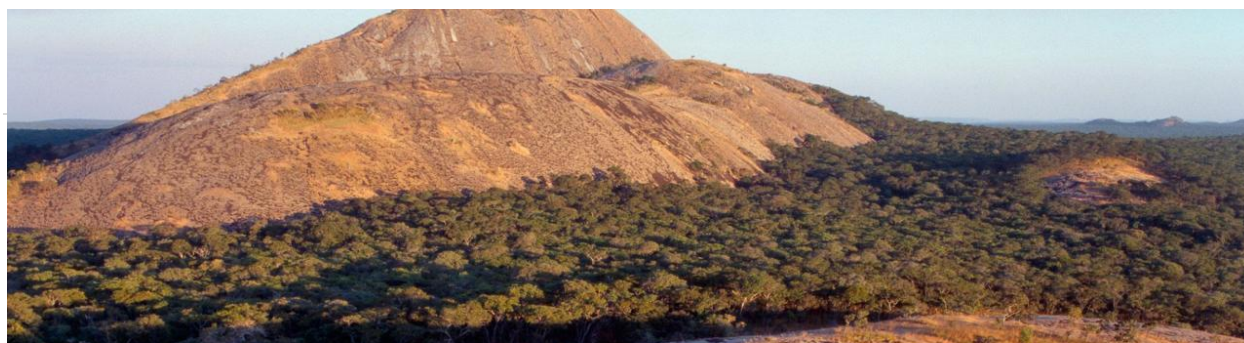




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POST COVID-19 PERSPECTIVES FOR AFRICAN HERITAGE

OPINION PIECE BY PROFESSOR SHADRECK CHIRIKURE ...

Department of Archaeology, University of Cape Town and School of Archaeology, University of Oxford

1. Introduction

Using thoughts by some scientists, a BBC online report questioned why South Africa (and by extension Africa) had so few deaths from covid-19 given that the pandemic wrought, and is still wreaking havoc, in some of the world's most advanced economies (Harding 2020). What followed, especially from African quarters, was an avalanche of outrage. A fundamental question was why must Africa always experience the worst, and must the continent also not shine and lead? To be fair, the author made attempts to correct the offensive headline, but the damage had already been done. For centuries, Africa has unjustifiably been seen in negative light, and never with positive illumination, especially by some Westerners (Chirikure 2015). If it is good, then it cannot be Africa or African. Well, in the 1890s and 1900s, Great Zimbabwe had to be built by people from outside the continent. Fast forward in the year 2020, African success at handling a pandemic that troubled the developed nations is raising questions about how and perhaps why the continent long equated with darkness has been so successful. From an African centred pivot, varying degrees of success were achieved from Algeria to Senegal and South Africa and other countries.

These many success stories were achieved against a background of African thinking, and African solutions to global problems. Under normal circumstances, Africa is not always given a chance to be itself, and to try its own initiatives. The covid-19 pandemic partly cut off Africa from the rest of the world, allowing the continent to implement its own solutions and to good effect. On this point, it is vital to think about what the post covid-19 future for heritage conservation on the continent might look like and what opportunities and constraints it might bring to heritage.

2. Risk management in African heritage conservation – what might the future look like?

There is a general sense that the covid-19 pandemic introduced a new normal, totally different to what preceded it (Chirikure 2020; Douglass 2020; Ogundiran 2020). Risk and uncertainty were always essential variables in the management of cultural and natural heritage in Africa. Before covid-19, many heritage places had disaster and risk management plans as part of, or in addition to, integrated management plans. Under the previous 'normal', such plans covered the likely impact of man-made and natural factors and sought ways of managing them.

However, the risk that was not covered was the one introduced by unforeseen events such as pandemics. The lockdowns imposed to manage pandemics were unprecedented. It is not yet clear what the impact on museum collections and heritage places, especially those that required constant care has been. On one level, pre-existing risk management tools contributed towards alleviating some of the impact of this unanticipated threat. This reaffirms the importance of risk management in the sense that it helps heritage places to weather any storm. At another level, very few heritage managers anticipated lockdowns and associated measures. The question then becomes how might the heritage fraternity rethink risk management to ensure that unanticipated risks are factored so that the heritage and those that it employs can weather the storms? Part of the answer lies in detailed studies aimed at understanding the effects of the pandemic and opportunities it brought.

3. Tourism and heritage in Africa

Related to the above, is the fact that heritage is about livelihoods (Chirikure 2020). It also brings revenue through tourism. Before the pandemic, most tourism in Africa, especially that at places such as the Victoria Falls, Serengeti, Virunga and others was based on the spend of international tourists. Covid-19 resulted in lockdown and closing off of borders. In most cases, it was only the local tourists who could visit heritage places and museums. Consequently, this motivates added and renewed efforts aimed at promoting local heritage tourism. Adequate investments into products that attract local visitors are extremely essential in the post-covid-19 world. We need to teach each other how to love Africa

International tourists are welcome, but it is local tourists who will bring in more impact in terms of revenue, spend and also promoting peace, social cohesion and many other good things. Local tourism if well-developed is bound to be more sustainable and underscores the forgotten fact that Africa must consume its heritage. It must not look after the heritage for those from other continents to enjoy.

4. Local knowledge and resilience

In most cases, the lockdown reduced connections or interrupted them, which opened unprecedented space for local solutions. Because this has worked, it is time to apply African solutions to global problems in the post covid-19 period. Part of the concern and debate has been that the 1972 Convention and Operational Guidelines do not fully capture African sensibilities. The success of Africa in managing the pandemic and heritage during the same pandemic suggests that African knowledge has potential to produce solutions for the rest of the world. It can only achieve that when space is opened for it. This will not be politely bestowed on Africa and Africans – rather adequate and robust research and theorisation must be performed to persuade others of the merits of the African experiences. Meanwhile, that resilience and risk management resting on local knowledge is better than that resting on imported solutions needs no emphasis. Such knowledge was applied by communities, by women and by youths and resulted in sustainable heritage management. Therefore, more work needs to be done to incorporate these groups and African values locally and globally. Gone must be the pre-covid-19 situation when ignorance promoted the undermining of some African knowledge, ushering in a new era where African knowledge can be mixed with other knowledge to produce solutions for humanity.

World Heritage has a language, an approach and traditions that emphasise universals and often not particulars. Covi-19 has shown that in some cases it is the local particulars and the specifics that work better than the generalised prescriptions. Are we therefore going to see more local solutions, especially those championed by communities taking a centre stage in protecting, conserving and utilising all forms of heritage including World Heritage? Finally, are experts prepared to learn more and take instructions from communities? Answers to these questions will determine whether the African heritage fraternity will take opportunities associated with a rethink occasioned by the pandemic and its aftermath.

5. Conclusion

The post-covid-19 times must be associated with the unleashing of Africa's potential, especially in terms of conversation inspired by local approaches, local communities and balanced by a careful selection of imported solutions that might work locally. The lessons from this pandemic experience must take Africa forward, not back to the situation where Africa and its knowledge was always questioned and challenged. African expertise and African communities must also be valued while Africans must learn to interact and collaborate across Anglophone and Francophone divides. Of course, collaborations and learning from others is always welcome. What will not work is a situation where African knowledge is shelved in favour of that from elsewhere and African heritage managers continue to sideline African communities of scholars and those who live within and around heritage places in favour of those from outside the continent.

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1. HIGHLIGHTS

1.1 AWHF SIGNS A 5 YEARS AGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF CAMEROON

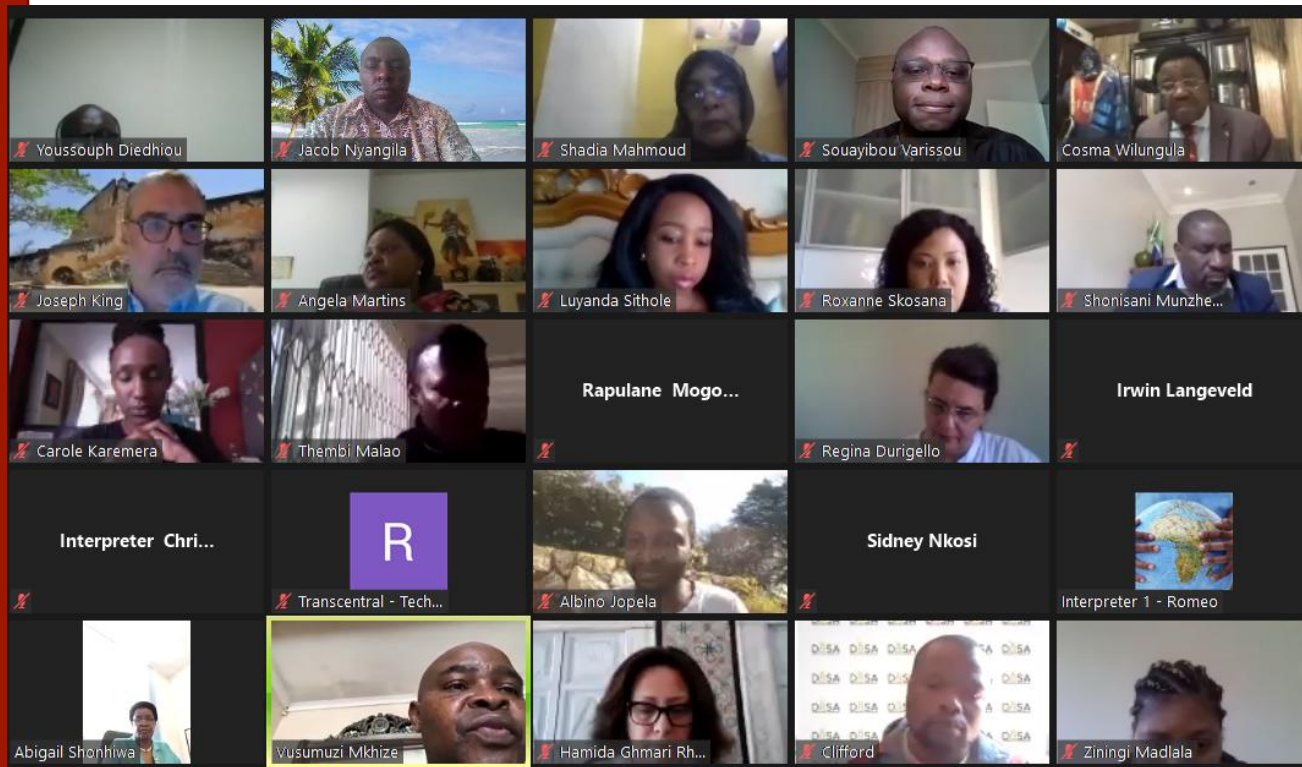


Honorable Mr. Bidoung MKPATT, Minister of Arts and Culture of the Republic of Cameroon, Mr. Souayibou Varissou, AWHF Executive Director & H. E. Mr. Adrien Kouambo Jomague, High Commissioner of Cameroon to South Africa ©AWHF

The African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) concluded a **5 Year Agreement** with the Government of the Republic of Cameroon, through the Ministry of Arts and Culture, represented by Honorable **Mr. Bidoung MKPATT**, Minister of Arts and Culture, Cameroon. The Agreement will see the Government of the Republic of Cameroon making an annual financial contribution to the AWHF, to continue its work of uplifting Africa's rich heritage. Hon. Mkpatt expressed that the agreement with AWHF results from the engagement at the highest level of the Government of Cameroon, to strengthen the capacity of AWHF to support World Heritage implementation in Africa.

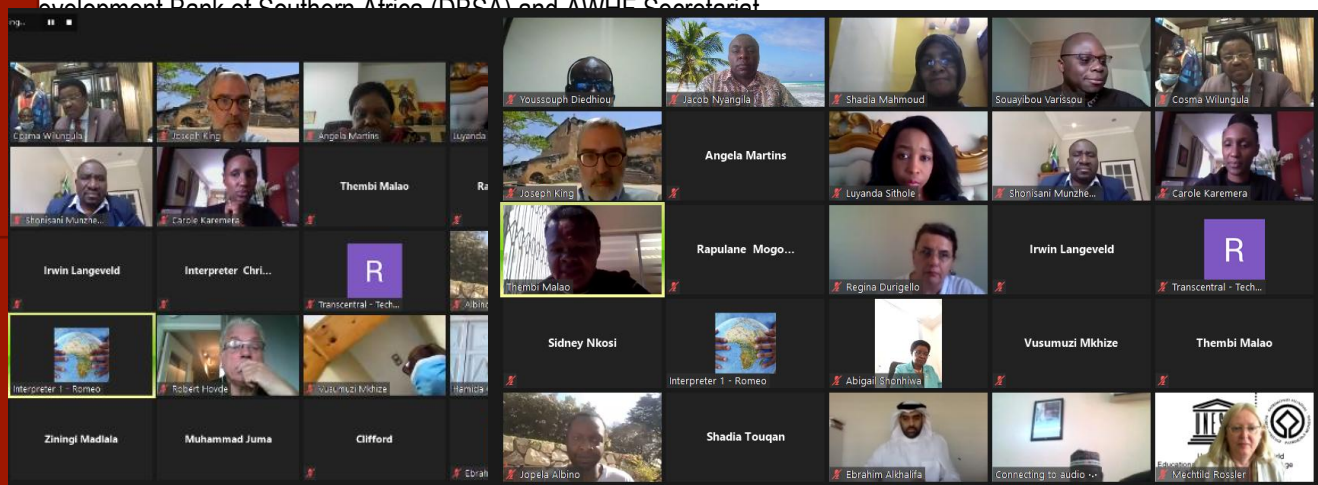
The formal signing of the Agreement was facilitated through **H. E. Mr. Adrien Kouambo Jomague**, High Commissioner of the Republic of Cameroon to South Africa at the High Commission in Pretoria, while the Minister joined via Zoom from **Yaounde, Cameroon**. AWHF is committed to bringing Cameroonian professionals and institutions into its regional capacity-building programs, particularly in the preparation of World Heritage nomination dossiers and the better preservation and management of World Heritage properties.

1.2 27TH AWHF BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING



Virtual proceedings of the 27th AWHF Board of Trustees Meeting chaired by Mr. Vusumuzi Mkhize @AWHF

AWHF held its 27th Board of Trustees Meeting on 23rd July 2020 which was chaired by Mr. Vusumuzi Mkhize, Chairperson of AWHF. The three (3) day virtual meeting saw participation from members of the five regions in Africa (North, South, Central, East, West). The African Union Commission was represented by Mrs. Angela Martins, Head of Arts and Culture Division and UNESCO was represented by Dr. Mechthild Rössler, Director of World Heritage Centre and Mr. Muhammad Juma. Other representative included, Advisory Bodies, ICCROM, represented by Mr. Joseph King, COMOS, by Ms. Regina Durighello and IUCN, by Dr. Youssouph Diedhiou who joined in the capacity as Observers. Also included were, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway (Mr. Robert Hovde), Arab regional Centre for World Heritage (Dr. Shadia Touqan, and Sheikh Ebrahim), Departments of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), Sports, Arts and Culture (DSAC), Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) of South Africa as well as the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) and AWHF Secretariat.



2.1 AWHF SERVES AS CO-CHAIR FOR AFRICA IN THE CLIMATE HERITAGE NETWORK (CHN)



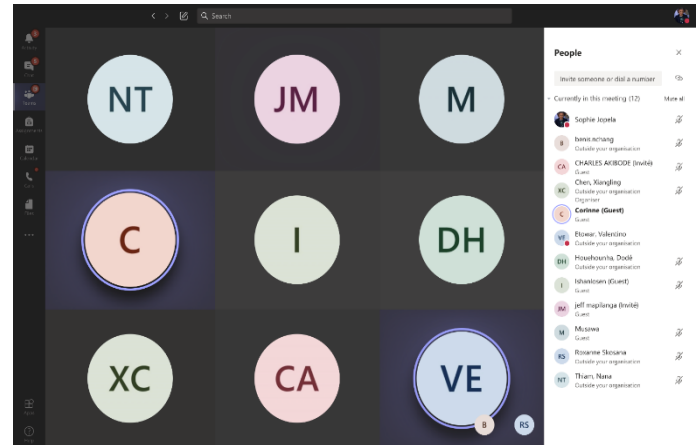
The AWHF, has joined forces with arts, culture, and heritage organisations from around the world to activate the Climate Heritage Network (CHN). The CHN was launched with over 70 founding members at the Climate Heritage Network Global Launch event on 24 October 2019 in Edinburgh, Scotland, and AWHF serves as Co-Chair for Africa. The CHN aims, amongst others, to (i) promote the vision that while culture and heritage are negatively impacted by climate change, they are also a driver for climate action; and (ii) coordinate work by its members, both individually and jointly, to implement a common Action Plan for mobilizing arts, culture and heritage for climate action. The CHN is developing a project centred on piloting in Africa a new prototype heritage management methodology known as the Climate Vulnerability Index (CVI). The project aims to support African countries to respond effectively to cultural heritage challenges resulting from climate change. Two World Heritage Sites were selected as CVI pilot sites because they present a diversity of heritage typologies and climate hazards. The sites are, **Kilwa Kisiwani and Songo Mnara World Heritage Site (Tanzania)** and **Sukur Cultural Landscape World Heritage Site (Nigeria)**. A virtual progress update



(Left) Kilwa Kisiwani & Songo Mnara World Heritage Site (Tanzania), (Right) Sukur Cultural Landscape World Heritage Site (Nigeria). ©AWHF

2.2 3RD CYCLE OF PERIODIC REPORTING EXERCISE FOR THE AFRICA REGION – COORDINATION TEAM PERIODIC REPORT MEETING

Due to the rapid spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Francophone edition of the Workshop for African World Heritage Site Managers was cancelled. The Secretariat, through its Coordination Team, and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, provided technical support to States Parties for completion of both Section I and II of the Questionnaire. A coordination team periodic report virtual meeting took place on 13 July 2020 to monitor the progress of the questionnaire completion. In line with the results framework, the main result was that the States Parties achieved 100% of completion of Sections I and II of the Periodic Reporting Questionnaire. All Questionnaires were submitted by States Parties to UNESCO by 31 July 2020.



Participant: Dr Albino Jopela, Charles Akibode, Ms. Chen Xiangling, Ms. Corinne Forest, Mr. Valentino Etowar, Mr. Houehounha Dode, Ms. Ishanlosen Adiaua, Mr. Jeff Mapilanga, Ms. Nana Thiam, Ms. Musawa Musonda, Ms. Roxanne Skosana ©AWHF

2.3 MODERN HERITAGE OF AFRICA (MOHOA) PROGRAMME – VIRTUAL BRAINSTORMING SESSION



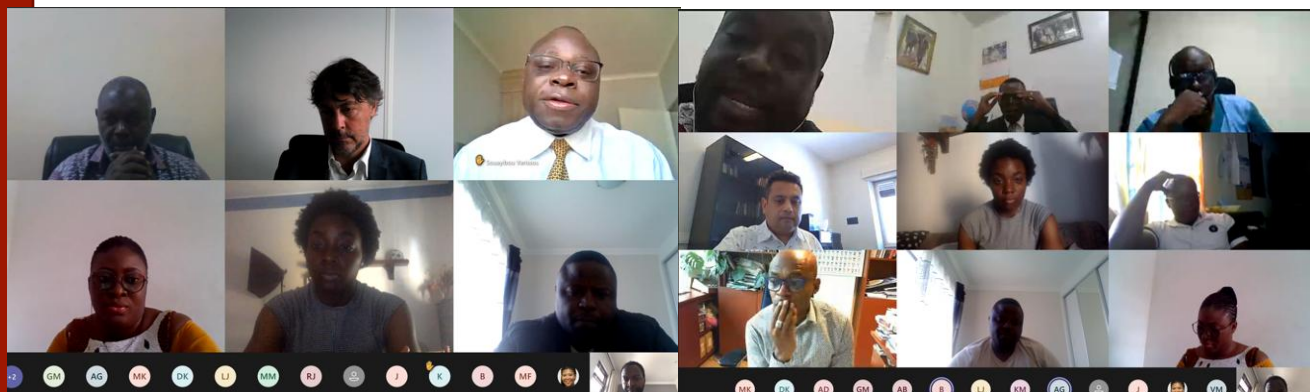
(Left) Kilwa Kisiwani & Songo Mnara World Heritage Site (Tanzania), (Right) Sukur Cultural Landscape World

AWHF in partnership with the University of Cape Town (UCT) in South Africa organized two open-ended Brainstorming Sessions on **20th and 27th August 2020**. The Brainstorming Session gathered over 170 participants and constituted an important platform for key stakeholders in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Africa (e.g. UNESCO, Advisory Bodies, African Universities, Heritage Practitioners, International Heritage Agencies, Civil Society Organization across Africa) to tackle critical issues regarding modern heritage in Africa, its role and contribution for urban sustainability as well as the potential of modern heritage to help fill the gap of Africa's underrepresentation on the World Heritage List.

The *Modern Heritage of Africa (MoHoA)* Programme focused on harmonisation of Tentative Lists that may increase both African representativity on the World Heritage List and highlight the role of modern heritage in the promotion of urban sustainability, in line with the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), the African Union Agenda 2063 and the UN Habitat New Urban Agenda. The goal of the MoHoA Programme is to support the sustainable agenda in Africa through the research, protection and reinterpretation of modern heritage and to contribute to improving the implementation of the World Heritage Convention on the African continent.

3. SUSTAINABILITY

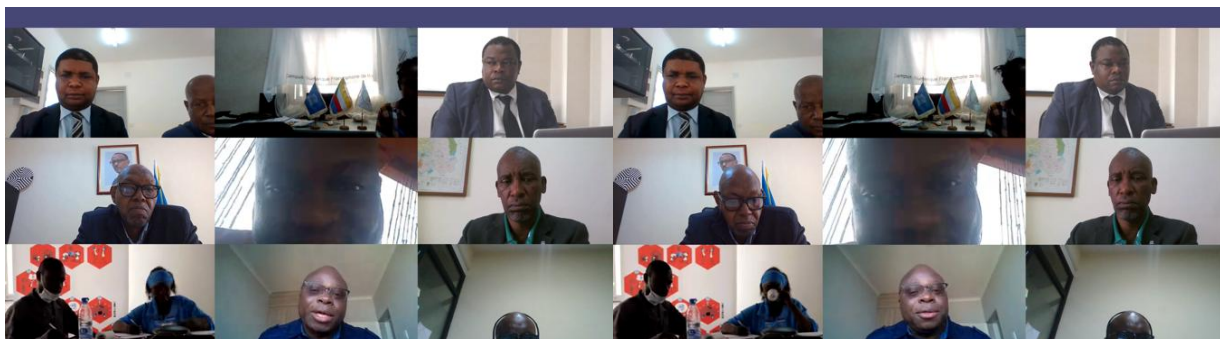
3.1 THEMATIC STUDY ON THE UPSTREAM GAPS OF AFRICAN PROPERTIES ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST: VIRTUAL VALIDATION WORKSHOP ON THE GAP STUDY



*Participants of the Review Workshop of Gap Study on African Properties on the World Heritage List
©AWHF*

Implemented within the framework of the Grant Agreement between EPA and AWHF, the Thematic Gap Study undertook a geographical, statistical and thematic analysis to identify the existing gaps in the existing African properties on the World Heritage Lists and the potential sites on the Tentative Lists which can fill in the gaps. The study has identified 53 properties (25 natural, 19 cultural and 9 mixed) with potential outstanding universal value which should be prioritised for World Heritage nomination in Africa. As part of the validation process, the Thematic Gap Study was reviewed by a group of experts during and a 3 hours online review workshop convened on **26th August 2020** to discuss the main recommendation from the review panel.

3.2 VIRTUAL WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION TRAINING WORKSHOPS: TENTATIVE LISTING WORKSHOP – REGIONAL TENTATIVE LISTING WORKSHOP, RWANDA



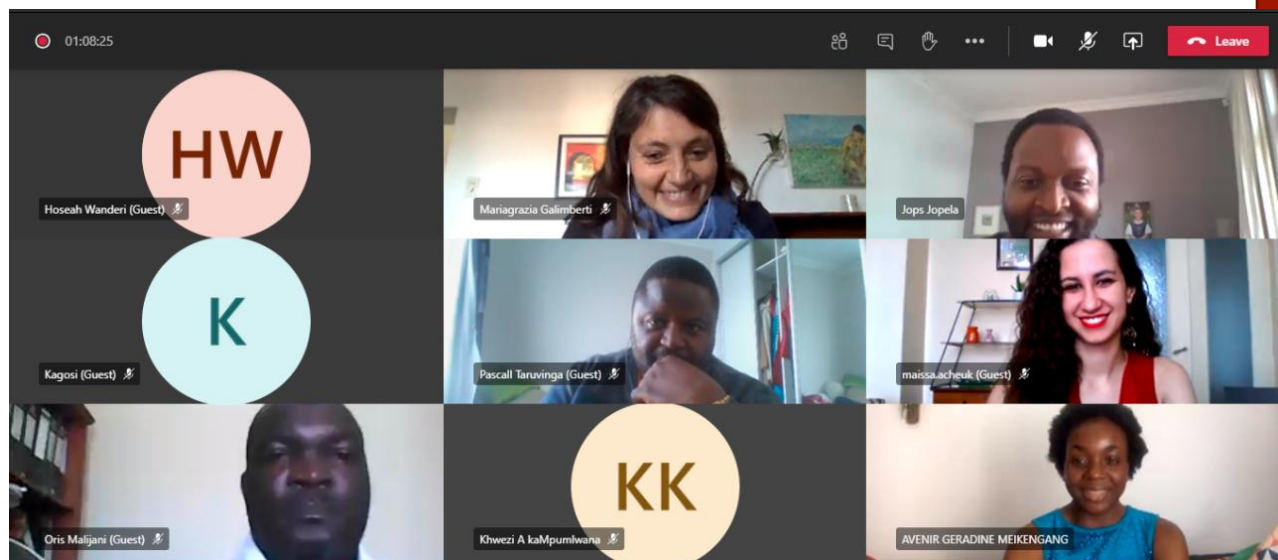
Participants of the virtual World Heritage Nomination Training Workshop (Tentative Listing Workshop) ©AWHF

The AWHF in partnership with UNESCO World Heritage Centre, the Ministry of Sports and Culture of Rwanda, Rwanda National Commission for UNESCO, the School of African Heritage (EPA) and the Advisory Bodies (IUCN and ICOMOS), organized an online Tentative Listing workshop between **13 and 14 August 2020**. The workshop gathered twenty participants from ten African countries that are underrepresented on the World Heritage List: **Benin, Burundi, Comoros, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Equatorial Guinea, Rwanda, Chad and Togo**.

RESULTS ACHIEVED:

- Implementation of two-phase Tentative Listing project with online/theoretical component (phase 1) followed by field/practical component (phase 2) of development of Tentative Lists.
- Presentation of national inventories of heritage sites and preliminary assessment of requirements for their inclusion on national Tentative Lists.
- Discussions regarding the appropriate protection and management mechanism for each property to be placed on the Tentative List.
- Draft Action Plans for development of national Tentative Lists proposals to be analysed during phase 2 of the workshop in Kigali, Rwanda, initially schedule for December 2020 (depending on the level of travel restrictions due to COVID pandemic).

3.3 WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION WORKSHOPS: VIRTUAL WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION WORKSHOP FOR ADVANCED DOSSIERS



Participants of the World Nomination Training @AWHF

The World Heritage Nomination Programme for Africa was initiated in 2008 in line with the objectives of the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) of contributing to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Africa, particularly contributing to a better representation of African properties on the World Heritage List. The AWHF in partnership with the World Heritage Centre (WHC), Advisory Bodies (ICCROM, IUCN and ICOMOS) and training institutions in Africa (EPA and CHDA) implemented 19 editions of the World Heritage Nomination Programme which alternates between various linguistic zones that benefited over 360 participants from Francophone, Anglophone and Lusophone countries. Between 2010 and 2019 twenty-seven African properties were successfully nominated to the World Heritage List with direct support of AWHF.

A six-day virtual workshop focusing on the analysis and development of World Heritage Nomination files currently being prepared by the States Parties (advanced nominations files) took place. These workshops (**Anglophone, 10th – 17th September 2020 and Francophone, 24th September – 1st October 2020**) consisted of hands-on exercises aiming at evaluating the state of readiness of advanced nomination dossiers and assist States Parties to address the outstanding issues of the nomination dossier. This allowed State Parties who might have submitted their nomination files for completeness check to the WHC or received a negative decision from the World Heritage Committee (i.e. referral and deferral) in previous years to address the issues raised and improve the nomination dossiers in view of resubmission.

4. PARTNERSHIPS

4.1 AWHF CONVENES WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE AFRICA GROUP (AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT DELEGATE OF KENYA TO UNESCO)

AWHF held a robust meeting with **H. E. Phyllis Kandie**, President of the Africa Group and Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Kenya to UNESCO on **15th September 2020**. Present were her delegation which included her Deputy, **Ms. Hellen Gichuhi**. H. E. Kandie conveyed her unwavering support to AWHF and displayed keen interest in the work of the Fund. She further encouraged AWHF to keep the communication line open with her office and assured that she remained at the Funds disposal to assist in driving the initiatives forward in achieving the set mandate.



4.2 AWHF HOLDS AN INTRODUCTORY MEETING WITH THE AMBASSADOR OF THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO TO SOUTH AFRICA

A successful introductory meeting was convened with **H. E. Mr. Y. Amrani**, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to South Africa on **25th August 2020**. The meeting discussed possible collaborative initiatives that AWF and the Kingdom of Morocco could embark on in the near future in line with the protection, conservation and promotion of Africa's cultural and natural heritage.



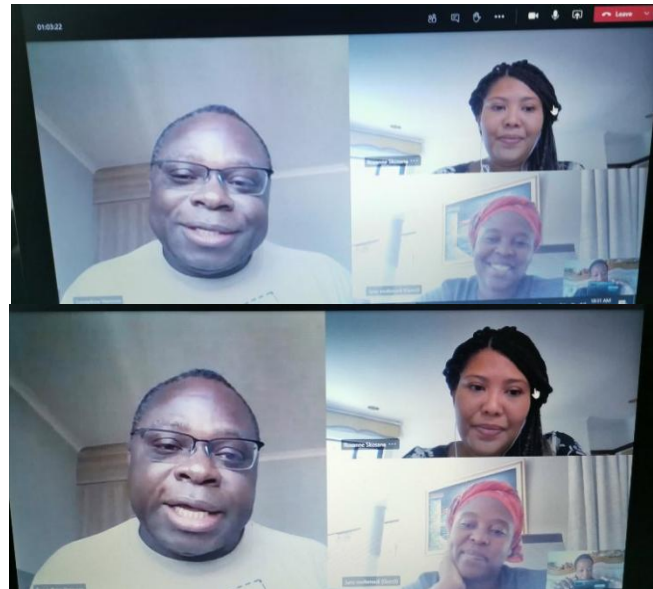
4.3 AWHF CONVENES WITH THE AMBASSADOR OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC) TO SOUTH AFRICA

AWHF met with **H. E. L. Bebe M'poko**, Ambassador of DRC to South Africa along with his First Counsellor and Head of Economic Unit, Mr. Muzungu Diakalo Doctor on **29th September 2020**. The meeting sought to brief the Ambassador of the three-pronged events approach planned for the upcoming 28th AWHF Board of Trustees (BOT) Meeting which will be hosted in DRC in December 2020. The briefing included relaying the envisioned programme of all three events, the strategy being implemented and the expected outcome. The 28th BOT is expected to be attended by high level representatives from DRC.



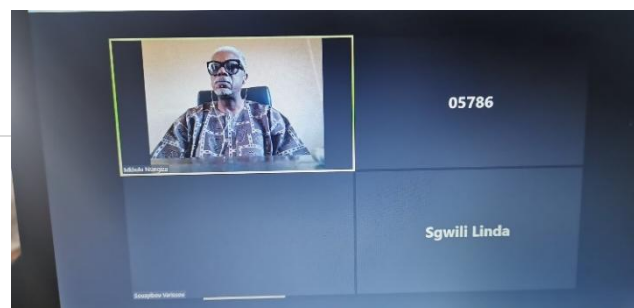
4.4 AWHF MEETS WITH THE CEO OF FREEDOM PARK SITE & MUSEUM, A SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL HERITAGE SITE

AWHF held a valuable meeting with **Ms. Jane Mufamadi**, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Freedom Park and Museum historic national heritage site in South Africa on **14th September 2020**. The meeting sought to find ways of collaboration through identified areas of common interest which were outlined. A three (3) year Partnership Agreement is in the process of being developed, to commence in the year 2021.



4.5 AWHF HOLDS AN INTRODUCTORY MEETING WITH THE CEO OF ZINDZI MANDELA FOUNDATION

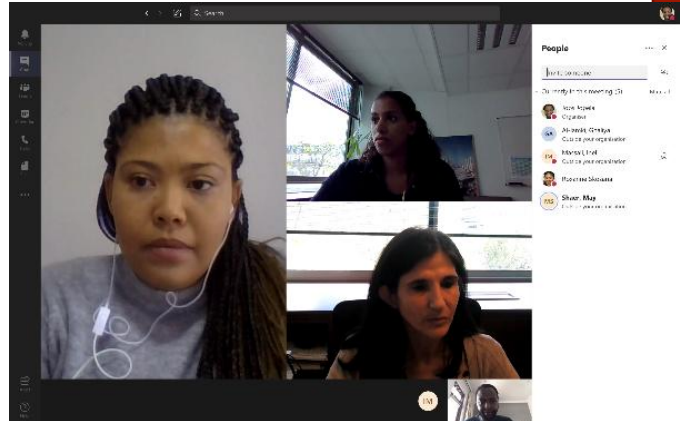
A progressive introductory meeting was held with the Zindzi Mandela Foundation, led by **Mr. Mkhulu Nsingiza**, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Mr. Nsingiza took interest in the work of AWHF and put forward ways to collaborate. AWHF further committed to assisting the Foundation with facilitating engagements with a broader network base.



4.6 COORDINATION MEETING WITH THE ARAB REGIONAL CENTRE FOR WORLD HERITAGE (ARC-WH)

AWHF and the Arab Unit have diverse programmes and activities which provides an opportunity for transfer of skills and collaboration on programmes. Specifically, youth development, capacity building, sites on the danger list and Gap studies. With transferring of skills, there is a need to discuss institutional difficulties, shared experiences and technical support.

The impact of Covid-19 has enhanced ways of communicating online and has provided an opportunity to collaborate more. The pandemic has resulted in both organizations adapting their programmes and activities which has highlighted the need for a report on the impact of Covid-19 pandemic. A coordination meeting between ARC and AWHF took place on **24 August 2020**



5. COMMUNICATION

AWHF SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN FOR AFRICAN WORLD HERITAGE SITES

In July 2020, AWHF embarked on a Social Media Campaign for African World Heritage Sites which aims to profile all the 137 World Heritage Sites in the continent. The objective of the campaign is to take the followers on an informative, knowledge sharing and educational journey while broaden awareness about the richness of our African properties and spark interest of the various sites. With the threat of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, AWHF sought to maintain visibility in an innovative way using digital platforms. Several African sites have been profiled with their Site Managers and the plan is to complete all sites. The campaign involves, member states, site managers and directors and aims to reach as many heritage and tourist enthusiast globally. Each site is taken on a 2 weeks profiling journey and showcases attracting images. **NB: Follow all AWHF Social Media platforms to like, share and interact on the updates.**

AWHF SOCIAL MEDIA HANDLES



Twitter handle: **@African_WH_Fund**



Facebook handle: **@African World Heritage Fund**



Instagram handle: **@Africanworldheritagefund**

6. UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

AWHF CALENDAR OF EVENTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2020)

EVENT	PARTNER	DATE/VENUE
Thematic Study and Gap Analysis of Proposed African Properties for the World Heritage List	EPA, WHC-UNESCO, IUCN, ICOMOS, African Universities	July 2020
27 th Board of Trustees Meeting of AWHF	Government of South Africa	23 July 2020 (Online)
World Heritage Nomination Workshop for Advanced Dossiers	ICCROM, WHC-UNESCO, EPA, IUCN, ICOMOS	3 – 14 August 2020 (Online)
AWHF Grants Evaluation Panel Meeting	IUCN, EPA, African Experts	6 September 2020 (Online)
World Heritage Nomination Training Course	Government of Benin, ICCROM, EPA, WHC-UNESCO, IUCN	5 – 23 October 2020, Porto-Novo, Bénin
3rd Periodic Reporting in Africa - Analysis and Synthesis Workshop	WHC-UNESCO, Coordination Team of PR	29 – 31 October 2020 (Online)
5th Regional World Heritage Youth Forum	ICCROM, ABG, UCT, WHC-UNESCO, IUCN	2 – 20 November 2020 (Online)
Regional Field Workshop on Entrepreneurship around World Heritage Sites in Africa	Government of Malawi, ABG, WHC-UNESCO	16 – 27 November 2020 Dedza District, Malawi
Publication of e-book on “World Heritage and Sustainable Development in Africa: Implementing the 2015 Policy”	RIM, University of Kent, IUCN, ICOMOS	November 2020
Study on Curricula Development: World Heritage and Sustainable Development in Africa	African Universities, WHC-UNESCO, AUC	November – December 2020
5 th Meeting of African Experts on the World Heritage Committee	Government of Uganda, African WH Committee Members	Kampala, Uganda, TBC
Events at the 44th Session of the World Heritage Committee	Government of China, WHC, ICCROM	Fuzhou, China, TBC
Expert Meeting on the Implementation of World Heritage Convention in Central Africa + Stakeholders Event	Government of DRC, ICCN, WHC-UNESCO, AUC	30 November – 2 December 2020, Kinshasa, DRC
28 th Board of Trustees Meeting of AWHF	Government of DRC, ICCN	3 -5 December, Kinshasa, DRC