

An Introductory to International Bodies in Conservation of Cultural Heritage

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Cultural Heritage and Key Issues

- The present situation of the cultural heritage status in **Palestine** is a reflection on the **deteriorated economic situation** in general.
- The survival of the **cultural assets** is deeply influenced by the **economic criteria** and overall **economic rationale** of support for the Cultural Heritage domain.
- The proper **maintenance and management** of the **Palestinian cultural heritage assets** can positively affect the **quality of life through** a wealth of channels, economic, cultural, spiritual, and educational.
- Therefore, Cultural Heritage needs to be considered on **national level** as key requirement in the overall desired **national development plan**.

Cultural Heritage in Palestine

Different **approaches** have been carried out to maintain the local cultural heritage assets, due to:

- *Vacuum of **national** policies,*
- *Organizational **weakness**,*
- *Low **financing** levels,*
- *Until recently, after Oslo Accord, Cultural heritage have not been introduced clearly.*

*Therefore, Cultural heritage is not a **priority**
Cultural heritage is conceived **within** development
Development **focus** aims mainly to reduce **poverty** and
not **sustainable development**.*

Cultural Heritage in Palestine

Since the Cultural Heritage is not yet on the “National Agenda” ...

- Cultural Heritage is seen as **liability** rather than as social and economic development factor.
- Most cultural activities is funded through “**International Aid**”, with donors objectives and various understanding of communities needs.
- Most Cultural Heritage activities comes within “**project or program**” that has specific objectives with limited time and budget.
- Most different efforts lack strategy with no coordination, duplication, lack of effectiveness and efficiency, and **sustainability**

Sustainable Cultural Heritage

- Should be conceived within a **broader map of development strategy**.
- Should have **strategic dimensions** related to investment, socioeconomic effectiveness and sustainable development.
- Should be regarded as an expression of **total way of productive life** (tangible and intangible heritage).
- Should be carried out by the different actors in integrated and complementary mechanisms to **accumulatively** achieve the **national** objectives.

Main Key Actors in Cultural Heritage

Local and International:

- Palestinian state: Ministry of Antiquities and Tourism, PECDAR, Ministry of Planning,....
- International donors (States and Commissions): USA, France, Japan, Norway, Sweden, European Union, ...
- International Organization: World Bank, UNDP, USAID,..
- International NGOs: UNESCO, Save the Children, CHF,..
- Local Organization: Riwaq, Welfare, Hebron rehabilitation committee, Cultural centre of Bethlehem, ...
- Private Sector

International Aid Focus

- Until recently, not all donor agencies have considered cultural heritage among its main **area of focus**, nor was specific **framework** recognized to control and lead their different interventions in the cultural heritage preservations.
- The key question for most of the donors concerning the cultural heritage development is **not only conceptual** in terms of cultures only, but rather more to **strategic dimensions** related to investment, reduction of poverty, sustainable development...and political

Ongoing Efforts...

- During the last few years, the local government has recognized the importance of addressing the needs of cultural heritage, and approached the **interested donor agencies** to attract **additional efforts and support** in this direction.
- This has been demonstrated in **two dynamic** perspectives:
 - First, to being **responsive** to local needs and demands;*
 - Second, to the changes in **development rationale** and the including of cultural heritage.*
- This recognition of cultural heritage requires **identification** and awareness of cultural dimensions in all development interventions from one side, and the incorporation of socio-cultural knowledge to be used in the key process for development, such as policy formulation, planning, financing, and institutional mobilization from the other side.
- Meeting such requirements increases the **sustainability** of development by laying the foundation for the preservation of our local cultural heritage.

Donors Policies Should ...

For donors' policies to match the cultural heritage local needs, it requires addressing it in **consistency** with the developing local socio-cultural dimensions throughout its **national action plan** which could be recognized in considering the followings:

1. *Comprehensive and large scale **sectoral interventions**, instead of small project identification.*
2. *Strengthen the **institutional structures**; overcome the governance weaknesses, link to development's mainstream, and reform the management and financing of the cultural heritage aspects.*
3. *Differentiate risks for the cultural heritage **deterioration** mainly indicated in the natural, economic, social and institutional causes.*
4. *Consensus improvement in the international **cooperation and cofinancing arrangements** to enhance the volume of cultural oriented development aid.*

What Is expected from the International Aid

- Donors' support and interventions should **complement**, and **not duplicate**, the many cultural heritage preservations activities ongoing in Palestine either by the local government and/or other bilateral donor agency.
- Cultural Heritage preservation is a **partnership endeavor**, requiring the support and participation of large number of **interested parties**, including governments, donor organizations, and the community.
- There are still much to do and learn to better integrate the cultural heritage **management into development**, this needs to be considered at both levels the local governments and donor agencies' interventions.

Therefore,

- Donors should be aware of the need to create a **strong connection** between aid and development.
- The aid should be spent on activities that ensure **employment** and **generate revenues**.
- Maximizing the benefit of aid efforts through **effectiveness**.
- Increasing the **social capital**, by spending the aid through popular committees and **awareness** on the improvement of public services, which **strengthen the spirit of partnership**.

And,,

- The key recommendation is to consider cultural heritage as a tool for **economic and local development** and **to build national identity**.
- The contribution of cultural heritage tourism for the socio economic development of the partner countries shows **great potential for growth**, and this also requires networking .

Thank You...