

## Research Connections — E-Bulletin

### CRRC and Open Society Build Policy Paper Writing Skills

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On February 23-24, 2007 CRRC-Armenia and the Open Society Institute (OSI) Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative (LGI) organized a workshop entitled “Writing Effective Policy Papers to Influence Decision Making” for 15 participants from Armenia and Georgia. The workshop helped build a regional network of policy researchers and analysts. The training was conducted by authors of a training manual, Eóin Young and Lisa Quinn, in cooperation with Suren Poghosyan and Ashot Khurshudyan. The guide for the training is [available online](#) in various languages.

[More Details](#)



Trainees from Armenia and Georgia work to improve their policy paper writing skills

### Selected Upcoming [English](#) and [Russian](#) Events

- Training: [Maximum Likelihood Estimation](#), April 9-13, Yerevan, Armenia — Russian.
- Seminar: [Classical Liberalism vs. Keynesianism](#), April 14, Tbilisi, Georgia — English.
- Seminar: [Poverty and Charity in Islamic Societies](#), April 24, Baku, Azerbaijan — English.
- Lecture: [Georgia and the EU: How Do Partner States Coordinate Their European Policies?](#), April 30, Tbilisi Georgia — English.

*For more events, particularly those in local languages, please go to our country websites listed below.*

### CRRC Book of the Month

[Understanding Post-Soviet Transitions](#) by Christoph H. Stefes

Using Armenia and Georgia as case studies, Stefes argues corruption is the cause, not a side-effect, of poor governance and stagnant economic development. A must read! Available at CRRC-Armenia and in Georgia upon request.

### Fellowship Highlight — Sergo Baramidze



CRRC Fellow Sergo Baramidze (right) stands next to Robert Wilson (left) USAID's Caucasus Regional Mission Director

Multinational and governmental organizations have increased their interest in cooperative agriculture in the Caucasus. Sergo Baramidze, a CRRC fellow, set out to investigate barriers hindering the development of cooperatives and other forms of business partnerships in the rural areas of West Georgia.

Baramidze found that in rural communities of Georgia, peasants and small-scale farmers tend to be self-reliant and not interested in forms of cooperation, such as agricultural or credit cooperatives. For instance, only 5% of the credit unions developed through the World Bank attained a modicum of success.

The researcher highlighted five main barriers hindering co-op developments: 1) peasants and small-scale farmers are unfamiliar with the benefits of cooperation; 2) farmers are not educated about the principles of community resource management; 3) there is no concrete plan for the development of small farm cooperative markets in rural communities; 4) villagers distrust each other too much to cooperate; 5) ultimately, there is too little sustained financing for agricultural development.

To read more, please go the CRRC [blog](#).

### Introducing Google Scholar to the Caucasus

How to connect research plans to ongoing scholarly debates? [Google Scholar](#) now is CRRC's preferred search tool, for fellows and staff. Log in to see a sample on our [Moodle platform](#).

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