Reflection on the role of accredited non-governmental organizations within the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

18 April 2019

**Consultation meeting / Working document**

1. **Background on the current accreditation system**
2. Article 9 of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Convention’) requires that the Committee propose to the General Assembly the accreditation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with recognized competence in the field of intangible cultural heritage to act in an advisory capacity to the Committee. The modalities for the accreditation are described in chapter III.2 of the Operational Directives (Annex 2). Based on these provisions, the current accreditation system of NGOs was established at the second session of the General Assembly of States Parties in 2008. Since then, five cycles of accreditation (2010, 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2018) and two cycles of reviewing the accreditation status of NGOs (2015 and 2017) have taken place. Over eight years, a total of 231 NGOs have been accredited, 55 of which saw their accreditation terminated after the quadrennial review by the Intergovernmental Committee of their contribution and commitment to the implementation of the Convention.
3. As of February 2019, there are 176 NGOs accredited to provide advisory services to the Committee. The geographical representation of these NGOs is as follows:

* Western Europe and North America (Group I): 97;
* Eastern Europe (Group II): 18;
* Latin America and the Caribbean (Group III): 9;
* Asia and the Pacific (Group IV): 26;
* Africa [Group V(a)]: 20; and
* Arab States [Group V(b)]: 6.

Due to this imbalance among the regional groups, it should be noted that some electoral groups have found it difficult to identify a sufficient number of candidate NGOs to fill their respective seats in the Evaluation Body.

1. Since 2010, accredited NGOs have organized themselves around an ICH NGO Forum, initially an informal platform for communication, networking, exchange and cooperation for accredited NGOs. Since 2012, for the Committee sessions, the ICH NGO Forum[[1]](#footnote-1) has more formally coordinated the inputs of accredited NGOs to the debates of the Committee, including the preparation of a joint statement on behalf of NGOs, which had been customary since 2009. The ICH NGO Forum is now coordinated by a fully elected steering committee composed of seven persons, one from each of the six regions corresponding to the Electoral Groups of UNESCO, who act, on a voluntary basis, as contact persons for the NGOs and for the activities of the Forum in their respective regions, and one representing international NGOs. As such, the ICH NGO Forum – itself an NGO registered in France but not accredited under the 2003 Convention – operates, in some ways, as a sort of ‘umbrella organization’ for accredited NGOs.
2. While the important role of NGOs in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage has been underlined by the governing bodies of the Convention, as well as in the 2013 evaluation of the Convention carried out by UNESCO’s Internal Oversight Service ([Document IOS/EVS/PI/129 REV](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/IOS-EVS-PI-129_REV.-EN.pdf)), the specific ways in which NGOs can be involved in the life of the Convention at the international level have not been clearly and extensively defined. Both States and NGOs have on several occasions regretted the lack of opportunities for NGOs to leverage their expertise, experience and reach among communities in the work of the governing bodies of the Convention. On the basis of this realization, the Secretariat has identified the following issues that would need further clarification:

* Which advisory functions should the Committee assign to accredited NGOs?
* What type of NGOs should be accredited?
* How should NGOs requesting accreditation be evaluated?
* How should their contribution to and engagement in the work of the Committee be assessed?
* How should the contribution and participation of accredited NGOs be coordinated?
* How can the accreditation system ensure that there is a critical mass of accredited NGOs from each region?
* Should the number of accredited NGOs regularly increase, and how can the accreditation system be managed in a sustainable manner?

1. **Context of the reflection process**
2. At its twelfth session in November–December 2017, the Committee invited the Secretariat ‘to reflect, in consultation with accredited NGOs, on the possible ways in which the participation of NGOs under the 2003 Convention could be further enhanced and how this would be reflected in the accreditation and renewal mechanisms of NGOs’ ([Decision 12.COM 17](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/12.COM/17)). This request was made following debates during the same session on the identification and definition of the advisory functions that the Committee wishes accredited NGOs to fulfil (expressed as *inter alia* functions in paragraph 96 of the Operational Directives) and on the relevance of the accreditation system for the work of the Committee and the implementation of the Convention. These discussions stemmed from the realization that at any one time, only six accredited NGOs are members of the Evaluation Body and are therefore in a position to fulfil the advisory functions assigned to accredited NGOs in the Operational Directives.
3. This reflection is meant to provide a direction for the accreditation and renewal criteria, the role and organization of the ICH NGO Forum and, more generally, the contribution of NGOs to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. In June 2018, the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention took note of the ongoing reflection undertaken by the Secretariat and the informal open-ended ad hoc working group of the 2003 Convention and requested that the Committee and the Secretariat present the updates on this reflection at the next session of the General Assembly ([Resolution 7.GA 11](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/7.GA/11)).
4. Following preliminary consultations with the steering committee of the ICH NGO Forum and representatives from the informal ad hoc working group on the organization of the consultation process, an electronic consultation on the potential advisory functions to be fulfilled by accredited NGOs and possible ways forward for the accreditation system was launched in September 2018 with a communication sent to all 176 accredited NGOs and 178 States Parties to the Convention. The aim of this electronic consultation was to solicit experiences and observations concerning the involvement of NGOs in the implementation of the Convention under the current accreditation system and gather ideas on:

* potential advisory functions that accredited NGOs could fulfil for the governing bodies of the Convention (the General Assembly of States Parties and the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage),
* potential functions that accredited NGOs could fulfil in the implementation of the Convention at the national level,
* the evolution of the accreditation system of NGOs, and
* the role of the ICH NGO Forum.

1. From September to October 2018, 68 accredited NGOs (39 per cent of the accredited NGOs) and 38 States Parties (21 per cent of States Parties) responded to the electronic consultation. The geographical distribution of the participating accredited NGOs and States Parties is as follows:
2. At its thirteenth session in November/December 2018, the Committee took note of the participatory consultation process presented by the Secretariat and of the initial observations from the electronic consultation on the role of accredited NGOs in the Convention. It requested the Secretariat to continue the reflection with accredited NGOs, the ICH NGO Forum, the informal ad hoc open-ended working group and States Parties on the definition of the advisory functions to be fulfilled by accredited NGOs and to present the results of such reflection and proposals for the revision of the accreditation system at its fourteenth session ([Decision 13.COM 13](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/13.COM/13)).
3. **Summary findings of the electronic consultation**
4. For the purpose of the electronic consultation on the role of accredited NGOs in the Convention, a survey questionnaire ([Document ITH/18/NGO/2](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-18-NGO-2_Questionnaire_EN.pdf)) was sent to all accredited NGOs and States Parties in September 2018. While not all accredited NGOs and States Parties contributed to the electronic consultation, a significant number of them responded to the survey, allowing all groups and regions to be represented, apart from accredited NGOs based in the Arab States. Therefore, while the observations outlined below may not fully capture the opinions of all accredited NGOs and States Parties, they do present a representative sample of opinions (39 per cent of accredited NGOs and 21 per cent of States Parties) regarding the current accreditation system of NGOs. The detailed findings of the electronic consultation are presented in Annex 3 of the present document.
5. **Adequacy of the current accreditation system**. Around 80 per cent of accredited NGOs that participated in the survey consider that the accreditation system supported their work in a way they expected. This confirms the rather positive impression that States and NGOs have of the accreditation system, with 70 per cent of the 106 respondents considering the current system as adequate. However, responses from accredited NGOs also reveal that a number of them have a different understanding of the accreditation system. Many NGOs expect the Committee to provide more concrete guidance on areas in which it wishes accredited NGOs to advise it. In addition, there are a number of areas for improvement that respondents identified as critical, such as the need to improve cooperation among accredited NGOs and between accredited NGOs and States Parties, as well as the importance of improving the fair representation of all regions.
6. **Advisory functions of accredited NGOs**. A wide range of advisory functions were proposed by States and accredited NGOs that took part in the electronic consultation. While the full list of proposed functions can be found in Annex 3 of the present document, these can be categorized according to three different types:

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| Type of advisory functions | Specific tasks |
| Direct advisory to the Committee | * Thematic advisory on specific issues identified by the Committee, such as the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in relation to sustainable development, climate change or emergencies. * Technical advisory to the Committee including the evaluation of periodic reports, accreditation requests from NGOs and International Assistance requests. * Preparation of alternative periodic reports on the implementation of the Convention at the national level (‘shadow report’ system). |
| Implementation of the Convention at the international level | * Experience-sharing with the international intangible cultural heritage community concerning good safeguarding practices. * Research on thematic issues focusing on the safeguarding of living heritage (e.g., ethical issues) and on the links between living heritage and other connected fields. |
| Implementation of the Convention at the national level | * Advisory to States Parties in the implementation of the Convention at the national level. * Capacity-building and awareness-raising among communities in the safeguarding of their living heritage. * Monitoring of the implementation of the Convention at the national level, the status of elements inscribed on the Lists of the Convention and the implementation of safeguarding projects. |

Based on the proposed advisory functions outlined above, it appears that respondents consider that providing advisory services to the Committee goes beyond a direct contribution to the work of the Committee and also entails supporting the implementation of the Convention at the international and national levels.

1. **Relevance of the accreditation criteria**. A total of 78 per cent of the accredited NGOs and States Parties consider the current accreditation criteria – as defined in paragraph 91 of the Operational Directives – to be relevant and sufficient. However, eight respondents suggested that the criteria used to review the accreditation of NGOs after four years – which include not only the engagement of NGOs in the implementation of the Convention but also their capacities to provide advisory services to the Committee – could be better aligned with the accreditation criteria, which do not include a demonstration of capacities to advise the Committee. At the same time, respondents also expressed the wish that the capacities of accredited NGOs to work at the international level and to serve in the Evaluation Body be better taken into account in the accreditation process.
2. **Review of accreditation**. When reviewing the contribution and commitment of accredited NGOs and their relations with the Committee – as per paragraph 94 of the Operational Directives – accredited NGOs and States Parties agree that the Committee should mainly take into consideration the wide range of operational programmes and activities carried out over the past four years by the NGO in the field of ICH safeguarding at the local, national and international levels. Furthermore, the importance of the direct involvement of accredited NGOs in the implementation of the Convention at the national level, such as through the provision of advisory services to governmental authorities and their contribution to policy-making, is widely acknowledged. These aspects are already included in the form used for the quadrennial report submitted by accredited NGOs. However, in addition to those, respondents also suggest that information be requested from each accredited NGO that demonstrates its integrity and track record (seven respondents), its active cooperation with communities (six respondents) and its participation in the activities of the ICH NGO Forum (five respondents).
3. **Geographical distribution**. Prior to the electronic consultation, the unbalanced geographical distribution of accredited NGOs was identified as one of the major concerns by the General Assembly, the Committee and the Secretariat. This was pointed out in numerous working documents of the governing bodies ([Document ITH/18/7.GA/11](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-18-7.GA-11-EN.docx) is the most recent example). Most of the respondents encouraged the implementation of ‘soft measures’ to foster the accreditation of NGOs based in underrepresented regions. These include awareness-raising initiatives through the wider network of entities associated with UNESCO, capacity-building actions by the Secretariat, accredited NGOs and a network of experts and the identification of thematic areas of interest to the Committee, in which targeted efforts could be made to identify active NGOs. Aside from these proposed ‘soft measures’, eleven respondents also considered the possibility of limiting the number of accredited NGOs in over-represented regions.
4. **Disparity in size and capacities of NGOs**. A total of 62 per cent of respondents are of the opinion that the accreditation system should take into consideration the disparity in the size and capacities of NGOs, although they largely believe that these should not constitute determining factors in the way accreditation requests are evaluated and examined. Instead, responding accredited NGOs and States Parties seem to promote the idea that the form used for accreditation requests should include information concerning the size of the organization, the scope of its activities, its thematic areas of expertise and its budget, among other factors. Based on this data, accredited NGOs could be assigned different tasks and could benefit from certain targeted capacity-building activities, although recourse to the latter should not become a replacement for the required accreditation criteria.
5. **Different types of accreditation**. In response to the challenges caused by the diversity of activities carried out by NGOs, the possibility of creating different types of accreditation associated with the different types of functions that NGOs could fulfil could be seen as a potential solution. In this regard, respondents are rather divided, with a slight majority (54 per cent) being positive about this possible way forward. Should different types of accreditation be created, respondents consider that the distinction could be based on the scope of their activities (international, regional, national or local), their field of expertise or their interest in providing advisory services at the international level in addition to their regular activities aiming at safeguarding living heritage.
6. **Role of the ICH NGO Forum**. The ICH NGO Forum is widely considered as a link between accredited NGOs, States, communities and UNESCO. Accredited NGOs and States Parties envisage a wide range of functions they wish the ICH NGO Forum to fulfil, some of which are functions the Forum is at least already partially covering and some of which could be considered as areas in which the ICH NGO Forum could reinforce its actions or as new areas. Respondents to the survey seem to encourage the ICH NGO Forum to continue providing a platform for sharing experiences and information and for networking among accredited NGOs, in representing NGOs in meetings of the governing bodies and in its awareness-raising initiatives. In addition, respondents suggested that some of the functions of the ICH NGO Forum could be reinforced or expanded. These include the coordination of the direct advisory function of accredited NGOs to the Committee and its function as a laboratory of ideas. Furthermore, the ICH NGO Forum is considered as an entity that could train accredited NGOs and communities.
7. **Conclusion of summary findings**. The survey findings indicate that there is currently no wide consensus among accredited NGOs and States Parties concerning the need to entirely overhaul the accreditation system of NGOs. However, both accredited NGOs and States Parties acknowledge that a number of areas could be improved, firstly to allow the Committee to benefit from the wealth of experience and expertise NGOs can bring to its debates, and secondly to enable NGOs to fully contribute to the implementation of the Convention at the international and national levels. Some of these areas relate to the definition of the accreditation system, such as the identification of advisory functions that accredited NGOs shall fulfil; these will be discussed in section D of the present document. Other areas are cross-cutting concerns which were raised by the Committee in its debates at its thirteenth session in 2018 (see paragraph 4 of the present document) and that will need to be addressed regardless of the nature of the accreditation system.
8. **Proposed future actions**. Based on the findings of the survey, the following actions could be undertaken to address some of the major cross-cutting concerns:

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| Issues | Proposed actions |
| How to improve the geographical distribution of accredited NGOs? | * The Secretariat, Category 2 Centres and the ICH NGO Forum could undertake specific awareness-raising and capacity-building activities targeting NGOs in under-represented regions, pending the availability of funding and in cooperation with the States concerned. * States could be encouraged to mobilize NGOs active in the safeguarding of heritage at the national and local levels. |
| How to facilitate cooperation between accredited NGOs and States? | * Accreditation forms and quadrennial report forms could be revised to allow for the collection of information concerning the specific expertise of each accredited NGO. This could allow for the mapping of expertise offered by accredited NGOs, which could be presented online. |
| How to improve the active participation of accredited NGOs? | * The Secretariat could send a welcome letter to all newly accredited NGOs to inform them of the functioning of the Intergovernmental Committee and ways for accredited NGOs to contribute to its work. * Prior to each session of the Committee, the ICH NGO Forum could organize a workshop for newly accredited NGOs and could facilitate the contribution of NGOs to the debates of the Committee. |
| How to prevent the possible misuse of accreditation by NGOs? | * The governing bodies of the Convention may wish to reflect on the possibility of adding ‘integrity and professional standing’ as a criterion for the accreditation of NGOs. * The accreditation form could include a formal pledge by NGOs requesting accreditation to avoid, for example, political claims not relevant to the Convention. * The ICH NGO Forum could be invited to develop a code of conduct for all accredited NGOs. |

1. **Defining the future of the NGO accreditation system**
2. Based on the findings of the electronic consultation, the debates of the General Assembly of States Parties in 2018 and those of the Committee in 2017 and 2018, three main ways forward for the accreditation system of NGOs could be identified. Whereas a first option would be aimed at refining and adjusting the current accreditation system, a second option could consist in creating a new accreditation system, managed by an ‘umbrella organization’, possibly with different types of accreditation that would fit the various profiles of NGOs that are currently accredited or that may seek accreditation in the future. A third alternative could lead States Parties and NGOs to envisage an accreditation system that combines the other two options: such a system would foresee the creation of two types of accreditation, one for NGOs fulfilling advisory functions to the Committee and the other for NGOs contributing to the implementation of the Convention at the national and local levels. Annex 1 presents all three options in a summarized comparative table.
3. **Preliminary remark concerning the number of accredited NGOs**. All three options described in this section do not foresee any specific measure addressing the question of the overall number of accredited NGOs. While the increasing number of accredited NGOs in all regions could indeed contribute to enhancing the visibility of the Convention and reinforcing the safeguarding of living heritage in general, it may nonetheless be important to acknowledge that managing any system with potentially several hundred accredited organizations – many of which are unable to directly advise the Committee due to a lack of opportunities and/or a lack of capacities – will mobilize both human and financial resources. It will also require the General Assembly, the Committee, the Secretariat and possibly the ICH NGO Forum to allocate an increasing amount of time to properly overseeing the functioning of the accreditation system. Under these circumstances, it could be crucial to ensure that the accreditation system is best fit to fulfil its main function – advising the Committee – given the limited resources at hand.

**Option 1: Maintain and adjust the current accreditation system**

1. **Rationale**. Maintaining the current accreditation system, in which accredited NGOs of all sizes, capacities and interests can be involved in the implementation of the Convention at the international level, would be in line with the overall satisfaction of States and accredited NGOs that participated in the electronic consultation. The accreditation system could be adjusted to take into consideration the main needs and concerns that accredited NGOs and States outlined in their responses to the survey, as well as the concerns expressed by the Committee and the Secretariat. These adjustments would include broadening the definition of the advisory functions to be fulfilled by accredited NGOs, revising the accreditation criteria and lightening the process for the quadrennial review of accreditation.
2. **Advisory functions**. As currently defined in paragraph 96 of the Operational Directives, advisory functions assigned to accredited NGOs focus on the evaluation of nominations, proposals and requests to the international mechanisms of the Convention, as well as the assessment of the effects of safeguarding plans for elements inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. As these functions are closely related to the inscriptions on the Lists of the Convention, it would appear to be preferable that any revision affecting them be discussed as part of the global reflection on the listing mechanisms of the 2003 Convention launched by the Committee in 2018 ([Decision 13.COM 6](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/13.COM/6)). In addition to these advisory functions, accredited NGOs and States may wish to consider extending the role of accredited NGOs to include the following tasks:
   1. Advisory to the Committee on specific thematic issues identified by the governing bodies of the Convention, including research on thematic issues focusing on the safeguarding of living heritage (e.g., ethical issues) or on the links between living heritage and other connected fields;
   2. Experience-sharing with the international community of intangible cultural heritage concerning good safeguarding practices.
3. **Accreditation criteria and process**. To continue allowing a diverse range of NGOs to become accredited, the existing accreditation criteria, as described in paragraph 91 of the Operational Directives, could be maintained. In addition, in order to address a specific concern raised by States and NGOs, the addition of a criterion on the integrity and professional standing of NGOs requesting accreditation could be considered. The accreditation process would remain unchanged, with the General Assembly, the Committee and the Secretariat keeping their current roles.
4. **Review of accreditation**. As prescribed under paragraph 94 of the Operational Directives, the Committee would continue reviewing the contribution and engagement of accredited NGOs based on the submission of a quadrennial report. However, considering the increasing number of accredited NGOs since 2010 – a trend which is expected to continue in the coming years if the current accreditation criteria are maintained – it may be considered necessary to lighten the process for the review of accreditation while ensuring that only competent and active NGOs retain their accreditation status. This could involve entrusting the Secretariat with registering the quadrennial reports received, ensuring that the accredited NGOs are still active and legally in existence and submitting recommendations to the Committee accordingly.
5. **Positive implications**. This proposed accreditation system would allow a wide range of NGOs to become accredited and would require minimal changes to the Operational Directives. Furthermore, while it is unlikely, based on current trends, that a strict geographical balance of accredited NGOs could be ensured, this system could be aimed at ensuring that at least a critical mass of NGOs is accredited in each region. This system may be suitable in the short term as a transitional system that could in the future lead to the creation of an accreditation system managed by an ‘umbrella organization’ – such as the ICH NGO Forum (see option 2 below) – or to the establishment of a hybrid system (see option 3 below).
6. **Challenges**. This proposed accreditation system is expected to lead to an ever-increasing number of accredited NGOs, many of which do not have the intention, interest or capacities to directly advise the Committee, as their expertise is highly specialized and/or their objectives focus on the implementation of the Convention at the national or local level. Under these circumstances, it may become difficult for the General Assembly, the Committee and the Secretariat to shoulder the responsibility of regularly accrediting NGOs.

**Option 2: Establish an ‘umbrella organization’ responsible for the accreditation system and the coordination of the contribution of NGOs to the work of the Committee**

1. **Background**.At its first session in Algiers, Algeria (November 2006) and its first extraordinary session in Chengdu, China (May 2007), the Committee discussed the desirability of establishing an umbrella advisory body, composed of representatives of accredited NGOs and of a limited number of private persons with widely recognized competence in the field of intangible cultural heritage. At the time, based on the experience acquired under the 1972 World Heritage Convention, the Committee concluded that the creation of an ‘umbrella organization’ would not allow for the necessary plurality of expertise, may limit the number of NGOs upon which the Committee could call and may encourage the systematic recourse to well-known NGOs without due attention to geographical diversity. Twelve years after these initial discussions on a potential ‘umbrella organization’, the success of the accreditation system, as illustrated by the 432 accreditation requests received by the Secretariat since 2009, proves NGOs’ strong interest in contributing to the implementation of the Convention. The diversity of their profiles and their geographical distribution further show that the accreditation system can allow for a diverse range of expertise from different regions. Moreover, the creation of the ICH NGO Forum demonstrates that accredited NGOs themselves felt the need to establish a participatory coordinating mechanism in which all regions are represented.
2. **Rationale**. In order to encompass the wide range of aspirations described in the responses of the electronic consultation and taking into consideration the inherent difficulties of a centralized process revolving around the recommendations from the Secretariat to the Committee regarding the accreditation and the review of the accreditation of NGOs, States Parties and NGOs may consider the ongoing reflection process as an opportunity to envisage an accreditation system managed by an ‘umbrella organization’.
3. **Advisory functions**. In addition to the advisory functions currently outlined in paragraph 96 of the Operational Directives, accredited NGOs would be tasked – under the coordination of an ‘umbrella organization’ – with contributing to the implementation of the Convention at the international, national and local levels and sharing experiences and good safeguarding practices of living heritage with the Committee, as it deems necessary.
4. **Accreditation criteria**.This system of accreditation could essentially retain the accreditation criteria described in paragraph 91 of the Operational Directives. In addition, NGOs that express an interest in serving in the Evaluation Body or in providing direct advisory services to the Committee may be subject to additional criteria, such as demonstrating their integrity and their capacities to evaluate nominations.
5. **Accreditation and review of accreditation processes.** The processes for the accreditation and review of accreditation could be led by an international ‘umbrella organization’ – such as the ICH NGO Forum – or by regional ‘umbrella organizations’ if States Parties and NGOs consider that a decentralized accreditation system may be more pertinent. ‘Umbrella organization(s)’ would then be asked to receive requests from NGOs and submit its(their) recommendations to the Committee with regard to accrediting them and to maintaining and terminating relations with them.
6. **Positive implications**. Through a more flexible and simplified accreditation system, the Committee could benefit from the expertise of a larger number of NGOs with more diverse profiles and from all regions. Regardless of the total number of accredited NGOs, the Committee would have a limited number of counterparts, as the ‘umbrella organization(s)’ would coordinate the work of NGOs. Furthermore, the potentially larger number of NGOs could contribute to raise the visibility of intangible cultural heritage and of the Convention at the national and local levels.
7. **Challenges**. Under this system, the role and status of the umbrella organization(s) would still need to be clearly defined, as the establishment of such organizations should not prevent the possibility for the diversity of NGOs to directly contribute to the work of the Committee. The umbrella organization(s) could be considered as an ad hoc consultative body in the sense of Article 8.3 of the Convention or could request accreditation in the same way as other accredited NGOs it will be entrusted with coordinating. Its(their) primary function(s) could for instance consist in managing the accreditation system and in coordinating the work of accredited NGOs at the international level.

**Option 3: Create a hybrid system with two types of accreditation for NGOs**

1. **Rationale**. As an alternative to the two options outlined above, States Parties and NGOs may also consider the possibility of a hybrid solution, combining options 1 and 2 as described above. This would involve the introduction of two types of accreditation for NGOs: one type of accreditation could be dedicated to providing direct advisory services to the Committee and would be managed by the Secretariat (option 1), while the other type could focus on the implementation of the Convention at the national level and could be managed by an ‘umbrella organization’ (option 2). As most NGOs active at the international level also contribute to the safeguarding of living heritage at the national and local levels, States Parties and accredited NGOs may consider it to be advisable to ensure that both types of accreditation are not mutually exclusive. In other words, an NGO could hold both types of accreditation at the same time; it might also be considered necessary for NGOs to be accredited for the implementation of the Convention at the national level before seeking accreditation to provide advisory services to the Committee.
2. **Positive implications**. In addition to the benefits described in paragraphs 27 and 34, this alternative solution may allow for a wide range of NGOs involved in the safeguarding of living heritage to contribute to the implementation of the Convention based on their expertise and capacities. In other words, the Committee could directly and easily access the pool of expertise offered by NGOs from all regions that are engaged in the implementation of the Convention at the international level, while retaining the possibility of calling upon the more specialized and local expertise of a broader range of NGOs.
3. **Challenges**. This system could suffer from the potential risk associated with the coexistence of two types of accreditation, which could lead to the introduction of a sense of hierarchy among NGOs. Furthermore, the challenges linked to the definition of the role and status of the ‘umbrella organization(s)’ would need to be tackled to ensure a sound governance of the accreditation system.
4. **Conclusion**
5. Defining **the role of accredited NGOs in the Convention and the ways in which they will provide advisory services to the Committee offers an opportunity for States Parties and NGOs to reflect on the role that communities and civil society at large – through the voice of NGOs – can contribute to the intergovernmental developments of the Convention. To this end, this working document has provided background information for the reflection on the role of accredited NGOs in the implementation of the 2003 Convention and more specifically in the work of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. It has discussed several considerations that States Parties and NGOs may wish to take into account and presented three ways forward that may guide the debates during the consultation meeting. The outcomes of the consultation meeting will be presented to the Committee at its fourteenth session in Bogotá, Colombia, in December 2019. It is then foreseen that the results of the entire reflection process on the role of accredited NGOs, including the possible revision of the relevant Operational Directives, will be presented to the General Assembly of States Parties at its eighth session in June 2020.**

**Annex 1: Summary table of the three ways forward**

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|  | Option 1: Current system revised | Option 2: With umbrella organization | Option 3: Hybrid system |
| Advisory functions | In addition to current advisory functions:   * Advisory to the Committee on specific thematic issues * Experience-sharing on good safeguarding practices | Under the coordination of an ‘umbrella organization’ and in addition to current advisory functions:   * Advisory to the Committee on specific thematic issues * Advisory to the Committee in the review of accreditation of NGOs * Experience-sharing on good safeguarding practices * Implementation of the Convention at the national and local levels | Accreditation for advisory to the Committee   * Same advisory functions as option 1   Accreditation for implementation of the Convention   * Implementation of the Convention at the national and local levels   *NGOs may be accredited under both types of accreditation.* |
| Criteria | * Current criteria and additional criterion on the integrity and professional standing of the NGO requesting accreditation * Criteria for the review of accreditation to be aligned on accreditation criteria | * Current criteria for all accredited NGOs * For NGOs interested in serving on the Evaluation Body or in providing direct advisory services to the Committee, two additional criteria to demonstrate their integrity and their capacities to evaluate nominations | Accreditation for advisory to the Committee   * Current criteria + additional criteria concerning integrity and capacities to evaluate nominations   Accreditation for implementation of the Convention   * Current criteria |
| Accreditation and review of accreditation processes | * Processes for accreditation and review of accreditation remain unchanged | * Processes for accreditation and review of accreditation managed by an international ‘umbrella organization’ or by regional ‘umbrella organizations’ * ‘Umbrella organization(s)’ submit recommendations to the Committee | Accreditation for advisory to the Committee   * Current process managed by Secretariat   Accreditation for implementation of the Convention   * Simplified process managed by ‘umbrella organization(s)’ |
| Positive implications | * Wide range of accredited NGOs * Minimal changes in the Operational Directives * May allow for a critical mass of accredited NGOs from each region * Could be envisaged as a transitional system towards one of the two other options | * A flexible and simplified accreditation system with a limited number of counterparts for the Committee * Committee benefits from the expertise of a larger number of NGOs with diverse profiles and with a more balanced geographical distribution * Increased visibility of intangible cultural heritage and of the Convention | * Accreditation system allowing each NGO to contribute to the work of the Committee based on its interests and capacities * Limited number of counterparts for the Committee * As needed, the Committee benefits from the relevant expertise of NGOs experienced at the international level and/or a larger number of NGOs with diverse profiles and from all regions * The system may allow for a critical mass of accredited NGOs from each region * Increased visibility of intangible cultural heritage and of the Convention |
| Challenges | * Ever-increasing number of accredited NGOs, many of which do not have the interest and capacities to directly advise the Committee | * Role and status of umbrella organizations to be clearly defined | * Role and status of umbrella organizations to be clearly defined * Possible hierarchy among NGOs due to the coexistence of two types of accreditation |

**Annex 2: Provisions of the Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage currently guiding the accreditation system[[2]](#footnote-2)**

**III.2 Non-governmental organizations and the Convention**

**III.2.1 Participation of non-governmental organizations at the national level**

1. In conformity with Article 11 (b) of the Convention, States Parties shall involve the relevant non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the Convention, *inter alia* in identifying and defining intangible cultural heritage and in other appropriate safeguarding measures, in cooperation and coordination with other actors involved in the implementation of the Convention.

**III.2.2 Participation of accredited non-governmental organizations**

*Criteria for the accreditation of non-governmental organizations*

1. Non-governmental organizations shall:
   1. have proven competence, expertise and experience in safeguarding (as defined in Article 2.3 of the Convention) intangible cultural heritage belonging, inter alia, to one or more specific domains;
   2. have a local, national, regional or international nature, as appropriate;
   3. have objectives that are in conformity with the spirit of the Convention and, preferably, statutes or bylaws that conform with those objectives;
   4. cooperate in a spirit of mutual respect with communities, groups, and, where appropriate, individuals that create, practise and transmit intangible cultural heritage;
   5. possess operational capacities, including:
2. a regular active membership, which forms a community linked by the desire to pursue the objectives for which it was established;
3. an established domicile and a recognized legal personality as compatible with domestic law;
4. having existed and having carried out appropriate activities for at least four years when being considered for accreditation.

*Modalities and review of accreditation*

1. The Committee asks the Secretariat to receive requests from non-governmental organizations and submit recommendations to it with regard to accrediting them and with regard to maintaining or terminating relations with them.
2. The Committee submits its recommendations to the General Assembly for decision, in conformity with Article 9 of the Convention. In receiving and examining such requests, the Committee shall pay due attention to the principle of equitable geographical representation based on information provided to it by the Secretariat. Accredited non-governmental organizations should abide by applicable domestic and international legal and ethical standards.
3. The Committee reviews the contribution and the commitment of the advisory organization, and its relations with it, every four years following accreditation, taking into account the perspective of the non-governmental organization concerned.
4. Termination of relations may be decided at the time of the review if the Committee deems it necessary. If circumstances require, relations may be suspended with the organization concerned until a decision regarding termination of these relations is taken.

*Advisory functions*

1. Accredited non-governmental organizations who, according to Article 9.1 of the Convention, shall have advisory functions to the Committee, may be invited by the Committee to provide it, *inter alia,* with reports of evaluation as a reference for the Committee to examine:
   1. nomination files for the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
   2. the programmes, projects and activities mentioned in Article 18 of the Convention;
   3. requests for international assistance;
   4. the effects of safeguarding plans for elements inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.

*Procedure for accreditation*

1. A non-governmental organization requesting accreditation to act in an advisory capacity to the Committee shall submit to the Secretariat the following information:
   1. a description of the organization, including its full official name;
   2. its main objectives;
   3. its full address;
   4. its date of founding or approximate duration of its existence;
   5. the name of the country or countries in which it is active;
   6. documentation showing that it possesses operational capacities, including proof of:
2. a regular active membership, which forms a community linked by the desire to pursue the objectives for which it was established;
3. an established domicile and a recognized legal personality as compatible with domestic law;
4. having existed and having carried out appropriate activities for at least four years when being considered for accreditation.
   1. its activities in the field of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage;
   2. a description of its experiences in cooperating with communities, groups and intangible cultural heritage practitioners.
5. Requests for accreditation shall be prepared by using the Form ICH-09 (available at <https://ich.unesco.org> or on request from the Secretariat) and shall include all the information requested and only that information. Requests shall be received by the Secretariat by 30 April of odd-numbered years for examination by the Committee at its ordinary session in that same year.
6. The Secretariat shall register the proposals and keep up to date a list of non- governmental organizations accredited to the Committee.

**Annex 3: Summary findings of the 2018 electronic consultation on the role of accredited non-governmental organizations within the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage**

*Section A pertained to the experience of accredited NGOs with the current accreditation system and therefore specifically targeted NGOs. Sections B, C, D, E and F included questions for both States Parties and accredited NGOs.*

****Section A. Sharing experiences about the current accreditation system of NGOs (*for NGOs only*)****

1. **What are the main reasons that motivated your organization to seek accreditation under the Convention?**

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| --- | --- |
| **Issues** | **Number of respondents** |
| **To become part of an international ICH community**   * Widen international network of partners, potentially for shared projects (NGOs, States and others) * Share experiences/expertise/good practices with other NGOs * International cooperation * Strengthen cooperation with academia * Keep abreast of latest developments in the Convention | 31 |
| **Relevance of the Convention to the work of the NGO**   * Similarity of objective in safeguarding and promoting ICH * Relevance to one’s work * Shared ideals * Long involvement in the conception and implementation of the Convention * Relevance of ICH in today’s world | 18 |
| **To specifically improve the safeguarding of one ICH element**   * Safeguard one specific element or raise awareness about it | 16 |
| **To contribute to the development of the Convention at the international level**   * Contribute to a global agenda shaping NGOs’ ICH politics and views on the Convention globally * Contribute to the international development of the Convention * Contribute to scientific work linked to the contributions of ICH * Increase the visibility of ICH * Promote an inclusive multidisciplinary approach to ICH safeguarding * Advocate the role of education in capacity building and empowering stakeholders’ capacities | 13 |
| **For the opportunity to build one’s own capacities**   * Build one’s own capacities, including to further transmit this knowledge to communities * Learn from others * Acquire knowledge, skills and attitude in international best practices in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage * Opportunity to access and acquire new knowledge about ICH * Possibilities to learn how the Convention works and what kind of interests, politics and processes lie behind the ways it is put into reality | 11 |
| **To gain credibility at the national level**   * Gain credibility at the national level with national or local authorities, ICH communities, different funding sources * Valorize the work accomplished by the NGO at the national level * Leverage accreditation with UNESCO to link our local ICH initiatives with the global ICH agenda, trends and emerging thought processes * Mobilize financial resources | 10 |
| **To support States Parties and UNESCO in the safeguarding of ICH**   * Opportunity to extend voluntary services to UNESCO in its program and practices related to ICH * Support States Parties and UNESCO in safeguarding ICH through the provision of expert knowledge and skills * Enhance existing programme content and approaches * Eliminate any biases and prejudices about the process regarding the evaluation of nominations * Represent the voice of NGOs | 9 |
| **To connect communities with national authorities and intergovernmental bodies**   * Act as an intermediary between many stakeholders, both local, regional, national and international, including indigenous communities * ‘To use our vital contacts with the bearers of traditional rural culture and our present and future experiences as an accredited NGO to strengthen and support the message and impact of the Convention’ | 7 |
| **To promote the implementation of the Convention at the national level**   * Support and promote the implementation of the Convention at the national level | 7 |
| **To receive international recognition**   * Gain international recognition * Obtain UNESCO’s support | 6 |
| **To support the implementation of the Convention in other countries**   * Support the implementation of the Convention in other countries * Participate in International Assistance projects | 3 |

1. **Since the accreditation of your organization, has the accreditation system supported your work?**
2. **Did the accreditation support your work in the way you expected?**
3. **If you consider that the accreditation system supported your work, please explain in which ways this was achieved.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Issues** | **Number of respondents** |
| **Increased recognition and visibility**   * Increased the credibility, visibility and recognition of the NGO at the national level | 20 | |
| **Improved the implementation of the Convention at the national level**   * Facilitated the NGO’s work at the national level (exchange of experts, conferences, publications, awareness-raising, inventorying, education) * Built a framework for ICH safeguarding at the national and local levels * Enabled the NGO to be involved in policy-making at the national level | 19 | |
| **Access to international experiences in ICH safeguarding**   * Provided a platform for experience-sharing and networking among NGOs at the national and international levels * Learnt about good practices in ICH safeguarding * Became part of an international community around ICH * Increased knowledge about the 2003 Convention and ICH safeguarding policies * Offered a reference framework to advocate for policy developments with a view to ICH safeguarding | 15 | |
| **Opportunities to participate in the international life of the Convention**   * Participated in the sessions of the Committee as observers * Became informed about the latest developments in the life of the Convention * Provided insight into the inner workings of the Convention at the international level * Provided financial assistance for participation in events organized by UNESCO | 12 | |
| **Increased opportunities for partnerships**   * Facilitated the establishment of partnerships with other entities involved in ICH safeguarding * Fostered the participation of international expertise in activities at the national and local levels | 9 | |
| **Participation in the ICH NGO Forum**   * Participated in the activities of the ICH NGO Forum to exchange and create synergies among accredited NGOs | 5 | |
| **Participation in the work of the Evaluation Body**   * Gained experience in the treatment of ICH-related information through participation in the work of the Evaluation Body | 4 | |
| **Raised awareness about ICH**   * Raised awareness about ICH and the Convention * Encouraged the involvement of other NGOs | 2 | |
| **Other aspects**   * Gained experience in the development of training materials and the delivery of capacity-building activities * Benefited from training activities concerning the implementation of the Convention * Benefited from financial assistance from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for the implementation of a safeguarding project * Integrated the international work on the Convention into the strategic planning of the NGO |  | |

1. **Is your organization actively involved in the ICH NGO Forum?**
2. **Please specify how your organization has been specifically involved in the ICH NGO Forum. If your organization has not been involved in the ICH NGO Forum, please kindly describe the main reasons why your organization did not or could not be involved.**

*Aspects in which the NGOs participate in the NGO Forum*

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| --- | --- |
| **Issues** | **Number of respondents** |
| **Participation in meetings**   * Participated in the ICH NGO Forum symposia and meetings (through presentations, inputs to the agenda) | 31 | |
| **Experience-sharing**   * Participated in experience-sharing initiatives such as the Heritage Alive publication * Contributed to the website and publications | 21 | |
| **Participation in working groups**   * Participation in a working group of the ICH NGO Forum | 10 | |
| **Passive participation**   * Recipient of correspondence and newsletters | 9 | |
| **Establishment of the ICH NGO Forum**   * Contributed to the creation of the ICH NGO Forum | 8 | |
| **Participation in the steering committee of the ICH NGO Forum**   * Served as a member of the steering committee of the ICH NGO Forum * Participated in the elections of the steering committee of the ICH NGO Forum | 6 | |
| **Contribution to NGO Statements to governing bodies of the Convention**   * Contributed to the drafting of the NGO Statement given during the meetings of the governing bodies | 3 | |
| **Other aspects**   * Liaised with the Secretariat of the Convention * Participated in awareness-raising actions such as exhibitions during the meetings of the governing bodies * Represented the ICH NGO Forum in international/intergovernmental meetings * Facilitated partnerships between the ICH NGO Forum and other entities involved in ICH safeguarding * Contributed to the ICH NGO Forum’s international consultations * Liaison between ICH NGO Forum and other NGOs |  | |

*Obstacles to participation in the NGO Forum*

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| --- | --- |
| **Issues** | **Number of respondents** |
| * Lack of funds to participate in meetings | 17 |
| * Recent accreditation | 7 |
| * Lack of capacities | 6 |
| * Lack of information regarding the NGO Forum activities | 5 |
| * Topics discussed are not relevant to the field of expertise of the NGO (agriculture, biodiversity) * Lack of relevance | 2 |

1. **What are the main challenges encountered by your NGO in its activities for the safeguarding of living heritage?**

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| --- | --- |
| **Issues** | **Number of respondents** |
| **Funding**   * Lack of funding including funds to facilitate the participation of communities in safeguarding processes * Limited State financial support * Lack of appeal of ICH-focused projects * Lack of logistical support from State and the Secretariat | 27 |
| **Cooperation with governmental authorities**   * Complexity of obtaining authorization to undertake activities at the national level * Lack of cooperation from State authorities or excessively centralized process * Need for a consultative dialogue process between governments and communities * Difficulty of promoting a community-based approach * Lack of involvement in the safeguarding of inscribed elements * Lack of understanding due to focus on tangible heritage * Lack of capacities in institutions responsible for the implementation of the Convention at the national level * Lack of coordination among State institutions * Constraints imposed by the bureaucracy around ICH safeguarding | 21 |
| **Awareness of the general public**   * Difficulties in raising awareness of communities about the importance of transmitting ICH, in particular among communities that are less organized * Weak understanding of ICH at the local level * Lack of awareness of the general public * Misunderstanding of the concept of ICH, often understood as a re-enactment of an old tradition * Diversity of interpretations of the ICH concept * Lack of information among communities | 16 |
| **Visibility of ICH and recognition of practitioners**   * Lack of recognition of the role of ICH in society * Lack of visibility * Need to include ICH in socio-economic impact assessment of development projects * Lack of recognition of traditional custodians | 11 |
| **Transmission of ICH and youth involvement**   * Weakness of traditional transmission mechanisms * Lack of integration of ICH into education * Lack of recognition of vocational education * Lack of youth involvement/interest * Frictions between modern educational system and traditional transmission | 7 |
| **Internal capacities and skills**   * Lack of trained human resources * Lack of knowledge about good practices in ICH safeguarding * Need for capacity-building programmes | 6 |
| **Normative framework at the national level**   * Absence of any/minimal/basic national, regional and local strategies for the safeguarding of ICH or biased towards another field (economic, development, tourism) * Inadequacy of the national legislation | 5 |
| **Global challenges**   * Challenges linked to rapid changes in the contemporary world (globalization, urbanization, rural to urban migration, digitalization, dwindling biodiversity…) * Difficulties in tackling local challenges for which good practices have not yet been identified (e.g. for superdiversity, tourism, controversial practices) * Safeguarding of controversial practices, for instance those associated with animals | 4 |
| **Partnerships**   * Difficulties in identifying adequate partners * Identification of trained experts in a specific practice | 4 |
| **Political situation at the national level**   * Political situation and emergency circumstances * Safeguarding practices enacted by minority groups * Lack of guidance to address ICH safeguarding in situations of disasters and instabilities | 4 |
| **Work in intergovernmental settings**   * Difficulties for NGOs to make their voices heard in intergovernmental settings * Lack of language skills allowing NGOs to participate in intergovernmental debates * Coordination between UNESCO, governments and NGOs | 3 |
| **Ethics**   * Ethical issues in the safeguarding of living heritage * Over-commercialization or use of ICH for tourism * Lack of instruments preventing cultural appropriation and protecting intellectual property | 3 |
| **Collaboration with communities**   * Empowering communities for the safeguarding of their living heritage is a lengthy process | 2 |
| **Understanding of the role of cultural brokers**   * Identification of the role of cultural experts, brokers and mediators | 2 |
| **Operational safeguarding activities**   * Difficulties in safeguarding practices that allow limited access to people outside of the community * Influence of religion * Difficulties in documenting living practices |  |
| **Other challenges**   * Mapping the wide range of activities carried out by accredited NGOs * Tension between the culturally relative and the universal * Lack of consensus within academia on the notion of ICH |  |

****Section B. Identifying potential advisory functions of NGOs at the international level (for *States Parties and NGOs)*****

1. **Beside participation in the work of the Evaluation Body, what role(s) could accredited NGOs play in the implementation of the Convention at the international level?**

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| --- | --- |
| **Issues** | **Number of respondents** |
| **Share experiences with the ICH community, in particular through the identification and sharing of good safeguarding practices**   * Share experiences with States, accredited NGOs, C2Cs, UNESCO Chairs and the ICH community at large, in particular about good practices * Cooperate with States Parties * Connect people and organizations involved in ICH safeguarding * Accredited NGOs could support cross-country learning on good safeguarding practices * Organize annual events * Build networks * Identify, document and promote good ICH safeguarding practices at the national level, including through publications * Contribute at an international level to initiating, developing, documenting and sharing (in lighter ways) safeguarding practices - e.g. by setting up concrete pilot projects and experiments on safeguarding methodologies and urgent safeguarding challenges, e.g. cooperating in a platform of sharing safeguarding methods, tools and experiences (e.g. with a peer reviewed model of NGOs/experts/researchers/facilitators of the global capacity-building programme) * Create and maintain an online platform on ICH elements and their safeguarding | 37 |
| **Implement the Convention at the national level**   * Contribute to the implementation of the Convention at the national/local/community level, e.g. through the identification and definition of ICH and in the development of safeguarding measures * Assist in the preparation of periodic reports * Advise States Parties * Support the implementation of safeguarding plans, where applicable, and provide feedback on the outcomes implementing safeguarding plans for specific ICH elements, in particular those in need of urgent safeguarding, taking into consideration the specific circumstances of each region * Advocate for the integration of safeguarding principles into existing heritage policies or in the establishment of specific policies on ICH safeguarding | 32 |
| **Build the capacities of communities and civil society**   * Ensure capacity building among communities and other NGOs on ICH safeguarding by themselves, in cooperation with UNESCO, States or C2Cs * Provide training in their specific field of expertise * Empower communities to safeguard ICH * Assist other NGOs, particularly in underrepresented regions * Contribute to the development of capacity-building materials | 23 |
| **Raising awareness about ICH and the Convention**   * Promote, raise awareness about and publicize the 2003 Convention at the national and international levels * Organize side-events * Contribute to the outreach strategy of the Convention * Promote and publicize (inscribed) ICH elements | 21 |
| **Participate in the decision-making process of governing bodies**   * Participate in and support decision-making processes (including by correspondence, online consultations) of governing bodies, expert meetings and working groups * Examine revisions to Operational Directives * Propose amendments prior to sessions of the Committee, which could be shared online. * Provide technical support to the 2003 Convention processes such as nominations, inventorying * Evaluate the periodic reports submitted by States Parties * Prepare alternative reports on the implementation of the Convention to the state report at each reporting period of the state party / Shadow report system * Assist in the evaluation of accreditation requests by NGOs * Assist in the evaluation of all International Assistance requests | 20 |
| **Advisory to governing bodies on specific thematic issues**   * Share experiences with the governing bodies in their respective field of expertise, concerning the contribution of ICH to sustainable development and regarding cross-cutting issues (migration, emergencies, climate change) * Inform the governing bodies about the challenges encountered by communities in the field * Present their work and methodologies to States Parties as a form of inspiration * Inform the decisions of the Committee by sharing insights | 18 |
| **Provide a link for communities with the governing bodies and States**   * Provide a link, and act as an interface, between governing bodies/intergovernmental scene/national policies and communities * Act as a clearinghouse for other civil society organizations working at the national and local levels | 17 |
| **Undertake research on thematic issues**   * Undertake research relevant to the work of the Committee (including on ICH for sustainable development) and report regularly to the Secretariat on the outcomes of this research. This can be done, for instance, through conferences and publications * Contribute to the reflection around ethical issues in ICH safeguarding and the development of ethical tools | 11 |
| **Monitor the implementation of the Convention and the status of ICH**   * Monitor progress made in the implementation of the Convention through the Overall Results Framework (for instance as part of a dedicated structure) * Monitor the safeguarding of (inscribed) elements * Draw the attention of the Committee and States to practices that are in need of urgent safeguarding (whether they have been nominated for inscription or not) | 10 |
| **Implement, monitor and evaluate safeguarding projects at the national and international levels**   * Assist with international processes of safeguarding cooperation and projects * Assist in the preparation of International Assistance requests * Apply directly to the ICH Fund * Monitor/evaluate safeguarding projects * Develop an evaluation framework for activities | 9 |
| **Upstream assistance to the preparation of nominations**   * Prepare nomination files for inscription on the Lists * Assist in the preparation of nomination files with a mechanism to be coordinated by the NGO Forum on a voluntary basis | 6 |
| **Evaluation of nominations**   * Establish thematic consultative commissions for the evaluation of nominations * Carry out a field evaluation of nominated elements | 2 |
| **Contribute to the global reflection on ICH and sustainable development**   * Contribute to the preparation of the 2045 Sustainable Development Agenda * Develop an ICH and sustainable development toolkit | 2 |

****Section C. Identifying potential advisory functions of NGOs at the national level *(for States Parties and NGOs)*****

1. **How can the accreditation system of NGOs support the work carried out by NGOs in the implementation of the Convention at the national level?**

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| --- | --- |
| **Issues** | **Number of respondents** |
| **Recognition of accredited NGOs by States**   * Encourage collaboration between States, National Commissions for UNESCO, experts and accredited NGOs to promote the 2003 Convention * Raise the awareness of States about the work carried out by NGOs, including good practices of cooperation between States and NGOs * Recognize the expertise of accredited NGOs so as to foster their participation in national ICH committees * Establish a space for accredited NGOs and States Parties to meet during sessions of the Committee * Provide recognition to accredited NGOs * Require States to involve accredited NGOs in their implementation of the Convention, including through meetings for joint planning, participation in national ICH committees, in the preparation of nominations, and in information-sharing * Establish accredited NGOs as reference points at the national level * Require States to inform accredited NGOs about all developments concerning the implementation of the Convention at the national level * Support NGOs in advocating for ICH policies at the national level | 30 |
| **Additional advisory functions**   * Provide a framework for the work of NGOs * Provide for a clear role in the implementation of safeguarding plans for inscribed ICH element at national level * Involve NGOs in monitoring inscribed elements and study the impact of inscriptions * Formalize the role of accredited NGOs in the implementation of the Convention at the the national level * Involve accredited NGOs in the identification of good safeguarding practices * ICH and education (SDG 4) * Pilot actions in ICH safeguarding and sustainable development * Assist with the preparation of nomination files * Be involved in the preparation of periodic reports * Collect accreditation requests from other NGOs * Contribute to the outreach of the Convention * Build the capacities of NGOs, practitioners and civil society * Encourage the transmission of ICH * Contribute to the documentation of good safeguarding practices and the comparative study of safeguarding practices * Promote the Overall Results Framework of the Convention * Contribute to the development of ethical tools * Allow NGOs to voice the concerns of communities | 20 |
| **Capacity building**   * Provide training to staff of accredited NGOs * Introduce trained professionals to States Parties as experts * Equip NGOs with the tools to mediate between States and communities * Allow NGOs to become facilitators of the Convention * Establish a mentoring mechanism between accredited NGOs and other organizations * Raise the awareness of NGOs about the Convention | 10 |
| **Platform for networking and information-sharing**   * Provide for the creation of national networks of accredited NGOs to design and implement an ICH safeguarding agenda in collaboration with relevant stakeholders * Support NGOs in developing ‘learning networks’ at the national and regional levels and foster the exchange of experiences in the safeguarding of ICH * Provide a platform for exchanges and networking at the international level * Develop an online and offline platform to share data related to ICH * Give accredited NGOs a forum to present a common paper presenting their challenges in safeguarding ICH and possible solutions * Create national chapters of accredited NGOs to encourage networking and the exchange of information | 10 |
| **Financial support**   * Grant financial support to NGOs, including to facilitate participation in statutory meetings of all NGOs and to implement safeguarding projects * Access to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund * Support NGOs in obtaining financial support | 8 |
| **Foster enhanced cooperation between accredited NGOs and the Secretariat**   * Grant institutional support to accredited NGOs, including through patronage, and to facilitate fundraising efforts * Cooperate with the Secretariat in the organization of conferences * Integrate recommendations from NGOs into working documents * Create a specific logo for accredited NGOs or allow the use of the emblem of the Convention * Keep NGOs informed about the latest developments * Introduce an induction programme for newly accredited NGOs * Consult NGOs on matters of interest to them * Increase communication between UNESCO, States and NGOs | 9 |
| **Visibility of accredited NGOs**   * Raise the visibility of accredited NGOs * Create a database presenting the wide range of expertise offered by accredited NGOs | 4 |
| **Other suggestions**   * Specifically support the work carried out by NGOs that have no ties with governments * Introduce a criterion on cooperation with accredited NGOs as a condition for successful inscription on the Lists of the Convention or requests for International Assistance |  |

****Section D. Redefining the accreditation system of NGOs *(for States Parties and NGOs)*****

1. **Is the current accreditation system of NGOs adequate?**
2. **If you wish to propose modifications to the current accreditation system, please provide specific suggestions.**

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| **Issues** | **Number of respondents** |
| **Improve cooperation among accredited NGOs and with States Parties**   * Map NGOs to foster synergies with State efforts * States should fund the participation in the sessions of the Committee of accredited NGOs and support their activities * Define how accredited NGOs who have served on the Evaluation Body may provide technical support to national nomination processes * UNESCO needs to identify support conditions or systems from the relevant government * Reinforce cooperation and information-sharing with States * Improve the recognition of NGOs at the national level | 9 |
| **Improve the representation of all regions**   * Encourage at least 2-3 accredited NGOs per country * Increase awareness-raising actions between accreditation cycles * Lower the criterion to two years’ experience instead of four * Encourage more NGOs to participate | 9 |
| **Introduce different types of accreditation with no hierarchical implications**   * 2 or 3 different types of accreditation: international, regional and national * No hierarchical implications | 7 |
| **Funding**   * Introduce funding opportunities for safeguarding projects * Financial assistance to build their own capacities * Financial assistance specifically for NGOs from underrepresented regions | 5 |
| **Involve accredited NGOs in the accreditation system**   * Involve ICH NGO Forum or other accredited NGOs to screen new accreditation requests * Peer-review system | 4 |
| **Simplify the accreditation system**   * Need to simplify the accreditation process | 4 |
| **Need to build capacities of all accredited NGOs**   * Secretariat should provide training to all newly accredited NGOs * Build the capacities of accredited NGOs to establish a common foundation in ICH knowledge and add value to the ‘advisory function’ | 4 |
| **Involve States Parties in the accreditation system**   * Involve Member States in the accreditation process * States should be informed that NGOs have requested accreditation | 4 |
| **Assign different tasks to accredited NGOs based on their capacities and wishes**   * Need to introduce a different accreditation system (under the NGO Forum or at the national level) for NGOs that do not have the capacities to operate at the international level * Two different types of accreditation: one for advisory services and one for the implementation of the Convention at the national level * Two types of accreditation (one based on Art. 9 and one on Art. 11) | 3 |
| **New criterion: support from communities**   * Additional criterion: social embeddedness of NGOs * Letter of support from communities | 3 |
| **Functions of NGOs**   * Expand roles of NGOs beyond advisory functions * Define more clearly how accredited NGOs who are not part of the Evaluation Body (the majority) can contribute to the implementation of the 2003 Convention * Improve their participation in the deliberations of the Committee | 3 |
| **New criterion: level of knowledge about the Convention**   * Ensure that NGOs have enough experience or knowledge about the Convention to be accredited | 2 |
| **Other proposals concerning the accreditation process**   * Introduce an external vetting system * Make the accreditation form less descriptive and use clear indicators and criteria * Accreditation requests should include all documents that NGOs have produced |  |
| **Other proposals concerning the accreditation criteria**   * Reconnect accreditation criteria and aspects considered for the review of accreditation * Stricter accreditation criteria * Need to check that NGOs are really non-governmental |  |
| **Other proposals concerning the accreditation system**   * Three categories: advisory, national and regional/international with criteria based on the quadrennial report format * Create an observer status for NGOs (4 years prior to possible accreditation) * Accreditation should be at the regional level * Regional cap to limit NGOs from certain countries * Max. number of NGOs in each field/domain * Need to establish a platform to facilitate exchanges and the development of concrete actions |  |

1. **Are the current accreditation criteria (as defined in paragraph 91 of the Operational Directives) relevant and sufficient?**
2. **If you wish to propose modifications to the current criteria or propose the addition of new criteria, please provide specific suggestions.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Issues** | **Number of respondents** |
| **Align accreditation and review criteria**   * Align quadrennial report format on the accreditation request * Three sets of criteria based on the quadrennial report format (for three categories of accreditation) | 5 |
| **The NGO has carried out a programme contributing to the implementation of the Convention**   * Demonstrate that the NGO has carried out a programme contributing to the objectives of the Convention * Activities related to data management and collection should be included * Activities carried out in relation to ICH safeguarding | 5 |
| **Capacities**   * Language capacities in French and English * Cross-cutting expertise in ICH safeguarding * Demonstrated familiarity with the 2003 Convention and its mechanisms * Ability to effectively contribute to the work of the Committee * For international advisory: experience in evaluating and analysing documents * For international advisory: a very good command of English or French * For international advisory: experience in drafting synthetic texts in English or French * Number of staff as well as skills and knowledge | 5 |
| **The NGO is independent from any State**   * Each NGO should prove its independence from States | 2 |
| **The NGO has concrete plans to contribute to the work of the Committee**   * Present plans to engage in or contribute to the work of the governing bodies of the Convention | 2 |
| **The NGO has sufficient experience at the international level**   * For international advisory: experience in working at the international level or the capacity to extrapolate from local experience to apply it within an international context | 2 |
| **Accreditation requests should allow for the mapping of NGOs in terms of expertise**   * The criteria (and resulting file for accreditation) should be able to facilitate the mapping of specific fields of competence and expertise/experience (type of safeguarding measures, domains of intangible cultural heritage, type of relations with communities, involvement with governmental authorities, contribution to UNESCO priorities and 2030 Agenda, technical skills in project and budget management, scope of activities, involvement in good safeguarding practices, and so on) | 2 |
| **Cooperation with other NGOs**   * Link with other accredited NGOs * Local, regional and international collaborations | 2 |
| **Integrity/Transparency/Ethics**   * Respect of ethical principles * Track record | 2 |
| **Link with communities**   * Social embeddedness * Representativeness | 2 |
| **Other proposed criteria:**   * The restoration of cultural objects should be considered as contributing to ICH * Proof of registration could be replaced with reference letters from States in case of doubt * Indicators for each criterion should be defined with ICH NGO Forum * The criteria should allow for the accreditation of public-private research centres, research centres and universities * Establishment of a minimum geographical scope for NGOs * Contribution to sustainable development as defined in Chapter VI of the Operational Directives * Integrate the Overall Results Framework * Innovativeness in safeguarding methods * Clear key performance indicators * Size of the NGO * Criteria defined based on new accreditation categories |  |

1. **When reviewing the contribution and the commitment of accredited NGOs and their relations with the Committee (ref. paragraph 94 of the Operational Directives), what should be taken into consideration in the assessment of NGOs?**

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| --- | --- |
| **Issues** | **Number of respondents** |
| **Programmes and activities carried out in the field of ICH safeguarding**   * All projects, activities and programmes carried out taking into consideration their different operational strategies and capacities * Documentation should be sent * Activities linked to transmission * Relevance of activities carried out by the NGO * Social and environmental impact for communities * Sustainability and innovativeness of measures implemented by the NGO concerned in safeguarding and promoting rich tradition of ICH * Educational activities, cooperation with universities * Activities in support of the safeguarding of inscribed elements and their communities * Publications made at all levels * Contribution to pushing forward the ICH agenda * Engagement in ICH safeguarding * Contribution to sustainable development | 38 |
| **Involvement in the implementation of the Convention at the national level**   * For organizations that are not providing advisory services on the Evaluation Body, the extent to which they are involved in the 2003 Convention processes (policy advocacy, nomination, inventory, safeguarding ICH, participation in implementing or advising on the implementation of safeguarding plans for inscribed ICH elements) at the national level could be considered or the contributions and commitment it has made to the Convention * Advisory services to local authorities * Contribution to inventorying and data-collection activities * Coordination with other national NGOs | 22 |
| **Engagement in statutory processes at the international level**   * Attendance to statutory meetings and engagement in statutory processes * Level of contributions to the work of the Committee * Actual output based on questions defined by the Committee | 9 |
| **Integrity and track record**   * Integrity * Professional standing (whether the organisation is still operational and its management and Board have not been found guilty of violating any national or international law related to trade in cultural artefacts or any other laws) * Demonstrate that the NGO has not shown any hostility to other States, communities or cultures * Respect for general principles promoted by the Convention (cultural diversity, gender equality, youth involvement, mutual respects, transparent dialogue…) * Transparency in the management and origin of funding | 7 |
| **Capacities of the accredited NGO**   * Technical and human capacities * Research capacities * Level of transferrable expertise concerning the work of the Convention and in communities * Language capacities * Ability to implement safeguarding projects at the international level * Capacity to advise * Ability to work in tripartite settings (NGOs, States and communities) | 7 |
| **Cooperation with communities**   * Level of cooperation with communities | 6 |
| **Cooperation with other States**   * Activities carried out with other Member States or at the international level * Level of cooperation with States and governmental agencies | 6 |
| **Contribution to the activities of the ICH NGO Forum**   * Contribution to the ICH NGO Forum * Proactiveness in networking with other NGOs | 5 |
| **Contribution to the visibility of the Convention**   * Contribution to ensuring cost-effective visibility of the implementation of the Convention * Media coverage of NGO work | 4 |
| **Involvement of States in review process** | 4 |
| **Review timeframe: 4 years**   * Review to be focused on the past 4 years | 3 |
| **Review of accreditation to be based on accreditation criteria**   * Align review of accreditation with accreditation criteria | 3 |
| **Involvement of ICH NGO Forum in review process**   * Need for clear indicators to be defined with the ICH NGO Forum * Involvement of ICH NGO Forum in the review process | 2 |
| **Relation with States Parties**   * Level of independence from States * Level of support from States | 2 |
| **Other proposals**   * Annual report instead of quadrennial report * Review should not be too reliant on attendance at international meetings * Proportion of activities that are not merely commercial or contributing to tourism * Review process should integrate the Overall Results Framework * Field missions to review NGOs * Review should take into consideration the geographical representation of NGOs |  |

1. **Which specific measures should be taken to ensure a balanced geographical distribution of accredited NGOs?**

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| --- | --- |
| **Issues** | **Number of respondents** |
| **Awareness-raising in underrepresented regions**   * Raise awareness in underrepresented regions through States, other accredited NGOs, UNESCO field offices, Category 2 Centres (thematic networks, campaigns, actions at the community level) * Involve ICH NGO Forum to raise awareness and encourage NGOs from underrepresented regions to request accreditation * Highlight the benefits of accreditation more clearly * Offer materials in more languages | 28 |
| **Capacity-building of NGOs in underrepresented regions**   * Capacity-building activities for organizations located in underrepresented regions * Create a network of experts that would assist potential accredited NGOs | 17 |
| **Limit accreditations in overrepresented regions**   * Ceiling on the number of accreditations per region approved each cycle (possibly only during a transition period) * Apply a priority system similar to nominations | 11 |
| **State involvement**   * States should be required/encouraged to recommend at least one NGO from their country * Involve National Commissions | 10 |
| **Encourage involvement of accredited NGOs**   * Cooperation between NGOs should be encouraged for experience-sharing * Encourage North-South cooperation * Peer recommendation * Mentoring by accredited NGOs | 7 |
| **Financial and human support**   * Provide funding to NGOs in underrepresented countries including though the ICH Fund * Encourage States to further support NGOs (including by providing human resources) | 6 |
| **Do not limit** **accreditations in overrepresented regions**   * No ceiling for overrepresented regions * Encourage the accreditation of a maximum number of NGOs | 4 |
| **Foster the involvement of NGOs in targeted thematic areas**   * Encourage NGOs in specific thematic areas such as crises and disasters * Target specific NGOs that carry out interesting work * Stimulate the creation of NGOs specializing in target domains * Encourage the establishment and accreditation of NGOs connected with inscriptions on the Lists | 4 |
| **Lower requirements for NGOs in underrepresented regions**   * Lower the requirements for underrepresented regions, such as for the duration of existence (less than 4 years) | 3 |
| **Stop the use of electoral grouping for NGOs**   * Stop categorizing NGOs by electoral group | 2 |
| **Other proposals**   * Identify the reasons for the lack of accreditation requests from some regions * Include the balanced geographical representation of NGOs in the Operational Directives * Strengthen the governance of ICH NGO Forum * Promote the role and legitimacy of NGOs |  |

1. **Should the accreditation system take into consideration the disparity in size and capacities of NGOs?**
2. **If you think that the accreditation system should take into consideration the disparity in size and capacities of NGOs, in which ways could this be achieved?**

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| **Issues** | **Number of respondents** |
| * Accreditation requests should require information concerning the size and capacities of NGOs (scope of activities, number of staff members, thematic areas of expertise, budget, institutional capacities, date of establishment, source of funding) * Indicate the size and capacities in a mapping exercise * This should not be a determining factor in the accreditation. Commitment and engagement are more important factors. | 23 |
| * Capacity building should be offered based on the size and capacities of each NGO | 6 |
| * Create two/three different kinds/categories of accreditation | 5 |
| * Accredited NGOs should be assigned different tasks based on their size and capacities | 4 |
| * Involve the ICH NGO Forum * Peer-review system to review NGO by size and capacities * Encourage exchanges between NGOs of different sizes and capacities | 4 |
| * Lower the requirements for NGOs of smaller sizes and capacities | 2 |
| * Encourage diversity of size and capacities | 2 |
| * This should be taken into consideration during the review process | 2 |
| * Size and capacities should be taken into consideration in relation to the size of the community that the NGO represents * Size and capacities should be taken into consideration in relation to their impact | 2 |

1. **Should the Convention foresee different types of accreditation for NGOs?**
2. **If the Convention had different types of accreditation, which criteria should define those different types of accreditation?**

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| **Issues** | **Number of respondents** |
| * By scope of activities (international, regional, national and/or local) | 10 |
| * By ICH domain or field of expertise | 10 |
| * Distinguish those who wish to fulfil advisory functions at the international level from those who are involved in ICH safeguarding and could build the capacities and raise the awareness of communities | 9 |
| * Distinguish between NGOs within communities and those outside of the communities they support | 4 |
| * By region | 3 |
| * By size | 3 |
| * Different advisory functions instead of different types of accreditation | 3 |
| * By level or type of contribution to the implementation of the Convention | 3 |
| * By quality standards and ethics to which the NGO adheres | 2 |
| * Observer status for 4 years before full accreditation status | 2 |
| * Based on capacities and engagement in international fora and mechanisms | 2 |
| * By duration of existence | 2 |
| * By contribution to socioeconomic development * By number of people benefitting from activities carried out by the NGO | 2 |

1. **If the Convention had different types of accreditation, which entity should manage each type of accreditation?**

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| **Issues** | **Number of respondents** |
| * Intergovernmental Committee / General Assembly for all accreditation types: * upon proposal from Secretariat (8) * upon proposal from Secretariat and ICH NGO Forum (2) * upon direct proposal from ICH NGO Forum (2) | 13 |
| * Secretariat for all accreditation types | 12 |
| * Consultation with experts, representatives from accredited NGOs and/or ICH NGO Forum | 6 |
| * The same entity for all accreditation types | 4 |
| * ICH NGO Forum for NGOs contributing to the implementation of the Convention in general | 2 |
| * ICH NGO Forum for all accreditation types | 3 |
| * Consultation with National Commissions | 2 |
| * Intergovernmental Committee for NGOs providing international advisory services | 2 |

****Section E. Defining the role of the ICH NGO Forum *(for States Parties and NGOs)*****

1. **What do you expect to be the functions of the ICH NGO Forum? Do you see possible or desirable developments for the ICH NGO Forum?**

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| **Issues** | **Number of respondents** |
| **Experience-sharing, information-sharing and networking**   * Strengthen inclusive collaboration among accredited NGOs (including between NGOs of various sizes) * Promote experience-sharing and provide guidelines to NGOs to facilitate the replication of successful experiences * Share and discuss the situation of NGOs in various countries * Share information on successful projects but also on challenges and pitfalls encountered * Provide networking opportunities and develop networks * Platform for information-sharing * Present inspiring experiences | 46 |
| **Direct advisory to the governing bodies of the Convention**   * Contribute to the reflection of States Parties and governing bodies on cross-cutting issues (climate change, emergencies, indigenous minorities, migration, gender, sustainable development, ethics), the future of the Convention and matters related to the accreditation process * Collate information from accredited NGOs with a view to sharing it with governing bodies * Be a reference point for its expertise in ICH safeguarding * Review documents submitted to the Committee such as periodic reports * Play a role in pilot activities concerning emerging issues and challenges to be addressed by the Convention * Contribute to the mapping of competences and fields of expertise/experience of NGOs | 27 |
| **Representation of accredited NGOs**   * Representing accredited NGOs in high-level meetings * Be the common and strong voice of accredited NGOs * Coordinate accredited NGOs * Consult NGOs on relevant issues | 23 |
| **Link between communities, States, Secretariat and governing bodies**   * Be the voice of communities * Act as a mediator between communities and the Committee * Invite Committee members as observers to its meetings * Facilitate the involvement of tradition bearers * Consider the establishment of a council of communities * Facilitate communication and cooperation with other States Parties * Maintain dialogue with States Parties regarding deliberations and results of the Forum’s activities * Act as a point of liaison between accredited NGOs and Secretariat | 19 |
| **Awareness-raising and advocacy**   * Promote the aims and objectives of the Convention * Increase awareness about the Convention (particularly in underrepresented regions), for instance on the accreditation process * Advocate for the Convention * Encourage relevant publications | 16 |
| **Capacity-building**   * Capacity-building of accredited NGOs, particularly newly accredited NGOs * Capacity building among communities | 15 |
| **Documentation and lighter ways of sharing safeguarding practices**   * Documentation of ICH (good practices, organizational experiences, inventorying, capacity-building, NGO involvement) * Knowledge management * Contribute to the lighter ways of sharing safeguarding experiences * Document activities carried out by NGOs | 11 |
| **Support for the participation of accredited NGOs**   * Facilitate the participation of accredited NGOs in its activities (including through webcasts, financial assistance) * Organize activities at the regional level * Strengthen the regional governance of the ICH NGO Forum in relation to the issue of balanced geographical distribution, including the development of regional networks | 11 |
| **Platform to facilitate cooperation among accredited NGOs**   * Facilitate collaborative work and communication among accredited NGOs, including through the development of joint proposals * Develop concrete ways to collaborate * Carry out collaborative projects | 11 |
| **Laboratory of ideas**   * Develop an international research agenda * Organize conferences on specific topics * Encourage joint research projects * Create more sub-groups of NGOs * Organize thematic meetings and activities * Facilitate the work of thematic working groups * Contribute to the work carried out in the area of Education for Sustainable Development * Play a role in the overall reflection of ethical issues, including through the development of a platform and toolkit | 11 |
| **Information-sharing about accredited NGOs and the ICH NGO Forum**   * Update accredited NGOs on the latest information * Provide information on its activities and those of its regional and thematic groups through its website * Maintain and update information about accredited NGOs though an online database * Strengthen the visibility of the ICH NGO Forum and accredited NGOs * Promote the work of NGOs | 9 |
| **Advisory and support to NGOS**   * Advise NGOs on the implementation of the Convention * Support project proposals from accredited NGOs * Advocate for the involvement of NGOs in policy-making at the national level * Inform NGOs in a concise and precise manner about the ways and extent in which they can participate * Assist NGOs in identifying funding opportunities | 6 |
| **Governance of the ICH NGO Forum**   * Facilitate the participation of all accredited NGOs in its transparent governance * Simplify its organization | 5 |
| **Participation in international mechanisms of the Convention**   * Participate in the evaluation of nominations, proposals and requests to the international mechanisms of the Convention * Assist in international processes of safeguarding cooperation and projects | 5 |
| **Monitoring of the implementation of the Convention**   * Participate in the monitoring of the Convention, including through the Overall Results Framework | 4 |
| **Funding of the ICH NGO Forum**   * Benefit from more sustainable sources of funding, such as the ICH Fund or contributions from Member States | 4 |
| **Participation in the accreditation process**   * Evaluate new accreditation requests * Monitor accredited NGOs and contribute to their quadrennial review | 4 |
| **Code of conduct**   * Develop a code of conduct for accredited NGOs | 2 |

****Section F. Other issues *(for States Parties and NGOs)*****

1. **Other suggestions**

* Create an exchange programme for the personnel of accredited NGOs based on the model of the ERASMUS programme for European students
* Establish an open-ended working group to define the role of accredited NGOs
* Create a separate agenda item for NGOs for States and NGOs to exchange on issues of mutual interest during intergovernmental meetings
* Create a dedicated webpage where NGOs could offer their assistance in the preparation of nominations, proposals and requests
* Reflect on the role of researchers and centres of expertise in the implementation of the Convention and as advisory entities to the Committee
* Reflect on the need to institutionalize the ICH NGO Forum with more permanent focal points
* Ensure that the resources of the ICH NGO Forum are properly and transparently audited
* Send a welcome information kit to newly accredited NGOs
* Encourage States to organize post-Committee sessions to update accredited NGOs and jointly strategize on the implementation of decisions that have an impact at the national and local levels

1. <http://www.ichngoforum.org/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ICH-Operational\_Directives-7.GA-PDF-EN.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-2)