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Intangible Cultural Heritage

International Assistance

ICH-04-Report – Form

INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE FUND

FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

Beneficiary State(s) Party(ies): Lao PDR

Project title:	Capacity Building for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage through creation of community-based ICH Inventory for Luang Prabang
Time frame:	Starting date: April 2022 Completion date: April 2023
Budget:	<p style="text-align: right;">Total: US\$140,182</p> <p><i>Including:</i></p> <p>Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund: US\$99,886</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">State Party contribution: US\$40,296</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Other contributions: US\$</p>
Implementing agency (contracting partner or UNESCO Field Office):	Department of Information, Culture and Tourism in Luang Prabang, Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, Lao PDR
Contact person:	<p>Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr.</p> <p>Family name: HAEKHAM</p> <p>Given name: Sonesay</p> <p>Institution/position: Technical Staff Officer</p> <p>Address: Department of Information, Culture and Tourism, Luang Prabang</p> <p>Telephone number: +856 20 5519 9529</p> <p>E-mail address: department.ict.luangprabang@gmail.com</p>
Partner agency (in the case of a service from UNESCO project):	
Implementing partners:	Department of Information, Culture and Tourism in Luang Prabang

Background

Provide a brief description of the situation existing at the time of the request and the need that the assistance aimed to address. For safeguarding of a particular element, provide a description of the element, its viability and why safeguarding measures were required. For preparation of inventories, strengthening of capacities, awareness-raising, visibility or other safeguarding not focussed on a particular element, identify gaps that were to be addressed. For emergency assistance requests, describe the nature and severity of the emergency at the time of the request.

Not fewer than 750 or more than 1000 words

In June 2017, a policy mission was carried out by UNESCO in Lao PDR, conducted by UNESCO accredited experts. There were several recommendations among which was the need of linking safeguarding projects with sustainable development. It is crucial that a thorough understanding of the ICH elements requiring safeguarding is carried out in consultation with the communities concerned before such plans are developed and put into place.

To achieve this, it is required that ICH trainers/resource persons will need tailor-made/contextualized training to become trainers at various levels (at the village level, district level, and national level respectively) and become ICH resource persons for the country to carry on inventorying and implementing safeguarding activities. This will require that training modules for training these trainers will have to be developed. In addition to this, simple manuals will also be developed for communities to understand the basic concepts of ICH, and to be able to carry out an inventory within their communities or village.

Our Laos is also one of the countries affected by the outbreak of covid 19, especially Luang Prabang province from 2019 to February 2022. The whole country has been locked down, making many operations difficult, especially working in the community. From March 2022, the government of Laos began to ease the situation of covid 19 by opening up areas in community areas and people can come to each other and live a new normal of life. The committee in charge of the project had a discussion with the project coordinator and experts to conduct a local level training in the community of the village of Kour Thre Neung, Luang Prabang in an online format, on March 21-25, 2022 with a total of 39 participants, 17 women from 11 districts and 1 city, the purpose of this training:

1. To create seminarians with the ability to register their own cultural heritage.
2. To build seminarians with the ability to spread, encourage and help the community in protecting the cultural heritage.
3. Experimenting with the use of manuals for inventory of ICH, and names created by experts and also correcting some aspects that are not in accordance with the situation of the local Laos in the manual.

After completing the training, the responsible committee, the team consulted and discussed with the project coordinator and experts together to plan for the preparation of the area survey in Luang Prabang province which has been determined in 11 districts and 1 city after preparing the readiness in various aspects of the area. But the spread of the disease has increased in the community of Luang Prabang province in the second round. Therefore, from April to September 2022, some areas in Luang Prabang have been locked down, so they cannot go to the area. At the beginning of October 2022, the government has opened the area for surveying in all communities in Luang Prabang. Therefore, the team has determined to survey the area in the community of Luang Prabang from November 16, 2022 to February 15, 2023.

1. Try to use the manual for inventory of ICH by the community that has been improved in the actual community of Luang Prabang province.
2. Disseminate the creation of a plan for the safeguarding of ICH that is at risk of

disappearing in Luang Prabang.

3. To be able to identify and collect statistics on cultural heritage topics in the community area by community members as self-identifiers and to be able to assess the risks of ICH element in the community area as well as to discuss with the community in creating a plan to safeguarding of ICH element.

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

The project has achieved the objectives and goals set in surveying the area in 11 communities and 1 city of Luang Prabang province by emphasizing that community members in each district recognize and understand how to inventory of ICH by themselves and can create a safeguarding plan for ICH elements that are at risk of being lost.

Also, the project has strengthened the skills of using the handbook as a basis for inventory of ICH by the members of their own community and can identify the risks to the ICH subject in their own community and can bring the various aspects of the ICH work to the members of the community through inventory and creating a safeguarding plan .

164 state officials in the Information, culture and tourism office in each city and community members in 11 cities and 1 city were trained in inventory of ICH and fully aware of creating ICH safeguarding plans for their own communities. This is the best way to carry out activities in the future, as well as a good condition for surveying the actual area of Luang Prabang province, so it can be seen in the identification of ICH topics of each community in 11 districts and 1 city of Luang Prabang province, which is rich and diverse in the ICH element of Luang Prabang and can create a list of ICH elements that are unique to the 13 tribes in Luang Prabang province. At the same time, the community can also identify the ICH element that are at risk of disappearing in the community and find a way to protect the ICH topic according to its own plan.

As a whole, the project can be achieved according to the objectives and goals set in the plan of activities initially set and can indicate the successful results of the project as well as the creation of various strategies under the operation of the activities of the project as:

1. Can create 35 national level trainers on ICH work throughout the country.
2. Can create local trainers and trainers in the community of Luang Prabang province in 11 districts and 1 city, totaling 164 peoples, both community and government officials.
3. To be able to create a guidebook for ICH registration and a form of creating a safeguarding plans that is suitable for the actual situation of Laos, especially for the community of Luang Prabang province.
4. Be able to inventory the ICH list of Luang Prabang province and be able to identify elements that are at risk of disappearing with priority in creating a safeguarding plans.
5. Can publish a manual for ICH inventory by the community and creating a safeguarding plans for the ICH topic of the Luang Phabang community.

Description of project implementation

Provide a description of the activities undertaken and the outputs they generated (e.g. trainings, consultation process, technical assistance, awareness raising, publications, toolkits, etc.). Also describe any problems encountered in project delivery and corrective actions taken. Describe the role of the implementing agency and of the partner agency (in the case of a service from UNESCO project) and the role of other implementing partners in carrying out activities and generating outputs.

Not fewer than 1000 or more than 1500 words

Activity 1: Pilot Community-based Inventory Training for the Communities Workshop for community members from 11 districts in Luang Prabang and its materials development

The aim of this workshop was to introduce the fact that since it is the community who owns the culture and the traditions, and since they are the experts in the practice of the ICH, they are the best people to carry out the inventory. As ICH is part of their lives, it is an ongoing activity and thus they are in a position to keep documenting and recording events, processes and activities at any time. This is also in consonance with the 2003 UNESCO Convention and its Operational Directives. The workshop was highly interactive in which the participants contributed their own ideas about how a community can take ownership of its own culture.

The workshop was organized on 21-25 March 2022, with 46 participants including community members, members from institutions, schools and universities, a representative from an INGO and government officers.

The IA ICH team members including eight representatives from DICT LP, Luang Prabang World Heritage Office, Supphanuvong University, Santhipap School, IT Technician – Photographer, and Traditional Arts and Ethnology Centre (TAEC), prepared the workshop together with the ICH Expert Facilitator Dr. Shubha Chaudhuri, and UNESCO Culture Programme Officer, Ms. Kamonrat Chayamarit. The aims of the workshop and the workshop materials were explained and trained to the IA ICH team members, especially the facilitators guide. DICT LP were selecting the community representatives/members from all the 11 districts and 1 capital. The IA ICH Team undertook documentation of two ICH elements in Had Hien communities for Meet Cha Nak and Hmong Khaen in order to give inputs to develop the Me and My Village booklet. The community members from the communities also were selected to take part in the workshop and be the leaders in their communities later on.

The success are;

-A facilitators team has been officially set up who can train or guide and support community members to be able to carry out their own inventory, including working with community members to create a pilot inventory. These facilitators team has also learned and practiced what their role are as facilitators, and how to support the community, not treating them as informants.

-A group of community leaders from 11 districts and one capital in Luang Prabang province has been created to continue the work in the communities. Most importantly all those who participate in this workshop have committed to working for the entire duration of the project and to working to empower and train the community members.

The workshop has become Community Trainers or Facilitators, and created a framework for collaboration.

-The basics of the convention and inventorying seemed to have been comprehended. However, the idea of a community led inventory, free prior informed consent or community ownership would need a lot more efforts in the times to come. A small team that is in a position to train and support the inventory will surely help this endeavor. A positive outcome noticed was the result of the constant inclusion of safeguarding issues as part of inventorying was that most participants had included safeguarding elements in their

exercises.

Activity 2: Survey the area in 11 districts and 1 district of Luang Prabang province between November 18, 2022 and February 8, 2023.

In this survey, our team of facilitators from DICT along with 8 project leaders visited the actual area in 11 districts and 1 city starting from

1. Pak Ou District, November 16-18, 2022
2. Chomphet District, November 28-30, 2022
3. Phou Khun District, December 12 - 14, 2022
4. Chieng Ngen District, December 18 - 20, 2022
5. Nan District, December 21 - 23, 2022
6. Phon Thong District, December 26 - 28, 2022
7. Phonxai District, January 2 - 4, 2023
8. Pak cheng District, January 9 - 11, 2023
9. Vieng Kham District, January 16 - 18, 2023
10. Nambak District, January 23 - 25, 2023
11. Ngoy district, January 30 - February 1, 2023
12. Luang Prabang City, February 6-8, 2023

The objective of the survey in 11 districts and 1 city this time:

1. To test the use of the Me and My Village handbook that has been revised in the local training series at the Kour Three Neung Village of LuangPrabang city, with the improvement of the ICH Expert Facilitator Dr. Shubha Chaudhuri, and UNESCO Culture Program Officer in the form of training in the actual area of the community in each district.
2. Introduce the process and procedure for creating ICH protection plan according to community risk assessment in 11 districts and 1 city.

The successes are;

1. 164 community representatives in 11 districts and 1 city recognized and understood the use of the manual called Me and My Village.
2. Community representatives in 11 districts and 1 city recognized the detailed process and steps in creating a protection plan to carry out the steps to protect the community's ICH to be sustainable with the community forever.
3. All parties in the community are involved in determining the ICH element of each community in 11 districts and 1 city.
4. 11 district and 1 city can create their own ICH list through actual area surveys in the community and can assess the risks of ICH topics contained in their own community areas.
5. The committee can summarize the list of ICH in 11 districts and 1 city of Luang Prabang province basically. Also identify some ICH topics that are at risk of disappearing for each community throughout Luang Prabang province through the selection of topics from representatives of each community in 11 districts and 1 city.
6. Create a facilitator for ICH inventory that represents 164 community members from the public sector and community members in the area and this group of people will become an active group in encouraging, promoting and advertising the protection of ICH in their own community. In addition, the facilitators in the community will become coordinators between local to district, provincial and central levels in the implementation of ICH work in the future.

Community involvement

Provide a description of the mechanisms used for fully involving the community(ies) concerned. Describe not only the participation of the communities as beneficiaries of the project, but also their active participation in the planning and implementation of all activities.

Not fewer than 300 or more than 500 words

Surveying in 11 communities and 1 city is a very important encouragement and promotion in the protection of ICH in Luang Prabang province because the community of each district, especially the representatives of that community, can participate in coordinating with the owners of ICH in the community and know the state of movement of the ICH element and is an important participant in communicating with the community that is involved in the ICH work of their locality and the facilitators are the main fruit in the facilitation of the ICH inventory in their own community. According to the main spirit of the 2003 Convention of ICH protection of humanity based on the community for the overall benefit of the community.

Therefore, the surveying of the area is the responsibility of the committee, especially the team has coordinated and met with the coordinator, discussed various aspects with the ICH Expert Facilitator and the facilitator, coordinated the project from UNESCO Bangkok many times before going to the area in Luang Prabang province.

The team members and heritage owners of the ICH elements in the Luang Prabang province were identified by the team and experts as models for the collection of elements to submit to the International Expert to be integrated into the training materials development through the community of Luang Prabang. The team has been in close contact and consultation with the community, in order to collect the information clearly, which was very important in developing a good and consistent guide to the community in Laos.

In preparation, we were working with stakeholders to focus on the development of community ICH safeguarding by identifying stakeholders from government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and communities in 11 districts and 1 city of Luang Prabang province as follows:

- Participants from communities in 11 districts and 1 city: 164 peoples
- Participants from the DICT: 8 peoples

This training was very important to provide participants with a clear understanding of the importance of the 2003 Convention, the various aspects of our ICH inventory facilitation. At the heart of this training was the participation of all, especially the community members, in determining their ICH work plans in their own community, in the management, so that everyone in their community was fully involved for the maximum benefit of their community.

The free form consents were obtained every time prior to going into the communities. List of participants attached.

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 sustainability of the project is ensured by the community ICH leaders being trained identified as a culture focal point and committed to transmit all the knowledge gained about how to use the guidebook to raise awareness and assist the other community members in inventorying and documenting their own ICH. Those focal points were also acknowledged by the DICT LP and networked well among themselves. Each community also took on the guidebook and will find opportunities to translate them into their ethnic languages as appropriate in order to contextualise them to fit their community context and also engage youth in their communities in making inventory, documenting and safeguarding their own ICH. The DICT LP plans to maintain the network for the ongoing ICH projects and the future project in order to build upon and strengthen the capacity gained during this IA project.

The Me and My Village is being designed and will be proposed for officially adopted as an official reference to work on ICH at the community level, and later will be adjusted to fit the school and academic context.

Lessons learnt

Describe what are the key lessons learnt regarding the following:

- *Attainment of expected results*
- *Ownership of key stakeholders and community involvement*
- *Delivery of project outputs*
- *Project management and implementation*
- *Sustainability of the project after the assistance*

Not fewer than 300 or more than 750 words

The institutions and the community members chosen for participation were a good cross section of those who are related to ICH. The combination of the participants this time was the best mix of government officials all the 11 district ICT offices, academics, and community members. The majority of the participants were community members and the gender balance was well represented. This should be extended in the future.

In summary the feedback from the participants was that they got a basic understanding of the concept of what Safeguarding is and the difference between the various forms. This is as far as one can expect. We have to provide time for concepts to be discussed debated in their community and understood to be absorbed.

The Government of Lao PDR was keen on developing capacity in this area, being encouraged by the successful of the two workshops supported by this IA. The Government of Lao PDR also has borne in mind that an important aspect of the current forms of nomination is that they require more and more exact information on a national inventory and on safeguarding practices in the past, present and future. This was true of all the three forms of nomination. Thus a successful nomination is not only a matter of learning how to prepare a dossier but requires integrity of work done towards the implementation of the

convention, especially of a community based inventory and safeguarding projects that involve the community.

The Government of Lao PDR therefore has developed the ICH workplan and strategy for 2021-2025 including development of safeguarding ICH plan and strategy nation-wide, making the national inventory of ICH under threats and its documentation as well as digitalisation, continuing enhancing the competency of Lao PDR in safeguarding the ICH with the focus at the community level, and to strengthen the regional and international cooperation towards the safeguarding the ICH.

Role of the UNESCO Bangkok Liaison Officer:

The role of Project or Workshop coordinator Ms. Mali Kamonrat Chayamarit was a very critical one and aided substantially in the success of the workshop. Her role is not to be confused with that of a trainer (or Facilitator in the UNESCO parlance) but one that was needed to pull together the various strands that are essential in such a program as well as contextualise the materials and liaise with the IA ICH Team and also to continue assist the Government of Lao PDR in ICH work in the country.

Kamonrat was very useful in the communication with the Heritage Department, DICT LP and the UNESCO accredited trainer or facilitator. Direct communication for the expert with the Heritage Department was desirable but not easy given various factors. As Kamonrat is in charge of Lao PDR at the UNESCO Bangkok office she is in constant touch with the government agencies and thus has necessary experience. Her knowledge of the 2003 Convention also aids in keeping the programs that are planned in keeping with the spirit of the 2003 Convention. Most importantly she has been involved with the Capacity Building workshops which were organised by UNESCO since 2013 as well as the Heritage Department and thus is familiar with all the issues. She played a key role in the organisation regarding the TOR for the expert, the schedule of the workshop, the content of the materials and workshop programme and communication lines on both sides. During the workshop she provided support by introducing the convention, providing assistance in carrying out the exercises, contextualise the discussions and general coordination.

Role of the Trainer:

The role of the UNESCO Accredited Trainer, Dr. Shubha Chaudhuri, has been significant to bring the workshop up to the international standards especially under the framework of UNESCO 2003 Convention of which Lao PDR has ratified since 2009. Dr. Shubha Chaudhuri has been familiar with Lao context because she was appointed to be a facilitator for all the capacity building series implemented in Lao PDR since 2011. Dr. Shubha has extensive experience in the areas of audio visual archiving and ethnomusicology for over the decades. Her field work in India and South Asia also provided comparative inputs and expertise into all the workshops she co-facilitated. She also is an expert in issues related to intellectual property rights in the areas of intangible cultural heritage.

The role of the trainer(s) and coordinators in Lao PDR is very crucial because those persons need to have background knowledge of the region and the context of the country, combined with right attitudes, patience and perseverance towards the longer term safeguarding the ICH in Lao PDR.

We are also an important part in the implementation of the activities of the project to achieve the results according to the plan, representing his government in promoting the ICH protection guidelines of the nation, in general, in Luang Prabang province.

Based on the principle of important content according to the 2003 convention to remain and continue in the future and be a very important unit in the activity of ICH in Luang Prabang province.

Able to improve information on ICH work to match the social situation as a whole, the team is an important part in communicating and coordinating with facilitators in the Luang Prabang community to exchange information and discuss with the community to promote

technical assistance in carrying out various activities in the future.

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)*

ANNEX I: Me and My Village Final (word doc. version)

ANNEXII: Participants list of the 11 districts and 1 city (version lao language)

ANNEX III: Draft the list of ICH in 11 districts and 1 city (version lao language)

ANNEX IV: Photos of survey in 11 districts and 1 city

Name and signature of the person having completed the report

Name: Sonesay Haekham

Title: Technical Staff Officer

Date: 2 April 2023

Signature:

