

Orran Yerevan – 1st Quarter 2013 Operations Report

The report outlines the Yerevan Orran January – March activities in the following sections:

- General Remarks
- Academic Assistance to Children
- Social Services
- Medical Assistance
- Cultural Enrichment and Activities

1. GENERAL REMARKS

Throughout the quarter, the total number of the daily beneficiaries at Orran was 156 - 144 as shown in the table below.

	January	February	March
Number of children	107	105	98
Number of elderly	49	45	46
Total number	156	150	144

The following changes took place in the Orran food program for the elderly: three needy elderly were included in the program and six left (three because of health problems and three elderly passed away).

Changes also occurred in the number of the Orran children. Within the quarter the program engaged ten more children. All the new children's homes were visited by the Orran team members and the housing conditions were assessed as very bad.

Eighteen children left; seven of which graduated from Orran after turning 16. Four out of recent seven graduates continue their studies at colleges: two study cookery and hairdressing at the Arts College of "Mkhitar Sebastatsi" and two are Medical College students. Another two Orran graduates were provided with training opportunities with the help of Orran and now they are successfully attending courses of food design. One boy is working for a children's café. One of the highlights of the quarter was that one of Orran graduates Anna Petrosyan applied for the voluntary work at Orran and is now enthusiastically volunteering at Junior I Group.

The remaining eleven children left because of different reasons: work (1), financial improvement in the family (2), conflict of schedules/parent decision (4), move (1), discipline (1), and attendance issues (1). Also, one child has been included in his school inclusive education project which provides the child with food, transportation expenses, and psychosocial services; there was, therefore, no more need for him to come to Orran.

In addition to the food program, the children participated in a great number of educational and cultural activities facilitated by Orran staff and volunteers described in the sections below. At the beginning of January, a water pipe explosion on the Orran roof caused serious damages to two classrooms which haven't been used in January - March. Despite the space restraints, the Orran educational department continued its activities without any interruptions except for a 5-day break with Junior II and Middle Group students on March 19-23 because of smallpox incidences.

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2. ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE TO CHILDREN

2.1. Groups and Workshops

Throughout the quarter the Orran academic team facilitated various educational activities for the children and helped them with their school home assignments on different disciplines. However, because of the school schedules, Middle/Senior Group students came at late hours and little work was carried out with them except for a few students who have been actively involved in the handcrafts classes. The table below presents the total number of students in each group and the number of the children participating in the crafts workshops as of March 2013. One child is included in the food program.

	Junior I	Junior II	Middle/Senior
Total number of the children in groups	35	36	26
Participation in the workshops	25	26	13
Makramé/Felt	10	10	4
Woodwork	7	8	4
Pottery	8	8	5

The academic team staff met almost on daily basis to briefly discuss and plan the ongoing activities. The staff kept in touch also with the children's school teachers and parents to monitor their progress. In February, individual meetings were held with parents and *Orran – Parent* agreements were updated.

Throughout the quarter, the children participated in a number of enjoyable initiatives. In January, Junior I Group teacher Astghik Hovhannisyan facilitated discussions dedicated to the 21st anniversary of Armenian Army. As a follow-up to the discussions the children composed letters to Armenian soldiers and the letters were sent by mail to Military Unit # 36534 on January 28, the Armenian Army Day. In their letters the children wrote about the role which a soldier plays in defending and protecting the borders of our country, congratulated the soldiers on the Army Day, expressed gratitude and wished them safe service. The letters were also nicely decorated with the children's drawings. The Orran children were extremely happy when in February they received individual replies to their letters from the soldiers. The head of Military Unit # 36534, G. Gabrielyan, thanked the Orran children for their wishes and mentioned they were all very touched by the children's letters.

In January, the children were also excited to get letters from the AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School students who visited Orran last summer. A pen pal program was then initiated by Manoogian-Demirdjian School student Natasha Khachaturyan. The Orran children prepared their first letters to the US friends and gave them while their visit to Orran. The children were delighted to get replies to their letters by regular mail and enthusiastically answered the letters. The Orran

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children's letters were mailed to US in February and now they look forward to their friends' replies.

The children also continued their active participation in the crafts classes. On March 24, Orran participated in the charitable exhibition sale which was organized by the Union of the Disabled People at Ani Plaza hotel and was devoted to the Women's Month in Armenia. Another highlight of the quarter was that the crafts class students prepared for their favorite festival Easter. With the help of their teachers, they had a nice opportunity to learn more about the ancient traditions and experience them at Orran, such as the celebration of *Barekendan*, last day before Lent, and the ancient tradition of Aklatis, making puppets Aklatis and putting them in the house on the first day of Lent.



