The East-West Management Institute (EWMI) works to strengthen democratic societies by bringing together government, civil society, and the private sector – to build accountable, capable and transparent institutions. Founded in 1988, as an independent not-for-profit organization, EWMI’s work began the year before the Berlin Wall came down, with the challenge of crafting functioning democratic systems in transitioning post-Soviet societies. We learned—in our initial work across Central and Eastern Europe, and in the decades that followed around the world—that a collaborative approach involving civil society, government and the private sector is the key to ensuring that citizens exercise their rights, and institutions are accountable for protecting them. This leads to more just and prosperous societies.

Michelle Scott, Chair (General Counsel, Fair Health, Inc.)
Eugenia McGill, Director (Assistant Director of the Economic and Political Development Concentration at Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs)
Roberta Thami, Director (Former Senior Counsel, Asian Development Bank)
George Vickers, Director (Former Director of International Operations for the Open Society Institute)

Adrian Hewryk, President
Rachel Tritt, Executive Vice President
Mark Dietrich, Vice President & Director, Washington DC Office
Nicolas Mansfield, Director of Legal Programs
Delina Fico, Director of Civil Society Programs

Christina Keller, Communications Director
Dear Friends,

I am proud to present a summary EWMI’s accomplishments for 2015 in this year’s Annual Report. These successes would not have been possible, had it not been for our unique group of dedicated partners and staff who made these initiatives focused on justice, economic development and civic engagement possible. The accomplishments and successes are in part based on EWMI’s in-depth understanding of local needs, and our approach of implementing programs in partnership with local governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Supporting the effective participation of civil society organizations (CSOs) in democratic and economic transitions is one of the cornerstones of EWMI’s Mission. This year, we worked with over 150 organizations to strengthen their capacity to become effective voices and advocates for political and economic reform, as well as for the protection of human rights.

Justice reform remains a central element of EWMI’s work, including empowering local groups to advocate for change, training judges and lawyers, improving legal education, and improving the efficiency and transparency of court operations. These efforts were recognized by USAID, by awarding EWMI the Promoting the Rule of Law in Georgia (PROLoG) project.

This report highlights only a few of our accomplishments, and invite you to read about our work, and more importantly the work of our partners.

Adrian Hewryk, President
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Students of the Niyazabad community in Khachmaz Rayon faced several obstacles on their path to academic success. Prior to 2015, a single school—a 13-room building constructed in 1965—served all 210 students of the village. Having undergone no renovation since its initial construction, the building itself suffered from extensive disrepair. The overcrowded classrooms, which often lacked enough desks for students, were separated by panels instead of walls. Poor lighting, insufficient space, and minimal furniture also contributed to poor learning conditions.

Through the USAID-funded Socio-Economic Development Activity (SEDA), EWMI has been working with rural communities in Azerbaijan to increase their participation in socio-economic decisions and prepare them to advocate for development projects that address the needs of their community. To improve the classroom conditions in Niyazabad, EWMI helped establish a local volunteer community development council that collaborated with EMWI and the Government of Azerbaijan to design and fund the construction of two additional rooms and one corridor in the school. The positive impact of this investment was clear on September 10, 2015, when village residents, NGOs, and representatives at all levels of government convened to celebrate the renovations and a school environment more suited to learning.

For the residents of the Balakurd community, lack of potable water was a critical issue. The community needed new infrastructure to deliver clean water to the village. EWMI worked with the newly established local community development council to mobilize a project to improve access and storage capacity for water and update sanitation facilities. With EWMI’s support, Balakurd community members organized

“Fresh water is one of our most vital resources, and we are thankful to the SEDA project that together we could complete the project and help our villagers to get access to clean, potable water for cooking, drinking, cleaning, bathing, and so forth. In the summer time especially, the water we were using from the water pools often caused illnesses such as diarrhea in little children.”

Nushaba Alibeyli, a resident of Balakurd community and a mother of four children
and started the improvement project by digging a ditch 4,700 m long and 0.8 m deep and then constructing a water line from the Goranboy water reservoir to the Balakurd community. The new line ensures potable water access for Balakurd’s 2,000 residents.

Mikaela Meredith, USAID/Azerbaijan Mission Director, congratulated the Balakurd residents for this achievement: “The completion of this project is a clear example of the positive outcomes that can be achieved when local communities are given the chance to help themselves. After all, who better understands and has the most interest in the well-being of a community than the people of the community themselves? Your achievement in selecting this project and making it a reality will dramatically improve health conditions and lower the cost of clean drinking water.”

In the farming community of Nadirkend, clean water and deteriorating schools were not a concern. Instead, a shortage of affordable and nutritious feed was major constraint for local livestock farmers. For years, Nadirkend residents had to travel to neighboring Borsunlu, Samabad, and Dali-mammadli Villages to clean and grind their seeds as there weren’t any grinding facilities nearby. Traveling to the nearest facility was expensive, and Nadirkend residents needed to pay an average of 30–40 AZN per metric ton of crop and 10-20 AZN for transportation costs. Nadrikend residents worked with EWMI and the municipality to develop a plan to fund a feed grinding facility equipped with feed grinding and seed cleaning machines that would increase the productivity of cattle breeding and agriculture within the community. The newly-installed facilities opened on December 10, 2015 and have improved the farming conditions for the Nadirkend community.

Mr. Ali Agayev, Chairman of the Nadirkend Municipality remarked, “Thanks to this project, we won’t need to travel to neighboring communities anymore; it saves our time and transportation costs. The feed grinding machines will improve the conditions for almost 80% of the community residents who depend on agriculture production and livestock for their income.”
Civil society organizations (CSOs) are essential incubators of active citizens and responsive government. In Georgia, EWMI has helped CSOs to become respected community representatives capable of leading public debate and collaborating with government officials to produce effective policy.

Through organizing the first-ever nationwide Regional Civic Engagement Week (RCEW), EWMI provided regional CSOs with a platform to showcase their work, earn public trust, and stimulate discussions on the issues of the greatest public concern. Participating organizations spearheaded over 57 public discussions, volunteer drives, and town hall meetings in 24 cities across Georgia.

These initiatives garnered immediate and positive results: volunteer drives involved up to 200 volunteers in tree-planting, public cleanup events, blood donation and helping the elderly in retirement homes. Regional Civic Engagement Week also engaged over 1,000 participants and received a wide media coverage.

Recognizing the importance of CSOs and inspired by the success of EWMI’s Regional Civic Engagement Week, leaders from some of the most prominent businesses and CSOs in Tbilisi gathered to charter a Corporate
Social Responsibility (CSR) Club. Over 50 members of the Georgian business and CSO communities have committed their companies to the virtues of social responsibility as defined by the club’s founding members. The formation of the club marks the first time in the last decade that leading Georgian businesses and civil society groups from across the country have come together to better serve Georgia’s national interests and its citizens.

The CSR Club has already lived up its name. In mere days following the disastrous flooding along the river of Vere that devastated Tbilisi in June 2015, club members garnered over 10 million GEL in donations for affected families and relief efforts. Additionally, members leveraged their contacts and resources to organize volunteer cleanup efforts and meet urgent needs of the disaster-affected families. Furthermore, the club maintained a database of donations made by members and other companies to properly catalogue the stunning response of the business and CSO communities to the disaster.

By September 2015, the CSR Club held its second general assembly where it reflected on the successes and challenges of its first four months of operation, enlisted 21 new members, and looked to the year ahead to plan additional volunteer opportunities and philanthropic endeavors for 2016.
Fostering sustainable and independent CSOs is the primary goal of all of EWMI’s capacity building work. To ensure regional CSOs have the financial and professional capacity to operate independently, EWMI’s USAID Collaborative Governance Program (CGP) organized a series of three best practice workshops for writing grant proposals. In addition to discussing the requirements for receiving CGP and U.S. Embassy grants, the 30 civil society representatives present explored the individual needs of their respective organizations. Each participant completed a baseline survey to assess their strengths and weaknesses as grant-writers and then worked independently to outline the measurable results that their organization hopes to outline with more funding. Interactive presentations such as the Diagram on Project Lifecycle, which revealed the six integral stages of the grant application process, highlighted the importance of budget planning and program evaluations.

These workshops have not only enhanced the quality of grant applications that CGP receives but also served as an important networking tool for CSOs wishing to consult with one another and coordinate resources for future campaigns. About 80% of participants found the workshops helpful and indicated that they planned to keep in contact with the other CSO representatives with whom they met.
Realizing the Benefits of European Integration

European integration functions as a powerful agent for democratization, and the promise of EU membership serves as a powerful guard against authoritarianism. With Georgia facing a complicated position in the context of world politics, the country has firmly chosen its way westward. Numerous reforms are being carried out to reach the ultimate goal of EU and NATO integration. However, anti-European sentiment and skepticism regarding the benefits of integration remain roadblocks among part of Georgia's population. To address this problem, EWMI’s USAID-funded Advancing CSO Capacities and Engaging Society for Sustainability (ACCESS) project organized a series of regional policy forums, “The Myths and Realities of European Integration,” in nine regions of Georgia, including the regions where substantial numbers of ethnic minorities live and skepticism towards Western alliances is high.

In total, 643 people, including representatives from CSOs, farmer groups, local government, media, and the private sector participated in the open discussions. The forums provided participants with concrete and objective information about EU-Georgia relations and covered a range of topics from the specific benefits reaped by the EU-Georgia Association Agreement (AA), the requirements of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA), prospects for Visa Free travel to the EU, and the ongoing deliberations between Georgia and the EU over membership.

Regional participants asked EWMI, as well as the panelists, to hold similar sessions more regularly and to target larger groups of rural populations like including farmers, small business entrepreneurs, and ethnic minorities. The popularity of this forum has led Georgian CSOs and media outlets to partner and launch a similar campaign that informs the citizens in the regions about the benefits of European Union membership.
Aiming to check unrestrained government encroachment on public land, EWMI supported Open Development Cambodia in training university students and civil society groups in how to navigate its online maps that track forest cover changes. Participants learned how to use GPS, create shapefiles (a simple format for storing the geometric location and attribute information of geographic features) and upload GPS data into a mapping kit. After testing out the mapping kit for two days, the group provided feedback on how the it could be improved and enhanced. As a result of these efforts, the online mapping tool will become easier to use and more accessible to wide swaths of the public looking to compare the government’s rhetoric on environmental protection with its actual policy.

Perfecting Technology to Survey Mekong Landscape

Civil society representatives work together to troubleshoot and navigate the mapping kit.
Civil society organizations are tasked with advocating on behalf of citizens and holding government officials accountable. Programs that train civically-minded students in nonprofit management can only strengthen the capacity of CSOs to carry out their missions and better serve citizens.

Beginning in 2013, EWMI’s Collaborative Governance Program (CGP) in the Kyrgyz Republic laid the groundwork for establishing a 15-member consortium of universities dedicated to offering nonprofit management courses. The two piloted courses, “Introduction to Nonprofit Management and Nonprofit Management in the Modern World,” were first made available to over 550 students in the 2014-2015 school year. A follow-up survey revealed widespread satisfaction with the courses; nearly 96% of enrolled students found the courses useful and 66% said that they planned to operate their own CSO in the future. This success has mobilized the Consortium to expand course offerings, and leading consortium professors gathered this February to devise the curriculum for a third course, “Financial Management in Nonprofits.” By September of 2015, professors in the Consortium met again to set a deadline for finalizing the curriculum of a fourth non-profit course on “Public Policy and Advocacy.” The new courses, expected to see enrolled students in the 2016-2017 school year, reflects the culmination of the Consortium’s steady expansion in 2015.

Efforts to strengthen nonprofit management education go beyond curriculum development. This year, the Consortium also opened a new Nonprofit Management Resource Center in Osh. This new center along with the center opened last year in have hosted 15 guest lectures and six professional development workshops for consortium professors to jointly share and further develop their syllabi. In addition, five professors were selected through an open competition among all 15 NPM Consortium Member Universities to participate in the second annual Nonprofit Management Fellowship Program in the Republic of Georgia. The four-week series of workshops gave the Consortium members the opportunity to audit non-profit management courses at Georgian Universities and observe the work of prominent Georgian CSOs. 

University students, professors, CSO representatives listen to the guests.

Abdygany Abduvaliev, Vice-Rector of Osh State University speaks at the opening ceremony of the UNCO Resource Center.
Achieving Greater Gender Equality through the Courts

Although the Georgian Constitution protects equality before the law regardless of gender, cases of discrimination against both women and men are nevertheless frequently brought before the courts. Discrimination against women in the workplace is well documented and present at every stage of employment, but lesser known cases of discrimination against male caretakers also exist. Since most men are unaware of their parental rights, however, the issue rarely gets litigated.

Giorgi Bezhanishvili, a member of the Telavi Gender Equity Club, attended a meeting at the Telavi Center of Civic Engagement (CCE) and learned of his rights to paid parental leave as father. A week later, Mr. Bezhanishvili worked with the CCE to file a complaint against his employer who would not allow him to take time off for childcare. With the aid of the Georgian Public Defender’s Office, Mr. Bezhanishvili earned his entitled paternity leave.

EWMI supports CCEs in Georgia through EWMI’s USAID-funded ACCESS project.

Mitigating the Threat of Natural Disasters in Georgia

A concentrated thunderstorm in June 2015 caused the river Vere to overflow, leading to the worst flooding in living memory around the Tbilisi area. Twenty people have died in its wake. The flooding destroyed homes, leaving dozens of families homeless and seeking shelter in nearby hotels.

To provide these dislocated families with the most valuable resources, EWMI staff spoke to Georgians and directly assessed their needs. In conjunction with partner organizations, EWMI solicited donations for linens, shoes and medicines—all of which staff members themselves delivered to affected families. In total, 14 families received support from EWMI, and we plan to continue to support flood-affected children in the future.
Monitoring Deforestation with Open Data

EWMI’s Open Development Initiative (ODI) has partnered with World Resources Institute (WRI) to fight deforestation and thereby protect the lives of 70 million people living along the Lower Mekong Basin.

ODI supports an open information platform that uses visually compelling mapping data to track the effects of deforestation over decades in time-lapsed animation maps. WRI’s Global Forest Watch is an online forest monitoring system that uses satellite technology and forest clearing alert systems to create transparency of forest clearing on a global scale. By combining this real-time data and displaying its effects in maps, the two organizations hope to assist civil society leaders as they agitate for forest conservation and sustainable management.

The Cambodian Ministry charged with providing this information has long been criticized by NGOs for failing to regularly update forest cover maps. When ODI first published its forest cover change maps in December 2013, the Ministry publicly critiqued them but also agreed to release their own official updated maps by 2015. The response of the government highlights the importance of the current ODI/WRI initiative; with easy access to open data, the public may question government actions and advance alternative policy agendas.

Striving to Make All Voices Heard

A criminal justice system that reflects democratic principles of fairness must give defendants due process. The poor enforcement of key due process rights in Liberia, however, presents criminal defendants with significant hurdles as they seek impartial trials. Although detainees sent to prison by a court are required to receive copies of their court commitment, a document detailing their scheduled court dates, courts diverge in their reading of this law. Some courts issue just one commitment for multiple defendants tried in separate, unrelated cases and only print one copy for all of them to share – a practice that creates confusion among defendants about their individual court dates. To combat this issue, EWMI has designed and implemented an Automated Detainee Tracker (ADT) as part of its “Making All Voices Heard” initiative. By allowing families, friends, and government officials to identify individuals held in extended pretrial detentions, ADT will ensure that detainees are brought to hearings on a timely basis. ADT even runs on an internal alert system that informs officials and family members of due dates for hearings.

Encouraging Citizen-Led Advocacy

All too often civil society development happens in conference rooms and offices, far removed from beneficiaries, especially from those residing in remote regions. Georgia’s regional population finds it difficult to make their voices heard in Tbilisi and often criticizes CSOs for pursuing topics that do not respond to the primary needs of people living outside Tbilisi.

In order to get closer to the communities at the grassroots level and identify the ways that CSOs could contribute to solving the community members’ primary problems, EWMI’s ACCESS project launched an innovative outreach initiative wherein leading civil society professionals met face-to-face with rural beneficiaries of Upper Ajara. Representatives from EWMI, Transparency International - Georgia, the Economic Policy Research Center, and the Civil Development Agency visited five villages in Keda, Shaukhevi and Khulo Municipalities to increase public awareness of CSO activity in Georgia and to hear firsthand about issues and problems people face in day-to-day life. Informal conversations on the streets and in backyards facilitated direct and honest discussions.

Such initiatives are critical to building linkages and trust among the population and the CSOs. Following these discussions, CSOs
now better understand how to represent regional interests. On the matter, Zviad Devdariani of the Civil Development Agency said, “Sitting in Tbilisi and speaking in conference halls or on television is not enough. We have to go and reach out to the communities at the grassroots level to hear about their concerns and needs so that we can tailor our activities and campaigns according to those needs.”

Meetings with residents revealed that failed capital projects have placed an indelible economic toll on families. The confusing bureaucratic guidelines for registering agricultural land plots, coupled with deteriorating roads and limited water supplies, create insurmountable barriers toward selling crops in open marketplaces. In addition, the construction of a large hydropower dam in Shuakhevi Municipality—initiated with little citizen input and perhaps no environmental impact report—worries citizens.

EWMI immediately delivered on its promise to help residents raise their concerns with the appropriate government entities. As a follow-up to the meetings, EWMI and its partners sent joint letters to the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources with a series of policy recommendations that addressed the issues discussed in Ajara. Suggestions included increasing communication with residents regarding all hydropower dam construction activities and repairing village drainage systems to facilitate further road repairs.

In response to the joint letter, Ministry representatives informed EWMI that contractual obligations bound the dam construction company to respect existing laws surrounding development and environment protection. Nonetheless, the Ministry resolved to initiate a special inspection of the construction company to ensure that it meets all of its obligations. The Ministry also promised to provide copies of all previous construction monitoring reports upon receiving a written request so that EWMI may share them with concerned residents of Ajara.
Creating Sustained Judicial Independence in Georgia

Promoting the Rule of Law in Georgia (PROLoG) Activity, a new EWMI initiative inspired by the success of JILEP, introduces a set of institutional safeguards designed to protect human rights and justice sector work in Georgia. Coordinating with its counterparts in the NGO community, Parliament, and the Ministry of Justice, EWMI will develop a legal and policy framework capable improving judicial independence and due process protections in Georgia. The program will also implement projects to meet Georgia’s international and domestic human rights obligations and improve access to justice for women and minorities. Particular attention will be paid to strengthening legal education at universities and providing more opportunities for continuing legal education (CLE) for current judges and lawyers. These programs will ultimately improve the management of essential judicial institutions, such as the High Council of Justice (HCOJ), the High School of Justice (HSOJ), the courts, the Georgian Bar Association (GBA), and Legal Aid Services (LAS).
Peace Museum Reconsiders Cambodian History

EWMI, through its Partner Legacy Support Program, is working with the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies to help fund a Cambodia Peace Museum. Although a number of museums in Cambodia confront the nation's history of conflict, these other institutions document atrocities (like the violence committed by the Khmer Rouge) without further explaining how everyday citizens can learn from the past to work towards reconciliation. The Cambodia Peace Museum will serve not only a space for education but one of healing where visitors will see firsthand how Cambodian people have overcome adversity through resilience. Exhibits will explore all historical strategies employed to end the conflict—such as the signing of the Paris Peace Accords in 1991—as well as current efforts led by Cambodians in civil society, former combatants, the government and faith-based groups to work toward full reconciliation.

