

WHV – Maintenance of the heritage areas

M'Zab Valley, Algeria

PROJECT DATES

Cultural property inscribed on the World Heritage List (1982)

01 May - 15 December 2024

THE SITE - Located 600 km south of Algiers, in the heart of the Sahara Desert, the five ksour (fortified villages) of the M'Zab Valley form an extraordinarily homogenous ensemble constituting, in the desert, the mark of a sedentary and urban civilization possessing an original culture that has, through its own merit, preserved its cohesion throughout the centuries. The anthropic ensembles of the M'Zab Valley bear witness, by their exceedingly original architecture dating from the beginning of the 11th century and by their rigour and organization, to an outstanding and original occupation model for human settlements of the cultural area of central Sahara. This model settlement has exercised considerable influence for nearly a millennium on Arab architecture and town-planning, including architects and town-planners of the 20th century, from Le Corbusier to Fernand Pouillon and André Raverau. The three elements constituting the urban ensembles and settlements of the M'Zab Valley: ksar, cemetery, and palm grove with its summer citadel, are an exceptional testimony of the Ibadis culture at its height and the egalitarian principle that was meticulously applied by the Mozabite society. The elements constituting the M'Zab Valley are an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, representative of the Ibadis culture that, through the ingenious system for the capture and distribution of water and the creation of palm groves, demonstrates the extremely efficient human interaction with a semi-desert environment.

OBJECTIVES - The Imekres Heritage and Folklore Association, which is taking part in the campaign for the first time, aims to get young people more involved in protecting the M'Zab Valley.

ACTIVITIES - Volunteers will take part in campaigns to improve access and circulation around the Saidi Brahim mausoleum and the cemetery, including the installation of a handrail for the elderly and people with reduced mobility, under the supervision of the site management authorities.

PARTNERS - Ministère de la culture; Ministère de la jeunesse et du sport; Office de promotion et protection la vallée du M'Zab OPVM; Pouvoirs locaux, institutions culturelles, tribus et association de jeunes; Entrepreneurs et artisans volontaires locaux (volontariat TWIZA)

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