

IV. ICH Practitioners, Groups, Communities

1. ICH practitioners

ICH practices in Fiji especially amongst the indigenous communities are communally safeguarded and implemented. It is not the role of one person to see its manifestation and continuity but the village, the vanua, the entire tribe or the whole clan participates and dialogue over its maintenance and use. Often when a member of the community pursues at his/her accord, it is the belief that the blessings of the chiefs and elders of the community need to be sought, if not the skill or practice will not thrive. It is also the belief that if an individual is singled out as someone possessing a “gift” or ‘talent’ or skill, the person may be the main denominator manifesting the trait but the community remains the “custodians”, the “keepers”, and the mainstay of the ICH element.

1) Mr. Paula Liga

- Career: Paula has exhibited widely, including at the Fijian Cultural Craft Fair in Suva, Fiji (1986) where he won 1st prize; at the 40th anniversary of the South Pacific Commission in Noumea, New Caledonia (1987); and at the Fiji Arts Council (2002) where he won 1st prize.
- Location: Suva, Fiji
- Covered ICH element: Wood carving (figurines)
- Activities:



- Paula has been carving since he was a young boy in Fulaga, in the Lau Islands of Fiji. Fulaga is known throughout Fiji for its long tradition of highly-skilled wood carvers. Paula’s father was a carver, and Paula learnt how to carve tanoa, war clubs and figures from watching him. He moved to Suva in 1965 and continued carving, this time for the tourist markets on Viti Levu, the main island of Fiji. He was invited to the Oceania Centre by Epeli Hau’ofa in 1998 to explore contemporary, creative wood carving. His first solo exhibition, in 2001, was well received and from then on he brought his own creativity to his carving. At first his

ideas came from books and conversations with Epeli, and he created animals and figures linked into a single form. Now, the ideas come from his own mind and he finds that the more he imagines creative sculptures, the more ideas he has. He does not see this contemporary style as breaking away from the traditional styles of Fulaga, but rather that he is the new generation of Fulaga carver. Instead of breaking away, he is creating just one more aspect of carving and he continues to carve the traditional forms as well. As the first Fijian to work in these contemporary forms, he sees himself as opening up opportunities to others and hopes that his example will help to stop the loss of carving in Fiji. He shares both the traditional and the contemporary carving with his son and grandson, so as to continue the carving tradition in his family.

- Source: Oceania Centre for the Arts & Culture, Pacific Studies, USP, Suva.

2. ICH communities

1) Vanua Sovatabua



The sovatabua fan of Natewa

- Location: District of Natewa, Cakaudrove.
- Covered ICH element: Iri ni Sovatabua
- Information regarding community:
 - Iri ni Sovatabua is a fan traditionally owned by the people of Sovatabua in the Natewa District of the Province of Cakaudrove in the island of Vanualevu.
 - In 2014, a Special Revival Unit under the iTaukei Institute of Language and Culture successfully facilitated a revival workshop in the vanua of Sovatabua to revive the weaving of this unique traditional Sovatabua fan. This revival workshop was done after the Cultural Mapping team found out that there was only one man remaining in the vanua of

Sovatabua who is the knowledge bearer. The old man's age makes it pertinent that the knowledge of weaving the Sovatabua fan is on the verge of disappearing forever.

- The Iri ni Sovatabua has a significant associated meaning with the people in the vanua Sovatabua and most of all to the Vunivalu of Natewa, Chief of the Natewa District. The fan is made from the stalk of a coconut leaf. This complex craft is a symbol of nobility as it is only used by members of the chiefly family. Methods of weaving and the articulation of each individual coconut leaf is a ritual which has meanings to the vanua Sovatabua. How the fan is weaved and shaped tell the stories of Sovatabua.

