



Trip Report: ARMENIA First Trip 2014

Dates: September 12, 2014 through October 26, 2014

Authors: Angela M. Neilan

Institution(s): Virginia Tech Office of International Research, Education and Development

Purpose:

To begin the newly awarded project, InnovATE/Armenia,

Sites Visited: USAID offices, ICARE/ATC offices, Armenia National Agrarian University offices, Darakert Ag Service Center, Ararat marz, Sissian Regional Rural Development Center, Shombe Fruit packing plant, Goris Regional Agricultural Service Center, Armenian National Zoo and Cascade Art Foundation

Description of Activities: Start up activities under Tasks in work plan, conducted action research interviews with staff, participated in agriculture forum with 150 stakeholders, participated in Vocational Technical Education conference sponsored by Ministry of Education. Collected position descriptions and labor contracts to review for functional organization chart. Began planning for visit of Development Director to Virginia. Began training new project Accountant. Discussed financial management procedures currently in place and the importance of transparency. Attended opening of Ag Vet Center in Ararat Marz. Met with ANAU Rector to introduce new staff and new project. Attended Wine Academy programs, which model could be duplicated with food technology and agronomy specialties. Prepared budget re-alignment to shift scholarship funds from years 2-4 to 1-3. Skype training for financial best practices, work plan. Participatory planning meetings with ICARE-ATC staff for evaluation indicators, submitted PMEP draft plan to USAID. Visited zoo and art foundation to explore their fundraising strategies such as “adopt a zoo animal for a year” or sponsor a painting at the gallery. Meetings with USAID Mission for introductions and to deliver PMEP. Current staff rotating out of Armenia and a new M&E specialist will be assigned in spring to give thorough review of PMEP. Field Trip to South of Armenia-Sissian and Goris to explore linkages between agricultural production, field research and internships and ways to keep good students in the country and in the agricultural sector once they graduate. Continuing to explore adding specialties to ATC curriculum in food science and technology and also in agronomy and soil fertility

Suggestions and Recommendations: Recommend a review of scholarship funds and how to account and distribute. Recommend follow up on the two new potential specialties for the ATC curriculum with internships-Food Technology and Agronomy

List of Contacts Made:

Name	Title/Organization	Contact Info (address, phone, email)
Naren Chanmugam	USAID Director Economic Growth Office	
Simon Sargsyan	Energy, Water and Engineering Sector Advisor	
Richard Byess	Supervisory Program Officer	retired
Mary Enschede	USDA-FAS-DC	Mary.enschede@fas.usda.gov
Arshaluys Tarverdyan	ANAU Rector	
Gagik Sardaryan	CARD director	
Armen Khojoyan	CARD Agribusiness Development Specialist	
Armen Harutyunyan	Deputy Minister of Agriculture	
Artur Harutyunyan	Biochemistry and Biotechnology ANAU	
Nune Sarukhanyan	President, Green Lane NGO	
David Bequette	Green Bean Coffee Group	
Michael Steiner	USDA Statistics Service-Armenian Agr Census	
Lynn Exton	Risk, Governance and Analytics	lynnEPRGA@outlook.com
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	primary health	
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Iga Niznik	Advocacy Officer, Seed Savers Arche Noah	
Zorab Tsvitsivadze	Food Technology, Ministry of Agriculture, Georgia	
Omar Tedoradze	Agriculture Technology, Ministry of Agriculture, Georgia	
Meri Makharadze	Women Agricultural Cooperatives, Georgia	
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Thomas Dichter	Capable Partners FHI360	tspdich@gmail.com
Traian Laurentiu HRISTEA	Ambassador, Head of EU Delegation to Armenia	
John Barker	Intl Aid Officer, EU Agr, Food, Dev and Environment	Johnbarker@eeas.europa.eu

Appendix:

Trip Log 2014

September 12-14-Travel to Armenia (Neilan) and meet up with Keith Moore

September 15-Introductions at ICARE/ATC, move into offices, visit USAID at Embassy compound for meeting with Naren Chanmugam, Simon Sargsyan, and Richard Byess on Indicators and PMEP preparations

September 16- Keith and I met with Vardan Urutyan and ATC staff for orientation and review the PMEP requirements

September 17-Interviewed Arthur Grigoryan, Development Director for Action Research and Situation Analysis. Met with financial staff, Vahe and Hayk, Began reviewing the financial reporting and record keeping requirements for USAID

September 18-Continued interviewing individual staff for Action Research and Situation Analysis-Arthur, Anna and Suzanna. Met with staff on indicators with Keith.

September 19-With Keith, visited ANAU Rector Arshalyus to give him VT OIRED mugs and introduce new InnovATE/Armenia project. Visited USAID Mission again to review indicators for M&E. Richard Byess gave good review and announced his retirement. We expect new M&E person in spring, 2015.

September 20-With Vardan and family, Keith and I joined for pizza party and art opening of works by graphic artist who does publications for ATC.

September 21-celebrated Armenia Independence Day in Yerevan. Walked Cascade and watched fireworks.

September 22-Continue ATC staff interviews for Action Research-Lusine, Sos and Arthur

September 23-Meet with Mary Enschede and Vardan and then with financial staff, Vahe and Hayk, in preparation for skype with VT financial folks-Denise, Jim and Tom

September 24-Attend opening of new Vet Ag Center in Darakert, Ararat Marz, with Keith and Vardan.

Also attending were US Embassy staff, USAID staff and many Ag stakeholders including Minister, Deputy Minister, CARD officials,