**UNIT 46**

Limnu Hand-out 6:

Guidance tasks and questions for group sessions (Non-game)

*Disclaimer: the facts in this scenario are entirely fictitious. Any resemblance with actual facts is mere coincidence.*

**Session 1: Getting prepared for the discussions**

Text for reading:

In Limnu Valley, the population at large was informed about opportunities that may be created for them and their ICH under the implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. The information meetings were followed by three meetings of some ten individual practitioners and representatives of various groups of Limnu Valley people; these persons have been brainstorming about needs and possibilities for safeguarding activities in Limnu Valley with a view to the valley’s development. Between their meetings, they have been consulting the groups they represent. A few external stakeholders also participated in these meetings. The scribe of the meetings produced for your information a short description of the twelve main participants in the meetings and their ideas for safeguarding Limnu Valley ICH, and for developing the valley.

#### **The Chief Elder (CE)**

The Chief Elder is main guardian of public life, ceremonies and rituals in Limnu Valley. CE chairs meetings of the Council of Elders and maintains contact with the district authorities in Talga City. He sincerely believes in the values and functions of the inherited practices and traditional occupations of the Valley people. He is unhappy to see a declining interest in traditional practices among Limnu and Mare villagers, in particular among young people. He is worried about unemployment, and crop failures; he has come to realize that Limnu Valley is in deep crisis.

The Council of Elders is aware that many problems are out of their control and is increasingly prepared to listen to experts from outside, and to request the authorities to step in. CE convinced the council that they should listen more to young people. There is agreement that the rulings of the council have been excessively conservative over the last decades.

CE, wants the valley to be transformed into a place that future generations will be happy to live in. CE is willing to accept change and transformation on condition that traditions and practices that are valued will be preserved, albeit in modernized forms.

#### **The Representative of Weavers (RW)**

The representative of weavers has been spokesperson for the association of weavers, banner-makers and costume-makers for a long time. She is a key figure among single mothers in Limnu. RW is worried about the sometimes difficult position of women in the Valley.

RW, and the members of her association, are not against developing new forms, designs and uses for their products if buyers can be found for them. This fine weaver and designer believes that there should be employment for everyone in the valley. RW knows there are enough young women who want to learn how to weave, but they want to be remunerated once they are proficient. RW agrees: women should try to be economically independent and ways should be found to create markets for Limnu Valley weavers.

RW considers the Council of Elders to be an antiquated institution.

#### **The Representative of the Limnu Valley Potters (RP)**

RP is, like all other potters, indignant about the mass production of fake Limnu Valley ware outside the valley; the potters would like to find ways to protect their produce, and to encourage people in Limnu Valley and Talga City to use more local pottery.

With the provision of water tanks by the province, the large pots traditionally used for rain harvesting are falling into disuse, and becoming decorative only; RP appreciates that some families use them again to harvest rainwater for their kitchen gardens. This iconic feature of Limnu Valley homesteads might in that way be preserved with a new practical function. The valley potters were happy to learn that the ethnographic museum in the capital had bought a collection of Limnu Valley pottery.

In the valley, the required knowledge and skills for pot making are still thriving, the clay is there, wood is a problem but electricity might offer an alternative. But, how to stop non-authentic Limnu Valley ware production?

The potters know that traditional valley ware is of such a rare quality that, if new designs and new uses for their produce are developed and the techniques preserved, one cannot fail to attract new buyers in and especially outside the valley.

#### **The Representative of Limnu farmers (LF)**

LF represents the largest professional group of Limnu. The degradation of the soil, the terraces and the irrigation systems, the fragmentation of the allotments, the changing climate are common problems experienced by all farmers. The shortage of arable land and disputes over it, might be addressed – LF hopes – by a good safeguarding plan. LF has had some open disagreements with representatives of the research institute when they visited Limnu; LF felt that they did not sufficiently take local circumstances and values into account.

LF does understand that an unquestioned return to traditional practices cannot be an option – some of these are no doubt being abandoned for good reasons.

LF is worried about the absence of essential infrastructural facilities. Like many farmers, this fine expert attaches great value to the rituals of the Long Week; the yearly Festival of the Clouds is for all farmers a joyful interruption of hard labour in summer.

#### **The Representative of Mare Farmers (MF)**

MF comes from a family in which men were specialized in making terraces and dry-stone walls; some still have the required skills. In the past, mainly men from Mare helped build terraces on the lower slopes of Limnu Valley. According to the research institute almost 75% of the terraces in the valley are now destroyed.

In Mare there is no shop, and the electricity supply is unreliable; twenty percent of the houses are abandoned; most houses are scenic, but in bad condition. Mare parents regret but also understand that many young people – especially women – try their luck outside the valley after middle school. Mare was a lively and prosperous place 40 years ago.

Some Mare farmers are still specialized in growing fruit on terraces near the village; the quality of the fruit may be lower than before, but their produce is still appreciated at Talga City market. Most of these farmers would like to restore a large number of terraces to produce high quality fruit and vegetables there again. Some would prefer the development of ecotourism as that would create employment, make Mare more lively, encourage some of the girls to stay in the village, and contribute to the restoration of Mare village.

MF thinks tourism, and a hotel near Mare, need not affect traditional practices and rituals: the Long Week practices, take place in private courtyards and the Festival of the Clouds takes place in Limnu. Limited numbers of tourists might be welcomed to the Festival. They would also be welcome to buy excess handicraft produce.

The Mare people are willing to work together with their relatives and friends from Limnu for the development of tourism, and to assist them in restoring terraces, if such activities were remunerated.

#### **Performer (PF)**

PF, a gifted musician and singer, learned pot-making at young age and – not much later – singing and also storytelling and how to play a *rutu*. PF earns more from his/her performances than from pot-making but together that would not have been enough to support a family. PF accepts invitations by friends in the Mining District who make her/him perform in exchange for a free trip and lodging.

There are eight or nine people like PF (half are women), who are well versed in the performing arts of Limnu Valley and who occasionally perform; none is younger than 45. The traditional transmission of the performing arts was disrupted by the introduction of schooling. All regret that there are no young storytellers, singers or *rutu* players.

The performers have been speaking of setting up a training system, but do not know what that should look like. They understand the valley cannot sustain fully professional performers, but they do think that better remuneration might help to make the idea of becoming a musician, singer or storyteller more attractive.

Performers are indispensable in the Long Week and at the Festival of the Clouds. They sometimes get invited to smaller festivities in quarters or farmhouses (and then return home with a bag of maize or a live chicken).

#### **Professional gardener (FO)**

FO lives in Mare, where she returned to her parents’ farm after finishing agricultural high school. With her parents, FO concentrates on growing fruit trees, and plants for the production of dyes. She sells her dyes to an Indian firm. FO is a member of the association of organizers of the Festival of the Clouds, which has always consisted of 12 unmarried young people. However enthusiastic these young people may be about the Festival, hardly any of them attend or participate in Long Week rituals and ceremonies.

FO believes that not all traditional practices need to be preserved and that living and working conditions should be improved first. Solutions will not come from the Council of Elders. She would like to see their role reduced. She is in favour of developing tourism, on condition that it would not impede agricultural development. The valley should not become a museum.

#### **Merchant (MD)**

MD is the only trader in the valley and a drum player. His wife runs the only shop of the valley. MD has been buying agricultural products, pots and some cloths in the valley, which he has sold in Talga City and beyond. MD has witnessed the decline in quantity and quality of local agricultural production. He had to give up his trade in Limnu Valley pottery, because of the large-scale sale of cheap, fake valley ware.

For MD, a safeguarding plan needs to take a balanced position regarding traditional values and commercial interests. MD thinks that people in Limnu would have had access to clean drinking water and a decent road a long time ago had they not been represented by the Council of Elders. MD studied the potential of Limnu Valley for ecotourism and believes that it offers what ecotourists are looking for: pristine flora and fauna; beautiful scenery; and intangible, tangible and natural heritage. If only the more visible parts of the terraces could be restored!

#### **Youth Representative (YR)**

YR, who worked in the mining town till his/her unfortunate accident, is now a photographer, video-maker and a fine expert in making natural dyes. YR is one of the co-organizers of the Festival.

While away from Limnu, YR had already realized the value of the Valley’s celebrations, rituals and songs, the handicrafts and their beautiful products and above all the annual Festival of the Clouds.

YR has clear ideas about the different problems that threaten the viability of the valley and its people. YR can see threats to the continuity of the handicrafts and the social and cultural traditions of the Limnu. All these threats – YR thinks – are related, and should be tackled at the same time, for the well-being of the valley people. YR believes that the development of decent infrastructure is a task of the provincial government. Financially and logistically, this is outside the reach of the valley itself, or even of the district. Protecting the inherited practices and handicrafts, restoring terraces, is something that the villagers can do themselves, YR hopes.

A lack of interest among most young people for ceremonies and rituals, and for the stories of elder people has alarmed elder Valley people over the past few years. Young people see the fun and importance of the Festival of the Clouds, and respect its ritual part, but they think the rest of the Long Week makes less sense. They view it as a burden with inexplicable obligations. In several quarters, adult people also no longer fully keep to the once generally followed rituals and traditional practices of the Long Week.

#### **Researcher (RS)**

RS, who is not from Talga District, works at an institute that nowadays conducts research on alternatives to traditional agricultural practices in underdeveloped areas. The institute is about to propose experimental farming programmes to test solutions to the looming food security problems in the valley (e.g. other seeds, alternative irrigation and soil enrichment methods and different planting cycles).

RS is convinced that improved agricultural methods by themselves will not be enough: other sources of income are to be developed as well and infrastructure has to be improved. RS has come to recognise the deep relationship between the Valley people and their land. RS is unhappy that people think the gradual disappearance of the forests from the valley is a natural phenomenon.

RS believes that some of the traditional practices of the Limnu Valley may be mobilized for its sustainable development and for the well-being of its inhabitants. RS observes many problematic issues in the village that are not directly linked to ICH. RS would like to see a safeguarding plan that seeks long-term solutions, addressing the need for self-sufficiency and economic development.

RS heard from foreign visitors to the valley that they found the remaining terraced slopes behind Mare, with their receding orchards, stunningly beautiful and that they found Mare itself, with all its walls running around and within the quarters, scenic and ‘unspoiled’.

#### **Head teacher (HT)**

HT is appreciated for her/his hard work in the school, where she/he introduces children to traditional vegetable growing in after-school classes and to Limnu stories and songs in school time. HT promotes the local language, far beyond the limited time slots foreseen in the school curriculum.

HT is honestly worried about the social problems of the valley, in particular about the drop-out rate among children of some families, and about the diminishing numbers of children in the valley. HT is convinced that group and family practices and traditions give persons their identity, an anchor place in this world and a place – however small – in the history of humanity. As many Limnu Valley traditions should be safeguarded, for and by as many people as possible as that would reduce social problems more than anything else. HT is sometimes criticised for living in a nostalgic past and is viewed with suspicion by some parents who cannot understand HT’s desire to spend energy and money on revitalizing traditional practices with children when they need to prepare for survival in a modern world.

#### **District Officer (DO)**

DO is an engineer who has been seconded to Talga District by the Ministry of Rural Development, which was concerned about increasing poverty and diminishing harvests. DO believes more in creating jobs for the Valley people through tourism or the development of a mineral water plant in Mare, than in beefing up agricultural production.

DO, who comes from outside the district, thinks that the Council of Elders is profoundly incompetent and that its role should be ceremonial only. The valley should be administered like any other municipality. Limnu Valley is a municipality with over 75% of the inhabitants belonging to one national minority, and therefore has a special status.

DO took a fancy to Limnu Valley pots and acquired quite a collection of different sizes and designs. In her/his living room DO has wall decorations and a lamp cover that she/he asked Limnu women to make, using the materials and techniques they use for producing banners.

**SESSIONS 2 TO 8**

In your groups you will be developing a safeguarding plan for Limnu Valley ICH (sessions 2-8), using as guidelines, insofar as you consider them relevant, the questions suggested in this hand-out, and the reporting formats in Limnu Hand-out 4. While the group and scribe may decide to use another format for reporting back, you may nevertheless use the sheets in Limnu Hand-out 4 for your own notes, if you wish.

**Session 2: What is the ICH to be safeguarded and who are the communities, groups or individuals concerned? What are the general challenges of the Valley?**

Use the Welcome text (Limnu Hand-out 1), and the text for reading under session 1 above to identify a short list of ICH that may require safeguarding activities, indicating for each of them the community, groups and/or individuals concerned. Please keep your notes short as you are merely identifying the outlines of a safeguarding plan, and are not creating a fully-fledged plan.

Questions to consider (identifying ICH)

You may insert your notes concerning the elements to be safeguarded in the first box in Limnu Hand-out 4, session 2.

* What are the element(s) of Limnu Valley ICH that should be safeguarded? Describe them in a few words, indicating name, domain, place, and periodicity.
* What are the current modes of transmission?
* Does the ICH you are considering have aspects that need special consideration (such as gender or legal issues, restricted access, or inter-community problems)?

Questions to consider (identifying communities)

You may insert your notes concerning the communities, groups and individuals concerned in the same first box in Limnu Hand-out 4, session 2.

* Which communities, groups and/or individuals consider the element(s) under discussion as part of their cultural heritage?
* Who has specific roles in the practice and transmission of the element(s) under discussion?
* Who identifies with the element(s) under discussion?

Questions to consider (identifying general problems)

You may insert your notes concerning general (infrastructural, societal or environmental) problems that the Valley people are faced with in the second box in Limnu Hand-out 4, session 2.

* Which general problems are the inhabitants of Limnu Valley confronted with?
* Do these problems have an impact on the enactment or transmission of Limnu Valley ICH?
* Might the safeguarding of specific Limnu Valley ICH contribute to mitigating one or more of the Valley’s general problems?

**Session 3: Identifying value and function of the selected ICH. Why do the communities, groups or individuals concerned want to safeguard the selected ICH?**

You may insert your notes in the box in Limnu Hand-out 4, session 3. Use separate boxes for each element identified, indicating in the second column what makes them important.

Questions to consider

* In respect to the Limnu Valley ICH that you have identified, what makes it important and for whom?
* Are there different opinions within the community about the value or function of the ICH you have identified, or about the need for safeguarding it? If any, discuss and find solutions.
* Who should make the decision as to what ICH is important and whether it should be safeguarded?
* Could safeguarding of specific ICH contribute to mitigating general problems?

**Session 4: What threats and risks affect or may affect the viability of the selected ICH and what activities could address these problems?**

You may insert your notes in the box in Limnu Hand-out 4, session 4.

Questions to consider

* What problems affect or may affect the enactment and/or the transmission of the selected ICH?
* Where are the most severe risks?

Having discussed the questions above, you may wish to reconsider the choice of ICH elements made in session 2.

Now that you have a clear picture of the ICH for which you want to develop safeguarding activities, and you know about the threats and risks that impact its viability,

* Brainstorm about possible safeguarding activities. You do not yet need to prioritize these.

**Session 5: What are the main objectives and expected results of safeguarding the selected ICH?**

In the previous session, you have probably already come up with some results that you expect from the safeguarding activities you have been considering so far. Now it is time to reach agreement as to the objectives of a safeguarding plan for Limnu Valley ICH, and about the concrete, quantifiable results that you expect from successful implementation of the planned activities. You may insert your notes in the box in Limnu Hand-out 4, session 5.

A few main objectives may be enough for a realistic safeguarding plan, not more than three to five. Objectives address problems (not too specific ones); they are ambitious, qualitative and time bound.

For each objective, define two to four expected results. A result, in this context, is a concrete, specific and measurable change produced by the implementation of one or more safeguarding activities. A result does not describe what is to be done, but states how a future situation is expected to be different from the current situation. Expected results allow you to measure whether – at certain points of time – objectives are accomplished.

Questions to consider

* What concrete changes would you like to see over the next years because of safeguarding the selected ICH element(s) of Limnu Valley ICH?
* How are they related to the problems, threats and risks that you have identified so far?

**Session 6: Final selection of safeguarding activities; identifying timeline and responsibilities**

In order to identify your final set of safeguarding activities, you may find the following questions helpful. You may insert your notes in the two left-hand columns of the box in Limnu Hand-out 4, sessions 6-7. Take your time to build consensus.

Questions to consider

* Looking at each of your expected results, what activities are to be undertaken in order to attain them? NB: often one activity may contribute to achieving more than one of the formulated objectives.
* In what order would it be best to implement the activities?
* Who might execute/organize; who might be responsible for what?

**Session 7: What resources are required to implement the activities? identify global costs per activity**

In this session, you will indicate what resources may be required for the implementation of the safeguarding plan. Resources may be of very different types.

Since you are preparing the outlines of a safeguarding plan, no detailed budget presentations are required. Nevertheless, you are requested to pay some attention to the financial, human, institutional and other resources that may be required for the implementation of the safeguarding plan you are about to propose. You know that the ICH Task Force may finance a sound plan to a maximum amount of USD 200,000.

You may insert your notes in the third column (on resources) and the fourth column (budget breakdown per activity) of the box in Limnu Hand-out 4, sessions 6-7.

Questions to consider

* Whose time is required to make the activity happen? How will they be remunerated?
* Do the activities require institutional support of any kind? Can that be granted free or does it have a cost?
* What resources might be donated or given in kind?
* What might be the estimated overall costs per activity? Calculate the grand total for the plan as a whole.

Revise the activity list or the resource allocation (if necessary) should they exceed the budget for the project, or brainstorm fundraising activities.

**Session 8: How can the plan’s results be monitored and evaluated? Summarizing the plan, indicating implementation periods and benchmarks for each activiy**

It is important that the implementation of a safeguarding plan be monitored at crucial moments to determine whether things are on the right track. A way of measuring the plan’s progress is to define targets or benchmarks that should be attained at predetermined moments. Then you will be able to adjust the plan or take corrective measures to get it back on track, if required.

You may insert your notes in the box in Limnu Hand-out 4, session 8.

Questions to consider

* What could be the benchmarks or targets for each safeguarding activity?
* For each benchmark, when could its attainment be assessed?
* What challenges could be expected?

**Summary of the plan**

Please assist your scribe in filling in the last box of Limnu Hand-out 4, which asks for a summary of the proposed safeguarding plan, under indication of main objectives and global budgets.

**Involvement and consent of communities**

The following questions may be useful for assessing whether and how you have taken into account the interests of communities, groups and/or individuals concerned. The scribe will take notes summarizing your findings.

Questions to consider

* Will the rights and interests of the communities concerned be protected in the course of the proposed activities?
* Were customary practices (if any) governing access to the ICH concerned respected during the preparation of the plan?
* Will no violations of human rights be continued or introduced by the proposed safeguarding activities?
* Might the safeguarding plan contribute to the principle of mutual respect between communities, groups and individuals?