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Restoring Livelihoods through Culture in Yemen

Virtual International Conference

26 - 27 May 2021

Cash
for
Work

Promoting Livelihood
Opportunities for Urban
Youth in Yemen

Event Organizers:



European Union

collaboration with



This project is funded by the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the authors and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

FOREWORD

Yemen is home to irreplaceable assets with an outstanding universal value to humanity. Unfortunately, several historic sites are in danger of deterioration due to ongoing conflict, climate change, and long-term lack of maintenance. In 2000, the Historic Town of Zabid in Yemen was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, and in 2015, the Old Walled City of Shibam and the Old City of Sana'a joined the list due to damages from the ongoing conflict. This damage was coupled with a collapsing economy and high unemployment rates, especially among the youth.

To protect Yemen's identity, heritage, and cultural life, UNESCO, the EU, the Social Fund for Development, and Yemenis worked together and rehabilitated over 150 historical buildings. Despite the setbacks, the project until now employed more than 2350 young male and female Yemenis in heritage sites while supporting artists, youth-led initiatives, and awareness-raising campaigns to boost the cultural and creative industries.

This is a significant milestone while we face a pandemic disrupting all aspects of life. Since our establishment, for the first time in 75 years, we are facing a challenge to the entire cultural ecosystem. At UNESCO, we always focused on sustainability, but this pandemic taught us resilience

is as important. We need to make culture more resilient to crisis, an objective the Cash for Work project in Yemen aims to achieve.

By combining social protection and urban rehabilitation, we provide Yemenis access to livelihoods, strengthen their economic resilience, develop skills and promote social cohesion. Supporting young Yemenis and local partners is the basis for resilience to take roots and grow at a community level. And by adapting to the challenges COVID-19 is creating, we build a more sustainable and resilient future.

I am looking forward to celebrating the progress made and discussing how our partnerships will move forward.



Ernesto Ottone Ramirez
UNESCO Assistant Director-
General for Culture

AGENDA

Day 1: Wednesday 26 May 2021

Creative intervention - Introduction

Welcome remarks

- | 14:03 – 14:10 **Mr Ernesto Ottone Ramirez**, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Culture
- | 14:10 – 14:17 **H.E. Mr Moamer Al-Eryani**, Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism, Republic of Yemen
- | 14:17 – 14:25 **Ms Sarah Rinaldi**, Head of Unit, Middle East/Central Asia, Directorate General for International Partnership, European Commission
- | 14:25 – 14:30 **H.E. Mr Mohammed Jumei**, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of the Republic of Yemen to UNESCO
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Creative intervention

Project's Milestones and Lessons-Learned

- | 14:32 – 14:40 **Mr Wesam Qaid**, Managing Director of the Social Fund for Development, Yemen
- | 14:40 – 14:55 **Dr Anna Paolini**, UNESCO Representative to GCC and Yemen, Director of UNESCO Doha Office
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Creative intervention

Session 1: Community-centered Urban Rehabilitation in Conflict Contexts: Lessons learnt, challenges and ways forward

- | 15:00 – 15:40 **Ms Hind Alawi**, Deputy head of M&E Unit, Social Fund for Development, Yemen
- Representative of Qatar Fund for Development**
Heritage Emergency Fund
- Mr Damien Helly**, Executive Director, Cultural Solutions Europe
-

Mr Mazen Sharif, CEO, Aden Again Association, Yemen

Mr Ahmed Zaouche, Project Manager, UNESCO GCC and Yemen Office (Moderator)

Creative intervention

Session 2: Preservation Standards and Livelihood Needs in Yemen: Bridging humanitarian development nexus through heritage?

| 15:45 – 16:40 **Dr Maja Kominko**, Scientific & Programs Director, ALIPH Foundation

Mr Nabil Munassar, Senior Cultural Heritage Officer, UNESCO Sana'a Office

Mr Ahmed Nooraldine, Youth and Livelihoods Expert, Yemen

Session 3: International Standards: Translating international conventions into operational plans

| 16:45 – 17:45 **Dr May Shaer**, Chief of the Arab States Unit, World Heritage Centre, UNESCO

Mr Tom Leiermann, International Conservation Expert, Germany

Dr Kay Van Damme, Nature Specialist, Ghent University, Belgium

Mr Bart Hesselings, Culture Heritage Research Associate, Culture Solutions (Moderator)

Short Films trailer screening

| 17:45 – 18:00 **Mr Nasser Almag**, CEO, Youth of the World Together Organization

Day 2: Thursday 27 May 2021

Creative intervention

Introduction - Supporting Youth-led Cultural Programming and Protecting Economic Resilience in Yemen

| 14:00 – 14:10 | **Mr Ahmed Zaouche**, Project Manager, UNESCO GCC and Yemen Office

Creative intervention

Session 4: Turning Young Yemenis' Ideas, Talents and Creativity into Livelihoods: Untapped potential of creative industries

| 14:15 – 15:15 | **Ms Safiya Al Jaberi**, Executive Director, SMEPS, Yemen

Ms Rima Mismar, CEO, Arab Fund for Arts and Culture, Lebanon

Ms Entesar Al-Duais, Young film maker, Yemen

Ms Shaima Jamal, CEO, Basement Cultural Foundation, Sana'a

Ms Nicole McNeilly, Training and Knowledge Coordinator, Culture Solutions (Moderator)

Conversation and virtual photo exhibition

| 15:15 – 15:30 | **Mr Asim Abdulaziz**: Visual artists, Aden, Yemen

Session 5: Building Engagement and Community Commitment to Culture and Peace in Yemen

| 15:30 – 16:30 | **Ms Ismini Palla**, Chief Public Information, UN SG Special Envoy for Yemen

Ms Jacqueline Lampe, CEO, RNW Media

Ms Somaya Gamal, Yemeni Influencer and Contents Creator, Yemen

Mr Mohammed Al-Jaberi, Program and Communication Officer, UNESCO GCC and Yemen Office (Moderator)

Creative intervention

Wrap-up and way forward

| 16:40 – 17:00 | **Dr Anna Paolini**, UNESCO Representative to GCC and Yemen, Director of UNESCO Doha Office

H.E. Mr Hans Grundberg, Ambassador, Head of Delegation of the European Union to Yemen

PROJECT'S FACTSHEET

Cash for Work: Promoting Livelihood Opportunities for Urban Youth in Yemen

Sector :

Youth employment, cultural heritage safeguarding, peace-building

Timeframe:

1 September 2018 – 31 August 2022

Implementing partners:

UNESCO, Social Fund for Development-Yemen, cultural heritage institutions, cultural CSOs in Yemen, local government agencies (GoPHCY, GoAM).

Objectives:

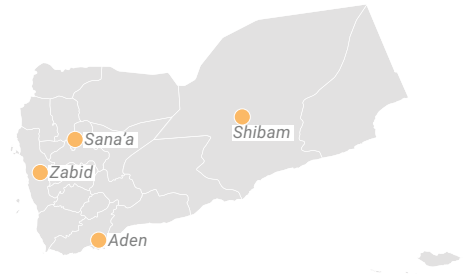
Increase livelihood opportunities for young Yemenis and promote appreciation of Yemeni heritage through cash-for-work restoration of historic urban environment.

Support sustainable, community-led youth programming in the arts to promote future employment in Yemeni cultural sector.

Improve heritage management capacities within government and civil society.

Geographical scope:

- Sana'a
- Shibam
- Zabid
- Aden



Direct beneficiaries:

- 4000 urban youth employed for 500,000 working days through cash-for-work
- Yemeni cultural CSOs supported by small grants and training workshops
- Employment and training of Yemeni master builders and craftsmen
- At least 500 women beneficiaries

Contribution to the SDGs:

- SDG 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- SDG 8. Decent work and economic growth
- SDG 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

PROGRESS MADE

As of May 2021, the following progress has been achieved with the support of the EU:

Outcome N° 1: 4000 young people (including 500 young women) and their families have access to income-generating opportunities in 4 historic cities and contribute to the sustainable preservation of cultural heritage.

- Enrolled over 2350 young workers (including 10% females), representing 8,000 household members.
- Surveyed over 8.000 historical buildings in four historic cities using advanced and remote sensing technologies as well as community-based assessments.
- Stabilized and/or rehabilitated 151 historical buildings in three World Heritage Sites in Danger (Sana'a, Shibam and Zabid) as well as in the historic city of Aden.
- Urban Rehabilitation Guidelines produced, and evidence-informed Rehabilitation Plans developed for each city.
- Capacity-building and consultative workshops organized on key themes such as fight against illicit trafficking, sustainable management of historical cities, preventive conservation of museum's collections, etc.



Outcome N° 2: Yemeni CSOs and relevant public authorities are committed and enabled to engaging youth in preserving cultural heritage and promoting cultural expressions.

- 8 cultural projects funded as part of the small grants programme to cultural CSOs and improving youth's abilities to generate income in cultural industries.
- Small jobs opportunities created for over 500 youth under 35 (including 188 female cultural operators).
- Training and networking opportunities created for over 60 young cultural operators in cultural management and communication.
- An educational and communication campaign was produced consisting of a series of five video episodes called "Turathna" ("Our heritage"). The social media posts reached over 4 million views. The five episodes were also broadcasted on Yemeni National TV.
- A mapping of 51 cultural and youth CSOs operating in the four cities and a mapping of culture activists and international organizations investing in creative industries was updated and disseminated.
- A series of youth-led awareness-raising online contents fostering appreciation of heritage and culture amongst youth produced in partnership with RNW Media with an overall outreach of 8 M. views.



