

INSIDE AGBU'S HYBRID BUSINESS MODEL

ORIGINS AND CORE MISSION

FOUNDATIONAL HISTORY



Established on April 15, 1906, in Cairo, Egypt, AGBU's original goal was to promote socio-economic and educational development for Armenians in the Ottoman Empire.

THE PRIVATE-SECTOR MINDSET



From the start, AGBU was designed with a private-sector mindset centered on collective responsibility and long-term vision rather than functioning as a traditional charity.

CORE PURPOSE



Promoting the prosperity and well-being of Armenians globally, emphasising education, social, cultural, and spiritual development while preserving Armenian identity.

OPERATIONAL PILLARS AND GLOBAL PRESENCE

GLOBAL REACH



Programmes are implemented not only in Armenia but also across the United States, Europe, and other regions

THE FOUR PILLARS



Today, AGBU operates across four main areas: education, culture, humanitarian assistance, and socio-economic development.

THE ECOSYSTEM



AGBU operates as a global network of local chapters and members, young professionals, volunteers, scouts, mentors, and donors, enabling the organisation to mobilise people, knowledge, and trust beyond financial resources.

THE HYBRID BUSINESS MODEL

DIVERSIFIED INCOME STREAMS

ENDOWMENT FUNDS

GENERAL

The Board has full discretion in allocating funds based on emerging priorities.

RESTRICTED

Designated for specific purposes such as scholarships, equipment, or targeted programs.

PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Not only for funding, but for expertise, tools, and innovation.

FUNDRAISING

STRUCTURED
For ongoing core programs.

AD-HOC
Efforts in response to humanitarian crises or to support new initiatives and concepts.

INVESTMENT

Conservative approach, prioritising stability and long-term preservation of capital over high-risk returns.



STRENGTHS



INCOME DIVERSITY

AGBU's independence from a single funding source allows for long-term planning and investment in projects that require years to show results.



INSTITUTIONAL NATURE

AGBU operates more like an impact-driven institution than a traditional NGO.



COMMUNITY MOBILISATION

The Young Professionals and alumni networks, volunteer and mentorship programmes allow diaspora experts to directly support beneficiaries in Armenia.



LONG-TERM PLANNING

The diversification income streams gives AGBU the ability to plan long-term and invest in impact that takes time to materialise.

CHALLENGES



RESOURCE FLEXIBILITY

Since much of the funding comes from restricted endowments, it can be difficult to quickly redirect resources to new or emerging needs.



FUNDING PERCEPTIONS

AGBU is sometimes viewed as a donor rather than an organisation that needs funding, which can limit its access to certain external grants.



OPERATIONAL COMPLEXITY

The size and global nature of the organisation can make it difficult to align global strategies with local realities.



LOCAL FUNDRAISING GAP

There is a current lack of structured fundraising capacity and mechanisms within Armenia itself.

To know more about EUDiF's collaboration with AGBU, follow this [link](#).

STRATEGIC EVOLUTION AND FUTURE OUTLOOK



SHIFT TOWARD PARTNERSHIPS

AGBU has moved from a purely philanthropic model to one based on **collaboration with governments, the private sector, and international partners.**



FOCUS ON LIVELIHOODS

There is a growing emphasis on socio-economic development through programmes like **LEAP**, which link beneficiaries to the labour market.



NEW FINANCIAL FRONTIERS

The organisation is exploring **social impact investments** and ways to monetise its expertise through advisory services and training.



SUSTAINABILITY AS BALANCE

Ultimate sustainability is defined by AGBU as a balance between global networks and local impact, and between maintaining a core mission and embracing innovation.

“ There is no single model that guarantees sustainability for diaspora organisations. But what AGBU’s experience shows is that sustainability comes from balance between financial stability and flexibility, between global networks and local impact, and between mission and innovation. ”

Astine Badeyan
Manager, Learn to Earn Armenia Program (LEAP),
Armenian General Benevolent Union
Funding the Future: Inside sustainable diaspora organisations

Explore additional business models for diaspora organisations [here](#).

Interested in collaborating with AGBU?
Contact them here:



info@agbu.org



212-319-6383