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## **Success Story : Building on the Data Initiative to Provide Relevant Training and Public Presentations**

Before the Data Initiative (DI) survey began in 2004, researchers lacked a publicly available dataset to provide reliable information on social developments in the South Caucasus. In response, CRRC began the largest comparable annual social survey carried out across the South Caucasus. The Data Initiative now provides a representative nationwide sample of all three countries of the South Caucasus. More information on the dataset can be found at <http://www.crrccenters.org>.

In addition to providing data for researchers to use for academic and policy research, the dataset is now being used in trainings and presentations to teach policy makers and analysts how to better manipulate data and to educate the development community about data's importance. The data are immediately relevant to the problems that both the development community is facing and problems academics are interested in and many individuals apply the hands-on activities used in the trainings to their classrooms or workplaces.

### **Examples of Trainings and Presentations**

#### **Azerbaijan**

In Azerbaijan, Counterpart International's Civil Society Project (CSP) and CRRC-Azerbaijan organized a training course "Statistics and Regression for Policy Research." This workshop aimed to equip Azerbaijani government and NGO sector executives and analysts engaged in policy research and analysis with essential tools and techniques in statistics and regression and used the Data Initiative as the source for all of its exercises.

#### **Armenia**

In Armenia, CRRC organized sessions on "The Basics of Econometrics" and "Statistical Analysis with STATA." The 20-hour training included computer based training and involved exercises to develop practical skills using concrete examples from the DI. One participant, an instructor at the European Charolus Magnus University and Agribusiness Teaching Center, said that the local data helped her "to understand all factors and coefficients in regression output that could later on be explained to my students."

#### **Georgia**

Throughout the Caucasus, CRRC is building awareness of the importance of data and analysis among international organizations. In Georgia, CRRC provided updates on trends in Georgia to several groups of high level officials. These included a presentation at the home of Robert. J. Wilson, the Caucasus Regional Mission Director of USAID, with ambassadors and embassy officials from Europe and the United States in attendance, and a presentation to the European Commission Delegation to Georgia, chaired by Per Eklund, Ambassador and Head of Delegation. A lively debate about the use of data in the EC's development projects ensued.