



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Intangible  
Cultural  
Heritage

## International Assistance

ICH-04-Report – Form

### INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE FUND

#### PROGRESS NARRATIVE REPORT

Beneficiary State(s) Party(ies):

Project title:	1A 0888 Kenya No. 45000323641
Reporting period:	From: 17/02/2018 to: 12/02/2020
Budget:	Total: US\$ 212,641 <i>Including:</i> Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund: US\$144,43 State Party contribution: US\$41,211 Other contributions: US\$27,000
Implementing agency (contracting partner or UNESCO Field Office):	
Contact person:	Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Dr. Family name: Lagat Given name: Kiprof Institution/position: Department of Culture/Director of Culture Address: P.O. Box 67374-00200, Nairobi, Kenya Telephone number: +2540202727980-4 E-mail address: roplagat@yahoo.com
Partner agency (in the case of a service from UNESCO project):	
Implementing partners:	Kenya National Commission for UNESCO (KNATCOM), Centre for Heritage Development in Africa (CHDA), Department of Film Services (DFS) and the National Museums of Kenya (NMK) and Geo Acre Survey Ltd, a private firm of surveyors.

## Background

*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*

Enkipaata, Eunoto and Olng'esherr are three interrelated male rites of passage of the Maasai community. Enkipaata is the induction of boys leading to initiation, Eunoto is the shaving of hair of the moran paving way to adulthood. Olng'esherr is the meat-eating ceremony marking the end of moranism and the beginning of eldership.

The practitioners of the element are young men from the Maasai community from the age of fifteen through the age of thirty years. During this period, they undergo the three male rites of passage; Enkipaata, Eunoto and Olng'esherr. After Enkipaata the first initiation ceremony, the young men are required to keep their hair unshaved until they undergo (Eunoto), the second rite of passage. They must set up an isolated homestead called Emanyatta, where they perform their duties together in line with the rules and regulations of moranism. A spear, a club, a sword, a red checked sheet and traditional shoes are the common features that identify a moran. After Eunoto, Olng'esherr, a meat-eating ceremony is performed to mark the onset of the end of the age set.

The enactment of these rites is significant to the community because it involves the transmission of indigenous knowledge, including Maasai rituals, legendaries, traditions and life skills through songs, folktales, proverbs, riddles and other social events, thus providing the group with a sense of unity, cultural identity and continuity.

Although the enactment of these three male rites of passage is still viable, there are a number of emerging challenges to the practice. Traditional methods of transmission are threatened by a reduction in the frequency of enactment. It has also been noted that there is a decrease in the level of community participation in the practice of the element. The regular cycle in the practice has changed from approximately eight years to fifteen years. This has largely been prompted by rural-urban migration, adoption of newer lifestyles and influence by modern religious practices.

The traditional settings where the element was informally transmitted to young boys, in Manyattas (temporary villages), where boys and young men would live together while receiving instructions from elders, have tremendously changed putting in danger this cultural expression. The seclusion of the initiates in the bush so that they could be imparted with values, knowledge and life skills, away from the rest of the community, rarely takes place. Besides, cultural spaces and places where these practices were held are increasingly diminishing. The current land tenure systems that now allows for individuals to own land has turned the traditionally designated cultural spaces used for the practices associated with the element into private property. In addition, these cultural landscapes have been encroached on by human settlements by members from other communities after they purchased them as private property. These cultural landscapes have also been affected by infrastructure developments, revised subdivision systems and emerging developments by private developers and immigrants. The reduction in the number and size of these spaces and places has posed serious challenges to the enactment of this element.

With the world having been turned into a small global village and modern education and the western lifestyle being embraced more than ever, an increasing percentage of youth have begun discarding these traditional practices. In addition, the schools' calendar is too constricted to allow these young men to participate in these practices. Besides, no affirmative steps have been taken to incorporate the transmission of these practices in the



school curriculum. With the adoption of emerging modern life trends, many parents prefer that boys stay at home, instead of the bush, making it difficult for the young men to participate in induction sessions with elders as it was before. The Moran assemblies which provided apprenticeship, mentorship and the transfer of life and leadership skills have been reduced to clan or family assemblies.

The need to safeguard the element emanates from the fact that the frequency of enactment of the element has been affected by the aforementioned factors. Yet these practices have invaluable benefits to the Maasai community. There is even a greater need to enhance the safeguarding measures in view of the fact that most cultural spaces where the element is enacted are now privately owned. In most of the clans visited, a community member has to volunteer part of his land to enable the ceremonies take place.

