Mainstreaming Cultural Heritage in Community Engagement.

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International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)

- Is an intergovernmental organization working in service to its Member States to promote the conservation of all forms of cultural heritage, in every region of the world engaging and informing new generations of professionals

- **Disaster Risk Mitigation and First Response to Cultural Heritage**

- It launched a **First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis** training course

- *The role of humanitarians and cultural heritage in emergency response:* The project aimed to demonstrate the integration of cultural heritage first aid with humanitarian relief makes a meaningful contribution in alleviating the trauma of communities affected by disasters and conflicts, while promoting early recovery, as well as a transition to lasting peace.
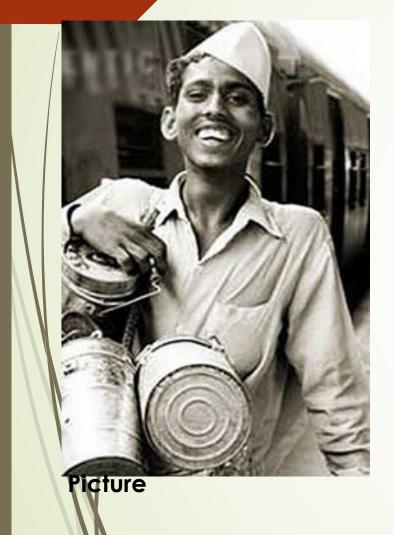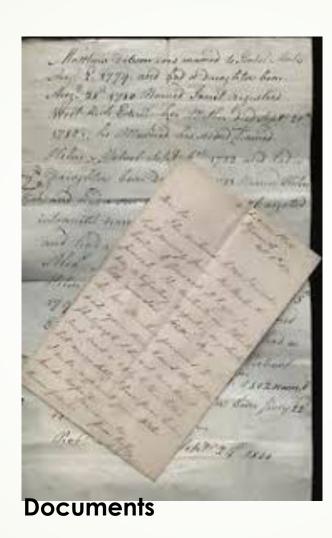
What does Heritage mean?

- **_Literally:_**

_1- _'a property that is or may be inherited; an inheritance.'

_2- _a special or individual possession; an allotted portion

"Heritage is the legacy that we receive from the past, that we experience in the present and that we will pass on to future generations. However, cultural heritage is not limited to monuments and collections of objects. It also includes lived expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants. These include oral traditions, performing arts, social manners, rituals, celebrations, practices and knowledge and techniques related to traditional handcrafts. Despite its fragility, intangible cultural heritage or living heritage is an important factor in maintaining cultural diversity." **UNESCO**

What is Heritage?

Picture

Documents

Old Buddha

What else…?

«Cultural Heritage is an expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including customs, practices, places, objects, artistic expressions and values. Cultural Heritage is often expressed as either Intangible or Tangible Cultural Heritage (ICOMOS, 2002).»
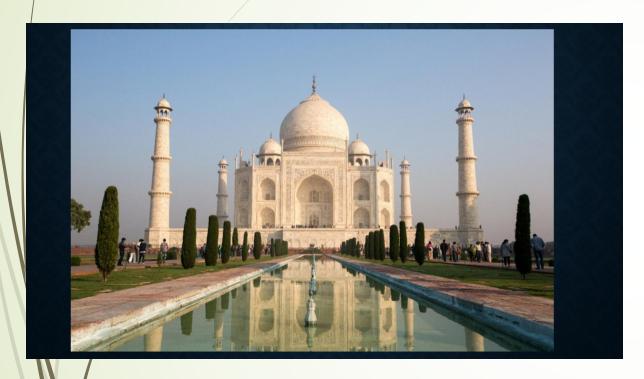
It is important to distinguish between:

1- Tangible Heritage

2- Intangible Heritage

1- Tangible:

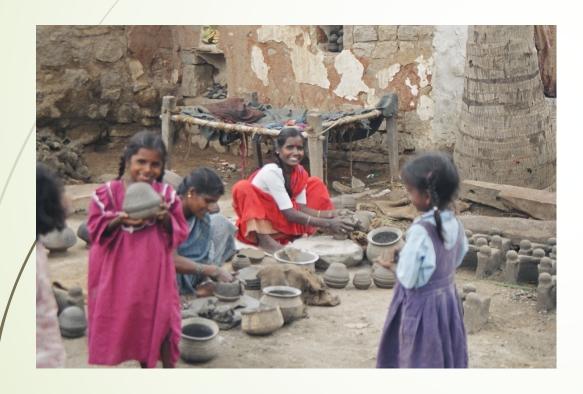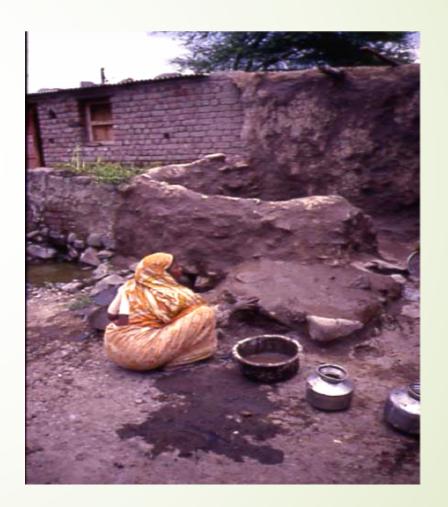**Historical Monuments**

Religious monuments

Archeological Sites
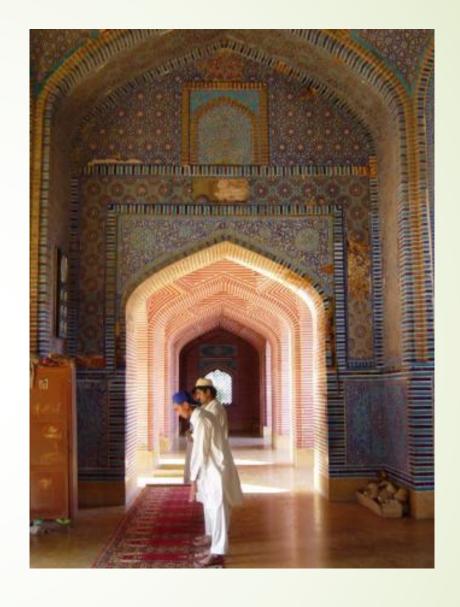
2- Intangible Heritage

Traditional Skills and crafts

Ritual and cultural practices

Natural landscape

Values associate to cultural heritage

- The term 'heritage values' refers to the meanings and values that individuals or groups of people bestow on heritage (including collections, buildings, archaeological sites, landscapes and intangible expressions of culture, such as traditions).

- These values have been a key factor in the legitimation of **IDENTITY.** Therefore heritage protection and management becomes valuable towards time and space, although the understanding of what they are has varied over time and there are nuances between one country and another.

- Values are drawn from association and memory of past events

PAST   **PRESENT**   **FUTURE**

Social and spiritual value

Artistic Value

Historic Value

Enviromental value

Educational Value

What are the impact of disaster and conflict?

Loss of knowledge

- Communities are dispersed: prevents transmission

- Hierarchy of needs – cultural transmission becomes low priority

- Deliberate targeting of particular group and its culture/memory

- Damage to intergenerational transmission (migration)

- Changing of cultural habits and practices

Interruption of tangible/intangible relationship

- Loss of sites where Intangible Cultural Heritage practices took place

- Loss of tools and materials

- Loss of records

- Lack of raw materials

- Limited access to religious, cultural and social sites

Impact on values associate with Cultural Heritage= CRISIS of IDENTITY (Who Am I? Where Do I belong?...)

How can we assess the effect of a disaster/conflict on Cultural Heritage?

What is the local community identifies as important cultural heritage?

- **Step 1:** Identify the affected community

- **Step 2:** Identify and communicate with key stakeholders within the community

- **Step 3:** Understand local heritage concerns

- **Step 4**: Document the tangible heritage assets associated with community-based heritage (place of worship, spiritual and traditional places, etc..)

- **Step 5:** Identify and assess the status of traditions and knowledge.

- **Step 6:** Recovery, Securing and Stabilizing

Step 1: Identify the affected community

Communities are made of people, not rhetoric. You can define a community by the **shared attributes** of the people in it, and/or by the **strength of the connections** among them. (Nina Simon)

We define community as **a group of people coming together to work for a common goal**. Shared goal and passion unites them beyond differences, social labels, and stereotypes. Community can be built through collaborations across race, ethnicity, gender, age, and socio-economic statuses. (Justina Crawford-Williams and Christina Oi Ying Nip)

geography   identity   affinity

Step 2: Identify and communicate with the cultural brokers

➡ **Who are the Culture brokers?**

- Traditional practitioners.

- Elders.

- Community leaders.

- Elected leaders.

- College-educated community members.

- Religious leaders

- Women 'or/and men's groups

- Craft associations

- Artisans

- Performers

- Practitioners

➡ **Informal Approaches**

- Active Listening

- Sincerity

➡ **Research Design**

- Focus Groups

- Meetings

- Conversations

- Survey

Step 3: Identify local heritage concerns

➡ **What is community concerned about?**

- oral expressions
- traditional languages
- performing arts
- social practices
- rituals
- festivals
- local knowledge
- special traditions
- traditional crafts

Step 4: Document the tangible heritage assets associated with community-based heritage

- Museum
- School and library
- Place of Worship
- Historical and archeological monuments
- Community places
- Spiritual and religious sites
- Records and archives
- Community objects and tools
- Etc..

Step 5: Identify and assess the status of traditions and knowledge.

➢ **Estimate the extent of the change brought by the disaster and the effect this may have over time**

- Is the community able to continue its practices, rituals, festival, religious activities?

- Has the transmission of knowledge and skills stopped after the disaster/conflict?

- Has the community been facing any threats or risk in performing its arts?

- Has the community access to religious/spiritual sites?

- Is there any vulnerable group in need of major support in performing its tradition? And why?

➢ **A good understanding of a community tradition is needed and mediation by culture brokers is important.**

➢ **This evaluation step is the most difficult.**

Step 6: Securing and stabilizing

Stabilization of community-based heritage means:

- Ensuring that a community can continue a specific practice, ritual, etc. in the immediate aftermath of a hazard event.

- Ensuring that the transmission of knowledge and skills can continue until more long-term solutions can be identified.

- May involve documentation for a visual and oral record for the future.

- In cases of significant displacement or loss of culture bearers, master-apprentice training may be necessary.

Stabilizing community-based tangible heritage:

- Includes buildings, sites, objects, tools, costumes, and any material culture associated with an intangible practice.

- If the situation analysis and on-site damage and risk assessment have identified urgent needs, the same steps can be undertaken as above for built and movable heritage.

Key benefits of Cultural Heritage Programmes to post-conflict recovery

- **Community engagement:**
  artistic and cultural activities can engage a wide audience in a way that resonates with their cultural background. They are an effective forum for community collaboration and for engaging marginalised communities.

- **Skills for employment:**
  training in the creative industries can provide marginalised young people
  with a way out of unemployment and hope for a better future, providing an alternative to that offered by violent groups, while creating economic benefit for the wider community.

- **Inclusive development:**
  policy work can provide impact at scale by working with government to integrate cultural policies into regional and national-level development strategies.

_____

* The art of peace. The value of culture in post-conflict recovery / British Council, 2019

- **Therapeutic interventions:**
provide significant benefits during and after conflict, helping communities to survive a difficult time and process the trauma of conflict and displacement.

- **Social cohesion:**
cultural activities based on a shared common heritage can build a sense of community and provide a platform for dialogue and moderate narratives. Storytelling provides a way for divided communities to address stereotypes.

- **Voice and agency**:

  in areas where traditional protest is difficult, the arts can provide an alternative outlet for expression. They can help give voice to marginalized communities and provide them with a sense of agency.

POTENTIAL OF MEMORIALIZATION IN POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION

- **Reconciliation:**
  By bringing opposing groups together to work on a common project, memorialization projects can contribute to the re-building of relationships between previously divided communities.

- **Recognition:**
  It can provide a space for victims to be recognized and reintegrated into society.

- **Promote national identity:**
  By addressing distortions about the past and rewriting a national narrative that is inclusive of all social groups, memorialization can mark a new era of democracy and national identity.

- **Healing:**
  In many conflict situations, gross human rights violations include disappearances and mass killings. In the absence of human remains, memorial sites can provide spaces for mourning and reflection, contributing to long-term healing.

- **Truth-telling and setting the historical record straight:**
By documenting human rights violations, memorialization projects contribute to broader post- conflict truth-telling processes. Additionally, memory sites themselves may provide physical evidence of gross human rights violations.
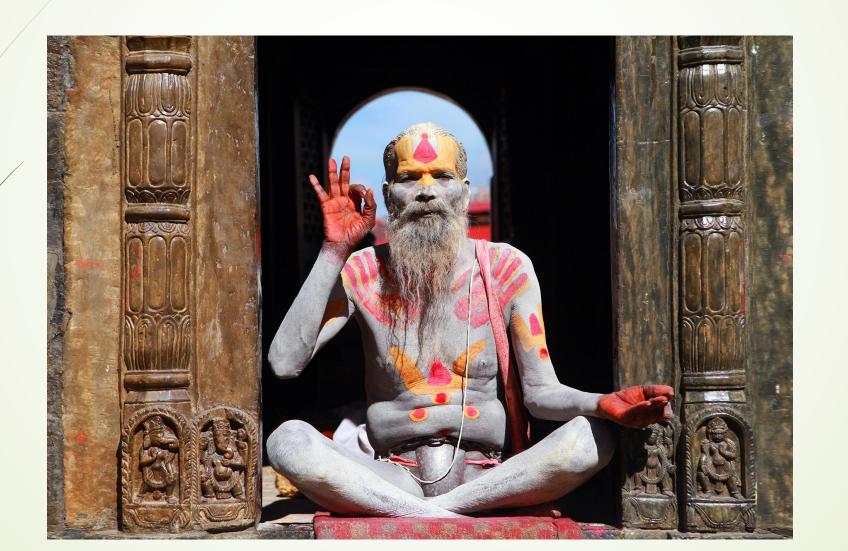
- **Civic Engagement:**
Societies emerging from regimes of authoritarianism and gross human rights violations are often characterized by cultures of silence and a lack of public engagement. Through the process of memorialization and ongoing education programs at sites of memory, memorialization projects can promote constructive public dialogue, discussion and debate.

- **Never Again!**
Through education programs, memorialization initiatives can promote cultures that respect human rights and prevent future cycles of violence.

HEALING USE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN POST-CONFLICT CONTEXTS, ITS ROLE IN RECONCILIATION AND STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY

Examples from the world:

- **Myanmar**

  - Monasteries, pagodas and theatre workshops in the towns of Bogalay and Moulemeingyun were restored in the wake of cyclone Nargis (2008)
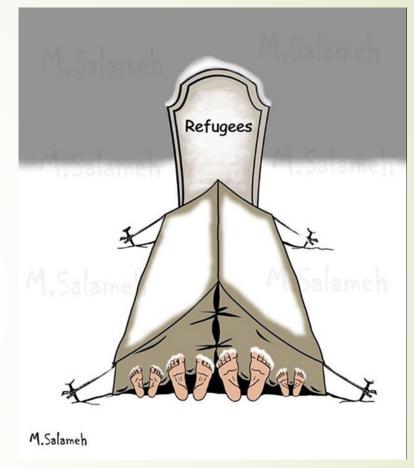
- **Uganda**

  - Use of songs to suggest that former combatants should not be stigmatised was credited with contributing to the end of decades of conflict.

- **Nigeria**

  - Powerful potential of music to dissipate inter-ethnic conflict, and transmit positive messages of good citizenship and civic responsibility.

- **Syria**

  - Art therapy (skills for street children to improve their lives and reduce their vulnerability)

  - Theatre (The Prophecy performance reflects upon the current conflict and encourage feelings of hope, tolerance and understanding among Syrians, imagine a better future after the conflict, bring together around a sense of a common past).

Mahmoud Salameh, a featured artist for The Refugee Art Project, is a Palestinian refugee from Syria

Colombia

- "Orange economy of the creative industries (neutral ground for mutual understanding)

- Youth music (music for Reconciliation)

- Arts and crafts (a non-threatening path for dialogue).

Rwanda

- Cultural education (Itorero programme launched in 2007, based on the 17th century cultural and civic 'school' for Rwandans.

- Film and theatre (Never Again Rwanda works with those affected by the genocide and seeks to encourage 'creative, active and critical thinking' citizens through films, discussion and group work)

- Remembrance and ceremonies (Kwibuka, the annual commemoration of the 1994 genocide, Flame of Remembrance with community performances of theatre, music, arts).

Iraq

- Reopening of Kirkuk Museum in 2003, after the US-led invasion of Iraq, helped defuse community tensions and remind them of their shared cultural heritage.

Art Therapy project
Za'Atari Syrian Refugees Camp Project, Jordan

Transmission of Skills,
various projects in Myanmar

ART-THERAPY AND YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
Independence Square 2014, Kiev

TRAUMA HEALING
Ivan Honchar Museum 2014, Kiev

Sleepover for resettled children from the occupied regions of Donbas, Ivan Honchar Museum, Kyiv, 2014

Any questions?

Thank you