Advancing Transparency and Accountability and Countering Corruption

Many Sri Lankans hoped that their new president, catapulted to a surprise victory in January 2015, would pioneer a new era of government accountability by investigating charges of public corruption, particularly by the previous administration. Although considered the most important government body for carrying out investigations, Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery and Corruption (CIABOC) has produced only a limited number of convictions since its founding in 1994. Civil society groups demanded greater efficiency. The Sri Lankan Daily Mirror captured the widespread public dissatisfaction with its pointed declaration that, “almost nothing has happened with regard to probing the past government’s misdeeds.”

Committed to restoring public faith in mechanisms of government oversight, EWMI launched its “Advancing Transparency and Accountability and Countering Corruption: Strengthening the Technical Capacity of the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption.” Funded by the United States Department of State’s Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL), the project has two pronged goals: to help build CIABOC’s capacity to effectively investigate claims of corruption or bribery and to increase the institutional support CIABOC receives from government agencies. The results of the initiative could be seen as early as October 2015, when CIABOC arrested three high-ranking customs officials for accepting the equivalent of almost $900,000 in bribes. Following these arrests, CIABOC has shown interest in providing its employees skills. With EWMI’s assistance, CIABOC determined the types of training that would be of greatest use to employees. EWMI analyzed the past 100 cases lost by CIABOC and surveyed CIABOC prosecutors to identify needed skills, knowledge, and experience. By December, over 45 investigators and 10 prosecutors participated in EWMI-led trainings on the legal threshold for pursuing bribery offenses.
Cultivating Legal Empowerment in Georgia

When EWMI’s Judicial Independence and Legal Empowerment Project in Georgia (EWMI-JILEP) began operation in 2010, growing disillusionment with the Georgian court system permeated public life. A handful of top-level managers, all men, served as its institutional “voice,” and lower-level judges were rarely seen or heard at public events. This centralized and monolithic judicial management structure slowed the pace of potential reforms, a reality compounded by the undue role that prosecutors played in directing or otherwise influencing case outcomes. In addition, although critical of overreach by the executive branch, the Georgian Bar Association (GBA) remained weak and faced the constant threat of dismantlement. Few NGOs at the time even possessed the institutional capacity to engage in in-depth data collection and analysis or to combine forces to pursue targeted advocacy campaigns around judicial corruption. Although analysts hoped that a new generation of law graduates could spearhead structural legal reforms, Georgian law schools were not preparing them well for this role.

Since 2010, Georgia has greatly improved the quality of its lawyers and the transparency of its courts. Over the course of the project, EWMI-JILEP supported its NGO partners to monitor the courts’ administrative organ, the High Council of Justice (HCOJ). The reports that these NGOs generated and the advocacy that they pursued helped open up the court system to public scrutiny. The HCOJ now regularly publicizes its meeting agendas and many of its decisions, and civil society representatives frequently participate in HCOJ meetings. At the trial court level, hearings are routinely recorded for public consumption.

A team from the Caucasus Law School that was trained by JILEP finished second place in the International Client Consultation Competition (ICCC), held in April 2015 at the University of Nebraska College of Law and judged by a panel of experienced attorneys.
In addition, because of its sustained effort to raise awareness of gender imbalance in the judiciary, EWMI-JILEP has contributed to the diversification of the makeup of judicial leadership. When the project began, only one woman served as an HCOJ justice, but today the HCOJ has four women members—one of whom is the Chief Justice on the Supreme Court.

As a result of EWMI-JILEP’s initiative, Georgian civil society plays a more active voice in policy discussions. It supported the establishment of the Coalition for an Independent and Transparent Judiciary (Coalition), which became a major contributor to the government’s “three waves” of legal reform. Collectively, and through the work of its individual members, the Coalition has provided an unprecedented level of judicial oversight. Its members now have a seat at the table of nearly every important justice reform discussion, and its position papers hold significant sway with both government and judicial decision makers.

EWMI-JILEP’s impact on legal education was similarly profound. Because of EWMI-JILEP’s textbook creation project and its library exchange initiative, professors and students have access to a wide range of up-to-date written materials both in Georgian and other languages. In response to these new offerings, many law schools have even adjusted their course offerings to include practical skills training such as legal writing and research, oral advocacy, and clinical practice. In 2015, at least eight law schools in Georgia boasted clinical programs, compared to just two in 2010.

With EWMI-JILEP’s support, the GBA has also sought to revamp its educational programs. The GBA now requires its members to take 12 hours of legal training each year to remain certified. To further enhance the quality of lawyers that enter its ranks, GBA endorsed the complete overhaul of the bar entry exam. In past years, exam answers were published in advance and almost candidate sitting for the exam passed. Now, test answers are confidential, and newly constructed exam questions require more analysis to resolve. Only 11% of the applicants passed this new test when first given in 2013. The rate rose to 26% in 2015 and is expected to rise further in coming years as law graduates learn how to prepare themselves for a more strenuous and meaningful examination.

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At a JILEP-sponsored conference, Legal Aid Services and eleven NGOs signed a Memorandum of Cooperation and pledged to jointly develop a referral system for clients and ease the exchange of information.


EWMI-JILEP’s textbook creation project provides student with access to legal materials in Georgian.
EWMI has over 25 years’ experience successfully managing grants programs with the strategic aim of building civil society support to further advance human rights, nascent justice sector reforms and economic development. EWMI has honed an expertise in the area of strategic grants management, working closely with CSOs and justice institutions to enhance their organizational capacity, and improve their ability to carry out effective advocacy campaigns and advance rule of law and other reforms. EWMI takes pride in its commitment to our local partners, and continues to fund them through the Partner Legacy Support Program.

Ending Patterns of Gender-Based Violence in the Kyrgyz Republic

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence is an international campaign calling for the elimination of all forms of violence against women. In the Kyrgyz Republic, the Public Foundation DIA launched the “Osh Oblast’s Support for the 16 Days Campaign of Activism against Gender-Based Violence” with a grant from EWMI’s CGP. A roundtable discussion was held on how the government may best address violence and how international frameworks like Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and Millennium Development Goals (MDG) can serve as tools to raise awareness on the issue. Awareness-raising activities are at the forefront of DIA’s agenda. According to DIA leader Avazkhan Ormonova, “gender inequality stems the community members’ poor awareness of gender violence as a human rights issue, as well as weak efforts made in local communities to address the issues of violence against women and girls.” DIA activities were accompanied by public outreach materials distributed to the media and social networks.
Osh is the second largest city in the Kyrgyz Republic with a population of about 300,000 citizens. The city is well known for its diverse and dynamic environment, but over the past ten years, Osh has faced a series of infrastructural challenges. Residents noticed an inconsistency in a wide range of services like garbage removal, public transportation, and road maintenance. Without a channel of communication, residents lack sufficient tools to voice their requests and complaints.

The Public Union Youth of Osh, a EWMI grantee, believes it may have a solution to the problem. After extensive negotiations, they officially signed a cooperative agreement with the Osh Mayor’s office aimed at improving public confidence in local government. The signatories pledged to establish an Open Data communication platform with online maps that residents may use to evaluate the quality of available municipal services and report issues. According to Osh Mayor Aitmamat Kadyrbayev, the project represents “the first step in quality implementation of electronic management or ‘e-government’ in the Kyrgyz Republic.” Both parties predict that the platform will improve the quality of social services and ensure timely responses to municipal problems.

Child marriage continues to be an issue within the Azeri community in Georgia, with some girls being married at ages as young as 13. Union Vejin, a coalition of three local organizations, has launched grass roots, culturally-sensitive community gatherings with Azeri people to discuss the impact of early marriage. Over a cup of tea with women and girls in 11 villages, Vejini has bridged the generational gap in perceptions of marriage. Although attitudes varied by community, most teenage girls voiced greater enthusiasm for continuing with higher education than marrying immediately. They asked Vejini representatives to persuade their parents to rethink long-held views of marriage. To achieve this goal, the organization has drafted brochures that highlight the negative impact of early marriage and identified institutions most capable of speaking out against the practice.
The Pankisi Gorge, an enclave situated in Northeast Georgia, is predominantly inhabited by the ethnic minority group of Kists. The region has been under the media and political spotlight this year thanks to reports of several dozen local inhabitants, including teens, who were recruited by ISIS, some of whom died in combat in Syria. This has raised concerns about the threats of youth radicalization and the potentially deteriorating security situation in Pankisi. Furthermore, the region is rife with economic difficulty and has an estimated unemployment rate of 90%. Youth development and alternatives to poverty and radicalization are a critical component to development goals for the region.

The Kakheti-based Center for Civil Activities (CCA), a EWMI ACCESS grantee, is breaking down these barriers with their exciting initiative to provide classes for the Kist youth and facilitate their integration into Georgian media and ongoing public discussion. The project started with an eight-day course on the basics of civic journalism and technical instruction on using reporting equipment. At the project’s inception, the vision was to provide the Georgian population with media coverage of issues affecting ethnic and religious minorities in Pankisi while simultaneously training Kist youths in media and journalism in the hopes that they would provide strong reporting of some of the issues facing the local population. Under the mentorship of journalists from Kakheti Information Center, Pankisi’s newly minted press corps has been producing multimedia reports and blogs on issues of their concern: access to education, unemployment and other economic difficulties, gender equality, and deteriorating infrastructure. The stories are published on the most popular online media source in Kakheti Region – the Kakheti Information Center website. Considering the pressing need for local media broadcasting to fill the existing information vacuum and inspired by the youth’s enthusiasm and capacities, the CCA decided to open up a district radio station to be based in village of Duisi (Pankisi Gorge). CCA is currently setting up office space and waiting for their license to launch the local radio station. The trained youth will be recruited as radio reporters; they will be able to further improve their professional skills beyond the project lifetime and cement their integration and commitment to their community.

In the future, the Center for Civil Activities will finance small-scale youth projects aimed at solving local problems and help them during the implementation process. Given the critical nature and potential regional implications that youth development in Pankisi hold, EWMI ACCESS is committed to continued development projects in the region and is working with the Tbilisi CSO community and Georgian government to find new opportunities for the region’s youth. ✿
For the year ending December 31, 2015, EWMI’s revenue totaled $11,504,571. Overall, in 2015, EWMI had 22 projects, working in eight countries in the world. EWMI’s funding sources in 2015 included U. S. Agency for International Development, the U. S. Department of State, the European Union, and various private foundations.

EWMI’s 2015 financial statements were audited by Mitchell & Titus, and EWMI’s audited financial statements and IRS Form 990 are available upon request.

### Statement of Activities for Year Ended December 31, 2015:

#### Revenues:
- Government grants $10,283,548
- Government contracts $4,997
- Contributed services $210,411
- Other contracts $1,177
- Other grants 1,004,438
- **Total revenue** $11,504,571

#### Expenses:
- Program $9,338,118
- General and administrative $1,863,318
- **Total expenses** $11,201,436

#### Changes in net assets before other income $303,135

#### Other income (expense):
- Interest income $147
- Currency exchange (loss) gain 18
- Interest expense $(58,577)
- Deferred rent $(4,500)
- Bad Debt $(6,057)
- Other expense, net $(18,969)
- **Other expense, net** $(18,969)

#### Change in net assets $284,166

#### Net assets at the beginning of year $1,446,766

#### Net assets at the end of year $1,730,932