

**PIAG Nikozi Monastery  
Feasibility Study of Nikozi Monastery**

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## **1. Executive Summary**

The proposed project envisages a full rehabilitation of Nikozi Monastery with a view to a broader rehabilitation and revitalization. Proper functioning of the monastery is an essential attribute of the vitality of the site. This, in its turn, will bring cultural, social and economic benefit to the region.

If successfully implemented, the Nikozi Monastery rehabilitation project will bring about a culturally, economically and socially significant outcome which will go beyond the boundaries of site and the village and acquire a regional dimension thus ensuring a long-term benefit to the region.

The rehabilitation of Nikozi Monastery will give a new incentive to the economic growth of the region, which is absolutely necessary for businesses operating locally and across the country in general.

The rehabilitation and development of the monastic complex is of utmost importance as it will create wide benefits including:

the alleviation of artificially created tension between the neighbouring Georgians and Ossetians affirming the same religion;

the full restoration of one of the most outstanding works of Georgian architecture;

the creation of dozens of jobs for local residents during the implementation of physical works and afterwards, for regular maintenance; also involving local specialists of various fields in site rehabilitation work;

turning the monastery into an attractive destination for pilgrims and tourists/visitors;

facilitating not only socio-cultural revival of the village of Nikozi, but also its economic revitalisation through the restoration of the original function and importance of the monastery, which in its turn, may have a positive impact on the local economy.

This is especially important against the background of suspended trade ties with the Tskhinvali region, which has affected the regional economy. The population living in Zemo Nikozi and nearby villages earned most of their livelihood thanks to the active trade ties with Tskhinvali. The Georgians and Ossetians had until recently been engaged in intensive trade with cattle and agricultural products through barter and weekend market fairs. The August hostilities put an end to all kinds of contacts, which had a negative impact on the regional economy and thus affected the quality of life of the local population. Zemo Nikozi definitely requires a new impetus and the rehabilitated Zemo Nikozi Monastery may play an important role in this regard.

The outstanding religious, historical and cultural value of the monastery, as well as its excellent location and marvellous landscape (snow-capped mountains of the Caucasus) make the site attractive for investment and commercial use. The site appears to have a great potential in this regard.

The tourist potential of the site is a factor which a potential investor may rely on. The rehabilitation of Nikozi Monastery will lead to the increased tourist attraction of the site and raise the importance of the regional tourist itinerary which, in turn, will help revitalise the entire region and thus create conducive settings for developing all sorts of businesses. Hence, the rehabilitation of Nikozi Monastery as a religious, public and cultural centre and a tourist destination is in the interests of the entire private sector functioning in Nikozi.

## **2. History & Significance: the site what is it and why it is important**

The village of Zemo Nikozi is situated in historical Shida (Inner) Kartli, the heart of Georgia. Located near the city of Tskhinvali, to its south-west, the place is without doubt of great strategic importance for Georgia. But the significance of the village lying at the foothills of the Caucasus, and surrounded by a dramatic mountainous landscape, is not limited to its natural location. Its special historical, cultural and artistic value is largely defined by Nikozi Monastery. The latter is an outstanding monument of Georgian culture and is granted with a grade of a national monument. The monastery is one of the earliest and greatest religious centres in Georgia. More specifically, it was a spiritual centre of the north part of the Kartli region, which is a clear indication of the autochthony of the Georgians in this

region. According to historical records, the eparchy covered Dvaleti, part of Racha and the upper reaches of the Liakhvi gorge. (An Episcopal See is still functioning here with its eparchy now being found on the territory of so-called South Ossetia (Tskhinvali and Akhagori municipalities).

Zemo Nikozi was not a random selection for an Episcopal See. The foundation of an Episcopal centre as early as the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century in place of a pagan temple points to the outstanding importance of the site. Another reason could be a Zoroastrian temple, the presence of which in the pagan period is supported by historical sources. This once again points to the exceptional importance of Zemo Nikozi.

It is natural that the eparchy, which claimed to be the religious centre of the country, would need a monastery of high artistic value. This explains the keen interest taken by secular and ecclesiastical authorities in building Nikozi Monastery. It is therefore that the relevance of the monastery has never diminished, which is confirmed by the dynamic history of the site. The history of the building of the monastery spans a long period from the latter half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century through the 19<sup>th</sup> century (see appendix 1.5 for a map of history of Nikozi Monastery).

The earliest building (in the 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century) erected on this site was a three-nave basilica of Ghvtaeba, which was followed by a Bishop's Palace in the 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century and a Church of the Archangels in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Also in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, Ghvtaeba Church was repaired. In place of a badly damaged three-nave basilica a cruciform domed church was built in the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century. The proportions and the decorations of the dome were borrowed from the Church of the Archangels standing nearby.

In the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century, a bell-tower of an original shape was constructed in the west of the monastic complex. Ghvtaeba Church was restored at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Thus the monastery, which took its present appearance in the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century, can be considered authentic.

Lying on a high hill, on the right side of the Liakhvi River, at 850m above sea level, in the heart of the village of Zemo Nikozi, Nikozi Monastery overlooks the settlement and is clearly visible from the nearby villages. Architecturally it dominates the village (see appendix 1.1 and 1.2).

The buildings making up Nikozi Monastery are of high architectural interest. The most remarkable is the Church of the Archangels, which is an outstanding work of Georgian architecture with its planning (kuppelhalle) and forms. The Episcopal palace is one of the rare examples of the type it represents in Georgia. Altered many times and preserving 5<sup>th</sup> century basilica remnants, Ghvtaeba Church attracts interest of specialists.

For a detailed description of the structures see appendix 1.4. and appendix 2.

