



Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR), Inc.

# Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR), Inc. 2006 Annual Report

Prepared by Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR), Inc.

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## Message from the National President

December 27, 2007

Dear SOAR Supporters:

Our accomplishments through 2006 have been nothing short of amazing! While at the time of our founding I knew that there was no single organization that focused exclusively on providing humanitarian relief to orphaned children living in Armenia, I was unsure how SOAR would be received. But the feedback I received throughout our first year confirmed my belief that this was a much needed organization that could provide a valuable service to what I believe is the most vulnerable population of Armenian youth. While all new organizations have growing pains, SOAR made a virtually seamless transition from pipedream to a fully functioning 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that has been able to galvanize support from across the United States.

What I never expected was how SOAR would become a repository of information for persons interested in adopting from Armenia. While SOAR neither facilitates adoptions or provides adoption services, my wife Erica and I know firsthand the process for adopting in Armenia. We lived through what was both an exciting and frustrating process that culminated in the adoption of our daughter Liliana. Since SOAR began, I have fielded dozens of phone calls from prospective parents at various stages of adopting in Armenia. It has been my pleasure to speak to them about necessary steps, what can be expected throughout the process, and the emotions that will inevitably evolve as one journeys through a path of adoption. That SOAR can offer some measure of support to others looking to provide a new life to an Armenian child is immensely satisfying.

As we put 2006 to rest, I am particularly excited about our prospects for 2007, for two reasons. First, I am anxious to see how our efforts increased from our first to second years. As 2007 will be our first full year in existence, I anticipate tremendous growth. Second, I would like to see SOAR expand. Specifically, I would like to establish one chapter in 2007 that will ultimately springboard to many others in 2008 and beyond. While the national board of directors is located in Philadelphia, PA, our efforts can be significantly more fruitful with help from other Armenian communities across the country.

In conclusion, let me offer my heartfelt thanks to everyone who has made this dream a reality – our tireless board members, our Partners in Armenia, and, most importantly, our generous supporters. Your unwavering financial and emotional support is greatly appreciated, and we thank you for a fantastic 2006!

Sincerely,

George S. Yacoubian, Jr., J.D., Ph.D.,  
President

## Introduction

Although Armenia has attempted to overcome the economic crisis that resulted from its independence in 1991, it remains among the poorest countries in the world. Nearly 50% of the population lives in poverty<sup>1</sup> and unemployment is as high as 30%. Since 1991, approximately 25% of the population has emigrated to pursue better economic opportunities. A disproportionately high percentage of these emigrants have been the male heads of families, which has left thousands of mothers to be the sole caregivers for their children. Government expenditures on social services remain very low and offer little in the way of a safety net. A vulnerability assessment undertaken by the World Food Program found that in 4 Armenian marzes (states), 70-80% of households have inadequate access to food, consuming 35% below the national average of 2,200 kilo calories per person per day.

Although there have been signs of economic growth in the capital city of Yerevan, the situation remains bleak throughout the remainder of the country. The disparity between the rich and poor has taken a sharp increase since independence, with the benefits of recent economic growth going to a relatively few wealthy people. Poverty in Armenia is rooted in both external and internal factors, including widespread government corruption, poor state governance, conflict with Azerbaijan over the Karabagh territory, economic blockades by Turkey and Azerbaijan, loss of economic links after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and an outdated technological base and labor force.

Children in Armenia are more vulnerable to the consequences of poverty than any other age or social group. The 2000 Armenia Demographic and Health Survey reported that, in some regions, nearly 50% of children under the age of 5 are stunted because of poor nutrition. Poverty in Armenia has also resulted in ever increasing numbers of orphans, institutionalized children, and children living and working on the streets. There are 11,000 otherwise healthy children committed to 53 public boarding schools and more than 1,500 children living in the 15 state- and privately-funded orphanages.

The orphan population in Armenia is different than in the United States. In Armenia, there are both “natural” and “social” orphans. Natural orphans have no mother or father. In contrast, social orphans have living parents that are unable or unwilling to care for them. The state orphanages are typically underfunded, poorly managed, in disrepair, and understaffed. Although the children receive basic material and nutritional support, most institutions fail to care for the emotional, educational, spiritual, and psychological well-being of the children. Moreover, orphans and institutionalized children in Armenia are at very high risk of being trafficked, abused, falling into prostitution, and/or coming into conflict with the law. It is because the orphaned children in Armenia are at very high risk of physical deterioration and emotional despair that the Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR), Inc. was created.

