EWMI Grantee Facilitates Greater Collaboration on Sustainable Energy Issues

Hydro-power will be an important component to developing a sustainable domestic energy supply in Georgia. However, several hydro-power plant (HPP) construction contracts were signed without the input of the communities those HPPs would affect or an assessment of their environmental impacts. To ensure a more participatory process that accounts for community and environmental concerns, EWMI grantee, Green Alternative, successfully facilitated greater collaboration between the government, CSOs, the private sector, and the public on the issue.

Green Alternative focused its efforts on the Imereti, Racha-Lechkhumi, and Svaneti regions, which would be affected by several new HPPs. Green Alternative began by meeting with community members to raise public awareness about the potential impact of HPP construction on local ecosystems, geography, and livelihoods.

At the same time, Green Alternative facilitated communication between these communities and relevant investors and government decision makers. Green Alternative formed two working groups within the Ministry of Energy to address public concerns. The organization also researched the terms of HPP construction contracts and recommended amendments that would promote greater sustainability and economic benefits for Georgia. These recommendations were presented to all stakeholders.

Green Alternative also formed partnerships with local CSOs working on similar issues throughout the country, including some outside of the regions originally envisioned by the project. Stepantsminda, from the Kazbegi region, was one such organization. With assistance from Green Alternative Executive Director Ketevan Gujaradze arranged through EWMI G-PAC’s Mentoring Program, Stepantsminda helped citizens in its community express their concerns about HPP construction in the Dariali Ravine to policy makers.

Thanks to Green Alternative and their coalition partners like Stepantsminda, three HPP projects (in Dariiali, Khudoni, and Namakvani) have been put on hold until concerns about them can be adequately addressed. The Ministry of Energy is now working on a sustainable energy strategy that will account for the concerns Green Alternative’s coalition has raised.

EWMI funded Green Alternative’s project with a G-PAC Partnership for Change (PfC) grant.