Strengthening National Capacities for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage: UNESCO’s Strategy for Asia and the Pacific

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International Field School Alumni Seminar on Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia Pacific
Lamphun, Thailand 7 August 2012
State Parties of the 2003 Convention

143 States Parties worldwide as of 17 April 2012, of which 27 are from Asia and the Pacific.
## Intangible Heritage Lists 2008-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Worldwide</th>
<th>Asia/Pacific</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICH in need of Urgent Safeguarding</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative List</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Practices</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Elements Inscribed</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 90 elements listed in 2008 were formerly proclaimed Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity
Inscription of Asia-Pacific ICH elements by domains

Summary 2008-2011

- Oral traditions and expressions (36)
- Performing arts (58)
- Social practices, rituals and festive events (42)
- Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe (11)
- Craftsmanship (20)
Inscription of Asia-Pacific ICH elements by domains

- Increasing proportion of *Knowledge and Practices related to Nature and the Universe* and *Traditional Craftsmanship* inscribed in the two lists

- *Performing Arts* is still a dominant category, followed by *Social Practices, Rituals and Festive Events*

* Counted from the Register List and Urgent Safeguarding List.
** Many ICH elements belong to more than one domains.
Why Capacity Building?

• Request from States Parties and Intergovernmental Committee to the Secretariat

• Lack of understanding of the different mechanisms established by the Convention

• ICH safeguarding in the spirit of the Convention is a new field of heritage practice in most countries

• Lack of human resources or technical know-how necessary to implement the Convention effectively
Aims of the capacity-building activities

• To enhance capacities in beneficiary countries to safeguard their intangible cultural heritage

• To enhance the capacities of beneficiary countries to benefit from mechanisms of international cooperation and assistance established by the Convention
Regional Capacity Building Programme in Asia and the Pacific

Funded by the Governments of Japan and the Republic of Korea

- **Nine Beneficiary Countries**: Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste

Funded by the Government of Norway

- **Four Beneficiary Countries in Central Asia**: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan

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Trainings of Trainers

- Regional trainers trained in 2011
  - **Beijing:** 10 - 14 January
  - **Harare:** 24 - 28 January
  - **Libreville:** 30 January - 4 February
  - **Sofia:** 14 - 18 March
  - **Havana:** 28 March - 1 April
  - **Abu Dhabi:** 10 - 14 April
Four Priority Themes of Capacity-building Training Workshops

• Ratification of the Convention (2 days)
• Implementation of the Convention at the National Level (5 days)
• Community-based ICH Inventory (8 days)
• Preparation of Nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List (5 days)
Ratification of the Convention

**Two-day workshop**

- Clarifies why the Convention needs to be ratified
- Explains process and mechanisms for successful ratification
- Provides guidance in solving problems in ratifying the Convention
- Explains the importance of legal or policy reform to integrate ICH safeguarding

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Implementation at the National Level

Five-day workshop
Provides an overview of the Convention on:

- Its objectives
- Key safeguarding concepts
- Obligations of States Parties
- Involvement of communities and other actors
- Mechanisms for international cooperation

The Darangen Epic of the Maranao People of Lake Lanao © J. Uñalivia/NCCA-IHC
Implementation at the National Level

Five-day workshop
Provides an platform for:

• Sharing past and on-going experiences of safeguarding
• Collective reflection on experiences and challenges in safeguarding ICH
• Discussion on sustainable development
Community-based ICH inventorying

Eight-day workshop

- Details the essential features of inventorying, particularly the fullest participation of communities and ICH practitioners
- Clarifies how inventorying contributes to safeguarding
- Provides training on practical technical skills in inventory-making, including fieldwork practicum
Preparing Nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List

**Five-day workshop**

- Uses simulated nominations and walks participants through the process of examination
- Provides understanding of what a good and complete nomination through examination of sample files
- Provides practical experience in developing safeguarding plans

Jultagi, Tightrope Walking @ National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, Korea

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Preparing Nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List

Five-day workshop

- Emphasizes community participation
- Explains the principle of free, prior and informed consent
- Produces a core of knowledgeable experts able to develop nominations and assess their adequacy

Yuki-Tsumugi, Silk Fabric Production Technique
@2009 Association for the Preservation of Honba Yuki-Tsumugi Weaving Techniques
Modular Structure

• Workshops designed to be adapted to diverse situations, settings and audiences
• Trainers can easily introduce new content from local or regional perspective
• Each unit supported by lesson plan, handouts, reference materials
• High-tech, medium-tech and low-tech editions
• Adaptation to specific needs, regional characteristics or national contexts
• Updating and/or revision of texts and materials
• Translation and customization to local requirements
Audiences

Actors at the heart of the Convention:

• Policy-oriented audience for workshop on ratification
• Ministry and local officers, experts, NGOs for workshops on implementation and preparing nominations
• Officers, experts and community members for workshop on inventorying
• Intensive workshops require serious commitments from participants
• Availability and willingness to continue implementing activities after the end of the workshop (e.g. inventories, nominations)
• Respect for parity between genders

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Pedagogical Approaches

• Participation of pedagogical experts in shaping the training modules
• Emphasis on interactivity and active learning
• Simulations and role-playing activities to reinforce learning
• Quizzes to test and reinforce knowledge of participants
National Workshops in Asia-Pacific Region (2012-2014)

- Twenty-seven (27) workshops to be organized in the nine beneficiary countries in Asia and the Pacific (9 workshops completed as of August 2012)
- Workshops in Central Asia through the Field Office in Almaty and Tashkent
- Facilitated by trained regional trainers
- Implemented by national implementing partners through UNESCO field offices
General Observations from Completed Workshops in Asia and Pacific

- Empowerment of communities and practitioners in inventorying ICH
  - a relatively new idea in countries where a top-down approach has been the norm
  - need for representation from communities and ICH practitioners in all capacity building workshops on ICH to underline their central role in the implementation of the 2003 Convention

- Group exercises and field works elicited great interest among participants and facilitated the understanding of basic concepts presented during lectures
General Observations from Completed Workshops in Asia and Pacific

Issues encountered:

- **Language issues:**
  - Difficulty in translating ICH concepts into local languages
  - The understanding of ICH terminologies and concepts differ from one country to the other

- **Safeguarding issues:**
  - Confusion between different UNESCO Conventions (1972 Convention, 2003 Convention and 2005 Conventions)
  - Exaggerated focus on listing
  - Difficulties by government in bringing in communities/practitioners to participate in processes of safeguarding, including the workshops
Thank you.

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