



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Intangible  
Cultural  
Heritage

## International Assistance

ICH-04-Report – Form

### INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE FUND

#### FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

Beneficiary State(s) Party(ies): Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Project title:	Strengthening the Capacities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for Community-Based Inventorying of Intangible Cultural Heritage and for Elaborating Nomination Files under the Mechanisms of the 2003 Convention
Time frame:	Starting date: 03/07/2018      Completion date: 28/05/2019
Budget:	<p style="text-align: right;">Total: US\$100,365.00</p> <p><i>Including:</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund: US\$98,000.00</p> <p style="text-align: right;">State Party contribution: US\$2,365.00</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Other contributions: US\$</p>
Implementing agency (contracting partner or UNESCO Field Office):	UNESCO Office in Beijing
Contact person:	<p>Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Ms</p> <p>Family name: Gurung</p> <p>Given name: Himalchuli</p> <p>Institution/position: Programme Specialist for Culture</p> <p>Address: Wajjiaogongyu 5-15-3, Jianguomenwai, Beijing, 100600, People's Republic of China</p> <p>Telephone number: +8610-6532-2828-109</p> <p>E-mail address: h.gurung@unesco.org</p>
Partner agency (in the case of a service from UNESCO project):	

Implementing partners:	National Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for UNESCO (signatory of the contract) National Authority for the Protection of Cultural Heritage (NAPCH)
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## 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*

After the ratification of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2008, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has been taking a number of measures to enable government bodies, organizations, local authorities as well as communities and individuals concerned in the practice and transmission of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) to actively participate in the safeguarding of ICH. At the institutional level, a dedicated Department of Intangible Cultural Heritage was set up in 2012 under the National Authority for the Protection of Cultural Heritage (NAPCH). The concerned local authorities, in liaison with NAPCH, which is steering the overall safeguarding efforts in the country, have then taken practical steps to identify and promote intangible cultural heritage elements in their communities, as well as to support related local training courses, protection and dissemination activities, thus fostering public awareness of the importance of intangible cultural heritage and encouraging active participation in safeguarding efforts.

Another step to ensure the identification and documentation of existing ICH in the country, was the establishment in 2014 of the Section of Research on Intangible Cultural Heritage at the Korea National Heritage Preservation Agency (KNHPA) under NAPCH and respective branches at the provincial and municipal levels (12 in total). This had the objective to ensure local outreach for research and documentation and the entity was staffed and equipped by NAPCH with available resources.

Today, amidst growing awareness and public interest, 107 elements are registered as National Intangible Cultural Heritage and 10 elements are on the local ICH inventories. This is a significant advance compared to what was reported in the Periodic Report of 2014 referring to the inventory being in its earliest phases. While interesting for the reach of the inventorying efforts, there was still an emphasis on scientific over community-based approaches. On a wider context, the Arirang folk song, and the Tradition of Kimchi-making have been inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (RL) in 2014 and 2015 respectively, while in 2018 the Traditional Korean wrestling (Ssirum/Ssireum) was inscribed as a joint element between DPRK and the Republic of Korea, setting a precedent in inter-Korean relations.

In parallel with enhanced knowledge and awareness—extensively promoted within a broader framework of nation-building and structuring of national identity—local authorities, communities and individuals who practice their respective intangible cultural heritage have been expressing strong will to have their elements duly acknowledged and inventoried, and eventually nominated to the Convention's Lists and the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices for better protection and safeguarding.

Authorities and communities alike, however, lacked the knowledge on how to proceed with the community-based inventorying (CBI) approach supported by the 2003 Convention as well as the correct understanding on how to prepare nomination files according to UNESCO's requirements. In particular, concerns were raised on the ways of fully engaging bearers and practitioners in the documentation of concerned practices and cultural expressions, as well as in safeguarding measures of ICH elements in general. Another issue was the limited and obsolete equipment available at KNHPA for the documentation of ICH which hindered the capacity of leading the nationwide network in executing their

functions effectively.

Considering the domestic growing interest for safeguarding and promoting ICH and the lack of expertise and relative weak capacities in the implementation of the Convention, UNESCO Beijing Office has been providing assistance to DPRK by organizing a series of capacity-building workshops, aiming to improve practitioners' and stakeholders' understanding of the 2003 Convention and its specific requirements and rules to ensure the viability of DPRK's rich ICH. These include the National Safeguarding Awareness-Raising Workshop (2011), the Training Workshop on the Implementation of the 2003 Convention (2013), and the Training Workshop on Community-Based Inventorying of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2016)–the latter co-organized with CRIHAP Category 2 Centre.

In continuation with UNESCO's capacity-building strategy for ICH, the International Assistance (IA) project aimed to address the need for increased capacities in community-based inventorying and preparing nominations to the Lists of the Convention. This was requested in the form of: training of concerned stakeholders; provision of international expertise and sharing of good practices; and supply of equipment and know-how for better documentation and inventory.

It is to be noted that the request also identified the specific need of having UNESCO Beijing Office as implementing agency of the project in line with the operational modality set in the country for activities and projects funded by UNESCO's Regular Budget, strictly following the 1718 Sanctions Committee protocol for involvement with DPRK.

The IA project financed by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund had the overall aim to build capacity on preparing nomination files and on methodologies for community-based inventorying that would inform the experts in the field of intangible cultural heritage and the community members concerned, filling a gap of know-how as well as of available and adequate equipment for documentation. This would, in turn, also contribute to the preparation of future nomination files to the Lists of the Convention, including enriched information on the existing inventory and the methodology employed.

### **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*

The direct beneficiaries of the project were 264 in total (including 170 women), divided among participants of the training workshop, participants of the preparatory workshops held at the selected pilot communities, and practitioners and bearers involved in the community-based inventorying exercise.

An adequate understanding of the nomination modalities and processes as well as on community-based inventorying methodologies was enhanced through the training workshop. As a result, DPRK submitted the nomination on Custom of Korean costume for consideration of inscription on the Representative List in 2020, and new submissions for RL, Good Safeguarding Practices and IA are under discussion. An International Assistance project titled 'Capacity building on traditional Koryo celadon making practice' is also currently being examined.

Human and technical capacities of concerned stakeholders, in particular KNHPA, which is playing a pivotal role in the identification, research, documentation and promotion of ICH in the country, were strengthened through the provision of training, equipment for documentation and the enhancement of the cooperation network between the centre and local branches through the pilot inventorying exercise, which established a community of

practice.

It is estimated that knowledge gained from the activities could reach some 3000 indirect beneficiaries who are engaged in the field of ICH as cultural workers, researchers, practitioners, and professionals in the field of communication and education. Among these, the provincial cultural officers who will receive the guidelines on ICH safeguarding developed as a spin-off of this project and will be trained on CBI in the near future would be more than 60; bearers and practitioners of other ICH elements included in the national and local inventories would also benefit greatly from the outcomes of the project.

Unexpected and indirect outcomes of the project were also observed in the short-term, including:

- The series of activities in safeguarding ICH in DPRK contributed to a revision of the Law of DPRK on the Protection of National Heritage in November 2018, which includes updated contents related specifically to the safeguarding of ICH, thus consolidating the underlying legal framework.
- During the 13<sup>th</sup> Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the element Traditional Korean wrestling (Ssirum/Ssireum) was inscribed as the first joint inscription between DPRK and ROK marking a historic moment of goodwill in inter-Korean relations. Although not directly ascribable to this project, the inscription was the result of a deeper understanding by DPRK of available nomination mechanisms, including multi-national nominations, which was covered as part of the workshop.
- A set of operational Guidelines for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage was developed prior to the project in conformity with the 2003 Convention and its Operational Directives. An updated version, including knowledge and insights acquired at the workshop will be produced and distributed to local cultural officers.
- A national symposium held on the occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ratification of the 2003 Convention on 24 October 2018, involving 260 ICH officials, researchers and community representatives, was enriched with knowledge and information gained through the project.

### **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*

The project consisted of two main components: a training workshop on community-based inventorying of intangible cultural heritage and elaborating nominations files under the mechanisms of the 2003 Convention and a pilot community-based exercise in selected communities.

Activity 1: Training workshop on community-based inventorying of intangible cultural heritage and elaboration of nomination files

A five-day training workshop was held in Pyongyang, DPRK from 26 September-3 October 2018. It was organized by UNESCO Beijing Office, in cooperation with the National Authority for the Protection of Cultural Heritage and the National Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for UNESCO. Two experts from the UNESCO facility under the 2003 Convention – Ms Susanne Ogge (Australia/France) and Mr Gang Zhu (China) – were engaged for the facilitation of the workshop.

Based on specific requests raised by the DPRK counterparts and as a follow-up to the three

previous UNESCO workshops, the training workshop sought to a deepened understanding of the Convention and its Operational Directives, and hoped to further reinforce participants' knowledge of the requirements and criteria of relevant nominations or proposals, as well as refreshing knowledge on community-based inventorying approaches touched upon in the workshop organized in 2016. Topics such as joint nominations with other countries, how to apply for international financial assistance, and the importance of integrating sustainable development and inclusive approaches in nominations were covered as indispensable components of the training. Focus was also given to the concept of 'community' which seems somehow problematic to define in the DPRK context where communities are mostly determined by administrative divisions and in a society where the notions of nation and community are so closely interlinked. Another important dimension of the workshop was the presentation of case studies and good practices from other countries which widened the understanding of participants on the different approaches and possibilities adopted in other contexts.

Nine out of 24 participants came from KNHPA's branches in the provinces and other cities (South Pyongan, North Hwanghae, South Hwanghae, North Hamgyong, Ryanggang, Kangwon, and Kaesong, Nampo and Ranson City). Overall, participants grasped well the various concepts and demonstrated a genuine commitment to disseminate their learning at the local level.

A field practicum was organized as part of the training with visits to the Mansudae Art Studio and the Mangyongdae School Children's Palace, allowing participants to work on a basic inventorying questionnaire with selected elements, including Koryo ceramics, traditional Korean painting, and the playing of the traditional Korean instrument Kayakum. Mock nominations and real-case scenarios were also prepared in groups so to experience the nomination process and clear outstanding doubts with the help of international experts.

The workshop encouraged proactive interaction between workshop facilitators and participants through the collaboration of NAPCH and UNESCO, aiming at achieving best results when preparing nominations that would meet the fundamental requirements of the 2003 Convention. The community-based approach to inventorying was reiterated and there seemed to be commitment to adjust the existing working method in order to better involve practitioners and bearers, to the extent possible.

#### Activity 2: Pilot community-based inventorying exercise in selected communities

After the workshop, a team of six professionals that had participated both in the 2016 CBI workshop and in the workshop organized under this IA project was set up to conduct a pilot community-based inventorying exercise in selected communities, applying the CBI methodologies acquired during the UNESCO trainings. The team revised the existing questionnaire and adapted the inventory form in line with UNESCO's guidance. In the meantime, they also revised a guidance note prepared in Korean language for local actors, to be distributed in the pilot sites but also nationwide to all provinces.

As part of the preparation for the inventory, one video camera, two photo cameras and one film scanner were purchased as per the IA approved request. Staff were also trained on the use of the equipment by experienced professionals. This equipment remained at the disposal of KNHPA after the termination of the contract period for future ICH documentation purposes.

The pilot community-based inventorying exercise was conducted on three ICH elements, i.e. Janggo manufacturing skills (a traditional percussion instrument) of Sohung County, stoneware of Pongsan County, and mask dance of Unryul County, in the North and South Hwanghae Provinces from 12 March to 11 April 2019. Prior to the field exercise, NAPCH ensured to obtain free, prior and informed consent from the communities concerned. Workshops on the inventorying of these elements were held at each location respectively.

Information and audio-visual materials were collected among members of the community

through the newly updated questionnaire and inventory forms. Team meetings were organized afterwards to review and analyze collected data, and to finalize the description of surveyed elements. Inventories of elements that would be submitted and examined for inclusion in national and local inventories were drafted.

The close and efficient cooperation among all partners is the solid basis for the orderly organization of the activities. The responsibilities for each side were made clear in the IA request and remained consistent with previous experiences of cooperation. Namely:

- UNESCO Beijing Office played a coordination and management role to: oversee the budget and workplan, engage and contract international facilitators, prepare the agenda of the workshop in consultation with facilitators and NAPCH, monitor and evaluate the project;
- the National Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for UNESCO ensured effective liaison between UNESCO and national counterparts and as the signatory of the contract ensured compliance, timely submission of deliverable and financial transactions;
- NAPCH was in charge of local logistics including venue for the workshop, accommodation, local transportation, translation of documents into Korean, in-site interpretation, and visibility in cooperation with KNHPA, the General Bureau of Public Catering Service, the Sci-tech Complex, the Pyongyang University of Foreign Studies, the National Heritage IT Exchange Company, the Radio-Television Broadcasting Committee of DPRK and other institutions. It also played a crucial role in the organization of the inventorying exercise, identifying elements to be surveyed, liaising with local communities and following up with the team for the compilation of the inventory forms.

During project implementation, UNESCO encountered difficulties in making financial transactions to DPRK, due to the sanctions regime enacted by the UN Security Council. This was overcome by making arrangements with the DPRK Embassy in Beijing to ensure the transfer of contract installments to DPRK for the implementation of activities. Though this process slightly delayed Activity 2 (postponed of a few months), the proactive intervention of NAPCH ensured the timely adjustment of the workplan and the completion of all activities by the end of the contract.

To enhance the visibility of project outcomes, NAPCH and UNESCO Beijing Office also prepared a brief video-clip and a leaflet, summarizing activities implemented.

## **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*

In the preparatory phase of the project and later for the planning of all activities, NAPCH held meetings with 12 provincial and municipal authorities to discuss the selection of community members for participation in the training workshop and the selection of ICH elements and related communities for the pilot inventorying exercise. The involvement of communities in the planning and implementation of project activities therefore relied on this consultation mechanism between the centre and the provinces.

Community members selected at the local level to take part in the workshop, although mainly represented by government officials, appeared to be practitioners to some extent, in terms of making traditional foods, drinks or performing Korean dance and music. Participants had their specific demands regarding issues encountered in the nomination and inventorying of elements. These were duly addressed in the agenda and sufficient time was allowed in the schedule to voice concerns during the workshop and group discussion.

The participants engaged well during the more interactive sessions and group work, and

most were not hesitant to raise questions and share experiences. Their input reflected a good knowledge of the Convention overall, and in fact, it was observed by the international facilitators that many of the participants showed a better grasp of the Convention by the end of the workshop than is often the case in UNESCO ICH workshops elsewhere. This is probably due to the strong government engagement with the Convention and the importance attached to the learning opportunities offered by UNESCO in this regard. In light of how readily most participants grasped the content of the workshop and the commitment to improve their working modality in the field of ICH, it is expected that they have taken the learning back to their colleagues and the communities in the provinces.

It is reported by NAPCH that the three communities of Sohung, Pongsan and Unryul counties actively supported the pilot inventorying exercise performed by the team and provided necessary information for completing the survey. Both experienced bearers of the practices as well as young apprentices participated enthusiastically in the interviews and audio-visual recordings, hoping for their practice to be better appreciated and eventually safeguarded.

It needs to be stressed that, given the centralized nature of the country, it is somewhat difficult to assess the engagement of communities concerned in an in-depth manner, without national authorities functioning as intermediaries. It is however understandable how the level of community involvement largely relies on the efforts of NAPCH, which played, and will be playing, key roles in identifying workshop participants, selecting elements and communities for the pilot inventorying exercise, securing and disseminating the results and achievements of the activities, as well as organizing further capacity-building activities at both national and provincial levels in line with the spirit of the current project.

### **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*

The implementation of the project made a great contribution to the capacity of government entities (both at the central and local levels), experts, and communities in applying a community-based approach to inventorying ICH as well as preparing nomination files to the Lists of the Convention, filling gaps that were identified in the appraisal phase. This is evidenced by the prompt revision of the existing questionnaire forms and inventory guidance performed by NAPCH and disseminated nationwide following the workshop. Also, nomination dossiers are in the pipeline for RL and Good Safeguarding Practices.

During the national symposium organized on 24 October 2018 on the occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of DPRK's ratification of the 2003 Convention, new mechanisms and approaches for ICH inventorying were discussed in light of lessons learned during this project and the existing Guidelines for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage are being adapted according to the knowledge acquired through the workshop.

These Guidelines will be distributed to local institutions and trainings will be replicated at the local level. It is also expected to extend the community-based approach piloted on the three selected elements to other elements, including those already part of the national and local inventories, upon availability of financial and technical resources.

As a result of this project, additional funding from the Shunde Municipality, China (approx. 95,000 USD) was secured by UNESCO Beijing Office at the request of the National Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and in close cooperation with the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO. The purpose is to establish an ICH exhibition hall which will serve as a hub for identification, research, documentation, dissemination and nomination of ICH in the country. This will improve nationwide visibility of various ICH elements, contribute to educational purposes, and help disseminate knowledge about safeguarding practices. It is also hoped that the hub will eventually take on additional functions to contribute to further strengthening the capacities and expertise of professionals, accelerating the digitalization of ICH inventories in the country, as well as developing a more comprehensive, unified and nationwide dissemination system for ICH in the country.

The revision of the Law of DPRK on the Protection of National Heritage completed in November 2018 to include specific provisions concerning the safeguarding of ICH demonstrates the highest political commitment. There is reason to believe that the safeguarding efforts in DPRK would become more systematic and sustainable with a solidified legal basis.

To sum up, the current project, along with previous capacity building activities, has contributed significantly to building momentum for and enhancing visibility of ICH safeguarding efforts in the country. More projects and activities are already in the pipeline.

### **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*

As requested by DPRK, the UNESCO Beijing Office was responsible for the coordination and monitoring of the project activities. It was for the first time that the funding of International Assistance was handled through the coordination of a Field Office as a service to a State Party. In a sense, the project was carried out on an experimental basis, and relevant experiences gained from its implementation could be of great value in terms of further ameliorating the mechanism of International Assistance under the 2003 Convention.

The involvement of the Field Office proved effective in ensuring a results-based management approach to the project according to UNESCO's frameworks for monitoring and evaluation. This resulted in efficient monitoring of budget and activities and quality reporting, collecting quantitative and qualitative information on results against identified indicators. Projects managed directly by States Parties might lack this type of approach and result in reporting of insufficient information which might constrain the capacity of UNESCO to fully appraise the effectiveness of the intervention.

With regards to the engagement with international facilitators from the 2003 expert facility, UNESCO Field Offices have abundant experience in managing contracts, negotiating fees and assisting with the preparation of workshop agendas and liaising with national partners. The familiarity of UNESCO Beijing Office with the local context was crucial in sharing with experts their experience in the country, giving advice and guidance on how to shape the workshop most effectively.

Additionally, the coordination by UNESCO could bring technical expertise in all phases of the project, especially in the conception of activities, providing a broader vision on cultural issues to be addressed in the country, offering examples and best practices and finding synergies

with other UNESCO/UN interventions that might lead to a greater impact.

For the DPRK case in particular, the involvement of UNESCO Beijing Office was essential in that it supported the State Party in executing the project under the sanctions regime enforced by the UN Security Council. This entailed consultation with the 1718 Sanctions Committee prior to proceeding with activities in the country, funds management and contracting of international facilitators for engagement in the workshop. It also helped in terms of visibility, particularly on a global level.

## 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)

- Video-clip
- Leaflet

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

Name: Himalchuli Gurung

Title: Programme Specialist for Culture, UNESCO Office in Beijing

Date: 8 October 2019

Signature:

