CASE STUDY 61

Reporting under UNESCO’s 2005 Convention on Protecting and Promoting the Diversity of Cultural Expression

This case study looks at the way in which periodic reporting is conducted under UNESCO’s 2005 Convention on Protecting and Promoting the Diversity of Cultural Expression. This experience is not absolutely parallel with that of the 2003 Convention as the aims and objectives of each instrument are very different. Despite that, there are also aspects of how this process in organized that can be of interest and might encourage reflection on how to undertake the process of reporting on the 2003 Convention.

Although not all of the sections of the reporting form are relevant to ICH (e.g. that dealing with preferential treatment), some are worth considering. These latter include transversal issues, UNESCO priorities, achievements, challenges and solutions, and next steps. Most sections of the report ask for 6-10 key measures to be described for each of which, in turn, around 8 or 9 key questions should to be addressed. The key questions may therefore be seen as analogous to the 86 assessment factors of the ORF and as guidance to States Parties in filling out the form.

Of note here is that the quadrennial periodic reports for the 2005 Convention are not simply aimed at eliciting information on policies and measures taken by State Parties to implement the Convention, but also on *the impact and results of these policies and measures*. Moreover, the reports are intended to provide *qualitative and quantitative information* and analyze *how, why, when and with what impact,* policies and measures have been introduced.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Parties are also *encouraged to form inter-ministerial working groups covering relevant areas of Government (trade, tourism, labour, etc.)* for compiling their reports, an approach that could also be applied to periodic reporting for the 2003 Convention, especially in view of Chapter VI of the ODs. Specific suggestions for ensuring a participatory process are given, which include *conducting multi-stakeholder consultations* and *involving civil society* in the preparation of reports.

Diversity of cultural expressions lends itself much more readily to *quantitative measurement* than does ICH safeguarding and there is an *additional voluntary section* containing complementary statistical information (e.g. number of books published, imports/exports of cultural goods and services (in USD), media, cultural participation). Such an approach may be worth considering in the future for gathering statistics on those aspects of ICH safeguarding that can be measured, such as sales of handicrafts, media coverage of ICH elements, economic value of traditional medicine, etc. On the other hand, this may be regarded as focusing too heavily on (potentially damaging) economic exploitation of ICH and needs to be considered with care.

To ensure sustainability of results and impact, a capacity-building intervention covering the expected results and activities proposed has also been developed as follows:

**Phase 1:** Multi-stakeholder national consultations and a needs assessment. This preparatory phase was used to raise awareness about the 2005 Convention with the involvement of media professionals. In this preparatory phase, the information required for the training programme was collected and used to customise the training manual content, in particular the case studies and examples for use during the training workshop.

**Phase 2:** The 3-day *national* training workshop of a multi-stakeholder national team comprising 15 people representing government and civil society.

**Phase 3:** Mentoring and coaching national teams in preparation of periodic reports. In this phase, the (national level) facilitators can use some of the optional exercises and case studies not used in Phase 2 to assist teams to reflect on the issues that are most pressing in their country contexts so that the periodic reports can be further elaborated. During this phase, relevant data and information is collected. The phase ends with a draft report.

**Phase 4:** Establishment of a public dialogue platform with civil society for the validation of periodic reports. After Phase 4, the Quadrennial Periodic Report will be submitted to the UNESCO Secretariat.

When considering this model and how it might apply to the 2003 Convention periodic reporting, it is useful to bear in mind the responsibilities of Focal Points. The following provide a guide to this:

* Sharing information on the Convention at the national level with a wide variety of relevant actors and stakeholders
* Building a team (of potentially varied composition) for conducting the periodic reporting exercise
* Gathering relevant data and information through whatever appropriate means, as input to the six-yearly Periodic Reports
* Acting as a communication channel through which this information can be disseminated to/from relevant ministries and public agencies

1. Guidelines on Information and Transparency for the 2005 Convention at 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)