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# LE SAHARA DES CULTURES ET DES HOMMES

Vers une stratégie pour un développement durable du tourisme au Sahara  
dans une perspective de lutte contre la pauvreté

**“The Sahara of cultures and people”**

**Towards a strategy for the sustainable development of tourism in  
the Sahara, in the context of combating poverty**



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## **This project is developed in the framework of:**

**🌟 The World Summit on Eco-Tourism held in Quebec (Canada, 19-22 May 2002)**

**🌟 The Rio+10 Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, South Africa (26 August - 4 September 2002)**

**🌟 The Plan of Action of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity**

**🌟 The Millennium Declaration adopted by the United Nations : « the struggle against poverty and extreme poverty»**



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## Poverty as a violation of Human Rights

- ✿ **Subjecting people to live in *poverty deprives* them of their *human rights*.**
- ✿ **Poverty is to be understood in its *broad sense*.**
- ✿ ***Responsibility* lies at all levels, local, national, and international, to ensure that the full body of *human rights* are protected for *all members of society*.**
- ✿ **Poverty is *not a result of shortage of resources* but rather the *lack of political will*.**



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## THE SAHARA OF CULTURES AND PEOPLE

- ✦ **A desartic and fragile ecosystem**
- ✦ **A rich heritage: ancestral cultures and know-how**
- ✦ **Traditional economy in crisis**
- ✦ **economic, social and cultural change : new life styles**
- ✦ **situation of poverty and exclusion**
- ✦ **Degradation of heritage**



Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Mauritania, Niger, Sudan, Chad, Tunisia



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# **Safeguarding the natural and cultural Heritage**

- 🚩 No clear identification and protection of the heritage**
- 🚩 Need for inventories, archeological and vegetation maps**
- 🚩 Implementation of the International Conventions on:
  - the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (UNESCO, 1972)**
  - the illicit trafficking of cultural goods (UNESCO, 1970)****



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## **WHY SETTING UP THIS PROJECT?**

***Sustainable Tourism : a tool for safeguarding cultural Heritage, local development and struggle against poverty***

- ✦ Preserve and enhance cultural heritage and ecosystems**
- ✦ Promote Saharan cultures and civilisation**
- ✦ Fight against poverty**
- ✦ Reinforce cooperation between the Saharan States, the Southern and Northern countries**
- ✦ Anticipate the increase of tourism flux expected in the next 20 years (raising awareness, trainings, infrastructures, etc.)**



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## ***What kind of tourism?***

- ✿ The growing demand for new horizons, space, silence and meaningful travel**
- ✿ The tourism products: a global and qualitative discovery experience**
- ✿ The discovery of lifestyles and cultural heritage**
- ✿ Promote responsibility and innovative ways of travelling: codes of conduct for T.O and travellers**





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## ***Tourism, as a lever to economy***

- ✿ Tourism is directly affected by the preservation of the cultural and natural context**
- ✿ Tourism can act as a lever to increase the production of goods, whether material or symbolic (agriculture, crafts, small industries, cultural performances, music, etc.)**
- ✿ Tourism can help to develop or maintain the quality of services**
- ✿ Tourism revenues have to benefit to the local and poor population**



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## ***OUR STRATEGY:***

- 🌟 Global and crosscutting approach (interdisciplinarity: environment, culture, gender issues, poverty alleviation, tourism, cooperation)**
- 🌟 Concrete involvement of local population in the development of their territories**
- 🌟 Wide and constructive partnership (local, national, regional and international levels)**
- 🌟 Promotion of the Sahara destination through the development of qualitative touristic products (circuits) and cultural events**



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## **PHASES OF THE PROJÉT**

### **PHASE 1 : 2002**

**Meeting to launch the project: Tunis**

#### **DIAGNOSTIC**

#### **7 thematic studies**

Environment – tourism –cultural heritage

Poverty and local populations

co-operation Skills

**Meeting of Experts**

### **PHASE 2 : 2003**

#### **STRATEGY**

**International Workshop : Ghardaïa**

#### **PLAN OF ACTION COMMUNICATION**

#### **First Pilot Project**

*« The Route of the Ksour »  
(UNDP, Algeria)*



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# PHASES OF THE PROJECT

**PHASE 3 : 2004/2005**

**Implementation:**

**PLAN OF ACTION  
FUND RAISING  
NETWORKING**



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## **THE PLAN OF ACTION**

- ✿ Saharan touristic circuits**
- ✿ Network of Saharan Cities**
- ✿ Co-operation Programme**
- ✿ Raising awareness and Training**
- ✿ Communication, promotion and marketing**



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# THE ACTIONS OF THE PROJECT

## *Saharan touristic circuits*

*An example : “The listeners of Imzad” (NIGER)*

➤ **Safeguarding and enhancement of intangible heritage :**

- Imzad Training for 30 Young girls
- Recording of Music and oral traditions of the Touaregs

➤ **Promotion of a qualitative tourism:**

- Training for 10 touristic guides
- Creation and promotion of an original touristic circuit





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# THE ACTIONS OF THE PROJECT

## *Cities and Heritage*

- ✳ **Tamanrasset (Algeria): creation of a centre for *Imzad* (training)**
- ✳ **Zagora (Morocco): preservation and promotion of traditional songs and dances (studies, training, integration into touristic activities)**
- ✳ **Agadez (Niger): creation of a cultural Centre (feasibility study)**
- ✳ **Timbuktu (Mali): restoration of an historic house and transformation into a cultural and tourism center**



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# THE ACTIONS OF THE PROJECT

## *Programmes of cooperation*

- ✿ **An interministry Meeting between Representatives of the 10 Countries**
- ✿ **A cooperation Tool: Declaration or Convention**
- ✿ **Setting up of common development and management tools (management of transnational protected area)**



## **Raising awareness and Training**

**Example: Training for guides, tours operators, project Stakeholders, NGO Managers, Students**

**(Nouakchott, Mauritania: June 2004)**

## **Communication and marketing**

- **Festivals**
- **International Events: The “Sahara Day”**

**( UNESCO Headquarters, 12 May 2005)**



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## THE ACTIONS OF THE PROJET

### *The Pilot Project*

#### *“The roads of the Ksour”*

- ✦ **Rehabilitation of Ksour into labelled tourist accommodation and associations animated by the local communities**
- ✦ **Development of specific touristic products generating revenues for the populations**
- ✦ **Elaboration of national and transnational touristic Circuits**





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## THE ACTIONS OF THE PROJET

### *The Pilot Project*

#### *“The roads of the Ksour”: in Algeria*

- ✦ **PHASE I (2003):** Expertise and identification (mission on the field), fund raising, networking, promotion (Festival:Timimoun )
- ✦ **PHASE II (2004):** feasibility Study (environment, architecture,culture, tourism) and workshops, Fund raising (Donors Meeting in Alger), Promotion of the project in Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco
- ✦ **PHASE III (2005-2007):** launching of the project and evaluation of the activities in Algeria; feasibility studies and follow up in other countries (Tunisia , Morocco, Mali...)



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## ***“The roads of the Ksour”*: in Algeria**

### **PHASE III (2005-2007): ACTIVITIES**

- **REHABILITATION: 22 traditional houses rehabilitated and converted, Energetic autonomy of one Ksar, Renovation of 2 « foggaras » irrigation systems**
- **TRAINING: 120 persons in the use of clean energy, 150 youth in construction techniques, 300 persons (80 women) in tourism related jobs (communication, marketing, services), 200 children educated in environment issues, 100 farmers in environment**
- **11 cooperatives established (5 women’s cooperatives), Micro-project financing system put in place**
- **Inventories of intangible heritage resources, An itinerant festival of music and art performance, an exhibition**
- **Promotion material (video, leaflets, etc.)**



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## **THE RESULTS**

- ✿ Rehabilitation and enhancement of traditional houses in the Ksour**
- ✿ Development of the network of touristic Ksour and Saharan circuits marketed by Tour Operators**
- ✿ Establishment of cultural associations and cooperatives**
- ✿ Poverty reduction through the creation of employment and micro-projects**
- ✿ Improvement of the local populations' skills in the management of cultural and tourism activities**
- ✿ Transmission of traditional know-how**

## **LESSONS LEARNED:**

- **Strong political commitment at local and national levels**
- **Competency,interdisciplinarity, coordination within the teams of experts**
- **A relevant, clearly understood strategy**
- **A strong involvement of the local populations, based on awareness raising and good governance**
- **A large network and support at national and international levels: Member states, UN Agencies, experts, stakeholders in culture and tourism, public and private sectors.**

