



Fourth Edition

**“NATURAL HAZARDS AND CULTURAL
HERITAGE”
PRESERVATION STRATEGIES
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TITLE: Protection of Mali's Cultural Heritage: The Exemplary Case of the Great Mosque of Djenné

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This presentation will explore essential strategies for the conservation and restoration of Mali's cultural heritage, focusing on the Great Mosque of Djenné. We will address the challenges posed by climate and environmental changes, the crucial importance of local community involvement, and the legal and policy framework governing these efforts. The aim is to provide architecture and heritage professionals with an in-depth understanding of the issues at stake and the approaches adopted to safeguard this iconic site.

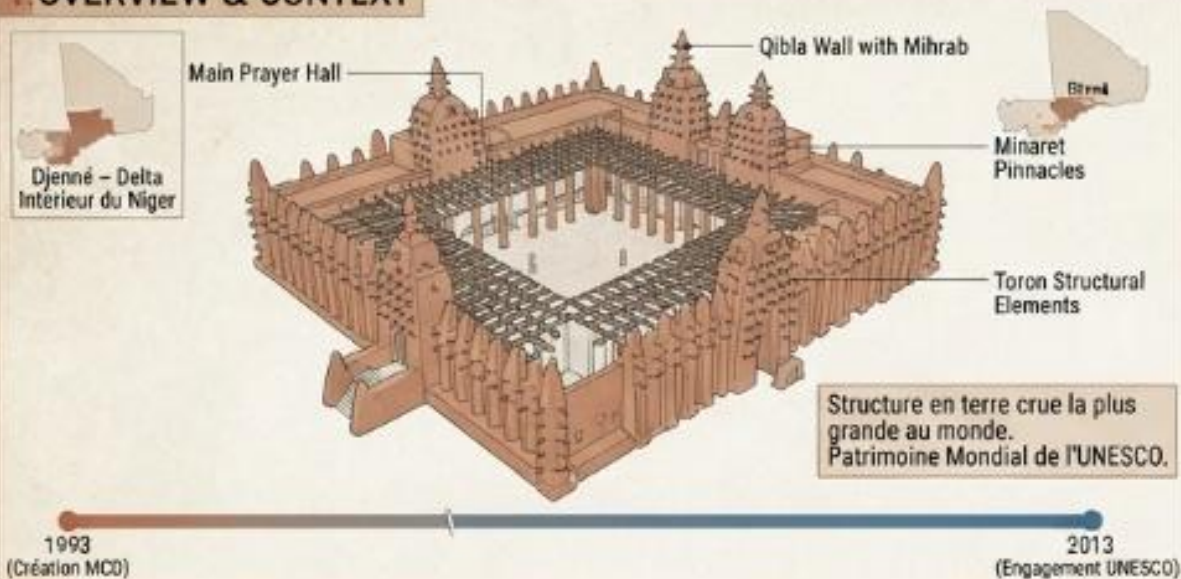
- Mali holds annual national events dedicated to cultural heritage to promote its richness and diversity.
- In 2013, UNESCO launched an ambitious program to rehabilitate Mali's destroyed heritage.
- The Cultural Mission of Djenné, established in 1993, is specifically tasked with protecting and promoting the city's cultural heritage.
- Heritage protection is complicated by armed conflict, pandemics, and climate change.
- Local communities play an active role in protecting and promoting heritage, particularly through their involvement in landscape restoration and the consensual management of sites.



