

INFORMATION SHEET¹

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND GENDER EQUALITY POLICY

POLICY AREA / POLICY ISSUE

Other Sectors / Gender Equality

ISSUES TO CONSIDER

This Information Sheet provides guidance and examples on the significant role of gender in the practice, transmission and safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage (ICH). Lack of attention to gender, in all its manifestations, can distort the identification and representation of ICH and exclude or marginalize certain groups and their views in the processes of safeguarding and transmission. Gender equality principles are designed to ensure that all groups defined on the basis of gender are considered and consulted in the development of policy, including policy related to ICH safeguarding.

Gender Equality and Human Rights

UNESCO has made the promotion of gender equality a priority in its programmes, including in the implementation of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (hereafter 'the Convention').² Under the Convention, only intangible cultural heritage (hereafter 'ICH') that is 'compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals' (Article 2.1), will be taken into account. Human rights become an issue when the dignity and well-being of those involved in the practice, performance and transmission of ICH is denied.³

UNESCO's approach to gender equality is in line with United Nations frameworks, including those under the leadership of the UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, which defines gender equality as 'the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for people of all sexes and gender identities'.⁴ Gender-aware policy making for ICH safeguarding should ensure the active participation of a diversity of voices, including all gender groups concerned. Not considering a diversity of voices risks omitting or misrepresenting the complex gender dynamics associated with cultural practices.

State Legislation and Policy

Legislation and policies within a State strive for consistency with the principles of the international human rights instruments, which that State has ratified. Many States have ratified instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) but with reservations.⁵ National constitutions and legal frameworks may formally prohibit gender discrimination but may provide exemptions from compliance on the grounds of 'tradition' or 'custom' in customary or religious laws. Moreover, the processes and

¹ This information sheet is part of a series of information sheets attached to the UNESCO Guidance for Providing Policy Support in the Field of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The guide contains comprehensive conceptual and practical advice for advising specialists. It includes questions that can be asked to develop a better understanding of the situation of intangible heritage safeguarding in a given country and to reflect on related policy options. The accompanying fact sheets deal with specific policy areas relevant to intangible heritage safeguarding, such as gender equality, social cohesion and peace and education.

² See for example UNESCO, 2003. [Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework 2003-2007](#); UNESCO, 2011. [Priority Gender Equality Guidelines](#); UNESCO, 2014. [Gender Equality: Heritage and Creativity](#); UNESCO, 2014. [Priority Gender Equality Action Plan 2014-2021 \(GEAPII\)](#); ICH Intergovernmental Committee DECISION 9.COM 13.b.

³ Blake, J., 2018. 'Gender and intangible heritage: illustrating the inter-disciplinary character of international law', In: R J Wilson & L Smith (eds), *Gender and Heritage, Performance, Place and Politics*, London, New York: Routledge, p.216.

⁴ OHCHR, 2018. [Integrating a Gender Perspective into Human Rights Investigations. Guidance and Practice](#). New York and Geneva, p.7.

⁵ UN Women. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Reservations to CEDAW. <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/reservations.htm> (accessed 16 August 2019).

time required for different States to incorporate provisions for human rights and gender equality into national legislation can vary considerably, and their translation into socially accepted ideas and practices will depend on the extent to which they resonate in local contexts.⁶

Gender Equality and Cultural Practices

There has been limited discussion about how non-discrimination provisions can be incorporated into ICH-related policies, legislation and safeguarding approaches under the Convention. The international human rights framework provides some guidance on how tensions between cultural diversity and human rights principles can be resolved in relation to gender. As stressed by the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 2009, ‘Ensuring the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights is a mandatory and immediate obligation of States parties,’ requiring the ‘elimination of institutional and legal obstacles as well as those based on harmful practices, including those attributed to customs and traditions.’⁷ Article 4 of the *UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity* states that ‘No one may invoke cultural diversity to infringe upon human rights guaranteed by international law, nor to limit their scope.’⁸ Article 5 of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* states that ‘States Parties shall take all appropriate measures: (a) To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women...’. Further guidance on achieving gender equality with respect to cultural practices is provided by the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights.⁹

Addressing Gender Dynamics in Policy Development

The gender constellations of ICH are manifold, and gender dynamics and gender norms need to be understood within their particular cultural and historical contexts. Some ICH practices involve a single gender group (or separation by gender, age, status, ethnicity, etc.), while others involve gender complementarity (where genders fulfill separate but complementary roles).¹⁰ These gender constellations may have an inherent logic that is not always easily accessible to outsiders. Moreover, ICH practices are rarely static, and in some cases are adapting to provide greater scope for gender equality and the recognition of different gender identities and expressions.¹¹

Nevertheless:

- the contributions of women and groups marginalized on the basis of gender may be devalued or ignored in identifying and documenting ICH elements;
- the gender dynamics of ICH elements, including the development of gender-responsive approaches towards the transmission of ICH, are not always fully explored in the process of identification, inventorying and safeguarding; and

⁶ Merry, S.E. and Levitt, P., 2017. The Vernacularization of Women’s Human Rights. In Hopgood, S., Snyder, J. and Vinjamuri, L. eds., *Human Rights Futures*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 213-236.

⁷ United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2009. General Comment 21 (E/C.12/GC/21).

⁸ [UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity](#) (Adopted 2 November 2001)

⁹ United Nations General Assembly, 2019. Cultural Rights: Tenth Anniversary Report (A/HRC/40/53).

¹⁰ For more information, see UNESCO Living Heritage Entity, Capacity-building Materials, Unit 48: Gender and intangible cultural heritage and Unit 49: A gender-responsive approach to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage; UNESCO, 2009. [Intangible Cultural Heritage and Gender](#).

¹¹ Examination of the reports of States Parties, 2013. ITH/13/8.COM/6.a, para 62.

- the gender dimension of community consultation and capacity building may not always be adequately addressed.¹²

It is therefore essential that awareness of the relationship between gender concepts and norms on the one hand, and the practice, identification and safeguarding of ICH on the other, be incorporated within the policy development process.

