

**REQUEST FOR PREPARATORY ASSISTANCE FOR
ELABORATING A PROPOSAL FOR INSCRIPTION ON THE
REGISTER OF GOOD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES**

FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

Beneficiary State Party: Mongolia

Name of the programme, project or activity to be nominated for inscription:	The Nomadic Mongolia ICH Festival – A Paradigm of Best Practice to Safeguard the Intangible Cultural Heritage
Geographic location and range of the programme, project or activity:	Mongolia
Time frame:	Starting date: 04/09/2024 Completion date: 15/04/2024
Budget:	Total: US\$11,560 <i>Including:</i> Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund: US\$8,340 State Party contributions: US\$3,220 Other contributions: US\$
Implementing agency:	Foundation for the Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage – UNESCO Accredited NGO in Mongolia
Contact person:	Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr. Family name: Norov Given name: Urtnasan Institution/position: Foundation for the Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage / President Address: #102-903, Ikh Mongol, 26 th Khoroo, Bayanzurkh District, Ulaanbaatar 13311, Mongolia Telephone number: (976)-99100184 E-mail address: n.urtnasan@gmail.com

Process of elaborating the proposal

Provide a description of the process that was used to elaborate the proposal. Explain the mechanisms employed for fully involving the communities, groups, or if applicable, individuals concerned in the preparation of the proposal.

Not fewer than 200 or more than 500 words

The process of elaborating the proposal for the Nomadic Mongolia ICH Festival to the UNESCO Register of Good Safeguarding Practices was designed to be inclusive, participatory, and reflective of the communities it aims to represent. Main approach was the commitment to involve and empower the communities, groups, and practitioners, and ensure their voices and expertise reflect the proposal preparation.

The process started with initial consultations to understand the needs, expectations, and aspirations of ICH communities. These discussions helped in forming an interdisciplinary working group. This group comprised experts in intangible heritage, community leaders, administrative officials of national and local governments, and representatives from specialized NGOs. Their collective knowledge and perspectives were instrumental in shaping the proposal's direction and content.

A significant part of the proposal's preparation involved field research, carried out through three expeditions across twelve soums and three provinces, covering approximately 3,000 kilometers. These expeditions aimed to survey and document practices and understand the living traditions of over 100 practitioners and 20 community groups and NGO representatives, and to gather stories of their involvement and experiences in ICH festivals. By engaging directly in their local environments, the working group was able to capture the essence and the understanding of the Festival, its historical background, organizational framework at all levels, and its role for the communities and contribution to the viability of the nomadic traditions.

To ensure full involvement of the communities and groups concerned, participatory workshops and community meetings were organized in each visited soum and province. These activities supported to initiate open dialogue, allowing community members to express their views on the proposal, the important aspects of the ICH Festival and the nomadic heritage practices that are to be highlighted in the proposal. The workshops also facilitated a mutual learning process, where the working group gained invaluable insights into the process of local participation and communities became more aware of the proposal process and its importance.

The insights gathered from the research and activities were synthesized into a draft proposal, and shared among working group experts and key representatives of several ICH community organizations, and ensured their suggestions were incorporated. The final draft of the proposal was refined under the leadership of the Project Coordinator.

Throughout the whole process, documentation of all engagements, field notes, audio-visual materials, and workshop outcomes was maintained. The process also included obtaining free, prior, and informed consent from participating community organizations and associations which affirmed their active involvement and support for the proposal, and willingness to collaborate for its sustainability at all levels.

The Working Group's active engagement in the 2023 Nomadic Mongolia Festival held in Nalaikh district, Ulaanbaatar, and the designation of its leader as a jury member for evaluating provincial practices enriched the proposal's research and development process. Additionally, the International

Consultative Meeting, attended by delegates from 10 countries during the festival, was instrumental in formulating the "Nomadic Living Heritage Safeguarding" Declaration. The overall process reassures the importance to making the festival a global model for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.

Preparatory measures supported financially by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund

What are the specific activities in the process of elaborating the proposal that were financed by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund? Please indicate the nature and sequence of such activities (e.g. a film or photos necessary for the submission of a proposal, the organization of consultations with communities, expert services for the preparation of a proposal, translation services, etc.).

Provide information concerning only the specific measures that were funded by this preparatory assistance request.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 750 words

The elaboration process of the proposal for the Nomadic Mongolia ICH Festival significantly benefited from the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund's financial support. This support was allocated towards conducting comprehensive research, facilitating expert involvement, ensuring detailed documentation, and fulfilling the requirements for the proposal's submission to UNESCO. Below is a detailed account of the specific activities financed, in line with the approved Work Plan and the Budget:

1. Research and Field Expeditions

The foundational aspect of the proposal preparation involved research and field expeditions carried out across various regions to gather firsthand information about the Nomadic Mongolia ICH Festival, its organization at local levels, aspects of involved nomadic heritage practices, as well as participation of stakeholders including ICH communities, practitioners, associations and NGOs. Financial support from the Fund covered:

Transportation Costs: Expenses for vehicles, drivers, and fuel enabled the research team to access remote areas, and conduct in-depth fieldwork across different regions, and collect broad and representative set of materials and data on ICH practices and festival dynamics.

Accommodation and Meals: Provision for researchers' lodging and sustenance during expeditions to ensure that the team could conduct in-depth fieldwork without logistical constraints.

Consultations, Workshops, and Meetings: The organization and execution of these activities were crucial for engaging with communities, groups, and practitioners, facilitating a participatory approach in shaping the proposal.

2. Acquiring Expert Services for the Elaboration of the Proposal

The compilation and refinement of the proposal required the engagement of experts in various capacities:

Data Analysis and Evaluation: Experts analyzed the gathered research data, synthesizing insights and incorporating community feedback into the proposal's development.

Translation Services: Professional translation of the final draft from Mongolian to English was essential for ensuring adherence to UNESCO's professional standards and the terminological precision of the ICH Convention.

3. Photo and Audio-Visual Documentation

A significant portion of the Fund was allocated to documenting the ICH practices, festival activities, and community engagements through photos and audio-visual documentation, which were utilized for the final outcome of the proposal documents and the documentary film:

Scriptwriting: Financial resources were allocated for script development for the documentary film.

Documentary Production: A Production studio was commissioned for filming required footages at different locations including festival events, interviews with community representatives, documenting ICH practices, and festival programs and activities, which ensured the production of quality audio-visual content.

Translation for Documentary: The documentary's script, voice-over, and subtitles were translated for accessibility and comprehension for an international audience.

4. Reporting and Submission of the Proposal

The final phase of the proposal process involved compiling, finalizing, and submitting the final Proposal documents to UNESCO:

Submission of Final Proposal: The completion and submission of the Proposal according to the ICH-03-Form, accompanied by ten high-definition photos and a ten-minute documentary film, along with other community consent and letter documents were delivered to UNESCO via DHL express service, and electronically within the specified deadline.

Final Narrative Report: The Final Narrative Report, detailing the process and outcomes of the proposal elaboration, were submitted to UNESCO via DHL express service, and electronically within the specified deadline.

This financial support from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund was very crucial in conducting foundational research, engaging with the cultural heritage community, documenting intangible cultural practices, and ensuring the professional preparation and submission of the proposal. Each of these activities was integral to the research, documentation and representation of the Nomadic Mongolia ICH Festival, aiming for its recognition as a Good Practice for safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage at the international level.

Lessons learnt

What are the key lessons learnt regarding the following:

- *Attainment of expected results. Also describe any unexpected results, direct or indirect, whether positive or negative from the proposal process if applicable.*
- *Ownership of key stakeholders and community involvement*
- *Delivery of project outputs. Also describe any other indirect outputs (e.g. capacity built, additional funding secured).*
- *Project management and implementation*

Not fewer than 300 or more than 750 words

The process of elaborating the proposal for the Nomadic Mongolia ICH Festival, supported by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund, has been a deeply informative experience, producing several key lessons regarding project management, community involvement, and the attainment of results. Reflecting on this experience allows us to extract valuable insights for future endeavors in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.

1. Attainment of Expected Results

Key Lessons:

Planning: Thorough planning and flexibility are crucial. The process emphasized the importance of a well-structured and also adaptable project plan that anticipates challenges and incorporates contingency measures.

Engagement and Communication: Continuous engagement and clear communication with all stakeholders are crucial for the alignment of objectives and smooth execution of the project phases. The Working Group maintained an excellent communication approach with all stakeholders involved.

Unexpected Results:

Enhanced Community Engagement: An indirect positive outcome was the deepened sense of ownership and involvement among community members, beyond initial expectations. This engagement sparked a renewed interest in safeguarding their own cultural practices, fostering a grassroots movement for ICH safeguarding.

Increased Visibility and Awareness: The process inadvertently amplified national and international awareness of Mongolia's ICH, attracting attention from entities beyond the initial stakeholder group, which could potentially lead to further collaborative safeguarding initiatives.

2. Ownership of Key Stakeholders and Community Involvement

Key Lessons:

Building Trust and Respect: Establishing trust and respect with the communities and key stakeholders from the outset is vital. The genuine involvement of communities in the decision-making process enhanced the proposal's authenticity and relevance.

Empowerment through Involvement: Actively involving stakeholders in every step, from research to documentation, empowered them, and ensured the sustainability of the project's outcomes.

Unexpected Results:

Strengthened Community Networks: The project facilitated the strengthening of networks within communities and between different stakeholder groups. This networking may serve as a solid foundation for future collaborative efforts in safeguarding ICH.

Cultural Pride and Identity: The process ignited a strong sense of cultural pride and identity among participants, reinforcing the value of their intangible cultural heritage and motivating continued engagement with safeguarding practices.

3. Delivery of Project Outputs

Key Lessons:

Quality over Quantity: The focus on producing high-quality outputs, such as detailed field research and visually representative documentary content, rather than the volume of outputs, significantly enhanced the proposal's impact.

Flexibility and Adaptability: Being flexible and adaptable in the face of unexpected challenges, especially in logistics and scheduling, was crucial for maintaining project activities and meeting deadlines.

Unexpected Results:

Capacity Building: An indirect output was the capacity building among community members and stakeholders in ICH documentation and safeguarding techniques. This skill development enhances their ability to engage in future safeguarding efforts.

Additional Support: During the field expeditions, the Working Group had a good amount of voluntary support from various local administrative officials, ICH communities and their representative organizations guiding the researchers, helping with transportation issues, and other unforeseen challenges.

4. Project Management and Implementation

Key Lessons:

Effective Team Coordination: The importance of a cohesive, multidisciplinary team cannot be overstated. Effective coordination and clear role definitions within the project team facilitated smooth implementation and the timely achievement of milestones.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Implementing a monitoring and evaluation framework from the project's commencement enabled the team to track all progress, make necessary adjustments, and evaluate the project's impact accurately.

Unexpected Results:

Knowledge Sharing and Best Practices: The lessons learnt and best practices derived from this project have contributed valuable knowledge to the wider field of ICH safeguarding. Disseminating these insights through future forums and publications will amplify the project's impact beyond its original scope.

The project for elaborating a proposal for the Nomadic Mongolia ICH Festival was a rich source of learning in project management, stakeholder engagement, and the delivery of outcomes. The lessons learnt highlight the importance of planning, flexibility, stakeholder empowerment, and the pursuit of quality in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. The unexpected results, including increased cultural awareness, community empowerment, and voluntary support and interest by the ICH communities and NGO representatives, emphasize the far-reaching impact of such initiatives. These insights will undoubtedly inform future projects, enhance their effectiveness in promoting and safeguarding the world's intangible cultural treasures.

Name and signature of the person having completed the report

Name: URTNASAN Norov

Title: Mr

Date: April 08, 2024

Signature:

