

ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR MEMORY OF THE WORLD (MOWCAP)

GOODWILL PATRON'S REPORT TO THE 8th MOWCAP GENERAL MEETING, 29 May-1 June 2018 Gwangju, Korea

This report is a summary of the activities of MOWCAP Goodwill Patron, Dr. M.R.Rujaya Abhakorn, between June 2016-March 2018.

BACKGROUND

The voluntary position of “Goodwill Patron” held by Dr. M.R.Rujaya Abhakorn was created by MOWCAP in 2004-5 as an advocacy strategy to provide information to the Asia/Pacific countries about the MOW Programme, to encourage the establishment of National MOW Committees and the submission of nominations to the International and Regional Registers. The concept was advocated at the 2nd MOWCAP Bureau meeting in 2002 to consider the appointment of a “Goodwill Ambassador”. By the time of the 3rd Bureau meeting in 2004, this role has become the “Goodwill Patron”. In the MOWCAP 2nd General Meeting of 2005, a report of the “Goodwill Patron” was first submitted by Dr.Rujaya. The title “Goodwill Patron” was first coined by Susanne Ornager, the UNESCO Regional Advisor, Communications and Information, UNESCO Office Bangkok. Since then Dr. Rujaya has travelled to all of the ASEAN countries who are now better aware of the MOW Programme, have established some links with MOWCAP in different ways and many have submitted nominations for the Asia/Pacific Memory of the World Register. Since 2008. 24 countries from the Region have submitted nominations.

ACTIVITIES

The Advocacy role has now been taken up by other members of the MOWCAP Bureau and other specialists who operate without such a title and receive financial support from other sources outside UNESCO, especial from the Republic of Korea and China. Dr. Rujaya has been involved in two events in his role as Goodwill Patron:

1. Speaker at a UNESCO Exhibition “Memory of the World Documentary Heritage in Asia and the Pacific” at Bangkok Art and Culture Centre, Bangkok, Thailand on November 15, 2016, organized by UNESCO Bangkok.
2. Resource person at the “National Workshop for the Implementation of the Memory of the World at Programme in Vientiane, Lao PDR”, on March 27, 2018, sponsored by Communication and Information section, UNESCO Bangkok:

**National Workshop for the Implementation of the
Memory of the World Programme in Lao PDR
Vientiane, Lao PDR
Vientiane Plaza Hotel, 27 March 2018**

Background

The UNESCO Memory of the World (MoW) programme was established in 1992 and aims at safeguarding, protecting and facilitating access to and the use of documentary heritage, especially heritage that is rare and endangered.

Already Laos has one important inscription on the regional register: The Neo Lao Hak Xath collection of 450 newsreels and documentary films. There are many other collections in Laos with high potential for inscription, for example the collections of the National Library or the Buddhist Photographic Archive of Luang Prabang to name a few.

Through increased support and awareness of the MoW, even many more nominations can be developed to the regional and international registers. In addition, to coordinate and implement the work of MoW and ensure its sustainability in the country, the establishment of a National Committee for MoW in the country is critically important. The establishment of such a Committee will also enable the stakeholders in Laos to actively take part in the regional cooperation mechanism offered by MOWCAP, the MoW Regional Committee for Asia-Pacific.

At the first stakeholder meeting organized in June 2017 in Vientiane, participants were introduced to the MoW programme and it was suggested that the next stakeholder meeting be organized to address the following:

- To develop a common understanding among the stakeholder in Laos on the criteria for nomination to MoW
- To provide an overview of documentary heritage available within each memory institution in Laos, and
- To establish a plan of action for the creation of the National MoW Committee.

This one-day national workshop in Vientiane is proposed to bring together documentary heritage experts, representatives of institutions holding collections of documentary heritage or involved in the preservation of heritage to discuss the implementation of the MoW programme in Lao PDR.

Objectives of the workshop

The objectives of the workshop are:

- To raise awareness and develop a common understanding among the stakeholders in Laos on the MoW programme and its selection criteria for nominations

- To provide an overview of the documentary heritage collections held in institutions in Laos and develop an understanding on their significance
- To support the institutions for the creation of the National MoW Committee in Lao PDR

Indicative Agenda

Session	Time	Description	Speakers
1	8.00-8.30	Registration	<p>Mr Thongbay Phothisane, Director-General, Department of Heritage</p> <p>Mr Somboun Masouvanh, Secretary-General, Lao National Commission for UNESCO</p> <p>Ms Misako Ito, Adviser for Communication and Information, UNESCO</p>
	8.30-8.40	Opening remarks	
	8.40-9.15	Presentation of the MoW programme and introduction of the objectives of the workshop	
	9.15-9.45	Group photo and coffee break	
2	9.45-10.45	Introduction to the MoW nominations and selection criteria	<p>Dr Rujaya Abhakorn, MOWCAP Goodwill Patron and Director of SEAMEO SPAFA</p> <p>All participants (list below)</p>
	10.45-12.00	Q&A Roundtable on documentary heritage collections of Laos (5-10 min / speaker)	
	12.00-13.00	Lunch	
2	13.00-15.00	Roundtable on documentary heritage (5-10 min / speaker)	All participants (list below)
	15.00-15.30	Coffee break	
3	15.30-16.30	Introduction to the MoW National Committee	<p>Ms Misako Ito and Dr Rujaya Abhakorn</p> <p>Lao Department of Heritage All participants</p> <p>UNESCO Lao Department of Heritage</p>
	16.30	Establishment of MoW National Committee in Lao PDR	
		Closing remarks and adoption of the next steps for the implementation of MoW in Lao PDR	

Indicative list of participants

19 participants from Vientiane

Lao National Commission for UNESCO (1)
Lao Department of Heritage (2)
Division of Archeology (3)
Department of Film (1)
National Library (1)
National Museum (1)
National Archives (1)
National University (1)
National Radio (1)
National Television (1)
Department of printing (1)
Lao Journalists' Association (1)
Kaysone Museum (1)
Police Museum (1)
Defence Museum (1)
Gallery of Central Bank (1)

5 participants from other provinces

DICT Luang Prabang (1)
Buddhist Archive of Photography (1)
National Museum of Luang Prabang (1)
Vat Phu Museum (1)
Xiengkhuang Museum (1)

Outcome : It was attended by 24 representatives from major stakeholders in the country.
An important step towards the setting up of a National MOW Committee for
LAO PDR.

Summary

Most countries in the Asia/Pacific region now have a better knowledge of the UNESCO MOW Programme because of the work by Goodwill Patron and other MOWCAP Bureau volunteers at workshops and seminars, which have been generously supported by the Archives Administration of China and the Korean National Commission for UNESCO. Nevertheless, training in the drafting of a good nomination in the English language is still needed. Also a better understanding of the MOW criteria and the meaning of global historical significance. Preservation knowledge specific to certain materials and a better use of digital technology is always needed and could be assigned to particular experts in the same way as advocacy was assigned to a “Goodwill Patron” for a more rapid success.

Rujaya Abhakorn
MOWCAP Goodwill Patron
20 May 2018