

## II. Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory

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### 1. National inventory

Fiji does not have a national inventory for intangible cultural heritage. As alluded to in previous section, most of the Fijian legislations call for the establishment and maintenance of a “Registry” or something similar. Similarly, there are certain registries and catalogues which provide for the establishment of an inventory.

Fiji does not want to encourage the establishment of a national inventory because ICH elements amongst the different ethnicities and communities are unique and have varying approaches towards safeguarding. The diversity of ICH elements in themselves require separate inventories established. However, what the state party of Fiji wants to pursue is conduct an audit of existing inventories, registers, databases in the country and create a “National List of Fijian Inventories of ICH”. The list will be maintained by the Department of Heritage & Arts ICH Unit. on a PPT regarding brief “Situational Analysis of ICH Inventories in Fiji” by Sipiriano Nemani of the Department of Heritage & Arts.

At present Fiji has a collection of inventories and these are safeguarded in various institutions. Access to these inventories differ, some are restricted while few can be accessed by the general public. Some of the most notable inventories (also in the form of registers) are articulated below:

### **1) TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE & EXPRESSIONS OF CULTURE DATABASE**

The above is a national government managed inventory. Funding received to establish and manage the database is provided for by the Fijian government through annual budgetary provisions to the iTaukei Institute of Language & Culture. The database stores ICH information for the itaukei or indigenous people of Fiji only. Information collated and archived emanate from an ongoing “cultural mapping program” covering the 14 Provinces of Fiji. Information gathered from this exercise include traditional dances, chants, stories, folklore, culinary, fishing methods, food preparations methods, weaving, carving, rituals and ceremonies, herbal and healing practices and many others. Since 2005, cultural mapping has been fully conducted in 12 provinces, and data verification in the same provinces undertaken. Mapping currently conducted in the remaining 2 provinces.

### **2) INVENTORY OF VOSA VAKAVITI OR INDIGENOUS FIJIAN WORDS/ VOCABULARY**

The iTaukei Institute of Language and Culture through research undertaken since the 1970s maintains a collection of itaukei words, idioms and stories. The collection has been transformed into a monolingual iTaukei dictionary however, collection of words continues with a special unit established by the Institute dedicated towards this particular work.

This activity of the Institute was funded by government.

### **3) INVENTORY OF INDIGENOUS FIJIAN STORIES, LEGENDS & TRADITIONAL MEDICINE**

The iTaukei Institute of Language & Culture had had through the dictionary project visited places around Fiji collecting stories and legends and sharing these on radio broadcasts to indigenous Fijian language speakers. Presently it is working towards publishing a collection of 28 legends and stories for young and old people alike.

However, the same organization has published a compendium of traditional medicine including methodology of use. The Wai Vakaviti (Herbal medicine) book emanated out of a database of herbal medicine collated from practitioners around Fiji and consent for its access was also sought from bearers of the knowledge. Interestingly most of the herbal medicine can only be prepared and consumed if the practitioner him/herself prepares the mix.

The inventory is government funded and managed.

#### **4) FIJI MUSEUM INVENTORY OF ARTEFACTS & ORAL TRADITIONS**

The Fiji Museum is the national institution responsible for the safekeeping of national treasures and heirlooms. This is mandated under the Fiji Museum Act. All artifacts collected and their associated stories are kept in a database at the Museum. Also through the archaeological assessments and site assessment undertaken by Museum Archaeologists, stories and cultural information are collected from the field and stored. These are listed according to provinces, villages and districts. These supplement the 'Oral Traditions Project' initiated by the Fiji Museum earlier which is also inventoried.

The databases are non-government funded and managed.

There is no inventory for ICH of Rotumans, Rabi and Kioa Islanders. The Department of Heritage is working with the Rotuma Island Council and the Fiji Rotuman Association in the implementation of a cultural mapping program in Rotuma. The data collected will be inventoried and kept in a database to be accessible to all Rotumans.