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Intangible
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Expert Meeting on Intangible Cultural Heritage in Emergencies

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Defining methodological guidance
for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in emergencies

I.   Introduction

1.   In the recent past, the loss of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and threats to cultural diversity which accompany emergencies has become the object of growing concern. As the international community has come to recognize, intangible cultural heritage provides an important foundation for the identity, well-being and sustainable development of communities as well as mutual understandings within and between them. Damage to the living heritage by conflicts and natural disasters may therefore affect core aspects of people's lives. UNESCO has increasingly been called upon to provide assistance in such situations.

2.   Under the 2003 Convention, the eleventh session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2016 initiated a reflection on the role of communities both in safeguarding their intangible cultural heritage in situations of emergency and mobilizing it as a tool for preparedness, resilience, reconciliation and recovery (Decision 11.COM 15). At its twelfth session in 2017, the Committee took care, in particular, to discuss the issue in different contexts, including, among others, armed conflicts and disasters caused by natural and human-induced hazards, and pointed to a future direction that privileges 'community-based needs identifications' and fosters links between intangible cultural heritage and disaster risk management (Decision 12.COM 15). At its thirteenth session in 2018, the Committee felt that the time had come to define operational modalities for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in emergencies and requested that 'the Secretariat organize an individual expert meeting during the course of 2019 to conceptualize and transform the knowledge and experience acquired into methodological guidance for States Parties, or for any other relevant national or international stakeholders' (Decision 13.COM 11).

3.   Against this background, the expert meeting is convened to serve as an important step towards producing a succinct and practical set of methodological guidelines. Underpinned by principles for action, these guidelines are meant to support the effective implementation of the 2003 Convention across a wide range of emergency contexts. With the generous financial support of the People's Republic of China, this two-day meeting will bring together over twenty experts from different UNESCO Member States with specific expertise and/or experience in the field of intangible cultural heritage and emergencies. This meeting is organized as a category VI expert meeting, in UNESCO's terminology, which means that the experts participate in their private capacity and not as representatives of any government or organization. The results of the meeting will be presented to the Director-General of UNESCO, and subsequently examined by the Committee when it meets for its fourteenth session in Colombia from 9 to 14 December 2019 in view of informing its discussions and recommendations to the eighth session of the General Assembly of States Parties (June 2020) regarding operational modalities for the implementation of the 2003 Convention in situations of emergency.

4.   Emergency contexts are broadly understood here to include both conflict situations and disasters caused by natural and human-induced hazards ('natural disasters'), in keeping with the definitions used by UNESCO. While these two forms of emergency are often treated separately, this document focuses on areas of overlapping concern that are important for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. The aim is to seek broad safeguarding principles and methodologies that might apply to all or most emergency situations. It might be important to specify at a later stage which of those methodologies are specifically suited to serve different situations of emergencies.

5.   This document has been developed on the basis of institutional and individual knowledge and experience, including activities undertaken by UNESCO or reported by States Parties, and on available published and unpublished sources (listed in annex). The document first addresses the range of available normative, policy and operational frameworks – within UNESCO and beyond – that bear, directly or indirectly, on questions of intangible cultural heritage and emergency. The dual relationship between intangible cultural heritage and emergencies is then reviewed: the risk to living heritage itself generated by different forms of emergency on the one hand, and the role of intangible cultural heritage in strategies for preparedness and for mitigating the effects of disaster and conflict, in particular as a driver for recovery. Finally, a number of emergent operational principles and modalities are identified for further discussion.

II.   Frameworks for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in emergencies

UNESCO frameworks

6.   As regards UNESCO, the following normative, policy and operational texts are relevant to operationalize the 2003 Convention in the context of emergency situations, namely:

- UNESCO's Strategy for the protection of culture and the promotion of cultural pluralism in the event of armed conflict (UNESCO General Conference Resolution 38C/48);
- Addendum to the Strategy for the reinforcement of UNESCO's action for the protection of culture and the promotion of cultural pluralism in the event of armed conflict concerning emergencies associated with disasters caused by natural and human-induced hazards (UNESCO General Conference Resolution 39C/35);
- Relevant provisions of the Operational Directives of the 2003 Convention;
- The Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage.

7.   UNESCO's Strategy for the Protection of Culture and the Promotion of Cultural Pluralism in Emergency Situations and its Addendum concerning emergencies associated with disasters caused by natural and human-induced hazards, adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 2015 and 2017 respectively, have set policies for reinforcing UNESCO's actions for the protection of culture and the promotion of cultural pluralism in emergency situations. Taken together, they provide UNESCO's operational definition of emergencies as encompassing armed conflict and disasters caused by natural and human-induced hazards. The Strategy calls for cooperation and collaboration across the fields of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding and a variety of sectors intervening in emergencies. For UNESCO and other stakeholders concerned with safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in emergencies, such cooperation requires an understanding of the normative and operational frameworks that guide the activities of other sectors. This understanding should make it possible to identify potential synergies between the field of intangible cultural heritage and other sectors, and to assess the compatibility of different goals, concepts, methods and ethical underpinnings.

8.   With reference to Article 11 of the text of the 2003 Convention, States Parties have the obligation to take the necessary measures to ensure the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage present in their territory. This provision applies in all contexts, including emergencies. In so doing, States Parties shall endeavour to ensure the widest possible participation of communities, in conformity with Article 15. Furthermore, for the purpose of requesting emergency International Assistance and with reference to Article 22.2, the Operational Directives of the 2003 Convention (paragraph 50) consider an emergency to occur 'when a State Party cannot overcome on its own an insurmountable circumstance due to a calamity, a

natural or environmental disaster, an armed conflict, a serious epidemic or any other natural or human event which has catastrophic consequences for the intangible cultural heritage as well as communities, groups and, if applicable, individuals who are the bearers of this heritage'.

9. Paragraph 32 of the Operational Directives, with reference to Article 17.3 of the Convention, indicates another means of responding to certain situations of extreme urgency that has not yet been used. This paragraph states that 'in case of extreme urgency, and in conformity with Criterion U.6, the Bureau of the Committee may invite the State(s) Party(ies) concerned to submit a nomination to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding on an accelerated schedule. […] Cases of extreme urgency may be brought to the attention of the Bureau of the Committee by the State(s) Party(ies) on whose territory(ies) the element is located, by any other State Party, by the community concerned, or by an advisory organization. […]'.

10. Additionally, the Committee at its tenth session in 2015 adopted a new chapter of the Operational Directives on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development at the national level, which includes provisions related to the contribution of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding in the context of natural disasters and climate change (Chapter VI.3 on environmental sustainability). Chapter VI.4 on intangible cultural heritage and peace includes provisions concerning the mobilization of intangible cultural heritage and its bearers for the prevention of disputes, peaceful conflict resolution and the restoration of peace and security.

11. At the same session, the Committee endorsed a set of twelve Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage (Decision 10.COM 15.a). The fifth point of the principles states that the 'access of communities, groups and individuals to the instruments, objects, artefacts, cultural and natural spaces and places of memory whose existence is necessary for expressing the intangible cultural heritage should be ensured, including in situations of armed conflict. […]'.

Other international instruments and standards

12. Other relevant international normative instruments and standards include the following:

- United Nations Security Council resolution 2347 (2017): This historic resolution of the United Nations Security Council is the first one to focus exclusively on cultural heritage. It condemns the destruction, looting, and trafficking of cultural property in conflict, particularly by non-state armed groups such as terrorists and in light of its role in financing terrorism, and recognizes the role that such destruction and misappropriation of cultural property plays in exacerbating conflict and fueling ongoing tension and instability. The resolution notes that the mistreatment of cultural heritage in war prevents post-war reconciliation and development, given that such cultural heritage often constitutes a symbol of unity and identity for communities in war-affected regions.

- International human rights instruments with which the Convention is aligned, namely:
    - Core human rights treaties addressing cultural rights[1] as well as the elimination of racial discrimination and discrimination against women, the rights of children, the rights of persons with disabilities, the rights of migrant workers and their families, and the elimination of torture[2].
    - Other universal instruments relating to the elimination of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief, and to the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities[3].

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1. Notably Article 27 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights of 1948 and Article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966.
2. https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/coreinstruments.aspx
3   https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/UniversalHumanRightsInstruments.aspx

- Instruments for the protection of culture, intellectual property rights and biological diversity whose principles are acknowledged in the text of the 2003 Convention. The Operational Directives of the 2003 Convention also reflect connections with these instruments.

- International law relevant to armed conflicts: the 2003 Convention and its Operational Directives do not specifically refer to international instruments that seek to limit the effects of armed conflicts – known as international humanitarian law – including the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. Although this convention only covers movable and immovable cultural property, the 2003 Convention acknowledges in its Article 2 that some places, spaces and artefacts are linked to the expression or practice of intangible cultural heritage, or are repositories of records, archives and so on related to intangible cultural heritage.

- International law relevant to refugees and principles pertaining to internally displaced persons (IDPs). The Strategy adopted by the General Conference in Resolution 38C/48 makes specific reference to the deprivation of cultural rights experienced by the growing number of refugees and IDPs. Furthermore, relevant to the situation of both refugees and IDPs, the 2003 Convention provides that States Parties have the primary responsibility for safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage present on their territories (Article 11). Section VI of the Operational Directives (paragraph 172) encourages States Parties to take an approach to safeguarding that is inclusive, *inter alia*, of refugees.

13. Standards of donors and funders also need to be considered since they shape much of the international cooperation and assistance provided in emergency situations. The consideration of cultural heritage and of indigenous peoples is increasingly mainstreamed in the standards and guidelines adopted by financial institutions providing loans for development projects (including for post-disaster or post-conflict reconstruction), and by bilateral and multilateral donors funding development assistance. However, intangible cultural heritage is seldom mentioned. There is also a recognition among the main development actors that project activities may have an adverse effect on cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible. This concern is reflected in the Operational Directives of the 2003 Convention (Chapter VI, paragraphs 171 and 172).

III. Intangible cultural heritage in emergencies

14. If a single analysis for both conflict and disaster makes it possible to identify areas of overlap that are pertinent to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, it is important, however, to acknowledge that there are still major differences between a natural disaster and a conflict, such as the unforeseeable nature of certain disasters, or the deliberate targeting of cultural heritage including intangible cultural heritage in certain conflicts. Accordingly, observations on intangible cultural heritage in the contexts of disaster and conflict are first addressed separately, before some of the outcomes that appear to be common to both contexts are considered.

Intangible cultural heritage in natural disasters

15. Disasters arise from the interaction between human populations and natural hazards or human-induced hazard events. The desk study on Safeguarding and Mobilising Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Context of Natural and Human-induced Hazards commissioned by UNESCO in 2017 showed that intangible cultural heritage plays a critical role in the mitigation of disasters at every stage of the emergency management cycle, from preparedness through to response and recovery. To ensure their viability over the long term, knowledge and practices related to intangible cultural heritage are often distributed widely across a community, or in ways that limit the possibility of total loss. Moreover, the role of climate change in transforming the frequency, severity and duration of both disasters and conflicts, and exacerbating their effects on intangible cultural heritage, appears to be increasingly certain and will doubtless expand over time.

16. Examples of the importance of living heritage in disasters include: a) local knowledge of landscapes and environments; b) local practices that serve to mitigate the impact of a disaster; and c) local traditions describing previous disasters. They are demonstrated in the lower proportional mortality experienced by Simeulue Islanders in the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and by Simbo Islanders in the 2007 Solomon Islands tsunami, in comparison with urban Acehnese or Kiribati migrants, respectively[4]. Living heritage practices can also provide the means for much-needed cash income (through craft and tourism, for example), communal re-integration, and psychological therapy and relief during the recovery phase. One of the best-documented illustrations of the role of intangible cultural heritage in these forms of disaster recovery is the important role of the revival of traditional rituals and ceremonies in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011[5].

17. Extensive attention has been paid, by disaster risk management (DRM) or disaster risk reduction (DRR) exercises and humanitarian agencies, in particular, to local knowledge and practices that relate to disaster mitigation. However, the use of this knowledge has tended to proceed in an ad hoc manner, seldom situating individual expressions or practices within their broader social and cultural contexts or over a period longer than the immediate disaster and recovery phases.

18. The impact of disasters on elements of intangible cultural heritage itself is poorly understood and less thoroughly documented. For all but the most cataclysmic events, there are questions about the precise links between disasters and the loss of intangible cultural heritage. In part, this reflects a lack of adequate data clearly focused on intangible cultural heritage, rather than cultural heritage more broadly; damage to tangible heritage, such as buildings, is much more readily identified, enumerated and costed. Minimal inventorying of elements of intangible cultural heritage, limited modelling of processes of transmission, and a lack of longitudinal studies that track practices of intangible cultural heritage over long periods prior to and following disasters, are amongst the more significant challenges to an adequate understanding of the threats disasters pose to the safeguarding of living heritage.

Intangible cultural heritage in conflicts

19. The fields of development, conflict prevention, humanitarian assistance and post-conflict reconstruction or stabilization have so far paid very little attention to intangible cultural heritage. Although some humanitarian standards have given limited consideration to 'culture', 'local culture' and/or 'customs'[6], they tend to consider culture as a static entity rather than a dynamic social process, and to view individuals as detached from their sociocultural environment. As a result, the potential contribution of intangible cultural heritage to averting conflicts, mitigating their effects or increasing the resilience of affected communities is even less well-documented than is the case with disasters. There are also questions regarding the capacity of intangible cultural heritage to prevent conflict beyond highly localized contexts.

20. There is little reason to doubt that intangible cultural heritage is heavily affected by war, destruction, death, displacement, and associated disruption to the social, economic and cultural fabric of communities. People caught up in conflicts face violence, physical and psychological suffering, the loss of property and livelihoods, and the death and scattering of family members. Those forcibly displaced experience a radical separation from their places and communities of origin. All these factors inevitably induce changes in lifestyles and cultural practices. Recent community-based assessments conducted with refugees and internally displaced populations in the Middle East[7] and Africa[8] concur that massive deaths, destruction and forced population displacement dislocate the contexts and channels people need to express their intangible cultural heritage. At the same time, the social, economic, security,

4. McAdoo *et al*. 2006, Lauer *et al*. 2013
5. Klien 2016, Kimura 2016, Takakura 2019, Takizawa 2019
6. See notably IFRC/ICRC, 1994; IASC, 2007; Sphere Project, 2011; CHS Alliance, 2014; INEE, 2012
7. Survey on Intangible Cultural Heritage of Displaced Syrians, UNESCO 2017.
8. Needs identification with the participation of communities for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in the region of North Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo, UNESCO 2017.

legal, or political contexts within which people are displaced are not necessarily conducive for them to enact their knowledge and practices.

21. As with disasters, threats to the viability of intangible cultural heritage in conflicts are multifactorial. However, in situations where traditions and practices of living heritage (or culture in general) are directly targeted, the causality of the impacts is more straightforward. This is most often the case with ethnic or ethno-religious conflicts and cultural cleansing combining widespread killings of civilians, forced displacement, and the intentional destruction of cultural spaces and artefacts.

22. Existing assessments also show that refugees and IDPs turn to various forms of cultural expression to address their situation. Such forms include rituals of grieving and mourning, collective practices of social bonding and remembrance, and the celebration of birth, marriage and other festive events. Within new environments, the performing arts or craft skills can also provide a source of livelihood, whereas traditional knowledge systems may be harnessed for survival. Some expressions and practices are eroded or lost, whereas others are transformed, and new ones are created, particularly around the memory of collective suffering and radical social and cultural change. Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms can also be harnessed to restore peace. However, experience has showed that such initiatives can have only limited effects on large-scale conflicts[9].

Observations

23. While a number of features of intangible cultural heritage that are distinctive in the contexts of disaster and conflict have been identified, there are also outcomes, measures and challenges common to both, and which are thus relevant to a general approach to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in emergencies. These include the following:

- Intangible cultural heritage is widely understood to play a dual role in the context of emergencies: intangible cultural heritage can be directly affected and threatened while it can also be a source of resilience and recovery in mitigating many of the negative effects of an emergency in favour of rebuilding social cohesion, fostering reconciliation and/or facilitating recovery for communities confronted with situations of emergency.

- Little is understood about threats or losses to intangible cultural heritage over the longer term because of the multiplicity of factors that affect intangible cultural heritage and its diffuse and dynamic character. In particular, information is generally absent on: (a) the impact of particular emergencies on transmission and viability; and (b) the economic cost to intangible cultural heritage impacted by an emergency.

- While some existing elements of intangible cultural heritage can be mobilized by communities to address both short- and long-term effects of disasters (e.g., basic physical needs, spiritual needs, resilience and recovery), these elements need to be understood within their broader social and cultural contexts and not extracted for instrumental purposes.

- Emergencies can be reinvigorating or creative contexts for intangible cultural heritage. They can prompt the re-emergence or renewal of interest in abandoned elements, the intensification of existing elements, or the emergence of new elements such as memorial expressions and practices linked to catastrophic events.

- Emergencies also provide critical moments or prompts for heightened community and national reflection and discussion of the roles of intangible cultural heritage.

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9. Braeuchler 2012.

IV.   Intangible cultural heritage and existing operational modalities

24.   Today, most of the agencies involved in planning for and implementing interventions in emergencies – including civil protection authorities involved in disaster risk management, national/local cultural authorities, military/defence actors and international humanitarian actors – mobilize notions of culture, community and participation or inclusion as part of their operational standards and practices. In some sectors, there is also a growing interest in cultural heritage as a factor that enhances or mitigates risks related to various forms of emergency. However, despite an apparent concern for cultural safeguarding, the standards and approaches adopted in these interventions stem from very different understandings of the basic concepts of culture, community and inclusion.

Intangible cultural heritage in humanitarian interventions

25.   Disaster risk management and disaster risk reduction specialists often conceptualize culture fairly narrowly as 'local and indigenous knowledge systems', limited to local coping mechanisms and empirical knowledge used to prepare for and respond to disasters. It remains unclear if the local practices, knowledge and behaviours subsumed under this category are understood by communities as a distinct component of their intangible cultural heritage that is transmitted over generations and gives them a sense of identity. Additionally, attention has been paid primarily to manifestations that can be validated scientifically, transferred to other communities, and integrated into technical frameworks. Therefore, although these specialists are obviously concerned with improving the well-being of communities, their interventions risk decontextualizing these elements.

26.   Another point of concern is that these operational modalities do not have a concern for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in the sense of the 2003 Convention at their core. At the programmatic level, humanitarian agencies take a utilitarian view of culture as a tool to understand their context of intervention, localize interventions, meet specific sectorial aims or enhance the acceptance of humanitarian operations by local populations and the safety of humanitarian workers. This is the case, for example, with emergency medicine and with the mental health and psychosocial support sector where an understanding of the 'culture' of beneficiaries is deemed necessary for practitioners to deliver support effectively[10]. Conversely, some cultural beliefs, norms, practices or institutions can be singled out as causing or fuelling an emergency or impeding the delivery of aid[11].

27.   The Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) process, which is primarily intended to evaluate the costs of losses and damages so as to raise the funds for International Assistance, directly addresses the issue of culture and specifically identifies intangible cultural heritage for attention. However, while the PDNA presents an opportunity to prompt an inquiry into intangible cultural heritage, there are numerous limitations inherent in this rapid assessment tool. PDNA is primarily concerned with monetary assessment based on losses and damages and consequently, it restricts its focus in practice to the tangible features of intangible cultural heritage, detaching elements from their wider sociocultural contexts, and offering little practical guidance to assessment teams in terms of safeguarding. Post-Conflict Needs Assessments (PCNAs) are even less standardized than PDNAs and there is little or no systematic evaluation of damage to culture in general.

Community-based approaches

28.   People-centred, community-based approaches are not standard methodologies in international development and humanitarian assistance, even if they have been gaining ground since the 1990s among NGOs. For example, the methodologies used are still mostly top-down and extractive: informed consent given for research purposes falls short of genuine community participation, and provisions for returning results to communities are unclear. Furthermore, in

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10.   MSF, 2013: 8-9; ERAP, 2019
11.   PSSHA, 2018.

terms of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding, these studies appear to pay insufficient attention to transmission mechanisms within communities.

29. Some issues related to community participation that have emerged from the practical implementation of the 2003 Convention in 'normal' settings risk becoming exacerbated in emergency situations where the operational context is more complex, and collaboration may be needed with a variety of actors. Community-based methodologies are notoriously time-consuming and complicated processes that need to address the heterogeneity of communities. Moreover, in emergency situations, the cohesiveness of communities may be severely affected – members may be dislocated or separated, and social structures disrupted. Disasters and conflicts may deepen lines of tension inside affected communities, including by undermining shared intangible cultural heritage and creating disagreements about what should be revitalized, transmitted or abandoned. All of this must be carefully considered when initiating community based needs identification for Intangible Cultural Heritage in situations of emergencies. Whilst respecting the spirit of the 2003 Convention which calls for an approach centred on bearers and practitioners, it is also important to consider the roles that other stakeholders can play as connectors, facilitators and agents of empowerment.

30. Another point worth considering is that vulnerability to hazards can reflect degrees of marginalization stemming from uneven relations of power within a given community, or from governmental policies directed towards specific social groups. Alternatively, in contexts of armed conflict, civilian populations may also be the target of regular armies and/or non-state armed actors. These situations are typical of complex emergencies in which safeguarding activities for intangible cultural heritage may be undertaken. This points to the conundrum of enforcing States' responsibility for safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of communities whose presence or existence in their territories is challenged.

Observations

31. An examination of the different sectors engaged in emergency assistance shows that:

- There is a very wide range of stakeholders to consider, including civil protection authorities involved in disaster risk management, national/local cultural authorities, international humanitarian actors, military/defence actors, and development actors involved in reconstruction work.

- Existing frameworks through which these stakeholders plan and implement their programmes and projects are generally quite removed from the norms and the Operational Directives of the 2003 Convention.

- Their interventions can be the source of additional threats to intangible cultural heritage. Even when they incorporate aspects of intangible cultural heritage (under a different conceptualization), their programmes and projects can have adverse effects on the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.

- Individually or collectively, they may display a spectrum of attitudes towards intangible cultural heritage and its safeguarding, ranging from an interest in, awareness of and respect for the living heritage of the communities concerned, to ignorance, indifference, or utilitarian views.

- Certain emergency situations represent particularly difficult contexts for the design of meaningful safeguarding interventions premised on trust and collaboration between governments and communities, and on a high degree of social cohesion within a given social group that shares cultural characteristics.

- Some caution is warranted on the part of institutional stakeholders and intangible cultural heritage professionals when collaborating with the various sectors involved in emergencies or evaluating the effects of these interventions. In particular, practical safeguarding initiatives cannot uncritically use the findings of research carried out by these sectors or adopt their methodologies.

V. Identifying operational principles and guidelines under the 2003 Convention

Recent initiatives

32. The Secretariat of the 2003 Convention has undertaken a series of activities to implement the decisions of the Intergovernmental Committee pertaining to intangible cultural heritage and emergencies, as reported to the Committee at its eleventh (2016), twelfth (2017) and thirteenth sessions (2018):

   - piloting community-based identifications of safeguarding needs in situations of population displacement resulting from conflict[12];

   - commissioning a desk-based concept paper focusing on the interaction between intangible cultural heritage and natural disasters[13];

   - integrating disaster risk management into the guidance note for inventorying intangible cultural heritage and related capacity-building training materials;

   - reviewing methodological approaches to the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in emergencies.

33. A point that has become particularly clear through recent experiences is the usefulness of community-based needs identifications. They serve as a starting point when reviewing the impact a crisis has on the viability of specific traditions and practices on the one hand, and for understanding how their safeguarding can help communities surmount such crises on the other. Needs identifications typically entail background studies, stakeholder consultations, field surveys and a careful analysis of the results collected. Giving a real voice to communities, this approach requires a significant preparation phase, expertise and trust-building with those affected by crises and disasters. However, if successful, the results become instrumental for developing context-specific safeguarding actions that respond to concrete needs on the ground. Such an outcome cannot be hoped for when using a ready-made list of strategies prepared away from the affected areas.

34. In parallel, a number of States Parties (Colombia, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Vanuatu) have received financial help as emergency International Assistance under the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund to support safeguarding plans usually embedded in larger post-conflict or post-disaster recovery programmes. Notably, during the dedicated side event held in June 2018[14], during the seventh session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the 2003 Convention, several representatives of States Parties and NGOs shared existing safeguarding experiences that appeared to be little-known beyond restricted circles.

35. Lastly, a number of regional initiatives have taken place that address the nexus between intangible cultural heritage and emergencies. The International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI) – a category 2 centre established in Japan, under the auspices of UNESCO – launched a series of activities in 2016 around intangible cultural heritage and natural hazards, which has resulted in two publications to date[15]. More recently, the IRCI has expanded its interest to cover intangible cultural heritage in post-conflict situations. For its part, the Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Latin America (CRESPIAL), another category 2 centre based in Cuzco, Peru, launched its own research programme in late 2018 on the relationship between intangible cultural heritage and emergencies[16]. The International Council on Archives and the Caribbean Archives Association organized a conference on 'Regional approaches to disaster recovery

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12. Survey on Intangible Cultural Heritage of Displaced Syrians, UNESCO 2017; Needs identification with the participation of communities for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in the region of North Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo, UNESCO 2017.
13. Safeguarding and Mobilising Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Context of Natural and Human-induced Hazards, UNESCO 2017.
14. https://ich.unesco.org/en/calendar-of-events-00990.
15. Iwamoto et al., 2018; Iwamoto and Nojima, 2019.
16. See a first report on natural disasters and ICH in Latin America and the Caribbean in Iwamoto and Nojima, 2019: 121–128.

and heritage preservation' in 2018 in collaboration with the Government of Sint Maarten, which led to the creation of a Caribbean Heritage Protection Network[17], including intangible cultural heritage.

Emergent operational principles and modalities

36. These various activities and projects represent a body of experience from which a number of operational principles and modalities have emerged, some of which may be summarized as below:

Operational principles:

1) The **breadth and complexity of emergencies** need to be acknowledged, together with the correspondingly complex contexts in which intangible cultural heritage safeguarding takes place. It is important to seek a clearer understanding, grounded in research and documentation, of the interaction between intangible cultural heritage and emergencies, addressing, in particular, the question of **threats to transmission and practice** under both emergency and non-emergency conditions.

2) **The widest possible range of stakeholders** implicated in intangible cultural heritage and emergencies should be engaged: these stakeholders include, but are not limited to, States Parties and all other national and international stakeholders involved in prevention/preparedness and response to emergencies, ranging from local civil society to governments and disaster relief, humanitarian and military actors. In particular, the levels and nature of coordination and cooperation with specialists in disaster risk management and disaster risk reduction, humanitarian, security and peace-building actors need to be reviewed and enhanced.

3) **Community-based approaches** are to be further extended and applied, particularly as one of the first steps of intervention when planning safeguarding actions for intangible cultural heritage in emergencies. One aspect that requires attention is how to better integrate bearers and practitioners of intangible cultural heritage into governance, policy and operational decision-making processes related to emergency preparedness, response and recovery.

4) Developing **regional cooperation mechanisms** could be beneficial to address risks to intangible cultural heritage in emergencies and share experiences. In some cases, existing mechanisms could serve as an appropriate forum (see above for the example related to the creation of the Caribbean Heritage Protection Network).

5) **Local knowledge** about disasters could provide a solid basis for **building disaster risk reduction** strategies. Traditional conflict management or resolution mechanisms could also become important sources of information for developing similar strategies to increase resilience and reduce the vulnerability of communities affected by the situations of emergency.

6) In the long term, communities need to be empowered to **mainstream intangible cultural heritage in the process of the relief-to-development continuum**. The aim is to re-establish transmission mechanisms to allow for the enactment of intangible cultural heritage, for example through formal, non-formal and informal education, interactions between different groups or vertically between generations. In this process, it is important to consider various elements of intangible cultural heritage – social, economic, cultural and spiritual, in post-emergency as well as pre-emergency contexts.

Operational modalities

1) **Addressing safeguarding needs pre-emptively**:

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17. https://www.caribheritage.org/sites/default/files/press-kit/about/CHN_Fact_Sheet.pdf.

- Identifying, inventorying, documenting, researching and storing information in safe or multiple locations.

- Generating contingency action plans for the intangible cultural heritage of specific communities or for specific elements to support their safeguarding in the case of an emergency.

- Incorporating intangible cultural heritage into disaster response planning.

- Establishing links between bodies safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and bodies in charge of disaster management.

2) **Evaluating safeguarding needs post-disaster and post-conflict**:

- Assess who is the community, in particular if the community is configure in a similar way as it was before the emergency situation.

- Paying particular attention to how to address the issue of communities and groups marginalized or excluded by authorities and other more 'powerful' stakeholders.

- Incorporating impacts on instruments, objects, artefacts, cultural and natural spaces associated with the enactment of intangible cultural heritage, as well as on related repositories of knowledge and practice (e.g., museums and archives).

- Sharing information within and between countries so that the extent and nature of disruptions caused to intangible cultural heritage can be quickly ascertained – in particular where intangible cultural heritage is shared across borders.

3) **Privileging the community-based needs identification as one of the first port of calls**:

- Using the community-based needs identification which allows ensuring a people-centred and community-based approach with the participation of the primary stakeholders, notably the communities, groups and individuals affected by emergencies.

4) **Adopting immediate and mid-term measures to help affected communities practise their intangible cultural heritage**:

- Obtaining financial contributions from national/local as well as international authorities to practitioners.

- Incorporating intangible cultural heritage into reconstruction and recovery.

- Establishing educational and other activities aimed particularly at young people within the communities concerned.

5) **Need for targeted awareness-raising and capacity building** for assessing, planning and implementing programmes amongst:

- The communities/groups concerned, particularly youth.

- National and local authorities.

- Other civil society stakeholders: research/academia, voluntary and advocacy sectors, the media, etc.

- International humanitarian and organizations with a mandate in disaster risk management and disaster risk reduction.

6) In conjunction with the **mechanisms of the 2003 Convention**:

- States Parties may request emergency International Assistance from the Fund for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (e.g. Mali, Ivory Coast, Vanuatu, Niger, Colombia).

- In order to enhance the visibility of elements particularly threatened by disaster/conflict, States Parties may submit nominations for inscription on the List

of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (e.g., Traditional Vallenato music of the Greater Magdalena region submitted by Colombia).

- In order to call the attention of the international community on elements particularly threatened by disaster/conflict, the Bureau of the Committee may invite the State(s) Party(ies) concerned to submit a nomination to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding on an accelerated schedule as per criterion U.6. Cases of extreme urgency may be brought to the attention of the Bureau of the Committee by the State(s) Party(ies) on whose territory(ies) the element is located, by any other State Party, by the community concerned or by an advisory organization (paragraph 32 of the Operational Directives).

- With a view to enhancing the visibility of elements that contribute to preparing for or to mitigating the effects of disasters/conflict, States Parties may submit nominations for inscription on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (e.g., Avalanche risk management submitted by Switzerland and Austria; Practices and expressions of joking relationships submitted in Niger; Al-Zajal recited or sung poetry submitted by Lebanon).

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