
Mapping Cultural Diversity – Good Practices from around the globe

From Policy to Practice

As the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Convention’) rightly points out, cultural diversity has been recognized both as a resource to be preserved and as a driving force for sustainable development. In October 2010, the International Community celebrates the fifth anniversary of the Convention after its adoption in October 2005. Hence, the Convention enters its implementing stage. Parties to the Convention start examining and exchanging good and relevant policy practice. The Intergovernmental Committee will be drafting Operational Guidelines on these two articles this year. It is in this context, the [German Commission for UNESCO](#) and the [Asia-Europe Foundation](#) (ASEF) are proposing a publication on good practices related to the diversity of cultural expressions with contributions from the U40-network (2009-2011) around the world.

The U40-network (Under 40ies) Fellows are young experts selected for the interdisciplinary capacity building programme [U40 "Cultural Diversity 2030"](#) initiated by the German Commission for UNESCO in 2007 as part of the German EU Council presidency. The U40-process offers postgraduates, PhD students, young professionals, and similarly qualified young experts the opportunity to participate in the international debate on Cultural Diversity and the implementation of the [UNESCO Convention on the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression](#) (2005). The U40-World Forum (12-18th June 2009, Paris), the core element of the U40-programme brought together 50 young experts from 34 countries. As part of the World Forum they participated as observers to the 2nd Conference of Parties of the Convention of the Convention in June 2009. The programme aims to strengthen the networks and invest in the knowledge of the future decision makers and implementers of the UNESCO Convention from all over the world.

Purpose of the publication

The proposed publication will include up to 24 examples of innovative and sustainable projects that are contributing to the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions. These projects should reflect the interplay of practice and policy in achieving the objectives of the Convention and display the role of culture as a key component of sustainable development. The contributions result from various fields addressed in the Convention (such as the arts, Media, creative industries, international cooperation, policy development, research and education) and at various levels (local, national, regional and international). The idea of mapping good practices on cultural diversity is based on the observation that carefully documented case studies can not only provide inspiration for networking and collaboration but also aid planning and policy making. Initiatives of interest can be policies, programmes, projects, and also regulatory measures. The methodology of case studies should allow for a comparative perspective.

Good practices

A 'best' or 'good' practice can be defined as a creative and sustainable practice that provides an effective response based on the idea of direct knowledge utilization; has the potential for replication as an “inspirational guideline”; and, can contribute to policy development.

Best Practices include successful initiatives which:

- Have a demonstrable effect and tangible impact on improving people’s quality of life;
- Are socially, culturally, economically and environmentally sustainable;

- Are innovative: a best practice develops new and creative solutions to common problems. This could also result from already well established programmes and/or projects that have been running for years;
- Have the potential for replication: a best practice can serve as an inspiration to generate policies and initiatives elsewhere.

Any practice must be adapted to the political, historic, cultural, social and economic context of the society in question.¹

In the context of the present publication, the 'good practices' we aim to compile should fit some of the **criteria** listed below:

Examples should display at least one aspect of the creation, production, distribution/dissemination, access and enjoyment of cultural expressions, as conveyed by cultural activities, goods and services as framed in the 2005 Convention:

- Initiatives profiled should aim to preserve, protect and/or promote cultural diversity in relation to the 2005 Convention;
- Initiatives could be initiated by civil society, government or be a partnership between the public and civic sectors of society; special attention might be given to initiatives where women and young people are key actors;
- Initiatives could be operational at local, national, regional or international levels;
- Initiatives should have been set up in the last decade and can include ongoing projects;
- Initiatives could deal with diversity of cultural expressions in different fields addressed in the Convention such as the arts, Media, creative industries, international cooperation, policy development, research and education.

Hence, the profiled initiatives should **address the diversity of cultural expressions in different areas/dimensions** such as:

- Policies (Cultural, trade, media, information technology, other relevant policies)
- Media, communication & cultural content
- Contemporary arts (visual, literary and performing arts; arts education; cultural journalism; access to arts and culture)
- Cultural and creative industries
- Culture and development
- Economy and trade
- International Cooperation (mobility of artists, collaboration, capacity-building in management skills and technology transfer, support of independent creative industries, development assistance including technical and financial)
- Research and Education
- Channels of information and awareness raising programmes on the Convention and its objectives

Such practices could also take the form of **policies and measures by governments (at the national and/or local levels)** that provide enabling environments for the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions.

The proposed publication will aim to present good practices on cultural diversity drawn from different fields, which, their intrinsic functions apart, may be seen as essential for protection and promotion of diversity of cultural expressions.² Creation, production, distribution/dissemination, access and enjoyment of cultural expressions, as conveyed by cultural activities, goods and services will serve as the matrix.

¹ *Best Practices*. Retrieved May 5, 2010, from UNESCO website: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-humansciences/themes/social-transformations/international-migration/best-practices/>

² UNESCO World Report *Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue* (2009), pg. 2

Online consultation by Asian U40 Fellows

To gather information on innovative and sustainable projects from Asia for inclusion in the publication, the Asian U40 Fellows are organising this online regional consultation. Artists and cultural practitioners are invited to submit details of projects they would like to propose for inclusion in the publication, through an online questionnaire or via email, latest by **15 August 2010**.

The online regional consultation for Asia is being organised by the U40 Fellows from the region, namely,

- Li Fan, urban planner, National Research Centre of Historic Cities, Tongji University, Shanghai (China);
- Nguyen Tuan Khanh, pursuing Master's programme in Sociology and Anthropology (Vietnam/France); Huong Le Thu, PhD scholar in Asia-Pacific Studies, National Chengchi University (Taiwan);
- [Anupama Sekhar](#), Project Executive-Cultural Exchange, Asia-Europe Foundation; also Editorial Co-ordinator, "Mapping Cultural Diversity – Good Practices from around the globe" (Singapore/India); and,
- Mohammed Tazuddin, Programme Officer, Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO (Bangladesh).

Following the consultation, the proposed projects from Asia will be reviewed by the Asian U40 Fellows. The next step in the process will be the final selection of projects for inclusion in the publication by the German Commission for UNESCO and ASEF. The selected Asian projects will be documented in detail by the Asian U40 Fellows for Cultural Diversity and included as 'good practices' in the publication.

Contact

If you have any queries or would like more information, please contact,

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