Progress report

Strengthening Capacities to Safeguard Intangible Cultural Heritage and Contribute to Sustainable Development in Ghana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographical scope/benefitting country(ies)</th>
<th>Ghana</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of funding</td>
<td>Earmarked voluntary contribution to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund received from France</td>
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<td>Amount</td>
<td>US$ 135,575</td>
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<td>Executing field office(s)</td>
<td>UNESCO Office in Accra</td>
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<td>Reporting period</td>
<td>January to November 2021</td>
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I. Background & Summary

Ghana ratified the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2016. As a signatory to the Convention, the state aims to take necessary measures to ensure safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) present in its territory through raising awareness about living heritage as well as strengthening capacities for the implementation of the Convention, notably to undertake community-based inventory.

In 2018, UNESCO and Ghana conducted a need assessment, through interviews with representatives from relevant institutions and a validation workshop was held in order to share the major findings. Based on the outcomes of this needs’ assessment, risks and threats to the viability of ICH in Ghana have been identified in the following areas:

- Lack of information regarding the breadth and depth of the ICH present in the country, leading to difficulties in adequately assessing and addressing relevant challenges without knowing the current situation;
- Lack of public awareness and education around the value of ICH and its contribution to development, leading to a relative erosion of the role of ICH in the country;
- Lack of adequate institutional and legislative frameworks to support the viability of ICH;
- Absence of an inter-agency and inter-ministerial strategy which addresses the diverse sectors in which ICH finds itself leading to the exclusion of cultural practices from programmes addressing education, health, agriculture, and industry development in Ghana among others.

To this end, the current project is addressing the paucity of skilled human resources for the implementation of any ICH project in line with the spirit of the Convention. The project aims to
develop a critical mass of national competencies in safeguarding ICH and strengthen strategic inter-agency and inter-ministerial collaboration with different sectors in which the integration of ICH could be integrated in development programs with the goal to strengthen its safeguarding and.

The key activities of the project include:

- Establishment of National ICH Network to support policy making in the field of ICH
- ICH Trainers for community-based inventory
- Community Based Inventory (CBI - Pilot)
- ICH awareness raising

II. Implementation of the project for the period under review

This project has completed the project preparation phased, developing a share understanding with the national counterparts, agreeing on the focus of the project, agreeing on implementation modalities and setting up the project team. The implementation of concrete activities is starting in December 2021 with UNESCO Office in Accra leading the implementation process.

III. Challenges and how they were addressed

Developing a shared understanding of the project, its focus and modalities took some time, also related to the restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it progressed smoothly so that the implementation of the concrete activities can be effectively implemented.

IV. Direct Beneficiaries, Key Partners and Other Stakeholders

The key beneficiaries of the project are institutional stakeholders, local community members and custodians of ICH.

The key partners for the implementation of the project include the National Folklore Board, the National Commission for Culture, the Ghana National Commission for UNESCO, the Ghana Museums and Monuments, NGOs in the cultural sector, academics, traditional authorities, researchers and research institutions, religious leaders, environmental organizations, legal sector, media and Education sector. Ministries involved as key partners are the Ministry of Tourism, Arts & Culture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC).

The National Folklore Board (NFB), is designated by the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture as responsible for the implementation of the 2003 Convention in Ghana will be the core implementing partner. The National Commission on Culture (NCC) will support the NFB as a result of its national presence.

The project will take an inclusive approach to ensure the widest possible participation of relevant stakeholders in the design and implementation of safeguarding activities, including in the organization of capacity-building workshops, the development of materials focusing on community-based inventorying of intangible cultural heritage, public awareness-raising and educational efforts (both formal and non-formal), initiatives involving mass media and the use of technological platforms for the maintenance of data for inventorying and cultural mapping in Ghana.

V. Communication and Visibility

The UNESCO Offices in Accra and the Living Heritage Entity will disseminate information
about the project through their respective websites (http://www.unesco.org/new/en/accra; www.unesco.org/culture/ich). The UNESCO Office in Accra will also mobilize national media to cover the project; to some extent possible leaders and key members of various communities concerned under the project will be associated to visibility activities. The voluntary contributions to the ITH Fund are also acknowledged in the statutory meeting of the 2003 Convention, notably the General Assembly of States Parties and the Intergovernmental Committee.