The religious importance of Nikozi Monastery is high as it keeps the main relic, the grave of Razhden the Protomartyr (St Razhden is buried near the south door of Ghvtaeba Church). Traditionally, each year, on the day of the commemoration of St Razhden, thousands of pilgrims travel to Nikozi Monastery, by various forms of transport, to pay homage to the holy site. Before the conflict, ethnic Ossetians would also visit the church. It can thus be said that Nikozi Monastery is a meeting place of people of different ethnic origins. Despite the suspension of transport links, the religious importance of the monastery has not diminished in the eyes of the local community after August 2008. On the contrary, the respect to the monastic clergy has further increased after the Nikozi bishop and local monks had provided care to the village community. Thus apart from being an important heritage site, Nikozi Monastery serves as an active religious centre, the spiritual importance of which is highly acknowledged by the regional community.

The structures of the monastery (the Bishop's Palace, monks' dwellings and auxiliary structures), burnt down and damaged by air and artillery assault, are facing a real danger of destruction. The Bishop's Palace is in need of urgent reinforcement, while the monks' dwellings and auxiliary structures are to be dismantled. They are facing a real threat of collapse, especially during winter and spring rainwater. The bank of an irrigation canal running to the east of the monastery also needs to be taken care of. It needs to be reinforced to prevent washing off of the ground.

There is another danger. Most parts of the monastic area are unprotected and during the Russian occupation of the region the monastery was many times looted. There is a threat of the repeated plundering of the monastery. In the case of further escalation of the conflict, the implementation of works may be impeded and suspended.

### 3. *Technical Condition*

The main historical structures making up Nikozi Monastery (see appendix 1.2 for the plan of Nikozi Monastery) are found in different states of preservation:

Ghvtaeba Church – in a satisfactory condition

Bishop's Palace – in a very poor condition. The walls are burnt, the ceilings are ruined and the roof is missing.

Bell-tower – in a poor condition; the roof fails to stop rainwater.

The Church of the Archangels – in a satisfactory condition. The arms (or branches) will be fully protected with stone slabs.

Thus some of the buildings are in a satisfactory condition and are need of minor repair, while others are in a very poor condition and require substantial intervention.

The main buildings of Zemo Nikozi Monastery (churches, a bell-tower and circuit wall fragments) preserve an authentic appearance and are in need of minor repairs, cleaning and consolidation. Some of the structures (the Bishop's Palace, cells for monks and subsidiary chambers) were so damaged in August 2008 that their consolidation is possible only through reconstruction.

The Nikozi PTA revealed the structural state of the buildings and structures of the monastery and allowed an assessment of the intervention needed in each case.

- A. The central cathedral, Ghvtaeba Church – the condition is satisfactory. Cement plaster applied to the church walls at a later date is to be removed. Archaeological excavations shall be conducted within the building and along the outer perimeter. The authentic, now deformed, floor needs repair. It is desirable to cover the church with a tile roof.
- B. The bell-tower to the north-west of the church – the condition is satisfactory. The crevices between stone slabs need to be cleaned and filled with lime. An iron gate, incompatible with the architecture of the bell-tower, needs to be replaced. The staircase, faced with basalt stone, leading to the upper level, needs replacement. It is also desirable to replace the steps with stone blocks compatible with the stones of the bell-tower facing masonry.
- C. Bishop's Palace – badly damaged as a result of the military activities during August 2008. The fire left the roof and the floors damaged and ruined, the north and east balconies destroyed, and the original rubble south wall masonry cracked. The palace is in urgent need of rehabilitation. The damaged supporting walls require consolidation and restoration. New floors and tile roofing will need to be built and doors, windows, balconies and vertical infrastructural units installed; the ground floor is to be lined with ceramic tiles or stone. According to the project, the site shall serve as an open public space with a Sunday parish school, a reception hall, a depository of antiquities, an exhibition hall, a library, etc. The first floor will be used as an apartment for visiting bishops and their retinue. The space under the attic will be designed to serve as auxiliary rooms. The palace must have had a cellar and a semi-cellar, which is indicated by the windows located in the lower segment of the south wall. At present, this part of the building is filled with earth and is in need of archaeological cleaning. It is intended to make a wine cellar in the emptied and rehabilitated space.
- D. Cells and subsidiary structures to the south of the palace – these are burnt and ruined. The remains of the building need to be dismantled and rebuilt according to the proposed designs. It is intended to construct a double-storey structure with cells for approximately fifteen monks. The ground floor will accommodate subsidiary rooms, while the first floor will have monks' cells. (see 7.6.3-4 of PTA) (yes, it, is)
- E. The Church of the Archangels – the condition is satisfactory. The tiles covering the arms (or branches) shall be replaced with stone slabs. The church doors and windows need replacing.
- F. The parish school (to the north of Ghvtaeba Church) – a double-storey structure in a good state of preservation. Only interior re-planning and cosmetic repairs are needed. The project envisages its use as a bishop's reception, study, office, a library and archives.
- G. Residential part (now in the ownership of the monastery) to the north-east of Ghvtaeba complex, along the central highway – it is intended to build cells for nuns and subsidiary chambers. During the 2008 hostilities, the nuns of Ikorta Convent, which is part of Nikozi Eparchy (located in the Ksani gorge now occupied by the Russian troops) visited the bishop to receive his support and encouragement. It was then that Nikozi Convent was founded within the Nikozi Complex.

