



### **CCT Poverty Project 04513:**

Contributing to poverty eradication through sustainable income generation in an ecological disaster area

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 Implementation: B. Lane (UNESCO Tashkent)

TOTAL ALLOCATION: \$150,000  
 2004 Allotment: \$75,000

EXPENDITURE TO DATE: \$34,372  
 Percentage to date of total budget: 23%

#### Project Goal :



Ichan Kala, Khiva, Khorezm: a World Heritage site

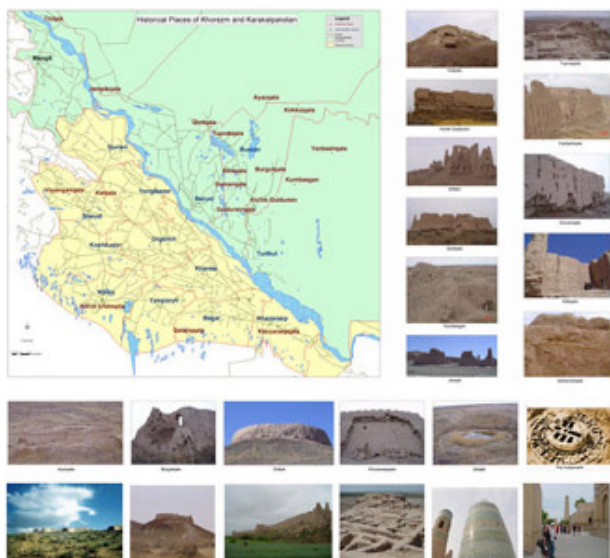


Ayaz Kala, Karakalpakstan

and chemical pollution by pesticides, caused by excessive irrigation and an excessive reliance on a cotton monoculture, have generated severe economic and social problems such as chronic health problems, unemployment, and consequently emigration. In these conditions, what are the alternatives to the cotton monoculture, which development activities will be most effective in order to benefit the population, and with what resources will they be funded? The aim of the project is to generate employment and incomes to reduce poverty, through the protection, promotion and sustainable development of the natural and cultural heritage, through a more efficient use of water and natural resources, and through the development of sustainable economic activities linked to the development of tourism, whether ecological, agricultural or cultural, based on the discovery of civilisation of the ancient Khorezmian civilization: activities such as development of itineraries, B&B accommodation, yurt camps, production and sale of handicrafts, development of guide books, training of tourism professionals etc. It also aims to promote water-saving technologies and alternative cash crops such as natural dyes, medicinal plants and vegetables and fruit which can supply the hotels and restaurants as well as nourish the local populations. Finally, 'virtual laboratory' video-conferences will allow the specialists from Uzbekistan to discuss with their counterparts in Kazakhstan, Germany and Holland issues such as the latest developments in water-saving technology, improvement of quality of production etc, and a WEB-site will be created to link all existing GIS systems in the country, permitting a more efficient management of natural as well as cultural resources.

The goal of the project is to conceive and implement an innovative development project in the epicentre of the environmental disaster zone of the Aral Sea Basin, affected by the gradual drying up of this vast inland lake. The ecological problems such as soil salinization

Key project accomplishments of prior reporting period (Jan-October 2004):



**1. GIS mapping of cultural resources in Khorezm region**

The first step in identifying future tourism itineraries was to identify, inventory and map the cultural, natural and ecological resources to be protected, promoted and exploited for sustainable tourism. In spring 2004 a team comprising a history professor, a group of students and IT specialists from Khorezm State University carried out field work to document the major ancient monuments and archaeological sites of Khorezm region, record their geographical coordinates using a GPS, and incorporate them in the GIS mapping system developed under the UNESCO/ZEF/Bonn project. Combined with existing data on administrative boundaries, and management, road, drainage and water infrastructure, ground water, land use, incomes, crop types, etc., this will serve as a useful tool for the management and conservation planning of cultural resources in the region.

**2. Project launch; organization of stakeholders' workshops**

Two workshops were organized. The first was held in Nukus, capital of the autonomous region of Karakalpakstan, and the second at Khiva, capital of Khorezm region.

The participants debated actively and proposed interesting suggestions and proposals which have been most useful for the development of the project. Representatives of the local authorities of Karakalpakstan and Khorezm regions (including the Mayor of Khiva) actively participated in the working groups, which is very encouraging for the future of the project.