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<sup>1</sup> See [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org).

## Creation and Management

George S. Yacoubian, Jr., and his wife Erica, SOAR founders, were married on December 31, 2004. During their engagement, they discussed the possibility of adopting a baby, regardless of whether they were able to have children of their own. Wanting to give an orphaned child in Armenia the opportunity for a new life, they decided to adopt a baby in the spring of 2005.

Throughout 2005, they went through “home study” and various levels of domestic governmental approval. In July 2005, they traveled to Armenia to visit a summer camp hosted by the Our Lady of Armenia Orphanage. While in Armenia, they saw Liliana for the first time. They submitted their dossier to the Armenian government in the fall of 2005, received their preliminary approval in December 2005, and received their final approval in March 2006. They brought Liliana home on April 23, 2006.

After observing the conditions of the orphanages in Armenia, George and Erica created SOAR, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to providing humanitarian relief to orphaned children living in Armenia. SOAR’s mission is to distribute much needed food, clothing, medicine, educational supplies, and other essential resources to orphanages throughout Armenia. Between October 2005 and May 2006, the necessary corporate documents were filed, the 501(c)(3) tax exempt status was approved, preliminary research was conducted, an experienced and talented national Board of Directors was assembled, a trustworthy network of Partners in Armenia was established to assist with distributions, and the Web site ([www.soar-us.org](http://www.soar-us.org)) was launched.

SOAR has no paid employees, and the National Board of Directors<sup>2</sup> and Partners in Armenia volunteer their time. Below are the names of these persons who are, unquestionably, the lifeblood of this organization.

### **National Board of Directors:**

**George S. Yacoubian, Jr., J.D., Ph.D. (President):** George S. Yacoubian, Jr. has a Master’s Degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice, a Ph.D. in Criminal Justice Management, and a J.D. from the Rutgers University School of Law. He is currently pursuing an LL.M. in Transnational Law from the Temple University School of Law. He is an Assistant District Attorney with the Philadelphia Office of the District Attorney, a Senior Associate with ICF International in Fairfax, VA, and Core Faculty with the Criminal Justice Institute of Nova Southeastern University. He and his wife Erica live in Philadelphia, PA, and adopted a baby girl (Liliana) from Armenia in April 2006. They conceived of the idea of SOAR during a visit to Elen Orphanage in the summer of 2005.

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<sup>2</sup> The National Board members identified in this report reflect current Board members. Three persons who served on the National Board of Directors in 2006 (Joseph Carraro, Amy Croot, and Kim Yacoubian) are no longer affiliated with the organization.

**Hagop Keshishian, P.E. (Vice-President):** Hagop Keshishian, PE has a Bachelor of Science Degree from Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA. He holds a Professional Engineer License in the States of Pennsylvania and New Jersey and is a New Jersey Certified Municipal Engineer. Currently Hagop performs engineering and project management services for a construction company and a development company in Philadelphia. Hagop is a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and the National Society of Professional Engineers. Hagop presently resides in Abington, PA.

**George S. Yacoubian (Treasurer):** George S. Yacoubian is a 1959 graduate of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science. For many years he owned and operated a retail pharmacy, retiring in 1999. For more than 40 years he has been an active member of a panoply of service organizations, including the Armenian Assembly, the Armenian General Benevolent Union, the Armenian Students' Association, and the Knights of Vartan. He is also a past president of the Haverford Club of Rotary International. He and his wife Margaret live in Broomall, PA.

**Susan Harootunian (Secretary):** Susan Harootunian earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in both Elementary and Special Education at Holy Family University and is certified to teach in Pennsylvania. She has taught children of all ages and abilities and most recently worked as an Early Intervention teacher with Easter Seals. In August of 2005, Susan traveled to Armenia to adopt and bring home her baby daughter, Anna. She hopes that her efforts with SOAR will help improve the quality of life for the many children left behind. Currently, Susan devotes her time to being a full time mom. She and her husband Paul live in West Chester, PA with their two children, Paul and Anna.

