



## KHEVSURETI AND COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

Location: Georgia/Pshav-  
Khevsureti, village Korsha

Key words: master classes, cultural events -  
exhibitions, youth camps and workshops



Non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) Legal Entity "Khevsureti and Community" is a studio engaged in heritage crafts, conducting cultural events - exhibitions, youth camps and workshops for the purpose of activation of the local youth and forming them as entrepreneurs since 2014. Activities of "Khevsureti and Community" began with hosting the visitor and introduction of the studio. There are several artists in the Arabuli family - father and one son are painters and another son is a theater playwright and a writer. Creativity of the family members influenced the studio environment. The guesthouse "Korsha" is decorated with original and ethnographic elements where creativity and individualism of the family are felt.

The family owns 1 ha of land (with residential area of 120 square meters) and is actively engaged in farming - they have cattle and produce milk products for their own consumption. Almost all of the products offered to visitors are local. Products (eggs, cheese, melted butter) for visitors are bought from some families (mainly from the population of Barisakho community and part of vegetables are purchased in Zhinvali or Tbilisi). Gastronomy has become a necessary attribute of their offer and beer-brewing process is also shown to visitors. Such processes are always interesting for visitors. Delivery of local products positively influences creation of confidence in the family.

The organization also founded the festival "Chirdili" and tries to hold it systematically by raising required funds.

### Marketing approach

The organization receives local and foreign tourists and familiarizes them with the culture of Khevsureti, works with local families and implements various projects with their engagement (local masters, ethnographers, women working on embroidery and knitting). Their goal is to expand the community-based activities, to restore and preserve the living culture of the region.

At the distance of one kilometre from the studio, there is a camping zone and an adapted café where the local community gathers. Socialization is a very natural process in such environment. Tourists become familiar and feel the identity of locals, nature, values and the lifestyle common for Khevsureti.

"Khevsureti and Community" promotes products via the Facebook page. It has also

concluded business agreements with the leading tour operators in Georgia and has direct contacts with international organizations and embassies. Large part of their visitors arrives in the family upon recommendation of their friends and acquaintances.

### Financial situation

Initially, the idea of creating the studio appeared due to the lack of souvenirs. At the same time, festivals were



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held and funds were collected for required materials, transport and food. Two years later the project was funded by the Ministry of Culture, but the festivals were suspended from 2016. Later, the studio continued to exist with the support of Strategic Research and Development Centre and the Georgian Arts and Culture Centre. They also enjoy an interest-free loan issued by the finance organization "Crystal".

### Success factors and challenges

According to the hosts, key to the business success is constant readiness to learn something new. Despite vast

experience, the family members are willing to attend seminars in eco-tourism again and retrain the local guides for the new season.

The family tries to maintain authenticity - keep balance between art and business in the process of product commercialization.

### Plans for the future development

The organization tries to expand the community-based activities and therefore, enhance communication with people engaged in the community. In addition, their goal is to develop and promote experiential tourism (which

implies more engagement of tourists in the process) as a separate field of tourism. During the post-pandemic period, they consider focusing on domestic tourism and camps and cooperating with other studios (such as the studio located in Kazbegi, as well as felt house "Pesvebi" in Dedoplistskaro).

The host have a good understanding of business needs. At this stage, they need a large write screen to fix installations in the open air, invite sculptors and architects who will make various figures from wood for the festival and these installations will remain onsite in the future.

## GALLERY:





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Source of the images: <https://www.facebook.com/festivalchirdili>

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