



SUCCESS STORY

Reaching out to Taxpayers – STS’s First Ever Outreach and Training Division



2007 ATIP Work Plan

Goal V. Modernize the tax body

- 1. Structural reforms of the tax authority
 - 1.1. Optimize structure and functions of tax body
 - 1.1.1. Develop recommendations on STS structural changes based on strategic initiatives and international best practices
 - 1.1.2. **Support the establishment of Training and Taxpayer Outreach Division and the implementation of its functions**

On August 10, 2007, Mr. Vahram Barseghyan, Head of the State Tax Service of the Republic of Armenia (STS), signed a decree establishing the STS’ first Training and Outreach Division. This Division, created through consistent collaboration between the STS and the USAID Armenia Tax Improvement Program (ATIP), is a crucial step on the STS’ path to becoming a truly modern tax administration system and essential for moving Armenia’s self-assessment system forward.

ATIP’s communications and organizational change experts met regularly with the STS Deputy Head, Mr. Alaverdyan, and staff of the Tax Administration Improvement Department (TAID), to design the agency based on international best practice. ATIP worked extensively with the STS to develop the Division’s functions, structure, and strategy as they related to internal training and taxpayer education.

Prior to the creation of the Division, both training and outreach activities were housed in the TAID but with no formal strategy or structure. Activities were largely ad hoc; department staff would organize trainings and outreach activities on an as-needed basis. By creating an entirely new and distinct Division, ATIP assisted the STS in separating the training and outreach functions. Based on ATIP’s recommendations, the STS has allocated specialized staff to the Division to set the agency’s training and outreach policy at STS Headquarters, which will ensure standard implementation of both functions at tax inspectorates throughout Armenia.

In addition, ATIP and the STS developed a detailed work plan for the Division that focuses on activities to build staffing and training capacity in the new Division – one of the STS’ goals as stated in the Triennial Plan approved this year – as well as the organization’s 2007-2008 outreach activities. This work plan was also signed by Mr. Barseghyan, initiating activities essential to modernizing the tax administration as a whole and providing pertinent information to Armenia’s taxpayers about the country’s move to a complete self-assessment system.