

American Soft Power in Armenia
Objectives, Implementation, Results

by

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Introduction

Education and information are one of the most influential tools in today's world. Many important achievements throughout history have been reached by the implementation of these tools. Today in the world, countries gain advantage not only through their political and military power but also their ability to compete in the informational sphere. In general, the complex of tools that are designed to ensure the advantage in informational sphere are called Soft Power tools. The concept of Soft Power was designed in the United States of America. The author of the project is American political scientist Joseph Nye. The implementation of the concept reached its apogee in the Cold War era when the world was divided into various socio-political and cultural blocks. There was a need to raise awareness of the people living in the non-western countries about free and democratic Western world and Soft Power was one of the major tools to achieve that mission. Despite the fact that the Cold War era is currently over, the implementation of Soft Power techniques still remains actual and its role did not decrease in U.S foreign policy. In general, Soft Power is exercised through educational programs, cultural and public diplomacy etc. There are no concrete target groups for its effective realization, although in most of cases there is a huge attention paid on the young generation of the population. There are concrete educational and cultural programs which are concentrated only on this segment of the population. This capstone project analyzes Soft Power which is implemented by the USA in the Republic of Armenia. One of the main goals of the Soft Power is to input American value system in countries where it is implemented. Only those institutions and organizations which are financed by the United States are included in this capstone. This research project provides general background information about several US supported institutions.

The purpose of conducting this project is to understand how effective is the Soft Power concept in general and specifically, how successfully it is implemented in Armenia. This research is important from the perspective of the general impact that the Soft Power realized by the USA had on Armenia. We have concrete examples of Soft Power realization in Armenia in this project. Whether the institution, which is implementing it is working on the improvements of the political or educational, socio-economic or other spheres, there is a concrete analysis of the mechanisms which are involved in the process. Also, the project is important from the point of view of understanding the role of Soft Power in strengthening mutual understanding between countries and societies and their role in preventing possible conflictual situations between sides. One of the purposes of the realization of Soft Power is to strengthen cultural and public diplomacy in those countries where it is realized. We get a background information concerning how the attitude of those people who are being part of projects financed by the US changed towards that country after completing the project. All those important aspects are analyzed during the project.

Literature Review

The concept of Soft Power became largely used in the past century. Since its implementation, there were a number of articles and scholarly research dedicated to this topic. In the past decades, the term was discussed from many perspectives including its analysis a tool of political influence, its socio-cultural impact on other societies and its overall effectiveness for U.S interests. The exact definition of the concept is better in the works of the designer of the concept. Joseph Nye, who describes the concept in his book (Soft Power, 2004) soft power arises from the

attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies. Currently, it is mainly exercised through educational and cultural programs.

Since the education is one of the major tools of Soft Power it is appropriate to discuss it from that perspective. The philosophic definitions of education could be better analyzed by combining it with Aristotle's ideas about education. In the article of Carnes Lord (Aristotle, U.S Public Diplomacy and the Cold War, 2008) are represented the soft power's philosophical aspects. According to him, the purpose of democracy is creating institutions to realize the good, moral for the society. He thinks that, the education should be devoted to the developing the excellence of civic identity, courage, modesty, honor and virtue. This book is important for analyzing the philosophic aspects behind the Soft Power

The importance of the Soft Power was essential during the Cold War era when there was a serious propaganda campaign between the world dominant blocks. Media tools replaced weapons as the main tools to gain advantage over the rivals. After the World War II, U.S have allocated 65 million dollars in West Germany only for realizing necessary propaganda, which was a huge amount of money at that time. The U.S Information Agency (USIA) which was the central organization to exercise a soft power in that time, has been working on the image of U.S in different countries of the world, including the Western part of Germany. Wilson Dizard, in his book (Inventing Public Diplomacy, 2004) has provided with a brief history of USIA in as well as the main directions of US Soft Power. He discusses Soft Power from the public diplomacy perspective. In this research, there is covered a topic of the U.S image in the countries, particularly Armenia after implementing Soft Power tools.

Despite the question why Soft Power is useful and why it is implemented, it is also essential to understand how it is implemented. In today's world, internet is one of the most powerful media

tools, if not the most powerful. Engagement of audience through the internet increases the efficiency and enables to engage more people in the process while using less resources. In the book (*The long Road to Public Diplomacy 2.0: The internet in the U.S Public Diplomacy*, 2013), the author Nicholas Cull has represented the role of technologies in the exercising soft power by U.S. This book is helpful for analyzing the U.S involvement in foreign countries through the internet. According to the author, from the start, Americans have understood the value of technology in projecting their national image. This book is important to analyze the role of internet in U.S Soft Power, particularly while analyzing the E-resources branch of the U.S embassy's public affairs section.

Some scholars also emphasize the role of Soft Power as a major factor of reducing terrorism. Particularly, authors of the book (*Trials of Engagement, The future of U.S Public Diplomacy*, 2010) Scot Martinus and Ali Fisher bring an opinion, according to which the closing of United States Information Agency was one of the most serious committed mistakes by President Bill Clinton's administration. The primary mission of USIA was to execute Soft Power inside and outside the territory of U.S. According to authors, there was a portion of U.S propaganda failure for the accidents of 9/11. They think that terrorists have used the vacuum of ideology propaganda which was created after USIA has stopped to operate. In this paper there are discussed the key components of Soft Power which may reduce the chances of terror.

It is also important to analyze Soft Power in the scope of geopolitical interests of those countries which implement it. The author of the book Nelly Babayan discusses in her book (*Democratic Transformation and obstruction: EU, U.S, and Russia in the South Caucasus*, 2014). The author discusses why the U.S purposes democratic principles through soft power. Those values that U.S purposes through realizing it's Soft Power will serve for the geopolitical interests of that country,

particularly in the peacekeeping mission. The author quotes the thesis that democratic states have fewer chances to wage war against each other than those countries that do not share the same values. The components of Soft Power that serve for the peacekeeping interests of the U.S in the region are also be covered in this paper.

The understanding for geopolitics, particularly of the region where the Soft Power is implemented is very essential. The understanding of it permits to analyze in which direction it is accented to implement and what are the main goals of it. Svante Cornell's, book (U.S Engagement in the Caucasus: Changing Gears, 2005), is more related to geopolitics but it is essential to understand U.S interests in the Caucasus region for better understanding of socio-political processes which may be connected to the implementation of Soft Power.

Besides the politics, the Soft Power represents itself also as a marketing tool. As in the business sphere goods are designed to be promoted in market, those values that are proposed through Soft Power present themselves as goods that should be advertised. The book of Henry Sun (International Political Marketing: Case Study of United States Soft Power and Public Diplomacy, 2008) contains numerous elements of Soft Power being used as Marketing tool and lot of comparisons are drawn between marketing and public diplomacy. The book is useful in order to analyze the Soft Power from marketing perspective.

Research questions and methodology

The central questions of this research project are:

RQ1: What is the central objective of the U.S realizing Soft Power in Armenia

RQ2: How Soft Power shapes the minds of people who are involved in various U.S financed projects

The primary objective of this project is to identify the key directions of Soft Power implementations of the U.S funded institutions which operate in Armenia. Since one of the main directions of Soft Power implementation is education, it has a central role during realization this research project. However, some other directions besides education are covered in this research.

The main methods of conducting this research project were face-to-face interviews with officials of U.S funded institutions and a survey including students who took part in the educational programs of those institutions. Since the long term U.S system of education in Armenia is offered by American University of Armenia, the survey questionnaire is designed for students who study in that institution. The other institutions, whose officials are interviewed for this research project are “Civic Consent” , U.S Embassy in Armenia and Peace Corps branch in Armenia. The choice of the institutions which are included in the project is based on the goal to ensure the wide range of directions which are included in the agenda of those institutions and variety of audience which should be targeted in that Soft Power implementation process.

