



STATUS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE MOW PROGRAMME

A Briefing and Guidance Note for UNESCO Field Offices as well as Regional and National MoW Committees

1. Introduction

- 1.1. By its 202 EX/Decision 15, the Executive Board requested the Director-General, in cooperation with Member States, and building on the work produced by the International Advisory Committee (IAC) working groups, to engage in a comprehensive review of the Memory of the World (MoW) Programme.
- 1.2. Between the 202nd and 206th sessions of the Executive Board, the Secretariat developed and implemented an [Action Plan](#) approved for the implementation of the comprehensive review.
- 1.3. At its 207th session, the UNESCO Secretariat presented a Consolidated Report on the comprehensive review as a whole. This report, which sums up the overall perspectives that emerged during the comprehensive review, is available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000370642>.
- 1.4. Accompanying the Consolidated Report is the report of the co-chairpersons of the open-ended working group (OEWG) set up to examine the most appropriate legal framework for the MoW Programme. The report presents the co-chairpersons' perspectives on the discussions carried out within the framework of the OEWG. Their report can be accessed at: https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/oewg-co-chairs-report_final_en.pdf.
- 1.5. A key outcome of the OEWG, at its last sitting in September 2019, was to reaffirm the suspension of the nomination cycle for the MoW International Register during the ongoing discussions.
- 1.6. Following its deliberations on the Consolidated Report, the 207th session of the Executive Board resolved as follows:
 1. Recalling 202 EX/Decision 15, 204 EX/Decision 8, 205 EX/Decision 8 and 206 EX/Decision 12,
 2. Having examined document 207 EX/8,
 3. Taking into account the progress made as part of Action Step 1 of the action plan, as well as Action Step 2 within the discussions of the open-ended working group set up to

examine other concrete suggestions for the reform of the Memory of the World (MoW) Programme,

4. *Also taking into account the activities partially implemented under action steps 3 and 4 of the Action Plan,*

5. *Commends the Director-General for facilitating the implementation of the Action Plan for the comprehensive review of the Memory of the World (MoW) Programme as well as for elaborating this consolidated report;*

6. *Takes note of the recommendations by the co-chairs of the open-ended working group included in their report;*

7. *Decides to establish a limited-participant working group as an extension to the open-ended working group until June 2020, with the same terms of reference and co-chairs as the open-ended working group, and invites the co-chairs to take the necessary measures to expedite its deliberations on the remaining issues. The limited-participant working group will be composed of up to six members from each electoral group;*

8. *Requests the limited-participant working group to submit to the Executive Board at its 210th session a final consolidated report on the comprehensive review of the Memory of the World (MoW) Programme, and requests the Director-General to provide all necessary support to assist the working group.*

1.7. In taking this decision, the Executive Board also reaffirmed its commitment to the ongoing activities of the MoW Programme.

2. Significance of the Executive Board decision

2.1. In summary, the Executive Board decision effectively means:

- Creation of a new limited-participant working group (LPWG) composed of up to six representatives from each of the UNESCO electoral groups.
- Maintaining the same terms of reference (amended to reflect the new composition of the LPWG above) and the same co-chairs as the OEWG.
- The LPWG will present its report directly to the Executive Board.
- By not indicating any request for extra-budgetary support for the meetings of the LPWG, the Regular Programme budget is expected to be used for this purpose.
- The UNESCO Secretariat's role, on request by the LPWG, could include assisting the working group "in its deliberations and reporting" (see original Terms of Reference: https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/owg_terms_of_reference.pdf).

2.2. Strategically, this revised decision implies the following:

- Discussions among Member States have now entered a phase requiring **consensus among Member States themselves**. It will be the prerogative of the co-chairs of the LPWG and the Member States participating in the LPWG to decide if experts are to be consulted.
- It is important to emphasize that the **LPWG will produce its own report, which will be submitted directly to the Executive Board at its 210th session in 2020.**

- Accordingly, it may be advisable to remind Member States that may wish to discuss the comprehensive review with the UNESCO Secretariat to rather **take up such matters directly with the co-chairs of the LPWG**, although they are also encouraged to keep the Secretariat informed.

3. Activities of the MoW Programme

- 3.1. Given the inactivity of the MoW International Register, it has been particularly important for the MoW Programme to concentrate its work on other areas of activity. As Member States enter a new phase of inter-governmental negotiations in the form of the LPWG, the MoW Programme can continue with that part of the activity portfolio of the Programme which goes beyond the MoW International Register.
- 3.2. An important observation made by Member States throughout the deliberations of the OEWG was that the MoW Programme has managed to carry out a significantly higher number of activities regionally and globally during the last two years when the nomination cycle for the MoW International Register had been on hold. This work needs to continue unabated.
- 3.3. As a consequence, below follows an outline of strategic programmatic directions, offering Field Offices and other stakeholders a coherent framework for implementing other activities relating to **identifying** documentary heritage of national, regional and/or global significance, **preserving** it and enhancing **universal access** to it within the framework of the UNESCO 2015 *Recommendation concerning the preservation of, and access to, documentary heritage including in digital form*.

Strategic Direction	Possible Intervention	Activities
1. <u>Continued support</u> for Member States' implementation of the 2015 Recommendation, along with their reporting on actions taken to give effect to the 2015 Recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening efforts to set up national MoW committees as implementation vehicles. • Continue with regional consultations and inter-regional conferences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of national committees is ongoing. • Regional consultations/inter-regional conferences are ongoing (e.g. Abuja, Tunis, Panama, Alexandrina, Tehran, La Paz, Gwangju, and soon Doha). Thirty-eight Member States submitted reports for the first consultation on the 2015 <i>Recommendation</i>.
2. Supporting <u>upstream preservation policy advocacy</u> among Member States and <u>capacity-building</u> among memory institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Policy Forum, including on disaster risk reduction as a strategy for documentary heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st edition of the Global Policy Forum (funded by Japan) was held in November 2018 and the 2nd edition is scheduled for March 2020.

	<p>preservation and accessibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building workshops, especially for Africa and SIDS. • Targeted institutional support for preservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building workshops, targeting SIDS, have been held in Bhutan 2018 and Adelaide 2019. • The Amadou Hampate Ba Foundation, visited by the UNESCO Director-General, is now being supported to preserve its manuscripts, as a pilot for the Sahel and Africa as a whole. An international consultation is being planned for Bamako, Mali, in order to mobilize support for the preservation of the Malian ancient manuscripts (2020).
<p>3. Enhancing <u>value-adding and thematic strategic partnerships</u> for memory preservation and accessibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying new and strengthening old partnerships focused on specific themes • Supporting co-publishing in order to reach new audiences for documentary heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A partnership with the Digital Preservation Coalition, in the framework of PERSIST/Preservation Sub-Committee, has resulted in a publication <i>Executive Guide on Digital Preservation</i>. • Strengthening partnerships with IFLA/ICA on endangered documentary heritage. UNESCO is undertaking a survey of documentary heritage at risk as a pilot, with findings expected to be presented during the 2nd Global Policy Forum in March 2020. • Working with the French-based INRIA on software source code development as documentary heritage: https://en.unesco.org/news/preserving-software-source-code-key-powering-future-software-development. • Reaching children by co-publishing with Fondazione BARBANERA (1762) an adventure calendar <i>The Little Friends of Barbanera and the Memory of the World</i>.
<p>4. Refining the <u>conceptual framework</u> for documentary heritage as <u>Sustainable Development</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of policy briefs on sustainable development and documentary heritage • Participation in high-level reflections on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in the European Commission (EC) debates. • Presentations at high-level conferences. • Production of policy briefs on documentary heritage as sustainable development. • Thematic debates on documentary heritage and sustainable development (e.g. disaster risk reduction, intercultural

	<p>how cultural heritage, including the culture industries, contribute towards sustainable development</p>	<p>dialogue, education for peace, human rights and tolerance, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution of reflective articles to academic journals in the field of 'memory studies', 'development studies', etc.)
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4. Key talking points

4.1. In view of the foregoing, the following key talking points could be recommended for Field Offices as well as other stakeholders:

- The comprehensive review is now proceeding in the form of a limited-participant working group (LPWG) composed of up to six Member States from each UNESCO electoral group.
- The mandate of the LPWG is to seek consensus on the pending issues as contained in the Consolidated Report prepared by the UNESCO Secretariat and the Report prepared by the Co-Chairs of the open-ended working group (OEWG). The OEWG met until September 2019. These reports are available on the UNESCO website.
- During the deliberations of the LPWG, the nomination cycle for the MoW International Register remains suspended. It is advisable that National/Regional MoW Registers should also remain suspended in order to provide a serene environment for Member States to reach consensus on the pending issues.
- Member States are committed to ensuring that the MoW Programme continues to implement all other activities aimed at safeguarding documentary heritage. To this end, the UNESCO Secretariat continues to implement activities, along with all the UNESCO Field Offices, within the framework of the 2015 *Recommendation concerning the preservation of, and access to, documentary heritage including in digital form*.

5. **Contact:** For any further clarification about the information in this *Briefing and Guidance Note*, you may contact Fackson Banda (f.banda@unesco.org).