



WORLD BANK GROUP



SESSION SUMMARY

Session Title: Fostering Social Inclusion through Culture in City Reconstruction and Recovery

Session Type: Thematic Session

Date and Time: May 13th, 2019/ 16-17:30 /Room 18

Key Speakers and Agencies:

Moderator:

- **Joe Leitmann**, Lead Disaster Risk Management Specialist, GFDRR

Speakers:

- **Lazare Eloundou Assomo**, Director for Culture and Emergencies, UNESCO
- **Sameh Wahba**, Director of Urban and Territorial Development, DRM and Resilience, World Bank
- **Setsuko Saya**, Director for International Cooperation, Disaster Management Bureau, Cabinet Office, Japan
- **Tecson John Lim**, Director of Rehabilitation and Recovery Management Services, Office of Civil Defense Philippines

The session stressed that culture is key to successful post-crisis recovery and reconstruction. It started with a joint presentation by UNESCO and the World Bank of key findings from a joint position paper on “Culture in City Reconstruction and Recovery (CURE)”.



WORLD BANK GROUP

Lazare Eloundou Assomo, UNESCO, reminded the audience that – especially in conflict-affected places – culture is increasingly under threat to an extent that in some places it reaches the level of “cultural cleansing”. He stressed the critical importance of culture for achieving sustainable urban development and described the CURE framework as a road map for integrating culture in post-crisis reconstruction and recovery. Building on various case studies, he illustrated how culture is the key to boosting local tourism development (Seoul, South Korea), engaging communities and fostering social cohesion and reconciliation (Timbuktu, Mali) and adopting innovative land readjustment mechanisms for resilient city building (Tokyo, Japan).

Sameh Wahba, World Bank, explained how the CURE framework builds on the existing DRM and recovery frameworks, but introduces culture as an important driver and enabler of post-crisis reconstruction and development. He argued that there is a need for a combining people-centered and place-based reconstruction approaches and for ensuring that culture underpins the entire process. Drawing on examples, he illustrated how reconstructing landmarks can start a reconciliation process (Mostar, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina) and that it is important to balance people’s immediate needs and the recovery of a city’s historic character (Mosul, Iraq).

In her presentation, **Setsuko Saya**, Government of Japan, described how an earthquake in 2016 damaged about 200,000 buildings in the City of Kumamoto - among these the world-famous Kumamoto Castle, that dates back to 1607. She described how reconstructing the castle became one of the top priorities in the city’s reconstruction plan, because of the symbolic value for the citizens. Supported by an elaborated communications strategy, Kumamoto Castle became a symbol of building back better in the city and will serve as a reminder of earthquake risks for future generations.

Tecson Joh Lim, Office of Civil Defense, Philippines, complemented the session with a presentation on the reconstruction process after the liberation of the city of Marawi from ISIS-linked Maute terrorist groups by the national security forces. He stressed the importance of Marawi as the premier “Islamic



WORLD BANK GROUP

city” in the Philippines and explained how the Government of the Philippines used the reconstruction process to foster trust between the Muslim minority and the predominantly Christian majority population of the country. In addition, he reported on the creation of a new Rehabilitation and Recovery Management Service in the Office of Civil Defense and a National Disaster Rehabilitation and Recovery Planning Guide that integrates cultural sensitivity as a cross-cutting issue.

City reconstruction is a field of increasing importance, worldwide. The global population is urbanizing at a speed and scale that is unprecedented in human history. Today, nearly 55 percent of the world’s population lives in cities. Compounding this, we are witnessing a rapid increase in the impacts of disasters on urban areas. Each year, more than 200 million people are affected by storms, floods, cyclones, and earthquakes. At the same time, armed conflicts are increasingly causing widespread destruction in cities. City reconstruction is thus challenged to reconcile communities, ensure social inclusion, promote economic development, and manage complex social, spatial, and economic transformations. Cities are not just a collection of buildings, but they are about people and their interaction with each other, their cultural identity and a sense of place. Therefore, culture is the key to “building cities back better” after disasters or conflicts.



GFDRR
Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery



WORLD BANK GROUP

PHOTOS FROM THE EVENT:





GFDRR
Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery



WORLD BANK GROUP

