Twinning Project AZ/15/ENP/OT/35

Support to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic
of Azerbaijan for the modernization of its policy and
management system in the culture sector

Component 2–Institutional Development of cultural heritage management

Activity 4.2.1: Two Pilot Projects

Museums for All

Final Report

TWINNING

1. Introduction

The present report summarizes the findings of the Pilot project "Museums for All" implemented within the framework of the twinning project "Support to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan for the modernization of its policy and management system in the culture sector"

One of the results to be achieved by the Twinning project is the planning and testing of effective models of management of national cultural heritage. The project contributes to development of both general strategies and improved implementation mechanisms, in order to deliver a modern and user-friendly approach in management of sites and museums.

The "Museums for All" pilot project focused on audience development and access issues, promotion of museums in the context of tourism, innovative educational and outreach programs and initiatives, use of digitalization and new technologies both for management and developmental purposes. In this sense, the pilot project aimed at deepening the matters involved in:

→ the upgrade and modernization of services offered by Azerbaijani state museums;

→ the reform proposals included in the Twinning project's Activity 1.5's output *Roadmap for full implementation of the new culture sector governance model*, that is recommendations to further improve the provisions of the 2014 *Culture Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan;*

Therefore, the outputs of the pilot project have been:

- the state-of-art of the Azerbaijani practices compared to the most updated models applied in European practices

- suggestion on the measures to be adopted to improve and modernize the Azerbaijani state museums as well as the other important museums of the country in the respective sectors

The present report contains the two following sections:

- Elements of innovative Museum Management, outlining European and Global best practices in management of museums that could be applied to Azerbaijan

- Setting up a Museum Management system in Baku, outlining concrete proposals for the development of the Museum system in the capital city of Baku

2. Improvement of museum management

The necessity to improve and upgrade some of the sectors in the life of museums come directly from the evolution of the meaning and definition of what a museum is (or shall be) in the present days. Such meaning descend from the latest definition of museum made by ICOM Statutes, adopted by the 22nd General Assembly in Vienna, Austria on August 24th, 2007:

> *"A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment."*

Even though some of the activities above listed have indeed ad economic meaning, the development that museums are functional to has much more to do with education and entertainment: museums should educate while entertain the public; so they should be more attractive and interesting for people who should decide to use some of their free time from work or school to visit a museum.

Excite curiosity into the public has much to do with communication, as well as exhibitions. And still didactics and exhibition are based on researches, studies and education, but they must show up also in a very communicative and attractive way if they are to hit the target of more and more visitors entering the museum. And many of these sectors challenge the organization of museums and ask for more investment in money, because no museum in the world could survive only through the tickets of visitors, and the number of visitors will probably dramatically shrink if the museum doesn't provide "edutainment" activities or exhibition and event for its public. This means, in the end, that even if not for profit, but museums still need a funding strategy to gain enough money to become a modern museum as ICOM statutes calls for. So the sectors we need to improve and upgrade are connected one to the other and they must be part of an integrated development strategy.

The elements of a development strategy for modern museums are:

- Storage
- Exhibitions
- Didactics
- Communication
- Fundraising
- Networking

Here below, a review of the state of the art on each element is proposed

2.1 Storage

Museum collection storage is both a physical space and an ongoing process.

- It is a dedicated space used for storing museum objects, natural history specimens and archival materials. This space is designed or upgraded to meet standards and requirements for the preservation protection and accessibility of the collection.

- It is an ongoing process of containing, organizing and caring for the collection while it is in storage. This involves evaluating and implementing strategies and techniques to improve the condition and long-term preservation of the collection.

Each decision about storage should take into account how the consequences of the decision will improve the protection and preservation of collections.

Good collection storage is a major component of the preventive conservation and collections care program. A well-planned and organized storage space reduces risks to the collection and provides accessibility.

Deterioration, damage or loss can be minimized through:

- Proper storage place, strategies and techniques
- Good handling practices
- Effective security and fire protection
- Good housekeeping practices
- Appropriate environmental conditions
- An effective integrated Pest Management program

A well-designed collection storage space that readily accommodates the collections combined with a rational, systematic approach to collections management and good housekeeping will minimize or block risks to the collection. It will provide the collection the best possible protection from all agents of deterioration.

A multi-layered collection storage system is composed of successive layers of protective envelopes or enclosures, from the building itself to the equipment and containers that surround an object. The greater the number of layers, the more protection. Although museum collection storage situations vary, the variables that need to be considered to properly house a collection are the same.
In the multi-layered approach, each level adds another layer of protection to the collection by shielding it from the agents of deterioration.

The layers of protection are:

- *Building/facility envelope*: exterior (outside/external) walls of the structure housing the collection.
- *Room/space envelope*: walls of the room or space immediately enclosing the collection.
- *Equipment/storage furniture*: storage furniture such as a cabinet with gaskets, map unit or shelving unit housing the object.
- *Container/housing*. Container housing the object such as a box, tray or other fully enclosed container.
- *Packaging/wrapping materials*: museum quality materials that cover and/or support the object inside of its container/housing, such as tissue, muslin or polyethylene foam.

The essential elements of a museum collection storage space standards and requirements are the following:

- Safe and secure storage of museum collections requires dedicated space. Museum storage areas must only house museum collections. Always separate museum storage from all other uses, including office space and research and work areas.

- House collections in a dedicated space that has minimal penetrations and optimum thermal performance.

- Museum storage space must be adequate to accommodate the particular characteristics and quantity of objects, specimens and archival items in collections.

- Organize the space to allow for the efficient use of curatorial equipment and techniques and to provide for effective access and optimum preservation of the museum collection.

- House objects in appropriate containers and package objects with appropriate materials.

- Containerize collections to the extent possible to minimize the negative effects of relative humidity and temperature fluctuations.

Ensure the collection storage space in both *suitable* and *sufficient* for proper storage. *Suitable* space is planned space that has been determined to be adequate for storing museum objects. *Sufficient* space is expandable space that provides room for safe, non-crowded storage of the collection and allows room for future growth.

Collection storage place should be used exclusively for storing collections. By separating curatorial office, work and research spaces from the space housing the collection, the environmental impacts on the collection and the security risks are minimized.

According to an international ICCROM-UNESCO survey (2011), collections in storage worldwide are at serious risk. While much has been written on how to plan new storage areas starting from zero, most museums are not faced with this problem at all. Instead, they must improve a situation that has deteriorated over time

2.2 Exhibit conservation

Exhibit conservation focuses on practical techniques that protect museum collections from unnecessary damage while on display. Improperly designed and poorly fabricated exhibits are a significant source of damage for museum collections. Only by involving conservation early and throughout the process, can we ensure preservation-responsible planning, design and production. Successful exhibits require a close, constructive working relationship between exhibit, curatorial and conservation specialists.

The tools for assuring adequate conservation of exhibit include:

- Exhibit planning and integrating conservation into the exhibit process:

  o Integrate conservation early in the exhibit planning phase. Make a commitment to preserving objects placed on exhibit by including conservation concerns throughout the development and production of the exhibit.

  o Provide adequate time and resources. Build in enough time for development and review of technical designs, case prototypes, lighting mockups, and the testing of proposed materials. The schedule must allow for safe handling, exhibit mount making,

and installation of objects. Include the costs of addressing preservation issues, such as treatment and special casework, in the budget.

- o Search for balanced conservation solutions. Employ solutions that are appropriate for the specific exhibit circumstances and balance conservation criteria with other exhibit requirements.

- Team Building and cooperation

  - o Work cooperatively. Each team member should take responsibility for understanding basic conservation issues and working with other members to achieve preservation-responsible displays. The search for balanced and appropriate solutions often requires compromise.
  - o Hire supportive design staff. Use designers who are experienced in working with exhibit conservators and firms that have a history of producing preservation-responsible exhibits.

  - o Demand high construction standards. Develop drawings and specifications that clearly articulate the intended conservation features; consider including performance criteria. Oversee production contractors to ensure that conservation components are built as specified.

- The role of the Exhibit Conservator

  - o Include an exhibit conservator on the exhibit team. Select a conservator who is qualified in the specialty of exhibit conservation. Often, a part-time consultant is sufficient.

  - o Involve the exhibit conservator in the earliest stages and throughout the exhibit planning, design, fabrication, and installation process. An exhibit conservator should set conservation criteria, participate in planning and design meetings, review conservation-related decisions, and assess prototypes and exhibit work after installation. e invaluable parts of the equation.

- Selection of Objects

  - o Select appropriate display objects. Make the selection in conjunction with a conservator who can establish whether the objects are stable enough to exhibit (with or without treatment) and the ramifications of exhibiting them.

  - o Avoid selecting too many objects. Review the number of objects that can be accommodated safely within the available space.

  - o Consider the aesthetics of each object. Object selection should include curatorial review of the visual message presented. Incomplete, deteriorated, or dirty objects may require extensive treatment.

  - o Avoid permanent exhibit of objects. Consider rotating vulnerable objects, substituting alternate objects, or using reproductions. When possible, use a reproduction to demonstrate the function of an object.

- o Allow enough time and resources to safely prepare, mount, install, or replicate exhibit objects.

- Establishment of Conservation Criteria

  - o Review the objects. Examine each object chosen for display to determine its current condition and individualize its conservation requirements. Complete a written condition assessment of the objects.

  - o Establish necessary but realistic conservation criteria. Base the requirements on an assessment of the individual objects, the likely environment in the exhibit space, and current conservation research.

  - o Address the conservation criteria. Incorporate the conservation recommendations into the exhibit design. The designer, conservator, curator, and other team members must work cooperatively to ensure practical display methods that preserve the objects.

- Collections Management

  - o Ensure safe handling. Provide training for anyone who handles an object during the exhibit process. Dedicate a clean, secure space for temporary storage of objects during exhibit development, construction, and installation.

  - o Stabilize all objects. Have a conservator document their condition and provide a treatment proposal for those that require treatment. Secure the necessary funding for treating unstable objects before display.

  - o Document objects. An exhibit object list should include the accession or catalogue number of each object. Photographs of the objects and floor plans marked with object location facilitate security and condition checks.

  - o Protect objects during photography. Limit an object's total exposure to light, and avoid overheating objects with studio lights. Use a flash system, especially for light-sensitive objects. Always provide appropriate support for objects.

The design of the exhibit must be developed and implemented keeping in mind the conservation element. The tools for implementing design in compliance with conservation needs include:

- Multilevel Conservation Response

  - o Design for environmental stability and protection. Choose an appropriate and efficient response from among the multiple options available. Consider what level of protection is obtainable and what kinds of tradeoffs each will impose on the conservation criteria.

  - o Consider both macro and micro approaches. Weigh the benefits and costs of addressing conservation criteria throughout the exhibition against creating micro environmental solutions using exhibit cases.

- Exhibit Format and Layout

- Use enclosed display when possible. Avoid open display except in historic house museums and some gallery settings or when an object's size makes enclosure impractical. Open display should never be a routine exhibition option or one chosen solely for financial reasons.

- Allow sufficient room for traffic flow. Design the exhibit to avoid accidents. Provide adequate space through the exhibit and around exhibit cases for the easy movement of individuals, groups, and people in wheelchairs.
- Group similar objects. Consolidating the location of collections with similar conservation criteria will make it easier and more economical to meet the design goals. Consider ease of installation, maintenance and object removal.

2.3 Didactics

Museums have been educational places since their inception, with their mission: caring for collections as well as providing access and learning opportunities for visitors.

The historical trajectory of museums shows they were based on the functions related to the preservation of artistic and cultural heritage (collection, protection, conservation and scientific research) and to dissemination (communication and education); therefore, presently education is one of the other functions of these institutions.

Museums are ideal places to provide settings, resources and inspirations for a wide reaching and diverse range of both informal and formal learning activities addressing all ages with different needs. Thus, in addition to being places that preserve and shows the traces of the past, they may also now be seen as the centre piece of community development or regeneration projects.
Since ICOM (International Council of Museums), it was agreed that museums should develop specific functions with education and cultural diffusion and had to have a certain space inside the Museum that could be called "Education Department and Cultural Action".

A special International Committee of the ICOM is named CECA (Committee for Education and Cultural Action), which gathers museum educators and other museum professionals with an interest in education and in culture who work in research, management, interpretation, exhibitions, programmes, media and evaluation. The committee aims at exchanging information and ideas about museum education at an international level, ensuring that museum education is part of the policy, decisions and programmes of ICOM, advocating the educational purpose of museums around the world and promoting high professional standards in museum education. CECA holds annual conferences for which proceedings are published as well as a newsletter and an annual review entitled *ICOM Education*.

New educational approaches are trying to transform the "static" traditional Museum into active Museum, in centre of culture for society. This transformation is based fundamentally on spend "policy of the object" to the policy of what the "visitor-centred" Museum, with special attention to making exhibitions understandable to laymen in the different subjects, providing didactic criteria and not purely aesthetic or scientific.

The museum public has widened to include both younger and older adults, who pose new challenges to museum educators used to working with groups of pupils or students in formal education.

The Museum must have two means to approaching society:

- a cultural environment that contributes to raising public awareness, and thus the citizens become potential visitors of the Museum;

- the training centres: colleges, schools, academies, universities, etc. which are potential future backers of museums as places of learning. Through a pedagogical attitude they can educate visitors. Children, especially, need to know that they will have fun learning objects, learning to decipher its secrets in a natural way.

The recipients of this approach are the various groups of users of the Museum and even though its offer is usually focus – usually but not always – on children and young people, its action is actually aimed at all audiences. Special programs include visits guided tours to the Museum, editions of learning & teaching cases, organization of workshops or laboratories, screening of films and videos. Special spaces can be organized inside the Museum: rooms for children; educational programs for specific school courses; design and production of exhibitions; the Organization of monographic seminars, conferences, outreach, events…

These are the general categories of audience to be involved in the museum activities:

- Teachers of all levels education and educators in general.

- Groups of children or young people belonging to schools, groups or associations of leisure.

- Adults, either individually or in small groups, whether organized by any institution, organization, Association, company or other collective.

- Elders, either individually or in the same way as under the previous heading.

- People with a physical or mental disability; hospitalized people and long stay patients.

- People with special social issues, such as marginalization, poverty, imprisonment in detention centres, etc.

- Researchers and experts.

In school-level programs there has been a trend to smaller groups working with a museum educator. Less time spent in classrooms and more time in exhibition areas complemented by hands-on experiences. Programs are considerably more learning- and student-oriented and less object-driven. Opportunity for communication with teachers and students has expanded dramatically through web-based information, materials and activities.

In consideration of the growing importance of the didactics and education dimension for museums, the establishment of a dedicated education department is a necessity. In this sense, the figure of dedicated educators, professionals tasked with the didactics dimension of the museum activities, is of utmost importance.

The ICOM *Running a Museum: A Practical Handbook*, sums up its role in this way:

"the best present-day museum educators have qualified (usually at postgraduate level) in many different fields during their careers. Many have studied the subject matter of the museum they work

for – e.g. archaeology, biology, history, physics, or studies in education or psychology will have provided the basic pedagogic knowledge, for it is vital for the educator to be respected academically by his/her curatorial colleagues.

In addition museological training is absolutely necessary, whether through specialized (postgraduate) courses or through experience as a trainee in a museum. Some courses of teacher training may be suitable, but it is important to understand that learning in the museum can be very different from learning in schools, particularly where the country has a tradition of very formal school teaching and learning.

Once a museum has decided to establish an education service and has found a suitable candidate to run it, the new education officer has to set up a structure and decide on a policy and programme. This has to be realistic in terms of what can be accomplished according to the museum's situation, particularly the staff, time, space and finance available.

As a minimum, an effective education service requires a full-time professional head who is capable of handling the management and administrative aspects of the job as well as taking part in the teaching and other educational work. Long experience shows that while a single education officer is better than nothing, one person will not be able to carry out every necessary task, especially once schools, colleges, parents and the wider public recognise the value of the educational programmes offered by the museum. It is inefficient and uneconomic for a highly qualified education officer to have to undertake routine secretarial jobs such as taking bookings, distributing publicity material or printing teaching and learning materials because of the lack of necessary administrative assistance.

Public demand for the educational services is likely to make it necessary to engage additional specialised staff for guiding, teaching and for conducting the educational workshops and other activities. Freelance or part-time staff can undertake many of these functions under appropriate contract arrangements and supervision. However, such staff must be trained by the education officer or other experts in order to maintain quality standards. This training and continuing professional development needs to cover a wide range of topics, including current knowledge of learning theory and psychology, and information on new research in the museum's subject matter, as well as communication, presentation, and any relevant special aspects of the job, such as historical crafts and techniques. Therefore the museum educator must be a leader or manager as well as a true team player

Many museum educators today have a responsibility that goes well beyond the school student audience. While in some institutions public programs are separate from school visit programs, there is a move toward staff working across all audience groups. This link enables shared theoretical and philosophical approaches which in turn enhance visitor experiences, as well as giving greater recognition to the professional role of educators in all aspects of the museum's work.

At the same time staff are focusing programs for discrete audiences — very young children, primary, secondary/adolescents, singles or groups of adults and family groups — and these programs are seen as 'audience drivers'. Rather than being an adjunct to an exhibition, they are the programs which attract people to the exhibition and institution and provide the key experience for the visit. This has meant that, for example, family and holiday programs are being taken much more seriously by institutions and funded accordingly.

Adult learners are autonomous and self-directed, able to contribute actively to the learning experience and take part in the meaning-making process which all learning entails; they have also accumulated life experience and knowledge that new learning should build upon. Adult learning has seldom strayed from the guided visit, the expert lecture or formal evening class. In the last decade, more and

more museums in the different European countries have chosen to consider the needs of and engage with new and or different audiences: migrants, people with disabilities, socially excluded people, and also adult lifelong learners, who see a museum visit as an opportunity to build understanding, gain an insight, be inspired, or simply to enjoy.

Lifelong learning therefore opens up a new era for museums: that of questioning assumptions, of experimenting, of building up partnerships, and of being challenged by encounters with different public, new audiences, new citizens, and of trying to make a positive difference to their lives.

A wide range of tools for museum didactics can be identified. The planning of the use of these tools must be realized in an integrated fashion, on the basis of a pre-set strategy:

- General Exhibit Labels and Individual Captions
- Guided Tours and Educational Dialogue under direction by trained educators
- Audio and Audiovisual Media
- Visual and Computer Media
- Tactile media and dedicated controlled environments encouraging visitors to touching objects
- Educational Spaces
- Educational games such as quizzes, puzzles, role-playing games
- Practical Workshops and/or educational shows by professionals such as craftsmen
- Didactic/Educational Exhibitions, specifically targeted at a certain group and supported by specific didactic tools

Moreover, many museums in recent years are involved in promoting educational programs for people who are economically and socially marginalised, such as migrants, foreigners, citizens living in poverty and deprivation situations. Thus, the audience development plays also a role of social inclusion and cultural enhance for disadvantaged categories.

Education in museums helps in disseminating knowledge and promotes the values of respect and estimation to the indigenous culture and the other peoples of the world, develop cognitive skills people: capacity of observation, comparison, relationship, synthesis, interpretation, etc. Therefore, once more and the last, the museums are educational centres of an extraordinary value.

2.4 Communication

According to UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Protection and promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society, Paris 2015, and communication is another primary function of museums. Members States should encourage museums to actively interpret and disseminate knowledge on collections, monuments and sites within their specific areas of expertise and to organize exhibitions, as appropriate. Furthermore, museums should be encouraged to use all means of communication to play an active part in society by, for example, organizing public events, taking part in relevant cultural activities and other interactions with the public in both physical and digital forms. Communication policies should take into account integration, access and social inclusion and should be conducted in collaboration with the public, including that do not normally visit museums. Museum actions should also be strengthened by the actions of the public and communities in their favour.

Today, it is therefore crucial to view communication and citizens' engagement as a core activity of the museum, to be tackled through an established strategy, meaning that museums or museums' networks would have a communication strategy.

The models of Corporate Communication and Public Relations present different options for strategic planning of communication. However, they both present a strategic planning structure: that starts with the research of the publics, developing a communication strategy, and finally applying and evaluating the actions on the basis of the strategy itself.

The communication of the museum is usually made of four phases (research, planning, implementation and evaluation), since this four stage model is frequently used in the field of Corporate Communication and Public Relations. This four stages model is used for products, services, enterprises, institutions or organisations and can also be applied to both the museums (as entities) and their products or cultural services.
More in detail, the stages are:

Research

Systematic collection of information to understands the environment and the whole process of communication between the museum and its public, representing the basis for adequate planning of activities. In the field of museums, analysis of publics is basically centred on visitor surveys targeted at one main public (users/visitors), at an individual or family level

Planning

On the basis of research, communication planning starts. In this stage, some key aspects should be defined, such as the definition of the objectives, the identification of the publics with which to communicate, the selection and programming of the activities to be carried out.

The communication strategy should define the target groups of the communication, the media for communication, identify clear and measurable objectives, define responsibilities within the museum management.

In particular, the communication strategy should:

- Be a written and thoroughly shared document
- Defined role of museum's management and communications professional(s)
- Contains clear and measurable objectives, to be used as a reference to judge progress.
- Clearly identify target groups (audiences) of the communication
- Establish a work plan for the realization of communication
- Define required resources – financial and people

The strategy is particularly important because it allows the team to agree what they want to achieve, plan ahead to exploit all the available channels, identify the necessary resources and allocate responsibilities, and gives a clear plan against which to measure success
In this sense, a comprehensive communications strategy should include:

- Research
- Mission (purpose)
- Vision (ambition)

- Aims
- Objectives
- Audiences
- Messages
- Channels
- Timing
- Resources
- Risks
- Evaluation

Background research is essential to planning an effective communications strategy. It allows to learn lessons from previous projects, and from experiences of peers and competitors. It allows to assess past successes and failures, identify what works, what doesn't, and where investment should be prioritised.

Implementation

Realizing the activities defined in the previous stage and controlling their contribution to the attainment of the established objectives. The methods and tools for museums communication may include:

- advertising,
- sales promotion,
- direct marketing
- public relations.
- corporate identity,
- personal selling,
- promotional literature
- other...

Evaluation

Measurement and assessment of the entire action carried out in the previous phases in order to assess the success of the communication. This is the last step of the process of communication.
Listening to the audience is a crucial activity for museums and evaluation activities should be carried out to refine the profile of visitors in order to update communication. The museum should define a profile of the current visitors, predicting visitors and defining a segmentation of visitors by demographic and social aspects, identify behavioural patterns for different visitors profiles during the visit and after the visit

2.5 Fundraising

When it comes to fundraising, it is better to start with the basics, knowing that this is a fundamental issue for the life of any museum and that success or failure relies mainly on an accurate and well-conceived strategy. That means aiming very well at the desired target, both in terms of quantity and

quality of funds needed, which implies designing clearly a strategy based on a well-known matters of the museum potentialities and on a diversified battery of weapons to hit the target.

Philanthropists believe that to give is good. Companies know that being seen to be generous improves their public image. And foundations exist expressly to distribute funds to good causes. Public bodies must be convinced that giving money to a museum will bring benefits to the whole community because they are paying with the money of the community itself.

Therefore one should start by approaching the right people, being clear about the plans for the museum, and being able to show who will benefit within and beyond the museum's walls.

It all adds up to making a convincing case that the proposed actions will address a real need, not for the management of the museum, but for the community. On the other hand a good fundraising strategy must proof that it can spend grant and sponsorship money effectively, because of course no one wants to see their largesse spent in vain and, if co, they will never come back again to support the museum

"People give to people" is one of the conventional wisdoms among fundraisers, stressing the often highly personal nature of the relationship between donor and recipient. More an art than a science, charm, institutional prestige and powers of persuasion are crucial in fundraising.

A tried-and-tested strategy is a public launch when a major donation or grant has been secured; it gets a campaign rolling and adds weight to the appeal.

But it is short-sighted to focus solely on big donors. Every cheque helps. And an important goal for long-term fundraising is expanding the network of people who know the museum exist and are interested and curious about the museum organisation's plans for the future.

Some people give for the "warm glow" of giving. Others appreciate a tangible token of their donation. Museums are, by this matter, in a strong position. Because appearing the name on a donors' wall or next to an object that has been conserved, gives more opportunities go far beyond the listings in an annual report. And the more the museum is a successful story and is visited and visible in the media, the more fundraising will grow.

So we will highlight that a well-done fundraising strategy must be made out of different stages:

1. Planning a successful fundraising campaign;
2. Writing a good fundraising application;
3. Building a strong and long-lasting work and engagement with donors (that may need to establish a department dedicated to this function within the museum or the network);
4. Attracting corporate sponsors;
5. Cultivate private donors (even small donors, organized in clubs or associations of "friends of the museum" that will feel proud to be a member of or part of the project);
6. Building a Board of Trustees than may operate ad advocates and testimonies of the museum, so that anyone can associate their name and reputation to the museum.

Fundraiser has become a very high skilled job and it is certainly one of the key figure of a success story of a museum, devoting a part of the budget to a well-organized fundraising strategy and to experts in this field, it is not a contradiction as it may seem, but it could be a fundamental investment. That is always true, but it is rather more when it is necessary to enhance and exploit already existing museums, because in such cases one could rely on "things as usual", giving the fact that the museum

has its public (maybe not to many so that the employees don't get too much upset...) and in some way it has always survived. But this would be the worst thing to do when the mission is to build a new museum network that cannot simply consist in the sum of the existing museums.

Under this point of view, it could be of some interest to detect the Italian museum system and its evolution in the recent period
In the context of the Italian museum system, counting more than 4000 institutions (most of them are public and so depending from the local authority or the Ministry of Culture), it is urgent to focus on their management system and to develop some programs able to give the museums any form of autonomy.

"To fundraise" means therefore to differentiate the sources of funding, making it possible to depend at a fewer rate from the ticketing, way too far instable and related to international unpredictable circumstances.

Some possible options are:

- Establishment of associations of friends and donors
- Applying to calls and funding programs (European calls, granting foundations, banks etc.)
- To take advantages of the tax incentives set
- To stipulate partnerships to develop collaborative projects
- To attract sponsors and patrons with engaging projects

For all the actions here above mentioned, the necessary starting point is the Research conducted by the museum. The Museum is a learning institution, whose main purposes are the maintenance of the collection and the development of the society through the proposal of engaging high-value activities to connect around it different actors.
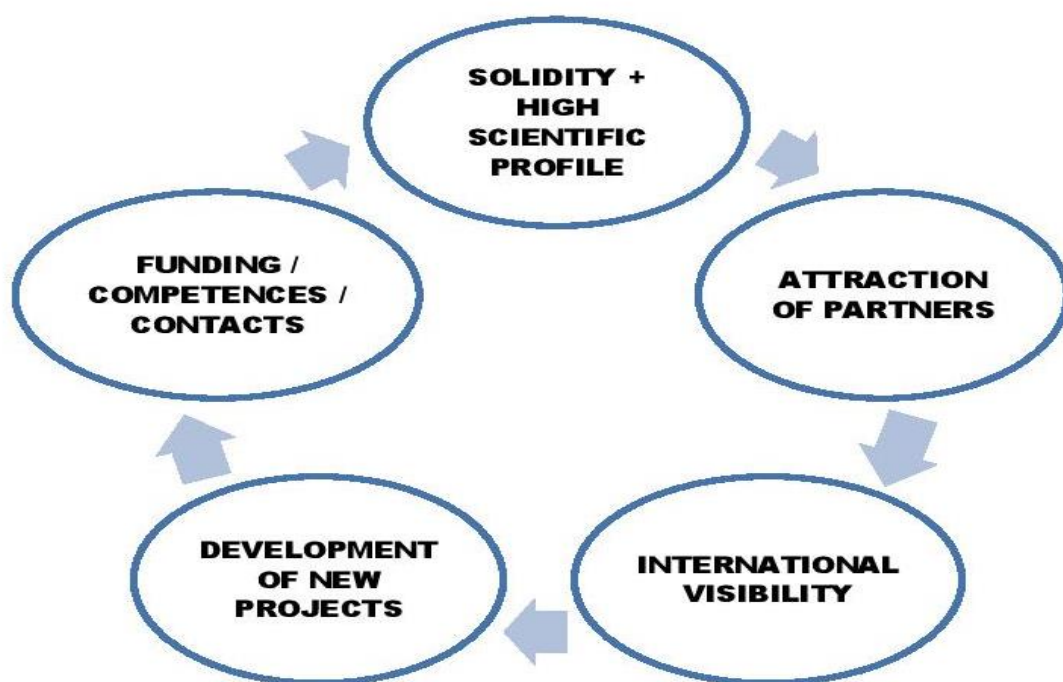
A contemporary museum can therefore be seen as a cultural hub, a place of mutual and profitable exchanges. Each project developed needs to be coherent with the museum mission and has to be considered as a vector for the museum vision and ideals. In this view, it is clear how a good planning of the development and fundraising activities assumes a prominent role in the general management of a Museum:

In detail, the sponsorship contracts can reduce the distance between the museum and the private company environment and, at the same time, provide the museum relevant incomes or technical provisions and the company prestige and reputation.

3. Building museum networks

Building a city museums network in a modern city as Baku it's a task or a challenge that needs a clear idea of what is today a modern city and what kind of a modern city is today and shall be tomorrow the city of Baku.

Therefore it is necessary to understand what kind of museums there are today within city limits and what kind of transformation they individually need to meet the demands of the public, both native or tourists; and also what kind of new museums is needed in the future to tell the never-ending story of the modern city of Baku.

As a matter of a fact, it will be quite reasonable to design, shape and adapt the Museum Network of the city of Baku as a constituency part of the design and continuously shaping and developing of the city itself. Cities change, so do city museums and so does urban museology. Therefore museums are constantly challenged by the transformations happening within the city, the lifestyle of their inhabitants and the expectations of their visitors: if they don't want to be seen as just dusty remains of a past that doesn't say speak to the living people, they must continuously reorganize their storytelling, the services they offer to visitors and be in tune with modern life (even when they preserve objects of the past or they tell stories of the past ages).

Indeed, city museums have had a pioneering role by envisioning the future while engaging with the past and the present. Particularly, city museums (or museums whose mission is to represent significant phases of the life or the history of the city and its inhabitants) has contributed to build an inclusive urban environmental and a deeper consciousness of the identity of a community based on the awareness of its routes and on the idea that any human community willing to face the future must include different cultures and ideas.

Two essential features of the definition of a city museum in the early part of the twenty-first century are usually highlighted within the literature: the relationship between the museum and the life of the present, even the future, and the importance given to the community of citizens as part of the discourse of the museum.

3.1 Role of museum networks

In the literature, city museums has consider themselves to be primarily historical museums as museums devoted to cities and their history; but even when they are not defined as historical museums, they definitely tell us the story (or some story) of the city and its community. Therefore, the list of the eighteen museums that are willing to constitute the new museum network of Baku will tell part of the story of the city and the network will be the support for the storytelling of the city of Baku. Van Pelt, author in 1931 of a text describing the project and the missions of the Museum of the City of New York, said that the museum "is no more historical than the art museum or the museum of natural history – perhaps less so. […] All museums are museums of history, if we accept the definition which makes history apply to the future as well as the present and the past. […] It is the museum of a city and its value should be sociological"[1]

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1   Van Pelt J., «The museum as a guide to the life of a city», in The Museum News, vol. IX, n° 12, Washington, The American Association of Museums, 1931, 8

As we can see simply by reading the list of the eighteen museums, the concept of history is involved in the self-definition of many of them, in some cases explicitly and in other cases one can imagine it implicitly. However, "history" does not mean the same thing to all these museums, and different kinds of temporality are used to display the city. i.e. in the Azerbaijan state museum of religious history or in the Azerbaijan state museum of religious history and in many others, the mission of the museum is clearly directed toward the past. In such museums the visitors and all the communicating material assumes an historical perspective. But it would be foolish if the museums were to give up speak about the present time and the future of the city. Instead all museums of the network should use the past as an opportunity to talk about the issues facing Baku today. The museum has a mission to help its visitors grasp in concrete terms the issues that affect the city most directly, so that solutions to problems can be more intelligently sought. We can still cite Van Pelt when he says that "there are future problems that should be provided for in any city and that may be forecast by the museum". As said, the museums should not just be the mirror of the past, but also a window open into the future.

So, the mission of the network of the museums of the city of Baku should be to link together all the different stories that every single museum of the network tells in one coherent and understandable storytelling of the city of Baku, knotting together different stories, subjects and ages, making clearly identify for the visitors which are going to be the challenges that the city is facing.

The target of museums

Identifying the target persons to which the museum is addressed is one of the most complex issues of museum management. A clear identification of the type of visitors to which the museum is addressed may lead to a substantially better organization of the museum itself.
For example, a museum mainly addressed to local people, one should emphasize all the elements in which the visitors could recognize themselves as members of a community and understand how the identity of the community has been changing during the years. Or if the museum is targeted to young students, a strong department for didactic is needed. Often, a good museum will intercept many different segments of the public. And it could also happen that, during the managing of a museum that was originally intended for a kind of public, it's not able to attract it, then one must change its strategy or reorganize the museum.
We should, therefore try to understand – in the case of already existing museum which we are willing to link in a network – who the visitors are, if they are satisfied with the visit the paid to the museum and why we the museums are not able to attract further visitors.

So, even though documents published by the museums reveal, sometimes subconsciously, the figure of a typical visitor to whom the museum addresses itself, only *visitor surveys*, would allow one to confirm the success of a museum by checking the match between actual visitors and the kind of visitor the museum was attempting to attract. That means that, while building the network, different kind of visitors surveys should be used to understand *who* the visitors are, *what* they came to the museums for, *why* they decided to visit the museums, *if* their expectations where fulfilled.

At the same time, *non-visitor surveys* should be used as well, in order to understand the priorities of people not visiting museums, the causes of the lack of interest in museums and to identify potential actions to bring these people at museums

Museums, as institutions, are creatures of their time and belong to a determinate cultural context. They evolve during their lifetime together with the city they are sited in, both visually and conceptually. They have a different appearance because of the general movement of museum

development through the years, and continue to change its approaches to museology and museography.

The current emphasis on the city museum's active role in society can be seen as the last stage of a long thought process related to the development of the missions assigned to city museums since they began to be established. A museum who was conceived and created only 30-40 year ago is less the same as one built in 2010. However, each of the city museums of the past generations, given the means available at a given time, has contributed in its own way to a form of social interaction and to the improvement of the urban condition. So the making of a museum network of the city of Baku must also be the occasion to rethink all of the museums that will compose the network and to give each one of them a new mission, both by strengthening its original mission and by giving it a new perspective by the inside of the network.

The proposed kind of network

the kind of storytelling to be chosen for the museum network that Baku is about to create. Is crucial Because, whether there is awareness or not, even when we simply link together in a row a certain number of museums that happen to be in the same environment maybe only to present the opportunity for the visitors to know their existence and their opening hours, we are telling something about such environment and the role that those museums as a whole are playing in it.

Specifically there is a strong **relationship between museums and cultural landscapes** and the museum network of the city of Baku may aim to represent the cultural landscape of Azerbaijan as well.

This issue is highlighted in a recommendation on the historic urban landscape by UNESCO in May 2011: *"...urban heritage is for humanity a social, cultural and economic asset, defined by an historic layering of values that have been produced by successive and existing cultures and an accumulation of traditions and experiences, recognized as such in their diversity…*
[While] the dynamic nature of living cities,…rapid and frequently uncontrolled development is transforming urban areas and their settings, which may cause fragmentation and deterioration to urban heritage with deep impacts on community values, throughout the world… the principle of sustainable development provides for the preservation of existing resources, the active protection of urban heritage and its sustainable management is a condition sine qua non of development". These kind of problems seems to fit the role that the museum network of a modern city, continuously transforming itself, as Baku may aim to interpreter.

This is also a strategic perspective for the museums of the third millennium all over the world. This theme presents both an opportunity and a challenge for museums to revive their mission and strengthen their cultural and social role. This strategic theme implies two essential questions.

First, to what extent should museums, especially those that hold collections linked to their local vicinities, take up the role of interpretation centers for the region and the community they belong to

Secondly, how can museums disseminate knowledge on the cultural heritage that dwells both inside and outside their walls

Museums should not only take complete responsibility for their collections, but also for the cultural heritage that surrounds them. Thanks to the skills of their staff, museums should become "**widespread museums**", extended museums and safe quarters to protect the cultural heritage outside their walls.

Museums are active responsible players in their own cultural landscape; they should become:

1. careers of knowledge through their collections, research and scientific activities;
2. main players of new investigations on cultural heritage and active institutions in the protection and conservation of cultural goods inside and outside their walls;
3. extended museums and interpretation centers for local heritage;
4. centers responsible for education actions related to cultural heritage and landscape;
5. actors for the landscape protection, conservation and development, as well as for the urban and landscape planning and for the promotion of cultural tourism;
6. custodians of the historical and cultural values of the landscape and promoters of sustainable development.

Museum network may tell the story (or the stories) of the city and its cultural landscape on many different subjects, perhaps in the case of the city of Baku through the *filles rouge* of the modernization of the city and the country which has gone through many dramatic changes in the last centuries. Once the network has chosen its storytelling, the "widespread museum" develops by hollowing out and harmonizing together different cultural resources of the urban landscape, starting with different museums, but including urban parks, theaters, architectures, monuments, memorials, libraries, etc. in a matter that each one of these knots of the network will represent different but coherent stages of a common historical and cultural landscape.

3.2 Proposed Network

In the roadmap for full implementation of the new culture sector governance model, following the point 3.3 "Modernization of the museum branch" of the Presidential Decree No. 273/2014 which approved the *Culture Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan* it has been suggested to reshape the Azerbaijani museum system introducing a distinction between:

- State Museums having direct autonomy, and

- Regional Museums networks, gathered within autonomous regional networks, based on the Presidential Decree of the 29 March 2016 *Upgrading organizational structure of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan*, under the Directorate-General of the Department for Cultural Institutions and Folk Art of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT).

Therefore, it is recommended, to establish networks on the basis of the nature of involved institutions in order to facilitate cooperation and joint realization of activities and identification of synergies.

It is in particular recommended to establish a network of State Museums and dedicated Regional Museums Networks

a) State Museum Network (proposal):

1. Azerbaijan State Carpet Museum
2. Azerbaijan State Museum of Arts
3. Independence Museum of Azerbaijan
4. Azerbaijan State Museum of Theatre

     5. Azerbaijan State Museum of Musical Culture
     6. The Petroglyph Museum

  b) Regional Museums Networks:

     1. Sumgayit
     2. Khachmaz
     3. Ismayilli
     4. Sheki
     5. Kurdemir
     6. Aghstafa
     7. Shamkir
     8. Ganja
     9. Barda
     10. Agdjabadi
     11. Agdash
     12. Sabirabad
     13. Bilasuvar
     14. Masalli
     15. Lankaran

Both State Museums Network and Regional Museums Networks could be characterized by scientific and administrative autonomy and be dependent on the Director of the Department for Cultural Institutions and Folk Art (MCT). The networks may represent adequate contact point for further promotion of networking at the international level as follows.

CAMOC: an international network of city museums

The *CAMOC* (International Committee for the Collections and Activities of Museums of Cities), is an international organizations concerned with cities and urban living, established under the imprint of ICOM (International Committee of Museums) in 2004 during the ICOM triennial meeting in Seoul.

It is a forum for people who work in or are interested in museums about the past, present and future of cities. It is also a forum for urban planners, historians, economists, architects or geographers, and of course citizens, aimed to share knowledge and experience, exchange ideas and explore partnerships across national boundaries. With close on 300 members from 43 countries CAMOC carries out projects, run workshops, publish and hold meetings with a specific theme in a different city each year.

The Committee reflects the growing focus worldwide on cities: their economic importance, their spectacular growth, and the problems and possibilities they present. The matters for debate on the city are almost endless: pollution, regeneration, private and public transportation, relations with the suburbs, maintenance or destruction of heritage, insensitive development. The Committee aims to be at the centre of this debate, supporting and encouraging museums of cities in their work of collecting, preserving and presenting original material on the city's past, present and future, work which can reinforce the city's identity and contribute to its development.

CAMOC focus on two permanent themes: migration and cities in conflict. But, beyond that, CAMOC works on a wide range of themes and topics about the city and city life. For example: city streets and spaces; architecture and the city; city transport; the flâneur and the flâneus - the observant wanderers; tourism; city government; the environment and the city; city wealth and poverty; cities on film; cities

in literature. The list is virtually endless and there are opportunities to develop new topics depending on the will of its participants.

CAMOC held conferences in 11 cities worldwide so far and held other meetings and seminars in Athens, Copenhagen, Glasgow and Kazan. Members have also been involved in projects to set up new city museums, recently in Aveiro in Portugal and Volos in Greece.

It seems, therefore, that the museum network of the city of Baku could be interested in getting in touch and perhaps participating to the CAMOC activities. Being part of such a network could help the project of the museum network of Baku to upgrade topics that are at this stage discussed in city museums of the world: it is important to participate to such debate to be aware of new tendencies, new solutions to common problems, opportunities offered by exchanging of good practices or events held all over the world, and also to enter into international projects that may suggest solutions to problems shared with other city museums.

As a matter of fact, one of the specific object of CAMOC is to carry out a programme of activities related to the development of museums about a city by helping to enhance their role in city life, drawing attention to best models of museum practice in changing social, cultural and economic conditions, promoting partnership and cooperation among museums of cities worldwide, promoting partnership and co-operation with other urban stakeholders.

3.3 Museum Networks for rural areas

Building museums network in rural areas presents peculiar problems and opportunities that must be in some attempt highlighted, assuming that it could be quite danger to just apply methods, procedures and figure borrowed from the city museum network to a rural area, because of the so deep differences between museums, visitors, cultural landscape and purposes. But, at the same time, there are opportunities that can be achieved in a rural museum network that are impossible in a city museum network, first of all the possibility to combine museums with environmental issues and historical and archeological sites, or even with rural traditions or events and festivals.

In different countries around the world, particularly in Italy, France, Portugal and in Northern Europe (but also in Brazil, Venezuela, Mexico and more recently in India), there has been a growing attention and attempt in museums exploiting the ethnographic and environmental heritage and linked to the rural culture.

These kind of museums have been defined as *ecomuseums* by Georges Henri Rivière and Hugues de Varine, who coined the term 'ecomusée' in 1971. The term "éco" is a shortened form for "écologie", but it refers especially to a new idea of holistic interpretation of cultural heritage, in opposition to the focus on specific items and objects, performed by traditional museums. There are around 200 of such museums in Europe, while contemporary museology is still discussing how to define the distinctive features of ecomuseums, listing their characteristics. But, nevertheless, they have been growing and multiplying during the latest years, with no model but rather an entire philosophy that has been adapted and molded for use in a variety of situations. As many more ecomuseums are established across the world the idea has been growing and the changes in the approach towards the philosophy are reflected in the reactions of the communities involved. In recent time particular significance is the rise in ecomuseology in India, China, Taiwan, Japan, Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia, with significant increase in Italy, Poland, the Czech Republic and Turkey.

Ecomuseums are an important medium through which a community can take control of its heritage and enable new approaches to preserve and exploit various traditional and rural life environment, natural and historical-artistic heritage which are to be preserved, restored and promoted.

Recently the **European Network of Ecomuseums**has agreed on a definition of the ecomuseum as a *dynamic way in which communities preserve, interpret, and manage their heritage for a sustainable development.* So an Ecomuseum is based on a community agreement and on its consensus and recognition, implying reciprocal commitments between local players. *Community* also means that local authorities have a very important role to play by involving people, going beyond the narrow circle of "authorized personnel". *Preservation, interpretation and management* means that reading and communicating heritage values, providing new interpretations of it and raising its profile, are part of the day-to-day activity for ecomuseums. *Heritage* is very close to *Place* as a notion, including history of inhabitants and things, what is visible and what it is not, tangibles and intangibles, memories and future.

Sustainable development is a central issue for ecomuseums and it implies also to increase the value of a place instead of diminishing it. Evidence from best practices identifies in this process two key elements: place-based development and the improvement of local networks, where ecomuseums have to play a key role as catalysts of social capital development.

In 2016 inside the 24th ICOM General Conference *"Museums and cultural landscape"* of Milan, the*first Forum of ecomuseums and community museums* took place. The goals of the forum were to share experiences, questions and difficulties that ecomuseums face; to share their future projects; to envisage any prospect of exchange or collaboration with the visitors. During the Forum it was proposed to establish an International Platform for exchanges and experience sharing, and decided to create a permanent international Working Group to keep watch and make proposals on the theme territory-heritage-landscape. In the early 2017 on the basis of ideas, issues and debates raised by participants during the Forum a common vision was drawn and a provisional *"Milan Cooperation Charter"* was adopted.

By the way, in the early 2017 the world platform for exchange and experience sharing between ecomuseums and community museums was published. The platform called *DROPS*aims at "connecting all national Ecomuseums and Community Museums and their networks, existing or to be established, and all other heritage and landscape NGOs, in a virtual and interactive space" and at the "production of a multilingual documentary and a bibliographic pool of resources on eco-museology and its best practices".

Even though the history of eco-museums is now approaching its 50th anniversary, the idea has gone through many stages. The one we are now in is more linked to the importance of the identity of a community and its sense of belonging to a common local history and an idea of territorial developing. Local authorities are gaining importance and also the cooperation between different museums and their activities (didactic, tourist, communication, etc.). There is a much more involvement of these museums in the open air activities and relation with the community, in many cases recovering buildings and environments linked to local traditions therefore to exploit them, creating contextualized environments similar to the ones characterizing oper-air museums, involving directly the local population. At the same time, there is a growing importance attributed to historical researches over the heritage roots: this process is helped also by the growing importance that the ethnographic sciences are giving to the human aspects related to the findings and objects studied.

The ecomuseum phenomenon it has to be understood as one of the most encouraging development of the traditional museums linked to the development of the concept of cultural heritage itself.

So, beyond the theoretic discussion over definition of ecomuseums or *musée de société*, the phenomenon is growing and involves so many different situations and territories around the world. Perhaps, due to its resilience to many different environmental situation, the idea of ecomuseum may adhere to some of the rural areas in Azerbaijan in which there are rural traditions in the field of agriculture, museums of local handicraft, parks and relevant environmental areas, potential archeological sites and museums of local and natural history.

In a dual perspective of the ecomuseum, adaptive and evolutionary, in which the ecomuseum may have both the function of promoting the cultural and environmental heritage (eventually reorganized to better fit the ecomuseum model) and the function of a revitalization and a change in the way the heritage has been exploited by existing museums or cultural institutions, we can underline six characterizing elements identifying an ecomuseum that should be taken into consideration when trying to establish a new one in some rural areas of modern Azerbaijan:

- in situ interpretation;
- widespread museum;
- interdisciplinarity;
- relationship with the community;
- focusing on visitors (and on not-yet-visitors);
- focusing on the territory and on its peculiarities.

Five out of six of these elements are often faced by traditional museums that are willing to innovate its mission, but the sixth is a true peculiarity of ecomuseums and it establishes a direct link with the issues of sustainable tourism as it has been managed in many European countries, mainly in the northern part of the continent. And, of course, the sense of the word "territory" here it has to be understood not only in its geographical, environmental and landscape meanings, but also in a intensifying social meaning. Therefore an ecomuseum must pay attention to the transformation of its territory also in the sense of the facts of languages, folk traditions, lifestyles, working-styles, oenological and gastronomic productions, etc.

In Italy there has been an initiative to endorse the approval of a national law to promote ecomuseums, but it still has not reached the goal. But many Regions have approved such a law: Piemonte, Provincia autonoma di Trento, Sardegna, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Lombardia, Umbria, Molise, Toscana, Puglia, Veneto, Calabria, Sicilia, Lazio. This, in some way, confirms how important is the territory and its peculiarity for this kind of museum. But at the same time shows how large is the necessity of an action taken by the public bodies to help promote such a new kind of museum.

So, perhaps, Azerbaijan could promote some new experiences of ecomuseums in rural areas of the country and at the same time start figuring out how the State can take action by defying in a law the basic elements and the instruments to promote ecomuseums in several departments of the country.

4. Outline of Baku Museums Network

4.1 Introduction

Following the relevant reports drafted during the Twinning Project AZ/15/ENP/OT/35 *Component 1 - Cultural Sector Policy and Governance Reform*[2], this document focuses on some specific issues in the field of the *Modernisation of the Museum Branch*, all connected with the **valorization** and the **management** of museums.

Starting from the Italian experience and moving to the Azerbaijan context, the present document develops a proposal of management of the Museums in the City of Baku. In the next pages, hence, a specific focus on strategies and practises (strictly connected both with the general reports drafted during the Twinning Project and the Florentine specific experience) will be outlined.

Before entering the subject, nevertheless, it is necessary to underline three key aspects which are essential to structure an efficient museum management:

- *the focus on audiences* : talking about cultural valorization, the priority has to be given to audiences and their development. As already specified, contemporary museums are visitors-centred and socially-oriented institutions that can help cultural development and cohesion. To achieve this, a wide effort for inclusion, accessibility and participation of visitors has to be undertaken: the public is the main stakeholder of museums and is essential for giving sense to any museum policy;
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- *the role of professionals*: the first step for a real modernization of the museum branch is the enhancement of museum professionals. They are the soul and the body of museums and the living holders of the museum strategy; therefore it is just thanks to their professionalism that museum services can be efficient and valuable. Therefore, it is essential to punctually define roles and figures that really correspond to the goals of museums and to promote a program of permanent education and training of the museum staff, in order to guarantee an on-going qualification and innovation. This is why personnel should be hired through public selection processes based on strict inclusion requirements (which differ in relationship with the specific service) and punctually stimulated towards high standards, constant growth and development opportunities: this can be achieved through a permanent training that aims to improve skills, update competencies, reinforce motivation. These goals are essential to guarantee high-quality services;
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- *the public-private partnership*: in order to build a sustainable model it is important to balance public and private skills: on one hand a public mission has to be guaranteed, but on the other hand a focus on the income (in terms both of visitors and revenues) has to be taken in account. Borrowing strategies and methods from the private system can strengthen the world of museums and let it become more attractive to its stakeholders.

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2 Activity 1.5: Supporting in elaboration of a roadmap for full implementation of a new culture sector governance model and of an Administrative Reform Plan with 'milestones' and timetable, Activity 2.1: Review of Azerbaijan's present legislation, Activity 2.2: Recommendations on legislative acts and amendments

4.2 Outline of a museums management system in Baku

In Baku there are several museums, very different one from each other in terms of nature, location, size, collections and setting. Among them, the Azerbaijan Carpet museum is surely one of the most innovative and modern, having not just an attractive exterior and interior design but mainly a well-organised and efficient management system, focused on the high-quality enhancement both of collections and audiences. A smaller-size example of efficient and innovative setting can be the Yusuf Mammadaliyev's memorial museum: there, the visitor can quite easily find the clues to correctly approach the items and to understand the main topics of the museum.

4.2.1 Baku Museums Network

In addition to the proposal included in 4.5 of the report 1.5 of the Twinning Project, the proposal for the museums of the city of Baku is to build a **network of museums** which could include all the museums of the city owned by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism[3].

Therefore, the new network of museums could include 18 institutions, as follows:

1. Abdulla Shaig's home museum
2. Azerbaijan state museum of religious history
3. Azerbaijan Museum of Independence
4. Azerbaijan National Art Museum
5. Azerbaijan Museum of History
6. Bulbul's home museum
7. JafarJabarly's home museum
8. JalilMammadguluzade's home museum
9. Yusuf Mammadaliyev's memorial museum
10. Home museum of Leopold and Mstislav Rostropovich
11. Azerbaijan Carpet museum
12. NarimanNarimanov's memorial museum
13. SamadVurgun's home museum
14. UzeyirHajibayov's home museum
15. SattarBahlulzade's home museum
16. Azim Azimzade's home museum
17. Azerbaijan State Museum of Theatre named after J.Jabbarli
18. Azerbaijan State Museum of Musical Culture

This reform could modernize the actual museum management in Baku promoting a new vision on the cultural world of the city. It could also strength each museum in terms of revenues, resources and results, allowing:

1. the shaping of a stronger and wider museum **identity**: a unique visual identity and a coordinated communication strategy would increase the cultural impact on the city, both on residents and tourists;
2. the crossing of real **stakeholders** and the expansion of the potential ones: connecting all the museums in a unique network would multiply cultural recreation. All stakeholders - visitors, partners, sponsors - could establish new relations and each museum could benefit from the

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3   The museum network could include also museums owned by other institutions of the city.

other one;

3. the development of a system based on **economies of scale**: all services could be managed by a unique structure, optimising efforts and human resources and simultaneously achieving more important results for the single museum.

Every museum of the network belongs to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

Every museum should have a director for the permanent collection and restoration of the works, for research and publishing. Moreover, he could be responsible of the building and the museum spaces, their ordinary and extraordinary maintenance and expansion.
Furthermore, in order to achieve the objectives described above, it is necessary to shape a new system of management, in charge of all the services related to the public and its development.

Before describing each service in detail, it is crucial to specify some organizational points of this new structure:

- the new structure must have a director in charge of coordinating all services and a team of managers, one for each type of service

- the new structure must provide services across all museums of the network, in order to optimize efforts and human resources

- all workers who perform the services are employees of the new structure, which must care of their training, professionalism, knowledge, organization

- the headquarter of the new structure has to be located near or inside the Azerbaijani Carpet Museum (the most organized and frequented museum of Baku) or in the Azerbaijan Art National Museum (the second most frequented museum in Baku), in order to have a correct, timely and convenient management of the services. This is essential as these are the museums with more visitors and it is there that the new structure will have to concentrate the most of its activity
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- the headquarter should include: the offices of the general management area with his secretariat, the administration and the personnel management, the managers of the single services. It is also essential to include a dedicated space for the workers who provide guide tour to let them study, training, and create always new activities

- the new structure has to must maintain direct and continuous contacts with the Ministry in order to establish the priority.

4.3 Services and functions

The Museum Network should manage, coordinate and supervise the following services:

4.3.1 Information, Reception, Ticket desk, Bookshop, Customer Service and Reservation Office

These services represent the first contact with the public: a specific attention has to be addressed to orienteer and welcome the visitors, giving them the first and the best tools to build their museum experience. These are the services that have to be guaranteed:

- <u>Information and ticketing</u>: every museum must have a information/ticketing desk (for the museums with free entrance an info-point is enough); the two services can be run by the same worker at the info/ticketing desk. Just in the most frequented museums it could be useful to have two distinct spaces for these two services (one for Information and one for Ticketing, preventing potential lines) and two (or more) separate workers.

- <u>Bookshop</u>: in the little museums it has to be together with the ticket office and must look like as a corner bookshop. In the most frequented museums, instead, it has to be located in a specific and well visible space, with dedicated staff. The items sold by bookshops must be of high-quality, including peculiar museum merchandise and Azerbaijani handicraft.

- <u>Customer Service and Reservation of guided tours</u>: visitors are invited to customize their visit and book their guided tour/activity by phone, email and directly to every information/ticketing point. A unique call center can be set up for all the museums of the network and all the staff can stay in the same office. It is essential to use advanced technological infrastructures to connect all the museums together in order to be always updated about reservations and ticketing.

In order to increase the strength of the network of museums and to attract more public in the smaller museums, a Baku card could be defined: that is a card with a all-included price, giving to visitors the possibility to visit all the museums of the network, to take public transportations (buses and metro), in a determined period of time (i.e. 72 hour)[4]

For these services, the network allows a flexible and efficient employment of personnel: people can work in more than one museum, optimizing human resources and at the same time offering them a variety of contexts. Every month a detailed schedule of the service (who, when, where) is defined by the manager of human resources and the manager of this service, organizing locations and shifts of the single employees relating to the different needs of museums (opening times, extra-events, etc.). The structure make decisions on the number of employees who work every day in all the museums of the network in order to be the most efficient as possible.

4.3.2 Opening and security of cultural sites, visit assistance

The service involves professionals not just opening and guarding the museum spaces but also assisting the visitors during their visit, giving them the basic information and helping them to get familiar with the main topics of the museum. This service can contribute to orientate the public, offer a light support for the visit and gives the opportunity to employees to be more useful in the life of the museum. The museums network allows a flexible and efficient employment of personnel: people can work in more than one museum, optimizing human resources and offering a variety of contexts. Every

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4   The Firenze Card can be an example: http://www.firenzecard.it/?lang=en

month a detailed schedule of the service (who, when, where) is defined by the manager of human resources and the manager of this service, organizing locations and shifts of the single employees relating to the different needs of museums (opening times, extra-events, etc.).

4.3.3 Visit support

This service implies the development and the management of specific tools in order to support the public during the museum experience: audio-guides, multimedia guides, family kit, booklets and all material can be helpful for giving sense to the visit of the museum. This kind of tools is essential to guarantee a support to all visitors, at any time and in any language; though it implies some costs of investment then it can bring an income for museums and it guarantees a second-level of assistance for visitors.

4.3.4 Education and Audiences Development

This service include the set of tours, conferences, workshops, activities and initiatives created for the different targets of visitors (i.e. schools, families, young people, adults, the elderly, residents, tourists, people for special needs, foreign communities). The service has to be carried out by a team of people with a solid cultural background and interdisciplinary skills (i.e. in foreign languages, in theatre, in fine arts, in scenography). This service is essential to offer a high-quality experience, letting the museum be a lively and enjoyable space for visitors: this is crucial to attract tourists but also to give to citizens new incentives to come back to museums and visit them several times. The portfolio has to be diversified with regard to themes, tools and languages: storytelling, theatre, manual techniques and multimedia are but a few of the "keys of the visit" thanks to which visitors can get closer to cultural heritage and associate it with their own present-day. The network allows a flexible and efficient employment of personnel: people can work in more than one museum, optimizing human resources and at the same time offering them a variety of contexts.

4.3.5 Communication and Press

This service includes all the policies and actions which are necessary for disseminating, promoting and enhancing the life of the museum and its activities. It implies a strong effort to find the best tools in order to be attractive and connected with contemporary taste, shaping several strategies specifically tailored to the different audiences. The museums network allows a flexible and efficient employment of personnel: the team works on the museums as a whole, strengthening the dissemination of the single actions and at the same time optimizing human resources. This implies the creation of in-common tools and strategies for the network of museums[5], though they can provide specific declinations for the single museums:

- a unique web site for all the network (with news, highlights, infos and descriptions, on-line ticketing)

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5   as examples see www.museicivicifiorentini.comune.fi.it and www.musefirenze.it

- a unique graphic identity and a set of logos, with the same lettering but different colours for each museum
- a unique management of social media that everyday can publish news, curiosities, pictures, video, infos about all the museums of the network
- a unique off-line communication: the same logo has to be used on all media instruments (as brochure, cards, posters). It is important that all the museums of the network have outside a totem or a banner in order to be immediately identified by visitors
- a unique press office in order to have daily news to journalist and press and keep the public opinion's attention high.

4.3.6 Customer satisfaction, analysis and statistics

This service includes an ongoing and timely analysis and verification through quantitative surveys (with general reporting on the numbers achieved monthly, quarterly and annually) and qualitative surveys: they consist in general Customer Satisfaction and specific surveys in order to have continual feedback and define the best short-medium-long term strategies for real and potential audiences.[6]. All this work can be yearly summed up in the Annual Report[7], which represents a very valuable institutional tool for increasing knowledge, performing assessments, making decisions and engage public and private partners. In this case the network allows a flexible and efficient employment of personnel: the team works on the museums as a whole, designing a wide and comparative analysis of the data.

It is important to get the monthly statistics of all the museums, not just in terms of number of visitors but also in relationship to their specific characteristics (i.e. general public and school visitors).

Every museum has to set up, at the end of its itinerary, a specific space for the customer satisfaction: this could be held through questionnaires for the public, which have to be available in several languages, either on paper or in digital form (through multimedia devices). All visitors should fill the questionnaire. the questions have to be focused on the satisfaction about the visit and the museum settings/services (some sample questions can be: "did you appreciate the museum?" "what did you like more?" "what would you like to change?" "why did you decide to visit the museum?" "where are you from?" "how did you get the first infos on the museum?" "would you like to receive news about the museum activities?"). Every months the new structure has to collect all the questionnaires: thanks to their analysis a monthly report will be draft, in order to understand the main trends of museums and strength their weaknesses.

4.3.7 Exhibitions and major events

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6   Moreover, a key-role can be played by the analysis and measurement of the Social Return On Investment indicator, which offers the possibility of "measuring" the social role that museum services have in the territory and for the community as a whole. For the measurement of social impacts in the cultural field see J. Myerscough, *The economic importance of the Arts in Britain*, Policy Study Institute, 1988. In Italy the first S-ROI measurement in the museum sector is due to MUS.E in 2016: for 1€ of investment the museum services have generated 3€.

7   as an example see http://musefirenze.it/doc-area/Annual-report-WEB.pdf

This service strongly enriches the life of museums offering new perspectives and opportunities to visit them. In dialogue with the permanent collections, exhibitions and events focus on specific topics and contents setting them up in a special frame which can be very attractive. A rich program has to be yearly defined, organising a common calendar for all the museums in order to avoid the overlapping of initiatives, to offer to citizens and locals recurring initiatives, keeping a flexible and efficient employment of personnel: the same team, provided with a specific competence in organizing events and setting up exhibitions, can work for the different museums, optimizing human resources. This office has to work strictly in contact with the Fundraising office.

4.3.8 Fundraising

In compensation for the limited public resources, this service works on the research, identification, engagement, care, maintenance and development of private partners and sponsors. Basically, private partners and sponsors are invited to be part of the different projects developed by the new structure and this is the key point: in order to establish a fruitful public-private partnership, it is essential not just to look for occasional and scattered sponsorships, rather it is important to build solid and permanent partnerships, founded on co-marketing projects. In exchange, sponsors and partners will strength their marketing goals and furthermore get important benefits such as visibility on the media of the project (i.e. on-line and off-line communication, presence at the press conference) and subsidized rent for special events inside the museums. As mentioned above, the main steps of this service are:

1) identification: it means that the office has to identify sponsors and partners potentially interested in refining their name on the project

2) engagement: then, it is necessary to look for a direct contact through a meeting in which the various co-marketing projects can be presented

3) care and maintenance: after the engagement, the office must think of the care and maintenance of sponsors and partners through the creation of special events finalised to thank them, to inform them and invite them to other cultural events, to set up unique and exclusive occasions in the museums, such as guided tours dedicated only to the sponsor/partner or important corporate events.