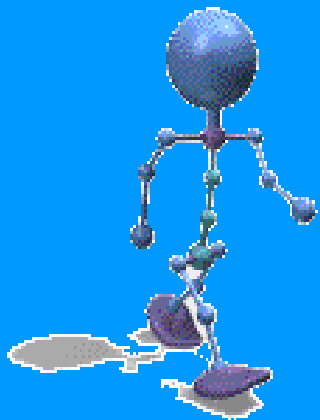


# **Integrated Social Services in Armenia**

## **Improving social welfare for Armenian families and children**



**Hasmik Arakelyan, UNICEF Armenia**  
**Mira Antonyan, Fund for Armenian Relief**  
**Yerevan, 8 July, 2014**

# Armenia during the Soviet Union

## Advantages:

Recognition of **social justice** by the state

Full package of **free of charge medical services, employment opportunities and various entitlements**

## Disadvantages:

Transition to **communism**: difficult for Armenia as well as many countries of the Soviet Union

**No freedom of speech**

# Independent Armenia (1991 up to date)

- Many challenges during the first years as a **sovereign state**
- The state run industries&agriculture: **privatized**
- **In 1988: Start of Nagorno Karabagh War**
- **Blockade, nuclear energy shut down** down after earthquake
- **Economic decline from 81.4% to 52.3%**
- **Social welfare system** affected by the economic crisis

# After Independence.....

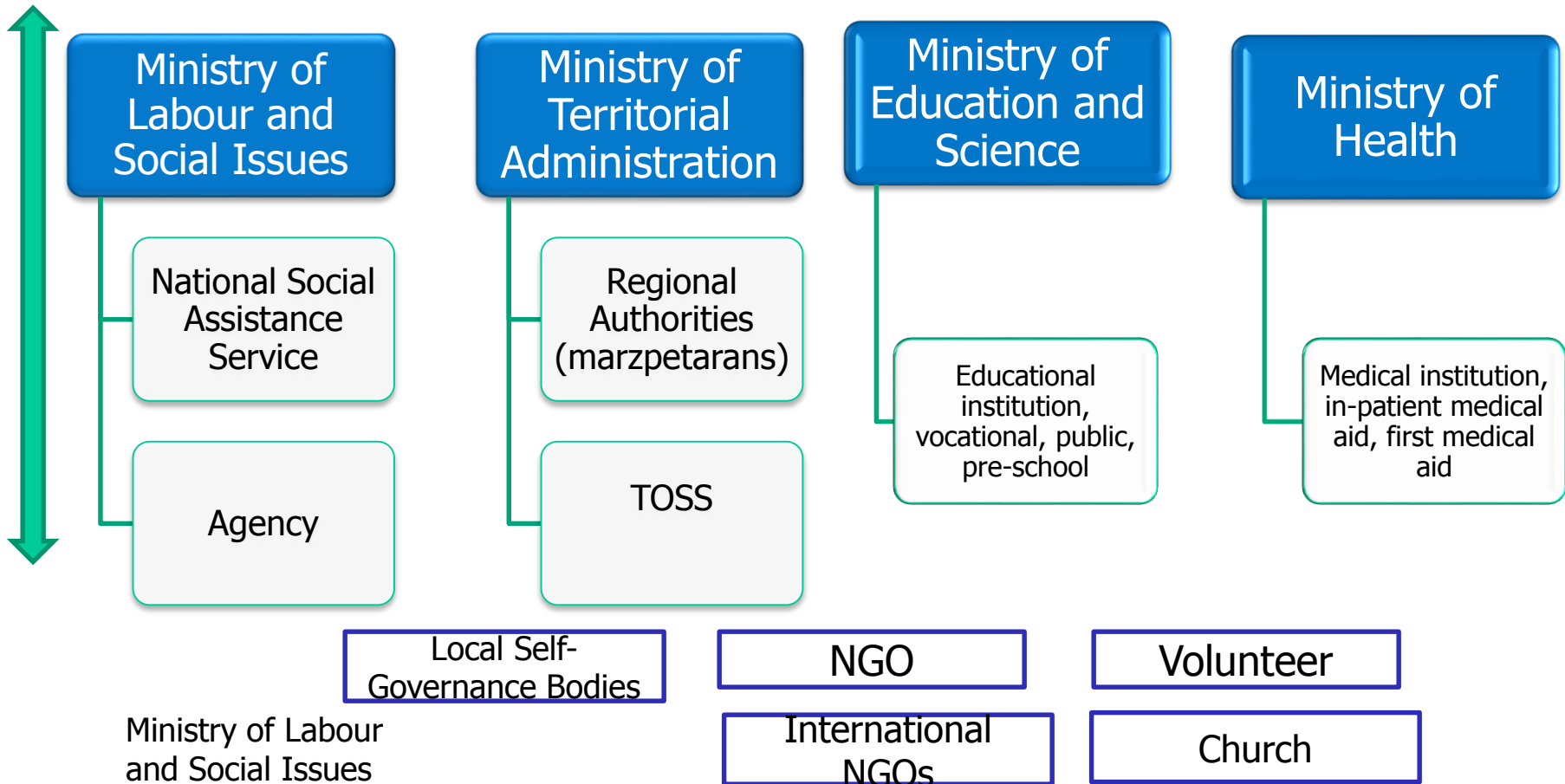
**Free of charge** social services for most vulnerable groups based on the previous classification of Soviet Union

- **Persons with disabilities**
- **Children deprived of parental care**
- **Orphans**
- **Unemployed**
- **Chronically ill people**
- **Family of previous civil prisoners**
- **Single pensioners**
- **Etc.**

**Actually as a result of rapid reduction of resources, the state moved from the welfare system towards a system that would support only the most vulnerable ones, i.e. liberal state**

# GOVERNMENT OF ARMENIA

## Cooperation



# How is the new social protection system different?

## Case Evaluation

Traditional Perspective

Based on available resources

Cash assistance; management of administrative procedures (family benefits)

Process Evaluation  
(number of provisions)

Case Management Perspective

Based on individual need

Case Management; full package of social services

Results Evaluation  
(decreased need)

# UNICEF Technical Support to the Government (2010-2012)

**Conceptual model** of ISS for Armenia, in partnership with the Ministry of Labour



**Functional-structural** model of ISS in territorial offices, towards a model of **Integrated Social Centres** (MoLSI with WB support) for the mainstreaming of the reform

**How:** peer-level professional exchanges with managers and professionals of W-European social services

# Principles of the Western European **meta-model** of **ISS**

**Universality of access** – cost sustained by national or local Government through tax income (social pact between the citizens and the State sustaining citizenship rights)

Focused on **vulnerable groups** – promoting **equity** principles, while bearing the collective responsibility of social distress

Involving other **social actors** (NGOs, formal and informal social networks), and therefore sharing the responsibility

Emphasizing the importance of **liability** at all levels (policy; common services; single social worker; other services)

**Improving the life conditions** of people, while aiming at **reducing public expenditure** in other sectors (through the reduction of the likelihood of deviance or social diseases)



