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

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MOWCAP NEWS

Message from the Chair

DR KWIBAE KIM

Dear MOWCAP Friends and Colleagues,

MOWCAP Chair Dr Kwibae Kim at the Inter-Regional MoW Consultation Workshop on 6 November 2025. Image courtesy of the Korean Studies Institute.

I am pleased to report on the success of our recent inter-regional Memory of the World (MoW) consultation workshop in Andong, Republic of Korea, where representatives from five regional MoW committees and the International Advisory Committee met to strengthen our network, made possible thanks to our hosts the Korean Studies Institute and the City of Andong.

Pressing issues were discussed and pivotal outcomes made, including a collective recognition that heritage belongs to all of humanity and that regional MoW committees need to work closely together in this spirit.

In addition, training workshops were held to build the capacity of Timor-Leste and Myanmar custodians, both countries facing either ongoing or post-conflict situations and where documentary heritage is exposed to severe natural disaster risks.

The Timor-Leste workshop, co-hosted by UNESCO Jakarta and Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, helped build the framework for Timor-Leste's renewed national MoW committee. The workshop successfully identified key documentary heritage items and collaborated in creating a roadmap for development with an inclusive, multi-stakeholder approach.

Highlighting the importance of community-based efforts, the Save Myanmar Film team conducted a critical workshop on Advanced Digitization and Film Handling in Yangon as part of their mission to save Myanmar's endangered cinema heritage, 99% of which is estimated to have been lost.

These activities demonstrate our shared commitment as an expert-led programme and communities of practitioners to preserve and promote our region's rich documentary heritage.

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Building bridges between regional MoW committees in Andong, Republic of Korea

Regional and global MoW committees visited the National Archives of Korea (Seongnam Branch) on 4 November 2025. Image courtesy of National Archives of Korea.

From 4 to 6 November 2025, representatives from regional and global Memory of the World (MoW) programmes, including ARCMoW, MOWCAP, MOWCAR, MoWLAC and the International Advisory Committee (IAC) met in Andong, Republic of Korea for a consultation workshop, generously hosted by the Korean Studies Institute and the City of Andong, joined by the International Centre for Documentary Heritage (ICDH) and memory institutions of the Republic of Korea.

Chaired by Dr Kim Kwibae (MOWCAP), the discussion focussed on overcoming challenges like limited government engagement, resource mobilization deficits and the severe impact of climate change on collections.

Participants stressed the need for better communication, proposing annual inter-regional meetings and a centralized digital hub for publications, as suggested by MOWCAR Vice-President for Northern Africa Prof. Sherif Shaheen.

A major debate centred on inclusion, specifically communities that do not have State representation. MOWCAP Vice-Chair Prof. Dr Haga Mitsuru recalled origins of the modern State, rendering some forms of documentary heritage difficult to ascribe to a nation by its very nature as a vehicle for information dissemination and pre-dating the modern State. MOWCAP Vice-Chair Mr Imam Gunarto highlighted the case of the Sea Nomads of Southeast Asia, urging a participatory approach for identifying and documenting the oral history and literature of their dispersed communities. This led to a consensus on the need to redefine “documentary heritage” to include oral traditions.

IAC Chair Mr Jan Bos, MOWCAR Vice-President for Northern Africa Prof. Sherif Shaheen, ARCMoW President Mr Papa Momar Diop, MoWLAC Secretariat Consultant Dr Yolia Tortolero and MoWLAC President Dr Laura Sánchez Alvarado at the Inter-regional MoW Regional Consultation Workshop on 6 November 2025 at the Korean Studies Institute (KSI). Image courtesy of KSI.

MOWCAP Register Sub-Committee Chair Dr Helen Jarvis and IAC Chair Mr Jan Bos clarified that Regional Committees like MOWCAP are autonomous and encouraged them to interpret the 2021 Guidelines flexibly, maintaining the founding spirit that heritage belongs to all of humanity.

ARCMoW President Mr Papa Momar Diop reported that strengthened efforts in information

dissemination are needed to increase nomination numbers for the regional MoW programme in Africa. MOWCAP Secretary-General Ms Linh Anh Moreau strongly urged increased capacity-building and resource mobilization to meet this need.

MoWLAC Secretariat Consultant Dr Yolia Tortolero emphasized the need to deepen relations between Regional MoW Registers to present Joint Nominations and to stay connected.

MOWCAP RSC Member Prof. Dr Aijarkyn Kojobekova and RSC Member Ms Wang Hongmin at the Inter-regional MoW Regional Consultation Workshop on 6 November 2025 at the Korean Studies Institute. Image courtesy of KSI.

Looking ahead, participants proposed a future agenda focussed on Digital Heritage and Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications, the connection between Documentary and Intangible, and Site Heritage, promoting inclusivity by focusing on oral traditions, marginalized groups and youth engagement.

The meeting concluded with a strong call for collective action, innovation, leveraging platforms like the ICDH to increase the visibility and accessibility of global memory.

UNESCO Bangkok Regional Advisor for Communication and Information Mr Jo Hironaka, MOWCAP Secretary-General Ms Linh Anh Moreau, Vice-Chair Mr Imam Gunarto, Chair Dr Kim Kwibae and Assistant Secretary-General Mr Kang Bo-Seung at the Inter-regional MoW Regional Consultation Workshop on 6 November 2025 at the Korean Studies Institute (KSI). Image courtesy of KSI.

MoW workshop builds capacity in identifying and nominating Timor-Leste's documentary heritage

The training workshop on "Timor-Leste National Memory of the World Committee Framework" was held on 17-20 November 2025 in Jakarta, Indonesia, co-hosted by UNESCO Jakarta and Arsip Nasional Republic Indonesia (ANRI) and supported by the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

This capacity-building activity was designed to identify and address the needs for the development of Timor-Leste's renewed national Memory of the World Committee. The workshop was attended by 16 participants from Timor-Leste's national MoW committee and custodians of memory institutions, as well as 12 participants from Indonesia's ANRI, National Library and Ministry of Culture.

The first day included an introduction to the MoW Programme, its objectives, activities in Asia-Pacific, and public engagement endeavours. Experts from Indonesia, including ANRI's Ms Eli Ruliawati, Director of Service and Utilization of the National Archive of the Republic of Indonesia, shared good practices and successful cases from Indonesia in nominating items to national, regional and international MoW registers.

Timor-Leste and Indonesia custodians work together on a MoW Significance exercise on 19 November 2025. Image courtesy of UNESCO.

The two following days were dedicated to workshop activities led by MOWCAP RSC Chair Dr Helen Jarvis and MOWCAP Secretary-General Ms Linh Anh Moreau, with the support of UNESCO Consultant Ms Kim Hye-Young.

Participants conduct a group exercise on mapping Timor-Leste documentary heritage and stakeholders on 18 November 2025. Image courtesy of UNESCO.

Examples of MoW inscriptions related to conflict memory, peace, recovery and lived experiences were shared to kickstart brainstorming exercises on potential nominations from Timor-Leste, as well as good practices in preparing MoW nominations.

The discussion exercises included mapping key documentary heritage items and stakeholders in Timor-Leste and globally (Australia, Brazil, France, Indonesia, Portugal, USA), building a roadmap of development activities for the Timor-Leste national MoW committee, as well as conducting Significance exercises using selected documentary heritage items.

Participants and resource persons from MOWCAP, UNESCO and ANRI concluded the three-day workshop on "Timor-Leste National MoW Committee Framework on 20 November 2025. Image courtesy of UNESCO.

The workshop resulted in the identification of 17 documentary heritage items in Timor-Leste, and a roadmap which includes multi-stakeholder consultations, including community knowledge-keepers, civil society organizations and religious institutions, for an inclusive approach to developing the MoW Programme in Timor-Leste.

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Save Myanmar Film and international experts organize film preservation workshop in Yangon, Myanmar

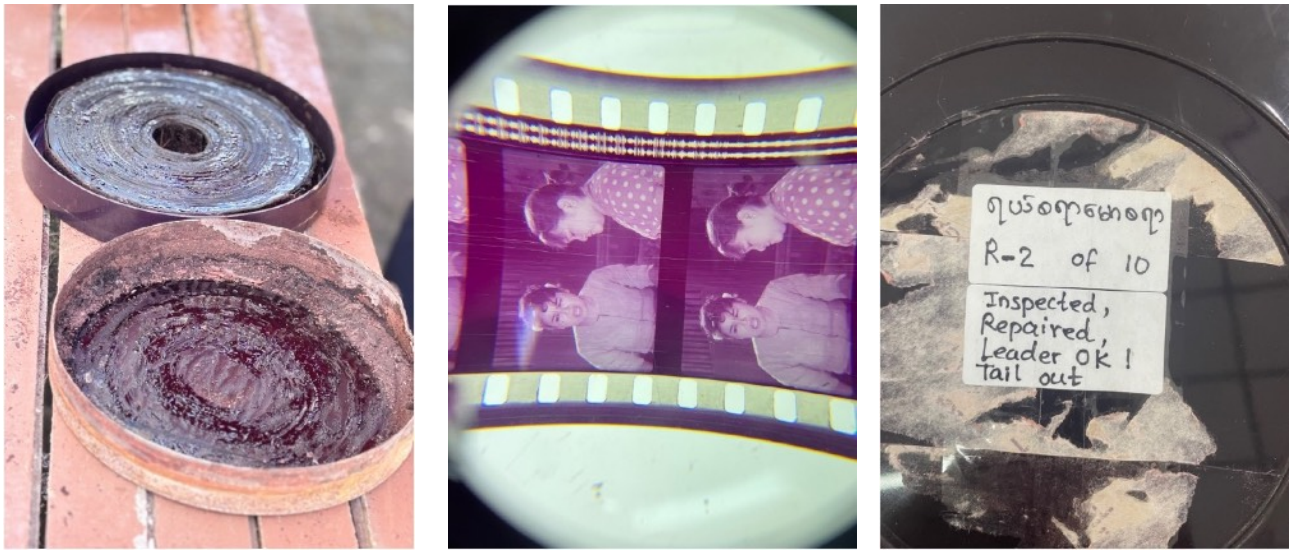
From 20 November to 3 December 2025, Save Myanmar Film team organized a crucial “Basic Film Handling, Identification, Inspection and Advanced Digitization Workshop”, successfully bringing together emerging Myanmar archivists for intensive training. The programme was led by internationally recognized film archiving specialists Lisabona Rahman and Mengchun Tsai, ensuring expert-led training in film preservation.

The Save Myanmar Film intensive training on Basic Film Handling, Identification, Inspection and Advanced Digitization took place in Yangon, Myanmar, between 20 November and 3 December 2025. Image courtesy of Save Myanmar Film.

The workshop kicked off with trainers Okkar and Thu Thu Shein from Save Myanmar Film, who established the foundational principles of archiving ethics and highlighted the critical importance of safeguarding surviving black-and-white films as national heritage. Building on this theoretical base, Indonesian Berlin-based specialist Lisabona Rahman, who also serves as a International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) Training and Outreach Coordinator, conducted an intensive, hands-on module. Her sessions focussed on safe film handling techniques, identifying various film stocks and forms of decay, and the practical repair and preparation of 35mm, 16mm, and sound negatives for scanning. Participants gained hands-on experience by practising inspection and repair, confronting common archival challenges directly.

Expert film archivist Lisabona Rahman demonstrates the safe handling of film with Save Myanmar Film’s co-founder Okkar. Image courtesy of Save Myanmar Film.

The final stage of the training saw Taiwanese film preservation expert Mengchun Tsai introduce the technical world of advanced digitization. He guided the groups through fundamental steps, technical considerations, and the safe operation of specialized equipment, including the Kodak film cleaner and the Blackmagic Cintel scanner. A key learning experience involved participants immediately scanning their repaired reels, allowing them to compare their physical preparation work with the final digital results and understand how inspection quality directly impacts the digitization outcome. The workshop concluded with a reflective discussion on the influence of repairs on the scanned materials, and the team made a practical stride forward by developing a standardized, Myanmar-language cataloguing and inspection report sheet for long-term local archival use.



The Save Myanmar Film intensive training on Basic Film Handling, Identification, Inspection and Advanced Digitization aims to address risks faced by Myanmar's cinematic heritage through capacity-bu. Image courtesy of Save Myanmar Film.

With an estimated 99% loss of Myanmar's film heritage, Save Myanmar Film's tireless efforts in saving what is left, in the context of ongoing political conflict, demonstrate the importance of community-based initiatives in the preservation of documentary heritage in times of crisis. The NGO has been a recipient of the Asia Culture Center-MOWCAP Small Grants Programme and successfully inscribed the film The Emerald Jungle (Mya Ga Naing) on the MOWCAP Regional Register in 2018. To support the Save Myanmar Film community of film heritage heroes, please visit: https://www.savemyanmarfilm.org/support-us/.

24 nominations for the MOWCAP Regional Register 2026 cycle announced!

Find out which ones by visiting the MOWCAP website at www.mowcapunesco.org

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.