Unit 16 

Workshop on ratifying the convention: Introduction

Participant’s Text

This unit covers the following topics:

* Capacity-building workshops for implementing the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.
* Purpose and structure of the two-day workshop on ratifying the Convention.
* The use of the capacity-building materials.
* Key concepts and definitions (intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and safeguarding under the Convention [with reference to Unit 3]).
* Resources and terminology (with reference to Unit 1 Hand-out 1).

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**16.1 A capacity-building curriculum**

In 2003 the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which entered into force in 2006. Already over two-thirds of the Member States of UNESCO have now ratified this Convention.

The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage that oversees the implementation of the Convention requested that the UNESCO Secretariat organize worldwide trainings aimed at reinforcing capacities for the implementation of the Convention. States Parties provided generous financial support to allow the Secretariat to prepare training materials, train facilitators and fund capacity-building activities.

**Capacity-building workshops**

The Secretariat has developed a series of capacity-building workshops that cover different themes related to the implementation of the Convention such as ratification, implementation of the Convention at the national level, community-based inventorying, nominations and development of safeguarding plans. Further themes are currently under development. The workshops themselves are customized to the needs of the participants and the countries they come from. Interactive discussions are organized around themes that are especially important for participants.

**16.2 workshop on ratifying the Convention**

The ratification workshop was developed for States that have not yet ratified the Convention and it is thus often the first workshop to be delivered in a particular country. It covers the basic knowledge required for the implementation of the Convention referring to a number of other units of the capacity-building cuirriculum. It explains how States can ratify the Convention, what obligations this imposes on them, which States have done so to date, why ratification might be beneficial to various stakeholders and it provides guidance on how to work towards ratification (Unit 17).

The contents of the workshop are adapted to the specific profiles and needs of participants and it is therefore very important to provide the facilitators with some basic information about the participants prior to the workshop.

The standard two-day workshop on ratification is composed of the following sessions:

* **Sessions 1-3:** Introucing the Convention (Units 16, 2, 3, optional 13)
* **Session 4:** Implementing the Convention at the national level (Units 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10)
* **Session 5:** Implementing the Convention at the international level (Units 11-12)
* **Session 6:** Involving communities (Unit 7)
* **Session 7:** Ratifying the convention (Unit 17)
* **Session 8:** Conclusions and evaluation (Unit 15)

Facilitators will provide participants with all relevant materials for the workshop, including Participant’s text and Hand-outs.

**16.3 CAPACITY-BUILDING MATERIALS**

Materials for the workshops were developed by internationally recognized experts in the field of ICH. Designed to be easily adaptable to local needs, these materials are divided into units which include Facilitator’s notes, Participant’s texts, PowerPoint presentations, exercises, quizzes and a wide range of case studies. The materials frequently refer to Articles of the Convention and paragraphs of the Operational Directives (ODs). These texts should therefore also be used during the workshops (both included in the Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage[[1]](#footnote-1)).

All materials have been tested by facilitators with different audiences around the world. All materials are available electronically for use by facilitators in English and are being progressively translated to other languages, including French, Spanish, Portugeuse, Russian, Arabic and others.

The materials development foresees a continuous process of development of new topics and of improvement and adaptation of the existing materials in order to reflect the feedback received from facilitators and participants and to adapt them effectively to the specific needs of each State. This updating process concerns not only content development but also the design and packaging of the curricula to increase their educational effectiveness, attractiveness and ease of reproduction.

The materials are used not only in the context of the workshops. They have also been designed as sources of information to accompany longer-term initiatives such as policy revision or institutional reforms.

**ABOUT THE Participant’s text**

The Participant’s text is meant to serve as a reference in training workshops and can later also be used as a reference for participants to assist them in the implementation of the Convention. The Participant’s text provides general information; during the workshops, more details and background information will be provided.

**ICons**

Icons are used throughout the capacity-building materials to draw attention to certain aspects of the text.

**The eye icon indicates a reference to another unit or section of the capacity-building materials not contained within the document or a reference to the Basic Texts.

The paper icon indicates a reference that is not part of the capacity-building materials. This may include websites, articles and other external resources.

The exclamation mark icon indicates information that is particularly important to pay attention to and remember.

The pencil icon indicates an exercise or activity that is part of the unit. These exercises require adequate attention.

**16.4 Key concepts and definitions**

The Convention provides only a few definitions, most of them in Article 2. Both ‘intangible cultural heritage’ and ‘safeguarding’ are defined there. These are two key concepts of the Convention and they will be discussed in detail in the workshop.

The implementation of ICH safeguarding measures at different levels is a task that the international community is increasingly willing to support, as shown by the rapid ratification of the Convention (see also Article 19.2).

See Participant’s text Unit 3: ‘intangible cultural heritage’, ‘domains of ICH’ and ‘safeguarding’

**16**.**5 Resources AND TERMINOLOGY**

Workshop participants will be provided with either hard or electronic copies of the Basic Texts. Available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish, this publication presents the text of the Convention, its Operational Directives, the Rules of Procedure of the two Organs of the Convention, Financial Regulations and a number of annexes. All the texts it contains can also be downloaded from the website of the Convention.

The ICH website, http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/, managed by the Secretariat to the Convention, is the source of many relevant documents and additional information, such as:

* The six official versions of the Convention. The Convention has been translated, officially or unofficially, into a large number of languages. Many of these translations are available at: http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/convention/
* Information on the Organs of the Convention, including detailed reports of their meetings and lists of their decisions.
* Information about meetings relating to ICH and the Convention organized or co-organized by UNESCO from 1992 onwards:   
  <http://www.unesco.org/>culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00015
* Information about accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs):   
  http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=331
* A kit explaining what ICH is and why it is worthwhile safeguarding it:   
  http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/kit/
* A presentation of the elements inscribed on the Lists of the Convention and of projects or programmes selected for the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices:   
  http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/lists/
* The forms to be used for nominating elements to the Lists of the Convention (English and French only), for proposing safeguarding practices for inclusion on the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices and for requesting international assistance. These can be found at: <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/forms/>

#### terminology

For a full list of abbreviations, acronyms and terminology please see Unit 1 Hand-out 1.

1. . UNESCO. Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (referred to in this unit as Basic Texts). Paris, UNESCO. Available at <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00026>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)