



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Strengthening resilience at World Heritage cultural properties against disasters, conflicts, and climate change



Impact of the 2005 tsunami on the World Heritage property of the Old City of Galle (Sri Lanka) © Giovanni Boccardi

Name and unit of project officer	Giovanni Boccardi, WHC
Geographical scope/benefitting country(ies):	Global (Priority given to Africa and SIDS)
Duration (in months):	24
Partner(s) institutions:	Category 2 centres, ICOMOS, IUCN, ICCROM
Total estimated budget inclusive of Programme Support costs	USD 3,842,000

Rationale and background

Heritage, especially World Heritage, is increasingly affected by disasters and conflicts, resulting from various underlying factors including natural hazards, climate change and political instability. The loss of heritage of historic, aesthetic and scientific value has a

negative impact on communities due to since it affects the ability of heritage to serve as a fundamental resource for their sustainable development as well as to act as an anchor for their spirituality and identity. This conversely means that the rehabilitation of heritage in the post-disaster and post-conflict phase would contribute to the rehabilitation of communities and their empowerment. As well, evidences show that well-maintained heritage sites with relevant traditional knowledge with building techniques and environmental management contribute to reducing disaster risks in general. However, it is often the case that heritage sites managers are unaware of the risks affecting their heritage and unprepared to address them. Therefore, the aim of this project is to strengthen resilience and preparedness of selected World Heritage properties against disaster, conflicts, and climate change.

Why UNESCO?

UNESCO is the only UN organisation which has profound expertise on heritage, especially World Heritage. “Heritage at Risk” has been identified as one of the sectoral priority themes for a Sharpened Resource Mobilisation Strategy. UNESCO also has much experience in assisting Member States through heritage at post-disaster and post-conflict phase, though in an ad-hoc manner, such as in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Haiti, Mali, Libya, and Syria. This project will build on these previous experiences that UNESCO has accumulated over the years.

Overall Goal/Objective

The overall goal of this project is to assist Member States to strengthen their resilience through heritage against disasters, conflicts, and climate change impact, hence their capacity and preparedness to address risks arising from these factors. By strengthening such resilience, communities that own heritage sites are expected to be less impacted by these factors, and in the event of disasters and/or conflicts, communities would be better prepared and be able to rehabilitate more quickly.

The objectives of this project are: (1) to develop and integrate a disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation component into their management systems at selected pilot sites; and (2) to share the outcome and experience of those pilot sites with wider audience. The project focuses on cultural heritage, and intends to work with at least two sites per region (the total of 10 sites in 5 regions). The pilot sites will demonstrate good practices, and the experience will be shared among national authorities and site managers in the world through a publication and reports to the World Heritage Committee so as to create an impact on wider audiences. It is also expected that the model of the pilot sites will be replicated in other World Heritage cultural properties in future.

Main expected results

Expected Result 1

Disaster risk reduction and climate change component developed and integrated into management systems.

Expected Result 2

Methodology and lessons learned from 10 pilot sites widely shared with other sites

Activities and outputs/deliverables relating to the achievement of expected results

<p>Activities and outputs/deliverables relating to the achievement of expected results</p>
<p>Activity 1 – expected results 1 <i>Capacity-building workshop at national level to strengthen their understanding of heritage and disaster risk reduction, to understand the local system on heritage management and DRR, and to select one pilot site</i></p>
<p>Output/deliverable 1.1 Capacity of national staff developed to better address disasters, conflicts, and climate change impacts at heritage sites</p>
<p>Output/deliverable 1.2 Local system understood to better address DRR needs</p>
<p>Output/deliverable 1.3 Pilot sites selected for the development of DRR component at site level</p>
<p>Activity 2 – expected results 1 <i>Workshops at the site level to build capacity of local staff to better address disasters, conflicts, and climate change impact, and to develop and implement a strategy.</i></p>
<p>Output/deliverable 2.1 Capacity of site managers developed to better address disasters, conflicts, and climate change impacts at heritage sites</p>
<p>Output/deliverable 2.2 Disaster risk assessment carried out by stakeholders</p>
<p>Activity 3 - expected results 1 <i>Development of the full DRR management plan for the site with list of priority actions</i></p>
<p>Output/deliverable 3.1 DRR management plan at site level fully developed with list of priority actions</p>
<p>Activity 4 - expected results 1 <i>National workshop with national staff and site managers to present the DRR management plans at site levels and identify priorities for national DRM strategy. The aim of this workshop is to raise political awareness and commitment, and to establish a monitoring process for implementation at both site and national levels.</i></p>
<p>Output/deliverable 4.1 The outcome of the site DRR management plans presented to national authorities, and monitoring process established at national level</p>

<p>Output/deliverable 4.2 Priorities for a national DRR strategy for heritage are defined and endorsed by authorities</p>
<p>Activity 5 - expected results 2 <i>International workshop with focal points from 10 pilot sites to share outcome and experience of their strengthening resilience against disasters, and publication of outcome</i></p>
<p>Output/deliverable 5.1 Experience of pilot sites shared among each other</p>
<p>Output/deliverable 4.2 A publication on the methodology and outcome produced and widely disseminated</p>

The project consists of two major parts – the first part is a series of capacity-building workshops at national and site levels, and the second part is an international workshop at the end of the project. The first part consists of three components. First, a workshop will be organised at national level to build capacity of national staff and to identify pilot sites for site based activities that follow. Following this workshop, selected pilot sites, together with other stakeholders such as local government and communities, will organise meetings where disaster risk assessment will be undertaken. Capacity-building and initial inputs will be provided by UNESCO. The assessment will take into account traditional knowledge and techniques to address disasters, where roles of both men and women will also be incorporated, as appropriate. Based on the assessment, disaster risk reduction and climate change component of management systems should be developed, and priority actions implemented. Once DRR component are fully integrated, a national workshop will be organised inviting national authorities and site managers in order to present the outcome of activities at site level, and to raise political commitment. In order to ensure an effective implementation, a monitoring process at national level should be established.

For the second part, an international workshop will be organised inviting focal points from 10 pilot sites and countries to present reports on the outcome and share experience. A publication which compiles the methodology, experience, and lessons learned will be produced and shared with other national authorities and site managers so that the models created by pilot sites can be replicated at other sites.

Beneficiaries and stakeholders

Direct beneficiaries are national authorities and site managers responsible for the management of World Heritage properties. Other key stakeholders that have impacts on this project and hence should be involved are members of the local communities, indigenous people, local governments, and other ministries responsible for managing disaster risks, who will all participate in risk assessment and the development of a strategy. Their ownership, rights, and interests will be reflected through this participatory process.

Implementation strategy

The project objective to strengthen the resilience of heritage sites against disasters, conflicts, and climate change impacts will be achieved by improving management systems of the sites and building capacity of site managers and other stakeholders. Voices and knowledge of all stakeholders including indigenous people will be reflected in the development of management systems. The initial inputs will be provided by UNESCO, which will accompany

the entire process to make sure that relevant expertise will be provided as appropriate. The project will ensure that there will be coordination between national authorities and site managers, and that the outcome will be shared with international audience. Relevant Field Offices will be consulted to design the precise activities once the sites / countries are identified.

Sustainability and exit strategy

This project will enable site managers and other stakeholders to be more resilient and better equipped against potential disasters and conflicts. By improving their management system, the budgets that have already been available for the management of sites will be better channelled to the needs in addressing disasters. At the end of the project, the awareness and capacity of stakeholders will also be developed, which can be used at other heritage sites to improve their management against disasters. Hence, the outcome of the project will be sustained without much additional costs, and the outcome can be replicated in other sites.