



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Intangible  
Cultural  
Heritage

## International Assistance

ICH-05-Report – Form

### REQUEST FOR PREPARATORY ASSISTANCE FOR ELABORATING A NOMINATION FOR INSCRIPTION ON THE URGENT SAFEGUARDING LIST

#### FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

Beneficiary State Party: Timor-Leste

Name of element to be nominated for inscription:	Tais, traditional textile
Geographic location and range of the element:	Tais can be seen throughout the territory of Timor-Leste, composed of 13 municipalities: Aileu, Ainaro, Baucau, Bobonaro, Covalima, Dili, Ermera, Lautem, Liquiça, Manatuto, Manufahi, Oecusse and Viqueque. The designs, motifs and colors of Tais vary among and within the municipalities.
Time frame:	Starting date: 30/9/2019      Completion date: 27/3/2020
Budget:	Total: US\$55,000.00 <i>Including:</i> Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund: US\$10,000.00 State Party contributions: US\$20,000.00 Other contributions: US\$25,000.00
Implementing agency:	Timor-Leste National Commission for UNESCO

Contact person:	Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr Family name: Barreto Given name: Francisco Institution/position: Timor-Leste National Commission for UNESCO / Interim Executive Secretary Address: Avenida da Patria, Antiga rua Mouzinho de Albuquerque, Beco da UNAMET C/O Kampung Infordepe, Balide, Dili, Timor-Leste Telephone number: +670-331-0123 / +670-7706-2222 / +670-7727-1829 E-mail address: tlnationalcom@gmail.com
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### Process of elaborating the nomination

*Provide a description of the process that was used to elaborate the nomination. Explain the mechanisms employed for fully involving the communities, groups, or if applicable, individuals concerned in the preparation of the nomination.*

*Not fewer than 200 or more than 500 words*

National Tais stakeholders' workshop was held in 2017, recommending to nominate Tais to UNESCO's list. In 2018, another workshop was held with the participation of the women Tais weavers from across Timor-Leste.

Building on these efforts, National Workshop "Protecting, Preserving, and Promoting Tais: the Road towards UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage Recognition" was conducted on 23 April 2019, where the weavers, together with government, NGOs, and international agencies discussed the difficulties that the weavers are facing about Tais. In this workshop, National Committee for Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH Committee) was also established, beginning to prepare the nomination file of Tais.

The ICH Committee shared the roles among its institutional members as follows; Secretariat of State for Art and Culture leading the completion of information on identification and definition of the element, as well as examination and follow-up of the national inventory; Alola Foundation coordinating development and elaboration of the safeguarding plan while National Commission for UNESCO coordinating budget for the safeguarding plan; Ministry of Tourism, Commerce and Industry leading in-depth consultation with the local communities; Timor Aid leading selection of the photos and production of the video; and USAID's Tourism for All Project, UN Women and UNESCO Field Office providing technical assistance in the overall process.

During the preparation process, ICH Committee conducted four field visits to have in-depth consultation with the local communities, in particular with the women Tais weavers and the community leaders, in Aileu, Ermera, Liquiça and Manufahi Municipalities in October and November 2019. This was to follow-up with the local communities which were not present in the national workshop in April 2019 and have not taken part in any activities at national level.

Building on these processes, Consultation Forum "Protecting, Preserving, and Promoting Tais: the Road towards UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage Recognition" was held on 4 December 2019, bring together national stakeholders of Tais, especially the representatives of the weaver groups and 'xefe suku' (elected village chief). In this event, the ICH Committee made presentations on all progress of the nomination preparation, followed by discussion involving all participants verifying the draft safeguarding plan that was developed by ICH Committee after the discussion in the national workshop in April 2019. After all of the program finished, the weavers and 'xefe suku' provided their written consents to the nomination.

In January 2020, ICH Committee conducted four more field visits to follow-up with the weaver groups' representatives and 'xefe suku' who were not present in the forum. Further follow-ups were taken in March 2020.

### Preparatory measures supported financially by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund

*What are the specific activities in the process of elaborating the nomination that were financed by the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund? Please indicate the nature and sequence of such activities (e.g. a film or photos necessary for the submission of a nomination, the organization of consultations with communities, expert services for the preparation of a nomination, translation services, etc.).*

*Provide information concerning only the specific measures that were funded by this preparatory assistance request.*

*Not fewer than 300 or more than 750 words*

In general, there were four specific activities implemented, which were covered by Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund in the process of elaborating nomination.

(1) Extraordinary meetings of the National Committee for Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH Committee): The extraordinary meetings was held five times between November 2019 and March 2020, to develop and elaborate the safeguarding plan for Tais. In this process, the ICH Committee compiled the voices from the women Tais weavers raised in the national workshop held in April 2019, identified the potential activities to mitigate the challenges that weavers are facing, determining the responsibilities within the ICH Committee to implement the activities, and developed the timetable and budget to implement the activities. One of the extraordinary meetings was held together with three women weavers for them to verify the draft safeguarding plan of Tais.

(2) Field visits for in-depth consultation with the communities: The ICH Committee conducted four field visits to have in-depth consultation with the weavers and the community leaders in Aileu, Ermera, Liquiça and Manufahi municipalities in October and November 2019. This was to follow up with the communities which were not present in the national workshop in April 2019 and have not yet taken part in any activities at national level. During these field visits, the women weavers and community leaders were very satisfied and agreed to the nomination. Another series of field visit was conducted in January 2020, conducting another four field visits to Aileu, Baucau, Bobonaro, Covalima, Ermera, Lautem, Manatuto and Viqueque municipalities, in order to have in-depth consultation with the women weavers and community leaders who were not present in the forum in December 2019.

(3) Consultation forum in Dili (capital city): Consultation Forum "Protecting, Preserving and Promoting Tais: the Road towards UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage Recognition" was held on 4 December 2019. The forum brought together 121 participants including the Tais weavers and the community leaders throughout Timor-Leste from all 13 municipalities, as well as government, NGOs, international agencies, academia and handicraft industries. The objective was for the weavers and community leaders to review together the nomination file of Tais including the safeguarding plan. The weavers and community leaders were divided into groups, expressing their own thoughts about the draft safeguarding plan. Upon the discussion, the weavers and community leaders provided their written consent on the nomination.

(4) Video and photos: First, existing videos of Tais produced by various stakeholders were collected to build up on the previous efforts. Then, in order to reflect the up-to-date voices of the women weavers, three women weavers from Covalima, Lautem and Oecusse Municipalities were invited to have video shooting of their interviews. The footages were then edited into one video describing Tais and its cultural meanings, production process, transmission, and its modern use. With regard to the photos, existing photos of Tais taken by various stakeholders were collected, describing the production process of Tais, its transmission, social function and cultural meanings of Tais, and economic aspects of Tais.

## Lessons learnt

*What are the key lessons learnt regarding the following:*

- *Attainment of expected results. Also describe any unexpected results, direct or indirect, whether positive or negative from the nomination process if applicable.*
- *Ownership of key stakeholders and community involvement*
- *Delivery of project outputs. Also describe any other indirect outputs (e.g. capacity built, additional funding secured).*
- *Project management and implementation*

*Not fewer than 300 or more than 750 words*

The most successful result obtained during the nomination process was the involvement of local communities. For example, the consultation forum brought together the Tais stakeholders and the local communities' representatives concerned on Tais from all over Timor-Leste. This led to the attainment of the expected results by elaborating the safeguarding plan together with weavers and 'xefe suku'. In the event, they proactively participated, providing feedback and inputs, and in the end reached consensus on the safeguarding plan and the nomination.

In the organization of the consultation forum, additional in-kind contributions were gained from USAID's Tourism for All Project as well as UN Women; the former covering the organization cost and the latter covering the travel cost for women weavers. This made it possible for the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund to focus on the travel cost for 'xefe suku' or the local community leaders. With these contributions, the forum was able to broaden the participation of local communities than initially planned.

However, due to inadequate communication, some of the 'xefe suku' were not present in the consultation forum. In order to follow-up with them, additional field visits were conducted, using the saving from the forum.

Besides the local communities, the project has also brought together various stakeholders onto one platform. Previously, there were many government institutions, NGOs, and international agencies working on Tais, however, in many cases, they were working separately and not necessarily working together. The project, led by the newly established National Committee for Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH Committee, composed of Secretariat of State for Art and Culture, Ministry of Tourism, Commerce and Industry, Secretariat of State for Equality and Inclusion, Timor-Leste National Commission for UNESCO, Alola Foundation, Timor Aid, UNESCO Field Office, UN Women and USAID's Tourism For All Project), created a common platform for these stakeholders to work together with the local communities on Tais. By distributing the roles and responsibilities among the different institutions in the committee, each of the institutional members felt more engaged and have shown high commitment to the safeguarding of Tais through the nomination.

Through the activities, the local communities, in particular the weavers, developed their understandings and became more aware of the value of their culture they are practicing. On the other hand, staff of the institutional members of the ICH Committee raised their capacity to interpret between the international context and the local context regarding intangible cultural heritage.

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

Name: Manuel Ximenes Smith

Title: Director General for Art and Culture, Secretariat of State for Art and Culture / President of National Committee for Intangible Cultural Heritage of Timor-Leste

Date: 27/03/2020

Signature: 