



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage

International Assistance

ICH-04-Report – Form

INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE FUND

FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

Beneficiary State Party: UGANDA

Project title:	UGA 979: Safeguarding and Promotion of Bigwala, gourd Trumpet Music and Dance of Busoga Kingdom in Uganda
Time frame:	Starting date: 01/09/2015 Completion date: 31/08/2017
Budget:	<p style="text-align: right;">Total: US\$35561</p> <p><i>Including:</i></p> <p>Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund: US\$24990</p> <p>State Party contributions: US\$5340</p> <p>Other contributions: US\$5231</p>
Implementing agency:	National Council of Folklorists of Uganda
Implementing partners:	Sub County and District Leaders, Bigwala Communities, Music Department Kyambogo University, District community development officer, Busoga Kingdom, UNATCOM, Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development
Contact person:	<p>Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr.</p> <p>Family name: Isabirye</p> <p>Given name: James</p> <p>Institution/position: National Council of Folklorists of Uganda</p> <p>Address: P.O. Box 199, Kyambogo - Uganda</p> <p>Telephone number: +256782721506</p> <p>E-mail address: nacofuorg@gmail.com</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

Bigwala music and dance is a cultural practice of the Basoga people from Eastern Uganda. Bigwala comprises a set of five or more gourd trumpets each producing a single tone and blown in hocket to produce a melody, accompanied with singing, drumming and dancing. Singers and dancers move in circular formation around the five drum players together with the trumpeters. One singer leads the songs while others join in the chorus. Dancers wriggle their waists gently and raising hands in excitement following the dynamic rhythms of drums and trumpets music. Men blow the trumpets, play the drums and dance together with women. Women ululate as the performance becomes exciting to mark the climax. Men wear Kanzus (Cassocks), trousers and shirts that may or may not be uniform. Women wear Gomesi (Long wrapping cloth with shoulder parts that are pointed upwards) that may or may not be of the same colour. Members of the community can join and leave the performance as they wish. Thus there is a fluid boundary between the performers and the audience.

Bigwala music and dance was not only performed in the villages, but also at ceremonies held by Busoga kingdom. Bigwala music and dance dates back to the 18th century Bugabula state, one of the eleven original chiefdoms that later united to form Busoga kingdom. When the chiefs of the original eleven chiefdoms united in 1939 and elected among themselves a Kyabazinga (constitutional King), they adopted Bigwala music to lead the king's processions at the coronation, royal ceremonies, funeral rituals and other royal - social occasions. Bigwala songs narrate the history of the Basoga, focusing in particular on kings and their exploits, Basoga philosophy and other cultural matters thus symbolically reconfirming community identity and links with their past. Bigwala plays a major ritualistic role during the enthronement of the king who is also main symbol of the kingdom. When a king died, Bigwala players could perform their music as part of the rituals in the palace before and during burial. For example when king Henry Wako Muloki passed away on 1st September 2008, the five Bigwala players (alive at that time) performed their mourning ritualistic role at Nakabango palace, near Jinja town for two days and for another two days at Kaliro village, where the deceased king was laid to rest. Bigwala is also a means of educating the young generation about diverse issues of their society thus directly contributing to the continuity and survival of the Basoga community.

However, Bigwala was no longer regularly performed in communities. Most people that knew how to perform Bigwala music and dance had passed away. There were only two surviving master players that were the main sources of information and skills about Bigwala. Therefore, there were not enough proficient players in the kingdom and that affected all cultural practices associated with Bigwala music that people cherish. Absence of Bigwala players led to a situation where Amakondere (royal trumpets) music of Bunyoro kingdom was brought to lead the coronation procession of His Royal Highness William Wilberforce Kadumbula Nadiope Gabula IV as king of Busoga kingdom on 13th September 2014, instead. The kingdom would have used Bigwala at the coronation anniversary in September 2015, if there were proficient Bigwala players by that time but it was not possible.

Busoga kingdom was also in high gear to mobilize the people towards development and eradication of poverty, disease and ignorance. The six years kingship succession wrangles that followed King Henry Wako Muloki's death had led to stagnation as a result many Basoga families suffered. Bigwala music and dance is one of the means through which

Basoga people can identify and feel pride in their community, awaken their cultural values and work towards development.

There was general interest in safeguarding Bigwala among Basoga communities for example Village Councils and other local leaders, elders, opinion leaders, educators among others. It had become apparent that if the two surviving Bigwala master players died before passing Bigwala knowledge and skills to the youth, an important part of Basoga heritage would disappear. Youths hardly experienced Bigwala music and dance neither in the communities nor through the media. Therefore, in 2011 a Bigwala campaign was organized at Naigombwa Primary school by the community elders with support from National Council of Folklorists of Uganda (NACOFU). Community members, teachers, secondary and primary school children plus non schooling youths; a total of about 500 people attended. After listening to the Bigwala master players, fifteen youth expressed great interest in Bigwala music and dance. The master players had expressed readiness to teach more youth how to make and play the Bigwala and the accompanying drums.

At the time of starting this project, they had started to learn how to make and play the Bigwala. Master players taught the repertoire of the Bigwala songs which they could remember vocally and using pawpaw stalk dummy Bigwala. NACOFU and teachers in Namalembe sub-county started to collect materials in form of photographs, audio recordings, videos and interviewed the master players. This project became a continuation of earlier Bigwala safeguarding measures that needed more support such the one currently offered by ICH Section of UNESCO.

The requested funds were to be used to organize workshops for youths in making Bigwala, playing and dancing to Bigwala music. The training was to be given by the two master players and the communities, schools and NACOFU were be involved in developing teaching methods, so that Bigwala becomes sustainable. Further, there would be a festival in which the newly trained 9 Bigwala groups perform. Audio and video recordings would be made and a selection of CDs and DVDs would be on sale for the general public. The visibility of Bigwala would also be enhanced by involving radio and television to record and broadcast these activities. The project would also help to raise awareness about cultural heritage and improve the infrastructure for safeguarding Bigwala; which could be used for starting similar safeguarding activities.

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

Overall objective was:

To strengthen the transfer of Bigwala music and dance knowledge and skills to the young generation

Specific Objectives were:

1. To set up project management committee. Committee was set up and capacity building plus facilitation to manage the project to international standard is ongoing. Project committee members held kick-starting meeting at Namalembe sub-county. Committee members visited home of surviving Bigwala player at Buswiga and later met 15 youths that were learning Bigwala Music at Bukakaire village.

2. To establish groups with knowledge and skills of making and playing Bigwala. 52 youths from Buwunga, Buyanga and other villages apart from the first 15 youths have so far been trained in Bigwala making. Thus youths with skills in making Bigwala so far total to 67 and more. Some youths registered for Bigwala playing and dancing but have also learnt how to

make.

3. To develop better documentation. Photographs, audio and video format documentation of Bigwala project activities is going on.

4. To hold the Bigwala festival and raise awareness. This will take place according to plan. Arrangements for it are underway.

5. To set an example for other Ugandan societies to participate in safeguarding of their heritage. The "Bigwala model" is being used to kick-start a process to revive Entenga (tuned drums), Endere (flute band) and Entamivu (xylophone with drums band) royal music of Buganda kingdom.

The outcomes realized so far:

1. Community members, NACOFU, teachers mobilized communities to grow Enhendo (gourds) for Bigwala. Gourds were got after a serious search beyond Busoga and seeds have been planted. Gourds take 5 to 6 months to mature and communities are looking forward to earn money from them. Gourds are also used for drinking in water and could replace plastic mugs.

2. We planned to train 30 youths and music teachers to make Bigwala but due to community enthusiasm and cooperation the number has reached 67 so far.

3. Regarding living conditions and impact to community, we encouraged the surviving Bigwala master to renovate his house from the project wages. This was partly done. As a result youths in his neighbourhood are enthused about Bigwala. Project committee argues that the project is contributing to improving living conditions of its beneficiaries.

4. Bigwala project activities are being documented in form of photographs, Audio files and DVDs and are kept by NACOFU. They are accessible to the communities, general public, kingdom officials, radio and television houses. Some of the documentation was done with NACOFU's partners and is available at www.singingwells.org/stories/central-and-eastern-uganda-day-2-kampala-to-jinja/. James Lugolole, the last surviving Bigwala player commented about the progress of the project that, "I am so happy. I feel now, when I finally die, I will have a hand that has reached back, teaching others the trumpets so the music lives beyond me."

We look forward to the second disbursement of funds in April 2016, to continue with workshops in Bigwala playing, dancing, formation of groups, holding the Bigwala festival as we document them all.

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

The project committee was constituted and members were informed in writing by the NACOFU Executive Secretary and the return consent copies. A meeting was held on 4th September 2015 and 10 people out of 11 were present and one member sent apology. They included the surviving Bigwala master player, Local leaders, Kyambogo University representative, Opio Joseph (Iganga District Culture Officer and Secretary), Chairperson of Bigwala youths group, Representatives from Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development, James Isabirye (NACOFU Executive Secretary and Project Leader) and Walusimbi Haruna (Busoga Cultural Music and Dance Troupes representative and Project Manager).

The Project committee held its first meeting which in short, discussed past actions to

safeguard Bigwala, the state of Bigwala performance, UNESCO Certificate of inscription for Bigwala on list of ICH in need of urgent safeguarding to be used at all community activities, coordination of roles and timelines, the project management among others. Members then visited the home of Lugolole James and found it was in a bad state and later met the 15 Bigwala youths and encouraged them to continue.

Asuman Walyanda a famous Primary School Music Teacher and cultural groups' trainer worked with the project manager to register trainees. Although during registration we recruited the targeted numbers of 30 for Bigwala making, 90 for Bigwala plying and 90 for Bigwala dancing, the numbers increased during the actual workshops. At the moment 67 youths have been recorded during the making of Bigwala workshops. The number for the players and dancers is also likely to be high.

Although James Lugolole and village opinion leaders had distributed seeds to communities before this project started, bad weather had affected the plants and all of them died. So, the search for other Bigwala gourds that were needed to conduct the workshops in Busoga yielded nothing. This necessitated moving to other parts of the country and later we found a few that had been kept out of sheer lack. We bought them and they became parent gourds because their seeds have been distributed to communities for planting. The first fruits have started to be harvested. More seeds will be available from those fruits and consequently more Bigwala sets. Bigwala trumpets require two types / species of gourds; the long ones with a round end plus the rather short hard type. These have all been found the committee has encouraged farmers to grow them. Seeds were distributed to communities during the Bigwala making workshops since many people turned up to see how they are made.

Also at those events, a photocopy of the ICH certificate of inscription for Bigwala was handed over to the local leaders on behalf of their communities. This will continuously remind communities and their leaders about Bigwala as well as provide mapping for project coverage.

Bigwala making workshops were held at the following villages: Mawanga in Bwunga Sub County – Bugiri district, Bukakaire in Namalemba Sub County – Iganga district, Butyabule in Buyanga Sub County – Iganga district, Kiwanhi in Buyanga Sub County – Iganga district and Nakibembe in Ibulanku Sub County – Iganga district.

James Lugolole had trained James Mukama, Siraji and Waiswa how to make Bigwala. These three have led some of the Bigwala making workshops very successfully. It goes without saying that the skill of making Bigwala is totally back in Busoga. We hope to see many sets being sold and played at the Bigwala festival in November 2016.

1000 Photographs, 4 hours of Audio and 2 hours of Video – Visual recordings of Bigwala project activities have been recorded. NACOFU has also encouraged Bigwala communities to allow its partners to participate in documentation and disseminate their work to give Bigwala mileage as well as create more sources of information when needed.

The main challenge was absence of Bigwala gourds in the entire Busoga region. This paused a serious threat but extensive and intensive search enabled us find them in other parts of the country. We found few and expensive ones but these became the parent fruits since their seeds have been distributed in different parts. Also they have been used to carry out the workshops where the Bigwala sets made were handed over to the communities to start them off and act as reference when they make more sets.

Busoga Kingdom has and will continue to mobilize and recognize the Bigwala communities as major actors in culture.

The surviving master player gave information at different activities and taught youths how to make Bigwala. Village elders and opinion leaders participated in the search for new seeds following the failure of the Bigwala gourds crop that Lugolole had grown due to bad weather. Youths and music teachers showed great interest in Bigwala music, asked questions such as, why this heritage has not been regularly performed and learnt how to

make Bigwala.

Local council leaders in various places have and will continue to organize meeting venues for project activities and encouraged youths to participate in the project. They also mobilized communities to participate in large numbers because they viewed the Bigwala project as a means of reviving the much cherished Busoga culture.

NACOFU has and will continue to coordinate all activities, liaise with participants at various levels, and keep the recorded materials. Two members of NACOFU have offered technical, managerial skills and participated in monitor project activities, have prepared and disseminated minutes and reports to various stakeholders.

Kyambogo University Performing Arts Department and the Music Teachers in Busoga region have started to include Bigwala music their in lessons. Teachers have also started to identify village groups that they will train in preparation for the Bigwala festival.

Members in the village music groups attended meetings to get information and came for workshops to learn how to make Bigwala. Each village mobilized more than 50 people ranging from five years or even below up to elderly people.

