Connecting Culture and Heritage for Disaster Resilience: Supporting the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

Giovanni Boccardi
Head, Emergency Preparedness and Response
UNESCO Culture Sector

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Presentation Outline

1. Connecting the Dots: Disaster Risk Reduction, Cultural Heritage, and Resilience

2. A Fragmented Connection: Opportunities to Strengthen the Links

The Role of UNESCO

- UNESCO is the only UN agency with a specific mandate in culture

- Sets standards, acting in the framework of its legal instruments:
  - The 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage
  - The 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage
  - The 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
  - The 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions

- Mobilizes international community

- Provides coordination and information sharing platforms

- Builds capacity and provides policy advice
1. Connecting the Dots
Disaster Risk Reduction, Cultural Heritage, and Resilience

- To understand the connection between disaster risk reduction, cultural heritage and resilience, we must first recognize the unique role and contribution of cultural heritage in reducing disaster risk and building resilience.
It Reflects Cultural and Natural Diversity
It Is Inherently Risk-Sensitive
It Mitigates Risks Through Goods and Services
It Is Connected To And Owned By The People
It Is A Symbol Of Identity And A Factor Of Social Stability
Cultural tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing global tourism markets.

The culture and creative industry is one of the most rapidly growing sectors of the world economy and a highly transformative one in terms of income generation, job creation and export earnings.

Growth rates of the culture and creative industry by region:

- Middle East: 17.6%
- Africa: 13.9%
- Latin America: 11.9%
- Asia: 9.7%
- Oceania: 6.9%
- North and Central America: 4.3%

In the EU, the industry accounts for 4.2% of the EU’s GDP and is the third largest employer, providing 7 million jobs.
Acts As A Powerful Tool To Communicate Risks
2. A Fragmented Connection
Opportunities to Strengthen the Links

- With a few notable exceptions, the overall connection between disaster risk reduction, cultural heritage and resilience is weak, with efforts to protect heritage from disaster risk and to draw on heritage as an instrument for building resilience remaining inconsistent.
Most World Heritage Properties Are Not Prepared For Disasters

- The cases where the risks were not identified within the management documents
- The cases where even though risks were identified, there was no concrete plan or any reference to mitigating these in the management systems established for the properties
- The cases where the risks were identified but mitigation included was considered mainly for visitor safety and not the properties themselves
- The cases where the risks were identified and plans to mitigate these were considered, but where the mitigation was not extensive enough or where there were concerns as to the effective implementation of such plans.
- The cases where both risks and mitigation of these were presented in an effective and extensive Risk Preparedness Plan.
The Challenges To Be Faced

- Most heritage sites and traditional knowledge systems are 
  unprotected / unexploited with respect to risks from disasters.

- The Heritage sector does not have a strong policy for risk 
  reduction that fits within the wider DR framework.

- The Heritage sector finds it very difficult to convince decision 
  makers (Governments, development agencies, donors) and 
  disaster managers that it is useful to invest in risk reduction for 
  heritage, at all stages.
Opportunity 1: Bridging a Persistent Institutional Gap

Heritage concerns should be integrated into disaster management policies.

Disaster Management Systems should be introduced into cultural heritage sites.
Integrating Disaster Risk Management within Site Management Plans and Systems
Opportunity 2: Capacity-Building

- Strengthening **institutional support and governance** for reducing risks.

- Using **knowledge, innovation and education** to build a culture of disaster prevention

- **Identifying, assessing and monitoring** risks from disasters

- Reducing **underlying risk factors**

- Strengthening disaster **preparedness**
Opportunity 3: Ensuring the Systematic Integration of Culture in Post-Disaster Needs Assessments

- A joint protocol for action established in 2008 by the UN, the EU and the World Bank.

- A framework to help coordinate recovery efforts across different sectors and with a risk reduction focus.

- Methodology that coordinates consistent and predictable assistance to Governments in assessing disaster’s socio-economic consequences.

- A chapter on Culture was introduced in recent years, developed by UNESCO.
Consideration of culture when the ToR of PDNAs are established.

Strengthen integration with DRR/R Sectors and the broader integration of culture sub-sectors (tangible/intangible/movable/immovable).

Build capacity of heritage institutions (UNESCO, ICOMOS, ICCROM, ICOM etc.) and that of national authorities.

Establish regional teams of trained professionals in stand by.

Progressive improvement of PDNA-CLT methodology drawing from experience and research.
3. Looking Ahead
Supporting the Implementation of the Culture and Heritage-related Provisions in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

- Once we understand the unique role and contribution of cultural heritage, we are better able to leverage and connect it to the evolving DRR/R international landscape and frameworks.
The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction: 2015-2030

- Adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and endorsed by the UN General Assembly in 2015.

- Calls for “the substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries.”

- An unprecedented step in the recognition of culture as a key dimension of disaster risk reduction and the need to protect and draw on heritage as an asset for resilience.
The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction: 2015-2030

Priorities for Action linked to Culture and Heritage:

- **Priority 1: Understanding disaster risk**
  Ensure adequate identification, assessment and monitoring of disaster risks to culture and heritage, including its associated intangible aspects and movable items.
  Ensure adequate consideration of underlying drivers of risk, including the impacts of climate change and urbanization, on culture and heritage.

- **Priority 2: Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk**
  Mobilize and strengthen support with relevant global, regional, national and local institutions for reducing disaster risks to culture and heritage.

- **Priority 3: Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience**
  Build a concern for culture to incentivise funding for disaster risk reduction for culture and heritage.

- **Priority 4: Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction**
  Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of disaster prevention.
How can UNESCO help YOU?

- Conducting Risk Assessments e.g. Petra
- Developing Disaster Risk Management Plans e.g. Albania
- Conducting Training Courses and Capacity-Building Projects e.g. Post-Disaster Needs Assessment
- Sharing Best Practices and Guidance Materials
A Proposal For Discussion:
Develop the Culture Sector Module in the World Bank CityStrength Diagnostic Guidebook and Pilot this in Your Country