



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Intangible  
Cultural  
Heritage

# Register of Good Safeguarding Practices

ICH-03 – Form

## PROGRAMMES, PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES BEST REFLECTING THE PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CONVENTION

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

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

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

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

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

Kenya

### B. Contact person for correspondence

#### B.1. Designated contact person

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

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr  
Family name: Maundu  
Given name: Patrick  
Institution/position: National Museums of Kenya / Ethnobotanist  
Address: P.O. Box 40658 00100  
Telephone number: +254 721983273  
Email address: patrickmaundu@gmail.com  
Other relevant information:

#### B.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.

### C. Title

Indicate the official title of the programme, project or activity, in English or French, that will appear in published material.

Not more than 200 characters

The success story of promoting traditional foods and safeguarding traditional foodways in Kenya

### D. Geographic scope

Tick one box to identify whether the geographic scope of the programme, project or activity is essentially national, subregional, regional or international (the last category includes projects carried out in geographically non-continuous areas).

national (within a single country)

subregional (more than one country)

regional (more than one country)

international (including geographically non-continuous areas)

### E. Geographical location

Indicate the locations in which the programme, project or activity was or is being carried out.

Not more than 150 words

This activity has been implemented in many parts of Kenya but has focused more on Kakamega County among the Isukha people, Baringo County among the Pokot People, Nairobi's urban and peri-urban areas, Kisii and Kitui counties and Kenya's coast among the Mijikenda community groups. Documentation work has begun in Narok County among the Maasai of Loita.

### F. Status

Tick one box to identify whether the programme, project or activity is completed or in progress at the time the proposal is submitted.

completed

in progress

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

Identify clearly one or several communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned with the proposed programme, project or activity.

Not more than 150 words

## Key communities

1. Isukha community (Kakamega County)
2. East Pokot community (Baringo County)
3. Mijikenda Community (Kilifi and Kwale counties)
4. Central Kitui and Nzambani communities (Kitui County)
5. Wangige community of Kiambu County in peri-urban Nairobi
6. Loita community (Iloitai) (Narok County)
7. Mt Kulal Biosphere Reserve Community (Marsabit County)

## Key community-based organisations (CBOs):

(1). Kyanika Adult Women Group in Kitui County; (2). Kilifi Utamaduni Conservation Group (KUCG) in Kilifi County; (3) Kaya (sacred forest groves) elders of nine (9) Kayas of the Mijikenda; (4) Mt Kulal Wazee wa Mazingira groups.

## Some key individuals:

Timothy Johns, Patrick Maundu, Ruth Adeka, Maryam Imbuni, Lucy Kariuki, Yasuyuki Morimoto, Eunice Mutemi, Judith Kimiywe, Mary Abukutsa-Onyango, Staline Kibet, Esther Bosibori, Augustus Odubo, Peninah Mwangangi, Joseph Karisa Fondo, Brian Silas Kapeta, Thomas Wainaina, Ziporah Ayuma, Abdalla Mnyenze, Jemimah Kimonyi, Bosco Kahindi, Joseph Lengoiyap, Charles Saitabau.

## H. Domain(s)

Tick one or more boxes to identify the domain(s) of intangible cultural heritage covered by the programme, project or activity, which might include one or more of the domains identified in Article 2.2 of the Convention. If you tick 'others', 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) ( )

## 1. Description

**Criterion P.1** requires that 'the programme, project or activity involves safeguarding, as defined in Article 2.3 of the Convention'. Article 2.3 states that "Safeguarding" means measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage'.

For sections 1.a and 1.b together, provide succinct descriptions of the programme, project or activity and its main components, describing what actually happened or is underway.

### 1.a. Background, rationale and objectives

Describe the context in which the programme, project or activity was created – what safeguarding needs were identified and by whom, and how the priorities were identified and established. Identify the primary objectives of the programme, project or activity.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words

In Kenya, traditional foodways were under threat due to historical factors and the pressure of modern lifestyles. Local foods were looked down upon and were associated with poverty, the old

and also backwardness. The large diversity of local food and all the culture and knowledge that are associated with it was at risk of getting lost. Highly commercialized, often less nutritious fast (junk) foods were rapidly spreading and taking over the interest of the young. A decline in the food diversity and knowledge of use meant the loss of all associated benefits - nutritional and food security, health, ecological etc. Younger people were progressively inheriting less food diversity and knowledge from their elders and therefore many of them were no longer familiar with the traditional foodways of their communities. Loss of local food would lead to loss of knowledge about how to grow or acquire the food, preparation and the benefits associated with the food e.g. some being good for pregnant and lactating mothers. This would have ramifications including food and nutrition insecurity, rise in non-communicable diseases, loss of intangible cultural heritage, loss of genetic diversity and ecological degradation in farmland.

