



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: Mongolia

Project title:	Safeguarding and revitalizing the Mongolian traditional epic
Time frame:	Starting date: 30/09/2013 Completion date: 31/07/2016
Budget:	<p style="text-align: right;">Total: US\$185,000</p> <p><i>Including:</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund: US\$107,000</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">State Party contributions: US\$78 000</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Other contributions: US\$</p>
Implementing agency:	Center of Cultural Heritage, Mongolia
Implementing partners:	<p>Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO</p> <p>"Association of Mongol Tuuli" NGO</p> <p>Local Cultural Centres</p> <p>Institute of Language and Literature at the Mongolian Academy of Sciences</p>
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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

Mongol Tuuli – Mongolian epic is an element included in the category of the rare and invaluable intangible cultural heritage of Mongolia and in 2009 the UNESCO has inscribed the element on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.

The epic is a living oral expression that is crucial for the cultural identity of the Mongolian people and for the historical continuity of their nomadic lifestyle. The Mongolian epic plays an important role in the traditional education of younger people living in the communities where it is performed.

Evolving over a span of many centuries to eulogize and immortalize Mongolian heroes, these epics constitute an oral encyclopaedia of national histories, myths, legends and folk songs. Epics are learnt by rote and transmitted from fathers to sons within kinship circle. Currently there are only about ten epic performers living in the remote western region of Mongolia who maintain and transmit these Tuuli performing traditions. Today, they survive only in the western region and the capital city, Ulaanbaatar.

As for a nomadic people who are not typically all mastered in reading and writing due to their mobile lifestyle, the heroic epic was an irreplaceable oral tradition which allows them learn and transmit their rich cultural heritage and immortalize heroic history of Mongolian people.

Epic singers are renowned for their remarkable memory, imagination and commitment. Professional singers traditionally perform specific epics during social and public events, such as state affairs, wedding ceremonies, the Naadam festival, a child's first haircut, hunting expeditions and the worship of sacred sites. In ordinary households, epics are traditionally performed at night-time. Mongolian heroic epics can last several hours and some are performed over several nights.

The Mongolian epic is one of forms of traditional folk oral expressions which consist from hundreds to thousands of lines. The epic is not only an oral expression but it is a phenomenon which combine different poetic narrative techniques and vocal improvisation.

During the seventy years of the Mongolian People's Republic, traditional nomadic lifestyle and traditional culture were suppressed. In its aftermath, Mongolia experienced continued rapid urbanization against a backdrop of increasing globalization. As a consequence, the Mongolian epic lost its traditional place in the culture, and interest decreased correspondingly among the general public. The number and distribution of epic performances diminished drastically as a result.

Mongolian epics were once found across Mongolia. In today's Mongolia, traditional nomadic lifestyles continue to face pressure from increased internal migration and industrialization. Trained professional epic masters have decreased in number and the repertory of existing performers has diminished, with the few remaining epic performers increasingly performing only parts of epics, largely on specific social and ceremonial occasions. The skills and talents of existing Tuuli performers are diminished compared to the singers of the past, and the safeguarding measures, if taken quickly, could revive the Mongolian epic. There is consequently an urgent need to strengthen and transmit the skills and techniques of the few existing traditional epic bearers to prevent its permanent loss.

Therefore, the urgent organization and implementation of the coherent set of safeguarding

measures with the support under this project is indeed crucial for the revitalization of the Tuuli and further to ensure its viability, transmission and sustainability.

Under the support of this project the coherent set of safeguarding measures are expected to be implemented with aims to revitalize and safeguard the epic, ensure its viability and sustainability, such as conducting traditional apprenticeship-training courses, organizing various public events such as exhibitions, festivals or seminars.

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

Objectives

The aim of the project is to revitalize and safeguard and transmit the epic.

The objectives are to:

- Strengthen the research and establish registration-information database through a field-survey focusing on the current state of epic;
- Improving the viability of the epic by training new generation of performers, while also reviving traditional method of apprenticeship-training;
- Improving the capacity-building of the bearers, concerned NGOs, community-based organizations and professionals by involving in safeguarding measures;
- Raise the awareness among general public through production of media and;
- Produce 10 Volume serial books on epic;
- Extend the Project activity to the regional level through organizing the "Central Asian Epics" Regional Symposium Festival-II.

Results

- Database created from registration and documentation materials gathered during Filed survey. This database is to be enriched and improved year by year basis even beyond the completion of the Project;
- The traditional apprenticeship method restored. Apprentices received trainings and 30 new epic performers were born;
- Revitalized the Durvud, Bayad, Uriankhai and Khalkha tribes epics and restored more than 7 forgotten epics.
- Raised interest to learn epic among young generation, especially Western in provinces and Ulaanbaatar city.
- Through the activities, awareness of the importance and understanding to revitalize and safeguard the element were raised;
- The epic performers' skills and talents have significantly improved, their repertoire enriched and some forgotten epics revived;
- 11 Volume serial books on Mongol Tuuli were published and contributed to the revitalization and sustainability of epic;
- Awareness will have increased at the regional level from the organization of Symposium Festival-II.

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 Centre of Cultural Heritage had a direct involvement in elaborating the planning and management of the plan, elaborating the contracts between government organizations, NGOs, epic performers and students, organizing the regulations and management of available human resources. All the relevant information and data of the epic performers are being kept in the national archive of the Centre of Cultural Heritage. Mongolian Tuuli is listed in the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Territory of Mongolia, where it is prioritized as Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. The Centre of Cultural Heritage also bears the responsibility to conduct the multiple responsibility of monitoring and preparation of the process and final report of the project in cooperation with Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO.

This project's actions carried – out in 3 stages focused on the following activities. (Please, refer to the Appendix for the detailed Activity Reports of each stage):

A: Field study and inventorying

At the onset of the project, a field survey was undertaken to focus on the current state of Epic, its repertoire and associated customs and rituals.

A.1. Identification and documentation of epic performers

A.2. Creation of a registration-information database

B: Safeguarding and Transmission

B.1. Training Workshop (2 days and 25 participants including lecturers, epic performers and apprentices)

B.2. Apprenticeship training

Conducted the apprenticeship-method trainings for revival and transmission. Each home-tutoring apprenticeship training centre is to train 2-3 students and transmit 1-2 epics along with the technique. Epic training centres were established at schools and theatres, involving the participation of practitioners and expert scholars, as well as the use of audio-video recordings to restore forgotten epics. Rituals and customs related to epic performance will also be restored – primarily, the tradition of reciting epics during public and family festive events and rituals.

Musical equipment /*ikel, tovshuur*/ were produced and delivered for apprenticeship training centres.

In October, 2015 with support of Ministry of Education, Culture and Science we have opened the Centre of Great Epic in Palace Museum of Bogd Khaan. The centre will provide to epic trainer-bearers place to hold the training in capital city Ulaanbaatar, as well will serve for public to organize rituals and customs related to epic performance, the tradition of reciting epics during public and family festive events and rituals. Also the Centre aims to improve epic performers' skill and talents, to enrich their repertoire and to revive some forgotten epics.

B.3. Production of Guidebook

The Guidebook for epic practitioners with contents including particularly the various techniques of epic performance and traditional knowledge of transmission was produced and published in collaboration of implementing organization, partners and epic performers. Its purpose is to provide them with step by step complete guide on the technique to learn epic. Distribution of the guidebook to concerned individuals will also contribute to raising the awareness among epic bearers, ethnic groups and general public, and capacity building of concerned NGOs, community-based organizations and professionals.

B.4. Evaluation Performance-Meeting of Trainers-Epic Performers and Apprentices

The scope of the "Evaluation Performance-Meeting of Trainers-Epic Performers and Apprentices" is to examine and evaluate the progress of the trainings, improvement of skills and knowledge of both trainers and apprentices. The event was held once in every two years starting from 21st month of Project initiation with aims to evaluate the state of implementation of the training activities, quality of improvement of the bearers' knowledge and skills and enrichment of their repertoire.

C: Awareness raising, dissemination and promotion

C.1. Documentary

Documentary on the Mongolian epic and epic performers will serve as an interactive and practical tool to educate children and youth as well as community. Materials from research and field survey documentations will widely be utilized in the Documentary. During the project implementation were produced and broadcasted national wide 3 documentaries and 2 TV series.

C.2. Media production

The media production aims to further raise the awareness of various groups of people about the importance of preserving the Mongolian Traditional Epic. It serves as to popularize the epic performers and advertise them through TV, newspapers and magazines as well. Each activity was disseminated through media.

C.3. Serial publications (10 Volume)

Overall 11 Volume Serial publications were produced within much larger scope and contents than the Guidebook mentioned in activity B and the publication from Symposium mentioned below. Serial publications covered every text of epics from various ethnic groups in Mongolia and existing materials abroad concerning the Mongolian epics. There is also a significant amount of research materials and texts of epics collected since 1940s in Mongolia that has never been published before. These Volumes will serve as the important and main accessories for research, study, dissemination and transmission.

All publications will contribute to raising the awareness among epic bearers, ethnic groups and general public, and capacity building of concerned NGOs, community-based organizations and professionals. And was distributed to the Central and local libraries, Regional Cultural Centers, the Universities, NGO's and community, bearers.

C.4. "Central Asian Epics" Regional Symposium Festival-II

"Central Asian Epics" Regional Symposium Festival-I was held in 1997. The purpose of the Symposium is to extend the activities of the Project at the Regional level. This activity aims to conduct the Symposium-II entitled "Means of safeguarding the epic, reviving the living tradition of epic performance and ensuring its viability". The Symposium II will lead to the preparation of a Publication focusing on the Symposium results and with additions on strengthening the community based development of Epic which will also contribute to ensuring sustainability of the project outcomes beyond the end of this project.

In August, 2013 the 2nd 'Central Asian Epics' Regional Symposium – Festival was organized in Ulaanbaatar. The 2nd Symposium was entitled "Means of safeguarding in epic, reviving the living tradition of epics performance, and ensuring viability" and involved more

than 100 epic performers, researchers, experts, scholars and specialists from 15 countries.

D: Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

Designated individuals from State Professional Monitoring Organization, NatCom for UNESCO, implementing organization and partners carried out the evaluation and monitoring through the duration of Project implementation. The progress result of the evaluation and monitoring were executed on every aspect of implemented actions and activities under this project at every phase.

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

The safeguarding measures were elaborated with full participation of the ICH bearers, concerned representatives of relevant NGOs, and their opinions and recommendations were freely been reflected in the planning of this project.

The main activities under this project for safeguarding the epic, conducting research, advertising and transmitting to the younger generation were implemented with full participation of the epic performers.

Through the local government administrations and Cultural Centres in each region with epics, the "Association of Mongol Tuuli" non-government organization had main responsibility for ensuring the viability of the epic at the local levels. As a consequence, the "Association of Mongol Tuuli" NGO had established the centralized regulatory groundwork for safeguarding the epic and ensuring its viability.

The epic performers and concerned NGOs involve with dominant role in the project for restoring the apprenticeship method of epic and conduct training for the trainers-bearers under relevant program. The trainers-performers had direct involvement and support for the implementation of this Project, also in the coherent and serial set of training programs.

Bearers of the element, local residents and concerned ethnic groups are the main beneficiary communities. The sense of pride, identity and continuity among these ethnic groups will have increased significantly. There are:

- 'Uriankhai' ethnic epic performers: Kh. Seseer (male), A. Baldandorj (male); A. Dorjpalam (male), N. Damdindorj (male), Sh.Punsantsogvoo (male), E.Baatarjav (male), B.Bayarmagnai (male), B.Bold (male);

- 'Bayad' ethnic epic performers: Ya. Tsegeen (male), N. Ankhbayar (male), N.Namsrai (male).

- Khalkh ethnic epic performer: D.Ulzii (female), Chuluunbaatar (male)

These few epic performers of the above ethnic groups are the ones who have successfully inherited the tradition of epic from their previous generations. The epic today is only in hands of these few artisans and these practitioners participated in every stage of the processes of awareness-raising, training, inventorying, validation and population of the database.

The contract has been signed with following 11 trainers-bearers /A.Baldandorj, L.Baatarkhuu, E.Baatarjav, D.Ulzii, B.Bayarmagnai from Ulaanbaatar, N.Ankhbayar-Uvs province, I.Nergui-Uvs province, E.Mendbayar-Khovd province, N.Damdindorj-Khovd province, B.Bold – Bayan Ulgii province, Chuluunbaatar – Dornogovi province/ and their conducted the apprenticeship-method trainings for revival and transmission with financial support from this project.

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 implementation involved the active participation of national and local authorities, as well as stakeholders. The participation of a wide range of institutions (academic, governmental, NGOs) will reinforce the ownership of the project and sustainability of the results.

The capacity of cultural officers working for the safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage will be increased by improved hands-on, on-site and real time experience for identifying and registering the epic performers, documenting their repertoire with photo and audio-visual recordings, enriching and improving the national database of epic performance and its bearers. The communities take ownership of their own intangible cultural heritage for the purposes of developing transmission systems that are appropriate in the current national context.

As a result of the implementation of the project, the national system for safeguarding and promoting the traditional epic will have set up with its established clear and constant fundamentals and groundwork for sustainability. The public awareness will have tremendously raised, the number of practitioners increased.

Securing preferential treatment in government procurement regulations for the safeguarding ICH will also advance the project's objectives in the long term.

The production of a National Safeguarding and Promotion plan for the ICH that sustain the elements and in order to ensure its viability. Moreover, the strong national ownership enhances the sustainability of the project outcomes.

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

As globalization expands, there is a growing necessity to preserve and pass down our intangible cultural heritage element to future generations. This project greatly contribute for revitalizing and safeguarding the Mongolian epic to the next generation, and raising public awareness not only now but also in the future. It will last constantly to identify and revitalize the Mongolian epic and enhance the young people's knowledge and appreciation upon the

inventories

The repertoire and skills of the current epic singers; increasing the number of the epic heritage bearers and trainers; selecting and training the young learners; formulating the further training system for the transmitting epic performance tradition; and creating socio-cultural environment for the further survival and viability of Mongolian Traditional Epic.

Number of the epic heritage bearers from three to four folded, restoration and revival of the folk rituals and customs associated to the Mongolian Epic, revitalization and acquirement of some forgotten epics, traditional techniques, methods, skills and rituals relative to the narration of epic, and ensuring the maintenance of inheritable characters of epic increased.

The system of identifying, registering and documenting of the epic bearers will have established and further be continued constantly.

The implementation of this project has proved the value of promoting ICH through a holistic approach that puts together public, communities and civil society actors.

In terms of practical challenges faced to the safeguarding of the intangible heritage, a structural problem in the administration should be stressed. In Mongolia, there is a single Ministry in charge of three large sectors: Culture, Education and Sciences. As the issues concerning especially education is crucial in the general policy and budget of the country, the cultural sector, particularly the protection of cultural heritage is undervalued. Consequently, there is not enough financial, professional and technical support for the safeguarding of intangible heritage. Relating to this administrative structure that suffocates the progress of cultural sector, especially safeguarding of intangible heritage, there is an existing lack of a constancy and persistency of cultural activities.

An other-hand, along with increased economic globalization, gaps between wealthy developed countries and low-income developing countries, and gaps between urban centers and rural areas have been expanding that resulted more concerns over safeguarding and maintaining intangible cultural heritage, supporting their bearers and encouraging them to transmit their outstanding talents and skills, as well as strengthening financing sources for such initiatives. Because of shortcomings, there are not enough financial and technical provisions from the Government of Mongolia to the ICH bearers

There are important prerequisites to an efficient structure for safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage in Mongolia, such as a management, regulatory financial framework and its enforcement, capable institutions, skilled human resources, and effective monitoring and supervision.

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)*

- 10 epic volumes
- Progress reports of 3 stages
- Invoices
- Financial statement

Name and signature of the person having completed the report

Name: ENKHBAT Galbadrakh

Title: Mr.

Date: 2016.08.25

Signature:

