

**Policy, Advocacy, and Civil Society Development in Georgia
(G-PAC)**

2014 Follow-up Report on Civic Engagement

Contents

Executive Summary	3
I. Introduction	8
II. The Current State of Civic Engagement in Georgia	9
Formal Civic Engagement	9
Informal Pro-Social Behaviors, Altruism and Social Trust	11
Willingness to Participate	12
III. NGO Understanding and Knowledge	14
Ability to Identify NGOs and their Leaders	14
Understanding the NGO Concept	16
IV. NGO Impressions and Attitudes	16
Trust in NGOs	17
Attitudes toward NGO Activists and Social Entrepreneurs	17
Issue Mismatch	19
V. Social Dynamics and Community Organizing	20
Family Dynamics	20
Openness to New People	22
Community Organizing	22
Political Dialogue	23
VI. Democratic Attitudes and the Soviet Legacy	24
Political Participation and Democratic Attitudes	24
Feelings of Political Efficacy	26
Lingering Soviet Legacy	28
VII. Conclusion	28
Annex 1 - Survey Methodology	30

Executive Summary

In 2011 at the outset of its four-year program funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by the East West Management Institute (EWMI), G-PAC carried out what was then the first nationally representative survey on civic engagement in Georgia. Now at the end of its mission providing grants and technical assistance to think tanks and advocacy organizations in Georgia, G-PAC has re-administered the survey to help understand how the landscape of civic engagement has shifted over the last three years.

In both 2011 and 2014 the EWMI G-PAC survey posed in-depth questions about the Georgian population's current levels of civic engagement, attitudes toward and perceptions of NGOs, willingness to participate in NGO campaigns, current membership in organizations and political values. It then went a step beyond the necessary but predictable questions about the formal NGO sector to assess social attitudes, altruistic behaviors and relationships among family, friends and neighbors that could be acting as obstacles to, or present unseen opportunities for, formal civic participation. In 2014 the survey was administered to a nationally representative sample of 2,410 speakers of the Georgian language in face-to-face interviews that took place between April 23 and May 6, 2014 (survey methodology is described in the Annex 1).

In general, the survey results illustrate that a considerable amount of progress has been made across many fronts in the civil society sector over a short period of time in Georgia. Not only has the general public's awareness and understanding of what an NGO is and does increased over the last three years, but levels of trust in NGOs and NGO activists have also risen significantly. The population's contact with NGOs, while still low in absolute terms, has nearly doubled since 2011 and NGOs seem to have increased their outreach efforts to the Georgian public. Moreover, the proportion of people who express willingness to participate in NGO activities far exceeds the small segment that is currently engaging with NGOs, particularly when the issues that the NGO campaigns address are considered salient. Those people already taking part in NGO activities and who express interest in doing so in the future tend to be younger, more educated, more frequent internet users providing NGOs with a key demographic to target for future membership. All in all, it seems that Georgian society is ripe for increased levels of civic organizing via NGOs in the near future.

The key findings from the 2014 survey were as follows:

- The Georgian public's understanding of what an NGO is and does seems to have increased and respondents now seem more capable of and comfortable answering questions about NGOs. Across the same set of seven questions that judged personal impressions about NGOs, a significantly reduced 33% chose to answer "Don't Know" in 2014 compared to 45% in 2011.
- Compared to the 2011 results, the Georgian public did a much better job correctly identifying the most prominent NGOs. 67% and 42% of the population correctly identified GYLA and ISFED, respectively, in 2014, as opposed to the significantly lower 56% and 30% who were able to correctly identify these two prominent Georgian NGOs in 2011. The people more likely to correctly identify NGOs tend to be younger and more educated.

- Trust in NGOs and NGO activists, while still low in absolute terms at 28% and 29%, respectively, has significantly increased since 2011 when those levels were 18% and 21%. Trust in NGOs and NGO activists seems to be higher among people who are young, more educated and living in the regions.

Please name an NGO which first comes to your mind (%)	
GYLA	10
ISFED	1
Red Cross	1
The Citizen	1
Trasparency international	1
Other	5
None	52
Don't know	29

- The Georgian public is now even more likely to believe that NGOs have positive, altruistic motivations guiding their work than selfish motives. When asked what the “main motivation” of NGOs is, the largest proportion of the population answered “helping Georgian citizens solve their problems” at 41%, up from 30% in 2011. Only 21% thought that NGOs were only motivated to receive funding for and employ themselves, which is statistically similar to the 19% who thought the same in 2011.

- Willingness to participate in NGO activities is quite high in comparison to the very low levels of actual participation. When asked if they would “become a member of an organization, which upon its own initiative, works on issues important for the society,” 35% of the

To what extent can a person who is actively involved in NGO work be trusted?	2014	2011
Can be trusted completely	10	5
4	19	16
3	40	30
2	9	5
Cannot be trusted at all	6	7
Don't know	16	36
Refuse to answer	0	1

population in 2014 reported that they were interested, similar to the 33% who expressed interest in 2011. While 65% of the society is still not interested in participating, there is a huge gap between the 2% who actually join NGOs and the 35% who express the interest in and willingness to join. This represents the pool of Georgian citizens from which NGOs should be able to draw if they wish to expand their membership and participation rates. Those people who express willingness to participate in NGO activities tend to be

younger and more educated and represent the prime demographic that NGOs should be targeting in their outreach.

- Interest in NGO campaigns is higher when NGOs address more salient issues in more specific terms. When asked if they would “become a member of an organization, which upon its own initiative, works on issues important for the society,” 35% of the population in 2014 reported that they were interested, similar to the 33% who expressed interest in 2011. However, when asked more specifically if they would be interested in “becoming a member of an organization that works to ensure food safety in Georgia,” 43% of the population expressed interest in joining. NGOs should work on

How interested would you be to become a member of an organization that works on ensuring food safety in Georgia? (%)	
Very interested	27
4	16
3	18
2	8
Not interested at all	25
Don't know	6

identifying issues that are considered important among the younger, more educated demographic that report the highest interest in participating in NGO activities.

- There remains a mismatch between the primarily economic and health related issues that most concern Georgian citizens and the election-related issues that most respondents perceive NGOs to be working on. The issue that the highest percentage of people imagines that NGOs in Georgia address is “elections” (31%), which contrasts dramatically with what people identify as the most important issues that Georgia faces: “unemployment” (30%), “peace” (17%), “affordability of healthcare” (15%), “poverty” (8%) and “territorial integrity” (6%) with “fairness of elections” getting only 1% response. This issue mismatch could be a significant factor in explaining the low levels of formal engagement with the NGO sector.

What issues do the NGOs in Georgia address most frequently? (% of mentioned)	
Elections	31
Healthcare or social assistance	17
Media/Freedom of speech	15
Minority rights	15
Increasing prices, poverty or unemployment	15
Domestic violence	13
Courts	12
Education	7
Security, defense or conflicts in Abkhazia and Ossetia	6
IDP issues	5
Regional development, municipal services and local issues	2
Don't know	22

- Levels of engagement with NGOs, while still low in absolute standards, increased dramatically over the last three years. In 2014, 9% of the population stated that they had attended a meeting organized by an NGO over the last two years, which is nearly twice the 5% who attended such a meeting in 2011. Moreover, 6% of respondents reported having called or gone to the office of an NGO compared to only 2% in 2011. NGOs themselves seem to be more actively engaging the public as well with 13% of the population reporting that someone from an NGO

had come to their door in the last two years compared to only 6% reporting the same in 2011. Again, while these levels do seem low in absolute terms, they represent a near doubling of the population’s level of engagement with NGOs in 2011. Those people who have engaged with NGOs tend to be younger, more educated and are more likely to live in the regions.

- Formal civic engagement, including formal membership in and contact with NGOs, remains very low in Georgia. Despite a more expansive definition of formal membership in the 2014 survey, only 2% of the Georgian population reported membership in any type of formal club or union, including online groups.
- Informal one-off forms of civic engagement, including pro-social helping behaviors toward family, friends, neighbors and other Georgian citizens, are even more widespread in 2014 than the already high levels of 2011. In the 2014 results 74% of the population reported having given money to a beggar in the last six months, compared to 65% in 2011; 74% reported

Over the last 2 years, have you... (% of Yes)	2014	2011
	Signed a collective letter addressing a specific issue	22
Participated in a training sponsored by an NGO	6	4
Attended a meeting organized by an NGO	9	5
Called or went to the office of an NGO	6	2
Had someone from an NGO come to your door	13	6

having helped a neighbor with a household chore, up from 61% in 2011; and 27% reported having helped resolve a dispute, compared to 20% in 2011. Moreover, there were unchanged but substantial proportions of the population who reported having helped a stranger on the road (57%), helped cleaned a public space (29%), made a contribution to a charity (29%) and planted a tree outside of their property (23%). Those people who report engaging pro-social behaviors toward other citizens tend to be younger and more educated.

- Respect for social entrepreneurs who work to solve collective problems remains high. When asked their opinions of people who collect money in the neighborhood to fix common problems, 81% agreed that they “very much respect that neighbor because they spend energy to solve problems that concern us all,” while only 6% agreed that they were suspicious of these people because they try to make a profit out of the money collection. This indicates that Georgians do appreciate the efforts put into community organizing and do not inherently distrust the intentions of people with ideas for solving common problems.
- Positive attitudes toward democracy and feelings of political efficacy as citizens have improved since 2011. For example, we see in 2014 that more Georgian citizens are interested in a deliberative style of governance than in 2011. A majority 66% agreed that “the Georgian state will only get stronger if the Government takes into consideration people’s opinions, even if this process takes more time,” while only 16% instead agreed that “right now the Georgian Government needs to take quick decisions to strengthen the state and asking people’s opinions may slow this process down.” This is a significant increase from the 56% who were inclined toward deliberation in 2011. Georgians holding the most democratic attitudes tend to be more educated and in some cases more male. If this trend continues, Georgians interested in pressing for political change may become more engaged with the NGO sector.

Which of the following statements you agree with?		2014	2011
Right now the Georgian Government needs to take quick decisions to strengthen the state	Agree very strongly	3	4
	Agree	12	7
The Georgian state will only get stronger if the Government takes into consideration people’s opinions	Agree very strongly	38	19
	Agree	29	38
Agree with neither		3	3
Don't know		13	27
Refuse to answer		1	3

- Georgians who are currently more engaged with NGOs, display more informal pro-social behaviors, express more interest in engaging with NGOs, have more trust in NGOs, are open to meeting new people, hold positive attitudes toward democracy and more feelings of political efficacy all tend to be younger and more

educated. They also tend to report more frequent internet usage. NGOs should therefore target their outreach activities to this demographic.

In sum, the findings from the G-PAC survey point to a huge opportunity for NGOs to target their campaigns to those people who: 1) already engage in socially conscious but informal acts of altruism toward other citizens, 2) express trust in NGOs, 3) report willingness to participate in NGO campaigns that focus on salient issues, 4) are open to meeting new people and making new

friends and 5) are becoming increasingly aware of and confident in their democratic rights and responsibilities to impact political decisions. The survey results highlight that people in the population possessing the above-listed characteristics all tend to come from a similar demographic. They tend to be younger, more educated, more frequent internet users who make up the segment of the population who are already taking part in NGO activities and who express interest in doing so in the future should their interests align with the NGOs' campaigns. The biggest current challenge for NGO's, as revealed by the G-PAC survey results, is matching the issues that they choose to address to the issues seen as most poignant by the young, educated demographic most likely to participate in their campaigns and activities.

I. Introduction

Three years ago the results of the 2011 G-PAC survey on civic engagement, the first of its kind ever implemented in Georgia, painted a bleak picture of minimal citizen engagement with the civil society sector. Formal membership levels were low, political engagement was weak and among the people who actually understood what an NGO is and does, more distrusted NGOs than trusted them. A brighter side emerged when looking at more informal forms of civic engagement in Georgia with a majority of Georgians regularly helping out family, friends, neighbors and fellow citizens. The 2011 report concluded that the raw materials for a vibrant civil society exist in Georgia as evidenced by the population's widespread altruistic behavior, positive attitudes toward democracy and willingness to participate in NGO campaigns when they address salient issues, particularly among the younger generation. It recommended that the formal NGO sector find ways to tap into these resources and formalize the already widespread norms of informal civic engagement.

In spring of 2014 the G-PAC civic engagement survey was re-administered to the Georgian population. With only minor modifications, the comprehensive survey again posed in-depth questions about the Georgian population's current levels of civic engagement, attitudes toward and perceptions of NGOs, willingness to participate in NGO campaigns, current membership in organizations and political values. It then went a step beyond the necessary but predictable questions about the formal NGO sector to assess social attitudes, altruistic behaviors, religious engagement and relationships among family, friends and neighbors that could be acting as obstacles to, or present unseen opportunities for, formal civic participation (see annex 1 for detailed survey methodology).

The following report presents the results of the 2014 EWMI G-PAC survey data. It begins with an assessment of the Georgian public's continuingly low levels of engagement with the formal NGO sector contrasted with the Georgian society's increasingly more widespread forms of informal civic engagement. It highlights a certain demographic of young, educated Georgians who express interest in participating in NGO campaigns that is far greater than the small segment of the population that is currently engaged with the formal NGO sector. The report moves on to look at factors that could account for the discrepancy between the very low levels of formal engagement with the NGO sector on the one hand, and both the extremely high levels of informal civic engagement and the relatively high levels of expressed interest in participating in NGO activities.

In trying to explain this discrepancy, the report first addresses the general level of knowledge about what an NGO is and does in Georgian society. It finds that while still low, the Georgian population's understanding of the concept of an NGO has improved significantly over the last three years. It then moves on to look at the perceptions and impressions that Georgians have of the NGO sector. While the results show that trust and positive attitudes toward NGOs are still low in absolute terms, they have increased significantly since 2011. The report then turns to social dynamics between family, friends and neighbors that could be crowding out the time, energy and openness needed to participate in NGO activities. It finds that social networks do not seem to stand in the way of civic engagement and that models of community organizing among neighbors could be scaled up to increase civic engagement through NGOs.

Finally, the report looks at the democratic attitudes and Soviet legacy of Georgia to ascertain whether a lack of understanding of the system or feelings of political efficacy could be preventing Georgian citizens from engagement with the formal civil society sector. The results show that democratic attitudes have only increased in Georgia over the last three years, and that Georgian citizens seem to understand the workings of the democratic system and their own political power in it. The report concludes by re-emphasizing the opportunity for NGOs to target the young, more educated demographic that has expressed interest in participating in NGO activities and highlighting the need for NGOs to address the problem of “issue mismatch” by taking up issues that are in line with the issues that this demographic perceives as the most pressing problems in Georgia.

II. The Current State of Civic Engagement in Georgia

The 2014 G-PAC survey results present a more mixed picture of the state of civic engagement among the Georgian population than in 2011. On the down side, formal engagement with the civil society sector is still very weak. Rates of membership in formal organizations remain extremely low. Statistics on political activism are equally sluggish. However, while citizens’ levels of contact with NGOs in absolute standards remain weak, they have in fact increased markedly since 2011. On the positive side, levels of informal social engagement between citizens in the form of one-off helping behaviors that were already very high in 2011 have increased even further. Moreover, reported willingness to participate in NGO activities is higher in comparison to the current levels of contact with NGOs, suggesting that there is a segment of the population who could be recruited for future NGO campaigns. Notably, both the small segment of the population who are already members of formal civic organizations or have formally engaged with NGOs and the larger segment of the population who express willingness to engage in NGO activities are significantly more likely to have engaged in one-off altruistic behaviors. This swathe of the population tends to be younger, more educated, more frequent internet users who represent a pool of potential participants for future NGO campaigns.

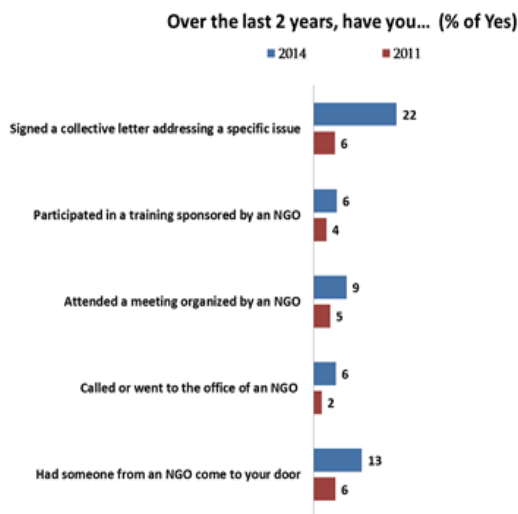
Formal Civic Engagement

Since results tracking membership in formal civic organizations were so low in 2011, the 2014 G-PAC survey broadened the definition of formal membership in an attempt to capture a larger range of participants. Respondents were therefore asked whether they belonged to “any union, club or association, such as a book club, union of writers or artists, club of theater, dance or sports lovers or an online union of people having the same interests.” Despite this more expansive definition of formal membership, only 2% of respondents reported membership in such a club or union. This result is statistically similar to the 0.77% – 1.7% of the population that reported being members of cultural, sports or professional unions, NGOs and political parties in 2011. With 98% of the population not a member of any form of civic organization it is easy to imagine the state of civic engagement in Georgia as quite grim.

Furthermore, despite an extremely active and competitive three years in Georgian politics, levels of public engagement remain unchanged from 2011 levels. 13% of respondents reported that they had attended a public meeting of any sort, 4% having sent a letter or made a phone call to a newspaper, TV or radio program and only 3% reporting attendance at a political rally, all in the past six months. The one bright spot was a dramatic increase in the proportion of the population that had signed a collective letter addressing a specific issue of concern over the last two years. Whereas in 2011 only 6% of the population reported having signed a collective letter, in 2014 that increased over three times to 22%. Even with this increase, overall levels of public engagement remain weak.

Meanwhile, levels of engagement with NGOs, while still low in absolute standards, increased dramatically over the last three years. In 2014, 9% of the population stated that they had attended a meeting organized by an NGO over the last two years, which is nearly twice the 5% who attended such a meeting in 2011. Moreover, 6% of respondents reported having called or gone to the office of an NGO compared to only 2% in 2011. While not a statistically significant increase, 6% of the population in 2014 participated in a training sponsored by an NGO in comparison to the 4% who participated in NGO training in 2011. NGOs themselves seem to be more actively engaging the public as well with 13% of the population reporting that someone from an NGO had come to their door in the last two years compared to only 6% reporting the same in 2011. Again, while these levels do seem low in absolute terms, they represent a near doubling of the population's level of engagement with NGOs in 2011.

Another encouraging trend is the profile of people who were most likely to engage with NGOs; a profile that remained consistent across all NGO-related questions. The people who more proactively engaged with NGOs tended to be younger, have higher levels of education, report



accessing the internet more frequently and, surprisingly, were more distantly located from the capital, that is, living in less major cities and rural areas. They were also more likely to have engaged in one-off altruistic behaviors such as giving money to a beggar or helping a stranger on the side of the road. By contrast, the 22% of people who signed a collective letter tended only to be more educated so did not fit the same profile of the younger, more educated person, more frequently using the internet, living in the regions who more informally engages with other citizens altruistically and formally engages with NGOs. It should be useful for Georgian

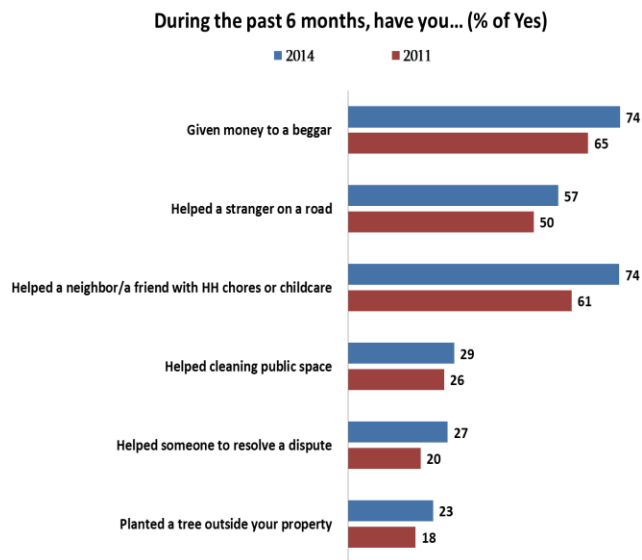
NGOs going forward to note that this specific demographic is most likely to join or participate in their campaigns.

