

Jbeil District Sustainable Tourism Vision رؤية لسياحة مستدامة لمدينة وقضاء جبيل Lebanese American University

Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury Health Sciences Auditorium, Byblos Campus. 7-9 April 2022

Byblos in Focus: Risk Preparedness Planning and Disaster Risk Reduction

The Centre for the Preservation and Protection of Cultural Heritage

Dr. Rachid Chamoun, Director, LAU-LCF, Board Member of WATCH

Honored guests, participants and speakers,

Within the embodiment of this cultural event encompassing valuable vision and topics addressing the “**Jbeil District Sustainable Tourism Vision**”. Together, we call for national and international support to help and create a method for moving Byblos - Cultural system from its present state to its ideal future state, in terms of unfreezing, moving, and re-freezing the system in three basic components: diagnosis, action and program management.

Pursuant to the delectable efforts that we have invested in the “War Free World Heritage Listed Cities” project, (2009-2013) within the framework of the EU ENPI CIUDAD (Cooperation in Urban Development and Dialogue). It is a partnership between the Council of the United Municipalities of Byblos (Lebanon) in its position a lead partner in partnership with the city of Mtskheta Georgia, in collaboration with the World Association for the Protection of Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage in times of armed conflicts (WATCH), and relevant local and international ministries of culture both in Lebanon and Georgia.

The proposal for this project, made in 2009, stemmed from two opportunities, suggesting improved models of governance for world heritage sites embedded in historic core urban centers. First, the EU launched a call for proposals within the EU ENPI CIUDAD program allowing local authorities to participate in the administration of territories, based on their closer ties with residents and their proximity to the problems faced on the ground. Second, UNESCO circulated the first publication of draft Guidelines for the implementation of the 1999 Second Protocol to the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1999 HP).

The Project Scope focused on specific tasks related to the War Free World Heritage Listed Cities project included:

- Establishing good practices for Urban and Site Management in cities threatened by armed conflicts.
- Promoting widespread awareness of the risks facing WHL cities at threat of conflict.
- Preparing candidacy applications for Byblos and Mtskheta for enhanced protection from UNESCO.

The project resulted in paving the way to building a sustainable constitution of collaborative efforts between LAU- Louis Cardahi Foundation (LCF), the World Association for the Protection of Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage in times of armed conflicts – WATCH, and the Lebanese Ministry of Culture- DGA. As a result of our collaborative efforts, LAU and WATCH have established “The Centre for the Preservation and Protection of Cultural Heritage” (CPCH) within the premises of LAU- LCF in Byblos on October 15, 2019, concurrently with the workshop on “Disaster Risk Reduction to Protect Natural and Cultural Heritage”.

The creation of the new centre in Byblos represents a unique opportunity to develop an **Urban and Site Management Plan for the City of Byblos** as part of a national program where the protection of natural and cultural heritage is properly addressed. This will contribute to enabling the concerned parties in Lebanon, to set proper measures that would permit abiding with the country's commitment toward the concrete implementation of all the UNESCO Heritage related Conventions, Protocols and Guidelines.

Byblos in Focus: Risk Preparedness Planning and Disaster Risk Reduction: Webinars - Workshop and Onsite Training- 2022

In preparation of the celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, and in line with WATCH mandate in the field of Cultural and Natural Heritage Protection; in continuity with the experience gained in the areas of Risk Preparedness Planning and Disaster Risk Reduction as well as in line with the planned extension of the level of competence of the association within the area of Response for the Heritage Protection when events occur. The Centre for the Preservation and Protection of Cultural Heritage (CPCH) envisage implementing a number of factual activities to the creation of independent heritage protection missions.

Organise and implement of six series of Webinars starting April 2022– finish in June on Disasters Risk Reduction dedicated to the protection of the Lebanese World Heritage Sites (Cultural, Natural or Mixed). Participants will receive a Certificate by the end of the webinars' cycle only if they reach a remotely verified 100% attendance of the activity and pass the individual set of web-test. A second certificate will be issued to the participants to the final drills that will take place contemporarily on the Lebanese World Heritage Sites.

In preparation for such activities, We shall have Regional Public Awareness promotion campaigns on Cultural and Natural Heritage Protection. (Social media, posters, articles in papers and interviews on TVS and radio). The webinars will be organised with the cooperation and direct involvement of International experts and Academicians with great experience. The six sets of webinars will treat the following arguments:

- W1_Introduction to Disasters Risk Reduction for the protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage sites;
- W2_Progressive Cultural & Natural Heritage Classification and Documentation for operative application during emergency;
- W3_Movable Heritage Risk Reduction and Response Policies and Measures;
- W4_Immovable Heritage Risk Reduction and Response Policies and Measures;
- W5_DRR planning & implementing concrete measures to contrast the effects of catastrophic events;
- W6_Developing logistics for evacuation and sheltering to protect heritage in emergency. How to set safe haven for heritage under threat.

Following the webinars we shall have an international workshop and onsite training in Byblos and other heritage sites in Lebanon, entitled: Disasters Risk Reduction dedicated to the protection of the Lebanese World Heritage Sites, starting June to July 2022.

Upon completion of a series of further specialised trainings those that will have successfully completed all the planned activities and drills, will be selected to join a permanent voluntary heritage elite team trained and equipped to be ready to deploy and cooperate within joint cultural and natural heritage protection missions locally and nationally.