

4 Defining, assessing and improving heritage management systems

- Responsive and flexible to cope with emerging concepts, trends and requirements.
- Organizational decentralization, when appropriate, to bring decision-making closer to the problems of the property, favouring community participation and the promotion of sustainable approaches.
- Giving due attention to the increasing number of institutional frameworks consisting of multiple organizations – which has two major implications:
 - The need for new skills to address the consequent management challenges;
 - The risk of overlap (wasteful repetition), poor accountability and reduced transparency as complexity increases.
- An open organizational structure and sufficient operational capacity to promote an integrated approach, i.e. working with others. Adequate stakeholder involvement is inseparable from issues of sustainability and the contributions that heritage can make to (and benefit from) sustainable development (see Part 2.3).
- A set of guiding principles for the institutional framework. These should promote the concepts of empowerment, participation and inclusion if positive change is to be generated, while highlighting the grave consequences of opposing tendencies (marginalization, discrimination, disempowerment, exclusion and ignoring the voiceless). There should not be any passive recipients when a management system is applied, so far as possible.

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR HERITAGE IN GENERAL

GOOD TIPS

- ▶ An institutional framework which distributes power and responsibility for decision-making throughout the organization whilst maintaining clear roles and answerability can be effective.
- ▶ An institutional framework which invests in the intellectual development of its teams (e.g. training of staff, research initiatives) and contributes to general conservation debate will find this investment repaid in improved efficiency and in new forms of support for the cultural properties in its care.
- ▶ If there are shortcomings in the institutional framework and if restructuring is not possible, then partnership can act as a form of ‘institutional’ capacity-building to increase the scope and flexibility of the organizational structure (see Part 3.8).
- ▶ Similarly, heritage management planning (Appendix A) can help to overcome shortcomings in the primary institutional framework with the help of contributions from other management systems, with positive repercussions for decision-making mechanisms. It has become the principal tool in use for World Heritage properties.
- ▶ Accruing and maintaining knowledge of a specific property and past actions taken there is important to inform future actions. The institutional framework and its staff (see Part 4.3; Resources) play an important role in guaranteeing continuity of knowledge. Any reorganization should be a staged process so there is no loss of expertise. Similarly, using more external contractors and specialists should be matched by rigorous documentation requirements and sufficient in-house supervision.
- ▶ A systematic assessment similar to that proposed in the *Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit* – ‘Tool 3: Relationships with Stakeholders’ – could deliver the information needed to refine an institutional framework to this end.⁵⁸
- ▶ Hybrid institutional frameworks that unite public heritage authority organizations with new entities can serve to address World Heritage obligations. They can be fairly permanent or of a finite term, bringing in outside partners to achieve specific objectives that leave a positive legacy for the long-term management of the property (see, for example, the Herculaneum (Italy) case study, p. 111).
- ▶ If the institutional framework is traditional/established practice, it is all the more important that its light organizational form is grounded in a broad community consensus.

58. Hockings, M., James, R., Stolton, S., Dudley, N., Mathur, V., Makombo, J., Courrau, J. and Parrish, J. 2008. *Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit. Assessing management effectiveness of Natural World Heritage Sites*. Paris, UNESCO World Heritage Centre. (World Heritage Papers 23). Tool 3: Relationships with Stakeholders, p.28. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/23/>