RE| SHAPING CULTURAL POLICIES

for the promotion of fundamental freedoms and the diversity of cultural expressions

Progress Report 2020
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1-THE PROJECT

Background

The UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (hereafter “2005 Convention”) recognizes the sovereign right of States to formulate and implement policies and measures that support the emergence of dynamic cultural and creative sectors. It ensures that policies and measures are designed and implemented through informed, participatory and transparent processes and guided by principles that promote human rights and fundamental freedoms.

To work towards this objective, Parties to the 2005 Convention (149, to date) have committed to collect and share, through quadrennial periodic reports (hereafter “QPRs”) submitted to UNESCO every four years, information and data on progress or challenges in designing and implementing such policies and measures. The QPRs also represent a unique and valuable source of information which nurture the global monitoring of the implementation of the 2005 Convention and promote the exchange of experiences and peer learning at the international level, in particular on emerging issues such as diversity in and of the media, artistic freedom or gender equality.

However, many Parties have identified a number of challenges throughout the monitoring process, including the absence of cultural monitoring frameworks, limited capacity to assess the impact of cultural policies or fragile networking opportunities between government and civil society. Within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has impacted significantly the cultural and creative sectors, new challenges have also emerged.

With the funding from Sweden, UNESCO has been implementing the 2018-2022 project “Reshaping cultural policies for the promotion of fundamental freedoms and the diversity of cultural expressions” (hereafter “UNESCO-Sida II project”). Building upon the results and impact of the project entitled “Enhancing fundamental freedoms through the promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions” (hereafter “UNESCO-Sida I project”) implemented between 2014 and 2018, the UNESCO-Sida II project has the following two components:
Component 1: Strengthening the human and institutional capacities of governmental and civil society actors to monitor policies and measures and to formulate informed policy recommendations that promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the diversity of cultural expressions.

Component 1 supports government and civil society actors in ten partner countries to work together to collect data and information and engage with each other in policy dialogue by jointly elaborating national periodic reports, and produce informed policy recommendations. The interventions also support inter-ministerial cooperation and civil society engagement in order to help attain sustainable and participatory systems of governance for culture. Furthermore, the project also supports governmental and civil society actors in other six countries (“follow-up partner countries”) that participated in the UNESCO-Sida I project in order to sustain the policy dialogue mechanisms and platforms created and further reinforce policy monitoring and policy implementation in emerging areas such as gender equality, artistic freedom, media diversity and partnership with civil society.

The premise of Component 1 is that periodic reporting is more than just an administrative exercise; it is designed to support, through multi-stakeholder dialogues, evidence-based and participatory cultural policymaking which in turn strengthens democratic processes at the country level. Additionally, drawing on the COVID-19 impact related research developed by UNESCO as well as on the participatory processes established through the QPR exercise, three partner countries are elaborating recovery action plans to tackle the impact of COVID-19 on the creative and cultural sectors adapted to the national contexts.

Component 2: Producing and sharing a Global Report to monitor compliance with obligations under the 2005 Convention and inspire a reshaping of cultural policies worldwide, enhancing fundamental freedoms and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions.

Drawing on both governmental (i.e. periodic reports submitted by countries signatories to the Convention) and non-governmental sources, the third edition of the Global Report is expected to further facilitate information and knowledge sharing, sustain policy dialogue involving stakeholders from the public, private and civil society sectors, inspire policy change and contribute to training a new generation of cultural managers globally.

The maintenance and further development of the Policy Monitoring Platform (PMP) and the development of COVID-19 impact related research promote a wide dissemination and sharing of information related to the implementation of the 2005 Convention and the promotion of fundamental freedoms and the diversity of cultural expressions.

**Contributing to SDGs**

The project contributes to several SDGs, including:

1 Algeria, Bangladesh, Jamaica, Mali, Mauritius, Mongolia, Palestine, Peru, Tanzania, Uganda
2 Burkina Faso, Colombia, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Senegal, Zimbabwe
2- IN THE FIELD: STRENGTHENING PARTICIPATORY POLICY MONITORING

Successful submission of quadrenial periodic reports despite a challenging context

The participatory elaboration of the periodic reports and their submission by the statutory deadlines have been achieved by all the 16 partner countries, despite the on-going pandemic and the difficult context faced by several partner countries. The 100% submission rate in this unprecedented context is an exceptional result demonstrating the relevance of the project and its objectives, especially at a time when government priorities are being diverted to emergency measures to counter the effect of the pandemic. The engagement, generosity, determination, and adaptability of all stakeholders and partners have all been crucial to ensure the achievement of objectives and implementation of activities.

Parties have expressed the relevancy of the project at the 14th session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in February 2021 recognizing that the spaces of dialogue created under the project ensured better communication and a relation of trust between public agencies and civil society organisations.

“We have had the opportunity to report on the 2005 Convention and to prepare a periodic report for the second time. The report process has united all stakeholders to work together and has brought forward the creative sector as an important part of the economic and social structure. (...) Ethiopia’s QPR is the reflection of the transformation and an example of how the government of Ethiopia is giving space for civil society organisations to take the lead in managing the creative sector. This report is also a sign of deep commitment and resilience of all stakeholders, throughout hard and testing times.”

Representative of Ethiopia at the 14th IGC
IN FOCUS: Launch of Peru’s quadrennial periodic report

Peru has elaborated a publication entitled “Policies for the diversity of cultural expressions: Steps taken and ways forward”, an analytical and summarised version of Peru’s QPR providing a diagnostic of the arts and cultural industries from 2016 to 2019 and setting out the main challenges for the coming years. The publication includes an analysis of the data collected, infographics and graphs, as well as opinion articles by four specialists in each of the goals of the 2005 Convention’s monitoring framework. The aim is to provide civil society with an accessible and thought-provoking insight into cultural policies.

A virtual launch was organised on 21 January 2021, including presentations from H.E. Alejandro Neyra, Minister of Culture of Peru, M. Ernesto Ottone, Assistant Director-General for Culture from UNESCO, M. Ernesto Fernandez, Representant of UNESCO in Peru, and Ms Fabiola Reyna, Director of the Women’s Cinema Festival.

Communication materials were elaborated around the publication and disseminated through various networks, notably a video highlighting key recommendations in the report.

Fostering ownership of the QPR process and disseminating the results at the national level

Eleven public presentations were organized either virtually or physically in 2020 in Burkina Faso, Colombia, Ethiopia, Mali, Mongolia, Palestine, Peru, Senegal, Uganda, Tanzania and Zimbabwe in order to share the process and the results of the QPR, fostering an interactive dialogue and gathering comments and inputs from relevant stakeholders for fine-tuning the policy recommendations.

Innovative practices for disseminating the results of the periodic reports are being implemented by partner countries. Colombia currently preparing to publish their QPR to be disseminated nationally. In Burkina Faso and Mali, an executive summary of the periodic report was disseminated in the Council of Ministers, bringing the creative sector to the attention of the highest political representation.

Some partner countries have also taken advantage of cultural events to disseminate the results of their QPR and information of the elaboration process, such as in Mali where a presentation of the QPR was made during the festival “Equations nomades” or in Colombia where the Global Forum on Arts, Culture, Creativity and Technology was the occasion to present the conclusions of the QPR.
IN FOCUS: Uptake of the QPR process

Increased coverage of the QPR process at the national level demonstrates the amplified interest of stakeholders and the public to these processes as well as ownership by partner countries.

In Ethiopia, a press conference was organised following the submission of the QPR and was covered by two local TV stations. In Burkina Faso, around 30 media representatives covered the QPR process. In Algeria, the national point of contact for the QPR process was interviewed in the press on several occasions. In Mongolia, thanks to the cooperation with line Ministries and main stakeholders, especially those in the media field that participated in the media diversity workshop, the activities under the project were featured on several media outlets, including major TV stations. In Zimbabwe, the inclusion of journalists, within the national team has had a positive impact, not only in terms of coverage of the project, but also in terms of understanding and valorisation of the QPR exercise and the 2005 Convention.

National team members presenting the QPR in Mongolia on national TV

Cooperation between government officials and CSO strengthened

A number of countries have started to implement follow-up activities focusing on capacity-building for civil society and/or inter-ministerial cooperation, based on the conclusions of the QPRs and mobilising the national teams.