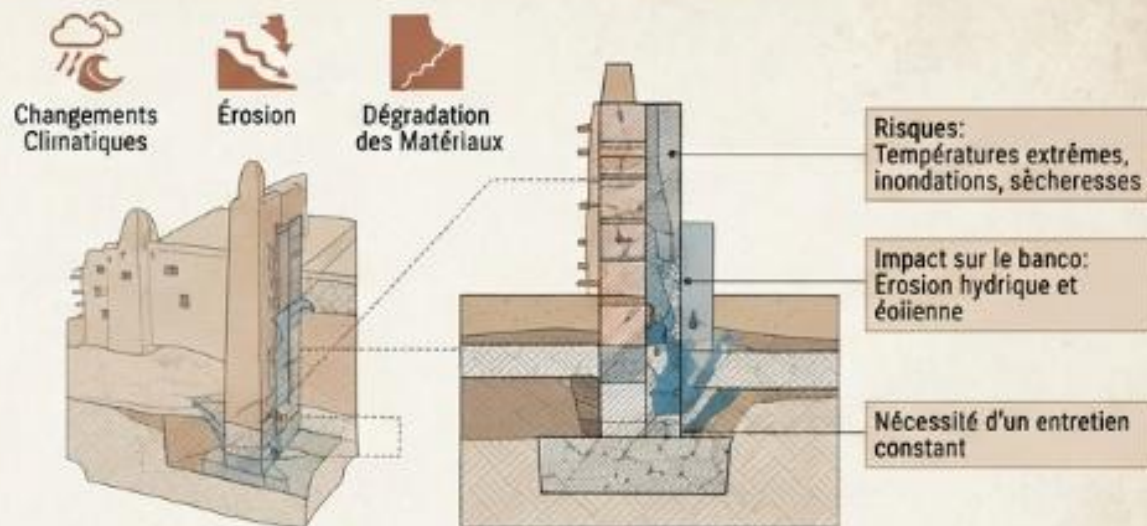
The Great Mosque of Djenné

MALI – DJENNÉ: STRATÉGIES DE CONSERVATION ET DE RESTAURATION DE LA GRANDE MOSQUÉE.

1. OVERVIEW & CONTEXT



2. CLIMATIC & ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES



3. LOCAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & TRADITIONAL KNOW-HOW



4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK & INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT





Background / Context

Mali possesses a cultural heritage of inestimable value, including the Old Towns of Djenné, which are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. This heritage reflects a history spanning a millennium and a unique earthen architecture, epitomized by the Great Mosque of Djenné—the largest unbaked-earth structure in the world. Its preservation is a matter of great importance for both Malian identity and world heritage.

Conservation and Restoration Techniques

Preserving the architectural heritage of Djenné—particularly its Mosque—relies on ancestral earthen architecture techniques.

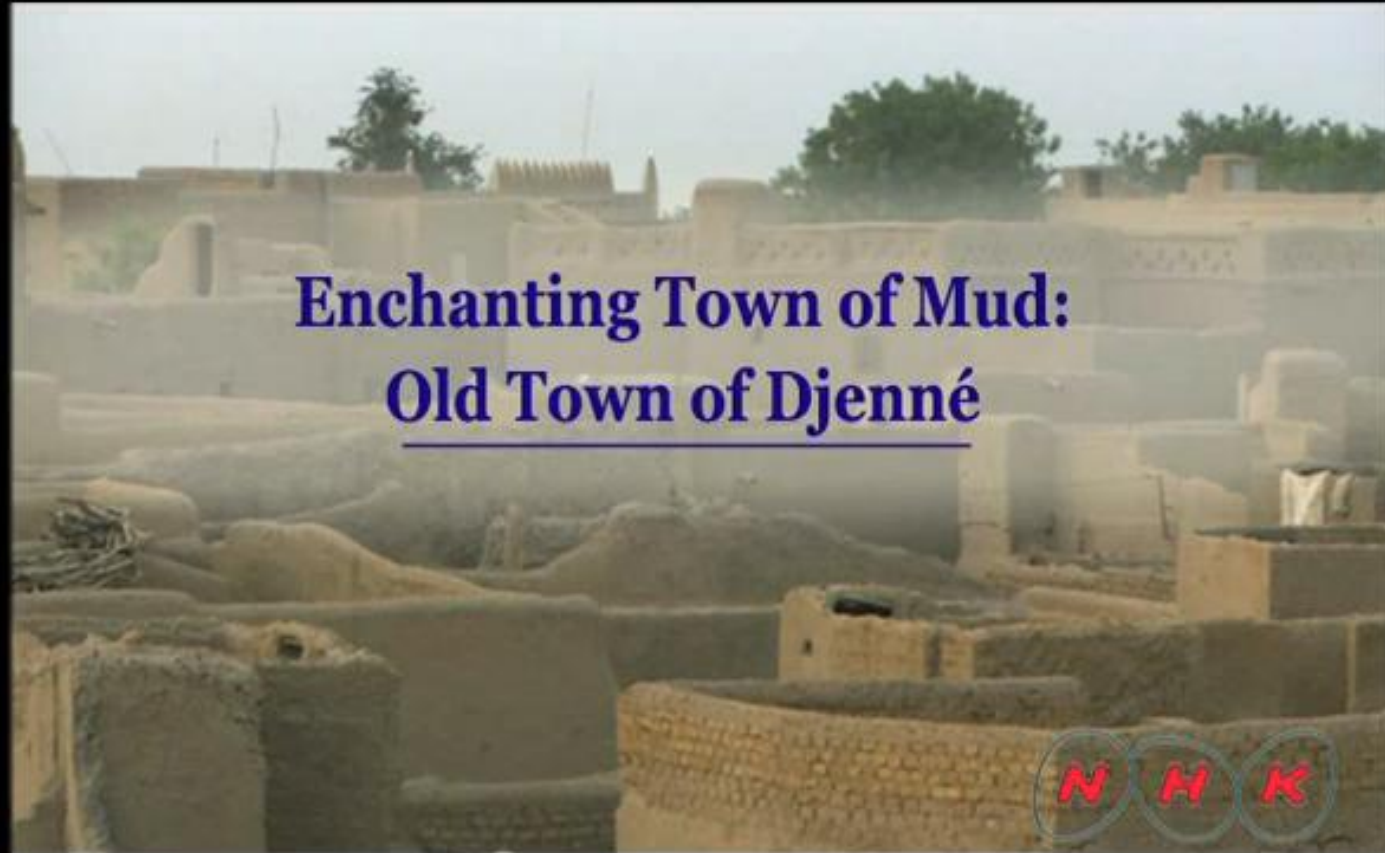
Local materials: Use of unbaked earth (*banco*) and other natural materials, which require regular maintenance.

Traditional know-how: Annual plastering techniques (such as the replastering of the Great Mosque) serve as community rituals essential to the longevity of the structures.

Rehabilitation programs: Initiatives, such as those led by UNESCO, aim to rebuild and restore heritage that has been destroyed or damaged.

Management and conservation plans: Documents such as the Conservation and Management Plan for the "Old Towns of Djenné" are developed to ensure sustainable and consensus-based management.

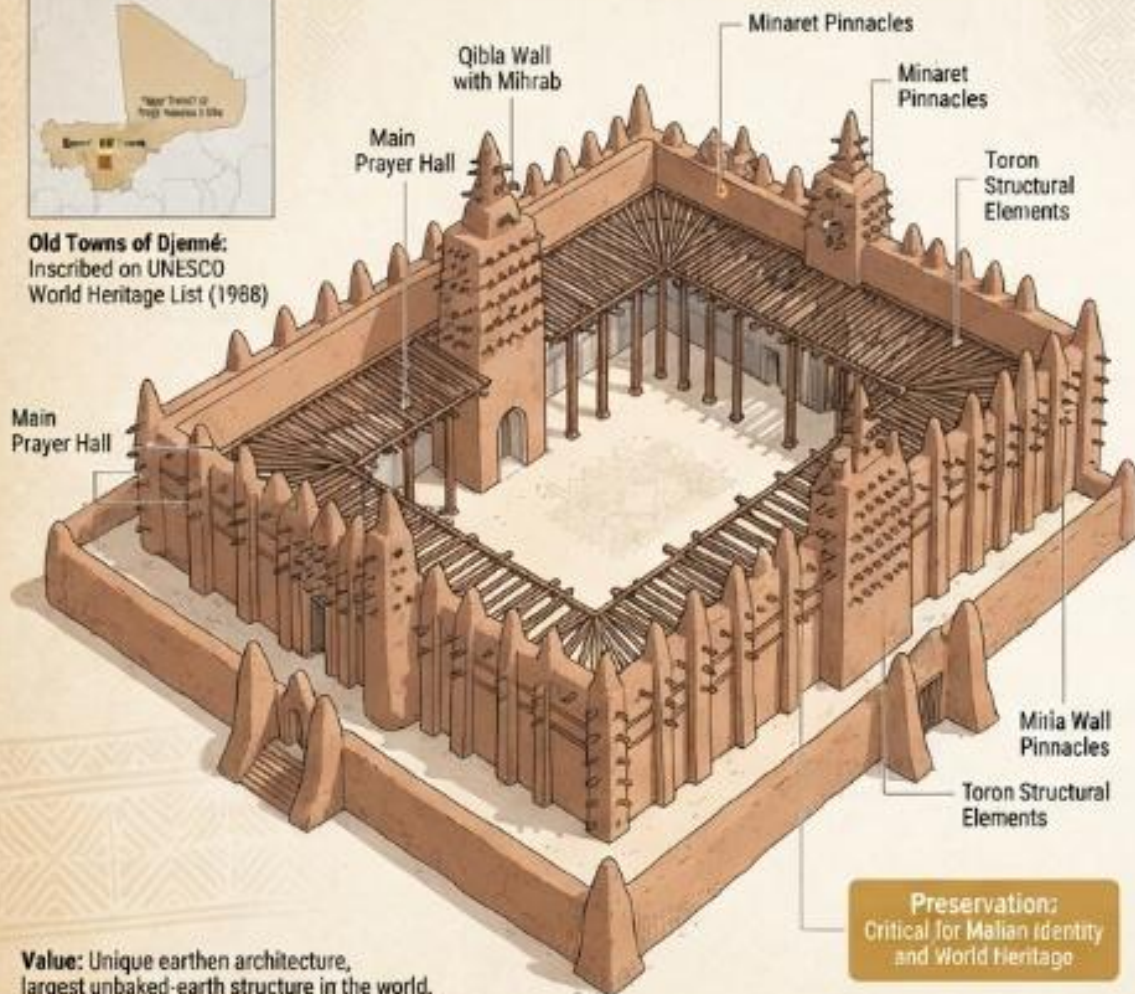
Enchanting Town of Mud: Old Town of Djenné



Background / Context



Old Towns of Djenné:
Inscribed on UNESCO
World Heritage List (1988)



Value: Unique earthen architecture, largest unbaked-earth structure in the world, reflecting a millennium of history.

Preservation:
Critical for Malian identity
and World Heritage

1000 CE

1000

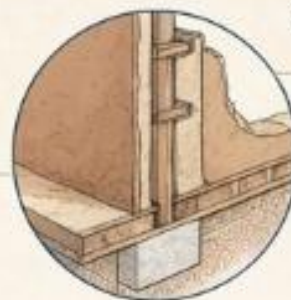
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Present

The Conservation Cycle

Annual (Crépissage) Planning
→
Periodic Rehabilitation
→
Routine Maintenance
→
Long-Term (Crépissage)

Conservation & Restoration Techniques



Banco Construction & Moisture Management



Annual Plastering Ritual (Crépissage)

Community-led Process

Essential for Longevity

Traditional Know-how Transmission



Essential for Longevity

Rehabilitation Programs & Plans

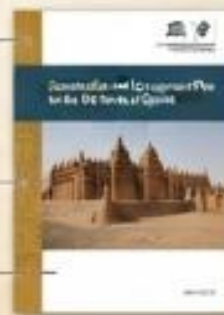
UNESCO-led Rehabilitation



Consensus-based
Management

Risk
Assessment

Sustainable
Practices



Climate and Environmental Challenges

Malian heritage, and the Great Mosque of Djenné in particular, faces growing environmental challenges:

- Climate change: Extreme temperature fluctuations, heavy rainfall, and droughts affect the stability of earthen structures.
- Erosion: Water and wind contribute to the erosion of walls and foundations.
- Material degradation: Traditional building materials are sensitive to moisture and require constant maintenance.
- Urban pressure: Urban expansion and changing lifestyles can compromise the integrity of historical sites.

Local Community Involvement and Awareness-Raising

Engaging local communities is fundamental to heritage protection:

- Active participation: Local communities are often the primary agents in protecting, conserving, and promoting their heritage.
- Awareness-raising: Events such as Mali's National Cultural Heritage Days aim to raise public awareness about the importance of this heritage.
- Knowledge transmission: Maintenance rituals, such as the replastering of the Great Mosque, serve as moments for passing on techniques and strengthening social bonds.
- Participatory management: Local community involvement is essential for assessing social and environmental impacts and for landscape restoration.

Legal Framework and Protection Policies

A robust legal and policy framework is necessary to safeguard heritage:

- National legislation: Mali has legislative and regulatory measures in place to protect its heritage.
- Dedicated institutions: The Cultural Mission of Djenné is an example of an institution specifically tasked with protecting and promoting local heritage.
- International cooperation: Organizations such as UNESCO and MINUSMA provide technical and financial support and help protect sites against attacks.
- Legal guidelines: Guides and publications offer direction for formulating legal standards regarding cultural assets, facilitating their implementation.

MALI- DJENNÉ: HERITAGE, CHALLENGES, AND PROTECTION

CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES



Water and Wind Erosion

- Water erosion (cuts existing gully erosion)
- Abrasion (blowing and excels wind spalling)
- Abrasion since sites site changing extreme temperature fluctuation



Material Degradation

Moisture Sensitivity & Upkeep

- Efflorescences, wall spalling, borist spalling
- Maintenance and foam as spalling efflorescences, efflorescence and spalling
- Maintenance and spalling charring coking into



Urban Encroachment

- Urban expansions the urban contraction, deserts, snow alarm new satellites
- Urban expansions as the new to contraindicate
- New satellite

LOCAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND AWARENESS-RAISING



Public Awareness Events

- Community leader Heritage Days

Intergenerational Technique Transfer

- Intergenerational Technique Transfer with village leader
- Community leader techniques limit pupils the rectification positions
- Encouraging the farmers spalling make replaster technique



Participatory Management

- Impact Assessment & Landscape Transfer
- Community council, and heritage expert #1
- Impact Assessment & Landscape rehabilitation with heritage expert and Impact Assessment & Landscape

LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND PROTECTION POLICIES



Malian Legislative Measures

- Malian Legislative Measures (Patrimoine, Culture)
- Cultural Legislation and specialties
- Implementation as per the national legislation on heritage cultural



Cultural Mission of Djenné

- Cultural Mission of Djenné



UNESCO & MINUSSMA Support



Regulatory Guidance

- ✓ Legal legal steps
- ✓ Implementation steps
- ✓ Implementation & penalties
- ✓ Implementation steps
- ✓ Regulatory Guidance





Practical Takeaways

- Integrate traditional knowledge: The sustainability of interventions depends on incorporating local techniques and materials, as well as community expertise.
- Strengthen climate resilience: Develop adaptive strategies to protect heritage against the impacts of climate change.
- Support community participation: Foster local engagement in decision-making processes and the implementation of conservation actions.
- Consolidate the legal framework: Ensure rigorous enforcement of laws and policies regarding heritage protection.
- Promote cooperation: Maintain and expand international partnerships to access the expertise and resources needed to safeguard heritage during crises.



MALI – DJENNÉ: PRACTICAL TAKEAWAYS FOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE DJENNÉ WORLD HERITAGE SITE



1. INTEGRATE TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE



Incorporate local techniques, materials (banco), and community expertise for sustainable interventions.

2. STRENGTHEN CLIMATE RESILIENCE



Develop adaptive strategies to protect heritage against extreme weather and climate change impacts.

3. SUPPORT COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION



Foster local engagement in decision-making processes and the implementation of conservation actions.

4. CONSOLIDATE LEGAL FRAMEWORK



Ensure rigorous enforcement of laws and policies regarding heritage protection.

5. PROMOTE COOPERATION



Maintain and expand international partnerships to access expertise and resources for safeguarding heritage.



THANK YOU FOR
YOUR ATTENTION