**Tanya M. Bardakjian, M.S.:** Tanya M. Bardakjian has a Master of Science degree in genetic counseling. She is Board Certified by the American Board of Genetic Counselors. She practices at Albert Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia, PA and is the coordinator of the anophthalmia genetic research program. She has authored many scientific publications in the field of Genetics. She is a clinical supervisor for genetic counseling students from Arcadia University and lectures to medical students and medical residents regularly. She, her husband and two daughters live in Media, PA.

**Jack E. Kazanjian, M.D.:** Jack E. Kazanjian, D.O., earned a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from Bucknell University and his medical degree, in 1998, from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) in Philadelphia, PA. He completed his residency in orthopedic surgery at PCOM's affiliated hospitals and a fellowship in sports medicine and adult reconstruction at The Hughston Clinic in Columbus, GA. Dr. Kazanjian is board certified in orthopedic surgery and currently resides and practices in Delaware County, PA. A former college athlete, he is a member of several professional societies and oversees all SOAR activities related to medicine and the delivery of medical services.

**Arousiag Keshishian, Esq.:** Arousiag Keshishian, Esq. earned Political Science and Juris Doctor degrees from Temple University in Philadelphia, PA. Currently, Arousiag devotes her energies to her solo practice, where she concentrates on Immigration and Nationality Law. Arousiag has chosen the immigration practice because of her multi-language background. She finds this area of the law rewarding because of the diversified international population she interacts with on a daily basis. In her practice she handles all family, corporate/business and general immigration matters. Among other organizations, Arousiag is a member of the Armenian Bar Association and the American Immigration Lawyers Association. She is admitted to practice in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Arousiag is excited about using her background to assist SOAR in meeting their goals while serving in the best interest of the orphaned children in Armenia.

**Asadur Minasian:** Asadur Minasian earned a Bachelors Degree in Criminal Justice and Sociology with a Minor in Pre-Law from Widener University. After graduating from Widener, he was offered a position at MBNA America as a Fraud Investigator. Asadur was responsible for investigating fraudulent activities on customer accounts. After 4 years with MBNA, Asadur wanted to do what he truly loved – work with Art and Custom Framing. He established Masterpieces Fine Art & Custom Framing, Inc. in 2002 and is currently the President of the company. Asadur recognizes that many Armenians, young and old, are great artists and displays art directly from Armenia. He is currently a member of the Professional Picture Framers Association and resides in Newtown Square with his wife Arpy and 3 children – Vahe, Sareen, and Nare.

**Erica Yacoubian:** Erica Yacoubian has a Masters Degree in Physical Therapy from the University of Scranton and is licensed to practice in Pennsylvania. She currently works for a leading pharmaceutical company as a District Sales Manager. She and her husband George live in Philadelphia, PA, and adopted a baby girl from Armenia in the spring of 2006. They conceived of the idea for SOAR during a visit to Armenia in the summer of 2005 when they observed the conditions of the various orphanages. She believes that the efforts around SOAR can go a long way toward helping these underprivileged children in Armenia.

### **Partners in Armenia:**

**Davit Avanesyan:** Davit Avanesyan attended Khachik Dashtents School between 1993 and 2003. He is currently an undergraduate student in the Department of Management at the State Institute of Economy. Davit is fluent in Armenian and English.

**Vartuhi Baloyan, M.A.:** Vartuhi Baloyan has a Master's Degree in English, graduating from the Gyumri State Pedagogic Institute (Department of Foreign Languages) in Gyumri, Armenia, in June 2005. She currently holds the position of administrative assistant with the Our Lady of Armenia Center. A privately-funded orphanage in Gyumri, the Our Lady of Armenia Center is operated by the Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, a religious order of nuns established in 1847 in Constantinople. Vartuhi is fluent in Armenian, Russian, and English.

**Siranush Hovhannisyan:** Siranush Hovhannisyan is an Armenian citizen, living in Yerevan. She has a degree in English and is a self employed interpreter, tour guide, and facilitator. She has been engaged as an interpreter and local consultant on many public administration reform projects in Armenia funded by the Government of the United Kingdom. The projects included the reorganization of the President's Office, the National Assembly, the Prime Minister's Office, and the Civil Service. She has a particular interest in the children in the orphanages of Armenia.

**Moses V. Sahakian, M.B.A./M.I.M.:** Moses V. Sahakian was born and raised in Beirut, Lebanon. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in international business from Woodbury University in 1978 and a Master's Degree in International Management (M.I.M) in 1979 from the American Graduate School of International Business. In 1980, he earned an M.B.A. from the Breech School of Business at Drury College in 1980. Moses has served as an Account Executive for Royal Business Machines and as the Vice-President of Marketing of Peclar Corporation. Since 2002, he has served as the Chief Operating Office of Bedian International, currently living in Stepanakert. He is responsible for running the operations in Armenia and Karabagh.

**Sr. Arousiag Sajonian:** Sr. Arousiag Sajonian has been the Superior of the Our Lady of Armenia Center in Gyumri, Armenia, since September 1990. The Our Lady of Armenia Center was established by the Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, a religious order of nuns established in 1847 to educate Armenian youth. She was the principal of the Armenian Sisters Academy in Radnor, PA, between September 1967 and June 1986. Sr. Arousiag earned a Bachelor's Degree from Cabrini College in Radnor, PA, in 1967 and a Master's Degree in Education from Villanova University in Villanova, PA, in 1973. She is proficient in several languages, including Armenian, English, French, and Italian.



## Orphanage Summaries

There are 15 orphanages in Armenia. Between February and April 2006, George, Erica, and several of SOAR's Partners in Armenia met with the orphanage directors to inform them of SOAR's creation and to identify their most pressing needs. Since then, our Partners in Armenia have kept in regular contact with the orphanage directors to maintain a current list of needs. A description of each and a summary of their needs are presented below.

**Children's Home of Gyumri** (Mrs. Ruzann Avagyan, Director) is a state-funded orphanage in Gyumri, housing approximately 105 mentally and physically handicapped children 6 years old and younger. Its primary needs are beds and mattresses, closets, disposable diapers and other baby supplies, and over-the-counter (OTC) medications. Children's Home would also like to build an addition to the facility in 2008. No funding has yet been secured.

**Elen Orphanage** (Drs. Mher and Janna Yengibaryan, Directors) is a privately-funded orphanage in Massis, housing approximately 10 healthy infants 4 years old and under. Elen's primary needs are a new gas heating system, the construction of a parent suite (to provide quarters for adopting parents), disposable diapers and other baby supplies, bottled water or a water filtering system, and OTC medications.

**Gavar Orphanage** (Mr. Nikolay Nalbandyan, Director) is a state-funded orphanage in Gavar, housing approximately 115 healthy children between the ages of 3 and 18. Gavar's primary needs are clothes (particularly shoes), hot water heaters for the bathrooms, washing machine detergent, hand soap/shampoo, and OTC medications.

**Hadug Tibi Orphanage** (Mrs. Hasmig Mgdrtchyan, Director) is a state-funded orphanage in Yerevan, housing approximately 83 healthy and handicapped children up to 8 years of age. Hadug Tibi's primary needs are wardrobes, classroom desks and chairs, beds, mattresses, closets, and kitchen appliances.

**Houys Orphanage** (Mr. Ruben Markosyan, Director) is a state-funded orphanage in Gyumri, housing approximately 80 healthy children between the ages of 4 and 18. Its primary needs are wardrobes, classroom desks and chairs, and books for the library.

**Kharberd Orphanage** (Mr. Harutyun Balasanyan, Director) is a state-funded orphanage in Kharberd, housing approximately 240 mentally and physically handicapped children between the ages of 6 and 18. Kharberd's primary needs are physical therapy equipment, disposable diapers and other infant supplies, and renovations to the restrooms throughout the facility.

**Nork Orphanage** (Mrs. Liana Karapetyan, Director) is a state-funded orphanage in Yerevan, housing approximately 80 healthy children 6 years old and younger. Nork's primary needs are OTC and prescription medications, comforters, fitted sheets, mattress pads, changing table pads, and disposable diapers and other infant supplies.

**Nubarashen** (Mr. Merouj Yenkibarian, Director) is a state-funded, special boarding school in Yerevan, housing approximately 105 mentally and physically handicapped children between 7 and 18 years of age. Nubarashen's primary needs are washing machines and dryers, notebooks, beds, linens, blankets, and kitchen appliances.

**Our Lady of Armenia Center** (Sr. Arousiag Sajonian, Director) is a privately-funded orphanage in Gyumri housing children between the ages of 6 and 18. The Our Lady of Armenia Center is operated by the Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, a religious order of nuns established in 1847. The Sisters also operate the Our Lady of Armenia Summer Camp in Tsaghgazor, a mountain retreat in northeast Armenia. The Center's primary needs are new kitchen appliances, washers and dryers, OTC medications, renovation to a play room, and desks and chairs. In addition, they need assistance with their annual summer camp, which costs approximately \$100,000 a year.

**Sisters of Charity Orphanage** (Sr. Anna Marie Vanlalruati, Director) is a privately-funded orphanage in Spitak, housing approximately 33 mentally and physically handicapped children. There are no age limitations. The Sisters of Charity is a Catholic religious order established in 1950 by Nobel Peace Prize winner Mother Teresa to tend to "the poorest of the poor." Its primary needs are food, soap, shampoo, and OTC medications.

**SOS Children's Village** (Mr. Armen Ayvazyan, Director) is an international organization that provides a new home for children who have lost their parents or who for other reasons can no longer live with their parents (e.g., because the parents have abandoned their children, are alcoholics, or are in prison). SOS Children's Village, located in Abovyan, houses approximately 80 healthy children under the age of 15. When the children turn 15, they move to one of three SOS centers in Yerevan, where they remain until age 20. Its primary needs are school supplies, shoes, and assistance with the construction of an indoor recreation hall.

**Trchoonian Home** (Mrs. Sonya Simonyan, Director) is a privately-funded orphanage in Gyumri, housing approximately 60 intellectually gifted children between the ages of 3 and 12. Trchoonian Home's primary needs are OTC and prescription medications, rugs for their indoor playroom, and an outdoor basketball/tennis court.

**Vanadzor Orphanage** (Mr. Arshalouys Haroutounian, Director) is a privately-funded orphanage in Vanadzor, housing approximately 110 healthy children 18 years of age and under. Vanadzor's primary needs are new shower facilities, beds, wardrobes, renovations to all doors and floors, OTC and prescription medications, and new kitchen appliances.

**Vardashen** (Mrs. Larisa Sargsyan, Director) is a state-funded, special boarding school in Yerevan, housing approximately 83 healthy children who "exhibit socially dangerous behavior" between the ages of 6 and 18. Vardashen's primary needs are OTC medications, tables and chairs for the cafeteria, beds, linens, and kitchen appliances.

**Zadik Orphanage** (Mr. Ashot Mnatsakanyan, Director) is a state-funded orphanage in Yerevan, housing approximately 138 healthy children between the ages of 6 and 18. After the age of 18, the children have the option of moving to Rainbow House or a farming village in Arzni. Rainbow House is sustained, in part, by handcrafting greeting cards, which are sold throughout Armenia. The farming village is approximately 15 kilometers from the orphanage. Zadik's primary needs are clothes (especially shoes), OTC and prescription medications, kitchen appliances, and assistance with the transitional residences.

## Mechanisms of Assistance

SOAR has a variety of mechanisms in place through which assistance is provided to the orphanages. In alphabetical order, they are:

### **Balik-Jan Project:**

The Balik-Jan Project brings warmth, love, and comfort to the orphaned children in Armenia. Balik-Jan Project volunteers knit, crochet, and sew infant, toddler and children's clothes. The handmade items are then donated to Armenia's orphanages. There are no rules, membership dues, donation quotas, or obligations.

The following items can be made in all children's sizes – booties, hats/bonnets, dresses, sweaters, ponchos, socks, mittens, scarves, and blankets. Persons interested in becoming a Balik-Jan volunteer can contact Anna A. Turcotte at [BalikJan@soar-us.org](mailto:BalikJan@soar-us.org). All items can be shipped to the following address:

George S. Yacoubian, Jr.  
c/o SOAR, Inc.  
487 Paxon Hollow Road  
Broomall, PA 19008  
USA

### **Donation of Goods:**

Throughout the year, SOAR held various drives to accept donations of goods for shipment to the orphanages of Armenia. These drives were advertised on our Web site and occurred in various venues across the United States. The following is a non-exhaustive list of items of items we shipped to Armenia in 2006: baby supplies (e.g., bumpers and changing table pads) Band-Aids; bath towels; bedding (for cribs and twin beds); blankets; books; new clothing (infants through young adult)<sup>3</sup>; diapers; games; hair products (combs and brushes); musical items (e.g., CDs and radios); OTC medications (e.g., Tylenol and vitamins); personal hygiene products (e.g., soap and shampoo); shoes; and, umbrellas. SOAR only accepts certain products (e.g., Band-Aids, diapers, and hairbrushes) if they are in their original sealed containers. All items can be shipped to the following address:

George S. Yacoubian, Jr.  
c/o SOAR, Inc.  
487 Paxon Hollow Road  
Broomall, PA 19008  
USA

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<sup>3</sup> We no longer accept donations of used clothing. All donations of clothes must be new.

**Financial Donations:**

All cash donations made to SOAR are tax deductible. There are two methods by which donations can be made: 1) by check; and 2) through our on-line donation system ([www.soar-us.org/donate.html](http://www.soar-us.org/donate.html)). All check donations are acknowledged by mail for tax purposes. Checks should be made out to the Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief, Inc. and mailed to the following address:

Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR), Inc.  
P.O. Box 537  
Berwyn, PA 19312-0537  
USA

**Special Gifts Program:**

In addition to our conventional method of financial donations, SOAR offers a Special Gifts Program. This Program includes bequests, charitable gift annuities, charitable lead trusts, charitable remainder trusts, donor-advised funds, endowments, in lieu of flowers, retained life estates, scholarships, and wealth replacement trusts. If you would like more information about our Special Gifts Program, please contact George S. Yacoubian, Jr., at (866) 904-5535 or by email at [gyacoubian@soar-us.org](mailto:gyacoubian@soar-us.org).

## Shipping and Distribution

### Protocol

SOAR assists the orphanages through **3 primary mechanisms**. First, we work with for-profit corporations (e.g., Hasbro) to provide donations of specific products. SOAR receives these goods in the United States and ships them to Armenia via an airlift provided by the United Armenia Fund (UAF). As a recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, SOAR is permitted to use the services of UAF free of charge. The airlift departs from John F. Kennedy (JFK) International Airport in New York, NY, approximately every 2 months. Moreover, the truck we use to take our items to JFK is provided free of charge by Mr. and Mrs. Vaughn Hoplamazian of Bargain Rental (Broomall, PA). As such, there are minimal costs associated with our shipments to Armenia.

UAF informs us of the date of arrival in Armenia approximately one week in advance. We then notify our Partners in Armenia who arrange for picking up the goods from the airport in Yerevan. Our Partners in Armenia receive the goods and make all distributions as determined by the National Board of Directors.

Second, we receive goods (e.g., new clothing) from donors across the United States and ship them to Armenia via UAF.

Third, we receive cash donations to purchase goods and services for the orphanages. Some of these products are purchased outside of Armenia and shipped to our Partners. Most of the products, however, are purchased *in* Armenia. This method of procurement serves the dual role of satisfying the orphanages' needs while simultaneously providing a much needed boost to the Armenian economy. Our Partners are responsible for either receiving the goods purchased by SOAR or for purchasing the items/services for SOAR and subsequently making the distributions.

### Quality Control

SOAR has a **strict quality control protocol** to assure that all donations reach the intended recipients. This protocol has five primary steps:

- First, **we rarely make cash distributions directly to the orphanages**. Rather, those goods/services that can be procured in Armenia are purchased by our Partners and distributed directly to the orphanages.
- Second, we implement **chain of custody procedures** for any goods or services distributed to the orphanages. This assures us that these items have been received by the orphanages in the exact quantity intended. These chain of custody procedures have 3 sub-steps:

- Our Partners sign for the shipments received and attest to the type/quantity of goods/services purchased in Armenia. This invoice includes an exact description of the type and quantity of goods shipped/distributed and services provided.
  - The orphanage directors sign this invoice, indicating that the exact type/quantity of goods and services they have received is the quantity indicated on the invoice.
  - Both invoices are faxed or mailed to the attention of the National President as evidence of a successful distribution.
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- Third, our Partners make periodic **random inspections** of the orphanages following each distribution to assure that a reasonable quantity of goods remains. We recognize that this step may be difficult with certain types of products (e.g., diapers). With other products, however, such as mattresses, most if not all of the original quantity should remain long after the distribution. Discrepancies are reported immediately to the National President.
  - Fourth, when possible, goods donated by SOAR are **engraved and/or stamped with a corporate seal**. This type of identification is particularly feasible with non-perishable items, such as appliances, beds, books, and desks and chairs.
  - Fifth, we implement a **zero-tolerance policy** for fraud, theft, and/or deception. Prior to making a distribution to the orphanages, orphanage directors are reminded of our strict protocol. They are warned that random checks are part of this protocol and that, in the event a discrepancy arises, they will no longer be eligible for assistance.

## Accounting Summary<sup>4</sup>

Below is a summary of SOAR's 2006 activity.

Cash contributions and donations of goods (gross receipts)	<b>\$91,597.00</b>
Distributions made (cash and goods)	<b>\$59,700.00</b>
• Children's Home of Gyumri – clothes and toys/games	\$3,425.00
• Elen – clothes, toys/games, and clothes dryers	\$1,750.00
• Gavar – clothes and toys/games	\$5,880.00
• Hatug Tibi – clothes and toys/games	\$1,600.00
• Houys – shoes, toys/games	\$2,600.00
• Kharberd – clothes and toys/games	\$1,220.00
• Nork – clothes, toys/games, and physical therapy equipment	\$11,155.00
• Nubarashen – shoes and toys/games	\$3,320.00
• Our Lady of Armenia – clothes, toys/games, and cash	\$19,730.00
• Sisters of Charity – school supplies, toys/games, and clothes	\$670.00
• SOS Children's Center – school supplies and toys/games	\$1,075.00
• Trchoonian Home – school supplies and toys/games	\$1,150.00
• Vanadzor – school supplies clothes, and toys/games	\$2,500.00
• Vardashen – refrigerator, school supplies, toys/games	\$2,100.00
• Zadik – school supplies, clothes, toys/games	\$1,525.00
Professional fees	<b>\$75.00</b>
Maintenance	<b>\$900.00</b>
Printing and postage	<b>\$3,579.00</b>
Other expenses (supplies, special events, communications, and travel)	<b>\$5,208.00</b>
Closing balance	<b>\$22,135.00</b>

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<sup>4</sup> SOAR's 2006 tax return was prepared by Mangasarian and Associates, 103 Chesley Drive, Suite 103, Media, PA, 19063, (610) 891-7710.

## Conclusion

The Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR), Inc. was established in March 2006 to provide humanitarian relief to the orphanages in Armenia. Our long-term goal is to provide the orphaned children living in Armenia with the resources fundamental to their physical, emotional, and intellectual development. Over time, we hope to provide these underprivileged youth with the tools necessary to become accomplished, educated, and self-supporting Armenian adults.

There are 15 orphanages in Armenia with varying levels of need. Our web site ([www.soar-us.org](http://www.soar-us.org)), launched on May 4, 2006, provides a complete description of our organization and the population we serve.

In 2006, we received \$91,597.00 in cash and goods and distributed nearly \$60,000 to the 15 orphanages. We received a variety of items from across the country, including clothes, toys, games, books, school supplies, physical therapy equipment, and personal hygiene products. Moreover, we were able to purchase in Armenia a new clothes dryer for Elen, new shoes for the children at Houys and Nubarashen (more than 200 orphans total), and a refrigerator for Vardashen.

It is important to reiterate that SOAR is a completely volunteer organization. We have no paid employees and occupy no formal office space, which allows us to keep our operating expenses to a minimum. As such, a high majority of the donations we receive are channeled directly to the orphanages. If you have any additional questions about SOAR, the orphanages we serve, or our 2006 accounting, please contact George S. Yacoubian, Jr., at (866) 904-5535 or by email at [gyacoubian@soar-us.org](mailto:gyacoubian@soar-us.org).