MEMORY OF THE WORLD COMMITTEE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
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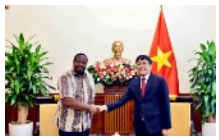
unesco Regional Committee

2025 ISSUE 3 (JULY-SEPTEMBER)



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MOWCAP NEWS

Message from the Chair

DR KWIBAE KIM

MOWCAP Chair Dr Kwibae Kim in Naples, Italy on 9 September 2025 for "K Heritage in Italy".

Dear MOWCAP Friends and Colleagues,

I am pleased to share an update on the dynamic activities within the Asia-Pacific region and beyond, showcasing the growing momentum of the Memory of the World (MoW) Programme.

In July, a UNESCO delegation visited Hanoi, Vietnam, to present the MoW Certificate for "Composer Hoang Van's Collection," following its 2025 International Register inscription. This was immediately followed by a successful Regional Training on "Preserving Glass Plate Negatives at Risk in Asia," which equipped custodians from four Asian countries with vital conservation skills using a "learning by doing" approach.

In September, the International Conference on Archives and Memory for Unity, Access and Identity was hosted in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Co-organized with ICDH and SARBICA, the conference focused on archives as instruments of unity, stressing the need to include marginalized voices, utilize digital tools, and address the unique challenges of post-conflict communities.

Finally, MOWCAP travelled to Naples, Italy, for the "K Heritage in Italy" event. This three-day cultural programme explored the Republic of Korea's documentary heritage, ranging from UNESCO MoW contributions and historical publishing to the preservation of ancient Korean culinary arts.

These events reinforce our shared commitment to preserving and promoting our region's rich documentary heritage and sharing it with the world.

As submissions for the 2026 cycle of MOWCAP Regional Register nominations came to a close on 15 September 2025, I would like to congratulate all the nominators for their efforts, and wish you all my very best in the processes to come.

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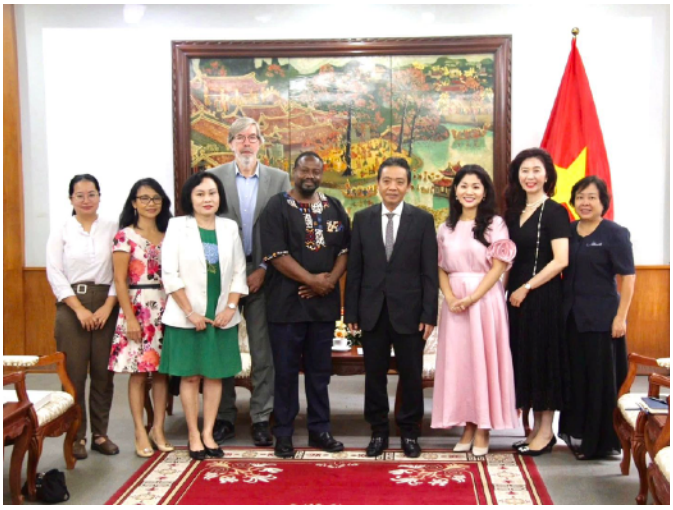
UNESCO delegation visits Vietnam for MoW celebration

From 22 to 26 July 2025, a delegation of Memory of the World (MoW) Programme, led by Dr Fackson Banda, Head of the Documentary Heritage Unit, UNESCO Paris, and Dr Jan Bos, Chair of the International Advisory Committee (IAC) of the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme visited Hanoi, Vietnam, to deliver the UNESCO Memory of the world Award Certificate for "Composer Hoang Van's Collection" to celebrate its inscription on the MoW International Register (2025 cycle).



(Top) Dr Fackson Banda and Dr Jan Bos were received by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accompanied by MOWCAP Vice-Chair Dr Vu Thi Minh Huong.

(Bottom) Dr Fackson Banda presents the UNESCO Memory of the World award certificate to Composer Hoang Van.

The delegation was received by H.E. Mr Nguyễn Minh Vũ, Standing Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chairperson of the Vietnam National Commission for UNESCO and H.E. Mr Hoang Dao Cuong, Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and Vice-Chairperson of the Vietnam National Commission for UNESCO.

During the mission, the delegation was received by the Centre for Scientific and Cultural Activities of the Temple of Literature (Van Mieu – Quoc Tu Giam), and visited the 82 doctoral stones steles at the Temple of Literature, which were inscribed on the MoW International Register in 2011.

The delegation visited the National Archives Centre N.1 where the Imperial Archives of the Nguyen Dynasty (MoW International Register, 2017) are being preserved, as well as the National Archives Centre N.3 where Composer Hoang Van's Collection is being kept. Opinions were shared during the roundtable discussion on UNESCO Memory of the World Programme and establishing nominations.

In addition, the delegation visited the Research Institute of Forest Industry and the Stone Steles in the province of Hung Yên. Dr Vu Thi Minh Huong, MOWCAP Vice-Chair and IAC Member, attended all the activities in which the delegation participated.

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UNESCO organizes a training workshop on preserving glass plate negatives in Hanoi, Vietnam

The Regional Training on "Preserving Glass Plate Negatives at Risk" was held on 28 July-1 August 2025 in Hanoi, Vietnam, hosted by the Institute of Social Sciences Information (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences) and supported by the Japanese Funds-in-Trust.

This capacity-building activity was the first in a planned series of trainings, designed to assess the existing experience of trainees, introduce them to 19th-century photographic techniques, train them in the identification of degradation, handling, cleaning and storage of historic glass plate negatives, and share principles in environmental conditions and disaster risk management.

On 1 August 2025, paper and photograph conservator Ms Yoko Shiraiwa demonstrated how to make frames for photographic materials for exhibitions.

Three international experts, photography conservation expert Prof. Dr Bertrand Lavédrine of the French National Centre for Conservation, paper and photograph conservator Ms Yoko Shiraiwa and archives specialist Dr Vu Thi Minh Huong collectively trained 18 custodians of photographic and audiovisual heritage from Cambodia, Indonesia, Mongolia and Vietnam.

On 28 July 2025, participants were introduced to the processes involved in the production of glass plate negatives by Prof. Dr Bertrand Lavédrine.

On 29 July 2025, participants were trained on how to identify types and causes of degradation affecting glass plate negatives.

UNESCO Regional Office in Bangkok facilitated the workshop by linking theoretical and practical teachings to everyday situations and to sustainability. Throughout the workshop, the "learning by doing" methodology was applied, which was successful to keep participants engaged and overcome language barriers. One site visits were organized to the National Archives Centre N.3, where participants and experts were shown a collection of glass plate negatives numbering in the 200 plates that was recently rediscovered by staff. Participants were also welcomed by the Vietnam Film Institute to view the storage of film reels, digitization rooms and film poster archives.

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ICDH and SARBICA join forces for an international conference on Archives and Memory in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

On 23-24 September 2025, the National Archives of Malaysia generously hosted the International Conference on Archives and Memory for Unity, Access and Identity, co-organized by the International Centre for Documentary Heritage (ICDH, under the auspices of UNESCO) and the Southeast Asia Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (SARBICA), in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Opening Ceremony of the ICDH-SARBICA International Conference, hosted by the National Archives Malaysia, held on 23-26 September 2025 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Image courtesy of National Archives Malaysia.

The event convened archival institutions and researchers from across Southeast Asia, the Republic of Korea and Australia to explore how archives can connect communities and enhance public access to a documentary heritage.

Dato' Halina Abdul Hamid, Secretary-General of Ministry of National Unity and Dato' Jaafar Sidek bin Haji Abdul Rahman, Director-General of National Archives Malaysia, emphasized the need to include Indigenous and marginalized voices and ensure public access to archives for identity-building. MOWCAP Secretary-General Ms Linh Anh Moreau in her Keynote Speech highlighted the origins and evolution of UNESCO's MoW Programme, shared examples of documentary heritage that remain under threat from conflict and climate change, and issued a call to action for collective responsibility in preserving diverse histories for future generations.

During a sharing session on digital initiatives, the National Archives of Singapore presented an AI-powered Chatbook, while the National Archives of Korea detailed its plan for an AI-driven public record system. Radio Televisyen Malaysia shared their use of Smart Agentic AI for preserving broadcast heritage.

For the session on connecting communities, the Thai Film Archive highlighted successful public engagement, including using TikTok to share film heritage and running a "Senior Film Club" for reminiscence therapy. The National Archives of Australia shared projects engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and on preserving and digitizing the F.E. Williams' glass plate negatives collection, inscribed on the MOWCAP Regional Register (2012) in Papua New Guinea.

The conference also addressed the immense challenges faced by post-conflict nations. Representatives from Timor-Leste and Cambodia discussed ongoing efforts to rebuild archives amidst scarcity and past destruction. The Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Cambodia detailed how public access and family tracing tools are aiding reconciliation.

The conference concluded with strong recommendations to enhance the use of AI and digital tools, promote wider inclusivity in archival work, and formalize regional agreements on documentary heritage.

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MOWCAP goes to Naples, Italy to showcase the Republic of Korea's rich documentary heritage

On 9-11 September 2025, MOWCAP and the Korean Studies Institute organized the cultural event "K Heritage in Italy: Harmony of Memory, Records and Culinary Arts" at the Basilica di San Lorenzo Maggiore in Naples, Italy.

The cultural event explored themes related to documentary heritage, including a speech from MOWCAP Chair Dr Kwibae Kim on the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme and the Republic of Korea's contributions to global documentary heritage.

Ms Do-Eun Kim demonstrates recipes from *Suunjapbang*, a 16th-century Korean cookbook and current MOWCAP Regional Register candidate, in Naples, Italy on 11 September 2025. Image courtesy of the Korean Studies Institute.

The first day centred on "Documents, Stories that Connect the World", exploring how records preserve identity and connect cultures, and included a talk by Prof. Andrea De Beneditis, University of Naples, who shared the story of *Parhaego*, highlighting the tension between censorship and historical memory in Korean publishing history. The second day focused on the materials, methods, and artistic traditions behind historical records, with speaker Mr Sang-Bong Han, Director of the Korean Institute of Fine Arts, sharing the material culture of documentation. The event concluded with a celebration of how food and folklore evolve into documented heritage: to be shared, preserved, and passed on across generations. Prof. Ho Kim, Seoul National University, shared ancient Korean recipe books as living documents that have shaped society and everyday life, while Prof. Kichul Lee, Seoul National University, spoke on the growing cultural exchanges between young Koreans and Italians through the lens of culinary storytelling

Visitors explored immersive zones, including UNESCO Memory of the World-inscribed heritage: traditional Korean woodblocks, *pyeon-aek* (framed calligraphy), handwritten manuscripts, Korean folk art, including the tiger and magpie motif, recently popularized by K-Pop Demon Hunters, and live calligraphy by experts.

Throughout the three-day cultural event, guests continued to enjoy a range of cultural workshops, with a culinary highlight: a special tasting of dishes from *Suunjapbang*, a 16th-century Korean cookbook and current MOWCAP Regional Register candidate, prepared by Ms Do-Eun Kim.

ANY NEWS TO SHARE?

If you have an upcoming or recent activity, publication or news on documentary heritage in Asia-Pacific to contribute to the MOWCAP Newsletter, submit to mowcapinfo@gmail.com.