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Envisioning the Future of the Global Capacity-Building Programme and Its Facilitators' Network

A strategy meeting with facilitators

6-9 March 2017, Bangkok, Thailand

Meeting Report

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

The UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Section, in collaboration with the UNESCO Bangkok Office Culture Unit, organized a four-day strategy meeting on UNESCO's Global capacity-building Programme (hereafter 'the Programme') for the implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (hereafter 'the Convention') and its facilitators' network (hereafter 'the Network') in Bangkok, Thailand, 6-9 March 2017. The meeting brought together 14 facilitators from different regions, 7 UNESCO programme specialists from Field Offices and four members of the Convention's Secretariat. Observers included representatives from six UNESCO Category 2 centres with a mandate in the field of intangible cultural heritage.¹ The Secretary of the Convention, Tim Curtis, and his team facilitated the meeting.

The Section organized this meeting in the context of preparing UNESCO's next Quadrennial Programme (2018-2022) and with a view to develop new strategic directions for the future development of the Programme and its Network. More specifically, it pursued the following objectives:

- i. Consolidate facilitators' perspectives on the relevance and future potential of the Programme;
- ii. Assess the evolution, effects and potential of the Network; and
- iii. Develop ideas and recommendations for the future of the Programme and the Network.

This report provides an analytical summary of the presentations and discussions from the meeting and presents the conclusions and recommendations made:

- [Part I](#) sets the context for the discussions, providing an overview of the recent developments in the life of the Convention;

¹ CRIHAP: International Training Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (China)
IRCI: International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific region (Japan)
ICHCAP: International Information and Networking Centre for the Asia-Pacific Region (Republic of Korea)
CRESPIAL: Regional Centre for Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage of Latin America (Peru)
Regional Research Centre for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in West and Central Asia (Iran)
Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe (Bulgaria)

- [Part II](#) focuses on insights gained from UNESCO assessments in the context of discussions on the relevance and future potential of the Programme;
- [Part III](#) provides an overview of discussions on the Network and how it can be developed to meet evolving demands, and
- [Part IV](#) presents the new strategic directions and recommendations put forward during the meeting.

I. SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR DISCUSSIONS

A. Recent developments in the life of the Convention

Tim Curtis presented the recent developments and updates in the life of the Convention to contextualize the reflection on the Programme and its Network. He referred to decisions of the governing bodies, notably the sixth General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention (6.GA) and the eleventh session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (11.COM). The subjects covered included the following:

- **New Operational Directives (ODs) on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and sustainable development:** In 2016, the 6.GA adopted a new Chapter VI for the Convention's ODs entitled '[Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development at the national level](#)'.² The new chapter follows the structure of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – the outcome document prepared for the United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda. It explores the links between the safeguarding of ICH and sustainable development, including in the areas of inclusive social development, inclusive economic development, environmental sustainability and peace building. The ODs call upon States Parties to promote recognition of the importance of safeguarding ICH for sustainable development and integrate it in all relevant policies and programmes, including in national development strategies.

This topic triggered a substantive discussion on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and how the 2030 Agenda may present new opportunities for working with different development partners to integrate ICH in their strategies and programmes. The participants welcomed the new ODs and suggested a stronger collaboration with relevant development partners. However, they also underlined that care should be taken not to 'instrumentalise' ICH for sustainable development purposes that may not correspond to the safeguarding concerns of the bearer communities involved. Some participants warned that the concepts, structure of their targets and terminologies of the SDGs, may not always resonate with or translate readily into local community contexts, worldviews and understandings. Communities do not necessarily frame the safeguarding of their ICH with the SDGs in mind and caution is therefore required.

- **Improved accessibility to International Assistance (IA):** The 6.GA adopted changes in the ODs regarding IA to improve accessibility to the funds. The ceiling for requests that can be granted directly by a decision from the Committee's Bureau was increased from US\$25,000 to US\$100,000. Requests for amounts of up to US\$100,000 therefore do not have to go through the 18-month cycle of evaluation by the Evaluation Body and approval of the Committee, which means that State Parties can submit them at any time of the year for examination by the Bureau. Secondly, the 6.GA decisions say that, States Parties can submit IA requests intended to support the safeguarding of ICH in need of urgent safeguarding, together with a corresponding nomination file for possible inscription on the Urgent Safeguarding List using a new procedure contained in one nomination form ([ICH-01bis](#)).³

The group agreed that there is a great need to encourage more IA requests, given the underutilization of this mechanism to date. They welcomed the fact that the Secretariat had

² See [ITH/16-6-GA-7](#)

³ See [ITH/16-6-GA-7](#)

developed specific training materials to build capacities of national counterparts in this area as they had seen low capacities in countries and communities to develop and manage safeguarding projects.

- **Developing an Overall Results Framework for the Convention and rethinking periodic reporting:** The results framework intends to provide a tool to monitor the implementation of the Convention and draw conclusions about progress made. The Committee requested an [open-ended intergovernmental working group meeting in Chengdu, China](#) (June 2017) to agree on a set of draft indicators and assessment factors to complete the framework for submission to the Committee session in December 2017. One key issue is the question of where and how to generate the data required to monitor progress towards outcomes according to the indicators established. In this regard, the periodic reporting mechanism of the Convention could play an important role. A review of the format and process of the periodic reporting mechanism is proposed to make it more efficient and align it with the new results framework.

The group expressed enthusiasm about this initiative and underlined that the results framework and the related reporting could have a positive effect on countries' capacities to develop policies and strategies for effective ICH safeguarding. They observed the absence of systematic monitoring of the implementation of the Convention at the national level and lack of capacity in this field. Some had been asked to support the drafting of the periodic report and expressed concern that these are often the result of desk studies by individual consultants and not a consultative process.

- **Building knowledge on how to support safeguarding ICH in emergencies:** The Committee discussed this topic for the first time at the 11.COM in the context of the broader strategy to reinforce UNESCO's house-wide action for the protection of culture and the promotion of cultural pluralism in the event of armed conflict.⁴ The Committee emphasized that future action would have to respond to different types of emergency situations, including natural disasters, displaced people and conflict. As information on ICH in emergencies is not yet systematically available, the Secretariat was asked, as a first step, to focus on consolidating more information on the topic and brief the Committee at its next session.

The group welcomed UNESCO's approach to focus on a range of different emergencies. They emphasized that each situation requires different measures and has its own governmental, political and humanitarian context that any action should take into account, including capacity-building activities.

- **Integrating ICH in education:** This is a new programmatic area for the Section. Article 2 of the Convention includes transmission through formal and non-formal education in the list of safeguarding measures. Article 14 furthermore calls for the recognition of, respect for, and enhancement of ICH through education. Several paragraphs of the ODs give further guidance on this topic. The Section has started to seize the momentum created with the adoption of SDG 4 on quality education to collaborate with the Education Sector on this topic. Target 4.7 explicitly mentions learning to respect cultural diversity and understanding the role of culture to development, as well as education for global citizenship and peace education. There is much scope for integrating ICH into education to increase inclusion, educational relevance and quality. A [consultation meeting](#) on this topic was held in May 2017 with the UNESCO regional education offices, institutes and programmes.

The participants appreciated the discussion on recent developments as they find themselves often approached by trainees and national counterparts to respond to these questions. The Secretariat, in turn, felt that hearing the facilitators' perspectives was very helpful for its work, as they bring first-hand experience of how the Convention is implemented at country level.

⁴ See [ITH/16/11.COM/15](#)

B. Update and feedback on the capacity-building curriculum

The Secretariat gave a short presentation on recent and ongoing developments in the Programme's curriculum. Topics covered included the comprehensive guidance note for facilitators on providing policy advice for safeguarding ICH, new case studies on policy development, interactive workshop materials on developing safeguarding plans, updated nomination materials, new units on gender and the mainstreaming of gender and ethics in the materials to reflect the latest decisions of the Committee. The updated materials are available [online](#).

The Secretariat opened discussion for feedback and suggestions for new training materials in sustainable development and IA.

- **Advice on developing new materials on safeguarding ICH and sustainable development:** UNESCO asked the facilitators what kind of training or guidance materials could be useful to build capacities for the effective implementation of Chapter VI of the ODs.

A challenge for the Programme is to reach all relevant actors, including people and institutions working on policies and programmes that do not specifically focus on safeguarding ICH, but that either affect safeguarding or could play a role in supporting ICH safeguarding. The facilitators highlighted the need for guidance and advocacy materials to support closer collaboration between these different government agencies and initiatives on sustainable development. They underlined the need for practical ways to integrate ICH in sustainable development, and the importance of linking ICH safeguarding efforts with existing sustainable development projects, notably at the decentralized level, to build on existing efforts and work in local contexts.

The new materials should therefore be prepared for government officials, development actors, other UN agencies and NGOs who are working in different policy and programme areas. The objective should be to equip these actors with a solid understanding of the connection between ICH and sustainable development and with the knowledge to integrate community-based approaches to ICH safeguarding in their policies and programmes.

- **Feedback on draft IA materials:** The Secretariat circulated the draft materials on elaborating IA requests prior to the meeting. They follow a similar approach as the nomination materials, comprising mock assistance requests and exercises with the task to improve them during a training. Additionally, the new materials introduce basic project development skills, such as formulating objectives, identifying activities, costing them and developing a timeline for implementation.

The group appreciated the inclusion of multinational IA requests in the new materials. They supported the idea to disseminate the new materials as widely as possible through the Programme and to organize trainings upon demand, either separately as specific training sessions, such as with national ICH Committees, or as integrated with other training workshops. They noted that participants often ask them in training workshops about funding possibilities to support ICH safeguarding in their country or community and the materials will be useful in this regard.

The group furthermore highlighted several areas where the training materials and modalities of the Programme could be further developed. They welcomed more audio-visual training materials and appreciated the first video tutorial of the SAFE workshop, based on the training held in Curaçao. The possibility of online training materials was also discussed.

II. THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

The sessions aimed to share insights about the key achievements and challenges of the Programme and think collaboratively about strategic priorities for the future. It addressed the

first objective of the meeting: to consolidate facilitators' perspectives on the relevance and potential of the Programme, and addressed the following key questions:

1. What are the main **achievements** of the capacity-building programme?
2. What were the main implementation **challenges** encountered by facilitators and how were or could they be addressed?
3. What are the **gaps** identified throughout the implementation of the programme and how could they be addressed?

A. UNESCO assessments

Following a warm-up exercise to map participants' views on these questions, which were later discussed in group-work sessions, the Secretariat presented some insights gained from recent UNESCO assessments of implementing the Programme at the national level. These included:

i. Multi-country project evaluations

The results from two multi-country project evaluations in Portuguese-speaking Africa (Angola, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe) and Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) were presented.

The PALOP project brought the five project countries, which previously had difficulties engaging with the Convention due to language barriers, into the Convention process. The project supported the ratification process in three countries, led to the establishment of dedicated ICH departments, councils or committees in all countries, and developed inventory frameworks that were tested in seven communities in four countries. The project, furthermore, equipped key officials with the required knowledge and skills for the elaboration of IA requests, trained three facilitators from the sub-region and initiated a sub-regional cooperation network for capacity building and information exchange on the implementation of the Convention.

The Central Asian project helped to strengthen ministry departments to include ICH safeguarding in their strategies and succeeded in gradually mobilizing the different stakeholder groups, including communities and NGOs, in collaborative work for the implementation of the Convention. Through the project, countries developed community-based inventory frameworks and increased their participation in the governing bodies and the listing mechanism.

The evaluation showed the need to expand capacity building to additional areas, including the elaboration of safeguarding plans, policy development and integration of safeguarding ICH in sustainable development programmes. Moreover, the issue of sustainability would require solidifying institutional capacities and the development of national mechanisms to ensure ongoing capacity development at all levels. In this regard, further resource mobilization efforts by the Secretariat and the countries are needed to sustain Programme achievements.

ii. Cross-regional analysis of the facilitators' reports

The cross-regional analysis examined 73 facilitators' reports from workshops carried out in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Arab States since 2011. According to the report, the participants confirmed the relevance of the Programme and maintained that a workshop approach was not enough, but that policy support and stakeholder engagement should also be integrated into capacity-building activities at the national level.

The facilitators furthermore highlighted continued issues in workshop logistics and organization, notably language difficulties and the need to invest in sufficient interpretation and translation services. The need to identify participants with the most relevant profiles for workshops was raised as a critical element to ensure the success of the Programme. In addition, the analysis showed that facilitators saw the need for greater workshop follow-up and monitoring activities during periods between workshops.

Based on the analysis, the Secretariat has reviewed its strategy and addressed the recommendations in collaboration with facilitators and Field Offices. For example, more time and care has since been invested at the country level to identify participants for capacity-building activities, who would be best placed to use the new knowledge and skills acquired through the training workshops. The Secretariat also developed a checklist to help improve the practical and logistic aspects of organizing training workshops and introduced policy development support in the curriculum and operational projects at country level.

iii. Pilot tracer study: follow-up study with participants of training activities

The pilot tracer study was carried out in 2016 to test a methodology to generate information on the short-term effects of the Programme, focusing on trainees' engagement with safeguarding ICH at the individual level and how they utilize the new knowledge and skills in their work. The participants interviewed in Namibia and Nepal highlighted that they appreciated the new knowledge and skills acquired through the training and spoke of the empowering effect that the training had on them personally. Moreover, they valued how the workshop created a network of trained professionals at the country level, which opened up certain professional opportunities for them in their work. However, they also noted that the training workshops was only the first step, and that there was a need for a more structured follow up after training had concluded. Decentralization and the important role of national trainers also emerged as key points during the interviews, pointing to the continued challenges of replication at the country level.

B. Discussion highlights

The findings from the UNESCO assessments provided 'food for thought' for the strategic discussions on the future of the Programme. In particular, the participants highlighted the challenge of ensuring the Programme's 'ripple effects' and that project achievements are sustained at the country level. They highlighted the following key issues:

▪ Strengthening capacities of national institutions

Strengthening the capacities of national institutions to implement the Convention remains a challenge. National institutions may be affected by frequent staff changes and may not necessarily have the capacity to fully exploit the new knowledge and skills acquired through the Programme.

The parameters of institutional capacity building, however, are not straightforward. Institutional capacity building is a complex question and the reform of institutions is perhaps beyond the scope of the Programme. There are no standard prescriptions when it comes to capacity building and the first step is perhaps to understand where the institutional weaknesses lie. Institutional capacity building requires a systemic approach. It includes strengthening human and financial resources, building collaboration mechanisms between actors, encouraging networking and partnerships, and the development of policies and strategies that guide collaborative action.

The Secretariat has addressed the need for institutional capacity building by including policy development in the Programme and the facilitators appreciated this development as an important step forward. However, institutional capacity building can only have the desired effects, if adequate funding is mobilized at country level with support mobilized through partnerships and international cooperation mechanisms.

▪ Community participation in institutional capacity building

While community participation in safeguarding is a key principle of the Convention, a realistic approach that recognizes the challenges of having community members involved in official bodies is necessary. Community members have their own concerns and may not have the capacity or interest to work with larger government or civil structures to safeguard ICH. However, the facilitators can play a role in connecting different stakeholders through the

Programme by moderating the dialogue between them and helping to embed capacity building in longer-term national strategies for safeguarding ICH. In this regard, administrators at provincial and district levels have an important role to play. In many cases, they are the key contact points on the ground, with knowledge of the communities and local social structures, and connections with institutional and governmental counterparts. Facilitators underscored the central role of communities in the Convention and admitted that while they are aware of the many challenges, they do not see a collective space to discuss these. Some countries may have examples of good collaboration with communities and it would be interesting to share these through the Programme and its Network.

- **Partnership building within countries**

Strengthening institutional-level relations and partnerships in countries is key to the capacity-building process. The group underlined that while governments may be often prone to changes of personnel and structure, other institutions and organizations may be more stable in carrying on capacity-building activities and therefore well placed to take on a stronger role in this regard.

NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs)

NGOs, CBOs and other local institutions working in areas relating to safeguarding ICH can play an important role. While efforts have been made to include NGOs and CBOs in capacity-building activities, more work could be done to strengthen their involvement, particularly with regard to those organizations who have experience working with communities at the local level.

UN agencies and programmes

Similarly, partnerships with different UN agencies could be strengthened. The facilitators highlighted a particular need for greater advocacy with UN agencies who may not work in the field of culture. Partnerships with other UN agencies can furthermore present a strategic entry point for the Programme in some contexts where it may lack the operational capacities or thematic expertise.

Universities

Where universities with relevant experiences exist, they can become partners to support capacity building locally. They may have expertise and research in the different thematic areas related to the Convention, such as sustainable development, gender, and policy issues. However, partnership strategies should always keep in mind the Convention's focus on community-led safeguarding initiatives.

- **National networks of trainers**

The group widely agreed on the importance of national trainers to ensure the sustainability of the Programme. National trainers have a strong understanding of the local context and can deliver training in local languages at the decentralized level. They are important as a liaison between the local/national and regional/international levels and can help to establish a sense of ownership over the Programme. Experiences from Southern Africa, for example, showed how national trainings helped prepare local trainers to deliver the inventorying module in nine communities across Namibia.

The group shared their experiences and strategies to establish national networks of trainers. One strategy, which has already been implemented in some places, is a mentoring system, whereby potential national trainers are identified during workshops and partnered with a more experienced member of the global network to provide guidance and advice. In cases where countries are remote, such as the Pacific Islands, mentoring could also take place over distance using online technologies, such as Skype.

The pairing of facilitators has been a principle of the Programme since its beginning and facilitators welcome this approach as a good way to share the workload, discuss challenges,

mirror one's own performance and find inspiration in seeing how the co-facilitator approaches the task. However, the group noted that the approach only works if both facilitators have the required knowledge on the workshop topic and local context. This was apparently not always the case and participants highlighted the importance of ensuring the best possible match between facilitators' profile and the specific task and context. Many considered sound knowledge of the local context to be as important for a successful training activity as sound knowledge of the subject matter. They consequently suggested that efforts should be made to pair facilitators accordingly.

The group, however, remained unresolved on the best way to approach national trainings and how it could be integrated into the global capacity-building strategy. Countries are at varied stages of implementation and a flexible approach is required to ensure that trainings meet local needs rather than a more blanket approach. Local partners will be key when identifying and training future facilitators in country.

III. THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF THE NETWORK

UNESCO provided a short overview of the history of the Network. It recalled that initially the Network was set up as a pool of experts trained to use and adapt the capacity-building curriculum developed by UNESCO to deliver training workshops at country level. However, since the early Programme days in 2011, the Network has evolved and the landscape of actors has changed. Today the Network has become an important resource and a respected player to support the safeguarding of ICH through the implementation of the Convention. Moreover, in light of challenges to human and financial resources, the Secretariat underscored the need to explore institutional-level partnerships to grow and sustain the Network in the future.

A. Findings from the UNESCO online facilitators' survey

The Secretariat presented the findings from an **online survey** it fielded prior to the meeting to assess the Network and its effects on the facilitators. More than 100 facilitators received the survey, with a 50% response rate. The survey addressed three key concerns, which are presented below with a brief overview. More details are available in the [Survey Report](#):

i. The relevance and efficiency of the facilitators' network for the implementation of the capacity-building programme

Irrespective of when facilitators joined the Network, the regions they worked in, or the number of capacity-building activities they carried out, facilitators reported that the Network added value to their work in implementing the Convention. The key benefits of membership in the Network mentioned, included opportunities for networking, knowledge sharing and information gathering, learning from comparative experiences, and simply moral support.

ii. The effects that membership in the Network had on the roles and activities of facilitators

Membership in the Network had manifold effects on the roles and activities of facilitators, offering opportunities for providing advisory services and engaging in collaborative activities (i.e. joint research, preparing nomination files, providing policy advice). In addition, the survey noted the 'spillover' effects of membership in the professional lives of facilitators, such as academic research, publishing, university-level teaching and consulting.

iii. Ideas and suggestions for the future development of the Network

Concrete ideas for the future development of the Network included requesting regular meetings at regional and international levels and stronger involvement in Programme evaluation. The respondents also suggested a mechanism for facilitators to form regional networks. Respondents felt that the Network should engage more in a thematic reflection on relevant issues and global trends, and explore new thematic areas for capacity building relevant to safeguarding ICH (i.e. emergencies, sustainable development and gender).

B. Participants' perspectives

The participants split into small groups to discuss the survey findings. The highlights from the group work were discussed in plenary and focused on the following themes:

- **The expanding role of the facilitator**

The role of the facilitator has expanded significantly and become multifaceted over time. In many cases, the facilitators have come to provide services that go beyond their role as trainers, such as policy support, assistance with project development, mediating between different stakeholders, advising on multiple subjects, and more.⁵ One facilitator referred to their present role as regional/national 'implementing agents' for the Convention.

Some facilitators have become focal points for ICH issues in their own countries. Others act as reference persons for ICH-related questions in the countries that they have facilitated. Their accumulated experience has given rise to an evolving narrative on the implementation of the Convention, which they share with UNESCO through review meetings and analytical reports completed after carrying out capacity-building activities.

The facilitators welcomed their expanded role, but identified emerging challenges as they managed these multiple responsibilities. Some felt they lacked knowledge about the local context in specific settings and questioned whether their facilitation and mediation was effective in concrete situations. The different roles of facilitators demand a different set of skills and knowledge. Facilitating a field visit, for example, is different to delivering a presentation on a specific aspect of the Convention. Likewise, conducting a meeting with a Minister or providing guidance in discussions with officials on policy options for safeguarding ICH, requires yet another and even more complex set of competencies.

In some instances, facilitators explained that the media had approached them as if they represented UNESCO and expected them to have specific knowledge about the latest developments of the Convention. When they are under a UNESCO contract, the facilitators expressed uncertainty as to what extent they could bring in their personal perspectives.

- **Framing the future of the Network**

Goal and function of the Network

The ultimate purpose of the Network is to effectively support the safeguarding of ICH. While originally it was set up as a pool of trained experts to deliver capacity-building services for UNESCO, it has developed into a network of resource person recognized and solicited by many different partners.

In light of these evolutions, the Network has a two-fold function. On the one hand, it provides a resourceful pool of expertise that the Secretariat and other partners can turn to, when a country requests training and advisory support for the effective implementation of the Convention. On the other hand, it provides network members with the necessary support to equip and empower them to play their different roles effectively.

Organizing and structuring the Network

The facilitators said that part of the Network's strength is the flexible way in which it has developed. However, a more structured framework could be useful so that external parties can readily identify the Network as a resource. A more structured framework may also serve to leverage its relationship with UNESCO when responding to capacity-building requests and it could facilitate networking among the members. Some degree of structuring is therefore

⁵ The expansion of these roles was raised as early as the 2012 '[Review Meeting on the Global Strategy for Strengthening National Capacities for Safeguarding ICH](#)' (Beijing), when discussions referred to a shift from a 'workshop approach' to an 'integrated project approach.'

important for the functioning of the Network. Yet, this does not imply a hierarchal structure. The question is what is too much structuring and what is not enough.

Further structuring is possible without stifling opportunities for facilitators' roles to evolve with UNESCO and other bodies soliciting their expertise. Some facilitators suggested that the Network could be organized around geographic or thematic demands for capacity building and members' areas of expertise and interest. These areas of expertise would need to be further defined.

The Secretariat, countries and organizations that solicit the support of facilitators should be able to easily identify the best-suited profiles for the tasks to be commissioned. Similarly, network members should have the possibility to identify other facilitators for support or collaboration.

Many facilitators see benefits of having regional or sub-regional branches of the global Network, which UNESCO strengthens through regional training of trainers' workshops and review meetings.

Membership and expansion

The expansion and strengthening of the Network regionally is necessary to ensure that there are an adequate number of facilitators with expertise and contextual knowledge to respond to the growing demand for capacity building around the world. So far, the Programme has mainly taken new facilitators on board through regional or sub-regional training of trainers workshops. In this approach, newcomers are identified among the participants from capacity-building projects and a mentoring system is organized to support them when co-facilitating a training workshop. This approach seemed to have worked in several sub-regions, including in PALOP countries, the Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific. The participants did not have strong suggestions for how to expand the Network, but several underscored the need to keep in mind the Network's reputation as a reliable and reputed resource base.

Providing a support mechanism to its members

The facilitators welcomed the training of trainers workshops which had focused on familiarizing facilitators with the training approach and content of the Programme or reviewing the Programme to date.

However, with their expanding role, the facilitators expressed the need for more support. For instance, they would appreciate having more opportunities to share experiences about challenges and collectively analyze their experiences with a view to strengthen their competencies, networking and confidence in assuming their various roles. Furthermore, some suggested that training workshops could be organized according to themes, which require different competencies. Not all facilitators need to master all the roles and training workshops could be organized accordingly, as has been the case with training on policy development.

More networking could happen among members around the emerging areas of expertise. Members with expertise in one area could share ideas with those who are interested, but may not (yet) have that experience. In this way, the Network would consolidate these new experiences and new technology could be used to facilitate this exchange.

Connecting with other relevant networks

Some participants felt that it could be interesting for network members to strengthen partnerships with other relevant networks and institutions. These could include, for instance, relevant research networks or community organizations working on ICH related issues. This kind of networking is already taking place for many network members, who are members of several networks and have created some synergies between them.

Mobilizing support for the work of the Network

The facilitators welcomed the regional training of trainers workshops. In this regard, appreciation was expressed for the collaborations with Category 2 Centres with a mandate in the field of capacity building, notably CRESPIAL, CRIHAP and the Regional Centre in Sofia, Bulgaria and their ongoing support. The Network has also benefitted from support from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund. The partnership with Category 2 Centres should continue and other partnerships should be explored to further sustain the work and delivery capacity of the Network, especially in times where the resources of the Secretariat are limited.

IV NEW STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

During the final session, the Secretariat summarized the key points discussed during the meeting and actions that could contribute to defining future strategies for the Programme and its Network.

The facilitators urged UNESCO to maintain capacity building as a strategic priority for supporting the effective implementation of the Convention. Assessments show that the Programme is still highly relevant and needed in many countries around the world. Some countries have not yet benefitted from the Programme while others require further capacity building in focused areas, such as policy development and elaborating safeguarding plans.

While the Programme has increased human capacities at the individual level, there is a continued need to strengthen institutional capacities to ensure the Programme's sustainability in the future. In the context of increasing budgetary uncertainty and the shifting global agenda, there will be a need to develop national and sub-regional capacity-building mechanisms and further reinforce and develop partnerships with a range of actors at the country level.

The expanded thematic and regional scope of the Programme implies new demands on facilitators, whose roles have evolved over the past six years. Moreover, the Network has evolved into a dynamic resource, recognised for its accumulated expertise and experiences, and solicited by local, regional and international partners to support the effective implementation of the Convention. To meet these changing demands, the facilitators advised that the organization and function of the Network should be adapted. The Network should provide the support mechanism that its members require to play their new roles effectively and, at the same time, expand to meet the growing demand for reliable expertise in all regions which vary in terms of social, cultural, political and linguistic context. Striving for high-quality services and acknowledging that not every facilitator has to deliver on all of the expected roles are important parameters when reorganizing and reshaping the network. It will be important that facilitators receive the support they need to play their role effectively and that UNESCO and its partners can easily identify facilitators whose profile best respond to specific requests for expertise.

As a last important strategic point, facilitators said that more thought should be given, to the question of how to provide efficient support to countries for the integration of ICH safeguarding in different policy and programme areas for sustainable development. While the Programme should focus on sensitization and advocacy for the importance of ICH safeguarding in all areas of sustainable development, and provide support to policy dialogue with relevant ministries and stakeholders, each theme will eventually require specific programmes. These could be developed through inter-sectoral and inter-disciplinary partnerships and, as far as possible, also draw upon the knowledge and expertise generated in the Programme and its Network. The new thematic UNESCO programme on integrating ICH in education is a good example in this regard.

In light of the new strategic directions proposed above, the meeting made a number of concrete recommendations for UNESCO's consideration regarding the future development of the Programme and its Network.

Recommendations

A. Delivery at country level

The participants emphasized the need to **sustain country programmes and activities**.

- Work with countries to put in place **‘national networks of trainers’** to sustain and replicate capacity building at decentralized levels, in particular through
 - ✓ national training of trainers workshop and support to networking among new trainers;
 - ✓ the identification of suitable institutional partners which could support future capacity-building activities and projects;
- Invest adequate time to identify **trainees with the best suitable profiles** to ensure that they utilize the new knowledge and skills acquired through participation in capacity-building activities;
- Strengthen the **focus on institutional development**, i.e. policy and strategy development, resource mobilization (IA requests), stakeholder mobilization, monitoring;
- Build understanding about the importance of **ICH for sustainable development** in line with the **Ethical Principles** for safeguarding ICH under the Convention, notably among decision-makers and development planners;
- Foster **collaboration with development programmes and experts** to strengthen the integration of safeguarding ICH in national strategies for sustainable development and relevant policies and programmes;
- Reinforce **national capacities to monitor and evaluate** the implementation of the Convention in countries using the opportunities of the Overall Results Framework and the periodic reporting mechanism;
- Enhance **cooperation with universities** and other relevant higher-education institutions working in the field of ICH for training;
- Explore **possibilities for resource mobilization and fundraising** to address ongoing demands for the continued effective implementation of the Convention.

B. New themes and priorities

Regarding the integration of new themes and priorities into the Programme, undertake the following:

- Develop more **tools and materials on ICH and sustainable development** in light of the recently adopted ODs on this theme
 - ✓ examples/illustrations to learn from
 - ✓ advocacy tools targeting decision makers and other development actors working in the field of sustainable development;
- Expand the **scope of the current training materials** to include, for example, training on monitoring and evaluation and more on project preparation, development and fundraising;
- Develop further the **‘guidance note’-approach** for relevant topics to complement the workshop training materials;
- Develop capacity-building approaches for **ICH safeguarding in emergency situations** (conflict, post-conflict, natural disasters);

- Enhance the **appeal of materials to target youth**, with a focus on audio-visual formats.

C. Global network development

Regarding the future development of the Network, which is facing the challenge of having to provide a support mechanism tailored to the changing role of facilitators and the growing and thematically more diversified demand for reliable expertise from countries, undertake the following:

- **Build on the existing knowledge and expertise of the Network** by facilitating the sharing of experiences and grouping facilitators around specific themes/topics of interest.
- **Develop a new approach to training activities for facilitators to support them in their new/expanded roles.** The new roles require a different approach than the current 'training of trainers approach' that focuses on familiarizing facilitators with curriculum materials developed by UNESCO. The new approach should be more competence-based and self-reflective, bringing facilitators together to share and analyze their experiences to better understand the challenges encountered and strengthen their confidence and creative ability to address them.
- **Support networking among network members** to strengthen self-confidence, provide access to information and experience of others as a way to learn from one another. In this regard:
 - ✓ Strengthen the regional branches of the network through activities, such as training and review workshops for network members or collecting regionally specific case studies. The good collaboration with relevant UNESCO category 2 centres can be pursued in regions where they exist;
 - ✓ Explore possibilities for organizing global meetings of network members to facilitate cross-regional exchange of facilitators' knowledge and experiences;
 - ✓ Use online tutorials to complement face-to-face support;
 - ✓ Try new ways to combine facilitators' expertise across regions;
 - ✓ Facilitate online exchanges among facilitators when preparing for capacity-building activities or to discuss specific thematic issues;
 - ✓ Encourage sharing of adapted and tailored training materials.
- **Expand the Network to respond to new demands as they arise.** These may relate to insufficient availability of facilitators in a specific (sub)region or the need for suitable profiles and expertise to provide the different capacity-building services (training, advising, monitoring, etc.) and cover the wide range of thematic areas of the Programme. To this end, combine initial training of newcomers with mentoring by experienced facilitators.
- **Improve the online presentation of the Network** to facilitate exchanges between network members and outside stakeholders. To this end, update the description of the Network and the information on individual members and establish a search system to find information on expertise and experiences by region(s) and themes.