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development's Department of Culture sent three officials to meet the Bigwala communities and offer their technical guidance and support to the project. They also assessed the situation and gave useful ideas for implementation of the project. Later an officer was appointed to take up a position of the project management committee. Ministry officials have often given updates to the top management in the ministry and reported back to the Bigwala management committee the situation in the Ministry.

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

Communities have been involved in planning interventions at the Project management committee level. The project management committee which is responsible for streamlines and monitoring the actions of the project includes members from the communities. These are Walusimbi Haruna, the Director of Nile Beat Artists, one of the cultural groups that are involved in the safeguarding actions. He is the Bigwala Project Manager; who reaches the Bigwala communities any time and has capacity to communicate with the Project Leader. Other Bigwala community members on the committee include: the Chairperson of Namalemba Sub-County Local Council, James Lugolole, the surviving Bigwala master player, Nabirye Irene, the Bigwala youths group leader from Bukakaire village. Iganga District Community Development Officer in charge of culture is also member of the project management committee. These members generate ideas that inform the actions of the Bigwala project. Some of these members have been involved right from the time of preparing the nomination file for Bigwala to be included on the UNESCO list of ICH in need of urgent safeguarding.

Communities have participated actively in implementation of activities in different ways such as:

Local Council Leaders have been helpful in mobilizing new Bigwala groups, encouraging people in their villages to grow gourds and speaking strongly about the need to revive not only Bigwala but all endangered cultural idioms of Busoga. In some places, for example in Buwunga Sub County, the Speaker of the Local Council Mr. Magoola promised to include financial support to the Bigwala youth group at Mawanga village in their budget for the next financial year and encouraged members in their community to support this cause. The Sub County representative to Bugiri District Council, Mrs. Bajje offered to become the patron of

that Bigwala group.

New Bigwala groups are growing gourds, seeking guidance on how to care for their crop and make Bigwala out of them. They invite resourceful people in their villages for our meetings / workshops to ensure that their immediate Bigwala community comprises highly skilled people. This has led to an encouragingly big turn up of men, women, schooling and non-schooling children of all ages, at the Bigwala making workshops.

When there was shortage for gourds James Mukama, Godfrey Mugabe and other youths led the search for seeds up to Teso, Bunyoro and other areas that are more than 150 Kilometers away. They went through villages asking anybody until they found some people that had gourds for some reasons other than Bigwala. It is these gourds that gave seeds for a new generation of Bigwala gourds.

James Lugolole and the 15 Bigwala youths have moved places encouraging new Bigwala groups, citing the media and international attention they have received so far. Bigwala has been covered by Ugandan (The New Vision and Monitor newspapers), regional (The East African newspaper) and international media like BBC plus Singing Wells; partner music organization with NACOFU. Bigwala communities assemble whenever called upon to meet any persons interested in their work thus contributing to further dissemination of the Bigwala cause.

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

Sustainability was ensured by: Encouraging new Bigwala groups / communities to plant gourds. Seeds were distributed and some members will soon harvest. Gourds are also mugs for drinking in water or local beer. Therefore, shortage of gourds as was the case before the project has been solved.

Children have been involved in planting gourds and making Bigwala and some made dummy Bigwala from pawpaw leaves.

The new sets of Bigwala from workshops are left with leaders as an example for communities to continue making their own, when gourds mature. The master player will visit communities until craftsmen emerge. New Bigwala groups identify leaders that manage their activities and communicate with us regularly.

Local Leaders have expressed commitment to allocate funds in Council budgets to Bigwala groups. At Mawanga village, the Sub-Country representative to Bugiri District Council requested to become patron of their Bigwala group. She will solicit funds and performance opportunities for the group. Groups have identified patrons among leaders in their communities.

Ownership of the project has been ensured by including a representative of youth groups, the master musician and local leaders on the project committee right from preparing the nomination file for Bigwala to be included on UNESCO list of ICH in need of urgent safeguarding. We give every new Bigwala group the UNESCO certificate for Bigwala as a

reminder of their efforts and encouragement to sustain this achievement.

NACOFU and Singing Wells adopted the Bigwala model to kick-start revival of Entenga (Royal drums), Endere (Flutes) and Amakondere (Royal trumpets) music of Buganda kingdom (October – December 2015). The model involves identifying surviving master player, mobilizing youths, soliciting resources, training new generations of musicians and creating performance opportunities for them.

Bigwala project will lead to safeguarding of a cherished cultural element in Busoga kingdom. The Basoga people are strongly attached to their kingdom. When Bigwala performance is revitalized it will be supported because it is a royal and ritualistic element in their society.

Busoga kingdom will soon send its representative represented on the project committee and members will have direct contact with the kingdom to follow up with kingdom activities after closure of the project.

NACOFU organizes festivals with village music groups across the country and their activities will include furthering the project benefits. Music educationists in Busoga region will be stimulated to include Bigwala Music and Dance in their teaching.

A committee comprising members from the communities, local council leaders and kingdom officials will be formed and will last two years after the project working by themselves, to inform NACOFU about state of project benefits and they will prepare reports that will be circulated to the stakeholders. If any problems will be identified, appropriate action will be taken with support from the kingdom, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, NACOFU and the local leaders to ensure continuity of project benefits.

The select committee will time to time communicate with the culture minister in Busoga kingdom as well other kingdom officials and local leaders about the state of Bigwala music and dance.

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

In short, the project results will include:

Communities and project implementers have gained experience in ICH safeguarding according to international standards; Nine groups with knowledge and skills of playing Bigwala music and dance formed, each with its own set of 5 trumpets and 5 drums and there are 30 youth and music teachers who can make good quality trumpets and drums; Bigwala music and dance has been documented in form of Photographs, CDs and DVDs, is kept by NACOFU and is accessible to the communities; The Bigwala music and dance festival has been held in which the 9 Bigwala groups have performed and Bigwala safeguarding has been promoted as best practice of safeguarding ICH in need of urgent safeguarding. Basing on the project outputs delivered so far the results given above will be realized.

Ownership of the project has been ensured by including representatives on the key stakeholders and communities on the project management committee. Also, ideas from the communities are attended to and where they are not practical, they are discussed and consensus reached. For example some people wanted a new house built for the Bigwala

holder. The budget for this was so high but an overhaul of the existing house could be accommodated from his wages. Communities have been part of the processes right from preparation of the file for nomination of Bigwala as ICH in need of urgent safeguarding. They contributed to formulating it and have gained knowledge in organizing activities effectively and efficiently.

The project has so far realized the following outputs: Bigwala management team has not only gained experience in ICH project but also interest in other safeguarding activities. Availability of gourds for making Bigwala was addressed by encouraging farmers to plant them and seeds were provided. Building capacity of 30 youths and teachers to make Bigwala; making 9 sets of Bigwala with drums as well as documenting all project activities has been done. The living condition of the surviving master musician has been improved; his house was overhauled. Outputs that will be delivered next include: Training youths in Bigwala playing and dancing, formation of 9 Bigwala groups, holding the festival and documenting the project activities and Bigwala music. Basing on what has been delivered so far and what is remaining, the project will be able to deliver all stated outputs and even surpass expectation when completed.

A Project Management Committee was set up comprising members from stakeholder organizations. It is the policy making body and includes: The surviving master player, two local council leaders, Kyambogo University Music Lecturer, a director of one cultural group from Busoga (Project Manager), Primary School music teacher, Bigwala youths leader, Representative of ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development, Iganga District Community Development Officer in Charge of Culture (Secretary), NACOFU Secretary (Project Leader), UNATCOM representative and Busoga kingdom official. The committee is a policy making body and NACOFU coordinates the different actors in the project. The project manager solicits all ideas from the music teachers, Bigwala communities and all stakeholders on day to day basis and advises the Project Leader the effectiveness and efficiency of the chosen activities in line with recommendations of the Project Committee upon which activities are implemented. Project activities and their outputs are shared with communities and subsequent activities decided on in similar manner. The project has caused increased interaction and discussion of issues regarding ICH safeguarding among stakeholders and the communities; and this had never happened in Busoga.

Regarding sustainability, the communities; the local political and opinion leaders all confirmed that Bigwala was not new to them, but that they were starting to forget a valued heritage. Thus this project is timely and dealing with a real community need. Communities and their leaders manifest great enthusiasm towards Bigwala and a resolve to support the project not only up to the end but also to sustain its benefits when it is completed. They unanimously appealed for actions that would cause revival of Basoga peoples' heritage in general.

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)*

- Lists of Youths and Teachers that learnt to make Bigwala
- Photographs of some activities / outputs
- Minutes of project committee

Name and signature of the person having completed the report

Name: Isabirye James

Title: Executive Secretary, National Council of Folklorists of Uganda

Date: 18th March 2016

Signature: