UNESCO
United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

**THIRD ANNUAL COORDINATION MEETING OF
CATEGORY 2 CENTRES ACTIVE IN THE FIELD OF
INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

**Guiyang, China
6 to 8 July 2015**

Concept Note

Category 2 centres under the auspices of UNESCO are established and funded by Member States to contribute to the achievement of UNESCO's objectives by way of global, regional, subregional or interregional activities. The centres are intended to serve as international or regional centres and poles of expertise or excellence to provide technical assistance and services to Member States, cooperation partners and also to the network of UNESCO field offices. The category 2 centres are expected to contribute directly to achieving the Strategic Programme Objectives or programme priorities and themes of the Organization, and specifically, to UNESCO's programme results at the MLA level. The Organization's current Integrated Comprehensive Strategy for Category 2 Institutes and Centres under the Auspices of UNESCO was adopted by the General Conference at its 37th session ([37/C Resolution 93](#)).

To date, there are six centres devoted exclusively to contributing to UNESCO's actions in the field of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage:

1. BULGARIA – Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe (Sofia Centre);

2. CHINA – International Training Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (CRIHAP);

3. IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF) – Regional Research Centre for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in West and Central Asia (Tehran Centre)

4. JAPAN – International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI);

5. PERU – Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Latin America (CRESPIAL);

6. REPUBLIC OF KOREA – International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (ICHCAP).

A seventh centre has a shared mandate for both tangible and intangible heritage:

7. BRAZIL – Regional Heritage Management Training Centre (Lucio Costa).

And an eighth centre, to focus on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, was approved by the General Conference at its 37th Session and is in the process of being established:

8. ALGERIA – Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Africa.

In its 2012 Policy Brief, Improving UNESCO's Category 2 Centre Network, the United Kingdom National Commission for UNESCO insisted upon the importance of effective networking among the category 2 centres and with UNESCO. As the brief explains, UNESCO 'should provide proactive, central coordination for the category 2 network while also promoting "bottom-up" initiatives, led by centres'. To that end, it encouraged the organization of 'regular and structured meetings, preferably hosted by a category 2 centre'. Such meetings have consequently been integrated into the Culture Sector Strategy for Category 2 Institutes and Centres. The first such annual meeting was organized in Sozopol, Bulgaria, 24 to 26 July 2013, with the generous support of the Sofia Centre. The second annual meeting was organized at UNESCO Headquarters, 6 June 2014 (in conjunction with the fourth session of the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage). The centres themselves have also organized global meetings on the margins of the annual sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage or regional meetings on the margins of their respective governing body meetings.

The first two global meetings concentrated on the communication of fundamental information from UNESCO to the centres, aimed at establishing a common understanding of the integrated comprehensive strategy for category 2 centres, UNESCO's Results-Based Management approach and the content of UNESCO's 37 C/4 medium-term strategy and 37 C/5 Approved Programme and Budget. Given that these fundamentals have changed little since 2013, and that on the contrary most of the centres have now gained a solid base of experience, both administrative and programmatic, the third annual meeting of the centres emphasizes peer-to-peer exchanges. After a brief update from UNESCO of recent developments in the life of the Convention (including the status of the 38 C/5 for the 2016-2017 biennium), the remaining sessions will be coordinated by the respective centres. A UNESCO representative will serve as rapporteur of each session and will present a brief summary during the closing session.

The centres are invited to present both successful experiences and approaches and those that may have been less successful but from which lessons might usefully be drawn by the other centres. The centre coordinating each session is asked to provide a brief introduction to the topic before opening the session for general discussion. The coordinator is asked to begin by framing the discussion in terms of the desired long-term and medium-term objectives before bringing concrete examples – both good and bad – from its own experience that can inspire further debate. Sessions are foreseen on the following topics and questions:

- **Information and networking, including through the web**: what have been the accomplishments and challenges of the centres in promoting the flow of information

and strengthening networks among collaborators, and what particular challenges are involved in creating and sustaining an internet platform for information and networking?

- **Collaboration with UNESCO in the global capacity-building programme**: what have been the experiences of centres that have collaborated actively with UNESCO to organize capacity-building workshops? What practical lessons can be drawn, both for UNESCO and for the centres? For those centres that do not have primary responsibility for capacity building, how might they best contribute to the global programme?

- **Approaches to programme planning and budgeting**: many centres have begun to integrate the Results-Based Management methodology into their programming. What are the challenges of adopting this approach, and how have centres surmounted those challenges? If budgets are annual, how can centres effectively plan beyond a 12-month timeframe?

- **Approaches to governance and getting the most from your governing body(ies)**: good governance requires the active and informed participation of governing body members not only during decision-making meetings, but year-round. What are some practical lessons to be drawn concerning how centres can get the most out of their governing bodies? What are some possible pitfalls about micro-management or miscommunication that centres may wish to avoid?

- **Cooperation with Member States in planning and implementing programmes**: what have been the accomplishments and challenges centres have encountered when planning and implementing programmes together with beneficiary States? What practical lessons can be drawn that can help other centres best serve their Member States?

- **Evaluation and renewal**: UNESCO periodically evaluates the effectiveness and contributions of category 2 centres prior to renewing their status; until now two centres (CRESPIAL in 2013-14 and IRCI in 2014-15) have been through this process. Following an initial report from CRESPIAL at last year's meeting, what additional lessons can IRCI draw from its experience that can assist other centres who will soon be subject to such evaluation and renewal?