



CHILDREN
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Press Release

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Supporting Rural Education at a Critical Time for Armenia

YEREVAN - The Children of Armenia Fund's (COAF) current Back To School appeal aims to expand its transformative extracurricular education programs to youth in underserved rural communities for an entire academic year. Prioritizing education in a time of crisis comes with the conviction that the empowerment of youth is an essential building block for Armenia's progress toward lasting peace, security and sustainable economic development.

This year's Back To School initiative will provide 600 children in 30 rural communities in the Armavir and Aragatsotn regions with access to a broad range of programs, including arts (performing, painting, dance), sports (basketball, soccer, wrestling) and STEM (math, programming, robotics) education.

A \$140 donation provides a single child with the opportunity to participate in a program of their choice for an entire year. The campaign has so far raised half of the \$83,000 needed to offer education programs to all 600 children living in these 30 communities. Longtime COAF supporters Jack and Zarig Youredjian have made a generous matching gift in the amount of \$25,000 to encourage other benefactors to join in helping bring these crucial programs to life.

"Children are the most vulnerable members of any society in times of uncertainty and turbulence, as they are not able to fully process information and fear. Continuing educational programs in a country at war is therefore critical. It provides a sense of stability and normalcy to children as they continue to play, express themselves and learn, regardless of any conditions," states COAF SMART Center Education Manager Shahane Halajyan.

In parallel to operating the COAF SMART Center at full capacity in Armenia's Lori region and establishing a second Center in the Armavir region, COAF will be providing even more children in the Armavir and Aragatsotn regions with quality education this year thanks to the Back To School appeal, and ensuring that the education process is continuous and uninterrupted.

You may support COAF's Back To School appeal by visiting coaf.org or emailing COAF Senior Director of Development Haig Boyadjian at haig.boyadjian@coaf.org

coaf.org
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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 66 villages in Armavir, Aragatsotn, Lori, Gegharkunik, Shirak, and Tavush regions, impacting more than 107,000 beneficiaries.

Since 2015, COAF has developed and started implementing the SMART Initiative. COAF SMART is designed to advance a generation across the rural world through education that will benefit individuals, societies, and the environment. As an exemplary model of development, COAF SMART 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.