

INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE FUND

1ST PROGRESS NARRATIVE REPORT 8TH OCTOBER, 2021 – 15TH MARCH, 2022

Beneficiary State(s) Party(ies): COOK ISLANDS

Project title:	Documentation and Inventory of Peu Karioi (Performing Arts) in the Cook Islands
Reporting period:	From: 08/10/21 to: 15/03/22
.00Budget:	Total: US\$39,992.00 <i>Including:</i> Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund: US\$39,992.00 State Party contribution: US\$26,636.82 Other contributions: US\$0
Implementing agency (contracting partner or UNESCO Field Office):	Ministry of Cultural Development
Contact person:	Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr Family name: Turua Given name: Anthony Institution/position: Head of Ministry Address: PO Box 8 Telephone number: 682 20725 E-mail address: anthony.turua@cookislands.gov.ck
Partner agency (in the case of a service from UNESCO project):	
Implementing partners:	Ministry of Cultural Development

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.

Despite efforts at the national level to sustain the *peu karioi* in the Cook Islands, it is still inadequate, lacks originality, with traditional performances declining and on the verge of disappearing, hindered further by competition-focused performing art activities. Traditionally, the elders of each island teach and transmit knowledge to the next generation through interaction, storytelling, chants, dances and other practical methods of communicating to the child so that it remains viable. However, this approach is now challenged by over-commercialization of *peu karioi*, foreign dance influence, an apathetic youthful population, religious beliefs, and the migration of many Cook Islanders abroad. It is therefore critical that an inventory of knowledge and skills associated with *peu karioi* is developed urgently to capture and document the knowledge of the remaining elderly experts on each island before they pass on, for fear of losing these knowledge completely.

An example of an element where safeguarding measures is urgently required is the *Pe'e* or the Traditional Chant. *Pe'e/Traditional Chant* have different functions and require skills and a leading *Taunga Karakia/Expert* to execute it but sadly these are not being followed today due to lack of cultural knowledge and protocol. A welcome *pe'e* for a Chief sometimes is currently mixed with a Wedding *Pe'e* or mixed with another island's *pe'e* for lamenting or burial. These needs to be documented for its appropriate use and maybe workshopped later in the years so people know the appropriate *pe'e* for a function and for the young generation to be better guided. The *Taunga Karakia/Expert* performing the *pe'e* also has to be the right person from the right tribe and not just anyone. Depending on the function, the *Pe'e* is also taboo for that and must be respected.

There is also the aspect of skills needed to carry out the *Pe'e*. For the individual *Taunga Karakia/Expert*, the emphasis on particular words is a must. For a group there is the leading female and male voices at certain times during the performance of the *Pe'e*. All these must be captured and safeguarded for this particular element.

Given the nature of request at hand, Gaps identified as critical and would disappear if they are not documented and recorded are; the uniqueness of performances, or the originality of performances. There are some elements today that are mixed in terms of its functions and the right expertise to carry them out. Some elements are not practised often and there is fear that these would soon disappear if we don't document the knowledge and skills involved. Then there is the cultural protocol that is needed to be understood by all involved. With today's many influences, cultural protocol is also treated as a thing of the past. The safeguarding and transmission of these knowledge and skills are vital to the viability of the elements. As communities, there is a need to understand also the sensitivity of knowledge and skills and depending on the knowledge holders, if they wish for their knowledge to be accessed by a limited number of people, then so be it.

The Cook Islands through the Ministry of Cultural Development saw the severity and the need of maintaining our islands' performances so that the young generations can easily distinguish which performances belong to which island or team. For example during our huge celebration "Te Maeva Nui" where everyone including the Outer Islands come together to celebrate our Independence Day; mostly the Northern Group Islands performances stood out because of the instruments they use (cabin bread tin) none of the islands in the South or Rarotonga use this. Due to the close locations of the hostels around the Auditorium, everyone can hear each other's rehearsals so sometimes one can hear the similarities in the tunes of songs or drum beats. It is vital that the inventorying and documenting of performances of each island be developed now. The competition element

of the Te Maeva Nui is also affecting the originality of the islands' performances where everyone wants to win rather than maintaining their island's way of performing. Given this mentality of winning, and the impact on the Performing Arts of the Cook Islands, the Ministry of Cultural Development should address the judging criteria of the categories of Te Maeva Nui to bring back the island's uniqueness and original way of performing and award those Islands/Teams who are maintaining their peu karioi/performing arts.

The sustainability of most of the performing Arts/peu karioi is viable through the Te Maeva Nui Celebrations but to capture the originality and uniqueness of the islands' performances and ensure these are transmitted and safeguarded for all, Tauranga Vananga/Ministry of Cultural Development seriously need to look at the judging criteria of the performances.

Not fewer than 750 or more than 1000 words

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.

At this time of Reporting for the project, the Ministry of Cultural Development have completed the following Activities:

Activity 1: Identifying ICH project team (ICHPT) including the 20 community-based ICH Researchers (1-2 months). (Attach ICHPT Structure – Annex 1). This activity has been partially completed, just a minor issues that needs to be managed properly.

Activity 2: Resourcing (and asset management) of the project (1-3 months). Our assets of 21 laptops, 21 cameras, 21 printers, 21 hard drives 21 phones and minor accessories have been sourced from New Zealand. The Southern Group Outer Islands have taken their equipment mainly the laptops, printers, cameras, hard drives while the phones will be sent to them this week.

Activity 3: Establish ICH Database (1 –13 months). The Cook Islands ICH database and the ICH website has been set up for the ICH Project. For now just waiting for information from our researchers to upload onto the website on a weekly basis. At this time of reporting, nothing has been sent so far.

Activity 4: Capacity building on inventorying and safeguarding (1-2 months). The Capacity building for the Southern Group and the Rarotonga Group has been done so in total we had: 5 Southern Group Researchers completed their training; 6 Rarotonga Researchers and 1 Northern Group Researcher. We have yet to train 6 from the Northern Groups and 2 from the Southern Group. Transport, Shipping, Covid and the unavailability of the researchers have been a major delay in the training of the rest of the Researchers.

Despite Covid lockdowns being a challenge, it also gave us an extra opportunity to better train our Outer Island researchers especially in fully utilizing their equipment and uploading their information before they headed back to their home islands to do their fieldwork. The lockdowns meant that they couldn't return home as per their schedule, hence gave us the opportunity and time to train them more. We anticipate the same for the next lot as our Covid numbers continue to rise.

Not fewer than 100 or more than 500 words

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.

Activity 1: Identifying ICH project team (ICHPT) including the 20 community-based ICH Researchers (1-2 months). For this ICH Project, the Ministry's Senior Management Team and Managers from the Cultural Heritage Team became the ICH Project Team with the Director of Cultural Development, as the Project Manager. (**Annex 1: Project Structure**) The awareness raising for the ICH project went ahead last year on the Radio Program after the Ministry was informed that the application was successful. The Senior Management Team also promoted the project to the Island Secretaries and Mayor of the Outer Islands during their annual conference last year here in Rarotonga. Later on in November last year during the House of Ariki's Annual Conference, the Senior Management Team of the Ministry again also promoted the ICH Project to the House of Ariki and the Outer Island School Principals.

Advertisements for the 20 community-based researchers went in the local newspapers, the all user government emails and the Ministry's face book. After the closing date, a short list for the interview was made before the interview was carried out. For the Outer Island candidates, the interviews were done via phone whereas the Rarotonga researchers were interviewed on a one on one basis. Ratings were given to interviewed candidates which were later proposed to the ICHPT for their approval. This activity wasn't a clear cut process as the Team had to interview people from Australia and New Zealand who at the time of applying assured us that they were coming back to the Cook Islands to live. So there were Zoom sessions and Messenger calls made to be able to interview these people. For the Team however, the criteria was pretty clear from the bet, that the researcher must be someone living on the island and know their community hence was able to make decisions accordingly. (**Annex 2: Biodata for the researchers/applicants**)

Activity 2: Resourcing (and asset management) of the project (1-3 months). Project Cost \$NZ39, 727.94. Our assets were all sought from New Zealand and were much cheaper and available compared to purchasing from home. The following resources were purchased for the Project; laptops, cameras, printers, hard drives, phones and required accessories such as the wires and multi plugs. Each researcher will get one of these assets with a spare one for the Project Manager. (**Refer to ICH Budget Allocation for breakdown**) This aspect of the activities was one that was accomplished way ahead of time. Before the assets were released from the Ministry to the Researchers, these were registered and labelled.

Activity 3: Establish ICH Database (1 –13 months). Project Cost \$NZ39, 500.00. The Cook Islands ICH database and the ICH website has been set up for the ICH Project. Likewise with the Resourcing of Assets – this particular aspect of the activities was also ahead of time too. The Researchers were also trained in the ICH website so that they can upload their fieldwork for the supervisors and Project Manager to monitor etc. They were also trained and shown how the database would work and the level of authorities involved in accessing the information. For now just waiting for information from our researchers to upload onto the website on a weekly basis. This is yet to start rolling in.

Activity 4: Capacity building on inventorying and safeguarding (1-2 months). Project Cost \$17, 893.51. The Capacity building for the Southern Group and the Rarotonga Group has been done so in total we had: 5 Southern Group Researchers completed their training; 6 Rarotonga Researchers and 1 Northern Group Researcher. **The Capacity building training was done by the Heritage Staff (Supervisors Ms Paula Paniani, Ms Odile Urirau, Ms Tui**

Tupa, Ms Teuru Tuakanangaro and the Project Manager Ms Justina Nicholas) and the MOCD IT staff – Refer to Workshop Program (Annex 3: ICH Workshop Program). Training so far done for the Researchers had been on the theoretical side (ICH, Convention, Fieldwork (Interviews, questionnaires, consent forms, checklists, work plans). (**Annex 4:** Fieldwork attachments). And the final training was on the equipment – care and use. Included also in this equipment training was how to edit the videos and uploading these onto the ICH website in order for the Project Supervisors and the Project Manager to monitor and evaluate from the Ministry.

We have yet to train the 6 Researchers from the Northern Groups and the remaining 2 researchers from the Southern Group. Transport, Shipping, Corvid and the unavailability of the researchers at the time of the first date for training have been a major delay in the capacity building activity hence the different times allocated. We are looking to train the remaining researchers next month during the school holidays mainly because two of our researchers are teachers and this would give enough time for the Northern Group Islands to be fully vaccinated and approved to travel to the main island for the training.

Not only is the Ministry of Cultural Development responsible for driving the implementation of the ICH Project, it must collaborate with another agency to assist with the Project. The Ministry is currently negotiating with the Ministry of Education in terms of assisting the project especially in the Outer Islands; a) Main School on the island being the depository (Are Korero) for the information collected during this project b) Schools' privilege to internet data can be shared by the Researchers to upload their data onto the ICH website c) Access to information is shared with the school community and the island community after final approval from the ICHPT Team here at the Ministry of Culture d) that the Ministry of Education create a curriculum in the school to enable the use of collected data to allow for maximum usage. e) to provide storage space for the ICH equipment during non-project time especially after this project.

The Rarotonga Researchers' equipment on the other hand however must be brought back to the Ministry of Cultural Development during non-project times and especially after the project is completed.

Not fewer than 1000 or more than 1500 words

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.

Unfortunately at this time of reporting, the Ministry of Cultural Development have not started its Activity 5: which is about Community Engagement and fieldwork survey. Despite that however, in the Recruitment and Selection Processes, the community had a part to play with whom they recommended from their community to do the job. This is the case especially for the Outer Islands, the island councils, island secretaries, and mayors were instrumental in the choice of their people to work with the Ministry on this project. These recommended people however still have to apply for the position and go through the interview process. The Ministry do allow the community to make their suggestion as to whom they prefer but if their candidate do not meet the criteria that the Ministry has set forth, then they have to nominate another person who would fit the criteria but will apply like everyone else. In this way also, the Ministry is giving the ownership back to the community but at the same time assuring also that we got the best person for the job, from the Ministry's point of view – one who can do the job and report on what he or she had done. With the community behind the recruitment and selection process, they can easily support their candidates in terms of availability during the training session and of course the fieldwork.

Community engagement at this time of reporting has been through the Radio Program when promoting the ICH project, emails to the Island Secretaries, Mayors and all users on the government network and the local newspaper during the Recruitment Process. Again, during the Capacity Building time when the researchers had to be trained, the community leaders were also part of the team who supported the release of the Researchers for the training here on the main island of Rarotonga.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words

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: Once the Project for the Peu Karioi is completed, the island community and the schools will have access to the collected information once it has been approved for access by the Ministry of Cultural Development. Schools will be able to have resources/publications from these collections. Gaps on the Peu Karioi can now be filled and accessed by all.

- *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.*
 - Recruitment of the researchers and capacity building
 - The training carried out with the Researchers are designed for them to adapt to other Domains or any other cultural event.
 - Database building with the capacity to hold huge data.
 - The ICH equipment will be stored at the schools for the next project however if the school have an event where they require the use of the ICH equipment, they can always consult with the ICH researcher to film for them.
 - Similarly the same activity can be applied to a different Domain of ICH after the PEU KARIOI project is done.
 - Four Supervisors are supposed to be checking the projects on the islands
- *Additional funding secured as a result of this project, if any. Indicate by whom, how much and for what purpose the contributions are granted.*
 - After this project, the Ministry of Cultural Developments has earmarked for the next budget to focus on a different Domain but financed by the government. The funding is not yet secured but the planning has been discussed.
 - The funding sought through the government will help pay for the researchers to carry out the documentation of a different ICH domain. Also for the administration of the new domain, funding is needed also for any of the equipment should it require maintenance.

Part of the promotion to have Researchers from their own islands and Vakas is so that the Communities take ownership of their Korero or Information. The rationale is that the Taunga Korero will feel at home and confident passing on their knowledge to their own people and not to some stranger they don't know. During the recruitment process, the Island Secretaries and sometimes the mayors recommend from their people who would make the best researcher. There were a few cases where the Member of Parliament even put in their recommendation for the best person for the job.

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).

As mentioned above, the ICH tools/equipment for the Outer Islands will be stored at the main school on the island during non-project times. This is where the partnership with the Ministry of Education comes into play. There is a school on each island so the Ministry of Cultural Development and the Ministry of Education are currently working out an MOU that during non-project times, the main school on the island will look after the equipment until such time they are in use again or if the schools need to borrow for their event with permission from MOCD of course. For the Rarotonga researchers they will need to bring the equipment back to the Ministry of Cultural Development. The Ministry of Cultural Development has already prepared the researchers for the next project in another Domain should they wish to keep on working with the Ministry on these upcoming projects..

Not fewer than 100 or more than 500 words

Lessons learnt

Describe what are the key lessons learnt regarding the following:

- *Attainment of expected results:*

In the Recruitment Process, it was most difficult trying to get applications for researchers from the Northern Group Islands as well as some of the Vakas. Moreso during the interview process, language was also an issue especially with the Northern Group applicants. The Ministry of Cultural Development actually had to request for someone to translate the questions and responses although one of the criteria was to be proficient in spoken and written English and Maori.

- *Ownership of key stakeholders and community involvement*

The Ministry of Cultural Development have yet to engage in the community especially for the ones here in Rarotonga. Although promotion of this project has been on the Radio Program, emails and in the local newspaper, there is a need for the Ministry to do consultations in the Vakas around the island and involving a lot more people so that the work is easier for the researchers and most of all the ownership of the project remains with the Community and stakeholders.

- *Delivery of project outputs*

Another lesson learnt for the Ministry of Cultural Development is with the sourcing of our resources especially with the camera. The current camera is quite small and the Ministry had to purchase phones to allow for better focus on the informant when interviewing, otherwise it was much difficult to see the informant properly.

- *Project management and implementation*

Timeline was an issue with the project management. Some of these issues were beyond our control especially with Corvid involved. The current situation with Corvid presents its own barriers especially in bringing the 20 Researchers all at once to be trained at one go. This is very much causing delay to the implementation of our project. Today the rest of the Northern Group Researchers will be trained next month because their Island Leaders don't want their people to come over to the main Island for fear that the Corvid will spread to their islands.

- *Sustainability of the project after the assistance*

For the sustainability of the project after the assistance, the Ministry should have sourced out a better camera that would last a long time so that we could use them for more projects in the other Intangible Cultural Heritage Domains. Resources sought should be those that are compatible to the Outer Islands environment where data and wireless are not 100% reliable. Hopefully with the current equipment another 2 Domains and their elements can be documented and recorded using these equipment.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 750 words

Annexes

List the annexes and documentation included in the report:

- *evaluation reports*
- *progress reports prepared during the contract period – this is the first progress report for this project.*
- *list of major equipment provided under the project and status after termination of contract period*
- *other (please specify) structure, biodata, and fieldwork attachments,*
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Name and signature of the person having completed the report

Name: Justina Nicholas

Title: Director of Cultural Heritage

Date: 14/3/22

Signature:

