

II. Intangible Cultural Heritage Inventory

1. Background Information

Having a population of over 6 million people and over 850 languages, Papua New Guinea's diverse cultures and traditions remain intact, others have undergone changes, while others have disappeared.

The overall aim of the legitimate state entity as a custodian to PNG's art and culture, the National Cultural Commission, is to identify, record and document all the traditional cultural heritage in its entire totality so that we can be able resurrect, revive and revitalize every tangible and intangible element, its mode and processes for our next generation's survival, continuity and advancement.

Papua New Guinea has a total of 20 provinces that are politically divided into four Regions. Unlike other Pacific Island States and Territories having a homogenous culture, Papua New Guinea, being very culturally diverse, is approached on a regional basis for its cultural mapping pilot projects so that it sets the basis for the entire country's inventory work.

However, Papua New Guinea does not have a national inventory as yet. The implementing agency of the UNESCO 2003 Convention, the National Cultural Commission, has started undertaking the Cultural Mapping Program in 2009 to establish and maintain a database registry system, a first time documentation exercise that has never been done in the country before.

The National Cultural Commission is currently undertaking regional pilot projects in the local level government areas with the following core objectives;

- (i) Develop research topics;
- (ii) Develop research methodologies;
- (iii) Develop a national framework;
- (iv) Develop training manual;
- (v) Develop logistical frameworks; and
- (vi) Develop an inventory mechanism, a database registry system.

2. Plan

The Cultural Mapping Inventory is slowly progressing, nonetheless, the National Cultural Commission has undertaken the following plans for the future;

- The Pacific Regional Framework on the Model Law on Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Culture has been developed into a *National Traditional Knowledge Policy* in its draft form. The *National Traditional Knowledge Policy* has further been developed into a *Draft Bill* which two combined regional workshops and a national workshop for experts from Stakeholder organizations and key state bodies was recently held to further comment on before it goes through the National Executive Council for endorsement to be fully operational.
- The first regional Cultural Mapping Pilot Project has been conducted in the Taure-Lakekamu Local Level Government of the Gulf Province in the Southern Region of Papua New Guinea. The NCC is currently arranging for the next pilot project to be held in another Hoskins Local Level Government of the West New Britain Province in the New Guinea Islands Region. The Commission anticipates to conduct a pilot project each in at least, a particular Local Level Government area in one of the provinces of the four regions of the country.
- A database system has been established, however, it needs more reviewing and evaluation.

3. Inventory Information

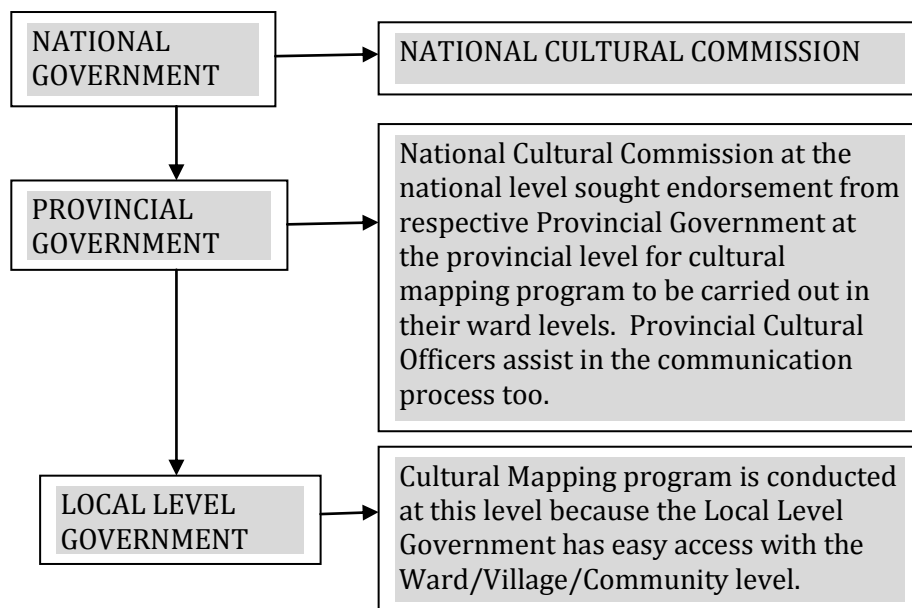
A. Title(s)

PAPUA NEW GUINEA CULTURAL DATABASE

The Papua New Guinea Cultural Database is an initiative the National Cultural Commission is currently undertaking and it aims to preserve and protect traditional and contemporary cultural data and information. It will basically include the National Cultural Commission's data from other institutions as well as the ongoing Cultural Mapping Program. The database system will also cooperate with the Summer Institute of Linguistics to include a language database. Moreover, it will keep a registry of heritage sites in Papua New Guinea and a Papua New Guinea Arts Directory.

B. Number of inventories

Since Papua New Guinea has just completed its first regional Cultural Mapping Pilot Project in the Taure-Lakekamu Local Level Government of the Gulf Province in December 2009, it anticipates to undertake another pilot project in another Local Level Government area in the West New Britain Province in March 2011. The National Cultural Commission will conduct four (4) regional pilot project exercises in a selected province, before its all set to fully cover the entire country. This concept was established because of the country's complex and diverse cultures and traditions, coupled with its complex geographical composition.



C. Number of designated items

In the initial planning stages of conducting its first pilot project in December 2008, the National Cultural Commission engaged an officer with the Institute of Fijian Language and Culture in June 2009, for a period of three weeks.

Upon her return, she shared her experiences and the NCC considered Fiji's designated items to that of its first regional pilot project in the Gulf Province, however, considering the country's diversity and complexity, those designated items were adapted to that particular society's social structure, environment and related cultural resources. Hence, number of designated items will entirely depend on environmental factors, geographical location, density of the population, access to education and

health, to those cultural resources that exist in a particular community/society.

D. Frequency of designation

Since the National Cultural Commission has just completed its first regional pilot project, there are some issues that they have not focused on, and Frequency of Designation is one of them. The NCC will definitely consider this issue in the forthcoming cultural mapping pilot project. However, Frequency of Designation will entirely depend on what data/information the traditional knowledge holders' will provide.

E. Date of most recent update

As indicated earlier, the National Cultural Commission has just started on its first of the four regional pilot projects in December 2008, hence, the data collected has just been transcribed and is yet to go through the process of updating. This issue is currently under discussion.

F. Establishment of an expert advisory panel

According to past regional workshops in working towards the development of the *draft National Traditional Knowledge Policy*, it was noted that the Cultural Authority would best sit at the national level through the National Cultural Commission.

However, in the deliberation of the *Draft Bill for the Protection of Traditional Knowledge & Expressions of Culture*, the National Cultural Commission automatically becomes the custodian of PNG's art and culture, however, this issue of cultural authority is optional, pending cabinet approval.

G. Responsible governmental organization

- Organization: National Cultural Commission
- Person in charge: Dr. Jacob L. Simet, OL
- Contact Information: +675 323 5111/5119
- Job Description: Executive Director

4. Designated Heritage

A. Categories

The following categories were developed in light of the first Southern Regional Cultural Mapping

Pilot Project in December 2008 in the Taure-Lakekamu Local Level Government in the Gulf Province.

- Category 1: Social Organization
 - Kinship
 - Moiety
 - Clans
 - Sub-clans
 - Totems
 - History of groups
 - History of clan
 - Emigration

- Category 2: Life Crisis
 - Birth
 - Marriage
 - Deaths
 - Initiations
 - Puberty rites
 - Greetings/ salutation
 - Grooming-hair styles and beards
 - Traditional games

- Category 3: Material Culture
 - Traditional house
 - House items
 - Culinary items, eg. pottery, bags, mats, bark cloth

- Category 4: Ritual Objects
 - Mask
 - Drums
 - Spirit (tambaran) houses
 - Ancestral figures
 - Bull roarers
 - Sacred flutes

- Category 5: Ceremonies/ Expressions of Culture
 - Dance/ performances/costumes
 - Music
 - Designs
 - Legends

- Games
- Body decorations
- Category 6: Economics/ Subsistence activities
 - Hunting :legends, Methods, Tools
 - Fishing
 - Gardening
 - Exchange/trade
 - Sago making
- Category 7: Technology
 - Weapons-warfare
 - Ritual objects
 - Fire making
 - Ropes
 - Paints
 - Clothing
 - Axes
 - Knives
 - Torches
 - Fishing, hunting and gardening tools
- Category 8: Herbal and Healing Techniques
 - Traditional midwifery
 - Traditional healing practices
 - Traditional medicine
- Category 9: Others
 - Spirits
 - Warfare

The above topics were made possible by tape recorders and recording cassettes, photographs and audio visuals.

B. Criteria

Documentation of inventory collection of cultural resources is a very new initiative undertaken by the National Cultural Commission. The challenging experiences in the first pilot project in December 2008 in the Gulf Province has set the basis of inventory collection in the remaining three cultural mapping pilot projects for the three regions. The inventory

processes will constitute a set of procedure or steps involved in creating a nationally owned database.

- Prior to selecting an area for the cultural mapping program, a number of reasons are considered which may include:
 - Request made by provinces through their Provincial Governments;
 - Considering the logistics of the area;
 - Knowledge of the province; and
 - Urgency for documentation of endangered cultural resources or those on the verge of disappearing.

The National Cultural Commission has considered the regional approach and has developed a national Implementation schedule to include the provinces from each region of the country. For this reason, the National Cultural Commission has decided to consider these provinces for pilot projects. The first regional pilot cultural mapping project has been conducted in the Gulf province which represents the Southern Region. The remaining three provinces for the pilot projects are: West New Britain Province for New Guinea Island Region, Eastern Highland Province for the Highland Region and the East Sepik Province for the Momase Region. The selection of these provinces is based on the reasons mentioned above. The West New Britain province was selected due to request made by their Provincial Government and Administration. The selection of Eastern Highlands and East Sepik Provinces is due to background knowledge of the different types of cultural heritage found in these areas.

C. Designated Heritage Items

The aim of the national inventory is to maintain and keep a record of existing intangible and tangible cultural heritage of local communities in Papua New Guinea. This inventory will serve the purpose of:

- Preserving the intangible and tangible cultural heritages for future generations; and
- Identifying the owners of all traditional knowledge and cultural expressions; and
- Enabling accessibility to utilize these traditional knowledge and cultural expressions by users and, thus, compensate owners of these traditional knowledge and cultural expressions appropriately.

Since the National Cultural Commission is currently focusing on its cultural mapping pilot project and does not have a national inventory as yet, there are no designated items enlisted, however, the cultural mapping project will certainly assist in the establishment of a national inventory.

D. Name, Domains, Explanation, Criteria, Holders

The new initiative that the National Cultural Commission is currently working on, the Papua New Guinea Cultural Database will additionally create the foundation for database registry system for the cultural mapping project.

The data will be itemized according to their places of origin from provincial down to their clans and as individuals in their respective societies, and also all the details relating to their cultural resources. Not much is mentioned on this because establishment of this programme is currently in progress.

E. Heritage Associated Items

- craftsmanship: skills: tools, methods, workshop, etc.

In most villages in Papua New Guinea, some people make a living through their skills in arts and crafts as formal sector employment amounts to a small proportion of livelihood activities undertaken by families in the community. Some individuals and families have skills in carving and shaping shells to make ornaments and jewellery, whilst in other areas, carvers carve wood to make artefacts, others make string bags, weave baskets, etc. The craftsmen's skills are high in demand.

However, only a few craftsmen and craftswomen still practice craftsmanship in the customary way, although efforts are being made to pass that skill on to a new generation. The few who possess the complex and important skill of their traditional craftsmanship with cultural and historical significance are slowly decreasing in numbers. This also reflects the decreasing numbers of traditional tools that are now replaced with modern devices.

- performing arts: costumes, instruments, stage, occasion etc.

Culture is not static, it evolves with time, hence, most traditional costumes and instruments are being substituted with modern ones.

The recent independent celebrations in the country, 16th September 2010, has highlighted the people's enthusiasm and fascinating traditional costumes were showcased in the main locations in the nation's capital and provincial towns. It clearly shows that traditional costumes and instruments are showcased only during cultural shows, festivals and important occasions.

There are cultural shows and festivals showcased in urban areas while others are performed at village proper, depending on the occasion.

During the first regional cultural mapping pilot project, various cultural instruments that were never used for long period of time were identified and documented.

Apart from cultural festivals and shows, there are traditional performances undertaken by certain communities/societies during occasions such as bride price payments, initiation ceremonies, circumcision, etc.

- event: occasion, venue, participants, costumes, dance, rituals, etc.

As indicated above, there are certain traditional ceremonies held apart from cultural festivals and shows. Some of these traditional ceremonies have sacred/secret elements normally held in enclosures outside the village proper, whilst others are generally held in the main village arena witnessed by everyone.

One such sacred/secret traditional ceremony that involves specific rituals is the female initiation in the Burui-Kunai Local Level Government in the Wosera-Gawi District in the East Sepik Province.

With regards to NCC's participation in cultural festivals and shows, there are four thematic regional festivals coordinated by NCC in collaboration with respective Provincial Governments and Administrations. The National Mask Festival annually held in the East New Britain Province showcases the unique and dynamic mask culture that is culturally significant in the area. This particular culture involves rituals for weeks before the dancers participate in the actual festival.

While in the Southern Region of Papua New Guinea which consists of 5 provinces including the nation's capital, the canoe and kundu (hand drums) both have significant roles in the socio-cultural life of the people. The canoe technology also contributes to the maritime trading networks in coastal areas of Papua New Guinea especially. Its significance has materialized the annual staging of the National Canoe and Kundu Festival in Alotau, Milne Bay Province.

For the Momase Region which includes 4 provinces participate in the annually held National Mambu (Bamboo) and Garamut (Slit gong) Festival. This festival is annually held in the provincial town, Wewak of the East Sepik Province.

In the Highlands Region, very detailed body painting that complements their oral traditions is culturally significant in the area. This has compelled the NCC to establish the annual staging of the Bilasim Skin (Body Decoration) Festival in Goroka, East Highlands Province.

The 4 regional thematic festival indicated above are annually staged in close collaboration with their host Provincial Governments and Provincial Administrations.

The NCC also collaborates with the respective Provincial Governments and Administrations in assists in Festivals such as the Gulf Mini Mask Festival in the Gulf Province, Gogodala Canoe Festival in the Western Province, Garamut and Mask Festival in the East Sepik Province, Mona Festival in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville and the Namatanai Mask Festival in the New Ireland Province.

Other cultural shows and festivals are coordinated at the Provincial level, such as the Madang Festival for the Madang Province, Morobe Agriculture Cultural Festival in Morobe Province, Hiri Moale Festival in the nation's capital, National Arts and Crafts Exhibition in the Nation's capital, Tavor Cultural Show in the West New Britain Province, Kontu/Tembin Shark Calling Festival in the New Ireland Province, Choral Festival and the Kokopo District Cultural Show in the East New Britain Province, Engan Cultural Show in the Enga Province, Hagen Show in the Western Highlands Province, Goroka Show in the Eastern Highlands Province, etc.

F. Information regarding holders/bearers

- Numbers, names, designated items, etc.

From the first cultural mapping pilot project, the traditional holders were interviewed and all information provided was documented. This indicates that those traditional holders identified and interviewed will be noted and documented during the course of the cultural mapping exercise.

In most communities in PNG, traditional knowledge is communally owned, however, only a few individuals stand out to be the mastercraftsman for a specific cultural resource or material.

In a family unit, when traditional ceremonies or occasions are held, each family member is aware of his/her customary obligations. This is commonly practiced in most societies in the country and is documented in the initial cultural mapping project. There are several ceremonies that involve certain clans/tribes and there are others which involve the whole community.

5. Provisional Designated Items

- A. National government: name, domain, general information, characteristics, location, etc.

We have not looked into this area, however, now that it is raised, it will be considered.

- B. Local government: name, domain, general information, characteristics, location, etc..

At the village/ward level, ward councilors represent the Local Level Government, however, there is not much safeguarding efforts implemented from their level. In Papua New Guinea, the National Government in its annual budget allocations does not put much emphasis on cultural activities and related infrastructural projects, priority is given to health and education sectors, and development oriented programs.

- C. Additional Information

The research tools used in the cultural mapping pilot project were *interviewing* and *participant observation*.

In the context of participant observation, the field researchers present at a cultural activity at the research site would observe or participate with the rest of the community in the program.

Face to face interviewing involved verbal exchange in which the interviewer asked structured or some unstructured questions, in a formal or informal manner with a group of people or individuals during the interview period.

The first southern region pilot project was a stepping stone to the implementation of the intangible cultural heritage inventory at the national level. Prior to the cultural mapping program, a draft overall framework has been developed, however, it still needs reviewing.

The methodological framework or tools was basically developed to guide and securely implement the pilot project carried out to document the cultural mapping project. After the pilot project, the methodological framework has been reviewed, taken into account the challenges faced in the field, lessons learnt and recommendations made for improvement by the selected field researchers. All these challenges, lessons learnt and recommendations will be adopted for the implementation for a nationwide inventory program.

D. Reference Materials

- Explanation note, photos, etc

The audio visual and other related materials of the recent cultural mapping pilot project will not be distributed unless consent is given by the traditional knowledge owners. A prior informed consent form was signed between the National Cultural Commission and the traditional knowledge holders during the cultural mapping pilot project. The consent form was a fundamental principle of research that relates to the right of any participants to have full and honest information about the research. The consent form spelt out the code of ethics that was strictly observed whilst cultural research in the community was conducted. This allowed the field researchers to observe the code of ethics that was being prepared to undertaking work. Furthermore, the consent form offered opportunities to raise issues of concern that was pertained to the field research undertaken in the community concerned to be clarified.

6. Non-Governmental Inventory

There are no non-governmental organization that focus on intangible cultural heritage inventory, however, there is one Summer Institute of Linguistics located in the Eastern Highlands Province in the Highlands Region who mainly focus on bible translation into local vernaculars. Hence, they may generally have documentation of languages in different parts of the country.

The National Cultural Commission is currently liaising with them to exchange ideas and information in assisting NCC with its cultural database registry system.