



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

International Assistance

ICH-04-Report – Form

INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE FUND

FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

Beneficiary State Party: Malawi

Project title:	Safeguarding of Nkhonde, Tumbuka and Chewa Proverbs and Folktales
Time frame:	Starting date: 20/05/2016 Completion date: 30/11/2017
Budget:	Total: US\$101,663.00 <i>Including:</i> Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund: US\$90,533 State Party contributions: US\$7,000.00 Other contributions: US\$4,100.00
Implementing agency:	Malawi National Commission for UNESCO
Implementing partners:	1.Oral Traditions Association of Malawi Mzuzu University Chapter; University of Malawi Centre for Language Studies and National Library Services
Contact person:	Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr Family name: Magomelo Given name: Christopher Institution/position: Assistant Executive Secretary for Culture Address: P. O. Box 30278, Lilongwe 3 Telephone number: +265 (0) 880 060 537 E-mail address: cjmagomelo.mnatcomunesco@mtlonline.mw

Background and rationale

Provide a brief description of the situation existing at the time of the request and the need that the assistance aimed to address. For safeguarding of a particular element, provide a description of the element, its viability and why safeguarding measures were required. For preparation of inventories, strengthening of capacities, awareness-raising, visibility or other safeguarding not focussed on a particular element, identify gaps that were to be addressed. For emergency assistance requests, describe the nature and severity of the emergency at the time of the request.

Not fewer than 750 or more than 1000 words

Proverbs and Folktales embody the knowledge, wisdom and culture of a society. People are educated and taught about their culture and philosophy of life through them among other things. They are therefore, vehicles for carrying the cultural values and philosophical orientation of a particular group of people.

Paramount Chief Chikulamayembe (Tumbuka), Paramount Chief Kyungu (Ngonde) and Traditional Authority Chadza (Chewa) lamented the rapidly dwindling numbers of people and households telling proverbs and folktales to their children, the none availability of materials in libraries and schools on these oral traditions in local languages and the accompanying disappearance of certain positive cultural values, customs and traditions. They implored Oral Traditions Association of Malawi (OTAMA) to do something to promote the reading and use of local proverbs and folktales in schools and libraries in Malawi.

This is in line with what UNESCO (2011) observes that with the disappearance of unwritten and undocumented oral traditions, humanity would lose cultural wealth and important ancestral knowledge embedded in them. Today, few members of these communities practice these traditions as used to be the case in the past when parents would sit down with their children around a fire and tell them proverbs and folktales. Not many people can read about them too because written materials on the traditions are very few if any.

On its part Government through the Department of Culture established the first inventory of ICH in 2009 (published in 2011). The NICHC, also established several inventories since its creation in 2010. These were established in 2010, and 2012. The 2011 published inventory listed proverbs and folktales as falling under domain (a) of ICH "Oral traditions and expressions including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage" as stated in Article 2.2 of the 2003 Convention.

Since the purpose of an inventory is not to document the ICH elements in detail, the 2011 inventory only broadly refers to the existence of proverbs and folktales as part of the traditions of the communities and the dangers that face them due to dwindling numbers of practitioners.

It is against this background that in 2012 the chiefs sent a request to Malawi National Commission for UNESCO through the Oral Traditions Association of Malawi (OTAMA) for assistance to document proverbs and folktales of Nkhonde, Tumbuka and Chewa communities.

However, the National Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee (NICHC) realised that for OTAMA to be able to carry out the documentation of the proverbs and folktales it needed to have its members trained in UNESCO approved methodology. Beside the need in relation to the request by the traditional authorities, there is also a general need to increase the number of experts with knowledge of safeguarding ICH using UNESCO approved methodology.

The purpose of this project therefore, was to address this situation by first training OTAMA members in documenting ICH using UNESCO approved methodology, secondly documenting in audiovisual and text formats the proverbs and folktales of Nkhonde, Tumbuka and Chewa communities, thirdly developing dictionaries of the Kyangonde, Chitumbuka and Chichewa languages and lastly to have the informants tell the folktales to children in the libraries.

The choice of communities was made on the basis that the local leaders of these communities

actually requested this as stated above.

At the start of this project Malawi had two experts trained by UNESCO in inventorying and documenting ICH. One is a sub-regional trainer, the other a national trainer. Both are members of the NICH. Through them, the NICH in 2010, 2013 and 2014 trained 32 youth from the local communities in community-based inventorying of ICH. They were identified by their respective heritage foundations and associations. 12 of these were trained as facilitators meaning they can on their own train others in inventorying of ICH. The rest are able to do the inventorying but cannot train others.

The project planned to increase the number of people knowledgeable about ICH and its safeguarding. To do this it planned to involve six members of OTAMA in documenting the proverbs and folktales after being trained in the methodology of community-based inventorying of ICH. It further planned to use two of the trained youth from each of the three communities as assistants to the researchers from OTAMA.

Scientific research in many parts of the world, including Malawi, has unequivocally demonstrated that children show better education outcomes, including the acquisition of literacy skills, if they are taught through examples from traditions which they are familiar with. It is in this regard that the development of pedagogical tools such as books on oral traditions and dictionaries of vernacular terminologies become clearly relevant and were included in the plan of this project.

Furthermore, there was need of fostering the understanding of the elements listed on the Representative List of ICH of Humanity namely Gule Wamkulu (the Great Dance) of the Chewa People and Vimbuza Healing Dance of the Tumbuka People as well as the many elements in the inventories and the dictionaries would contribute to that.

Objectives and results attained

Overall, to what extent did the project attain its objectives? Describe the main results attained, focussing in particular on the perspective of the direct beneficiaries and communities. For each expected result identified in the request, explain whether it was fully or partially attained. Also describe any unexpected results, direct or indirect, whether positive or negative.

Not fewer than 100 or more than 500 words

The following were the project's objectives and expected results that were archived:

Objective a. To increase the number of researchers in Malawi able to document ICH and contribute to implementing the 2003 Convention using UNESCO approved methodology.

Expected Result 1: A cadre of 3 researchers and 6 assistants from Oral Traditions Association of Malawi (OTAMA), will have gained knowledge in the UNESCO approved methodology of documenting ICH complementing the methodologies they already know.

Achieved Result: The project surpassed the target by actually adding 13 experts, four (4) researchers and six (6) research assistants. 10 of these were trained in community-based inventorying complementing the methodologies they already know. They have also gained experience in researching and recording ICH. They include the following four (4) researchers from Oral Traditions Association of Malawi (OTAMA): Prof. Boston Soko, Professor of Oral Literature at Mzuzu University; Mr. Wellman Kondowe, lecturer of African Languages & Linguistics at Mzuzu University; Mr. Albert Mtungambara Harawa, lecturer in Oral Literature at Mzuzu University; Mrs. Lydia Kishindo-Mafuta, a lecturer in Languages and Literature at Mzuzu University. The other six who were trained were research assistants.

Three (3) experts gained knowledge in the field documentation of the languages for the development of the dictionaries including Prof. Pascal Kishindo Professor of Linguistics at University of Malawi and Director of Center for Language Studies; Dr. Jean Chavula, also teaches linguistics at Chancellor College of the University of Malawi.

Objective b. To improve the safeguarding of the proverbs and folktales of Nkhonde, Tumbuka

and Chewa people.

Expected Result 1: 150 proverbs and 150 folktales of the Nkhonde, Tumbuka and Chewa communities will be collected and documented on audio visual media and will be saved in pdf text as safeguarding measures.

Archived result: 156 proverbs and 153 folktales of the Nkhonde, Tumbuka and Chewa communities were recorded on audio visual media and analysed, processed and saved in pdf text as safeguarding measures (see annexed documentation).

Objective c: Oral traditions of Nkhonde, Tumbuka and Chewa people transmitted to young people

Expected Result 1: 90 children from Nkhonde, Tumbuka and Chewa communities acquire knowledge as contained in the proverbs and folktales.

Archived result: More than 210 children came to in National Library branches, more than 70 in each of the three communities to listen to the live performances of the storytellers who were the informants during the documentation activity. (see videos) .

Description of project implementation

Provide a description of the activities undertaken and the outputs they generated (e.g. trainings, consultation process, technical assistance, awareness raising, publications, toolkits, etc.) Also describe any problems encountered in project delivery and corrective actions taken. Describe the role of the implementing agency and implementing partners in carrying out activities and generating outputs.

Not fewer than 1000 or more than 1500 words

Activity 1: Coordination

The National Commission for UNESCO coordinated individual institutions and individuals that were involved in the implementation of the project in terms of instigating when activities should be implemented and ensuring deadlines were met. The Museums of Malawi and the National Commission provided the experts to train the researchers and guide them during the implementation. The OTAMA and Center for Language Studies together implemented activities on documenting proverbs and folktales and on development of dictionaries respectively with involvement of traditional authorities, heritage associations and research assistants.

Activity 2: Training of OTAMA researchers

The OTAMA - Mzuzu University chapter (OTAMA-MZUNI), identified four experts from its members to be trained as lead researchers. These were Professor Boston Soko, Mr. Albert Mthungambara Harawa, Mr. Wellman Kondowe and Mrs. Lydia Kishindo-Mafuta all of whom are lecturers in oral literature at the university. The training was conducted by the two experts, Mr. Lovemore Mazibuko and Mr. Christopher Magomelo. It took place at St. John of God over a period of 8 days from 21st to 28th August, 2016 as recommended in the UNESCO guidelines on training on Safeguarding of ICH. The purpose of the training was to introduce the project, the methodology for community-based documentation of intangible cultural heritage as well as prepare the lead researchers for the field work.

Activity 3: Identification and Briefing of Principal Informants and Field Assistants

The principal researchers first identified five research assistants (instead of three). These were; Mr. Daniel Lughano Mwakasoko a former student of oral literature at Mzuzu University, a member of the Ngonde community and a KyaNgonde speaker, Miss. Patience Tafwa Shaba, a student of oral literature at Mzuzu University and ChiTumbuka speaker, Mr. Symon J. Sikwese a student of oral literature at Mzuzu University and ChiChewa speaker, Miss. Wezzie A. Nyirenda, a former student of oral literature at Mzuzu University and a member of the Tumbuka Community, and Mr. Frances Simwinda, a student of oral literature at Mzuzu University and a KyaNgonde and ChiTumbuka speaker. They were identified after consulting

the Kyangonde/Ngonde Cultural Association, Tumbuka Heritage Association and Chewa Heritage Foundation (CHEFO). All the principal researchers were ChiTumbuka and ChiChewa speakers.

MNCU assisted in identifying two audio-visual technical assistants. The technicians were identified through purposive sampling. Due to the nature of the assignment, it was imperative to identify video technicians who had done similar work before. Therefore, BM Studios and Electrical Services a private company which had done audiovisual recording of ICH during the inventorying exercise, was identified.

A second training was conducted for research assistants and technical assistants. It was facilitated by Mr. Lovemore Mazibuko assisted by two of the principal researchers who were trained in the first training workshop, Mr. Wellman Kondowe and Mr. Albert Harawa. The five research assistants and two technical assistants were trained in inventorying and documentation of ICH at St. John of God from 19th to 26th September, 2016.

After briefing the traditional authorities on the objectives of the project and the modalities as contained in the project document, the research team collaborated with them to identify the principal informants in the three districts.

18 informants were identified through snowballing in Traditional Authority T/A Kilupula in Pramout Chief Kyungu in Karonga District, 10 in TA Mwankhunikira in Paramount Chief Chikulamayembe in Rumphi District and 31 in TA Chadza in Lilongwe District. This was far more than the planned 10 per district. This was caused by the inability of some informants to tell all the five folktales and five proverbs, hence they suggested other additional informants to be interviewed and recorded. The research team, similarly briefed the identified people on the objectives of the project and explained the modalities as contained in the project document. Then the principal informants were auditioned. From the auditions, principal informants from each traditional authority were selected. The successful principal informants were then given time to practice the telling of the proverbs and folktales.

Activity 4: Collection and recording of proverbs and folktales

Collection and recording in Karonga District

The first documentation exercise took place in T/A Kilupula in Karonga District from 16th to 26th October, 2016. The documentation consisted of two researchers, one trainer, three research assistants and two technical assistants. One of the research assistants was the Chinkhonde speaker, the other Chitumbuka speaker with the last one being Chichewa speaker. The team interviewed the 18 principal informants and recorded them on audio-visual media telling at locally common proverbs and folktales. The three language specialists from Centre for Language Studies also visited the District to interview Kyangonde speakers for additional information on the pronunciation of the language. A total of 53 proverbs and 51 folktales were collected and recorded. The audio-visual recordings have been edited and submitted as part of this report.

