

Funding priority 2

Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in formal and non-formal education

Geographical scope/benefitting country(ies):	Global Programme with country projects in all regions, in particular Africa
Duration (in months):	2022–2025 (48 months)
Name, Unit and contact details of Project Officer(s):	Tim Curtis, Chief, Living Heritage Entity and Secretary of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage <i>For each project under this global programme appropriate Education Sector colleagues will be involved from the design to the evaluation stage</i>
Partner(s) institutions:	Ministries of Culture and of Education, relevant culture and education institutions, category 2 centres, UNESCO education institutes and bureau
Tentative budget inclusive of Programme Support costs:	US\$3.5 million

Rationale and overall purpose



Incorporating living heritage in formal and non-formal education can take multiple forms as established by the range of projects implemented since the initiation of this programme in later 2017. According to the UNESCO Internal Oversight Service (IOS) in 2021 ‘projects have made some inroads into demonstrating the value of integrating living heritage into educational contexts’ (see documents [LHE/21/16.COM/10](#) and [LHE/21/16.COM/INF.10](#)). The evaluation highlights that the partnerships developed between communities, ICH culture bearers, and schools is perhaps one of the ‘most rewarding features’ of the projects carried out thus far. However, to take the

programme a step further, it now has to “scale up” to ensure that projects do not remain isolated, but that the lessons learnt will inform educational policies and get firmly anchored in education systems. A solid inter-ministerial approach between the Culture and Education Sectors is required to effectively strengthen the ‘transmission through formal and non-formal education’ as a safeguarding measure and enhance respect of and recognition for this living cultural heritage (Articles 2 and 14 of the Convention) while thereby contributing to relevant and quality education. The Overall Results Framework for the Convention includes three education-related indicators and one related to education policies. These are guiding the intervention logic of this programme.

Living heritage is a foundation for learning. It can provide context-specific content, meanings, pedagogies, and language for education programmes. By grounding the learning process in one's own culture and creating possibilities of expanding and transforming existing experiences, intangible cultural heritage acts as a leverage to increase the relevance of education and improve learning outcomes, while promoting mutual respect and appreciation for diversity. Furthermore, intangible cultural heritage supports linking education systems to the local community and vice versa, recognizing the role of the communities in the teaching and learning processes. In this regard, intangible cultural heritage provides a needed and incredibly rich resource for attaining SDG 4, notably Target 4.7 which emphasizes learning to 'appreciate cultural diversity' and to 'understand the role of culture for development' together with education for sustainable development and global citizenship.

Progress and achievements

The first phase of the Programme implementation (2018 to 2021) focused on providing technical support to Member States to design and implement a wide range of projects to develop and test methods and tools to integrate living heritage in education programmes. Technical support was provided to raise awareness for the important role that education can play for safeguarding living heritage, and to promote intersectoral collaboration at the national level. Moreover, UNESCO developed a [Clearinghouse](#) for knowledge-sharing and a dedicated instructor-paced online training of trainers' course which generated a learning network of resource persons on living heritage and education that is well equipped to provide training and advisory services upon request in this new area of work.

An important programme outcome of this work is that the role of living heritage and its importance for achieving SDG 4 for quality education is now better understood and illustrated. Furthermore, according to the IOS evaluation, projects undertaken in this area have led to, at least six outcomes, in particular an increased awareness of and respect for ICH amongst youth and the wider community. The importance of ICH as a vehicle for fostering identity, pride, and appreciation for cultural diversity was also observed. Participating teachers developed capacities and confidence to integrate ICH in their teaching practice and in some countries more opportunities to pursue the study of ICH in post-secondary level were created. In addition, the IOS evaluation acknowledged the progress made in consolidating and sharing knowledge in this intersectoral area and establishing initial collaboration among governments and stakeholders such as communities, NGOs and cultural heritage institutions, among others, to support this work.

Challenges and expected impact

However, the IOS evaluation emphasized that while some progress has been achieved through projects, it tends to be isolated and local. Scaling up with a more strategic focus on education systems is needed to promote a pedagogical shift and effectively feed results into the national discourse and advance the 2030 Agenda through education and culture. In many places, education systems are not giving due consideration to the important role they can play in the living heritage safeguarding process nor are they harnessing its potential to improve education quality and relevance.

Based on the assessment and insights gained from substantive work carried out in related fields, such as intercultural education, indigenous education, education for sustainable development, and others, UNESCO will centre its efforts on further expanding and scaling up the intersectoral Programme for greater impact and sustainability.

The longer-term impact of the Programme is to ensure that living heritage is valued and safeguarded as an integral part of quality and transformative education in a greater number of national education systems and through collaboration with bearers, thereby contributing to the well-being, creativity and dignity of learners and their communities, as well as to the achievement of the SDGs, in particular SDG 4. The outcomes and outputs below concern all levels of education from early childhood to post-secondary and provide the road map to eventually achieve the expected impact.

The intervention logic reflected in the table below drew from the Theory of Change proposed for this Programme in the IOS evaluation. It is aligned with the Overall results framework for the Convention.

Summary of impact, outcomes and outputs

Impact: Living heritage is appreciated and safeguarded as an integral part of quality and transformative education in an increased number of national education systems and through collaboration with the bearers, thereby contributing to the well-being, creativity and dignity of learners and their communities and to the attainment of the SDGs, notably SDG 4.

Outcome N°1: Countries support work for a pedagogical shift to bring learners' living heritage into formal and non-formal education which involves transformative methodology and the identification of living heritage, connecting them to attain learning objectives aligned with specific targets of SDG 4.

Output N°1.1: Methods and assessment tools for integrating intangible cultural heritage in formal, non-formal and post-secondary education, including technical and vocational training, developed, strengthened, and implemented.

Outcome N°2: Countries utilize strengthened human and institutional capacities to include approaches to integrating living heritage and its safeguarding into education in teacher-training programmes and programmes for training providers of non-formal education.

Output N°2.1: Technical support provided through capacity building for teachers, educators, teacher educators and culture and education professionals.

Outcome N°3: Countries scale up action at the interface of safeguarding living heritage and transformative education through inter-ministerial collaboration, policy development and curriculum revision, thereby anchoring the approach in education systems.

Output N°3.1: Inter-ministerial cooperation initiated, and policy advice provided to create an enabling institutional environment and mechanisms for safeguarding living heritage in formal and non-formal education.

Outcome N°4: Countries participate in knowledge-sharing and networking platforms and advocate for the incorporation of living heritage in education in relevant regional and international policy processes.

Output N°4.1: Access to expertise at the junction of living heritage and education provided together with knowledge-sharing and networking platforms.

Output N°4.2: Education policy recommendations on integrating intangible cultural heritage to improve educational quality and relevance are disseminated among relevant regional and international policy processes.

Implementation Strategy

The Programme implementation strategy requires a combined approach addressing inter-ministerial collaboration at all levels as well as bottom-up initiatives. It was designed with a view to scale up action at the country level, combining methodological development and capacity building with stronger inter-ministerial collaboration, advocacy, and policy development.

The Programme does not intend to achieve in four years all the desired changes in all project countries; rather it offers a strategic approach for this work of safeguarding living heritage in formal and non-formal education that can be adapted in scope and scale to each country context. Countries will make choices about the focus of the action in terms of the type of education, namely formal and

non-formal and the level of education which ranges from early childhood to post-secondary education, including technical and vocational training (TVET). They may also choose to focus on teacher training or on curriculum reform and policy development. While the four outcomes follow a sequential logic, they are strongly interrelated. Hence implementation can happen either as a sequence over time or in parallel.

In order to foster institutional anchoring and sustainability of processes, two cross-cutting approaches will be considered at all levels of implementation: 1) intersectoral collaboration and coordination through working groups and inter-ministerial cooperation and 2) context-specific strategies to involve community bearers from the implementation of pilot activities and capacity building to the elaboration of policy recommendations and the establishment of intersectoral and interinstitutional mechanisms. Attention will also be paid to fair and equal engagement of all sectors and strata of society, including indigenous peoples, migrants, immigrants and refugees, people of different ages, persons with disabilities and members of vulnerable groups in all activities. A gender-responsive approach will be applied both to ensure inclusive participation and as a pedagogical approach to reflect on the influence of the gender in this work drawing from the understanding and needs of each context.

UNESCO field offices will take the lead in cooperation with national counterparts, UNESCO Education Institutes, and category 2 centres and with on-going technical support from the Living Heritage Entity and relevant education entities at Headquarters.

Stakeholders, beneficiaries and partners

Beneficiaries and stakeholders include learners and community bearers together with different actors involved in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (relevant institutions, culture ministries) and in education (schools, non-formal education programmes, education ministries, teacher-training institutions, and the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network). For activities directly happening in schools and other learning spaces, the primary beneficiaries are the learners and the wider communities concerned. For complementary activities, such as teacher development, policy analysis and the consolidation and sharing of information, beneficiaries will be teacher-training programmes, planners and policy makers. The Secretariat will identify beneficiary countries, taking into account the needs and implementation capacities of Member States and of UNESCO's delivery capacity in each Member State; the regional or bilateral priorities of donors can also be taken into account.

The Convention recognizes the critical role of communities in safeguarding their intangible cultural heritage. Therefore, all activities carried out under this project will involve them and obtain their free, prior, and informed consent, while also seizing opportunities of involving a wider range of relevant stakeholders.

Risk analysis, sustainability and exit strategy

In the short term, the programme will engage States Parties to strengthen their capacities to support safeguarding in formal and non-formal education. Countries should have at their disposal access to expertise, guidance and concrete experiences that will allow the relevant stakeholders and communities on their territory to carry on this work and develop larger scale projects. Where relevant, guidance will include information on the possibilities of requesting International Assistance from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund for this purpose.

For the programme to be successful, the intersectoral collaboration between the Living Heritage Entity and the Education Sector will be strengthened also in the framework of the joint intersectoral initiative entitled 'Education and Culture together in action to advance the Sustainable Development Goals.' Above all, in order to guarantee a dialogic bottom-up and top-down approach, it will be crucial to ensure that all actors, including youth, community leaders and educators, have access to the means of consultation and implementation.