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EUROPEAN UNION FOR ARMENIA



ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM FOR BETTER INFORMED CITIZENS

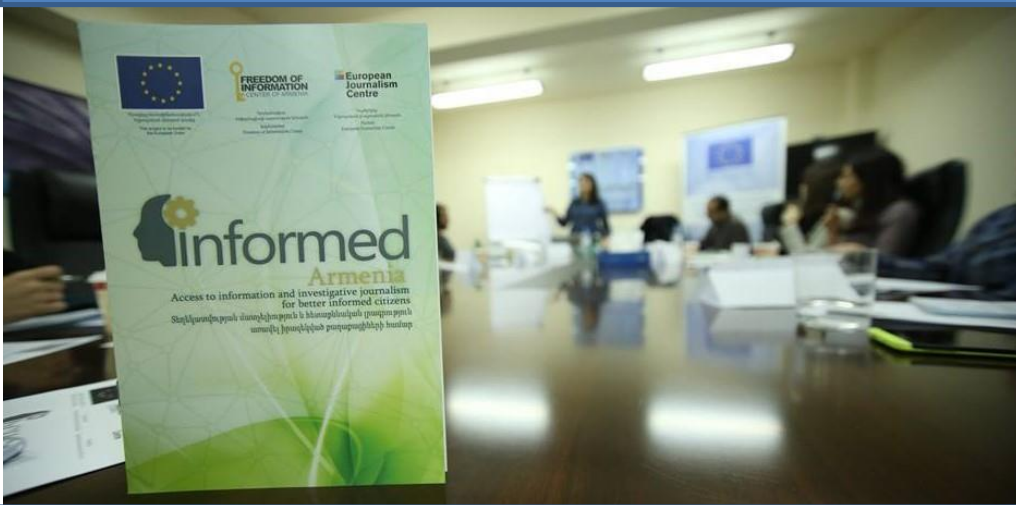
May 2018 – December 2019 (19 months)

Grant Contract: ENPI/2017/394-338

Presented by Shushan Doydoyan, FOICA President, Armenia



This project is funded by the European Union, implemented by Freedom of Information Center of Armenia (FOICA), Maastricht-based European Journalism Center.



PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The overall objective:

Reinforced civil society in Armenia; in particular, CSOs capable to conduct effective monitoring activity on state budget, as well as young members of civil society capable to conduct journalistic investigations.

Specific objectives:

- 1) Watchdog capacity of CSOs, particularly the oversight of the state budget in sectors relevant for EU/Armenia relations is strengthened.
- 2) Investigative reporting on state budget and on various human rights issues is increased among the youth.



KEY ACTIVITIES

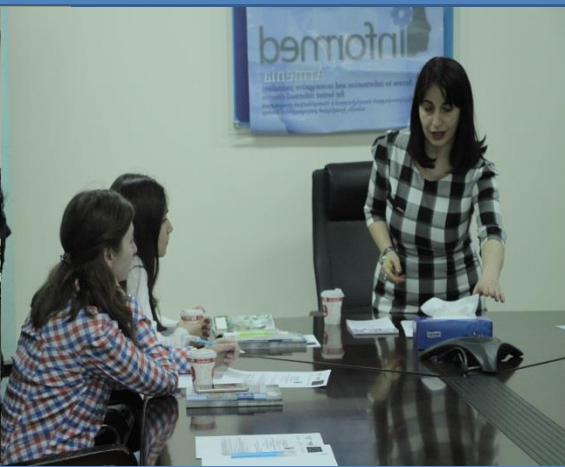
- **Capacity building trainings for 92 regional and Yerevan based CSOs**
- **Providing 10 specific advocacy sub-grants**
- **Providing 13 core institutional sub-grants**
- **Implementing 2 seasons of Investigative Journalism competition TV-show**



Capacity building trainings for regional and Yerevan based CSOs

92 national and regional CSOs enhanced with monitoring capacities in the area of state budget monitoring and access to information

- *One 3-day grant training in Yerevan for national and regional CSOs on September 2018, ATI and investigative journalism civil initiative was formed.*
- *13 capacity building training sessions are organized for 92 national and regional CSOs/media organizations.*
- ***participated CSOs (NGO and Media): 92 (70 regional CSOs and 22 Yerevan-based CSOs)***
- ***trained members of CSOs: 136 (out of which 96 (i.e. 70.5%) were women)***



Capacity building trainings for regional and Yerevan based CSOs

Output – CSOs and media organizations have strengthened their understanding of access to information issues, as well as their ability to monitor state budget and engage in watchdog activities relating to EU-Armenia cooperation sectors.

- 92 national and regional CSOs enhanced with monitoring capacities in area of state budget monitoring
- 10 cases of transparent state budget process development relating to sectors covered by EU-Armenia cooperation

CAPACITY BUILDING TRAININGS: Grand Training FOICA and EJC

27-29 September 2018





10 SPECIFIC ADVOCACY SUB-GRANTS: 1st round

15 March – 15 June 2019

10 specific advocacy grants, focused on the state budget monitoring in sectors relevant to EU-Armenia relations, were successfully implemented.

- 34 call applications have been submitted to FOICA.
- **Implementing CSOs:** 10 out of which 4 from regions (including 3 media outlets)
- **Available grant budget:** 2000 EUR
- **Total budget:** 19,758.23 EUR
- **Projects duration:** Up to 4 months



ADVOCACY SUB-GRANTS: SCOPE OF WORK AND KEY RESULTS

The projects covered the monitoring of the state budget expenditures in sectors relevant for EU-Armenia relations: e-health, services providing by e-justice platforms and public service delivery offices, e-request, public transport and road construction, irrigation system, energy efficiency, education, etc.

- **43 working group meetings** with government agencies held;
- **10 joint concept papers** jointly with government agencies developed,
- **170 media materials** published in offline/online media, FB

ADVOCACY SUB-GRANTS: KEY RESULTS

Recommendations for government agencies on state budget planning and expenditure . Government accepted at least 50% of our recommendations.

Examples:

❖ ALT TV Company: Controlling and publicizing the efforts of making the irrigation system healthier

Based on the monitoring results of the project, investigations have been initiated, criminal cases have been filed based on the detected abuses, and the heads of Armavir and Echmiadzin water services have been dismissed.

❖ “Armenian Camp” NGO: “Accessible transport”

The program team monitored and publicized the issue of 25 lifts (cranes) purchased in 2014-2016 by Yerevan city budget and installed on the city buses and qualify those costs ineffectively. The Armenian Camp NGO together with other NGOs are elaborating a public transport access description-rulebook for decision-makers. The members of the “My Step” of the Yerevan Council of Elders expressed their readiness to use the public transport accessibility description-regulation to be prepared as part of cooperation.

❖ Centre of Democracy and Law NGO: Monitoring of Services Provided by e-Justice Platforms and Public Service Delivery Offices

The Ministry of Justice accepted several suggestions of the project team aimed at improving www.e-draft.am and e-request.am platforms.

The Government undertook to circulate the draft law on amendments to the RA Law on Freedom of Information and Government Decree 1204-N, as well as to supplement the proposal for a new amendment to the RA Law on Protection of Personal Data.

❖ Partnership and Teaching P&T NGO: Youth for their future

The youth policy strategy of Goris community and the implementation action plan was designed with youth. The municipality has given its positive response to the prepared strategy and action plan. The community head is ready to present it for discussion at the upcoming council meeting by the end of October, 2019.

10 SPECIFIC ADVOCACY SUB-GRANTS



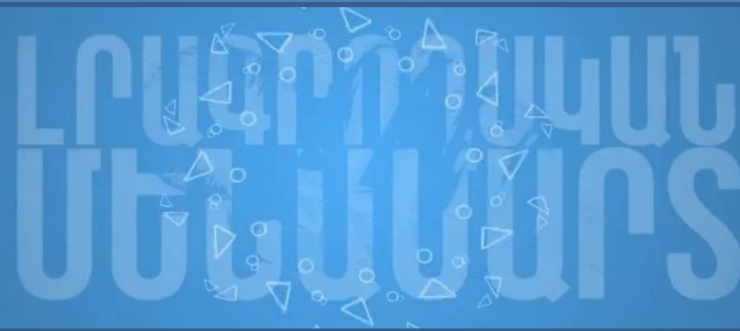


13 CORE INSTITUTIONAL SUB-GRANTS: 2nd round July to November 2019

13 core institutional grants are in the process of implementation.

29 applications have been submitted to FOICA.

- **Implementing CSOs:** 13, out of which 7 from regions
- **Available grant budget:** 6000 EUR
- **Total budget:** 75,788.5 EUR
- **Projects duration:** Up to 4 months



JOURNALISTIC BATTLES: Investigative Journalism Competition TV-show

Investigative journalism is promoted among youth, and watchdog capacity of future CSO members is fostered.

Overall 98 law/journalism students were trained in practice how to investigate and present to the public urgent and public interest issues.

- **TV-shows: 1st season** - Shabat.am media outlet– September-December 2018
 - 2nd season - Public TV company of Armenia - February-May 2019
- **Number of episodes:** 24 episodes (including the Moot Court and the Award Ceremonies)
- **Number of Investigative stories:** 40 powerful and effective journalistic storytelling by journalism students.
- **Partner universities:** 8 (3 from regions)

JOURNALISTIC BATTLES: Investigative Journalism Competition TV-show



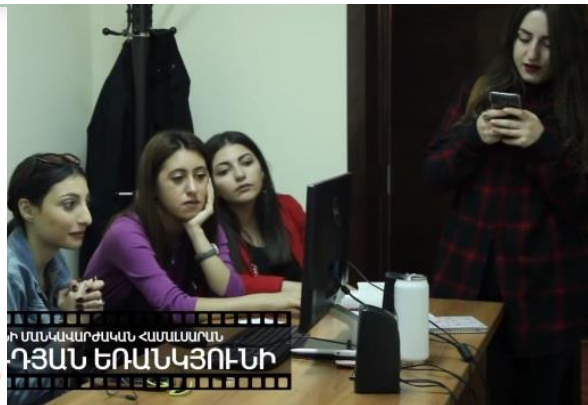
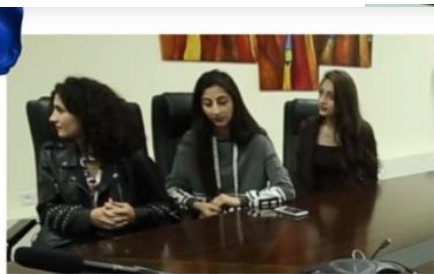
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JOURNALISTIC BATTLES: Investigative Journalism Competition TV-show

- Overall **98** journalism and law students participated in the 1st and 2nd seasons. 88 of them (**90%**) were women.
- 30% of the participant students started their job as a journalist different media outlets such as Public TV Company, A1plus, Sabat.am etc.



The majority of participants (65%, 33 students) envisaged to continue their future career as investigative journalists.

JOURNALISTIC BATTLES:



105 TV

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JOURNALISTIC BATTLES: MOOT COURT

25 law students participated in the Moot Court

A group of law students, acting as Plaintiffs, filed mock claims against investigative journalists, and the other group -the Defenders - defended them. The purpose of all this was to show our journalists all the legal difficulties in their future work so that they become better protected and informed in the future. This was also a good school and a practical job for our future lawyers.



JOURNALISTIC BATTLES AWARDING - December 14, 2018, May 20, 2019



THANK YOU



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