The difficulty and the challenge of these two workshops was to conceive a project which considers tourism not as an end in itself but as a motor for development and a way of getting to know a country

and its inhabitants, its ancient civilizations and traditional way of life. Thus, tourism is seen as an important part of development, to which are associated actions for the identification and protection of cultural heritage, environmental research and education, experimentation of alternative agricultural crops, sensitization and training in cultural industries (including conservation, handicrafts, museums) and tourism (training of guides, tourism and hospitality professionals, design of itineraries, management etc.) A team spirit has been created with a multidisciplinary network of resource people. Many new ideas were expressed, a real debate took place among the strongly motivated participants, and by the end of the workshop we were able to define and agree on the main lines of a strategy and action plan. The following suggestions were made, among others: to associate Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan to the project, as the civilization of Khorezm extended into both countries; to launch rapidly the tourism itinerary 'The Golden Ring of Khorezm'; to hold educational/informational workshops on questions of the environment and health; to include the question of funding the culture sector (through tourism) in the project; to identify and promote the intangible heritage; to encourage associations of women artisans; and to create a sub-regional centre for training in cultural tourism.

Our colleague Barry Lane and the team of the Tashkent Office (particularly Mr. Karimov, Mr. Ergashev and Ms. Mahmudova) had prepared the two workshops very well in the region surrounding the Aral Sea, bringing together resource persons and participants of quality, motivated by the UNESCO CCT project. The mission concluded with a working meeting at the UNESCO Tashkent Office, where we reviewed the workshops for the launching of the project and follow-up actions to be put immediately into effect in order to keep the momentum of these days.



The launch of the project during the workshop in Nukus



It is evident that the ability of UNESCO to develop and implement interdisciplinary projects in support of the struggle against poverty is a considerable comparative advantage of the Organization. Such an approach is, in fact, indispensable in order to tackle development in an effective way in the Aral Sea Basin which is on the one hand subject to severe ecological, social and economic problems while having on the other hand a rich past and present cultural legacy, largely unknown and underexploited.

In the final recommendations, the participants:

1. Request that UNESCO publish the proceedings of the workshops, including the minutes of the three thematic working groups;
2. Consider these workshops as the beginning of a process leading to the implementation of the project with all of the participants, and to mobilization of funds at local, national and international levels on the basis of a project document and action plan;
3. Request UNESCO to carry out a feasibility study/project document including a workplan and budget;
4. Declare that the participants in the workshops form an interdisciplinary network which may cooperate intellectually, technically and eventually financially to the implementation of the project.

Draft TOR were prepared by Mr Herve Barre for a contract for the realisation of a feasibility study/project document in three parts: 1. Present situation/expressed needs/project justification, 2. Proposals for actions/measures to be put into effect immediately; and 3. Workplan/budget/partners matrix.

### 3. Formation of working groups and collection of proposals

Three working groups were formed with the participation of experts and CTAs of three existing international projects, in order to collect proposals from local NGOs on: training programmes; culture and tourism development; and ecological measures to protect the environment.

### 4. Training programmes for tourism professionals

The UNESCO CCT project has established a partnership with the IIZ/DVV/TACIS/IBPP project 'Creating regional Training and Support Centres for SMEs in Tourism' for the identification, development and implementation of training programmes for tourism professionals. The IIZ/DVV/TACIS/IBPP team shall, in cooperation with MBM guruhi, carry out the following research in order to determine the training and infrastructure needs for the existing or newly-formed tourism facilities in Khorezm and Karakalpakstan regions:

- Select information about the tourism infrastructure in the region;
- Identify problems concerning human resources;
- Identify existing organizations dealing with training and education in the field;

- Analyse the expectations of foreign and national tourists;
- Identify the most needed topics and issues for training;
- Design a concrete, costed proposal.

The survey work will last five weeks and will comprise:

- Desk research of existing materials;
- Interviews and field research;
- Analysis of the received data.

In addition, IIZ/DVV/TACIS/IBPP project has been subcontracted to create fully equipped classrooms for training tourism and hospitality professionals within the NGOs 'Centre for Business and Tourism Development' in Khiva and 'Golden Heritage of the Aral Sea' in Nukus, and to carry out training courses in the following subjects:

- Management and financial administration for tourism
- Hotel infrastructure
- Modern cuisine and gastronomy
- Training of waiters
- Hospitality
- Design and advertising
- History, culture and crafts of Uzbekistan



A pupil of the UNESCO skills training centre for disadvantaged young people in natural dyeing and silk carpet weaving, Khiva, with one of the products

### 5. Support to local NGOs, cultural and tourism SMEs

#### 5.1. Support to Karakalpak craftswomen, Moynak

Moynak is one of the areas of Karakalpakstan which has been worst-hit by environmental, health and economic problems. It is chiefly known for the 'ships' graveyard', where tourists go to be photographed next to rusting, beached fishing vessels stranded in the desert sands. The 'Golden Heritage of Karakalpakstan' NGO, established in Nukus and Moynak, is providing employment to Karakalpak women through embroidery and other traditional crafts. The project will provide assistance to repair the

premises, improve the sanitary facilities for tourists, provide additional equipment, raw materials and training programmes for carpet weaving and natural dyeing, a solar pump for drawing clean drinking water, and a fully equipped traditional yurt for exhibiting and selling the craftswomen’s work and providing refreshments to tourists.



The yurt camp for tourists at Ayaz Kala, a local tourism initiative supported by the project

## 5.2. Support to local tourism development initiative, Ayaz Kala

Ayaz Kala is one of the most ancient and spectacular of the ‘desert castles’ situated between Khiva and Nukus. A yurt camp for about 25 tourists has been established by a local NGO on a small hill below the archaeological site. Apart from overnight stays, the camp provides traditional meals, camel trekking and folklore performances. It thus provides an essential stopping-off point for tourists on the ‘Golden Ring of Khorezm’ itinerary. However, in this remote spot the camp does not have access to a clean water supply or electricity. The demonstration pilot project will improve the sanitary facilities and provide a water supply and solar power for lighting and running a refrigerator.

## 6. Design and implementation of a GIS Web-site

In October 2004 the ZEF/Bonn project was subcontracted to design and implement a Web-site for the promotion of the newly introduced GIS laboratories in Uzbekistan. The web site will act as a network of all existing GIS centers operating in the country and will be in three languages (Uzbek, Russian, and English), with the possibility to add other languages, in case the GIS centres network expands beyond Uzbekistan in the future. A database will be established as a part of the web site, which will contain all GIS data contributed by the network participants. It will also include a forum for discussion of issues of common interest in real time.



Premises of the UNESCO/ZEF/Bonn development research project, Urgench State University

## 7. ‘Virtual laboratory’ videoconferencing

A subcontract with the ZEF/Bonn Project Urgench also included the organization of a ‘virtual laboratory’ videoconference at the State University of Urgench from 10-11 December on ‘Water and soil saving technologies and their suitability for small holders and private farmers of Khorezm within the Aral Sea Basin’, with the participation of UNESCO/ZEF/Bonn, Urgench State University, the Soil Science Institute of Uzbekistan, the Uzbek Cotton Research Institute, ICARDA, IHP Kazakhstan, TIAME, University of Tashkent, UrSU, ZEF and Bonn University, Germany.



Experimental field work, UNESCO/ZEF/Bonn University project

## 8. Pilot agricultural demonstration projects

The ZEF/Bonn project team has also been subcontracted to implement a pilot demonstration project for the transfer of the following water saving technologies in the Aral Sea Basin for improvement of welfare, livelihoods and ecological sustainability through improved land management and reduced water use for agricultural applications:

- To introduce drip irrigation through a pilot project for kitchen garden drip irrigation systems for small-holder farmers, organizing training courses from November through January on combined fertilization and irrigation



methods, and implementing in the spring on demonstration plots of about 500m<sup>2</sup> each.

- To implement a pilot soil conservation pilot application using zero tillage on 2ha demonstration plots in selected villages in Khorezm, organizing study visits for neighbouring farmers and local authorities to show the advantages of zero tillage, and organize the measurement of the yield by students of the ZEF project.
- To implement in two locations in Khorezm a pilot planting of a new strain of salt resisting cotton developed by the Institute of water Problems. The demonstration will be set up to compare on a relatively marginal soil and a good soil the performance of the actual and new varieties. The total planting area will be 1 ha.



Traditional Karakalpak costume and jewelry from the collection of the Igor Savitsky Museum, Nukus



Igor Savitsky Museum, Nukus, Karakalpakstan

## 8. Reviving a Cultural Oasis in Karakalpakistan

The following project has been identified and developed with the NGO 'Restaurateurs Sans Frontieres', in order to preserve and promote the Vision of Igor Savitsky, founder of the Nukus Museum. The activities will be partly funded through the present CCT project and implemented by Restaurateurs Sans Frontieres.

The immediate goals are:

- to preserve one of the greatest sources of cultural information in Uzbekistan, the Nukus Museum,
- to revive the intricate vision of Museum founder Igor Savitsky which incorporated a commitment to fine art creation and appreciation and local cultural heritage, and his legacy- The Karakalpak School of painters,
- to channel local creative energy toward the interpretation of cultural heritage,
- to strengthen support for the young and creative,

- to create and foster a living culture within the Nukus Museum.

The long term goals are:

- to empower young artists with cultural awareness and the means to express it,
- to give the Nukus Museum a more active and participatory role in cultural development in the area,
- to develop the relationship between young local artists and the Nukus Museum with hopes of finding prospective future leaders for that museum,
- to make better use of this incredibly unique and rich collection of artwork.

Summary:

Nowhere in Uzbekistan or in most of the world is there so thorough and sophisticated a collection of paintings as in the Nukus Museum. Along with the famous Russian Avant Garde works of the 1920's and 1930's is a substantial representation of Russian educated, highly talented artists who settled in Uzbekistan and focused their painting on the surroundings. Mazel's meditations on nomadic life, Korovai's paintings of Bukharan Jews and Volkov's depictions of Uzbek villages among others inspired a school of Uzbek painters and eventually a school of Karakalpak painters too. These artists introduced new artistic techniques in the contemplation of the landscape, its people, their traditions and often their crafts. Today the Nukus Museum is the largest and most active deposit of all of these elements. In their collection are thousands of works focusing on regional cultural heritage. As a source of information and inspiration to current local artists these paintings are invaluable and unfortunately in danger of irreparable decay. In all of Karakalpakistan, this is the only organized tool for cultural dissemination.

This extremely unique and valuable collection is the result of the passionate collection and creation of its founder and namesake, Igor Savitsky. Working as a painter on an archaeological dig in Karakalpakistan,

he fell in love with the landscape and local culture. He abandoned his life in Moscow and moved to Nukus where he spent the rest of his life building the museum collection and focusing his own creativity on the Karakalpak landscape. This powerful force in Savitsky and the collection he built brought modern art into the same context with local folk art and craft. One of his great accomplishments, the Karakalpak School of painting is a direct result of that influence. Under the tutelage of Savitsky this group applied sophisticated painting techniques to local cultural subject matter.

Nukus, Karakalpakistan, is home to a group of young artists of considerable talent and technical painting ability. Aged 15-18 these ~20 painters are high school students and are already affiliated with the museum through its annual painting contest. Based on the results of these contests, it is obvious that some of these students have artistic gifts. Using the Nukus Museum collection as their guide and source of inspiration, some of these students could harness their vision of Karakalpakistan's unique cultural heritage in the preservation of the Savitsky dream.

The following will be the main project activities:

- *Restoration:* From the ~6000 paintings and ~35,000 graphics in the Nukus Museum, RSF will select 35 works which are representative of both the technical excellence and others of local subject matter which Savitsky blended in the creation of the Karakalpak School. Three RSF restorers will execute the restoration and preparation of these works.
- *Inspiration:* With restoration complete, RSF will design a short series of lectures, studies and discussions on these particular paintings and how they are linked to local heritage. An expert on Karakalpak culture, an art historian and a well-established artist will participate along with ~20 local artists. Following the series, RSF will distribute adequate art supplies and ask these artists to paint with these discussions and restored paintings as their source of inspiration.
- *Creation:* The following 3 months will be allowed for the ~20 students to prepare their work.
- *Exhibition:* The new paintings will then be displayed with the old in an exhibition in the Nukus Museum. Additional exhibition opportunities in Tashkent will be explored.



Toprak Kala, capital of ancient Khorezm

*Principle Objectives for Forthcoming Six Months:*

**1. Workshops, round tables:**

The UNESCO project team and heads of the project working groups have been invited to participate in a donor's round table organized by Government of Karakalpakstan and JICA in Nukus on 11 November 2004. The aim of the round table is to constitute thematic working groups on issues such as: environmental protection; sustainable incomes; health; and tourism development.

UNDP is to launch an important new EU-funded project on poverty reduction in the Aral Sea region next year with objectives similar to to the present

CCT project and complementary activities. The project will include training workshops for local government officials and parliamentarians to advocate poverty-reduction policies and strategies; mapping of poverty; support to civil society; SME development; renewable energies; and microcredit. Preliminary agreement has been reached with UNDP to organize together with UNESCO a joint round table and thematic workshops to launch the project early in 2006.

## **2. Implementation and monitoring of pilot demonstration projects**

Pilot projects which have already been identified and subcontracted will be implemented and monitored over the next year.

## **3. Collection, evaluation and implementation of additional demonstration projects**

Other pilot projects in the pipeline will be finalized, subcontracted and implemented, such as:

- Development of leaflets and guidebooks for tourists on the ‘Golden ring of Khorezm’, together with specialists of the Australian/Karakalpak archaeological mission;
- Development of informative museum panels and the principal monuments and sites of the ‘Golden ring of Khorezm’ with specialists of the Australian/Karakalpak archaeological mission;
- Development of audio-visual promotional materials, magazine articles and TV programmes;
- Development of proposals for the better conservation and presentation of archaeological sites;
- Development of proposals in support of the Savitsky museum, Nukus, with the ‘Friends of Nukus Museum’ NGO;

- Development of proposals to improve the existing hotel and tourism infrastructure.
- Development of environmental and health education curricula and teaching materials.

## **Research and advocacy**

It is planned, with the existing UNESCO Silk Road Radio Soap project team of reporters and producers, to carry out field reports and interviews on topical social, human rights, health and economic issues in Aral Sea Region and incorporate them in the storylines of the educational radio drama series and supporting feature programmes.