Collection and recording in Rumphi District

The second documentation exercise took place in TA Mwankhunikira under Paramount Chief Chikulamayembe in Rumphi District from 15th to 25th November, 2016. The documentation team consisted of two principal researchers, one trainer, three research assistants and two technical assistants. One of the research assistants was Tumbuka speakers and the other two Chichewa speakers. Both principal researchers were Chitumbuka speakers. The team interviewed the 10 principal informants and recorded them on audio-visual media telling at locally common proverbs and folktales. A total of 52 proverbs and 50 folktales were collected and recorded. The audio-visual recordings have been edited and the videos submitted as part of this report.

Collection and recording in Lilongwe District

The third documentation exercise took place in TA Chadza in Lilongwe. The documentation team consisted of two researchers, the two trainers and three research assistants. The whole team were Chichewa speakers. The team interviewed the 10 principal informants and recorded them on audio-visual media over 10 days from 9th to 18th December, 2016. The team interviewed the 31 principal informants and recorded them on audio-visual media telling locally common proverbs and folktales. A total of 51 proverbs and 52 folktales were collected and recorded. The audio-visual recordings were edited and the videos have been submitted as part of this report.

Activity 5: Transcription, Analysis Translation of Nkhonde, Tumbuka and Chewa Proverbs and Folktales

This activity took place in Mzuzu at Mzuzu University and involved the four trained researchers from OTAMA involved in the collection and recording exercise (one for each of the communities and one overall supervisor) and three language specialists (one for each of the three community languages) from the Centre for Language Studies. It involved writing down the audio-visual recordings in the original languages of the proverbs and folktales and translating them into English.

The transcriptions of the proverbs and folktales generated useful information and terminologies and words which the Center for Language Studies added to the Chinkhonde, Chitumbuka and Chichewa dictionaries.

The results of the activity were the text of the proverbs and folktales in the original languages and the English translations following them in the books in the annexes.

Activity 6: Development of the books on Nkhonde, Tumbuka and Chewa Proverbs and Folktales

This activity involved the same four researchers and three language specialists as in activity 4 doing the technical work of putting together the three books and three dictionaries in local languages. The books have details concerning the proverbs including name, meaning usage and their English translations. The source community and principal informants' details are given in the appendix. 500 copies of each book and dictionary were produced and are being published and printed by Dzuka Publishing Limited, later to be distributed in libraries throughout the country.

Activity 7: Storytelling sessions

This activity introduced story telling at the National Library Headquarters in Lilongwe. It was difficult due to communication challenges with storytellers from the districts for the storytelling sessions to take place in the library community branches in Karonga, Rumphi and Kasungu. However, the storytelling sessions which took place for sixty days from October 25 to December 21 were well patronised by children from the surrounding neighbourhoods of Kawale, Area 10, Area 43, Kauma, Area 18 to mention a few. They re-awakened the interest for storytelling among parents who brought their children to the National Library. The sessions continue to be held after the project, through a new partnership with Rei Foundation Limited and its integration into the National Library's annual budget and plan for sustainability.

Activity 8: Evaluation missions:

The monitoring and evaluation was done both internally and externally. The National Commission for UNESCO together with Museums of Malawi conducted periodic monitoring evaluation missions which culminated in producing the midterm and the end-of-the-project reports.

Activity 9: Reporting

The Museums of Malawi and the National Commission provided the experts to train the researchers. The OTAMA and Center for Language Studies together jointly implemented

activities 2, 3 (with involvement of traditional authorities, heritage associations and research assistants) 4 and 5. The Centre for Language Studies and the OTAMA prepared their narrative specific activity reports while the experts identified by the Museum of Malawi and National Commission produced midterm and final reports.

Community involvement

Provide a description of the mechanisms used for fully involving the community(ies) concerned. Describe not only the participation of the communities as beneficiaries of financial support, but also their active participation in the planning and implementation of all activities.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words

In 2012 Paramount Chief Chikulamayembe, Paramount Chief Kyungu and Traditional Authority Chadza sent the request to Malawi National Commission for UNESCO for assistance to document proverbs and folktales of Nkhonde, Tumbuka and Chewa communities. In addition, proverbs and folktales as a category of oral tradition are contained in Volume 1 of Inventory of Malawi's Intangible Cultural Heritage (2011) which was compiled through a community-based inventorying approach. During the discussions the traditional authorities lamented the lack of promotion of intangible heritage such as proverbs and folktales which is demonstrated by the absence of such oral traditions in the school curriculum. Paramount Chief Chikulamayembe and Traditional Authority Chadza both thanked UNESCO for inscribing Vimbuza and Gule Wamkulu respectively on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage but also pointed out that the languages used in these elements do not have dictionaries which lends them to different interpretations.

The OTAMA assigned members who together with some members of the Nkhonde, Tumbuka and Chewa communities identified by Paramount Chief Chikulamayembe, Paramount Chief Kyungu and Traditional Authority Chadza as well as the secretaries of Nkhonde Heritage Association, Tumbuka Culture Association and Chewa Heritage Foundation, developed the initial the plan that was in the proposal. The project plan was therefore a product of the participation of these communities. The draft project was then scrutinised by the Centre for Language Studies, revised and submitted to the NICHC.

During implementation the project used the same implementation plan and the traditional system of protocol and communication for prior informed consent and participation of practicing communities in the whole project from start to finish. Therefore, before implementation started OTAMA went to the chiefs to report on the plan to start implementation of the project. The meeting reviewed the plans and the chiefs allowed OTAMA to work with the three heritage associations representing the practitioners. In addition, before recording the oral traditions the communities were in their respective villages engaged on the plan and intended use of the products and they gave input. For instance they also wanted copies of the books and dictionaries to be deposited with the Traditional Authorities and in schools in their areas.

Furthermore, the project used five of the youth trained prior to this project from each of the three communities who were identified by the heritage associations themselves to assist the researchers from OTAMA as well as the two technical assistants. The associations advised on the appropriate time to visit the communities and who to contact on the ground for smooth involvement and participation of the informants. Because of this advice the research team encountered no resistance and communities were aware of the project and welcomed the OTAMA team with open arms. University lecturers who are members of Oral Traditions Association of Malawi were also involved in analysing the proverbs and folktales.

Sustainability and exit/transition strategy

Describe how the benefits of the project will continue after the project has been completed. Where appropriate, describe the steps undertaken to ensure the following:

- *Sustainability of activities, outputs and results, including with reference to how capacity has been built under the project. Also describe any planned follow-up measures to ensure sustainability.*
- *Additional funding secured as a result of this project, if any. Indicate by whom, how much and for what purpose the contributions are granted.*
- *Describe how the ownership (of activities, outputs, results) by stakeholders and the community(ies) in particular has been promoted.*
- *Describe, if relevant, how tools, processes, outputs, etc. have been adopted, adapted, replicated and/or extended for future use (e.g. in other regions, communities, elements, or fields of intangible cultural heritage.).*

Not fewer than 100 or more than 500 words

The OTAMA's capacity has been adequately built through this project which ensures the sustainability of the project activities, outputs and results. This is so because the researchers are firstly in a position to be able to teach their students how to document ICH; secondly they themselves can conduct similar research and produce books for posterity in the same way they did in this project; thirdly the Centre for Language Studies now has capacity to conduct research and be able to produce dictionaries in other local languages as vehicles of ICH; and lastly the books and dictionaries are documents which will live forever as testimonies of the existence of these oral traditions which hitherto were not there. The project has demonstrated the capacity of OTAMA to document ICH. The knowledge and experience gained in this project will be used as resource on which to base scholars' analyses concerning issues to do with proverbs, folktales and oral traditions generally as a means of storage of the knowledge systems and philosophies of a society. This will also prompt these institutions to conduct more research in other areas of intangible cultural heritage that exist in the country..

The training the youth got will be used to conduct more documentation of ICH when needed in the course of safeguarding exercises of these communities' other ICH in future. The inventory of ICH of Malawi Volume 1 and 2 contains other ICH elements in these communities which will need to be documented in future.

The budget for the production of books was underestimated. Fortunately, Rei Foundation Limited indicated its interest to assist but was interested in supporting the storytelling sessions. So Rei Foundation supported the storytelling sessions at the National Library and the budget for this in the project was used for the production of books the cost of which was double the budget estimate. It should be understood that the budget estimate was made two years previously before the approval of the project by the IGCOC of ICH.

The National Library Service has integrated the storytelling sessions into its annual budget and plans for continuation because of their success under this project. In addition the sessions have had a positive unintended effect in that children go to the library to read while waiting for the storytelling sessions to start and this is helping to promote the reading culture among children in Lilongwe. The NLS therefore has taken ownership of the storytelling sessions.

The communities can access this documentation through the chiefs and community libraries. The community libraries are accessible to the youth who can read them in order to familiarise themselves further with the knowledge and the philosophies of their society in their own languages.

OTAMA engaged Dzuka Publishing Limited one of the renowned publishers in Malawi to enter into an agreement to produce more books on oral traditions of Malawi. This will further strengthen the sustainability of the results of the project. OTAMA therefore has assumed ownership of documentation under this project.

Lessons learnt

Describe what are the key lessons learnt regarding the following:

- *Attainment of expected results*
- *Ownership of key stakeholders and community involvement*
- *Delivery of project outputs*
- *Project management and implementation*
- *Sustainability of the project after the financial assistance*

Not fewer than 300 or more than 750 words

All the results in this project were attained beyond expectations. The lesson learnt from this is that setting realistic targets helps in attaining them. Greater consultation with stakeholders and real participation of communities are critical in ensuring the results are attained. This also helps in greater ownership of the project by the stakeholders and communities.

OTAMA, Mzuzu University and Centre for Language Studies and National Library Service owned the project while communities felt that it was their responsibility to ensure that their oral traditions were safeguarded. This resulted in communities giving all the information they could. Traditional leaders were in the forefront urging their subjects to participate in the project. This was critical to the success of the project because without them communities would usually be reluctant to participate.

The project outputs were delivered a bit later than was planned mainly because publication involves a lot of back and forth communication with the publisher. It was learnt that enough time needs to be allowed. However there was little that could be done because the ICHF requires that the project be implemented within two years. However, when considering projects with results that involve publishing documents the more time needs to be given to allow for the back and forth process to take place.

Budget estimate must be finalized very close to the time when decision to approve or not to approve the project is about to be taken so that there is little variance with the actual cost during implementation. In this project the estimate for publishing the books was half the actual and this almost caused the project not to attain all the results.

The project was managed in transparent manner so that each stakeholder knew what their role was and what to expect as well as what results were required. This was because all stakeholders were involved in the planning and implementation. Everyone took their component of the project seriously. The management body's diligence in finding alternative funding from Rei Foundation assisted in ensuring that all the expected results were particularly on publishing the books were achieved. Without the funding from Rei Foundation fewer books would have been published and printed than was planned.

All the stakeholders have integrated the results of the project into their normal institutional plans. This will ensure continuity of the results of the project. OTAMA has the capacity to document ICH, more experts have been added to the pool experts on ICH, Centre for Language Studies has the capacity to produce dictionaries and the National Library has the capacity to run storytelling sessions for children. These are the results of greater involvement of stakeholders and participation of communities and contributed to the project being very successful.

Annexes

List the annexes and documentation included in the report:

- publications, evaluation reports and other outputs, when applicable
- progress reports prepared during the contract period
- list of major equipment provided under the project and status after termination of contract period
- other (please specify)

1. Book on Kyangonde Proverbs and Folktales
2. Book on Chitumbuka Proverbs and Folktales
3. Book on Chichewa Proverbs and Folktales
4. Dictionary of Kyangonde Language
5. Dictionary of Chitumbuka Language
6. Dictionary of Chichewa Language
7. 66 DVDs of audiovisual recordings of proverbs and folktales
8. A flash drive with 20 videos of storytelling
9. Interim Report

Name and signature of the person having completed the report

Name: Christopher Julio Magomelo

Title: Assistant Executive Secretary (Culture)

Date: 20/12/2017

Signature: