

# Work Plan for FY 2021

## 1. Activity Focus and the Overview of Research Projects

The Work Plan for FY 2021 is developed under the scheme of IRCI's Medium-term Programme, which was approved at the 4th Governing Board Meeting of IRCI (25 September 2015). In FY 2021, IRCI will look back on its achievements in the past and plan new projects with the aim of envisioning the future direction of IRCI.

As for the continuing projects in FY 2021, there are 3 projects in total planned under Activity Focus I (Promoting Research for ICH Safeguarding), and 1 project under Activity Focus II (Research on ICH Safeguarding and Disaster-Risk Management) (Table 1).

**Figure 1: Timeline of research projects in Medium-Term Programme**

FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021
<b>Activity Focus I. Promoting Research for ICH Safeguarding</b>					
International Experts Meeting	International Conference				
Literature Survey on ICH Safeguarding Research in Asia-Pacific Countries					
Research Data Collection on ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region and Optimisation of its Use					
			Sustainable Research Data Collection for ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region		
	Researchers Forum		Researchers Forum		Researchers Forum
		Multi-disciplinary Study on ICH's Contribution to Sustainable Development - Focusing on Education		Research on ICH Contribution to SDGs – Education and Community Development	
<b>Activity Focus II. Research on ICH Safeguarding and Disaster Risk Management</b>					
Preliminary Research on ICH Safeguarding and Disaster Risk Management		Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop		Research on ICH Safeguarding and DRM	
	Study of Emergency Protection of ICH in Conflict-Affected Countries in Asia				

**Table1: List of FY 2021 research projects**

<b>Activity Focus I. Promoting Research for ICH Safeguarding</b>	
Sustainable Research Data Collection for ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region	
Research on ICH Contribution to SDGs – Education and Community Development	
New project	Researchers Forum
<b>Activity Focus II. Research on ICH and Disaster Risk Management</b>	
Research on ICH Safeguarding and Disaster Risk Management	

**Activity Focus I: Promoting Research for ICH Safeguarding**

**Specific Contents of Activities**

*Promote research for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, through conducting the following activities regarding the practices and methodologies of safeguarding, in cooperation with research institutions and researchers working in the Asia-Pacific region:*

*(i) Instigate research activities and develop the researchers’ community through international conferences, experts meetings, and publications;*

*(ii) Examine and develop strategies for optimizing the use of research data, while collecting research information.*

(Section III(1), Medium-term Programme)

IRCI has implemented a research project based on the mapping of research information pertaining to the safeguarding of ICH in the Asia-Pacific region for 6 years from FY 2013 to FY 2018.

This ‘Mapping Project’, aiming at instigating research for ICH safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific region through analysing current trends and challenges, has been carried out in the form of three inter-related sub-projects Since FY 2016: international conferences/experts meetings, systematic literature survey, and optimisation of the use of research information with the database.

After six years of implementation, the project was reviewed and new projects were proposed in FY 2019 to develop an alternative framework for collecting research data and to prospect the future direction of the IRCI research as a whole.

As for the project “Research on ICH Contribution to SDGs – Education and Community Development” (FY 2020-FY 2021), IRCI has started a case study on the contribution of intangible cultural heritage to SDG 4 and 11 in FY2020, based on the accumulated expertise of the project “Multi-disciplinary Study on ICH’s Contribution to Sustainable Development- Focusing on Education” carried out from FY 2018 to FY 2019. IRCI will implement these cases in 2021 as a project to examine these cases in more depth.

The Researcher Forum has been held every other year since 2017, and a wide range of discussions have been held among researchers on intangible cultural heritage. Since FY2021 is the 10th anniversary of IRCI's establishment, the third forum will be positioned as a commemorative event. In addition, this forum will also look back on IRCI's past 10-year research projects and IRCI will utilize them when formulating the next Medium- term and Long-term Programme. Following the event, IRCI and Sakai City will collaborate to hold a public event on intangible cultural heritage to further spread the understanding of the 2003 Convention to the general public.

## **Activity Focus II: Research on ICH and Disaster Risk Management**

### **Specific Contents of Activities**

*Conduct research on the current status and the cases of the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in the Asia-Pacific region that are endangered by disasters such as natural hazards, as well as research on the role of ICH for disaster preparedness and in the post-disaster recovery process, in consideration of UNESCO's focus in the Medium-Term Strategy (37C/4) on the response to post-conflict and post-disaster situations (PCPD).*

(Section III(2), Medium-term Programme)

This Activity Focus was devised in consideration of UNESCO's concern on post-conflict and post-disaster (PCPD) situations, as described in its Medium-term Strategy 2014-2021 (37C/4). The emphasis on this issue has been further strengthened in the latest Programme and Budget (39C/5 and Draft 40C/5), with a cross-cutting ER 5 stating 'Culture protected and cultural pluralism promoted in emergencies through better preparedness and response'. This Activity Focus also reflects growing national and international interests in the heritage management in the context of disasters, in which importance of ICH has been increasingly recognised. Against this backdrop, IRCI has undertaken two projects during the current medium-term: one focusing on natural hazards and disasters, and the other related to conflict. The importance of these projects by IRCI has been acknowledged by various researchers and organisations in the world, including the latest sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee in 2017 and 2018, and the experts meeting in 2019 which highlighted the agenda on the safeguarding of ICH under emergencies. Also, in the 8<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the 2003 Convention recently organized in September 2020, "Operational principles and modalities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in emergencies" was adopted.

In addition, the global spread of the COVID-19 infection that occurred in the first half of 2020 raised great interest in research on ICH and pandemic. In response to this serious situation, IRCI will take an urgent step toward exploring research areas as a new factor that threatens the transmission of ICH, taking into account the outcomes of various

surveys including the UNESCO online survey on Living heritage experiences and COVID-19.

## 2. Individual Project Outlines

### Activity Focus I. Promoting Research for ICH Safeguarding **Sustainable Research Data Collection for ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region**

**Period of implementation:** FY 2019-2021

**Geographic focus:** Entire Asia-Pacific region

**Background:** With regard to the Mapping Project that was concluded in FY2018, some challenges were identified by analysing the project outcomes. One of the challenges is the difficulty to collect the information through the individual researchers. The background of the challenge is: A majority of the countries in Asia-Pacific region ratified the 2003 convention (44 countries as of October 2020), nonetheless, a basic understanding such as the definition of ICH has not been popularised thoroughly among the research institutions and government officials and there are still many countries that are seeking or beginning to make inventories and to develop national laws, and the situation of each countries varies. Moreover, there is a limited number of experts in the academic fields related to ICH such as anthropology at the local level, given that from a global perspective, research resources are distributed unevenly. Furthermore, high risk of loss of archived research data due to poor storage conditions and limited access was also revealed. In order to overcome these challenges, from FY 2019, IRCI systematically collaborated with research institutions such as universities instead of individual researchers, and established a cooperative mechanism for the sustainable ICH research data collection. This promotes to gain profound understanding of ICH and better knowledge of the 2003 Convention and encourages the area studies by researchers including young researchers, and this, conclusively, is expected to contribute to the safeguarding of ICH. By FY 2020, IRCI developed activities in collaboration with 11 institutions (universities and research institutes) in 6 Asian countries, centered on National Counterparts, participated in the research data collection and spread the understanding of ICH research. In addition, National workshops (on the web) on challenges related to ICH research were held cooperated with the counterparts, and difficulties found in research and also future plans were discussed.

**Purpose:** In FY 2021, while assessing the response of research institutions in each country due to COVID-19, the existing national counterpart will build a network of

research institutions such as universities in their own country and promote the enhancement of data collection systems, and IRCI will add the collected data to the database. In the end, this will be verified as an effective information gathering scheme as a practice useful for application in other regions. Furthermore, in collaboration with 11 institutions that IRCI have cooperated with so far, IRCI will analyse the challenges regarding ICH research that have become clear in the process of data collection in the region, and from this point, IRCI will clarify the challenges of research that IRCI should aim for and also discuss the use of the IRCI Research Database. Discussions on the analysis of this challenge will be opened to young researchers at cooperating universities, and opinions will be widely sought.

**Progress/preparatory activities** (during/before FY 2020): The specific activities in the FY 2020 is the followings:

- A national workshop (27-28 July) at Gadjah Mada University in Indonesia was held on the web, with a total of 34 researchers participating, and two new universities have established a system to cooperate in the project.
- A national workshop (4 August) at the University of Malaya in Malaysia was held on the web, with a total of 32 researchers participating, and three new universities have established a system for cooperation in the project.
- The University of the Philippines (UP), Faculty of Cultural Anthropology of Thammasat University, and Vietnam Institute of Cultural Arts Studies (VICAS) have signed the MoU to start research data collection in collaboration with IRCI. Thammasat University plans to collect data in collaboration with one institution, and VICAS plans to collaborate with two domestic institutions to collect information.

**Specific activities for FY 2021:** Since the activities of universities and research institutions are limited due to the large impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, IRCI will proceed with activities while assessing the situation in each country. National Counterparts that have been collaborating since FY2019 will promote the construction of networks and the expansion of data collection systems in each country.

1. The National Counterparts (NC) will expand their network with domestic research institutions and collect further research data.
2. IRCI will analyse the research data collected over the three years and make a proposal for overcoming the challenges and enhancing research in the region, and publish it on the IRCI website.
3. The National Counterparts and IRCI will hold a symposium to discuss and summarise the above two points. IRCI will aim to build a mechanism to promote ICH research, including the training of young researchers, in order to activate research activities.
4. The data collected in the above section 1. will be added to the IRCI Research Database.

**Specific outputs:** The challenges of ICH research in the Asia-Pacific region will be

clarified, and the direction of research promotion based on it will be decided. The collected research data will be published in IRCI Research Database.

**Project partners/cooperating researchers and organisations:**

Research institutions in selected countries in the Asia-Pacific region, including universities, museums, and other relevant organisations.

\*See attached PDM (IRCI/2020/9GB/7/Annex 2a) for the detailed project design and benchmarks.

Activity Focus I. Promoting Research for ICH Safeguarding  
**Research on ICH's Contribution to SDGs – Education and Community Development**

**Period of implementation:** FY 2020-2021

**Geographic focus:** Entire Asia-Pacific region

**Background:** On 25 September 2015, the 70th General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the resolution “Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. The Agenda sets the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which consist of 17 goals and 169 targets. The SDGs are the common goals shared by the international community to realise the sustainable world in order to leave no one behind. UNESCO emphasises the contribution of culture to the sustainable development. In the Major Programme IV of the 39C/5, UNESCO outlines the contribution of culture to the SDGs, where the potential contribution of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) is expected in SDGs 2, 4, 5, 11 and 17. At the twelfth session of the Intergovernmental Committee, a decision was made to dedicate its second funding priority to the safeguarding of ICH in formal and non-formal education, testifying a growing need for its contribution to the goal 4, which stipulates “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”. In this context, in FY2018-2019, IRCI conducted the project that testifies ICH contribution to SDG 4, using ICH into formal and non-formal education in Viet Nam and the Philippines respectively, and the international workshops were held to share the outcomes with the related stakeholders including UNESCO. Then, IRCI launched a 2-year project to analyse the ICH roles in SDG 4 and SDG 11 by collecting a series of case studies.

**Purpose:** ICH in the Asia-Pacific Region is facing the challenges of ICH transmission due to various internal and external factors. As a safeguarding measure focusing on SDGs, IRCI will conduct a series of case studies expecting to find the clues to solve the problem. The case studies will be initiated by two NGO/institution which relates to ICH (including traditional knowledge), education, community development and its analysed result will be revealed the relevance of three elements. Besides, the impact and effective measures

on the ICH safeguarding will be examined. Furthermore, the impact on the community where transfers the ICH, will be studied. The analysis and verification of the case studies between the previous project (FY 2018-2019) focusing on only SDG4 and the current project focusing on both SDG4 and SDG11 will lead consideration of ICH safeguarding which accommodates with diverse Asia communities.

**Progress/preparatory activities** (during/before FY 2021): The feasibility study has begun in some NGO/institution in the Asia-Region, through emails, web meetings, and questionnaires asking the possibility of the case studies. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, only a limited number of the institutions are possible to conduct the case studies. Therefore, the partner institutions will be selected assessing the future situation. In October, IRCI and Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) agreed to conduct case studies mainly in the urban area and rural area. Regarding the DAM in Bangladesh, IRCI has exchanged opinions with DAM since 2019 and DAM is highly interested in this project from their experience of solving comprehensive social issues such as poverty, human rights, and the environment through education. Similarly, Dewi Fortuna Community Learning Center (DFCLC) (Indonesia) and Taalim-Forum Public Foundation (TFPF) (Kyrgyz Republic) agreed to join the project to address their own social issues such as globalization and gender inequality by studying the relationship among intangible cultural heritage and education, especially non-formal education and community development. However, as the expansion of COVID-19 is a big issue for Asia-Region, the research methodology is still under consideration.

**Specific activities for FY 2021:**

1. The field surveys for the case studies are conducted in the area, in particular, where sufficient field surveys were yet to be conducted due to the COVID-19 in FY 2020.
2. The outcomes will be verified at the workshop with local stakeholders, related experts of ICH, education and community development. The lessons and challenges learned from the workshop will be discussed at the regional symposium at the end of the fiscal year. At the symposium, a discussion will be made for the above purpose inviting experts from partner institutions, former project (FY 2018-2019) partners (from the Philippines and Vietnam), and Japanese experts.
3. As a final fiscal year, the project report with the 2 years collection of case studies and outcomes of the symposium will be published on the IRCI website.

**Specific outputs:** Project report with a collection of case studies

**Project partners/cooperating researchers and organisations:** Research

institutions, CLCs, local museums, and NGOs

\*See attached PDM (IRCI/2020/9GB/7/Annex 2b) for the detailed project design and benchmarks.

### Activity Focus I: Promoting Research for ICH Safeguarding **Researchers Forum (New)**

**Period of implementation:** FY 2021

**Geographic focus:** Entire Asia-Pacific region

**Background:** Studies on ICH are carried out by experts in various academic fields from their respective standpoints, and challenges related to ICH safeguarding and transmission are also widely discussed. It is necessary, therefore, to analyse them for the effective safeguarding of ICH in the region.

**Purpose:** IRCI was established in FY 2011 as a Category 2 Centre of UNESCO with the aim of contributing to the promotion of the 2003 Convention by instigating and coordinating research, and will celebrate its 10th anniversary in 2021. Since the Medium-term and Long-term Programme will start in FY 2022, the 3rd Researcher Forum will be held to look back on the IRCI research projects that have been carried out in the past 10 years and discuss the direction that IRCI should aim for.

#### **Specific activities for FY2021 :**

- 1.** An academic symposium consisting of presentations and panel discussions will be held. Speakers will be selected from researchers from about eight IRCI partner institutions, researchers and practitioners in the field of intangible cultural heritage, etc., who have collaborated in the past programmes.  
  
\* Online meeting will be envisaged depending on the situation of COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2.** IRCI will contact relevant organisations before the forum to gather opinions and comments on IRCI's research activities. This enables discussions that reflect the opinions of more stakeholders.
- 3.** Summarise and publish the contents of the meeting

**Specific outputs:** Proceedings that summarise the latest challenges of promoting the 2003 Convention in the Asia-Pacific region and the current status and challenges of research on ICH will be published.



Needs for IRCI's future research promotion activities will be gathered.

**Project partners/cooperating researchers and organisations:** Researchers of about 8 IRCI partner institutions, researchers and practitioners in the field of intangible cultural heritage, etc. who have cooperated so far

\*See attached PDM (IRCI/2020/9GB/7/Annex 2c) for the detailed project design and benchmarks.

## Activity Focus II. Research on ICH Safeguarding and Disaster Risk Management

### Research on ICH Safeguarding and Disaster Risk Management

**Period of implementation:** FY 2020-2022

**Geographic focus:** Entire Asia-Pacific region

**Background:** The importance of ICH in the context of natural disasters has recently been widely recognised, but the situation still requires active involvement of ICH sector. At the “Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on ICH and Natural Disasters” that IRCI held in 2018, roles of ICH in disaster preparedness, disaster mitigation and disaster resilience were discussed. These various aspects of ICH should be reflected in DRM.

In addition, the global spread of COVID-19 that occurred in early 2020 has become a pandemic worldwide and has a great impacts on the practice and succession of ICH. While natural disasters affect both tangible and intangible cultural heritage due to its correlation, it seems to negative impacts of epidemics concentrated on ICH. Although there is no prospect of convergence of COVID-19 at this time, it is considered that information gathering on the impact on ICH should be started at an early stage.

**Purpose:** Building upon the preliminary survey conducted since 2016 and the results obtained at the workshop held in 2018, research on the effectiveness of ICH in the context of disaster preparedness, disaster mitigation and disaster resilience and the measures for safeguarding ICH from natural disasters is conducting. IRCI aims to collect case studies to be applied to examine the effectiveness of the matrix developed by IRCI in FY 2020 which shows preparedness for each potential risk for ICH associated with different types of natural disaster and the role of ICH in post-disaster resilience. IRCI will deepen cooperation between institutions as a collaborator, mainly researchers working in the area of ICH and disaster prevention, and government agencies involved in disaster risk management and cultural policy.

**Specific activities for FY 2021 :**

1. IRCI will collect case studies on ICH in the context of natural disasters in cooperation with approximately two counterparts in the Asia-Pacific region.
2. The results will be discussed with local experts. Based on these works IRCI will improve the matrix in cooperation with researchers, institutions and communities involved.
3. Target countries will be selected in the expert meeting.
4. IRCI will collect information on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on ICH in view of thorough assessment in the region.

**Specific outputs:** Project report

**Project partners/cooperating researchers and organisations:**

- Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties
- National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka
- ICH/DRM researchers in the research institutions in the Asia-Pacific Region and optionally those in the other regions

\*See attached PDM (IRCI/2020/9GB/7/Annex 2d) for the detailed project design and benchmarks.

### **3. Cooperation with Sakai City**

In accordance with its Medium-term Programme, and within the framework of its mandate as specified in the Agreement between UNESCO and the Government of Japan, IRCI has been contributing to the projects carried out by Sakai City for promoting ICH to the general public.

In FY 2021, in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the establishment of IRCI, Sakai City will organise a symposium followed by the IRCI Researchers Forum, where an exhibition on ICH of the city will also be planned to raise the public awareness on importance of ICH safeguarding as well as to increase the visibility of IRCI. In addition, IRCI will collaborate in organising seminars with Sakai City as well as display panels introducing IRCI's research activities and disseminate brochures and leaflets at the Sakai City Museum.