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

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

**Meeting of the Bureau**

**UNESCO Headquarters, Room VIII**

**4 June 2024**

**10 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

**Item 3 of the provisional agenda:**

**Examination of requests for International Assistance**

**up to US$100,000**

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| **Summary**  With reference to Article 23 of the Convention and paragraph 47 of the Operational Directives, this document presents three requests for International Assistance up to US$100,000. The Bureau of the Committee is asked to examine these requests, in accordance with paragraph 49 of the Operational Directives.  **Decision required:** paragraph 5 |

1. Article 20 of the Convention states that International Assistance may be granted to States Parties for purposes relating to: the safeguarding of elements inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding; the preparation of inventories in the sense of Articles 11 and 12 of the Convention; support for programmes, projects and activities undertaken at the national, sub-regional and regional levels for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage; and for any other purpose that the Committee may deem necessary. As specified in the Operational Directives, International Assistance not exceeding US$100,000 can be submitted at any time (paragraph 47) for examination and approval by the Bureau of the Committee (paragraph 49).
2. **Overview of the requests**
3. The Bureau is asked to examine the following three completed International Assistance requests up to US$100,000:

| **Draft decision** | **Requesting State** | **Title** | **Amount requested** | **File no.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [19.COM 2.BUR 3.1](#Dec1) | Angola | Safeguarding semba by creating new levers for intergenerational transmission and income-generating opportunities | US$86,050 | 02124 |
| [19.COM 2.BUR 3.2](#Dec2) | Bangladesh | Implementing community-based heritage festivals in eight administrative divisions of Bangladesh | US$99,700 | 02226 |
| [19.COM 2.BUR 3.3](#Dec3) | Belize, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama | Exchange of experiences and cultural dialogues for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage of Afro-descendant peoples through the preparation of inventories in the SICA region and Cuba | US$99,990 | 02229 |

1. In conformity with paragraph 48 of the Operational Directives, the Secretariat assessed the completeness of these requests. Considering the importance of International Assistance for achieving the Convention’s purpose of promoting international cooperation, the Secretariat provided support to the requesting States as follows:

* Angola benefited from technical assistance, meaning that the State Party received support from an expert for the preparation of the request before its submission to the Secretariat.
* Following the submission of their requests, Bangladesh, along with the nine submitting countries – with Honduras as the coordinating State – received guidance through letters from the Secretariat indicating whether any information was missing or insufficient. They were also supported during the revision process to ensure that the requests complied with the criteria for International Assistance set out in paragraphs 10 and 12 of the Operational Directives. These States submitted revised versions of their requests.
* This would be the first time that Angola and Bangladesh would have benefitted from International Assistance from the Convention.

1. The Secretariat hereby forwards the three requests for International Assistance to the Bureau, along with a draft decision incorporating the Secretariat’s assessment of how each request responds to the eligibility and selection criteria set out in Chapter I.4 of the Operational Directives. The International Assistance requests in question are available online, in English and French, for the Bureau’s consultation and can be found at <https://ich.unesco.org/en/ia-request-19com-2bur-01350>.
2. **Draft decisions**
3. The Bureau of the Intergovernmental Committee may wish to adopt the following decisions:

**DRAFT DECISION 19.COM 2.BUR 3.1**  [Retour au début](#Overview)

The Bureau,

1. Recalling Article 23 of the Convention as well as Chapter I.4 of the Operational Directives relating to the eligibility and criteria of International Assistance requests,
2. Having examined document LHE/24/19.COM 2.BUR/3 as well as International Assistance request no. 02124 submitted by Angola,
3. Takes note that Angola has requested International Assistance for the project entitled **Safeguarding semba by creating new levers for intergenerational transmission and income-generating opportunities**:

To be implemented by the Instituto Nacional do Património Cultural (INPC), this two-year project aims to establish suitable conditions for safeguarding semba, a traditional musical genre and dance, by creating opportunities for intergenerational transmission and income generation. Rooted in working-class neighbourhoods, semba is a symbol of Angolan identity-building and anticolonial resistance. However, lately it has begun to lose influence and significance among young urban populations who view the practice as old-fashioned. This has resulted in a gradual decline in the number of composers, musicians, dancers and craftspeople of traditional instruments, as well as in the performance and transmission of semba. The objective of this project is to counter these trends through capacity-building, research, awareness-raising and communication activities aimed at reconnecting the population with listening to and practising semba. Activities include participatory inventory workshops and inventorying activities with the communities concerned; digital platforms (‘impact lab’) to collectively experiment, create and share audiovisual content, resources, tools, skills and knowledge; and workshops on the creation of dicanza (a related percussion instrument) and cultural entrepreneurship. Originating from a request from the semba community, the project will also build the capacities on the 2003 Convention of practitioners and officials from the INPC, staff at the National Museum of Anthropology and members of the National Union of Artists and Composers.

1. Further takes note that this assistance aims to support a project implemented at the national level, in accordance with Article 20 (c) of the Convention, and that it takes the form of the **provision of a grant**, pursuant to Article 21 (g) of the Convention;
2. Also takes note that Angola has requested an allocation of US$86,050 from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for the implementation of the project;
3. Decides that, from the information provided in file no. 02124, the request responds as follows to the criteria for granting International Assistance given in paragraphs 10 and 12 of the Operational Directives:

**Criterion A.1:** This project was initiated in response to the needs of the semba community, for which the State Party requested technical assistance to prepare the International Assistance request. During the mission of the expert in July 2023, who provided this assistance, community members and practitioners of semba (dancers, craftspeople, musicians, composers) met to share their safeguarding needs and gave their consent to participate in the project. Furthermore, a group of seventeen people, mostly community representatives, contributed to its elaboration. They will be fully involved in training workshops, community-based inventorying workshops and fieldwork exercises.

**Criterion A.2:** The budget is well structured, and the project costs are clearly explained. The amount of assistance requested is appropriate for the proposed activities.

**Criterion A.3:** The proposed activities are well conceived in order to establish the necessary dynamics amongst the communities concerned to ensure the intergenerational transmission of the element and income-generating opportunities, required for safeguarding semba. They are described in detail and presented in a logical sequence, covering six activities: (a) a training workshop on the 2003 Convention and on community-based inventory; (b) experimentation, creation and sharing of audiovisual content on semba through the ‘impact lab’ digital platform; (c) community-based inventories and field exercises in Luanda; (d) a training programme on the manufacturing of dicanza; (e) a training workshop to enhance the entrepreneurial skills of semba practitioners; and (f) a training workshop on the elaboration of nomination files to the Lists of the 2003 Convention.

**Criterion A.4:** The project will contribute to the viability and visibility of the element. It should strengthen the capacity of the bearers and practitioners who will in turn raise awareness among civil society, youth and other stakeholders on the importance of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Through a wide range of activities, a broad network of practitioners, equipped with knowledge on the 2003 Convention and the necessary skills to safeguard intangible cultural heritage, will be able to transmit their knowledge of semba to the new generations with a view to safeguarding it. In addition, the cultural entrepreneurship workshop will help artists diversify their income sources and ensure their financial stability.

**Criterion A.5:** The requesting State Party will contribute 9 per cent (US$9,200) and other partners will contribute 6 per cent (US$6,600) of the total amount of the project budget (US$101,850). Consequently, International Assistance is requested from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for the remaining 85 per cent of the total amount of the project.

**Criterion A.6:** The project focuses on building the capacities of the communities concerned to strengthen the viability of the element and transmit it to future generations. During the various training workshops, governmental staff and community representatives will receive specific training on the 2003 Convention, community-based inventorying and safeguarding approaches. Therefore, ninety bearers and practitioners will benefit from the capacity building component. In addition, nearly fifty young people will be directly involved in the project activities: a) they will be trained on developing digital contents and materials aiming at raising awareness about the element, and b) they will be the primary beneficiaries of the training workshop to manufacture the instrument.

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

**Paragraph 10(a):** The project is national in scope and involves partners such as the National Museum of Anthropology, the Council of composers, the National Union of Artists and Composers and practitioner associations.

**Paragraph 10(b):** The community-based inventory and the communication tools developed will contribute to raising awareness among communities about the importance of safeguarding the element. In addition, the project indicates that it could have lasting results as it will encourage similar initiatives for the inventorying of intangible cultural heritage in Angola.

1. Notes with interest that the issues raised by the request concern economic dimensions of living heritage safeguarding with a focus on creativity, requiring a heritage-sensitive planning and management process in order to maximize the positive effects of economic activities on living heritage safeguarding while mitigating the potential negative impacts on its viability;
2. Approves the International Assistance request from Angola for the project entitled **Safeguarding semba by creating new levers for intergenerational transmission and income-generating opportunities**,and grants the amount of US$86,050 for the implementation of this project;
3. Requests that the Secretariat reach an agreement with the requesting State Party on the technical details of the assistance, paying particular attention to ensuring that the budget and the work plan of the activities to be covered by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund are detailed and specific enough to provide a sufficient justification of all the expenditures;
4. Invites the requesting State Party to use Form ICH-04-Report to report on the use of the assistance granted.

**DRAFT DECISION 19.COM 2.BUR 3.2** [Retour au début](#Overview)

The Bureau,

1. Recalling Article 23 of the Convention as well as Chapter I.4 of the Operational Directives relating to the eligibility and criteria of International Assistance requests,
2. Having examined document LHE/24/19.COM 2.BUR/3 as well as International Assistance request no. 02226 submitted by Bangladesh,
3. Takes note that Bangladesh has requested International Assistance for the project entitled **Implementing community-based heritage festivals in eight administrative divisions of Bangladesh**:

To be implemented by the Bangladesh National Museum, this two-year project aims at implementing community-based and -led intangible cultural heritage festivals across eight administrative divisions of Bangladesh. The project is a collaborative effort between the Bangladesh National Museum and the Consortium for ICH-pedia in Bangladesh. It will focus on safeguarding, promoting and transmitting the living heritage of eight communities through capacity building, research and intergenerational knowledge sharing. For each division, the activities include awareness-raising among local practitioners, performers and other stakeholders; documentation on the elements concerned; and capacity-building workshops to raise awareness on the 2003 Convention. After each festival, review sessions and workshops will allow the participating communities to share their perspectives on project achievements and to discuss lessons learned and sustainability measures for future events. The project is expected to ensure the continued celebration and protection of Bangladesh’s diverse cultural heritage, particularly as it will also result in the comprehensive documentation of the living heritage elements featured in the festivals. In addition, it will build lasting partnerships between the organizations, communities and stakeholders involved in the project and empower local communities and community leaders to organize future festivals.

1. Further takes note that this assistance aims to support a project implemented at the national level, in accordance with Article 20 (c) of the Convention, and that it takes the form of the **provision of a grant**, pursuant to Article 21 (g) of the Convention;
2. Also takes note that Bangladesh has requested an allocation of US$99,700 from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for the implementation of the project;
3. Decides that, from the information provided in file no. 02226, the request responds as follows to the criteria for granting International Assistance given in paragraphs 10 and 12 of the Operational Directives:

**Criterion A.1:** The project is the result of a long consultation process with the communities concerned, conducted in 2021 during the inventorying of their living heritage. The following communities were consulted and involved in the elaboration of the request: Chakma, Marma, Tripura and Rakhain communities; Gidree Bawlee community; Hajong community; Manashamangal community; Monipuri community; Motua community; Rowing and Santhal communities. They are described in the request as small ethnic minority groups facing social challenges. The project emphasizes the central and active role of the communities throughout its implementation, from the planning to the monitoring stages. In addition, a steering committee will be established to manage the project. It will be composed of staff from the Bangladesh National Museum, the Consortium for ICH-pedia, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and eight community representatives.

**Criterion A.2:** The budget is well structured, and the project costs are clearly explained. The amount of assistance requested is appropriate for the proposed activities.

**Criterion A.3:** The project consists of six activities that are described in detail: (a) the establishment of the project management structure; (b) the organization of the community festivals; (c) capacity-building workshops on the 2003 Convention; (d) documentation and research on the community festivals; (e) a workshop to identify the needs to maintain the viability of the festivals and develop safeguarding measures, and (f) the production of awareness-raising and communication materials. The proposed activities are well conceived in relation to the objectives and expected results of the project.

**Criterion A.4:** The requesting State Party is seeking to develop a multi-stakeholder approach to safeguarding the country’s eight festivals by creating a network amongst the communities concerned, the governmental staff and NGOs working in the field of intangible cultural heritage, both at the local and national levels. This partnership will be maintained beyond the completion of the project and will lay the foundation for a solid collaboration to safeguard and promote intangible cultural heritage at the national level. Through capacity-building and empowerment, community leaders and practitioners will be able to continue organizing their festivals and perpetuating their social practices, rituals, and festive events, avoiding the risk of their disappearance. Finally, the production and dissemination of various communication materials will raise awareness among civil society and different stakeholders of the importance of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, thus increasing the visibility and viability of these elements.

**Criterion A.5:** The requesting State Party will contribute 12 per cent (US$13,200) of the total amount of the project budget (US$112,900). Consequently, International Assistance is requested from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for the remaining 88 per cent of the total amount of the project.

**Criterion A.6:** The project will significantly contribute to building local and national capacities to safeguard intangible cultural heritage. A total of eight workshops would be organized to target each community: nearly eighty community representatives and staff from local NGOs will benefit from training on the 2003 Convention adapted to the local context. The festivals will enable community members to transmit their knowledge and skills to future generations through traditional crafts, performing arts, ritual practices and storytelling. They will also enable other members of the community to have a better understanding of the historical, social and cultural significance inherent in each festival. Covering a large part of the country, the project will enable over five hundred people to participate in the festivals and other activities during its implementation.

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

**Paragraph 10(a):** The project is national in scope and involves cooperation with a wide range of national and local NGOs and community organizations in various divisions of the country.

**Paragraph 10(b):** The communication and educational materials developed during the project will serve to raise awareness among communities and the general public of the importance of safeguarding the eight festivals of Bangladesh, thus contributing to their recognition at the national level.

1. Notes with interest that the activities planned under the request would contribute to promoting and celebrating the diversity of minority cultures;
2. Approves the International Assistance request from Bangladesh for the project entitled **Implementing community-based heritage festivals in eight administrative divisions of Bangladesh**,and grants the amount of US$99,700 for the implementation of this project;
3. Requests that the Secretariat reach an agreement with the requesting State Party on the technical details of the assistance, paying particular attention to ensuring that the budget and the work plan of the activities to be covered by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund are detailed and specific enough to provide a sufficient justification of all the expenditures;
4. Invites the requesting State Party to use Form ICH-04-Report to report on the use of the assistance granted.

**DRAFT DECISION 19.COM 2.BUR 3.3** [Retour au début](#Overview)

The Bureau,

1. Recalling Article 23 of the Convention as well as Chapter I.4 of the Operational Directives relating to the eligibility and criteria of International Assistance requests,
2. Having examined document LHE/24/19.COM 2.BUR/3 as well as International Assistance request no. 02229, submitted by Belize, Costa Rica Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras (coordinating State), Nicaragua and Panama,
3. Takes note that Belize, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama have requested International Assistance for the project entitled **Exchange of experiences and cultural dialogues for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage of Afro-descendant peoples through the preparation of inventories in the SICA region and Cuba**:

To be implemented by the Central American Educational and Cultural Coordination (CECC/SICA) in cooperation with the Regional Center for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Latin America (CRESPIAL) and with the involvement of the Central American Black Organization (ONECA), this eighteen-month multinational project aims to build collective and participatory knowledge on the processes of inventorying the living heritage of Afro-descendant peoples. It builds on a first project started in February 2023 (scheduled to be completed by August 2024), which has supported the establishment and capacity building of national living heritage management units, the mapping of safeguarding initiatives in the States Parties concerned and the preparation of project proposals for national inventories. As a second phase of this project, the new project will continue to apply a regional and intersectoral approach in the nine submitting countries to: (a) further build the capacities of officials and community bearers and leaders in inventorying living heritage; (b) draw-up inventories of living heritage; and (c) share experiences among the participating communities and countries. Activities include virtual workshops, in-person meetings and online technical support for developing national inventorying projects. At the community level, the project is expected to strengthen the safeguarding capacities of community bearers and leaders, while setting the foundation for future safeguarding projects, policies, and measures at the state level. At the regional level, it will serve as a model for multinational projects and may contribute, in a long run, to the creation of a regional observatory of intangible cultural heritage of African descent.

1. Further takes note that this assistance aims to support a project implemented at the regional level, in accordance with Article 20 (c) of the Convention, and that it takes the form of the **provision of a grant**, pursuant to Article 21 (g) of the Convention;
2. Also takes note that the requesting States have requested an allocation of US$99,990 from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for the implementation of the project;
3. Decides that, from the information provided in file no. 02229, the request responds as follows to the criteria for granting International Assistance given in paragraphs 10 and 12 of the Operational Directives:

**Criterion A.1:** This request is a continuation of the ongoing project ‘Capacity building for community leaders and public managers to safeguard the living heritage of Afro-descendant communities in the SICA region and Cuba’ (see criterion A.7 below). The project has established a common conceptual and methodological framework for safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of Afro-descendant communities in the nine countries concerned. Community representatives played an active role in the implementation of this first phase, in particular through mapping and the elaboration of safeguarding initiatives for intangible cultural heritage elements of Afro-descendant communities. Based on the results obtained so far, the objective of the second phase of the project in question focuses on the elaboration of national inventories of the living heritage of Afro-descendant communities in the nine countries concerned. In this regard, the involvement of the Central America Black Organization (ONECA) will ensure that the voices of Afro-descendant communities are heard and respected.

**Criterion A.2:** The budget is presented in a structured manner, reflecting the planned activities and related expenses. The amount of assistance requested may therefore be considered as appropriate for the implementation of the proposed activities.

**Criterion A.3:** The proposed activities consist of a series of workshops, online and in-person, to train the beneficiary communities, officials and experts from the nine requesting States Parties on the inventorying of living heritage. Activities will be undertaken with the support of the Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Latin America (CRESPIAL) and include upstream advice and the organization of national meetings (one in each country). A final regional workshop will bring together all the stakeholders to share the results of the national inventories, discuss ways forward and develop a third phase of the project aimed at disseminating the results of the first two phases throughout the region. The activities are presented in a logical sequence and correspond to the objectives and expected results outlined in the request.

**Criterion A.4:** Through the project, the implementing agency and the nine requesting States Parties are expected to continue to strengthen the institutional and multi-stakeholders’ framework initially set up by the Council of Ministers of Culture of the SICA region and Cuba in the first phase of the project for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage of Afro-descendant peoples. Moreover, the results of the national inventories and the information gathered during the project will constitute an important source of documentation on living heritage that may lead to the creation of a regional observatory. Lastly, the project should raise awareness among the population of the requesting States Parties of the importance of the living heritage of Afro-descendant communities, thereby contributing to an increased recognition of this heritage and its future safeguarding.

**Criterion A.5:** The requesting States Parties will contribute 66 per cent (US$284,590) and other partners will contribute 11 per cent (US$48,250) of the total amount of the project budget (US$432,830). Consequently, International Assistance is requested from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for the remaining 23 per cent of the total amount of the project.

**Criterion A.6:** The request adequately describes how the project will contribute to building capacities to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage of Afro-descendants. It will strengthen the capacity of sixty-four representatives from Afro-descendant community-based organizations and twenty-seven staff from departments dedicated to intangible cultural heritage in the nine States Parties. Nearly one hundred individuals will participate in the various activities and will benefit from various training sessions, notably on inventorying. They will become resource persons equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to continue the inventory work and other safeguarding efforts at the national and regional level beyond the end of the project. Women’s participation will be ensured throughout the project.

**Criterion A.7:** The requesting States Parties have benefitted from International Assistance from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for one ongoing multinational project entitled ‘Capacity building for community leaders and public managers to safeguard the living heritage of Afro-descendant communities in the SICA region and Cuba’ (file no. 02010, February 2023 – August 2024, US$99,986) approved by the Bureau of the seventeenth session of the Committee (Decision [17.COM 5.BUR 3.1](https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions-bureau/17.COM%205.BUR/3.1)). The work stipulated in the contract related to this project is being carried out in accordance with UNESCO regulations.

**Paragraph 10(a):** The proposed activities are regional in scope and involve cooperation with local and national implementing partners, including Ministries of Culture of the States Parties involved and their intangible cultural heritage departments, the Technical Secretariat of the Central American Educational and Cultural Coordination of the Central American Cultural Integration System (CECC/SICA), ONECA and CRESPIAL.

**Paragraph 10(b):** The project is expected to encourage national governments to incorporate the inventoried Afro-descendant living heritage into their safeguarding plans and frameworks and provide the basis for future updating of national inventories. The documentation and the materials collected during the two phases of the project are expected to constitute important resources for the future regional observatory.

1. Approves the International Assistance request from Belize, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama for the project entitled **Exchange of experiences and cultural dialogues for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage of Afro-descendant peoples through the preparation of inventories in the SICA region and Cuba**, and grants the amount of US$99,990 for the implementation of this project;
2. Commends the continued commitment of the nine requesting States as well as the SICA, CRESPIAL and ONECA – including financially – to promote the multi-country integration process in Central America, while highlighting the importance of the living heritage of Afro-descendant communities with reference to the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024);
3. Requests that the Secretariat reach an agreement with the requesting States Parties on the technical details of the assistance (and to issue the contract once the ongoing project has been completed), paying particular attention to ensuring that the budget and the work plan of the activities to be covered by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund are detailed and specific enough to provide a sufficient justification of all the expenditures;
4. Invites the requesting States Parties to use Form ICH-04-Report to report on the use of the assistance granted.