

Annual Meeting of the International Scientific Committee on Historic Cities
(CIVVIH) – ICOMOS

3rd Conference of the Sub-Committee for Central and Eastern Europe

Strategies for Enhancing Historic Cities' Resilience to Disasters

Theme 1. Risk Management in Historic Cities, Towns, and Villages:

Lessons Learned and Capacity Building for Disaster Preparedness.

Traditional Skills as Driving Force for Community Cohesion

**Savoir-faire traditionnels comme force
motrice et vecteur de cohésion
communautaire**

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WG. LAC. ICOM. CICOP

Kuldiga, Latvia – September 2025

What are Traditional Skills?

Qu'est-ce que les savoir-faire traditionnels ?

Knowledge and techniques passed down, often orally.	Savoirs et techniques transmis, souvent oralement.
Examples: traditional carpentry, blacksmithing, pottery, basketry, weaving, embroidery, adobe construction, bookbinding.	Exemples : charpenterie traditionnelle, forge, poterie, vannerie, tissage, broderie, construction en adobe, reliure.
Includes ancestral landscape management, cooking, traditional medicine.	Inclut la gestion ancestrale du paysage, la cuisine, la médecine traditionnelle.
Represent living intangible heritage.	Représentent un patrimoine vivant et immatériel.

Block 1 – Traditional Skills and Human Resilience

Bloc 1 – Compétences traditionnelles et résilience humaine

Why are they a driving force?

Pourquoi sont-ils une force motrice ?

Generate employment and dignity.	Génèrent emploi et dignité.
Revitalize social fabric.	Revitalisent le tissu social.
Strengthen community identity.	Renforcent l'identité communautaire.
Serve as educational and therapeutic tools.	Servent d'outils éducatifs et thérapeutiques.

a. Contribution to Heritage Preservation

Contribution à la préservation du patrimoine

Contribution Contribution	Description (EN / FR)	Example Exemple
Empower cultural bearers Valoriser les porteurs culturels	From cultural shame to pride, mobilizing communities. De la honte culturelle à la fierté, mobilisation des communautés.	Oaxaca, Mexico – Zapotec bio-construction & murals post-earthquake. Oaxaca, Mexique – bioconstruction zapotèque & fresques après séisme.
Build cohesion Construire la cohésion	Intergenerational spaces strengthen ties for heritage resilience. Espaces intergénérationnels renforçant les liens pour la résilience patrimoniale.	Fez, Morocco – revival of tanning, weaving, pottery. Fès, Maroc – renaissance du tannage, du tissage, de la poterie.
Reconnect body, mind, territory Reconnecter corps, esprit, territoire	Practices linked to land, climate, worldview. Pratiques liées à la terre, au climat et à la cosmovision.	Aymara Alasita festivities, Bolivia. Fêtes aymaras de l'Alasita, Bolivie.

b. Traditional Skills & Emotional Anchors

Savoir-faire & ancrages émotionnels

Impact / Impact	Description (EN / FR)	Example / Exemple
Mindfulness & Flow / Pleine conscience & flux	Crafts foster focus, reduce stress, boost belonging. Les métiers favorisent la concentration, réduisent le stress, renforcent l'appartenance.	Andean women weaving – less anxiety, more connection to lineage. Femmes andines tissant – moins d'anxiété, plus de lien au lignage.
Emotional Resilience Résilience émotionnelle	Rituals provide containment in crises. Les rituels offrent un cadre de soutien en temps de crise.	Obon rituals in Japan post- tsunami – higher cohesion & recovery. Rituels Obon au Japon après tsunami – cohésion accrue & meilleure reconstruction.

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c. Handwork & Psychology

Travail manuel & psychologie

Impact / Impact	Neuro-Sensory Effect Effet neurosensoriel	Outcome / Résultat
Neural activation / Activation neuronale	Prefrontal cortex, limbic system, stress regulation. Cortex préfrontal, système limbique, régulation du stress.	Lower cortisol, more dopamine & serotonin. Moins de cortisol, plus de dopamine & sérotonine.
Self-esteem recovery Récupération de l'estime de soi	Restores sense of control after crises. Restaure le sentiment de contrôle après une crise.	Nepalese women resumed weaving post-earthquake. Femmes népalaises reprenant le tissage après séisme.
Cultural identity Identité culturelle	Connects with history, community, visual language. Relie à l'histoire, à la communauté, au langage visuel.	—

d. Economic & Cultural Impact

Impact économique et culturel

Crafts = low environmental impact + high cultural value.	Artisanat = faible impact environnemental + forte valeur culturelle.
Promote circular economy in historic towns.	Favorisent l'économie circulaire dans les centres historiques.
Avoid depopulation of historic centers.	Évitent la dépopulation des centres historiques.

Strategic Integration

Intégration stratégique

Public policy: participatory conservation plans, legal protection.	Politiques publiques : plans de conservation participatifs, protection juridique.
Infrastructure: historic buildings as workshops or schools.	Infrastructures : bâtiments historiques comme ateliers ou écoles.
Education: traditional skills in curricula, apprenticeships.	Éducation : intégration des savoir-faire dans les programmes, apprentissages.
Communication: tech for documentation, digital sales, QR codes.	Communication : technologies pour la documentation, ventes numériques, QR codes.

Block 2 - Cases Studies

Bloc 2 - Études de cas

Case Studies: Heritage Recovery through Skills

Études de cas : Récupération du patrimoine par les savoir-faire

Case / Pays	Traditional Skill / Savoir-faire	Heritage / Patrimoine	Key Results / Résultats clés
Cartagena (Colombia)	Masonry, carpentry / Maçonnerie, menuiserie	Walled city (UNESCO)	3000+ youth trained, local jobs
Redeiras, Galicia (Spain)	Net making / Fabrication de filets	Maritime heritage	Women cooperatives, economy revived
Teotitlán del Valle (Mexico)	Weaving, natural dyes Tissage, teintures naturelles	Zapotec identity	Cultural tourism, community workshops
Al-Qasr (Egypt)	Adobe, Islamic carpentry / Adobe, menuiserie islamique	Mudbrick town	Local youth trained, authentic restoration
Úbeda & Baeza (Spain)	Ceramics, stonework / Céramique, taille de pierre	Renaissance cities (UNESCO)	Craft training, tourism economy
Fez (Morocco)	Tannery, zellige / Tannerie, zellige	Historic medina	Restoration, local pride, tourism

Cartagena (Colombia)

Redeiras (Galicia)



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:City_walls_of_Cartagena



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Redeiras%2C_Muros%2C_Galiza.jpg

Teotitlán (Mexico)



<https://fr.pinterest.com/pin/390405861420005730/>



<https://www.dreamstime.com/stock-photo-weaving-old-traditional-loom-teotitlan-mexiko-del-valle-image80408960>



<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:WeavingTeotitlan>



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Fez (Morocco): housing restored with local techniques; pride & tourism. Habitation restaurée avec des techniques locales ; fierté & tourisme.



Medina's streets
Barbara Blanchard



<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/170/>



Medina of Fez (Morocco)
Nikolas Oikonomou



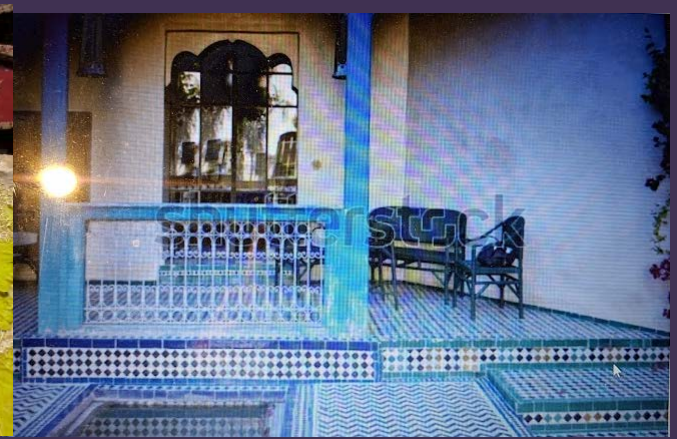
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<https://whc.unesco.org/en/documents/108784>



<https://www.shutterstock.com/es/image-photo/fez-morocco-may-13-2016-interior-775645660>

Case Studies: Crafts in Disaster & Conflict Recovery

Études de cas : Artisanat dans la reprise après catastrophes et conflits

Place Pays	Disaster Désastre	Craft Artisanat	Participation Participation	Results Résultats
L'Aquila (Italy)	Earthquake 2009	Embroidery, ceramics Broderie, céramique	Women & youth workshops	Identity recovered, micro-enterprises
Gorlovka (Ukraine)	Armed conflict	Embroidery, weaving Broderie, tissage	Refugee community centers	Income + cultural preservation
Valparaíso (Chile)	Fire 2014	Ceramics, murals Céramique, fresques murales	Artists & neighbors	Restored façades, community pride
Aceh (Indonesia)	Tsunami 2004	Weaving, basketry Tissage, vannerie	Local cooperatives + NGOs	Economic recovery, traditional revival
Mostar (Bosnia)	War 1990s	Stone & copper work Pierre & cuivre	Local artisans rebuilding	Authentic bridge restoration (UNESCO)
Kathmandu (Nepal)	Earthquake 2015	Wood & metal carving Sculpture bois & métal	Artisan communities	Temples rebuilt, local jobs

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Kathmandú (Nepal)

ON APRIL 25TH 2015
NEPAL WAS STRUCK BY
A 7.8 MAGNITUDE EARTHQUAKE



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<https://www.shutterstock.com/es/image-photo/patan-sept-28-nepali-people-enjoying-158854457>

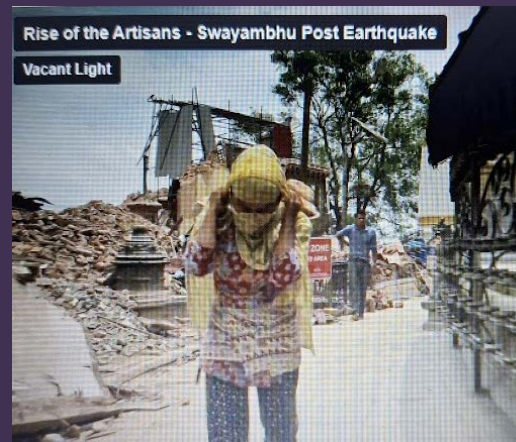
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Nepal's historic Dharahara Tower was largely destroyed in an April 25 earthquake. (Domenico/Flickr)



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Gorlovka/Ukraine:

Community centers with traditional embroidery.

Centres communautaires avec broderie traditionnelle

Sunlit Workshop: Women Artisans Embroidering Traditional Ukrainian Designs
Atelier ensoleillé : des artisanes brodent des motifs traditionnels ukrainiens



<https://www.freepik.com/free-photos-vectors/ukrainian-embroidery>



Adobe Stock | #1553957294



<https://www.gettyimages.com.mx/search/2/image?phrase=ukrainian+embroidery+designs>

https://stock.adobe.com/ar/search?k=%22ukrainian+embroidery%22&asset_id=1553957294



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ukrainian_Embroidery.jpg



<https://stock.adobe.com/ar/search?k=%22ukrainian+embroidery%22>

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Resilience Cases Cas de résilience culturelle

💡 Heritage resilience = heritage with and for people

💡 Résilience du patrimoine = patrimoine avec et pour les gens

Case Lieu	Specific Work Travail spécifique		
Bolivia – Festividad Alasita (Aymaras)	Miniature crafts, prayers and ritual offerings. Artisanat de miniatures, prières et offrandes rituelles	Alasita fair with miniatures. Foire Alasita avec miniatures	 
Japan – Obon Festival after the 2011 tsunami Japon – Festival Obon après le tsunami de 2011	Memory rituals with lanterns and traditional dances. Rituels de mémoire avec lanternes et danses traditionnelles.	Lanterns floating on water or hanging in temples. Lanternes flottant sur l'eau ou suspendues dans des temples.	 https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feria_de_la_Alasita   https://www.google.es/search?q=Japan+%E2%80%93+Obon+Festival+after+the+2011+tsunami&rls=com.micros oft:es-419&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&startIndex=&startPage=1 

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Block 3 – Key Lessons & Conclusion

Bloc 3 – Leçons clés et conclusion

Key Lessons

- Training creates sustainability
 - Community creates ownership
 - Tradition is innovation
 - Resilience is built with people, hands, and meaning
-
- **Traditional skills preserve identity, heal emotions, and strengthen cohesion. They are vehicles for resilience, continuity, and hope.**
-
- they must be recognized not as a complement—but **as a central pillar of heritage and human recovery.**

Leçons clés

- La formation crée la durabilité
 - La communauté crée l'appropriation
 - La tradition est source d'innovation
 - La résilience se construit avec les gens, les mains et le sens
-
- **Les savoir-faire traditionnels préservent l'identité, apaisent les émotions et renforcent la cohésion. Ils sont vecteurs de résilience, de continuité et d'espoir.**
-
- ils doivent être reconnus non pas comme un complément, mais comme **Un pilier central du patrimoine et du rétablissement humain.**

Impacts of Traditional Skills

Impacts des compétences traditionnelles

Impact - Impact	Key Benefit - Bénéfice clé	Example - Exemple
 Neurocognitive Neurocognitif	Mindfulness, emotional memory, stress regulation, chemical well-being (dopamine, serotonin). Pleine conscience, mémoire émotionnelle, régulation du stress, bien-être chimique (dopamine, sérotonine).	Manual activities → less anxiety/depression. Activités manuelles → moins d'anxiété/dépression.
 Self-esteem & Efficacy Estime de soi & efficacité	Regaining personal control and sense of usefulness. Récupérer le contrôle personnel et le sentiment d'utilité.	Nepal: traditional weaving as a tool for post-earthquake resilience. Népal : le tissage traditionnel comme outil de résilience post-séisme.
 Identity & Belonging Identité & appartenance	Connection with history, territory, and community. Lien avec l'histoire, le territoire et la communauté.	Workshops and rituals integrating emotion, spirituality, and technique. Ateliers et rituels intégrant émotion, spiritualité et technique.



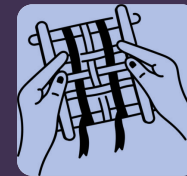
Conclusion

✦✦ *Restoring skills is restoring life.*

✦✦ *Restaurer les compétences, c'est restaurer la vie.*

✦✦ *Hands rebuild walls, but also rebuild souls.*

✦✦ *Les mains reconstruisent les murs, mais reconstruisent aussi les âmes.*



Thank you