



UNESCO

Activities supported by the Heritage Emergency Fund in IRAQ



Documentation of the urban heritage of Mosul (2018) © UNESCO

Support to the revival of musical life in Mosul (2019)

Following the liberation of the city of Mosul from its occupation by Da'esh and in response to the banning of all forms of artistic expression in this context, the HEF supported an activity to contribute to the reviving of the cultural life of Mosul. The activity was implemented by the NGO *Action for Hope*. Entitled *Wassla* ('connection'), the activity entailed, in its first phase, the undertaking of a research trip. Those on the trip aimed to identify local partners and develop plans for activities that respond to the needs of the local cultural actors and residents, as well as to design project implementation guidelines. This mission also allowed for consultation with local authorities. As a follow-up to the first phase, the HEF is supporting the implementation of the project 'Listening to Iraq', which aims to bring music to the core of the healing process in Mosul. The project will achieve this by researching different musical styles that can bring communities together, developing a teaching methodology and giving music training to contribute to filling the void in Mosul's cultural make-up. While implementation is foreseen to continue into 2020, a second research trip organized in November 2019 allowed the identification of local cultural actors to support the mapping of diverse musical practices. It was also agreed with the relevant stakeholders that the mapping should cover most of the ethnic and religious communities' musical traditions and practices, as performed by ordinary people, amateur musicians and professionals.

International Conference on “Revive the Spirit of Mosul” (2018)

UNESCO and Iraq co-organized the first international meeting on the "Revive the Spirit of Mosul" initiative on Monday, 10 September 2018, at the Organization's Headquarters in Paris. The Director-General opened the day with the Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers of Iraq, H.E. Mahdi Al-Alaq, in the presence of ministers, political figures, representatives of religious authorities, international experts, members of civil society and UNESCO partners. With the support of the Heritage Emergency Fund, the conference was organized with the objective to mobilize the international community for the reconstruction and recovery of Mosul, to take stock of the current situation on the ground, to announce the creation of the Mosul Revival Trust Fund, and to present a list of major projects that will contribute to the rehabilitation of Mosul's heritage sites. A number of countries and intergovernmental organizations committed to providing financial contributions, technical support, knowledge sharing, project staffing and educational materials.

Side event on the “Revive the Spirit of Mosul” initiative at the 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee (2018)

In order to raise awareness of the international community on the destruction on Mosul and gather support of the members of the World Heritage Committee for the UNESCO initiative “Revive the Spirit of Mosul”, a side event was organized at the 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee held in Manama, Bahrain, on 30 June 2018. With the support of the Heritage Emergency Fund, a renowned Iraqi heritage expert provided a technical and scientific analysis of the situation on the ground, including recommendations for actions to be undertaken for recovery. Moreover, the Heritage Emergency Fund made possible the development of a video presenting an overview of damage in the city of Mosul, based on the drone imagery of the Old City of Mosul collected by the French start-up Iconem.

Documentation of the urban heritage of Mosul (2018)

In the framework of UNESCO's flagship initiative for the recovery and reconstruction of the City of Mosul, Iraq, through culture and education, “Reviving the Spirit of Mosul”, the Heritage Emergency Fund supported the detailed documentation of the urban heritage of the city, through an overall survey of the historic urban fabric and urban heritage, including of religious interest, undertaken by the French start-up Iconem from 14 June to 7 July 2018, to complete a previous assessment of February 2018. In addition to the precise aerial survey of the Old City of Mosul, the scientific documentation and subsequent data analysis and processing led to the development of precise Global Positioning System (GPS) measurements of the city as well as the digitization, including in 3D, of several of its landmark monuments, including the Museum of Mosul, the Church of Al Tahira, Qattanin Mosque, the Imam Awnildden shrine and the Sheik Al-Shat shrine.