In 2007 Kenya ratified the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, and is committed to the identification and safeguarding of the living heritage practices and expressions present in her territory.

The activity reported here focuses on two main initiatives undertaken to safeguard intangible cultural heritage related to traditional foods in Kenya - (1) The African leafy vegetables and traditional foods diversification activities (1996 - 2011); (2) Safeguarding the Traditional Foodways of Two Communities in Kenya (2009-2012). In both cases, priorities were set by scientists along with representatives of the specific communities and community-based groups. Both initiatives have since led to many other related activities carried out independently by local institutions.

The first initiative was carried out by a multidisciplinary group drawn from a number of institutions and involved taking an inventory of traditional foods with specific focus on traditional vegetables. About 850 indigenous plants with local names and uses were recorded as edible, among them, 210 vegetables species. This was followed by detailed documentation of use and related indigenous knowledge (including recipes) and practice (such as ceremonies, who, when) among selected communities in Kenya. Finally came rigorous promotion of the foods with more focus on Nairobi which was viewed as a trend setter in food habits.

In the second case, UNESCO in partnership with Department of Culture, Bioversity International and National Museums of Kenya and in consultation with community leaders of the Isukha and Pokot, initiated a pilot project in 2009, Safeguarding Traditional Foodways of two Communities in Kenya. The project identified and inventorized traditional foodways in partnership with primary school children and also raised awareness in the communities and Kenya about the threat of its traditional foodways. Using lessons from this work, several similar initiatives have been carried out among other communities in Kenya in Ethiopia and Burkina Faso.

### **1.b. Safeguarding measures involved**

*Describe the specific safeguarding measures that the programme, project or activity includes and why they were adopted. Identify what innovative methods or modalities were involved, if any.*

*Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words*

The first initiative - the African leafy vegetable project and traditional foods initiative took a number of measures to counter loss of local foods and knowledge.

i. Developing an inventory of local Kenyan foods:

This entailed a country-wide survey to inventorize domesticated and wild foods. The inventory has local and scientific names and geographical and ecological information. It is maintained in database form at KENRIK in the National Museums of Kenya.

ii. Documenting indigenous knowledge:

This activity targeted local knowledge, beliefs, taboos and practices including obtaining food, storage, processing (recipes), responsibilities (gender issues), seasonal changes etc. in selected communities. Scientists guided the process. Kyanika Adult Women Group in Kitui County focused on the bottle gourd (calabash) and local foods. Kilifi Utamaduni Conservation Group at the coast focused on indigenous vegetables. In both cases, there would be a brief training on the use of documentation protocols and equipment such as tape recorder and camera. In Kitui, pairs of group members (mainly married women) went out to interview knowledgeable people especially their parents, then returned to their groups to share the

experience and to compile the information. Women going to interview their parents proved quite innovative.

iii. Promotion of local foods and awareness:

These activities were carried out in Nairobi. Nairobi was strategically chosen because firstly it has people from various ethnic communities and secondly, what goes on in Nairobi finally trickles down to the rural areas. Promotion was aimed at changing the negative image of traditional foods. Promotion took the form of cooking demonstrations, street and media campaigns, posters and leaflets providing recipes and nutritional benefits of the food.

2. In the second initiative (Foodways of the Isukha and Pokot people), the Department of Culture, National Museums of Kenya, Kenya Society of Ethnoecology and Bioversity International in collaboration with UNESCO and local community leaders worked with the Isukha, an agricultural group in Western Kenya as well as the Pokot – a predominantly pastoralist group in the Rift Valley region. Two primary schools were selected in each community to participate in documentation work – Muraka and Shihuli in Isukha and Chemolingot and Churo in Pokot. Two teachers (often patrons of school clubs) in each school and the local coordinators were trained in information gathering (interviewing and photography). The teachers in turn trained the club members (pupils 12-14 years). The pupils went out to interview their parents and relatives and to take photos of foods, food preparation and related activities. In Isukha, the pupils documented stories about their farming activities while in pastoralist Pokot, pupils documented their livestock activities and wild food. Each community identified a local project coordinator to compile collected information.

Two foodway inventories, a photobook and a methodology book were published. The methodology book can be used as a guide to document foodways in other communities.

Each community organized a major food event in 2012 to show off their foodways. Raw and cooked food, utensils and agricultural tools were displayed.

### 1.c. Competent body(ies) involved

*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), responsible for the local management of the programme, project or activity.*

Name of the body: Ministry of Sports, Culture and Heritage  
Name and title of the contact person: Augustus Odubo, Researcher  
Address: P.O. Box 49849, 00100 Nairobi, Kenya  
Telephone number: +254 720785532  
Email address: oduboaugustus@yahoo.com

Name of the body: Bioversity International  
Name and title of the contact person: Dr. Y. Morimoto, Researcher  
Address: c/o ICIPE, P.O. Box 823-00621 Duduville Campus,  
Nairobi- Kenya  
Telephone number: [\(+254\) 709 134 000](tel:+254709134000)  
Email address: [y.morimoto@cgiar.org](mailto:y.morimoto@cgiar.org); [bioversity-kenya@cgiar.org](mailto:bioversity-kenya@cgiar.org)

Name of the body: Kenya Society of Ethnoecology  
Name and title of the contact person: Mr. Patel Muiruri  
Address: c/o KENRIK, P.O. Box 40658, 00100, Nairobi, Kenya  
Telephone number: +254714394437  
Email address: patelmuiruri@gmail.com

Other relevant information None

## 2. Coordination at the regional, subregional and/or international levels

*Criterion P.2 requires that 'the programme, project or activity promotes the coordination of efforts for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage on regional, subregional and/or international levels'. Explain, if applicable, how the programme, project or activity has promoted such coordination. If the programme was or is conducted exclusively at the national level and has not involved such coordination, state so clearly.*

*Not more than 500 words*

The African leafy vegetable project and traditional foods involved government and non-governmental institutions, universities, community based organisations as well as international bodies. Although the programme was conducted in specific groups in Kenya, the experience was taken up by other institutions and scaled up in Kenya and also regionally and internationally. The experience has been documented and shared in many websites (e.g. Bioversity International) as an example of a research, documentation and development project bringing together indigenous knowledge (ICH), conservation of species, preservation of culture and providing income for women while enhancing nutrition and health status of local people.

The foodways methodology has been used in foodways documentation in Ethiopia (Benishangul-Gumuz Region) and Burkina Faso (Dissin department of Ioba Province in south-eastern Burkina Faso) and two in other projects in Kenya. The methods have also been shared in institutional websites of Bioversity International, The CGIAR and UNESCO. The National Museums has continued to document the foodways of indigenous communities of Kenya as part of its workplan.

### 3. Reflection of the principles and objectives of the Convention

*Criterion P.3 requires that 'the programme, project or activity reflects the principles and objectives of the Convention'. Identify the specific principles and objectives of the Convention that are addressed by the programme, project or activity and explain how it reflects those principles and objectives in its conception, design and implementation.*

*Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words*

Traditional foods were looked down upon and viewed as foods for poor rural communities. Consuming some of them would attract stigma. The actions taken in this initiative were geared towards ensuring appreciation especially by outsiders and the young as well as respect for the food and those consuming such food. Understanding the cultural and nutritional value associated with the food (health benefits) was a basis for promoting them. Local people's knowledge and food varieties have often been taken by outsiders without due respect and acknowledgement. Raising the profile of the knowledge and local food resources has empowered the local people to appreciate and safeguard what belongs to them.

Traditional foods are credited with high species diversity, high nutritional value and numerous ecological benefits, all encapsulated in indigenous knowledge. Maintaining a high species diversity and an intricate farming system supported by local knowledge made sense to the locals but not to many outsiders. For example, the agricultural practice of growing several food crops together or mixed-cropping (as opposed to mono-cropping) ensured the sustainability of the agricultural ecosystem. Mixing maize with creeping soil-covering types such as pumpkins and nitrogen fixing legumes (e.g. *Crotalaria*) ensured the soils retained moisture and fertility. This knowledge was however often undermined by agricultural extension workers because their training was on mainly on commercial production of some few crops and animals.

The traditional vegetables training and promotion in Kenya starting with the communities that provided the information as a way of recognising the community's contribution. Research methodologies for documenting and promoting foodways have been developed over time. These include participatory methods and guidelines for accessing indigenous knowledge while respecting customary practices and the principles of prior informed consent. While attempts have been made to establish community resource centres to deposit the information collected locally, this has generally been hampered by lack of resources. The Kenya Resource Centre for Indigenous Knowledge (KENRIK) at the National Museums of Kenya has however been acting as a depository for such knowledge. It also facilitates access to such knowledge for community groups and individuals. All resource persons and their communities are aware of their rights to this information and can access it when needed.

This project on documenting traditional foodways implemented in Isukha and Pokot endeavoured to promote inter-generational exchanges of knowledge to ensure continuity. Further the project tried to promote respect for the traditional foodways within the communities through documentation activities by school pupils and community food fairs.

The project raised awareness at the local, national and international levels firstly through food

fairs and symposia and secondly through publications that have been shared with institutions in print form and in specific websites. The books are not only aimed at sharing the content but also the experience of helping communities in safeguarding their intangible heritage.

#### 4. Effectiveness

*Criterion P.4 requires that 'the programme, project or activity has demonstrated effectiveness in contributing to the viability of the intangible cultural heritage concerned'. Describe how the programme, project or activity has demonstrated such effectiveness and how it has contributed concretely to the strengthened viability of the heritage.*

*Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words*

##### Documentation

Extensive foodways documentation and building of local capacity in documentation has been carried out in a number of Kenyan communities. Activities among the Mijikenda of coastal Kenya led to the publication of *Mboga za Watu wa Pwani* (Vegetables of the Coastal People). This book which is in Kiswahili has been shared with schools and the County governments. Kyanika Adult Women Group of Kitui County maintains a 700-page record of their food culture. They also maintain a small gourd museum. KENRIK maintains a traditional foods database of Kenyan with over 800 species of both cultivated and wild food plants and related local knowledge including over a thousand recipes.

The documentation of the foodways carried out between 2010 -2012 in western Kenya and the Rift Valley regions resulted in the publication of two books - the foodways of the Isukha and the Pokot. The books are available as hard copies and also in the internet e.g. ([http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Nairobi/Safeguarding\\_Intangible\\_Cultural\\_Heritage\\_Traditional\\_Fo.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Nairobi/Safeguarding_Intangible_Cultural_Heritage_Traditional_Fo.pdf)).

Foodways documentation forms part of KENRIK's workplan and has since been expanded to cover other communities of Kenya, latest ones being the Mijikenda, the Maasai and the Samburu.

##### Promotion of local foods and awareness:

The activity of promoting traditional foods in Kenya has been effective. There is evidence from impact assessments, outputs in terms of published material but above all, the change in attitude and the great interest which sparked a chain of other activities including a boom of traditional foods in markets and restaurants. Many people no longer view traditional foods as foods of the poor and the less progressive as before due to rigorous promotion and awareness campaigns that have been carried out in recent years. Traditional foods have rather come to epitomize cultural pride and good health. The number of restaurants selling traditional foods in Nairobi and the number of retailers selling traditional foods including women and supermarkets selling vegetables has steadily grown in recent years as demand for these vegetables and foods has been increasing.

##### Training and capacity building:

Research and training on traditional foods has grown as evidenced by the number of students asking for seeds to carry out experiments on local foods and also the fact that many universities are currently offering courses on traditional foods and particularly vegetables within biological, environmental and horticultural sciences. Traditional vegetables have now been integrated in many university teaching curricula, are part of research agenda of many research institutions and are being promoted by both county and national governments, being completely integrated into agricultural planning programmes of the government. Training of farmers and extension staff has also been carried out mainly through partnership with CBOs and the Ministry of Agriculture. Increasingly, extension staff have more respect for farmers' knowledge and farming practices and therefore giving the communities the right to continue using their food varieties and practicing their traditions. The book, 'A Practical Guide to Documenting Traditional Foodways' and is available in the internet ([http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Nairobi/Safeguarding\\_Intangible\\_Cultural\\_Heritage\\_a\\_practical\\_gu.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Nairobi/Safeguarding_Intangible_Cultural_Heritage_a_practical_gu.pdf)) and has been useful to people who want to be involved in foodways documentation.



## 5. Community participation and consent

*Criterion P.5 requires that 'the programme, project or activity is or has been implemented with the participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent'.*

### 5.a. Participation of the community, group or individuals

*Describe how the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned have participated in the programme, project or activity at all stages of its planning and implementation, including the role of gender.*

*Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words*

The work of Safeguarding traditional foodways has over the years been carried out in conjunction with community groups, and in many cases, these have been taking the lead.

The work of documenting traditional vegetables of coastal Kenya was championed by a community group known as Utamaduni Conservation Group. The group carried out the fieldwork and also did the illustrations for the book with the guidance of scientists. Their publication, *Mboga za Watu wa Pwani* is available on the internet (<http://www.biodiversityinternational.org/e-library/publications/detail/mboga-za-watu-wa-pwani/>).

The work of documenting the indigenous knowledge surrounding the use of the bottle gourd in Kitui was led by the Kyanika Adult Women's Group and their work is available in various sites including the following:

<http://www.new-ag.info/06-1/develop/dev04.html>

<http://artmatters.info/2008/09/preserving-culture-through-art/>

The women were trained on interviewing skills and the use of the camera and tape recorder. They then visited households within the county and also in other counties where they had contacts.

The activity '*Safeguarding traditional foodways of two communities in Kenya*' undertaken from 2010-2012 in Kakamega County among the Isukha and in Baringo County among the Pokot involved school pupils. The work of the pupils was published in 3 volumes which are now accessible on the internet and also at the respective schools and communities. See Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage: traditional foodways of the Isukha and Pokot communities on: (<http://www.biodiversityinternational.org/e-library/publications/detail/safeguarding-intangible-cultural-heritage-traditional-foodways-of-the-isukha-community-of-kenya/>).

The communities were fully involved in food fairs and street campaigns in the local towns to promote respect for the foods and to showcase their food diversity and value. The activity covered both agricultural and wild foods.

More recent work on documenting traditional foodways among the Loita Maasai of Narok County and Mijikenda of coastal Kenya have involved school pupils and their teachers. With the help of their teachers, the pupils learn how to take photos and how to conduct an interview. Foodways documentation work among the Dagara of Burkina Faso and Gumuz of Ethiopia was led by community members appointed by the community.

### 5.b. Free, prior and informed consent to this proposal and involvement in its preparation

*Submitting States Parties shall involve the community, group or, if applicable, individuals whose intangible cultural heritage is concerned in the preparation of the proposal. Describe below how they have participated actively in preparing the proposal at all stages, including in terms of the role of gender. States Parties are reminded that the communities 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.*

*The free, prior and informed consent to the submission of the proposal from 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 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*

The initiative, Conservation of the bottle gourd (Kitete) and documentation of related indigenous knowledge was implemented by Kyanika Adult Women Group (KAWG) in Kitui County. KAWG was involved from project development and took the lead in documentation. The project came to being when they voiced their concern to the National Museums of Kenya (NMK) and Bioversity International about the imminent loss of bottle gourd varieties and all the associated knowledge due to the introduction of plastic containers.

Documentation of African leafy vegetables and uses at Kenya's coast was done by Kilifi Utamaduni Conservation Group (KUCG) in collaboration with NMK and Bioversity International. KUCG had approached NMK with fears that younger people were not interested in the diverse traditional vegetables used by the Mijikenda and that the culture and knowledge associated with the vegetables were being eroded.

The project on documentation of foodways among the Isukha and Pokot was developed in consultation with local leaders. The community and schools took the lead in documentation of local foodways. In the Pastoralist Pokot, the community gave priority to documentation of livestock and wild gathered food while the agricultural Isukha gave priority to farm foods especially vegetables, chicken, termites and local grains. Most of the above activities were thus carried out by the communities themselves under the guidance of researchers. In cases where researchers were involved, a standard prior-informed consent form was used.

### 5.c. Community organization(s) or representative(s) concerned

Provide detailed contact information for each community organization or representative, or other non-governmental organization, that is 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
- f. Other relevant information

1. Kyanika Adult Women Group, Kyanika village, Kitui.

Contact: Ms Peninah Mwangangi, coordinator KAWG. Mobile:+254722251829. Alternative contact: Ms Jemimah Kimonyi, Chairlady Mobile:+254720404744. Address: P.O. Box 165 Kitui.

2. Kilifi Utamaduni Conservation Group.

Contact: Joseph Fondo Karisa. P.O. Box 596, 80108, Kilifi. Mobile +254726438081. Alternative contact: Bosco Kahindi. Mobile: +254722893179. Mobile: klmdesign2000@yahoo.co.uk

3. Pokot Foodways contact Mr. Brian Silas, head of documentation 0713364294. P.O. 76, Marigat. Email: silasbrian@yahoo.com.

4. Matumaini Women Group, P.O. Box 248 Khayega, Kakamega. Contact: Ziphora Ayuma, Coordinator and leader of foodways documentation: +2547232970364.

5. Hillary Mwatsuma, Kilifi County Kaya Elders Council. Mayowe Pri. School. 532 Kilifi, Kenya. Mobile +254726628166. Alternative contact 1: Abdalla Ali Mnyenze, Leader, Kwale County Kaya elders. Mobile 0722994745. Alternative contact 2: Shaaban Ndegwa, leader, Kaya Mtswakara. Mobile 0728175091.

### 6. Regional, subregional and/or international model

**Criterion P.6** requires that 'the programme, project or activity may serve as a subregional, regional or international model, as the case may be, for safeguarding activities'. Describe how the programme, project or activity may serve as such a model for safeguarding activities, identifying the particular components, methods or practices that would be relevant in other contexts.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words

The experience outlined here can serve as a regional or international model.

(1) The African leafy vegetables and traditional foods diversification activities serve as a perfect model for safeguarding endangered local knowledge and practices related to indigenous food resources. The source of endangerment included pressure from outsiders to adopt other forms of knowledge and foods and the acquired attitude among local people, especially the young, that local foods and the knowledge were not 'trendy'. Indigenous knowledge (IK) was therefore not being passed over from the elderly to the youth. The net effect was a decline in the diversity of local food resources and loss of IK. The consequences included food and nutrition insecurity, loss of biodiversity, decreased dietary diversity and increased incidences of non-communicable diseases. Most countries in Africa are experiencing or are likely to experience this trend and therefore the approaches used by the African leafy vegetable project could be used as a remedial measure. The key steps are (1) working with communities and community groups to identify and inventorize the diversity of foods and the knowledge associated with the foods (what? who? where? when? why?); (2) employing science facts to change attitude (e.g. nutrition and health and ecological benefits) by making the communities understand the value of their

food resources; (3) Demonstration through cooking and food fairs, training seminars, posters etc.; (4) Involving the youth; (5) Identifying opportunities to sustain sharing of knowledge and maintaining the food diversity. This could entail the commercialization of some of the foods to earn income for the community as was the case with African leafy vegetables in Nairobi. Value chains for the vegetables were developed as rigorous promotion went on; (6) Identifying a champion institution to act as 'sponsor' i.e. to monitor the activities and to act as a repository for the knowledge generated on behalf of the community. In this activity, KENRIK played that role. A community based resource centre with a way of generating income can also play that role. A multidisciplinary, multistakeholder team is needed tackle the various aspects of the activity.

(2) In the case of documenting Traditional Foodways, the methodology has been described in [http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Nairobi/Safeguarding\\_Intangible\\_Cultural\\_Heritage\\_a\\_practical\\_gu.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Nairobi/Safeguarding_Intangible_Cultural_Heritage_a_practical_gu.pdf). This method has been since been updated. The method has to be adapted depending on the local food systems. The innovative aspect of this methodology is involving the local youth (school pupils) in the documentation and the practice. The elderly, more-knowledgeable relatives and neighbours provide the knowledge. The pupils find fun in documenting the activity both as text (essay) and in photography. This improves their indigenous knowledge and their skills of writing and has the overall effect of changing attitude. Teachers and parents provide their support to the pupils. Selected teachers gather and keep the information but also share with an institution that has the mandate to archive it on behalf of the community (KENRIK at the National Museums of Kenya played that role.). These methods can be extended to other fields of indigenous knowledge including traditional medicine/health systems etc.

## 7. Willingness to cooperate in the dissemination of best safeguarding practices

*Criterion P.7 requires that 'the submitting State(s) Party(ies), implementing body(ies), and community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned are willing to cooperate in the dissemination of best practices, if their programme, project or activity is selected'. Describe their willingness to cooperate in such dissemination.*

*If you attach supporting evidence demonstrating such willingness, especially expressed by the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned, indicate below what evidence you are providing and what form it takes. Such evidence, if any, 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.*

*Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words*

The submitting state (Kenya) and the implementing body (National Museums of Kenya), researchers and representatives of all community groups involved in this activity have been contacted about their willingness to cooperate in the dissemination of this practice. None of these has objected to the idea, instead, many of the group representatives have expressed delight that their work could finally be shared with the international community. Evidence of this willingness can be seen in some of the works:

1. A Practical Guide to Documenting Traditional Foodways Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage: Using lessons from the Isukha and Pokot communities of Kenya.

[http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Nairobi/Safeguarding\\_Intangible\\_Cultural\\_Heritage\\_a\\_practical\\_gu.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Nairobi/Safeguarding_Intangible_Cultural_Heritage_a_practical_gu.pdf)

2. Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage: traditional foodways of the Isukha community of Kenya

<http://www.biodiversityinternational.org/e-library/publications/detail/safeguarding-intangible-cultural-heritage-traditional-foodways-of-the-isukha-community-of-kenya/>

3. Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage: a photobook of traditional foodways of the Isukha and East Pokot communities of Kenya

<http://www.biodiversityinternational.org/e-library/publications/detail/safeguarding-intangible-cultural-heritage-a-photobook-of-traditional-foodways-of-the-isukha-and-east-pokot-communities-of-kenya/>

4. Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage: traditional foodways of the East Pokot community of Kenya

[https://www.biodiversityinternational.org/fileadmin/\\_migrated/uploads/tx\\_news/Safeguarding\\_intangible\\_cultural\\_heritage\\_traditional\\_foodways\\_of\\_the\\_East\\_Pokot\\_community\\_of\\_Kenya\\_1672\\_.pdf](https://www.biodiversityinternational.org/fileadmin/_migrated/uploads/tx_news/Safeguarding_intangible_cultural_heritage_traditional_foodways_of_the_East_Pokot_community_of_Kenya_1672_.pdf)

5. Mboga za Watu wa Pwani

[http://www.biodiversityinternational.org/fileadmin/\\_migrated/uploads/tx\\_news/Mboga\\_za\\_Watu\\_wa\\_Pwani\\_1515.pdf](http://www.biodiversityinternational.org/fileadmin/_migrated/uploads/tx_news/Mboga_za_Watu_wa_Pwani_1515.pdf)

6. Traditional Food Plants of Kenya (National Museum of Kenya, 1999, 288 p.)

<http://www.nzdl.org/gsd/mod?e=d-00000-00---off-0fnl2.2--00-0---0-10-0---0---0direct-10---4-----0-1l--11-en-50---20-about---00-0-1-00-0--4----0-0-11-10-OutfZz-8-00&a=d&cl=CL1.5&d=HASH01bacaafdadbafabafb9e082.fc>

In addition to the above, some letters from community representatives showing no-objection, have been provided.

## 8. Assessing the results

*Criterion P.8* requires that 'the programme, project or activity features experiences that are susceptible to an assessment of their results'. Provide concrete examples of assessments that have been or are being carried out.

*Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words*

The results of this activity can be assessed firstly through the outputs (publications); secondly through stories told by people on the streets and in the villages and thirdly through impact assessments that have been carried out on the African leafy vegetable (ALV) work. The raw material of foodways documentation by local communities in Isukha, Pokot, Mijikenda, Dagara, Gumuz and Loita Maasai can be viewed at KENRIK at the National Museums of Kenya. Parts of Isukha and Pokot have been published and are on the internet.

The ALV work has been evaluated by a number of individuals and organizations interested in specific aspects of the outcomes and results and not necessarily ICH. Some of the reports are available at:

[http://teca.fao.org/sites/default/files/technology\\_files/FSNL\\_Fact\\_sheet\\_AfricanLeafyVegetables-12oct2011.pdf](http://teca.fao.org/sites/default/files/technology_files/FSNL_Fact_sheet_AfricanLeafyVegetables-12oct2011.pdf)

<http://impact.cgiar.org/pdf/170.pdf>

Results from these assessments conducted in 2007 showed that since 1997, when baseline surveys were conducted, interest in African leafy vegetables (ALVs) had increased tremendously along with production, consumption and marketing. Women still dominated most vegetable activities and were also the biggest beneficiaries. The women could now grow, sell and use the vegetables in their households without prejudice unlike before. Other big beneficiaries have been consumers who better access to traditional foods and particularly vegetables and can buy without worrying that others will look down upon them. Some urban people can now reconnect with vegetables that they only used to enjoy as they were growing up in rural areas. Availability of these vegetables will keep alive that deep traditional knowledge associated with the food.

The benefits and outcomes of this initiative are diverse and complex as one result often led to another. Although this initiative initially involved a few institutions including Biodiversity International (coordinating office), the National Museums of Kenya, Ministry of Health, Universities and some CBOs and NGOs it generated interest, drawing more stakeholders and activities and therefore it is now hard to attribute any results to an individual organization or individual. A few facts however stand out:

- Attitudes towards traditional vegetables and local foods in general had changed significantly by 2006, the end of phase II of the programme. There was more respect given to users of traditional foods and overall consumption had increased – at household level and in restaurants.
- Women were the biggest beneficiaries – in terms of income, availability of vegetables
- Traditional leafy vegetables that had been neglected by researchers and national agricultural programmes were now a popular subject of research and extension
- Dietary diversity (and perhaps nutritional status) had been enhanced as there were more types of vegetables on the plate
- Seeds of traditional vegetables were more accessible and there was increased cultivation of previously wild species
- Traditional knowledge about the vegetables (including recipes) and the associated practices had been revived and become more widespread.

## 9. Model for developing countries

*Criterion P.9 requires that ‘the programme, project or activity is primarily applicable to the particular needs of developing countries’. Describe how the programme, project or activity may be relevant to the needs of developing countries and appropriate to their circumstances, identifying the particular components, methods or practices that would be relevant to them.*

*Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words*

This activity is applicable to the needs of developing countries in a number of ways. Many communities in developing countries are endowed with a rich food culture. While some communities may have a high regard for their foods and related traditions, many do not value their foodways and such communities stand to lose out in biodiversity and the related knowledge and practices that support that biodiversity. Many developing countries are witnessing loss of food cultures and concomitant rise in non-communicable diseases. Actions similar to those taken in Kenya are needed to safeguard these foodways - through identification, documentation/inventory, promotion and awareness creation and institutionalizing foodways in state agencies and institutions of learning. Developing countries also often suffer from food and nutrition insecurity. Diversity ensures environmental sustainability and diverse diets – and this is good for health. An important prerequisite for maintaining diverse diets and rich cuisine is maintaining the knowledge and practices that go with the foods. Indigenous foods also offer income opportunities for the locals if their value chains are developed but without compromising the integrity of the local food system.

Documentation is key as the information can be returned to the community whenever it is required and more importantly it can be evaluated to develop programmes that are of benefit to the community. The capacity for documentation of traditional foodways and storage of the information is often a challenge. This might be due to lack of skilled staff, methods or proper equipment for surveys and data handling. Experience from Kenya however has shown that with minimal resources and training, communities could handle much of the documentation and with the spread of mobile phones in rural areas, this process can be both cheap and effective as recording and transmission of data is easy. The presence of a centre for collecting, keeping and evaluating this information is however key to the success of the overall initiative. In Kenya, KENRIK at the National Museums of Kenya played that role.

Quite so often, governments are committed to the principles of ICH in paper, but implementation is often a challenge. Governments should however commit to support these activities especially, the establishment of resource centres (for repository and local coordination), supporting communities with data storage facilities, nurturing such institutions to be sustainable and having programmes that keep these traditions alive and ensuring these are incorporated in government development plans.

## 10. Documentation

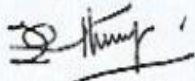
The documentation listed below is mandatory and will be used in the process of evaluating and examining the proposal. It will also be helpful for visibility activities if the programme, project or activity is selected. Tick the following boxes to confirm that related items are included with the proposal 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 community concerned is other than English or French
- ten recent photographs in high definition
- grant(s) of rights corresponding to the photographs (Form ICH-07-photo)
- edited video (from five to ten minutes), subtitled in one of the languages of the Committee

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

The proposal should conclude with the signature of the official empowered to sign it on behalf of the State Party, together with his or her name, title and the date of submission.

In the case of multi-national proposals, the document should contain the name, title and signature of an official of each State Party submitting the proposal.

Name: JULIUS MANZI  
Title: PRINCIPAL CULTURAL OFFICER  
Date: 31/03/2017  
Signature: 

Name(s), title(s) and signature(s) of other official(s) (For multi-national proposals only)