

INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE FUND

FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

Beneficiary State(s) Party(ies): Cambodia

Project title:	Implementation of the safeguarding Plan for Chapei Dang Veng (file no. 01165)
Time frame:	Starting date: 03/11/2017 Completion date: 02/11/2021
Budget:	<p style="text-align: right;">Total: US\$258,829.88</p> <p><i>Including:</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund: US\$212,579.88</p> <p style="text-align: right;">State Party contribution: US\$46,250.00</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Other contributions: US\$</p>
Implementing agency (contracting partner or UNESCO Field Office):	Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, The Royal Government of Cambodia
Contact person:	<p>Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr</p> <p>Family name: SIYONN</p> <p>Given name: SOPHEARITH</p> <p>Institution/position: Director-General of Directorate-General of Techniques for Cultural Affairs, Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts</p> <p>Address: #227 Norodom Boulevard, Khan Chamkarmorn, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.</p> <p>Telephone number: +855 (0) 17 674 905</p> <p>E-mail address: sopheariths@yahoo.com</p>
Partner agency (in the case of a service from UNESCO project):	N/A

Implementing partners:

Cambodian Living Arts (CLA), Community of Living Chapei (CLC), Khmer Magic Music Bus (KMMB)

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

Chapei Dang Veng (hereafter called Chapei) is a long necked lute. It is a popular musical instrument found in Cambodian society. Chapei is played accompanied by melodious singing about previous lives of the Buddha, various folktales or even good advice for the listeners. The instrument itself is used as of today in two traditional ensembles which are 'Pleng Araek' (Music played to entertain spirits) and 'Pleng Kar Boran' (Traditional Wedding Music). At the same time, both are endangered forms of music themselves. The Chapei is closely interwoven in the tradition and beliefs of the Cambodian people, however, during the Khmer Rouge regime (1975 to 1979), Chapei along with all other forms of entertainment, disappeared from Khmer society as that many artists were killed. This enforced break has jeopardized the continuity of the tradition. After the Khmer Rouge period, the government and many surviving individual artists have made serious endeavors to restore this element together with NGOs and generous donors. However, its situation remained precarious and required urgent safeguarding measures.

At the time the request to the UNESCO ICH Financial Fund was made, there were only two surviving grand masters of Chapei who were then honored as the Living Human Treasures. Sadly a grand master passed on during 2018, leaving behind the last grand master. Unfortunately, the last grand master could not perform due to old age and poor health. Besides the Grand Masters, a handful of masters exist and pass their skills to a limited number of students throughout the country. Despite the challenges, these masters are still practicing and passing on their skills using traditional methods, particularly teaching orally. This was also commonly observed within families that have traditionally practiced Chapei throughout Cambodia.

There exist committed groups and organizations that use traditional methods to preserve Chapei. For example, in Phnom Penh, a small and very committed group of young students and artists have organized to form an informal association, called "The Community of Living Chapei". There exists an art organization which puts efforts into the transference of the Chapei skills. Over the past 19 years, Cambodian Living Arts has supported this transference of Chapei through self-crafted programs. The Champey Arts Academy, which was established 6 years ago, has also carried out similar activities.

The only formal government art school, "The Secondary School of Fine Arts" integrated a Chapei training program into its curriculum in 2002. While the transmission of Chapei is still commonly done through the master-to-disciple technique, formal instruction programs have also been developed. As a result of these programs, a small number of talented new generation Chapei players have emerged. Nonetheless, more effective methods of transfer are required.

At the time of making this request, lack of qualified students entering the program meant that the threat to transmission remained. Fortunately, the recent rise and awareness has brought more students in for enrollment. However, such training only exists in Phnom Penh

and is otherwise lacking elsewhere in Cambodia.

A majority of the practitioners of Chapei are male, with the masters being over 50 years old, and the sole surviving Grand Master is in his mid-70s and most of the students are under 30 years-old. The mid-generation players are capable performers, however, their improvisation skills are still considered less than fluent. It is still predominantly the elderly masters who continue to teach and perform, and even travel abroad for festivals or other performances. In terms of the audience for Chapei, it is enjoyed by the public from all ages and backgrounds. In comparison to the past, when Chapei was more enjoyed by the elderly, nowadays the enthusiasm of the younger generation has brought Chapei to all ages. This said, the rising popularity of Chapei among young audiences augurs well for the future of this art form.

At the time of the submission of this request in 2015, research and documentation for the form was scarce and strongly depended on oral tradition. There were also limited resources for teachers to use in being able to teach the art form. Factors such as the high cost of the instrument, and low or erratic income from performing Chapei means that artists face economic difficulties if they are to rely on the art alone, and therefore will resort to other means of finding income.

The inscription of Chapei in 2016 gave great momentum for the revival of this treasured art form and after implementing the safeguarding measures for a year there were promising results for Chapei. The Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts (MoCFA) in collaboration with its partners such as the Cambodian Living Arts, the Community of Living Chapei, Khmer Magic Music Bus has launched a range of activities in accordance with the proposed action plan. Due to this project, Chapei's popularity and visibility is reaching new heights today especially among the young generation and is becoming an increasingly regular feature of both live and broadcast performances and even in private and corporate events. However, there are still many challenges to overcome for the sustainability and visibility of the elements.

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

During the implementation of the safeguarding plan of the project, vindication of the request has been evident in the results achieved. The Ministry, through the Provincial Departments of Culture and Fine Arts conducted a survey and a series of interviews to provide the data for a mapping of Chapei. Presently, the number of practitioners of Chapei in Cambodia is increasing thanks to the active support provided by over one hundred artists and teachers. Based on the survey, Chapei masters and artists (located through the mapping activity, and referred to in our work as 'resources') exist in 19 of Cambodia's 25 provinces, with cities and provinces such as Phnom Penh, Banteay Meanchey, Prey Veng, Kampot, Takeo and Kandal found to have the largest concentration. Chapei artists were willing to perform on various occasions, such as at local and national festivals as well as important events in Buddhist monasteries, nonetheless, small numbers of events and invitations limited their performances to 4 or 5 a year. This means that supporting a family and one's artistic

progression through Chapei alone is not possible.

Globalization presents both negative and positive effects on traditional art forms and Chapei is not an exception. Hence Cambodia is developing effective strategies for safeguarding and transmission. Considering the importance of harmonization between modern creativity and the traditional form, Chapei could then be played and integrated with other art forms.

The "Community of Living Chapei" has formed a group of young Chapei players, whereby the leader was a former student of Master Kong Nay, who is the surviving National Living Human Treasure in Chapei. These young artists are trained to be skilled performers through practicing the technique of this traditional form, with the goal of becoming a grandmaster themselves someday.

Further results from our survey shows that the popularity and public awareness of Chapei is increasing in the living culture of Cambodia, which in turn creates a positive environment for the artists, and offers greater visibility of the art form throughout the media.

MoCFA has introduced a new system to honor the Chapei Masters which will encourage young followers to develop new skills in the field. In reality, the value of Chapei performers depend not only on musical ability, but they also need to use their wit, intelligence and ability for quick adaptation and improvisation to be a good story teller. They are required to be well-versed in language, literature and poetry and to be aware of contemporary social and political events and personalities. Furthermore, today Chapei is not only performed by males, but a small number of female Chapei players have started to emerge.

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

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Section: Project implementation

Nine major activities have been proposed under the safeguarding plan. Although many activities were fully or partly implemented since the inception of the project, the pandemic situation called for an extension of the timeline for implementing the project until November, 02 2021. However, some activities were completed and some activities were rescheduled:

1. MAPPING:

At the end of March 2020, our team completed this activity and final reporting of the mapping finished in Khmer with the summary in English. Research materials such as videos and voice recorded are with the size of 499 GB. Thus, all the materials are stored in an external hard drive along with our final report at the end of the project.

2. RESEARCH & DOCUMENTATION:

The research team of CLA, as requested by MoCFA, implemented its research work and reported to MoCFA its progress from the period of September 2018 until completion in February 2020. The Research team of CLA led by Musicologist Patrick Kersalé completed all the work including the written research document and video via <https://chapei.iimdofree.com/>

Aiming for the wider diffusion of the report and visual documents, an English-Khmer website was launched and updated with new information.

