



20 ANNUAL 25 REPORT



SUMMARY

Our action	04
Our projects in Armenia	05
Women's empowerment in Armenia	06
Testimonials	08
Strategic partnership	10
Taxation and entrepreneurship	11
Digital literacy	12
SMM and HR training for displaced women	13
Introduction to artificial intelligence	14
Voluntary return	15
Le Coq Français	16
French classrooms	17
Voices that inspire and transform	18
Stories from our beneficiaries	19
Economic aspects of income generation by refugee women in Armenia	29
A legacy that outlives time	31
The management of nursing homes in France	33
Armenian Home of Saint-Raphaël	34
Residence l'Églantier of Gonesse	35
Armenian Residence of Montmorency	36
AAAS enters the digital age	37
Support our work	39
Our addresses	40

OUR ACTION

Vulnerable Women's empowerment in Armenia



Education



Migration - Return to Sources



Nursing Homes



OUR PROJECTS IN ARMENIA

The year 2025 reaffirmed our commitment to developing and supporting the most vulnerable populations. Through our actions, we continued and strengthened our interventions in essential areas such as migration, education, assistance to people in precarious situations, and the promotion of the French-speaking world.

The empowerment of vulnerable women remained at the heart of our priorities, particularly that of refugee women and the wives of soldiers affected by the consequences of the 2020 war and the successive crises. Thanks to tailored programs, we supported their resilience and fostered their social and economic inclusion, while continuing to accompany people displaced from Artsakh towards lasting autonomy.

This annual report retraces the main actions carried out in 2025, the results achieved, and the challenges overcome. It reflects our Organization's ongoing commitment to the populations it supports and highlights the prospects that will guide our mission.



EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN ARMENIA

Following the selection process conducted in December 2024, the project to support vulnerable refugee and war-affected women, implemented jointly by Saint Sarkis Charity Trust and the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD) and coordinated on the ground by the AAAS, entered its operational phase as early as January 2025.

This program, deployed nationwide in Armenia, generated strong interest, with 175 applications received. Among them, 95 participants attended an intensive training course, resulting in the selection of 46 projects, including 25 business start-ups and 21 vocational training pathways. In the first half of the year, these initiatives were launched and supported through individualized follow-up, enabling tailored support to each beneficiary's specific needs.

In the second half of the year, the project reached a decisive milestone by consolidating income-generating activities, with particular attention paid to the agriculture and production sectors. These areas were prioritized for their potential for sustainability and their capacity to offer stable, long-term economic prospects.

At the same time, the beneficiaries strengthened their skills through training in entrepreneurship and accounting management, essential to structuring and sustaining their activities. Some participants engaged in vocational training were thus able to complete their pathway and enter the labor market or develop their own activity.



The acquisition of practical skills enabled them to envisage a gradual evolution of their projects, moving from a logic of subsistence to a genuine entrepreneurial dynamic. The regular follow-up provided by the teams of the AAAS and the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development was a key factor of success. Monthly field visits enabled quick identification of difficulties, targeted adjustments, and proper implementation of activities. Thanks to this rigorous and continuous support, all the projects supported were successfully completed.

Beyond the economic results, the project's impact can also be measured by the social transformations observed. Several beneficiaries are now able to provide for their families' needs, strengthen their autonomy, and reduce their dependence on public assistance. This lasting change helps to break the cycle of precariousness and to restore confidence in the future.

175 applications received

95 participants in the intensive training

46 projects selected, including

25 business start-ups

21 vocational training courses

However, despite these encouraging results, the needs remain considerable. Due to insufficient resources, many women could not be supported under this program.

This reality underscores the importance of support from partners and donors to continue and expand this action.



By 2025, the project had thus fully achieved its goal: to empower vulnerable women to take control of their futures by laying the groundwork for sustainable economic and social autonomy.

OUR BENEFICIARIES



« I had the good fortune to have the love and the strength to carry on.»

“

Anahit, war widow

In Vanadzor, Anahit transformed a former family garage into a professional kitchen to launch "Irma, " her small business specializing in homemade frozen meals, including stuffed dumplings (ravioli).

After months of uncertainty and several exploratory training courses, she chose to devote herself to food production. With the support of the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD), she equipped her workshop and structured her business. Today, her business provides a stable income and supplies local families with quality artisanal products.

For Anahit, "Irma" represents much more than a job: it is a way to honor her husband's memory, offer her children a dignified childhood, and, step by step, build a more secure future.

“

« Every piece of clothing I make carries something of my own story. Helping other women get back on their feet has become my purpose. »



Mariam, war widow

Some stories embody resilience with particular strength. Originally from Martakert, in Artsakh, Mariam had always dreamed of becoming a seamstress. She had opened her workshop before being brutally displaced in 2020, while she was pregnant. Despite a perilous exile, she was able to draw on her own resources to start everything anew.

Settled in Sevan, she revived her activity with the material assistance received through the project. Her workshop has become more than a place to sew; it's a place where things are passed on and women support each other. Two women from Artsakh have trained with her and joined the team. Mariam holds tight to her roots: she weaves cultural motifs from Artsakh and the colors of the Armenian flag into her work.

Her project goes beyond sewing: it becomes a life mission, a space for collective reconstruction, and a tool for transmission. Together, these women are building a future made of autonomy, pride, and memory.



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP: AREV SOCIETY

In a context marked by the lasting consequences of recent conflicts and the challenges faced by displaced populations, Association Arménienne d'Aide Sociale (AAAS) strengthened its cooperation in 2025 with the partner of the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD), Arev Society.

This alliance is part of a long-term commitment to supporting the most vulnerable women in achieving sustainable economic and social autonomy.

After a first phase focused on humanitarian aid, this cooperation has gradually evolved toward implementing structured programs focused on skills strengthening, access to employment, and the development of income-generating activities.

The objective is clear: to enable displaced women from Artsakh and those affected by the consequences of war to rebuild their lives, regain their dignity, and become full actors in their future.



Practical seminar on Armenian taxation for refugee women from Artsakh

In February 2025, 25 women displaced from Artsakh took part in a practical seminar on Armenian taxation, organized as part of a cooperation among the Association Arménienne d'Aide Sociale (AAAS), the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD), and the Arev Society.

This seminar aimed to help participants better understand the tax rules governing small business activity in Armenia, in the context of significant changes to the tax system.

Participants were informed of recent tax reforms that directly affect micro entrepreneurs. Starting January 2025, the turnover tax rate will double, rising from 5% to 10%. This increase marks the first phase of a gradual transition away from the turnover tax system, with a second phase of more radical changes planned for July 2025.

Participants also learned that the Armenian government aims to narrow the gap between the tax burdens of the turnover tax system and the general tax system, while increasing incentives for commercial entities by reducing document expenses.

The trainer, who is herself a former FADD beneficiary, highlighted the support opportunities available for women entrepreneurs, particularly in the high-tech sector, where the government plans to introduce a reduced turnover tax rate of 2% (instead of 5%) and to cover part of the training costs of companies that invest in the professional development of their employees.

Through this initiative, AF4SD and its partners hope to provide displaced women from Artsakh with the tools and knowledge they need to rebuild their economic lives despite the considerable challenges they face in their host country.



Digital literacy for women displaced from Artsakh

The first stage of the program aimed to strengthen basic digital skills, indispensable for professional autonomy and integration into the labor market. This free training, entirely online, was aimed at women displaced from Artsakh as well as those whose husbands were killed or gravely wounded during the war.

Over four weeks, 100 participants benefited from structured support. They learned to use office tools such as Word and Excel effectively, to work with Google applications (Docs, Sheets, Slides, Gmail), and to adopt safe practices on the Internet.

Beyond acquiring technical know-how, this training enabled participants to gain confidence and better organize their professional projects. For many, it was a concrete first step towards exploring new opportunities and developing skills transferable across different sectors.

The exchanges between participants also enriched the program. The online sessions fostered the sharing of experiences, collaborative learning and the creation of professional support networks, allowing each woman to draw inspiration from the journeys of others and to strengthen her own skills.

Finally, this training provided a solid foundation for all those wishing to continue their digital development. It offered the bases needed to deepen more advanced technical skills and to remain competitive in a constantly evolving professional environment.

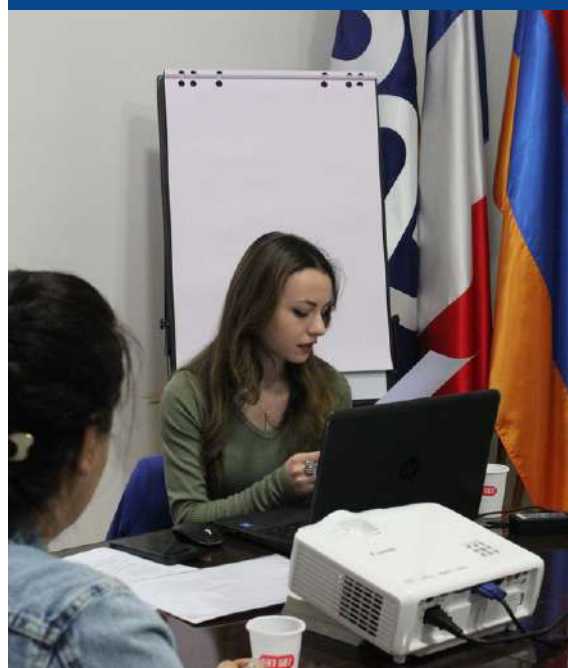


SMM and HR training for displaced women

In April 2025, targeted training for women displaced from Artsakh was organized, strengthening their capacity for professional integration in Armenia.

Participants discovered the recruitment methods favored by Armenian companies: local job platforms, selection processes, and decisive interview criteria. Human resources (HR) professionals presented current trends such as video recruitment and situational assessments.

The training also covered Social Media Marketing (SMM) strategies, that is, the use of social networks for professional purposes, essential for an effective job search or the launch of an activity. The beneficiaries learned to optimize their presence on LinkedIn, a platform that is becoming crucial in the Armenian market.





Introduction to artificial intelligence: preparing tomorrow's skills

In continuation of the digital training program, an introduction to artificial intelligence was offered, allowing participants to deepen their professional skills.

