



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

International Assistance

ICH-04-Report – Form

Requ	CLT	CIH	ITH
Le	31 JUL. 2018		
N°		

INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE FUND

FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

Beneficiary State Party: Kenya

Project title:	Promotion of traditional pottery making practices in Eastern Kenya
Time frame:	Starting date: 20/09/2016 Completion date: 11/12/2017
Budget:	<p style="text-align: right;">Total: US\$26688</p> <p><i>Including:</i></p> <p>Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund: US\$23388</p> <p>State Party contributions: US\$3300</p> <p>Other contributions: US\$0</p>
Implementing agency:	National Museums of Kenya
Implementing partners:	
Contact person:	<p>Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Dr</p> <p>Family name: MMbogori</p> <p>Given name: Freda Nkirote</p> <p>Institution/position: Head, Cultural Heritage Department</p> <p>Address: P.O. Box 40658-00100</p> <p>Telephone number: +254722842029</p> <p>E-mail address: fnkirote@museums.or.ke</p>

Background and rationale

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

Not fewer than 750 or more than 1000 words

Pottery-making in Tigania West is by women (55-70years) on part-time bases. According to them, it is labour intensive and the results are not economically rewarding. Thus, they prefer farming and casual jobs to supplement income from pottery on orders. The craft is regarded as being of low status thus, it is maintained among potting families. The skill is passed from mother-in-law to daughter/in-law. The daughter starts to learn at 7yrs while the in-law learns after marriage. The pottery forms include beer pots kithiiri (30-60ltrs), porridge and cooking pots tuungu. The volume of the latter ² depends on the family size.

Among the Tharaka, the craft is active in August (dry season) when potters are not busy farming. Most potters belong to 45-60yrs age group. They work in unregistered groups to give each other company when visiting the clay sources where they conduct rituals before every potting season. They carry pots for long distances to the markets. The skill is passed from mother-in-law to daughter-in-law. Tharaka has mostly 3 forms of pots; beer pots kithiiri, (30-60ltrs) honey pot kathiri (20-30ltrs) and cooking pots tuungu whose sizes depend on the family.

Among the Mbeere-Ishiara, the craft is by women of between 30 and 70years. It is not dependent on the season but on weather. When the weather is right, they make pots to supplement the farming income. Besides cooking pots, they produce clay stoves riko, and other pot forms used for tobacco processing. They also produce bowls thaani and flower vases nyunguyamaua. The skills are passed from mother-in-law to daughter/in-law.

The Tigania, Tharaka and Mbeere are Bantu speakers with similar economic subsistence. The three groups among other Bantu speakers in the Mt. Kenya region form their pots in a similar way (Barbour and Wandibba 1989; Langenkamp 2000 and M'Mbogori 2011). Clay sources are communal. The Tigania may mix red and white clay or use either while the Mbeere and Tharaka use single sources. They do not add any temper. Clay is soaked overnight and kneaded in the morning. The pot is made in two parts. The procedure involves forming of one or two slabs and joining them into a circle before pulling it upwards. She alternates the pulling with smoothing and shaping by bulging it outwards using a piece of calabash. She decorates the pots according to community identity, followed by her own mark. She leaves it to dry (3hrs), then turns it upside down and adds clay to make the base. Finally she smoothes both interior and exterior and leaves it for 3 days before firing.

Traditional pottery making is fast declining in Kenya. The government's efforts to promote local crafts e.g. craft markets, are applied in general- nothing specific to pottery-making. Introduction of throwing wheel which was specific to pottery-making failed because of lack of understanding of societal traditions. Therefore, the financial assistance will address issues related to traditional knowledge transmission mechanisms, market networks and infrastructure, form diversification and means of sustainability which have contributed to negative effects on production.

positive

Objectives and results attained

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

Not fewer than 100 or more than 500 words

a) To conduct research and to document

The aim of this objective was to research, record and document the element for posterity. This would ensure that it is well understood for any future interventions. Its traditional functions, techniques and values to the community would remain in circulation for years to come.

Research was on pottery making ~~were~~ conducted in all the three areas. It was recorded in both video and print which resulted in a dvd production and printed booklets. We had intended to include a psychologists in order to understand why new techniques were adopted by some people and not others. Due to the unexpected cost of kilns and due to several extra trips that we had to make to the potting areas because of bad weather, we ~~were~~ stuck with the most important aspects of research that is recording of techniques and studying the historical and archaeological background

b) To Improve Potters Community Capacity building

In order to provide potters with a better working environment and to give them negotiating power in public arenas.

We were able to register 5 groups although we had planned to have 6. the 6th group which is from Mituguu (tharaka) was very difficult to bring together because they only work in august (as they live in very agricultural productive areas) and the money was always received after August.

c) To improve fuel use and energy conservation

This would contribute in cutting down on the laborious nature of finding firewood, reducing firewood wastage hence an essential activity for both the community and their environments. It would also enable the potters to make pots throughout the year, consequently improving potting efficiency.

