

Recommendations Working Group 2

Preserving the Environment and Local Traditions in Emergency Preparedness and Response

Definition

Considering that cultural heritage is a product of the environment and local traditions, it is necessary to consider the importance and potential of these when preparing practical and acceptable plans in response to emergency situations.

Statement

Recognising the importance of cultural heritage, local, regional, national, and international institutions, organisations, international charters and conventions should play an active role in preparing and implementing the necessary framework/guidelines required for effective implementation, with preventive measures to mitigate the risk from man-made and natural disasters and a swift and adequate response to potential disasters.

Improvement of Risk Preparedness

- a) Strengthening institutional frameworks;
- b) funding;
- c) emergency management
 - preventive
 - response
 - long-term: to ensure long-term sustainability, it is necessary to incorporate diverse traditional beliefs, practices and knowledge;
- d) research and documentation on tangible and intangible heritage, to record existing and recover lost traditions and practices that may have potential for improving policies and practices on risk preparedness;
- e) to prepare and implement an effective emergency plan, it is important to seek community participation at all levels.

Using instruments and tools to enhance the effectiveness of emergency management plans through:

- training museum staff and local volunteers in the community;
- mass education awareness-raising programmes using appropriate communication methods;
- building sustainable networks and partnerships at various levels;

- using local and appropriate knowledge and technology;
- inventory and documentation of the physical conditions of the museum buildings and their environment;
- the development of international partnerships of museums and local institutional networks, as needed for the preservation of cultural heritage and exchange of experience;
- cooperation with ICOM, ICOMOS and international institutions such as ICCROM, IFLA and ICA, this being necessary to create a synergy of efforts; access to these institutions and their databases via electronic medium is also essential;
- cooperation of ICOM, ICOMOS and ICCROM with relevant external partners, such as the Getty Conservation Institute, offering possibilities for training key people and large-scale implementation of successful emergency management programmes;
- trained museum personnel and emergency services which must be available when cultural heritage is threatened in a community;
- cooperation with institutions, where conservators and conservation architects are trained, so as to broaden the scope of museum personnel in dealing with emergency situations;
- a clear demarcation of different responsibilities and activities allocated to different stakeholders in emergency management plans;
- ICOM National Committees in each country leading and coordinating the efforts and advocating emergency planning. ICOM should take the leading role in coordinating the participation of each country on a global scale in order to pursue effective emergency planning.