



**Figure 2.** The second floor of Omari House, before and after restoration. Photos by E.Roshi and A.Zaretsky (2010), © Gjirokastra Foundation.

The costs of the project, at the end of 2011, was EUR 210 000.

### Project initiatives

- a. ACIC had two shops on the ground floor, which were given for free to two of the best Gjirokastra craft masters in wood and stone carving. The masters' 'payback' was that they would accept apprentices and teach them the wood and stone carving skills needed in house restoration. The young apprentices 'payback' for their free training was to work for free, as practice, on a monumental house (Figure 3).
- b. In the training room on the second floor of ACIC, ten young men were trained for six months in wood and stone carving and restoration. A curriculum was developed to provide the best local advisers in wood and stone carving and restoration. This in-depth training involved practising in a monumental house in Gjirokastra (Figure 4).
- c. In the same training area of ACIC, 14 young artists (from 10 to 16 years old) were trained in singing iso-polyphonic songs of Gjirokastra. Albanian folk iso-polyphony has been proclaimed a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.
- d. Women artisans used the training area and its facilities for quite some time; the first training was carried out in November 2010 on creativity and new products. In September 2011, the training area was used to produce new textile products based on Gjirokastra's traditional themes.
- e. At the start of 2011, the Gjirokastra Foundation organized an awareness-raising campaign, with workshops in Gjirokastra and Berat (another Ottoman town listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Town in Albania), targeting around 1 000 families with monumental houses in both towns. A book explaining the role of the house owners in revitalizing their houses was published.