



Internet Society
Armenia Chapter

Rehabilitation of disabled people, retired athletes,
pensioners, jobless school graduates by training
them in Internet literacy, social networks and
setting-up new businesses/start-ups in the
Republic of Armenia

May 30, 2021



Complete Report

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THE OBJECTIVE

One of the priorities of the Internet Society is to provide Internet connectivity and enable various communities to use the Internet. And while the process is going fairly well for the young and active part of the population, the vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities, retired persons, and jobless school graduates mostly remain unconnected because of the lack of knowledge and devices.

The main objective of the Project is to increase the reach of the Internet by bringing it to the vulnerable groups of the population as well as to train them computer and Internet literacy, social networks, and set up start-ups/small businesses. Achievement of this objective will help the target group participants to return to an active life and earn enough money to support themselves.

The following focus groups are under the attention of the Internet Society Armenia Chapter: people with disabilities, pensioners, retired athletes, and young school graduates having no specialty and jobs. We consider that retired engineers are the most suitable target group among pensioners. As for sportsmen, after leaving the sport, a lot of athletes face financial problems because they cannot support themselves without being prepared for new life conditions without having an alternative profession and knowledge. Young school graduates having no specialty and jobs are probably the most active but vulnerable group as jobless young people are sometimes subject to criminals' influence and giving them Internet skills will avert them from joining street gangs. Besides, working side by side with elder people would add young energy and agility to the overall activity of participants.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

In December 2019 Internet Society Armenia Chapter announced the launch of the “Internet Literacy for Vulnerable Groups” Program, which would provide basic knowledge in computer and Internet literacy, social media marketing, business planning and implementation for vulnerable groups.

The announcement was sent out through various channels: mailing list of the Chapter members and partner organizations as well as the social media.

For the implementation of this Project, we have cooperated with:

- "Pyunik" Armenian Association for people with disabilities,
- “64+” Charitable NGO, a public organization of retired athletes,
- Adult education and lifelong learning public organization (PO of retired engineers and technicians),
- Jobless young school graduates having no specialty.

To invite people to the Program, we created a public call, especially for young participants with no higher education and for the elders.



← In this photo:

A group of people with disabilities from the "Pyunik" organization with the General Manager of the project Igor Mkrtyumyan and the Manager of the group Hasmik Melikyan

SELECTION & GROUPING OF PARTICIPANTS

As a result of the first step, 45 people (10 people from the first three target groups and 15 young jobless school graduates) were selected. The criteria of choice were their willingness to start their own business and having some business ideas.

A manager was assigned to each group: **Ms. Hasmik Melikyan, Ms. Annie Dallakian, and Mr. Gagik Sargsyan** became the primary contact point for participants.

THE LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

This is a list of 45 selected participants applied to the open call for applications

MANAGER: ANNIE DALLAKIAN

Alvard Davtyan
Ani Amirkhanyan
Anna Poghosyan
Aram Simonyan
Edik Bakhshyan
Edmond Hovhannisyan
Eduard Yeghiazaryan
Erik Antonyan
Erna Ghazaryan
Gagik Gyanjumyan
Gagik Hakobyan
Gayane Grigoryan
Gayane Yesayan
Georgi Gevorgyan
Gor Hakobyan

MANAGER: HASMIK MELIKYAN

Hakob Sargsyan
Hasmik Melikyan
Hayk Avetisyan
Hovhannes Ispiryan
Hrachya Avagyan
Hrachya Harutyunyan
Inesa Dilikyan
Irina Martirosyan
Karen Azaryan
Karen Mikayelyan
Lena Karapetyan
Liana Aneshyan
Lilit Nazlukhanyan
Maria Aghbashyan
Zaruhi Madatyan

MANAGER: GAGIK SARGSYAN

Marine Petrosyan
Meri Mangryan
Narek Derdzakyan
Narek Yeghiazaryan
Narine Azaryan
Narine Karapetyan
Narine Zakaryan
Onik Tovmasyan
Sargis Zakaryan
Serob Manukyan
Sona Khachatryan
Syuzanna Nazaryan
Tatev Arakelyan
Tigran Nazaryan
Varduhi Hakobyan



All participants became students of a month-long business course provided by the **Business Support Center** (BSC).

The choice of BSC for the business course was based on the reputation of BSC in Armenia. It is one of the founders of the management consulting sector and a company that ensures continuous development of this sector. BSC is an EU-funded company, laid by the EU TACIS (Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States) program and is considered a "forge of the country business professionals".

Business Support Center among others, provides business advisory services, marketing consultancy, develops business plan, marketing strategy and runs corporate trainings.

LECTURES

➤ How to set up and manage a private business

Before launching the business course, the Project General Manager met the Business Support Center team and explained the objectives of this Project. The professional team of BSC designed a special program for our participants. The one-month course was shaped to cover the following topics:

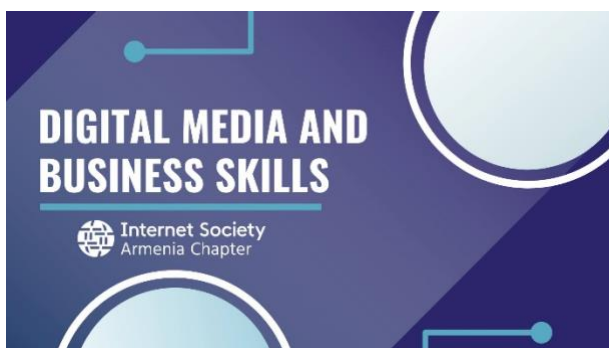
- From idea to business
- Development of business model(s)
- Development of business plan(s)
- Businesses' legal status and registration
- Market research
- How to attract investments
- Accounting and taxation
- Business management
- Personnel management
- Marketing strategies
- Digital marketing
- Financial management
- Sales management
- Time management
- Organization of business processes

The selected participants started their trainings in 3 groups with 15 participants in each group. The lectures were run in various formats including interactive elements to provide utmost engagement and better understanding of the topics.

❖ Participants at the Business Course classes



❖ Facebook Group



To keep the participants updated on any information regarding the Project, a Facebook group "**Digital Media and Business Skills**" was created.

