



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Intangible  
Cultural  
Heritage

## REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF HUMANITY

**Deadline 31 March 2020  
for possible inscription in 2021**

*Instructions for completing the nomination form are available at: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/forms>*

*Nominations not complying with those instructions and those found below will be considered incomplete and cannot be accepted.*

### A. State(s) Party(ies)

*For multinational nominations, States Parties should be listed in the order on which they have mutually agreed.*

Nigeria

### B. Name of the element

#### B.1. Name of the element in English or French

*Indicate the official name of the element that will appear in published material.*

*Not to exceed 200 characters*

Sango Festival, Oyo

#### B.2. Name of the element in the language and script of the community concerned, if applicable

*Indicate the official name of the element in the vernacular language corresponding to the official name in English or French (point B.1).*

*Not to exceed 200 characters*

Odun Sango Oyo

#### B.3. Other name(s) of the element, if any

*In addition to the official name(s) of the element (point B.1), mention alternate name(s), if any, by which the element is known.*

World Sango Festival

### C. Name of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned

Identify clearly one or several communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned with the nominated element.

Not to exceed 150 words

The Festival initially found its expression in the Old Oyo Empire which has become Oyo Community in modern times and involves the Yoruba nation cutting across the South-western part of Nigeria which includes Oyo, Osun, Ondo, Ogun, Ekiti, Kwara and Lagos States with two broad groupings of Sango devotees namely Sango Koso and Sango Mogba. The individuals concerned with the element are His Royal Majesty, Iku Baba Yeye, Oba Olayiwola Atanda Adeyemi, III, the Alaafin of Oyo, who is the direct descendant of Sango and the custodian of the Yoruba Culture; the eldest Queen called "Iya Ile Koto"; The Sango Chiefs and Devotees such as the Baale Sango; Otun Sango; Adosu Sango; Elegun Sango; Jagun Sango; Iyanaso; Otun Efa; Alase; Ipeere Okunrin; Ipeere Obinrin, etc.

### D. Geographical location and range of the element

Provide information on the distribution of the element within the territory(ies) of the submitting State(s), indicating, if possible, the location(s) in which it is centred. Nominations should concentrate on the situation of the element within the territories of the submitting States, while acknowledging the existence of same or similar elements outside their territories. Submitting States should not refer to the viability of such intangible cultural heritage outside their territories or characterize the safeguarding efforts of other States.

Not to exceed 150 words

The Sango Festival of Oyo has participants drawn across a wide area of Yoruba land due to the vast Oyo Empire coverage in the past. The aboriginal place of this cultural event is the Oyo Community in the present Oyo State in the South - western part of Nigeria. It is a ten-day long festival which begins from Koso, the suburb of Sango, where the ancient Koso Temple is, and moves round Oyo Community before its climax on the tenth day with the final entry of Sango Koso (Ancestral Sango) into the Palace of the Alaafin of Oyo. The element is among the most popular cultural events and brings together all Sango devotees of Yoruba extraction to celebrate the annual Sango Festival which marks the beginning of the Yoruba New Year in August of every year. The element is also found with the African in the Diaspora.

### E. Contact person for correspondence

#### E.1. Designated contact person

Provide the name, address and other contact information of a single person responsible for all correspondence concerning the nomination. For multinational nominations, provide complete contact information for one person designated by the States Parties as the main contact person for all correspondence relating to the nomination.

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Ms  
Family name: David  
Given name: Ruby Onengia  
Institution/position: Federal Ministry of Information and Culture / Deputy Director  
Address: Rm 205, Block E, UNESCO Division, Department of International Cultural Relations, Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, Federal Secretariat, Phase II, Abuj, Nigeria.  
Telephone number: +2348033063267  
Email address: rubydavid.on@gmail.com  
Other relevant information: maniegail@gmail.com

## E.2. Other contact persons (for multinational files only)

Provide below complete contact information for one person in each submitting State, other than the primary contact person identified above.

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### 1. Identification and definition of the element

For **Criterion R.1**, States **shall demonstrate that 'the element constitutes intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention'.**

Tick one or more boxes to identify the domain(s) of intangible cultural heritage manifested by the element, which might include one or more of the domains identified in Article 2.2 of the Convention. If you tick 'other(s)', specify the domain(s) in brackets.

- oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of intangible cultural heritage
- performing arts
- social practices, rituals and festive events
- knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe
- traditional craftsmanship
- other(s) ( )

This section should address all the significant features of the element as it exists at present, and should include:

- a. an explanation of its social functions and cultural meanings today, within and for its community;
- b. the characteristics of the bearers and practitioners of the element;
- c. any specific roles, including gender-related ones or categories of persons with special responsibilities towards the element; and
- d. the current modes of transmission of the knowledge and skills related to the element.

The Committee should receive sufficient information to determine:

- a. that the element is among the 'practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills — as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith —';
- b. 'that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize [it] as part of their cultural heritage';
- c. that it is being 'transmitted from generation to generation, [and] is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history';
- d. that it provides the communities and groups involved with 'a sense of identity and continuity'; and
- e. that it is not incompatible with 'existing international human rights instruments as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development'.

Overly technical descriptions should be avoided and submitting States should keep in mind that this section must explain the element to readers who have no prior knowledge or direct experience of it. Nomination files need not address in detail the history of the element, or its origin or antiquity.

- (i) Provide a brief description of the element that can introduce it to readers who have never seen or experienced it.

Not fewer than 150 or more than 250 words

Sango Festival of Oyo is the expression of the larger intangible cultural heritage of the Yoruba people uniting diverse forms of socio-cultural practices in Oyo Community and marks the beginning of the Yoruba Traditional New Year in August. It is an ancestral worship which starts from the suburb of Sango called Koso where the ancient Koso Temple is situated. The ten-day long festival is strongly connected to the social, religious, cultural and political institution in Yoruba land. It is done in commemoration of Tella-Okò, the Third Alaafin (King) of Oyo Empire, believed to be the incarnation of the mythical Sango, the Yoruba Orisa divinity of thunder and lightning. When the festival commences on the Yoruba new year eve in August, roasted new yam and palm oil are shared and eaten by Sango devotees and followers. Sango devotees

(male and female) plait their hair and wear red dress while putting around their necks and wrists white and red beads. The Sango Chief Priest known as Baba Mogba does not plait his hair. The Festival encompasses different rites, the ritual items include: Bitterkola, palmoil, gin and ram. It involves dancing, praise singing, drumming and display of different techniques, skills and crafts through which cultural values and customs of the people are manifested. Sango Festival reflects the traditional diversity of the people. The efficacy of its spirituality, knowledge of nature and universe for curbing crime and administration of justice till date is highly revered by the Community.

(ii) *Who are the bearers and practitioners of the element? Are there any specific roles, including gender-related ones or categories of persons with special responsibilities for the practice and transmission of the element? If so, who are they and what are their responsibilities?*

*Not fewer than 150 or more than 250 words*

Although the event mobilizes the whole community, some key roles are strictly distinct such as:

The Alaafin of Oyo - the Custodian and guardian of Yoruba Culture.

Iya Ile Koto - the Queen who welcomes Sango Koso to the Palace

Traditional Council (Oyo Mesi) - Cabinet of Chiefs of Alaafin serve as traditional administrators.

The Traditional Religious Council- The Chief Priests control all liturgical rites.

The Mogba Koso- The Supreme Chief of Koso and guardian of the ancient crown of the Alaafin and Sango Koso Shrine, responsible for the coronation/initiation of the new king into Sango Cult.

The Iya-Naso- The guardian mother of the ancestral shrine inside the palace.

The Elegun Koso- He is a traditional priest, personifies the physical representation of the ancestral spirit of Sango.

Eleguns and Adosu Sango are devotees of the worship of Sango. They perform divination with sixteen (16) cowries. They are males and females and both plait their hair as it is forbidden to shave until death.

The Baale Sango- The head priest of all Sango community who understand and supervise all the traditional performances.

Female Sango devotees chant Sango's oriki (cognomen), compose new songs, clean Sango shrine, prepare food, teach the children and youth to chant and sing.

The Otun Efa, palace attendant attached to Alaafin's most senior wife, responsible for the exchange of presents between the palace and Sango Shrine at Koso.

The youths understudy elders, dance and support in taking care of the shrines and temple of Sango.

The Bata drummers

(iii) *How are the knowledge and skills related to the element transmitted today?*

*Not fewer than 150 or more than 250 words*

Presently, the men and women transmit the knowledge and skills related to Sango worship and festival to the young ones orally through the following approaches: The children and youths are mandated to be present and observe the worshippers in all aspects of the elements such as chanting, divination, singing, story telling and dancing every Saturdays at the Sango Temples in Oyo. The children and youths are taught the rudiments of Sango (Pipe) cognomen by the women. They follow the elders to meetings to observe proceedings. Right from childhood, the children learn the arts of divination with the sixteen cowries (eerindinlogun), they are taught how to offer prayers, appeal and enquire from Sango using the bitterkola. The bata drummers as well as the elders teach dancing and interpretative skills of Bata drumming to the younger generation.

The Elegun Sango teaches the younger generation the arts of magic of Sango, burial rites, naming rites and so on. They teach them the dos and don'ts of Sango and discipline them if they break any of the rules. Today, the Sango devotees and initiates worship at temples on Saturdays and they go to the palace every five days, the day of Jakuta and on the last Friday of the month to offer prayers for the Alaafin and the entire people of Oyo community. The activities hold with the full complement of the old and young, presence of bata drummers and give room for the youth to practice all they have been learning from time to time.

(iv) *What social functions and cultural meanings does the element have for its community nowadays?*

*Not fewer than 150 or more than 250 words*

The festival unites Oyo community. The Sango devotees celebrate, eat, drink, dance, sing and fashion out strategies for socio-cultural interaction and economic development for the Yoruba traditional new year which commences in August. The Oyo community considers it worthy to reconnect with their ancestor, Sango, as a way of remembrance, celebration and mediation between humankind and Olodumare (Supreme Creator).

The annual festival represents the summit of the community to a constant linkage and connection to their ancestral world, the appreciation of a productive season and reaffirms the spiritual power of the throne of Oyo.

The Sango Festival remains a socio-cultural mechanism of utmost importance for the unity, mass participation, all inclusiveness and depiction of the common identity of the Oyo People. This is clearly visible through the intense participation of the elders, youths, male and female gender, bringing all together for the purpose of social development of the community.

The unity displayed and participation of the community at the festival through exhibition and production of indigenous products, special attires, chanting, drumming and special Sango dance repertoire of all keeps the spirit of the festival alive. The festival encourages and restores pride in the community through identifying, protecting, promoting and revitalizing the heritage, as well as transmitting the knowledge from generation to generation. The Yoruba traditional ways of doing things according to her calendar are preserved as evidenced of its root in cultural tradition or history of the community thus affirming the community's cultural identity.

(v) *Is there any part of the element that is not compatible with existing international human rights instruments or with the requirement of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, or with sustainable development?*

*Not fewer than 150 or more than 250 words*

No part of the element negates international human rights instruments. Sango festival stands for justice, equity, fairness as well as promotes intercultural dialogue and mutual respect among different customary religions. People of diverse faith come together to celebrate the festival with days allotted to various Yoruba divinities or deities in the course of the festival.

The element is in conformity with the existing international human rights instruments based on the fact that it maintains tradition as a vehicle for promoting unity, sense of belonging, identity, respect, preservation, continuity, balance and peace, being the substratum to life and the mutual relationship within the society. This is the foundation, the basis and the fundamental pivot of human relations and human co-existence.

The element is an uplift to the sustainable development due to the engagement, participation and full commitment of the entire community in its activities. The element is compatible and in conformity with existing international human rights instruments because it abhors discrimination among the social classes and genders, by recognizing and practicing equality between both genders, eliminating inferiority and superiority complexes. It also encourages strong respect for the environment and protection of the people's tradition, especially promoting unity and peace.

The skills and craft connected to Sango festival like, drumming, calabash carving, weaving attires, sculpture making and leather products are a daily occupation of the people in addition to

farming which promotes the right to good life. Thus, the element is a vehicle to promote and encourage their daily practices of survival.

## 2. Contribution to ensuring visibility and awareness and to encouraging dialogue

For **Criterion R.2**, the States **shall demonstrate that 'Inscription of the element will contribute to ensuring visibility and awareness of the significance of the intangible cultural heritage and to encouraging dialogue, thus reflecting cultural diversity worldwide and testifying to human creativity'**. This criterion will only be considered to be satisfied if the nomination demonstrates how the possible inscription would contribute to ensuring the visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage in general, and not only of the inscribed element itself, and to encouraging dialogue that respects cultural diversity.

(i) How could the inscription of the element on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity contribute to the visibility of the intangible cultural heritage in general (and not only of the inscribed element itself) and raise awareness of its importance?

(i.a) Please explain how this would be achieved at the local level.

Not fewer than 100 or more than 150 words

The inscription of Sango Festival on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity would contribute to visibility for intangible cultural heritage at the local level in general based on the fact that the festival brings together other traditional religious belief system of the Yoruba nation such as Ogun, Oya, Osun, Obaluafe, Esu, Obatala, etc. The inscription of this prominent cultural expression on UNESCO's representative list of intangible cultural heritage will certainly increase the community's attention to the new paradigms of Yoruba cultural heritage protection and management. It is expected at the local level that the traditional knowledge holders would feel more motivated and committed to safeguard the cultural heritage. The disclosure of this achievement can also have a positive impact on the Community psyche, encourage them to give it wider visibility and stimulate more passionate involvement during the festival.

(i.b) Please explain how this would be achieved at the national level.

Not fewer than 100 or more than 150 words

This is achieved at the national level through the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture of Nigeria in collaboration with its relevant agencies such as: the National Institute for Cultural Orientation, the National Council for Arts and Culture; the National Troupe of Nigeria; National Commission for Museums and Monuments; National Gallery of Art and Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation contributions to the success of the festival. Colloquiums are organized annually to promote visibility and stimulate intercultural dialogue among scholars on the contribution of Sango's administration to Nation's building. State governments from outside Yoruba speaking region are invited to participate at the festival. The Federal Government has included Sango festival on the Cultural calendar of Nigeria therefore both technical and professional support are deployed from the federal government to the planning of the festival. This resulted to a lot of creativities being exhibited at the festival.

(i.c) Please explain how this would be achieved at the international level.

Not fewer than 100 or more than 150 words

Sango Festival's inscription on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity would further increase intercultural dialogue and enhance visibility for the Festival internationally. The Sango Oyo Community have had the privilege of being invited to perform in Brazil, Cuba and the United States of America. The festival attract participants from, and

stimulates the home coming of the Yorubas in the Diaspora. If the element is inscribed, there would be renewed international attention in terms of studies, scientific researches and documentation worthy of stimulating increased awareness on Sango Festival and the cultural innovative tendencies which the element stands for. It would afford the devotees opportunity to extend invitation for participation at Sango Oyo festival to UNESCO States Parties to the 2003 Convention and the Yoruba speaking people in the Diaspora. A lot of academic and scientific researches would be carried out on Sango's evoking and striking power.

*(ii) How would dialogue among communities, groups and individuals be encouraged by the inscription of the element?*

*Not fewer than 100 or more than 150 words*

The inscription of Sango Festival of Oyo on the Representative List would further stimulate dialogue among Communities, groups and individuals connected with the element. Sango festival involves various groups such as drummers (Ayan), Egbe, Ogun, Yemoja, Obatala, Osun, Obaluaye, Esu and Oya worshippers who participate in the celebration. Days and roles are assigned to various groups but, the drummers are involved in all segments of the festival. All the groups are part of the dialogues leading to the success of the festival. All Sango devotees, admirers and community interact extensively, dine; drink; sing, chant and dance together. People within and outside the community fix meetings for that period to discuss on the development of Oyo. Common disputes are settled, friendship strengthened and communal and individual needs are met. The festival period has become a pilgrimage period where people reignite the bond of relationships with relatives, friends, colleagues, contemporaries and the community.

