



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



World Heritage Convention

Consultation Meeting on the Implementation of the World Heritage Earthen Architecture Programme (WHEAP) in the Arab States – Strategies and Approaches

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MEETING REPORT



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incorporating notes by John Hurd, ICOMOS Scientific Commission for Earthen Architectural
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**UNESCO World Heritage Centre
Africa Unit**

1 Introduction

The first one day consultation meeting on the implementation of the World Heritage Earthen Architecture Programme (WHEAP) in the Arab States was held within the framework of the 10 year WHEAP programme (2007-2017) adopted at the 31st session of the World Heritage Committee per decision 31COM21C (2007, Christchurch, New Zealand). This meeting was planned within the Phase 2 (2009-2010): “regional” pilot phase in Africa and Arab states. The goal of the meeting was to discuss the strategy of the programme, issues of fundraising and to define a road map with priorities containing concrete actions for the regions.

After the introduction of the participants, the meeting started with a presentation of the overall framework programme of WHEAP, its history, objectives, activities and structure with a description of current and accomplished activities and the obtained financial support. This was followed by nine presentations by participants of the conference on the challenges and experiences in earthen architecture heritage preservation in the Arab States. The conference concluded with a brainstorming on the strategy of the implementation, possible thematic priorities of the programme and a call for suggestions and proposals of actions from the participants.

1.1 Overall framework of the WHEAP Programme

Presented by Mr Lazare Eloundou / UNESCO World Heritage Centre / Chief of Africa Unit

Over 10% of WH properties are earthen architectural sites and 107 out of the 689 cultural properties inscribed on the World Heritage List were identified in 2009 to incorporate earthen structures. In 2001, the World Heritage Committee approved Earthen architecture as a thematic programme. The main objectives of the programme are to develop appropriate methods for a sustainable conservation of the different types of earthen architectural heritage included in the World Heritage or a States Parties’ Tentative List and to ensure that best practices are broadly disseminated for application at properties protected under the *World Heritage Convention*.

The orientation and the expected output were briefly presented along with the four main activities of the programme: research, training, promotion/advocacy, and in situ pilot projects which arise from opportunities of collaboration with governments and institutions and/or priority problems of conservation. The programme framework has established a timeline in four phases, which provides a regional focus that moves from continent to continent. Cooperation with State Parties, local partners and the consolidation of a network of institutions and experts to develop this programme is critical to its success. The consultation meeting presented the objectives of the current Phase 2. These objectives are open for further detailed definition in response to needs, themes and priorities specific to the African and Arab countries. The achievements of the first three years of the programme (2007, 2008, 2009) were listed and the to-date financial support by the World Heritage

Fund and various international donors was summarized. There is an urgent need for financial support for the programme management for Phase 2.

The current programme management proposal calls for overall management by WHC, a steering committee with representatives of the programme partners, a technical secretariat at CRATERRE-ENSAG, an advisory role by ICCROM and ICOMOS-ISCEAH, regional institutions and a scientific counsellor from Udine University.

2 Summary of presentations

2.1 Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH), Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

By Dr. Sami El-Masri, Deputy Director General Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH) and Dr. Hossam Mahdy, Building Conservation Supervisor

As part of its mandate to conserve the tangible heritage of Abu Dhabi Emirate, the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH), as an organ of the Abu Dhabi Government with a local mandate, has been developing policies and programming numerous initiatives for the inventory, conservation, and promotion of Abu Dhabi's historic buildings, sites and collections. This is based on the Abu Dhabi Cultural Heritage Management Strategy, prepared by a UNESCO-led team of experts in 2005, and the ADACH Strategic Plan 2009-2013. Area planning initiatives by ADACH are currently focused on the preparation of the Al Ain Oasis Cultural Quarter Master Plan, the Qattara Oasis Master Plan and the planning of a Centre for Design, Arts and Crafts. ADACH also targets to complete the Abu Dhabi Emirate inventory of tangible cultural properties and to have 30% of Abu Dhabi's historical buildings and sites conserved. Furthermore, an application was made to UNESCO in January 2009 for nomination of the Cultural Sites of Al Ain as a World Heritage Site.

