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Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

2009

A young girl with dark hair, wearing a white batik shirt with gold floral patterns, is focused on writing on a white scroll. She is using a traditional pen made from a wooden gourd with a natural nib. The scroll has some handwritten text in a cursive script. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting an outdoor or traditional setting.

Register of Best Safeguarding Practices



Register of Best Safeguarding Practices



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Foreword

by Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO

UNESCO is proud to launch this much-awaited series of publications devoted to three key components of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, and the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices. The publication of these first three books attests to the fact that the 2003 Convention has now reached the crucial operational phase.

The successful implementation of this ground-breaking legal instrument remains one of UNESCO's priority actions, and one to which I am firmly committed. In 2008, before my election as Director-General of UNESCO, I had the privilege of chairing one of the sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Sofia, Bulgaria. This enriching experience reinforced my personal convictions regarding the significance of intangible cultural heritage, its fragility, and the urgent need to safeguard it for future generations.

It is most encouraging to note that since the adoption of the Convention in 2003, the term 'intangible cultural heritage' has become more familiar thanks largely to the efforts of UNESCO and its partners worldwide. However, much remains to be done. We must continue to send out clear messages about what constitutes intangible cultural heritage, why it should be safeguarded, and what actions need to be taken.

The present publication series, along with UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage website, will serve as our principal communication tool for informing the widest possible public about all aspects of living heritage. Moreover, we trust that the numerous examples of intangible cultural heritage worldwide and the concrete information about community participation and effective safeguarding practices featured in these pages will incite all those concerned – from government officials, policy makers, teachers and youth, to NGOs and international organizations – to appreciate the significance of their own living heritage and that of other cultures. This heightened awareness should, in turn, spur further safeguarding measures and activities.

The UN General Assembly proclaimed 2010 as the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures. UNESCO's efforts to safeguard intangible cultural heritage aim to promote "reciprocal knowledge of cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity" – one of the four stated objectives of the Year. Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage directly contributes to UNESCO's priority mission to safeguard the world's cultural diversity.

Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage requires close collaboration with local, regional and international actors and practitioners of all ages, thus providing an excellent opportunity for intergenerational as well as intercultural dialogue. The multinational intangible cultural heritage elements and multinational best safeguarding practices described in these publications provide good examples of constructive international cooperation.

I am confident that these publications will also encourage more Member States to join the growing ranks of the States Parties to the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. More than 120 have ratified the Convention to date. This unique legal instrument will thus become a truly universal tool and the foremost reference point for safeguarding our irreplaceable living heritage.

Introduction

UNESCO

Founded in 1945, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), a specialized agency of the United Nations, has a mandate in international cooperation in the fields of education, science, culture, and communication. UNESCO functions as a laboratory of ideas, setting standards to forge universal agreements on emerging issues. The Organization also serves as a clearing-house for the dissemination and sharing of information and knowledge as it assists its 193 Member States to build on their human and institutional capacities.

The Culture Sector, as one of the Programme Sectors of UNESCO, has over the years been involved in the creation of seven international conventions in the field of culture¹, for which the Sector assumes a Secretariat role. The Sector assists the Member States in the protection and promotion of their cultural diversity through the adoption of measures encompassing heritage protection, rehabilitation and safeguarding, and the development and implementation of cultural policies and sustainable cultural industries.

The Convention for Intangible Cultural Heritage

The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, adopted during the 2003 General Conference of UNESCO, and which entered into force in 2006, is one of seven UNESCO Conventions in the field of culture. The Convention has four primary goals:

- To safeguard intangible cultural heritage.
- To ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of communities, groups and individuals concerned.
- To raise awareness and appreciation of the importance of intangible cultural heritage at local, national and international levels.
- To provide for international cooperation and assistance.

The term ‘intangible cultural heritage’ is defined in the Convention as “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” (Article 2.1). The domains covered by the Convention include oral expressions and traditions, performing arts, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, and traditional craftsmanship.

