



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: Kenya

Project title:	Documenting and Inventorying Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Pastoralist samburu community in northern Kenya: a focus on the region of Mt. Kulal biosphere reserve
Time frame:	Starting date: 04/12/2015 Completion date: 31/05/2016
Budget:	Total: US\$24,038 <i>Including:</i> Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund: US\$24,038 State Party contributions: US\$4,498 Other contributions: US\$
Implementing agency:	National Museums of Kenya
Implementing partners:	
Contact person:	Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr Family name: Okeyo Opudo Given name: Dennis Institution/position: National Museums of Kenya/Senior Research Scientist Address: 40658 Nairobi Telephone number: 3742131-4/3742161-4 E-mail address: okeyopudo@yahoo.co.uk

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

Over 42 ethnic groups with distinct traditions and practices do exist in Kenya. Cap 216 of Kenya's National Heritage act 2006 recognizes the country's need to safeguard and promote such traditions. Under this policy, the National Museums of Kenya ensures the development and implementation of programmes that promote ICH. The Museum also recognizes the role of inventorying of ICH as one of the tools for safeguarding and promoting living heritage.

Having ratified the 2003 convention, Kenya is obliged to undertake activities that raise awareness about this instrument at the national, local and community levels. This project aimed at engaging communities in documenting and inventorying. The Samburu communities would therefore be able to identify elements of their living heritage, and be made to promote and safeguard them.

The project targeted Mt. Kulal Biosphere reserve, an area basically remote and far isolated from mainstream development thus missing out in basic infrastructure. Other than the Samburu, other indigenous communities in the region of Mt. Kulal include the Rendille, Gabbra, Borana, Turkana, Dassenach and Waata. These communities struggle to make a living and are always in constant competition over pasture and water for livestock; thus making cattle related conflicts common. Such conflicts have over the years threatened ICH of these communities.

Among the Samburu, the transition from boy-child to youth (moranism) is usually marked with a group circumcision exercise that is accompanied with a rich ceremony locally known as "illmuget". This intangible cultural heritage practice has been put under serious threat by conflicts orchestrated by neighbouring ethnic groups. The conflicts largely disrupts calendars of such ritual events. Similarly, external influences have also threatened the continuity of Samburu folk songs, riddles and storytelling. Today, even weather prediction and rain making rituals that hitherto enabled the Samburu to aptly move and sustain their livestock against harsh weather are gradually disappearing as a result of such external influences.

The Samburu are a Nilotic people that are related but distinct from Maasai. They occupy an area that spans over 21,000sq.km. Like the Maasai, the Samburu are semi-nomadic pastoralists moving from one place to another, following patterns of rainfall in search of fresh pasture and water for their livestock. Their main livestock are cattle, sheep, goats and camels.

Samburu are a polygamous community in which a man marries multiple wives; each with her own house that she builds with the help of other women using local materials such as sticks, mud, and cow dung. A thorny fence is built around the huts for protection from wild animals or any foreign aggression. The formation of various houses in one settlement area is known as nkang- meaning manyatta in Kiswahili, which may consist of one man and his family. The huts are constructed to be easy to dismantle and transport when the Samburu move to a new location.

Samburu men care for the cattle and camels, as women care and milk the smaller stock; fetching water, gathering firewood, cooking and tending to children. Duties of boys and girls

are also delineated along the same gender division of labour.

The power of Samburu elders is linked to the belief in their curse, underpinning their monopoly over arranging marriages, and taking on further wives. This they do at the expense of unmarried warrior men (Lmuran/moran), whose development up to the age of thirty is a state of social suspension, prolonging their adolescent status. Moranism is a stage in which all male initiates enter immediately after circumcision at 14 years of age. Among the Samburu, the boys are circumcised every 10-15 years over the previous age-set and when the elders consider the time is ripe for a new age grade to take over the functions of the moran. They get circumcised and in one course become warriors (morans), the preceding age grade retiring and becoming elders.

Among the Samburu, the morans traditionally live together and share everything with their age-set-usually not marrying until the completion of this adolescent period. They typically wear their hair in long braids, which they shave off when they eventually become elders. The hair and body is coloured using red ochre and they usually have large pierced holes in their ears. Moranism among the Samburu is viewed as superior to anything. It involves, not intermingling with other people or even eating food prepared by women. It is an abomination for a moran to be seen by a woman while eating.

Samburu women wear two pieces of shukas with distinct bright colour (mostly blue and purple)-one round the waist and the other over the chest. Women keep their hair shaved and wear numerous necklaces and bracelets as well.

The Samburu indigenous education system is mainly focused on such elements as pasture and water for livestock. Education is essentially seen as helping man in exploiting nature for the satisfaction of his needs and those of his society. Whatever else a Samburu might learn cannot easily compare with his knowledge of livestock. The child and adult alike are told riddles, myths, proverbs and stories pertinent to livestock rearing.

Results of this project are contributing to the overall effort by Kenya in elaborating inventories of ICH among different communities. It adds to development of national inventories and serve as a stepping stone towards future ventures ICH threats, opportunities, and necessary safeguarding measures among other communities. Furthermore, Kenya does not yet have the capacities required for ensuring the effective identification and safeguarding of ICH at the grassroots levels. This project therefore provided an opportunity for capacity building to individuals in the Samburu community in identifying strengths and weaknesses.

Samburu was identified for this pilot project because it remains rich in authentic traditions today. However, many of these traditions are constantly put under threat due to rapidly changing environments and fast pacing economic, political, and cultural influxes. Like other groups in the northern region, the Samburu had not previously received attention with regards to cultural support by the government partly due to their distant proximity from where policies and decisions are usually formulated.

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

This project attained its objectives to the extent that it not only contributed to the overall effort by Kenya in elaborating inventories of Intangible Cultural Heritage of different communities across the country but also Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Samburu for posterity through identification of threats and opportunities. Further, the intervention was able to research and document various elements among the Samburu

while helping to promote as well as revitalize such heritage. In so doing and in the sense of the 2003 Convention, it was possible to build capacity and raise awareness of local people and the communities on the importance of intangible cultural heritage, inventorying, safeguarding and promoting the same ICH for posterity.

Results:

1. An inventory has been established in which all existing ICH elements among the Samburu were identified and documented as a contribution to the country's effort towards elaboration of inventories for safeguarding of ICH of all communities across the country for posterity.
2. Threats and opportunities to ICH of the Samburu were identified and their safeguarding efforts started, various elements documented, promoted and transmitted through formal and non-formal public awareness programmes.
3. Residents of Samburu were fully sensitized, trained and gained knowledge on inventorying, safeguarding and promoting their ICH. This invoked a sense of responsibility and ownership residents for purposes of ensuring continuity and protection of their ICH.
4. A documentary has been produced for dissemination through public education channelled in museums exhibitions
5. The Samburu community at large was sensitized on the significance of ICH; with the knowledge transcending through age-sets including youth, elderly and children thus making them become part and parcel of the safeguarding process.

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 was driven by five key activities described as shown below:

1. A comprehensive Desk Review focusing on what has been written by scholars and heritage researchers on the subject of ICH among the people in the Mt. Kulal biosphere reserve and Kenya at large was done. During the review, emphasis was laid on topical areas covering heritage resource management, oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, rites of passage, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, traditional craftsmanship, folklore as well as ethno-medicinal practices. The exercise involved literature searches on books, websites, journals, periodicals, electronic and print media. Information from these sources have been compiled into a single document that now forms the basis of reference on the project. A booklet has been availed as a one stop resource at the national museums library forming the basis for detailed readership on the Samburu intangible cultural heritage. This can be accessed by the museums visitors, researchers, and students on internship seeking to gain more knowledge regarding the intangible cultural heritage of the Samburu. Efforts are being laid by the National museums of Kenya for making a publication on the subject of intangible cultural heritage of the Samburu. That notwithstanding, it is noteworthy that not many researchers and scholars have written on the samburu intangible cultural heritage. Much of what has been written on the Samburu cultural heritage were mainly found to have been generated largely from non-authoritative sources such as the print media articles and reports.
2. Community consultative meetings were conducted as part of the project initiation process during which members of the Project Implementation Team (PIT) selected twenty (20) indigenous persons from across Samburuland (5) from each of the Samburu focal points i.e

Arapal, Wamba, Baragoi, and Maralal. Much emphasis during this selection was on (i) advanced age (ii) familiarity with Samburu culture (iii) leadership roles and experience regarding Samburu traditional practices. The twenty individuals were then made to serve in the project as the key informants and helped in the planning and coordination of all project activities throughout the implementation period.

From each of the respective focal points, the five selected key informants helped in the formation of 4 different community sensitization and awareness creation groups, each comprising 20 members. It is at this point that each focal points helped in the identification of existing ICH elements in their midst; threats to such elements and available opportunities for enhancing such elements.

3. There were two (2) community-based training workshops geared towards capacity building on inventorying and safeguarding. Each of the workshops lasted 3 days, and conducted at Arapal and Wamba (as opposed to Loiyangalani and Maralal respectively as earlier planned) due to logistical and security challenges during the time of this intervention. There were simmering tensions between the Samburu and Turkana at the lakeshore town of Loiyangalani at the time of the planned workshop. This forced the implementation team to shift the training to the foot of Mt. Kulal's Arapal where there was relative calm. Similarly, due to technicalities related to road transport in the region, participants agreed that the second training workshop be done in Wamba as opposed to Maralal as earlier planned. Reason being that Wamba was perceived to be a neutral ground considering those coming from all the way from Archer's Post at the southern end of Samburuland. The first workshop conducted in Arapal consisted of participants from the locality and those from Baragoi. The second workshop consisted of participants from Wamba and Maralal. With each workshop drawing 20 participants from each of the focal points, 80 direct beneficiaries were trained on inventorying, safeguarding and promoting ICH through the methodology and materials developed for this purpose by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Section of UNESCO within the framework of the global capacity-building strategy for safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage. One UNESCO trained expert by the name Mr. Julius Mwachungu facilitated the two training workshops respectively. In the process, participants gained knowledge on identification, safeguarding, and promotion of the existing intangible heritage in their territories and the need to protect such intangible cultural heritage elements. It is in these same workshops that participants were made aware of the significance of ICH and the need to safeguard and protect it for posterity.

4. A two months (60) day fieldwork was conducted in the months of May and June 2016 to document the Samburu intangible cultural heritage within Baragoi area/cluster. The documentation exercise was delayed as a result of inter-ethnic tensions between pastoralist groups in the month of April. Although the tensions interfered with the project schedule, the delay coincided with the calendar month of the ritual ceremony of Illmuget that usually graduates boys to youth stage (Morans). During this fieldwork and alongside the ritual ceremony of Illmuget, several other Intangible cultural heritage of the Samburu were documented throughout the villages. Assisted by the already identified key informants, it was possible to audio/video record traditional songs, folklore, wisdom in pasture management, weather prediction, riddles, traditional healing, beliefs, rituals, among other traditional practices of the Samburu. From this exercise, resultant documentaries are being featured within exhibitions of the regional museum stations across the country as a means to promote and educate the general public on the significance of intangible cultural heritage. Similar documentaries are also being distributed/disseminated to learning institutions across the country to educate and sensitize students on the need to safeguard intangible cultural heritage of all communities.

5. Kenya being a states party to the 2003 UNESCO Convention this intervention realized an Inventory that is particularly established to boost the country's efforts towards inventorying of ICH. Dissemination of such inventory is also on-going and takes the form of narratives (write-ups) and software media such as audiovisual slides, DVDs and/or USB that are going

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 involvement of the youth, elders and children in this project at the very initial stages will ensure not only cross generational transmission of skills but also continuity in the post project phase.

Sensitized and trained groups will continue with awareness campaigns and documentation at the local levels. Beneficiaries will continue holding meetings within the community and train many more individuals on the newly acquired skills thus resulting to a multiplier effect.

Also, as the project is rolled out among residents of Samburu, it is expected that the implementation team will establish local structures and systems that will ensure continuity in the functions and responsibility in the sense of safeguarding and promotion of intangible cultural heritage for the benefit of the community. Through such established systems and structures, residents themselves will continue to network through the use of acquired skills and knowledge in spreading the word and sensitizing communities in their neighbourhood on the role and significance of intangible cultural heritage and why such is significant to the respective communities for posterity.

The project implementation team will always remain in touch with the communities for purposes of continuous feedback on progress and provision of technical advice on areas of difficulty and need for guidance. This strategy is achievable given that members of the PIT are employees of the National Museums who are always in touch with communities at grassroots levels and are always easily reachable by all cadres in the event of information transmission.

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

Some of the key lessons learnt were as follows:

1. all the age groups (elders and the youth) were very excited and supportive especially during the establishment of an inventory of all existing ICH elements. This was more noticeable especially in their active involvement using simple gadgets such as mobile handsets in recording of the identified elements as a means to assist the project implementation teams
2. In identifying threats and opportunities to ICH, the communities were actively involved and

played a leading role in safeguarding efforts, documenting, and promoting awareness through various organized public programmes during which performances were staged.

3. Since the local residents were fully sensitized and trained, a sense of responsibility was invoked thus ensuring continuity and protection of the Samburu ICH after the financial assistance. It may take awhile to have all residents embrace a sense of responsibility but indicators already exist in the community pointing to the fact that the message is already widespread and through ripple effect it will get to every corner of the region

4. With a documentary already produced and disseminated through public education channels in museums and other partners, more and more learning institutions are already making inquiries for details from the museums regarding the intangible cultural of the Samburu. This is a pointer to the fact that the initiative was a wake up call to all and sundry that intangible cultural heritage of all communities across Kenya is significant and needs to be safeguarded for posterity

5. The project registered marked success given the approach mounted by the implementation team in which communities were involved at all levels. The approach enabled easy establishment of synergies with local leadership structures and efficient communication channels with grassroots partners. By and large, we took cognizance of the fact that the Samburu people are very sensitive to gender and hierarchy in which knowledge and communication must transcend. In this way, the implementation team was able to deal with issues to do with age-sets, elders, women and children thus making them become part and parcel of the safeguarding process without a hitch.

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. Traditional prayer of the Samburu by elders
2. Rain making and weather prediction through reading of animal entrails
3. Songs and dances of the Samburu
4. Traditional rituals of the Samburu (the Ilmuget)
5. Traditional healing systems of the Samburu

Name and signature of the person having completed the report

Name: Dennis Okeyo Opudo

Title: Senior Research Scientist

Date: 27/7/16

Signature:

