

This seasonal review of activities is provided with gratitude to all our supporters, volunteers, and donors who continue to help the National Trust of Georgia (NTG) make an impact in protecting and celebrating Georgia's natural and cultural heritage

### Key Achievements During the Reporting Period

- Reached approximately **160 community members** through heritage-themed puppet theatre performances, interactive educational activities, and community-led cultural programmes in Samshvilde and Dimi.
- Welcomed nearly **200 schoolchildren** to educational heritage programmes at the space of the National Trust of Georgia.
- Expanded educational outreach through a **new collaboration** with Buckswood School.
- Highlighted challenges facing cultural heritage protection in Georgia through **participation in a European Parliament panel discussion**.
- Strengthened professional networks and organisational capacity through **participation in an Erasmus+ heritage training programme** in France.
- Continued exploring opportunities for the **future acquisition and preservation** of a traditional darbazi dwelling in Khizabavra, Samtskhe-Javakheti.



Photo 1: Local children interacting with the main characters and actors following the puppet performance in Samshvilde.

## Regional Puppet Theatre Performances

The first months of 2026 marked the completion of the second major phase of the project: bringing heritage-themed puppet theatre performances to regional communities and creating opportunities for meaningful interaction between audiences, performers, and local communities.

A key component of the programme was audience engagement. Each performance was followed by interactive activities that encouraged children to communicate directly with the main characters through conversations, songs, poetry, and creative expression. Participants also received character-themed stickers, while informal hosting created additional opportunities for discussion and feedback.

### Samshilde – February

Our first regional performance took place in Samshilde at *Orbis Bude*, a community space familiar to us from a previous project. The event attracted approximately 90 attendees, including residents and visitors from Tbilisi.

The performance focused on cultural heritage and generated particularly strong engagement among children, who eagerly interacted with the characters after the show. These informal exchanges helped transform the performance into a participatory learning experience rather than a one-way presentation.

The event also highlighted the cultural diversity of the region. As part of the post-performance programme, women from the local ethnic Armenian community prepared traditional dishes and led a lavash-making masterclass. This activity created opportunities for cultural exchange while strengthening engagement with local minority communities and showcasing living heritage traditions.



*Photo 2: Audience members in Samshilde waiting for the puppet performance to begin*



*Photo 3: An Armenian lavashi baking workshop led by a local woman as part of the cultural programme*

## Dimi–March

The final stop of the tour was the village of Dimi in the Imereti region, where the performance was hosted at the historic Phulariani Oda. Approximately 70 people attended the event, including around 40 children.

Following the performance, participants joined a hands-on workshop led by the production's lead designer and puppet creator, during which approximately 20–30 children and young people created traditional angel puppets inspired by Georgian folk culture.

The event also supported local participation beyond the performance itself. Alongside the programme, local women entrepreneurs presented and sold their products, creating an opportunity to showcase local craftsmanship and small-scale production to visitors.



*Photos 4 and 5: Puppet performance in Dimi, western Georgia, attended by local audience members.*



*Photo 6: Angel puppet inspired by traditional ethnographic motifs*



*Photo 7: Puppet master Manana Abzianidze leading a workshop for children and adults.*

## Educational Outreach and School Partnerships–January-February

Throughout February, we welcomed nearly 200 students from grades 1-5 from the British International School of Tbilisi. During their visits, students explored our sixteenth–eighteenth century historic building and participated in hands-on workshops led by the Tuta Workshop team.

In January, our Tuta Workshop expanded its activities through a new partnership with Buckswood School. As part of the school's extracurricular program, weekly workshops now introduce students to traditional crafts and creative practices connected to cultural heritage.



Photo 8: Group photo of students with their teachers and members of the Tuta workshop team.



Photo 9: The Chair of the NTG introducing students to the history and rehabilitation process of the building.



Photo 10: Students engaging with educational and theoretical materials



Photo 11: Workshop in progress: students constructing a model of an oldest Georgian dwelling using clay bricks.



Photo 12: Student presenting a hand-painted clay pot created during the workshop.

## Ongoing Development of a New Educational Initiative

### \_ January–May

During the reporting period, the NTG team continued developing a new educational project titled “We Read, Illustrate and Reimagine The Knight in the Panther’s Skin.”

The initiative aims to engage children from different regions of Georgia in creative educational activities inspired by Shota Rustaveli’s literary masterpiece.

The project seeks to encourage reading, artistic expression, and a deeper understanding of one of the most important works of Georgian cultural heritage.



Photo 13: Project development session with the project authors.

As part of the project’s development, NTG is collaborating with a technical team to combine this medieval poem with contemporary digital technologies. Through interactive creative processes, children will be able to bring literary characters to life, develop their own interpretations and storylines, and transform their ideas into animated content. By connecting cultural heritage with innovative learning tools, the project aims to make Rustaveli’s work more accessible, engaging, and relevant for younger generations.

## International Partnerships and Capacity Building

### European Parliament Discussion\_March

Marine Mizandari, the Chair of the NTG, participated in a panel discussion at the European Parliament organized by Europa Nostra and ALIPH Foundation in connection with International Women’s Day.

The discussion focused on the role of women in protecting cultural heritage during times of crisis. During the event, Marine highlighted current challenges facing cultural heritage protection in Georgia and emphasized the close relationship between heritage preservation, human rights, democratic values, and good governance.



Photos 14–15: Marine Mizandari participating in a panel discussion.

## Erasmus+ Training in France\_March-April

Mikheil Chincharauli, as a part of the NTG volunteer network, participated in an Erasmus+ training programme in Villandraut, France, alongside heritage professionals from several European countries.

The week-long programme combined practical and theoretical learning focused on leadership within heritage conservation projects. Participants took part in restoration-related activities, site visits, and exchanges of experience concerning volunteer engagement and heritage preservation.

The NTG has collaborated with Union REMPART since 2020, when both organizations worked together in connection with the rehabilitation of the Tsiskarauli Tower.



Photo 16: Site visit.



Photo 17: Woodworking activity in progress.

## Heritage Conservation Initiatives

### Visit to Samtskhe-Javakheti\_May

The team of the NTG visited the Khizabavra community in Samtskhe-Javakheti as part of ongoing efforts to explore the future preservation of a traditional darbazi dwelling.

The long-term goal is to acquire and adapt one of the endangered traditional houses in the area. During this visit, the team met with individuals interested in selling a property and continued gathering information about potential next steps.

Impact: The visit represents an early stage in a longer-term preservation effort aimed at protecting a significant example of traditional Georgian architecture.



Photo 18: One of the sections of a Keghoshvili darbazi dwelling.



Photos 19–22: Interior spaces and architectural details of the Kegoshvili Darbazi, including the crown-shaped roof, fireplace, column capital, and other features.

# Organizational Development and Sustainability

The reporting period was marked by continued efforts to strengthen the organization's sustainability and expand opportunities for public engagement.

Regular educational activities continued through the Tuta Workshop, cooperation with the Folklore House, and rehearsals of Adilei connected to future cultural programming.

The NTG continued developing public cultural heritage tours in Tbilisi and surrounding regions. Pilot tours conducted in Tbilisi and Samshvilde helped test and refine future heritage engagement activities.



Photo 23: Student applying gold leaf to a manuscript imitation during a Tuta Workshop lesson.



Photo 24: Student playing a Tushetian accordion during a lesson at the Folklore House



Photo 25: Moment from the heritage tour in Tbilisi



Photo 26: Moment from the heritage tour in Samshvilde

## განცხადება

**საქართველოში მსოფლიო მემკვიდრეობის ძეგლების მდგომარეობის შესახებ**

In the end of the May, the NTG joined a public statement expressing concern about threats facing World Heritage sites in Georgia and reaffirmed its commitment to heritage advocacy and protection.

Photo 27: The card of the statement

**Thank you for  
standing with the  
National Trust of  
Georgia!**

*Your support enables us to bring cultural heritage closer to communities, engage young people in meaningful educational experiences, and continue working toward the protection of Georgia's unique cultural legacy.*