

ثقافتنا هويتنا  
Our culture, our identity



# Cultural Heritage Documentation and Digital Archiving Guide

Saudi Arabia



# **Document's Objective**

**Define the methodology for identification, documentation and archiving of cultural heritage through guidelines, procedures, and templates to be leveraged by cultural heritage operators.**

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MOC	Ministry of Culture
CH	Cultural Heritage
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage
NCA	National Cultural Archive
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
ICOM	International Council of Museums
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property

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“The Kingdom prides itself with a **rich heritage** and **diverse traditions** spanning **13 regions**. The onus is on us to **preserve** our shared heritage for **future generations** and to produce and **disseminate culture** in a sustainable manner”

**His Highness Prince Badr bin Abdullah bin Mohammed  
bin Farhan Al Saud  
Minister of Culture**

## A. Introduction

Cultural heritage is the legacy of places and objects, as well as of intangible practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills, which are deemed to be symbolic of the cultural identities of a given country or community. Knowledge related to cultural heritage is found within communities and individuals, as well as in cultural institutions, and represents an essential resource for understanding a country's identity and culture and serves as an anchor for social and cultural development.

The Kingdom is on a journey to make the cultural sector flourish as part of its Vision 2030 covering ambitions for a wide array of societal, economic, and governmental areas, with significant opportunity for culture to contribute. As heritage is a key pillar of the culture agenda, the national archive will exist to be accessed, used, and to promote cultural national heritage. It provides an appropriate guide lists, indexes, and acts as a reference for those who are interested in the national heritage of Saudi Arabia.

The Kingdom is currently faced with a number of barriers to establish a strong national cultural heritage. To address these barriers, a national inventory and archive of Saudi cultural heritage is needed to be a reference for public, researchers and makers of cultural and artistic content. This national repository is designed to be searchable and accessible by the different stakeholders within the Saudi heritage ecosystem and serve as a mean to safeguard the heritage on the long run.

While a national inventory consists of a comprehensive catalogue with key pieces of information on the heritage, a national digital heritage archive consists of embracing information created digitally, or converted into digital form from existing analogue resources on a certain cultural heritage and storing them in one location.

It is important to highlight that developing a national digital archive presents several advantages, which help address challenges, notably preserve cultural heritage content for future generations to access it and benefit from it, and ensure dissemination of cultural heritage content to enable wider access to the public.

To achieve the government's interest to document Saudi cultural heritage and preserve such records in digital form, guidelines and procedures are defined to support organizations in the identification, documentation, and digital archiving of cultural heritage.

A central entity is to be responsible for managing KSA's cultural heritage national identification, documentation and digital archiving agenda and supporting cultural institutions for the implementation of documentation and archiving programs and plans.

This handbook is prepared to serve as a reference in assisting and guiding institutions and individuals in the identification, documentation and archiving of cultural heritage assets or elements. The guide explains the definition and importance of cultural heritage identification, inventorying, documentation, and digital archiving, why they are useful, and how to go about them.

The following pages will provide advice on identifying or recognizing potential assets that are perceived with a cultural heritage significance, developing and maintaining a cultural heritage inventory, and the digitization and publishing of cultural heritage content into a national centralized archive.

This involves implementing a consistent approach and infusing stronger coordination and collaboration between the different stakeholders involved.

This methodology handbook aims to achieve the following:

- Provide national standards and guidelines for the identification, baseline documentation and digital archiving of cultural heritage assets and elements in line with international standards and best practices;
- Build a standardized approach to identification and documentation of Saudi cultural heritage;
- Improve the coordination among the different stakeholders within the cultural heritage ecosystem and reinforce cross-sector partnerships and collaboration;
- Encourage and reinforce the community and broader public's engagement and participation in cultural heritage identification and documentation;

Prepare cultural heritage documentation as per UNESCO requirements, facilitating their submission for World Heritage nomination (1972 world heritage) as well as 2003 convention covering intangible cultural heritage. An entity that follows the guidelines and procedures of this document should be eligible to publish its cultural heritage content onto the National Cultural Archive (NCA). However, it is important to highlight that each entity should use these guidelines as a base (especially for the suggested forms) and further develop and adapt them depending on the type of asset in question to ensure that the information is as relevant and exhaustive as possible.

## Scope

The scope of this document covers Saudi Cultural Heritage for both tangible and intangible cultural heritage types. Natural heritage is not considered part of the scope.

Saudi Heritage		
Cultural Heritage		Natural Heritage
Intangible	Tangible	Tangible
Knowledge and practices concerning nature and universe	Monuments (incl. modern heritage)	Geological heritage
Oral traditions and expressions	Groups of Buildings (incl. modern heritage)	Biological heritage
Performing arts	Sites (incl. modern heritage)	Natural heritage
Social practices, rituals, and festive events	Movable Cultural Heritage	
Traditional craftsmanship	Underwater cultural heritage	
	Cultural landscape	

Additionally, three different domains are defined as part of the scope for Saudi's cultural heritage identification, documentation, and archiving:

- Cultural heritage within Saudi Arabia including the ones about Saudi Arabia (e.g., Masmak, Dir'ayah, among others) and by the people of Saudi Arabia (e.g., Culinary arts such as Tamees, among others).
- Cultural heritage outside Saudi Arabia including the ones about Saudi Arabia (e.g., British Museum collection of Saudi) and by the people of Saudi (e.g., Maqam Alhijaz, a melodic mode used in Music, among others).
- Shared cultural heritage with other countries (e.g., Arabic Coffee, Majlis, Falcony, among others),

## KSA Cultural Sub-Sectors

UNESCO splits culture into seven domains, and the Ministry's framework for defining culture takes into account UNESCO's definition and combines it with the local understanding of Saudi Arabia. This holistic strategy development approach led the Ministry of Culture to identify 16 sectors, which will form the cultural space the Ministry oversees, in coordination with others.

The following list represents the cultural sub-sectors of Saudi Arabia, which are covered by 11 commissions:

Commissions	Relevant sub-sectors
Literature, Publishing and Translation	- Literature - Language and translation - Books and Publications
Music	- Music
Visual Arts	- Visual Arts
Theater and Performing Arts	- Theater and Performing Arts
Fashion	- Fashion
Architecture and Design	- Architecture and Design
Culinary Arts	- Culinary Arts
Film	- Film
Heritage	- Heritage
Museums	- Museums
Libraries	- Libraries
Areas of interest overseen by existing government entities	- Archaeological and Cultural Landscapes - Natural Heritage - Cultural Festivals and Events

## Framework

This document covers procedures and guidelines for nine key procedures across three main phases: identification, baseline documentation, and digital archiving. Each phase focuses on the key considerations and tasks required while illustrating ways in which current faced challenges can be addressed.

The following framework has been leveraged as the foundation for this guideline and methodology:

Baseline Documentation		
Digital Archiving	Baseline Documentation	Identification
Digital Archiving	Baseline Documentation	Identification
Digital Archiving	Baseline Documentation	Identification
Digital Archiving	Baseline Documentation	Identification

For each of the nine key procedures, three sections are presented:

**Guidelines:** The Guidelines provide advice and information through a certain course of requirements. Most importantly, they outline an approach that entities are advised to meet to ensure standardized and higher quality documentation while creating a comprehensive understanding of the cultural heritage asset or element.

**Procedure:** This is divided into steps, which are major activities that take place in a procedure. These are further dived into numbered activities providing instructions about what should be done to streamline identification, baseline documentation, and archiving processes.

**Selected Sources:** Publications and organizations, which were used as a reference to help with building the content of the document.

## Users and target audience

This document has been developed to set standards and regulate roles and interactions of three target groups (detailed below) with the national archive and inventory. All three have the same purpose that triggers their engagement with this document; they all seek to integrate an asset or element of cultural heritage significance in the national inventory and archive.

- Subsector owners: Refer to governmental institutions known as the cultural commissions responsible for developing one or more cultural sectors. Sub-sector owners consist of 11 commissions in total (e.g. Theater and Performing Arts, Fashion, Architecture and Design, Culinary Arts, Film, Heritage, Museums, Libraries, Music, Visual Arts, Literature Publishing and Translation).

In the context of cultural heritage, these entities play the role of an aggregator of any cultural heritage that falls within their specific sub-sectors. They aim to provide the required support and guidance to other entities and institutions or individuals in order to identify, document and archive cultural heritage assets or elements. They also play a fundamental role in identifying the cultural heritage assets or elements held and carried by individuals where sub-sector owners are in charge of the full process following the identification phase of the asset or element until its publishing onto the national archive. They are responsible for reviewing the content shared by operators across various procedures in the framework.

- Operators: Refer to public, private and non-profit entities that play a role in identifying and documenting cultural heritage assets or elements. Operators consist of cultural institutions, libraries, museums, educational institutions, NGOs, TV channels, government entities, publishers, among others and contribute to the sector by managing and sharing, when possible, cultural heritage content through their channels. They are divided into two sub-categories:

a) Certified Operators: Operators that meet certain set criteria by the Ministry indicating the maturity of the entity. These criteria could be related to whether the entity has certified resources, advanced experience, long term presence in Saudi Arabia, local and international recognitions, advancement of processes, among others. These entities are considered as certified and eligible to autonomously conduct the procedures without having any approval or involvement from the relevant sub-sector owner, only from the central entity.

b) Non-Certified Operators: Operators that are entitled to secure the approval of the sub-sector owners for various procedures across the framework.

- Individuals (including private owners): Individuals owning or carrying a cultural heritage asset or element. These individuals play a key role in the identification phase as they provide inputs and information on the asset or element and in the assessment of the cultural heritage significance of the asset or element. Individuals should work closely with the sub-sector owners in order to document all information related to the asset or element and include them into the national inventory and archive.

## B. Glossary

**Cultural heritage:** Legacy of places and objects, as well as of intangible practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills, which are deemed to be symbolic of the cultural identity(ies) of a given country or community, among others.

**Cultural heritage significance:** The overall importance of an asset or element to society and to 'values' in relation to the various dimensions of this significance (i.e. aesthetic value of a monument, the social value of a certain traditional practice, the historic value of an ancient inscription, among others).

**Tangible Cultural heritage (TCH):** Movable and immovable material traces that are culturally significant to a community, a nation, or/and humanity.

**Intangible Cultural heritage (ICH):** Practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills, and related instruments that communities, groups, and individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage and transmit from generation to generation.

**Immovable cultural heritage asset:** Different types of architectural heritage, archaeological heritage structures and cultural landscape features.

**Movable cultural heritage:** Objects of cultural significance such as books, artifacts, manuscripts, artwork, among others.

**Monument:** Individual architectural works, works of sculpture and painting, structural elements of an archaeological nature and cave dwellings and combinations of features, which have cultural significance from the point of view of history, art, or science.

**Group of buildings:** Groups of separate or connected buildings which are noteworthy on account of their architectural value, homogeneity, or their place in the environment, among others.

**Sites:** Works of man or the combined works of nature and of man, and areas including archaeological areas and cultural landscapes, which have cultural significance from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological points of view.

**Archaeological site:** Area or place in which manifestations of past human activities are evident on structures and remains of all kinds and for which archaeological methods provide primary information.

**Underwater cultural heritage:** Traces of human existence having a cultural, historical, or archaeological character, which have been partially or totally under water, periodically or continuously for at least 100 years.

**Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe:** Include knowledge, knowhow, skills, practices, and representations developed by communities through interaction with the natural environment.

**Oral traditions and expressions (including language):** Proverbs, riddles, tales, nursery rhymes, legends, myths, epic songs and poems, charms, prayers, chants, songs, among others.

**Performing arts:** Arts ranging from vocal and instrumental music, dance, and theater to pantomime, sung verse and beyond.

**Social practices, rituals and festive events:** Practices and events that structure the lives of communities and groups and that are shared by and relevant to many of their members.

**Traditional craftsmanship:** Tools, clothing and jewelry, costumes and props for festivals and performing arts, storage containers, objects used for storage, transport and shelter, decorative art, and musical instruments.

**Identification:** Recognition that an asset or element has a heritage value, through gathering information from various sources, while engaging with all relevant stakeholders.

**Assessment of significance and condition:** Determining the cultural significance of a heritage asset/element, across all relevant dimensions (historic, artistic, scientific, etc.) and criteria (for WH). This includes identifying the specific attributes that carry those values as well as assessing the overall authenticity, integrity, and state of protection of the cultural heritage.

**Definition:** Attribution of a cultural heritage asset or element to a specific domain/type. In the context of ICH, reference is made to five key domains (practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills). However, these domains are not exhaustive and each country could modify them by adding new domains (such as pilgrimages, games and traditional sports, cooking traditions, traditional medicines, customs related to home and family practices, practices that have a social, economic and cultural role, among others). In the context of TCH, definition refers to deciding if something is an object, a monument, a group of buildings or a cultural landscape, among others.

**Inventorying:** Listing cultural heritage assets to have a clear and shared understanding of the items considered as culturally significant for conservation and management purposes. Entries of an inventory have a limited length and are subject to regular updating. This is not the same as documentation.

**Community-based inventorying of ICH:** Community-based inventorying uses techniques such as individual and group interviewing, participatory mapping, photovoice and participatory video as interactive vehicles to generate and systematize knowledge about the ICH of a community.

**Documentation:** Means of obtaining the needed information using techniques that should be the most effective, least destructive, and most efficient. The actual documentation consists of computer-data sets, plans and sections, photographs, drawings, illustrations, recording forms, logbooks, site notebooks, diaries, among others. Documentation is an ongoing process throughout the entire cultural heritage management lifecycle of an asset or element, from research and identification to conservation and archiving.

**Consent of communities or individuals:** A matter of ethics that grew out of a concern that people who were being studied and recorded were often not aware of what was intended from the research. It is concerned with communities and individuals' agreement on the narrative created around a historic and cultural phenomenon and the way this narrative portrays them, but it is also concerned with their approval on the way the information and material would be used and distributed.

**Archiving:** Process of transferring documents and records, objects to a storage to retain their long-term value.

**Digital archiving:** Identification, appraisal, description, storage, preservation, management, and retrieval of digital records, including all the policies, guidelines and systems associated with those processes, so that the logical and physical integrity of the records is securely maintained over time.

**Digital heritage archive:** Aggregation, storage, preservation, management, and retrieval of digital heritage records coming from various sources including different cultural institutions into a centralized digital platform owned and maintained by a central body.

**Safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage:** Measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage .

**Restoration:** The practice of returning an object or building to its appearance at a particular time period, with the aim of facilitating its appreciation, understanding and use. Restoration may include the removal of additions and alterations made after the specific time period, and reconstruction of missing earlier features.

**Records:** Evidence that constitutes a part of the documentation that have been created or received by the public or by an institution and that can contribute in understanding a tangible or intangible cultural heritage.

**Significance:** Values and meanings that assets and elements have for individuals and communities.

**Viability:** Extent to which a cultural heritage asset/element is sustainable and able to survive in future having taken into consideration current and future environmental, social, and economic factors.

**Representativeness:** Asset or element that is a good case of representation in its category, or an asset/element of outstanding intrinsic merit (such as a masterpiece of workmanship or course, a work of a prominent artist/architect in a certain area/region, or a practiced tradition within a specified period, which has been considered as a model and has influenced other creations).

**Diversity:** Asset or element that is representative of individual, communal, and regional variety within a certain type or period.

**Authenticity:** The essential qualifying factor underpinning values of tangible cultural heritage. The significance of cultural heritage in all its forms and historical periods is rooted in the values attributed to it. The ability to understand and appreciate these values depends on the degree to which the nature and characteristics of the attributes of the cultural heritage actually are what they are purported to be, based on credible and truthful information sources. Ultimately, authenticity is a function of the extent to which a cultural heritage asset truly possesses the nature and characters attributed to it.

**Integrity:** Measure of the wholeness and intactness of the cultural heritage asset and thus of its ability to convey the full "story" through its attributes.

**Objects of art:** Movable works of art in the field of the fine arts such as paintings and drawings made by hand, on any medium and of any material, industrial design and industrial products decorated by hand, original sculptures, artistic compositions and assemblages on any material, original engravings, copperplates, lithographs and other prints, original posters and photographs constituting an original creation and works of applied art made of any material.

**Archaeological objects:** Findings of any type or material, excavated out of the ground or extracted from water, which originate from periods that are the focus of archaeological research and its related sciences.

**Ethnological objects:** Movable assets relating to the lifestyles, activities, habits, beliefs, ideas and creations which are necessary to understand the ethnic characteristics and changes in the tangible and intangible culture of a specific population.

**Historical objects:** Movable assets relating to (i) significant historical events or activities of cultural, national liberation, historic movements and organizations, (ii) educational, cultural, scientific, religious, sport and other institutions and associations, (iii) the life and work of distinguished persons, and (iv) antiquities which do not belong to the other types of movable cultural heritage older than 50 years.

**Historic place:** Structure, building, group of buildings, district, landscape, archaeological site or other place that has been formally recognized for its heritage value by an appropriate authority.

**Cultural landscape:** Cultural properties and represent the "combined works of nature and of man". They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic, and cultural forces, both external and internal.

**Mixed cultural heritage:** Cultural heritage considered as “mixed cultural and natural heritage” if they satisfy a part or whole of the definitions of both cultural and natural heritage.

**Cultural landscapes:** The landscape designed and created by man (such as parks, orchards, recreational gardens, plazas, squares, cemeteries, courtyards), organically evolved cultural landscape (such as an agricultural landscape), and the associative landscape (a natural area not necessarily modified by human intervention, but that has nevertheless a cultural significance, such as a sacred mountain).

**Protected area:** Area that may include protected natural or environmental resources, or immovable cultural heritage.

**Library material:** Old manuscripts, old maps and atlases, special library collections from educational, cultural, scientific, religious or other institutions, rare books and other rare library material specified by Law, as well as family or personal libraries of scientific or cultural significance, statutory copies of publications, notes, letters, philatelic and other material with the status of publication.

**Audio-visual material:** Original cinematographic material, i.e. negatives of photographs or tone-negatives of films, tone copies of features, animated, documentary, popular science and other motion pictures, recorded material with or without sound, regardless of the recording technique, together with the film documentation (scenario, recording log, costume and scenario material, film trailers, etc.), and the statutory copy deposited with the competent film archives institution.

**Recorded sound (phonographic) archive material:** Original material of recorded sounds, i.e. original oral, music or other type of sound recordings or copies thereof, regardless of the form, sound recording technique or media type, including the statutory phonographic copy deposited with the competent institution according to the law.

**Digitization:** Process of creating digital files and objects by scanning physical copies or assets and converting existing analogue resources.

**Digital materials:** Texts, still and moving images, audio, graphics, software, and web pages, among a wide and growing range of formats. They require maintenance and management to be retained.

**Digital heritage:** Resources of cultural, educational, scientific, and administrative nature and other kinds of information created digitally (i.e. digital-born), or converted into digital form from existing analogue resources, deemed to possess cultural significance.

**Digital preservation:** Update of digital content and maintaining long-term accessibility.

**Data protection:** Processes of protecting bit-level data of digital objects from unauthorized changes or loss.

**Digital record:** Record produced, stored, or transmitted by digital means rather than physical means. A digital record includes born digital records and digitized records.

**Digital surrogate:** Record produced as a result of a digitization process, or photographic imaging.

**Metadata:** Information that describes, explains, locates, or otherwise makes it easier to understand, retrieve, use, manage, control, or preserve an item or information resource through time.

**Accessibility (digital):** Ability, means of finding, using, or retrieving information and accessing it.

**Authenticity (digital):** Trustworthiness of a record or an item, i.e. the quality of being what it purports to be, either as an original object or as a reliable copy derived by fully documented processes from an original.

**Integrity (digital):** State of being whole, uncorrupted, and free of unauthorized and undocumented changes.

**Rights statement:** Copyright status of a digital object that provides information on access and re-use of the object.

**Intellectual property rights:** Intellectual property right is the rights given to individuals over the invention of their minds. They are usually granted an exclusive right over the invention for a specific period. Intellectual Property rights are divided in two main fields: copyright and industrial property right.

**Copyright:** Copyright is a type of intellectual property right giving the owner the right to make copies of his creative work (literary, artistic, educational, musical form, amongst others) or authorize others to reproduce it.

**Legislated rights:** Rights given to certain institutions or individuals to collect, preserve and have access to some materials.

**Data migration:** Means of overcoming technological obsolescence by transferring digital resources from one hardware/software generation to the next.

# **GUIDELINES FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE IDENTIFICATION**

## A. Detailed Methodology

### 1. Phase 1: Identification

#### Introduction

The objective of identification is to recognize the cultural heritage significance of assets or elements, through the gathering of information (including by conducting research and site visits) and an inclusive process of engagement with all stakeholders.

The “identification” phase is a three-step process that starts with the identification and designation of an asset with potential cultural significance and value for Saudi Arabia through research, community-based inventorying, surveys, and consultations. It is then followed by the definition and classification of the selected asset according to the predefined categories of tangible and intangible heritage and is finally evaluated and assessed in terms of significance and value. The three steps mentioned above are detailed in this section, which provides definitions, guidelines, and procedures respectively for each.

This “identification” phase is significantly important as it enables the inclusion of the identified assets/elements within the national inventory as well as within the national digital archive.

Approaches to the identification of each tangible and intangible cultural heritage may differ in some respects, with intangible heritage requiring even stronger community involvement, since communities are the ones who create intangible cultural heritage and keep it alive. The process of identifying and defining cultural heritage assets leads to the establishment of baseline documentation (section 4 in this document), providing the knowledge which is essential for the monitoring, conservation and awareness raising.

## **1.1. Identify cultural heritage asset or element**

### **1.1.1. OVERVIEW**

Identifying cultural heritage refers to the recognition of something with heritage value, through gathering information from various sources, while engaging with all relevant stakeholders. In order to identify cultural heritage, institutions can either

- 1) Engage in projects to explore designated areas/meet with local communities with specific scope and objectives to achieve or
- 2) Proactively engage with community members or owners of cultural heritage assets or elements such as places, museums, libraries, private collectors and others who can come forward with proposals for recognizing potential assets or elements that they deem to have heritage value and significance. Then, they are validated and documented, based on the process detailed in this document.

Following the recognition and information gathering of a potential tangible asset or intangible element, deemed as having cultural heritage significance, information and data are collected to further describe the element and tag it under its relevant category (tangible or intangible heritage, and further more into its relevant sub-category as detailed in procedure 1.2 - Define and classify the cultural heritage asset or element).

### **1.1.2. GUIDELINES**

Whether the recognition of a cultural heritage asset/element is initiated by an institution (operator or commission) or by civil society associations and individuals (heritage owners or bearers), these guidelines target assets and elements that are unknown and in view to be discovered, that are known but not completely investigated and that are recognized but need to be supported by additional research, documentation, and inventorying.

In the case of an identified asset or element with an existing potential cultural heritage value, the operator or individual should fill out the cultural heritage identification form (refer section b) Record Management and to Annex I) with preliminary information about the asset or element. Individuals should fill the form and submit it to the relevant commission (as per the asset or element classification).

Alternatively, new projects can be initiated for the identification of cultural heritage assets or elements, derived from the national cultural heritage strategy, commissions' strategy, and other institutions' set priorities.

When engaging in a project to explore and discover cultural heritage across KSA, the following guidelines should be followed to properly implement and conduct the required activities:

- a) Sourcing Methodology**
- b) Criteria for prioritizing identification projects**
- c) Record Management**
- d) Cultural heritage identification form**
- e) Required Capabilities**

### **a) Sourcing Methodology**

In order to source information and collect data about a cultural heritage asset or element, several methods can be adopted:

- Desktop research (preliminary research to gather available information about the cultural heritage asset or element and its surrounding);
- Review of previous efforts, scientific publications, archival material and relevant existing information across the Kingdom's cultural heritage institutions and/or relevant foreign cultural institutions (some relevant information might exist within libraries, museums, and other cultural heritage institutions);
- Acquisition, where relevant, of geographical information, including spatial imagery;
- Interviews (involving communities, individuals, experts, among others);
- Field visits (on-site visits with the support of field experts to explore the designated area of the cultural heritage asset or element and interview relevant stakeholders);
- Collection of documents and assets related to the cultural heritage asset or element;
- Surveys and questionnaires (list of questions to be shared with relevant stakeholders in the cultural heritage asset or element's surrounding to gather input);
- Crowdsourcing (call for information from the wider public and knowledgeable individuals through workshops); and
- Public engagement (contribution of the society through social media, awareness campaigns, events, etc.).

Depending on the target heritage type, different skills, methods, and knowledge are required to design and conduct the research and surveys.

Research design benefits from previously understanding and knowing the types of cultural heritage likely to be encountered. Therefore, it is worth researching important events, people and places that helped shape the community's history before starting the fieldwork. Historical information can be obtained from books and publications, or by talking to community elderly and other knowledgeable individuals. Heritage surveys provide a proactive way to engage the community in identifying its heritage and collecting the necessary evidence to inform heritage registers and cultural schemes.

Surveys, interviews, field visits and public engagement are particularly important in areas where there is scarce information about heritage resources, and consequently little active protection.

### **b) Criteria for prioritizing identification projects**

The identification of some cultural heritage assets or elements might be more critical to begin with than others. The sub-sector owners or operators should have a prioritization approach. Any new identification project should be aligned to the national's cultural heritage strategy and institutions' (mainly sub-sector owners) specific set priorities. The following list presents some of the criteria that can guide the prioritization of the identification projects for cultural heritage assets and elements:

Tangible cultural heritage assets' criteria that can influence the prioritization of identification projects:

- Assets potentially under threats due to development, restoration or reconstruction work;
- Uniqueness of an asset value;
- Assets privately owned; and
- Site or monuments in remote areas without protection (e.g. areas not under the control of the municipality or province);
- Environmental condition, including the impact of climate change.

Intangible cultural heritage elements' criteria that can influence the prioritization of identification projects:

- Community interest and motivation to preserve the intangible cultural heritage;
- Consent of the stakeholders and communities involved to share knowledge and information about intangible cultural heritage;
- Endangered (ICH) with a risk of losing the knowledge;
- Measures for safeguarding and transmitting an intangible cultural heritage in danger identified and feasible;

### **c) Record management**

Record management aims at ensuring that procedures are in place to manage and maintain the information and data obtained in the process of identifying and documenting cultural heritage assets, including forms, notes, photographs, digital files, and interviews that are conducted. Papers as well as supporting documents (such as photographs and videos) should be collected from the researchers on a regular basis while constantly examining forms for completeness and accuracy. Both a physical and digital place to store the materials might be needed, as well as a filing system that allows cross referencing of documents and photos. Photographic prints and negatives should be labelled and stored in archival quality sleeves or envelopes. Digital copies can also be taken and stored with the collected information which can include recorded interviews (audio and video) upon the consent of the audience.

Using standardized forms ensures the consistency of information collected. Each type of heritage (tangible and intangible along with their sub-categories) for the different methods of data collection should follow specific formats and templates to record information and should be developed by sub-sector owners and shared consistently with operators.

For both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, any project should be referenced with the following information:

- Team members' full names and contact details (including experts and external advisors – if any);
- Team members occupancies, organizations and qualifications;
- Project scope and objectives;
- Project start date, end date and duration;
- Survey / research location;
- Date and time of the field work; and
- Any other relevant information (project specific).

### **d) Cultural heritage identification form**

Sub-sector owners, operators and individuals should fill this form provided by the central entity.

For tangible cultural heritage, the below information should be recorded, at a minimum:

- Common name(s) of the cultural heritage asset;
- Location of the asset (including GPS coordinates when applicable);
- Brief description of the asset and of its cultural significance;
- History of the asset;
- Owner's name;
- Physical description of the asset and of its setting;
- Observations on physical condition;
- Comments on existing or potential threats; and
- Current management system.

For intangible cultural heritage, the below information should be recorded, at a minimum:

- Identification of the element (name, community concerned, physical location)
- Perceived origin;
- Brief description of the element and of its cultural significance to communities (that can introduce the element to readers who have never seen or experienced it);
- Names of previous and active practitioners;
- Current, original and other previous uses or functions of the element;
- Location of origin; Local community
- Observations on additional context relevant to the asset.

#### **e) Required Capabilities**

The level of training and supervision required depends on the members conducting the research and data collection methods. If no one involved in the project has experience in recording cultural heritage assets, the services of a heritage professional should be enlisted to assist with the research or to provide training and coaching.

At a minimum, researchers need to know:

- The purpose of the project and how to explain it to owners or bearers of cultural heritage in the designated area (or even to communities of the designated area). A handout can be useful;
- The development of a data sourcing and collection plan and schedule, and types of information to be recorded;
- Approach to fill out data collection forms; and
- Basic knowledge of cultural heritage assets and elements.

Experienced researchers can coach and train newer members to familiarize them with the relevant techniques of research. Training should also include some field sessions to practice the use of equipment and the completion of forms.

#### **1.1.3. PROCEDURE**

**a) Individuals** - For individuals submitting the identification form for a potential cultural asset or element, the following procedure should be followed:

**Step 1:** Aggregate information and data pertaining to the cultural heritage asset or element.

**Step 2:** Fill the cultural heritage asset or element identification form

**Step 3:** Submit the cultural heritage asset or element identification form to the relevant commission.

**Note:** Once the form is submitted, it is directly directed to the relevant sub-sector owner (commission) that receives the form. The relevant sub-sector owner should take over the process and start with step 2 from 1.1.3 – Sub-sector owners and operators (section below) until the publishing of cultural heritage content. Throughout the process, the individual should be continuously consulted and involved to ensure his continued consent and alignment.

In case the sub-sector owner has no more capacity to take on additional identification projects, the entity could assign some of these projects to a certified operator that can provide the support needed.

**b) Sub-sector owners and operators** - For sub-sector owners and operators engaging in a project to identify cultural heritage, the following process should be followed:

**Step 1:** Define the cultural heritage identification project's purpose, scope, and plan.

**i. Define project purpose and scope**

Why is the project being created and what is its purpose? Projects should be aligned with and derived from the national cultural heritage strategy and the sub-sectors strategies developed by the commissions. A clear statement of purpose helps explain and legitimize the project, as well as guide the planning process. It also increases the buy-in of potential volunteers and team members.

Several approaches could be followed to define the scope of the project: one approach may be to begin with familiar locations or assets for which information is known. Another way to start is with dimensions that meet predefined criteria, like a group of a certain age or function, within a certain geographic area, or those associated with particular people or events.

**ii. Define project governance and plan**

Once the project's purpose and scope are defined, specific tasks, individual responsibilities and timelines should be identified. Components of an identification project include:

• **Tasks and timelines:**

- Planning, coordination and day-to-day project management;
- Communication and public relations;
- Recruiting, training and supervising staff and volunteers (when applicable);
- Financial management and fundraising (when applicable);
- Research and evaluation;
- Data entry and record keeping; and
- Ongoing data management.

• **Resources:**

Following the definition of the scope of work as well as planning activities, an estimate of needed resources is made, as well as the required budget, equipment needed (as per the type of project's needs, such as computers, cameras, recording tools, maps) and transportation. Additional support from skilled teams with local and international experts can be sought to advise the project during its implementation (some municipalities have dedicated teams established that could contribute to the work).

Entities should also recruit volunteers and involve the wider public to gather additional inputs and collect data. Identification and research projects are excellent opportunities to raise public awareness and build community support for heritage conservation.

**Step 2:** Validate whether the assets or elements that are part of a new identification project are listed on the national inventory and have been already previously identified to prevent duplication. In case an asset already exists in the national inventory, it is dismissed. In the case the asset is new to the inventory, remaining steps are to be followed.

**Step 3:** Conduct research following the methods of data collection listed in the above guidelines.

- Discover and collect information and sources related to cultural heritage assets and elements within the project scope and confirm discoveries of the existence or non-existence of such assets in the designated area.
- Gather information and findings to be further assessed and studied.

**Step 4:** Conduct fieldwork and on-site research.

- Develop a survey that will be used to collate information for known assets or elements, and to identify and record other cultural heritage places/assets that may have been previously overlooked.
- Conduct fieldwork while constantly engaging with the public along with experts as needed.

**Step 5:** Process and analyze gathered information on the asset or element.

- Analyze fieldwork results and information collected through survey and crowdsourcing.
- Involve and liaise with experts and supporting teams as needed and review interpretation of results.

#### **1.1.4. SELECTED SOURCES**

- Identification and Documentation of Modern Heritage, UNESCO World Heritage Centre with financial contribution from the Netherlands Funds-in-Trust, 2003.
- Identifying and Inventorying Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO.
- Developing Your Heritage Inventory, A Guide for Communities, Canada's Historic Places, Government of Saskatchewan, Dawson, 2004.
- Carrying out a heritage survey, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, Australia.
- Robin Letellier's Guiding Principles on Recording, Documentation, and Information Management for the Conservation of
- Guidelines on Cultural Heritage, Council of Europe, 2012.

## 1.2. Define and classify the cultural heritage asset or element

### 1.2.1. OVERVIEW

The guidelines on defining and classifying the cultural heritage asset or element are intended to be used as a technical tool for recognizing assets or elements and classifying them under their relevant type through a consistent and shared approach across the Kingdom. Definitions of cultural heritage are based on UNESCO's standard setting instruments and terminologies, KSA's cultural strategy, cultural sub-sectors of Saudi Arabia, relevant local laws as well as best practice from international recognized bodies.

### 1.2.2. GUIDELINES

- a) Asset / element definition form
- b) Classification considerations
- c) Types of cultural heritage
- d) Cultural heritage definitions
- e) Saudi sub-sectors

#### a) Asset / element definition form

In order to adequately define and classify identified cultural assets or elements, the below information is required and should be collected at a minimum:

- General information (name of the cultural heritage asset or element, brief description);
- Information about the asset or element (original, current and potential other names for the asset or element, names of similar assets or elements – if any);
- Historical facts and information (geographical location of the asset or element, involved and relevant stakeholders and their types);
- Components (basic components of the asset or element, additional components introduced with time or external interventions);
- Special considerations;
- Relevant sub-sector; and
- Other related cultural heritage assets or elements.

According to the above characteristics, the asset or element is then tagged as tangible or intangible cultural heritage, and further classified in its respective sub-category (detailed in the below sections). For each type of cultural heritage asset, support and advisory can be sought from the relevant commission.

#### b) Classification considerations

The classification phase can be challenging for some asset types, especially certain categories that do not capture the complexity of the asset such as "group of buildings" for instance. The delineation between a monument, a group of building or a historic urban area has often caused confusion. For this reason, additional guidance and explanation has been integrated in the annexes of the World Heritage Convention in order to facilitate the classification task and reduce ambiguity. Anyhow, if the "identification" phase has been carried out properly the classification should not result in problems.

A further challenge concerns movable heritage which is intrinsically associated with tangible immovable assets or the distinction of tangible and intangible assets as they might in some cases be linked to each other. For this reason, a link between the two type of assets needs to be created for conservation and management reasons. It is of high importance to preserve the asset in its larger context in order to obtain a full understanding of its value and history. A system of cross-references where assets/elements are linked to provide a full picture is included in the inventorying phase of the guidelines.

### c) Types of cultural heritage

There are different types of cultural heritage, divided in two main categories:

Tangible cultural heritage:

- Monuments.
- Groups of buildings.
- Sites.
- Underwater Cultural Heritage.
- Cultural landscape.
- Movable cultural heritage.

Note:

The above categories do not include natural heritage, which is not covered per se by these guidelines. It is important to clarify, however, that in a country like Saudi Arabia, most natural heritage protected areas will have some significant cultural attributes (be they sacred sites, rock art, ancient water management structures, hunting traps, tombs and so on ), whose values are often deeply rooted in their relation with the environment. Conversely, many cultural sites will have some natural heritage significance, including biodiversity, peculiar geological formations, natural aesthetic features etc. (e.g. in the case of Al Ahsa, the cultural landscape inscribed in 2018 on the World Heritage List). The relationships between humans and their natural environment, where relevant, represent a very important dimension of the cultural significance of such assets and will be a key focus of their conservation and management strategies.

Intangible cultural heritage:

- Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;
- Oral traditions and expressions (including language);
- Performing arts;
- Social practices and festive events; and
- Traditional craftsmanship.

There are various levels of heritage. Monumental / national vs. "small" heritage, at the scale of a local community, knowing that even within sites of national or world importance there will be some local values that would need to be recognized and considered in the management and conservation of a cultural heritage asset.

Modern/contemporary heritage, i.e. more recent cultural assets and elements which have the potential to be symbolic of the cultural identity of Saudi Arabia and the people of Saudi Arabia, are considered across the categories and should not be overlooked.

#### d) Cultural Heritage Definitions

Tangible cultural heritage represents movable and immovable material traces that are significant to a community, a nation, or/and humanity. Tangible cultural heritage includes the following:

- **Monuments:** Architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which have cultural significance from the point of view of history, art, or science.
- **Groups of buildings:** Groups of separate or connected buildings, including towns and town centres, which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity, or their place in the landscape, have cultural significance from the point of view of history, art, or science.
- **Sites:** Works of man or the combined works of nature and of man, and areas including archaeological areas and cultural landscapes, which have cultural significance from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological points of view.
- **Underwater Cultural Heritage:** Any traces of human existence having a cultural, historical, or archaeological character which have been partially or totally under water, periodically or continuously for at least 100 years.
- **Cultural landscape:** Consisting of landscapes created by man (such as parks, orchards, recreational gardens, plazas, squares, cemeteries, courtyards), organically evolved cultural landscapes (such as an agricultural landscape), and associative landscapes (natural areas not necessarily modified by human intervention, but that have nevertheless a cultural significance, such as a sacred mountain).
- **Movable cultural heritage:** Objects of significance such as books, artifacts, manuscripts, artwork, among others.

Intangible cultural heritage represents practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills, and related instruments that communities, groups, and individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage and transmit from generation to generation.

Intangible heritage includes:

- **Knowledge and practices:** Concerning nature and the universe including knowledge, knowhow, skills, practices, and representations developed by communities through interaction with the natural environment.
- **Oral traditions & expressions and language:** Including proverbs, riddles, tales, nursery rhymes, legends, myths, epic songs and poems, charms, prayers, chants, songs, among others.
- **Performing arts:** Ranging from vocal and instrumental music, dance and theater to pantomime, sung verse and beyond.
- **Social practices and festive events:** that structure the lives of communities and groups and that are shared by and relevant to many of their members.
- **Traditional craftsmanship:** including tools, clothing and jewelry, costumes and props for festivals and performing arts, storage containers, objects used for storage, transport and shelter, decorative art, and musical instruments.

### e) Saudi Sub-sectors

As part of the definition and classification of the asset or element, one should also map it to the relevant sub-sector and accordingly to the relevant sub-sector owner (commission). The following list represents the cultural sub-sectors and their respective sub-sectors in Saudi Arabia:

- Literature, language and translation, books and publications overseen by the Literature, Publishing and Translation Commission.
- Music overseen by the Music Commission.
- Visual arts overseen by the Visual Arts Commission.
- Theater and performing arts overseen by the Theater and Performing Arts Commission.
- Fashion overseen by the Fashion Commission.
- Architecture and design overseen by the Architecture and Design Commission
- Culinary arts overseen by the Culinary Arts Commission.
- Film overseen by the Film Commission.
- Heritage overseen by the Heritage Commission.
- Museums overseen by the Museums Commission.
- Libraries overseen by the Libraries Commission.
- Archaeological and cultural landscapes, natural heritage and cultural festivals and events: areas of interest overseen by existing government entities.

#### 1.2.3. PROCEDURE

The following procedure details the required steps for sub-sector owners and operators to define and classify the asset or element:

**Step 1:** Consolidate and review information collected from the identification of the asset or element.

**Step 2:** Collect additional information as required about the asset/element to further understand it and enable its classification.

**Step 3:** Tag the identified asset under a cultural heritage category and sub-category.

Define the category and sub-category relevant to the asset / element as per the definitions and guidelines provided in this section. In some cases, the definition of the asset could require additional information (depending on the asset sub-category, i.e. monuments and groups of buildings can be further classified according to their grade, architectural interest, historic interest, and other dimensions). Those dimensions are specific to the category itself and should be aligned with sub-sector owners' existing guidelines.

**Step 4:** Populate the cultural heritage asset/element definition form with the required fields.

**Step 5:** [Applicable only to operators] Confirm the asset or element definition and classification with the concerned sub-sector owner for alignment as needed.

In case the operator is not fully clear whether the classification and definition made on the asset or element is accurate, the entity could request the support of the relevant sub-sector owner to align on the outcome.

#### 1.2.4. SELECTED SOURCES

- Identification and Designation of Heritage Assets, Historic England Website.
- Guidelines on Cultural Heritage, Technical Tools for Heritage Conservation and Management, "EU/Council of Europe Support to the Promotion of Cultural Diversity in Kosovo, 2012.
- UNESCO terminologies and classification of cultural heritage.
- UNESCO intangible cultural heritage (ICH) terminologies.
- World Heritage Convention, 1972, updated version published in 2019.
- International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Glossary.

### **1.3. Assess cultural heritage asset or element significance and preliminary condition**

#### **1.3.1. OVERVIEW**

Significance refers to the values and meanings that assets and elements have for individuals and communities. Understanding and articulating the values of cultural heritage is essential to inform conservation and management policies and plans as well as to promote the country's heritage and history, both locally and internationally. The following guidelines are a tool to assess cultural heritage assets or elements' significance and condition by determining their cultural value across relevant dimensions (historic, artistic, scientific, social etc.). An important aspect of this process is eliciting values through engaging with stakeholders. Traditionally, heritage values and the significance of a place or object were primarily determined by professionals (architects, historians, archaeologists, anthropologists etc.). In recent years, however, new stakeholders have emerged, notably local community members, that value heritage for various reasons and demand recognition. Reconciling different values as perceived by different groups of stakeholders may be challenging, especially when it comes to deciding on protection and management systems. In determining the values of a cultural heritage asset, therefore, it is important to balance inclusion and legitimacy with the need for effectiveness. It is also important to consider that values, i.e. the perception of people on the significance of a place, object, or intangible element, may change over time.

This section also provides essential guidelines to evaluate the state of each asset /element to determine whether they are in good condition, sustainable (or viable), and/or to identify major threats of deterioration or challenges to their viability.

#### **1.2.3. GUIDELINES**

##### **a) Assessment of cultural heritage significance**

##### **b) Preliminary assessment of cultural heritage condition**

##### **c) Statement of significance**

##### **a) Assessment of cultural heritage significance**

The following criteria are used to evaluate the significance of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and help determine whether they meet the requirements for their inclusion within the inventory of KSA's cultural heritage. Some assets or elements might satisfy multiple criteria and be strong candidates for designation while others might satisfy only one or few criteria.

The evaluation should be carried out in accordance with:

- Scientific knowledge and experience in the field to which the cultural asset/element belongs; and/ or
- Available information and documentation on the asset/elements (consultations with concerned communities and stakeholders, inventory, survey, study, etc.); and/ or
- Results of additional research, surveys, and interviews (when applicable).

Fundamentally, heritage values relate to the ability of a place, object or intangible element to embody and testify to past events, peoples and traditions, having acquired a symbolic status for present-day individuals and groups or having become part of the social and life system of communities as representative of their history and identity. Cultural heritage assets and elements may also have more direct and intrinsic values, associated with their contemporary functions within the society, including as economic resources (in relation to tourism, for example), educational activities or religious practices. There may be a variety of different values that can be recognized by different people within a single cultural heritage asset/element. These can be grouped within the following main dimensions:

- **Historic significance:** Assets/elements that are associated with a particular historic period, person, group, event or activity and show a historic theme, process or pattern of life; and contribute to the understanding of a period or place, activity, person, group or event. All historic phases that have contributed to give to a cultural heritage asset/element its present state
- **Aesthetic significance:** Assets/elements that are well designed, crafted or made and are a good example of a style, design, artistic movement, or an artist's/craftsperson's work. They should also be considered beautiful by common standards and uphold originality or innovation in their design.
- **Scientific or research significance:** Assets/elements with major potential value for further scientific examination or study; as well as buildings and sites, artefacts and collections, oral expressions and traditions, social practices, and other historically significant tangible/intangible assets/elements, which have a certified origin and are recorded in a well-documented context and/or if they represent aspects of history that are not well reflected in other sources.
- **Social significance:** Assets/elements with social significance for specific groups of people, e.g. they are considered sacred, are closely associated with community events or activities, and in general command a community's strong affection and contribute to that community's identity and social cohesion.
- **Economic significance:** Assets/elements that have an impact on KSA's economy (for example, if the cultural heritage has an impact on tourism, crafts, agriculture, among others and thus an economic effect). This does not include commodification of the heritage asset or element outside its traditional context, i.e. the transformation of an established and living cultural practice into an artificial, staged performance, for example, for the benefits of tourists, predominantly for commercial reasons.

Assessed against the above main dimensions, cultural heritage values may also be a function of the following criteria:

- **Continuity of use:** Evidence of continuity of use and of the passing of time and different historical phases may increase the value of the asset/element (the age value), especially if there is potential for its continued use over a long period of time.
- **Quantity of evidence:** Availability of in-depth research and knowledge of the asset/element to reveal its significance and to increase its educational/interpretational potential/value as well as enhance understanding.
- **Rarity:** A rare asset/element of its type within a period, and/or a rare example in terms of completeness and quality of its survival.
- **Diversity:** An asset /element that is representative of individual, communal, and regional variety within a certain type or period of time.
- **Physical context:** Quality of the relationship of an asset/element to other assets/elements in their immediate vicinity and to the wider landscape and setting.
- **Connection with other forms of cultural expression:** The symbiotic relation between a cultural asset/element with other forms of cultural expressions, without which they cannot be fully understood and that strengthens their significance to individuals and groups.
- **Representativeness:** An asset or element that is a good representation of its category, or an asset or element of outstanding intrinsic merit (such as a masterpiece of workmanship or course, a work of a prominent artist/architect in a certain area/region, or a practiced tradition – intangible element - within a specified period, which has been considered as a model and has influenced other creations).
- **Fragility:** An asset or element vulnerable to degradation without appropriate management and conservation /protection measures.

For intangible cultural heritage, the determination of their significance requires assessing:

- **Viability:** The extent to which a cultural heritage asset/element is viable and sustainable having taken into consideration current and future environmental, social, and economic factors. This includes consideration of traditional knowledge and practices embedded in the cultural heritage asset/element regarding environmental management, construction techniques and other human activities that may strengthen the resilience of societies.
- **Inclusiveness:** An asset or element that contributes to social cohesion, encouraging a sense of identity and responsibility which helps individuals feel part of one or different communities and part of society.

In relation to tangible cultural heritage assets, in particular, the determination of their significance requires assessing how they satisfy two fundamental conditions:

- **Authenticity:** Authenticity of a cultural asset is a function of the extent to which a tangible cultural heritage asset truly possesses the nature and characters attributed to it. The ability to understand and appreciate these values depends on the degree to which the nature and characteristics of the attributes of the cultural heritage actually are what they are purported to be, based on credible and truthful information sources. Ultimately, authenticity is a function of the extent to which a tangible cultural heritage asset truly possesses the nature and characters attributed to it.
- **Integrity:** Integrity is a measure of the wholeness and intactness of the cultural heritage asset and thus of its ability to convey the full “story” through its attributes. Examining the conditions of integrity, therefore, requires assessing the extent to which the property includes all elements necessary to express its value; is of adequate size to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes, which convey the property’s significance; and suffers from adverse effects of development and/or neglect.

#### **b) Preliminary assessment of cultural heritage condition**

The state of conservation/viability assessment of tangible and intangible cultural heritage aims to identify its present state as well as issues that can emerge across time with the asset or element’s attributes and characteristics. The assessment is the act that carefully analyzes a place, a tradition, or a feature in order to understand the degree of severity, deterioration mechanisms or threats to the element’s viability and understand what corrective and preventive actions are required to safeguard and conserve the cultural heritage asset or element.

There are a variety of threats that can impact tangible and intangible assets/elements preservation and safeguarding. Tangible and intangible cultural heritage threats can be around damage, or any kind of threats related to loss of the asset or element (e.g. loss of transmission of knowledge for intangible cultural heritage). Threats can be social, economic, management and institutional issues; environmental including climate (change), local conditions, usage, including social/ cultural use threats, sudden ecological or geological, physical asset extraction, and human threats.

### **i. Assessment of the state of conservation of tangible cultural heritage**

While assessing the statement of conservation of cultural heritage assets, the following criteria should be examined but not limited to:

- Present state of conservation; and
- Threats to the asset:

More specifically in Saudi, the major threats encountered for tangible cultural heritage are:

- Urban development.
- Asset demolition (replacement when an asset is perceived as lacking any aesthetic value).
- Visitor/tourist threats.
- Environmental threats.

Further information could be collected according to the type of cultural heritage. Hence, each subsector owner is expected to develop its own template to assess the state of conservation taking into account the threats and factors that influence this precise asset type.

### **ii. Assessment of intangible cultural heritage viability**

The assessment of intangible cultural heritage's viability should rely on the inputs from the relevant community, which is the most knowledgeable of the cultural heritage element assessed.

In Saudi Arabia, the major threats encountered for intangible cultural heritage are:

- Lack of interest from new generations.
- Loss of knowledge with the loss of people carrying it.
- Modern technology.

While assessing the viability of intangible cultural heritage, the following criteria should be examined:

- Recognition: Is the intangible culture heritage element clearly identified and recognized among communities, groups, and sometimes individuals in the country?
- Current state of the element: Is the cultural heritage still active or still being practiced (does the practicing community still exist?)
- Practice: Who are the bearers and practitioners of the element? How many practitioners of the cultural heritage element are still active (if any)? Are there any specific roles, including gender-related ones or categories of persons with special responsibilities for the practice and transmission of the element?
- Viability: Is the element expected to continue being active in the future?
- Transmission of knowledge: Are there any ongoing knowledge transfer initiatives to educate and familiarize newer generations?
- What past and current efforts have been taken to safeguard the element?
- Threats and challenges: are there any threats or damages that could impact the sustainability of the cultural heritage element?

Further information specific to the type of cultural heritage could be collected according to forms developed by sub-sector owners.

### **c) Statement of significance**

A Statement of significance is a useful tool for presenting the results of a cultural heritage asset or element significance evaluation. The statement of significance is a short document that describes the place or asset/element and explains the reason why it is of value. Every assessment of cultural heritage asset or element should be supported by its statement of significance for future reference and validation. Statements of significance represent also the foundation for any conservation and management policy and plan. The statement should include:

- Description of the cultural asset/element;
- List of significance criteria (selected from the above guidelines) that apply to the asset with a brief justification; and
- Any additional relevant information about the asset or element's significance, including its current management regime.

The statement of significance usually comprises three components:

#### **i. The “what”: Description**

The description should describe the asset (whether movable or immovable)/element as it exists in the present day: its attributes or character-defining elements (CDEs)

Guidelines on writing a description:

- The description should be generic and effectively describe the asset/element.
- The statement of significance works as a whole so there is no need to include in the description any details that are covered in other sections such as cultural heritage significance and management regime.
- It can be helpful to refer to photographs or other visual documents to better illustrate the description of the current state of the asset/ element.

The attributes or character-defining elements of the heritage asset/element can be underlined through:

- Form and design;
- Traditions;
- Historic context;
- Location and setting;
- Materials and substance;
- Quality;
- Techniques and management systems; and
- Use and function

## ii. The “why”: Heritage value

The statement of significance should contain some paragraphs (approx. 2 - 4) to explain why the asset or element is with its given attributes (or character defining elements) is of cultural significance based on the criteria and dimensions provided in 1.3.2 - Assessment of cultural heritage significance against which the asset should be assessed. Cultural heritage significance is also in relation with the notion of authenticity and integrity.

## iii. The “how”: Management regime

This section of the statement of significance underlines information about the management regime of the asset/element. As this would differ for tangible and intangible, the differences should be reflected to point out how to operate, manage and maintain in order to protect the heritage value of this specific asset or elements.

This section of the statement of significance underlines the factors/attributes of the heritage asset/ element that should be maintained in order to protect its heritage value. These elements that make up the character of the asset/ element may include materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses and cultural relations or denotations. This section does not aim to just list all character-defining elements, but to point out those of which one should be aware of when operating or managing this specific heritage asset/element. Character-defining elements (CDEs) capture the main features of the asset/element that express its heritage values such as its historic evidence of use, historic context, use or any of the above-mentioned factors (see list in “the why”).

### 1.3.3. PROCEDURE

The following details the required steps for sub-sector owners and operators to assess the significance and preliminary condition of the asset or element:

**Step 1:** Gather information collected on the asset or element.

Information gathering includes outcomes of the research (which includes a thorough archival and bibliographic research to compile as much information as possible about the asset / element), designation of the asset/element, classification, and relevant supporting documents. Record all sources of information and create a reference file for the asset/element.

**Step 2:** Conduct additional primary and secondary research to address any gaps in content (if any).

Conduct additional research whether through interviews with communities or experts, documents collection or library research. The research helps solicit information to further understand the asset or element, the characteristics and unique features of the asset or element in case of ambiguousness and get to understand why it is valued by people.

**Step 3:** Conduct a field visit to assess the asset or element.

Collaborate with experts to conduct field assessment and take notes on the description, layout, physical features (in case of a tangible asset), and other information that can only be collected on-site. For ICH field visits, this covers meeting and interviewing community practitioners and local communities. It is recommended to take photographs for future reference.

**Step 4:** Assess the information collected against the criteria of heritage significance, noting the criteria applied to evaluate the asset or element.

**Step 5:** Draft the statement of significance including a description of the asset or element followed by the relevant criteria of significance identified in step 4.

**Step 6:** Review the statement of significance with the relevant commission if need be (according to the asset or element’s sub-sector).

In case of any ambiguities related to the assessment of significance and condition, the entity should consult with the concerned sub-sector available for support and guidance.

**Step 7:** Assess the state of conservation of the tangible asset or the viability of the intangible element.

Analyze and examine the asset or element current state against the criteria listed in section 1.3.2 - Assessment of cultural heritage significance.

**Step 8:** When necessary, review the assessment with the relevant commission (according to the asset or element's sub-sector).

#### **1.3.4. SELECTED SOURCES**

- Guidance on heritage assessment, Council of Europe publication, 2005.
- Review of Archaeological Assessment and Monitoring, Heritage Council, Ireland, February 2000.
- The Conservation Assessment: A Proposed Model for Evaluating Museum Environmental Management Needs, prepared by K. Dardes, Conservation Project Specialist (GCI), 1998.
- Identifying and Inventorying Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO ICH.
- Significance 2.0: a guide to assess the significance of collections. Collections Council of Australia LTD.
- The NARA Document on Authenticity, ICOMOS, 1994.
- Guidelines for Writing Effective Statements of Significance, British Columbia Heritage Branch.
- List of factors affecting the properties, UNESCO World Heritage Center.
- Format for the nomination of properties for inscription on the world heritage list, UNESCO, 2005.

**GUIDELINES FOR CULTURAL  
HERITAGE BASELINE DOCUMENTATION**

## 2. Phase 2: Baseline Documentation

### Introduction

The main objective of phase 2 is to define the guidelines and requirements enabling the different institutions to develop their local inventory and enrich the centralized national inventory of Saudi Arabia. Establishing a national inventory requires each institution to compile and maintain their records following a systematized register of content produced in respect of their cultural heritage.

The “baseline documentation” phase consists of three procedures that start with the assessment of the completeness of the information compiled at the identification stage and contained in a cultural heritage form, followed by the assessment of substance. Once validation of the heritage is complete, the next procedure is incorporating the cultural heritage asset or element within the entity’s specific inventory as well as the national inventory. Finally, all the information collected is further enriched to address any existing gaps and compiled all together in a structured manner.

Documentation is an ongoing process throughout the entire cultural heritage management lifecycle, from research and identification to its conservation/safeguarding. The documentation collected at the early stages of the process (i.e. during and immediately after identification and inventorying) is used to support claims of cultural significance, inform initial conservation and management policies and plans and, very importantly, will constitute the baseline against which future monitoring exercises will be carried out. While a cultural heritage documentation can serve several purposes, it is mainly a tool for informed decision making, as resources cannot be managed successfully if they are not well documented.

The documentation phase helps prepare for enriching the national digital archive (Phase 3 in the methodology) which aims to not only preserve and safeguard the country’s heritage but also to disseminate information and increase awareness.

Documentation presents several benefits, including:

- **Continuity:** Providing new users with an existing knowledge base to refer to and build upon.
- **Civic pride:** Stimulating interest in local culture and history and reinforcing people’s sense of community pride and identity.
- **Inclusive communities:** Helping acknowledge a community’s diversity by ensuring that every group’s cultural heritage aspects are recognized.
- **Civic engagement:** Promoting community involvement and often establishing long-lasting networks that can benefit communities in other ways.
- **Cultural record:** Valuable reference for educators, researchers and others who have an interest in the community’s culture and history.
- **Resilient practices:** Documenting relevant traditional knowledge and practices and ensuring their harnessing and inclusion within disaster risk management plans

## 2.1. Validate cultural heritage asset or element information and nomination

### 2.1.1. OVERVIEW

After the completion of the identification phase, the next step is to verify the degree to which the information provided on the asset or element is complete and the asset/element in question possesses cultural significance. In case the cultural heritage validation form has been duly answered according to the established standards and guidelines and the required steps are completed properly, the entity can proceed accordingly.

The validation of the cultural heritage information assesses the eligibility of the asset or element to be part of the national cultural heritage inventory and archive.

Each sub-sector owner conducts a review of the relevant “applications” of the operators, from both the completeness and substantial points of views to validate the cultural heritage and consequently approve its inclusion into a cultural heritage inventory. Sub-sector owners are responsible then for making a recommendation to the central entity responsible for formally integrating the asset/element within the national inventory and at a later stage into the digital archive.

Certified operators are responsible for conducting their own internal review process to assess the completeness and substance of the cultural heritage applications. The certified operators can support the commissions in the review of select applications.

### 2.1.2. GUIDELINES

#### a) Cultural heritage validation form

#### b) Assessment of completeness

#### c) Assessment of substance

#### d) Final validation

#### a) Cultural heritage validation form

Before an asset is formally accepted and recognized as a cultural heritage asset or element, it is necessary to review and aggregate the information collected throughout the previous phases into the validation form. The information submitted is then assessed in terms of completeness and substance.

The cultural heritage validation form should consist of the following information, at a minimum:

- Information of stakeholders involved (Name, Date, Author etc.) and their contact;
- Explanation on the work conducted to identify the asset and gather information (including field work, site visits, surveys, interviews etc.);
- Important information recorded during the identification project (based on 1.1 – Identify cultural heritage asset or element);
- Essential information for the asset definition and description including general information (name and brief description), historic information, origin, components, amongst others (based on 1.2 – Define and classify the cultural heritage asset or element);
- Evidence used to classify the asset/element (based on 1.2 – Define and classify the cultural heritage asset or element);
- Reasons for attaching cultural heritage value and significance to the asset or element (based on 1.3 – Assess cultural heritage asset or element significance and preliminary condition);
- Evidence collected to prove the cultural heritage asset or element’s significance;
- Information and evidence on the state of conservation/viability, protection and management of the asset or element (based on 1.3 – Assess cultural heritage asset or element significance and preliminary condition; and
- Sources of information.

## **b) Assessment of completeness**

The completeness assessment is the first layer of review that can be conducted by either the sub-sector owners or the certified operators. This assessment focuses on whether all information required in the tailored cultural heritage validation application form has been duly completed according to the established standards and guidelines. Validating that all required steps are completed properly enables the institution to proceed in this process. A key element for this application is a well-drafted statement of cultural significance for review.

All this information will be essential to enable the following step of the process, i.e. the assessment of substance (see below). The assessment spans across the outcomes of the identification, definition and classification, and assessment of significance and condition. The following checklist depicts the required fields for submission:

- Has a proper exercise to collect relevant information been conducted throughout the identification phase? (this might include on-site visits, field expert support, interviews, surveys, and crowdsourcing)
- Has there been any validation on whether the asset or element already exists in the national inventory or archive to avoid duplication?
- Was there an analysis of the research results produced and reviewed with experts?
- Is the asset or element definition and classification in line with the provided definitions in 1.2 – Define and classify the cultural heritage asset or element?
- Is the drafted statement of significance comprehensive and does it adequately describe the heritage value of the asset or element according to 1.3 – Assess cultural heritage asset or element significance and preliminary condition?
- Is the application submitted for validation and review complemented with sufficient and relevant supporting documents (including maps, imagery, videos, among others)?
- Is the quality of the documents provided acceptable and easily readable?

## **c) Assessment of substance**

The purpose of the assessment of substance is to determine to which extent, the proposed asset or element for inclusion on the national inventory possesses cultural heritage significance. The assessment will also review the methodology applied throughout the process.

Assessing cultural significance involves reviewing the relevant information provided on a specific asset or element that has been put forward while making a judgment on whether it meets certain established criteria for value. For tangible heritage, the conditions of authenticity and integrity would also need to be satisfied.

The criteria for determining the value of a cultural asset or element are described in 1.3 – Assess Cultural heritage asset or element. The assessment of substance, fundamentally, reviews the claims made in the application form and determines whether they meet the above-mentioned criteria and conditions and are grounded in reality. An important aspect to be assessed is the current state of conservation and the management system in place to safeguard the asset/element. At this stage, the assessor might also wish to explore the potential for any additional cultural heritage values that have not been recognized/identified by the proponents.

Assessing the methodology adopted in putting together the application form involves reviewing the relevant information and making a judgment on whether such methodology complies with established principles. These include the need for extensive and inclusive consultations with concerned stakeholders (and where relevant obtaining their consent to the formal recognition of the asset/element in question, notably for intangible cultural heritage elements); demonstrating the credibility and truthfulness of the sources of information; the appropriate management of the records collected; and the involvement of persons with the required capacities and expertise throughout the process. Such principles are described in 1.1 – Identify cultural heritage asset/element.

In addition to a desktop review, the assessment of substance will most likely require a field visit along with additional consultations. It is critical to complement secondary data (contained in the application form), with primary data directly obtained by the assessors.

Based on the assessment of substance, the reviewer will make a recommendation regarding the inclusion of the proposed asset/element on the national inventory of cultural heritage. This might also include a proposal regarding the category of importance of the asset/element as well as recommendations for urgent safeguarding measures, if necessary.

#### **d) Final validation**

Any entity or body within the cultural heritage ecosystem, whether a subsector owner, operator, enabler, or individual is eligible to research, gather and aggregate information on an asset or element. The entity or body should incorporate the gathered information into the cultural heritage validation form after having classified the asset and assessed its cultural heritage significance. A first layer of review is carried out by either the sub-sector owner or certified operator depending on the entity in charge of the asset or element. The final stage represents an official approval to have the asset or element included into the national inventory and archive.

There are three scenarios for final validation:

- i. A sub-sector owner: A sub-sector owner should dedicate a person responsible to assess information in terms of completeness and substance and secure an approval from the head of the commission or from the highest authority level required based on the delegation of authority.
- ii. A certified operator: If an operator meets certain set criteria (e.g. certified resources, advanced experience, long term presence in Saudi Arabia, local and international recognitions, advancement of processes, etc.), the entity is then considered as certified and is not required to secure a validation from the relevant sub-sector owner.
- iii. Non-certified operators or other entities: All other entities or bodies involved in cultural heritage documentation require a final validation from the relevant sub-sector owner. Subsector owners own the end-to-end validation process and are eligible to review and approve their team's submitted information.

#### **2.1.3. PROCEDURE**

This procedure is highly dependent on the entity submitting the information. Sub-sector owners and certified operators are entitled to review and approve their own assessment without requiring any external intervention. While non-certified operators should ensure the review and approval of the relevant sub-sector owner.

The following procedure details the required steps for non-certified operators, certified operators, and sub-sector owners to ensure an approval on the outcomes and conclusions from the identification phase.

**a) Non-certified operators** - For non-certified operators submitting the validation form for a potential cultural asset or element, the following procedure should be followed:

**Step 1:** Gather and submit the required information and validation form.

Non-certified operator should fill the validation form (refer to 2.1 – Validate cultural heritage asset or element information and nomination for the form requirements) that is made available by the central entity and submit it to the relevant sub-sector owner (commission) based on the type of the asset.

**Step 2:** Receive feedback on the application information of the cultural heritage asset or element.

This step concerns assessing the completeness and substance of the information provided based on the completed phase 1, including identification, definition and classification, and assessment of significance and condition of cultural heritage asset or element. For non-certified operators, the party responsible for conducting the two layers of assessment (assessment of completeness and assessment of substance) is the relevant sub-sector owner. The latter is assigned based on the asset type tagging during the submission of the form.

**Step 3:** Address received comments and submit final draft for approval.

As a final step, a final approval is required from the higher authority of the concerned sub-sector owner.

**b) Sub-sector owner or certified operators** - For sub-sector owner or certified operators submitting the validation form for a potential cultural asset or element, the following procedure should be followed:

**Step 1:** Gather and submit the required information and the validation form.

Sub-sector owners or certified operators should use the validation form (refer to 2.1 – Validate cultural heritage asset or element information and nomination for the form requirements) available with the central entity and fill it with the relevant gathered information. No submission of the validation form is required.

**Step 2:** Assess application information of the cultural heritage asset or element.

This step concerns assessing the completeness and substance of the information provided based on the completed phase 1, including identification, definition and classification, and assessment of significance and condition of cultural heritage asset or element.

- Assign resources responsible for the validation based on the asset types, with the support of international and local experts as needed. The party responsible for conducting the two layers of assessment (assessment of completeness and assessment of substance) is the entity itself that is filling the form under the condition that the person/committee in charge of the assessment is not the same as the one involved in the identification phase.
- Verify that submitted information is complete (assessment of completeness).
- Verify the validity and truthfulness of the information provided (assessment of substance).

**Step 3:** Address received feedback and submit final draft for final approval.

As a final step, a final approval is required on the outcomes of the assessment of the cultural heritage asset or element. For the certified operators and sub-sector owners, the final approval should be provided by the relevant approver from the entity itself based on the delegation of authority.

#### 2.1.4. SELECTED SOURCES

- Convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage, World Heritage Committee, December 1994.
- Operation Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, World Heritage Center, July 2012.
- Identifying and Inventorying Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO, 2009.

## **2.2. Prepare and maintain cultural heritage asset or element inventory**

### **2.2.1. OVERVIEW**

The purpose of this procedure is to support institutions in establishing their own inventory as well as integrating the asset or element into the national inventory for the purpose of safeguarding Saudi cultural heritage.

Inventorying is defined as “listing cultural heritage assets to have a clear and shared understanding of the items considered as culturally significant for conservation and management purposes”.

In the context of cultural heritage, an inventory involves conducting a systematic survey of all the assets/elements belonging to a certain geo-cultural area, historic period, or collection, depending on their intended scope. Listing cultural heritage assets ensures having a clear and shared understanding of the items considered as culturally significant for conservation and management purposes. Entries of an inventory have a limited length and are subject to regular updating. This is not the same as documentation, although some documentation will be necessary to establish an inventory.

The process of compiling an inventory is like the activity of collecting that is continuous since there are always new assets and elements to be added. Moreover, the state of conservation of certain items, or even their perceived cultural significance, may vary over time. Like scientific research, inventories reflect the state of that science at a given moment.

Whether the inventory consists of essential or detailed information, it should provide a central repository information about a specific group of assets/elements that could be owned by several parties (sub-sector owner, operators, private collectors, and others). To create a central inventory, it is vital to develop standard templates and to ensure that a consistent methodology and approach are applied in gathering and compiling data.

The final stage of this procedure requires the approval of the central entity on the asset or element in order to integrate it into the national inventory.

### **2.2.2. GUIDELINES**

#### **a) Inventory content**

#### **b) Inventory planning**

#### **c) Updating the inventory**

#### **a) Inventory content**

Each heritage institution should establish an inventory of its assets and elements since it is a basic requirement for the entity to fulfil its mandate with respect to the management of cultural heritage. Developing an inventory for cultural heritage assets involves choosing which type of information should be collected on the assets or elements. The inventory should generate basic information but also additional information on the characteristics of the asset or element.

The inventory should at least answer three basic questions:

- What assets are inventoried?
- How many assets are there?
- Where are these assets located?

There are several benefits from developing a comprehensive inventory:

- Gain a better understanding of the asset or elements;
- Be equipped with the tools needed to manage the assets/elements well;
- Create core content to which more detailed information can be added later;
- Intervene quickly in the event that the safety of an asset is threatened; and
- Guarantee the quality and reliability of the information on the assets as a whole.

An important consideration when creating entity-level inventories is ensuring consistency given that the data and entries are further carried as inputs into the national inventory.

Some new techniques and technologies can be considered when building a national inventory such as the inventory built based on a GIS platform, which identifies the location of each asset/element. The advantages of building an inventory on a spatial platform are numerous, including facilitating dialogue with other institutions, entrepreneurs, involving civil society, supporting monitoring (through spatial imagery), promoting visitation and tourism, preventing adverse impacts from insensitive development & natural hazards, easing the updating process, among others. Moreover, many good examples of such inventories for cultural heritage already exist and can serve as model.

The reference list below gives a generic overview on the information that should be integrated into an inventory template for both tangible and intangible cultural heritage. However, this list should be tailored and adapted by the sub-sector owners (commissions) based on the asset type. Additional information and fields can also be considered.

a) Content of the inventory form of tangible cultural heritage assets (Movable and immovable) should contain the following information:

**- Identification of the asset**

- o Name of the cultural heritage asset;
- o Heritage classification type/category (monument, site, group of buildings, artwork, cultural landscape, amongst others);
- o Concerned heritage sub-sector (fashion, film, theater and performing arts, music, culinary arts, visual arts, libraries, museums, among others);
- o Physical location and setting;
- o Ownership (private-profit, private non-profit, private-individual, private nonspecific, city, state, community, foreign...);
- o Date/Period (cultural period and/or culture/style, century, date range, absolute date);and
- o Inventory number/unique reference number Inventory number and/or unique reference number (number or combination of characters, which uniquely identifies each asset or element within the inventory list).

**- Characteristics of the asset**

- o Brief description of the cultural heritage asset and its significance;
- o Dimensions and material;
- o Associated tangible assets/elements;
- o Associated intangible assets/elements;
- o Perceived origin and year of creation / construction;
- o Original use/current use; and
- o Changes and alterations.

**- Person(s) and/or organization(s) associated with the production and history of the heritage**

- o Persons and/or workshops (having participated in the construction, painting, woodcarving or in building/making other features of the heritage – architects, constructors, painters, landscapers, gardeners, etc.); and
- o Author(s)/ Maker(s) (painters, sculptors, blacksmith/smithy and other specific category of producers, artists, etc.).

#### **- State of conservation of the asset**

- Asset assessment of condition related information, including present state of conservation and threats to the asset including urban development threats, asset demolition, and environmental threats, among others. Conservation measures in place, including conservation and preservation plan, reporting and monitoring, standards of care, display, handling, usage, security and environmental arrangements;
- Restoration related information and transportation requirements (if any); and
- Costs and responsibilities including conservation, transport and staff time.

#### **- Data gathering and inventorying**

- Consent from and involvement of the owner in data gathering and inventorying;
- Name of the person(s)/ institution/organization who collects and provides the information for the inventory (name, professional category and position) in whose possession the asset was/is (for private collections);
- Sources of information;
- Restrictions, if any, on use of inventoried data;
- Date(s) and place(s) of gathering/collecting data/information;
- Date(s) of entering of information into the inventory;
- Storing and/or transferring to other location; and
- Associated references such as record format and type, documentary materials, tools, recordings, literature, discography, audio-visual materials, among others.

#### **- Persons and institutions involved with the asset**

- Name(s), age, gender, and/or professional category, and others;
- Other participants with the TCH, but in a way that is not related to practicing it, rather contributing to its sustainability or facilitating its practice and transmission (e.g. holders, custodians, donor, supporter, founder, occupant, amongst others); and
- Concerned institutions and organizations.

#### **- Legal related information**

- Insurance and indemnity requirements;
- Terms of reproduction and intellectual rights;
- Additional terms and conditions as agreed with the lender, including the method of acknowledgement for labels, the owner's rights to their object; and
- Legal base of ownership (contract, donation, other type of agreement).

#### **- Research Methods**

- Library research, city directory, historic photos, maps, among others; and
- Survey(s), interview(s).

#### **- Cross-references**

- Cross-references to related records of associated elements/objects or documentation.

b) Content of the inventory form of intangible cultural heritage assets should contain the following information:

**- Identification of the element**

- Name of the element, as used by community or group concerned;
- Heritage classification type/category (traditional crafts, beliefs, dances, music, songs, traditional crafts, traditional food, oral traditions, among others);
- Concerned heritage sub-sector (fashion, film, theater and performing arts, music, culinary arts, visual arts, libraries, museums, among others);
- Natural location of the ICH and its scope of practice;
- Community(ies) (or groups) or practitioner(s) involved; and
- Inventory number/unique reference number (number or combination of characters, which uniquely identifies each asset or element within the inventory list).

**- Characteristics of the element**

- Brief description of the cultural heritage element and its significance;
- Associated tangible assets/elements;
- Associated intangible assets/elements;
- Perceived origin/provenance and evolution;
- Physical elements associated with practicing the ICH (tools and equipment, costumes, places, and liturgical tools if applicable); and
- Language(s) and dialects used in performing or practicing the element.

**- State of viability of the element**

- ICH assessment of condition related information, including threats to the enactment, threats to the transmission, availability of associated tangible elements and resources, viability of associated tangible and intangible elements; and
- Safeguarding measures in place (if any) to address any of these threats and encourage the practice and transfer of ICH.

**- Data gathering and inventorying**

- Consent from and involvement of the community/group in data gathering and inventorying;
- Resource persons(s): name and status or affiliation;
- Restrictions, if any, on use of inventoried data;
- Date(s) and place(s) of gathering/collecting data/information;
- Date(s) of entering of information into the inventory; and
- Associated references to literature, discography, audio-visual materials, and archives.

**- Persons and institutions involved with the element**

- Community/practitioner(s)/producers/performer(s): name(s), age, gender, social status, and/or professional category, among others;
- Other participants concerned with the ICH, but in a way that is not related to practicing it, rather contributing to its sustainability or facilitating its practice and transmission (e.g. holders/custodians); and
- Concerned institutions and organizations.

**- Legal related information**

- Insurance and indemnity requirements;
- Terms of reproduction and intellectual rights;
- Additional terms and conditions as agreed with the lender, including the method of acknowledgement for labels, the owner's rights to their object; and
- Legal base of ownership (contract, donation, other type of agreement).

#### - Research methods

- Library research, city directory, historic photos, among others; and
- Survey(s), interview(s).

#### - Cross-references

- Cross-references to related records of associated elements/objects or documentation.

### **b) Inventory planning**

As part of the inventorying process, an initial step is to develop a plan for the inventory exercise to be conducted. The plan includes defining the purpose, scope, involved stakeholders, criteria of inclusion, resources, required information and data fields, inventory access, methodology of inventorying and updating, associated costs, amongst others.

The following key questions are to help guide the planning of the inventorying:

- What will be the purposes of the inventorying exercise?
- What will the scope of the inventory be?
- Which criteria for inclusion will be applied and what ordering principles will be used?
- What consultative mechanisms will be used or created?
- Which other stakeholders, in addition to the relevant non-governmental organizations, (if any) will be involved?
- How will the communities whose intangible cultural heritage will be inventoried, and their representatives, be identified and informed?
- How much information will be included about each element? And which additional data fields are to be considered?
- Which organization(s) or institution(s) will be responsible for the coordination or implementation of the inventory process(es)?
- How will the dissemination of and access to the inventory be organized?
- How will the inventory be monitored and updated?
- What costs will be involved and how will the inventorying system be financed?

### **c) Updating the inventory**

Inventories are of dynamic nature and keep evolving over time. It is of critical importance that inventories are reviewed over time as the assets/elements are exposed to constant changes whether due to its condition, location or use among others. The information must thus be updated on a regular basis to ensure an exhaustive inventory list.

Inventory must have a process for updating the content that might be periodic (annual, biennial review...) or more often on a case by case basis triggered by a specific event or threat (e.g. a new proposed development) and whenever it appears necessary.

Several factors influence the need for updating the inventory and its recommended frequency. These updates often serve as means of monitoring location and condition and avoid any risk of damage or loss of the asset or element.

The following key questions are to guide the decision on the frequency to be set for updating the inventory:

- When was the inventory created? And when was it lastly updated?
- Are the assets/elements often in use? Are they moved around frequently?
- Which is the state of the asset's condition? Does it require a special monitoring?

Updating the inventory requires:

- Meeting with private owners, communities, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and institutions with heritage bearers. The cultural community is often a primary source of information on the status of certain elements and proposals for safeguarding and development.
- Conducting field trips and involving experts i.e. ethnographers, archaeologists, folklorists, photographers, amongst others to verify periodically whether there are any changes to the asset and update the inventory accordingly.

Several factors set off the need for updating the inventory and information:

- The asset is subject to ongoing research and discoveries.
- Conservation/restoration related changes.
- Asset condition/ viability related changes.
- Asset change of location.

It is necessary to record the following information as soon as updates or changes are made and move older information to history:

- New information;
- Date of update/change/adding;
- Person updating/changing/adding;
- Signature of person updating/changing/adding information;
- Reason for update/change/add; and
- Additional information about the update/change/adding as required.

While each entity/institution is responsible for creating its own inventory, it is also responsible for conducting periodical check-ups to ensure that the inventory is up to date. The asset or element owner should notify the inventory owner of any updates and provide the latest information ensuring that the changes are also reflected in the national inventory.

### 2.2.3. PROCEDURE

Inventorying is an open and evolving process; approaches are best developed over time in response to monitoring and evaluation results. It is important to note that inventories of cultural heritage especially for intangible will always remain a work-in-progress due to the ever-evolving nature of that heritage. It is important to develop an inventory leveraging the information and records collected throughout the previous phases.

The following procedure details the required steps for sub-sector owners and operators to ensure inclusion of the asset or element in the entity specific inventory as well as the central inventory.

**Step 1:** Develop the inventorying plan and scope.

- Define the type of inventory.
- Establish the level of detail necessary and define the required information.
- Establish a list of available resources.
- Assign a team or person responsible of the inventory content.
- Define process for updating inventory and assign a dedicate team/person responsible for the continuous updates.

**Step 2:** Collect the information required for the inventory.

At this stage, the operator or sub-sector owner may be required to conduct additional archival and bibliographic research to complement/verify the available information as well as field visits to collect and complete the previously conducted work. The entity should build on top of the data collected during the identification phase to fill and complete the inventory required data fields.

**Step 3:** Submit inventory to central entity for its review and approval.

The operator or sub-sector owner should submit the new cultural heritage asset or element by filling the NCA inventory form required for the national inventory. Once the inventory form is submitted to the central entity, the proposed entries are then reviewed and approved by the central entity and accordingly integrated into the national inventory.

In case the operator is submitting the content to the central, the entity should inform and notify relevant sub-sector throughout the whole process until the integration of the new entries into the national inventory.

**Step 4:** Address received comments and submit final draft for approval.

The operator or sub-sector owner submits the final draft to the central entity after performing the requested changes. As a final step, a final approval is provided from the central entity that becomes at this stage responsible for integrating the new information to the national inventory.

**Note:** In case the operator or sub-sector owner requires updating the content on the national inventory, the concerned entity should use to the asset or element defined ID number to access the “existing entry”. Once the pre-populated template is accessed, modify fields with the new content.

#### 2.2.4. SELECTED SOURCES

- Guidance on Inventory and Documentation of the Cultural Heritage, Council of Europe 2009.
- Questions and Answers – UNESCO project publication (brochure) on implementation of the Convention on Safeguarding the Intangible Heritage, 2009.
- Identifying and Inventorying Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO, 2009.
- Implementing the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO project publication (brochure), 2008.
- International Charter for Archaeological Heritage Management (ICOMOS Charter), 1990.
- Statement of principles of museum documentation, ICOM CIDOC, 2012.

### 2.3. Document initial cultural heritage asset or element details

#### 2.3.1. OVERVIEW

Documentation is related to the systematic collection and structuring of cultural heritage information and records in order to preserve them for future reference. It is data and information that are structured so that they are useful to individuals or organizations and can be shared with others and serve the purpose of identification, preservation, and conservation of cultural heritage assets. Documentation is indispensable before making decisions about cultural heritage. Ultimately, “recording and documentary research are essential first steps towards good conservation practice”.

Through collaboration between experts who master a wide variety of recording techniques and tools, this step can be seen as an extension of the inventory form. In order to enrich the information included in the inventory, one should document the asset/element graphically through sketches, videos and photos among others. Depending on the asset type and conservation/safeguarding issues, specific documentation and field work will be further required. Additional notes and information could be recorded to provide further description on the asset/element and its overall state of conservation and viability but also to document specific areas of concerns/interests.

The commitment at the national level to conserve the heritage requires an equal commitment towards the documentation process. The complexity of the documentation processes requires the deployment of individuals with adequate skills and knowledge, such as specialist heritage recorders, surveyors, conservators, architects, engineers, researchers, architectural historians, anthropologists, archaeologists above and below ground, and other specialist advisors.

In short, proper documentation enables:

- Adequate safeguarding and protection of the assets.
- Identification and description of the assets.
- A better understanding of the asset.
- Better preventative conservation and maintenance of the assets.
- Access to the assets and information.
- Updating of information.
- Allowing the protection of rights (e.g. copyright).
- Preservation of information.
- Dissemination of information and knowledge for educational and promotional purposes.

The documentation process is continuous and does not have an end. There will always be new information to gather on the asset/element. It may be based on a specialist’s new understanding of the asset/element, new conservation or preservation measures, a change in the description following new scientific research, changes in the state of conservation following a traumatic event, among others.

#### 2.3.2. GUIDELINES

- a) Documentation considerations
- b) Recording formats and techniques
- c) Updating document content

### a) Documentation considerations

The list below represents general considerations and tips for cultural heritage professionals and institutions, and other custodians of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, who oversee documenting cultural heritage asset/elements:

- **Content:** The content of the documentation phase should explain and depict the significance and value as well as any visual, historical, technical specificities among others. Any information that supports the long-time preservation and conservation of the assets needs to be included. The evidence is backed-up by drawings, photographs, and other supporting documentation.
- **Quality:** The documentation content should be sourced in a reliable manner setting up limitations to enable independent verification of the information. The goal of documentation is to create an accurate record of assets/elements supporting research and other preservation activities.
- **Material:** Any documentation should use materials that are reproducible, durable, and in standard sizes. The material and its quality are important aspects to documentation in order to ensure the preservation of information for future use. The selection factors of the material need to take the expected storage time, the frequency of use and size recommendations into account.
- **Presentation:** Documentation should be produced in a clear and concise manner in order to be useful for future research and preservation. Any document whether written, audio-visual, or graphic, or other, needs to be legible, understandable and contain adequate references.

### b) Recording formats

Documentation methods and formats should be adapted to the nature of the heritage, the purposes of the record, the cultural context and should, wherever possible, use non-intrusive techniques avoiding causing any damage to the heritage asset. The guidelines below provide an overview of the different formats that can be used for documentation. It is important during the documentation phase to meet standardized requirements to ensure compatibility while creating a comprehensive understanding of the cultural asset/element. However, technological advances are highly impacting and revolutionizing the field of documentation and recording of cultural heritage at all levels and thus new techniques and formats are continuously evolving over time.

- **Photogrammetric images:** A print of any photogrammetric image used in the field recording process, along with dimensional information pertinent to control points in the image, should be included as part of the field records. Photogrammetry today is often done by means overlapping normal 2D digital photographs that are enabled by special software capable of producing 3D models. These high-resolution photographs are sometimes taken by drones.
- **Photography:** Photography other than large-format photography, intended for the purposes of producing documentation e.g. aerial photography.
- **Field records:** Notes of measurements taken, field photographs and other recorded information intended for the purpose of producing documentation.
- **Drawings:** Drawings depicting existing conditions or other relevant features of objects, historic buildings, sites, structures, or landscapes. Measured drawings are usually produced in ink on an archival material.
- **Written data:** Inventory forms, data sheets, historical reports, or other original, written works of varying lengths that describe a building, site, structure, object, or landscape and highlight its historical, architectural, technological, or cultural significance.
- **Photocopy:** A photograph, with large format negative, of a photograph or drawings.
- **Sketch plan:** A floor or site plan, usually not to exact scale although often drawn from measurements, where the features are shown in proper relation and proportion to one another.

- **Graphic record:** A measured drawing, rectified photograph, ortho-photo-mosaic or 3-D model that graphically or photographically describes the physical configuration of a heritage place, along with its dimensional and architectural characteristics.
- **Audio-video:** Records that combine audio and visual format such as motion picture film, sound and video recordings, posters and other graphic works, multimedia productions. They capture tangible or intangible cultural heritage such as an interview, performance, craftsmen, etc.
- **3D scan:** Laser scanning machines serving to analyze a real-world object or environment, collect data on its exact size and shape and then use them to construct a digital 3-dimensional representation into the computer world.

### c) Updating document content

The process refers to documenting the updates. It is important to ensure that each document prepared at a given time and reflecting the situation at that moment, is left unchanged and recorded, so as to provide information on the evolution over time of the asset/element.

Several factors set off the need for updating:

- The asset is subject to ongoing research and discoveries.
- Conservation/restoration related changes.
- Asset condition related changes.
- Asset change of location.

It is necessary to record the following information as soon updates or changes are made:

- New information;
- Date of update/change/adding;
- Move older information to history;
- Person updating/changing/adding;
- Signature of person updating/changing/adding information;
- Reason for update/change/add; and
- Additional information about the update/change/adding as required.

### 2.3.3. PROCEDURE

The following procedure details the required steps for sub-sector owners and operators to ensure an exhaustive view of the asset or element through documented information and supporting evidence.

**Step 1:** Compile previously gathered information and identify required additional documentation.

Before creating additional content, existing information should be compiled organized properly into folders for each of the asset or element. Once completed, additional content and records can be added to provide a richer view on the asset/element.

- Review and identify potential new documents or information relevant to the asset or element.
- Consult individuals and organizations who owned, occupied, recorded, constructed, conserved, or carried out research or have knowledge of the asset or element.

**Step 2:** Develop an action plan to source required additional content and records.

Develop an action plan based on the identified needs, defining required tasks and necessary resources. The planning of additional documentation of cultural heritage involves:

- Defining project objectives and determining recording methods.

- Determining required human resources, skills, and equipment to achieve project goals.
- Determining budget requirements including the costs of equipment, salaries, and all other project expenses.
- Developing an implementation plan by making a list of tasks and determining the time and timelines required to complete each step (including site visits, fieldwork, among others).

**Step 3:** Initiate the documentation of additional records.

In this phase, professionals and experts are engaged to build new content and complement existing ones from the previous phases. Depending on the asset/element type, characteristics, different methods or formats will be used. The types of new records or content produced include more accurate measured drawings and photographs, which provide complete information on significant components of the asset/place, thematic maps, condition reports, scientific investigation data, historical and archaeological surveys, environmental conditions, analysis of samples and reports on tests for security, safety, among others.

**Step 4:** Review and manage documentation updates.

In case the existing content and information on a certain asset/element needs to be updated, the new information should be submitted in compliance with the guidelines and defined procedure by each entity. The updates should be submitted by the entity in charge following the procedure defined in 2.2 stating the updates. The information should then be reviewed and approved by the relevant entity (refer to procedure 2.1). Once the updates are reviewed and validated, the inventory should be updated accordingly. It is important to keep track of the history of updates and the modifications made to the documents.

Note: Completing the identification and baseline documentation properly facilitates preparing an asset or element nomination proposal to the UNESCO's lists as the proposed guidelines in this document are aligned to UNESCO's requirements. The nomination process requires developing an 'inventory' of the important cultural heritage assets or elements and preparing the nomination file, which needs to be as exhaustive as possible, making sure the necessary documentation is included.

#### 2.3.4. SELECTED SOURCES

- Identifying and Inventorying Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO, 2009.
- Documentation and monitoring of built heritage in Abu Dhabi, UAE, Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority, September 2013.
- Principles for the recording of monuments, groups of buildings and sites, Icomos, October 1996.
- Recording, Documentation, and Information Management for the Conservation of Heritage places, the Getty Conservation Institute, Robin Letellier, 2007.
- Documentation & Condition Mapping for Restoration & Revitalisation of historic Sheesh Mahal & Char Bagh complex in Patiala (Punjab), India, Principal Conservation Architect – Heritage Conservation & Design Centre, September 2017.
- Documentation of Cultural Heritage techniques, potentials and constraints, Faculty of Architecture, World Heritage Studies, BTU Cottbus, September 2015.
- CIDOC International Guidelines for Museum Object Information: CIDOC Information Categories.
- Standards, Department of the Interior, Federal Register, September 1983.

# GUIDELINES FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE ARCHIVING

### 3. Phase 3: Digital Archiving

#### Introduction

The aim of the digital cultural heritage archive is to create a “collection of collections” of Saudi Arabia’s cultural heritage. This phase defines the guidelines and requirements for the digitization and publishing of cultural heritage content into a national centralized archive to ensure all content is digitized and published. It covers the whole process from digitization through publishing to the preservation of the archive, ensuring sustainable and accessible content over the long term. Ultimately, the objective is to preserve, safeguard and promote tangible and intangible cultural heritage recognized and approved by the central entity as a Saudi cultural heritage.

The “Digital Archiving” phase is a three-step process that starts with the digitization of the cultural heritage assets following guidelines and requirements defined by the central entity. The second step of the process consists of publishing the cultural heritage content into the national archive. At this specific stage, the entities provide the data and information on their assets/elements and establish a data exchange agreement with the central entity. The final step ensures the update of the content of the archive when necessary and the long-term preservation and accessibility of the records.

Several factors play a key role in successfully establishing a digital archive:

- **Standardization:** Standardizing compiled data from several sources and build a consistent approach for archiving data.
- **Data protection and privacy:** Ensuring that the right protection measures are set and followed according to the specific restrictions on the data.
- **Changing environments:** Adapting to the rapid technological changes by continuously maintaining digital records and upgrading the tools as needed to ensure a sustainable digital archive.
- **Safety and security:** Making sure that the precious records held by the digital archive are not damaged or stolen as a result of some incidents or malevolent acts.
- **Accessibility:** Ensuring that the intended audiences are able to access and use the content of the digital archive.
- **Capacity building:** Developing and maintaining the capacities needed to operate the archive, especially in the light of the rapid technological innovations that characterize the field.
- **Partnerships and international cooperation:** Promoting collaboration with a wide variety of public and private partners, locally and internationally, with a view to enhancing the outreach and impact of the archive institution.

### 3.1. Digitize cultural heritage content

#### 3.1.1. OVERVIEW

Digitization of cultural heritage content is the process of creating digital files and objects by scanning physical copies or assets and converting existing analogue resources. Digital materials include texts, still and moving images, audio, graphics, software, web pages, among a wide and growing range of formats. They require maintenance and management to be retained.

Digitization of cultural heritage ensures long-term preservation and safeguarding of intellectual property and valuable information about Saudi. It also makes possible their publication in an open information space to raise awareness and promote the country's image locally and internationally.

Therefore, digitization of cultural heritage assets or elements is essential to make collections vastly more accessible by broader audiences.

Any cultural institutions planning to engage in digitization projects should check existing digital cultural heritage copies within their database and identify the need for digitization to prevent duplication of digital copies.

#### 3.1.2. GUIDELINES

##### a) Digitization approach

##### b) Quality assurance and quality control

##### c) Recommended file formats for content digitization

##### a) Digitization approach

Digitization of cultural heritage content refers to the set of activities resulting in the creation of digital records that can be made accessible to the public. To ensure the success of digitization activities with the highest standards of quality and the preservation of content, the following guidelines should be considered:

- Records should be prioritized based on criteria set by the operator in alignment with cultural heritage content significance levels, sensitivity of original copies, their exposure to threats and risks of damage, budget available, resources available, equipment available, etc.
- Documents' metadata should be gathered and consolidated, if not already, and contextual information should be communicated with the parties responsible for the digitization (when digitization is outsourced).
- IT infrastructure required for the process should be reviewed to ensure it supports the storage of the digital records created.
- Staffing of required resources by operators to support digitization initiatives, mobilize teams and ensure they have the knowledge and capabilities required for the task.
- Policies, standards, and guidelines for digitization of cultural heritage content should be comprehensively developed and shared with supporting stakeholders.
- Funding strategies should be developed to secure funding required.
- Safety of material being digitized should be examined and preserved.

There are many ways to approach the digitization of cultural heritage, from planning and prioritization of content to execution. Operators may adopt one, or a combination of the following approaches when engaging in digitization of cultural heritage content projects:

**i) Engaging in partnerships:**

Engaging with private, public, non-profit, educational and government institutions in Saudi to digitize cultural heritage content. Partners can be leveraged for their specialization in topics and industries, technology expertise, capacity, and availability to undergo tasks of digitization of large amount of content. Partners can conduct the digitization activities themselves or alternatively support operators with funding for them to manage digitization activities.

**ii) Crowdsourced digitization:**

Operators should consider engaging the community and increasing public engagement in digitizing cultural heritage content. Operators should share digitization guidelines and standards developed by the central entity to ensure processes go as required and should dedicate rooms or spaces and call for support from the public.

**iii) Internal digitization:**

Operators should still invest the biggest efforts into their internal resources to conduct digitization of sensitive material, or material that may not be suitable to be shared with the public or with partners.

Digitization requires a set of tools and equipment such as scanners, audio and video conversion software, imaging software, storage solutions, electronic record-keeping systems, storage devices, amongst others. Digital records created should all have an adequate name and version information in their title to enable their structured classification and organization for future use and retrieval. All records should be organized, tracked, secure and retrievable within a record-keeping system. Record-keeping systems facilitate the management of records throughout their lifecycle and minimize the risk of loss or inaccessibility of information. Record-keeping systems enable record retention and disposal, metadata capture, records classification, tracking and indexing.

**b) Quality assurance and quality control**

Quality control and quality assurance activities consist of checking the process and the outcomes of digitization to ensure that digital copies are suitably created, clear, and resemble original copies of cultural heritage assets and elements. They also ensure that original records are handled correctly and are not damaged during the digitization process and that metadata related to digital copies is accurate and complete. When the output quality does not meet the desired targets set by the central entity and the operators, re-digitization of the cultural heritage asset or element should be conducted.

Prior to engaging in digitization projects, operators should partner with quality assurance and quality control vendors recognized by the central entity to ensure an objective and unbiased evaluation of results.

When conducting quality control and quality assurance of metadata, the following at a minimum should be examined:

- The completeness and accuracy of minimum metadata fields required (refer to the following section 3.2.2, Metadata Management).
- Naming convention is compliant with standards.
- The accuracy of grammar spelling and punctuation.

### c) Recommended file formats for content digitization

The following guidelines should be used by cultural heritage operators as a tool to select the adequate format when creating digital copies of their content or to convert existing analogue resources. File formats covered in this document span across the following content categories:

- Text;
- Still image;
- Audio;
- Video; and
- Motion Pictures (Film); and
- 3D modelling.

When selecting file formats for the digitization of cultural heritage assets or analogue sources, the below considerations should be made regarding the format:

- Widely used and supported around the world.
- Free from copyrights.
- Identifiable and the specification is publicly available.
- Stable and new versions are only released rarely.
- Uncompressed.
- Supports metadata.

There are endless formats available for the above-mentioned content types, however, to ensure the highest standards of quality, the below selected formats are preferred and the most common across archiving centers and cultural heritage institutions' best practices. Recently, new techniques have been emerging as technology keeps on evolving. These techniques include Geospatial (Maps) and 3D models of cultural heritage assets that are recorded and stored digitally, from which endless by-products can be potentially extracted.

#### **Text:**

Historical and cultural texts, if not maintained properly, are highly fragile and prone to deterioration. Hence, it is necessary to scan them or convert them to sustainable formats for their long-term preservation and safeguarding. Some fragile text documents cannot be digitized. Instead, one can consider writing the text or manuscript in a separate document while referring to the original source. Below are the preferred formats for text digitization:

- **PDF:** An open file format that can be correctly displayed on any device. PDFs are created through the conversion of word documents or scanning techniques and can be improved using optical character recognition (OCR) techniques, which converts texts within images or documents into machine-readable texts.
- **PDF/A:** A sub-version of PDF that sets a higher standard for archiving and long-term preservation of electronic documents through embedding fonts and graphics, which means that the reader can see the file exactly as the original copy.

#### **Still Image:**

Similarly, physical images rarely withstand over long periods of time, and should be converted into digital formats to ensure their preservation and accessibility:

- **TIFF:** TIFF is the best file format for archiving high-quality images, as files may be edited and saved without damage. If not scanned directly as TIFF, images can be converted by selecting the TIFF format in the saving options. TIFF can also be used for files that include text.
- **JPEG and JPEG 2000:** JPEG and JPEG 2000 are methods of compressing digital images. JPEG 2000 has better image resolution than the original JPEG file format, as JPEG 2000 files can compress with less loss of visual performance.
- **PNG:** A file format that handles bitmap digital images. PNG retains the file size and picture quality when compressing data and can also decompress files at their original quality.

#### Audio:

Physical audio recordings are no longer the standard when it comes to storing and playing audio. That is why, it is essential to archive digitally historically and culturally relevant recordings to ensure that they are preserved in optimal quality for generations ahead. The following file format is the optimal format to make audios easily storable and accessible.

- **BWAV container, with linear pulse-code modulation codec:** Broadcast WAV format is a file format that can store audio data and seamlessly exchange audio material between different computer platforms and applications, which is achieved by the integration of metadata.

**Note:** Some video formats listed below also support audio.

#### Video:

Magnetic tapes are an aging means of storing and playing videos. They are fragile materials, highly vulnerable to physical degradation, and require a video recorder to be played, which nowadays is difficult to find. Hence, it is essential for cultural institutions to convert magnetic videotapes to digital video to prevent their loss and ensure their long-term preservation.

Target video formats for digitization include the following codecs and containers:

- **Advanced Authoring Format (AAF):** A file format that stores audio and video information, and is a format optimized for sharing content and metadata across different platforms and applications. AAF provides a convenient way to include all elements of a file together for archiving.
- **MXF (Material Exchange Format):** File format for storing video and audio media, commonly used to hold individual image frames in JPEG 2000 format and designed to address most components of the digital video lifecycle, including content capture, editing, distribution, and archiving. MXF is not designed to be a consumer playable format.
- **QuickTime:** A digital, high quality color video picture format that is used to play and store various formats of digital video, picture, sound, animation, graphics, text (subtitles) and music with a built-in media player. QuickTime is widely adopted by many consumer level devices, and can be recognized by its “.mov” or “.qt” file extension.
- **Advanced System Format (ASF):** Designed for storing and playing synchronized digital media streams and transmitting them over networks. ASF is the container format for windows media audio and windows media video-based content.
- **Audio Video Interleave (AVI):** Stores audio and video content and is made to be used on windows. AVI files allow synchronous audio-with-video playback. AVI files (which end with an .avi extension) require a special player that may be included with a web browser or may require downloading.

- **Motion JPEG 2000 (MJ2 or MJP2):** File format for motion sequences of JPEG 2000 images and associated audio. An MJ2 video sequence can be formed by encoding frames separately using JPEG 2000.
- **MPEG:** MPEG-1, MPEG-2 and MPEG-4 are methods for compressing audio and digital video for storage, MPEG-4 is a later version that includes a few added features. MPEG-4 files are smaller than QuickTime and JPEG 2000 files, as they are designed to transmit audio, video, and graphics at a more efficient rate of data transfer.
- **Ogg:** Designed for efficient streaming and manipulation of high-quality digital multimedia. Ogg can multiplex (a method that transmits two or more digital or analog signals over a common channel) several independent streams for audio, video, text (such as subtitles), and metadata. Ogg files are common, so most major media players can open them for example, VLC, windows media player, google drive and many more.
- **Matroska:** File format that can hold an unlimited number of videos, audios, pictures, or subtitle tracks in one file. It is a universal format for storing common multimedia content and works similarly to ASF and AVI (see above). The optimal way to play a Matroska file is through VLC media player.
- **Digital Video (DV):** Format for storing digital videos. DVs can be played using media players such as QuickTime, VLC, and windows media player.
- **Divx:** High-quality video files that are compressed in size to be distributed via the Internet. Divx files reduce the size of the video data as much as possible while retaining good picture and sound qualities. They can be played using VLC.
- **Windows Media Video (WMV):** Content representation format for storage or transmission of digital video content that is designed to compress and decompress digital videos. WMV files are playable on several media player applications. Other video files that use the WMV codec include AVI and Matroska.
- **FFV1 (FF video codec 1):** Intended for storing video content in a trusted repository. FFV1 is lossless, meaning it compresses a video without degradations, which makes it a good choice for archiving and preservation.

#### **Motion Picture (Film):**

- **DPX file format (Digital Picture Exchange):** Common file format for digitizing a motion picture, manipulating the image colour and characteristics as well as visual effects work. It is used to store high-quality detailed image information (in larger size raster format). Scanning film to DPX files produces a lossless, numbered digital file corresponding to each frame of the scanned film.
- **Digital Cinema Distribution Master (DCDM):** DCDM contains all data needed for the creation of a digital cinema package (which is the transmission and delivery of films electronically) it includes picture, sound, subtitles, and metadata in uncompressed and unencrypted form.

The above-mentioned content types and file formats are summarized in the following table:

Content type	File format	Description	Usage	Limitations
Text	PDF	Read-only documents that preserve the layout of a page	Used in archiving and documenting files that don't require font and graphics to be exactly as the original copy	Files that require long term storage and high quality are better with PDF/A
Text	PDF/A	Scanned documents for archiving and digital archiving	Used in archiving and documenting files that require clarity over a long period of time	Cannot contain audio, video, transparent images, JavaScript, encryption, and copyrighted specialty fonts which are replaced or discarded
Still image	PNG	Graphics, small images that maintain original quality, transparency	Digital images	Issues with sharing high-resolution photos on the web. Not supported by all web browsers
Still image	JPEG 2000	Images are compatible with almost all devices and software, which means that there is no need to change the format for usage	Digital images	Issues with editing images, line graphics, and print
Still image	TIFF	Good for editing and storage	Storing digital images that can be edited or printed	Large file size, and a single file can typically take up to at least 100 megabytes of storage space
Digital Audio	BWAV	For media requiring top uncompromised audio quality	An audio file for a video	Larger files impact streaming
Video	MXF	Content capture, editing, distribution and archiving	High quality videos	N/A
Video	QuickTime	Can play various formats of digital video, picture, sound, animation, graphics, text, and music with built-in media player	Playing videos of various formats	Certain formats need a conversion process before playing them on QuickTime
Video	AAF	Stores and shares audio and video content which makes it optimal for digital archiving	Video that includes audio, graphics, or subtitles	N/A
Video	ASF	Stores and plays digital media and transmits them over networks	Video played on different applications	N/A

Content type	File format	Description	Usage	Limitations
Video	AVI	Stores audio and video content for playback purposes	Video that requires higher audio quality	If uncompressed, can be very large in size as compared to the other file formats
Video	Motion JPEG 2000	Stores motion sequences of JPEG 2000 images and associated audio	Video made of JPEG 2000 images	Increased storage and bandwidth requirements
Video	MPEG-4	Digital multimedia format used to store video and audio, but can also be used to store other data such as subtitles and still images	Synchronous audio and video	Image quality suffers with network congestion or increased movement in scenes
Video	Ogg	Designed for efficient streaming and manipulation of high-quality digital multimedia	Audio and video	It follows the lossy technique of discarding some data, such that the output file is not as good as the original
Video	Matroska	A universal format for storing common multimedia content	Storing a combination of audio, video, and images	Needs a larger file size
Video	DV	Is a format for storing digital videos	Videos	More complex
Video	Divx	High-quality video files that have been compressed in size to be distributed via the Internet	Videos of higher quality and smaller size	Not available on every platform
Video	WMV	Storing or transmitting of digital video content that is designed to compress and decompress digital videos	Videos of smaller sizes	As it is a windows format, it is difficult to apply on different operating systems
Video	FFV1 (FF video codec 1)	Stores video content in a trusted repository	Videos	Requires more storage space
Motion picture	DCDM	Contains all data needed for the transmission and delivery of films electronically	Transmits audio, video, and images electronically	N/A
Motion picture	DPX	Motion picture finishing and visual effects	Still frame storage	DPX files do not playback in the traditional sense, so applications must support the playback of file sequences to mount and display DPX files

### 3.1.3. PROCEDURE

**Step 1:** Develop digitization plan.

Identify cultural heritage physical content that requires digitization. Assess cultural heritage asset or element, prioritize it for digitization according to resources, budget, and cultural heritage significance, and develop a plan or roadmap for digitization.

**Step 2:** Select digitization file format.

Following file formats selection guidelines (3.1.2 a), map the target digital format to each asset or element's content type, identifying technology requirements for the adequate creation of digital records. When necessary (particularly for individual owners of cultural heritage assets or elements), request support or approval from the relevant sub-sector owner to validate the selection of the digitization format through the National Cultural Heritage Archive System.

**Step 3:** Prepare digitization equipment and program.

According to file formats selected and technology required, set equipment and programs needed for digitization. This may also include identifying potential third party vendors specializing in specific areas of asset digitization and engaging with them.

**Step 4:** Digitize cultural heritage assets or elements.

Conduct the digitization of identified cultural heritage content copies such as scanning, audio or video conversions, among others.

**Step 5:** Quality control and quality assurance.

Review the quality of the digital records produced in comparison with the original cultural heritage element or asset. Reach out to specialized third party vendors appointed and certified by the central entity for quality assurance and quality control activities. Repeat digitization process for damaged / unsatisfactory digital records created.

**Step 6:** Reference and store digital records.

Reference and define the digital records once done and store them in a safe and centralized place for future re-use and long-term preservation.

### 3.1.4. SELECTED SOURCES

- A Guide for Managers Planning and Implementing Digitization Projects, Canada.ca.
- National Heritage Digitization Strategy – Digital Preservation File Format Recommendations, Canada.ca.
- Digitization at the National Archives, UK National Archives, August 2016.
- Technical Guidelines for Digitizing Archival Materials for Electronic Access: Creation of Production Master Files – Raster Images, U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), June 2004.
- Preservation Digitization Standards, National Archives Australia, November 2018.
- Digital Preservation Policy, Preserving Archival Digital Records Transferred from Commonwealth Agencies, National Archives Australia, June 2020.
- Guidelines for the preservation of digital heritage, National Library of Australia, March 2003.
- Archives: Digital Imaging and Resolution Recommendations (Website), 2021.
- The Digital Video Archive, International Council on Archives (ICA), 2014.
- Strategy for Digitizing Archival Materials for Public Access, US, NARA, 2014.

- Cultural Heritage: Digitization, Online Accessibility and Digital Preservation, European Commission, 2015-2017.
- Benchmarks and Quality Assurance, NSW State Archives & Records.
- Record-keeping Requirements for Digitization, UN Department of Management, Archives and Records Management Section, 2009.

## 3.2. Publish cultural heritage content

### 3.2.1. OVERVIEW

A digital archive consists of digital records of cultural assets or elements by transferring them into “a safe place” to avoid the risk of damage or loss of the information.

One of the main objectives of this procedure is to establish a centralized national archive for the cultural heritage of Saudi Arabia. Developing such an archive should give a comprehensive view on all Saudi Arabia’s cultural heritage, support the dissemination of cultural heritage knowledge, allow cultural heritage content to be accessed by any type of user, and most importantly reduce redundancy and duplication of efforts through cross referencing of the assets that may not belong to the same entity. Additional benefits that are worth mentioning include:

- Safeguarding and protection of all cultural heritage in Saudi Arabia.
- Easy access and sharing of information related to cultural heritage.
- Supporting consistent and standardized data that enable higher-quality content.
- Establishing and strengthening relations between all institutions, professional bodies, and other organizations, public and private within Saudi Arabia.

The central entity is mandated to ensure proper management and safeguarding of cultural heritage records. This mandate encompasses a wide range of responsibilities including establishing and maintaining a cultural heritage national digital archive and acting as the main aggregator of the content. To do so, it needs to ensure that the standards and guidelines are properly followed by institutions and individuals wishing to integrate their assets and elements within the national digital archive.

While the central entity manages the national digital archive and harmonizes cultural heritage preservation efforts across the nation by leveraging its central position, each sub-sector owner remains accountable for aggregating, validating, and sharing cultural heritage content relevant to their specific sectors.

The following considerations can contribute to further develop the national digital archive:

- Encouraging cultural institutions as well as publishers and other rights holders to make their digitized materials available on the national digital archive.
- Ensuring the use of common digitization standards defined by the central entity in collaboration with the cultural institutions to facilitate sharing digitized material at the national level.

### 3.2.2. . GUIDELINES

#### a) Publishing considerations

#### b) Approach to publishing

#### c) Metadata management

#### d) Managing rights

#### e) Data exchange agreement (between central entity and other entities)

#### a) Publishing considerations

- **Data transfer:** Data provider holding digital records should share data and content as per the defined standards of the receiving entity to facilitate its integration and sharing/transfer.

- **File formats and data:** Data provider should pay special attention to the choice of adequate file formats and data standards. Degree of adoption by others and standardization are two factors that should guide the decision. Once file formats have been chosen, the implementation needs to also comply with format standards.

- **File names:** Data records should have file names that are consistent and unambiguous.

- **File identifier:** Digital files management should use a persistent identifier in case files are moved.

- **Metadata:** Data provider should create good quality metadata according to widely accepted schema (in compliance with national archive guidelines) for all their digital assets. The metadata can be embedded in the digital asset or stored in a linked file.

- **File management:** It is advised to store and manage preservation master files separately from dissemination copies to ensure that data is not overwritten before it is captured.

- **Data security:** Data provider should make sure the file and systems are protected from any possible threat that might cause damage or loss by putting in place security and backup measures.

- **Authenticity:** Data provider should make sure that their files are identified, as well as their provenance and history documented to hold continuous evidence of authenticity.

#### b) Approach to publishing

Publishing of content or transfer of data usually involves the central entity either receiving files from the institutions holding the asset and associated content .

The institutions (content providers) should share and submit a copy of the digitized material with the associated documents and files relevant to the asset. In case the institution submitting is a non-certified operator, the submitted materials and files are re-directed to the relevant sub-sector owner to conduct a first level of review then to the central entity for a final review and approval.

The entity or institution should additionally submit the following information:

- Sources and information about the origin of content (including institution name, contact person);
- Metadata information; and
- Data exchange agreement signed (including all information needed about data management rights).

#### c) Metadata management

In parallel to the process of digitizing a cultural heritage asset, the individual entities (operators/sub-sector owners) create their metadata, structured information about data resources to describe the created digital asset. One compelling advantage for describing digital heritage assets is that they can be found and understood. Metadata is itself an information resource that must be managed and preserved along with the material that it describes.

If the entities wish their content to be integrated into the national archive, they will need to ensure that their metadata complies with the metadata standards proposed by the central entity. A review will be conducted on the metadata to ensure compliance with set standards and guidelines prior to the validation and publication. Digital content should always be uniquely identified and described using the metadata schema developed and published by the central entity for interoperability and integration purposes. Operators should ensure their metadata is complete with high standards of quality.

Examples of key metadata elements required for cultural heritage assets or elements include:

- Title;
- Preview of the asset or element;
- Language featured in the asset or element (when applicable);
- Type of digital object;
- Contexts and details about the asset or element;
- Type of provider (or owner) of the cultural heritage asset or element (when applicable);
- Sub-sector owner (when applicable);
- Location of origin;
- Date, age or timeline;
- Identifier;
- Rights statement for the media of the asset/element; and
- Direct link to the original page where the asset or element is published (when applicable).

#### **d) Managing rights**

Digital heritage assets are subject to a variety of rights with effective legal status. Limitations and rights should be defined based on the users' type and the restrictions on each of the assets set by the owner or bearer of the asset or element. In case the archive is made to be publicly accessible, some restrictions such as copyright might be linked to the intellectual property right of the asset.

The rights that any entity aiming to aggregate or publish cultural heritage content should account for:

##### **Access and re-use rights:**

Access rights should be defined based on the different login and users' categories. The login categories help setting the level of control that each entity or individual holds over the published digital content:

- Rights to read and view only.
- Rights to access for restricted purposes (research, education...).
- Rights to download content.
- Rights to modify content or propose modifications.
- Rights to copy or quote.
- Rights to preview restricted content.

The data provider can define the restrictions and conditions for accessing and re-using the asset while accounting for the intellectual property rights.

Some assets are subject to viewing limitations. In this case, viewing the asset or element should be restricted and allowed only if an approval is provided: a notification message can appear instead of the actual digital record mentioning that the asset or element is subject to viewing limitations and may be accessed by submitting a request to the entity in charge of the archive.

Additionally, some assets are subject to limitations of use. Similarly to the case above, the use of the asset or element should be restricted and allowed only if an approval is provided: a notification message can appear along with the digital record highlighting the restrictions and limitations to the re-use and that a permission is required for any copy, modification, distribution, among others. Otherwise, that asset or element will be identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related rights.

**Intellectual property rights (including copyright):**

These rights may exist in different layers relating to different aspects of the asset. Intellectual property right is an umbrella term that refers to laws protecting the expression of an idea , e.g., in a manuscript, and copyrights which cover expressions of ideas in visual or audio form.

Ownership of intellectual property rights of an asset differs from the actual ownership of the asset. Each might often be owned by two different stakeholders. For instance, a library might own a book, but the author owns the idea expressed in the content.

One should also be aware that provisions of copyright law are not the same for unpublished and published assets. As archive publishes assets from a variety of sources, it is important to outline the different copyrights and address the ownership of intellectual property of each asset before publishing/transferring any information on the assets or elements.

**Legislated rights:**

Legislated rights concern the right given to certain institutions or individuals to collect, preserve and have access to some materials.

**e) Data exchange agreement (between central entity and other entities)**

A data exchange agreement is an essential document that should be signed between the institutions and individual providing data and the central entity receiving the data in order to clearly define and articulate the legal relationship between both in a transparent way. The agreement functions as a contract between both parties and should lay out the rules and roles of each party. The form binds the providing entity to comply with the national cultural heritage archives' guidelines. The agreement aims at standardizing the rights between data provider and receiver and will establish rules on the following topics:

- Name of entity;
- Terms and conditions of data usage and access rights;
- Terms and conditions for content update;
- Copyright status of each asset;
- Consent of intellectual rights by the carrier or owner of the asset;
- Metadata standards to be followed; and
- Liability definition and termination of contract.

### 3.2.3. PROCEDURE

**a) Non-certified operators** - For non-certified operators submitting their content for publishing, the following procedure should be followed:

**Step 1:** Sign data exchange agreement. This step should be considered in case the entity is establishing or renewing its terms, agreements, and conditions with the central entity. Should the data exchange agreement be valid, then the entity can start with step 2.

- Agree with the central entity on the terms and conditions of the data exchange agreement.
- Fill, sign and share the data exchange agreement (refer to “Guidelines section e) - Data exchange agreement”) that could be obtained from the central entity.
- Receive the central entity’s approval and signature.

**Step 2:** Assess archive materials readiness and compliance with guidelines and prepare them for transfer to the national archive.

- Verify compliance with defined technical requirements:
  - o File formats and quality requirements (refer to 3.1 – Digitize cultural heritage content);
  - o Metadata guidelines and publishing approach (refer to 3.2 – Publish cultural heritage content).
- Identify changes and updates and perform adjustments as needed to comply with central entity’s requirements.

**Step 3:** Assess legal situations of the digital content and assets.

- Identify the rights needed to carry out a centralization program.
- Verify copyright status is assigned to each digital asset (digital records are labelled with legal explanation).
- Verify access and reuse authorization for each digital record is detailed.
- Verify rights regime previously negotiated with rights owner applies also for central archive and re-negotiate if not.

**Step 4:** Submit content to be published for review and approval.

- Define the legal rights for each of the digitized assets.
- Transfer the new content into the central entity archive along with supportive documents (e.g. defined rights, among others).

Once data is submitted to the central entity, it goes to the relevant sub-sector owner for a first layer of review.

- Receive feedback from the concerned sub-sector owner and perform required changes.
- Submit final draft based on the requested changes and receive approval from the relevant sub-sector owner.

**Step 5:** Receive central entity’s final approval and integrate content into the national archive.

Once sub-sector owner’s approval is received, the data to be published goes to the central entity for a final review.

- Receive feedback and final approval from central entity on the content based on a second layer of review.
- Coordinate with the central entity on transfer/integration date and conditions.
- Transfer data and content to the central entity based on the agreed plan.
- Receive a validation of the national entity that the content has been published onto the national archive.

#### 3.2.4. SELECTED SOURCES

- Europeana Publishing Guide, Europeana, July 2019.
- Europeana Pro-Process (Process Europeana Pro).
- Cultural Heritage - Digitisation, online accessibility and digital preservation, European Commission, June 2016.
- Guidelines for the selection of digital heritage for long-term preservation, UNESCO/ Persist, March 2016.
- Digital Preservation Policy, Preserving Archival Digital Records Transferred from Commonwealth Agencies, National Archives Australia, June 2020.
- Guidelines for the preservation of digital heritage, National Library of Australia, March 2003.
- The Archival Advantage: Integrating Archival Expertise into Management of Born-digital Library Materials, Online Computer Library Center, July 2015.

### **3.3. Preserve and update cultural heritage digital content**

#### **3.3.1. OVERVIEW**

Digital content maintenance is an essential component of digital archiving in which a range of activities is carried out to preserve digital information: ensure longevity and continuity of digital records.

Digital preservation is not concerned with the process of copying analogue material to digital form (known as digitization), but rather with the actions undertaken on the digital files created as a result of digitization.

One of the key challenges of maintaining digital records is dealing with the fact that technology keeps on evolving. Moreover, given the complexity and fragility of the nature of the digital records, there is a significant risk that the data they hold will be inaccessible in a few years' time.

Maintenance strategies are needed to ensure that digital records live beyond the life of the system on which they are created. To ensure the continuity of digital information, it is vital for that information to be well managed and maintained from the moment of its creation.

Digital material and content require well planned, well managed, and sustained strategies to protect and preserve data as a minimum foundation of continuity. The strategies that are needed usually include clear allocation of resources and responsibilities, provision of appropriate technical infrastructure and appropriate handling of the digital content and accessibility.

Digital content preservation entails updating digital content and maintaining long-term accessibility.

- Updating digital content aims to ensure that the information of all of the digital surrogates created through the digitization efforts and integrated into the archive is being updated on the digital archive. The original versions are always saved in order to be able to track the modifications.
- Maintaining long-term accessibility aims at guaranteeing ongoing usability of records and their content as well as ensuring continuous access to the digital records even in case of a changing technical environment. Accessibility refers as well to the ability of locating and retrieving digital records by any type of user. It equally aims at retaining quality, authenticity, and functionality.

#### **3.3.2. GUIDELINES**

- a) Key threats and risk management**
- b) Data protection strategies**
- c) Updating digital content**
- d) Maintaining long-term accessibility**

### a) Key threats and risk management

Several threats to the ongoing integrity of data that aggregators are likely to encounter include:

- Natural generation of errors that arise in digital archive systems.
- Breakdown of media as most carrier media have a reasonably short useable life before deteriorating.
- Malicious attack, which may come from system hackers, viruses, staff or outside intruders interacting with the archive system.
- Unintentional acts by staff or visitors such as turning off power or reformatting archive devices.

Threat	What it affects	Likelihood	Speed of onset	Impact	Prevention options
'Natural' generation of errors	Data integrity	Almost certain	Gradual	Data may not work; may prevent data recovery	Error checking, error correction, data refreshing and transfer
Media format breakdown	Data integrity	Certain for most media format	Gradual	Severe; data may be unreadable and not recoverable	Use high quality products; check condition frequently; transfer data to new format when needed
Malicious attack: hackers, virus, intruders	Data integrity, file identity	Almost certain for networked archives	Likely to be sudden	Likely to be severe; may include rewriting or corrupting data	security measures, logical and physical; firewalls, access controls; take data offline
Unintentional acts by staff or other users	Data integrity, file identity	Likely unless managed	Likely to be unexpected	Varies from nuisance to catastrophic	Backup data; staff training and physical access controls

### a) Data protection strategies

Other kinds of heritage materials may have survived periods of neglect, but digital data will not. Digital objects require well planned, well managed, and sustained strategies to protect data as a minimum foundation of continuity. The strategies that are needed usually include:

- Clear allocation of responsibilities;
- Provision of appropriate technical infrastructure, including systems and storage devices;
- Maintenance, support and asset replacement programs for the systems;
- Transfer of data to new carriers on a regular basis to ensure data is not threatened by media; deterioration or changes in access hardware;
- A high level of system security including controls on access to data; and
- Disaster preparedness planning.

## b) Updating digital content

Each entity whether a subsector owner, operator or individual owning or having a certain relation with a cultural heritage is responsible for providing a full and accurate representation of the original asset/element.

In case of any changes or updates performed to the existing digital content, each entity should ensure that these changes are communicated to the central entity and are properly reflected on the central archive.

The archive should ensure that the original record of the asset is always preserved, run check-ups and track a full history of actions such as modifications performed on the record in order to retain full information and view of digital record.

## c) Maintaining long-term accessibility

Preserving the ability to access digital material and content is a key objective of digital preservation. The rate of technological change in today's world can lead to the loss of many currently available digital materials. Hence, several measures should be considered to make the materials created accessible and valid with the technologies of today.

- **Format Sustainability:** Preserving the ability to access digital records and use them through regular monitoring and transfer of the files to new formats given that file formats can deteriorates and become obsolete over time.
- **Data Integrity:** Ensuring that data is not unwillingly altered and keeping track of all other authorized alterations over time in the data history in order to have a complete view over the asset. Achieving data integrity requires continuous checks for errors in the data and file fixity, scans for virus and threats.
- **File Management:** Maintaining a clear and structured file management by ensuring that files are clearly identified using good file and folder titling and naming rules. Files should be organized using structured classification schemes, among others, to ensure the information is not lost and can be easily found and used by others and overall file sustainability.
- **Metadata Preservation:** Ensuring sustainability over time by continuously updating the metadata and aligning its attributes with any associated modification to the actual digital record. There are a number of elements to consider in order to preserve metadata:
  - Structuring: Organizing metadata into a standardized document structure.
  - Linking: Maintaining the links between metadata records and the digital assets or elements they describe. Generally, it is recommended that metadata is attached to the asset or element they describe so that software tools can automatically process any update.
  - Quality control: Quality control measures should be defined whenever metadata records are created or changed.
  - Protection: The integrity of metadata records should be ensured.
- **Managing Storage and Backup:** Backups are created when the information on a digital asset is copied onto different storage media to prevent the loss of the information in case of a threat or disaster. The copied version might nevertheless not include the associated metadata and should therefore not be seen as a substitute to the master files.
- **Authenticity Preservation:** To ensure that digital materials or assets are trustworthy and authentic, continuous IT practices should be implemented such as guaranteeing data security and monitoring to avoid any unwilling alterations to the digital assets.

### 3.3.3. PROCEDURE

**Step 1:** Assess and plan maintenance of digital asset.

The purpose of the maintenance planning is to monitor threats to the digital asset, and to specify action to pre-empt or respond to them.

- **Conduct monitoring of digital records including:**
  - Quality control;
  - Data accessibility;
  - Data readability;
  - Data integrity;
  - Data protection; and
  - Data storage.
- **Identify the maintenance requirements for the digital records.**
- **Build maintenance activities plan and allocate necessary resources based on the required skillsets.**

**Step 3:** Implement required cultural heritage content updates.

The actions frequently involve changing the information package: transforming the digital records through new formats, media and systems, changing the metadata that describes the means of access information, managing storage, among others.

**Step 4:** Back-up and preserve cultural heritage digital records.

Perform regular back-ups for disaster recovery purposes and ensure records are protected.

### 3.3.4. SELECTED SOURCES

- A Guide for Managers Who Are Planning and Implementing Digitization Projects, Government of Canada, Canadian Heritage Information Network, 2020.
- Recommendation concerning the preservation of and access to, documentary heritage including in digital form, UNESCO's Memory of the World program, November 2015.
- Guidelines for the selection of digital heritage for long-term preservation, UNESCO/Persist, March 2016.
- Digital Preservation Policy, Preserving Archival Digital Records Transferred from Commonwealth Agencies, National Archives Australia, June 2020.
- Guidelines for the preservation of digital heritage, National Library of Australia, March 2003
- Guidelines for the selection of digital heritage for long-term preservation, UNESCO/Persist, November 2015.
- Recordkeeping for good governance toolkit, Pacific Regional Branch International Council on Archives, ICA.
- Guide for managing electronic records from an archival perspective, Committee on Electronic Records, ICA, February 1997.
- The Archival Advantage: Integrating Archival Expertise into Management of Born-digital Library Materials, Online Computer Library Center, July 2015.

## D. Annexe

Phase	Procedure	Required Forms	Purpose	Required actions
Identification	1.1: Identify cultural heritage asset or element	Cultural heritage identification asset or element form	Collect preliminary info on asset/element	Operator/sub-sector owner/ individuals to submit the form provided by NCA
	1.2: Define and classify the cultural heritage asset or element	Asset/element definition form	Define the information required to classify and define the asset/element	Operator/sub-sector owner to create their own form based on the asset type
	1.3: Assess cultural heritage asset or element significance and preliminary condition	Statement of significance form	Evaluate/justify the value and significance of an asset/element	Operator/sub-sector owner to create their own form based on the asset type
		Assessment of condition: State of conservation/ State of viability	Reflect the present state of the asset or element as well as issues that can emerge and impact its attributes and characteristics	Operator/sub-sector owner to create their own form based on the asset type
Baseline Documentation	2.1: Validate and authenticate cultural heritage asset or element information and nomination	Cultural Heritage Validation Form	Define the information required for submission to be validated	Operator/sub-sector owner to submit the form provided by NCA
		Assessment of completeness	Create a checklist containing guiding questions to verify the completeness and compliance with the guidelines	Operator/sub-sector owner to create their own form
	2.2: Prepare and maintain cultural heritage asset or element information and nomination	Inventory Content form	Define and standardize the required information that needs to be covered for the asset/ element to be inventoried	- Operator/sub-sector owner to create their own form - Operator/sub-sector owner to submit the form provided by NCA for the national inventory
Digital Archiving	3.2: Publish cultural heritage content	Data exchange agreement	Regulate the relationship between the data provider and the national archive	Operator/sub-sector owner to create their own form based on the asset type

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