

The Advocates and Network Women's Program Conclude National Violence Against Women Monitor Two-Day Meeting

On July 7-8, 2005, The Advocates for Human Rights, the Network Women's Program of Open Society Institute and twenty National Violence Against Women (VAW) Monitors gathered together in Tbilisi, Georgia to discuss StopVAW and the National VAW Monitor Program.

The meeting included a general review of the country pages, the purpose and goals of the National VAW Monitor Program, and discussions about the newsletter and website translations. In addition, presentations on National VAW Monitors' best practices were made by six countries' Monitors, including Azerbaijan, Montenegro, Ukraine, Armenia, Bulgaria and Hungary. Each of these Monitors shared their experiences in identifying and monitoring news on violence against women, updating their country pages, conducting outreach on StopVAW, collaborating with other NGOs and writing Expert's Corner articles for The VAW Monitor newsletter.

Special breakout sessions were devoted to brainstorming on the envisioned future of StopVAW's country pages. Several ideas were proposed, including producing local language versions of the country pages, creating new subsections to address certain issues, and possibly expanding StopVAW to encompass more nations. Overall, it was an opportunity for Monitors to meet each other in person and forge new advocate connections and friendships.

The meeting host, Open Society Georgia Foundation, went above and beyond to make participants feel welcome and ensure the two days were a success. From coordinating the multi-media conference to arranging for simultaneous English-Russian translation to a walking tour of Tbilisi's beautiful streets, OSGF was the perfect host. Special thanks to Marina Tabukashvili, Davit Gabunia, Nina Khandinashvili and Marika Changelia for their warmth and hospitality.