

Progress report

Strengthening capacities at the national and local levels for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in the United Republic of Tanzania and contributing to sustainable development

Benefitting country(ies)	Tanzania
Type of funding	Earmarked voluntary contribution to the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund received from the International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO
Amount	US\$ 81,271
Implementing field office(s)	UNESCO Dar es Salaam Office
Reporting period	from October 2022 to September 2024

I. Background & Summary

In line with the effective implementation of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), this project seeks to build the capacity of stakeholders at both national and local levels in the United Republic of Tanzania. Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage is a national priority.

Since ratifying the 2003 Convention in 2011, Tanzania has recognized the importance of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage as a critical component of its cultural diversity and sustainable development strategy. The Ministries of Culture, Arts, and Sports (in mainland Tanzania) and Information, Youth, Culture, and Sports (in Zanzibar) serve as the primary national bodies responsible for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. However, the need for capacity building to ensure effective implementation and active community engagement remains a key challenge. This project aims to address these gaps by providing technical support and fostering collaboration among communities, government institutions, civil society, and universities through tailored capacity-building support.

General Objective

To contribute to sustainable development in the United Republic of Tanzania through capacity building for the implementation of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Specific Objectives

1. Raise awareness of the importance of living heritage in Tanzania and its crucial societal role as a vector of cultural diversity.
2. Build the capacity of institutions, civil society, and communities in community-based inventorying, to ensure better documentation and more effective safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.
3. Improve planning and monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of the Convention.
4. Strengthen Tanzania's capacity to request international assistance from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund.

Expected Outputs

1. Increased awareness of the importance of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage at both local and national levels.
2. Development of a national framework and methodology for community-based inventorying and safeguarding.
3. Mastery of intangible cultural heritage inventorying and documentation techniques by local communities, in collaboration with government bodies, universities, and civil society (through a community-based inventory pilot).
4. Establishment of a key group of resource persons to support the formulation of international assistance requests.

II. Implementation of the project for the period under review

Activity 1: Inception and Awareness Creation Workshop on the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in the United Republic of Tanzania

The Inception and Awareness Creation Workshop on the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Tanzania, held from 21-24 November 2022, aimed to raise awareness about the importance of safeguarding Tanzania's rich cultural heritage. Tanzania, with over 150 ethnic communities, is home to a vast array of intangible cultural elements, including oral traditions, languages, rituals, and performing arts. However, many of these elements remain undocumented, especially in rural areas where marginalization and lack of resources have hindered their safeguarding. Recognizing the critical role of intangible cultural heritage in promoting cultural diversity and sustainable development, UNESCO Dar es Salaam Office supported the workshop as part of UNESCO's global capacity-building programme, emphasizing the urgent need for inventorying these cultural assets to avoid their decline.

During the workshop, 40 participants from various Tanzanian institutions and Zanzibar gathered to discuss key aspects of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding. Presentations covered topics such as the overview of intangible cultural heritage in Tanzania, policy and legal frameworks for safeguarding cultural heritage, and the roadmap for inventorying intangible cultural heritage in the country. The participants divided into groups to prioritize intangible cultural heritage elements that required immediate attention for documentation. Some of the cultural elements identified included the National Independence Torch, Mwakakogwa festival in Zanzibar, traditional boat-building skills along the Tanzanian coast, and Singeli music. These elements were highlighted for further documentation, inventorying, and as potential elements for the preparation of nomination files to the Lists of the Convention.

The workshop also highlighted several challenges facing intangible cultural heritage safeguarding in Tanzania. Documentation efforts remain largely fragmented, carried out by individual researchers rather than through a coordinated national approach. Furthermore, the government has allocated insufficient resources for cultural sectors, limiting the scope of intangible cultural heritage -related activities. The involvement of local communities, particularly elders and youth, in intangible cultural heritage identification and inventorying has been minimal, raising concerns about the sustainability of these cultural practices. Balancing intangible cultural heritage safeguarding with development efforts also remains a challenge, with insufficient progress in profiling the role of intangible cultural heritage as a catalyst for national development.

To address these challenges, the participants recommended practical measures, including the establishment of a national intangible cultural heritage digital database, the formation of a National ICH team, and greater involvement of communities in the documentation process, especially youth, women, and elders. They urged the government to allocate more resources and called for a review of national policies to ensure effective intangible cultural heritage safeguarding. One opportunity for this could be through the periodic reporting exercise which is an obligation of States Parties under the Convention. Moving forward, these recommendations will play a crucial role in safeguarding Tanzania's intangible cultural heritage, promoting cultural diversity, and ensuring that these intangible cultural elements are passed on to future generations.



Activity 2: ICH Documentary

The Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Documentary for the United Republic of Tanzania has been successfully completed, focusing on raising awareness about the safeguarding of the country's rich cultural heritage. Both a full-length documentary (11 minutes and 23 seconds) and a short trailer (1 minute and 10 seconds) were produced, using pre-existing footage to highlight the diversity of cultural practices, traditions, and knowledge across Tanzanian communities. The documentary was made in collaboration with local and national cultural experts to ensure accurate representation, and it includes Swahili and English subtitles to reach a wider audience.

Throughout the production process, the team faced several challenges, such as limited and varying quality of the available footage, which required significant enhancement during post-production. Additionally, the continuity of the narrative was carefully constructed through script development, editing, and sound design to maintain a cohesive story across different time periods. Creative solutions, including the use of narration and collaboration with experts, helped overcome these challenges and produced a compelling documentary that highlights the importance of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.

The completed documentary is now ready for distribution and is expected to play a key role in raising awareness about the importance of safeguarding Tanzania's intangible cultural heritage. The dissemination strategy targets a wide range of audiences, including the general public, youth, cultural organizations, and educators, using digital platforms, cultural festivals, educational events, workshops and seminars. By utilizing existing footage, the documentary not only safeguards valuable cultural knowledge but also promotes intergenerational transmission of Tanzania's intangible cultural heritage, fostering appreciation for cultural diversity and encouraging active participation in its safeguarding. Key events for its dissemination include the Cultural Officers Meeting which includes cultural officers from different parts of the country, working under the Government and a youth dialogue event on intangible cultural heritage.

Activity 3: Community-based inventory

The Capacity-Building Workshop on Community-Based Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) was held from 8th to 13th July 2024 at Oceanic Bay Hotel in Bagamoyo, Tanzania facilitated by UNESCO facilitator Lovemore Mazibuko. The workshop aimed to strengthen national capacities for implementing the 2003 UNESCO Convention. It gathered 20 participants from various public institutions and NGOs across mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar, including representatives from the Ministry of Culture, National Museums, universities, communities and media houses. The workshop focused on orienting participants on the Convention, enhancing capacities in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, and providing skills for community-based inventorying.

The workshop combined theory and fieldwork, starting with presentations on the definition of culture, the 2003 Convention, the five domains of intangible cultural heritage, and threats to intangible cultural heritage. Participants engaged in group discussions, practical assignments, and fieldwork exercises, which involved inventorying four intangible cultural heritage elements in Bagamoyo town, such as traditional food preparation and dances. The interactive sessions were conducted in both English and Kiswahili to ensure inclusivity. Despite challenges such as limited equipment and time, participants successfully completed the field inventorying process and demonstrated their readiness to implement intangible cultural heritage safeguarding initiatives.

Looking forward, the workshop recommended that the Tanzanian government develop a National Framework for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and establish a National ICH Committee to guide implementation. Future capacity-building programs should prioritize training community members and providing sufficient resources and equipment. Participants expressed optimism about the future of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding in Tanzania, provided the government continues to support and allocate resources for these initiatives.



Activity 4: Development of the ICH National Framework **First Stakeholders Consultation Workshop**

The Stakeholders' Consultation Meeting on developing a National Framework for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in Tanzania was held from 26-27 June 2024 at TASUBA in Bagamoyo. Organized by the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Sports in collaboration with the UNESCO Dar es Salaam Office, the meeting aimed to bring together key stakeholders to initiate the development of a comprehensive framework to guide the identification, documentation, protection, and promotion of intangible cultural heritage nationwide. The event was attended by 20 participants, including representatives from public institutions, NGOs, government officials from Mainland and Zanzibar, and media representatives.

Key discussions focused on understanding the 2003 UNESCO Convention and the challenges facing the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in Tanzania. Participants expressed dissatisfaction with the current safeguarding practices, citing a lack of documentation, declining numbers of practitioners, and the threat of foreign cultural influence on younger generations. The need for better coordination, research, and public awareness was emphasized. Presenters highlighted that Tanzania has yet to inscribe any intangible cultural heritage elements on the UNESCO Lists, although two elements have been identified in the national inventory.

Stakeholders discussed the importance of developing a National Framework, which will outline priorities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, integrating it into national development plans, and promoting cultural diversity. The framework will also include guidelines for institutional responsibilities, legal frameworks, and resources mobilization. It was agreed that the framework should focus on safeguarding, promoting awareness, and enhancing governance, with an emphasis on community involvement, legal reform, and capacity building. The meeting concluded with a commitment to continue collaboration between the government, UNESCO, and other stakeholders to finalize and implement the framework.

Second Stakeholders Consultation Workshop

The Stakeholders' Consultation Workshop on the development of a National Framework for safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in Tanzania was held from 15th to 16th July 2024 at Oceanic Bay Hotel in Bagamoyo. The workshop, organized by the Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Sports in Tanzania and the UNESCO Dar es Salaam Office, aimed to bring together key stakeholders to develop a strategic guide for identifying, documenting, protecting, and promoting intangible cultural heritage. Twenty participants, including representatives from public institutions, NGOs, and media, attended the workshop to contribute to the framework, which aligns with the 2003 UNESCO Convention.

Discussions during the workshop focused on the purpose, objectives, and expected outcomes of the national framework. Stakeholders agreed that the framework should aim to safeguard Tanzania's intangible cultural heritage by developing policies, guidelines, and legislation that integrate intangible cultural heritage into national development plans. Priority areas included creating an intangible cultural heritage inventory, nominating elements for UNESCO's Lists, raising awareness among communities, and ensuring sustainable financial and technical resources. The importance of involving local communities in intangible cultural heritage safeguarding efforts and promoting collaboration across sectors was emphasized.

Key recommendations from the workshop included establishing a National ICH Committee by 2025 to oversee the implementation of the 2003 Convention and developing mechanisms for capacity building, research, and documentation. Stakeholders also identified various government ministries, NGOs, and international organizations that could support the framework's implementation, including UNESCO, the African Union, and various embassies. Additionally, it was suggested that financial resources be allocated for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage through partnerships with both public and private sectors.

The workshop concluded with stakeholders agreeing on the need for continuous monitoring and evaluation of the framework's implementation, with a major review planned after five years.

Key findings from the consultation process outlining challenges for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in Tanzania:

1. Limited Financial Resources

Challenge: Insufficient funding for the government to conduct comprehensive intangible cultural heritage inventories, documentation, and safeguarding activities. This constraint affects the ability to conduct fieldwork, engage experts, and cover logistical costs for both community-based inventories and intangible cultural heritage framework development.

Solution: Advocate for increased budget allocations from the government and explore partnerships with private sector organizations, international bodies, and development partners for financial support.

2. Lack of Public Awareness and Participation

Challenge: Low levels of awareness among the general public and communities about the importance of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. There is often limited understanding of the benefits of participating in intangible cultural heritage inventorying and safeguarding efforts.

Solution: Implement large-scale awareness campaigns and educational programs to highlight the value of intangible cultural heritage. Use media, schools, and community centers to engage the public and ensure active participation in the safeguarding process.

3. Declining Number of Practitioners

Challenge: The declining number of intangible cultural heritage practitioners, particularly in rural areas, as older generations pass away without transmitting knowledge to younger generations. This results in the erosion of traditional practices and skills.

Solution: Focus on intergenerational transmission by engaging youth and encouraging mentorship programs. Create incentives for younger generations to learn, practice, and preserve intangible cultural heritage elements through education and community initiatives.

4. Lack of Comprehensive Legal and Institutional Frameworks

Challenge: The absence of a specific legal framework dedicated to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage has led to fragmented efforts in inventorying and protecting cultural

heritage. Existing laws are often inadequate to address the unique requirements of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding.

Solution: Develop and enact specific legislation that defines, protects, and promotes intangible cultural heritage. Strengthen institutions responsible for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and clarify roles and responsibilities across government bodies, NGOs, and communities. The framework that we are currently supporting the government to develop is a good start.

III. Direct Beneficiaries, Key Partners and Other Stakeholders

- **Government Officials:** From the Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Sports (Mainland) and the Ministry of Information, Youth, Culture, and Sports (Zanzibar), involved in implementing the National Framework and safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.
- **Cultural Officers:** Responsible for intangible cultural heritage documentation and safeguarding at local government levels and institutions like museums and archives.
- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
- Community Members
- Researchers and Academics
- National Museums of Tanzania
- Private Sector
- Youth
- Media Professionals
- Academic Institutions
- Local Government Authorities

IV. Next steps

1. **Documentary Launch and Youth Dialogue on Intangible Cultural Heritage:** This event focuses on the official screening of a documentary highlighting Tanzania's rich Intangible Cultural Heritage. Following the screening, a youth-centered dialogue will provide an interactive platform for young people to discuss the importance of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, its role in preserving cultural identity, and how youth can actively engage in its promotion. The session aims to raise awareness among younger generations about the value of living heritage and encourage them to participate in cultural heritage preservation efforts.
When: November 2024
2. **Third Stakeholders Consultation Workshop for the National Framework for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage:** The workshop serves as a critical session where key stakeholders, including government officials, cultural practitioners, NGOs, and community representatives, review the National Framework for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage. Participants will provide feedback on the framework's objectives, strategies, and implementation plans. The workshop's goal is to ensure that the framework is inclusive, practical, and reflective of Tanzania's unique cultural landscape, positioning it as a guiding document for the long-term safeguarding of ICH in the country.
When: 19-20 November 2024
Where: Bagamoyo
3. **Preparing request for International Assistance session:** This session aims to inform and train relevant stakeholders on how to access international assistance for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage through mechanisms provided by UNESCO.

The session aims to strengthen Tanzania's capacity to secure international resources for the preservation and promotion of its intangible cultural heritage.

When: 21 November 2024

Where: Bagamoyo