Rebuilding Skills and Traditions

The project aimed to showcase conservation techniques reflecting international best practice throughout the planning, documentation, design and implementation stages to serve as a reference point for future work in Egypt. The process began with a systematic damage assessment, archaeological investigations and documentation of the monument’s history. Conservation work started in June 2009, performed by a team of specialists and local craftsmen, many of them residents of the surrounding communities. Vocational training in modern heritage conservation techniques was an important dimension of the project.

Much of the construction followed traditional methods long used in Egypt. A project objective was to revive these manual labour skills by introducing quality controls and standards for the use of stone and brick masonry, carpentry, tiling, and marble mosaic decoration. The 18th-century Mamluk‘ buildings and surrounding stone carvings, marble panels, terra-cotta and wooden ceilings involved the use of new materials, compatible to be weatherproof and of a reversible nature. Modern techniques and materials were employed to “critically and directly strengthen the context not wall”. All interventions and new works were fully documented.