All news concerning the schedule of lectures for each group as well as other announcements were henceforth published on this Facebook [private group](#).

❖ Certificates

After the course, the Program participants received Certificates on successful completion of the BSC's management course "How to set up and manage a private business".



At the end of this course, a survey on the evaluation of the lecture course was conducted.

The participants were invited to think about business ideas and present a short description of their ideas taking into consideration the following:

- Business description
- The purpose of the business
- Product or Service description
- Target group

The survey was needed to work with more practical examples in the classroom.

Later, a brainstorming session was organized, where all participants of the Program presented their business ideas. The pros and cons of each idea were discussed in the groups. Some ideas got support, others challenged, and changes proposed. Eventually, the following ideas were selected to serve as starting points for business coaches:

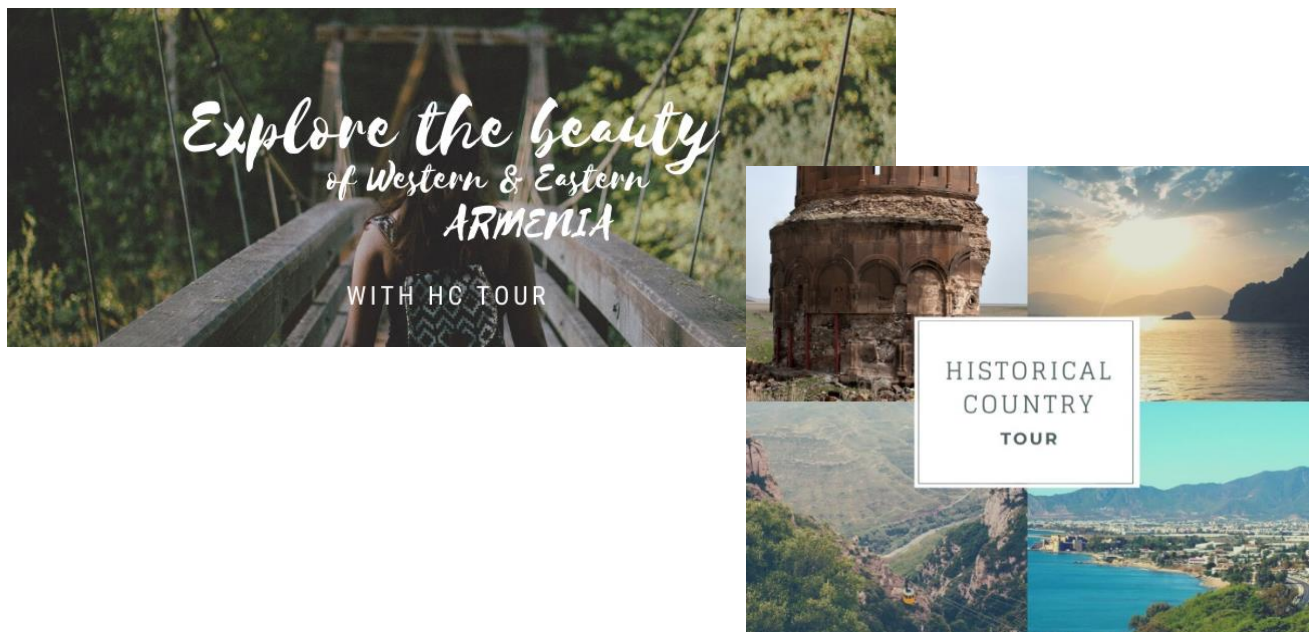
1. Meri Mangryan: "64+" NGO needs a website and a Facebook page.
2. Irina Martirosyan and Hrachya Harutyunyan: They want to set up a business in art management: paint art, music. They need a website.
3. Hrachya Harutyunyan: Abstract paintings on T-shirts. He wants to set up an art manager business.
4. Lianna Aneshyan: Handmade bijouterie, homemade peanut butter. She needs an online store and marketing help.
5. Gayane Yesayan: Psychotherapy specialist. She wants to set up a psychotherapy clinic for up to 30 patients (a separate house in a green, relaxed environment, where patients can relax, take séances of psychotherapy, and recover). Needs a business plan and investors. She would also like to organize special tourist routes for patients.
6. Eduard Yeghiazaryan: He has a building, fruit gardens, and several land plots. Wants to sell them or donate to a benevolent undertaking.
7. Hasmik Petrosyan: Buying and reselling bijou, through the Facebook oriented for women of 18-25 years old. She needs help in marketing goods.
8. Hovhannes Ispiryan: He wants to set up a store for selling intellectual games (Lego type) and newest mobile accessories and gadgets. Needs help in setting a Facebook page/Internet website and marketing.
9. Tigran Nazaryan: Handmade goods from semi-precious stones and obsidian. He needs a Facebook online store and marketing help.
10. Syuzanna Nazaryan: Handmade embroidery. Buyers will get a present - hand painted dish.
11. Varduhi Hakobyan: Beauty salon with a half-price discount for people with disabilities. She needs investors, advertising, and marketing.
12. Narek Derdzakyan: Growing and selling black roses. He needs advertising and marketing.
13. Maria Aghbashyan: Virtual tourism. Mobile application with virtual access to different sightseeing places.
14. Karen Matevosyan and Maria Aghbashyan: Touristic business, guides. They need a Facebook page, advertising, and marketing help.

15. Anna Khechumyan: Kniting socks and making soft toys. She needs a Facebook page and a store.
16. Gayane Grigoryan: Reproduction and sale of aquarium fish. She needs a Facebook page and a store.
17. Ani Amirkhanyan: She wants to open a private Children's cafe. She has a good experience.
18. Karen Mikaelyan: Deputy chief editor of a Russian language newspaper. Because of the lack of money, the newspaper is issued once a month. He needs crowdfunding help to keep the newspaper alive.
19. Gagik Sargsyan: He has an idea to create an Internet store of Armenian bijou, souvenirs, brandy, jewelry and needs a website.
20. Visually impaired people: They need rebranding of the radio-menq.am web site.

The work with one of the participants was started earlier and was presented to all others. This was a newly opened Facebook page of Karen Matosyan named "HISTORICAL COUNTRY TOUR". Karen's idea was one of the first in the program and was meant to motivate other participants.

The group Manager worked with Karen to create and launch his Facebook page and all necessary elements for promoting the idea of tourism to the historical territories of Western Armenia (currently the territory of Turkey). Together they explored the need of the market for this tour and developed routes via comfortable minivans. The Manager, acting as a Coach for this particular project, helped out with preparations of the initial publications.

Pic.: From Facebook page



➤ Computer Literacy

A lecture course on basic knowledge of “Computer Literacy” was conducted. Topics of the lecture were **Operating Systems, Browsers, Microsoft Office**. The course was provided by Vahan Misakyan, the lead of the "Computers, services and WiFi Internet for rural libraries" program.

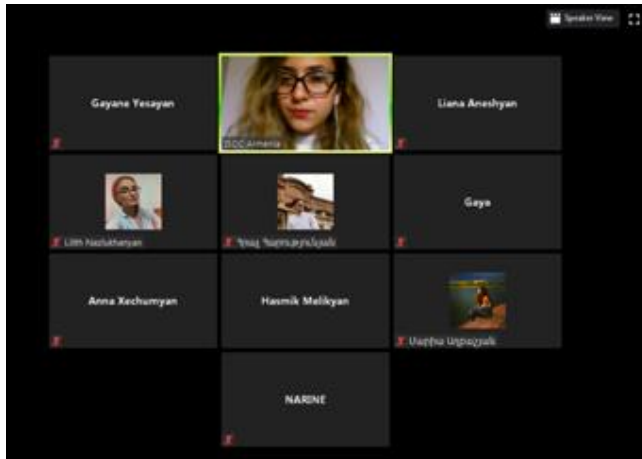


Pic.: Vahan Misakyan during the “Computer Literacy” lecture course

➤ Internet Literacy

The "Internet Literacy" course lectures were conducted to introduce the basics of **Cyber Hygiene** to enable the students to be mindful while surfing the Internet for personal and business purposes, the basics of **intellectual property, domain names**, and other important issues. The first 3 lectures of interactive character were conducted in the Chapter's office where participants had the opportunity to share the cases they faced previously and learned the recommendations on given situations.





Then, in the middle of the planned lectures, the country faced the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic and an Emergency State was announced banning face-to-face meetings. It took some time for the ISOC Armenia Chapter to take necessary measures for transferring the activities to the online format. Among various possibilities it was decided to use the Zoom video conferencing system. Lianna Galstyan continued the lectures of "Internet Literacy" via this platform.

THE LIST OF ONLINE PARTICIPANTS Some of the participants from the 1st phase lectures could not adapt to the new format, i.e. to fully participate. However, the majority overcame the challenges and continued their commitment to the project.

Alvard Davtyan	Hasmik Melikyan	Liana Aneshyan
Ani Amirkhanyan	Hasmik Petrosyan	Lilit Nazlukhanyan
Anna Poghosyan	Hovhannes Ispiryan	Maria Aghbashyan
Edik Bakhshyan	Hrachya Avagyan	Marine Petrosyan
Erna Ghazaryan	Hrachya Harutyunyan	Narek Derdzakyan
Gagik Hakobyan	Inesa Dilikyan	Narine Azaryan
Gagik Sargsyan	Irina Martirosyan	Serob Manukyan
Gayane Grigoryan	Karen Azaryan	Tatev Arakelyan
Gayane Yesayan	Karen Matevosyan	Tigran Nazaryan
Gor Hakobyan	Karen Mikayelyan	Zaruhi Madatyan

➤ Social Media Marketing

After completing the Internet Literacy Course, the participants of the "Internet literacy for vulnerable groups" Program started the last part of the lectures tailored for their needs. Annie Dallakian conducted the Social Media Marketing (SMM) course online. It included:

- Digital marketing and SMM overview
- What is SMM and its need for the business
- Content Marketing and Strategy
- Facebook from 0 (Business Page and Ads)
- Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook Page, Ads Manager
- Important resources: editing, tools, web and more.

AGENDA

	Խոսմբ 1	Խոսմբ 2
Digital Marketing և ինչ է SMM-ը:		Ապրիլի 10
SMM Overview. Դնքը ընդունելի համար	Ապրիլի 14	Ապրիլի 15
Ուսումնասիրություն և Content Marketing	Ապրիլի 16	Ապրիլի 17
Facebook Օ-ից, էջ, գովազդ և ապրիլի	Ապրիլի 21	Ապրիլի 22
Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn. Facebook Page & Ads Manager	Ապրիլի 23	Ապրիլի 24
Best & important resources, Editing & web	Ապրիլի 28	Ապրիլի 29



The course introduced **Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube** platforms to the students and revealed the specifics of their usage. It also trained students in searching the work on the Internet, looking for a job, and learning how to get money.

Upon completing the SMM course, the learning stage of the Program was concluded.

At the next stage, ISOC Armenia Chapter provided computers to the organizations participating in the program, to start working on business ideas of participants, to set up their private businesses (where necessary), creating their Internet presence by developing websites and social media pages.

ASSESSMENT OF BUSINESS IDEA PROPOSALS

The implementation of the second part of the Project was postponed due to the political (an escalated war) situation in the country. However, once the situation was stabilized, the Project Coordinators continued the planned work.

The key of this Project is to train people to be more actively involved in the social life of Armenia, to be able to implement their business ideas and create their own businesses instead of being just passive observers and receivers of tiny financial aids/pensions provided by Government, NGOs, or other benefactors.

The 1st stage of the Project was completed by training students on Computer and Internet literacy, Social Media, Social Media Marketing as well as basics of Business Startup. As a result, the participants became able to formulate their business projects/proposals.

The 2nd stage is dedicated for the practical implementation of the developed business ideas.

Out of 45 participants from the initial 3 groups, about 20 ideas were discussed and worked out.

Group leaders shaped these ideas and made presentations of desired business proposals.

The Coordinator and the Managers gave the assessment of the business proposals based on the cost-effectiveness, sustainability, future perspectives, and the overall benefits of the projects.

As planned, each business project should have an attached Coach to lead and consult in creating web presence, analysis of supply and demand, advertising, and product promotion. Web presence (Facebook/Instagram) was the most locally demanded tool to be created. We decided to develop a website for retired sportsmen, and renovate the website of blind and visually impaired people.