The process of developing a gender-responsive approach towards ICH safeguarding is unfolding within the broader context of gender mainstreaming in UNESCO. The UNESCO Priority Gender Equality Action Plan (2019 revision) states that, 'Mainstreaming is intended to transform development such that equality becomes both a means and an end'. This approach covers several key processes, including: collecting and analyzing sex-disaggregated data, raising gender awareness through policy dialogue and advocacy, building support for change through alliances/partnerships, developing the capacity to make plans and implement them, and holding individuals and institutions accountable for results through securing political will and leadership. For policy work to be inclusive and effective, it needs to address the diversity of gender-related practices present within the territory of the State. A lack of relevant indicators or sex-disaggregated ICH data can conceal gender gaps and challenges from policy makers and decision makers. Policies related to gender equality and ICH can benefit from being embedded in broader gender equality strategies that take into account context-specific factors and address the causes of gender inequalities.¹³

WHAT THE CONVENTION AND ITS TEXTS SAY

Annex A identifies those aspects of the Convention and its texts that are relevant to the topic of gender equality. The Preamble and Article 2.1 of the Convention emphasize the need for ICH to be compatible with international human rights instruments.¹⁴ While not mentioning gender specifically, the Convention promotes inclusion and respect for the diversity and identities of communities, groups and individuals associated with the practice, transmission and safeguarding of ICH (Articles 1 and 15). **The Operational Directives specifically advise States Parties to avoid gender discrimination, to respect human rights and freedom of choice, and to practice gender inclusiveness in the implementation of the Convention** (Paragraphs 102, 157, 170, 174, 177, 194, 197). In the context of safeguarding and sustainable development, OD181 provides the most comprehensive treatment of gender, noting the constitutive role that ICH plays in shaping gender identities and perceptions, and providing States Parties with a framework for exercising gender responsiveness and addressing issues of gender inequality. Ethical Principles 3 and 11 emphasize the importance of mutual respect, and the need to pay attention to gender equality in the design and implementation of safeguarding measures.¹⁵ The Overall Results Framework, citing ODs 174 and 194, promotes 'Broad and inclusive involvement in ICH safeguarding and management', and encourages States Parties to report on their approaches to inclusivity, such as through the provision of disaggregated data.¹⁶

The Intergovernmental Committee has repeatedly urged States Parties to take account of the diversity of actors associated with intangible cultural heritage, paying special attention to gender (Document 8.COM 7; Document 8.COM 8). This advice is reflected in the commentary

¹² For further information, see UNESCO Living Heritage Entity, Capacity-building Materials, Units 48-49.

¹³ For example, limited participation of people of different genders in decision-making positions; restricted opportunities for ongoing training, capacity building and networking; women's unequal share of unpaid care work; poor employment conditions (part-time, contractual work, informality, etc.); gender stereotypes and fixed ideas about culturally appropriate roles for women and men, not necessarily based on the consent of those concerned.

¹⁴ See Appendix A for relevant articles of the Convention and paragraphs of the Operational Directives.

¹⁵ UNESCO, 2015. [Ethical Principles for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage](#) (Decision 10.COM 15a)

¹⁶ UNESCO, 2018. [The Overall Results Framework for the 2003 Convention](#) (Resolution 7.GA.9)

of the Advisory Bodies, which is incorporated in the Aide-Mémoire for Completing a Nomination to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, including Paragraph 24 which notes that not all sectors of society share a unified vision of ICH, and that the roles and contributions of all actors (and, by implication, all genders) should be considered.¹⁷ Since 2015, Periodic Reporting forms have prompted States Parties to consider gender when describing the status of inscribed elements.¹⁸

OTHER RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS¹⁹

Provisions for gender equality exist in the following international treaties and declarations which address both human rights (UDHR; ICCPR and ICESCR) and women's rights (CEDAW; Beijing Declaration).

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948)²⁰
- United Nations, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1966)²¹ and its Optional Protocol
- United Nations, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966)²²
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979) and its Optional Protocol²³
- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)²⁴

Relevant international resolutions and decisions include the 2016 Human Rights Council Resolution 32/2 on the 'Protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity'²⁵, and the inclusion of Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG5) in the United Nation's 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, which is specifically devoted to the achievement of gender equality.²⁶

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

The examples in Annex B illustrate some of the ways in which the concepts of gender equality and gender diversity identified in this information note have been addressed in national legislation, policies, and programmes. Specific instances in which gender-responsive approaches have been adopted in the implementation of the 2003 Convention are offered. However, these examples cannot provide a comprehensive overview of all the relevant issues, nor can they convey the full complexity of individual cases. Constitutional, legislative and policy reforms are not always reflected in local contexts or ICH practices, and shifts in societal norms often occur over long timeframes. Moreover, while statutory provisions may play a role, social inequalities exist and change in response to a range of social, political, economic and environmental factors. There are also limits to the efficacy of legal instruments. While gender rights provisions may be enshrined in national laws, it can still be difficult for individuals to exercise these powers due to social pressures to conform.²⁷ An increase in the national

¹⁷ UNESCO, 2014. Aide-Mémoire for Completing a Nomination to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. July. ([ICH-01-aide-mémoire-EN](#)). See also Paragraph 26 which urges States Parties to 'ensure that women's voices are heard in the process of elaborating files, that they have a central role in the design and implementation of safeguarding measures, and that they are fully represented among those providing consent.'

¹⁸ [ITH/13/8.COM/Decisions](#)

¹⁹ See also <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CoreInstruments.aspx>

²⁰ <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

²¹ <http://www.unhcr.org/uk/496323761b.pdf>

²² <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/cescr.aspx>

²³ <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx>

²⁴ <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf>

²⁵ https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/HRC/RES/32/2

²⁶ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>

²⁷ Blake, J., 2018. Gender and Intangible Heritage: Illustrating the Inter-disciplinary Character of International Law. In: R.J. Wilson & L. Smith (eds), *Gender and Heritage, Performance, Place and Politics*, London, New York: Routledge, p.215; Deacon, H.J.,

recognition of gender rights does not automatically result in improved identification and support of the role of gender in the practice and safeguarding of ICH.

Nonetheless, the examples in this section demonstrate concerted efforts made at national, regional and community levels to address gender equality and gender diversity, and to provide marginalised gender groups and individuals with space in which to renegotiate their roles in relation to ICH. To achieve a gender sensitive approach in the practice and safeguarding of ICH, it will be necessary to promote awareness and dialogue within and between the communities, institutions, and government agencies that practice, promote and enact cultural diversity, and to establish institutional structures and programmes that can address systemic issues of inequality (e.g. numbers of women employed in cultural institutions; the degree to which gender diversity is reflected in ICH inventories). Examining the ICH practiced and safeguarded within individual countries can be instructive in this process, as ICH broadly reflects and reiterates gender norms.

RELEVANT CASE STUDIES IN THE CAPACITY-BUILDING MATERIALS

The following case studies embedded in the capacity-building materials highlight the complex interactions between gender and the practice, performance and safeguarding of ICH:

- Case Study 14. ICH and social development: literacy through oral poetry in Yemen CS14-v2.0: [English](#)|[French](#)|[Spanish](#)|[Russian](#)|[Arabic](#)
- Case study 40: An Indigenous Andean textile art CS40-v1.0-EN: [English](#)|[French](#)|[Spanish](#)|[Arabic](#)
- Case study 41: Two examples of ICH and conflict prevention/resolution CS41-v1.0-EN: [English](#)|[French](#)|[Spanish](#)|[Arabic](#)
- Case study 42: Ritual and performance art of a non-mainstream gender group CS42-v1.0-EN: [English](#)|[French](#)|[Spanish](#)|[Arabic](#)
- Case study 43: Mindusuan traditional dance performance CS43-v1.0-EN: [English](#)|[French](#)|[Spanish](#)|[Arabic](#)
- Case study 44: A shamanistic ritual and its associated ceremony CS44-v1.0-EN: [English](#)|[French](#)|[Spanish](#)|[Arabic](#)

FURTHER INFORMATION

For a fuller consideration of the topic, the references listed here cover a range of academic and other documentation on gender equality, gender diversity, and human rights as these relate to the fields of culture and heritage:

Buentella Garcia, M.E.D., 2019. *Beyond Gender Dichotomy in Heritage Discourse: the third gender of Mexico in the 2003 Convention*. Unpublished MA Thesis. BTY Cottbus-Senftenberg and Deakin University.

Colella, S., 2018. Not a mere tangential outbreak: Gender, feminism and cultural heritage. // *Capitale Culturale. Studies on the Value of Cultural Heritage*, (18), pp.251-275.

Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe, 2019. <https://www.culturalpolicies.net> (accessed 16 August 2019).

2018. Understanding the Work that 'Culture' Does: A Comparative Perspective on Cultural Rights Provisions in the Constitution of Kenya 2010. *African Studies*, 77(2), p.183.

- De Vido, S., 2017. Mainstreaming Gender in the Protection of Cultural Heritage. *Sapere l'Europa, sapere d'Europa* 4:451-468.
- Dvorak, G., D. Ehmes, E. Feleti, T. 'Ō. Ka'ili, T. Teaiwa, and J.P. Viernes, 2018. *Gender in the Pacific*. Volume 2 of Teaching Oceania Series, edited by Monica C. LaBriola. Honolulu: Center for Pacific Islands Studies, University of Hawai'i–Mānoa.
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- Grahn, W. and Wilson, R.J. eds., 2018. *Gender and Heritage: Performance, Place and Politics*. Routledge.
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- Mutua, M., 2013. *Human rights: A political and cultural critique*. University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Nanda, S., 2014. *Gender Diversity: crosscultural variations*. Waveland Press Inc., Illinois, USA.
- Oyèwùmí, O., 1997. *The invention of women: Making an African sense of western gender discourses*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Richards, N., 2007. Handicrafts and Employment Generation for the Poorest Youth and Women, Policy Paper No. 17. Paris: UNESCO. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001567/156772e.pdf>
- Silverman, H., and D. Fairchild Ruggles, 2007. *Cultural heritage and human rights*. Springer, New York.
- Smith, L., 2008. Heritage, gender and identity. *The Ashgate research companion to heritage and identity*, pp.159-178.
- The Yogyakarta Principles (YP), 2007. http://yogyakartaprinciples.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/principles_en.pdf
- The Yogyakarta Principles plus 10 (YP+10), 2017. http://yogyakartaprinciples.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/A5_yogyakartaWEB-2.pdf (see in particular Principle 38)
- United National Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, 2019. <https://www.ohchr.org/EN> (accessed 16 August 2019)
- UN Women, 2019. <https://www.unwomen.org/en> (accessed 16 August 2019)

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

The following questions are for the consideration of facilitators providing advice on the topic of gender equality and ICH. The questions pick up on the key concepts raised in this Information Sheet, and are designed to stimulate strategies for the implementation of OD181. Advice on gender should be given judiciously and sensitively, and with a comprehensive awareness of the gender norms and dynamics that exist within individual countries.

- What legal provisions, policies and/or institutional mechanisms exist in the State to ensure that human rights, including gender rights, are protected?
- How does safeguarding ICH influence recognition of and respect for gender equality and gender diversity?

- How are international, national and local level approaches to gender equality and ICH articulated, and do they need to comply with one another?
- Have gender roles and gender dynamics associated with the practice of ICH changed over time? How and why have these changes occurred?
- To what extent is there awareness of gender issues among government agencies and communities?
- How can gender equality and gender diversity be promoted in the identification, practice and safeguarding of ICH?
- What role does gender diversity in ICH play in preserving cultural diversity?
- What are the implications for ICH policy dialogue when cultural practices do not seem to reflect State-level gender equality provisions?
- How can ICH policy take account of legal provisions in a State that bans, prohibits or marginalises forms of ICH that are widely accepted in society?

UNESCO THESAURUS KEYWORDS policy making; government policy; intangible cultural heritage; gender discrimination; gender roles; gender stereotypes; gender minorities; disadvantaged groups; human rights; equal opportunity; cultural diversity

ANNEX A: RELEVANT SECTIONS OF THE CONVENTION AND ITS TEXTS

The Convention

- The Convention's Preamble refers to 'existing international human rights instruments, in particular to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights of 1948, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966.' It recognizes 'the invaluable role of the intangible cultural heritage as a factor in bringing human beings closer together and ensuring exchange and understanding among them.'
- Article 1 of the Convention states that one of its purposes is to 'ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of the communities, groups and individuals concerned.'
- Article 2.1 states that 'consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.'
- Article 15 states that '[w]ithin the framework of its safeguarding activities of the intangible cultural heritage, 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.'

Operational Directives

- OD 102: 'All parties are encouraged to take particular care to ensure that awareness-raising actions will not... contribute to justifying any form of political, social, ethnic, religious, linguistic or gender-based discrimination.'
- OD 157: 'The State Party shall pay special attention to the role of gender and shall endeavour to ensure the widest possible participation of the communities, groups, and, where applicable, individuals concerned as well as relevant non-governmental organizations during the process of preparation of such reports, which shall address, for each element concerned...'
- OD 170: 'States Parties ... shall direct their safeguarding efforts solely on such intangible cultural heritage that is compatible with existing international human rights

instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals’

- OD 174: ‘States Parties shall endeavour to ensure that their safeguarding plans and programmes are fully inclusive of all sectors and strata of society, including indigenous peoples, migrants, immigrants and refugees, people of different ages and genders, persons with disabilities and members of vulnerable groups, in conformity with Article 11 of the Convention.’
 - OD 177: ‘States Parties are encouraged to recognize that inclusive social development comprehends issues such as sustainable food security, quality health care, quality education for all, gender equality and access to safe water and sanitation, and that these goals should be underpinned by inclusive governance and the freedom for people to choose their own value systems.’
 - OD 181: ‘States Parties shall endeavour to foster the contributions of intangible cultural heritage and its safeguarding to greater gender equality and to eliminating gender-based discrimination while recognizing that communities and groups pass on their values, norms and expectations related to gender through intangible cultural heritage and it is, therefore, a privileged context in which group and community members’ gender identities are shaped. To that end, States Parties are encouraged to:
 - a) take advantage of the potential of intangible cultural heritage and of its safeguarding to create common spaces for dialogue on how best to achieve gender equality, taking into account the diverse perspectives of all stakeholders;
 - b) promote the important role that intangible cultural heritage and its safeguarding can play in building mutual respect among communities and groups whose members may not share the same conceptions of gender;
 - c) assist communities and groups in examining expressions of their intangible cultural heritage with regard to their impact and potential contribution to enhancing gender equality and to take the results of this examination into account in decisions to safeguard, practice, transmit and promote at the international level these expressions;
 - d) foster scientific studies and research methodologies, including those conducted by the communities and groups themselves, aimed at understanding the diversity of gender roles within particular expressions of intangible cultural heritage;
 - e) ensure gender equality in the planning, management and implementation of safeguarding measures, at all levels and in all contexts, in order to take full advantage of the diverse perspectives of all members of society.’
 - OD 194: ‘States Parties should endeavour to recognize and promote the contribution of the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage to social cohesion, overcoming all forms of discrimination and strengthening the social fabric of communities and groups in an inclusive way. To that end, States Parties are encouraged to give particular attention to those practices, expressions and knowledge that help communities, groups and individuals to transcend and address differences of gender, colour, ethnicity, origin, class and locality and to those that are broadly inclusive of all sectors and strata of society, including indigenous peoples, migrants, immigrants and refugees, people of different ages and genders, persons with disabilities and members of marginalized groups.’
- OD 197(a): States Parties are encouraged to ‘ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of indigenous peoples, migrants, immigrants and refugees, people of different ages and genders, persons with disabilities, and members of vulnerable groups in their safeguarding efforts.’

ANNEX B: ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

Each of the following case studies highlights one or more of the **principal concepts** covered in this Information Sheet:

- a) ICH, gender and international human rights instruments
- b) Recognizing and respecting gender diversity
- c) Articulation between international, national and local level approaches
- d) Changes in gender dynamics of ICH over time
- e) Institutional and policy responses to gender dynamics
- f) Gender mainstreaming

Community-driven responses to violence (Papua New Guinea)

In countries where deep legal pluralism exists, certain communities are taking steps to combat gender-based violence or discrimination generated by the understandings of cultural practices held by particular members of those communities.²⁸ For example, in Jiwaka and Chimbu Provinces in Papua New Guinea (PNG), witchcraft and sorcery-accusation related violence is being addressed through the review, modification and codification by communities of their own customary laws. While witchcraft accusations are directed at both women and men in PNG, in some regions, such as Goroka in the Eastern Highlands, the vast majority of witchcraft (*sanguma*) accusations are levelled at women.²⁹ In response to violence associated with these accusations, the community of Nauro Gor in Chimbu Province has developed the 'Gor Community Base Laws and Policing'.³⁰ This law targets the defamatory aspect of witchcraft accusations by requiring compensation of money and pigs to be made to the defamed and the village court.³¹ Voice for Change, a community-based organisation in neighbouring Jiwaka Province, has also supported the establishment of local laws to address both witchcraft accusations and other social issues such as violence against women and children. In the Jiwaka case, three communities wrote their own community laws, all with express provisions forbidding the making of accusations of witchcraft.³² Whether or not these initiatives are resulting in a reduction in accusations and attacks requires further research, but the results are promising.³³ While these codified community laws are not officially recognized by the PNG government, they are modelled on state laws. In 2013, PNG amended the Criminal Code Act to create a specific offence of homicide following an accusation of sorcery, but impunity is still more often the norm in response to this type of violence.³⁴ Adequately resourced local communities are often best positioned to generate codes for conduct that incorporate human rights provisions in support of gender equality.

Affirmative government policies (Ecuador)

In 2011, Ecuador developed a Gender and Interculturality Policy to combat ethnic and gender exclusion, particularly amongst the country's minority and marginalized groups. One of the principal achievements of the policy is the integration of gender and cultural marginality, with

²⁸ Forsyth, M. and R. Eves (eds), 2015. [Talking it Through: Responses to Sorcery and Witchcraft Beliefs and Practices in Melanesia](#). Canberra: ANU Press.

²⁹ R. Eves and A. Kelly-Hanku, 2014. [Witch-Hunts in Papua New Guinea's Eastern Highlands Province: A Fieldwork Report](#). In Brief 2014/4. State Society and Governance in Melanesia.

³⁰ Bal, C., 2015. Kumo Koimbo: Accounts and Responses to Witchcraft in Gor, Simbu Province. In M. Forsyth and R. Eves (eds). *Talking it Through: Responses to Sorcery and Witchcraft Beliefs and Practices in Melanesia*. Canberra: ANU Press, pp.299–307.

³¹ Eves, R., 2017. [Developing Community Laws to Address Sorcery and Witchcraft-Related Violence in Papua New Guinea](#). In Brief 2017/7. State Society and Governance in Melanesia.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.* See presentations on Day one of this conference: <http://regnet.anu.edu.au/news-events/events/7159/codification-and-creation-community-customary-laws-south-pacific-and-beyond>

³⁴ Papua New Guinea. Criminal Code (Amendment) Act 2013. <http://ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/98691/117507/F-1310328162/PNG98691.pdf> (accessed 14 August 2019).

a commitment to support and improve the living conditions of the country's ethnic minorities.³⁵ The policy builds on the National Plan for Good Living 2009-2013, which pledges to 'recognize and respect social-cultural diversity and eradicate all forms of discrimination, whether based on gender, sexual preference, ethnic, cultural, political, economic and religious factors, or on origin, migration, geography, age, socioeconomic background, disability, etc'.³⁶ In 2013, the Ministry of Culture and Heritage initiated a 'Bearer Recognition' project for traditional knowledge, with the Instituto Nacional de Patrimonio Cultural del Ecuador (INPC) granting awards in the seven zones of the country.³⁷ One of these awards went to the late Zoila Espinoza, an AfroChoteño woman recognized not just for her role in safeguarding the 'baile de la botella con la música Bomba' del Chota, (the dance of the bottle with the Bomba music of Chota), but also for her advocacy of the rights of Afro-Ecuadorians.³⁸ Marking the end of the multi-year project on 'Strengthening Capacities for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in Ecuador', UNESCO and the Minister of Culture and Heritage of Ecuador launched the 2017 publication *Contributions for the Consolidation of the Public Policy on the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Ecuador*,³⁹ which affirms the importance of addressing both gender and interculturality. International programmes have also focused on strengthening the capacity of women in Ecuador, particularly amongst different minority groups. The Joint Programme on Development and Cultural Diversity to Reduce Poverty and Promote Social Inclusion supported the creation of 1500 income-generating enterprises, 800 of which are run by women. One of these projects, featuring the Corporation of Women Artisans of Nízag in Riobamba (Chimborazo Province, central Ecuador), provides an interesting insight into gender power relations involving an entrenched resistance to the financial autonomy of women. In this instance, the increasing participation of women in the public meetings of practitioners suggests that the gender dynamics with respect to weaving in this area are gradually shifting.⁴⁰

Inclusion of gender diversity (Bangladesh)

Many national governments, cultural organisations and non-government agencies are working towards greater inclusion of gender diversity, taking account of the needs of different gender identities and expressions. The notion that the world is divided into the dual categories of male and female is challenged by several cultures which traditionally recognize more than two genders, such as the *hijra* of Bangladesh, the *fa'afafine* and *fa'afatama* of Samoa, and the *muxe* of Mexico.⁴¹ *Hijra* refers to people who may not identify as either male or female, and may include people who 'perform or want to be presented as a gender that is different from the one which was assigned to them at birth'.⁴² A description of the cultural roles and practices of *hijra* in Hindu mythology and ritual is described in Case Study 42 (Unit 48) of the capacity-building programme. In 2013 the government of Bangladesh approved a proposal by the social welfare ministry to identify *hijra* as a "third gender" identity.⁴³ The work of non-government

³⁵ UNESCO/UNFPA/UNDP, 2015. Post-2015 Dialogues on Culture and Development. Paris and New York, p.43.

³⁶ Government of Ecuador. *National Plan of Good Living 2009-2013*. <https://www.planificacion.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2016/03/Plan-Nacional-Buen-Vivir-2009-2013-Ingles.pdf> (accessed 14 August 2019).

³⁷ *Ibid*, p.41.

³⁸ Mama Zoilita, Portadora de Saberes Tradicionales. <http://procultura-ecuador.blogspot.com/2013/05/mama-zoilita-portadora-de-saberes.html> [accessed 13 October 2019]

³⁹ UNESCO, 2017. Aportes para la consolidación de la política pública sobre el patrimonio cultural inmaterial del Ecuador. UNESCO, Quito.

⁴⁰ MDG Fund. Advancing Gender Equality: promising practices. Case Studies from the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund. *Improved Capabilities and Resources* http://www.mdgfund.org/sites/default/files/MDG-F_Case-Studies_Improved-capabilities.pdf, p. 88.

⁴¹ Buentello García, M.E.D., 2019. Beyond Gender Dichotomy in Heritage Discourse: the third gender of Mexico and the 2003 Convention. Unpublished MA Thesis. BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg and Deakin University.

⁴² Bandhu Welfare Society, 2019. "Third gender is not a word, it is a Gender". <https://www.bandhu-bd.org/third-gender-is-not-a-word-it-is-a-gender/> [accessed 19 October 2019]

⁴³ Bandhu Social Welfare Society, 2016. A Tale of Two Decades. 20-year achievements leading to impact 1996-2016. <http://www.bandhu-bd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/A-Tale-of-Two-Decades.pdf> (accessed 18 August 2019), p. 19. There are also people who identify as *hijra* or 'third gender' in Pakistan, India and Nepal.

organisations in advocating for the equality of *hijra* has also been instrumental in shifting social perceptions of gender diversity in Bangladesh. The Bandhu Social Welfare Society (BSWS) has been lobbying against societal discrimination of *hijra* for many years, with progressive impacts on government policy.⁴⁴ In 2013, the BSWS provided contacts for a workshop and performance by *hijra* at the Goethe-Institut Bangladesh, and a subsequent international performance art and installation show titled 'ID-clash', held at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. ID-clash was the first time that *hijra* trained in traditional Bengali folk dance had performed at the Academy.⁴⁵

Inclusivity through the arts (Cambodia)

The Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) and the Cambodian National Council for Women (CNCW) are the key national agencies that promote gender equality in Cambodia. MoWA encourages public institutions, civil society and the private sector to integrate gender equality into their policies and programs, and monitors achievements. In 1999, MoWA launched its first five-year strategic plan, *Neary Rattanak*, in support of programs promoted under the Royal Government of Cambodia's (RGC) Rectangular Strategy (RS) and the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2014-2018. The development of *Neary Rattanak IV*⁴⁶ was partly informed by the Cambodia Gender Assessment 2014⁴⁷, which found that despite progressive efforts by the national government to close the nation's gender gap in recent years, deeply entrenched cultural norms mean that women and girls continue to be discriminated against.⁴⁸

A recent initiative, the *Leading the Way for Gender Equality* (LWGE) program (2017-2020), also led by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, is building on lessons learned from previous interventions on gender equality. One of the achievements of this program has been the promotion of the rights and inclusion of disadvantaged groups of women and girls, including women and girls with disabilities, elderly women, indigenous women and girls, Muslim Cham women and girls, and lesbians. Discussions were facilitated between these groups and government officials to increase awareness and identify legal and policy interventions.⁴⁹ While social change takes time, efforts to improve gender equality are occurring in the cultural sphere. Cambodian Living Arts (CLA) runs programmes to promote and protect Cambodian arts, including expressions of ICH. The programmes encourage women's participation in traditionally male-dominated arts, such as music and puppetry, highlighting the importance of promoting access to artistic fields. The CLA's Heritage Hub Research Residency website states: 'We especially want to support people who have not had access to similar opportunities previously. We commit to support all applicants regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, and economic background. We encourage women and those from vulnerable groups to apply.' The CLA website has a section specifically dedicated to cultural expressions involving women.⁵⁰

Cultural practices and human rights (Kenya)

⁴⁴ Op cit. Bandhu Social Welfare Society, 2016.

⁴⁵ Sheikh I., 2015. Tête-à-tête with Angie Hiesl. *The Independent. The Weekend*, 20 November 2015. <http://www.theindependentbd.com/arcprint/details/23721/2015-11-20> (accessed 1 September 2019)

⁴⁶ Royal Government of Cambodia, Ministry of Women's Affairs. 2014. *Neary Rattanak IV. Five Year Strategic Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, 2014-2018*. https://www.undp.org/content/dam/cambodia/docs/DemoGov/NearyRattanak4/Cambodian%20Gender%20Strategic%20Plan%20-%20Neary%20Rattanak%204_Eng.pdf (accessed 21 September 2019)

⁴⁷ Royal Government of Cambodia, Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2014. *Cambodia Gender Assessment (CGA) 2014, Leading the Way: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment*.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p.27.

⁴⁹ UNDP Cambodia, 2019. *Partnership for Gender Equality Phase IV*. <http://www.kh.undp.org/content/cambodia/en/home/projects/partnership-for-gender-equity-phase-iii.html> (accessed 21 September 2019)

⁵⁰ Cambodian Living Arts (CLA) website. <https://www.cambodianlivingarts.org/research-center/> (accessed 14 August 2019)

The international human rights framework protects the rights of individuals to opt out of engaging in cultural practices. However, as exemplified by the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) in Kenya, there are complexities associated with the vernacularization of this framework at national and community levels. The practice of FGM was outlawed in Kenya in 2001 under the Children Act and later under the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act (No. 32, 2011).⁵¹ Article 53(d) of the Constitution of Kenya (2010) protects every child 'from harmful cultural practices' that transgress human rights. Article 44(3) states that 'a person shall not compel another person to perform, observe or undergo any cultural practice or rite'.⁵² Despite being outlawed, FGM continues to be practiced in Kenya. The Katiba Cultural Rights project, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, has been researching how Kenyans are exercising their cultural rights under the new Constitution. While the prevalence of Female Genital Mutilation in Kenya fell from 32% in 2003 to 21% in 2014, discussions held in the lead up to the passing of the Constitution of Kenya indicated that people held widely divergent views on the practice, including: 'those who practise FGM should be severely punished; FGM should not be practised for health reasons; communities should be allowed to practise their traditions, including circumcision of boys and girls; and the constitution must allow communities to circumcise children out of respect for culture.'⁵³ As noted by one of the leading researchers on the Katiba Cultural Rights Project, 'we need to understand this resistance rather than simply condemn it, particularly within a longer, deeper historical context of marginalization experienced by indigenous and minority communities since colonial times.'⁵⁴ A variation on FGM has also developed in Kenya, known as 'Alternative Rights of Passage' (ARP), which is designed to replicate the traditional initiation without physical incision.⁵⁵

Gender inclusion in cultural festivals (Japan)

Local level gender dynamics and gender norms can evolve over time, as exemplified by the increasing inclusion of women in certain public ceremonies in Japan. A research survey on gender roles and gender restrictions has been conducted among local 'preservation associations' (*hozonkai*) associated with the Yama Hoko Yatai Float Festivals,⁵⁶ which were inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2016.⁵⁷ Float festivals are performed primarily by men, with restrictions on the participation of women for reasons connected to religious concerns about purity.⁵⁸ Approximately half of the 23 responses to the survey indicated that a shift in gender roles and restrictions has occurred over time, resulting in the increased participation of women. This shift is attributed largely to a shortage of male participants, reflecting either declining birth rates (*shōshika*) or a combination of declining birth rates and an aging population (*shōshikōreika*). In a handful of cases, changing attitudes towards women were also identified as a contributing factor. Perceptions around gender inclusion vary amongst the *hozonkai*. One survey respondent insisted on 'a

⁵¹ Laws of Kenya. Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act (No.32 of 2011). http://kenyalaw.org/kl/fileadmin/pdfdownloads/Acts/ProhibitionofFemaleGenitalMutilationAct_No32of2011.pdf (accessed 15 August 2019).

⁵² Laws of Kenya. The Constitution of Kenya. <http://kenyalaw.org/kl/index.php?id=398> (accessed 15 August 2019). See also Article 24.3 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: 'States Parties shall take all effective and appropriate measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children' (<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>).

⁵³ Hughes, L., 2018. Alternative Rites of Passage: Faith, rights, and performance in FGM/C abandonment campaigns in Kenya. *African Studies* 77(2): 279.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Janse, H., 2019. Changes in Gender Roles within Intangible Cultural Heritage: a survey of gender roles and gender restrictions within the Yama Hoko Yatai Float Festivals in Japan. *Heritage* 2(3): 20190-2110.

⁵⁷ Nomination File for the Inscription of 'Yama, Hoko, Yatai, Float Festivals in Japan' on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. 2016, File No. 01059. Available on the UNESCO ICH website: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/lists> (accessed on 14 August 2019).

⁵⁸ Janse 2019, *op. cit.*

tacit understanding that women are not involved in religious matters', while another said that 'forbidding women from religious matters was groundless.'⁵⁹ Improvements in gender equality associated with ICH practices, such as the Japanese float festivals, can occur for pragmatic reasons that are not necessarily inspired by changes in gender policy and legislation.

Media promotion of gender equality (Iran)

The media can play a vital role in enabling and driving gender equality (or reasserting gender norms) through the depiction of gender dynamics. Naqqāli is a form of dramatic performance practiced in the Islamic Republic of Iran that entails storytelling in verse or prose accompanied by gesture and movement. This element was inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding in 2011. The nomination document for Naqqāli states that 'A positive aspect of the element is... its popularity among a small community of female practitioners, who are allowed to perform for a mixed community of audiences.' While in the past Naqqāli has been performed largely by and for men, today it is practised by an increasing number of Iranian women, with the state media in Iran playing a role in this transformation. Bahareh Jahandoost, a trained Naqqāl, performs traditional storytelling on a television program for young people, and says 'I am very aware of how gender shapes my work, and I am also aware that I am a role model to younger women who might, after seeing me perform, feel inspired by the simple fact of seeing me in a lead role...When young women encounter a woman telling ancient Persian stories, they might imagine themselves standing in the very same position. This is thrilling!'⁶⁰ Communities negotiate their gender roles and norms over time, and gender-specific traditions that were largely or exclusively the domain of one gender group can be opened to include others. The media can play a prominent role in this process.

Traditional recognition of gender diversity (Navajo Nation, United States of America)

In 2016, the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission (NNHRC) submitted a public hearing report to the Navajo government (*Diné bi naat'á*): *The Status of Navajo Women and Gender Violence: Conversations with Diné Traditional Medicine People and a Dialogue with the People*.⁶¹ The goal of the report was to draw on both international human rights standards and traditional Navajo principles in developing legislation and policies concerning the status of women and the Navajo LGBTQI⁶² community. The public consultation process for the report included sessions with traditional knowledge holders and practitioners to learn more about customary gender roles in Navajo society. The practitioners drew attention to a foundational Navajo story that emphasises the presence of multiple genders. The story concerns First Man (*Áłtsé Hastiin*) and First Woman (*Áłtsé Asdzáá*), who gave birth to twins who were not entirely male or female. The twins were recognized as having special skills, such as being able to make pottery, plates and bowls, essential to survival of society. Traditional *Diné* gender roles include the presence of multiple gender identities beyond the categories of masculine and feminine in Navajo society, such as the *Nádleehí* and the *Dilbaa'*. The report found that many members of the contemporary LGBTQI community draw upon these traditional figures as sources of acceptance within Navajo society. The Commission report recommended that the

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Traditional storytelling meets new media activism in Iran. *The Conversation*, August 24, 2018. <https://theconversation.com/traditional-storytelling-meets-new-media-activism-in-iran-93339> (accessed 13 August 2019)

⁶¹ Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission, 2016. *The Status of Navajo Women and Gender Violence: Conversations with Diné Traditional Medicine People and a Dialogue with the People*. Arizona. <http://www.nnhrc.navajonnsn.gov/docs/NewsRptResolution/PublicHearingReports/The%20Status%20of%20Navajo%20Women%20and%20Gender%20Violence%20Report%20-%20Copy.pdf> (accessed 16 August 2019).

⁶² Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning and Intersex

'Navajo Nation enact laws and policies that would ensure the protection of people regardless of sex, gender identity and sexual orientation'.⁶³

Gender integration in festivals (Spain)

In different autonomous communities in Spain, ICH is being used as a vehicle to draw attention to and re-shape gender roles. One civil society organisation in Valencia, Fonèvol, is uniquely dedicated to promoting the equal participation of women in the Moors and Christians Festival in the city of Alcoy (Fiestas de Moros y Cristianos en Alcoi), a major social event leading to a public parade held during three days each April. Strategies used by Fonèvol to effect change include communication plans for raising awareness, conferences, media statements, non-formal education in schools, and political lobbying in the streets. Each year Fonèvol stages a photography contest and exhibition on the participation of women in the festival. The gender dynamics associated with Valencian festivals are changing, to include either mixed parades or women-exclusive parades held within festivities that are predominantly performed by men. The aim of Fonèvol, however, is to achieve full integration of women inside current festive structures, not by forcing women to participate but by defending their right to be involved.⁶⁴ In 2019, Fonèvol estimated that a record 5.6% of participants in the festival of Alcoy were women.⁶⁵ However, while the participation of women is gradually changing, deeper structural issues associated with festival practices reflect ongoing inequalities. For instance, the Association responsible for organizing the festivities in Alcoy is almost exclusively composed of men.⁶⁶

Women's roles in the transmission of language and cuisine (Morocco)

Women are critical to the transmission of Amazigh language and culture of the Imazighen (or Berbers) in Morocco. Having once occupied much of North Africa west of the Nile River, today the Imazighen are clustered in discrete rural areas of Morocco and Algeria, as well as in the cities where they co-exist with people speaking Moroccan or Algerian Arabic. While the Berbers of Morocco are traditionally a patriarchal society, women play a crucial role in the transmission of Amazigh language(s) (Tamazight)⁶⁷ and knowledge pertaining to agricultural production and food security.⁶⁸ Various actions at the national level and amongst non-government organisations have resulted in the increased recognition of Berber identity and the cultural rights of Amazigh women. In 2001, King Mohammed VI decreed his support for Amazigh with the creation of the Institut Royal de la Culture Amazighe (IRCAM), which has standardized the Amazigh language and integrated it within school curricula and media outlets. In 2011, Tamazight was recognized as an official language in the Moroccan Constitution.⁶⁹ Recently, Amazigh-speaking women have been engaged in several initiatives and partnerships that have led to the documentation and safeguarding of their language and culture, including amongst their diasporic communities. The Zahwa project, part of an

⁶³ *Ibid*, p.57. See also Jacobs, S-E., W. Thomas, and S. Lang, eds., 1997, *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality*. University of Illinois Press; see especially W. Thomas, 'Navajo Cultural Constructions of Gender and Sexuality', pp. 156-173; S. Lang, 'Various Kinds of Two-Spirit People: Gender and Variance and Homosexuality in Native American Communities', pp. 100-108; C. Epple, 'A Navajo Worldview and Nadleehi', pp. 174-191.

⁶⁴ Comunicat Fonèvol: http://fonevol.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/2005/2005_1_comunicat_fonevol.pdf (accessed 8 September 2019)

⁶⁵ Les Muntanyes. *Les dones de la festa d'Alcoi en números*. Article opinió per Fonèvol. 13 May 2019. <https://www.lesmuntanyes.com/2019/05/13/les-dones-de-la-festa-dalcoi-en-numeros/> (accessed 8 September 2019)

⁶⁶ *Ibid*.

⁶⁷ Sadiqi, F., 2007. The Role of Moroccan Women in Preserving Amazigh Language and Culture. *Museum International*, 59(4), pp.26-33; Inside North Africa. Linguist and Professor Amina Mettouchi: endangered Berber languages: <https://insidenorthafrica.com/2019/03/23/linguist-and-professor-amina-mettouchi-endangered-berber-languages/> (accessed 15 August 2019)

⁶⁸ Belahsen, R., Naciri, K. and El Ibrahimy, A., 2017. Food Security and Women's Roles in Moroccan Berber (Amazigh) Society Today. *Maternal and Child Nutrition* 13: p.e12562.

⁶⁹ Chtatou, Mohammed. 2018. Amazigh Cultural Revival in North Africa – Analysis. *Eurasia Review*. <https://www.eurasiareview.com/20032018-amazigh-cultural-revival-in-north-africa-analysis/> (accessed 13 August 2019)

Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language, has designed a mobile phone application that is being used by Amazigh women to share culinary recipes, food preparation methods (using voice and gesture), and associated language terms.⁷⁰ With such technology, Amazigh-speaking women are exercising cultural autonomy through the process of auto-documentation, and with an ability to transmit their knowledge and language both intergenerationally and across national borders.

Gender inclusion in ICH inventorying (Finland)

Finland has adopted a model for the implementation of the 2003 Convention which places communities at the centre of the identification and definition of intangible cultural heritage. In February 2016, the Finnish Heritage Agency launched the Wiki-inventory for Living Heritage, an online platform that enables communities to support the process of national inventorying of intangible cultural heritage.⁷¹ The instructions on how to use the inventory note that only intangible cultural heritage that accords with ‘human rights and Finnish legislation’, and which supports ‘sustainable development and respect between communities’ should be included.⁷² It urges users to ‘show consideration for previously under-represented groups’. Women and women’s associations play a central role in contributing to the inventory. The Kalevala Women’s Association, for instance, is responsible for the ‘Oral Heritage Circle’, one of the Circles of Living Heritage that has been established as part of the implementation of the Convention. This association has provided support for the submissions of several elements.⁷³ The online inventory can be searched according to key terms such as ‘women’, ‘gender’, ‘gender diversity’, and ‘gender equality’, providing an insight into gender dynamics as they are negotiated through cultural practices in Finnish society. For instance, the wiki entry for open air dancing states that: ‘[t]he open air dance etiquette is ... transforming: as gender equality is emphasised in society, this also is reflected in the dance etiquette, and in many places, there are no turns for men and women to ask each other to dance, but instead anyone can ask others to dance during the whole evening.’⁷⁴ The inventory also reveals how cultural practices are changing to become more gender diverse and inclusive of marginal groups. Sauna bathing, traditionally defined by a gender division of men and women, is becoming mixed more commonly. Accessibility is also considered in building codes and the design of modern saunas so that, for instance, they can be accessed by a wheelchair.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ The Zahwa Project. <https://zahwa.aikuma.org/> (accessed 13 August 2019)

⁷¹ Finnish Heritage Agency. Wiki-inventory for Living Heritage. <https://wiki.aineetonkulttuuriperinto.fi/> (accessed 8 September 2019)

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ Kavela Women’s Association. <http://www.kalevalaistennaistenliitto.fi/> (accessed 8 September)

⁷⁴ Wiki-inventory for Living Heritage: Open air dancing: https://wiki.aineetonkulttuuriperinto.fi/wiki/Open_air_dancing (accessed 8 September 2019)

⁷⁵ Wiki-inventory for Living Heritage: Sauna bathing: https://wiki.aineetonkulttuuriperinto.fi/wiki/Sauna_bathing (accessed 8 September 2019)