REFLECTIONS ON TEN YEARS OF CULTURAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE

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Reflections on ten years of
Cultural Emergency Response

11 November 2013
Pakhuis de Zwijger
Amsterdam
The Netherlands

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To celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Prince Claus Funds’ Cultural Emergency Response programme, the Fund organised an international expert meeting entitled *Culture Is A Basic Need Revisited* on the 11th of November 2013 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Why

Since its establishment in September 2003, the Cultural Emergency Response (CER) programme has successfully addressed a previously underrecognised need. CER’s arrival triggered the recognition of culture as an intrinsic part of emergency response, based on the principle that ‘culture is a basic need’. The demands of cultural emergency response are unique in their need for a swift and flexible response to urgent cultural needs in situations of conflict and disaster. CER provides first aid to cultural heritage that is threatened or damaged, acting as the cultural ambulance that it was set out to be. Ideas about what constitutes an emergency may change over time, but providing a quick and fitting response to cultural emergency needs, rescuing cultural heritage at risk and preventing damages to cultural heritage from worsening remain the core business of CER.

Since CER was established, its scope of work and the emergency needs as formulated in project proposals have evolved and the way in which CER responds to these cultural needs has evolved along with it. After ten years of cultural emergency experience, the programme increasingly operates in the shadow of new threats, including conflicts where sites of cultural heritage are a military target and a growing number of natural disasters caused by climate change.

Objectives

The development of the CER programme has been based on the knowledge and experience of its partners, who implement cultural relief projects. On the occasion of this ten year anniversary conference, the Prince Claus Fund felt the need to bring these partners together to develop a better understanding of the context in which CER operates and define the priorities for future cultural emergency response.

The main objective of the day was to identify ways to improve CER’s responsiveness to disaster situations, an objective which required a clear understanding of the exact circumstances in which CER is working. A day centred on general presentations and small scale discussions aimed at sharing experiences from partners, all facing their own challenges and contributing with the benefit of their own unique experiences and insights, facilitating a better understanding of the way CER functions in the ever-changing field of conflict and disaster. Based on the insights generated from these discussions, CER’s partners formulated recommendations on how CER could improve its effectiveness. These included making better use of the knowledge available within its network, achieving the full potential of outreach and adopting a more proactive response to disaster situations.

Results

Discussions on the day resulted in concrete proposals that CER could work on to further develop and improve its activities. A number of reflections on the most important discussion points are included in this report, illustrating potential new paths for CER whilst also providing a tool for similar organisations operating within the field. More detailed recommendations deriving from the discussion are summarised in part V of this report, although what was perhaps the most important result cannot be captured in writing. Bringing together CER partners and enabling them to meet other professionals facing similar obstacles in their desire to preserve cultural heritage yielded a remarkable flow of energy, giving rise to a feeling of connectivity that left attendees strengthened by the conviction that they are not alone in fighting their battle.
Ten years ago today, the Prince Claus Fund initiated a Cultural Emergency Response programme as a concrete response to the destruction and looting of the national museum in Baghdad. Over the next ten years, the Prince Claus Cultural Emergency Response fund proved both its necessity and worth. Having a cultural ambulance that responds immediately to save cultural heritage damaged or threatened by conflict and natural disaster has been instrumental in strengthening people’s resilience and fostering a community’s motivation to rebuild in the immediate aftermath of disaster. Saving cultural heritage for communities and countries has proven to be elementary in the subsequent rehabilitation phase, as both a communal anchor and a stabiliser.

In these ten years, the cultural emergency response programme has become an integral part of the activities of the Prince Claus Fund. Still unique in the world, CER has been able to act quickly to provide cultural emergency relief to sites worldwide.

In addition to reacting to emergency situations, CER has built an impressive network of cultural first responders; organisations and people trained specifically to respond to cultural emergencies that may affect their countries due to natural or man-made disasters.

Today is a special day. It is the first time that organisations from all over the world that have become our most trusted partners in cultural emergency response are gathering and meeting here in Amsterdam. I am looking forward to a day of discussion and exchange, and to building a true network of cultural first aiders across the world.

Thank you for taking the time to be here with us to mark the tenth anniversary of our cultural emergency response work. I look forward to continuing our collaboration to save and protect cultural heritage worldwide.

Thank you.
Ten years ago, in 2003, the Prince Claus Fund considered that the world lacked a programme that could form an international bulwark against the deliberate destruction of heritage. The blow up of the Bamyan Buddhas and the looting of the national museum of Baghdad at this time brought about the beginnings of the Cultural Emergency Response programme.

Starting out as just one project to restore the University Library in Baghdad after the fall of Saddam Hussein, CER has grown to become a significant player in the field of emergency relief, now implementing some 35 projects a year worldwide. Through a timely action, Cultural Emergency Response aims to make a difference: We act in case of conflict and natural disaster but also attach great importance to raising awareness, preventive action and risk preparedness.

In 2005 we dreamt to further develop CER so by 2010 it had become a million euro programme. We grew beyond that aim and continue to grow today. Over the course of ten years CER has worked in 66 countries, implementing over two hundred projects and building a specific network of likeminded organisations.

We see and feel how saving culture contributes to the restoration of identity, bringing hope and strengthening resilience. We are actively involved in securing or restoring the very fibre of people’s existences and we see recipients of CER allocations finding an anchor of stability and sense of continuity between past and present.

Every project we support, has to be actively sustained by a local community. Cultural heritage in our terms is not to be a petrified remain, on the contrary: it should continue to contribute to the creative dynamics of society: binding, inspiring and innovating. And if not by itself, then by the means it provides to those involved in its public maintenance and accessibility.

Restoring the social fabric of a community enables communication in a disrupted context. We often hear how working on a CER project offers people a goal and purpose, making them active players rather than victims in disaster situations. As heritage is the most tangible and visible expression of cultural identity and diversity, its repair promotes cultural diversity and respect for the variety of cultural affiliations.

Line with the vision of the Prince Claus Fund, CER tries to reach out to areas that are in most need of help. This can be because of the severe impact of a disaster, the extreme remoteness of a location, or the result of local politics and policy, above all when this is based on cultural and religious beliefs of one group prevailing over those of another: Amnesty for Culture, so to speak.

It is within this niche that CER is still operating today. It is operating in a changing working field where the number of natural disasters seems to be increasing. It could be the case that natural disasters are just more often reported, but even so, a globally rising and urbanizing population is making it more likely that people will be affected.

Apart from natural disasters, another kind of silent but nonetheless devastating conflict that targets heritage at a very slow pace is becoming ever more widespread. Commercial exploitation and the expansion of livelihoods are threatening sites more and more, squeezing their ability to retain their function.

While stressing and valuing the strictly neutral and non-political position of the fund, its advisors are always aware that by the nature of its relevance, culture is bound to be engaged in national and international discussions. Ideas about what constitutes an emergency may change over time, but providing a quick and fitting response to cultural emergency needs, to rescue cultural heritage at risk or prevent damages to cultural heritage from worsening, these tasks remain the core business of CER, even as it continues to evolve in step with the new challenges in the field.

Certain characteristics still define all of CER’s actions. Chief among these: in every supported project there should be an obvious urgency and a need to act now rather than later to rescue or save cultural heritage, to prevent a site from collapsing or to stop damages from deteriorating into a state beyond repair. CER provides a speedy response, accepting that speediness can also bring risks. Reacting to imminent danger to sites with a limited grant can be compared to an ambulance, transporting somebody to the hospital in order to get full treatment. Keeping in mind the ethos of the Prince Claus Fund that ‘Culture is a Basic need’, CER responds to whatever people indicate they feel is important to save.

Over the years the programme has developed more ways in which it can respond to imminent need, thereby broadening its scope to be able to better fit the needs. In our continuing effort to evaluate our effectiveness, we also pay increasing attention to the notion of emergency preparedness, as preparedness also means: anticipating risk and the appropriate emergency relief action. This includes both mapping of vulnerable targets and knowledge of potential partners in emergency actions.

An emergency may require a preventive action to actually rescue cultural heritage from being destroyed. The evacuation of manuscripts from Timbuktu in Mali sets a clear example of this. If there is an opportunity
when looking at these situations there is always but this does not make a site's need any less acute. cultural relief action could not be implemented earlier, work of the pcf . cross cultural relations as a core condition for the necessity of building and maintaining longstanding. this once more underlines the key elements you need to be able to work in these difficult situations. this once more underlines the importance of building and maintaining longstanding cross cultural relations as a core condition for the work of the pcf. CER also responds to emergency needs caused by long-term neglect or reoccurring damage. heritage sites affected by climatological degradation, at times aggravating an already bad situation, can be the victim of steady degradation resulting in a situation that is just as urgent as one in which the damages are caused by conflict or natural disaster. long-term neglect of a site by a lack of professional capacity, lack of available funding, lack of proper recognition, failing policy or other circumstantial reasons can still cause an immediate need. there can be many reasons why a cultural relief action could not be implemented earlier, but this does not make a site's need any less acute. at times aggravating an already bad situation. this once more underlines the importance of building and maintaining longstanding cross cultural relations as a core condition for the work of the pcf. CER also responds to emergency needs caused by long-term neglect or reoccurring damage. heritage sites affected by climatological degradation, at times aggravating an already bad situation, can be the victim of steady degradation resulting in a situation that is just as urgent as one in which the damages are caused by conflict or natural disaster. long-term neglect of a site by a lack of professional capacity, lack of available funding, lack of proper recognition, failing policy or other circumstantial reasons can still cause an immediate need.

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CER's support extends beyond the financial, as the programme increasingly takes on the role of a broker and initiator and quality trademark for action by others. this has become clearer in recent actions such as the evacuation of manuscripts in Mali, but also in Bhutan, where the restoration of the Trashigang Dzong was subsequently included in the government's next ten year plan for heritage development; in Egypt where a CER action implemented within days made way for other national organisations to follow up after the Scientific Institute in Tahrir Square burned; and Haiti, where after CER's commitment to establish a mobile cultural ambulance has been completed. evaluations provide evidence of the many cases where CER interventions have served as an incentive for local NGOs or governments to step in. a strong point of the programme is thus that its established reputation raises attention for sites that might otherwise disappear from the radar. the CER programme and its specific activities are receiving more attention in the media and CER is often used as an example of best practice of the protection of heritage under pressure.

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of CER, it is a great honour to be here and receive 17 international guests to think with us on CER and its future, providing a glimpse into the unique network that has been built in this niche of emergency relief for culture.

Challenges worldwide seem greater and more complex than ever, but we find ourselves in a situation where politicians question the expenditure of investing in culture and development cooperation, the very field in which we are so active. CER would like to keep responding to emergency situations, as the cultural ambulance it was set out to be.

This day will be centred on an open forum for discussion on the challenges and future of the Cultural Emergency Response Programme. Think with us on how to further improve CER to make it fit the realities of implementing projects, consider what we should anticipate and reflect with us on ways to strengthen this programme.

Talk to us and talk to each other, share the abundance of experience and knowledge present in this room. we are proud to connect.
Introduction

One of my favourite childhood books recounted the story of a young boy much like myself. He lived on a farm with a large family in the middle of nowhere. One day a bulldozer appears on the horizon and soon a parade of heavy equipment operated by cheery men waving at the young boy created a beautiful ribbon of highway right through the dull farm and transformed the landscape into something modern and wonderful. Around that same time, I-65 (an interstate highway), was being built five miles from my house. It made it easy to go everywhere – Chicago, Lake Michigan, Indianapolis, the new shopping mall in Merrillville. And there was now a gas station with a candy shop just a thirty minute bike ride away. The ponds created by the excavation of sand for construction were great for swimming and fishing. My older brothers worked on the highway and paid their college tuition fees and bought new cars with their earnings. The highway was definitely transformative to our lives and our tranquil, farm family culture. I look back now and see how much we gained: development. and how much we lost: our way of life had changed speeds.

It would be hard to say that there was much of a change or direct damage to any monumental or tangible heritage. I had helped denude the landscape of woodlands with my own hands to increase the farming acreage and profits. With this personal experience in mind, I am introspective when being critical of the effects of ‘development’ on heritage.

Each of us carries and transmits memories, which represent the core of our personal heritage. It is impossible to preserve all of the landscapes, buildings, objects and beliefs important to our personal heritage. The fragility of objects, the forces of nature, but more importantly the effects of human activities – many of them associated with progress – are some of the factors that lead to the obliteration of heritage. At the same time, heritage is often the product of wealth or resources (including time) generated by human development.

We witness the continuous destruction of natural spaces, rural landscapes, historical urban centres, villages, monuments and archaeological sites. Yet our quest to protect heritage should not necessarily be perceived as being in contradiction to people’s general aspirations toward modernity and the enhancement of living conditions.

There’s the tension between heritage and human development and of course we have to find out whether this is only a tension, or could it also be mutually beneficial, or it can be conceived in other ways?

Ole Bouman, Board Member of the CER Steering Committee

Heritage itself is neither static nor dwindling – it is created, it dies, it regenerates. Heritage is created every day. Every day heritage is being transformed and reinterpreted. What is tragic is when irreplaceable heritage is destroyed without a trace and without a thought about its meaning or importance as a medium for dialogue, a means of moral reflection or the basis for economic development.

Case study: Slow destruction of Africa’s rock art heritage

Africa is considered to have some of the greatest diversity of rock art of any continent. There are nine UNESCO World Heritage rock art sites in Africa. This recognition has benefited African rock art by raising awareness of this exceptional heritage. Africa’s rock art sites – listed or not – face numerous conservation challenges, such as residential or agricultural encroachment, uncontrolled quarrying and deforestation for charcoal burning, graffiti and vandalism.

One of the challenges TARA has been trying to address in the past eight years is the identification of alternative economic uses of rock art sites to offset these destructive forces, while at the same time increasing their social and cultural values.

The organisation I work for, TARA – the Trust for African Rock Art, is a non-governmental organisation founded in Nairobi, Kenya in 1996, whose mission is the conservation and valorisation of this heritage. Apart from the Sahara Desert, most known rock art sites in Africa are found in or around areas inhabited by communities who, despite the possible emotional or cultural links to the paintings or engravings, are often the source of conservation problems. Physical barriers, while useful in keeping some people and animals away from the art, often violate the harmony between the actual site and the larger landscape. Based on experience, TARA believes that the most effective way of conserving rock art is through involvement of local communities and identifying ways for the heritage to generate material benefits, e.g. through responsible tourism.
Production of Culture versus Protection of Culture: Kisii, Kenya

Soapstone mining and soapstone handicrafts are considered a major economic activity in Kisii, in western Kenya, hundreds of people. Ironically, it is today’s soapstone sculptors and masons who, through lack of awareness of the ancient rock art heritage surrounding them, are destroying the very works of art they are supposed to preserve.

In 2011, TARA learned from a renowned Kenyan sculptor, Elkan Ongesa, about grave threats to Kenya’s cultural heritage in Kisii District where an important rock engraving site had recently been destroyed.

Preservation of the rock art should not be perceived as an obstacle to economic development and so TARA, along with the National Museums of Kenya and Design Power Consultants, a local NGO, have been working to engage players in the soapstone industry to look for alternative solutions to quarrying at the key rock art sites. There is a need to strike a balance between art production and rock art protection. TARA received funding from the Prince Claus Fund for the Conservation Emergency Response Programme to undertake photo documentation of the sites as risk, and to engage opinion leaders who act as ambassadors to encourage the rest of the community members to support the conservation efforts.

In the hills of an area called Samaeta, TARA documented many rocks which had grooves, curved lines and depictions of them. A very large rock, with dozens of lines and grooves, as well as two big eyes and a face at one end of the rock, was especially striking. It appears to be some kind of mythical animal, something for which we have no comparison in East Africa. In Tabaka, near Kisii town, where they are quarrying stone, there are extremely interesting engravings which we managed to document shortly before they disappeared into huge holes and pits, or onto trucks carrying them away for industrial purposes.

Kisii’s soapstone heritage is still being exploited to make paints and other industrial products as well as to make soapstone souvenirs. We couldn’t (and shouldn’t) stand by at this very beginning, there was an interest in protecting the sites as soon as we started documenting and meeting with community groups. When we returned a second time to document the rock art, people who took us around said, ‘We’ve found these other engravings’, and they documented the rock art, people who took us around for a second time to document the sites as risk, and to engage opinion leaders who act as ambassadors to encourage the rest of the community members to support the conservation efforts.

The rhetoric of urgency

Cultural disasters occur with different degrees of perceived urgency and the responses they generate. The swift and shocking nature of human conflicts and natural calamities are understandably considered the most urgent by the general public. Everyone understands when there is a disaster. Whereas the slow, progressive destruction caused by the creation of infrastructure and other human activities does not generate the same kind of reaction.

What made the situation in the Kisii rock art different from other emergency situations is that the destruction was a slow, steady process. It is a real challenge to get people to appreciate the slow processes that are destroying heritage, but the final effect is the same – the heritage vanishes.

An earthquake two years ago damaged some buildings in Sikkam, India – the kind of disaster that attracts a strong and immediate response. Pimpim de Azevedo is a Tibetan architecture conservationist and cofounder of the Tibet Heritage Fund (THF). She pointed out the overenthusiastic government response in Sikkim as a kind of second-order emergency. The government had given the local people funds for the restoration of the buildings and without any kind of training or guidance, these people ended up doing more damage than the earthquake. Is this the best way of conserving heritage?

Perhaps it is a rhetorical thing: How can we create a sense of urgency that is so well formulated and well conveyed that people accept it as a real emergency?

The metaphor of a cultural ambulance for emergency rescue was often used in our discussions. But is it the right metaphor? By its nature, an ambulance should be politically and socially neutral. Can the CER ambulance, or any cultural ambulance, be completely neutral?

Who calls the ambulance? Who can raise the red flag and report cultural emergencies first-hand or second-hand? This type of a watchtower function could be a role that the CER could help to create.

Cristina Vidal Lorenzo, scientific director of La Blanca Project, warned that the construction of roads, for instance, can lead to the wholesale destruction of the community’s assets. This is another kind of disaster. Whereas the slow, progressive destruction caused by the creation of infrastructure and other human activities does not generate the same kind of reaction.

Other heritage tragedies occur with different degrees of perceived urgency and the responses they generate. The swift and shocking nature of human conflicts and natural calamities are understandably considered the most urgent by the general public. Everyone understands when there is a disaster. Whereas the slow, progressive destruction caused by the creation of infrastructure and other human activities does not generate the same kind of reaction.

There is a twist to the story of the heritage of Azerbaijan’s capital city, Baku. Much of the city’s historic architecture is a result of the petroleum wealth which has been the usual by-product of the oil industry since the 1800s. A resurgence of energy exports in the past decade has led to a massive building boom and Aytenek Irmakova, coordinator of the Protection of Historic Cultural and Natural Heritage Public-Private Consultative Committee, reports that scores of distinctive buildings have fallen victim to the wrecking ball.

One of the most popular dramatic television series for over the past decade is CSI: Crime Scene Investigation. While I am not suggesting that CSI: Heritage could be a major hit, I would suggest that heritage professionals consider what it is about the series which makes them so popular. They combine forensic investigations – the examination and testing of evidence – with gritty subject matter. We may not need to get into the gritty subject matter but we must definitely need to consider the human aspect of preserving heritage.

At UNESCO, we believe there is no choice but to make between saving lives and saving cultural heritage. Protecting heritage is inseparable from protecting populations, because heritage enriches people’s identities. Heritage gives people strength and confidence to look to the future – it is a force for social cohesion and recovery.

In cases like these where there is so much wealth involved, how can we make sure that the sense of urgency, even if the process is slow, can still be brought to the table.

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Introduction

Yemen’s rich and unique heritage has captured my imagination ever since, as a young architecture student at Reading University’s Briony Rennie’s 1974 film Arabian Nights (Il fiore delle mille e una notte), filmed against the amazing architecture of the Yemeni cities of San’á, Zabid and Shibam in Hadramut, the country’s capital. Famed for its mud brick skyscrapers, the region benefited in antiquity from the wealth that was brought to it by the incense route. Hadramut’s beautiful architectural heritage is a vestige of a rich urban culture.

The province is home to the city of Shibam, with its iconic mud brick towers, and the Kathiri Sultan’s palace in Sayn, often mentioned as the last sun-dried mud brick building in the world. Yet Yemen, despite its rich cultural heritage, has been rocked in recent years by internal strife, a worsening economic situation, a civil war in the north and demonstrations in 2011 against a corrupt regime, all of which breed more instability and unrest. As a result, the architectural condition has provided refuge to the spread of fundamentalism and unruly groups. It has suited the Yemeni Government to brand these as a branch of Al Qa'idah, an approach the Yemeni authorities have followed USA since 2011 to trigger out continuous drone strikes against Yemeni citizens in Hadramut in particular, to curb what they see as the increasing ‘terror’ threat in the country. Naturally this has further depleted any sense of confidence that was left in the administration or government, and exacerbated the chaos and lack of civil order in day to day life.

I have worked in Yemen since 1981. At the time, the socialist government made it difficult to get a visa; tourism was not encouraged, the country was closed to foreigners, and referred to as the ‘Cuba of the Middle East’. I first visited as an Iraqi who was brought up in London, with and advance the urban culture of Hadramut (Reading 1991). The main aim of this organisation was to work with and advance the urban culture of Hadramut Province. As an Iraq who was brought up in London, my affiliation to Yemen came from having invested years of work there, learning from their original architecture, and from a passion for sustaining and developing the country’s rich urban culture and fabric. The architecture that enriched the landscape of most of the authentic cities and towns in our region was in danger, but this is being pended the political situation and renewed confidence in the tourist sector that has been significantly affected since 2011.

Following more devastating flash flooding that created havoc in Wadi Hadramut (2008) and Wadi Sah in particular, sweeping homes and villages, CER contacted us to report on the damage and on the emergency response needed to save important cultural landmarks. With their partnership and collaboration we restored two of the oldest mosques in eastern Wadi Hadramut, and our Wad’i Yafis (Sufi shrines). We are particularly proud of these projects. They are terribly poor in quality and execution, and the tourist sector that has been significantly affected since 2011.

In 2012, the Italian embassy shut down, as the US had performed the European Union. As many Yemenis were not aware the predominant media narrative was of how dangerous Yemen was. I was scheduled to travel there and for once I thought I was crazy to do so. I was convinced that the whole thing was suicide, until I got to Sana’a airport and realised that there was absolutely nothing violent or alarming happening. I kept expecting to come across Al Qa’ida, men or appearances, but there was absolutely nothing. The Yemenis were in agreement that the terror threats were simply to continue international justifications for the continued use of US forces.

The Antiquities Department in Yemen does not work on restoration in Hadramut. So many of the historic monuments outside our own scope, are in disrepair and suffer neglect. The Social Fund for Development claims to be in deficit, and as a result has not invested in the urban wealth of important sites like Shibam since 2011. A large amount of money reaches the country in foreign or European aid but most of it disappears into the pockets of corrupt bureaucrats, their developers or contractors. Hardly any budgets that are earmarked for projects in the southern provinces arrive intact at all. The revenues from Yemen’s oil, like fisheries, find their way to the political accounts of the country and monitored through their private companies.

I have the advantage of having worked in Yemen for 30 years. When I arrive in Sana’a airport most

Politics in Yemen and CER

There is no escaping the fact that Yemen is a particularly difficult country to work in, and especially since 2012. The country, the poorest in the Arabian Peninsula, has suffered tremendous political unrest and development claims to be in deficit, and as a result has not invested in the urban wealth of important sites like Shibam since 2011. A large amount of money reaches the country in foreign or European aid but most of it disappears into the pockets of corrupt bureaucrats, their developers or contractors. Hardly any budgets that are earmarked for projects in the southern provinces arrive intact at all. The revenues from Yemen’s oil, like fisheries, find their way to the political accounts of the country and monitored through their private companies.
of the porters come up to me and know me by name – even if I don’t even know them. I must look particularly strange to them, as if I have landed from outer space. I definitely do not look like a woman to them, because their women are all dressed in black. If I speak Arabic to people who don’t know me, they are surprised; if I tell them I am an Arab, they tell me that I’m not.

We do not like to talk about politics but unfortunately we have already become, one way or another, politically involved. The difficulty of working in a country like Yemen means that we almost have to stop being intimidated by the larger political reality and focus on the details as they impact the environment, communities and how the political process is in total chaos and seems at a deadlock. Corruption is also difficult to resolve in times of conflict. For the time being, there is no clear way out of the unrest in the country. For us, the only solution is to keep working, to continue our task there. The lack of civil order and exhausting bureaucracy otherwise is discouraging. Indeed the Prince Claus Fund’s dedication to urban culture, and lack of political aims is vitally important for this type of work in unstable contexts.

Training and capacity building are also vital to the sustainability of all of our projects. An overemphasis on conservation ignores investing in the capability of local craftspeople and master builders – indeed we should demystify the notion of experts as essential to the running of projects. Rather local people play an essential role, and in so doing involve the community directly in the development of a project. Each of these projects present an important point of reference to contemplate, learn from and emulate.

CER is a unique programme because of its responsiveness and effectiveness. Reacting to conflict and emergency is rare and vitally important. The Daw’an Foundation’s work in Yemen has been set against a constantly evolving political climate, one that has been worsening over the years that the Foundation has been working with the PCF. We (and Hadramut) are fortunate and privileged to have such sensitive and responsive partners in the PCF without whom it would have been difficult for us to achieve much of what we have.

Conclusion

Today the conflict in Yemen is getting worse and the political situation is lamentable. Drones continue to devastate the urban clusters and the moral of the population – particularly in Hadramut. Yemen has been turned into a pariah of the international community, and this is a great loss for the world’s cultural heritage.

Few organisations continue to be involved in Yemen. There are no foreign missions in the country, the economic situation is terrible, and the political process is in total chaos and seems at a deadlock. Corruption is also difficult to resolve in times of conflict. For the time being, there is no clear way out of the unrest in the country. For us, the only solution is to keep working, to continue our task there. The lack of civil order and exhausting bureaucracy otherwise is discouraging. Indeed the Prince Claus Fund’s dedication to urban culture, and lack of political aims is vitally important for this type of work in unstable contexts.

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Threats to Heritage
The major reasons identified for loss of heritage in Pakistan include the following, each of which is given with an example:

- **A lack of comprehensive information**
  
  There is very little information regarding heritage sites, their location and latest condition. For instance, the site of the 105 km long Basha Dam in the 1990s had no hydraulic system or the value of land. This led to encroachments and the demolition of a famous landmark: the Prince Claus Fund in providing support has been essential to the movement for providing focus to the heritage safeguarding initiatives, at the same time making it available for research and academic studies.

- **Militancy and conflict**
  
  The demolition of a famous landmark: the 19th century Residency in Zarat in 2013, and the defacement of Buddha statues at Makli, are examples according to the present state of preservation is compiled. As changing climate and other factors take their toll, many are disappearing without a trace or being taken over by vested interests for the sake of the construction of the construction material or the value of land.

- **Climate Change Impact and Neglect**
  
  World Heritage Site Makli and other important sites are gravely endangered due to aggressive weather while hundreds of sites languish due to neglect. Without adequate care and application of preventive measures, many sites have been destroyed during floods and earthquakes.

While remedies can be worked out and saner opinion can prevail to counteract dangers due to changing climatic conditions, today the same impact is witnessed within a few years. In Pakistan excessive rains and flooding have occurred successively every year since 2010. This has meant that not only have many heritage sites been damaged, but people have also been forced to take refuge in heritage sites, which are usually built on higher elevations. This practice often results in great damage to the sites. Global warming, clear from the temperature impact and greater velocity of wind are some of the factors that have been seen to intensify and accelerate degradation of ancient structures.

**Case Study World Heritage Site Makli, Thatta**
The effect of climate change is nowhere more apparent than at the 14th century necropolis spanning four centuries, reputed to be the largest Muslim necropolis in the world. It is the subject of the studies undertaken by HF that its structures are undergoing accelerated degradation due to aggressive weather conditions.

Heritage Foundation of Pakistan (HF) in collaboration with government agencies, is working out the many steps which must be implemented urgently, if historic treasures of the country are to be saved from destruction. Among critical steps is the cataloguing of heritage sites in order that information about their present state of preservation is compiled. As changing climate and other factors take their toll, many are disappearing without a trace or being taken over by vested interests for the sake of the construction project.

- **Pressure from Development Projects**
  
  Many historic remains are destroyed in the name of development, such as the chlorite Rock Carvings where 35,000 year old Bronze Age petroglyphs will be submerged in water due to the construction of the dam. The bamboo supports, the use of mud brick for removed materials and developing a comprehensive treatment plan and principles which would ensure the OUV and authenticity of property.

- **Identification of Endangered monuments**
The Mission supported by CER provided the basis for identifying the most endangered monuments. A large number of the structures are in a highly vulnerable state, however, a few are in an imminent danger of collapse. It became clear that although one site could be chosen for the consideration of CER, almost all required immediate assistance in order that they could be saved. Because of the large number of structures at WHS Makli, it became essential to develop a methodology that would provide immediate stabilization at a low cost.

**Emergency Assistance by CER**
In addition to the Damage Assessment Mission, emergency funding provided by CER led to the stabilization and underpinning of a funerary structure of Samma Noble I, which was close to collapse. The emergency measures undertaken on the highly endangered tomb of Samma Noble I helped HF develop tools that could be applicable to most endangered heritage sites in the region.

- **Construction**

to this end, Heritage Foundation, through a collaborative effort with the University of Aachen (funded by the Federal Government of Germany) and Culture Department, in collaboration with the Department of Culture, Government of Sindh.

- **Many UNESCO World Heritage Missions in the past** had pointed out certain immediate actions that remained unfulfilled. Due to the research work by HF for over two decades, including studies conducted on behalf of UNESCO, HF was able to take the opportunity to lay down systematic and sustained actions that were pre-requisites for protecting the Site:

  - **Cataloguing and Numbering of all Heritage Assets**

  The extensive work by HF yielded 75 above ground structures and 402 open platforms, which eventually to become accessible to government and civil society organisations in order to develop heritage management strategies according to the present state of preservation and other factors required for annihilation or destruction. As HF’s teams composed of architects traverse remote and out of the way areas to record core data, it is the status of sites that the heritage region’s heritage can seem to loom larger than ever before due to their highly degraded condition.

  The argument thus becomes even more compelling that cheaply, low cost methodologies must be implemented for Pakistan’s vast heritage reservoir is to be saved.

  - **Map of World Heritage Site**

  The first map of the site prepared on the basis of cataloguing all tangible heritage assets delineates the Core Zone and Buffer Zone. It records all the heritage assets that have been identified. The map has helped in defining the boundaries that will inhibit further encroachments. The methodology adopted followed international principles for the execution of work, including the preparation of detailed documentation, condition surveys and damage assessment, as well as carrying out structural and geotechnical surveys, testing of materials and developing a comprehensive treatment plan and principles which would ensure the OUV and authenticity of property.

  - **Training modules**

  In addition to the Damage Assessment Mission, emergency funding provided by CER led to the stabilization and underpinning of a funerary structure. The process was carefully recorded and has been developed as good practice modules for undertaking similar works in providing assistance to endangered structures. Training modules have been designed for their use as a case study to be used for a 3-month international course developed in collaboration with UNESCO, international experts and the Embassy of the Netherlands, and other short term courses that are needed for providing assistance to endangered structures.

  The CER project also allowed training of local artisans in the techniques of providing temporary bamboo supports, the use of mud brick for removed structures at Makli, Thatta.
Regional Centre at Makli for Lari – Emergency Preventive Intervention Lab (L-EPIL)

As mentioned above, HF has developed methodologies for First Aid based on the experience gained while providing emergency assistance to the near-collapsed Tomb of Emma Noble. Clearly, heritage management of vulnerable sites needs to be taken up in a sustained manner. Accordingly it is essential that an ongoing methodology is now safe from inclement weather. The low cost methods have been devised to buy time for monuments in a poor state of repair until otherwise collapse. The methodology is now safe from inclement weather.

A host of new questions for consideration was generated. The conversation centred around how, exactly, local capacity is defined. Should we conceive of capacity as: the scope of technical knowledge and skills in the community?. The ability of local conservation actors and stakeholders to carry out bricks and mortar projects? the availability of resources – both labour and materials – in the country? Or, can the concept of capacity be captured more broadly? In particular, can capacity be understood as the ‘social embeddedness’ of restoration and conservation skills? Are there societal structures, social values, and local economies in place that protect and encourage the perpetuation of these traditional skills?

Participants also discussed how local capacities could be built globally across countries and regions in concert with one another. What can earthquake-prone areas such as the Kathmandu Valley learn from experiences in Haiti? How can valuable lessons be shared across countries? And, whilst, what role can the CER network play in connecting local actors and facilitating the sharing of knowledge globally?

The Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT; Mission, History and Current Projects)

The Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT) was established in 1991 in response to UNESCO’s international campaign for the safeguarding of the Kathmandu Valley. The Trust is dedicated to the protection of the Kathmandu Valley’s threatened architectural heritage and, over the past two decades, has rescued historic structures including temples, monasteries, rest houses and step wells. The Trust has launched three major urban restoration campaigns including the Kathmandu Darbar Initiative, the Buddhist Kathmandu Initiative, and the Patan Palace Restoration Project – its current project.

The Patan Palace Restoration Project is the Trust’s most ambitious programme to date, preserving eleven monuments and implementing a comprehensive adaptive re-use and management programme for the structures.

The restored Palace spaces will serve as Galleries for Architecture; a community meeting hall, a series of shops, classrooms for visiting school groups, and public gathering spaces. They will be adopted into the existing Patan Museum, Nepal’s most successful independently-run cultural institution, and incorporated into its self-sustaining management structure.

The Trust’s offices in Patan serve as a resource centre and clearing house for information about architecture, architectural history, and urbanism in Nepal. The office – located in a restored Newari house just across the square from the Patan Palace – hosts students in short-term internships in historic preservation, offers its space as a classroom for students in masters-level preservation programmes in Kathmandu, and maintains an open door to any visiting scholars wishing to use its in-house library and archives.

KVPCT Collaborations and Partnerships

The Trust follows a working model that aims to safeguard the built heritage of the Kathmandu Valley through restoration and through the support its projects’ provide to local craftspeople and traditional artistic guilds. By providing long-term employment and training in restoration and conservation methods, KVPT seeks to keep alive the skills and artistry native to the Valley.

To this end, KVPT collaborates with community groups, local and international educational institutions, and the Department of Archaeology of the Government of Nepal. Cooperating across the academic, public, and private spheres, KVPT enables international collaborations to advance the field of conservation practice in Nepal, and stimulates dialogue about the role of architecture in society. The Trust works closely with the Government of Nepal’s Department of Archaeology (DoA), the designated governing body which oversees the country’s conservation projects and manages the country’s cultural heritage sites. Under the Trust’s mandate with the government, the Trust must work together with the DoA to address design challenges and resolve questions of authenticity. The trust works alongside TPAC on the implementation of its own projects, coming to an agreement on design and material decisions, and the future use of the space. This private-public partnership mutually educates both parties in different restoration approaches and ethics, building the technical and cultural capacity of both entities.

KVPT collaborates with non-governmental organisations active in the Kathmandu Valley region. The rapid and unregulated urban development in Kathmandu poses a threat not only to individual monuments, but to the entire comprehensive and urban life in the Kathmandu Valley at large. The Trust envisions itself as part of a broader cultural heritage conservation and urbanism movement. While its day-to-day work is primarily bricks and mortar restoration, the Trust’s activities amount to more than isolated, technical and architectural....

CAPACITY BUILDING, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL SHARING

BRITTIN ALFRED, Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust

Introduction

This paper summarises the presentation from the Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust on its own experience with and understanding of capacity building, and the discussion that followed, on the occasion of the CER conference in Amsterdam, 11th of November 2013.

The Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust, working on the nepal’s department of archaeology (DoA), has launched three major urban restoration campaigns alongside the DoA on the implementation of its own projects, coming to an agreement on design and material decisions, and the future use of the space. The Trust follows a working model that aims to safeguard the built heritage of the Kathmandu Valley through restoration and through the support its projects’ provide to local craftspeople and traditional artistic guilds. By providing long-term employment and training in restoration and conservation methods, KVPT seeks to keep alive the skills and artistry native to the Valley.

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KVPT collaborates with non-governmental organisations active in the Kathmandu Valley region. The rapid and unregulated urban development in Kathmandu poses a threat not only to individual monuments, but to the entire comprehensive and urban life in the Kathmandu Valley at large. The Trust envisions itself as part of a broader cultural heritage conservation and urbanism movement. While its day-to-day work is primarily bricks and mortar restoration, the Trust’s activities amount to more than isolated, technical and architectural...
endeavours. The Trust strives to be a catalyzing agent for the rising cultural heritage movement, and to integrate itself with the traditional arts community and emerging contemporary arts scene in Kathmandu. This is central to the Trust’s mission: to not only revive historic structures themselves, but to revive their relevance in Kathmandu’s urban environment and cultural memory. By restoring the buildings, the Trust hopes to restore the pride in and respect for traditional craft and architecture.

Through its restoration of the Patan Palace Complex, the Trust aims to transform the Complex from a neglected palace of an ousted monarchy into a vibrant cultural centre – a fitting symbolic move for a nation transitioning from monarchy to democracy. As pointed out by one workshop participant, the capacity of the community can be understood in this sense as the ‘social embedded­ness’ of the skills critical to conservation. To what extent is local society capable of hosting, fostering and encouraging traditional craftsmanship skills? Are there societal structures, social values, and local economies in place that protect and encourage the perpetuation of these skills? If these skills are not valued or cannot support a sustainable livelihood, the community’s capacity to carry out conservation work is also reduced. Participants in the discussion from around the region all agreed that this was one of the largest challenges facing capacity building.

To participate in and contribute towards the creation of a larger heritage movement, the Trust works with a number of community organizations and actors, including ICOMOS-Nepal, the Patan Museum, the Patan Rotary Club, Kathmandu Contemporary Arts Centre (KCAC), UNESCO Kathmandu and Supathaya, a start-up educational NGO providing progressive and holistic educational curriculum to youth in Kathmandu.

Collaborations with educational institutions also provide a useful base for KVPT’s operations. Dr. Rohit Ranjitkar, Country Director of the Trust, teaches a course on Architectural Restoration at the Khwopa College of Engineering. The education of young local architects is a direct investment in the capacity of future generations and as such the courses are hosted at the Trust’s offices. They aim to build awareness of KVPT and its activities within the academic community and youth. The coursework directly engages students in the documentation of endangered historic neighbourhood streetscapes, which then contribute to KVPT’s archive of architectural documentation. The Trust also hosts an annual summer exchange programme with conservation students and professionals from the University of Vienna’s School of Applied Arts’ Conservation Programme who visit the site for 4–6 weeks and partake in a discrete conservation project. These interactions and discussions between KVPT’s team and young Western conservation students widen the horizons of people on both sides of the conversation, and the students directly engage with new interpretations of the act of preservation. Students are introduced to and understand new approaches to the preservation process, and as a result, creative and collaborative solutions to preservation challenges are struck. For example, in the case of a copper repoussé statue which had lost most of its gilding, the question of re-gilding arose: how would the damaged sections of the statue be re-gilded while maintaining a unified aesthetic, and integrity of the surface? The University of Vienna and KVPT team discussed the issue at length, and while KVPT craftmen were in favour of complete re-gilding, the University team supported only extensive cleaning and patchwork gold leafing. Through these challenging conversations, both actors were exposed to new preservation approaches, building the capacity of KVPT’s team and of the students for mutual understanding of different approaches.

Over the years, KVPT has established a reliable network of preservation professionals working throughout Asia, who embody what is certainly one of the most important collaborations that the organization engages in. These individuals have been directly involved in ambitious restoration and documentation projects throughout Asia, including: Nepal, Tibet, China, Bhutan, India, Burma and Afghanistan. KVPT draws upon this collaborative experience and relies on the guidance and expertise these individuals provide.

However, this network is largely informal and created through KVPT’s own experience and the relationships it has built through the years working in the field. How can this professional network be broadened and formalised, so that other conservation groups may draw upon the shared expertise? And how can it be connected to CER’s global network? How can a shared and consistent venue for knowledge exchange be created?

In discussing these questions, participants identified the need for the building up of manpower and know-how across regions – the creation of a database of experts, craftsmen, and academics working in the field. The group discussed the possibility of building up a sort of ‘Linkedin’ for craftsmen in different nations across regions that share architectural traditions and face similar political or environmental threats. This idea of a networking site and database was revisited and further explored later in the discussion.

**Defining Local Capacity: Technical, Social and Global Capacity**

All of this urges us to ask the question: how is local capacity to be defined and understood? Local capacity can certainly be easily defined in terms of technical skills and access to new technologies, but it...
Improving the structural design of the South Taleju Temple will enable the structure to withstand earthquakes.

Nepal, 2013 © Thomas Schrom

Degradation of the stone surface is posing a big threat to this remarkable rock art site.

Niger, 2008 © David Coulson, Trust for African Rock Art

Seismic strengthening of the South Taleju Temple, Patan Royal palace complex.

Nepal, 2013 © The Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust
Architect Yasmeen Lari has developed techniques to stabilise structures and prevent collapse, using simple materials such as bamboo. Pakistan, 2013 © Heritage Foundation of Pakistan

The internal wall of the tomb of Samma, Pakistan, has been restored using re-invented traditional techniques. Pakistan, 2013 © Heritage Foundation of Pakistan
Local craftsmen salvaged original elements from the Muqaddam Ahmad bin Omar Basurrah house, which were then incorporated into the new structure. Yemen, 2008 © AR Babuqri, Dawan Architecture Foundation, 2010

Previous page: The city of Shibam, the mud-brick 'Manhattan of the Desert,' faces conservation threats due to severe rain and loss of knowledge on traditional techniques. Yemen, 2008 © Salma Samour DAMLUJI, London 2008

The house of Muqaddam Ahmad bin Omar Basurrah in Masn'at Daw'an suffered severe damage due to more extreme rainfall. Yemen, 2007 © Salma Samour DAMLUJI, London 2008
can also be defined more broadly as the local capacity to motivate and lend momentum to the heritage conservation movement. By offering classes at Khwopa College of Engineering, by engaging with contemporary arts institutions to use the historic buildings as exhibition spaces, by training young school children in the value of their own heritage, a public movement is built that values craftsmanship and traditional knowledge as relevant—and ideally, employable—skills.

The conversation returned again to the idea of social embeddedness and the integration of traditional skills within local economies and social structures. When traditional social systems of public space stewardship, such as Nepal’s guthi system, and architectural patronage, break down over time—an inevitable casualty of modernization—craftsmanship skills break down with them. As the families traditionally responsible for the caretaking of buildings seek economic opportunity in other professions, as artistic guilds dissipate, and in the absence of significant modern patronage, skills and traditional know-how are lost. The relevance of building craftsmanship and artistry, and its viability as a profession, is critical to local capacity. The group agreed that capacity building could be understood in two broad categories: technical capacity building, or the building of knowledge and the skills themselves, and social capacity building, equipping the society with the structures and systems to ensure that such skills can survive the tides of modern change.

A new question was posed in the conversation: if local capacity does not exist, what about global capacity? Can these skills remain alive if there is a global economy surrounding them? In a sense, this happens on a daily basis with exports and crafts tourism. But what about the global craft industry? How do we make these tools and skills exportable in the same way that cheap construction labour by Nepalis is exportable to the Gulf countries? Would there be a market for Nepali carpenters in European countries? This then has huge implications for the authenticity of the skill itself: is authenticity compromised if the artist is removed from his or her local context? While the products are removed from their local context all of the time via exportation, is the removal of the artist from the local situation for the sake of preserving their knowledge ultimately more harmful to the local capacity? Should the preservation of the social systems/economies surrounding the craft?

While largely theoretical questions more tied to economic markets, these were valuable questions to explore.

Tools developed for capacity building
Over the years, KVPT has developed a host of tools for capacity building, some more successful than others. The Trust has also imagined and envisioned a number of tools which it has yet been able to develop, but are valuable to explore and share.

In making decisions between traditional and advanced technologies, the Trust cannot rely heavily on the use of advanced technologies being consistently available. While our partnership with the University of Vienna brings in advanced technologies and equipment, such as laser cleaning machines, this is used for highly specific work and only for the duration of the University’s visit. The majority of the Trust’s restoration work is conducted through traditional techniques, which to date have withstood the test of time, are locally available, and sustainable. In this way, KVPT has not developed its own technological tools for capacity building.

Publications form an important part of the Trust’s historic approach to capacity building. In 2006, the Trust and UNESCO-Kathmandu jointly published a ‘Heritage Homeowners’ Preservation Manual’ for historic homes in the Kathmandu Valley. This was developed within UNESCO’s framework of ‘Integrated Community Development and Cultural Heritage Site Preservation in Asia and the Pacific through Local Effort Programme’. The manuals aimed to build local capacity in heritage preservation by training homeowners to maintain their historic properties using appropriate conservation approaches. This was intended to strengthen the local conservation ethic, and make a comprehensive resource on home maintenance readily available for free to the general public. Written in both English and Nepali, the manual included instructional texts, drawings and diagrams, and photographs demonstrating simple conservation techniques.

As with all manuals and publications, the Trust encountered problems with distribution and effectively circulating the information. It is too often the fate of such manuals to collect dust on shelves, and the Trust has sought new solutions to the dissemination of information over the internet. With internet penetration at 26% of Nepal’s population, and growing explosively, KVPT has focused on the development of its website into a comprehensive resource for the field of conservation. The conservation network active in the region could be further enriched by the dissemination of KVPT’s materials on its website. The Trust is currently digitizing all of its reports and publications, and will eventually publish all for free download on its website—making the Trust’s resources available for use by anyone with access to the internet. The Trust hopes that its website can serve as a comprehensive database for conservation methods and contemporary conservation issues in Nepal.

While it is certainly an achievement that these
materials will soon be available, this achievement can be completely nullified if no one is aware of the availability of these materials. How can the Trust ensure that those seeking such materials and are unaware of Kvpt can find them? How can the Trust publicise this resource and make it known to the people and organisations that could benefit from these materials?

This is more a question of knowledge sharing and dissemination. How can all of us break out of our small circles, and make the knowledge widely available and useful for all? Making use of the networks built up by the Trust, and other organisations, could be the first step. How could such a database and network be built online?

Another possible solution could be the effective organisation and cataloguing of information so that it is easily located and picked up by search engines. How could the Trust use meaningful titles and keywords to catalogue its materials for easy searchability? The Prince Claus Fund could connect Kvpt and other organisations whilst advising on how to make their content search-able on the web.

Tools imagined for capacity building

The Trust has considered the development of a mobile app that would guide users through a walking tour of the historic Patan neighbourhood surrounding the palace and other sites often visited by international tourists. The app could provide a unique history to locals who walk by these monuments each day but may not be aware of their rich histories. This app could be available through free download from the internet, and could function on smart phones, which are increasingly prevalent in Nepal. Through a key-in system, the app user would learn a unique history about the building that stands before them, each told by a local craftsman, resident, academic, or architect. Such an app would not only provide a historic tour accessible to a wider audience, but could also help support the local economy.

Networks

Towards the close of our conversation, the group identified potential tools that could help build international support and awareness for capacity building of all of heritages organisations.

The Global Heritage Fund has considered the development of a crowd-sourced network of conservation professionals and craftsmen working across regions. Craftsmen and professionals could join, with the facilitation of NGOs such as Kvpt, and create user profiles. The network could host shared topics of discussion and lead to networking opportunities. Such a network could be organised around division of labour: experts could be categorised with respect to craft material, and technique.

This would allow for craftsmen working in the same materials to collaborate cross-regionally. Each database user could log on and search across these fields to easily find the best individual for their query, and be able to reach out to them, as well as participate in discussion forums. This accessible online dialogue would allow for problems and concerns to be shared, and for solutions to be found.

The Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust found its participation in the CEH workshop invaluable and would like to thank the Cultural Emergency Response Network for the hosting of this event which allowed for the opportunity for international collaboration and conversation on these critical questions.

First Aid to Cultural Heritage – origins and significance

The concept of First Aid is generally associated with the medical domain, where it is certainly well known and even better understood. A basic principle, the definition of First Aid relates in fact to the various initial measures used to take care of an injured person and comprises the provision of initial care that may be carried out by non-professionals, generally trained ones, and that, in many cases, have proven to be essential to saving human lives.

What most of people do not know is that a similar approach has been recently adopted for cultural heritage and teams of 'Cultural First Aiders' have been trained and are starting to be in action in many countries around the world. To better understand the scope of work for these 'different' First Aiders, and the perspective that are behind the needs for such professionals, it may be useful to trace the history of the concept of 'First Aid', its origins and specific humanitarian significance.

The earliest evidence of First Aid actions can be dated back to the later years of the 7th century CE when the Knights Hospitaller, or the Order of St John, founded in Jerusalem after the First Crusade. The Order of St John was in fact known to be providing help to pilgrims and knights in need. Afterwards the concept became almost forgotten during the Middle Ages and it took until 1859 and the battle of Solferina in modern-day Italy, when the example of Henry Dunant providing non-professional help to the soldiers on both sides of the battle led eventually to the creation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. This was particularly revolutionary thanks to its reliance on volunteers, who would provide an emergency response in this kind of situation.

The concept of First Aid, well described in the war report written by Dunant, is in fact deeply connected to providing prompt and impartial assistance to the injured or wounded, whatever their physical and psychological level. It is an ideal that strives to give dignity to the wounded or war affected people with a human-to-human approach. This concept is at the core of the foundation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), deeply rooted in its 7 principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and continuity.

In terms of the move towards legislating for armed conflict, the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict was the first international treaty that provided legal protection to cultural heritage in times of war. In a sense, it was the first to acknowledge the
concept of ‘Culture as a basic need’ which lies at the basis of the Prince Claus Fund’s Cultural Emergency Response programme. It ranks damages or destructions of cultural properties as crimes, on the same level as armed conflicts which may cause a damage to a group of individuals or even, especially when they refer to World Heritage Sites, to the entirety of humanity.

UNESCO, ICRC, ICCROM and many other international institutions and organisations have devoted themselves to strengthening this legal instrument by encouraging the involvement of additional and impartial entities ready to defend the Convention and its protocols, whilst providing more tools and support for its formal implementation among all stakeholders.

Nevertheless, recent conflicts have been shown to include an increasing number of cultural properties and sites as major targets in war strategies, as belligerent parties consider their destruction an effective way to completely wipe out the memories and roots of their opposition. Culture and cultural heritage is what one generation has inherited from its ancestors and what it transmits to future descendants. Cultural heritage is what remains over time, a message delivered and to be delivered. It is the idea that a portion of mankind can survive longer than the time given to a single person or group of people. That’s why destroying a cultural site is very close to eradicating completely the existence of a community or of an ethnic group: it is the most effective way to reduce to the minimum the risk that these people may raise again, making them hopeless and culturally helpless.

Many episodes can be quoted in this regard, starting with the, from the deliberate destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas, the pillaging of the National Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo and the vandalism perpetrated on many shrines in Somalia, to name but a few. Recent conflicts in Libya, Mali, Syria, Egypt, as well as Lebanon, have shown with dramatic evidence to all and to all of us who are aware of the vulnerability of cultural objects and sites, that awareness that some of them may carry along values that the First Aiders themselves would find difficult to acknowledge.

There is little need to explain why we should look for Cultural First Aiders in many countries now, especially if we look at the dramatic situation of the Egypt Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo or to those of Aleppo’s Umayyad Mosque. However, it should be even more obvious that every museum, be it the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo or to those of Malawi, the Museum of the Faculty of Archaeology – Cairo University – or, and more recently, the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo are only some of the major examples to have found their origins and tried to make their contributions in sharing the knowledge of First Aid to Cultural Heritage.

Building First Aid Capabilities – the Example of Egypt

Along the Nile valley in Egypt, civilisation has existed for more than 5000 years and these different civilisations, beginning in pre-historic times and then moving through Pharaonic, Greek, Roman, Coptic and Islamic until the present have left their signs and heritage. Built out of stones, rocks, earth, wood and many other materials, these monuments and sites transfer the cultural message of past civilisations, witness the existence of different communities and bear the traces of the people that inhabited them. Egyptian heritage has stood the test of time, dealing with the many hazards to passing its history from one generation to another. During that time the vulnerability of cultural objects and sites has been continuously increasing until arriving at the present, highly precarious conditions. Under the circumstances caused by the volatile security situation and the drastic social and economic conditions following the January 25th Revolution, the protection of heritage has dramatically receded as a priority. In the absence of vigilant supervision, conditions have in fact further deteriorated. In the last three years, many tombs have been violated and historical sites looted. In February 2011, 76 artefacts were stolen from the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir Square, and, in the following months, several other institutions were badly vandalised: the Institut d’Egypte, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, the Egyptian Museum in Tell el-Amarna... the list is long. In the absence of vigilant supervision, conditions have in fact further deteriorated. In the last three years, many tombs have been violated and historical sites looted. It is not by chance that the Ministry of Antiquities has been continuously increasing until arriving at the present, highly precarious conditions. 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The Culture as a Basic Need concept provides tools and methodologies, which could be used by the trainees under difficult circumstances and limited resources. Due to the partnership with the Prince Claus Fund and the inclusion of First Aiders from the local communities, it was also possible to move forward, allowing the various participants, coming from different continents, to apply for small grants. This opportunity has given them the possibility to apply, in their countries of origin, what was acquired during the course.

It is within this framework that the training courses of ‘Egyptian Heritage Rescue Team’ and ‘Lebanese for First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Conflict Times’ organized by ICCROM in Rome. Upon his return, having become a trainer himself, he rallied the support of other alarmed citizens and together they founded the Egyptian Foundation for Rescue Heritage (EFRH).

Their first concern was to set up a course to reflect the knowledge and modules of the ICCROM course and to tailor this knowledge to the Egyptian context in order to train the first ‘Egyptian Heritage Rescue Team’ (EHRT) in Cairo. With the technical support of ICCROM and financial support of Prince Claus Fund and the curriculum of The Egyptian Heritage Rescue Programme (EHRP) was devised and implemented. In its early phase, the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities supported the initiative by recommending to encourage participation of other governmental and non governmental organizations to take the course while providing venues for the training.

The Egyptian Heritage Rescue Programme is a pioneer project aiming at developing skills related to emergency situations; setting up priorities plans and promoting the re-use of buildings to ensure cultural heritage sustainability.

Since the material cultural heritage of Egypt is to be found in archaeological sites as well as in museums, distinctive management programmes and separate sets of rescue criteria had to be developed for each specific case. The Egyptian Heritage Rescue Programme fully identified the differences in terms of personnel, needs and priorities for cultural first aiders in museums. It also worked to deliver customized training that fits the needs of each. This is achieved by increasing the First Aid knowledge in different areas in Egypt, through First Aid Training.

Phase One: from June 2012 to March 2014

The organization of a three week long intensive course on First Aid to cultural heritage in emergency times, in cooperation with the Ministry of Antiquities (MoA) with the technical support of ICCROM and the financial support of Prince Claus Fund, enabled 29 Egyptians to be qualified as First Aiders to Cultural Heritage and to be the first members of the Egyptian Heritage Rescue Team (EHRT). During this course a unique case of collaboration took place between the participants of the ICCROM course (FACH 2011) and their future colleagues: those participants decided to provide their assistance and help to the Egyptian future team by teaching free of charge.

After the success of this course at the National level, the future plan became to train, whenever possible, a team composed of three members – an archaeologist, a conservator and an architect/engineer – for each city. For the protection of movable heritage, it was envisaged to train at least two curators from every museum. The plan for protecting heritage in Egypt was on the right path, nevertheless, to be continued and supported with an urgent and vital task to establish a team of Egyptian trainers on Disaster Risks Management and First Aid to Cultural Heritage.

The Training of Cultural First Aiders: a Case Study on Egypt

To cope with a demanding need for trained personnel devoted to saving and rescuing cultural properties during dramatic events such as those outlined above, in 2010 ICCROM committed itself in partnership with UNESCO, the Prince Claus Fund, Blue Shield, the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage Activities and other institutions, to establish the first course on ‘First Aid to Cultural Properties in Crisis’. The course was aimed at providing people, active in the cultural heritage field and coming from many war-affected areas, with the necessary tools, skills and knowledge to ensure and possibly save the cultural assets of their countries.

The course was without a doubt revolutionary as it was the first to provide a ‘cultural consistency’ to the humanitarian approach by systematically including the, for many, much neglected cultural aspects of a conflict. The course was aimed at providing people, active in the cultural heritage field and coming from many war-affected areas, with the necessary tools, skills and knowledge to ensure and possibly save the cultural assets of their countries.

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To reach this goal, from January 6th to January 28th 2014, eleven of the previous trainees received intensive tutoring courses, allowing them to train future participants to the programme with the technical support of ICCROM and the financial support of Prince Claus Fund. That this further training occurred proved to be extremely fortuitous for the state of Egyptian heritage, when on Friday 24 January, the attack hit the Police Security Directorate on Port Said Street, Cairo.

On that day, a vehicle filled with explosives blew up, causing extensive damages to the building occupied by the Egyptian Army and the National Library and Archives situated on the other side of the road, just a few metres away. A total of 1471 objects were on display of which 171 were completely destroyed or badly damaged. The team in training were at the time nearing the end of their course, due to complete a simulation of a major disaster within the following few days, that would test their abilities to act as a team and operate effectively in a rehearsed operation. It is fortunate for the city of Cairo and for Egyptian heritage in general that the team were ready to be thrown at the deep end, applying what they had learnt in a real-life situation of critical importance.

As soon as it was declared safe to operate in, the newly formed expertise of the group was put to the test in the difficult conditions of the badly damaged museum, much to the shock of local politicians. Engaged in theoretical classes, the imminent arrival of a fully-trained team of First Aiders showed what they were capable of and became a proactive actor in saving the rich cultural heritage of this country.

At the crossroads of the greatest civilisations of the Mediterranean Sea, cradle of the Phoenician culture, Lebanon is a small country with a high density of cultural sites (6 UNESCO Heritage Sites in only 10,452 km²). The cultural diversity of this country bears witness to the long history of Lebanon as well as to the often dramatic vicissitudes of its past. A land of many religions that for ages cohabited peacefully, Lebanon suffered from 1975 until 1990 the dreadful consequences of a civil war, which pitted the various religious groups within society against one another.

Being a unique land for its cultural heritage (from understanding the priorities of interventions. There were also workshops on how to carry out inventorying and cataloguing, emergency restoration or cleaning measures, how to secure and prop damaged buildings or to safely move objects from unsafe building activities, with the objectives of training future trainers who would then themselves be able to spread their knowledge and skills to others, both at the professional and local levels. The idea of targeting the course at local professionals was mainly conceived in order to be more effective in the short term (at least a team of Cultural First Aiders could be in place at the end of the training course) while foreseeing to have prepared trainers for additional courses that may take place in the medium and long term.

The targeted professionals were chosen not only among the cultural heritage experts, but also among professionals coming from ‘usual’ areas of expertise: the opportunity to participate was in fact given to all the categories that are actually physically involved in emergency response activities such as the Lebanese Army, the Lebanese Red Cross and NGOs volunteers. It was considered that their background, adequately shared, could create benefits in terms of the team and that it would be easier to start action even in the short term. Due to the extensive collaboration of the Lebanese NGO Blandi, the technical support of ICCROM and the funds allocated by the Prince Claus Fund, fifteen people, representing the various faiths of Lebanon and experts in different disciplines, committed themselves to an intensive training course of fifteen days (the maximum time allowed by their organisations to be absent from work).

International teachers and First Aiders from the ICCROM and the Egyptian `EHSF’ were engaged in theoretical classes, practical exercises, role playing and debates. The areas covered were: disaster preparedness, standard operating procedures in action and transmit their important message to others, reaching up to the municipal level and local communities. Commited citizens should know that they can make a difference in saving their cultural values and prolonging the life of their monuments, relics, cultural objects and books. There is still need for confrontation and a better understanding that religious heritage is cultural heritage. The Lebanese for Lebanon team is not yet done. It will be hopefully able to proceed with this difficult path and eventually succeed in the protection of the rich cultural heritage of this country.

Conclusion

The advanced experience in Egypt and the first steps moved by the Lebanese First Aiders are only some examples of the potential need for similar trained groups all around the world. Culture is vital to people and cultural heritage should therefore be listed among the basic needs for communities.

Neglecting cultural heritage definitely leads to diminishing the dignity of the communities who feel represented by it and find their roots therein. Capacity building and the sharing of expertise is certainly one of the key solutions for spreading useful information, methods and skills to the affected areas: it helps creating more secure and conflict-prone countries and in disaster-prone areas.

Knowledge is the only treasure you can give even without a proper origin, the proverb well represents the intentions and the commitments of the First Aiders to cultural heritage so far trained through ICCROM courses; ready to help their colleagues wherever they are. ‘Culture is a basic need’ for us all and building First Aid capacities should be our commitment aiming to protect the incredible cultural value of the world we live in.
5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The strength of CER lies not only in its unique mission but also in its far-reaching and varied network of partners worldwide. This fact was made especially clear in the conference Culture Is a Basic Need: Revisited which gave rise to this volume of reflections. From the contributions as presented here and the ongoing discussion during the day, certain conclusions and recommendation can be drawn which could help CER to further strengthen its activities.

FROM HERITAGE UNDER PRESSURE OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

BY TERRY LITTLE, Chief of Operations at TARA Trust for African Rock Art, Kenya

CONCLUSIONS

• The preservation of rock art and other cultural heritage sites should not be perceived as an obstacle to economic development but as an asset.

• Building physical barriers around the edges of cultural heritage, although tempting as a means of keeping people and their livestock away from delicate sites, is not always a good idea. It separates the heritage site from its context, which in the case of landscape specific rock art sites can serve to deprive and damage its meaning.

• There are two rates at which cultural heritage resources can disappear and both represent their own challenges and obstacles to overcome. Emergency intervention in the wake of sudden disasters certainly requires an immediate response from a cultural ambulance, a process of reaching out which is often aided by the publicity associated with the event. However, slow paced degradation of heritage sites can also bring them to the edge of disaster without any accompanying fanfare.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• Heritage professionals must enter into useful discourse with those who champion the aims of economic development. An open approach on how heritage or culture can also be utilised should be explored to make development and also cultural preservation sustainable. The heritage field should adopt a more holistic approach towards preservation.

• When a threat to a site comes from community development or exploitation either by locals or internationals, the solution to save a site must also start with the surrounding community. Raising awareness on the cultural treasures in their midst is often the most effective tool to save a site. Therefore awareness raising should also be included in CER policy as a tool that helps safeguard threatened heritage.

• Cultural relief often tends to overlook sites that are less known and therefore often face challenges bigger than their more famous counterparts. The situation of such un-championed sites can be every bit as grave as the others. The Cultural Emergency Response programme already developed a special eye for these cases but could in the future focus even more on this type of heritage sites as it would also comply with its niche function.
CONCLUSIONS

As an actor working in conflict areas, it is imperative to have input from local sources that have a clear idea of the local security situation.

A trustworthy local partner is an absolute necessity not only for their view on local security situations, but also as a means of avoiding the underhand practices that see a great deal of international aid budgets disappear into pockets of the corrupt.

Dr. Damluji advises that the key to direct impact of activities is to, where possible, remain above politics, and to be well organised at all times. CER’s independent character is something that should be preserved at all times since it enables the programme to get involved in extremely difficult situations without becoming part of politics and the international aid economy that more than often also worsens tensions.

In the context of acknowledging community engagement and the preference for dealing with local people there is a crucial need to demystify the notion of experts, especially the perception that they are essential to the running of projects. Local people should be placed at the heart of the work being carried out, ensuring that they have a stake in its development, protection and completion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In acting in conflict struck regions, Dr Damluji learned that aid agencies should never accept at face value the portrayal of that area in the international media. The politcised aims of media do not necessarily reflect (or even come close to) the realities on the ground as in current conflict media has become one of the warfare tools.

Where conflict thrives more than often corruption flourishes and we are therefore reminded that conflict and corruption in government often go hand in hand. Although international aid agencies tend to provide aid through bi-lateral relations, this especially in conflict situations, is often not the most effective way to reach out to the communities that suffer from an ongoing conflict.

When working in a country that presents an extremely difficult working environment we almost have to stop being intimidated by the larger political reality and focus on the details as they impact the environment.

In conflict situations external interference, be it international aid, armed forces or others, tend to create a misbalance potentially evoking fear and suspicion which further complicated any cultural relief intervention.

CONCLUSIONS

Yasmeen Lari’s contribution stresses the need to be aware of a particular emerging threat in the field of cultural heritage conservation: climate change. This is of particular concern in those countries, like Pakistan, that are predicted to be particularly ravaged by its effects. Indeed the effects on the country are already being strongly felt. Lari notes that ‘where once it took a few decades for degradation to be visible, due to changing climatic conditions, today the same impact is witnessed within a few years.’

In a context where a large number of varied heritage sites must be protected with very limited resources, the Heritage Foundation advocates for a methodology that places at its centre locally available, cheap materials that can be quickly used to stabilise the situation and then later removed. In Pakistan, the organisation has had a great deal of success with using bamboo and mud brick constructions, which are easily removed when more complete work becomes possible. These act as immediate preventative measures to delay or even stop the imminent collapse of heritage. They benefit from being plentifully and cheaply available and not requiring the teaching of complicated techniques for their use.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a need to acknowledge climate change as a cause of immediate cultural needs since we can no longer speak of natural degradation in some cases. Therefore, a distinction must be made between progressive degradation caused by natural causes and more aggressive and immediate degradation which would qualify as an emergency situation.

An inventory is a prerequisite for developing meaningful heritage management plans. It is therefore also an invaluable tool in prioritising and planning in the provision of cultural emergency response.

When training professionals in Cultural Emergency Response, this preferably would take place on-site. A significantly sized heritage site already facing challenges makes an excellent place to start. Trainees can be exposed to the realities of the work that will be expected of them and can also benefit from the opportunity to make a real difference in the time that they are in training. Furthermore the site itself would benefit from gradual restoration.

The framework of fast, inexpensive stabilising structure and techniques adopted by the Heritage Foundation is one that should be multiplied. Although these measures do not contribute to restoration they will stop further degradation. Especially at big sites that may require large amounts of funding CER could consider develop similar techniques for other sites.

FROM OPERATING IN COMPLEX EMERGENCIES AND ONGOING CONFLICT
BY SALMA SAMAR DAMLUJI, co-Bounder of the Daw’an Mud Brick Architecture Foundation, Yemen

FROM THREATS TO HERITAGE SITES IN LOW-INCOME COUNTRIES: THE APPLICATION OF LOW-COST EMERGENCY PREVENTATIVE INTERVENTIONS
BY YASMEEN LARI, CEO of the Heritage Foundation of Pakistan
CONCLUSIONS

• When speaking about local capacity it must be considered there are different definitions of what local capacity means. Perhaps it can be best summarised or defined as the social embedded-ness of restoration and conservation skills. The societal structures to support this knowledge is equally important as the skills themselves.

• One of the main obstacles that organisations with a regional focus such as the Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust face is how to widely distribute their publications and advice, not only in the target community but also to a broader audience. It is suggested the Prince Claus Fund and other organisations with a global network could serve as a means of publicising resources that other organisations make available on their own websites. This role of promoting other organisations would ensure that resources developed for their publications and advice, not only in the target community but also to a broader audience. It is suggested the Prince Claus Fund and other organisations with a global network could serve as a means of publicising resources that other organisations make available on their own websites. This role of promoting other organisations would ensure that resources developed for their own affiliations at home in the treatment of heritage resources. In the area of cultural relief knowledge, there are also upsides to this happening, like recognition, freedom of movements and finances, cautiousness and securing the ability to stay neutral are key.

• Spread amongst different organisation in the field there is a great wealth of contacts and networks. It seems that organisations like the KVPT and the Prince Claus Fund invest a lot of time in building networks and establishing contacts. Besides pulling together financial resources sharing other resources in a more structural way does not happen yet.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• A useful tool would be a digital service, in the vein of ‘Linkedin’, that could connect artisans and cultural heritage professionals in a global online platform. Concentrating in particular on individuals in the heritage field, it would be especially useful if such a web service could connect professionals operating in nations that share elements of their architectural or archaeological histories, helping to facilitate the sharing of knowledge of best practice.

• Emergency drills could be carried out across the wider networks of organisations with a global reach. This would serve to establish both the regional partners who are best placed to act as facilitators in the event of a disaster and in turn their own, potentially difficult to contact, local partners who are the best placed to act either as local partners for CER or workers/artisans for a project. In this way, links could be made ahead of any potential disaster, establishing the chain of communication in preparation.

FROM BUILDING FIRST AID CAPACITIES TO CULTURAL HERITAGE. AN URGENT NEED

ANNA DAL MASO, Italian Development Cooperation Office
Lebanon & Abdelhamid Salah, Egyptian Heritage Rescue Foundation

CONCLUSIONS

• It is of paramount importance that those trained to be first responders at times when a Cultural Emergency Response is required are strictly neutral in their treatment of heritage resources. In the frequently sectarian human landscape of for example Lebanon and Egypt this principle becomes particularly important, as those who respond must leave their own affiliations at home in the treatment of cultural heritage.

• A main achievement by the Egyptian First Aid team, serving as a best practice, is the creation of a nation-wide network of first responders to have small clusters of three respondents placed locally in each area, made up of an archaeologist, conservator and architect/engineer. In this way, each town has a small nuclear first response team that can achieve the initial work necessary and help to coordinate other efforts in the area.

• In the area of Cultural Relief is must be emphasized that it is not necessary for someone to be an expert in order to be trained as an effective emergency first aider. Furthermore, community engagement is in fact deepened by the galvanisation of local people in the protection of their own heritage. Combined knowledge of different institutions, team members bridge institutional differences.

• Having trained first aid capacity in place helps to limit and mitigate damages in disaster situations but also is more cost effective then a response.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• After the establishment of First Aid teams it is of uppermost importance for them to keep functioning as independent units. Successful initiatives like these become attractive for both government authorities as other stakeholders wishing to incorporate the initiative. Although there are also upsides to this happening, like recognition, freedom of movements and finances, cautiousness and securing the ability to stay neutral are key.

• The proven success of the trained teams already in place asks for a further duplication of this initiative. Ideally teams all over the world would be organised with a similar pay-it-forward set up as the Egyptian team, creating an oil stain of cultural relief knowledge.

• If possible it would be extremely helpful to instigate fire ‘drill practices’. These would not only provide onsite training of the teams but would also build team spirit, bridge gaps between responsive units, contribute to the development of preparedness and salvation plans.

FROM CAPACITY BUILDING, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL SHARING

BY BRITTIN ALFRED, Programme Manager
at the Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust, Nepal

CONCLUSIONS

• When speaking about local capacity it must be considered there are different definitions of what local capacity means. Perhaps it can be best summarised or defined as the social embedded-ness of restoration and conservation skills. The societal structures to support this knowledge is equally important as the skills themselves.

• One of the main obstacles that organisations with a regional focus such as the Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust face is how to widely distribute their publications and advice, not only in the target community but also to a broader audience. It is suggested the Prince Claus Fund and other organisations with a global network could serve as a means of publicising resources that other organisations make available on their own websites. This role of promoting other organisations would ensure that resources developed for their own affiliations at home in the treatment of heritage resources. In the area of cultural relief knowledge, there are also upsides to this happening, like recognition, freedom of movements and finances, cautiousness and securing the ability to stay neutral are key.

• Spread amongst different organisation in the field there is a great wealth of contacts and networks. It seems that organisations like the KVPT and the Prince Claus Fund invest a lot of time in building networks and establishing contacts. Besides pulling together financial resources sharing other resources in a more structural way does not happen yet.
Emergency conservation of the frescos, both the plaster as well as the provision of the rehabilitation of the architectural structure and the incoming rainwater. Timely support from the CE/R programme allowed donors also decided to support the evacuation of the manuscripts, the evacuation of Timbuktu’s manuscripts. Following the fund’s initial of his own family’s manuscript collection and was successful in setting up the Ahmed Baba Institute (IAHIB) which was partially burned by Abdelkader Haidara is the founder and executive president of the monastery complex as well as plans for the rehabilitation of the palace after the war in the Tskhinvali region, in which the episcopal palace was directly bombed and partially destroyed in the resulting fire. The CER project was implemented in 2009 and aimed at the consolidation of the architectural structure and the erection of temporary roofing to prevent further water damage to the palace. These emergency measures ensured the stabilisation of the structure of the building and prevented the further deterioration of the monument; the project prepared the ground for further rehabilitation of the palace itself and the whole monastery. It was the first international project implemented in Timbuktu. The operation, which started with initial support of the Prince Claus Fund on 12 October 2012, was successful thanks to the trust between all parties involved: the Malian people, the Malian authorities, project partner SAHMAO-DGI and international partners including the Prince Claus Fund, Fund Dignity, LOEIZ Foundation and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

Ms. Pimpim de Azevedo, India
Co-director of the Tibet Heritage Fund (THF). After the sudden passing of Andrea Alexander, who represented the THF’s soul, Pimpim is continuing his brave work. She has been working with THF since its foundation in 1996, when it was born out of a desire to document the disappearing heritage of Lhasa. THF is an international non-profit organisation committed to the preservation of architectural heritage in general and Tibetan heritage in particular; as well as to the improvement of the lives of people living in traditional and historic settlements through sustainable development. Current urgent projects are relief work after the 2015 earthquake and the recent earthquake and fire that occurred in nearby monasteries. Recent projects include a new conservation project in Sikim, the recovery of a 10th century Buddhist stone carving, the design and construction of the Central Asian Museum in Ladakh, the restoration of a 14th-century monastery in Amdo, and the restoration of a 13th-century temple in Ladakh. Many projects are featured in media reports, including a number of recent TV programmes, articles and radio shows. THF is implementing a CER action by providing emergency measures to safeguard three earthquake affected Buddhist buildings. In addition, the Tibet Heritage Fund will start a programme on capacity building and awareness raising in Sikim, India and train local craftsmen in conservation techniques on site. The THF through the implementation of these three emergency interventions, raises awareness on the importance of restoration and the possible conservation methods to be used across the region. It seems that the time is right for such an action as there is a noticeable shift in attitude in the region towards heritage preservation. The younger generation in Sikim feels the urge to reinvent their Buddhist and monastic tradition in order to regain and preserve their cultural identity amidst the severe poverty and psychical degradation of their surroundings.

Mr. Abdel Hamid Salah El-Shairief, Egypt
After his initial work with the University of the Western Cape in 2012, the Prince Claus Fund decided to support the evacuation of Timbuktu’s manuscripts. Following the Fund’s initial support, other international organisations, governments and private donors also decided to support the evacuation of the manuscripts, which are highly valued for the knowledge that they represent. The precious documents show scholarly writing from a period of free thinking as far back as the 10th century, when Timbuktu was an African centre of learning and trade. Malians are proud of these physical remnants of science and culture which play an important role in their society today. For months, hundreds of Malians under the guidance of Abdelkader Haidara, have collaborated and taken great risks to evacuate centuries-old manuscripts from Timbuktu. The operation, which started with initial support of the Prince Claus Fund on 12 October 2012, was successful thanks to the trust between all parties involved: the Malian people, the Malian authorities, project partner SAHMAO-DGI and international partners including the Prince Claus Fund, Fund Dignity, LOEIZ Foundation and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

Ms. Hasti Tarekat, Indonesia
Hasti Tarekat (Samara, 1966) is an urban planner specialist in conservation management. In 2005 she was elected as a member of the board of directors of the Indonesian Heritage Trust as representative of the trust in Europe. In the Netherlands, she is an advisor for the Netherlands Heritage Agency, guest teacher in the Master’s Programme on culture and heritage conservation, and has done research on culture and politics, identity and development. Before Haiti and South Sudan, she also worked in Bosnia and Herzegovina where she was managing a project on culture and reconciliation in and South and Southeast Asia.

Ms. Cristina Vital Lorenzo, Spain/Guatemala
Cristina Vital Lorenzo is a professor of art history at the University of Valencia, Spain. She has participated in many archaeological and development projects in Europe and Central America and published largely in the fields of archaeology, cooperation and cultural heritage. She is the scientific director of the La Blanca project for which, together with Gaspar Muñoz Cosme, she received the 2013 Award for Best Practices in Site Preservation by the Archéological Institute of America. Since 2004 the La Blanca project has been conducting archaeological research, restoration and enhancement of the archaeological sites located in the broad valley formed by the Mopan and Salsipuedes river basins, in the Department of Peten (Guatemala). This project has implemented a holistic approach combining scientific research and conservation on cultural heritage with economic developments and educational opportunities for local communities. Two archaeological sites of this valley have been investigated in depth: La Blanca and Chichén Itza. The former represents an outstanding architecture of high quality and spectacular proportions, and the main Palace of Chichén Itza has murals with hieroglyphic inscriptions and figurative scenes which depict the life and customs of the Maya peoples and their gods. During the last decade, the La Blanca project has made great efforts to avoid looting in both sites, to enhance the cultural heritage of this archaeological area and to contribute to public understanding and appreciation of the past through heritage education programmes and heritage tourism initiatives as part of an economic development based on the principles of sustainable resource use. An interpretative centre at La Blanca with safety information about this important site and the project’s conservation efforts The Prince Claus Fund supported the reconstruction of the thatched roofs that covered and protected the Mays palace of La Blanca Acropolis, destroyed by a tropical storm in 2008, and two other projects: the conservation of Chichén murals, damaged by illegal activities carried out by looters two years ago. The La Blanca and Chichén Itza projects have had great success and have always paid close attention to the preservation of important cultural heritage sites, the amelioration of the financial position of disadvantaged indigenous populations, and the development of sustainable tourism.

Anna dal Maso, Lebanon
Anna dal Maso is a consultant in the Italian Co-operation Office for Lebanon and Syria and to the Lebanese Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR). With a PhD in Conservation Studies, starting from 2005 she dedicated herself to development projects in the Global Summit in the field of urban planning. She also received a UNESCO Public Service Award as project manager for the refurbishing of a historical bridge in Indonesia. Signature projects are CER programmes in West Sumatra and Yogyakarta, Indonesia, disaster management and climate change, emergency and preservation of buildings and revival of small scale industry, managing bilateral cooperation between Indonesia and the Netherlands in the field of heritage education (curriculum and methods of teaching), public/private partnership (introduction of a building restoration”-status tenetur) model, smartphone application of heritage trails (the first one in Derpazari, Bali, launched in November 2013) and managing urban heritage strategies international trainings (funded primarily trainings for NGO’s government officers and universities).
with limited resources and an insufficiently trained workforce for thousands of heritage sites, confronted with accelerated degradation, most vulnerable due to climate change impact. as a reservoir of and illiteracy; with the added menace of militancy, it is also among the many low income nations it is confronted with challenges of poverty country consisting of 796,095 sq km and 200,000,000. as in the case of for the promotion of culture and peace and islamic development she has been awarded both the sitara­i­imtiaz (the star of distinction) and self­reliance among local communities. and women's traditional craft skills, in order to foster pride, strength and a profound belief in the value of heritage and tradition, local knowledge and leverage its conservation. as part of its conservation and valorisation aim to define financial, cultural and social values of this heritage to with it problems of graffiti and vandalism. taRa's community projects are among the main architects of the bilateral agreement signed in 1993 between the main topics the participants had to deal with. an official visit to restoration activities, cultural tourism development and capacity building. a project specialist at iccRom, aparna is leading its international division and valorise the cultural heritage of lebanon while promoting activities for the implementation of the programme. as national advisor and consultant to unesco, yasmeen has worked extensively on heritage management of world Heritage site lahore centre at world Heritage site makli, thatta. as part of his work with the academy-Alvaro has completed research on the medical centre of the town (for the Colombian Institute of Culture) as well as many other investigations into the cultural heritage of his home country. Moreover, in the last three years the main work has centred on studies of the Albarra Defense Wall, with a particular focus on its conservation and consolidation. this work has been carried out over three stages, of which the first in 2011 to complete emergency conservation and restoration work was funded by the Prince Claus Fund's CER programme. this was done in three stages Year 2010. Emergency Works. I Stage of Consolidation and Restoration of Albarraidas, founded by the Foundation Prince Claus of the Netherlands. the latter two stages, to complete the consolidation and restoration, were funded by unesco and the domestic Ministry of Culture respectively. other projects with which Alvaro has been involved include the establishment of an electronic heritage bank database in order to develop heritage FIR through evaluation of sites; the development of low cost sustainable techniques through the use of unfired clay, lime and bamboo to provide emergency intervention (ER) and First Aid. the use of sustainable materials and low-level skills for poverty alleviation and economic regeneration of surrounding communities and the creation of a Regional Research and Training Centre at World Heritage Site Makli, Thatta. as part of her work with egyptian architect Hasan fathy in 1974­5, dr. Salma Samir Damluji has also contributed to several international organisations, and is professor of architecture at the American University in Cairo. Dr. Rohit Jigyasu, India Dr. Jigyasu has been teaching as a visiting lecturer at several national and international organisations, including the Archaeological Survey of India, National Institute of Disaster Management and architecture in Delhi, he obtained his doctoral degree from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. Trondheim on the subject of ‘Reducing Disaster Vulnerability through Local Knowledge and Capacity – the Case of Food Security in the Province of Après Lourdes in Nepal’. Dr. Jigyasu has been teaching as a visiting lecturer at several national and international organisations, including the Archaeological Survey of India, National Institute of Disaster Management, UNESCO, ICCROM and the Getty Conservation Institute for conducting research and training on Cultural Heritage Risk Management. Dr. Jigyasu has also contributed to several international publications and is the author of the World Heritage Resource Manual on ‘Managing Disaster Risks for World Heritage’, published by ICCROM, ICOMOS and UICN and the recently published ‘Training Guide on Disaster Risk Management of Cultural Heritage in Urban Areas’.
**Vince Michael, United States**

Executive Director of Global Heritage Fund. Vince began working with GHF in 2008, visiting the Pingyao project in China as a member of the Senior Advisory Board (SAB), and then completing a mid-term assessment of the site in 2011. He then became Chair of the SAB in 2011 and joined GHF as Chief Conservation Officer in 2012, before being elected Executive Director.

Vince is the John H. Bryan Chair in Historic Preservation at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he was Director of the Historic Preservation programme from 1996 to 2010. Vince is a Trustee of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the nation’s premier private preservation organization, where he serves as Vice Chair of the Preservation and Sites Committee and Vice Chair of the Diversity Task Force.

A professional preservationist since 1983, Vincent worked on the creation and interpretation of the Illinois & Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor, the nation’s first heritage area. He was a planner and advocate for Landmarks Illinois for eight years and has served on their Board for the last decade. He received his B.A. and M.A. from the University of Chicago and received a Trustee’s Award from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts to complete his doctorate in architectural history at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

He is Chair Emeritus of the National Council for Preservation Education and of the Site Council for the Gaylord Building, a National Trust property. He also served on the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council and Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission. He began his international work in 1997 and brought graduate students to work on heritage sites in Ireland, China and Peru eight times between 1998 and 2012. He also represented the United States in preservation education conferences in the Ukraine and Sweden in 2006 and 2007. Since 2003 he has worked to preserve the Weishan Heritage Valley in Yunnan, China, with the Centre for US-China Arts Exchange at Columbia University and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, frequently bringing student study groups to the Southern Silk Road city. He has also been involved in the preservation of the Cusco World Heritage Site in Lima, Peru. Vince has lectured on heritage conservation, architecture, geography, art and history throughout the United States, Europe and Asia. His writings include the book The Architecture of Barry Byrne and Chinese Old City Weishan as well as articles in Design Issues, Future Anterior, Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Traditional Building, and Vincent’s blog, Time Tells has been cited as noteworthy by traditional media.

**Brittin Alfred, Nepal**

Brittin is Nepal and New York Programme Manager at The Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT). The Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT) was founded in 1991 with the mission to safeguard the extraordinary and threatened architectural heritage of the Kathmandu Valley in Nepal.

The negative impact of today’s development pressures poses a threat not only to individual monuments but to the future of public space and urban life in the valley at large. Over the past two decades, KVPT has saved more than 50 historic buildings including temples, step-wells, monasteries, and palaces, and has launched three major campaigns for urban preservation.

KVPT collaborates with community groups, local and international specialists, educational institutions, and the Government of Nepal, Department of Archaeology Restoration and conservation operations have initiated key research and training programmes, and the KVPT office in Patan Darbar Square has become a resource centre and clearinghouse for information about architecture and urbanism in Nepal.

**Aytekin Imranova, Azerbaijan**

As coordinator of ‘Protection of historic-cultural and natural heritage’ Public Control Committee, Azerbaijan, Imranova is raising attention on the loss of historical, cultural and natural heritage in the Azerbaijani city of Baku. Aytekin Imranova would like to see the international community get more involved in Baku preservation efforts. Thanks to a massive cash infusion generated by energy exports, Baku has experienced a building boom over the past decade. Amid the makeover, scores of buildings with distinctive architectural attributes, some of them registered with UNESCO as having historical value, have fallen victim to the wrecking ball. Advocates of preservation are intensifying efforts to call attention to what they consider to be architectural crimes.

As part of an official ‘reconstruction’ effort, more than 30 buildings have been demolished over the past few years within Baku’s walled Old City (Ichari Shahar), a maze of atmospheric cobblestone streets twisting around the 15th century Shirvanshah Palace. The Old City is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
ABOUT THE PRINCE CLAUS FUND

The Cultural Emergency Response programme is a programme of the Prince Claus Fund for Culture & Development. The Prince Claus Fund was established on 6 September 1996 as a tribute to Prince Claus’s dedication to culture and development. The Fund believes that culture is a basic need and the driver of development.

The Prince Claus Fund supports artists, critical thinkers and cultural organisations in spaces where freedom of cultural expression is restricted by conflict, poverty, repression, marginalisation or taboos. Annually, the Fund grants eleven Prince Claus Awards to individuals and organisations for their outstanding achievements in the field of culture and development. The Fund also provides first aid to cultural heritage damaged by man-made or natural disaster.

Over the years, the Fund has built a diverse global network of excellent people, many of them role models in their own societies. This network of trust and mutual respect is the backbone of the Fund. Local partners and initiatives guide all the Fund’s work, following the conviction of Prince Claus that people are not being developed, but develop themselves.

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The Prince Claus Fund has sought to support culture and creative expression in people and communities; where these meet with resistance. We used terms like the amnesty for culture; culture as a basic need; giving voice to the unheard in the zones of silence. They are all expressions of the central idea that culture is what makes us human. Development without it cannot be sustainable and is meaningless.

HRH Prince Constantijn, Honorary Chairman of the Fund