# Towards a Pilot Project:

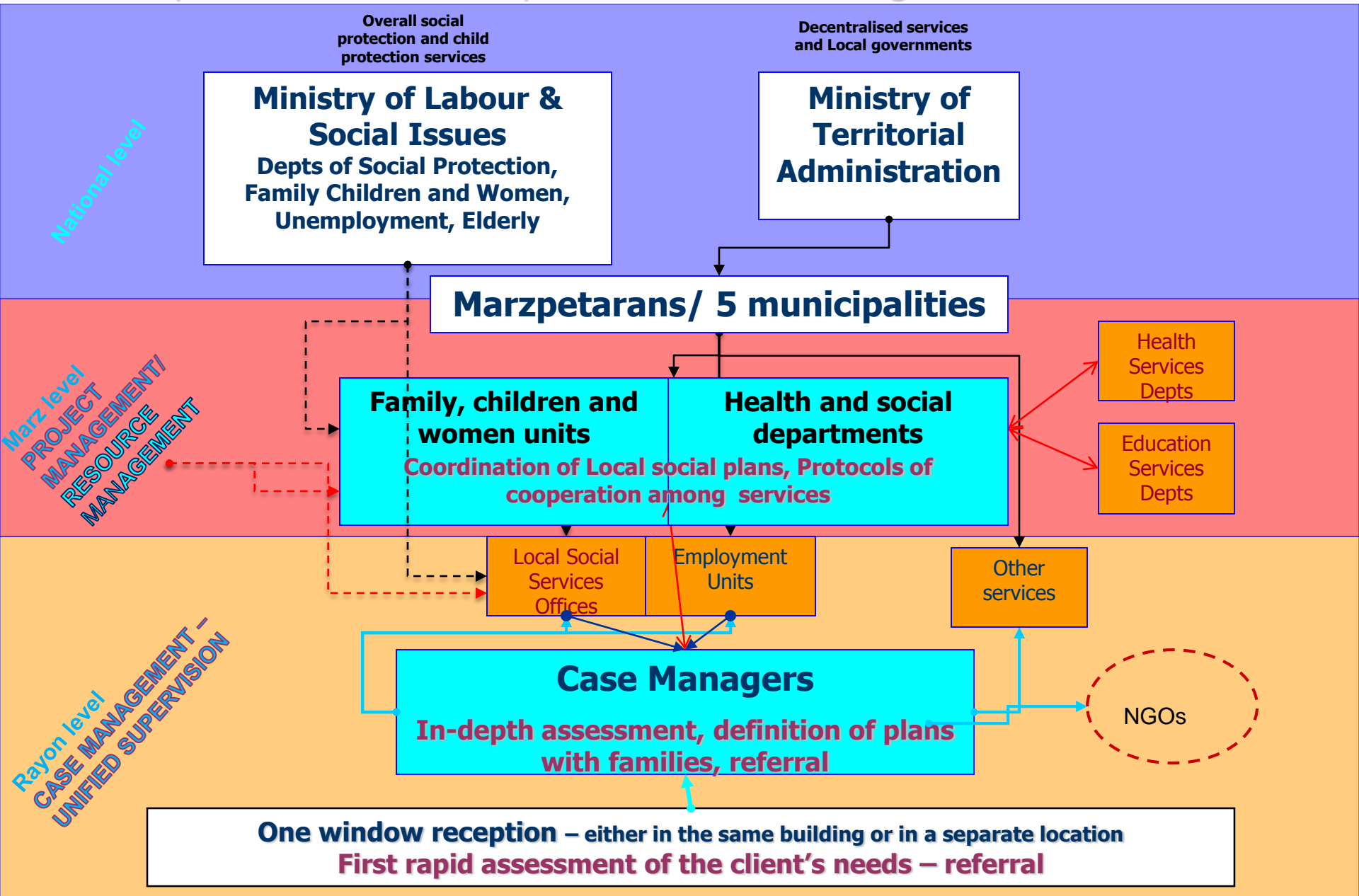
## The Three Pillars of Integrated Social Services Meta-Model

**Case  
Management**

**Project  
Management**

**Resource  
Management**

# Republic of Armenia: a possible Model of Integrated Social Services



Referral lines, supervision lines, cooperation lines



# What do we mean by **Integrated Social Services?**

## **Modes of Integration**

- Principle of a “**one-stop shop or one window reception**”
- **Integrated data exchange** on the regional and central levels
- **Integrated processing of monetary payments within a single state body**
- **Integrated delivery of social services via case management practices**
- **Design and implementation of local (territorial) social plans**

# UNICEF support to **Integrated Social Services System in Armenia**

**UNICEF supported the introduction of 2 most innovative approaches**

- **Case Management Practices**
- **Territorial Social Planning**
- **Training package** for case managers developed and around **200** case managers trained and are already working in **19** ISS centers
- **Gradual separation** of functions of Case Managers from colleagues doing **admin work** on family benefits
- **Inter-ministerial board** established from **line-ministry representatives at the national level chaired by Prime Minister** for coordination of work within the ISS reform

# Case management **process**

- **Shared assessment of family's social needs**
- **Definition** of an individual social project
- **Implementation** of individual social project
- **Reference** to other organizations for initiating steps to meet client needs
- **Step by step monitoring and evaluation of individual social projects**
- **Ongoing oversight**

## **Evaluation of Results**

- **Objective** evaluation based on standardized indicators
- **Subjective** evaluation by participants
- **Changes in needs, capacities, perspective, social behavior, quality of living, lifestyle**

# Pilot Project in 2011-2012

## Focus on **case management**

**Case Managers profile** introduced as the main and essential innovation in piloting integrated social services

**Case management allows to integrate services from the bottom:**

**without infrastructural changes requirement;  
without additional recurrent costs (but a re-distribution of functions within existing staff)**

**Focus on the needs of vulnerable individuals,  
and on the setup of networks of services and resources  
around the client (coping network)  
rather than on pre-defined performances.**

# Pilot Project in 2011-2012

## Focus on **project management**

**Territorial Social Plans** proposed as the second pillar of ISS, since they define the networks of services and cooperation required for case managers to identify appropriate answers to the needs of their clients

They are the result of an articulate **negotiation** among all the key social actors in a territory, sharing the responsibility of care towards the most vulnerable

They apply the principle of **subsidiarity**, whereby functions are delegated to the most appropriate unit (public or private) under the overall legal responsibility of public administrators

# Pilot Project in 2013:

## Focus on **project management**

**4 Territorial Social Plans financed and are being implemented in two regions (Lori and Tavush)**

**Methodology on needs assessment and preparation of local social plans approved by the Government**

**10 specific community based **social projects** developed in response to the needs of the population.  
**Additional funds required****



# Achievements in Integrated Social Services Reform

- **19** centers were created, renovated and equipped
- Several working tools were developed for CM's and other social service providers in ISS centers
- More than **120 case managers** are appointed and working in ISS centers
- More than **1300 families** are assessed and individual plans are developed for them
- As a fundamental reform ISS is recognized by nearly all stakeholders
- All social service providers are informed about ISS reform and Case Management
- Service providers outside state services **realize** the importance of working in a coordinated way with other services, including with case managers
- The need for employing **professional social workers** is recognized which leads to strengthening of social work institute in the country
- **Social Assistance Law** has been revised as the main framework of Social Protection System: social work and social service providers profiles are clarified

# **Challenges** in Integrated Social Services Reform

- **Roles and responsibilities of case managers and other service providers**
- **Mentality, heritage of previous system**
- **Accountability and reporting processes**
- **Physical environment**
- **Hierarchy**
- **Management issues**
- **Legal status**
- **Functions: malfunctions and overlaps**
- **Motivation of professionals: salary, allowances, transport reimbursement, maintenance/security expenses**
- **Shortage of ISS board in introduction of unified approaches for ISS system**
- **Absence of unified information database**
- **Delays in introduction of functional-structural model**
- **Resistance in making a distinction between policy development, programme implementation, service provision and quality control functions, fear to lose power control**

# Not addressed yet:

## Focus on **resource management**

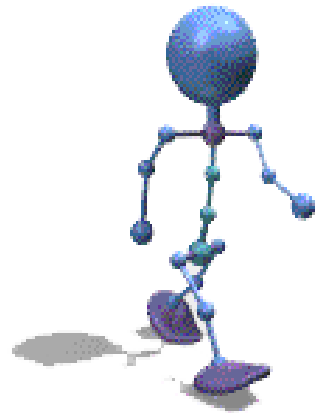
Various possible options, also related to the evolution of de-centralization programmes

For the effectiveness of ISS, a certain level of **autonomy**, and **therefore accountability** needs to be granted to case managers for the proper response to the needs of beneficiaries

At territorial level, the capacity of sub-national governments to **allocate resources** in response to the needs of their communities, guarantees the responsible engagement of local administrators and their liability towards the common welfare

Leverage of **additional resources** for the expansion and infrastructural set up of integrated social centre the professional re-qualification of staff , and the realization of specific services identified within the territorial social plans – **the support of donors is essential!**

**We believe in any effort aimed at  
the promotion of  
equal access to services  
and an increased resilience  
for all children and families**



**Thank you**