# **International Assistance**



ICH-04-Report - Form

# INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE FUND

## PROGRESS NARRATIVE REPORT

Beneficiary State(s) Party(ies): Belize, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

Project title:	Capacity building for community leaders and public managers to safeguard the ICH of African descent in the SICA region and Cuba		
Reporting period:	From: 02/06/2023	to: 06/12/2023	
Budget:	Total: US\$284 426.00		
	Including:		
	Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund: US\$ 99 986.00		
	State Party contribution: US\$ 131 140.00		
	Other contributions: US\$ 53 300.00		
Implementing agency	COORDINACION EDUCATIVA Y CULTURAL		
(contracting partner or UNESCO Field Office):	CENTROAMERICANA CECC (Central American Educational and Cultural Coordination)		
Contact person:	Title (Ms/Mr, etc.):	Mr.	
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Partner agency (in the case of a service from UNESCO project):			
Implementing partners:	Central American Educational and Cultural Coordination of the		

Central American Integration System (CECC/SICA).	
Central American Black Organization (ONECA).	
Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Latin America (CRESPIAL).	

### **Background**

Provide a brief description of the situation existing at the time of the request and the need that the assistance aimed to address. For safeguarding of a particular element, provide a description of the element, its viability and why safeguarding measures were required. For preparation of inventories, strengthening of capacities, awareness-raising, visibility or other safeguarding not focussed on a particular element, identify gaps that were to be addressed. For emergency assistance requests, describe the nature and severity of the emergency at the time of the request.

Not fewer than 750 or more than 1000 words

The Heads of State and Government of Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and the Dominican Republic, who are grouped in the Central American Integration System (SICA), have partnered with the Government of Cuba and the Central American Black Organization (ONECA). They have also joined hands with the Regional Center for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Latin America (CRESPIAL) and the UNESCO Cluster Office based in San José (Costa Rica) to develop a multinational framework project. The project aims at safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) of Afro-descendant communities in the SICA region and Cuba. The primary objective of the project is to generate mechanisms for safeguarding the ICH of Afro-descendant communities. This will serve as a means of strengthening regional integration.

The project will be developed between 2022 and 2025 within the framework of the 2030 Agenda and the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024). Its general objective is to develop a participatory inventory of the manifestations of the ICH of Afrodescendant communities in the SICA region and Cuba. However, the project identified the need to develop a "phase 1" of preparation, which would strengthen the capacities of the participating countries and build common conceptual and methodological bases.

To this end, the countries and community representatives grouped in ONECA, with the support of CRESPIAL, prepared a request for "Capacity building of community leaders and public managers for the safeguarding of the ICH of African descent in the SICA region and Cuba". This capacity building project is therefore a preparation and planning phase of a larger initiative that seeks to safeguard the living Afro-descendant heritage of the region.

The project aims to address the uneven development of the implementation of the 2003 Convention in the different countries of the region. While some countries have updated ICH inventories in their territories, others are just beginning to formulate them. Equally diverse is the level of detail in the approach to these elements, in the identification of their viability and threats, in the criteria used for their identification and registration, as well as in the normative or institutional developments.

The project also aims to address the lack of specialists linked to the processes at the national level and the need to strengthen the capacities of officials and cultural managers specifically on the issue of ICH of African descent. While some countries had specialized regulations and institutions, others lacked these elements and even reinforced narratives that discouraged the self-recognition of many communities as Afro-descendant.

The project recognizes the need to build joint work guidelines, establish some basic agreements at the methodological level, and seek common conceptual horizons that will allow the development of the regional framework project in an articulated manner by the nine countries. A particular point on which it is necessary to carry out a shared reflection of greater conceptual depth is the institutional approach to the ICH of Afro-descendant communities, as well as their histories and cultures.

The project involves discussions including both community and institutional voices in the dialogue and in the recognition of the use of ICH as a tool for the reaffirmation of the cultural

rights of the Afro-descendant communities in the region. The project intends to close the gaps in the recognition and safeguarding of the ICH of Afro-descendant communities in the SICA region and Cuba, strengthen the capacities of community and State representatives for the management of ICH, and build joint work guidelines and common conceptual horizons that will allow the development of the regional framework project in an articulated manner by the nine countries.

### Objectives and results attained

Overall, to what extent did the project attain its objectives? Describe the main results attained, focussing in particular on the perspective of the direct beneficiaries and communities. For each expected result identified in the request, explain whether it was fully or partially attained. Also describe any unexpected results, direct or indirect, whether positive or negative.

Not fewer than 100 or more than 500 words

- a. Strengthen the ICH management capacities of officials and community representatives of the 9 participating countries
- Partially attained

A group of 27 representatives from national governments and Afro-descendant communities in the region was selected by the Beneficiary States Parties.

The coordination team successfully designed the methodology for the first face-to-face workshop ("Initial ICH training") that was held in Panama with the support of ONECA. It was initially scheduled for the third week of April. However, due to a request from the host country (Panama), it was rescheduled for the first week of May (May 1st to May 5th).

The workshop successfully facilitated the sharing of a fundamental theoretical framework, which enabled participants to acquire a profound understanding of the concepts related to Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). Furthermore, it empowered the participants by equipping them with essential tools and methodologies, enabling them to initiate the development of comprehensive national reports of the initiatives developed in their respective countries aimed at safeguarding the living heritage of Afro-descendant communities.

During the reporting period, the project successfully progressed towards strengthening regional cooperation ties around ICH and motivating dialogues between Afro-descendant organizations and governments in the region. For instance, each participating country formed a "National Management Unit" (NMU) led by project participants and with the participation of ONECA representatives. The NMU's aim is to strengthen the management of Afrodescendant ICH and its impact over different agendas and institutions beyond culture.

- b. Identify and analyze the processes and actions oriented to the Afro-descendant ICH in the region to build national safeguarding proposals within the framework of the multinational project "Safeguarding of the Afro-descendant Intangible Cultural Heritage of the SICA region and Cuba" to be developed between 2022 and 2025
- Partially attained

To guide the identification and analysis of ICH safeguarding actions developed in each of the participating countries, a documentation form was designed, and a virtual monitoring schedule was proposed. Both the form and the proposed schedule were adjusted with the participants during the workshop held in Panama and resulted in an action plan for each

country including activities and a work schedule.

Since the last week of April, country representatives have initiated the task of identifying and analyzing the safeguarding actions pertaining to Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of Afrodescendant communities that have been implemented within their respective nations. As of the present report, considerable headway has been made by the countries in recognizing pivotal governmental and community stakeholders, pinpointing the principal safeguarding measures that have been put into effect, and commencing the process of organizing the information according to the agreed-upon formats.

- c. Disseminate the knowledge built collectively in the capacity building process and the contributions and importance of Afro-descendant culture and history in the region.
- Partially attained

The CECC/SICA communication's team formulated a communications campaign for the first face-to-face workshop and designed a graphic template to be used by all project partners in order to amplify the project's outreach.

The first face-to-face workshop held in Panama was widely covered by national media from the host country and news about the event were disseminated through social media.

### **Description of project implementation**

Provide a description of the activities undertaken and the outputs they generated (e.g. trainings, consultation process, technical assistance, awareness raising, publications, toolkits, etc.). Also describe any problems encountered in project delivery and corrective actions taken. Describe the role of the implementing agency and of the partner agency (in the case of a service from UNESCO project) and the role of other implementing partners in carrying out activities and generating outputs.

Not fewer than 1000 or more than 1500 words

# Activity 1: Methodological and conceptual planning and management (February - ongoing)

On February a work team was formed, composed of representatives from CECC/SICA, Oneca, and Crespial responsible for designing and implementing methodological tools for the development of face-to-face and virtual activities. For the selection of the ONECA representative, the implementing agency of the project (CECC/SICA) suggested the following profile: Being of African descent; Having knowledge about the histories, traditions, and cultures of Afro-descendant peoples in the SICA region and Cuba; Having availability to participate in planning, implementation, and evaluation meetings and virtual encounters of the project; and having availability to participate in regional encounters during 2023.

Based on the suggested profile, ONECA made a pre-selection and later shared the resumes of the pre-selected individuals with CECC/SICA and requested feedback on the candidates. CECC/SICA reviewed the pre-selection and suggested selecting Mr. Leonel Gondola based on his regional trajectory and experience. ONECA accepted the suggestion and selected Mr. Gondola as their regional representative.

From February to May the methodology for the first in-person workshop was developed and a work schedule was structured covering from a virtual presentation session (conducted on April 21<sup>st</sup> previous to the first in-person workshop) until the second in-person workshop, including virtual support activities. In coordination with CECC/SICA and ONECA, CRESPIAL

has been the institution responsible for designing and adapting the work materials to the specific needs of the project.

The methodology for this stage took the strengthening capacity strategy of CRESPIAL as its main input. This strategy considered capacity strengthening as a participatory training process that proposes spaces for conceptual learning along with others for exchange of experiences and collective knowledge building through different activities such as group and individual work, case analysis, master sessions with specialists, etc.

### **Outputs:**

- A work team was conformed integrated by a project coordinator (David Gómez Manrique, covered by the ICH Fund), a methodological facilitator (Oihane de Gana Romero, CRESPIAL's contribution) and a community representative (Leonel Gondola, ONECA's contribution).
- A group of 28 participants was selected (1 representative of the government of each country; 2 representatives of the Afro-descendant communities of each country; 1 regional representative of ONECA). Each country selected their representatives based on a profile developed by the implementing agency (CECC/SICA). According to the proposed profile the selected community representatives must comply with the following criteria:
  - Being of African descent.
  - Having knowledge about the histories, traditions, cultural practices, expressions, knowledge, or techniques transmitted from generation to generation by Afro-descendant communities at a national level.
  - Having research skills, teamwork, writing, and good interpersonal relationships.
  - Being a bearer of a manifestation of Afro-descendant ICH that will be included in the national project.
  - Being available to participate in activities, meetings, and virtual and in-person encounters at the national and regional level.
  - Each country must designate two community representatives, ensuring gender equity or affirmative gender action, being one man and one woman or two women. The profile also suggested that at least one of the two designated persons must be under 25 years old.
- In each participating country, a "National Management Unit" (NMU) was formed with the objective of operationalizing, leading, and implementing the Project at the national and regional level. The NMUs are led by the designated person for the Project from each participating country and includes the participation of other units of the Ministries of Culture as well as representatives of the communities. Other public institutions of the country that lead portfolios such as education, Afro-descendant peoples, or municipalities may be added at the discretion of each country. The NMUs will allow for a greater reach of the project's results in terms of institutional management and impact with other instances, even beyond the cultural sphere.

### ACTIVITY 2: In-person workshop "Initial ICH training" (Panama, May 1st to May 5th)

This activity consisted of a 5-day workshop in Panama based on the "Intangible Cultural Heritage Training Strategy" developed by CRESPIAL. The workshop enhanced participants' skills in managing living heritage by teaching them basic concepts, identifying national and international policies, emphasizing community participation, and applying tools for safeguarding ICH under the UNESCO 2003 Convention. Additionally, the workshop encouraged a discussion on the situation of Afro-descendant populations in the region and

their connection to ICH. Lastly, participants collaborated to create a tool for gathering information on actors and safeguarding processes for ICH of African descent in the SICA region and Cuba.

The workshop was initially scheduled to take place at the end of April, but had to be rescheduled for the first week of May (May 1st to 5th) due to a request from the host country. Initially, the costs of stationary and domestic travel necessary for both this workshop and subsequent in-person workshops were to be covered by the ICH Fund. However, due to an increase in international airfare costs on March 21st, the implementing agency requested authorization via email to modify the budget and redirect several items that were originally charged to the ICH Fund into "International travel" to compensate for the rise. The implementing agency discussed the issue with the host countries and they agreed to cover those expenses so that the proper development of the project would not be affected. On March 30th the implementing agency received an ok on the changes and went ahead with the purchases.

This workshop was attended by delegates from 8 of the participating countries. Due to logistical issues, the representatives from the Dominican Republic were unable to obtain their visas on time and, consequently, could not attend the event in Panama. To address their absence, two virtual sessions were conducted on May 10th and 15th, 2023. These sessions encompassed the fundamental concepts of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and provided detailed explanations of the proposed tools for mapping the safeguarding initiatives implemented by participating countries.

### **Outputs:**

- For the first in-person workshop, a diverse team of facilitators was selected, consisting of 01 representative from ONECA (Leonel Gondola, ONECA Youth Secretary), 01 representative from CECC/SICA (David Gómez Manrique, project coordinator), 01 independent facilitator specialized in Afro-descendant cultural rights (Marco Antonio Ramírez, President of Ashanti Peru Peruvian Network of Afro-descendant Youth), and 01 external consultant from CRESPIAL (Oihane de Gana Romero, Sociology graduate with a postgraduate degree in International Cooperation and Development and a specialization in Gender Studies). This team delivered two basic outputs: provided a basic theoretical framework for understanding the UNESCO 2003 Convention, its operational guidelines, as well as the basic concepts of ICH and safeguarding; and provided participants with basic skills in the methodological tools necessary for the development and implementation of a mapping of safeguarding actions of Afro-descendant heritage in their respective countries.
- The meeting space and lodging for participants was provided by Panama, as host of the activity. In addition to the 27 representatives from the participating countries, 6 additional participants from Panama attended the workshop. These additional participants were selected by the host country and represented different organizations and institutions that have contributed to the safeguarding of Afro-descendant ICH.
- A group of 24 individuals, representing 8 countries and Afro-descendant communities from the region, participated in the capacity-building workshop for the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). The day-by-day methodology was devised, focusing on the following elements during the workshop:
  - o Day 1: Key concepts of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) were explored.
  - Day 2: Public policies for the management and safeguarding of ICH were examined.
  - Day 3: Community participation within the framework of ICH safeguarding was discussed.
  - Day 4: Measures and tools for ICH safeguarding were addressed.

- Each day of the workshop was dedicated to thoroughly studying and analyzing these specific topics, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.
- A group of three individuals, representing the Dominican Republic, were sensitized to the basic concepts of ICH and received foundational training to carry out the mapping of Afro-descendant ICH safeguarding actions in their country.
- Each participating country designed one action plan to carry out the mapping of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) safeguarding initiatives in their respective countries.
   These action plans encompassed the activities to be carried out and a detailed work schedule.

# ACTIVITY 3: Virtual monitoring and mapping of projects and actions for the safeguarding of ICH of African descent in the SICA region and Cuba (May 5<sup>th</sup> to July 3rd).

Upon concluding the first in-person workshop in Panama, the representatives of the countries initiated the mapping of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) safeguarding initiatives in their respective countries.

With each country, a schedule was agreed upon, which includes two virtual follow-up meetings. At the time of writing this report, the first round of follow-up meetings has been conducted with the participating countries (last week of May), and the second round of meetings is pending, scheduled to take place in the third week of June.

While the majority of countries are progressing according to the agreed-upon plan, some countries are experiencing delays in their schedules due to various factors such as difficulties in accessing information, cumbersome national procedures, or personal issues faced by researchers. The situation of each country is being evaluated individually, and necessary measures are being taken to support their work, such as additional virtual mentoring sessions.

During the workshop in Panama, it was agreed upon that the deadline for each country to submit their completed mapping would be July 3rd.

Two synchronous virtual meetings were conducted with the participating countries (May 17th and June 7th). The first meeting focused on Afro-descendant Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) safeguarding initiatives led by institutional bodies. It featured presentations by representatives from CRESPIAL and Costa Rica. The second meeting addressed Afro-descendant ICH safeguarding initiatives led by communities, featuring presentations by representatives from Cuba and the Dominican Republic.

### **Outputs:**

- A registration format and a work schedule were structured and adjusted in the first inperson workshop in Panama. This documents are guiding the development of mapping projects and actions for the safeguarding of ICH of African descent in each participating country.
- A work schedule was agreed upon during the first face-to-face workshop. It included two synchronous virtual meetings with all participants (conducted on May 17th and June 7th); and 2 virtual follow-up meetings with community representatives from each country (from May 29th to June 2nd and from June 12th to 16th).
- A total of 27 representatives from 9 countries are currently progressing with mapping the initiatives for safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in their respective countries. The deliverables from each country are expected to be submitted to CECC/SICA by July 3, 2023.

 As part of the synchronous meetings held (May 17th and June 7th), participants exchanged experiences regarding the safeguarding of Afro-descendant Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and the challenges involved in mapping these initiatives.

### **ACTIVITY 7: Outreach (February - Ongoing)**

### **Outputs:**

- The CECC/SICA communication team recognized the importance of a unified image and project logo for an effective communication and outreach of the project. Accordingly, they developed a comprehensive communications campaign for the first face-to-face workshop, including a graphic template that all project partners used to amplify the project's message. By utilizing a consistent visual identity, the project partners were able to present a unified front and increase the project's visibility and impact. This helped to establish a clear and recognizable brand identity for the project.
- CRESPIAL made its communication platform and social networks available to the project for the communication of progress and information. The synchronous meetings were conducted through CRESPIAL's platform.

### **Community involvement**

Provide a description of the mechanisms used for fully involving the community(ies) concerned. Describe not only the participation of the communities as beneficiaries of the project, but also their active participation in the planning and implementation of all activities.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words

The implementation of the capacity building project for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) of African descent in the SICA region and Cuba involves community participation throughout the process. The Central American Black Organization (ONECA) plays a significant role in this project. So far ONECA has actively participated in the methodological design and their regional representative was part of the facilitator's team for the first in-person workshop.

Additionally, the project involves the participation of two representatives from each of the nine participating countries' Afro-descendant communities. The community representatives participated in the first face-to-face workshop and in the virtual activities developed.

The community representatives play a crucial role in the project's activities, particularly in activity 2 (In-person workshop "Initial ICH training"), where they participated in the initial ICH training process and later on (at later stages) may replicate the process in their communities using the "Intangible Cultural Heritage Training Strategy - Initial Level" developed by CRESPIAL.

During activity 3 (Virtual monitoring and mapping of projects and actions for the safeguarding of ICH of African descent in the SICA region and Cuba), the representatives are actively participating in mapping projects and actions to safeguard the ICH of African descent in the SICA region and Cuba. In the second stage of this activity (after the second face-to-face workshop to be held in El Salvador from July 17th to 21st), the representatives will support government representatives in constructing national projects for the development of the inventory of the ICH of African descent in each country, including a route of consultation with communities and governmental entities.

In activity 4 (Second face-to-face workshop "Sharing the safeguarding processes of the Afro-ICH in the region" to be held in El Salvador from July 17th to 21st), community representatives will socialize the mappings carried out in each country and contribute to conceptual discussions based on their professional backgrounds and life experiences. In activity 5

(Virtual follow-up stage 2: Design of national projects and conceptual discussion), the representatives will participate in the discussion and formulation of the conceptual and methodological horizon proposed for safeguarding actions of the ICH of African descent in the region, as well as in the joint declaration that will guide the implementation of the framework project "Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage of African Descent of the SICA region and Cuba."

ONECA plays a crucial role in the project as a regional representative of the Afro-descendant communities. The project's community participation is expanded in subsequent phases, including the development of the multinational participatory inventory of the living heritage of African descent in nine countries of Central America and the Caribbean. ONECA's involvement in the project ensures that the voices and perspectives of the Afro-descendant communities are heard and considered in the safeguarding of their intangible cultural heritage.

### Sustainability and exit/transition strategy

Describe how the benefits of the project will continue after the project has been completed. Where appropriate, describe the steps undertaken to ensure the following:

- Sustainability of activities, outputs and results, including with reference to how capacity has been built under the project. Also describe any planned follow-up measures to ensure sustainability.
- Additional funding secured as a result of this project, if any. Indicate by whom, how much and for what purpose
  the contributions are granted.

Describe how the ownership (of activities, outputs, results) by stakeholders and the community(ies) in particular has been promoted.

Describe, if relevant, how tools, processes, outputs, etc. have been adopted, adapted, replicated and/or extended for future use (e.g. in other regions, communities, elements, or fields of intangible cultural heritage).

Not fewer than 100 or more than 500 words

This is the first stage of the Multinational Framework Project for the Safeguarding of the ICH of African descent in the SICA region and Cuba 2022-2025. The Multinational Framework Project has been approved by the Council of Ministers of SICA, therefore ensuring its continuity.

This project is aimed at promoting regional interculturality, inclusion, and strengthening of cultures of peace in the region by safeguarding the ICH of african descent. The CECC/SICA has the mandate to manage the necessary actions towards the implementation of the Cultural Policy for Central American Integration, in which cultural heritage is conceived as an area of permanent work. The project is producing background information and tools that will promote the safeguarding of the afro descendant ICH in the region, involving both communities and governments. The agreements and results of the project will have the support of the CECC/SICA Council of Ministers of Culture, which will allow them to be officially implemented through the governments' public policies. It is important to highlight that this first stage is centered on a capacity building process that will continue afterward, which will enable the implementation of the project outcomes in the long term.

#### Lessons learnt

Describe what are the key lessons learnt regarding the following:

- Attainment of expected results
- Ownership of key stakeholders and community involvement
- Delivery of project outputs
- Project management and implementation
- Sustainability of the project after the assistance

Not fewer than 300 or more than 750 words

#### Attainment of expected results

One important lesson learned about achieving expected results is the importance of setting realistic and achievable goals for the project. In this sense, even though the project is in an early stage of implementation, the project's proposed results are achievable according to its conditions and align properly with its objectives. The capacity strengthening process outlined has a solid foundation for its development, and the formulation of national projects for the development of ICH inventories is a fully viable goal within the stipulated period.

Another important lesson learned is the need for effective communication and collaboration among all stakeholders involved in the project. The work dynamic generated among partners has allowed for a correct implementation so far and promises a good future for the rest of the project.

Ownership of key stakeholders and community involvement

The premise that community participation is the basis for safeguarding ICH has been maintained throughout the project. A relevant learning in this regard has been the importance of ONECA's participation and the value of its regional reach. The active presence of a delegate from this organization as a facilitator in face-to-face workshops will not only strengthen ONECA but has enriched the reflections generated within the project..

Delivery of project outputs

The established timelines and responsibilities for each of the results allow us to foresee that the outputs will be achieved without major difficulties. So far, the planned schedule has been mostly fulfilled and necessary adjustments have been made on time, for example, in response to substantial increases in airfare or the need to adjust the dates of the face-to-face workshop due to situations specific to the host country.

Project management and implementation

The most relevant lesson learned has been the unpredictability of economic fluctuations, especially in relation to the originally estimated budget for international air transport. The initially quoted fares were significantly lower than the costly increase in ticket prices, which in some cases doubled the originally budgeted amounts. To address this situation, the costs of airfare for workshops 2 and 3 were calculated with gradual increases that we hope will be sufficient to cover the need.

Sustainability of the project after the assistance

The key lessons at this point are the importance of good communication between the participating organizations (CECC/SICA, Oneca, and Crespial); and the support of both the participating countries and the regional community organization. This project corresponds to the first phase of a larger framework project that was approved by the culture ministers of the region and aligns in the medium and long term with the cultural policies of the SICA region.

### **Annexes**

List the annexes and documentation included in the report:

- publications, evaluation reports and other outputs, when applicable
- progress reports prepared during the contract period
- list of major equipment provided under the project and status after termination of contract period
- other (please specify)
- Methodological guide for workshop 1.pdf
- Project Letterhead.pdf
- Project logo.pdf
- Project Power point template.pptx
- Terms of reference for the National management units (spanish).docx
- Zoom banner.png
- Zoom-background\_01.png
- Zoom-background\_02.png
- Zoom-background\_03.png
- Attendance lists for the first face-to-face workshop held in Panama from May 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>.

### Name and signature of the person having completed the report

Name: Roberto M. Suárez Title: Executive Secretary

Date: 06/12/2023

Signature:

Name: Abel Aronátegui Vivies.

Title: Culture Coordinator

Date: 06/12/2023

Signature: