BE A PART OF ARMENIAN TREE PROJECT'S SPRING PLANTING IN ARMENIA

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By Nancy Kricorian, Writer and Activist, ATP Executive Committee Member , 31 March 2009

As you may have read in our recent Annual Report, ATP is doing great things for the environment in Armenia. ATP planted 460,000 trees last year, trained 539 teachers in our "Plant an Idea, Plant a Tree" curriculum, and expanded our reforestation nursery operations in Margahovit. Mher Sadoyan and the other Yerevan employees are doing truly amazing work at both planting trees and helping to create a citizenry who will be responsible stewards of their forests.

What you might not realize is how important ATP's programs are in providing jobs and financial security for families in Armenia. ATP has over 80 staff in the Yerevan office and three nurseries. There are 400 families in the Getik River Valley with Backyard Nurseries, and there are approximately 100 other workers hired seasonally. If you figure that an average Armenian family has four members, then ATP's programs are helping to support over 2,300 people.

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We need your help to support our spring planting program. Click here to donate now.

The story of Seta Aghajanian (pictured here), a resident of Vanadzor's new Taron District and a seasonal tree planter, gives you an idea of the impact your donations have in Armenia. Seta lives in a one-room apartment with her husband and six children (ranging in age from 8-23). Her husband has been unemployed because of a back injury, her two eldest daughters work--one at a clothing factory and the other in a flower shop--and the youngest are students. The money they received from ATP in 2008 allowed them to purchase a gas heater and paid for their gas and electricity bills through the winter months.

Seta says, "Every seedling I put in the ground brings me joy and hope for the future of my family and for the future of Armenia. I am grateful to ATP for helping the environment and for giving us work that allows my family to pay our utility bills."

As you probably also know, the global economic downturn is hitting Armenia hard. The Armenian government recently devalued the dram under pressure from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, cut spending, and sought millions of dollars in foreign assistance. The impact of this crisis on the working people of Armenia is severe. The devaluation of the dram resulted in a sudden and significant rise in the price of food and other goods, and utilities increases announced by the government took effect on April 1, putting a further strain on household budgets.

When you give to Armenia Tree Project, you are investing in the future of Armenia--the future of its trees and environment and the future of its people. Please give as generously as you can. Click here to donate now.

Working for a sustainable, green, and just future for Armenia,

Nancy Kricorian