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**Preparation of Destination Management Organization (DMO)  
Development Model for the Republic of Armenia  
Ref. Number: DMO-01**

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**ASSIGNMENT 3  
TASK 5  
Preparation of 4 Site Management Plans  
SMP2: Marmashen Monastery**

**ARS Progetti SPA  
In association with ARPA Environmental Foundation**



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Definition
ATDF	Armenian Territorial Development Fund
B&B	Bed and Breakfast
BP	Business Plan
CAGR	Compound Annual Growth Rate
DM	Destination Management
DMO	Destination Management Organization
EU	European Union
GoA	Government of Armenia
HO.RE.CA	Hotels Restaurant and Catering
KE	Key Expert
LEID	Local Economy and Infrastructure Development (project)
MES	Ministry of Emergency Situations
MoE	Ministry of Economy
MoESCS	Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports
NK	Non Key (expert)
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PAs	Protected Areas
RA	Republic of Armenia
SA	Study Area
SPNAs	Specially Protected Natural Areas
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
TC	Tourism Committee
ToR	Terms of Reference
TSPs	Tourism Service Providers
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
SNCO	State non-commercial organization
USAID	United States Development Cooperation Agency
WB	World Bank



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## 1. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

### 1.1. Purpose

The study is intended to define the site management plan for Marmashen monastery, which is a 10th-century Armenian monastic complex consisting of five churches located between the two villages near the village of Marmashen and Vahramaberd in Shirak region. It will be upgraded under the project to better host cultural-heritage related tourism experience.

### 1.2. Specific objective

According to agreements reached after the Inception Report Presentation, SMP is to be intended as a **Tourism Management Plan** that will supplement existing management tools with tourism development activities and procedures in order to increase the site's touristic attractiveness through specifying management, operation and other related functionalities.

### 1.3. Contents

According to TORs, the SMP is based on the specific nature of the site and addresses the following issues:

- Definition of the carrying capacity of site and subsequent flow management techniques.
- Identification of the key and secondary roles and responsibilities of the site owner.
- Specification of the public and/or private management scheme, including operation and maintenance guidance.
- Specification of human resource needs and key required capacities and skills per the functionality.
- Formulation of a sustainable business plan ensuring operation and maintenance.
- Provision of guidance on visitor rights and responsibilities on the site.
- Provision of tools to contribute to the sustainable and responsible use of the site and adjacent natural environment.
- Description of restrictions on economic activity on the site and potential services beyond the buffer zones of the site.
- Provision of guidance on safety and security for the site.
- Definition of a mechanism for collecting visitor flow statistics.
- Definition of communication tools to ensure proper awareness of all above requirements and regimes (if applicable) to the stakeholders and public at large.

### 1.4. Stakeholder involvement

The SMP ensured identification of Key Stakeholders (i.e. owners and implementers of the SMP) soon from the beginning of the project and tightly cooperation with them for enforcing the plan's sustainability.

A workshop was organized by the Consultancy firm in coordination with Client and key stakeholders to present and summarize the findings and reach agreements based on consultative approach.

## 2. SITE IDENTIFICATION

### 2.1. Site Description

#### 2.1.1. Context

Located 35km north-east from Ani<sup>1</sup>, the monastery of Marmashen lies on the left bank of the Akhurian river, near the modern city of Gyumri, in Shirak district of the RA. The nearby village of Vahramaberd (2 km to the north of the monastery) echoes the memory of Marmashen's founder Vahram Pahlawuni and suggests the connection of the monastery with a fortified place, perhaps built on an ancient Urartean one. It is a bright illustration of the Armenian medieval architecture of the late 10th century.

<sup>1</sup> Ani is a ruined medieval Armenian city now situated in Turkey's province of Kars, next to the closed border with Armenia.



The strategic location of Marmashen on the fluvial way to Ani was also crucial for its later life in the thirteenth century. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Marmashen's ruins attracted the attention of travelers and historians.

### 2.1.2. The site

Built within 986 and 1029, Marmashen complex comprises five churches, and a vestibule (now ruined), located close to each other with the main church, the Kathoghike, rising in the middle of the compound.

The main church of the monastery Katoghike (Cathedral), according to the inscription on the southern wall, was built by prince Vahram Pahlavouni in 988-1029. Famous Trdat (Tiridates) is supposed to be its architect. Katoghike built of red tufa stone is a domed hall. Interior proportions of the church were changed at the expense of cutting the eastern branch of the cross and approaching the altar apse with adjacent side chapels to the under-cupola square. Owing to this the dome occupied the central position and the building, decreased in length, came closer to the type of centric constructions. A cruciform facade is framed with vaulted niches creating light and shade effect. 12-hedral drum crowned with umbrella roof is decorated with bunches of semi-columns. The south church is a small cross-in-square building with plain façades and without exterior niches, topped by a high cylindrical drum supporting a conical roof. This modest and sober building is adorned on its western façade by a window with an elaborate frame above a modest portal. On the northern wall, a second door faces the southern façade of the main church.

The second church of the monastery is to the north from the main one. Its architectural design and interior are similar to Katoghike (probably they were built at the same time).

The third church situated to the south of Katoghike is a rectangular outside and cruciform inside with side-chapels in each corner.

The fourth church being round four-apse domed construction with 4 side-chapels was found during the excavations in 1954-1956. The base is all that remains of the church. The ruins of 4-pillar vestibule which served as a burial vault of Pahlavouni princes are found on the territory of the monastery. Vahram Pahlavouni killed during the battle near Dvin in 1045 was also buried there. There is a cemetery, ruins of different constructions, khachkars and gravestones on the territory of the monastery<sup>2</sup>. Cemetery – is spread around the small monastery. Here is buried the ashes of Sophia –wife of Vahram Pahlavuni. Here is also buried the architect Shnavorik.

There is also an old or fifth church. It is situated on the hill at the northern side from big monastery. It is domed structure with a cruciform plan which is attributed to the X-XI centuries. Now it is ruined<sup>3</sup>.

The monastery was ravaged during the Seljuks invasion in the 11th century. Katoghike was turned to a fortress and the territory around it — to a village. Only in 1225 Zakarian princes (according to the inscription on the northern wall) returned the monastery to Pahlavouni. Vahram Pahlavouni's grandsons archbishop Grigor and his brother prince Gharib restored the monastery.

In the 13th century Marmashen monastery was ravaged again this time during the Tatar-Mongol invasion. In the 30-s of the 19th century after the Russo-Turkish war a group of Armenians from Kars moved to Marmashen. Katoghike was turned to parish church. In 1870 Mkrtych Jalalian restored the monastery and opened a school there. During the earthquake of 1883 the northern church of the monastery was damaged. In 1900 the monastery was restored under the initiative of Catholicos Mkrtych I Vanetsi. In 1923 after establishment of Soviet authority in Armenia the monastery was closed. In 1988 it suffered a lot from the Spitak earthquake<sup>4</sup>.

In 2001 the church of Katoghike was repaired by the efforts of the Italian benefactress Gayane Kaznati<sup>5</sup>.

### 2.1.3. Value statement

Marmashen complex is important for its close **connections with the city of Ani in terms of architecture and patronage**. The Architectural Heritage of Armenia is characterized by an **astonishing homogeneity of styles, especially of materials and construction techniques**. This homogeneity is mainly due to the fact that Armenians identify their cultural foundations in Church and traditions (as frequently invaded by nearby countries)<sup>6</sup>. Traits of Armenian architecture can be found in churches, monasteries, bridges, aqueducts and caravanserais: buildings and infrastructures **strictly related to trade**. Many famous cities of ancient Armenia, among which the ancient capital

<sup>2</sup> Marmashen Monastery, Vahramaberd, Armenia, <https://www.building.am/buildings-index/marmashen-monastery-vahramaberd-armenia/>

<sup>3</sup> The monastery of Marmashen, <https://hushardzan.am/en/archives/1914>

<sup>4</sup> Marmashen Monastery, Vahramaberd, Armenia, <https://www.building.am/buildings-index/marmashen-monastery-vahramaberd-armenia/>

<sup>5</sup> The monastery of Marmashen, <https://hushardzan.am/en/archives/1914>

<sup>6</sup> L. Jurina, E. Randelli (2014): Armenian experiences in consolidation of ancient buildings: the study cases of Anberd, Tatev, Arudj and Ani in XXII International Forum "Le Vie dei Mercanti", Best Practices in Heritage Conservation Management from the world of Pompei, Aversa/Capri, 12, 13, 14 June 2014



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Ani were a great economic, political, cultural and spiritual power in international trade for many centuries. Greeks, Assyrians, Persians, Jews, Georgians and many others traded with the Armenians, contributing to the most flourishing artistic and architectural period of the Country.

The elegance of the structure at Marmashen and the ornamentation of the buildings, particularly of the Katholike, have legitimately allowed to ascribe the complex to the "school of Ani" and to the quasi-mythical figure of the architect Tiridate<sup>7</sup>. One of the most valuable features of the site is the **Domed Hall Church**, built of red volcanic tufa and a remarkable example of Armenian ecclesiastical architecture<sup>8</sup>.

In the 19th century it was said that the name Marmashen was a corruption of the name Marmarashen meaning "a building built of marble". However, there is no marble used in its construction, but the name may just signify the high quality of the stonework: the volcanic orange tufa, typical from the Ani region.

Apart of its cultural value, Marmashen complex is also inscribed in a valuable natural scenery overlooking a curve of the river. The **water provides both connection and protection to the site**, which is further delimited by low hills to the south and east<sup>9</sup>. The symbiotic relationship between man and the environment lends significant value to the landscape in terms of the history and archaeology of the settlement. Marmashen is indeed immersed in a pristine environment, in which the visitor is drawn through a **remarkably 'empty' landscape** with limited human interventions.



Figure 1: River next to Marmashen Monastery

#### 2.1.4. Previous projects on heritage conservation at the site

Heavily damaged several times, most recently by the earthquake in 1886, the complex had several restorations, mostly funded by international bodies.



Figure 2: Original engraving of the church before the collapse of the original dome, Alishan's "Shirak", 1880

<sup>7</sup> <https://sites.courtauld.ac.uk/crossingfrontiers/crossing-frontiers/armenia/marmashen-monastery/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.wmf.org/project/church-marmashen>

<sup>9</sup> <https://sites.courtauld.ac.uk/crossingfrontiers/crossing-frontiers/armenia/marmashen-monastery/>, Op. Cit.



The first modern era restoration works were carried out in 1888, when Catholicos Khrimian Hayrig started a limited rebuilding of the monastery. This intervention appears to have included the unfortunate destruction of the original umbrella roof of the Katoghike church and its replacement with today's simplified version.

Further reconstruction and repair works were undertaken during the soviet period, although the nature of such interventions remains unclear. In 1945 the little St. Petros church was restored. Between 1950 and 1954 the pitched roof of the Katoghike was again entirely renewed. More reconstruction was done on the buildings between 1954 and 1957, along with archaeological excavations of the ancillary buildings in the monastery surroundings.

The violent earthquake of 1988, which devastated Gyumri and its surroundings, shook the monastery: the west façade of the Katoghike church lost much of its structural connection to the adjoining north and south walls, and a severe crack developed in the dome.

Restoration and structural consolidation works were carried out by an Italian restoration team from the "Centro Studi e Documentazione della Cultura Armena" (CSDCA).

Recently, the *World Monument Fund* (WMF) in collaboration with the Agency for the protection of Monuments of History and Culture of Armenia undertook some **preventive conservation measures** to improve the stability and presentation of the site. This includes condition surveys, structural repairs, cleaning and conservation of the stone, channeling of a river to reduce the risk of water infiltration<sup>10</sup>.

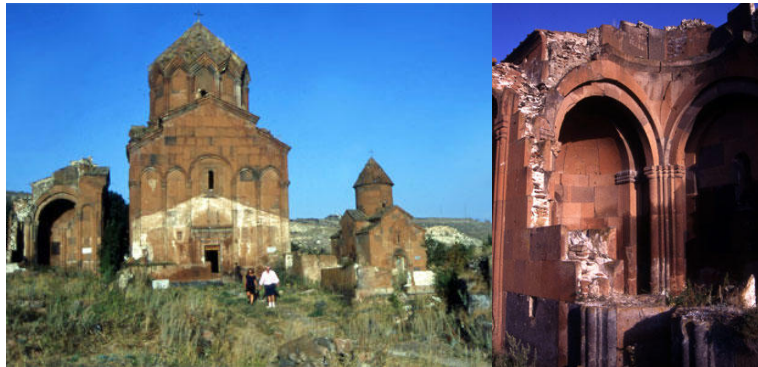


Figure 3: Marmashen Monastery, view from distance / View of the inside of the Church, 1995

### 2.1.5. Other remarkable projects in the area of the TSMP

Moreover, the nearby "**Heghnar aghbyur in Vahramaberd** village's gorge near Marmashen monastery in Shirak region was restored and at the same time the off-grid solar station donated by Shtigen was launched. It will power the monument and light the surrounding space<sup>11</sup>.



Figure 4: Heghnar aghbyur in Vahramaberd solar panel for lighting monument surroundings

Another remarkable initiative in the TSMP area is a community project started by the NGO "Yerkink" Social-Legal Support Center Non Governmental Organization (Sky NGO) under the **EU-funded project**: "*Choice: Cultural heritage preservation as a sustainable development factor among the communities located close to the Shirak Province monuments*".

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.wmf.org/project/church-marmashen>

<sup>11</sup> <https://shtigen.com/en/blog/the-restored-heghnar-aghbyur-monument-will-be-powered-by-solar-24-7-3/>



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The project lays its foundations on the International Charter on Cultural Tourism principle that: *“local public must be involved in operating the heritage sites and in tourism development”*. Indeed, with no participation on behalf of the local residents the cultural monuments, tangible and intangible ones alike, are likely to lose their living spirit and turn into lifeless structures<sup>12</sup>.

A series of training sessions was conducted in the Shirak province to sensitize community on their cultural heritage and to identify economic opportunities connected to it. Project activities included launch of a business incubator in the master class format, which resulted in the production of **authentic souvenirs** and artisanal artefacts by micro-enterprises, which are channeling part of their profits to heritage preservation in the region.



Figure 5: Souvenirs and artisanal artefacts made by micro-enterprises

As cited previously in the report, the Monastery and the TSMP area will be also part of a WB project for road upgrading and monastery train system development

## 2.2. Site Boundaries

### 2.2.1. Core area

On October 20, 2021, the Municipality of Marmashen made a decision regarding the transfer of 1.7678 hectares of land situated in Vahramaberd village to the Holy Apostolic Church of Armenia gratuitous by ownership, for the maintenance and service of Marmashen monastery

After that, on August 3, 2022, Marmashen Monastery was registered as the property of the Republic of Armenia, in the unified register of state registration, which was needed for the LEID program financed by World Bank and Government of RA for the *“Major repair of the road to Marmashen Monastery and improvement of the adjacent area”*<sup>13</sup>.

The location is registered as Shirak *Marz*, community Akhuryan, village Vahramaberd 17th street, 47 church.

Area size (ha) is 1.18535.

Because of its importance it is a specific protected area, with operational significance or landscape being historical and cultural.

Characteristics of the buildings is as following<sup>14</sup>:

Cadastral code	Type	Surface	Type of registered right
08-108-0118-0014-001	Church	162.17 square meters	ownership
08-108-0118-0014-002	Narthex	100.63 square meters	ownership
08-108-0118-0014-003	Church	87.82 square meters	ownership
08-108-0118-0014-004	Church	38.06 square meters	ownership
08-108-0118-0014-005	Church	118.67 square meters	ownership
08-108-0118-0014-006	Auxiliary building	9.27 square meters	ownership
08-108-0118-0014-008	Fence	8.02 square meters 8.82 cubic meter	ownership
08-108-0118-0014-007	Fence	7.48 square meters 8.23 cubic meter	ownership

<sup>12</sup> <http://choiceproject.eu/preservation-of-cultural-heritage-as-a-factor-of-sustainable-development-of-communities-located-near-the-monuments-of-cultural-heritage-of-shirak-region/>

<sup>13</sup> See Annex 1

<sup>14</sup> CERTIFICATE N 03082022-08-0045, password: WA8HT3GS95CM, The authenticity and validity of the document can be checked at the Cadastre Committee through the website [www.e-cadastre.am](http://www.e-cadastre.am)



Table 1: Characteristics of core area buildings

### 2.2.2. Tourism impact area

Currently Marmashen Monastery is in **Akhuryan consolidated community**, which includes 35 communities (Akhuryan, Aygabac, Arevik, Basen, Karnut, Kamo, Hovit, Jrarat, Azatan, Getq, Erazgavors, Xaribjanyan, Akhurik, Arapi, Bayandur, Voskehask, Haykavan, Beniamin, Kaps, Vahramaberd, Marmashen, Hovuni, Qeti, Pograshen, Hacik, Shirak, Jajur, Karmraqar, Lernut, Mec Sarian, Krashen, Jajuravan, Mayisyan, Hacikavan, Akhuryan kayaran) (see Annex 2).

The total population is 44,951 according to the data of Akuryan Municipality. The distance of Akuryan community from Yerevan is 126 km. Administrative area of the community is 55,889.73 ha<sup>15</sup>. In **Vahramaberd** the population is 1,438 people according to the data of Akuryan Municipality.



Figure 6: Marmashen Monastery

### 2.3. Key Stakeholders identification

As mentioned in 2.2.1 paragraph, the Monastery of Marmashen belongs to the Republic of Armenia (Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports) as an archeological site was discovered near the monastery (the ruins of old village), but the Monastery is given to the Diocese of Shirak of Armenian Apostolic church for use.

Here are the main stakeholders:

- Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports (MoESCS)
- Ministry of Economy, Tourism Committee
- Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure
- Diocese of Shirak of Armenian Apostolic church
- Akhuryan Community
- Vahramaberd village
- Electric networks of Armenia
- Shirak DMO
- Private sector

*Regarding Shirak DMO, its features were analyzed in Assignment 1.2 – Local Context Analysis. It was established as NGO following initial funding by My Armenia Program. It included 13 members, some of which were My Armenia beneficiaries.*

Population of the community and tourists may also be considered as stakeholders. WB as well, as it is sustaining the current and other projects that can provide additional financial resources for valorization.

<sup>15</sup> Akhuryan community, <https://akhuryan.am/Pages/CustomPage/?CustomPageID=722b890c-cc0b-4c5d-bdf2-30fbeb4291>



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### 3. TOURISM ASSETS AND DEMAND

#### 3.1. Tourism Supply in the impact area

##### 3.1.1. Tourism attractors and activities, and their improvements

It should be noted that just behind the Monastery there is a private land with trees and during the site visit cows were grazing near the Monastery which was not a good touristic scenery. In this case, this issue should also be regulated in terms of implementing this SMP.

Near the Monastery, **Akhuryan river** flows through the valley. Despite the great cultural and environmental value of the area, a hydroelectric power station was built by the private sector about 10 years ago for the purpose of electricity production. Special fish channels were made to ensure their passage.

► **People are actually engaged in fishing, but such activity is not regulated in that area.**



Figure 7: Reservoir near the Monastery

Now in the valley, near the river, from May till October people do parties and picnics every weekend, and afterward they mainly pollute the surroundings.

► **The church would be able to regulate this should the monastery be under its property, as the Church mentions based on other cases<sup>16</sup>.**

► **However, the Monastery now belongs to the MoESCS, and they should undertake some measures, in order the other activities not to destroy the surroundings of the monastery.**

Also, in the river, the private sector offers kayaking for tourists.

In June, 2018, "**Heghnar aghbyur**" (water spring) was restored near the Monastery. At the same time the off-grid solar station donated by Shtigen was launched. It will power the monument and light the surrounding space. The restoration of the monument was realized by Russian-Armenian businessman of Vahramaberd origin Arthur Galstyan and Hamlet Gevorgyan also from Vahramaberd with the aid from the son of the author of the monument, people who knew the monument's history and art experts.

The monument was totally restored with all the architectural and sculptural resolutions as was in the movie. The "Heghnar aghbyur" story was written in 1935 by an Armenian writer, poet and translator Mkrtych Armen (Mkrtych Grigor Harutyunyan, 1906-1972). Hayfilm studio shot a movie based on that story.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> In other places, where the monasteries belong to the Armenian Apostolic Church, they regulate it, as it was clear with our interview with Diocese of Shirak of Armenian Apostolic church.

<sup>17</sup> The action took place in 19th century in a traditional Armenian town. Heghnar, the wife of a spring building mason Mkrtych, fell in love with another man. The woman wasn't able to stand the shame when her treason was discovered. After the wife's death the master built a monument on a spring in her memory. The spring's phenomenon became a symbol of the holiness of the family. The water runs only when the master approaches and stops when another man tries to drink. "Each woman is his man's spring and no other man has the right to drink it". With these words on the monument master Mkrtych emphasizes the love and faith in a traditional Armenian family and its holiness too. The restored "Heghnar aghbyur" monument will be powered by solar 24/7, <https://shtigen.com/en/blog/the-restored-heghnar-aghbyur-monument-will-be-powered-by-solar-24-7-3/>



Figure 8: Heghnar aghbyur and Marmashen Monastery

On the south of the village of Marmashen, on a natural rock of the gorge, **King Argishti I left an inscription**, which is known in historical literature as "Ghanlija's polar inscription". By the greatness of Khaldi (god), Argishti says:

*I conquered the land of (the tribe of) Eriakh,  
conquered Irdaniuni (city) to Ishkigulu (country).*

According to researchers, the mentioned "country of Eriakh (tribe)" is the field of Shirak, and "city of Irdaniuni" is its administrative center<sup>18</sup>.

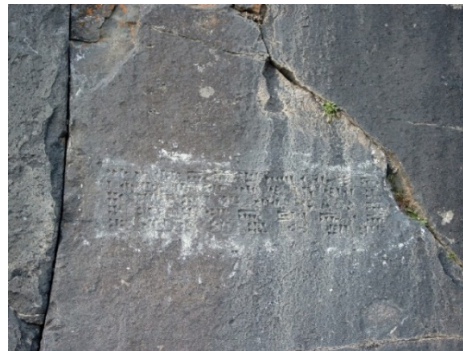


Figure 9: Inscription by King Argishti I

2 km away from Monastery, there is a good place for climbing near Kaps village.

In the Urartian period, during the raids undertaken to the north, it was rebuilt and fortified the Cyclopean fortress, existing since the III millennium BC. From this fort and nearby tombs were found various cultural materials related to III-I millennia. Vahram Magistros Pahlavuni rebuilds that ancient pre-Christian fortress and turns it into one of the reliable defensive strongholds (10th century). Since that period, the **fortress** has traditionally been called "Vahramashen" or "**Vahramaberd**"<sup>19</sup>. That is another touristic attraction to visit.



Figure 10: RUINS OF VAHRAMABERD FORTRESS

<sup>18</sup> <https://hushardzan.am/archives/12247>

<sup>19</sup> <https://hushardzan.am/archives/12247>





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On the wall of the **house of Culture of Vahramaberd**, there is a **painting of Minas Avetisyan**, famous Armenian painter.



Figure 11: The painting of Minas Avetisyan in the house of Culture of Vahramaberd

Also, 17 km from Monastery is **Jajur village**, which is in Akhuryan community, there is the **Museum of Minas Avetisyan**, which is another touristic destination.



Figure 12: Ruins of Vahramaberd fortress Minas Avetisyan Museum<sup>20</sup>

Near the village of Anipemza in Shirak region is **Yereruyk Basilica**, which is one of the earliest surviving Christian monuments in Armenia, it was added to the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List on August 25, 1995 in the Cultural category<sup>21</sup>. Marmashen Monastery, Yereruyk Basilica and Ani (now in the territory of Turkey, near the border with Shirak) were included in the Silk Road.



Figure 13: Yereruyk Basilica

In Akhuryan community, between Hatick and Karmraqar villages is situated **TSAK QAR (Hole in the rock)**. According to the legend, if you make a wish and climb through the hole in this giant rock, your wish will come through. The hole looks small, but both children and adults can climb through. The place is a very popular destination for visitors. Next to Tsak Qar is the sacred place of Seven Brothers, that is another religious trip destination for Shirak region visitors<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.gallery.am/en/Branches/Minas/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/10/>

<sup>22</sup> TSAK QAR, <https://visitarmeria.tours/tsak-qar-hatick/>



Figure 14: TSAK QAR in Hatcik village

Usually, the main tours to Shirak include city tour in Gyumri, also Harichavank and Marmashen monasteries. **Harichavank** is 7th century Armenian monastery located near the village of Harich in Shirak region.

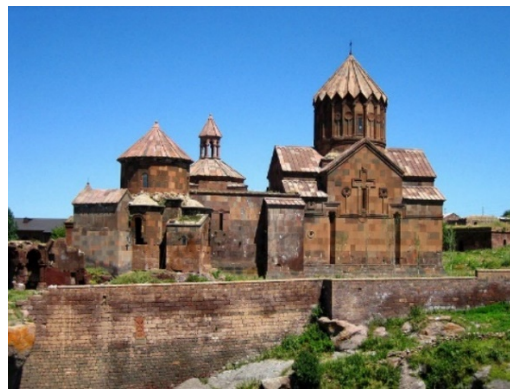


Figure 15: Harichavank monastery<sup>23</sup>

- ▶ **Harichavank Monastery belongs to the Armenian Apostolic Church. The Church has made a fence near the monastery, built a school for monks there, so the same they are ready to do in Marmashen, if it belongs to them as ownership.**

The full list of cultural and natural monuments of Akhuryan community which may be used for tourism development is presented in Annex 3, provided by Akhuryan municipality.

Thus, the above-mentioned sites may be used for developing tourism in Marmashen monastery and surroundings.

### 3.1.2. Tourism facilities and services, and their improvements

Based on the data from Akhuryan municipality, there was **only 1 guest house in Vahramaberd**, which does not operate currently.

Also, according to the data from Akhuryan municipality, there are 8 public catering facilities in Akhuryan (1 in Xaribjanyan, 4 in Akhuryan, 1 in Qeti, 2 in Azatan).

**However, tourists usually stay in Gyumri for night and mainly eat in the restaurants of Gyumri, and they visit the Monastery as a daily visitor.**

### 3.1.3. Infrastructure analysis and recommendations

**Currently, the road to Marmashen Monastery is in a very bad condition.** Sometimes, during the heavy snows, the road to Monastery closes in winter till spring.

Currently there is LEID program financed by World Bank and Government of RA for the '*Major repair of the road to Marmashen Monastery and improvement of the adjacent area*'. The road will be renovated till September 2023.

- ▶ **Due to the revitalization of tourism in Shirak region, the visit to this Monastery has increased. However, the road is in poor condition creating many obstacles for visitors. It also has a negative impact on the aesthetic appearance of the monastery complex.**

<sup>23</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harichavank\\_Monastery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harichavank_Monastery)



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The major repair of the road leading to Marmashen monastic complex and the improvement of the surrounding area will contribute to the development of the region with positive social and economic changes. The monastery will be an important place of visit for tourists and visitors to Gyumri, as well as to Shirak region, contributing to the revitalization of the surrounding rural areas and creating economic opportunities for the residents. The improvement of the surrounding area and the overhaul of the road will contribute to growth of domestic tourism, extension of the length of stay of visitors, and increase of various target tourist flows.

The main objectives of the project are:

- Contribute to the preservation and popularization of the historical and cultural structure
- To create well-developed public infrastructure to the monastery complex for locals and tourists
- To contribute to the formation of a new diversified product in Shirak region
- Increase the number of tourist visits to the region and the length of stay
- Contribute to the growth of income from tourism in rural settlements of Marmashen community.

Hereafter is provided a description of the project, as provided by the TC.

**Project: 'Major repair of the road to Marmashen Monastery and improvement of the adjacent area'<sup>24</sup>**

The sub-project includes the overhaul of the 2.4 km long road leading from the H-32 (Gyumri-Kaps-Amasia) national highway to Marmashen monastic complex and the improvement of the area adjacent to the monastery, including the construction of a parking area, the improvement of the sales area, and the creation of a recreation area as needed.

The following works are planned under this sub-program:

- Major repair of 2.4 km road, removal of reinforced concrete construction waste from the area bordering the road
- Equipping the road with drainage elements
- Marking of bicycle lanes along the road
- Construction of lighting network
- Placement of benches and trash cans as needed
- Solving the problem of waterproofing of the right-side wall of the church and fixing it
- Construction of asphalted open parking lot
- Construction of a bathroom consisting of the following sections: men's block with a section for the disabled and women's block with a section for the disabled
- Design and construction of the market place
- Improvement of the area adjacent to the Heghnar aghbyur
- Creation of rest area as needed
- Improvement of stairs going down from the monastery to Akhuryan River, installation of handrails
- Construction of viewing platforms on the rocky part of the shore of the Akhuryan River
- Furnishing with tourist and road signs as needed

Impact of the project on communities

The implementation of the project will contribute to making the historical and cultural profile of Shirak competitive and attractive, combining it with well-developed public infrastructure. This is also a great opportunity to offer tourists visiting Gyumri an alternative to visit a historical place just 15 minutes away from the city, located in an unparalleled nature.

The sub-project "Major repair of the road leading to the Marmashen monastery and improvement of the surrounding area" will have a positive socio-economic impact on the development of the region, another guarantee for the visits of the population of Gyumri and neighboring communities, the creation and development of a new and modern public infrastructure and will give the region a beautiful tourist appearance.

Results of the project

- Creation of a beautiful environment near the historical and cultural complex,
- Creation of a new, modern, improved public infrastructure,
- Increasing the number of tourist visits and income.

Beneficiary communities

1. Marmashen community, which includes the following settlements: Lernut, Kaps, Karmrakar, Krashen, Hatsik, Hovuni, Marmashen, Mets Sarian, Shirak village, Krashen, Jajur, Jajuravan, Vahramaberd, Poqrashen, Keti,
2. Gyumri city,
3. All communities of Shirak region can be indirect beneficiaries of the project, including:
  - population of beneficiary communities: the population of Marmashen community, which is 10,952 people

<sup>24</sup> Based on description of the Project "Major repair of the road to Marmashen Monastery and improvement of the adjacent area". The document was provided by Tourism Committee.



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- business entities operating in Gyumri city (hotels, catering facilities, sales facilities): 28 hotel facilities (of which 24 are hotels, 4 are guest houses), 66 public catering facilities (of which: restaurant - 45, cafe - 18, fast food service point - 1, pub – 1).

- industrial enterprises operating in or near the community: there are 58 industrial enterprises operating in the city of Gyumri (spinning and sewing industry, production of food, dairy products and beverages, production of paper and cardboard, production of vehicles and equipment).

#### Available tourist routes

The project will increase attractivity of current tourist routes, including:

- Marmashen - Vahramaberd - Jajur - Trckan
- Gyumri - Marmashen - Ashotsk
- Gyumri - Marmashen - Bavra border checkpoint
- Gyumri - Marmashen - Gyumri city tour
- Marmashen – Kaps Valley - Amasia - Lake Arpi
- Tirashen - Argishti A. Inscription – Marmashen

#### Emerging routes

The project will allow for the creation of newly formed routes. which can ease to mitigate seasonality, making the above secondary tourist attractions more accessible. There is also a tendency to develop horse racing, bicycle tours in the area, with local people organizing fishing, mushroom, edible plant gathering, gastro tours, etc.

These infrastructures will create additional entertainment opportunities for tourists visiting Gyumri, as the city tour can be combined with a visit to Marmashen. This part of Shirak region will become a tourist center providing a new diversified tourist result, and the cultural values of the region, unique climate and opportunities for active recreation will form diverse tourist results. The increase in the volume of tourist output can contribute to the increase in the volume of passenger traffic of Shirak airport and railway.

#### The importance of preserving the historical/cultural/natural monument

As already specified, Marmashen is one of the best monument groups of Armenian architecture, which was a prominent cultural and religious center of medieval Armenia. This large monastic complex greatly contributed to the development of Armenian spiritual life. The complex consists of two groups of monuments, which include churches, a vestibule, a bell tower, and cemeteries.

Akhuryan river near the city has a great potential for the development of adventure tourism. There are many hiking and biking trails in the area that direct different target groups of tourists to Shirak. Arpi Lake National Park is also located in the region, which was created to preserve the unique biodiversity of the Javakhk-Shirak Plateau.

## 3.2. Tourism Demand

### 3.2.1. Visitor flows

Unfortunately, there are no exact data on the number of tourists visiting Marmashen Monastery, while Gyumri Municipality does not have statistical data on the number of tourists visiting Gyumri.

However, according to approximate evaluations, based on data provided by Akhuryan Municipality, before opening Heghnar aghbyur, the number of visitors was 300-350 monthly (both domestic and incoming tourists). After opening it, the number increased, and in summer about 1000-1200 tourists visit the monastery monthly.

- Tourists come from different countries, particularly those more sensitive to cultural and/or diaspora motivations: France, Italy, Germany, Russia, USA, Argentina, etc.

Incoming tourists are mainly middle aged and older.

Tourists do not stay in Shirak region long. Usually they stay in Gyumri for one night, or are only daily visitors to Harichavank, Gyumri, Marmashen Monastery coming with tour companies.

In May the Armenian Church celebrates the **pilgrimage day to Marmashen Monastery** and on that day, there is also a cultural-musical program organized in the area of monastery. However, mainly the parents and relatives of children participating in the cultural program come to the Monastery.

- So, this day may be used for attracting more visitors to the site. For that purpose, special marketing activities are needed.



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- ▶ The demand is growing and should the infrastructure be repaired and tourism products verified, we might assume that the number of tourists will continue to grow for sure.

### **3.2.2. Profile of visitors**

As mentioned above, the visitors from abroad are middle aged and elderly people mainly, who visit the site for cultural & heritage site seeing purposes.

- ▶ They visit the site to admire the beautiful architecture of the Monastery, the site with Akhuryan river.
- ▶ There are no places of shopping near the monastery, just a girl is selling her handmade arts and crafts in front of the church (mainly Armenian dolls, some souvenirs), so there are no places to spend a lot of money.

Tourists mainly stay and eat in Gyumri.

They learn about the Marmashen Monastery from tour companies as Marmashen is also included in tours together with Gyumri and Harichavank Monastery.

### **3.2.3. Community use of the site**

The community already visits the site for recreational besides religious purposes. The visit is, however, not organized and no permanent tourist services are provided.

- ▶ As the Monastery is located in a very pleasant environment, should infrastructures and services being improved the community will certainly benefit from it. It is reasonable to figure it out that the site might become attractive for small investments, such as a marketplace where people from the village may sell their handmade products (souvenirs, food, etc.).

Should the number of tourists increase, the site might become a touristic center which will drive also stronger development of local communities, as there will be a demand for more guesthouses, catering facilities, buying typical arts & crafts, food, etc.

