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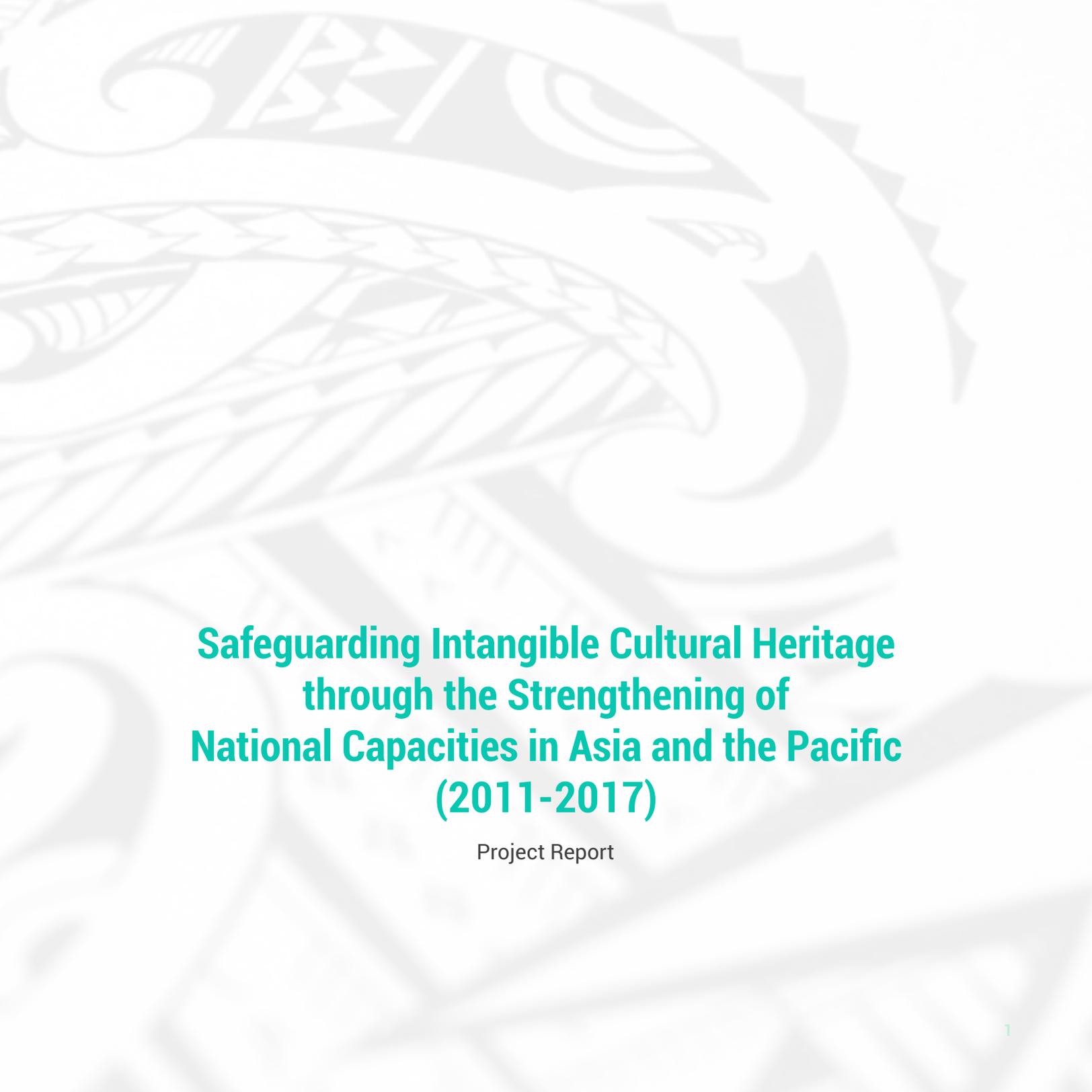


Sustainable  
Development  
Goals

# Building National Capacity to Safeguard Asia-Pacific Intangible Cultural Heritage (2011-2017)

Project Report





**Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage  
through the Strengthening of  
National Capacities in Asia and the Pacific  
(2011-2017)**

Project Report

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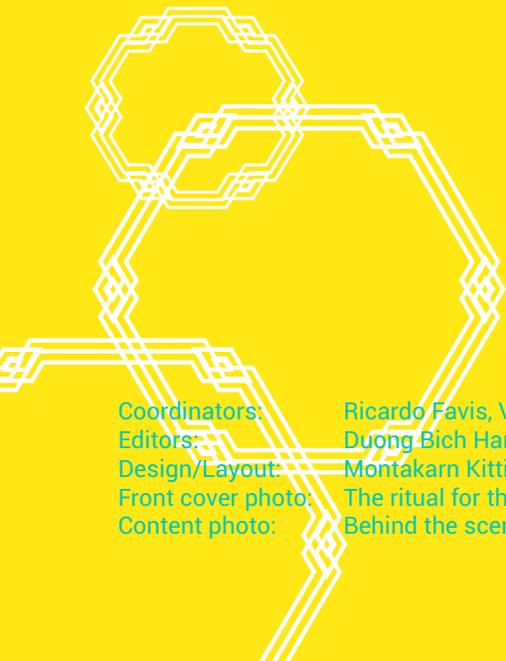
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Front cover photo: The ritual for the deceased, Jiri, Nepal, 2013. © Nepali Ministry of Culture/S.Dangol

Content photo: Behind the scene of *Sbek Thom* puppetry performance. © UNESCO/M.Hong



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Street of Dili, Timor Leste. © UNESCO/R.Goswami

# Project's Philosophy & Implementation Strategy



The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was adopted by the General Conference in October 2003 and entered into force in 2006 after ratification by 30 Member States. As of September 2017, the Convention has been ratified by 175 Member States. Despite the rapid rate of ratification, many States Parties to the Convention still need to appreciate better the concepts and mechanisms established under the Convention. Moreover, they often lack the human capacities and financial resources to implement the Convention effectively.

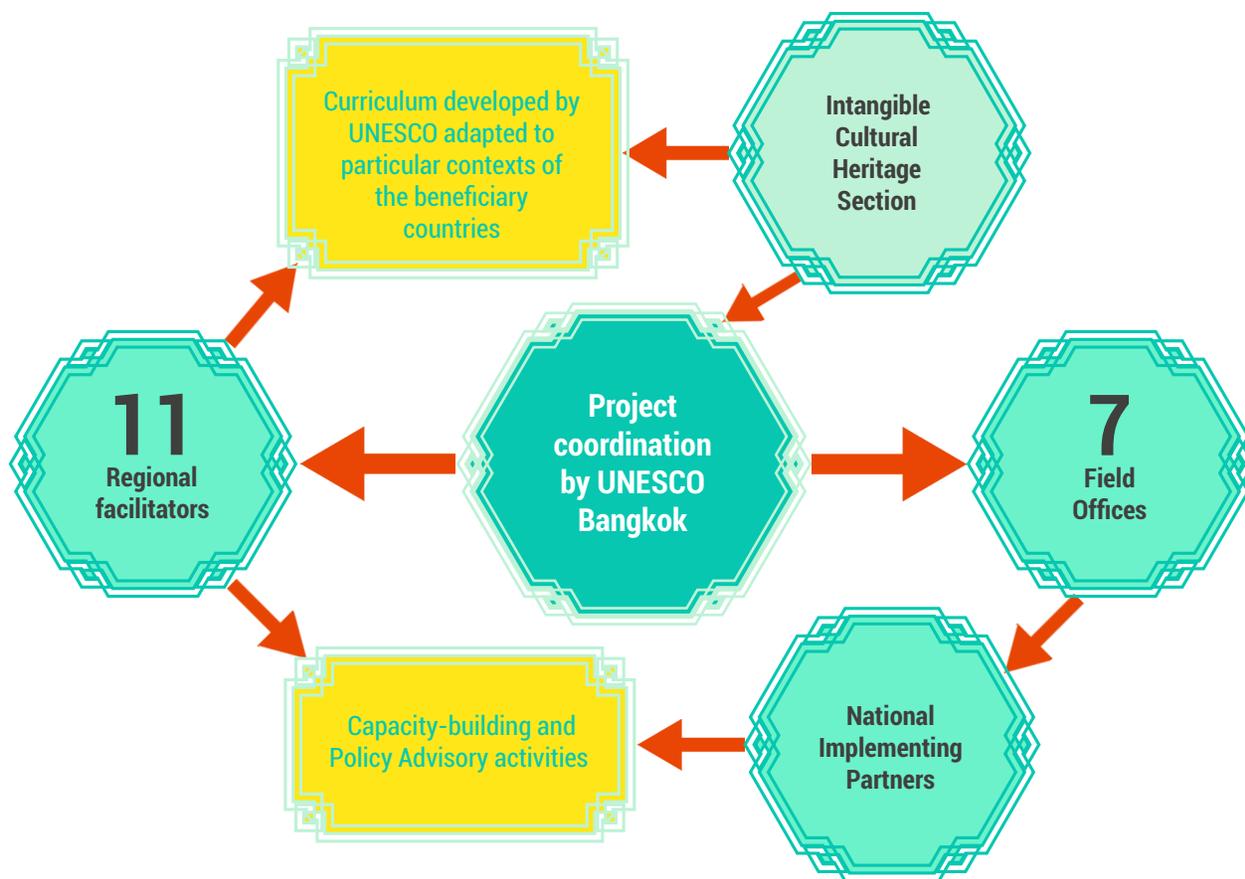
In response, UNESCO has initiated a global capacity-building strategy which aims to build up the knowledge and skills in both government institutions and civil society in State Parties countries, so that they will have sustainable frameworks for safeguarding intangible cultural

heritage (ICH) and implementing the 2003 Convention on a long-term basis. With the generous support from the Government of Japan, the regional capacity-building project 'Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage through the Strengthening of National Capacities in Asia and the Pacific' was designed and implemented as part of this strategy, including a series of training workshops and activities, tailored to respond to the identified needs of each beneficiary country. The project also provided other benefits, ranging from practical support to community-based inventorying to consultation on possible policy or legal reforms or technical assistance to the national government agency responsible for ICH safeguarding. The beneficiary countries under the first phase of this project (November 2011 – April 2014) were Bhutan, Cambodia, Mongolia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Sri Lanka and Timor Leste, while under



the second phase (April 2015 – October 2017), Fiji, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Samoa and Sri Lanka were beneficiaries. The project utilized over 50 units of training materials developed under the global capacity-building programme and adapted them to the specific needs and context of each country. Regional experts with extensive experience in safeguarding ICH were trained to use these units and were later assigned to facilitate the capacity-

building activities in the beneficiary countries. UNESCO Bangkok Office coordinated the regional project in close collaboration with the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section and responsible Field Offices, who liaised with the national implementing partners in the organization of project activities in the beneficiary countries.





