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Special Thanks To...**

**Karabakh Telecom**  
For providing free broadband  
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Fund's Telemedicine Program in  
Armenia and Karabakh

**Armenian Community in Detroit,  
The benefactors of the Armenia  
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For their support to Armenia  
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Project



**Telemedicine In Focus: narrowing the gap of  
living standards between Yerevan and rural Armenia**

The Armenia Fund USA Telemedicine pro-  
gram, first launched with the completion of the  
Armine Pagoumian Polyclinic and Hirair and Anna  
Hovnanian Diagnostic Center in Stepanakert in 2005.  
It is an innovative approach to disseminating medical  
knowledge and best practices through technology.  
The success of the program was marked by yet an-  
other teleconference held at the Yerevan State  
Medical University (YSMU) of Mkhitar Heratsi in Febru-  
ary, 2008.

Sponsored by Armenia Fund USA, and organ-  
ized by the Department of Postgraduate/Continuing  
Education at YSMU, the teleconference focused on  
pediatrics and connected medical professionals in  
this field from different parts of the country. While the  
main two focal points of the teleconference were  
Yerevan and Stepanakert, many of the participating  
pediatricians came from more than a dozen regions  
of Armenia, including Goris, Armavir, Vahgarshapat,  
Martuni, Alaverdi, Berd, Idjevan, Dilidjan, Masis, Abo-  
vian, Charentsavan, Artashat, and Aragats.

The conference brought together more than forty  
medical professionals in Yerevan, and more than fifty  
in Stepanakert, Nagorno-Karabakh.

Aimed at improving delivery of pediatric care in the  
less developed re-  
gions of the country,  
the teleconference  
was fully translated  
into Armenian. Two  
most important topics  
covered included  
"Febrile Convulsions  
in Childhood" pre-  
sented by Dr. Arusyak  
Khachatryan, MD  
from St. Astvatsamair  
Medical Center, and

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Armenia Fund sponsors a new series of Yerevan-Stepanakert Teleconferences on Pediatrics

“Jaundices in Childhood” presented by Dr. Hrant Kalenteryan, MD from University Hospital N3 at YSMU.

**A Second Teleconference...**

A second teleconference, this time focusing on infectious diseases was held on February 22, 2008. Through a Yerevan-Salzburg telemedicine-conference, Dr. Ellen A. Morrison from the Division of Infectious Diseases at the Department of Medicine/Columbia University Medical Center delivered a full series of lectures on “Infectious Causes of Diarrhea.” The teleconference drew the participation of more than thirty physicians from Yerevan, Department of Pediatrics and Infectious Diseases at YSMU, and pediatricians from different regions of the country.

“This is truly exciting – seeing our telemedicine program fully functional to deliver quality healthcare to the underserved regions of rural Armenia and Karabakh. We hope that such kind of events will become more and more frequent, enabling physicians in the capital to share information and knowledge. This is what we are continuously trying to achieve – narrowing the gap of living standards between Yerevan and rural Armenia,” says Irina Lazarian, the Executive Director of Armenia Fund in New York.

Armenia Fund's Telemedicine Program aims at modernizing delivery of healthcare and professional development of physicians in less developed regions of Armenia and Karabakh. Telemedicine is a much needed addition to the Rural Development Program that is upgrading the living standards of rural communities across Armenia and Karabakh.

**Our Telemedicine Program and the People That Make it Happen**

Telemedicine is an innovative approach to medical care linking a physician with a patient in a remote area. The state-of-the-art medical technology makes it possible to ignore constraints of time and distance, and with the concurrent advancement of Internet and digital communication, it revolutionizes the way healthcare is delivered to people in dire need.

The launch of Armenia Fund's Telemedicine Program, with the installation of equipment and provision of adequate technical training to the medical team, was a success with the completion of Armine Pagoumian Polyclinic in Stepanakert. Actual connection of remote regions to the Telemedicine network, however, remained a serious challenge. “This is where Karabakh Telecom partnership added so much value to our program”, says Raffi Festekjian, Chairman of Armenia Fund USA, “We never thought it would actually be possible to conduct these advanced medical training sessions so quickly and make it available to some of the most underserved communities in the country.”

Karabakh Telecom provided Armenia Fund USA with the necessary high speed Internet connection that has made possible a series of telemedicine seminars since September of 2007. But this was only the beginning. With the successful installation of equipment in Stepanakert, Karabakh Telecom announced it will continue providing service to the Fund's Telemedicine program free of charge.



“Karabakh Telecom strongly believes that a strong society is the foundation of a strong nation, and accordingly whatever a commercial institution receives from society in terms of revenues, it should return part of it back to society by other means,” says Ralph Yirikian at Karabakh Telecom. “Today there are over 650 needy families and individuals, 40 charitable and non-profit organizations, as well as 4 educational institutions that are benefiting all year round from assistance programs sponsored by Karabakh Telecom.”



Janyatagh in Martakert, Nagorno-Karabakh

Janyatagh village in the Martakert region of Karabakh has many big families. Robert Movsisian comes from one of them. He works at a tractor and farm machinery base set up by Armenia Fund in 2006. He is one of 26 workers at this newly created institution. “After I was discharged from the army I couldn't find work for two years,” Robert says. “It's a good thing this base opened...I work as a welder now.”

Robert, like others in Martakert, experienced the ordeals of the war and felt the bitterness of destruction and expulsion. “I was a little boy when we left the village. Then when the war was over we came back to our village,” he remembered. “What village?” There was no village, “interrupted Maxim Petrosian, the chief engineer at the station.

Like many other villages in Martakert, Janyatagh was completely destroyed due to the war, but people have returned and are trying to render it habitable.

**I support because...**

July, 2008

“World food prices are skyrocketing and creating a food crisis in many countries, including for the majority of Armenia's population. Priority must be given to domestic food production in order to decrease dependency on the international market. Small family farms and cooperatives should be revived – given access to land, water, seeds and fertilizer. This means investment into farmer-based agriculture (in contrast to industrialized, large-scale unsustainable agricultural systems). And this is where Armenia Fund's Rural Development Program can play a major role and already has begun to show promise by reviving the agro-economies of several villages.

Robert's family owns eight hectares of land but barely manages to cultivate three. “We were in a very bad situation,” Maxim Petrosyan said.

“We had to go and ask other people to come and plough our land, then to reap. Sometimes they were late, sometimes a car would break down and it cost the villagers more money.”



Robert Movsisian

Robert's family was able to plough all of their land for the first time in 2006, thanks to the newly created station that provided new technology at much affordable rates. “I paid 20,000 drams per hectare in advance. They came and plowed the land, took the seeds from my house to the field in a truck, sowed them and in the summer they will also reap.”

The cost for cultivating one hectare of land is 48,000 drams; due to the newly established agricultural base, the cost has been cut down by more than half and the payment schedule is much more flexible. “We don't feel constrained by anything now,” Robert says. “In the past, we had to wait and see if we could do any work. Sometimes we had to wait so long that it was already too late to reap. Now we know that there are people who care about us.”

The agro-ecological approach to farming is safe for the environment, is low-energy input - consumes less fossil fuel, no synthetic fertilizers. Plus, it provides food and employment to the poor. Best of all, once established, small to medium sized farms are more productive, than large-scale industrial farms. Because the produced food is traded locally or regionally, less fossil fuel is used for food transportation. Development of Armenia's agriculture must be carried out with the right approach in order to provide food and employment for the population.

I believe that Armenia Fund's Rural Development Program can and will accomplish a lot in that direction. This is why I support the Armenia Fund. “

Anne Anahid Shirinian-Orlando  
Freehold, NJ