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UNESCO and EU are partnering to improve livelihood opportunities for youth in Yemen and safeguard the country's unique cultural heritage



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The ongoing conflict in Yemen is significantly affecting Yemen's economy and society, particularly youth and women, causing internal displacement of the population, severe economic decline, as well as extensive damage to infrastructure and assets across the country. The EU has just signed a new initiative, implemented by UNESCO, on cash for work.

The € 10 Million project is called *Cash for Work: Promoting Livelihood Opportunities for Urban Youth in Yemen* and aims at increasing income generating opportunities of young Yemenis in urban centres while preserving and restoring national cultural heritage. This effort – concentrated on UNESCO World Heritage cities and other historic urban heritage in the country – will certainly contribute to social cohesion and peace for the next three years with a clear impact and emphasis on the creation of employment opportunities.

The main objective of this programme is to promote livelihoods opportunities for youth in Yemen through urban regeneration activities which will include the restoration of particular buildings in historic urban centres that have been damaged during the ongoing conflict. The project will also contribute to social cohesion and peace-building through targeted cultural programming and support for civil society.

In particular, this project promotes progress towards building the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable conditions and reducing their exposure and vulnerability to shocks and disasters; achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value; devising and implementing policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products by 2030; strengthens efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage; and supporting least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials.

"Creating the conditions for sustainable employment and preservation of Yemeni culture is a very important element of the EU effort in this country. We are confident that this initiative will contribute to reducing the unemployment rate among youth in the Yemeni labour market, the

preservation and restoration of cultural assets, skills development, and provide support to cultural industries" said the EU Head of Delegation, Antonia Calvo Puerta.

Moreover, Anna Paolini, representative and Director of the UNESCO office for the GCC and Yemen added "We are extremely pleased with this strategic partnership with the EU for this innovative approach to the safeguarding cultural heritage at risk through empowering youth in Yemen. This project will not only provide livelihoods to youth and their families in this particular moment but it will also retain and strengthen competencies in conservation and restoration of the built heritage, which will be necessary in the recovery phase of the country."

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