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| ITEM 8.C OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA |
| **Examination of proposals to the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices** |
| Sixteenth session, Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Online – 13 to 18 December 2021) |

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| **Summary**  The present document includes the recommendations of the Evaluation Body on proposals to the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices (Part A) and a set of draft decisions for the Committee’s consideration (Part B). An overview of the 2021 files and the working methods of the Evaluation Body are included in document [LHE/21/16.COM/8.](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-21-16.COM-8-EN.docx)  **Decisions required**: paragraph 3 |

1. **Recommendations**
2. The Evaluation Body recommends that the Committee select the following programmes as best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention:

| **Draft  Decision** | **Submitting State** | **Proposal** | **Concerned by Dialogue** | **File No.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [16.COM 8.c.2](#_DRAFT_DECISION_16.COM_4) | Iran (Islamic Republic of) | National programme to safeguard the traditional art of calligraphy in Iran | Yes | [01716](https://ich.unesco.org/en/8c-register-01193#8.c.2) |
| [16.COM 8.c.3](#_DRAFT_DECISION_16.COM) | Kenya | Success story of promoting traditional foods and safeguarding traditional foodways in Kenya |  | [01409](https://ich.unesco.org/en/8c-register-01193#8.c.3) |
| [16.COM 8.c.4](#_DRAFT_DECISION_16.COM_1) | Kyrgyzstan | Nomad games, rediscovering heritage, celebrating diversity |  | [01738](https://ich.unesco.org/en/8c-register-01193#8.c.4) |
| [16.COM 8.c.5](#_DRAFT_DECISION_16.COM_2) | Philippines | The School of Living Traditions (SLT) |  | [01739](https://ich.unesco.org/en/8c-register-01193#8.c.5) |

1. The Evaluation Body recommends to the Committee to refer the following programme to the submitting States:

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| **Draft  Decision** | **Submitting State** | **Proposal** | **Concerned by Dialogue** | **File No.** |
| [16.COM 8.c.1](#_DRAFT_DECISION_16.COM_3) | Denmark, Germany | Danish-German minority model: a framework for living together in peace in a culturally diverse region |  | [01697](https://ich.unesco.org/en/8c-register-01193#8.c.1) |

1. **Draft decisions**
2. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decisions:

## **DRAFT DECISION 16.COM 8.c.1**

The Committee

* 1. Takes note that Denmark and Germany have proposed **Danish-German minority model: a framework for living together in peace in a culturally diverse region** (no. 01697) for selection and promotion by the Committee as a programme, project or activity best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention:

The area of Schleswig is home to three native cultures, Danish, German and Friesian. The three are interrelated but markedly different in terms of their language and cultural and social practices. With the rise of nationalism in the early nineteenth century, a focus on differences created tensions, especially between Danes and Germans, culminating in two bloody wars – the Schleswig Wars of 1848-1851 and 1864. In 1920, a referendum resulted in the partition of Schleswig into a Danish and a German part. The new border created a majority of Danes in the north and a majority of Germans in the south. In 1955, acknowledging cultural freedom, personal rights and formal equality as guiding principles for peace, the German and Danish governments issued the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations. The two non-legally binding, unilateral statements of intent were issued on the same day by the heads of government of both countries. Further improvements have made it possible for both minority communities to enjoy a well-established infrastructure (including community schools, libraries and clubs) to safeguard and transmit their Danish or German language and cultural heritage. The Declarations created a framework in which the intangible cultural heritage of the minorities could flourish and contribute to peaceful coexistence.

* 1. Considers that, from the information included in the file, the programme responds as follows to the criteria for selection as a good safeguarding practice in paragraph 7 of the Operational Directives:

P.1: The description of the model is too broad to determine how exactly it reflects the principles and objectives of the Convention. The file seems to refer to a cultural policy for the general integration of minorities without a specific relationship to intangible cultural heritage as defined by Article 2 of the Convention. The file describes the relative long-term implementation of two political declarations, dating back to 1955, which recognize the freedoms and rights of Danish and German minorities to self-identity. Legal measures, the promotion of Danish and German languages and other deliberate steps to support minority cultures on both sides of the Danish-German border have resulted in the general support for Danish and German culture, traditions and ways of life.

P.2: The coordination measures described refer to a number of legal and political mechanisms which facilitate the access of minority groups to the governance and decision-making bodies in Denmark and Germany. There are references in the file to regional cooperation, namely: the setting up minority schools with public funding in Denmark, equal access to public funds for attending schools in Germany, funding of theatre and poetry slams. However, these references are not sufficient to determine how this regional model contributes to the safeguarding of a specific element of intangible cultural heritage or intangible cultural heritage in general.

P.3: The file focuses predominantly on the Bonn-Copenhagen Declarations and the political measures taken to ensure the rights of the minorities and prevent discrimination. While these are important measures to ensure the rights of minority communities, it is unclear how these measures relate specifically to the principles and objectives of the Convention. These measures may be more appropriate to be considered under other international frameworks for cultural and human rights.

P.4: The file does not demonstrate how the programme has contributed to the viability of intangible cultural heritage. First, it is not clear which specific elements of intangible cultural heritage are concerned by the file. Second, the file does not describe the viability of any elements in a substantial manner.

P.5: The Sydslesvigsk Forening (SSF, South Schleswigian Association) and the Bund Deutscher Nordschleswiger (BDN, Union of German North Schleswigians) are listed as the competent bodies responsible for the local management of the Danish-German minority model. A number of other non-governmental organizations are also listed. These actors demonstrate the dense landscape of associations concerned, including organizations relating to youth, schools, lifelong education, religion, media and politics. They include the Royal Danish Library and the German Commission for UNESCO, who also participated in local meetings and workshops leading up to the preparation of the file. Free, prior and informed consent is also established in the file.

P.6: The file explains that the Danish-German minority model cannot be applied or exported as a whole, but rather should be viewed as a toolbox to be adapted. The file proposes that the key components of the model may be adopted elsewhere as a democratic practice, which considers that “national minorities should be able to maintain their culture and practices, including language without discrimination.” However, the file does not provide sufficient information on which components of the model are concerned with the safeguarding of a specific element of intangible cultural heritage or intangible cultural heritage in general.

P.7: The file explains how various communities, administrations, universities, institutions and parliaments have already accumulated decades of experience in presenting the Danish-German minority model and cooperating to share their experience and knowledge. In particular, various institutions are cited as being able to conduct research on and present findings about questions concerning minority groups. However, the ability of these institutions to disseminate information about the good practices is implied rather than explicitly stated in the file.

P.8: The file describes a system of monitoring and evaluation that is conducted by the Council of Europe on the Danish and German Minority Policy. This system also involves the minorities themselves in the collection of various quantitative information and statistics, such as the number of members in clubs and associations, or participants at events and cultural events organized by the different clubs and associations concerned. The file provides a link to a website, which includes a section on culture, but which addresses activities only in general, and not in terms of specific elements of intangible cultural heritage.

P.9: The Danish-German minority model can serve as a positive example of a policy relating to the protection of minority rights and practices. However, as the model seems to fall outside the scope of the Convention as described in Article 2, it does not serve as a model that can be applicable to safeguarding efforts that meet the particular needs of developing countries.

* 1. Decides to refer **Danish-German minority model: a framework for living together in peace in a culturally diverse region** to the submitting States Parties;
  2. Commends the States Parties on having adopted policies for the integration of linguistic minorities and recalls, nevertheless, that only programmes, projects or activities dedicated to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, can be nominated for this mechanism.

## **DRAFT DECISION 16.COM 8.c.2**

The Committee

* 1. Takes note that the Islamic Republic of Iran has proposed **National programme to safeguard the traditional art of calligraphy in Iran** (no. 01716) for selection and promotion by the Committee as a programme, project or activity best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention:

The tradition of calligraphy has always been associated with the act of writing in Iran, and even when the writers had limited literacy, calligraphy and writing were still intricately linked. But with the advent of printing and the emergence of computer programmes and digital fonts, this art gradually declined and the emphasis on pure readability replaced the observance of both readability and aesthetics. This resulted in a decline in the appreciation of calligraphy among the new generations. The safeguarding of the Iranian calligraphic tradition thus became a major concern in the 1980s, and a national programme was developed for this purpose by non-governmental organizations in collaboration with the government. This programme aimed to expand informal and formal public training in calligraphy, publish books and pamphlets, hold art exhibitions, and develop academic curricula, while promoting appropriate use of the calligraphic tradition in line with modern living conditions. Some of the work on this programme was started by the Iranian Calligraphers Association before the 1980s, and given its immense popularity, the public sector turned it into a national programme by redefining and coordinating it on a large scale based on the experiences of the public and private sectors.

* 1. Considers that, from the information included in the file and the information provided by the submitting State through the dialogue process, the programme responds as follows to the criteria for selection as a good safeguarding practice in paragraph 7 of the Operational Directives:

P.1: The programme for safeguarding the traditional art of calligraphy in Iran is a long-term programme coordinated by two non-governmental organizations and four governmental actors to revitalize, enhance and promote the practice of calligraphy in Iran. Measures include publishing, training programmes, exhibitions, competitions, school textbooks and university courses, new digital fonts, certification and evaluation for calligraphers, and allocation of insurance and financial support to selected artists.

P.2: The programme operates at the national level and is led by two national councils who coordinate its implementation: 1) a specialized Council formed in the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, which issues licenses and funding; and 2) a corresponding Council in the Ministry of Education responsible for coordinating the implementation of the programme relating to schools and student textbooks. The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts and the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, in cooperation and coordination with the two above-mentioned Councils, are the driving force behind the programme.

P.3: The programme reflects the objectives of the Convention by reinforcing and promoting the role of calligraphy in transmitting traditional values from one generation to another. It also enhances respect for cultural diversity and human creativity in Iran and other countries through the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. Documentation activities contribute to expanding research in the field of calligraphy and other traditional arts, as well as strengthening the formal and informal educational infrastructure.

P.4: The programme has contributed to the element being revitalized and gaining popularity among youth, while also contributing to creative expressions involving the element. Masters of the art have combined the tradition with contemporary art to create calligrams, which have gained prominence in the Iranian and international art market. As a result of the programme, the element also features prominently in traditional architecture, on exterior facades and interior finishes, and is widely used in the design of clothing and jewelry. The writing of sacred texts, such as the Qur’an, books of Hadith and narrations, banner writing, celebration and mourning announcements, are also based on the traditional art of calligraphy.

P.5: The programme has been implemented collaboratively between the State bodies and non-governmental organizations, including many master practitioners who are involved in training, formal and informal education approaches, exhibitions and publications.

P.6: The national programme of traditional calligraphy art in Iran can serve as a model for safeguarding in other countries that have the same or similar elements. The art of calligraphy is widespread in a number of Islamic and Arab countries. Given that Iran has common traditions with neighbouring countries, the programme may also be considered for implementation elsewhere.

P.7: The file lists several entities, including government departments and associations, as participating in the implementation of the programme and as being willing to assist with the dissemination of good safeguarding practices. These entities include the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, the Iranian Calligraphers Association, and the Novem Association. The file provides consent letters as proof of the willingness of these entities to cooperate and their potential role to disseminate the safeguarding practices more widely.

P.8: The safeguarding activities included in this programme will be reported on by government and non-governmental organizations, and be reviewed, analyzed and evaluated by the two national Councils, and the relevant specialized and policy committees. The results of the evaluation will be announced in the Councils and the programme will be adapted accordingly until its full implementation.

P.9: Other countries with a written tradition, especially those from Islamic and Arabic cultures, may benefit from the experiences in this programme according to their local needs. Examples include taking appropriate steps to exchange and share experiences with other countries, teaching calligraphy as an essential part of the programme and implementing it as a national programme. Involving practitioners of all ages, genders, ethnicities and nationalities will furthermore enrich cultural diversity, innovation and creativity, leading the programme to become more dynamic and flexible.

* 1. Decides to select **National programme to safeguard the traditional art of calligraphy in Iran** as a programme, project or activity best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention.

## **DRAFT DECISION 16.COM 8.c.3**

The Committee

* 1. Takes note that Kenya has proposed **Success story of promoting traditional foods and safeguarding traditional foodways in Kenya** (No. 01409) for selection and promotion by the Committee as a programme, project or activity best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention:

In Kenya, traditional foodways were under threat due to historical factors and the pressure of modern lifestyles. Local foods were looked down upon and were associated with poverty and backwardness. Understanding that a decline in food diversity and knowledge would have serious ramifications on health and on food and nutrition insecurity, in 2007 Kenya committed to safeguarding related practices and expressions. Two main initiatives were launched, in collaboration with scientists and community groups. The first involved inventorying traditional foods, with a focus on traditional vegetables. About 850 indigenous plants with local names were recorded. This was followed by the detailed documentation of use and related indigenous knowledge (including recipes) and practices (such as ceremonies). Finally came rigorous promotion of the foods. For the second initiative, UNESCO in partnership with the Department of Culture and the International and National Museums of Kenya, and in consultation with community leaders, initiated a pilot project to identify and inventory traditional foodways in partnership with primary school children to raise awareness about the threat to traditional foodways. Both initiatives have since led to other related activities carried out independently by local institutions, and several similar initiatives have been launched among other communities in Kenya, Ethiopia and Burkina Faso.

* 1. Considers that, from the information included in the file, the programme responds as follows to the criteria for selection as a good safeguarding practice in paragraph 7 of the Operational Directives:

P.1: The programme is comprised of two safeguarding initiatives involving the promotion of traditional foods and safeguarding foodways in Kenya, namely: “The African leafy vegetables and traditional foods diversification activities” (1996-2011) and “Safeguarding the traditional foodways of two communities in Kenya (2009-2012).” The programme was designed in direct response to the threats to traditional foodways brought on by historical factors and modern lifestyles, and which resulted in a noticeable decline in food diversity and knowledge associated with these foods. Both projects capitalized on community research methodologies to inventory traditional foods, with an emphasis on vegetables, and to document and inventory traditional foodways with the participation of primary school students in two communities.

P.2: Both safeguarding initiatives in the file involved coordination efforts between government and non-governmental institutions, universities, community-based organizations, as well as international bodies on the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage. Although the projects were conducted with specific communities in Kenya, the experiences were shared, adopted and scaled-up by other institutions at the regional level in Kenya, as well as at the international levels in Ethiopia and Burkina Faso.

P.3: The project on documenting traditional foodways, in particular, that was implemented in Isukha and Pokot aimed to promote the intergenerational exchange of knowledge and practices relating to traditional foodways to ensure continuity of the element. The project also sought to promote respect for the traditional foodways within the communities through documentation activities that were conducted by students at community food fairs. The project furthermore raised awareness about intangible cultural heritage at the local, national and international levels through food fairs and symposia, as well as through print and digital publications that aimed to share content about the programme and the experiences of communities. Overall, the programme recognizes that communities have an important role to play and has involved the community in all stages of its implementation. Altogether the programme reflects the spirit of the Convention by encouraging and promoting the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, respect for cultural diversity and the contribution of intangible cultural heritage to sustainable development.

P.4: Through its methodological approach, the file demonstrates the effectiveness of the programme in enhancing awareness about traditional foods and foodways in Kenya. Documentation activities conducted with the communities concerned, including the involvement of women, led to the production of a 700-page record of food culture among the Mijikenda of coastal Kenya, as well as a database of 800 species of wild and cultivated food plants and associated recipes. The file notes that promotion and awareness-raising initiatives are correlated to a notable increase in traditional foods found in markets and restaurants. The selling of vegetables has also grown steadily, and traditional foods have re-emerged to epitomize cultural pride and good health. In addition, training and capacity-building initiatives have contributed to an increase in the number of university courses on traditional foods.

P.5: The communities concerned were involved at all stages of the project in the documentation of traditional foods and vegetables across coastal Kenya. The documentation of the indigenous knowledge surrounding the use of the bottle gourd in Kitui was led by the Kyanika Adult Women's Group and involved the participation of women. The communities concerned were fully involved in the local food fairs and street campaigns to promote respect for the traditional foods and to showcase their food diversity and value. The file shows how different activities involved in project planning and implementation were conducted in consultation with the communities concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent.

P.6: The file indicates that the safeguarding approaches of both projects could be applicable at regional and international levels and serve as a model for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. The model could serve as a source of inspiration in the following areas: working with communities, changing attitudes through evidence-based approaches, demonstrations through cooking and food fairs, identifying opportunities to sustain knowledge sharing, involving youth and identifying institutions to champion the issue of sustainability. The file shows how such approaches could also be applied to other fields relating to indigenous knowledge, such as traditional medicine and health systems.

P.7: The submitting State and the implementing body (National Museums of Kenya), as well as researchers and community representatives involved in the project, were contacted about and reaffirmed their willingness to cooperate in the dissemination of this good practice. The file indicates that many of the group representatives are furthermore in strong support of being able to share their work with the international community. Some of the results of the efforts of the project have already been shared in various ways, such as through print and online publications.

P.8: The file indicates that the results of this activity are susceptible to an assessment through publications, the collection of stories from key stakeholders and previous impact assessments. Previous evaluations of the project on the African leafy vegetables and traditional foods diversification activities showed increased interest in African leafy vegetables, along with their production, consumption and marketing. The evaluation found that one of the project’s main results was the significant change in people’s attitudes towards traditional vegetables and local foods by 2006, and the increased public consumption at the household level and in restaurants of such vegetables.

P.9: This programme is applicable to the needs of developing countries in a number of ways as it can be used to address food security concerns, encourage food diversification, revive and safeguard foodways and their associated knowledge, enhance opportunities for income generation, and teach community-based documentation and inventorying skills. Actions similar to those taken in Kenya are needed to safeguard foodways, which may be under threat in other developing countries.

* 1. Decides to select **Success story of promoting traditional foods and safeguarding traditional foodways in Kenya** as a programme, project or activity best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention;
  2. Commends the State Party for a well-prepared file that can serve as a concrete, attainable example of a safeguarding model around traditional food and foodways that can be applied and adapted to other settings facing similar challenges around a decline in traditional foods;
  3. Encourages the State Party to take note of the gender dimensions of the safeguarding programme and to ensure equitable participation of all community members regardless of their gender, age or any other factors.

## **DRAFT DECISION 16.COM 8.c.4**

The Committee

* 1. Takes note that Kyrgyzstan has proposed **Nomad games, rediscovering heritage, celebrating diversity** (no. 01738) for selection and promotion by the Committee as a programme, project or activity best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention:

Kyrgyz people’s cultural heritage is intrinsically linked to the nomadic lifestyle. However, during the Soviet era, which came with forced sedentation, many elements became endangered, including traditional games. After gaining independence in 1991, the local communities in Kyrgyzstan started working on revitalizing and celebrating their traditional culture. In this context, traditional game practitioners and knowledge bearers from different communities across the country held their first major meeting in 2007 to discuss current challenges for the traditional games and the safeguarding needs. The participants identified many challenges but agreed that some of them were very urgent: the first being the loss of knowledge about the traditional games and the second being the lack of interest among the younger generation to play the games. After long discussions and deliberations, the participants identified several safeguarding needs that shaped the Nomad Games: Rediscovering Heritage programme. The traditional game practitioners reached a consensus about the need to prioritize documentation and identification of traditional games in different parts of the country. These goals were prioritized because many people knowledgeable about traditional games were older and there was a real threat of losing their knowledge about traditional games unless it was documented.

* 1. Considers that, from the information included in the file, the programme responds as follows to the criteria for selection as a good safeguarding practice in paragraph 7 of the Operational Directives:

P.1: Revitalization efforts began formally in 2007 and developed into its current format, while gaining traction and wide participation nationally and internationally. Among the safeguarding needs identified by the federations and practitioners are the need to: identify, document and record existing traditional games; raise general awareness and boost interest toward traditional games with a focus on children and youth; and include traditional games into formal education. The documentation efforts have been developed into the Nomad Games and recently into the World Nomad Games. Innovative components of this programme include: i) a community-driven documentation process, ii) extensive media coverage, iii) holistic approach to intangible cultural heritage, iv) conducting Nomad Games festivals on multiple scales, and v) building partnerships among various groups of traditional game practitioners, federations and governments.

P.2: While the programme initially did not involve coordination at the regional, sub-regional or international levels as it was organized as a strictly national effort, it eventually evolved into an internationally coordinated initiative known as the World Nomad Games. The programme currently involves cross-border exchange, contact and networking among different traditional game federations in Central Asia and worldwide, contributing to the revitalization of knowledge associated with the traditional games and mutual dialogue between the countries. The most recent World Nomad Games involved participants from eighty-two countries, media from fifty-six countries and reporting in thirty languages.

P.3: The file clearly shows that the programme is aligned with the principles and objectives of the Convention in several key ways. These include: the participation of communities (Article 15), education, awareness raising and capacity building (Article 14), inventories (Article 12), research (Article 13(c)) and safeguarding (Article 2). In this way, the programme is well-designed and coherent with the spirit of the Convention to enhance the visibility and respect for intangible cultural heritage worldwide.

P.4: The file demonstrates that the programme has been effective in contributing to the viability of the traditional games. Indicators of effectiveness outlined in the file include an increase in the number of traditional game clubs, inclusion of the games into the curriculum at all levels, inscription of two games (elements) on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, exponential media attention and broadcasts associated with the games as a whole, and the establishment of a strong link between traditional game practitioners and traditional crafts persons.

P.5: The file provides evidence of the wide participation of concerned communities, groups and individuals, including federations, practitioners and academic institutions. Women also feature prominently in the programme as volunteers, practitioners and community researchers, showing a good level of gender equity. Free, prior and informed consent is established in the file through signed consent letters and video formats.

P.6: The format of the Nomad Games is relevant to many countries in Central Asia and around the world, and particularly to other countries with nomadic cultures. The model of the Nomad Games has several components that can be considered a model of safeguarding activities. These include the involvement of the communities in the documentation process, the use of festivals for traditional games and competitions which bring practitioners and the younger generations together, and a coordinated communication strategy for awareness raising through formal and informal channels. The recruitment of youth volunteers to the programme encourages youth to learn about the diversity of intangible cultural heritage and the importance of safeguarding it.

P.7: The file describes the ability of the federations, practitioners and countries to mobilize and coordinate, demonstrating their ability to participate in the dissemination of the programme as a good practice using available means, including technology-based approaches. The practitioner communities have been reaching out to the local communities and federations, while the State Party has expressed its willingness to share their experience and cooperate with other interested parties in the dissemination of the Nomad Games experience.

P.8: The file proposes that the scale of the programme in its current format allows for independent evaluation. Notable statistics provided in the file include the documentation of 220 games, which have been included in a National Intangible Cultural Heritage List, fifty-five thousand practitioners in Kyrgyzstan, increased numbers of formal and informal clubs, and consolidation of several federations and networks spanning several countries. The Nomad Games has received commendation and recognition by various entities globally, including the United Nations General Assembly, International Olympic Committee and several heads of government.

P.9: Kyrgyzstan is a developing country and many of its experiences in the Nomad Games could provide useful learning points for other countries. The community-driven approach and the use of volunteers to support the games reduces the funding and optimizes the resources needed to organize such games. The Nomad Games also connect various other forms of intangible cultural heritage, including traditional crafts, while encouraging the sales of traditional craft products and boosting the local economy.

* 1. Decides to select **Nomad games, rediscovering heritage, celebrating diversity** as a programme, project or activity best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention;
  2. Commends the State Party for a well-written file demonstrating strong community engagement and support for the programme and for the proactive participation of the federations and practitioners in the safeguarding of their collective intangible cultural heritage at such a large scale.

## **DRAFT DECISION 16.COM 8.c.5**

The Committee

* 1. Takes note that the Philippines have proposed **The** **School of Living Traditions (SLT)** (no. 01739) for selection and promotion by the Committee as a programme, project or activity best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention:

In 1995, the Sub-commission on Cultural Communities and Traditional Arts of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) – the lead agency mandated to preserve, promote and develop Philippine culture and the arts – affirmed the need to safeguard traditional knowledge and practices from rapid cultural devaluation brought about by media, tourism, formal education and religion. This paved the way for the creation of The School of Living Traditions (SLT) programme, involving informal, community-managed learning centres where practitioners can transmit their communities’ knowledge, intangible cultural heritage, skills and values to younger generations. The identification of priorities for safeguarding was led by elders, leaders and other members of communities through a series of consultations. In the process, the NCCA provided capacity-building assistance for the mobilization of logistics and other resources needed to establish the learning centres. The SLT programme aims to develop, implement and evaluate community-based measures to safeguard vital traditional cultural knowledge and practices from the potential negative effects of modernization. In 2015, the NCCA initiated the enhancement of the SLT programme. This entails the implementation of site-specific five-year community development programmes to support the transmission and viability of intangible cultural heritage in partnership with local communities and organizations.

* 1. Considers that, from the information included in the file, the programme responds as follows to the criteria for selection as a good safeguarding practice in paragraph 7 of the Operational Directives:

P.1: The School of Living Traditions (SLT) involves community-managed non-formal education centres that utilize bearers and practitioners to transmit the related knowledge and skills to younger generations. Each SLT is supported by the collaboration of a Council of Elders and Leaders and a local coordinating team who work to identity, inventory and transmit elements of intangible cultural heritage. This is principally achieved through learning-by-doing techniques and the promotion of elements through exhibits, fairs, lectures and festivals.

P.2: The SLT programme coordinates efforts to safeguard intangible cultural heritage at the national, sub-regional, regional and international levels. It is implemented at the national level by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, in partnership and consultation with relevant cultural masters, local communities and their leaders. At the regional level, the SLT programme has worked with different Category 2 Centres under the auspices of UNESCO, including the International Research Center for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI) and the International Information and Networking Center for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (ICHCAP).

P.3: The programme is fully in line with the objectives and principles of the Convention in its design, conception and implementation. Some formal schools have integrated aspects of the programme into the curriculum of the Indigenous People’s Education and Alternative Learning System, as Article 14(a)(ii) of the Convention on developing specific educational and training programmes within the communities and groups concerned. The development of inventories with the full involvement of the cultural masters and bearers concerned is aligned with Article 12 of the Convention on inventories. Similarly, the work of the SLTs is informed by and implemented by the communities themselves, reflecting Article 15 of the Convention on community participation. Articles 1, 11, 13 and 14 are also accounted for through the SLT programme.

P.4: The programme demonstrates its effectiveness in contributing to the viability of the intangible cultural heritage concerned in terms of six indicators, namely: i) the transmission of eighty-four elements across twenty-eight schools, ii) the training of 2,100 youth, iii) the revitalization of elements, iv) community and partner buy-in, v) site visits and research, and vi) the proposed establishment of satellite SLTs for wider community involvement.

P.5: The SLT programme is a community-based initiative that is done in collaboration with local government. Community leaders pass resolutions that approve the setup and utilization of community spaces to construct SLT centres and participate in formulating a five-year strategic plan. This process involves men, women and youth, including through discussions on identifying what elements to prioritize in the programme. Capacity building, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation are conducted with the active participation of local communities and practitioners. The file demonstrates wide community participation, and establishes their free, prior and informed consent in various ways according to the different social contexts.

P.6: The programme can serve as a sub-regional and international model for safeguarding activities. The programme involves a community-developed and managed teaching and learning process, which is guided by the customary laws of the communities concerned. As such, this approach may be particularly instructive for countries who work closely with indigenous peoples. Learning modules are contextualized and do not follow a strict framework but are taught and guided by cultural masters or elders recognized and respected by their communities. Transmission of indigenous knowledge systems and practices through non-formal methods, encourages apprenticeship of younger generations. Such modes can also be promoted in formal education systems. The programme is a multi-sectoral initiative and relies on a cross-section of actors, including academia, state entities, civil society organizations and the communities themselves.

P.7: The submitting State considers the consent letters and consultation process as proof of their collective willingness to cooperate in the dissemination of good safeguarding practices. The file explains that communities have already participated in awareness-raising activities and the dissemination of information on safeguarding measures, as well as participating in festivals, lectures and demonstrations. SLTs share good safeguarding practices through the publication of modules and are financially and technically supported by the National Council of Culture and Arts.

P.8: Since their launch in 1995, the National Commission of Arts and Culture Program Monitoring and Evaluation Division (PMED) regularly conducts assessments on the implementation of SLT programmes and activities. This includes an annual evaluation, regular surveys, focus groups and planning activities. Based on these evaluations, the SLT programme was strengthened in 2015 and updated to better respond to the current context and challenges.

P.9: The file demonstrates the ability of the programme to act as a model for safeguarding activities and respond to the needs of developing countries, particularly those with indigenous communities. The SLT programme can be considered a cost-effective model that is responsive to local circumstances and may help developing countries grappling with the effects of globalization on their cultural heritage. The programme prioritizes communities as the primary actors and beneficiaries of the programme, and can serve as a model to promote creativity, dialogue and sustainable development based on the needs of communities first and foremost.

* 1. Decides to select **The** **School of Living Traditions (SLT)** as a programme, project or activity best reflecting the principles and objectives of the Convention;
  2. Commends the State Party on the submission of a well-prepared file which reflects the spirit of the Convention and places great emphasis on the central role of communities, groups and individuals, and in particular indigenous communities, in safeguarding their intangible cultural heritage.