



**REGIONAL FORUM**

ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE UNECE REGION

13-14 MARCH 2024 | PALAIS DES NATIONS | GENEVA

# Rural Connectivity Armenia Project

Bridging the Digital Divide

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# Rural Connectivity Armenia Project

Bridging the Digital Divide



## Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the critical significance of the Internet, reshaping our methods of work, learning, and communication

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36.85% of Armenian population lives in rural areas

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100% mobile connection coverage. Thanks to 4G license buildout obligations, most Armenians have access to 4G networks, but still there is a place to grow

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66.5% broadband network coverage

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## Bridging the Digital Divide in Armenia



- **Equal Opportunities for All Citizens**

- Commitment to providing equal opportunities to every citizen of Armenia.
- Ensuring equitable access to essential digital services.

- **Universal Access to High-Quality Internet**

- Extending high-quality internet services to every corner of Armenia.
- Including remote rural and mountainous areas in the coverage.

# Rural Connectivity Project

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## Pilot Project: Bringing High-Speed Internet to Underserved Rural Areas

### Addressing Connectivity Challenges

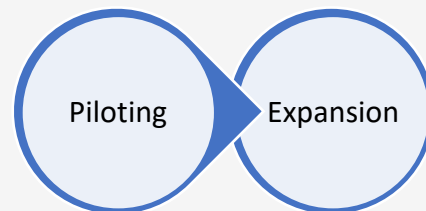
#### Objective of the Pilot Project

- Bringing high-speed internet to underserved rural areas.
- Targeting regions where conventional private sector providers face challenges in meeting telecom service demand.

#### Challenges Faced by Internet Service Providers

- Operating expenses surpass expected revenues over an extended period.
- Difficulty in meeting the growing demand for telecom services.

#### Project phases



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- Shaghap has 230 households
- Population 1023, Territory 6.2sqz
- Agriculture and Animal Husbandry
- Vedi – Shaghap Optical line – 17.9 km



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## Community Benefits of High-Speed Internet Expansion

- **High-speed Fiber Optic Internet for Every Household:**  
Enables access to reliable and fast internet connectivity, facilitating various online activities such as education, work, and entertainment.
- **Expanded Cable TV Options:**  
Access to over 100 TV channels compared to the limited selection previously available, enhancing entertainment choices and cultural exposure.
- **Retention of Young People in the Community:**  
Encourages young individuals to remain within the community by providing essential digital infrastructure and opportunities, reducing migration to urban areas.
- **Stimulation of New Business Ventures:**  
Fosters entrepreneurship and economic growth within the community by providing access to global markets, promoting innovation and creating job opportunities.



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## Benefits for Children

### ➤ Free of charge High-Speed Internet at School

Provides students with equitable access to digital resources and educational materials, regardless of socio-economic status.

### ➤ Establishment of Robotics Laboratory

Offers hands-on learning experiences in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), fostering creativity, problem-solving skills, and innovation among students.

### ➤ Enhanced Remote Learning Opportunities:

Facilitates remote learning and access to educational platforms, enables instructors from other schools to deliver lessons remotely, bridging educational gaps and ensuring continuity in learning.



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## Invaluable Partnership We Made

State Bodies	International Organization	Operators & Local Community Authorities
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Director of the Union of Operator of Armenia Kristine Gyonyan , was awarded a special prize of Connecting the Unconnected champion by the Internet Society for her significant contribution to the establishment and development of community networks.

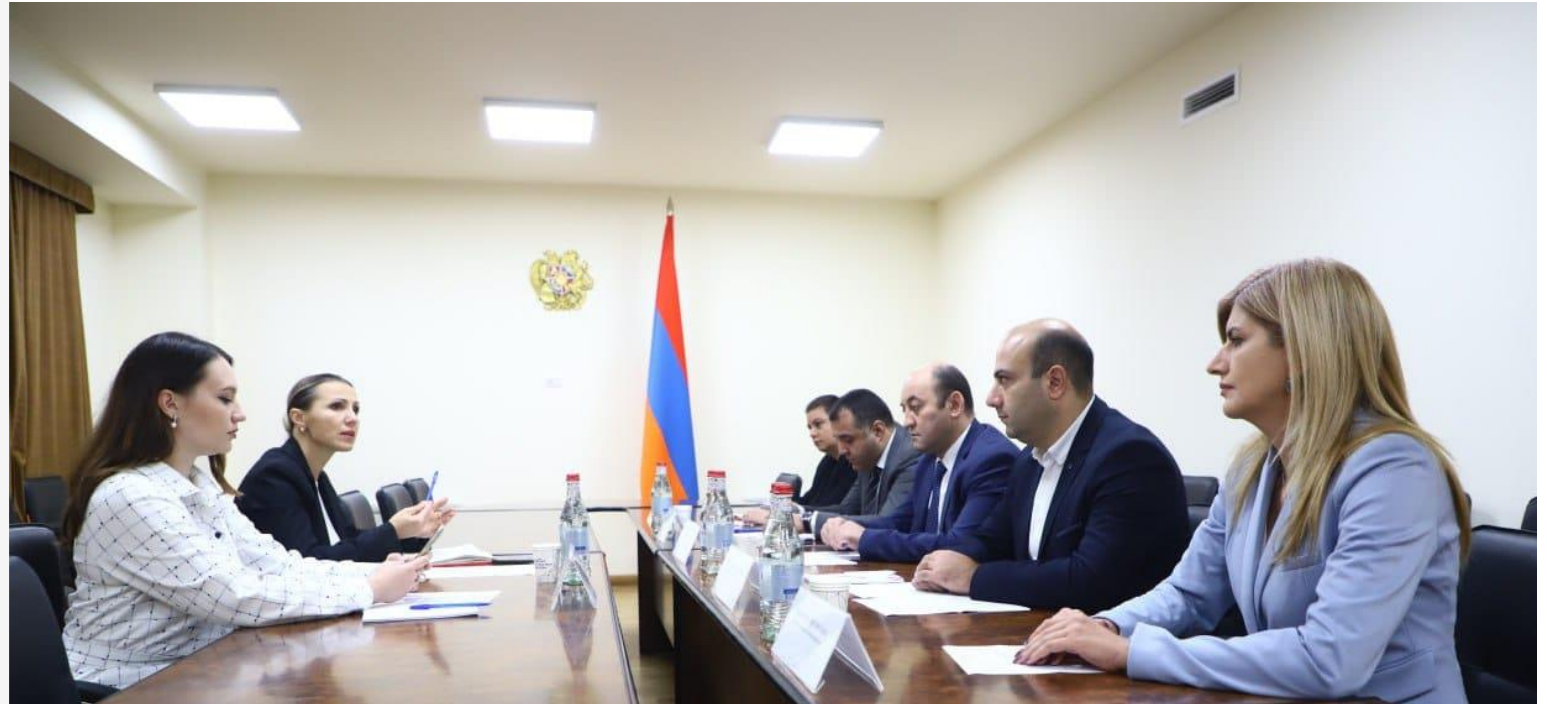


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In 2023, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) signed a project document with the Ministry of High-Tech Industry of Armenia, providing support to expand connectivity to more communities and implement capacity-building activities in the newly connected areas to maximize the impact of high-speed internet.



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## 6 New Communities in Ararat Region

- Zangakatun
- Vardashat
- Urtsalanj
- Lanjar
- Lusashogh
- Lanjanist



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## Capacity Building Activities

- Basic Digital Literacy trainings
- Internet Safety and Security
- Communication and Collaboration Tools
- Media Literacy and Critical Thinking
- Digital Entrepreneurship and Economic Opportunities
- Etc.

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## Partnerships: Key to Success

Robust partnerships essential for project achievements.  
Collaboration with diverse stakeholders drives progress.

## Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals

Direct alignment with Sustainable Development Goals:

Goal 4: Quality Education

Goal 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals

## Supporting Government Vision

Enabling achievement of Armenian Government's broadband coverage target.



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# Thank you!

Kristine Gyonjyan

Director

**Union of Operators of Armenia**

Date 14 | 03 | 2024, Geneva