

## Progress report

### Safeguarding Living Heritage in Non-formal Education in Asia and the Pacific

Benefitting country(ies)	Nepal, Thailand
Type of funding	Earmarked voluntary contribution to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund received from the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO (ICHCAP)
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Implementing field office(s)	Kathmandu Office Bangkok Office
Implementing period	April – December 2021
Reporting period	April – November 2021

#### I. Background & Summary

This project on Safeguarding Living Heritage in Non-formal Education in Asia and the Pacific is part of the implementation of the global funding priority on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in formal and non-formal education under the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. It aims at developing and piloting approaches concerning the integration of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) – or ‘living heritage’ - in non-formal education (NFE) in Nepal and Thailand. While methodologies for integrating ICH in formal education have been developed and implemented in several countries around the world<sup>1</sup>, the potential to safeguard living heritage through non-formal education has so far been less explored under the global programme on living heritage and education. It is yet to be addressed in a comprehensive and systematic manner, including in Nepal and Thailand. This project therefore focuses on incorporating ICH in NFE, aiming to strengthen the safeguarding and transmission of ICH, while also improving the relevance of education programmes with a view to promote community well-being, social cohesion and sustainable development.

The activities in both countries will capitalize on the active structure of Community Learning Centers (CLCs) that exist at the district and municipality levels. In Nepal, there is a network of 2,199 CLCs (2017 update) across 753 local units (including new and rural municipalities). In Thailand, there are 7,424 CLCs (2017 update), which have the potential to raise high impact interventions reaching out to 3.9 million learners who attend the centers’ non-formal courses

<sup>1</sup> See [UNESCO clearing house on living heritage and education](#)

and informal activities every year. In both countries, CLCs are being recognized as the main mechanism for delivering non-formal education, as stated in Nepal's School Sector Development Plan (2016-2023) and Thailand's National Education Plan (2017-2036). CLCs also have the possibility to reach out to a wide range of learners, including those who are marginalized or excluded from formal education opportunities, out-of-school children, older age children and adults who never received formal schooling, and vulnerable groups, as well as girls, women and youth in general. CLCs play an important role to engage them in lifelong learning activities at community level. Good practices in CLCs include programmes and activities relating to sustainable development, social cohesion as well as collaboration with community partners and resources to extend learning opportunities to a larger target population. CLCs in both Nepal and Thailand are a driving force for community empowerment and there is a strong potential to build synergy with culture-based approaches.

## II. Implementation of the project for the period under review

Achievements to date are as follows:

- **Official partnership** has been established with the Office of Nonformal and Informal Education (ONIE), under the Office of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education (Thailand) and the Centre for Education and Human Resource Department (CEHRD) under the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (Nepal). This official partnership allows for the project outcome to be mainstreamed in the government system, which ensures the project's sustainability. Regular consultation meetings have been carried out between UNESCO offices and respective partners in the countries to review progress and plan for future activities.
- A **review of non-formal educational materials and current programs at the CLCs** has been conducted in both countries, to understand the current situation and availability of curricula and learning materials, and to identify entry points wherein intangible cultural heritage could be integrated to strengthen the relevance of the teaching and learning process in non-formal education environments, such as CLC programmes. The review reports have been shared with respective partners in the two pilot countries. In Thailand, the results of the analysis point to i) subjects or curricula where ICH can be integrated to improve the quality and relevance to learners, ii) CLC teachers' needs for training materials, and iii) areas of capacity-building needs for CLCs and their teachers to be able to practically integrate living heritage in their educational programmes.

In Nepal, based on the gaps identified and lessons drawn from other countries, the review has presented five-point recommendations on how ICH could be incorporated in the CLC education: i) Entry points: several entry modalities are suggested - standalone, content topping, integration in session delivery, or adopting multiple ways, needs-testing during piloting phase ii) ICH related content in NFE materials: NFE programme and materials need updating in regards to ICH, reflecting a shared understanding of the concept of ICH and possibly also include the teaching of knowledge and skills in ICH safeguarding (iii) Capacity development of NFE facilitators: awareness building, developing critical thinking, carrying out advocacy to influence people's attitude and ICH safeguarding with skills and techniques for a collaborative approach and community building iv) Expanding CLC programme and activities: encourage CLCs to plan long-term programming for ICH as collaborative work between CLC and community and develop capacity of CLCs to identify ICH in their community and prepare community-based proposals for its safeguarding which can be supported by local government or donors and v) Mainstreaming of ICH: appropriate

entry point needs decision based on the piloting and in turn, decision on modality to mainstream of ICH, with the full consent and participation of the communities.

- To build a long-term collaboration between the participating CLCs and community on ICH safeguarding and to ensure the essential role of the central and local government in the process, a **two-day orientation workshop** was organized in Nepal jointly with CEHRD for 15 selected CLC managers and education officials from the respective local governments on 19 and 20 November 2021. 15 CLCs were selected by the CEHRD representing all the seven provinces of the country for pilot implementation. The main objective of the workshop was to
  - Build a long-term collaboration among the participating CLCs, community and local government on ICH safeguarding; and
  - Requirements mapping to develop content for capacity building training workshop for CLC facilitators on integrating living heritage in their CLC programmes and activities that aims at ICH safeguarding and its contribution to sustainable development, notably – environmental, social and economic, with focus to improving the livelihood opportunities

A capacity building training workshop is targeted to be organized on early January 2022 for CLC facilitators to familiarize them with of key concepts, principles and approach to integrating ICH in their programs and to test appropriate entry points leading to the development of a proposal for each CLCs to implement a pilot activity in their respective CLCs that illustrate strong linkages between ICH safeguarding and their activities as well as during NFE content delivery.

- In Thailand, based on the topics of interest identified from the review, such as community and youth participation processes in safeguarding ICH, cultural mapping, ICH and sustainable development, genders, global citizenship, media creation, living museums, sustainable tourism management, heritage guide development and environment conservation with traditional wisdom, etc.), an online **Training of CLC Teachers on Integrating Intangible Cultural Heritage in Non-formal and Informal Education** was carried out in November 2021. A total of 42 CLC teachers from 14 district ONIE centres participated in this session. The training was led by an UNESCO-trained facilitators, together with 14 experts, lecturers and panelists from numerous institutes and organizations, such as HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirinthorn Anthropology Centre, British Council, Chiang Mai University, Sripatum University and social enterprise businesses. The training provided CLC teachers with:
  - Understanding of concepts, principles and methodologies relevant to integrating ICH in their subject courses
  - Capacity to review, analyze and strengthen their existing courses currently offered, and
  - Capacity to develop new courses that highlight the linkages between ICH and sustainable development and address the needs of local communities.

Following the training, CLC teachers have developed proposals for the revision of an existing course or to develop a new course that illustrate strong linkages between ICH safeguarding and the content delivered in the CLC curriculum. Eight proposals have been selected for funding for the pilot phase, during which CLC teachers will work further to test and refine the proposed new lessons/courses to better reflect diverse local perspectives toward sustainable development – environmental, social and economic – which could lead to more tangible impacts on the wellbeing and livelihoods of the local communities.

### III. Challenges and how they were addressed

The project began during the time Nepal was going through a lockdown period caused by COVID-19. With the gradual opening after August with prohibitory orders and issuance of no restriction to conduct meetings, conferences were organized on 1 October. Similarly, in Thailand, the lockdown measures were implemented until July, post which the gradual easing of the restrictions were being implemented.

Because of the restrictions imposed, some activities were delayed. In the beginning, in-person meetings and visits to CLCs outside the CLCs were planned, however, due to the imposed restrictions and uncertainty, the trainings and other activities were organized using the online modality in Thailand. In Nepal, the review work and related meetings with the CEHRD, responsible government authorities, and some sample CLCs were done online. The remaining activities in Nepal are now being proposed to be done physically for better effectiveness, complying with the COVID-19 health safety protocols.

### IV. Direct Beneficiaries, Key Partners and Other Stakeholders

The direct beneficiaries of the project are CLC teachers/facilitators or mobilisers in both countries are participating in training activities as well as mentoring support during the revision of existing courses and/or development of new courses.

Other materials that are currently developed, such as a guidance note for CLC teachers to integrate living heritage in their teaching, will also be shared widely so CLC teachers can apply it in their work in the future.

At the institutional level, the Office for Non-formal and Informal Education (Thailand) and the Centre for Education and Human Resource Department (Nepal), both under Ministries of Education, serve as implementation partners but also are beneficiaries of the project. They assist to mainstream the approach to the widest level of CLCs under their supervision, while at the same time this new innovative approach will help them to strengthen the relevance of their CLC curriculum and make it more connected to the local communities. Moreover, in Nepal, the recently organized orientation workshop helped build a good networking between the Central level Ministry of Culture, a key government agency responsible for ICH related matters, and the local governments' education portfolio which is quite beneficial as the Ministry of Culture does not have any extended wings at the local level.

### V. Communication and Visibility

In Thailand, the call for participants to the capacity building workshop was made to all CLCs in the country, resulting in raised awareness amongst the CLCs. A national showcase day will be organized to coincide with the annual national event that ONIE will organize in 2022, which will amplify the approach, successes as well as lesson learned to all CLCs in the country.

In Nepal, in consultation with the CEHRD, only selected CLCs were called to join the orientation workshop given the fact that status review of the CLCs is currently being undertaken by the CEHRD. Accordingly, the capacity building workshop planned for early January 2022 will aim to train the facilitators/mobilisers from the target CLCs. However, a more inclusive showcase event will be organised in consultation with CEHRD in 2022 to disseminate the outcome of the pilot activity. Among others, this event will be designed to also raise awareness of the approach, successes and lesson learned among all other CLCs and local governments' network in the country.

- Links for the orientation workshop in Nepal:

- Event Calendar: <https://bit.ly/3FDGzoQ>
- Social media post: <https://bit.ly/3kXxtLZ> and <https://bit.ly/3HHsl8q>
- Post event article: <https://bit.ly/3rUVcRj>
- Links for the selection of 8 pilot projects in Thailand:
  - UNESCO Bangkok website: <https://bangkok.unesco.org/content/unesco-and-one-support-8-pilot-projects-teach-living-heritage-and-sustainable-development>
  - Social media:
    - <https://www.facebook.com/unescobangkok/posts/4983287201683658>
    - <https://twitter.com/unescobangkok/status/1468449547525316609>