**CONVENTION FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE**  
**INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE**  
**SAFEGUARDING OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

**Meeting of the Bureau**

**Online**

**4 October 2021   
9 a.m. – 12 p.m. (UTC+2)**

**Item 3 of the Provisional Agenda:**

**Examination of requests for**  
**International Assistance up to US$100,000**

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| **Summary**  Paragraph 49 of the Operational Directives provides that International Assistance requests up to US$100,000 be examined and approved by the Bureau of the Committee. The present document includes an overview of three requests that the Secretariat treated, together with the draft decisions for each request.  **Decisions required**: paragraph 5 |

1. As stipulated in Article 20 of the Convention, International Assistance may be granted to States Parties for purposes relating to the safeguarding of elements of intangible cultural heritage inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding; the preparation of inventories in the sense of Articles 11 and 12 of the Convention, in support of programmes, projects and activities undertaken at the national, sub-regional and regional levels for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage; and for any other purpose that the Committee may deem necessary. In conformity with paragraph 47 of the Operational Directives, International Assistance requests up to US$100,000 (except for requests for preparatory assistance) may be submitted at any time. Paragraph 49 further provides that requests up to US$100,000 be examined and approved by the Bureau of the Committee.
2. **Overview of the present requests**
3. The Bureau is asked to examine and decide on the following three completed requests:

| **Draft decision** | **Requesting State** | **Title** | **Amount requested** | **File no.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [16.COM 3.BUR 3.1](#Decisionarmenia) | Armenia | Community-Based Inventory, Documenting and Safeguarding Folklore of the Syunik Region of Armenia | US$70,855 | 01864 |
| [16.COM 3.BUR 3.2](#DecisionCAR)16.COM 2.BUR 3.2 | Central African Republic | Capacity building of Gbaka, Mbati, Mondjombo communities and stakeholders in the Forest Prefecture of Lobaye and implementation of a pilot project of Identification and Inventory for the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage | US$55,049 | 01750 |
| [16.COM 3.BUR 3.3](#Decisionmauritania) | Mauritania | Safeguarding the Oulad Mbarek epic | US$88,375 | 01628 |

1. In conformity with paragraph 48 of the Operational Directives, the Secretariat assessed the completeness of the requests. Considering the importance of International Assistance for achieving the Convention’s purpose of international cooperation, the Secretariat provided support to all three requesting States for improving their requests through letters indicating whether any information was missing or insufficient. All the States concerned submitted a revised version of their request following an additional information letter from the Secretariat. The International Assistance requests in question are available online for the Bureau’s consultation, in English and French, at <https://ich.unesco.org/en/16com-bureau>, together with the preceding versions and the Secretariat’s letters requesting additional information.
2. As previously requested by the Bureau, the Secretariat forwards each request for International Assistance up to US$100,000 to the Bureau, along with a draft decision incorporating the Secretariat’s assessment of how the request responds to the eligibility and selection criteria set out in Chapter I.4 of the Operational Directives.
3. **Draft decisions**
4. The Bureau of the Intergovernmental Committee may wish to adopt the following decisions:

**DRAFT DECISION 16.COM 3.BUR** **3.1**

The Bureau,

1. Recalling Article 23 of the Convention as well as Chapter I.4 of the Operational Directives relating to the eligibility and criteria of International Assistance requests,
2. Having examined document LHE/21/16.COM 3.BUR/3 as well as International Assistance request no. 01864 submitted by Armenia,
3. Takes note that the Armenia has requested International Assistance for the project entitled **‘Community-Based Inventory, Documenting and Safeguarding Folklore of the Syunik Region of Armenia’**:

To be implemented by the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, this twenty-four-month project aims to inventory, document, safeguard and promote the oral heritage of the Syunik region of the Republic of Armenia. As a response to this lack of documentation and to the dwindling practice of and interest in local folklore, the project seeks to identify, collect and record the folktales, myths, legends, traditions, sayings and ritual songs of the region in order to ensure their transmission to future generations. The main objective of the project is to raise awareness of and promote Syunik folklore among local communities and to create favourable conditions for its transmission, with a focus on the roles of youth and elder community members. Specifically, the project will include fieldwork to inventory folklore from eight communities and a series of capacity-building workshops to spread awareness about the importance of intangible cultural heritage and to promote community members’ participation in safeguarding and transmitting their intangible cultural heritage. Activities entail digitalizing the collected materials and compiling a new Syunik Intangible Cultural Heritage database. The activities will take into account the topographic and ethnographic features of the region as well as its geographical, linguistic, economic and lifestyle specificities.

1. Further takes note that this assistance aims to support a project implemented at the national level, in accordance with Article 20 (c) of the Convention, and that it takes the form of the **provision of a grant**, pursuant to Article 21 (g) of the Convention;
2. Also takes note that Armenia has requested assistance in the amount of US$70,855 from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for the implementation of this project;
3. Decides that, from the information provided in file no. 01864, the request responds as follows to the criteria for granting International Assistance given in paragraphs 10 and 12 of the Operational Directives:

**Criterion A.1**: The project involves eight communities located in twenty rural and urban areas from the Syunik region. Community leaders, bearers and local NGOs collaborated with the project team in the development of the request. The project outlines the central and active role of communities during its implementation. It foresees that local community representatives will help identify the members who will participate in the training workshops and inventory work planned in each of the communities. They will also participate in the planning, monitoring and follow-up of the project.

**Criterion A.2**: The budget is presented in a structured manner, corresponds to the planned activities and provides sufficient detail. The amount of assistance requested may therefore be considered as appropriate.

**Criterion A.3**: The request is structured around four main activities: (a) an awareness-raising stakeholder meeting at Goris State University; (b) capacity building workshops on the 2003 Convention; (c) community-based inventory in each of the eight communities; and (d) field exercises in the different areas. The proposed activities are clearly identified and correspond to the objectives and expected results outlined in the request. Furthermore, the timeframe is realistic to enable the effective implementation of the project.

**Criterion A.4**: Throughout the project, the implementing agency and its partners will establish a sustainable framework to safeguard living heritage in the Syunik region. It plans to integrate the results of the inventories into the national inventory of Armenia, thus contributing to its promotion. Furthermore, the capacity-building workshops and inventorying activities are intended to provide the communities, national authorities and other stakeholders with the methodological tools and skills needed to continue safeguarding the oral traditions beyond the project completion. Lastly, the project will help raise awareness about the importance of the role of bearers and practitioners in the transmission and sharing of knowledge, ‘transforming them from passive informants to active intangible cultural heritage promoters’.

**Criterion A.5**: The submitting State Party will contribute 5 per cent of the total amount of the project for which International Assistance is requested from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund.

**Criterion A.6**: The request adequately describes how the project will contribute to building capacities at two different levels: at the institutional level, it will strengthen the capacities of the staff from the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences and Goris State University, and of the students, researchers and cultural centres that will benefit from the various training workshops. At the community level, the project is expected to train 370 community members on the safeguarding of their oral intangible cultural heritage and 300 individuals will be involved in inventorying exercises and fieldwork. The project will thus contribute to building long-term capacity for the safeguarding of living heritage, both for educational staff, youth and bearers.

**Criterion A.7**: Armenia has not previously received any financial assistance from UNESCO under the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund of the 2003 Convention to implement similar or related activities in the field of intangible cultural heritage.

**Paragraph 10(a)**: The project has a regional scope and involves both local implementing partners such as Goris State University and the Syunik Armenological Center and national partners such as the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia and the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports.

**Paragraph 10(b):** The project should raise awareness about the importance of safeguarding oral traditions. It may have lasting results as it could also encourage similar initiatives for the safeguarding of living heritage in other regions of Armenia.

1. Approves the International Assistance request from the Armenia for the project entitled **‘Community-Based Inventory, Documenting and Safeguarding Folklore of the Syunik Region of Armenia’** and grants the amount of US$70,855 to the State Party for this purpose.
2. Requests that the Secretariat reach an agreement with the requesting State Party on the technical details of the assistance, paying particular attention to ensuring that the budget and work plan of the activities to be covered by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund are detailed and specific enough to provide sufficient justification of the expenditures.
3. Invites the State Party to use Form ICH-04-Report to report on the use of the assistance granted.

**DRAFT DECISION 16.COM 3.BUR 3.2**

The Bureau,

1. Recalling Article 23 of the Convention as well as Chapter I.4 of the Operational Directives relating to the eligibility and criteria of International Assistance requests,
2. Having examined document LHE/21/16.COM 3.BUR/3 as well as International Assistance request no. 01750 submitted by the Central African Republic,
3. Takes note that the Central African Republic has requested International Assistance for the project entitled **‘Capacity building of Gbaka, Mbati, Mondjombo communities and stakeholders in the Forest Prefecture of Lobaye and implementation of a pilot identification and inventory project for the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage’**:

To be implemented by the Ministry of Culture, this twelve-month pilot project aims to raise-awareness of the 2003 Convention in the Lobaye prefecture of Central African Republic. The project was proposed by a local NGO called *Réseau National des Jeunes pour la Sauvegarde du Patrimoine Culturel Immatériel* (RNJSPCI), that is the interface between the different communities concerned and the Ministry in charge of culture. At the request of the Gbaka, Mbati and Mondjombo communities, the project aims to support the communities in safeguarding their living heritage by providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge. Activities will include training communities on the key principles of the 2003 Convention and on inventorying the intangible cultural heritage. The project will also contribute to assessing the viability of intangible cultural heritage elements in the region and to identifying appropriate safeguarding measures. It is expected to lead to similar initiatives in other areas of the country and to support tourism, thus generating financial resources for the communities and mobilizing other partners, such as municipalities, tourism agencies and cultural organizations, to consolidate the project’s achievements. The Secretariat submitted a technical assessment to the submitting state on 18 May 2021 aiming at providing guidance to improve the quality of the request. This was followed by several calls and online meetings during the evaluation process.

1. Further takes note that this assistance aims to support a project implemented at the national level, in accordance with Article 20 (c) of the Convention, and that it takes the form of the **provision of a grant**, pursuant to Article 21 (g) of the Convention;
2. Also takes note that the Central African Republic has requested assistance in the amount of US$55,049 from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for the implementation of this project;
3. Decides that, from the information provided in file no. 01750, the request responds as follows to the criteria for granting International Assistance given in paragraphs 10 and 12 of the Operational Directives:

**Criterion A.1**: The request demonstrates the role of the communities concerned in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the project. It was designed by a local NGO (RNJSPCI) in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture following the request expressed by the community members to inventory their intangible cultural heritage. The communities will be involved in the capacity-building workshop and the community-based inventorying as well as in the monitoring and follow-up activities.

**Criterion A.2**: The amount requested cannot be considered appropriate since the budget does not fully correspond to the planned activities and timetable. Some activities included in the timetable, such as the development of communication tools and the documentation related to the inventory’s fieldwork, are not budgeted. Therefore, it is difficult to assess if the requested budget is appropriate in regard to the objectives, activities and scope of the project.

**Criterion A.3**: One of the main objectives of the project is to establish a pilot inventory of intangible cultural heritage in the province of Lobaye. However, most of the activities related to this important component of the project are not described, especially with regard to the specific methodologies used for inventory training, fieldwork, documentation and processing of the data collected. In addition, some activities such as the awareness-raising meetings with local authorities are included in the timetable but not described in the project. The information provided is not sufficient to determine the feasibility and relevance of the proposed activities.

**Criterion A.4**: The project consists of one capacity-building workshop during which the key principles of the 2003 Convention and inventorying methodology will be addressed. The workshop targets community representatives and professionals from the Ministry of Culture. However, the proposed activities, as presented, do not demonstrate that the results would lead to enhancing the capacities of the communities or to the establishment of a network of experts on intangible cultural heritage that could participate in drawing up inventories in the Central African Republic. Furthermore, the project intends to develop and implement safeguarding measures for the identified elements, but the file does not give any details on this important aspect of the project.

**Criterion A.5**: The submitting State Party will contribute 12 per cent of the total amount of the project for which International Assistance is requested from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund.

**Criterion A.6**: Information on one capacity building workshop to raise awareness about the 2003 Convention and safeguarding measures is included in the request, which nevertheless remains insufficient. Additional information is required to understand the impact of the project on the capacity of the communities to safeguard, inventory and transmit their living heritage beyond the completion of the project. This makes it difficult to determine the extent to which the capacities of the communities will be strengthened in the long term.

**Criterion A.7**: The Central African Republic has not previously received any financial assistance from UNESCO under the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund of the 2003 Convention to implement similar or related activities in the field of intangible cultural heritage.

**Paragraph 10(a)**: The project is local and national in scope and involves local and national implementing partner such as the Ministry of Culture.

**Paragraph 10(b)**: The project should raise awareness about the importance of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage among the communities concerned. It is also expected to increase interest among national communities in the country in inventorying and safeguarding their respective intangible cultural heritage.

1. Decides to refer the International Assistance request from the Central African Republic for the project entitled **‘Capacity building of Gbaka, Mbati, Mondjombo communities and stakeholders in the Forest Prefecture of Lobaye and implementation of a pilot identification and inventory project for the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage’**;
2. Invites the State Party to seek the assistance of an expert in the framework of a technical assistance, as established by the Committee at its eighth session ([Decision 8.COM 7.c](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/8.COM/7.c)) in view of revising the request;
3. Encourages the State Party, if it wishes to resubmit its request, to revise the content of the project taking into account the above-mentioned concerns, and to ensure, in particular, that there is a clear correspondence between the overall objectives and the proposed activities, budget and timetable of the project.

**DECISION 16.COM 3.BUR 3.3**

The Bureau,

1. Recalling Article 23 of the Convention as well as Chapter I.4 of the Operational Directives relating to the eligibility and criteria of International Assistance requests,
2. Having examined document LHE/21/16.COM 3.BUR/3 as well as International Assistance request no. 01628 submitted by Mauritania,
3. Takes note that Mauritania has requested International Assistance for the project entitled **‘Safeguarding the Oulad Mbarek epic’**:

This eighteen-month project aims to safeguard the Oulad Mbarek epic, an oral tradition combining poetry and music that was developed in the eighteenth century on the borders of present-day Mauritania and Mali. T'heydinne, an element inscribed in 2011 (6.COM) on the List of Intangible Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, is an epic poetry whose source is undoubtedly the Oulad Mbarek and which subsequently spread throughout the country. Given the ever-decreasing number of bearers, namely the griot, the project aims to collect the repertoire of poems in writing, sound and image to promote access to and facilitate transmission of the tradition. The project, which will be implemented by the International Foundation of the Aïn Farba Festival in close collaboration with local communities, is based on three major axes: (a) a campaign to raise awareness of the cultural and historical interest of the epic and the need to safeguard it, including the development of communication materials and a documentary; (b) a series of activities focusing on the transmission of the practice to younger generations; and (c) the creation of an inventory of the elements of the Oulad Mbarek epic. Furthermore, sixty community members will be informed about the 2003 Convention, as well as about inventorying and its crucial role in safeguarding living heritage. The inventory will be undertaken in collaboration with the bearers and include capacity-building workshops, the development of a digital database and a thesaurus that can be accessed and updated by researchers and bearers. The project will contribute to the development of additional products and performances such as concerts, plays and films. It is expected to encourage the manufacture of traditional musical instruments, thus creating income-generating activities.

1. Further takes note that this assistance is to support a project implemented at the local level, in accordance with Article 20 (c) of the Convention, and that it takes the form of the **provision of a grant**, pursuant to Article 21 (g) of the Convention;
2. Also takes note that Mauritania has requested assistance in the amount of US$88,375 from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for the implementation of this project;
3. Decides that, from the information provided in file no. 01628, the request responds as follows to the criteria for granting International Assistance given in paragraphs 10 and 12 of the Operational Directives:

**Criterion A.1**: The request was submitted following consultations among the communities from the Hodh Chargui, Hodh Al Gharbi and Assaba regions, which will be the primary beneficiaries of the project. It foresees that the communities will participate in awareness-raising and safeguarding activities, as well as community-based inventorying workshops and fieldwork exercises. They will also be involved in the validation of the documented inventory of the elements of the Oulad Mbarek epic and in the evaluation and follow-up of the project.

**Criterion A.2**: The budget is presented in a structured manner, corresponds to the planned activities and provides sufficient detail. The amount of assistance requested may therefore be considered as appropriate.

**Criterion A.3**: The project is articulated around five main components that will contribute to the Safeguarding of the Ouled Mbarek Epic: awareness-raising, safeguarding, capacity building, community-based inventory and documentation. They are presented in a logical sequence and include activities that focus specifically on the transmission of the practice from griots (women and men) to young community representatives. The activities correspond to the objectives and expected results described in the project and they seem feasible within the proposed duration.

**Criterion A.4**: The Ouled Mbarek epic is part of the repertoire of the Moorish epic T'heydinne, an element inscribed on the List of Intangible Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. Consequently, the inventory of the poems and music produced during the epic of this emirate constitutes an important action in the safeguarding of the element. Furthermore, the Ouled Mbarek epic will help strengthen the social links between the griots and their communities and across different communities. The project will enable the griots to hand on their knowledge to younger generations, and this transmission will entail teaching youth how to play the instruments and introducing them to poetry through recitation. The participation of young people could improve the knowledge and transmission of skills related to this epic beyond the end of the project.

**Criterion A.5**: The submitting State Party, through its implementing partner, is committed to sharing 9 per cent of the cost of the project.

**Criterion A.6**: The project is clearly aimed at developing the capacities of the communities concerned, with a focus on women and men bearers. During various training workshops, sixty representatives of civil society, youth and practitioners will be trained on the principles of the 2003 Convention, safeguarding measures and community-based inventorying. Furthermore, the training tools used during these workshops will be based on the materials developed in the framework of the project ‘Strengthening the capacities of NGOs active in the field of intangible cultural heritage in Mauritania’. The safeguarding activities aimed at enhancing the visibility of the element could raise awareness about the importance of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage among a wide audience, at the local and national levels.

**Criterion A.7**: Mauritania received preparatory assistance in the amount of US$9,800 from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for the preparation of a nomination to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding in 2009 (file no. 00487). It has also received assistance for two ongoing projects entitled ‘Strengthening the capacities of NGOs active in the field of intangible cultural heritage in Mauritania’ (file no. 01429, 2019-2021, US$94,300) and ‘National Oral Traditions (NOT), additional collection component’ (file no. 01528, 2020-2021, US$90,562). The work stipulated by the contracts related to these projects was and is being carried out in compliance with UNESCO’s regulations.

**Paragraph 10(a)**: The project is local in scope and its implementation involves national and local partners, including two intangible cultural heritage-accredited NGOs from Mauritania: the *Association mauritanienne pour la sauvegarde du patrimoine culturel immatériel* and the *Association mauritanienne pour les traditions populaires*.

**Paragraph 10(b)**: The project should raise awareness about the importance of safeguarding oral traditions, especially those at risk. The project may have lasting results as could encourage similar initiatives for the safeguarding of oral traditions in other regions of Mauritania.

1. Approves the International Assistance request from Mauritania for the project entitled **‘Safeguarding the Oulad Mbarek epic’** and grants the amount of US$88,375 to the State Party to this end;
2. Requests that the Secretariat reach an agreement with the requesting State Party on the technical details of the assistance, paying particular attention to ensuring that the budget and work plan of the activities to be covered by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund are detailed and specific enough to provide sufficient justification of the expenditures;
3. Invites the State Party to use Form ICH-04 Report when reporting on the use of the assistance provided.