



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



World Heritage  
Convention

# World Heritage Earthen Architecture Programme

## WHEAP TECHNICAL PARTNERS:

**CRAterre-ENSAG**

**ICCROM**

**ICOMOS** through its International Scientific Committee for Earthen Architecture

**Udine University** (Italy)

**Regional Institutions: EPA** (Benin), **CHDA** (Kenya) and **CERKAS** (Marocco)



**ICOMOS**



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

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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COVER: From top to bottom: New Gurna (Egypt), Old Towns of Djenné (Mali), Historic Centre of the Town of Olinda (Brazil), Alhambra (Spain), Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto (Japan)

INTERIOR LEFT: Top: Old Towns of Djenné (Mali), Historic Centre of Évora (Portugal), Asante Traditional Buildings (Ghana). Bottom: Mesa Verde National Park (United States of America), Chan Chan Archaeological (Peru), Fujian Tulou (China)

INTERIOR RIGHT: From top to bottom: Historic Centre of Bukhara (Uzbekistan), Timbuktu (Mali), Ouazazate Ait-Ben-Haddou (Marocco), Ghadames (Libya), Coro and its Port (Venezuela), Timbuktu (Mali)

ABOVE: Old Walled City of Shibam (Yemen)

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Launched in 2007, the World Heritage Earthen Architecture Programme (WHEAP) promotes the conservation of earthen architecture worldwide. Earthen architecture is an expression of the timeless ingenuity of human capacity to create a built environment with locally available resources.

Progress Report, June 2011

# Achievements 2010-2011

## Values of Earthen Architecture

Earth buildings provide shelter for over a third of the world's population. Places as unique as the **Old Towns of Djenné** in Mali, the **Old Walled City of Shibam** in Yemen, the **Ksar of Ait-Ben-Haddou** in Morocco, the **Fujian Tulou** in China, the **Chan Chan Archaeological Zone** in Peru or the **Mesa Verde National Park** in the United States of America, and others, form no less than 10% of the sites inscribed in the World Heritage List. However they remain particularly threatened by development pressures like urbanization and climate change.

Earth architecture plays a vital role in defining the identity of local communities: sustainable both in terms of art and building techniques and an intrinsic ability to contribute to communal economic, ecological and cultural assets. The WHEAP aims at seizing these advantages and at enhancing the use and recognition of this valuable architecture through a range of pilot activities at selected earthen World Heritage sites, research studies, capacity building, conferences and promotional activities.

The protection and sustenance of this precious human legacy calls for the mobilization of the global community.

### 2010

- Consultation meeting on the implementation of the WHEAP in the Arab States at the World Heritage Centre (supported by the private joint initiative Shaikh Ebrahim Bin Mohammed Al-Kalifa Centre for Culture and Research/ ARCAPITA Bank B.S.C., Bahrain);
- Project for the safeguarding of **New Gournia Village** (Egypt): physical survey results and draft master plan presented at the 1st Scientific Committee meeting held in Luxor, Egypt. (supported by UNESCO through the Special account for the Safeguarding of the Cultural Heritage of Egypt);
- Draft **inventory of World Heritage and Tentative lists' earthen architecture sites** put online for complementary information input from the field (financial support from the French Government through the France-UNESCO Cooperation Agreement);
- **Conservation project for Africa** (supported by the Italian Government): includes a study on the need to conserve and manage the long-neglected traditional earthen buildings as a strategy for the sustainable conservation of the **Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela** (Ethiopia); draft building regulations to clarify the delimitation of the **Old Towns of Djenné** (Mali); building regulations for **Timbuktu** (Mali) finalized and submitted for adoption;
- Major restoration project, following the destructive earthquake, in **Bam and its Cultural Landscape** (Iran) successfully completed (supported by the Italian Government); work continues on a bi-lateral basis.

### 2011

- The **Conservation project for Africa** (supported by the Italian Government): rehabilitation of the Youth House of **Djenné** (Mali) to host community activities in particular for young people and women; organization of regional workshops for site managers and tourist guides in **Djenné** (Mali) in cooperation with the School of African Heritage (EPA); realization of an exchange mission between representatives of the **Old Towns of Djenné** (Mali) and Italian counterparts from Udine (Italy) to strengthen bilateral relations between both countries, in cooperation with the Italian NGO CEFS and the University of Udine; finalization of teaching material on earthen architecture conservation for use at the regional training institutions EPA and CHDA (Centre for Heritage Development in Africa); studies on the economic potential of the **Old Towns of Djenné** and on sustainable tourism development in **Timbuktu** foreseen for completion in 2011;
- Final phase of the emergency consolidation and rehabilitation project at the **Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam** in Afghanistan (supported by the Italian and the Swiss Governments);
- Launching of second phase of the **WHEAP inventory** to complete information and prepare publication (supported by the French Government through the France-UNESCO Cooperation Agreement);
- **Project for the safeguarding of New Gournia Village** (Egypt): launch of emergency stabilization works for the most damaged buildings, finalization of the master plan, identification of short term actions; the project has been temporarily suspended owing to political changes in the country.

