



Cultural heritage, a national affair

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BACKGROUND

Cultural heritage and other components of Morocco's culture sector constitute a source of potential richness for the country. However, the sector has traditionally suffered from institutional fragmentation and a lack of internal coordination, thereby impeding its growth.

Each institution working in the field of culture had its own initiatives and processes. Lack of communication and consultation among them meant that some projects were duplicated and valuable lessons learned weren't shared or taken into consideration. Moreover, owing to the absence of a clear definition of each institution's role, the overall process of managing heritage was incomplete and arbitrary.

PROCESS

To improve coordination among stakeholders involved in cultural heritage management, and to increase decision-makers' awareness of the economic and social potential of cultural and natural heritage, consultation workshops were organized to promote dialogue between various state institutions and civil society. The exchange of ideas, perspectives and guidelines led to a serious reflection on the need to harmonize processes and the development of a national strategy whose main aim was to promote, preserve and capitalize on cultural heritage by pooling efforts and resources.

Joint implementation of activities involved a participatory process based on consultations with institutional partners and social associations. The Ministry of Culture, being the national



National Steering Committee and national partners' visit to the My el Bashir zouia © MDG-F JP Morocco

coordinator of the JP, adopted the consultative approach internally before replicating it with other organs. Regional offices and national institutions were also involved in implementing activities in an effort to ensure greater ownership of the process among industry professionals.

All JP activities were implemented according to a gender-sensitive approach.

Outcomes

Thanks to the joint management of the JP and close cooperation between all participating Ministerial departments, the various heritage policies that prevailed among development actors were harmonized. Morocco developed a national strategy and a national charter for the promotion and preservation of cultural heritage which is uniform for all relevant departments and divisions. This strategy is already contributing to changing the attitudes of policymakers and managers, leading them to consider cultural heritage as a dynamic source of economic growth.