverdi AC-based volunteer group has created a "New Alaverdi" NGO, which is actively operating this time increasing awareness of the community on the research carried out to expand the mine by Teghut CJSC.



8. Gyumri AC has supported and organized a meeting with the members of Yerevan and Gyumri SOS of Gyumri ZOO initiative.



9. At the invitation of the mayor of Syunik community, Kapan Aarhus Center Coordinator visited the community for the purpose of clarification information about the lands being flooded with the waste. Many residents did not have accurate information about the situation, did not know whom to turn to, they were concerned that the issue could affect their income from selling agricultural products and their health.



2/5.2 Achieved results

1. After presenting residents of Kaputan community about the EIA draft and their rights protected by the Aarhus Convention and expert explanations by Hrazdan Aarhus Center, during the public hearing the residents of Kaputan had raised well founded issues and spoke against the place and the method of operation of the mine.
2. As a result of numerous visits of Stepanavan Aarhus Centre coordinator to the community and the right actions Russian residents of Fioletovo community populated by molokans, the community participated in the public hearing to make their voice heard in terms of decision-making.
3. As a result of activists carried out by Alaverdi Aarhus Center the residents and activists have demanded the company to fulfill its obligations in terms of the old tailing dumps exploitation and recultivation and than only planning to build a new tailing dump. http://aarhus.am/?page_id=8975&lang=en, http://aarhus.am/?page_id=9541&lang=en,
4. The active civic group formed in Melikgyugh is ready to defend their right to live in a healthy and safe environment.
5. Hrazdan Aarhus Centre has new conscious partners aware of their rights, who are fighting for a healthy environment.
6. The members of active group of Fioletovo community are consistently working to be informed on their rights, in environmental protection and participation processes.
7. About 20 young people are aware of their rights and involved not only in the environmental protection but also other issues related community development issues.
8. An agreement was signed for the transportation of animals, money has been reached and for animals fodder and the animals were fed.
9. As a result of Kapan Aarhus Center intervention the holes of drainage pipe's manholes cemented with the efforts of the leadership of local livestock complex, excluding the leak. The responsible organizations "AWSC" CJSC Kapan branch coordinators closed up the metal pipe holes and covered it with ground.

Sub-Action 2/6

To support and promote cooperation between CSOs and the formation of partnership relations at local and national levels.

2/6.1 Taken steps

Aarhus Centres through the organization of online newsletters and discussions have been carried out on planning agreed joint actions with CSOs, create awareness of CSOs in the activities of their colleagues.

In this regard is exemplary the experience of Hrazdan and Gavar centers, where have established a permanent collaboration with local and regional NGOs.



http://aarhus.am/?page_id=9180&lang=en



http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10006&lang=en

The Aarhus Centres are in constant cooperation with Eco- alliance, have been jointly conducted extensive awareness raising among the general public, as well as a joint letter has been prepared addressed to the RA Prime Minister with regard to transferring water from Lake Sevan to Lake Urmira.

http://aarhus.am/letters_2015/11.08.15-letter%20from%20Aarhus%20&%20ecocoalition.pdf

2/6.2 Achieved results

The works are being carried out in coordination and collaboration, in regard to environmental matters are being processed and submitted joint proposals and letters to relevant bodies.

Environmental matters related actions are being implemented coordinated and ensuring a wider notification. http://aarhus.am/letters_2015/patasxan_03_09.pdf

Action 1.1.3 The Aarhus Centers will contribute to access to available environmental information through various tools (www.aarhus.am web site, newsletters, information boards, etc.) to communicate more actively with local and national media.

Sub-action 3/1

Collection of information to update appropriate sections of the website under the "Aarhus Centers Related Documents", "International Conventions", "Documents related to the Aarhus Convention", "Aarhus Centers Library", "Links", "Organizations" "Publications" and so on.

3/1.1 Taken steps

During the reporting period of 2015 the www.aarhus.am website has been operated and updated.

1. For the Aarhus online TV have been prepared and installed complete video recording of public hearings and discussions, as well as interviews. It is remarkable the installation of experts interview about the opportunities of creation of an alternative impartial and independent body intended by the Aarhus Convention's Article 9 paragraph 2, which aroused great interest among the public.

