

Friends of Armenia

November 2023

Yerevan

REPORT 1

Activities of Friends of Armenia regarding the Displaced Persons from Artsakh

When the Azerbaijani army attacked the civilian population of Artsakh, who were supposed to be protected by the Russian Peacekeepers, 105,000 people, the whole Armenian population of Artsakh were compelled to leave, escaping to Armenia. Within three days all were registered and most were placed in temporary or long term accommodations.

Two of the Trustees of FoA, Mariette and Rouben Galichian decided to act immediately and within the first two days joining the forces of the Little Singers of Armenia Foundation (LSA) began raising funds to help the displaced population, who escaped with whatever they could carry.

Through the help of the officials, we found out that over 300 families (670 personas) have been allocated housing in the town of Jambarak (east of Lake Sevan) and surrounding villages. Contacting the local leaders we found out the needs of these refugees, which was staple food, warm clothes and jackets, electric kettles, wood pellets for heating, boots etc.

Our fundraising efforts were able to collect some \$11,000, which was used for the purchase of the above mentioned items from manufacturers and wholesalers. A total of 2.5 tons of food, three hundred sets of warm clothes, 180 padded jackets, 350 pairs of winter shoes were purchased. Some staff members of the LSA and FoA and other friends arranged to transport the goods to Jambarak, some 140 km away and distribute to the displaced families of the area. The distribution took place between October 10th and 20th.

PROJECT A - Below please find some of the photos related to this phase of the work.





After the initial project with the LSA, the Board of the FoA decided to arrange for a fundraiser in the UK, so that FoA members in Armenia could act on their behalf and arrange the purchase and distribution of the necessary items.

Board member Alexander Katsouris arranged fundraising activities through “Just Giving” and within a short period of time through our trustees, as well as individual FoA donors were able to raise over £6000. At this time we found out that the government is providing hot meals, twice a day to ALL the refugees, wherever they are, therefore there was no need for further foodstuff and our efforts could be concentrated on the provision of clothing, hygiene and other items.

PROJECT B – Hayk Baghdasaryan and family from Hadrut.

Through our visits and contacts we found a family of nine, Hayk Baghdasaryan born 1992, his wife and three children, his mother-in-law, brother and his wife, as well as the grandmother, have been given the use of a large house, in the village of Vanashen, about 50 km from Yerevan. The house was built by Mayis Grigoryan for his three sons, who have now moved to the city. He lives in the adjacent building with his wife. Mariette and Rouben, assisted by Vartuhi paid a visit to the family and the owner of the building.

Mayis, the neighbour has given the empty building to Hayk and his extended family and in our presence confirmed that Hayk and family can stay there as long as they wish, provided they cultivate the land and the garden for their own use.

Hayk, with his wife Lyra (a very active young woman) plan to complete the half-built greenhouse, build a second one, keep chickens and Lyra plans to grow various herbs and onion. Hayk is also seeking employment as heavy goods lorry driver and has been promised a job by the army.

During our visit FoA decided to pay for the material cost of the hot-houses as well as chicken etc.



The house and part of the greenhouse.



The unfinished greenhouse



Hayk and Mayis.



Hayk, his wife, sister-in-law, Mariette and Vartuhi



Hayk and family



The greenhouse after ten days, awaiting drip irrigation.



Lyra and two of her children



The already refurbished chicken coop with 12 hens and a rooster .

PROJECT C – Displaced families in and near Alaverdi, north Armenia

Searching the needy communities we were directed to Alaverdi, where in town and the surrounding villages there are about 350 displaced persons. The community leader informed us that there is need for warm shoes-boots and warm clothing.

With the help of Vartuhi we found manufacturers and purchased 114 sets of warm sweaters and trousers and 347 pairs of warm shoes. With the community leader we arranged for these refugees to come to the Community Cultural Centre, sent the goods to Alaverdy, accompanied by Mariet and her friends Nairi Stepan Sarkissian, Nona Galustian, Vartuhi and Lucine Ohanyans and Nushik Tashjian.

All the clothing as well as most of the shoes were distributed on Friday November 10, and we decided to take the remaining items to Noramarg village, near town of Masis.



Downloading, collecting and distributing the items.



Various types of warm shoes.



Distribution of the clothing and shoes



At the end of the day, after distributing the clothing and shoes, here are those who did the work, with the remaining shoes. These will be taken to Noramarg later.

PROJECT D – Village of Noramarg in Ararat valley.

Contacting the displaced families in Noramarg, we realized that there are some 37 children, who need warm clothing, as well as shoes. Therefore decision was made to take the shoes remaining form Alaverdy and purchase further 37 sets of warm children’s clothing from our previous supplier.



Vartuhi and her friend managed to take the items and distribute them on the 14th of November. See photos attached, which includes the family with nine children!

← Family with nine children



The boots, warm winter cloths and one of the recipient families in Noramarg village.

For Noramarg families FoA purchased 15 sets of duvets, pillows with the necessary duvet covers and pillowcases, to be given to families with large number of children and to those who needed most. These were delivered to the families on the 20th of November (see images below),



Our donor Christine Arzoumanian and husband with FoA helper Vartuhi and few of the recipients in Noramarg.



Another group and some other recipients of the donations in Noramarg.