

DEMOCRACY TODAY

ANNUAL REPORT

2021

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ABOUT THE REPORT

The Annual Report provides an information about activities and initiatives carried out by Democracy Today NGO (DT) in the period from January to December 2021.

The Report covers the work of DT, as well as presents the success of our beneficiaries and participants. It illustrated the major achievement and results of our activities and the most memorable moments of 2021.

The fundamental principles of our organization include a clear definition regarding the primary goals of Democracy Today that are highlighted with the progress achieved during the report period.

For us is critically important to engaging key stakeholders in meaningful dialogue to enable continuous improvement for our projects and initiatives.

Democracy Today NGO supports increasing calls for greater accountability from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to donors, governments, partner organisations, communities and its project participants.

Our organization highlights the importance of transparency and accountability, as well as access to the information.



MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER

With great pleasure and honor, I would like to present the exceptional and powerful work that “Democracy Today” (DT) team has successfully implemented during 2021.

2021 has been quite challenging not only for our organization but for our country. The economic consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, together with the harsh wounds left by the 44-day war, created a situation when many gaps have been identified and many issues came up that needed immediate actions. These issues and challenges created a situation when new pathways, non-standard models and new creative solutions needed to be introduced. We are proud to say that in most of the cases

on the grassroot level, our organization could face all the obstacles in the best possible way. We launched many interesting and empowering projects and reached enormous results thanks to the efforts of our small but hardworking and united staff, our partners and beneficiaries, as well and different actors who supported our work. We want to thank all the people who helped us on our way.

You can find many interesting, empowering and existing projects in the report

Values of our organization and basic principles which are protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms, gender equality and ant-discrimination have always been in the center of our

activities. Our work and success gives us motivation and helps to become stronger to resist any obstacles.

Human rights and gender equality as always are priority areas for our organization, in all our projects. Through the year, we have developed new directions of work carrying out professional studies and initiating empowering publications.

Democracy Today NGO works hard to bring to light new creative approaches of collaborations, build and improve sustainable practices in all areas of our work.

We did our best to invest in making positive, democratic change in Armenia and beyond.



Ms. Gulnara Shahinian
Founder and President
Democracy Today NGO

ABOUT DEMOCRACY TODAY

Democracy Today (DT) is a non-profit organization registered in 2002 in the Republic of Armenia. The NGO aims to support and strengthen democratic achievements and human rights in Armenia.

Democracy Today's mission is to support democratic processes in Armenia, enhance women's role and invest in building gender sensitive and inclusive society, protect the rule of law and human rights. DT hopes that its investment will give results that will contribute to a country where everybody's rights and dignity are protected, and where citizens play a key role in making society just, secure, and prosperous - a democratic country with a strong rule of

law and balanced participation of women and men in the society.

During 2021 DT has been working in a few main directions, which are the following ones:

- peacebuilding and human's rights
- women's rights and gender equality
- critical and creative thinking
- exchange projects
- civic education of youth

We hope that the investment of Democracy Today (DT) and other civil society organizations will contribute to a country where everybody's rights and dignity

are protected, and women play an important role in making society just, secure, and prosperous - a democratic country with strong rule of law and balanced participation of women and men in society.

Democracy Today's membership is open. Our members are activists, public leaders, young women and men that build their work and values on principles of social inclusion and nondiscrimination.



HIGHLIGHTS

FROM THE YEAR

- **187 young women and men** were educated on human rights, gender equality, critical and creative thinking, and increased their leadership abilities through various projects of Democracy Today NGO.

- **up to 1000** indirect beneficiaries affected by the project.

- increase of knowledge and leadership among the projects' participants **by 72% in average**.

- understanding of gender equality concept increased among project beneficiaries from target

communities **by 78% in average**.

- **32 young people** from displaced and disadvantaged communities got skills on how to write CV, prepare for the job interview and became competitive in the labor market.

- **a network of 134 human rights organizations** and individuals established as a result of annual "International Young Women's Peace and Human Rights Award" and "International Conference".

- **6 mock elections** were held for youth from

different communities of Armenia to increase civic education.

- **3 small projects** have been implemented by women's groups from bordering communities of Armenia.

- **4 publications** have been initiated, which include a series of articles, research studies and assessment reports.

- **4 awards** have been granted to exceptional women for "their dedication, human rights and peacebuilding work"

- **2 special diplomas** have been handed to the

individuals/institutions "for protecting the human security and outstanding work in protecting human rights and dignity".

- **7 online meetings** organized with well-known experts from throughout the world to raise awareness on the conflict-related situation and its impact on the Republic of Armenia.

- an international conference with the participation of women, leaders, human rights defenders and peacebuilder from **17 countries** organized.

OUR WORK IN ARMENIA

During 2021 Democracy Today worked in 40 communities and 10 provinces all over Armenia, including the capital city Yerevan.

ARMAVIR

Yeghegnut
Araks
Tandzut
Haykavan
Nalbandyan
Nor Artagers

ARARAT

Getazat
Sipanik
Lanjazat
Arevabuyr
Kharberd

ARAGATSOTN

Bazmaghbyur
Ashtarak

SHIRAK

Arpi
Gyumri

TAVUSH

Voskepar
Berdavan
Chinchin
Movses
Koghb
Berd

LORI

Gargar
Alaverdi
Aqori

KOTAYK

Charentsavan

GEGHARKUNIK

Sevan
Gavar
Martuni - city
Vardenik
Martuni - village

Mets Masrik

VAYOTS DZOR

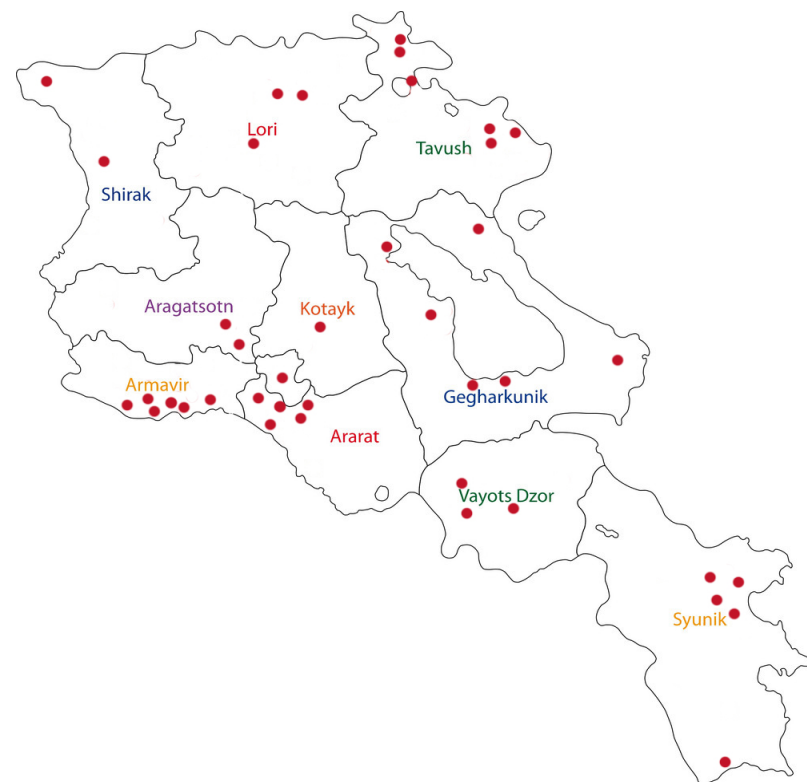
Yeghegnadzor
Maralik
Shatin

SYUNIK

Tandzaver
Goris
Khndzoresk
Meghri
Shinuhayr

YEREVAN

ARTSAKH



OUR WORK THROUGHTOUT THE WORLD

Apart from the local and regional work Democracy Today NGO also works internationally.

We involved participants from South Caucasus including Armenia, Georgia Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh. Region of North Caucasus including Chechnya, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria and North Ossetia. Middle East through Syria, Iraq and Lebanon, South America through Colombia, North American through United States of America, Europe through Belgium and Cyprus.

And these are only the countries from which laureates of International Young Women's Peace Award are coming.



OUR MAIN PROJECTS

IMPLEMENTING WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY RESOLUTION AT THE BORDER COMMUNITY OF ARMENIA (SUPPORTED BY THE AUSTRIAN DEVELOPMENT AGENCY)

The overall goal of the proposed project is to empower 40 displaced and local women from the communities of Gegharkunik Province with the knowledge and skills to change their lives and invest in the economic development of the communities. Through the provision of knowledge of protecting women's rights and provision of small grants to help women start joint economic and educational activities, investing in the enhancement

of social cohesion and helping to the successful integration of displaced women into the host communities.



YOUTH SCHOOL OF CREATIVE THINKING (SUPPORTED BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF NETHERLANDS)

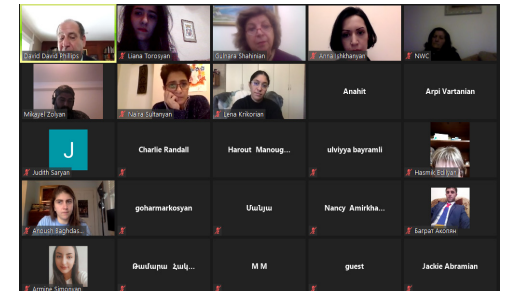
The overall goal of the project was to empower young and muddled aged members of the rural communities with the comprehensive knowledge

of fundamental human rights, legal instruments and political situation making them able to define fake news. Initially, the project was designed for youth however, later extended to middle-aged parents, which was the suggestion brought up by the young participants. 12 communities throughout Armenia took part in the project, bringing together 40 community leaders.



WFM/IGP (WORLD FEDERALIST MOVEMENT/ INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL POLICY)

The project aimed to strengthen implementation of the concept "Responsibility to protect" (R2P) through organizations of webinars in cooperation with leading institutions. The consequences of 44-day war and the crimes the committed during the war have been introduced in the context of international law and R2P.



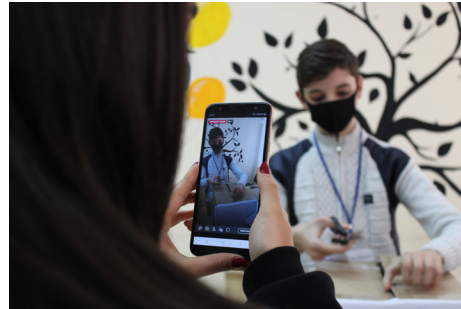
OUR MAIN PROJECTS

U-18 (SUPPORTED BY THE GERMAN-RUSSIAN EXCHANGE (DRA))

The aim of the project was to introduce the concept of U18 (Under 18 years) elections in Armenia.

U-18 is a sustainable method in civic education and youth policy, as well as, the establishment of five regional U18 coordination center in the regions and embedding of sustainable regional youth participation culture and creating of a networking platform for partner organizations of several regions.

The project was implemented in 5 provinces of Armenia.



SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION OF THE DISPLACED YOUTH (SUPPORTED BY UMCOR-ARMENIA FOUNDATION)

The project aims to provide displaced youth with appropriate knowledge and practical skills that will help them find their niche in the labor market. It will allow those displaced people who cannot return to Artsakh not to leave Armenia, but to get opportunities and

paths for future professional development in the country, having a positive impact on both their dignified future and economic development of the country.



CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT IN CONFLICT IMPACTED COMMUNITIES (SUPPORTED BY THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY (NED))

The project aims to invest in increasing the capacities of

youth from conflict-affected communities to contribute to the peace process, as well as build connections between communities in Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh) and the bordering regions of Armenia. The project aims at implementing UNSC Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and security.



OUR PUBLICATIONS

YOUTH SPEAKS PEACE



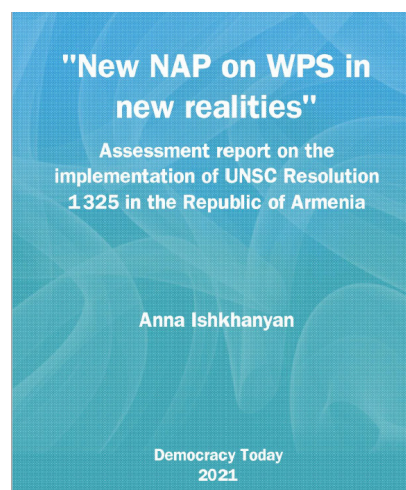
The publication includes visions and perceptions on the peace of youth from Tavush bordering the province of Armenia and Artsakh. The study presents the dynamic change in perceptions from the first assessment, which took place long before the Tavush war, and visions after the first brief clashes at the borders of Tavush and followed by the 44-day full-scale destructive war. Another important trait of this study is that it includes chapters written by the young local experts, bringing their personal insight.

NEVER AGAIN!!! 44 DAYS WAR: WAR CRIMES AND INTERNATIONAL LAW



The publication is based on the facts and documents collected by the Ombudsmen of Armenia and Artsakh, International organizations and media sources aim to provide with the analysis of the war crimes committed during this short, but devastating war. It also introduces a rich pool of corresponding definitions and articles from the international legal framework adopted and ratified by the states to address such war crimes.

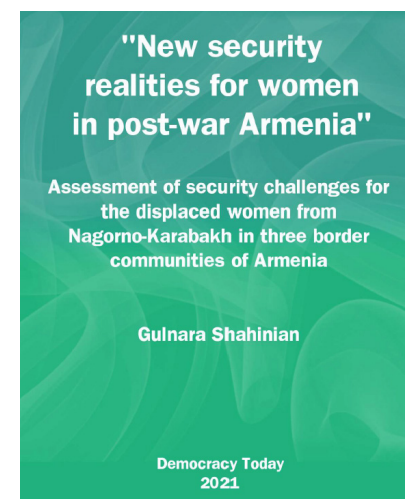
NEW NAP ON WPS IN NEW REALITIES



Assessment report on the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 in the Republic of Armenia.

This report presents an analysis of the work conducted and implemented by the members of the interagency commission on the implementation and monitoring of the NAP.

NEW SECURITY REALITIES FOR WOMEN IN POST-WAR ARMENIA



Assessment of security challenges for the displaced women from Nagorno-Karabakh in three border communities of Armenia.

This assessment focuses on issues of human security and gender roles among women living in border communities in Armenia.

INTERNATIONAL YOUNG WOMEN'S PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD 2021

“The International Young Women’s Peace and Human Rights Award” took place on March 2021.

After careful decision-making process, the board of IYWPA granted awards to the doctors. Ms. Diana Sayiyan (Artsakh) and Maria Azizyan (USA) got awards for their outstanding professionalism and dedication during the 44-day war in Artsakh. Ms. Victoria Ayrumyan (Russia) and Gayane Papoyan (Armenia) were granted with special diplomas. Dr. Catherine Lesimple (France) got a prize for her eminent support to

Armenia.

In recognition of professional dedication and exceptional service to people during the 44-day Artsakh war of 2020, doctors and medical personnel of the “Republican Medical Center” of the Republic of Artsakh got a special diploma of the International Young women’s Peace and Human Rights.



Ms. Rose Mbone received and award for her extensive contribution in raising the role of women in peacebuilding in Kenya.

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the International Award for Young Women and Human Rights, Democracy Today NGO had the honor to present its gratitude to the staff of the French Embassy in Armenia for supporting the award ceremony over the years. A letter of gratitude was presented to the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of France to Armenia, Mr. Jonathan Lacôte

for his continued contribution to the ongoing Women’s Security’s Peace in the Republic of Armenia.



IYWPA BOARD MEMBERS

THE BOARD MEMBER OF INTERNATIONAL YOUNG WOMEN'S PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD ARE EMPOWERING EXAMPLES OF STRONG WOMEN WHO PROMOTED HUMAN RIGHTS AND PEACE IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE WORLD.



GULNARA SHAHINIAN

The UN Human Rights Council Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, member of the CoE Group of Experts on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings, founder of Democracy Today.



HEIDI MEINZOLT

European coordinator of Women's International League

for Peace (WILPF), coordinator of Gender Working Group of the Civic Solidarity Platform, Women's rights and Conflict Transformation specialist, UNSCR 1325 and CEDAW professional.



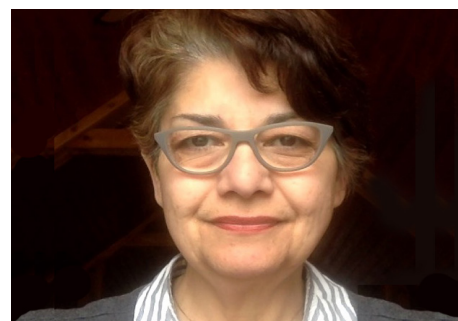
CAROLANN NAJARIAN

Medical doctor, philanthropist, humanitarian, worked in Armenia and Artsakh delivering aid and providing care, sponsors human right lecture annually, recipient of Vachagan Barepashd award 2019 for consistent support shown to Artsakh and services rendered to the republic.



ANDREA MARTIN

Two time Tony and Emmy Award winning actress, singer, author and comedian, philanthrope, human rights defender and exceptional women who dedicated huge part of her work to benevolent acts, taking care about the most vulnerable groups.



JACKIE ABRAMIAN

PR, Social Media Marketing executive for global technology companies, consulting with social enterprises in the UK, Africa, Syria and Armenia, raising visibility of social impact on marginalized and refugee populations. Philanthropist dedicated to defending human rights and women empowerment.



AUDREY KALAJIAN

Human rights advocate, supporter of the Boston-based activist collective, Zoravik. She worked on projects to facilitate and promote dialogue among women. Coordinated humanitarian aid, led fact-finding missions, documenting human rights violations.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2021

The Annual International Conference entitled “Displacement of women: gender implications and search for viable solutions to protect human rights” organized by “Democracy Today” took place in Yerevan, Armenia on December 16 and 17 of 2021. As its previous conferences, this one also aimed to strengthen the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325.

The annual conference was organized with the support and direct involvement of the members of the Working Group on Gender realities in the OSCE region and Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) Germany. The main goal of the conference was to launch an open discussion process of the

grave human rights violations encountered by over 21 million women and children from different parts of the world caused by numerous diverse root causes including but not limited to the impact of war, internal strife, environmental crisis, conflict, and armed violence, military aggression use of explosive weapons shrinking democratic space and political pressure with the governments, international organizations, women’s and human rights groups and develop and strengthen international legal mechanism protecting such groups.

Irrespective of the fact that the burden of displacement is shared by men and women almost equally, the actual affects and the negative

repercussions of living in internal displacement seem to affect women more than men, particularly in regards to livelihoods, security, health, and education. Twenty-five years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, one of the most comprehensive global policy frameworks for gender equality, women and girls are still suffering disproportionately from displacement.



The conference took place in a hybrid format, with presentations in the

offline format in Yerevan and the participation of women from Artsakh who are displaced because of the 44-day war. Women from Goris (Syunik region) and Martuni (Gegharkunik region) of Armenia who founded themselves in a new geopolitical reality and increased insecurity due to the trilateral ceasefire agreement which was signed on November 9, 2020. Women from 16 countries such as Germany, Russian Federation, USA, Kenya, Columbia, Lebanon, Turkey, Georgia, Palestine, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, Italy, and Armenia spoke online. The participants brought up the situation on displacement that currently exists in different parts of the world.

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