The “Civic Consent” NGO is an Armenian nonprofit organization established in 2007 to increase youth participation in the decision-making process, inform young people about their civic and political rights, and encourage youth to engage in political life actively. Currently, Civic Consent has approximately 300 members and 200 active volunteers. Civic Consent organizes forums,

roundtable discussions, and training on political rights, and conducts election rights campaigns. The NGO aims to encourage voter participation in elections and educate voters about election procedures, as well as to deter election fraud and corruption. Civic Consent is funded by NDI (National Democratic Institute, U.S). Gegham Sargsyan, the head of the NDI in Armenia is interviewed for this research project.

U.S Embassy in Armenia dates from 1992 after the collapse of Soviet Union. Mission elements include the U.S. State Department, the United States Agency for International Development, the Department of Defense, and the Department of the Treasury and the Department of Agriculture. The Public Affairs Section is responsible for informing local audiences about the U.S., for conducting educational exchanges and partnerships and for keeping the media informed of U.S. policy. Mrs. Jacqueline Deley , head of the embassy's public affairs department is interviewed for this project.

Peace Corps in Armenia dates the start of it's mission from 1992, after the independence of Armenia. The Peace Corps is a service opportunity for motivated change makers to immerse themselves in a community abroad, working side by side with local leaders to tackle the most pressing challenges of our generation. Since 1992, over 1.000 volunteers have arrived to Armenia to be involved in various projects, mainly in rural areas. One of their primary missions are to become acquainted with local customs and also to share with local population the values of U.S society. Communications officer of Peace Corps in Armenia is interviewed for this project.

The American University of Armenia is a higher educational institution. AUA's academic programs provide a graduate education and, starting in fall 2013, an undergraduate education. Parallel to its educational programs, AUA has established the Engineering Research Center, the

Turpanjian Center for Policy Analysis, the Acopian Center for the Environment, the Center for Health Services Research and Development, the Center for Research in Applied Linguistics, the Center for Business Research and Development, and the Legal Resource Center, in order to promote research in conjunction with its teaching programs.

Research Findings and Analysis

As it is mentioned, the research is realized by conducting series with face-to-face interviews with U.S organizations officials and also a survey questionnaire including the students studying in the U.S institution in Armenia. The questions asked to officials were designed in order to provide us with complete answers to survey questions. And a choice of the institutions was made to ensure the wide range of directions of Soft Power implementation in Armenia. The officials interviewed from U.S institutions are Jacqueline Deley (Head of the Public Affairs section of U.S embassy in Armenia), Gegham Sargsyan (Head of the Civic Consent NGO), Hermine Ghazaryan (Coordinator of Peace Corps in Armenia). Survey questionnaire is completed by American University of Armenia students.

Mrs. Jacqueline Deley, representative of the U.S Embassy in Armenia, responded to the first question saying that their primary mission is to advance further U.S policies in Armenia and make local audience familiar with it. As main tools of the Soft Power implementation she emphasized work with the local press, cultural and educational programs, grants and special attention to alumni of all programs. According to her, the Soft Power is an entire mechanism and every detail in that mechanism should work in correlation with others. She also drew my attention on American Corners in Armenia where people can spend their time being familiar with U.S culture, English language and different other things. They are mainly located in populated

areas, in the capital of Armenia Yerevan and also include regions. The other tool that she mentioned is free show of American films which makes local public familiar with the life in U.S, it's values, principles etc. Every month and people enjoy watching that films. According to her, the main mission of Public Affairs section of the embassy is to engage the public in various activities by implementing the above mentioned tools.

Probably the widest specter of Soft Power activities are educational programs. The most famous programs are Fulbright, Global Ugrad and Susi which all are exchange programs. Fulbright is American scholarship program designed for scholars, teachers, professionals, scientists and artists, Global Ugrad is an exchange program for undergraduate students and Susi is a summer school for current students and opportunity to study U.S institutes. There is also New Fulbright program for graduate studies. Education is considered as a core element of democracy.

According to Carnes Lord, education should be devoted to the developing the excellence of civic identity, courage, modesty, honor and virtue (Aristotle, U.S Public Diplomacy and the Cold War, 2008)

Besides exchange programs which are designed mainly for younger generation, there are also programs where people of all age categories are encouraged to be included. Free English classes of American Corners are open for people representing all age categories. Majority of attendants are 30, 40 years old people who are engaged in those activities. For rural areas, where the organization of physical presence of tutors is less possible, online English classes are realized through E-resources of the internet. Virtual teaching is extremely important nowadays, in the era of technologies. According to Nicolas Cull, from the start, Americans have understood the value of technology in projecting their national image. He also emphasizes the prominent role of the

virtual presence of U.S in other countries (The long Road to Public Diplomacy 2.0: The internet in the U.S Public Diplomacy, 2013).

Besides educational programs there are also numerous cultural programs which are designed to strengthen connections between Armenian and American societies. There is a huge effort from U.S Embassy in Armenia dedicated to cultural preservation, especially in Armenian regions.

There are also numerous cultural programs, including collective Armenian traditional dancing and other types of cultural exchange.

According to U.S Embassy officer, the main direction of the Public Affairs section is to propose of U.S values in Armenia. That are equality, girls empowerment, anti-corruption movement, rule of law, fair elections etc.

U.S state department also funds Civic Consent NGO in Armenia. . The main objective of the NGO is to increase youth participation in the decision-making process, inform young people about their civic and political rights, and encourage youth to engage in political life actively. The interview was held with the head of organization Mr. Gegham Sargsyan.

According to him, start of their mission in Armenia dates from 1995 and their activities are mainly concentrated on political themes. However, some other directions related to politics are also being part of their influence sphere. The main activities of the NGO are consultations with parliament members, discussions of different laws, coalition building. One of the major programs that was implemented for youth sector of political parties is a Leadership School. The development of civil society was one of the main achievements of independent Armenia and according to him they have made a solid contribution in that process. In that process, the NGO which he represents had a huge role. They also formed observer missions for monitoring local elections and encouraged younger generations to participate in that. One of the major

achievements, for which Mr. Sargsyan is proud for is women's participation in the election process. According to him, that was a big problem in Armenia, especially in rural areas. Women were forced to resign just after being elected and that was a huge problem. By the electoral code of Armenia adopted in 2010¹, 20 percent of total legislators in the parliament should be women and Civic Consent NGO considers it as a result of their effort. In 2015, 20 of 100 members of the U.S. Senate (20 percent) and 84 of 435 members of the U.S. House of Representatives (19.3 percent) are women². Numbers of Armenian women MP s are already closed to U.S and that can be considered as a success of Soft Power implementation since Armenia is brought a step closer to America. Women candidates start to raise questionable issues of those areas from where they have been elected as legislators.

The culture of electoral campaigning was also developed in Armenia by the support of Civic Consent NGO according to Sargsyan. The principle of door-to-door campaign when candidates meet their potential voters individually, parties which are represented in the parliament make transparent decisions, compared to the past, there is established internal democracy inside parties. The ties of political parties and NGO s are strengthened and latest are considered more seriously by parties. The proof is involvement of almost all political parties in events organized by various non-governmental organizations. There is a vision that parties cannot make decisions without taking into consideration the public opinion. What is more important, young generation of both genders are now represented in political parties. For example, half of the legislators elected from the "ELK" in recent elections are under 35 years old. One of the most influential educational programs that we realize is series of training sessions for youngsters of political

¹ Retrieved from http://www.gov.am/u_files/file/kananc-xorh/Gender-hayecakarg.pdf

² Retrieved from <https://statusofwomendata.org/explore-the-data/political-participation/political-participation-full-section/#pptrends>

parties. Those trainings last from six to twelve months and there are concrete results after completing that sessions. The new generation of those parties should form the future elite. The contribution of Civic Consent NGO in the above mentioned processes is evident according to Mr. Sargsian. He thinks that is a result of their effort.

