**INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE FUND**

**FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT**

Beneficiary State Party: UGANDA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title:</th>
<th>UGA 979: Safeguarding and Promotion of Bigwala, gourd Trumpet Music and Dance of Busoga Kingdom in Uganda</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time frame:</td>
<td>Starting date: 01/09/2015 Completion date: 31/08/2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budget:</td>
<td>Total: US$35561</td>
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<td></td>
<td>including:</td>
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<td>Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund: US$24990</td>
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<td>State Party contributions: US$5340</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Other contributions: US$5231</td>
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<td>Implementing agency:</td>
<td>National Council of Folklorists of Uganda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementing partners:</td>
<td>Sub County and District Leaders, Bigwala Communities, Music Department Kyambogo University, District community development officer, Busoga Kingdom, UNATCOM, Ministry of Gender, Labour &amp; Social Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact person:</td>
<td>Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Mr.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Family name: Isabirye</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Given name: James</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Institution/position: National Council of Folklorists of Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Address: P.O. Box 199, Kyambogo - Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Telephone number: +256782721506</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E-mail address: <a href="mailto:nacofuorg@gmail.com">nacofuorg@gmail.com</a></td>
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Bigwala music and dance is a cultural practice of the Basoga people from Eastern Uganda. Bigwala comprises a set of five or more gourd trumpets. Each of the five trumpets produces a single tone. Thus they are blown in hocket to produce a melody. Bigwala also involves singing, drumming and dancing. Singers and dancers move in circular formation around the five drum players together with trumpet players. One singer leads the songs while others respond in the chorus. Dancers wriggle their waists, raise hand and add many expressive gestures following the trumpets music and drum rhythms. Men blow the trumpets, play the drums and dance together with women. In addition, women ululate as the performance becomes exciting to mark the climax. Men wear Kanzus (Cassocks), trousers and shirts that may or may not be of same colour and design. Women wear Gomesi (Long wrapping cloth with shoulder parts that are pointed upwards) that may or may not be of the same colour. Members of the community join whenever they get excited and leave the performance as they wish. Thus there is a fluid boundary between the Bigwala performers and audience - performers. Bigwala songs narrate history, focusing in particular on kings and their exploits, philosophy and other cultural matters. Thus Bigwala represents Basoga peoples' identity and links them with their ancestry.

Bigwala music and dance dates back to the 18th century Bugabula state, one of the eleven original chiefdoms that united to form current Busoga kingdom. Chiefs of the original eleven chiefdoms that were related by common ancestry united in 1939 to form Busoga kingdom. They elected among themselves a Kyabazinga (head of the eleven equal chiefs). Then Bigwala music was adopted to lead the king’s processions at coronation, royal ceremonies, funeral rituals and other royal occasions. Bigwala plays a major ritualistic role during the enthronement of the king; who is the main symbol of Busoga kingdom. The kingdom has always been highly involved in mobilizing the people to eradicate poverty, disease and ignorance. Therefore, its strength directly reflects on the conditions of the people. For example, the six years succession wrangles that followed King Henry Wako Muloki’s death stunted the kingdom. As a result many Basoga families suffered.

When a king dies, Bigwala players perform their music as part of the rituals in the palace before and during burial. For example when king Henry Wako Muloki passed away on 1st September 2008, the five Bigwala players (alive at that time) performed their mourning ritualistic role at Nakabango palace, near Jinja town for two days and for another two days at Kaliro village, where the deceased king was laid to rest.

Bigwala music and dance is also performed at social occasions in villages. In society Bigwala is a means of educating the young generation about diverse issues of their community. Bigwala music and dance is one of the major means through which Basoga people can identify and feel pride in their community, awaken their cultural values and work towards development. Thus Bigwala directly contributes to the very existence, continuity and survival of the Basoga community.

However, by year 2009 Bigwala was no longer regularly performed. Most people that knew how to perform Bigwala music and dance had passed away. There were only two surviving master players that had skills of how to make and play Bigwala in the entire Busoga kingdom. It had become apparent that if the two surviving Bigwala master players died before passing Bigwala knowledge and skills to the youth, an important part of Basoga heritage would disappear. This would affect all cultural practices of the kingdom particularly where Bigwala music was meant to be played. For example, absence of proficient Bigwala players had already led to a situation where Amakondere (Bunyoro kingdom royal trumpets) were brought in and played to lead the
coronation procession of the current king of Busoga, His Royal Highness William Wilberforce Kadhumula Nadiope Gabula IV on 13th September 2014. Also the kingdom did not have proficient players at the coronation anniversary in September 2015.

Youths hardly experienced Bigwala music and dance neither in the communities nor through the media. This caused concern among communities about the need for safeguarding Bigwala. Village Council leaders, elders, opinion leaders, educators among other people from different places in Busoga spoke in one voice. Therefore, in 2011 a Bigwala campaign was launched at Naigombwa Primary School by the community elders with support from National Council of Folklorists of Uganda (NACOFU). Community members, teachers, secondary and primary school children plus non schooling youths; a total of about 500 people attended. The master players encouraged youth to join them and learn how to make and play the Bigwala plus the drums. After listening to the Bigwala master players, fifteen youth expressed great interest in Bigwala music and dance. At the time of starting this project, those youth had started to learn playing Bigwala. Master players taught the repertoire of the Bigwala songs which they could remember vocally and using pawpaw stalk dummies. NACOFU and teachers in Namalemba sub-county started to collect photographs, audio recordings, videos and interviewed the master players. This project became a continuation of earlier Bigwala safeguarding measures that needed more support such as this one offered by ICH Section of UNESCO.

The requested funds were to be used to organize workshops for youths in making Bigwala, playing and dancing to Bigwala. The two master players were to train youths. The communities, schools and NACOFU were to develop teaching methods, so that Bigwala becomes sustainable. Further, there would be a festival in which the newly trained 9 Bigwala groups perform. Audio and video recordings would be made and a selection of CDs and DVDs would be on sale for the general public. Visibility of Bigwala was to be enhanced by involving radio and television to record and broadcast these activities. This project aimed to set up infrastructure for safeguarding Bigwala and raise awareness about cultural heritage which could cause similar safeguarding activities to take place.

Objectives and results attained

Overall, to what extent did the project attain its objectives? Describe the main results attained, focusing 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

Overall objective:
To strengthen the transfer of Bigwala music and dance knowledge and skills to the young generation

Specific Objectives:
1. To set up Project Management Committee (PMC). Committee was set up. Members contributed their knowledge and skills in different ways to success of the project. They took decisions in consultation with Bigwala communities, monitored and gave guidance which has seen the project succeed.
2. To establish groups with knowledge and skills of making and playing Bigwala. Youths and teachers from different villages and schools were registered and trained in Bigwala making and playing. Additionally some youths observed the workshops but had not registered. Others registered for Bigwala playing or dancing but learnt how to make or other skills.
3. To develop better documentation. Photographs, audio and video format documentation of Bigwala project activities was well done.
4. To hold the Bigwala festival and raise awareness. This was held at Mufumi to select a 60 member Busoga Bigwala Group. Players came from the Bigwala communities at Bukakaire,
Nabirere, Nakibungulya, Butyabule, Mawanga, Nakisenyi, Kiwhanyi, Mufumi and Nabintende villages. Preparations for Busoga kingdom union day celebrations followed immediately. The festival budget was used to transport players to joint training sessions at Mufumi the venue agreed on as most central. Players got meals for about one month. Uniform was bought for the big events. Players got transport facilitation to Bugiri (2016) coronation anniversary and Namutumba (2017) Busoga Day anniversary celebrations. This tagged Bigwala to the kingdom events and Busoga culture minister pledged confirmed it.

5. To set an example for other Ugandan societies to participate in safeguarding of their heritage. The "Bigwala model" is being used to lay foundation for reviving Ekimasa (Busoga royal harp), Entenga (Buganda royal drums) and Entamivu (Buganda xylophone and drums band) and Amakondere (Buganda royal trumpets). Reference: http://tsupug.com/recollecting-the-tunes-of-bugandas-lost-sounds-3/, http://www.monitor.co.ug/artsculture/Reviews/Entenga-Music-that-soothed-kings/691232-3350580-kdhxbjz/index.html, http://tsupug.com/recollecting-the-tunes-of-bugandas-lost-sounds-2/, http://www.singingwells.org/stories/central-eastern-uganda-day-4-part-2-flutes/

The outcomes realized:

1. Bigwala communities have grown plenty of gourds that had gotten extinct. Farmers earned money and gourds are back. They are also used for drinking in water and could reduce use of plastic mugs in future.

2. We planned to train 30 youths and music teachers to make Bigwala. Due to community enthusiasm and cooperation the number reached 102 people. We planned to teach 90 players but pleasantly registered 176 youths in villages and schools. We planned to teach 90 dancers but more than 200 were registered; the actual number far exceeds expectation.

3. Improvement of living conditions in the communities: Renovation of the master’s house tremendously increased community participation in the project. People in his neighbourhood continue to grow gourds and learn different skills of Bigwala. Farmers earned money from gourds, paid school fees for their children and met many basic needs.


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 activities focused on realization of project results set by the project committee during inception meeting, recommendation of the monitoring teams and suggestions by the Bigwala communities. The main activities included: creating new generations of Bigwala and drum makers, Bigwala players and dancers, organizing performances at Busoga kingdom big events, pictorial, audio and audio-visual documentation, lessons learnt as well as coordination of roles and follow agreed timelines.

New generation of Bigwala makers:

The project aimed to teach 30 youths and teachers in Bigwala making. Bigwala making workshops were held at the following villages: 1. Mawanga in Buwung'a Sub County – Bugiri
Bigwala project activities have been recorded. NACOFU’s partners also documented and have shared with communities the recordings. This has furthered dissemination of Bigwala work as well as created additional sources of information.

Roles of various actors:

The surviving master player plus three other trainee/novice experts taught youths how to make Bigwala. Village elders and opinion leaders gave their experiences of Bigwala and encouraged youths to continue. Youths and music teachers participated in workshops and learnt Bigwala making, playing and dancing. They played for the king and will play whenever they will be invited. They also started to play at village events in order to get some money.

Local council leaders organized meeting venues for Bigwala activities and encouraged youths to participate. They also mobilized communities to participate in large numbers in reviving the much cherished Busoga heritage.

NACOFU ably coordinated all activities, linked with participants at various levels, and has the recorded materials of the project. Some documentaries of these materials have been posted on the NACOFU’s Facebook page. Two members of NACOFU offered technical, managerial skills and participated in monitoring project activities, prepared and disseminated information about the project to various stakeholders.

Kyambogo University Performing Arts Department involved their students in research and documentation. Music Teachers in Busoga region have started including Bigwala students’ performances and to take knowledge and skills of Bigwala making and playing into their schools. Also, the Uganda National Examinations Board has included a Bigwala song; “Waiswa mugude” among the Senior Four African Set Works. The set works are studied in detail and at the end of the course; students will be required to answer analytical questions about these works. Guiding notes about Bigwala and the song have already been compiled for use by all schools in Uganda. This will extend appreciation of Bigwala music beyond Busoga region.

Members in the village music groups organized meetings to get information and came for workshops in making, playing and dancing Bigwala. Each village mobilized more than 250 people of all age groups.

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development’s Department of Culture sent three officials to the Bigwala communities where they offered technical guidance and support to the project. They also assessed the situation and gave useful ideas for implementation of the project during the inception meeting. Ministry officials have often given updates to the top management in the ministry and to the communities. The commissioner for Gender and Culture identified Buwenge Primary School to perform at the East African Community Cultural Festival (JAMAFEST 2017).

Notable activities:

When the project team visited the master player’s home after the inception meeting, it was apparent his house would fall on him any time. To avoid the undesirable situation of losing the focal person in the project, it was agreed that his house be overhauled immediately. The money was recovered from part of his allowances. The overhaul of Lugolole James’ house energized him and inspired the youths to value what they were doing. Communities appreciated UNESCO for turning around Lugolole’s miserable living condition. Community elders were empowered to encourage their children that were not participating in Bigwala project. Other project participants started to improve their homes after seeing Lugolole’s house. No doubt this project inspired communities to improve hygiene and general state of their homes.

The PMC recommended that a copy of the UNESCO Certificate of inscription for Bigwala on the list of ICH in need of urgent safeguarding be given to all Bigwala communities to launch them into the project. This has been done everywhere. The certificates act as major reminders to communities about their pledges towards this heritage. It was also the intention of the PMC to do a mapping for project coverage by distributing copies of the certificates. Eventually, people that visit offices and homes where certificates were given get information about the project.
The project inspired all Bigwala farmers to grow and care for their gourds properly. Communities realized that Bigwala farming is an economically gainful activity they could do to improve incomes. As a result the harvest has continued to be good, more gourds are being planted and there are lots of gourds in Busoga at the moment. As project activities moved into schools; and they are very many, there is no worry that they will find difficulty getting gourds, people to teach them how make and play Bigwala. It is therefore the judgement of the project leadership that safeguarding of Bigwala has been successfully done.

**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

In addition to what was highlighted in the previous report, the concerned communities have through the local leaders and James Lugolole (Surviving master player) been resourceful in suggesting practical activity options for implementation. For example they agreed with the Busoga Minister of Culture to replace Bigwala festival with preparation of performances at the king’s coronation anniversary (2016) and Busoga kingdom Union day (February 2017). They proposed joint rehearsals where each of the nine groups sent up to 5 players. 60 players were trained at Mufumi Primary School for a total of one month. This increased proficiency and unity among them.

During the first joint meeting of the selected group, members agreed that money that was originally meant to transport them and buy prizes at the festival be used to transport and feed them during rehearsals and buy them uniform that would identify them. This uniform was commissioned by the Culture Minister of Busoga kingdom Ow. Richard Mafumo in October 2016. The group also jointly composed a song entitled “Oyo Gabula” (That Gabula) which praises King W. W. Nadiope Gabula IV. They agreed that this song should always be played to usher in the king at every function. Bigwala players also composed a drum rhythm “Mwenemu alimu” which is played on 11 drums. One of the drums is played by the king and another by the culture minister. These drums are organized by the Bigwala group.

The Bigwala project lead music teacher Walyanda Asuman planned and organized a launch of “Bigwala in Schools” at Buwenge Primary School on Saturday 24th June 2017. The event attracted the district education officer, Buwenge town clerk, members of the school management committee and project committee members. 70 pupils participated in workshops of making and playing Bigwala. Seeds of the gourds were distributed to the pupils and leaders. The UNESCO certificate of inscription was given to the school head teacher, town clerk and education officers.

James Mukama, Godfrey Mugabe, Irene Nabirye searched for gourd seeds in such areas as Teso, Bunyoro, Buganda and other places as far as 150 kilometers away. They went through villages asking anybody until they found some people that had gourds. It is these gourds that gave parent seeds for the Bigwala farmers.

Bigwala communities are growing gourds, seeking guidance on how to care for their crop and make Bigwala from them. They invite resourceful village members for our meetings / workshops to ensure that their Bigwala community fully gained Bigwala knowledge and skills. As a result, many men, women, schooling and non-schooling children of all ages, turned up at the Bigwala events.

The project manager Walusimbi Haruna, is the Director of Nile Beat Artists, one of the cultural groups that are involved in the project. Other community members on the committee include: the Chairperson of Namalemba Sub-County Local Council III, James Lugolole, the Bigwala master player, Nabirye Irene, the Bigwala youths leader at Mawanga village and Iganga District Culture Officer. Committee members drew policies and monitored the project with passion.
### 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.).**

Sustainability of activities was ensured by attaching economic and social benefit to Bigwala knowledge and skills. Bigwala farmers sell their harvest which encourages them to grow more. Bigwala will soon be played by many groups and schools which will increase demand for gourds. Bigwala craftsmen will have market. It is necessary to note that gourds break. All groups will often go back to craftsmen for replacements. Players of Bigwala have started to perform at various functions and are paid for it. During kingdom events many people wish to be near the king but never get opportunity to do so. Bigwala players lead the convoy and enjoy that privilege and status in society. For example the Bigwala group played drums together with the king during last coronation anniversary and Busoga kingdom Union day. Dancers are often given some money when they perform. Thus, all major activities of the project have incentives attached to them. Therefore, they will continue to happen among the Basoga communities even after the project has ended.

Seeds were distributed to all nine communities. There is no possibility that gourds will be lost again since even children started to grow them. Youths and children of less than ten years acquired knowledge and skills of making Bigwala. Taking Bigwala to schools increased effectiveness of the project since most youths spend nine months each year in school. In addition to that, schools have financial capacity to buy Bigwala and have students taught.

Bigwala groups elected leaders and appointed patrons among local leaders and elders. Group leaders identify issues that arise and plan continuity of the groups. Some groups like Mawanga, started to add more economic activities like basketry to strengthen benefit of their members.

Ownership of the project was ensured by including representatives of key stakeholders and communities on the project management committee. Also, ideas from the communities were included in project implementation plans and where they were not practical consensus was reached about best course of action. Project activities and their outputs were shared with communities and subsequent activities decided on in each community basing on their recommendations. The project caused increased interaction and discussion of ICH safeguarding among implementers, monitors and the communities. This had never happened in Busoga before.

Communities were part of the Bigwala processes right from preparations for nomination. They have gained skills in organizing safeguarding activities effectively and efficiently. A committee of volunteer local and cultural leaders to ensure the Bigwala communities and Busoga kingdom sustain the project benefits was identified.

The project came to be replicated and codenamed the “Bigwala model” for safeguarding ICH involved identifying the master musician, finding resources, transfer knowledge and skills of how to make and perform the music to the youths and then create opportunities for the new generation to perform. This model has been and is continuing to be used in creating new players of Entenga (tuned drums), Amakondere(gourd trumpets) and Endere (flutes) of Buganda kingdom as well as Naizungwe (drums) and Ekimasa (harp) of Busoga kingdom.
**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*

Project leaders need to focus on the goals and guide all stakeholders towards the principle aim. This project aimed to create a new generation of Bigwala players so that at the end a total of 210 youths have Bigwala skills. At the beginning of the project, some youths did not show interest but the objective was clearly articulated and pursued by all members in the communities. As the project progressed, many youths were encouraged and invited by their friends to join. Also, Busoga kingdom only took great interest in the project later when the culture minister appealed for formation of a unified Bigwala group to play at kingdom functions.

When a problem affects, given opportunity communities and they craft a solution together, they own and participate in the interventions. Bigwala communities were passionate about their heritage from the beginning. When the project was funded, they saw it as an opportunity to revive and develop their heritage. Ideas that were shared during the join rehearsals at Mufumi and the unity manifested by the youths showed that the communities wanted Bigwala revived. Secondly, people are willing to sacrifice for general good. This project did not give money to members to enjoy but people sacrificed many things to ensure the activities took place. They gave ideas passionately, kept time, stayed longer, brought extra furniture and generally organized project activities. Communities followed up all activities to ensure they do not miss anything. They were competitive in desiring benefit from the project activities to earn credit from them.

When communities that are concerned with a project are passionate and willing to sacrifice, the activities achieve higher outputs than projected. Bigwala communities mobilized big numbers to participate in the activities and followed up every action passionately. They kept on improving quality much fast and created room for better and bigger results.

When communities are involved in management of a project, implementation becomes effective and efficient. Activities of the Bigwala project yielded desired outputs partly because mobilization and communication with communities was easy. Community leaders that received phone calls mobilized villages by word of mouth and through music; by playing drums. Local leaders were the immediate community monitors who advised their members during various activities.

Regarding sustainability, the communities; the local political and opinion leaders all confirmed that Bigwala was not new to them, but that they were starting to forget a valued heritage. Thus this project is timely and dealing with a real community need. Communities and their leaders manifest great enthusiasm towards Bigwala and a resolve to support the project not only up to the end but also to sustain its benefits when it is completed. They unanimously appealed for actions that would cause revival of Basoga peoples’ heritage in general.

Successful implementation of a project is an inspiring experience. The Bigwala project presented lessons to the implementers and increased capacity to deliver ICH safeguarding interventions. Five similar projects were initiated and are ways of getting them implemented to the level of Bigwala are underway.
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)

1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OyrnJwdAO3k
2. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBgaMm_wHbk
7. https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=why%20we%20must%20value%20east%20african%20music&ref=eyJzaWQiOiIwLj3MTE1NTkwMTM0OTI3MTI2IiwicXMi0iJKVFZDSIRJeWQyaDVKVEI3ZDJVbE1qQnRkWE4wSIRJd2RtRnNkV1VsTWpCbFYTjBKVEI3WVdaelWFXTmhiavVSTUcxMWMybGpKVEI5SIRVRSIsm2joiYmVIMDImOTNnYTczMmNnYTU5YTFFyZkOWY0NTBkMzg5MjQyNGU0OSJ9
12. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gpG0HLNxVQA&feature=youtu.be
13. Photographs and audio-visual documentaries
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name: Isabirye James</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title: Executive Secretary</td>
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<td>National Council of Folklorists of Uganda (NACOFU)</td>
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<td>Date: 28 Jul 2017</td>
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<td>Signature: [Signature]</td>
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