

Progress report

Strengthening Capacities to Safeguard Intangible Cultural Heritage and Contribute to Sustainable Development in Ghana

Geographical scope/benefitting country(ies)	Ghana
Type of funding	Earmarked voluntary contribution to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund received from France
Amount	US\$ 135,575
Executing field office(s)	UNESCO Office in Accra
Reporting period	November 2021 – June 2023

I. Background & Summary

Ghana ratified the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2016. As a signatory to the Convention, the state aims to take necessary measures to ensure safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) present in its territory through raising awareness about living heritage as well as strengthening capacities for the implementation of the Convention, notably to undertake community-based inventories.

In 2018, UNESCO and Ghana conducted a need assessment, through interviews with representatives from relevant institutions, and a validation workshop was held in order to share the major findings. Based on the outcomes of this needs' assessment, risks and threats to the viability of ICH in Ghana were identified in the following areas:

- Lack of information regarding the breadth and depth of the ICH present in the country, leading to difficulties in adequately assessing and addressing current challenges to safeguarding;
- Lack of public awareness and education around the value of ICH and its contribution to sustainable development, leading to a relative erosion of the role of ICH in the country;
- Lack of adequate institutional and legislative frameworks to support the viability of ICH;
- Absence of an inter-agency and inter-ministerial strategy to support a holistic approach to ICH safeguarding, leading to the exclusion of cultural practices from policies and programmes addressing education, health, agriculture, and industry development, among others.

To this end, the project's aim is to develop a critical mass of national competencies in safeguarding ICH and strengthen strategic inter-agency and inter-ministerial collaboration with

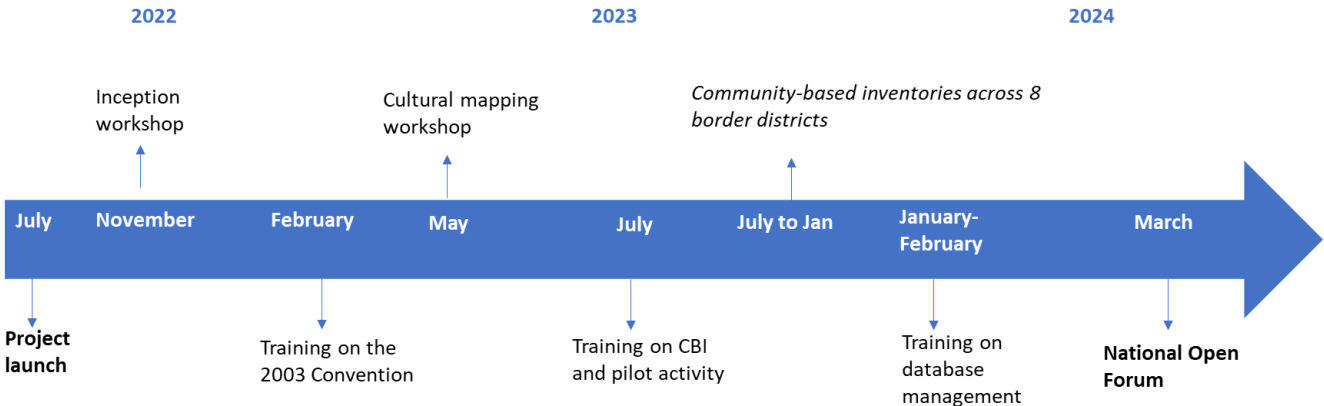
different sectors, for ICH to be integrated in development programs with the goal of strengthening its safeguarding.

The key activities of the project include:

- Capacity-building for safeguarding ICH and community-based inventorying.
- Community-based inventorying (CBI) - pilot activity.
- ICH awareness raising.
- Establishment of a national ICH network to support policymaking.

II. Implementation of the project for the period under review

The following diagram presents a global timely of project implementation. The detailed explanation follows below.



This project kicked off with an inception phase that allowed for developing a shared understanding with the national counterparts, agreeing on the focus of the project and main implementation modalities, and setting up the project team.

Launch of project: in July 2022, the project was launched at the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture. Elizabeth Matilda Mantebeah, UNESCO trained facilitator and heritage practitioner, provided an overview of the 2003 Convention and the needs assessment on strengthening ICH safeguarding through capacity building that was completed in Ghana in 2018.

Key stakeholders were present, including representatives from the Embassy of France; Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture; Ghana National Commission for UNESCO; National Commission on Culture; National Folklore Board; Ghana Museums and Monuments Board; and Heritage and Cultural Society of Africa Foundation.

Inception Consultative Workshop: the implementation of activities started in November 2022 with the UNESCO Office in Accra leading the implementation process. The first activity was an inception phase consultative workshop, which took place on 23 November. Conducted by the Ghanaian Commission for UNESCO (NATCOM) in November 2022, this one-day event in Accra introduced the selected technical participants to the project outline and facilitated a discussion about how to ensure community involvement in planned activities and inventorying processes. The 16-member technical team comprises individuals possessing specialized skills and knowledge, who benefitted from an intensive training session as part of the initial Training of Trainers program. This team then became a primary resource for disseminating knowledge and expertise at the regional level.

45 participants attended the workshop, including the technical team, representatives from NATCOM, Ministry of Tourism, Arts & Culture (MoTAC), National Folklore Board (NFB), National Commission on Culture (NCC), and a number of external participants.

Workshop for Government Officials and Technical Team (ToT 1): implemented by NFB in February 2023, this 10-day capacity building and training workshop focused on the implementation of the 2003 Convention and CBI. The event had 36 attendees, including an international facilitator (Deirdre Prins-Solani), the technical team, and representatives from NFB and NCC.

The workshop consisted of several components, including lectures, group exercises, and field work in Jamestown, a community in Accra known for its rich cultural heritage. During the field work, participants had the opportunity to observe and document the preparation of a local delicacy called "Akpilijii" or "Aprapransa" and to interview practitioners and community members about the practice.

Participants also conducted a community mapping exercise, in which they used their [Padlet contributions](#) to map out the ICH elements in the community and generate a key for the maps. This exercise helped them gain a better understanding of the social and environmental conditions in which ICH takes place.

Following the field work, participants spent a day analyzing the data collected and developing a sample inventorying framework. This exercise helped to deepen their understanding of the viability and risks of ICH elements and to identify missing information for which follow-up interviews or conversations needed to be planned.

The workshop concluded with a series of recommendations for safeguarding ICH elements in Ghana. These recommendations included aligning the [ongoing cultural policy review](#) with needs for safeguarding living heritage, exploring potential synergies between conservation initiatives for sites and museum collections, and developing a code of ethics for community-based inventorying.

Overall, the workshop was a success, with participants expressing excitement about the opportunity to put their learning into practice in the next phase of the project and to engage with community members about their cultural heritage.

Cultural Mapping Workshop: in May 2023, the NFB hosted a one-day Cultural Mapping Workshop. The workshop was designed to kick-start the cultural mapping of ICH elements within specific border districts.

The workshop was strategically planned as a precursor to the second Training of Trainers session and the community-based inventorying project, set to cover all 16 regions of the country.

The selected border districts are:

1. Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem District, representing Central and Western regions. (CBI concluded).
2. Kwahu Afram Plains North District, representing Eastern and Oti regions. (CBI concluded).
3. Sefwi Wiawso, representing Western North and Ahafo regions. (CBI concluded).
4. Karaga District, representing Northeast and Northern regions. (CBI ongoing from 19 November to 7 December 2023).
5. Asokore Mampong, representing Ashanti and Bono East regions. (CBI ongoing from 22 November to 10 December 2023).
6. Builsa South District, representing Upper East and Upper West regions. (CBI foreseen)

on 8 – 26 December 2023).

7. Banda District, representing Savannah and Bono regions. (CBI foreseen on 8 – 26 December 2023).
8. Ada East, representing Greater Accra and Volta regions. (CBI foreseen on 27 December 2023 – 14 January 2024).

The objective of the Cultural Mapping Workshop was to identify, document, and prioritize endangered ICH elements within each selected district across the regions. This process will facilitate planning for their preservation.

The workshop saw participation from 37 attendees, which included technical team leaders, a local facilitator, and key stakeholders from the border districts.

Training in Community-based Inventorying (ToT 2) and Community-based Inventorying Pilot Project: initiated on 10 July 2023, NCC implemented a second 5-day ToT workshop, led by the original 16-member technical team from ToT1, in selected border districts.

The training was followed by a 14-day pilot project for carrying out community-based inventories, across 8 border districts, one from every two regions among the country's 16 regions.

Both activities engaged 64 participants, comprising 40 ToT2 trainees (5 per boarder district), 16-member technical team, and staff from both NFB and NCC.

During the reporting period, the community-based inventorying was carried out in the following districts:

1. Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem District, representing Central and Western regions
2. Sefwi Wiawso, representing Western North and Ahafo regions
3. Kwahu Afram Plains North District, representing Eastern and Oti regions

The fieldwork is estimated to conclude by the end of January 2024, with the following calendar:

19 November – 7 December 2023:

1. Karaga District, representing North East and Northern regions

22 November – 10 December 2023:

2. Asokore Mampong, representing Ashanti and Bono East regions

8 – 26 December 2023:

3. Banda District, representing Savannah and Bono regions
4. Builsa South District, representing Upper East and Upper West regions

27 December 2023 – 14 January 2024:

5. Ada East, representing Greater Accra and Volta regions

Database Management Training: Once the community-based inventorying concludes in all selected districts, NFB will host a 3-day hybrid training on database management. The training aims to impart skills on managing data gathered during the CBI, as well as ensuring its public accessibility. In-person attendees will include representatives from the NFB, the NCC, and key stakeholders involved in the ICH sector.

National Open Forum: this event, organized by NFB and scheduled for March 2024, is expected to gather 100 participants including key stakeholders in the ICH field and 16 traditional leaders from every region.

III. Challenges and how they were addressed

Developing a shared understanding of the project, its focus and modalities took some time, partially due to restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, the volatility of the currency in Ghana caused delays in the beginning of the implementation of the project. Thus, a number of meetings with the implementing partners were held to carefully revise the project budget and ensure the concrete activities could be effectively implemented. Reassessments of the budget throughout the project's execution are regularly be performed.

IV. Direct Beneficiaries, Key Partners and Other Stakeholders

The key beneficiaries of the project are institutional stakeholders, local community members and bearers of living heritage.

Key partners for the implementation of the project include the National Folklore Board, National Commission for Culture, and Ghana National Commission for UNESCO. The National Folklore Board (NFB) is designated by the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture as the responsible body for the implementation of the 2003 Convention in Ghana and is the core implementing partner. The National Commission on Culture will support the NFB as a result of its national presence.

Important stakeholders also include Ghana Museums and Monuments Board, NGOs in the cultural sector, academics, traditional authorities, researchers and research institutions, religious leaders, environmental organizations, representatives from the legal, media and education sectors. Ministries involved as key partners are the Ministry of Tourism, Arts & Culture; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning; and the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC).

The project has adopted an inclusive approach to ensure the widest possible participation of relevant stakeholders in the design and implementation of safeguarding activities, including in the organization of capacity-building workshops, the development of materials focusing on community-based inventoring of intangible cultural heritage, public awareness-raising and educational efforts (in both formal and non-formal settings), initiatives involving mass media and the use of technological platforms for the maintenance of data for inventoring and cultural mapping in Ghana.

V. Related activities

Earth Network Asante Traditional Buildings Expert mission

Scheduled to take place in December 2023, the mission aims to strengthen the capacities to identify and safeguard ICH elements linked to biodiversity at the Asante Traditional Buildings (ATBs) World Heritage site. The activities will involve training on the 2003 Convention and community-based inventoring of ICH.

The mission will enable a deeper understanding of the interplay between identified ICH elements and tangible heritage of the ATBs. In line with UNESCO's aim to create more synergies between the 1972 and the 2003 Conventions, training on safeguarding living heritage will be provided to ATB community members, and a community action plan will be developed to address risks to viability and to involve youth in safeguarding ICH. In order to facilitate active community engagement throughout the process and sustained commitment towards ICH safeguarding, key concepts from the 2003 Convention will be translated into local languages.

VI. Communication and Visibility

The UNESCO Offices in Accra and the Living Heritage Entity is disseminating information about the project through their respective websites (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/accra> and www.unesco.org/culture/ich).

The UNESCO Office in Accra and the implementing partners have also mobilized national media to cover the project and links to some of the published articles are shared below.

The voluntary contributions to the ICH Fund are also acknowledged in the statutory meeting of the 2003 Convention, notably the General Assembly of States Parties and the Intergovernmental Committee.

Launch of the Project:

<https://mobile.classfmonline.com/news/general/Intangible-cultural-heritage-for-sustainable-dev-t-project-launched-33890>



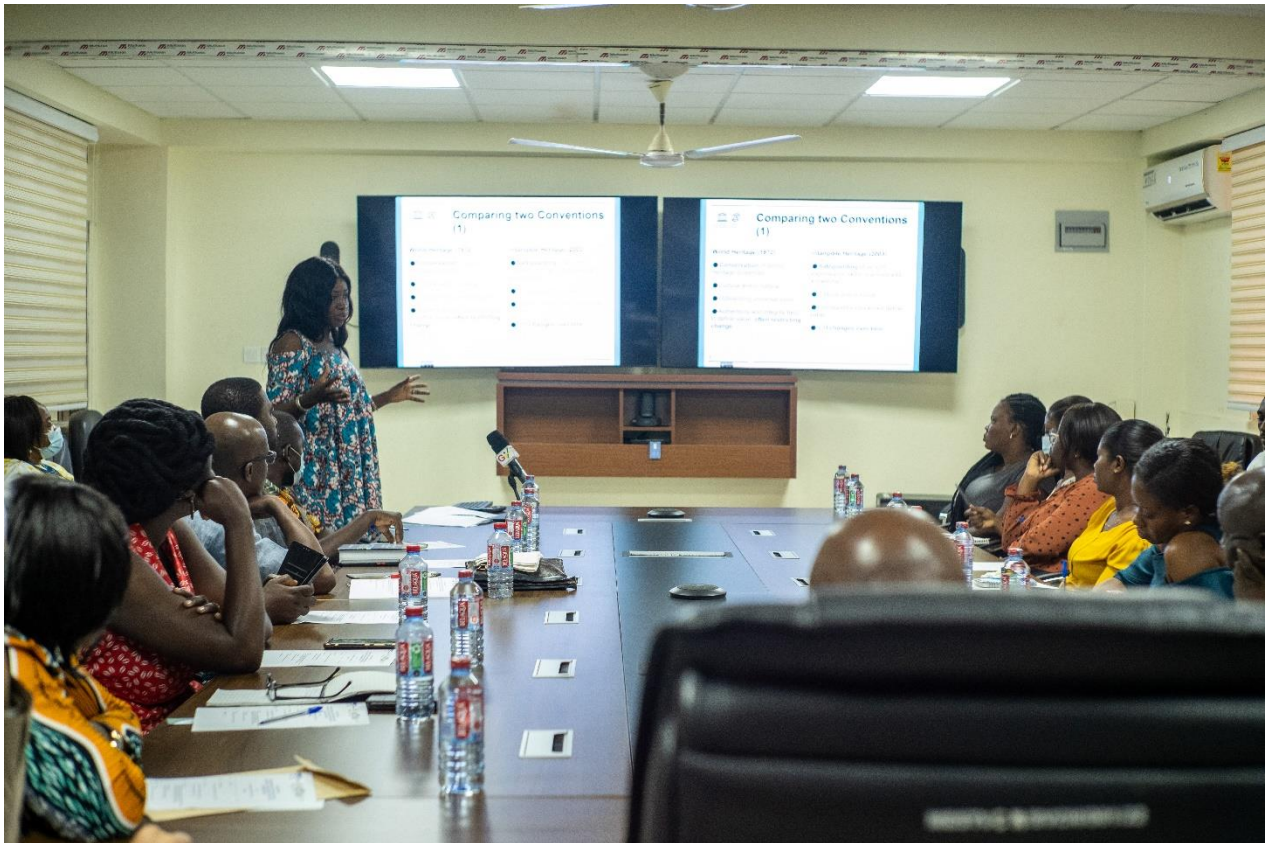
GBC news segment -
Launch of ICH Project.

<https://ich.unesco.org/en/news/capacity-building-for-safeguarding-living-heritage-and-sustainable-development-in-ghana-13416>

UNESCO folder with pictures: [Strengthening Capacities for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage for Sustainable Development in Ghana \(2022-2024\) at MOTAC](#)















Inception Consultative Workshop:







Workshop for Government Officials and Technical Team (ToT 1):

Joy News: https://youtu.be/L11NsYS_AXg

UNESCO office in Accra;s website: <https://en.unesco.org/news/training-national-experts-inventory-techniques-safeguarding-living-heritage-ghana>

UNESCO folder with pictures: [ICH- ToT](#)







Cultural Mapping Workshop:

Ghana News Agency: <https://gna.org.gh/2023/05/ghaians-urged-to-explore-intangible-cultural-heritage-assets/>







