Unit 65

BASICS IN SAFEGUARDING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN SITUATIONS OF CONFLICT AND FORCED DISPLACEMENT

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Lesson plan

**Duration:**

5 hours

**Objective:**

This unit introduces the relationship between intangible cultural heritage and conflict and forced displacement, exploring how conflict situations impact living heritage and the role that living heritage can play in these contexts. It familiarizes participants with the Convention’s Operational principles and modalities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in emergencies, with a focus on conflict-related situations and the different stages of the emergency management cycle.

**DESCRIPTION:**

This unit explores safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in situations of conflict and displacement. Participants will examine the dual role of living heritage in emergencies, where it faces threats to transmission and viability but also supports resilience, reconciliation, and social cohesion. They will learn about international frameworks, instruments, and standards linking intangible cultural heritage with armed conflict and displacement and engage in exercises to apply safeguarding strategies across the emergency management cycle: preparedness, response, and recovery.

**Proposed sequence:**

1. **Participant introductions:** Focus on their experience with intangible cultural heritage and conflict.
2. **Overview of unit objectives:** Brief introduction to intangible cultural heritage and the 2003 Convention, if needed.
3. **Key terms and concepts:** Definitions related to conflict, forced displacement, and the conflict management cycle
4. **Impact on living heritage**: Exploring the impacts of conflict on intangible cultural heritage.

**Exercise 1** Analysing case studies from the Urgent Safeguarding List to understand the impact of conflict on living heritage.

**Exercise 2** Reflection on personal experiences of conflict impacts on intangible cultural heritage safeguarding.

1. **Roles for living heritage**: Discuss how living heritage supports communities in coping with conflict. **Exercise 3:** Examine case studies on leveraging living heritage in conflict contexts.
2. **Frameworks and standards:** Review relevant frameworks, instruments, and standards for cultural heritage in conflict.
3. Introduction to the Operational principles and modalities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in emergencies.  
   **Exercise 4** Analyse safeguarding modalities according to the stages of the emergency management cycle.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:**

Facilitator’s notes Unit 65

PowerPoint presentation Unit 65

Case study 1: The ‘alabado’ as a resource for healing: Bojayá massacre, Colombia.

Unit 65 Handout 1: Exercise 1 Case study analysis: The dual role of the intangible cultural heritage in conflict situations.

Unit 65 Handout 2: Exercise 3 Analysing modalities

UNESCO 2019. Expert Meeting on Intangible Cultural Heritage in Emergencies, Report (2019). LHE-19-EXP-5. <https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/46083-EN.pdf>

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

UN General Assembly 1951. Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. <https://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10>

UNESCO 1954. The Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two Protocols (1954 and 1999). <https://en.unesco.org/protecting-heritage/convention-and-protocols/1954-convention>

UNESCO 2015. Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage. <https://ich.unesco.org/en/ethics-and-ich-00866>

UN. Human Rights Council 2016. Cultural rights and the protection of cultural heritage: resolution (A/HRC/RES/33/20). <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1486785?ln=en>

UN. Security Council 2017. Resolution 2347 (UN Doc S/RES/2347). <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/862506?ln=en>

UNESCO. 2017. Document de référence pour l’évaluation des besoins en matière de sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel immatériel en situation d’urgence dans la province du Nord-Kivu, RDC. Paris, UNESCO Living Heritage Entity. <https://ich.unesco.org/doc/download.php?versionID=47573> (Available in French only)

UNESCO 2017. Strategy for the reinforcement of UNESCO’s action for the protection of culture and the promotion of cultural pluralism in the event of armed conflict. (Document 39 C/57). <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000259805.locale=en>

UNESCO 2018. Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. <https://ich.unesco.org/en/basic-texts-00503>

UNESCO 2019. Defining Methodological Guidance for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Emergencies. Expert Meeting on Intangible Cultural Heritage in Emergencies, Paris 21–22 May 2019. LHE-19-EXP-2-EN. <https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-19-EXP-2-EN.docx>

UNESCO 2021. Reinforcing synergies between the 1954 Hague Convention and its two Protocols and the other UNESCO’s Conventions in the field of culture. C54/20/15.COM/5. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375671_eng>

UNESCO 2022. Operational Directives for the implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage. Last version. <https://ich.unesco.org/en/directives>

UNESCO n.d. Living Heritage in Emergencies. <https://ich.unesco.org/en-emergency-situations-01117>

United Nations High Commission for Human Rights (UNHCR) <https://www.unhcr.org/>

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) <https://www.unocha.org/>

Notes and suggestions

The facilitator should be familiar with the Operational principles and modalities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in emergencies (2020). Reviewing the Facilitator's Notes beforehand is essential, as they provide details for the PowerPoint presentation. The additional resources listed above serve as supplementary documentation for the preparation of this unit.

