CASE STUDY 3

Awareness raising: awareness-raising activities in Colombia

In 2002 the Colombian Government, supported by UNESCO and assisted financially by the Government of Japan, launched a nationwide campaign to alert communities, civil society, scientific institutions and State agencies about the importance of safeguarding Colombia’s intangible heritage. The aim was to raise support for actions in favour of ICH among policy-makers and elected officials and to involve the general public and others in ICH safeguarding actions. Activities included:

* Establishing the Intangible Heritage Committee (2004), an advisory body to Colombia’s Ministry of Culture for the formulation of policies.
* Organizing the First National Encounter for ICH (Medellín, September 2005), which led to the establishment of national networks and encouraged political decision-makers to support the ratification of the Convention.
* Implementing a media campaign based on the theme ‘Show Who You Are’ to raise awareness, especially among Colombian youth, about the importance of maintaining Colombia’s cultural diversity. The campaign included 3 TV spots on national and regional TV channels, 40 messages on some 200 regional commercial and community radio stations and an advertising campaign in major newspapers.
* Organizing five regional seminars to encourage communities, cultural agents, indigenous groups and education and communication professionals to become actively involved in safeguarding measures.
* Publishing an educational brochure and a guide with advice on methods for assembling Colombia’s first ICH inventory (Colombian Intangible Heritage Inventory Registry), as well as designing a database compatible with existing national systems, which helped with the testing of inventory pilot projects.[[1]](#footnote-1)

#### Nominations to the Lists and the Register of the Convention

Nominating ICH elements to the Lists and safeguarding practices to the Register of the Convention is also a way of raising awareness about ICH at the international level and – in many cases – at the national level.

The Carnival of Barranquilla in Colombia, which incorporates dancing and music from different Colombian subcultures, is held in the coastal town of Barranquilla every year during the four days before Lent. It was inscribed on the Representative List in 2008, after first being proclaimed a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2003. The inscription contributed internationally to widespread awareness about the Carnival and further increased its popularity in Colombia.

1. . See the ICH Fact Sheets, UNESCO ICH Kit: http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/src/01858-EN.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)