Informal Pro-Social Behaviors, Altruism and Social Trust

The optimistic contrast to the low levels of formal civic engagement in Georgia is the remarkably high levels of informal pro-social and altruistic behaviors in Georgian society. In 2014, these informal one-off helping behaviors increased to levels higher than the already

considerable levels of 2011. 74% of the population reported having given money to a beggar in the last six months, compared to 65% in 2011; 74% reported having helped a neighbor with a household chore, up from 61% in 2011; 27% reported having helped resolve a dispute, compared to 20% in 2011. Moreover, there were unchanged but substantial proportions of the population who reported having helped a stranger on the road (57%), helped cleaned a public space (29%), made a contribution to a charity (29%) and planted a tree outside of their property (23%). The people who engage in these altruistic activities tend to

be younger, more educated and have higher household incomes. More men helped strangers on the road and planted trees outside their property, but otherwise there were no gender differences across these activities. Thus, we consistently see that while few Georgians participate in formal civic organizations large proportions of the population are engaged in helping other members of the society in spontaneous one-off acts of altruism.



In addition to actions, attitudes toward altruism in Georgian society also remained highly positive. Only 21% of the population cynically thinks that people help others only because they expect to get something back in return, while a much higher 40% disagree. The cynics do not fit a specific profile and are evenly spread across age, gender and other groups. Meanwhile, the percentage of people who felt that they could be helpful to people outside of their family rose from an already high 55% to 64%. Reciprocally, 89% of the population agreed that there are plenty of people they can rely on when they have problems. Both those who feel they can be helpful to others and those who feel they have someone to rely on tend to be younger, living in smaller cities and rural areas and to have higher household incomes.

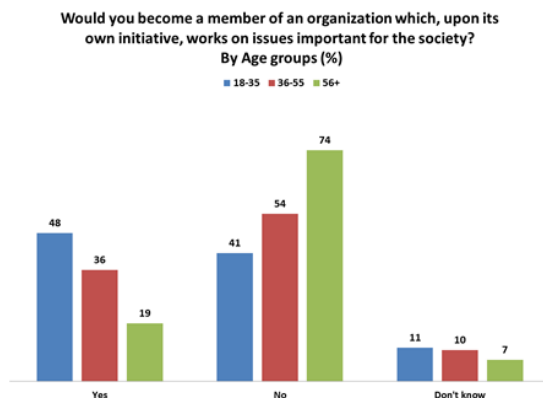
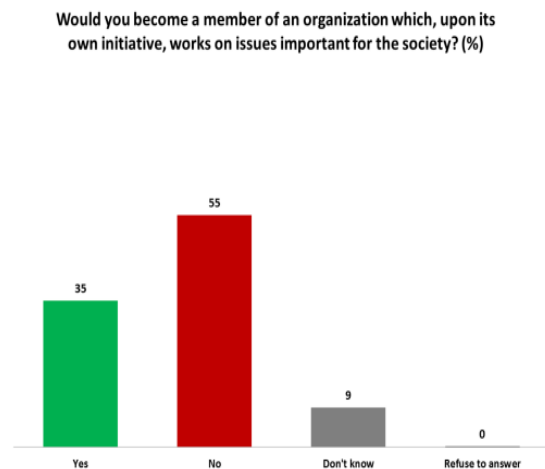
The strange counterpoint to this outpouring of altruism among Georgians is the low and decreased levels of general trust in the population. Often used as a proxy for social capital, levels of trust are thought to indicate levels of cooperation and potential for organization across a society. The proportion of the population pessimistically believing that ‘you can’t be too careful in dealing with other people in Georgia’ rose nearly ten points from 66% to 74%. Meanwhile, the level of social trust as measured by respondents who agree that ‘most people in Georgia can be

trusted' dropped significantly from 31% in 2011 to only 25% in 2014. By contrast, trust levels measured with the same question on the World Values Survey show even lower levels of social trust in neighboring Azerbaijan (15%) and Armenia (11%), far higher levels in Sweden (60%) and Germany (45%) and not much higher levels in the US (35%). The people who are more trusting of other Georgians tend to be older, more educated and are more likely to be employed.

In sum, the 2014 survey results show the same discrepancy observed in 2011 between low levels of formal civic engagement and social trust and high levels of informal pro-social behaviors and positive attitudes toward altruism in Georgian society. However, engagement with formal NGOs, while still low, has increased significantly along with trust in NGOs. Moreover, the fact that the portions of the population who tend to be most actively engaged with and trusting of NGOs as well as most altruistic in their attitudes and actions overwhelmingly tend to be younger can only bode well for generations to come.

Willingness to Participate

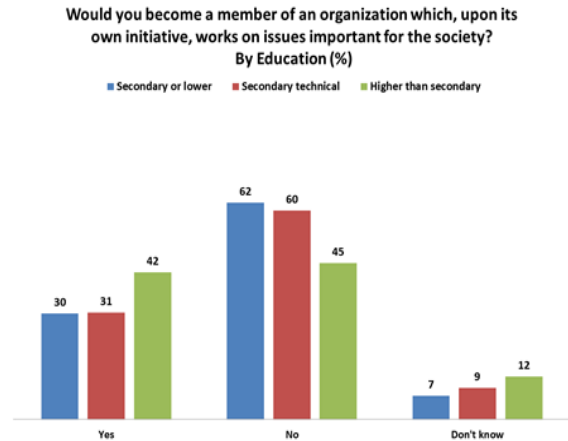
Despite levels of citizen-initiated engagement with NGOs at under 10% and membership in formal organizations still at only 2%, the proportion of respondents who profess an interest and willingness to participate in NGO activities is notably much higher. When asked if they would “become a member of an organization, which upon its own initiative, works on issues important for the society,” 35% of the population in 2014 reported that they were interested, similar to the 33% who expressed interest in 2011. While 65% of the society is still not interested in participating, there is a huge gap between the 2% who actually join NGOs and the 35% who express the interest in and willingness to join. This represents the pool of Georgian citizens from which NGOs should be able to draw if they wish to expand their membership and participation rates. They tend to be younger, more educated and use the internet more frequently and unlike the people who report currently engaging with NGOs, they are evenly distributed between urban and rural areas. This segment of the population is also far more likely to have engaged in one of the one-off altruistic behaviors measured by the survey.



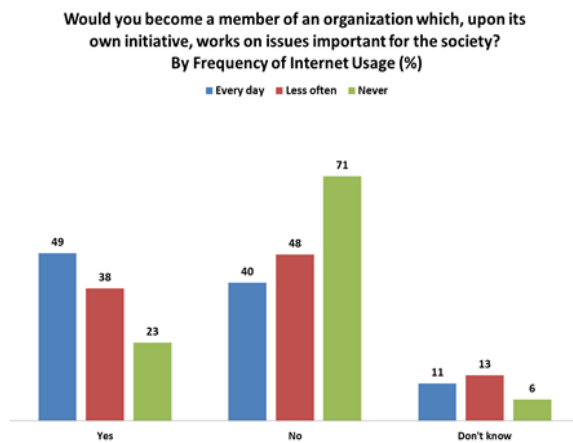
The survey results also show that the type of club or specific issue addressed by an NGO is extremely important to the level of interest shown by the population. When asked if people would be interested in joining a club for film lovers, only 15% of respondents expressed interest. However, when the currently poignant issue of food safety was raised and respondents were asked how interested they were in “becoming a member

of an organization that works to ensure food safety in Georgia,” 43% of the population expressed interest in joining. In parallel, the survey posed a new question asking “In your opinion, how necessary or unnecessary is it that Georgian citizens attend a demonstration supporting Ukraine’s territorial integrity in Georgia?” A surprising 59% majority said that such a demonstration was necessary versus only 27% of the population who said that it was unnecessary. While this does not confirm their participation in such an event, again we see the interest in civically engaged activities far outstripping the reported numbers of actual participation in such events, in this case the 3% of the population that attended a public rally.

The huge discrepancy between the 43% of people who express interest in joining the food safety NGO or the 59% who support the need for civic action in defense of Ukraine and the 2 – 10% of the population who have had any actual contact with an NGO represents an opportunity for NGOs to recruit members and participants in civic activities. The profile of the people interested in both the film club and the food safety NGO was once again younger, more educated and more frequent internet users, while the people who supported the Ukraine demonstration were more likely to be female, younger, have higher household incomes and live in the regions.



Thus, we see a similar pattern to 2011 results in which Georgians very rarely join organizations in reality, but do express higher levels of interest in joining organizations in the abstract.

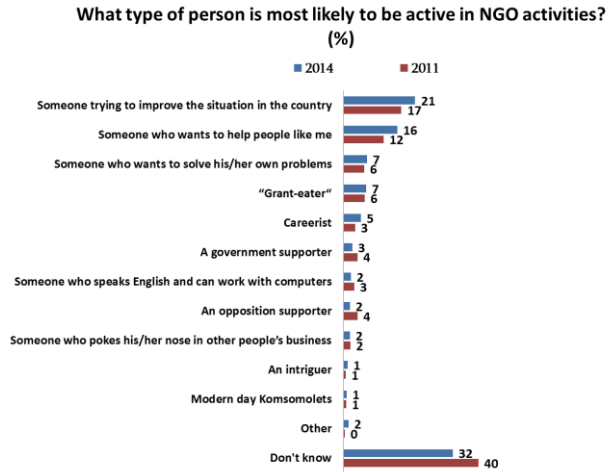


Particularly when the opportunity to join an organization that is working on a concrete issue of importance to them, a large percentage of the population expresses their interest in taking part. Whether or not expressions of interest on a survey would necessarily translate into people taking steps to join or participate in NGO activities in reality is unknowable. However, the takeaway message for NGOs who want to increase participation seems to be that there is a population of younger, more educated Georgians who spend time on the internet who are at the very least interested in participating in activities that are meaningful

to them. The key for NGOs is to find ways to appeal concretely to the public and to address issues that are most currently salient to this population.

III. NGO Understanding and Knowledge

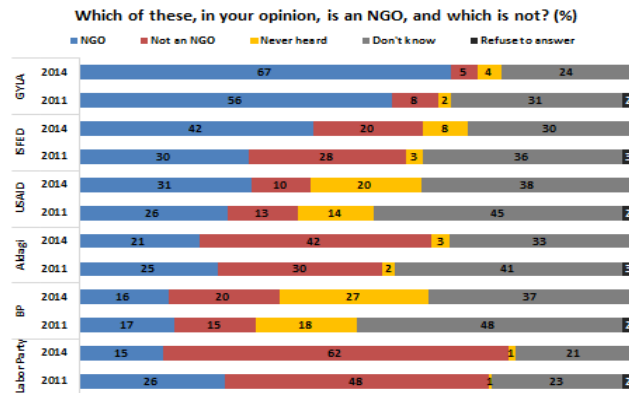
One reason that could explain the discrepancy between Georgia’s low levels of formal engagement with the civil society sector, on the one hand, and the extremely high levels of informal civic altruism and the relatively high willingness to participate in NGO campaigns, on the other hand, is the population’s lack of understanding of what an NGO is or does. The 2011 results suggested that the majority of the population did not fully comprehend the concept of an NGO and it is then easy to see why people without that knowledge would not go out of their way to participate in NGO activities.



The results from the 2014 survey illustrate that while the level of understanding of NGOs as a concept is not fully widespread in Georgia, there has been significant learning over the past three year. Moreover, while much of the population has a hard time correctly identifying NGOs and their leaders, far higher percentages have heard of recent high profile NGO campaigns.

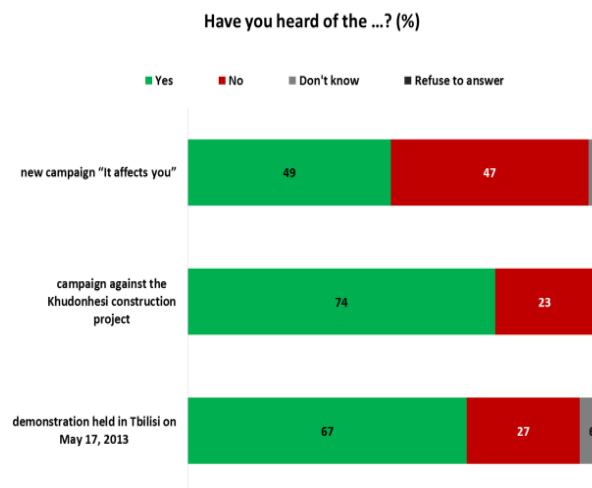
Ability to Identify NGOs and their Leaders

In trying to figure out why the levels of engagement with NGOs are so low in Georgia, the G-PAC survey asked questions to determine the population’s level of knowledge about what an NGO is and does as well. Do people not have enough information about NGOs to participate in their activities? The results were mixed. While levels of knowledge about NGOs was fairly low, awareness of specific NGO campaigns was relatively high. Compared to the 2011 responses, the Georgian public was much more confident in their understanding of NGOs as a concept, but it seemed that NGOs in Georgia still have a hard time matching the issues that they address to the issues that the Georgian public cares about most.



As in 2011, the EWMI-G-PAC survey included a series of questions designed to test respondents’ knowledge of what is and is not an NGO. Respondents were shown the names of a series of ten institutions and were asked to identify whether each institution was an NGO or not an NGO. These institutions included four well-known Georgian NGOs (the Georgian Young Lawyer’s Association (GYLA), International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy (ISFED), and the Liberty Institute) as well as six non-NGOs, including two international

organizations (the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)), two private companies (British Petroleum (BP) and Aldagi, a Georgian insurance agency), two political entities (Parliament and the Labor Party) and one fictitious organization (Association of Unemployed People). In 2014 five additional NGOs were added including Moqalqe (Citizen) (38%), Identoba (Identity) (30%), Transparency International – Georgia (41%), the Soros Foundation (43%) and the Open Society Georgia Foundation (33%).



Compared to the 2011 results, the Georgian public did a much better job correctly identifying the most prominent NGOs, whose profiles were likely raised during the multiple elections over the last three years. 67% of the population identified GYLA correctly, as opposed to the 56% who were able to correctly identify it in 2011. Similarly, 42% correctly identified ISFED as an NGO in comparison to 30% in 2011. Between 30% and 43% correctly identified the five additional NGOs added in 2014. On the other side, respondents were also significantly better at identifying private companies as not NGOs. 42% of the population correctly identified the Aldagi insurance company as not an NGO, compared to the 30% who were able to do the same in 2011. Correct identification of government institutions as not NGOs also improved. Whereas 48% of respondents in 2011 had identified the Labor Party as not an NGO, 62% of the 2014 respondents knew that the Labor Party was not an NGO.

While these rates are nowhere near perfect, they do illustrate that the Georgian public's understanding of what is and is not an NGO has improved significantly over the last three years. People who identified NGOs correctly tended to be younger and more educated. Those who identified USAID correctly came from more urban areas and those who identified GYLA, ISFED, OSI and OSGF correctly were significantly more likely to be male. Similarly, those who identified a variety of institutions and companies as not NGOs correctly tended to be younger and more educated. Those who identified BP and the Georgian Parliament as not NGOs were more likely to be male, while those who correctly identified USAID as not an NGO tended to be from more urban areas.

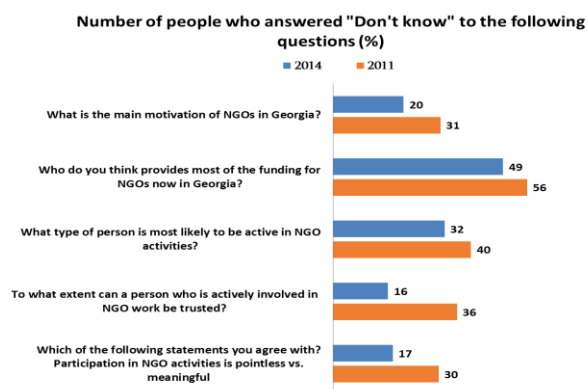
Despite the widespread inability to correctly identify NGOs based on their leaders, much larger segments of the population were aware of recent NGO campaigns that addressed salient issues. 74% reported that they had heard about the campaign against the Khudonhesi construction project, 67% about the demonstrations held in Tbilisi on May 17, 2013 and 49% about the campaign "It Affects You." Across all three campaigns, people who reported having heard of them were more likely to be male, better educated and have a higher income. Those who had heard about the May 17 demonstrations tended to be young.

Understanding the NGO Concept

In 2011, one of the most surprising results of the G-PAC survey was the extremely high level of respondents who opted to answer “Don’t Know” to all of the questions posed about NGOs. In attempting to identify whether or not a given institution was an NGO, an average 34% of the 2011 respondents answered that they did not know. Even when they were asked for their personal impressions, opinions or feelings about NGOs across a series of seven questions, an even higher average 45% responded that they did not know rather than choosing answers. This seemed to imply that a large segment of the Georgian population was not confident enough in their understanding about what an NGO is and does to answer questions about them.

The 2014 results show that the level of “Don’t Know” responses has dropped significantly and with it we can infer that the Georgian public’s level of understanding and familiarity with the concept of an NGO has increased significantly. Compared to the 34% who opted to answer “Don’t Know” rather than identify whether an institution was or was not an NGO, only 28% chose the “Don’t Know” option in 2014. More significantly, over the same seven questions that judged personal impressions about NGOs, 33% answered “Don’t Know” in 2014 compared to the 45% in 2011. Across the board, people who answered “Don’t Know” tended to be older and less educated. It is interesting to note that there were no gender or settlement differences, that is, men and women, and people across the country in urban and rural settings were just as likely to know as to not know.

While the level of people claiming not to have enough information to answer questions about NGOs is still high, the significant decrease in “Don’t Know” responses signifies that in 2014 the Georgian public is more willing to be assertive and express opinions about NGOs. This implies that the public’s level of understanding about what an NGO is and does and their comfort with the term NGO as a concept that they can identify have significantly increased over the last three years.



IV. NGO Impressions and Attitudes

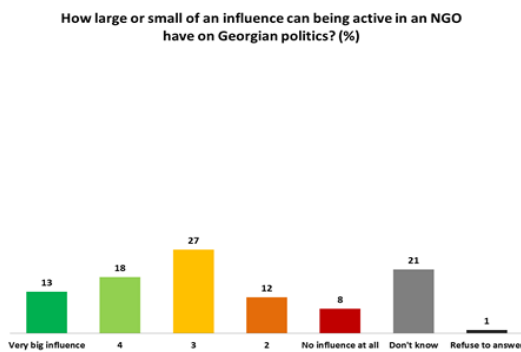
Another reason that could explain the low levels of formal civic engagement in Georgia despite high levels of altruism and expressed interest in participating in specific NGO campaigns is negative attitudes and mistrust directed at NGOs. This certainly seemed to be part of the problem in the 2011 results. However, the 2014 results show that the level of trust in NGOs and belief in their efficacy has increased significantly over the last three years. Moreover, levels of trust and positive impressions have also increased for NGO workers and remain high for social entrepreneurs who organize to solve collective problems. Finally, the problem of ‘issue mismatch’ or people’s perceptions of what issues that NGOs address not lining up with the

issues that they find the most pressing for themselves personally and for society remains a key problem for Georgian NGOs to solve.

Trust in NGOs

Meanwhile, levels of trust in NGOs, while still relatively low in comparison to trust in other institutions in Georgia, have increased markedly since 2011. Strong levels of trust in NGOs jumped ten points from 18% in 2011 to 28% in 2014, while neutral feelings of neither trust nor distrust increased another ten points from 26% to 36%. Strong levels of trust in the Georgian army and police remained much higher at 82% and 59% respectively, but these new levels of trust in NGOs are not that far off from levels of trust in local government (34%), parliament (32%) and the courts (30%). As with those people more engaged with NGO activities, the respondents who reported higher level of trust in NGOs tended to be younger, more educated and to live in less urban areas.

A new question introduced in the 2014 survey asked how much influence respondents thought that participating in an NGO would have on Georgian politics. Despite low levels of actual participation in NGO activities, 30% of Georgians believed that such participation has a high impact on Georgian politics, while only 12% believed it had low impact and only 8% believed it had no impact at all. Those who believed that NGOs had impact on politics tended to be younger, female and more highly educated. Again we can note the trend that the younger generation seems more positively oriented toward NGOs and their role in democratic politics.



Unfortunately, only 15% state that they would turn to NGOs for help if they were having a difficult time in life. This compares to 88% who would turn to relatives, 73% who would turn to friends, 37% who would turn to the local government and 21% who would turn to their priest.

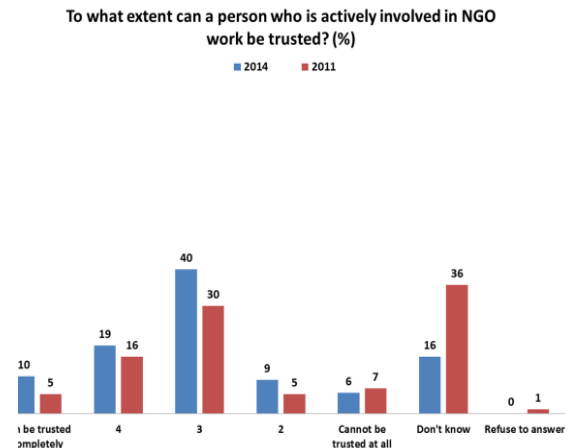
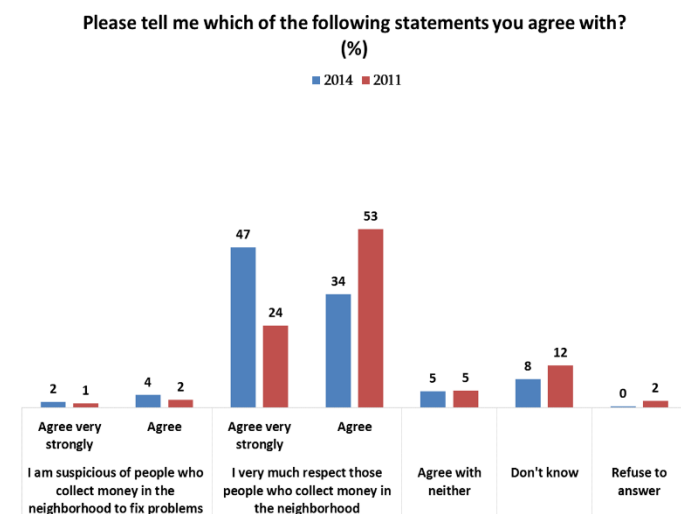
Moreover, when asked what the “main motivation” of NGOs is, the largest proportion of the population answered “helping Georgian citizens solve their problems” at 41%, up from 30% in 2011. Only 21% thought that NGOs were only motivated to receive funding for and employ

themselves, which is statistically similar to the 19% who thought the same in 2011. Meanwhile, 20% responded that they “Don’t Know,” down from 31% in 2011.

Attitudes toward NGO Activists and Social Entrepreneurs

Another theory of why civic engagement might not be widespread is a suspicion of and dislike toward NGO activists and social entrepreneurs. Particularly given the Soviet legacy, it is possible that people who attempt to organize and solve collective problems are perceived as meddling or attempting to gain profit for themselves.

However, the 2014 results found increased levels of trust in people who are active in NGOs. 29% of the population report high levels of trust in NGO activists, while 40% are neutral about them and only 15% distrust them. This is a significant increase from the 21% who trusted NGO activists and 30% who were neutral about them in 2011 that comes from people deciding to state a level of trust rather than declaring that they “Don’t Know.” As in 2011, a large proportion of people still categorize people active in NGOs positively as “someone who is trying to improve the situation in the country” (21%) and “someone who wants to help people like me” (16%), while far fewer imagine NGO activists as “Grant-eaters” (6%) or “someone who pokes his/her nose into other people’s business” (2%).



Those people who view NGO activists positively tend to be younger, more educated and living in less urban environments. Those who view them negatively are also more educated but instead skew toward the capital and more urban areas. Most people (40%), however, respond that they “Don’t Know” how to categorize these people at all.

The G-PAC survey also asked a series of questions about social entrepreneurs in people’s neighborhoods. 61% of respondents agreed that “in the event of a neighborhood problem, there is a neighbor who is most likely to organize people to resolve it or take care of it him/herself.” 29% did not have this sort of neighbor and 10% did not know. People who had this type of neighborhood organizer tended to have higher household incomes. They were not more likely to be more rural or more urban. An overwhelming 80% of people with such a neighbor thought that the majority of neighbors had positive views of this person. 17% thought they held neutral views and only 1% thought the neighborhood organizer was viewed negatively. This type of organizer was more likely to be seen as negative or neutral in more urban areas. 58% of respondents reported that this neighbor had been officially elected to a position for handling such issues, while 33% stated that he/she had not been elected and 10% were not sure. The neighborhood organizer was more likely to have been officially elected in more urban areas.

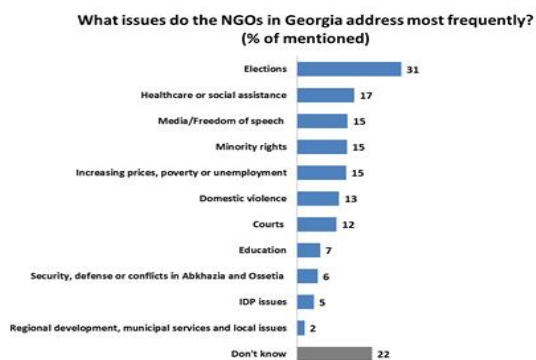
Respondents were also asked their opinions of people who collect money in the neighborhood to fix common problems. Only 6% agreed or strongly agreed that they were suspicious of these people because they try to make a profit out of the money collection. 81% agreed the opposite that they very much respect that neighbor because they spend energy to solve problems that concern us all. Results were similar in 2011, however, there was a significant shift in intensity from 34% simply agreeing to 47% strongly agreeing with the positive framing of that neighbor.

In sum, attitudes toward both NGO activists and social entrepreneurs seem overwhelmingly positive. Negative feelings toward the people who organize to collectively solve problems does not seem to be a reason for low levels of formal engagement with the NGO sector.

Issue Mismatch

Another reason that so few Georgians join or participate in the work of NGOs could be their perception that NGOs are not working on the issues that are most important to them. The G-PAC survey asks a series of questions to attempt to understand what issues are most important to the Georgian people in addition to what issues they believe that NGOs in Georgia address most frequently.

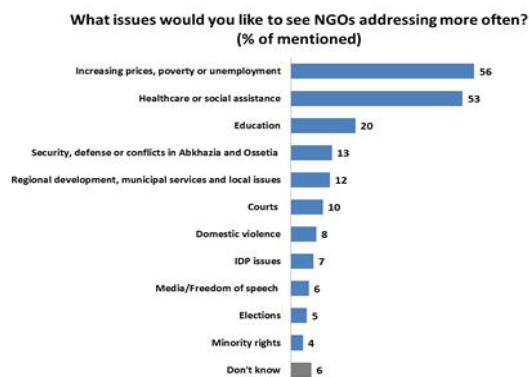
As in 2011, the issue that the highest percentage of people imagines that NGOs in Georgia address is “elections” (31%). Particularly in the wake of the high-profile work done by the Georgian NGO sector for the last parliamentary and presidential elections, it is not surprising that the largest segment of respondents who are able to identify what issues NGOs work on select “elections.” However, this contrasts dramatically with what people identify as the most



important issues that Georgia faces. When asked what the most pressing issue is for them personally at the moment “fairness of elections” gets only 1% response. Instead, “unemployment” is in first place with 30%, “peace” behind it at 17%, followed by “affordability of healthcare” (15%), “poverty” (8%) and “territorial integrity” (6%). Moreover, when asked what issues respondents would like NGOs to address more often, only 5% select elections compared to those who cite poverty and

unemployment (56%), healthcare or social assistance (53%), education (20%), security and conflicts (13%) and regional development (12%).

The picture seems clear that the majority of Georgian citizens are most concerned about economic and health-related issues and to a lesser extent issues of peace and security. While there is some evidence of people perceiving NGOs as addressing two of the issues most important to the public, such as healthcare or social assistance (17%) and poverty and unemployment (15%), the levels of people who perceive this are still quite low. Taking into account the strong responses garnered from larger proportions of the society when NGOs took up issues that were meaningful for respondents, issue mismatch seems the biggest obstacle to increased participation in the NGO sector in 2014.



As in 2011, there is still evidence of a mismatch between what people perceive as the most pressing problems the country and population face and the issues that NGOs address. It is thus the obligation of NGOs who want to broaden their membership and participation to work harder to tailor the focus of their campaigns to the issues that the population, particularly the younger more educated population who have expressed interest in taking part in NGO activities, finds the most salient.

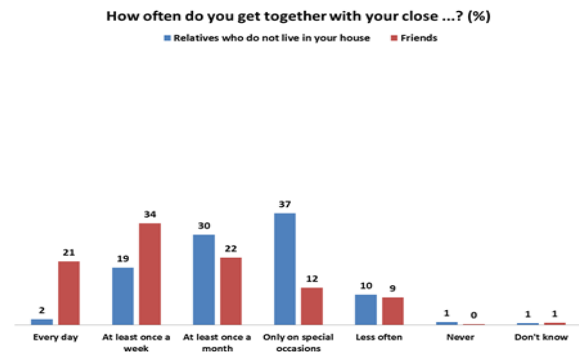
V. Social Dynamics and Community Organizing

A further possible explanation for lack of engagement with the formal NGO sector is that the dense web of existing social interactions between family, friends and neighbors crowd out the space for added obligations and leave no desire for additional social engagement. The 2014 results suggest that family obligations may be an issue for a segment of the population, but not the same segment that has expressed interest in participating in NGO activities. They further show that despite a preponderance of close friendships, the majority of Georgians remain open to meeting new people and making new friends, particularly among the youth. Moreover, patterns of social collaboration among neighbors reveal that Georgians are already familiar with the logic of community organizing to solve shared problems that can be applied to solving problems at the regional or national levels via NGOs. Finally and less fortunately, the survey results show that despite high levels of socialization, the majority of Georgians do not regularly discuss politics with family, friends or neighbors. The young demographic seems particularly averse to discussing politics, which may be a factor preventing them from engaging with the formal NGO sector.

Family Dynamics

When respondents are asked outright to explain why they are not interested in participating in NGO activities, the top two reasons they give corroborate this idea that their social space is already too crowded for the additional obligations of engagement with the NGO sector. 36% of respondents stated that they prefer to focus on their own personal and family matters and 22%

that do not have the time to participate in NGO activities. Further supporting this logic, more Georgians agree with the statement that “they have so much to do at home that they do not have time for anything else” (41%) than those who think they have time for outside activities (32%). The profile of the people who prefer to take care of their family affairs and who feel too busy at home is similar with both tending to be female and living in less urban environments and in the case of preferring to take care of family affairs, they are also less educated. This profile is distinct from the younger, more educated segment of the population that is more likely to be a member of an NGO or to express interest in participating in NGO activities.



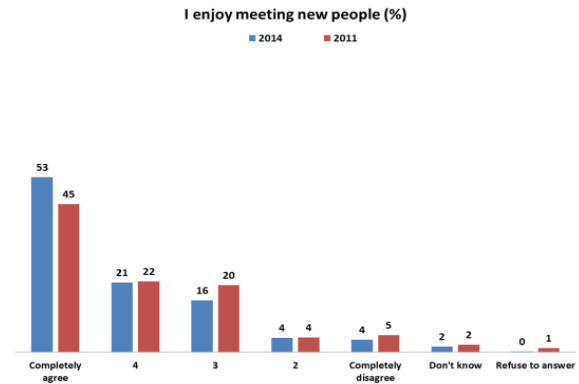
Despite tight-knit family bonds, most Georgians do not get together with close relatives very frequently, certainly not so much that it could be seen as crowding out time for other activities. When asked how often they get together with close relatives, 21% reported every day or once a week, while 67% once a month or only on special occasions and 11% less frequently. Rates for getting together with close friends were comparably much higher. Younger people and people with higher household incomes tend to get together more frequently. Moreover, the majority of Georgians (51%) do not believe that their families demand too much of them. Those who do tend to be younger and more male, but do not fit any economic or geographic profile.

Another interesting piece of data that supports the idea that existing family commitments could crowd out the time and energy for additional civic obligations is the fact that the only background characteristic that current members of formal organizations have in common is that they come from households with fewer adult members. That is, as household size, as measured by the number of adult members living in the home, decreases, family members are more likely to join formal organizations outside of the home. This is not true, however, for households in which children increase the household size.

While there is no way from the survey results to know conclusively why living in households with more adult members would detract from formal membership we can posit two theories. On one hand, more adults living in a household together could indicate the presence of an inter-generational family, perhaps holding more traditional values that promote insularity rather than openness. Relatedly, the higher levels of social interaction, private concerns and family challenges at play in a larger household could keep family members more involved in household affairs with less time and energy to invest outside of the home. The flipside of this logic is that people living in households with fewer adult members crave further social interaction and seek it in clubs, unions and other formal civic organizations. However, the 2% of the population that are currently members of formal organizations is so small that the same logic may not reflect the rest of the population.

Openness to New People

The crowding out may not come only from family obligations but from existing social ties with friends that keep Georgians too busy to participate in NGO activities. As in 2011, a surprising 92% of Georgians report having close friends. The 7% who report not having close friends tend to be older and living in more urban environments. In fact, it is close friends not relatives that most Georgians see frequently. 55% report getting together with close friends every day or once a week, 35% once a month or only on special occasions while 10% less frequently. Those who see their friends more often tend to be younger and male. It is possible that this high level of contact with close friends could impact the amount of time Georgians have to commit to outside activities, though it is also possible that friends could join NGOs or participate in their activities together.

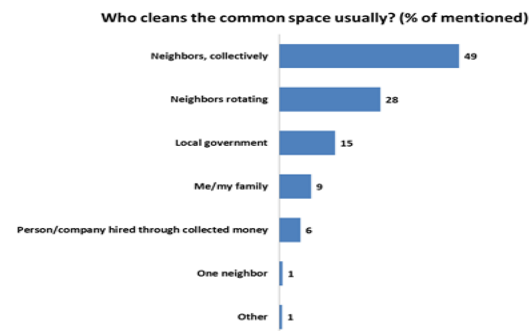


However, despite their deep commitments to existing friends, the majority of Georgians are open to making new friends as well at increasing levels. An overwhelming 73% of Georgians disagreed with the statement that they already had enough friends and did not need to make any new friends, compared to 64% in 2011. Moreover, 74% stated that they enjoy meeting new people compared to 67% in 2011. Those who are interested in making new friends tend to be younger and more rural and those who enjoy meeting new people are also younger and more rural but in addition tend to have more education and higher household incomes. That said, while the vast majority of Georgians are interested in making new friends, 50% of them did not make any new friends in the last year. Those who did make new friends were most likely to meet them through existing friends (22%), through relatives (9%), through co-workers (9%) or at school (9%).

Community Organizing

The G-PAC survey further examines the social dynamics that Georgians have with their neighbors to better understand whether or not and how individuals organize to solve shared problems. If most citizens depend on the government to solve problems for them or they prefer to handle problems as individuals rather than collectively, they simply may not see the purpose or benefit in the kind of community organizing that an NGO employs to resolve common problems in the society.

By way of background, the survey establishes that the majority of Georgians (58%) have lived in their current residence for over 20 years, including 25% who have lived there for over 40 years. 29% have been



living there for 4 – 20 years and only 11% are new arrivals who have only lived in their residences for 0 – 3 years. Thus, it is not surprising that 56% of Georgians report knowing all of the families in their neighborhood and only 1% report knowing none. 64% of Georgians talk to their neighbors every day and 25% at least once a week with only 1% reporting never talking to neighbors. Those who talk the most with their neighbors tend to live in less urban areas and are less likely to be employed, so presumably have more time on their hands.

When asked about how neighbors solve collective problems, most answers involve some form of collectively organizing themselves rather than depending on the local government or handling problems individually. 72% of Georgians report that they have a common space shared with neighbors that gets regularly cleaned. Only 15% of those with shared cleaning needs report that the local government cleans that common space for them and only 6% hire a person to clean that space. By far the most common way of dealing with the cleaning of shared space is neighbors collectively cleaning (49%) or neighbors cleaning on a rotational basis (28%). Similarly, when asked if a hypothetical tree were to fall and block a road or entrance for the neighborhood, only 5% would rely on the local government to solve the problem for them and 4% on a condominium association leader. 38% thought that all neighbors would go out to solve the problem together, while 21% thought that the neighbor most affected would solve it him/herself. Others thought neighbors who have the time (7%) or a small group of active neighbors (6%) would clear the tree. Thus, we see that most Georgians do in fact have an inherent understanding of the power of collective organizing to solve shared problems. This logic should be scalable from solving local problems among a group of neighbors to solving pressing regional or national problems among a group of NGO members sharing a collective interest.

Political Dialogue

Despite the very social lives described above, Georgians for the most part do not seem to be widely discussing politics with their relatives, friends or neighbors. While 66% of Georgians are very likely to discuss private problems with their close relatives, only 23% are very likely to discuss politics. Even fewer (18%) are very likely to discuss politics with their friends. And although 29% of Georgians are very likely to discuss common problems with their neighbors, only 14% are likely to change the topic of that discussion to politics. Interestingly, those who tend to discuss private problems with relatives and common problems with neighbors tend to be older and more female. However, those most likely to discuss politics with relatives, friends and neighbors tend to be older, male and more educated. In the case of neighborhood discussions, they tend to be living in more rural conditions. In discussions, 29% of Georgians agreed that when they hold a strong opinion about a political issue they were likely to try to persuade relatives, friends and neighbors to share their view, while 44% disagreed. Those who were interested in persuasion tended to be male and more educated.

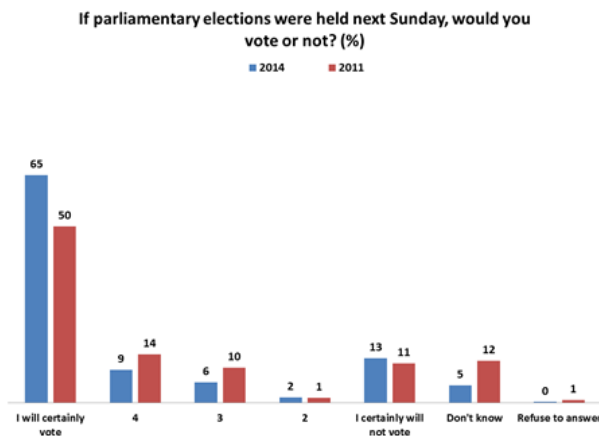
Thus, while we see a picture of very social people, we do not see this social engagement being put to use to deliberate, discuss or help solve collective problems. While the younger demographic expresses the most interest in theoretically participating in NGO activities, they do not seem to discuss the political issues that an NGO campaign would address with their family, friends or neighbors.

VI. Democratic Attitudes and the Soviet Legacy

Another reason put forward to explain the lack of formal engagement with the civil society sector is a lingering Soviet mentality that keeps Georgians from fully understanding or believing in the benefits of democratic political participation and pushing for political change. The G-PAC survey thus asks a series of questions to gauge Georgian citizens' understanding of and feelings toward political participation, democracy and their own political efficacy as citizens. The results show a marked increase from 2011 in positive attitudes toward political participation, democratic decision making and feelings of political efficacy. The only throwback to the Soviet era seems to be a widespread desire for a return to government enforced volunteerism. While this particular legacy could help explain why individuals do not pro-actively join NGOs of their own free will, it does not seem to impact the younger demographic who are of the most interest to the NGO sector.

Political Participation and Democratic Attitudes

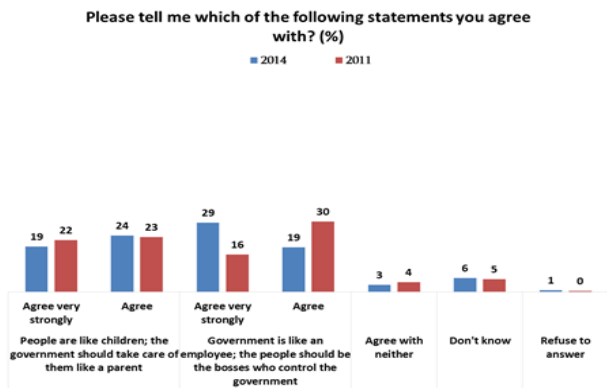
When asked whether or not they would vote in parliamentary elections if they were held next Sunday, a majority 75% of the population reported that they would vote, which represents a significant increase from 65% in 2011. Those who intended to vote were more likely to be older and living farther from the capital. 60 and 62% of Georgians stated that taking part in presidential/parliamentary elections and local elections, respectively, is a way that citizens can have a very large impact on Georgian politics. By contrast, only 12% and 11% believed that



voting in presidential/parliamentary and local elections, respectively, would have little or no impact on Georgian politics. Interestingly, the majority who more strongly believed in the efficacy of elections tended to live in smaller cities and more rural areas. That said, a 53% agreed that it is difficult to understand what is going on in Georgian politics. While these people tended to be less educated, they were spread evenly across both genders, rural and urban environments, all levels of household income and represent the majority.

48% of Georgians agree or strongly agree with the statement that the government is like an employee and the people should be the bosses who control the government, whereas 43% agree or strongly agree that people are like children and the government should take care of them like a parent. More educated people and men are more likely to agree that the government should act like an employee rather than a parent. While the margin of error means that there is no statistically significant shift of people from the parent to the employee category between 2011 and 2014, there was a significant increase in the intensity of the preference for the government serving as an employee. In 2011 30% of people simply agreed and 16% strongly agreed that the government should serve as an employee rather than as a parent. In 2014, however, 19% simply agreed and 29% strongly agreed. By contrast in neighboring Armenia and Azerbaijan, only 22%

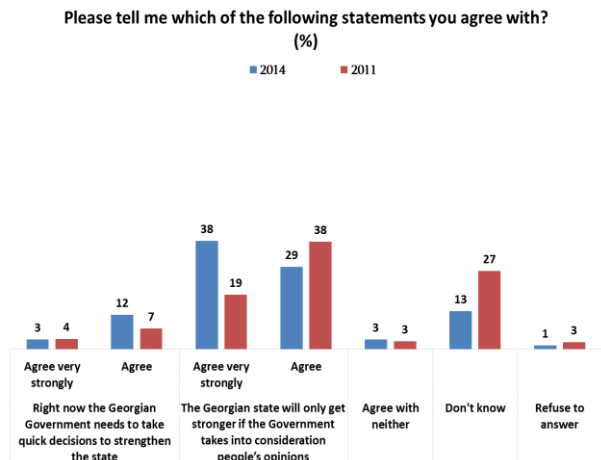
and 21% of the populations respectively thought that the government should act like an employee of the citizens, while 71% and 70% thought that the government should play the role of a parent.



43% of the population agree or strongly agree with the statement that “Politics is a dirty business and I do not participate in politics because I do not want to get dirty hands myself,” whereas 42% believe the countervailing statement that “It is the civic duty of every Georgian citizen to participate in politics to make it a better country.” Those who thought the latter tended to be more educated. While the population seems split on this issue in 2011 and 2014 there

was a shift in intensity of agreement for the people who believe that politics is a civic duty rather than a dirty business. In 2011 28% agreed with this statement and only 9% strongly agreed, while in 2014, 20% agreed and 22% strongly agreed that politics is a civic duty.

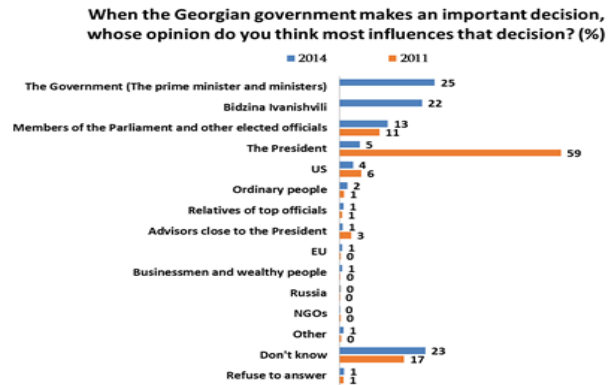
Another aspect of democracy is deliberative decision making. In Georgia’s past many leaders have taken quick decisions to move state-building reforms along rapidly rather than taking the time to form consensus among the people and interest groups. We see in 2014 that Georgian citizens are becoming more interested in a deliberative style of governance. Only 16% agreed with the statement that “right now the Georgian Government needs to take quick decisions to strengthen the state and asking people’s opinions may slow this process down,” whereas a majority 66% agreed with that instead “the Georgian state will only get stronger if the Government takes into consideration people’s opinions, even if this process takes more time.” This is a significant increase from the 56% who were inclined toward deliberation in 2011.



Finally, when asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement “I do not want to press for political change because things could always get worse,” 32% of the population disagreed with this pessimistic statement, 26% were neutral and 30% agreed. While not statistically significant, the subtle difference from 2011’s 25% disagreeing, 32% neutral and 36% agreeing could mean that attitudes are shifting in a more optimistic direction. Moreover, the fact that the more pessimistic respondents tended to be older may bode well for the future of Georgian politics.

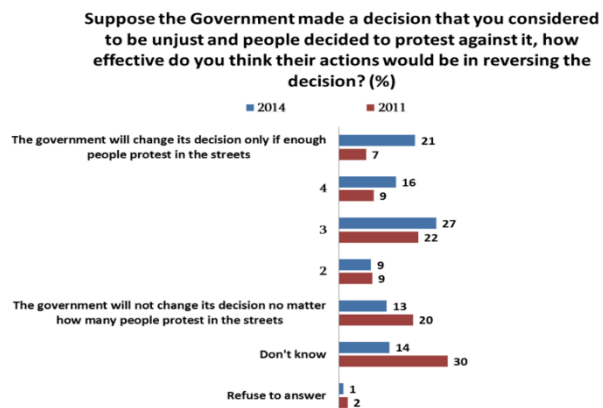
Feelings of Political Efficacy

Another reason that Georgians may not participate in political activity, is that they feel it has no ultimate effect on the Georgian government’s decision making process. This could also explain why interest in NGO campaigns is high but participation is low. However, when asked a series of questions about their feelings of political efficacy as citizens, far more Georgians believed citizen action could influence government decisions than not and at increased levels than they did in 2011.



Attitudes about how the government makes decisions seem to have shifted a great deal between 2011 and 2014, presumably in parallel with the significant political changes during this period. When asked in 2011 “when Georgian government makes an important decision, whose opinion do you think most influences that decision?” and allowed to pick only one answer, an overwhelming 59% believed that the President’s opinion held the most sway. In 2014, with a new president in office, only 5% of the population still believe that the President’s opinion has the most impact on government decisions. Instead, 25% now believe that the prime minister and ministers have the most influence on government decisions and 22% that Bidzina Ivanishvili, himself, the now former-Prime Minister. Note that both of these responses were added as new options to the 2014 survey. Similar to 2011, 13% believed that Members of Parliament and other elected officials have the most impact. Very few people believe that foreign governments influence Georgian political decisions with 4% stating the US government, 1% the EU and 0% the Russian government having influence. Similarly few people believe that people outside of the formal political system such as relatives of top officials (1%) and businessmen and wealthy people (1%) have the most influence. Unfortunately, the numbers are just as low for Georgians believing that the popular opinion of ordinary citizens significantly influences political decisions (1%) and no one believed that NGOs were the most influential.

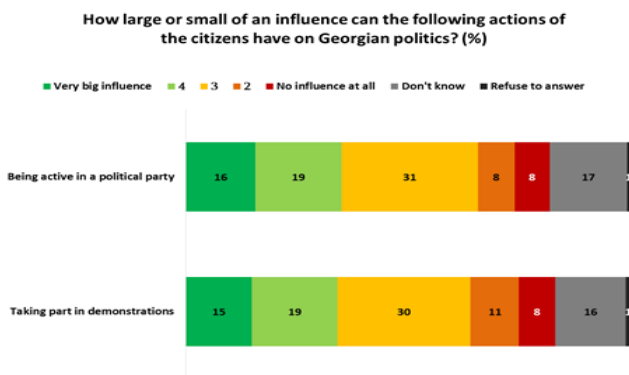
On the brighter sides, opinions have shifted more positively toward the importance and safety of taking part in peaceful demonstrations. In 2011, 38% of the population agreed with the statement that “holding peaceful demonstrations is *important* because this way the government is forced to take into consideration people’s demands” compared to 30% who instead agreed that “For me, actions like holding peaceful demonstrations to demand something



from the government are *pointless* because the government will do whatever it wants anyway.” In 2014, a majority 58% agreed with the importance of staging public demonstrations to influence the government, a significant increase of 20 points, with a comparatively small 24% maintaining the view that demonstrations are pointless. The majority now believing in the importance of demonstrations tend to be more educated but are otherwise evenly distributed across gender, age, economic prosperity and settlement types.

Another question attempting to gauge feelings of political efficacy asks respondents to “suppose the Government made a decision that you considered to be unjust and people decided to protest against it” and evaluate “how effective do you think their actions would be in reversing the decision.” The responses also shifted dramatically between 2011 and 2014. In 2011, 29% of Georgians pessimistically thought that protests against a government decision would have little or no impact in reversing that decision, while only 17% believed that the same protests could have impact in getting the government to reverse the decision. However, in 2014, those proportions flipped with only 22% believing that protests would have no impact and 36% thinking that protests would convince the government to reverse its decision. The major difference between these two types of people seems to be age with younger Georgians tending to more optimistically believe that public protests could effectively reverse an unpopular government decision.

This increase in beliefs in political efficacy was mirrored in beliefs of the safety of taking part in such demonstrations. In 2011, 44% of Georgians agreed with the statement that “taking part in actions like attending peaceful demonstrations is completely *safe* because the Constitution guarantees citizens the right to express their opinions” while 22% believed that “taking part in actions like attending peaceful demonstrations is *dangerous* because the Government is keeping an eye on everything.” In 2014, the proportion of the population that believed taking part in demonstrations was dangerous dropped to only 15% and the percentage believing that demonstrations are completely safe increased over 20 points to a majority 66%. This shift in



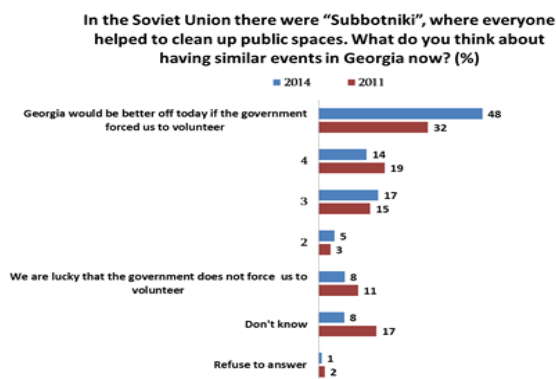
feelings that the Constitution guarantees the safety of full political expression and that the government cannot seek reprisals for such expression in addition to the belief that demonstrations are important rather than pointless, if maintained, are likely to have a positive impact on political participation.

Further optimistic attitudes toward the efficacy of political participation could be seen in responses to questions introduced in the 2014 survey about the extent to which citizens taking part in demonstrations and being active in a political party can have influence on Georgian politics. 34% of Georgians believe that taking part in demonstrations could have great influence on Georgian politics versus only 19% who believe demonstrations have little (11%) or no (8%) influence. Similarly, 35% of the population believes that being active in a political party can have considerable influence on Georgian politics, while only 16% believe that citizens’ party activity has little (8%) or no (8%)

impact on politics. Those who felt that being active in a political party had influence tended to be younger but did not skew toward either gender, level of education or urban or rural environment. While many Georgians hedge their bets by thinking the influence of political participation is somewhere in between having a great deal of influence and having little or no influence on Georgian politics, the proportions seem positively weighted toward a belief in political efficacy.

Lingering Soviet Legacy

The one measure where Georgians score overwhelmingly undemocratically regards attitudes toward government enforced volunteerism. In Soviet times the government mandated the practice of ‘Shabatoba’ in Georgian (‘Subbotniki’ in Russian), which translates to ‘Saturdays’ or the day that the government forced people to ‘volunteer’ to clean common spaces collectively. Only 12% of Georgians agreed that “they are lucky the government no longer forces them to clean” while a majority 62%, up from 52% in 2011, stated the belief that “Georgia would be better off today if the government forced us to volunteer.” Those who agreed were more likely to be female, older and less educated. This lingering desire for the government to force volunteerism and public service onto the people in itself could go a long way to explaining the low levels of membership. Since the attitudes toward NGOs are improving and the desire to join in public activism is at a much higher level than levels of participation, perhaps this view that the government should take a role in organizing public service could be in some way responsible for the low levels of participation. That said, the profile of the older less educated 62% who support government enforced volunteerism is much different from the younger more educated segments of the population who express interest in taking part in NGO activities.



VII. Conclusion

The follow-up administration of G-PAC’s civic engagement survey illustrates that a considerable amount of progress has been made across many fronts over a short period of time in Georgia. While levels of formal civic engagement remain extremely low, informal altruistic behaviors toward other citizens remain high. Moreover, the proportion of people who express willingness to participate in NGO activities far exceeds the small segment that is actually engaging with those activities. Not only has the general public’s awareness and understanding of what an NGO is and does increased over the last three years, but levels of trust in NGOs and NGO activists have also risen significantly creating more solid ground in the society from which NGOs can begin to recruit new members and participants.

Yes, Georgians do have tight social bonds with family, friends and neighbors, but the survey results seem to show that these obligations do not crowd out the time and energy necessary for civic engagement, particularly among the younger, more educated demographic interested in

NGO participation. Georgians remain open to meeting new people and making new friends, an opportunity that taking part in an NGO would open up to them. Moreover, neighbors who collectively act to solve shared problems have already established a model for how concerned citizens can join together in NGOs to tackle common problems that face them at the regional and national levels. Georgian society is currently more aware of and optimistic about their democratic rights and responsibilities than in years past. This is particularly true among the younger and more educated people that NGOs should seek to target. All in all, it seems that Georgian society is ripe for increased levels of civic organizing via NGOs.

The findings from the G-PAC survey point out a huge opportunity for NGOs to target their campaigns to those people who: 1) already engage in socially conscious but informal acts of altruism toward other citizens, 2) express trust in NGOs, 2) report willingness to participate in NGO campaigns that focus on salient issues, 3) are open to meeting new people and making new friends and 4) are becoming increasingly aware of and confident in their democratic rights and responsibilities to impact political decisions. The survey results highlight that people in the population possessing the above-listed characteristics all tend to come from a similar demographic. They tend to be younger, more educated, more frequent internet users who make up the segment of the population who are already taking part in NGO activities and who express interest in doing so in the future should their interests align with the NGOs' campaigns.

The biggest current challenge for NGO's, as revealed by the G-PAC survey results, is matching the issues that they choose to address to the issues that are of poignant interest to the young, educated demographic most likely to participate in their campaigns and activities.

Annex 1 - Survey Methodology

CRRC Georgia conducted the nationally representative survey on civic engagement between April 23 and May 6 2014. The survey was designed to examine social attitudes held among the adult Georgian-speaking population of Georgia on topics pertaining to civic engagement, activism, non-governmental organizations and volunteerism. This was the second wave of the survey on volunteerism and civic participation. The first wave of this survey was conducted in summer 2011.

Sampling

The target population of the 2014 survey was Georgian speaking adults. The size of the sample was defined as 3,732, resulting in 2,410 completed interviews. Exclusions from the target population included residents in predominantly non-Georgian settlements, the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, institutionalized populations, such as army servicemen living on military bases, and the homeless population.

The survey used a stratified multistage clustered sample design. The target population was stratified by four strata in order to obtain representative survey estimates for each stratum: 1. Capital; 2. Major cities (Telavi, Rustavi, Gori, Kutaisi, Zugdidi, Poti, Batumi), 3. Other urban settlements and 4. Rural settlements. Within strata 3 and 4 further proportional substratification into 4 geographic substrata was used in order to eliminate the chance of sample bias within each first level stratum. In each substrata and the capital an independent random selection of voting precincts (clusters) was made with probability proportional to the number of registered voters within the precinct. Within each cluster, a fixed number of households was selected using a systematic random walk protocol. Within each selected household one adult respondent was selected using the Kish respondent selection method.

Method of interviewing

The 2014 survey was conducted using a computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) method of face-to-face interviews, unlike the 2011 survey in which a paper and pencil interviewing (PAPI) method was used. In between the two waves of this survey, CRRC has conducted a number of surveys using both methods to test any difference that could be attributed to the usage of computer tablets. In all cases, no significant differences have been detected.

The CAPI method ensures data reliability by decreasing the number of interviewer errors and providing opportunities to check the work of interviewers during and after fieldwork. The raw data underwent a data cleaning process during which a series of logical checks and missing data analysis were conducted. In cases when it was possible to obtain the correct response for illogical or missed data, the data was imputed, while in the rest of the cases the incorrect values were replaced by “Interviewer Error” codes.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork for the survey was conducted between April 23 and May 6 2014 and was carried out by eight supervisors and 102 interviewers. Prior to fieldwork, interviewers went through an intensive two-day training program that included training on tablet usage, sampling instructions and questionnaire content and structure. The training was conducted by CRRC staff in Tbilisi (for eastern Georgia) and in Kutaisi, Zugdidi and Batumi (for western Georgia).

The fieldwork was conducted without any major problems or interruptions. Interviewers reported neutral and sometimes positive attitude towards the questions.

Data Analysis

The majority of the survey data presented in the report constitute the percentages of respondent survey answers after controlling for the probability of an individual or household being chosen in the stratified multistage clustered sample design. Standard errors for each question in the 2014 data ranged from .02% to 2.45% with an average standard error of 1.22%. Standard errors for each question in the 2011 data ranged from .01% to 2.74% with an average standard error of 1.31%. To determine whether or not changes were significant between the 2011 and 2014 results, each question was analyzed using a one or two-tailed t-test with the significance threshold (p-value) set at .05.

Regression analysis in STATA was used to identify the background characteristics of respondents for certain questions asked in 2014 only. All regressions analysis was weighted by the probability of an individual (or in rarer cases a household) being chosen in the stratified multistage clustered sample design. For questions with a wide range of answers, standard OLS regressions were used. For questions with binary and small set answers, Logit and O-Logit regressions were used, respectively. All regressions controlled for age, gender, level of education, household size (adult members), household income, employment status and settlement type (on a 4 point scale of capital, major cities, other urban and rural).

About CRRC-Georgia

CRRC-Georgia is a non-governmental, non-profit research organization, which collects, analyzes and publishes policy relevant data on social, economic and political trends in Georgia. CRRC-Georgia, together with CRRC-Armenia and CRRC-Azerbaijan, constitutes a network with the common goal of strengthening social science research and public policy analysis in the South Caucasus.

CRRC's public databases give everyone the opportunity to understand and evaluate the social and political trends in both Georgia and the entire South Caucasus. These databases are accessible through user-friendly Online Data Analysis tool at www.caucasusbarometer.org.