



## The first years

BENGT OH JOHANSSON, PROFESSOR, CHAIRMAN CHWB 2000-2006

Shocking reports from the war in former Yugoslavia told that destruction of monuments was part of the warfare. As I remember it, we were three who met in 1994 at the Swedish Heritage office to discuss the possibilities to organize aid to the heritage of former Yugoslavia. The three of us were beside me: Ing-Mari Beck, art critic and Jan Krister Boman, architect and organizer of the exhibition *Warchitecture from Sarajevo*. In my mind was also Zoran Filipovic's moving photo exhibition "A season in hell", documenting Sarajevo during the siege.

At the same time Margareta Biörnstad (former head of the Swedish Heritage administration) had organized an international UNESCO seminar in Stockholm to discuss how information could be a tool to save heritage in war. The seminar became a meeting ground for experts in heritage, civil rights, journalistic and also representatives of the military who had been engaged in UN's mission in Bosnia. It became very clear that the knowledge of the Hague Convention needed to be spread and that Swedish media had ignored the vast destruction of heritage in the Balkan war. From ICOMOS a proposal to initiate an international organization for the protection of heritage in distress was launched. The results of the seminar were published in the Swedish Unesco council's report 4/1994.

When Margareta Biörnstad joined the above mentioned loosely organized group as its chairperson things began to move. We decided to create a foundation called Cultural Heritage without Borders with the purpose to offer concrete help to heritage in danger. We thought that international organizations so far offered talk but not much action. Instead we wanted to do actual rescue work on the ground.

Already from the start the working group's ambition was to create a broad public back up for its ambitions. This was realized by engaging many as founders but also by formulating the statutes in a way that granted direct connections to other institutions responsible for the heritage. Thus the chairperson of the Swedish Red Cross, the Princess Christina accepted to be the first among the founders, which showed a connection between CHWB and the broader humanitarian work. The political sphere was represented by three former ministers of culture while the Director of the Swedish Heritage, the chairperson of the Swedish UNESCO council, the bishop of Stockholm, the heads of learned academies and the chairpersons of ICOM, ICOMOS, the Secretary General of the architect's organization represented other interests in the Swedish society. Finally the organization group also vol-

unteered as founders.

A crucial question was how to formulate the goal of the organization. Should the future work only be directed towards Bosnia and Herzegovina or should it be formulated more broadly? The answer was that CHwB should go further safeguarding cultural property in conflict zones, when catastrophes of other sorts occur and in situations of acute threats.

The official inauguration of CHwB took place on the 19th of April 1995 at the Royal Academy of fine Arts. It was now time to spread knowledge about the new foundation and create economic resources. The Swedish Heritage administration, UNESCO and the Royal Academy of Letters had donated some resources to start with and during the first year we also received support from the insurance company Skandia, Cementa Ltd, Electrolux and the Government which all enabled us to create a platform for future work.

The same year I met in Paris with the Bosnian minister of education and the head of the Bosnian Heritage administration. They had escaped from Sarajevo via the tunnel under the airport to take part in a meeting with the Council of Europe. This gave a firsthand insight in the horrors of the Balkan war and its consequences for the heritage.

When finally a peace agreement in former Yugoslavia was settled in October 1995 international organizations could initiate massive reconstruction efforts. Those were mostly focused towards housing and infrastructure. Sweden belonged to the countries who were most active in the region and CHwB initiated in an early stage discussions with Sida if not reconstruction of the heritage should be included in the disaster relief. In fact the Dayton peace agreement had included paragraphs on heritage protection.

When the then Swedish minister of Culture visited Sarajevo in February 1996, on the occasion of a solidarity action by Swedish actors and performers, I could accompany her as an expert in heritage preservation. In a city dominated by shelled and burnt buildings, destroyed cars and trams and a myriad of international military vehicles the minister devoted much time to discuss with the government and other heritage partners their need for support. For CHwB this trip enabled important meetings. Afterwards we could inspire the department of culture to support a summer course in preservation initiated by UNESCO.

The next step for CHwB was to send Mats Edström (member of the board) and me to a fact finding mission in Bosnia. The mission was supported by the Swedish Institute and we concentrated our efforts to the Tuzla region where Sweden was active. A great help was offered by Björn Mossberg, head of the local Sida office. We visited Travnik, Maglaj and Gradacac and of course Sarajevo, all badly hurt. Despite the misbelieve of the Swedish Ambassador we found that the local mayors showed great interest in aid to reconstruct the destroyed heritage. In

Maglaj we found objects that seemed feasible for a first rescue action. The town is situated on the brinks of the river Bosna and has a medieval city center with traditional buildings climbing a hillside crowned by the ruins of a Turkish fortress.

Maglaj was the offer of a violent siege from Serb forces – a siege that was as intensive as that of Sarajevo. During the siege the old mosque was the target for heavy shelling. The minaret was crippled and the stones made dangerous holes in the cupola. An unexploded grenade was stuck in a column base in the portico. Close to the mosque was burnt out buildings – one of them a 100 year old guest house, a “konak” in traditional Bosnian style but without roof which someone had tried to cover with plastic sheets. We concluded that the mosque and the konak could be saved with limited means and that this might help the local administration to abandon existing plans of a total modernization of the city.

The former central heritage institute in Sarajevo had escaped from its old premises and





resettled in a couple of rooms in a freezing apartment building in the outskirts of the city. Here we met with a small group of architects and engineers with no pay and no resources. We concluded that the most important aid would be to offer the institute cooperation in actual restoration projects. In order to facilitate future communication we were able to donate a fax machine.

With the experiences from the mission in 1996 we could turn to Sida with concrete proposals for a first aid to the built heritage in Maglaj. Sida set aside a sum of 160.000 Euro as a pilot scheme and we could recruit an experienced project leader, the Finnish restoration architect Tulla Rauma who had been trained at the restoration course at Royal School of Art and Architecture in Stockholm. She had undertaken restoration work in Finland under tough conditions and was thus well suited to work in Bosnia. As a lone woman in a hard and male environment she had to fight to claim the necessary authority but managed to guide the institute in producing correct plans and material for tenders.

Our guiding principles were that the restorations should be carried out according to local traditions and authentic techniques. In our deal with the institute we stated that the decisions were up to the institute but we would not finance actions that in our belief would jeopardize the heritage. This paved the ground for a fruitful cooperation through many years.

After having covered the roofs of the Maglaj buildings the first stage of the restoration works could start in mid June 1997 with mending of the small cupolas to the portico of the Mosque. Next stage was to repair the central dome and re-erect the missing part of the minaret and change a badly damaged column in the portico. This work was from our side led by Pål Anders Stensson, our new project leader, who was supported in his task by volunteers of Swedish experts in architecture, stone conservation and the art of working in lead. A special challenge was to find the right stones to complete the minaret. In the end Stensson had to reopen an old quarry where the original stones once had been found. .

In order to demonstrate the principles we believed would be useful to our partners we invited members of the institute and teachers at Sarajevo's faculty of architecture to visit Stockholm and current restoration projects. After that we organized an open course in Sarajevo in restoration techniques and ethics led by Ove Hidemark.

Thanks to expanding support from Sida the initial efforts were followed by several initiatives in Republika Srpska, and Serbia both regarding buildings and museology. Among these were the saving of the mediaeval orthodox cloister church in Zavala with the help of specialists in foundations from Skanska and advice from Krister Berggren consultant in



constructions. This work was led by our project leader from the fourth season Tina Wik in close cooperation with the Serb heritage Institute in Banja Luka. Tina Wik was also elected as a member of the national so-called Dayton commission on the protection of Heritage monuments.

In Mostar international focus was in reconstructing the old bridge. An unexpected US donation helped us to undertake a reconstruction of a couple of burnt bazaar buildings close to the bridge as a help to revitalize the commercial center of Mostar.

In the spring of 2001 the European Agency for reconstruction in Kosovo asked CHwB to undertake the reconstruction of five Albanian so-called Kulla buildings, which had been the victim of ethnic cleansing during the liberation struggle. Thanks to guarantees from Sida we could accept the offer and send our forth project leader, Dick Sandberg, to Pristhina. Dick set up a special office for the task and managed to successfully finish the task. At the same time we were able to support the Agency with an assistant head of the local heritage institute during six months. Also here Sida provided the finance. Kerstin Berggren, who took on the original challenge, had a hard time trying to reform the Institutes agenda and start a process of writing an adequate heritage law. Dick Sandberg's project office has since developed into a more or less independent and successfully working organization, with a great impact on the Kosovar society.

Thanks to a series of generous donations CHwB could expand its work already during the first years. Many museums as well as the National Heritage Board have sent experts to the field. A row of companies have donated material mostly to Zemaljski Muzej where our board member Per Kåks orchestrated the aid. Our foremost financier was however Sida who also financed a cooperation with a German organization in Tibet where Tina Wik, our project leader for several years in Sarajevo, could take part in the saving of a cloister.

Essential for our efforts is that members of the board have worked in many projects on a voluntary basis. From the beginning the heaviest burden was carried by Margareta Biörnstad who took on the administration, later on assisted by Sven Erik Köhlin and myself. In 1999 Susanne Wik was our first employee. In 2002 we could engage our first secretary general, Madeleine Sjöstedt – a great relief.



