Community builds the future
We restore and build relations
THE REAL DIFFERENCE CANNOT BE SEEN ON THE SURFACE
The clock tower in the city of Rahovec/Orahovac in Kosovo gains a working clock for the first time in 50 years. The clock tower has been restored by people from various ethnic and religious backgrounds, using traditional techniques and materials.

You might think that we are some kind of developer that restores historical buildings in areas hit by war and natural disaster. We would say that we are experts in human rights, reconciliation and poverty reduction. We restore cultural heritage and help to build futures.

WAR HAS DESTROYED THEIR HISTORY
NOW THEY ARE BUILDING UP A SHARED FUTURE

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As we see it, there is a clear link between restoring a building and building up human relations, trust, economies, societies — and indeed nations. A building is more than just bricks and mortar. It is also a link to the past and part of people’s history, security and identity.

CHwB organises restoration camps where students, young professionals and international experts come together in joint cultural heritage projects — work that also facilitates reconciliation.
Velika Hoca is a Serbian enclave in a Kosovo Albanian area of southern Kosovo. One CHwB project converted several traditional private houses into Bed & Breakfast. This has contributed to a rise in female enterprise, and in democracy: having been a closed enclave in 2005, 60% of residents voted in the local elections in 2010.

A link to the past and a door into the future – knowing where you come from makes it easier to decide which path to take next.

We promote cultural heritage as an engine for local and regional development that also attract tourists. That is one result. Another is the relations that are built up during the work. The emergence of a “we” in the discussion over who makes the decisions about a particular place and how that place should be used.

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Every project is a potential democratisation process that offers countless opportunities to bridge conflicts, promote trust between former enemies and work on social and economic development.

**THE MOST IMPORTANT BUILDING BLOCKS ARE DIALOGUE, RESPECT AND TRUST**

Already at the planning stage CHwB involves a variety of partners at different levels of society and builds on existing local capacity.
Setting up a workforce of men and women from different ethnic or religious backgrounds means that people who would never otherwise have interacted, have a chance to meet. They gain an opportunity to get to know each other, trust each other and build something together.

**THIS IS NOT AN ART EXHIBITION**

**THIS IS ELEVEN MUSEUMS WITH THE COURAGE TO BUILD SOMETHING NEW TOGETHER**
Before the war in the former Yugoslavia, the medieval centre of Jajce in Bosnia and Herzegovina attracted 300,000 tourists per year – which generated work for one in five local inhabitants. Many of the buildings were destroyed in the war. Following restoration work, the city is now seeking World Heritage status from UNESCO.

Using local craftsmen provides an opportunity to use and develop traditional working methods that are often good for the environment and create jobs. A builder has to be sourced for a restoration. If this is done in open competition, it automatically provides a chance to discuss issues of corruption and how corruption can be combated.

Once the restoration is complete, the building needs to be protected by laws that also need to be harmonised with legislation in other countries.
This in turn creates a need for a functioning administration. At a local level, the restoration has to be incorporated into a development plan, which prompts an open discussion on local development as a whole – a discussion that can strengthen trust between people and confidence in institutions.

CHwB promotes a program to improve the situation of the natural and cultural heritage of society and builds on existing local capacity in seven municipalities in Kosovo. The program facilitates integration into economic, tourist, cultural and local circles and the creation of joint forums for open communication with civil society, the business community, marginalized groups, environmental groups and citizens.
Our job is to get these processes started. Our goal is for our partners to finish them. Which takes time: demolishing history is quick, but building trust, democracy and a future is often a laborious process. But it can be done.

OLD RELATIONSHIPS WERE DESTROYED
NOW THE FOUNDATION IS BEING LAID FOR A NEW, SHARED SOCIETY

Museums are not just buildings. Working in the community with handling exhibitions and children’s events are regular activities for the museums in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania and Macedonia.
Cultural Heritage without Borders (CHwB) sees cultural heritage as an indispensable element of human rights and democracy and a common resource belonging to all of mankind regardless of nationality or religion.

Our mission is to promote cultural heritage as both a right in itself and a resource. CHwB works with civil society and institutions at all levels to strengthen peace-building, sustainable socio-economic and democratic development and the realisation of human rights.

CHwB is neutral when it comes to conflicting parties, but not to the rights of all people to cultural heritage. CHwB is committed to equality, non-discrimination, participation, accountability and transparency.

We are an independent Swedish organisation with local offices in countries of operations supported by Sida, other bilateral funds, the EU, private foundations and grants.

CHwB’s board is appointed by ICOMOS Sweden, ICOM Sweden, The Swedish National Heritage Board and Swedish Association of Architects.
We restore and build relations

Cultural Heritage without Borders

KULTURARV UTAN GRÄNSER