



### Economic Empowerment of Women: Syunik Women's Resource Centers Network

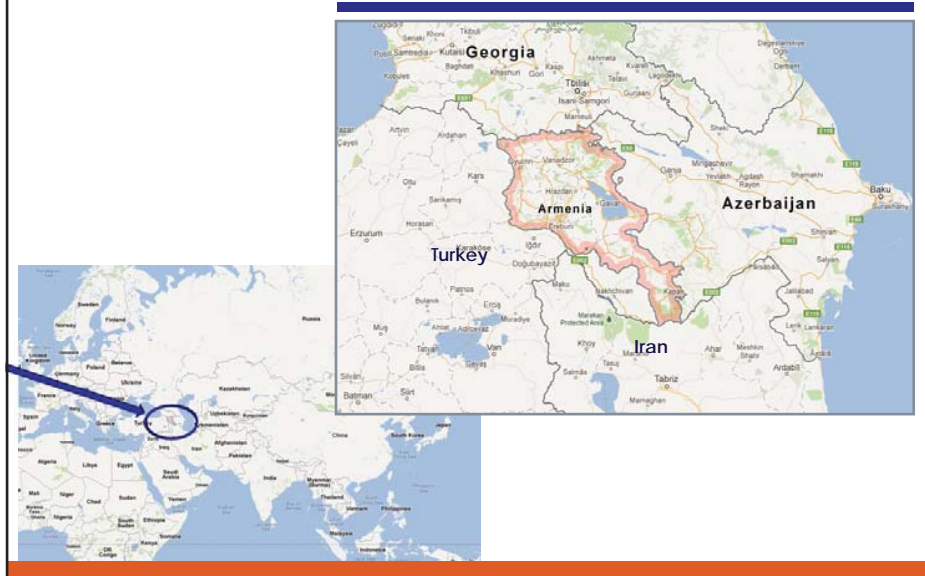


## Overview

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- The Economy of Armenia
- Syunik Women's Resource Centers Network
- Supporting the Empowerment of Women in Local Governments
- Economic development
- Social activism
- Network Development

## 1. Armenia: A. Location



Official Unemployment Rate in  
Armenia: 7%

Real Unemployment Rate in  
Armenia: 45-50 %



# Women: 70%

## 2. The Economy of Armenia:

C. "Women's Empowerment and Cooperation in Armenia" project initiated by the OSCE Office in Yerevan



Establishment of 3 Women's Resource Centers in the Syunik region:



Meghri Women's Resource Centre  
NGO (Dec 2008)



Kapan Women's Resource Centre NGO  
(Jul 2009)



Goris Women's Development "Resource Center" Foundation  
(Jul 2009)

## 3. Syunik Women's Resource Center Network

A. Mission



Promote the increase in the roles and competitiveness of women at the national, regional and local levels through collaboration and civic engagement thus supporting the development of women's resource centers.

### 3. Syunik Women's Resource Center Network

#### *B. Goals and Objectives*

- Monitor, research, and analysis women's issues
- Assist **solving women's issues** at local, regional, and national levels
- Increasing women's **role and competency** through cooperation and civic involvement
- Create **equal opportunities** for women



### 3. Syunik Women's Resource Center Network

#### *C. Activity Aspects*

- Political Involvement
- Economic Development
- Social Activism and Support



## 5. Supporting the Empowerment of Women in Local Governments:

### *B. Results*

- 38 women nominated, 26 elected (68.4%)
- 13 women involved with observation activities
- Continued commitment to future elections cycles



## 6. Economic development

### *A. Sociological Survey*

Aim of this survey:

- study women's entrepreneurship in the Syunik Region;
- provide a description of the woman entrepreneur, her business and business environment;
- identify the factors that promote and hinder business development.



## 6. Economic development:

### B. Survey Findings

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Three main issues found as a result of the survey:

1. Financing issues
  - Finding loans
  - Interest rates
  - Repayment periods
2. Tax regulations
3. Lack of business knowledge and relevant skills

## 6. Economic development:

### C. Development of Handicrafts

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**The Objective:** To provide unemployed women in Syunik region a chance of lasting employment and a consistent and substantial income

## 6. Economic Development

### D. Handicraft groups: Activities



- Organizing the groups into economical units
- Trainings, based on specific product groups
  - Crochet, ceramics, carpet weaving, embroidery/sewing
- Meetings with outside consultants/experts
- Idea exchanges between the various groups
- Increase the access to markets

## 6.Economic Development:

### G.Handicraft Group Example

- Makes small crocheted animals (currently 65 different animals)
- Works with about 70 women artisans in the region
- Conducts trainings to bring in more women artisans to meet production demands and sustain growth
- Works with HDIF for increased access to markets
- Exports
  - Testing of products for relevant certificates is ongoing, this is to legally export items to the EU and North America



## 6.Economic Development: H. Handicraft Group Example

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- Outcomes:
- 2013 sales of over 4,800 products to date.
  - Over 13,000 EURO for 2013
  - This is an increase of 190% when comparing it to the same time period in 2012 ( January – August 2012 vs. 2013)
- Over 70 women artisans are now involved in this project, up from 15 in 2009
- Reduction in regional unemployment rate
  - Average monthly income is proportionate to average regional salary
- Increased the working business knowledge of women involved and further developed the souvenir market

## 6.Economic Development I. Going Forward

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- Establish all projects as sustainable income generating projects
- Involve more women in each project
- Increase participation in domestic and international expos
- Increase collaborations with partners/new partners
- Setting up revolving funds for each project
- Other Projects:
  - Carpet making
  - Ceramics
  - Embroidery/Sewing
  - Yarn production



## 7. Social activism

- Environmental projects
- Domestic violence victim support
- Job skills trainings
- Raising awareness about local community issues
- Distribution of donations from International Aid organizations to needy community members



## 8. Network Development

- A bigger network increases the opportunities for collaboration and idea/experience exchange
- First goal is to grow the network within Armenia
  - Reaching out to other women based organizations
- Second goal is to expand the network outside of our traditional borders, and onto the international stage as part of a larger network



*Thank you!*