- H. Perimeter wall – the perimeter wall needs to be restored around each of the three segments of the complex. This also includes the conservation of the surviving fragments of the wall and installation of a tile roof along the entire perimeter of the wall.
- I. Irrigation canal and a bridge – a strip along the bank of the irrigation canal running in the east of the complex needs to be repaired and partially lined with stone. The bridge spanning over the village road dividing the main part of the monastery from the area of the Church of the Archangels needs reconstruction. The restoration and reuse of an old water mill by the bank of the canal is desirable.
- J. Engineering infrastructure (water supply, sewage, power and gas supply, telecommunication) needs to be installed on the grounds of Zemo Nikozi Monastery and within the structures located there.
- K. Geological exploration at selected locations, archaeological study and topographic survey shall be conducted. The project also envisages paving of the roads leading to the monastery as well as paths within the monastery with stone. In addition, it is intended to build a parking lot.

#### **4. *Proposals, design documentation, description & current works***

The intention for the conservation of Zemo Nikozi Monastery is to preserve the planning structure of the site within the cadastre boundaries as well as the architectural and artistic qualities of the buildings therein.

At the same time, the improvement of living and working conditions for monks as well as enhancing the area for receiving pilgrims, tourists/visitors and researchers requires the development of site infrastructure, which implies construction of additional structures. Apart from the rehabilitation of the buildings, it is intended to construct new buildings/structures to ensure the proper functioning of the monastery. Among other additions, it is planned to build the following structures (appendix 1.3.):

1. A single-storey refectory outside the circuit wall located to the north of the central church by incorporating an authentic wall within the interior.
2. Nikozi parish school. The double-storey building of the parish house of the monastery, located to the north of the central church, fails to function effectively due to the lack of space. It now accommodates a refectory and a kitchen, a bishop's reception and office, a library, crafts centre (weaving loom), working room for nuns, storerooms and a parish school with dozens of youngsters taking classes with great enthusiasm. The main goal of Bishop Isaia is to create appropriate educational and art space for young Orthodox Christian residents of Nikozi and those from nearby villages. It is planned to construct a building to the extreme north of the monastic area, between the central village road and the north boundary of the convent standing by the bank of the canal. A new school will be single-storeyed with three rooms for class discussions and music (ecclesiastical singing). The building will also accommodate workshops for icon-painting, animation, wood and metal working, rooms for the head of the school and teaching staff, as well as auxiliary and technical facilities.
3. A new structure for auxiliary rooms and workshops. A convent was founded in the complex under the martial law in August 2008. Standing to the north-east of the complex, a house with its surrounding area, recently (before the war) acquired by the monastery, is intended to accommodate nuns' cells. The usable space of the building is small and requires the addition of a new structure for auxiliary rooms and workshops. A new, single-storey structure will be built by the west boundary of the convent and will open onto the road leading to the church. It will accommodate sewing, weaving, embroidery and enamel workshops and auxiliary rooms (laundry and dye-works).
4. A new building for the monks of Nikozi Monastery. It is intended to build a new residential building in place of monks' cells destroyed together with the historical palace of a bishop as a result of an air assault during the August war. The building will be erected along the south and west perimeter of the circuit wall. This will be a double-storied structure with a three-level turret in the south-west corner. The south section of the ground floor will be assigned for workshops (icon-painting, ecclesiastical candle manufacturing, monastic bakery) and auxiliary rooms (a laundry, a sewing room and a storeroom). The west part will accommodate a refectory and a kitchen. The first floor will have monks' cells and bathrooms. The third level of the corner turret, a mezzanine, will serve as a meeting hall of the members of the monastery.

5. A small chapel, St John the Baptist's baptistery, an ecclesiastical shop and a shelter. It is intended to construct a structure onto a circuit wall to the north of the courtyard, within the residential area of monks. The planned building will be three-storeyed: the ground floor will serve as a small chapel; the first floor will have St John the Baptist's baptistery and an ecclesiastical shop. The floor of the baptistery and the shop will be designed on the same level as the courtyard of the central church, from which an entrance will be made. The underground space will be used as an air-raid shelter with a hidden exit. The need for such a shelter arose during the August hostilities, and the site was selected because of the miraculous survival of the monastic brethren, who escaped the unexpected, intensive and destructive air assault in the room located on this site. Since then it has been considered to be the most sacral and safest place.

6. Nikozi monastic hotel. It is planned to build a hotel for guests and pilgrims or several separately standing cells to the east of the central church, in the green strip on the right bank of the canal. Several garages will be constructed to the south of the hotel area, along the road, to accommodate monastic cars.

7. Monastic workshops and technical facilities. To the end of ensuring the self-sustained functioning of the monastery, it is planned to build several fully equipped workshops, including a carpenter's workshop, stone and metal workshops (equipped with a furnace), a power supply facility and a central boiler-room working on alternative fuel. Considering the possible noise that the workshops may cause, it is advisable to construct them at quite a distance from the monastic complex, namely to the east of the left bank of the canal, along the village road.

8. A souvenir shop, visitors' centre and a café. With a view to providing improved services to visitors/tourists and pilgrims, it is envisaged to build a shop selling souvenirs produced in monastic workshops, a visitors' centre and a small café in the main square before the bell-tower.

At present, emergency repair of the Bishop's Palace, a 9th-10th century building of Nikozi Monastery, is underway with the grant obtained by Georgian Arts and Culture Centre from Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development (Cultural Emergency Response Programme). The following works has been done so far:

- putting up of scaffoldings;
- building of a temporary ceiling;
- building a wooden framework for the roof;
- cleaning of burnt and damaged stone remains on the façade (some of them were replaced by new ones);
- treatment of new wooden structures with antiseptic solution (underway);
- installation of metal drainage gutters.

The works are scheduled to finish in late August 2009.

## **5. The Outcome & Impact**

If the planned rehabilitation and reconstruction works are successfully implemented, the monastery will turn into a religious, cultural, educational and tourism centre.

Thanks to its unique religious and historical significance, as well as effective location, Zemo Nikozi Monastery offers significant potential for tourism development. Rehabilitated following the aforementioned proposals, it will create opportunities for religious and secular services thus encouraging the development and promotion of the monastery. The intervention will help create temporary jobs during the implementation of physical works and regular workplaces afterwards, for the follow-up maintenance. Dozens of local people will be engaged in public services, the tradition of pilgrimage will revive and tourism will increase. It will also promote museum and educational activities (summer schools), as well as the revival of local crafts and manufacturing of traditional artistic items for ecclesiastical use. It is assumed that commercial interest will increase in selling locally produced items (knitting, woodwork, goldsmith's art, icon-painting, etc). As a consequence, Zemo Nikozi will return its traditional function of a religious, cultural and educational centre of the village and of the region in general.

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Zemo Nikozi definitely requires a new impetus and the rehabilitation of the monastery may play an important role in this regard.

As has been seen, if successfully implemented, the project may yield positive results and benefits, including cultural, economic and social. More specifically, it will help :

1) alleviate tension between the Georgians and Ossetians affirming the same faith and consolidate them through their common religion to facilitate the stabilisation of situation not only in the village of Zemo Nikozi, but in the entire region, which, in its turn, will create conducive settings for further development and make the region more attractive for small and private businesses ;

2) the restoration of one of the unique monuments of Georgian architecture and its functioning as a religious, cultural and educational centre will attract pilgrims, scholars/researchers and tourists, which will make Nikozi Monastery an active tourist destination and contribute to the revitalisation of the entire region. Stimulation of internal and external tourism will encourage all sorts of business activities and is therefore be in the interests of the entire private sector.

Also, special educational programmes help raise public awareness and increase their overall intellectual level, which, according to the long-term forecast, will create a new class of customers and suppliers with adequate skills and erudition, which is vital for the viability of the private sector.

3) creation of short-term (during restoration) and long-term (maintenance of the monastic infrastructure) job opportunities, which is considered to improve, at least slightly, the economic condition of the population ;

4) facilitate not only the socio-cultural revival of the village of Nikozi, but also its economic revitalisation through the restoration of the original function and importance of the monastery, which in its turn, may have a positive impact on the local economy. Thus the rehabilitation of Nikozi Monastery will give an incentive to new development within the region, which is vital for businesses at the local level as well as across the country.

## **6. Options appraisal**

The primary purpose of the proposal is to protect this listed cultural heritage site graded as a national monument from the destruction and further deterioration and bring it back into an appropriate use for religious and broader secular purposes.

Driven by this purpose, the following key priorities of the consolidation and rehabilitation of Nikozi Monastery have been identified:

1. prevention of the further collapse and encroachment of the monastic complex;
2. preparation of the monastic complex for its full-scale, multi-purpose use.

A variety of methods can be considered with respect to the rehabilitation of Nikozi Monastery. Each of them envisages a different level of intervention and a varied scope of work to be conducted on each structure. The following are the options, including that of complete inactivity, that can be considered:

- i) complete inactivity – buildings burnt and destroyed as a result of the assault of Russian aviation and artillery (Bishop's Palace, monks' cells and auxiliary buildings) are in a very poor physical state; some of the buildings require urgent consolidation, while others need dismantling. There is a real risk of their collapse, especially during rainy seasons in winter and spring. This means that in the case of inactivity, the structures will be destroyed physically and the Bishop's Palace, one of the most notable structures of the Monastery, will be lost forever. It is therefore without doubt that long neglect and inactivity further damage the monuments. Each minute of delay means more expenses in the future in the best case, and the irrevocable loss, in the worst.

It is also to be noted that most part of the monastic grounds is unprotected; the boundary wall needs to be restored. During the Russian occupation of the region, the monastery was looted several times. Therefore, security is another issue to be addressed.

- ii) partial restoration/rehabilitation/reconstruction and revitalization – envisages emergency consolidation and rehabilitation works. This scheme implies the restoration/rehabilitation of the main historical structures of Nikozi Monastery and reconstruction of monks' cells, but does not provide for the infrastructure improvement work, while this is absolutely necessary for establishing adequate conditions for living and working of the monks, as well as for receiving pilgrims, tourists and researchers. More specifically, additional structures will need to be built to ensure the full-scale functioning of the monastery. Without doing so, the monastery will fail to function as a religious, tourist, public and cultural centre and above all, serve as a new impetus for the regional development. Consequently, all assumptions and prognosis made above (see Section 4) will become unrealistic.
- iii) full rehabilitation (recommended) – this proposal envisages full-scale restoration/rehabilitation of the main historical structures of the monastery and building additional infrastructure for receiving pilgrims and tourists, such as a guests' house with cells, a refectory/kitchen, a souvenir/book shops (which, among other items, will sell objects made at the monastery), meeting hall for cultural and educational events (seminars, workshops, conferences, exhibitions, summer schools, weekend parish schools, etc) (for more details see sections 2 and 3). This scheme will ensure a full-scale functioning and viability of Nikozi Monastery, which is a precondition for obtaining cultural, economic and social benefits discussed above.

The fully rehabilitated Nikozi Monastery will give an incentive to new development within the region. The rehabilitation of Nikozi Monastery as a religious, public and cultural centre and a tourist destination is in the interests of the entire private sector functioning in Nikozi.

## **7. Partners & Stakeholders**

Potential stakeholders of the Project include:

- Ministry of Culture, Monuments Protection and Sport of Georgia
- National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia
- Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation of Georgia
- Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia
- Ministry of Interior of Georgia
- Department of Tourism of Georgia;
- Parliament of Georgia
- Foundation of the President of Georgia
- Patriarchate of Georgia
- Regional Gori Administration and Gori Local Council

Each of the aforementioned bodies/institutions has its own interest in the Project and hopes to gain benefit from becoming engaged in it:

- The Ministry of Culture, Monument Protection and Sport of Georgia, as a key body shaping the country's cultural heritage policy, is to a certain extent responsible for the success of the Project. The Ministry is willing to have the site functioning at full scale and thus contributing to the development of the regional and central economy in general. The rehabilitation of Nikozi Monastery with national and foreign investments will be an example of international support for cultural heritage.
- The National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia, as a CoE partner within the framework of the Project and a body immediately responsible for the implementation of Project activities, has a direct interest in the success of one of the Specific Actions of the Project. In addition to that, the Agency is responsible for the maintenance of Georgia's cultural heritage sites; also, the goals and objectives of the Project are in agreement with the obligations and interests of the Agency.
- The Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation of Georgia, as a body responsible for the welfare of IDPs, is interested in the rehabilitation of the cultural heritage site in the conflict zone with a view to facilitating economic activity and thus enhancing living standards of the local community;

- The Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia is obliged to care for the economic, social and infrastructural development of Georgian regions and is therefore interested in the regional development of Gori Municipality. If functioning fully, Nikozi Monastery will, as mentioned above, contribute to the improvement of the region's economic indicatives.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, as a Project coordinating authority on the central level, is interested in the success of the Project in general and in the rehabilitation of Nikozi Monastery as one of its Specific Actions, in particular;
- The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia maintains a general strategic overview of all large scale projects particularly those within the former conflict zone. The Ministry is interested in the rehabilitation of this site due to its great religious and cultural importance to Georgians and strategic location (20km from Tskhinvali);
- The Tourism Department of Georgia, as a body responsible for improving tourism potential, is interested in the rehabilitation of Nikozi Monastery and establishing the site on a tourist map and thus contributing to the revitalisation of the entire region;
- The Parliament of Georgia as the highest decision-making authority is obliged to have information on the Project. The Parliamentary Committee on Education, Science and Culture deals with cultural issues on a national strategic scale;
- The President's Fund is interested in improving the situation in the conflict region, and the rehabilitation of Nikozi Monastery is one of the steps towards this goal;
- The Georgian Patriarchate, as a legal successor of Orthodox churches in Georgia, is certainly interested in the rehabilitation of Nikozi Monastery. Provided with adequate infrastructure, the rehabilitated monastery will become fully functional and serve as a religious centre of the region. Thus Nikozi Monastery, as one of the strongest centres of Shida (Inner) Kartli, will be of great support to the Patriarchate.
- The Regional Gori Administration and Gori Local Council which is responsible for improving welfare in Gori Municipality and is associated with any activity in Gori region, is interested in the rehabilitation of Nikozi Monastery as a factor of the facilitation of socio-economic condition of the region.

The population of Gori Municipality obviously has the greatest interest in the Project and expects significant benefit from its implementation. If successfully realised, the Project will facilitate the creation of new jobs and establishment of a strong religious, cultural and educational centre. This, in its turn, will foster the spread of education, establish favourable settings for domestic and foreign tourism and create market for the produce of the local community, which will have a positive effect on the regional economy.

## **8. Management of study, long term management & responsibility**

As envisaged by the Constitutional Agreement between the Georgian State and the Georgian Apostolic Autocephalic Church (Concordat) dated 20 October 2002, all Orthodox churches in Georgia, including the monastery in Zemo Nikozi, are in the ownership of the Georgian Patriarchate. Religious activities at monasteries are led by an abbot together with the Patriarchate. Apart from that, the rights and responsibilities of monument owners are regulated by Georgia's *Law on Cultural Heritage*. According to this law, the Ministry of Culture, Monument Protection and Sport is the main authority defining the country's cultural policy. The Ministry is also authorised to exercise oversight on the protection of cultural heritage monuments.

At present, it would be reasonable to assign the management authority for the monastery to the so-called management board to be staffed with competent people related to the monastery. This should be people who were directly involved in the development of a rehabilitation proposal and of a tentative action plan. The work was done in close collaboration with the abbot of the monastery, Bishop Isaia. Several meetings were held between the Project management, specialists and the bishop to identify the needs of the monastery, the scope of needed intervention, a total number of monks/nuns and the required amount of cells respectively, etc. Meetings were held regularly, twice a month. In all, ten meetings were conducted.

### *Management Board:*

- Abbot of the Monastery, Bishop of Nikozi and Tskhinvali, Metropolitan Isaia;
- Director General of the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation, Nickoloz Vacheishvili;
- Project Leader, Leila Tumanishvili

- Project Manager, Kakha Trapaidze;
- Project Coordinator, Christine Darchia;
- Architecture restorer Gia Sosanidze
- GIS specialist Gabriel Mazmishvili
- Gori Municipality representative

These people have undertaken commitment with respect to Nikozi Monastery. They were immediately involved in the preparation of the Project and have a right and obligation to manage the Project. The Board of Advisors shall be compiled of political decision-makers, officials institutionally related to the Project. In addition, with the aim of ensuring close cooperation between the Project Management Unit it shall also include the Project Management Board.

*Board of Advisors:*

- Shida Kartli Governor;
- Members of the Interministerial Commission: Deputy Foreign Minister D. Jalaghania, Deputy Minister of Culture, Monument Protection and Sport D. Tskhadadze, head of the administration of the Governor of Shida Kartli region Zurab Chinchikashvili, Chairperson Gori Municipality David Khmiadashvili;
- Abbot of Nikozi Monastery, Nikozi and Tskhinvali Bishop, Metropolitan Isaia;
- Nikoloz Vacheishvili, Director General of the National Agency for Cultural Heritage of Georgia;
- Leila Tumanishvili, Project Leader;
- Kakha Trapaidze, Project Manager;
- Abba Alaverdeli, Bishop Davit (Makharadze), Chairman of the Board of Architecture, Art and Restoration at the Patriarchate of Georgia.

## **9. Risk Analysis**

Any project has its strengths and weaknesses, advantages and disadvantages, which provide arguments against opponents on one hand and contain a risk endangering the success of the Project, on the other. Therefore, it is essential to make an in-depth analysis of each component.

*Strengths:*

- cultural and historical importance of Nikozi Monastery, which is a strong argument for rehabilitating this heritage site;
- the role of the monastery as a religious centre, which has deep roots in history and is still preserved – this makes the site to be viewed as one of national importance and be listed as a monument of national significance;
- the site is an educational and cultural centre, which is an indication of its vitality and relevance.

*Weaknesses:*

- due to long neglect and lack of maintenance, historical structures of the complex have lost authenticity and in the case of inactivity, the site may lose its artistic, architectural and cultural value over time;
- political instability in the region;
- ambiguous and unstable social context, constant migration and depopulation of the villages.

*Opportunities:*

- growth of tourist potential and the related economic development of the village; growth of community income;
- establishing a new educational centre and improving conditions for providing better education locally;
- improvement of relations with the South Ossetian population through religious contacts and trade ties.

*Threat/Risk:*

- Nikozi Monastery is a dominant architectural feature of the village of Zemo Nikozi. All the central and peripheral village roads are concentrated around the monastery. An irrigation canal supplying the village also runs near the site. The monument makes the village attractive for rapid urban development. Residential houses of inadequate scale and design built

irregularly at the end of the previous century, as well as infrastructural facilities of the monastery threaten the centuries-old architectural and spatial planning. Another threat is related to unexpected archaeological finds, which may cause the suspension of physical works; this may require the change of the project planning. With the aim of avoiding such threats, it is essential to conduct a preliminary archaeological exploration and take its findings into account while planning.

## 10. Programme & Phasing

Key priorities for Nikozi Monastery repair and rehabilitation:

- i) prevent the monastery from further decay and destruction;
- ii) make arrangements for the rehabilitation and renewed functioning of the monastery;
- iii) implement full-scale rehabilitation of the monastery;
- iv) develop monastic infrastructure to ensure a proper functioning of the monastery as a cultural site.

The table below shows the phases of the project listed according to the order of priority. It is also to be noted that some works are scheduled to run parallel and overlap in time.

#	Type of work according to phases	Duration	Current status		Potential implementers	Note
			completed	planned		
<b>I. Arrangements</b>						
1	Start of the contract: cleaning of the structures and the area	1 month	partially		Local resources	
2	Feasibility study and development of recommendations for rehabilitation					
	2.1 Art historian study	1 month	partially		PIAG team of experts	
	2.2 Creating a digital topographic reference for the complex	1 month			a group of Georgian supporters of the monastery	
	2.3 Hydro-geological survey of the area	1 month			a group of Georgian supporters of the monastery	
	2.4 Archaeological study of the area	2 months	partially		Agency	
	2.5 Assessment of the structural and technical condition	0,5 month			PIAG team of experts	
	2.6 Make architectural and archaeological measurements	1 month			Invited specialists	
	<b>Total: 3 months</b>					
<b>II Development of design documentation</b>						
1.	Layout plan development	0,5 month			PIAG team of experts	
2	Master plan	2 month			Invited	

					specialists	
3	Functional zoning map of the monastic area				a group of Georgian supporters of the monastery	
4	Detailed architectural drawings of each structure	3 months			Invited specialists	
5	Detailed structural drawings and calculations	3 months			Invited specialists	
6	Infrastructure rehabilitation and installation design documentation	1,5 months			Invited specialists	
7	Detailed design of vertical planning	1 month			Invited specialists	
8	Lighting design	1 month			Invited specialists	
9	Security system design	0,5 month			Invited specialists	
10	Area improvement design	1,5 month			Invited specialists	
11	Project of organisation of works	0,5 month			Invited specialists	
12	Announcement of tender for physical works	1,5 month			Agency	
	<b>Total: 7 months</b>					
<b>III. Physical works</b>						
1	Preparation of a construction site	1 month			Company selected through tender	
2	Major infrastructure works	14 months			Company selected through tender	
3	Reinforcement and rehabilitation of historical structures of the monastery: works listed according to the order of priority: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bishop's palace</li> <li>• Ghvtaeba church</li> <li>• Church of the Archangel</li> <li>• Bell tower</li> <li>• Circuit wall</li> </ul>	12 months			Company selected through tender	
				partially		
4	Building new structures listed according to priority: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cells for monks and nuns</li> <li>• refectory</li> <li>• baptisterium</li> <li>• parish school</li> <li>• workshops</li> <li>• auxiliary structures</li> <li>• ecclesiastical and souvenir shop</li> <li>• visitors' centre</li> <li>• hotel</li> </ul>	15 months			Company selected through tender	
	<b>Total: 30 months</b>					

The full of rehabilitation programme contains three phases and covers 40 months.

## 11. Costs

Two sets of cost-estimates have been developed for the aforementioned scenarios (chapter 5) envisaging different levels of intervention on Nikozi Monastery and its structures.

### **reconstruction/rehabilitation (Consolidation of existing structures) – Total 1 032 970.00 €**

<b>Preparatory works - total</b>	<b>103 700.00 €</b>
Enabling contact to clear structures and the area	10 400 €
Photo recording of the existing condition, collecting archival material relating to the structures, comparative analysis and art historian report, development of recommendations for the rehabilitation	3 500 €
Creating a modern digital topographic survey base for the complex and its surroundings (resolution 1:1000 and 1:1500, WGS – 84-UTM coordinates)	6 900 €
Hydro-geological survey of the design area, conclusions and recommendations	8 600 €
Archaeological survey of the area and report	17 300 €
Structural survey of the monastic buildings, including the study and assessment of foundations	17 300 €
Making architectural and archaeological drawings of each structure by indicating local damages (sketch-maps, sketch drawings – resolution 1:50)	39 700 €
<b>Compiling design documentation for rehabilitation/reconstruction - total</b>	<b>345 300.00 €</b>
Developing a layout plan (resolution 1:2000)	1 700 €
Master plan (resolution (1:1500, 1:1000)	34 500 €
Functioning zoning scheme of the complex grounds by indicating restricted, public and open spaces	10 400 €
Design drawing for each structure of the complex: plans, sections, façades, developed views (resolution 1:100, 1:50), fragments and details (resolution 1:20, 1:10)	117 500 €
Structural drawings and calculations (resolution 1:100, 1:50)	117 500 €
Design documentation for exterior and interior infrastructure rehabilitation and installation (power and water supply, sewage, heating/ventilation, weak currents, storm water and drainage systems)	34 500 €
Detailed design of vertical planning of the area	6 900 €
Lighting design (internal and external systems)	3 400 €
Design for security system (fire-prevention, security)	3 400 €
Landscaping and improvement design (paths, minor architectural forms, planting of greenery and other landscaping elements)	13 800 €
Project for the organisation of works	1 700 €
<b>Construction works - total</b>	<b>327 700.00 €</b>
Preparation of a construction site	4 000 €
Dismantling of the remains of destroyed structures	18 000 €
Consolidation/reconstruction of walls and foundations	215 000 €
Repair/installation of roofs	50 000 €
Repair/building of ceilings, walls and floors	40 000 €

<b>Installations needed for new services - total</b>	<b>205 500.00 €</b>
Electric lining (internal and exterior lighting, heating, telecommunication, etc)	80 000 €
Water and sewage lines and installation	40 000 €
Installation of storm water and drainage systems	35 000 €
<b>Other costs - total</b>	<b>50 500.00 €</b>
Contingencies	50 500 €

**Without alternative: reconstruction/rehabilitation of existing structures and new structures –**  
**Total 3 284 800.00 €**

<b>Preparatory works - total</b>	<b>103 700.00 €</b>
Enabling contact to clear structures and the area	10 400 €
Photo recording of the existing condition, collecting archival material relating to the structures, comparative analysis and art historian report, development of recommendations for the rehabilitation	3 500 €
Creating a modern digital topographic survey base for the complex and its surroundings (resolution 1:1000 and 1:1500, WGS – 84-UTM coordinates)	6 900 €
Hydro-geological survey of the design area, conclusions and recommendations	8 600 €
Archaeological survey of the area and report	17 300 €
Structural survey of the monastic buildings, including the study and assessment of foundations	17 300 €
Making architectural and archaeological drawings of each structure by indicating local damages (sketch-maps, sketch drawings – resolution 1:50)	39 700 €
<b>Compiling design documentation for rehabilitation/reconstruction - total</b>	<b>345 300.00 €</b>
Developing a layout plan (resolution 1:2000)	1 700 €
Master plan (resolution (1:1500, 1:1000)	34 500 €
Functioning zoning scheme of the complex grounds by indicating restricted, public and open spaces	10 400 €
Design drawing for each structure of the complex: plans, sections, façades, developed views (resolution 1:100, 1:50), fragments and details (resolution 1:20, 1:10)	117 500 €
Structural drawings and calculations (resolution 1:100, 1:50)	117 500 €
Design documentation for exterior and interior infrastructure rehabilitation and installation (power and water supply, sewage, heating/ventilation, weak currents, storm water and drainage systems)	34 500 €
Detailed design of vertical planning of the area	6 900 €
Lighting design (internal and external systems)	3 400 €
Design for security system (fire-prevention, security)	3 400 €
Landscaping and improvement design (paths, minor architectural forms, planting of greenery and other landscaping elements)	13 800 €
Project for the organisation of works	1 700 €
<b>Construction works - total</b>	<b>2 041 000.00 €</b>

Preparation of a construction site	36 000 €
Dismantling of the remains of destroyed structures	28 000 €
Consolidation/reconstruction of walls and foundations	215 000 €
Construction of new structures (8 new objects see. fig.7.6.3)	1 365 000 €
Repair/installation of roofs	165 000 €
Repair/building of ceilings, walls and floors	120 000 €
Installation, technical equipment	112 000 €
<b>Installations needed for new services - total</b>	<b>518 300.00 €</b>
Electric lining (internal and exterior lighting, heating, telecommunication, etc)	241 000 €
Water and sewage lines and installation	138 200 €
Installation of storm water and drainage systems	69 100 €
Landscaping/improvement work	70 000 €
<b>Other costs - total</b>	<b>276 500.00 €</b>
Contingencies	276 500 €

## 12. Product and Revenue

An adequate monastic infrastructure is a precondition for generating income for the monastery that is essential for covering every-day costs, which are generally negligible.

Nikozi monastery is primarily a religious shrine, the church providing regular daily services for around 30 individuals. Prior to the conflict, Sunday services were very popular with people worshipping both inside and outside the church, the audience including people from Tskinali and South Ossetia.

In addition, throughout the year there are 12 main religious days of celebration which attract very large numbers of people.

The main products are related to local crafts.

The main and the most stable and traditional source of income will be a candle manufacturing; the following activities may also generate income:

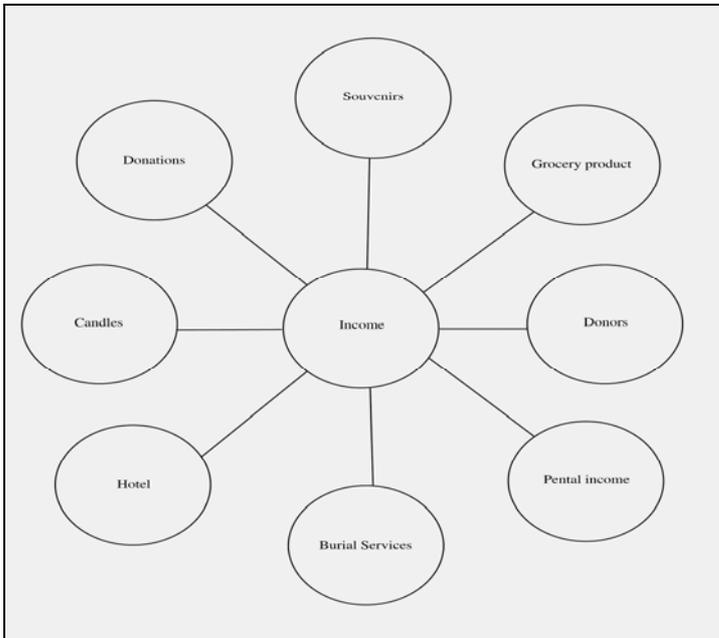
- ecclesiastical and souvenir shop (icons, crosses, rosaries, religious adornment, etc);
- a hotel for laymen outside the church area of the monastery;
- church rituals (weddings, christening, holding funerals, etc);
- manufacturing of ritual inventory;
- contributions;
- honey, bread, fasting pastry or wine if the Monastery has enterprises producing these;
- fruit and berry processing (tea, extracts, etc);
- pottery
- Charges for entry to special exhibitions;
- Rental income from stall holders in the market square.

Being a unique monument of medieval Georgian architecture, Nikozi Monastery is a religious and tourist centre of the region. In addition to this, the monastery serves as a place of public gathering in the village and more broadly, as a cultural and education centre of region, which, in its turn, contributes to the publicity and competitiveness of this site.

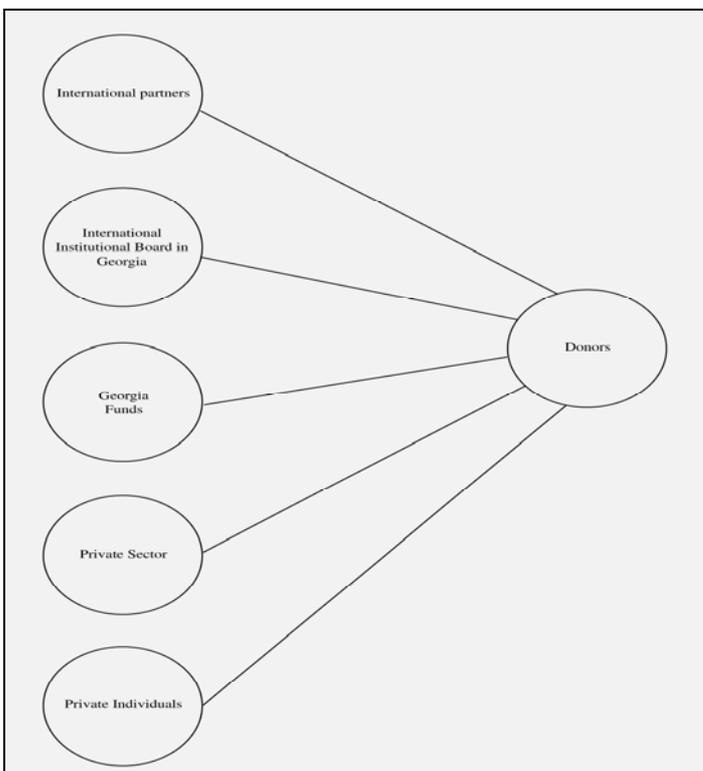
Donors are another important source of income. These can be local or foreign organisations and individuals, mostly businessmen or people from the Bishop's close circle.

- International Partners
- Embassy of the USA in Tbilisi
- Embassy of France in Tbilisi
- Embassy of Netherlands

- Prince Claus Fund
- Possible education links; universities and schools
- International partners
- British Council
- Goethe Institute
- Fund of Georgian Historic Monuments Preservation
- Private Sector
- Wissol Petroleum Georgia
- Individuals



A scheme of donors can be developed with the same logic.



The Monastery administers its own income.

Administrative costs of Nikozi Monastery are negligible as the monks themselves maintain the monastery. In addition nuns from the convent located there give special care to the Monastery.

### **13. Sustainability**

It will be vital to sustain the results after the rehabilitation of Nikozi Monastery. This will require special maintenance of the site by the monastery people. The Bishop's office would be responsible for monitoring the management and maintenance plan for the site. Monks and nuns active at the monastery shall take care of the monastic infrastructure.

The Monastery shall maintain 'a registration log' in which seasonal preventive works aimed at maintaining the physical condition of the site will be entered (e.g. cleaning of rainwater pipes and roofs, fixing drain pipes, etc).

The Monastery shall also maintain a document to register the scope and timing of all works (including small rehabilitation or repair) on each structure and in the monastic grounds in general. In the case of substantial damage, the clergy of Nikozi Monastery will be obliged to notify the Ministry of Culture, Monument Protection and Sport of Georgia or the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia.

Observance of the aforementioned principles is vital for the smooth functioning and operation of the monastery and primarily for the sustainability of its historic structures. Ateni Convent, which is located nearby, Gori Municipality, is a successful example of a fully functioning site infrastructure maintained in accordance with the aforementioned principles.