Conflict situations will present a complex and very sensitive subject for many participants, and even more so when the topic is approached through the lens of intangible cultural heritage. In this sense, the facilitator should check cautiously how he/she approaches this training material during the workshop to avoid potentially provoking confrontations of opinions among the participants. The facilitator should be familiar with the conflict context in which the workshop is held and know in advance the profile of the participants attending it, in order to have tools to handle possible high-stress situations that may arise.

*Participants*

The unit is aimed at a variety of participant profiles, such as government officials, personnel of humanitarian organizations, NGO officials, security actors, cultural heritage professionals and practitioners, UN agency field officers, community leaders and researchers, among others interested in this field of knowledge. When inviting participants to the training, consider including representation from all sectors (different genders, ages, ethnicities and other relevant social categories). Given the level of sensitivity involved in dealing with issues related to conflict and intangible cultural heritage, the facilitator, together with the local liaison, should familiarize him or herself with the profiles of the participants and check if the composition is adequate to ensure the smooth running of the workshop.

*Pedagogic approach*

The emphasis is on interactivity and active learning, so the facilitator is expected to constantly encourage people to participate during the training. Some of the sessions in the unit include participatory activities, but the facilitator could add others that fit the content of this unit. It is also intended that the workshop will have a peer learning approach. As the potential participants are specialists and/or have experience in different fields covered in this unit, such as emergencies, armed conflict and intangible cultural heritage, it is expected that they contribute with their knowledge throughout the course of the training.

*Material and resources*

It is proposed that the participants sit in a circular formation during the training to facilitate interaction. This can create a more informal and horizontal atmosphere that encourages participation during the sessions. The facilitator should distribute the handouts listed above under “Supporting Documents” where indicated, along with any other supporting materials the facilitator deems necessary. In addition, the facilitator should bring blank paper and markers for the first activity and chalk, markers and masking tape for exercise 4. Ensure that a video projector is available in advance.

*Preparing for the unit*

This unit, together with Unit 66 on Conducting community-based needs identifications, is part of the training material on ‘Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in situations of conflict and forced displacement’. The facilitator should prepare the workshop presentation based on the documents described in supporting documents and additional resources. When inviting participants, it is suggested that the facilitator asks them to bring a personal object that has significant value in their lives. This will serve as a resource for the first introductory activity.

**Facilitator’s narrative**

**INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS**

**Purpose and rationale**

In recent years, the world has witnessed threats posed by conflict situations to tangible forms of heritage, as evidenced by the destruction of historic buildings, monuments and artefacts. Armed conflicts not only resulted in direct damage to cultural heritage but also facilitated widespread looting and illicit trafficking of artefacts. However, the threat that conflict situations exert on intangible cultural heritage has been less explored. Likewise, the potential of intangible cultural heritage as a resilience mechanism to cope with crises has not been widely addressed. Consequently, UNESCO initiated in 2016 a reflection on the role of intangible cultural heritage in emergencies, including not only conflict situations, but also disasters. This reflection led to the adoption of the Operational Principles and Modalities for the Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in Emergencies by the General Assembly of States Parties (Resolution 8 GA. 9) in 2020. The operational principles and modalities aim to guide States Parties and other national or international stakeholders on how to best ensure the use and safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in emergency situations. This document and the related intergovernmental discussions, called for the need to raise awareness and train stakeholders on the dual nature of intangible cultural heritage in emergencies. Building on this work, the purpose of this unit is to provide participants with a fundamental understanding on the relationship between intangible cultural heritage and situations of conflict and forced displacement, as well as to explore how these principles and modalities can be applied in such contexts.

**Learning objectives**

The overall objective of this unit is to provide a basic understanding of the relationship between intangible cultural heritage and situations of conflict and forced displacement. To reach this goal, at the end of the training participants will be able to:

* Demonstrate an understanding of the basic terms and concepts related to situations of conflict and forced displacement, as well as to the conflict management cycle.
* Analyze how different international frameworks, instruments and standards that address the relationship between conflict situations and intangible cultural heritage to contexts they work in.
* Illustrate the dual role that intangible cultural heritage in situations of conflict and forced displacement through concrete examples.
* Critically assess Operational principles and modalities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in emergencies and how they may apply in situations of conflict and forced displacement.

# SLIDE 1

Basics in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in situations of conflict and forced displacement

*Title slide*

Note: The photo in this slide shows the “Ukrainian borscht cooking culture”, inscribed in 2022 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding as a case of extreme urgency. See: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/culture-of-ukrainian-borscht-cooking-01852>

# SLIDE 2

In this presentation

*Introductory exercise:* The facilitator should begin by welcoming participants and asking each person to introduce themselves with their name and organization. Then, each participant will present a meaningful personal object, describing its physical features and sharing the deeper significance – such as connections to family, traditions, or social practices.

* To start, the facilitator should introduce their own object and then invite each participant to continue in turn until everyone has shared.

Note: Ensure all participants have their object. If someone hasn’t brought one, allow 10 minutes at the start for them to draw it or find a picture on their phone. Provide blank paper and markers as needed.

After the presentation, the facilitator explains the timetable and the approach of the unit.

# SLIDE 3

Intangible cultural heritage

Some participants may not be familiar with the concept of intangible cultural heritage, so it is important to introduce the topic at the outset. Since some participants might already work directly with intangible cultural heritage, the facilitator can invite them to define the term and prompt the group to provide examples.

Next, the facilitator can connect the discussion to the earlier exercise of sharing meaningful objects, which then evoked cultural practices, expressions, knowledge, and skills that give a sense of identity and belonging. This explanation should lead into presenting the definition and the domains of intangible cultural heritage as included in Article 2 of the 2003 Convention:

Intangible cultural heritage means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith –that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. (Article 2.1, 2003 Convention)

# SLIDE 4

Intangible cultural heritage domains

According to the 2003 Convention, intangible cultural heritage is manifested *inter alia* in the following domains (Aritcle 2.2):

* Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage;
* Performing arts;
* Social practices, rituals and festive events;
* Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, and
* Traditional craftsmanship.

The Convention recognizes that these domains may overlap and are not exclusive. States Parties may define other domains in their national inventorying systems. The facilitator may also wish to refer to Unit 3 Participant’s text for further information.

To illustrate the different domains of intangible cultural heritage, and how they overlap, the faciltiator may furthermore wish to refer to the ‘[Dive into intangible cultural heritage](https://ich.unesco.org/en/dive?display=constellation)!’ tool on the Secretariat’s website to explore some of the interconnections.

The facilitator may wish to ask one of the participants, who is an expert in intangible cultural heritage in the country or region where the training is taking place, to give a short presentation (10-15 minutes) introducing key intangible cultural heritage elements of the area.

# SLIDE 5

Understanding conflict

The following three slides (slide 5 to 7) provide basic concepts and terms related to conflict and forced displacement. The facilitator should bear in mind that there will be participants who work with conflict issues on a daily basis. In this regard, during the discussion,the facilitator may wish to ask those participants to explain those terms according to their experience and to give examples.

Conflict is a complex concept with no single, universally recognized definition. For this training unit, conflict is broadly understood as a situation of tension and confrontation that disrupts the normal functioning of a society. Conflict situations can involve broader forms of violence, such as terrorism, military coups, mass protests and rebellions, inter-communal violence, organized crime and cartels, ethnic cleansing and genocide.

Armed conflict, according to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), is a specific type of conflict that involves the use of armed forced between opposing parties. Under international law, it is defined as follows: “An armed conflict exists whenever there is a resort to armed force between States or protracted armed violence between governmental authorities and organized armed groups or between such groups within a State.” *ICTY, Prosecutor v. Tadić,* [*Decision*](https://www.icty.org/x/cases/tadic/acdec/en/51002.htm) *on the Defence Motion for Interlocutory Appeal on Jurisdiction, 2 October 1995, para. 70*

Armed conflict includes both international armed conflict, which occurs between two or more states, and non-international armed conflict, which involves governmental forces and one or more organized armed groups, or clashes between such groups within a state.

In case the notion of occupation is raised by participants, please note the following: In certain cases, occupation is treated under the broader framework of armed conflict and international humanitarian law. According to Article 42 of the 1907 Hague Regulations: “*A territory is considered occupied when it is actually placed under the authority of the hostile army. The occupation extends only to the territory where such authority has been established and can be exercised.”*

For further information, see: ICRC. 2024. ‘How is ‘armed conflict’ defined in international humanitarian law? <https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/document_new/file_list/armed_conflict_defined_in_ihl.pdf>

# SLIDE 6

Forced displacement

The consequences of conflict are varied, impacting on the socio-economic, political and human dynamics of societies. As a result of conflict, many populations may be forced to flee their countries or communities of origin. There are three concepts that differentiate the individual status of people who have forcibly fled their place of origin due to conflict:

* Refugees are persons who are outside their country of origin for reasons of feared persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or other circumstances that have seriously disturbed public order and, as a result, require international protection. *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees – UNHCR*
* Asylum seeker is an individual who is seeking international protection. In countries with individualized procedures, an asylum seeker is someone whose claim has not yet been finally decided on by the country in which he or she has submitted it. *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - UNHCR*
* Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border. *United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (1998)*

For further information, see: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). <https://www.unhcr.org/about-unhcr/who-we-protect>

After giving these definitions, the facilitator might encourage participants not working on conflict-related issues to highlight the difference between these three terms.

# SLIDE 7

Conflict management cycle

The conflict management cycle can vary in complexity and the number of recognised phases, but the basic form consists of three phases: preparedness, response and recovery. The phases can vary in length and often overlap:

* Preparedness consists of constant monitoring and analysis of social tensions and disputes to anticipate the possibility of violent conflict. On this basis, programmes and interventions can be designed to prevent the outbreak of violence or to mitigate the scale and intensity of such events should they occur.
* Response phase takes place when violent conflict erupts, thus the humanitarian response operates immediately, providing emergency services and public assistance in order to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public security and meet the basic livelihood needs of affected people.
* Recovery is the restoration and improvement of facilities, livelihoods and living conditions of conflict-affected communities. Actions conducted in this phase include activities that promote access to dialogue with the aim of restoring political stability and putting society on the path to sustainable peace, social justice and inclusion.

For further information, see: <https://www.preventionweb.net/files/7817_UNISDRTerminologyEnglish.pdf>

For participants not familiar with key concepts in intangible cultural heritage, the faciltiator can refer them to the Participant’s text of Unit 3: Key concepts in the Convention.

# SLIDE 8

The facilitator presents the graphic of the conflict management cycle, explaining the different phases. The facilitator may invite the participants to reflect on their own experience and give examples of the different phases of an emegerncy management cycle.

# SLIDE 9

**The impacts of conflict on intangible cultural heritage**

The impact of conflict and forced displacement on the safegurding of intangible cultural heritage are multiple and connected to and compounded by other forms of emergency in complex ways. Some areas in which intangible cultural heritage may be affected include:

* Death and forced displacement affect the number of living heritage practitioners and bearers
* Conflicts alienate people from their land and restrict access to places and spaces that are vital for the viability of intangible cultural heritage
* Forced migration fractures the social cohesion of communities

The facilitator should discuss and unpack these issues with the participants, inviting them to provide examples from their own experience or to provide other examples of other ways in which intangible cultural heritage may be affected by conflict and forced displacement.

For a discussion on the roles of intangible cultural heritage in conflict situations, the facilitator may refer to the following UNESCO report for examples:

* UNESCO. 2017. Document de référence pour l’évaluation des besoins en matière de sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel immatériel en situation d’urgence dans la province du Nord-Kivu, RDC. Available from**:** https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/RDC-201709-document\_de\_r%C3%A9f%C3%A9rence\_Nord\_Kivu.pdf). (Only available in French)
* UNESCO. 2024. Final report: Training on identifying needs for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in situations of conflict and forced displacement. Minawao Refugee Camp, Cameroon. *Available on request from the Secretariat.*

# SLIDE 10

**EXERCISE 1. The impact of conflict on intangible cultural heritage**

**Estimated time: 45 mins**

**Learning objective**: In this exercise, participants are invited to explore the relationship between intangible cultural heritage and conflict by taking concrete examples from the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. For each case, the participants will identify the impacts of conflict on the viability and safeguarding of these elements and think about the possible safeguarding measures to address these risks.

**For this exercise:**

* The facilitator can present one or more cases depending on the context of the workshop. The below cases are presented as examples and are all affected by conflict in some way. If the facilitator is more familiar with another example from the Urgent Safgeuarding List they may choose to rather present this example.
* The facilitator is invited to consult the Secretariat’s website for more information on each element. Links to the elements are provided below. Further information can be found in the nomination and in the periodic report for the element, if available.
* To explore other examples for the Lists of the Convention, the facilitator may wish to refer to the Dive into intangible cultural heritage tool, and in particular the visualization on threats: <https://ich.unesco.org/dive/threat/>
* The facilitator may wish to show a video of the element (available on the Secretariat’s website) to provide an introduction to each element.
* If appropriate, the facilitator may divide the group into smaller breakout groups of no more than 5 participants.

**Questions for reflection:**

The facilitator should invite participants to reflect on the impact of conflict on the viability of the element and what potential safeguarding measures could be designed to address such risks:

* Who are the key living heritage stakeholders and how might they be affected by the conflict?
* Do the communities still have access to the places/spaces needed for the practice of this element?
* Do the communities still have access to the resources needed to practice this element (i.e. raw materials, objects, instruments)?
* How might the conflict also affect the livelihoods of communities?
* Can you identify any potential impacts on the gender dynamics of the ICH element in conflict situation?
* …

# SLIDE 11

**Case study: Culture of Ukrainian borscht cooking (Ukraine, 2022)**

“Ukrainian borscht is a traditional dish that is cooked with broth combined with beetroot, sugar beet or fermented beet juice. The practice dates back centuries and is passed on within families, with children participating in the preparation. An expression of hospitality, Ukrainian borscht unites people of all ages, genders and backgrounds at the table. The viability of the element, however, is threatened by various factors since the beginning of the armed conflict in February 2022, including the displacement of bearers from their communities of origin and from the cultural contexts necessary for the cooking and consumption of borscht in Ukraine. Moreover, destruction to the surrounding environment and traditional agriculture has prevented communities from accessing local products, such as vegetables, needed to prepare the dish. Despite these difficulties, communities across Ukraine have united around the element.”

* Nomination file: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/culture-of-ukrainian-borscht-cooking-01852>
* Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A01buIjvLCQ>

# SLIDE 12

**Exercise 2: The impact of conflict on intangible cultural heritage**

After the previous exercise, the participants will be asked to reflect on their own experiences of conflict and whether they can identify any intangible cultural hertiage elements that have been affected. They will be given 30 minutes to discuss together, in breakout groups, their expereinces and invited to present these to the rest of the participants if appropriate.

# SLIDE 13

**The roles of intangible cultural heritage in situations of conflict and forced displacement**

The facilitator will lead a 20-minute discussion about the roles that living heritage can play in situations of conflict and displacement. The idea is to follow with the flow of the previous discussion to explore the possibilities of intangible cultural heritage. The discussion may be guided by the following question:

* Do you know some cases in which intangible cultural heritage has been important for communities in a conflict or a post-conflict situation? How can intangible cultural heritage help people in conflict and post-conflict cases?

# SLIDE 145

**Roles of intangible cultural heritage in situations of conflict and forced displacement**

After the discussion, the facilitator will summarize some of the main discussion points and key areas where intangible cultural hertiage may play a role to support communities in times of crisis. For instance, intangible cultural heritage may:

* be an instrument to unite people, helping them to cope with tragedies.
* be used to heal wounds and bind communities as a sourece of resilience and wellbeing.
* re-establish dialogue between adversaries, restore peace and strengthen security.
* become an effective strategy in symbolic reparation processes in post-conflict areas.
* help strengthen the livelihoods of communities.
* be a source of mutual understanding and reconciliation between and within communities, including between displaced populations and host communities

# SLIDE 15

**Exercise 3: Intangible cultural heritage as a mitigator of the impacts of conflict**

*Learning objective:* This exercise aims to identify the elements of intangible cultural heritage that are being threatened by the conflict, or those that have contributed as a tool to positively address the impact of the conflict. Participants are expected to analyze specific case studies and identify not only the effect of the conflict on the intangible cultural heritage, but also the possible actions to safeguard and engage the identified element(s) to address these impacts.

*Estimated time:* 60 minutes.

* Case study 1: The ‘alabado’ as a resource for healing: Bojayá massacre, Colombia

*Instructions*

* Divide participants into two groups, assigning one case study to each group. Distribute *Handout 1: Case Study Analysis*, which provides a structured table for analyzing each case study. The handout will guide participants through analyzing the role of intangible cultural heritage in both positive and challenging aspects during conflict situations.
* Each group will use the handout to:
  + Describe how the intangible cultural heritage element was impacted by conflict.
  + Note any ways in which these elements served as coping mechanisms or supported healing and resilience.
  + Identify safeguarding measures that could further support these practices.
  + Group discussion and presentation: After 30 minutes, ask one participant from each group to present their findings to the full group. Repeat exercise with second group.

# SLIDE 16

International frameworks, instruments and standards for safeguarding intangilbe cultural heritage in situations of conflict

The next four slides (slides 21 to 24) explore relevant international frameworks, instruments and standards addressing intangible cultural heritage in situations of conflict (and forced displacement).

Relevant provisions of the Convention include:

* Article 11: “Each State Party shall: (a) take the necessary measures to ensure the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage present in its territory”
* Article 15: “(…) each State Party shall endeavour to ensure the widest possible participation of communities, groups and, where appropriate, individuals that create, maintain and transmit such heritage, and to involve them actively in its management.”
* Article 22.2: “In emergencies, requests for assistance shall be examined by the Committee as a matter of priority.”

# SLIDE 17

Operational Directives

In the Convention’s Operational Directives, there are few direct references to emegencies:

* In relation to the evaluation of International Assistance requests, the Operational Directives provide a definiton of an emergency under paragraph 50.
* In 2016, a new chapter of the Operational Directives was adopted focusing specifically on the relationship between intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development at the national level. This chapter includes specific provisions relevant to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in conflict situations, notably:
* Recognize and promote the contribution of the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage to social cohesion and equity (VI.4.1).
* Recognize, enhance and promote the contribution of the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage to conflict prevention and resolution (VI.4.2).
* To take full advantage of the potential role of intangible cultural heritage in the restoration of peace, reconciliation between parties, re-establishment of safety and security, and recovery of communities, groups and individuals (VI.4.3).
* Recognize, promote and enhance the contribution that safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of communities, groups and individuals makes to the construction of lasting peace. (VI.4.4).

# SLIDE 18

Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage

The Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage have been elaborated in the spirit of the 2003 Convention and existing international normative instruments protecting human rights and the rights of Indigenous Peoples. They represent a set of overarching aspirational principles that are widely accepted as constituting good practices for governments, organizations and individuals directly or indirectly affecting intangible cultural heritage in order to ensure its viability, thereby recognizing its contribution to peace and sustainable development.

In particular, the fifth point of the Ethical principles for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage states that the “access of communities, groups and individuals to the instruments, objects, artefacts, cultural and natural spaces and places of memory whose existence is necessary for expressing the intangible cultural heritage should be ensured, including in situations of armed conflict”.

See: https://ich.unesco.org/en/ethics-and-ich-00866

# SLIDE 19

Other international instruments that call for the protection of cultural heritage in conflict situations include:

* United Nations Security Council Resolution 2347 (2017) is the first to focus solely on cultural heritage in the context of peace and security. It condemns the destruction, looting, and trafficking of cultural property, especially by non-state groups, highlighting its role in financing terrorism and fueling conflict. The resolution emphasizes that damaging cultural heritage hinders post-war reconciliation and development, as it often represents a symbol of unity for affected communities. Although it does not directly address intangible cultural heritage, the resolution’s emphasis on the values communities place on their heritage is highly relevant for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in emergencies.
* The Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two Protocols (1954). This Convention calls on the international community to protect tangible cultural heritage that are threatened in an armed conflict. Although this Convention only refers to movable and immovable cultural property, there are potential synergies with the 2003 Convention in that it recognizes that certain places, spaces and objects are linked to the expression or practice of intagnible cultural heritage. For example, the destruction of a religious site may, in turn, challenge the right to religious freedom and worship that may lead to the intimidation or destabilization of a community concerned.

See Reflection document on synergies in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in emergency situations C54/21/16.COM/INF.5.III (https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000379571.locale=en)

* The Human Rights Council Resolution 33/20 – “Cultural rights and the protection of cultural heritage” (2016). This report notes that the destruction or deterioration of cultural heritage may have a detrimental and irreversible impact on the enjoyment of cultural rights, in particular the right of everyone to take part in cultural life, including the ability to access and enjoy cultural heritage. Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, as a foundation for the identity and wellbeing of people, is central to human rights.

# SLIDE 20

UNESCO Strategy for reinforcing UNESCO’s action for the protection of culture and the promotion of cultural pluralism in the event of armed conflict (2015).

* The *Addendum* (2017) to the *Strategy for the Reinforcement of the UNESCO’s action for the Protection of Culture and the Promotion of Cultural Pluralism in the Event of Armed Conflict*, has two main objectives in relation to emergencies associated with disasters:

(1) strengthen the ability of Member States to prevent, mitigate and recover the loss of cultural heritage and diversity as a result of disasters caused by natural and human-induced hazards.

(2) incorporate consideration for culture into the DRR sector and humanitarian action related to disasters by engaging with the relevant stakeholders outside the cultural domain.

* Since 2016, the Intergovernmental Committee of the 2003 Convention has reflected on the role of ICH in disasters and emergencies (Decision [11.COM 15](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/11.COM/15), Decision [12.COM 15](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/12.COM/15), Decision [13.COM 11](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/13.COM/11) and Decision [14.COM 13](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/14.COM/13)), and has commissioned a series of studies and actions, culminating in the *Operational Principles and Modalities for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in Emergencies* (see Slides 13-16).

# SLIDE 21

Operational principles and modalities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in emergencies:

* The Operational principles and modalities offer guidance to States Parties and other relevant national or international stakeholders on how best to ensure that intangible cultural heritage is most effectively engaged and safeguarded in the context of various types of emergencies.
* The principles should guide all interventions aimed at safeguarding and/or engaging intangible cultural heritage in emergencies.
* The modalities integrate the principles and identify actions appropriate to the three main phases in an emergency management cycle. They will be adapted to the local circumstances.

# SLIDE 22

Operational Principles

The facilitator may start with the explanation of the six principles that shall underpin all interventions aimed at safeguarding and/or engaging intangible cultural heritage in emergencies, including in situations of conflict and forced displacement. The principles below are paraphrased and the facilitator shall refer to the [Operational Principles and Modalities for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in Emergencies](https://ich.unesco.org/en/operational-principles-and-modalities-in-emergencies-01143) for the full text:

1. Central importance of lives and well-being of intangible cultural heritage bearers
2. Expanded understanding of affected communities, including hosts, displaced persons
3. Community-based inventorying essential in all phases of disaster management cycle
4. States Parties to ensure widest possible participation of intangible cultural heritage bearers
5. State and non-state humanitarian actors to support intangible cultural heritage bearers in safeguarding and mitigating actions
6. Respect for the dynamic and adaptive nature of intangible cultural heritage

# SLIDE 23

Operational Modalities: Preparedness

The modalities integrate the above principles and identify appropriate actions to operate in the three main phases of an emergency management cycle: preparedness, response and recovery, recognising that each phase may vary in duration and may overlap with other phases. Local circumstances and conditions will determine which of these actions would be the most relevant and appropriate for a particular intangible cultural heritage element or situation.

The preparedness phase consist of constant monitoring and analysis of social tensions and disputes to anticipate the possibility of violent conflict. On this basis, programmes and interventions can be designed to prevent the outbreak of violence or to mitigate the scale and intensity of such events should they occur. In the framework of this document, actions for safeguarding and/ or engaging intangible cultural heritage in situations of conflict and forced displacement are:

**PREPAREDNESS**

1. Raise the awareness and build capacities of relevant stakeholders regarding the dual nature of intangible cultural heritage in emergencies, and the present principles and modalities.

2. Provide resources and support for the capacity of communities to engage in all aspects of emergency preparedness in consultation with other stakeholders, especially in regions and countries prone to emergencies.

3. Integrate into inventories of intangible cultural heritage, as provided for in the 2003 Convention, information on the vulnerability of elements to potential emergencies. This should include the mitigation capacity of these elements, as well as details of the concerned locations and communities to facilitate identification and access during emergency response.

4. Include emergency preparedness in the safeguarding plans of specific elements. This can include preventive measures to address their potential vulnerability during an emergency, preparatory measures to enhance and engage their mitigation capacity, and a methodology to evaluate the situation of the element during the emergency response phase.

5. Incorporate relevant intangible cultural heritage in local, national, sub-regional and regional emergency preparedness plans.

6. Establish links between bodies safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage and those in charge of emergency preparedness.

# SLIDE 24

**Operational Modalities: Response**

The response phase takes place when conflict erupts, thus the humanitarian response operates immediately, providing emergency services and public assistance in order to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public security and meet the basic livelihood needs of affected people. Actions to safeguard and/or engage intangible cultural heritage in situations of conflict and forced displacement during the response phase should take place after the immediate emergency interventions conducted by humanitarian agencies have been completed. Actions include:

**RESPONSE**

1. Identify, locate and reach out to communities whose intangible cultural heritage is known or likely to have been affected by the emergency, as early as possible.

2. Prioritize resourcing and supporting the capacity of concerned communities to identify and address, through a community-based approach, their immediate safeguarding needs and to draw upon their intangible cultural heritage in mitigating the immediate effects of the emergency (community-based needs identification). In some contexts, it will only be possible to implement this set of actions during the recovery phase.

3. Share information within and between affected States Parties and other stakeholders, particularly humanitarian actors, relevant non-governmental organizations and/or armed forces, to determine the nature and extent of the disruption to intangible cultural heritage and the scope for engaging it in mitigation. This is also to ensure that relief operations take full account of the existing intangible cultural heritage and contribute to its safeguarding.

4. Whenever a post-disaster or post-conflict needs assessment is undertaken, notably in the framework of multi-party international crisis response mechanisms, ensure that intangible cultural heritage is incorporated. Involve communities in the assessment of the effects of the natural disaster and/or armed conflict on their intangible cultural heritage as well as of related economic damage and losses, and human development impacts.

# SLIDE 25

**Operational Modalities: Recovery**

The recovery phase includes the restoration and improvement of facilities, livelihoods and living conditions of conflict-affected communities. Actions conducted in this phase include activities that promote access to dialogue with the aim of restoring political stability and putting society on the path to sustainable peace, social justice and inclusion. These include:

**RECOVERY**

1. Carry out the community-based needs identification if this could not be performed earlier.

2. Based on the outcomes of the needs identification process, provide resources and support for communities to develop and undertake safeguarding measures or plans to enhance the mitigation capacity of their intangible cultural heritage. This engagement should be sustained throughout the recovery phase and into the following preparedness phase, as well as in the transition from dependence on humanitarian assistance towards development.

3. Engage intangible cultural heritage in fostering dialogue, mutual understanding and reconciliation between and within communities, including between displaced populations and host communities.

# SLIDE 26

Exercise 4: Understanding the operational modalities

*Learning objective:* The aim of this exercise is for participants not only to learn about and analyse the different actions of the operational modalities, but also to be able to identify which stage of the emergency cycle each action corresponds to.

*Estimated time:* 30-40 minutes. (Optonal)

*Material needed:* chalk, markers, sticky tape and printed actions of the modalities.

* Handout 2: Exercise 4 Analysing modalities, contains the 13 actions of the modalities, some with questions. If possible, print each of these actions on a separate sheet of paper, otherwise, cut out each of these actions with the corresponding questions.
* Give each participant one of these actions. If there are less than 13 people, some of them should take two actions, if there are more than 13 participants give one of the actions with two questions to two people.
* Draw on the board or on a poster a chart containing three columns, each column titled with the three phases of the emergency cycle: preparedness, response and recovery.
* Ask each participant to analyse their action, and try to answer, if applicable, the questions included in that action. Give them 10-15 minutes.
* Ask each participant to explain their action to the rest of the group and try to answer the questions. If they do not know how to answer the question(s), ask the rest of the participants to contribute with ideas.
* Ask each participant to paste their action in one of the three phases of the emergency cycle on the table designed by the facilitator on the board.

# SLIDE 27

**UNESCO Resources and financial support**

UNESCO provides several different mechanisms to support to its Member States to safeguard their ICH in emergency situations:

* **Lists of the Convention**: The listing mechanisms under the Convention may provide an opportunity for promoting and enhancing the visibility of elements that contribute to preparing for, responding to and recovering from the effects of disasters (the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, as well as the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices), and/or to draw the attention of the international community to elements particularly threatened by disaster (for the possibility of the accelerated procedure for a nomination to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, see criterion U.6 under Chapter I.1 of the Operational Directives of the 2003 Convention). The facilitator may wish to highlight some examples.
* **Financial and Technical Support** can be sought under various emergency-related funds, including:
  + - Emergency assistance can be sought at any time from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund’s International Assistance mechanism (<https://ich.unesco.org/en/requesting-assistance-00039>). The facilitator may wish to highlight some examples, for instance, [Mali](https://ich.unesco.org/en/assistances/inventory-of-intangible-cultural-heritage-in-mali-with-a-view-to-its-urgent-safeguarding-01026), [Ivory Coast](https://ich.unesco.org/en/assistances/inventory-of-the-intangible-cultural-heritage-present-in-cote-d-ivoire-in-view-of-its-urgent-safeguarding-01051), [Vanuatu](https://ich.unesco.org/en/assistances/safeguarding-indigenous-vernacular-architecture-and-building-knowledge-in-vanuatu-01214), [Niger](https://ich.unesco.org/en/assistances/safeguarding-the-intangible-cultural-heritage-of-niger-in-a-situation-of-urgency-and-for-the-resilience-of-displaced-populations-pilot-project-in-tillabery-and-diffa-01412) and [Colombia](https://ich.unesco.org/en/assistances/intangible-cultural-heritage-as-a-basis-for-resilience-reconciliation-and-construction-of-peace-environments-in-colombia-s-post-agreements-01522).
    - The UNESCO Culture Sector’s Heritage Emergency Fund, set up in 2015, provides assistance to States Parties to prevent, mitigate and recover the loss of cultural heritage and diversity in emergencies, including disasters. For more information, the facilitator can refer participants to the webpage, which provides some FAQs about the Fund: <https://en.unesco.org/themes/protecting-our-heritage-and-fostering-creativity/emergencyfund2>.

# SLIDE 28

Wrapping up

In closing this unit, aim to clarify any outstanding issues raised by participants, including fielding questions about content, and then (if appropriate) prepare participants for the practical exercises in Unit 66, emphasizing that the concepts introduced here will be further illustrated through their application in the exercises.