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

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

**Eighteenth session**

**Kasane, Republic of Botswana**

**4 to 9 December 2023**

**Item 7.a of the provisional agenda:**

**Examination of the reports by States Parties on the current status of elements inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding**

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| **Summary**  The present document contains fifteen reports submitted by States Parties on the status of elements of intangible cultural heritage that have been inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, in accordance with paragraphs 160 to 164 of the Operational Directives.  It includes background information (Part A), general observations on the reports (Part B), and a short assessment of each submitted report (Part C).  **Decisions required:** paragraphs 16, 23, 30, 37, 44, 51, 58, 66, 73, 81, 89, 97, 105, 113, 121 and 129. |

1. **Background**
2. In accordance with Article 29, ‘the States Parties shall submit to the Committee […] reports on the legislative, regulatory and other measures taken for the implementation of this Convention’. One of the Committee’s duties, as identified in Article 7(f) of the Convention, is to examine these reports submitted by States Parties and to summarize them for the General Assembly. In conformity with Article 30, the Committee then submits its own report, based in part on these reports, to the General Assembly.
3. In accordance with paragraphs 160 to 164 of the Operational Directives, each State Party with an element inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (hereafter, ‘the Urgent Safeguarding List’) shall submit to the Committee regular reports on the status of the element in question. These reports are normally submitted by 15 December of the fourth year following the year in which the element was inscribed, and every fourth year thereafter. Upon submission, they are received and processed by the Secretariat, as described in paragraphs 165 and 166 of the Operational Directives[[1]](#footnote-1).
4. The present document concerns the tenth cycle of periodic reporting (2023 cycle)[[2]](#footnote-2) for reports on elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List submitted by the deadline of 15 December 2022 or after[[3]](#footnote-3). This cycle covers: first reports on elements inscribed in 2018; second reports on elements inscribed in 2014; and third reports on elements inscribed in 2010. It also covers a first biennial report for an element inscribed in 2020 and a first annual report for an element inscribed in 2022 as a case of extreme urgency. Out of the eighteen reports, which were expected to be examined by the Committee at its present session, fifteen were submitted by eleven States Parties, with three being overdue.
5. This document includes an overview of the fifteen reports received and an overall decision, as well as a summary and a draft decision for each of the reports, for the Committee’s consideration. The fifteen reports in question are available at: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/01323>.
6. **First reports**. The eight first reports received, out of the ten expected, presented to this session of the Committee are listed in the table below[[4]](#footnote-4):

| Draft decision | **Reporting**  **State** | **Element** | **Year of inscription** | **Initially due for cycle** | **File No.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **First reports** | | | | | |
| [18.COM 7.a.1](#_DRAFT_DECISION_18.COM) | Azerbaijan | Yalli (Kochari, Tenzere), traditional group dances of Nakhchivan | 2018 | 2023 | [01190](https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/yalli-kochari-tenzere-traditional-group-dances-of-nakhchivan-01190) |
| [18.COM 7.a.2](#_DRAFT_DECISION_18.COM_1) | Cambodia | Lkhon Khol Wat Svay Andet | 2018 | 2023 | [01374](https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/lkhon-khol-wat-svay-andet-01374) |
| [18.COM 7.a.3](#_DRAFT_DECISION_18.COM_2) | Colombia | Traditional Vallenato music of the Greater Magdalena region | 2015 | 2020 | [01095](https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/traditional-vallenato-music-of-the-greater-magdalena-region-01095) |
| [18.COM 7.a.4](#_DRAFT_DECISION_18.COM_3) | Egypt | Traditional hand puppetry | 2018 | 2023 | [01376](https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/traditional-hand-puppetry-01376) |
| [18.COM 7.a.5](#_DRAFT_DECISION_18.COM_4) | Egypt | Handmade weaving in Upper Egypt (Sa’eed) | 2020 | 2023 | [01605](https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/handmade-weaving-in-upper-egypt-sa-eed-01605) |
| [18.COM 7.a.6](#_DRAFT_DECISION_18.COM_5) | Kenya | Enkipaata, Eunoto and Olng’esherr, three male rites of passage of the Maasai community | 2018 | 2023 | [01390](https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/enkipaata-eunoto-and-olng-esherr-three-male-rites-of-passage-of-the-maasai-community-01390) |
| [18.COM 7.a.7](#_DRAFT_DECISION_18.COM_6) | Syrian Arab Republic | Shadow play | 2018 | 2023 | [01368](https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/shadow-play-01368) |
| [18.COM 7.a.8](#_DRAFT_DECISION_18.COM_7) | Ukraine | Culture of Ukrainian borscht cooking | 2022 | 2023 | [01852](https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/culture-of-ukrainian-borscht-cooking-01852) |

1. **Second reports**. The three second reports received, out of the four expected, presented to this session of the Committee are listed in the table below:

| Draft decision | **Reporting**  **State** | **Element** | **Year of inscription** | **Initially due for cycle** | **File No.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Second reports:** | | | | | |
| [18.COM 7.a.9](#_DRAFT_DECISION_18.COM_8) | Kenya | Isukuti dance of Isukha and Idakho communities of Western Kenya | 2014 | 2023 | [00981](https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/isukuti-dance-of-isukha-and-idakho-communities-of-western-kenya-00981) |
| [18.COM 7.a.10](#_DRAFT_DECISION_18.COM_9) | Uganda | Male-child cleansing ceremony of the Lango of central northern Uganda | 2014 | 2023 | [00982](https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/male-child-cleansing-ceremony-of-the-lango-of-central-northern-uganda-00982) |
| [18.COM 7.a.11](#_DRAFT_DECISION_18.COM_10) | Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) | Mapoyo oral tradition and its symbolic reference points within their ancestral territory | 2014 | 2023 | [00983](https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/mapoyo-oral-tradition-and-its-symbolic-reference-points-within-their-ancestral-territory-00983) |

1. **Third reports.** The four third reports received are hereby presented to this session of the Committee in the table below:

| Draft decision | **Reporting**  **State** | **Element** | **Year of inscription** | **Initially due for cycle** | **File No.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Third reports** | | | | | |
| [18.COM 7.a.12](#_DRAFT_DECISION_18.COM_11) | China | Meshrep | 2010 | 2023 | [00304](https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/meshrep-00304) |
| [18.COM 7.a.13](#_DRAFT_DECISION_18.COM_12) | China | Wooden movable-type printing of China | 2010 | 2023 | [00322](https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/wooden-movable-type-printing-of-china-00322) |
| [18.COM 7.a.14](#_DRAFT_DECISION_18.COM_13) | China | Watertight-bulkhead technology of Chinese junks | 2010 | 2023 | [00321](https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/watertight-bulkhead-technology-of-chinese-junks-00321) |
| [18.COM 7.a.15](#_DRAFT_DECISION_18.COM_14) | Croatia | Ojkanje singing | 2010 | 2023 | [00320](https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/ojkanje-singing-00320) |

1. **General observations on the reports submitted for examination in 2023**
2. This year marks the milestone of the tenth ordinary cycle of reports. It is encouraging to see that most States now prioritize the timely submission of their reports, and that the overall quality of the reports has significantly improved over the past ten years, despite several persistent challenges, for example in terms of the level and consistency of the information provided and the quality of the language.
3. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plans**. As reported, the safeguarding efforts in this cycle were largely aligned with the objectives outlined in the safeguarding plans:
4. Documentation, transmission, and awareness-raising remained among the core activities. Many initiatives centered on community-based inventorying and research and an improvement of the quality of the documentation produced were reported. Furthermore, hands-on training sessions for practitioners, capacity-building for communities and culture professionals, as well as training and toolkits for teachers and students were reported to have been effective in safeguarding inscribed elements. The development of master-apprentice transmission modalities and the integration of elements into vocational and higher education have also been reported. A special emphasis has been placed on raising awareness among children and youth. Festivals and exhibitions have further increased the visibility of elements and their public recognition. In addition to the well-established role of television and radio in promoting inscribed elements, the widespread use of websites and social media has expanded audiences and facilitated information exchange, networking, and knowledge transmission.
5. Another significant aspect highlighted in the reports is the potential for certain elements to secure livelihoods for communities. Several reports highlighted the efforts made to explore new income-generating opportunities, while, in a few cases, there has been a strong emphasis on the non-commercial nature of elements.
6. Concerning ecological sustainability, the reports have addressed the accessibility of raw materials. In some instances, alternative materials have been introduced to safeguard certain elements, replacing traditional materials from endangered and protected animal species. This increase in ecological responsibility underscores a commitment to the preservation of both living heritage and the natural environment.
7. As highlighted in both the second and third ordinary reports, safeguarding efforts have consistently followed the defined plans and incorporated recommendations provided by the Committee in previous reports. The safeguarding initiatives have also displayed a commendable adaptability in response to evolving circumstances. Several reports have underlined the importance of enhancing intersectoral cooperation as a key component of their safeguarding strategies. Despite the challenge of limited financial resources, Ministries of culture, in collaboration with other institutions, municipalities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and communities, have successfully secured funding for safeguarding activities. Communities have been able to generate funds both domestically and internationally, reflecting their strong commitment. International Assistance played an important role in supporting the safeguarding efforts of one element reported in this cycle. Additionally, another element received financial support through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund.
8. **COVID-19**. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic resonated throughout nearly all the reports, with only two exceptions. It affected various aspects of safeguarding, fundamentally altering the opportunities for the practice and transmission of elements, as well as the economic conditions of many practitioners:
9. The imposition of substantial restrictions on public events and the use of public spaces had a detrimental effect on numerous practices. Ceremonies were disrupted and festivals cancelled or adapted to a reduced or virtual form.
10. Traditional forms of transmission diminished as training programmes and courses were suspended, interrupting their regular cycles in both formal and non-formal education. Enrollment in such programmes decreased, schools closed down, and experiential learning opportunities and study trips became scarce. Nonetheless, social media and radio platforms emerged as valuable tools for awareness raising and education. Online training materials tailored for young audiences were developed, and a notable surge in the significance of such training was witnessed.
11. A noticeable decline in demand for certain crafts became evident and performances were postponed, resulting in a deterioration in the economic conditions of practitioners relying on the practice for their livelihoods. The economic austerity measures implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic limited overall access to financial support for safeguarding inscribed elements.
12. **Community participation**. The characteristics of practitioners and communities as well as the forms of their participation and the role of community organizations varied across the reports of this cycle:
13. The majority of the reports documented an increase in the number of practitioners, including youth, although some reports indicated either unchanged or decreasing numbers. States emphasized the pivotal role that elder practitioners played in transmitting their knowledge. While globally the reports noted a growing awareness, knowledge and interest among younger generations and their active involvement in safeguarding efforts, in some cases a lack of participation by young people and an overall decrease in their interest were reported. Gender roles were addressed in the majority of the reports, with women emerging as the most active bearers of certain practices. In some instances, women’s engagement in safeguarding had gradually increased. Several reports highlighted social inclusion initiatives, involving vulnerable populations such as temporarily displaced individuals, victims of armed conflict, and persons with special needs or diverse social backgrounds. Indigenous communities actively participated in the safeguarding efforts related to their elements and the promotion of indigenous languages in public life has been recognized as an effective safeguarding measure. There was a wide recognition of the role of broader communities, including raw material producers, audiences, visitors, and consumers.
14. Bearers of inscribed elements provided information for inventorying, shared experiences, promoted elements through media, and participated in exhibitions. They also designed and led training workshops for apprentices, mentored trainees, and developed teaching materials and tools. Innovative formats for exchanging experiences were adopted, with digital social media platforms serving as vital channels for communication and interaction with institutions, as well as for promoting elements and enhancing their social recognition. Local communities actively provided resources and raised funds to support their practices, while civil society organizations played a key role in motivating individuals to safeguard their heritage and facilitated the safeguarding processes.
15. The majority of the reports recognized community associations and civil society organizations as being committed and effective in their safeguarding efforts, fostering collaboration between bearers and other stakeholders. Traditional structures such as community assemblies and councils of elders played an essential role in safeguarding certain practices. Several communities established monitoring committees to oversee the safeguarding efforts. A recurrent need for institutional structures within communities was identified, particularly to serve as repositories for documented information related to the inscribed elements. Research institutions engaged in the study and promotion of practices, while small factories, workshops and enterprises contributed to their practice and transmission. Trade associations participated in the updating of safeguarding plans and the role of youth organizations was emphasized. Local authorities, culture and community centers, and local media served as important partners in implementing safeguarding activities. Some reports underscored the importance of family-based transmission, while States predominantly acknowledged the significance of community organizations and an increasing role of education and public institutions in the transmission of living heritage. Additionally, new networks and associations were established to facilitate knowledge exchange and information sharing, new institutions became partners in safeguarding the inscribed elements and new collaborations emerged between governmental and non-governmental entities.
16. **Viability and current risks**. According to the reports, the inscription of elements has generally led to increased visibility and viability, with a revival in their practice in some cases. This increased visibility resulted in greater awareness and respect for the bearers and their practices. It was observed that practices were continuously adapting to changing trends and influences, sparking creativity and innovative forms of expression. However, in some cases it has also led to elements becoming simplified, losing their diversity and traditional meanings. Notably, the reports pointed out a lack of contextualization of some elements at festivals and in educational settings. Current risks for safeguarding inscribed elements are predominantly linked to social and economic challenges, as well as concerns related to the protection of nature and the use of natural resources. In some cases, these risks have remained largely consistent with those previously identified:
17. Risks to safeguarding living heritage include factors such as the aging of bearers, rural-urban migration, and the adoption of new lifestyles. Additionally, war, the rise of religious radicalism, and violence in rural areas have severely impacted certain elements. On an institutional level, reports have highlighted the lack of sufficient support and commitment from institutions, as well as the absence of effective dialogue between them.
18. Concerning economic aspects, while safeguarding measures have had a positive impact on income generation for bearers, there is a risk of over-commercialization in some instances. States have reported a decline in market demand, along with income instability and high unemployment associated with certain practices. The lengthy learning process has led to a shortage of successors and a limited number of young apprentices, particularly in crafts and performing arts. Some communities have reported deteriorating well-being and extreme economic challenges. Furthermore, reports also mentioned the following challenges: high labor costs, competition, the poor quality and high prices of raw materials and ingredients, and a reliance on imported supplies. The need to enhance capacities in cultural entrepreneurship and develop relevant legal regulations became evident.
19. The natural environment has faced threats, with flora and fauna diversity being endangered by war, and cultural landscapes being affected by infrastructure development projects and changes in land tenure. The exploitation of natural areas, illegal mining in ancient territories and non-compliance with agreements on mining waste management and reforestation have negatively affected the heritage of indigenous groups. Meanwhile, certain elements, including performances, have been harnessed to raise public awareness about the importance of nature conservation. The impact of climate change has also been noted, particularly in relation to factors such as drought and dried-up rivers, which have restricted the spaces available for the practice of certain expressions.
20. Safeguarding plans have primarily been updated through extensive community involvement and collaborative efforts between governmental and non-governmental organizations. They encompass a range of activities focused on knowledge transmission, education, engagement of younger generations and awareness-raising. Often these efforts are channeled through dedicated festivals and digital media platforms, with the aim of increasing the number of practitioners of inscribed elements. Several reports have highlighted the shared concern of safeguarding traditional meanings and the different varieties of elements. Plans entail a wide range of initiatives, including the establishment of new cultural centers and spaces dedicated to the practice of elements. They also prioritize the advancement of documentation and research, and the completion of digital inventories, networking and capacity-building for practitioners, with a specific focus on enhancing cultural entrepreneurship skills. Notably, some plans emphasize forging new partnerships among various sectorial ministries, local authorities and other institutions and organizations, to address viability risks that extend beyond the fields of culture and education. To fund the planned safeguarding activities, the reports suggest a combination of contributions from communities and various funding sources, accompanied by fundraising initiatives. However, in some instances the reports lacked specific details regarding timelines, the estimated amount of funding required and the available and planned funding sources.
21. **Transfer requests**. Three reports mention the desire to transfer an element inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List to the Representative List, concerning elements inscribed in 2010, 2018 and 2022, respectively. At its ninth session last year, the General Assembly adopted a procedure for transferring an inscribed element from one List to another (Resolution [9.GA 9](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/9.GA/9)), which resulted in amendments to the Operational Directives (see paragraphs 20.2, 38.1, 38.2 and 39.2). The new procedure requires that a request to transfer an element from the Urgent Safeguarding List to the Representative List be submitted using Form ICH-02 USL to RL, which is attached to the periodic reporting Form ICH-11 (paragraph 20.2 of the Operational Directives). States Parties are thus now able to submit transfer requests using the named form, which is linked to the periodic reporting exercise.
22. The Committee may wish to adopt the following overall decision:

DRAFT DECISION 18.COM 7.a

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/23/18.COM/7.a,
2. Recalling Articles 7, 29 and 30 of the Convention concerning reports by States Parties and Chapter V of the Operational Directives,
3. Underlining the importance of periodic reports on the status of elements inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, which serves as a key monitoring tool for the States Parties concerned and enables the Committee to assess the viability of elements at risk,
4. Thanks the States Parties that submitted their reports on time, and appreciates the efforts of the State Party that has submitted its overdue report;
5. Encourages States Parties to provide complete, comprehensive and up-to-date information in their reports, taking note of the observations provided in the analysis of the current and previous cycles;
6. Congratulates States Parties for the improved viability of the inscribed elements, which is demonstrated by practitioners’ increased interest and engagement in safeguarding the element, in particular among young people, the active participation of community and civil society organizations, the emergence of new types of organizations, partnerships and networks, and strengthened intersectoral cooperation;
7. Takes note of the increasing level of community engagement in developing and implementing safeguarding plans and measures, and recalls the importance of consistently seeking free, prior, sustained and informed consent from the communities, groups and individuals concerned for the documentation of their practices and the long-term preservation and accessibility of the relevant information, including on digital media;
8. Welcomes the special attention paid to social inclusion through the involvement of vulnerable members of the population, such as temporarily displaced persons, victims of armed conflict, and persons with special needs or of diverse social backgrounds, and encourages States Parties to continue supporting and promoting such initiatives;
9. Observes with satisfaction the growing prioritization of environmental and ecological sustainability, as reflected in several reports which highlighted communities’ efforts to address the shortage of raw materials and their transition from traditional materials derived from endangered and protected animal species to innovative alternative solutions;
10. Further observes that the recommendations of the Committee provided in its previous decisions on the reports on the inscribed elements were mostly considered and reflected in updated safeguarding plans, and invites States to further improve the referencing where needed;
11. Takes note that, based on the improved viability of the elements concerned, three States Parties have expressed their intention in their reports to consider the transfer of these elements from the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding to the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity; and invites these States Parties concerned to continue monitoring the viability of the elements concerned;
12. Recalls that the designations employed in the reports presented by the States Parties do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Committee or UNESCO concerning: a) the legal status of any country, territory, city or area; b) the legal status of its authorities; or c) the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries;
13. Decides to submit to the General Assembly at its eleventh session a summary of the reports of States Parties on the current status of elements inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding examined during the current session.
14. **Assessments of the first reports and draft decisions**

**Azerbaijan: ‘Yalli (Kochari, Tenzere), traditional group dances of Nakhchivan’** (*consult the* [*report*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/download.php?versionID=71200))

1. Yalli are traditional group dances practiced as a collective performance, accompanied by musicians. These dances are performed in a circle or concentric circles, in a single, two parallel, or several rows, and involve elements of games, pantomime, such as imitation of animals and birds, physical exercises and labor movements. Yalli are danced by both men and women, or men only, holding onto each other by the little finger, shoulder to shoulder, or hand to hand. Yalli dances are transmitted both formally and informally through festivities, gatherings and weddings. They are based on equality and solidarity, and give feelings of safety, friendship, sharing and belonging.
2. The element was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2018. This is the first report submitted by the State Party on the status of this element.
3. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. According to the report, the implementation of the safeguarding plan has been effective and has greatly contributed to achieving the expected results in terms of revitalizing and sustaining the diversity of yalli, enhancing networking among its practitioners and raising awareness about the importance of the element in society. Information was gathered on the forgotten forms of yalli and on less known varieties, and the inventory on the element was updated accordingly. A large-scale training programme has been developed and initiated in different regions of Nakhchivan, including annual programmes for amateur dancers, courses for children and adolescents at music and dance schools and folk ensembles. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic the programme had to be suspended for two years. Steps have also been taken to revitalize yalli music melodies and acapella singing through the development of an online training toolkit for young people, and to establish an association of traditional yalli dances and a Yalli Information Centre in Sharur. Safeguarding activities were funded by government allocations, regional budgets and private contributions.
4. **Community participation**. As reported, the overall number of practitioners has increased by around eighteen per cent. Yalli dancers led training activities, participated in data collection and awareness-raising activities and were involved in the establishment of the association of traditional yalli dances. Individual practitioners, NGOs and community organizations such as the Sharur Folk Dance Ensemble, as well as local and national government stakeholders, such as the Documentation and Inventory Board in charge of compiling and updating the Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage, continued to play an important role in safeguarding the element. Youth organizations were mobilized for the development of the online toolkit, whereas local media contributed to the awareness-raising efforts all over Nakhchivan. The Ministry of Culture of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic coordinated the implementation of the safeguarding measures and ensured their monitoring. This report and the updated safeguarding plan have been prepared in consultation with practitioners, community organizations, local municipalities, schools and other stakeholders across Nakhchivan.
5. **Viability and current risks**. According to the report, the inscription of the element increased its visibility locally and nationally, raised awareness about its importance and resulted in its enhanced practice and transmission. Young people in different regions of Nakhchivan have become increasingly interested in the element, both as practitioners and as spectators. As reported, practitioners’ capacities to safeguard the element have been developed and archaic and forgotten forms of yalli have been revived. However, there are still risks concerning its safeguarding, namely young people’s insufficient participation in the practice of yalli dances and the loss of diversity of its varieties.
6. While focusing strongly on the transmission to younger generations, the updated safeguarding plan is aimed at increasing the number of practitioners, promoting the diversity of yalli dances, broadening training opportunities and their accessibility across different regions of Nakhchivan, and strengthening research and its availability to practitioners. The plan is expected to sustain, in cooperation with practitioners, the large-scale training programme including the annual programmes for training amateur dancers at local culture houses, to expand these to two more regions in Nakhchivan, and to enlarge the network of musicians from local villages and towns to accompany the training. Furthermore, there is a plan to finalize a comprehensive database of yalli dances in their local and regional varieties, with a training component, and to complete the establishment of the association of traditional yalli dances and the Yalli Information Centre in Sharur. Awareness-raising and visibility campaigns planned in all regions of Nakhchivan will primarily target young people. Government allocations are envisaged for implementing safeguarding activities.
7. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 18.COM 7.a.1

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/23/18.COM/7.a,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decision [13.COM 10.a.2](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/13.COM/10.a.2),
3. Expresses its appreciation to Azerbaijan for submitting, on time, its first report on the status of the element ‘Yalli (Kochari, Tenzere), traditional group dances of Nakhchivan’, inscribed in 2018 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the efforts undertaken by the State Party to safeguard the element, in particular by documenting and raising awareness about its diversity, particularly among young people, developing opportunities for training and transmission, and initiating the establishment of an association of traditional yalli dances and a Yalli Information Centre in Sharur;
5. Encourages the State Party to pursue its efforts to transmit the element to younger generations, to raise awareness about its social and cultural functions and broaden training opportunities, to sustain the possibilities to learn the element at music and dance schools, and to encourage its informal transmission at social events within the communities concerned;
6. Invites the State Party to continue safeguarding the element in all its forms and aspects, including dance, music, singing and playing musical instruments, to pursue research and inventorying, and to integrate its results into training programmes;
7. Further invites the State Party to continue strengthening the practice and its transmission across the regions of Nakhchivan, using local culture houses to enhance the involvement of amateur dancers, complete the establishment of the association of traditional yalli dances and the Yalli Information Centre in Sharur, and support their operations with the broad involvement of the communities concerned;
8. Requests that the Secretariat inform the State Party at least nine months prior to the next deadline about the required submission of its next report on the status of this element.

**Cambodia: ‘Lkhon Khol Wat Svay Andet’** (*consult the* [*report*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/download.php?versionID=72678))

1. Lkhon Khol Wat Svay Andet is a traditional theatrical form in which masked Khmer man perform episodes from Reamker to a melodious recitation accompanied by a traditional Khmer orchestra. It is performed during religious and ceremonial events to soothe the Neak Ta, guardian spirits of the local community, and to endow their protection and prosperity. When performed, spirit mediums, both women and men, who predict the conditions for the upcoming year are present to facilitate the interaction between the spirits, the performers and the villagers. They become possessed and join the stage. If the spirits are satisfied by the performance, they bless the villagers. Lkhon Khol Wat Svay Andet is performed for ritual purposes, mainly linked to the rice farming cycle. The element has a strong connection to the Wat Svay Andet Monastery and great spiritual significance within the community, representing their local identity.
2. The element was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2018. This is the first report submitted by the State Party on the status of this element.
3. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. As reported, the intense safeguarding efforts from all relevant stakeholders brought visible results: incorporating the performance into several religious ceremonies led to an increased frequency of performances both within and beyond its community. The number of performers doubled by the end of 2022 and young people from the community are showing a growing interest in the element. Musicians started to perform more frequently in ceremonies. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic the number of performances decreased again and fewer students could enroll in the training sessions in 2020 and 2021. However, the numbers increased again in 2022 and the strengthened awareness raising resulted in a growth in the audience and community support. The transmission of the related knowledge and skills was ensured by the state providing financial support to masters to train young performers. Training hours were increased, and essential training was provided to secure the roles of a reciter and Sita (female role). One master of the element was awarded the title of ‘Living Human Treasure’, which secured governmental funding for teaching the element to apprentices. A new performing stage was built, which now serves as a permanent training center. Masks, headpieces, costumes and musical instruments were repaired, loaned or donated. Furthermore, workshops and networking activities with other groups of performers were organized and peer support was received to safeguard the element. Annual fundraising has increased, and resources for activities were secured by the community, as well as by the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, local authorities and various organizations.
4. **Community participation**. According to the report, bearers of the element include masters, performers and spirit mediums, monks of Wat Svay Andet Monastery and village elders. The number of community members involved in the Lkhon Khol performance group in Wat Svay Andet has more than doubled since its inscription, and they now include performers, as well as teachers, pupils, tailors and managers. According to the report, the community is passionate about continuing the transmission of the element, and the number of community members involved has increased. An NGO was active in providing musical training. The overall management of the element is overseen by a Steering Committee composed of Lkhon Khol Masters and the Abbot of Wat Svay Andet, and it decides on the organization of performances and training. The safeguarding plan was updated, and the report was prepared with the wide participation of community members and other stakeholders.
5. **Viability and current risks**. As reported, the visibility and viability of the element have been raised. The attention, recognition and support received increased the number of practitioners and enhanced their determination to continue their safeguarding efforts, and the practice has become the pride of the community. Furthermore, the element has become a symbol of the Lvea Em District, recognized as a cultural treasure by the Kandal provincial administration, also appreciated at the national level. The effects of migration outside Wat Svay Andet by younger and working-age villagers due to socio-economic reasons were mitigated by enhancing public awareness and support for safeguarding the element. The difficulties of lacking space and funds for training were overcome during the reporting period. According to the report, the element is no longer in need of urgent safeguarding.
6. The updated safeguarding plan aims to maintain the relevance of the element to the community by increasing the frequency of its practice within and beyond the Wat Svay Andet Monastery, to ensure resources for practising and transmitting the element, and to establish a Lkhon Khol Center at Wat Svay Andet to facilitate awareness-raising and transmission of the element. Planned activities will be based on financial contributions from various stakeholders. The plan also envisages accomplishing the transfer of the element from the Urgent Safeguarding List to the Representative List.
7. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 18.COM 7.a.2

