Since ancient times, people all over the world have used earth as their main building material. Earthen architecture has in a way become a symbolic expression of the human capacity to build, and to make the world and to inform on its significant role for social improvement as well as its great potential for poverty alleviation.

In 2007, 106 out of the 660 cultural properties inscribed on the World Heritage List and/or included in States Parties' Tentative Lists; application at properties protected under the World Heritage Convention, with also possible broader application at the community level for the upgrading of the living conditions, as a contribution to poverty alleviation.

The programme involves the main international and regional institutions with the professional competency to contribute to the Programme’s implementation: CRATerre-ENSA, as the focal point of the UNESCO Chair of “Earthen Architecture, Building Cultures and Sustainable Development;

ICOMOS, as the priority partner of the World Heritage Committee in the evaluation of properties nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List and/or included in States Parties’ Tentative Lists, including long term follow-up and evaluation in all types of earthen architectural heritage inscribed on the World Heritage List and/or included in States Parties’ Tentative Lists;

ICOMOS will coordinate research projects activities, and it will report back to the steering committee. ICCROM will advise on training activities and will develop training materials in collaboration with CRATerre-ENSA. ICOMOS will coordinate all necessary studies on the World Heritage List and the Tentative Lists. For Africa and the Arab states, EPA in Benin, CHDA in Kenya and CERKAS in Morocco, as regional institutions.

In addition to the technical partners of the Programme, several other institutions will collaborate during specific activities: National institutions in charge of Cultural Heritage and Local Government authorities will also be involved wherever possible.

In addition to seed money provided by the World Heritage Committee, international donors and sponsors will be called to help ensuring that proper funding for the programme is secured. Of course, national heritage institutions in charge of Cultural Heritage and Local Government authorities will also be involved wherever possible.
**EARTHEN ARCHITECTURE**

**WORLD HERITAGE PROGRAMME**

2007/2017

**PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES**

The Programme will last 10 years and will be structured in 4 phases:

**PHASE 1 (2007-2008)**

**PREPARATION**

- A partner-consultation meeting for the determination of the Programme strategy for each region.
- Support for the participation to the Terra Conferences (organized by Getty Conservation Institute) to promote the earthen architecture conservation.
- Preparation of a consolidated multi-year programme document with a realistic work plan aiming at prioritizing the various components of the earthen architecture programme.
- Preparation of a fundraising and marketing document on the Programme.

**PHASE 2 (2009-2010)**

**PILOT PHASE**

- 2 regional meetings and 2 training workshops for site managers and decision-makers from Africa and Arab States on earthen architecture preservation.
- In-situ projects in Africa and Arab States addressing specific typologies and focusing on rehabilitation and management.
- Preparation of nomination dossiers for inscription on the World Heritage List.
- Laboratory research for restoration techniques.
- Development of a strategy to ensure an effective transfer of the Programme management to Regional training institutions.
- Promotion and advocacy (brochures and technical guides).

**PHASE 3 (2011-2014)**

**CONSOLIDATION PHASE**

- 2 regional meetings and 2 training workshops for site managers and decision-makers on earthen architecture preservation (Latin America, Central Asia).
- In-situ projects addressing a specific typology and focusing on applied research and experimentation on restoration.
- Studies for setting-up of monitoring mechanisms.
- Preparation of cumulus for training and educational activities in earthen architecture.
- Elaboration of best practice guides for earthen architecture conservation and sustainable management.
- Publications of series of technical books.
- Launching of progressive decentralization of the management, transfer of training and in-situ projects to architectural regional training institutions.


**FINAL PHASE**

- 2 regional meetings and 2 training workshops for site managers and decision-makers on earthen architecture preservation (Europe, Asia).
- Regional meetings for site managers and decision-makers on the results achieved.
- In-situ projects addressing a specific typology and focusing on applied research and experimentation on restoration.
- Transfer of earthen architecture conservation curricula to Universities and Regional training institutions.
- Synthesis of the results achieved, evaluation, conclusions, recommendations.
- Finalization of the publications.

**EXPECTED OUTPUTS**

By its conclusion in 2017, the Programme will have achieved the following ten outputs:

- Identification and understanding of problems of earthen architecture heritage exposed to, in the larger context of sustainable development.
- Development of policies for conservation, use of revitalization and valorization of earthen architecture heritage protected under the Convention.
- Definition of appropriate methods and techniques of interventions concerning earthen architecture.
- Organization of training and awareness activities by regional training institutions.
- Elaboration of technical specifications for the restoration of historic towns as well as for the inclusion of modern infrastructures.
- Efficient protection and enhancement of at least 15 earthen architecture sites protected under the Convention.
- Organization of at least 4 capacity building activities on earthen architecture conservation and management with regional training institutions.
- Involvement of trained national professionals and other skilled persons in all countries with earthen architecture sites.
- Setting-up of an active global network for exchange of information and experience.

**PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES**

**IN SITU PILOT PROJECTS**

Towards developing “best practices” examples:

- Elaboration of conservation and management plans.
- Conservation projects for monuments, historic towns and archaeological sites.
- Conservation projects for sustainable tourism development.
- On-site training for site managers, technicians, artisans, and tour guides.
- Elaboration of technical guide lines for restoration and rehabilitation.
- In-situ experiments and other research activities.
- Close follow-up of implementation with regular technical inputs.

**RESEARCH**

Scientific research and applied research at site level will comprise:

- Laboratory research on raw materials, stabilization, damp migration.
- Applied research and documentation.
- Experimentation using prototype samples and other methods.
- Thematic seminars with site managers and earthen architecture specialists.

**TRAINING**

Increase opportunities for specialized training:

- Organization of thematic courses.
- Assistance to Regional institutions in developing training on earthen architecture at different levels (vocational, basic, university, post graduate).
- Preparation of teaching material for dispatch and use by the UNESCO earthen architecture Chair network.

**PROMOTION/ADVOCACY**

Ensure better recognition at international and national levels through:

- Publication of a series of technical books on earthen architecture in general and on World Heritage earthen architecture in particular (management plans, preventive conservation, etc.).
- Organization of exhibitions and participation in events.
- Organization of regional workshops on conservation of earthen architecture.
- Organization of international conferences on earthen architecture and partnership for Terra conferences organized by the Getty Conservation Institute.

**IN SITU PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

- Preparation of technical specifications for the restoration and rehabilitation of historic properties.
- Preparation of curricula for training and educational activities in earthen architecture.
- Studies for setting-up of monitoring mechanisms.
- Preparation of cumulative for training and educational activities in earthen architecture.
- Elaboration of best practice guides for earthen architecture conservation and sustainable management.
- Publications of series of technical books.
- Launching of progressive decentralization of the management, transfer of training and in-situ project activities to regional training institutions.

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