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### Globalization and interdependence

## Culture and sustainable development

### Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General hereby transmits the report prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in accordance with General Assembly resolution [72/229](#).

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\* [A/74/150](#).



## **Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**

### *Summary*

The present report, prepared in consultation with relevant stakeholders, presents an overview of the progress made in culture and sustainable development since the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution [72/229](#). As requested by the Assembly, the report also includes an assessment of the compilation of quantitative data, including indicators and statistics, with a view to informing development policies and relevant reports, as well as of progress in the development of national capacities and international cooperation instruments to optimize the contribution of culture to sustainable development.

## I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution [72/229](#), entitled “Culture and sustainable development”, the present report is prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) – in consultation with relevant stakeholders, including other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and other international organizations – on progress made in the implementation of the resolution. It is the second report to the Assembly on culture and sustainable development following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and further demonstrates the role of culture as a driver of social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainability. It highlights the linkages between culture and the implementation of all 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

2. The two years since the adoption of resolution [72/229](#) have borne fruit as United Nations system organizations have worked together to highlight the role of culture as a vital component for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. A more holistic approach has been adopted that better integrates the safeguarding of built and living heritage, promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions and support to the creative economy, demonstrating culture’s transformative power in areas including education, gender equality, social cohesion, poverty reduction, human rights, migration and tackling climate change. A dedicated implementation and monitoring entity was established to spearhead UNESCO efforts to strengthen and measure culture’s transformational impact on the realization of the 2030 Agenda. In addition, UNESCO reinforced its cross-cutting programmatic capacities to reflect this change in paradigm through a comprehensive mapping of the contributions of its conventions on culture across the 17 Goals and their 169 targets. That effort culminated in the publication in 2018 of the UNESCO brochure *Culture for the 2030 Agenda*.

3. The 120 voluntary national reviews that were submitted to the United Nations high-level political forum on sustainable development between 2017 and 2019 show notable progress regarding the integration of culture into national policies. Information on culture in those voluntary national reviews shows an overall trend towards greater linkages with social inclusion and education, as well as new emphasis on indigenous communities, economic development and technology. One example is goal 1 of the Jamaican 2030 Vision, which seeks to strengthen the country’s framework for safeguarding cultural heritage and developing cultural and creative industries. Greece, meanwhile, has established policy priorities aimed at supporting creativity, especially for young artists and culture professionals, and promoting the internationalization of Greek cultural production.

4. Given global changes in demographics – in particular mass urbanization – UNESCO has also reinforced its work on cities as laboratories of innovation for sustainable development. That work will support Member States in integrating cultural policies into their national and regional development plans, through a transversal approach across UNESCO normative instruments, and will assist Member States in the development of their voluntary national reviews. The organization established the UNESCO Cities Platform, an integrated mechanism that brings together existing city networks and programmes related to education, inclusion, water management, risk-preparedness, urban heritage, digital innovation, biodiversity and creativity. The integrated platform aims to support innovation, networking, collaborative action and advocacy for sustainable cities, while providing policy support and recommendations on a wide range of sustainable urban development issues, strengthening the contribution of culture to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 11, on sustainable cities and communities.

5. Following the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), held in Quito in October 2016, the United Nations task team on Habitat III – consisting of some 40 United Nations and other international organizations – identified culture as a key area for future work. The ninth World Urban Forum, held in Kuala Lumpur in February 2018 and which gathered 22,000 participants, was another major opportunity to highlight the role of culture in urban development, building on the New Urban Agenda. UNESCO and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) organized special sessions, networking and training events, including on leveraging diversity and creativity, urban culture and heritage, to foster social inclusion, economic development and enhanced resilience. Inter-agency collaboration for the forthcoming tenth World Urban Forum, to be held in Abu Dhabi in 2020, is well under way.

6. In July 2017, in the same spirit of inter-agency collaboration on cities, UNESCO and the World Bank renewed their partnership to advance sustainable development by investing in culture, urban development and resilience in an integrated manner. A joint position paper, *Culture in City Reconstruction and Recovery*, published in 2018, outlines an enhanced culture-based framework for post-crisis city reconstruction and recovery, offering operational guidance for policymakers and practitioners. A new collaboration seeks to leverage the potential of the creative industries and to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage of creative cities.

7. The links between the protection of intangible and built cultural heritage and the creative industries in order to achieve long-lasting peace have been explored through the flagship UNESCO initiative “Revive the spirit of Mosul”, which was launched in February 2018 and places culture and education at the heart of the recovery and reconstruction process in Iraq, so as to strengthen social cohesion and foster peacebuilding and community reconciliation. The initiative has contributed to the rehabilitation and reconstruction of cultural heritage of Mosul, whose symbolic significance constitutes a source of identity and cohesion for the entire population of the city and indeed the Iraqi people more widely. The initiative also accords with the Iraqi reconstruction and development framework, in which the rehabilitation of the cultural heritage of Iraq is included as a theme, under the pillar of “Reconciliation and peacebuilding”.

8. To further embed culture into urban development policy, the UNESCO Creative Cities Network – comprising 180 cities in 72 countries – has been developing a medium- to long-term strategy that aims to align more closely with the Sustainable Development Goals. That road map will also cover ongoing and so-called “frontier” issues, such as artificial intelligence, the use of big data, the future of work, climate change, disaster risk management, ecological transition and migration, and will also lay the groundwork for the development of guidelines for policymakers at the national and local levels.

9. Through the Creative Cities Network, UNESCO also launched the LAB.2030 initiative to identify good practices for how creative cities worldwide have mobilized their creative potential to build more sustainable, resilient and inclusive cities. The case studies in the 2019 publication *Voices of the City: UNESCO Creative Cities moving towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* showcase innovative solutions that harness creativity for the construction of more inclusive growth models to facilitate environmental adaptation and economic transition. Discussions during the thirteenth Annual Conference of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, held in Fabriano, Italy, in June 2019, deepened the collective reflection on the role of culture across development areas including education, entrepreneurship, innovation, inclusiveness and environmental sustainability.

10. Understanding the role of urban cultural heritage has also been a priority during the reporting period. Of the 55 member States that responded to a 2018 survey on the implementation of the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, 60 per cent reported that they had incorporated urban conservation policies into their national sustainable development plans, while more than 70 per cent of respondents had made the New Urban Agenda operational. United Nations technical assistance programmes have supported member States in applying that 2011 Recommendation. One example is the programme on inclusive urban revitalization for 2012–2019 in India, which sought to tackle significant knowledge, policy and implementation gaps on urban revitalization at a critical moment in the country’s urbanization. Implemented by the World Bank with advisory support from UNESCO and Cities Alliance, the project’s main outcome was the establishment of the first national heritage-based urban development scheme in India, along with a number of state- and city-level heritage-based development programmes and investments. Other innovative policies mentioned in voluntary national reviews include the Tunisian Ministry of Cultural Affairs’ new national “cities of civilizations” programme, which aims to regenerate ancient centres. Furthermore, work has continued on the role of culture in the sustainable development of small settlements and the enhancement of rural-urban linkages. The International Conference on Culture 2030 | Rural-Urban Development: The Future of Historic Villages, which took place in June 2019 in Meishan, China, saw the launch of a publication highlighting lessons learned from the Meishan experience.

## **II. Progress in the implementation of resolution [72/229](#)**

11. In accordance with resolution [72/229](#), the President of the United Nations General Assembly held a thematic high-level debate on culture and sustainable development in May 2019, on the occasion of the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development and to mark the International Year of Indigenous Languages. Ministers for Culture, representatives of Governments, the United Nations, intergovernmental organizations and civil society, and experts and cultural professionals took part. The importance of culture for advancing the Sustainable Development Goals was discussed during a ministerial round table, two interactive panel discussions and a leaders’ luncheon. Themes included: cultural diversity as the common heritage of humanity; the creative economy and the future of work; culture and education; and culture as a lever of change, innovation, empowerment and equality. All speakers emphasized the need to harness culture in every development policy, whether on education, science, health, decent work, climate action or resilience to natural disasters. The need to ensure that culture is incorporated into national budgets as a long-term investment was also underscored.

12. In its resolution [72/229](#), the General Assembly also invited all countries, intergovernmental bodies, organizations of the United Nations system, relevant non-governmental organizations and all other major stakeholders to further their endeavours to enhance the role of culture through specific measures. The following section reports on progress towards the implementation of the resolution in that regard.

### **A. Promoting cultural diversity through education and the media**

13. An important component of the Secretary General’s Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism is education, including through equipping learners, in educational contexts and through the media, with the knowledge, values, attitudes and behaviours that foster responsible global citizenship, critical thinking, empathy and the ability to

take action against violent extremism. A new UNESCO Chair in cultural rights at the University of Copenhagen was created in 2017 to explore new ways of promoting the mutual understanding of cultures, particularly within academia.

14. The 2018 UNESCO report “Progress on education for sustainable development and global citizenship education” provides a summary analysis on the self-reported responses of the 83 countries that participated in the sixth consultation on the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. One finding is that nearly all countries’ curricula incorporate the guiding principles of the 1974 Recommendation but relatively less attention is paid to cultural diversity and tolerance.

15. To address that issue, several resources have been developed to teach learners about intercultural dialogue as the key to conflict prevention. The 2017 *Writing Peace* manual, for example, helps school students to explore how different languages have contributed to the human story and how contemporary writing systems enhance the mutual enrichment of cultures to combat prejudice and discrimination. In addition, the *Manual for Developing Intercultural Competencies*, published by UNESCO and Routledge in 2019, is an important resource for anyone involved in managing the growing cultural diversity within our societies through storytelling.

16. The International Year of Indigenous Languages 2019 aims to raise awareness of that rich source of linguistic knowledge, not only for the benefit of people who speak those languages but so that others can appreciate their important contribution to our world’s cultural diversity. Despite their immense value as repositories of cultural and intellectual heritage, languages continue to disappear at an alarming rate. Alongside the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and several other United Nations agencies, UNESCO has led that worldwide celebration of indigenous languages, with events including an online indigenous film festival. UNESCO has also advocated for the right of indigenous peoples to their own media and for State support to reflect indigenous culture through the media. In Mexico, for instance, UNESCO has been working with duty bearers to develop public policies to foster indigenous media. The organization has also been working in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to build the capacities of community radio stations operated by young indigenous journalists.

17. Local cultures have also been promoted through a global initiative on “Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in formal and non-formal education”, launched in 2017 by UNESCO to help foster an appreciation of cultural diversity and of global citizenship. Ministries and stakeholders from education and culture sectors in more than 100 countries have already been mobilized. A similar initiative in Lebanon, called “Learn with intangible cultural heritage for a sustainable future” will enable students to learn how traditional local knowledge and practices are crucial for identity, health and the natural environment.

18. During World Radio Day 2019, for which the theme was “Dialogue, Tolerance and Peace”, the key role of public broadcasters in ensuring that diverse voices are heard in the public arena was highlighted. The UNESCO project, “Empowering Local Radio with ICTs” had a similar purpose; it concluded in 2018 after 6 years of building the capacities of 59 local radio stations in 10 African countries through strengthening the skills of local radio journalists, technicians and station managers. As a result, the diversity of the local communities, particularly poor and hard-to-reach populations, including rural areas, slums and excluded minorities, was better represented. The city of Rome, as a member of the Creative Cities Network, has promoted the medium of film through its Platform of Audiovisual Archives initiative, which aims to safeguard

film heritage in different regions of the world and facilitate access to documentary heritage, particularly in schools and universities.

## **B. Including culture in social, economic and environmental development policies and strategies**

19. Member States have been aligning their implementation and monitoring of the six UNESCO conventions on culture<sup>1</sup> with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Of the 110 countries that have adopted a national development plan or strategy, some 96 – over two thirds of which are from the global South – have included references to the cultural dimension. Municipal authorities around the world have also explored innovative ways of fostering sustainable development through the cultural and creative industries.

20. The United Nations has sought to facilitate that process. At its twenty-first session in 2017, the General Assembly of the States Parties to the 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage presented the first progress report on the World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy, which had been adopted unanimously in 2015. The Policy’s objective is to ensure that the conservation and management of World Heritage properties are aligned with overall sustainable development objectives. While the Policy acknowledges that the “Outstanding Universal Value” of World Heritage properties should not be compromised, its adoption represents an important step in the evolution of the concept of “World Heritage”, bringing it into line with the United Nations sustainable development policy framework. The 2017 progress report highlights the fruitful efforts made in adapting the processes of the Convention and developing evaluation tools and mechanisms and in awareness-raising and communication activities.

21. To aid the implementation of the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and to support creative sectors, in line with the 2030 Agenda, an online policy monitoring platform was launched in 2017. The platform highlights culture-related policies and strategies, including data on 2,065 policies and measures, as reported by 102 States parties to the 2005 Convention, to promote the sharing of good practices. Similarly, the second edition of the global report, *Re|Shaping Cultural Policies: Advancing creativity for development*, launched in 2017, examines how the Convention has inspired policy change.

22. At the national level, emerging opportunities in the creative sector have inspired Governments to adapt their national policies and strategies to accentuate the role of culture. Colombia, for example, has pioneered a strategy known as the “Orange Economy”, which puts the creative and cultural industries at the heart of its national economy and is already paying dividends. In view of the global technological revolution, there are other interesting practices in countries including Argentina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Kenya and Tajikistan that have focused on setting up regulatory frameworks, policies and measures to meet the challenges of the digital environment in an informed and participatory manner.

<sup>1</sup> The six UNESCO conventions on culture are: the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict with Regulations for the Execution of the Convention (1954); the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970); the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972); the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001); the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003); the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005).

23. During the reporting period, innovative strategies were devised to support sustainable cultural tourism, in line with target 8.9 of the Sustainable Development Goals, to devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products. In 2017, UNESCO and the European Union jointly launched a number of trans-European itineraries that incorporate both iconic and lesser-known World Heritage sites, with the aim of promoting sustainable tourism practices at those sites while encouraging visitors to stay longer and support the local culture and creative industries. A similar project in Asia, known as the Buddhist Heritage Route for Sustainable Tourism Development in South Asia, is in progress.

### **C. Enabling women and men to equally access, participate in and contribute to cultural life**

24. UNESCO continues to incorporate gender equality into its conventions on culture through reporting and capacity-building mechanisms to ensure that women and men can equally access, participate in and contribute to cultural life, as well as share decision-making. Regrettably, reporting across the conventions shows that women continue to face challenges in those areas.

25. In partnership with the private sector, UNESCO has established a programme aiming to reduce the gender gap in the digital creative economy by expanding access for women under 40 years of age to funding, infrastructure, equipment and co-production opportunities. The initiative, called “You Are Next: Empowering Creative Women”, granted funding to four projects in Mexico, Senegal, Tajikistan and the State of Palestine in 2018. UNESCO also placed the spotlight on women directors and on policies to support the film sector in Africa during the 26th edition of the Pan-African Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou, in February 2019. Forty African women directors participated in a round-table event with the Director-General of UNESCO and the Ministers for Culture of Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire and Rwanda in order to raise awareness about the protection and promotion of women’s rights in the creative sector.

26. The organization’s work to preserve built cultural heritage has also included structured efforts to ensure a gender-sensitive and gender-balanced approach in the implementation of its activities. Technical and vocational training and education for women has been a major feature of projects, including an initiative in Madagascar to empower women through sustainable tourism, which provided training for women in the communities surrounding the Tsingy de Bemaraha Strict Nature Reserve World Heritage property. The project – in partnership with Fondation CHANEL – supported work in the sustainable tourism sector, improving the livelihoods of participants and helping them to become financially independent.

### **D. Promoting capacity-building for the development of a dynamic cultural and creative sector**

27. At the national level, many countries have developed vibrant culture sectors and initiatives and have requested support in that regard. Strengthening human and institutional capacities for cultural governance, especially in developing countries, remains a priority for museum directors, policymakers, World Heritage site managers and disaster risk planners. Middle-income countries in particular are increasingly requesting United Nations assistance to strengthen their cultural sectors and related fields.



28. UNESCO and its partners provide tailored support to countries through its global capacity-building programme under the framework of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage with a view to harnessing the potential of intangible cultural heritage in sustainable development and fostering peaceful societies. The number of beneficiary countries increased to over 100 in the past two years, with training provided to more than 2,500 professionals from Governments, civil society and local communities around the world. To support work in the creative and cultural industries sector, UNESCO launched two global initiatives in 2018. The first, “Reshaping cultural policies for the promotion of fundamental freedoms and the diversity of cultural expressions”, supports 16 developing countries in participatory policy monitoring, data collection, policy elaboration and implementation. The second, “Supporting new regulatory frameworks to strengthen the cultural and creative industries and promote South-South cooperation”, encourages the establishment of regulatory frameworks for the creative sectors in 12 developing countries, including Gabon, Georgia, South Sudan, and Zimbabwe.

29. During the reporting period, the African World Heritage Fund continued its capacity-building activities to tackle the challenges that many African countries face in implementing the World Heritage Convention. The 2019 UNESCO-Africa-China Forum on World Heritage Capacity-building and Cooperation provided opportunities for stakeholders from 38 African Member States to enhance dialogue between heritage and development sectors. It is hoped that these efforts will bolster World Heritage in Africa, whose many cultural sites remain underrepresented on World Heritage lists.

## **E. Supporting the emergence of local markets for cultural goods and services**

30. The cultural and creative sector continues to be dynamic, accounting for 3 per cent of the global economy and 30 million jobs worldwide; it is the largest single sector providing employment for young people between 15 and 29 years of age. Yet countries of the global South still do not participate equitably in the exchange of cultural goods and services in the world: outside China and India, developing countries account for only 26 per cent of world exports of cultural goods. As such, it remains vital that capacities are reinforced at a local level, the status of the artist is improved, challenges posed by the digital era are addressed and barriers to international markets are reduced. An inclusive, human rights-based approach that takes into account all dimensions of human development is therefore crucial. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development has supported many events on the economic benefits of the creative economy. It was, for example, a major partner at the World Conference on Creative Economy held in Bali (Indonesia) on 6 to 9 November 2018. A key message was that creative industries can foster economic growth, promote inclusivity and boost sustainable development.

31. In June 2018, UNESCO launched a global survey on policies and measures taken since 2014 to implement the 1980 Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist. It revealed that a growing number of member States, especially in the global South, are developing new programmes to extend social benefits for artists and exploring new models to provide economic rights for them, including equitable pay and fair remuneration schemes. A 2019 International Labour Organization study, *Challenges and opportunities for decent work in the culture and media sectors*, also brought to light the extremely diversified employment conditions and decent work issues within those sectors. The study was conducted in 2018–2019 among trade union organizations in the media and culture sectors in 16 countries across 4 regions in order to analyse employment patterns and working conditions in those sectors. The

report also provides specific guidance on measures to ensure that workers in those sectors – musicians, actors, dancers, journalists, screenwriters, technicians and creators of audiovisual, live performances, and visual art – can adapt to the work of the future, including actions to adjust the market and to train or retrain in the light of technological developments. UNESCO has assisted Costa Rica, Mauritius and Senegal in developing legislative frameworks for the promotion of artists' work and the establishment of systems of social protection for artists. Member States have also been working to establish a world day for the arts to celebrate the achievement of artists worldwide, which it is hoped will be officially adopted at the fortieth session of the General Conference of UNESCO in November 2019. The first world day would take place on 15 April 2020, a date chosen to celebrate the birthday of the great artist Leonardo da Vinci.

32. The technological revolution has had a profound effect on all aspects of the cultural value chain, which is being transformed from a pipeline-like configuration to a network model. Very few countries have designed and implemented digital culture policies that go beyond initiatives undertaken to digitize or strengthen specific nodes of the value chain and there remains an enormous disparity between the global North and South in terms of access to digital platforms, markets and infrastructure. Some notable exceptions, such as Zimbabwe, are reported to have launched digitalization projects to boost business opportunities to the country's creative arts industry in the production and supply of content to the digital platform. At its sixth session in June 2017, the Conference of Parties to the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions adopted Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the Convention in the Digital Environment in part to ensure that artists are fairly remunerated for their work in the digital environment and their human rights are respected. In 2018–2019, UNESCO developed an open road map to support the implementation of the Operational Guidelines, featuring case studies, innovative practices, data and information on policies and measures to provide answers to emerging issues, including in the areas of the ethical challenges of artificial intelligence, the impact of algorithms on access to and discoverability of local cultural content, the consequences of digital technology on copyright, transparency and the accessibility of data.

33. Trade barriers, the scarcity of preferential treatment measures and limited human and financial capacities continue to hamper developing countries' penetration of cultural goods and services markets in the global North. That is despite some improvements in digital distribution platforms, exchange networks and export strategies, mostly in the audiovisual sector, that have been helping global South countries to enter that international market. To aid the assessment of how trade agreements have affected the cultural sector, an impact study published in June 2019 on the 2008 Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Caribbean Forum States concluded that not all opportunities arising from that Economic Partnership Agreement have been fully exploited. Furthermore, its Protocol on Cultural Cooperation has yet to be activated – especially provisions related to the movement of artists and co-productions in the audiovisual sector. UNESCO has continued to collect data to assess ways in which cultural goods and services are given special status in trade and investment agreements to help advance the position of culture in international trade debates. Significantly, the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) culture ministers called for measures to overcome existing imbalances of cultural goods and services at their meeting in June 2019. Furthermore, parties to the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area are in the process of defining the role of cultural and creative industries, cultural tourism and culture-related small and medium enterprises within that trading bloc.

## **F. Safeguarding traditional knowledge of environmental management and foster synergies between indigenous practices and modern technology**

34. According to the 2017 International Labour Organization report, *Indigenous peoples and climate change*, indigenous and tribal peoples care for an estimated 22 per cent of the Earth's surface and protect nearly 80 per cent of the remaining biodiversity on the planet, while representing only 5 per cent of the world's population. Harnessing traditional and indigenous knowledge, in conjunction with modern technology, is therefore vital for sustainably managing the environment. The "Knowing our Changing Climate in Africa" research project, run through the UNESCO Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems programme, for example, gathered information on how the knowledge of pastoralist people in sub-Saharan Africa enabled them to sustainably use the natural resources found in the arid and semi-arid lands of the continent. Much of that knowledge has been transmitted through songs, dances, rituals, language, tracking, herding, navigation and other key elements of their culture.

35. Food and farming are two increasingly important themes linking culture and the environment. In July 2018, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and UNESCO renewed their partnership and began to develop educational materials on food security and sustainable food systems and to raise awareness of the linkages between food, traditional culinary practices and sustainable food production through an international symposium on "Chefs as Agents of Change". They also reinforced cooperation on safeguarding agricultural heritage, linking the UNESCO 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the FAO Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems to identify and safeguard elements of living heritage related to agricultural practices. The United Nations Decade of Family Farming, launched in May 2019 and led by FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, will also emphasise the role of culture in agriculture, for example, in preserving traditional food products. A joint UNESCO-FAO initiative, the World Forum on Food and Culture, will take place in Parma, Italy, in September 2019, with the support of the Italian Government, to further this work.

## **G. Promoting global awareness of the linkages between cultural and biological diversity**

36. In line with the Lima Action Plan for the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves, UNESCO launched in 2018 a major multidisciplinary project for reconciliation and peace in the Lake Chad region, bringing together biological and cultural diversity. The Biosphere and Heritage of Lake Chad project, implemented in collaboration with the African Development Bank across five African countries (Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria), aims to strengthen the capacity of those countries to develop sustainable, inclusive and coordinated management of their hydrological, natural and cultural resources. The project also incorporates the conservation of biodiversity and the promotion of local and indigenous knowledge. Following a successful first phase, a broader roll-out across the Sahel is under consideration.

37. Few countries have developed policy frameworks to facilitate the inclusion of knowledge, data and evidence generated by indigenous and local communities into conservation strategies and decision-making. At a global level, the Conference of the

Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, at its fourteenth meeting in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, in November 2018, decided to establish through its Declaration on Investing in Biodiversity for People and Planet a multi-partner international alliance on nature and culture. The platform, due to be launched in 2020 at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, will aim to strengthen international cooperation on the linkages between biological and cultural diversity to achieve the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity of humanity “living in harmony with nature”.

38. Linkages between biological diversity and culture are also evident in underwater environments. Working towards the aims of Sustainable Development Goal 14, to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, and the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, UNESCO organized in November 2018 a workshop focused on plastic waste and pollution at marine World Heritage sites. World Heritage marine managers and marine litter experts from around the world met at the Wadden Sea World Heritage site in Germany to discuss the negative effects of marine litter and plastics and to raise awareness of this growing problem. It is hoped that the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021–2030) will provide further opportunities to explore linkages between the protection of underwater biodiversity and underwater heritage.

#### **H. Protecting and preserving cultural heritage and cultural property: the fight against illicit trafficking in cultural property, the return of cultural property and recognizing the importance of intellectual property rights**

39. The protection of culture and the promotion of cultural pluralism and rights is important in crises, particularly those associated with armed conflict, disasters and climate change. At those critical times, integrating culture into humanitarian, security and peacebuilding policies and operations is essential to preventing the destabilization of communities. In its resolution [2347 \(2017\)](#), the Security Council established a clear link between the protection of cultural heritage in time of armed conflict and maintaining international peace and security. UNESCO, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team prepared the first report on implementation of that resolution ([S/2017/969](#)), which was presented to the Council in November 2017. The report highlights efforts of Member States to protect cultural heritage during armed conflict, including through training specialized personnel to protect cultural heritage, curb the illicit trafficking of cultural property and fight violent extremism. The report also explores a number of good practices shared by 29 Member States and presents a series of recommendations on strengthening the protection of heritage, awareness-raising, data collection and training peacekeepers, with a view to better integrating cultural issues in future peacekeeping missions.

40. The experience of UNESCO shows that, in the wake of conflicts and disasters, communities everywhere share a basic need to reconnect with their culture as a means of reasserting their identities and as a source of reconciliation, recovery and hope. Following the devastating fire at the National Museum of Brazil in Rio de Janeiro in September 2018, UNESCO sent an emergency response mission, financed by its Heritage Emergency Fund, to work with Brazilian stakeholders to prepare an action plan for the museum’s recovery and an emergency plan and protocol for all Brazilian museums. Up to July 2019, 55 UNESCO member States had benefited from that fund, which responds to requests for immediate interventions in the aftermath of conflicts and disasters across the globe and supports efforts to prevent and prepare for emergencies before they occur. UNESCO also leads the post-disaster needs

assessment process for culture. To date, more than 10 such assessments related to culture have been carried out across the world. Disaster risk reduction and management and multi-stakeholder partnerships can help to establish more resilient heritage. A recent example was the June 2019 workshop at the Buddhist stupa of Swayambhu at the Kathmandu World Heritage site in Nepal. UNESCO advised site managers on how to improve waste management at the site, which is highly vulnerable to landslides and fire.

41. United Nations agencies have initiated dialogue and cooperation on the role of intangible cultural heritage in emergencies. In 2018, a United Nations meeting to discuss ideas was held in Beirut and several areas of cooperation for mutual benefit were identified, including: in refugee camps with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; in peacebuilding and livelihoods with the United Nations Development Programme; in revitalization of public spaces and vulnerable neighbourhoods with UN-Habitat; and in environmental health with the World Health Organization. In May 2019, UNESCO also organized an expert meeting to explore methodological guidance for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in emergencies. The meeting emphasized the dual nature of intangible cultural heritage in emergencies, in terms of both the threats to the practice and transmission of such heritage and its mitigating role as a tool for preparedness, resilience, reconciliation and recovery. To that end, countries have requested support for initiatives aimed at harnessing the potential of living heritage for peacebuilding in Colombia and for building resilience of displaced populations in the Niger.

42. Museums are crucial partners for protecting and promoting culture, from safeguarding World Heritage to countering illicit trafficking of cultural property, in particular through their preservation, research, communication and education efforts. UNESCO continues to lead work on the illicit trafficking of cultural goods and restitution, particularly through its field office network and in close collaboration with Interpol, the World Customs Organization and national authorities. In Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger, for example, law enforcement and customs agents have been trained, as have officers from the Southern African Development Community countries.

## **I. Developing innovative mechanisms of financing culture**

43. Despite the growing recognition of the importance of culture in sustainable development, it remains generally underacknowledged as a formal sector of the economy and, consequently, the economic and social benefits and contribution of culture have not been fully recognized. According to the *First Quadrennial Pacific Sustainable Development Report 2018*, culture receives less than 1 per cent of national budgets. Culture ministers of the Pacific island States met in Fiji in May 2018 and made a significant step forward by agreeing to advocate for increased resource allocation to the culture sector of at least 2 per cent of the national budget by 2030 – up from the current average of 0.7 per cent.

44. There are also examples of innovative financing mechanisms at the national level that promote equity, such as the Vietnamese New Rural Development programme and the Canadian Cultural Spaces Fund, which provide grants and contributions to support communities, many of which are rural or remote. In Cambodia, a national fund to develop the arts was created to provide financial support for young artists. Meanwhile, Georgia and Mexico offer tax incentives for donations to arts and culture and preferential tax and procurement policies for the cultural industries, while Belarus, Chile and the State of Palestine have established culture funds for small and medium-sized enterprises and cultural organizations.

45. Nevertheless, the proportion of development aid spent on culture today is the lowest it has been for over 10 years. Responding to one appeal of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development regarding “partnerships and integrated approaches”, UNESCO has entered into multi-year Programme Cooperation Agreements with donors to enable better planning and programme delivery. The organization also held its first UNESCO Partners’ Forum in September 2018, at which it took the first steps to institutionalizing a new structured financing dialogue. The Forum notably included a session on the creative economy. As part of its ongoing endeavours to diversify sources of funding, including private-public collaboration, and to foster innovative financing mechanisms, UNESCO will be holding further Structured Financing Dialogue meetings to focus on specific regions and themes.

46. The UNESCO International Fund for Cultural Diversity is a voluntary fund established under the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. Its objective is to strengthen international cooperation and assistance by promoting the emergence of dynamic cultural sectors in developing countries that are parties to the 2005 Convention. In 2017–2018, 15 new projects were approved for funding. Of those projects, four countries received assistance for the first time: Albania, Antigua and Barbuda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda. Furthermore, two projects facilitating cooperation among six countries of the Caribbean region and six countries in Latin America were funded. Since 2010, 105 projects have been funded in 54 developing and least developed countries, for a total of more than \$7 million, resulting in transformative changes for institutional infrastructures to support viable cultural industries.

47. A particularly fruitful collaboration between the Government of Afghanistan, the World Bank and UNESCO has been the Afghanistan Heritage and Extractive Industries Development Initiative, which entered its second phase in 2017. While development of the country continues, the project has helped to enhance the technical capacity of the Afghan Government in safeguarding cultural assets and supporting the preservation of the country’s archaeological sites. The project promotes the message that the preservation of cultural assets is not necessarily in opposition to development. Similarly, the World Bank launched its Environmental and Social Framework with a component on cultural heritage in October 2018, in order to better manage the environmental and social risks of projects and to improve development outcomes.

## **J. Mobilizing culture as a vehicle for tolerance, understanding, peace and reconciliation**

48. Against a global backdrop of increasing cultural diversity and intercultural interaction, and with worrying trends of violent extremism, the United Nations system continues to harness culture to foster more tolerant and peaceful societies. As such, there has been a United Nations-wide shift towards conflict prevention in peacebuilding efforts. The ongoing International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013–2022) provides impetus across the United Nations system for action in this area.

49. There is, however, a need for stronger data on the contribution of tolerance, understanding, peace and reconciliation to more sustainable societies, as evidenced in the UNESCO Survey on Intercultural Dialogue 2017, designed to take stock of the current conceptual understanding, policies and legislation in that field, as well as the available data, resources and main stakeholders. In response, UNESCO will be launching a long-term project in late 2019 to create a global body of data to help identify effective methods for intercultural dialogue and to clarify its contribution to

the prevention of conflict and the protection of human rights. In late 2018, UNESCO finalized a feasibility study for the project and organized an expert meeting with partner organizations, including the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the United Nations Development Fund, the Council of Europe and the Nordic Cultural Fund.

50. Good practices at the national level include the New Zealand “Tapasā” framework, designed for teachers to strengthen their cultural competencies, embedding Māori identity, language and culture into local curricula and supporting families to engage. In the Sudan, the Arts for Peace programme uses art to promote the culture of peace in the society, while Cote d’Ivoire has developed the National Festival of Arts and Culture in Schools to promote the arts, culture, social cohesion and job creation as part of its national reconciliation.

51. Culture in diplomacy remains an important component of strengthening international relations. One vehicle for this is a joint inscription on the World Heritage List. For example, the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid region World Heritage property was extended in 2019 to include parts of Albania in addition to the original site in North Macedonia; several joint inscriptions for parts of the historic Silk Roads are under way; and, in 2018, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea made a joint inscription of traditional wrestling on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

### **III. Assessing indicator frameworks and national progress reports**

52. To give greater visibility to the major role that culture plays in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, a framework of thematic indicators for culture is due to be rolled out in 2020. The culture indicators will assess both the contribution of heritage and creativity, as well as the transversal contribution of culture across different Goals and policy areas. The indicators will be underpinned by a framework of four dimensions: environment and resilience; prosperity and livelihoods; knowledge and skills; and inclusion and participation. Each dimension combines several Goals and targets so as to capture the multifaceted and transversal contribution of culture to sustainable development. Consolidating existing qualitative and quantitative data – and building upon data sets from across the UNESCO conventions on culture and other United Nations data – the indicators are designed to adapt to a variety of statistical capacities. Crucially, they are an aspirational tool for all rather than normative assessment, despite being based on results-based management. In addition, they are designed to facilitate cooperation across institutions and bolster the capacity-building of relevant agencies. To hone the methodology, two international expert meetings were organized in September 2017 and January 2018 to discuss the framework and the detailed methodology for each indicator, which was then refined through online consultations. A Member State consultation period in May and June 2019 was the final step for strengthening the culture indicators prior to the first phase of their implementation.

53. A second significant contribution to monitoring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals is a new globally comparable indicator to monitor target 11.4, to strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage. In collaboration with Member States and partners, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics has been developing indicator 11.4.1, which will reflect the total expenditure per capita spent by each country to protect its cultural and natural heritage. It will include public and private sources of expenditure, including investments made at the local, national and international levels, alone or in

partnership with civil society organizations. For the first time, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics will collect micro-level information on private spending from a wide range of institutions, including foundations and other non-profit organizations, corporate sponsors and private donations.

54. Finally, UNESCO has developed a monitoring mechanism to track the effects of UNESCO activities at the country level in the field of intangible cultural heritage. Such activity had previously been a great challenge as there had been no systematic results-based monitoring mechanism in place at either the global or country level. As a result, at its seventh session in 2018, the General Assembly of the States Parties to the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage adopted an overall results framework for the Convention, including clear outcomes, indicators and assessment factors. UNESCO will collect the required information and data through the 2003 Convention's periodic reporting mechanism, starting with a first cycle of national reporting in the Latin American and Caribbean region in 2020.

#### **IV. Conclusions and suggested ways forward**

55. Culture is an intrinsic part of the human experience, the oxygen for the spirit. It is a source of identity and belonging and, as such, is a good in itself. Its role as the vital missing link between development aspirations at the global level and their application at the heart of communities at the local level is increasingly being recognized. With the global mega trends of climate change, population growth and urbanization, migration and increasingly diverse communities, no response to the challenges of today can be solid and lasting without culture playing a pivotal role. Across the United Nations system, agencies, funds and programmes are incorporating the cultural dimension into their work, whether it be supporting Governments to factor in culture in post-conflict reconstruction, establishing socially and environmentally sustainable tourism, expanding inclusive urban development or embedding vibrant creative sectors within their economies. Crucially, Member States are increasingly integrating culture into their own national strategies across various government departments, as the key to unlocking inclusive policymaking in increasingly diverse and multicultural societies. It is particularly heartening to note that some 96 countries – most of which are in the global South – have already included a culture dimension in their national development plans.

56. As the mandated United Nations agency on culture, UNESCO, in partnership with other United Nations entities, non-governmental organizations and Member States, is leading the way in seamlessly folding culture into development strategies. Work on the six conventions on culture is deepening the global understanding of culture's contribution to sustainable development. At the same time, the vision for that contribution is broadening. By adopting a more transversal and integrated approach, the links between culture and seemingly disparate Sustainable Development Goals become clear, in line with the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Goals and 169 associated targets, which are "integrated and indivisible". From traditional food practices that can contribute to reducing hunger (Goal 2) to the protection of natural world heritage to ensure clean water resources (Goal 6), and the promotion of cultural and creative industries to create decent work (Goal 8), to artists raising awareness about climate action (Goal 13), culture can contribute to those shared global Goals. To underpin advocacy for the role of culture as the bedrock of sustainable development, the new thematic indicators for culture will provide a framework for monitoring progress. Crucially, as an aspirational tool rather than a normative assessment, they will signpost to ambitious Governments, municipalities and intergovernmental organizations suitable routes to harness its transformative power.



UNESCO will continue to develop tools to disseminate the growing body of qualitative and quantitative data and good practices.

57. Despite significant advances within the reporting period, major concerns remain regarding threats to culture. The increased attacks on cultural heritage property and on the living traditions of communities as a result of conflict remains a worrying trend, and the United Nations as a whole is stepping up preventative measures in this regard. Likewise, in the face of natural disasters, potentially exacerbated by climate change, disaster risk reduction is a vital area of work across the United Nations system for the protection of World Heritage sites. Finally, with an increase in global tourism – including global cultural tourism – there is inter-agency cooperation to devise strategies to ensure that the 1,121 World Heritage sites can adopt sustainable tourism practices for the benefit of local communities.

58. There are also many opportunities in the cultural field. The work of the United Nations is increasingly oriented towards cities and urban settlements and to harnessing the potential of new technologies. By 2050, two in every three people will live in urban spaces, making them central to any development strategy and giving them a role as laboratories of ideas for new, innovative practices. The creative economy is largely based in urban spaces and is increasingly recognised as an important economic engine. Yet the lack of solid regulatory frameworks or the full realization of artists' rights and global imbalances in the trade of cultural goods and services continue to hamper progress, despite some inspiring examples that can serve as models. New frameworks must be designed to make the most of the opportunities of the technological revolution, which is in the process of revolutionizing not only how contemporary cultural expressions are created and distributed, but also how cultural heritage can be preserved for the good of humanity.

59. In conclusion, given the interrelated nature of culture across all aspects of human development, it currently represents an underexplored wellspring of potential. Greater synergies across United Nations mandates and work, stronger partnerships with civil society and the private sector, and enhanced cooperation with Member States and municipal authorities – in the spirit of Goal 17, to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development – will also support the integration of culture into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a more coherent manner. Finally, as we strive to “leave no one behind”, culture can give voice to groups such as migrants, women and girls, children and youth, ethnic minorities and indigenous people, whose perspectives can guide progress towards our global ambitions. Looking forward, Member States may wish to fully integrate culture into their sustainable development planning. In order to unleash the full potential of culture for the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development. The enthusiasm demonstrated by Member States for the upcoming UNESCO Forum of Ministers for Culture, in November 2019 – the first of its kind to be held in 21 years – bodes well for the future of sustainable development with culture at its heart.