



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

Workshop

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Envisioning the Future of the Global Capacity-Building Programme and Its Facilitators' Network

A strategy meeting with facilitators

6 to 9 March 2017, Bangkok, Thailand

Concept note

A. Background and rationale

UNESCO's global capacity-building strategy for the implementation of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage is today widely known and recognized by the international intangible cultural heritage community. The first evaluation on the implementation of the Convention highlighted that the programme is well appreciated by all stakeholders¹ and this point has been furthermore confirmed by the on-going strong demand for capacity building from States Parties and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in this field. The figures below provide an indication of the scope of what has been achieved:

- 70+ countries enhanced results in policy development, inventorying and safeguarding;
- 1800+ individuals from governments, civil society and communities were trained;
- 50+ thematic units for training stakeholders were developed; and
- 80+ expert facilitators from all regions (more than 40% from Africa and more than 40% women) delivered trainings and advisory services as members of the global facilitators' network.

The programme has so far focused on addressing the most urgent needs identified for the implementation of the Convention, such as developing a better understanding of its key concepts and requirements, building capacities for the development of inventories and safeguarding plans, and strengthening the knowledge and skills required to participate effectively in the international cooperation mechanisms of the Convention. The initial evidence gathered in project reports and evaluations suggests that capacity building in these areas, together with the advisory services provided for policy analysis and revision, are effectively contributing to the establishment of the professional and institutional environment required to support communities and groups in their efforts to transmit and recreate their intangible cultural heritage.

¹ 'Evaluation of UNESCO's Standard-setting Work of the Culture Sector: Part I – 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage' available in [English](#)[French](#)[Spanish](#)[Arabic](#)

Similarly, the UNESCO-trained facilitators have confirmed the relevance of the capacity-building programme in their analytical reports to UNESCO, which they prepare after conducting a training workshop or providing advisory services in a specific country. These reports, in addition to the regional review meetings held with facilitators, have allowed UNESCO to systematically take into account facilitators' recommendations in its programme planning and management to improve programme efficiency and determine ways forward. A cross-regional analysis of facilitators' reports on capacity-building workshops has also been conducted to consolidate these perspectives and will be provided with this note for background reading.

The facilitators' network

Taking into account previous experiences of implementing the capacity-building programme, it is clear that the facilitators' network has become a resourceful and respected player for implementing the Convention. Some refer to the network as the living memory of the implementation of the Convention during the first decade. While the network was initially created by UNESCO to facilitate the delivery of training workshops, its members report that their role has evolved considerably over time from being solely a trainer, to becoming also a mediator, advisor, evaluator and activist for the implementation of the Convention. This is an noteworthy development, which deserves further analysis and consideration of how it affects the development of the network as a whole.

The facilitators have also demonstrated great flexibility and openness in taking on new themes for which the Secretariat developed guidance and training materials. Gender, policy development and safeguarding plans, are just three examples and the thematic scope keeps growing as new implementation challenges occur. This year, for instance, the Secretariat is going to develop materials to help countries implement Chapter VI of the Convention's Operational Directives (2016), which focuses on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development at the national level. However, one question that arises is how the network could best manage these new demands. Should every facilitator be knowledgeable of all themes or do different themes require facilitators to have different profiles and expertise?

The landscape of institutions active in the field of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage is different today to when UNESCO first created the global facilitators' network. At that time, the comparative advantage of the network delivering capacity-building services was unique. Today, the situation has changed and there are several different types of actors involved in building capacity in the field of intangible cultural heritage, even though they may focus on different aspects of safeguarding and not necessarily on implementing the Convention. For example, some universities are integrating intangible cultural heritage in their programmes to train the future managers and decision-makers. Moreover, NGOs are developing expertise in intangible cultural heritage, with some offering capacity building for different stakeholders. Specialized heritage institutions are also integrating intangible cultural heritage in their training programmes. Thus, given these developments, the question is how the facilitators' network can evolve to best complement other capacity-building efforts.

Finally, there is the issue of decentralization and the question about how to articulate the global network of facilitators with ongoing efforts to create national networks of facilitators. While the distinction between a global and a national network is clear, the articulation between the two as well as with the regional level may not be so evident. How then can communication between the different levels be best assured?

These questions and developments illustrate some of the changes and challenges regarding the Convention's capacity-building programme and its global network of facilitators. They will require further reflection to envision the future development of the global capacity-building strategy and its facilitators' network, both in the short- and long-term. From UNESCO's

perspective, it is a particularly opportune time to reflect on these issues as UNESCO is currently developing its next four-year programme and would like to take a future-oriented approach.

Recognizing the strengths and experience of the facilitators' network, UNESCO has therefore decided to involve its members in this strategic thinking about the future. While UNESCO solicited feedback from as many network members as possible through an online anonymous survey, it is also organizing a strategic workshop with UNESCO colleagues from Field Offices and the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section from 6 to 9 March 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand. The above-mentioned issues and questions will frame the discussions during the meeting as participants engage in a collective reflection about the future of the programme and its network.

B. Objectives

In light of latest developments in the life of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and in the framework of developing the next quadrennial UNESCO programme (2018 to 2022), this workshop intends to involve facilitators and Field office colleagues in vision building and strategic thinking about the future of the Convention's global capacity-building programme and its facilitators' network. More specifically, it will pursue the following key objectives:

1. Consolidate the facilitators' perspectives on the relevance and future potential of the capacity-building programme;
2. Assess the evolution, effects and potential of the global facilitators' network; and
3. Develop ideas and recommendations for the future of the programme and the network.

The workshop will also dedicate some time to discuss new training materials on International Assistance (to be sent to participants with this note).

C. Outputs

The meeting will essentially produce two kinds of outputs:

1. A report on the meeting, consolidating the insights and suggestions for the future development of the programme that emerged from the discussions; and
2. A list of recommendations for the future of the programme and its network.

D. Participants

The workshop will bring together four types of participant groups from all regions:

1. Members of the global network of facilitators;
2. Field office colleagues;
3. Staff of the Secretariat of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage; and
4. Category 2 centres with a mandate in the field of intangible cultural heritage, as observers.

The meeting will bring together 15 expert facilitators, 7 UNESCO programme specialists from Field Offices and 5 UNESCO colleagues from headquarters who have all been closely involved in implementing the global capacity-building strategy, notably the Secretary of the Convention. Representatives of six Category 2 centres with a mandate in intangible cultural heritage will attend the workshop as observers. The total number of participants will be 25-30.

E. Meeting structure and content

The workshop will devote the entire first day to setting the scene for the discussions on the future. The Secretary of the Convention will engage participants in a reflection on the latest developments in the life of the Convention, followed by a quick overview on the implementation of the capacity-building programme. The latter will include an update on progress made in providing support to policy development and on the capacity-building materials, as well as a feedback session on the materials on International Assistance and a brainstorming on new materials on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development.

Part 1: The present and future of the capacity-building programme

This part will provide an opportunity to share results of programme assessments that UNESCO carried out, followed by discussions on participants' assessments, addressing three key questions:

- i. What are the main achievements of the capacity-building programme?
- ii. What were the main implementation challenges encountered by facilitators and how were or could they be addressed?
- iii. What are the gaps identified throughout the implementation of the programme and how could they be addressed?

Based on the review of the key issues from different perspectives, the discussions will explore possible future developments of the capacity-building programme in longer term, taking into account the new needs and changing institutional environment at the national and international levels.

Part 2: The present and future of the global facilitators' network

The second part will focus on the global network of facilitators, which has been a cornerstone and valuable resource of the programme. Using the findings of the recent on-line survey, the sessions will discuss the evolving role of facilitators and the implications this may have on the network. The debates will raise several important issues regarding existing collaborations among facilitators, but also new initiatives, such as the creation of thematic communities of practice, strengthening of knowledge exchange or networking among the group. The discussions will then focus on the future of the network and the ways in which its impact and role might be further enhanced.

Part 3: Strategic priorities

Building on the recommendations for the future of the capacity-building programme and its facilitators' network that came up during the first three days, the final part of the workshop will try to identify priorities and propose concrete ways forward.

The workshop sessions will include presentations, group work and plenary discussions. See the draft programme of the meeting attached.

F. Preparatory process

To prepare for the meeting, the Capacity Building and Heritage Policies Unit of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section circulated a short online survey among all members of the facilitators' network. The survey was distributed via Survey Monkey in English, French and Spanish with the purpose to collect information on issues related to the experience of being a facilitator, the facilitators' network and its possible future. The questions addressed the following topics:

I. Experience as a member of the facilitators' network

1. What year did you join the facilitators' network?
2. In which regions have you mainly worked?
3. Please indicate the number of capacity-building activities you have carried out since joining the network. Include all activities, irrespective of the funding source.

II. Relevance and efficiency of the facilitators' network

4. To what extent has the facilitators' network added value to your work in the field of intangible cultural heritage? Please elaborate.
5. What are the major challenges that you have encountered as a facilitator of the programme?

III. Effects of membership in the facilitators' network

6. Have you provided services in the field of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage through stakeholders other than the UNESCO Secretariat (i.e. category 2 centres, non-governmental organizations, research institutes, universities, States Parties, museums, etc.)? If so, please briefly describe the services that you provided.
7. Have you collaborated with other members of the facilitators' network outside of facilitating UNESCO workshops? If so, please describe your experience.

IV. Your views on the future of the capacity-building programme and its facilitators' network

8. How could the facilitators' network be strengthened or further developed in the future?
9. What do you consider to be the needs and priorities of the capacity-building programme in the future, including thematic areas that could be explored or further expanded?

Over 50 facilitators responded to the survey and the analysis of the survey results will be presented during the meeting together with key findings that emerged from the analysis of project reports and of a pilot tracer study. These insights will help trigger further reflection and discussion on the possible future of the facilitators' network.

G. Venue

The meeting venue is at the same hotel where participants will stay. The details are as follows (see also the specific Information Note distributed to participants by email):

Holiday Inn Bangkok Sukhumvit

22 Sukhumvit Rd, Khlong Tan Nuea, Watthana, Bangkok 10110, Thailand

Tel.: +66 2 683 48888

H. Organization

The Unit for Capacity Building and Heritage Policy of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section is responsible for the substantive part of the meeting, collaborating closely with the UNESCO Bangkok Office.

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