The Building and Site Initiatives respond to three areas: conservation of ruins, conservation and rehabilitation leading to new usage, and emergency conservation interventions. Examples of ADACH initiatives include Al Jahili Fort—fully rehabilitated and now housing an information centre and exhibition spaces, Al Jahili Mosque, Bin Hadi House—conserved as a semi-ruined site with detailed archaeological investigations, Muwaiji Palace—transformed into a regional research centre, Abdullah Bin Salem Al Darmaki House, Al Muraijib Fort, Khalfan and Saif House.

ADACH plans to establish a Centre for Earthen Building Conservation and Construction to open in March 2011, which aims to provide academic and vocational training in the conservation and new construction of earthen structures, as well as opportunities for research and publication. The centre is regional and international in scope. It will propose a specialised curriculum in English and Arabic for two different training courses: one for architects, civil engineers, conservators, and archaeologists, and another for craftsmen (masons, carpenters, painters etc.)

2.2 Ghadames, Libya

By Mr Ibrahim Bachir Malik, Ghadames Old Town Administration Office, Libya

Ghadames is situated 12 km from the border of Tunisia, 14 km from the border to Algeria and about 600 km south of Tripoli. The site's surface is about 8.2 hectares. The site is known in Phoenician and Roman times. Its current form is a Muslim town of 1300 houses and 176 public buildings, surrounded by a wall pierced by seven doors for seven covered streets each leading to a square. The city encloses in its core a fountain and a basin and is surrounded by palm trees. 25 years ago, after the disappearance of the spring, its inhabitants abandoned the city in search of water and modern amenities.

Today, the Ghadames Development Authority has renovated about 35 % of the houses. In order to perform maintenance and restoration work, the Authority conducted research on traditional methods, skills and building techniques known by the older population. The spring was reintroduced, the network of water channels leading from the spring through mosques outside the town was restored and general conservation and rehabilitation work on wall structures, streets and houses carried out. CRATERRE –ENSAG collaborated to create a research laboratory and an adobe brick factory is currently producing about 8000 brick per day.

Ghadames has not yet seen the return of inhabitants. Hope was expressed that the raised awareness of earthen architecture and an economic incentive through activities that can be held in the houses of Ghadames will result in inhabitants wanting to move back to the renovated structures. The Government owns the city and is financially supporting its renovation and presenting the town to its VIP guests. About 14 houses have been transformed into guesthouses with running water and about 50 tourists per day are allowed to visit Ghadames.

2.3 Experiences and Challenges in the Field of Conservation of Earthen

Architecture: The Algerian Case

By Ms Yasmine Terki, Architecte des monuments historiques, Ministère de la Culture, Alger, Algeria

The Ministry of Culture is in charge of the protection of national heritage. 38 Ksour are under the legal protection of the Ministry of Culture. A 1998 law defines provisory and definitive measures related to the protection of national heritage and a definitive classification leads to the creation of a safeguarded sector. In theory, owners are obligated to maintain their houses.

The reality shows a desertion of the old historic towns that do not respond to modern domestic expectations. Photos of the Ksar de Moughel, Ksar de Chetma and Ksar de El Dechra El Hamra were presented. Many historic centres of Ksour show serious signs of degradation. Inhabitants still living in Ksour generally do not maintain their houses. They either build extensions in concrete or cement outside the walls or a room in concrete in the old houses. By law they can be expropriated but it seems impossible to find new uses for the hundreds of expropriated houses.

Even if the government pays for the totality of the rehabilitation the inhabitants do not return, as the experience of the Ksar de Beni Abbas shows.

Algeria's challenge is to avoid the abandonment of the Ksour. There is a need to create a public establishment that can rehabilitate the image of earthen architecture based on its capacity to respond to the contemporary norms of comfort, security and sustainability.

A contribution towards this image improvement was the exhibition "Terres, d'Afrique et d'ailleurs" presented in Alger in July 2009 at the occasion of the International Panafrica Festival. An information and documentation seminar on earthen architecture for architecture students will be held in April 2010.

2.4 CERKAS, Programme d'Architecture de Terre du Patrimoine Mondial

By Dr. Mohamed Boussalh, Centre de Conservation et de Réhabilitation du patrimoine Architectural des Zones Atlasiques et Subatlasiques (CERKAS), Ouarzazate, Morocco

After the Ksar Aït Benhaddou has been abandoned by its inhabitants, it was considered to be an endangered site. Three years ago, in collaboration with CRAterre-ENSAG, CERKAS defined and put in place a management plan incorporating rehabilitation policies. The plan has been translated into Arabic and is now available in French and Arabic. A tourism plan has been developed to efficiently manage the flow of 250 000 visitors at Ksar Aït Benhaddou every year. This has led to a welcome centre outside the site, paved and consolidated pathways and steps, and amenities such as trash cans and drinking fountains. Tools have been given to the local population and two locals have been trained for health emergencies. Consolidation work of the outside wall, refurbishment of the outside areas and anti-erosion work has been carried out. Studies to manage wastewater are under way. Electrification of the site is planned for this year. In collaboration with private partners, CERKAS has restored buildings that have been put to use again such as a weaving workshop. In addition to work at the Ksar, Granaries and Kasbahs have been restored. Some have been transformed into exhibition spaces or workspaces for local NGOs.

CERKAS is also working on the inventory of earthen architecture of the Draa Valley by creating a database. This inventory is based on orthophotos from different periods at various scales that have been digitized and entered into a geographic information system (GIS). Each inventory item in the GIS data is accompanied by photos and descriptive information. In the Draa valley the information includes sociological and typological studies. The analysis of evolution of the palm groves of the Draa valley between 1987 and 2004 has been conducted based on the vegetation and new constructions. Per the request by the Ministry of Tourism a foot travel itinerary has been mapped between Ksour and palm groves.

2.5 A Brief on the Accomplishments of Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities (SCTA) in the Field of Earthen Heritage

By Mr. Mohammad Yosof Alaidaroos, Antiquities & Museums, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Earthen heritage is a relevant part of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's heritage. SCTA developed a strategy for the long-term preservation of its heritage. This strategy is based on three areas: improving awareness of earthen heritage, mapping and listing important or major earthen sites (archaeological sites, urban centre, historical buildings and monuments) and recognition of regional styles and typologies of earthen architecture. SCTA works on the rehabilitation and new constructions of the King Abdul-Aziz Historical Centre in Riyadh and on enlisting three Archaeological & Cultural sites on UNESCO WH List.

The first integrated experience and the most important project underway is Atturaif in Addariyah. SCTA has prepared the nomination file for World Heritage List and the management plan. It will be examined by the upcoming 34th session of the WH Committee in Brasilia, Brazil. This lead to documentation, survey and condition assessment of the site, conservation studies, rehabilitation and reuse projects. To guarantee the long-term sustainability of the project a management plan has been prepared taking into consideration the economic aspect involved in the reuse of the village as a Living Heritage Museum. It is hoped that Addariyah can become a model for the study and preservation of earth heritage and an example of modern and sensitive reuse of an abandoned major historical site. One of the objectives is to establish a centre of earthen construction and develop training program in close coordination with universities and international institutions.

2.6 Earthen Architecture in Mauritania

By Mr. Saleh Nami Ould Mohamed Kaber, Directeur du patrimoine culturel, Ministère de la Culture, de la Jeunesse et des Sports, Nouakchott, Mauritania

Earthen Architecture in Mauritania has a history of several thousand years. Due to its fragile nature and the local climatic conditions, as well as the massive exodus of inhabitants to the capital, its conservation is facing difficulties. Some successful experiments were presented. For example the Spanish cooperation in the city of Oualata led to the rehabilitation of several houses and urban buildings, as in the city of Atar. In the city of Kaedi, on the Senegal River, earthen architecture was used for a hospital with all amenities. The actions planned for 2010 are multiple: establish a complete listing and mapping of all earthen architecture sites, study a system of technical supervision for maintenance of private houses in selected cities, and study to set up capacity building activities on earthen Architecture conservation. The wish is to rehabilitate priority sites that can be used and maintained such as libraries or local craft shops.

2.7 Earthen Architectural Heritage in Syria

By Mr. Mahmoud Bendakir, CRAterre-ENSAG, Grenoble, France

Earthen architecture in Syria is 11,000 years old. Its rich Mesopotamian heritage and its diversity are underrepresented in the WH List. Earthen architecture exists in archaeological sites, rural architecture and old urban centres. Mr Bendakir presented two of his publications which present recent work on earthen architecture in Syria: “Les vestiges de Mari, La préservation d’une architecture millénaire en terre” on the work of Mari and the conservation of raw earth bricks; and “Architecture de terre en Syrie, une tradition de onze millénaires” about rural Syrian earthen architecture and old urban cores.

Since 1991 the French Archaeological Mission has collaborated with CRAterre to develop a conservation, presentation and touristic development programme at Tell Hariri, Mari. Syrian archaeologists are currently working in cooperation with international missions from Italy, Germany, France, EU, and the United States at various sites: Tell Mardikh, Ebla, Mishrifeh- Qatna, Rawda, Tell Chiekh Hamad, Tell Beyday, Nabada, and Tell Mozan, Urkesh. A project for next year is to gather all site teams together to promote experience and information exchange.

2.8 ATHAR Programme, Conservation of Cultural Heritage in the Arab Region

By Mr. Joseph King, ICCROM, Rome, Italy

ATHAR was launched in 2003. The programme which first focused on Syria, Jordan and Lebanon has now been extended to the entire Arab State region. The overall goal of ATHAR is to contribute to the protection and promotion of cultural heritage in the Arab region, and broaden access, appreciation and understanding of its past. The programme is structured in three branches: Development of Professional Education, Institutional Capacity Building and Public Outreach. ATHAR organizes a core regional education programme called “Conservation of Heritage Sites” in various countries. It contains courses in documentation and management, conservation of mosaics and decorative surfaces, and conservation of stone and earthen structures. This includes lab work and testing of earthen materials as well as on-site work on masonry conservation in damp buildings. Thanks to this programme, a publication titled “Conservation of Cultural Heritage in the Arab region, Issues in the Conservation and Management of Heritage Sites” is now in press and field projects are launched such as the conservation plan for the Al Khamis Mosque, Bahrain. The importance of education at every level was underlined; not only at the university level, but also masons, carpenters and other craftsmen.

2.9 Presentation of CRAterre

By Mr Thierry Joffroy, Chairman of CRAterre-ENSAG, Grenoble, France

CRAterre-ENSAG was founded 30 years ago by a group of students interested in earthen cultural heritage. CRAterre works as an NGO and as a university with a research laboratory and a postgraduate course specialized in earthen architecture and building cultures at the ENSAG. Its main fields are research and

education/training. Complementary activities are dissemination of knowledge and publications as well as site projects and programmes. CRATERre has projects in 15 Arab countries and has worked on 25 sites diverse in age, structure and typology. It has contributed to the inscription of five World Heritage properties, two more nomination files are in progress.

The vision of CRATERre is to preserve local solutions and develop them to ensure a harmonious globalization. Its mandate is to enable people and their organizations to have a better control over their own built environment. CRATERre-ENSAG is a multidisciplinary group which builds a network and seeks partnership with more than 100 organisations (research centres, universities...) CRATERre is in partnership with the World Heritage Centre since 1994 and the UNESCO Chair "Earthen Architecture, Building Cultures and Sustainable Development" resides at CRATERre. It aims to accelerate the dissemination of scientific and technical knowledge and skills relating to earthen architecture and its conservation within the international community.

CRATERre suggested the following recommendations for consideration when launching the WHEAP in the Arab States:

- The variety of conservation environment is great in Arab countries, a great diversity of cases exists and therefore a diversity of responses must be considered. This imposes to adopt a methodological and iterative approach.
- There is a need to give some focus on value oriented decision making and management planning at property as well as at national/regional levels.
- There is a possibility for thematic approaches: historic cities (Ksour), archaeological sites, monuments.
- Traditional building skills have to be preserved through traditional transmission, research on old practices and vocational training.
- The challenge is to conserve the cultural diversity while allowing access to modernity. How much change can be allowed/promoted to ensure that the values are kept while people are satisfied?

