

Support to the safeguarding and promotion of cultural diversity and heritage, with a special focus on intangible cultural heritage and the diversity of cultural expressions



Saz and Tar making training programme © MDC-F, JP Turkey

- Awareness-raising on the importance and value of intangible cultural heritage
- Women from Kars were encouraged to practice the Minstrelsy tradition themselves.
- Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Municipality of Kars and the Minstrels Association

BACKGROUND

The JP provided concrete contributions to the safeguarding and promotion of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), through a set of complementary activities aimed to raise awareness on the ICH concept, and to support its safeguarding and viability. Bearing in mind that the preparation of the national inventory of ICH is a long-term and dynamic process under the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MoCT) and considering the short timeframe available for the implementation of the JP, it was decided that the JP activities related to ICH would consist in the identification and mapping of the main intangible cultural assets in the Kars province, and in the provision of support to selected manifestations of this heritage, particularly Minstrelsy tradition. Support by means of transmission through written form, creating a platform for the making and performing of traditional instruments, contributing to promotion, and providing a culture house, all formed a solid basis for further activities.

PROCESS

Activities started with two workshops intended to inform and train local stakeholders for the preparation of the national inventory of ICH, led by the MoCT. Activities continued with the preparation, implementation and publication of research for mapping ICH main assets in the Kars province. The research covered 80 villages; 50 students from Kafkas University (50% women, 50% men) were trained. Approximately 7,000 pages of data transcriptions, 2,000 photographs, and 260 video recordings were collected. Selected data was presented in a publication and the research was submitted to MoCT for archiving and further processing.

Besides this encompassing action, specific activities especially designed to support the safeguarding, viability and promotion of the 'Minstrelsy' tradition, a distinctive feature of the local cultural heritage (also inscribed in the UNESCO Representative List for ICH), were implemented. These activities included vocational training for making traditional musical instruments, recording and publishing an audio CD with Minstrelsy performances, preparation and publishing of a book in traditional folk tales, organizational support for an international festival, and the establishment of a permanent meeting point for Minstrelsy in a refurbished, historical building named 'Culture House'.

Outcomes

Awareness was raised concerning all stakeholders, from relevant authorities, to the bearer-community, to local civil society at large, on the nature, importance and value of ICH. Tools and resources were made available for supporting the safeguarding, viability and transmission of local intangible heritage, with special focus on the Minstrelsy tradition wherein professionals were trained in the making of traditional musical instruments. Local intangible cultural heritage was better integrated into processes and policies for the sustainable development of cultural tourism, notably through the completion and publishing of research for the mapping of the primary ICH in the province of Kars. Ownership from local communities and authorities was prioritized. The overall experience formed a model for the establishment of other culture houses and the creation of platforms for different traditions in different contexts.

It is important to note that, while 20% of the audience of the Minstrelsy tradition is female, the practice mostly involves men as the tradition stemmed historically from travelling. Through the JP, however, women from Kars were exposed to the tradition and were encouraged to practice it themselves. The most important component of this initiative was the establishment of the Culture House, and the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Municipality of Kars and the Minstrelsy Association, which will strive to ensure the sustainability of related activities beyond the end of the project. Furthermore, an audio cd of Minstrelsy performances was produced, and International Minstrelsy Festivals were organized in Kars, Kağızman and Sarıkamış. In addition, a book on Eastern Anatolian Folk Tales was published, which will help raise awareness on the overall importance of safeguarding oral traditions.

Creation of a Model for Strategic Direction, Prioritizing and Safeguarding of Tangible Cultural Heritage



Awareness – raising Brochures for the Safeguarding of Cultural Heritage© MDG-F JP Turkey

BACKGROUND

An integrated model for the protection of cultural and natural assets, encompassing strategic direction, prioritization, and safeguarding, was needed in Turkey in order to promote sustainability and integration into local tourism-development programmes. This model, which would ideally comprise a decisive improvement of existing institutional capacities, was achieved by means of two main sets of interventions: creating a digital data management system, and preparing a management plan for the Site of Ani.

PROCESS

a) Creation of an automated system for managing digital data on conservation, monitoring and supervision of registered sites, immovable cultural and natural assets in the province of Kars. Activities included engineering the system structure and functioning, developing software, purchasing and installing said hardware, as well as training the system users at both local and national levels. The system, designed and realised in close coordination with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, which was both the main user and a direct beneficiary, and related Regional Preservation Councils, is the first comprehensive tool for the digitisation of cultural heritage in Eastern Anatolia, and will represent a point of reference for the development of similar structures in the region.

b) Preparation of a management plan for the Site of Ani, which is the main cultural asset and potentially the most important cultural attraction in the project area. Site Management Planning is a relatively new subject for Turkey. The first legal disposition was approved in 2004 and specific regulations were introduced in 2005. Since then, only a few management plans have been defined in Turkey in draft form mostly through external procurement. The JP initiated and led the process for the definition of the draft management plan, provided technical assistance and activated partnerships between all relevant stakeholders, with an inclusive participatory approach. It should be highlighted that this is the first management plan developed with such methodology in Turkey (where existing management plans of other

sites have been mostly developed through an externalization of services), thus posing itself as a good practice to be possibly replicated in other sites. Within this process, the revision and integration of the existing official map of the Ani archaeological site was completed and integrated into automated software system. As a result of a series of workshops and consultation processes, a 'Site Management Development Framework' was approved, and an agreement established between the relevant stakeholders on the preparation of a draft 5 - year Management Plan based on the Turkish legislative framework as well as on relevant international standards.

Outcomes

The afore-mentioned activities resulted in a decisive improvement in the safeguarding and management of cultural and natural sites in the project area, and paved the way for their sustainable integration into the local tourism development programmes. The creation of the automated system for the digitization of local cultural heritage accelerated the establishment of the Regional Preservation Council in Kars, which was long planned by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and was opened in 2011. Furthermore, the activities brought significant results in terms of training, institutional and professional capacity building, awareness-raising, and the establishment of partnerships between central state authorities, local government agencies, and stakeholders for the academic sector and civil society. The activities within the Ani Site Management Plan process determined an increase of funds allocated by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism for the conservation and restoration of the site. The Ani Site Management Planning process is an outstanding achievement considering the methodology based on international standards and leveraging directly on the structures and capacities of the relevant institutions.



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Alliances for Culture Tourism in Eastern Anatolia UN Joint Programme"



DEVELOPMENT OF A SOFTWARE AND AUTOMATED SYSTEM FOR THE CREATION OF DIGITAL DATA ON CONSERVATION, MONITORING AND SUPERVISION OF REGISTERED SITES AND IMMOVABLE CULTURAL AND NATURAL ASSETS

- Improvement in the safeguarding and management of cultural and management sites

- Sustainable integration into local tourism development programmes

Tourism Master Plan for Kars and Local Economic

Development Initiatives for Tourism Development (LDITD) Grant Scheme Programme



Ani Archeological Site /Site Management Planning © MDG-F JP Turkey

BACKGROUND

Based on national strategic documents such as the 9th Development Plan of Turkey, Tourism Action Plan (2007-2013), Tourism Strategy 2023, and Kars Brand City Action Plan, the Diagnostic Report for Kars was prepared to assess the current situation of the tourism sector.

Following this report, a sustainable tourism strategy was developed to define the objectives aimed at mitigating constraints, benefiting from opportunities and key success aspects. Thus, the tourism development strategy focused on definition of product, destination and promotion strategies considering human resources. An action plan was prepared for the period 2010-2023 in line with the schedule of the Tourism Strategy of Turkey. The programmes composing the Action Plan were based on analysis of gaps between the current situation and the desired situation which is intended to be reached by 2023. The Action Plan foresees realizing the tourism development strategy defined for the region, with gender, poverty reduction and sustainable development taken into consideration as primary factors.

Selected activities supported institutional capacity building, product development, and income-generating activities for women. Special attention was given to poor or disadvantaged rural communities and areas with high-potential for natural tourism. Local development initiatives covered small scale actions having the potential to boost larger-scale economic developments in Kars and its environs.

Outcomes
The activities suggested within the project proposals had a concrete impact on the tourism potential of Kars. On the global level, initiatives including meeting immediate small scale infrastructure or organizational needs for the development of tourism within the context of the project proposal; enhancing public/private partnerships in the field of tourism; raising awareness on the importance of tourism in the economic development of Kars, and supporting collective actions within tourism actors for enhanced public-private partnerships.

More concretely, an alternative tourist route incorporating cultural assets of Kars together with historic and well-known characters in literature was developed. In line with the development of the long term tourism strategy which focused on the winter season, a snow-park for an alternative winter tourism product was established, as were capacity building activities for hotels and restaurants for improved service quality. Training facilities and hygienic packaging equipment for local goose producers was obtained, and a cheese museum for showcasing the local cheese making tradition and for determining the relevant inventories was established. The JP promoted the fabrication of felt products and traditional dress dolls as important tools for supporting women's participation in the workforce. Training programmes were organized in cooperation with municipalities. As an added bonus, the projects mobilized partnerships between NGOs and government institutions.

- Promotion of tools for supporting women's participation in the workforce

- Mobilisation of partnerships between NGOs and government institutions

- Enhancement of public/private partnerships in the field of tourism

PROCESS

The JP aimed to develop national ownership through the effective cohesion of programme outputs and to build local capacities to achieve sustainable tourism development beyond the project. The studies in the field revealed that competencies of the local stakeholders are not sufficient to sustain the momentum created during the project. Social capital, which refers to connections within and between social networks, had not emerged in the region either. For this reason, a Grant Scheme, which is considered a tool to build competencies and social capital, was launched for civil societies in Kars. This tool is expected to contribute not only to build the capacity of cluster stakeholders, but also to facilitate the implementation of actions identified within the JP. In line with the outputs and complementary activities of the JP, a support scheme within the activity plan was foreseen. Taking into account both the progress of activities and feedback from local stakeholders, a grant scheme programme was formulated as 'Local Economic Development Initiatives for Tourism Development in Kars' in order to support small scale infrastructural and organizational efforts that will meet the immediate requirements for further development of the Tourism Industry in Kars for Culture, Winter, and Nature Tourism.