



Музейна ініціатива з реагування на збереження культурної спадщини в умовах війни та її пост-кризового відновлення
Museum task force aimed at responding to cultural heritage in times of warfare and its post-conflict recovery

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REPORT № 1

ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE HERITAGE EMERGENCY



MARCH 2022

About HERI

Russia's aggression against Ukraine has inflicted countless crimes, suffering, and casualties. In such circumstances, the greatest support should be offered to civilians who have been subjected to barbaric bombings and Ukrainian soldiers fighting the aggressor. Each war, however, also results in irreparable loss of national heritage and culture. Today, Ukrainian museums and cultural institutions face extreme challenges, including how to respond effectively to emergencies and threats during the war, how to protect employees, premises, territory, collections, artifacts, historical sites, and monuments – the heritage of many previous generations and local communities, how to preserve our heritage for our posterity.

On March 3, several non-governmental organizations and public institutions, most notably the National Museum of the Revolution of Dignity (Maidan Museum) and the "Tustan" NGO, launched a volunteer expert Heritage Rescue Emergency Initiative (HERI). Its purpose is to promote the preservation of cultural heritage during the war and its post-war restoration. The top priority areas of HERI's activity are assisting cultural institutions and their employees; preparing for rapid response to emergencies in the context of armed conflict; protecting museum collections; assessing losses and risks; carrying out primary rescue operations; collecting and systematizing information on crimes against cultural heritage; coordination of actions between various authorities at state/municipal levels, museum institutions, cultural institutions, non-governmental sector, and international organizations on the preservation of cultural heritage and its restoration.



UUA

HERI's PRIMARY OBJECTIVE



- **The preservation of the cultural heritage of Ukraine during the war and the further preparation for its restoration and reconstruction.**

HERI's TASKS



- **Creating an emergency response system, network, and infrastructure.**
- **Preservation of cultural heritage, minimization of losses.**
- **Preparation for the restoration and resumption of cultural heritage.**

HERI OPERATES FOLLOWING THE ICCROM'S STAGES OF FIRST AID FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE IN EMERGENCIES:

- 1. Situation analysis.**
- 2. Assessment of losses and risks.**
- 3. Stabilization and security.**
- 4. Preparation for restoration.**

HERI's WORK FORMAT:

- **Establishing communication with museums and cultural institutions in all regions;**
- **collection of information on heritage needs and current situation; preservation, analysis, and structuring of data;**
- **targeted assistance to museum experts and institutions, the physical rescue of collections;**
- **searching for funds, materials, and other resources as requested;**
- **providing consultations, organizing training for museum workers, preparing manuals and instructions;**
- **coordination with other heritage rescue initiatives and volunteers;**
- **public communication, spreading comprehensive information about the state of cultural heritage, responding to requests from foreign media;**
- **representation of HERI at the international level, participation in meetings, discussions, webinars, conferences, consultations with foreign partners, etc.**



Task #1:

CREATING AN EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEM, NETWORK, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Team building

The core HERI team was formed by the National Museum of the Revolution of Dignity, the “Maidan Museum” NGO, the “Tustan” NGO, and the State Historical and Cultural Reserve “Tustan”.

7 people are involved in the work permanently:

- Vasyl Rozhko: Headquarters Coordinator, connections between the network of museums and relief initiatives in Ukraine, digital infrastructure, capacity expansion.
- Ihor Poshyvailo: Headquarters Coordinator, providing assistance from foreign partners, assessment of needs, losses, and risks, and communication with international institutions, organizations, donors, media, and methodological projects for museum workers.
- Andriy Kotlyarchuk: mapping of cultural heritage sites, museums, and losses; cloud storage.
- Yulia Prus: continuous communication with museums and partners, prompt response, contact person regarding information materials, needs assessment.
- Ksenia Dvornikova: work with mass media, information work, maintenance of the Facebook page, public relations.
- Olha Salo: addressing the needs of museums, logistics, forming a network of rapid response, publishing projects.
- Roman Myska: financial support, accounting, reporting.

Additional museum workers, experts, and volunteers participating in the operation of our initiative in various functions – from communication and consultations to unloading cars and trucks: Roman Strehalyuk, Khrystyna Kundyra, Vladyslav Piro, Kyrylo Kobtsev, Tymur Bobrovskyy, Maria Zadorozhna, Ihor Shabat, Andriy Yamelynets, Maksym Horkovchuk, Dmytro Tsvitnenko, Olha Vashchevska, Oleksandr Komyakhov, Kyla Anastasia Osminin, Mykola Kovtun, Ihor Petriy, Taras Rad, Yaroslav Pohoralskyy, Taras Bochulyak, Andriy Shymanskyy, Dmytro Zbyr, Myroslav Yankovskyy, Lyubomyr Fedunkiv, Oleksandr Boltyanskyy, Danylo Filatov, Roman Hoynyak, Oleg Rybchynskyy, Yulia Vaganova, Valentyna Bochkovska, Milena Chorna, Lesya Hasydzhak, Andriy Fedorenko, Ivan Ilchyshyn, Oksana Levkova, Yaroslav Kokhalevych, Myroslav Koshun, Borys Ilchyshyn, Maria Dzhufur, Maria Mykhats, Anastasia Haydukevych.

Creating a network of contacts with museums in Ukraine

To collect information about the problems and needs of Ukrainian museums and their employees, as well as for the ability to prompt response, we are expanding our contact base and maintaining contact with museums in all regions of Ukraine.

At present, contact has been established with museums in 19 regions: Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, Odesa, Kherson, Dnipropetrovsk, Poltava, Kyiv, Donetsk, Lugansk, Kirovohrad, Cherkasy, Zhytomyr, Vinnytsia, Volyn, Rivne, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv.



Resource acquisition

Following the results of museum surveys, analysis of needs, situations, and tasks identified by HERI, a priority list of required packaging materials and protective equipment was compiled, an estimated budget was determined, project proposals and needs were generated for the Prince Claus Fund (Netherlands), the ALIPH Foundation (Switzerland), the Polish Institute in Ukraine, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of Poland, the Committee for Assistance to Ukrainian Museums (Poland), the Ministry of Culture of Estonia, the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, the Ministry of Defense of Italy, CHOICE (Italy), *Network of European Museum Organizations (NEMO)*, Europa Nostra, the ICOM National Committee in Georgia.

RESOURCE ACQUISITION



We have received packaging materials and protective equipment (over 10 tons) from:

- **museums of Poland;**
- **the Prince Claus Fund (Netherlands);**
- **the Ministry of Culture of Estonia.**

We are expecting support goods from

from the CHOICE Association (Italy); the Committee for Aid to Museums of Ukraine (Poland); and the ALIPH Foundation (Switzerland).

Another activity area of our initiative is raising funds from private donors.

Finances

As the main resource for financial assistance to museums at the initial stage and the purchase of materials prior to their arrival from abroad, the funds in the account of the “Tustan” NGO were used (the first tranche of the grant from the Prince Claus Fund for the preservation of wooden architecture €5,335; the Fund allowed to use the grant funds for saving the heritage from military threats).

FINANCES



Funds raised:

- **€10,670 from the Prince Claus Fund (Netherlands);**
- **€210 from Marcin Piotrowski (Poland);**
- **€800 from Aparna Tandon (Italy);**
- **€380.31 from the International Committee of the Blue Shield in Georgia;**
- **\$600 from ICOM Georgia.**

Total funds raised: UAH 412,753 (€12,060.31; \$600).

Total spent: UAH 235,889.

Donors will be provided with detailed expense reports.

Coordination with other institutions and initiatives

To increase capacity and efficiency, combine efforts, exchange and spread information, search for resources, HERI communicates with other initiatives, organizations, public agencies, and international institutions in the field of cultural heritage preservation:

- the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine;
- the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO);
- the International Council of Museums (ICOM);
- the ICOM Disaster Resilient Museums Committee (ICOM-DRMC);
- the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM);
- the Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative (SCRI);
- Europa Nostra;
- *Ukraine Emergency Cultural Heritage Rescue Initiative (USA, Canada);*
- [the Cultural Heritage Rescue Centre](#) (Lviv; specialization – professional packaging materials for museums of Ukraine, preservation of immovable heritage in Lviv region);
- [the Museum Crisis Center](#) (Lviv; specialization – financial, organizational, and human support of small regional museums and their teams in times of war crisis);
- The Western Ukrainian Union of Museums (specialization – guardianship of relocated museums and museum workers);
- Leonid Marushchak – an individual initiative to help museums of Donetsk and Luhansk regions;

- the Ukrainian *ICOM* Committee;
- the Ukrainian Centre for Museum Development (Kyiv);
- the Ukrainian *ICOMOS* Committee;
- the State Museum of Natural History of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine;
- the Ivan Honchar Museum National Centre of Folk Culture;
- NGO “People’s Self-Defense of Lviv Region”;
- Volunteer headquarters of the Student Brotherhood of Lviv region.

Forming a response network: people, organizations, locations

One of the top priority needs to help museums and their staff was to form a response network and liaise with volunteer organizations possessing and able to share the required resources. In particular, we managed to establish:

- transportation of necessary goods and equipment to museums in different regions;
- supply of food products and medicines from humanitarian warehouses for sending to museums as requested;
- freight transportation for evacuation of museum and archival collections;
- on-site volunteer assistance: loading/unloading, packing, sending items;
- temporary use of warehouses and equipment;
- arrangement of protected premises for the temporary storage of museum objects.

Communication

An informational Facebook page has been created and is being regularly updated (in the period from March 7, 2022, to March 31, 2022, 34 publications were posted; 552 subscribers, total coverage of over 30,000 readers):

- The visual identity of HERI has been developed.
- Information and recommendation materials were emailed to museums.
- Information about HERI and its team activity was recorded in 12 Ukrainian and 15 foreign media.
- Ukrainian media: *Istorychna Pravda* (“Historical Truth”), *Informator.UA*, *Ukrinform*, *Suspilne* («Public»), *Uryadovy Portal* (“Government Portal” website).
- Foreign media: *Voice of America’s Ukrainian service* (TV channel, YouTube channel), “Chas-Time” program, *Artnet news*; *Imedis Dila (Georgia)*, *PBS NewsHour*, *The Washington Post*, *Time*, *Il Giornale Dell’arte*, *La Vanguardia*, *France24*, *Clarín*, *PolitikYol*, *Narodowe Centrum Kultury*, *Le Journal de Montréal*, *News9 Live*, *UOL information portal (Brazil)*, *news-24.fr*.



Task #2:

PRESERVATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE, MINIMIZATION OF LOSSES

Collecting information about problems and needs of museum institutions and staff

One of the first steps of HERI's activity was developing and launching an [online questionnaire](#) aimed at estimating the degree of readiness and the needs of museums in the context of warfare.

Our volunteers have also conducted a telephone survey for museum leaders, received and systematized requests and inquiries by email and via Facebook page messaging, managed personal inquiries addressed to the team members, and created a database of needs.

The museum survey was carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy (hereinafter, MCIP) on the non-disclosure of information about the storage of exhibits and the state of their preservation.

Based on the received responses, we generalized 6 (six) basic needs/requests from museums:

- Protection of museum premises: the need to cover windows with materials to deter or at least reduce the impact of blast waves within indoor spaces, as well as to protect against unauthorized intrusion and potential looting.
- Materials for packing and protecting cultural heritage objects from possible damage due to explosion, fire, building collapse, etc., as well as for their safe movement for storage in less endangered areas.
- Equipment for the security of museums, as well as support for museum staff who remain indoors to respond quickly to possible problems: power generators, fire extinguishers, power supplies, power banks, flashlights, etc.
- Evacuation of cultural heritage objects from the museum premises to safer areas.
- Consultations, instructions, training, and methodological materials on rapid response in the context of war.
- Financial, humanitarian and legal assistance to museum workers located on the occupied territories, in the areas of active warfare or humanitarian blockade.



ASSISTANCE TO MUSEUMS:

78 museums, archives, and private collection owners provided information directly or by responding to questionnaires,

of which:

- 45 museums applied for help with protective and packaging materials, equipment, humanitarian needs;
- 8 museums were provided with free cloud storage for digital material preservation and consulting support as per their requests;
- assistance was provided in the evacuation of 7 collections, three more are ready for evacuation and awaiting permits;
- 12 museums were provided with material assistance such as equipment, packaging materials, or transfer of funds for materials and humanitarian needs of their staff;
- based on the applications received, a [list of top priority needs and materials](#) was created, and the budget necessary for supplying these needs was defined [budget](#).



**INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS
THAT RECEIVED ASSISTANCE
(such as cloud storage, assistance to staff – a total of 26
institutions):**

- Kharkiv Literary Museum (Kharkiv);
- Nikanor Onatsky Regional Art Museum (Sumy);
- Sumy Regional Museum of Local Lore (Sumy);
- Okhtyrka City Museum of Local Lore (Sumy Region);
- Vasyl Tarnovsky Regional Historical Museum (Chernihiv);
- Zaporizhzhya Regional Museum of Local Lore (Zaporizhzhya);
- Semen Ioffe Museum of Local Lore (Popasna, Luhansk region);
- Slovyansk Museum of Local Lore (Slovyansk, Donetsk region);
- Olexandr Dovzhenko National Center (Kyiv);
- Bohdan and Varvara Khanenko National Museum of Arts (Kyiv);
- The City of Kyiv History Museum (Kyiv);
- Museum of the Book and Printing of Ukraine (Kyiv);
- Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra National Preserve (Kyiv);
- Museum-archive of the press (Kyiv);
- Museum of Military Childhood in Ukraine (Kyiv);
- I. Repin Art and Memorial Museum (Kharkiv region);
- Odesa Archaeological Museum of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (Odesa);
- Dmytro Yavornytsky National Historical Museum (Dnipro);
- Tomakivka National Museum of History and Local Lore (Dnipropetrovsk region);
- Museum of Arts of the Kirovohrad Regional Council (Kropyvnytskyi);
- Private ethnographic collection of Yevhen Dmytruk (Kyiv region);
- Ethnographic Collection “Tree», Eduard Krutko (Poltava region);
- Archive of laser scanning of wooden churches of Lviv region (Lviv region);
- Chernihiv Hryhoriy Halahan Regional Art Museum (Chernihiv) – a generator was sent, but the humanitarian cargo was subject to heavy gunfire.

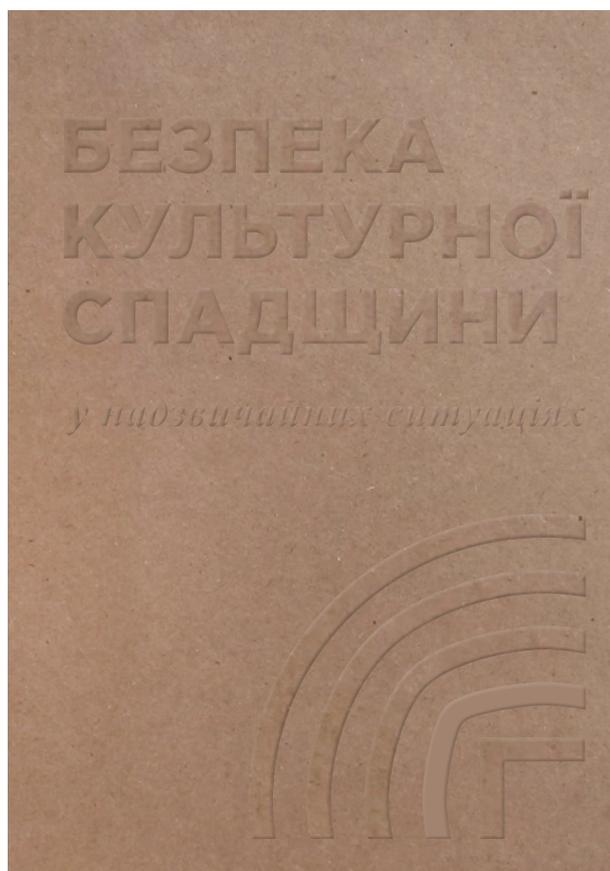
Information and consultation on the preservation of cultural heritage in wartime

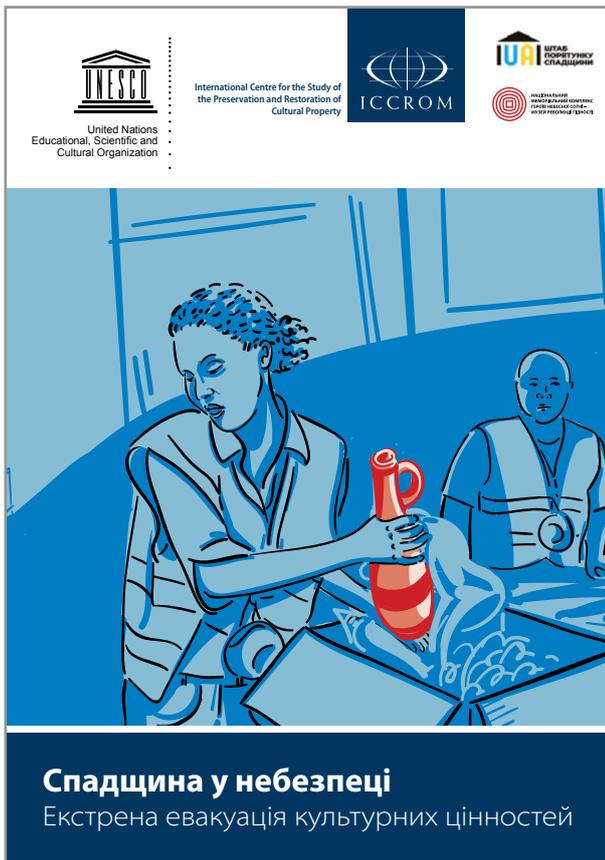
On March 13, an online seminar was delivered with the participation of international experts who answered specific questions from museum staff responsible for the preservation of collections. Number of participants: 78. The event was held in response to numerous inquiries from museum workers with the participation of Heritage For Peace.

The results of the online seminar identified a list of specific issues that require individual consultation or instruction.

The following instructions and manuals have been prepared and distributed:

- **«First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Emergencies: International Strategies for Ukraine»**, scientific and methodological publication. Maidan Museum, 2016.
- **Rapid response instructions for museums in the areas of warfare, armed conflicts, terrorist attacks, and other emergencies.** Maidan Museum, HERI, 2022.





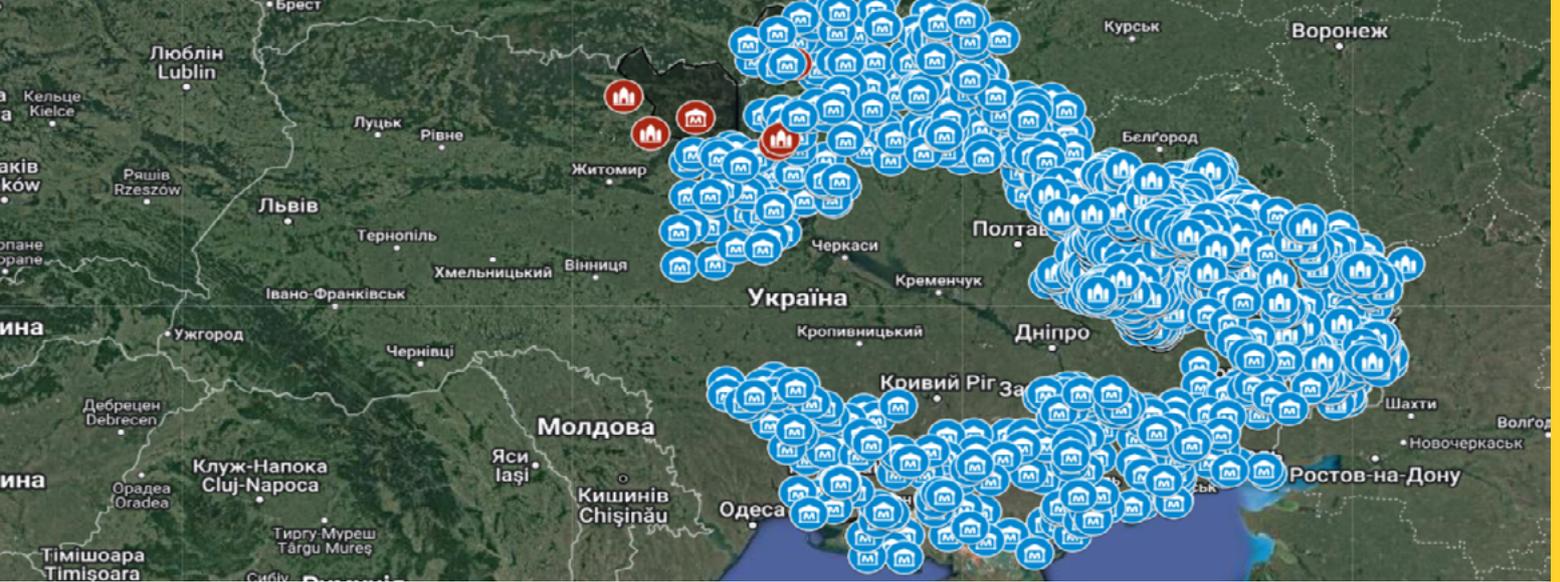
- “Heritage in danger. Emergency evacuation of cultural values”. UNESCO, ICCROM, Maidan Museum, HERI (prepared for print, posted on the UNESCO and Maidan Museum websites, sent to museums).



- Instructions for action in case of seizure or damage to museums by Russian troops. Maidan Museum, HERI (in process of layout proofing).

Participation in international online meetings and consultations, in particular:

- UNESCO meeting «Support for Museums and Cultural Institutions of Ukraine» with the participation of UNESCO Deputy Director-General for Culture, Ernesto Ottone (March 10);
- meeting with the leadership of Heritage for Peace (March 15);
- meeting with the Secretariat of the International Council of Museums with the participation of ICOM Director-General Peter Keller (March 28);
- Europa Nostra webinar «Civil Society for the Protection of Ukraine’s Cultural Heritage» (about 300 participants – representatives of European institutions and organizations, Ukrainian cultural figures, March 31);
- meetings with the team of the European project SUM-4CH on the preservation of digital and digitalized heritage on European servers.



TASK #3: PREPARATION FOR RESTORATION AND RETURN OF HERITAGE

Recording and mapping of cultural heritage losses

Documenting the losses of cultural heritage has been one of HERI's priorities. Several different initiatives have also joined the project of creating the register of crimes against culture, including the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy, the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance, and the Smithsonian Institution (USA).

As of the end of March, [the Ministry of Culture has been documenting the losses of cultural objects](#) in the most comprehensive manner. HERI has been creating an interactive map to record the losses.

Mapping of museums and immovable heritage

An interactive map of museums and monuments matched with the situation at the fighting front is being created to estimate the situation and plan the assistance to the population.

2531 museums are indicated across all regions of Ukraine, and the indication of immovable heritage monuments is in progress.

Preserving digital and digitalized heritage in cloud services

In times of war, HERI recommends that the preservation of documentation and data on cultural heritage be ensured. Digital data stored on physical storage media (USB drives, disks, hard drives) or servers located in Ukraine are at risk of loss to the same extent as material heritage. It is safer to store data on foreign cloud storage servers.

For this purpose, HERI has prepared and distributed recommendations on free cloud storage of data on foreign servers: 1) the SUM-4CH project of European partners; 2) saving data to Google Drive.

Google Drive and Azure storage infrastructure has been prepared for fast digital storage. 8 museums have already used these services.

Digital infrastructure

An internal MediaWiki database has been deployed for storing and structuring the collected information.

Google maps were initially used for working with geospatial data, then an additional separate geographic information system was created for internal use.

For systematic long-term work with cultural heritage data, including threats and losses, an Arches code-based open source software with support for geospatial data is used for inventorying of cultural heritage objects.

Documentation center

We have been holding consultations on the establishment of the Center for Heritage Documentation, preservation and scanning of archival materials, and creating a database linking lost cultural heritage sites with available information about them (archival photographs, drawings, satellite images).

CHALLENGES

- **Our top priority task is a high-speed response to the humanitarian needs** of museum staff in the occupied or surrounded territories, in areas of active warfare: purchasing and transferring generators, fuel, power banks, flashlights, appliances, medicines, food, and sometimes even water, payment for mobile communications and transferring funds for the basic survival necessities.
The constant change on the war front and the situation in the affected locations do not allow to rely on already established supply networks and also significantly reduces the capabilities of planning for specific tasks. On the other hand, such instability necessitates the creation of mobile rapid response teams.
- **Lack of unambiguously safe solutions for the evacuation of collection items:** on the one hand, there is a clear threat of shelling and gunfire attacks, occupation by Russian troops, and all related risks, in particular during transportation and storage of these items in temporary storage locations, lack of certainty about their safety even in the remote regions of Ukraine far away from the battlefields.
- **Problematics of clear coordination of factions and agreements:** museum – government authority – MCIP – law enforcement and military structures – civil protection authorities.
- **The need for managers to assume responsibility** that sometimes contradicts their authority and instructions to save valuable artifacts.

- In the case of a decision to evacuate the items, the responsibility of transportation and finding a temporary storage place for the collections also falls on the manager or the custodian.
- **Unsystematic understanding by the military of the importance of preserving cultural heritage sites**, which results in many examples of placing checkpoints, defensive excavations, etc. near historical monuments or placement of combat units on the premises of historical/cultural monuments. There is a need to coordinate with the armed forces at all levels, from instructions for command and communication directly on-site to the establishment of a unit of cultural heritage experts in the Ministry of Defense based on the example of NATO armies.
- **Insufficient readiness for a rapid response to military threats** among museum managers and staff, unavailability of plans, skills, resources, and coordination.
- **The need for coordination within the country and from abroad.** There are numerous opportunities for international assistance, which can be applied for by a single common initiative (for many museums and objects and by each museum separately, and the result is that the applications are often duplicated. At the same time, there are a lot of museums that do not receive any help at all.

PLANS

- To continue the analysis of the situation and the needs of museums, to keep on collecting relevant information to ensure an effective response.
- To search for resources and funds to meet needs.
- To initiate an additional activity of engaging volunteers and working with them.
- To expand the scope of heritage preservation activities by including an analysis of the situation and needs of documentary archives, art collections at theaters and art schools, collecting information on the status of major private art collections, digital collections, religious monuments, etc.
- In addition to Lviv, to activate another HERI headquarters also in Kyiv, to serve as a logistical, communicational, and methodological hub.
- To create mobile rapid response teams with appropriate training and equipment in 4-5 regions of Ukraine.
- To develop and regularly update the HERI website as an information portal.
- To prepare, print, and distribute instructions on actions for the preservation of cultural heritage. Translation and distribution of the ICCROM emergency response textbook.
- To open a support hotline of HERI for offering consultations on legal, organizational, and security issues and preservation of digital archives.
- To launch informational work among the military forces to coordinate actions for the protection of cultural heritage following the 1954 Hague Convention and its two protocols.
- In cooperation with ICOM and ALIPH, to create “red lists” of Ukrainian cultural valuables for control over their possible illegal export and further return/restitution.
- To acquire a possibility of systematic satellite monitoring of the state of cultural heritage sites with the assistance of foreign partners.

- To facilitate the establishment of a documentation center. Assistance in rapid digitalization of valuable materials, including 3D-scanning of architectural objects and scanning of archival materials important for the future reconstruction of lost objects.
- To work on establishing a permanent Heritage Rescue Center (trained and equipped team). Training for museum workers and guards of cultural monuments.
- To hold worldwide events aimed at raising awareness about threats to Ukrainian cultural heritage, promoting Ukrainian culture, support for heritage preservation activities.
- To develop a strategic plan of restoring losses in the area of the cultural heritage of Ukraine and ensure the resilience of cultural institutions to emergencies.

During the first month of HERI's operation, its areas of activity and priorities have been defined more clearly, and the vision for system work has been formed determining its peculiarities and specific spheres of influence, which are mostly not duplicated by other initiatives.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Registration and mapping of lost or damaged cultural heritage objects/sites
- A database of the cultural heritage of Ukraine
- A set of training literature on emergency response
- Cultural heritage rescue team and its stakeholder network
- Coordinated emergency response of all parties involved
- Assessing losses, risks, and priorities for cultural heritage restoration
- Involvement of foreign specialists in the restoration of cultural heritage

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