## Sarajevo: towards the future

ING-MARIE MUNKTELL, PH.D, MUSEUM DIRECTOR, CHAIRMAN CHWB

The unimaginable becomes reality, already when we go from the airport into the city. Like great monster the burned out shells of apartment buildings stand with gaping black windows. Every other building that is passed by has bullet holes in the façades. In spite of this, the hillsides around the town are a lush green, the apple trees bloom and the Japanese cherry trees in the garden of the National Museum have just lost their pink gossamer peddles. Soon, we learn that the beautiful mountain slopes with snow-capped peaks, far away is mined and, for the foreseeable future, are inaccessible.

Now it is the spring of 2000 and for me, as a fairly new member on the board of Cultural Heritage without Borders, it is my first visit to the Balkans since the end of the war in 1995. We are a few Swedish museum workers (Per Kåks, Staffan Thorman, Tina Rodhe, Magnus Dahl Bring, Ing-Marie Munktell) on the way to the National Museum in order to discuss the future of the museum. How can the museum re-emerge and become a meeting place and platform for peace and reconciliation?

We are told that the National Museum is more than a hundred years old and has survived three wars. The greatest damage was done during the latest war. Back in 1993, the then head of the museum was shot to death when he climbed up on the roof to look over the damage. The physical damage to the buildings was substantial and the botanical garden was completely destroyed. The collections had to be brought to somewhere for safe storage. Later during our visit we heard a heartbreaking story from the librarian Andrea who during the war carried nearly 200 000 volumes on her back, down into the basement, only to bring them up again once the war was over.

Cultural Heritage without Borders is already in place and participating in the restoration of the buildings. Now we have to discuss how we can best help our Bosnian colleagues with their daily work. Many hours were devoted to presentations of "collections" and the research that is produced from the collections. It felt a bit like a sort of "debriefing" after the difficult war years. We soon learn that the collections (archaeological, ethnological and natural historical) are not used in a popular or public manner and that there might not be any interest from management to reach out to the community in this manner. In spite of the fact that the museum has some 60 employees, about a third of whom are academically trained, cooperation between departments almost non-existent. The museum's single fax

machine is in the museum director's room, giving her full control of the museum hierarchy and of the museum's contact with the outside world.

We sit in a room with no heat, with our outdoor clothes on and are still cold. How are we to get our Bosnian colleagues to turn their gaze outward towards the surrounding society and get them to focus on cooperation in such an environment. First we needed heat, technical equipment and other practical / educational equipment to be operational and to achieve this Per Kåks got a number of Swedish museums to send several loads of surplus equipment to Sarajevo. English language courses were another important tool that was necessary if we were to be able to develop the operation.

In our presentations at this first visit we focused on examples of how, with simple means and without great cost the museum can reach a wider audience. The undersigned appeared as "Viking mother Ingeborg" in a tableau giving our frozen colleagues a chance to warm their hands by giving a round of applause. The purpose of the performance was twofold, firstly that the dissemination of knowledge can and should be enjoyable and secondly that to show that even a museum director must sometimes step down from the "Ivory Tower" and become part of the team. The role of a Viking mother came to follow me in a number of workshops over the years in the Balkans.

We traveled home with the firm conviction that a "mental shift" was coming and that hope had been brought to the worn personnel. Now, as soon as the practical conditions improved, we had to help with business plan, communication plan, documentation plan and a plan for the educational work. Leadership training and additional training of staff was also important. Above all our Bosnian colleagues wished to do conduct field trips to other museums and other countries after, having for a long time, lived isolated from the outside world.

### **Years to come**

There should be many visits to Sarajevo during the coming years and together with our colleagues we sometimes took several steps forward, sometimes several steps back, for example when the funding from the Federation for such elementary things as heating did not occur. The status of being a "National Museum" also came in to question in the dysfunctional state that the Dayton Agreement created after the war. The educational activities grew substantially during 2005-06 when the Swedish museum educator Anette Prior from CHwB mission devised an educational program that reached out across the region. The leadership training started by CHwB (2006) had effects both at the management level and middle-management level. The Swedish psychologist Ulla Britt Fridell was able to get the employees to know themselves and their strengths better. The main question turned out to be very important to further development. The female manager we had met at our first meeting had no outward ambitions and did not give the impression of wanting to delegate her "power" in favor of collaboration within the staff and with the outside world. Aisa Softic who took office in 2002 had the desire to change and participated with great enthusiasm both in leadership training and strategic planning. When Aisa Softic, in 2010, handed over her position to one of her subordinates, a male archaeologist whose focus was on research, the museum fell back in its public development, and in 2012 the museum was closed completely. During a visit to Sarajevo in 2013, I could see for myself, that the doors were boarded up and in conversation with one of my Bosnian colleagues, who was in charge of the ethnological collections (Lebiba Dzeko), I found out that she occasionally "took care" of her collections. Sadly, within the walls there is now a well-trained staff that has developed a modern view of what museums could mean for society, provided the State funds their remaining open.

### **The National Museum in Belgrade**

Museum Collaboration grew as exchanges between museums, courses and seminars came

about. More and more museums wanted to be involved in building civic-minded more inclusive museums. A call from the National Museum in Belgrade in 2002 to CHwB led to some colleagues from the National Museum in Stockholm and I went there for a first inventory of their need for assistance.

The National Museum in downtown Belgrade was, as it turned out, in a miserable state. The roof leaked, the basement, where all the precious icons are kept, filled with water when it rained heavily and the work environment was clearly a health hazard for employees. The museum was closed for remodeling and the collections were in the meanwhile in danger. The focus of CHwB's work here became support for the staff, about 80 employees, one third of which were academically trained, but called for assistance with management, educational activities and assured management of the collections. But first, an inventory of the most urgent needs and a report with proposals for assistance was sent to the Ministry of Culture (Munktell 09/10/03). Also the leadership in Belgrade was crucial to how the operation could develop. When Tatjana Cvieticanin became the director in 2003 the museum took a big step forward. Together with a female "leader troika" she took charge of the closed museum, within a year all of the proposed improvements, made during the Swedish inventory, had been made. For example, the icons in the basement no longer needed to bathe in water from the street outside. It established joint venture between CHwB and Belgrade also brought about a series of exchanges with Swedish museums in skill enhancement courses and training for staff members.

It was about exhibition technology, educational activities, museum ethics, preventive conservation, documentation and how archeology can be presented in museums as well as leadership development.

(Uppsala University Museum, Museum Gustavianum, Carolina Rediviva, Uppsala Art Museum, Brother Hjort's House and from Stockholm, The National Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, The Museum of Medieval Stockholm, The Stockholm City Museum and the Royal Coin Cabinet)

It was in Belgrade in November 2006 that the network for Balkan museums met to analyze their respective museums organization and development opportunities. No fewer than 11 museums were present. It became abundant that leadership is crucial to the desire to change and also to how quickly the changes are implemented. The final summation showed that the focus of a workshop, named "Creative Leadership for the Future", should be the priority and that there was a need for knowledge of "strategic planning" in the coming year collaboration. At the same meeting a "Female network" was formed, as it turned out that the female managers and senior curators worked under worse conditions than their male counterparts. Many of the male colleagues questioned the need for a separate network for women, but the support has been important and continues in the support network "The Wild Ones" primarily focused on younger female leaders and management personnel in the cultural sector in the Balkans.

### **Museum Collaboration and Networking**

What came to be crucial for the CHwB museum development activities was Margaret Huséns entry into the CHwB board 2005. Through her involvement a professional support for both museum workers of the Board, Per Kåks and Ing-Marie Munktell, could be formalized. Spring 2006 the troika drew together 16 museum directors from the Western Balkans to a meeting in the Museum Gustavianum, Uppsala. The aim was to determine how CHwB could contribute to a network for cooperation between museums, a network that would strengthen museums as meeting places. Many of the visiting museum directors had never met before, some had not met since the Balkan War broke out. They soon found out how similar their problems were and what joys we shared. There was a great willingness to cooperate and the foundations for a "Western Balkan Museum Programme" / Regional Muse-

um Cooperation in the Western Balkans / was created. The following year all 16 museums met again in Stockholm at the Natural History Museum to learn "strategic planning" with the lecturer Professor Peter Tirrell from Oklahoma University. And the women's network got to meet Swedish gender researchers such as Margaret Fahlgren and Birgitta Wistrand from Uppsala University.

Now the business was started in earnest, reaching more and more museum workers, the network took another step towards formalization at a meeting in Uppsala in 2010 and has since 2014 become a reality as BMN Balkan Museums Network under the direction of the Balkan museums themselves. Since the employment of the museologist Diana Walters in 2007 as the responsible coordinator, business has grown and been professionalized.

To be part of the development and to have participated in some 20 seminars / workshops and to have followed colleagues who have risen after the war has been a great privilege. I have received knowledge and insights that have greatly benefited my own work as the director of a museum and in my development as a human being.







## From a network to a platform – the formation of the Balkan Museum Network

DIANA WALTERS, MUSEUM SPECIALIST

From the very outset of the Regional Museum Network (RMN), the idea of a joint exhibition had been discussed. However it was quickly apparent that such a project would be difficult if not impossible. The political and economic logistics of travelling a single show across a region with disputed borders, sporadic outbreaks of tension, legal disputes and pockets of deep hostility were formidable. Despite all the enthusiasm for such an event it was clear that there were many obstacles and risks.

In March 2010, a workshop was organised at the National Museum in Sarajevo, one of the founding members of the RMN. Here the question of a joint exhibition was again discussed and there was a real energy and desire to achieve something that publicly showed the Balkan museums as partners that worked together professionally, creatively and internationally. A key driving force was the desire to dispel the negative image of the countries involved. Young professionals particularly reacted to this, stating that they were tired of being seen as ‘countries that fight and hate each other’.

People began to think ‘outside the box’ and the idea of the Simultaneous Exhibition was born. Rather than have a travelling show, the eleven museums of the RMN decided to open exhibitions with the same title on the same day. So the ‘1+1:Life & Love’ simultaneous exhibition was born.

The journey to the opening, on March 11 2011, was rocky and challenging. There were many obstacles to overcome, not least the simple logistics of coordinating eleven separate exhibitions, across six countries, and involving over 100 museum professionals and partners. There was real courage and commitment and the individual museums worked hard – separately and together – to reach the opening day. It’s hard to fully understand the significance of 1+1, and it is important to understand that several of the museums took real risks in being on a shared public platform. But it worked, and on March 11 2011, eleven museums opened their 1+1:Life & Love exhibitions in a moment of true international solidarity .

Being part of a movement is really exciting; those moments when years and years of hard and patient development work move into a new phase foster a real tangible energy and often a significant shift will occur. This was the case in March 2011. From supporting each other

‘virtually’ people wanted to support them physically, and the ‘Peace Bus’ Tour was created. Over ten hectic days, a bus travelled to all of the eleven museums, and the virtual link became a real one. One young archaeologist from Bosnia Herzegovina observed that ‘we shall never forget, but we cannot stay forever on the battlefield’, a phrase that continues to have real resonance for the Balkan Museum work.

‘1+1:Live and Love’ took the BMN to a wider international audience. The opening was live streamed and over 5000 people tuned in to watch, despite being many technical difficulties. The openings were also really well supported by the Swedish Embassies and the extra gravitas given to these events helped to smooth over some of the political uncertainties.

In 2012 another milestone was reached with the first BMN conference. It was entitled ‘Meet, See, Do’ (MSD) as a way of signalling the active nature of the event. Over 60 delegates from eight Balkan countries gathered in Sarajevo to enjoy three full days of workshops, seminars, key-notes and networking. A second conference followed in Tirana in April 2013, and the third will take place in Novi Sad in April 2015. These conferences have been co-funded by SIDA, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and the Swedish Institute, and are rapidly becoming key events in Balkan museum and heritage activity.

Two areas have emerged as particular strengths from Balkan museums; developing inclusive practice and interpretation. Since 2007 work around access and inclusion with Balkan museums has been supported by two major grants from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation. This support has enabled many museums to understand the nature of discrimination against disabled people and to reach out to audiences that do not or cannot easily access their own heritage. As well as over 25 separate museum-based projects, the access and inclusion work has produced a group of trained and experienced consultants that can advise and support other museums in how to become more open as institutions. Members of the Balkan Museum Access Group were also instrumental in the first Balkan Museums without Barriers conference in October 2014. This two-day event broke new ground in terms of practice and understanding of the power of museums as places of social change.

The second area of strength is around heritage interpretation. Museums are highly political organisations and are often manipulated for specific aims. Equally, in an attempt to reduce what can be interference, museums often retreat to the relative safety of non-contentious displays based on archaeology, art history or nostalgic representations of ‘the past’. Understanding interpretation and developing strategies for learning, engagement and creativity has been a key focus for the BMN. This is particularly important around questions of recent history, identity and ethnicity – aspects that are often appropriated for political means. Interpretation is based on multiple voices, perspectives and understanding and is designed to use stories and narratives to weave threads through exhibitions and collections to support learning and discovery. A key objective of the BMN in coming years is to strengthen this and to bring museums alive as places of real discussion.

In 2015 the BMN will become an NGO in its own right. This is a massive achievement and is only possible because of the ongoing, unpaid, dedicated work of a group of museum professionals in the western Balkan countries. Taking a stand for collaboration with former enemies is brave and risky, and the continued international support of the network is vital if the NGO is to grow and become strong. That it is needed is clear; all the evidence shows that a growing number of museums are hungry for change and care passionately about their collections, buildings, colleagues and audiences. Initiatives such as the Womens’ International Leadership Development (WILD) programme, supported by SIDA up to 2014, ensure that creative leadership has a chance to develop, alongside enhancing equality. By 2015, sixteen Balkan women will have benefited from this professional development, and steps towards changing the dominant organisational culture of hierarchical patrimony will have begun.



## 1+1: Life & Love travelling exhibition

LENA HEJLL, CURATOR, SECRETARY CHWB

In 2009, at one of the Balkan Museum workshops, the decision was taken to create a joint exhibition. Several workshops about the exhibition process, were accomplished during the following years. All of the 11 network museums, from six different countries, were taking part as often as they could. Finally, March 11, 2011 – 11 exhibitions, all named 1+1: Life & Love, opened simultaneously.

After the closing of the 11 exhibitions, the work continued with planning for the joint travelling exhibition. All of the 11 Western Balkan museums were asked to send a part of their exhibitions to the

CHWB office in Sarajevo. The contributions were very different – objects, films, pictures, sound and texts.

In January and June 2012, a smaller group of participants elected from the 11 museums, met to discuss the content of the travelling exhibition out of the material sent in. The two workshops were also discussing learning, texts and marketing of the new exhibition.

Three young designers from Sarajevo were assigned to create the exhibition form and the National Museum in Sarajevo let the project use some space for the actual building of the exhibition.

The travelling exhibition, 1+1: Life & Love, opened September 7, 2012 at Museum Gustavianum, Uppsala University, Sweden.

This project brings together museums and people in six countries in the Western Balkans who want to show the beauty of their countries and to share common heritage. The image of the former Yugoslavia is too often associated with war, conflicts and hatred. 1+1: Life & Love shows that people can and do want to work together for a better future.

Much learning is the effect of the project and all who has participated, most surely agree that it has been a great success and an important step towards working across borders.

*“We will never forget, but we cannot stay forever on the battlefield”*

*The tour started in Sarajevo and visited all of the 11 museums.*





## BALKAN REGIONAL

# The South East European (SEE) Heritage Network (2006-ongoing)

**”Till now SEE Heritage was very important and useful for member organizations, since we had a chance to meet each other, exchange experience, collaborate, act jointly, make new partnerships in new projects. For the SEE region in general, it is very important to have such a network of NGOs that advocate for heritage, and that can be an important actor and link between governments and citizens.”**

*Representative of an NGO member of SEE Heritage Network*

### Short description

The South East European (SEE) Heritage network is a voluntary, independent, non-governmental, non-political and non-profit organization that gathers organizations from South East European countries which believe that cultural, ethnic and religious diversity is a valuable social resource. SEE Heritage Network works towards protecting and promoting the region’s common cultural heritage with the aim of encouraging sustainable development. The vision of SEE Heritage Network is to see South East Europe as a region where people cooperate, understand and respect each other on the basis of their cultural differences.

SEE Heritage strengthens contacts, cooperation and capacities of civil society organizations in the field of cultural heritage in the SEE region; identifies problems in this field, and participates in resolving them through joint projects; promotes the work of civil society organizations, as well as the values, importance and potentials of the cultural heritage of South East Europe; encourages partnerships and cooperation among the state, business and CSO sectors, as well as citizens; encourages improvements in cultural heritage management; influences decision-makers by encouraging the state sector to adopt more efficient approaches towards protecting and valorising cultural heritage; and produces and publishes relevant

### Contribution to socio-economic development

Through meetings of the members, joint activities, public events and publications, SEE Heritage Network has been dealing with important social topics such as: cultural landscapes and the role of NGOs in the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in South East Europe; misuse of cultural heritage in political, ideological and other causes; the state and sites of industrial heritage in the Western Balkan countries. By tackling the-

se issues SEE Heritage has contributed to the valorisation of heritage as an underutilised resource and promoted its protection. By gathering NGOs that are willing to contribute to protecting and promoting South East European heritage as part of our common European and world heritage, SEE Heritage Network creates the framework for creating synergies and testing innovative ideas.



## BALKAN REGIONAL

# Balkan Museum Network (2006-ongoing)

### Short description

CHwB developed a separate programme for regional museum cooperation in order to develop a broader approach to heritage by including more museums in its work. As a part of the regional efforts towards peace and reconciliation museums have been identified as a backbone of the cultural sectors in the western Balkan countries. However, the political transition and post-conflict turbulence have stripped down museums of the possibility to fulfil their roles. With the objective to democratize museums, CHwB has created different professional development programmes (trainings and workshops) for the museum professionals to reconnect and share common strategies for dealing with similar issues all have dealt with after the conflicts in the region.

Since 2006 more than twenty regional meetings and workshops have been organised; thirty museum projects implemented, increasing the accessibility of museums; skills in specific areas have been improved (conservation, marketing, exhibition design and other related topics); field trips have been organized and thematic working group meetings held. One of the tangible results of sharing and interaction has been the production of a joint, simultaneous, traveling exhibition '1+1, Life & Love,' which was realized in 2011. As of 2015, three annual conference have been organized by the Balkan Museum Network, under the title 'Meet, See, Do.'

One of the key capacity-building areas was developing leadership skills, and the initial result has been the creation of the female leadership network known as WILD© - Women's International Leadership Development programme. In 2014 the Balkan Museum Network (BMN) was registered as an association, and today it is an independent, international, non-governmental organization dedicated to safeguarding and promoting the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the Balkans. It gathers museums and museum professionals

**“As the containers of human knowledge, museums are maybe the only spaces where a scientific and constructive dialogue can take place, and have the power to support dialogues happening outside their space.”**

*Nedi Petri, CHwB Albania*

that are willing to participate in the creation of a better society, in which museums are active forces for democracy, promoting diversity and human rights.

**“For me, the strength of the BMN is its capacity to offer new ideas, visions and knowledge to the museum community.”**

*Tatjana Mijatović, Member of the Balkan Museum Access Group*

### **Contribution to socio-economic development**

The strengthened capacities of museums have been put into action through new partnerships with civil society organization through the implantation of joint projects. Around 30 small museum projects have been funded by CHwB, creating relevant outcomes on the local and regional level. Improved museum services and new infrastructure that have been developed, leading to higher visibility for museums in society. More community outreach activities and new audiences helped museums fulfil social and educational roles which have long-term effects and contribute to financial sustainability.



## BALKAN REGIONAL

# Inclusion of Deaf and disabled people in the museums of the Western Balkans (2007-ongoing)

### Short description

With its dedication to social justice, CHwB has realised very positive outcomes working with museums on increasing Deaf and disabled people's access to museums and their collections. Through the regional museum cooperation programme, and later through the Balkan Museum Network, CHwB has been dedicated to helping museums become places of creativity, inclusion, social justice and peacebuilding—places that are accessible to all members of all communities. Using different educational methodologies, knowledge has been disseminated through training materials that have been collected as a 'Disability Tool Kit' (available in five languages). This toolkit drew on international collaboration with experts from Sweden, the UK and other countries, as well as partnering with the associations of disabled people and service providers in the region. The most important result has been the creation of the Balkan Museum Access Group (BMAG) that consists of eight museum professionals working through the social model of disability and cascading learning, skills and knowledge around inclusive practice. BMAG has covered topics such as 'producing tactile images', 'working with blind and visually impaired people' and 'applying the social model in practice'. Access and inclusion are mainstreamed in CHwB activities and are core themes for the Balkan Museum Network, avoiding the pitfalls of adopting an 'add-on' culture.

### Contribution to socio-economic development

Working on increasing the inclusiveness and accessibility of museums, CHwB has produced a shift in the organizational culture of participating museums based on changes in attitude,

**“The museum is quite changed. We have more blind and visually impaired visitors. Also, children love our tactile replicas. They can touch them, take them, and until now they couldn't do that with museum exhibits. We intend to continue this beautiful cooperation.”**

*Lejla Alić, Zenica City Museum*



practice and policy. The creation of an annual museum conference (Meet, See, Do) as a forum to share and learn good practice and common challenges contributes to the professional and media coverage of disability and other socially relevant topics. Partnerships with individuals and disabled people organizations has contributed to the visibility of Deaf and disabled people in the community.

The improvement to the physical museum environment based on the social model of disability and principles of universal design has long lasting effects. The development of the interpretation tools based on new technologies (e.g. handheld guides with sign language, Braille information, accessible websites, portable chairs, tactile replicas) enables museums to be the space for dialogue and intercultural interaction.

*Beri monastery. Photo: CHwB*

## Tibetan cultural heritage rescue work (2002 and 2011)

### Short description

CHwB has been involved in two projects related to the rescue of Tibetan heritage.

The first project was the restoration of the Beri Monastery in the province of Sichuan in China. The building's oldest parts are from the 17th century. After the Cultural Revolution the monastery was repaired and later re-opened in the 1980's. However, because of a badly leaking roof, invaluable wall paintings from the 17th and 18th centuries were seriously threatened. In order to carry out the work, a workshop was established for the use in the restoration of traditional building skills. Work consisted mainly of repairing the timber structure and roof and installing a functional drainage system.

The second project was the Tibetan Museum in Dharamsala in India, where the largest Tibetan photo archive in the world was under sincere threat to be destroyed due to improper storage of the photos. A CHwB mission made an analysis and a proposal how to improve the storage situation.

### Contribution to socio-economic development

Tibetan culture is threatened in various ways and therefore it is vital to rescue valuable and important heritage for future generations. Both projects have contributed to this.

The restoration work of the monastery has had the immediate effect that the wall paintings were saved. A more long-term effect is that the monastery as an important Tibetan symbol can continue to play a role as part of the history and culture in the area. The project also had significance through the training of younger craftsmen in traditional techniques.

The situation report and proposed action plan which CHwB assisted the Tibetan Museum to produce has given the museum a tool to improve the storage of the photos. This will save this unique documentation, which plays a vital role for Tibetan society, as well as for museum visitors from different parts of the world, offering knowledge about different aspects of Tibetan life and culture of the past until today.



## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

# Bridges to the Future: Conservation, Science, Technology & Education in Stolac (2012 - 2014)

**Short description**

The town of Stolac has a rich cultural, historic and natural heritage, as a melting pot of different religious and ethnic groups. During the war in the 1990s in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the absence of appreciation for the common cultural heritage, led to its destruction as a target of war. As a result, the city experienced almost complete loss of its built heritage and cultural memory. Seventeen years after the war, the tensions and the segregation between the different ethnic and religious communities has prevented the perception of the city's heritage as a resource. CHwB therefore started a project where local heritage sites are used to contribute to a shared understanding of heritage and to bridge gaps in society. With new technologies, an innovative digital model was built that highlights the region's heritage resources in a qualitative, innovative and interactive way. The effects of CHwB's contribution to the visibility of the rich cultural heritage were reached through: a smartphone application, a touchscreen platform installed in the high school, production of small promotional materials (such as bilingual maps, postcards and puzzles) and workshops.

**“As a citizen of Stolac, I am very proud that my town is the first one in Bosnia and Herzegovina that has smartphone application that promotes our rich cultural heritage.”**

*Ana from Stolac*

**Contribution to socio-economic development**

A sustainable approach to cultural development has been ensured by engaging a great number of young people from Stolac in fun, educational activities. Stolac, the city of mills and bridges, has received one more bridge—this time between heritage and the visitor, between a troublesome past and a brighter future. Tourism in the town of Stolac has great potential to become an important source of employment and income generation. The number of tourists that have visited Stolac in 2014 has increased by more than 60% in one year. Stolac is today an important cultural hub, also due to the nomination of stećak, the medieval tombstones, to UNESCO's World Heritage List. The web page is: [www.connectingstolac.ba](http://www.connectingstolac.ba)



## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA “Make it Yours!” (2014–2015)

### Short description

Due to post-war divisions among different ethnic groups and a generally low level of trust in the Balkans, it is important to present the rich and diverse cultural heritage of the region by focusing on its values and creating a sense of ownership. Through community engagement, a core component of CHwB’s working methodology, and based on the successful realization of similarly-titled awareness-raising campaigns started by CHwB in Albania and expanded to Kosovo, CHwB implemented its most ambitious “Make it Yours!” campaign yet, as a yearlong awareness-raising project in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

Activities related to heritage conservation and restoration are usually designed solely to engage professionals. In this way, the monument becomes alienated from the surrounding community. CHwB has experienced that monuments do not have to be alienating if they are interpreted with local target audiences in mind. Therefore, this project was aimed at all citizens of BiH, who were both encouraged to increase their sense of ownership and confronted with standard prejudices and misunderstandings of concepts of heritage. The project used on-going restoration projects to engage health workers, politicians, taxi drivers, heritage professionals, professors and students of high schools and universities, leaders of religious communities and others, so as to challenge their views on recognition (or non-recognition) of cultural heritage as our common resource. While engaging citizens of different professions in actions such as plastering, hewing timber and masonry, we provided a different insight into what a monument is, contributing to education and a different interpretation that created and encouraged personal relations with monuments.

### Contribution to socio-economic development

The project has increased a sense of ownership and responsibility over heritage, especially among high school students, who took part in nine creative workshops that gathered more

**“I did not know that we had so many beautiful monuments from the Austro-Hungarian period with so many nicely designed decorative details that could be turned into souvenirs or objects of function. I will continue to research about the buildings and their stories.”**

*Student from the creative workshop*

than 200 students from different high schools across BiH. The topics of the workshops included traditional Bosnian carpets, traditional methods of modelling, volunteerism for cultural heritage preservation, traditional instruments, Austro-Hungarian newspapers, traditional wool felting, modelling with the use of a 3D printer, and street art. An educational toolkit that was developed for use by cultural educators serves as the basis for future cooperation with high schools. An extensive media campaign has raised awareness among citizens of BiH about their shared cultural heritage, with its universal values and its potential for broader social development. The informal 'Advocacy and Monitoring Cultural Heritage Platform,' which was established within the project, would continue with its information-sharing and advocacy activities. The project "Make it Yours!" was funded by the European Union under the framework of the 'Sarajevo 2014' programme, which incorporates a series of projects implemented in and around the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, in order for Sarajevo to send messages of peace, reconciliation and solidarity to the world.



## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

## Mapping heritage after flood in BiH 2014

### Short description

In May 2014, severe flooding in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia left hundreds of thousands of people roofless. In addition to the floods, a vast number of landslides worsened the situation and relief efforts. Some of the landmines buried during the conflict that had not yet been removed were dislocated due to the floods.

In that situation, CHwB's office in Sarajevo mobilised to assess the damage occurred on cultural heritage monuments. Data collection and analysis took place in the period July – October 2014 resulting in the comprehensive report "Heritage in Aid - Priority List Register 2014" that summarized data on 140 monuments (type/name, address, GPS coordinates, ownership, occupancy, condition and description of the site). For each monument, a series of photographs were attached, as well as the technical documentation that had been collected.

Based on guidelines and templates developed by CHwB for survey and damage assessment, five interdisciplinary teams conducted on-the-ground mapping missions surveying the cultural heritage affected by the floods. Some members of these teams were alumni of CHwB's Regional Restoration Camps from Bosnia and Herzegovina that have collected the data on heritage sites and endangered monuments (measuring, sketching, photographing, drawing and describing).

The flood recovery is an on-going process that continued in 2015. Several funds are providing technical support to authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the development of a Recovery Needs Assessment. CHwB will continue contributing to the development of the flood prevention measures design, which will serve to protect historical structures, and their integration into local planning.

**“Being a member of the assessment team was a unique professional development opportunity for me. I have realised that it is crucial to develop plans for dealing with risks and emergency situations in order to safeguard our rich cultural heritage.”**

*Boris, member of the assessment team*

### **Contribution to social development**

The database of the endangered cultural heritage as well as the analysis and summary of the collected data in the report forms the basis of the priority list of cultural heritage and highlights the most endangered buildings of cultural significance in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Future interventions aiming to preserve and rehabilitate cultural heritage in the affected municipalities will be based on the real needs and evidence deriving from the assessment process. Better promoted and preserved cultural heritage can be an engine for cultural, social and economic development. Risk analysis and preparedness plans as well as guidelines for the flood protection systems are an essential element for the future management of heritage sites.



*Kursumlija Mosque, 17th century (1997-1999), Maglaj.*

## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

# Restoration process in eight towns (1996-2014)

### Short description

During the 1992-1995 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, cultural heritage was explicitly targeted. The state of destruction was grave, with both sacral and secular monuments reduced to rubble. It is estimated that 2,770 monuments of culture were either destroyed or damaged (713 monuments were completely destroyed). Destruction of cultural monuments was quite extensive and systematic, which made the world realize the urgent need for both emergency and development assistance and protection. CHwB was founded by Swedish heritage professionals as a reaction to the vast destruction of cultural heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Because cultural heritage provides a tangible link with our past and contributes to our sense of cultural identity and pride, the destruction of cultural heritage is also the destruction of cultural memory and identity. Therefore it is crucial to rehabilitate cultural heritage sites in the process of reconciliation, which facilitates the return of displaced persons and refugees after wars and conflicts.

As an effort to contribute to these processes, CHwB has restored 23 sites in 8 towns as follows:

**Sarajevo:** The Despić House, the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Jajce:** Three residential houses in the old town, Dizdar Mosque, Sinan-Bey's Mosque, Omer Bey's House, the northeast fortification walls adjoining Papaz Tower, four water mills on the Pliva Lakes

**Prusac:** Handanija Mosque

**Maglaj:** Kuršumlija Mosque, Uzer Bey's Guesthouse

**“I am satisfied with the reconstruction, with the improvement of life in the village.”**

*Respondent in a face-to-face interview conducted by Puls agency*



**Banja Luka:** Entrance gate to Kastel

**Mostar:** Kujundzilu bazaar building, Labyrinth building, the Institute building,

**Ozren:** Archive of the Orthodox Church

**Zavala:** Orthodox Monastery

The criteria for the selection of sites were locally prioritized according to historical importance, size and damage, so that restoration works could provide qualified restoration training. In all the projects as much of the object as possible were preserved, aesthetic changes were avoided and most often later additions left as a record of the history of the building. In addition to this, chosen buildings were interesting restoration problems that serve as suitable educational examples.



### **Contribution to social development**

An Impact Assessment Study was carried out in 2007 regarding the restoration process in eight cities, towns and villages in Bosnia and Herzegovina and some of the conclusions are: the selection of sites was relevant and important; heritage effectively contributes to poverty reduction, reconciliation and the return of refugees; the reconstruction of religious objects was done after the return to the villages; the restoration of cultural heritage buildings conducted by CHwB was especially effective in terms of improving professional knowledge among local experts, institutions and contractors.



*The Village Hoça e Madhe / Velika Hoča is an example of cultural heritage as a resource for reconciliation and local development.*

## KOSOVO

# Cultural heritage is a resource for reconciliation and local development (2005 – 2015)

### Short description

Kosovo Albanians and Serbs share a common past in their country. However, it has often been marked by turmoil and conflicts that have hindered a peaceful coexistence. Today, 17 years after the 1998-99 ethnic conflict, communities are still struggling with reconciliation and building trust. Because the village of Hoça e Madhe / Velika Hoča is inhabited by Kosovo Serbs but situated in a region with a Kosovo Albanian majority in southern Kosovo, it became an ethnic enclave after the conflict, isolated and guarded by international forces.

During medieval times, the village was a strong commercial and cultural centre. Handicrafts, wine production and agriculture played an important role. Today, thirteen medieval churches and old stone houses have survived in this valley surrounded by vineyards, numerous lodgings, wineries and water mills.

Like everywhere in Kosovo, the current challenge of the village is economic welfare. Therefore, in order to use cultural heritage to create opportunities for cultural tourism, CHWB has restored four houses, which have been converted into bed & breakfasts. Furthermore, a beautiful Ottoman-style house has been turned into an art gallery and youth centre, while a historic tower is becoming a tourist attraction. Finally, CHWB has restored the 18th century winery, which will become a community centre.

### Contribution to socio-economic development

In the Village Hoça e Madhe / Velika Hoča, CHWB brought different communities closer together by engaging Albanian and Serb craftsmen in joint workshops, giving them opportunities to be reacquainted with each other, build trust and find common ground.

Tourism activities in and around Hoça e Madhe / Velika Hoča now include day-trips, church visits and nature walks in the hills nearby, as well as a festival of traditional food and wine.

**“The community of Hoça e Madhe / Velika Hoča is proud of their heritage. Today, after all this work, our heritage will be shared with the world as our common heritage.”**

*Father Marko*



*Emergency interventions on the Kulla of Zejnullah Beu, Balince, Vushtrri, were focused on stone wall consolidation and restoration of the roof construction. Photo: CHwB, 2014.*

## KOSOVO

# Emergency Interventions (2013 – 2015)

### Short description

Kosovo is a country rich in history and cultural heritage, dating from pre-historic times to the present. Cultural heritage assets are important in terms of their historic, aesthetic, architectural and social values. Due to the unstable political situation of the last century, the war of 1998/99 and the post-war political and social transition, the focus on preserving cultural heritage has been left on the margin.

CHwB has been promoting the idea of preventive interventions on buildings in need, as a quick measure to prevent cultural heritage from further destruction and avoid major restoration interventions. Emergency interventions of buildings in this project have been focused mainly on treating the roof, consolidating walls, stabilizing the structure, draining and cleaning.



### Contribution to socio-economic development

This approach has been backed by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, which supported the program of emergency interventions on 50 cultural heritage objects, as a necessary act and a legal obligation. The selected buildings represent different typologies of national architecture spread across the entire territory of Kosovo. The project has increased awareness and built competence for owners and communities to recognize the value of their buildings. Within these communities, this project has boosted economic and social development through stimulation of the local economy by using local materials, engaging local workers and companies, and presenting the possible future usage of these assets.



*Participatory workshops  
are the key for success  
of the project.  
Photo: CHwB*

## KOSOVO

# Local Cultural Heritage Plans program in seven municipalities of Kosovo (2012 – 2015)

### Short description

When the Local Cultural Heritage Plans program began, Kosovo municipalities were facing major difficulties in utilizing cultural heritage for community benefits, and the risk of further destruction of the heritage remained high. There was insufficient level of dialogue between municipalities and central institutions as well as between institutions and the communities. Investments in cultural and natural heritage at the municipal level were insufficient. Based on the experiences of a successful CHwB pilot project in the municipality of Junik, CHwB developed an expansion to seven new municipalities in 2012. The four-year program on Local Cultural Heritage Plans adopted a new approach by integrating protection and promotion of cultural and natural heritage in spatial and urban planning—identifying heritage assets for economic and social development. The process of developing these plans included a wide range of local stakeholders engaged in various meetings, participatory workshops, study visits and public consultation processes. In the end, the program has created a new standard where priorities identified in the plans have been implemented in the field. These priorities vary from conservation and emergency intervention on architectural and archaeological sites to a number of educational, awareness and cultural events; development of local heritage databases; establishment of tourism offices; development of spatial planning documents and strategies; establishment of local museums; promotional tourism videos; and more. From a list of more than 200 hundred priorities, about 80 of them have been selected to be implemented.

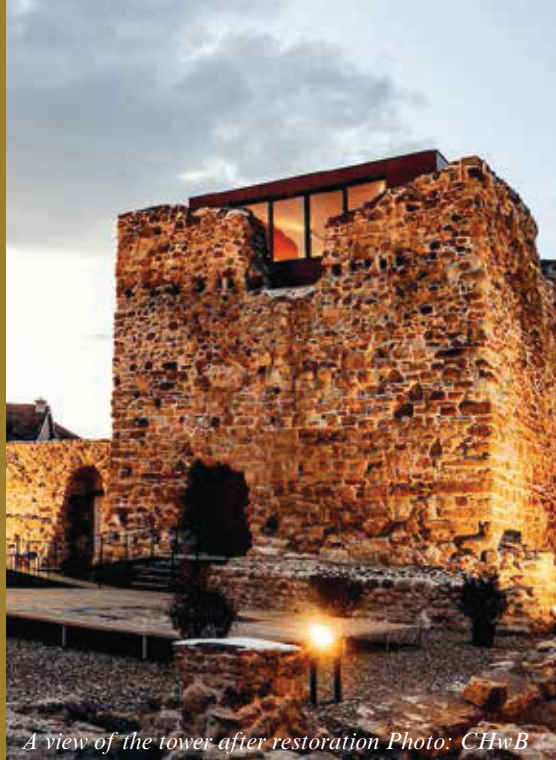
### Contribution to socio-economic development

One of the key focuses of the program has been the establishment of Local Forums in each of the municipalities with representatives from the respective municipality, central institu-

**“CHwB offers an important alternative to procuring external planners for municipalities. It consists of building municipal capacity and engaging civil society in contributing proactively to municipal planning through the participation in inclusive processes. This approach is expected to result in greater ownership and functionality, and lower costs.”**

*From the independent evaluation  
by Indevelop 2011*

tions, local authorities, international organizations and civil society. This participatory process has increased constructive interagency communication and coordination. In addition, decision-making bodies, as well as monitoring and support systems, have been established while drafting the seven plans and setting the 80 priorities. The plans address both immediate needs and longer-term visions for cultural and natural heritage. This program is helping local communities understanding of the value of cultural heritage for social, economic and cultural development and at the same time developing capacity at different levels of society.



*A view of the tower after restoration Photo: CHwB*



*New public facilities in the castle. Photo: CHwB*

## KOSOVO

# Preservation of Vushtrri/Vučitrn Castle (2011 – 2014)

### Short description

The archaeological site 'Vushtrri/Vučitrn Castle' is located in the city centre and consists of building structures with layers of different historical periods. As an archaeological site, the castle has a lot of values that indicate its role in the surrounding context and its function in the urban environment. It is a symbol for the city and its long history. Even though it has had different functions over time, its main structure remains the same. The castle was built over different periods of time, thus it has different layers of building materials and construction techniques.

### Contribution to socio-economic development

Until recently the site was closed to the general public. Today, the re-opened site has become a great tourist attraction for the town. Apart from conserving the remaining structures, the castle has been modified into a functional space to promote educational activities in the open archaeological museum, making it an outstanding platform for artistic and cultural events. Giving the castle a new function makes it accessible for everyone regardless of age, sex, religion or ability. The renovations enable all to freely use and enjoy the new spaces and functions of the building. The fresh external appearance is eye catching and evokes community pride.

The project has additionally contributed to employment in areas of unique skills, as well as general labour. Because the local community holds Vushtrri Castle in high regard, the improvements made through this project have encouraged greater proactive interest for the future management of the property. The preservation of Vushtrri Castle has contributed to the on-going preservation and conservation of other heritage buildings in Kosovo, particularly in Vushtrri, while improving facilities for future visitors and users.



## KOSOVO

**Saint Saviour Church, Prizren** (2010)**Short description**

Located north of the old city of Prizren in southern Kosovo, the Church of Saint Saviour stands at the edge of the old castle overlooking the historic centre. The complex structure of the church is immediately revealed through the combination of two buildings from different eras: the small medieval church built in the fourteenth century surrounded on three sides by a church of the nineteenth century, still unfinished. In the second half of the eighteenth century the building was transformed into a church for the Orthodox Vlach community and later used by the Serbian community until hostilities started in Prizren.

The French NGO Patrimoine sans Frontières (PSF) was responsible for managing the full restoration of the building in 2010. CHwB was sub-contracted by PSF to carry out the structural and architectural restoration. A team of conservators, craftsmen, carpenters and young practitioners were involved to strengthen the structure in different parts of the building.

**Contribution to socio-economic development**

In addition to stimulating the local economy by using local material, engaging local workers and companies, this project has built local professional competence through workshops and working together in international teams.

During the restoration work, the site was partially open to the public. Visits led by a professional architect enabled exchanges of views between visitors, workers and experts. The restoration of the church opened important opportunities for discussion about cultural heritage and tolerance among different ethnic and religious communities. Taking into consideration that the site was used as a military checkpoint from 2004 to 2009, the aforementioned dialogue is of special importance as it contributed to reconciliation between groups that had experienced hostilities. The Serbian Orthodox Church in Prizren is now active in organizing visits and bringing visitors to the church.



*Kulla building in the town of Junik – today the Regional Tourism Centre. Photo: Sali Shoshi*

## KOSOVO

# See you in Dukagjin (2010-2013) and Welcome to Dukagjin (2011-2013)

### Short description

Despite a rich cultural and natural heritage, the economic growth in western Kosovo has been slow. CHwB saw the potential for promoting regional socio-economic development by promoting cultural tourism. In this regard, the tourism development project ‘See you in Dukagjin’ started in December 2010 and aimed to establish an improved basis for cultural tourism. It was later followed by the project ‘Welcome to Dukagjin’ to further the efforts and revitalize this part of Kosovo. Small and medium size enterprises were targeted as well as owners of vernacular houses, community organisations, and new actors important for the support structures. Training was carried out to prepare the different groups to face the challenges and see the possibilities of cultural tourism.

### Contribution to socio-economic development

The key feature of both projects was to establish a sustainable tourism business infrastructure – a Regional Tourism Centre (RTC) with adequate human and physical resources. The RTC is now supporting small and medium size tourism enterprises in starting up businesses and developing, improving and promoting cultural tourism in the region. As a result, a network of 16 vernacular buildings is active and offers bed and breakfast services in family houses, in addition to a mill and a museum. Since the establishment of the RTC, the number of enquiries and tourism visits has been increasing steadily at a quarterly rate of 5-15%, varying by the season. Organised visits for seminars and conferences have also increased at a steady pace.

**“In long-term development, investments in cultural tourism are of strategic importance.**

**Pilot actions such as cultural networking, B&B’s and RTC are an excellent example of a sustainable approach to the development of our natural and cultural heritage”**

*The Mayor of Junik Municipality*

**“Cultural tourism has offered the opportunity for transforming a neglected area into a local asset for the wellbeing of its citizens.”**

*The coordinator of the Regional Tourism Centre in Junik*





Hadum mosque, Gjakova. Photo: Victoria Bly, CHwB.



## KOSOVO

# The Hadum Mosque Restoration

(2003 – 2009)

### Short description

The rule of the Ottoman Empire in Kosovo has left its traces in the material and spiritual culture of the inhabitants of this region. There are a considerable number of classic monumental mosques, mainly from the 15th to 17th centuries. One such building is the Hadum Mosque in Gjakova, built in 1594/95. Together with the old bazar, the Hadum Mosque complex also consisted of an adjacent library, a religious school and a graveyard, which were damaged in the war of 1998/99.

In line with the CHwB's mission to promote the preservation of cultural property in areas beset by conflicts, in case of other catastrophes or in acutely threatening situations, the restoration of the Hadum Mosque begun in the year 2003 and lasted until the end of 2005. Highly qualified Turkish experts were engaged in the overall design and heritage supervision in the delicate and complex restoration process. In addition, a large number of local craftsmen were involved. Following the success of the conservation of the exterior of the mosque, CHwB signed a contract in 2008 for the restoration and conservation of the wall paintings and wooden decoration in the interior of the mosque, marking the first conservation project funded by UNESCO in Kosovo. Also here, international experts were engaged in the painting conservation and restoration. Six local junior experts supported the senior experts. The project was finalized in 2009.

### Contribution to socio-economic development

The project has contributed to the social development of the community, having in mind that for centuries the building was used, in parallel to the religious rituals, as a gathering space for locals where different issues were discussed. These activities have resumed after the restoration of the mosque. The project has also established a network of international and local conservation experts engaged in the conservation process, which is useful for other complex restoration projects in the Balkan region. Valuable professional competence was developed by involving young experts, who got the opportunity to exercise conservation techniques.

**“Hadum Mosque is more than just a religious building; it represents one of the foundations of the town of Gjakova and, as such, it represents many great social and cultural values, making it a unique building in Kosovo. The restoration carried out after the war has brought back the brilliance of the building and reinstated its values. Restoration was the most appropriate measure to be undertaken, and all the work was done properly.”**

*Esat Rexha, Secretary of the Council of Islam Community in Gjakova*



*Tour de Culture participants resting in front of Hadum mosque in Gjakova.*

## KOSOVO

# Tour de Culture (2008-ongoing)

### Short description

Tour de Culture is the only non-competitive cycling and recreational activity in Kosovo open to ALL: professionals and amateurs, young and old, men and women, and disabled people. This unique annual activity in Kosovo consists of synergies arising from the principles of the European Heritage Days and European Mobility Week, which are celebrated all over Europe. The objectives of Tour de Culture are the promotion of our common natural and cultural heritage, promotion of non-motorized transport for more efficient mobility for all and promotion of environmental protection. Within 8 years, Tour de Culture has gone from 100 participants to 1000. During the tour, participants have the chance to visit different heritage sites, attend local cultural activities and taste local food.

### Contribution to socio-economic development

This annual event, which in 2015 was organized for the eighth consecutive year, has become an attention-grabbing activity and tends each year to bring every corner of Kosovo closer together, thus turning it into a pleasant tradition for all of Kosovar society. This is achieved through the growing number of enthusiastic participants every year and great support from local and international institutions, including local businesses and media. Tour de Culture and its activities increase the understanding and relationship between cultural and natural heritage and local communities through non-motorized transport. This means that Tour de Culture is introducing cultural heritage to a non-traditional audience, promoting social inclusion, intercultural and inter-generational meetings and dialogue, as well as active community participation.





*Andrew Shepherd, director of building conservation at the Architectural Association School of Architecture (London), demonstrates techniques for mortar segregation analysis at the 6th Camp in Gjirokastra, Albania. (Kreshnik Merxhani, 2011).*

**“Apparently we need to be reminded of the great heritage we inherit, of the great danger it faces if we keep not doing enough to protect it and mostly, we need to be reminded that we, all together, exchanging our similar experiences can do so much for our countries. It is impossible to imagine how much you understand about your culture by getting to know the one of your neighbour.”**

*Anisa Lloja, camp participant.*

In 2014, the Regional Restoration Camps were honoured with the prestigious European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Award in the category of “Education, Training and Awareness-Raising”: “The Jury especially admired the sustained success of this project in providing practical training for young professionals and inter-regional networking opportunities. This success has been proven: since 2007, (649) participants from (26) countries have taken part in a succession of intensive, well-organised two-week camps in the Balkan region. The jury appreciated the involvement of master craftspeople and academic teachers from local and international institutions in providing this valuable learning environment.” *(numbers updated since the submission of the nomination)*

## BALKAN REGIONAL

# Regional Restoration Camps (2007-ongoing)

### Short description

The CHwB Regional Restoration Camps represent a simple, successful, scalable training model, which grew from a few students in Albania in 2007 to today’s multiple sessions in four countries, with a diverse array of participants. The Camps form part of a Balkans-wide push to encourage people to value and care for their local heritage. Over the course of two weeks, participants follow a rigorous but fulfilling schedule, combining theory – through engaging lectures and presentations – with hands-on restoration work on historic monuments in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo or Serbia.

The main objectives of the Regional Restoration Camps are to use cultural heritage to build relations among young professionals, creating conditions for reconciliation as a prerequisite for peace and democracy, and to preserve traditional crafts and techniques. In addition, each intervention directly helps local residents – using traditional materials and techniques to repair their valuable buildings and providing a new means of understanding, interpreting and revitalizing them.

### Contribution to socio-economic development

Repair works on more than 87 monuments across the Western Balkan region have been carried out and contributed to the revitalization of heritage sites and the communities around them. Participating universities have included the camps in their educational curricula as a practical part of teaching, and students are accredited when they participate. The capacity of participating universities and institutes for monument protection in the region has increased by getting new and more practical insights through the camps. From isolated countries in the war-torn former Yugoslavia, young professional men and women now not only rebuild houses but also build bridges between cultures and ethnic groups when working and learning together.



## ALBANIA

# Babameto I revitalization (2012 – 2013)

### Short description

The grand residential house of Babameto dating from 1885/1887 is an historic vestige of Gjirokastra's urban-architectural landscape and central to the World Heritage historic zone. Completely abandoned following the 1997 national crisis, this first-category monument quickly fell into disrepair, eventually becoming a priority for restoration. In 2004, the state invested in the reconstruction of the roof and other ruined elements. However, the house remained in poor condition until interventions were made by CHwB from 2012 to 2013.



### Contribution to socio-economic development

As a main element of the central bazaar, the restoration of the Babameto house has brought renewed vitality to the commercial area of Gjirokastra's historic centre. The house is now entering its third year as a tourist hostel and cultural centre, operated by a local NGO called the Gjirokastra Foundation. Having had more than 400 overnights, 100 cultural events and revenues of 20.000EUR, the house provides an example of how a restored historic building can be revitalized and used to bring social activities and economic growth to the historic part of the city. Today, the Babameto house stands as a model of sustainable practice in cultural heritage management and an investment practice to be followed by other donors in Gjirokastra, as well as in other cities in Albania.

**“It was a nice moment spent in this traditional Albanian house. Thank you very much for the welcome. It is a good way to discover traditional inhabitant [sic] of Albania. We could really feel the atmosphere and the peacefulness of the house. Congratulation for the high level of the reconstruction. Thank you everybody. From the happy French,”**

*Two French tourists, 16 August 2013, From the 'Impressions Book' at Babameto Hostel*



*An overview of Spaç prison (Kreshnik Merxhani, 2013)*

## ALBANIA

# Dialogues for Spaç (2014-ongoing)

### Short description

In 2014, CHwB began a project called Sharing Stories, Shaping the Future: Dialogues for Spaç - a series of three workshops that brought together stakeholders from local government, national institutions, local residents, former prisoners and non-profit organizations to chart out a future for the former political prison and forced labour camp at Spaç in northern Albania. The workshops focused on (1) understanding the site, its history and its place in the popular conception today; (2) envisioning a mission and set of objectives for a future institution of memory (museum or otherwise) at Spaç; and (3) charting out a concrete set of actions to reach those goals.

### Contribution to socio-economic development

Albania is at a crossroads in its development; it is growing and changing rapidly, yet still held back by the long-lasting political and social legacies of its 45-year Communist dictatorship. For the peace and stability of the country, it is crucial that its citizens begin to explore and confront the history and legacies of its Communist past. As an important site of memory, Spaç prison can serve as a vital touch point, from which Albanians can begin a healthy and productive dialogue about this difficult history. This project entails a series of visioning workshops predicated on the understanding that there is not one way to read the experience of Communism in Albania - the perspectives are as varied as the people who suffered, survived and went about their lives during that time. The key to interpretation is providing a space for these voices to tell their story.

**“These facts were dreadful but very meaningful, in order to rebuild and make present a history that is not known to everyone - a big help for the process.”**

*‘Dialogues for Spaç’ workshop participant*



*After visiting the Kruja hammam, the children fill out an activity booklet, the first edition in the E Ka Kush E Ka series. (Nedi Petri, 2014)*

## ALBANIA

# E Ka Kush E Ka / Heritage Atelier

(2011-ongoing)

### Short description

The collection E Ka Kush e Ka includes children and adults in a series of books and games through which they discover and rediscover cultural heritage as a bridge, linking us to the complexities of the world around us. The series began in 2011 during the 7th Regional Restoration Camp, with an interpretation project for the historic hammam (Turkish bath) of Gjirokastra. Camp participants wanted to come up with a way to teach young children about the hammam – how it worked, who used it, what to do with the building today. From two booklets about the hammam, the collection has grown to include four booklets, a puzzle and a paper house model, focusing on topics from the tower houses of Gjirokastra to the traditional costumes of northern Albania.

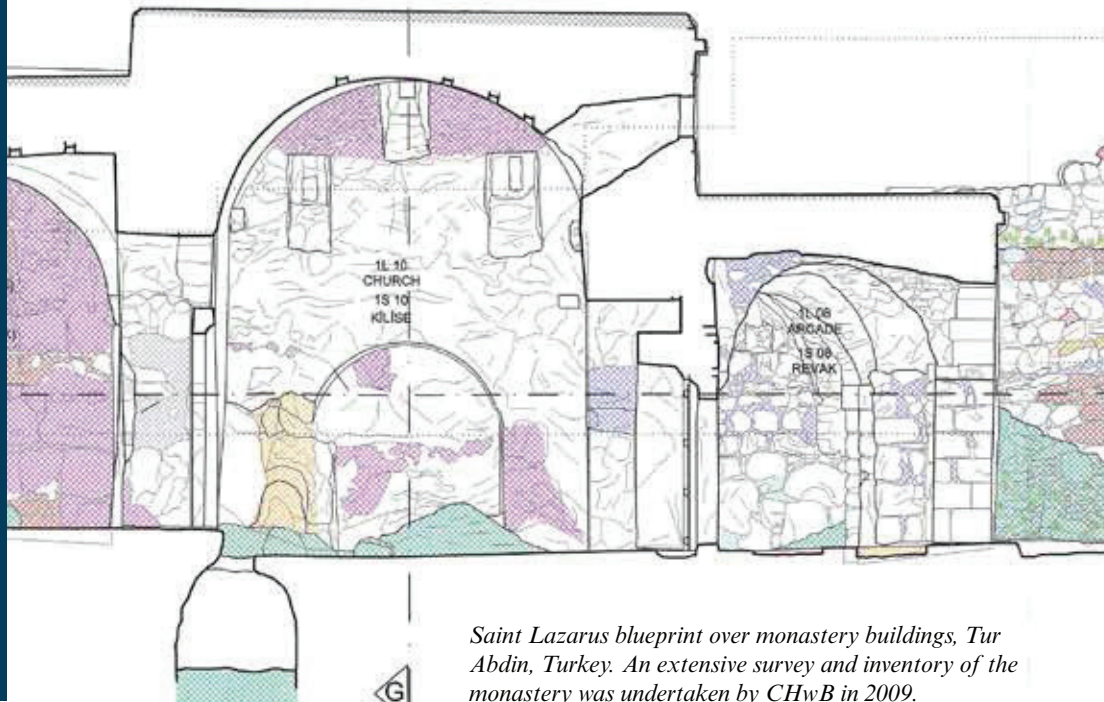
### Contribution to socio-economic development

Cultural heritage is not only about learning facts; it is an ideal educational and entertaining support for learning about and exploring new things, other people and our society. It is an instrument that helps with self-reflection, skills and mental vivacity... a path toward citizenship and mutual respect, where the search for meaning is foremost. By working with young children, the E Ka Kush E Ka project helps to foster a lifelong appreciation for heritage while promoting good citizenship and wise stewardship of our resources from an early age.

**“I liked how the activity was organized by CHwB.**

**This type of activity makes us more interactive with the students, and the practical exercises leave a better impression in their memory.”**

*Eftimi Puraveli, 4th grade teacher, participant in a Heritage Atelier in Gjirokastra*



*Saint Lazarus blueprint over monastery buildings, Tur Abdin, Turkey. An extensive survey and inventory of the monastery was undertaken by CHwB in 2009.*

## Cultural heritage protection in southeast Turkey (2009 - 2010)

### Short description

Assyrians/Syriacs living in Sweden saw the need to save heritage at risk in the area of Tur Abdin in southeast Turkey. Attention eventually focused on the monastery of Saint Lazarus, founded in the 5th century and thus representing an important expression of early Christianity in the area. The present monastery buildings, abandoned in the beginning of the 20th century, were possibly erected on the remains of an earlier, non-Christian shrine. The Stylite pillar in the monastery courtyard, and the technique of using large rectangular blocks in the monastery's inner wall are two aspects that contribute to the monastery's unique value.

CHwB and SLKV (the Friends of Saint Lazarus Monastery) cooperated to promote the preservation of the monastery. An extensive survey and inventory of the monastery was undertaken in 2009. Based on the inventory, a seminar was organised in order to define needs to protect and preserve the monastery against further destruction and explore the possibilities of using it as a place for dialogue.

### Contribution to socio-economic development

The focus of local, regional and international expertise on this heritage at great risk has contributed to save the monastery. After the project, institutions and organisations have acted on the urgently needed protective security measures against on-going looting and further destruction.

Knowledge and awareness of Saint Lazarus Monastery and its place in architectural history have increased through the project activities. Participating researchers contributed by giving a good overview of the historical sites, and they provided further information about

on-going archaeological, historic and educational activities in the area.

There are strong reasons to develop dialogue work that already exists in Tur Abdin as many groups with different languages and religious beliefs live in the area. Using cultural heritage to strengthen an understanding of different cultures and their shared history and at the same time work with tolerance and rights issues among men and women, would be a sustainable way of preserving a common heritage. Many local organisations were interested in participating in such an initiative.





## Belarusian Cultural Heritage (2012 – 2014)

### Short description

After visits to Belarus, CHwB found that the main problems were international isolation, the absence of dialogue between the government and civil society and ineffective legislation, which does not adequately protect cultural heritage. One consequence of these is that heritage professionals have limited access to international standards, which reduces opportunities for professional development among people in the field of cultural heritage. There are few opportunities to work with integrated theory and practice. The result of this is that craftspeople, students and teachers are losing their knowledge of Belarusian cultural heritage, threatening its authenticity. Therefore, two areas of work were prioritized in this project:

- Museum development, including new dimensions of working with museums, in order to promote new meeting places, democratic dialogue and networks at national and international levels.

- Architectural authenticity and sustainable integrated conservation, creating networks on a local level and creating confidence for Belarusian cultural heritage.

The overall goal for the project was to support the development of a vibrant civil society and democratic participation in Belarus, using cultural heritage as a tool for development.

### Contribution to socio-economic development

The project established new contacts and networks with and between Belarusian institutions and heritage professionals, as well as making connections among Sweden, Belarus, Lithuania and to CHwB programs in the western Balkans for professional exchange of experiences and joint discussions. These activities were eye openers for many Belarusian participants who got inspiration and tools to work in more innovative ways and strengthen local communities.

A group of 27 Belarusian museum directors shared an overview of museum management in Sweden. Topics covered included: the human rights perspective and gender equality in

producing exhibitions, methods for attracting and working with visitors, methods for preventive conservation and seeing the museum as a learning environment.

In the field of restoration, Belarusian participants made study visits to CHwB's office in Kosovo and participated in CHwB's Regional Restoration Camp in Gjirokastra, Albania. The Belarusian restoration experts were inspired and enthusiastic to understand the international methods and approaches used by CHwB. They came away from the experience with new visions of how to organize practical works at the local level—involving community-based organisations, students and young professionals, as well as local authorities.



## KENYA

**Journeys of Peace** (2013 – 2014)  
**and Youth for Peace** (2014 – 2015)**Short description**

Too often museums and heritage are used as instruments to divide people. Heritage, history and identity are manipulated by those who seek to undermine democracy and erode conditions for peaceful coexistence based on respect and acceptance of others. This is especially true in countries where conflict has recently taken place, such as Kenya. The image that is built is of a country that is divided and unsettled. Yet there is another history that is largely unknown – and that is the long tradition of peace-building between peoples and respectful sharing of diverse heritage, landscape, artefacts and values. Journeys of Peace is a project that reclaims this hidden history and empowers individuals and communities to rediscover old and build new ways of creating better lives.

Journeys of Peace had a strong bottom-up approach to conflict resolution and peace-building, with a focus on family and community. Networking, workshops and the production of a traveling exhibition contributed to providing a safe forum for dialogue between women and men, coming from different generations and communities, to promote understanding, appreciation and use of cultural heritage. This successful project has continued in the project Youth for Peace. Both projects have been in collaboration with the Kenyan Community Peace Museums Heritage Foundation.

**Contribution to socio-economic development**

It is a challenge to create conditions for dialogue between conflicting communities. For many in the project Journeys for Peace it was the first time they had worked together in a structured way; for others it was the first time they had met their colleagues from other community peace museums. The workshops also resulted in curators collaborating to take the

**“If you don’t share  
your values you can’t  
share your future”**

*Workshop participant*

exhibition to more remote and troubled communities. The workshops were opportunities for training and capacity building in the use of IT and social media, thereby strengthening the channels of communication within the network and creating a platform for sustainable cooperation. Women were empowered and the dialogue between the elders in a community and its young people was facilitated. Peace Clubs have been revitalised at several schools and colleges. More than 4,000 people visited the exhibition at 8 venues – exceeding the original target of 3,000 visitors at 5 venues. Over 50 volunteers participated and in excess of 80 artefacts were donated to the museums. Networking increased within and between communities and people are beginning to take an active role in resolving conflict using traditional values and practices.



## Al-Hakawati – the Storyteller, Syrian oral tradition project (2014 - 2015)

### Short description

An active and living tradition of oral storytelling still exists in Syria and in other countries of the Middle East. These folktales have existed in oral tradition throughout generations and capture social and moral values, entertainment and heroic epics. They can be considered as a common denominator for solidarity across ethnic, geographic, and religious boundaries. To contribute to the preservation of this intangible cultural heritage, the al-Hakawati project was initiated by CHwB in January 2014. A close collaboration was established early between CHwB and the Hakaya network represented by the Arab Education Forum (Jordan), the Arab Resource Collective for Popular Arts – Al Jana (Lebanon), and Al Balad theatre (Jordan), and in association with Fabula Storytelling (Sweden). Within its framework, six Syrian researchers in Lebanon and Syria collected more than 250 stories and a selection of 21 traditional stories has been made and published in a bi-lingual (Arabic-English) anthology.

The anthology is not only meant to archive these stories, but give them a second life to be read and told by the new generations of Syrians wherever they are, as well as introduce the world to these exciting folk tales. They have been produced in Classical and colloquial Arabic, as well as translated into English. The anthology will be distributed as widely as possible in Sweden and in the MENA region, and will be accompanied by storytelling performances organized by our partners in Sweden, Jordan and Lebanon. The performances will ensure that these stories continue to live on in the hearts, minds and traditions of Syrians, host populations in the region and elsewhere in the world.

Although Syrians are suffering from displacement, imprisonment, killing and destruction of their homes and livelihoods, many people were eager to remember and share their stories.

The diversity of the traditions in these stories actually reflects the diversity within Syria itself, a richness that even astonished the lead researcher.

### **Contribution to socio-economic development**

In Sweden the project has led to a greater knowledge of the Syrian cultural heritage and the bilingual performance has affected many spectators' prejudices about the Arab world. In Jordan and Lebanon, results were beyond expectations. In addition to the immediate results of collecting the stories and producing the anthology, storytellers from the region have integrated some of these Syrian stories in their repertoire. The organizations working in the Syrian refugee camps are becoming aware of the deficit of simply using the UNICEF manual of "psycho-social support" and the need to introduce more profound cultural activities that are relevant to the refugees. Currently all of the partners want to continue with the storytelling activities and complement them with training in storytelling, and writing, activities that have not been included in the psycho-social support scheme provided by humanitarian agencies in Jordan. This is a great breakthrough and will be extremely beneficial for the Syrian refugees, especially the children, youth, and mothers.

To sum up, stories are what we are made of, and if we lose our stories, we risk losing touch with our humanity and our identity. We strongly believe that through the enhancement of this thousand-year-old heritage of storytelling the Hakawati project has a potential to bridge ethnic, political and religious divides and hopefully build better understanding between people all over the world.