Puppet Aklatis made by Orran children

Aklatis, Easter Calendar, is the ritual of attaching seven feathers to the shoots of an onion and removing one feather at the end of each fast week. Aklatis as a symbol of good luck was put since the first day of Lent.

Here are a few more handmade Easter Symbols by Orran children.



2.2 Volunteers

The quarter was characterized by the active engagement of volunteers who helped the children with home assignments and different educational activities. The table below presents the number of volunteers and the total hours of voluntary service performed each month.

	January	February	March
Number of volunteers	14	10	15
Total hours of voluntary service	444	448	431

Here are a few pictures of volunteers working with the children at Orran.

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Volunteer Tsovinar Ghazaryan teaching an Armenian National Dance



Learning a song under beautiful violin music with Mkhitaryan Monika and Kirakosyan Ani



Volunteer Haik Sahakian playing guitar for Junior Group children



Junior group kids making cards for the International Women's Day with volunteer Anna Petrosyan, Orran newly graduate

3. SOCIAL SERVICES

Social worker Marina Ghazaryan facilitated a number of visits and meetings and provided assistance to Orran beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Marina also worked on identifying new beneficiaries and helping them prepare all the necessary papers required for their enrollment in the Orran programs. In addition, she followed up on the daily attendance of the beneficiaries, regularly updated the lists of beneficiaries and contacted the absentees. The table below summarizes the overall social work statistics of the quarter.

Also, in March all the Orran children received a pair of walking shoes donated to Orran by UNISON NGO for Support of People with Special Needs.

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	January	February	March
Advice to/meeting with Orran families	32	45	20
School visits	1	0	3
Meeting and visits with new families	11	0	4
Home visits with Orran families	0	2	6
Meetings with other institutions for information and coordination	15	17	14

Social advice to walk-ins	11	6	8
Telephone contacts with various persons	90	130	120

4. MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Orran Doctor Nadejda Arakelova worked on the following activities:

- performed prophylactic medical check-ups of the children;
- gave medical consultations to the children and elderly;
- performed regular hygiene check-ups of the kids;
- gave individual sessions on health/hygiene issues to the kids and their parents;
- insured the good quality of the food and overall cleanliness in the kitchen and in the whole building.
- provided the children with soaps and toothbrush each month.

5. CULTURAL ENRICHMENT and ACTIVITIES

Throughout the quarter the children enjoyed a number of activities and events. Below are a few fun days of the quarter.

On January 18, Orran Junior I and II group children accompanied by staff and a few older children walked from Orran to Gabriel Sundukyan National Theatre to watch Yogu Magic show organized by diary company *Ashtarak Kat*. At the end of the show the children also received presents prepared by *Ashtarak Kat*. The Orran children enjoyed the walk, the show and the presents. Many thanks to *Ashtarak Kat* for the enjoyable day.

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The children were also brainstormed on what heroes of the show they liked most and the importance of being kind and generous.

The Characters of the Yogu Magic Show

On January 26, Orran celebrated Saint Sargis – the holiday of lovers in Armenia when the blessing of the youth takes place. The children enjoyed a beautifully decorated delicious cake and fruits, dancing and singing with the guests: the students of a few Yerevan secondary schools.

Celebration of Love at Orran



On January 26, the Middle Group students accompanied by Orran receptionist Liana Bareghamyan went to Moscow Cinema to watch “Happy New Year, Moms” with Alain Delon. The children were very impressed, shared their opinions with each other and actively participated in the discussion on the role of Mother in our life.

On February 9, *Barekendan*, similar to Mardi Gras, the last day before Lent starts, was celebrated at Orran. The holiday celebration traditionally includes wearing masks, playing different games, eating and drinking merrily before fasting. The handcraft class students together with pottery teacher Ernest Voskanyan prepared the masks for the day. Another highlight of the day was that over 30 students of Echmiadzin Secondary school # 1 and their teachers visited Orran and joined the Orran children’ celebration of Barekendan. The guests came with many delicious and sweet presents for the children. They had a tour of Orran and were impressed by the Orran activities.

Here are two videos of the children’s performance at *Barekendan*:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FPrIFq-zcXY;>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dkvpKdWIWCg.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dkvpKdWIWCg)

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Celebration of Barekenden at Orran



On March 24, Orran participated in the charitable exhibition sale which was organized by the Union of the Disabled People at Ani Plaza hotel

Exhibition Sale at Ani Plaza Hotel