2) Vanua Vugalei

- Location: District of Vugalei, Province of Tailevu
- Covered ICH element:
Talitali wame (Pandanaceae), also known as tali Voco
- Information regarding community:
 - Talitali Wame is a special kind of traditional weaving known by the vanua Vugalei in the Province of Tailevu. It is special in Fiji because they are using wame as the raw material of the weaving and it requires special vanua knowledge to weave baskets. Wame is a kind of vine and it normally grows in the bush. Apart from basket weaving, it is also used in the building of traditional thatched houses. The name of the wame weaved basket is voco. In the past when there were no roads in the interior of Fiji especially the two vanua Vugalei and Tai Vugalei. The people follow inland tracks to visit their relatives in Tai Vugalei or people from Taivugalei come down to Vugalei for fish and salt. They normally use voco as their basket to carry their fish and salt back to Taivulagalei. This kind of weaving needs special knowledge to select the right wame from the bush especially for voco weaving. The talitali wame or voco weaving does not only represent the vanua Vugalei but it also describes the unique traditional knowledge of the people in Vugalei. Through the Special Revival Unit in the iTaukei Institute of Language and Culture under the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs this unique element of ICH in the vanua Vugalei was revived in 2013.

3) Yavusa Wacawaca

- Location: Naiyarabale & Baleinaga villages, Vaturova District, Cakaudrove.
- Covered ICH element: Tali sova Wamere [Pandanaceae]
- Information regarding community:
 - Although the Pandanaceae resource used is the same as the 'wame' articulated in Element 2 above, the stories are different.
 - Sova wamere is a kind of basket made from the wamere woven only by the women in the yavusa Wacawaca. It has a significant meaning to people in the vanua Wacawaca yet they are isolated from the rest of villages of the same district. It is understood that in the past, for every traditional ceremony and event, people from vanua Wacawaca will have to cross an inland tract for about five to six hours before arriving at their chiefly village of Korotasere along the coastal part of Cakaudrove.
 - Today most of the women in from Wacawaca are using the Sova Wamere as one of their main source of income. The sova wamere is also an ICH element in the vanua Wacawaca as it requires the contribution of man and women in the vanua. Men with very good knowledge of selecting wamere will have to spend two to three days out in the forest collecting the matured wamere and also assist the women in the preparation and treatment of the wamere. Only the women will be weaving the basket. Thus more than fifty women in Wacawaca know how to weave sova wamere however only one of them is registered with the Fiji Craft Society.

4) Vanua Udu

- Location: Udu District, Province of Macuata.
- Covered ICH element: Ibe Kiluvatu
- Information regarding community:
 - Kiluvatu is a special kind of mat traditionally known by people of vanua o Udu. Women in the vanua Udu are the only bearers of the Kiluvatu knowledge and it is only practiced in their vanua. Through their vanua initiative older women are being encourage by the chief to make an effort to teach the young women and newly married women from other parts of Fiji how to weave kiluvatu.
 - A complete Kiluvatu mat from the vanua Udu clearly articulates myths, culture and tradition of the vanua Udu. Through the efforts of the vanua Udu, Kiluvatu is not only used for traditional purposes, the women are also using the mat for income generating purposes.

- The Kiluvatu mat is an Intangible Cultural Heritage element of the vanua Udu as the process and method weaving involved has associated meaning with the vanua Udu. In addition, the women normally work in groups while they are weaving a kiluvatu mat.

5) District of Nawaidina, Naitasiri.



- Location: Nativi Village, District of Nawaidina in the Province of Naitasiri.
- Covered ICH element: Traditional Chanting
- Information regarding community:
 - The District of Nawaidina in the Province of Naitasiri are well known for traditional chanting. During all traditional gathering in the Province the district will be approached for the traditional chant as most of the chant lyrics they sing contain the history of the province. Every individual tribe in the district would have a role during, before and after the district performs.
 - Through the cultural mapping program, the field officers identified that a few old man in the district knows how to chant. The Special Revival Unit in the Institute of Language and Culture facilitated a five day revitalization workshop reviving traditional chanting in the district.

6) Navutulevu

- Location: Navutulevu Village, Serua Province
- Covered ICH element: Talitali Draudrekwa
- Information regarding community:
 - Draudrekwa is a special kind of mat traditionally known and owned by the people of Serua Province. In the past when the high chief or the Vunivalu of Serua attends to a traditional occasion he would take a draudrekwa with him for his traditional presentation.
 - The draudrekwa mat is made from draudrekwa leaves and is only found in those places in the Province who normally weave the mat. It was through the cultural mapping program that enables the revitalization of the draudrekwa mat.

7) Navutulevu: Vunisea village

- Location: Vunisea Village, District of Tokaimalo, Province of Ra
- Covered ICH element: ibe vakadraunidamanu
- Information regarding community:
 - The village of Vunisea in the District of Tokaimalo province of Ra is traditionally known for the vakadraunidamanu mat. The mat has a unique association to their vanua and it is only practiced by the women of vanua Vunisea. The knowledge of this unique Tokaimalo mat was on the verge of disappearing as there was remaining only one old woman of 70 who still has the knowledge of weaving the vakadraunidamanu mat. Her name is Ana Savaia, of the Vatuvoka clan in the vanua Vunisea. Due to age and health condition, she was handicapped in remembering the patterns for the vakadraunidamanu mat. She taught her daughter-in-law, Mrs Tema Savai, a skillful mat weaving practitioner and one of the key resource persons for the workshop. After the workshop more than 20 women in the vanua Tokaimalo managed to grab the knowledge and the vanua is now utilizing the knowledge by setting up a village market where the women could sell the mats from.

3. ICH preservation groups/associations

Most of the following organizations outlined were established at their own accord by various individuals and industry player who foresee the need to establish such clusters to voice the concerns, opinions and find opportunities on behalf of members.

1) Fiji Performing Rights Association¹

- Location: 66 McGregor Road SUVA FIJI
- Covered ICH element: Oral Traditions & Expressions (Chants)
- Information regarding tradition bearer/holders:
 - FPRA administer the performing rights of its' local composer and songwriter members. In Fiji, and numerous countries around the world, composers and songwriters are given a number of exclusive legal rights to protect their intellectual property and allow them to make a living from their creativity. Although the focus on IP, the organization provides a forum for composers of traditional chants, and forms of expressive arts to have a voice and address concerns regarding misappropriation of intellectual property. Practitioners can register and pay the membership fees.
- Financial support:
 - FPRA is a non-profit organization funded through membership fees of members, commission fees amongst others.
- Advisory body:
 - The organization has as its Directors very experienced renowned musicians and composers who are role models. These individuals have been part of an ICH capacity building workshop and are considered informally as “ambassadors” in Fiji.
 - The organization’s advice is sort in as far as national delegation to an international event in the area of performance is concerned.
 - Person in charge: Mr. Eremasi Tamanisau Jnr(Chairman of FPRA)
- Public events:
 - Organisers of the Annual FPRA Music Awards to celebrate the achievements of performers;



¹ Source: FPRA Music Awards 2016

- Organizers of the previous Young Musso's Acclaim appreciating contribution of budding young musicians, recognizing their talents and promoting originality in music composition and lyrics.

2) Fiji Craft Society²



- Location: Fiji Arts Council Office Procera House Waimanu Rd Suva.
- Covered ICH element:
All forms of weaving, woodcarving, sculpturing, jewelry making, pottery making, masi making
- Information regarding tradition bearer/holders:
 - FCS helps promote craftsmanship skills in Fiji to sustain these unique knowledge and skills through capacity building workshops organized in communities and resource peoples from FCS facilitate the workshops.
 - Practitioners are encouraged to become members to foster the continuity of their skills, appreciation and recognition of the skills. As members, practitioners will have spaces made available to meet and work providing opportunities; access to domestic and international market displays, sales and marketing.
 - Practitioners may be able to use this platform to solidify earning a livelihood and also a transmission space for continuity of skills.
- Financial support:
A non-profit organization attached to the Fiji Arts Council. Fees from members, project grants received donors, and commission fees.
- Advisory body:
 - FCS advises the Fiji Arts Council and the Ministry of Trade and Industries on Fijian Crafted products qualified for the licensed seal.

² Source: National Craft Exhibition (FAC)

- FCS assists the Ministry of Women in the judging of women craft events including advisory given to the Ministry on policy.
- FCS also judges and advises Provincial Councils in the implementation of the provincial cultural events.
- FCS assists the National Organizing Committee in appointing crafts people to attend regional and international art festivals, world trade shows and expos.
- Person in charge: Ms. Niqa Tuvuki Radiniceva
- President: Fiji Craft Society
- Public events:
 - organizes the annual National Craft Exhibition for all artists specializing in craft genre to attend, exhibit and sell their crafts.
 - organizes the divisional craft shows – northern, western and eastern craft shows

3) Western Arts & Crafts Society

- Location:
28 Cawa Rd. Matintar, Nadi Covered ICH element Pottery, Expressive Arts (Visual arts)
- Information regarding tradition bearer/holders:
 - The initial office of the society was burnt and the group has relocated to current site.
 - The Society hosts annual art competitions and craftiest artist can become a member to the Society and exhibit their works as an incentive.
 - The Society helps artists and craftists who otherwise have no base to be able to work in a designated space and network with other artists in the western division.
- Financial support:
The Western Arts and Crafts Society is a registered Charity based in Nadi. It is a support group formed for and by local artists and craftist.
- Advisory body: Not Applicable
- Person in charge: <http://www.facebook.com/WesternArtsCraftsSociety>
- Public events:
 - The WACS organized a week long craft fair Bazaar for local crafters in Nadi, Fiji. The purpose was to encourage more local artists and crafts people to recognize and appreciate their skills; develop and market crafts and art of current artists; and sell their works of art.
 - WACS organized Art on the Island VI at Denarau Island in Nadi.

4) Uto-ni-Yalo Trust (formerly Fiji Islands Voyaging Society)³



- Location: C/- Mr. Collin Philips, Leleuvia Island Resort
- Covered ICH element: Traditional Navigation or way finding
- Information regarding tradition bearer/holders:
 - BEFORE the inventions of large and small buoyant watercraft, people in the Pacific ruled the ocean with their long voyages on traditional sailing canoes for many years. Now with modern sailing vessels and boats, the tradition of sailing in canoes seems to be a thing of the past with more people preferring to travel on easier means of sea transport.
 - Voyaging societies in the Pacific now have come together to maintain the traditional sailing skills and knowledge to a voyage across the Pacific Ocean. The Uto ni Yalo Trust (formerly known as Fiji Islands Voyaging Society) is part of a Pacific renaissance seeking to recapture knowledge, traditions and values of our rich maritime history. This charitable trust was established with the primary objectives of reviving ancient cultural skills of navigation and canoeing. The Uto ni Yalo, has worked extensively with communities in Fiji and through the region to highlight the importance of culture and its roles in sustainable conservation, community building and achieving this by uniting people with a similar vision in the Pacific.
 - The trust aims to celebrate this unique Fijian spirit in reverence and preservation of our cultural and natural heritage. The focus of the trust is to revive and sustain traditional Fijian canoe building, sailing and navigational knowledge, skills and customs. It also aims to undertake research into all aspects of Fijian and Rotuman seafaring culture, including the sustainable use of sailing for future sea transport for the benefit of current and future generations, both locally and internationally.

³ Source: Fiji Voyaging Society Facebook

- The Uto ni Yalo (canoe) has become an important part of achieving these goals After two Pacific wide voyages his gifting of the Uto ni Yalo so that she remains with Fiji and means she is able to continue her cultural, environmental, educational and community work.
- Fiji has benefited directly from the work of the Uto ni Yalo over the past five years as one of the lead canoes of the voyages which have been undertaken. Its impact on communities throughout Fiji and the world has seen the Uto ni Yalo contribute to Fiji's cultural and environmental tourism campaigns. The importation into Fiji of this vessel will further promote the interests of Fiji in tourism and also in Fiji's foreign policy on the protection of the environment and mitigation on the rising sea levels, and its stand on pollution and global warming. [Reverend James Baghwan]

* <http://www.fjitimes.com/story.aspx?id=256985>.

- Financial support:

The Trust is a non-profit organization. It sustains itself through in-kind donations, partnership projects (through MOA signed).

- Advisory body:

Not a member of a national professional body for ICH development.

- Public events: Te Mana o Te Moana "Spirit of the Ocean" Voyage