In Bangladesh, an assessment of the COVID-19 impact on the cultural and creative sectors was launched. In Mali, follow-up activities include: training sessions for cultural journalists on policy monitoring and the 2005 Convention and supporting photographers and visual artists through the organisation of an exhibition. In Jamaica, a media diversity training will be organised, alongside a plan to disseminate the National Culture Policy. In Mongolia, the establishment of the multi-stakeholder project team has also fostered more and better cooperation at the inter-ministerial level and involved a variety of stakeholders (academia, media, NGOs, CSOs, etc.), leading to the establishment of the Division of Creative Industries and Innovation in the Ministry of Culture.

In other partner countries, discussions are being conducted in cooperation with UNESCO Field Offices to plan for follow-up activities according to the priorities identified through the QPR elaboration process. For instance, media diversity trainings will be organised in Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania and Mauritius and a training on artistic freedom is planned to take place in Palestine.
Giving a voice to cultural professionals during the pandemic: the ResiliArt movement

UNESCO launched an international movement, ResiliArt, a debate series calling artists and cultural professionals to organise open and inclusive conversations to share stories about needs and challenges that the creative sector is facing in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over 270 debates have been organised, involving more than 110 countries since the launch of the movement on 15 April 2020.

Organised either by civil society organisations or national counterparts, the engagement of partner countries in the ResiliArt debates demonstrates the uptake of the capacity-building activities at the national level and the growing awareness for an inclusive and transparent governance of culture in times of crisis.

Since April 2020, 12 partner countries\(^3\) have organised ResiliArt debates. Members of national teams and project holders were mobilised to take part in ResiliArt debates. For instance, the ResiliArt debate in Mongolia included two members of the national team as speakers. The ResiliArt debate organised by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Ethiopia also included national team members, such as Dr Elizabeth Giorgis, associate professor in the College of Performing and Visual Art at Addis Ababa University and Mr Manyazewal Endeshow, director general of the National Theatre. Uganda organised a series of six ResiliArt debates, which have led to concrete actions, notably the provision of food relief to impacted artists and the design of a proposal for a rescue fund by the National Culture and Creative Forum.

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\(^3\) Algeria, Colombia, Ethiopia, Jamaica, Mauritius, Mongolia, Palestine, Peru, Senegal, Uganda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe.

“The ResiliArt movement was a mechanism through which we could learn from artists, and let artists learn from each other. It raised awareness about the challenges as well as opportunities created by COVID-19 among artists. It also led to information sharing on national, regional and international level. (...) ResiliArt made us go out of our comfort zone and to make new connections. Originally, they classified the culture sector as part of Tourism Cluster, which made it difficult for arts actors to benefit from resources. After productive discussions, it was decided that a stand-alone Culture and Creative Industry Cluster will be created. With this new structure, it will be much easier for culture actors to access funding and capacity building opportunities offered by the private sector.”

Juliana Akoryo, Commissioner for Culture and Family Affairs in Uganda
Supporting participatory recovery plans for the culture

To tackle the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the culture and creative sectors, a context-based approach has been adopted in Palestine, Peru and Senegal to define supplementary activities to be implemented.

**Peru** is focusing on the elaboration of a recovery plan for the next 5 years for the culture and creative sectors, with special attention to the status of the artist. **Palestine** is elaborating a recovery plan with special attention to the digital environment and the “E-culture”. **Senegal** is implementing a specific measure to establish a first diploma training on cultural management entirely dedicated to women.

"We are working with UNESCO on two important things to see how we can have a new artist’s law, which is fundamental, because in reality part of the problem we have is the cultural sector does not have stability or clear rules to develop its activities (…) and to see a response that goes beyond the support that was given last year, which may be a temporary palliative, but which does not provide us with real solutions to the problem of the cultural sector."

Alejandro Neyra, Minister of Culture of Peru
Supporting emerging programmes on gender equality

Data from the quadrennial periodic reports of the 16 partner countries reveals that 81% reported on gender equality.

Moreover, a number of concrete actions have been developed at the operational level. In Peru, a scholarship has been granted to women for the second consecutive year in the framework of the partnership between UNESCO Peru and MALI (Museum of Art of Lima), contributing to the reduction of inequality in women’s access to functions and decision-making positions in the cultural sector. The Ministry of Culture in Colombia has launched a study aimed at mapping the status of women in publishing and the audio-visual sectors gathering primary and secondary sources from a wide range of actors from the public and private sectors as well as civil society organisations. The UNESCO Field Office in Dakar launched in 2020 a digital campaign entitled “The Voice of resilient women”, which disseminated portraits of ten Senegalese and Malian women artists on social media and through two webinars in August 2020 to promote and recognize the contribution of these women role models to the dynamism of the West African cultural sectors. Partner countries, such as Algeria, Palestine and Mongolia have also organised various ResiliArt debates specifically on gender equality and the status of the artist.

“We must never allow ourselves to be locked in the gaze of the others, instead if you have a vision, believe in yourself and do not accept any compromise”

Salimata Diop, curator

Inspiring informed policymaking and innovative measures

QPRs are increasingly being used as a strategic tool for governments and civil society organisations nationally, and not just as a reporting mechanism for UNESCO. At the national level, partner countries have embraced a QPR participatory process as an important priority setting instrument for Ministries of Culture, sparked policy dialogue and inspired policy changes.

In Zimbabwe, following the successful submission of its second periodic report, the Ministry of Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation and the National Arts Council of Zimbabwe lobbied and participated in national development planning processes that, for the first time, resulted in a section on culture being included in the National Development Strategy (2021-25). In Ethiopia, the government has dedicated a full office and team to further develop the cultural and creative industries. In Bangladesh, the QPR process enabled awareness-raising on the 2005 Convention and helped gather for the first time CSOs and government agencies to start a dialogue on cultural
policy reform. As a first steppingstone, the Government of Bangladesh approved the draft of the Bangladesh Film Artists Welfare Trust Act 2020 in November 2020. The aim of the Act is to ensure the overall welfare of actors employed in the country’s film industry, including financial assistance to artists. Burkina Faso is working to establish an inter-ministerial committee, including civil society organisations, to pursue the multi-stakeholder consultations and ensure the implementation of the recommendations included in its QPR.

3-GLOBAL MONITORING AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Global monitoring promoting the diversity of cultural expressions enhanced

A record number of quadrennial periodic reports were received in 2020: despite the exceptional circumstances, 79 periodic reports were submitted to UNESCO, representing a twofold increase in the submission rate compared to the first year (2016) of the second periodic reporting cycle. For the third edition of the Global Report, to be launched in February 2022 on the occasion of the 15 Intergovernmental Committee, 96 periodic reports will thus be considered as primary data to be analysed.

Overall, the quality and relevance of the information provided in periodic reports significantly improved and developing countries reached a better submission rate, accounting for 59% of the total number of reports due and submitted in 2020. It is worth noting the improvement in the geographical representation of the reports received, as shown in the figure below, and in particular from the Arab States.
Upgrading the Knowledge Management System

The Policy Monitoring Platform has been progressively updated to include policies and measures drawn from all reports submitted in 2020.

New filters and search features have also been added. Two new transversal priorities allow users to easily find policies and measures taken to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic or related to climate change. In addition, new developments have been made so that the Policy Monitoring Platform can display, in a differentiated way, the measures and initiatives carried out by civil society organizations as described in the periodic reports submitted in 2020.

About 500 measures and initiatives from civil society organizations are available online, along with almost 4,000 policies and measures from governments. These new developments will strengthen the Policy Monitoring Platform as a unique research and knowledge sharing tool. It will also enhance synergies between the various monitoring tools of the Convention and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
Broadening knowledge on emerging issues

Raising awareness on artistic freedom

Launched on 3 May on the occasion of the 2020 World Press Freedom Day, the Special Edition Freedom & Creativity: Defending Art, Defending Diversity highlights artistic freedom as a pillar of freedom of expression, reveals flaws in artistic freedom that the COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated, and progress that could be built upon. The publication was discussed in depth during the panel discussion “Creativity Without Fear or Favour: Towards a Collaboration between Press and Artists” at the World Press Freedom Conference 2020 in Den Haag, the Netherlands. For the first time, the World Press Freedom Conference’s concept note included many references to artists emphasising the correlations between artistic freedom and freedom of expression and recognising that artists and cultural professionals share the same struggles as journalists and media professionals over gender equality, media independence and diversity, and censorship.

“We are connected with a common connection: freedom of expression. Arts and the press have a lot in common, as they are both the cornerstones of free and democratic societies. They are expressions of our relentless search for knowledge and information. They are rights we exercise and ready to defend at all costs.”

Ipek Sur, journalist and moderator of the panel discussion “Creativity Without Fear or Favour”

IN FOCUS: Implementing initiatives at the national level

Research and knowledge production work is being operationalised at the country level through the development of new initiatives, programmes and projects. In Indonesia, a white paper for the development of a media diversity monitoring framework has been elaborated. In Mongolia, following the media diversity workshop held in September 2019, the participants created a community of practice continuing to engage with each other in knowledge sharing and advocacy efforts.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NQf32nmahkQ
Broadening knowledge on gender equality in culture sectors

Launched on 8 March 2021 on the occasion of the International Women’s Day, the Special Edition Gender & Creativity: Progress on the Precipice highlights a number of innovative measures from all regions, ranging from training and mentoring schemes, awareness-raising campaigns, mechanisms to enhance the visibility of women artists, networking opportunities, and facilitating access to funding. This report offers a number of key recommendations to governments, civil society organisations, academia, artists and cultural professionals, trade unions and legislators in order to inspire future actions. On the occasion of the 8th session of the conference of Parties of the 2005 Convention, UNESCO launched the publication by inviting prominent academics and cultural professionals.

IN FOCUS UNESCO Research to foster dialogue at country level

The dissemination and uptake at country level is crucial to foster dialogue on new emerging topics and advance knowledge as well as to promote exchanges of innovative practices and to operationalize the recommendations included in the report.

The UNESCO Field Office in Lima (Peru) has disseminated the report through their networks while announcing the winners of the 2nd edition of the scholarship for women cultural managers promoted by UNESCO and the Lima Art Museum (MALI). The report was also presented and discussed on the occasion of a ResiliArt dialogue cycle, “The voice of women art workers” hosted between March and April 2021.

As part of the Transcultura project implemented by the UNESCO Field Office in La Havana (Cuba), the report was launched through a webinar on 8 March 2021 for International Women’s Day entitled “Women & cultural entrepreneurship: opportunities and challenges in the post-COVID-19 era”, featuring nine emblematic women, leaders in the cultural and creative sectors.

“Although women artists in Ethiopia graduate with outstanding grades from prominent art colleges, life challenges and social barriers have led women to set the arts aside. In this regard, women artists associations are crucial to provide opportunities to enable women to showcase their ideas and skills in order to pursue a career in the arts. There is a lack of policies and measures for the arts integrating a gender lens, that is why it is crucial that associations representing the voices of women’s artists, such as ours, be included in policy dialogue. Advocacy for policy change in this sense should include the promotion of artistic freedom and gender equality for sustainable development in the arts and culture sectors and provide exhibition spaces, marketing opportunities, trainings, exchange programmes and fund allocations to support women artists.”

Ruth Ademasu, Visual Artist, President of the Ethiopian Women’s Visual Artist Association & Member of the QPR national team of Ethiopia
Generating new knowledge on the impact of the pandemic in the culture sectors

Encouraged to report COVID-19 emergency measures, **44% of the 16 partner countries included in their periodic reports information on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis** on the cultural and creative sectors, as well as on emergency measures. Some countries, such as Algeria, Uganda and Bangladesh specifically used the periodic reporting process to start monitoring the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their cultural and creative sectors, thereby demonstrating the relevance and value of participatory policy mechanisms in times of crisis.

Collecting and showcasing information on the COVID-19 pandemic is part of ongoing governments efforts to develop evidence-based measures to address the impact of the crisis on cultural professionals but remains a challenge. It has notably contributed to enhance global transparency and information sharing by providing relevant policy practices to enrich the COVID-19 Response dynamic webpage and to inform the toolkit entitled Culture in Crisis: Policy Guide for a Resilient Creative Sector.

With regards to knowledge management and COVID-19 impact related research, a global study on the economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis in the cultural and creative sectors was published in June 2021. The publication entitled Cultural and Creative Industries in the Face of COVID-19: An Economic Impact Outlook collects existing data from various sources and to present a preliminary analysis on the scale of the economic impact of the pandemic on revenues and Gross Added Value generated by the cultural and creative industries.