


ANNUAL REPORT



CONTACT US

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THE PAROS PROMISE

The Paros Foundation underwrites all administrative and overhead costs allowing 100% of donor contributions to go directly towards projects and supported organizations.

MESSAGE

FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PETER ABAJIAN

In 2022-23, The Paros Foundation continued to grow and implement vital projects.

The Paros Foundation helped successfully resettle 22 families from Artsakh into new permanent homes in Armenia in both 2022 and 2023. In addition, we rebuilt eight homes for families in Artsakh and were working on completing three additional homes when the Armenians there were faced with blockade and ultimately the September 2023 ethnic cleansing of all Armenians from the territory of historic Artsakh. The last quarter of 2023 was spent assisting families with their humanitarian needs and launching a new program to help permanently resettle refugee families into new homes in Armenia.

Our important work on infrastructure, humanitarian and housing projects in Armenia's border communities continued at an expanded pace. These projects help improve the overall living conditions in these communities and lead to a more vibrant and secure border.

Gyumri, Armenia's second largest city, was the continued recipient of our projects aimed at reducing the level of generational poverty and improving living conditions for families. Our Debi Arach Children's Center continues to be recognized within Gyumri as a valuable tool in shaping the children who attend the centers future.

Creating meaningful employment and business opportunities for people in both Gyumri and in border communities helps combat poverty and leads to a brighter future. To this end, our team has successfully launched several economic test projects in rural communities and continues to support the Hianali Beauty Center & Vocational Training Programs and our work at the Aygepar Business Incubator.

It is with deep appreciation that we acknowledge our generous donors who enable our work in Armenia. Do consider becoming a member of The Paros Foundation's family of donors and get involved today!

CONTINUOUSLY GROWING &
IMPLEMENTING VITAL PROJECTS



DID YOU KNOW ?

▶ The Paros Foundation has had **192** young people participate in its SERVICE Armenia Program

▶ We have fully or partially improved **22** kindergartens benefiting more than **10,000** children

▶ Since we have begun our beekeeping program, we have produced **7,929** lbs of honey

▶ We have built and/or renovated **133** restrooms via our projects throughout Armenia

▶ We have replaced more than **90,000** sq feet of roofing on homes, kindergartens, schools and medical centers

▶ Invested **\$16.4 million** in Armenia via our programs

▶ Created **820** full and part time jobs in Armenia to date.



2022-2023 PROJECTS

- 200 Beehives for Tavush
- Abovyan School #8 Phase 1
- Akunk Medical Center
- Apelian Clinic at Prkutyun Center
- Artsakh Refugee Support Fund
- Assarian Vocational Training Program
- Aygedzor Kindergarten Renovation
- Aygepar Business Incubator
- Classroom Renovation-The Levon Bosnoyan Chess Room
- Debi Arach Children's Center
- Emergency Reconstruction Fund Artsakh
- Fuel Through Firewood Gyumri
- GOALS for Armenia and Artsakh
- Groceries for Gyumri
- High Tech Education for Children
- Khndzoresk School Multipurpose Room Renovation
- Kindergarten for Nerkin Tsaghkavan
- Kindergarten Renovations: Shirak
- Komitas Conservatory Student Scholarships
- Matching Challenge Grant for Getahovid School
- Mobile Dental Clinic
- Mobile Dental Clinic Vayots Dzor
- Musical Armenia
- Nor Geghi Kindergarten Expansion
- Nor Ughi School Gym
- NKA Home Repairs
- Orphan Excursions
- Paros Housing, After-School and Vocational Center
- Ponics Farming on the Border
- Roots in Nerkin Karmiraghbyur
- Scholarship for a Sustainable Future
- School Improvements for Students in Paruyr Sevak
- Stepanavan St. Gregory the Illuminator School #2 Improvement Project
- Talin Music School
- University Greenhouse for Forest Tree Seedling
- Verishen Kindergarten Expansion and Renovation
- Water for Verin Tsaghkavan
- Winter Coats for Debi Arach 2020
- Wrestling Programs in Tavush

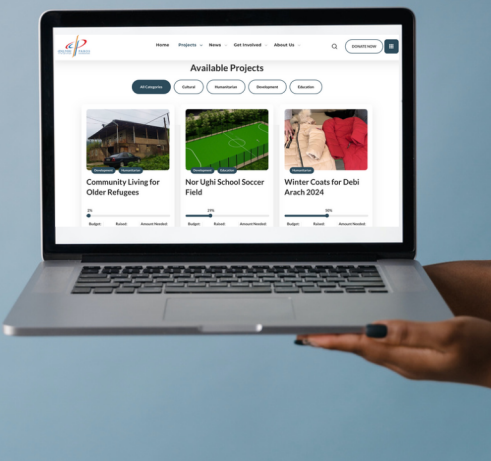
CULTURAL - DEVELOPMENT - EDUCATIONAL - HUMANITARIAN



GET INVOLVED



BECOME A PART OF
THE PAROS FOUNDATION'S
FAMILY OF DONORS TODAY!



OUR PROMISE

The Paros Foundation underwrites all administrative expenses allowing 100% of your contribution to be applied directly to your chosen project.

OUR WEBSITE

www.parosfoundation.org has many important projects that are pre-vetted and ready to be implemented, but need your support.

EVENTS

Consider sponsoring an event to help raise funds or inform your family and friends about the important work Paros is implementing in Armenia!

VISIT

When you visit Armenia, The Paros Foundation staff can arrange for you and your family to visit your project!

The Paros Foundation is a 501(c)3 charitable organization. All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

For more information and to get involved, please contact Peter Abajian at (310) 400-9061 or via email peter@parosfoundation.org.

ARTSAKH

RELIEF & RESETTLEMENT EFFORTS

Major efforts were made to assist Armenians displaced both in Armenia and Artsakh following the 2020 War, during Artsakh's illegal blockade, and following the ultimate ethnic cleansing of our people from their historic lands.

Our work resettling displaced families, who lost their homes in Artsakh following the 2020 war continued up to the illegal blockade of Artsakh in December 2022. During this period, we resettled 22 families into new homes in Armenia as part of our efforts with the Armenian Resettlement Coalition. This effort provided these families ownership in their home, which was given to them fully renovated and fully furnished. In addition, individually tailored economic support packages were provided to each family to give them a means to earn a living and care for their family.

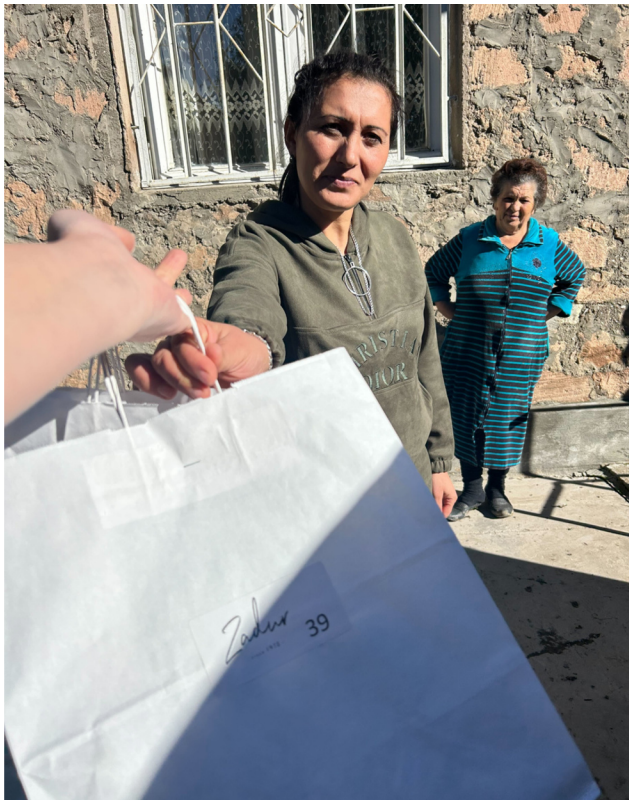
MEDS MASRIK,
GEGHARKUNIK REGION



ARTSAKH (CONT'D)

Simultaneously, in Artsakh, we worked closely with the government to secure abandoned homes, fully rebuild and renovate them for families in Artsakh who had also lost their homes in the 2020 War. Thirteen homes were renovated in Artsakh for families and 10 of them were occupied prior to the blockade.

During the illegal blockade of Artsakh from December 2022 until September 2023, The Paros Foundation helped provide more than 740 tons of humanitarian food, medicine and necessary support to our brothers and sisters in Artsakh. This was completed by working with diasporan and international organizations.



Following the illegal siege and ethnic cleansing of Artsakh, that saw the exodus of more than 100,000 Armenians from their historic homeland, Paros immediately began a second relief effort to provide immediate humanitarian assistance to these refugees. Perhaps more importantly, Paros also launched a second housing resettlement effort called “Artsakh Refugee Support Fund” and successfully moved its first refugee family into their new home in Meds Masrik in December of 2023.

The Paros Foundation’s efforts to rehouse and support refugees from Artsakh continues to be a priority for our organization and supporters.

BORDER PROJECTS

PROSPERITY ON THE BORDER

In Armenia's remote border communities, prosperity translates to security. Launched in 2015, our Prosperity on the Border initiative works to promote border security and prosperity through well thought-out, targeted infrastructure, economic development and educational projects. Helping improve conditions within these villages and investing in these communities helps fuel a sense of security for its residents and creates hope for a brighter future.

In 2022-23, seven major infrastructure projects were completed in border communities including the complete renovation and expansion of two kindergartens (Verishen, Aygedzor,) and the establishment of a new kindergarten in Nerkin Tsaghkavan, significant improvements to two schools (Paruyr Sevak, Khndzoresk,) the renovation of the Akunk Poly Clinic and improvements to the water infrastructure in Verin Tsaghkavan. Each of these projects significantly improved the living conditions for residents within their respective communities.

Job creation in border communities received a boost with the implementation of several projects focused on economic development and job creation. Feed production and a pig farm were launched at the Aygepar Incubator, 200 new beehives were installed in two communities in the Tavush Region, 830 fruit trees were planted in Nerkin Karmiraghbyur and a Ponics Greenhouse was built and launched at the school in Nerkin Karmiraghbyur. These projects create jobs, contribute to the local economy, help grow needed food, and educate school-aged children as to modern farming methods.

VERISHEN KINDERGARTEN,
SYUNIK REGION





PARUYR SEVAK SCHOOL,
ARARAT REGION



AKUNK POLYCLINIC,
GEGHARKUNIK REGION



NERKIN TSAHKKAVAN
KINDERGARTEN,
TAVUSH REGION

PROMOTING BORDER
SECURITY & PROSPERITY



SHIRAK

The Paros Foundation's presence in Armenia's second largest city, Gyumri, has been a constant since 2011. Each year the scope of work has evolved with first hand involvement by SERVICE Armenia participants and Paros supporters and friends.

Gyumri's residents were left battling hardship after hardship following the 1988 Spitak Earthquake, the Artsakh Conflict and collapse of the Soviet Union. While decades later many are still battling generational poverty, Paros has established projects to help families obtain the tools and skills needed to better their lives and end their cycle of poverty.

Through the Paros Projects for Prosperity initiative, 26 impoverished families were moved from their *domiks* into new permanent homes. The Debi Arach Children's Center continues to provide much needed support to children in need. In addition, the children have received regular dental and medical checkups through our Mobile Dental Clinic and Med-Aid Armenia Medical trips. The Assarian Vocational Training Program has helped 98 residents learn new skills in technology, textiles and cosmetology and obtain employment. Humanitarian aid, including firewood, shoes, winter boots, coats, groceries, backpacks and school supplies are distributed regularly.

Our newest effort will encompass many of our impactful projects into a centralized location. The Paros Housing, After-School & Vocational Center will house the second location of the Debi Arach Children's Center, an extension of the Assarian Vocational Training Program and move 27 more families out of *domiks* and into new homes.

DIGITAL POMEGRANATE
GYUMRI, SHIRAK REGION



DEBI ARACH CHILDREN'S CENTER

GYUMRI, SHIRAK REGION



EDUCATION

- Homework Assistance
- Cultural & Educational Excursions
- Free College Entrance Exam Tutoring
- High-Tech Curriculum
- Professional Orientation Courses
- Special Interest Courses
- Guest Speakers

HEALTH

- Health Examinations
- Dental Care
- Psychological Support & Art Therapy
- Vitamin & Hygiene Product Distribution

HUMANITARIAN

- Distributions of Coats, Shoes, Boots, School Supplies
- Transportation Stipends for Students
- Access to Bathing Facilities

Since its inception in 2015 the Debi Arach (“Moving Forward”) Children's Center in Gyumri, has been providing children the necessary academic, psychological, social and humanitarian support they need by a professional staff and volunteers. Although these children come from poverty stricken families, with differing interests and goals, they have received the same kindness, support, encouragement and opportunities to grow.

180 children have access to a psychologist on staff, and receive homework assistance and tutoring for almost every subject including English, Math, Language and History. Additionally, students have the opportunity to take computer and robotics classes in addition to career training provided through the Assarian Vocational Training Program.

Children receive a nutritious meal each day, helping them obtain the calories and nutrients they would otherwise not receive. Furthermore, the Center addresses a very important hygienic need by providing the children in attendance with supervised bathing facilities. The goal is to help hundreds of children mature into successful young adults and work to break their family's cycle of poverty. To help ensure this outcome the staff consistently introduce new and innovative teaching methods as well as participate in teacher training seminars with distinguished guest coaches such as Nelly De Leon, a licensed mental health professional from the US.



WWW.DEBIARACH.ORG

HERE'S WHAT'S NEW:

- Guest speakers
- Open classes are offered to address special interests such as agriculture and theater
- Nine kids from Artsakh
- Coding competition
- Recycling & community cleanup
- Local university psychology students visit to observe the unique model of care at Debi Arach



PAROS HOUSING, AFTER-SCHOOL & VOCATIONAL CENTER



GYUMRI, SHIRAK REGION



In early 2022, the Mayor of Gyumri agreed to provide Paros with one of Gyumri's many half-constructed buildings, with the purpose of completing the building's construction and housing *domik* families. Excitement for this amazing opportunity has allowed Paros to raise funds, begin this important project, and make great progress in moving forward.

Government officials, staff, friends, and supporters all gathered for the official groundbreaking on October 30, 2023. Once completed, this new facility will have a significant impact on Gyumri's housing problem with 27 new apartments for *domik* families. In addition, a second location of the Debi Arach Children's Center will be located on the building's first floor, which will provide services for more than 150 children daily. Finally, the Assarian Vocational Training Program and social enterprise consisting of training in the garment-making industry will train and employ an estimated 50 people a year. In all, it is expected that the economic impact of this new facility will top \$1 million its first year of operation. The project budget to complete construction on the entire building is estimated at \$1.5 million. \$300,000 has already been raised towards this important effort.

Visit www.parosfoundation.org to support this important project.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

An important component in the development and sustainability of a country is its economic vitality. To this end, The Paros Foundation continues to invest in Armenia's economic potential through job training, social enterprise and small business development.

The Assarian Vocational Training Program provides both high tech and low-tech training for impoverished residents living in Gyumri at Gyumri's leading tech company "Digital Pomegranate" and Gyumri's largest employer "Lentex." More than 35 people were successfully trained and secured employment at these companies in 2022 and 2023.

Thanks to the continued generous support of the Assarian Family, the Hianali Beauty Center continued to provide high quality salon services to people in Gyumri, while training dozens of people in the art of cosmetology as a future career. To date, more than 75% of people completing the Hianali courses are working within the industry and earning needed income to care for their families.



ECONOMIC IMPACT (CONT'D)

In Aygepar, the Aygepar Business Incubator, created by The Paros Foundation, continues to test a variety of small businesses to expand economic opportunities for border communities. The Incubator is housed in a large complex of buildings abandoned since Soviet times and given to The Paros Foundation for the purpose of helping stimulate the local economy. Local pig feed production, a pig farm, a rabbit farm and fertilizer production efforts were tested during this period to determine which businesses offered the greatest potential for economic development and impact.

At the school in the Nerkin Karmir Aghbyur, in addition to the existing honey field, a state-of-the-art ponics greenhouse and fruit orchard were built and continue to produce food and serve as “living classrooms” for student education in various methods of modern farming. As these efforts produce saleable commodities, students will engage in the processing, packaging and marketing of these items.

All of these efforts are helping create a base skill set to improve Armenia's economy both in Gyumri, Armenia's second largest city, and in important border communities.



AYGEPAR &
NERKIN KARMIR
AGHBAYUR,
TAVUSH REGION

ARMENIA HONEY PROJECT

In the Tavush communities of Nerkin Karmir Aghbyur and Verin Tsakhkavan, The Paros Foundation expanded its honey fields with the generous support of the Assarian Family. 200 active beehives now employ two master beekeepers and two junior beekeepers. In addition, seasonal labor is employed to help tend to the hives and extract, and package the honey for sale. This packaging is completed in the “clean kitchen” at the Aygepar Business Incubator.



During the period 2022 to 2023, almost 4,000 pounds of high-quality honey was harvested, packaged and sold in Armenia. Locals, tourists and shoppers in several stores in Yerevan enjoyed the high-quality honey. In addition to the job creation and economic benefit of this project, all the components of this project were also manufactured in Armenia, adding to its economic impact, including hives, fencing, blocks, cushions, frames and wax starter sheets.

Students from the school in Nerkin Karmir Aghbyur actively participate in the process of honey production both learning about honey production through the curriculum and spending time working hand's-on in the field.

Sponsorship opportunities exist for field expansion into new communities. For more information, please contact at info@parosfoundation.org or via telephone at (310) 400-9061.

ENGAGING IN ARMENIA

The Paros Foundation is committed to the principle of service and volunteerism through our trip-based programs. These trips help develop the relationship between program participants and Armenia. Each are planned to include a service component, informational excursions, and time for leisure and fun activities, while touring throughout Armenia. The Paros Foundation staff responsible for facilitating these programs have a tremendous amount of experience working in Armenia and successfully implementing and overseeing service opportunities and tours.



SERVICE ARMENIA 2022 & 2023

28 participants and 2 coordinators traveled to Armenia from various regions throughout the United States to participate in SERVICE Armenia. Their volunteer efforts included:

- Excursions with orphans
- Renovations to Talin School of Music
- Engaging w/children at Debi Arach
- Packing & distributing groceries through Groceries for Gyumri
- Work on the new Paros Housing, After-School and Vocational Center in Gyumri

SERVICE ARMENIA

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 2022

The 2nd SERVICE Armenia Young Professionals trip was a great success. Participants toured the country, volunteered with various projects, and made lifelong friends during the two-week SERVICE Armenia Young Professionals trip. Volunteer work days included renovations at Talin Music School, Paruyr Sevak Kindergarten, and teaching at Debi Arach.

ENGAGING IN ARMENIA (CONT'D)

JOURNEY THROUGH ARMENIA 2023

The Paros Journey trip is designed for adult participants, and current and future donors. Journey Through Armenia 2023 had a meaningful and productive trip! The group was able to visit several Paros project sites as well as implement an excursion with children from the Yerevan Children's Home and distribute humanitarian aid, including new shoes for the children at the Debi Arach Children's Center. We are happy to host the next Journey Through Armenia trip for you. Contact us to express your interest.



MED-AID ARMENIA 2022 & 2023

The Med-Aid Armenia medical trip has become a life changing initiative for both residents receiving care in Armenia and the medical professionals & volunteers dedicating their time to this effort. Health screenings were provided to children in Yerevan, Gyumri and Paruyr Sevak during both 2022 & 2023 trips. The Med-Aid teams also worked with their local colleagues in the community of Nor Hachen helping with program development. We are so thankful for everyone who volunteered their time and a special thank you to Dr. Krikor Deramerian who leads Med-Aid Armenia.

ORGANIZATIONS WE SUPPORT

5

Organizations
Supported

2006

Supported
Since

1,940

Beneficiaries
2022-2023

The Paros Foundation supports five exemplary organizations in Armenia. These organizations are leaders in their respective fields, paving the way for under represented populations and interests. These organizations are supported in differing capacities including operating funds, the provision of office space (for three of the organizations), operational resources and mentoring. Our goal is to assist these organizations manage their growth and attract financial, human and physical resources to their respective causes. Through their hard work, these organizations continue to make an important impact in Armenia.



GHOGHANJ CHILDREN'S CENTER



The Ghoghanj Children's Center provides after-school and summer school programs to "at-risk" children from economically challenged families at two Yerevan locations. They provide the necessary academic, psychological and social support to ensure that these socially vulnerable children are able to excel in school and become self-confident young adults. Since 2001, their dedicated staff guide the children through several core classes, competitions and extracurricular activities. They also continue to advance in robotics and are developing skills in drone operations.

Services were provided to 210 children from disadvantaged families, refugee families from Artsakh and families of soldiers wounded in the 44-Day War.

The Paros Foundation continues to support the Kentron and Nor Nork centers with rent-free program space and financial support.



THE PAROS CHAMBER CHOIR



Since 1993, The Paros Chamber Choir has coveted awards and impressed audiences around the world with performances in England, Armenia, Georgia, Lebanon, Italy and France. Maestro Raffi Mikaelian, has helped shape the group into a world-class chamber choir despite the fact that most of the members are disabled and many sing from a seated position.

In 2023 the choir celebrated 30 inspirational years with an anniversary concert. Several guests joined the performance including the Artsakh Chamber Choir for a memorable evening for all.

The Paros Foundation provides funding and rent- free office and rehearsal space for the choir.

VANADZOR ART SCHOOL

VANADZOR
ART SCHOOL

Since 1969, the Vanadzor Art School (formally known as Vanadzor Music School #3) has been providing music and art education to local students. The school was destroyed in the 1988 Spitak Earthquake, but with the help of the San Francisco Arshak II Opera fundraising efforts, Wells Fargo, Armenia Fund, and other donors, the school underwent a complete renovation.

250 students attend the school, excel in their studies and participate in many concerts and competitions. Students continue to receive excellent musical education and several have entered the Yerevan State Conservatory to continue their studies. In 2023, Paros installed a new heating system for the school and continues to assist with student scholarships and other repairs to the school building.





VANADZOR MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS



The Vanadzor Museum of Fine Arts was established in 1975 and contains an impressive collection of artwork. The Museum houses more than 1,800 works of art including paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints and decorative arts. A steady flow of tourists and guests continue to visit the Museum and their rich collection of artwork. A complete renovation of the museum took place in 2019.

In recent years the museum continues to hold exhibits from local artists, host guests to help promote art culture and facilitate children's events and art classes.

The Paros Foundation has been supporting the Museum with efforts designed to raise awareness regarding its significant collection of art in an attempt to help redevelop and reinvigorate the historical art colony in the Lori Region.

UNISON NGO



Since 2002, the UNISON NGO has been working to serve and improve the lives of people with disabilities (PWD) in Armenia. Their mission is to help PWD lead independent and productive lives by providing art and computer training, legal advice, psychological counseling, employment training and advocacy.

In recent years Unison has been busy implementing important projects. They successfully held the *Support to Families of PWD* programs for 60 participants. They also partnered with the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs to bring the *Finding a Common Language* festival to Armenia bringing everyone together to promote inclusion for all.

The Paros Foundation provides UNISON NGO with financial support and rent-free accessible office space.



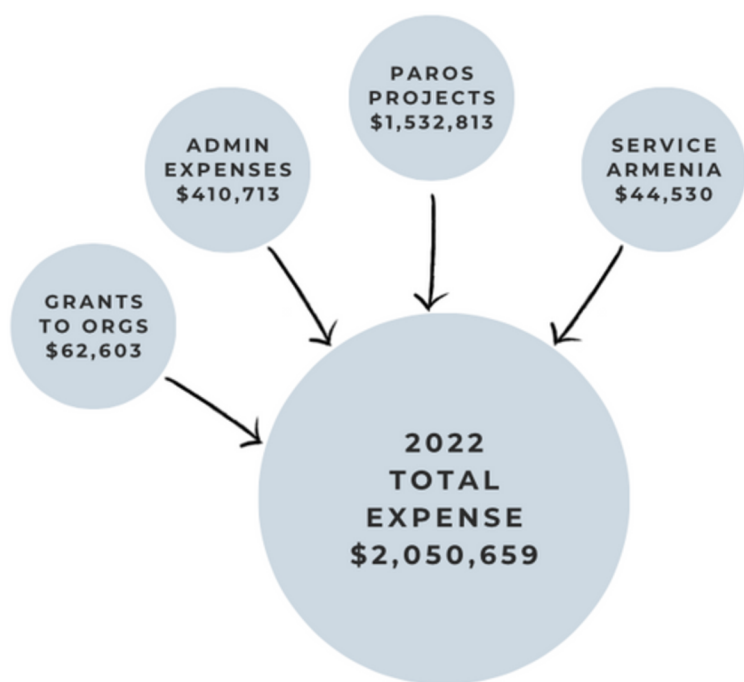
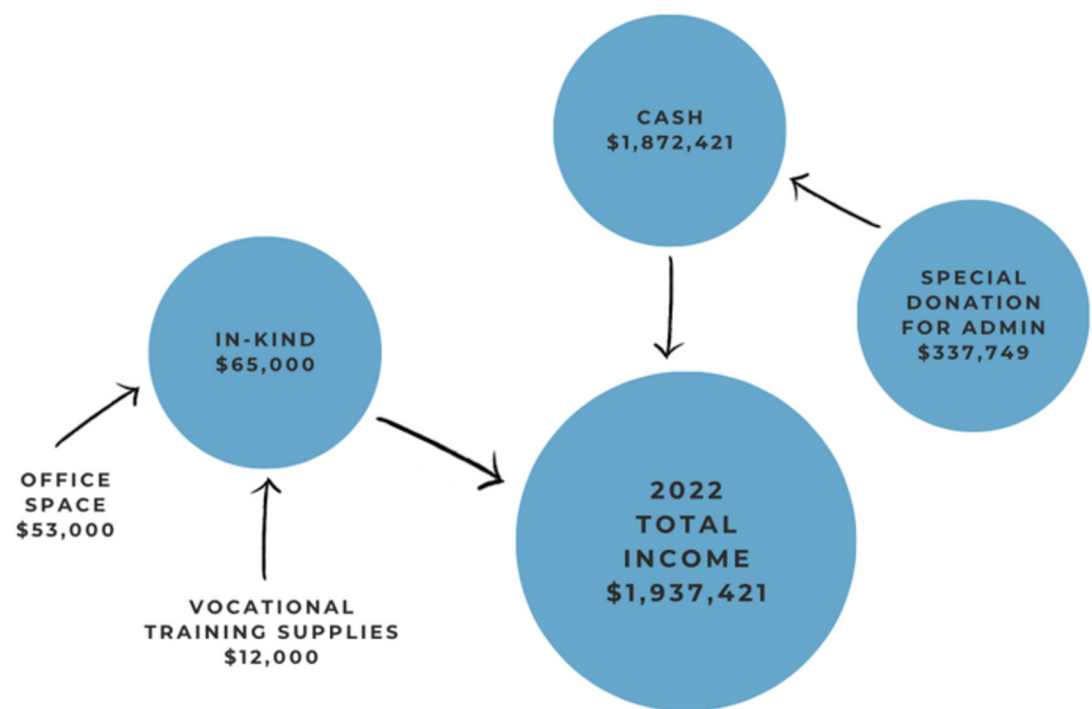
INCOME

The Paros Foundation successfully raised more than \$1.87 million in 2022 and \$2.3 million in 2023. Along with the Paros promise to implement all projects with no charge for administrative expenses, this period's income helped finance significant projects impacting thousands of families throughout the country.

EXPENSE

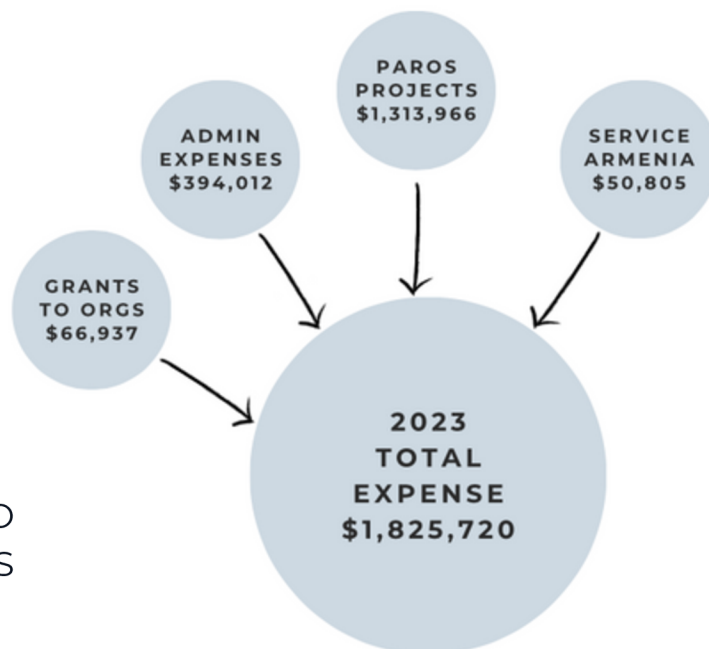
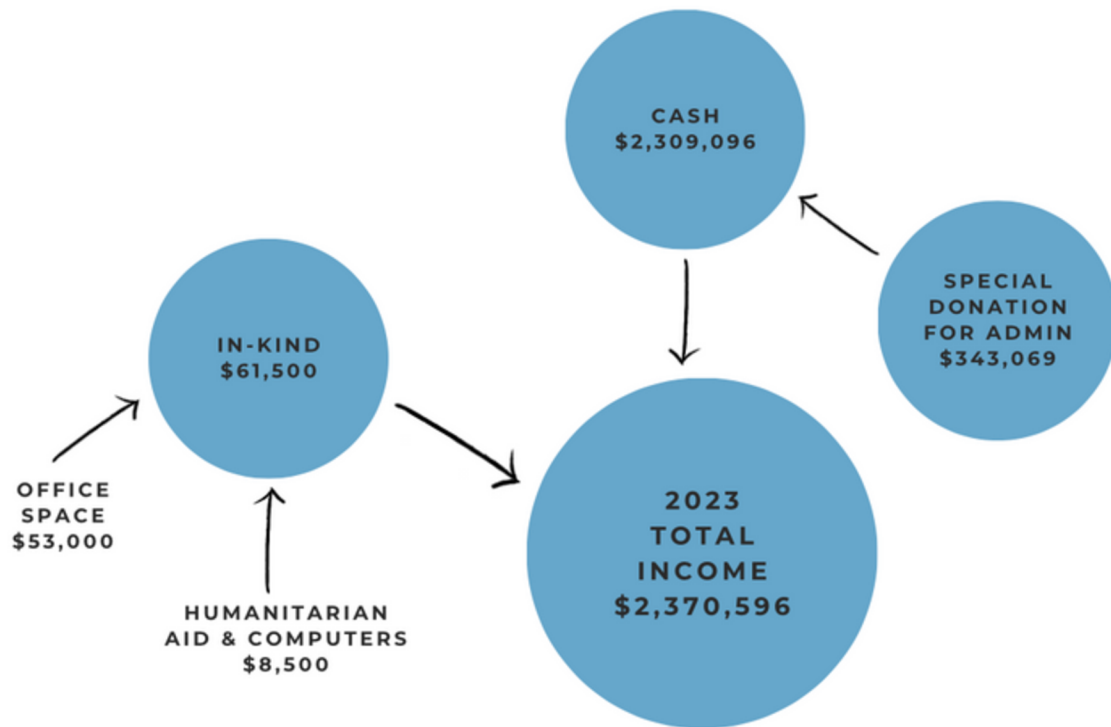
The Paros Foundation continued to make grants to our organization partners and implemented valuable projects in Armenia in 2022 and 2023. Our administrative expenses continued to be underwritten by our chairman allowing all donations to be applied 100% to their intended projects.

2022 INCOME & EXPENSE



100%
OF DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS GO
DIRECTLY TOWARDS PROJECTS
& SUPPORTED ORGANIZATIONS

2023 INCOME & EXPENSE



100%

OF DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS GO DIRECTLY TOWARDS PROJECTS & SUPPORTED ORGANIZATIONS

2022-2023 DONORS

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Dan & Kathleen Yessian
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James Yogurtian
Maurice & Hilda Yotnegparian
George Younan
Gigi Young
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Z

Kohar Zaher
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Adam, Mary Pat, Blake, & Brenna
Zakarian
Al & Barbara Zakarian
Anoush Zakarian
Vrej Zakarian & Francine Gyeckhyan
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Nairi Zograbyan
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Mary Zoryan
Vahe Zurnachyan
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THANK YOU



OUR STORY

Formally launched in 2006, The Paros Foundation is based in Berkeley, California. Paros welcomes the involvement of our friends around the world. We invite organizations and individuals to partner with us and utilize our on-the-ground resources in Armenia to implement valuable projects.

Paros has earned a reputation as the “go-to” organization to oversee project implementation in Armenia. The Foundation works to help build a sustainable and vibrant homeland while improving living conditions for its most vulnerable populations.



OUR MISSION & VISION

The mission of The Paros Foundation is to effectively implement humanitarian, educational, cultural and development projects; and to support trusted local organizations in partnership with the diaspora.

The Paros Foundation implements small and medium sized projects in Armenia, while striving to bring Armenia and the Armenian community worldwide closer through our unique model of philanthropy, volunteerism and service.



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