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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
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Diversity of
Cultural Expressions

Diversité
des expressions
culturelles

Diversidad
de las expresiones
culturales

Разнообразие форм
культурного
самовыражения

تنوع أشكال التعبير
الثقافي

文化表现形式
多样性

**CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE
DIVERSITY OF CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS**

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INFORMATION DOCUMENT

This document presents the report prepared by Ms. Kamara, in charge of the review of recommendations made by the external evaluation of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD).

Review of recommendations made by the external evaluation of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD)

Final Report, October 2018

Yarri Kamara

CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

ACP	Africa Caribbean and Pacific States
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EU	European Union
HDI	Human development index
HR	Human resources
IFCD	International Fund for Cultural Diversity
IFPC	International Fund for the Promotion of Culture
IGC	Intergovernmental Committee
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

INTRODUCTION

1. An external evaluation was undertaken of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD) in 2017. The evaluation report made 21 recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the IFCD. This report reviews each one of these 21 recommendations to assess the implications of their implementation and propose measures for implementing the recommendations or, where relevant, alternative options to the recommendations.

2. A summary table of the analysis of the evaluation recommendations is presented after the introduction, with the recommendations following the order of their original numbering in the evaluation report. The detailed analysis that follows, on the other hand, has reordered the recommendations thematically according to what operational theme of the IFCD they relate to: (1) IFCD rules – who can apply to the IFCD, the selection process and support for applicants; (2) Learning and fundraising; (3) Stakeholder processes – IFCD relations with National Commissions, Field Offices and the wider 2005 Convention. Recommendations that address the same problem have been analyzed together in the detailed assessment tables. There are thus only 18 recommendation assessment tables rather than 21.

3. The analysis of recommendations is based on document reviews, key informant interviews and data analysis where relevant. The analysis of recommendations related to IFCD rules was presented in depth to the Panel of Experts at a meeting at the UNESCO Headquarters on 19 July 2018, and consensus was reached on which were the preferred options. The Panel of Experts also gave advice concerning the recommendations related to Learning and Fundraising and to Stakeholder processes.

4. Each recommendation is reviewed through an assessment table which:
    -   Presents the recommendation as formulated in the evaluation report, with its original numbering;
    -   Formulates the underlying problem that the evaluation recommendation aims to address. This makes it easier to think of and assess alternative options for action where relevant;
    -   Assesses the level of urgency or of strategic importance for the IFCD of each recommendation. Recommendations that are strongly relevant in particular for the future sustainability of the IFCD are marked as being of high urgency/strategic importance. The level of risk posed by the implementation of the recommendation as formulated by the evaluation is also assessed. Recommendations that pose risks for the Fund should only be considered for implementation if they are also highly strategic;
    -   Presents relevant facts and data related to the recommendation followed by an analysis;
    -   If following the analysis, the recommendation does not present any problems, suggest measures for implementing the recommendation. If the analysis reveals problems, alternative options are suggested and pros and cons of all options assessed.

5. The last section of the report highlights the recommendations that are of greatest urgency and should therefore be addressed first.

SUMMARY OF REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations from evaluation	Level of urgency/ strategic importance	Risk posed by implementation[1]	Recommendations from review	Cost implications
Rec. 1 To consider focusing IFCD support on low/middle income countries that have less funding opportunities in the realm of culture at their disposal by using other reference lists such as the UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) or using the OECD DAC list. (See section 1)	low	high	a) Do not implement. Maintain the status quo for now and track the proportion of projects going to richer developing countries, according to the HDI definition b) Should richer countries start to consistently (over 3 or more years) receive a <u>disproportionate</u> number of projects, implement positive discrimination for low HDI countries	None
Rec. 2 To consider actively promoting and/or prioritizing regional initiatives through the IFCD in order to promote greater international cooperation (in line with article 12 of the Convention) and to also impact more countries, thereby meeting the needs and expectations of more Parties and potential project holders. (See section 2)	low	low	a) Do not implement active promotion or prioritization. Maintain the status quo and in the announcement of the call for proposals encourage regional projects b) Await evaluations of a body of regional projects to assess whether the current US$ 100,000 funding envelope is too restrictive for regional projects	None
Rec. 3 To introduce an IFCD endorsement scheme for projects implemented in high human development countries where IFCD funding is not as relevant as in low human development countries with fewer funding opportunities. (See section 3)	low	medium	a) Do not introduce an endorsement scheme. Increase visibility of project application database so that applicants who wish to can use the publicly available evaluation as an endorsement	None

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[1] Risk posed by implementation of the recommendation from the evaluation.

Recommendations from evaluation	Level of urgency/ strategic importance	Risk posed by implementation[1]	Recommendations from review	Cost implications
Rec. 4 Introduce a call for concept notes that would complement the current call for proposals. The evaluation team recommends adopting a call requesting a short 2-3-page application with a simple budget based on two elements: a summary of the proposed action presented within a simple theory of change reflecting a wider contextual change process and elements proving the capacity of partners (see Recommendation 21). Concept notes should be presented online to be assessed by National Commissions. After the first screening process, a maximum of 15 to 20 applicants would be invited to develop full proposals following the same process currently in place. (See section 4)	low – medium	medium	a) Do not introduce concept notes, but limit the applicant information that National Commissions need to assess b) Communicate statistics on chances of selection to applicants c) Focus on ensuring simplicity of the application forms	None
Rec. 5 To work with the National Commissions to strengthen their role in line with the Guidelines in concrete areas such as the responsibility of forming and coordinating the pre-selection panel (as per articles 12.2 and 12.3 of the Guidelines). (See section 15)	medium – high	low	a) Simplify the National Commission preselection form by eliminating section 5 b) Invite the IGC to consider the possibility of the Secretariat taking recourse to the 2005 Convention Focal Point if a National Commission fails to undertake preselection by the deadline	None
Rec. 6 To allocate extra criteria in the proposal scoring system to projects promoting certain strategic themes and/or geographic regions in order to finetune project selection and reduce the challenges emerging from the 30-point decision as well as geographic imbalance. (See section 5)	low	low	a) Give the Coordinator of the Panel of Experts the responsibility of attributing 1 bonus point for projects with scores close to the recommendation range from countries that have never received funding b) Revise current 30-point criteria, whereby any project scoring at least 30 points is recommended for funding, to stipulate that the highest-scoring projects attaining at least 30 points, will be recommended for funding within the limit of funds available	None

Recommendations from evaluation	Level of urgency/ strategic importance	Risk posed by implementation[1]	Recommendations from review	Cost implications
Rec. 7 To incorporate a specific question about the IFCD in the Quadrennial Periodic Reports (QPRs) to ensure that IFCD projects systematically feature in these reports, thereby ensuring that the links between the Fund and the implementation of the 2005 Convention are made explicit. (See section 17)	--	--	This recommendation is already implemented	--
Rec. 8 To conduct a human resource analysis in the Secretariat with a view to meeting the needs of the IFCD and strengthening the Secretariat (in line with IOS Recommendation 31). Strengthening the team's fundraising capacity is particularly key for the future of the Fund and in order to maximize efforts to date. (See section 9)	high	low	a) Commission an HR analysis for the IFCD. A senior HR consultant is to conduct individual and/or group interviews with staff, undertake a review of fundraising and monitoring & evaluation tools, present findings and conclusions in an interactive workshop	US$4000 for the HR analysis + funds for implementing the recommend-actions

Recommendations from evaluation	Level of urgency/ strategic importance	Risk posed by implementation[1]	Recommendations from review	Cost implications
Rec. 9 To strengthen the capacity of the National Commissions as key actors involved in the application process in order to improve the selection process and avoid the non-selection of good quality projects. A good step forward would be ensuring that each National Commission appoints a focal person in charge of coordinating IFCD issues for at least 2 years, and that in case of changes, the same person ensures the transfer of knowledge and files. (See section 15)	medium – high	low	a) The Secretariat should regularly communicate indicators tracking screening by National Commissions b) During the 2019 cycle, the Secretariat should review current communication processes with National Commissions c) In 2019 or 2020, the Secretariat should take advantage of the annual meeting of National Commissions at UNESCO headquarters to present the IFCD and the preselection process d) In the 2020 cycle the Secretariat should organize an assessment of the quality of preselection by having the Panel of Experts evaluate a random sample of applications rejected by National Commissions e) If the assessment reveals that there are problems with quality, prepare a training programme for National Commissions with lowest capacities f) If insufficient improvement is seen in National Commission performance indicators by the next global IFCD evaluation, invite the IGC to consider transferring National Commission responsibilities to other official channels, such as the 2005 Convention Focal Point	Cost of additional evaluations by Panel of Experts in 2020. Potential costs of training programme for National Commissions after 2020.

Recommendations from evaluation	Level of urgency/ strategic importance	Risk posed by implementation[1]	Recommendations from review	Cost implications
Rec. 10 To work with Field Offices to ensure that on the one hand, UNESCO maximizes the opportunities of having an IFCD-funded project (such as increased visibility, enhanced contact with the local cultural sector and a better understanding of the context) and on the other hand, to ensure that projects know what they can (and should) expect from UNESCO Field Offices (especially in terms of support and involvement throughout the diffusion, communication and implementation processes). (See section 16)	medium	low	a) The Secretariat should review current communication processes for Field Offices	None
Rec. 11 To develop tailored capacity-building actions for countries with less funding opportunities in the cultural sector and for those countries that have never received funding. (See section 6)	medium	low	a) Implement in-person training on the IFCD through the 2005 Convention Capacity building programme. Integrate a 1-day session on the IFCD in all 2005 Convention training programmes b) Encourage field offices that have the capacity to undertake capacity building c) Develop online videos focusing in particular on: 1) visual presentation of the application guide, and 2) common weaknesses in project applications and elements that are well appreciated d) Explore the opportunities for developing more elaborate online training in conjunction with other culture funding institutions	Funds from existing capacity building activity. Funds for developing online training tools

