



Press release
March 10, 2021

COAF, Debet Municipality and Gradarak establish a library in Debet village

YEREVAN - On March 10, [Children of Armenia Fund \(COAF\)](#), [Gradarak Libraries](#), an educational and cultural NGO determined to spread libraries throughout Armenia and Artsakh, and [Debet](#) (a village in the Lori region of Armenia) **Municipality** signed a memorandum of cooperation at COAF's Yerevan office.

Thanks to the partnership, a new modern multifunctional library will be established on the first floor of Debet Village Municipality. The space will also serve for seminars, workshops, and community events. The new library is part of COAF's SMART Debet initiative that aspires to become an exemplary holistic development model in rural communities.

"Our goal is to transform Debet into a SMART village. By altering the municipality building, we also establish an authentic 21-century library that is indispensable for every community. Moreover, a catchy library will motivate more villagers to visit the municipality and thus be active community members. We value our partnership with Gradarak, which has the mission and broad experience of building modern libraries in rural communities," mentioned COAF Managing Director **Korioun Khatchadourian**.

The library will occupy 100 square meters, have a small quiet work and study room, as well as larger halls for events and meetings.

"Currently, there are people who use the municipality library, but it is less motivating for them as the condition of the books is not that good. The new library will increase the flow of people with its attractiveness and variety of books," mentioned Debet Village Mayor **Ashot Ghazaryan**.

Debet library will be available to all villagers above three and will be equipped with computers, a projector, a big screen, microphones, speakers, and furniture. The number of books will gradually increase from 400 to 4,000. Table games will also be available.



"We value our collaboration for two main reasons. First, we are glad to enter a new community and be able to serve more children and adults of the Lori region. Second, this is a great way of showcasing how successful and effective cooperation between non-profit organizations can be. Uniting forces for creating a better Armenia is amazing and should be a priority for all of us," emphasized **Arusik Zeynalyan**, the Co-founder and Director of Gradarak Libraries NGO.

The cost of the project is \$40,000. COAF covers the building and furnishing costs of the library, while Gradarak will ensure the continuous and smooth operation of the institution, including the provision of a librarian by hiring a local specialist. Debet Municipality will cover part of the operational costs and ensure access to the library seven days a week.

About COAF

The "Children of Armenia" Fund (COAF) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that employs community-led approaches aimed at improving the quality of life

in rural Armenia, with a particular focus on children and youth. COAF's target development areas are education, healthcare, social and economic development. COAF launched its programs in 2004, starting in one village and expanding to 64 villages in Armavir, Aragatsotn, Lori, Gegharkunik, Shirak, and Tavush regions, impacting more than 107,000 beneficiaries.

Since 2015, COAF has developed and started implementing a new vision – SMART Initiative. COAF SMART is designed to advance a generation across the rural world through education that will benefit individuals, societies, and the environment. COAF SMART will become an exemplary model of development and will be replicated in other regions and communities throughout Armenia. The first COAF SMART Center was inaugurated on May 27, 2018, near the village of Debet, Lori Region.

About Gradarak Libraries

Gradarak is an NGO established in 2018 in Armenia with the mission to empower children and youth in rural areas of Armenia and Artsakh through providing safe and inspiring spaces for reading, active learning and developing community projects. It was founded as a result of the successful implementation of the pilot library project in Amrakits village, Lori Province. In two years, 4 Gradarak libraries in 3 Provinces of Armenia have been built becoming platforms for learning and creativity and currently serving more than 15 communities and more than 1000 children, young people, teachers, and other adults.