



## Background

World Monuments Fund (WMF) is the leading independent organization devoted to saving important cultural heritage sites around the world. For nearly 50 years, working in 100 countries and territories, WMF's skilled experts have applied proven and effective techniques to the preservation of important architectural and cultural heritage sites. Through partnerships with local communities, funders, and governments, the organization inspires an enduring commitment to stewardship for future generations. Headquartered in New York City, WMF has offices and affiliates worldwide.

WMF projects span the history of human civilization, from the earliest known cultures to the recent past. The organization's work encompasses five core program areas.

**CULTURAL LEGACY:** WMF has a long history of protecting monuments that represent a cultural era or a particular period of artistic expression, such as Annibale Carracci's ceiling in Rome's Palazzo Farnese, colonial-era churches along Peru's Andean Baroque Route south of Cusco, or the Qianlong Garden, in Beijing's fabled Forbidden City. These are sites of universal importance, for which the organization raises funds, brings together support, and works towards long-term, sustainable preservation.

**CAPACITY BUILDING:** In addition to working on physical restoration, WMF helps local communities build the governmental, financial, and technical infrastructures needed to preserve and sustain their heritage. One of WMF's most successful capacity-building programs is at the vast temple complex of Angkor, in Cambodia, where the organization has been working since 1989.

**ADVOCACY:** Through its advocacy programs, WMF speaks out in support of architectural and cultural heritage around the globe. Its signature advocacy tool is the World Monuments Watch, a biennial list that serves as a call to action on behalf of sites in need of immediate assistance. Launched in 1996, the Watch has provided support for hundreds of sites. In the process, it has become a powerful vehicle for understanding the range of challenges confronting the field of heritage conservation today.

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING:** WMF takes a multilayered approach to education, promoting the exchange of information among professionals, educating the public, and training craftspeople in both lost arts and modern standards. Through site interpretation, international symposia, and field schools, such as the ones held in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, WMF helps to ensure that heritage preservation remains a vital field.

**DISASTER RECOVERY:** WMF's work in disaster recovery has ranged from its response to the Venice flood in 1966 to its recent work in Iraq, Italy, Japan, and Haiti. While it cannot plan in advance for damage wrought by natural or man-made disasters, WMF is nonetheless ready to step in wherever possible, providing rapid-response experts, damage assessments, and assistance in conservation planning and implementation.

Working collaboratively and bridging national boundaries, World Monuments Fund is a leader in the field of heritage preservation today, sharing its knowledge and inspiring future generations. [WWW.WMF.ORG](http://www.wmf.org)

### PRESS CONTACTS

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