<http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3432&page=1&&status=all>:

2. www.aarhus.am Approximately 225 information materials and analysis have been posted on the website on the centers actions and events organized in the centers on the initiatives of other organizations, public hearings and discussions. All materials were also posted in English, if was necessary also in Russian.

3. The centers in their turn have provided information on the EIA drafts of "Nahatak" tailing dump of Akhtala Enrichment Combine and the planned new tailings dump, Armanis, Sotq, Fioletovo, Meliqgyugh gold mines expansion or operation, SHPPs to the experts of Yerevan State University Sustainable Development Center, Armenia Forests NGO.

4. Brief e-newsletters in regard to various issues were prepared and disseminated among the Aarhus centers, media and other interested civil society organizations; close co-operation with the media has been established by the PR officer, especially with the Radio Liberty, Central Television, "Haykakan Zhamanak" daily, Armenpress news agency, the YSU Faculty of Journalism and emerging journalists, local and regional media Human Rights Defender's Office, Emergency Channel aimed disaster risk reduction Information Center. (Detailed information is at the Annex 1, in Armenian and English versions).

5. By necessity, the coordinators have provided interviews with regard to tree pruning, mineral exploration activities in Sevan Lake Basin, environmental pollution, water pollution in the river Gegharot, and damages of mining industry and so on.

6. At the "News from Aarhus center" have been posted 175 informative, if necessary also 10 analytical materials, as seen in / the attached Appendix 2 / according to the centers. All articles have been edited and adapted to website technical format and content.

7. To the relevant authorities have been filed 95 inquiries, 7 of which jointly, including one was addressed to the Ministry of Finance twice. The inquiries are posted on the website with short titles, which were drawn up by the public relations officer.

8. All materials have been translated into English, translation of the materials have been ensured by Anush Beybutyan, coordinator-translator of Yeghvard Aarhus Center, Marine Mazmanyan, coordinator of

Gavar Aarhus Center, the materials of Ararat, Yeghvard and Yeghegnadzor Centers have been translated by the Coordinators. The titles of inquiries has also been translated by Marine Mazmanyanyan.

All materials (http://aarhus.am/?page_id=757) and inquiries with their answers (http://aarhus.am/?page_id=132) can be found in relevant sections of the website.

9. At the "Expert's Corner" section of the website have been posted 28 materials- analysis, comment or suggestion, made by "Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment" NGO, YSU Centre for Sustainable Development, Environmental Law Research Centre and independent experts.

As well as the letter and comment of "Blejan" NGO on what actions have been taken in 2003 since the ratification of "Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers" Protocol, what is the obstacle of the ratification of the Protocol.

10. Has been updated the page provided for the YSU Centre for Sustainable Development with the materials and information provided by them on the important events.

11. Has been updated the section library with references of more than 10 new thematic literature.

12. Eco-News section has been regularly updated, providing the users of the website with the links of news, reports, studies and journalistic investigations on the interesting and important events in the field.

13. Through the Aarhus online TV Aarhus have been disseminated 20 documentaries: video recordings of 7 public hearings and public discussion (4 with English subtitles), 1 video recording of the media tour to Nahatak tailings dump, 4 interviews (with English subtitles), 8 lectures or presentations.

Public hearings and discussions:

On the professional discussion of oil and gas exploration activities

<http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3231&page=1&&status=all> ,

- On the media tour towards Nahatak tailings dams
<http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3401&page=1&&status=all> ,
- Professional discussion of Amoulsar Mine Development draft
<http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3405&page=1&&status=all> ,
- Public hearing held in Kartchaghpyur.
<http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3414&page=1&&status=all> ,
- The complete video of the discussion on the Mining Industry Sector on the initiative of the Centre for Sustainable Development
<http://aviplatform.com/user.items.php?id=185> :
- Public discussion of draft on waste management strategy
<http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3452&page=1&&status=all> ,
- Video recordings of the public hearings on the applications for preliminary environmental impact assessment of fish processing plant and Sevan trout breeding cage net model draft
<http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3494&page=1&&status=all>
<http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3493&page=1&&status=all> :

Interviews:

- Interview with Anahit Manasyan, senior adviser to the President of the Constitutional Court, on whether the institution of the Ombudsman can be an independent and impartial alternative body reviewing the environment related decisions designed by the Aarhus Convention in Armenia. <http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3432&page=1&&status=all#sthash.2efUNW3g.dpuf>
- Have been prepared and published 2 interviews with the lawyer Nazeli Vardanyan, on the Article 9 of the Aarhus Convention and the second one on the Amulsar Mine Development draft non-compliance with the national legislation, <http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3430&page=1&&status=all> :
- Interview with Ruzanna Ghazaryan about the reminder on the implementation of the decision V / 9a of the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee <http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3491&page=1&&status=all>

Lectures and presentations:

- Eric Grigoryan’s lecture on the calculation of environmental damage and compensation methodology http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?member_id=185&type=video#sthash.BBz8HZTV.dpuf
- Artur Nikogosyan’s lecture on Gyurdjef’s life and doctrines, <http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3486&page=1&&status=all> esoteric and sohestic perceptions of environmental issues (part 1) <http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?mediaID=3487&page=1&&status=all>, (part 2 is in the working stage)
- Gevorg Petrosyan's presentation about the hazards of the enriched flour and legislative initiative http://aviplatform.com/media.details.php?member_id=185&type=video
- Never Poghosyan’s lecture on the disaster risk reduction through the knowledge / is processing/.
- Nikolay Grigorian's speech about the creation of an Emergency information network / is processing/.



14. The cooperation with the Media has been achieved in various ways, via providing contacts of relevant experts and organizations, information, clarifications, video fails or photos.

3/1.2 Achieved results

1. For the period of January-December the number of the website visitors is amounted to **36 440** from **124** countries and **106 050** viewed pages.

2. Viewed pages of the web sites reach to several hundreds, even to 2-3 thousands.
3. the views of videos posted at the Aarhus online TV is 300-160 amounted to 300-1600, have been also increased views of the archival records.
4. During the current period have been published more than 45 articles about the centers activities, broadcasts mostly at local and national television news programs, as well as at the ecological program of “Kentron” TV, morning programs of local TVs, Liberty online TV and youtube, more than 25 reports of or video recordings without comments have been showed about the centers activity.
5. Media coverage of the current period, about which fellow journalists told us, are 67.

Action 1.1.4 Aarhus Centres will contribute to formation of environmental education and responsible environmental behavior among society, including their rights guaranteed by the Convention.

Sub-action 4/1

To promot environmental education and assist in the implementation of the rights guaranteed by the Convention

4/1.1 Taken steps

Particular attention was paid to raising the educational level of young people, have been organized 51 educational events dedicated to the importance of conservation of wildlife, endemic and rare species, ineffectiveness of the policy of reducing the number of wolves and the possible negative consequences, public awareness and participation rights, preservation of the Ozone Layer, stray animals, public awareness and participation rights, waste management, noise as an environmental element of pollution, global environmental challenges and opportunities for the efficient use of natural ecosystems in the RA.

4/1.2 Achieved results

Approximately 1000 pupils, students, teachers, NGO representatives from more than 14 towns and villages in Armenia received environmental knowledge, informed by global environmental problems and possibilities of efficient use of natural ecosystems, their rights guaranteed by the Aarhus Convention, to purchase and place the responsibility for the environment in terms of environmental protection, have become more proactive.

Sub-action4/2

Support the organization of a public consultation process

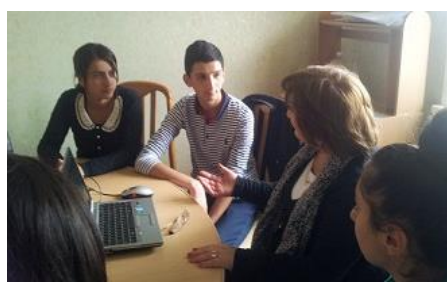
4/2.1 Taken steps

In accordance with the paragraph 5.2 of the Road Map the centers support the organization of the consultation process and they are providing relevant consultation by carrying out 350 actions in this regard. (including 271 by the ACs, the others the consultation given by the PR manager to students, journalists, various partner organizations).

4/2.2 Achieved results

1. 350 citizens and civic groups, media, educational institutions, public sector and non-governmental organizations have acquired necessary consultation
2. The next steps of the mentioned groups have been based on thorough information and become more efficient.







Sub-action4 4/3

In line with objectives of the implementing program, to develop a working action plan taking into account the regional environmental peculiarities and the existing realities

4/3.1 Taken steps

Before the implementation of the above mentioned actions and starting work towards its realization, at the each center, on the basis of the technical recommendations have been developed annual work plans, taking into account regional peculiarities and local environmental urgent issues.

In 10 centers the plans were approved by the Board of Experts Session, in others cases, taking into account the employment of experts, the plans have been agreed with them online.

http://aarhus.am/images/Kapan/Kapan_Protocol.pdf
http://aarhus.am/images/Yeghvard/Protocol_eghvard.pdf
http://aarhus.am/images/Dilijan/Dilijan_Ashxatanqajin%20tsragir.pdf
<http://aarhus.am/images/Alaverdi/Work%20plan%20alaverdi%20aarhus%202015.pdf>
http://aarhus.am/images/Ijevan/Ijevan_Ashxatanqayin%20tsragirI.pdf
http://aarhus.am/images/Gavar/Gavar_ashx.%20plan.pdf
http://aarhus.am/images/Aparan/Aparan_plan_2015.pdf
http://aarhus.am/?page_id=9766
<http://aarhus.am/images/Hrazdan/plan2015.pdf>
http://aarhus.am/?page_id=9502

4/3.2 Achieved results

As of June 30 this year the coordinators of 10 centers among 14 operating centers have been accountable to the Board of experts' through the sittings about the activities implemented in 2014, the activity of another

3 centers have been carried out online, with the help of experts were drawn up and approved the annual work plans .



Ijevan AC



Aparan AC



Dilijan AC



Kapan AC



Ararat AC



Yeghvard AC



Stepanavan AC



Gavar AC



Hrazdan AC



Alaverdi AC

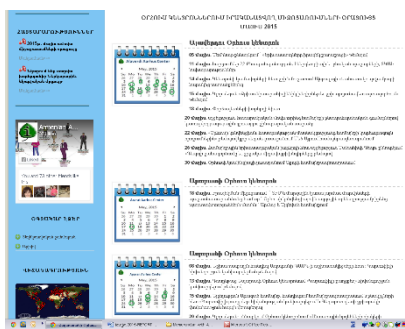
Kapan AC has even conducted an annual meeting of board, performed the work done by the center. The members of centers board of expert were in constant touch with the coordinators, the actions were carried out coordinated.

Sub-Action 4/4

To implement the activities in accordance with the monthly operation plan approved by the project manager, ensuring professional consultation, in regard to the the implementation of organization the centers activity

4/4.1 Taken steps

1. Since the launch of the project was planned and from May was put into action the calendar, which is posted on the website by months and by centers and which makes more visible and controllable the centers planned and implemented actions.



2. In parallel with it at the website have been also posted statements on some of the planned events, about others the notification of the public was ensured by local organizations concerned and via citizens' e-mail addresses, telephone calls.

Sub-action 4/5

To organize meetings and training courses for Coordinators, as well as by the professionals from other OSCE programs, the government agencies / workshops meeting held in Yerevan /

4/5.1 Taken steps

1. To the effective implementation of the project have supported the assistant project manager and project's PR officer. By the project manager, assistant manager and PR officer constantly have been provided professional consultation to centers coordinators, guidance were given to the coordinators to respond to controversial inquiries accurately.

Especially constant advice have been given to the coordinators of the newly appointed coordinators of Yeghegnadzor and to organize their works literate and correct.

During the first reporting period all the planned 4 working meetings were carried out.

Those were held in Yerevan Aarhus Center. During the all working meeting of the ACs, there has been exchange of experience, discussion of working issues, identification of obstacles and guidance. As well as lectures were conducted in order to increase the capacity of employees of the centers.



a. At the first meeting, in 31.03.15, had been presented a number of working issues regarding the implementation of the program, the goals of the program, all activities to achieve the results as well as the program's budget. http://aarhus.am/?page_id=9032/

b. At the second meeting held in 11.06.15, was presented the works done during 3 months and conducted a training on "State bodies legislative action and inaction of the procedural issues" by expert Gevorg Danielyan: http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10703/



31.03.2015, 1-իւ



11.06.2015. 2-րդ

c. The third meeting began with the welcoming remarks of Mrs. Radka Rubilina, the Human Rights Officer of the OSCE Office in Yerevan. They discussed issues related to the centers the current and future activities.

Aiming at developing abilities of the coordinators lectures were delivered by the experts Eric Grigoryan, Artur Nikogosyan and Nver Poghosyan. http://aarhus.am/?page_id=12148



d. The agenda of the fourth meeting was also full, both the requalification courses, as well as meetings and discussions of formulation and presentation of the annual reports.

http://aarhus.am/?page_id=13244



2. The Aarhus Centers coordinators have also participated in training courses conducted by other organizations, at the national level, in particular

3. Within the framework of cooperation with the DRR National Platform under the theme "Environmental emergencies and FEAT integration" in the UN Yerevan office.



4. On September 11, Armenia's Aarhus Centers employees participated in the workshop organized by the OSCE Office in Yerevan, which was aimed at discussing environmental issues on access to justice.



5. On November 5, the representatives of the Armenian Aarhus Centres took part in the conference organized by "Khazer" eco-cultural NGO, a on "Towards Paris, Armenia at the threshold of the 21 th Session of the Parties to the UNFCCC ", once again presented their views mainly on the new financial mechanism for solving environmental issues posed by climate change, the idea of creation a revolving

fund, because it can be a great tool for community development and meanwhile for facing the various problems posed by climate change.



6. On November 10, the representatives of the Aarhus Centres in Armenia participated in the "Natural mineral and water resources efficient use and environmental management, problems and solutions" workshop.



7. The Project Manager and the PR officer have participated in the EMN meetings.

8. The Aarhus Centers employees have participated in international meetings.

a. With the support of the OSCE the coordinators of Hrazdan and Yeghvard Aarhus Centers and the centers press officer have participated in the Aarhus Centers annual meeting in 2015 in Vienna, where the latter have presented the cooperation among the Aarhus Centres of Armenia aimed at improving the management of the field and how the Armenian Aarhus Centres promote public participation in decision-making: http://aarhus.eng/?page_id=10442, presentations are available at the following link http://aarhus.am/?page_id=131



b. With the support of the OSCE the coordinator of Yerevan Aarhus Centers has participated in the meeting of the South Caucasus region "Environment and Security Initiative " held in Tbilisi.

Reports about the mentioned meetings have been presented to the employees of the other centers during the working meetings, as well as through the website.

http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10648&lang=en http://aarhus.am/?page_id=10626



c. Coordinator of Yerevan Aarhus Center has participated in the 2nd round table discussion under the auspices of UNECE's Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Ratification taken place in Madrid.



d. The Project Manager has participated in Meeting of Tasks Force Working Group's on Access to Information of the Aarhus Convention held on December 8-10 in Geneva with the financial support of the Secretariat.



4/5.2 Achieved results

1. The centers work has become more organized, efficient, purposeful, consolidated and literate.

2. Have been ensured between the ACs exchange of best practices and accountability. ACs were aware of calculation and compensation methodology of the environmental damage, international experience, esoteric and semantic perceptions of the environmental issues, possession of appropriate knowledge and literate use of disaster risk reduction measures.
3. The Centers employees informed about the need of compliance of some pillars of the Aarhus Convention to the national legislation, analysis of the processes related to the implementation of the Aarhus Convention, international experience, the importance of creation an independent and impartial body in Armenia envisaged by the paragraph 2, of the Article 9 of the Convention.
4. They are aware of international trends, ACs activities in other countries, activities conducted in collaboration with the OSCE ENVSEC in the field of disaster risk reduction, etc.

3. The project's direct and indirect beneficiaries, partner organizations and experts.

The beneficiaries of the project were residents of all the provinces of the RA, including Armavir, 15 cities: Ararat, Alaverdi, Aparan, Gavar, Gyumri, Dilijan, Yerevan, Yeghegnadzor, Yeghvard, Ijevan, Stepanavan, Vanadzor and Kapan, Hrazdan cities and their surrounding urban and rural communities, NGOs of the field, public active groups and initiatives, LSGs, youth groups, students, educational institutions and others.

Throughout the implementation of the program the Aarhus centers were in close cooperation with about 8 dozen of non-governmental organizations, the media, community leaders, regional administrations, particularly the departments of Environment and Urban Development, the Regional Environmental Inspectorate and other government departments and community organizations.