Training on “Counter Antiquities Trafficking in the Mashreq” (2018)

To counter the phenomenon of illicit trafficking of antiquities and to protect cultural heritage, UNESCO organized the training workshop “Countering Antiquities Trafficking in the Mashreq – A training programme for specialists working to deter cultural property theft and the illicit trafficking of antiquities”, from 16 to 20 April 2018, in Beirut (Lebanon). With the support of the Heritage Emergency Fund, the programme aimed at providing governmental authorities, art professionals, academics and decision-makers who work in fragile countries affected by cultural property theft and illicit trafficking of antiquities, with professional skills to counter such phenomena. 31 professionals from Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey, including 11 women, benefitted from the training. The 5-day training, animated by experts from the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT), INTERPOL, the International Council Of Museums (ICOM), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as well as the Association for

Research into Crimes against Art (ARCA), was structured around four modules, each designed to address issues of common concern in affected source and transit countries.

Monitoring of the state of cultural heritage via satellite imagery (2017 and 2018)

In the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between UNESCO and UNITAR-UNOSAT in 2016, the Heritage Emergency Fund continued to support the emergency monitoring via satellite imagery of cultural heritage sites. In this context, in 2017 and 2018, satellite imagery was received and analyzed for two cultural properties in Iraq: the World Heritage property “Hatra” and the Old City of Mosul, on the country’s Tentative List, including specific imagery of the al-Nouri Mosque and al-Hadba Minaret.

Support to the recovery of the cultural heritage of Iraq (2018 and 2017)

Following the liberation of Mosul from ISIL/Da’esh, officially announced by Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi on 10 July 2017, UNESCO scaled up its efforts to protect and conserve cultural heritage affected by conflict and/or at risk in the liberated areas of Northern Iraq, and in particular in the city of Mosul, Iraq’s second largest city. The Heritage Emergency Fund supported UNESCO in assisting the Iraqi authorities in the coordination and design of emergency response and recovery interventions in the Liberated Areas of Northern Iraq. These efforts and support continued in 2018, namely with the launch of UNESCO’s flagship initiative “Revive the Spirit of Mosul” for the rehabilitation of the city by the Director-General in February 2018. The support in human resources provided under the Heritage Emergency Fund in 2017 and 2018 allowed for the implementation of urgent safeguarding activities and provided seed funding for the further mobilization of resources, enabling the mid- to long-term implementation of rehabilitation and recovery interventions. In 2017, the main activities implemented by the Senior Project Officer recruited through support of the Heritage Emergency Fund consisted in: two field visits to Mosul, undertaken jointly with UN-Habitat Iraq on 10 and 23 October 2017, allowing the first assessment of the state of the city; a comparative study and the design of a Geographic Information System (GIS) database for the restoration and reconstruction of the Historic Urban Landscape of the Old City of Mosul; participation in a Technical Planning Workshop in Mosul on 16 November 2017 with a view to ensuring stakeholder engagement; a drone survey for a 3D modelling for the restoration and reconstruction of the Historic Urban Landscape of the Old City of Mosul, conducted by the French company Iconem. In 2018, further support was provided through coordination in planning for recovery and substantial resource mobilization, including the development of 17 project proposals and the raising of over USD 68 million. Furthermore, consultation and coordination with other UN Agencies and local and national stakeholders, including communities, were ensured and facilitated through staff based in Mosul and a second armoured car.

Coordination of the follow-up to UN Security Council Resolutions 2199 and 2253 (2018 and 2016)

In 2016, a UNESCO Focal Point was supported by the Heritage Emergency Fund to ensure the follow-up of UN Security Council Resolutions 2199 (February 2015) and 2253 (December 2015), concerning a world-wide moratorium on the trade in artefacts of illicit origin from Syria and Iraq. Its purpose also was to provide advice and support to Member States on other issues related to the prevention of illicit trafficking of cultural property from these countries. In 2018, the Heritage Emergency Fund enabled UNESCO to proceed to an analytical assessment of reports from Member States on their implementation of Resolution 2199. These reports revealed the most commonly used trafficking routes and contributed to the establishment of a list of seized artefacts originating in Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen.