Compendium of International Organisations' Practices

Working Towards More Effective International Instruments

Snapshots of IO Practices

Evaluation of Cultural Conventions

Organisation(s): United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

The Snapshots of IO Practices present examples of specific efforts undertaken by an international organisation to work towards more effective international instruments. They aim to highlight examples of practices within the five focus areas of the Partnership of International Organisations for Effective International Rulemaking (IO Partnership), namely the variety and development of international instruments, their implementation, evaluation, ensuring stakeholder engagement, and co-ordination among IOs. The snapshots are submitted by the secretariats of the relevant international organisations implementing the relevant practice. The practices were compiled by the OECD Secretariat and focal points of the IO Partnership (UNCITRAL, OIE, WHO, ISO, WCO, BIPM, and SIECA), with a brief review to ensure consistency and comparability of the information provided within the snapshots. The inclusion of a practice in these snapshots implies no endorsement or assessment of that practice on the part of the OECD Secretariat or the focal points of the IO Partnership.

1	Overview of the Practice	Answers	Comments and intersections
1.1	Organisation	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	
1.2	Area of relevance among the IO partnership focus themes (variety of instruments, implementation, stakeholder engagement, evaluation, co-ordination)	Evaluation (of a sub-set of instruments; namely, conventions in the culture sector).	
1.3	Name of the Practice	N/A	
1.4	Name of person(s) completing the template	Ekaterina Sediakina Rivière, Evaluation Specialist, UNESCO Internal Oversight Service, Evaluation Office	

2	Description of the Practice	Answers	Comments and intersections
2.1	Please describe the practice shortly, providing information on its core features.	UNESCO has developed a large array of standard-setting instruments in its fields of competence. The Evaluation Office conducted evaluations of all six Culture Conventions between 2013 and 2019. It further evaluated the Convention against Doping in Sport in 2017.	
2.2	What are the objectives of the practice?	The primary objective of the evaluations was to generate findings and recommendations regarding the relevance and the effectiveness of standard-setting work with a focus on its impact on legislation, policies, and strategies of Parties to the conventions. The evaluations of the Culture Conventions specifically assessed the contribution of UNESCO's standard-setting work, which is designed to support Member States with the: I. Ratification (or accession / acceptance / approval) of the Conventions II. Integration of the provisions of the Conventions into national / regional legislation, policy and strategy (policy development level) III. Implementation of the legislation, policies and strategies at national level (policy implementation level).	Intersection between the evaluation (WG4) and implementation (WG2) of international instruments.

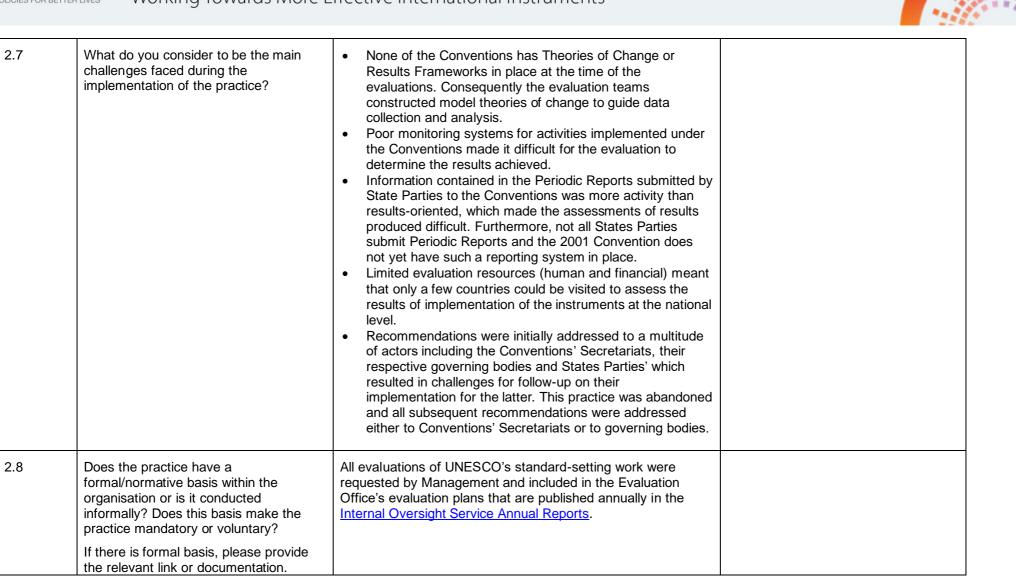| 2.3 | What have been the key results of the practice? | The primary output has been the publication of evaluations of all six UNESCO Culture Conventions:
• Evaluation of UNESCO's Standard-setting Work of the Culture Sector - Part I - 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
• Evaluation of UNESCO's Standard-setting Work of the Culture Sector - Part II - 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property
• Evaluation of UNESCO's Standard-setting Work of the Culture Sector - Part III - 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage
• Evaluation of UNESCO's Standard-setting Work of the Culture Sector - Part IV - 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions
• Evaluation of UNESCO's Standard-setting Work of the Culture Sector – Part V – 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two Protocols (1954 and 1999)
• Evaluation of UNESCO's standard-setting work of the Culture Sector, part VI – 2001 Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage

Furthermore, in 2017 the Evaluation Office conducted and published the Evaluation of UNESCO's International Convention against Doping in Sport.

In terms of results, the evaluations have led to the development of results frameworks for the 2003 and 2005 Conventions, revised periodic reporting systems (1970, 2003, 2005 Conventions) as well as resource mobilisation strategies for the instruments, improvements in respective Conventions' capacity development programmes and communication initiatives, as well as changes to the working methods of the Conventions' Secretariats. | |

2.4	In what year was the practice introduced?	The first Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of UNESCO's standard-setting work of the Culture Sector were developed in late 2012. The ToR can be found in Annex to the first report listed above: Evaluation of UNESCO's Standard-setting Work of the Culture Sector - Part I - 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage	.
2.5	Has the practice been updated/reformed since then? If yes, when and how has it evolved over time?	Yes The practice started with the Evaluation of the 2003 Convention, which examined UNESCO's support to Member States at all three levels of ratification, policy development and policy implementation. The findings and recommendations were presented to the Intergovernmental Committee of the 2003 Convention, as well as the Conference of Parties, which endorsed most of the recommendations and asked the Secretariat to report on their implementation to subsequent Committee meetings. Five other evaluations of Culture Conventions have followed since and have drawn from the lessons learned of the first few experiences.	
2.6	What do you consider to be the primary strengths of the practice?	It has become standard practice to present evaluations of standard-setting work to the respective governing bodies of the instruments concerned. As a result, these bodies have integrated most evaluation recommendations into their decisions, which are binding. The Secretariats of the respective Conventions have therefore been reporting on the implementation of the evaluation recommendations to these bodies on a regular basis.	

2.7	What do you consider to be the main challenges faced during the implementation of the practice?	- None of the Conventions has Theories of Change or Results Frameworks in place at the time of the evaluations. Consequently the evaluation teams constructed model theories of change to guide data collection and analysis. - Poor monitoring systems for activities implemented under the Conventions made it difficult for the evaluation to determine the results achieved. - Information contained in the Periodic Reports submitted by State Parties to the Conventions was more activity than results-oriented, which made the assessments of results produced difficult. Furthermore, not all States Parties submit Periodic Reports and the 2001 Convention does not yet have such a reporting system in place. - Limited evaluation resources (human and financial) meant that only a few countries could be visited to assess the results of implementation of the instruments at the national level. - Recommendations were initially addressed to a multitude of actors including the Conventions' Secretariats, their respective governing bodies and States Parties' which resulted in challenges for follow-up on their implementation for the latter. This practice was abandoned and all subsequent recommendations were addressed either to Conventions' Secretariats or to governing bodies.	
2.8	Does the practice have a formal/normative basis within the organisation or is it conducted informally? Does this basis make the practice mandatory or voluntary? If there is formal basis, please provide the relevant link or documentation.	All evaluations of UNESCO's standard-setting work were requested by Management and included in the Evaluation Office's evaluation plans that are published annually in the Internal Oversight Service Annual Reports.	

2.9	At what frequency is the practice applied? i.e. is it conducted once or on an iterative basis?	Evaluations are conducted upon request from Management, a Governing Body or following analysis during its annual planning by the Evaluation Office.	
2.10	Is this practice applied systematically, (e.g. with respect to every normative instrument, according to specific criteria or on an ad hoc basis)?	The practice was applied systematically to all six UNESCO Culture Conventions. Not all other UNESCO normative instruments have been the subject of evaluations.	
2.11	Please provide specific details or examples to illustrate the practice (including supporting links and documents).	• Evaluation of UNESCO's Standard-setting Work of the Culture Sector - Part I - 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage • Evaluation of UNESCO's Standard-setting Work of the Culture Sector - Part II - 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property • Evaluation of UNESCO's Standard-setting Work of the Culture Sector - Part III - 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage • Evaluation of UNESCO's Standard-setting Work of the Culture Sector - Part IV - 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions • Evaluation of UNESCO's Standard-setting Work of the Culture Sector – Part V – 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two Protocols (1954 and 1999) • Evaluation of UNESCO's standard-setting work of the Culture Sector, part VI – 2001 Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage Furthermore, in 2017 the Evaluation Office conducted and published the Evaluation of UNESCO's International Convention against Doping in Sport.	

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3	Design of the Practice	Answers	Comments and intersections
3.1	Who designed the practice (e.g. Was it developed internally, in collaboration with other organisations, etc?)	The UNESCO Evaluation Office developed the Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of UNESCO's standard-setting work of the Culture Sector initially in parallel with the process for development of the UNEG Handbook for Conducting Evaluations of Normative Work in the UN System and were mutually inspiring. All Terms of Reference are developed using participatory approaches with input from Evaluation Reference Groups.	
3.2	Which stakeholders were engaged with in the design of the practice?	See point 3.1	
3.3	How long did it take to design the practice?	The Terms of Reference for the first Evaluation of UNESCO's standard-setting work of the Culture Sector were developed over the course of a couple of months in late 2012. Subsequent evaluations were informed by the lessons learned from this first and other experiences.	
3.4	What resources were needed to design the practice initially (i.e., staff, budget etc.)?	The Terms of Reference for the first Evaluation of UNESCO's standard-setting work of the Culture Sector were developed by one evaluator from UNESCO's Evaluation Office with inspiration from the work of the UNEG Working Group on Evaluations of Normative Work in the UN System.	

3.5	What challenges were encountered during the design of the practice and how were they overcome?	Very little guidance on the evaluation of normative work was available in 2012 when the first UNESCO Evaluation of the Culture Conventions was launched. The lead evaluator for the first exercises was a member of the UNEG Working Group on Evaluations of Normative work and participated in the elaboration of the guidance, using the UNESCO experience as a pilot to test the guidance.	
3.6	Has the practice been tested before implementation (i.e. pilot phase)? If yes, please describe.	Yes The Evaluation of UNESCO's Standard-setting Work of the Culture Sector - Part I - 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was a pilot phase, which informed the five subsequent parts of the overall evaluation.	
4	**Implementation of the Practice**		**Comments and intersections**
4.1	Which units are responsible for implementing the practice within your IO?	UNESCO Internal Oversight Service Evaluation Office	
4.2	Are IO members involved in implementing the practice? If so, how?	UNESCO Internal Oversight Service Evaluation Office	
4.3	Are external actors beyond the organisation or its membership involved in implementing the practice? If so, how?	Each evaluation has embraced participatory approaches that have included Member States, NGOs, civil society, academia, and other actors. Following stakeholder analyses, all these stakeholders were involved in the evaluation processes in various ways, primarily for consultation for data collection.	intersection between stakeholder engagement (WG3), implementation (WG2), and evaluation (WG4).

4.4	Which resources are needed to implement the practice (e.g., staff and budget)?	Each UNESCO evaluation of standard-setting work has on average mobilised two evaluators from the Evaluation Office and cost between USD 20 000 and 100 000.	
5	**Outputs and Evaluation of the Practice**	**Answers**	**Comments and intersections**
5.1	Has the practice been evaluated or reviewed?	Yes All UNESCO evaluation reports undergo an external quality assurance review by an independent external evaluator.	intersection between evaluation (WG4) and stakeholder engagement (WG3).
5.2	If yes, who carried out the evaluation (please specify whether it was done internally or externally)	See point 5.1.	
5.3	If yes, please describe the evaluation methodology? (e.g. were any quantitative or qualitative indicators/criteria used to measure/assess the outcomes of the practice?).	N/A	
5.4	If yes, what were the conclusions of the evaluation,and has the practice evolved subsequently? If possible, please attach related documents or provide a link.	N/A	

6	Additional comments and information	Answers	Comments and intersections
6.1	Is there any more information or documentation that would be valuable to share in relation to the practice (e.g. links, reports, meeting minutes, supporting documents)?	Links to all evaluations of normative work have been provided above.	
	Sources		