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Final Narrative Report

Project title	Strengthening national capacities for effective safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in Central Asia
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Responsible sector	Culture
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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

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I. SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

UNESCO's strategic emphasis for the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage lies in the implementation of the global capacity-building strategy. Designed to strengthen countries' capacities for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, the strategy aims at harnessing the potential of living heritage for sustainable development while promoting broad public knowledge and support for the Convention's key concepts and objectives.

The strategy's long-term and multifaceted approach develops along evolving needs at national levels. It currently addresses the revision of policies and legislation; the redesign of institutional infrastructures; the development of inventory methods and systems; the full involvement of all key stakeholders in particular bearers and civil society in processes related to safeguarding; and the development of technical skills required to safeguard intangible cultural heritage.

Central Asia was identified as one of the priority regions with a full-fledged capacity-building programme for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan developed, and implemented thanks to a contribution from Norway to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund.

In 2003, the UNESCO Almaty and Tashkent Offices implemented several activities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in all four countries, which included promotion and inventorying. Valuable knowledge was gained on the status of safeguarding in the region and further capacity-building needs identified. In general, it was found that there was a lack of capacity for effective implementation of the Convention with few or no specialized institutions and experts in intangible cultural heritage. Consequently, despite activities implemented at country level, understanding of the Convention's core concepts and implementation mechanisms at national level and for international cooperation, was quite limited.

The first country to ratify the Convention within the region was Kyrgyzstan in 2006, closely followed by Uzbekistan in 2008, Tajikistan in 2010 and Kazakhstan in 2011. Although all four countries started to develop individual activities to safeguard their intangible cultural heritage immediately after ratification, most of the projects did not follow the provisions of the Convention.

The first of its kind to be implemented within the global capacity-building strategy, the project aimed to assist the beneficiary countries involved to effectively implement the Convention. It intended to build a critical mass of experience and knowledge in government institutions, specialised research and training centres, as well as among bearers and civil society so that countries would be equipped with an appropriate and sustainable framework to 'take the necessary measures to ensure the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage present in (their) territories' (Article 11 [a] of the Convention).

To respond to the specific needs identified for each country, a series of tailor-made workshops and field activities were conducted that provided a thorough understanding of their obligations at



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

the national level, and a substantial knowledge of the mechanisms of international cooperation established by the Convention. In this way, the project presented a sustained investment in human resources of the beneficiary countries, providing a core of intangible cultural heritage managers and civil society representatives with fundamental knowledge of the Convention and its mechanisms.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

UNESCO Offices in Almaty and Tashkent implemented the project in close cooperation with the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section at UNESCO Headquarters. UNESCO Tashkent was responsible for all activities in Uzbekistan and coordination of the translation and adaptation of all workshop materials. UNESCO Almaty covered activities in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and ensured the overall management and coordination of budgeting, evaluation and reporting for the project. Culture officers in each office oversaw the implementation of activities from a technical and logistical point of view.

The project was composed of three 10-day workshops for each of the four beneficiary countries tailored to respond to their identified needs. Delivered in each country from 2012 to 2014, the workshops included the following themes: implementation of the Convention at the national level; community-based inventorying; and understanding the processes of preparing nomination files to the Urgent Safeguarding List and the Representative List.

Usually, the workshops are implemented in the following order: implementation of the Convention, community-based inventorying then nominations. However, all four countries had a strong tradition of experts centrally coordinating inventorying so the inventorying workshops were held at the end of the project to give participants more time to understand and assimilate community-based approaches required by the Convention.

While the workshops on implementing the Convention and community-based inventorying brought together only participants at national level, all four workshops on preparing nominations files were organized with participation of representatives from the other three countries in order to strengthen sub-regional cooperation and discuss prospects for joint nominations to the Convention's Lists. Several multinational nomination files were developed and submitted to UNESCO in the immediate follow-up to these workshops.

Training workshops in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were conducted mainly in Russian, and Kazakh and Kyrgyz as needed. The three workshops in Uzbekistan were delivered in Russian and English with simultaneous translation into Uzbek. As the situations in the countries were quite diverse from a contextual and linguistic point of view, special attention was paid to translation and adaptation of workshop materials to the needs of the specific context and target audience. All materials were available in English and Russian and key materials also in Uzbek.



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

Each training workshop was conducted by two (in a few cases three) Russian-speaking facilitators from the network of UNESCO-trained expert facilitators: Mr Illya Fetysov (Ukraine), Mr Rieks Smeets (the Netherlands), Ms Sabira Soltongeldieva (Kyrgyzstan) and Mr Nikolai Vukov (Bulgaria).

The following training workshops were conducted (summaries in alphabetical order):

a) Implementing the Convention at the national level

Kazakhstan - The first workshop of the series was held from 6 to 10 April 2012 in Astana. It was organized by UNESCO Almaty in close co-operation with the National Commission for UNESCO and ISESCO, and the National Federation of UNESCO Clubs and Associations.

After the ratification of the Convention in 2011, Kazakhstan established the National Committee for Intangible Cultural Heritage responsible for implementation of the Convention in the country. The first workshop organized just a few months after the establishment of the National Committee was much appreciated as it allowed its members to discuss a number of key issues related to the organization of the Committee's work, roles and responsibilities. It also addressed questions related to the organization of inventorying work at the national level and existing legislative and structural frameworks.

Among the 18 participants from different parts of Kazakhstan who attended the workshop were officials from the Ministry of Culture and Information, the Agency for Tourism and Sport, representatives of leading universities, members of the National Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, experts from the UNESCO Observatory on Central Asia, as well as bearers, including artisans, musicians and storytellers. Most of the participants were over 50 years old (only four participants were below 40 years of age) and half of the participants were women.

After the workshop, members of the Committee further elaborated the idea of developing a specific programme on intangible cultural heritage at the national level. The State Programme entitled 'Rukhani Mura' was drafted and officially submitted to the Ministry of Culture.

Kyrgyzstan - Organized by UNESCO Almaty in close co-operation with the National Commission for UNESCO, the first workshop was held from 8 to 12 October 2012 in Bishkek.

Just before the project took off in Kyrgyzstan in June 2012, the country became a member of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. This has increased the visibility and importance of intangible heritage at the national level. The mechanism for implementing the Convention was reinforced by the adoption of a law on the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in July 2012. Debate during the workshop focused on the interaction between representatives of the Ministry of Culture in the regions, NGOs and bearers working in intangible cultural heritage on implementation of this law.

The facilitators adjusted the programme to the participant's background knowledge. Questions, such as the definition of intangible cultural heritage, the issue of languages, concepts of authenticity and folklore, and inventorying practices were raised. The nomination of 'Manas' by China to the Representative List of the Convention in 2009 raised many questions and helped illustrate how the Convention operates at the national and international level.

Thirty individuals took part in the workshop; 15 were from Bishkek city, the others came from the seven regions of Kyrgyzstan. Public administration, research institutions, NGOs and bearers were equally represented. Heads of culture departments responsible for cultural policy in the regions



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

and representatives of communities from the same regions interacted during the workshop in a very constructive way and discussed possible acceleration of inventorying processes at the regional level. The active participation of heads of culture departments has shown to be essential for successful implementation of the Convention.

Participants of the workshop elaborated a list of recommendations for further actions, which could then be discussed with the Deputy Minister of Culture and Tourism. The workshop was closed by Mr. Sultan Raev, Chairperson of the National Commission for UNESCO and special advisor to the President. After the workshop, membership of the National Committee was reorganized to include more civil society representatives, including bearers and NGOs.

Tajikistan - The workshop on implementation of the Convention was held from 21 to 25 August 2012 in Dushanbe. It was organized by UNESCO Almaty in close co-operation with the National Commission for UNESCO.

The welcoming speech of Ms Farogat Azizi, Deputy Minister for Culture, confirmed the commitment of Tajik authorities towards implementation of the Convention by announcing the creation of the National Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the State Programme for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage for 2013-2030 (which had already received support from the Government).

Twenty-two participants and five observers from governmental structures and NGOs attended this session. Participants were representatives from the Ministry of Culture, museums, cultural institutions, NGOs and bearers. Participants from remote areas were not very familiar with the Convention and its key concepts and were eager to learn more about them. The training was very much appreciated, and based on the results of the final workshop evaluation. Most participants considered knowledge gained as useful and believed they might apply it in their own work.

Mr Mirzoshokhrukh Asrori, Minister of Culture and Chairperson of the National Commission of Tajikistan for UNESCO closed the workshop. Reflection on the roles of the different key stakeholders in implementation of the Convention during the workshop led to a revision of the structure and membership of the National Committee on Intangible Heritage and it now involves representatives of academic institutions and civil society.

Uzbekistan - The workshop held from 3 to 7 July 2012 in Tashkent was organized by UNESCO Tashkent in close co-operation with the Ministry of Culture and Sport.

It aimed at strengthening capacities in the field of implementation of the Convention at national level. The specific objective was to provide a broad overview of the Convention and its Operational Directives, clarify what obligations States take on when ratifying the Convention and discuss possible ways of implementing the Convention at the national level. Identification, inventorying and safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, cooperation with communities, public awareness and international assistance were also addressed. The necessity of community participation was emphasized especially with regard to inventorying activities, which were so far, centralized under the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture and Sport.

Most of the 27 participants were experts associated with the Ministry of Culture and Sport and representatives of research and other institutions at the national and importantly, district level from across Uzbekistan. The majority of participants from the districts worked in regional departments of the Scientific and Methodical Centre of Folk Creativity, Culture and Enlightenment. Many participants were already involved in activities related to intangible cultural heritage, in particular, documenting and inventorying. About a third of participants were female and on average, younger



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

than their male colleagues and demonstrated strong ability to grasp quickly the new concepts and approaches presented by the Convention. The present bearers shared their valuable first-hand experience of enacting their heritage with the group.

Key stakeholders were equipped with essential knowledge of the Convention and its Operational Directives. The discussions made clear that, despite recent modifications of national legislation on the occasion of ratification of the Convention, some parts of the law needed to be further revised in order to be in line with the Convention. The same is valid for the existing inventorying system, which does not fully reflect the parameters established by the Convention.

Several of the workshop participants were selected for a team of national trainers on the Convention. The team has already conducted a number of training and information sessions throughout the country with more foreseen.

b) Understanding the nomination processes for inscription on the Lists of the Convention (NOM)

Kazakhstan - Organized by UNESCO Almaty in close co-operation with the National Commission for UNESCO and ISESCO and the National Federation of UNESCO Clubs, the workshop was held from 18 to 21 February 2013 in Almaty.

It targeted primarily Kazakh participants, mainly from the National Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the Agency for Tourism and Sport, leading universities and museums in the country, as well as NGOs in the field of crafts, traditional music and dance. In order to strengthen sub-regional cooperation, three participants from the neighbouring Central Asian countries (one from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) attended the workshop. The majority of the 21 participants were experts (only two practitioners) between 40 and 60 years of age and almost half of them were women. Six participants participated in a workshop on implementation of the Convention, five of them within the current project (April 2012, Astana).

The workshop provided an opportunity to improve participants' knowledge on international mechanisms of the Convention. The presence of experts on intangible cultural heritage from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan offered an excellent opportunity to exchange experiences in safeguarding and allowed participants to discuss prospects for possible nominations of elements shared by communities in Central Asian countries.

The most heated debates were raised around the question of if it was appropriate to consider professional performers of traditional music and dance as bearers of intangible cultural heritage. Discussions also involved the administration of intellectual property rights for traditional knowledge and cultural expressions.

Kyrgyzstan - The workshop on nominations was held from 28 to 31 May 2013 in Bishkek. It was organized by UNESCO Almaty in close co-operation with the National Commission of Kyrgyzstan for UNESCO.

Twenty seven representatives of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, National Academy of Sciences, NGOs, as well as bearers of intangible cultural heritage from several regions of the country attended the workshop. One representative from Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan was also invited to discuss possible joint nominations.

After the workshop at the Ministry of Culture, participants from Kyrgyzstan discussed outcomes, which included improvement of the inventorying and data collection systems, coordination of



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

current safeguarding measures in all administrative areas and development of proposals for future activities at the national level. In parallel, the National Committee for Intangible Heritage appointed institutions to be in charge of nominations of intangible cultural heritage present at the national level, as well as nominations of elements shared within the sub-region.

Tajikistan - The workshop held from 10 to 13 April 2013 in Dushanbe was organized by UNESCO Almaty in close co-operation with the National Commission for UNESCO.

Twenty-three participants represented the National Commission for UNESCO, Ministry of Culture, Institute for Culture and Information, National Conservatory, academic and educational institutions, central and regional museums, libraries, foundations of traditional music and crafts and NGOs.

Using elements such as Nowruz, Suzane, Chatkal or Falah as case studies, the workshop focused on clarifying procedures for the preparation and submission of nomination files for the Lists established under the Convention. It was closed by Mr Mirzoshokhrukh Asrori, Minister of Culture and Chairperson of the National Commission of Tajikistan for UNESCO.

As an immediate follow-up to the workshop, the Ministry established an expert working group under the National Committee for Intangible Cultural Heritage composed of participants of the workshop representing all domains of the Convention.

Uzbekistan - Held from 21 to 24 November 2012 in Samarkand, the workshop was organized by UNESCO Tashkent in close co-operation with the Ministry of Culture and Sport and support from authorities of the Samarkand Province.

It aimed at strengthening national capacities for the elaboration of nomination files for inscription on the Lists of the Convention. Participants from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were also invited to discuss possible joint projects.

Nine of the 26 participants took part in the workshop on implementing the Convention organized in July 2012 and thus were at ease in actively participating in the workshop as they had already acquired sound knowledge and understanding of the Convention's key concepts. It was more challenging for the 'new' participants who had to absorb a lot of information on the Convention and its key concepts, as well as the nomination processes. One of the recommendations of this workshop was therefore, to add a special day dedicated to basics of the Convention for newcomers of future workshops. Close to half of the participants were women.

In the follow-up to the workshop, Uzbekistan prepared and submitted a nomination file on 'Askiya, the art of wit' for possible inscription on the Representative List within the 2014 cycle (the file was successfully inscribed in 2014).

The participation of experts from other Central Asian countries allowed fruitful discussions on possible elaboration of multinational nomination files.

c) Community-based inventorying of intangible cultural heritage (INV)

Kazakhstan - The workshop held from 22 to 29 November 2013 in Shymkent was organized by UNESCO Almaty in close co-operation with the National Commission for UNESCO and ISESCO and the Kazakhstan National Federation of UNESCO Clubs.

Twenty-two participants represented the National Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the Ministry of Culture and Information, leading universities and museums,



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

NGOs in the field of crafts, traditional music and dance and bearers. Women and men were represented almost equally; 6 participants were from the younger generation, 12 were middle-aged and 4 were elderly.

The theoretical sessions were followed by four days of inventorying exercises organized in different areas around the city of Shymkent (Sary-Agash, Arys and Turkestan). Participants were divided into several groups, which focused on inventorying of different types of crafts (weaving, ceramic, jewellery and leather making), traditional music and singing, as well as traditional practices related to sacred places and mausoleums. Participants then consolidated knowledge in a discussion session, which analysed in detail all inventorying material collected in the field.

For the follow-up to the workshop, participants suggested the delivery of similar workshops in other parts of Kazakhstan to reach out to more communities and practitioners and allow them to actively participate in implementation of the Convention.

Kyrgyzstan - Organized by UNESCO Almaty and the National Commission of Kyrgyzstan for UNESCO, this workshop was held from 24 to 31 August 2013 in Cholpon-Ata.

It embraced discussions about principles and methods of inventorying, including those related to technical skills, as well as the process of preparation for fieldwork and community participation in identification and inventorying of intangible cultural heritage.

Twenty-five participants represented members of various communities, research institutions, the Ministry of Culture and regional departments of culture, museums and NGOs from all regions of the country. Four participants were male and 21 female; 12 had participated in previous workshops organized within the project.

The Issyk-Kul region was chosen as a workshop venue as it offered ideal conditions for the theoretical and practical component of the workshop. Participants were first trained in approaches to identifying, defining, inventorying and documenting intangible cultural heritage and then spent four days doing inventorying work in the region. They had the chance to work with practitioners of yurt-makers, a toolmaker of national instruments, weavers, a seven year-old Manas epic teller, an elderly lady playing *komuz*, a folk song singer, a bearer of knowledge on traditional medicine, and a bearer of knowledge on sacred sites of the Issyk-Kul region.

During the inventorying practice, participants did not reach a consensus on the question of if a practice should be included in the inventory or not. One example was a woman who performed her own songs in a folk style, while another was a woman who treated stones based on knowledge received from her dreams, which do not fall under the common intangible heritage transmission process (from teacher to student).

Participants particularly appreciated the practical experience they gained in inventorying followed by a critical analysis of information obtained from bearers.

Tajikistan - The inventory workshop was held from 11 to 17 May 2014 in Dushanbe and was organized by UNESCO Almaty in co-operation with the Scientific Research Institute of Culture and Information.

The workshop familiarized participants with the basic principles of inventorying as understood by the Convention, providing them with practical skills ranging from planning and developing of an inventorying framework, to data collection and establishment of inventorying cards.



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

The eighteen participants of the workshop represented leading universities, libraries and museums of the country, NGOs in the field of crafts, traditional music and dance and bearers. Fourteen were from Dushanbe and four were from local communities of the regions. Experts of the working group established under the National Committee for Intangible Cultural Heritage participated in all sessions of the training workshop.

Inventoring exercises in rural areas around Dushanbe focused on traditional handicrafts (the manufacturing of mats and musical instruments in Gissar), performers of *surnay* (wind musical instrument) and *doira* (percussion instrument), knowledge of female folk singers and dance performances in Karotog and a performer of the Tajik epic Gurugli in the mountain village of Obi-Hirf. Participants were divided into several groups to conduct interviews, make photo and video recordings and fill out the proposed inventoring questionnaire for the workshop translated into Tajik. Results of each field exercise were later discussed and analysed.

After the workshop, specialists from the Institute of Language, Literature and Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences, together with bearers from the Kulob community prepared the 'Chakan' nomination, which was submitted for possible inscription on the Representative List in the 2014 inscription cycle (not inscribed).

Uzbekistan - Held from 8 to 15 October 2013 in Fergana, the inventoring workshop was organized by UNESCO Tashkent and the Ministry of Culture and Sport with the support of local authorities of the Fergana province.

While covering essentially all theoretical basics on inventoring, the workshop was adapted to match the diversity of participants' knowledge and expectations, as well as the extensive field work possibilities with communities and practitioners in the Fergana valley. The workshop included a number of practical sessions at the main venue in Fergana, as well as in Rishtan, Vadil, Kokand, Margilan and Kuva villages.

Among the 27 participants who attended the workshop, 11 were active practitioners and 8 had been previously engaged in working with communities, mainly in documenting living heritage.

The field exercises in and around Fergana focused on identifying and defining intangible cultural heritage in domains such as traditional craftsmanship (pottery, weaving and production of musical instruments and natural dyes) or performing arts (Kokond Yor-yori, Darbozlar and Katta Ashula). Commercialization was an important issue in the discussions, raised several times by the participating bearers. They stated that they would not be able to continue practising their intangible cultural heritage if they could not make a living from it.

It is important to mention that the inventoring process in Uzbekistan, strongly supported by the project, is in the process of changing approaches. It is now focusing more on inventories in the regions with a stronger involvement of communities and bearers, who are now taking care of identifying and defining their heritage, and, in particular doing audiovisual documentation, filling in inventoring questionnaires and discussing best practises for safeguarding.

In the follow-up to all three workshops, the State Institute of Culture and Art of Uzbekistan prepared a special curriculum focusing on intangible cultural heritage. A specific one-month course was included in the regular curricula of teachers to increase their competence in the field of intangible cultural heritage and its safeguarding.



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

III. PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS

The current project was implemented under Main Line of Action 2 of the Major Programme IV: Supporting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions, the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and the development of cultural and creative industries, ER 6: National capacities strengthened and utilised to safeguard intangible cultural heritage, including indigenous and endangered languages, through the effective implementation of the 2003 Convention. Therefore, it was implemented in line with UNESCO's strategic emphasis on strengthening capacities of national counterparts to meet their obligations for safeguarding, and benefit from the opportunities and mechanisms of international cooperation created under the Convention.

By strengthening capacities in Central Asian countries, the project responded directly to identified needs. It covered the core concepts of the Convention and provided all four beneficiary countries with a thorough understanding of their obligations at the national level, and substantial knowledge of the mechanisms of international cooperation established under the Convention.

The project was successful in helping countries mobilize and bring together different groups of key stakeholders for the safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and implementing the Convention. They were trained on basic concepts and mechanisms of the Convention, which they then used to strengthen their national committees on intangible cultural heritage. Furthermore, it created commitment among national counterparts to review their current policies and legal frameworks and gave new impetus to inventorying work. It also resulted in the integration of intangible cultural heritage in national development strategies, notably in the field of education and in beneficiary countries' increased participation in international cooperation mechanisms of the Convention evident from nominations submitted for possible inscription on the Convention's Lists.

Besides the expected outputs, the project generated a number of direct and indirect results. In Kazakhstan, for example, the initial consultations and preparatory activities for this project supported ongoing efforts for the ratification of the Convention, which was accomplished in December 2011 when Kazakhstan became the 142nd State Party to the Convention. Following ratification, the country immediately established a National Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Implementation of the capacity-building project also resulted in increased awareness of and commitment to intangible cultural heritage in Kyrgyzstan reflected by the application and subsequent election of Kyrgyzstan to serve as member of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage for 2012 to 2016 by the fourth session of the General Assembly of the States Parties. This election has not only further increased visibility of intangible cultural heritage and the Convention at national level, but has provided and will continue to provide additional opportunities for cooperation and capacity building at the sub-regional and international levels.

Furthermore, Kyrgyzstan submitted for the first time a nomination to the Urgent Safeguarding List for the 2012 cycle, thereby demonstrating its strong commitment to the safeguarding of endangered heritage and a good understanding of the purposes of the Convention centred on safeguarding ('Ala-kiyiz and Shyrdak, art of Kyrgyz traditional felt carpets' was inscribed on the USL in 2012).

It is also noteworthy that Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan submitted (some for the first time) nominations to the Representative List for the 2013, 2014 and 2015 cycles. Their increased participation in the mechanisms of the Convention is one of the visible effects of efforts made at national level within the framework of this capacity-building project.



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

In all four countries, important steps were undertaken to create new or improve existing structures for safeguarding at the national level. Now that the project has ended, all beneficiary countries have operational intangible cultural heritage committees in place. Moreover, some of the existing national institutions working with intangible heritage are currently under review with the objective to redefine their roles and functions to better serve safeguarding purposes.

Inventories and inventorying systems in all four beneficiary countries were discussed in depth by key stakeholders during the workshops. Several of the countries are shifting towards a more participative bottom-up approach of community-based inventorying.

The knowledge acquired in training in Uzbekistan was immediately used to conduct further workshops at the local level. The Scientific and Methodical Centre of Folk Creativity, Culture and Enlightenment of the Ministry of Culture conducted in 2012 and 2013 a series of intangible cultural heritage-related workshops and information sessions for specialists and community members at the local level in the Navoi and Khorezm regions, Boysun (Surkhandarya region), Karakalpakstan and Tashkent. Most of them hosted representatives from all four provinces of Uzbekistan. Creation of similar teams in the other three participating countries was recommended by final evaluation of the project and is planned for the near future.

a) The legislative framework and State programmes

During the project period, the beneficiary countries took the initiative to identify needs for improvement of legislation related to intangible cultural heritage; elaborate state programmes; and in some cases, allocate budgets to support safeguarding.

Kazakhstan developed the 'Conception on the Safeguarding and Development of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Republic of Kazakhstan' which was adopted through a government decree on 21 September 2013. The Conception is defining authority and responsibilities of the Ministry of Culture and Sport, the Ministry of Education and Science, the National Commission of Kazakhstan for UNESCO and ISESCO and the National Committee for Intangible Cultural Heritage. Unfortunately, no budget allocations have been made for its implementation so far.

The Law on Culture of Kazakhstan is currently not in line with the spirit of the Convention and no changes have been foreseen by the authorities so far. For 2015, the Ministry of Culture and Sports requested substantive funding for the creation of a national inventory of intangible cultural heritage, but funding has not yet been secured as it was not included in the already approved State budget.

Kazakhstan is about to adopt the Conception of Cultural Policy for 2015-2050 where intangible cultural heritage found its place in its Chapter two (# II); the Conception's Action Plan is currently under elaboration.

Safeguarding is at the core of the Law on the Manas Epic adopted by **Kyrgyzstan** on 21 November 2011. The law was further expanded by a government decree on 31 January 2012 and the 'National Programme of the Kyrgyz Republic on the safeguarding, study and promotion of the *Manas Epic* for the period of 2012-2017' was adopted. This programme foresees an annual budget of US\$10,000 for 'Creating and maintaining a national list of intangible cultural heritage elements of the Kyrgyz Republic'.

Kyrgyzstan was the only Central Asian country to adopt a specific Law on Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Kyrgyz Republic (№2166-V) of 22 June 2012. The current project is helping to support discussions on the legislation with concrete activities.



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

While **Tajikistan** does not have a separate law on intangible cultural heritage, the Law on Culture (№734) adopted on 28 June 2011 was supplemented by Article 81 – Intangible Cultural Heritage, which describes the authority and responsibilities of governmental organizations in the field of intangible cultural heritage.

On 31 May 2012, the government adopted 'The State Programme for Preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Tajikistan for 2013-2020' (Resolution №263). The total budget of the programme is about US\$2 million with some funding already allocated to conducting field inventorying activities.

Intangible cultural heritage was integrated in the Law of the Republic of **Uzbekistan** on the Protection and Use of Cultural Heritage Objects (of 30 August 2001). The norms concerning the interpretation of intangible cultural heritage were reviewed and new regulations on safeguarding and revitalization are being settled. However, discussions during the training workshops brought the understanding that, although the notion of intangible cultural heritage was integrated, the law was not in line with the provisions of the Convention. Preparations are currently underway to further adapt the existing heritage legislation.



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

<p>Overall goal of the project: To increase the capacity of Central Asian countries, particularly Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to ensure the safeguarding and management of its intangible cultural heritage, as well as ratification and more effective implementation of the 2003 Convention</p>		<p>Overall assessment: Meets expectations.</p> <p>The project was successful in helping countries mobilize and bring together different stakeholders of the Convention, training them on basic concepts and mechanisms of the Convention, which they then utilized to strengthen national committees on intangible cultural heritage. It furthermore, created commitment among national counterparts to review their current policy and legal framework and gave new impetus to inventorying work. It also resulted in the integration of intangible cultural heritage in national development strategies, notably in the field of education and increased participation by beneficiary countries in the international cooperation mechanisms of the Convention, evident from the nomination files submitted for inscription on the Convention's Lists</p>		
Expected results	Performance Indicators (PIs) and associated Target (T) /baselines (b)		Achievement(s)	Outputs contributing to expected results
	Programmed	Attained		
<p>Expected result N°1:</p> <p>Capacity of one beneficiary country (Kazakhstan) to ratify the Convention strengthened</p>	<p>PI 1.1: Capacity-building activities (workshop) on ratification organized in the beneficiary country</p> <p>Target 1.1: One capacity-building activity on ratification</p> <p>Baseline 1.1: 0</p>	<p>The project was launched in 2012 and the capacity-building workshop on ratification of the Convention was not organized because Kazakhstan had already ratified the Convention</p>	n/a	<p>Output 1.1: Supported by preparatory activities for the project, Kazakhstan ratified the Convention on 28 December 2011 and thus joined Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan (ratified between 2006 and 2010), as the 142nd State Party to the Convention</p>
	<p>PI 1.2: Number of Member States having ratified the 2003 Convention</p> <p>Target 1.2: Ratification by Kazakhstan by close of project</p> <p>Baseline 1.2: Kazakhstan – not ratified</p>	<p>Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage ratified by Kazakhstan on 28th of December 2011</p>	<p>9 November, 2011: the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan approved the draft Law on Ratification of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage</p>	<p>Output 1.2: In accordance with the terms of its Article 34, the Convention entered into force with respect to Kazakhstan three months after the date of deposit of the instrument, on 28th of March 2012</p>



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

	<p>Kyrgyzstan – 06/11/2006</p> <p>Uzbekistan – 29/01/2008</p> <p>Tajikistan – 17/08/2010</p>		<p>21 December, 2011: President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, signed the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Ratification of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage</p>	
<p>Expected Result N°2:</p> <p>Capacities of concerned countries strengthened to meet their national obligations under the Convention and to benefit from the mechanisms of international cooperation established by the Convention, including international assistance from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund</p>	<p>PI 2.1: Capacity-building activities (workshops) organized in the beneficiary countries</p> <p>Target 2.1.1: One capacity-building activity in each of the beneficiary countries on national implementation</p> <p>Baseline 2.1.1: 0</p> <p>Target 2.1.2: One capacity-building activity on preparing higher-quality nominations, proposals or requests</p> <p>Baseline 2.1.2: 0</p>	<p>Capacity-building workshops on implementing the Convention at national level organized in each beneficiary country (one per each country)</p> <p>Capacity-building workshops on understanding nomination processes aimed at inscription on UNESCO's Intangible Heritage Lists organized in each beneficiary country (one per each country)</p>	<p>The workshops covered the core concepts of the Convention and provided beneficiary countries with a thorough understanding of their obligations at the national level, and substantial knowledge of the mechanisms of international cooperation established by the Convention</p> <p>Participants of the workshops learned about the nomination processes and how to prepare nomination files to the Urgent Safeguarding List and the Representative List</p>	<p>Output 2.1: The capacities of beneficiary countries to safeguard their intangible cultural heritage through effective implementation of the Convention were strengthened</p> <p>Better visibility of intangible cultural heritage, awareness of its significance and function in society, and mutual respect for the heritage of others promoted</p>
	<p>PI 2.2: Safeguarding initiatives undertaken at the national level,</p>	<p>Capacity-building workshops on community-based inventorying of</p>	<p>The workshops familiarized the</p>	<p>Output 2.2: The community-based inventorying workshop enhanced the</p>



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

	<p>including inventorying and other safeguarding measures</p> <p>Target 2.2: One capacity-building workshop on community-based inventorying organized in the beneficiary countries</p> <p>Baseline 2.2: 0</p>	<p>intangible cultural heritage organized in each beneficiary country (one per each country)</p>	<p>participants with the concept of inventory in the understanding of the Convention, as well as gave the participants practical skills for inventorying, ranging from planning an inventory and developing an inventory framework to capturing the information inventory cards</p>	<p>national capacities in the field of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, in particular inventorying of intangible cultural heritage under the Convention including the practical technical skills in inventory-making</p>
	<p>PI 2.3: Nominations submitted to the Urgent Safeguarding List or Representative List, proposals submitted to the register of good practices, or requests submitted for international assistance</p> <p>Target 2.3: One nomination, proposal or request submitted</p> <p>Baseline 2.3: 0</p>	<p>‘Ala-kiyiz and Shyrdak, art of Kyrgyz traditional felt carpets’ (Kyrgyzstan) inscribed to the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2012</p> <p>‘Kyrgyz Epic Trilogy: Manas, Semetey, Seytek’ (Kyrgyzstan) inscribed to the Representative List in 2013</p> <p>Proposals to the register of good practices and requests for international assistance had not been submitted during the course of the project</p>	<p>Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan submitted (Kazakhstan for the first time) nominations to the Representative List for the 2013, 2014 and 2015 cycles</p>	<p>Output 2.3: Increased participation of beneficiary countries in the mechanisms of the Convention demonstrates efforts made at the national level within the framework of the capacity-building activities</p>
<p>Expected Result N°3:</p> <p>Critical mass of national capacity established in government institutions and civil society so that beneficiary countries will</p>	<p>PI 3.1: Number of cultural officers trained</p> <p>Target 3.1: Fifteen cultural officers trained in each beneficiary country</p> <p>Baseline 3.1: 0</p>	<p>Around 20 cultural officers trained in each beneficiary country</p>	<p>National mechanisms for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage strengthened</p>	<p>Output 3.1: Total number of participants of all workshops is 286. Gender equality balance achieved (female – 148, male – 138). National mechanisms for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage strengthened</p>



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

<p>have a sustainable framework for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and implementing the Convention</p>	<p>PI 3.2: Number of participating cultural officers involved in initiating nominations, proposals or requests</p> <p>Target 3.2: Ten cultural officers involved in initiating nominations, proposals or requests</p> <p>Baseline 3.2: 0</p>	<p>About 15 cultural officers involved in preparation of nominations</p>	<p>Nominations prepared and submitted to the Representative List for the 2013, 2014 and 2015 cycles by all beneficiary countries</p>	<p>Output 3.2: Cultural officers, as well as researchers, community members and practitioners are involved in preparation of nominations</p>
	<p>PI 3.3: Number of community representatives, practitioners and NGO members trained</p> <p>Target 3.3: Fifteen community representatives, practitioners and NGO members trained in each country</p> <p>Baseline 3.3: 0</p>	<p>Around 15 community representatives, practitioners and NGO members trained in each country</p>	<p>Less than 15 community members and practitioners trained in 3 workshops in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and 17 community members and practitioners trained in 3 workshops in Uzbekistan</p>	<p>Output 3.3: Wider participation of community representatives, practitioners and NGO members is required</p>
<p>Expected Result N°4:</p> <p>Sustained mechanism introduced or strengthened to safeguard intangible cultural heritage at national level with the active participation of communities</p>	<p>PI 4: Existence of adequate institutional framework for safeguarding in beneficiary countries</p> <p>Target 4: National mechanism/ committee created or to strengthen safeguarding intangible cultural heritage at State level</p> <p>Baseline 4: 0</p>	<p>Safeguarding initiatives undertaken by the beneficiary countries over the next 10 years that reflect the principles and objectives of the Convention and the broadest participation of communities</p>	<p>A National Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage was established in each beneficiary country</p> <p>Kazakhstan adopted the 'Conception on the Safeguarding and Development of ICH in the Republic of Kazakhstan' (21 September 2013)</p> <p>Kazakhstan is about to adopt the 'Conception of</p>	<p>Output 4: The project increased political willingness to take the necessary measures to ensure safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage</p> <p>In the period of the project activities, Central Asian countries made an effort to improve legislation for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, to elaborate some state programmes, as well as allocate some of its budget for safeguarding</p> <p>Election of Kyrgyzstan by the GA 4th session of the States Parties to serve as a member of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the</p>



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Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

			<p>Cultural Policy for 2015-2050'. Intangible cultural heritage found its place in Chapter # II</p> <p>Kyrgyzstan adopted the 'National Programme of the Kyrgyz Republic on the safeguarding, study and promotion of the epic Manas for the period of 2012-2017' (31 January 2012)</p> <p>Kyrgyzstan adopted the Law on Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Kyrgyz Republic (№2166-V, 22 June 2012)</p> <p>Tajikistan adopted the 'State Programme for Preservation of ICH of Tajikistan for 2013-2020' (31 May 2012). The total budget of the programme is about US\$2 million</p>	<p>Intangible Cultural Heritage for the period 2012-2016 will not only further increase visibility of intangible cultural heritage at the national level, but will also provide additional opportunities for cooperation and capacity building at the sub-regional and international levels</p>
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IV. SUSTAINABILITY AND EXIT/TRANSITION STRATEGY

The project has raised awareness about the importance of intangible heritage, fostered activities on safeguarding, promoted development of community-based inventories and strengthened capacities of officials, experts, bearers and representatives of NGOs and communities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.

Key stakeholders in all four beneficiary countries, although not yet in sufficient numbers, are now able to interpret the Convention and its Operational Directives. They are well aware of the fundamental rules of inventorying under the Convention and know what makes a good nomination to the Convention's Lists. In addition, various ongoing and planned processes related to implementation of the Convention at the national level have already been, or will be positively influenced by the training workshops.

However, to achieve sustainable results, it is necessary to continue implementing capacity-building workshops at national and local levels. Following the example of Uzbekistan, a group of trainers should be selected among the most competent and active participants of the workshops and more workshops should be organized at local levels across all four countries. It is also highly desirable to further increase participation of young people in the training workshops and other activities related to intangible cultural heritage and its safeguarding. Many participants of the training workshops recognized the need for further training at the local level and are willing to engage in further training activities.

In Kazakhstan, UNESCO secured considerable funding for 2016-2017 through a joint UN-Kazakhstan programme, which will include capacity-building workshops on intangible cultural heritage safeguarding in two regions (Mangystau and Kyzylorda).

In order to create a sustainable environment for intangible cultural heritage safeguarding, in addition to further capacity building and improvement of existing structures, revision of policies and legal frameworks would be needed. After initial consultations at national level, activities focusing on bringing cultural policies/specific intangible cultural heritage policies in line with the Convention are planned in all four Central Asian countries for the 2016-2017 biennium. Mainstreaming intangible cultural heritage in other related policies will also be part of the project.

The project also created some synergies with an inventorying project undertaken at the same time by the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO (ICHCAP).

V. VISIBILITY

All project activities were communicated in a two-fold way: at the respective national level and level of UNESCO.

At the national levels, all project activities were communicated to the media using press releases that highlighted the Norway contribution. As a result, a number of articles were published in the local press and websites and interviews with facilitators and participants featured on television.

At the level of UNESCO, each activity was announced on the central UNESCO web page (<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich>), as well as through the web pages of the related field offices in Almaty (<http://www.unesco.kz/new>) and Tashkent (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/tashkent>).



The Norwegian Embassy located in Astana, Kazakhstan that is responsible for affairs in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan was invited to every event organized in the context of the project, namely the workshops but was not able to participate. General reports on the workshops were shared with them.

The Director of the UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office and the culture specialist held a meeting with the Ambassador of Norway to Kazakhstan in the Almaty Office on various issues including the capacity-building project in April 2013.

The logo of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was integrated in the banners, programmes and other informational material (handbooks and manuals), that acknowledged the generous support of the donor.

Before each training workshop, the implementing partners of beneficiary countries managed to mobilize the media (mass media or broadcasting support and sometimes both) to cover local and national activities. One of the ways to attract attention of the mass media was to invite governmental authorities of a high rank (in many cases, Ministers of Deputies of the Ministries responsible for culture) to attend a workshop.

Measures such as meetings, discussions and official correspondence with authorities, scientific institutions and NGOs were undertaken to raise interest from governments and civil society. An unexpected result was the impact of public patriotism regarding visibility of the project.

Annex 3 contains some evidence of the project's visibility widening – web news, television broadcasting, and articles in newspapers and magazines.

VI. CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNT

As also highlighted by the final evaluation of the project, the implementation team encountered various challenges across countries involved. One of them was discrepancy between the theory and practice of implementing the Convention, which sometimes tends to be instrumentalized to promote a problematic notion of 'national identity' rather than valorising, in the spirit of the Convention, the rich diversity of intangible cultural heritage expressions of different groups and communities present in the territory of a State. This discrepancy becomes evident in policy and legal frameworks and reflected in the way inventories have been established to date.

Furthermore, the principle of community stewardship is not always understood and supported. Following long-lasting tradition in the beneficiary countries, deliberations sometimes reflected the conviction that scientific knowledge should enjoy higher recognition than community perspective in defining what is or is not intangible cultural heritage. Indeed, even participation of community members in the workshops proved to be a great challenge. Initially, there was hardly any community presence at the workshops, which did gradually change to more active participation in later sessions thanks to the ongoing efforts of UNESCO offices and facilitators.

The shift from traditional folklore and ethnological thinking to safeguarding living heritage takes time. The first series of workshops showed that more time was needed for participants to fully understand, accept and be ready to apply concepts related to community participation in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, in particular with identifying and defining it. It was, therefore, decided to run workshops on nominations before workshops that looked at inventorying. This gave participants additional opportunities to discuss community participation



through the nomination processes and has contributed to improving understanding for the need to better involve communities.

However, full acceptance and readiness to apply the community-based approaches have not yet been achieved and further training is needed.

As in other countries, the Central Asia experience showed that, while projects strengthen capacities to implement the Convention effectively, they also bring to the fore new needs that require support.

Finally, the tendency to give priority to nominations to the Representative List over all other provisions of the Convention is problematic, as it bears the risk of neglecting the Convention's key concern, which is safeguarding.

The project was positively assessed by all participants of beneficiary countries as it has helped to strengthen capacities for effective implementation of the Convention on the national level and offered a unique space for sharing experiences at national, as well as sub-regional levels.

The need to follow a second cycle of training in the near future was highlighted by most participants who underlined their interest in elaborating safeguarding plans and will to participate in awareness-raising and inventory activities. The elaboration of nominations and requests for international assistance attracted interest among participants.

VII. ANNEXES

Annex 1. Self-evaluation approach

Performance of the project was monitored and evaluated on a regular basis through missions, reporting and assessments from interviews with participants and facilitators.

After each training workshop, all participants filled in an evaluation report. The facilitator submitted to UNESCO a comprehensive report including key messages from the participant's evaluations. UNESCO was able to monitor the project's implementation by analysing these assessments and reports.

A more comprehensive evaluation of the project was undertaken at the end of 2014 by Ms Sabira Soltongeldieva, one of the facilitators of the project. The document is currently being translated and will be available on the project's web page. Findings of the evaluation have been reflected in the present document.



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

Annex 2. Gender disaggregated data

Throughout the project, a total of 286 people were trained, of which 148 were female and 138 were male. The fairly balanced ratio between female and male participants facilitated the sharing and enrichment of knowledge on different intangible cultural heritage elements and practices and extended the gender standpoints of intangible cultural heritage in Central Asia. In particular, during the data generation process for the community-based inventorying workshops, where cultural practices closely linked to activities traditionally performed by women were addressed fostering confidence with female participants.

Workshop	Total # of participants	Female	Male
IMP Workshop			
IMP Kazakhstan	18	10	8
IMP Uzbekistan	27	9	18
IMP Kyrgyzstan	30	22	8
IMP Tajikistan	22	7	15
NOM Workshop			
NOM Uzbekistan	26	9	17
NOM Kazakhstan	21	11	10
NOM Kyrgyzstan	27	19	8
NOM Tajikistan	23	13	10
INV Workshop			
INV Kazakhstan	22	12	10
INV Kyrgyzstan	25	21	4
INV Tajikistan	18	5	13
INV Uzbekistan	27	10	17
Grand total	286	148	138



Annex 3. Visibility - selected evidence – see attached

Annex 4. List of project staff

Facilitators:

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Mr Rieks SMEETS, The Netherlands

Ms Sabira SOLTONGELDIEVA, Kyrgyzstan

Mr Nikolai VUKOV, Bulgaria

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