

SHORT INFORMATION ABOUT BRIDGE OF HOPE NGO



Bridge of Hope (BoH) is a well-established and highly effective local non-governmental organization with a strong management system, robust financial structure, well-developed material resources, technical expertise, and a dedicated team of 74 professionals across Yerevan and Tavush Marz. Founded in 1996 by parents of children with disabilities and committed

individuals, BoH has been at the forefront of promoting disability as a human rights issue in Armenia, building its programs on the principles of human rights and inclusive development.

Shaping National Disability Policies

Since its inception, BoH has played a pivotal role in shifting national approaches to disability from a medical model to a social and human rights-based model. This paradigm shift has gained increasing support among decision-makers, legislators, and stakeholders in the public and private sectors, as well as civil society organizations. BoH's extensive expertise in disability rights, inclusive education, and community-based support services has significantly influenced national policies and practices, ensuring that people with disabilities can:

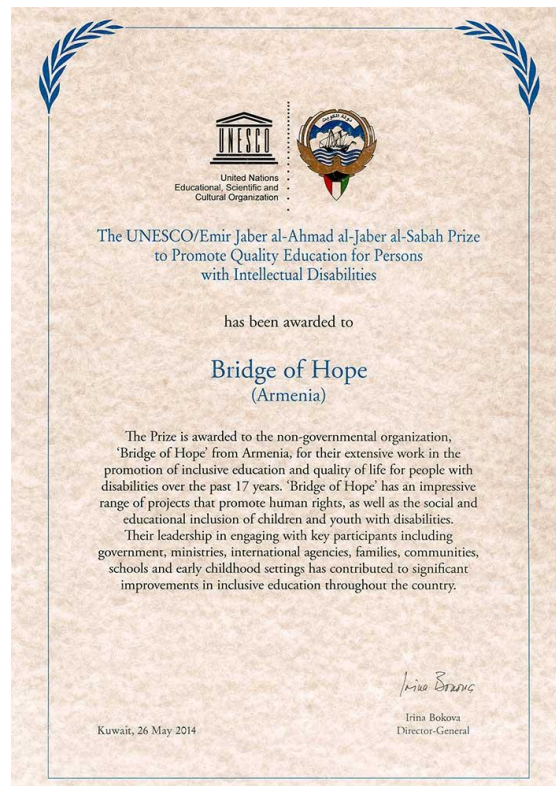
- Be born and raised in family environments
- Access inclusive and equitable education
- Participate in the workforce
- Live independently in communities of their choice

Strong Partnerships and International Recognition

To achieve its mission, BoH has established strategic partnerships with local and national governments, international organizations, and civil society actors. Since 1999, the organization has been a key driver of Armenia's inclusive education movement, with parents of children with disabilities leading the advocacy efforts.

Over 25 major projects have been successfully implemented with financial support from leading international organizations, including Mission East (Denmark), DANIDA, NORAD, ADA, EU, UNICEF, CISU Denmark, and many others. These projects have had a direct impact on Armenia's education policies, leading to the successful adoption of inclusive education as a national policy. As a result, government funding is now allocated for the implementation and further development of inclusive education across the country.

UNESCO Award for Excellence in Inclusive Education



In 2014, Bridge of Hope was awarded UNESCO's International Prize for the Promotion of Quality Inclusive Education—a testament to its pioneering role in transforming Armenia's education system to become more inclusive and equitable.

International Memberships

- **Inclusion International:** BoH is an active member of this global federation advocating for the rights of people with intellectual disabilities and their families.
- **European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD):** BoH collaborates with European partners to enhance service quality and accessibility for persons with disabilities.

- **EC Committee of Experts on the Rights and the Best Interest of the Child in Parental Separation and in Care Proceedings (CJ/ENF-ISE).**

Community-Based Services in Tavush Marz



Since 2001, BoH has provided community-based rehabilitation and inclusion services in Tavush Marz, an administrative region composed of four major districts: Dilijan, Ijevan, Berd, and Noyemberyan. Between 2001-2004, BoH established mainstream child development and social inclusion centers in these four cities. These centers later became national models

for the Armenian government, leading to their replication and expansion.

BoH's Tavush-based centers provide:

- Pedagogical-psychological support services for inclusive education, psychosocial and medical rehabilitation services for children and youth with disabilities in an inclusive environment.
- Training and consultation for parents, teachers, and specialists, ensuring sustainable support structures.

The success of BoH's Tavush Marz model is demonstrated by key partnerships and government support:

- Municipalities in four cities provided large buildings for 99 years free of charge and cover 10% of the centers' running costs through community budgets.
- The building in Dilijan was officially donated to BoH with ownership rights.
- From 2008 to 2020, Armenia's Ministry of Labor and Social Issues subsidized the salaries of 84 employees in BoH's Tavush centers as part of its social service program.
- Since 2017, the Ministry of Education has delegated the provision of pedagogical and psychological support services for inclusive education in Tavush to BoH.

Impact in Tavush Marz



As a direct result of BoH's intervention and advocacy efforts:

- ✓ The institutionalization of children with disabilities has been drastically reduced, reaching a minimum level.
- ✓ Almost all children with disabilities in Tavush are now enrolled in mainstream schools, receiving inclusive education.
- ✓ About 125 youths with disabilities have pursued vocational, secondary, or higher education and are successfully employed in various sectors.

Through its sustained efforts, expertise, and strong partnerships, Bridge of Hope continues to break barriers, fostering a more inclusive society where every child and young person with a disability can realize their full potential.

For more information, please visit our web site: www.bridgeofhope.am