3 Discussion

After the various presentations a brainstorming was held to discuss the strategy of the implementation of WHEAP in the Arab States Region and possible thematic priorities. The discussion focused on theoretical issues, sustainability issues and training/technical issues; the main discussion points are summarized hereafter.

3.1 Authenticity and Integrity

Earth architecture is by nature fragile, its conservation difficult. Reconstruction, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse work might imperil the integrity and/or the authenticity of heritage sites.

What is the percentage of reconstruction possible for archaeological sites, architecture sites and forts and villages? The differentiation of values of material was acknowledged between an archaeological site with material dating 2000 years in

comparison with a non-listed dwelling with material that has been traditionally renewed. Advocacy for the preservation and documentation of intangible aspects of traditional construction and maintenance systems was underlined. This leads to important ethical questions linked to authenticity, conservation and continued use: Do States Parties pursue deliberate policies to discourage continued full time occupancy of earth WH sites? To what extent is it desirable to adapt the reuse of such places from traditional lifestyles to tourist focus and occupation? To what extent does this compromise the integrity of earthen heritage places? To what extent does this type of policy compromise human rights?

3.2 Abandonment and Adaptive Re-use

Abandonment and active clearance of traditional towns, villages and structures was stated as a fact. Systems to maintain local occupancy of traditional settlements and central policies to permit continued habitation of traditional settlements should be installed. Design of scope for adaptive re-use of structures and plans for revitalization of abandoned places should be put in place. Interventions should respond to the need of local societies while maintaining authenticity of structures. There is a lack of infrastructure to encourage continued use of traditional settlements (Roads and access, schools, shops etc.)

The maintaining of earth structures needs to be coupled with a fight for poverty alleviation of inhabitants. Site interventions must respond to conservation demands but also to life and work necessities of inhabitants. The demonstration of an economic incentive to be gained by the local population will improve the users' value assessment and maintaining patterns.

3.3 Training Technical Issues

There is a lack of training at the national and site management level and at a technical level for improved understanding of conservation needs and systems. The programme needs to carry out regional training workshops for both management systems and policies, and technical approaches to conservation including inventories, site management planning, disaster preparedness policies, conservation technologies, appropriate documentation and survey, sheltering, maintenance programmes and ethics related to values and the preservation of outstanding universal value through respect for authenticity and integrity.

In addition to technical training on conservation, there is a need for sociological and anthropological studies on local cultures that produced earthen architecture. There was an argument made about seeing earthen housing architecture as an evolution, a result of a typological process. A suggestion is to re-initiate the cultural process on vernacular architecture to keep or continue saving the traditional skills and techniques and to accept the evolution of methods.

3.4 Lack of Regional and Comparative Studies

The programme needs to demonstrate and encourage the techniques and practical approach to regional studies including comparative analysis between sites in some detail. Decoration and surface finishes, intangible aspects of traditions involved in

construction and traditional and superstitious maintenance systems should be included in any such study.

3.5 Emergency Response to Threats and Damage Factors

As a first principle, disaster preparedness and planning should be specially highlighted during all activities. This includes fire protection, contingency planning for flood and severe weather conditions, prioritisation of what requires the most urgent protection including moveable heritage etc. Capacity building and training of skilled disaster and risk response teams and the establishment of regional co-operation between such teams should be encouraged.

3.6 Advocacy

Advocacy needs to encompass the dissemination of the many values of traditional settlements and structures and the less tangible aspects of culture surrounding traditional building systems. The question of 'what should we advocate' needs to be discussed both at international level and, due to cultural differences of values and expression, at regional and local levels. The promotion material and campaigns should be aimed first to Government levels. The advocacy for the preservation and documentation of traditional knowledge systems may also belong here.

The image of earthen architecture in the Arab States is an image of poverty, generally rejected. A negative image of a typology of heritage architecture can change as seen in many European city cores, which have been abandoned then reclaimed. Currently in South America new construction in earth are signs of sophistication and wealth. This lack of awareness on the qualities of earth architecture may need to be reverted with the help of professionals. Advocacy importantly includes the encouragement of continued use of earth both as an accessible and as a 'green material'. The UNESCO World Heritage Centre initiative for the safeguarding of New Gournia is an important contribution to this aspect of advocacy.

Contemporary and modern earth architecture can modernize the image of earth as a material. Values inherent in contemporary green building and green technology can be associated to earthen architecture. Further general research on the scientific qualities of earthen architecture should be done to advocate earth as a material (Climatic values, seismic resistance etc.)

3.7 Legal Frameworks, Planning Codes and Construction Guidelines

Legislation on earthen architecture should be sought for in each country, and should be encouraged to allow earth as a material for new constructions, extensions or adaptive uses for installation or modern amenities. Conservation of sites in urban areas should be integrated in a general urban planning framework approved by planning authorities. Regional workshops could include discussions and fact finding in the curriculum.

4 Conclusion and Call for Action

The discussion confirmed the need for a regional integrated approach to the conservation of earthen architecture; issues of modern earthen architecture need to be included. The discussion also confirmed the need to integrate a debate on authenticity and integrity of earthen architecture especially when thinking about adapting the reuse of sites from traditional lifestyles to tourism. This could be done through regional meetings. There is a lack of infrastructure for continued uses of settlement. There is a true need for training at national and site management level and open exchange of expertise; the new Centre of Abu Dhabi was invited to become a partner of the WHEAP and particularly for implementing activities in the Arab States.

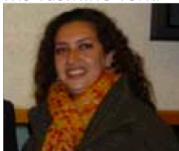




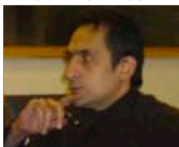

Other themes that need to be addressed are abandonment of earthen structures, regional studies on earthen architecture, and research on traditional conservation methods including comparative analysis between sites. Capacity development, training and education need to be at the core of the programme. Emergency response to threats and damage factors should be put in place. Laws and statutes need to be analyzed. Advocacy of the values of earthen architecture should be encouraged.










In summary, the following activities were identified as being most important for the WHEAP implementation strategy in the Arab States Region:

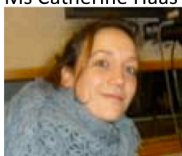

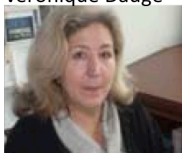
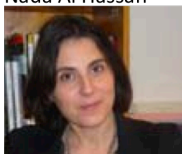
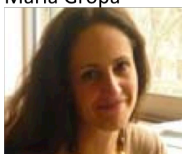



- Research and studies on:
 - Traditional conservation methods
 - Economic potential of WH earth architecture
 - Management of waste water and inclusion of modern infrastructures
- Seminar on Earth Architecture:
 - Earth architecture capacity to respond to contemporary norms of comfort, security and sustainability
- Training/workshops:
 - Site management planning
 - Inventories and documentation and GIS mapping
 - Disaster preparedness
 - Conservation of ruins
 - Conservation and new usage of earth heritage with existing case studies
 - Mapping of earth architecture sites

At the end of the one-day consultation meeting, Mr. Lazare Eloundou made a call to all representatives of state parties to prioritize issues in their respective countries and to reflect on how each organisation can contribute to Phase 2 of the programme. These propositions are to be sent to the WHC. The call is open beyond the participants of the meeting to a large audience of experts, institutions and organisations that wish to be involved in the programme.

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ANNEX II– PROGRAMME OF THE MEETING ON 11 JANUARY 2010

Agenda

09:00 Welcome coffee - arrival of participants

09:30 Welcoming address by Mr. Bandarin, Director of the World Heritage Centre

09:45 Presentation and adoption of the agenda

10:00 WHEAP – Presentation of the overall framework programme

- History (World Heritage Committee decision 31COM 21C)
- Framework agreement and partnerships
- Programme objectives, planned activities and structure
- Achievements, activities under way, financial support obtained

10:30 WHEAP pilot phase I: Arab States / challenges and experience in earthen architecture heritage preservation in the region - Presentations by participants

11:00 Coffee break

12:15 Brainstorming on regional approach to:

- Strategy for programme implementation and priorities
- Fundraising strategy
- Periodic reporting
- ATHAR Programme

*** 12:45 / *Lunch break* ***

14:30 Continuation of brainstorming on regional approach

15:30 Discussion and establishment of a road map

16:00 Coffee break

17:00 – 17:30 Conclusions and end of the meeting

ANNEX III– NOTES BY JOHN HURD / JANUARY 2010

Below are some rough notes that evolve from the meeting at UNESCO Paris, 11 January 2010 on the topic of the Arab States.

As proposed by Veronique Dauge, I have limited the scope of these notes to a focus on WH sites, although at the meeting you will recall that we occasionally wandered into a broader framework.

While the focus of this meeting was the Arab States, it is clear that many points raised at the brainstorming session also apply in a far wider international context.

These notes are aimed to enhance the already excellent existing programme and they may add topics to the list and clarify items that are already listed.

Challenges:

- 1. Lack of training both at the national and site management level and at a technical level, as tools for improved understanding of conservation needs and systems.**

The programme needs to carry out regional training workshops for both management systems and policies, and technical approaches to conservation including inventories, site management planning, disaster preparedness policies, Conservation technologies, Appropriate documentation and survey, sheltering, maintenance programmes and ethics related to values and the preservation of Outstanding Universal Value through respect for Authenticity and Integrity.

[I would present a caveat here. It is possible to demonstrate some of these topics on actual WH properties, but given the ethical consideration of not experimenting on authentic historic structures, that such workshops recall this caveat when training in both materials testing and on practical techniques of conservation and restoration. This instils good habits!].

- 2. Abandonment and indeed active clearance of traditional towns, villages and structures.**

Systems to maintain local occupancy of traditional settlements and indeed central policies to permit continued habitation of traditional settlements. Design of scope for adaptive re-use of structures and plans for revitalisation of abandoned places
[See also point 7]

- 3. Lack of regional and comparative studies.**

The programme needs to demonstrate and encourage the techniques and practical approach to regional studies including comparative analysis between sites in some detail. Decoration and surface finishes, intangible aspects of traditions involved in

construction and traditional and superstitious maintenance systems should be included in any such study.

4. Emergency response to threats and damage factors.

As a first principle, disaster preparedness and planning should be specially highlighted during all activities. Fire protection, contingency planning for flood and severe weather conditions, prioritisation of what requires the most urgent protection including moveable heritage etc. Encouraging the formation and training of skilled disaster and risk response teams and the establishment of regional co-operation between such teams.

5. Advocacy, especially in the dissemination of the many values of traditional settlements, structures and the less tangible aspects of culture surrounding traditional building systems.

This is self evident and perhaps the question of “what should we advocate” requires another brainstorming, both at international level and due to cultural differences of values and expression, at regional and local levels. Advocacy importantly includes the encouragement of continued use of earth both as an accessible and as a “green” material. The initiative at New Gournia is an important contribution to this aspect of advocacy.

As highlighted by Joe King and others, the advocacy for the preservation and documentation of traditional knowledge systems may also belong here.

6. Modern laws and statutes, planning codes and construction guidelines.

Also self evident. Perhaps regional workshops should include discussions and fact finding in the curriculum.

7. Lack of infrastructure to encourage continued use of traditional settlements. Roads and access, schools, shops etc.

This rises from points very clearly raised by Jasmine Terki but leads in to an important ethical question. Do states parties pursue deliberate policies to discourage continued full time occupancy of earth WH sites? To what extent is it desirable to adapt the reuse of such places from traditional lifestyles to tourist focus and occupation? To what extent does this compromise the integrity of earthen heritage places? To what extent does this type of policy compromise human rights?

That's it for now and I hope that these points will be in some way added into, what is already, a very good agenda for programme, developed over the last years.

John Hurd. January 2010.