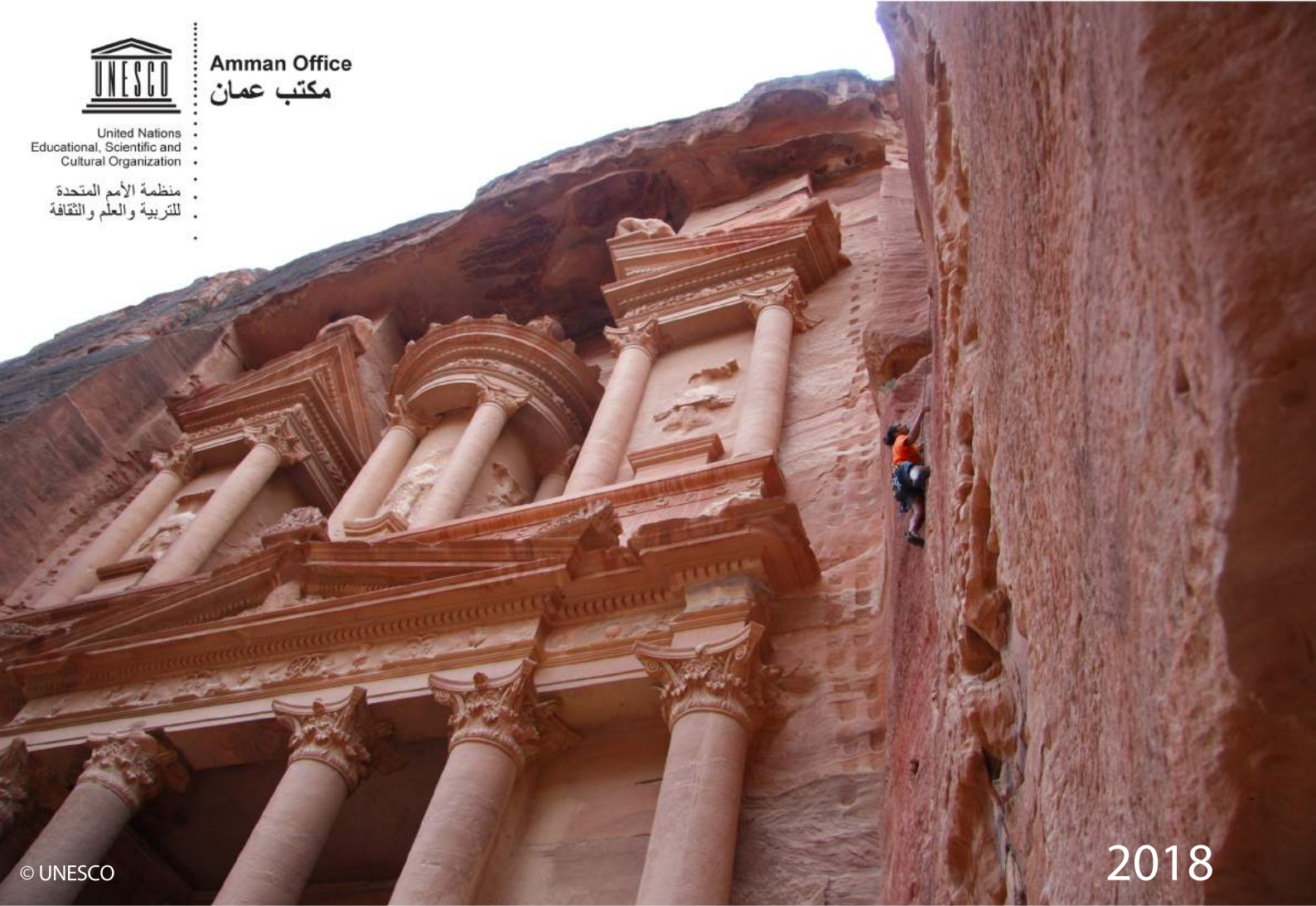




Amman Office
مكتب عمان

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة



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UNESCO Amman Office

CULTURE

Culture's power to transform societies is clear. Its diverse manifestations – from our cherished historic monuments and museums to traditional practices and contemporary art forms – enrich our everyday lives in countless ways. Heritage constitutes a source of identity and cohesion for communities and creativity contributes to building open, inclusive, knowledge societies.

UNESCO Amman office is leveraging culture for sustainable development and as a source of resilience in Jordan. In parallel, it is working on the ground to support government and local stakeholders to safeguard heritage, strengthen creative industries and encourage cultural pluralism.



World Heritage

Positioned on the historical trade routes of the Middle East, Jordan has been home to a mix of cultures and religions throughout time. UNESCO is focused on enhancing the management framework at Jordan's World Heritage properties and further protecting the country's heritage, in line with the 1972 Convention.

The UNESCO Amman office provides technical assistance to Jordan's national authorities to enhance the management and preservation of cultural and natural heritage sites registered on the UNESCO World Heritage List as well as those sites on the Tentative List.

Within this framework, the following objectives are being achieved:

- In the framework of the specialized technical assistance provided by UNESCO to the national authorities for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, and in coordination with the Petra Archaeological Park and the Department of Antiquities of Jordan, the UNESCO Amman office has been engaged in supporting the elaboration of an Integrated Management Plan for Petra, since mid-2015. The Plan shall act as a practical operational guide to establishing an appropriate balance between the needs of cultural and natural resources, conservation, tourism, access, sustainable economic development and the interests of the local community.
- Technical Assistance for the Um Er-Rasas Site Management Plan;
- Technical Assistance for the Road Map leading to the development of a World Heritage nomination file for the Al Salt site.

Currently, five sites in Jordan are inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List:

Petra (1985)

Wonder of the world where ancient Eastern traditions meet Hellenistic architecture through the marvelous remains of the Nabataean civilization.

Qusair Amra (1985)

Exceptional testimony to the Umayyad civilization.

Um Er-Rasas (2004)

Ancient Byzantine churches and mosaic floors representing a masterpiece of human creative genius.

Wadi Rum (2011)

Stunning desert landscape witness to 12,000 years of human interaction, famous ancient petroglyphs and inscriptions.

Baptism Site "Bethany Beyond the Jordan" (2015)

The place where Jesus is said to have been baptized, alongside the remains of Roman and Byzantine churches and chapels.



UNESCO's Work



UNESCO promotes cultural diversity, creativity and innovation as a vector for dialogue, cooperation and mutual understanding. The Amman office works towards ensuring sustainability through projects focused on resilience building.

Jordan possesses tremendous cultural assets, including remarkable archaeological and historical sites and rich intangible cultural heritage. UNESCO's renowned cultural conventions provide a unique global platform for international cooperation and establish a holistic cultural governance system based on human rights and shared values. These international treaties endeavor to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage, intangible cultural heritage, museum collections, oral traditions and other forms of heritage, and to support creativity, innovation and the emergence of dynamic cultural sectors.

These cultural assets also offer a unique opportunity for the promotion of sustainable socio-economic development in Jordan, especially amongst marginalized groups.

Current Projects

EMPOWERING RURAL WOMEN IN THE JORDAN VALLEY

UNESCO recognizes that rural women are the most marginalized group and commits to increasing employment opportunities for them. The UNESCO Amman office is implementing an income-generating project targeting rural women and capitalizing on Jordanian cultural assets in Ghor el Safi (the Jordan Valley), one of the poverty pockets of the kingdom.

UNESCO is supporting a women's cooperative working to improve their lives by enhancing the production and promotion of their vibrant, hand-dyed textiles using naturally sourced dyes. Through this initiative, the women have re-introduced the cultivation of the indigo plant in Jordan.



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Scarves dyed in Ghor el-Safi



HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RISK PREVENTION IN PETRA

The 'Siq' canyon, a 1.2 km gorge serving as the main entrance of Petra, is particularly exposed to geological risks including landslides, flashfloods, earthquakes which pose a major threat to monuments, visitors and the local community. Since 2009, alongside key partners, the UNESCO Amman office has been striving to mitigate the immediate hazards of rock falls and floods with the goal of preserving this natural wonder and ensuring its safety. Capitalizing on the achievements of the "Siq Stability" project, the overall purpose of the project is to enhance the capacities of and provide employment opportunities to youth, focusing on cultural heritage preservation and risk prevention by contributing to the implementation of priority landslide risk mitigation works in Petra. The project will work to mitigate landslide risks in the 'Siq', ensuring the improved management and conservation of cultural heritage. Training will be delivered in the areas of safety and security; geology and engineering geology as it applies to cultural heritage; and site conservation and maintenance activities at selected areas of the site.

SAFEGUARDING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

The UNESCO Amman office has been providing technical support to the Government of Jordan to safeguard intangible cultural heritage (ICH), working to strengthen the capacities of national authorities, local communities and cultural actors. Responding in line with the 2003 "Convention for the Safeguarding of ICH", capacity enhancing trainings were initiated based upon UNESCO's global capacity-building strategy. A pilot initiative to train the local community in Mafrq on community-based inventorying of ICH was undertaken by UNESCO in an effort to collect precious traditional knowledge.



PRESERVING DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE IN JORDAN

Based on a needs assessment on the state of conservation of documentary heritage in Jordan, the UNESCO Amman office has been providing technical support to improve the state of preservation of archives to ensure that this precious heritage is preserved according to international standards. Archivists have been engaged through a number of trainings focused on preservation techniques for visual collections, archival policies and management.

STRENGTHENING NATIONAL CAPACITY TO COUNTER ILLICIT TRAFFICKING

In the framework of the "Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property" (1970), the UNESCO Amman office and the Department of Antiquities have joined forces to address the illicit trafficking of cultural items. A needs assessment to enhance responsiveness to this phenomenon has been undertaken and a series of capacity development sessions have taken place.



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The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The 2030 Agenda marks a substantial step forward for sustainable development across many fields and particularly for culture as it is the first time that the international development agenda refers specifically to culture. UNESCO believes that no development can be sustainable without a strong culture component. Culture contributes to human and socio-economic development, quality education, social inclusion, sustainable cities, environmental sustainability and peaceful societies.

The UNESCO Amman office Culture team is striving to mainstream the SDGs into ongoing projects, focusing on the following targets:

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SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning.

- **Target 4.7:** Contributing to sustainable development and conservation of natural and cultural heritage, recognizing that the active engagement of children and youth is essential to UNESCO's work. Promoting heritage education to students, enabling long-lasting preservation and enhancement of the history and identity of Jordan and its people.

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SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

- **Target 5.5:** Engaging women from all sectors of society in the creation of improved livelihood opportunities that capitalize on the country's cultural assets as a source of recovery and resilience.

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SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

- **Target 8.9:** Investing in the rich cultural heritage of Jordan to create income-generating opportunities for rural women.

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SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

- **Target 11.4:** Providing technical assistance to the Government of Jordan to adopt resilient management practices aimed at the preservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage. Focusing on the application of Disaster Risk Reduction strategies at the local level and the implementation of education and awareness raising activities for the enhanced preparedness and mitigation of disaster risks and adaptation to climate change phenomena.



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Wadi Rum



Stay in touch

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