**CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

**‘****Sharing insights and outcomes: hands-on workshops on living heritage and sustainable urban development in Latin America and the Caribbean’**

**Strengthening capacities for resilient communities through sustainable Tourism and Heritage Safeguarding in Latin America and the Caribbean**

**20 October 2025
Hybrid – Room VIII UNESCO HQ**

**Concept note**

Background

The project ‘Latin America and the Caribbean: Strengthening Capacities for Resilient Communities through Sustainable Tourism and Heritage Safeguarding’ is being implemented with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia within the framework of the UNESCO Programme on Culture and Digital Technologies (<https://www.unesco.org/en/culture-and-digital-technologies>).

As part of the project, the Living Heritage Entity of the Culture Sector is coordinating the implementation of Outcome 2 on integrating intangible cultural heritage safeguarding into urban plans, policies and programmes, through capacity building and community-based methodologies. The project is being implemented in the following beneficiary countries: Belize, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Panamá.

The project’s capacity-building approach began with the development of dedicated training materials, which were used in an online training course on living heritage and sustainable urban development from March until April 2025, with the ten country expert teams identified for the project (see the dedicated [webpage](https://ich.unesco.org/en/events/training-of-trainers-on-living-heritage-and-sustainable-urban-development-01026) for this training).

The online course consisted of six sessions designed to equip experts in intangible cultural heritage and sustainable urban development with UNESCO’s capacity-building approach and materials. It aimed to support the safeguarding of living heritage in urban contexts, in alignment with the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Structured around the three thematic units below the course fostered interdisciplinary collaboration. It aimed to strengthen synergies between living heritage and urban planning in the region, promoting more inclusive and sustainable urban development through the safeguarding of living heritage:

* Unit 1: Linking intangible cultural heritage and sustainable urban development
* Unit 2: Key frameworks related to living heritage and sustainable urban development
* Unit 3: Practical approach to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in urban contexts

Following the online training, the trained expert teams rolled out the capacity-building approach through an in-person workshop in each of the project cities during June to October 2025. This training engaged national and local public officials, along with key stakeholders and community members engaged in intangible cultural heritage safeguarding and urban planning in the project cities. The main objective of this workshop was to bring local stakeholders together to develop approaches for identifying and integrating living heritage into urban planning processes.

The training was conducted in the following cities :

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| No. | Beneficiary country  | City  | Date |
| 1 | Belize  | Belmopan | 25 – 29 August 2025 |
| 2 | Costa Rica | San José | 4 – 8 August 2025  |
| 3 | Cuba | Trinidad | 2 – 6 June 2025 |
| 4 | Dominican Republic | Santo Domingo | 12 – 15 August 2025 |
| 5 | El Salvador | San Salvador | 19 – 22 August 2025 |
| 6 | Guatemala | Antigua | 14 – 17 October 2025 |
| 7 | Honduras | Trujillo | 11 – 15 August 2025 |
| 8 | Mexico | Oaxaca | 13 – 15 August 2025  |
| 9 | Panamá | Colón | 29 – 31 October 2025 |

After the completion of the in-person workshops at the city level, the meeting to be held on 20 October will bring together the project country teams, representatives from the Permanent Delegations to UNESCO involved in the project, and key project stakeholders to share insights and outcomes of the hands-on training workshops held in the nine cities. In addition to highlighting the results of the capacity-building approach, the meeting intends to foster dialogue, peer exchange and strengthen networking among participating cities and countries. Participants will also have the opportunity to explore synergies relating to World Heritage and sustainable tourism, including the implementation of the Visitor Management Assessment Strategy Tool (VMAST)..

Agenda

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| 3.45 p.m. | Opening of the online room.  |
| 4.00 – 4.25 p.m. | **Item 1. Opening*** Opening remarks by Fumiko Ohinata, Secretary of the 2003 Convention
* Welcoming remarks by representative from the Central American Educational and Cultural Coordination (CECC/SICA)
* Welcoming remarks by H.E. Dr Abdulelah Altokhais, Permanent Delegate

Permanent Delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to UNESCO |
| 4.25 – 4.35 p.m. | **Item 2. Introduction and agenda** Objectives and agenda of the meeting by Susanne Schnüttgen, Head, Capacity-Building and Heritage Policy Unit, Living Heritage Entity |
| 4.35 – 4.45 p.m. | **Item 3. World Heritage and sustainable tourism: capacity building results** Update on sustainable tourism component including Visitor Management Assessment Strategy Tool (VMAST) implementation and capacity building activities. Johanna Devine, Associate Project Officer. World Heritage Center |
| 4.45 – 4.55 p.m. | **Item 4. Living heritage and sustainable urban development: capacity building approach**Brief presentation of the capacity building approach and its tailored implementation at country level. Carlos Sánchez. Associate Project Officer. Living Heritage Entity |
| 4.55 – 5.40 p.m. | **Item 5. Sharing results and findings from nine cities**Country expert teams will present the main findings and results of the implementation of the in-person workshops at the city level. Each country-team has five minutes to present**Group 1 – Synergies between heritage safeguarding, sustainable tourism and urban planning** * Mexico, Oaxaca. José Feliciano y Danivia Calderón, co-facilitators
* Cuba, Trinidad. Pablo Fornet and Violeta Rodríguez, co-facilitators
* Dominican Republic, Santo Domingo. Mónica Sánchez and Edis Sánchez, co-facilitators

**Group 2 – Integrating living heritage in sustainable urban development** * Belize: Belmopan. Carren Williams and Rolando Cocom, co-facilitators
* Costa Rica. San José. Celia Barrantes and Josephine Dusapin, co-facilitators
* El Salvador. San Salvador. Yonny Marroquín y Estanislao López, co-facilitators
* Guatemala. Antigua. Irene Tello and Nelly Ramírez, co-facilitators
* Honduras. Trujillo. Siris Elvir and Mario Ardón, co-facilitators
* Panamá. Colón. Guillermina-Iztel de Gracia and Manuel Trute, co-facilitators
 |
| 5.40 – 5.55 p.m. | **Item 6. Regional dialogue and exchange** Discussion on recommendations for strengthening synergies between living heritage safeguarding, urban planning and sustainable tourism.  |
| 5.55 – 6.00 p.m. | Closing |