

# Aarhus Centers Armenia Challenges and Perspectives

Annual Meeting of Aarhus Centers  
Vienna, 03 July, 2013



Organization for Security  
and Co-operation in  
Europe Office in Yerevan



Since 2002 based on the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Armenia and OSCE Office in Yerevan Aarhus Centers were established. Strong Net of 15 Centers covering the all regions of the country actively contributing into raising awareness on environmental democracy

● Aarhus Centres  
of Armenia

2002 Yerevan

2007 Dilijan, Gavar, Goris, Gyumri,  
Hrazdan, Kapan, Vanadzor

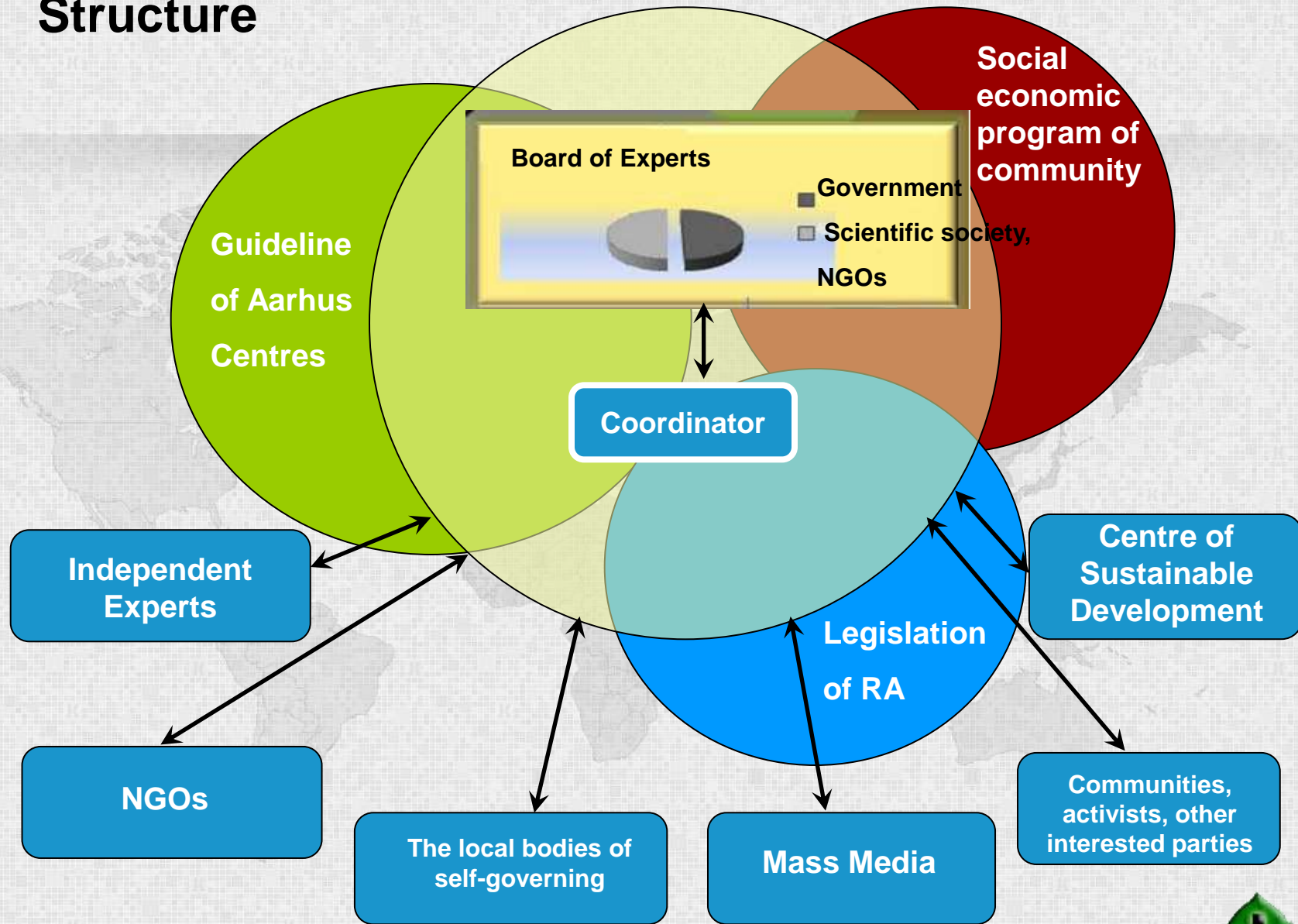
2009 Alaverdi, Aparan, Ijevan, Stepanavan,  
Yeghegnadzor, Yeghvard

2011 Ararat





# Aarhus centers Structure



# Aarhus centers

## Structure

The Centers are community based; all the operational costs are covered by self-governmental bodies. The Centers implement decentralized approach. The overall goal of the Centers to involve large public into decision-making process via providing to them knowledge and information to let people deeply understand the issues. They train locals on environmental and human rights and assist in access to justice.

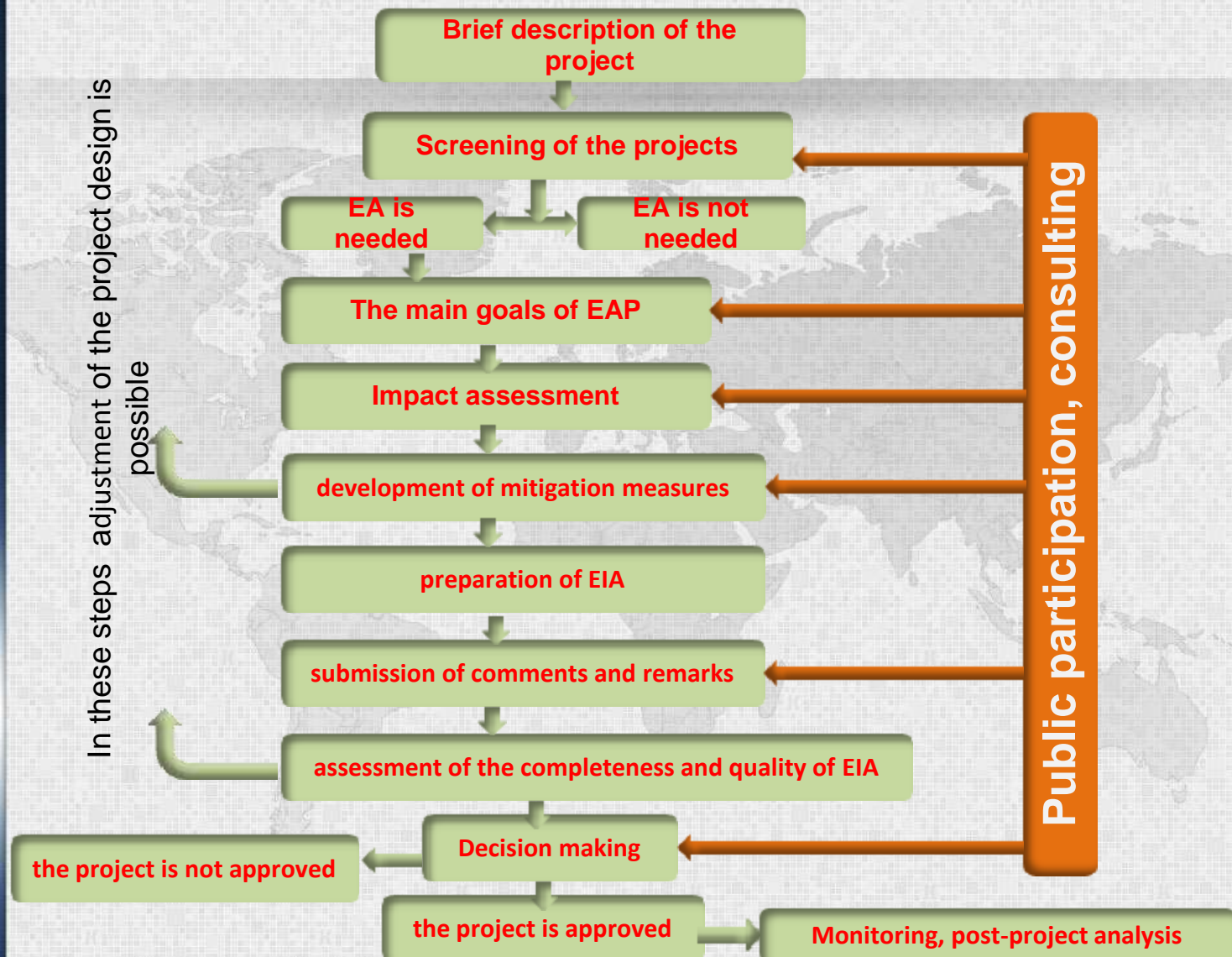
The Centers annual plan, proved by the Board of Experts is based on governmental strategy in the field and community development documents.

The ten years experience prove that the Centers are effective bridge between community, NGOs, self-government bodies, authorities. During the years the Centers were able to foster new tradition of round-table discussions and mutually agreed decisions.





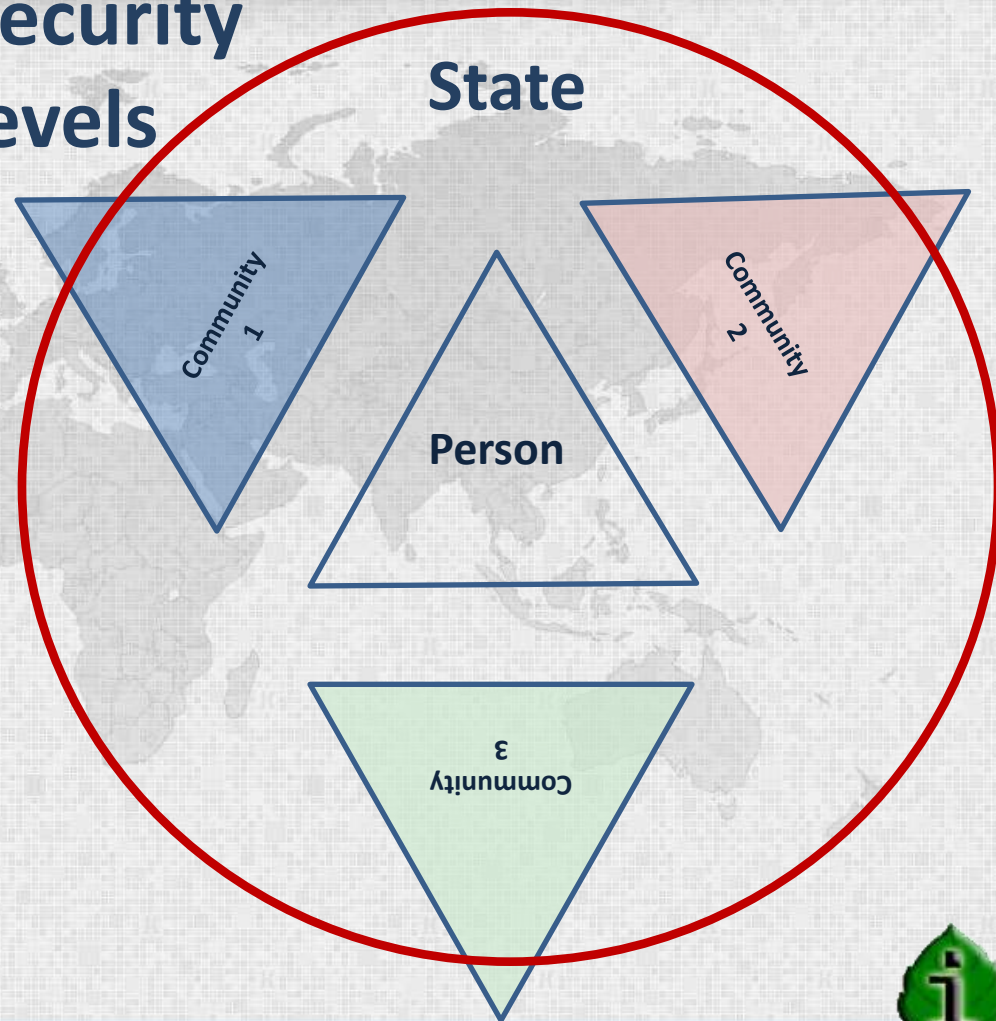
# Public Participation in decision making process



# Aarhus Centers and Community Security

The Centers raised up Environmental Security on the level of Community Security understanding thus develop the idea of common actions for common good as starting point and the end goal at the same time

**Security  
levels**





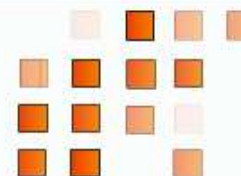
To raise quality of arguments the OSCE Office in Yerevan involved scientific community via establishing the Centre on Sustainable Development at the Yerevan State University and civil society organizations via setting up an Expert groups who scrutinize the activity-related documents, visiting the Centers, provide knowledge and information to locals.





Centers **AARHUS**  
Network of Armenia

- Access to Information
- Public Participation
- Access to Justice



Type searched text and click "Enter"

- > Yerevan
- > Alaverdi
- > Aparan
- > Ararat
- > Dilijan
- > Idjevan
- > Gavar
- > Goris
- > Gyumri
- > Hrazdan
- > Kapan
- > Stepavan
- > Vanadzor
- > Yeghegnadzor
- > Yeghvard
- > Aarhus Centers' activity reports
- > Aarhus Centers Related Documents

Hits: 3535

## Location of Aarhus Centers in Armenia

( -pointers show the addresses and coordinates of the Aarhus centers)

Since 2002 according to the Understanding Memorandum signed between RA Ministry of Nature Protection and OSCE office in Yerevan Public Environmental Information /Aarhus/ Centers started to act in the Republic of Armenia. From 2002 till now there were opened 15 Aarhus Centers in different regions of Armenia. In virtue of their activities information concerning environmental problem is component for Armenian habitants. Aarhus Centers also promote the public participation in environmental decision making process and in managing activity.

Civic awareness

Sustainable Development Centre

Contacts of Aarhus Centers

Civic action for security and env. /CASE

Aarhus library

Interesting

PRTR Map

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Eco Calendar

Site MAP

Where to get information

Search item

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# To Assist the Government on Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee Decision implementation

4. Invites the Party concerned to take the necessary legislative, regulatory, and administrative measures and practical arrangements to ensure that:

- (a) Thresholds for activities subject to an EIA procedure, including public participation, are set in a clear manner;
- (b) The public is informed as early as possible in the decision-making procedure, when all options are open, and that reasonable time frames are set for the public to consult and comment on project-related documentation;
- (c) The responsibilities of different actors (public authorities, local authorities, developer) in the organization of public participation procedures are defined as clearly as possible;
- (d) A system of prompt notification of the public concerned on final conclusions of environmental expertise is arranged, e.g., through the website of the Ministry of Nature Protection;

However the absence of the necessary legislative, regulatory, and administrative measures to ensure proper public participation remains a challenge. We would like to thank our Secretariat colleagues for their support on promoting implementation of the Aarhus convention by providing opportunity to us to involve more expertise on the subject via Extra-budgetary project on South Caucasus Aarhus Centers.



# Aarhus Community nominated a representative to the Intergovernmental Committee on Human Rights established by the President decree in 2013.



- To promote the implementation the Aarhus Centers widely disseminate the knowledge granted by the Convention. Recently the Aarhus Community of the country nominated a representative to the Intergovernmental Committee on Human Rights established by the President of the Republic of Armenia in 2013. A report covering Environmental and Human rights issues in Armenia prepared per the OSCE support and will be provided on the first meeting of the Committee on 9th of July.





**To promote the implementation the Aarhus Centers widely disseminate the knowledge granted by the Convention**





**Working under challenging conditions the Centers were able to bring change into society, symbolize high standards of strength and signify renewal**

Absence on necessary legislative measures creates difficulties for daily activities and is obstacle for raising effectiveness and influence of the Centers. That is why creation of the Aarhus Foundation on which the OSCE and the Government is negotiating, is still a challenge.

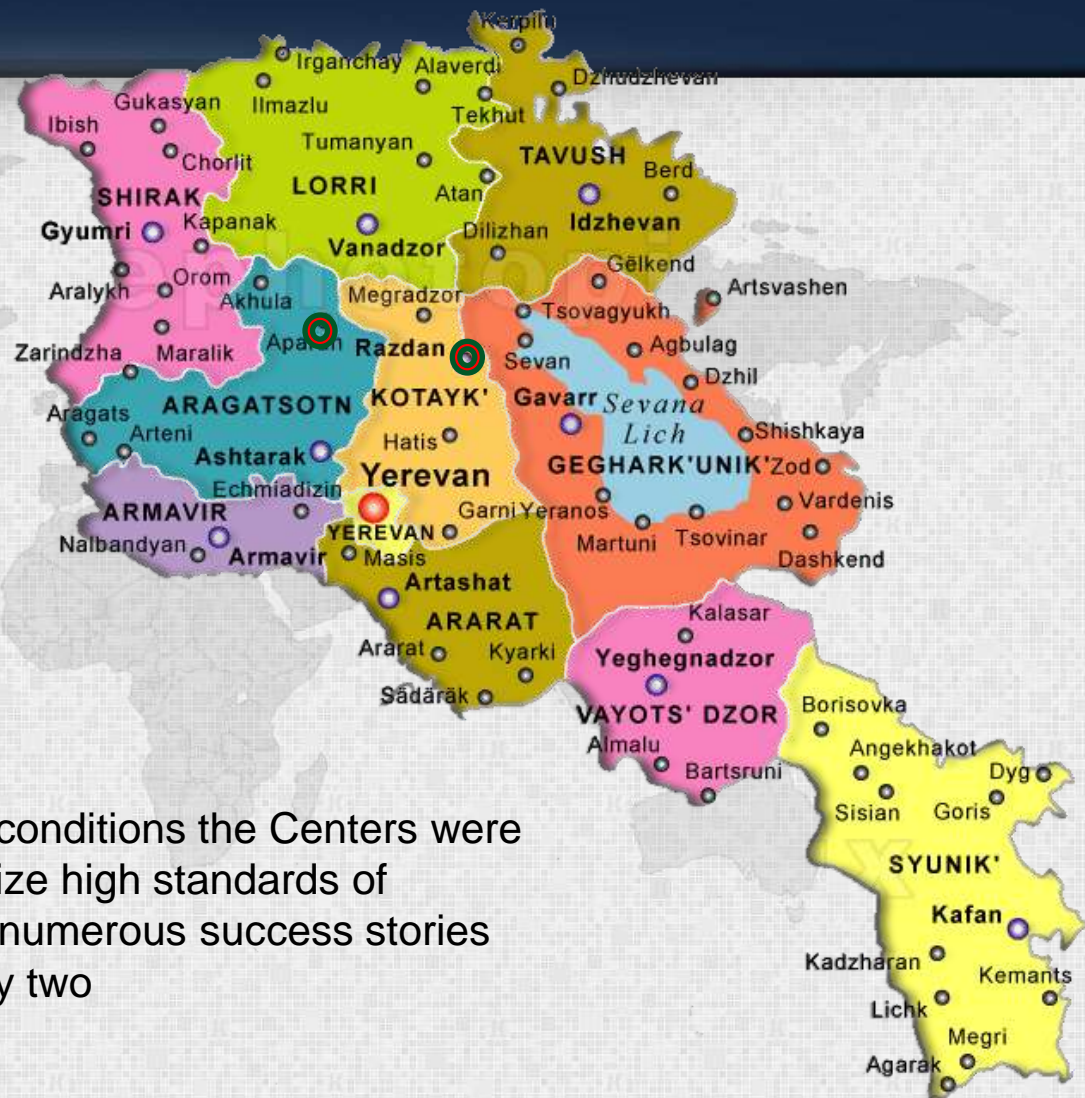




# Aarhus Centres: Good Practice

❖ **Hrazdan  
Aarhus Centre**

❖ **Aparan  
Aarhus Centre**



Nevertheless working under challenging conditions the Centers were able to bring change into society, symbolize high standards of strength and signify renewal. Among the numerous success stories for today`s presentation we prepared only two

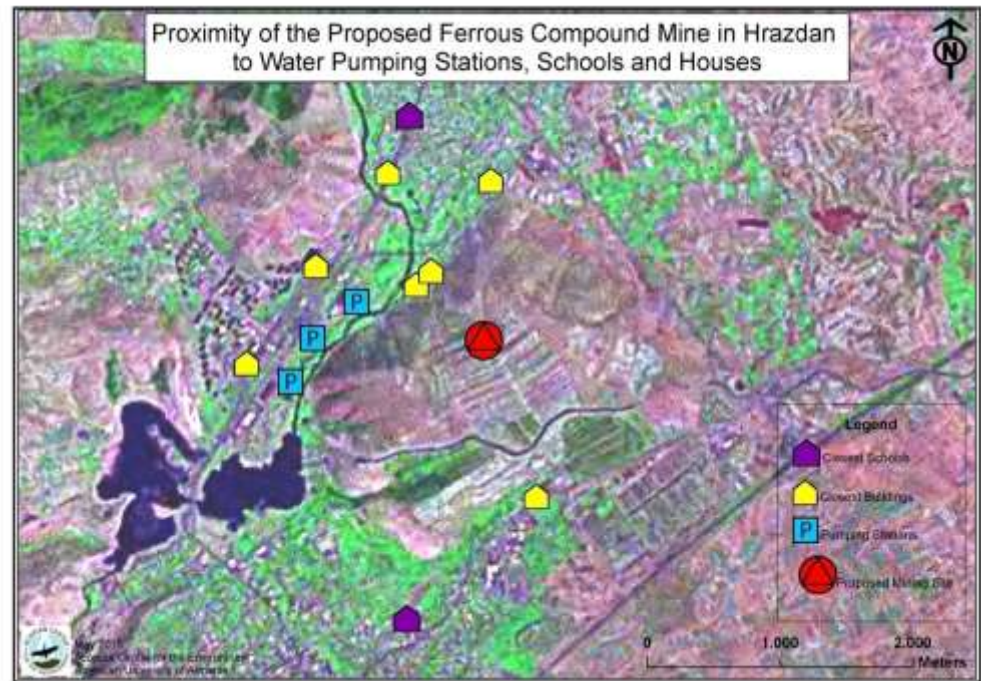


# Hrazdan Aarhus Centre: Good Practice

## Metal mining industry and community safety

### Ferrous Compound Mine in Hrazdan city

Hrazdan Aarhus Centre was informed that it was planned to open mine site nearby the city. From the project provided by the mining company it was clear that city is under danger. The Center mobilized public, involved authorities, negotiated with the Government, sets up a special expert group to learn the documentation, involved youth, media, well - known people of art, sport and civic activists. Finally the Government cancelled the mine project.





# **Hrazdan Aarhus Centre: Good Practice**

## **Metal mining industry and community safety**

### **Ferrous Compound Mine in Hrazdan city**



**Campaigns raising awareness  
on the mine impact**

**Frequent visits to mines**



**Public discussions in AC**

**Mass visit to the Iron Mine**



**Flesh-Mob:**

**NO – to the mine exploitation**

**Consultation with environmental  
experts, scientific society**



# Hrazdan Aarhus Centre: Good Practice

## Metal mining industry and community safety

### Ferrous Compound Mine in Hrazdan city

❖ The Office of OSCE in Yerevan

❖ Environmental Public Alliance

❖ Kotayk Marzpetaran

❖ Hrazdan Municipality

❖ Aarhus Centers of Armenia

❖ Schools, Universities, Colleges

❖ NGO-s, “Healthy Hrazdan” public initiative

❖ Kotayk Anti-Corruption Center

❖ Local and State Media

❖ USA Peace Corps

❖ Active citizens

## Cooperation





# Aparan Aarhus Centre: Good Practice

## Metal mining industry and community safety

Tukhmanuk gold mine in the community Melik



Local people from the Meliq village applied to the Aparan Aarhus Center with request to assist them on their struggle against the mining company which plans to build the third tailing ipso facto jeopardies the village existence due to already high pollution and contamination level from the mining operation of the company and the two liking tailings as well as landslide zone. The Aparan Center involved experts, media, organized numerous round-table discussions, briefings and debates from which was clear that Environmental Impact Assessment was conducted not in a proper way. The decision of the Ministry of Nature Protection was to reject the project of the mining company on the third tailing construction.





# Aparan Aarhus Centre: Good Practice

## Metal mining industry and community safety

Actions of the Aarhus Center: Information Collection and Dissemination

Discussion with authorities,  
NGOs, Mass Media, developers,  
society



Field trips, field research.  
sampling of water, soil

- With journalists KENTRON TV
- From the Center of Research and Development of Medical Services at the American University of Armenia

Garden plots, tailing



Reservoir  
Halavar



With NGO activists, the  
initiative Tekhut,,

Aarhus Center  
contributed to dialogue  
between the company  
and the community for  
voicing the concerns of  
the residents of the state  
and to make mutually  
beneficial solutions

In the Ministry of Nature  
Protection

Getik river





# Aparan Aarhus Centre: Good Practice

## Metal mining industry and community safety

Tukhmanuk problems - from the media

**Mine and health problems in Melikgyugh**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGYWz5nIKEM>



**Press Club - heavy metals**

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=9dadheggw4Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=9dadheggw4Y)



**Aparan citizens complain of health**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sB3OXDaRMC0>



**Public hearing in the literal sense**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gYMiCil3GV8>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCHhZxM6q2g>

**Azdarar Ar tv**



**Melikgyugh. Challenges. Article**

<http://www.yekir.am/am/news/51951.htm>

**Falsification again and again - Article**

<http://www.yekir.am/am/news/48694.htm>



# Aarhus Centre Network and CASE Grantee NGOs



The CASE Grantee  
Varvogh Astgh NGO  
in Hrazdan Aarhus  
Center. Date:  
16.04.2013





# Partnership and cooperation



**Centre of Sustainable  
Development in Yerevan  
State University**



**Environmental  
Public Alliance**



**The National Academy of  
Science of Armenia**



# THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION

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