Activities supported by the Heritage Emergency Fund in LYBIA

Evaluation and needs assessment of manuscripts and books of the University of Benghazi (2018)

UNESCO undertook an expert mission from 5 to 14 April 2018 to evaluate the state of conservation of thousands of manuscripts and books belonging to the library of the University of Benghazi - some dating back as far as the 11th century – displaced and damaged in the years of armed conflict. The mission was organized by UNESCO, in close cooperation with the Libyan authorities and the Office of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General to Libya, and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Mr Ghassan Salamé, and with the support of the Heritage Emergency Fund. A conservator specialized in ancient manuscripts conducted the evaluation mission, working closely with local Libyan experts and University personnel to identify urgent measures and to develop recommendations in terms of staff training, equipment and materials and a long-term preservation plan project for the University’s Collection of Manuscripts and Books. A first-aid manuscripts conservation workshop was held for the Library staff and for representatives of the Libyan Department of Antiquities.
Training of Libyan officers in the conservation of mummies (2017)

Following the discovery of numerous mummies in areas at high risk of armed conflict in Libya, the Libyan Department of Antiquities (DoA) expressed its concern regarding their preservation and underlined the urgent need for a capacity-building programme on the handling of human remains. In this context, the Heritage Emergency Fund supported the participation of two Libyan representatives from the DoA in a workshop organized by UNESCO on the “Treatment and Handling of Mummies and Human Remains”, held at the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization and the Grand Egyptian Museum in Cairo (Egypt) from 29 October to 2 November 2017. The workshop brought together nationally and internationally renowned experts in mummy conservation, DNA studies and evolutionary medicine, who shared their knowledge with more than 30 archaeologists, conservators and heritage managers from different Egyptian and Libyan museums and archaeological sites. This event contributed to enhancing national capacities for the successful implementation of projects on the reassembling, study and preservation of human remains. In addition, the workshop created space for networking and the development of south-south cooperation.