



FIRST PERSON Training Promotes Entrepreneurial Spirit

**Exchange program
alumnus is increasing
knowledge of business**

Nugzar Tateshvili, the founder and acting chairman of the Akhaltsikhe Center for Social Development in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region of the Republic of Georgia, recently launched a new training course to support business education. The course,



Photo: Nugzar Tateshvili

Small Businesses for a Better Future, is based on materials and information he received while in the United States on a USAID-funded exchange program.

During a one month visit to the United States, the program provides participants with professional training and exposure to the day-to-day functioning of a free market system and creates links between U.S. and Georgian regions and communities.

Nugzar Tateshvili conducts a training course on business education at the Youth Educational Center in Akhaltsikhe, Georgia.

According to Tateshvili, many in the region do not have a solid understanding of business although the community has a high education rate. He explained, "This is very common not only in the rural areas of Georgia, but in all the post Soviet countries."

Out of the 131 people who completed one of the 13 courses, 28 have started their own businesses.

The training aims to increase opportunities for adult employment by teaching the students how to start and manage a business, create business plans, and market their business or product. The monthlong program, which provides 21 hours of training for 12 people at a time, is open to all interested citizens of the region over age 18, free of charge.

The results of his training have exceeded expectations. Since it began in early 2007, out of the 131 people who completed one of the 13 courses, 28 have started their own businesses, including a café, a sewing workshop, and a local market. Another 38 have found jobs, mostly in the banking sector.