Recommendations from evaluation	Level of urgency/ strategic importance	Risk posed by implementation[1]	Recommendations from review	Cost implications
Rec. 12 To make resources available so that the Secretariat can take bold steps for the IFCD to become a "learning-driven" fund by introducing measures that aim to extract lessons and spaces for the reflection at that center of the IFCD strategy, including hiring of dedicated staff at the Secretariat responsible for project monitoring and evaluation. (See section 10)	high	low	a) Invite the IGC to commit to making the resources available for implementing costed options for building learning capacity resulting from the human resource analysis referred to in Rec. 8. b) For 2019, invite the IGC to commit up to US$30,000 for the re-design and testing of an overall M&E system from unassigned funds c) Invite the IGC to commit to regularly allocating a percentage of either IFCD project funding or IFCD total income to learning (monitoring & evaluation human resources, tools and products) d) The Secretariat should undertake a rapid review practices of other organizations with strong learning cultures funding culture or social change to identify practices that could potentially strengthen existing systems	A benchmark figure suggests $78,000 of M&E expenditure per year for $600,000 of project funding
Rec. 13 To conduct random IFCD project independent evaluations in order to build a knowledge base on the projects and extract lessons from the different experiences. (See section 11)	high	low	a) Set aside a sum equivalent to 3% of project funding (US$18,000 each year assuming US$600,000 in project funding) for IFCD-commissioned independent project evaluations	Sum equivalent to 3% of project funding per year. NB. To come from overall M&E budget (Rec 12)

Recommendations from evaluation	Level of urgency/ strategic importance	Risk posed by implementation[1]	Recommendations from review	Cost implications
Rec. 14 To take steps to maximize the Convention's potential as an advocacy tool among civil society actors. This could be done by providing more information, training and awareness-raising on the importance of advocating on the contribution of the cultural sector to the economy as well as on the existing links between project-focused work conducted by cultural entities and their contribution to policy-related issues affecting the implementation of the Convention. (See section 18)	low	low	a) Ensure that the new fundraising strategy considers how to engage past IFCD grant recipients in fundraising efforts b) Organize events at the regional or international level every 2 or 4 years to facilitate networking among IFCD grant recipients	Budget for organizing regional or international events every 2 to 4 years
Rec. 15 To positively discriminate project proposals that include concrete actions aimed at increasing women's representation in key areas of cultural activity and/or aimed at challenging traditional women's roles. (see section 8)	medium - high	low	a) Integrate a special call for gender transformative projects in IFCD calls b) Introduce gender disaggregated indicators in monitoring and evaluation tools c) Develop a gender knowledge pack for applicants and the Panel of Experts d) Include a session on gender in the induction meeting of the Panel of Experts	None
Rec. 16 To review the current Committee's fundraising strategy to ensure that it dedicates more attention to the contributions of Parties and their engagement in a more tailored manner, recognizing that not all Parties have the same capacities and resources. (see section 12)	high	low	a) The Secretariat should undertake analysis of what influences contributions from Parties b) In future, the Secretariat should regularly collect feedback on all communication materials from a sample of 6-10 Parties	None

Recommendations from evaluation	Level of urgency/ strategic importance	Risk posed by implementation[1]	Recommendations from review	Cost implications
Rec. 17 To work towards meeting the target contribution of 1% (Art. 18.3 and 18.7) to strengthen the sustainability of the Fund and overturn the static trend of the last 5 years. (See section 13)	high	low	a) Re-emphasize the 1% of UNESCO contribution target in the fundraising strategy for Parties b) The Secretariat should review current communication to Parties aimed at encouraging contributions to assess whether Parties are receiving reminders about their contributions at the right time	None
Rec. 18 To strengthen IFCD's fundraising strategy by incorporating an analytical dimension that ensures an explicit connection between communication products and concrete fundraising targets (especially those related to Parties' contributions). (see section 14)	high	low	a) Commission a study to draft a new fundraising and communication strategy. The study will include a review of the previous strategy b) Invite the IGC to commit to making available the necessary resources for implementing the new fundraising strategy	US$65,000 for strategy development. At least 10% of income target for implementing the fundraising strategy
Rec. 19 To modify the current success target of 50% of contributing countries so that instead of focusing on ensuring that at least half of the Parties to the Convention give to the Fund, regular amounts are sought in line with the suggested 1% (Art. 18.3 and 18.7). (See section 13)	high	low	a) Put a timeframe (e.g. 3 years) on the 50% of Parties contributing target. When communicating, emphasize which Parties have contributed within that timeframe to encourage renewed contributions	None
Rec. 20 To strengthen the use of communication materials on the IFCD. The first suggested step is to conduct an analysis of the implementation of the different phases of the Communication Strategy to understand what has worked and what requires improvement. (See section 14)	high	low	a) Commission a study to draft a new fundraising and communication strategy. The study will include a review of the previous strategy b) Invite the IGC to commit to making available the necessary resources for implementing the new fundraising strategy	See Rec. 18

Recommendations from evaluation	Level of urgency/ strategic importance	Risk posed by implementation[1]	Recommendations from review	Cost implications
Rec. 21 To devote more attention to the capacity of project partners [applicants] and give this factor greater weight in the selection process…Include elements that prove the capacity of partners [applicants] (such as experience, sector expertise, past performance and participation in networks). (See section 7)	medium to high	low	a) In the application form introduce a table to inform on at least 2 similar experiences b) In the application form introduce a structured table to collect information on applicants' partners to ensure that applicants give more complete information c) Increase the weight given to applicant capacities in proposal evaluation scoring to at least 10%.	None

PART 1: RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO IFCD RULES

1. Adopt a more restrictive definition of developing country

Recommendation

REC 1. To consider focusing IFCD support on low/middle income countries that have less funding opportunities in the realm of culture at their disposal by using other reference lists such as the UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) or using the OECD DAC list.

Problem that recommendation addresses

The IFCD has very limited funds available for projects each year. Focusing the fund on a more restricted definition of developing countries would help ensure that funding goes to the countries that have the greatest unmet needs.

Implications of recommendation

Level of urgency/strategic importance: low
Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: high. Potential donor (Parties) discouragement

Facts and data

Excluding high human development countries would exclude 46 currently eligible countries[2], whereas the DAC definition, as of January 2018 would exclude 12 currently eligible countries[3] . The HDI definition would entail the almost total exclusion of two regions in particular: 8 of 10 currently eligible countries in Europe would be excluded, and 25 out of 32 currently eligible countries in Latin America and the Caribbean would be excluded.

In 8 cycles of funding, 35% (34 out of 97) of projects funded were from high HDI countries who represent 42% of IFCD eligible countries. The proportion remains the same if only cycles 4 to 8 are considered (13 out of 36 projects). HDI countries are therefore not currently overrepresented in the distribution of projects.

Analysis

The implementation of this recommendation is unlikely to improve the IFCD. The inclusiveness of the IFCD is a rallying element to garner support for the fund from the maximum number of Parties to the 2005 Convention. Moving to a more restrictive list of eligible countries may discourage donations from Parties and create frustration for middle income countries, particularly in the LAC region.

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[2]   Albania, Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Georgia, Grenada, Jamaica, Jordan, Kuwait, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Oman, Panama, Peru, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Serbia, Seychelles, The FYR of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay and Venezuela.

[3]   Bahamas, Barbados, Chile, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Seychelles, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates and Uruguay. Antigua and Barbuda may potentially be excluded in 2020.

While the IFCD was created to address specifically the needs of developing countries, and while UNESCO as a whole contributes to wider UN development goals, UNESCO's mandate and the ultimate objective of the 2005 Convention are not strictly development-focused but focused on culture. As such, the indicators that are used for HDI rankings and DAC listings may not be an accurate assessment of the cultural policy needs in. An indicator such as per capita public expenditure on culture would be a more suitable for identifying countries with the greatest need for IFCD funds. Unfortunately, such statistics are not available in a harmonized format for all countries.

Limiting potential IFCD recipients, in particular based on the HDI definition which excludes a large swathe of LAC countries, would also diminish the possibilities for South-South learning and collaboration through IFCD projects.

While moving to the DAC list certainly presents fewer problems that using more restrictive HDI criteria, the potential benefits of such a change are not compelling enough. Furthermore, one could argue that some self-exclusion occurs already from the richest eligible countries: for instance, applications from China, Korea, Kuwait and Qatar have never been received.

The pros and cons of the recommendation and two alternative options are assessed below. Whatever option is chosen, the Secretariat should continuously track the proportion of projects going to richer developing countries, according to the HDI definition and take remedial measures should richer countries start to consistently (over 3 or more years) receive a <u>disproportionate</u> number of projects.

Option 1 (recommendation from external evaluation)

Adopt either HDI definition or DAC definition of developing countries.

Option 2 (alternative)

Introduce positive discrimination for low to medium HDI countries – for example automatically allocate 1 or 2 extra points to countries in these categories. Rationale: Put low to medium HDI countries on a slightly more equal footing in competing for IFCD funds with high HDI countries that tend to have cultural operators with higher proposal development capacities and greater funding opportunities available.

Option 3 (alternative)

Continue with the status quo. Rationale: The fundamental underlying problem is limited funding available at the IFCD. Other measures can address this; limiting the number of countries eligible only manages demand, and not supply. Furthermore, limiting the number of eligible countries risks of discouraging donations from Parties.

Option 1: switch to a more restrictive list	Option 2: positive discrimination	Option 3: maintain the status quo

PROS	PROS	PROS
- Poorer countries would have 74% increased chances of accessing IFCD funds if 46 high HDI countries are excluded, or 12% increased chances if 12 DAC countries are excluded	- Poorer countries would have 5% increased chances of accessing IFCD funds if 1 extra point is allocated, 10% if 2 extra points are given	- IFCD fully maintains its inclusive nature – no donor discouragement
CONS	CONS	CONS
- Donor discouragement (among Parties): in the current context a great threat for the IFCD - Some disconnect with the mandate of UNESCO and the spirit of the 2005 Convention	- Some donor disgruntlement is possible, but full-blown discouragement unlikely	- Risk that poorer countries are "outcompeted" although current evidence shows that this is not the case

Preferred option recommended by the Panel of Experts
Option 3: maintain the status quo. Track the proportion of projects going to richer developing countries, according to the HDI definition and should richer countries start to consistently (over 3 or more years) receive a <u>disproportionate</u> number of projects, implement option 2.

2. Promote regional initiatives

Recommendation
REC 2: To consider actively promoting and/or prioritizing regional initiatives through the IFCD in order to promote greater international cooperation (in line with article 12 of the Convention) and to also impact more countries, thereby meeting the needs and expectations of more Parties and potential project holders.
Problem that recommendation addresses
Too few countries benefit from the IFCD.
Implications of recommendation
Level of urgency/strategic importance: low *Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: low* *Facts and data* After 8 cycles of funding, slightly more than 50% of eligible countries, 57 out of 108, have so far benefited from IFCD projects either as main beneficiaries or project partners.

4 regional projects have been funded: 3 of these were implemented by international NGOs and 1 by a Party with government authorities from 5 other countries as direct partners. These regional projects have mobilized significant co-funding: for two of these projects, IFCD funding represented less than 50% of the total project cost.

