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Global reflection meeting on the periodic reporting mechanisms of the 2003 Convention

Item 4b: Role of the focal points in periodic reporting

*Presentation by Maissoun Sharkawi, member of the UNESCO's global network of facilitators
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The importance of the periodic reporting exercise

Article 29 of the Convention stipulates that States Parties shall submit to the Committee, observing the forms and periodicity to be defined by the Committee, reports on the **legislative, regulatory and other measures taken for the implementation of the Convention.**

Similarly, Article 30 indicates that, on the basis of its activities and the reports by States Parties referred to in Article 29, the Committee shall submit a **report to the General Assembly** at each of its session. The report shall also be **brought to the attention of the General Conference of UNESCO.**

Periodic reporting allows States Parties to:

- Assess the implementation of the Convention at the national level.
- Take stock on progresses, lessons learned, existing needs and future safeguarding efforts.
- Design and review policies and legal frameworks.
- Report on their inventories of intangible cultural heritage.
- Update the status of elements inscribed on the Representative List and the Urgent Safeguarding List.



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The role of focal points in the periodic reporting exercise

Periodic reporting requires a **multisectoral, inclusive, and participatory approach**.

This approach brings together **all stakeholders involved in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage at the national level**, including governmental institutions, communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and related associations, the media, universities, research institutes and centres, and the private sector, among others.

In this context, focal points for periodic reporting are crucial in the implementation of the reporting exercise, as they serve as a **bridge between the various stakeholders existing at the national level**, as well as **between the State Party and UNESCO**.

Their primary responsibility is to **coordinate the overall reporting exercise**. Given the complexity of the reporting process, focal points can be **supported by a team**.



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Planning the periodic reporting exercise

Dedicating time to **plan the periodic reporting exercise** is a significant and important step of the process.

In this phase, focal point and their team shall focus on:

- Organizing the **overall reporting exercise**.
- Providing **initial guidance** on the scope of the reporting exercise to relevant stakeholders.
- Determining what **information and resources** are needed.
- Establishing a structured **framework for data collection and management**.
- Defining **who should be involved** in the process and **at what stage**.
- Setting a clear **timeline**.

*It is advisable to adopt a strategy that **promotes continuous planning and evaluation** throughout each stage of the reporting process*



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Collecting data and engaging stakeholders

Further to the planning phase, focal points and their team shall **gather the data and information required** to complete the periodic reporting forms (Form ICH-10 and Form ICH-11).

In this phase, they shall focus on:

- Developing a **data collection and management strategy**.
- Establishing how **communities and other stakeholders** can be **mobilized and engaged** (within and beyond the culture sector).
- Mapping **potential barriers** (technical or geographical).
- Ensuring **regular communication** with communities and stakeholders.

*When no data or information is available, this may be identified as a challenge to be **addressed in the future**.*



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Drafting and submitting periodic reports

Building on the results of the previous phases, during the **drafting of the periodic report** focal points and their team shall focus on:

- Determining **who should write the report** and **how the process will be organized**.
- Identifying **what information is appropriate to respond to each question of the forms**.
- Applying an **impact-based and analytical approach** to reporting.
- Providing a **coherent interpretation of safeguarding measures and outcomes** and **inform evidence-based findings**.
- Establishing **if, and with whom, the draft should be shared**.
- Defining **who will approve and sign the report**.

*Allocate time to **translate the report in English or French, if needed***



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Documents of the Committee and in-depth studies on periodic reporting

A dedicated webpage has been established by the Secretariat, providing access to the periodic reports examined by the Committee, as well as to their analyses:

<https://ich.unesco.org/en/committee-documents-and-in-depth-studies-00862>



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