We produced 5 kilns as opposed to the proposed 6. This is because the one in Mituguu was not possible to make since the potters were not available

d) To diversify pottery forms and decorations

The new forms and decorations would be aligned with the market demands so as to provide an economic base for the production of traditional pots hence conserving and preserving the traditional functions and techniques.

5 potters were taken to Kibichiko pottery making factory within the outskirts of Nairobi. They were each trained for 7 days except for one who was trained for 14 days. It was hoped that the latter would be the one to train the Mitunguu ones (during the second phase of the project) therefore, she had to grasp whatever they were being taught properly. Teaching of Mitunguu potters also did not happen

e) To enhance transmission methods

This would safeguard against the total loss of traditional pottery making techniques and would consequently encourage more individuals to take part in the craft. This would not only improve their lifestyles but it would also ensure continuity of production.

This activity was carried in three schools of the three locations. A total of 350 children Kiaritha Secondary school (Mbeere), Gacearaka Secondary school (Tharaka) and Miurine,

Ngongaka(Tigania)

Workshops were conducted during school holidays for both children and interested adults. In all the areas, a total of 67 people were trained

h) Education and Dissemination

The public would have an opportunity to get educated on the importance of the craft thus improving on its visibility and creation of interest, thus ensuring continued production.

200 booklets and DVDs on pottery making were produced

f) To Ensure Element Sustainability

Establishment of structures that empower the practitioners to access credit facilities will ensure expansion and sustainability of the craft. It would also help them to start other money generating projects which would protect the craft from being commercialized.

Description of project implementation

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

Not fewer than 1000 or more than 1500 words

Activity1: Project Preparation and potter capacity building

We organized the potters into groups with elected leaders, proper records and books of accounts. Between the 18th and 24th of November 2016, we visited potters of Mbeere, and Tharaka but we were unable to visit Tigania during the same period due to bad weather and poor roads. This coupled with the festive season of December it became extremely difficult to get potters' attention until after Christmas. We therefore postponed our visit to Tigania up to the 28th and 29th of December. With all the groups, and community leaders we discussed the project program and logistics. We informed them about the project and available funding, what and for whom it was intended and the expected outcomes. We were able to form 5 groups as opposed to the earlier proposed 6 groups. This is because the 6th group which was to be based in Mitunguu was very difficult to come together. The Kiriri group comprises 25 potters, Ngararigeri 20 potters, Marimanti 17 potters, Katithine 15 potters and Ngonga aka 20 potters. Of the 5 groups, three from Mbeere and Tharaka got formally registered with government social services department, during the first phase of the project, while the latter 2 got registered during the second phase.

Activity 2: Research and Documentation

Research and documentation, and the building of kilns were done between the 13th of January and 19th of April 2017. Doing several activities simultaneously, helped us to save on fuel and coordinator allowances as will be seen in the financial report. The researchers and kiln makers worked during the same period since kiln making did not require full time presence of the implementers or even potters as follows: From 13th to 17th of January, research and 1st kiln were done among the Ngararigeri potters; we then took a break for two reasons firstly it was raining heavily and secondly the bricks had to be made for the second kiln so neither the kiln makers nor the researchers could continue until the 5th of February when the rains subsided. After the second kiln we came back with more bricks on the 23rd of February to do research and to construct the 3rd kiln in Tharaka. The rains continued so we could not proceed and left after a period of 6days. On the 1st of March, we travelled to Tigania with the kiln makers after the potters informed us that the rains had subsided ~~there~~ ^{there} and it had not rained for almost 2 weeks so we took our chances and drove there. When we commenced the work, it started to rain so we had to halt the work and go back to Nairobi. We went back on the 20th of March to finish the 1st Tigania kiln before we went back Nairobi. We travelled back to complete the second kiln here on the 16 of April

and stayed up to the 29th due to interruptions from the rains. As pointed out earlier, due to the delay in starting and various activities which potters have to do besides potting in their farms, we had to carry out several activities simultaneously. Meanwhile, the researchers worked with potters to collect data on historical pottery making, social networks and detailed account of its intangible aspects and how it is passed on from generation to generation. Therefore, this involved desk research and mapping out of pottery making activities in these regions, recording all the tangible and intangible aspects on video and print. This called for the involvement of an anthropologist, archaeologist and a historian.

Activity 3: Improvement of fuel use and energy conservation

For Tharaka group, the kiln and a shed was built in a community land as suggested by the group. However, other places like Mbeere, Mrs. Madris Wangari (the group leader of ngararigeri group) decided to donate part of her land to be used for that purpose. A member from the second group (Kiriri women group) Mrs. Ruth Embu also donated a small area of her land. In Tigania there was no communal land and so the kilns were built in potters farms. Materials for the new kiln included pots of various sizes, bricks, cement and sand. We made the first kiln among the Ngararigeri potters. However, we were unable to get more damaged pots for other kilns and so we commissioned the potters to make pots which would be enough to produce kilns in other localities. We made an arrangement with the people who make bricks to work with the flower potters to produce the bricks where we were unable to get enough pots for kiln building. This was done and kilns were built within the specified time.

Activity 4: Diversification of forms and decoration

Although we had indicated during our earlier meetings with the potter groups that we would take the younger potters for this training on diversification of forms, when this time came, it became apparent that the youthful potters of below age 40 would not be allowed to leave their homes by their husbands as most were nursing children of between a few months and 8 years. As such, women who had less family commitments were able to attend. The advantage to this also, is that there was no danger of tampering with the traditional forming technique which is actually a form of motor skill for these women. It was interesting to see how the trainers struggled to teach them how to make huge flower pots using coiling technique, and the potters insisted on using the drawing technique which they have used all their lives. 6 women were taken to Kibichiko pottery making factory within the outskirts of Nairobi, for attachments. Each potter from different groups was trained for 1 week. Since one group had not been formed yet, we added an extra week for one of the Mbeere potters with the hope that they would teach the Mituguu potters later. After the attachments, the trained potters came back and transmitted their learnt skills to the group members.

Activity 5: Enhancement of transmission methods

i) Workshops

on The potters were asked to announce in their churches about the proposed workshop dates and their intention to teach village children and any other interested member of the society how to make pots. We organized the workshops during school holidays so that children from both potters and non-potters' families could meet and learn from professional traditional potters. We engaged master potters who worked with the participants not only giving them instructions but also giving them guidance by holding their hands and explaining step by step. During these workshops, the response was exciting as we had 27 participants at a time. We worked with 4 professional potters at a time who guided the participants through all the processes. During the first day, we started by introducing the participants to the purpose of the exercise and giving them a short brief of traditional craft and its value to the society since most of them were young and this is the first time they had come close to a pottery making space. We then added them over to the potters. On the 12th October 2017 we went back to Ishiara using funding from the second phase of the project to finish the process of firing. We spent an extra day here because we had request

from potters to facilitate training of interested members of their community who had not made it to the training during phase 1 of the project. Workshops in Tharaka and Tigania were done at the end of October and Mid December 2017 respectively.

In these two places 40 people were trained including children and adults. All the workshops achieved their objective which was to create interest, awareness and curiosity among the residents of these places.

ii) School clubs

The teachers decided who was to be trained based on what was suitable for them and their students. Teachers also insisted on training all the students regardless of their gender although in these communities only women make pots. We therefore started with Gaceraka secondary in Tharaka, followed by Kiaritha secondary school in Mbeere and lastly Miurine day secondary school in Ngonga Aka. During these school workshops, we worked with 4 potters from each school. Unfortunately, although we emphasised that our aim was to have the schools adopt this as one of the extracurricular activity, it was brought to our attention that it was not up to the head teachers or the teachers to decide since the activities were designed by the ministry.

g) Education and Dissemination

Local histories of potters and pottery making practices in these communities ^{were} recorded both in Audio/visual and Print. The pottery making stages which are outlined above, were all recorded in a video and a narration made based on the feedback from the potters. A 2gb video was produced and several copies were reproduced into a DVD format. In addition to the 200 DVDs, 200 booklets ^{were} also printed.

Community involvement

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

Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words

We invited community members at the beginning of the project where we informed them about the aims and objectives of the project. We made sure that they fully understood our intentions in order to receive their support. Based on this public participation exercise, we received overwhelming support from all from the beginning to the end of the project since the whole project was community run. We consulted with the government authorities from whom we sought permission to start working with the potters. The chief, the sub-chief and the subarea representatives worked with us especially giving us logistical support as necessary. They often came to see how far we had gone and where necessary offered advice. The potters who are members of these communities decided on where different activities would happen and community members who are not potters joined the training programs and enrolled their children. Workshops were advertised by church leaders on Sundays. They explained to their followers the usefulness of this project and actually urged them to come in big numbers. As such, we sometimes had church leaders in the site as the workshops went on. We worked with head teachers and other teachers to ensure smooth running of the school programmes. We also made sure that any materials that we used in the field were locally sourced and all the food and refreshments ^{were} provided by the community members during the workshops (though at a fee). Men from the villages were always involved in building of kilns as they supported the experts. This also gave them the necessary experience and skill so that they felt the ownership and they could always be called upon to repair them in case of need. Apart from the pots other materials such as bricks were made by men from the community as well as cement, sand and other building materials. The brick makers made them at a discounted price and even gave some for free especially if a small number was needed to complete a certain task. In all the places

community land was donated for the members for kilns to be built and also for pottery groups to be meeting, although potters in some areas felt more comfortable using their own lands.

Sustainability and exit/transition strategy

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

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

Not fewer than 100 or more than 500 words

i) Strengthened potters networks through workshops and additional trainees

A total of 5 potter groups were formed. This gave them an opportunity to have more regular meetings and easier communication among themselves. We were also able to work with potters to train 67 people during the workshops and about 350 school children during the school clubs.

ii) Increased accessibility to credit facilities as a result of potters organizing themselves into groups hence meeting one of the requirements of lending institutions.

Potters have now been able to apply for government funding to do their own activities which has afforded them more time to do work on pottery. Making of other forms and additional decorations has contributed to economic benefits since they are able to make and sell pottery forms such flower pots which are in demand.

iii) Improved proper record keeping and books of accounts

Forming of groups has helped the potters in enhancing their money management skills. They are now able to keep good books of accounts through practice which has enabled them to make applications to the government departments for group funding. This activity has indirectly contributed to the conservation and preservation of the craft.

iv) Opening of savings accounts

Group bank accounts have helped to keep the potters together. They are now able to borrow from each other and to accumulate savings which they use for various joint projects.

v) Efficient working tools

Kilns are expected to ease the potters' burden of sourcing for firing materials such as grass which is no longer available due to population pressure on land. They will also be able to conserve firewood hence contributing to a sustainable land cover.

vi) Increased national wide visibility of potters products

We are in the process of opening a facebook platform for the project where we will showcase the potter's products with an aim of increased sales in flower pots and sensitizing people on the availability of traditional pots which have become difficult to get even if several people have been looking for them.

vii) Retention of (youth) labour at village and district level-

Although there is no way to measure this contribution, several youths from the villages and schools were very interested in making pots. Some have now asked if we could help them

join technical schools where they would increase their pottery making skill which was introduced during the workshop/school clubs. This again, although it does not have a direct contribution to the traditional pottery making, we are sure that it will create job opportunities to these youths and eventually ensure long term production of traditional forms and hence maintaining the community identity for posterity.

We did not acquire any additional funding.

Lessons learnt

Describe what are the key lessons learnt regarding the following:

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

Not fewer than 300 or more than 750 words

Attainment of expected results

We learnt that when it comes to cultures and livelihoods, it is important to respect seasons when certain activities can be performed. We struggled to gather potters to work within our time frame since they have other responsibilities that are dictated by seasons. therefore, if you are late, you remain at their mercy.

Ownership of key stakeholders and community involvement

Talking to the community leaders and giving them the leeway to make suggestions on how things should be done, made them own the processes. For this reason, they called us whenever we had left due to bad weather conditions to inform us of the possibility of doing some work. They were very keen to see successful completion of all the activities and they monitored closely based on what we had told them at the beginning.

Delivery of project out puts

In all the three regions, by the time we got to the school activity, potters felt confident and would take a lot of pride in talking to the students about their work. This made the exercises very exciting as they enjoyed doing it and impacting on students. they were happy to talk to the students about the booklets and the DVDs and handing them over to them themselves.

Project management and implementation

While working with activities that are season dependent, it is always better to plan to receive the funding atleast one month a head of the commencement of the project. This will give you enough time for the money transfers from the granting institution to your institution and to you as the implementer. The delays became costly and were even responsible for our failure to implement activities in some areas. Sometimes we had to rebuild kilns after they had collapsed because of the rains since they had not been given enough time to dry.

Sustainability of the project after the financial assistance

One of the lessons that were learnt was that since this project happened as result of potters' requests, the rate of its success and sustainability after the financial assistance was very high. Potters' reactions were very encouraging because they did not see this as something that could benefit them in only pottery making but they saw it as an activity that was going to keep them together for collective actions which they have already started to benefit from. They are now able to borrow money from the government at no interest, and government officials are now visiting the groups to assist with various government led projects which are

meant for women groups.

The second lesson is that not all the activities might continue after the financial assistance. The school clubs for example will always need potters to work with the students and firing of their pots is a challenge because the kilns were not built in the schools. therefore, the students looked at this activity as though it was just a one time event although we had invisioned that it would be included in the school extracurriculum activities. Unfortunately, we failed to take into consideration that these activities are actually not decided by the schools but the ministry of education.

Annexes

List the annexes and documentation included in the report:

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

Pottery making DVDs

Pottery making booklets

Final phase printed report

Mid-term report

Name and signature of the person having completed the report

Name: Freda Nkirote M'Mbogori

Title: Dr

Date: 09.05.2018



Signature: