



Ministerio de
Cultura
República de Colombia



**Lines of action and commitments agreed in the Cultural Information Synthesis Meeting of
the sub-regional CIS workshops held in 2006**
Bogotá, Colombia, April 19 and 20, 2007

Draft
Original in Spanish

The Ministry of Culture of Colombia, the Convenio Andres Bello (CAB), and the Organization of American States (OAS) organized, a meeting in order to strengthen the development of Cultural Information Systems (CIS) in Bogotá, at the CAB's Cultural Center, on April 19 and 20, 2007. The encounter was attended by delegates of the cultural institutions of several countries of the American continent and of international organizations that have been developing actions regarding CIS. The meeting presented a synthesis of the achievements, advances and projects regarding Cultural Information Systems, knowledge generation and cultural indicators. In this sense, it was a synthesis meeting for the three sub-regional workshops held in Trinidad and Tobago (Caribbean), Mexico (Central America), and Chile (South America), during 2006, with the sponsorship of the the OAS, the CAB, the Mexican National Council for Culture and Arts (CONACULTA), the Chilean National Council of Culture and Arts (CNCA), and the Department of Canadian Heritage,. All of this according to the mandates of the Ministers of Culture and Highest Appropriate Authorities of the region, which prioritized the topic since the First Ministerial Meeting in 2002., in order to implement cultural information systems in their countries as a necessary tool for the better design, implementation, and evaluation of cultural public policies. On the basis of this synthesis a series of commitments on the part of the cultural institutions of the countries and the participating international organizations were agreed, in order to strengthen the CIS of the region.

The meeting also presented a reflection on cultural information and information systems, a framework from the three sub-regional workshops, and the experiences of the Caribbean, Central American, Mexican, and Canadian information systems. The three organizing institutions prepared a work planning matrix for the meeting, which included components, activities, and action guidelines regarding the CIS, intended as an input for during the encounter. Parting from that presentation and a discussion and reflection session, it was possible to identify five functions pertaining to CIS, stated in the general action guidelines: 1.) raise awareness at the different levels of political decisions on the importance of the information; 2.) planning and construction of cultural information systems; 3.) generation and collection of cultural information; 4) systematization of information, and analysis and interpretation of the information; 5.) dissemination and socialization of information and creation of associations, synergies, and alliances. There were three work sessions that grouped these functions and identified problems and action guidelines. In the final session, the participants identified action guidelines, and chose those considered a priority. Finally, the participating institutions made commitments related to the topic.

Below are the action guidelines recommendations, those identified as priorities, and the commitments made. It is hoped that based on this document, actions will be carried out in all the regions represented in the , that its recommendations will be taken into account by the countries' cultural institutions, and that it can provide support to management at the international, regional, national, and local scenarios in order to strengthen cultural information systems.

Institutions that participated in the encounter on cultural information systems

- CARICOM Caribbean Community
- Chilean National Council of Culture and Arts (CNCA)
- Convenio Andres Bello (CAB)
- Department of Canadian Heritage
- Iniciativa Latinoamericana
- International Federation of Art Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA)
- Mexican National Council of Culture and Arts (CONACULTA)
- Ministry of Culture and Sports of Guatemala, on behalf of the Central American Education and Culture Coordination (CECC)
- Ministry of Culture of Colombia
- Ministry of Culture of Saint Kitts and Nevis, on behalf of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)
- Organization of American States (OAS)
- Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science, and Culture - OEI
- Regional Center for the Promotion of Books and Reading in Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLALC)
- Secretariat of Culture of the Argentinean Nation, on behalf of Cultural MERCOSUR
- UNESCO's Statistics Institute

I. Action guidelines identified for the strengthening and development of cultural information systems

1. Sensitizing the different levels of political decision-making about the importance of information

1. 1. To elaborate an executive report on the CIS, their impact on cultural policies, which presents a case study of a successful experience. This document should contribute to articulate the CIS issue with the main lines of the cultural international agenda and for the institutionalization and promotion of the CIS at a national level.

1. 2. To generate a document that deeply addresses the most important topics discussed in the encounter and which identifies successful experiences in each one of them.

1. 3. To inform and spread among the national, regional, and local political scenarios the importance of the CIS. An example of these authorities can be the commissions in charge of the cultural policy in the national congresses.

1. 4. To join efforts between the countries of the region to prioritize the CIS issue within the agenda of the international forums.

1. 5. Based on the previous item, to consolidate a Schedule of international meetings in which the CIS issue is presented.

1. 6. To seek the support of an institution or institutions (international agency, university, etc.) which can assume the translation of the outputs generated as products of what was agreed in the encounter.

1. 7. To create a committee or to appoint an organization or an international authority in charge of the follow-up of the issues related to the CIS, which can meet regularly and encourage the different countries to work on the processes of construction of their CIS. To explore the possibility of having the organizations that have summoned the workshops and the synthesis meeting to perform this job.

2. Planning and construction of cultural information systems

2. 1. To make a characterization of the topics and sub-topics of the operating CIS so the countries that have not made any progress regarding their construction can have a point of reference for the definition of the baseline, planning, and the development of their CIS.

2. 2. To identify, in each country, the policy priorities and the information needs related to them, which will be the base to define the baseline for the system of each country.

2. 3. To determine a structure of minimum common contents of the CIS parting from the identification of common needs, in order to allow comparisons under the same parameters and through similar registers, and which allow the exchange of experiences.

2. 4. To create a blog for the exchange of experiences on the characterization of the countries' CIS. One mechanism could be to do it using characterization cards that allow comments and questions.

3. Generation, collection, systematization, analysis, and interpretation of the information

3. 1. To generate a proposal agreed by consensus of the countries for the formulation of a set of common questions regarding cultural issues, in order to allow the national statistics institutions to include them in their different surveys (quality of life, income and expenses, labor force, etc.).

3. 2. To elaborate a proposal for Basic cultural indicators which will allow, based on information available in most of the countries, to perform a regional comparison exercise. These could be simple non-monetary indicators on infrastructure and flows. This exercise can be incorporated in the documents mentioned in items 1.1 or 1.2.

3. 3. To generate a document about recommendations regarding processes for collection of information. This can be part of the document indicated in item 1.2.

3. 4. To promote the development of conceptual methodologies and information collection processes from information platforms, which guarantee both consistency and pertinence of the information and the comparison between the countries.

3. 5. To identify and use the existing information sources, both public and private, during the processes of collection and centralization of information. This includes identifying who are the information producers within each country.

3. 6. To involve the different actors that are part of the cultural field in the discussions about needs of information and its use for the definition of public policies. This, in such a way that the CIS results can be framed within processes of democratic participation and their socialization and spreading can be more effective.
3. 7. To generate administrative agreements with departmental, state, regional, provincial-level institutions, among others, to generate information that can nourish the CIS.
3. 8. To promote mechanisms for technical assistance, exchange of experiences and training on the part of the countries that have reached important advances in the development of the CIS and on the part of international organizations.

4. To publish, spread, and socialize the information and the analysis and interpretation of the information

4. 1. To take advantage of the existing low-cost or free tools found in Internet, such as Survey Monkey, Google Analytics, Weblog, and Awstats, among others, in order to understand the users' interests.
4. 2. Besides the Internet tools, it is important to perform meetings in which problems and advances regarding the SIC issue at a national level can be socialized.

5. Generation of associations, synergies, and alliances

5. 1. To create a virtual space that can concentrate and centralize regional information and that can articulate initiatives and advances of the national systems of cultural information. This virtual space will serve as a Forum and could make follow-up of the topics related to the CIS. Likewise, it can become an active space for exchange between the CIS.
5. 2. To include in the operating CIS the links to other organizations and/or portals of the institutions and countries present in the synthesis meeting.
5. 3. To determine a strategy of alliances with other institutions (statistics institutes, trades, investigation centers, etc.) in order to produce, centralize, and spread information.

II. Action guidelines identified for the strengthening and development of cultural information systems

The following recommendations of action guidelines, presented in the previous section, were consensually considered the main priorities.

- To elaborate an executive report on the CIS, their impact on cultural policies, which presents a case study of a successful experience. This document should contribute to articulate the CIS issue with the main lines of the cultural international agenda and for the institutionalization and promotion of the CIS at a national level.
- To join efforts between the countries of the region to prioritize the CIS issue within the agenda of the international forums.

- To inform and spread among the national, regional, and local political scenarios the importance of the CIS. An example of these authorities can be the commissions in charge of the cultural policy in the national congresses.
- To create a committee or to appoint an organization or an international authority in charge of the follow-up of the issues related to the CIS, which can meet regularly and encourage the different countries to work on the processes of construction of their CIS. To explore the possibility of having the organizations that have summoned the workshops and the synthesis meeting to perform this job.
- To determine a structure of minimum common contents of the CIS parting from the identification of common needs, in order to allow comparisons under the same parameters and through similar registers, and which allow the exchange of experiences.
- To identify and use the existing information sources, both public and private, during the processes of collection and centralization of information. This includes identifying who are the information producers within each country.
- To generate a proposal agreed by consensus of the countries about a set of common questions regarding cultural issues, so the national statistics institutions can include them in their different surveys (quality of life, income and expenses, labor force, etc.).
- To create a virtual space that can concentrate and centralize regional information and that can articulate initiatives and advances of the national systems of cultural information. This virtual space will serve as a Forum and could make follow-up of the topics related to the CIS. Likewise, it can be an active space for exchange between the CIS.
- To include in the operating CIS the links to other organizations and/or portals of the institutions and countries present in the synthesis meeting.
- To determine a strategy of alliances with other institutions (statistics institutes, trades, investigation centers, etc.) in order to produce, centralize, and spread information.

III. Commitments agreed by the institutions participating in the encounter

1. Raise of awareness in the different levels of political decision-making about the importance of information

- a) CONACULTA from Mexico: Offers to provide a base script that indicates contents and sections of the executive report about the CIS and their impact on the cultural policy, which presents a case study of a successful experience and makes suggestions about who could be responsible for each one of the sections. This proposal will be sent to the countries and international organizations that participated in the encounter, for them to make comments and contributions. The Argentinean Cultural Secretariat, the Ministry of Culture of Colombia, and Convenio Andres Bello (CAB) offer their support to this purpose.
- b) OAS: Offers to present before its political forums the conclusions drawn from this synthesis meeting, starting with the meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Culture

which will be held in August, 2007, previous to the 2008 Ministerial Meetings and the 2009 Summit of the Americas.

- c) OAS: Offers to compile and to distribute a schedule of the international forums appropriate for disseminating the issue for the period 2007 - 2009, and, in consultation with other international agencies, to collect the policy priorities regarding cultural issues in the different political authorities (ministerial meetings of OAS, OEI, CAB, etc.)
- d) OAS: Looking toward the next Inter-American Tourism Conference that will take place in 2008, OAS offers to explore with the appropriate offices of the inter-American system, the possible link of the CIS issue with that of the tourism information infrastructure.
- e) CAB: Offers to promote the main guidelines recommendations of the encounter in international culture meetings and in its meetings and forums. They will also be promoted in the context of the actions it makes with its member countries.
- f) IFACCA: Proposes to circulate a question among its members regarding the impact of the CIS on the public policies related to arts. It is expected that as a result of this process, the performance of a research on the region's information systems can be made. The question shall be determined by the countries and organizations that participated in the encounter.
- g) UNESCO – UIS: Whenever a government or public institution makes a direct request to UNESCO-UIS, this organization shall send a letter to everybody, if it is demanded, in order to highlight the relevance of having a CIS and its importance for achieving the objectives of Development and Education of the Millennium and, in general, of UNESCO's objectives. It will also continue promoting the importance of the strengthening of information systems in Latin American and Caribbean countries in the international meetings regarding culture.
- h) Ministry of Culture and Sports of Guatemala: Offers to bring before the CECC the conclusions drawn from the Synthesis Meeting of the SIC Sub-Regional Workshops.
- i) CARICOM: Offers to bring the conclusions of the synthesis meeting before the Ministries of Culture and cultural organizations of all the member countries.
- j) Iniciativa Latinoamericana: Offers to spread the conclusions of the synthesis meeting among the civil society organizations that perform activities for the promotion of culture in the region.

2. Planning and construction of cultural information systems

- k) CONACULTA from Mexico: Offers to make the characterization of the Central American CIS based on the surveys made for the workshop of that region in 2006.
- l) CONACULTA from Mexico: Makes the invitation and states the possibility to make internships so the countries that are interested can learn about Mexico's CIS experience.

- m) Ministry of Culture of Colombia: Offers support to the countries that want to design and start their CIS, based on the implementation and development experience of Colombia's CIS.

3. Generation, collection, systematization, analysis, and interpretation of the information

- n) CAB: Offers technical assistance and sharing the models of studies it has made about the economic and social dimensions of culture (cultural industries, popular festivals and historical centers, scenic arts), natural and cultural heritage, cultural legislation and urban imaginaries. It also offers the methodological manual of Satellite Accounts of Culture that is being developed, as well as the results of the project on theoretical investigation based on the economy of culture in Latin America.
- o) CONACULTA from Mexico and CAB: Offer to elaborate a proposal for Basic cultural indicators which will allow, based on information available in most of the countries, to perform a regional comparison exercise. Once the proposal is defined, CAB will be in charge of the coordination of the processes for the collection of the necessary information in the countries, so they can have these indicators.
- p) CERLALC: Offers to share its methodology on the elaboration of books statistics, including the software available in Internet for the elaboration of online statistical studies about books in the countries of the region. Additionally, when it is finished, it offers a methodology (still under construction) on the measurement of the reader's behavior in the region.
- q) OAS: Offers to work together with the countries interested and with UNESCO's Statistics Institute (UIS) in the political job of identifying some key questions about culture, so each country interested in adopting the suggestion can internally propose its inclusion in its national surveys.
- r) CAB and AECI: Offers the results that will be obtained from the products resulting from the project on Consumption and Cultural Practices, which includes a meeting for the generation of a methodology for the application of national surveys on cultural consumption, which offers common basic modules that allow to make comparisons between countries.
- s) Secretariat of Culture of the Argentinean Nation: Will present before MERCOSUR CULTURAL the possibility of sharing the methodology of the first exercise on economic measurement made in some countries, with the other countries of the region.

4. To publish, spread, and socialize the information and the analysis and interpretation of the information

- t) Department of Canadian Heritage: Offers the studies that it has been making on the perception of users and the corresponding methodologies used.

5. Generation of associations, synergies, and alliances

- u) CAB: Proposes to open a space in its Webpage to centralize information and regional knowledge on culture, and which articulates initiatives and advances of the national systems of cultural information. This virtual space will serve as a Forum and could make follow-up of the topics related to the CIS. Likewise, it will be an active space for exchange between the CIS. CAB agrees to provide human resources to create this space, which will make a follow-up of the topic in the region. CAB will seek alliances for supporting the translation of the information into English.
- v) Ministry of Culture of Colombia: Offers to seek an alliance with an institution that supports the job of translating the documents published in the space provided by CAB.
- w) Ministry of Culture of Colombia: Offers to adapt a module within SINIC to publish general documents related to Cultural Information Systems, with emphasis in America, so they can be consulted by all the countries during their processes of planning and development of the CIS.
- x) Ministry of Culture of Colombia: Will get together with OEI in order to include in their agenda the topics they can support, based on the conclusions of this meeting.