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A Methodology for Community-Based Needs Identification

ENGAGING

CULTURAL

RESOURCES IN

DISPOSABLEMENT

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ACRONYMS

C —	CBNI	Community-based needs identification
	CBO	Community-based organisation
	CCNC	Creative City Network of Canada
	CSC	The Conflict Sensitivity Consortium
	CSO	Civil society organisation
D —	DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
I —	IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
	ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
	ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
	IDP	Internally displaced person
	INGO	International non-governmental organisation
	IOM	International Organization for Migration
M —	MIRA	Multi-Sector Initial Rapid Assessment
N —	NGO	Non-governmental organisation
O —	OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
P —	PDNA	Post Disaster Needs Assessment
	POC	Person of concern to UNHCR
R —	RPBA	Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment
U —	UN	United Nations
	UNDG	United Nations Development Group
	UNDP	United Nations Development Program
	UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
	UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
	UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
	UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
	UNSC	United Nations Security Council
W —	WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
	WHO	World Health Organization
	WBG	World Bank Group

INTRODUCTION

As the international community has come to recognise, culture provides an important foundation for the identity, well-being and sustainable development of communities as well as mutual understandings within and between them. Conflict and displacement affect core aspects of people's lives including their tangible and intangible cultural heritage, living culture and creativity. Today, most of the UN agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) involved in planning for, and implementing interventions in humanitarian emergencies mobilise notions of culture as part of their operational standards and practices. In some sectors, there is also a growing interest in culture as a factor that enhances or mitigates risks related to various emergencies. However, standards and approaches to address culture in emergencies have been lacking.

In 2015 and 2017, respectively, UNESCO's General Conference adopted a Strategy for the reinforcement of the organisation's action for the protection of culture and the promotion of cultural pluralism in the event of armed conflict and an Addendum to the Strategy concerning emergencies associated with disasters caused by natural and human-induced hazards. An Action Plan, covering both conflicts and disasters ([UNESCO 2015b](#)), operationalises the Strategy and the Addendum. In it, UNESCO expresses its concern for the deprivation of cultural rights experienced by populations affected by conflict, particularly the growing number of refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) worldwide. As part of the implementation of the Strategy, UNESCO has undertaken to develop standards and approaches to address culture in emergencies.

This includes the present methodology to carry out community-based needs identification (CBNI) with the aim of supporting populations affected by forced displacement, primarily due to conflict, to engage their cultural resources for resilience, social cohesion and peacebuilding. As a highly participatory and qualitative process, CBNI has evolved from community-based inventorying of the intangible and tangible cultural heritage conducted in recent emergency situations ([Colombia](#), [Ivory Coast](#), [Mali](#), [Niger](#), [Vanuatu](#)) either as safeguarding activities or as bases to develop safeguarding plans. CBNI for intangible cultural heritage undertaken specifically with displaced communities was first tested with Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon ([UNESCO 2017a](#)) and considerably refined when used with IDPs in North Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo ([UNESCO 2017b](#)). CBNI focusing on a broader range of cultural resources and combining qualitative and quantitative research was piloted with Syrian refugees in North Lebanon ([UNESCO 2019a](#)) in the framework of the EU-funded project undertaken in partnership with UNHCR. Lessons learnt from the field have been incorporated into the present methodology.

This document is intended as a short guide for culture, development and humanitarian professionals to carry out CBNI with the widest possible participation of refugees, IDPs and their host communities. It can be used at different phases of an emergency and in post-conflict situations. The methodology can also be adapted to work with returnees and people who have remained whereas members of their communities have been displaced. Parts I and II lay down key notions and guiding principles from the combined domains of culture and forced displacement. Part III summarises the requirements and proposes adequate steps to undertake CBNI focusing on cultural resources in displacement situations.

Protecting and safeguarding cultural heritage, fostering cultural creativity, and promoting cultural rights are at the core of the mandate of UNESCO. These principles, combined with those underpinning the mandate of UNHCR – the UN organisation charged with protection and assistance to refugees, returnees, asylum seekers, stateless persons and operationally engaged to assist IDPs – frame the approach proposed in this methodology. Ultimately, the objective is to ensure that the safeguarding of cultural diversity is an integral element of the protection of forcibly displaced people, that due consideration for their cultural rights is mainstreamed into the services that they are offered and benefit from in camps and host communities, that cultural resources available in the community are engaged to enhance protection and assistance, and that culture becomes an integral part of initiatives to promote mutual understanding between displaced and host communities.

I. KEY NOTIONS

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Migration and forced displacement lead to increased diversity within societies. This diversity often refers to the co-existence of a difference in behaviour, traditions and customs – in short, a diversity of cultures. UNESCO's governing body, the General Conference, adopted the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity in 2001 ([UNESCO 2001b](#)). The Declaration, the first of its kind within the international community, elevates cultural diversity to the rank of common heritage of humanity and has become a founding text of the ethics of an open, creative and democratic world. The Declaration defines culture as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs. It recognises that culture takes diverse forms across time and space and provides an important source of identity, well-being and exchange for the groups and societies making

up humankind. It considers cultural heritage as a source of identity and cohesion for communities, and also acknowledges creativity, including contemporary art forms, as contributing to open, inclusive and pluralistic societies. The Declaration regards cultural diversity as one of the roots of development, understood not simply in terms of economic growth, but also as a means to achieve a more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence.

UNESCO Culture Conventions provide a global platform to protect and safeguard cultural diversity – the world’s natural and cultural heritage (UNESCO 1972 & UNESCO 2001), the intangible cultural heritage of communities (UNESCO 2003), the cultural property threatened by illicit traffic (UNESCO 1970) and armed conflict (UNESCO 1954) – and to foster creativity, innovation, and dynamic cultural sectors (UNESCO 1952, 1971 and 2005).

CULTURAL RIGHTS

The flourishing of cultural diversity requires the full implementation of cultural rights as defined in Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in Articles 13 and 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UNESCO 2001b). Cultural rights can be defined as the right of access to, participation in and enjoyment of culture. This includes the right of all individuals and communities – regardless of any other consideration – to know, understand, visit, make use of, maintain, exchange and develop cultural heritage and cultural expressions, as well as to benefit from the cultural heritage and cultural expressions of others. All persons have the right to express themselves and to create and disseminate their work in the language of their choice, and particularly in their mother tongue; all persons are entitled to quality education and training that fully respect their cultural identity; and all persons have the right to participate in the cultural life of their choice and conduct their own cultural practices, subject to respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms (UNESCO 2018a).

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Culture is both an enabler and a driver of sustainable development. The importance of cultural diversity in development is acknowledged in recent major documents that chart the path for a renewed development agenda, including the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (UNESCO 2005) and the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (UNGA 2015). Cultural diversity provides a wealth of resources to draw on for enhancing individual and collective well-being, strengthening social cohesion, benefitting conflict reduction and boosting the economy (UNESCO 2014).

People and communities draw their cultural resources from the interrelated domains of cultural heritage and creativity. Cultural heritage is the legacy of physical artefacts (objects, buildings, natural and cultural sites, etc.) and intangible attributes (languages, oral traditions and expressions, social practices, knowledge, skills, artistic, ritual and festive expressions, etc.) of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained, adapted and reinterpreted in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations. Heritage constitutes the cultural capital of contemporary societies. It contributes to the continued revalorisation of cultures and identities and is an important vehicle for the transmission of expertise, skills and knowledge between generations. It can also enrich social capital by shaping an individual and collective sense of belonging, which helps supporting social and territorial cohesion. Moreover, cultural heritage can be of great economic significance while at the same time its commercialisation engenders new challenges for its safeguarding and conservation. Heritage further provides inspiration for creativity and innovation and can be invested in cultural industries (UNESCO 2014: 130). In the cultural sector, creativity encompasses mainly arts (visual, literary and performing arts, architecture, and applied arts such as fashion and design) and media industries (radio, publishing, film and television production, and interactive media). Creative expressions are recognised for their economic value as having the potential to generate income and jobs. They also contribute to development in non-monetised ways by enhancing the overall wellbeing of individuals and communities, and energising and empowering social groups, particularly the marginal and the disenfranchised (UNDP & UNESCO 2013: 15, 18).

Cultural resources can also be seen as both tangible – or quantitative (e.g., physical spaces, cultural amenities and organisations, public forms of promotion and self-representation, public art, cultural industries, natural and cultural heritage, architecture, people, artefacts, and other material resources) – and intangible – or qualitative (e.g., values and norms, beliefs and philosophies, languages and oral expressions, community narratives, histories and memories, relationships, rituals, traditions, knowledge and skills, identities, and shared sense of place). Together, these assets help define communities (and help communities define themselves) in terms of cultural identity, vitality, sense of place, and quality of life (Duxbury et al. 2015).

FORCED DISPLACEMENT

In 2019, the UNHCR estimated that 71 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced due to war, persecution and conflict – the highest number ever. Displaced people are often forced to put their lives at risk when undertaking perilous journeys, may be exposed to exploitation and abuse, and face risks of

becoming economically vulnerable and socially disintegrated. The states or communities where they seek safety may regard them as a threat to their security.

People who have been forced to flee are entitled to the same human rights and fundamental freedoms as any other person, including the right to physical safety, freedom of thought and expression, and economic, social and cultural rights (UNESCO 2019b). However, in displacement, people are vulnerable to further rights abuses and therefore may need the protection of international institutions and foreign countries to access and exert their rights. The rights and protection of the different categories of forcibly displaced persons are inter alia addressed by the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, a number of regional legal instruments, and the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. Refugees are displaced persons who have been forced to flee their homes because of persecution, armed conflict, or other events seriously disturbing public order, who have subsequently crossed an international border, and who are unable to return home (UNHCR 2017b). Refugees have a status under international law and are to benefit from international protection. They may be called asylum-seekers until their status as refugees is recognised by states or the UNHCR. By contrast, internally displaced persons (IDPs) flee from the same events as refugees, but they have not crossed an international border. IDPs do not have a formal status in international law and upholding their rights remains the responsibility of the home country. The international agency mandated to work with states to ensure refugee protection and realise durable solutions to refugee situations is the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The United Nations have a second Office for refugees, the UNRWA, which is solely responsible for supporting Palestinian refugees in five areas of operation (Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem).

CULTURE AND DISPLACEMENT

Most people are displaced because of human rights violations forcing them to leave their homes in search of safety. These violations may include the deliberate targeting of their culture and abuse of their cultural rights. Some attacks may amount to cultural cleansing by combining systematic destruction of cultural heritage, denial of cultural identity and physical violence compelling people to flee (UNESCO 2015b: 2). Even in situations where their culture is not intentionally attacked, forced displacement affects people's cultural life, their relations to cultural expressions and heritage, and their capacity to exert their cultural rights.

UNHCR recognises that empowering refugees and other forcibly displaced persons to use their skills and capacities, including community-based systems and networks, enables them to better contribute to their own and communities' protection and self-reliance (Agenda for Protection, Goal 3, Objective 4 and Goal 5, Objective 7). Experience and research have shown that cultural knowledge and skills, together with cultural systems and networks are important resources for the forcibly displaced to strengthen their psychosocial and material resilience, enhance their sense of identity, dignity and empowerment, and sustain their efforts to live through and overcome crisis (IASC 2007; UNESCO 2015b, 2017a, 2017b, 2019a; UNHCR 2015a, 2018a; WHO and UNHCR 2012). Culture is a key resource for community-based protection and self-reliance. Intangible cultural heritage plays a powerful role in helping families and communities affected by forcible displacement rebuild affective bonds and social cohesion around common values, lifestyles and identities. Traditional knowledge and practices (related to care, health, food, shelter, etc.) may be harnessed for survival whereas specific cultural knowledge, skills and creative productions can provide sources of livelihood for men and women alike. Culture can also help counter exclusion by allowing displaced persons to be acknowledged by host communities for their cultural achievements rather than their residential or legal status. The maintenance of cultural knowledge facilitates the return and reintegration of those who have been displaced. Post emergency, culture can be a vehicle both to rebuild economies and societies and to foster tolerance and reconciliation, mitigating tensions and preventing renewed escalation into conflict (UNESCO 2015b).

Recent research undertaken by UNESCO also demonstrates that the ability of communities displaced by armed conflict to engage their cultural resources to live through and recover from their hardship is contingent upon two key factors: the effects of conflict on culture, and the displacement context (UNESCO 2017a & 2017b). Cultural practices and resources are affected in different ways and degrees by war, violence, destruction, death and scattering of family members, loss of property and livelihoods, separation from places and communities of origin, and associated disruption of the social, economic and cultural fabric of communities. On the other hand, the contexts within which people are displaced are more or less conducive for them to fully practice their intangible cultural heritage and transmit it to younger generations, enjoy freedom of expression and creativity, and participate in cultural life. Serious damage to cultural resources combined with lack of cultural rights is likely – in the short term – to deepen the root causes of the conflict and to generate tensions among affected populations, notably between displaced persons and host communities. In the longer term, it may cause irreversible loss of cultural diversity, hampering populations' return to and reintegration in their country of origin.

II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following set of principles is of direct relevance to assessment and planning activities in view of engaging the cultural resources of communities affected by displacement. They draw mostly from operational guidelines and principles developed by UNESCO and UNHCR on the basis of international human rights instruments and their respective mandates for culture and for refugees and other persons of concern (POCs).

A RIGHTS- AND COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH

Human rights principles guide all phases of the assessment, planning and programming process with displacement-affected people including to engage culture. All programmes must contribute to the realisation of human rights, particularly cultural rights. A rights-based approach and a community-based approach are complementary and view the community's concerns and priorities as the starting point for mobilising its members, defining problems and designing programmes to address them.

The right of forcibly displaced people to participate in decisions on matters that affect their lives, families and communities is enshrined in human rights instruments and UNHCR policy and guidelines, in particular the Agenda for Protection and more recently the 2018 UNHCR [Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity](#). The purpose of the 2018 UNHCR Policy is to reinforce the agency's longstanding commitment to ensuring that people are at the center of all interventions and participate in all stages of the programme cycle (assessment, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) This Policy also advances UNHCR's Strategic Directions 2017-2021, which emphasize "putting people first" and commits UNHCR to: (i) draw on the rich range of experiences, capacities, and aspirations of refugee, displaced, and stateless women, men, girls, and boys; and (ii) be accountable to the people we serve, listening and responding to their needs, perspectives, and priorities. In the UNHCR context, a rights- and community-based approach aims at mobilising women, men, boys and girls of diverse backgrounds as equal partners in protection and programming activities, with the ultimate aim of empowering the community as a whole, and the individuals within the community, to access and enjoy their rights (UNHCR 2006:11-13 & UNHCR 2008: 14-17) and with dignity on equal footing This is also referred to as a [community-based protection](#) which helps identify a community's most serious protection risks, explore their causes and effects, and jointly decide how to prevent and respond to them through consultation and meaningful engagement. In doing so, it builds on the assets, capacities and skills of the community and engages them as analysts, evaluators and implementers in their own protection.

This approach is congruent with UNESCO's 2003 and 2005 Conventions, respectively their [Operational Directives](#) and [Operational Guidelines](#), the [Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage](#), the Operational principles and modalities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in emergencies¹, and principles of community engagement and ownership related to tangible cultural heritage (ICCROM 2015) . Because individuals should be able to exert their cultural rights, any activity to foster, promote, protect or safeguard cultural diversity has at its centre communities, groups and individuals for whom tangible cultural heritage is meaningful, who are the bearers of intangible cultural heritage, and who produce contemporary cultural expressions.

Specifically in situations of emergency, besides being the only ones who can identify and define what constitutes their cultural heritage, the concerned communities, groups and individuals should be primarily engaged with to assess the effect of an emergency on their heritage, what measures are needed to safeguard it, as well as how they might draw on it as a resource (Principle 3, UNESCO 2019c).

INCLUSIVENESS AND EQUALITY

Inclusiveness and equality are underlying principles of a rights- and community-based approach. No group in the community, including those whose cultural heritage, expressions and identities are marginalised or threatened, should be excluded from expressing their opinions, claiming their rights, participating in decision-making and benefitting from programmes.

The 2018 UNHCR [Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity mainstreaming \(AGDM\)](#) sets standards and a strategy for the promotion of gender equality and respect for human rights, particularly women's and children's rights, and the protection of all people of concern regardless of their ethnic, social, religious and other background. Operational manuals and tools, particularly on participatory assessment and a community-based approach (UNHCR 2006 & 2008), as well as the UNHCR Protection Policy Paper around Understanding Community-Based Protection provide detailed guidance on how to implement AGDM.

¹The Operational principles and modalities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in emergencies will be presented to the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage when it meets for its fourteenth session in December 2019, with view to transmitting them to the General Assembly of States Parties (June 2020). A provisional version is included in annex to the report of the expert meeting on ICH and emergencies (UNESCO 2019c).

In the spirit of the UNESCO 2003 and 2005 Conventions, and along the principles of community engagement and ownership related to tangible cultural heritage (ICCROM 2015), whenever addressing the cultural diversity and resources of communities affected by displacement, extra attention is given to include persons and groups practicing forms of cultural expression or heritage (including languages) which are marginalised in the community or society at large, or whose cultural heritage is threatened, particularly by the displacement situation or factor(s) causing displacement such as “cultural cleansing.” In line with Ethical Principle 11 for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage (UNESCO 2015c), activities addressing the cultural resources of displaced communities should take into account the voices of men and women and people of different ages, origins and backgrounds and with different roles in society. This is not only to take full advantage of the diverse perspectives that may exist in society, but also to reflect the living, ever-changing character of intangible cultural heritage. Additionally, working with displaced populations on their cultural expressions, heritage and resources is likely to entail incorporating in activities members of host communities and possibly other people and groups connected with the concerned cultural heritage (Principle 2, UNESCO 2019c).

DO NO HARM TO PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES AND CULTURES

Harming culture is harming people. In humanitarian contexts, interventions addressing the cultural resources of forcibly displaced communities and other affected people must abide by the “Do No Harm” principle by preventing and mitigating any negative impact of operations on concerned people and communities, including their cultural expressions and heritage. They should positively affect conflict dynamics by harnessing the power of culture for relief, recovery and peacebuilding.

The principle of “Do No Harm” is that the wellbeing of people organisations are trying to help must be the focus of efforts to help them. The “Do No Harm” approach emphasises that action as well as inaction may cause harm. What is required is thoughtful, conflict sensitive action with attention to ways of improving a situation during and beyond interventions (Wallace 2015: 7-8). In a conflict-prone region or operational context, conflict sensitivity entails that an organisation is 1) able to understand the context it operates in, especially the conflict dynamics 2) understand the interaction between its intervention and the context, or how its engagement may affect the conflict context, and vice-versa, and 3) act on this understanding in order to minimise negative impacts and maximise positive impacts on conflict (CSC 2012: 2-3). “Do No Harm” and conflict sensitivity are mainstreamed into the work of UN agencies operating both in development and humanitarian contexts (see, in particular, the humanitarian principles underpinning the work of UNHCR), and widely adopted by international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and a growing number of national or local NGOs.

Cultural expressions and living heritage are inseparable from the communities who express, practice, enact and create them (UNESCO 2003 and 2005 Conventions). They are indispensable to their well-being and have the potential to improve their short and long-term situation including by re-establishing trust and peaceful coexistence within and between communities (UNESCO 2015b). This is why, in line with the “Do No Harm” principle, organisations assisting people affected by forced displacement have a role to play in protecting and safeguarding the culture of the people they are trying to help.

III. REQUIREMENTS AND METHODOLOGY

This part describes the requirements and steps to undertake CBNI as a prerequisite for programming and implementing activities supporting communities affected by displacement to engage their cultural resources.

WHICH CULTURAL RESOURCES?

Keeping in mind that cultural resources are context specific and no list can be exhaustive, cultural resources that can be considered under CBNI include some or all of the following:

- Access to places and spaces with a heritage or memorial value such as monuments, sites and landscapes;
- Availability of, access to, use and creation of private and public cultural spaces such as museums, libraries, theatres, cinemas, etc.;
- Availability of, access to and use of objects and documents linked to personal or collective memory and identity;
- Access to and capacity to engage in traditional and contemporary artistic expressions such as poetry, music, literature and other visual and performing arts;
- Capacity to use languages and dialects, and to express histories and memories, collective and individual;

- Access to and capacity to express or enact one's intangible cultural heritage: oral traditions; religious and social events, rituals, performing arts, games and leisure; cultural practices related to social norms and the life cycle; customary livelihoods; knowledge about nature; traditional health care and healing practices; family care practices; food preparation; craftsmanship; forms of social and/or cultural organisation; forms of decision-making, dialogue, conflict resolution and collective action;
- Infrastructure, instruments and objects important for creative expressions or intangible cultural resources;
- Forms of cultural transmission and education, including informal.

WHAT, WHO, WHERE AND WHEN?

Community-based needs identification (CBNI) allows to capture how the cultural resources of displacement-affected populations are impacted by the displacement situation and its drivers, how these resources can enhance the resilience of concerned populations, and how people and communities can be best supported to engage their cultural resources for resilience, social cohesion and peacebuilding. CBNI is more than a needs assessment serving as a basis for planning, programming and resource mobilisation. To contribute data and analysis, it relies on interactive consultations, discussions and interviews, and engages people not simply as informants but participants. CBNI prompts concerned communities to reflect upon what constitutes their cultural heritage, diversity and resources and how change affects them. It raises awareness of the role these resources play or could play in relation to displacement.

CBNI sees people affected by displacement as resilient agents, at times survivors, but not as hopeless victims. Their capabilities as much as their needs are considered. For their part, many cultural resources, particularly intangible cultural heritage and creative pursuits but also the meaning people attach to tangible heritage, are dynamic and adaptable. The effects of displacement or any other type of crisis, disruption or disaster on this type of cultural resources cannot be assessed solely in terms of damage. It is central to CBNI that community groups identify their own cultural resources and assess – even non-consensually – their value and condition, which should not be subject to external judgements of value or worth. This is why CBNI, although not necessarily community-driven, relies upon local, community-centred knowledge, rather than external expertise ([UNESCO & WBG 2018: 38-39](#)).

To “Do No Harm” to people, communities and cultures CBNI is informed by situation and conflict sensitivity analysis. This is particularly the case in contexts, such as armed conflict, where culture is or has been targeted or otherwise instrumentalised. More generally, CBNI pays attention to power relations, marginalised groups and their cultural practices, and issues that may cause individual psychological distress and tensions within the displaced community, with the host community and with national and local authorities.

CBNI can accommodate a variety of participative and qualitative tools (individual interviews, focus groups, community group discussion or dialogue, small group meetings, participatory stakeholder workshops, cultural mapping, inventories, etc.) and be low- or high-tech (limited to paper and pen or using voice recorders, cameras or tablets to capture data). This guide describes a low-tech process focused on consultation, discussions and interviews. Cultural mapping and inventories do not substitute for CBNI but can be incorporated as additional participatory tools. Like other tools used for CBNI, they need to be adjusted to the specific sensitivities and practical and ethical challenges associated with displacement situations. Valuable resources on cultural mapping are [CCNC \(2010\)](#), [Cook and Taylor \(2013\)](#) and [Duxbury et al. \(2015\)](#). For community-based inventories of intangible cultural heritage, methodological material in several languages is available upon request from the [global capacity-building programme](#) of UNESCO Living Heritage Entity. The material also covers the use of audio-visual equipment to record interviews and cultural practices. Issues of storage and safety of audio-visual material and its regulated access are rife with practical and ethical challenges. These have to be carefully considered and weighted against the real added value of collecting audio-visual data for CBNI.

Carrying out CBNI demands a combination of expertise in cultural and displacement issues and a good knowledge of the context in which it is implemented. If led by a national or international organisation specialising in culture, CBNI requires collaboration or at least extensive consultation with an organisation working with displaced populations. Conversely, a humanitarian or development organisation working with displacement-affected communities needs to make sure it has suitable cultural competences to undertake CBNI.

The role of external actors is to facilitate the community-based process. This entails that CBNI cannot be designed without involving expertise from within the concerned community, particularly cultural practitioners and operators, and researchers. Nor can it be implemented without involving, or even partnering, with community-based organisations (CBOs) or other relevant structures or networks within the concerned community.

Any organisation intending to engage in CBNI has first to decide which geographic areas and populations the process will cover. However, the precise identification of locations where to implement the

participatory components of CBNI can also emerge as a result of the situation analysis or the inception workshop (see below).

Timing CBNI depends on the context. The process can be implemented a few months into the emergency phase of a sudden crisis, early in the recovery phase, or at any point during a protracted crisis as part of planning efforts. Although an early identification of the cultural resources and needs of communities is important for programming, there may be risks associated with carrying out CBNI prematurely in the emergency cycle before the necessary information to perform situation and conflict sensitivity analysis is available (see below). Additionally, the implications of changes affecting cultural resources in displacement – such as the disruption of a festival or performing arts routine, of social or religious rituals, or the loss of access to cultural resources underpinning livelihoods, or the capacity to access new cultural resources in the host community – may be difficult to discern at an early stage of displacement.

In terms of resources, it is crucial that appropriate allocation be made available for all components of CBNI including financial resources, human resources and technical expertise. Logistics support is key to accessing and engaging concerned communities in a suitable manner, bearing in mind that forcibly displaced communities can be in remote locations with difficult access and unstable security conditions. CBNI raises people's expectations of concrete support. Before undertaking the process, organisations should make sure that they have secured funding to implement at least some activities identified as outcomes of participatory planning.

LINK TO NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

Whenever there is an international response to an emergency, humanitarian actors conduct needs assessments with affected populations as early as possible and sometimes conduct periodic needs assessments to monitor changes in the situation of concerned populations. Coordinated assessments carried out within days or weeks following the onset of a crisis include Multi-Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA), Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) and Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment (RPBA).

Cluster or sectoral assessments can also be carried out by one or several agencies to understand specific needs related to nutrition, education, health, shelter, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), protection, etc. Each agency generally uses its own tools and processes to feed a coordinated assessment and/or conduct sectoral assessments. This is the case with IOM that deploys its Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) to track and monitor population displacement during crises. The UNHCR Needs Assessment Handbook compiles the agency's tools used to generate data in a variety of situations (refugees, IDPs, mixed movements, host populations across all sectors of operation), with different focuses and using different methodologies including participatory assessment (UNHCR 2006).

Of all the existing coordinated or agency-specific assessment processes, only PDNAs provide for assessing needs in the culture sector (World Bank & UNDG 2014). However, PDNAs are tailored to situations following natural or man-made disasters but not conflict-induced displacement crises.

What link then should CBNI establish with needs assessment processes?

CBNI is best undertaken after standard coordinated and/or sectoral assessments have been performed so as to incorporate their results as information sources, gain a throughout understanding on the context and areas of sensitivity.

On the other hand, the availability of assessments and data on a given population may signal survey fatigue among this population. This is an additional reason why CBNI is and should remain distinct from needs assessments, avoid extractive research methodologies, and emphasise consultation, dialogue, awareness raising and participatory planning.

However, CBNI needs to be designed and implemented in consultation, and possibly in partnership with lead humanitarian organisations and/or government agencies to avoid duplicating existing efforts, build as much as possible on existing community engagement practices by lead humanitarian agencies, and ensure that the results can be used to inform a common understanding of a situation.

STEPS TO CONDUCT A CBNI FOR CULTURAL RESOURCES IN DISPLACEMENT

STEP 1: DEVELOPING LINES OF INQUIRY

Precise lines of inquiry are developed at the outset of CBNI since they affect its design and implementation, and to ensure that CBNI captures the full details and dynamics of the main issues at hand and addresses them comprehensively. Suggested lines of inquiry are some variations of the following:

- How does the displacement situation impact (transform, weaken, threaten, destroy, invigorate, renew, reactivate, etc.) the cultural resources (and/or diversity, intangible cultural

heritage, creativity, etc.) of affected populations (refugees, IDPs, returnees, those left behind, host communities and various groups within these populations)?

- How can affected populations draw on their cultural resources to enhance their social, economic and psychological resilience, improve social cohesion within their own community and with other communities, and/or play an active role in recovery and peacebuilding?
- How can concerned populations be empowered to engage their cultural resources? How can identification of and access to these resources be facilitated? What support can be provided to safeguard, conserve, enhance, revitalise, etc. these resources?
- How can UN agencies and NGOs better address the needs of displacement-affected communities by engaging their cultural resources for protection, livelihoods and social cohesion?

STEP 2: PERFORMING SITUATION ANALYSIS

Situation analysis is primarily a desk or literature review identifying and assessing the complex interactions between a displacement situation and cultural diversity (or some aspects of it) within their wider environment. As such, it is an essential prerequisite for designing and implementing the participatory components of CBNI within a “Do No Harm” and conflict sensitive approach.

Situation analysis is best performed by a small, focused team with a combination of expertise in refugee issues, cultural diversity, conflict analysis and/or political economy, relevant linguistic skills to access a diversity of sources, and previous knowledge of the specific geopolitical and social, cultural and economic context. Information is to be found mostly in secondary sources that can be complemented with some key informant interviews.

The analysis requires a range of different foci – including the social, political and cultural context of the country/region of origin and host country/region, the whole displacement movement (possibly involving several countries or regions), the displaced and other concerned communities (the hosts but also those who stayed behind and/or moved elsewhere), and the situation of individuals and families before and after displacement.

Situation analysis also explores conflict dynamics as they relate to displacement and cultural diversity. To do so, it identifies the main actors involved in the displacement situation, their relations, and interactions they have with cultural diversity particularly when culture is or has been targeted or otherwise instrumentalised by political or armed actors. It further seeks to understand power relations between different groups according to geographic origin, cultural, linguistic, ethnic or religious profile, other socioeconomic characteristics, and demographic variables such as gender and age. A useful reference is the [How to Guide on Conflict Sensitivity](#) (CSC 2012).

Additionally, situation analysis provides a picture of the operational environment, including other existing and potential resources, their capacities and limitations – e.g. local NGOs, government agencies, UN organisations, religious organisations etc.–, together with acceptance by national and/or local stakeholders of possible interventions addressing the cultural resources of displacement-affected populations. Consideration of security and accessibility of some geographical areas, sites or communities is also crucial.

Expected outputs of situation analysis are:

- A report summarising and analysing information relevant to the design and implementation of the CBNI process in the particular context;
- An analysis of the way power and cultural diversity interact, and indications of potential sensitivities to consider when designing and implementing CBNI. This can include cultural practices incompatible with human rights, actors who abuse or disrespect culture, use of culture to dominate or marginalise certain categories of persons or social groups, cultural stereotypes, negative attitude of host community or authorities towards the culture of displaced people, terminology to avoid, etc;
- An identification of knowledge gaps in areas of relevance;
- A reference list of knowledge sources (published and unpublished studies, cultural inventories, etc.) or resources (key informants, audio-visual or artefact collections, etc.) about the cultural diversity of the displaced and host populations and details about how these sources or resources can be accessed.

Some of the anticipated challenges to performing a comprehensive situation analysis are:

- Limited time and financial and/or human resources to cover all themes;
- The availability of and access to credible and valid sources on all topics of relevance;

- Keeping focus on the main lines of inquiry to avoid irrelevant data and analysis.

STEP 3: CONTEXTUALISING THE METHODOLOGY

Findings from the situation analysis are incorporated into the contextualised methodology for CBNI that includes at least:

- Ethical principles guiding CBNI adapted from UNESCO Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage ([UNESCO 2015c](#)), UNHCR Key Principles for Needs Assessments ([UNHCR 2017a](#): 29-30) and Ethics of Participation ([UNHCR 2008](#): 13-14);
- Refined lines of inquiry forming the basis of discussion and interview guides to be developed by the research team (see below);
- Identification of potential partners (international organisations, government, academic and research institutions, local NGOs, CBOs, etc.);
- Provisional identification of sites where to implement CBNI (specific locations and/or types of locations such as camps or settlements for the displaced, rural or urban areas where displaced people live among host population, etc.);
- Provisional list of groups and categories of people to include as participants (refugees, IDPs, returnees, host communities, and sub-groups among them);
- Categories (but not extensive list, see below) of cultural resources relevant to the context;
- Identification of resource persons, key informants, gate keepers and other influent people to include in preliminary consultation about the CBNI design and methodology;
- Identification of relevant research and consultation tools that depend on the context, time and resources available.

STEP 4: HOLDING A PARTICIPATORY INCEPTION WORKSHOP

Once partnerships are established, the next recommended step is to hold an inception workshop to consult with resource persons, key informants, gate keepers, community members and other influential people who can facilitate access to and involvement of concerned communities. Workshop participants typically include members of cultural organisations, leading cultural practitioners, NGOs and CBOs, academics and researchers, community and opinion leaders (according to context) and local authorities. If the location(s) where CBNI is planned to be implemented is already known at that stage, the majority of participants should be members of the concerned communities while ensuring that a variety of sub-groups are included in terms of gender, age, ethnic, religious and other social characteristics.

The objectives of the workshop are to introduce the CBNI process; probe the interest of participants, garner their support for the process, and incorporate their input into the final methodology; collectively review the main findings of the situation analysis, lines of inquiry, customised methodology and proposed tools; agree on local terminology, definition and categories of cultural resources relevant to the context; identify or confirm the selection of communities and locations where to implement CBNI; and discuss practical challenges and ways of overcoming them. The workshop is also an opportunity to fill some of the information gaps identified in the situation analysis, locate additional information sources and resources, and identify researchers and implementing partners from the concerned communities if this has not been done before.

STEP 5: MOBILISING THE RESEARCH TEAM

Next comes the mobilisation of a team of female and male researchers drawn from the concerned community(ies). They may or may not live on the site(s) where CBNI will be carried out, but are familiar with them and possess local connections, language skills, social and cultural knowledge, and awareness of sensitive issues. Researchers can be people engaged in a cultural practice, students, teachers, academics, professional researchers or enumerators, volunteers with local or international organisations, etc. They either have previous experience conducting field research or demonstrate interest for cultural resources and the motivation and right attitude to conduct highly qualitative field-based research.

Unless all members of the team already have a solid field-research experience, a training component is included. It covers in particular research ethics, in-depth interview and consultation techniques and the use of audio-visual material to capture data. It is best to prioritise local trainers, ideally some members of the research team who can also assume a supervisory role during fieldwork.

STEP 6: FINALISING THE METHODOLOGY AND TOOLS

The research team must be involved in the finalisation of the methodology. This includes the final decision on locations where to implement CBNI, identification of specific sensitive issue and areas and gate keepers in the chosen locations, selection of categories of people and local organisations to involve in

discussions and interviews — community leaders of various types, local authorities, camp managers, etc.; members of a specific ethnic/language group, persons displaced from a specific region, host families, married women or men with children, single women or men, older persons, youth, practitioners of certain cultural expressions, holders of a specific knowledge (such as traditional healers) or skills (such as artisans), etc.; cultural, professional, ethnic, tribal, religious organisations, cooperatives, etc. — and type and number of discussions and interviews to hold in each location. A fieldwork plan (including list and details of locations, timeline, logistics, allocation of responsibilities, supervision and communication mechanisms) is prepared and agreed upon.

The research team discusses and clarifies ethical matters including how to approach gate keepers and other participants, involve marginalised persons, ensure the safety and anonymity of vulnerable participants, obtain free, prior and informed consent, respect limitations participants may put on sharing information about certain cultural resources, avoid sensitivities and manage potential conflict, safely store and protect information, deal with sensitive issues should they arise, etc.

The research team prepares discussion and interview guides based on the lines of inquiry, making sure each member feels comfortable with the topics to be discussed and language used. Different categories of people to be involved and different formats (community discussions, small group meetings, individual interviews, focus group discussions) may require different guides. Unless CBNI intends to focus on a very specific type of cultural resources (such as the performing arts or craftsmanship), discussion and interview guides are not meant to include a pre-defined list of cultural resources: participants need to be given space to tell their own story in their own terms, identify what cultural resources were significant for them before displacement and in which way, how this relationship and its elements (the person, the cultural resources and the environment) have evolved in relation to the drivers of displacement (violence, insecurity, natural disaster, etc.) and displacement itself, what their capacities are individually and collectively, and if and where they feel they need support. The research team also prepares reporting templates. In case audio-visual equipment is planned to be used, the team agrees on a protocol (when to record or not, when to capture images or not, how to safely store and manage the data, etc.).

STEP 7: IN THE FIELD

Arrangements to gain access to concerned communities in the field and organise the practicalities of the field work depend on the context and scope of CBNI (one or several sites, type of site, accessibility, etc.), the capacity of local partners to organise the field component and the relational resources the research team can mobilise. As a general rule, on each site gate keepers – relevant local authorities, institutions, organisations and influential figures representing or providing access to a variety of sub-groups – should be approached, consulted about the methodology, asked to facilitate the fieldwork, and, when relevant, interviewed in priority as key informants.

In contexts where security is problematic, another consideration is that research team members should feel safe in locations where they conduct interviews and the safety of participants should not be compromised. This may demand last minute shifts to alternative fieldwork sites with better security conditions. The United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), the agency coordinating safety and security in the field for UN agencies and their partners, can advise on accessibility and the evolution of local security conditions.

The amount of time to spend on each site and the number of community members to involve depends on several factors. The research team should have sufficient time to approach gate keepers, build confidence, gain access, organise individual and group meetings to introduce CBNI and discuss the issues at hand, identify suitable and/or safe spaces where to hold interviews and discussions, organise and conduct in-depth individual interviews and focus group discussions with pre-identified population categories, and allow time for additional discussion with participants identified during the fieldwork or categories of the population who are more difficult to access, such as marginalised groups. Experience tends to show that, regardless of the population size in a selected site, one week is the average time required in each location provided that the research team is already familiar with the environment and a local partner has prepared the ground effectively.

STEP 8: PROCESSING AND ANALYSING DATA

Transcribing hand-written or voice recorded discussions and interviews is a time-consuming process, especially if translation also needs to be performed. When this is the case, it is important not to underestimate the necessary resources in terms of time and competences. Researchers, when they have the required linguistic abilities, should be involved in performing or reviewing translations, and be available to provide clarification to the person or team performing the data processing and analysis.

Further steps of data processing and analysis are performed by one single person or a small group in a harmonised and coordinated manner. A fiche is created for each transcribed individual or group interview and discussion (including all consultative workshops and small group meetings), participants are anonymised, and data reduction is performed according to its relevance to the lines of inquiry. It is best to use a qualitative textual data analysis software to code the dataset along themes derived from the lines

of inquiry and additional relevant ones that have emerged from the discussions and interviews. Thematic analysis is then performed by identifying patterns and interrelations across themes, categories/profile of participants and locations.

It is beyond the scope of this guide to consider how to process, analyse and store audio-visual data other than recordings of interviews (performances, spaces, objects, etc.). A number of [qualitative data analysis software products](#) allow for incorporating this material in a research project. Opensource products are available at no cost, but additional time and human resources are needed.

From a methodological perspective, the dataset is meant to reflect the experiences, views and expectations of a small but diverse sample of community members. The analysis should allow to identify variations between participants but is not intended to be statistically representative of the whole community, nor to cover the whole range of possible experiences and opinions. In qualitative research, the findings are considered reliable through internal validation. That is to say that they should be consistent across different categories of participants while accommodating reasonable variations related to different participant profiles (Patton 1990). The analysis should take stock of these variations. External validation is sought through triangulation with the literature, at least on topics for which it exists. The situation analysis provides a basis for such validation.

A potentialities analysis may follow. This explores resources, capacities and opportunities that are unutilised or underutilised but may be utilised or developed. These can be internal to the community as revealed by the consultation and interview process, or available outside the community (in national or local institutions and organisations, other social groups such as the host community, international agencies, etc.).

Once the analysis is performed, findings have to be communicated and discussed with the research team before a report is finalised and dissemination and discussion material adequate to the context (in terms of language, visual tools, etc.) is prepared to use for participatory planning.

STEP 9: PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

Participatory planning concludes CBNI by linking the situation analysis and the fieldwork findings to the design of activities, a project or a programme.

Participatory planning brings the various stakeholders together to undertake a final analysis of the results of field-based research and consultation process, agree on goals and actions, and identify roles and responsibilities in carrying out these actions. Cultural resources needing action to better contribute to the resilience of the concerned community, to social cohesion and reconciliation are prioritised. The priority needs and preferred actions are analysed from an age, gender, and social and cultural diversity perspective. The capacities and contributions of the community members and other stakeholders is assessed jointly in order to identify gaps and ways of addressing them. The final outcome will vary in format, depending on the type of organisation and the goals of the participating stakeholders. Typically, it takes the form of a project or a programme. It should include any budgetary requirements and agreements on what efforts will be undertaken to meet these and by whom.

Participants in the inception workshop are invited to join the planning process, together with additional officials, policy makers, service providers and/or organisations that can contribute external resources. The concerned community is represented by men and women of all ages, also ensuring diversity in terms of cultural, social and other relevant characteristics. In some displacement situations, it might be difficult to include certain categories of the concerned population if there are security or sensitivity concerns. In these cases, it might be necessary to have separate planning meetings.

Participants must be given appropriate and timely information so that they can participate meaningfully. It is best to communicate a summary of the findings to participants before convening them. Some participants may need oral rather than written communication of the findings and may need to be trained on the planning process.

STEP 10: KEEPING COMMUNITIES INFORMED

As a follow up the participatory planning process, the organisation leading CBNI should disseminate reports and the programme or project design with the concerned community, and keep community groups informed about outcomes and changes, both good and bad, to the programme. Project reports should be written in an adequate manner to ensure the understanding from concerned community members.

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