

Chapter 2

The Role of the African World Heritage Fund in the Conservation of African World Heritage Sites

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Introduction

For a long time, African heritage sites have been and are still under-represented on the World Heritage List (WHL). However, even those sites that are listed, most of them are poorly managed and preserved, leading to nearly a quarter of them being placed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. This is attributed to the fact that African countries lack the capacity—both human and capital—to prepare nomination dossiers acceptable to the World Heritage Committee and also to manage the listed sites. As a result of this realisation, African heritage experts and the African Permanent Representatives to UNESCO proposed to African countries and to UNESCO to set up an organisation that would enable African countries to develop the capacity to source funds as well as train African professionals in both the development of the nomination dossiers and management of heritage sites. This proposal was accepted and led to the establishment of the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) in 2006.

Background

In order to ensure that there is balance and representativeness in the WHL, the World Heritage Committee adopted the Global Strategy for a representative, balanced and credible WHL in 1994 (World Heritage Committee 1994). The aim of the strategy was to ensure that the WHL reflects the world's cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value (OUV). As a follow-up to the Global Strategy decision, several experts' meetings meant to increase the appreciation of

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African cultural heritage amongst both African policy makers and professionals were conducted within Africa between 1995 and 2000 (Munjeri et al. 1995). Some of the results of these meetings included recommendations for the identification, study, protection and promotion of the archaeological, architectural, technical and spiritual components of African cultural heritage. In addition, the experts' meetings felt that African cultural heritage was defined by both its tangible and intangible aspects, and therefore, it was important for the intangible elements to be recognised as well (Munjeri 2004).

The World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002 had, as part of the meeting, a workshop on World Heritage in Africa and Sustainable Development. This workshop adopted a declaration dubbed the Johannesburg Declaration on World Heritage in Africa and Sustainable Development, which amongst other things, recognised that the efficient management of heritage can be an effective tool for the promotion of sustainable development and wealth creation and that World Heritage status can contribute immensely to sustainable development of African countries. The workshop urged African governments to be politically committed to the promotion of heritage management and to put in place legal and policy frameworks, which link nature and culture. This is partly because in most African countries, there is no distinction between the natural and the cultural; the two are intertwined in a circle, which leads one to the other. African governments were also encouraged to sensitise decision-makers in-and-out of the continent the important role that heritage could play in promoting sustainable development. Finally, the workshop encouraged African governments to not only devote more resources to heritage management but also to recognise the critical role that local communities play in the management and ownership of heritage resources.

In the same year (2002), at its 26th Session in Budapest in Hungary, the World Heritage Committee adopted the Africa Periodic Report (World Heritage Committee 2002). Like the workshop in Johannesburg, the Periodic Report pointed out the challenges that African countries faced in the implementation of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, especially in regard to the nomination, conservation and protection of World Heritage Sites. The Report noted that Africa was by that time the most under-represented continent accounting for only 7 % of properties on the WHL.¹ There were many African countries which, although they are signatories to the Convention, did not have sites on the WHL. At the same time, there were a few African countries that had not ratified the Convention. In 2002, of the 35 sites on the List of World Heritage in Danger, 14 or 40 % were African sites. It was argued that amongst the reasons for this situation were inadequate resources, weak institutional frameworks, inadequate training and capacity building, low level of information and awareness-raising, poor networking, low levels of local participation, and

¹ As of 2013 the WH List has 981 properties with 88 (9 %) being in Africa. There are 44 sites on the Danger List with 16 of them (36 %) being African sites.

inadequate regional and international cooperation (Munjeri et al. 1995; World Heritage Committee 2002). Consequently, in order to ameliorate this situation, the Africa Periodic Report recommended that an African World Heritage Fund be established to supplement the financial resources required to deal with the challenges that face the conservation, protection and management of World Heritage properties on the African continent.

