**Background Note & Programme**

**Developing a follow-up and evaluation mechanism for   
capacity-building activities**

**1 to 3 June 2015  
UNESCO Headquarters, Miollis Building, Room XIV**

1. **Context and rationale**

UNESCO put in place since 2009 a global capacity-building programme to assist countries in building the institutional and professional environment required for the effective safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. [[1]](#footnote-1) The programme is part of global and national efforts to attain long-term development goals. It intends to assist beneficiary countries with making development more sustainable, ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage present in their territories and strengthening relations within and between communities, through the effective implementation of the Convention.[[2]](#footnote-2) The expected impact of this programme is a vibrant collaboration between governmental and non-governmental institutions and communities to strengthen the place of intangible cultural heritage in sustainable development ranging from security, social cohesion and the search for relevant and quality education to food security, environmental concerns and health matters.

A network of 80 expert facilitators from all regions have supported UNESCO in delivering advisory and training services in more than 50 countries so far. As explained extensively in reports to the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the delivery of capacity-building services in countries is implemented by UNESCO Field Offices in collaboration with national counterparts and backstopping from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section. Typically, such projects extend from 18 to 36 months and aim to address the most urgent identified requirements: revision of policies and legislation; redesign of institutional infrastructures; development of inventory methods; development of safeguarding measures and plans; and effective participation in cooperation mechanisms of the Convention. The projects intend to create in each country a critical level of national capacity, both in government institutions and among key players from communities and civil society, constituting a sustainable foundation for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and implementing the Convention.

According to the Internal Oversight Service (IOS) evaluation of the impact of the 2003 Convention conducted in 2013,[[3]](#footnote-3) stakeholders interviewed stressed the importance of capacity building for its successful implementation and many considered the capacity-building programme to be the most important of all mechanisms established so far. The evaluation however emphasizes that it was difficult to establish the long-term results of the capacity building activities that have taken place so far. A systematic monitoring mechanism would allow UNESCO to follow up several months and years after the results and impact of these capacity-building interventions at the country level. While some information on project results, strengths and weaknesses is available in reports on project implementation, review meetings and facilitators’ assessments at the end of training delivery, no longer term analysis exists yet on any sustained behaviour or structural change (different approaches or practices used) and on the ultimate impact resulting from UNESCO’s intervention through capacity-building activities: improved inventories, better policy and legislative environment, increased community involvement, successful participation in international mechanisms, etc.

As the report concludes, having a good follow-up system in place would not only help UNESCO continuously to adapt and improve the programme and provide insights and experiences that could be shared with others, but would also help demonstrate concrete results achieved to potential donors and supporters. The follow-up system would also be a valuable tool for the benefitting countries to monitor the longer-term effects of UNESCO’s support and inform their strategies for further action for the effective safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage present in their territories.

Supported by the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage,[[4]](#footnote-4) UNESCO has embarked on the establishment of a follow-up and evaluation mechanism for activities implemented within the context of the global capacity-building strategy.

Such mechanism is challenging and will require creative thinking and commitment from key constituents. The involvement of all constituents — national counterparts, including national commissions, UNESCO Field Offices, the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section at Headquarters, but also all relevant other stakeholders — is indispensable.

Some key questions include the following: How can we best monitor and evaluate the effects of the capacity-building programme? What exactly are we looking for? How do we find or generate all the information required to assess the effectiveness of our action? How move from a theory of change for the global programme to an evaluation matrix? How can we ensure that the mechanism will reflect the principles of the Conventions, such as inclusion, community involvement, etc.? How will the evaluation framework balance legal, policy, cultural and social analysis? What will the scope of this follow up and evaluation encompass? What are the most practical and cost-effective, while efficient ways of generating and analyzing the data and information required for assessing the effectiveness of the capacity-building activities? Who will be responsible for its implementation from data generation to data analysis? Finding answers to these and other questions is part of the challenge ahead.

1. **Objectives**

The present workshop is a key step in establishing the follow-up mechanism for capacity-building activities to gather data about their effectiveness. More specifically, it aims at the following:

1. Clarify the purpose and objectives of the follow-up and evaluation mechanism.
2. Conceptualize the evaluation matrix spelling out expected outputs, indicators, benchmarks and means of verification.
3. Propose a practical mechanism and work plan to collect and assess the data and information specifying resources, processes, timelines, tasks and responsibilities required for implementation.
4. **Participants**

The workshop will bring together 30 participants, from different key constituent groups involved in the capacity-building programme, coming from all regions. They will participate based on their experiences:

* national counterparts, including National Commissions
* expert facilitators
* UNESCO Field Office colleagues
* members of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section

An evaluation expert from IOS and an evaluation expert consultant will also join the workshop.

Invited participants will sit in a private capacity and not as representatives of any government or organization; the workshop results and recommendations will not be ascribed by name to any participant.

1. **Organization and format**

The Secretariat of the Convention is in charge of organizing and facilitating this workshop with the support of an evaluation expert consultant. The Secretariat will make available a working document in the two working languages (English and French).

The format of the three-day workshop will be interactive with participants contributing their various perspectives, ideas and recommendations for the development of the follow-up mechanism. Discussions are organized in three sections:   
(i) Purpose and objectives of a follow-up mechanism;   
(ii) Developing the evaluation matrix;  
(iii) Defining the format and requirements for implementation.

**Coordination:**

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**Preliminary Programme[[5]](#footnote-5)**

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| **DAY 1: Monday, 1 June 2015** | | |
| **10:00 – 10:30** | Welcome and introductory remarks | * Welcome and introduction by Ms Cecile Duvelle, Secretary Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage * Workshop rationale and objectives by Ms Susanne Schnüttgen, Chief of Unit, Capacity Building and Heritage Policy |
| **10:30 – 11:00** | Introducing participants | * Samaa Moustafa, Junior Programme Specialist, Intangible Cultural Heritage Section |
| **11:00 – 13:00** | **Session 1:** Purpose and objectives of a follow-up and evaluation mechanism for the global capacity-building programme | * General discussion on rationale and benefits by Susanne Schnüttgen * Theory of change to clarify objectives and intervention logic by Evaluation expert consultant |
| **13:00 – 14:30** | **Lunch** | |
| **14:30 – 17:30** | **Session 2:** Developing the evaluation matrix (part 1) | Focus: results, indicators and benchmarks. |
| **DAY 2: Tuesday, 2 June 2015** | | |
| **09:30 – 12:30** | **Session 2** – continued |  |
| **12:30 – 14:00** | **Lunch** | |
| **14:00 – 17:00** | **Session 3:** Developing the evaluation matrix (part 2) | Focus: data collection methods and means of verification. |
| **DAY 3: Wednesday, 3 June 2015** | | |
| **09:30 – 12:30** | **Session 4:** Defining the format and requirements for implementation | Focus: implementation modalities, tools, responsibilities, timeline, costing |
| **12:30 – 14:00** | **Lunch** | |
| **14:00 – 15:00** | **Session 4** - continued |  |
| **15:00 – 15:45** | **Session 5:** Conclusions, next steps |  |
| **15:45 – 16:00** | Closing |  |

1. . For a detailed description of the global strategy please see the Report by the Secretariat on the implementation of the global capacity-building strategy in document ITH/12/7.COM/INF.5, Paris, 4 December 2012 [English](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-12-7.COM-INF.5-EN.doc)|[French](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-12-7.COM-INF.5-FR.doc) and updates on the implementation in the reports by the Secretariat to the subsequent annual Committee meetings. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. . See the Concept note entitled ‘Strengthening capacities to safeguard intangible cultural heritage for sustainable development’ prepared for UNESCO’s Complementary Additional Programme for the Programme and Budget for 2013 to 2017 (37 C/5) available in the Annex of document ITH/14/9.COM/7 Rev.: [English](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-9.COM-7_Rev.-EN.doc)|[French](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-14-9.COM-7_Rev.-FR.doc) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. . See [Evaluation of UNESCO’s Standard-Setting Work of the Culture Sector (Part I) - 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage](http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002230/223095E.pdf), October 2013 [English](http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002230/223095E.pdf) [French](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-13-8.COM-INF.5.c-FR_.doc) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. . See Decision 8.COM 5.c.1 in document ITH/13/8.COM/Decisions, Paris, 7 December 2013 [English](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-13-8.COM-Decisions-EN.doc)|[French](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/ITH-13-8.COM-Decisions-FR.doc): ‘Requests the Secretariat to establish, with the full involvement of UNESCO Field Offices and in cooperation with UNESCO National Commissions, a follow-up mechanism for capacity-building activities to gather data about their effectiveness (Recommendation 6 [of the above-mentioned IOS report]). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. . To be revised and finalized closer to the meeting [↑](#footnote-ref-5)