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**EURASIA
PARTNERSHIP
FOUNDATION**

Civil Society Strategizing Event

August 24-26, 2018

Tsakhkadzor, Armenia

CSO Development Program

Fosters sustainable civil society development through strengthening the capacity of CSOs as critical actors to advance and oversee reform, improve services and contribute to the development of more effective governance in the economic, democratic, health and social spheres.

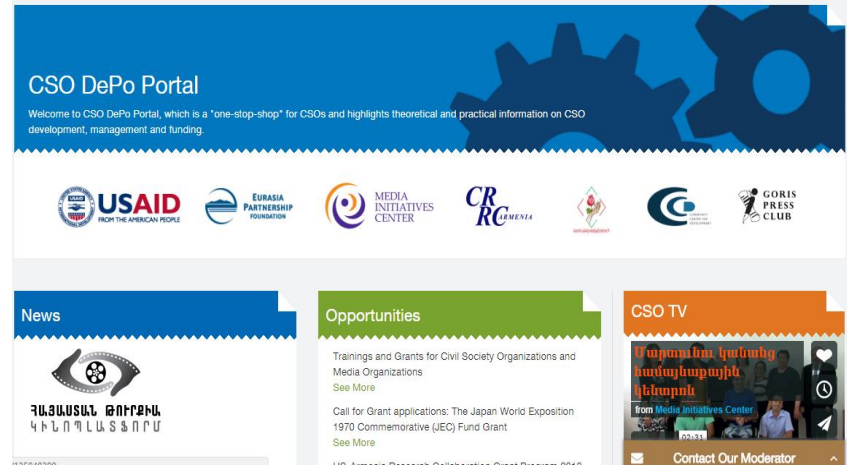
Timeframe: June, 2014 – May, 2019.

Budget: 2,000,000 USD

Partners: Media Initiatives Center
Caucasus Resource Research Centers
Goris Press Club (Syuniq)
Community Center for Development (Tavush)
Martuni Women’s Community Council, (Gegharkunik)

DePo Tools

- www.hkdepo.am
10 000 monthly visits



- [CSO Capacity Enhancement Tool](#) (CET)
- [CSO Management School](#): serves CSOs, media, arts, business, International organizations, individuals.

CSOs paradigm shift: Focus changes from money to management, capacities, impact, networks, systems and knowledge

Reasons for CS Strategizing Event

- Revolution
- Ownership: people feel more responsible for the state
- Lack of a long-term strategy/development vision for Armenia
- New government, new faces
- Tabula Rasa
- Change in Government-CSO relations: declaring and actively pursuing civil society help and cooperation

Nikol Pashinyan (unofficial quote):

'I thought everything in the executive is like I criticized over the years or a bit better, it turns out everything is much worse and totally dysfunctional'.

CS Strategizing Event

Objective

To enable civil society to start moving towards defining a common vision for the strategic development of Armenia in the new historical circumstances.

Specific objectives

- Clarifying, developing and, if necessary, creating communication & cooperation mechanisms among CS and the government;
- Formulating Innovative Ideas
- Outlining and sharing the civil society vision and the action plan towards its implementation.

The Process

- Voting for topics
- Dividing into Working Groups
- Coming together to report
- Back to Working Groups; new topics possible

Working Group Tasks

Day 1.

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Recommendations (first bunch)

Day 2.

- Connections
- Urgency
- Feasibility
- Recommendations (second bunch)

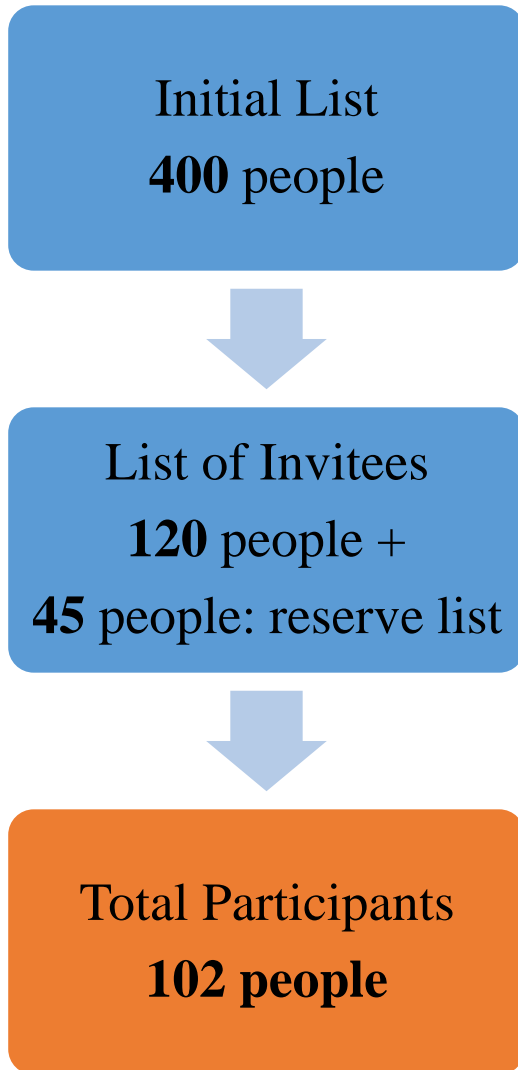
Why Open Space?

- CS responsibility and maturity increased
- Too many issues to discuss
- People feel uncomfortable if guided too much

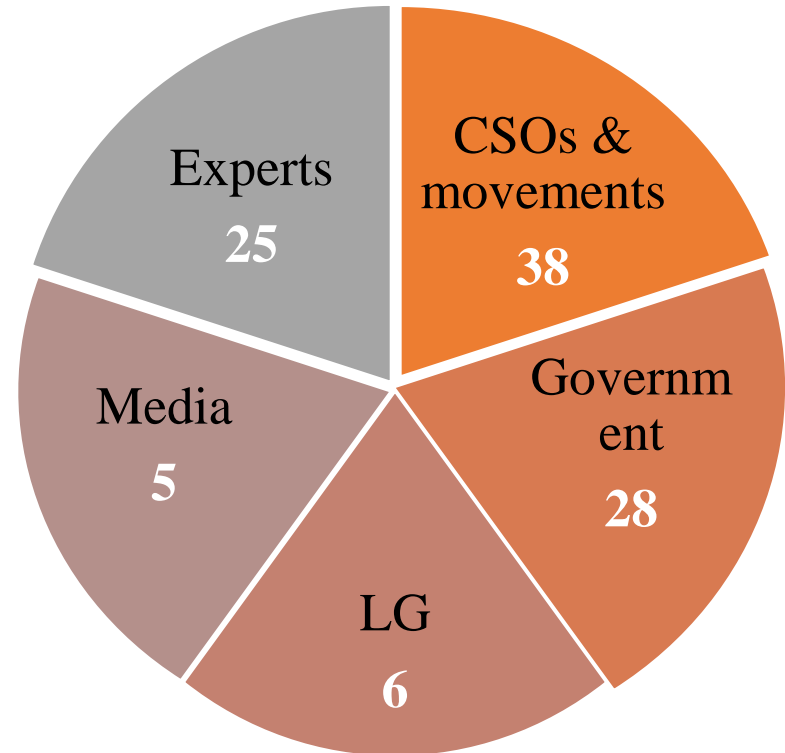
Expected Results:

- Networks, Connections, Discussions, Opportunities
- Analysis & Recommendations
- Policy Briefs
- Follow Ups on the issue of CS - Government cooperation strategy

Selection Process



Participants Distribution



The level of Government Participation:

- Deputy Ministers
- Heads of State Agencies

Proposed Themes

- State - CS Relations
- Armenia - International Development
- State Strategies
- Anticorruption issues: COI, Tenders, Procurement procedures
- Values: Controversies, public debates
- Philosophy of Law
- Yerevan
- Trolling
- etc.

Overall 32 topics

Issues that were not discussed or were discussed insufficiently

- Yerevan
- Values
- Conflicts in Army
- Conflicts (NK); Turkey
- Science...

Selected & Discussed Themes

1. State - CS Relations; Governance / Public Administration; CS Development
2. Sustainable Development - Environment
3. Media; Digital Technologies & Tools in the Management System
4. Global Armenia (External Relations)
5. Culture
6. Role of Women in New Circumstances
7. Balanced Development of Regions
8. Ideologies & Parties
9. Trade Unions

Strengths

- The ‘path’ issue (pluses and minuses of path dependency) – see the pic
- Some aspects of the legal framework
- Anti-Fragile
- Enthusiasm
- The State has been constituted and goes forward even in times of upheavals
- Some laws
- Relatively strong Civil Society
- Significant capacity to rely on internal resource
- External help appreciated

RECOMMENDATIONS *(part 1)*

Civil Society - Government Cooperation

- **Civil Society** should formulate the issues and **shape the agenda of ministries**, rather than be merely discussants of proposals
- Develop a new **CSO-State cooperation strategy** for EU-Armenia CEPA implementation

Governance / Management Reform

- **Strengthen Public Councils** next to ministries, support financially (working space: kind of an ‘urban hub’)
- **Make competitions & tenders transparent**, professional, trustful
- **Institutionalize procedures for CSO support**; strengthen interagency cooperation at various levels (see the pic later on)

RECOMMENDATIONS *(part 2)*

External Relations /Global Armenia

- CS to help create global professional cooperation **networks of Armenians and non-Armenians** on urgent issues
- **Networks of observers** of different areas of reform (train on Armenia, go global)
- Make **global projects local** and vice versa

Education

- Reform the National Institute of Education

Culture Ministry

- New **department on behavioral culture**: the culture of language, the culture of following rules, etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS *(part 3)*

Regional Development /

Proportionality of Rural and Urban Development

- **Capacity building of LG staff:** leadership, anticorruption & COI, project management, business thinking
- **CSOs help LGs to incorporate creative, innovative** (culture, education, enterprise development) **local development strategic plans** (see the CeLoG Creative Game report)
- **Revise mechanisms of budget allocations to LG**, such as social support services.

Environment

- **Increased public and CS oversight** over mining, small Hydro Stations & Fisheries
- **Formulate state strategy for renewable energy**
- **Catastrophic situation with water resources basins**

Cross-Cutting Issues

- Governance / Management / Public Administration: new culture vs old rules of game
- Generational cooperation between old and new staff: corporate culture, leadership, anticorruption, institutional memory
- To replace the ‘cyclical’ approach with a project management approach (see the pic later on);
- Business thinking
- Interagency cooperation, coordination or at least info sharing
- Departmental communication: internal, external
- Managing public expectations from the govt; and the public to learn to appreciate the change and to be constructive

Controversial Issues

- Extra budgetary accounts: Yes or No?
 - Tactical vs Strategic approaches and public expectations
-

- **The Reform Path:**

Some change before elections  Serious change after
Is that enough?

- Communication skills of new government staff (e.g. discriminatory glossary, ageism etc.).
- Urgency of specific sensitive human rights issues (antidiscrimination, the Law on Religious Organizations) may harm positive processes



Group Works & Plenary Discussions



Discussions with State Representatives



Artur Grigoryan, Head of Nature Protection and Subsoil Inspectorate on environmental challenges in Armenia



Artur Vanetsyan, Director of National Security Service on prior security issues to cooperate with CS sector



Nazeni Gharibyan, Deputy Minister of Culture on Ministry on CS cooperation



Sarhat Petrosyan, Head of Real Estate Cadaster Committee

Some Take Away-s

- Reform of state funding system for NGOs: more service provision sought, transparent tenders, flexibility, much more funding to be channeled to such tenders via reforming the Project Implementation Units and state foundations
- State employees need management training: empowerment, team work, leadership
- Interagency cooperation issue
- Why security, election observation, and corruption prevention (political will) were not discussed?
- Best state agencies and their new appointees compete with CS in terms of having/not having a vision
- The Government also needs such events! Why?
- The Government directly benefits from such events, and CS too

Follow-Up

Conceptual

- CSO-Government WGs on specific and larger issues to be established, to follow through: Resource?
 - LG-NGO WGs to be established
 - Central agencies-NGO WGs to be established, the existing ones to be made more effective
- Additional CS groups to be involved in further discussions (only EPF had 400 candidates, of which only 100 took part in the event)
- Sectoral consultations to be initiated by CS on these and additional topics

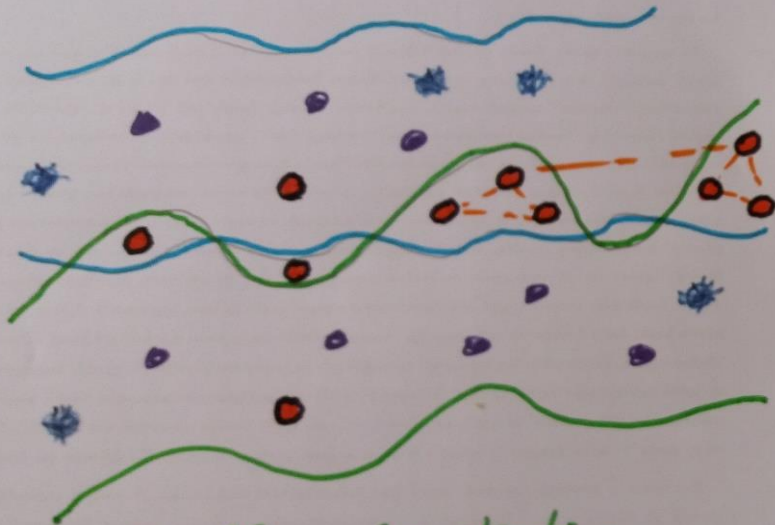
Follow-Up

Specific

- Request for capacity building training for the municipality of Goris to Goris Press Club
- Implementation of social enterprise model with Migration service (the model was developed for Gyumri Infotun in the scope of CELoG program)
- Creating a pilot e-tool with the Subsoil Committee to make CSO engagement easier and institutionalized.
- Government agencies and active CS groups ask DePo for particular action-related WGs to be established rapidly, based on the need.

Vision

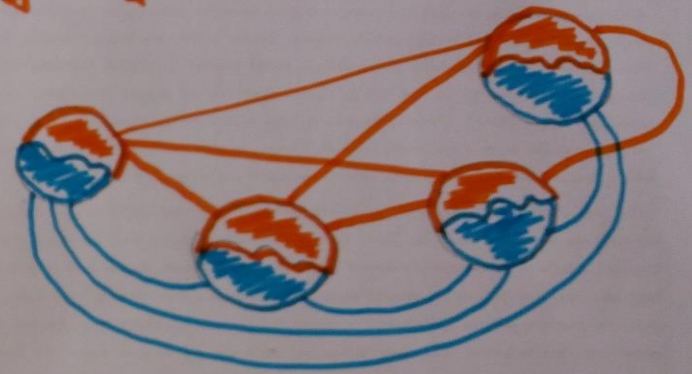
Dig'l path / rules / algorithms



the flow of initiative

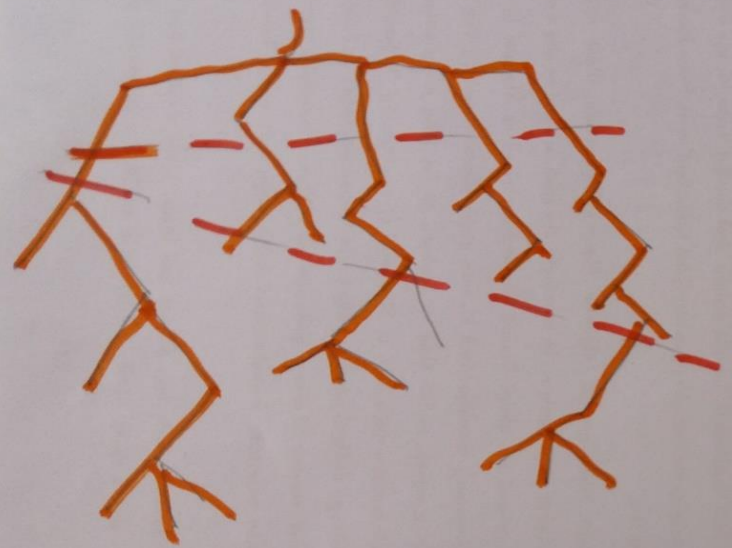
Agency

CS

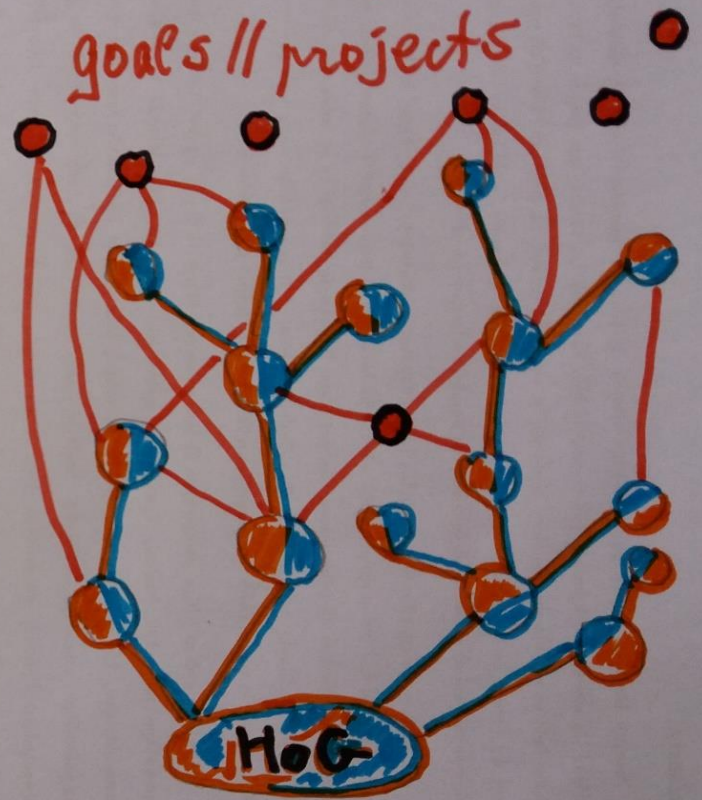


Vision

the Org-Chart Version
of the Court.



the People // CS
goals // projects



CSO Needs

- **Policy writing 2.0**
- **State Governance education 2.0**
- **Legal education 2.0**
- **Facilitating CSO-Government, CSO-LG dialogues**
- **Working on interagency issues**
- **Effective network management**
- **Critical thinking, New media, international partnership building etc.**

Thank you!

Funding needed for a very different next stage:

The CSO DePo is already DePo 2.0, thanks to the USAID previous support and changes in the country!

We are talking about DePo 4.0!! 😊