

## **JOB&EDUCATION 4 ARTSAKH WAR VETERANS & WAR AFFECTED WOMEN**

### **JOB&EDUCATION 4 ARTSAKH VETERANS**

We strongly believe that the veterans of the Artsakh war must be confident that they have a next mission, a future worth looking forward to.

We realize that the path of return to routine life will look complicated and different for the veterans and their families.

We aim to partner the veterans of the Artsakh war in passing this journey together, with dignity and justice.

We plan to do it by putting in motion the **synergy of three steps of their rehabilitation and integration.**

#### **Mental Rehabilitation**

Most of the soldiers who have returned from the 2020 Artsakh war, face a number of psychological issues, including posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI) and more. We plan to support in building their mental health resilience by ensuring access to high quality professional services, as well as offering a scope of interactive programs, including creative therapy sessions and recreational retreats. Only by being mentally strong will they be able to look at their inverted lives through a prism of strength and willing to invest efforts and time in the other two crucial steps.

#### **Education**

18 to 20 - this is the age range of most of the soldiers who returned home from war suffering from moderate-to-severe injuries. However, it is worth mentioning that there is a big group among the injured people who voluntarily joined the army during the war. These are the people who have a profession, however are not able to work anymore due to the health and physical issues they face as a result of the war. The younger people didn't manage to seek and get post-secondary education opportunities before appearing in war and who were forced to exchange their dreams and plans to obscurity and desperation. In order to disroot their complex of inferiority, to inspire them towards an independent future, we need to offer them an environment where they will have willingness and opportunities to return to postsecondary education – be it achieving an academic degree or taking classes. The project envisages giving an opportunity to acquire professions as programming, cyber security, SMM, jewellery production, diamond processing, etc..

This will be a complex approach, including but not limited to:

- creating an accessible educational hub/rehabilitation center adapted for the people with disabilities providing specifically designed programs of vocational education for the

veterans of the war that will promote acquiring new skills and restoring faith in the future,

- highlighting primary laws that suggest special conditions for postsecondary student veterans with disabilities;
- lobbying their right to education and access to free education;
- providing them with necessary educational materials, facilities and equipment;
- providing extra support as needed;
- bridging them with resources that cater specifically to the academic or vocational educational paths of veterans with disabilities in and out of Armenia.

## Employment

Common injuries incurred among the veterans of all ages include missing limbs, burns, spinal cord injuries, hearing and vision loss and other impairments. We believe it is a high imperative to provide all-level protections for veterans with disabilities who are looking for jobs. Some of the actions planned to be taken in this niche are:

- Establish a vocational training center accessible for all,
- Start a large scale campaign against employment discrimination,
- Elaborate and disseminate guidelines that apply to recruiting, hiring and accommodating veterans with disabilities
- Lobby relevant amendments in laws and regulations that would make recruiting and hiring veterans with disabilities a priority for the employers, and on the other hand, make it illegal for the latter to treat a job applicant or an employee unfavorably only because he or she has a history of disability.
- Create and promote platforms where online job announcements, recruiting information and application processes are accessible to individuals with disabilities
- Create and promote written recruiting materials, such as CV templates, application forms and brochures, available in alternate formats (e.g., Braille, audio, large print etc.).
- Assist veterans with disabilities in all steps of seeking employment – from setting achievable goals to helping completing application materials or preparing for the interview.
- Connect across industries and put the veterans in touch with compatible local employers. Organize job fairs specifically for this purpose.

## JOB&EDUCATION 4 ARTSAKH WAR AFFECTED WOMEN

### Summary

The project aims at empowering economically active women uprooted from Artsakh, by providing them with vocational training and supporting development of business enterprises and services.

### Description of the project

Gender-specific obstacles have continuously positioned women in significantly disadvantageous conditions both in Armenia and Artsakh, especially in remote communities. Lack of education,

training opportunities, fair working conditions, financing, are only a few of the contributing factors for this even in peaceful times.

As a result of the war and its immediate consequences women of Armenia and Artsakh face serious social, economic and psychological conditions. Firstly, each and every family has directly and indirectly suffered from the war. Secondly, many found themselves in a new situation. This includes having lost the breadwinner in the family; have people with disabilities in the family; or have lost both the breadwinner and their homes, etc.. Thus, many women became the sole providers for their families and their economic empowerment became the only way for the family survival.

Having early marriages, early childbirth, multiple children in families as a part of Armenian “traditions” many mothers are currently caretakers of multiple children below being below 25. Majority of them lack the opportunity, or the motivation or the capacity to seek independent income. Many do have all of the above, but are becoming the victims of society pressure.

In the current situation, empowerment of the women affected by the war is essential to promote sustainable living conditions and set grounds for healthy society. Moreover, it will also serve as the cornerstone for sustainable development of the community, ensuring that the families can become self-sufficient and better integrate into the new situation.

While most of the assistance provided by the charities and international humanitarian organizations is mainly focused on supplying emergency relief to the people, the short-term assistance does little to address the cycles of poverty and support resilience and self-reliance.

### **Aim and objectives**

The project aims at building capacities of the displaced women from Artsakh for alternative livelihood creation, empowering them and enhancing their self-reliance. Additionally it will promote reducing vulnerability and improving the social and economic conditions of the families affected by the war. The objectives of the project include but are not limited to the following:

- Assessing the socioeconomic conditions of displaced Artsakh women, identifying the target group among them, and identifying appropriate set of income-generating activities for retraining.
- Providing practical skills by organizing capacity-building training courses focused on enhancing entrepreneurship skills, business, financial and web literacy, to prepare and empower them for independent income and (self)employment opportunities.
- Supporting development of business enterprises and services run by the beneficiaries to ensure long term sustainability.
- Organizing leadership, problem-solving and collaboration training courses for the displaced women and girls.
- Creating and promoting platforms (such as job fairs) to bridge the displaced women and girls to local businesses that can offer them employment or sustainable income opportunities.

Thus, the project will guarantee the economic inclusion of the beneficiaries by **supporting development of entrepreneurial cooperatives, by offering them job opportunities** or **supporting small home-based income generating initiatives**, by their choice.