According to this year's program, since July 1, two experts have worked with the centers: Artur Nikoghosyan, expert of the "Esoteric and semantic perceptions of the environmental issues" and Nver Poghosyan, "Disaster risk reduction capacity building" expert / CVs are attached/, who have already conducted training course for the centers coordinators.

On July 1-30 Yeghvard Aarhus Centre hosted the American Mariel Kieval, who was doing a summer internship in the frames of American Council's professional and intercultural training program. American spent a summer internship at the Aarhus Centers in Armenia, in particular, visiting Yerevan, Hrazdan and Gavar Aarhus centers, got acquainted with the activities of the centers, the works, explored the Aarhus Convention, the steps taken towards its implementation in Armenia.

Then she conducted independent evaluation of Aarhus Centers, offering suggestions on how to make the centers activity efficient, which means additional resources.

4. Project's actual results achieved, lessons learned and conclusions

Real achievements achieved by the program can be considered that:

1. This year, after the publication of the Ombudsman's report, as stated in the preamble, the PR officer of the Aarhus Centres in Armenia and coordinator of Yerevan Aarhus Centre were invited to a meeting with the Environmental Assistant to Ombudsman to discuss the next steps and to do everything possible to make appropriate amendments and additions in the "Environmental Impact Assessment and Expertise " law. The centers have disseminated the Ombudsman's report via website and networks, particularly regarding the information at environment chapter, made clarifications at the local level meetings.

Afterwards centers have jointly sent a letter to the Minister of Nature Protection aiming at obtaining the position of the ministry and explanations in regard to the comments of shortcomings and deficiencies existing in the environmental management in accordance with the relevant sections of Ombudsman's 2014 annual report: http://aarhus.am/letters_2015/Orhusneri%20namak_29_05.pdf:

The MNP answered that we can get that answer from the Ombudsman's office, after their official response to the Ombudsman,

2. Thanks to the vigorous activity carried out by Stepanavan Aarhus Center it was possible to impact at the final decision on the public hearings of the EIA draft of the planned gold mine exploitation in Fioletovo community, the process was suspended, the Minister of Nature Protection required to take into consideration othe local residents, experts' comments and recommendations, the contradictions between laws, develop and introduce a new project.
3. As a result of Aparan Aarhus Centre alarm and letters, by Aragatsotn Marz Department of Ecology and Environmental Inspection department has been conducted inspections.
4. The network of the Aarhus Centers in Armenia has continued the membership to the 3rd Working Group's activity of Armenia's National Platform of EaP CSF, participated in discussions and planning of field operations.

5. Some parts of recommendations collected by the Aarhus Centres and presented to the relevant authorities were included in the relevant document or taken into consideration by the given agency.
6. As a result of implemented activities many RA residents, the media, CSOs and local government representatives were got informed about the international environmental agreements ratified by Armenia and the pillars of the Aarhus Convention, as well as the rights of citizens enshrined by them.
7. Eco-education events were attended by more than 1000 young people and adolescents, which raised the level interest of environmental protection issues.
8. Have been ensured the everyday activities of the Aarhus Centres in accordance with the goals stated in the centers memorandum, plans approved by the Board to experts, and the tasks established by this project.
9. Have been ensured notification on the new financial mechanism resolving environment issues, as a result of which Gavar city administration appealed to the national coordinator of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, requesting to organize urban lighting via energy-saving method, a number of communities applied to Ararat Center Coordinator directing them to invest in this financial mechanism.
10. Some of the recommendations collected by the Aarhus Centres and submitted to the appropriate authorities have been included in the document or taken note of by the given ministry.
11. As a result of the alarm and the letter of Aparan Aarhus Center with regard to illegal construction carried out in the area of Tuxhmanuk gold mine by the “Mego Gold” LLC inspections have been conducted by the Environmental Department and Regional Environmental Inspectorate Division of Aragatsotn province, the works have been suspended,
12. Thanks to the vigorous activity of Stepanavan Aarhus Center has been possible to affect the final decision on the gold mine development planned at the area of Fioletovo community at the public hearings EIA phase of the project, the activity has been suspended, the Minister of Environment required to develop and introduce a new project taking into consideration comments and recommendations of local residents and experts' as well as the laws contradictions.
13. Has been settled the problem No. 1 in 2007 for Kapan Aarhus Center: the orchards and vegetable gardens of Syuniq community will not be irrigated by the tailings dam water contaminated with heavy metals and chemicals.
14. The residents of Kapan and Kajaran are no longer be nurtured by dangerous / report of the Ecological Research Center of the RA National Academy / vegetables and fruits.

