Eritrea

CULTURAL ASSETS REHABILITATION PROJECT

Environment

**Project details:**

- **Project Number:** P058724 – Learning and Innovation Loan
- **Loan Amount/Project Costs:** $5.0 million/$5.4 million
- **Cost of Cultural Heritage Component:** $5.4 million (100 percent of total project costs)
- **Task Manager:** Roxanne Hakim
- **Fiscal Year of Bank Approval:** 2002

**ITFCSD grant details:**

- **Year of ITFCSD grant approval:** 2003
- **Status:** active
- **Grant amount:** USD 200,000
- **Disbursements:** ---
- **Commitments:** ---

This multifaceted project intends to use aspects of Eritrea’s cultural practices and expression for social and economic development. The Cultural Assets Rehabilitation Project (CARP), financed by the World Bank’s International Development Association (IDA), has provided documentation of historic architecture in Asmara and Massawa, which has made available essential information for guidance in maintaining the historic character and value of the two cities. Following the identification of the major restoration interventions, the ITFCSD has provided a grant to support the training of Eritrean craftsmen. Such skills as woodworking, carving, construction and plastering necessary in the restoration and maintenance of the outstanding architectural ensembles, need in fact to be reinstated.

The recent review of the program and the consequent restructuring has raised the possibility to change the scope of the grant’s activities. An option would be to support the renovation and upgrading of the historical perimeter of Asmara and Massawa, through financing the mapping and cataloguing of the historic districts. The ITFCSD grant could be also be used for financing the restoration design for one of the historical buildings selected in Asmara. The hiring of Italian experts to design and implement such intervention appears to be extremely appealing given the fact that urban architecture in Eritrea is largely the legacy of Italian urban planners dating back to 19th and 20th centuries.

This second option is the most likely.