The enactment of the three male rites of passage provides the community with a sense of cultural identity, continuity and forms part of their lifeline. These practices are central to the unity, cohesiveness and the social systems of the Maasai community. Other than promoting respect amongst members of the same age set, the practices are important in defining and transferring responsibilities from one age set to the next. The practices underpin the transmission of indigenous knowledge from the older to the younger generation, while enhancing respect and promoting moral standards in the community. These practices promote humility and foster hard work amongst the age sets.

### **Objectives and results attained**

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

*Not fewer than 100 or more than 500 words*

The overall objectives of the project were as outlined below:

Objective 1: Empower the Maasai Community with knowledge and skills to safeguard their intangible cultural heritage for continued enactment of the practices for posterity;

Objective 2: Protect the natural spaces and places for the enactment of the element;

Objective 3: Research and document the intangible cultural heritage of the Maasai community for future transmission;

Objective 4: Enhance the inventorying of the elements of the Maasai Community;

Objective 5: Educate the youth on the importance of the element;

In line with objective 2, 3 and 4, and as a follow up on the activities already carried out in objective 1, the following activities were carried out:

1. Identification and mapping the cultural spaces and developing strategies to protect these spaces;
2. Research, documentation and inventorying of the element and the spaces associated;
3. Establishment of tree nurseries;
4. Production of ICH materials.

This project encompassed visiting the nine clans and the cultural spaces where these ceremonies are or were held. There were individual and group interviews conducted. The interviews were unstructured and semi-structured, but with guiding topics. These interviews were conducted in Maa, the indigenous language. Some of the interviews were video recorded. Any other additional information of interest was noted down.

The visits and the interviews were to evaluate the status of the practices and the spaces



associated with the element. The community was engaged to come up with realistic and sustainable strategies to keep the element viable. The community representatives involved in the project presented a number of suggestions on how to rejuvenate the practices. Secondly, the cultural spaces used for the ceremonies associated with the element were to be identified, surveyed and mapped. Seventeen cultural spaces belonging to the nine clans were visited, identified and mapped. Also, tree nurseries were to be developed. This too was achieved fully as seedlings relating to the element were planted. Notably, two botanical gardens with trees and other plants associated with the element were established at the Narok Museum grounds and the Olekajuado Secondary School in Kajiado. These will be an invaluable learning resources for researchers and the younger generation in the community.

The establishment of a community website as a viable tool to transmit information and knowledge associated with the element has been jumpstarted. This will make information on the element accessible to the community at the local, national, regional and international levels. A documentary, and brochures in the Maa language have been produced to be distributed to schools in the next few weeks to create awareness about the element amongst the younger generation.

The community was empowered to continuously inventory practices associated with the element, having been trained in community-based inventorying. Equipment to facilitate the documentation and inventorying (cameras and other accessories, laptops, hard drives for storage, gadget to access internet services) have been procured. The hosting of the website has been secured for five years. Overall, all the objectives for this project were met.

### 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 of the partner agency (in the case of a service from UNESCO project) and the role of other implementing partners in carrying out activities and generating outputs.*

*Not fewer than 1000 or more than 1500 words*

The Department of Culture in collaboration with the representatives from the Maasai community and other stake holders carried out the exercise of identifying and mapping of the cultural spaces associated with the three male rites of passage of the Maasai community with the aim of coming up with strategies to protect these cultural spaces. This exercise was conducted between 8th to 28th November, 2019. This project also entailed research, documentation and inventorying of the element as a follow up on the community-based inventorying training that was carried out last year. These activities focused on achieving several objectives. Firstly, to determine the status of the cultural spaces and places used for these rites of passage. Secondly, to carry out a research to document the elements associated with these rites of passage, through active participation of the community. The activities were intended to empower the community to sustainably continue documenting and disseminating information on the element through the establishment of a community-based website. The project was to conserve the trees and other plants associated with the element. Lastly, it was to produce materials that would be used disseminate information that would create awareness on the element.

The exercise was carried out in collaboration with the County Governments of Kajiado and Narok, the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO (KNATCOM), Centre for Heritage Development in Africa (CHDA), Department of Film Services (DFS) and the National Museums of Kenya (NMK) and Geo Acre Survey Ltd, a private firm of surveyors.

Consultative meetings with representatives from the community and other stakeholders were held to strategize on how to implement the activities. The planning meeting entailed identification of geographical location of the clans in Narok and Kajiado Counties, the number of possible cultural sites that would be visited.

The community representatives were instrumental in guiding on the possible cultural sites in each county. The representatives present during the meeting agreed to nominating a leader from each of the nine clans who would together with other elders identify the sites used by the respective clans. The community representatives also agreed to create awareness on the exercise through community-based meetings (village barazas) before the visits. This was done so that the community could embrace the objectives of the project. After the elders from each clan had identified the sites used, two other meetings were held in Narok and Kajiado counties with representatives from each clan. These meetings sought for free, prior and informed consent from the clan elders so that the geographical coordinates and the land acreage of each site could be mapped.

In carrying out this exercise, the following stakeholders were involved in the actual visits:

1. Mr. Francis Noseli, Mr. John Mark Koisaba - Maasai Cultural Council of Elders (Narok County);
2. Mr. Joseph Ntoipo, Mr. Benjamin Tipatet - Representatives of the Maasai community in (Kajiado County);
3. Representatives from the Department of Culture;
4. Mr. Peter Okwaro – Cultural Expert (Centre for Heritage Development in Africa (CHDA));
5. Film crew - Department of Film Services;
6. Mr. Saitoti - Geo Acre Survey Ltd, a private firm of surveyors;
7. Two representatives from Narok and Kajiado County Government.

The visits were conducted and the respective cultural sites identified, surveyed and mapped as outlined below:

#### Narok County

1. Iloita Clan - 11th November 2019

Cultural sites visited - Naibala and Olemesuti - Narok South.

2. Ilgwasinkishu Clan -12th November 2019

Cultural sites visited - Osinoni and Enoosaen - Kilgoris, Trans Mara West.

3. Ilmoitenek Clan - 12th November 2019

Cultural site visited – Nganayio - Kilgoris.

4. Ilpurko Clan - 13th November 2019

Cultural site visited - Rotian, - Narok East.

5. Ildamat Clan - 13th November 2019,

Cultural site visited - Eldamat - Narok East.

6. Ilkeekonyike Clan -13th November 2019

Cultural site visited - Kikuyan - Enkarengare.

#### Kajiado County

1. Illoodokilani Clan - 25th November 2019

Cultural site visited - Elangata wuas – Kajiado Central

2. Ilpurko Clan - 26th November 2019

Cultural site visited - Enkaroni - Nalepo sub-location

3. Ildamat Clan - 27th November 2019



4. Cultural site visited - Ildamat in Kajiado Central

5. Ilkangere Clan - 27th November 2019

Cultural sites visited Sajiloni area and Engorika area

6. Ekisongo Clan - 27th November 2019

Cultural site visited - Maralal Kuku area - Kajiado South

8. Enkidongi and Ileiser Clan - 28th November 2019

Cultural site visited Lemongo area in Kimana location.

Sixteen sites were visited and identified as having been used to hold either of the three male rites of passage. Of the sites visited, only four are still communally owned while twelve are on privately owned land. The mapping exercise produced photographs and a digital and a hard copy map of the actual locations of sites where these ceremonies are or were held. Twenty elders drawn from across the nine clans were interviewed on a variety of topics and audio-visual recordings done. This information will be used to produce written, visual and audio-visual materials on various aspects on the element, including the landscapes.

One of the major outputs is the continued documentation of the practices, rituals, artefacts and associated landscapes relating to the element. This will be attained through the establishment of the community-based website. The Department of Culture in consultation with the community representative and other stakeholders held a meeting that identified some of the equipment that will be used to facilitate this exercise for a start. They included two cameras with accompanying accessories, two laptops, digital storage devices, gadget to access internet services, and a website provider. These items are in the process of being procured. This initiative will enable a wider accessibility to information about the element to members of the community in the country and those in diaspora. In addition, this website will create a greater awareness on the threats facing the element, thus trigger the need to protect the element and the cultural spaces associated. It is hoped that this will revitalize efforts to keep the practices associated with this element viable.

The establishment of botanical gardens at the Narok Museum in Narok County and at Olekajuado Secondary School in Kajiado with trees and other plants used in the three ceremonies is another output. These gardens will be educational resources for researchers, children and youth from the community.

In implementing the project, several problems were encountered. Language barrier, especially in the interior parts where the communities live was a challenge the team encountered. The presence of representatives of the Council of Elders in the team enabled the team to navigate through this challenge. This problem had been anticipated. Arrangements were therefore put in place to make sure that throughout the visits, there was somebody from the community conversant with the Maa and English accompanying the team to do the translations. This role was assigned to Mr. Benjamin Tipatet. He conducted the audio-visual interviews after having been fully briefed on the kind of information to seek for. It was also difficult to map out sites on privately owned land. The owners were suspicious on the intentions of the exercise. This problem was overcome through the intervention of the representatives from the community accompanying the team who had been briefed on the need to seek for free, prior and informed consent from individual, groups or the community before any activity was carried out. Bad weather and poor road conditions interfered with the programme since this exercise was conducted during the rainy season. It rendered most of the sites difficult to access. Since this was anticipated, a provision had been made to have at least one four-wheel drive vehicle so that in the event of any challenges, core members of the team would get to the venue.

The Department of Culture played a co-ordinating and facilitating role during this exercise. This included organizing for meetings that brought together the stakeholders and meeting the costs incurred during the visits. Mr. Peter Okwaro, a Cultural Expert from the Centre for



Heritage Development in Africa (CHDA), handled the technical aspects relating to inventorying within the framework of the 2003 Convention guidelines. The community elders and representatives did the mobilization and guided the team on where to visit and which elders to interview. The surveyor did the mapping of the cultural spaces while the film crew did the recording. Other technical members from the Department of Culture conducted oral interviews with the rest of the community members so that as much information as possible could be gathered.

### **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 the project, but also their active participation in the planning and implementation of all activities.*

*Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words*

The community was fully involved from the planning to the implementation stage. During the planning meetings, four representatives from the community were in attendance. They comprised two members from the Maasai Council of Elders, a youth representative and a member from the local administration. The representatives identified the clans and gave guidance on the order of movement during the exercise. In addition, the elders identified and contacted the nine lead persons from each clan to inform them about the exercise. These nine were used in the mobilization of the ten members from each clan. It is the ten members from each clan who identified the sites that were to be visited. The community provided the information on the status of the sites and the viability of the element. In addition, it provided suggestions on some of the strategies that could be used to safeguard the element for posterity.

The interviews were conducted in the Maa by a youth from the community while another did the translation. Of the nine enumerators, seven were from the community. Four members from the community accompanied the team that implemented this project and were tasked with coordinating the visits. The community representatives were also involved in the actual surveying and mapping of the cultural sites through identifying the specific location where the ceremonies were or are held. The elders were involved in seeking for consent for the exercise to be carried out, in cases where land now under private ownership, is used for these ceremonies.

The Council of Elders identified the species of seedlings to be planted and negotiated with the County Governments of Narok and Kajiado on where the seedlings would be planted. They in addition, identified where the seedlings could be procured from.

Four youths from the community familiar with knowledge in information technology have been engaged to develop the community website. The four comprise two young men and two ladies. These youths came up with a concept on the kind of website that could be developed and identified the kind of equipment that would be used to jumpstart the process. For a beginning, the website when established, will be run and managed by these four. It is anticipated that with time more members will be incorporated in the running of the website.

It is also expected that the website will put the community at the centre of the documentation process, consequently enhancing its role in the safeguarding measures. The website too will be a viable tool for creating awareness on the significance of the element to the community. Since the website will also have a calendar of events, it is expected that many more members from the community will be aware of when these ceremonies will be held, therefore, be able to participate.



## Sustainability and exit/transition strategy

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

- *Sustainability of activities, outputs and results, including with reference to how capacity has been built under the project. Also describe any planned follow-up measures to ensure sustainability.*
- *Additional funding secured as a result of this project, if any. Indicate by whom, how much and for what purpose the contributions are granted.*

*Describe how the ownership (of activities, outputs, results) by stakeholders and the community(ies) in particular has been promoted.*

*Describe, if relevant, how tools, processes, outputs, etc. have been adopted, adapted, replicated and/or extended for future use (e.g. in other regions, communities, elements, or fields of intangible cultural heritage).*

*Not fewer than 100 or more than 500 words*

The positive impact of the project and its sustainability can only be understood within the framework of the activities that have so far been undertaken. The preliminary meetings with the nine clans of the Maasai Community raised the community's awareness on the convention and its objectives. Over time, the community has realized the advantages of the element as a source of unity, identity, respect and continuity of the community. While the community representatives have continuously expressed the danger of losing this heritage because of various challenges, the project, in their opinion, was an eye opener that has given them a new lifeline. It is now clear that the community can modern lifestyles, but still embrace the values and tenets embedded in the element. Interviews carried out revealed that from the time the project began, more youths are now keen on participating in these ceremonies. The enlisting of element on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding has rejuvenated the community's umph to identify and participate in ceremonies involving the three male rites of passage. The enlisting has given them a sense of pride and ownership and a fighting spirit to ensure that these ceremonies are kept alive. There are plans in place by some of the youth from the community to have the convention interpreted in the indigenous language, but in a simpler version.

Approximately five hundred members from the community participated in the induction meetings. The Council of Elders and the youth who attended these preliminary meetings have always endeavoured to include the safeguarding of the three male rites of passage as part of the agenda in the fora they attend, as a way of raising awareness on the element. The preliminary meetings also introduced the community representatives to different networks where they can secure funds to augment the safeguarding measures. The representatives are now aware that they can engage other partners and stakeholders other than UNESCO or the National Government to support the safeguarding measures. Already the community through their representatives have begun working closely with the County Governments, to have their agenda included in the annual budget.

The workshops on community-based inventorying was extremely important. Some of the members who participated in the training also took part in the research and documentation programme and conducted the interviews. This gave them a hands-on experience. They were involved in the production of the ICH material. Besides, the project is providing equipment to continue collecting information for the website. The youth who have developed the website have come up with a proposal to have a pay pal number for the web. The Maasai community in diaspora, may be keen on their children being aware of the element and could be willing to financially support the initiative. Members of the community in diaspora have also promised support for more equipment for documentation as soon as the website is established.

It is also anticipated that with the community facilitated with equipment for recording, more material on the ICH associated with the three male rites of passage will be produced and disseminated to the younger generation and the other communities so that there is enhanced awareness and respect for these ceremonies.



## 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 assistance*

*Not fewer than 300 or more than 750 words*

### Attainment of expected results

1. Community involvement was very crucial in the attainment of the results. If community representatives had not been brought on board from the onset, very little would have been achieved. Since the representatives did the mobilization to the grassroots level, it was easy to access those members who are repositories of the information and knowledge on the element.

2. Prior planning is important to achieve expected result. Our planning meetings were instrumental in setting out the goals that were to be pursued. The community representatives present understood their roles clearly because of this meeting. They were able to identify and reach out to the nine clan elders and explain to them what was required of them. In addition, the team was able to agree with the clan elders on the tentative dates for the visits and a roadmap on how to approach the sites. This strategy ended up saving us a lot of time during the actual visits.

3. Facilitation of stakeholders is key to attainment of results. This project required a lot of coordination and mobilization of the community representatives. Given that the Maasai community resides in a very expansive geographical area, it was a big challenge reaching out to representatives and leadership of each clan. Facilitating the coordinators' with travel and call costs was therefore very important. They had to constantly communicate with the clan representatives at the grassroots level to evaluate the progress that had been made. Furthermore, they had to constantly give the Department feedback on the progress and challenges on the ground.

4. It is important to anticipate possible challenges, consequently put alternative plans in place in case things do not work with what has been planned. This project was undertaken when rains had been anticipated. Provisions were therefore made for at least a four-wheel vehicle in case roads were impassable. Indeed, this turned out to be case. We would never have achieved the results in certain areas without the four-wheel vehicle.

### Ownership of key stakeholders and community involvement

1. It was clear that the stakeholders and community participation were crucial to the success of this project. We learnt that it was important to bring the stakeholders on board from the onset so that they could understand their roles and plan on how they would execute these roles. One such example was the role of the Department of Film Services who were filming the activities. Through constant communication and meetings, the crew was able to plan their work and carry the required equipment for the job.

2. This project would never have succeeded without involvement of the community. The representatives played a pivotal role in the mobilization of the members of the various clans and coordination of the activities on the ground. We learnt, and important so, that the main role of the Department should be facilitation and overseeing that everything is going on as planned.

### Delivery of project outputs

1. We learnt that outputs have to be clearly defined and all stakeholders must understand

them. When they do, they all work focused on what they understand. The community representatives who were coordinating the activities understood the outputs. The information they disseminated on the ground gave the team an easy time in implementing the project.

2. It was also clear that it is important for the community to own the outputs. For example, the community insisted on running the website. This has put it at the centre of the management of its heritage. This is healthy with regard to the sustainability of the safeguarding measures, now and in future.

Sustainability of the project after the financial assistance.

The previous activities carried out in the project have been an eye opener to the community. It has engaged the county governments to allocate funds to support the safeguarding measures after this project ends. In addition, the technical team of youth from the community who will manage the website intend that the users of information on the web subscribe with some fee. These funds will be used to support the safeguarding measures.

## 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)

The following are annexed to this report:

1. A detailed financial statement of accounts presented on an official letterhead on all expenses incurred for when the activities were undertaken amounting to US\$ 38.407 from the ICH Fund while the State Party contributed US\$ 6461.
2. All scanned original evidence of payments such as receipts, payment schedules, invoices are attached.
3. A signed and dated invoice for the last instalment under the contract.

## Name and signature of the person having completed the report

Name: George Litswa

Title: Mr. *GEORGE LITSWA*

Date: *20/3/2020*

Signature: *Litswa*