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

**Expert meeting in the framework of the reflection on a**

 **broader implementation of Article 18 of the 2003 Convention**

 **for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage**

**PLENARY GROUP REPORT**

**(Version 4 May 2023)**

**Topic 3**

**Stockholm, Sweden**

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| **Topic 3: Any other issues to be identified**  |
| This topic is left open to discuss “any other issues related to the Article 18”, and the discussion was done as plenary to list and explore various issues that were not addressed in the previous two sessions. With reference to the two issues proposed in the document in relation to the topic, several points were raised to initiate the discussion, as follows:Question 1: What solutions could be envisaged to improve access to International Assistance for the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices?1. Improve the visibility of International Assistance for the Register
2. Diversification of International Assistance funding opportunities to various channels such as multi-sectoral UNESCO Regional Offices, Category 2 centres (C2Cs), and Accredited NGOs
3. Emulation, or setting prize/awards for best practices (or good practices)

Question 2: What other issues may be pertinent for untapping the full potential of Article 18?1. Detach the register process from other listing mechanisms
2. Establishing “Good Safeguarding Practice Days” to enhance the visibility
3. Follow-up through periodic reporting
4. Further consideration of the name of “observatory”: using languages different from UNESCO working languages

Major discussion focussed on the issues related to the possibilities of diversification of International Assistance funding opportunities (Question 1, point 2). Organizations such as UNESCO Regional Offices, Category 2 centres, and accredited NGOs (including NGO Forum) will be important players in promoting and actively supporting good safeguarding practices, including the Register and other activities in line with Article 18. NGOs, C2Cs, and Regional Offices are in better positions to identify good practices. Utilizing the capacities of these organizations will open other ways to approach the issues surrounding the Register and Article 18, not entirely relying on States parties. Diversification would work in this manner. Given that specific rules and procedures for requesting International Assistance are prescribed on Article 21 of the Convention, and the request has to be submitted by the State Party, making alternative resources available for good safeguarding practices will be a possible approach for diversifying funding opportunities. Funding priority should be given to the Register and sharing of good safeguarding practices. The Committee should recommend this prioritization explicitly.Regional Offices, C2Cs, and NGOs could also be a point of entrance to inform various stakeholders that International Assistance is available for good safeguarding practices. In some regions, more capacities are needed to develop good applications and requests, but improving communication among these actors and with state parties will push this subject forward through enhanced collaborations. UNESCO can encourage other actors to engage in the process to make some progress in the good safeguarding practice. For improving the access to International Assistance for the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices, efforts to increase the visibility of the Register itself along with the International Assistance opportunities for this purpose could be undertaken, through proposed ideas such as “Good Safeguarding Practice Days”, or even a year-long commitment like “the Year for Good Safeguarding Practice” for raising awareness, targeting not only the practices that are already recognized by UNESCO but including other programmes. Understanding the spirit of the Convention, the idea of prize/awards is not to select some for monetary prize but is considered an encouragement in a non-competitive manner. For instance, newly registered safeguarding practices could be supported through various opportunities so that such experiences are widely recognized. Other ideas of using certificate, symbols, or emblem were also suggested.Conducting national level surveys on the good practice would be important, because through such survey, States Parties are able to identify practices that should be registered and those to be supported through International Assistance. Developing national registers for good safeguarding practices will be an option in this context. Alternatively, by utilizing existing materials such as periodic reporting, survey could be undertaken to understand how States parties select good practices and apply for International Assistance, which will be helpful in considering a practical process.Numbers of statements and opinions expressed during the session highlighted the needs of prioritizing the Register and Article 18 (this is a theme closely tied to Topic 1 discussed on the first day of the meeting). For instance, it is understandable that safeguarding endangered ICH elements through the inscription to the urgent safeguarding list has the highest priority, as otherwise such elements could be lost forever. Recognizing such situation, the importance of good safeguarding practices has to be explained in an explicit manner to convince state parties the importance accelerating the implementation of Article 18. Developing a mechanism that gives priorities to the Register will be effective. Detaching the register process from other listing mechanisms could be a way to increase the number of submissions to the Register. There was also a suggestion that when submitting a file for the Representative List or the Urgent Safeguarding List, associated good safeguarding practice could be submitted to the Register at the same time. Intergovernmental Committee need to actively promote the importance of good safeguarding practices and encourage the exchange of good safeguarding practices at the global level. Experts participated in the meeting were positive in identifying good safeguarding practices among existing mechanisms such as such as two lists of the Convention; however, careful consideration is needed to avoid any confusions that the Register is not for the elements themselves but about good practices. Basic principles underlining the broader implementation of Article 18 are:1) having increased number of good safeguarding practices;2) reducing geographically unbalanced distribution of registered good practices;3) a wide range of ICH and threats to be covered in the practices; and 4) the use of good safeguarding practices by multiple countries.In addition, diversity of potential users of the Register should be considered. Therefore, engagement and involvement of wider range of stakeholders in the programmes, with lighter evaluation method, is encouraged. Further exploring the potential of Article 18, possibilities of combining Operational Directives 9(b) and 21(b), with 14, to highlight ideas and methodologies for multinational activities, keeping in mind to activate geographically discontinuous areas.  |