Report of the Internet Society Armenia Chapter on the first phase of the Community grant “Creation of Internet Availability Center at the Cultural Center of the Armenian Society of Blind and Visually Impaired People”

Phase 1

During the reporting period the following jobs were carried out:
- A contract with a construction company was signed. (See the Contract page1, page 2, page 3). The cost of works was 2,100,000AMD (see the figure on the page 2 of the Contract). It corresponds to $5,110.

According to the contract the company performed the following construction works:
   a. Closing the opening between 2nd and 3rd floor in the entrance room,
   b. Removing wooden boards from the walls,
   c. Replacing floor tiles (about 70 square meters),
   d. Plastering and painting walls and ceilings of the computer and entrance room,
   e. Replacing two doors, one of which is a steel door,
   f. Laying the reliable electrical power to the building - about 200 m,
   g. Replacing three windowsills.

At the end of construction works it appeared that the volume of works exceeded the sum of the contract and an addition to the contract (See Addition to the Contract) was signed for total sum 2,371,950AMD, i.e additional 271,950AMD. It corresponds to $670.
So the total cost of construction works amounted to $5,770.
Final act of construction works was signed on October 31, 2012 (See final act, page 1, 2 and 3)

- 10 computer tables and chairs were purchased.

- Completed the power supply and network cabling.

- Metal and plastic wall for the computer center was ordered and setup.

The stages of construction works and the final results are shown in 12 photos (Jpg files numbered from 1 to 12).
Phase 2

On the second phase of the grant the following works were completed:

- electrical and network cabling for 16 network outlets were done,
- a contract with ISP “Beeline” for one-year Internet connection was signed.
- a glass wall was set up in the corridor thus adding to the Internet Center one more room that serves as a relaxation room.
- 4 computer desks were donated by privates.
- 6 computers were acquired, 2 were donated by the Armenian branch of the American IRD (Internet Relief and Development) organization, and 2 more were donated by Internet Society of Armenia,
- Two «Onix» and one «Pearl» device, scanner and brail printer, as well as a projector was provided by the Ministry of Transport and Communications. One scanner-printer was donated by the “Armenians and sea” organization.
- 10 films with tiflo-commentaries were received from Russian Society of Blinds.
- In January 2013 furniture was received from the Armenian branch of the IRD: cabinets, tables, armchairs, sofa, magazine table, small cabinets as well a drinking water device and air conditioner,
- Within the framework of the grant the Arev program was purchased and installed on 6 computers. The program was developed for blinds by the Yerevan Institute of Mathematical machines. Thus, by the end of January 2013 the establishment of the Internet Center was completed.

Since February 2013 the Center started its operations at full strength. Internet Society of Armenia provided the budget for 3 instructors who ensure the operation of the Center during 7 days of the week.

Ceremony of the opening of the Center took place on April 17. At the opening ceremony the leadership of the Ministry of Social Security and the Armenian Society of Blinds were present. The youth of the House of Culture of Blinds gave a concert. The ceremony is put on the Youtube (http://youtu.be/ETYIrbBNQvs/). Blinds and visually impaired participants were very inspired.

On May 16 the House of Culture and the Internet Center was visited by the first lady of Armenia Ms. Rita Sargsyan, Minister of Culture, Hasmik Poghosyan and famous Armenian writer Zory Balayan. It was the first visit of distinguished guests after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In the lobby of the hall there was an exhibition of works of blinds and the achievements of full blinds on the example of the artist Liza Fittipaldi, sculptor Lina Po, aviator Miles Hilton Barber, alpinist Erik Weyenmayer. The
guests were demonstrated a piece of film “The smell of woman” with tiflo-commentary.

The guests were informed about the problems of blinds.

ISOC AM is continues providing financial support to the Internet center paying salary to trainers, as well as electricity and Internet connection expenses of the Center.

Within the framework of the grant by its own initiative ISOC AM developed a proposal for a complete renovation of the House of Culture of Blinds where estimated the required expenses. It was presented to first Lady of Armenia, Mrs. Rita Sargsyan, during her first visit to the Internet Center.

During her second visit she was accompanied by the President of Armenian Diaspora in Russia, Mr. Ara Abrahamyan, who promised a financial support to the project. Sometime later he donated a minivan for transportation of blinds to the Internet Center and started renovation works in the House.