

**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL  
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

**THE MEMORY OF THE WORLD PROGRAMME FOR ASIA/PACIFIC**

**MISSIONS OF “GOODWILL PATRON”  
DR. M.R.RUJAYA ABHAKORN**

**To**

**INDONESIA, LAO PDR, VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA  
MARCH-JULY, 2005**

**FINAL REPORT**

## INTRODUCTION

Concerned with the unsatisfactory participation by countries in the MOW Programme, the Memory of the World Committee for Asia/Pacific (MOWCAP) adopted a strategy in December 2004 on how to build up membership. It was agreed to appoint a "Goodwill Patron" who would have meetings with UNESCO member countries in the Asia/Pacific Region which had not yet joined MOWCAP and invite them, among others, to set up National Committees and participate in the MOW Programme.

A Contract No. FC00490 was signed by Professor Mohsen Tawfik on behalf of the Director-General of UNESCO on February 11, 2005 and by Dr. M.R. Rujaya Abhakorn on February 18, 2005 whereby Dr. M.R. Rujaya Abhakorn would organize and supervise a series of awareness raising meetings/seminars in Lao PDR (February/March), Indonesia (March), Vietnam (April), and Myanmar (May) for MOWCAP and National Committees of MOW. Each meeting would be arranged with the National Library and National Archives in the country in collaboration with UNESCO National Commission, National Museum, Research institutions, Public and Academic libraries, and Scholars from Universities. Each meeting would last one day.

The objectives of the meeting were:

- To provide information about the MOW Programme and the three different levels;
- To present information on the guidelines for setting up a National Committee in the country and explain the rules and procedures for that committee;
- To provide information on how to inform about the establishment and composition of the National Committee, the designated contact person and coordinating unit/institution for MOWCAP;
- To stress that the Regional Committee (MOWCAP) be informed of the participation to enable them to mobilize resources required for the countries participation in MOWCAP's future activities and projects;
- To provide facts on where to obtain further information on the programme and MOWCAP:  
UNESCO Delhi Website [http://www.unescodelhi.nic.in/ci/ci\\_inf/communication.htm](http://www.unescodelhi.nic.in/ci/ci_inf/communication.htm) ; UNESCO Bangkok Website <http://www.unescobkk.org/cominfo> ; UNESCO HQ website [http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=1538&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-URL_ID=1538&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

The second day meeting would be used to inform and explain about the MOW programme and MOWCAP to Ministers, ministries and/or high officials explaining about the benefits of setting-up a National Committee for MOW.

A fund of US\$ 4,000 was provided to cover the expenses incurred under the terms of the contract. The Final Report was to be submitted on June 30, 2005.

## **Changes in the Schedule**

The meetings in Myanmar were postponed because of the concerns over security in Yangon after the bombings there on May 7, 2005. As time was running out, contacts were established with Cambodia as an alternative with the approval of Dr. Susanne Ornager. With the help of H.E. Dr. Helen Jarvis, Advisor to the Council of Ministers, and Ms. Than Theany of the Cambodian National Commission for UNESCO, it was possible to conduct meetings in Phnom Penh on July 13-15, 2005 instead of Yangon. Consequently, the submission of the Final Report would have to be moved to after July 31, 2005.

## **SUMMARY and EVALUATION**

### **1. Achievements of the Missions**

The four missions were carried out in accordance with the objectives of

- A) providing information about the MOW Programme, and the information related to the MOW National Committee . This was achieved by distributing the *MOW General Guidelines to Safeguard Documentary Heritage* in both paper and digital formats; by slide presentations at the National Meetings to nearly 200 people; through Q&A sessions with the participants; and by private discussions with officials involved in preservation and UNESCO projects;
- B) providing facts on where to obtain further information on the MOW and MOWCAP;
- C) encouraging the establishment of National MOW Committees.

The visits by the Goodwill Patron created a stir in all the countries, especially among the senior and mid-level staff of such institutions as the National Libraries, National Archives, National Museums, and Film Archives. The MOW Programme was fully presented in all its aspects in an integrated way. It is clear that everyone learnt more and had a much better understand about the objectives of the MOW Programme and how it is carried out..

#### **A. National Meetings**

It was requested by all the national organizers that the national awareness-raising meetings be confined to only half a day instead of the whole day as suggested by MOWCAP. This was agreed as there would be more time to make more separate visits to the relevant agencies.

In general the meetings were very successful in raising awareness about the MOW Programme among the national officials working at the staff level, the UNESCO National Commissions, and even the UNESCO offices. The most frequently asked questions were related to the composition of the National Committee, which agency would be qualified to host it, the nature of its responsibility, the selection criteria and process.

#### **B. Institutional visits**

The visits to the National Libraries, Archives, and Film Archives helped to underscore their important role in documentary heritage and national collaboration in the formation of a national body like the National MOW Committee. However, the culture-related institutions like the National Museum and Archeology Departments did not seem to relate their work to the MOW Programme very much. The extensive coverage under the MOW's definition of documentary heritage to include many kinds of materials is the most difficult part to understand by all parties concerned, but once

it was understood, the necessity of establishing a National Committee as a coordinating instrument was accepted. The question that followed was who would be the most appropriate host.

#### C. Media Coverage

In Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam, the media is more or less controlled by the state. This was an advantage as the Ministries of Information were invited to attend the National Meetings and the state media turned up to cover the meetings. There was also a newspaper coverage in Vientiane where an interview was given. Unfortunately, as the missions usually ended before the coverage was aired or printed, one would have to rely on the UNESCO National Commissions to keep the records and copies of the coverage results.

## 2. Restrictions and Challenges

Many in the audience at the national meetings could not fully follow the talk although the visual presentation eased this problem. The time allotted proved to be too short to explain all the aspects of the MOW Programme. Although some MOW publications and CD's were distributed, there was a shortage. It would also have been useful if they had been translated into the national languages.

In these countries, the vertical nature of the bureaucracies with separate functions makes it hard to integrate or unify the different agencies that look after documentary heritage. A strong unifying force may be needed to bring them together for a common cause that is quite new to them.

(For details see Mission Reports by Country in **ANNEX A**)

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

The project has the following main goals:

1. To have a "Goodwill Patron" to raise awareness in four UNESCO member countries in the Asia/Pacific Region that had not yet joined Regional Committee (MOWCAP) on the MOW Programme and MOWCAP's roles and activities.
2. To invite these countries to set up National Committees and participate in the MOW Programme.

Specifically, the "Goodwill Patron" would have to

1. Provide detailed information about the MOW Programme and its website at national seminars.
2. Present information on the guidelines for setting up a National Committee, its composition, the rules and procedures for that committee;
3. Contact ministers and high officials to explain about the benefits of setting-up a National Committee for MOW.

Regarding the main goals, the following results were obtained,

- Four countries were visited: Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR and Vietnam.
- Four half-day "National Meetings" (rather than "National One-day Seminars") were held with 191 participants.
- About 200 sheets of short information on MOW Programme were distributed, some of which were translated into the national languages.

About 80 copies of the MOW CD-Rom were copied and distributed. Ten copies of the MOW *General Guidelines to Safeguard Documentary Heritage* were given to high officials and the organizers of the national meetings.

- Meetings with two ministers, more than twenty high government officials, heads of National Archives and Libraries, NGOs and the mass media, almost all of whom were exposed to the MOW Programme for the first time. UNESCO related-staff were also better informed on the nature and objectives of the Programme.
- Press reports on the meetings in Lao PDR and Cambodia.

Immediate positive results:

- Awareness was raised on the importance of documentary preservation in one's own country.
- Awareness was raised on the importance of making known unique national documents to the world. This approach was more effective than concentrating on the importance of the contents and their relation to world history.
- All of the countries saw the possibility and the way to establish the National Committees.
- Indonesia and Vietnam began the process of establishing National Committees after the meetings.

Long-term positive results:

- Coordinated efforts among the relevant government agencies in working together in the National Committee framework.
- More people both outside and within the preservation circles are better aware of the need to look after all forms of documentary heritage.

Outstanding Issues and Questions

- How far is UNESCO prepared in providing financial assistance to national preservation efforts in general and in the work of the National Committees in particular?
- How to solve the problem of the lack of policies, facilities, equipment and personnel in preservation and digital access in accordance with international standard.
- The selection criteria are not properly understood and need to be explained further.
- The academic communities do not show much interest in the MOW Programme.
- The definition and long-term role of the "Goodwill Patron". The term is not easily translated into the Thai, Lao or Cambodian language and could give the connotation of a financial funder or political patron rather than a moral supporter.

## Recommendations

1. It is necessary to follow-up the success of awareness-raising by the “Goodwill Patron” by monitoring the progress towards the setting-up of the National Committees through the office of National Commissions for UNESCO. This is specially relevant to Lao PDR and Cambodia where further encouragement is needed for the organization of National Committees.
2. More booklets and CD’s related to the MOW Programme should be made available for distribution by the National Commissions
3. UNESCO MOW Office should provide appropriate forms of assistance to countries that show good results in national coordination for preservation.
4. Annual regional workshops should be held on selection criteria and other pertinent issues related to preservation and access.
5. Technical workshops could be held on digital conservation and issues related to the preservation of moving images and photographs.
6. A group of regional academicians could be invited to coordinate with the National Committees in advising on matters related to the selection of important national documents for dissemination through the MOWCAP website over a long period of at least 5 years.
7. A common theme could galvanize the countries in the region to cooperate, such as “Theravada Buddhist Documentary Heritage of the Greater Mekong Subregion”, “Memory of the Indian Ocean”, or “19<sup>th</sup> Century Social Photographs of Asia and the Pacific” etc.
8. An awareness-raising effort in Myanmar that was postponed should be carried out as soon as financially possible.
9. The role of the “Goodwill Patron” should be reviewed for better effectiveness.

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