unit 57

introducing periodic reporting

Published in 2019 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 7, place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France

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Lesson Plan

**DURATION**

1 hour 30 minutes (+20 mins, if the optional exercise is included)

**Objectives**

Introduce participants to the Convention’s periodic reporting system and guidance materials, while reinforcing their existing knowledge of the key concepts and approaches underpinning the Convention and its reporting.

**Description**

The unit begins with an introduction to periodic reporting under the Convention. It introduces the new results-based approach with a discussion of its merits and of the roles played by various actors in this process, including national focal points, government officials in various ministries/agencies, non-governmental organisations, civil society groups, cultural communities and groups, etc. The participants are also introduced to the main supporting materials they will need, in particular the Guidance Notes prepared for the overall results framework and periodic reporting. A number of concepts used specifically in the revised periodic reporting online form are also introduced and explained.

**SEQUENCE OF SESSIONS**

**Session 1: An overview of the periodic reporting mechanism (45 minutes):** This introduces participants to periodic reporting under the Convention using the Operational Directives as a reference and working tool (participants should have access to the Basic Texts of the Convention). The session discusses the various objectives of the reporting process, its calendar, and the roles of the Committee and General Assembly, etc. In addition, the various purposes of periodic reporting are considered, including monitoring implementation, as well as serving as a valuable information tool for States Parties to assess progress and the effectiveness of their policies. The role of national Focal Points in this process is also examined.

**Session 2: Introducing the guidance notes (45 minutes):** In this session, the guidance notes prepared for the overall results framework and periodic reporting are introduced, along with some key concepts used in the periodic reporting form. Hands-on experience of using the periodic reporting form is given in this session.

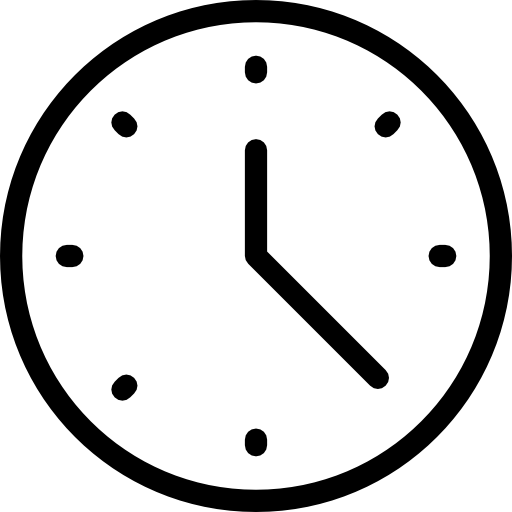
**Optional exercise (20 mins): Key concepts used in periodic reporting**

**Supporting documents**

* Facilitator’s notes Unit 57
* PowerPoint presentation Unit 57
* Participant’s text Unit 57
* Handout 1 Unit 57 Optional exercise: Key terms in periodic reporting

Facilitator’s Narrative

Before starting Session 1, the facilitator should stress the need for participants to be familiar with the key concepts of the Convention (as presented in Unit 3 of the IMP workshop) and they may be guided towards these as a supplementary resource if they feel they need it. In view of the short time available for this workshop, there is not time to go through these in plenary, but participants should feel free to ask the facilitator for further explanation on any key concepts that they are unfamiliar with.

**Session 1: aN OVERVIEW OF THE PERIODIC REPORTING mechanism

***Estimated time: 30 minutes***

This session introduces the participants to the periodic reporting process as it is established under the Convention, in particular: its various objectives, its calendar, the roles of the Committee and General Assembly, etc. It also addresses what the purposes of the periodic reporting requirement. This session mentions briefly the link between the overall results framework for the Convention and periodic reporting, but does not consider it in any detail nor its impact on how periodic reporting is to be carried out, which is addressed in later units. It also introduces participants to the question as to their role as national Focal Points for periodic reporting might involve.

slide 2

Reporting under the 2003 Convention

This slide reminds us of the importance of periodic reporting in the Convention: One of the few direct obligations (using the language “shall”) in the Convention is found in Articles 29 and 30 setting out the obligations of States Parties to submit periodic reports and the Committee to provide summaries of these for the General Assembly. Article 29 allows for a broad interpretation as to what Parties report on, allowing the Committee the necessary flexibility to revise and develop the system as new requirements are identified. This the Committee has done as one of the functions set out in Article 7(e) through preparing Operational Directives in this regard (ODs 151-166). If the participants need further details, refer them to Articles 29 and 30 of the Convention.

Periodic reports may take many forms. For example, the reporting requirements for the Paris Agreement (2015) on climate change are placed within a detailed ‘transparency framework’. The 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity is a voluntary framework and is linked to national clearing-house mechanisms, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and other environmental multilateral agreements. It is important to stress that, although a primary purpose of any periodic reporting mechanism is to check implementation by States Parties of their obligations under the Convention, this is only one of the purposes of periodic reporting. Hence, although the detailed requirements of periodic reporting mechanisms differ, they generally serve as a valuable information tool for States Parties to evaluate the effectiveness of their policies.

slide 3

Purposes of periodic reporting

Periodic reporting also gives States Parties an opportunity to take stock regularly of the progress achieved and challenges encountered when implementing the 2003 Convention. It is important for the facilitator to emphasize from the start how periodic reporting can serve as a very useful source of information for countries and also as a policy-making tool.

Following a rather negative assessment of how periodic reporting was operating under the Convention, the Internal Oversight Service of UNESCO (IOS) recommended in 2013 a move towards a results-based approach towards monitoring and evaluating the Convention’s implementation. For this purpose, it was necessary to develop an overall results framework (ORF) for the Convention that would allow for results (outputs and outcomes) to be captured and reported on. Through such a framework and an associated reporting mechanism, what results have been and are to be achieved can be made much clearer for States Parties, the Committee and UNESCO. One major consideration underlying the process of developing an ORF for the Convention (and revising the periodic reporting system on that basis) was *how the reporting process could be made more user-friendly and useful for submitting States Parties and to the Convention as a whole*.

Periodic reporting therefore serves as a tool to monitor the effective operationalization of the Convention at the national level. If it serves this purpose well, it can then be an invaluable basis for developing related policies. It also provides the Committee (and General Assembly) with an overview of the progress of implementing the Convention worldwide (and, with the new system, regionally) which allows for gaps in implementation to be identified and for new ODs to be developed to address these. The benefits of aligning periodic reporting to a broader results-based monitoring framework should be strongly emphasized to participants, so that they understand that reporting is not an end in itself (i.e. fulfilling the task of filling out a form), but is rather part of the process of monitoring the *results* of implementing measures, setting baselines on the basis of this, evaluating progress, setting future targets and, crucially, enabling countries to set policies that help them to meet these targets.

Unit 58 examines how a results-based reporting mechanism can become a more useful process for countries and can be incorporated into the policy-making cycle.

slideS 4 & 5

These two slides provide a quick glance of the overall results framework for the Convention. The facilitators can say that it will be explored at length during the workshop. At this point, it is only important to be aware that the periodic reporting form was developed based on the overall results framework with reference to the Operational Directives.

slide 6

Reports on the implementation of the Convention

ODs 153 to 158 spell out to the key requirements for Part I of the periodic reports, which is on the implementation of the Convention (Part II concerns reporting on elements inscribed on the Representative List of the Convention). They are relevant to the design of the periodic reporting form ICH-10.[[1]](#footnote-1) The facilitator should invite participants to read through ODs 153-158 in the Basic Texts. Participants had the opportunity to explore the online form prior to the workshop and you may ask them here to share their initial impressions.

slide 7

REGIONAL SYSTEM OF NATIONAL REPORTING

One of the most important aspects of the Operational Directives dealing with periodic reporting under the Convention (ODs 152-166) is the periodicity based on a regional system of reporting similar to that now operating with the 1972 World Heritage Convention.

This slide shows the content of OD 152 which makes clear that a major advantage of such a system is that it will allow for monitoring to be undertaken at the regional level, and for regional trends to be identified. It may also help to encourage States Parties to report on time due to the support provided through national Focal Points and the regional-level capacity-building training.

slide 8

Regional Overview of reports:

The participant text provides some background information on why the periodic reporting process was reformed under the 2003 Convention. In particular, it highlights the weaknesses of the periodic reporting system as identified by UNESCO’s Internal Oversight Service in 2013. To get a clearer understanding of the nature of the information that was gathered during previous reporting cycles (before the system was revised), participants may also refer to the cumulative studies of periodic reports available on the Convention’s website.[[2]](#footnote-2)

slide 9 & 10

Aims of the periodic reporting process

This slide presents some of the main characteristics and benefits of the periodic reporting process towards, which is a *results-based reporting system*:

* A periodic reporting format that is aligned with the overarching goals of implementing the 2003 Convention and with the overall results framework, providing a mechanism that monitors *effective implementation* of the Convention by focusing on outputs, outcomes and impact.
* A periodic reporting format that is user-friendly and clear for reporting States Parties, and avoids unnecessary (and often obscuring) detail in reporting, while allowing for examples of good practices.
* A tool to allow for more effective monitoring of implementation by the Committee, and thereby facilitate evaluation and planning, by developing some standards for the information gathered by national monitoring systems over time.
* To provide States Parties with a useful tool for identifying the appropriateness of specific implementing measures and approaches and evidence of good practices where they exist, and to serve as a useful basis for States Parties to develop their own national monitoring systems.
* To create benchmarks against which progress (or regress) can be measured in future reporting, and to identify clearly both the positive and negative impacts of certain safeguarding measures.
* High submission rate for reports and timely submission
* To improve the submission rate for reports and reduce as much as possible the tardiness of such reports ([ITH/17/12.COM WG/5](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-17-12.COM_WG-5-EN.doc), at page 15).

slide 11

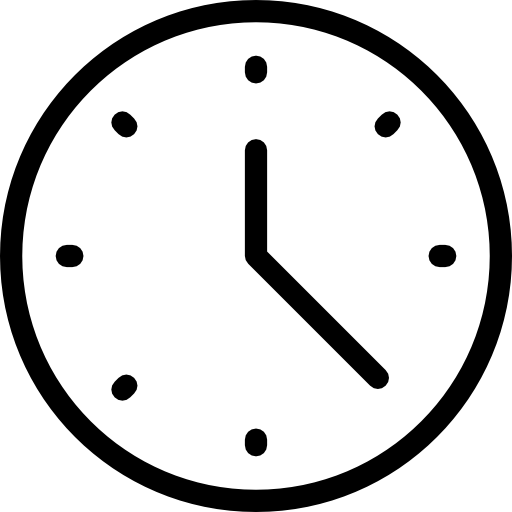
role of Focal Points in Periodic reporting:

It is important that, as part of the workshop, the participants reflect upon their role as national Focal Points for the periodic reporting process and this is a good point to begin that reflection. They are, of course, a bridge between UNESCO and the Convention framework and their own national authorities and other national stakeholders. They need to be able to consider how they will be able to put into practice the ideas and training that they gain through the workshop, taking into account their own national situations. As a group, they may also wish to think about how they can provide a support network for each other throughout the process.

As an introduction to the discussion, the facilitator can refer to the final question of **Handout 2** from Unit 56 (“*Is there an overall strategy in place for implementing the convention in your country? If ‘yes’, what are the main features of that strategy? If ‘no’, what strategies exist?*”) and elicit from the participants their views on this question.

Other questions that participants can be encouraged to think about include if time permits:

* What additional human, financial, institutional and technical resources will be available to them in their role as focal points?
* How will their role as focal points relate to the general role of the governmental authority charged with safeguarding ICH?
* What kind of team and with what sorts of expertise do they need to build?
* Who/which institutions will be their main partners in this process?
* What other governmental and/or non-governmental partners might they be able to involve?
* How can they involve both expert and non-expert partners?
* What methods can they use to gather data and information from (a) other governmental bodies and (b) non-governmental bodies and (c) ICH bearers and practitioners?
* What kind of support systems can they find within UNESCO (both HQ and field/regional offices), UNESCO-affiliated bodies (e.g. Category 2 Centres) and other regional organizations?

**Session 2: Introducing the Guidance notes

***Estimated time: 45 minutes***

In the first part of this session, theguidance notes to the overall results framework and periodic reporting tool are introduced to participants. It should be explained that each core indicator of the overall results framework has its own guidance note and, as these core indicators form the basis for the structure of the periodic reporting tool, they also provide information and guidance relevant for completing the online form.

As these will be used throughout the workshop, participants should be introduced to them at this stage to become familiar with them. Although the participants will have had access to the guidance notes in advance of the workshop, the emphasis here is placed on the guidance notes for Indicator 1.

slide 12

Overview of Sections of the Guidance Notes:

As mentioned above, there is a guidance note for each of the 26 core indicators of the overall results framework, corresponding to different question clusters of the online reporting tool. The exact relationship between each core indicator and the reporting tool questions is explained in detail in a later unit.

Each guidance note is divided into two main sections covering (1) an overview and rationale of the overall results framework and (2) specific guidance on monitoring and periodic reporting. Although the latter section is obviously more directly related to periodic reporting, elements in the other section (such as the relationship to the SDGs and to other indicators) can also be useful. The following is an explanatory note on the content and purpose each section of the guidance note:

**Overview and rationale:**

***Indicator*:** The indicator for which that guidance note has been prepared.

***Assessment factors*:** The assessment factors set out in the overall results framework for that indicator.

***Relation with SDGs and other indicators*:** This explains how the indicator is related to the SDGs (citing specific SDGs) and also how it relates to other indicators, as two or more indicators may deal with the same general areas (e.g. indicators 7 and 8 for inventorying).

***Rationale for action*:** The rationale or basis on which interventions and other measures are implemented in relation to this indicator, citing Convention provisions, Operational Directives and other sources where relevant.

***Key terms*:** This section sets out any key terms that need to be explained for filling out the relevant section of the form. The key concepts introduced in the participant text for Unit 57 cover these.

**Specific guidance on monitoring and periodic reporting:**

***Benefits of monitoring*:** This explains what benefits can be found at both the national and global levels from monitoring this indicator. This is not only to encourage States Parties to engage with the process, but also suggests how the process can feed into setting baselines and targets.

***Data sources and collection*:** This section addresses in general and with reference to specific sources where the data and information required to fill out the form related to the indicator may be found. This is, of course, a guide and other useful sources may also be available.

***Extent to which indicator is satisfied*:** This gives the weightings for each of the assessment factors related to the indicator, as seen in the previous unit.

slides 13 to 19

Explaining the Guidance Note: Indicator 1

These slides present the guidance note prepared for core indicator 1 on “Extent to which competent bodies and institutions and consultative mechanisms support the continued practice and transmission of ICH”. Each of the sections should be introduced by the facilitator who explains the content and can respond to questions from the participants.

Slide 14

***Relation with SDGs and other indicators*:** SDG Target 11.4, ‘strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage’ is, of course, relevant to most (if not all) of the indicators). In addition, it is also possible to find a relationship between assessment factor 1.3 (“Broad and inclusive involvement in ICH safeguarding and management, particularly by the communities, groups and individuals concerned, is fostered through consultative bodies or other coordination mechanisms”) and two targets of SDG 16. This connection is based on the fact that it encourages formal bodies or mechanisms to coordinate broad public participation. It is assumed that the effectiveness, accountability and transparency of such bodies or mechanisms is enhanced by such participation (target 16.6) and, of course, this responds directly to the requirement of target 16.7 for responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at the level(s) on which safeguarding is operating.

***Relation with other indicators*:** The purpose of this section is to ensure that information is entered in the correct sections of the online form, reflecting the problems of misplaced information in the old ICH-10 form. First, it distinguishes Indicator 1 from Indicator 2, by explaining their different focus (on institutional and human capacities, respectively). It is also made clear that in responding to this indicator, States Parties should concentrate on governmental bodies or other institutions established with governmental support; they are not here concerned with NGOs, community associations, and private sector entities whose activities are the subject of Indicator 21. The guidance also distinguishes the information being elicited here from research and documentation activities and findings, which fall under the scope of Indicators 9 and 10. A further potential source of confusion is addressed by noting that monitoring activities of research institutions and centres of expertise and international networking among such institutions and centres are not dealt with here, but under Indicators 22 and Indicator 25, respectively.

Slide 15

***Rationale for action*:** Here,States Parties are reminded that their obligation underArticle 13(b) includes the responsibility to establish or designate one or more competent bodies that can safeguard ICH. It also notes the importance of this action and the range of responsibilities for implementing the Convention at the national level that this body may have. Furthermore, it notes the potential value of establishing additional bodies or mechanisms to coordinate the involvement of communities, groups and individuals (who play a central role) and many other actors in safeguarding. Other safeguarding bodies or institutions are mentioned here (e.g. cultural centres, centres of expertise, museums, archives, libraries and other research institutions) that may be involved in documenting ICH (under Article 13(d) (iii)), as well as in safeguarding and managing ICH.

***Key terms*:** This is self-evident. It can be noted here that the glossary of terms provided in the Participant’s text for Unit B includes all of the key terms expressed in the guidance notes.

Slide 16

***Benefits of monitoring*:** This section explains what benefits States Parties can gain from monitoring the indicator, in concrete terms that are easily identifiable and understandable (such as mapping existing institutions, identifying institutional gaps and weaknesses, evaluating how effectively these institutions are engaging with other actors). This also shows how monitoring the indicator can feed into their policy-making. In addition, this section indicates the benefits of monitoring this indicator across the reporting Parties, either globally or regionally, for the international community (States Parties, the Committee, UNESCO and other international actors).

Slide 17

***Data sources and collection*:** This is a key section as one of the main challenges in reporting will be to identify the appropriate data sources. It starts by noting that the body responsible for filling out the periodic reporting form is often the designated ‘competent body’ and so will probably be the main source of information on the bodies, institutions and mechanisms that are the subject of the indicator. However, it also points out that other State bodies and national organizations– not necessarily in the culture sector, but which may be active in other sectors, such as education, health, the environment, etc. -- can act as their partners. Provincial and local bodies and institutions (especially for safeguarding specific elements, as referred to in assessment factor 1.2) may also have to be taken into account here. This may require ongoing networking and, for specific elements, undertaking regular surveys of what is occurring at the local level. This section, therefore, also recommends potential institutional development, in particular for the establishment of an effective consultative body or coordination mechanism if none exists to manage such ‘multi-level monitoring’. The ‘possible data sources’ part of this section is aimed at guiding States Parties to the most obvious places where data and information should be readily available to them. However, this list is not exhaustive and there may well be other valuable sources that States Parties can turn to.

Slide 18

***Extent to which indicator is satisfied:***This section explains the basis on which the extent to which this indicator is fulfilled is automatically calculated (by the online tool). The weightings are, as seen in Unit 59, assigned according to a number of factors that include the support they have in the Convention text and ODs. This section can also be a useful guidance to States Parties when they want to set their own baselines and future targets.

Slide 19

optional Exercise (20 minutes):

***Learning objective:*** This exercise aims to familiarize participants with the key terms and concepts used in the online periodic reporting tool.

Participants should be given **Handout 1**, which gives some key terms used in the periodic reporting tool. The participants should read this list either individually or with a partner and note any terms where they are not sure about their exact meaning. The participants should discuss their experience in plenary.

Participants should also be encouraged to refer to the key concepts of the Convention in **Participant’s text Unit 3**. This is a set of more general concepts applied in the 2003 Convention and may be helpful when filling out the online form.

Additional background information for facilitators

Some additional contextual information on the periodic reporting process is provided below to the facilitator as background.

***Operational Directives on participation:***

The Committee adopted Chapter III (ODs 79-91) on ‘Participation of communities, groups and, where applicable, individuals, as well as experts, centres of expertise and research institutes’ in 2010, showing that it wished to move towards more effective community participation in identifying and safeguarding ICH. In these ODs, various actors - communities, groups and, where applicable, individuals who create, maintain and transmit intangible cultural heritage, as well as experts, centres of expertise and research institutes – are seen as being involved directly in a wide range of safeguarding activities.

This is now reflected much more strongly in the revised periodic reporting framework and means that national focal points and their teams have to consider seriously how all of these various actors can be brought into this process in a meaningful way. Where a coordination mechanism exists, it can be an extremely valuable source of data and information, particularly on actions taken by non-state actors. In addition, if a Party has established a directory of experts, centres of expertise, research institutes and regional centres (OD 83), this will also be a very useful tool for identifying the various non-state partners who can be brought into the process.

***Operational Directives on sustainable development:***

A significant development in implementing the Convention was achieved in 2016 with the addition of a new chapter to the ODs (Chapter VI – ODs 170-194) which addresses “Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development at the national Level”.

The Convention recognises in its Preamble the importance of the intangible cultural heritage as ‘a mainspring of cultural diversity’ and a ‘guarantee of sustainable development’. In addition, the definition of ICH in Article 2.1 makes clear that ‘...consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of … sustainable development’.

The Convention therefore provides States Parties with a framework to develop heritage-based policies and programmes related to a wide number of sectors, from tourism to environmental protection, social inclusion and rural/urban development. An important way in which ICH mirrors the sustainable development agenda is in its cross-sectoral character: it encompasses the activities of a number of *non-cultural sectors* such as health, agriculture, food security, education, environmental protection, tourism, disaster prevention and mitigation, conflict resolution etc. Thus, effective ICH safeguarding requires a similarly horizontal cooperation between governmental bodies and regional and local authorities as do the procedural aspects of sustainable development.

It should also be mentioned that the guidance notes prepared for the periodic reporting and the overall results framework to which it is linked include, for each of the 26 Indicators, a section linking it to the relevant SDG.

As Chapter VI is very detailed, it is advisable to ask participants to read this chapter in their own time and to reflect upon how these new Operational Directives will shape what they report on in the periodic reporting process. They may also wish to look at Unit 8 of the workshop on ICH and Sustainable Development for further information.

***Overlap with other cultural heritage treaties:***

A further relevant area in which developments are taking place is in the areas of overlap with other cultural heritage treaties (in particular with the 1972 World Heritage Convention and the 2005 Convention on Diversity of Cultural Expressions). However, this is not limited to UNESCO Culture Conventions, but also extends to treaties in other areas, such as environmental protection with the 1992 UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the 1973 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES); and human rights, with the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). This is important to note here as countries should consider relevant implementing actions in other treaty frameworks (in the field of the environment, cultural policy and rights, education, etc.) when reporting on implementing the Convention.

1. The original version of this form was used from 2011-18. The new online version is to be used from 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://ich.unesco.org/en/committee-documents-and-in-depth-studies-00862 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)