URBAN REHABILITATION

I Production of Urban Rehabilitation Guidelines

UNESCO, in partnership with SFD, produced Urban Rehabilitation Guidelines targeting local architects, master builders and cultural heritage local stakeholders. The guidelines aim at helping to conduct necessary planning, surveying, maintenance, rehabilitation and monitoring, in compliance with recognized conservation standards and principles. The overall aim is to ensure the preservation of historical structures and their use as a living environment with the highest possible level of authenticity and safeguarding.

The guidelines are part of a comprehensive preservation strategy to preserve historic urban centers in Yemen and to encourage the traditional building industry satisfying modernization demands and preservation requirements.

I Community-led and Human-centred Approach to Rehabilitation

UNESCO recognizes the role of local communities for the safeguarding of cultural heritage in the 1972 Convention and advocates for the involvement of youth and women-focused civil society at the centre of (pre-)recovery urban strategies. The Cash for Work project in Yemen presents a novel approach that combines innovative methodologies in modern heritage rehabilitation and social protection to meet the most urgent development needs in a crisis – providing access to livelihoods, strengthening economic resilience and restoring social cohesion – while promoting local ownership over the safeguarding of endangered World Heritage.

Participatory cash-for-work schemes in heritage restoration and urban regeneration are implemented in World Heritage Sites for the first time through cohesive community-led approaches. Community-based damage assessments in Sana'a, Aden, Shibam and Zabid supported by consultations with local government agencies were conducted to identify priority intervention sites based on both inclusive human needs and heritage concerns. Beneficiary selection and risk mitigation mechanisms are similarly based on community-centred structures verified by transparent scientific data.

The intervention reaffirms the importance of human-centred approaches to heritage safeguarding and cultural development that ensure community ownership. The project contributes to an environment for sustainable development that allows communities to come together and maintain their connections with heritage and each other, while appreciating the diversity of cultural traditions and contributing to renewed dialogue and peace.



Challenges to Urban Rehabilitation in Yemen

The operating context marked by political fragmentation and severe security risks is very challenging for rehabilitation operations and mobility across the country. Besides, the extreme weather conditions observed during the second and third quarter of 2020 causing further deterioration of the state of conservation of World Heritage Sites and aggravated the living conditions of the communities living around and within those sites.

The COVID-19 crisis has introduced another layer of acute social and economic risks to Yemen. With a low-capacity health sector overwhelmed by war-related famine and disease outbreaks, the current COVID-19 crisis threatens serious damage to the country's fragile prospects for development and recovery. The introduction of cash for work schemes in World Heritage properties is also facing challenges from traditional preservation actors. The involvement of unskilled youth population within a domain that has always been reserved to architects and high skilled master builders raised concerns from local entities. Finally, shortage of raw construction materials formed additional delays and challenges.

CULTURAL AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Outcomes of the small grant programmes

UNESCO and the European Union, in partnership with SMEPS, have supported eight Yemeni CSOs for the small grant program. The program aims at developing cultural programming and income-generation capacities of selected civil society organizations to improve the livelihoods of young artists and culture professionals, with a view on reinforcing the resilience of the creative sector in Yemen. Eight cultural projects were funded representing a geographic diversity to include all the four historical cities targeted by the Cash-for-work project. Funds between 10,000 to 40,000 USD were dispersed through a cash-for-work scheme to improve the livelihood of all of their participants reaching more than 500 young female and male cultural operators.



Capacity building of cultural operators from Yemen and the diaspora

A series of trainings were organized to transfer skills to small grant winners and associated artists. The workshops covered topics like digital engagement, grants management, communication, and M&E. A workshop about digital engagement was held for ten Yemenis in Aden, and an online session was held to train 13 Yemenis in diaspora storytelling techniques. By introducing social media engagement tools and storytelling techniques, creatives can raise awareness about the diversity of heritage in Yemen. The project also developed a training toolkit on cultural entrepreneurship in times of crisis that covers the identification and benchmarking of support mechanisms to cultural programming, the articulation of a contextualized sustainable programme as an art incubator, a training methodology, assessment of partner cultural CSOs, and a reference list of proposed experts/trainers.



Online engagement with cultural heritage

Communication and awareness-raising materials by UNESCO, RNW Media, and SMEPS fostering the ownership amongst local communities reached 6 million people and resulted in 84 media features. A second phase of the cooperation agreement with RNW Media was launched in May 2020 consisting of the cash-based involvement of 174 young beneficiaries to develop content on cultural and creative industries. The objective of this project is to strengthen social cohesion through cultural activities. It aims to encourage young people to connect, participate and contribute meaningfully to their society using the power of culture.



YEMENI FILMS ON CULTURAL HERITAGE

Exclusive access to 12 short documentary films on culture heritage produced in collaboration with UNESCO, EU, YWT, New York Film Academy and SMEPS. The films are a result of an extensive training program utilizing cash-for-work methodology to support the livelihood of 12 young Yemenis (6 females and 6 males) while gaining a unique set of skills by internationally recognized professionals in the film industry. Throughout the training, the filmmakers selected different topics celebrating Yemen's unique and diverse culture. The films will be available on-demand for a week starting on 26 May 2021 providing an opportunity for the attendees to watch the videos at their convince. Registration to watch the films will be available through the event page on UNESCO website.

The 12 short films:

- Tea - Jalsat Bukhari
- Adeni Incense - Ahmed Aljabry
- Silver - Entesar Al-Duais
- Aqeeq - Basheera Alarefi
- The new old - Mayar Ahmed
- Craft Resists Extinction - Gamal Al-Zawqari
- Blessed nets - Hussam Abdulhakim
- Tehami's Muqla - Hamzah Al-Dubai
- Durar - Lamia M. Fadhel
- Amer's House - Randa Alziyadi
- Dream of String - Ezzat Shadad
- Sharh Hadrimi - Noor Albity



SPEAKERS AND PARTICIPANTS:



Mr Ernesto Ottone Ramirez,
UNESCO Assistant Director
General for Culture



H.E. Moamer Al-Eryani,
Minister of Information,
Culture and Tourism,
Republic of Yemen



H.E. Mr Mohammed Jumei,
Permanent Delegate of the
Republic of Yemen to
UNESCO



H.E Hans Grundberg,
Head of Delegation, EU
Ambassador for Yemen



Ms Sarah Rinaldi,
Head of Unit, Middle East/
Central Asia, Directorate
General for International
Partnership, European
Commission



Dr Anna Paolini,
UNESCO Representative for
GCC and Yemen, Director
UNESCO Doha Office



Mr Wesam Qaid,
Managing Director of the
Social Fund for Development,
Yemen

**Session 1: Community-centred Urban Rehabilitation in Conflict Context:
Lessons learnt, challenges and way forward**



Ms Hind Alawi,
Deputy head of M&E Unit,
Social Fund for Development,
Yemen



Mr Damien Helly,
Executive Director, Cultural
Solutions Europe



Mr Mazen Sharif,
CEO, Aden Again Association



Mr Ahmed Zaouche,
Programme Manager,
UNESCO GCC and Yemen

**Session 2: Preservation Standards and Livelihood Needs in Yemen: Bridging humanitarian
development nexus through cultural heritage?**



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Director, ALIPH Foundation



Mr Nabil Munassar, Senior,
Cultural Heritage Officer,
UNESCO Sana'a



Mr Ahmed Nooraldine,
Youth and Livelihoods Expert
- Yemen

Session 3: International Standards: Translating international conventions into operational plans



Dr May Shaer,
Chief of the Arab States
Unit, World Heritage Centre,
UNESCO



Mr Tom Leiermann,
International Conservation
Expert



Dr Kay Van Damme,
Nature Specialist, Ghent
University, Belgium



Mr Bart Hesselting,
Culture Heritage Research
Associate, Culture Solutions
(Moderator)

Session 4: Turning Young Yemenis' Ideas, Talents and Creativity into Livelihoods: Untapped potential of creative industries



Ms Safiya Al Jaber,
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Yemen



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Culture, Lebanon



Ms Shaima Jamal,
CEO of Basement Cultural
Foundation, Sana'a



Ms Entessar Al-Doiss,
Young Yemeni filmmaker



Ms Nicole McNeilly,
Training and Knowledge
Coordinator, Culture
Solutions (Moderator)

Session 5: Building Engagement and Community Commitment to Cultural Heritage Protection in Yemen



Ms Ismini Palla,
Chief Public Information, UN
SG Special Envoy for Yemen



Ms Jacqueline Lampe,
CEO, RNW Media



Ms Somaya Gamal,
Young Yemeni Influencer and
Content Creator



Mr Mohammed Al-Jaberi,
Communication Officer,
UNESCO GCC and Yemen

Short Films Screening: 12 Short films focusing on culture in Yemen produced in collaboration with UNESCO, EU, YWT, New York Film Academy and SMEPS – Available on-demand for a week



Mr Nasser Almag,
CEO, Youth of the World
Together Organization

Conversation with a young Yemeni artist



Mr Asim Abdulaziz,
Visual artists, Aden, Yemen



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CONTACT:

DOHA@UNESCO.ORG
BRUSSELS@UNESCO.ORG

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