



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

NGO Review of Accreditation

ICH-08 Report – Form

REPORT BY A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION ACCREDITED TO ACT IN AN ADVISORY CAPACITY TO THE COMMITTEE ON ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

**DEADLINE 15 FEBRUARY 2017
FOR EXAMINATION IN 2017**

File may be downloaded at:
<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/forms>

Please provide only the information requested below. Annexes or other additional materials cannot be accepted.

A. Identification of the organization

A.1. Name of the organization submitting this report

A.1.a. Provide the full official name of the organization in its original language, as it appears on the official documents.

الجمعية المصرية للمأثورات الشعبية

A.1.b. Name of the organization in English and/or French.

The Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT)

A.1.c. Accreditation number of the organization (as indicated on all previous correspondence: NGO-90XXX)

NGO-90182

A.2. Address of the organization

Provide the complete postal address of the organization, as well as additional contact information such as its telephone, e-mail address, website, etc. This should be the postal address where the organization carries out its business, regardless of where it may be legally domiciled. In case of internationally active organizations, please provide the address of the headquarters.

Organization: The Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT)

Address: 47 Soliman Gohar Street, Dokki, Giza, Egypt

Telephone number: +2 02 37626702 / +2 02 37624409

E-mail address: info@ESFT.info
Website: www.esft.info
Other relevant information: NGO
Date of Establishment: 12/4/2000
Local Registration Number: 1434

A.3. Contact person for correspondence

Provide the complete name, address and other contact information of the person responsible for correspondence concerning this report.

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Prof.
Family name: Aly Morsi
Given name: Ahmed
Institution/position: Chairman of The Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions
Address: 47 Soliman Gohar Street, Dokki, Giza, Egypt
Telephone number: +2 01111684207
E-mail address: amorsi9@yahoo.es
Other relevant information:

B. Contribution of the organization to the implementation of the Convention at the national level (Chapter III of the Convention)¹

Distinguish completed activities and ongoing activities. If you have not contributed, so indicate. Also describe any obstacles or difficulties that your organization may have encountered in such participation.

B.1. *Describe your organization's participation in State efforts to develop and implement measures to strengthen institutional capacities for safeguarding ICH (Article 13 and OD 154), e.g. in the drafting of ICH related policies or legislation, in the establishment of national ICH committees or in other government-led processes.*

Not to exceed 250 words

1. The Supreme Council for Culture is the highest advisory unit of the Ministry of Culture, and is composed of twenty nine committees including "The Committee for Traditional Arts". Upon the initiation of ICH, The Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT) requested changing the committee's priorities accordingly, and it became "The of Committee for Intangible Cultural Heritage". The main objective of ESFT is to strengthen the state's efforts to develop and implement measures to support the States Institutional Capacities for Safeguarding ICH.
2. ESFT participated in the preparation of legislation aimed at safeguarding and protecting ICH

¹. In case your organization operates in several States, please clearly indicate which State or States are concerned by your answers when filling in parts B, C and E.

(within the scope of the Egyptian Intellectual Property Law).

3. ESFT translated the Cultural Policies documents to make them accessible to all Arabic speaking countries.
4. ESFT prepared a list of 82 elements for Egypt's international cultural heritage inventory.
5. ESFT classified its database using the five genres of ICH to organize and facilitate accessibility.
6. ESFT encouraged its representatives and intellectuals interested in folk traditions from different Arab states to attend conferences abroad and interact with international organizations.
7. ESFT trained 360 students of folklore and similar disciplines on collecting different elements of ICH.
8. ESFT arranged field trips to 26 governorates to expose the wealth of intangible aspects of traditional culture to its bearers and other communities.

B.2. *Describe your organization's cooperation with competent governmental bodies for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage (Article 13), including existing institutions for training and documentation of intangible cultural heritage (OD 154).*

Not to exceed 250 words

1. The Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT) established a comprehensive archive of traditional arts, and a relationship protocol was issued with the Ministry of Culture declaring the mutual collaboration between the two bodies.
2. Through a UNESCO grant, The Egyptian Council for Women (ECW) cooperated with ESFT to train women in Upper Egypt on the art of Tally. Tally is an embroidery craft that was approaching extinction. ESFT was requested to train 350 women in this craft in Assuit and Sohag. 180 women were successfully trained in each location.
3. ESFT cooperated with the Ministry of Industry in administering a survey of traditional crafts all over Egypt. ESFT documented 366 traditional crafts for consideration in the ministry's developmental plan. .
4. ESFT cooperated with the Ministry of Antiquity in providing information on the aspects of traditional culture in the following issues:
 - Preparing a photographic document about the themes of the National Museum of Civilization (NMEC). The photos covered material on: the Nile, Writing, Material Culture, State and Society, and Belief and World View.
 - Training of the specialists of traditional culture in NMEC.
 - Preparing five documentary films on traditional crafts, their processes, and cultural significance.
 - Searching and providing relevant cultural objects for NMEC display.
5. Assisting graduate students in fulfilling their studies by providing access to databases.
6. Initiating a website for the online archival of traditional culture in the Arab World.
7. Producing and distributing multimedia resources on crafts, performing arts, festivals and traditional dancing.

B.3. *Describe your organization's involvement in or contribution to the drafting of the State's Periodic Report (OD 152).*

Not to exceed 250 words

The Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT) was involved in drafting the State Period Report on the National Level with:

1. Preparing Intangible Cultural Heritage inventories according to Articles 11 and 12 of the convention, and providing the UNESCO Egyptian National Committee with elements of ICH to

register on the UNESCO inventories.

2. Providing surveys and intensive data to various organizations such as the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization (NMEC) and the Ministry of Antiquity.
3. Upon the request of the Industrial Modernization Center, of the Ministry of Industry, ESFT collected intensive information about 366 crafts from all over Egypt which presented a concrete understanding on the state of traditional crafts in Egypt.
4. Assisting graduate students, MA and Ph.D researchers in fulfilling their graduate studies by providing access to data and scholars.
5. Producing and distributing multimedia resources on crafts, performing arts, festivals and traditional dancing.
6. Initiating a Website for the materials of ICH which was awarded a prize for Best Website of Traditional Culture in the Arab World by World Summit Award (WSA).
7. Training of University students of Anthropology and Folklore on data collection of intangible culture and photography.
8. A detailed database classification was laid out, using the five genres of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in Egypt to organize and facilitate accessibility.

B.4 *Describe your organization's participation in the preparation of nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List or Representative List, requests for International Assistance or proposals of Best Safeguarding Practices.*

Not to exceed 250 words

The Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT) participated in the preparation of the Representative List through:

1. Safeguarding and protecting Al Sirah Al Hilalyyya, a poetic oral Epic, which is popular throughout most of the Arab World. Narratives about this Sirah have been passed down orally from generation to generation; and it continues to be performed in rural areas. Narratives of the Sirah were collected and documented from the governorates of Assiut, Qena and Sohag in Upper Egypt, and Kafr El Sheikh in the Delta, in addition to the capital city of Cairo. The research is ongoing.
2. ESFT participated in the preparation of the El Tahteb file for The Representative List. El Tahteb is an entertainment stick game performed by adults in special occasions and for different members of the community. In 2016 was added to one of the UNESCO's representative list.
3. ESFT submitted a recent file for Best Practice concerned with the women's 'Art of Tally', to be reviewed in the 2017 UNESCO meeting. This project was funded by UNESCO for the training and development of the craft in one of the poorest villages in Upper Egypt. The project trained 180 women in the same village. Presently, and as a result of the project, the number of those presently practicing exceeds 1000. The project increased the income and independence of these women and their families, and the whole village has gained social recognition for being known as the village of Tally.

B.5. *Describe your organization's participation in the identification, definition (Article 11.b) and inventorying of ICH (Article 12, OD 80 and OD 153). Explain in particular how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.*

Not to exceed 250 words

1. The Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT) supervised the establishment of the Archives of ICH. Upon starting the Archives, ESFT not only utilized the classic Folklore classification system, but also incorporated the classification adopted by UNESCO in the ICH convention to ensure that all documentation and methodology is consistent to the convention.
2. Once the Archives became well-established, ESFT produced useful Arabic documents describing ESFT's process, methodology and activities. The document was published in a book,

and included:

- The various UNESCO Cultural Policies of UNESCO, as well as other relevant information from international agencies such as the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in order to make the information accessible to the Arab world.
- A detailed database classification was laid out using the UNESCO five genres in order to organize and facilitate accessibility.
- Information about specialized topics including religious festivals, epics, crafts, agricultural heritage and traditional markets.
- As a consequence of the 2011 revolution and the dangers of field hazards, data collectors were asked to collect material that was accessible within their vicinities and among elderly relatives.

This resulted in the documentation of an abundant amount of data related to:

- Marriage ceremonial life,
- Expressions of life cycles,
- Traditional food,
- Children Lullaby's
- Folktales.

3. ESFT advised and assisted women working with 'Tally' to establish an NGO to safeguard their interests and legal presence, which they did.

4. ESFT facilitated exhibitions for Tally women to exhibit their products in local and international fairs.

B.6. Describe your organization's participation in other safeguarding measures, including those referred to in Article 13 and OD 153, aimed at:

- promoting the function of intangible cultural heritage in society;*
- fostering scientific, technical and artistic studies with a view to effective safeguarding;*
- facilitating, to the extent possible, access to information relating to intangible cultural heritage while respecting customary practices governing access to specific aspects of it.*

Explain in particular how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals when participating in such measures.

Not to exceed 250 words

1. The Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT) cooperates with communities and groups in various ways, such as locating, meeting, collecting and studying ICH, as well as the individuals still practicing traditional aspects of culture.

2. Raising the awareness of the public and officials to the importance of ICH by bringing together specialists and practitioners of different elements of ICH with intellectuals who are interested and concerned with Egyptian ICH. ESFT promotes and develops the ICH concepts between members of communities and practitioners by organizing conferences and workshops to explain the functions of ICH.

3. Inviting traditional artists and craftsmen to interact with members of the society through various cultural activities.

4. Training curators from the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization (NMEC) responsible for the sector of traditional culture about the concepts of ICH. This included taking them on field trips to villages to observe different aspects of traditional elements and relating them to items in different museums to observe the continuity and diversity of the elements in different eras and areas. Moreover, this provided the opportunity to learn and investigate the meaning of certain local terms and objects, how they relate to other aspects of culture and how members of the community relate to their natural environment and their world view. It is important that the

curators make the implicit aspects of culture coherent to the visitors.

5. Members of ESFT produced four films on traditional crafts for NMEC projecting the above concepts.

B.7. Describe your organization's involvement in measures to ensure greater recognition of, respect for and enhancement of intangible cultural heritage, in particular those referred to in Article 14 and ODs 105 to 109 and OD 155:

- a. educational, awareness-raising and information programmes aimed at the general public, in particular at young people;
- b. educational and training programmes within the communities and groups concerned;
- c. capacity-building activities for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage;
- d. non-formal means of transmitting knowledge;
- e. education for the protection of natural spaces and places of memory whose existence is necessary for expressing the intangible cultural heritage.

Explain in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and where relevant, individuals when participating in such measures.

Not to exceed 250 words

1. Through its electronic website, The Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT), stresses the importance of intangible culture in understanding the wealth of our culture. The website gained the respect of many people in Egypt and other Arab countries and received a prize for being the best cultural website in the Arab world by World Summit Award (WSA).
2. Every project that ESFT undertakes is accompanied by training programs.
3. ESFT administers photography and data collection workshops for students who collect field data.
4. ESFT participated in the capacity building of the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization (NMEC) staff.
5. ESFT administered projects on the art of tally and weaving. Both the projects involved training of trainers to train other members of the community to practice these crafts.
6. Many efforts were made by entrepreneurs to convince the tally workers to move to Cairo and practice there. The artists were encouraged by ESFT to remain within their cultural domains which foster their cultural identity.
7. ESFT produced two children books regarding the above two crafts to spread the awareness of their local treasures across generations.

C. Bilateral, sub-regional, regional and international cooperation

Report on activities carried out by your organization at the bilateral, sub-regional, regional or international levels for the implementation of the Convention, including initiatives such as the exchange of information and experience, and other joint initiatives, as referred to in Article 19 and OD 156. You may, for example, consider the following issues:

- a. sharing information and documentation concerning shared ICH (OD 87);
- b. participating in regional cooperation activities including for example those of category 2 centres for intangible cultural heritage established under the auspices of UNESCO (OD 88);
- c. developing networks of NGOs, communities, experts, centres of expertise and research institutes at sub-regional and regional levels to develop joint and interdisciplinary approaches concerning shared ICH (OD 86).

Not to exceed 250 words

1. The Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT) signed a protocol with the Moroccan NGO, Lequaat; meaning 'Contact'. ESFT regularly participates in their annual activities in Casablanca,

and joint conferences are carried out to discuss issues regarding ICH methodology among craftsmen and artists from both countries.

2. ESFT is a member of the International Organization of Folk Art (IOV) and Dr. Morsi regularly attends its meetings.

3. ESFT cooperates with the Al-Sharga Emirate in its academic activities, and writes articles for the Journal of Folk Culture periodical.

4. ESFT has an electronic website which provides great archival resources for people in Egypt and the Arab world The website received a prize of being the best cultural Website in the Arab World by World Summit Award (WSA).

5. ESFT is a consulting member of World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

D. Participation in the work of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

D.1 *Has your organization participated in the Committee meetings or those of the General Assembly? If yes, please indicate which meetings you attended and describe the nature of your contribution to the Committee's work.*

Not to exceed 250 words

Dr. Morsi, Chairman of Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT) participated in most of the meetings of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage and all the meetings of the General Assembly in Paris, China, Turkey, Indonesia and Kenya as the representative of Egypt and ESFT. He participated in the formation of the Convention and all the works of the Committee according to the memorandums of the meetings.

D.2 *Has your organization served as a member of the Evaluation Body (OD 26 to 31), or as a member of the Consultative Body (between 2012-2014)? If yes, please indicate the period.*

Not to exceed 100 words

During this period, Egypt was passing through difficult political uprisings and instability of cabinet, which made it difficult for the Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT) to participate in international activities.

D.3 *In what way(s) has your organization provided advisory services to the Committee (OD 96) or in what way(s) do you foresee that it might provide such services in the future?*

Not to exceed 500 words

The Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT) did not provide advisory services to the Committee because it was not yet a member of the Evaluation Body or the Consultative Body. The Society can now offer such services, after becoming a member of the Evaluating Body. The Society has many specialists in the different aspects of ICH.

E. Capacities of your organization for evaluation of nominations, proposals and requests (as described in OD 27 and OD 96):

E.1. *Nominations, proposals and requests are available for evaluation only in English or French. Do members of your organization or your staff demonstrate a very good command of English or French? If yes, please indicate which language(s) and the number of those members or staff.*

Not to exceed 250 words

Several members of the Egyptian Society of Folk Traditions (ESFT) have an excellent command of the English and French languages.

- Two of our members received their PhD degrees from the USA, one in Anthropology and the other in Folklore.
- Five members received their university education from the American University in Cairo, in addition two MAs from the same University.
- Two members fulfilled their secondary education in French schools.
- Four members have experience in teaching in international universities in Egypt and abroad.
- Most of the rest of the members are university professors in Egyptian universities.
- Two members work as editors for English and Arabic documents, proposals and publications.
- The Chairman of ESFT has excellent command of Spanish and worked as Cultural Attaché in Spain and taught as a professor of Folklore at Harvard University.
- All publications of ESFT are produced in two languages, Arabic and English.

E.2. *Does your organization have experience in working across several ICH domains? Please describe your experiences.*

Not to exceed 250 words

The Egyptian Society of Folk Traditions (ESFT) experienced working across several domains of ICH which are mentioned in the Convention.

1. In the domain of oral traditions and expression, research on Al Sirah Al Hilalya provided the organization with several intangible language components that relate to the values which characterise the people of Beni Hilall, such as the value of courage is an attribute which has been passed from one generation to the other through epic poetry.
2. In the research of Tally, (the embroidery of occasional dress), among the things the organization was concerned with were the embroidery motifs. The motifs used reflect the continuity of culture through the different eras (Pharaonic, Coptic and Islamic). The community never restricted the use of any of these motifs.
3. ESFT carried out research in the domain of traditional craftsmanship in Upper Egypt, which was concerned with weaving on the traditional handloom. Traditionally, weaving is a women's craft and the role of men is minimal. In a conservative society that values the dominance of men, intangible nomenclature of the loom and its parts convey an indiscrete message. For example,

the loom is regarded as a cart being pulled by an animal, complete with a 'body', 'head', 'pelvis', 'thighs', 'teeth', and 'testical'. For the loom to operate, it requires 'eyes' to lead, 'nafas' (breath) and a 'watcher', provided by the woman. Furthermore the cart has a 'rein' to control its movement. This is an intangible indication to women's craftsmanship and their discrete empowerment.

E.3. *Describe the experience of your organization in evaluating and analysing documents such as proposals or applications.*

Not to exceed 250 words

The Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT) has different forms for the evaluation of documents:

1. Members consistently browse for calls for proposals, which are then reviewed by the research committee to assess suitability to the organization's capabilities and interests.
2. Contact with the granting agency is carried out if clarification is required.
3. A senior researcher is assigned, whose specialization is within the domain of the proposal.
4. The senior researcher reviews documents prior to writing the proposal, and discussions are carried out with the research committee.
5. Once it is accepted by the committee, the proposal is edited and delivered to the granting agency.
6. ESFT contacts universities which have specializations related to the proposal to announce a potential need for data collectors, if the proposal is accepted. Students who apply for data collection present a CV of their experiences and qualifications.
7. ESFT has previously submitted proposals to UNESCO and other agencies, such as the World Bank, USAID and IDRC.
8. The research proposal on Al Sirah Al Hilalya was accepted and implemented. The study was published and received a prize by UNESCO for Safeguarding and Protecting.
9. The Tally proposal was accepted by UNESCO. A book was written and published in English and Arabic.
10. The proposal for training of women in Upper Egypt on hand loom weaving was accepted by the World Bank. The project was implemented and a book was published in English and Arabic.

E.4. *Does your organization have experience in drafting synthetic texts in English or French? Please describe your experience and indicate in which language(s) and the number of those members or staff.*

Not to exceed 250 words

- Safeguarding and Protecting the Oral Epic of Al Sirah Al Hillalya. (Phase I: Collecting and Documenting). Prof. Ahmed Morsi (2006).
- The Making of a Traditional Artist: The Art of Tally and Sustainable Development. Dr. Nawal el Messiri (2009) English edition, (2017) Arabic Edition.
- Official Report on Traditional Crafts for the Industrial Modernization Center (IMC) of The Ministry of Industry (2010).
- Report on Safeguarding of Egyptian Traditional Festivals, Prof. Ahmed Morsi (2009).
- The Traditional Market. Dr. Nawal el Messiri (2012).
- Traditional Agricultural Knowledge and Skills. Haitham Younis (2014).
- Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (The Egyptian Archive as an Example). Prof. Ahmed Morsi (2014).
- Traditional Arts and Crafts from Cairo. Asaad Nadim (Second Edition 2014)

• Traditional Hand Loom Silk Industry in Egypt. Ed. Dr. Nawal el Messiri (2015) English Edition, (2016) Arabic Edition.

E.5. Does your organization have experience in working at the international level or the capacity to extrapolate from local experience to apply it within an international context? Please describe such experience.

Not to exceed 250 words

1. Several Arabic speaking countries requested that the Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT) to establish a joint archival system. Experts from the organizations have attended international workshops and conferences.
2. El Sharga Governorate in the Emirates is presently negotiating cooperation with ESFT to have joint practices in documenting folk culture.
3. A protocol of cooperation in research and exchange experiences was signed with the Moroccan NGO 'Lequaat' (meaning "contact").

F. Cooperation with UNESCO

Report on activities carried out by your organization in cooperation with UNESCO (both direct cooperation with UNESCO as well as activities carried out under the auspices of UNESCO or for which you have received the authorization to use the emblem of UNESCO/of the 2003 Convention, or financial support, such as e.g. funding from the Participation Program).

Not to exceed 250 words

The activities carried by The Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT) in cooperation with UNESCO include the following:

1. Safeguarding and protecting the oral epic tradition of Al Sirah Al Hilaliya
2. The art of Tally which is a traditional method of embroidery used for occasional dress made by women of Upper Egypt.
3. Documentation of Egyptian Culture for the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization (NMEC), including photographs on the Nile, Writing, Material Culture, State and Society, and Beliefs and World Outlook.
4. Purchasing objects on traditional culture for NMEC.
5. Producing five films for the NMEC temporary exhibition.

G. Signature

The report must include the name and signature of the person empowered to sign it on behalf of the organization.

Name: Ahmed Aly Morsi

Title: Chairman of Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions

Date: 24/01/2017

Signature:



The stamp is circular with a blue border. Inside the border, there is Arabic text at the top: 'جمعية التراث الشعبي المصري' and English text at the bottom: 'EGYPTIAN SOCIETY FOR FOLK TRADITIONS'. The center of the stamp contains a handwritten signature in blue ink.