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## EXECUTION OF THE PROGRAMME ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

### SUMMARY

This information document intends to provide Member of the Executive Board with additional information on the execution of the programme adopted by the General Conference in accordance with Executive Board decisions.



JOB: 201911048

## D. FRAMEWORK OF THEMATIC INDICATORS TO MEASURE CULTURE IN THE 2030 AGENDA INCLUDING RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION WITH MEMBERS STATES

### SUMMARY

In compliance with the Approved 39 C/5 and in line with the objectives of Major Programme IV, Expected Result 8 on culture and the 2030 Agenda, the Secretariat submits hereafter a report on the consultation of Member States on the Thematic Indicators for Culture in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, before its pilot implementation planned in 2020.

### Introduction

1. UNESCO's advocacy efforts for the culture and development approach over the last decade resulted in three milestone Resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (2010, 2011 and 2013), which acknowledge the role of culture as an enabler and a driver of sustainable development. This process culminated in culture being integrated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted in 2015. Culture is explicitly referenced in SDG11 Target 4, "Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage", for which the globally agreed upon indicator 11.4.1 will be elaborated and reported by the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS). Beyond Target 11.4, culture contributes both as a sector of activity and transversally across other sectors. The contribution of culture to sustainable development is also clearly recognized in other major international frameworks, including the New Urban Agenda adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador, on 20 October 2016.

2. The UNESCO Thematic Indicators for Culture in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Culture|2030 Indicators) is an initiative of the Culture Sector undertaken in partnership with the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS). The initiative is in line with the Approved 39 C/5 and Major Programme IV cross-cutting Expected Result 8, concerning the integration of culture in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda across all the six Culture Conventions, and reflected, in particular, in Performance Indicator 2 on the "Number of supported Member States that have monitored and assessed the impact of culture on sustainable development".

### Overview of the Culture|2030 Indicators

3. **Objectives:** The Culture|2030 Indicators is a framework of thematic indicators whose purpose is to measure and monitor the progress of culture's enabling contribution to the national and local implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The framework will assess both the role of culture as a sector of activity, as well as the transversal contribution of culture across different SDGs and policy areas. As a set of thematic indicators, it is intended to support and complement the global indicators agreed upon within the 2030 Agenda and foster linkages between different Goals and Targets. The Culture|2030 Indicators provide a conceptual framework and methodological instruments for countries and cities to assess the contribution of culture to the SDGs as part of the existing implementation mechanisms of the 2030 Agenda at the national or local levels. Evidence gathered will inform policies and decisions as well as operational actions. The initiative is an innovative effort to establish a methodology for demonstrating and making visible culture's impact on the SDGs in a way that helps decision-makers.

4. **Approach:** Implemented on a voluntary basis by countries and cities, and building on an in-depth analysis of the multiple ways in which culture contributes to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development, the Culture|2030 Indicators provides evidence of culture's transformative role, making it more visible and tangible. The development of a new framework for measuring and collecting data on culture is foundational both for advocacy of culture

in the SDGs as well as for integration into development plans and policies at the national and urban levels and within the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF). In a context where culture-related data is fragmented and produced by different institutions and agencies, the framework brings the data together and highlights linkages and intersections between culture and other policy areas. Rather than monitoring the contribution of culture to each relevant SDG Target and globally accepted indicator, the Culture|2030 Indicators consider the contribution of culture across several of the Goals and Targets, with a view to linking them together. The framework allows aggregation of data across different Goals and Targets around transversal themes in line with UNESCO's programmes, activities and policies. By strengthening the transversal visibility of culture in the 2030 Agenda, the Culture|2030 Indicators will help build a coherent and strong narrative on culture and development that is evidence-based.

5. **Methodology:** The conceptual framework, methodology and implementation mechanisms of the Culture|2030 Indicators relies as much as possible on existing data sources, using qualitative and quantitative data to assess the contribution of culture, integrate data from reporting on UNESCO Culture Conventions and programmes, develop instruments at both national and urban levels, prioritize capacity-building of relevant agencies, facilitate cooperation across institutions, propose a framework adaptable to different statistical capacities, and provide an aspirational tool for improvement. The Culture|2030 Indicators aims to reap the benefits of UNESCO's unique expertise in collecting and analysing quantitative and qualitative data in the field of culture.

6. Once the framework is implemented by a city or a country, the analytical material and good practices will help to build a better understanding, with a view to developing a knowledge base with a digital data bank on Culture in the 2030 Agenda. Information collected as part of the implementation of the Culture|2030 Indicators in voluntary pilot cities and countries provides a valuable baseline from which to measure progress in addition to directing actions at the local and national levels. The data can also contribute to the formation of a global overview of the state of progress of the contribution of culture to the 2030 Agenda and provides evidence-based and analytical material to support the participation of UNESCO in UN-wide reporting mechanisms related to the 2030 Agenda as well as to the Resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly pertaining to Culture and Development.

7. **Process:** The development of the Culture|2030 Indicators framework began in early 2017, with the review of existing methodologies to measure culture in relation to development in general. The review included also the methodologies developed and implemented by UNESCO and other partners globally over the last few years in order to measure culture, with a view to facilitating their convergence towards the SDGs, and enhance existing instruments and data, including the Framework for Cultural Statistics (FCS) of UIS, the Culture for Development Indicators Suite (CDIS), the Culture Conventions periodic reporting mechanisms and other monitoring mechanisms and methodologies in the specific context of the 2030 Agenda.

8. Two expert workshops were organized (September 2017 and January 2018) to discuss the indicators framework and the methodologies for collecting data. The workshops involved UNESCO staff (members of the secretariats of the different Culture Conventions, staff from Field Offices who had previous experience in the implementation of the CDIS, and from UIS), representatives from UN-Habitat, Eurostat, OECD, World Bank, UNEP, the EU Joint Research Centre, and some national and local statistical agencies with previous experience in cultural statistics; representatives from AECID (Spain) who had previously supported the CDIS, as well as international experts from different regions.

9. **Framework:** Building on the outcomes of this review exercise, a framework of 22 indicators grouped into four thematic dimensions was developed: each corresponding to the three pillars of sustainable development, the economic, the social, and the environmental, and the fourth dimension relates to education, knowledge and skills in cultural fields. Each of the dimensions had indicators defined in the Technical Guidelines which included a description of the purpose, data sources and calculation methods of each indicator. These guidelines have been developed with input from UIS,

the teams of the UNESCO Culture Conventions, as well as from a number of external experts who generously dedicated their time and expertise to this exercise. The framework also responds to the five Ps of the 2030 Agenda (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships) where Peace is fully transversal and supported by the fundamental focus on promoting cultural diversity. Rather than a single indicator, gender equality is mainstreamed throughout the framework by ensuring that as much sex-disaggregated data as possible are collected across each of the dimensions.

### Consultation and Key Outcomes

10. A consultation with Member States on technical guidelines and the Culture|2030 Indicators was launched online on 16 May 2019. This included an online questionnaire (accessible in [English](#) and [French](#)) in which Member States were requested to share their interest and recommendations on the Culture|2030 Indicators, the proposed framework and methodology. The survey was originally scheduled to close on 27 June but was later extended until 15 July and then finally 29 July 2019 to allow maximum number of Member States to participate in the consultation.

11. Feedback from Member States has been compiled, analysed and consolidated in a full analytical report available in English and French on the website of the Culture|2030 Indicators ([whc.unesco.org/en/culture2030indicators/](http://whc.unesco.org/en/culture2030indicators/)). The key outcomes of the consultation are summarized below. The initiative will also be presented at the Forum of Ministers of Culture to take place in the margin of the 40th session of the General Conference in November 2019.

12. A total of 46 Member States (22.5% response rate) responded to the online consultation.<sup>1</sup> The response rate is as follows: Group Va (African States): 12 (26%), Group I (Western European and North American States) 9 (20%), Group II (Eastern European States) 8 (17%), Group III (Latin America and Caribbean States) 8 (17%), Group Vb (Arab States) 5 (11%), and Group IV (Asian and Pacific States) 4 (9%). Responding Member States were unequivocal in their conviction regarding the need, purpose, and principles of Culture|2030 Indicators and that the measurement of culture and the development of indicators were necessary to support and enhance the role of culture in their national efforts to implement the United Nations 2030 Agenda. Member States recognized that a lack of common, consistent, and internationally comparable indicators impedes the recognition of culture's contribution to sustainable development.<sup>2</sup>

13. Almost 100% of the respondents agreed with the proposed framework and approach of the Culture|2030 Indicators, which aims to measure the contribution of culture across several Goals and Targets and links them together. Specifically, all respondents agreed that the proposed Culture|2030 Indicators framework would help make the transversal role of culture in the 2030 Agenda more visible and that measurement was necessary to support advocacy for culture in sustainable development policies and initiatives.<sup>3</sup> Over 90% of respondents agreed that an accurate measurement of culture's contribution to sustainable development would support the prioritization of culture-related policies and actions. Furthermore, 98% agreed that the proposed framework would support the integration of culture in other sectors and policies, and 100% agreed that the proposed framework would help build a knowledge-base and monitor progress on national goals and SDGs.

<sup>1</sup> Austria, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czechia, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Haiti, Honduras, Latvia, Lithuania, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, Oman, Palestine, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Serbia, Seychelles, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Zimbabwe.

<sup>2</sup> For example, Latvia wrote, "Although culture is dominant in Latvia's national dialogue, the transversal role of culture and the impact of culture on sustainability are not fully recognized in policy planning and the implementation process, partly because of the lack of convincing and internationally comparable indicators."

<sup>3</sup> For example, Estonia wrote, "Practice has shown the role and influence of culture is quite difficult to measure, therefore cooperation on international level on this topic can also make the difference on national level as well. The "Thematic Indicators for Culture in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development" is a very good way forward in setting the main principles in addition to previous work and mapping on relations between culture and sustainable development done by UNESCO."

14. The Culture|2030 Indicators framework is intended to be implemented in voluntary cities and countries to provide a valuable baseline from which to measure progress and also contribute to a global overview of the state of progress of culture in the 2030 Agenda. The survey revealed that over 60% of the responding Member States are currently developing capacities for or are already gathering statistics or other evidence on culture. Through their quantitative and qualitative evidence, several of them saw the links to its role and contribution to the SDGs transversally, and some respondents are specifically gathering data on culture in the 2030 Agenda. In their comments, respondents shared information on their existing systems for gathering data on culture, as well as some initiatives across institutions. Many respondents stated the importance and need for linkages to the SDGs across several goals and targets via direct or generic links that could be established in the countries' efforts to align national priorities to the 2030 Agenda. They also suggested that similar links could be established with UNESCO's statistical frameworks such as the CDIS or the UIS Framework for Cultural Statistics, from reporting on the implementation of specific UNESCO Culture Conventions, or from Voluntary National Reporting to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. There was an overall clear agreement on the importance of the linkages between the Culture|2030 Indicators and the SDGs, including their transversal connections, linking both quantitative and qualitative data on culture with the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

15. The methodology of the Culture|2030 Indicators is based on four key principles of constructing indicators from existing data to the extent possible, using both qualitative and quantitative data, integrating data from the national periodic reporting and monitoring frameworks of the UNESCO Culture Conventions, and to measure culture at both the national and the urban levels constructing indicators that are broadly aligned at both levels. There was overall agreement on the methodology of the indicators and data collection. Collecting and updating data is a demanding and costly process, particularly for countries with limited statistical capabilities. Member States shared their experiences regarding the various challenges they faced in the gathering and dissemination of cultural statistics.<sup>4</sup> There was a general concern over the lack of official data available on cultural establishments. The issue of data quality was of equal concern, and responding Member States agreed that merely collecting quantitative data was viewed as too limiting, and that qualitative data was also necessary to capture evidence of culture's contribution to sustainable development more accurately. Moreover, many emphasized the value of utilizing existing data sources as has been proposed in the methodology of the Culture|2030 Indicators.

16. The Culture|2030 Indicators will allow countries and cities to monitor their own progress regarding the outcomes of their policies and the effectiveness or robustness of the policies. The survey asked the Member States the extent to which the proposed indicators framework reflect their national priorities and policies on culture. Over 90% of the respondents agreed that the proposed framework would facilitate the inclusion of culture in the National Voluntary Reporting on the implementation of SDGs at the United Nations High-level Political Forum. Ninety-six per cent (96%) agreed that it would help support the inclusion of culture in national and urban reports on the implementation of SDG 11 and the New Urban Agenda. Of the responding Member States, 87% underlined that the thematic framework and indicators reinforce their national priorities relevant to culture, and 89% support that it could facilitate the inclusion of culture in development programmes.<sup>5</sup>

17. The Culture|2030 Indicators is a framework adaptable to their different statistical capacities and data availability. The methodology developed for each indicator foresees possible alternatives when primary data sources or calculation methods cannot be fully achieved. Eighty-three per cent (83%) of responding Member States agreed that the broad and inclusive approach in the proposed framework would be compatible with data sources available to the country. Member States which lack the necessary infrastructure to collect data welcomed the proposed framework to identify and

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<sup>4</sup> For example, Brazil wrote, "Although there are statistics specifically related to the cultural sector, there still exists a considerable gap in the production of serial and comparable data, making the Agenda 2030 cultural indicators strategy an important tool for fostering the formulation of other regional, national and local indicators."

<sup>5</sup> For example, South Sudan wrote, "In our context, the proposed framework could contribute to the integration of culture into humanitarian and emergencies programmes."

unveil gaps statistics and monitoring systems, and as an opportunity to fulfil the need for increased dialogue, collaboration, and harmonization of cultural policies and financial mechanisms.<sup>6</sup>

18. The purpose of the Culture|2030 Indicators is more aspirational than normative, as it aims to assist countries and cities in assessing their own progress, recognizing opportunities for aspiration and improvement. The objective of the framework is to support national and local understandings of their culture's specificities and their ability to identify and combine relevant data. Member States shared valuable suggestions on the implementation of the Culture|2030 Indicators. They emphasized a need for a comparative database at the international level and the importance of a digital databank or monitoring system to help build a unique and stable integration of culture in sustainable development evaluation. Feedback received for implementation underlines the necessity of reinforcing knowledge and capacity-building by way of organizing regional and national workshops as essential to foster cooperation and partnerships between institutions, especially for countries that have limited statistical capacities.<sup>7</sup>

19. The survey gauged the interest and capacity of Member States to take part in a pilot phase of implementation. Responses were encouraging with 78% of respondents (36 Member States) indicating an eagerness to participate in the pilot implementation phase. However, only 42% (15 Member States) of those interested in participating are able to support financially their participation. Some Member States proposed partial financing for their participation in the pilot phase such as a co-partnership with UNESCO or other national agencies to address the lack of ready finances to participate in the pilot implementation.<sup>8</sup> Other Member States proposed to restrict their participation to an observer role due to budgetary restrictions or national priorities. Of those respondents who declined to participate, many cited financial and budgetary constraints for doing so.

20. In sum, feedback from the Member States consultation demonstrated an overwhelming support for the initiative from the respondents. The maximum number of responses received were from the African States, followed by the Arab States. Thirty six of the 46 responding countries are ready to participate in the pilot phase of implementation, with 15 ready to finance their participation. Member States provided a number of suggestions as well as links to ongoing efforts and other documents that will be valuable to refine the methodology of the indicators and develop working tools including capacity-building material in preparation of the launch of the pilot phase of implementation of the Culture|2030 Indicators.

## Way Forward

21. Based on the outcomes of the consultation, the Secretariat will refine the methodology and develop working tools including capacity-building materials and a training toolkit, in preparation of the launch of the pilot phase of the implementation of the Culture|2030 Indicators at the end 2019 or early 2020 in volunteer cities and countries.

22. Regional experts will be selected and trained in order to facilitate the use of the methodology and planning for national and local implementation. Additional consultations with senior experts will be sought as necessary to finalize the technical guidelines and methodology. Building on the outcomes of the pilot phase, the methodology will be fine-tuned and systematized in view of its future implementation. A third expert workshop will be organized by the end of the pilot phase to analyse feedback and further reflect on the methodology and data collected.

23. The Culture|2030 Indicator framework integrates existing UIS methodologies and standards such as the 2009 UNESCO FCS, CSA and the other already available technical guidelines for the

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<sup>6</sup> For example, The United Arab Emirates wrote, "The implementation of the indicators and definitions must be very clear to elaborate on comparable indicators. The indicators must specify realistic timelines and a measurement frequency as well."

<sup>7</sup> For example, Myanmar wrote, "The indicators could help reinforce culture's contribution to national priorities if it fostered cultural partnerships among the Member States."

<sup>8</sup> For example, South Africa wrote, "Co-partnerships and financing with UNESCO and/or other partners is preferred where possible."

production of data wherever possible as they support the quality of national data contributing to these thematic indicators.

24. Based on the availability of funding, data gathered in the different pilot cities and countries will be compiled into an online digital databank, which will gather a variety of data on culture available at UNESCO – including from the national periodic reporting on Culture Conventions and Recommendations as well as from activities and initiatives in field offices. This will also include the data from the previous CDIS implementation, as well as links to the UIS data on cultural statistics. Visual interpretations of the national and local profiles for Culture|2030 Indicators will also be designed and a publication will be developed subsequently, if funds are available.