Within the framework of the Project we installed computers with Internet connection in the public organizations of people with disabilities, retired sportsmen, and retired engineers' education center. We provided computers with a broadband Internet to those startup businesses who needed them.

After a careful and detailed assessment, 5 business ideas were selected to become business projects.

SELECTED IDEAS

➤ Karen Matevosyan: Historical Country Tour

Karen Matevosyan was one of the most active participants in the first stage of the Project and he was the first one in the group who quickly crystallized a startup idea to open up a tour to the historical territories of Western Armenia.

The idea was discussed in the group, among the Project Managers and the Coordinator. It was decided to support the startup and take necessary actions towards its implementation.

The establishment of the business idea started from the Naming.



A name and a logo were created accordingly. It was followed with some branding items for social media pages and for future website as well.

The Project Coach worked with Karen to create and launch his Facebook page and all necessary elements for promoting the startup.

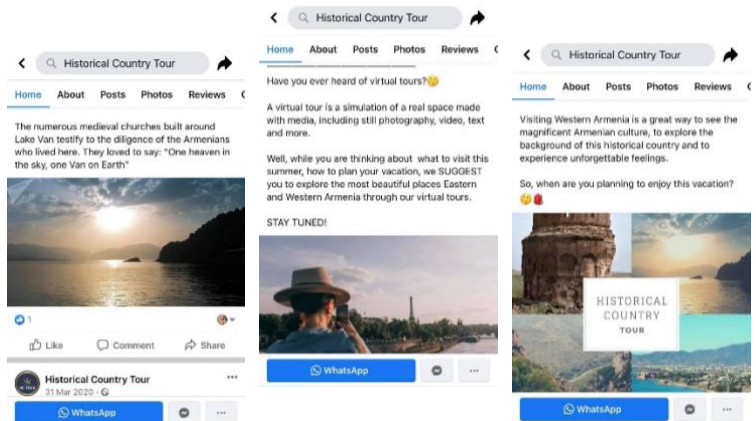
Together they explored the need of the market for this tour comparing similar available services. They worked hard on establishing contacts with the small hotels and guesthouses on the route.

He had a minivan which was renovated for travel needs.

The Manager, acting as a Coach for this particular project, helped out with preparations of the initial publications of the newly launched Facebook page "[HISTORICAL COUNTRY TOUR](#)". The page was starting to gain engagement and interest from potential customers, when unplanned circumstances emerged. COVID-19 limitations and a war situation in Armenia interfered in the development of this Business Idea, but the team together with Karen were trying hard to launch the business.

Currently, Karen explores the possibility of transforming his "Historical Tour" idea to domestic tours, which can be demanded once the pandemic restrictions are lifted within the country.

Here are some posts from newsfeed →



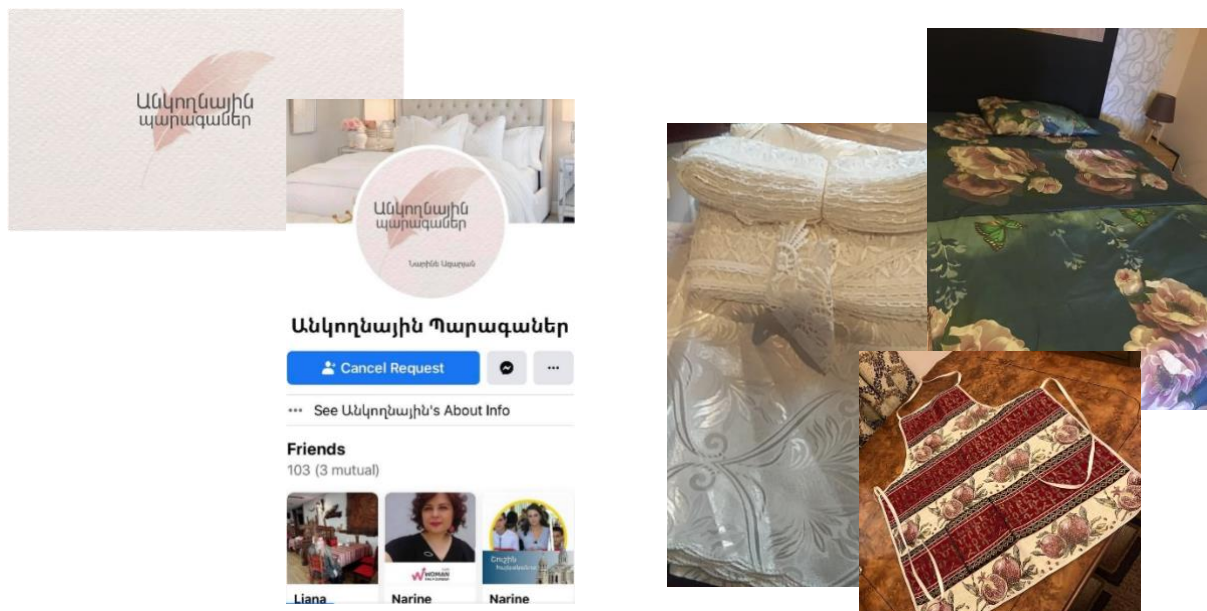
➤ Narine Azaryan: Sewing Bedding Items

Narine Azaryan, a member from the group of people with disabilities, came up with rather an interesting, creative and skillful idea. She got skills at sewing bedding items for personal use and she proposed to help her in establishing an online small business.

The Coach started working individually with Narine. Together they created branding, logo and naming for the business. They had a research on her business idea, her target audience, competitors and the market itself. Later on, they created a Facebook Business page and Narine learned how to use Ads manager for the further promotion of her products. Beside this, other social media pages were created.

With the agreement of the Coordinator and the General Manager, a requested budget was allocated to Narine for obtaining materials necessary as a start of her business. Narine obtained her first package of materials and prepared a few products for selling.

Narine is actively working on her products, and regularly posting the completed ones on her social media pages.



The logo, naming and promotional materials for social media pages are created in Armenian language as the target audience is mainly in Armenia.

➤ Hovhannes Markosyan: “Shop N.1” Instagram Shop

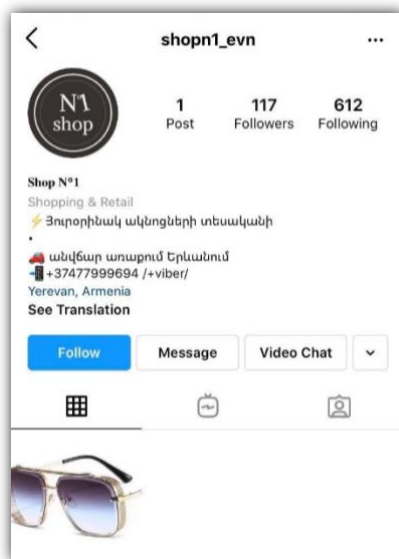
Hovhannes Markosyan learned about the Project from the open call published via Facebook. From the beginning, he joined the Youth Group and was quite an active participant at all classes. He made great progress in his learning and generating ideas of startups.

In the selection stage, Hovhannes wished to establish an online shop where he would import products of general interest.

The Coach helped him create an Instagram account.

They started from the very bottom with:

- Naming,
- Logo,
- Business orientation
- Market Research,
- Prices policy,
- Payment policy, etc.
- Instagram page
- Instagram initial promotion for page follows



After the market research, Hovhannes decided to import personal massagers which were not found in the Armenian market. He ordered the products from well-known online shops and got ready to promote these products through his social media pages.

Unfortunately, the delivery time took too long due to the outburst of the pandemic and total lockdown. Anyway, when he received his products, he successfully managed to sell them in a very short period.

While evaluating the whole process of work from idea to implementation, it should definitely be mentioned about the significant challenges we faced; those were the pandemic and the war. These events resulted in economic difficulties and customer motivation decrease to make shopping. But with

Hovhannes, we stood firm through the entire process. The whole team, including the Coach and Hovhannes himself, brainstormed many times for problem solving ideas and tried to be flexible in the given situation.

Following the brainstorming meetings and with summer approaching, Hovhannes decided to import brand sunglasses (not too expensive, though). He asked for a budget for the initial order

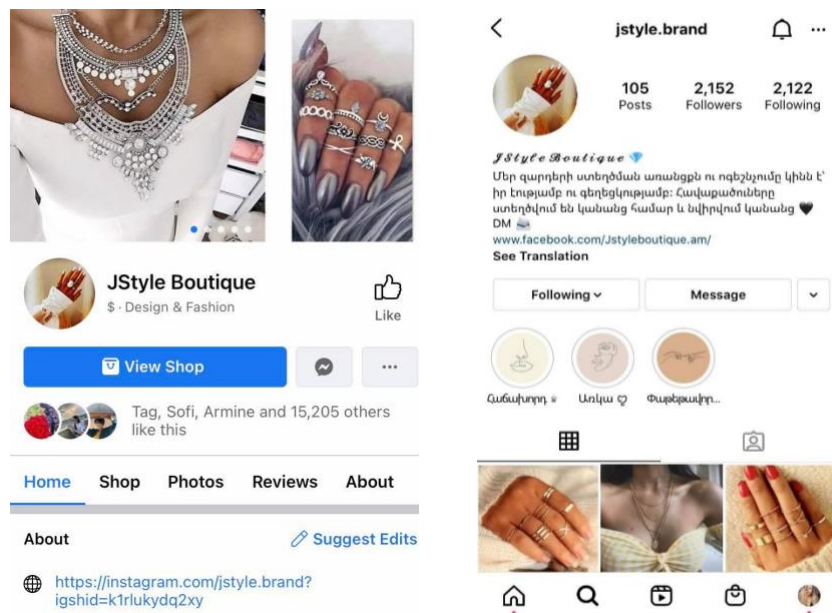
of importing sunglasses. Currently, he still waits for the products to arrive, meanwhile sharing posts and promoting to sell the items.

As a conclusion for this project, it can be highlighted that the social presence of the online shop has been established and Hovhannes Markosyan has the skills to maintain his orders and further promotion of those products. We are confident that his startup would be successful.

➤ Hasmik Petrosyan: “J Style Boutique” Accessories Shop

While brainstorming the various business ideas of our participants, Hasmik Petrosyan uncovered one of her dreams, to have a specialized accessories shop. She created Facebook and Instagram pages for that purpose 2 years ago, but due to lack of necessary skills and knowledge to promote it, the pages remained inactive.

The Managers and the whole team assessed her idea, revised the work done and decided to support it.



The Coach and Hasmik updated her logo and social media accounts visuals, such as covers and highlight covers. They worked on researching the market and creating marketing strategy for the business promotion. Together they designed a few campaigns of sales and started to promote the page with Facebook ads. The Coach prepared special Ads Manager ads which resulted the desired goals and eventually, Hasmik was able to sell a lot of products.



Another strategy was creating Ads campaigns with discount opportunities on special holidays, such as Valentine’s Day, March 8 International Women’s Day and April 7 Mothers’ Day celebrated in Armenia. All these campaigns brought the expected remarkable results. Hasmik enlarged her customer audience and the quantity of sales.

SECOND CALL FOR PROJECT PARTICIPATION

As it was mentioned earlier, the implementation phase of the Project faced serious challenges - epidemic and the war. Some of the participants who came up with ideas, suffered from the result of those challenges. The others gave up trying or investing in new initiatives. Besides, displaced people from Artsakh (the territory involved in the war) were temporarily hosted in various cities of Armenia. They vastly increased the list of vulnerable people in the country.

Internet Society Armenia Chapter in its endeavor to help those people, sent out a **Second Call for Project participation** to include more people, especially from vulnerable groups and rural areas.

As a result, some groups and families were identified and invited. Then a quick capacity building program was remotely organized for them.

➤ Women from Artsakh: “Dadivangq delights”

One of the respondents was a **group of women** (family members) displaced from Artsakh. Two of them, Astghik Davtyan and Vera Hovhannisyan, were good at cooking. With their own financial means, they found a small kitchen by rent where they were preparing national dishes - “Jengyalov hats”, “Pakhlava” and “Gata”.

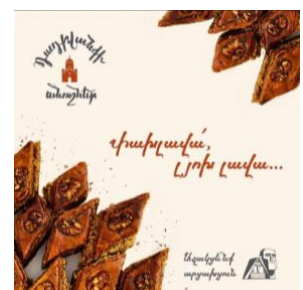
The youngest woman of their family, Tatevik Davtyan, was active in social media. With the help of Armenian community members, she created a logo and branding for a Facebook page “Dadivangq delights” and started taking orders for food delivery through it.



The Program Coordinator helped them with consultations and sharing the digital presence.

This particular startup had all potential to grow and have success but with the end of the war, after the New Year, the family decided to return to their home, restore their house and build up their life anew.

The Program Coordinator is in contact with these women who continue their cooking practice in Artsakh. Given the fact that Internet connectivity is limited in the area they live now, the female entrepreneurs discontinued their social media activity. Nevertheless, the knowledge they acquired in digital literacy and the practical ways of maintaining a small startup, helps them earn money for their family wellbeing.



➤ Rima Pahlevanyan: Handmade Art Pieces

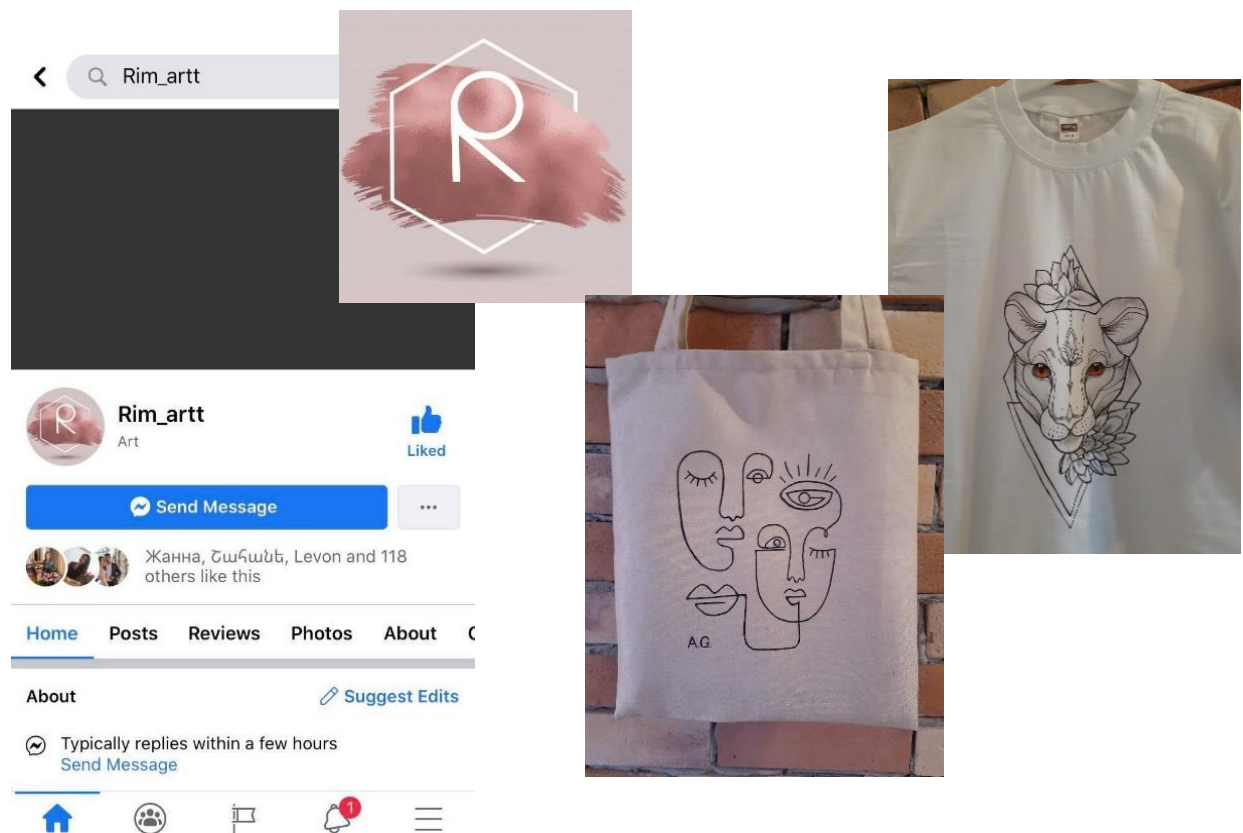
The other selected participant from the Second Call was Rima Pahlevanyan, a school girl from a rural area of Armenia. Rima is a very creative person and good at painting. She tried textile painting and batik technique on her own.

The Project leadership decided to help her create her own digital space and boost her creativity.

Rima designed her logo and with the help of the Coach created a Facebook page to publicize the hand-made products.

The work with Rima had its peculiarities due to her young age. As she is a school girl, she spent most of her time for classes and after-class activities. As for the startup, with the support of her family, especially her mother, she became involved in the main aspects of running a small business.

The Coach made sure to get a consent of Rima's mother on any activity and promotion needed for her project.



Along with launching the Facebook page and making publications there, it was decided to provide financial support to Rima in order to obtain necessary textile, tools, accessories.

SUPPORT TO VULNERABLE GROUPS

➤ Support to Blind and Visually Impaired People

Website Improvements

- One of the improvements was font size enlargement on the first page.
- Daily programs are published on the first page menu under the Radio Programs link.

Internet Availability Center

- Our continuous support also concerns the Internet availability center by providing 4 positions for lab instructors (The money is provided to the Chapter by the Armenia Internet Registry).

We continued our support to blind and visually impaired people. Within the framework of the grant we redesigned the web site www.radio-menq.am of the Internet radio for the blind and visually impaired people



The ISOC Armenia Chapter together with Accessibility SIG convened a webinar with the theme “**Accessibility Challenges: A conversation with ISOC Armenia**“. The agenda was:

- Internet Availability Center of Blind and Visually Impaired People
- Internet Radio for People with Visual Impairments
- A tool for children with autism and social anxiety to solve the communication problem
- Let’s talk: Talking application for non-verbal individuals

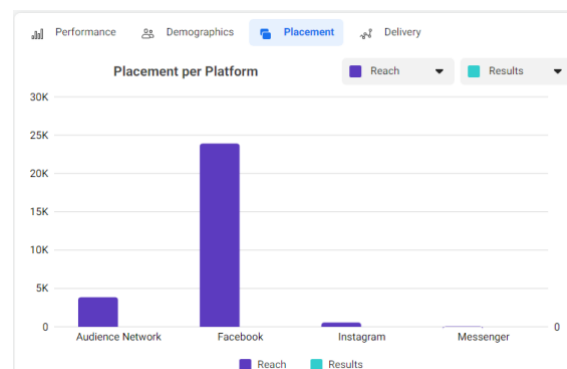
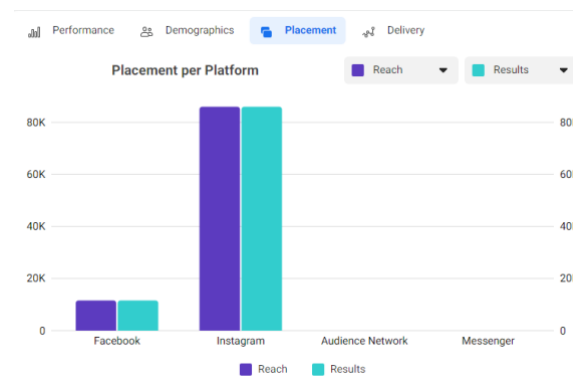
- Support to 1OfU Organization

Children with autism are an extremely vulnerable group as typically they cannot even express their most elementary needs. **1ofU** is the first Armenian mobile application for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder to overcome their problems with communication, expressing thoughts and socialization. It improves children’s interacting skills and helps to formulate thoughts correctly.

In line with the objective of our Project to help vulnerable people, ISOC Armenia Chapter decided to provide some help, in particular, to advance the tool for children with autism on Google Play with social media marketing. In order to advertise the App and increase its reach among potential users, we provided a Social media advertisement support on Instagram and Facebook.

1ofU - Explainer Video is available in YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wco14FiPRVo>

The Ads were in Armenian and English. Here’s one of the sponsored Ad placements.



➤ Support to “PYUNIK” Association

Within the framework of the grant we donated 5 computers with USB WiFis and a WiFi router to the "PYUNIK" Armenian Association for Disabled people. The Association was involved in the grant project from the very beginning. We involved them in all our IT and business training and starting small businesses.



In the photo above:

Hakob Abrahamyan,
the Chairman of the “PYUNIK”
organization

In the photo below:

Vahan Misakyan,
ISOC Armenia Chapter member
He installed the computers and connected
them to the Internet

➤ Support to Retired Athletes

"It is often said that a sports star will die twice, the first time at retirement. For elite athletes who have dedicated their lives to sport, what happens when your time comes to an end, if you aren't an athlete, then who are you?"

..... What Next? There are a number of ways that athletes can help to reduce the chances of depression after retirement from sport. One of them is to reduce exclusive identification with the sporting role and expand the self-identity to other pursuits".

Emma Vickers
A life after sport:
depression in the retired athlete

A part of our project was devoted to the retired athletes.

In order to help retired athletes to be integrated in the social life and familiarize them with nowadays technologies, we made special efforts.

Within the framework of the grant we donated 5 computers with USB WiFi and a WiFi router to the Charitable NGO, "64plus" Public Organization of retired athletes.



In the photo below: President of the retired athletes NGO, Chess Grandmaster Rafael Vahanyan



Rafael Vahanyan, President of the NGO

Chairman of "64 PLUS" Sports Veterans Support NGO, First International Grandmaster of Armenia (1971), Honored Master of Sports of the USSR (1985), 1989 Champion of the USSR, member of the USSR national team at the Chess Olympiads (1984 & 1986), champion of two world team championships (1985 and 1989), three European team championships (1980, 1983, 1989), Honorary Citizen of Yerevan (2012).

Rafael Vahanyan is the Chairman of the Board of Grandmasters of the Chess Federation of Armenia, the director of "Rafael Vahanyan Children and Youth Chess Sports School".

Rafael Vahanyan has made a great contribution to the development and popularization of chess in Armenia. Every year on October 15, Rafael Vahanyan is considered the "Man of the Day" of the chess world.

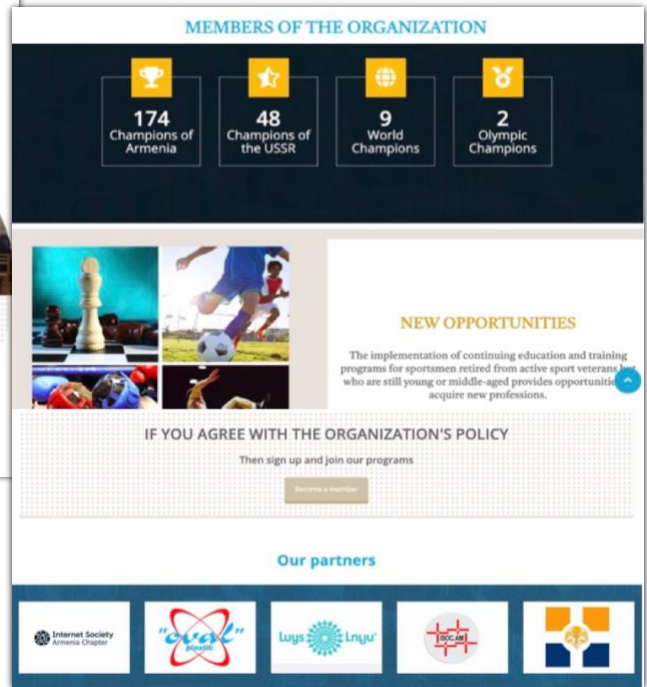
Rafael Vahanyan in 1984 was awarded the USSR "Druzhiba Narodov" (Friendship of Peoples), and in 1987, "Znak Pochyota" (Badge of Honor) medals.

In 2001 was awarded with the "Movses Khorenatsi" order of the Republic of Armenia, and in 2011 with the 1st degree medal "For Services to the Motherland".

Besides, we registered domain names 64plus.am and 64պլյուս.հայ for the organization and developed a website for them.



First page of the website



The computers and the website aim to intensify the athletes' integration in social life and learn basics of computer and Internet technologies. The next step will be to train them in IT skills.

➤ Support to Seniors



Within the framework of the grant we donated 3 computers to **“Adult Education and Lifelong Learning”** NGO, headed by the chairman, Arevik Sargsyan (on the photo). The NGO is providing training for adults, pensioners, and retired people. Their activity is in line with the goals of our grant.

➤ Support to Refugees

The recent war in Artsakh drastically increased the vulnerable groups of population in Armenia. One of such groups is refugees from Artsakh.

Within the framework of the grant we donated 3 computers, external HDD and a WiFi router to refugees from Hadrut, who found shelter in Yerevan. The donation was made to the Hadrut Children and Youth Creativity Center.



The computers were connected to the Internet by a donated Wi-Fi router.

The installation was done by the ISOC Armenia Chapter members Vahan Misakyan and Valery Stepanyan.



Here we have the words of gratitude from the Head of the Center to the ISOC Armenia Chapter.

<https://youtu.be/LxhzEoYTfuA>

➤ Support to Disabled Soldiers

The war in Artsakh caused thousands of disabled young soldiers. In order to help them somehow, we donated them computers with Internet connection and plan to train them and other war victims in computer and Internet literacy. One of the young person we helped is Harutyun Mkrtchyan from Gyumri city.

Chapter members volunteered to donate a notebook and connected it to the Internet.

<https://youtu.be/I1wNMk0reGY>



➤ Support to Rural Libraries

Armenian rural libraries belong to the vulnerable groups of organizations that need our help in providing them computers with Internet connection and library management software. One of them is the Central library of Gyumri city, the second largest city in Armenia.

Five computers, WiFi routers, video projector and USB WiFi adapters were donated and connected to the Internet.

After visiting the library, we found that they needed more help. So during the next visit we donated one more computer, 5 USB WiFi, one more router and a projector.



➤ Computers Repair

A notebook was donated to a new small business setup owner, Narine Azaryan.

Two computers were repaired for a member of the project, Hasmik Petrosyan, and for a member of the “PYUNIK” Association Karapet Aleksanyan, who has Down syndrome.

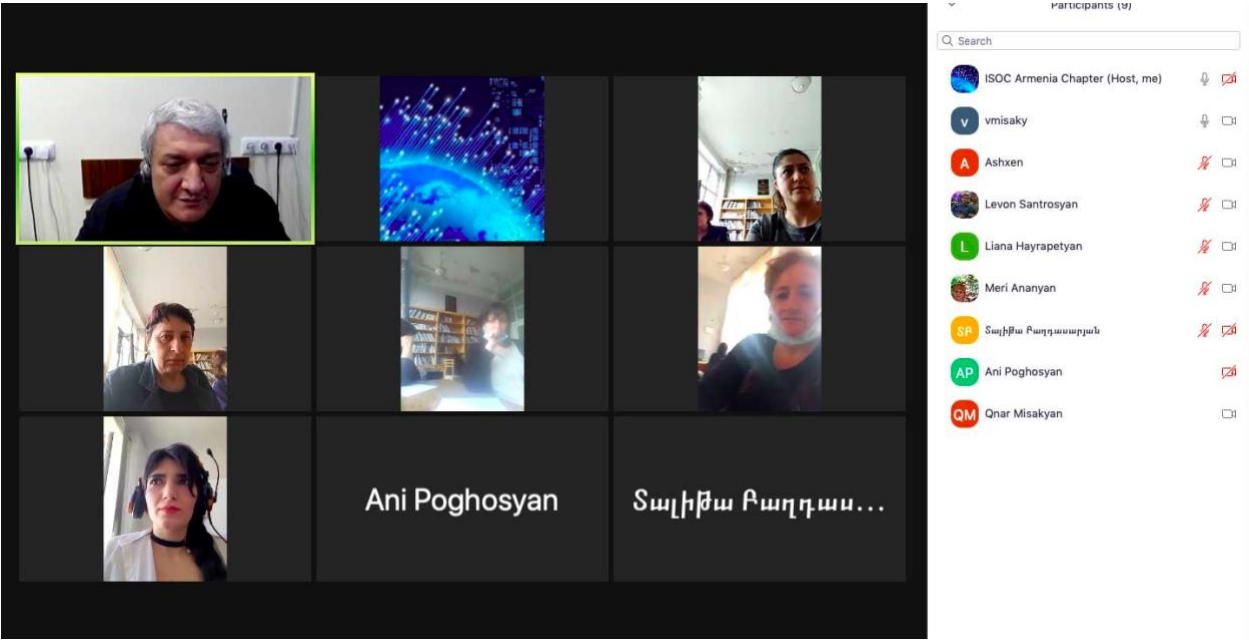


IT SKILLS COURSES

To equip vulnerable groups with IT skills, ISOC Armenia Chapter organized new IT skills courses, that include:

- Computer minor repairs
- Document digitization
- Library management

The courses were provided online with the Zoom platform.



MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

A large number of vulnerable group representatives were trained in computer and Internet literacy, business setup skills, and social media marketing.

Several small businesses were set up, helping people to support themselves.

The created small businesses were advertised in the social media with SMM tools and channels.

Large number of computers with Internet connection devices were donated to vulnerable group public organizations providing their members with access to the Internet and implementing the Internet Society slogan “Internet is for everyone”.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS



Websites for some vulnerable group public organizations were developed to activate their Internet presence.

Lectures on the new IT skills were provided to the vulnerable

An application for people with autism was helped to create and to advance through social media.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The main objectives of the Project have been to provide Internet connectivity to the vulnerable groups of the population as well as to equip them with digital literacy and business skills, to help the target group participants to be active in digital space and earn money to support themselves.

The implementation of the Project started with training based on which the participants generated numerous ideas for startups, and became more confident of how they can launch their own projects and succeed. The process continued with individual coaching and consultations, brainstorming and encouragement to run their small businesses.

Target group individual and organization participants were provided with computers and Internet connectivity, for some of them websites were created and improved.

Lessons learned were to be flexible, creative and resilient while facing unpredictable Force Majeure situations like COVID-19 pandemic and a war in the country.

Upon concluding of the Project, all participants and beneficiaries expressed their appreciativeness for the knowledge they obtained, the small businesses they could now run, the Internet connection they received and the network they established.