Despite the overall satisfaction from the work realized by Civic Consent NGO in the past years, there are still obstacles for their Soft Power realization in Armenia and many issues that they should contribute to resolve. According to him, the major obstacles are absence of the willingness of ruling elite to make some changes, corruption not only in the economy but also inside political parties, treatment of the party presidents to party members like their ownership and many other problems. From the global perspective, they want to see Armenia allied with democratic countries, unlike the current situation. As a medium term goal it is considered to concentrate on the solution of that issues.

Concerning the “insert” of American values in Armenia, Mr. Sargsyan emphasized they do not have an objective to “import” U.S values to Armenia. Rather, they want to pick the most suitable for Armenian mentality values and promote them. In other words, they want some reformation of existing values making them to match with American values.

Mission of Peace Corps in Armenia dates from 1992, after the collapse of the Soviet Union. One of the main directions of the Peace Corps activities is involvement of American volunteers in different activities outside of the U.S territory. Since 1992, over 1.000 volunteers have arrived to Armenia to be involved in various projects, mainly in rural areas. They have a mission to become acquainted with local customs and also to share with local population the values of U.S society. According to Peace Corps officer Hermine Ghazaryan, their organization has three major objectives. They are helping people of interested countries to meet trained men and women, to

help local people to have better understanding concerning America as a country and to promote better understanding about American people.

Like U.S Embassy in Armenia, Peace Corps also seeks to promote better understanding about America through educational programs, especially Teaching English as a Foreign Language program (TEFL). That is realized mainly by American volunteers who spend their time in Armenia living in rural areas and educating local people. The purpose of TEFL project is for the students and teachers to gain access to personal, professional, and academic opportunities through English. Volunteers also conduct after-school language clubs, initiate and implement various camps, create and share resources and lesson plans, organize competitions and many other extra-curricular activities.

As part of the Peace Corps overall success in Armenia, highlighted are hope of a better future to many people in rural communities in Armenia. Many volunteers have formed lifelong friendships with Armenian counterparts, friends, and neighbors. A lot of progress has been made in helping Armenian students improve their English language skills and many students and teachers working with Peace Corps Volunteers have reached quite significant academic heights and are holding key positions in Armenia. Over the past years Peace Corps volunteers have contributed significantly to the development of non-governmental organizations by helping many of them to design and realize various projects and service such as girls empowerment programs and rural development projects.

Part of the research project is a survey questionnaire designed for the students of American University of Armenia. The purpose of it is to determine how U.S educational Soft Power have affected on local people who spend their studies in that institution. During the 2-week period of

time, 15 students from different classes (freshman, junior, and sophomore, senior) have taken part in the survey.

Questions of the survey are following

- In your opinion, the education that you are receiving in this university has negative or positive impact on you as personality?
- Which are the main changes that had taken place in your value system during your studies at this university?
- What important thing has American University of Armenia given to you?
- Would you like to take part in other programs organized by U.S institution?
- How your opinion about U.S has changed during studies at this university?

Results of the survey are following

Q.1 .14 participants out of 15 have indicated that studies in AUA had a positive impact on them as a personality. 1 respondent indicated that it had both negative and positive impact.

Q. 2 As main changes that occurred in the value system of participants, 9 out of 15 have responded that they have started to value liberties and particularly liberty of expression. The rest have mentioned that no changes occurred in their value system.

Q.3 To the question, what important thing has AUA given to you, 14 out of 15 participants have responded that knowledge was the most important achievement that they AUA has helped them to have. 1 participant has responded that AUA gave him liberty and courage.

Q.4 To the question, whether respondents would like to take part in other educational programs funded by US besides studying in AUA, all 15 respondents have given a positive answer

Q.5 To the question, to which direction the opinion of students has changed towards the U.S, 8 participants have responded that it changed to a positive direction, while 7 participants have responded that it did not change to any direction.

Results show that the central objective of the Soft Power realization by U.S is to make local people familiar with U.S value system, customs and culture. Taking into consideration the results of survey questionnaire, as well as opinions of individuals who are key figures of U.S Soft Power implementation in Armenia there is a conclusion that there is an overall success in the work that was realized so far. Officials, who implement Soft Power elements are satisfied with the overall work, realized by institutions which they represent and students who take part in educational programs organized by U.S share the vision of that country. The conclusion is that Soft Power is realized in an effective manner and there are concrete examples of that based on the interviews and survey questionnaire. The fact that Soft Power reaches it's main goals is proven both by the officials of organizations who exercise Soft Power and by beneficiary students who take part in the process.

Limitations and Avenue for Future Research

The research part of this project was realized during two months. Institutions which were picked up for this project ensured the wide specter of educational Soft Power. All American institutions were very responsive and officers were willing to conduct an interview for this project. The only exception was American Councils in Armenia whose officials have refused to conduct a face-to-face interview advising to ask questions via-email. However, there was no adequate response to the email and only very short, sloppy answers were provided.

This research project also has had to include a Liberty Radio of Armenia (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty) which is a United States government-funded broadcasting organization. Liberty Radio was one of the most powerful tools for America during a Cold War era. It had a mission to inform population living in the opposite block to be informed about the West. The

radio remains important for U.S interest even now, when the Cold War is over. Since the research period of the project coincided with the parliament elections campaign and actual elections in Armenia, the interview with any official representing the Liberty Radio has failed to be achieved.

In the current circumstances, the project is concentrated on the educational aspect of U.S Soft Power. It leaves a room for a future research concerning cultural and informational directions of Soft Power. Although some points of other aspects were covered during this project, that was not a systematic and other directions of Soft Power can be covered by conducting future research projects.

This project will be helpful to provide a background for Soft Power analyzes in particular country. The topic can be expanded and new directions of Soft Power which do not exist nowadays and directions which were not analyzed in this project can also be covered in the future.

Due to the scarcity of the time, it was possible to get full answers from only 15 AUA students. For the future projects, it would be efficient to include wider range of students. Also, it would be effective to interview some of the beneficiaries of U.S funded programs in order to spread light on the question concerning which are the concrete changes that U.S system made on them as personalities.

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Appendices

Interview with the head of Public Affairs section of the U.S Embassy in Armenia Mrs. Jacqueline Deley

Question 1

Which is the main mission of Public Affairs Section of the Embassy?

Answer: “The main mission of the Public Affairs section is the same as other sections of the embassy have. It is to advance further relations between U.S and Armenia. However, there are different tools and different types of audiences that various sections of our embassy deal with. For example, one section concentrates on the work with Armenian journalists, local TV or cultural programs etc. Every section of the embassy is in the partnership in the other.”

Question 2

Which are the main educational programs of the Public Affairs department?

Answer: “The main educational programs that our department realizes are free English classes. Without knowledge of English it is hard to move forward. There are different English language

programs which include audience of all age categories. People can attend nearest American Corners and have their free classes of English. For those who do not have an access to this corners due to long distances, there are online programs of English via internet. Besides the English language classes, there are also several exchange programs concentrated on the younger generations. The programs are Fulbright program, Global Ugrad program, SUSI program (Studying United States Institutes) etc. All of those programs compose the educational branch of our Public Affairs section.

Question 3

Does the Embassy make an effort to strengthen the Public Diplomacy in Armenia?

Answer: “Yes, almost all programs that we are realizing can be considered as factors strengthening Public Diplomacy in Armenia. We already have 75 thousand people who visited our 1300 programs. We organize film discussions, various cultural programs, team buildings. All of that actions which are realized under the umbrella of the embassy are strengthening the Public Diplomacy in Armenia.

Question 4

Which you consider the greatest achievements that the Public Affairs Section of the Embassy had in Armenia?

Answer: This question has a two-part answer. There are a lot of achievements that we had so far. I am very proud by the work that we have completed during this year. Things that I would like to highlight as major achievements are girls empowerment, social inclusion and strengthening of civil society. However, there is always more to be done. We have to realize that no society is perfect. We have four priorities and we are looking forward for their further realization. The priorities are deepening ties with Armenia, anti-corruption movement, reinforcement of rule of

law in the country and foreign policy. We also consider grants as an effective tool for the realization of our vision. There has been a huge success in several directions after receiving grants from the embassy and I am happy for that.

Interview with the head of Civic Consent NGO Gegham Sargsyan

Question 1

What is the main mission of NDI in Armenia which is represented by Civic Consent NGO?

Answer: “Starting from 1995 we have active participation in electoral process in Armenia. We cooperate with legislators, organize regular consultations with them and discuss political life in the country. We put a huge effort to strengthen civil society in Armenia since it is one of the roots of successful democratic country. We have also launched several observatory missions who accomplished their tasks during previous elections in Armenia. In general, this is the main specter of our activities”.

Question 2

Which are the greatest achievements that your organization had in Armenia

Answer “We have brought a new electoral culture to Armenia. Our advices and suggestions were successfully implemented by various political parties in Armenia. Door-to-door campaign, transparent decisions inside and outside parties, internal democracies in the parties all those are achievements for which we are very proud. One of our greatest achievements is women involvement in political processes. It is evident that a decade ago women in Armenia were not being considered as politicians. That problem was painful especially in rural areas where women were forced to resign just after being elected because of some mentality issues. Now the situation

is completely different and we are proud to compare women participation percentage with the one in America. We have also encouraged active participation of youth in the decision making process in their parties. We periodically organize training sessions for young wings of political parties and we hope to see them in the future as a new ruling elite of Armenia. We have a goal to achieve a change of generations in Armenian politics and we believe that in the near future it will take place.

Question 3

How well the program realizes the Soft Power of U.S.

Answer: “We try to implement models. We do not try to force someone in Armenia to do something. We just want Western values to coexist with Armenian domestic values. We do not want to import values, we want to pick the best values in Armenia and make them similar with ones existing in the U.S. We also seek a reorganization of some models which in my opinion can improve a performance of various institutions where that models are implemented”.

Question 4

What are the main obstacles that the organization had in Armenia?

Answer: “The major obstacle is the absence of political willingness among several parties and politicians. There is a corruption not only in Armenian economy but also inside several political parties. We want to see concreteness in political life of Armenia. We want Armenia to evaluate in which zone of values it wants to be located. Currently there is a tendency of Armenia cooperating with authoritarian countries and that is not the direction where we want Armenia to move. We also consider as an obstacle a weak checks and balances mechanisms which exist in Armenia. In order to succeed, there should be such strong mechanisms of balances”.

Question 5

Are you satisfied with the work that you have done in previous years, or you are eager to have more achievements?

Answer: “We are satisfied. There are successful examples, concrete cases of success. However, I am not satisfied yet. There is a serious resistance towards changes from the side of leaders. They consider political parties as subjects of their ownership and are not willing to conduct any kinds of reforms”.

Question 6

Which programs you are planning to implement in Armenia in the future?

Answer: “There are several programs that we are planning to implement in the near future. First one is a series of coalition building trainings. Also, we are planning to organize training sessions for youth of Armenian political parties dedicated to the normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey. Those are the main programs to be realized in the future”.

Interview with the Peace Corps representative Hermine Ghazaryan

Question 1

Which is the main mission of US Peace Corps in Armenia?

Answer: “There are several goals that our organization seeks to accomplish. We want to promote world peace and friendship by fulfilling three goals. The mission is to help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women, to help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served and to help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans”.

Question 2

Which are the main programs of the Peace Corps?

Answer: “Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) - Volunteers in the Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) project are teaching English at village and town secondary schools, colleges, and other institutions belonging to RA Ministry of Education and science. All TEFL Volunteers co-teach classes with Armenian counterpart teachers. The purpose of TEFL project is for the students and teachers to gain access to personal, professional, and academic opportunities through English. In addition to co-teaching, Volunteers also conduct after-school language clubs, initiate and implement various camps, create and share resources and lesson plans, organize competitions and many other extra-curricular activities. Also, I would like to speak about community and youth development.

Community and Youth Development- CYD Volunteers work with local non-governmental organizations, community based organization or groups, educational institutions including schools and universities, and youth centers to empower community organizations and youth to build and sustain a strong civil society. Peace Corps Volunteers work in communities throughout the country with the goal to broaden professional, employability and leadership skills and educational, career opportunities for local youth and help the community organizations to achieve their mission”.

Question 3

Which you consider the greatest achievements that the Peace Corps had in Armenia?

Answer: “Peace Corps Volunteers have brought hope of a better future to many people in rural communities in Armenia. Many volunteers have formed lifelong friendships with Armenian counterparts, friends, and neighbors. A lot of progress has been made in helping Armenian students improve their English language skills and many students and teachers working with Peace Corps Volunteers have reached quite significant academic heights and are holding key

positions in Armenia or outside of Armenia now. Over the past years Peace Corps Volunteers have contributed significantly to the development of non-governmental organizations by helping many of them to develop sustainable projects and services, which have benefited their client/target group”.

Completed Survey Questionnaire Results from AUA students

Question 1	Question 2
In your opinion, the education that you are receiving in this university has negative or positive impact on you as personality?	Which are the main changes that had taken place in your value system during your studies at this university?
Respondent 1 Positive	Respondent 1 Value of liberties
Respondent 2 Positive	Respondent 2 Value of liberties
Respondent 3 Positive	Respondent 3 Value of liberties
Respondent 4 Positive	Respondent 4 No Changes
Respondent 5 Positive	Respondent 5 Value of liberties
Respondent 6 Positive	Respondent 6 Value of liberties
Respondent 7 Positive	Respondent 7 No Changes
Respondent 8 Positive	Respondent 8 Value of liberties
Respondent 9 Positive and Negative	Respondent 9 Value of liberties
Respondent 10 Positive	Respondent 10 No Changes
Respondent 11 Positive	Respondent 11 Value of liberties
Respondent 12 Positive	Respondent 12 Value of liberties
Respondent 13 Positive	Respondent 13 No Changes
Respondent 14 Positive	
Respondent 15 Positive	

Question 3	Question 4	Question 5
What important thing has American University of Armenia given to you?	Would you like to take part in other programs organized by U.S institution?	How your opinion about U.S has changed during studies at this university?
Respondent 1 Knowledge	Respondent 1 Yes	Respondent 1 No Change
Respondent 2 Knowledge	Respondent 2 Yes	Respondent 2 No Change
Respondent 3 Knowledge	Respondent 3 Yes	Respondent 3 No Change
Respondent 4 Knowledge	Respondent 4 Yes	Respondent 4 Change to Positive
Respondent 5 Knowledge	Respondent 5 Yes	Respondent 5 Change to Positive
Respondent 6 Knowledge	Respondent 6 Yes	Respondent 6 No Change
Respondent 7 Knowledge	Respondent 7 Yes	Respondent 7 Change to Positive
Respondent 8 Knowledge	Respondent 8 Yes	Respondent 8 Change to Positive
Respondent 9 Knowledge	Respondent 9 Yes	Respondent 9 Change to Positive
Respondent 10 Liberty and Courage	Respondent 10 Yes	Respondent 10 Change to Positive
Respondent 11 Knowledge	Respondent 11 Yes	Respondent 11 No Change
Respondent 12 Knowledge	Respondent 12 Yes	Respondent 12 No Change
Respondent 13 Knowledge	Respondent 13 Yes	Respondent 13 Change to Positive
Respondent 14 Knowledge	Respondent 14 Yes	
Respondent 15 Knowledge	Respondent 15 Yes	