

VI. Pending issues & urgent needs regarding the safeguarding of ICH

Q1. Is any of the intangible cultural heritage in your country in danger of disappearance or transformation?

Practically all forms of intangible heritage are in danger of disappearance, development or transformation due to socio-cultural evolution since change is inevitable.

As stated above all intangible forms of heritage are in constant danger in due time. In evolving they are modified thru adaptation and may either develop into something else, change altogether or disappear when these are no longer compatible or functional within the culture

As such the entire listing of Philippine intangible heritage will be listed here if we are to respond to this request. It will take more than the project time frame to be able to do this, more so if we include, location and the specific problems encountered.

Q2. What are the reasons the heritage is in danger and what type of safeguarding measures have been taken? Please be specific.

Again, the only generic reason that heritage changes is due to socio-cultural evolution. We do not think that change- evolution is a danger to intangible heritage. We allow this to happen. There is a great difference between evolving and a deliberate attack against a heritage. We cannot stop evolution but can safeguard against deliberate attack. But to answer as to what type of safeguarding measures have been taken, one has to be very specific since there is no such thing as a generic solution to the safeguarding of heritage. As an example, we refer you to what we did with the Hudhud of the Ifugao (above) which took us eight (8) years to institutionalize the safeguarding. The measures used in Ifugao may or may not work with another culture or with another culture. Measures need to confront particular and specific issues.

Socio-cultural changes are specific to particular cultures. There are eighty (80) major ethno-linguistic cultures in the country with wide variations.

Safeguarding measures should be designed in accordance with the socio-cultural dictates. There are no generic solutions.

Q3. What are the pending issues for safeguarding ICH in your country that you have found through interviews and the field survey?

The most alarming issue is the lack of awareness that heritage exists at all. People take life for granted and live from day to day practicing their culture in the way they are born to and take this as a way of life. Only particular interest groups are aware of culture it at all. Safeguarding heritage is not an issue since it is a part of life and people are not aware that this even needs to be safeguarded

When made aware, they acknowledge that it does exist but are not aware to what extent this has anything to do with their lives. The degree of concern varies in accordance to their relationship to that heritage or to what extent this affects their day to day life. That heritage has an intrinsic value is not an issue again until they are made aware of it. But when apprised of this there are attempts at assigning values to it all in their own way.

Q4. What kind of problems and difficulties were encountered during the safeguarding projects?

Too voluminous to be discussed – safeguarding one intangible heritage took the NCCA eight (8) years to accomplish. The second item is taking the NCCA two (2) years already just to assess the status. One of the major delays was due to the funding tranches in-between the phases of the project that upset the time table. Another is personnel problems that require many adjustments to ensure affectivity and efficiency

Q5. What future plans are there for the safeguarding of ICH (programme information)?

The mandate of the NCCA is continually to safeguard Philippine heritage.

Q6. What type of contributions and cooperation from the international society is needed for the safeguarding of ICH in your country?

The NCCA needs information about developments elsewhere; what methodologies are being used; what have been accomplished; publications; expert advise. Exchange of experts.

Q 7. What role do you expect ICHCAP to play in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in the region in terms of programmes, projects, etc .?

Networking, information and expert exchange, financial support.

Q8. Please include any requests and/or suggestions you have on this matter.

Funding is always necessary in safeguarding work.

Q9. What should be considered to encourage or to ensure active involvement from the community in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage?

Snob appeal is effective. Make it socially relevant and prestigious to be part of the safeguarding. The community seemed to be more inclined to get involved when the elite actively lead, more especially if these are the elders.