



Mini-Football Stadium in the Village of Khospio

Georgia is quite well-known as a tolerant country where ethnic minorities are able to retain their identity in the regions in which they live but the level of integration with the rest of the community still appears to be a challenge. It has been years since Georgians, Armenians and Greeks have been live together in the village of Khospio in the Akhalkalaki Municipality. Although they belong to different cultures and have different traditions, they all have the same problems. One of these issues is the promotion of a healthy lifestyle in the village. The majority of adults spend most of their time at home and play computer games. This lifestyle is dangerous not only for their health but it also creates communication gaps between adults and children.

Within the program of rural funding, the villages of Khospio and Martvili received financing from the government. Local community members gathered together and decided to construct a mini football stadium that would comply with modern standards. Unfortunately, however, the amount of available funding was not enough for this purpose.

At the same time, a grant competition was announced in Akhalkalaki with the purpose of financing projects focusing on the development of the municipality. A group of Georgian and Armenian adults founded the non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) legal entity of the community engagement, called Khospio, and then addressed the LAG for project support. Khospio members took the LAG's recommendations into consideration, drafted a project proposal and were successful in receiving financing from the EU.



Employees: 1 local
Total budget of the project: GEL 60,000.00
EU share: GEL 36,000.00
Co-financing: GEL 24,000.00



“The involvement of the LAG was not limited to supporting us during the preparation of the project proposal but they and GIPA encouraged us during the whole time in order to finish the construction of the stadium in a timely manner. They gave us their whole effort to successfully implement this social project,” said Levon Minasyan, the Chairman of Khospio.

Nowadays, the population of Khospio and Martvili has a modern stadium which has become a place of assembly for young boys and girls from the neighboring villages. They are divided into teams, play football, communicate with each other and become friends. According to Levon Minasyan, their relationships also continue beyond the stadium.





aren Mkoyan is a 17-year-old boy from Khospio. He often goes to the stadium and meets a lot of new friends there.

“The local adults almost do not know each other. We had trouble communicating due to the language barrier as well. Setting up the mini football stadium solved this issue. As my all-time favorite football player Zlatan Ibrahimovic would say, sport belongs to everybody and everybody should be able to play the game since football unites people from all ethnicities. I agree with him totally,” said Karen Mkoyan who also noted that he intends to create a team with his Georgian and Greek mates and even organize a mini competition with the involvement of other adults from the neighboring municipality.

The initiative has been financed by the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD) through the project of promoting new approaches in Rural Development in Akhalkhalaki.

Project is being implemented by the Department of Rural Development and Vocational Education (DRDVE) of the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA). Project Partners are Mercy Corps, Elva – Community Engagement and West Cork Development Partnership.

The European Union supports agriculture and rural development of Georgia through the programme of ENPARD, which has been implemented in Georgia since 2013. The total budget is 179.5 mio EUR. The main goal of the ENPARD is to reduce the rural poverty. The main priority of the first phase of the program was to support agricultural development, whereas the main aim of the second and third phases is to promote economic opportunities and capacity building of people living in the rural areas. For the additional information, please follow the link: www.enpard.ge