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/23/18.COM/7.a,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decision [13.COM 10.a.3](https://ich.unesco.org/en/d%C3%A9cisions/13.COM/10.a.3),
3. Expresses its appreciation to Cambodia for submitting, on time, its first report on the status of the element ‘Lkhon Khol Wat Svay Andet’, inscribed in 2018 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the efforts undertaken by the State Party to safeguard the element, in particular by supporting the local community and bearers of the element, providing the space and resources needed for its practice and transmission to younger generations, increasing the number of practitioners and performances, and ensuring participatory safeguarding with the involvement of the community, the Wat Svay Andet Monastery and other key stakeholders;
5. Encourages the State Party to pursue its efforts to support the transmission of the element to younger generations, maintaining its spiritual significance within the community, supporting the community-based management of the element and fundraising for its safeguarding;
6. Further encourages the State Party to establish a Lkhon Khol Center at Wat Svay Andet to facilitate the transmission of the element and to raise public awareness about the element, its practice and its meaning both within and beyond its community;
7. Requests that the Secretariat inform the State Party at least nine months prior to the next deadline about the required submission of its next report on the status of this element.

**Colombia: ‘Traditional Vallenato music of the Greater Magdalena region’** (*consult the* [*report*)](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/download.php?versionID=69118)

1. Traditional Vallenato music fuses cultural expressions from northern Colombia, the songs of cow-herders of the Greater Magdalena region and the chants of African slaves with the traditional dance rhythms of the indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. The lyrics interpret the world through stories that mix realism and fantasy with nostalgy, joy, sarcasm and humor. It is accompanied by traditional instruments that include a small drum, a wooden ribbed stick played with a wire comb, and an accordion. Performed at traditional gatherings and festivals as well as at parrandas where friends and family gather, the element functions as a means of communication between communities, enhances socialization and integration and plays a crucial role in building a regional shared identity.
2. The element was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2015. This is the first report submitted by the State Party on the status of this element.
3. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan.** According to the report, the transmission of traditional Vallenato music was one of the primary objectives of the safeguarding plan. Teaching this practice to children, youth and adults has been ensured by local institutions, non-profit organizations and public music schools. Universities have created programmes, courses and research initiatives to strengthen knowledge about the element. Furthermore, the organization of over eighty festivals across the region, funded by municipalities and communities, has also contributed to safeguarding Vallenato music. The viability of the element has also been strengthened thanks to the perseverance of its bearers, and notably through its promotion by local museums and radio stations, as well as on social networks, blogs and discussion groups. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic crisis impacted the implementation of the safeguarding plan. To mitigate its impact, the Ministry of Culture provided grants to support safeguarding measures and local authorities from three departments – La Guajira, Magdalena and Cesar, together representing seventy municipalities – included the safeguarding of the element in their development plans and supported festivals and meetings in their territories.
4. **Community participation.** As reported, many safeguarding activities were directly carried out by the bearers of the element including musicians, composers and cultural managers. A total of seventy-eight activities were carried out to strengthen the transmission of the element through formal and non-formal education, as well as through the organization of meetings and workshops with communities. Two meetings of female Vallenato musicians were held, and certain safeguarding efforts involved vulnerable members of the population, such as victims of armed conflict. The report also highlights the strong involvement of civil society and local institutions at the departmental level, though it is noted that greater participation and engagement of communities in the working groups of the cultural sector is needed. A monitoring committee appointed by the community oversaw the implementation of the safeguarding measures. A regional meeting held in 2022 to prepare the report involved cultural bearers and managers, delegates from three universities, representatives from local institutions and the Ministry of Culture. However, most participants came from the department of La Guajira. It is foreseen that, in 2023, follow-up meetings will be organized to include broader participation from all three departments and from other rural areas.
5. **Viability and current risks.** The inscription of the element has strengthened the sense of shared regional identity and enhanced support and access to resources to safeguard the element. However, a number of challenges were reported, including a lack of knowledge in schools about traditional Vallenato music, particularly related to its historical and social context, as well as the need to enhance dialogue between public and private educational institutions and teach all musical instruments and the characteristics of the element. Another reported threat concerns the diminishing practice of Vallenato music at public gatherings in the parrandas and violence is seen as affecting the transmission of the element, in particular in rural areas. A lack of interest from radio stations and recording companies and the decontextualization of the element at some festivals have also been reported, along with the need to improve the recognition of the work of musicians and composers, respect their copyrights, provide better conditions for their work and build their capacities in cultural entrepreneurship. As reported, there is a lack of dialogue between the local institutions of the three departments and the support, commitment and funding at the department level is not sufficient. Difficulty for bearers and managers to formulate a safeguarding project and receive funding was also noted.
6. The updated safeguarding plan notably aims to: (i) strengthen education of the element at primary and secondary school levels; (ii) launch a Vallenato Chair in the department of Cesar; (iii) create an Observatory of Traditional Vallenato Music and Culture to transfer knowledge and enhance public access to research; and (iv) establish a network of Vallenato festivals in the Greater Magdalena region. Proposed future activities include creating an archive of oral memory, developing a virtual platform to promote the element, and training and mentoring musicians, including on copyright issues. However, the report does not include a timeline for the proposed measures. It is foreseen that the safeguarding plan will be fully updated, validated, and its budget defined in 2023, with the participation of the community and institutions from the three departments of the Greater Magdalena region.
7. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 18.COM 7.a.3

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/23/18.COM/7.a,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decision [10.COM 10.a.2](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/10.COM/10.a.2),
3. Expresses its appreciation to Colombia for submitting its first report on the status of the element ‘Traditional Vallenato music of the Greater Magdalena region’, inscribed in 2015 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the efforts undertaken by the State Party to safeguard the element, in particular by enhancing its transmission in education, promoting the element through local gatherings and festivals, advancing research on the element, and ensuring the participatory monitoring of its safeguarding;
5. Further takes note of the efforts of community members, organizations and institutions to adapt to the situation presented by the COVID-19 pandemic by maintaining initiatives that could not be implemented during the pandemic as part of the updated safeguarding plan;
6. Encourages the State Party to pursue its efforts to transmit all aspects of the element, enhance its transmission through education at various levels, raise public awareness and secure public access to research on the element, and facilitate experience sharing among diverse stakeholders;
7. Further encourages the State Party to address the protection of the rights and interests of the bearers of the element, musicians and composers alike, to continue involving vulnerable members of the population in safeguarding the element, and to ensure the participatory monitoring of the implementation of the safeguarding measures;
8. Invites the State Party to prioritize safeguarding measures in response to identified threats to the viability of the element, to pay particular attention to avoiding its decontextualization, and to support the transmission of its social and cultural functions, including through its practice at traditional gatherings;
9. Further invites the State Party to finish updating the safeguarding measures, and to provide a fully updated safeguarding plan in its next report with a detailed timetable and budget, prepared with the participation of the community;
10. Requests that the Secretariat informe the State Party at least nine months prior to the next deadline about the required submission of its second report on the status of this element, and also encourages the State Party to submit it on time.

**Egypt: ‘Traditional hand puppetry’** (*consult the* [*report*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/download.php?versionID=69812))

1. Al-Aragoz is a traditional theatre form that uses hand puppetry and a distinctive voice-over technique. Performances are highly popular events during which puppeteers remain hidden while an assistant interacts with the puppets and crowd. Performers and the audience interact dynamically throughout the shows, which have a comic and entertaining character. They attract different audiences and address a variety of themes relating to daily life, including political phenomena, daily social conditions and familial relations. The element used to be practised by groups of travelling performers; today, performances mostly take place in Cairo. Traditional hand puppetry is recognized by the communities concerned as part of their living heritage.
2. The element was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2018. This is the first report submitted by the State Party on the status of this element.
3. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. According to the report, the primary objectives of the safeguarding plan were to document, promote and transmit the element and to train practitioners. The activities undertaken include studying, documenting and archiving traditional scripts, and several workshops for performers and puppet makers were organized. Public awareness about the element has been raised through continuous media attention, a documentary film, and an online channel showing performances recorded within the country and abroad. The practice was sustained through weekly performances in Cairo, and at a number of other places, including remote parts of the country. Traditional hand puppetry continued to be the main source of income for its performers, and an important source of income for puppet makers. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic social occasions for performing the element were stopped, which negatively affected the economic conditions of performers as well as traditional modes of transmission. Civil society organizations, educational and cultural institutions, and the Ministry of Culture made efforts to safeguard the element, and governmental and other funding sources were mobilized. The UNESCO Office in Cairo supported the production of an educational toolkit. Workshops for educators and children on intangible cultural heritage safeguarding, including this element, also helped raise awareness among many school children about the element.
4. **Community participation**. As reported, the number of practitioners has been diminishing. Some practitioners passed away during the reporting period, some stopped practising due to health conditions, while some gave up the practice due to the poor economic situation. This has limited the transmission of the element. Regular performances were given by fewer than ten active practitioners, all of an advanced age, the majority of whom are from Cairo. Practitioners of the element contributed to a series of seminars and training workshops, including for children. The element was performed in schools, and two classes were trained each year in the basic skills of hand puppetry. The Egyptian Aragoz Festival organized by the Wamda Troup every year included several activities targeting university students and raising their awareness about hand puppetry, puppet making, and their social functions and values. The annual Aragoz Forum hosted workshops on the element for persons with special needs. The report states that civil society organizations have been very effective in their safeguarding activities. The report and the updated safeguarding plan resulted from a collaboration between performers and puppet makers, the Wamda Troupe, the Ministry of Culture, its culture centers, local authorities and other stakeholders. However, the report does not provide information on gender roles regarding community participation.
5. **Viability and current risks**. According to the report, the inscription of the element was greatly appreciated by the communities concerned, in particular in Cairo, and attracted attention to the risks concerning its safeguarding. The implementation of safeguarding measures helped prevent the deterioration of the element. However, its viability was reported to still be at risk, facing the same threats as recognized in its nomination. There is a lack of professional performers and puppet makers and an overall decrease in interest among younger generations. Traditional venues and folk ceremonies linked to the element have disappeared, and its performances have become limited mainly to a number of places in Cairo. The element is performed outside its traditional context, without giving sufficient attention to its social functions and to the transmission of the moral values of the community. As reported, laws concerning public gatherings and the rise of religious radicalism have also negatively affected the practice and its transmission. Many once-performed stories have disappeared from the repertoire, along with specific performance techniques, and traditional scripts have not been sufficiently documented. Furthermore, financial resources available for safeguarding the element are reported to be limited.
6. The updated safeguarding plan is based on the experiences gained during the implementation of the safeguarding measures and is intended to increase the number of practitioners, audiences and performances of the element. Planned activities include expanding the geographical scope of planned performance tours as well as of regular and systematic training workshops, and to transmit all aspects of the element. Training sessions for practitioners are planned, including on cultural entrepreneurship and management. The scope of the Aragoz Forum will be expanded, and the Egyptian Aragoz Festival will become an international event. Furthermore, there are plans to organize a summer school for younger generations, to enhance distance learning through a website, to establish an arts center focusing on the element and function as a training venue, and to support the production of new puppetry performances. Cooperation among several ministries, practitioners and civil society is planned to develop a new policy for safeguarding the element in Egypt. Its practitioners are reported to be highly motivated to continue the practice, and national and local governmental support is planned to implement safeguarding activities.
7. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 18.COM 7.a.4

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/23/18.COM/7.a,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decision [13.COM 10.a.4](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/13.COM/10.a.4),
3. Expresses its appreciation to Egypt for submitting, on time, its first report on the status of the element ‘Traditional hand puppetry’, inscribed in 2018 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the efforts undertaken by the State Party to safeguard the element, in particular by raising public awareness, providing inclusive training possibilities with a focus on younger generations, continuing documentation, promoting the element, and ensuring participatory safeguarding and its monitoring;
5. Encourages the State Party to pursue its efforts to document the element and support its practice and availability to diverse audiences in various regions of Egypt, to build the capacities of its practitioners, to develop inclusive training possibilities, and to transmit all aspects of the element, including puppet making and voice-over techniques;
6. Invites the State Party to strengthen the awareness of the social and cultural functions of the element, encourage its performances, including in traditional contexts, and promote the transmission of positive community values through the practice;
7. Further invites the State Party to describe in its next report how communities, groups and individuals are involved in terms of gender roles in the practice of the element, including its audiences, and in the implementation of its safeguarding measures;
8. Further encourages the State Party to continue its fundraising efforts, to carry on developing synergies among various funding sources, and to consider International Assistance provided by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund as a possible source of funding for the development and implementation of the safeguarding plan for the element;
9. Requests that the Secretariat inform the State Party at least nine months prior to the next deadline about the required submission of its next report on the status of this element.

**Egypt: ‘Handmade weaving in Upper Egypt (Sa’eed)’** (*consult the* [*report*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/download.php?versionID=70403))

1. Handmade weaving in Upper Egypt (Sa’eed) is a set of skills that involve loom preparation, threading and weaving. Silk, cotton, linen and wool are traditionally used for weaving. Handmade weaving is practised on the traditional handloom, and loom making is seen as an integral part of it. This craft is practised by both men and women, passed on from older to younger weavers by imitation and inherited as a profession within families. Handmade weaving creates a sense of identity, belonging and pride, and has a cultural, social and economic value for its communities, which recognize it as part of their cultural heritage.
2. The element was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2020. As requested by the fifteenth session of the Committee in 2020 (Decision [15.COM 8.a.3](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/15.COM/8.a.3)), this is the first biennial report submitted by the State Party on the status of this element.
3. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. As reported, the inscription of the element has increased its local and national media coverage, which has raised awareness and interest about the element among communities in Upper Egypt and in the country in general. Weavers have participated in annual fairs and exhibitions organized by the government, which have had a positive impact on the practice. Raw materials such as silk, cotton, linen and wool have been provided through cooperation among different ministries, NGOs and private agencies. As reported, non-formal training workshops organized by NGOs were particularly effective for transmitting the knowledge and skills to youth from local communities. For instance, the Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions has trained 300 young people in handmade weaving. Furthermore, children’s awareness about the element has been raised by including information and activities related to handmade weaving in the Egyptian school curricula, starting with primary education. However, the COVID-19 pandemic slowed down the realization of safeguarding plans, including the transmission of knowledge and skills related to the element. The Ministry of Culture ensured the overall implementation of the safeguarding plan, which was based on in-kind inputs from governmental and non-governmental sources.
4. **Community participation**. The practitioners of the element are weavers and traditional loom makers, mostly men, whereas women mainly carry out preparatory activities, such as spinning cones. According to the report, elderly practitioners still have the necessary knowledge and skills to transmit the element. An increase in the number of practitioners has been observed, in particular through the participation of girls and women. Broader communities concerned with handmade weaving that have contributed to its practice include cotton farmers, sheep breeders, silk makers and tailors, as well as consumers. Several small factories, workshops and enterprises of weaving were also involved in the practice of the element. The Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions was instrumental in promoting the participation of handmade weaving craftspeople in practising and transmitting the element. Safeguarding measures have been implemented by communities, groups and individuals, as well as community associations, along with national and local authorities. The updated safeguarding plan and the report were prepared with the participation of weavers, traditional loom makers, community associations, local and national authorities and other stakeholders.
5. **Viability and current risks**. According to the report, the inscription of the element has favored its recognition within society and has been helpful for reviving it, improving its viability and enhancing its cultural, social and economic value. Nevertheless, there is still a need for its urgent safeguarding. High yarn prices and the lack of some types of cotton and linen hinder the practice and transmission of the element. The supply of raw materials partly relies on importation, and the poor quality of available materials has a negative impact on the quality of products. Despite governmental efforts to advance the silk industry, silk thread production is reported to be at an early stage of development. Meanwhile, there are increasing efforts to encourage cotton production. The problem of unemployment has remained, and the practice of the element is seen as an opportunity to provide income and contribute to the economy of its communities. As reported, work is also being continued to limit health risks related to the practice of handmade weaving, for example through the promotion of proper sitting positions.
6. The updated safeguarding plan is directed at continuing the practice and transmission of the element, increasing the number of practising weavers and traditional loom makers, especially among young people, and maintaining the necessary conditions for the availability of raw materials. Planned activities include capacity-building workshops, training programmes, participation in fairs and raising awareness through the media. The implementation of the updated safeguarding plan will be based on cooperation among practitioners and governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. However, a timetable for the activities and an estimation of the funds required are missing from the updated safeguarding plan.
7. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 18.COM 7.a.5

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/23/18.COM/7.a,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decision [15.COM 8.a.3](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/15.COM/8.a.3),
3. Expresses its appreciation to Egypt for submitting, on time, its first biennial report on the status of the element ‘Handmade weaving in Upper Egypt (Sa'eed)’, inscribed in 2020 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the efforts undertaken by the State Party to safeguard the element, in particular by enhancing its visibility at annual fairs and exhibitions, raising awareness about it in society, including through formal education, and transmitting the knowledge and skills required to practise the element through non-formal training for younger generations;
5. Encourages the State Party to pursue its efforts to enhance the transmission of the element through formal and non-formal education, to raise its visibility and increase the number of practitioners, to favor the accessibility of quality raw materials for its practice and support collaboration among diverse stakeholders for its safeguarding;
6. Further encourages the State Party to strengthen the social and cultural functions of the element and safeguard all its aspects, including the knowledge and skills of making traditional handlooms;
7. Invites the State Party to strengthen the capacities of bearers and practitioners to practise and transmit the element and secure their livelihoods, and to address the social and health security concerns raised in the nomination of the element;
8. Further invites the State Party to provide a timetable and an estimation of the funds required for future safeguarding activities in its next report;
9. Requests that the Secretariat inform the State Party at least nine months prior to the next deadline about the required submission of its next biennial report on the status of this element.

Kenya: ‘Enkipaata, Eunoto and Olng'esherr, three male rites of passage of the Maasai community’ (*consult the* [*report*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/download.php?versionID=70476))

1. Enkipaata, Eunoto and Olng'esherr are three interrelated male rites of passage of the Maasai community. Their enactment involves the transmission of indigenous knowledge on social values, traditions and life skills. Enkipaata induces boys to initiation, Eunoto paves the way to adulthood, and Olng'esherr marks the beginning of eldership. Elders transmit their knowledge to young men through songs, folktales, legends, stories, proverbs and riddles, and women actively participate in various ways. These rites enhance unity, cohesiveness, moral standards and responsibilities within the community.
2. The element was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2018, and this is the first report submitted by the State Party on the status of this element. International Assistance was granted from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund by the Bureau of the Committee in October 2016 (Decision [11.COM 3.BUR 4](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/ITH-16-11.COM_3.BUR-Decisions-EN.docx)) for the purpose of safeguarding the element, and the project was implemented between February 2017 and February 2020.
3. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. According to the report, the inscription has given the element positive local and national visibility, and the implementation of its safeguarding measures has supported its viability. Capacity-building on the implementation of the 2003 Convention and on community-based inventorying was carried out, raising awareness about the Convention among elders, women and youth. However, the need for further capacity-building is also reported. Awareness-raising materials, such as a film and photographs, were disseminated to youth through schools in the Kajiado and Narok communities, and technical equipment was secured to engage youth in documenting the element. Cultural spaces important for the practice of the element have been mapped in Kajiado and Narok counties. While some ceremonies were disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic during 2019-2021, the community continued to safeguard the element and exchange safeguarding ideas through community meetings. Support was received from the Department of Culture in the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Culture, the County Governments of Kajiado and Narok, and local agencies. However, as reported, the community faced several challenges, including limited funds and personnel, and logistical challenges for executing the safeguarding plan. The report lacks complete information on funding sources for the implementation of the safeguarding measures.
4. **Community participation**. According to the report, the practice and safeguarding of the element have enhanced interaction and exchange among community members and a sense of ownership over the project. The safeguarding of the element was based on extensive community consultations, involving the Council of Elders, the nine clans of the Maasai community spread across geographically spread-out settlements, youth practitioners from the age of fifteen to thirty years and women. Younger generations established a website on the element, and women engaged in inventorying and documenting activities related to the element. As reported, there is a need to secure institutional structures within the community to serve as repositories for the information documented. The Department of Culture, the County Governments of Kajiado and Narok, the Centre for Heritage Development in Africa, the Department of Film Services, and the National Museums of Kenya, among others, implemented safeguarding activities. Communities participated in the assessment and updating of the safeguarding plan and in the preparation of the report.
5. **Viability and current risks**. As reported, the frequency of the enactment of these rites is diminishing, and there has been a decrease in the level of community participation in their practice. This is partly explained by rural-to-urban migration and the adoption of new lifestyles. The element has been adapted to formal education, and some apprenticeship and mentorship practices have been transferred from the Maasai community to clan or family assemblies. According to the report, traditional modes of transmission are limited, and a well-planned structured process is needed to transmit the element through education programmes and public institutions. Furthermore, cultural spaces of traditional settings of rites are diminishing. Cultural landscapes have been affected by infrastructure developments and changes in land tenure. Privatization of land has led to the need to request that landowners permit the use of spaces for the practice of the rites. In addition, according to the report, many rivers have dried up due to drought, and climate change has limited the spaces that can be used for the practice of the element.
6. The updated safeguarding plan is aimed at raising awareness among stakeholders, including the Kenya Wildlife Services and Lands Department, on the management and protection of the cultural and natural spaces associated with the practice of the element, including the documentation of communal land. In addition, the updated plan seeks to enhance awareness among youth through mentoring and informal learning sessions with elders in schools and by informally integrating the Maasai language and ceremonies into the school curriculum, in collaboration with local schools and the County education authorities. Youth volunteer groups will also be engaged in documenting the element and enriching the community website. An annual community festival will be introduced. Regular consultation meetings between communities and other stakeholders are foreseen. Information on available funding sources for the implementation of the safeguarding plan is missing from the report.
7. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 18.COM 7.a.6

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/23/18.COM/7.a,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decision [13.COM 10.a.5](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/13.COM/10.a.5),
3. Expresses its appreciation to Kenya for submitting, on time, its first report on the status of the element ‘Enkipaata, Eunoto and Olng'esherr, three male rites of passage of the Maasai community’, inscribed in 2018 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the efforts undertaken by the State Party to safeguard the element, in particular by building the capacities of the Maasai community, raising awareness about the element among youth and diverse stakeholders, documenting and inventorying the element with the involvement of youth, mapping associated cultural spaces, and ensuring community participation in the implementation and monitoring of safeguarding activities;
5. Encourages the State Party to pursue its efforts to strengthen the involvement of educational institutions in the transmission of knowledge, to sustain the accessibility of cultural and natural spaces that are important for its practice, to support the Maasai community in its efforts to establish repositories of information on the element, including related digital tools developed, and to ensure continuous community participation in monitoring the safeguarding of the element;
6. Recalls the importance of ensuring the free, prior, sustained and informed consent of communities regarding the documentation of its rituals performed, its storage and further dissemination;
7. Notes that International Assistance was provided in 2016 to safeguard the element, and further encourages the State Party to continue its fundraising efforts and to develop synergies among various funding sources, with due consideration to balance the funding planned for the bearers of the element for knowledge transmission, and for other safeguarding expenditures;
8. Requests that the Secretariat inform the State Party at least nine months prior to the next deadline about the required submission of its next report on the status of this element.

Syrian Arab Republic: ‘Shadow play’ (*consult the* [*report*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/download.php?versionID=69116))

1. Shadow play is an expression composed of several artistic elements, including storytelling, acting, singing, script writing and craftsmanship, with a central role being played by the Mukhayels, talented male and female performers. Shadow play transcends mere entertainment, serving as a tool for fostering social bonds within communities. Traditionally, it incorporates humorous narratives on the social and political issues prevailing in society, expressed through the main characters Karakoz and Eiwas. This age-old art has embraced contemporary themes, and novel characters have been introduced to speak about post-war hardships, identity, gender roles, societal prejudices and social justice.
2. The element was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2018, and this is the first report submitted by the State Party on the status of this element.
3. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. Safeguarding efforts have responded to the objectives of the safeguarding plan. A free-of-charge training programme and a toolkit developed for teachers were reported to be the most effective measures. Children and youth have been introduced to shadow play through shows and workshops, and culture professionals have been trained. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the programme’s momentum remained strong, with three cycles successfully implemented prior to the reporting period. Around twenty new professional practitioners were certified each year by the Ministry of Culture and received portable screens and other necessary tools. The practice has become an alternative source of income in difficult post-war conditions for many practitioners. Shadow plays were presented in private and public events at local and national levels. The number of performances continues to increase, also thanks to the fact that more and more traditional cafes request shadow play performances, and shadow plays are also performed in new types of spaces. Characters and storylines are documented, respecting and protecting the rights of performers. Historical puppets were procured, and their documentation and research are ongoing. Safeguarding was funded by governmental bodies and NGOs, international partners such as Syria Trust for Development and UNICEF. As reported, certain safeguarding commitments, such as the development of a website, had to be canceled or postponed due to the continuously decreasing value of the domestic currency and large discrepancies between the expenses planned and actual expenses.
4. **Community participation**. The improved viability of the element is reported thanks to the strong commitment of communities and NGOs. Following the inscription, new Mukhayels have been trained under the mentorship of the sole practising Mukhayel at the time of the nomination. Local artists, experts and creatives volunteered to conceive a training programme and provide training, including on storytelling, speech skills, creative writing, scriptwriting, acting, singing and puppet crafting. Post-graduate Mukhayels become mentors for future trainees. The number of certified practitioners has increased to fifty-seven, sixty percent of whom are female, and including communities from different ethnic and religious backgrounds, as well as persons with special needs. Networks of practitioners have been established to exchange knowledge and information, and to share resources. An annual training programme was introduced to further expand the number of practitioners. Over nineteen NGOs established a network for collaboration and information sharing. Collaborations have been triggered between government and non-governmental bodies. Shadow play has become a permanent activity in community centers as a measure of support and life-skill learning for children and vulnerable women. Younger generations, in particular university students, have also shown a greater interest in practising the element. NGOs ensured the safeguarding measures were monitored and updated. The report was based on information provided by practitioners and on regular reports by participating governmental bodies and NGOs.
5. **Viability and current risks**. As reported, the element has experienced a revival and its visibility has increased thanks to the inscription. Its reach has expanded significantly, now spanning a wider geographical area, with the revival of roadshows across multiple cities. The traditional shadow play characters Karakoz and Eiwas have been enriched by the addition of over a hundred newly created characters and background narratives that address the challenges and aspirations of current generations. The element has become a platform for young people’s free and creative expression.
6. Nonetheless, the report also underscores the continued deterioration of the socio-economic wellbeing of communities and extreme economic challenges in the post-war recovery process which affect the practice of the element. A continuous increase in practitioner numbers is deemed necessary to ensure the sustained viability of the element.
7. The primary objectives of the updated safeguarding plan are to strengthen the transmission of the knowledge and skills related to the element through training, to increase awareness of the element through promotion, including in an annual national shadow play event, and to establish a permanent and accessible cultural space for safeguarding the element, including developing a physical and digital archive and a Shadow Play Living Museum. With the involvement of the Ministry of Health, there are plans to train mental health practitioners to use the element for working with trauma victims. Governmental, non-governmental and private funding is planned for the safeguarding activities.
8. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 18.COM 7.a.7

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/23/18.COM/7.a,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decision [13.COM 10.a.7](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/13.COM/10.a.7),
3. Expresses its appreciation to the Syrian Arab Republic for submitting, on time, its first report on the status of the element ‘Shadow play’, inscribed in 2018 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the efforts undertaken by the State Party to safeguard the element, in particular by prioritizing training and supporting new practitioners, raising awareness, especially among children and youth, enhancing the gender balance and inclusivity in its practice, strengthening collaboration within the community, between non-governmental and governmental bodies and internationally, and safeguarding all aspects of the element, including puppet crafting;
5. Notes also the revival of the element despite post-war conditions and social and economic hardships, and the role that the element plays in this context in terms of supporting the resilience and wellbeing of communities;
6. Encourages the State Party to pursue its efforts to enhance the viability of the element, provide training opportunities, promote the element and support its practitioners, raise awareness among younger generations, develop a dedicated physical and digital archive and a museum, and continue collaborations between governmental and non-governmental bodies;
7. Further encourages the State Party to continue its fundraising efforts, develop synergies among various funding sources, and consider International Assistance under the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund as a possible source of funding for the development and implementation of the safeguarding measures for the element;
8. Requests that the Secretariat inform the State Party at least nine months prior to the next deadline about the required submission of its next report on the status of this element.

**Ukraine: ‘Culture of Ukrainian borscht cooking’** (*consult the* [*report*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/download.php?versionID=72828))

1. Culture of Ukrainian borscht cooking includes cooking skills, consumption, traditional farming and associated rituals, as well as oral expressions. It unites people of all ages, genders, backgrounds and statuses, strengthening social ties between them. Borscht has a variety of recipes, all of which are rich in vegetables and nutrients, and it is cooked at home and in catering establishments as well as being served in schools and hospitals. Knowledge and skills of borscht cooking are passed down from generation to generation within families. Borscht cooking relies on the knowledge and ability needed to grow and preserve its ingredients while taking care of the environment. Borscht in Ukraine is a marker of healthy eating, national identity and sustainability.
2. The element was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2022, as a case of extreme urgency as stipulated in Article 17.3 of the Convention. As requested by the fifth extraordinary session of the Committee in 2022 (Decision [5.EXT.COM 5](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/5.EXT.COM/5)), this is the first annual report submitted by the State Party on the status of this element. Two assistance projects were implemented within the reporting period with the support of UNESCO: ‘Assessing the needs of living heritage safeguarding among displaced communities from Ukraine in five neighboring countries: Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia’ (between April and September 2022); and the project ‘Supporting the resilience of Ukrainian school children through enhancing awareness of their living heritage’, supported by the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund (between September 2022 and July 2023).
3. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. According to the report, the utmost efforts were made to safeguard the element. Borscht registers created in three pilot regions – Odesa, Kherson and Dnipro – include local varieties, as well as those practised and reported by temporarily displaced people and residents who have moved abroad. The UNESCO project ‘Teaching and learning with living heritage’ enhanced the involvement of young people. The element has been integrated into school curricula, namely in chemistry and biology lessons. Methodological recommendations for educators on ‘Technology of Cooking Borscht’ have been developed and made available digitally and the element is part of the specialization on food technologies. A didactic game for children was published and other publications are foreseen. The visibility of the element was enhanced through dedicated programmes on national and regional television, the radio, websites and social media. Traditional borscht festivals, workshops, masterclasses, information seminars and other events, some of which were for young people, took place in accordance with the commitments made, despite the opportunities limited by the war in Ukraine. The second Saturday of September was declared All-Ukrainian Borscht Day and celebrated for the first time in 2023. The Ministry of Culture and Information Policy, local governments, organizations and communities provided support for safeguarding the element, despite the limited resources.
4. **Community participation**. As reported, governmental and non-governmental organizations collaborated to safeguard the element. Regional folk art centers engaged in the documentation and mapping of the element, libraries monitored publications on borscht, and NGOs engaged in awareness-raising. Ukrainian citizens abroad popularized the culture of cooking and eating borscht, and new Ukrainian restaurants have been opened in several countries. The viability of the element was monitored in close cooperation with public institutions and practitioners from all regions of Ukraine. The safeguarding plan was updated through discussions held by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Platform, an association of public authorities and representatives of communities. Thematic conferences and workshops were held to discuss threats and develop local safeguarding plans. The report was prepared based on a survey, phone interviews with practitioners, visits to different parts of Ukraine and discussions with local communities.
5. **Viability and current risks**. According to the report, positive changes were witnessed after the inscription of the element. Knowledge about the element has been spread, borsht has become more popular, and respect for traditional food has increased in general. Ukrainian borscht cooking has united people and became a symbol of resilience and resistance during the war. Residents of many communities have volunteered to prepare borscht for the Armed Forces of Ukraine and for internally displaced persons. However, the threats have not changed and in some cases they have intensified. The military actions in some areas of Ukraine have made rituals associated with the element and its documentation impossible and have resulted in the destruction or reduction of plants and animal products necessary for borscht cooking. This has led to an increase in the prices of ingredients, which has negatively affected the viability of the element. The number of varieties of the element is therefore diminishing. The flooding of territories, destruction of fertile land, pollution of water and wells threaten flora and fauna diversity and affect the element. As reported, attention to the environment is crucial to sustain its viability. Research has been initiated on the impact of war on borsch cooking and consumption, seeking to determine the human, social, economic and environmental losses.
6. The updated safeguarding plan aims to overcome the current threats to the element and strengthen cooperation among various ministries, organizations and individuals. Safeguarding activities will be prioritized and adjusted to the current situation in Ukraine. They will focus on education, research, cooperation with the media, joint actions among various stakeholders and awareness-raising within the country as well as among the Ukrainian diaspora and temporarily displaced persons abroad. The creation of a state programme to safeguard the element is foreseen. Governmental funding is planned for education, and fundraising is intended to support other safeguarding activities. The safeguarding plan aims to achieve a transfer of the element from the Urgent Safeguarding List to the Representative List.
7. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 18.COM 7.a.8

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/23/18.COM/7.a,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decision [5.EXT.COM 5](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/5.EXT.COM/5),
3. Expresses its appreciation to Ukraine for submitting, on time, its first annual report on the status of the element ‘Culture of Ukrainian borscht cooking’, inscribed in 2022 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, as a case of extreme urgency as stipulated in Article 17.3 of the Convention;
4. Takes note of the efforts undertaken by the State Party to safeguard the element, in particular by enhancing cooperation among governmental and non-governmental organizations, raising public awareness about the element, developing methodological materials, integrating the element into education, and documenting the varieties of the element in several regions, despite the circumstances of war in the territory of Ukraine;
5. Further takes note that the element has united people in Ukraine, including internally displaced persons, the Ukrainian diaspora and temporarily displaced persons abroad, and has become a symbol of resilience and resistance;
6. Encourages the State Party to pursue its efforts to overcome current risks to the viability of the element, to strengthen cooperation among various stakeholders and develop a state programme to safeguard the element, to continue research, transmit knowledge and raise public awareness about the element through education and the media;
7. Invites the State Party to pursue its efforts to research the impact of war on the viability of the element and to adjust the implementation of the updated safeguarding plan in view of the evolving context of the threats concerning the element;
8. Notes also the assistance from the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund granted in 2022, and its reported contribution to the safeguarding of the element, and further encourages the State Party to continue its fundraising efforts and developing synergies among various funding sources;
9. Requests that the Secretariat inform the State Party at least nine months prior to the next deadline about the required submission of its next report on the status of this element.

**C.2. Assessments of the second reports and draft decisions**

Kenya: ‘Isukuti dance of Isukha and Idakho communities of Western Kenya’ *(consult the* [*report*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/download.php?versionID=70475)*)*

1. Isukuti dance is performed by the Isukha and Idakho communities in Western Kenya, uniting members of the two communities at various social occasions. The dance is accompanied by Isukuti songs that serve as a repository of the history of communities and provides a commentary on social and moral issues. Three types of drums are played, representing the father, the mother and the child, along with other instruments. Isukuti dance transmits cultural values and norms to younger generations and provides practitioners with a sense of belonging, identity and continuity.
2. The element was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2014. The [first report](file:///\\hqfs\OurDrive\CLT\ProgrammeExecution\2003Convention\2003-PeriodicReporting\2019\ICH-11\KEN-01452-USL%20Report\0145200005-Form%20ICH-11-EN_20190627%20.doc) was examined by the Committee in 2018. This is the second report submitted by the State Party on the status of this element.
3. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. According to the report, the safeguarding measures implemented sustained the viability of the element. Communities shared documentation concerning Isukuti dance through social media, which increased awareness, popularized the element, and developed exchanges among performance groups. Performances of Isukuti dance at national and county celebrations were documented by County and National Governments. The bearers and practitioners of the element, together with other stakeholders, mapped the available raw materials for making instruments for Isukuti performances. Alternative materials were also identified and used, such as cowhides and horns, instead of traditional material from endangered and protected animal species. Hands-on training has been instrumental in the transmission of the element from one generation to the next. Safeguarding measures were funded by national and county governments, private funding and community groups.
4. Regarding the previous Decision [14.COM 9.a.2](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/9.a.2) of the Committee, in which it invited the State Party to integrate the practice of the element into school curricula, it is reported that Isukuti dance was featured at special school days, as well as at drama and music festivals from the sub-county to the national level, which had a positive impact on the viability of the element. Training on instrument playing was provided at several schools upon request, mainly during music and drama competition seasons, and the number of schools requesting such training sessions is increasing. In 2020-2021 the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted these cycles and also led to budgetary cuts. The limited funding still affects the implementation of the envisaged measures, such as establishing an Isukuti Centre.
5. **Community participation**. As reported, communities have been central to the implementation of the safeguarding measures. There are about fifty active Isukuti groups within Isukha and Idakho communities, all of which are training their own apprentices in instrument playing. About 240 apprentices are trained every year. Women and youth groups have been instrumental in developing tree seedlings around the Kakamega forest to secure future raw material for drum making. Elders provided complementary information for the inventory on the element. During the reporting period, a workshop was organized to monitor the status of the element, and to strengthen the networks of its bearers and practitioners. The Department of Culture in the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Culture coordinated safeguarding measures and collaborated with the County Government of Kakamega and other institutions. Consultative meetings with communities were held to update the safeguarding plan and to prepare the report.
6. **Viability and current risks**. According to the report, the viability of the element has improved and Isukuti dance is now practised on an almost daily basis at diverse social gatherings. Transmission through lineage is limited due to migration, the adoption of new lifestyles and school schedules, but it is ensured by the Isukuti groups. Traditional drumbeats and meanings of Isukuti are disappearing and the practice is adapting to changing trends and influences of modern music appealing to youth. The element is practised by members of communities who have migrated to urban areas; however, to a large extent this is for commercial purposes. Over-commercialization continues to be a threat for the safeguarding of the element. As reported, Isukuti dance has also been embraced by other communities in their ceremonies, and in the ceremonies of the Catholic church. It is also used as a tool for raising awareness about the environment, economy, gender and religion, for instance in relation to the conservation of the Kakamega forest.
7. The updated safeguarding plan foresees the continued documentation of the element, the production of teaching materials, a website and other publications, as well as the transmission of Isukuti dance through informal training, annual workshops and festivals. There are also plans to further integrate it into education by holding training sessions and monitoring their effectiveness, sustaining awards and securing a stock of raw materials for instrument making. Furthermore, the community has initiated research to collect traditional Isukuti songs, and support is needed to help store the documented information. There are plans to establish a craft center for making Isukuti dance drums, along with other accompanying instruments and costumes. Meetings between practitioners and the county government are planned to advance the establishment of the Isukuti Centre. National and county government funding and other funding sources are planned.
8. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 18.COM 7.a.9

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/23/18.COM/7.a,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decisions [9.COM 9.a.5](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/9.COM/9.a.5) and [14.COM 9.a.2](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/9.a.2),
3. Expresses its appreciation to Kenya for submitting, on time, its second report on the status of the element ‘Isukuti dance of Isukha and Idakho communities of Western Kenya’, inscribed in 2014 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the efforts undertaken by the State Party to safeguard the element, in particular through its documentation and by providing training possibilities and encouraging the involvement of youth in its practice, mapping and alternating raw materials for instrument making, facilitating networking among practitioners and ensuring a participatory process for the documentation, safeguarding and monitoring of the element;
5. Encourages the State Party to pursue its efforts to strengthen the viability of the element by integrating it into education, providing training sessions, enhancing community networking and continuing documentation and research, and to proceed with the establishment of a crafts center and an Isukuti Centre as foreseen in the safeguarding plan;
6. Recalls the importance of obtaining the free, prior and informed consent of bearers and practitioners regarding the documentation of their knowledge and performances, its long-term storage and further dissemination;
7. Invites the State Party to improve the viability of the element and all associated aspects, such as knowledge of the traditional songs, drumbeats and meanings of Isukuti dance, as well as instrument-making skills, and to facilitate and support communities in their efforts to document the element, store and preserve the related information and sustain access to such information, including through the planned website dedicated to the element;
8. Further invites the State Party to continue taking particular care to avoid the possible negative consequences of safeguarding efforts, such as the over-commercialization of the element;
9. Further encourages the State Party to continue its fundraising efforts and developing synergies among various funding sources;
10. Requests that the Secretariat inform the State Party at least nine months prior to the next deadline about the required submission of its next report on the status of this element.

**Uganda: ‘Male-child cleansing ceremony of the Lango of central northern Uganda’** (*consult the* [*report*)](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/download.php?versionID=69305)

1. The male-child cleansing ceremony, performed among the Lango people of central northern Uganda, is a healing ritual for a male child who is believed to have lost his manhood because of the non-observance of certain norms and procedures in the first three days of the child’s life. The ritual is performed to enable him to regain his manhood and to allow for the continuity of Lango society and the reproduction of other lives. It is a community celebration accompanied by traditional food and dances in which women play a central role. Shea butter is used for performing some of its rituals. The ceremony is deeply rooted in the belief system of the Lango people and provides them with a sense of identity and social cohesion.
2. The element was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2014. The [first report](file:///\\hqfs\OurDrive\CLT\ProgrammeExecution\2003Convention\2003-PeriodicReporting\2019\ICH-11\UGA-01453-USL%20Report\0145300004-Form%20ICH-11-EN_20190218.pdf) was examined by the Committee in 2019. This is the second report submitted by the State Party on the status of this element.
3. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. During the reporting period, safeguarding activities continued to address objectives identified at the time of the nomination of the element. As reported, awareness of the element was raised and resulted in increased knowledge and acceptance of the ceremony across the districts inhabited by Lango people. Community dialogue meetings were held and engaged elders, clan leaders, cultural, political and religious leaders and community members of various ages. Bearers and practitioners of the ceremony were interviewed, the inventory was updated, and documentation was disseminated to the communities and organizations concerned. The COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on the participation of communities and schools and the mobilization of funds to cater for the planned activities. It is deemed that only about half of the activities could be implemented during the reporting period. Alternative measures were adopted, and the community was engaged through interactive radio programmes in the local language and through social media.
4. Regarding the previous Decision [14.COM 9.a.3](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/9.a.3) of the Committee, in which it invited the State Party to develop new educational plans and policies in the field of culture and to pursue close cooperation with governmental and non-governmental organizations, and individual partners, it is reported that head teachers of primary schools in Dokolo District engaged in teaching the element at schools. Furthermore, seedlings have been supplied by agricultural and forestry research institutes to ensure the preservation of shea butter trees, which are protected under the national law. Community members participated in an increased number of initiatives to produce and plant shea butter tree seedlings, including in community gardens, and engaged in monitoring and referring offenses against existing regulations on tree preservation. Safeguarding activities were funded by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, district local governments, the Uganda Community Museums Association, the Lango Cultural Foundation and other stakeholders.
5. **Community participation**. Practitioners of the ceremony include adults from the family and the community of diverse ages, genders and social backgrounds, whereas the bearers are mainly women of an advanced age who are knowledgeable about the practice. Younger women have also become involved in carrying out cleansing ceremonies. Women and men alike have transmitted their knowledge to youth, and civil society organizations participated in awareness-raising activities. This helped renew communities’ understanding and their motivation to engage in safeguarding the ceremony. Community members, including tradition bearers, elders and youths, participated as guests and panelists at interactive radio programmes to promote the element, sharing their experiences and clarifying cultural aspects of the element. The report was prepared, the planned activities discussed and the safeguarding plan updated with the engagement of local governments and through meetings with community members in villages in each of the districts inhabited by Lango people.
6. **Viability and current risks**. As reported, the inscription of the element has brought pride among the Lango people and increased community participation in the practice of the element. Several cleansing ceremonies have been carried out during the reporting period. The risks and threats to the element identified at the time of the nomination have been addressed, such as limited knowledge of the element, the lack of freedom to practise it, and the disappearance of shea butter trees. The male-child cleansing ceremony has been widely promoted, and young girls and boys are deemed to be well informed about the element. The shea butter trees have been replanted and preserved, with increased individual and community commitment. Knowledge and acceptance of the element has increased, reducing the stigma associated with its practice, but direct modes of transmission within communities remain weak.
7. The updated safeguarding plan includes similar objectives to the previous one, with specific measures for youth and capacity building. Community dialogue meetings will be continued, radio programmes to raise awareness conducted, and youth and children educated on the element. It is envisaged that training sessions will be organized on inventorying and documentation, interviews will be carried out with the bearers and practitioners of the element, the inventory on the element will be updated, and the documented information will be disseminated. The planting and preservation of shea butter trees will be continued in cooperation with diverse stakeholders. As reported, the State Party will support training, mobilize resources, coordinate the implementation of the updated safeguarding plan, and encourage the widest possible community participation.
8. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 18.COM 7.a.10

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/23/18.COM/7.a,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decisions [9.COM 9.a.7](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/9.COM/9.a.7) and [14.COM 9.a.3](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/9.a.3),
3. Expresses its appreciation to Uganda for submitting, on time, its second report on the status of the element ‘Male-child cleansing ceremony of the Lango of central northern Uganda’, inscribed in 2014 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the efforts undertaken by the State Party to safeguard the element, in particular by raising awareness within communities, pursuing the documentation and inventorying of the element, and enhancing partnerships to secure the preservation and planting of shea butter trees used for the practice;
5. Encourages the State Party to pursue its efforts with regards to awareness-raising and education, with the participation of the bearers and practitioners of the element, to continue dialogue and strengthen partnerships among community members, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and to support the safeguarding of all aspects of the element, including the preservation of shea butter trees, which are used for the ritual;
6. Invites the State Party to build the capacities of community members, including youth, to document the element and continue disseminating information on its practice in the local language, and recalls the importance of obtaining the free, prior and informed consent of practitioners of the element regarding the documentation of the rituals performed and their further dissemination;
7. Further invites the State Party to provide consistent and up-to-date information in all sections of its next report on the status of this element;
8. Requests that the Secretariat inform the State Party at least nine months prior to the next deadline about the required submission of its next report on the status of this element.

**Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela: ‘Mapoyo oral tradition and its symbolic reference points within their ancestral territory’** (*consult the* [*report*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/download.php?versionID=72682))

1. Mapoyo oral tradition encompasses a body of narratives that constitute the collective memory of the Mapoyo people. Tradition bearers recount the narratives while carrying out their daily activities. The stories recounted strengthen the sense of territory, establishing its symbolic geography, contribute to nature preservation, and sustain the identity and worldview of Mapoyo people. Families are essential for transmitting Mapoyo oral tradition through daily activities, with children acquiring social norms and values from elders through stories that are related to social organization and have a social function.
2. The element was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2014. The [first report](file:///\\hqfs\OurDrive\CLT\ProgrammeExecution\2003Convention\2003-PeriodicReporting\2019\ICH-11\VEN-01454-USL%20Report\0145400005-%20Form%20ICH-11-EN_20181219.pdf) was examined by the Committee in 2019. This is the second report submitted by the State Party on the status of this element.
3. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. According to the report, safeguarding efforts were focused on the transmission of knowledge and values from elders to younger members of the community. This included knowledge and practices related to the management and preservation of natural resources, hunting, fishing, agriculture and medicinal plants. Research on sacred sites within the Mapoyo territory was carried out, and young community members were trained to become park rangers. Traditional dances and rituals, children’s games, archery, and indigenous sport competitions were revived. During the COVID-19 pandemic, safeguarding activities and access to financial and operational resources were limited. Social media played a strong role in the dissemination of and education on the element. A national Legislation for Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage was adopted in 2021, enhancing intersectoral cooperation on intangible cultural heritage safeguarding. Support from public institutions, non-governmental and international organizations, such as UNICEF, was provided to safeguard the element, along with the community’s own input. That was instrumental in advancing education and health care, among other things, and in providing pensions to fifteen bearers.
4. Regarding the previous Decision [14.COM 9.a.4](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/9.a.4) of the Committee, in which it invited the State Party to continue supporting the transmission of the element through education and raising awareness about the element, it is reported that teachers, grandparents and the Council of Elders were active in passing on their knowledge through education. The use of Mapoyo language has been strengthened in formal education and in everyday practice, contributing to language proficiency among children and to the sense of identity of Mapoyo people. Furthermore, a high school will be opened in El Palomo, as a previously identified measure to transmit the element to youths. However, the Murukuní Community Museum, which was intended to raise the visibility of Mapoyo culture to the general public, did not receive the expected support and had to be closed. Its reactivation plan was developed by the community.
5. **Community participation**. As reported, Mapoyo people were central to the development and implementation of the safeguarding measures, and their awareness about the meaning of the element has risen, especially among elders. There is a greater involvement of younger generations in ancestral practices, such as knitting, sowing, food production, and the production of bows and arrows. Traditional gathering places were recreated, and community assemblies for decision-making as well as meetings with and between bearers of the element were organized, such as a ‘Mapoyo meeting 2022’ in Caracas. Digital media were used to provide frequent communication channels within the community and with institutions. As reported, new institutions became partners in the safeguarding of the element. The report was prepared based on participatory monitoring, and safeguarding actions were updated with the participation of the community. Furthermore, the importance of involving all community members, including persons with disabilities, has been emphasized.
6. **Viability and current risks**. According to the report, there has been a notable improvement in the viability of the element. However, certain risks persist. These include the presence of violent groups, illegal mining within the Mapoyo ancient territory, and instances of non-compliance with agreements by mining companies, particularly concerning critical aspects like mining waste management and reforestation. A lack of support to the Mapoyo community was also noted, including support for the restoration of the Community Museum, which plays an important role in the transmission of the Mapoyo way of life. In response to these challenges, a series of on-site meetings brought together representatives from the Mapoyo community, officials from the Center for Cultural Diversity, which oversees the implementation of the safeguarding plan, and senior executives from the ‘Corporación Venezolana de Guayana-Bauxilum’, a state-owned mining company, with the objective of encouraging the company to take responsibility for safeguarding the element. The Mapoyo community created the Council of people and indigenous communities from the Mapoyo ancient territory to safeguard the achieved land demarcation.
7. The updated safeguarding plan continues to set out strategies that have brought positive results. It is aimed at strengthening the intergenerational transmission of the element through customary practices and education, including by adapting the school calendar to agricultural activities. It also includes plans to develop educational and promotional material based on research, including a bilingual dictionary, to reactivate the Murukuní Community Museum and strengthen bearers’ abilities in relation to the preemptive preservation of collections, to mark the ancient territory with signage using the Mapoyo language, and to enable learning in natural contexts. As reported, the public sector is committed to providing budget, technical support and complying with planned safeguarding measures.
8. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 18.COM 7.a.11

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/23/18.COM/7.a,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decisions [9.COM 9.a.8](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/9.COM/9.a.8) and [14.COM 9.a.4](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/9.a.4),
3. Expresses its appreciation to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for submitting, on time, its second report on the status of the element ‘Mapoyo oral tradition and its symbolic reference points within their ancestral territory’, inscribed in 2014 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the efforts undertaken by the State Party to safeguard the element, in particular by enhancing its transmission and supporting the use of the Mapoyo language in education, encouraging community elders to transmit their knowledge on social life and nature preservation, reviving traditional practices related to nature, and striving for the sustainability of Mapoyo oral tradition in its natural environment;
5. Encourages the State Party to pursue its efforts to safeguard the element through education, including through the opening of a high school in El Palomo, to enhance the intergenerational transmission of traditional knowledge and practices in their natural contexts, to introduce signage within the Mapoyo ancestral territory using the Mapoyo language, and to advance research on the element;
6. Invites the State Party to continue adopting a participatory and inclusive approach to safeguarding, involving all members of the community, pursuing dialogue and assuming the responsibilities of various stakeholders, such as mining companies, supporting the bearers of the element and ensuring their social security;
7. Notes with concern the closure of the Murukuní Community Museum, and further invites the State Party to support its restoration, reopening and the community-driven reactivation of its work in order to preserve the collections and ensure their accessibility, while promoting Mapoyo culture and raising its visibility in society;
8. Requests that the Secretariat inform the State Party at least nine months prior to the next deadline about the required submission of its next report on the status of this element.

**C.3. Assessments of the third reports and draft decisions**

China: ‘Meshrep’ (*consult the* [*report*](C://Users/h_drobna/Downloads/61377-EN.pdf))

1. Meshrep is a traditional cultural practice of learning and entertainment, practised by Uygur people, men and women, old and young. Knowledge, experience and ethics are transmitted through this practice. Meshrep is held for different purposes and at specific times of the year, including for celebrating rites of passage and harvest, and during traditional festivals. Meshrep is practised at annual festivals, such as the Spring Festival, Lantern Festival, Apricot Flower Festival, and Cultural and Natural Heritage Day, and serves as an inspiration for creative expressions. It takes various forms, including singing, dancing, games, oral literature and folk art, and usually takes place in the courtyard, in the square or in the field. Meshrep is mostly practised in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and has strong regional characteristics in terms of content, style and scale. It enjoys wide participation and is traditionally transmitted within families during their attendance of Meshrep events, as well as from bearers to apprentices. Meshrep provides practising communities with a sense of identity and belonging.
2. The element was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2010. The [first report](file:///\\\\hqfs\\OurDrive\\CLT\\ProgrammeExecution\\2003Convention\\2003-PeriodicReporting\\2017\\ICH-11\\CHN-01123-USL%20Report%20-%20reception%20due%202014\\0112300006-Form%20ICH-11-EN_20160530.pdf) was examined by the Committee in 2017, and the [second report](file:///\\\\hqfs\\OurDrive\\CLT\\ProgrammeExecution\\2003Convention\\2003-PeriodicReporting\\2021\\ICH-11\\CHN-01449-Meshrep\\0144900007-Form%20ICH-11-EN_20201214.pdf) was examined by the Committee in 2021. This is the third report submitted by the State Party on the status of this element.
3. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. As reported by the State Party, the transmission of the element along with its frequency and scope of practice have been improved, and its visibility has been raised as a result of the safeguarding efforts. The training of bearers and practitioners has been intensified through regular workshops. Representative bearers have received financial support to practise and transmit the element, and the results of their activities are subject to an evaluation mechanism. Meshrep transmission centers operate in several counties. A new cultural center has been established and a transmission base has been renovated, providing space for the practice and transmission of the element. Performing Meshrep in tourism, at scenic spots and cultural plaza, has generated income for Meshrep bearers and increased the frequency of practice. As reported, central government and local governments have provided financial aid for bearers, including for purchasing equipment for the practice, such as musical instruments and costumes.
4. Regarding the previous Decision [16.COM 7.a.11](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/16.COM/7.a.11) of the Committee, in which it invited the State Party to strengthen the apprenticeship and education on Meshrep, it is reported that Meshrep courses have been offered in higher and vocational secondary education institutions, and bearers were invited to teach Meshrep music and dance in primary and secondary schools. Graduates have also engaged in music and dance teaching and training. The Committee invited the State Party to carry out research and promotional activities, and it is reported that field study was carried out, institutions and organizations in several counties enriched their archival data on the element with audiovisual material, as well as with a collection of associated objects, while the mass media were involved in promoting awareness raising about Meshrep.
5. **Community participation**. According to the report, there are 483 representative bearers of Meshrep, which is an increase of 59 compared with the number of bearers reported previously. An increasing number of young practitioners is also reported. More than thirty communities actively participated in safeguarding the element, and twenty-one folk clubs and associations were engaged in promotional activities, organizing presentations and training workshops, and promoting Meshrep through social media. Transmission has been both family-based and from master to apprentice. Hosts of Meshrep events, the representative bearers, had a particular role in training their apprentices in singing, dancing and playing instruments. Local people also actively participated in safeguarding the element and provided in-kind resources for the practice. Research institutions, experts and scholars were involved in promoting the element. Bearers and experts have engaged in preparing the Meshrep Safeguarding Plan 2021-2030, and the updated safeguarding plan and the report are both based on inputs from bearers, experts, scholars, folk artists and local associations, and on community members’ participation in a survey, field visits and consultations.
6. **Viability and current risks**. The viability of the element has been enhanced and the frequency of its practice increased. Its content and forms have been changing. However, Meshrep tends to be simplified to a singing and dancing performance, and younger generation are not fully aware of its cultural meanings. As reported, communities and bearers have expressed their hope to transfer the element from the Urgent Safeguarding List to the Representative List, and this objective has been integrated into the updated safeguarding plan.
7. The updated safeguarding plan aims to implement the Meshrep Safeguarding Plan 2021-2030, strengthen the management and improve the efficiency of the use of funds, secure continuous financial aid for bearers and conduct its evaluation, provide facilities in different localities and involve cultural centers in transmitting the element through training, attract young audiences through live broadcasts on media platforms, complete and digitize archives and improve their public access, and enhance the documentation, research and promotion of the element, including its cultural meanings. There are plans to safeguard local styles and traditions related to the element. Central and local governmental funding is foreseen, with the majority of the resources being envisaged for financial support for bearers, community-based transmission and safeguarding activities.
8. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 18.COM 7.a.12

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/23/18.COM/7.a,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decisions [5.COM 5.1](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/5.COM/5.1), [12.COM 8.c.5](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/12.COM/8.c.5) and [16.COM 7.a.11](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/16.COM/7.a.11),
3. Expresses its appreciation to China for submitting, on time, its third report on the status of the element ‘Meshrep’, inscribed in 2010 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the efforts undertaken by the State Party to safeguard the element, in particular by financially supporting its bearers, providing facilities to enhance its transmission through practice, training and apprenticeship, integrating the element into the educational system at various levels, continuing the documentation, research and promotion of the element, and involving community representatives and organizations in monitoring and updating safeguarding measures;
5. Encourages the State Party to pursue its efforts to transmit the element with its local variations, including their cultural meanings, to younger generations, raising their awareness about it, enhancing participation and providing learning and training opportunities, to support the bearers of the element, and to develop facilities for its safeguarding;
6. Further encourages the State Party to carry out documentation and research on the element, to complete and digitize archives, and to promote the sustained preservation of and improved public access to the archival data and objects related to the element, collected through field study and held by several institutions and organizations;
7. Invites the State Party to continue to ensure the participation of the communities concerned and their organizations in updating safeguarding measures and taking particular heed so as to avoid the possible negative consequences of the safeguarding efforts, such as the decontextualization of the element in tourism-related performances and the dependency of bearers on external evaluation in their transmission of the element;
8. Requests that the Secretariat inform the State Party at least nine months prior to the next deadline about the required submission of its next report on the status of this element.

China: ‘Wooden movable-type printing of China’ (*consult the* [*report*](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/download.php?versionID=72680))

1. Wooden movable-type printing is a system of knowledge and skills that includes editing, printing and binding, traditionally used for printing clan genealogies of local communities. Fixed patterns and procedures are used, while leaving room for creativity. It records the history and kinship of families and reflects local social developments and is mainly practised in southern Zhejiang Province and parts of Fujian Province. Wooden movable-type printing is practised mostly by men and transmitted within families and from masters to apprentices, and it provides a livelihood for its bearers.
2. The element was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2010. The [first report](file:///\\hqfs\OurDrive\CLT\ProgrammeExecution\2003Convention\2003-PeriodicReporting\2017\ICH-11\CHN-01125-USL%20Report%20-%20reception%20due%202014\0112500006-Form%20ICH-11-EN_20160530.pdf) was examined by the Committee in 2017, and the [second report](file:///\\hqfs\OurDrive\CLT\ProgrammeExecution\2003Convention\2003-PeriodicReporting\2021\ICH-11\CHN-01451-Wooden%20movable-type%20printing\0145100007-Form%20ICH-11-EN_20201214.pdf) was examined by the Committee in 2021. This is the third report submitted by the State Party on the status of this element.
3. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. As reported by the State Party, the frequency of practice of the element has been increased and its scope expanded. Training workshops were held for apprentices, educational activities carried out in schools, and bearers held printing courses in higher education institutions. The COVID-19 pandemic affected the possibility of holding traditional ceremonies at the beginning and end of the genealogy compiling, which led to a decrease in orders for genealogy printing. Technological processes and bearers of the element have been identified and documented, information digitized, and the existing database improved. Interaction between researchers, bearers and practitioners has deepened, boosted by a newly established research institute, the engagement of experts in research, academic seminars, and publications on the element. Governments at all levels supported the implementation of the safeguarding activities, with a major part of the resources being invested in the integration of several traditional techniques into the development of new products, and the engagement of bearers, groups and communities in exhibitions and conferences.
4. Regarding the previous Decision [16.COM 7.a.13](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/16.COM/7.a.13) of the Committee, in which it invited the State Party to pursue its efforts to provide financial aid to the bearers of the element and increase subsidies and encouraged the State Party to support young apprentices, it has been reported that the annual subsidies for bearers were increased and daily allowances were provided for young apprentices during their training, which allowed them to take apprentices and transmit the element. New products were developed to foster the demand for wooden movable-type printing and its innovative use. The element was also integrated with other traditional techniques, such as woodblock printing, bamboo paper making and paper cutting. New businesses were created, which generated supplementary income for bearers and practitioners.
5. **Community participation**. As reported, there are twenty-two representative bearers of the element, the same number as identified in the first report, including one female bearer, all under the age of fifty. There are 39 registered apprentices, and the number of practitioners has reached about 300, namely 60 more than during the previous reporting period, including over 40 women. According to the report, women practitioners have been increasingly involved in all aspects of the element. The Rui'an Movable-type Printing Association served as a coordinator between bearers and other stakeholders in implementing safeguarding measures, whereas the Folk Artists Association and the Arts and Crafts Association engaged in the identification of bearers and transmission activities. The Rui'an Surname Culture Research Association carried out research and formulated standards for genealogy compiling. A council of clan elders supervised the use of funds for safeguarding. Local communities ordered compiling and printing clan genealogies, drawing on self-raised funds. About 49,000 people were involved in the safeguarding activities, and from 2019 to 2022 the Rui'an Movable-type Printing Exhibition Hall and the Experiential Learning Hall received a total of 131,000 visitors. Several rounds of consultations with communities and other stakeholders were carried out to update the safeguarding plan, and the report was drafted based on community inputs.
6. **Viability and current risks**. According to the report, the visibility of the element has been improved and public awareness and respect for the bearers raised, which has in turn increased their income and created jobs for local communities. Exhibitions and experiential learning activities were held in Dongyuan Village, Rui’an city, where the element has been traditionally practised, and in more than twenty experience halls all over the country, thematic inns, restaurants and camps. The major risks identified include switching to digital typesetting as it is less costly, other competitive parties entering the genealogy compiling and printing market, the time-consuming learning process, the limited opportunities for practice and unstable income, which explains the small number of young apprentices. Furthermore, wooden movable-type printing of ancient books has declined due to high labor costs and limited market demand.
7. The updated safeguarding plan includes the transmission of the element through long-term partnerships with educational institutions, developing training and teaching contents, including on genealogical culture, establishing a Genealogical Cultural Centre, continuing to subsidize bearers, fostering innovation and modern application of the element in newly established crafts workstations and through an open competition, applying research outcomes in safeguarding, and promoting the element and its cultural significance, in particular through digital means, and at the China Movable-type Printing Culture and Tourism Festival. The implementation of the plan will be funded by government and community inputs, with a decrease in the budget planned for subsidies for bearers to train apprentices. It will be coordinated by local authorities, providing regular feedback to and ensuring the participation of the communities concerned.
8. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 18.COM 7.a.13

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/23/18.COM/7.a,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decisions [5.COM 5.3](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/5.COM/5.3), [12.COM 8.c.7](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/12.COM/8.c.7) and [16.COM 7.a.13](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/16.COM/7.a.13),
3. Expresses its appreciation to China for submitting, on time, its third report on the status of the element ‘Wooden movable-type printing of China’, inscribed in 2010 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the efforts undertaken by the State Party to safeguard the element, in particular by subsidizing bearers to transmit the element to apprentices, providing facilities and engaging educational institutions in its transmission, exploring new formats for applying traditional knowledge and skills, advancing research, promoting the element, and engaging communities and their organizations in its safeguarding and monitoring;
5. Encourages the State Party to pursue its efforts to transmit the element to younger generations through learning and apprenticeships, to support bearers and apprentices, to explore possibilities to adapt the element to present contexts while strengthening the continuity of its cultural significance and associated genealogical and ceremonial traditions, and to advance documentation and research on the element;
6. Recalls the importance of obtaining the free, prior and informed consent of bearers regarding the documentation of their practice and its further dissemination;
7. Invites the State Party to continue ensuring the participation of the bearers, communities and organizations concerned in developing and implementing safeguarding measures;
8. Notes the planned decrease in subsidies for bearers of the element, and further encourages the State Party to consider financial possibilities to sustain the master-apprentice transmission of the element;
9. Requests that the Secretariat inform the State Party at least nine months prior to the next deadline about the required submission of its next report on the status of this element.

**China: ‘Watertight-bulkhead technology of Chinese junks’** (*consult the* [report](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/download.php?versionID=72681))

1. Watertight-bulkhead technology of Chinese junks incorporates knowledge, techniques, and ritual traditions related to wooden junk building. According to this technology, independent watertight cabins are connected firmly using secure tenon joints. Master craftsmen named ‘shifutou’ design watertight-bulkhead junks and oversee the collaboration among a large number of artisans working on site. The production of traditional wooden junks is seen as part of the communities’ cultural heritage and is mainly practised in Fujian Province by bearers and practitioners employed by the traditional shipbuilding industry.
2. The element was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2010. The [first report](file:///\\hqfs\OurDrive\CLT\ProgrammeExecution\2003Convention\2003-PeriodicReporting\2017\ICH-11\CHN-01124-USL%20Report%20-%20reception%20due%202014\0112400006-Form%20ICH-11-EN_20160530.pdf) was examined by the Committee in 2017, and the [second report](file:///\\hqfs\OurDrive\CLT\ProgrammeExecution\2003Convention\2003-PeriodicReporting\2021\ICH-11\CHN-01450-Chinese%20junks\0145000007-Form%20ICH-11-EN_20201214.pdf) was examined by the Committee in 2021. This is the third report submitted by the State Party on the status of this element.
3. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. According to the report by the State Party, courses on traditional junk building techniques are offered to students as part of vocational education programmes, as well as in primary and secondary schools, and kindergartens, using specially prepared teaching materials and textbooks. Experiential learning and study trips are organized, including for the purpose of learning the cultural meanings of the element. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, experiential learning decreased in 2020-2021. The engagement of colleges and universities has been strengthened. Three training and practice centers have been operating to ensure master-apprentice transmission. Four new exhibition venues have been built, and the number of facilities used for exhibitions and presentations has increased. Promotional activities included documentaries, TV programmes, exhibitions on Cultural and Natural Heritage Day, and an online exhibition making use of virtual reality technology. Safeguarding measures were funded by the government, with an important investment in building the Maritime Museum of Traditional Chinese Junks. Important private funds were invested in the practice and promotion of the element.
4. Regarding the previous Decision [16.COM 7.a.12](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/16.COM/7.a.12) of the Committee, in which it encouraged the State Party to reinforce the financial support provided to bearers, practitioners and apprentices, it is reported that local governments have further adjusted their policies to ensure continuous financial support for the transmission of the element. Governments at all levels provided annual subsidies for representative bearers. The practice and transmission of watertight-bulkheadtechnology has been sustained. Several traditional junks were reconstructed and renovated, three junks were constructed, and about seventy large, medium and small-sized junks were built for cultural tourism and offshore aquaculture.
5. **Community participation**. As reported by the State Party, there are fifteen artisans who master the technology of the element, an increase of six compared with the previous report, and over sixty registered apprentices are being trained at eight training and practice centers run by bearers and shipyards. The number of other practitioners has increased to nearly 300, including young people. Bearers were engaged in the practice, training and teaching of the element, developing teaching materials and tools, and participating in exhibitions. Local communities gained more enthusiasm for safeguarding the element and established organizations to improve its social recognition. A couple of shipyards build traditional junks and run training and practice centers on their premises, with more than ten permanent apprentices. Four companies have engaged in model ship building and other product development, and over ten new products have obtained national patents and trademarks. Nearly a hundred kinds of traditional junk models were produced, which gained recognition and positive feedback from the market and generated more income for the bearers and practitioners, including women. Bearers, community members, organizations and trade associations participated in updating the safeguarding plan and preparing the report.
6. **Viability and current risks**. According to the report, the viability and visibility of the element have been improved. However, risks for the safeguarding of the element remain largely the same as identified in the nomination file. The traditional practice of the element has been reduced due to the high price of timber and other materials needed and of production and maintenance. As reported, traditional wooden junks hardly meet the functionality and safety requirements in modern ocean navigation. Furthermore, the decline in market demand has resulted in low practice frequency, limited income, and fewer successors. The aging of the bearers has placed the intergenerational transmission of the element under great pressure.
7. The updated safeguarding plan prioritizes the practice of the element, its transmission and the training of successors, including by integrating the element into education. It also aims to strengthen research, including on related customs and rituals, digitize archival material, facilitate domestic and international exchanges of diverse actors, balance the safeguarding of traditional technology and market-based operation, find appropriate business models and ensure that communities are the primary beneficiaries. Furthermore, it is planned to continue enhancing public awareness and the visibility of the element, including through a cultural festival of Chinese junks. Central, provincial and municipal governments will fund the safeguarding, additional subsidies for representative bearers are envisaged annually for transmission activities, and support from involved enterprises is also planned, along with inputs by communities and local associations.
8. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 18.COM 7.a.14

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/23/18.COM/7.a,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decisions [5.COM 5.2](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/5.COM/5.2), [12.COM 8.c.6](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/12.COM/8.c.6) and [16.COM 7.a.12](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/16.COM/7.a.12),
3. Expresses its appreciation to China for submitting, on time, its third report on the status of the element ‘Watertight-bulkhead technology of Chinese junks’, inscribed in 2010 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the efforts undertaken by the State Party to safeguard the element, in particular by sustaining master-apprentice transmission, involving educational institutions in safeguarding the element, developing digital tools for its promotion, advancing research, and creating synergies with private funding, encouraging new product development related to the element, thereby generating income for its bearers and practitioners, including women;
5. Encourages the State Party to pursue its efforts to transmit the element to younger generations through education, experiential learning and training, to promote the element and ensure digital accessibility for its documentation, to strengthen research and interaction among various stakeholders, including shipyards, and to ensure bearers and communities’ continuous participation in implementing and developing safeguarding measures;
6. Further encourages the State Party to support the exploration of new functions for producing traditional wooden junks and to diversify the development of new related products, while balancing market demand and the safeguarding of traditional practice and ensuring that relevant communities remain the primary beneficiaries;
7. Invites the State Party to pay special attention to safeguarding the cultural meanings of the element, along with the customs and rituals during the construction of traditional wooden junks;
8. Further invites the State Party to pay due attention both to raising awareness about and promoting the element and to transmitting the related knowledge and skills, and also encourages it to address the lack of insurance for bearers, apprentices and practitioners, as raised in the nomination file and in the previous report;
9. Requests that the Secretariat inform the State Party at least nine months prior to the next deadline about the required submission of its next report on the status of this element.

**Croatia: ‘Ojkanje singing’** (*consult the* [report](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/download.php?versionID=72683))

1. Ojkanje singing is an oral musical tradition shared by communities in the mountainous Dinaric region. It is a particular singing technique characterized by a distinctive voice-shaking created by the throat. Ojkanje singing serves as a means of communication among its practitioners. It is performed by male and female singers, with distinct repertoires, and is traditionally transmitted by singing alongside older singers. Nowadays local folklore ensembles are the main bearers of this singing tradition, which is mostly performed at public events and festivals.
2. The element was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List in 2010. The [first report](file:///\\hqfs\OurDrive\CLT\ProgrammeExecution\2003Convention\2003-PeriodicReporting\2015\ICH-11\HRV-01050-USL%20Report\0105000005-Form%20ICH-11-EN_20141215.pdf) was examined by the Committee in 2015, and the [second report](file:///\\hqfs\OurDrive\CLT\ProgrammeExecution\2003Convention\2003-PeriodicReporting\2019\ICH-11\HRV-01447-USL%20Report\0144700007-Form%20ICH-11-EN-CORR.pdf) was examined by the Committee in 2019. This is the third report submitted by the State Party on the status of this element.
3. **Effectiveness of the safeguarding plan**. According to the report, Ojkanje singing has been performed at festivals and other events at the national, regional and county levels. Workshops and seminars for practitioners have been organized, and a new study course was introduced at the Academy of Music in Zagreb. Documentation and research on the element have been ongoing in small local communities, encouraging further transmission of Ojkanje singing. As reported, there has been an evident improvement to the quality and quantity of documentation, especially though audiovisual recordings of festivals. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the activities of associations were interrupted, festivals and meetings were cancelled or held in a virtual and reduced form, many older singers passed away, and the long break also affected the dynamics of transmission. Safeguarding Ojkanje singing was based on gradually increasing financial support provided by the Ministry of Culture and Media as well as by regional and local governments.
4. Regarding the previous Decision [14.COM 9.a.1](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/9.a.1) of the Committee, in which it invited the State Party to pursue its efforts to establish an Ojkanje singing center, it is reported that an Interpretation Centre of Dinaric Culture was founded at the Communal Educational Institution in Otočac at the end of 2021 to document, research and promote the heritage of the region, including Ojkanje singing. Another interpretation center is planned to be opened in Dicmo in Damatinska Zagora, to become a meeting place for bearers and a knowledge center, storing documentation on the element.
5. **Community participation**. As reported, older and younger bearers of the element, both men and women, perform at festivals and other events. An Exhibition of Croatian Male Singing Groups was organized, featuring Ojkanje male singing. However, women are considered to be more active bearers of the element. Local communities and their associations organized singing workshops and gatherings to transmit the knowledge of Ojkanje singing. Folklore ensembles were engaged in passing on the tradition in local communities by organizing learning, public performances and audio-visual recordings to promote the element. International cooperation is taking place among practitioners and experts of similar musical phenomena, and new artistic expressions are being developed based on the element. The report was prepared with the involvement of local community organizations and individuals. The information on how communities, groups and individuals, as well as relevant NGOs, have been involved in updating the safeguarding plan could be explained in more detail.
6. **Viability and current risks**. According to the report, the state of viability of the element has been stabilized, negative trends stopped, and good safeguarding practices are increasing. The inscription of the element led to significant media exposure, and the general attitude towards the element has become more positive. As reported, local communities are interested in safeguarding the element, and interest among the younger generation has significantly increased. As village populations are rapidly decreasing and getting older, workshops were also organized for young people in urban areas. As in the previous report, it is deemed that increased funding would allow for more active participation in festivals outside hometowns or villages and for the further promotion of the element among a wider public.
7. The main objectives and key activities of the updated safeguarding plan have remained the same as defined in the previous report. The plan aims to enhance the transmission of the element, especially in regions with a potentially strong involvement of the younger generation and to increase the number of performers, in particular among youth and men. Activities would also be carried out in remote rural areas to raise awareness about the element. Further documentation and research as well as improved visibility and promotion of the element are planned to be carried out in the area where the element is practised. Furthermore, the younger generation will be involved in documenting the element. Efforts will also be made to integrate Ojkanje singing into music education in local schools and music schools will be encouraged to engage in the transmission of the element. There are plans to sustain and increase governmental funding at all levels, including support for folklore ensembles and cultural and artistic organizations. However, a timetable for the updated safeguarding plan is missing.
8. The Committee may wish to adopt the following decision:

#### DRAFT DECISION 18.COM 7.a.15

The Committee,

1. Having examined document LHE/23/18.COM/7.a,
2. Recalling Chapter V of the Operational Directives and its Decisions [5.COM 5.4](https://ich.unesco.org/en/d%C3%A9cisions/5.COM/5.4), [10.COM 6.b.1](https://ich.unesco.org/en/d%C3%A9cisions/10.COM/6.B.1) and [14.COM 9.a.1](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/9.a.1),
3. Expresses its appreciation to Croatia for submitting, on time, its third report on the status of the element ‘Ojkanje singing’, inscribed in 2010 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding;
4. Takes note of the efforts undertaken by the State Party to safeguard the element, in particular by supporting its practice and transmission within community ensembles and organizations, at public events and festivals, by providing learning opportunities within and beyond regions where the element was traditionally practised, and by establishing an additional interpretation center on the element;
5. Encourages the State Party to pursue its efforts to prioritize support for the transmission of the element, including through education, to engage younger generations in documenting, learning and practising the element, to provide financial assistance for the transmission and practice of the element, and to ensure the sustained accessibility of related documentation;
6. Invites the State Party to implement safeguarding measures across the entire area where the element is practised, paying special attention to the regions where it is at risk of extinction and to particular styles and genres of the element identified in the previous report as being under threat of disappearance;
7. Further invites the State Party to involve younger generations in updating the safeguarding measures, with the participation of the communities concerned, and to provide information on their participation as well as a timetable for future activities in its next report;
8. Recalls the importance of assessing the role of tourism entities in promoting the element and performances of Ojkanje singing in order to avoid the potential commodification or denaturation of the element;
9. Requests that the Secretariat inform the State Party at least nine months prior to the next deadline about the required submission of its next report on the status of this element.

1. The reform of the periodic reporting mechanisms undertaken between 2017 and 2018 did not concern the Urgent Safeguarding List (Decision [14.COM 8](https://ich.unesco.org/en/Decisions/14.COM/8)). Following the adoption of the MONDIACULT 2022 Declaration, the present session of the Committee is requested to consider, under Item 7.c, a proposal to rationalize the reporting mechanisms of the 2003 Convention, including the one concerning the Urgent Safeguarding List, to a single global submission date in support of UNESCO’s commitment to producing a quadrennial Global Report on Cultural Policies (see document [LHE/23/18.COM/7.c](https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/LHE-23-18.COM-7.c_EN.docx)). Pending the discussion, the draft decision for each report will not contain a specific date for the next report. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The first cycle of periodic reporting on the status of elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List began with elements inscribed in 2009, with their reports submitted in December 2013 and examined by the ninth session of the Committee in 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Secretariat registered and acknowledged receipt of the fifteen reports submitted for the 2023 cycle, in compliance with paragraph 165 of the Operational Directives. Nine reports were submitted using the online interface. Eight reports were submitted by the statutory deadline of 15 December 2022. The Secretariat contacted each of the submitting States Parties whose reports were overdue, to provide them with support. States were also given the possibility to submit their reports by 30 August 2023. Five reports were received by the extended deadline of 30 August 2023, one report was received on 6 September 2023, and another was received on 18 September 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The submission from Egypt concerns a first biennial report on an element inscribed in 2020. The report submitted by Ukraine is a first annual report on an element inscribed in July 2022 as a case of extreme urgency. In addition, Colombia submitted its overdue first report for an element inscribed in 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)