*(iii) How would human creativity and respect for cultural diversity be promoted by the inscription of the element?*

*Not fewer than 100 or more than 150 words*

Human creativity will be promoted in all the domains of the intangible cultural heritage to exhibit the richness of the cultural diversity. From the tangible form are the enrichment of the costumes of the Elegun Sango, Adosu Sango and other devotees. The symbol of authority of Sango is artistically carved with a light wood, the hair of the Adosu and Eleguns are carefully and elegantly plaited to the admiration of people. Various crafts such as calabash carving, traditional cloth weaving, local cosmetics (osun ) are finely produced to meet the taste of the spectators. The drummers exhibit their drumming skills while the dancers exhibit their dancing dexterity. At the event, people with different repertoires display their talents such as singing and chanting. The festival permits different people of various professions and talents to exhibit what they possess which are usually an improvement on the previous ones.

### **3. Safeguarding measures**

*For Criterion R.3, States shall demonstrate that 'safeguarding measures are elaborated that may protect and promote the element'.*

#### **3.a. Past and current efforts to safeguard the element**

*(i) How is the viability of the element being ensured by the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned? What past and current initiatives have they taken in this regard?*

*Not fewer than 150 or more than 250 words*

The Alaafin, his Council of Chiefs and the Sango community have been safeguarding the element as an ancestral worship since time immemorial due to its importance to the socio-cultural, political and economic wellness of the Oyo Community. The festival is mandatory as it heralds in the Yoruba traditional new year every August. In 2011, the festival was upgraded to

World Sango Festival by the Alaafin and people of Oyo Community. Presently, the Alaafin has registered a corporate umbrella body - the Traditional Religion Worshipers Association for Oyo Community known as "Asa Orisa" for safeguarding of the Sango Festival and other intangible cultural heritage within the Community. The association of Sango Devotees of Oyo Empire is an affiliate of the Asa Orisa which transmits the knowledge pertaining to Sango. Furthermore, to sustain the Sango annual celebration, Iya Naso is assigned with a portfolio for the welfare of Sango worship in the palace and its festival. A palace attendant, Ona Efa, is assigned to assist her in the discharge of this duty. Baba Mogba, is the Chief custodian of Sango deity who transmits the knowledge of the cult to his next generation as a heritage. The Eleguns train the youth and children to perform initiation rites and divine with sixteen cowries. The mother of the kids, "Iya Ipeere", teaches Sango songs to the children. The devotees worship Sango at the temple of Sango in Koso on Saturdays and visit the palace every five days to pray for the reigning king and the Community.

*Tick one or more boxes to identify the safeguarding measures that have been and are currently being taken by the **communities, groups or individuals** concerned:*

- transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education
- identification, documentation, research
- preservation, protection
- promotion, enhancement
- revitalization

(ii) *What past and current efforts have the States Parties concerned made to safeguard the element? Specify any external or internal constraints in this regard?*

*Not fewer than 150 or more than 250 words*

The Federal Government of Nigeria has been very supportive of the Sango Oyo Festival and made concerted plans for its safeguarding. Since the Oyo community recognized Sango Festival as their intangible cultural heritage, the Federal government of Nigeria through the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture with the funding support from the UNESCO – Japanese Funds – In - Trust selected the Community for a pilot project aimed at strengthening the safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in Nigeria from 2015 to 2017 and built the local capacity of Oyo Community on inventory making. It engaged the community to draw up her community based inventory in 2016. The Ministry, then included the element on the Inventory of Nigerian Cultural Resources in 2017 and provides financial, technical and administrative support to it through the numerous agencies of government responsible for cultural preservation, presentation and promotion, such as the National Council for Arts and Culture, the National Institute for Cultural Orientation, etc. The Federal government also encourages its safeguarding through provision of national platforms for presentation and promotion of Culture such as the Abuja International Carnival and the National Festival of Arts and Culture done annually to celebrate Nigeria's culture. The Oyo State Government has also been providing financial support to the festival in addition to the four local government areas where the event takes place. They also assist with publicity and awareness raising initiatives for the Festival. The funding enhancement due to inclusion on the national inventory will address the funding constraints of the past.

*Tick one or more boxes to identify the safeguarding measures that have been and are currently being taken by the **State(s) Party(ies)** with regard to the element:*

- transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education
- identification, documentation, research
- preservation, protection
- promotion, enhancement



revitalization

### 3.b. Safeguarding measures proposed

*This section should identify and describe safeguarding measures that will be implemented, especially those intended to protect and promote the element. The safeguarding measures should be described in terms of concrete engagements of the States Parties and communities and not only in terms of possibilities and potentialities.*

- (i) *What measures are proposed to help ensure that the viability of the element is not jeopardized in the future, especially as an unintended result of inscription and the resulting visibility and public attention?*

*Not fewer than 500 or more than 750 words*

The element's viability cannot be jeopardized in any way, real or imagined, in the wake of its inscription due to the fact that the whole essence of the traditional Festival is safeguarded by the bearer and practitioners themselves. To demonstrate the sustained latent interest in this traditional phenomenon, the Alaafin (king) of Oyo, as the bearer and custodian of Oyo cultural heritage, is supporting the capacity building for Sango Devotees to sustain the essence of the festival as an ancestral worship for the good of the Community. It is traditionally mandated for the Alaafin of Oyo to celebrate Sango Oyo Festival annually with pomp and pageantry because doing so means that he is celebrating his ancestor, predecessor and father. It also herald in the Yoruba traditional new year. There are safety nets that cannot be disregarded, such as the need for Sango to share and eat the combination of roasted new yam and palm oil with the sango devotees on the eve of the new year. It means it can only be done during the period of new yam harvest. This customarily occurs in August. Aside this, other deities like Ogun, Oya, Iyemoja, Aje Oloja, Elejo, etc., are part of the ten day long celebrations meant to seek the face of the divinity for the greater good and total wellness of the community. All Sango worshippers in various towns and villages meet now and then to protect the interest of their faith. They train their children both males and females on the arts as well as all aspects of Sango worship. The youth and children observe their elder's doings and practice same. The worship of Sango on every fourth day (Jakuta day) at the palace of Alaafin is mandatory for the Eleguns, the Adosu, the women, the youth and children (Sango devotees). This is also done at various shrines throughout Yoruba land on Saturdays. This is to equip and prepare all devotees ahead of the annual Sango Oyo Festival in August. The bond of Sango with other deities is displayed during the festival and if one stage of the rituals is missed, it will not be a successful event. Ogun, the divinity of Iron, must eat the new yam before Sango because he cleared the way for all the other deities. Osun must eat immediately after Sango because a myth says that Sango was Osun's husband. Yemoja who took care of Sango after the demise of Sango's mother in his childhood is also placated in appreciation for raising Sango in his childhood. Oya, the favourite wife of Sango must also be venerated and offered sacrifice because it was only death that separated her from Sango. The bata drummers, who are the worshippers of Ayan Agalu, are not left behind. The Egbe group offer sacrifices and celebrates with Sango. The King also has a common understanding with the Asa Orisa Cultural Association, a formal registered association of all traditional faithfuls and devotees of those deities in Oyo community to safeguard the Sango Oyo festival. This collective decision cannot be set aside by anyone and this is a known fact since Sango has the capacity to discipline erring members. The issue of the element being overtly commercialized or abused through enactment of the festival frequently in the wake of its inscription on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity cannot suffice as threat for now and the future. It is even against the age long traditions that has guided the practice in Oyo and the Yoruba land in general to host the festival out of season. Similarly, the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture regulates the festivals and cultural events calendar for Nigeria and as such does not entertain any departure from the benchmark for Sango Festival enactment. Ebbing elements would be delisted from the national cultural calendar since the planned/statutory timing of these events are also predicated on the fiscal and logistic planning of government on an annual basis. The inscription would therefore not lead to over-exposure or frequent enactment of Sango Oyo Festival since there are both informal and formal safety valves effectively put in place to control the frequency of the festival's enactment.

(ii) How will the States Parties concerned support the implementation of the proposed safeguarding measures?

Not fewer than 150 or more than 250 words

Nigeria has culture on its legislative concurrent list which gives fillip to the Federal, States and Local governments to support cultural preservation, presentation, promotion and financing. We have cultural agencies such as the National Institute for Cultural Orientation that organizes Conferences to promote intercultural and inter-religious dialogue for building of mutual respect. The Ministry of Information and Culture give policy and administrative support to the processes leading to the successful hosting of Sango Oyo Festival in a sustainable manner. More than this, budgetary provisions are made for the regular celebration of Sango festival, researches and trainings on the element to ensure its safeguarding. The State also ensures the safety of lives and properties during the festival. Sango Oyo festival attracts quality publicity and awareness raising activities on government patronage. The States encourage the teaching and academic research on indigenous religions and festivals in the school curricula at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. The Local governments support the celebration of the festival through documentation of the traditions such as chanting, history, singing, drumming, dancing and other rites by sponsorship of activities and competitions for the youths on the elements. Children and youths who distinguish themselves in this domain of oral or performing arts of the element are rewarded with scholarship. National and multi-national corporate organisations in the state that use any of the elements of Sango oral or tangible elements to promote its entity are encouraged to support the continuity of the celebration of the festival.

(iii) How have communities, groups or individuals been involved in planning the proposed safeguarding measures, including in terms of gender roles, and how will they be involved in their implementation?

Not fewer than 150 or more than 250 words

The Alaafin, as the bearer of the tradition, fully supports the safeguarding of the Sango Oyo Festival. He ensures strict observance of the Yoruba traditional calender among the traditional worshippers. Therefore, Sango worshippers and the devotees of other religious belief regularly come to the palace, offer libation and pray to the divinities every four days for the good of the Alaafin and the entire Community. This, provides a practical training and learning experience for the leaders and followers of Sango. The devotees always worship Sango at the Holy Temple at Koso every Saturdays thus giving the youths or "Ipeere" the direct access to learning the liturgical and ritual rites required for Sango Festival. The women teaches the children to sing and praise Sango while the men teaches the younger devotees on the art of divination using the sixteen cowries known as "idaasa". Baba Mogba teaches the esoteric rites of Sango to the initiates and the Eleguns and Adosus teaches the ipeere the choreographed movement of bata drumming which is the favourite rhythm of Sango. By and large the Oyo Sango Community are fully committed to the informal and formal training for the safeguarding of Sango Festival. The practitioners that have undergone inventory making training now teach the act of documenting the element to the other initiates for its safeguarding.

### 3.c. Competent body(ies) involved in safeguarding

Provide the name, address and other contact information of the competent body(ies) and, if applicable, the name and title of the contact person(s), with responsibility for the local management and safeguarding of the element.

Name of the body: The Palace Institution of the Alaafin of Oyo

Name and title of the contact person: Dr. Paola Gomes / Head of Cultural Department

Address: Alaafin' s Palace, Oyo Town, Oyo State, Nigeria

Telephone number: +2348167537580 / +2348058635290

Email address: alaafinculturaloffice@gmail.com

Other relevant information:

#### 4. Community participation and consent in the nomination process

*For Criterion R.4, States shall demonstrate that ‘the element has been nominated following the widest possible participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent’.*

##### 4.a. Participation of communities, groups and individuals concerned in the nomination process

*Describe how the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned have actively participated in all stages of the preparation of the nomination, including in terms of the role of gender.*

*States Parties are encouraged to prepare nominations with the participation of a wide variety of other parties concerned, including, where appropriate, local and regional governments, communities, NGOs, research institutes, centres of expertise and others. States Parties are reminded that the communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals whose intangible cultural heritage is concerned are essential participants throughout the conception and preparation of nominations, proposals and requests, as well as the planning and implementation of safeguarding measures, and are invited to devise creative measures to ensure that their widest possible participation is built in at every stage, as required by Article 15 of the Convention.*

*Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words*

His Royal Majesty, Oba (Dr.) Lamidi Olayiwola Adeyemi, III, J.P., CFR, LLB, the Alaafin of Oyo who is the Chief custodian of Yoruba culture in general and a direct descendant of Sango was the first to give his total support and approval to the nomination process when he met with the team from the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture and the National Institute for Cultural Orientation. His Imperial Majesty thereafter summoned a meeting of all the Sango devotees/groups concerned such as the Babamogba, Elegun Sango, Adosu Sango, Iyanaso, Iya Ile koto, the bata drummers and Paula Gomes. He briefed them on the rationale for the nomination of Sango Oyo festival, requested for and got their maximum cooperation which led to the success of the nomination exercise. The King granted audience to the government team, provided the historical background to the festival and took them to sacred places in the palace for them to have access to information needed for the nomination. He appealed to the practitioners to cooperate with the team. The practitioners of the element from all the groups within the Community, alongside key leaders, like Baba Mogba, Iyanaso, Otun Efa, Elegun Sango Koso, Adosu Sango, Iya Ile Koto, Paula Gomes, etc., actively participated in the nomination process. The team visited the sacred places connected with the festival and explanations were freely offered on the various components of the festival. All the title holders of the Sango divinity painstakingly provided necessary and adequate information at various stages of event, covering the apprenticeship to mastery level. The women sang the praise of Sango, the youth and children sat down with the elders to understudy the divination component and danced to the Bata rhythm. The local governments within Oyo community; Atiba, Afijio, Oyo west and Oyo Central supported the celebration of the festival financially and saw to the documentation of all stages of the festival. The Oyo community and its neighbouring towns such as Akinmoorin, Aawe, Ilorra, Fiditi, Iware, Jobele and Fasola graced the festival with exhibition of traditional crafts exclusive to the area, which included; Soap making, drum making, cloth weaving, calabash carving and other side attractions like dances and songs. At the state level, the host government of Oyo state involved all other Yoruba speaking states in the celebration of Sango Oyo festival. The states are; Oyo, Osun, Ogun, Ondo, Ekiti, Kwara, Kogi, Edo and Lagos States. A day was earmarked for each of the States to showcase their culture, states' cultural groups performed and each state sponsored its own day of the festival. Other groups that featured at the festival, included; Osun, Ogun, Oya, Yemoja, Obaluaye, Masquerade and Oya devotees. The Non - Governmental Organisations that featured during the nomination process included the Paula Gomes Cultural Foundation, The RAA Heritage Resources and the Centre for Black Culture and International Understanding (CBCIU), Osogbo. All these stakeholders came together for the nomination to be accomplished.

#### **4.b. Free, prior and informed consent to the nomination**

*The free, prior and informed consent to the nomination of the element of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned may be demonstrated through written or recorded concurrence, or through other means, according to the legal regimens of the State Party and the infinite variety of communities and groups concerned. The Committee will welcome a broad range of demonstrations or attestations of community consent in preference to standard or uniform declarations. Evidence of free, prior and informed consent shall be provided in one of the working languages of the Committee (English or French), as well as in the language of the community concerned if its members use languages other than English or French.*

*Attach to the nomination form information showing such consent and indicate below what documents you are providing, how they were obtained and what form they take. Indicate also the gender of the people providing their consent.*

*Not fewer than 150 or more than 250 words*

Letters of free, prior and informed consent in Yoruba and English languages were written by the Alaafin of Oyo, the Chief custodian of Orisas in Oyo Community and Sango incarnate to the Honourable Minister of Information and Culture as well as to the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Secretariat in Paris, France. Similarly, letters of Free, Prior and Informed Consent were written in Yoruba and English languages, signed and thumb-printed by the Sango Devotees of Oyo Empire, the Council of Orisa Chiefs of Alaafin Oyo and Asa Orisa Cultural Association of Alaafin Oyo. This is a proof that no particular traditional festival is solely celebrated by its devotees alone, other faithfuls of the aboriginal religions give support towards the success of all the festivals of the Orisa. The letters and information received were voluntarily provided by His Royal Majesty, the Alaafin of Oyo, the Chief Priest of Sango (Baba Mogba), Chiefs (males and females) of Sango worshippers, members of the Festival Planning Committee, the women wing, men wing, youths and the children. The leader of the Sango Devotees from Oyo, Osun, Ogun, Ondo, Ekiti, Lagos, Edo, Kogi and Kwara States of Nigeria also gave a letter of free, prior and informed consent to support the nomination of Sango Oyo Festival and joined in the performance at the Festival as always to further underscore their agreement to the nomination.

#### **4.c. Respect for customary practices governing access to the element**

*Access to certain specific aspects of intangible cultural heritage or to information about it is sometimes restricted by customary practices enacted and conducted by the communities in order, for example, to maintain the secrecy of specific knowledge. If such practices exist, demonstrate that the inscription of the element and implementation of the safeguarding measures would fully respect such customary practices governing access to specific aspects of such heritage (cf. Article 13 of the Convention). Describe any specific measures that might need to be taken to ensure such respect.*

*If no such practices exist, please provide a clear statement that there are no customary practices governing access to the element in at least 50 words.*

*Not fewer than 50 or more than 250 words*

Virtually all aspects of the element are open except for two key places in Sango Festival celebration where access to certain aspects of this intangible cultural heritage or information about it are restricted. The first place is the sacred shrine of Sango at Koso in Oyo and the next one is the Shrine of Esu at Akesan Market in Oyo. The Sango Main Shrine at Koso is the place to finish the initiation rites for the king-elect before his final emergence with the Sango beaded crown and recognition by his people as their king. After the Sango rites are performed on the king by Baba Mogba, the Chief Priest, custodian of the secret of the divinity's power and the Sango beaded crown, the king embodies the spirit and power of Sango. Only the Alaafin (King) and Baba Mogba, (the Chief Priest of Sango at Koso) know the secrets of the initiation. Throughout the reign of an Alaafin, he is not allowed to return or enter the Koso Main Shrine again. Access to the main shrine at Koso is also forbidden to non – initiates. The second place where public access is restricted and recording is not allowed is at the Shrine of Esu at the centre of Akesan Market in Oyo during the performance of rites by the King with Koso drummer. The devotees adhered to and practice these rules laid down by Sango till today and educate/inform the public on the need to respect this customary practices governing access to the element.

#### 4.d. Community organization(s) or representative(s) concerned

Provide detailed contact information for each community organization or representative, or other non-governmental organization, concerned with the element such as associations, organizations, clubs, guilds, steering committees, etc.:

- a. Name of the entity;
- b. Name and title of the contact person;
- c. Address;
- d. Telephone number;
- e. Email address;
- f. Other relevant information.

1.

A. CULTURAL DEPARTMENT OF THE ALAAFIN

B. Dr. PAULA GOMES

C. Palace of the Alaafin, Oyo, Oyo State, Nigeria

D. (+234) 816 753 7580

E. alaafinculturaloffice@gmail.com

2.

A. IJO SANGO ALABOLA (SANGO OYO COMMUNITY)

B. CHIEF SANGODELE IBUOWO, The Elegun Sango of Oyo Empire

C. Owotapo Compound, Asipa, Oyo.

D. (+234) 803 582 8796

3.

A. Asa Orisa Cultural Association

B. Chief Oke Adejare Adisa

C. P.O.BOX 15, Palace of the Alaafin

D. +234 803 9101 918

E. asaorisa@gmail.com

#### 5. Inclusion of the element in an inventory

**For Criterion R.5, States shall demonstrate that the element is identified and included in an inventory of the intangible cultural heritage present in the territory(ies) of the submitting State(s) Party(ies) in conformity with Articles 11.b and 12 of the Convention.**

*The inclusion of the nominated element in an inventory should not in any way imply or require that the inventory(ies) should have been completed prior to the nomination. Rather, the submitting State(s) Party(ies) may be in the process of completing or updating one or more inventories, but have already duly included the nominated element in an inventory-in-progress.*

Provide the following information:

(i) Name of the inventory(ies) in which the element is included:

Inventory of Nigeria Cultural Resources and  
Inventory of Oyo Intangible Cultural Heritage

*(ii) Name of the office(s), agency(ies), organization(s) or body(ies) responsible for maintaining and updating that (those) inventory(ies), both in the original language and in translation when the original language is not English or French:*

The UNESCO Division within the International Cultural Relations Department of the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is saddled with the mandate to maintaining and updating the inventory of Nigeria Intangible Cultural Resources while the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Oyo is maintained by the Culture Department of the Alaafin of Oyo Administration.

*(iii) Reference number(s) and name(s) of the element in the relevant inventory(ies):*

The element is found on Excel Spread Sheet 3 at No: 23 Under the Social Practices, Rituals and Festive Events section of the Inventory of Nigeria Cultural Resources and the name is Sango Oyo Festival. The element is at number 1 on the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Oyo and also bears Sango Oyo Festival.

*(iv) Date of inclusion of the element in the inventory(ies) (this date should precede the submission of this nomination):*

It was included on the Inventory of the Inventory of Nigeria Cultural Resources on 15th of January, 2017 while it was included on the Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Oyo on 16 August, 2016.

*(v) Explain how the element was identified and defined, including how information was collected and processed 'with the participation of communities, groups and relevant non-governmental organizations' (Article 11.b) for the purpose of inventorying, including reference to the role of the gender of the participants. Additional information may be provided to demonstrate the participation of research institutes and centres of expertise (max. 200 words).*

Although the element has been recognized and identified by the Community as their intangible cultural heritage since time immemorial, definition of Sango Oyo Festival was done by the King and the Community between 2015 and 2016 after the capacity of 15 selected members of the Community were built by the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture with the active and funding support from the UNESCO Japanese Trust - in - Funds. At the completion of the Inventory Making Workshop, ten members of the community (five male and five female) were engaged to carry out the inventory of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Oyo. Technical and administrative guidance was provided by the officials from the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture; UNESCO gave the local team salary to implement the task; the Institute for Niger Delta Studies of the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria provided expertise support. Paula Gomes Cultural Foundation (a cultural NGO) coordinated the research to document the intangible cultural heritage of Oyo Community together with some Sango Devotees on a regular basis for over six months and Sango Oyo Festival was included on their final inventory submission to the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture.

*(vi) Indicate how often the inventory(ies) is(are) updated (periodicity) (max. 100 words).*

The Inventory of Nigeria Cultural Resources is updated and revised periodically after any cultural engagements among the Communities who own these elements and the Ministry of Information and Culture and her agencies. The Ministry is responsible for monitoring and evaluation of heritage resources in Nigeria. As such, the data gathered by the Culture Officers and NGOs operating within those communities based on interaction with the bearers and practitioners of the various element are analyzed and used for updating the Inventory regularly. Those interfaces also reveal new elements that are thereafter included on the national inventory!

*(vii) Explain how the inventory(ies) is(are) regularly updated. The updating process is understood not only as adding new elements but also as revising existing information on the evolving nature of the elements already included therein*

(Article 12.1 of the Convention) (max. 200 words).

The officials from the UNESCO Division of the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture and Agencies under her supervision are invited to attend activities planned for the intangible cultural heritage by the Communities on a regular basis as observers. Their reports on these events are used to update the national Inventory taking into account the innovations and efforts of the communities aimed at revitalizing those intangible cultural heritage elements. In other words, the participation of the officials avail them the opportunity to take stock of the elements, determine the changes and these form the basis for revision of the existing information on the evolution of the elements. The same applies to the Inventory of Oyo Intangible Cultural Heritage. The Culture Officials, within the palace Administration that had been trained by UNESCO and the Ministry, monitor and report on the elements. The new data gathered from the interfaces with those elements are used in revising and updating the Inventory of Oyo Intangible Cultural Heritage on the Oyo Alaafin's website.

(viii) Documentary evidence shall be provided in an annex demonstrating that the nominated element is included in one or more inventories of the intangible cultural heritage present in the territory(ies) of the submitting State(s) Party(ies), as defined in Articles 11.b and 12 of the Convention. Such evidence shall at least include the name of the element, its description, the name(s) of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned, their geographic location and the range of the element.

- a. If the inventory is available online, provide hyperlinks (URLs) to pages dedicated to the nominated element (max. four hyperlinks in total, to be indicated in the box below). Attach to the nomination print-outs (no more than ten standard A4 sheets) of relevant sections of the content of these links. **The information should be provided in English or French, as well as in the original language if different.**
- b. If the inventory is not available online, attach exact copies of texts (no more than ten standard A4 sheets) concerning the element included in the inventory. **These texts should be provided in English or French as well as in the original language if different.**

Indicate the materials provided and – if applicable – the relevant hyperlinks:

A hard copy of the Inventory of Nigeria Cultural Resources is attached to this application while the link to Sango Oyo Festival on the Inventory of Oyo Intangible Cultural Heritage is at <http://oyoalaafin.com/sango-festival-oyo/>

## 6. Documentation

### 6.a. Appended documentation (mandatory)

The documentation listed below is mandatory and will be used in the process of evaluating and examining the nomination. The photographs and the video will also be helpful for activities geared at ensuring the visibility of the element if it is inscribed. Tick the following boxes to confirm that the related items are included with the nomination and that they follow the instructions. Additional materials other than those specified below cannot be accepted and will not be returned.

- documentary evidence of the consent of communities, along with a translation into English or French if the language of the community concerned is other than English or French;
- documentary evidence demonstrating that the nominated element is included in an inventory of the intangible cultural heritage present in the territory(ies) of the submitting State(s) Party(ies), as defined in Articles 11 and 12 of the Convention; such evidence shall include a relevant extract of the inventory(ies) in English or in French, as well as in the original language, if different;
- ten recent photographs in high definition;
- grant(s) of rights corresponding to the photos (Form ICH-07-photo);
- edited video (from five to ten minutes), subtitled in one of the languages of the Committee (English or French) if the language utilized is other than English or French;
- grant(s) of rights corresponding to the video recording (Form ICH-07-video).

## 6.b. Principal published references (optional)

*Submitting States may wish to list, using a standard bibliographic format, the principal published references providing supplementary information on the element, such as books, articles, audiovisual materials or websites. Such published works should not be sent along with the nomination.*

*Not to exceed one standard page.*

Dictionary of Modern Yoruba ; R.C. Abraham, M.A., D. Lit. University of London Press Ltd. pages 221-222. 1970.

History of the Yorubas by Samuel Johnson

Asa Ati Orisa Ile Yoruba

Asa ati Ise Yoruba,

Ijinle Ohun Enu Ifa Apa Kinni by Wande Abimbola

Ijinle Ohun Enu Ifa Apa keji by Wande Abimbola

Awon Oju Odu Mereerindinlogun By Wande Abimbola

Iwe Mimo Ifa by

Ifa: A Complete Divination by Ayo Salami. Published by NIDD Limited ( Publishers), Lagos, Nigeria.

Yoruba Theology and Tradition; The Man and The Society by Ayo Salami

Nigeria Magazines

Films by Duro Ladipo and others

Oba Koso by Duro Ladipo

An Exposition of Ifa Literary Corpus by Wand Abimbola

## 7. Signature(s) on behalf of the State(s) Party(ies)

*The nomination should be signed by the official empowered to do so on behalf of the State Party, together with his or her name, title and the date of submission.*

*In the case of multinational nominations, the document should contain the name, title and signature of an official of each State Party submitting the nomination.*

Name: Ms. Ruby Onengia David

Title: Deputy Director (Federal Ministry of Information and Culture)

Date: 29 February, 2020

Signature: < Signed >

*Name(s), title(s) and signature(s) of other official(s) (For multinational nominations only)*