As a follow-up to the recommendations of the Periodic Report, between 2004 and 2005, a group of African Ambassadors to UNESCO (The Africa Group) developed a position paper on Africa, which they presented to the 29th Session of the World Heritage Committee in Durban, South Africa, in July 2005 (World Heritage Committee 2005). The African paper was also submitted to the Council of Ministers of Culture of the African Union (September 2005), the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention (October 2005) and finally to the African Union Summit (January 2006). The position paper proposed a 10-year action plan that comprised of eight strategic objectives and several expected outputs. These objectives were:

- To ensure that heritage played a role in sustainable development and poverty eradication.
- African governments to strengthen and improve their institutional, policy and legal frameworks in order to effectively and efficiently manage and conserve heritage and also to implement the World Heritage Convention.
- Establish, in accordance with the Africa Periodic Report (2002), an AWHF and other financing mechanisms, drawing from experiences of other organizations to facilitate effective and efficient heritage conservation, in general and implementation of the World Heritage Convention on the continent in particular.
- Increase and strengthen human resource capacity for the protection, conservation and management of heritage through education, training and awareness-raising.
- Establish a mechanism for information and knowledge exchange about tangible and intangible African heritage.
- Conduct an audit and update national inventories and Tentative Lists of cultural and natural heritage.
- Increase inscription of new sites by ensuring that African nominations are in conformity with the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention and to reduce and eventually remove all African properties from the List of World Heritage in Danger.
- Strengthen heritage protection, conservation and management, particularly in conflict, post-conflict and natural disaster situations (World Heritage Committee 2005). As a result of this initiative by the African States Parties, the AWHF² was launched in May 2006 as a Trust, based in Midrand, South Africa to support the

² In this chapter, the terms AWHF and the FUND are being used interchangeably.

effective conservation and protection of natural and cultural heritage of OUV in Africa. The main objective of the Fund was to develop a strategy for dealing with the challenges faced by African countries in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

The objectives laid down for the Fund included:

- To provide support for the identification and preparation of African sites for inclusion on national Tentative Lists and nomination for inscription on the WHL.
- Provide support and assistance for the conservation and management of heritage sites in Africa, particularly those already inscribed on the WHL.
- Rehabilitate sites inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.
- Train heritage experts and site managers through continuing capacity building.
- Together with local communities build sustainable development around World Heritage Sites in Africa (see African World Heritage Fund [2011](#)).

In October 2009, the AWHF became a Category II Centre under the auspices of UNESCO. Category II Centres contribute to the strategic objectives of UNESCO, implementing its mandate throughout the world.

Capacity Building

In order to achieve its objectives, the AWHF has taken capacity building as an integral part of its activities. The AWHF has, therefore, developed programmes with training components on thematic areas and World Heritage processes such as OUV, integrity, Tentative Listing, nominations and conservation and site management. The AWHF has also supported some applied research efforts such as the Gap (Situational) Analysis on the Tentative List and studies on the effect of tourism at World Heritage Sites (Okello Abungu Heritage Consultants [2009](#); Taboroff and Deacon [2011](#)).

Training Courses

As part of its capacity-building strategy, the AWHF organises courses on nomination and Tentative Listing processes for African heritage professionals. The aim of these courses is to improve the skills of these professionals and, therefore, ensure that the quality of nomination files submitted to UNESCO is improved; this in turn will increase the chances of the sites being inscribed on the WHL. These programmes train local site managers and executives on the World Heritage nomination process, as well as on conservation and site management.

The AWHF in collaboration with World Heritage institutions and African States Parties initiated a nomination training course for African States Parties in 2008. This was in response to the fact that in spite of its very rich heritage, sub-Saharan Africa has continued to have the least number of sites (9 %) on the WHL. The main objective of the training course is to build competence and capacity amongst African heritage practitioners in the development of nomination files as required by the World Heritage Committee when considering properties for inscription on the WHL. The course has been held for three cycles, and its implementation is coordinated by regional training institutions in Africa, namely the Centre for Heritage Development in Africa (CHDA) for English-speaking Africa, the School of African Heritage [*Ecole du Patrimoine Africain* (EPA)] for French-speaking Africa and a local institution of the host country for Arabic-speaking Africa.

The nomination training course is meant amongst other things to build competence amongst natural and cultural heritage professionals and, therefore, improve the quality of nomination files submitted by African countries to the World Heritage Centre. The course is also meant to create a network of African heritage professionals working on World Heritage properties and finally to set up a support and follow-up mechanism to facilitate delivery of credible nomination files.

The course is a 1-year programme, which is divided into four segments: a 2-week training course during which participants learn about the World Heritage nomination process; an 8-month field project when participants return to their countries and continue working on the nomination dossiers; a 2-week training workshop, during which the participants get together again to conduct a comparative analysis of the work they have done and at which time the resource people assess the progress of the participants, and a final period of work in their own countries when participants together with their colleagues in their home institutions finalise the draft nomination dossier for submission to the World Heritage Centre.

The training programme also includes a follow-up on mentorship by experts from various African heritage institutions who guide the participants on the preparation of the dossiers and also ensure that the property the participants are working on is either submitted for nomination or proper conservation mechanisms have been put in place to protect it. Since 2008, the AWHF has carried out a total of seven nomination training courses (three for English-speaking, two for French-speaking and one each for Portuguese- and Arabic-speaking countries), with a total of 96 participants (Fig. 2.1). A total of 48 sites have had their management plans developed. Eleven of these sites were submitted to the World Heritage Centre for listing on the WHL, and five of them were successfully listed in 2011.

The participants who attend the course are given 100 % scholarships that cover airfare, accommodation and a living grant. However, this has created a culture of dependency in that the countries that are the ultimate beneficiaries of the training see development of nomination dossiers and even management of World Heritage Sites as the responsibility of the AWHF. The result is that some of these countries do not take the work of the participants seriously, to the extent that participants are sometimes withdrawn from the course before completion or are given other



Fig. 2.1 Participants of the 2nd nomination dossier training course in Namibia. Photo by author

responsibilities not associated with the course. Second, with dwindling financial resources from donors, the current funding model may in the long run make the course unsustainable. There is, therefore, the need for countries sending participants to meet some of the costs of the course. For instance, countries can be made to bear the travel or part of the travel costs of their participants.

Nomination Grants

Other than the training, another capacity-building programme of the AWHF is the provision of nomination grants for the further improvement of nomination files. The maximum amount awarded for nomination work is US\$15,000. Several countries have benefited from this grant, including Uganda to prepare the nomination dossier for Nyero rock-art painting and associated hunter-gatherer sites in eastern Uganda. The nomination proposal is expected to be submitted to UNESCO in 2013. Mauritius received funding for the Black River Gorge National Park, and the nomination dossier is also expected to be submitted to UNESCO in 2013. Zambia was granted support for the preparation of the Barotse cultural landscape, and the nomination dossier was submitted to UNESCO in January 2012. Ethiopia won assistance for the Konso cultural landscape, and this site was inscribed on the WHL in 2011. Kenya was funded to complete the revision of the deferred nomination of Fort Jesus, and the site was inscribed in 2011, and lastly, Swaziland received a grant to prepare the nomination dossier of Ngwenya mines.



Fig. 2.2 Fort Jesus, Mombasa, Kenya. Photo by Steve Okoko

Inscription on the WHL

During the 35th session of World Heritage Committee held in Paris, in June 2011, the Committee inscribed five African sites on the WHL. These sites had received either financial or technical assistance from the AWHF. The five inscribed sites were:

- Archaeological sites of the Island of Meroe (Sudan) (technical assistance).
- Fort Jesus (Kenya) (financial assistance) (Fig. 2.2).
- Kenya lake system in the Great Rift Valley (Kenya) (technical assistance).
- Konso cultural landscape (Ethiopia) (financial assistance).
- Saloum delta (Senegal) (technical assistance).

Heritage and Sustainable Tourism

While the main objective of setting up the AWHF was to assist in the management of African World Heritage Sites, it is now generally acknowledged that the listing of a site should lead to local economic benefits through increased tourism and associated activity such as the sale of local crafts, music and cultural products to visitors, which in turn can contribute to better economic opportunities and livelihoods for the local communities (Loulanski 2007). But increased tourism can create challenges for heritage conservation without necessarily achieving significant local economic participation, especially of the local communities, and this

may lead to complications for the management of the site (Kiriama 2012). For the benefits to be tangible and sustainable, there is need for appropriately designed management plans at these sites.

To ensure that the World Heritage status serves as a catalyst for environmental, economic and social development for the local communities around African World Heritage Sites, the AWHF initiated a Programme on Heritage and Sustainable Tourism. The main objective of this programme was to identify ways in which to exploit the potential of these sites and in particular how the local economy can enjoy the positive effects of World Heritage status. As part of the Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme, a planning workshop was held in Botswana in 2011, the objective of which was to design pilot projects for improving local communities' livelihoods and promote local sustainable development through tourism. Selected sites in a number of countries are being used as test cases for the programme, including the Okavango Delta in Botswana, Namib Desert in Namibia (both of which are also being prepared for World Heritage listing) and the South African World Heritage Site of Mapungubwe.

Another dimension of this programme was to carry out a situational analysis of the infrastructural needs for tourism development in targeted World Heritage Sites. The aim of the analysis was to understand how best to develop African World Heritage properties as tourism destinations in order to unlock the economic opportunities and benefits that tourism can bring to the rural communities. These studies looked at issues such as the existing and potential visitor markets, the socio-economic and impacts of community participation and inclusion in the process of development and operations. There was also a study of the institutional structures in place both on paper and in practice and the financing models as well as revenue streams. The sites where the studies were carried out include Bwindi National Park in Uganda, Victoria Falls on the border of Zambia and Zimbabwe (African World Heritage Fund 2009a), Great Zimbabwe in Zimbabwe (African World Heritage Fund 2009b), Kilwa Kisiwani in Tanzania (African World Heritage Fund 2009c) and Forts and Castles of Ghana (African World Heritage Fund 2009d). Some countries such as Ghana have implemented some of the recommendations of these studies and are reporting an improvement in both the way the site is presented, local community involvement, visitor appreciation and revenue collection. For instance, Ghana is working with the communities living near Fort Appolonia in Beyin and Fort Batenstein in Butre. They are also in the process of mounting an exhibition in Fort St. Sebastien in Axim (Kofi,³ personal communication, 2012). None of the other countries replied to requests for information on what has happened since the studies were carried. It can be assumed that nothing has been implemented.

³ Fredrick Kofi is the Executive Director of the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board.

World Heritage and Sustainable Development

The report of the Second Cycle of World Heritage Periodic Reporting for the Africa Region, presented to UNESCO in 2011, underscored the delicate relationship that exists between conservation and development and the need to create a balance between the two. In order to create this balance, the AWHF initiated the World Heritage and Sustainable Development Programme. The objective of the programme is to find a balance between conservation and development and also explore ways in which the two initiatives can coexist and generate benefits for local communities. The Programme takes place through events such as workshops and meetings attended by representatives from both the conservation and development communities. This format may be a drawback since the local community members who are supposed to be beneficiaries usually do not attend these meetings or, if they attend, more often than not, do not understand the technical language used by professionals at these events. There is, therefore, a need to come up with an initiative that will make the community active participants in the process rather than just being passive bystanders.

Conservation Grants

Another AWHF programme makes available annual grants to State Parties for conservation of their World Heritage Sites. Some of the funds have been used to organise training for site managers and workers to improve the management of sites. The maximum amount, which can be awarded, is \$60,000 per State Party. This grant can be awarded on the basis of matching funds; that is, the State Party should be willing to contribute at least 50 % of the total cost of the conservation works, and the Fund will contribute the remaining half. As of 2011, 43 grant applications from 30 countries had been received by the Fund. Some of the countries that have received the conservation grants include Niger for the conservation of the W National Park, which was threatened by poaching, illegal grazing and encroachment of agricultural land. In South Africa, a workshop was organised to discuss and develop a regional strategic plan for the Liberation Heritage Route of southern and eastern Africa. The Liberation Heritage Route consists of a series of sites that in combination express the struggle for justice and freedom and the fight against gross human rights violations, during the Apartheid period. The Republic of Benin was also given a grant to repair unexploited sections of the Royal Palaces of Abomey. The Royal Palaces were the decision-making centre of the Kingdom of Dahomey from 1625 to 1900. Protecting the palaces stops the scene of important historical events from vanishing and conserves the important testimonies of a kingdom that symbolises a desire for independence, resistance and fight against colonial occupation.

Management of Natural World Heritage Sites

Though West and Central Africa have 16 natural sites inscribed on the WHL, many of these are, however, facing conservation and management challenges, and consequently, some of them have been put on the List of World Heritage in Danger. To ameliorate this situation, the AWHF has since 2009 partnered with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to implement a project for the improvement of the management of West African natural resources. The objectives of the project are to strengthen the capacities of the heritage managers as well as to provide technical support to the sites. This programme has trained 59 heritage professionals on diverse topics such as the monitoring and evaluation of natural and cultural properties and protected areas management. The programme has also conducted studies on the impact of mining on natural heritage properties and on the contribution of ecotourism to the conservation of protected areas.

Workshops

Other capacity-building methods that the AWHF uses are workshops. Some of the workshops that have been organised have addressed issues such as the preparation of the draft statement on OUV, strategies to remove Kilwa Kisiwani and Songo Mnara from the List of World Heritage in Danger (African World Heritage Fund [2009e](#)) and the legal framework for Grand Bassam Historical Town of Cote d'Ivoire.

Projects

To further its mission, the AWHF has also carried out projects that focus on site management. For instance, one such project aims to improve the management of the Senegalese side of the World Heritage Site of the Stone Circles of Senegambia.⁴

Universities

Research is important in understanding how local communities perceive World Heritage Sites in their vicinity and the role that these sites have played or play in the daily lives of these communities. Thus, the AWHF has developed a partnership with the University of Witwatersrand, in South Africa, the objective of which is to

⁴ This is a trans-boundary site that is in both Senegal and the Gambia.

encourage postgraduate students to work on World Heritage topics and particularly on sacred sites. The aim is to understand how the OUV of these sites can be demonstrated, how to mitigate conflicts, how to gauge the effects of climate change on heritage and also to understand how communities can be involved in the conservation and management of sites.

Gap Analysis

One of the requirements of the World Heritage Operational Guidelines is that no nomination to the WHL can be considered unless the nominated property has already been included on the States Party's Tentative List (World Heritage Committee 2008). Tentative Lists provide an important planning and evaluation tool early in the process of identification of the OUV of the site and, as such, are relevant tools for States Parties, the World Heritage Committee and its Advisory Bodies such as the international council on monuments and sites (ICOMOS), the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the Secretariat to the Convention. Through the Global Strategy for a balanced WHL, State Parties are encouraged to prepare Tentative Lists, in addition to preparing nominations of properties from categories and regions that are under-represented on the WHL. To achieve this, the World Heritage Committee encourages its Advisory Bodies (ICOMOS and IUCN) to carry out an analysis of both the Tentative Lists and the nomination documents. For instance, during its 28th session in 2004, the World Heritage Committee reviewed analyses of the World Heritage and the Tentative Lists prepared by ICOMOS and IUCN. Both analyses were carried out on regional, chronological, geographical and thematic bases in order to evaluate the progress of the Global Strategy.

According to the ICOMOS study, the reasons for the gaps in the WHL fall into two main categories: (a) structural: relating to the World Heritage nomination process and the management and protection of cultural properties; and (b) qualitative: the way properties are identified, assessed and evaluated (Jokilehto 2005). The IUCN studies, on the other hand, found out that the natural and mixed sites currently inscribed on the WHL cover almost all regions and habitats of the world and have a relatively balanced distribution. The studies revealed that there are still major gaps in the WHL for natural areas in that sites from several zones such as tropical/temperate grasslands, savannahs, lake systems, tundra and polar systems, and cold winter deserts are under-represented (Badman and Bomhard 2008; Engels et al. 2009; Wood 2009).

The identification of the gaps in both cultural and natural types as well as regional distribution of sites has contributed to the critical attention given to Tentative Listing, especially by the World Heritage Committee. As such, State Parties are encouraged to take into account the studies carried out by the Advisory Bodies, as these have the potential to address incongruences in themes, regions and geo-cultural groupings as well as bio-geographical provinces. Consequently,

the AWHF commissioned a Gap Analysis (also referred to as a Situational Analysis) on the Tentative List for both cultural and natural sites in Africa, which included an analysis of sites, which are already listed as well as those that have potential for listing. The studies included a stocktaking of the work being done to nominate sites in various countries and an evaluation of their readiness and also an outline of areas needed to be addressed to ensure quality nominations. The studies also identified professionals working on nominations in each country and sites that had potential for immediate listing, mid-term listing and long-term listing, including sites which had been referred or deferred (Okello Abungu Heritage Consultants 2009, 2011).

The study found out that cultural properties have generally been accorded more attention by African State Parties in their current Tentative Lists. For instance, out of a total of 286 properties on these Tentative Lists, 170 were cultural properties, while only 76 were natural properties and 40 were mixed properties. This trend could be explained by the fact that the natural sites in the continent are large areas that are difficult to put together convincingly as circumscribed units, as opposed to cultural properties that could range from a town to a single building.

The analysis also found out that countries nominate properties to the list depending on their comparative advantages. For instance, countries in the north of Africa and close to the Sahara Desert, which have a long history of human urban development and trade that led to the creation of complex societies at a very early period, tend to go for cultural heritage sites, whereas eastern and southern African countries, which have a long history of nature conservation as well as strategic heritage sites, tend to have much more balanced lists.

The Gap Analysis also found out that Tentative Listings from Africa represented various heritage sites, and these include cultural landscapes, forts, vernacular architecture, other buildings, towns and trade routes. These sites represent, of course, categories that are found in other continents, and the inscription of African sites would depend on the quality of the dossiers vis-a-vis those from other continents with similar categories of sites. It was further shown in the analysis that there are areas where the continent is strongest and where it can bring new categories of heritage to the international community, including places of memory and spirituality, freedom and slave routes, hominid sites and rock-art sites, amongst others. These are areas where there are gaps in the WHL, and yet the continent abounds in such sites. The results of this Gap Analysis formed the basis for planning of the Tentative List and nomination courses and workshops.

Conclusion

Has the AWHF achieved its objectives? One can argue that it has made a positive impact on the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Africa if the number of grant applications to its schemes can be used as a measure. Out of the 54 countries in Africa, 30 of them or 55 % have made a grant application to

the AWHF. Second, as of March 2012, African countries had contributed a total of US\$3,647,235 to the Fund. Though this amount is relatively small when divided amongst all African countries, the important thing to note is that this is an indication that there is potential for political will to conserve African heritage, and it demonstrates that the AWHF has now been widely accepted in Africa (Taboroff and Deacon 2011). For instance, between 2008 and 2012, the Fund spent a total of US\$12,189,264 on the various activities related to capacity building, conservation and management of African heritage sites. Third, since its inception, the Fund has enabled more African countries to establish or update their Tentative Lists, which is the first and crucial step in the nomination of sites to the WHL. Additional to this, in 2011, a total of five African sites that had direct assistance from AWHF were inscribed on the WHL, and in 2013, nomination dossiers of another five sites that also have had direct support from the Fund will be submitted to the WHC for consideration for listing.

The training courses, seminars and the other thematic workshops have contributed to building the capacity of African heritage professionals as well as establishing a network of trained African heritage professionals. These are people who, as a result of the personal contacts that they have established outside the official bureaucracy, are now in a position to help each other to solve management and conservation issues that their individual sites may face. This saves the State Parties both time and financial resources. Being a UNESCO Category II Centre, it is now possible for the AWHF to interact with other international bodies and, therefore, bring the issues of African heritage to the international arena. This has led to the allocation of substantial financial and technical resources to African heritage by both individual foreign governments and multilateral agencies.

Despite its successes, the Fund is faced with challenges in balancing the needs of all African countries. There has been criticism that the Fund has concentrated most of its work in the English-speaking countries and in those areas where there are strong heritage institutions. The Fund has partly dealt with this issue by starting a programme together with IUCN that looks at the natural sites in western Africa and also by conducting training courses in both Portuguese- and Arabic-speaking countries. Although the Fund was set up as a response to the imbalance in the WHL, in Africa, there is a linkage between tangible and intangible heritage, and with the passing of the 2003 Intangible Heritage Convention, the Fund's mandate should be expanded to include intangible heritage. This will make it easier for the Fund to deal with all aspects of World Heritage Sites in Africa.

The AWHF is a non-government trust which relies on the willingness of donors and benefactors to fund its programmes. The Fund has three categories of donors: silver (those who have given between US\$10,000 and 99,000), gold (US\$100,000 and 999,000) and platinum (US\$1,000,000 and above). It is noteworthy that the largest donors so far have been non-African countries; apart from South Africa and Egypt, which are platinum donors. All other African countries are silver donors. Taking into consideration the global financial crisis that has affected many donors, it is anticipated that contributions from these countries will fall or stop, and so the operations of the Fund will be affected. There is need, therefore, for African

countries to wholly own the Fund and make substantial contributions to it despite their fragile economies. For instance, out of the 54 African countries, only ten have made any contribution to the Fund. Taking into account that many countries are now applying to the Fund for assistance, it would be a good idea to consider making the Fund a membership body to which all African nations are required to give annual subscriptions just as they do to UNESCO and other UN agencies. It is instructive however, to note that African countries have contributed a total of US\$3,647,235 of the total US\$5,577,235 of the endowment fund that the AWHF set up as a long-term funding mechanism of its programmes.

The AWHF currently funds or gives assistance and training to all African countries regardless of whether they have made a contribution to the Fund or not. This should be rethought carefully as it does not give an incentive to those who have contributed to continue contributing, nor does it compel those who have not done so to contribute. Knowing that assistance is only available to those who have contributed may make many more countries become contributors. Overall, it can be said that the Fund is making an important contribution to the conservation and management of African heritage sites.

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