Aside from the 4 explicitly regional projects, several other IFCD projects have integrated in a less formal way collaboration with institutions and experts from other countries, or have implemented IFCD projects as part of wider regional dynamics. The IFCD project evaluation form awards points for projects that promote South-South collaboration, therefore rewarding regional projects.

For comparison, the European Union (EU) ACP Culture+ programme (which funds projects similar to the IFCD, as well films productions, and for which project applicants must have international partners) over a 6-year funding cycle, funded 54 projects with direct partners in 53[4] out of 79 ACP countries. Almost half of the project main beneficiaries were from non-ACP European countries, either international NGOs or production companies. The average funding amount was approximately EUR. 400,000.

Analysis

Regional projects are desirable for the fund in particular for how they contribute to greater international collaboration in the realm of culture. However, the maximum amount of funding available to an IFCD project, currently stands at USD 100,000. For some multi-country projects, this funding amount may be too little; the figures above showed that two regional projects so far funded benefitted from significant co-funding. Giving a strong preference to regional projects may thus imply giving preference to projects from international NGOs or from countries that can put up significant co-funding, at the expense of poorer countries.

The impression that the IFCD has reached too few countries may also be relativized; the IFCD does not compare so unfavorably with the EU ACPCulture+ programme which had a funding envelope three times larger than the IFCD's. Given that the IFCD launches annual calls, every year there is potential for new countries to be reached.

Project experience also shows that it takes some skill and good lines of communication right from the proposal development stage for partnerships to be effective for all parties. Pushing applicants too strongly towards regional projects presents the risk of encouraging rushed partnerships and as a result ineffective use of resources in partner countries.

The pros and cons of the recommendation and two alternative options are assessed below.

Option 1 (recommendation from evaluation)

Give preference immediately to regional projects.

Option 2 (alternative)

Wait until the IFCD has at least US$1 million to fund projects in each cycle to open up a window for regional projects with a higher maximum budget (e.g. US$ 200,000). In the meantime, continue with the status quo.

Option 3 (alternative)

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4   Source: ACP Secretariat. 2018. 5 Years: How ACPCulture+ Programme contributed to the structuring of cultural industries in ACP countries. The report puts forward the figure of approximately 60 projects based on countries where activities were conducted. We have used a stricter definition, counting only the ACP countries that partners came from.

Maintain the status quo. Do not add any further incentive for regional projects. Several project applications already have a regional perspective, and points are already accorded for this on the project evaluation form.

Assessment of options

Option 1: give preference immediately to regional projects	Option 2: delay recommendation until at least $1 million per cycle is available	Option 3: maintain the status quo
PROS - Potential to reach more countries with the same budget - Actively incite regional collaborations	PROS - Provide more appropriate funding level for true regional projects - Actively incite regional collaboration	PROS - Do not introduce any distortion. Trend in applications already going in the direction of regional projects
CONS - Could imply favoring projects from international NGOs and richer countries with co-funding capacities	CONS - Contingent on IFCD funding capacity increasing significantly	CONS - Do not actively incite regional collaboration

Preferred option recommended by the Panel of Experts

Option 3: maintain the status quo. In the announcement of the call for proposals explicitly encourage regional projects. Await evaluations of a body of regional projects to assess whether the current $100.000 funding envelope is too restrictive for regional projects.

3. Introduce an endorsement scheme

Recommendation

REC 3. To introduce an IFCD endorsement scheme for projects implemented in high human development countries where IFCD funding is not as relevant as in low human development countries with fewer funding opportunities.

Problem that recommendation addresses

This recommendation aims at providing an alternative for countries that would be excluded were Recommendation 1 to use a more restrictive definition of developing country adopted.

Implications of recommendation

Level of urgency/strategic importance: low
Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: medium.
Risk of wasted efforts.

Analysis

If a more restrictive definition of developing countries were to be adopted by the IFCD, this recommendation involves applicants preparing proposals that would be assessed by the IFCD Expert Panel to receive an endorsement that could then serve to mobilize domestic or international resources from other sources. Even if a more restrictive definition were not adopted, this recommendation could be applied to project applications that are of good quality, but that do not receive funding because of lack of sufficient funds.

It can be argued that endorsement in some country contexts may give projects greater credibility. However, for such a scheme to have significant benefits for applicants, there would need to be substantial coordination between UNESCO and other potential funders; given that international donors have different agendas and criteria, such coordination would be complex to set up successfully. The EU attempted a similar experience in 2011, setting up an "Auction Floor Culture" to attract investors and donors for culture proposals received under "Investing in People", "ACP Films" and "ACP Cultures" calls. One report notes that the auction failed to attract any investors.[5]

The potential benefit of this recommendation is therefore not sufficiently commensurate with the level of effort demanded of applicants, the Secretariat and the Panel of Experts. Unlike other UNESCO schemes that provide a form of endorsement – for instance the World Heritage listings – which provide a label for existing "products" that can then immediately benefit from the increased notoriety, this recommendation is about endorsing an "idea" that would still need several steps to become a reality.

The IFCD platform also currently makes the evaluations of project applications publicly available. Applicants who wish can thus already publicize positive evaluations of their application.

The pros and cons of the recommendation and an alternative option are assessed below.

Option 1 (recommendation from evaluation)

Introduce endorsement scheme.

Option 2 (alternative)

Do not introduce any form of IFCD endorsement. Consider how the IFCD applications database can be made for visible, keeping in mind however, that some applicants may prefer that their applications and evaluations are kept private.

Assessment of options

Option 1: endorsement scheme	Option 2: no endorsement scheme	
PROS	PROS	
- Possibly (but with very low likelihood) create new opportunities for beneficiaries aligned with IFCD objectives	- No extra work created for the Secretariat	

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5   Kuhner, M (n.d). The Role of Culture in EU Cooperation with ACP Countries. IFA Stuttgart.

CONS	CONS	
- Would generate extra work for the Secretariat that is already stretched thin	- Potentially missing opportunity to make the IFCD and the Convention better known	

Preferred option recommended by the Panel of Experts

Option 2: do not introduce an endorsement scheme. Increase visibility of the project application database so that applicants who wish can use the publicly available evaluation as an endorsement. Ask applicants for explicit consent to make their application and evaluation publicly available even if their application is not successful.

4. Introduce concept notes

Recommendation

REC 4. Introduce a call for concept notes that would complement the current call for proposals. The evaluation team recommends adopting a call requesting a short 2-3-page application with a simple budget based on two elements: a summary of the proposed action presented within a simple theory of change reflecting a wider contextual change process and elements proving the capacity of partners (see Recommendation 21). Concept notes should be presented online to be assessed by National Commissions. After the first screening process, a maximum of 15 to 20 applicants would be invited to develop full proposals following the same process currently in place.

Problem that recommendation addresses

The primary problem raised by the IFCD evaluation is that with respect to selection chances, applicants have to expend too great an effort to prepare full applications. Some applicants with lesser capacities are likely being completely discouraged from applying. The secondary problem is that screening and assessing full applications requires considerable effort from the National Commissions and the Secretariat.

Implications of recommendation

Level of urgency/strategic importance: low-medium
Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: medium. May lead to poorer project selection

Facts and data

In the last three funding cycles, on average roughly 300 applications were submitted. The percentage of applications rejected (attrition rate) at each selection step are shown below.

	2015	2016	2017	**Average**
Total applications received	266	415	216	**299**
Applications for technical assessment	90	98	58	**82**
Applications for final evaluation	55	36	26	**39**
Funded projects	6	6	7	
Attrition rate of NatComm screening	66%	76%	73%	**72%**

Attrition rate of technical assessment	39%	63%	55%	**52%**
Attrition rate of final evaluation	89%	83%	73%	**82%**
Overall attrition rate: from application to final selection	98%	99%	97%	**98%**

Overall an application only has a 2% chance of receiving funding. Only 14% on average (peak 21%, low 9%) of applications undergo the full final evaluation which is the most time-consuming and costly selection phase as paid external experts are used.

Comparison: The Roberto Cimetta Fund reports receiving about 400 applications for their support grants of which 5-6 receive funding per year (slightly less than 2% chance of funding). They use concept notes for screening. The Prince Claus Fund reports that they expect a minimum of 200 applications for each support grant call, and up to 400 applications especially when calls are global like IFCD calls are. They do not use concept notes because they fear it would slow down selection too much. The EU ACP Cultures+ programme received 506 applications and funded 54 projects (10% chance of funding). While the application included a concept note, all applicants had to prepare a full proposal.

In terms of complexity, the 2017 IFCD application form had 17 substantive sections (i.e. excluding sections asking for names, addresses, etc. or simple tick box questions) for applicants to fill for a maximum length of roughly 8500 words. To put this length in perspective, the application for the Culture Bridges grants (ran by the British Council, maximum grant amount EUR 50,000) has 16 substantive sections for a maximum of 2900 words, while the EU ACPCulture+ (average grant EUR 400,000) concept note had 6 substantive sections for a maximum of 5000 words, and the full application 15 sections for about 25,000 words.

Analysis

The data above shows that similar funds are receiving similar numbers of applications; the main distinction in chances of selection comes from the funding envelope available for projects. In terms of complexity, the IFCD full application is in middle – it is not the simplest, but much simpler than other grants aimed at structural improvements in the culture sector.

Concept notes can be useful tool for screening applications in particular with regard to relevance. Short concept notes seem to work well for funding institutions that target either a limited number of countries, and therefore receive a relatively limited number of applications allowing for quick processing, for institutions that have a certain level of flexibility in their procedures allowing them to engage in substantive dialogue with applicants during the selection process, or for institutions that are soliciting ideas from applicants they already know. When used by multilateral institutions with more rigid application processes similar to UNESCO's, the concept notes tend to become quite long, in some cases (EU grants) as long or longer than the current IFCD full application.

Introducing concept notes in the IFCD selection process presents two specific difficulties. The first is the risk of poor selection of projects. IFCD calls are global, therefore applicants from all over the world apply; evaluators of the applications cannot have knowledge of all the applicant country contexts and thus have to rely heavily on information provided by applicants to assess the quality of proposals. With the current full application format, proposal evaluators already sometimes feel they are not getting enough information. A short concept note may therefore not provide sufficient information to make good informed choices. Private foundations may have the latitude of directly contacting applicants to ask for further information that can help in assessing proposals: this is not an option for a multilateral fund like the IFCD.

The second difficulty is that given the obligatory participation of National Commissions in screening projects, concept notes would essentially be screened by the National Commissions.

While shorter concept notes may be easier for National Commissions to screen, the number of applications is likely to rise considerably if concept notes are introduced, and therefore National Commissions will be called on to be even more selective. This is not ideal given that currently in several countries National Commissions are the weak point in the selection chain. It is possible however, to ask National Commissions to focus on more limited parts of the application form in their preselection (see Role and capacity of National Commissions). This would essentially reduce the burden on National Commissions without increasing the number of applications because applicants would still have the burden of preparing a full application.

In addition to these two difficulties that risk compromising the quality of projects selected, introducing concept notes also presents challenges in the selection schedule.

The pros and cons of implementing the recommendation and one alternative option are presented below. The suggested incorporation of a **theory of change** in the application form should be implemented regardless of whether concept notes are introduced or not.

Option 1 (recommendation from external evaluation)

Introduce concept notes.

Option 2

Do not introduce concept notes. Communicate statistics on chances of selection so that applicants can judge whether they want to make the effort[6]. Focus on ensuring simplicity of the application forms: undertake in-depth review (assessing content provided by applicants *and* comparing form to similar funding applications) of the application form every two years to ensure that it maintains a good balance between simplicity and gathering sufficient information necessary for assessing proposals. A simplifying measure that can be implemented immediately is to ask for proforma invoices for budget expenditures only for projects that are recommended for funding.

Assessment of options

Option 1: Introduce concept notes	Option 2: no concept note, attenuating measures	Option 3
PROS - Lower the barrier for applicants preparing applications	PROS - No disruption in application schedule - Higher barrier for applicants limits the number of applications	PROS -
CONS - Risk of poor project selection - Additional responsibility to National Commissions – this is risky - Complicates application schedule	CONS - Applicants continue to expend significant effort to prepare full applications	CONS -

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[6] Communicate the numbers rather than the percentages: i.e. The IFCD receives around 300 applications and funds about 7 projects each year.

- Likely to lead to increased number of irrelevant applications		

Preferred option recommended by the Panel of Experts

Option 2: Do not introduce concept notes but limit the applicant information that National Commissions need to assess. Communicate statistics on chances of selection so that applicants can judge whether they want to make the effort. Focus on ensuring simplicity of the application forms.

5.   Allocate extra criteria in the scoring system

Recommendation
REC 6. Allocate extra criteria in the proposal scoring system to projects promoting certain strategic themes and/or geographic regions in order to finetune project selection and reduce the challenges emerging from the 30-point decision as well as geographic imbalance.
Problem that recommendation addresses
The current scoring system does not provide an explicit point that favors countries that have never had projects funded.
Implications of recommendation   *Level of urgency/strategic importance: low*   *Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: low*   *Facts and data*   Article 6.6 of the operational guidelines stipulates that the Committee shall ensure that the use of the IFCD resources "respects, to the extent possible, an equitable geographic distribution of the resources of the IFCD and gives priority to Parties who have not yet benefited or who have benefited the least from these resources". This Article of the guidelines has not yet been translated into a formal act that would direct the Panel of Experts to, for example, systematically allocated an explicit point to projects submitted by Parties who have not yet benefited from the IFCD.   As for strategic themes, the project application scoring system has taken into account and has favored projects relating to gender equality, youth empowerment, South-South cooperation and marginalized social groups.   *Analysis*   The current scoring system does not formally implement Art 6.6. Rather, the Panel of Experts has informally been asked by the IGC to ensure a geographic balance among projects recommended for IFCD funding. In the absence of a specific IGC Decision on this issue, it has been left to the discretion of the panel members and its Coordinator.   The task of ensuring geographical balance can be interpreted in two ways: favoring countries that have never received funding, and/or avoiding the concentration of funding in a single country by disfavoring countries that have recently received funding.   Two options for implementing this recommendation and one alternative are assessed below.
Option 1
Add 1 bonus point to the scoring system for projects submitted from countries that have never received IFCD funding.
Option 2
Add 1 penalty point to the scoring system for projects submitted from countries that have had one project funded within the last 2 funding cycles.
Option 3
Maintain the status quo whereby the Panel of Experts implicitly takes into account geographic balance.

Assessment of options		
Option 1: 1 bonus point	Option 2: 1 penalty point	Option 3: maintain status quo
PROS - Renders respect of Art 6.6 of operational guidelines uniform and explicit - Increases by 5% chances of new countries getting IFCD funding	PROS - Reduces by 5% chances of concentration of resources in any given country to the detriment of other Parties.	PROS - Keeps the applicant evaluation purely merit-based
CONS -	CONS - Not a direct interpretation of Para 6.6 of the operational guidelines	CONS - Not possible to explicitly implement Art. 6.6 of operational guidelines.

Preferred option recommended by the Panel of Experts
The Panel of Experts recommends a combination of option 1 and option 3, whereby the Coordinator of the Panel of Experts in the final decision on projects with scores close to the recommendation range, attributes 1 bonus point for projects from countries that have never received funding. In addition, the Panel of Experts asks that the current 30-point criteria, whereby any project scoring at least 30 points is recommended for funding be revised, to stipulate that the highest-scoring projects attaining at least 30 points, will be recommended for funding within the limit of funds available.

6.   Capacity-building for applicants

Recommendation
Rec 11: Develop tailored capacity-building actions for countries with less funding opportunities in the cultural sector and for those countries that have never received funding.

Problem that recommendation addresses
This recommendation aims at ensuring equal opportunities. Some of the countries with the greatest needs may have the lowest capacities for preparing proposals.

Implications of recommendation
Level of urgency/strategic importance: medium. *Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: low.* *Estimated cost: depends on model of online training chosen. Consider between US$6,000 to 19,000 for 1 hour of e-learning content.* *Facts and data* The Panel of Experts consistently reports wide variance in the quality of formulation of project applications, and the general trend is that the higher human development countries produce better quality proposals than the lower human development countries, even if the latter may present good ideas.

The 2005 Convention capacity building programme has deployed training courses in several countries, notably on policy design, implementation and monitoring; sometimes training on IFCD proposal development has been added to these courses. A training module on IFCD applications already exists. The effectiveness of existing IFCD training has not yet been evaluated.

Analysis

Building capacities of applicants in proposal development benefits the IFCD by producing a wider pool of high-quality projects to choose from. If the capacity building is appropriately wide, it also potentially benefits the culture sector as a whole by increasing resource mobilization capacities.

The choice of training modalities needs to consider various issues:

a) Proposal development is a transversal skill, once learned the skill can be applied to various funding calls and even different fields. For greatest utility, ideally training should not be only strictly focused on the IFCD application format (this format may change over time), but the general thought process necessary for building a solid project. This would ensure that low capacity applicants have improved access to a variety of funding sources for culture.

b) In-person training allows greatest room for tailor design and hands-on practice. This form of training can also double as a vehicle for publicizing the IFCD in regions where the 2005 Convention and its fund are still not well known. However, it presents several risks that can lead to poor learning uptake: (1) poorly motivated learners especially when training is provided free of charge and/or per-diems are provided, (2) poorly motivated or wrong participant profile if selection of beneficiaries is not carefully conducted. It also has the disadvantage of being costly to implement at scale. Those who have participated in preparing IFCD training so far feel that any future in-class training ideally should be at least 3 days long.

c) Online training is an excellent method for reaching many learners at low cost. Various academic studies suggest that learning outcomes of in-class and online courses are very similar[7]. Because participants essentially self-select, they are likely to be more motivated. It is also easier to collect feedback for online courses making it easier assess the suitability of course content. The downsides are that for longer courses adherence may be an issue. Connectivity may also be an issue in some countries, however the general trend in all countries is that connectivity is improving. Any platform however should be designed with low connectivity in mind.

Examples of online learning developed for culture range from very short formats to longer training programmes. The EU funded Cultural Bridges programme ran by the British Council has developed a 20-minute YouTube course on proposal writing (https://www.culturepartnership.eu/en/publishing/proposal-writing-course). The tools section of the website also has a 5 min video (a text version is also available for those who cannot or do not want to watch the video) about common mistakes in project applications https://www.culturepartnership.eu/en/article/culture-bridges-mistakes.

Online training has been successfully deployed in Burkina Faso (globally ranked 187th for internet speed [8]) by Africalia who delivered a 3-month blended training programme for cultural entrepreneurs (topics went beyond proposal development) https://africalia.be/en/Africalia-work-13/Specific-projects/B-FASO-CREATIVE?lang=en.

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[7] Nguyen, T. (2015). The Effectiveness of Online Learning: Beyond No Significant Difference and Future Horizons, *MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching,* Vol. 11, No. 2, June 2015

[8] https://www.cable.co.uk/about/media-centre/releases/new-worldwide-broadband-speed-league-unveiled-uk-ranks-31/

Several online courses on proposal writing in other fields exist – very few appear to be free (costs range from US$200 to 1200), and some can be quite lengthy running up to 5 months for 50 hours (https://reliefweb.int/training/986971/distance-training-programme-project-proposal-writing)

Three options for implementing this recommended are assessed below.

Option 1

Implement in-country face-to-face training. Update the existing training module. Collect detailed feedback especially from the first 3 training workshops that are deployed. Budget limitations would mean not all countries could benefit. First priority would be given to countries that have never had an IFCD project funded and/or those countries with the lowest conversion rate (ratio of number of applications to number of projects funded. Additional criteria could be priority to low HDI countries that have made voluntary contributions to the IFCD. Ideally the individual participants should be selected through a competitive process. However, selection, by either the Ministry of Culture or the National Commission adheres best to UNESCO principles.

Option 2

Develop an online course. Design options range from short videos without exercises to real online classrooms with practical exercises, in effect requiring long-term involvement of a pedagogical team. Ensure that good text resumes of video content are also available in case applicants have connectivity issues (see Culture Bridges example above). Subtitles in as many of the five other UN languages as possible should be provided (priority: French, Spanish, Arabic). There may be potential to collaborate with other organizations such as the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA), Prince Claus or the new EU programme that will replace ACP Culture+ in developing core online content on proposal development (theory of change, linking objectives to activities, etc.); specificities of each fund can then be addressed in individual videos.

Option 3

Grab low-hanging fruit – provide links to existing free proposal writing resources.

Assessment of options		
Option 1: in-person learning	Option 2: online course	Option 3: links to existing resources
PROS - Content can be adapted to country specificities - Opportunity for in-person exchange	PROS - Once set up, no limits to how many people can be reached - Self-selection ensures better motivated participants - Easy to collect feedback to improve content - Potential to collaborate with other funders to develop common content	PROS - No cost involved – just 2 to 3 days of Secretariat staff time to set up, 1 day per year to update.
CONS - Limited reach because option is costly to implement at scale (estimate $6000 for 4-day training per country) - High risk of training not reaching the right participants	CONS - Depending on format, high initial outlay may be required. US industry studies report widely varying costs for development of <u>1 hour of eLearning ranging</u> from a minimum $6000 US to an average of US$19,000[9]	CONS - Most resources appear to be in English. May need to provide translated transcripts of such resources in French and Spanish - Content may not be directly relevant to IFCD applications
Preferred option recommended by the Panel of Experts Combine Option 1 and Option 2. Implement in-person training on the IFCD through the 2005 Convention Capacity building programme. Integrate a 1-day session on the IFCD in all 2005 Convention training programmes. The new SIDA-funded capacity building programme would allow potentially 16 countries to be reached in this way. Also encourage field offices that have the capacity to undertake capacity building [10] . Develop online videos focusing in particular on: 1) visual presentation of the application guide, and 2) common weaknesses in project applications and elements that are well appreciated. Explore the opportunities for developing more elaborate on-line training in conjunction with other culture funding institutions.		

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[9]   See https://raccoongang.com/blog/how-much-does-it-cost-create-online-course/ OR http://www.androcom.com/elearningcosts OR https://www.tagoras.com/cost-to-create-e-learning/

[10]   The UNESCO Field Office in Palestine and in Argentina for instance have organized 1-day sessions on preparing IFCD applications.

7.   Greater attention to the capacity of project implementers

Recommendation

REC 21. To devote more attention to the capacity of project partners [implementers] and give this factor greater weight in the selection process…Include elements that prove the capacity of partners (such as experience, sector expertise, past performance and participation in networks).

Problem that recommendation addresses

The capacity of implementing partners appears to be a key determinant of the sustainability of actions funded by the IFCD. It is therefore key to ensuring that the IFCD has long-term impact. Currently the application process only weakly assesses this capacity.

Implications of recommendation

Level of urgency/strategic importance: medium to high. Potential to improve project selection ultimately resulting in greater impact
Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: low

Facts and data

The current application form collects information in about 400 words about applicants: 1) Main mission, 2) Main activities, 3) Date of establishment 4) Website. Some members of the Panel of Experts do web searches on applicants during the proposal evaluation to gain better insight into applicant's capacities. Applicants also list project partners (and in some cases, but not all provide some information on their experience) and expertise and roles of main project staff (expertise is often described very summarily – e.g. Masters in project management).

The project evaluation form contains 1 question (roughly 2 out of 40 points) on applicant capacities: *2.1 What elements demonstrate the applicant's organizational capacity (main activities of the institution/organization) and competence (skills and background of staff) to implement the work plan and manage the budget?* Another question on the involvement of project partners also somewhat informs on implementing capacities: *5.1 To what extent are contractors and partners involved in the implementation of the project's activities? Has the role of each contractor and/or partner been clearly described?*

The preselection form filled in by National Commissions also contains 1 question on applicant capacities: *What elements demonstrate that the applicant institution/organization is a significant stakeholder in the culture sector (locally / nationally /internationally)?*

Analysis

With just one question that counts for roughly 5% of overall project scores, the IFCD proposal score sheet indeed does not put much emphasis on capacity for implementation.

With global calls for proposals, getting sufficient information to accurately assess applicants' capacities is a challenge. Some funds rely on an extensive network of voluntary advisors in several countries who can advise on the reputation of applicants. Others ask applicants to list two or three references, who are contacted if the application is shortlisted. Several bigger funding institutions (EU, Global Affairs Canada) ask applicants to fill in a table with references of two to five similar experiences. The information asked for includes funder, project budget, project duration, project partners, role of the applicant in the action. The first and second approaches may be problematic for a multilateral fund like the IFCD, but the third approach can easily be incorporated into the selection process.

Giving greater weight to the capacities of applicants may put newly established applicants at a slight disadvantage. It can be argued that this is not problematic given that the IFCD targets projects that produce structural change; actors capable of bringing about such change, in general, must already have solid experience.

As well as taking inspiration from what information other funding organizations ask for, it would be useful for a future IFCD learning activity to analyze and highlight the characteristics of successful project implementers and the warning signs of limited capacity. This could serve to later finetune the application form.

Measures to implement this recommendation are listed below.

Measures to implement the recommendation (validated by the Panel of Experts)
1. In the application form, include a table to inform on at least 2 similar experiences; to limit risk of fraudulent information, reference contacts should be asked for each experience listed (even if these may not be contacted), as well as URL links about the project experience cited.
2. Use a structured table to collect information on project partners to ensure that applicants give more complete information. URL links to project partners web pages should be given, where these are available.
3. Add a question to the project evaluation form directly related to applicant capacities. This would increase weight given to applicant capacities in proposal evaluation to at least 10%. The question could be "Does the applicant have experience implementing projects for structural change in the culture sector", which would be directly informed by the table to be inserted on past experiences. Newly established applicants would score poorly on this question, but they still have a chance to score well on the existing question on applicant capacity.

8.   Positive discrimination to increase women's representation

Recommendation
REC 15. To positively discriminate project proposals that include concrete actions aimed at increasing women's representation in key areas of cultural activity and/or aimed at challenging traditional women's roles.
Problem that recommendation addresses
While gender equality has become a more visible priority for the implementation of the 2005 Convention, especially following the publication of the Convention monitoring framework in 2015, the evaluation found that no single IFCD project so far had strongly addressed gender inequalities in cultural production and access.

Implications of recommendation

Level of urgency/strategic importance: medium - high. Gender equality is of key strategic importance for the 2005 Convention
Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: low

Facts and data

For several years, the IFCD application form has given applicants an opportunity in varying ways to describe how their project contributes to gender equality. Projects can earn points for addressing gender equality, but they are not obliged to address the issue.

Analysis

Most applications that provide information on how they intend to address gender equality through their projects have presented measures such as ensuring a certain level of participation of women in any training activities planned. When stronger measures have been proposed, sometimes they seem grafted onto a wider proposal, rather than an integral part of a coherent proposal.

The current format where gender considerations are optional thus far has generated mostly superficial and/or opportunistic measures. Positive discrimination which simply accords additional points for addressing gender equality is likely to lead to a similar response from applicants. What needs to be encouraged instead are gender transformative projects whose entire design is based around the issue of gender equality, or at least which incorporate gender measures in a strong and coherent manner. Two options that go in this direction are assessed below.

For either of these options to produce the best results, applicants as well as the Panel of Experts need to be informed about what makes a project gender transformative. UNESCO has produced research that can inform applicants wishing to address gender inequalities. Links to such studies, as well as other resources on gender transformative project design should be provided to applicants on the IFCD application page.

Option 1 : Introduce periodic calls for gender transformative projects. Every 3 to 4 years, IFCD calls invite only applications focused on addressing gender equality in culture.

Option 2 : Integrate a special call for gender transformative project in all IFCD calls. In each call set aside funding for 2 or more projects (30% to 50% of funding available) that directly address gender equality. Applicants would have to choose whether to respond to the gender call or the normal call. The application form for the gender call would include more detailed questions on gendered needs assessment, gendered objectives, etc.

Assessment of options

Option 1 : periodic gender calls	Option 2 : specific gender envelope	Option 3
PROS - Periodically forces all potential IFCD applicants to think seriously about gender equality - Large pool of gender projects from which to select the best	PROS - Gender equality promoted during each call	PROS -

CONS	CONS	CONS
- Good gender projects in between gender calls may be discouraged	- Slight risk that the pool of gender applications[11] is small which may result in funding low quality projects (to mitigate this risk, the option to not fund any gender project if none meet minimum criteria should be reserved)	-

Measures to implement with either one of the options chosen are:

- Introduce gender disaggregated indicators in monitoring and evaluation tools.
- Develop a gender knowledge pack that applicants can consult to get ideas about how to develop a good project to address gender inequalities.
- Include a session on gender in the induction meeting of the Panel of Experts. Provide the Panel with the same gender knowledge pack as applicants.

Preferred option recommended by the Panel of Experts

Option 2. Integrate a special call for gender transformative projects in IFCD calls. If after 4 cycles, the pool of applications is too limited for good project selection, consider moving to periodic gender calls.

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[11] The experience with the first U40 Empowered special call, which can be considered similar to this option, received over 100 applications, suggesting that the risk is indeed slight.

PART 2: RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO LEARNING AND FUNDRAISING

9.   Conduct a human resource analysis

Recommendation
REC 8. To conduct a human resource analysis in the Secretariat with a view to meeting the needs of the IFCD and strengthening the Secretariat (in line with IOS Recommendation 31). Strengthening the team's fundraising capacity is particularly key for the future of the Fund and in order to maximize efforts to date.
Problem that recommendation addresses
The Secretariat currently lacks suitable staff in sufficient quantity for fundraising and monitoring and evaluation
Implications of recommendation
Level of urgency/strategic importance: high   *Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: low.*   *Estimated cost: US$4000 for the analysis; additional funding necessary for implementing conclusions of analysis*   *Analysis*   This recommendation addresses a highly strategic issue for the IFCD. The two key strategic functions of fundraising (which ensures the sustainability of the IFCD) and monitoring & evaluation (which provides the information to drive impact and fundraising) are currently weak for lack of dedicated staff with specialist skill sets that these functions require.   The Secretariat staff already has several ideas of where weaknesses lie and what kinds of skills are needed. The intervention of external human resource expertise is needed to specify and complete the assessment of current human resource needs and review all options for responding to those needs in a cost-effective manner.   The support of a senior HR consultant with extensive experience with international organizations, and ideally with good knowledge of monitoring and evaluation and fundraising functions within organizations should be called on. Terms of references should be carefully drafted, with a focus in particular on the deliverables – what questions is the consultant to answer. An example could be: - What is the current level of adequacy of human resources for a) fundraising, b) monitoring and evaluation, c) the Secretariat overall?   - What are the key weaknesses to be addressed for each of the domains above?   - What are the options for addressing the HR weaknesses? Two to three options should be presented for each weakness including an ideal solution and a low-cost solution.
Measures to implement the recommendation
Commission an HR analysis for the IFCD. A senior HR consultant is to conduct individual and/or group interviews with staff, undertake a review of fundraising and monitoring & evaluation tools, present findings and conclusions in an interactive workshop. Estimated cost (5 billed days): US$ 4000.

10. Resources for learning

Recommendation

REC 12. Make resources available so that the Secretariat can take bold steps for the IFCD to become a "learning-driven" fund by introducing measures that aim to extract lessons and spaces for the reflection at that center of the IFCD strategy, including hiring of dedicated staff at the Secretariat responsible for project monitoring and evaluation.

