



Program Goal - to strengthen the sustainability of local regional print media outlets in Armenia by building outlet capacity and improving outlet performance.

Although approximately fifty regional print media outlets are currently operating in Armenia, daily local newspapers do not exist in the regions and in some areas local print media is not functioning at all. Those local newspapers that do exist are not independent. Journalists frequently self-censor, print media distribution is limited, newspaper outlets rely on outside sources of funding, and print media content is frequently controlled by political parties and wealthy individuals.

In July 2006, Eurasia Partnership Foundation launched a two-year program to strengthen the operational capacities and sustainability of regional print media outlets in Armenia. In order to achieve this goal, the Foundation is providing support to 28 regional print media outlets by improving the professional skills of their staff, enhancing their financial sustainability, and linking them with newspaper distribution networks.

A Cumulative Approach to Sustainability

Eurasia Partnership Foundation's approach to building the sustainability of Armenia's regional print media rests on a combination of capacity development and support for improved outlet performance. A series of intensive training workshops were held to improve the quality of reporting in regional newspapers, improve the publications' visual appearance, increase the percentage of their revenue that is generated by advertisement and sales, and improve the newspapers' overall management. Following a training cycle that involved more than 90 media professionals from 28 regional print media outlets, Eurasia Partnership Foundation announced a grant competition for the participating outlets. As a result, six outlets received additional grant support for business plan implementation and consulting on the creation of internal management systems for improved organizational performance. These grants build upon the skills developed during the first part of the program and will contribute to the outlets' long-term sustainability.

Building Outlet Capacity

A series of intensive training workshops and seminars that combined theory with practice developed the skills of outlet staff in the following areas:

- ◆ Newspaper management
- ◆ Marketing and advertisement
- ◆ Reporting and writing
- ◆ Newspaper design
- ◆ Photojournalism

Twenty-eight media outlets were selected to participate in the training portion of the program by a committee of Eurasia Partnership Foundation staff and independent experts in the field of journalism. Regional newspapers with larger circulation and greater potential for long-term financial sustainability were given priority for participation. Because the employees of most regional media perform multiple functions, including management, layout, editing and reporting, Eurasia Partnership Foundation encouraged cross-training among outlet staff.

Improving Outlet Performance

Six media outlets that demonstrated a commitment to reform and quality improvement, and presented a business development plan likely to result in financial independence received additional assistance from Eurasia Partnership Foundation in order to support the development of improved systems for advanced newspaper operations. The activities supported by the grants include market research in order to assess the advertising needs and interests of local businesses; the creation and maintenance of web-based versions of the newspapers; the establishment of distribution and marketing departments within the media outlets; and the organization and coverage by the outlets of public hearings on issues of local interest.

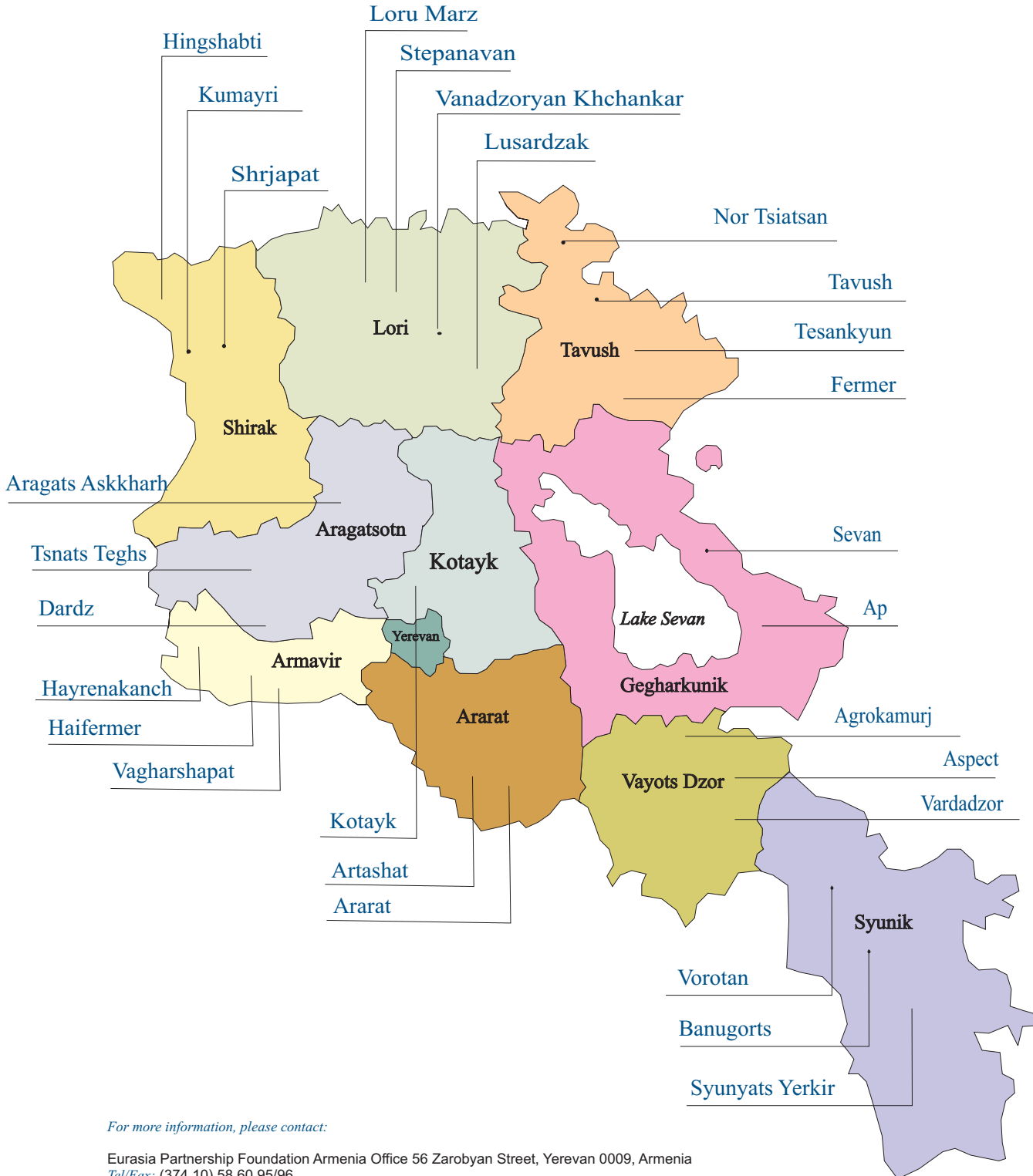
In order to increase the program's impact, Eurasia Partnership Foundation will link the media outlets in the program with its existing Print Media Distribution Network. This network will help increase newspaper circulation and subscription revenues.

Eurasia Foundation (EF) is a privately managed non-profit organization supported by the United States Agency for International Development and other public and private donors. Since 1992, Eurasia Foundation has invested over \$370 million through more than 8,400 grants and technical assistance projects in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The Foundation's headquarters office is located in Washington, D.C. Since 1993, the Foundation has invested more than \$30 million in grants and technical assistance in Armenia.

Eurasia Partnership Foundation (EPF) is the locally-registered, legacy institution of Eurasia Foundation in Armenia.

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Location of Targeted Print Media Outlets



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