

## Project idea description

### Third sector of divided Societies of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region

#### Project Goals and Justification

The goal of the project is to consolidate the efforts of civic institutions (Third Sector) of divided societies of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region in order to recognize common threats and carry out joint measures to reduce their impact on the common environment by means of creation joint informational-analytical platform “Rtskhila”

**The project is directed on addressing the following problems:**

- **The problem of the lack of a TV program covering the activities of civic institutions. Society does not have enough information about the activities of civil society institutions.** - Increasing capabilities of the Third Sector of the divided societies of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region through their information and analytical support. Informing the general public about the activities that these organizations carry out.
- **Low level of cooperation culture.** - Improving the culture of cooperation between organizations of the Third Sector of the divided societies of Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region.
- **Low level of trust.** - Increased confidence as a result of joining forces to solve common problems and prevent common threats.
- **Lack of awareness of common threats.** - Informing societies divided as a result of conflicts in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region about common threats and creating a sense of solidarity on their prevention.

The project is based on a scientific approach elaborated within the research conducted as part of the Support Program for Doctoral Studies of Shota Rustaveli Georgian National Science Foundation. Name of the research – “Interdisciplinary analysis of the complex system of the Abkhazian conflict by the method 4D-RAV-17 (grant number - PHDF-18-1147). The method is a combination of well-known and innovative approaches and techniques.

The concept of acknowledgement of common threats was presented by the authors of the project with the objective of finding the possibility of a worthy and mutually beneficial way out from the crisis for all participants of the process. The basis for rapprochement of the participating parties is considered a policy of acknowledgement of common threats. Under the System of Common Threats (SCT) is meant a set of phenomena that threaten the safety and security of all participants in the process.

**Why Rtskhila:** According to some scholars, the names of the cities of Sukhumi (Tskhumi) and Tskhinvali arose on the basis of the word “რცხილა” (rtskhila). Rtskhila (Carpinus Caucasica) is an extraordinary tree whose firewood has a high level of calorific value and from ancient times people used it to heat their homes and create high-quality charcoal. Knife handles and tableware were made from this wood. Domestic animals fed on young shoots of this tree. According to an ancient legend, it is believed that the coldest water is in the springs that are located near the “rtskhila”.

It has one interesting feature, the roots of different “Rtskhila” can grow together and create one common system. Its second unique feature is that it is the first among other trees that returns to the ashes of the burned forests and recreates the infrastructure of the new forest.

**Rtskhila is symbol of security** – it was used for creation of hedges to protect livestock from predators. We hope that under the shadow of “Rtskhila” we will be able to combine common efforts to develop new opportunities for cooperation and peacemaking in general.