

A Communiqué issued at the end of a 3-day Intensive Capacity Building Workshop on the Domestication of the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), jointly Organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and National Institute for Cultural Orientation (NICO), at the Bridge Waters Hotel, Enugu, Enugu State, from June 1 – 3, 2011.

The UNESCO Country Office, Abuja, with the active support of National Institute for Cultural Orientation (NICO), and Enugu State Government, organised a 3-day capacity building workshop on the Domestication of 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), from June 1-3, 2011, at the Bridge Waters Hotel, Enugu, Enugu State.

The 5th Session of the Inter-Governmental Committee on UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), which held in Kenya from 13th to 20th November, 2010, had emphasized modalities for the Domestication of the Content of the 2003 Convention by State Parties and other key stakeholders. A meeting between the Executive Secretary, NICO, Dr. Barclays Foubiri Ayakoroma, with the Secretary/Head of ICH, UNESCO, Ms Cecil Duvelle, initiated this 3-day capacity building workshop.

The opening ceremony of the workshop witnessed a wide representation and participation of the key national and local agencies and stakeholders, including the Federal Ministry of Tourism, Culture and National Orientation, National Institute for Cultural Orientation (NICO), the National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC), academia, community cultural bearers, civil society organizations accredited by UNESCO under the Nigerian Civil Society Platform (NICISOP), the Media represented by the Art Writers Organization of Nigeria (AWON), among others.

Highlights of the occasion were the emphases on the key strategic directions to the programmes, activities and goals of the 3-day workshop.

In his remarks, the Enugu State Governor, Barr. Sullivan Iheanacho Chime, who was represented by the Permanent Secretary, Enugu State Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, Chief Ferdinand Anikwe, lauded the

initiative of UNESCO and NICO in organizing the workshop and pledged the support of Enugu State Government, in ensuring its sustenance.

The UNESCO Director/Country Representative, Abuja, Dr. Joseph Ngu, on the other hand, commended the policy determination and programme initiative of NICO to recognize obligations of State Parties. He added that UNESCO is committed to the domestication of the implementation mechanism in Nigeria, working with relevant stakeholders in the culture sector.

In his welcome address, the Executive Secretary, NICO, Dr. Barclays Foubiri Ayakoroma, noted that in order to properly reposition Nigeria for active participation, attract international assistance and the listing of Nigeria's ICH on the two critical UNESCO lists, he resolved that concrete steps must be taken to sensitize, mobilize and train stakeholders, including communities, who are bearers of the living heritage, to appreciate the principles and objectives of the Convention in order to maximize the benefits of Nigeria's engagements with UNESCO.

Speaking on behalf of the Nigerian Civil Society Platform of accredited UNESCO NGOs, Dr. Ani Casimir, of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, expressed gratitude and commended UNESCO for its support of NICO's initiative in the strategic programme to domesticate the 2003 UNESCO Convention and attract international approval for compliance within the operational directives of the Convention.

Resolutions:

At the end of the 3-day workshop, it was resolved as follows:

1. That Nigeria has a rich depository of ICH elements, which when fully exploited, have the potential of attracting, not only international assistance and recognition to the country, but also reposition Nigeria globally in the comity of nations within the intangible cultural heritage of mankind.
2. That Nigeria being a State Party to the 2003 UNESCO Convention and realizing its obligations and responsibilities towards the domestication of the Convention, should regularly organise capacity building programmes such as workshops in the areas of awareness creation,

inventorying, documentation, nomination, monitoring, research and evaluation for effective implementation of the Convention.

3. That structured efforts should be made, at the earliest possible time, as part of this domestication activities, to have in place legislation or bill at the national, state and local government levels, to incorporate the contents and framework of the 2003 UNESCO Convention, so as to legalize all cultural policies and programmes by the federal, state and local governments, cultural agencies, communities, media and civil organizations.
4. That there is the need for greater synergy among the collaborative agencies and other stakeholders to achieve the goals and objectives of domestication of the 2003 Convention in Nigeria.
5. That the translation of 2003 Convention into Nigerian indigenous languages is recommended in order to achieve the indigenous people's rights, interests as right holders, and the recognition of language as a legitimate vehicle of ICH.
6. That the workshop recognized the existence of a National Committee on Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage but called for immediate review of the membership of the Committee to include representatives of all relevant stakeholders such as parastatals of the Federal Ministry of Tourism, Culture and National Orientation, NGOs, as well as the Media.
7. That there is need for the Federal Government to increase funding streams and budgetary allocations to achieve these identified goals and objectives of domestication of the Convention in the country; and
8. That there is urgent need for sensitization and awareness creation workshop for policy/decision makers on Intangible Cultural Heritage, in Nigeria.

Communiqué Drafting Committee of the Workshop

1. Mr. Hilary Ogbechie – NCAC – Chairman
2. Mr. Louis Eriomala – NICO – member
3. Dr. Ani Casimir K.C. – NICISOP – member
4. Mr. Emmanuel A. Odekanyin – FMTCNO – member
5. Bridget Chiedu Onochie – *The Guardian* Newspaper – Secretary