Problem that recommendation addresses

The IFCD currently cannot capture lessons from projects implemented to improve implementation, as well as future selection of projects for higher impact.

Implications of recommendation

Level of urgency/strategic importance: high.
Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: low
Minimum estimated cost: $78,000 per year

Facts and data

Figures for expenditure of funding organizations on monitoring and evaluation are hard to come by as they are often incorporated in wider programmatic expenditure figures. One benchmark figure was found for the Prince Claus Foundation.

Fund	M&E expenditure	Grants expenditure	Total income
Prince Claus	202,000	1,600,000	3,900,000
M&E as percentage of		*13%*	*5%*

Source: Prince Claus 2016 annual report

Analysis

This recommendation addresses a key strategic issue that can potentially set in place a virtuous cycle for the IFCD. Effective learning systems (through monitoring and evaluation, notably) would provide the IFCD with the leverage to:

- Strengthen UNESCO's position as a leading source of knowledge on cultural policies and industries particularly in developing countries.
- Improve IFCD project selection and implementation for greater impact.

Both these outcomes are likely to facilitate fundraising for the IFCD.

Learning is currently weak at the IFCD because of insufficient human and financial resources. Reasonable systems are in place for capturing lessons on IFCD processes – the IFCD has undergone two independent evaluations, feedback on application processes is regularly collected from the expert panel, etc. In addition, a result-based monitoring framework is in place and some IFCD staff[12] have received training on result-based management (RBM). However, further support may be needed to understand how to adapt RBM tools to project monitoring.

A key weakness also lies in getting information on the projects. Most project information available is based on self-reporting by grant recipients (including a recently conducted impact evaluation

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[12]   However, with new staff coming on board, training most likely needs to be renewed.

study) for lack of means to effect field visits. Some *ad hoc* field visits to projects take place, mostly linked to missions planned for other purposes, but these are not regular enough for Secretariat staff to gain an optimum level of field knowledge. It should also be noted that heavy administrative procedures currently place a burden on IFCD staff, limiting the time they can dedicate to learning-oriented monitoring.

The human resources required to implement learning systems can take many shapes depending on an organization's culture and on the structures already in place – training for existing staff (that is regularly renewed), short term consultant support, new permanent full time or part time staff, etc. Further analysis is prudent to determine the most suitable form and corresponding resources for implementing this recommendation. The human resources analysis discussed in section 9 should address in detail resources needed for learning. Factors that need to be considered are:

- Current distribution of M&E responsibilities among existing staff. This includes an analysis of competing responsibilities that potentially impede staff from dedicating time to M&E. For example, limiting time spent on financial monitoring by requiring projects to submit independent audits, could potentially permit IFCD staff to dedicate more time to learning activities.
- Current levels of M&E and research skills among existing staff
- Strengths and weaknesses in current M&E tools, including field office participation in project monitoring
- Current and potential links with wider 2005 Convention learning: how to optimize cross-fertilization between IFCD learning and wider 2005 Convention learning
- It may be useful, outside of existing frameworks, to identify one very clear key question that will drive learning, such as "What kind of actions work best to strengthen the diversity of cultural expressions?". Short direct questions can be more motivating for staff and partners than more complex analytical frameworks, and yet can still be effective in mobilizing information for those frameworks.

The first task of the M&E human resources put in place in the form recommended by the HR analysis should be the re-design and testing of an overall M&E system for IFCD projects.

The benchmark example above from Prince Claus fund, which has recently prioritized monitoring and evaluation in its new strategy, suggests, assuming $600,000 of IFCD project funding is available per year, that **approximately $78,000 per year** (13% of 600,000) be allocated to IFCD M&E (this includes any direct staff costs). If project funding increases, then the M&E budget should also increase. The overall M&E budget would cover the costs of independent project evaluations discussed in the next section.

Measures to implement the recommendation
1. Invite the IGC to commit to making the resources available for implementing costed options for building learning capacity resulting from the human resource (HR) analysis (see section 9)
2. For 2019, invite the IGC to commit up to US$30 000 for the re-design and testing of an overall M&E system from 'unassigned funds'. The exact costs of this exercise will depend on the options for building learning capacity resulting from the HR analysis
3. Invite the IGC to commit to regularly allocating a percentage of either IFCD project funding or IFCD total income to learning (monitoring & evaluation human resources, tools and products)
4. The Secretariat should undertake a rapid review practices of other organizations with strong learning cultures funding culture or social change to identify practices that could potentially strengthen existing systems and present a 2-5-page report with suggested practices for

> feedback from the Panel of Experts. For example, one practice that could strengthen reporting by IFCD grant recipients comes from Prince Claus: M&E staff at project launch work with the grant recipients to highlight the key outcomes from the project proposal and produce custom-designed M&E forms for each project. The timing is important to get partners thinking about collecting data right from project onset. While this requires quite some work, given the small quantity of projects the IFCD funds each year it can feasibly be adopted.

11. Independent evaluations of IFCD projects

Recommendation

REC 13. To conduct random IFCD project independent evaluations in order to build a knowledge base on the projects and extract lessons from the different experiences.

Problem that recommendation addresses

Currently almost all information about projects is based on self-declarations of project implementers. From this the Secretariat does not have a clear vision of how projects performed.

Implications of recommendation

Level of urgency/strategic importance: high. Key element in driving learning and ensuring impact of IFCD funding
Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: low.
Estimated cost: $15,000 per year

Facts and data

IFCD grant recipients submit mid-term and end of project reports. These are based on self-declarations and sometimes of poor quality. The Secretariat staff conduct ad hoc field visits to some project sites; these visits generally occur during field missions for other purposes. During the 2017 IFCD evaluation 3 projects were visited by external evaluators.

Analysis

Independent evaluations are a key element for IFCD learning. Independent objective assessments of project performances will allow the IFCD to understand what kind of projects have impact, and what kind of impacts are being generated. Independent evaluations thus feed both improvements in the IFCD (better selection of future projects) as well as UNESCO's position as a leading source of knowledge on cultural policy and industries. They are a crucial element for IFCD fundraising and communication.

This recommendation can be addressed at two levels. (1) By improving the quality of reports from grant recipients. For this, current reporting templates for grant recipients should be reviewed and strengthened, as part of the overall re-design of the M&E system discussed in section 10. (2) By improving learning on what impacts are being generated. For this, the Secretariat should regularly commission random or semi-random ex-post evaluations focused on assessing the impact of IFCD projects. The budget for these IFCD commissioned evaluations would come from the overall budget allocation for monitoring and evaluation (discussed in previous section). In addition, field visits by Secretariat staff should be planned more regularly to ensure that staff have more direct contact with project experiences allowing them to better assimilate learning from project reports and evaluations.

For the second level aimed at improving impact assessment, methods such as case studies and sustained and emerging impacts evaluation[13] are particularly useful. It is crucial to keep in mind that rigorous and meaningful impact assessment cannot be done if good monitoring is not in place from project launch as indicators describing the initial situation are necessary. The budget implications of these evaluations thus go beyond the individual cost of each evaluation study, as the budget for setting up good monitoring systems must be available too.

M&E expertise (as decided by the HR analysis) should advise on the design of these evaluations. Some key questions include: the ideal time after project end to undertake impact evaluation – information may be too difficult to track down if too much time elapses; the ideal sample to maximize learning potential in a cost-effective way – one combination could be to include at least 1 poor performing project, 1 good performer in each sample.

The key constraint for implementing this recommendation is budgetary. Standard evaluation practice recommends setting aside 3-10% of project costs[14]. On an annual basis, the IFCD can consider setting aside at minimum a sum equivalent to 3% of total project funding (but not taken directly from project funding) for commissioning impact evaluations and case studies. Assuming roughly US$600,000 in project funding per year, US$18,000 per year or US$36,000 per biennium would be available for IFCD-commissioned impact evaluations. With this budget level, at least 3 projects could be evaluated each biennium. The cost of regular field visits by Secretariat staff could be covered by the UNESCO regular programme.

As mentioned earlier, for spending on independent evaluations to be fully effective, spending on the wider M&E system is necessary (see section 10 Resources for Learning). Furthermore, the costs of the measures below are to be considered as part of the global M&E budget discussed in section 10.

Measures for implementing the recommendation

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1) Set aside a sum equivalent to 3% of project funding (roughly US$18,000 each year assuming US$600,000 in project funding) for IFCD-commissioned independent project evaluations. Develop an overall methodology for evaluating IFCD impact (timing of evaluations, drawing project samples, key competencies of evaluators, how results will be used, etc.). Commission at least 3 evaluations per biennium starting in 2020.

12. Increase focus on Parties in the fundraising strategy

Recommendation

REC 16. To review the current Committee's fundraising strategy to ensure that it dedicates more attention to the contributions of Parties and their engagement in a more tailored manner, recognizing that not all Parties have the same capacities and resources.

Problem that recommendation addresses

The fundraising strategy has not sufficiently focused on contributions from the Parties which constitute by far the most significant source of funding for the IFCD.

Implications of recommendation

Level of urgency/strategic importance: high

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[13] See https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/themes/SEIE
[14] See for example: De Perrot and Wodiunig. 2008. Evaluation in the Creative Sector: Why? What? Where? And How?

Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: low

Facts and data

Of seven UNESCO funds supporting culture, five function on the basis of mandatory contributions from Parties. Only the IFCD and the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture (IFPC) receive contributions from Parties on a voluntary basis. The IFPC's funding activities were suspended in 2016 due to lack of sufficient funds and a consultation is underway to determine whether this fund is to continue.

As of 1 August 2018, the ratio of contributions from Parties to contributions from the private sector is: 460:1 ($9,817,000 to $21,000). In 2017, a substantial donation from Sabrina Ho was secured, which went towards the U40 Empowered initiative for women in the digital creative industries which expands the IFCD work. This donation is handled separately from the IFCD. Were it included in IFCD private sector donations, the ratio of Party contributions to private sector contribution would fall to roughly 7:1.

For UNESCO as a whole in 2017, private sector funding contributed 3% to total UNESCO funding – $19 million[15]

Analysis

Parties constitute the bedrock of funding for the IFCD (and for UNESCO as a whole). The IFCD's fundraising strategy included a focus on private sector fundraising which can be understood in the context of general declining contributions from Member States to UNESCO: it is a resource diversification strategy.

The size of the recently secured Sabrina Ho donation, which however does not directly feed into the IFCD budget, demonstrates how private sector partnerships can have potentially very large yields. However, they are not yet a reliable source of continuous funding. To ensure the financial sustainability of the Fund, regular contributions from Parties needs to be secured. The reasons for why Parties contribute or do not contribute need to be analyzed, and this analysis used to feed the development of a new fundraising and communication strategy (the current one comes to an end in 2018).

Depending on time constraints, all measures can be implemented by Secretariat staff without external intervention; there are thus minimal cost implications.

Measures to implement the recommendation

1. Undertake **analysis of what influences contributions from Parties** through 1) a questionnaire circulated prior to the CoP meeting planned in June 2019 aimed at understanding difficulties Parties face in making regular contributions and testing and collecting ideas to encourage larger and more regular contributions, 2) organizing focus groups with Parties during the CoP meeting, 3) holding a plenary session during the CoP meeting about how contributions from Parties can be further encouraged using results from the questionnaire and focus groups.

2. In future, regularly collect **feedback on all communication materials** from 6-10 Parties. Use a custom-designed online questionnaire to collect feedback, focusing especially on how convincing key arguments contained in communication material are. To ensure that feedback from at least 6 Parties is collected, it is recommended to ask for a group of 12-20 volunteers during the CoP meeting and send the questionnaires only to this group rather than to all Parties.

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[15] UNESCO Transparency Portal. https://opendata.unesco.org/

13. Meeting the 1% of UNESCO contributions target

Recommendation

REC 17. To work towards meeting the target contribution of 1% (Art. 18.3 and 18.7) to strengthen the sustainability of the Fund and overturn the static trend of the last 5 years.

REC 19. To modify the current success target of 50% of contributing countries so that instead of focusing on ensuring that at least half of the Parties to the Convention give to the Fund, regular amounts are sought in line with the suggested 1% (Art. 18.3 and 18.7)

Problem that recommendation addresses

The need to secure regular funding to ensure financial sustainability of the Fund.

Implications of recommendation

Level of urgency/strategic importance: high
Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: low

Facts and data

In 2016, 1% of Parties' contributions to UNESCO would have amounted to $1.9 million in funding for the IFCD.

Five Parties have donated to the IFCD for at least 8 consecutive years – Andorra, Finland, France, Mexico and Monaco. A total of 23 Parties have donated at least four (consecutive or non-consecutive) times since the IFCD was launched in 2008.

Contributions from irregular donors can sometimes be large: for example, Norway (two-time contributor) contributed US$1.5 million over 2 years, and Brazil (three-time contributor) contributed US$250,000 in 2011.

Analysis

This recommendation implies de-emphasizing the target of achieving contributions from at least 50% of the Parties to the Convention to focus on encouraging countries to regularly meet the target contribution of 1% of their overall contribution to UNESCO being allocated to the IFCD. This is to ensure that the IFCD has a reliable regular source of income. The target, however is out of sync with the reality of how Parties currently donate: in 11 years of IFCD contributions, only 23 of 63 (37%) contributors have contributed at least 4 times.

Regular contributions for some countries therefore may just not be feasible. For some countries the target of at least 50% of Parties contributing may be more motivating. Both targets can be used to communicate to the Parties, with a slight tweak to the 50% of Parties target to add a shorter time-frame: for instance, at least 50% of Parties contribute every three years. Communication materials should emphasize the donors of the given timeframe, to encourage irregular Parties to make new contributions.

Measures to implement the recommendation

1. Re-emphasize the 1% of UNESCO contribution target in the fundraising strategy for Parties.
2. Put a timeframe (e.g. 3 years) on the 50% of Parties contributing target. When communicating, emphasize which Parties have contributed within that timeframe to encourage renewed contributions.

3. Review current communication to Parties aimed at encouraging contributions (in addition to soliciting feedback on content of communication materials; see section 12) to assess whether Parties are receiving reminders about their contributions at the right time.

14. Review fundraising and communication strategy

Recommendation
REC 18: To strengthen IFCD's fundraising strategy by incorporating an analytical dimension that ensures an explicit connection between communication products and concrete fundraising targets (especially those related to Parties' contributions). REC 20. To strengthen the use of communication materials on the IFCD. The first suggested step is to conduct an analysis of the implementation of the different phases of the Communication Strategy to understand what has worked and what requires improvement.
Problem that recommendation addresses
The Secretariat currently does not know which communication materials are producing fundraising results, and which are ineffective for fundraising.
Implications of recommendation *Level of urgency/strategic importance: high* *Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: low* *Estimated cost: US$65,000 for strategy review and development* *<u>At least</u> 10% of income target for implementing the fundraising strategy* *Facts and data* The two recommendations address the same strategy - the Fundraising and Communication strategy which covers the period 2013-2018. *Analysis* As the current Fundraising and Communication strategy comes to an end, these two recommendations ideally should be addressed as part of the process of drafting the new fundraising and communications strategy. A review of the 2013-2018 strategy should be commissioned that will include the analysis of what worked and what needs to be improved. The review will then feed the drafting of a new strategy which will incorporate monitoring of communication products towards fundraising goals. The review and drafting of the new fundraising and communications strategy is an opportunity for generating and discussing new fundraising ideas. One such idea is for the IFCD to introduce thematic calls as a way of more actively engaging non-Party donors. Particular attention should be paid to the effect of the U40 Empowered special call on the notoriety of the IFCD and more generally the potential benefits or risks that systematically introducing thematic calls present.
Measures to implement the recommendation
Commission a **study to draft a new fundraising and communication strategy**. The study will include a review of the previous strategy. Some key elements to take into consideration: - The issue of finding the right way to communicate on what the IFCD is and does to various donor groups is a key concern. Focus groups on existing communication materials should be organized

with (1) Parties, (2) potential public sector donors, (3) potential private sector donor. The network of 2005 Convention experts could also be mobilized to provide feedback on a voluntary basis on IFCD communications materials;

- The process of developing the new fundraising and communication strategy should be highly participatory. The Secretariat has several ideas that should be discussed, and it is very important the Secretariat has a high level of ownership of this strategy;
- Any new communication materials proposed in the strategy should have a clear distribution plan and a monitoring plan;
- Follow-up support from the firm developing the strategy should be planned for. This could take the form of an annual (virtual or in-person) meeting with the Secretariat to assess progress and decide on any necessary adjustments

Development of the previous strategy in 2012 cost US$57,000. Considering inflation and the requirement for follow-up support, US$65,000 should be made available for the review and development of the new strategy.

The **IGC should commit to making available the necessary resources for implementing the new fundraising strategy**. A key impediment to achieving previous fundraising targets was the lack of human resources to implement the strategy. As of June 2017, the ratio of fundraising expenditure to funds raised was roughly 1:10.

PART 3: RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO STAKEHOLDER PROCESSES

15. Role and capacity of National Commissions

Recommendation

REC 5. To work with the National Commissions to strengthen their role in line with the Guidelines in concrete areas such as the responsibility of forming and coordinating the pre-selection panel (as per articles 12.2 and 12.3 of the Guidelines).

REC 9. To strengthen the capacity of the National Commissions as key actors involved in the application process in order to improve the selection process and avoid the non-selection of good quality projects. A good step forward would be ensuring that each National Commission appoints a focal person in charge of coordinating IFCD issues for at least 2 years, and that in case of changes, the same person ensures the transfer of knowledge and files.

Problem that recommendation addresses

Some National Commissions are undertaking the preselection of projects poorly and this may be compromising the selection of IFCD projects – in particular, potentially good projects may be getting eliminated early in the process.

Implications of recommendation

Level of urgency/strategic importance: medium to high.
Issue is potentially compromising project quality
Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: low

Facts and data

Between 2015 and 2017, on average 13% of applications to the IFCD were *de facto* eliminated because National Commissions did not undertake preselection. In the same period, on average 30% of National Commissions did not perform preselection. This suggests that the National Commissions not performing preselection are primarily those in countries where few applications are submitted.

The IFCD operational guidelines (12.1 and 12.2) stipulate that National Commission <u>or other official channels</u> designated by the Parties have to perform the preselection.

Analysis

Poor performance of preselection responsibilities by National Commissions presents two problems: (1) that of proposals not being screened at all by National Commissions, (2) that of poor-quality screening eliminating potentially good projects too early. The first problem is verified, the second is an assumption that has not yet been verified.

Some of the difficulties that non-performing National Commissions have highlighted are:

- Lack of communication – they were not aware that projects had been submitted from their country;
- Difficulties coordinating with the Ministry in charge of culture for the formation of the preselection panel;

- Language issues for Spanish-speaking countries – it is difficult for them to put together English and/or French speaking panel to assess the projects written in these languages. One national commission reports that it asks applicants to submit also a Spanish version of their project.

A review of the preselection form suggests that more is being asked of National Commissions than is strictly necessary. The main added value National Commissions can bring to the selection process is their knowledge of local priorities and of the reputation and experience of applicants. Section 5 of the preselection form on the feasibility of the project could be eliminated; indeed, this section most often contains responses copied directly from the application and therefore brings little added value.

A method for implementing this recommendation is presented below. It is a tiered approach aimed at economy of efforts and costs. The strategy is to take immediate measures aimed mostly at the first problem of National Commissions not performing preselection. These measures may also have a beneficial effect on the second problem of poor-quality preselection. In two years' time, the quality of preselection can be assessed (this is time consuming), and if found wanting, relatively costly measures such as training low capacity National Commissions can be implemented.

Measures for implementing the recommendation

1. **Standardize indicators for tracking National Commissions screening**. The indicators already exist but should be converted to percentages rather than fractions for easier comprehension. Report regularly to the IGC in particular the indicators on: (1) percentage of applications not being screened, (2) percentage of National Commissions not performing screening. The third indicator on percentage of applications being rejected by National Commissions is more difficult to interpret – it can be both a sign of poor performance or rigorous performance. Set the goal of achieving less than 5% of applications not being screened in 2019.

2. For the 2019 cycle, **simplify the National Commission preselection form** by eliminating section 5. Revise the preselection guide to make it much shorter (15-20 pages). No longer ask National Commissions to read the entire application form; ask them instead to focus on sections 1 and 2 of the application form, directly related to judging the relevance of the project idea and the reputation of the applicant. This is essentially like asking National Commissions to screen a concept note.

3. During the 2019 cycle, **review current communication process** with National Commissions:

- Check that all National Commissions are receiving the call for proposals (right email addresses, receiving email in the right language, etc.);
- Check that all National Commissions are being notified (in the right language) when projects from their country are submitted. Ideally this notification should include a reminder of what needs to be done for the preselection and links to the platform. It could be possible to set up a system of automatic notifications whenever a project from the country is uploaded.;
- Consider the possibility of notifying the 2005 Convention Focal Point at the Ministry of Culture (in most developing countries, National Commissions are attached to the Ministry of Education[16]), instructing the Ministry to contact the National Commission for the formation of the preselection panel.;
- Consider the possibility of notifying applicants when their applications have not been screened by National Commissions one week prior to the deadline.;

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[16] UNESCO – Internal Oversight Service. 2011. Review of the Cooperation of UNESCO's Secretariat with the National Commissions for UNESCO. Final Report. December 2011.

-	Introduce congratulatory emails to all National Commissions that perform the preselection, and emails of enquiry[17] to those that failed to do so each year. These emails should contain links to information about the projects that were selected in that cycle. The purpose of these emails is to give National Commissions are greater sense of involvement in the IFCD.
4.	Invite the IGC to consider the possibility of the Secretariat **taking recourse to the 2005 Convention Focal Point if a National Commission fails to undertake preselection** by the deadline.
5.	In 2019 or 2020, take advantage of the **annual meeting of National Commissions** at UNESCO headquarters to present the IFCD and the preselection process. At this meeting ask National Commissions to appoint an IFCD focal point and to communicate this person's name and address to the Secretariat. The presentation can be renewed every 2 to 3 years considering the generally high turnover rates in National Commissions.
6.	**Assess the quality of preselection in the 2020 cycle**. Take a <u>completely random sample</u>[18] of 10% of the number of applications rejected by National Commissions and review them for quality. Put aside any applications that fail the technical assessment. Have the other applications marked by members of the expert panel (ideally it should be a blind test, i.e. do not tell experts that the projects were rejected by the National Commissions). If the average mark is above 20 or if 10% or more of the sample gets a mark above 30, consider that there is an issue with quality.
7.	If the assessment reveals that there are problems with quality**, prepare a training programme for National Commissions with lowest capacities**. Identify which National Commissions are performing poorest and target these first.
8.	If insufficient improvement is seen in National Commission performance indicators by the next global IFCD evaluation, **bring up the debate of whether National Commission responsibilities can be transferred to other official channels, such as the 2005 Convention Focal Point**.

16. Improve cooperation with Field Offices

Recommendation
REC 10. To work with Field Offices to ensure that on the one hand, UNESCO maximizes the opportunities of having an IFCD-funded project (such as increased visibility, enhanced contact with the local cultural sector and a better understanding of the context) and on the other hand, to ensure that projects know what they can (and should) expect from UNESCO Field Offices (especially in terms of support and involvement throughout the diffusion, communication and implementation processes).
Problem that recommendation addresses
There are missed opportunities for field offices to communicate on IFCD projects and there is a lack of clarity for projects on what they can expect from the field offices.
Implications of recommendation
Level of urgency/strategic importance: medium.

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[17]   For example: We regret that the National Commission of X was unable to perform preselection of projects submitted this year. Please let us know what we can do to facilitate the task for the next cycle. You should receive notification of the opening of the next call in February next year.

[18]   It is important that the selection is completely random; otherwise results may not be representative. One way to proceed is to generate a random number between 1 and 300 (or whatever total number of applications were received). This will indicate the starting point for drawing the sample. Using the application reference numbers, take the rejected proposal that corresponds to or is closest to the random number as the first proposal of sample. Thereafter skip the 5 next proposals (in order of application reference number), and then draw another proposal for the sample. Repeat the process until you have the full sample.

Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: low

Facts and data
There are 44 field offices in IFCD eligible countries.
A fact sheet on the IFCD has been developed for field office staff.

Analysis
About 60% of eligible countries do not have a direct field office presence. Where field offices are directly present, there are wide differences in the number of staff available in the culture sector – in some cases, 1 single officer covers culture for an entire region. The field offices could potentially play an important role in monitoring projects on the ground, but in reality, the level of field office involvement will vary from country to country.

A focus on streamlining communications with field offices about IFCD projects is recommended as the basic approach.

Measures for implementing the recommendation
Review current communication processes for Field Offices to ensure that: - Field offices are always informed when a project is selected in their country/region and receive a copy of the project document; - Introduce a phone call to field offices at project launch to discuss case-by-case to what extent the field office can be involved during project implementation – e.g. what capacity for assisting in project monitoring; - Include field office contacts in the project contract or project approval letter informing project implementers what they can expect from the field office; - Field offices receive copies of mid-term and end-of-project reports.

17. Incorporate IFCD in Quadrennial Periodic Reports

Recommendation
REC 7. To incorporate a specific question about the IFCD in the Quadrennial Periodic Reports (QPRs) to ensure that IFCD projects systematically feature in these reports, thereby ensuring that the links between the Fund and the implementation of the 2005 Convention are made explicit.
Problem that recommendation addresses
In some countries a disconnect between 2005 Convention processes and IFCD projects is observed.
Implications of recommendation
This recommendation is already implemented. One can also consider systematically informing the Ministry in charge of culture when a project receives IFCD funding.

18. Maximize the Convention's potential as an advocacy tool

Recommendation

REC 14. To take steps to maximize the Convention's potential as an advocacy tool among civil society actors. This could be done by providing more information, training and awareness-raising on the importance of advocating on the contribution of the cultural sector to the economy as well as on the existing links between project-focused work conducted by cultural entities and their contribution to policy-related issues affecting the implementation of the Convention.

Problem that recommendation addresses

A disconnect between IFCD projects and the 2005 Convention is sometimes observed.

Implications of recommendation

Level of urgency/strategic importance: low. This recommendation can potentially amplify the impact of the IFCD, but its non-implementation does not hinder the IFCD from being effective.
Risk involved in implementing the recommendation: low
Cost implications: budget for regional or international events every 2 to 4 years
Analysis

The IFCD has provided funding to several civil society organizations who can potentially become key advocates of the 2005 Convention and its objectives. There is potential to build longer term relationships and facilitate networking between IFCD grant recipients to create ripple effects notably through new South-South collaborations.

Measures to implement the recommendation

Ensure that the new fundraising strategy considers how to engage past IFCD grant recipients in fundraising efforts

Organize events at the regional or international level every 2 or 4 years to facilitate networking among IFCD grant recipients.

PART 4: PRIORITIZATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

6. The Six recommendations that have been identified as being of high urgency and/or strategic importance require rapid attention and action. They all concern learning or fundraising. Recommendation 8 on conducting a human resource analysis is particular crucial, as the optimal deployment of other highly strategic recommendations depends on the outcome of this analysis.

7. It is important to keep in mind that learning drives fundraising: that is learning to make better choices to improve impact and by having the evidence to demonstrate impact provides convincing arguments for fundraising activities. If action on all high strategic recommendations cannot be undertaken simultaneously, it is advised to focus on the recommendations related to learning first.

Recommendation from evaluation	Measures suggested by review and costs
REC 8. To conduct a human resource analysis in the Secretariat with a view to meeting the needs of the IFCD and strengthening the Secretariat. (See section 9)	- Commission an HR analysis for the IFCD. (US$ 4,000 + funds to implement recommendations from analysis)
REC 12. To make resources available so that the Secretariat can take bold steps for the IFCD to become a "learning-driven" fund (See section 10)	- Make the resources available for implementing costed options for building learning capacity resulting from the human resource analysis referred to in Rec. 8. (costs to be specified after HR analysis) - For 2019, commit up to US$ 30,000 for the re-design and testing of an overall M&E system from unassigned funds. (up to $30,000, to be specified after HR analysis) - Regular allocation of a percentage of either IFCD project funding or IFCD total income to learning (benchmark suggests US$78,000 per year) - Rapid review practices of other organizations with strong learning cultures funding culture or social change to identify practices that could potentially strengthen existing systems. (no additional cost)
REC 13: To conduct random IFCD project independent evaluations in order to build a knowledge base on the projects and extract lessons from the different experiences. (See section 11)	- Set aside a sum equivalent to 3% of project funding for IFCD-commissioned independent project evaluations. (US$ 18,000 per year assuming US$600,000 in project funding)
REC 16. To review the current Committee's fundraising strategy to ensure that it dedicates more attention to the contributions of Parties. (See section 12)	- The Secretariat should undertake analysis of what influences contributions from Parties. (minimal additional cost) - In future, the Secretariat should regularly collect feedback on all communication materials from a sample of 6-10 Parties. (no additional cost)

REC 17. To work towards meeting the target contribution of 1% (Art. 18.3 and 18.7) to strengthen the sustainability of the Fund and overturn the static trend of the last 5 years. (See section 13)	- Re-emphasize the 1% of UNESCO contribution target in the fundraising strategy for Parties. (no additional cost) - The Secretariat should review current communication to Parties aimed at encouraging contributions. (no additional cost)
REC 18. To strengthen IFCD's fundraising strategy by incorporating an analytical dimension that ensures an explicit connection between communication products and concrete fundraising targets. (See section 14)	- Commission a study to draft a new fundraising and communication strategy. (US$ 65,000) - Make available the necessary resources for implementing the new fundraising strategy (at least 10% of income target)
REC 20. To strengthen the use of communication materials on the IFCD. (See section 14)	

8. In addition, some of the recommendations of medium or medium-high strategic importance involve measures that do not call up additional financial resources to be implemented, and therefore their implementation can start as soon as time permits.

ANNEX 1: Persons consulted

Eva Otero	Leitmotiv, consultant for IFCD external evaluation
Danielle Cliche	UNESCO 2005 Convention Secretariat
Denise Bax	UNESCO 2005 Convention Secretariat
Diana Ramarohetra	UNESCO 2005 Convention Secretariat
Juanita Casas Castrillon	UNESCO 2005 Convention Secretariat
Catherine Cullen	IFCD Panel of Experts
Peter Inkei	IFCD Panel of Experts
Carlos Villasenor	IFCD Panel of Experts
Sarah Gardner	IFCD Panel of Experts
Ojoma Ochai	IFCD Panel of Experts
Fatin Farhat	IFCD Panel of Experts
Ouafa Belgacem	Culture expert, MENA. Former IFCD expert, CEO Culture Fund Watch
Ferdinand Richard	Culture expert. Former IFCD expert. Director of Roberto Cimetta Fund
Hector Schargorodsky	Researcher, University of Buenos Aires – Centre of Culture Research and Observation. 2005 Convention Expert facility
Baiba Tjarve	Researcher, Latvian Academy for Culture. Former IFCD expert
Tessa Giller	Researcher, Prince Claus Fund
Paul Hounkpé	Benin National Commission
Sara Peralta	Guatemala National Commission