

CULTURE AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



HIGHLIGHTS

- Since the first World Heritage Youth Forum in 1995, in Bergen, Norway, over 30 Youth Forums have been held around the world.
- Since 2008, more than 40 new World Heritage Volunteer projects have been launched. There are now 55 projects at 53 World Heritage sites in all 5 continents scheduled to take place in 2013.
- Opportunities for mentoring and intercultural dialogue in the creative industries have strengthened the professional and creative development of young people around the world (UNESCO-Ruby Partnership Programme; Travel to Learn Arts and Crafts; UNESCO-Aschberg Bursaries for Artists Programme).
- Transmitting heritage values to young people favours intercultural understanding, respect for cultural diversity and helps create an environment propitious to a culture of peace.

Culture has the power to transform entire societies, strengthen local communities and forge a sense of identity and belonging for people of all ages. As a vector for youth development and civic engagement, culture plays an essential role in promoting sustainable social and economic development for future generations. Youth can act as a bridge between cultures and serve as key agents in promoting peace and intercultural understanding.

Current situation

Youth comprise 18% of the world's population. Representing a significant segment of the community, young people:

- Can contribute to local development and prosperity.
- Can be a bridge between cultures and between tradition and modernity.
- Have the interest, energy and passion to address issues and concerns, such as heritage management, sustainable tourism, local development and community involvement.
- Have affinity for information and communication technologies to network and transcend geographical boundaries.
- Are in the position to act as potent agents of positive social change that will yield greater economic and social well-being in the perspective of sustainable development for generations to come.

At the same time, young women and men are particularly affected by development challenges at all levels, frequently faced with disproportionately high levels of unemployment, insufficient access to education and professional training, intolerance and exclusion, among others. This is all the more important in cities where increased urbanization has further accentuated these challenges for young people.





Investing in local cultural resources including tangible and intangible heritage including traditional knowledge and skills, as well as music, dance, theatre and festivals, can develop sustainable creative economies, open up opportunities to youth, and help strengthen identity and social cohesion. Promoting creativity for and among youth and harnessing young people’s creative potential and energy therefore needs to be a priority in finding creative solutions to today’s challenges.

Currently young people across the world are increasingly involved in heritage protection and promotion, recognising that heritage does not only belong to the past, but is also part of their identity. Transmitting heritage values to young people favours intercultural understanding, respect for cultural diversity and helps create an environment propitious to a culture of peace – principles which are central to the United Nation’s mission. Heritage related initiatives clearly demonstrate that culture is an indispensable driver and enabler of sustainable development. Heritage provides testimonies to, and links between, the past and present.

As one of the world’s few inexhaustible natural resources, creativity is a source of considerable potential in promoting sustainable socio-economic development for people of all ages. The creative industries can serve as a springboard for new ideas and innovation, which can open up new opportunities for employment and learning, while at the same time promoting well-being and self-esteem and empowering entire communities. Young women and men are increasingly engaged in proposing creative solutions to local challenges. This creative energy needs to be harnessed so as to maximize the positive impact it can have on society.

The UN System’s response

Transmitting the values of intercultural understanding, cultural diversity and creating a sustainable environment from one generation to the next is essential if the seeds of peace are to be planted and nurtured by future generations. The United Nations initiates young people to these principles through involving them as active partners and stakeholders in both its on-the-ground and normative actions. Engaging youth in the policy-making process contributes to better informed and equitable cultural policies and strengthens transparency, accountability and ownership.

The UNESCO World Heritage Education Programme strives to give young people the opportunity to learn and develop by acquiring knowledge about World Heritage protection, conservation and promotion. The driving force of the programme is the involvement of youth as a major segment of the community, taking cultural dimensions into account, encouraging them to become thinkers and actors of development. The Programme has generated many different projects and activities such as Youth Forums, skills development training courses, educative workshops and seminars, the World Heritage Volunteer Programme and its main tool, *World Heritage in Young Hands (WHYH)*, an educational resource kit for school teachers, existing in 37 national language versions, and which has reached at least 1 million young students¹.

¹ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/educationkit/>





The UN has invested in the creative energy of young people by engaging in numerous capacity building, policy development, and awareness raising and governance initiatives.

Capacity building

- Developing an on-line version of "Diversidades: the Creativity Game", an educational tool in Spanish designed for young people created in the framework of the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions; and launching an interactive platform to promote exchange.
- Organizing a one-week UNESCO Youth Forum on Creativity entitled "Experiment, learn, create" in Ecuador (April 2013) at which adolescents explored concepts of creativity, cultural expressions and the cultural cycle through participating in practical, hands-on workshops in audiovisual arts, the spoken word and visual arts. They also created, produced and distributed their own films, radio dramas and visual art works.
- The programme Harnessing Diversity for Sustainable Development and Social Change in Ethiopia in which, 438 youth received a total of over 99,000 USD as revolving funds to start up their businesses in addition to skill development training on product design, quality, business plan preparation and market linkage.
- The "Conflict Prevention and Countering the Appeal of Terrorism in Nigeria through Intercultural Dialogue and Education" programme which addresses conflict prevention, peace education and the de-radicalization of youth in Nigeria through the acquisition of relevant skills for socio-economic development, self reliance and confidence.
- A ten-week workshop in stand-up comedy techniques focusing on fostering intercultural dialogue and creativity, and that led to employment generation among the youth for young people in Jordan from diverse social and cultural backgrounds.
- Providing capacity building opportunities and creating new jobs for youth in Tunisia at the Bardo and Sousse museums.
- The "Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) for the Promotion of Cultural Identity and Community Resilience in Timor Leste" programme which supports the capacity of local authorities and communities in safeguarding ICH and which enriches the quality of life, notably for youth and women.
- The "CuidArte" movement in the Chilean Maipo Valley which boosts social development through the promotion of the arts and the diversity of cultural expressions, as well as through the safeguarding of tangible and intangible heritage. The movement works directly with vulnerable groups, notably youth.
- The programme "Promoting Cultural Heritage and Diversity through Ceramic Arts Capacity-Building, Development and Exchange between China, Africa and the Arab States" (UNESCO-Ruby Partnership Programme) which stimulates creativity and innovation, encourages the professional development of young ceramists and supports intergenerational dialogue and mentoring opportunities.



- CULTRIP, a promotional video on the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, which was created in Cuba by graduates from the International Film School in San Antonio de Los Baños (EICTV) and UNESCO staff from the Havana Office.
- A project connecting nine World Heritage related museums in Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam in which more than 1,200 schoolchildren benefitted from educational programmes developed by UNESCO's partner museums on the historic interconnection among these World Heritage sites, the representation of life force, intraregional trade and local cultural traditions.
- Supporting an important number of projects targeting youth through the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD). Over 20% of the projects supported by the IFCD have youth as their direct beneficiary.
- The Aschberg Bursaries for Artists Programme which awards bursaries to young artists from around the world, mainly from developing countries, to support them in developing a creative project. Over 700 young people from more than 72 countries have been awarded Aschberg bursaries.
- The Travel to Learn Arts and Crafts programme that enables arts and crafts students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds to complete a study tour abroad, acquire new skills and launch their professional careers.

Policy Development and Awareness Raising

- Organized a dialogue session on “Youth: an engine for creative economy” in the framework of the ECOSOC Youth Forum 2013. As a result, the Forum made key policy recommendations to encourage youth participation in creative industry policy-making processes.
- Analyzed the Quadrennial Periodic Reports submitted by the Parties to the 2005 Convention, half of which reported on the development and implementation of cultural policies targeting youth.
- Established in the framework of the Culture for Development Indicator Suite an indicator measuring youth's schooling indexes, taking into consideration the importance of youth's active participation in cultural, social and economic life.
- Created the youth-led video production “Para Mestizar which reflects the diversity of the peoples making up Cuban society in order to raise awareness on the importance of cultural diversity as a source of dialogue, mutual understanding, equality, social cohesion and development.

Governance

- Provided technical assistance, through the EU-funded Expert Facility to Strengthen the Governance of Culture in Developing Countries, aiming to make arts and culture education for youth a reality in Burkina Faso, and to develop a strong domestic audio-visual content sector for children in Argentina.





Progress

Awareness Raising

- Innovative educational materials, such as the World Heritage in Young Hands educational Resource Kit, have been developed and are now available for young people across the world to **raise awareness** about the importance of cultural heritage. More supplementary educational materials on World Heritage education are also being developed, including the cartoon series *Patrimonio's World Heritage Adventures*, in which 12 film episodes have already been produced.

Capacity Building

- Through forums and international volunteer projects, young people have been increasingly active in developing initiatives mobilizing the creative energy of youth. World Heritage Youth Forums are now also being organized in close collaboration with States Parties hosting the annual World Heritage Committee meetings.
- Since 2008, nearly 2,000 young people have been volunteering through the World Heritage Volunteers project in heritage preservation projects in 126 action camps at over 60 World Heritage sites in more than 30 countries.

Policy Making

- The initiatives launched in the framework of the 2005 Convention have been contributing to the engagement of youth in policy-making processes, to a greater participation of youth in cultural and creative industries and to an increased awareness about key themes of the 2005 Convention among young people.

Employment Opportunities

- As a result of the training programmes provided, young women and men have in several instances found gainful employment in the creative industries (entertainment, museums etc.)

The way forward

Important progress has been made but much can still be done to further maximize the potential of culture as a vector for youth development and civic engagement.

- *Promote holistic youth development and participation through education* – Continue to recognize youth as vital actors and partners in the implementation of the 1972 World Heritage Convention and working towards development and peace, instead of recognizing them as simple beneficiaries or target groups.



- *Enhance sustainability* – It is essential that the different projects and activities not be considered as a one-time experience for the young participants. They should rather be a starting point for the youth to have continuous interest and participate further in the promotion and preservation of World Heritage.
- *Create and reinforce synergy between youth and heritage stakeholders* – Promotion and preservation of World Heritage requires collaboration of various stakeholders, ranging from site managers to local community, and from heritage experts to young volunteers. The work of young participants should be included in a bigger initiative involving various stakeholders.
- *Expand the outreach of the projects, promoting regional and international exchange of cultures* – As the World Heritage sites are recognized for their ‘outstanding universal value’, it is important to raise awareness among young people to the existence of different World Heritage sites across the world.
- *Mainstream gender equality and involve the unreached* - Promote gender equality and increase the involvement of youth living in rural areas, in and around World Heritage sites and those living in post-conflict and post-disaster situations in the World Heritage Education Programme.
- *Policy formulation with the participation of youth* - Member States need to be supported in the elaboration and implementation of cultural policy measures and action plans targeting youth to promote their participation in the creative industries. Young people’s participation in policy-making processes must also receive support.
- *Capacity-development to support the transition to adulthood* - Introducing entrepreneurial and cultural management skills in higher education programmes and providing entrepreneurship training and skills development programs to young cultural practitioners are essential. Implementing and further developing the Diversity Kit for Youth, an educational tool to raise awareness about key themes of the 2005 Convention amongst young people (12 to 16 year-olds) also needs attention.
- *Civic engagement, democratic participation and social innovation* - Engaging youth in the promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions and stimulating their individual and collective creativity can take place through the organization of UNESCO Youth Forum on Creativity. Scaling-up successful programmes in the creative industries to reach more youth and encouraging and facilitating girls’ participation in youth programmes will also be given significant attention.

Further information

- <http://whc.unesco.org/>
- Diversity of Cultural Expressions
<http://www.diversidades.net/flooone/home.html>
- Aschberg Bursaries for Artists
<http://www.unesco.org/new/fr/culture/themes/creativity/aschberg-bursaries-for-artists/>





- Travel to Learn Arts and Crafts
<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/travel-to-learn-arts-and-crafts/>
- Promoting Cultural Heritage and Diversity through Ceramic Arts Capacity-Building, Development and Exchange between China, Africa and the Arab States
<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/creativity/unesco-ruby-partnership/>
http://www.rabat.unesco.org/article.php3?id_article=2062
- UN Projects around the world::
 - Abuja
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002177/217786e.pdf>
http://www.un.org/ru/terrorism/ctitf/ctitf_beam_vol5.pdf
<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2011/09/terrorism-jonathan-urges-world-leaders-to-unite/>
 - Amman
<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/amman/culture/culture-development/lets-laugh-comedy-workshop/>
http://www.un.org.jo/uploads/publications/UN_1348563570.pdf
 - Chile
<http://www.unesco.lacult.org/publicaciones/showitem.php?lg=1&id=79&paginasweb=37>
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 - Cuba
<http://www.unesco.lacult.org/proyectos/showitem.php?lg=1&id=172&paginasweb=156&idtitulo=1589>
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- Rabat
<http://www.rabat.unesco.org/sommaire.php3>

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