## **4. KEY STRATEGIC AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES FROM A TOURISM PERSPECTIVE**

### **4.1. SWOT Analysis**

#### **Strengths**

- ✓ Cultural significance of the site
- ✓ Religious testimonies on Sundays at the Monastery
- ✓ Persistence of religious participation by the local population
- ✓ Pleasant landscape
- ✓ Akhuryan river in the valley, which adds natural beauty to the site
- ✓ Popularity of the site among residents for recreational purposes near the River, including picnicking and fishing
- ✓ The monastery is on the road to Georgia and on the Silk Road
- ✓ Shirak has an international airport
- ✓ Gyumri with its tourist facilities is 15 minutes away
- ✓ Armenian traditional life style in villages
- ✓ Cultural and natural monuments
- ✓ Presence of Shirak DMO

#### **Weaknesses**

- ✓ Overlap of competences between the MoESCS and Diocese of Shirak
- ✓ Lack of property or long-term availability of the site, hindering investments by the Diocese
- ✓ Diocese mainly interested in religious values, disregarding tourism exploitation of the site
- ✓ Road infrastructures in poor conditions
- ✓ People mainly engaged in agricultural works, holding no tourism skills
- ✓ Low marketing activities for attracting more tourists
- ✓ No management of visitors flows at the site and in nearby area, including Akhuryan river, where fishing is popular but not regulated



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- ✓ Conflicting uses by residents attracted by daily recreational excursions, which clash with devotion and religious travel
- ✓ Lack of essential visitor facilities, such as parking, sales area, bathroom, information, etc.
- ✓ Limited accommodation, with low number of B&Bs and public catering facilities in the Community

### **Opportunities**

- ✓ Availability of manpower due to poor social-economic condition of rural population in local communities
- ✓ Plenty of pleasant space available to organize cultural and artistic events
- ✓ Abundance of nearby cultural and natural resources in Akhuryan community and in Shirak region, allowing for diversification of the tourism product, (e.g. Tsak Qar, Minas Avetisyan museum, Akhuryan river, Ashotsk and Arpi lake, etc.)
- ✓ Increasing tourism demand for authentic C&H experiences

### **Threats**

- ✓ Covid-19 pandemic restrictions
- ✓ Damage of the site because of uncontrolled tourism use
- ✓ Snow in winter season may bring to close the access road, thus hindering the tourism demand

## **4.2. Major critical issues**

The site is featured with clear opportunities to benefit from growing tourism demand, from both the domestic and international side. Current demand is however low as it is penalized by poor services and infrastructure, with the site used for recreational purposes by the local community without much added economic value. The protection is also at risk as there isn't any regulation about it.

Physical and technical weaknesses, related to tourist services, are clear and might be easily overcome once the site is provided with a sound management. This is however the key issue, as major stakeholders have different needs and expectations:

- The **Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, Sport** which owns the site, is motivated by preserving it by, at the best, favoring its visitation for educational purposes;
- The **Dioceses of Shirak** is motivated by preserving the site but for devotional purposes, disregarding tourism valorization. In any case it would not invest in tourism services and facilities unless it is provided with full availability of the site, with the best option being the transfer of the property from the State;
- The **Tourism Committee** considers the site an opportunity for the economic development of the broader region, but has no institutional power other than using persuasion and soft intervention (i.e. in promotion, in manpower training, etc.);
- The **local communities**, but for Shirak DMO and some operators, are not fully aware of the potential of the site for economic development and are happy to have the chance to continue to use it for leisure and recreational purposes.

## **5. STRATEGIC FOUNDATIONS**

### **5.1. Vision Statement**

The vision of this plan is to make Marmashen Monastery a best practice in Armenia Cultural Travel to Monasteries, by adopting a management model which ensures market success, a sound governance agreed among key stakeholder and a balanced use among devotional visits, C&H tourism and residents' recreation.

### **5.2. Values**

The management plan should be inspired to broad values such as those represented by the ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Charter. *Managing Tourism at Places of Heritage Significance*, adopted in 1999<sup>25</sup>, The Charter declares that, at the broadest level, the natural and cultural heritage belongs to all people, with each having a right and responsibility to understand, appreciate and conserve its universal values.

<sup>25</sup> ICOMOS (1999). *International Cultural Tourism Charter. Managing Tourism at Places of Heritage Significance*. Adopted by ICOMOS at the 12th General Assembly in Mexico, October



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The Charter pursue specific objectives on the basis of specific principles:

1. Since domestic and international tourism is among the foremost vehicles for cultural exchange, conservation should provide responsible and well managed opportunities for members of the host community and visitors to **experience and understand that community's heritage and culture** at first hand.
  - ▶ *Due also to the closeness to the ancient capital of Ani and to dramatic places that originated diaspora, the Marmashen Monastery shall provide, to different kind of visitors and using specific communication tools, interpretation about the Armenia C&H and national history.*
2. The relationship between Heritage Places and Tourism is dynamic and may involve **conflicting values. It should be managed in a sustainable way for present and future generations.**
  - ▶ *As the area of the site, due to its pleasant landscape and to the presence of the Akhuryan river, where fishing takes place, is visited both for religious motivations and, particularly by residents, for recreational purposes, a proper management is required so as to allow a both balance among such possible conflictual uses.*
3. Conservation and Tourism Planning for Heritage Places should ensure that the **Visitor Experience will be worthwhile, satisfying and enjoyable.**
  - ▶ *The site should provide both physical and digital services consistent with those offered at key cultural sites worldwide, including VR/AR tools to better the C&H experience.*
4. **Host communities and indigenous peoples should be involved** in planning for conservation and tourism.
  - ▶ *Specific educational and training programmes shall be devised, so as to encourage the participation of youths from local communities, that might find work opportunities as professional guides and interpreters besides restoration works.*
5. Tourism and conservation activities should **benefit the host community.**
  - ▶ *The STMP shall consider to involve the community in provision of tourism services and activities, not only in Marmashen but in the whole communities, such as for accommodation purposes, provided that high quality levels are guaranteed.*
6. Tourism promotion programmes **should protect and enhance Natural and Cultural Heritage characteristics.**
  - ▶ *Revenues collected by the management of the site should be reinvested in enhancement of its facilities and to contribute to its maintenance.*

### 5.3. Stakeholder engagement

As stated by the previous mentioned Charter, stakeholder engagement is a pre-requisite for developing a sustainable management model. It requires the following steps:

1. Stakeholder mapping
2. Stakeholder classification
3. Stakeholder communication

#### 5.3.1. Stakeholder mapping

We already identified key stakeholders at § 2.3. In the following table they are reported along with respective expectation.

Stakeholder	Positive expectation	Negative impacts to avoid
<b>Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports</b>	Preservation of the site and of its cultural value	Distortion of cultural features and traditions. Damaging of the cultural monuments
<b>Ministry of Economy, Tourism Committee</b>	Tourism valorization of the site. Definition of a new management model for C&H sites. Tourism valorization of broader itineraries including the site (e.g. Silk Road). Raise of average local income. Collection of fiscal revenues from direct and indirect taxation Implementation of on-going project « <i>Major repair of the road to Marmashen Monastery and improvement of the adjacent area</i> »	-
<b>Diocese of Shirak of Armenian Apostolic church</b>	Restoration of the Monastery and upgrading of its surrounding, which can be favored by transfer of ownership by the State to the Diocese	Commercialization of a religious site

<b>Akhuryan Community</b>	Local development. Increase of the image of the Community. Collection of fees from tourism activities. Creation of opportunities for selling locally-made products	Increase of local prices as an effect of tourism inflation
<b>Vahramaberd village</b>	Local development, Increase of leisure and recreational opportunities for its residents. Increase of the image and attractiveness of the Village. Creation of opportunities for selling locally-made products	Pollution of environment. Over tourism with detrimental of resident experience. Increase of local prices as an effect of tourism inflation.
<b>Shirak DMO</b>	Increase of its portfolio of tourism products. Enlargement of business opportunities by providing promotion and commercialization opportunities to new tourism activities	-
<b>Private sector</b>	Increase of demand with regard to tourist services and activities such as accommodation, catering, F&B sales	-

**Table 2:** Stakeholders' expectation with regard to Marmahen site tourism development

### 5.3.2. Stakeholder classification

For our purposes, we classify such stakeholders according to the power-legitimacy-urgency model<sup>26</sup>, where:

- *Power*, according to the type of relationship among social actors, in which on social actor, A, can get another social actor, B, to do something that B would not have otherwise done. Its base can be coercive (force/threat), utilitarian (material of financial incentives), normative (symbolic influence)<sup>27</sup>;
- *Legitimacy*, according to the generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions<sup>28</sup>. Its base is individual, organizational and/or societal;
- *Urgency*, according to the degree to which stakeholders call for immediate attention. Its base is time sensitivity (the degree to which managerial delay in attending to the claim or relationship is unacceptable to the stakeholder and Criticality-the importance of the claim or the relationship to the stakeholder)<sup>29</sup>.

It is worthwhile to mention that each attribute has a temporary value, which can change over time. Using a Likert scale, we assigned 1 to 5 points to each key stakeholder according to each parameter and reached the classification presented in the next table and figure, assuming, according to this model, that:

- *Latent* stakeholders are those possessing only one of the three attributes<sup>30</sup>, and include dormant, discretionary, and demanding stakeholders;
- *Expectant* stakeholders are those possessing two attributes, and include dominant, dependent, and dangerous stakeholders;
- *Definitive stakeholders* are those possessing all three attributes. Finally, individuals or entities possessing none of the attributes are non-stakeholders or potential stakeholders.

Stakeholder	Power	Legitimacy	Urgency	Typology
<b>Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports</b>	5	5	2	Dominant
<b>Ministry of Economy - Tourism Committee</b>	3	4	4	Definitive
<b>World Bank</b>	3	3	2	Dominant
<b>Diocese of Shirak of Armenian Apostolic church</b>	4	5	5	Definitive
<b>Akhuryan Community</b>	1	3	2	Discretionary
<b>Vahramaberd village</b>	2	3	3	Dependent
<b>Shirak DMO</b>	1	2	3	Demanding
<b>Residents</b>	1	3	3	Dependent
<b>Private sector</b>	1	2	3	Demanding
<b>Tourists</b>	1	3	1	Discretionary

**Table 3:** Evaluation of Marmashen's key stakeholders

According to the model, the TC and the Diocese of Shirak are currently Definitive stakeholders. According to their role, they are legitimate to intervene on the site, although their source of power and urgency is different:

- The TC holds financial sources to promote the site;

<sup>26</sup> Mitchell, R.K., Agle, B.R. and Wood, D.J., 1997. Toward a theory of stakeholder identification and salience: Defining the principle of who and what really counts. *Academy of management review*, 22(4), pp.853-886.

<sup>27</sup> Etzioni, A. 1964. *Modern organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

<sup>28</sup> Suchman, M.C., 1995. Managing legitimacy: Strategic and institutional approaches. *Academy of management review*, 20(3), pp.571-610.

<sup>29</sup> Williamson, O.E., 1975. Markets and hierarchies: analysis and antitrust implications: a study in the economics of internal organization. *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's Academy for Entrepreneurial Leadership Historical Research Reference in Entrepreneurship*.

<sup>30</sup> We assumed that possession of one attribute happens when the attributed value is 3 to 5 in the Likert scale





- The Diocese of Shirak holds the management of the site and is expected to provide tourist services which currently lack.

The Diocese seems however to have more urgent needs, as the condition of the site is not up to expectations for a sacred site. Other stakeholders are more powerful but have less urgent needs. The MoESCS is the owner of the site; the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure has competences on the road bringing to the site; the WB detains finance that can be provided for restoration of the site and renewal of the accessing road, which is currently in a poor condition<sup>31</sup>.

Among the others, local communities, particularly residents and Vahramaberd village have expectations from an improvement of the site, as they use its nice surroundings for recreational scopes besides religious attendance. They however hold no concrete power to support their legitimate expectations. Shirak DMO and private operators are in a similar condition, but they have more demanding needs as the site can be also valorized for economic returns generated by tourist services and activities.

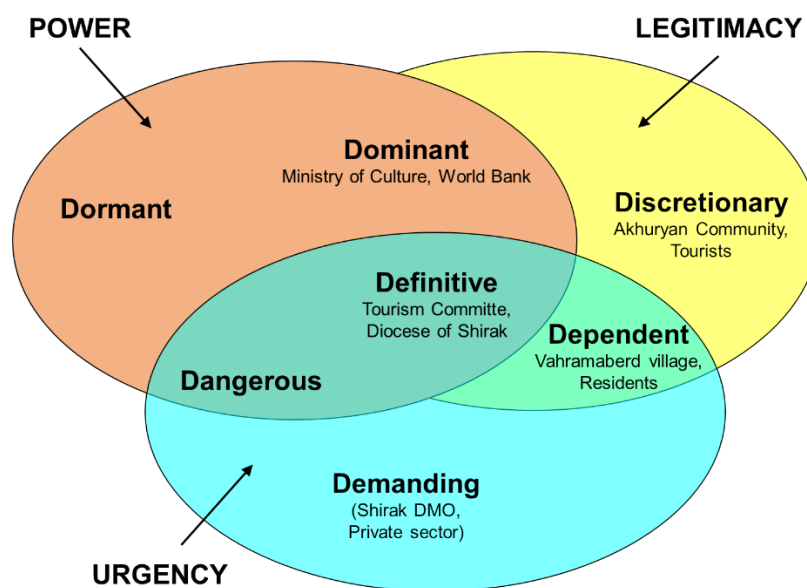


Figure 16: Positioning of Marmashen's key stakeholders

### 5.3.3. Stakeholder communication

On October 18-19, 2022 the group of national and international experts from A.R.S. Progetti and ARPA Environmental Foundation had meetings with key national and local stakeholders, and also site visits.

- During the meetings, the **Diocese of Shirak of Armenian Apostolic church** declared the desire to have Marmashen Monastery as its own property as many other churches in Armenia. In that case, they would be ready to invest to improve the main infrastructures and surroundings of the monastery, making the area clean, safe, fenced, building a school for monks, etc. If not, they would only use it for organizing religious testimonies, while not doing anything according to Site management plan.

The role of the Diocese appears therefore strategic for the success of the project as in case they will play a positive/active or negative/passive game in the management plan. For the success of the project, it will be however essential to have a communication plan in order to positively engage all key stakeholders.

### 5.4. Tourism Development Strategy

- The key strategic objective of the SMP is the definition of a governance model which satisfies different key stakeholders' expectation, coupled with a management plan able to guarantee an effective running of the site and to pursue a sustainable development of the wider area.

<sup>31</sup> The Consultant was told, during the workshop with key stakeholders, that the WB has approved to finance the renewal of the road. Later the Tourism Committee provided a description of the project 'Major repair of the road to Marmashen Monastery and improvement of the adjacent area'. See § 3.1.3



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The management plan starts from considering Marmashen as a tourist attraction, which in order to be market successful needs to provide a well-managed supply, which is positioned, through a key selling proposition (KSP), so serve specific target segments. Meanwhile, it has to cater to the needs of the community, which uses the Monastery area, including the Akhuryan river, as a recreational location.

#### 5.4.1. Key Selling Proposition

##### 5.4.1.1. For tourists

*A breathtaking 10th-century monastic complex, easily accessible from the second largest city of modern Armenia (Gyumri), situated in a very pleasant natural location, along the Great Silk Road and nearby the ancient capital of Ani, whose churches represent some of the finest examples of the “Ani school” of medieval Armenian architecture, offering a physical and imaginary insights into the fascinating and emotional history of the Country.*

##### 5.4.1.2. For the community

*A well-managed and easily accessible recreational area that offers the community, in a fascinating devotional context, cultural, sport and family activities in an open-air context.*

#### 5.4.2. Experiences to be provided

Marmashen Monastery is featured with exceptional features, which might allow to provide various tourism experiences, including<sup>32</sup>:

- **Educational**, which is the key motivation to visit for:
  - domestic and particularly international C&H tourists, that are interested in cultural values and memories, related to the Armenia identity and history, and also to the Silk Road;
  - diaspora tourism, which is interested in the history of Armenia also with relations to the ancient capital of Ani, which is only 40 km distant inside the Turkey border<sup>33</sup>;
- **Escapist**, that is a key reason for residents, that are motivated by leisure and recreation, while being attracted by a genuine and safe environment;
- **Entertainment**, as the location offers the chance to organize sustainable open-air activities, both cultural/artistic - near the monuments - and active/sport in the nearby area and river;
- **Esthetic**, which integrates and reinforces the previous experience, due to the enchanting location and view of the Monastery.

➤ The assumption is that the attraction system should include services and infrastructure so as to guarantee satisfactory experiences for each typology, being consistent with the two KSPs mentioned above.

#### 5.4.3. Market segments

- ✓ Domestic C&H tourists, with a peak in May, on occasion of *pilgrimage day to Marmashen Monastery*;
- ✓ International C&H tourists, particularly from France, Italy, Germany, Russia, UK, USA<sup>34</sup>;
- ✓ International Armenian diaspora;
- ✓ Residents from Vahramaberd (1,438 people), the broader Akhuryan consolidated community (44,951 people) and Gyumri (111,200 people).

#### 5.4.4. Tourism development elements

In order to function as a tourist attraction, a tourism system must be created at Marmashen and the nearby territory, which is composed of the following elements<sup>35</sup>:

- Management of the attraction;
- Accommodation;
- Other facilities and services (souvenir, good shops, food stores, restaurants and bars, etc.);
- Transport infrastructure;
- Digital connection;

<sup>32</sup> Pine, B.J. and Gilmore, J.H., 1998. *Welcome to the experience economy*.

<sup>33</sup> Armenia-Turkey border is closed and people cannot cross it. However, Ani is considered from Armenian side and many tourists go as near as possible to be the closest to the ruins of Ani.

<sup>34</sup> See Assignment 2.1 – Tourism Niche Cultural and Heritage Tourism for details of such perspective markets

<sup>35</sup> See, for instance, Pearce, D.G., 1981. *Tourist development*. Longman Group Limited



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- Electricity, gas and sewage disposal;
- Waste collection and disposal;
- Visitor information;
- Marketing and promotion.

Although the scope of the present SMP focuses on Marmashen Monastery only, a sound governance and management model cannot ignore the broader previous aspects, as they contribute to the success of the site inside a well-organized destination. This is the reason why some considerations are hereafter reported about each element.

- a) **Management of the attraction.** It is discussed at the following § 6.
- b) **Accommodation.** It is not viable neither advisable to foresee hard accommodation in the boundary of the site, as it is a specific protected area, with historical and cultural landscape. However, as accommodation is usually a major generating source of tourist income<sup>36</sup> and since our audit has shown that the Akhuryan community is currently providing only a very limited number of B&Bs, with overnights taking place mainly in Gyumri, it seems wise to encourage the introduction of new and sustainable accommodation at the local level, particularly considering solutions mentioned in Assignment 2.1 and 2.2 (respectively C&H and Adventure & Nature based), such as:
  - *Albergo diffuso*, particularly in Vahramaberd and other suitable communities, which might be personalized according to the Silk Road or diaspora theme;
  - Special camping infrastructure, including new models such as glamping, which would fit very well into the local landscape, without spoiling it. Such kind of accommodation might be located nearby the Akhuryan river, so as to provide a genuine natural and cultural experience, with a special spiritual atmosphere.
- c) **Other facilities and services.** Some facilities and service might be provided in the Monastery area, while other may be conveniently supplied by the nearby communities. At the site, it should at least guaranteed improvement of information (both physical and virtual/digital) provided by a dedicated desk; signage; café by mobile kiosks; restroom facilities; a souvenir shop and the sale of local artisan and agricultural products. Some of these facilities will be provided by the already mentioned the *'Major repair of the road to Marmashen Monastery and improvement of the adjacent area'* project (bathrooms, rest areas, market place, viewing platforms, lightings, tourist and road signs);
- d) **Transport infrastructure.** The Monastery currently lacks basic transport and parking infrastructure, which will be provided by the above-mentioned project (major repair of the road with equipping of drainage elements, bicycle lanes, asphalted open parking lot, stairs going down from the monastery to Akhuryan River, handrails);
- e) **Electricity, gas and sewage disposal.** They might be provided by mobile facilities, provided that they do no spoil the landscape and the environment.
- f) **Digital connection.**
- g) **Waste collection and disposal.** The above-mentioned project will provide trash cans.
- h) **Marketing and promotion.** It is necessary and is discussed at the following § 6.

## 6. GOVERNANCE

### 6.1. Key assumptions

#### 6.1.1. Government role with regard to Cultural Heritage

Government role with regard to Cultural Heritage encompasses two functions<sup>37</sup>:

- a) **Protection**, which consists in the exercise of the functions and in the regulation of the activities, on the basis of an adequate cognitive analysis, aimed to identify the goods constituting the cultural heritage and to guarantee their protection and conservation for purposes of public use;
- b) **Valorization**, which consists in the exercise of the functions and in the regulation of the activities aimed at promoting knowledge of the cultural heritage and at ensuring the best conditions of use and public

<sup>36</sup> According to international practice tourism expenditure for accommodation can be up to half of total daily tourism expenditure for overnight tourists

<sup>37</sup> We referred to the [Italian Cultural heritage and landscape code](#), which was approved by the Italian Government in 2004, following a long history of legislation which dates back to 1820, by the Vatican, to 1909, when it was approved the first Italian law and 1939 when a comprehensive law also included cultural landscape



enjoyment of the heritage itself, also by the disabled, in order to promote the development of culture. It also includes the promotion and support of cultural heritage conservation interventions. With reference to the landscape, enhancement also includes the redevelopment of compromised or degraded buildings and areas subject to protection, or the creation of new coherent and integrated landscape values. The enhancement is implemented in forms compatible with the protection and such as not to prejudice the needs.

### 6.1.2. Consequences for the Marmashen Plan

There are two consequences for our plan:

- Conservation and valorization, as it happens in most developed countries, can be carried out by different bodies, provided that they are coordinated.**
  - ▶ We will therefore assume that the MoESCS will continue to be the owner of Marmashen site and will be responsible for conservation, while the MoETC will be in charge for its tourism valorization.
- Valorization includes, among the other, the provision of tourism services, which must not be constrained to the Monastery site but spread to the broader area where it is located, so as to guarantee less landscape and environmental impact while expanding their positive economic and social impact to the nearby communities. We will therefore assume that:**
  - ▶ Regardless of formal recognition of a “buffer” zone – the whole Akhuryan river area is managed so as to provide an esthetic experience featured by beauty and spirituality;
  - ▶ Tourism services are located not only nearby the Monastery but in the broader area, encompassing the villages surrounding it, including Vahramaberd and Marmashen.
  - ▶ Therefore, some tourist services will be directly managed and provided by the MoETC on site, through the model suggested at the following § 6.2, while other (both on-site and off-site) will be provided by the private sector operating originating from the local communities<sup>38</sup>.

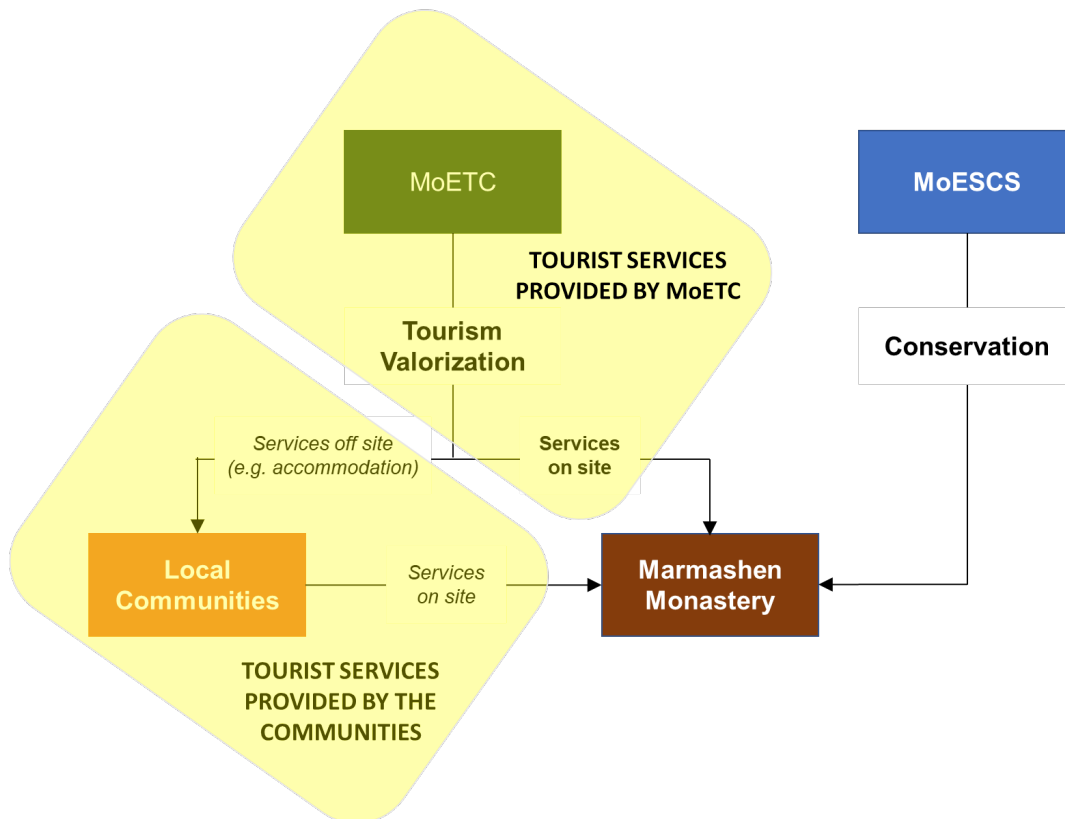


Figure 17: The valorization strategy for the Marmashen site

<sup>38</sup> The model provided is proactive to the creation of a tourism cultural district in the broad Vahramaberd and Marmashen area, as discussed in Valentino, P. A., Musacchio, A., & Perego, F. (1999). *La storia al futuro: beni culturali, specializzazione del territorio e nuova occupazione*. Giunti, Firenze



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## 6.2. Distinction among governance and management

In discussion the Consultant had with the TC, particularly in July 2022, the latter invited the team to consider options for the management of the Marmashen Monastery that would foster the economic development of the broader area (the impact area). The Consultant agreed with such aim and took a tourism cultural-district creation approach that drove to the assumptions introduced in previous § 6.1.

We find also useful clarify which is the distinction we apply between two key concepts:

- **Public Management** refers to the use of managerial techniques, often originating from the private sector, to increase the value for money achieved by public services. They are the core of the SMP described in § 7 and the followings;
- **Public Governance** means how an organization (the TC in our case) works with its partners, stakeholders and networks to influence the outcome of public policies. It contains public management but it is broader.

The valorization strategy described in the previous figures clearly requires a smart public governance approach, so as the efforts of all subjects introduced at previous table 3 converge towards the objective of **creating a tourism cultural-district that maximize local economic development**.

Different options were taken into consideration following meetings the team had with stakeholders. They are presented here after for the sake of transparency towards the legitimate aspirations of each of them. They are options and not decisions. The choice about the most feasible model is later provided on the basis of economic, legal and institutional sustainability.

## 6.3. The governance options

We considered four options for the governance of the site:

1. **The governance is left as it is.** This means that the property will be kept up to the RA Government - MoESCS, with the Diocese of Shirak responsible for the management of the Monastery. As the Diocese declared not to be interested in providing tourist services at the site without having a property title on it, such services - including provision of tourist information at a dedicated desk; management of café by mobile kiosks; restroom facilities; gift shop, bathrooms, rest areas, market place, tourist signage, etc. - will be directly managed by the Government. Later management will be granted to private operators after the execution of a tender.
  - ▶ ***Institutional/Legal sustainability:** In this case all activities and services are supposed to be internally managed by the MoESCS. This option is not viable, as such Ministry has absolutely other functions in the system of the central Government. Also, there can be inconsistency with its budgetary functions, as the MoESCS will not have the financial and capable human resources to organize the site management.*
2. **The property (or, alternatively, the availability of the site for a long period such as 50 years) is transferred to the Diocese.** The Diocese will be made responsible for the management of the Site and for the provision of tourist services, with only restoration costs might be kept up to the Government by a specific agreement.
  - ▶ ***Institutional/Legal sustainability:** This option is very far from providing tourism services and economic activities. The Diocese is a religious organization and it has quite restricted activities envisaged by the legislation on religious organizations. Therefore, this option is not viable either.*
3. **Creating "Historical-Cultural Reserve-Museums and Historical Environment Protection Service" state non-commercial organization (SNCO), which will implement STMP.** According to the charter of the "Historical-Cultural Reserve-Museums and Historical Environment Protection Service" state non-commercial organization (SNCO)<sup>39</sup>, the "Historical-Cultural Reserve-Museums and Historical Environment Protection Service" state non-commercial organization (hereinafter referred to as the organization) is a **non-profit-making organization**, having the status of a legal entity, **an organization carrying out educational, scientific-informational, cultural activities**, which was created for the study, publicity and use of immovable monuments, groups of monuments representing historical, archaeological, architectural or other cultural value, as well as for **implementing the complete conservation** of state-owned historical and cultural immovable monument groups, monument complexes, natural-historical, historical environment, historical and cultural lands and the surrounding terrains (landscapes).

<sup>39</sup> Charter of the "Historical-Cultural Reserve-Museums and Historical Environment Protection Service" state non-commercial organization <https://www.arlis.am/documentview.aspx?docid=113751>



► ***Institutional/Legal sustainability:*** The charter of this organization clearly defines the functions and objectives of the creation of this state non-commercial organization. They are not connected in any way with tourism activities, and they also do not provide an opportunity to carry out management, planning and other functions related to the sphere. There are also many other legal and institutional obstacles, about which there is no need to carry out a detailed analysis, because a cursory study of the state non-commercial organization charter already makes it inappropriate to consider the "Historical-Cultural Reserve-Museums and Historic Environment Protection Service" SNCO as a proper organization for management of the tourism sector. In addition, the model of SNCO is not the optimal for the site management because of the lack of multi-stakeholder approach in its system of governance. It is entirely state-controlled with a very limited possibility to engage the private sector in decision-making process, as prescribed by the legislation.

4. **The management is granted to a Foundation which is established by the State but includes the Akhuryan Community and the Diocese too.** In this case a new entity is created, the Foundation, which is a non-commercial organization, that has a clear objective – to manage and valorize the site – while the property is left to the State.

► ***Institutional/Legal sustainability:*** Organizational structure and the management of the Foundation is the most preferable for implementing the tourism site management operations. First, the objectives and the scope of activities of the expected organization will be defined by its Charter, which will focus on tourism development with strong consideration of other crosscutting issues, such as protection of cultural heritage, respect of spiritual character of the Monastery, etc. The governance of the Foundation is implemented by the Board of Trustees, which is the supreme body in the structure of Foundation, consisted of all potential stakeholders affiliated with the area (relevant representatives of state bodies, community, Church, private sector, other foundations and non-governmental actors, which may have interest upon a time, etc.). The multi-stakeholder approach of governance minimizes the contradictions between different actors, who have interest in the site and increases the atmosphere of collaboration. Importantly, the income generated by the tourism activities can be also used for improvement of the cultural heritage, environment, community infrastructures and serve as a driver for enlargement of cooperation, based on the common decisions of multi-stakeholder Board members of the Foundation. The new Foundation will be guaranteed the availability of the asset for a long term (e.g. 50 years), so as to motivate all the partners to a long-term commitment. The participation of the partners will be broadly defined by the Statute/Charter of the Foundation, while a regulation – approved by the Board of Administration - will set the participation conditions<sup>40</sup>.

## 6.4. Analysis of alternatives

### 6.4.1. Economic considerations

To compare the four options we adopted a 3-E model<sup>41</sup> as represented in the figure.

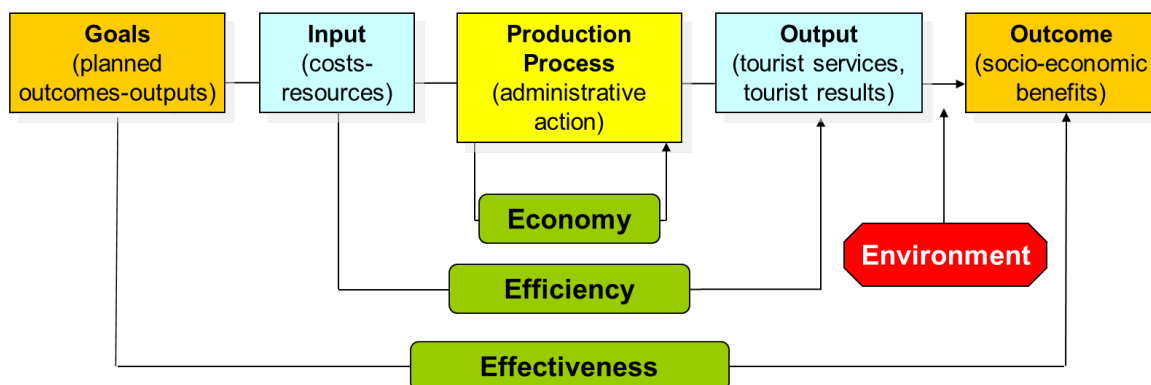


Figure 18: The 3-E concept for assessment of public management performance

<sup>40</sup> During a discussion among all stakeholders (MoESCS, TC, Akhuryan Community, Diocese of Shirak) which was held via Zoom on 23.02.2023, all four options were discussed and the option of creating a foundation was the most preferable and all parties agreed with this option. Also, this plan was sent to MoESCS, Akhuryan Community, Diocese of Shirak for their final approval, on February 28, and on March 8-9, 2023 the stakeholders have written by email that they agree with the plan and with the model of foundation.

<sup>41</sup> UK Comptroller and Auditor General (2001): Measuring the Performance of Departments, London: National Audit Office



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Where:

- Economy focuses on the use of public money, that is intended to be saved;
- Efficiency focuses on immediate results achieved for the money that is spent, that is for instance, the dimension of tourist services provided or the number of tourists visiting the site;
- Effectiveness measures broader socio-economic and institutional impact, including economic growth in the community area, stakeholder satisfaction, etc.

In the following table we compared the merits of the three options according to the benefits provided by each one with regard to the three indicators of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Governance Option	Economy	Efficiency	Effectiveness
As it is (MoESCS)	■ ■ ■	■ ■	■
Diocese of Shirak	■ ■	■ ■	■
Historical-Cultural Reserve-Museum	■ ■	■	■
Foundation	■	■ ■ ■	■ ■ ■

Table 4: Comparison of governance options

As we see, the first and the simplest solution (as it is) is the least costly, at least in the short term, as all activities and services are internally managed by the MoESCS.

The second option (Diocese of Shirak) is likely to keep some costs up to the Ministry (such as restoration) and therefore is less economic. It neither guarantees to reach strategic tourism development objectives, as the Diocese “core business” is far from providing tourism services and particularly caring for achieving economic results.

The third option is not preferable too, as it will not provide efficiency and effectiveness.

The fourth option is the most expensive in the short term, as it requires to hire a Director and key personnel, but it is likely to provide the best results in the medium-long term as it is committed to strategic objectives and – last but not the least – is capable to engage key stakeholders, including the local community and the Diocese.

#### 6.4.2. Institutional/legal considerations

##### Option 1. The governance is left as it is

- ▶ In this case all activities and services are supposed to be internally managed by the MoESCS. This option is not viable, as the MoESCS has absolutely other functions in the system of the central Government. Also, there can be inconsistency with its budgetary functions, as the MoESCS will not have the financial and capable human resources to organize the site management.

##### Option 2. The property (or, alternatively, the availability of the site for a long period such as 50 years) is transferred to the Diocese

- ▶ The second option (Diocese of Shirak) is very far from providing tourism services and economic activities. It is a religious organization and it has quite restricted activities envisaged by the legislation on religious organizations. Therefore, this option is not viable either.

##### Option 3. Creating a Historical-Cultural Reserve-Museum.

- ▶ This option is not preferable, as according to a charter of this organization its functions and objectives are not connected in any way with tourism activities, and they also do not provide an opportunity to carry out management, planning and other functions related to the sphere. The restricted multi-stakeholder liabilities also put this option among the unpreferable ones.

##### Option 4. The management is granted to a Foundation which is created by the State but includes the Akhuryan Community and the Diocese too

- ▶ The fourth option is the only working version for the meaningful site management. Surely, stakeholders such as the Local community, Diocese and the MoESCS can be involved in some aspects of the site management (protection of cultural heritage, garbage collection and setting up some local fees, provide the liturgy, etc.). The participation of representatives of all stakeholders in the Board of Trustees of the Foundation will make optimal conditions for collaborative decision-making.



► The management under this option might also be aligned with the structure proposed in *Assignment 1 – Task 3 Provision of a conceptual framework for DMOs establishment*. In this case, the overall management would be organized by the Shirak DMO (should this be established). Engaging other key stakeholders, including the local community and the Diocese is indeed the task of the DMO based on the suggested alleged liabilities of DMOs. Hence, from the institutional point of view, not the MoESCS but the Tourism Committee shall be the main organizer of the management of the Marmashen and other touristic sites, for being the Ministry controlling the DMO system.

### 6.5. Choice of best option

Following previous analysis, we consider the fourth option “The management is granted to a Foundation which is created by the State but includes the Akhuryan Community and the Diocese too” as the most suitable one. Such Foundation will cooperate with MoESCS to ensure conservation of the site<sup>42</sup>.

Should the TC adopt the Regional DMO model envisaged in the Assignment 1.3, participation of MoETC to the Marmashen Foundation might happen through it.

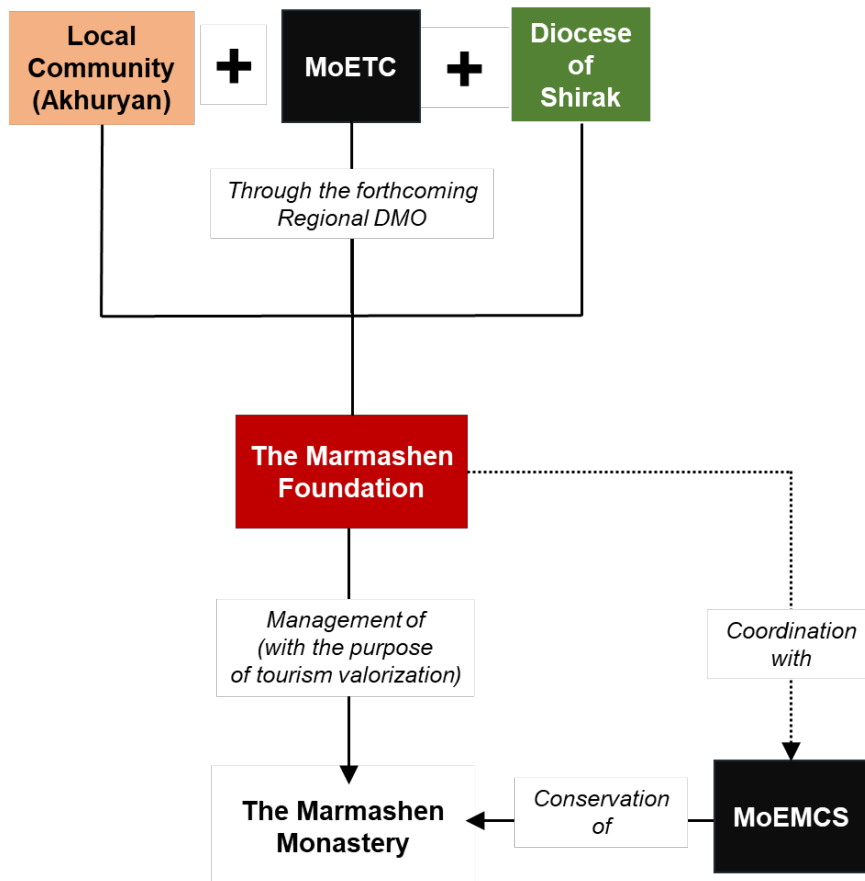


Figure 19: The3-E concept for assessment of public management performance

<sup>42</sup> The use of Foundations as a management model for C&H sites is well rooted in international experiences. Particularly in Italy, the Ministry of Culture distinguishes among traditional Foundations, which are used to promote intangible heritage and Participation Foundations, which are used for tangible heritage. The charter of Participation Foundations distinguishes among different conditions and typologies of participation (Founder Promoters, Founders, Institutional Participants, Supporters), allowing also for changes in partner participation and weight over time (e.g. Government bodies at the start-up if there is need to restore a site or provide physical infrastructure and public services; private partners at a second stage, when emphasis is on management and visitor attraction. The team leader of the Consultant holds extensive experience in this field as he was Director of an Italian Ministry of Culture Foundation that was recognized as a best practice by the EU and is currently engaged in other start-ups at key Italian C&H tourism destinations.





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## 7. SITE MANAGEMENT PLAN (Under Tourism Perspective)

### 7.1. Heritage Conservation

#### 7.1.1. Detected problems

##### 7.1.1.1. Dampness and internal water percolations

Caretakers of the site report that the main problem is the **dampness and water that collects under the walls**. Conservation works required are indeed extensive. The Consultant reports a severe problem of **internal water percolations with the creation of patinas and salt efflorescence**, leading to progressive detachment of material and consequent loss.



Figure 20: Interior views of Marmashen Monastery

- ▶ To detect a suitable solution, further on-site investigations and test should be made. However, the problem may be partially solved by inserting window frames, although this would affect the natural ventilation system and indoor microclimate. This problem is going to be solved by the above-mentioned project by LEID financed by WB/Government of the RA, which will be implemented in 2023.

##### 7.1.1.2. Authenticity loss

As per the time restoration philosophy, during last century restoration works, missing or badly damaged architectural details were replaced with a **simpler design in order to distinguish them from original medieval work**. The change of materials and simplified forms led to a **progressive loss of authenticity**, as the site most valuable architectural elements have been replaced.

- ▶ It is important to plan actions to document the sophistication of structural concepts and decorative elements

##### 7.1.1.3. Unwanted visitors

The site is lately become the **meeting point of partygoers**, who play their loud music in the immediate surrounding. In an interview, Marmashen caretaker declares: *"We are embarrassing ourselves in front of the tourists. But there is no one in charge and to tell these people to take their revelry up the hill and away from the church"*<sup>43</sup>.

- ▶ To limit this phenomenon, it would be necessary to identify a "respect area", a sort of "buffer zone", also by considering the environmental risk that spontaneous gatherings have on the local flora and fauna.

<sup>43</sup> <https://hetq.am/en/article/3843>



7.1.1.4. Prevention Conservation Measures

One important aspect of site management is the provision of sustained care over time, in other words **preventive conservation**. This approach encompasses a more **holistic and integrated approach of site maintenance**, which does not merely involve cleaning and repairs, but also management, monitoring, capacity building, risk assessment, and mitigation.



Figure 21: Preventive conservation approach

Maintenance, for its continuous action, is the most effective form of preventive conservation, as it retards heritage deterioration. In this process, it is imperative that the maintenance action is accompanied over time by **periodic checks**, preventing the maintenance program results in an "irrational" succession of occasional or emergency interventions.

The maintenance programme should include the frequency of inspection, the works to be done with the level of priority, who should do the work, at what cost, a record of previous inspections. All this information should be enclosed in the **inspection report** along with specific recommendations for interventions.

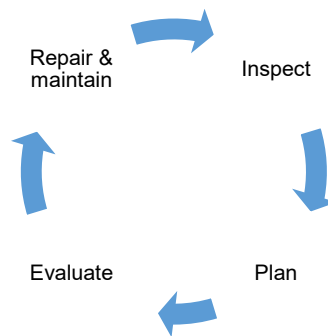


Figure 22: Maintenance cycle for heritage buildings

Another key point to be included is **training for the maintenance personnel**, in order to have personnel capable of understanding the primary building systems and to work on the original materials with a view to favoring interventions that preserve them for as long as possible while limiting their replacement, as per fundamental principles of restoration.

Principle	Description
<b>Recognisability</b>	Every restoration intervention must be recognizable, therefore any added part must be distinguishable from the original, without disturbing the vision of the site.
<b>Reversibility</b>	Any restoration work, whether "conservative" or "aesthetic", must be able to be removed (over time it may alter or for other reasons) without damaging the original.
<b>Compatibility</b>	The materials used must not cause physical or aesthetic damage to the original materials, they must therefore have the same chemical-physical-mechanical properties.



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<b>Minimum intervention<sup>44</sup></b>	Limit restoration work to the minimum necessary. This principle is very important because in this way the stress that the work undergoes with each intervention is limited, but above all because in this way respect for all the information on the constitution and history of an artefact is guaranteed.
<b>Interdisciplinarity</b>	The interaction between different disciplines/professions (the historian, the chemist and the restorer), who work together in research and exchange of knowledge, agreeing to achieve the most complete and respectful work possible.

**Table 5:** Principles of restoration

In order to avoid inefficiency and wasting of financial resources, when carrying out repairs or alterations to Marmashen complex buildings, owners of the TSMP should always consider the following **key points**:

- ▶ When repairing existing buildings, always try to restore the existing fabric, rather than replace with new.
- ▶ When carrying out repairs or alterations, always use the same materials as the original for the repairs, as modern materials may threaten site authenticity.
- ▶ It is important to use quality and proper materials. The repair will last longer and better.
- ▶ Use skilled craftsmen, checking first their reference and qualifications (e.g. certified by ISO standards)<sup>45</sup>.
- ▶ Follow international guidelines on heritage conservation.

## 7.2. Recommended extent and forms of tourism

### 7.2.1. Suggested investments at the site

According to the Diocese of Shirak Region, approximately 5 mln USD is needed to restore the Marmashen Monastery fully and to improve the surroundings.

For our scope, we consider a further investment of 1 mln USD to provide the following facilities, that are detailed in the following pages:

- Reception mobile desk;
- Signages;
- AR/VR tools;
- Lighting, including a special artistic for the Monastery;
- Local market area;
- Souvenir shop;
- E-bike recharging and renting station;
- Caravan Park;
- Glamping camping;
- Barbecue area.

### 7.2.2. Suggested investments on other tourism services and infrastructures in the impact area

We already described the relevant project “Major repair of the road to Marmashen Monastery and improvement of the adjacent area” that will finance the 2.4 km long road leading from the H-32 (Gyumri-Kaps-Amasia) national highway to Marmashen monastic complex and the improvement of the area adjacent to the monastery, including the construction of a parking area, the improvement of the sales area, and the creation of a recreation area as needed.

- ▶ As stated by the above-mentioned ICOMOS’ Charter, service and infrastructure projects should take account of the aesthetic, social and cultural dimensions, natural and cultural landscapes, bio-diversity characteristics and the broader visual context of the heritage site. Preference should be given to using local materials and take account of local architectural styles or vernacular traditions.
- ▶ According to our SWOT analysis, there are some other investments which lack in the area, such as those related to distinctive, cultural accommodation, that should be encouraged also by using specific incentives.

<sup>44</sup> The origins and evolution of minimal intervention are analyzed in early conservation projects and heritage doctrines, in 20th century charters and legislation, and in the present context of values-based conservation and sustainability. It asks to consider minimizing the impact of conservation measures not only on the material fabric of places, but also on their associated values, users, broader community and even the planet.

<sup>45</sup> ISO, like its national counterparts rely on the work of technical committees that draft standards in particular fields. Standards are difficult to be implemented at international level, as countries might be reluctant to change their current ones derived from experience and current knowledge. (ICROM, Standards of Preventive Interventions).

### 7.3. Restrictions on economic activity on the site and potential services beyond the buffer zone of the site

As said above, tourism may involve conflicting values between hosts and guests, that should be managed in a sustainable way. Any economic activity should therefore not damage the attractiveness and historical-cultural integrity of the site. As Marmashen Monastery is a cultural religious site, the typologies and form of activities should be discussed and planned along with the Diocese, that might consider some prohibition for products to be sold at the site or ask for dress codes to enter the Monastery.

As the adjacent area, because of its natural beauty, is already enjoyed by residents in their spare time, such activities should not be discouraged, but regulated so as to raise the quality and the added value for both the community and the site management.

For instance, cultural and artistic events should be promoted, with a scientific committee approving a seasonal/yearly palimpsest for the site, while loud or disturbing music performance should be prohibited. On the other hand, classical music representation, as well typical Armenian music, should be considered, as it would accrue the perceived value of the site.

Similar consideration would apply to active tourism nearby the site, with trekking, cycling and soft river activities promoted. Open-air accommodation, such as by glamping tents might as well be promoted in a specific managed area.

### 7.4. Visitor Management

#### 7.4.1. Carrying Capacity

Currently, due to lack of demand, the site has no problems concerning carrying capacity, except for the use of an adjacent area for picnicking. Improved road infrastructures and implementation of an effective management plan is however likely to bring an increase in tourism flow, so as to make necessary the measurement of Carrying Capacity (CC) and the adoption of prevention measures.

There are several methodologies to calculate Carrying Capacity (CC) for cultural heritage sites with the ultimate scope of informing its operational guidelines<sup>46</sup>.

The theoretical model for CC calculation is:

$$\text{Total site surface}/(1\text{m}^2 \cdot \text{opening hours})/2$$

However, by setting additional parameters, the TSMP could become a tool to be updated over time to describe the current situation of the site, its state of conservation and any weaknesses or management problems:

#### 1. Step 1 – Create a site description sheet

This document should entail some general information on the site, as well as its juridical status, environmental data (e.g. seismic risk), information on its management, availability of plans and programmatic documents, number of visitors and their profile (age, gender, nationality etc.) , maximum number of visitors/ m<sup>2</sup> (according to fire regulations), accessibility, number of opening days per year (for fenced CH sites).

#### 2. Step 2 – Create a set of KPIs

The KPI set usually distinguishes among four typologies:

- Functional Carrying Capacity
- Social Carrying Capacity
- Psychological Carrying Capacity
- Infrastructural/ Territorial Carrying Capacity

**Functional Carrying Capacity** KPIs could inform the definition of visitors' paths, opening times, adequacy of lighting systems, security and prevention plans. In absence of data, surveys should be carried out on site.

#### Functional Carrying Capacity

<sup>46</sup> E. Cimnaghi, G. Mondini, M. Valle: "La Capacità di carico turistica: uno strumento per la gestione del patrimonio culturale" in Quaderni della Valorizzazione NS5 – Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività culturali e del Turismo.

KPI	Description	Confrontation level <sup>47</sup>	Value of KPI
<b>Nr. of tourist with respect to the visitable surface</b>	CC= (visitable surface/ total surface)* theoretical CC	1	To be filled out on site
<b>Maximum visitors</b>	Constraint indicated by fire regulation	1	To be filled out on site
<b>Accessibility</b>	Presence of architectural barriers	1	To be filled out on site
<b>Opening times</b>	Site opening days/hours	3	To be filled out on site
<b>Security measures in place</b>	YES/NO	4	To be filled out on site
<b>Heritage Vulnerability factors</b>	To be identified on place during inspections	3	To be filled out on site

Table 6: Functional Carrying Capacity

**Social Carrying Capacity** KPIs can inform action to de-seasonalize tourism flows, introduce behavior norms at site, prevention policies (e.g. the installation of cameras).

Social Carrying Capacity			
KPI	Description	Confrontation level	Value of KPI
<b>Resident perception on tourism flows at site</b>	In-depth interview with key stakeholders to understand satisfaction level	3	To be filled out on site
<b>Perception of tourists attitude towards residents</b>	In-depth interview with key stakeholders to understand satisfaction level	3	To be filled out on site
<b>Ratio between nr. of tourists in low seasons and high season</b>	1 (i.e. visitor statistics collected at site)	2	To be filled out on site
<b>Other specific problems at site</b>	(e.g. thefts, vandalism)	4	To be filled out on site

Table 7: Social Carrying Capacity

**Psychological Carrying Capacity** KPIs can inform actions to enhance site quality and fruition, policies to reduce crowds (e.g. introduction of an online ticket), information on ancillary services and initiatives to make the visit more pleasant.

Psychological Carrying Capacity			
KPI	Description	Confrontation level	Value of KPI
<b>Tourist level of satisfaction regarding presentation of CH (i.e. heritage interpretation)</b>	Ad-hoc studies	3	To be filled out on site
<b>% of tourists who believe the site is overcrowded</b>	Direct observation	3	To be filled out on site
<b>Level of fruition of cultural offer and site comprehension</b>	Direct observation	3	To be filled out on site

Table 8: Psychological Carrying Capacity

**Infrastructural/ Territorial Carrying Capacity** KPIs can inform TSMP on actions related to the introduction of dedicated transportation means (e.g. direct bus operating on weekends) to reach the site and to take decisions on incrementing signage, toilets, trash bins and other amenities available to tourists.

Infrastructural/ Territorial Carrying Capacity			
KPI	Description	Confrontation level	Value of KPI
<b>Nr. of transports to get to the site</b>	Nr. of ordinary and dedicated transport means available	1	To be filled out on site
<b>Toilets/ nr. of visitors</b>	Determined by the law	1	To be filled out on site
<b>Signage</b>	YES/NO	4	To be filled out on site

<sup>47</sup>level 1: comparison with normative indications (if any) or quantifiable physical factor; level 2) comparison with best practices in the literature; level 3) site-specific definition of the reference target by means of a direct comparison direct comparison with the managing body; level 4) qualitative indications to be defined in consultation with the managing body



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<b>Spaces dedicated to visitor relax (e.g. benches and pic-nic areas) in TSMP area</b>	Direct observation and/or ad-hoc studies	3	To be filled out on site
<b>Nr. parking lots in TSMP area</b>	Direct observation and/or ad-hoc studies	1	To be filled out on site

**Table 9:** Infrastructural Carrying Capacity

### 3. Step 3 – Create a result sheet

The results obtained will be incorporated in a special form, aimed at collecting in a synthetic and organic manner the indications that emerged during the application phases of the model.

The first field to be filled in relates to the identification of the asset being studied.

As part of the analysis of the extrapolated theoretical CC values, it is useful to make a comparison with the flows at the reference site, in order to understand whether there is **overutilization or underutilization of the cultural asset**.

The results sheet conclusions should enclose a section on management guidelines, which must contain indications of a strategic nature to improve the conditions of usability of the site and inform its operational guidelines.

#### 7.4.2. Flow Management Techniques

Flow management techniques that may be used include:

- a) **Foreseeing specific circulation routes**, which might be suggested to minimize impacts on the integrity and physical fabric of the site, its natural and cultural characteristics.
- b) **Spreading visits through multiple hours, days and season:**
  - o During high season arrange visiting hours may be varied between tour operators to bring tourists to the Monastery at different hours and days;
  - o Particularly, during high season, in summer, on Saturdays and Sundays, in case of high flow of visitors, tour operators may be suggested to arrange their visit to the Monastery during the tours at different hours, in order to avoid over tourism;
- c) **Introduction of an entrance fee.** Currently the Monastery has no entrance fee (there is no monastery in Armenia which has an entrance fee). During the interview the Diocese declared to be available to consider an entrance fee for foreign tourists, but not Armenians. The fee might also help to raise money to preserve the Monastery and would allow to differentiate prices on working days so as to reduce pressure on weekends<sup>48</sup>.
- d) **Introduction on new tourist activities and attractions on site.** In case of much growing tourism demand, the creation of new tourist activities near the area would help to spread visitors spatially. This can be conveniently done nearby the Akhurian river.
- e) **Introduction on new tourist activities and attractions in the broader area.** The offer of tours that would allow tourists to access other activities and attractions across the Shirak region would contribute to reduce pressure on Marmashen, while promoting sustainable economic development of other areas as well.

#### 7.5. Visitor rights and responsibilities

Visitors should be able to experience the Monastery and the surrounding area at their own pace, if they so choose, using circulation routes should they be implemented.

Respect for the sanctity of spiritual places, practices and traditions is an important consideration. Visitors should be encouraged to behave as welcomed guests, respecting the values of the Diocese and conducting themselves in a responsible manner which would generate a renewed welcome, should they return.

A specific **regulation** should be adopted to specify visitor rights and responsibilities, including, for instance, behavioural norms concerning preserving the site, not polluting the area, not damaging the site, not using alcohol and cigarettes at the area. They should be aware of their rights and responsibilities. Also, there should be some guiding signs at the area for keeping the rules.

<sup>48</sup> In Italy, as well, the introduction of an entrance fee for some mixed functions site (archaeological/religious) has been considered, such as in the case of Pantheon in Rome, where there is an on-going discussion about introducing a 2 euro fee only for tourists, allowing free access to residents. Source: [Pantheon a pagamento: Sangiuliano e Gualtieri favorevoli a introdurre un biglietto d'ingresso](#)



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Such regulation might be part of broader act approved by the TC which would apply to all Armenia religious sites. There are several best practices at the international level that can be used as a reference<sup>49</sup>.

## 7.6. Adding value through products, experiences and services

### 7.6.1. Why it is important

New touristic activities and products will add value for local communities. They will enable to preserve the cultural heritage, make the sites known and visited, develop many types of tourism.

### 7.6.2. Interpretation of the site

The cultural heritage represented by the Monastery, with its values declared at § 2.3, have differing levels of significance, some with universal values, others of national or local relevance. Particularly diaspora and the connection with the city of Any represent for Marmashen a very relevant identity asset, that should be communicated in a proper manner to different targets.

Interpretation programmes should present that significance in a relevant and accessible manner to the host community and the visitor, with appropriate, stimulating and contemporary forms of education, media, technology and personal explanation of historical, environmental and cultural information

They should present the significance of the Monastery within the past experience and present diversities of the area and the host community, informing the visitor about the historical and specific cultural values that may be ascribed to such heritage resource.

Interpretation might also take advantage by the use of **virtual reality/augmented reality applications**, that might much enrich the visit providing historic and thematic experiences.

### 7.6.3. Products, services and experiences that can be developed

**Cultural musical light shows may be organized in and outside Marmashen Monastery**, as it happens in other countries. For example, Scoranno, in Italy, a small city of 7,000 inhabitants, celebrates the saint protector of their city, "Santa Domenica". Millions of lamps and lights are paired with futuristic technology; the event is always a huge success and about 400,000 people from all over the world come every year to witness it. The small city gained a lot of fame due to its spectacular light sculptures during the Santa Domenica day, which usually takes place every year from the 5th to the 8th of July<sup>50</sup>.

Another example is Vatican. Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli inaugurated a two-week light show on the façade of St Peter's Basilica, telling the story of the first pope, at the Vatican on Sunday night. The eight-minute video charting the life of the apostle had lighted up St Peter's each night from October 3 until 16 October, 2022, from 21.00 to 23.00 - with a projection every 15 minutes. Cardinal Mauro Gambetti, the archpriest of St Peter's Basilica, said the video mapping display is part of the Vatican's pastoral programme to make the faith more accessible to people through art<sup>51</sup>.

► **Such shows may be organized also in Marmashen Monastery by making it together with Church.**

### 7.6.4. Sales and merchandising

The promotion, distribution and sale of local crafts and other products should provide a reasonable social and economic return to the host community, while ensuring that their cultural integrity is not degraded. We have already mentioned the launch of a business incubator in the master class format, which resulted in the production of **authentic souvenirs** and artisanal artefacts by micro-enterprises. Such initiatives should be encouraged and find their market channel at the Monastery market and gift shop.

A **certified shop** should be indeed opened at the Monastery, which should sell souvenirs, religious literature, etc., the income from which should go to the church. The shop should sell certified merchandising, such as foreseen in Assignment 2.1 – C&H Tourism Niche, following standards defined for Armenia typical arts & crafts, so as keep up the quality standards.

<sup>49</sup> See, for instance, [LAW 15/2018 of 7 June](#) of the Regional Government of Valencia (Spain), on tourism, leisure and hospitality which includes article 16 about Tourist Rights and article 17 about Tourist Obligations

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.itinari.com/festa-di-santa-domenica-the-most-spectacular-light-festival-in-italy-9h95>

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.wantedinrome.com/news/vatican-light-show-tells-story-of-st-peter.html>

A **local market**, such as that foreseen by the on-going WB funded project, might be considered, providing local population with the chance to sell their products, including agricultural products, arts and crafts, souvenirs, etc. Even in this case, it is recommended that a quality control is implemented so as to ensure the value of the products sold.

#### 7.6.5. Value Infrastructures

Information should be provided, as already mentioned, by considering different interpretative tools aimed to satisfy the needs of different targets, including children, schools and impaired people. These would include:

- QR codes, that may be used at the site for informative signs;
- VR/AR tools;
- Audio guides.

#### 7.6.6. Marketing and branding

Marketing and branding of the site should be done following a three years marketing strategy, coupled with a yearly marketing plan. Branding should include a unique name and image, based on Marmashen KSP, and followed by the implementation of the three years and one year plan which would include:

- Some basic printed information (map and description of the site and of the surrounding area);
- Particularly, a web marketing plan, based on a web page driving to different social communication (FB, Instagram, Tik Tok, etc.) so as to stimulate viral marketing and SMM. The webpage would have different sections on what to do, where to go, what to see, by presenting all activities and places in pictures, videos, etc.

Marketing should promote various themes, in order to reach various target segments:

- ✓ As a spiritual route, as the tour may include Marmashen Monastery, also Tsak Qar, and here the main concern should be done on keeping a wish in mind which will come true in case of visiting the church and also by passing through the hole of Tsak Qar,
- ✓ Getting unforgettable memories of cultural and adventure tourism by visiting Marmashen Monastery, Arpi Lake and Ashotsk,
- ✓ Cultural experience by visiting Marmashen Monastery, Harichavank Monastery, Minas Avetisyan Museum and Museums in Gyumri,
- ✓ Creative tourism by participating at tours of preparing local food, arts and crafts in Gyumri and Marmashen,
- ✓ Festival tourism in Marmashen Monastery and Gyumri.

It would also helpful to have a touristic brand and logo of Shirak region, that might have been separately developed by the TC and local communities with the engagement of all stakeholders.

#### 7.6.7. Involvement of entrepreneurs and community

Marmashen management plan should promote measures for the equitable distribution of the benefits of tourism to be shared across the local communities, improving the levels of socio-economic development and contributing to poverty alleviation.

A significant proportion of the revenue specifically derived from tourism activities to heritage places should be allotted to the protection, conservation and presentation of the Monastery, including its natural context. Visitors should also be advised of this revenue allocation, in order to increase expenditure and promote donations.

Moreover:

- It should be encouraged the training and employment of guides and site interpreters from the host community to enhance the skills of local people in the presentation and interpretation of Shirak and Marmashen cultural values;
- Heritage interpretation and education should encourage the involvement of local site interpreters, so as to promote a knowledge and respect for the heritage, encouraging the residents to take a direct interest in Marmashen care and conservation;
- It should be provided education and training opportunities for policy makers, designers, architects, interpreters, conservators and tourism operators.

Hotels, restaurants, and shops should play a vital role in encouraging visitors to buy key products. They may help through:





- By explaining why consumers might want to make purchases of these products, services, and experiences.
- By embedding those products in what they offer guests.

Such initiatives might be implemented as part of the creation of a Marmashen cultural ecosystem (cultural district), that would include, along with training, also incentives such as micro-grants to the community to start business activities related to tourism services, as foreseen by Assignment 2.1 C&H Tourism Niche<sup>52</sup>.

The Marmashen cultural ecosystem should be the output of formulation of a Community-Led Local C&H Development Plan, centered on the Marmashen Monastery, involving public, private and third sector operators, active in different fields: cultural accommodation, tour and travel operations, restaurants, handicrafts, specialty and convenience shopping, etc.

### 7.7. Collection of visitor flow statistics

In case of making the entrance with fee, it will be possible to directly produce visitor flow statistics.

As the parking area must have cameras for security, it will also give the opportunity to collect data on the number of visitors, at least estimating them from the number of cars and buses.

As it is common for cultural sites, such collection systems will not allow to provide segmented data, such as number of tourists by origin, age, gender, purchased services. These should be collected by promoting **cooperation with universities and research centers** or by using big-data owned by digital operators.

### 7.8. Communication to stakeholders and public at large

The suggested tours, together with the main information may be included in brochures and given to tourists in visitor centers, hotels, restaurants not only in Shirak region, but also in other places in the country.

The same may be done also online using webpage of DMO, [www.armenia.travel](http://www.armenia.travel) portal, social networks, etc.

More in general, stakeholder communication should be part of a stakeholder engagement plan implemented inside a **Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy**<sup>53</sup>.

### 7.9. Risk management (Safety and security)

Risk management refer to two aspects:

- Risks to cultural heritage;
- Risks to visitors.

With regard to **Risks to cultural heritage**, because of its importance as a management tool, international standards have been developed. One of them is ISO 31000:2009, Risk Management - Principles and guidelines.



Figure 23: Steps for risk management defined by ISO 31000:2009

<sup>52</sup> We particularly refer to action 3.1.1 "Adopt the cultural ecosystems at the national level" and 5.1.1 Improve tourism facilities and services at key C&H sites

<sup>53</sup> See Kramer, Mark R. And Michael E. Porter., "Strategy and Society: The Link Between Competitive Advantage and Corporate Social Responsibility". In: *Harvard Business Review*. Dec 01, 2006



The figure shows the main steps defined by the standard (inner ring) as well as concepts and tools developed for the heritage sector<sup>54</sup>.

A risk management plan should be devised, with classification of risks from insignificant (risks easily mitigated by normal day to day process) to catastrophic (destruction of the site).

Likelihood	Consequences				
	Insignificant <i>Risk is easily mitigated by normal day to day process</i>	Minor <i>Delays up to 10% of Schedule Additional cost up to 10% of Budget</i>	Moderate <i>Delays up to 30% of Schedule Additional cost up to 30% of Budget</i>	Major <i>Delays up to 50% of Schedule Additional cost up to 50% of Budget</i>	Catastrophic <i>Project abandoned</i>
<b>Certain</b> >90% chance	High	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme
<b>Likely</b> 50% - 90% chance	Moderate	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
<b>Moderate</b> 10% - 50% chance	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme	Extreme
<b>Unlikely</b> 3% - 10% chance	Low	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
<b>Rare</b> <3% chance	Low	Low	Moderate	High	High

Figure 24: Classification of risks

With regard to **Risks to visitors**, standard safety and security systems should be put in place, providing fenced routes for visiting the sites, bathroom facilities and outdoor seats for the comfort, which would not adversely impact on the significant features or ecological characteristics. Emergency kits should also be kept at the reception.

## 8. MONITORING

### 8.1. Conservation or environmental benchmarks

For this site we may define the main environmental benchmarks:

- Air quality
- Biodiversity
- Pollution
- Water quality
- Energy efficiency

### 8.2. Community benchmarks

The main community benchmarks may be defined as:

- The average wage in tourism sector paid to local people in Akhuryan community
- The poverty rate in Akhuryan community
- The quality of life in Akhuryan community
- The percentage of local young people who receive training in the tourism industry
- The number of local people who run a business related to tourism

### 8.3. Economic/Tourism benchmarks

The main economic/tourism benchmarks may be:

- Number of domestic tourists visiting the site
- Number of incoming tourists visiting the site

<sup>54</sup> See ICCROM (2016). *A Guide to Risk Management of Cultural Heritage*. Government of Canada, Canadian Conservation Institute



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- Number of overnight tourists stays in Akhuryan community
- The main purpose of tourist visits
- The profile of tourists
- Seasonality of visits
- Money spent by tourists on food, accommodation, souvenirs, etc.
- Tourism added value in Akhuryan community

#### 8.4. Site-specific benchmarks

Such benchmarks may be:

- Number of cultural events organized at the site during a year
- Number of religious testimonies organized at the monastery during a year
- Number of new routes including the monastery

### 9. ORGANIZATION

#### 9.1. Management

We assume that the management is taken by the Foundation described at § 6.1. Such will therefore be created by the State and participated by the Akhuryan Community and the Diocese too.

We assume that:

- The Government will provide financial resources to cover operational costs, including restoration and maintenance of the Site;
- The Diocese will participate to the management of the site being responsible for religious functions;
- The Local Community will provide some services to the site, including security, waste collection and disposal;
- A Board of Administration will be set composed by five people (three from the Government, one each from the Diocese and the Local Community). The Government will appoint the President of the Board;
- An experienced Director - hired upon a tender on a competitive basis - will be in charge for the management;
- The Foundation will have a Director and will be provided with a staff to cover basic functions including administration, event organization, tourist services management.
- An Expert Committee, appointed by partners, will provide the Foundation with the advice on the organization of special events and projects.

#### 9.2. Functional structure

Following the Governance model defined at § 6, we assume a management structure which is held by an Executive Director, that operates through functional departments: Administrative, Operations, Marketing, Facilities, Visitor Service.

Security and Cleaning can respond to internal administration but also be conveniently outsourced.

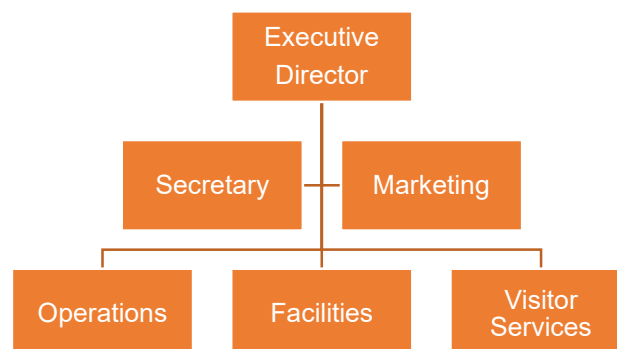


Figure 25: Management Structure

### 9.3. Human Resources

The following table reports the Departments along with relative personnel. As stated above, Security and Cleanings might be outsourced, as it is for maintenance and other service activities.

It is also assumed to engage volunteers for some activities, while ensuring gender equality.

Department	Personnel
Administrative	2 FTE
Operations & Marketing	2 FTE
Facilities	2 HTE
Visitor Service	3 FTE
Security/Custodians	2 FTE
Cleaners	2 FTE

Table 10: Departments and staff

Human resources should be specialists of the sphere, trying however to involve local young people who have consistent trainings and skills.

## 10. BUSINESS PLAN

### 10.1. Key assumptions

- A Foundation is created by the State and participated by the Diocese and the Akhuryan Community to be in charge for the management of the site.
  - o It promotes the Marmashen Monastery according to the KSP mentioned at § 5.4.1.
  - o It serves the market segments mentioned at § 5.4.3, to which it provides experiences mentioned at § 5.4.2
- The site has been restored and it is accessible by car and buses by the repaired 2.4 km road mentioned at § 3.1.3
- The site is accessible according to an operating schedule that assumes as public operating days: all weekends (Saturday, Sunday), plus all days during three months of summer seasons;
- The Monastery is organized as a “C&H” tourist attraction, consisting of the five churches and of tourist services including:
  - o A parking place whose capacity is 80 cars and 4 buses F&B kiosks
  - o A gift shop, selling certified merchandising, provided by a wooden caravan;
  - o A local market area consisting of 8 wooden kiosks conceded to local operators
  - o A F&B wooden kiosk with a soft-covered table & seats area with a capacity of 80 people, conceded to a specialized operator
  - o A Barbecue area with a capacity of 120 people;
  - o A E-bike renewable station provided with n. 8 e-bikes, conceded to a local operator
  - o A Kids playground;
  - o Lights, audio system and stage for small concerts.
- Other tourist services and activities are offered during the summer season, with exception for the Caravan Park, the gift shop, the local market and the F&B kiosks, which operate all-year round;
- Functions and Special Events are considered, as outdoor spaces are suitable for community, private (such as ceremonies) and other uses. Rentals of outdoor facilities is foreseen and encouraged;
- Special events, such as music spectacles performed in a specific area not conflicting with the Monastery are considered. Spectacles have a maximum audience of 400 people;
- Accommodation is mainly provided by local communities, adding economic benefits which are not accounted for in the present business plan
- At the site is however offered sustainable accommodation, consisting of:
  - o n. 10 glamping tents, with a capacity of maximum n. 4 people each;
  - o n. 8 caravans with a capacity of n. 4 people each (Caravan Park);
- Marketing strategies include – besides visitor’ word of mouth – rack brochures, road signage, partnership and collaborative opportunities with other institutions, website and social media communication.
- All revenue and expense projections are stated in 2023 constant currency. Thus, a specific inflation factor is not included in estimates. All projections are assumed to change at the rate of inflation.



► **Environmental considerations.** There is any discrepancy with the ongoing legislation or state policies. The issue of Environmental Impact Assessment of the site is not a barrier to implement the project as well. At this stage it is hard to predict whether or not the EIA will be needed. However, even if some areas or objects will fall under the scope of regulation of the Law on EIA, it can be organized by the organization, which is dealing with the site management (Foundation or other). The possible demand for EIA is fully compatible with the site management or a business plan.

## 10.2. Attendance Projections

Attendance is projected over 5 years and is break down by the following categories:

- International tourists
- Domestic tourists
- Daily visitors, which we assume that originate from the Shirak Region<sup>55</sup>

In order to foresee the demand, we adopt the following methodology:

- for a) and b) we consider official figures about total tourist arrivals, while for daily visitors, we consider figures from the 2011 Census<sup>56</sup>;
- we assume a compound average growth rate (CAGR) based on international benchmarks<sup>57</sup>;
- we apply a yearly penetration rate and obtain the prospective demand;
- we assume that each visitor, from each category, makes only one visit per year<sup>58</sup>.

Under such assumption, we obtain a demand of 74,955 people in the 1st year, reaching 92,741 in the 5th year.

Potential Attendance	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>International tourists</b>	550,289	577,803	606,694	637,028	668,880
<b>Domestic tourists</b>	1,112,305	1,167,920	1,226,316	1,287,632	1,352,014
Same-day visitors	251,941	251,941	251,941	251,941	251,941
<b>Yearly Penetration Rate</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
International tourists	5.0%	5.1%	5.2%	5.3%	5.4%
Domestic tourists	2.0%	2.0%	2.1%	2.1%	2.2%
Same-day visitors	10.0%	10.2%	10.4%	10.6%	10.8%
<b>Projected Attendance</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
International tourists	27,514	29,468	31,560	33,801	36,201
Domestic tourists	22,246	23,826	25,517	27,329	29,269
Same-day visitors	25,194	25,698	26,212	26,736	27,271
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>74,955</b>	<b>78,992</b>	<b>83,289</b>	<b>87,866</b>	<b>92,741</b>

Table 11: Attendance Projections

## 10.3. Demand for tourism services and activities

We apply a similar methodology for each tourism service at activity offered at Marmashen:

- we consider the projected attendance for each category of visitors;
- we apply a penetration rate, to projected attendance, for each service and activity, obtaining the projected demand;
- we assume that such penetration rate remains constant over the 5-year timeframe;
- we do not consider demand for functions and special events, assuming that in the first 5 years revenues would balance operative costs and therefore do not affect the Business Plan.

Service/activity	International tourists	Domestic tourists	Same-day visitors
<b>Parking</b>	All visitors arrive by car. 4 passengers per car <sup>59</sup>		
<b>Certified gift shop</b>	20%	10%	2%
<b>Local Market</b>	10%	10%	5%

<sup>55</sup> Same day visitors are visitors residing in Armenia who visit Marmashen but return to their usual environment within 24 hours. Source: Smith, S.L., 2014. *Tourism analysis: A handbook*. Routledge.

<sup>56</sup> Source: [Shirak population, 2011 Census](#)

<sup>57</sup> We assume a CAGR of international and domestic arrivals of 4.4% per year, as stated by UNWTO (2011), *Tourism towards 2030. Global Overview*. UNWTO: Madrid

<sup>58</sup> It is a prudent assumption especially for daily visitors from nearby areas. Many attractions do indeed rely their demand on repetitive visits by residents.

<sup>59</sup> For the sake of simplicity we consider that all Marmashen visitors arrive by their own or rented car. The use of tourist buses would indeed not affect the projections

<b>F&amp;B kiosks</b>	25%	25%	20%
<b>Kids playground</b>	0%	0%	50%
<b>E-bike renting</b>	4%	4%	8%
<b>Barbecue area</b>	0%	10%	20%
<b>Glamping tents</b>	1%	2%	0%
<b>Caravans</b>	5%	2%	0%

Table 12: Penetration rate for each tourism service/activity by each demand category

<b>Parking Projected Demand (nr. of car)</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
International tourists	6,879	7,325	7,800	8,306	8,845
Domestic tourists	5,562	5,922	6,307	6,716	7,151
Same-day visitors	6,299	6,424	6,553	6,684	6,818

Table 13: Parking Demand Projections

<b>Gift Shop Projected Demand</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
International tourists	5,503	5,860	6,240	6,645	7,076
Domestic tourists	2,225	2,369	2,523	2,686	2,861
Same-day visitors	504	514	524	535	545

Table 14: Gift Shop Demand Projections

<b>Local Market Projected Demand</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
International tourists	2,751	2,930	3,120	3,322	3,538
Domestic tourists	2,225	2,369	2,523	2,686	2,861
Same-day visitors	1,260	1,285	1,311	1,337	1,364

Table 15: Gift Shop Demand Projections

<b>F&amp;B kiosks Projected Demand</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
International tourists	6,879	7,325	7,800	8,306	8,845
Domestic tourists	5,562	5,922	6,307	6,716	7,151
Same-day visitors	5,039	5,140	5,242	5,347	5,454

Table 16: F&B kiosks Demand Projections

<b>Kids Playground Projected Demand</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
International tourists	0	0	0	0	0
Domestic tourists	0	0	0	0	0
Same-day visitors	12,597	12,849	13,106	13,368	13,635

Table 17: Kids Playground Demand Projections

<b>E-bike Renting Projected Demand</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
International tourists	1,101	1,172	1,248	1,329	1,415
Domestic tourists	890	948	1,009	1,075	1,144
Same-day visitors	2,016	2,056	2,097	2,139	2,182

Table 18: E-bike Renting Demand Projections

<b>Barbecue Area Projected Demand</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
International tourists	0	0	0	0	0
Domestic tourists	2,225	2,369	2,523	2,686	2,861
Same-day visitors	5,039	5,140	5,242	5,347	5,454

Table 19: Barbecue Area Demand Projections

<b>Glamping Tents Projected Demand</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
International tourists	5,503	5,860	6,240	6,645	7,076
Domestic tourists	2,225	2,369	2,523	2,686	2,861
Same-day visitors	504	514	524	535	545

Table 20: Glamping Tents Demand Projections

<b>Caravan Area Projected Demand</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
International tourists	5,503	5,860	6,240	6,645	7,076
Domestic tourists	2,225	2,369	2,523	2,686	2,861
Same-day visitors	504	514	524	535	545

Table 21: Caravan Area Demand Projections

#### 10.4. Admission fees

We assume the following fees for tourist services and activities. In the case of gift shop, local market, F&B kiosk, we assume an average expenditure per capita based on Consultants' experience in similar projects.

Service/activity	Fee (USD)	Service/activity	Fee (USD)
Admission (Int & domestic visitors)	3	F&B kiosks	20
Admission (residents)	0	Kids playground	4
Parking (car)	1	E-bike renting	10
Parking (bus)	30	Barbecue area	3
Gift shop	5	Glamping tents	20
Local Market	8	Caravans	35

Table 22: Fees of Tourist Services and Activities

## 10.5. Revenues

In order to project revenues, we considered the total yearly turnover of each service/activity, with the exception of the local market and the gift shop. As they are outsourced, revenues consist of royalties upon turnover, which are set at 30%.

Admissions Revenue	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
International tourists	\$82,543	\$88,404	\$94,681	\$101,403	\$108,603
Domestic tourists	\$66,738	\$71,477	\$76,552	\$81,987	\$87,808
Same-day visitors	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Table 23: Admission Revenues

Parking Revenue	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
International tourists	\$6,879	\$7,367	\$7,890	\$8,450	\$9,050
Domestic tourists	\$5,562	\$5,956	\$6,379	\$6,832	\$7,317
Same-day visitors	\$6,299	\$6,424	\$6,553	\$6,684	\$6,818

Table 24: Parking Revenues

Gift Shop Revenues	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
International tourists	\$27,514	\$29,468	\$31,560	\$33,801	\$36,201
Domestic tourists	\$11,123	\$11,913	\$12,759	\$13,664	\$14,635
Same-day visitors	\$2,519	\$2,570	\$2,621	\$2,674	\$2,727

Table 25: Gift Shop Revenues

Local Market Revenues	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
International tourists	\$6,603	\$7,072	\$7,574	\$8,112	\$8,688
Domestic tourists	\$5,339	\$5,718	\$6,124	\$6,559	\$7,025
Same-day visitors	\$3,023	\$3,084	\$3,145	\$3,208	\$3,273

Table 26: Gift Shop Revenues

F&B kiosks Revenues	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
International tourists	\$41,272	\$44,202	\$47,340	\$50,701	\$54,301
Domestic tourists	\$33,369	\$35,738	\$38,276	\$40,993	\$43,904
Same-day visitors	\$30,233	\$30,838	\$31,454	\$32,083	\$32,725

Table 27: F&B kiosks Revenues

Kids Playground Revenues	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
International tourists	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Domestic tourists	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Same-day visitors	\$50,388	\$51,396	\$52,424	\$53,472	\$54,542

Table 28: Kids Playground Revenues

E-bike Renting Revenues	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
International tourists	\$3,302	\$3,536	\$3,787	\$4,056	\$4,344
Domestic tourists	\$2,670	\$2,859	\$3,062	\$3,279	\$3,512
Same-day visitors	\$6,047	\$6,168	\$6,291	\$6,417	\$6,545

Table 29: E-bike Renting Revenues

Barbecue Area Revenues	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
International tourists	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Domestic tourists	\$6,674	\$7,148	\$7,655	\$8,199	\$8,781
Same-day visitors	\$15,116	\$15,419	\$15,727	\$16,042	\$16,363

Table 30: Barbecue Area Revenues

Glamping Tents Revenues	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
International tourists	\$5,503	\$5,894	\$6,312	\$6,760	\$7,240
Domestic tourists	\$4,449	\$4,765	\$5,103	\$5,466	\$5,854

Same-day visitors	\$10,078	\$10,279	\$10,485	\$10,694	\$10,908
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Table 31: Glamping Tents Revenues

Caravan Area Revenues	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
International tourists	\$48,150	\$51,569	\$55,230	\$59,152	\$63,351
Domestic tourists	\$15,572	\$16,678	\$17,862	\$19,130	\$20,488
Same-day visitors	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Table 32: Caravan Area Revenues

## 10.6. Investments

Capital costs include approximately:

- 2,166,500 mln USD to fully restore the Marmashen Monastery and to improve the surroundings;
- 0.8 mln USD to introduce new tourism facilities, including the formulation of a feasibility and implementation study.

Restoration costs are funded by the Government and by donations collected by diaspora.

Description	INPUT DATA		RESTORATION COSTS	
	Square metres	Cubic metres	Parametric restoration cost per sqm USD	Total Cost for Restoration works USD
The Katoghike	434	6,000	3,000	1,302,000
Vahram Pahlavuni tomb	194	ruin	1,000	194,000
Surb Astvatsatsin Church	148	partial ruin	2,500	370,000
The Circular Church	163	ruin	1,000	163,000
The St. Petros Chapel	55	900	2,500	137,500
Area belonging to buildings	4,344			0
Forest area down to the river	80,600			0
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>2,166,500</b>

Table 33: Restoration Cost

## 10.7. Personnel

We assume that the Foundation has an Executive Director which operates through departments mentioned at previous § 9.2. The following table reports the Departments along with relative personnel.

All Departments are considered to be internally managed, although some of them, particularly security and cleanings might be conveniently outsourced, as it is for maintenance and other service activities.

It is also assumed to engage volunteers for some activities, while ensuring gender equality.

Department	Personnel
Administrative	2 FTE
Operations & Marketing	2 FTE
Facilities	2 HTE
Visitor Service	3 FTE
Security/Custodians	2 FTE
Cleaners	2 FTE

Table 34: Departments and staff

## 10.8. Expenses

Projected Expenses include the following operating costs categories during the five years of projections:

### 10.8.1. Depreciation of facilities

It is considered a 5-year life time, with depreciation accounting each year for 20% of investments. It is therefore considered a yearly expense of 160,000 USD.





### 10.8.2. Maintenance of the restored churches

Such costs are estimated on the basis of the following parameters, based on international benchmarks and Consultant's wide experience in several projects worldwide.

Description	MAINTENANCE PLAN					
	Yearly cost/sqm USD	Yearly cost/cm USD	Total Cost per years for MP USD	Control, monitoring and equipment (from 6 to 16% of the MP) USD	Maintenance (from 40 to 60% of the MP) USD	Information management incl. revision of MP USD
The Katoghike		2.50	15,000.00	1,800.00	9,000.00	4,200.00
Vahram Pahlavuni tomb	15.00		2,910.00	174.60	1,164.00	1,571.40
Surb Astvatsatsin Church	30.00		4,440.00	355.20	2,220.00	1,864.80
The Circular Church	15.00		2,445.00	293.40	978.00	1,173.60
The St. Petros Chapel		2.50	2,250.00	202.50	1,350.00	697.50
Area belonging to buildings	1		4,344.00	195.48	2,606.40	1,542.12
Forest area down to the river	0.1		8,060	362.70	4,030.00	3,667.30
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>39,449.00</b>	<b>3,383.88</b>	<b>21,348.40</b>	<b>14,716.72</b>

Table 35: Maintenance Plan

► As such costs fall under the responsibility of the MoESCS, they are not accounted for in the Business Plan.

### 10.8.3. Salaries, Wages and Benefits

They are estimated on the basis of the organizational structure mentioned at § 9.

Expenses	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Salaries, Wages and Benefits	\$81,120	\$85,176	\$88,583	\$91,241	\$93,978

Table 36: Expenses for Salaries, Wages and Benefits

### 10.8.4. Building Occupancy Costs

They include all costs, excluding salaries, associated with building repairs and maintenance<sup>60</sup>, cleaning, utilities, security systems and building insurance. It is estimated at a fixed percentage over total size of facilities (gift shop and local market, barbecue area, kid playground, camping and caravan area, e-bike renting station), assumed at 1,200 gross sq. mt., at a cost of 20 USD per sq. mt. We considered a CAGR of 1% due accrued obsolescence.

Expenses	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Building Occupancy Costs	\$24,000	\$24,240	\$24,727	\$25,476	\$26,511

Table 37: Building Occupancy Costs

### 10.8.5. General and Administrative

These costs include office and related supplies, equipment, mailing, printing, telephone, travel, volunteer perquisites, professional services, dues and subscriptions, credit card fees, and other items that do not fit into the other expense categories. They are assumed at 15% of staffing costs.

Expenses	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
General and Administrative	\$12,168	\$12,776	\$13,287	\$13,686	\$14,097

Table 38: General and Administrative Expenses

### 10.8.6. Marketing

As marketing staff has been accounted for in the staffing projections the focus here is on non-staff marketing costs, including advertising and promotion. These costs generally range from 1-5% of the total operating budgets of

<sup>60</sup> With exception for the churches, as their maintenance cost is accounted for at §, 10.8.2

attractions. Another way marketing expenditures are calculated is on a per visitor basis, which is applied here. A cost of 0.5 USD per visitor is considered.

Expenses	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Marketing	\$37,477	\$39,496	\$41,645	\$43,933	\$46,371

Table 39: Marketing Expenses

### 10.8.7. Retail Cost of Goods Sold

It is the cost of the beginning inventory, plus the cost of net purchases (purchases minus purchase discounts and purchase returns and allowance) and freight-in. It equals the cost of goods available. We assumed them at 40% of sales revenues.

Expenses	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Retail Cost of Goods Sold	\$25,179	\$26,607	\$28,129	\$29,752	\$31,482

Table 40: Retail Cost of Goods Sold

## 10.9. Summary of attendance and financial projections

The following table reports a summary of attendance and financial projections.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Annual Attendance	74,955	78,992	83,289	87,866	92,741

Revenues	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Admission	\$149,282	\$159,881	\$171,232	\$183,390	\$196,410
Parking	\$18,739	\$19,748	\$20,822	\$21,967	\$23,185
Certified Shop	\$41,157	\$43,951	\$46,940	\$50,139	\$53,563
Local Market	\$14,966	\$15,874	\$16,844	\$17,880	\$18,985
F&B kiosks	\$104,874	\$110,778	\$117,070	\$123,778	\$130,930
Kids Playground	\$50,388	\$51,396	\$52,424	\$53,472	\$54,542
E-bike Renting	\$12,018	\$12,563	\$13,140	\$13,752	\$14,401
Barbecue Facilities	\$21,790	\$22,566	\$23,382	\$24,240	\$25,143
Glamping Tents	\$20,030	\$20,938	\$21,900	\$22,920	\$24,002
Caravans	\$63,723	\$68,247	\$73,092	\$78,282	\$83,840
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$413,213</b>	<b>\$436,756</b>	<b>\$461,855</b>	<b>\$488,618</b>	<b>\$517,160</b>

Expenses	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Facilities Depreciation	\$160,000	\$160,000	\$160,000	\$160,000	\$160,000
Salaries, Wages, Benefits	\$83,640	\$87,822	\$91,335	\$94,075	\$96,897
Building Occupancy	\$16,000	\$16,160	\$16,485	\$16,984	\$17,674
General & Administrative	\$12,168	\$12,776	\$13,287	\$13,686	\$14,097
Marketing	\$37,477	\$39,496	\$41,645	\$43,933	\$46,371
Retail Cost of Goods Sold	\$18,884	\$19,955	\$21,097	\$22,314	\$23,612
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>332,547.49</b>	<b>340,606.17</b>	<b>348,261.29</b>	<b>355,417.35</b>	<b>363,087.98</b>

Table 41: Summary of Attendance and Financial Projections

FINAL RESULT	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Revenues	\$413,213	\$436,756	\$461,855	\$488,618	\$517,160
Expenses	\$332,547	\$340,606	\$348,261	\$355,417	\$363,088
<b>(Gross) Profit / Loss</b>	<b>\$80,666</b>	<b>\$96,150</b>	<b>\$113,594</b>	<b>\$133,201</b>	<b>\$154,072</b>
Corporate tax	\$12,100	\$14,423	\$17,039	\$19,980	\$23,111
<b>Profit / Loss</b>	<b>\$68,566</b>	<b>\$81,728</b>	<b>\$96,555</b>	<b>\$113,221</b>	<b>\$130,961</b>

Table 42: Final Results



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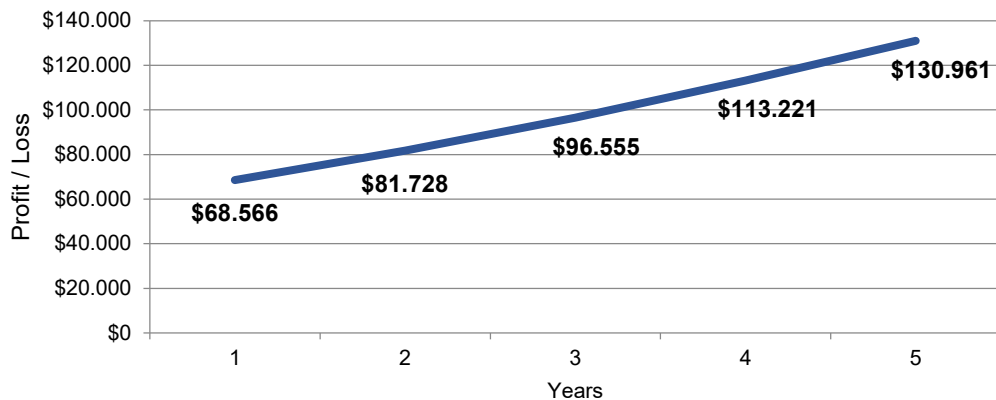


Figure 26: Profit/Loss

## 11. CONCLUSIONS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The present report formulated an innovative model for the management and valorization of Marmashen site, which might apply to other C&H monuments, particularly Monasteries, throughout Armenia.

Innovation springs from two aspects, that are:

- (1) the concept of Monasteries as a tourist attraction;
- (2) the governance model.

Considering the Monastery as a tourist attraction implies that it should be both protected for its historic values and for preservation of Armenia memory and identity, but also valorized through a system of tourism services and activities so as to cater to the needs of perspective international and domestic tourists.

A key issue is that Armenian monasteries are usually situated in pleasant locations, often surrounded by beautiful landscapes and natural resources, which make them much attractive for local demand as well. If not well managed, such demand not only may put as risks the integrity of the sites and of nearby resources (such as the river), but – for being driven by different motivations from those featuring the touristic demand (recreational vs. cultural/educational), might also originate negative conflicts.

This is what is indeed currently happening at Marmashen, where no control is in place, and the location is spoiled by picnicking and other outdoor activities, including unregulated fishing in the river and organization of loud music events, which also clash with the beautiness and spirituality of the place.

The STMP therefore foresees to take a distinguished and focused care of each segment.

Tourists are offered the opportunity to access quality interpretation functions, including digital ones such as VR/AR applications, while enjoying of a structured system of new services and activities, such as a certified gift shop and a F&B area. Not only, the most adventurous are offered the chance to night stay close to the Monastery in a glamping camping or at a caravan park, while enjoying the view of the site which is valorized through artistic lighting devices.

Residents are not excluded from visiting, but their flow is organized through a service supply aimed to upgrade the value and impact of participation. It is therefore foreseen the provision of facilities for children activities (kid playground), for family and friends gathering (the barbecue area) and for active leisure (e.g. e-bike rentals).

In other words, the Monastery is organized as a “cultural park” where different segments co-exist without disturbing each other but are however encouraged use the same services, so as to offer tourists the chance to experience “the way Armenia leisure”. Such model is enhanced by the possibility to organize high-quality cultural and musical events, as it already happens in other cultural/religious locations worldwide. This brings also to consider the



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concept of “Marmashen by night” that is introduced here but might also be a brilliant solution to be furtherly investigated as an option for other Monasteries as well.

The innovative tourism development model goes along with a new approach to governance, as the study foresees the creation of a non-commercial organization – a Foundation – which should originate out of a partnership between the MoESCS, the Church and the local communities.

The MoESCS would continue to keep the ownership of the site, but its management would be transferred for a long term to such new subject which would value the role of each partner, with the Government committed to protection and tourist valorization, while providing financial resources to cover restoration and maintenance of the Site. The Diocese would be motivated to participate to the management of the religious “buffer zone” by being responsible for liturgies. The Local Community would also provide some services to the site, according to its liability, including security, waste collection and disposal. It would also be motivated by fostering participation of youths and local operators to the provision of tourism services and activities, thus generating positive social and economic impacts which - although barely mentioned – might also spring from the creation of accommodation throughout the local communities or the flourishing of cultural and creative activities that might be performed at the site.

A more sophisticated option, although fully viable, would be the attribution of Marmashen management to the future regional Shirak DMO. Such scenario is also viable and does not bring any modifications to the management and business plan. In such a case the Foundation might simply be a partner of the DMO or be part of a broader DMO in charge not only for managing Marmashen site but also other locations besides tourism services and activities throughout the Region.



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## Annex 1 - Decision of Marmashen Municipality



### ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՇԻՐԱԿԻ ՄԱՐԶԻ ՄԱՐՄԱՇԵՆԻ ՀԱՄԱՅՆՔԻ ՂԵԿԱՎԱՐ

Ո Ր Ո Շ ՈՒ Մ ԹԻՎ 393

<<20>> հոկտեմբերի 2021 թվական

Գյուղ Մայիսյան

ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՇԻՐԱԿԻ ՄԱՐԶԻ ՄԱՐՄԱՇԵՆ ՀԱՄԱՅՆՔԻ ՎԱՐՄԱՐԲԵՐԴ ԲՆԱԿԱՎԱՅՐԻ ՏԱՐԱԾՔՈՒՄ ԳՏՆՎՈՂ <<ՄԱՐՄԱՇԵՆ>> ՎԱՆԱԿԱՆ ՀԱՄԱԼԻՐԻ ՊԱՀՊԱՆՄԱՆ ՈՒ ՍՊԱՍԱՐԿՄԱՆ ՀԱՄԱՐ 1,7678 ՀԵԿՏԱՐ ՀՈՂԱՄԱՍԸ ՍԵՓԱԿԱՆՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԻՐԱՎՈՒՆՔՈՎ ԱՆՀԱՏՈՒՅՑ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆՅԱՆՑ ԱՌԱՔԵԼԱԿԱՆ ՍՈՒՐԲ ԵԿԵՂԵՑՈՒՆ ՏՐԱՄԱԴՐԵԼՈՒ ՄԱՍԻՆ

Ղեկավարվելով <<Տեղական ինքնակառավարման մասին>> Հայաստանի Հանրապետության օրենքի 35-րդ հոդվածի 1-ին մասի 24-րդ կետի, Հայաստանի Հանրապետության հողային օրենսգրքի 64-րդ հոդվածի 1.2-րդ մասի դրույթներով և հիմք ընդունելով Հայաստանի Հանրապետության կառավարության 2001 թվականի հուլիսի 9-ի <<Հայաստանյայց Առաքելական եկեղեցուն վանքեր և եկեղեցիներ հանձնելու մասին>> թիվ 616 որոշման 1-ին կետը և Հայաստանի Հանրապետության Շիրակի մարզի Մարմաշեն համայնքի ավագանու 2021 թվականի հոկտեմբերի 14-ի թիվ 102 որոշումը **որոշում եմ՝**

Հայաստանի Հանրապետության Շիրակի մարզի Մարմաշեն համայնքի Վահրամաբերդ բնակավայրի վարչական տարածքում գտնվող <<Մարմաշեն>> վանական համալիրի պահպանման ու սպասարկման համար նախատեսված 08-108-0118-0014 կադաստրային ծածկագրով 1,7678 հեկտար մակերեսով հատուկ պահպանվող տարածքի նպատակային նշանակության, պատմական և մշակույթային գործառնական նշանակության հողամասը սեփականության իրավունքով անհատուց տրամադրել Հայաստանյայց Առաքելական Սուրբ Եկեղեցուն (Մայր Աթոռ Սուրբ Էջմիածին), կնքել հողամասի օտարման պայմանագիր:

ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՇԻՐԱԿԻ ՄԱՐԶԻ

ՄԱՐՄԱՇԵՆ ՀԱՄԱՅՆՔԻ ՂԵԿԱՎԱՐ՝

Կ. ԱՐՇԱԿՅԱՆ

20. հոկտեմբերի 2021 թվական  
Գյուղ Մայիսյան





**A.R.S. Progetti S.P.A.**  
Ambiente Risorse Sviluppo



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ՀՈՒՍԱՄԱՐ ՀԱՏԱԿԱԳԻԾ</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">ՇՄ, Ստրանշեն համայնք, գ. Կարդառաբերի</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ստր. հատվածի հասցե</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Երևանի մարզ</p>	<p>ՉԱ.1</p> <p>Հաստատման ամսաթիվը՝ 2021 թ.</p> <p>Համայնքի ղեկավար Կարեն Արշակունյաց</p> <p>Մասն. ազատում, հասցեագրում ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԱՐԿԱՏՐԱԿԱՆ ԿԵՆՏՐՈՆ</p>		<p>Մասշտաբ 1:2000</p> <p>Որպակարգում ունեցող անձ Պրակարգում, վկայականի համարը 0350</p> <p>Ստորագրություն Ստորագրող Ստորագրություն Ստորագրող Ստորագրություն Ստորագրող</p> <p>Ստորագրող Ստորագրություն Ստորագրող Ստորագրություն</p> <p>Ստորագրող Ստորագրություն Ստորագրող Ստորագրություն</p>																																									
<p>Սակերես հա 1.7678</p> <p>Ծածկագիր 08 - 108 - 0118 - 0014</p> <p>Նպատակային նշանակություն Հատուկ պահպանվելու տար. հողեր</p> <p>Գործարանական նշանակություն Պատրաստման և մշակության</p> <p>Գրություններ - վանդի հասանելի խոհանոցիկան մասեր</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Երկարություն (գծաչափ) (մետր)</th> <th colspan="2">Հողամասի</th> <th rowspan="2">Տարբ. չափեր (մ)</th> </tr> <tr> <th>X</th> <th>Y</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1</td><td>8394978.4204</td><td>4523844.4155</td><td>46.80</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>8394989.7499</td><td>4523887.3281</td><td>27.29</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>8394943.6502</td><td>4523909.3642</td><td>8.74</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>8394941.4805</td><td>4523917.8344</td><td>6.12</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>8394945.8074</td><td>4523922.1581</td><td>17.01</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>8394935.7112</td><td>4523935.8499</td><td>7.45</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8394928.7399</td><td>4523933.2076</td><td>17.18</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>8394919.8968</td><td>4523947.9414</td><td>187.67</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>8395078.3227</td><td>4524048.5555</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Երկարություն (գծաչափ) (մետր)	Հողամասի		Տարբ. չափեր (մ)	X	Y	1	8394978.4204	4523844.4155	46.80	2	8394989.7499	4523887.3281	27.29	3	8394943.6502	4523909.3642	8.74	4	8394941.4805	4523917.8344	6.12	5	8394945.8074	4523922.1581	17.01	6	8394935.7112	4523935.8499	7.45	7	8394928.7399	4523933.2076	17.18	8	8394919.8968	4523947.9414	187.67	9	8395078.3227	4524048.5555		<p>Ստորագրող Ստորագրություն Ստորագրող Ստորագրություն</p> <p>Ստորագրող Ստորագրություն Ստորագրող Ստորագրություն</p> <p>Ստորագրող Ստորագրություն Ստորագրող Ստորագրություն</p>
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**Annex 2 - The area of Akhuryan consolidated community**  
(marked with red)



Figure 1: The area of Akhuryan consolidated community





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## **Annex 3 - List of cultural and natural monuments of Akhuryan community which may be used for tourism development**

### **1. Azatan**

Is located on the left bank of Mantash River, at an altitude of 1490 m above sea level. It is located 8 km south from Gyumri. Azatan has a temperate mountain climate. Winters are cold and long. Stable snow cover is established every year. Summers are hot and relatively humid. Annual atmospheric precipitation is 500-600 mm.

#### **Historical - cultural and public structures**

- St. Stepanos Armenian Apostolic Church - built in 1460, renovated in 1865 and consecrated as Holy Resurrection in 1999. Now both names are used: S. Harutyun and S. Stepanos. The old apostolic church of the village was built in the 7th century, of which only the tongue of the bell has been preserved, which is kept in the Saint Stepanos Church.
- Saint Astvatsatsin Armenian Catholic Church - construction started in 1845 and finished in 1852. This church is also mentioned in Ghevond Alishan's work Shirak.
- There is also a chapel built next to the Armenian Apostolic Church in the 18th century.
- The memorial dedicated to the people from Azatan who died in the Great Patriotic War - the opening took place in 1980, architect: Hakob Jivanyan.
- Art school named after Aram Khachatryan

#### **Natural monuments**

Azatan Lake is one of the natural monuments.

### **2. Akhurik**

The village is located on the right bank of Akhuryan River, in the plain, at an altitude of 1470 m above sea level.

It is located 5 km from Gyumri. Climate is a temperate mountainous, the winter is long, cold, with permanent snow cover. Summer is hot, relatively humid. The amount of annual precipitation is 500-600 mm. Natural landscapes are black soil mountain steppes.

#### **Natural and historical monuments:**

- Akhurik "hot water" - natural spring
- Castle - 2-3rd millenniums B.C., located in "Aghli Baba" place
- Cemetery - 1st millennium B.C.
- Church - destroyed, 9-10th century
- Saint Eghia Chapel

### **3. Akhuryan**

The village is located at an average height of 1536 m above sea level. 5 km southeast from Gyumri.

#### **Historical and cultural monuments:**

- Surb Nshan domed church - 13-14th centuries
- Bell tower next to the church
- Monument Mother Armenia - 1983
- A monument dedicated to those who died in the Second World War
- Monument dedicated to Komitas
- Monument dedicated to Artem Mikoyan

### **4. Aygabats**

It is located 10 km southeast from Gyumri.

#### **Historical and cultural monuments:**

- Castle 3-2nd millenniums B.C., is located on the western edge of the village
- Medieval village - located 3 km west, in "Esidi" gorge
- Church built in 1887
- Monuments dedicated to the victims of the Second World War - built in 1971 and 1985

### **5. Arapi**



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It is located on the right bank of Akhuryan River. The height above sea level is 1500 m, the distance from Gyumri is 1 km to the west.

The climate is temperate mountainous, winter is long, cold, with permanent snow cover. Summer is hot, relatively humid. The amount of annual precipitation is 500-600 mm. Natural landscapes are black soil mountain steppes.

**Historical and cultural monuments:**

- Place of Residence - 1st-3rd century
- "Virgin Mary" chapel
- Tombstone - 1st-3rd century
- Memorial dedicated to the participants of the Second World War

**6. Arevik**

Arevik, a village in the Shirak marz of Armenia, 5 km southeast of the marz center, Gyumri.

**Historical and cultural monuments:**

- Medieval village
- Saint Grigor the Illuminator Church - 19th century
- Memorial dedicated to the participants of the Second World War - 1972.
- Saint Jacob Chapel

**7. Bayandur**

Bayandur, a village in the Shirak Marz of Armenia, on the left side of Akhuryan River. The height above the sea level is 1480 m, the distance from the regional center is 16 km to the southwest.

**Historical and cultural monuments:**

- Residence - 3-2nd millenniums B.C.
- Memorial dedicated to the participants of the Second World War

**8. Basen**

It is located 14 km southeast of the regional center, in Akhuryan region, on the slopes of Pambak mountains.

**Historical and cultural monuments:**

- "Zham" church was founded in 1842
- Medieval village
- "Saraveri" church
- "Averq" chapel

**9. Beniamin**

It is located 12 km south of the regional center.

**Historical and cultural monuments:**

- Early medieval settlement
- Village: "Tukh Manuk"
- Chapel "Tukh Manuk"
- Cemetery - 2-1 millenniums B.C.
- Church- 1871
- Mill - 19th century
- Town hall: "Draskhanakert"
- Palace building - 1 century B.C.
- Memorial dedicated to the participants of the Second World War

**10. Kamo**

The geographical location of the village is foothills, the average height above sea level is 1660m. The distance from the regional center is 13 km.

**Historical and cultural monuments:**

- Residence - 4th century B.C.
- Cemetery - 3rd millennium B.C.
- Medieval village - "Grnerov aghbyur"
- Medieval church of Saint Astvatsatsin
- Monument to Kamo (Simon Ter-Petrosyan) - 1970
- Memorial dedicated to the participants of the Second World War



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### **11. Kaps**

It is located 11 km northwest of the regional center, on the left bank of the Akhuryan River, in the Shirak field.

#### **Historical - cultural and natural monuments:**

- Medieval castle
- "Jham" church - 19th century
- Kaps Reservoir
- "Holy Mountain" chapel
- "Sacred" chapel

### **12. Karnut**

It is located 10 km northeast of the regional center, at the foot of Pambak mountains.

#### **Historical - cultural and natural monuments:**

- Residence - 3-1 millenniums B.C.
- Cemetery - 3-1 millenniums B.C.
- Church - 4th-5th centuries
- Reservoir "Surb Minas" - 7-8 centuries
- Memorial dedicated to the participants of the Second World War
- Karnut Reservoir

### **13. Hatsik**

It is located 5 km northeast of the regional center.

#### **Historical - cultural and natural monuments:**

- "Seven Brothers" chapel
- "Bluk" church - 1890
- "Seven brothers" - grave - sanctuary
- "Tsak Kar" pilgrimage site
- Memorial dedicated to the participants of the Second World War
- Hatsik lake

### **14. Jajur**

#### **Historical - cultural and natural monuments:**

- House-museum of Minas Avetisyan
- Memorial to the victims of Genocide
- Saint Astvatsatsin Church

### **15. Marmashen**

#### **Historical - cultural and natural monuments:**

- Tirashen settlement - 2nd millennium B.C.
- Cemetery - 3rd millennium B.C.
- Church - 6th-7th century
- Cuneiform inscription of King Argishti
- Village "Khachi Dzor" - 6th-7th century
- Memorial dedicated to the participants of the Second World War
- "Chle Gyol"
- Marmashen monastery complex