1. UNESCO's seven conventions in the field of culture includes: Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005); Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003); Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001); Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972); Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Cultural Property (1970); Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954); and Universal Copyright Convention (1952, 1971).

The 2003 Convention is composed of two statutory organs: the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention made up of signatory States to the Convention that meet every two years to provide strategic orientations for the implementation of the Convention; and the twenty-four members of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage elected by the General Assembly that meet annually to carry forward the concrete implementation of the Convention. One of the principal responsibilities of the Intergovernmental Committee is to inscribe intangible cultural heritage elements on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding as well as select programmes, projects and activities that best reflect the principles and objectives of the Convention in order to create a Register of Best Safeguarding Practices.

Register of Best Safeguarding Practices

Article 18 in the 2003 Convention stipulates that the Intergovernmental Committee periodically selects, among proposals submitted by States Parties, programmes, projects and activities for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage considered to best reflect the principles and objectives of the Convention. Once selected, the Committee promotes these initiatives as best safeguarding practices and accompanies their implementation for wider dissemination. This register of best practices is expected to serve as a platform for sharing good practices as well as serve as a source of inspiration to States, communities and anyone interested in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Learning more about effective safeguarding measures with proven success across various types of intangible cultural heritage in different geographical regions will help the parties concerned develop their own appropriate safeguarding measures.

States Parties and communities wishing to share their effective safeguarding measures are invited to fill in and submit to UNESCO form ICH-03, available for download from the ICH Convention website (www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/forms/). Proposals may include any of the safeguarding measures mentioned in Article 2.3 of the Convention, and at any level whether national, subregional, regional or international.

In the proposal, submitting States Parties are requested to describe and explain why the proposal should be considered for and included in the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices. From among the programmes, projects or activities proposed to the Committee by States Parties, only those that best satisfy the following criteria are selected:

2. According to Article 2.3 of the Convention, "Safeguarding" means measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage."

- Criterion 1** The programme, project or activity involves safeguarding, as defined in Article 2.3² of the Convention.
- Criterion 2** The programme, project or activity promotes the coordination of efforts for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage on regional, subregional and/or international levels.
- Criterion 3** The programme, project or activity reflects the principles and objectives of the Convention.
- Criterion 4** If already completed, the programme, project or activity has demonstrated effectiveness in contributing to the viability of the intangible cultural heritage concerned. If still underway or planned, it can reasonably be expected to contribute substantially to the viability of the intangible cultural heritage concerned.
- Criterion 5** The programme, project or activity has been or will be implemented with the participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent.
- Criterion 6** The programme, project or activity may serve as a subregional, regional or international model, as the case may be, for safeguarding activities.
- Criterion 7** The submitting State(s) Party(ies), implementing body(ies), and community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned are willing to cooperate in the dissemination of best practices, if their programme, project or activity is selected.
- Criterion 8** The programme, project or activity features experiences that are susceptible to an assessment of their results.
- Criterion 9** The programme, project or activity is primarily applicable to the particular needs of developing countries.

At its fourth session in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in 2009, the Intergovernmental Committee launched the Register of Best Safeguarding Practices by selecting two national and one subregional safeguarding programmes. The publication describes these first three chosen practices through presentation of community involvement, and the reasons for the decision to consider them as effective safeguarding measures. This publication series by UNESCO is just one of the many efforts to widely disseminate information on safeguarding. It will be regularly updated as the number of proposals to this register selected by the Committee continues to grow. More detailed information, including the actual nomination files, community consents, photographic and film documentation as well as any updates are all available for consultation on UNESCO's intangible heritage website (www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/lists/).

The Committee is currently assisting the States Parties, whose proposed safeguarding measures have been selected for this register, to develop various communication materials, from written manuals and methodologies to exhibition supports, with the aim of providing concrete examples on how to implement these effective safeguarding measures in other contexts. Among the mechanisms established by the 2003 Convention that provide the international community with opportunities for cooperation, this register is expected to become one of the more practical and useful tools. UNESCO hopes that States Parties to the Convention will submit proposals to this register so as to inform on effective safeguarding practices. The register will thus become a veritable platform in the sharing of ideas and experiences.



Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage of Aymara communities in Bolivia, Chile and Peru

1

Bolivia
(Plurinational
State of)
.....
Chile
.....
Peru

The Aymara people located in Bolivia, Chile and Peru, represent one of the oldest Andean cultures of the continent. At present, several of their forms of cultural heritage, including traditional knowledge related to textile art, agricultural techniques, oral expressions and musical forms, risk extinction due to drastic changes associated with globalization, lack of appropriate cultural policies and migration.

In August 2008, Bolivia, Chile and Peru decided to launch a five-year sub-regional project to safeguard the oral expressions, music and traditional knowledge of the Aymara communities of Bolivia (La Paz, Oruro, Potosí), Chile (Tarapacá, Arica, Parinacota, Antofagasta) and Peru (Tacna, Puno, Moquegua).

The activities planned for implementation include: (i) identifying and inventorying the traditional knowledge and oral traditions of Aymara communities in the selected areas, (ii) strengthening language as a vehicle for transmission of intangible cultural heritage through formal and non-formal education, (iii) promoting and disseminating Aymara oral and musical expressions, and (iv) reinforcing traditional knowledge related to the production of textile arts and traditional agricultural techniques.

The first phase of the project is being implemented by professional technical teams in Bolivia, Chile and Peru, with the active participation of Aymara communities. Three national reports and one regional analysis report will be produced on the current situation concerning Aymara's cultural heritage. The project will identify local Aymara carriers, specialists, research institutions, governmental and non-governmental agencies, and establish a regional information database.

The second phase will undertake to train teachers and fifty cultural managers from local communities. The aim is to create a subregional and international network comprising individuals, communities, groups, cultural managers, specialists, indigenous organizations, research centres, NGOs and governments, to promote the exchange of experience, information and training. Activities to disseminate Aymara culture will include an annual travelling music festival, a tri-national meeting, and regional contests of short stories and poetry in primary schools.

Aymara associations and indigenous organizations in the three countries were involved at different stages of planning, implementation, management, monitoring and

In August 2008, Bolivia, Chile and Peru decided to launch a five-year sub-regional project to safeguard the oral expressions, music and traditional knowledge of the Aymara communities.

assessment of the project. Different working strategies were established at the outset to guarantee the appropriation of the project by the involved communities.

These included the setting up of a sub-regional committee based upon cooperation between local communities, government bodies and NGOs in order to monitor and assess the project. A multidisciplinary team was also established, including bearers, specialists and professionals of the Aymara community to consult on project implementation.

A sub-regional and international directory of Aymara individuals, groups and communities, as well as of specialists and indigenous organizations, was set up, and a network was

developed to allow a fluent exchange of regular information regarding the progress, achievements and difficulties of the project, ensuring the active participation of all the actors involved. In addition, young Aymara generations were encouraged to participate in regional contests of literary creativity and oral expressions.

The project reflects a substantial number of the principles and objectives for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, as established in the 2003 Convention. The proposed safeguarding measures are comprehensive, involving activities relating to identifying, researching and documenting the heritage of Aymara communities; strengthening transmission of their heritage through formal and non-formal



Aymara associations and indigenous organizations in the three countries were involved at different stages of planning, implementation, management, monitoring and assessment of the project.



COMUNIDAD SAN SEBASTIAN
MORENADA CERRO
COMUNA
MAYO FELIZ
2010



The project promotes awareness-raising of safeguarding cultural heritage through a series of activities, including festivals, meetings and contests.



education; promoting and disseminating their oral and musical expressions; and reinforcing traditional knowledge regarding their agricultural practices. The potential effectiveness of its programme is moreover demonstrated by its systematic and well-defined action plans, which are both measurable and assessable.

The project promotes awareness-raising of safeguarding cultural heritage through a series of activities, including festivals, meetings and contests organized in Bolivia, Chile and Peru. These are expected to lead to increased visibility and recognition of Aymara cultural heritage at local and national levels. Furthermore, these and related activities should increase awareness about the importance of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in the Latin America region as a whole.

Another fundamental aspect of the project is the involvement of local Aymara communities in all the activities mentioned above. The consultation and active participation of local communities in the three neighbouring countries is indeed fundamental to the project's approach and its methodology. Moreover, the ongoing training of local managers and local actors will ensure the sustainability of the project's activities, and the continuing transmission of Aymara values, heritage and expressions. The willingness of local communities, as well as the concerned States and implementing bodies, to share their experiences in the dissemination of best practices testifies to the level of participation.

Finally, the project and its activities are expected to contribute to the reinforcement of mutual tolerance and dialogue amongst cultures, promoting human creativity and cultural diversity.



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Education and training in Indonesian Batik intangible cultural heritage for elementary, junior, senior, vocational school and polytechnic students, in collaboration with the Batik Museum in Pekalongan



Traditionally, batik culture is passed on through oral and non-formal transmission, mostly within families.

Indonesian Batik is a traditional hand-crafted textile passed down for generations in Java and its environs since the early nineteenth century. Cloth is decorated with patterns of dots and lines produced by the application of hot wax using a canthing *tulis* pen or cap stamp. The applied motifs symbolize social status, local communities, nature, history and cultural heritage.

Efforts to ensure the safeguarding of batik heritage were initiated as a result of the realization that the younger generation were losing interest in batik culture due to the influence of globalization, modernization and technology, among other factors. Unless efforts to transmit batik cultural values and traditional handicraft skills were renewed, the skills and traditions faced decline and possible extinction.

The proposed safeguarding measures focused on transmission of the heritage. Traditionally, batik culture is passed on through oral and non-formal transmission, mostly within families. In order to guarantee future transmission of the heritage, batik culture was introduced into the curriculum of formal educational institutions.

The management of the newly-opened Batik Museum Institute in Pekalongan, Central Java, instituted a programme, in collaboration with

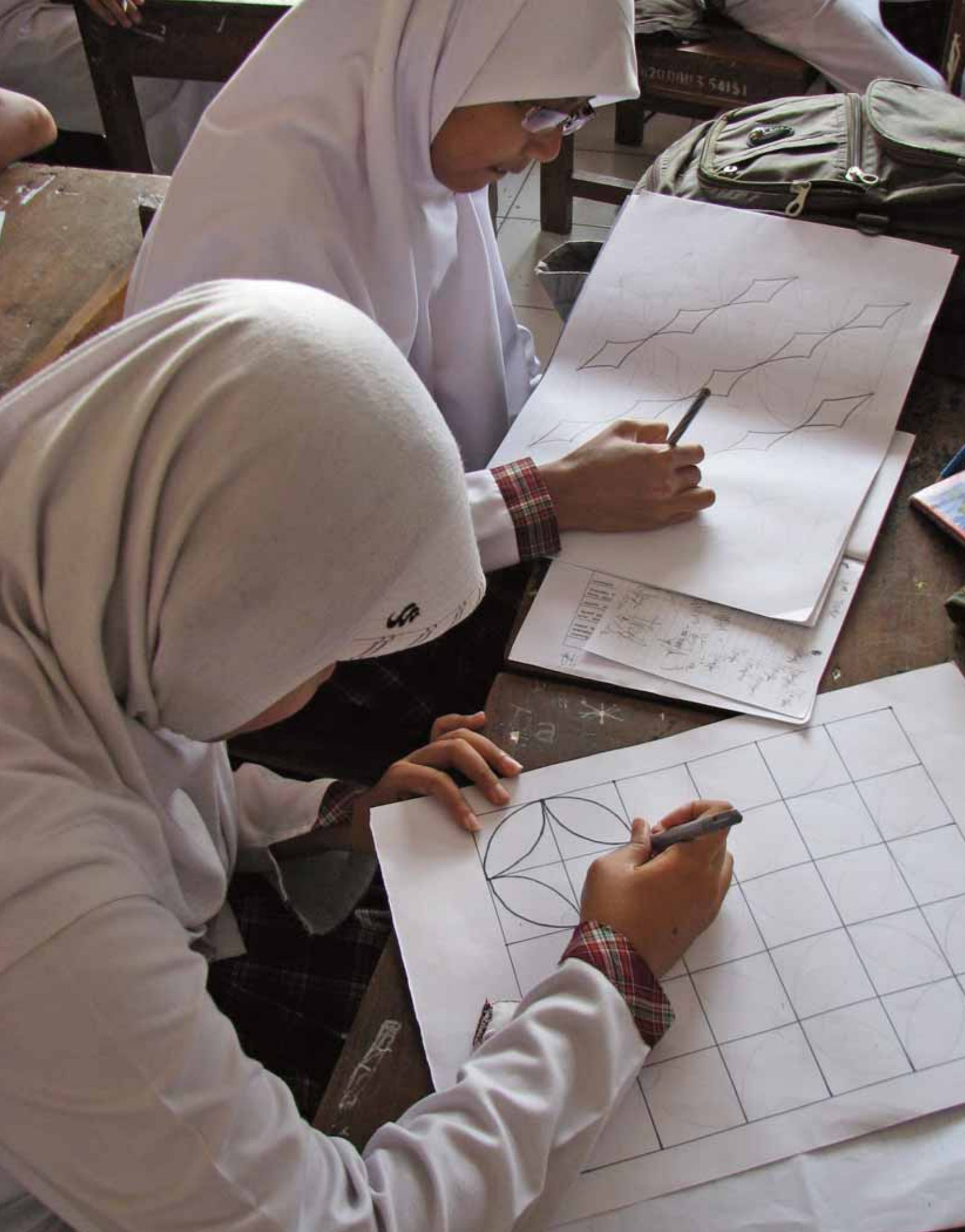
headmasters, to incorporate batik culture educational modules into elementary, junior, senior and vocational schools, and the polytechnic in Pekalongan City.

The principle goals of the programme are to increase awareness and appreciation of the cultural heritage of Indonesian batik, including its history, cultural values and traditional skills, among the pupils at the educational establishments in question.

Under the programme, school teachers receive training in local batik culture, and/or batik craftsmen are placed in schools to teach and provide hands-on training. Students participating in the programme are tested to evaluate their progress and the success of the programme.

The management and staff of the Batik museum have participated by providing educational activities for students and the general public on batik cultural values and traditional handicraft. Museum staff receive training on teaching batik history, cultural values and traditional handicrafts to students.

Efforts have been made to raise awareness among headmasters, teachers, parents and the







The batik community in Pelaongan has been the driving force behind the execution of the programme, which has had notable results.

batik community in Pelaongan, regarding the importance of transmission of batik culture to the younger generation. Invitations and proposals were issued to headmasters to help them encourage their students to participate in the programme.

The batik community in Pelaongan has been the driving force behind the execution of the programme, which has had notable results. As of 2008–09 all educational institutions in Pekalongan teach batik cultural heritage to their students. School and polytechnic students participating in batik culture training now constitute the largest percentage of visitors to the Batik Museum (4,815 in 2006, 12,905 in 2007 and 5,749 in 2008). Other visitors include teachers undergoing batik culture training (1,053, 1,798 and 925 for the respective years). These numbers indicate a significant contribution to the ongoing viability of batik culture in Pekalongan City and the surrounding areas. A sampling of test results shows that almost all participants succeeded in mastering both the cultural values and the practical training given in batik traditional handicraft.

The nomination of the Batik education and training programme for UNESCO's Register of Best Practice was compiled using data provided by the Batik Museum, the Education Service of Pekalongan City, and interviews and seminars with participants, community members, headmasters, teachers and students from some of the 230 schools involved. The interviewers remarked upon the evident level of enthusiasm among trainers, teachers and students participating in this programme, all of whom expressed their unanimous support for the programme and their hopes for its continued success.

The programme has successfully promoted transmission and dissemination of knowledge, taking advantage of the Indonesian legal framework (Law No. 20 of 2003), which provides for the inclusion of local content in school curricula. It has promoted interest among young people and encourages them to become practitioners of intangible cultural heritage. Its activities are in direct accord with Article 14(a) of the 2003 Convention, which makes specific mention of "educational, awareness-raising and



The programme has been proven particularly effective in increasing the visibility of batik cultural heritage among members of the younger generation.

information programmes, aimed at the general public, in particular young people” and “specific educational and training programmes within the communities and groups concerned.”

The effectiveness of the programme in terms of increased awareness and appreciation of Indonesian batik as cultural heritage has been effectively demonstrated, both statistically and via numerous testimonials of students and members of the educational community. The programme has proved to be particularly effective in increasing the visibility of batik cultural heritage among the younger generation who have participated in the programme.

The programme has optimized local resources by creating a close cooperative framework encompassing heritage bearers, experts and museum staff from the Batik Museum and teachers. Batik culture experts and practitioners have been given the opportunity to offer education and training to children, and some have been appointed as teachers in schools participating in the programme. Sponsors were sought among batik producers, in order to minimize the cost of training for the students. The willingness of participants and the overall inclusive approach has been a key to the success of the programme.



The programme also promotes the coordination of efforts at the national level, focusing on Pekalongan City and its surroundings. It reflects the primary objectives of the Convention by reinforcing traditional methods of transmission for traditional handicrafts, thereby working to ensure the safeguarding of this intangible cultural heritage.

The approach adopted in the programme can be used as a model for developing countries elsewhere but particularly in Asia. The teaching of traditional batik skills has not only given a sense of pride to the younger generation, but has also promoted economic empowerment.



The programme has optimized local resources by creating a close cooperative framework encompassing heritage bearers, experts and museum staff from the Batik Museum and teachers.



Centre for Traditional Culture – School Museum of Pusol pedagogic project

3

Spain

The Centre for Traditional Culture – School Museum of Pusol (Elche, Spain) grew out of the determination of a schoolteacher working at the one-teacher rural public school of Pusol to safeguard local culture and traditions in the face of cultural and environmental transformations.

In the late 1960s, Fernando García-Fontanet noted that farming mechanization was having a detrimental impact on the cultural heritage of Pusol and the surrounding Elche countryside. He responded by introducing the study of Pusol's traditions, natural environment and material culture into his school's curriculum. The local community was supportive and a School Museum emerged during the 1980s, gradually refining its methodology. News spread of the pedagogic project, thereby attracting heritage donations, and resulted in the establishment of a School Museum of Agriculture. The limits of the project expanded to encompass the surrounding countryside, then the city of Elche, and in 1993 and 2001, two museum extensions were financed by the Elche City Council. Following the turn of the century, the project adopted its present name and adjusted its project goals to ensure continuity.

The project has two overall goals: to promote value-based education by integrating the local cultural and natural heritage within the curriculum, and to contribute to the preservation of Elche's heritage by means of education, training, direct action and awareness-raising in the educational community.

To achieve these aims, the project has developed a series of operational strategies. The foremost of these is its teaching methodology. Guided by teachers and external collaborators, children play and explore Elche heritage in direct contact with tradition bearers. They undertake fieldwork, data collection, museography, and teach one another and visitors about heritage, studying and exploring the heritage by themselves. The methodology emphasizes schoolchildren's autonomy, initiative, personal responsibility, respect, altruism and cooperation. Families and neighbours are also encouraged to participate in school educational processes. In this way, all contribute directly to the preservation of the heritage.

The project promotes the use of the local Valencian language in teaching as a vehicle for the expression of intangible cultural heritage. It also promotes the identity, social and cultural life, as well as the sustainability of the local community through school activities. Projects are specifically designed to preserve and promote local heritage while, in the process, valorizing this heritage, and thus helping to ensure the continuity of the Pusol School.

Since the inception of the project its reach has gradually expanded. The original community comprised schoolchildren aged between 3 and 11 from Pusol School, their families and the local rural population. Today, the community



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Elderly citizens also contribute either as informants about traditions, as tradition-bearers or as volunteers.

encompasses the population of Elche and its rural surroundings, local and non-local students, teachers and researchers, and outside visitors to the School Museum.

Other sub-groups, institutions and people have been crucial to its development including heritage donors, outside teachers, volunteers, heritage preservation centres, the media, a number of universities, public administrations, non-profit associations, and certain industrial and trade companies and organizations.

The project relies greatly on the participation of the education community and these groups and individuals. Significantly, the foundation of its success lies in the trust, empathy and commitment it generates, which makes its smooth operation possible.

Young people form the core of the project, not just as learners, but later as decision-makers. The project also endeavours to reinforce the links between families and the local community with

workshops open to all, while parents are active participants in decision-making. Elderly citizens also contribute either as informants about traditions, as tradition-bearers or as volunteers. Lastly, the community cooperates in the organization of activities such as festivities and school calendar events, which aim to encourage open access and participation among the inhabitants of Pusol and Elche.

The project focuses on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage within a framework of formal and non-formal education. To date, almost 500 schoolchildren have been trained (and a much larger figure exposed to the heritage), and the project has resulted in a school museum with more than 61,000 inventory entries and 770 oral files collected largely by the student fieldworkers. The project documented and contributed to safeguarding numerous traditions and expressions of Elche's popular culture at a time when ethnographic heritage was not deemed an official priority. Without it, this heritage could well have been lost long ago.







The project has also rendered these cultural expressions visible, showing and disseminating their patrimonial and scientific worth and, in the process, arousing interest and pride among the community in their preservation. It has effectively revitalized local heritage and opened entire new avenues for its promotion.

As a result, the project is highly esteemed by the local rural community, the general population of Elche, and experts on education and culture – not only for its continued achievements, but also for its pioneering democratic, integrative and participatory nature. Over its four decades, it has redefined and extended its goals, finding solutions to issues brought up by its own success without losing sight of its core objectives or identity.

The project has turned heritage into a bridge for dialogue and the direct transfer of knowledge between the elderly and children, and has renewed and created links among the various parts of the community.

It also effectively contributes to laying the foundations for the sustainable use of the local context by the local population, promoting cultural mapping of local resources, the increased awareness of the local population, and the training of its population on heritage preservation and valorization. It promotes the sustainability of the fragile ecosystem of the local countryside, by reinforcing the use by local farmers of traditional crops and farming practices, which are adapted to the harsh environmental conditions.

The project also promotes an active policy of school museum visits, which has increased heritage awareness among children from other

schools in Elche and neighbouring towns, through non-formal education.

Finally, the project serves as a model for local cooperation and coordination within a safeguarding framework, and demonstrates the feasibility of extending bottom-up heritage preservation from schools.



The project has turned heritage into a bridge for dialogue and the direct transfer of knowledge between the elderly and children.



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Intangible Heritage of Humanity

Register of Best Safeguarding Practices

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This Register of Best Practices is expected to serve as a platform for sharing best practices as well as serve as a source of inspiration to States, communities and anyone interested in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Learning more about effective safeguarding measures with proven success across various types of intangible cultural heritage in different geographical regions will help the parties concerned develop their own appropriate safeguarding measures.

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