



اللجنة الوطنية اللبنانية لليونسكو
Commission nationale libanaise
pour l'UNESCO
Lebanese National Commission
for UNESCO



Faculty of Philosophy and Humanities (FPSH)

Department of Social Sciences

Research Center for Development and Peace (CRDP-USEK)

in partnership with the Lebanese National Commission for UNESCO

Protection and Consolidation of Lebanon's Intangible Cultural Heritage

Kaslik 2015-2019

Communiqué

Culture and the specific related heritage are the soul of every society and, as such, constitute the basic identity framework through which individuals and groups acknowledge one another as being both equal and different at the same time.

In the text of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, UNESCO emphasizes the importance of the intangible heritage as “a mainspring of cultural diversity and a guarantee of sustainable development” (UNESCO, Paris, 17 October, 2003). However, the mutations resulting from globalization and the ensuing degradation of practices are negatively impacting on identity specificities, which are particularly felt among the youth.

In an attempt to face the dangerous threat to the components of the Lebanese cultural identity, the IDEES Research Laboratory and the Research Center for Development and Peace (CRDP-USEK) propose a research/action plan for 2015-2019, entitled: “The Rehabilitation of the Lebanese Cultural Heritage”.

Objective

The objective is to first raise awareness of the fact that the intangible heritage is of priority importance to identity, then to promote knowledge of the intangible heritage content, and to develop a practical strategy that involves schools, universities and municipalities. This manifold objective takes into account the dual role of this heritage in the consolidation of interculturalism and sustainable development.

Thematic Axes

Axis 1: Intangible Cultural Heritage and Identity: Theoretical and Conceptual Field

This axis proposes a clarification of the concept of intangible cultural heritage in relation to the Lebanese societal identity. In so doing, it takes into consideration the daily condition of Lebanese individuals, families, institutions and communities. It also develops the notions and concepts in relation to the components of intangible cultural heritage, mainly cultural specificity, subcultures, mother tongue, etc.

Axis 2: Documentary Research and Field Assessment

This axis provides a categorized database pertaining to the Lebanese heritage content, mainly with respect to celebrations, traditions, daily practices, traditional culinary dishes, popular proverbs, idioms, etc.

A field assessment will be conducted through a questionnaire survey, individual interviews, and focus groups, providing a clarifying scientific base for any heritage-related action plan in Lebanon.

Axis 3: Lebanese Cultural Heritage: players and pilot experiments

This axis analyzes heritage dynamics and aims at clarifying: a) how individual and constitutional players perceive their role with regard to rehabilitating and promoting the Lebanese cultural heritage; b) the viability of educational pilot experiments in the sustainable reinforcement of heritage elements in relation to Lebanese socio-cultural identity.

Axis 4: Intangible Heritage and Cultural Minorities in the Middle East

The question of intangible cultural heritage in relation to identity specificities of cultural minorities, especially minorities in the Middle East, intersects with and enriches the field research/action conducted in Lebanon. The Research Center for Development and Peace (CRDP-USEK) will thus adopt several research/action operations (similar to the field research/action endeavors conducted in Lebanon) in order to ensure that the heritage components of each minority in the Middle East enjoy an interactive visibility that leads to consolidating these components and to promoting them from an intercultural perspective.

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