Workshop on Implementation of the 2003 Convention, Paro, Bhutan, 2012.  
© UNESCO/P.C.Koanantakool



**Building  
National  
Capacity**





A workshop participant joining local community members on *Kab Nguem* singing, Luang Prabang, Lao PDR, 2013.  
© UNESCO/S.Chaudhuri



A young apprentice crafting *Sbek Thom* puppets out of animal hide, Siem Reap, Cambodia, 2013.  
© UNESCO/M.Hong



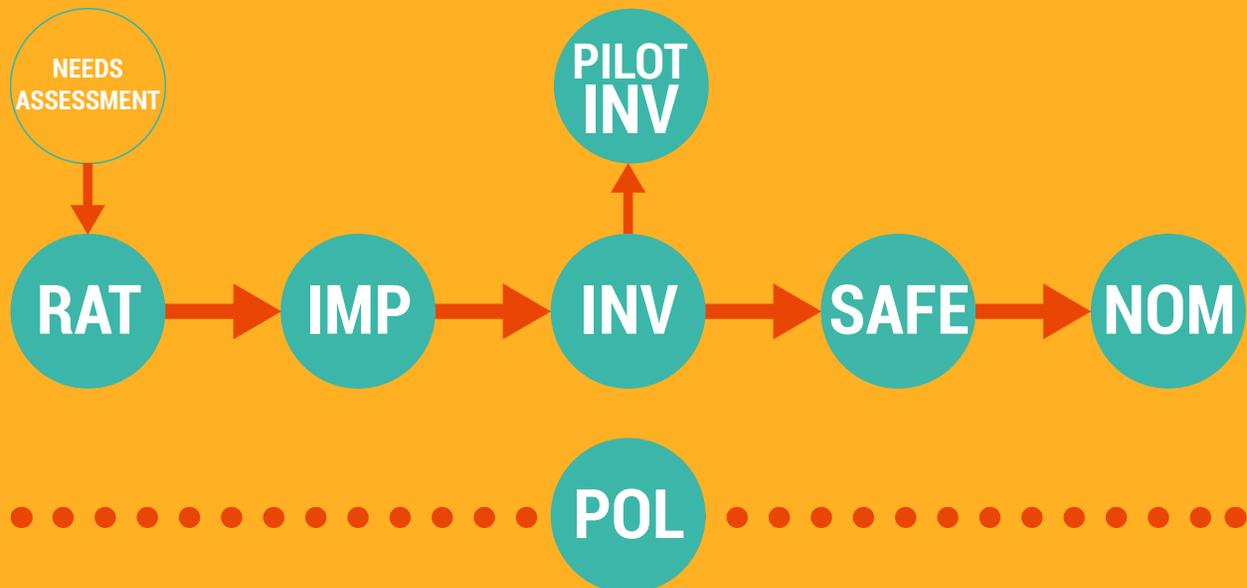
# Workshops & Activities

## Thematic

The project activities consisted primarily of a series of workshops covering different themes concerning the implementation of the 2003 Convention, including i) Ratification of the 2003 Convention; ii) Implementing the 2003 Convention at national level; iii) Community-based inventorying of ICH elements; iv) Developing safeguarding plans for ICH; and v) Preparing nomination to the lists of the Convention. Of these, the topic on developing safeguarding plans was only added during project Phase II. The training workshops were structured to maximize interactivity and active learning through group sessions, role playing, practical

exercises and field work. Regional facilitators, working in teams of 2, were assigned to facilitate the workshops in each beneficiary country. They were also responsible for customizing the training materials to the national context and the trainees' academic backgrounds and the sectors they represented. Practical inventorying exercises were carried out to complement the training. In addition, during Phase II, advisory missions were organized to provide guidance on the policy development.

This section presents an overview of the training themes covered under the project.



RAT

## Ratification of the 2003 Convention

This workshop targets a policy-oriented audience.

Intended for Member States which have not ratified the 2003 Convention, this workshop aims to clarify the Convention details, the processes, and mechanisms for successful ratification. It explains the importance of legal or policy reform to facilitate ICH safeguarding.

IMP

## Implementing the 2003 Convention at National Level

This workshop is intended for concerned ministry and local officers, experts, NGOs and community members.

This training provides an overview of the objectives and key safeguarding concepts of the 2003 Convention, national obligations of States Parties and mechanisms for international cooperation. It enables participants to understand possible activities involved in implementing the Convention and offers a platform where participants are able to reflect collectively on experiences and challenges in safeguarding ICH as well as discuss sustainable development and ICH.



INV

## Community-based Inventorying of ICH Elements

This training is aimed at ministry officials, local community members, community-based organizations, researchers and NGOs playing an active role in designing and conducting inventories of ICH.

It is intended to equip participants with basic knowledge and skills to design and facilitate a community-based inventorying process tailored to their particular circumstances.

Putting a strong emphasis on interactivity and active learning, the workshop includes lectures on various topics, group discussions and hands-on exercises. It is designed to help participants acquire the participatory research techniques for community-based inventorying and to reinforce capacity to obtain free, prior and informed consent from the concerned communities.

A 2-day fieldwork practicum allows participants to gain first-hand experience with inventorying and to put into practice what they have learned during the workshop.



PILOT  
INV

## Practical ICH Inventorying in Pilot Communities

Motivated and available participants of the community-based ICH inventorying workshops are selected to conduct practical field surveys and inventorying in pilot communities. Fieldworkers are tasked with collecting information about local ICH by using the template developed during the community-based ICH inventorying workshop.

During these activities, the fieldworkers are able to test newly acquired skills in documenting and inventorying ICH, while also noting challenges they encounter for future improvement of the methodology.

Free, prior and informed consent of community members is required before the fieldworkers start working with the cultural bearers and community members. Data collected during the field survey can be used in the training workshop on preparing nomination to the lists of the Convention.

Regional facilitators mentor this activity through missions or distance communication.





## Developing Safeguarding Plans for Intangible Cultural Heritage

The workshop targets government officials, NGOs and communities.

It addresses the main objective of the Convention by building participants' competences in developing safeguarding plans for ICH elements. The process of developing plans for ICH safeguarding may differ widely depending on the scope of the ICH in question, the domain, the communities concerned, the threats and risks to its viability, and the broader social, political and environmental contexts. Nevertheless, 7 analytical steps have been identified to guide such a process.

The training materials integrate 3 fictional scenarios presenting contexts and issues related to ICH elements as well as perspectives from multiple stakeholders. Using interactive role-play or a more traditional case studies analysis, participants use the 7 steps to develop a safeguarding plan. Once the participants are familiar with the steps, they can apply a similar process to selected ICH elements in their own countries. This exercise benefits from being conducted during a field trip, in collaboration with local knowledge-bearers.

### Step-by-step Guide for Developing Safeguarding Plans for ICH

1. Identifying and defining the ICH to be safeguarded and the communities, groups and individuals concerned;
2. Identifying the social function(s) and value of the selected ICH for the communities, groups and individuals concerned;
3. Identifying risks and threats to the selected ICH, and proposing adequate safeguarding activities;
4. Defining main objectives and expected results for the safeguarding plan;
5. Determining activities for the safeguarding plan;
6. Defining resources required and resource mobilization strategies;
7. Monitoring and evaluating implementation of the safeguarding plan.

NOM

## Preparing Nominations to the Lists of the Convention

This workshop trains ministry and local officials, national experts and NGOs on how to prepare nomination files for the Urgent Safeguarding List and Representative List, proposals for the Register of Best Practices and requests for international assistance. Through practical and participatory sessions, participants learn how to prepare these documents by understanding how they will later be examined and evaluated.

Following an overview of the processes for preparing nominations, proposals and requests, practical sessions aim to help participants understand what a complete nomination or request entails. Facilitators lead participants through the technical assessment carried out by the secretariat of sample nominations and international assistance requests and then engage the participants in analysing them for completeness and requesting additional information.

Participants then work on the examination of nominations, proposals and requests – this time with revised and improved versions of the nominations, proposals and requests that they had previously analysed. Here they play the role of an examiner and write examination reports. Participants will finally convene as a deliberative body or jury to simulate the evaluation process and the decisions taken by the Subsidiary Body or Consultative Body charged with evaluating different kinds of files.



## Policy Advisory Missions

States Parties need to create an enabling environment at the national level within which ICH is valued and respected, communities are assisted where necessary in safeguarding their ICH, and community stewardship over that ICH is recognized and protected.

The regional facilitators have gone beyond their role as trainers during capacity-building workshops. As experts on ICH, they have also provided advisory services to national authorities on needed revisions to existing national legislation or policies, improvement of the institutional infrastructure for safeguarding ICH, development of inventorying strategies, and in other relevant areas.

In light of the demand for policy advice from the beneficiary countries, the second phase of the project incorporated policy advisory missions as separate activities from the workshops. The aim of

these missions was to support national counterparts in analysing their needs and making recommendations for policy and legal development in the ICH field. In the spirit of the Convention, ICH policies can play an active role in promoting the principles of peace, human rights – including gender equality, sustainable development, international cooperation, as well as respect for cultural diversity. Whenever relevant, the policy advisors brought together inputs from stakeholders from both cultural and non-cultural sectors to highlight these connections.



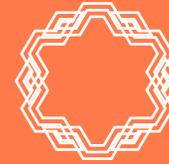
## Cross-cutting Units

UNESCO has developed new training materials on gender dimensions of ICH, linking ICH with sustainable development, preparing international assistance requests and policy development. These new thematic units have enriched capacity-building initiatives in the region and enhance their effectiveness.

In response to a growing need, UNESCO is also considering developing new thematic materials, such as a unit on ICH safeguarding in emergency situation. The Intangible Cultural Heritage Section will also explore how to expand the scope of the current training materials and enhance its appeal for and usability by various target groups.



The regional experts who facilitated the capacity-building activities were trained to use the training materials developed for the programme during the Training of Trainers Workshops in 2011 and 2015. They have become members of a global network of expert facilitators. The 11 experts who were assigned to assist the 10 beneficiary countries in Asia and the Pacific were:



## **Noriko Aikawa-Faure**

*Japan*

A social anthropologist and art historian, Ms Aikawa-Faure was formerly the Chief of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section at UNESCO Headquarters. She co-facilitated workshops in Mongolia, Papua New Guinea and Samoa.



## **Sang Mee Bak, Ph.D.**

*Republic of Korea*

Currently a Member of Cultural Heritage Committee (World Heritage/Intangible Cultural Heritage) of the Republic of Korea, Dr Bak is also a professor at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in Seoul. She co-facilitated workshops in Fiji.



## **Shubha Chaudhuri, Ph.D.**

*India*

The Associate Director General of Archives and Research Centre for Ethnomusicology, American Institute of Indian Studies in New Delhi, India, Dr Chaudhuri specializes in audio-visual archiving and field activities, Ethnomusicology, Intellectual Property Rights and Intangible Cultural Heritage. She co-facilitated workshops in Bhutan, Lao PDR and Nepal.

# UNESCO Network of Facilitators in Asia and the Pacific



**Alexandra Denes,  
Ph.D.**

*The United States*

Dr. Denes is a socio-cultural anthropologist with over 15 years of research and professional experience with academic institutions, international organizations and non-governmental organizations in mainland Southeast Asia. She co-facilitated workshops in Mongolia.



**Rahul  
Goswami**

*India*

An expert on rural development, agro-ecological practices and sustainable livelihood through local wisdom, Mr Goswami is a Senior Sector Consultant of the National Agricultural Innovation Project of the Indian Ministry of Agriculture. He co-facilitated workshops in Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Timor Leste.



**Paritta Chalernpow  
Koanantakool, Ph.D.**

*Thailand*

Formerly the Director of the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre, Dr Koanantakool has been involved in the research of traditional performance, art and crafts, anthropology of museums, cultural identity and ethnography. She co-facilitated the training activities in Bhutan, Cambodia and Lao PDR.



## Suzanne Ogge

*Australia*

Currently the Head of Heritage and Museum Projects of Studio Milou Architecture in Singapore, Ms Ogge was a consultant and project manager for the Culture Sector at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris for ten years. She co-facilitated workshops in Cambodia, Fiji, Mongolia, Nepal and Timor Leste.



## Anthony Parak Krong

*Papua New Guinea*

The Curator and Collection Conservator of the J K McCarthy Museum in Goroka, Papua New Guinea, Mr Parak has 18 years of experience in Pacific cultural heritage mapping and documentation, as well as integrated eco-tourism. He co-facilitated workshops in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Timor Leste.



## Sipiriano Nemani Ranuku

*Fiji*

Mr Nemani is currently the Director of the Fiji Museum, after serving as the Principal Policy & Conventions Officer for Fiji's Department of National Heritage, Culture & Arts. He co-facilitated workshops in Fiji and acted as a policy advisor in Samoa and Fiji.

# Policy Advisors

## Sarah Gardner

*Australia*

The Founding Executive Director of the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA), Ms Gardner has been instrumental in the development of the WorldCP, an international database of cultural policies. She provided policy advice for Sri Lanka.

## Kriengkrai Watanasawad, Ph.D.

*Thailand*

A full-time lecturer in the Program of Cultural Management at Thammasat University, Thailand, Dr Watanasawad has been conducting research on the linkages between cultural policies and the 2003 Convention in South-East Asia. He provided policy advice for Lao PDR.



## Vellorimo J. Suminguit, Ph.D.

*The Philippines*

An Associate Professor at Central Mindanao University, Mr Suminguit is experienced in multi-disciplinary research and capacity-building. He is the president of Friends of Lumads and also holds membership in various professional societies including the Anthropological Association in the Philippines. He co-facilitated a workshop in Timor Leste.

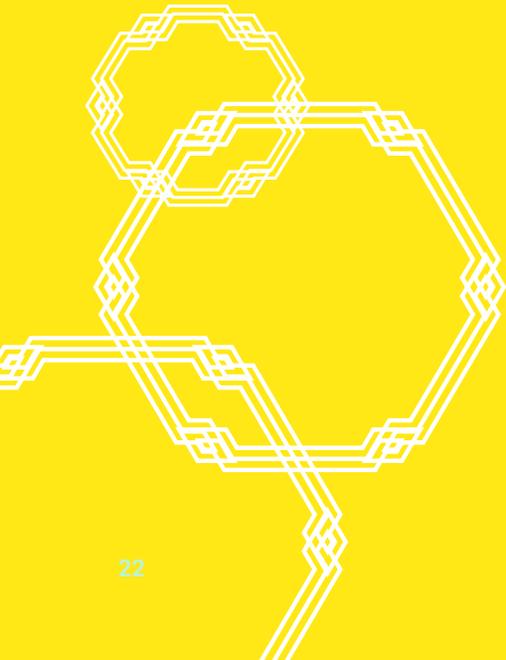


## Sajida Haider Vandal

*Pakistan*

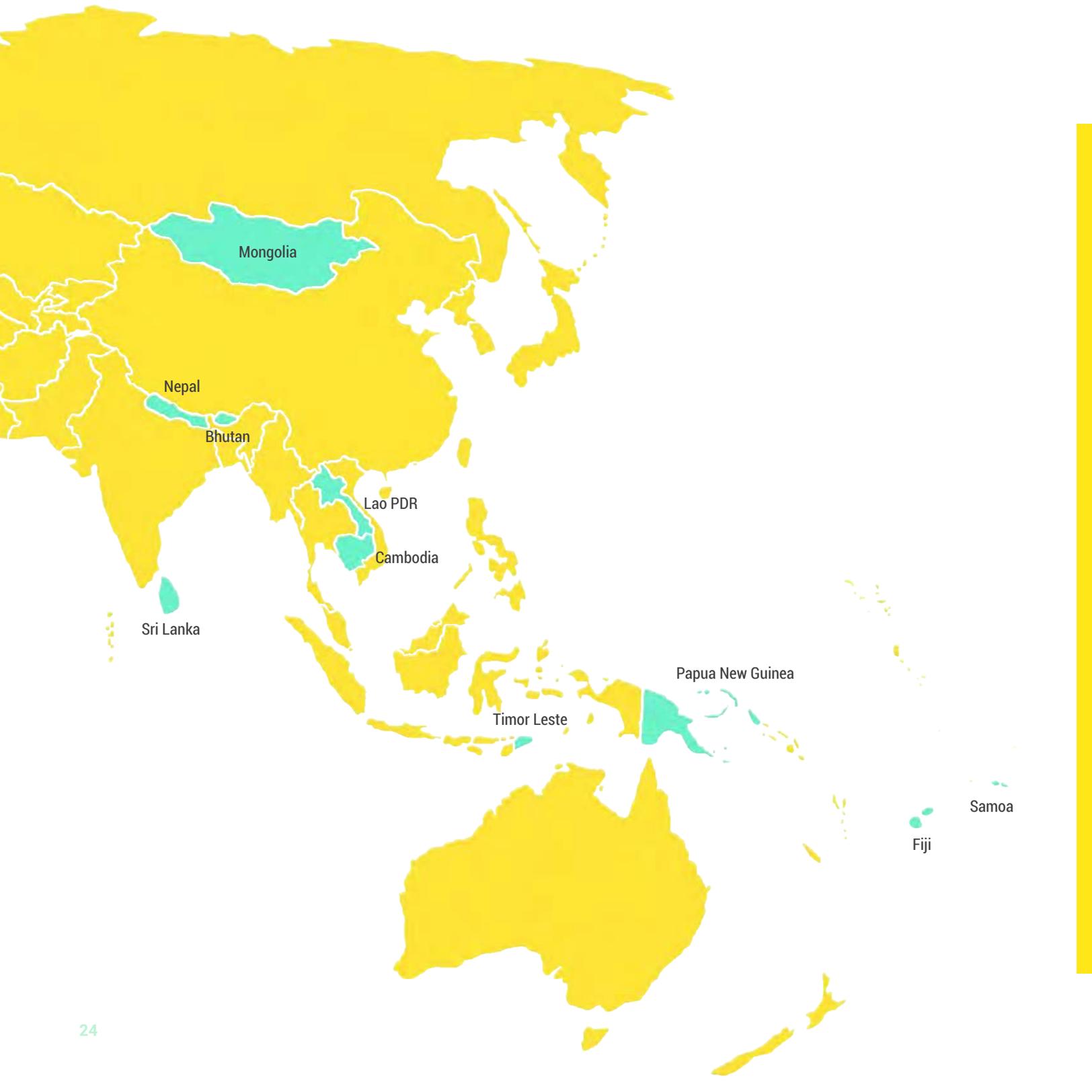
The Executive Director for Consultancy and Advisory Services of the Trust for History, Art and Architecture of Pakistan, Ms Vandal is an expert in architecture, cultural heritage management, culture education, community development and empowerment of women. She co-facilitated workshops in Sri Lanka.

# Results Achieved in the Beneficiary Countries





Young Jirels preparing offerings for the community rituals,  
Jiri, Nepal, 2013. © Nepali Ministry of Culture/S.Dangol



Mongolia

Nepal

Bhutan

Sri Lanka

Lao PDR

Cambodia

Timor Leste

Papua New Guinea

Fiji

Samoa

## Phase I (2011-2014)

**30 months**

**8 countries**

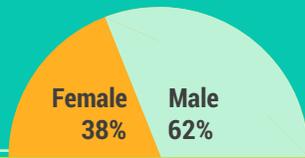
Bhutan, Cambodia,  
Mongolia, Nepal, Papua  
New Guinea, Samoa,  
Sri Lanka and Timor Leste

**25 workshops**

**3 field activities**

(Bhutan, Cambodia  
and Sri Lanka)

**888**  
stakeholders trained



## Phase II (2015-2017)

**30 months**

**5 countries**

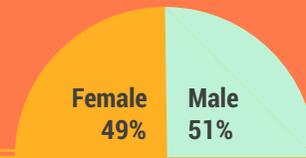
Fiji, Lao PDR,  
Mongolia, Samoa,  
Sri Lanka

**11 workshops**

**3 field activities**

(Fiji, Lao PDR  
and Samoa)

**287**  
stakeholders trained



## Project Outcomes

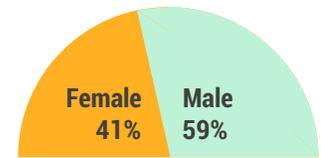
**60 months**

**10**  
countries

**36**  
workshops

**6**  
field activities

**1,175**  
stakeholders trained



## Impacts at National Level

- 2 countries ratified the Convention
- 3 laws and 3 cultural policies revised
- 3 national institutions on ICH set up and strengthened
- 69 ICH elements documented



Participants conducting an interview with traditional house builders during workshop on community-based inventorying, Bhutan, 2013. © UNESCO/S.Chaudhuri



The capacity-building activities have enabled participants to understand the core concepts of the Convention, the role of the various stakeholders in safeguarding ICH, the proper implementation of the Convention at the national level, the obligations of States Parties and international cooperation mechanisms that are available under the Convention. In addition to getting familiarized with the convention core concepts, the workshop participants – reaching almost 1200 individuals across the 10 project countries (41% of which are women) – have gained concrete skills and knowledge in carrying out practical actions to safeguard their countries' ICH following the principles of the Convention. This includes enhanced capacities in multi-stakeholder mobilization, improvement of policy and institutional frameworks for safeguarding ICH, development of inventorying strategies and methodologies, and participation in the international cooperation mechanisms under the Convention. It is expected that these individuals, coming from all sectors including governments, universities, NGOs and communities, will become agents of change bringing larger impacts in the coming years.

In addition to the strengthening of individual capacities to safeguard ICH, the project has also resulted in significant improvement in institutional capacities, through the establishment of new institutional structures, adoption of new ICH safeguarding institutional frameworks, as well as enactment of new policies. Some examples include the ratification of the Convention by Samoa in November 2013 and by Timor Leste in October 2016, the development of the National Heritage Law in Bhutan, the revision of the Law on Cultural Heritage in Lao PDR and the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage in Mongolia, the drafting of cultural policies by Bhutan, Cambodia, and Samoa, the set-up of the panel on ICH in Sri Lanka and of the Samoa Heritage Coordination Committee. Furthermore, all beneficiary countries have initiated their inventories and adopted inventorying methodologies consistent with the 2003 Convention.

The following section presents key actions and results from each of the beneficiary countries.



Participants conducting an interview with traditional house builders during workshop on community-based inventorying, Bhutan, 2013. © UNESCO/S.Chaudhuri

# Bhutan

National implementing partner:  
Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs

Regional facilitators:  
Shubha Chaudhuri  
Paritta Chalermkow Koanantakool

IMP	14-18 May 2012	Paro
INV	2-9 April 2013	Phuntsholing
PILOT INV	August-December 2013	Lhuntse Dzongkhag, Trongsa, Samtse, Wangdi Phodrang and Bumthang
NOM	4-8 March 2014	Paro

- Phase I
- Phase II
- Other funding sources



Bhutan organized 3 training workshops on the themes of implementation of the 2003 Convention (May 2012), community-based inventorying (April 2013) and preparing nominations to the lists of the Convention (March 2014). The main beneficiaries were the staff of the National Library, the government agency responsible for research and building a database on ICH elements, and district cultural officers who are responsible for implementation of project activities at the community level.

For 5 months starting August 2013, the project also supported the organization of practical field surveys and inventorying of ICH in 3 rural communities of practitioners of *sza zho* (traditional pottery), *dha tse* (archery) and *Nubi zhey* (classical songs of the Nubi communities), facilitated by the staff of the National Library and members of academic institutions. The practical field inventorying provided an opportunity

for participants to hone the knowledge and skills they acquired from earlier training workshops. Project beneficiaries included 60 stakeholders, of whom 47 per cent were female participants. The inventorying effort was further supported by International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO (ICHCAP).

In addition, in collaboration with UNESCO and Kyushu University in Japan, the Ministry has drafted a National Heritage Law, including safeguarding of ICH, which is currently being considered by the Parliament. Bhutan needs continuing guidance in consolidating their institutional framework, with the active participation of academic institutions and NGOs, and the involvement of local communities in the identification, inventorying and safeguarding of their ICH.

Workshop participants, Bhutan, 2014.  
© UNESCO/M.Chiba

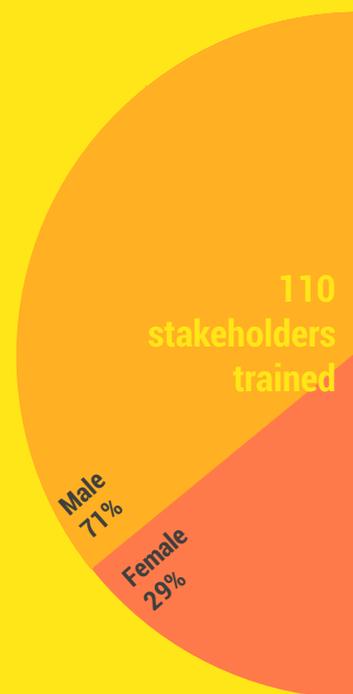


# Cambodia

National implementing partner:  
Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts

Regional facilitators:  
Rahul Goswami  
Suzanne Ogge  
Paritta Chalermpong Koanantakool

IMP	13-17 August 2012	Phnom Penh
INV	14-21 February 2013	Siem Reap
PILOT INV	March-October 2013	Siem Reap
NOM	21-25 October 2013	Phnom Penh
IMP	16-20 March 2015	Siem Reap
INV	24-29 March 2014	Siem Reap
SAFE	8-12 March 2016	Siem Reap



- Phase I
- Phase II
- Other funding sources



A master artist of *Sbek Thom* shadow puppetry training young apprentices on making puppets out of animal hide, Siem Reap, Cambodia, 2013. © UNESCO/M.Hong

Under the project, 3 capacity-building workshops were organized on the themes of implementing the 2003 Convention (August 2012), community-based inventorying of ICH (February 2013) and preparing nominations to the lists of the Convention (October 2013). In total, 110 key stakeholders (29 per cent female), mostly from the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts and provincial culture offices, took part in the 3 workshops. Practical field exercises during the community-based inventorying of ICH provided the opportunity for the participants to work with local communities and ICH bearers in documenting traditional weaving techniques, martial arts and traditional dances.

The project also supported the research and documentation of the *Sbek Thom* traditions (shadow puppetry) and their transmission to young artists by 8 masters in training centres in Siem Riep and Phnom Penh. As a result of project implementation, the Ministry, with the assistance of UNESCO, has drafted a national cultural policy, which was approved by the Council of Ministers in July 2014.

Thanks to the momentum of the project, Cambodia secured a 3-year collaboration (2014-2017) with the International Training Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO (CRIHAP) to continue building its capacity. This collaboration led to the organization of 3 additional training workshops: workshop on community-based inventorying of ICH (March 2014), workshop toward digital preservation (March 2015), and workshop on developing safeguarding plans for ICH (March 2016). UNESCO also mobilized core funding for 2 decentralized workshops on the establishment of an ICH database in Cambodia, the database itself being funded by the Government of Cambodia.

A major challenge lies in enabling local communities and ICH bearers to play active roles in the identification, inventorying and safeguarding of ICH. Cambodia has been developing a strategy of decentralized trainings which would require continued support from and collaboration with relevant agencies. The country would also need more support in mainstreaming the principles of the 2003 Convention in more concrete terms into national policies and legislative frameworks.



Puppeteers at rehearsal. © UNESCO/M.Hong



Firewalkers of Beqa, a touristic performance in Beqa Island, Fiji, 2015.  
© UNESCO/S.N.Ranuku

# Fiji

## National implementing partner:

Fiji Department of Heritage, Culture and Art,  
Ministry of Education

## Regional facilitators:

Sang Mee Bak  
Anthony Parak Krond  
Sipiriano Nemani Ranuku

<b>IMP</b>	24-29 September 2015	Suva
<b>INV</b>	3-11 February 2016	Natisiri, Suva
<b>SAFE</b>	17-21 October 2016	Suva
<b>NOM</b>	20-24 February 2017	Suva
<b>PILOT INV</b>	April-July 2017	

- Phase I
- Phase II
- Other funding sources



Under the second phase of the project, Fiji organized 4 training workshops, gathering 113 participants, half of them being women.

Case studies presented by local practitioners as well as a panel discussion enriched the workshop on the implementation of the Convention (September 2015). This set-up allowed this first workshop to be well grounded in the reality of Fiji and encouraged the active participation of stakeholders. Several members of chieftom status attended the event and reiterated the need to include ICH safeguarding on the permanent agenda of high-level meetings in each district and province.

The workshop on community-based inventory (February 2016) analysed and built up on successful past initiatives such as the inventorying and mapping projects carried out in the past in Fiji. Staff from the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs co-facilitated sessions on the technical aspects of ICH inventorying (e.g. taking photos and videos). Participants documented 5 elements during a field trip to Nabukaluka village: eel fishing method, traditional chants, food preparation, house construction techniques, and oral history. In preparation, the community was consulted as early as December 2015 following a locally-accepted process and authorized the participants to come to their village to contribute to the documentation of the local ICH.

The workshop on developing safeguarding plans for ICH (October 2017) complemented the theoretical role-play with the analysis of 3 Fijian elements: Vakamalolo tradition sitting *meke* (dance) of the Tui Lawa people of Yanuya; salt making traditions from Lomawi village, and the making of traditional fishing nets of the Sawau people of Beqa. Several practitioners shared their knowledge of selected elements so that participants could practice

developing safeguarding plans. The practical value of this exercise was a strong motivating factor for participants. The capacity-building cycle was completed with the workshop on the preparation of nominations to the lists of the Convention (February 2017).

Finally, the Fijian team consolidated its learning by undertaking the pilot community-based documentation of the meke dance.

While Fiji's stakeholders are clearly committed to ICH safeguarding, the country still need to set-up a comprehensive institutional framework to mainstream lessons learnt from previous projects and workshops. The Fiji cultural policy, still to be finalized, would certainly be an important cornerstone.



Workshop on developing safeguarding plans, 2016.  
© UNESCO/S.N.Ranuku

# Lao PDR

## National implementing partner:

Department of Heritage,  
Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism

## Regional facilitators:

Shubha Chaudhuri  
Paritta Chalernpaw Koanantakool

## Regional policy advisors:

Shubha Chaudhuri  
Kriengkrai Watanasawad



<b>RAT</b>	25-27 July 2011	Thalat
<b>IMP</b>	11-15 June 2012	Thalat
<b>INV</b>	11-18 June 2013	Thalat
<b>INV</b>	10-13 November 2015	Luang Prabang
<b>PILOT INV</b>	February – April 2016	Luang Prabang
<b>SAFE</b>	5-9 December 2016	Vientiane
<b>POL</b>	5-9 March 2017	Vientiane

- Phase I
- Phase II
- Other funding sources

Baci ceremony during the first workshop on  
community-based inventoring, 2013.  
© UNESCO/P.C.Koanantakool



Capacity building in Lao PDR was initially supported by the Government of Korea, with a series of workshops on implementation, community-based inventory and elaboration of nomination files taking place between 2011 and 2014. The resulting increased understanding of ICH informed the revision of the Heritage Law in 2014.

The project provided an opportunity to consolidate and expand stakeholders' knowledge and experience and to strengthen the capacity of the Heritage Department's ICH Unit. After a refresher workshop on community-based inventorying (November 2015), participants undertook the documentation of 6 elements in the province of Luang Prabang: *e-pok* puppet theater, *kub tum* singing, *nam kliang* lacquerware, *pak din* embroidery, natural papermaking as well as the process of preparing of *lam*, a local food delicacy.

The project also supported a workshop on the development of safeguarding plans (December 2016). In addition to the role-playing activity, participants practiced their newly acquired skills during a visit to the Pakkayoung community. Together with the community members, they discussed safeguarding plans for weaving, sword

dance, local basketry and kap ngung singing. A third of the 26 participants were women.

In June 2017, the Government of Lao PDR invited a mission to assess how various policies in the country may influence the safeguarding of ICH in the country. Although the terminology ICH remains widely unknown outside the culture sector, many development initiatives targeting or integrating local knowledge have been implemented. The experts' in-depth interviews with representatives from key ministries such as Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Home Affairs, Lao Women's Union, etc. explored several laws and decrees to highlight existing instruments which promote an enabling environment for ICH safeguarding. The mission also explored the existing instruments for regional cooperation like ASEAN and its Declaration. They also unearthed a number of entry points for inter-agency collaboration: knowledge on traditional medicines are dealt with by both Ministry of Health and Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment; or practices of ethnic minorities are covered under Ministry of Home Affairs, the Lao Women's Union and the National Lao Front as well as the National University of Laos.



The second workshop on community-based inventorying, 2015. © UNESCO/P.C.Koanantakool



Knucklebone shooters in the competition observed during the field practicum of workshop on community-based inventorying, Zuunmod, Mongolia, 2013. © UNESCO/S.Ogge

# Mongolia

**National implementing partner:**  
Intangible Cultural Heritage Division of  
the Mongolian Center of Cultural Heritage

**Regional facilitators:**  
Noriko Aikawa-Faure  
Suzanne Ogge  
Alexandra Denes



NEEDS ASSESSMENT	28-29 May 2012	Ulaanbaatar
IMP	19-23 November 2012	Ulaanbaatar
INV	22-28 May 2013	Ulaanbaatar, Zuunmod (Tuv)
NOM	5-9 October 2015	Ulaanbaatar
SAFE	23-27 May 2016	Nairamdal, Ulaanbaatar
PILOT INV	June-August 2017	Khentii, Dornod, Sukhbaatar

- Phase I
- Phase II
- Other funding sources

Phase I of the project supported the organization of an assessment and stakeholders workshop (May 2012) to identify the training needs and gaps in the institutional and policy frameworks of Mongolia. The assessment workshop was followed by training workshops on the implementation of the 2003 Convention (November 2012) and community-based inventoring of ICH (May 2013). During the community-based inventoring workshop, participants conducted practical inventoring exercises with practitioners of traditional knucklebone shooting skills in Zuunmod, Tuv province. Workshop participants worked closely with local practitioners to study traditional game rules and techniques, related oral traditions and songs, customs and rituals, and craftsmanship of objects related to knucklebone shooting. In total, 87 stakeholders, of which 40 per cent were female, participated in these activities.

Under Phase II, Mongolia organized 2 trainings. The first one on the preparation of nomination files explored 5 elements: steel carving, horse culture, traditional shaman's knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, coin-table embroidery, and technique to produce *airag*, the fermented horse milk (October 2015). The second one on the development of safeguarding plans was contextualized with discussions on the custom of naming and giving ablution to a child, the *tsagaan sar* (White Month) festive events, and Mongolian traditional craftsmanship of making bows and arrows (May 2016).

Altogether, 58 stakeholders, of which 71 per cent were female, participated in these activities, including cultural officers and ICH practitioners from all 21 of the country's provinces. This broad coverage spreads the benefits of the capacity building to the whole country.



The closing ceremony for the practicum of workshop on community-based inventoring, Zuunmod, Mongolia, 2013. © UNESCO/S.Ogge

The inventoring method practiced in Mongolia has generally been academic driven; hence, the role of local communities and ICH bearers has been limited to being simply 'the informants'. Under the project, Mongolia successfully tested community-based field exercise in 3 provinces involving 32 cultural centres and 51 practitioners, and resulted in an inventory of 48 elements. While Mongolia's previous inventories focused on performing art, this exercise was able to collect elements from other domains.

The sustained capacity-building effort supported the government's initiative to revise the Law on the Protection of Cultural Heritage. The instrument adopted in 2014 is now better aligned with the principles of the 2003 Convention.

# Nepal

National implementing partner:  
Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation

Regional facilitators:  
Shubha Chaudhuri  
Suzanne Ogge



<b>IMP</b>	16-20 April 2012	Kathmandu
<b>INV</b>	21-28 January 2013	Jiri
<b>PILOT INV</b>	June-August 2013	Khopasi, Badikhel, Thokarpa
<b>NOM</b>	16-20 September 2013	Kathmandu
<b>SAFE</b>	21-25 November 2016	Kathmandu
<b>PILOT INV</b>	December 2016 - September 2017	Khotang, Udayapur, Okhaldhunga, Solukhumbu

- Phase I
- Phase II
- Other funding sources



Senior *Phombo* (traditional healer) performing a ritual to commemorate the death anniversary of a community member during workshop on community-based inventorying, Jiri, Nepal, 2013. © Nepali Ministry of Culture/S.Dangol

Nepal benefited from training workshops on the implementation of the 2003 Convention (April 2012), community-based inventorying of ICH (January 2013) and preparation of nomination files (September 2013). Each workshop included field activities that enabled participants to understand the central role of community members and ICH bearers play in the identification, inventorying and safeguarding of ICH. During the implementation workshop, participants inventoried the construction of the traditional wooden chariot used during the Rain God's Chariot Festival and interacted with the traditional woodworking craftsmen in Patan.

During the workshop on community-based inventorying, participants interacted with local community members in inventorying a ritual honouring the dead, traditional bamboo mat weaving, the making of agricultural tools and associated rituals. In the nomination workshop, participants focused on formulating safeguarding measures for the endangered practice of mustard seed oil milling in the village of Khokana outside Patan. After the inventorying workshop, the Ministry organized practical field surveys and inventorying of the traditional carpentry or woodworking, songs and dances, bamboo weaving and shamanistic practices of the Pahari communities outside Kathmandu. The 3 workshops were attended by 107 stakeholders, of whom 22 per cent were women. A user-friendly workbook on community-based inventorying of ICH was prepared for distribution to local communities for their reference.

Support to ICH continued with core funding from UNESCO, as well as external support from CRIHAP and ICHCAP. A workshop on developing safeguarding plans in 2016 gave birth to an email network among the participants, facilitators and UNESCO. A workshop on community-based

inventorying and developing safeguarding plans for ICH of Kirant Rai Community and subsequent field inventorying of selected ICH element of 4 districts fed into the development of the Ministry's model framework on data organisation. The digitization of ICH data has also been improved. Finally, Nepal hosted an information sharing and networking event in 2017 where a sub-regional action plan envisioning a youth forum and regular exchanges was developed.

In 2010, Nepal adopted a national cultural policy, which acknowledges the important unifying role of ICH among the diverse and numerous ethnic minorities and endogenous groups. The 2015 Constitution also emphasizes the need for minority communities to exercise their social and cultural rights to maintain their identity. However, Nepal still needs legislative frameworks to guide this policy, and mainstream the principles of the Convention into existing policies. The Ministry has recently established a network of ICH core institutions to enhance coordination and avoid duplicate efforts. A dedicated ICH institution is still to be created for a comprehensive and strategic approach to ICH safeguarding.



Participant teaching community member to use video camera.  
© UNESCO/S.Ogge



Children from Labe village with the *Balu* for the prow of the war canoe, Alotau, Papua New Guinea, 2013.  
© A.P.Krond

# Papua New Guinea

National implementing partner:  
National Cultural Commission

Regional facilitators:  
Noriko Aikawa-Faure  
Anthony Parak Krond

IMP	14-18 May 2012	Port Moresby
INV	22-27 October 2012	Goroka
INV	23-28 September 2013	Alotau, Milne Bay Province

- Phase I
- Phase II
- Other funding sources



After Papua New Guinea ratified the Convention in 2008, the national authorities drafted their National Traditional Knowledge Policy in 2009 and their Law for the Protection of Traditional Knowledge and Expression of Culture, made possible with technical and financial assistance from WIPO. The project supported the organization of training workshops on the implementation of the 2003 Convention at the national level (May 2012) and community-based ICH inventorying (October 2012). With complementary funding from the National Cultural Commission, a second community-based ICH inventorying workshop was organized in Alotau, Milne Bay Province in September 2013 to benefit key stakeholders who were not able to travel to Goroka for the initial inventorying workshop.

During the inventorying workshop in Goroka, the participants inventoried the practices and oral traditions of the Asaro mud men, while in Alotau, they documented the *balu* (ceremonial prows of traditional war canoes) with the active participation of local communities. In total, 117 stakeholders took part in the training workshops, of whom 27 per cent were female. Challenges in the effective implementation of the Convention lie in reinforcing and consolidating the institutional frameworks for safeguarding ICH. This can be accomplished through enhanced networking and coordination among different government agencies and institutions involved in ICH, and in strengthening national policies, both cultural and non-cultural.



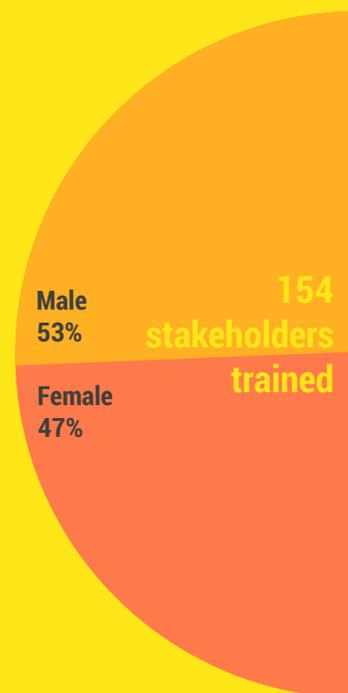
Participants conducting field exercise and interviews during workshop on community-based inventorying in Labe Village, Papua New Guinea, 2013. © A.P.Krond

# Samoa

**National implementing partner:**  
Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture

**Regional facilitators:**  
Noriko Aikawa-Faure  
Anthony Parak Krond

**Regional policy advisors:**  
Noriko Aikawa-Faure  
Sipiriano Nemani Ranuku



<b>RAT</b>	14-15 February 2012	Apia
<b>IMP</b>	11-15 February 2013	Apia
<b>INV</b>	21-26 October 2013	Apia, Savai'i Island
<b>PILOT INV</b>	August-December 2015	Savai'i Island
<b>NOM</b>	16-20 November 2015	Apia
<b>POL</b>	2-6 May 2016	Apia
<b>SAFE</b>	12-16 September 2016	Apia

- Phase I
- Phase II
- Other funding sources



Participants interviewing a local community member during workshop on community-based inventorying in Gatavai Village, Savaii Island, Samoa, 2013.  
© UNESCO/A.P.Krond

Samoa was not yet a State Party to the 2003 Convention when the first phase of the project started in 2011. Samoa benefited from training workshops on the ratification of the 2003 Convention (February 2012), implementation of the Convention at the national level (February 2013) and community-based inventorying of ICH (October 2013).

During the inventorying workshop, participants inventoried 7 ICH elements in the Gaitaivai village. The 3 capacity-building activities in Samoa benefited 125 key players, of whom 43 per cent were female participants. After the first training workshop on the ratification of the Convention, the Ministry organized 2 national consultation workshops among concerned government officials and village chiefs to seek their opinion on the possible ratification of the 2003 Convention. The parties consulted agreed that ratification would be beneficial, and Samoa ratified it in November 2013. In early 2014, Samoa established the Samoa Heritage Coordinating Committee, chaired by MESC, as an inter-ministerial coordination mechanism in charge of safeguarding Samoan heritage in all its forms. A specific task force focusses on ICH.

Participation in the second phase of the project allowed Samoa to strengthen its approach to ICH safeguarding through workshops and field pilots. A workshop on the preparation of nomination files was organized in November 2015. In addition to classroom activities, participants travelled to Afega village and practiced developing mock nominations on Ava ceremony and related rituals, Siva Samoa dance, food preparation and presentation for a feast and oral traditions. The workshop on developing safeguarding plans built upon the experience of a tattoo master.

Samoa organized a pilot survey on the 'Ceremonial exchange of traditional wealth items (such as fine mats) for extended family network' in July and August 2015. Over 100 community members, both men and women selected among 30 active weaving groups participated in the survey. The survey collected information on the social and economic status of weavers, the quality and costs of the mats and their usage, the role of various community members in their preparation, challenges and suggestions for the safeguarding. Based on the result of this survey, the Samoa Heritage Coordinating Committee has started developing a framework for a national inventory.

A policy mission undertaken in July 2016 provided a series of concrete recommendations and a roadmap for MESC which includes the revision of the national cultural policy, to be adopted by the end of 2017. While some recommendations were very welcome, such as the possibility to establish a national digital inventory, additional human and financial resources would be required for the efficient implementation of the roadmap.



Participants discussing key issues at workshop on implementation of the 2003 Convention, Apia, Samoa, 2012.  
© UNESCO/A.P.Krond



Stilt fishermen in Kogalla region.  
The fishing tradition was one of the main  
case studies during the Workshop on  
preparing nominations to the lists of  
the Convention, Galle, 2014.  
© UNESCO/R. Goswami

# Sri Lanka

## National implementing partner:

Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts (Phase I)  
Arts Council & National Library and Documentation  
Services Board (Phase II)

## Regional facilitators:

Rahul Goswami  
Sajida Haider Vandal

## Regional policy advisors:

Rahul Goswami  
Sarah Gardner



<b>IMP</b>	25-29 June 2012	Colombo
<b>INV</b>	10-17 March 2013	Kandy
<b>PILOT INV</b>	August-December 2013	Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa
<b>NOM</b>	11-15 February 2014	Galle
<b>SAFE</b>	24-28 October 2016	Colombo
<b>POL</b>	23-27 January 2017	Colombo

- Phase I
- Phase II
- Other funding sources

During the workshops on the implementation of the Convention (June 2012) and community-based inventorying of ICH (March 2013), participants worked with local community members and ICH practitioners in inventorying the traditional crafts of brassware, winnowing fans and drums. The inventorying workshop was followed by a practical field survey and inventorying of ICH in pilot communities, during which 5 teams were mobilized by the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts to conduct cultural mapping of ICH elements in 2 districts. During the field survey, 'mock nomination' files were also prepared on 5 elements: customs and rituals of Sinhalese puberty rites, traditional therapeutic viniculture and cauterization techniques, national Sinhalese New Year tradition, procession of the Sacred Tooth in Kandy, and traditional puppetry. Participants furthered their understanding of the nomination process during a workshop on the preparation of nomination files (February 2014), during which the 'mock nomination files' were reviewed and critiqued. In total, 62 stakeholders, 26 per cent female, benefited from Phase I of the project.



Workshop on preparing nominations to the lists of the Convention, Galle, 2014. © UNESCO/S.H.Vandal

The workshop on developing safeguarding plans (October 2016) was attended by high officials including the Secretary and Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Education and the President of the Art Council, which demonstrated their commitment for the follow-up actions. Kandy Perahara – one of the most important Buddhist festival of Sri Lanka – was used as a main case study for the role play session, fostering active discussion among the 26 participants. The participants also went on a field visit to study wood carving and mask making together with practitioners and practiced developing safeguarding plans.

Sri Lanka has a number of professionals involved in research and other aspects of safeguarding ICH, both in the government, NGOs and academic institutions. As shown in their active participation during the workshops, these national experts can be mobilized to replicate capacity-building activities at the provincial and local levels, if adequately supported by the national government and enabling policies.

This was reconfirmed by the policy mission in January 2017, which recommended the development of a national policy on ICH as well as new coordinating mechanisms to dovetail efforts from existing government and non-government agencies across portfolios. As a result of an administrative restructuring, a small portion of the former Ministry of Arts and Culture is presently attached to the new Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayama Development and Cultural Affairs, while most of the culture institutions came under the Ministry of Education. A new Panel on ICH was created under the National Art Council in 2016 in an attempt to address this issue although its mandate is still to be made official.

# Timor Leste

**National implementing partner:**  
State Secretariat of Arts and Culture of  
the Ministry of Tourism and Culture

**Regional facilitators:**  
Rahul Goswami  
Suzanne Ogge  
Anthony Parak Krond  
Vellorimo Suminguit



<b>RAT</b>	14-15 November 2011	Dili
<b>IMP</b>	10-14 April 2012	Dili
<b>INV</b>	23-25 October 2012	Suai Loro
<b>INV</b>	16-18 April 2013	Suai Loro
<b>INV</b>	3-6 November 2013	Dili
<b>SAFE</b>	6-9 September 2016	Dili

- Phase I
- Phase II
- Other funding sources



Participants conducting an interview during workshop on community-based inventorying held in Suai Loro village, Timor-Leste, 2013.  
© UNESCO/R. Goswami

Under Phase I of the project, 5 capacity-building activities in Timor Leste were organized: a workshop on ratification (November 2011), a workshop on the implementation of the Convention (April 2012), 2 community-based ICH inventorying workshops (October 2012 and April 2013) and a workshop on the preparation of nominations (November 2013). During the 2 community-based inventorying workshops, participants conducted practical inventorying in local communities documenting rituals associated with betel nut, the construction of vernacular houses, the weaving of bamboo screens and the preparation of traditional food. The 5 project activities benefitted 219 stakeholders, of whom 43 per cent were women.

As the youngest and one of the most impoverished countries in the region, Timor Leste lacks adequate financial and human resources to organize follow-up activities under the project. Timor Leste also lacks a comprehensive cultural policy, though the capacity-building project on safeguarding ICH has made contribution to the government's strategic development plan (2011-2030), which prioritizes infrastructure development and protection of cultural heritage for social development and tourism purposes. In many ways, the workshops succeeded in raising awareness among the key stakeholders

and provided a lively platform for participants to identify the linkages between ICH safeguarding and sustainable development areas, such as agriculture, fisheries, tourism, health and climate change.

As a result, Timor Leste ratified the 2003 Convention in October 2016. UNESCO mobilized its core funding to complement capacity building with the newly developed module on developing safeguarding plans for ICH (September 2016), which was attended by high level authorities, community leaders as well as representatives of youth.



Senior women of the village of Suai Loro lining to a sacred house to join the rice harvest ceremony.  
© UNESCO/R.Goswami

Basket made from pandan leaves. © UNESCO/A.P.Krond






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UNESCO has ensured donor visibility through many channels. The logo of the UNESCO-Japan Cooperation was included in all printed materials used throughout the project, including the banners and certificates of participation used during the workshops. As a standard procedure adopted from the start of project implementation, representatives of the Embassy of Japan in the beneficiary countries have always been invited to take part in project events, such as workshop opening and closing ceremonies.

Capacity-building activities are reported on the website of the Secretariat of the 2003 Convention for the global capacity-building strategy ([ich.unesco.org](http://ich.unesco.org)). Within this website, each beneficiary country and State Party has its own page with a record of activities implemented by UNESCO. Furthermore, a section is dedicated to distributing information about activities supported by the Japanese Funds-in-Trust.

UNESCO Bangkok also created a website providing more information on JFIT support to the regional project at: [bangkok.unesco.org/theme/intangible-cultural-heritage](http://bangkok.unesco.org/theme/intangible-cultural-heritage)

National implementing partners and UNESCO Field Offices also worked together to ensure maximum media coverage and exposure of project activities through, for instance, newspapers, television and radio channels and newsletters of UN agencies and partnering institutions. By linking up with UNESCO's existing media network, news about the capacity-building activities in the region is reaching more than 3.8 million followers.



**samoabserver**  
November 24, 2016

### Safeguarding our culture

12 September 2016

OUR INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE: Siapo making is a vibrant part of our heritage

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A workshop on Developing Safeguarding Plans for Intangible Cultural Heritage will open today, Monday 12 September 2016. This Workshop is organized by the Centre for Samoan Studies at the National University of Samoa in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESCC) and the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development.

Samoa has a wealth of Intangible Cultural Heritage (I.C.H.), whether it be tattooing, siapo making, canoe building, welcoming ava ceremony, traditional dances and songs. Samoa's I.C.H. is basically living heritage, providing a foundation for identity and well-being of community. Over the years, Samoan government actively engaged in the I.C.H. safeguarding through several activities such as the documentation of Samoa's myth and legends and school festivals.

Since 2010, UNESCO, through UNESCO/Japan Funds-In-Trust, assisted the M.E.S.C. to organise a series of capacity building workshops on the I.C.H. safeguarding.

# Intangible heritage means living traditions of the people

Nipuna Shrestha Singh- UNESCO

**TNW: What do you mean by intangible cultural heritage?**

**Nipuna:** As defined by the UNESCO (United Nations) intangible cultural heritages are those traditions, customs, rituals and process, which are being performed from many years and handed down to many generations. These cultural heritages belong to certain community, which has been practicing them for a long period of time. UNESCO has defined it under five categories. It can be oral traditions, rituals, events, scientific knowledge inherited from ancestors or craftsmanship learned from many generations. There is a need to safeguarding these intangible cultural heritages. It is not limited to the artworks or some element of tradition, it can be the process, the community which practices such customs and the things associated with these customs.

**What types of cultural heritages are included in it? Can you give some examples?**

If you look into the traditional process of making edible oil in Khokana, it can also be regarded as an intangible cultural heritage. The tradition of making the oil has been practiced from many years and the technique is being handed down from generations to generations. As regards the tangible heritage it is related to the use of soil or stone to make some art works. However, it should be noted that intangible heritage changes with regards to time and situation. People adopt things depending upon changing time and situation.

**Is language also a kind of intangible cultural heritage?**

Actually, language is not considered as intangible heritage. Language is just the medium for conveying ideas and thoughts. Social customs and traditions or events belong to this category. It is appropriate to call it oral tradition. Festivals or social events like Indra Jata can be considered as intangible heritage. The community has to accept and define it.

**What is the main**

**purpose of the workshop being organized by UNESCO regarding intangible cultural heritage?**

We have already completed two workshops related to the intangible cultural heritage and this is the third workshop in the series we are organizing here. Our obligation is to identify what should be preserved and how it is to preserve for the greater benefit of the community. As you know it is a very long and tedious process. First of all, we need to make an inventory of the heritage before drawing plans for preserving it. The ministry of culture is working towards this direction.

**What have been done so far in this area? Can you elaborate this?**

UNESCO's initiative to safeguarding Nepal's intangible heritage begins with a workshop on preparing nominations to UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List in Kathmandu from 16 to 20 September 2013. The workshop is the last of three Japan funded events to build capacity to protect the manifestations of Nepal's intangible - or living - heritage. These living traditions in the form of traditions, performing arts, festive events and skills of people to produce traditional crafts are a central part of the

country's collective heritage.

The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage adopted by UNESCO in 2003, and ratified by Nepal in 2010, is an excellent framework to give continuity to these living traditions. However, the national capacity to safeguard this heritage needs to be enhanced. The ongoing seminar, which UNESCO Kathmandu organizes jointly with the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, provide knowledge about inscribing elements in the intangible cultural heritage list and enhance skills to prepare a nomination file.

**How can we apply for enlisting our intangible heritages under intangible cultural heritage list?**

During the workshop the experts, representatives from community and concerned institutions will be trained on how to prepare files for the Urgent Safeguarding List and Representative List and proposals for the Register of Best Practices, and how to formulate requests for international assistance. The event is the final of a series of three capacity building events over the last 18 months. The first workshop, held in April 2012 in Kathmandu, addressed the key principles and definitions of



**How much money will UNESCO put in such type of intangible heritage projects?**

UNESCO does not help directly in field works. It basically provides help in preparing technical policy guidelines and legal frameworks. In case of urgent safeguarding projects, the UNESCO can provide. It can provide technical guidance for making proposals. It provides monetary assistance up to US \$ 30,000 under international technical assistance. There are certain processes and we should submit proposal for that. Two technical experts have also arrived to assist in the workshop and they will teach to prepare UNESCO will teach technical aspects of the project.

## Conserving intangible heritage is a challenging job: Sushil Ghimire, Tourism Secretary

"Intangible cultural heritage is at greater risk than the tangible cultural heritage, so we need to focus our efforts for preserving intangible heritages," observed Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Civil Aviation Sushil Ghimire. We can restore and renovate tangible cultural monuments whereas intangible cultural heritage cannot be reconstructed once destroyed, he pointed out speaking as chief guest during the inaugural of the seminar on the theme 'Safeguarding Nepal's Intangible Cultural Heritage: Preparation of nominations to the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List' in Kathmandu on



Monday.

Conservation of intangible cultural heritage is a challenging job and there is a need to generate awareness among the local people for achieving success in conservation efforts, he pointed out. Only the

government cannot preserve culture and tradition, the active participation of the local community is a must, said Secretary Ghimire. Imposing works by the government cannot succeed without involvement of the concerned

community in conserving culture and tradition, he said. There is a need to identify concerned ethnic groups, community and region and works should be carried out in order to enhance their capacity for conserving intangible heritage, he added.

Sunehi Sakarkibara, Deputy Chief of Mission of Japanese Embassy Kathmandu, Shubha Chaudhary, Regional expert on Intangible Cultural Heritage and Shashi Kumar Pandey, Deputy Secretary, General Nepal National Commission for UNESCO also spoke about the importance of conserving intangible cultural heritage.

## Donors and partners

### Donors

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### Partners

# Japan Funds-in-Trust for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

In 1993, following an agreement between UNESCO and the Japanese government, a special Funds-in-Trust was created aimed at assisting UNESCO in its actions in favour of intangible cultural heritage. Up to and including 2007, Japan's total contribution to the Fund has amounted to approximately USD 12 millions. In particular, the Fund played an important role in the preparation of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.



In accordance with the spirit of the Convention, the main focus of the Fund is currently given to activities, especially for developing countries and post-conflict countries, aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including identification (inventories), transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, protection, promotion, enhancement, documentation and research. The Fund also contributes to awareness-raising about and capacity-building in ratification and implementation of the Convention, especially in the Pacific region.



## Intangible Heritage

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## Sri Lanka and Bhutan better equipped to use the international mechanisms of the Intangible Heritage Convention



Mask dance of the drums from Drameba  
© 2007 by Institute of Language and cultural Studies-Serikocha Bhutan

07 March 2014 – In the framework of the regional capacity building project in the Asia-Pacific Region funded by the UNESCO Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, a number of representatives from governmental and non-governmental institutions from Sri Lanka and Bhutan receive intensive training on the nomination process, from preparation to evaluation and examination. These sessions represent a major step in the strengthening of their capacities and complement the training that both countries have already received on the implementation of the Convention at the national level and on community-based inventorying.

A capacity-building session conducted by the UNESCO-trained facilitators, Rahul Goswami from India and Sajida Vandal from Pakistan, has been already held in Galle, Sri Lanka from 11 to 15 February 2014, while in Bhutan the same activities are taking place in Paro this week (from 4 to 8 March 2014), facilitated by two other facilitators, Shubha Chaudhuri from India and Panita Koanantakool from Thailand. These 5-day workshops involve about 25 participants in each country that are provided with training on how to prepare nomination files for the Urgent

Safeguarding List and Representative List, as well as proposals for the Register of Best Practices and requests for international assistance. Sessions are mainly practical and participative and rely on mock nominations that participants need to analyse and improve in accordance with the criteria set out in the Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.



## Workshop on cultural heritage

**PRIYANKA KURUGALA**  
The Culture and the Arts Ministry in collaboration with UNESCO organised the first national workshop on the implementation of UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The workshop is held at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute from June 25 to 29.

It will be attended by national and international professionals in the field.

UNESCO has been organising

**Workshop**  
On 25 June 2013  
From 25 to 29  
at Sri Lanka Foundation Institute  
with UNESCO

such workshops in various regions aiming at an efficient implementation of the convention at national and global levels. These workshops are funded by the Japanese government

under the UNESCO-Japan Funds in Trust Cooperation framework, a Culture and the Arts Ministry spokesperson said.

Culture and the Arts Minister T B Ekanayake, National Heritage Minister Jagath Balanaraya, Sri Lanka National Commissioner for UNESCO Secretary General Prithi Perera, National Heritage Ministry Secretary Kanthi Wijethunga, Culture and the

Arts Ministry Secretary Wimala Ramesinghe, Japanese ambassador to Sri Lanka Nobuhito Hobo, UNESCO New Delhi Director, Shigeru Aoyagi and Bhutan, India and Maldives representatives participated in this event.

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# Safeguarding Sri Lanka's intangible cultural heritage

**G D AMARASIRI**

**Cultural heritage is not only the monuments and collection of objects. It also includes the traditions inherited from our ancestors. The traditions include oral tradition, performing art, rituals, festivals, knowledge, skills needed to produce traditional crafts etc. These traditions may not be tangible. They cannot be touched. This is an important part of our cultural heritage. This cultural heritage that cannot be touched is known as intangible cultural heritage.**

Communities create, carry and transmit intangible cultural heritage. Each country has its own intangible cultural heritage and it shows the cultural identity of a country. Understanding the intangible cultural

parties can help with safeguarding.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is the United Nations specialized agency working to promote international cooperation in the field of education, social and natural sciences, culture and communication. UNESCO has been working for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage for the last 60 years.

### Information collection

As an important step, UNESCO adopted a convention in 2003 for safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage. UNESCO was able to provide a legal administrative and financial framework to safeguard this heritage. The main objectives of the convention

practices related to agricultural and traditional medicine. Sri Lanka has also faced the danger of disappearing certain elements of intangible cultural heritage.

The National Library and Documentation Services Board (NLSDB) implements a project for the conservation of intangible cultural heritage in Sri Lanka. NLSDB implements this project with the assistance of UNESCO. Under this project NLSDB has carried out a number of activities. A national committee on intangible cultural heritage has been appointed. This committee consists of experts in intangible cultural heritage and representatives of institutions which deal with activities related to intangible cultural heritage.

In addition, NLSDB has created a website on intangible cultural heritage in Sri

18.01.2013 - UNESCO Office in Kathmandu

## Jirel community in Dolkha district to pilot safeguarding intangible heritage



**Nepal's Jirel community with its rich Lamaistic Buddhist and dharmi-jharkri practices will host a pilot of creating an inventory of this heritage as part of a "Community-based Identification and Inventorying of Intangible Cultural Heritage" workshop next week.**

The work with the community, which lives in the Jiri-Sikri valley in the Dolkha district, is the highlight of the workshop that the UNESCO Office in Kathmandu organizes jointly with the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation and with support from people in Jiri, from 21 to 28 January 2013 in Jiri.

About 25 participants from different parts and sectors of the country will attend the training to increase their understanding of how to safeguard Nepal's diverse living traditions and expressions. Its main objective is to build capacity to identify elements of intangible heritage and to establish inventories of this heritage.

The workshop is organized within the framework of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which Nepal ratified in 2010. Intangible cultural heritage includes oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe and the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts.



### दोलखाको जिरल समुदायमा अमृत सम्पदाको प्रयोगात्मक संरक्षण

अमृत सांस्कृतिक सम्पदाको समुदायमा आधारित पहिचान एवं विवरण सूचीकरण कार्यको हिस्साको रूपमा लामा बौद्ध धर्म एवं धामी झाकी प्रचलनहरूबाट धनी नेपालको जिरल समुदायमा अर्को हप्ता यस सम्पदाको विवरण सूची बनाउने प्रयोगात्मक कार्यशाला हुदैछ ।

दोलखा जिल्लाको जिरि-सिक्री उपत्यकामा समुदायसंग हुने यो कार्यशाला युनेस्को काठमाडौं र संस्कृति, पर्यटन तथा नागरिक उड्डयन मन्त्रालयले जिरिका मानिसहरूको सहयोगमा संयुक्त रूपमा आठौं २१ देखि २८ जनवरीसम्म आयोजना गर्दैछ ।

नेपालका विविध जिवन्त परम्परा एवं अभिव्यक्तिहरू कसरी संरक्षण गर्ने भन्ने बारेमा तिनीहरूको बुझाई वढाउन यस कार्यशालामा देशका विभिन्न भाग र विधाहरूका लगभग २५ जना सहभागीहरू यस प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम सहभागी हुदैछ ।

यो कार्यशाला युनेस्कोको अमृत सांस्कृतिक सम्पदा सम्बन्धी महसुसिधि, जसलाई नेपालले २०१० मा अनुमोदन गरिसकेकोछ, को रूपरेखाभित्र आयोजना हुदैछ । अमृत सांस्कृतिक सम्पदामा मौलिक परम्पराहरू, अभिनय कलाहरू, सामाजिक प्रचलनहरू, अनुष्ठानहरू, जात्रा पर्वका उत्सवहरू, प्रकृति एवं बसन्त ऋतुसम्मन्थि जल तथा प्रचलनहरू र परम्परागत शिल्पकला उत्पादन सम्बन्धि जल एवं सीपहरू पर्दछन् ।

यो कार्यशालाले अमृत सांस्कृतिक सम्पदाको संरक्षणमा समुदायहरू एवं समूहहरूको महत्त्वलाई जोड दिनेछ । यसले समाजमा सिजनशीलता एवं विविधताको प्रवर्द्धनमा योगदान पुर्याउने मानिसहरू द्वारा क्रियान्वित जिवन्त सम्पदालाई जोड दिनेछ ।

# Project Evaluation

The second phase of the project concluded with an external evaluation. The objective of this evaluation was to understand how and to what extent the project has achieved its objectives of supporting the 5 beneficiary countries in building institutional and professional environments for safeguarding ICH. Findings will also inform the future capacity-building strategy for ICH in Asia and the Pacific in the longer term. The evaluation was able to construct a comprehensive picture of this multi-faceted project through a series of interventions including visits to the project teams in Lao PDR, Mongolia, and Sri Lanka, and interviews with the 2003 Convention Secretariat, UNESCO Field Offices, trained facilitators and local partners.

Overall, the evaluation confirmed that the project has created positive effects and significant progress has been made in the implementation of the 2003 Convention among beneficiary State Parties. The project has contributed in a substantial manner to enhancement of infrastructure as well

as the utilization of the strengthened institutional and human resources, both female and male, from government, civil society and communities, for the effective safeguarding of ICH. Beneficiaries perceived activities as relevant and adding value to their work and continued sharing knowledge informally in the aftermath of the workshops. The project has in particular succeeded in promoting community-based inventorying, a key requirement under the Convention.

Although continued capacity-building support is deemed necessary, the evaluation recommends to focus on activities that will induce a multiplier effect, such as organizing training of national trainers or integrating in the project design field activities that directly apply the newly gained knowledge. These recommendations align with the findings from a recent review of the global capacity-building strategy and will contribute to shaping the future capacity-building activities.



# Challenges & Resolutions

## Participation of community members and ICH practitioners

The participation of community members and ICH bearers was not always sufficient. They also tended to be less outspoken when mixing with trainees who are governmental officials. To resolve this situation, adequate timing during group sessions was provided by the facilitators for community members and ICH bearers to share the knowledge about their traditional practices and the contexts under which they are practiced. The community-based inventoring workshops were conducted near local communities of ICH practitioners, where practical field inventoring exercises were held.

The trainees were also required to obtain the free, prior and informed consent of the host community before the start of the practical field exercises. Whenever possible, field visits were integrated in the programmes of other workshops. The field exercises were structured to ensure that community members and the knowledge bearers took the lead in facilitating the understanding of traditions and practices, and how they can be best transmitted to the younger members of their communities. This proved to be particularly useful during the workshops on the development of safeguarding plans, where participants depended on this essential knowledge to reflect on possible safeguarding measures.



Participants interviewing and documenting ICH elements during Workshop on Community-based Inventoring in Mongolia, 2013. © UNESCO/S.Ogge

## Language difficulties

One of the challenges in the effective delivery of capacity-building activities in Asia and the Pacific has been the language barrier between the English speaking facilitators and the trainees who sometimes have minimal English comprehension skills. Several measures were undertaken to ensure comprehension among participants.

At the outset, the texts of the 2003 Convention, its Operational Directives and key concepts and glossary of terms were translated into the national languages of the beneficiary countries for use by the trainees. Power Point presentations and essential training materials were likewise translated. Consecutive and simultaneous interpreters were present in most workshops to support interactions between the trainees and the expert facilitators.

In terms of the workshop content, the facilitators adapted their lectures and training materials to the local context and integrated as much as possible local knowledge and practices from their own experiences in dealing with local communities. They included basic and easy-to-understand examples, and provided more time for group discussions, role playing and field exercises. In particular, the field exercises provided an interactive and collaborative platform for the trainees, community members

and knowledge bearers in inventorying ICH. The facilitators also used video presentations of actual community-based inventorying and safeguarding activities to facilitate understanding of the concepts and principles of the Convention.



Basket weaving, Luang Prabang, Lao PDR, 2015.  
© UNESCO/P.C.Koanantakool



Artisanal fishermen go out to set their nets. The coastal waters are home to saltwater crocodiles, whom the Timorese consider to be their ancestor spirits. The fishing villagers have learned how to coexist with the fierce reptiles.  
© UNESCO/R.Goswami

# Sustainability

The project has been devised to maximize its sustainability and multiplier effects. Indeed, it aims to create in each beneficiary country a sustainable framework for safeguarding ICH and implementing the Convention built upon a critical mass of national capacity, both in government institutions and in civil society.

During the course of the project, 2 review meetings have been held on the implementation of the global capacity-building strategy for strengthening national capacities for safeguarding ICH. These meetings were attended by expert facilitators and key players from around the world. Lessons learnt from this project meaningfully contributed to the review and at the same time the recommendations from the review also contributed to (re-)shaping the project actions.

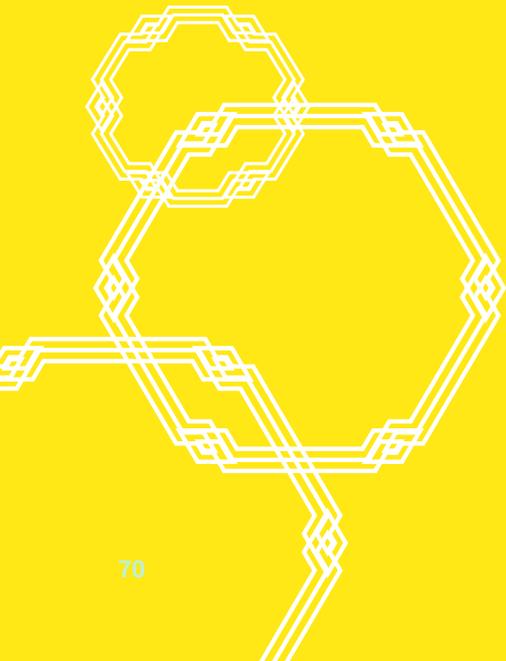
The first meeting in Beijing in 2012 advised on an integrated project approach combining training workshops with advisory services and practical activities, which was incorporated in the design of the second phase. The second meeting in March 2017 sparked a new and important discussion on the evolving multi-faceted role of facilitators, as trainers, advisors or partners and solicited by local, regional and international partners to support the effective implementation of the Convention. The facilitators' network therefore should provide the support mechanism for its members to play their

roles effectively. At the same time, it has been pointed out that there is an increasing need for the network to expand to meet the growing demand for reliable expertise in all regions which vary in terms of social, cultural, political and linguistic contexts. To sustain the capacity-building efforts at the country level, new strategies such as the set-up of national networks of trainers or cooperation with universities should be explored. UNESCO will take into consideration these important recommendations in the design of upcoming capacity-building projects.

At the onset of the Agenda 2030, UNESCO is planning to intensify its efforts to 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. Given the potential of ICH as a driver of development, future project activities will seek opportunities to reach out to other key players in development areas such as education, health, agriculture, climate change and food security. By involving stakeholders from both the culture sector and other development areas, the programme will facilitate the integration of safeguarding ICH into larger development strategies and programmes, thereby further sustaining the viability of ICH and harnessing it for the wellbeing of communities and societies.

# Voices from the Field

Two stories written by UNESCO regional facilitators and programme specialist portray the impacts of the project in Cambodia and Samoa.





A Bhutanese woman.  
© UNESCO/S. Chaudhuri

# How Cambodia's *Lakhaon Khaol* Thrives in a Riverbank Village

By Makara Hong and Rahul Goswami

The village of Ta Skor is tightly knit along the northern riverbank of the Mekong, after it has made a wide turn towards the east just downstream of Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia. At the point where the village lies, the river in its normal course is great, the width from one bank to the other over a kilometre. In this part of the province of Kandal, a province dense with watercourses large and small, and whose surface is dotted with water bodies, most of the available land is devoted to the cultivation of rice, with such cultivation in some communes occupying up to two-thirds of the surface.

Less than 4 kilometres away, on the south-west bank of the Mekong, is the advancing edge of the urban agglomeration, for the capital city has grown to extend along the river and has taken over the fields and wetlands to the west. The contrast between the 2 banks is distinct, urban density on the one hand, with traffic, commerce and tourists, and expansive tracts of rice fields and serene wetlands on the other, hamlets such as Ta Skor punctuating a green landscape.

This is the village – in Sarikakeo commune, Lvea Em district – that is home to the Wat Svay Angdet (Floating Mango Tree), a pagoda that possesses a valuable tradition of its *Lakhaon Khaol*, or masked theatre. One of the oldest forms of Cambodian performing arts which is considered to have been practiced as early as the Angkor period, a form whose origin is placed in the 9th century in

accordance with the bas-reliefs that abound in the vast galleries of the great Wat of Angkor. What is performed is always an enactment of scenes from the *Reamker*, or *Ramayana*. The Cambodian Court of Oudong once gave its patronage to the group who performed this art.

When *Lakhaon Khaol* lost this support in the 19th century, the artists dispersed into provinces (some to homes of wealthy patrons and governors). It is during this interim – from the time the support of the Court of Oudong ended until the recent revival (a gathering of surviving artists after 1979 and then the UNESCO-supported construction of a theatre in 2000) – that the performing art suffered perilously. In the 20th century, it was performed by what became village troupes during the Khmer New Year (13-15 April), or during ceremonies to worship spirits, to ask for rain, or to save villagers from epidemics and illnesses. While performed themes are derived from the *Reamker*, episodes selected are usually those that promote fortunate outcomes for the characters and, by extension, for the host community.

During the recent past of Cambodia, that is, over the last 2 generations, *Lakhaon Khaol* was very popular in the Lon Nol regime and later became a favourite of King Sihanouk. Judging from the sparse details available in several accounts of *Lakhaon Khaol*'s patchy 20th century history, there are likely to have been at least 3 and possibly up to 8 professional



Crossing Mekong River.  
© UNESCO/M.Hong

troupes in the country. In the sorrowful aftermath of the Khmer Rouge period, Lakhaon Khaol was considered a dying art because most of the old masters had been executed by the Pol Pot regime, with the members of the original troupes having scattered. The Wat Svay Angdet troupe is considered to be the only original troupe that remains today.

The masked theatre, the form of presentation of Lakhaon Khaol, is similar to that of the royal court dance which Lakhaon Khaol is believed to have evolved with. It usually consists of important narrations, mime, song and dance. The question of whether the Lakhaon Khaol – both the version patronised by King Ang Duong (1796-1859), and that of the early 20th century – was a male tradition is still inconclusive, because there were evidences of both female and male troupes at the royal court. Yet much earlier, the growing tension between Brahmanical court and Buddhism during the reign of King Jayavarman VIII (1243-1295) is believed to have favoured male performers over women.

Of much greater relevance today to the existing community in the riverside village of Ta Skor is the manner in which Lakhaon Khaol became reconstituted in the relatively humble rural context. This is an example, rare in the entire mainland South-East Asian region, of how a court tradition has been transplanted into village surroundings and has continued to survive while providing the community identity and continuity.

Village Lakhaon Khaol performers have been trained for many years, usually by elder relatives. Most are farmers who spend the seasons tending rice fields and fruit orchards, husbanding cattle, repairing canals and bunds of the village and its cultivated lands. When the Khmer New Year is a few months away they begin to spend their evenings practicing and preparing for the performance which requires the participation of everyone, young and old, whether as performers, makers of costume, stage sets and accessories, providers of raw materials or enthusiastic spectators. The cooperation of all is seen as crucial for the perpetuation of Lakhaon Khaol tradition, knitting together the community, strengthening their social and cultural livelihood. For these reasons, the performance is normally staged on special occasions, from funerals of important monks to ceremonies to battle health epidemics and prayers for peace and safety from wars. The most significant event of all is held around 10 days after Khmer New Year with the performance lasting 3 days. The community members have done so with the shared view of preserving the performing art for the younger generations. They have done so on their own, without governmental or international support.

Water dominates the village and its works. The mighty Mekong flows through rice fields and yields rice, creating wetlands that distribute water to



Rituals before performance.  
© UNESCO/M.Hong

surrounding communities. But soon after New Year, the dry heat becomes fierce at the peak of summer. Villagers turn to Lakhaon Khaol as a way to usher in the other form of water, the rain. Lakhaon Khaol has then become a form of communication of human to the nature, to ask for rain in time for the next planting season and to ask for blessing to the fertility of the land.

The Lakhaon Khaol of Wat Svay Angdet, as given in the community statement, was brought to being

since around 200 years ago by grandmaster Pheng (Lok Ta Pheng) with the tradition, knowledge and performing skills being passed on from generation to generation until 1970 when the darkness of the Khmer Rouge regime descended. After 1979 the community revived the tradition and the performance. When in 2000 UNESCO Phnom Penh Office supported the building a new theatre, it also contributed to the productions of new costumes and a new set of musical instruments for the

community. Thereafter a cultural philanthropy supported a training programme in the community.

It takes the combined efforts of a group of people, and often up to a month of their time, to complete one costume of a leading character. Patterns specific to certain lead characters are sewn in painstakingly, every bead and sequin individually added. The pin peat orchestra – which accompanies shadow puppet theatre, classical dance, masked dance-drama, and temple ceremonies – maintains their instruments and practices for the Lakhaon Khaol. The ensemble typically consists of large and small gong circles, xylophones, a double-headed barrel drum, a pair of barrel drums, cymbals and a reed hardwood instrument like an oboe.

Participating in the intangible cultural heritage training workshops held in Cambodia from 2012 onwards, members of the Wat Svay Angdet found a happy similarity of values between their tradition and the UNESCO 2003 Convention – the centrality of community, the importance given to transmission, the creative freedom to define what the performance means to the village and its residents. During the ICH training they appreciated the value of community-based documentation of the varied aspects, from costume to dance gesture, of the Lakhaon Khaol art and the manner of its performing.

That the Lakhaon Khaol of Wat Svay Angdet and Ta Skor has survived with dignity and meaning is testament to the strong support it enjoys from the community. The chief monk of the pagoda always ensures that a part of the Buddhists' contribution supports the Lakhaon Khaol troupe, especially for the training of young artists, and to pay for the organisation of rituals and the performances. He is ably assisted by the principal of the Svay Angdet



Masks and musical instruments offered by UNESCO. © UNESCO/M.Hong

Theatre offered by UNESCO.  
© UNESCO/M.Hong





The performance.  
© UNESCO/M.Hong

Primary school. The Director of the Provincial Department of Culture and Fine Arts very often attends the annual rituals and performances. The school hosts and supports the regular training for masters, training of trainers and young students after classes. On occasion, a master trainer from the Royal University of Fine Arts provides guidance and direction.

Ta Skor, on whose horizon the capital bustles, is even today a village whose roads turn muddy when it rains, where the provision of electricity is erratic and in which public sanitation is a continuing project. Yet the strength of its community has persevered, keeping Lakhaon Khaol tradition both relevant and meaningful to a younger generation of Cambodians.

# Safeguarding Samoan Tattooing

By Noriko Aikawa-Faure

A Samoan myth says that the twin sisters Taema and Tilafaiga brought the tradition and techniques of tattooing from Fiji to Samoa many centuries ago. It is said that 2 families named Sasu'a and Sa Tulou'ena, official practitioners of tattooing today, are the descendants of these sisters. The family of Master Malamagamalii Fosi Levi claims to be the third family practising traditional tattooing today. In the 19th century, tattooing was prohibited by missionaries, but despite this obstacle the Samoans continued to practice tattooing secretly for some 40 years.

Master Malamagamalii Fosi Levi and his son Fesoloa'i Imo Levi attended the UNESCO workshop for the safeguarding of ICH held in Apia in September 2016 in order to discuss the challenges that the practice of Samoan tattooing is currently facing. Master Malamagamalii Fosi Levi, who is also a judge, exercises tattooing in his practice built in his garden in his spare time. His son Fesoloa'i Imo Levi, who studied engineering abroad, came back to Samoa a few years ago to assist his father and now works as a tattooing master together with young apprentices. He also travels around the world attending conferences and exhibitions, giving lectures, and practicing tattooing.

Master Malamagamalii Fosi Levi is concerned about the loss of the cultural meaning of tattooing in Samoa and of its traditional social function. In traditional Samoan society, tattooing granted access to a position in society. Having a body



A Samoan tattooing master, Malamagamalii Fosi Levi.  
© UNESCO/N.Aikawa

covered by tattoos was a status symbol. If a man was not tattooed, he could not accede to a higher social status. Samoan women had different patterns of tattoos that are specific to women. For a woman, having tattoos on her body did not give her as important a social role as a man. Master Malamagamalii Fosi Levi said that some Samoans enter into a trance when they are being tattooed because of the pain of the procedure and into dialogue with their ancestors. He said that it was through this dialogue with their ancestors that they understood their own identities.

Today, fewer and fewer Samoan young people are getting tattooed, and many of them no longer consider tattooing to be an expression of their cultural identity. The social function and cultural meaning of tattooing in Samoa today have been changed. Its social function as a means to accede to a higher social position has been reduced,

and its cultural meaning has become a matter of personal choice. It was interesting to hear the experience of 2 participants in the workshop, both of them returnees to Samoa from the diaspora. Both said that the reason they had decided to have their bodies tattooed was to overcome their metaphysical suffering by experiencing physical pain. One of them, a Christian, shared his experience of engaging in a dialogue with God in a state of trance during a painful tattooing session.

Master Malamagamalii Fosi Levi said he thought the decline in the popularity of tattooing might have been due to the negative image of tattooing prevalent abroad, where tattoos are sometimes seen as associated with criminal elements. He regretted the fact that some tattooists working in Samoa today do not belong to the traditional families of tattooists and they do not always practice tattooing in its complete form, which includes the related rituals. They also do not always respect traditional protocols such as the appropriate patterns to be used for men and women. He was also not happy with the increasing numbers of new patterns that have been invented and introduced into the traditional Samoan tattoo patterns.

For Master Malamagamalii Fosi Levi, the loss of traditional Samoan tattooing was occurring in the same way as the loss of the Samoan language. His son Fesoloa'i Imo Levi was more concerned about the protection of the intellectual property rights (IPR) of traditional Samoan tattoo designs and motifs, which had been made available online and were being exploited free of charge. In one international tattoo design exhibition, Fesoloa'i Imo Levi discovered that one of the Samoan patterns was being presented as a Russian pattern. Among the increasing numbers of consumers of tattoos and tattooists abroad due to the recent popularity

of tattooing worldwide, sometimes foreign tattooists practice Samoan tattoo techniques and use Samoan patterns.

Fesoloa'i Imo Levi has been promoting the use of disposable needles and combs made of plastic instead of using traditional tools made of boars' tusks as a protection measure against HIV infection. He said that although the skills and know-how for the production of the traditional tools would no longer be transmitted as a result, the use of disposable instruments should become obligatory in order to secure the international reputation of Samoan tattooing. In response to a question from the workshop participants concerning the relationships among the tattooist families, he said that the families did not often communicate with each other. In fact, they had last met in 1996, he said.

Savea Fiti Tausisi, one of the workshop participants and also principal officer of the Samoan Qualification Authority (SQA), which awards university diplomas to some qualified bearers of traditional cultural expressions, described the difficulty the SQA had encountered in dealing with the tattooist families as they did not always have the same views regarding which skills should be seen as essential in gaining the relevant SQA qualifications.

During the workshop, a group consisting of a Samoan National Archives officer, an officer in charge of IPR from the Samoan Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour, an artist, a traditional sailing practitioner, and several weavers, drew up a safeguarding plan for the 'Traditional Practice of Tattooing and the Skills and Knowledge of the *tufunga* (Tattooing Master)' in Samoa. It was interesting to note that the threats and challenges identified included the fact that tattooing practices were being exercised

without respect for the traditional skills and patterns by individuals who did not belong to the traditional *tufunga* families and that there were also health risks and risks of the misappropriation of Samoan tattooing. In order to counter these threats, the group proposed legislation to protect the *tufungas*, health regulations relating to tattooing, and the compilation of a catalogue of tattoo motifs in order that these could be protected by copyright law.

While they fully respected the *tufunga*'s rights and the traditional restrictions and taboos, the participants identified all Samoans, including diaspora Samoans, as members of the community concerned by the traditional practices and skills of Samoan tattooing. It was also interesting to note that the possible conflict of Christianity with traditional cultural practices was raised as an issue in this regard. After the group's presentation, the participants at the workshop unanimously upheld the view that before taking any protective measures it was essential that the tattooist families meet in order to discuss the kind of measures they wished to see established.

A main Samoan daily newspaper, The Samoa Observer, reported 2 months after the workshop (3 November) that a significant consultation of tattooists was taking place that day to discuss health issues related to Samoan tattooing. In this article, Fesoloa'i Imo Levi was quoted as saying that 'the guidelines issued recently by the authorities are insufficient, and legal measures should be taken promptly' to regulate Samoan tattooing.

The UNESCO workshop might have contributed to opening a new phase of Samoan tattooing.



Tattooing master's son practicing tattooing.  
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