Delivered online and supervised in a structured way, this training brought together 100 participants. It enabled them to discover the concrete uses of AI to improve their professional efficiency and stimulate their creativity. Participants were thus trained in writing effective prompts, creating professional content, analyzing and rapidly summarizing large documents, and automating certain repetitive tasks. Each module included practical exercises that encouraged direct experimentation with the tools and their adaptation to each woman's specific needs.

Beyond technical skills, the program also encouraged reflection on innovation and applied creativity. Participants explored different ways of integrating artificial intelligence into their professional activities, whether in document management, communication, or task organization. This approach helped strengthen their autonomy, problem-solving capacity, and openness to new professional opportunities.

By combining hands-on learning with the exploration of emerging technologies, this program demonstrates the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development and Arev Society's continued commitment to the professional development of women and the expansion of their prospects in a constantly evolving economic environment.

VOLUNTARY RETURN

For more than twenty years, the Association Arménienne d'Aide Sociale and the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development have worked hand in hand to support Armenian migrants in an irregular situation in France who wish to return to their country of origin.

Thanks to the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII) program, these voluntary returns are accompanied by concrete and personalized support. Each returnee benefits from tailor-made assistance, including advice on settling in, training, and social and economic reintegration programs adapted to their situation

Review committees held regularly at the French Embassy in Armenia select the projects that will be supported, whether small farms, craft workshops or local businesses. The objective is clear: to enable everyone to start again on solid foundations and to turn their return into a lasting opportunity.

In 2025, this cooperation continues with the same demands and the same commitment. Beyond a simple return, it is about restoring hope and autonomy for beneficiaries while contributing to the economic and social dynamism of local communities in Armenia.



VOLUNTARY RETURNS

2005 to present

2287

New income-generating activities
in 2025

16

BUSINESS CREATION

416

Since the start of the project

LE COQ FRANÇAIS



Every year, in March, the national competition « Le Coq Français » (The French Rooster) is a highlight for Armenian pupils learning French. This event, which has become a must-attend key date, brings together thousands of pupils from across the territory to assess their language skills and celebrate their connection to French-speaking culture.



The 2025 edition confirmed this enthusiasm, with more than 2,500 pupils from all regions of Armenia participating. Their commitment, their seriousness and their level in the French language reflect the growing place of French in the country's education system. Twenty laureates were honored at the end of this edition.

Over the years, the competition has grown and become richer, offering participants far more than a simple competition: a rewarding experience that fosters cultural openness, self-confidence, and sharing.

This dynamic actively contributes to promoting the French language and strengthening educational and cultural ties between Armenia and the French-speaking world.

FRENCH CLASSROOMS



Since 2018, the Armenian Foundation for Sustainable Development, in partnership with the « Stepan Gishyan » charitable foundation, has worked to facilitate access for pupils in remote regions of Armenia to the French language and culture.

The main project centers on the creation of modern, fully equipped French classrooms, aiming to transform learning conditions in schools that often face resource constraints



These spaces go beyond the traditional classroom framework: they are designed to spark pupils' curiosity, foster their immersion in the French-speaking world, and encourage them to open up to new cultures. In 2025, two new French classrooms were inaugurated, in the regions of Tavush and Aragatsotn, bringing to eleven the total number of classrooms fitted out under this program. For teachers, these environments provide a more stimulating teaching setting and facilitate their pedagogical practice.



For pupils, they represent a true space of inspiration, conducive to openness to the world and to the broadening of their perspectives.

The Foundation and its partners remain convinced that the quality of educational environments plays a decisive role in school success and the personal fulfilment of pupils. They thus continue their efforts to develop and multiply these initiatives in the years to come



VOICES THAT INSPIRE AND TRANSFORM

Behind every program we run are women whose lives speak louder than any statistic. They've kept going through circumstances that would have stopped most of us. Their stories are where you really see what these initiatives do.

The women we work with in Armenia come from very different backgrounds. Many have been through serious hardship, personal, social, and economic. But they share one thing: the determination to learn, to find their feet, and to build something steady and meaningful for themselves and their families.

The stories in this section come straight from our teams on the ground. We talk with these women regularly. That's how we understand what they actually need, see what's working, and notice the changes, sometimes quiet ones, sometimes profound. A new sense of confidence. Someone is taking initiative for the first time. The ability to imagine a different kind of future.

By sharing these voices, we want to put real faces and real journeys at the center of the conversation. These are stories of individual courage, but they're also part of something bigger: a movement toward greater equality, greater independence, and more possibilities for women in Armenia

Empowerment of Refugee Women in Armenia

A BIOLOGIST WHO CHOSE TO CULTIVATE HOPE

In 2019, Margarita married and moved to Hadrut, in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh). A biologist by training, she had always been drawn to education.

That year, she joined Teach For Armenia and settled in one of the most remote parts of the region, not with grand ambitions but with a quiet determination to live with purpose. Her goals were simple: to teach, to learn, and to be useful in her new community.



While teaching in Hadrut, she noticed a small persistent problem in daily life: fresh mushrooms were almost impossible to find. The few that arrived from Armenia were often spoiled and inedible by the time they reached the local shops. It seemed a minor problem, but for Margarita it represented an opportunity. With her background in biology and a growing interest in sustainable solutions, she began to wonder: what if she could grow mushrooms locally?

She knew nothing about agriculture. But she had an instinct for learning and a resilience that would soon define her journey. She researched, experimented, and over time created a small mushroom production site. She learned to maintain the delicate balance between temperature and humidity, to manage the life cycle of mushrooms, and to preserve and package them in a way that prolonged their freshness.

It was not, first and foremost, a business idea but a response to a concrete need. Something simple. Something useful.

Then, in 2020, the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War turned everything upside down. Margarita, her husband, and their young son were forced to leave Hadrut along with thousands of other inhabitants. They left behind their home, the school where she taught, and her small mushroom-growing project, built with patience. Like many families from Artsakh, they were torn from everything that anchored their lives.

They resettled in Stepanakert. Starting over was hard, but Margarita held on. In 2022, when the blockade cut off gas, electricity, food, and medicine, she somehow got the operation going again, this time in a small space on the edge of town. Without transport, she walked several kilometers a day to tend to the mushrooms, often carrying them back herself. Even in the middle of shortages, she kept giving some away to families who needed them, adapting however she could to the conditions.

Then, in September 2023, she had to leave again. This time to Armenia, near Yerevan. With support from the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development, she started over once more, with a modest setup and the same determination. Her son is at the center of everything she does, and her commitment hasn't budged.

Margarita's story is one of constant reinvention. Every time something is taken from her, she rebuilds not by trying to recreate what was lost, but by working with what she has. The drive to be useful. To create. To hold on. It's a quiet kind of resilience, but it runs deep, and it's the thread that ties her whole story together.



Margarita, 29 years old, 1 child,
refugee from Artsakh

**Empowerment of Refugee
Women in Armenia**

MARIANNA'S JOURNEY OF STRENGTH

In the rolling hills of Martakert, in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh), Marianna once led a quiet and meaningful life. A nurse by training and a devoted mother of two children, she and her husband had built a modest way of life rooted in the land, growing vegetables and raising poultry together.

It was a life defined not by luxury but by meaning, rhythm and a deep connection to home.



But in 2020, the first wave of war turned everything upside down. The family was forced to leave temporarily. Soon, they returned to continue working the land and slowly rebuilt something that resembled daily life once again.

But this fragile peace they had created was not to last. On 19 September 2023, war returned to Artsakh with devastating consequences. In the chaos of the attacks and the displacement, Marianna lost her husband. Left alone to care for her children and the rest of her large family, she was once again forced to abandon everything.

She left with deep grief and fear to escape the ethnic cleansing.

Their journey led them to the town of Vanadzor in Armenia, where they found temporary refuge.

Adapting to a new environment with nine people under one roof was overwhelming. The emotional weight of loss made daily life heavier, especially for her children. Their new home offered little comfort, and there was no employment opportunity to make ends meet. Yet Marianna did not give up.

With a quiet but steady determination, she rebuilt the life she had been used to leading. She found a part-time job in the administration of the local school and bought a few hens.

Each morning began with feeding the hens, gathering the eggs, and managing the modest sales that followed. Whether she supplied local shops or sold directly to neighbors, she slowly found a rhythm again. It was not easy, resources were limited and the emotional cost remained heavy, but it was a beginning.

Marianna describes her family as « hard-working people », and this shows in every step she has taken since the displacement. From the very start, she refused to remain idle. For her, carrying on meant honoring her past and protecting her children's future.

While searching for economic support programs run by various charitable organizations for refugees, she came across the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD). With little hope, she requested support. AF4SD representatives visited her to assess the viability of a chicken-farming business. At first, she thought she could set this up in her neighbor's yard alongside the pigs, but AF4SD required that she set aside a dedicated section of her garage for the chickens. Once everything was prepared and after a final inspection, they approved the funding. The grant enabled her to buy additional hens, thus increasing her egg production.

« I went door to door, shop after shop », she says. « In the end, one of them said yes. Fresh eggs, twice a week. » She paused; her smile was modest but sincere. « I know it's not much, but it's the beginning of something. »

Marianna speaks about the refugee housing vouchers they are entitled to, her voice growing stronger as she describes their plan. « We want to buy a house in Vanadzor », she explains, her eyes lighting up. « With the vouchers, we will no longer have to worry about rent. Every egg and chick I sell will go directly toward building our life, not just for survival. »

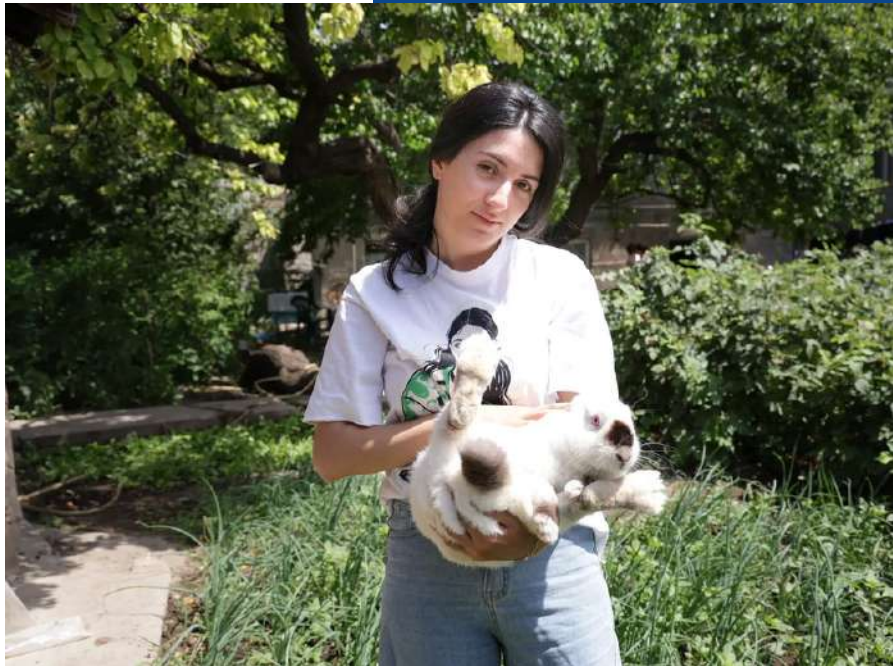


Marianna, 36 years old, 2 children
refugee from Artsakh

ZOYA'S NEW BEGINNING

When war broke out in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) in 2023, Zoya and her family had to flee in haste. They left everything behind: their home, their land, their livelihood, but also their dreams, which remained buried in their homeland. The shock of exile was immense, but fortunately, they were not alone.

Upon arriving in Armenia, Zoya found an unexpected human warmth around her: friends, humanitarian organizations, people who believed in the power of a fresh start.



It was this solidarity that gave Zoya and her husband the strength to get back up and start again. They rented a small house in the Kotayk region, not far from Yerevan. After the birth of their daughter, they decided to embark on an activity that could provide them with a modest but regular income. Their choice fell on rabbit farming.

It wasn't a random choice. Raising rabbits takes far fewer resources than raising cattle or pigs, and the meat is lean and high in protein, exactly what health-conscious families look for.

The project quickly became something more than a livelihood for Zoya.

With support from the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD), she turned the idea into reality. The AF4SD team visited her, reviewed the business plan, and the committee approved it. With that, she bought her first rabbits and got the farm going. She's deeply invested; she watches over the rabbits' health and growth with real care. Her neighbors and community welcomed the project warmly.

But for Zoya, this isn't just business: "I'm glad I can help parents like me who are looking for healthy food, she says. "Especially the ones who want the best for their kids.

She's already dreaming bigger: expanding the farm, working with local shops, raising more rabbits, and feeding more families in the area.

Her drive has rippled through her family. Her mother started baking traditional bread. Her father took up chicken-raising. Her husband found work in security, always there in the background, the quiet kind of presence that holds everything together.

This is a family that refused to be defeated by what happened to them. Instead, they got moving. They took on the challenges in front of them. They started building new paths forward.



Zoya, 27 years old, 1 child
refugee from Artsakh



Find more testimonials by scanning the QR code

INNA'S JOURNEY

Inna still remembers the forests of Chartar. Green, endless, with air so pure that it felt like breathing peace itself. Her house was located at the very top of the village, surrounded only by trees and silence.

In Artsakh, Inna worked as an entomologist.

Every spring, she advised farmers on how to protect their crops from insects. Her husband worked the land. Together, they lived according to a simple philosophy that became their motto:

« We love nature and animals, because plants do not betray and animals do not deceive. They are honest, and there is so much to learn from them. »

This world disappeared in September 2023. After months of blockade and famine, they had to flee Artsakh hastily to escape the looming ethnic cleansing.

« The journey was incredibly difficult, especially with my small child, » Inna recalls. She doesn't really like to talk about those hellish moments: the war, the blockade, the evacuation. Who would?

They arrived in Armenia almost empty-handed. They had lost everything, except their lives. But what makes Inna's story different is that she didn't just survive. She is rebuilding.



After a stay in the city, which they quickly disliked because of the noise and the lack of nature, they settled in Parakar, a small town near Yerevan. With support from the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD), they launched a pig farm. Inna smiles as she says that now, her husband « works for her », but that's how a family business works. « We love this work », she says simply.

Their dedication is visible. They use natural feed, and their customers love their products. Living on the outskirts of the village is ideal: it avoids inconvenience to neighbors and gives them space to dream big.

In addition to pigs, they raise rabbits in a multi-story house built by her husband.

Their idea?

To use rabbit manure to produce biohumus for their vegetable garden, and then sell it to other farmers. Their next big goal: beekeeping. « In Artsakh, we had more than ninety hives », Inna recalls.

« We produced pure honey. Today, we only have memories left... But we have kept all our know-how and the will to start over. »

It may seem like a dream, she acknowledges. But when you've already lost everything once and find the strength to start from scratch, dreams no longer seem so impossible.

« The most important thing for my family and me is to live in peace and to create », she affirms.

« It is difficult to build when you are constantly attacked and everything you build is destroyed. But we are hardworking, persevering, and above all... this is what we love to do. »

Deep down, Inna knows they have lost a lot, but she also knows they had the courage to find their way back. She and her husband have discovered work they love and do together with passion. It is harmony everywhere: in their marriage, in their work, in their life.

From the forests of Chartar to the farms of Parakar, Inna's story is not just about displacement. It speaks of an unbreakable human spirit, of the love of land, family, and honest work.

« We don't want to live in the past », Inna concludes. « We want to find a little more joy and build a more stable and predictable future for ourselves and our children. »

And step by step, one pig, one rabbit, one future hive at a time, Inna and her family are rediscovering their home.



Inna, 30 years old, 1 child
refugee from Artsakh

MERI'S STORY

Meri was the director of a beauty products company in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh). She had built her business with her own hands and led a beautiful team of women whom she inspired and helped achieve financial independence.

It wasn't just a career, but a true vocation.

Then war broke out, followed by the total blockade. In a few months, the vivid colors of life disappeared.



Her team scattered to the four corners of cities and villages, each carrying her wounds, her losses, sometimes even the loss of hope. The bond that united them was broken, and Meri, who had supported so many others, in turn found herself needing to be carried.

She struggled to survive, not only financially but also psychologically. Her daughter Adrianna had been deeply marked by what she had lived through during the war.

The nights were the hardest: the silence was no longer a comfort, but a constant fear. For a mother, seeing her child suffer is heartbreaking. And yet, Meri continued to stand tall, without a plan, but with a certainty: pain cannot be allowed to win.

After their forced displacement, fleeing ethnic cleansing, the family found refuge in the village of Mrgavet, in the Ararat region of Armenia, thanks to the humanitarian organization Gain. When her husband's birthday came, Meri wanted to thank the local team by preparing something special: baklava.

This simple gesture changed her life. A German volunteer tasted her cake and told her, "This baklava should be on the market. " Meri had never thought about it. But his words resonated within her. The next day, she went to Yerevan with a tray of baklava. Without a label, without a plan, just with confidence. She knocked on the doors of restaurants and shops. One of them placed her first order. Thus began a new adventure.

At first, she only had an oven, no professional equipment. But she moved forward, step by step. Then she discovered the economic support program for refugee women of the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD). She grabbed the chance, applied, wrote her first business plan, and got support. That gave her the push she needed: she bought proper equipment, improved her products, learned how to present them, and even entered an international dessert competition in Dilijan... which she won.

Today, Meri is no longer limited to baklava. She also bakes cakes and cookies and dreams of opening her own pastry shop. Even pregnant with her second child, she has never stopped: she learns, she works, she builds. And at every stage, she remembers why she started: Adrianna, her daughter.

It is for her that her business bears this name, as a promise and a tribute.

Meri is not just a pastry chef. She is a survivor. A mother. A builder. Her story is not a story of desserts, but a story of courage, of grief transformed into creation, of a future reinvented by the strength of the heart.



Meri, 27 years old, 2 children
refugee from Artsakh



Economic aspects of income generation by refugee women in Armenia

In the aftermath of the 2020 war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, thousands of families found themselves plunged into a crisis they had not asked for. Despite financial compensation, they suffered economic instability and deep trauma.

Many women became widows. Others had to take care of seriously injured husbands, moving from the role of stay-at-home mother to that of full-time caregiver, with the heavy responsibility of their children's well-being.

Added to these women are the refugees, deprived of stable resources, living in temporary housing and depending on meager state allowances. With an unemployment rate reaching 15.5% in 2024 and strong competition in the labor market, finding a job is a challenge.

In the face of this situation, the Armenian Fund for Sustainable Development (AF4SD) and its partners launched an economic empowerment program through the creation of small businesses.

Why create a small business?

Economic arguments

The micro-enterprise is particularly well-suited to refugees: few administrative formalities, lighter taxation, and tax exemption for unprocessed agricultural production. The initial investment is low, which is essential for families without capital.

Access to conventional credit is often blocked by the absence of guarantees and high interest rates.

« We tried to obtain a loan, but the rate was unaffordable. We are tenants, and the land is not ours, which the bank found unacceptable. »

– Refugee, 27 years old, project beneficiary

Flexibility and accessibility

Small businesses, particularly home-based ones, offer flexible hours, essential for women who have to reconcile work and family responsibilities. They also enable drawing on existing skills (crafts, cooking, services).

Community integration and support

Warmly welcomed by the local population, refugee women see entrepreneurship as a lever for economic and social integration. Some benefit from the support of their neighbors and shopkeepers. In rural areas, starting an activity also enables women to gain autonomy in the face of social norms that often entrust the management of assets to male in-laws.

« When the market owner learned that I had lost my husband, he offered to sell all my dried-fruit production without my having to pay rent. »

– War widow, 42 years old, project beneficiary

Skills development and economic impact

Running a business enables women to acquire skills in entrepreneurship, management, and marketing. They also develop interpersonal abilities and greater self-confidence.

The aim is to generate additional income to avoid slipping into poverty

Transforming communities

When a refugee woman starts an activity, her whole family becomes autonomous. She ceases to be dependent on aid and becomes a full economic actor: she creates jobs, generates income, and contributes to the local economy.

The project, reserved for women, encourages them to take on leadership roles. After being excluded from decision-making during the war, they are now taking their economic future back into their own hands.

You can read the article in full by visiting the website of our partner « Arev Society » by scanning the following QR code



The Poverty Rate in Armenia
in 2023

23,7 %

The poverty rate among
women in Armenia for the
same period

56 %

A LEGACY THAT OUTLIVES TIME

Some gestures change a single life. Others, rarer ones, change dozens, hundreds, year after year. The gift from Madame Lafitte-Nalbandian to the Association Arménienne d'Aide Sociale is one of those.

Madame LAFITTE-NALBANDIAN was a woman of conviction. Private, but deeply committed to an ideal of justice and solidarity. She had been a loyal member for many years, and every year her dues helped support the AAAS, because she believed that every woman, whatever her circumstances, deserves the chance to build a life of dignity. Not through charity, but through independence. Not through pity, but through trust.

Sadly, she passed away in 2025, but thanks to her generosity, AAAS established the LAFITTE-NALBANDIAN Memorial Fund, a named fund devoted entirely to empowering vulnerable women in Armenia. Many of these women are war widows, isolated, without resources or training.

Among them are refugees from Artsakh, torn from their land, their homes, everything they had built. War widows, soldiers' wives, and mothers who lost their sons during the most unjust war to strike Armenia in 2020, women who lost everything and yet keep carrying their families on their own shoulders.

**LAFITTE-
NALBANDIAN**



FONDS COMMÉMORATIF

In a country where the scars of recent conflicts still weigh heavily on the most vulnerable, this yearly commitment from the AAAS means far more than material aid. It is a form of recognition, a message to these women that their futures matter.

Madame LAFITTE-NALBANDIAN had no children. She could have faded into the silence that life sometimes reserves for those with no direct descendants. She chose something else. She chose to leave a different kind of mark, broader and more alive. Her name on this memorial fund is not an epitaph but a renewed promise. Every woman helped, every project supported, every training completed is a way of saying that Madame Lafitte-Nalbandian was here, and that she still is.

Memory is not measured by the number of heirs. It is measured by the mark left on the world. And this mark is a generous and tangible one, turned toward others, toward lasting and shared progress.

Reminder: Association Arménienne d'Aide Sociale and its partners run a program to empower vulnerable women in Armenia, which has led to the creation of around 100 income-generating activities and the organization of professional training for women affected by war and refugee women between 2022 and 2025.

The program continues in 2026 and is growing this year, both in the number of people it reaches and in the range of work it takes on.

To follow the program's progress, sign up for our newsletter.

You can also support our work by visiting our donation page through this link or by scanning this QR code. And if you'd like, you can add a dedication there, to remember someone close to you or honor the memory of a loved one.

Thank you for your support!



THE MANAGEMENT OF NURSING HOMES IN FRANCE



In 2025, our commitment to the elderly was fully reflected in our nursing homes through continuous action to improve the quality of support, care, and the living environment for residents.

Faced with the challenges of aging, we strengthened our care requirements, relying on the close cooperation of health and medico-social professionals to best adapt our practices to each person's needs.

Each day, the attention paid to the well-being, safety, and dignity of the residents remained at the heart of our priorities.

Beyond their mission of welcome, our establishments confirm themselves as true places of life, where kindness, respect, and the quality of human connection contribute to a serene and warm atmosphere.



ARMENIAN HOME OF SAINT-RAPHAËL

2025 brought a steady stream of activities, intergenerational exchanges, and connections with the outside world, all contributing to residents' well-being and fulfillment.

Themed meals set the rhythm of the year with real culinary journeys around the world, from Cape Verde to Indonesia, via Prague and other destinations. These occasions were enriched by creative workshops and decorations made with the residents, encouraging hands-on participation and a sense of togetherness.

Intergenerational ties grew stronger through visits to local schools, the Mission Locale de Fréjus, and nursing assistant students from the IFSI, centered on creative activities and time spent together. These partnerships helped foster a genuine spirit of sharing and passing things on.

Plenty of outings and events filled the year too: gardening after a trip to Jardiland, a seaside getaway in Agay, restaurant visits, a tea dance, and animal therapy with regular visits from Nouky, the rabbits, and outings to the pony club at Dramont. Art workshops (floral design, painting, Tai Chi, and exhibitions) also showcased residents' creativity.

Finally, several highlights stood out during the year, including the push around Octobre Rose and the festive end-of-year activities (Christmas market, creative workshops, and holiday preparations), wrapping up 2025 in a warm and welcoming spirit.



RESIDENCE L'ÉGLANTIER OF GONESSE

In 2025, the EHPAD de Gonesse went through a major transformation, driven by a wide-ranging renovation program and an ongoing effort to improve both the living environment for residents and the working conditions for staff.

Throughout the year, life at the facility kept its rhythm of conversations, gatherings, and activities that support residents' well-being. These everyday moments helped maintain a warm and attentive atmosphere, centered on care and on the quality of attention given to each person.

On the infrastructure side, the year was especially formative. Renovation work, carried out while the building remained occupied, continued without interruption and, by year's end, led to a full modernization of every room.

The facility's 70 rooms are now 5 m² larger, bringing more comfort, natural light, and practicality to daily life. The renovation of the building's facade rounds out this transformation, giving the residence a fresh identity.

Building on this momentum, the facility is already preparing its next steps. Starting next spring, ceiling track lifts will be installed on the first floor, covering 14 rooms. This system will make resident transfers safer while improving working conditions for staff, particularly by reducing physical strain and helping prevent musculoskeletal injuries.



ARMENIAN RESIDENCE OF MONTMORENCY

2025 was a year of vibrant institutional life, fueled by a wide range of activities, stronger local partnerships, and better living conditions for residents.

Throughout the year, the activities on offer encouraged connection and openness to the outside world: a visit from the Tiligolo farm, a spring festival with children from local recreation centers, festive outings (bingo, a tea dance, an Armenian exhibition-concert), and participation in the Semaine Bleue. The residence also strengthened its ties with the town through a lasting partnership with the Jules Ferry recreation center, which made monthly intergenerational gatherings possible. The arrival of two young people on service civique placements added to this momentum by developing activities and social connection for residents.

The facility also had several standout moments, including the commemoration of the 110th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, the traditional Armenian mass with the blessing of the grapes, and a visit from the Mayor of Montmorency. Residents' personal stories also helped keep collective memory alive, like that of M. Lefebvre, 98, who shared his memories of May 8, 1945, and his involvement in the Resistance.

On the infrastructure side, the year saw the completion of several important projects. The new kitchen came into service in December, allowing meal production to resume on site. At the same time, a large accessible terrace, fitted with guardrails and a wheelchair ramp, improved access to the park and enhanced residents' daily surroundings.



AAAS ENTERS THE DIGITAL AGE

A century-old association, a website to match its ambition

At a time when nonprofits have to rethink how they communicate in the digital age, the Association Arménienne d'Aide Sociale is taking an important step with the launch of its new website :

www.aaas.fr



Founded in Paris in 1890 and recognized as a public-interest organization since 1956, the AAAS works on two fronts: running three EHPAD (nursing homes) in France and carrying out economic and social development projects in Armenia. This new website reflects the association's goal of building tools worthy of its history and its commitments.

Designed as a true information and services platform, the site marks a significant shift in how the association connects with its members, its donors, the students it supports, and, more broadly, with everyone who shares its values of mutual aid and solidarity.

Solidarité et Entra



Stronger support for students

Helping students is one of the AAAS's founding purposes, established in 1890 to support Armenian students studying in Europe. 135 years later, that commitment remains intact. The website features a fully digital section dedicated to student scholarships, with an application window open each year from September 1 to October 31. Applicants check their eligibility online, download the necessary forms, and submit their applications directly on the site.



Être Membre de l'AAAS signifie

Appartenir à la plus ancienne organisation à but non lucratif arménienne de France

Soutenir les actions de l'AAAS en France et en Arménie

Clear navigation,
well-organized
information

The new website stands out for its thoughtful layout and easy navigation.

Right from the home page, visitors can reach the different sections through a clear menu structure. Each section offers detailed content to help people better understand the AAAS's missions and initiatives. The goal is simple: to offer a smooth experience that works just as well for longtime members as for first-time visitors.

The history page takes you all the way back to 1890, the year the association was founded, to discover the major events that shaped our hundred-plus years



DEMANDE DE BOURSE D'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR

A simplified
membership to join
our nonprofit

The new site makes it easier to join our nonprofit. A dedicated page clearly explains the steps to follow, the membership fees, and the essential role members play in the life of the AAAS. Interested individuals submit their request entirely online.

After approval by the Board of Directors, payment is made directly on the platform using the assigned member number. That number then gives access to members-only services, including the right to vote at the General Assembly.

Foire Aux Questions

Trouvez des réponses aux questions fréquemment posées sur nos services.

Questions générales

Qu'est-ce que l'AAAS ?

Quelle est l'Action de l'AAAS ?

Comment devenir membre de l'AAAS ?

Où se trouvent les implantations de l'AAAS ?

Direct communication through the FAQ and the forms

To answer the most frequent questions, the website offers a FAQ section structured around four topics: student scholarships, the procedures for entering a nursing home, membership, and financial support for AAAS.

A general contact form makes it easy to reach the association's headquarters at 77, rue La Fayette, 75009 Paris.

Staying informed and following our nonprofit news

The site provides access to AAAS publications: biannual newsletters since 2022, annual reports in French and English, and news articles and videos.

Visitors can sign up to receive these publications directly.

An active Facebook page shares field work and the events the association organizes.

NEWSLETTER

Inscrivez-vous à notre newsletter semestriel

Restez informé de nos actions et projets en recevant notre lettre d'information

Restez connecté

Prénom*

0/20 caractères

Nom*



SUPPORT OUR WORK

You can support our work by becoming a member of the AAAS, by making a bequest or simply through your donations.

Membership of the AAAS means :

- being part of the oldest Armenian nonprofit in France
- supporting our actions both in France and in Armenia
- having the right to vote at the General Assembly and thus taking part in how it runs
- receiving the AAAS newsletter and the annual report

Annual membership fees :

Student or retiree – €20

Full member – €40

Benefactor member – €1,000

PLEASE NOTE! Membership is now handled online, on the website of Association Arménienne d'Aide Sociale

To access the membership page directly, please scan the QR code



Bringing our projects to life depends on your generosity. It is thanks to your support that we can and will carry them out.



Association Arménienne d'Aide Sociale

Recognized as being of public utility by the decree of June 8, 1956

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