COMMUNITY-BASED INVENTORYING OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

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Presented by:

Susanne Schnuttgen, Chief of Capacity Building and Heritage Policy, Living Heritage, Culture Sector
The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

Objectives

- To safeguard the intangible heritage of humanity
- To ensure respect for it
- To raise awareness of the importance of ICH and ensure mutual appreciation thereof
- To provide for international cooperation and assistance

178 States Parties (May 2018)

75% of SIDS have ratified the Convention
Defining intangible cultural heritage

An open definition:

**Article 2.1:**

*For the purposes of the Convention, the ‘Intangible Cultural Heritage’ means*

the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills

• as well as the **instruments**, **objects**, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith –

• **that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.**
For the purpose of the 2003 Convention

- Oral traditions
- Traditional craftsmanship
- Social practices, rituals, festive events
- Knowledge about nature and the universe

However, each country may define different domains

Other domains defined by the State Parties
Oral traditions

Proverbs, riddles, tales, nursery rhymes, legends, myths, epic songs and poems, charms, prayers, chants, songs, dramatic performances, etc.
Performing arts

Vocal or instrumental music, dance, theatre, pantomime, sung verse, certain forms of storytelling, etc.

Sega tambour of Rodrigues Island, Mauritius

Lakalaka, dances and sung speeches of Tonga
Social practices, rituals, festive events

Activities that structure the lives of communities and groups linked to the life cycle of individuals and groups (initiation rites, birth, marriage, burial ceremonies, etc.), the agricultural calendar, the succession of seasons or other temporal systems, etc.
Knowledge about nature and the universe

Vanuatu Sand Drawings

Andean cosmovision of the Kallawaya, Bolivia

Xooy, a divination ceremony among the Serer of Senegal

Traditional ecological wisdom, indigenous knowledge, traditional healing systems and pharmacopeia, rituals, foodways, beliefs, esoteric sciences, initiatory rites, divinations, cosmologies, cosmogonies, shamanism, possession rites, etc.
Traditional craftsmanship

Pottery making, engraving, weaving, embroidery, paper cutting, lacemaking, etc.
Key concepts for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage

- Intergenerational transmission
- Widest possible participation of the community
- Living/dynamic heritage
Inventories, prominent in the Convention

State obligation in the Convention

Process of Identifying & documenting for safeguarding

Basis for safeguarding plans

Encourages self-respect of communities

Raising awareness

Inventories of intangible cultural heritage, also called: “living heritage”

See more details on inventories in Articles 11 & 12
Eight guiding principles

1. **Community consent:** should be based on procedures that document agreement with the communities, groups or, where appropriate, individuals concerned, consent is required before the start of inventorying processes, and for major decisions during these processes (Article 15; Ethical Principle 4; Committee)

2. **Community Involvement:** should present intangible cultural heritage elements that were identified with the participation of the communities and groups concerned, and of relevant nongovernmental organizations (Article 11(b), Ethical Principle 1);

3. **Inclusive Inventorying:** should aim to be inclusive (Article 11(b));
Eight guiding principles - continued

4. **Substantial Information**: should contain substantial information about the inventoried elements (Article 12.1);

5. **Purposes of Inventorying**: should be designed in such a way that they contribute to the purposes of the Convention, safeguarding in the first place (Article 12.1);

6. **Updating**: should be regularly updated (Article 12.1), with the participation of the communities, groups and individuals concerned (Article 15);

7. **Reporting about inventorying**: should be reported about in the six-yearly periodic reports that States Parties have to submit to the Committee (Article 12.2);

8. **Access**: should respect customary practices concerning access to intangible cultural heritage (Article 13(d)(ii))
Inventorying: community-based & dynamic

• Drawing up inventories
  ✓ Involving the tradition bearers and practitioners
  ✓ Comprehensiveness and extent of information
  ✓ Regularly updated
  ✓ Scope
  ✓ Domains and categories
  ✓ Intangible and tangible
  ✓ Native and/or immigrant ICH
  ✓ Documentation
  ✓ Property rights
Example: Philippines

- Innovative documentation of their indigenous knowledge about plants found in their ancestral domain.
- The plants are valuable to them for their medicinal, agricultural, economic, and religious uses.
- Elders recognized threats – no longer passed on to younger generations
- Specialized organizations provided them with the skills to document this indigenous knowledge themselves - acting as facilitators
- The resulting documentation was packaged into a multimedia format and other popular educational materials in English with Subanen translations – with copyright
Example: Brazil

- Ministry tasks local NGO
- Twelve Busoga community members trained to identify and inventory ICH elements in their own community
- Questionnaires developed
- Community consulted
- Information gathered will be included in the national ICH inventory for Uganda

Busoga community practising their interviewing skills for inventorying the intangible heritage
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Community-based inventorying - Characteristics

- Establishing dialogue
- Creative process
- Recognizes community members as creators and experts
- Non-community participants are first and foremost co-facilitators
- Recognizing diversity within a community
- Valuing divergent and different opinions

Merengue musicians in Dominican Republic
Community-based inventorying: methodology

- Draws from various experiences and tools in areas such as:
  - participatory rural appraisal and other participatory development tools;
  - obtaining free, prior and informed consent;
  - participatory ethnography;
  - oral history research; and
  - participatory spatial information management and communication.

Festivity of Las Parrandas in the centre of Cuba
UNESCO’s capacity building programme

- Introduction to Community-Based Inventorying (Units 18, 2, 3, 6 and 7)
- **Inventorying Framework** and Issues of Ethics and Responsibilities (units 19 to 22)
- **Information Generation Methods and Techniques** (units 23 to 28)
- Putting Community-Based Inventorying into Practice (units 29 to 33)
- Access and dissemination and Documentation and inventorying (units 34 to 35)

Interviewing an elderly gentleman who is expert in Saman in Indonesia

Ongoing projects in 13 SIDS
More support is needed
Links between inventories & listing

**Nomination forms** request technical details such as:

(1) the name of the inventory
(2) the name of the agency (institution, etc.) responsible for the inventory
(3) the method and frequency of updating
(4) the reference number and name of the element concerned in the inventory
(5) the date of the inclusion of the element in the inventory, as well as;
(6) a substantial explanation of how the inventorying took place with the participation of the communities groups and individuals concerned,
(7) Finally, documentary evidence is requested in the form of pages copied from the inventory confirming the technical details and that inventorying was carried out in conformity with Articles 11 and 12.
### Example: Sega tambour of Rodrigues Island, 2017

#### 5. Inclusion of the element in an inventory

Sega Tambour is one of the elements included in the National Inventory of ICH for the Republic of Mauritius compiled by the NHF with assistance of UoM since 2011. The first official inventory approved by Government in March 2013 subsequently updated and is maintained by the NHF. Inventory entries are updated on a regular basis as the information comes in and Sega Tambour's most recent update was carried out in 2015. The updated inventory 'National Inventory ICH Rodrigues Island Domain 2 Category 1 Element 1', is attached and available at: [http://culture.govmu.org/English/DOCUMENTS/ICH20INVENTORY_RODRIGUES%20ISLAND.PDF](http://culture.govmu.org/English/DOCUMENTS/ICH20INVENTORY_RODRIGUES%20ISLAND.PDF)

117 elements are included in the inventory organised in 5 domains as per the islands of the Republic of Mauritius. In 2012 workshops held with more than 70 participants provided feedback for finalisation of the first stage of the Republic of Mauritius inventory. Representatives of practitioners, artists, instruments-makers, community organizations participated in the identification of the element and in the compilation and revision of the inventory entry.

Twelve workshops were held between 2011 and 2015 to compile and update the inventory entry of Sega Tambour with the practitioners, groups among others Koulouden, Solitaire, Cardinal Blanc, Bwa Siro Dibwa Dir, Camaron, individuals, representatives of audiences and other stakeholders. Women and youth formed a major part of all these meetings, as demonstrated in the consent forms and videos. The free prior and informed consents of communities concerned for the inclusion of the element in the inventory collected in 2015 workshops are recorded and archived at the NHF.
Example: Sega tambour of Rodrigues Island

Excerpt from Decision 12.COM 11.B.22 of the Intergovernmental Committee

R.5: Sega Tambour of Rodrigues Island was included in the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage for the Republic of Mauritius in 2011 and also figures in the official directory approved in 2013. Representatives of practitioners, artists, instrument-makers and community organizations participated in the identification of the element and in the compilation and revision of the inventory entry. The inventory is regularly updated and is maintained by the NHF.

Consent of communities - video: English/Mauritian Creole
13 SIDs elements inscribed

8 in group 3
Jamaica, Maroon heritage of Moore Town, 2008
Cuba, La Tumba Francesa, 2008; Rumba in Cuba, a festive combination of music and dances and all the practices associated, 2016; Punto, 2017
Dominican Republic, Cocolo dance drama tradition; Cultural space of the Brotherhood of the Holy Spirit of the Congos of Villa Mella, 2008; Music and dance of the merengue in the Dominican Republic, 2016
Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, Language, dance and music of the Garifuna, 2008

2 in group 4
Tonga, Lakalaka, dances and sung speeches of Tonga, 2008 and Vanuatu sand drawings, 2008

3 in group 5
Mauritius, Traditional Mauritian Sega, 2014; Bhojpuri folk songs in Mauritius, Geet-Gawai, 2016; Sega tambour of Rodrigues Island, 2017
Resources

- **Webpage on inventorying for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage**
  - Guidance note
  - Reference to analytical study of periodic reports on safeguarding
  - Links to examples

- **Webpage on the global capacity-building programme**
  - Practical guidance on conducting pilot inventories
  - Training materials on community-based inventorying (60 hours of training)
  - Case studies
  - A global network of 130 facilitators competent to conduct training, activities and advisory services on inventorying intangible cultural heritage
THANK YOU

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