

Humanitarian Aid offered by Friends of Armenia (FoA)

REPORT No.7 – Major projects from end January to end May 2022

Dear Friends,

As time passes the needs of the wounded soldiers and or work changes. Many have fully recovered and some have already began working and providing for their families. I think this is our aim and I do really think that we have at least partially achieved our goal.

However problems still do exist and some need continued physiotherapy, which we provide free of charge through our dedicated physiotherapist, Vartuhi, who has become their second mother and doctor.

Three of the soldiers are getting married this month and we have been invited to their weddings. Knowing their family situations, we realise that two of them do not have beds and mattresses and the best wedding present that FoA could provide are double beds with proper mattresses for three of them.

1 – One of the beds is for Vahe Abrahamyan, who we assisted to complete their half finished house. See our report No.6 item 6. Now that they have built the house, he is soon to be married and as they lack most of the needed furniture, and as a wedding gift he will be the recipient of one of the beds.

Photo of Vahe in front of the house near completion.



2 – One of the beds is for Andranik Danoyan, who had head and hand injuries and we assisted him during his treatment by providing physio and acupuncture. See our report No.4 item 5, and report 6, item 5. He has fully recovered and is working. When Mariette last visited the family, she noticed that they had no bed and husband and wife were sleeping on a board, which was sitting on some bricks.

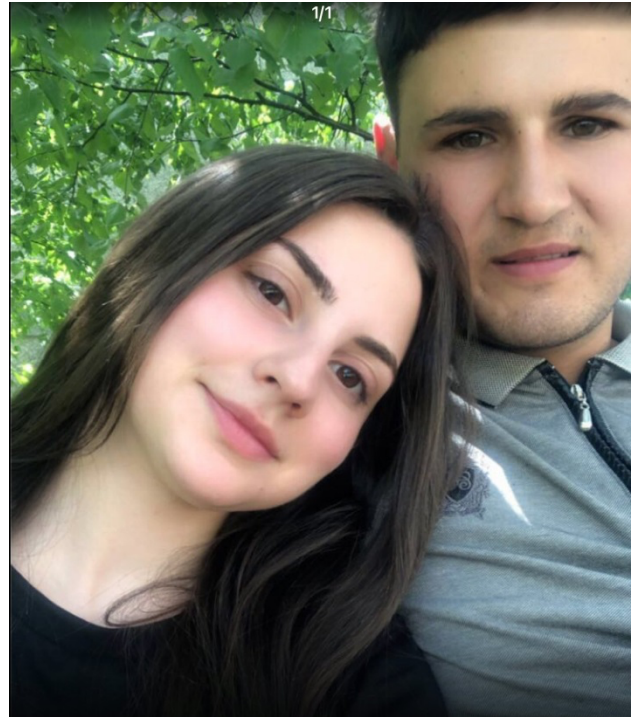
We made the decision of donating a bed to him.

Image of one of the beds, with special mattress.



3 – The other bed goes to Arman Davtyan, who lives on Mount Ara, Bujakan village, not far from Yerevan. He had terrible hand injuries and the right hand was not working at all. Through the intervention of a French-Armenian doctor and months of physiotherapy he is now well enough to drive and is now working. See our report No.2, item 5. He is now getting married to his fiancée and FoA will give them a bed as wedding gift.

Arman with his fiancée.

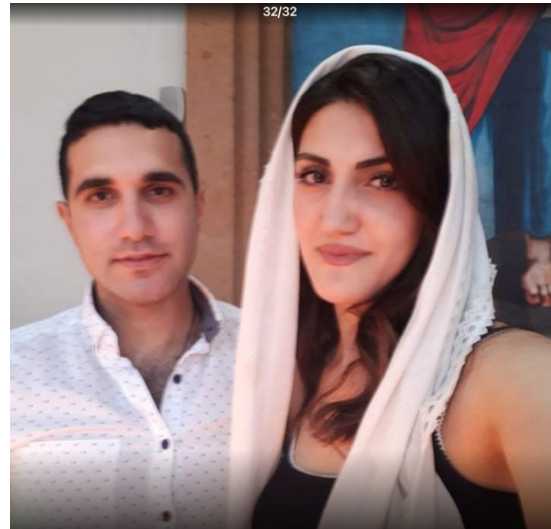


4 – The fourth soldier is Beno Poghosyan, 22, from Gyumri, who is studying in the Institute of fine arts and plans to become a sculptor. His injuries were in the leg, were also affected by phosphorus burns. He had furthermore lost hearing in one of the ears and after some treatment the hearing was partially restored. He had received a Russian made free hearing aid, which did not help at all, as it was not powerful enough for his condition. Mariette took him to an ear specialist, who after testing with modern audio equipment was recommended a high power Danish Oricon hearing aid. We obtained the recommended hearing aid and now Beno's hearing is normal and balanced in both ears. He is marrying the nurse who had nursed him in the hospital. They live in Gyumri and two days ago his father came to see us and invited us to their wedding, to be held on the 25th of June in Gyumri.



The hearing aid.

Beno and his wife to be.



5 - Friends of Armenia and SGMF/INTRA have been working together raising funds for the soldiers with PTSD treating soldiers with PTSD syndrome, especially those from Vanadzor the surrounding regions. They number about 50, some of whom are also disabled or were heavily wounded. INTRA/FoA has been sending councillors to Vanadzor almost every week for group, as well as individual treatment of soldiers, who still suffer from this psychological disorder.

INTRA/FoA planned to get them together, so that they get to know each other and in future mutually use this friendship. To this end INTRA and FoA are cooperating with a local charity called Arpi NGO, headed by Sofi Minasian, herself a therapist, who offered a room for the soldier to be their meeting place. To get the project going FoA and INTRA invited all soldiers living in the region as well as the widows, who had lost their husbands in the war for two separate, as well as joint meeting, so that they can get to know the others. We travelled to Vanadzor to partake in this meetings and below are some of the photos.



6 - Late last year family of a newly deceased friend donated funds to help pensioners in Armenia. As INTRA/FoA are active in Vanadzor and know the management of the residence, having done three projects for them, we suggested to the donor to help this organization, which has over 50 residents, some 35 of them being mobile, which they approved. To make their life more interesting we decided in parallel with group and individual mental health sessions, also organise cultural trips and performances for them. They made trips to the theatre, with a pre-performance visit to a coffee shop. As some of these soldiers are musicians (two singers, two duduk and a dap player), it was arranged for them to perform in the Old Peoples Home, so that all residents could benefit and the soldiers would also be doing something for the elderly.

As the Independence day of May 28 was upcoming, we suggested to the city authorities to allow us to organise the annual public concert. We invited the Home residents to come to the concert as well as including the soldiers and the bereaved families in the performances. The world famous Armenian composer- teacher Ara Gervorkyan agreed to bring his traditional instrument students group to perform on the day gratis. We took a few guests form Yerevan to the afternoon concert and the performance was very gratifying. It included:

- Folk songs and dance music performed by Gevorkians group
- A mother who had lost her only son in the war sang a few songs fitting for the occasion
- The four musician soldiers performed

See some images below and excuse the quality



The bereaved mother singing against the background of the image of her family and son (18).

7 – Arin Girunyan, 22, is a talented cellist, graduate of the conservatory. He had serious injuries in the leg and had lost a number of teeth.

He has no mother and the only carer, his father, is a taxi driver in Yerevan.

FoA took charge of the concluding part of the treatment, organised dentist's treatment and secured a much needed proper leg brace.

He is now almost recovered and mobile.

