



From Challenges to Achievements: Strengthening the Cochlear Implant Community in Armenia.

Our path toward building a cochlear implant community began with determination, grew through challenges, and flourished through partnership. This is the story of how individual struggles became collective strength.

First Attempts

1

2015 - Edgar's Initiative

Edgar Nersisyan, a CI user himself, founded an NGO and created a website. Unfortunately, the initiative didn't progress.

2

Second Attempt

Naira Manukyan (audiologist, CI parent) and Lusine co-founded "Hear and Speak - Supporting Parents" NGO.

3

Website Launch

Thanks to Naira's efforts, we launched hearandspeak.am to serve our community.



First Attempts

2015

Small Community

Few surgeries done in Armenia, limited parental community to support the initiative.

Vulnerable Parents

No post-surgery support available. Discussions often turned into protests rather than solutions.

Limited Resources

Edgar worked alone with no active parents' movement. Lusine was busy with two young children.

Opposition from parents

Discussions often became protests rather than progress

First Attempts

2025



Growing Community

~260 families now, with active mothers ready to engage and support each other.



State Support

Government support now available for assistive devices, creating new opportunities.



New Challenges

Facing device replacement issues and advocacy needs. Found like-minded allies in Naira and Lusine.

A Personal Story That Changed Everything

The Incident

June 2025:
Daughter's
hearing
processor was
banned during
university
entrance exam
despite medical
documentation.

The Action

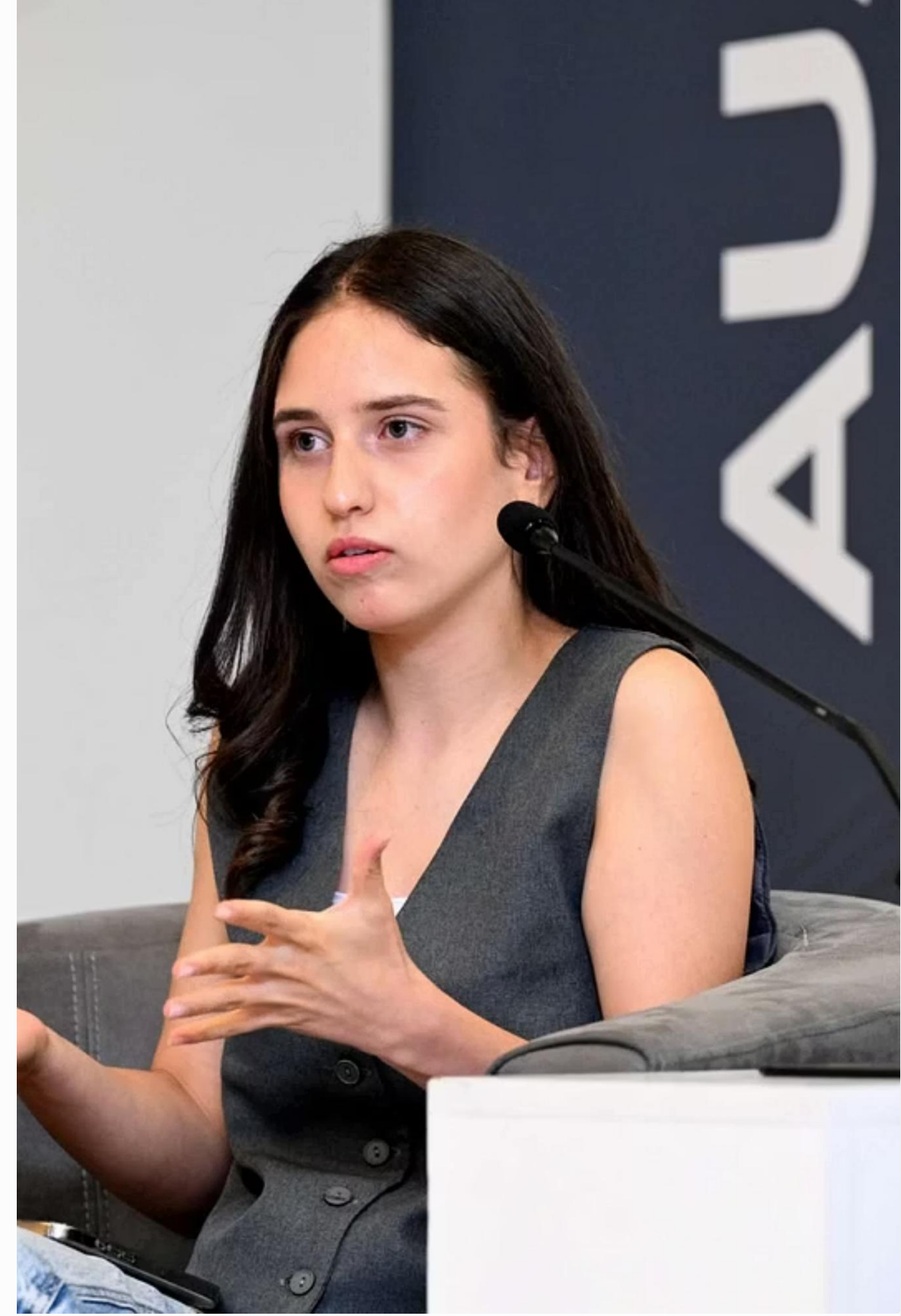
Escalated to
ATC, filed
complaint,
engaged
Ministry and
MPs. Media
attention
followed.

Solution

The case was
resolved with
new Ministry
guidelines for
exam centers
before the
next exam
cycle.

Media Coverage

facebook.com/reel/2369509126777041/?s=single_unit



Key Lessons



Awareness Prevents Discrimination

Lack of understanding leads to unfair treatment of people with hearing devices.



Advocacy Creates Real Change

Speaking up transforms both policy and practice for future generations.



Parents' Voices Are Essential

Our experiences drive meaningful progress in education and rights protection.

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Կրթության առանձնահատուկ պայմանների կարիք ունեցող դիմորդներին:

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Learning from Georgia

1

Meeting Ekaterine Tortladze

Connected with experienced advocate from Georgia who shared valuable insights.

2

Strategic Planning

Developed clear role division: Lusine focuses on partnerships, Naira works directly with parents.

Official Recognition

Meeting with the Member of the National Assembly Zaruhi Batoyan

1

Device Upgrades

Discussed challenges families face when cochlear implant technology needs updating.

2

Tax Exemptions

Advocated for tax relief on cochlear implant parts and accessories.

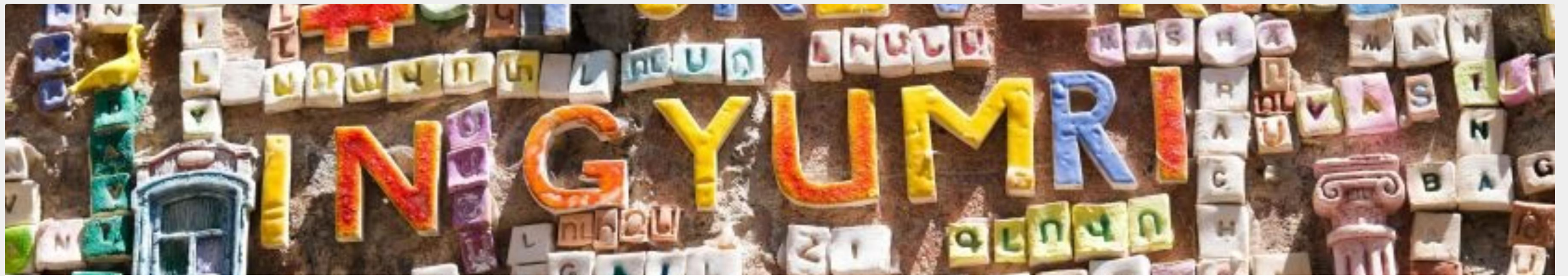
3

Education Access

Addressed inclusive education needs and university accessibility issues.

Result: Agreement for ongoing cooperation in disability-related legislation.





Making Our Voices Heard

Agate Rights Defense Center NGO

Collaborated on the Inclusion Wall initiative in Gyumri, featuring messages on equality and inclusion.

Collected 20+ parent messages, with 5 selected for permanent installation tiles.

Community Celebration

November 2025 installation ceremony brought together families and children to celebrate our shared mission.



Voices of Hope

"Hear me, my voice matters"

"Everyone's voice must be heard"

"This is another universe... Hold my hand tight"

"Hearing is a bridge between people"

"Hear me as I hear you – listen with your heart"

These messages from our community represent the heart of our mission: ensuring every voice is heard and valued.

People Who are by Our Side



Our Doctors and
Surdopedagogues

Salpy Akaragian
Armenian Medical Found



Monika Lehnhardt
Lehnhardt Foundation

Akira Ishiyama
Surgeon



Special Thanks to All Our Parents