15. Kapan city's central district's yard and streets will be refrained from contaminated with yellow-brown heavy metals waters coming from mine, where children were playing, after drying by winds and the passing cars yellow dust was arousing.
16. We expect that will be resolved the issue of sewage pipeline flowing into the gulch of Syunik community in 2016, after raising the issue by the center, which poses a great risk in accordance with the epidemiologists.
17. With regard to the illegal logging from the Kapan forestry of "ArmForest" SNCO has reported that a criminal case is initiated, the investigation is continuing, after completing such logging will not be taken place.
18. We are expecting that after the completion of the inspections in "Zangezur" 'Biospheric Complex' SNCO the perpetrators will be punished and will be no logging anymore in the areas of "Zangezur" 'Biospheric Complex, where it is forbidden even taking a dead tree lying on the ground.
19. Dilijan Center has widely used the Facebook social network as a platform for information dissemination and online discussions, direct beneficiaries of which have been 3819 citizens.
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/dilijangroup/>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1387196894935102/>
20. Information has been received and disseminated about poor quality of drinking water of Dilijan, the authorities' attention has been concentrated and certain solutions have been found.
<https://www.facebook.com/albert.haroyan/videos/o.171983678573/973146622730928/?type=2&theater>
21. On the initiative of Dilijan AC have been organized eco-educational, awareness raising and protection of residents interests: the right to live in an healthy environment, has been organized a cleaning campaign and entire neighborhood was cleared.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GwFEWpO3hQ&feature=youtu.be>

5. Difficulties emerged within the project and new solutions

- In this stage of the project there were no significant difficulties and obstacles, but there are unforeseen situations, which have more or less disturbed the process of the project /please see the attached Annex 2/.
- Since the months of July and August are vacation months, so in that period the centers were more passive in terms of organizing and holding events, but have actively worked in the acquisition and dissemination of information.
- The coordinator of Yeghegnadzor AC had appealed for termination request of contractual services, have been announced a new contest and elected new coordinators, it's true that the center works were stopped in 1.5 months, but since September10 again continued to work normally.

6. Project evaluation and continuity

The complete evaluation of program implementation process and results has been carried out:

1. Making everyday notes on the statistical report form previously developed by the project manager.
2. Providing materials, photos, agendas, minutes in connection with the implemented activities to the project manager and PR officer
3. Via daily phone calls, e-mails, discussions of the working group created at the www.facebook.com social network.

The actions carried out by the NGO regarding to the all issues mentioned in the program, which implementation has lead to solutions of some issues, decisions of common good and expected results.

7. Detailed statistical data on the activities and services rendered by Aarhus Centres

(See the attached files by centers in English and in Armenian)

8. Materials attached to the report

To the report are attached some of the photos regarding the center activities of this year.

Below we present the links of all press releases and video recordings on the activities and participation of the Aarhus Centers in Armenia, which are posted on the Internet. /Detailed information is attached in Annex 1, in Armenian and in English/.

The report was made by:

Lianna Asoyan

Project Manager of the Aarhus Centres in Armenia

Address: 1/16 Dashtoyan street, c. Gavar, RA

Tell: - (+374) 264 6 15 11

Mob.: (+374) 77 76 46 41

E-mail: blejanli@gmail.com

Mari Chakryan

PR officer of Aarhus Centres in Armenia

Address: 64 G. Mahari, C. Yerevan, RA

Mob: (+374) 93 991212

E-mail: aarhusnews@gmail.com,

Gevorg Petrosyan

Assistant to the Project Manager of the Aarhus Centres in Armenia

Address: 12a G.Nzhdeh, C. Gyumri, RA

Tell/fax: + 374 312/ 3 29 13

Mob: + 374 93 714 533

E-mail: gyumricenter@gmail.com, aarhuscenter@gyumri.am