Unit 29

Ground preparations in inventorying

Published in 2016 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 7, place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France

© UNESCO 2016



This publication is available in Open Access under the Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 IGO (CC-BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/igo/>). By using the content of this publication, the users accept to be bound by the terms of use of the UNESCO Open Access Repository ([www.unesco.org/open-access/terms-use-ccbyncsa-en](http://www.unesco.org/open-access/terms-use-ccbyncsa-en)).

The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The ideas and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors; they are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization.

Lesson plan

Duration:

2-2.5 hours

Objectives:

Participants will be able to list a step-by-step process for community ground preparation, establish contacts and build rapport, as well as familiarize themselves with the community surroundings. Furthermore, they will be able to identify community support structures, maintain good communication and community relations, and prepare community feedback.

Description:

This unit proposes a step-by-step process that could be followed in preparing groundwork for inventorying at the community level. It provides tips for facilitators and inventorying teams and underlines the importance of community ground preparation as a foundational activity for effective participation of communities and the importance of building a relationship based on mutual trust as vital for inventorying. This process of ground preparation is closely linked to the process of obtaining the free, prior and informed consent of the community concerned (see also Unit 22 on Community consent in inventorying). Time must be taken to ensure that the communities develop a good understanding of the inventorying process, and its purpose and relevance to their lives. Community ground preparation is critical for building partnerships with local institutions to spearhead and support the entire process of inventorying. This unit proposes an outline for a process that can be used for community ground preparation to conduct community-based inventorying.

Proposed sequence:

* Exercise 1: Community entry processes; to share experiences and identify common features about participatory processes and methods for entering communities and to develop a shared, step-by-step process for working with communities on inventorying projects
* Community ground preparation (Unit 29 PowerPoint presentation)

Supporting documents:

* Unit 29 PowerPoint presentation

Notes and suggestions

This unit is, in part, adapted from CTA. 2010. *Training Kit on Participatory Spatial Information Management and Communication*. CTA, The Netherlands and IFAD, Italy (ISBN: 978-92-9081-446-7).

The facilitator may also wish to provide basic information about the community and geographical area at the beginning of discussion of the present unit. In this manner, participants can make reference to the geographical area throughout the time leading up to the actual field practicum or planned inventory activity. Location of the geographic area in a country, which communities live there, why the respective community became the collaborating community and so on, is important to ground preparations for inventorying. For example, the specific location of the community relative to its surrounding could be provided in a map format. Some background on intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in the area is helpful to give participants a broader picture. Please note that even those participants that live in these areas may not have thought of their area from an ICH perspective due to their familiarity with the cultural context.

The facilitator may raise questions such as the following: Why was the community chosen for a pilot workshop and for future consideration when inventorying? What is the level of community involvement in past or ongoing inventorying exercises? What is the present level of community interest and consent to carry out inventorying to safeguard their ICH?

Unit 29

Ground preparations in inventorying

Facilitator’s narrative

###### Slide 1.

Ground preparations in inventorying

This unit proposes a step-by-step process that could be followed in preparing groundwork for community-based inventorying. The unit provides tips to practitioners (community members, NGO professionals, inventorying facilitators, etc.) on inventorying processes. It underlines the importance of community ground preparation as a foundational activity for effective participation and the importance of building a relationship based on mutual trust as vital for community-based inventorying.

###### Slide 2.

In this presentation …

###### Slide 3.

Planning inventorying projects: basic tasks

Broadly, before beginning any inventorying process a number of basic tasks should be kept in mind as preparations begin. While this unit focuses on a step-by-step process useful for inventorying ground preparations, this introductory slide provides an overview of steps in planning an inventory:

* Determine the purpose of the inventory.
* Identify and involve the communities concerned and other stakeholders (including NGOs).

Although the range of stakeholders within a community might be extensive, as this is a community-based inventorying project, the main stakeholders at the national level (according to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage) are the State Parties, the communities concerned, and institutions and researchers.

* Build consultative mechanisms and trust, obtaining consent.
* Locate resources
* Identify/create structures for information gathering and networking
* Information gathering and data entry.
* Dissemination, access and updating.

###### Slide 4.

Holistic view of ICH

When considering these basic tasks it is also critical that elements of ICH be seen in their entire context and in a holistic fashion, as part of society and culture, and not as isolated elements picked out for inventorying.

###### Slide 5.

Ground preparations for inventorying

Given these basic tasks and the importance of a holistic view, there are a few key aspects that should be kept in mind when preparing to inventory, as listed on the slide.

Building trust and dialogue in any community is not easy. Dialogue at the local level begins with a few people and then expands to larger groups in the community. Building relationships between the community, the inventorying facilitators and other stakeholders is therefore an important step for successful inventorying. Time must be taken to ensure that communities develop a good understanding of the inventorying process, and its purpose and relevance to their lives. Ground preparations for inventorying are also critical for building partnerships with local institutions to spearhead and support the entire process of inventorying. This unit thus proposes an outline for a process that can be used for ground preparations for inventorying.

###### Slide 6.

Step-by-step process

There is no universal sequence or blueprint for ground preparations for inventorying. Practitioners of community-based inventorying are encouraged to use their own creativity in developing their own process guides. The steps proposed in this unit are based on experience and reflections from commonly used steps in processes led by community participation.

###### Slide 7.

Proposed generic sequence

###### Slide 8.

Establishing contacts and building rapport (1)

The rapport built between the ‘outsiders’ and the ‘insiders’ affects the degree of effective participation in inventorying, the assessment of resources, the validity of the results, and the quality of the resulting inventory. This is especially so in the case of groups that have been historically marginalized. It is important to build relationships of mutual trust and respect.

For participants who are not necessarily community members and are involved in the planning, several important points should also be remembered:

* Clearly share the purpose of inventory making.
* Issues of transparency and trust are critical for any field documentation.
* Respect community/local feelings on secrecy or access.
* Involve members as much as possible even if not part of the proposed team.
* Make note of individuals/groups/institutions that may be capable of carrying out an inventory.
* Keep in mind that inventorying is part of the larger goal of safeguarding.

###### Slide 9.

Establish contacts and building rapport (2)

Facilitators can be introduced to the community through the community members themselves, local administration or any other institutions that have a presence in the community. However, it is important to respect and follow existing protocols. The person(s) who introduces the facilitating team to the community should be a recognized leader or someone of good standing in the community because this could have positive or negative effects on the community’s reception of the inventorying process.

Stakeholders could undertake some preliminary, informal activity so as to interact with and mutually understand the local community’s politics and social and economic life. This is not necessarily difficult; many inventorying processes take place in areas where the communities have some existing relationships with government agencies, NGOs or other communities. In some cases, it may be necessary for inventorying facilitators to immerse themselves in the community to understand its lifestyle and to become trusted and accepted.

During initial visits, it is important for community members and other stakeholders to discuss the inventory process, purpose and its expected results. There may be community members who are not familiar with inventorying processes and who may express uncertainties. These uncertainties could make some of them choose not to participate or even start opposing the entire inventory. It is therefore important to create an opportunity for debate that will enable the community members to ask all their questions, clarify their doubts and see the link and relevance of the inventory to their lives.

###### Slide 10.

Defining the ‘field’

When preparing to inventory, it is also useful to discuss the concept of what the ‘field’ may be, depending on the role of the participant. It is important to realize that what is defined as a ‘field’ for the purpose of research is home to the community. The issue is more important for those who belong to the community as they have the role of collecting data from their home base.

* What is ‘fieldwork’ or what is the ‘field’?
* An area entered to collect information/samples/data to be analysed later.
* Deciding/defining a field area:
* village, neighbourhood, district, geo cultural area;
* community, ethnic group, occupational group;
* genre of performance; and/or
* event, festival or ceremony.

###### Slide 11.

Become familiar with the community surroundings

While it is inadvisable to descend upon a community and perform a full inventorying exercise, there are basic participatory methods that non-community members can use to gain some familiarity with the community and the area it occupies. These can be facilitated by community members, contributing to enhancing rapport between various stakeholders.

These include doing transect walks or driving with community members in their area, participating in daily activities of the community, listening to conversations in public places, obtaining oral histories, and drawing daily activity schedules and seasonal calendars with different groups. These methods help in getting to know what different groups do in their community, what issues they consider important and why, where people meet, and what the best times and seasons are for meeting. While this step allows the inventorying facilitators to be inquisitive about local practices, it also allows community members to express their own curiosity and questions. Therefore, this could become a mutual learning exchange among peers and break the boundaries long before the actual inventorying begins.

###### Slide 12.

Creating a team with community members and other stakeholders

Assembling a group at community level that works together and works with the facilitators is also critical in ground preparations for inventorying and, ultimately, to the success of an inventorying project. According to the principles of community-based inventorying, community members form a major part of the team, but other stakeholders include NGOs, researchers and other entities as listed in the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and discussed earlier. Ideally it is this team that would participate in the inventorying workshop.

Aspects to consider discussing here include:

* The insider/outsider perspective
* Community representatives and possible roles
* Direct role such as practitioners, knowledge bearers, performers, craftspeople, shamans
* Indirect participants, such as patrons, audiences
* Necessary components of a team:
* Multiple perspectives
* Need to assign roles
* Complementary skills

###### Slide 13.

Community support structures

More broadly, this step involves identifying the local structures to support the inventorying processes and entails discussions between different stakeholders concerning the inventorying: the process, purpose, expected results and benefits. In fact, it is clear that information on the existence, functions and status of an ICH element and the reasons why communities identify with it, can only be generated through a dialogue with the community of tradition bearers and practitioners concerned. It is with such information that a meaningful discussion can happen about the roles and responsibilities of the facilitators, community structures, leaders and the broader community. It is important for local leaders to have a very good understanding of the inventorying process and to be committed to it. This enables them to champion the project and obtain support for it among the wider community.

It is more desirable to use existing community-led structures, but community members may also feel that changes are required to make existing structures more inclusive and participatory. It may also help to find out if there are any groups not represented in the existing structures and to reach agreement on how to include them.

###### Slide 14.

Maintaining community relations

Communities are usually willing to participate in processes if they are clear about the purpose and outcomes. However, it is easy to create false expectations. It is important to remember that communities may have been asked to participate in projects that have failed to improve their situation. They may, therefore, have strong justification for being suspicious. It will help to have discussions that clearly explain a number of related aspects. These discussions may be most fruitful if led by community members themselves who are deeply involved in the inventory ground preparations.

* The inventorying process will not result in immediate material benefits.
* The stakeholders and facilitators are there to support the community in any further inventorying activities that it wishes to take forward. It is up to the community to agree whether they wish to reveal information about their ICH to a wider public through an inventory. If yes, they can choose what information they wish to share or not share and how to present it.
* Community-based inventorying involves first and foremost the community concerned. Indeed, setting the foundations for safeguarding culturally sensitive information from external misuse and exploitation begins by giving its traditional custodians adequate say over how it is presented, accessed and used.

###### Slide 15.

Community feedback (1)

Regular communication between the community and other stakeholders during the inventorying process is important. It is a good idea to discuss and identify the preferred mechanisms for feedback prior to beginning the inventorying. This will ensure that the wider community can participate and validate the inventory and will help ensure their interest in the entire process and commitment to using the outcomes. Community feedback sessions:

* give the larger community confidence that the facilitators and community members are accurately inventorying the ICH;
* give the community an opportunity to verify and discuss what the team is inventorying; and
* enable the facilitator and community members to clarify information if there are any inconsistencies in their findings and make any necessary corrections.

It is important to arrange the feedback sessions as open meetings so that more than only a few community members participate. If the project is covering a wide area, separate feedback meetings in different parts of the community could be organized. Community leaders can best advise on venues and times for the feedback session(s). Also, it is good to seek people who have not participated in the inventorying process to participate in these sessions because they are best able to see gaps and bring new perspectives to the inventory.

###### Slide 16.

Community feedback (2)

Finally, ground preparations for inventorying should consider not only the involvement and feedback of the community, but should also assure that the communities will have access to the materials once they are collected. This is not always automatically the case, as State Parties that carry out inventories sometimes retain administrative control of the inventoried materials rather than leaving them in the hands of the community. It is therefore essential that ground preparations include reflection on how this will be done, and how copies will be given, made accessible or archived in the interests of community access.

*Source****:*** Musyoki S. M., 2010, “Exercise 1: Community Entry Processes”. M04U02: Community Ground Preparation; in “Training Kit on Preparatory Spatial Information Management and Communication”. CTA, The Netherlands and IFAD, Italy.

Unit 29

Exercise 1: Community entry processes

#### Objective:

To share experiences and identify common features about participatory processes and methods for collaboration between various stakeholders, and to develop a shared, step-by-step process for communities working on inventorying.

#### Time:

1.5 hours

#### Materials:

Metaplan cards, felt pens, pin boards and pins. If no pin boards are available, newsprint or flipchart paper can be adhered to walls with masking tape.

#### Procedure:

Part A: Individual and small group assignment (30 minutes)

* Ask participants to reflect individually (based on their own experience or thoughts) about how to mobilize and prepare communities to participate in an inventorying process.
* Encourage them to outline a step-by-step process by writing on cards and sequentially arranging them to show which activities they would undertake from start to finish, whom they would involve, and what participatory methods and activities they would use.
* After the participants complete the individual assignment, ask them to join in small groups of four to six people to share and compare their results and develop a consolidated sequence of the steps and a list of participants and methods, which they will share in a plenary session.

Part B: Plenary session (30 minutes)

* Invite the participants to review the displayed work of the other groups and to observe and note common features.
* Facilitate the participants to identify clusters that could form a key, sequential, step-by-step process that could identify the participants and participatory methods at each step. This could be done by creating a table that shows: (a) key steps, (b) participants and (c) participatory methods.

Part C: A process road map (30 minutes)

* While referring to the plenary outcome (i.e. visual process road map), make a brief structured verbal summary.
* Emphasize that there is no single road map outlining ground preparation for inventorying processes.

#### Tips and options:

Part C could also be undertaken as group reflection by asking participants to talk with a neighbour and share what they learned about the processes, methods and participants.

Reflection and discussion:

Ask participants to reflect and discuss whether there is indeed a universal sequence or road map for the process of entering and working with communities. Ask them to explain why they think the answer is ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

*Source****:*** Musyoki S. M., 2010, *Exercise 1: Community Entry Processes.* Unit M04U02, Module M04: Community Groundwork and Processes; in “Training Kit on Preparatory Spatial Information Management and Communication”. CTA, The Netherlands and IFAD, Italy.