Moreover, MoCFA in collaboration with CLC produced a book entitled "LIVING HERITAGE: The Artists of Cambodian Chapei" to celebrate, promote, and safeguard the tradition. This publication is proudly supported by: UNESCO; Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre and Griffith Centre for Creative Arts Research, Griffith University; MoCFA; and CLA.

3. BROADCAST AND MEDIA OUTREACH:

Following the contract between MoCFA and Mr. Pok Borak, these activities have been completed. Two new pieces were produced: Each piece requires various forms of arts and artists active participation to show the ability and skills of the Chapei Dang Veng artists and the adaptability of the Chapei Dang Veng itself to different situations of performance. The first one is entitled "Sovannasam" performed by four Chapei Dang Veng artists coming from different provinces of Cambodia and also traditional dancers. Along with this, the performance was lived on 23rd of May 2020 on the Ministry's official Facebook page with 4.5K likes, 728 comments, 4.6K shares and a cumulative view count of 191K.

The second piece is the story of "Soben Koma". This performance is slightly different from the earlier setup with participation of the Chapei Dang Veng artists, traditional dancers, performers of Lkhon Sbek Touch and the inclusion of "Pei Pok" a wind instrument and "Kse Diev" a string instrument, which was lived on 13th of September 2020, on the Ministry official Facebook page and had 2734 live audiences and until 21st of September 2020 it has accumulated 206,000 views, 817K shares and 1333 comments consisting of praises and critiques.

Along with this, the Ministry has invited a Chapei Dang Veng artist, Ael Pech (called as Kompul Pech) from Pursat province to sing a solo of a story in 2021, under the support of MocFa

4. EDUCATION & TRAINING:

The activities have been delayed and rescheduled. We have signed an agreement with 8 Chapei artists, one of them is Mr. Pech Sarath from Phnom Penh city and 7 others are from 5 different provinces (Mr. Meu Moeun from Siem Reap, Ms. Sin Soy and Mr. Ae Yen from Prei Veng, Mr. Peang Py and Mr. Moul Soda from Banteay Meanchey, Mr. In Saren from Svay Rieng, and Mr. Sao Yon from Takeo). The agreement is for a period of 8 months which started from June 2020 to January 2021. Due to the covid-19 pandemic, schools have been closed, however, some are teaching at their own home or public spaces such as Buddhist monasteries, while some others are conducting distance /online teaching. Furthermore, Chapei instruments have provided to their training place. The current situation is Chapei artists continue to train novices, while the MoCFA has invited artists to participate in national events and the Chapei Laureate programme.

5. SECONDARY SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS (STATE SCHOOL):

In the curriculum of the Secondary School of Fine Arts, which is under the patronage of MoCFA, a formal education in Chapei is already included and is obligatory for students. A Chapei curriculum was developed by a few experts.

6. CHAPEI FESTIVAL:

Three Chapei Festival were planned in different places in Cambodia.

- The first was organized by CLA's Heritage Hub team in Siem Reap from 30 November-2 December 2018 at the Heritage Hub office in Wat Bo Pagoda. The Festival saw participation by 25 Chapei Masters and Students, two groups of local public school students, 15 volunteers, local art communities including Sounds of Angkor, Wat Bo Puppet Troupe, TukTukTV, Phare Social Enterprise, Bamboo Stage, Silong Original, Small Art School and American Corner.

- The second was organized in Phnom Penh by Cambodian Living Chapei under the patronage of CLA. The event was held from 28 to 30 of November 2019 with the participation of Chapei Masters, Chapei Students, University students and as well as the general public with the total participation of 2048 people.

- As planned, the third Chapei festival held from 29 to 30 of November to celebrate the 4th year anniversary of Chapei Dang Veng inscribed in the UNESCO list. The third Chapei festival was the first virtual festival which was broadcast live on MoCFA official Facebook's page with 97.3k viewers and 227k shares.

7. INSTRUMENT COST

Due to the need for Chapei instruments for education and training activities, the MoCFA issued a third order, for 20 instruments, at the same price as was paid for the second order (about USD 550 each, and USD 11,000 for the batch). We are told that there are students who are willing to learn the Chapei, but they would not be able to learn if they do not have instruments and the cost of each Chapei is unaffordable for them. Thus, to promote Chapei, the instrument is key to training. This year, MoCFA distributed Chapei instruments as follows: 4 for CLC, 1 for Chapei artist (Mr. Prum Nil), 1 for Chapei artist (Mr. Peang Py), 1 for Chapei artist (Mr. Moul Soda), 1 for Chapei artist (Ms. Sin Soy), and 1 for Chapei artist (Mr. Nou Samnang). In 2021, the instrument was provided to 6 Chapei artists as follows: 2 for Mr. Meu Moeun, 1 for Mr. In Saren, 1 for Mr. Sao Yon, 1 for Mr. Nou Samnang, 2 for Mr. Peang Py, 1 for Mr. Moul Soda, 1 for Ae Yen.

8. CHAPEI LAUREATE

The MoCFA Chapei team developed a plan for a Chapei competition in 2021. There were 18 candidates who attended the competition. The competition plan is divided into three stages. After the final stages of the competition, we awarded 3 winners the 1st place to Mr. Moul Soda from Banteay Meanchey province, 2nd place to Mr. Sary Seyla from Prey Veng and 3rd place to Mr. Uong Soeurn from Posat. The Chapei Laureate competition and program was broadcast live on 15, 16, and 17 of October 2021 on the Ministry official Facebook page and had 452k viewers, 16k shares and 418 comments with 32k likes.

9. MONITORING and EVALUATION:

With the kind assistance from UNESCO Phnom Penh Office, MoCFA team is able to identify Mr. Rahul GOSWAMI as an international evaluator for Chapei Project as stated to Activity 9 "Monitoring and Evaluation." Mr. GOSWAMI has completed the monitoring report as an interim report on the Chapei Safeguarding Project in May 2020. At the present, due to current situation the monitoring and evaluation on final report was finished by distance working.

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

Prior to launching the project, MoCFA established a project team composed of the provincial departments of MoCFA and the three NGOs (CLC, CLA, KMMB) actively involved in the performing arts.

During 2018, the provincial departments of MoCFA contacted local communities including youth associations and local art performers and, as a result, more than 30 local communities are now integrated into the project and this number is increasing.

In case of the Chapei Festival, in order to have the festival fully reach out to the communities, especially the target audience, the full involvement of the concerned

communities, both partners as an active co-organizers and as beneficiaries are very important including the youth. To do so, the following mechanisms are being used:

- CLA went to the arts communities whose mission include support of Chapei form and/or who care about traditional musical instruments and who are really committed to contribute their participation in helping promoting and jointly-organizing the festival.
- Reaching out to the university students via CLA's existing network to get their contribution as volunteers in assisting some programs of the festival such as distributing the flyers and posters at universities, inviting their peers, and sharing our promotional media and helping some other logistics during the festival so that they feel they are part of promoting this arts form.
- Securing collaboration from public schools so that they were not only helping promote the Chapei festival but also working to arrange for their primary and secondary school students to join the festival programs.

From these mechanisms, the Chapei Festival was organized smoothly and effectively as follows:

- KMMB was in charge of the production of the festival
- CLC was in overall charge of the workshops program and also led the Chapei singing and storytelling workshops
- Wat Bo Puppet Troupe, a group of artist from local communities, organized the Pithi Sampeah Krou (Honouring the teacher) ceremony
- TukTukTV was in charge of the Exhibition Program
- Sounds of Angkor led the classical wedding music workshop
- Small Art School led the drawing workshop
- Bamboo Stage led the puppet making workshop
- Silong Original made the giant plastic Chapei instrument
- Other partners such as American Corner, Phare, etc. helped with promoting the events within their social media and sending their staff to help in the organizing teams.

For Broadcasting, the Chapei artists themselves were playing an important role as advisor, editor, player as well as team leader in the two creations. As a result, the Chapei form has become increasingly well-known throughout the country.

Remarkably, the Chapei artists who won in the Chapei Laureate received a warm encouragement and fully support from their community. This point indicates a positive outcome as the transformation of people's mindset about either Chapei performance and artist.

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

All activities in this project have been undertaken with a view to establishing a solid and sustainable foundation in the field of Chapei knowledge, skills, tradition and transmission to younger generations. Moreover, results of the mapping, research and documentation of Chapei have contributed to the preservation of the art form and the network for artists and communities across the country.

The strategic development of teacher education in Chapei has helped develop a higher knowledge among teachers and a solid curriculum for Chapei transmission. The key outcomes are that a number of students have had their interest in Chapei raised, the calibre of artists has further developed, and the popularity of this art form with the public has increased.

The pilot program of Chapei in School will play a very significant role in supporting cross-ministerial collaboration to support and promote culture in education. It will look at on-going models for including arts in education, which is one of the priorities of the National Cultural Policy. This will improve the overall future quality of teachers and students who have completed the programs. Activities such as the Chapei Laureate and instrument bursaries to talented artists will be core items supported by the MoCFA.

All students and participants of the advanced training and workshops will become equipped with better skills and higher quality of performance. This will help foster the next generation of teachers and students of Chapei. Throughout the three years, a creative artistic content will be developed. Increased collaboration between communities, artists, students, the government, other partners and international experts is foreseen and is being planned for.

After the project period, most of the activities continue to be carried out by stakeholders: CLA will include Chapei in their annual Arts Festival; CLC has continued to train young students with the established materials; national and private television channels have continued the Chapei Laureate program and Chapei show. Furthermore, Chapei activities and many programs are constantly being held by private creators and amateurs through a variety of artistic approaches. They also prepared a fund raising event which was a collaboration together with Chapei artists/masters to celebrate the 5th anniversary of the inscription of Chapei Dang Veng on the UNESCO ICH list.

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

Chapei was successfully promoted to the public and encouraged across local communities.

Regarding the mapping project, there were a number of unforeseen challenges that arose during the implementation:

- The plan was at times delayed due to weather and road conditions and also because in many cases the expected timetable was not kept as interviewees were not readily available or the interview took longer than anticipated.
- Collaborating with provincial departments of MoCFA was sometimes hindered because officials were not available when our team arrived or the information they had on Chapei performers was well out of date. e.g. the performer had moved his address, or gave up performing Chapei or even had already passed away.

Regarding the Chapei Festival:

- The dates of the festival overlapped with the Siem Reap marathon, and so the festival received smaller public audiences than expected. This requires future organizers to explore carefully to avoid any overlapping dates.
- Collaborating with public schools to get the students to join the workshops and other programs of the festival was so successful that we will strengthen and expand this way of working for future festivals or events
- The workshop location for classical wedding music and Areak Music had to be changed at the last minute due to the fact that the pagoda did not inform us that there was a ceremony on that day at the place we had requested. Next time, the organizers need to ensure that the place is free for use and that, even if a ceremony of the pagoda is taking place, it will not affect the program of the festival.
- The overwhelmingly positive response by the public meant that the venues provided were often insufficient or inadequate for the size or nature of the audience. e.g. not enough seating or lighting or sound system.

- Regarding the Broadcasting, Chapei Festival, Education Training and Chapei Laureate:

Initially, the events such as Broadcasting, Chapei Festival and Chapei Laureate are supposed to be held at a physical venue, however due to restriction by the Government because of COVID-19, the program was then moved digitally thus we faced a loss of prospective candidates, audiences and participants. At the same time, not only audiences were lost but also the chance to give them the experience and knowledge. Education and Training in Chapei is facing the same problem as earlier due to COVID-19, all schools are forced to closed down therefore Chapei artists are not able to teach and showcase Chapei physically also forcing them to take up online teaching.

Annexes

List the annexes and documentation included in the report:

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

1-Final Narrative Report

2-Final Financial Report

3-Third Chapei Report

4-Chapei Laureate Report

5-Education and Training report

6-Monitoring and Evaluation Report

Name and signature of the person having completed the report

Name: SIYONN Sophearith

Title: Director-General of Directorate-General of Technical Cultural Affairs

Date: 17 March 2022

Signature: 