

Progress report

Development and implementation of capacity building activities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in conflict-related situations, including situations of forced displacement

Benefitting country(ies)	Global
Type of funding	Earmarked voluntary contribution to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund received from Azerbaijan
Amount	\$100,000
Implementing period	2021-2023
Reporting period	2020-2021(Programming phase)

I. Background & Summary

In the framework of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO has explored the role of living heritage in emergencies, including conflict and disaster situations. In 2020, the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention adopted operational principles and modalities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in emergencies, which offers guidance to national and international stakeholders on how best to engage and safeguard living heritage in various types of emergency contexts ([Resolution 8.GA.9](#)). The operational principles and modalities emphasize the dual nature of living heritage in emergencies, both as being directly under threat and as a valuable resource that communities can draw on to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.

In this context, UNESCO is undertaking this project to strengthen the capacities of communities to safeguard and mobilize their intangible cultural heritage in situations of conflict and forced displacement. The project involves undertaking the following activities:

Activity 1.1: Develop training materials to strengthen capacities to undertake community-based needs identifications. The materials are being developed in line with the training approach of the global capacity-building programme and provide practical information on the steps to follow when undertaking a community-based needs identification in situations of conflict and forced displacement. They will take into account the Operational principles and modalities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in emergencies, approved by the eighth session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention.

Activity 1.2: Test training materials and approach developed. The materials and training approach will be tested with communities affected by conflict and forced displacement through workshops in a pilot country (to be identified).

Activity 1.3: Conduct community-based needs identification to identify how the

intangible cultural heritage has been affected and its potential to be mobilized by communities for resilience and recovery: Participants from the workshop will participate in a community-based needs identification to assess how their intangible cultural heritage has been affected by displacement, prompting reflection on notions of damages and loss with regard to their intangible cultural heritage. The needs identification will furthermore identify elements of intangible cultural heritage that can play a potential role in resilience and recovery.

Activity 1.4: Integrate lessons learnt into handbook for actors in the humanitarian field. Based on the lessons learnt and insights gained from the pilot activity, a handbook would be elaborated to unpack the specific considerations for operationalizing the principles and modalities in situations of conflict and forced displacement and a methodology for undertaking community-based needs identifications. The handbook would be targeted to national and international actors working in the humanitarian sector to enhance their understanding of the role of intangible cultural heritage in their work.

II. Implementation of the project for the period under review

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in delays in the programming and implementation of the project. During the reporting period, the Secretariat has undertaken the programming of the project, and is currently identifying the pilot country for testing out the elaborated materials. The period under review also included the advertisement for a consultancy position on the UNESCO careers [webpage](#) to hire a senior consultant to undertake the following activities in the framework of the project:

- Draft training materials on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in situations of conflict and forced displacement taking into account the methodology of community-based needs identification;
- Implement and test the training materials and approach developed in context where intangible cultural heritage is at risk from conflict; and
- Integrate lessons learnt into handbook for actors working in the humanitarian and security sectors.

Following the completion of the recruitment, the consultant is foreseen to elaborate upon the capacity building materials over a period of 2-3 months post which the testing of the materials in a pilot country will be undertaken and then piloted in the identified country over a period of 3-5 months.

III. Challenges and how they were addressed

The project has experienced significant delays due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the evolving sanitary situation, one of the other challenges faced during the programming of the project has been to identify the pilot country for testing the elaborated training materials.

To address the two main challenge, the following considerations are to be undertaken:

- Exploring online modalities to organize the testing of the elaborated materials on practical information on the steps to follow when undertaking a community-based needs identification in situations of conflict and forced displacement.
- The Living Heritage Entity is working closely with the network of Field Offices in identifying the pilot countries, assessing the local context and feasibility of implementing the project.

IV. Direct Beneficiaries, Key Partners and Other Stakeholders

The project recognizes the need to address actors working at different levels in the area of intangible cultural heritage and situations of conflict and forced displacement.

Direct project beneficiaries will include communities and bearers of intangible cultural heritage

who have been affected by conflict and forced displacement. Local and national non-governmental organization working with displaced populations will also benefit from the trainings and pilot activities.

The handbook and visibility event will address national and international organizations working with displaced populations to increase their understanding and awareness of the role of intangible cultural heritage in situations of conflict. This may also include UN organization and international bodies working in related areas. In this way, the project will also benefit actors in fields other than heritage safeguarding.

V. Communication and Visibility

An online visibility event will be organized to launch the handbook developed and raise awareness of the work accomplished among States Parties and other key actors of the 2003 Convention.