

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY STUDY

ON INTANGIBLE CULTURAL

HERITAGE'S CONTRIBUTION

TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

FOCUSING ON EDUCATION

A GUIDE FOR FACILITATORS AND LOCAL COORDINATORS
FOR A SCHOOL OF LIVING TRADITIONS ON THE *BUKLOG* THANKSGIVING RITUAL OF THE SUBANEN



MULTI-DISCIPLINARY STUDY
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FOCUSING ON EDUCATION

A Guide for Facilitators
and Local Coordinators
for a School Of Living Traditions
on the *Buklog* Thanksgiving Ritual
of the Subanen

Second Edition



Cover and facing page show a traditional Subanen house with a buklog attached to it in Kumalarang, Zamboanga del Sur.
Photo by Roel Hoang Manipon

Nestor T. Horfilla
Lead Documenter/Writer

Roel Hoang Manipon
Editor/Book and Cover Designer

Renefe Tremedal
Project Coordinator

Rhonson Ng
Nestor T. Horfilla
Paul Omar Gangoso
Roel Hoang Manipon
Photographers

Mariano "Anoy" Catague
Illustrator

Harold Lupogan
Graphics and Layout Artist

Tarhata Daligdigan
Fedilyn Lusay
Gauden Serig
Research Assistants

Timuay Gawasen Balibis
Timuay Dlibon Amrjorie L. Paulin
Timuay Dlibon Anita Tumbao
Neneng Mangilay
Pelais Tonggos
Necisto Liganan
Cultural Masters/Informants/Consultants

Kris Anne Cortez
Culture and Arts Officer
Cultural Communities and Traditional Arts Section
of the NCCA Secretariat

Renee Talavera
Head
Cultural Communities and Traditional Arts Section
of the NCCA Secretariat

**Multi-Disciplinary Study on Intangible Cultural Heritage's
Contribution to Sustainable Development, Focusing on Education:
A Guide for Facilitators and Local Coordinators
for a School of Living Traditions on the Buklog
Thanksgiving Ritual of the Subanen**

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**The International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage
in the Asia-Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO**

2 Cho, Mozusekiun-Cho, Sakai-Ku, Sakai City, Osaka 590-0802, Japan
Telephone: +81-72-275-8050
Facsimile: +81-72-275-8151
Web site: <https://www.irci.jp>

National Commission for Culture and the Arts

NCCA Building, 633 General Luna Street,
Intramuros, 1002 Manila, Philippines.
Telephone: (+63 2) 527-2192, (+63 2) 527-2202
Facsimile: (+63 2) 527-2191, (+63 2) 527-2194
E-mail: info@ncca.gov.ph
Web site: www.ncca.gov.ph

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MULTI-DISCIPLINARY STUDY ON INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE'S CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOCUSING ON EDUCATION

A GUIDE FOR FACILITATORS AND LOCAL COORDINATORS
FOR A SCHOOL OF LIVING TRADITIONS ON THE *BUKLOG* THANKSGIVING RITUAL OF THE SUBANEN





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Young learners at the School of Living Traditions
in Lakewood, Zamboanga del Sur
Photo by Rhonson Ng



GETTING STARTED

Cultural heterogeneity and variations characterize Mindanao, the second largest island in the Philippine archipelago. The Subanen, or people of the river, comprise the second largest indigenous population in the island. Like other indigenous cultural communities, the Subanen possess a rich cultural heritage which has been passed on since time immemorial.

- Do you affirm that there is a need for safeguarding the rich cultural heritage of the peoples in Mindanao?
- Do you believe that the reinvigoration of indigenous knowledge and promotions of traditional arts can be pathways for sustainable development?
- Do you think that your municipality and your province have the potentials for the establishment of a community-based School of Living Traditions (SLT)?

Then, this learning guide for the implementation of SLT is for you. This guide comprises two parts. The first part narrates the context of the *Buklog*, a vital intangible cultural heritage (ICH) element of the Subanen people, while the second part provides a collection of learning modules related to the *Buklog*, used in the learning section of the SLT.



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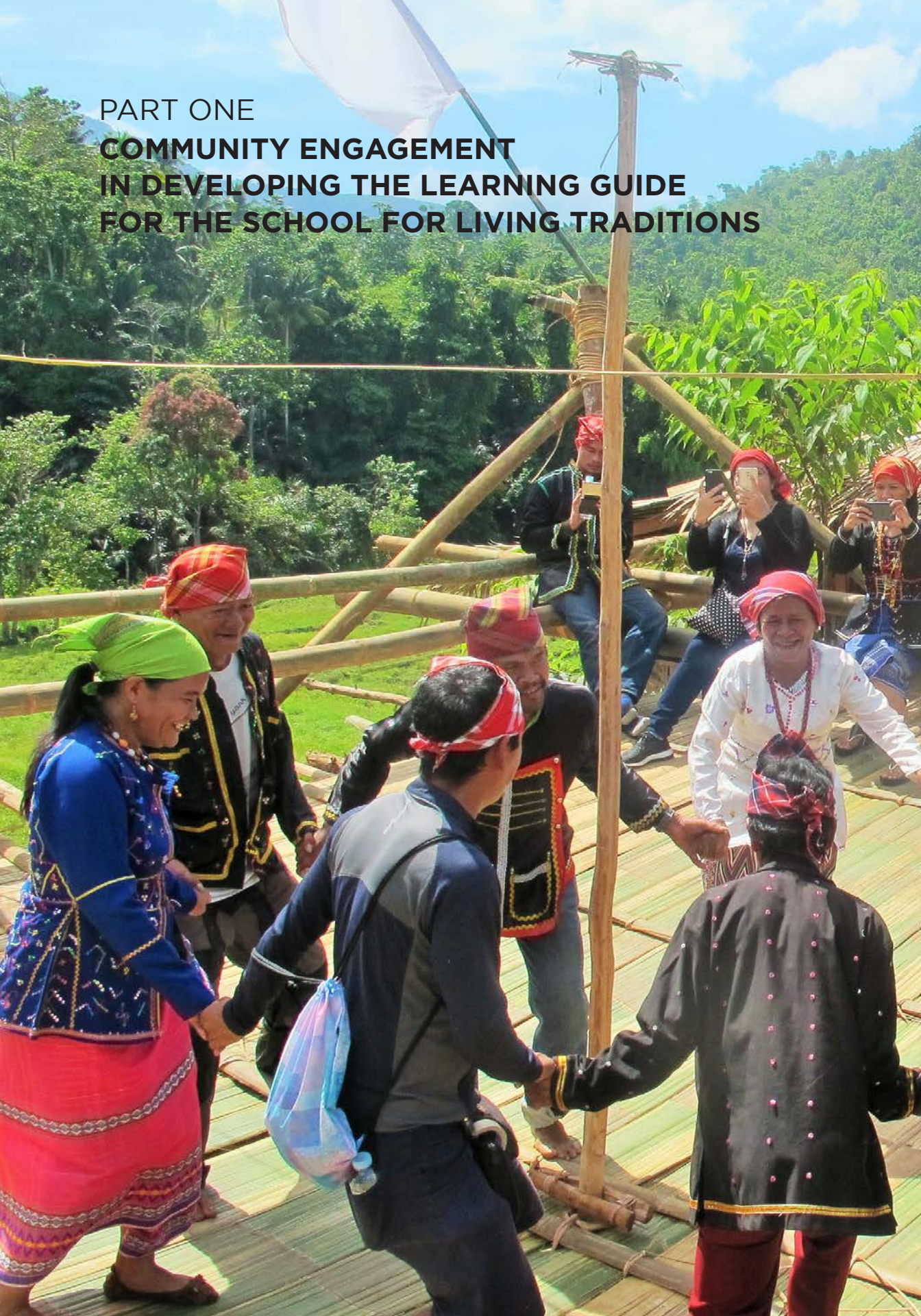
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PART ONE

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
IN DEVELOPING THE LEARNING GUIDE
FOR THE SCHOOL FOR LIVING TRADITIONS**





Subanen elders performing the *gbat* on the Buklog platform
Photo by Roel Hoang Manipon

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW

This section introduces the rationale and objectives of the learning guide for the Schools of Living Traditions. It introduces the nature and function of an SLT and presents key concepts related to intangible cultural heritage. It also reminds readers of the contributions to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) made by safeguarding the ICH.

A. Background and Rationale of the Project

This publication focuses on education of the intangible cultural heritage of indigenous people, particularly, of the Subanen of Zamboanga del Sur.

Like other indigenous cultural communities, the Subanen take pride in their rich cultural heritage, some elements of which have been passed on from generation to generation since time immemorial.

Article XIV of the Philippine Constitution affirms that “the State shall recognize, respect and protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions and institutions. It shall consider these rights in the formulation of national plans and policies.”

In the same vein, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) upholds the rights of the members of indigenous communities to their culture. The agency encourages and supports the transfer of indigenous knowledge and skills from recognized cultural masters to interested young people within the community through the establishment of Schools of Living Traditions (SLT) throughout the country.

The SLT is a flagship program of the NCCA, particularly of the Subcommission on Cultural Communities and Traditional Arts (SCCTA), conceived with the goal of safeguarding traditional cultural practices of indigenous peoples.

Besides being a form of safeguarding measure, the SLT—now channelled through the project proposed by the International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI), i.e. one of the Category 2 Centres of UNESCO to promote the 2003 Convention and its implementation—is envisioned to be an integrated and inter-agency development intervention involving cultural communities and multi-sectoral stakeholders as well as local government units and assisting government agencies to ensure that “education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, [is] mainstreamed at all levels in (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment.”

The collaboration between the NCCA and the IRCI will be education- and research-centric, directed through the SLT program. The SLT is an ideal outlet since it is a long-term and unique program envisioned to be a core instrument of the two parties in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and the subsequent widening of knowledge that ensures and promotes lifelong learning.

The SLT program has always strived to the promote quality

education and thus contributes to the fulfilment of Objective 4.7 of the SDGs that “by 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.”

B. The School of Living Traditions

Several community-managed and NCCA-supported SLTs have been established in several parts of the Subanen traditional home range since 2012. Since then, the SLT has become a dynamic haven for cultural awareness and heritage conservation. Proven is its ability to gather generations within a community to sit together, discuss and celebrate first-hand experiences of their long-cherished traditions and beliefs. With its initial success, the SLT has been replicated in different sites and communities using different implementing strategies and approaches.

The SLT was conceived to:

- Identify aspects/components of traditional culture and art considered to be important to a cultural community and transfer these aspects/components to the young through the masters of the community;
- Institutionalize a learning center for the perpetuation of the indigenous peoples’ culture or possibly, integrate the program into the local school curriculum for wider participation and dissemination; and
- Actively engage in the flourishing of viable social enterprises



Subanen young girls practicing the *thalek*, a Subanen traditional dance

Photo by Rhonson Ng

Box 1. Key Concepts

Cultural heritage refers to the totality of cultural property preserved and developed through time and passed on to posterity. On the other hand, **cultural property** shall refer to all products of human creativity by which a people and a nation reveal their identity. A significant cultural property can be movable or immovable, tangible or intangible, private or public. (Republic Act 10066)

Intangible cultural heritage is defined as “the practices, representations, expressions, as well as the knowledge and skills (including instruments, objects, artefacts, cultural spaces), that most of the communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.” (UNESCO, 2003)

Revitalizing traditional culture has been central to the heritage conservation and management program of the NCCA, through the establishment and expansion of the Schools of Living Traditions (SLT), as the primary mechanism for safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of the different cultural communities in the country.

The **School of Living Traditions** (SLTs), as a flagship project of the NCCA, is initiated by the Subcommittee on Cultural Communities and Traditional Arts toward the safeguarding of traditional cultures and practices through the transfer of indigenous knowledge and skills to the young people by the cultural masters in the community. The SLTs have become a model that is being adopted by the different agencies and institutions not only for the purpose of safeguarding cultural heritage but also for the advocacy for reinvigoration of indigenous knowledge systems as well as for the recognition of cultural rights.” (Talavera, 2015)

Indigenous knowledge systems refers to the cumulative and complex bodies of knowledge, know-how, practices and representations that are maintained and developed by peoples with extended histories of interactions with the natural environment. These cognitive systems are part of a complex that also includes language, attachment to place, spirituality and worldview. (UNESCO, 2003)

Education for Sustainable Development is likewise demonstrated in the implementation of an enhanced SLT program. As designed, the E-SLT program fundamentally focuses on the development of effective learning process for the transmission, safeguarding and revitalization of the elements of the community’s intangible cultural heritage. However, this program that does not only ensure the continuation of indigenous knowledge and practices, but also advances the contributions of intangible cultural heritage to sustainable development in the basal communities.

projects that are grounded on local culture and which preserve and promote local knowledge.

As a non-formal educational intervention program, the implementers of the various SLTs are guided by important key concepts (*see Box 1*) that help clarify their strategies and ensure the achievement of their desired outcomes, as explained in the following page.

Nothing makes indigenous culture of the Subanen more alive than the passionate commitment of the people to celebrate what makes them unique as a community. The SLT program affirms how the traditional arts play an essential role in sustaining heritage.

In specific formal and informal classes that both capture the attention and spark the interest of the youth, the SLT is able to hold its front against other influences. By actively engaging students in a face-to-face, inspired learning experience, the SLT underscores the need for active and direct measures in safeguarding culture in its traditional forms, rooted yet relevant in present times.

Thus, this publication of the SLT Learning Guide with the IRCI and NCCA, as a contribution in safeguarding the Subanen ICH, shall constantly remind and assist the learning facilitators in achieving the primary desired outcomes of an SLT program—the revitalization of traditions and heritage as pathways to the sustainable development of cultural communities.

There can be an effective incorporation of ICH in the teaching and learning practices in non-formal curricula. A more organized instruction from cultural masters can be achieved, leading to better transmission and acquisition of the knowledge on ICH elements present in their cultural communities. With that, students can appreciate the lessons more, and application of the skills obtained can be easier as well. This can better ensure the sustainable development of the community, and more importantly the implementation of community-led safeguarding measures of intangible cultural heritage.

C. Purpose of the Learning Guide

The NCCA supports the community-led establishment and functioning of SLT programs. As such, it is imperative that the program implementation utilizes measured interventions and proven approaches that are not only cost-effective but more importantly, culturally relevant and sensitive.

In the province of Zamboanga del Sur, three SLTs have recently been established in addition to more than twelve community-managed SLTs that were in existence since 2010. Thus, this maiden publication of the series of SLT learning guides is developed principally to guide the implementation of the non-formal educational processes in these SLTs duly managed by the Subanen communities (*See locator map*).

Moreover, the thrust and intention of this initial publication is to reinforce the initiatives of the Subanen communities in safeguarding their age-old tradition and the substantially valued element of their shared intangible cultural heritage, namely the *Buklog*, the highest and most elaborate ritual system of thanksgiving.

It is for this reason that this learning guide is conceptualized and produced. It aims to:

- Clarify the development framework of an Enhanced SLT program and its benefits to the local cultural community as well as help develop effective mechanisms for sustainability;
- Elaborate the learning content, methodology and processes embraced by the SLT program;
- Guide the SLT program implementers in the successful implementation of the planned learning activities;
- Ensure the effective transmission of local knowledge and skills from the cultural masters to the young learners; and
- Provide a guide for interested teachers in the formal basic education for integrating intangible cultural heritage as lesson content in the respective subjects they are teaching.

The SLT program of the Subanen further affirms that traditional art, as a vehicle of expression, communication and



values formation, is essential to the survival of indigenous cultures.

The cultural value of traditional art is reflected in the meanings embodied in or expressed by the artworks, artefacts, texts, performances, rituals, and customs of the cultural communities.

This learning guide underscores the need for a thorough documentation of the inherent worldviews and value systems of a particular cultural community where an SLT is established. In this manner, we can help explain the complex relations of art and society as well as of aesthetics and functions of traditional art. (Peralta, 2006)

The above-mentioned objectives emphasize the need to enhance the cultural competence of the implementers of the SLT program. Cultural competence refers to the “ongoing process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures and protects and preserves the dignity of the members of the cultural communities.”

D. Building a Database from Various Sources of Information

Most of the data on the Subanen and their rituals are sourced from the traditional leaders and identified cultural masters from the various communities in the province. It has to be underscored that the process of developing learning guides focused on the Subanen *Buklog* is challenging and equally demanding.

In the Subanen tradition and belief system, one cannot easily incorporate the subject of the *Buklog* in day-to-day conversation. The mere mention of the *Buklog* is considered sacred and due care must be considered and well-thought-out.

Thus, an accompanying ritual seeking permission from the spirits was conducted prior to the discussion and eventually the writing of this section.

Moreover, the process of developing a learning guide, particularly for the SLT, requires the building of a robust database on Subanen society and culture, as well as the consolidation of cultural inventories of ICH elements. The members of the research and writing team employed tools and techniques in participatory rural appraisal in the process of data gathering in the communities.

Appended in this learning guide is a compilation of resources that can be used as further references for the learning facilitators. It contains samples of cultural inventories documented through a participatory cultural mapping process. Moreover, additional notes for understanding indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) and the conduct of securing free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) of the indigenous community, which are generated from secondary sources, are also included in the annexes of this learning guide.

E. Contributions to the UN SDGs

This learning guide is prepared for the effective integration of ICH in the teaching and learning practices in non-formal education, such as the SLT. The intention is to facilitate a systematic process in the transfer of knowledge from cultural masters to the young learners, leading to a better transmission and acquisition of the knowledge on ICH elements present in the cultural communities.

The proposed learning processes are designed to increase the interest of the young learners, raise their appreciation of the lessons

as well as make it easier for them to apply the knowledge and skills acquired in the SLT. In this manner, the SLT program can better ensure its contribution to the implementation of community-led safeguarding measures of the shared intangible cultural heritage of the people and especially to the promotion of quality education stipulated in the target 4.7 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The SLT program contributes to the achievement of the UN SDGs in a number of ways. For one, by ensuring the safeguarding of unique cultural heritage and identity, the SLT also contributes to ensuring the preservation of the world's cultural diversity. The indigenous community, particularly the Subanen, is made aware of the uniqueness and importance of their culture in the national and global context, thus engendering pride in their cultural contribution to the world and promoting a sense of global citizenship and belongingness.

The learning processes spelled out in the SLT also emphasize how the students and young learners can help protect the diversity of cultural expressions and thus strengthen the shared identity and sense of pride-of-place as Filipinos.

More importantly, the SLT widens access of the members of the community to their shared cultural expressions, thereby safeguarding cultural diversity and promoting cultural pluralism. Indeed, by increasing peoples access to both new and traditional means of cultural expression implies cultural recognition and strengthens the individual's or a community's membership of the knowledge society. Culture has multiple and complex links with knowledge. The processing of information into knowledge is a creative and culturally informed act. "A truly knowledge-rich world has to be a culturally diverse world."

The SLT encourages the active participation of every member of the community in most aspects, either as learner, teacher or supporter, thus promoting inclusivity and equal access for all genders. It also provides a venue conducive to learning and social cohesion, thus upholding the culture of peace, and the value of inclusivity.

Likewise, the SLT embraces the principles and methodologies of inculcating life-skills and life-long learning through the revitalization of indigenous knowledge systems.

Particularly in Zamboanga Del Sur, the SLT strives to address pressing social issues, among others, the loss of bio-diversity and the depletion of genetic resources that is compounded by the problem of cultural erosion. As societies in transition, the younger generations are increasingly being drawn into mainstream society through formal education and exposure to mass media. Their assimilation into the mainstream poses the risk that the indigenous knowledge system of the Subanen will no longer be passed on to the next generation. There was a general consensus that local knowledge and significant ICH elements must be documented before it vanished forever, and this is principal role of the community-based SLT,

Indigenous knowledge can serve as an effective development tool to improve the living conditions of communities without degrading the environment. It can be used to increase and enhance livelihood options, revitalize agriculture, increase food security, improve health and promote a sense of cultural pride within the community.

Furthermore, the SLT is operated as a support-mechanism that foster creativity and expands the young learners' readiness for the emergence of dynamic cultural and creative industry in their local community as a pathway for inclusive economic and social development that foster local production, the development of local markets and access to platforms for their distribution and exchange.

Lastly, this learning guide substantiates the truism that indigenous heritage is a source of pride of the Filipinos. The contents remind us what Professor Felipe de Leon, Jr., former chairman of the NCCA, has written about the indigenous artists: "Celebrating the superior artistry and technical excellence of the indigenous artists cannot but warm the hearts of our people. For they reveal to us the depths of our soul, inspiring in us the most exulted and dignified image of ourselves. They make us proud to be Filipinos."

F. Intended Users

The above-mentioned objectives emphasize the need to enhance the cultural competence of the implementers and their support organizations in the SLT program. Cultural competence refers to the "ongoing process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures and protects and preserves the dignity of the members of the cultural communities."

Being said the primary users of this learning guide are the following:

- Program grantees, i.e. the project implementers and the SLT local coordinating teams
- Community leaders and support groups including teachers in the formal education programs
- Assisting institutions and agencies and local government units

However, researchers, educators, cultural workers and students may also find this learning guide meaningful and helpful in their culture-focused undertakings.



CHAPTER 2 THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The development of the SLT learning guide underwent a process that solicited the active engagement of the leaders of Subanen communities, their assisting organizations, and several academicians. Among the community and institutional partners of the NCCA involved in the research and development process of the guide are the following:

- **Dumendingan Arts Guild Incorporated (DAGI)**, a civil society organization of Subanen culture bearers and cultural workers from various ethno-linguistic groups based in the province of Zamboanga del Sur that actively support the cultural renewal of several Subanen communities in the province;
- **Thindegan Dlibon Subanen Association (TDSA)**, a community-based self-help group of Subanen women who are engaged in local gender-and-development projects and in the operations of Lakewood-based SLT; and
- **Pegsalabuhan Dlibon-Subanen Incorporated (PDSI)**, an inter-municipal people's organization, composed mostly of Subanen women, who are active in the recognition, delineation, protection and sustainable development of Subanen Ancestral Domains situated within the province.

For almost a decade now, the partnership of DAGI, together with the TDSA and PDSI with the NCCA has had facilitated the establishment of several community-managed SLTs in the province. On the other hand, the leaders of Dumendingan, TDSA and PDSI have always been at the forefront of safeguarding the *Buklog* as a significant ICH of the Subanen.

In July 2018, DAGI expressed its intention to assist the Subanen communities, particularly in advancing measures for safeguarding the *Buklog*, by integrating some of its significant elements as lesson content or as motivational activities in the existing SLTs within the province of Zamboanga del Sur.

After the initial discussions with the leaders of various Subanen communities, a series of consultative meetings and planning workshops were conducted by DAGI, with the end view of ensuring that the community leaders are actively engaged in the process and that the community has expressed its free, prior, and informed consent to the planned safeguarding measures of the community ICH.

Several SLTs have been established in the ancestral homelands of the Subanen since 2012. They mobilize the collaborations of the four development actors: IP leaders and organizations, SLT learning facilitators, assisting institutions, and representatives of LGU's. Together they shall enhance the operations of the SLT as an effective mode of transmission of indigenous knowledge and in the revitalization of indigenous traditions. The project team ensures

that the cultural masters are actively involved in the in the entire safeguarding process and that the community members are actively engage in promoting social cohesion and empowering approaches.

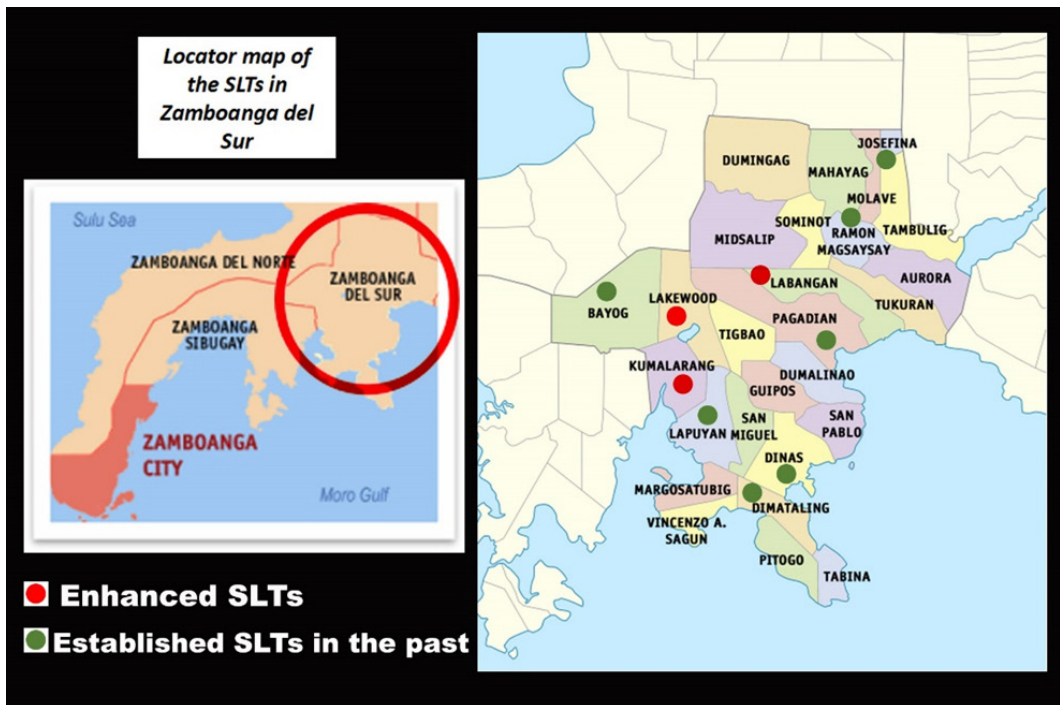
A. What is Buklog? Why Buklog?¹

The *Buklog* or *Gbeklug* is the biggest ritual and thanksgiving celebration of the Subanen that lasts for days, weeks and even months. It derives its name from the wooden structure holding the platform for dancing. The ritual is generally celebrated to propitiate the gods in specific events in which the entire Subanen community participates. The occasion may be a thanksgiving for a bountiful harvest, for healing, or for prestige for a new leader or a home comer. (Georshua, 2009)

The *Buklog* complex is a body of rituals and ceremonies that marks the stages of life in Subanen society. The Subanen celebrate various types of *Buklog* that correspond to the different aspects of their life. The comprehensive nature of the *Buklog* is summarized by Irwin:

“The *Gbuklug* festival comprehends and supersedes the practice of all other Subanen religious rituals; that is, in the performance may be observed every religious need and solution known to the tribe. Through the actions of the participants, especially dancing and singing the *Gingoman*, men are transposed in time back to the creation of the world; and there a total renewal occurs. Members exist at the intersection of the national, the social and the divine orders, and at that place experience total harmony in the cosmos” (Irwin, 1993:89)

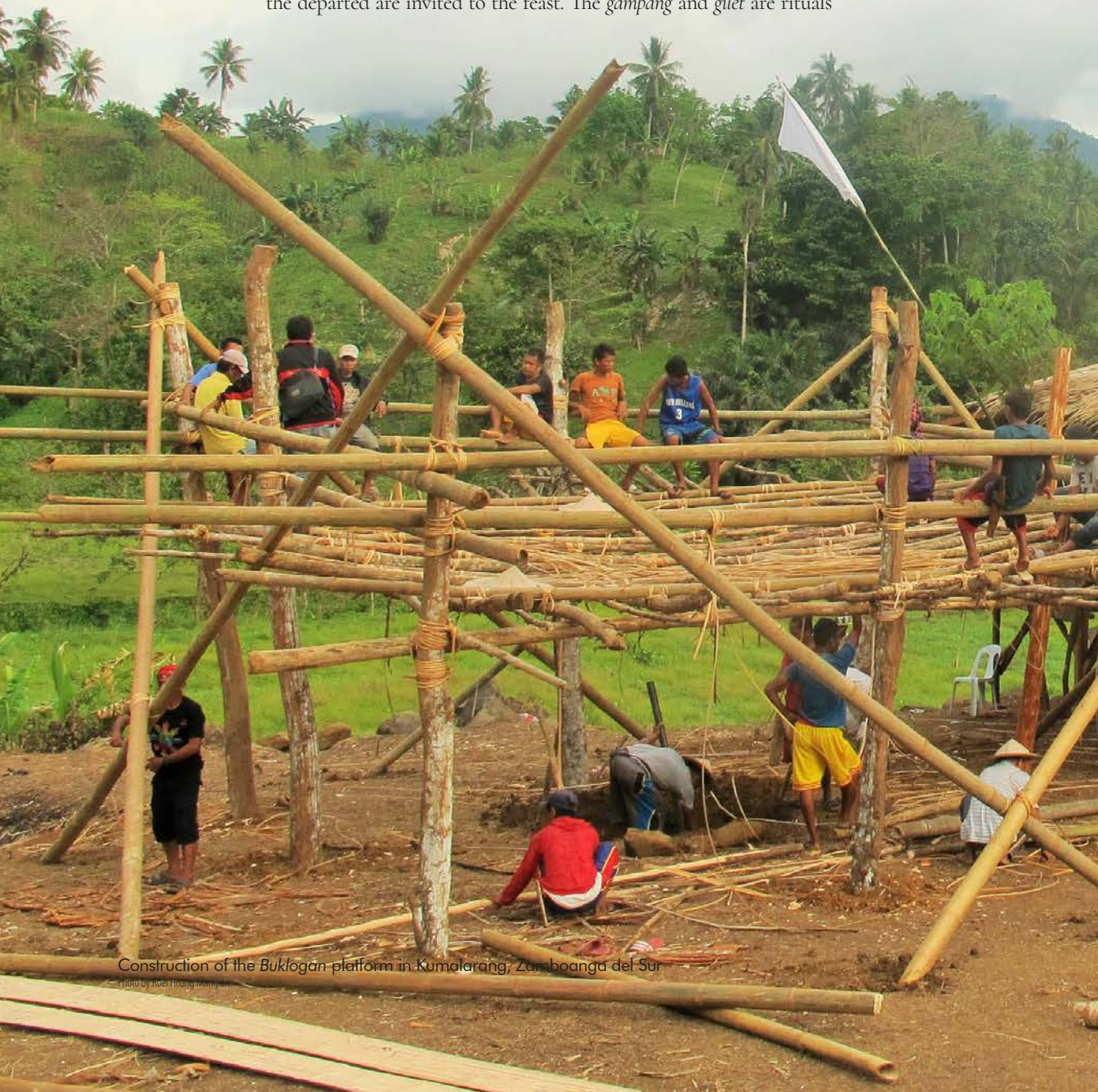
Buklog has several attendant rituals. It is planned by the head of a host family, usually a village chief called *timuay*, to appease and express gratitude to the spirits for many reasons such as a bountiful



harvest, recovery from sickness or calamity, or acknowledgement of a new leader. All community members, regardless of sex, age, gender, status, social and education background, and level of mental and physical capability, are encouraged to join the rituals and festivity which last for several days.

The Subanen belief system gives the whole *Buklog* complex its distinctive characteristic and significance. The Subanen's deep sense of spirituality is affirmed in this ritual, where representations of Dwata Magbabaya, the supreme god, as Apu Usog (the great ancestor), joins the community.

Buklog opens with the *sinulampong*, signifying the community's readiness to hold the *Buklog* and to ask permission from the spirits to gather materials from the forest. The offerings in the *sangat* seek to maintain the balance in the spirit world. In the *panmalwasan*, spirits of the departed are invited to the feast. The *gampang* and *gilet* are rituals



Construction of the *Buklogan* platform in Kumalarang, Zamboanga del Sur

Photo by Isidoro Florentino

invoking spirits of the water and land. The chanting of *giloy*, verses of praise, with the sounding of gongs, is performed in each ritual.

After the attendant rituals, the community starts the construction of an elevated wooden structure. At the center of the platform, a single pole called *petaw* is installed to hit a hollowed-out log called *dulugan*. While dancing on the platform, the structure resonates with a sound, believed to please the spirits and to make known that the festivity is culminating.

The final ritual, called *giti-an*, is performed on the platform, where the rules for the celebration are expressed. This is followed by the *gbat* (community dance), a moment marked by joy and excitement, resulting from the renewal of spiritual and social relationships within the community.

All the attendant rituals ensure harmony among members of a family/clan and the community, as well as among the human world, the natural world and the spirit world. Harmony is requisite



to the success of the *Buklog*, an indication of a socially cohesive community. Thus, the involvement of the whole community in the enormous mobilization of volunteer work and accumulation of huge resources reinforces social cohesion.

Through the *Buklog*, the Subanen indigenous secret knowledge is respected, preserved and transmitted. The ritual remains to be the most compelling cultural marker of the Subanen's individual and collective identity as much as it is the strongest unifying force of the community.

Moreover, the *Buklog* relates to the aesthetic aspects of Subanen life, with the chanting of *giloy*, dancing of the *gbat* and the playing of various musical instruments.

These function not only for entertainment, but to substantiate their spirituality. The sounding of the *dulugan*, the *Buklog*'s musical icon, serves as aural embodiment of Subanen's cosmology.

The *Buklog* performs both communal and integrative functions. The Subanen's economic, social, political and ritual life are intertwined to constitute a single system and are motivated by shared tenets of cultural survival—consulting the spirits, working with nature, sharing with others.

These are the values and virtues of the Subanen that the SLT desires to preserve, promote and safeguard.

B. Brief Community Situationer of the Subanen

The Subanen is the second largest group among the indigenous peoples of Mindanao Island in southern Philippines in terms of population.

They traditionally inhabit areas near rivers, thus their name, which means “people of the river.”

They traditional range is the Zamboanga Peninsula in western Mindanao, a multicultural region inhabited also by Islamized groups and migrant settlers, mostly Christians. They are spread throughout the provinces of the peninsula—Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga Sibugay—and in several municipalities in the province of Misamis Occidental.

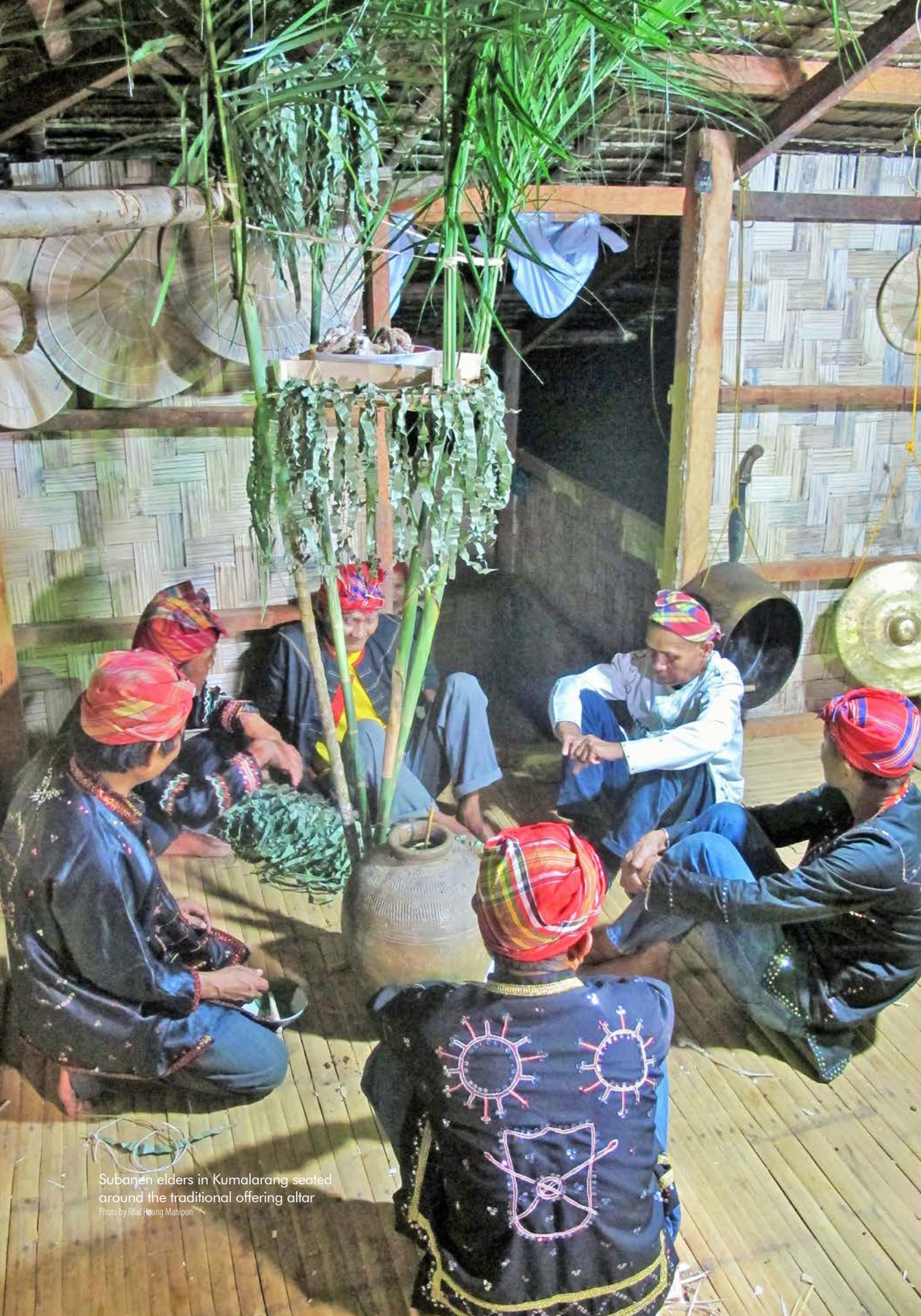
In a municipality where they are present, the Subanen demography ranges from as low as 15 to 60 percent of the population, and they are usually considered most marginalized.

Municipalities with high concentration of Subanen include Sindangan, Siayan, Josefina, Bonifacio, Aurora, Labangan, Lakewood, Kumalarang, and Kabasalan.

The Subanen are traditionally shifting cultivators, living in dispersed settlements, and remain the stewards of their Ancestral Domain.

Most of these settlements are located on rolling terrains, alluvial plains, or in upland areas, near sources of potable water sources and in the remote interior villages on the fringes of forests, considered environmentally critical areas.

While ethnically identified as one, the Subanen vary linguistically; geographically (according to the upland and riverine areas they live in); and by religion. Social groupings exist according to occupations and their roles in society, and the degree of assimilation to migrant lowland culture.



Subanen elders in Kumalarang seated around the traditional offering altar

Photo by Roel Hoang Manipon

Women and children are most vulnerable in typical indigenous communities, but both Subanen men and women have high regard for harmony in all aspects and for sharing with peoples from different cultures and backgrounds.

C. Threats and Challenges in Transmission of the *Buklog*²

In a community consultation held in July 2018, representatives of Subanen communities revealed that while before a grand *Buklog* is usually held once in seven to nine years, today the frequency of the practice varies from one community to another. The recent inventory conducted in five municipalities in the peninsula revealed that over the period covering thirty (30) years, the range and frequency of practices vary. In the municipalities of Lakewood and Kumalarang in Zamboanga del Sur, a *Buklog* is held once in every four to five years; while in Sindangan and Siayan, one *Buklog* celebration in seven to eight years. In other communities, only one *Buklog* was held.

The element is still practiced by Subanen residing in relatively intact communities with a strong and functioning, indigenous governance structure. These communities are located mostly in the interior areas of higher elevation, or in upland areas, that are not readily accessible by public transport.

On the other hand, in fully assimilated Subanen communities, situated in areas proximate to town centers, the practice of the element continues to diminish, and the spiritual and social significance may be completely lost in the next decades.

Influences from lowland communities and other cultures have brought marked transformation in Subanen society. While some aspects of the Subanen culture and tradition have persisted, changes in other aspects of Subanen's way of life are evident. These other influences that were introduced include lowland educational and political systems, shifts in social values, the introduction of the market economy, lowland body politic, and Christian denominations, among others. These have caused variations in the frequency and extent of the practice from one community to another.

Traditionally, the family is the basic social and political unit in the indigenous Subanen society, and is considered to perform key roles in the transmission of the knowledge and skills on the element to the young generations. At present, family dynamics have changed with the fact that in some families, some young Subanen, especially those belonging to the working age groups, decided to migrate to urban centers to look for regular and more productive work engagements.

While in the past, the roles of the *timuay* and the *balyan* are recognized as vital in the transmission of the values and meanings of the elements in intact communities, these leadership roles had slowly been disregarded as new sets of elected political leaders, mostly non-Subanens, take on these decisive positions, relegating the culture-focused traditional governance to the background.

The socio-economic and political structures and contexts of the Subanen community has been adversely affected by the imposition and influences of the current political and social conditions and issues, both in the national and local levels, from the enactment of Martial Law and the encroachment of logging concessions into

the area, degrading the environment, to the realities of political dynasties in lowland politics. With these, the Subanen communities experience the greatest and irreparable loss. Some of them have lost their ancestral lands, as well as their most precious heirlooms (including musical instruments and antique jars).

But the Subanen remain resilient and develop high adaptive mechanisms for the survival of their cultures. New alliances were forged with assisting organizations from the ranks of civil society organizations and even with the 'friendly' local government units. The latter likewise support the efforts to sustain the element.

More importantly, the NCCA, in partnership with local community organizations has supported the establishment in a few municipalities, of a number of community-based learning centers. These SLTs serve as mechanisms in reinforcing the traditional methods of transmitting the knowledge and skills of elders and cultural masters to the young learners.

In the province of Zamboanga del Sur, there had been more than nine SLTs that were established and made operational by local Subanen community associations. To date however, there are only three enhanced SLT that operates in the area. The remaining six SLTs however continue in the production of traditional crafts, albeit on an irregular basis.

In summary, the Subanen, regarded to be of high vulnerability, face a number of interrelated issues and constraints, and their



Elders drinking the pangasi (traditional wine) inside the Subanen house
Photo by Roel Hoang Manipon

culture bearers raised several factors that threaten the viability of the element:

1. Introduction of Christianity, prohibiting or deterring the Subanen in performing their traditional rituals;
2. Existence of armed conflict that leads to the displacement of the indigenous population in some critical areas in the region;
3. Poverty and economic constraints due mainly to downtrend of harvest or farm productivity because of climate extremities and other disasters;
4. The adverse effects of climate change and illegal logging on forests and farmlands, from which ritual materials, such as native trees/plants, are sourced;
5. Disempowerment of *timuays* due to the interface with lowland body politic, which disregards and weakens indigenous institutions, and imposes culturally inappropriate systems;
6. Educational system that alienates the Subanen from their own traditions and cultures; and
7. Weak implementation or non-delivery of necessary services and aids from institutions/agencies in terms of welfare, health, legal protection, environmental conservation, and agriculture, among others.

However, the existence and recognition of the *balyan* as spiritual leaders, backed up by the strong governance maintained by the local *gohoman* in the relatively intact Subanen communities, are evidence that the element, despite the constraints, is still viable.

As emphasized, the publication and utilization of this particular SLT learning guide fulfils the need to expand the number of SLTs in the province and consolidate the safeguarding of the *Buklog*. As mentioned by one of the respected *timuays* of the Subanen community, “If the *Buklog* ceases to be practiced, then the Subanen identity shall surely fade away.”

D. Participatory Methodology in Project Development

“The safeguarding of ICH elements requires a holistic and comprehensive strategy that obliges the active engagement of the community members and the support from the existing and well-meaning assisting organizations.”

—**Timuay Gawasen Balibis,**

Lanayan, Lakewood, Zamboanga del Sur

The informed consent expressed by the community as a requirement of the project prior to its implementation is initial evidence on the degree of community control of the project. In fact, in indigenous communities, the free-prior, and informed consent and agreement of the community is sanctified through a sacred ritual of acceptance.

However, in the ensuing research and writing processes, the members of the team always reminded themselves to discuss the details of the process of developing the learning guide and ensured the community of their full control, not as mere objects of study but as subjects capable to steer the directions set by the project initiators. Constantly, the team sought the permission of the leaders

and elders for the involvement of any of the community members in the project development phase.

1) Initial consultation with the cultural masters and spiritual leaders

The officers and members of Dumendingan conducted a series of community consultations duly attended by the known cultural masters, community leaders, ritual specialists as well as women and youth leaders. The consultations were held in various sites within the two municipalities in the province where SLTs are established—four small communities in the municipality of Lakewood (Duminata, Lanayan, Poblacion) and three small communities in the municipality of Kumalarang (Bulisong, Secade and Bogayo East).

The attendees in the small-group consultative meetings deliberated on the need to safeguard the Buklog tradition and the proposal to integrate the significant elements of the social practice as lesson content of the established SLTs.

The ideas and suggestions generated in the series of consultations were reviewed in the stakeholders' meeting in the City of Pagadian on July 21, 2018.





Subanen leaders discuss with members of the assisting NGO during the initial consultation

2) Ritual asking permission from the spirits of the ancestors

During the stakeholders meeting in Pagadian City, an offering ritual was conducted by the *balyan* and the *timuay* to ask permission from the spirits and guidance from the ancestors. This was done prior to the discussion on integrating the *Buklog* as lesson content in the SLT. Community rituals are as important as verbal or written consent to indigenous communities, because these are considered as sacred, sanctifying the agreement.



A traditional ritual, called phalas, is performed asking for guidance from the spirits of the ancestors



After the consultation, all of the Subanen leaders express their desire to safeguard their heritage

3) Revisiting the core principles on ICH safeguarding

Representatives of the Subanen communities together with the officers of their assisting organizations have expressed their consent on the urgent need for safeguarding the ICH of the community. However, they have also reiterated that safeguarding measures of the *Buklog* should be holistic, community-driven, multi-dimensional and multi-sectoral that can be categorized under three major areas of action:

- Measures for the continuing visibility of the *Buklog*;
- Measures for information dissemination and community education; and
- Measures for the revitalization of indigenous knowledge.

While the integration of the *Buklog* in the SLT fulfils the last two categories of safeguarding measures, the community representatives have also identified urgent actions that need to be prioritized in relation to the above-mentioned action-areas, and which should be integrated in the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP) of the community as explained below:

- All proposed processes and activities shall be implemented with full respect of the customary laws and principles of the

Subanen governing *Buklog*, in accordance to the advice of the members of the council of elders, ritual specialists and the *timuay* in matters such as conduct of rituals prior to and in sealing agreements;

- The Subanen are always reminded and should be mindful to assert their right to express or to withhold information specially if it is part of secret knowledge; and to clarify the restrictions or to supervise access to secret agricultural practices;
- There will be a group within the safeguarding body, composed of ritual specialists, representatives from the council of elders, and other concerned organizations and agencies. The team or committee assumes a decisive role in the designing of methodologies and processes of the proposed safeguarding measures as well as the facilitation of access to the ritual, ensuring the conservation of secret knowledge but still maintaining the *Buklog's* values of harmony, openness and sharing;
- Support organizations and partner agencies are encouraged to initiate a Joint Inter-Agency Action Plan and will be equipped to engage the publics in the promotion of cultural sensitivity most especially in the public sector.

4) Review of the safeguarding strategy

The safeguarding of ICH elements requires a comprehensive and holistic strategy and the active engagements of the community members. The planned strategies for the safeguarding of the *Buklog* envision supporting and rewarding indigenous Subanen for sustainably managing their natural environment and for revitalizing their indigenous knowledge systems and thus, achieving social and spiritual renewal.

The desired outcomes of the safeguarding plan is the “reinstallation of the celebration of the *Buklog* in its traditional frequency of once in a seven-year cycle in all the Subanen communities.”

To achieve this goal, the informed and active engagement of key stakeholders (community groups, assisting agencies, local government units, civil society organizations) for safeguarding the *Buklog*, consistent with the UN SDGs, is indeed crucial and irreversible. Among the agreed-upon strategic actions geared toward safeguarding the ICH element are the following:

- Conduct of participatory cultural mapping and ICH inventories, the findings and recommendations of which shall be integrated in the Comprehensive Development Plans and Programs of the concerned local government units (LGUs);
- Implementation of measured approaches and timely interventions for increased productivity of communal farms and sustainable use of natural resources within their ancestral domains that ensure the introduction and replication of culturally appropriate and affordable sustainable farming technologies In various household farms;
- Development and operation of an Inter-Agency Convergence Program (the NCCA as lead agency), to increase the support for the expansion of functional SLTs in all the municipalities

within the province;

- Enhancement of approaches employed in the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPED) Program of the Department of Education through the development of culturally-appropriate learning materials and the implementation of training for the core of culturally sensitive teachers engaged in IPED; and
- Mainstreaming of comprehensive safeguarding measures in the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan as well as ensure access to culturally-appropriate social protection measures of the members of the Subanen communities.

As emphasized, the intention to safeguard the *Buklog* should pave the way for the implementation of multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional interventions toward the sustainable development of the Subanen communities. Thus, the SLT Program implementers need to lobby for the institutionalization of the support from the local government units based on official endorsements by the respective local chief executives of the two LGUs concerned.

E. Ensuring Community Ownership and Empowerment

While other members of the indigenous community may have been engaged only as sources of information on the ICH elements, the identified cultural masters of the community participated in every phase of the project development.

The sense of empowerment, as expressed by the cultural masters,

Ritual preparation of the *dulugan* and the *pithaw*
Photo by Roel Hoang Manipon



varies in every stage. On one hand, it validated the significance of their age-old knowledge and wisdom which is nurtured by them. On the other hand, their engagement in the project has proven that they have important contributions in the development of their communities.

The community and other stakeholders reiterate their demand that a community validation of the learning guide prior to its dissemination or printing is necessary. In the community validation phase, the community members can express a sense of collective pride. They have also unreservedly conveyed that they are not merely the objects of the research, but are subjects who decide and control the project including its positive outcomes. Such is an expression of community empowerment. Moreover, the involvement of women leaders as well as the youth representatives in the entire research and development process is consistently ensured.

While the objective of the project is generally to use the learning guide in the teaching-learning situation within the SLTs, the active leaders of the communities have expressed that the project can also pave the way for more opportunities on culture-focused development interventions. The safeguarding measures of the *Buklog* could encourage support from various assisting agencies and support organizations in the following areas:

- Increasing capabilities of teachers engaged in Indigenous Peoples Education Program (IPED);
- Providing greater opportunities for gainful employment among the Subanen youth;
- Greater measured and timely support from LGUs for environmental conservation; and
- Advancing the utilization of indigenous knowledge in disaster-risk reduction programs and projects related to climate change.



¹ This section explains the context, content and processes of an important social practice among the indigenous Subanen communities—the *Buklog*. The text are culled from the ICH inventory that is made available in the NCCA archives.

² Culled from the proceedings of the community consultations assessing the viability of the *Buklog* documented by Dumendingan and the NCCA.

CHAPTER 3

SAFEGUARDING THE *BUKLOG* THROUGH THE SLT

A. Prioritization of the Associated ICH Elements

After the positive pronouncement of the community elders and spiritual leaders that allows the integration of the *Buklog* thanksgiving ritual as learning content in the SLT, an expanded SLT Coordinating Committee was constituted and tasked to determine the core objectives of the learning content and processes as well as to locate, prioritize and decide on the specific associated elements to be included in the non-formal instruction process.

The working committee participated in a series of workshops on a curriculum planning and module development and agreed on the concrete objectives of integrating the ICH element in the SLT which are:

- To enable the learners to deepen appreciation on the Subanen's shared ICH, particularly the *Buklog* and its associated elements;
- To enrich their understanding of the symbols and meanings embedded in the various elements associated with the *Buklog* ritual;
- To strengthen their sense of cultural identity, pride of place and self-esteem as young members of the community; and
- To inculcate in the minds and heart of the Subanen young learners their specific roles and responsibility in advancing the safeguarding measures for the *Buklog*.

To achieve these objectives, the committee has prioritized five significant ICH elements that are directly associated with the ritual, in addition to the previously identified elements on the domains of traditional craftsmanship, which have already been instituted in the previous SLT classes. These ICH elements that shall be integrated in the SLT teaching and learning situation are:

1) Narratives of the origin of the *Buklog* drawn from the Subanen epic. This lesson is necessary for the young learners to be aware of the origin of the social practices, the cultural significance of the element to Subanen society and the compelling reasons for celebrating the *Buklog*;

2) Nature and function of traditional dance and music. In this lesson, the young learners can gain a heightened appreciation of the social and spiritual functions of dance and music as well as hone their expressive skills in the traditional arts as preparation for their active participation in the ritual.

3) Symbols and meanings of the attendant rituals of the *Buklog*. There is a need for the young learners to discover the symbols and deeper meanings of the various offering rituals, the performance of which is part of their spiritual obligations as members of the community. Guided by the local spiritual leader, the activities to be

introduced must reckon with the beliefs and spiritual values of the community.

4) Ingredients and procedures in the preparation of traditional Subanen wine. Food and wine are necessary ingredients in community rituals and celebrations. The young learners must be prepared to acquire skills in the preparation of traditional cuisine and the famous Subanen *gasi*, which are requirements in the holding of a *Buklog*.

5) Inventory of the Subanen traditional farming systems focused on culturally relevant flora. The *Buklog* is an important celebration as it caps the agricultural season adhered to by the Subanen. It also employs elements found in the natural environment, most of which are considered sacred and are significant to the people. The continuous propagation and protection of the diverse plant species and varieties ensures a high level of biodiversity within the Subanen's ancestral domain.

It is envisioned that after the course, the young learners are enabled to achieve distinct levels of competence as they confidently:

- Identify the significant elements directly associated with the Buklog ritual and explain the cultural significance of these elements;
- Deepen their understanding of the shared community cultural values and desirable qualities of a Subanen as expounded by the symbols and meanings associated with the ICH elements-in-focus;
- Demonstrate how the knowledge of the ICH elements can be applied in actual lifesituations and as building blocks for a successful community development programs and projects; and
- Articulate how the young members of the community can value, pursue and advance youth-oriented safeguarding measures to sustain the ICH elements.

B. Formulation of the SLT Learning Curriculum: A Step-by-Step Guide

Based on the previous discussions, the learning guides which include the learning curriculum and the learning modules for the integration of the *Buklog* was eventually formulated and finalized by the working committee, following the step-by-step process.

Step 1. Decide what elements of the intangible cultural heritage of the community shall be tackled as a subject area in the SLT learning process

The local coordinating team, in close consultation with the cultural masters, shall determine the viable ICH element that would be integrated as subject area in the SLT.

ICH are inanimate concepts that cannot be touched, such as languages, thoughts, beliefs, processes, values, systems, patterns, mental and ideational structures, technologies, procedures, ways and modes.

Most of the time however, the ICH employs material and physical things as part of its processes and actual implementations.

For example, a shamanic ritual in itself and when actuated is an abstract and conceptual system of procedures, but the ritual specialist, healer, or shaman uses a lot of instruments or accessories such as bells, bowls, candles, leaves, food, etc.

To better appreciate and understand the wide range of ICH, UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage proposed five broad domains in which intangible cultural heritage manifests:

- Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the ICH;
- Performing arts;
- Social practices, rituals and festive events;
- Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and
- Traditional craftsmanship.

The main component concept of the ICH is its being intangible. According to various dictionaries, intangible means incapable of being perceived by the sense of touch, not corporeal or immaterial, impalpable, not made of physical substance, or not able to be touched. It is from the Latin infinitive *tangere*, or “to touch.”

In actual situations, there exists a wide range of ICH elements in a cultural community. However, the decision of the team should consider the following factors:

- Viability of the ICH element as evident in the community of practice;
- Availability and willingness of the cultural master/s to be engaged in the SLT;
- The number of interested young learners (at least twenty-five [25]);
- Active support from the traditional leaders and ritual specialists; and
- Knowledge and skills that can be learned in twenty-five-day sessions.

If the situation is favorable and the above requirements are present, then the local coordinating team can proceed to the next step.

Step 2. Conduct an inventory to characterize the ICH elements

It is suggested that the local coordinating team conduct a participatory profiling of the chosen ICH element. The data that shall be generated can help the team in locating the important and necessary lesson contents for the integration of the ICH element in the SLT learning process. The active involvement of the cultural masters and traditional community leaders in all the stages of the cultural profiling is necessary and indispensable.

Table 1 shows the types of ICH elements under each Domain and the data gathering tools as well as sources of information for the cultural inventory. This can help the local coordinating team in completing the inventory. However, we trust the team to locate, innovate and/or develop the creative and participatory methods in

the generation of data on the ICH element.

The NCCA has done several inventories of ICH in the country, and it may be helpful for the local coordinating team to use these as reference. Likewise, a sample of an ICH inventory conducted in Zamboanga del Sur is appended in this learning guide.

It should be emphasized that there are essential data sets that must be gathered by the local coordinating team in order for them to substantially describe the ICH element. Among others, the necessary data sets that must be included in the inventory are:

- a) Background information on the element
- b) Geographical location and range of the element
- c) Summary of the element (description of the history of the practice, occasion/season, processes involved, procedures, beliefs associated, settings, aims and other pertinent data)
- d) Culture-bearer/s and practitioner/s of the element (description of person/s or people practicing the ICH element)
- e) Mode/s of transmission (description of how the intangible practice is passed on)
- f) Past and present safeguarding measures installed in the community

Step 3. Consult the cultural master on the learning objective of the subject area

The local coordinating team works with the cultural master/s in the formulation of realistic and verifiable learning objectives of the subject area that integrate a chosen ICH element as focus of the SLT. Likewise, it would be necessary that the learning objective is linked with the SDGs of the United Nations.

In addition, the team must also consult and agree with the cultural masters in the community the desired learning competencies that must be achieved by the young learners of the ICH element. It should be considered that the conduct of the non-formal SLT learning process would only span to a maximum of thirty (30) learning sessions, to include both contextual and/or theoretical discussions and practical applications of the lessons. Hence, the desired learning competency can be realistically achieved only during the prescribe timeframe of the SLT classes. A sample of learning objectives and competency level, focused on a particular traditional craftsmanship, is presented in Table 2, presented to guide the local coordinating team.

Step 4. identify the attendant lessons and clarify the link between the lesson contents and the element of the intangible cultural heritage in focus

The local coordinating team, with the guidance of the cultural master/s, shall proceed to list down all the obligatory lessons that shall be introduced in the SLT learning sessions. It is emphasized that the identified lessons can be undertaken within the 25-day learning sessions and the prioritized lessons are really essential to achieve the desired competency level of the young learners.

On the other hand, the list of lessons to be introduced must be linked to the ICH element in focus. The links can be described as

Table 1. Matrix of ICH Elements, Types, Data Gathering Tools and Sources of Data

ICH DOMAIN	TYPES	DATA GATHERING TOOLS	SOURCES
Oral traditions and expressions	Languages, chants, epics, riddles, proverbs, stories, tales, poems, legends, myths, charms, etc.	Interviews, focused group discussions, demonstrations and re-enactments, review of related research and literature	Elders, artists, cultural workers, cultural groups, cultural institutions
Performing arts	Traditional music (vocal and/or instrumental), Dance, Theater, etc.	Interviews, focused group discussions, demonstrations and re-enactments, review of related research and literature	Elders, artists, cultural workers, cultural groups, cultural institutions
Social practices, rituals and festive events	Habitual events and activities, commemorative events and celebrations, or stages in a person's life, rites, traditional games and sports	Interviews, focused group discussions, demonstrations and re-enactments, review of related research and literature	Elders, artists, cultural workers, cultural groups, cultural institutions
Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe	Traditional ecological wisdom, indigenous knowledge about local fauna and flora, traditional healing systems, rituals, beliefs, initiation rites, cosmologies, shamanism, possessing rites, etc.	Interviews, focused group discussions, demonstrations and re-enactments, review of related research and literature	Elders, artists, cultural workers, cultural groups, cultural institutions
Traditional craftsmanship	Tools, clothing and jewelry-making, objects used for storage, transport and shelter, decorative art and ritual objects, musical instruments and household utensils, toys, both for amusement and education, cuisine, etc.	Interviews, focused group discussions, demonstrations and re-enactments, review of related research and literature	Elders, artists, cultural workers, cultural groups, cultural institutions



Young Subanen learners in the Lakewood SLT on traditional embroidery
 Photo by Rhonson Ng

Remember:

The Four Pillars of Intangible Cultural Heritage

1. ICH is traditional, contemporary, and living at the same time.

Intangible cultural heritage does not only represent inherited traditions from the past but also contemporary rural and urban practices in which diverse cultural groups take part.

2. ICH is inclusive. The shared expressions of intangible cultural heritage that are similar to those practiced by others give us a sense of identity and continuity, providing a link from our past, through the present, and into our future. ICH contributes to social cohesion and helps individuals to feel part of one or different communities and to feel part of society at large.

3. ICH is representative. Intangible cultural heritage is not merely valued as a cultural good, on a comparative basis, for its exclusivity or its exceptional value. It thrives on its basis in communities and depends on those whose knowledge of traditions, skills, and customs are passed on to the rest of the community, from generation to generation, or to other communities.

4. ICH is community-based. Intangible cultural heritage can only be heritage when it is recognized as such by the communities, groups, or individuals that create, maintain and transmit it. Without their recognition, nobody else can decide for them that a given expression or practice is their heritage.

to awareness and appreciation of the ICH element, the particular knowledge learned and skills acquired relative to the ICH element and/or basic application of the knowledge and skills toward safeguarding the ICH element.

Moreover, these links can also serve as basis in determining the nature and level of learning competencies desired for each of the lessons introduced in the SLT learning sessions. The table below describes particular lessons and the relations to the ICH element under the Traditional Craftsmanship Domain.

Step 5. Describe all the lessons that shall be undertaken and construct a final matrix of the learning curriculum

Each lesson identified and prioritized to be covered in the SLT learning session must be described clearly by expounding the following elements:

a) Learning targets or the knowledge that shall be learned by the young learner (e.g. the young learner demonstrates an understanding and appreciation of traditional craftsmanship and his/her role in safeguarding the ICH element);

b) Performance standards or the skills acquired as demonstrated by the young learner (e.g. the learner actively participates in the selective and regulated gathering of non-timber forest products);

Table 2. Samples of the Formulated Learning Objectives, Sustainable Development Goals and Learning Competency

Title of Learning Module	Rattan-based, hand-made Subanen basketry
ICH Element Integrated	Traditional rattan-based crafts and related products
Main ICH Domain	Traditional craftsmanship
Related ICH Domains	Social practices; indigenous knowledge and practices
Learning Objective	To strengthen the cultural identity of young Subanen learners through the acquisition of indigenous knowledge and skills in traditional craftsmanship, particularly the production of rattan-based crafts
Learning Competencies	The young learners can: 1.Explain the diversity of traditional arts and crafts of his/her community; 2. Identify diverse forest resources and methods of conserving non-timber forest resources; 3. Demonstrate basic and advance skills in the actual production of rattan-based traditional crafts; and 4. Articulate how young members of the community can value and safeguard their intangible cultural heritage.
Sustainable Development Goals	The young learners are able to raise awareness and appreciation of the traditional knowledge of the communities in ensuring the conservation of their agro-ecosystems by safeguarding their shared intangible cultural heritage.

Table 3. Sample of the List of Identified Lessons Linked to the ICH Element

NUMBER	TITLE OF LESSONS	LINKS TO THE ICH ELEMENT
1	Cultural Significance of the Subanen Traditional Craftsmanship	Basic knowledge on the diversity of traditional crafts
2	Subanen Basketry: Diverse Forms and Functions of Rattan-Based Woven Products	Identification of diverse forms and function of traditional crafts
3	Conserving our Forest Resources	Appreciation of traditional forest conservation methods
4	Basic Materials and Tools Used in Craft Production	Basic knowledge on the diversity of Knowledge of weaving patterns and basic tools used
5	Beliefs and Methods in Gathering and Utilization of Non-Timber Forest Products	Awareness of sustainable use of non-timber forest resources
6	Basic Steps/Procedures in the Production of Rattan-Based Crafts	Application of basic and advance skills in the actual production of traditional craft
7	Crafts Innovations and Heritage Safeguarding	Sustained production and safeguarding of community ICH
8	Rediscovering the Subanen IKSP: Vernacular Architecture and the <i>Buklog</i>	Appreciation of Subanen cultural identity and cultural heritage

c) Level of confidence including attitudes, observable in the young learners in the application of the knowledge learned and skills acquired in the learning process; and

d) Number of sessions covered or the timeframe for each of the introduced lesson content

The above information that describes the curriculum content of the subject area that focuses on a specific ICH element can then be summarized in a matrix of the agreed-upon curriculum guide. Again, it is emphasized that the cultural master expresses his/her consent in the formulated learning curriculum that the members of the local coordinating team have finalized.

C. Sample of Competency-Based Learning Curriculum

Presented in this section is the formulated learning curriculum (See box) that integrates the identified elements of the ICH of the community in the SLT learning session. The process of formulation followed the steps outlined in the previous section. The active engagements of the traditional leaders, cultural masters and ritual specialists were sought in the entire process.

Outlined below is a summary of the preparation process of the SLT leaning curriculum that was undertaken in accordance with the Guidelines mentioned.

- 1) Consultation with traditional leaders, cultural masters and ritual specialists (one day)
- 2) Focus-group discussion on the ICH element (one day)
- 3) Conduct and writing of an inventory on the ICH element (one day)
- 4) Workshops with cultural masters and the members of the SLT coordinating team (three days) toward:

- Identification of the learning objectives and the learning competency
- Listing of the priority lessons to be introduced based on the ICH inventory
- Deliberation of the elements of the lessons, namely, lesson content, lesson targets, performance standards and lesson competencies
- Finalization of the matrix of the learning curriculum for each of the chosen ICH elements

It is hoped that, with the publication of this SLT learning guide, the local coordinating teams of the established SLT all over the country can review their existing learning curriculum (see sample) towards enriching the teaching-and-learning process of the ICH elements in focus.

D. Summary of Guiding Principles in Revitalization of the IP Learning System

It should be emphasized that this learning guide is developed with the end view of enriching the learning processes within the community-managed enhanced SLT. The development of

Sample of competency-based learning curriculum to guide learning facilitators in integrating ICH elements associated with the Buklog in the Subanen SLT learning program

Subject Area: The Subanen Gbuklog: A System of Thanksgiving Ritual

Objectives: This learning objectives of this program are:

- a) Enable the learners to gain greater appreciation of the Subanen's shared intangible cultural heritage (ICH);
- b) Deepen their understanding of the symbols and meanings of the various elements associated with the Gbuklog ritual; and thereby
- c) Strengthen their sense of cultural identity, pride-of-place and self-esteem as young members of the Subanen community and
- d) Inculcate in the minds and heart of the Subanen young learners their specific roles and responsibility in advancing the safeguarding measures to sustain the social practice of the Gbuklog, as part of their spiritual and social obligations.

Description: The lessons contained in this curriculum shall heighten the young learners' awareness of the complex system of the Subanen Thanksgiving Ritual and allows him/her to explore ways in which he/she can contribute to the safeguarding of their intangible cultural heritage.

Likewise, the learning sessions oblige the learners to be familiar with the cultural significance of the following ICH elements that are directly associated with the Gbuklog ritual, namely:

1. Origin Myth of the Gbuklog (Oral Tradition including language)
2. Subanen Dance and Music (Performing Arts)
3. Traditional Wine Making (Social Practices)
4. Traditional Farming System and culturally-significant plants of the Subanen (Knowledge of Nature)
5. Attendant Rituals of the Gbuklog (Social Practices)

This learning module covers twenty-five (25) sessions; the learning content and processes embedded in the module are designed to encourage the learners to:

- Gain critical understanding of the socio-cultural, economic and political context of the Gbuklog Thanksgiving Ritual;
- Initiate informed dialogues with other community members for safeguarding the community ICH; and
- Be actively engaged in community cultural action toward achieving sustainable development of their community.

Fundamental to the implementation of the learning processes is the crucial participation of the community elders and leaders as well as the identified ritual specialist in the locality. Furthermore, at the completion of each lesson in this E-SLT course, the participation of other stakeholders of the community, from the public and private sector, are sought to dialogue with the young learners in realizing their proposals for cultural action that shall advance the safeguarding measures of the ICH elements.



**Matrix of the Learning Modules:
Guide for Devising Lesson Plans and Activities**

LESSON CONTENT	LEARNING TARGETS	PERFORMANCE STANDARD	LEARNING COMPETENCIES	# of
	The young learner:	The young learner:	The young learner:	Sessions
1) The Subanen Epic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expounds the meanings of the events as narrated in the Subanen Epic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expands his/her vocabulary of important Subanen words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizes the cultural significance of the Origin Myth of the Subanen Gbuklog 	5
2) Traditional Dance and Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains the context, cultural values and meanings of Subanen dances and music 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes his/her body expressive through the proper execution of traditional dances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthens the cultural significance of the traditional performing arts of the Subanen 	5
3) Traditional Wine-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses greater understanding of the health and ecological values of traditional cuisine and local wines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates the preparation of at least three distinct Subanen traditional dishes and the 'gasi' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Substantiates actions for heightened appreciation of traditional cuisine and local wine 	5
4) Traditional Farming and Culturally significant plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enumerates and list the species and varieties of plants that are culturally significant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively helps in the development of a community herbarium or an organic learning farm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledges the need to conserve the bio-diversity within the Subanen Ancestral Domain 	5
5) Attendant Rituals of the Gbuklog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specifies the attendant rituals of the Gbuklog and articulates the symbols and meanings embedded in the rituals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corroborates with other learners in developing youth-oriented projects that safeguard the ICH element 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulates urgent community-driven measures to safeguard and sustain the Gbuklog Ritual system 	5
Total # of learning sessions				25

the learning guide reinforces the consistent transmission of the elements of the *Buklog* as well as ensures the effective safeguarding of the priority ICH elements.

On the other hand, an important task considered in the development of the learning guide is the integration of the UN SDGs 2030 Agenda. Specifically, this learning guide likewise gives importance on SDG 4 and Target 4.7, to wit: "All learners must acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others, appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development."

Thus, it is important to reiterate that foremost of the intention in developing a learning guide is the revitalization of indigenous knowledge. Indigenous knowledge refers to the understandings, skills and philosophies developed by societies with long histories

of interaction with their natural surroundings. For indigenous peoples, their knowledge system informs decision-making about fundamental aspects of day-to-day life. These unique ways of knowing are important components of the world's cultural diversity, and provide a foundation for locally appropriate sustainable development.

Indigenous knowledge is proven to be a perfect scaffold for sustainable development, connecting the past, the present and the future. However, these knowledge systems and practices are at an escalating rate of deterioration due to consistent assimilation resulting from the youth's declining interest in these practices.

Thus, it is imperative to highlight the significance of IK in the SLT and to broaden the perspectives of the young learners in the relationship of IK to environmental protection and cultural preservation.

To realize this intention, the learning process institutionalized in the SLT should be guided by the following development principles.

a) Promoting community empowerment

As a measured development intervention, the SLT must contribute to peoples' empowerment. Fundamentally, the community should assert its claim of ownership of the SLT program, and the prescribed content and processes of the program must address the conditions of vulnerabilities of peoples and communities. The enhanced program is also designed to equip the cultural community with the capability to eventually become the direct implementer of the SLT, and assume the full responsibility to sustain the program beyond the grants provided by the NCCA.

b) Advancing social cohesion

The active involvement and informed participation

Bheben, a traditional Subanen basket
Photo by Nestor Horfilla



of the majority of the members of a local cultural community, most specially the formal and informal leaders, is greatly encouraged from the early stages of the project implementation until the institutionalization of the SLT program.

In this manner, possible conflicts that may arise are mitigated if not avoided. The SLT program then strives to create a favorable atmosphere that advances the aspirations of the community members as it builds a more cohesive and caring community of learners.

c) Employment of gender responsive approaches

The SLT program commits itself to widening the participation of both men and women, boys and girls, in all its development-oriented activities and projects. The opportunities for growth are thus increased, thereby eradicating the dangers of social exclusions. Young women learners are likewise encouraged to assume leadership roles in the learning experience.

d) Conservation of ecological wellness

The materials, tools and technologies used in the SLT are carefully assessed to be environmentally sound. Moreover, the lessons learned within and outside of the leaning center deliberately motivate the learners to care for the conservation of the ecosystems and the sustainable use of the natural resources of the community.

e) Instilling sense of pride and self-reliance

The SLT program shall develop among the young learners the positive characters of a best role model of the bearers of cultures. It shall not only deepen their sense of pride and identity, but it shall likewise inculcate the values of self-reliance as productive members of their communities who aspire for self-determination and local autonomy.

f) Ensuring conservation and the sustainable development of the claimed Subanen Ancestral Domain

The thematic content of the SLT supports the concern for the sustainable conservation and development of the Ancestral Domains of the Subanen.

All lesson content must elucidate the roles of the members of the young Subanen generation as stewards of the land, who at all times protect and promote the biodiversity within the domain. By doing so, they ensure the enhancement of their indigenous ecological knowledge and the survival of their culture.

g) Rights-based lesson content and learning processes

The awareness, recognition, assertion, protection and respect of the bundle of human rights of the indigenous peoples are always placed at the heart of instruction and learning processes in the SLT. The internalization of these rights by the young learners should also be one of the principal learning outcomes of the program.

As emphasized, the publication and utilization of this particular SLT learning guide fulfils the need to expand and consolidate the safeguarding of the *Buklog*.



Parents of the young learners at the Lakewood SLT, Zamboanga del Sur
Photo by Rhanson Ng

PART TWO

**SLT LEARNING CURRICULUM AND MODULES
IN INTEGRATING THE ELEMENTS
OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE
ASSOCIATED WITH THE *BUKLOG***





Young Subanen learners dancing the sot, a traditional war dance
Photo by Rhonson Ng

CHAPTER 4

SAMPLES OF SLT LEARNING MODULES

LEARNING MODULE 1

The Origin Myth of the *Buklog*

Oral Traditions

Objective

Primarily, this module enables young learners to appreciate the richness of the Subanen oral traditions and at the same time to broaden their understanding of the rootedness of their cultural expressions. The motivational activities indicated in this module are designed to cultivate and strengthen the young learners' sense of individual and collective identities.

Specifically, the learning activities shall motivate the young learners to:

- Expound the meanings of the events narrated in the epic
- Recognize the cultural significance of the origin myth of the *Buklog*
- Expand his/her vocabulary of important Subanen words
- Provide them an opportunity to dialogue with other members of the community

Description

The subject introduced in this module envisions to heighten the young learners' awareness of the Subanen oral tradition, particularly the extant narrative on the origins of the *Buklog* thanksgiving ritual, which is culled from the Subanen epic shared among the people in Dampalan.

The module opens with the collective reading of the illustrated story in order to flesh out the important characters and significant events narrated in the epic. The presence of a *timuay* or a *baylan* in the learning sessions is essential as they can help expound the meanings and give details about symbols contained in the narrative.

The succeeding sessions shall help the young learners value their rootedness to their culture as they expand their vocabulary of their local languages. As an application of the lessons learnt, the young learners are encouraged to share insightful stories of significant experiences with family and their communities that highlight the social values and shared beliefs of the Subanen. Finally, they shall pick up some themes from the stories shared to be transposed into short dramatic improvisations that shall be presented to invited members of the community.

Learning competency

The young learners can

1. Identify the significant elements that are directly associated with the *Buklog* ritual and explain the cultural significance of these elements; and
2. Deepen their understanding of the shared cultural values of the community and desirable qualities of a Subanen as expounded by the symbols and meanings associated with the ICH elements in focus.

Content breakdown

Learning Session 1: The origin myth of the *Buklog*

Learning Session 2: The meanings and relevance of the *Buklog*

Learning Session 3: Expanding our vocabulary: The first one-hundred words
Learning Session 4: Creative writing: Telling stories of my family and my community
Learning Session 5: Dramatization of stories as springboard for community dialogue
Application Session: Short drama performance and community dialogue

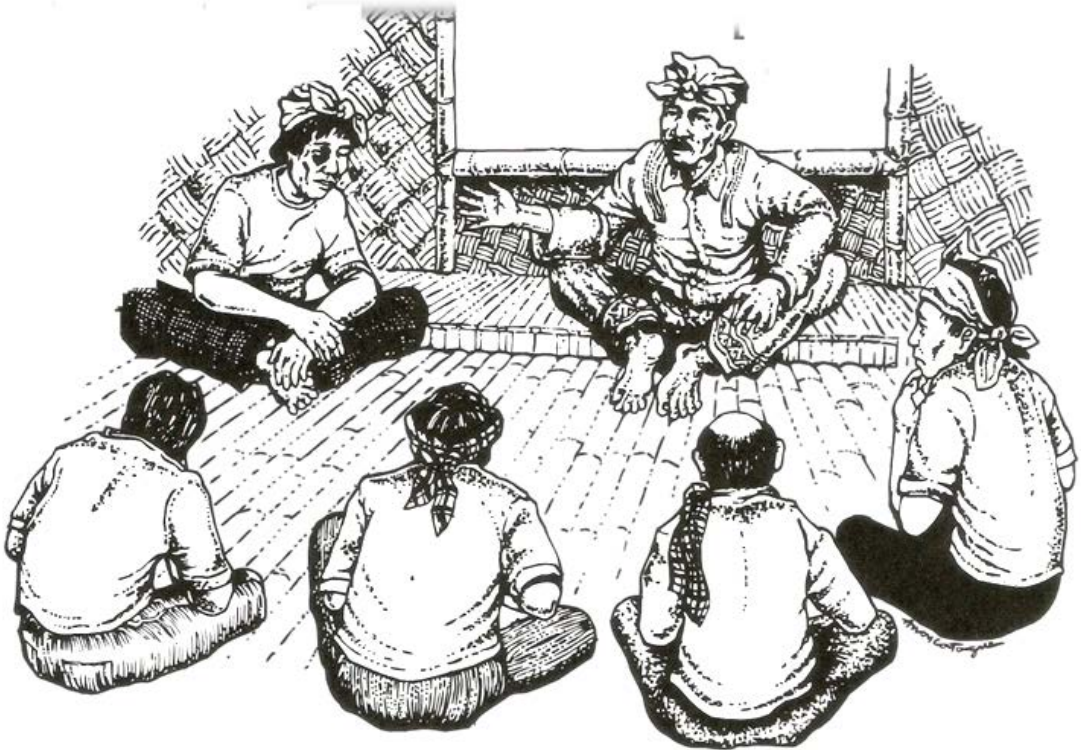
Methodology

Learning by doing through group discussions and creative exploration

- Short input and group discussion with the cultural masters
- Vocabulary building: Individual and group exploration
- Creative writing and dramatic improvisations
- Community performance of improvisational drama
- Facilitated community dialogue
- Mentoring and assessment

Assessment

Two tiers of assessment process: a) Learners' Peer-Assessment on Learning Targets and Performance Standard; and b) Mentors' Assessment on Learning Competency



AN ORIGIN MYTH OF THE BUKLOG

(DAMPALAN VERSION)

A woman walked alone and barefooted at the Thebed River. The water was still. Her footsteps dimpled and were softly heard. Ripples circled around wild dragonflies which deftly touched the water for a drink. The woman kept walking until she reached a remote section of the river where wild grasses and weeds thrived. She looked around, looked at a familiar spot and sighed. Then, she plucked a weed, savored its sweet smell and taste, and finally looked at the scenery as she recalled vivid memories.

A family with an only daughter was crossing the Thebed River. The father was carrying a child, placed inside a *gheban* (basket) behind his back. Unfortunately, upon reaching the middle of the river, the family encountered a sudden *guluang* or flash flood. Both parents were able to cross safely to the other side of the river but when they opened the basket, their child was no longer inside. Only a piece of *gilamon* (*guna/bunglay* or *knofe*) was found inside the basket. Their daughter was gone and could not be found.

Little did the parents know that the child drifted off to the *pipuluan*, a remote place where tall grasses and weeds sprout like green hills. The girl was stranded there so she ate the fruits of the *diyasa* (swamp grass) in order to survive. A few years have passed. Then one day, a son of a *thimuay* (ruler) of that area, who was good in making traps called *menginang*, saw and met the stranded young girl.

He said to her: "How nice it is to call you as the princess of the *Dalayaan* (grasses and weeds)!"

The girl retorted: "I am not to be offended by your sarcastic remark, nor will I get angry at you for your jest. Even if you think that I am the princess of weeds, I have this sanctuary to thank for because this is where I survived and grew up."

The man, seeing her state, invited her to meet his people. The girl, however, was too shy to go out and be seen with only grass leaves covering her entire body. So, the man had to go back to his people to fetch her some clothes. When the man came back and the girl was properly dressed, together they went to his people and were warmly greeted by the young man's father, the *thimuay*.

Immediately, the *gagung* (gong) was rung, while facing the east, west, north and south, and the young girl was welcomed. People arrived from all directions bringing with them provisions such as food, rice, pigs, gasi and chicken. The people celebrated and rejoiced for seven days and seven nights. Thereafter, the *thimuay* married his son to the girl, and they became husband and wife.

As part of the wedding ceremony, the couple went to the river for a wash. After bathing, the girl went to the *sala* (living room) of their house to comb her long hair in front of the people facing the east. Inexplicably, a strand of her hair broke off and split into three pieces (*metelu*). She threw the first piece to the east, the other to the west, and the third she chopped it into bits to throw to the ground. The hair that was chopped into bits and pieces became pigs and chickens. The piece that was thrown to the east became the *buklog* (dancing platform) and another became a *buklog* too facing the west. Two *buklogs* (*Gbuklog Petawangan*) thus emerged in the east and west. This type of celebration is called *Gbuklog Patawangan*.

After the celebration has started, Peroy, the young woman, initiated that the ceremony of the *buklog* can now be held. Everybody then changed into their best clothes and prepared themselves for a festivity. The first ceremony was opened at the east platform and surprisingly the girl's parents, brothers (*pated*), sisters and relatives (*delan*) appeared. Then, the people opened the ceremony to the west too, where dead relatives and many spirits appeared. The dead ancestors roamed around the *buklog* three times before going up. Significantly, before the *buklog* ended, another marriage took place between the girl's younger brother and her husband's younger sister.

The woman then looked up, paused for a while, and ended her story with these lines: "Therefore, the name *Gbuklog Petawangan* now stands for the two *buklogs* at the same time, which were held, too, in honor of the two weddings of the two families that were reunited at that time."

Upon completing her thoughts, she watched the sundown, bade farewell to her previous sanctuary and headed home.



ACTIVITY 1

Storytelling

The origin myth of the *Buklog* (Dampalan version)

This particular story enlightens learners on the ancient Subanen wisdom and shared social values that are necessary for the survival of the people. The telling of the story is done through a collective reading of the illustrated “comic story.” The learners shall pay close attention to the development of the plot and characters as well as on the meanings of the significant events that unfold in the narrative.

Processing the story

At the end of the story, the learners are encouraged to express their reflections and reaction to the story by posing the following guide questions:

- *What is the story all about?*
- *What are the significant events in the story?*
- *Where and when did the significant events happen?*
- *Who are the major characters, and what happened to them in the story?*
- *What happened to the strands of the falling hair of the princess when they were thrown towards the east and the west? What do you think is the reason why they transformed into Buklog platforms?*
- *What happened to the strand of hair thrown in the front yard? What are the uses of the animals that were transformed from the bits and pieces of the fallen hair?*
- *Why did the princess tell the people to celebrate?*
- *What is the significance of the Buklog celebration?*
- *Is it important to have two Buklog celebrations, one in the east and one in the west? Why?*
- *Why is the Buklog celebration important to the life of the Subanen?*
- *How do you feel about the entire story? Is it a good story to tell to your friends and family members?*
- *Can you tell us some of the significant lessons you learned or insights you gained on the Subanen culture?*
- *In your small group, compose and write down a summary of the lessons you have learnt from the origin myth of the Buklog.*

ACTIVITY 2

Re-examining the meanings and relevance of the *Buklog* thanksgiving ritual

On the second day of the lesson, a *timuay* (village chief) and/or a *balyan* (spiritual leader) is invited to join the learning session. It should be remembered that the conversation between the leaders and the learners must be done in a relaxed atmosphere where everyone is free to express ideas, sentiments, feelings and hopes.

The sequence of Activity 2 is explained below.

1. The young learners are asked to share to the elders their summaries of lessons learnt during the first day;
2. The young learners are also encouraged to ask questions to

clarify the meanings and symbols of the origin myth of the *Buklog*;

3. The *timuay* or *balyan* shares some thoughts to deepen the understanding of the young learners about the significance of the thanksgiving ritual;

4. The following summative points have to be clarified in the conversation between the *timuay* or *balyan* and the young learners:

- *The Buklog is a celebration to give thanks for the blessings bestowed upon the Subanen and/or successes achieved by the community;*
- *Celebrating the Buklog is both a social and a spiritual obligation of every Subanen;*
- *The youth and small children have very important roles and responsibility in every Buklog held in the community;*
- *The Buklog is an important marker of Subanen identity; without the Buklog the Subanen identity shall fade away; and*
- *Everyone should be proud of their successful participation in a Buklog ritual.*

5. Then, the learning facilitator expresses observations on the difficulties of some Subanen communities in celebrating the *Buklog*;

6. The *timuay* or the *balyan* also shares observations on the changes happening in the Subanen communities and the challenges members of the community must address in order to preserve and sustain their culture and traditions.

At the end of the conversation, the learning facilitator makes the following instruction and gives time for the learners, broken into small groups, to write and verbalize their answers and reflections:

Remember, the celebration of the *Buklog* is a significant aspect of Subanen life and culture. When the celebration of the ritual cease to happen, then our identity as Subanen shall fade away.

Please share to us how can the Subanen youth help in preserving and sustaining the *Buklog* ritual.

When everyone is ready to share their responses, the learning facilitator requests everyone to listen attentively to what the young learners have to say.

ACTIVITY 3

Expanding our vocabulary with the first 50 words

From the narrative of the origin myth of the *Buklog*, the learning facilitator makes a consolidated list of significant Subanen words that must be understood and used by young learners. The list shall be referred to as the “First Fifty Words” that everyone must know.

The compiled words can be grouped or classified as follows:

- a) Words that refer to time, seasons and directions;
- b) Words that ascribe names of natural resources (land formation, body of water, flora and fauna, etc.);
- c) Words of important places and/or names of people;
- d) Words that connote actions (verbs), activity or events; and

Sample entries for the first fifty words

1. *Gbenwa* (Territory, homeland)
2. *Dalepaan* (Sanctuary)
3. *Gbelit thubig* (Shore, Riverbank)
4. *G' melonaw* (Pristine)
5. *Gbelawanan* (Grassland)
6. *Thebed* (River)
7. *Midalepa* (Live)
8. *Geyuwan* (Brush land, Tree Orchard)
9. *Shapa* (Brook)
10. *Misipeg* (Shy, ashamed)
11. *Migigibangay* (Helping one another)
12. *Minunday* (Combing the hair)
13. *Mishagipa* (Get ready)
14. *Phusaha* (Heritage)
15. *Dlendasan* (Role model)
16. *Gbalalaga* (Significant)
17. *Ipaten* (Protect)
18. *Pepagenen* (Strengthen)
19. *Phendayan* (Wisdom)
20. *Phamalinta* (Rules)
21. *Pisigen* (Developed)
22. *Mesabot* (Understand)
23. *Hekuleg* (Move)
24. *Shilangan* (East)
25. *Shindepan* (West)
26. *Dlamalama* (Courtyard)
27. *Heripag* (To cross)
28. *Midhegos* (rushing rapids)
29. *Sibaloy* (Other side)
30. *Gbelit* (Other bank)
31. *Myanod* (Drift)
32. *Mipalid* (Napadpad)
33. *Minayan* (After some time)
34. *Gmelengas* (Lovely, beautiful)
35. *Suminingalit* (Mldalikyat)
36. *Dilendem* (Reminisce, ponder)
37. *Mindehan* (Surprised)
38. *Myangit* (Angry)
39. *Minampela* (insult)
40. *Hilyaman* (Ready)
41. *Gempya Gbenwa* (Paradise)
42. *Gempya* (Good)
43. *Mihasabot* (Understood)
44. *Lilyag* (Happy)
45. *Pigeyonan* (Agreement)
46. *Gbesalan* (Sound)
47. *Medlumpok* (Celebrate)
48. *Paladpald* (Thank)
49. *Dwa Gbelai* (Double Wedding)
50. *Hedway* (Marriage)

e) Words that describe feelings of persons.

Depending on the readiness or ability of the young learners, the learning facilitator asks all learners to:

- 1) Take from the list of at most fifteen (15) words that they like most;
- 2) Construct conversational sentences or dialogue lines using the words that they select;
- 3) As a class activity, the learning facilitator introduces a simple form of poetry—the cinquian—the structure of which is explained below.

Simple structure of the free-verse poem:

- First line: One word
Second line: Two verbs
Third line: Three adjectives
Forth line: One phrase
Fifth line: Analogy (that describes the word in the first line)

Examples of free-verse simple poetry:

Inan

*Pethaleku, pephemihil
maulawon, maki-angayon, malipayon
gmelisipegay, gmahasun, pedlelyagen dini binal delendeman
Subanen.*

Thubig

*Migugayas, dengeg gmelegen
sharen maanto guhiten
di thupwan peshuhatah.*

Gbuklog

*Sinusi, tinumanan
pigya, dilendem, ginipat
thuhasi di helon gisegan
phusaa.*

At the end of the session, as a class assignment, the learning facilitator asks learners to compose a short essay or a short story (not more than 1,000 words) using most of the words in the list considered as the First One-Hundred Words that everyone must know. The theme of the composition is “My Family, My Community” in relation to the *Buklog*.

ACTIVITY 4

Creative writing:

Telling stories on “My Family and My Community”

The learning facilitator starts the learning session by narrating a simple personal story of his/her family and community. It must be

Notes on Activity 4

The facilitator is encouraged to devise variations of the process prescribed in the activity. What is essential is to keep the motivations of the young learners in sharing their stories and in creating new stories based on the common themes of the individual, personal stories told.

It is also good if the facilitator provides side-coaching to the small groups in fleshing out their group stories and to remind the groups that the stories to be created should be realistic and believable enough.

Moreover, the young learners are always encouraged to ask questions, seek guidance and express feedbacks while undertaking the assigned activity.

SHAUT/THALEK

*Phethawag, gmelengas
don dlebetangen, phusaha, phendayan
dahus shunan nga gbegombata*

DUPI

*Minundak, midhegus
gmetidhaw, pheretengen gmahasuat
mahagaun di gempayat dlego di
gbawang*

a story that narrates the struggle of a family to survive. It also tells how the community members stand strong in adherence to social values of a caring and sharing community.

After the story of the facilitator, a volunteer is asked to share to the class the story that he/she has written, in compliance to the assignment given in the previous session.

The facilitator probes the theme of the personal story, the significant events affecting the characters and the motivation of the writer in coming up with that particular theme and in developing the story line.

After the short story telling session, the young learners are asked to form small groups composed of five (5) to seven (7) members. The groups are given the following instructions:

1) Each member of the group shall share their prepared individual, personal stories. (Those who did not prepare a story are asked to listen intently to the storyteller but should write a story at the end of the session).

2) All members of the group are asked to listen carefully to what their peers are sharing.

3) The group is tasked to list down the common themes or peculiar subject matters of the stories told by the members of the group.

4) The young learners are also told to remember the important events that they like in the stories that were shared.

5) The members of the group are asked to express how they feel about the stories told by their fellow learners.

6) From the list of themes and important events that they like, the group is encouraged to create a new story with a clear beginning, middle and end. The new story should carry the common themes and also incorporate the events that they like in the stories previously shared by their peers.

7) The new story should mention the *Buklog*, as a community activity, either at the beginning, the middle of at the end of the story.

8) To determine if the instructions are understood, the teacher asks five (5) to six (6) volunteers from the class, gather them in a round and start the “*dugtongan*” story telling game.

The teacher opens the storytelling with a two (2) to three (3)

sentences that tells the “who, what, when, and where” (characters, scenes, objects and events, time and locations/places). Then he/she asks the volunteer his/her right to continue the events that happened in the story, until all the volunteers have contributed in fleshing out the events that happened to the major character. The facilitator should also be the one to end the story.

9) After the exercise, the young learners join their small groups to create their new story. After some time, the facilitator asks all the groups to share their stories in the plenary.

10) To end the session, the young learners are asked to express their feedbacks on the stories told by all the groups.

ACTIVITY 5

Creative drama: Making stories come to life

The facilitator introduces a “role playing” exercise and asks five (5) to six (6) volunteers to perform specific roles, to perform common story that is short and sweet.

An example can be a short fable about the amazing race between the monkey and the turtle. The roles of the monkey, the turtle, the banana trunk, and other nature characters are distributed to the set of volunteers. After short rehearsals, the volunteers proceed to dramatize the story complete with actions and dialogues.

The learners are encouraged to watch the role-playing, and the performers are asked to perform their roles as lively as they

Bringing the log to be used for the *dulugan*
Photo by Roel Hoang Manipon





Subanen elders dancing during the *sinulampong* offering ritual
Photo by Roel Hoang Manipon

can. After the brief exercise, the facilitator gives the following instructions:

- 1) All young learners are instructed to return to their groups and review their group stories, which were created in the last session.
- 2) The groups are reminded that their stories should be action-packed and have a clear beginning, middle and end.
- 3) The groups may enhance their stories to make it more exciting to share; they may add or delete some details.
- 4) When all have expressed readiness to share their stories, the learning facilitator asks all the groups to dramatize their stories similar to what was shown in the role-playing activity.
- 5) Enough time should be given to the groups to finish devising their dramatic improvisations.
- 6) The facilitator must be ready to provide side-coaching to groups that may encounter difficulties in devising their short drama.
- 7) When almost all groups are ready, the facilitator calls everyone to present their short dramatic showcase.

From the output of dramatized stories, the facilitator

Note: A regular meeting of parents and representatives of the assisting organization of the E-SLT is held once a month. Prior notice must be given to the parents of the young learners and their peers about the meeting, which is for them to be aware of what has transpired in the last five (5) weeks in the E-SLT sessions. The community meeting should not last more than two (2) hours.

motivates the group members to arrive at a consensus in choosing at least three good drama improvisations to be performed in a community meeting.

The groups chosen to perform are asked to find time to rehearse and master their dramatic presentations.

Concluding activity: Performing stories as springboard to community dialogue

When majority of those who were invited and confirmed to attend have arrived, in the SLT center, the head of the E-SLT coordinating team opens the gathering by explaining the purpose and agenda of the community meeting.

The suggested flow of the meeting is as follows:

- 1) Retelling of the story on the origin of the *Buklog*
- 2) Soliciting feedback by asking the attendees what they feel about the epic narrative
- 3) Informing the attendees on what transpired during the young learners' session with the *timuay* and *balyan*, and then the facilitator providing a summary of the lessons learnt about the origin myth and the learners' proposal for safeguarding the *Buklog* tradition.
- 4) Encouraging the attendees to respond to the proposals of the young learners in safeguarding the *Buklog* tradition.
- 5) The E-SLT coordinating team summarizing the feedbacks of the audience and highlighting, if any, the continuing actions to take based on the community sharing.
- 6) Showcasing the dramatic improvisations prepared by the chosen groups of young learners on the stories that they had created.
- 7) Soliciting reactions from the audience on the performances of the young learners, focusing on what the young learners want to say in their stories and what the audience can say about the short dramatic performances.
- 8) Again, the E-SLT coordinating team summarizing the feedback and highlights all the urgent concerns raised during the dialogue.

After the community dialogue, other agenda concerning the operations of the E-SLT are tackled in an action planning session of key leaders and the E-SLT team.



Preparing for the ritual *phanwalmasan*
Photo by Roel Hoang Maribon

The completed *Buklogan* attached to the traditional Subanen house
Photo by Roel Hoang Manipon





Phaladyaan Subanen (Subanen Traditional Dance and Music)

Performing Arts

Objective

Essentially, this learning module shall heighten the young learners' appreciation on the richness of their traditional performing arts and at the same time broaden their understanding of the rootedness of their cultural expressions. The motivational activities indicated in this module are designed to cultivate and strengthen the young learners' sense of individual and collective cultural identities.

Specifically, in this learning module on Subanen traditional performing arts, the young learners are guided to:

- Explain the context, cultural values and meanings of Subanen dances and music
- Make his/her body expressive through the proper execution of traditional dances
- Value the cultural significance of the Subanen traditional performing arts

Description

The lessons in this learning module introduce the young learners to the origin, nature, types, functions and beliefs associated with the Subanen dances and music.

The ICH elements under the domain of traditional performances have been passed on from the past to the present generations of the Subanen since ancient times. The community elders attest that their knowledge on and skills in dance and music performances are gifts from their ancestors. These creative elements are performed in various occasions and are most especially highlighted during the observance of the Buklog thanksgiving ritual. In this learning module, the young learners are oriented on the different types of Subanen dances and into the realms of Subanen vocal and instrumental music. They are given ample time to explore the various musical Instruments.

Learning competency

The young learners can

1. Identify the cultural significance of Subanen dance and music, which are directly associated with the Buklog ritual; and
2. Deepen their understanding of the shared community cultural values and the desirable qualities ascribed to the Subanen, as expounded by the symbols and meanings associated with the ICH elements in focus.

Content breakdown

Learning Session 1: Cultural significance of Phaladyaan Subanen

Learning Session 2: Diverse forms, function and beliefs associated with Subanen dance and music

Learning Session 3: Learning melodic and rhythmic patterns of Subanen music

Learning Session 4: Learning the basic steps of Thalek, Shut, Sabay and Dumending

Learning Session 5: Familiarizing the Subanen musical instruments and song genres

Application Session: Mounting rehearsals for the recital, mastery of dance and music, and familiarization of the *gbat*

Methodology

Learning by doing through creative exploration, movement improvisations and music exercises. The facilitators shall likewise enable short inputs, motivational small group discussions and individual reflection sessions.

Assessment

Two tiers of assessment process: a) Learners' Peer-Assessment on Learning Targets and Performance Standard; and b) Mentors' Assessment on Learning Competency

Background

Among the most cherished and time-honored cultural expressions bequeathed to young Subanens are their traditional music, dance and performing arts. Rituals and ceremonies are at the heart of these animated performances. For a multitude of reasons and to communicate with ancestral spirits, the Subanens sing lyrical songs, chant prayers, pluck their lutes, blow their flutes and beat their gongs in elaborate occasions and festivities.

Told in an extant Subanen epic is an account on the magical talent of Bae Tayubuen (the mother of Raw Bulawan), considered as the first creature to express her thoughts and feelings through metaphors using the medium of *guingomanen* or chanting. Through chanting, she vividly describes the *Dlyagen*, the mythical body of water located in their ancient Kingdom.

The present-day Subanen likewise believe in the existence of mythical figures or spiritual beings, who are known to have used the *khumpas* (dance props made of rattan leaves) in a ritual dance. The waving of the *khumpas* symbolizes driving away the evil spirits, who are believed to be responsible for the sickness, misery and other calamities inimical to the human beings. The power of the good spirits is symbolized in the movement of the *khumpas*, driving away the misfortune and welcoming the good blessings.

In several Subanen territories, there are variations of their dances as seen in the body movements, footsteps and body orientation as well as in the music (e.g. timing and rhythm). However, the most popular are the dances from the municipality of Lapuyan, the territory of Getaw Pingulis, who have established certain guidelines and standards of their traditional dances.

Basic vocabularies of Subanen dance and music

The many types of Subanen traditional dances that are performed in special occasions and others include:

a) **Thalek**. The movements of the body are accompanied by the rhythmic sounding of the gongs. This dance is usually performed by women holding the *khumpas* and performed in various occasions. It is usually considered as a welcome dance or a community dance for entertainment.

b) **Sot** is usually performed by men carrying a *dlasag* (shield) on one hand, and sometimes a kerchief on the other hand. The shield is decorated with small sea shells, and moving the shield produces a distinct sound. This is considered a war dance.

The movement or patterns of the dance are based on the movements of hunting in the forests. Some portions of the Subanen epic narrates that the first man who danced the *sot* or war dance is Raw Bulawan and his six brothers who are dancing with their shields and spears.

c) **Sabay** is a courtship dance in which the man is holding a kerchief with an objective of placing it in the arms of the woman.

d) **Dumendingan** is a special dance described to be participated in by those with royal blood and performed during festivals or in other significant celebrations. During the dance, the performers use bamboo poles laid on ground, and the clicking sounds and rhythm patterns serve as the musical accompaniment of the dance steps.





Young Subanen learners performing a *sabay* (courtship) dance
Photo by Rhanson Ng

Foremost of the ritual performances among the Subanen is chanting. The *dlonde* is the welcome chant during community gatherings. It is a simple song that speaks of their traditional beliefs and social practices. The *shemba* is a love song chanted during courtship. The *bayok* is a series of improvised song-verses usually laced with metaphors. There is also the *guingoman*, an epic chant usually performed during weddings where elders exchange bits and pieces of epic narrative. And the *debodo*, a story typically sung, is about a brave hunter and his tool, the *sumpitan*.

The vocal music of the Subanen includes:

- a) **Shemba**, a chant for courtship and love. It is for settling disputes and an expression of felling about environment. Other types are *dendem* and *dlatanlatan*, the chanting of celebratory songs for entertainment.
- b) **Bayok**, improvisational song-verses usually using metaphors and performed as a debate
- c) **Dlonde**, welcome chant performed during gatherings; a simple song anchored on traditional beliefs and social practices and easily understood by most members of the community.
- d) **Guingoman**, an epic chant usually performed in wedding celebrations where the elders exchange songs based on the epic-narratives
- e) **Guinabenaben**, a lullaby chant or epic song that portrays past and contemporary events
- f) **Phatteddil**, a chant praising an individual
- g) **Debodo**, a narrative song about a hunter and his hunting tool (*sumpitan*)

The sets of musical instruments include:

- a) **Gagong** or **gong**, a metal gong (usually made of brass) played in various types of occasion
- b) **Gandingan**, a small gong used for ritual
- c) **Thumpong**, a short bamboo flute
- d) **Thanggab**, a long bamboo flute
- e) **Khumbing**, a Subanen jew's harp played by twanging in between lips.
- f) **Khutet**, a one-string guitar with fish skin as cover.
- g) **Khutapi**, a two-string lute
- h) **Suling**, a very short bamboo flute

The Subanen have a deep-seated belief that prohibits the playing of instruments as well as the performing of dances and music when someone dies. Music and dances are performed only during happy occasions. However, when a timuay dies, the gongs are sounded to inform the members of the community of the passing away of their leader.

Most young members of the Subanen communities display an affective attachment to their dances and music. The tradition is passed on through informal or non-formal ways. A significant number of the young community members learn the dance by merely watching actual performances.

In this module, the young learner is expected to master at least two (2) Subanen dances, three (3) short chants as well as play at least one (1) musical pattern of Subanen music, and to be able to perform confidently in public.

To realize this target, regular dance-and-music exploration



Subanen elders playing the agong
Photo by Noel Hoang Manipon

Rituals and ceremonies are at the heart of these animated performances. For a multitude of reasons to communicate with ancestral spirits, the Subanens sing lyrical songs, chant prayers, beat drums and sound their gongs in elaborate occasions and festivities.

sessions are done as an integrated activity in all E-SLT core subjects. This means, prior to the start of skills-orientated session, the young learners are encouraged to join the creative exploration sessions for a period of one hour. The routine shall be handled by a dancer-apprentice or a musician-

apprentice identified by the cultural master.

Below is the proposed flow of activities for all the lessons that are included in this learning module. It is reiterated that the flow is suggested only as a guide and the facilitator is given the liberty to introduce more innovative and motivating activities to enhance the learning process.

LEARNING SESSION 1

Cultural significance of *Phaladyaan Subanen*

Sequence of suggested activities:

1. Session opener

Creative movements, body orientation exercises and executing mimetic steps led by the dancer-apprentice.

2. Main activity

The cultural master engages the young learners to share their experiences and personal views on the traditional performing arts of the Subanen. After, a short input on the historical contexts and cultural significance of Subanen dances is shared.

3. Creative exploration

Rhythmic chanting of Subanen verses that explains the basic movements and body formation in executing various traditional dances, e.g., *thalek* and *sabay*.

4. Session ender

Sounding-off activity and feedback session followed by individual or small group practice for mastery of skills

5. Class assignment

The young learners are asked to interview their parents or relatives on the beliefs associated with Subanen performing arts.

LEARNING SESSION 2

Diverse forms, function and beliefs associated with Subanen dance and music

Sequence of suggested activities:

1. Session opener

Creative movements, body orientation exercises and executing mimetic steps led by the dancer-apprentice



Subanen young learners waving the *khumpas* during the *thalek* dance
 Photo by Rhonson Ng

2. Main activity

The cultural master encourages the young learners to share their interviews on the beliefs associated with the traditional dances and music. Then, a short story on the dances and music drawn from some episodes of the Subanen epic is shared.

3. Creative exploration

Individual and small group explorations on basic Subanen rhythm. Review of the *thalek* and *sabay* dances.

4. Session ender

Sounding-off activity and feedback session followed by individual or small group practice for mastery of skills

5. Class assignment

The facilitator asks the young students to bring a bamboo (specifications are provided) that shall be made into a simple percussive instrument, a *tambobok*.

LEARNING SESSION 3 Learning melodic and rhythmic patterns of Subanen music

Sequence of suggested activities:

1. Session opener

Creative movements, body orientation exercises and executing mimetic steps led by the dancer-apprentice.

Simple Chant of Traditional, Poetic Verses of the Subanen

I

Dlang gmanok pa rema (Step of a chicken)
Phanaw gitiyk pa rama (Walk like a duck)

II

Pahilingin su gbaga (Bending of shoulder)
Pelimbayan su khemet (Fly like a bird)

III

Limbaya di gunan (Step forward)
Phangay di thelyuran mo (Turn around)

IV

Thenggi a di gunan mo (Look forward)
Lingaya di gilid mo (Look sideways)



A cultural master dancing the traditional *thalek* dance
Photo by Nestor Horfilla

A master-instrument maker is introduced to guide the young learners in shaping the bamboos they bring to the class into a traditional percussion instrument.

2. Main activity

The cultural masters share the various musical instruments, their origins, usage, care and beliefs associated as practiced by the Subanen.

3. Creative exploration

Exploration of traditional rhythmic patterns to accompany the dance-movement exploration and rehearsals.

4. Session ender

Sounding-off activity and feed-backing session followed by individual or small group practice for mastery of skills

5. Class assignment

Mastery of at two (2) rhythmic patterns.

LEARNING SESSION 4 Introducing the *sot* and motivating for mastery of the basic steps of *thalek* and *sabay*

Sequence of suggested activities:

1. Session opener

Creative movements, body orientation exercises and executing mimetic steps led by the dancer-apprentice.

2. Main activity

Guided small group discussion/reflection on the ICH elements that have been introduced in the previous lessons. Dialogue with the cultural master ensues to clarify some points raised and deepen the lessons learnt.

3. Creative exploration

Individual, pair and group explorations of the movement patterns,

Among the most common Subanen musical instruments played in a variety of occasions are the traditional medium-sized gong; the gandingan, its smaller version; the thumpong, a bamboo flute, also called a thanggab (longer version); the khumbing, the Subanen harp played by twanging in between one's lips; the khutet, a one-stringed guitar; and the khutapi, a two-string lute.

From the rhythmic cadence of bamboo poles, to the distinct sways of women that implore healing, to coquettish hand gestures signaling courtship among gentlemen and ladies bearing dried rattan palms, Subanen dance is a showcase of daily activities creatively transposed into fluid motions of art. The thalek is the traditional welcome or community dance performed by women holding the khumpas or props made of rattan leaves. Just as lively is the shut, traditionally performed by men holding a dasag or shield decorated with shells to produce distinct sounds, anchored on war and hunting moves.

The sabay is the courtship dance featuring men dancing with kerchiefs, waiting for the chance to put this on the arm of the ladies they fancy. Finally, there's the dumendingan, a dance typically performed during festivals and significant celebrations, participated in by members of the royal family. To the clacking beat of bamboo poles laid on the ground, dancers follow a choreographed series of moves, guided by specific traditional chants.

spatial formations and body orientation towards mastery of the *sot*, *thalek*, and *sabay* accompanied by percussive rhythmic instrumentation.

4. Session ender

Sounding-off activity and feed-backing session followed by individual or small group practice for mastery of skills.

5. Class assignment

Individual mastery of the dances.

LEARNING SESSION 5 **Familiarizing the Subanen** **musical instruments and song genres**

Sequence of suggested activities:

1. Session opener

Creative movements, body orientation exercises and executing mimetic steps led by the dancer-apprentice.

2. Main activity

The cultural master introduces other traditional songs and musical genres to the young learners.

3. Creative exploration

Rhythmic chanting of Subanen verses that explains the basic movements and body formation in executing various traditional dances.

4. Session ender

Sounding-off activity and feed-backing session followed by individual or small group practice for mastery of skills.

5. Class assignment

Continue mastery rehearsals in their respective homes.

APPLICATION SESSION

The facilitator reminds the learners on the regular schedules and the target competencies of the learning module; motivates learners to seriously attend the following sessions; and in the process builds self-confidence:

- Mounting rehearsals for the recital
- Mastery rehearsals of dance and music
- Familiarization of the *gbat*

LEARNING MODULE 3
Process of Making *Gasi* Traditional Wine
Social Practices

Objective

Essentially, this particular module enhances the young learners' appreciation on the richness of their traditional culture and at the same time broaden their understanding of the rootedness of their socio-cultural practices. The motivational activities indicated in this module are designed to cultivate and strengthen the young learners' sense of identity and pride of place.

Specifically, in this learning module on Subanen wine, the young learners are guided to:

- Expresses greater understanding of the health and ecological values of traditional cuisine and local wines
- Demonstrates the preparation of distinct Subanen traditional dishes and the *gasi* or *pangasi*
- Substantiates concrete actions to achieve heightened appreciation of traditional cuisine and local wine among the young Subanen

Description

The lessons introduce the young learners to the origin, nature, types, functions and beliefs associated with the Subanen *gasi* or local wine. The wine-drinking ceremony assumes prominence in important celebrations or festivities and is considered part of the social decorum of the Subanen.

There are three main raw materials needed in the production of *pangasi*, namely, cassava tubers, rice hull and *tapay* (made from 24 to 60 herbs). The *pangasi* wine undergoes a fermentation process inside in a ceramic jar called *bandi* or *tibod* for two weeks to three years. The product is usually offered as gesture of gratitude and appreciation and is believed to be beneficial to the health of drinkers.

Learning competency

The production of *pangasi* is obligatory for members of the Subanen household but only the cultural masters can perfect the production. *Gasi* is part of the heritage. Thus, in this learning module, the young learners shall actively participate in the preparation and production of their local wine. Thus, in this module, the young learners can:

1. Identify the cultural significance and functions of the Subanen wine-drinking ceremony;
2. Deepen their understanding of the shared community cultural values and the desirable qualities of the Subanen, as expounded by the symbols and meanings associated with the ICH elements in focus.

Content breakdown

Learning Session 1: Cultural significance of Subanen *gasi* and associated belief

Learning Session 2: The production process and social obligations

Learning Session 3: The preparation process of traditional cuisine

Application Session: Safeguarding the indigenous knowledge

Methodology

Learning by doing through actual preparation of Subanen wine and traditional cuisine. The cultural masters shall likewise enable short inputs, lecture-demo and other motivational exercises that stimulate small group discussions and individual reflection sessions.

Assessment

Two tiers of assessment process: a) Learners' Peer-Assessment on Learning Targets and Performance Standard; and b) Mentors' Assessment on Learning Competency

Raw materials needed in the preparation of *gasi*

There are three main raw materials needed in the production of *pangasi* wine. These are:

1. Cassava tuber (*Manihot esculenta*), also called *kamoteng kahoy*, is extensively cultivated as an annual crop in tropical and sub-tropical regions for its edible starchy, tuberous root. It is a major source of carbohydrates. It is also used to make alcohol beverages.
2. Rice hulls (rice husks) are the hard protective coverings of grains of rice, and are used as a “press aid” to improve extraction efficiency.
3. *Tapay* is a concoction made from 24 to 60 types of herbs

Among the main ingredients, *tapay* is the most important component in wine production. The quality and spirit of the wine depend on how the *tapay* is made and its proportion in the mixture. One of the important ingredients that should always be present in the *tapay* concoction is *Blumea balsamiferu* or *gabon*.

In its preparation, the Subanen believe that weather plays an important role in determining the quality and taste of *tapay*. Sweet and bitter *tapays* are produced during dry season, and sour and tasteless mixtures are the results during rainy season. The sources of the *tapay* are usually from the top leaves and roots of a number of herbs, and the amount and specification of the mixture are a guarded secret passed to a selected few throughout generations.

Ten steps in making the *gasi*

1. Collecting the major raw materials such as cassava tuber, rice hull, and *tapay* mixture
2. Peeling of the cassava tubers and thoroughly washing it. It should be made certain that the cassava tubers are clean before cooking;
3. Cooking the peeled cassava tubers;
4. Removing the cassava tubers from the kettle and chopping them uniformly. Letting the cooked and chopped cassava to cool down;
5. Pulverizing one (1) measurement of *tapay* and spreading it thoroughly on the cooked and chopped cassava tubers for mixing;
6. Mixing and spreading the mixture of cassava and *tapay* into a flat surface;



CULTURAL PRACTICES AND BELIEFS

The accepted belief among the makers of tapay is that weather plays an important role in determining the quality and taste of the mixture during the process of mixing the various herbs. Preparing the concoction during dry season will result to sweet or bitter flavor while if done during rainy season it will have a sour or dull taste. Elders strictly follow the practice of having only one person to do the mixing of the various herbs. The purpose of this is to prevent the exchange of negative words or utterances if two persons are present which, they believe, will have a profound effect on the taste and quality of the mixture. Another person can only be allowed in the process if the elders have immense trust and confidence in that person.

In the consumption of the pangasi, the wine is sipped using a small bamboo straw called hasam. The small bamboo is well selected and designed in such a way that it will serve as drinking tube or straw to sip the juice (lihing). When the gallon or jar is already out of juice (lihing), a litter or litters of water is/are added to produce more drink.

The Subanen elders believe that when sipping the wine, strict rituals and behaviour should be observed as it may affect the outcome of the drinking session. For example, during the session, it is strictly prohibited to make unnecessary jokes, comments, or negative utterances because it is believed that these actions will result to immediate drunkenness by the drinkers, and this will ultimately result to trouble, disorder, or discord among the participants. It is further believed that it will bring bad luck to group members.

To make the wine more delicious or tasty when swallowed, jewelleryes should be removed from the body of the drinkers. A violation to this belief causes the wine to become tasteless or bland.

Subanen elders consider gasi as a spiritual or holy wine. That's why during processing, the processor should observe silence and should refrain from commenting and praising.

—Culled from *Production, Processing and Marketing of Pangase Wine: A Subanen Identity* by Wilson C. Nabua et al (2013, Philippine Agricultural Economics and Development Association, Malate; https://paedacon.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/fullpaper_nabua_wilson.pdf)



The *gasi*, a Subanen traditional wine preserved in the traditional Subanen jar
Photo by Paul Omar Gangoso



TRIBES, DRINKING AND TALK (SUBANEN)

Gasi is a special Subanen drink. A rice-yeast fermented beverage made of rice, manioc, maize, and/ or Job's tears mash. It is drunk with bamboo straws inserted in the bottom of a Chinese jar containing the fermented mash.

Each drinking turn is preceded by the addition of water to keep the jar filled to the brim. When the water is sucked up through the straw it draws an alcoholic mixture from the mash as well.

The *gasi* drinking occurs only during festivity and is the focus of the social gathering. Figuratively speaking, the function of the drinking straw is not only as a channel for the drink, but mainly as a channel for the drink-talk. The Subanen have an expression for this: "*talug bwat dig beksuk*" or "talk from the straw." The drinking-talk is a major medium of interfamily communication for which the festive gathering provides the opportunity. As there are no absolute, society-wide status positions, one's role in society at large, particularly for the Subanen male, depends to a considerable extent upon one's verbal performance during drinking encounters.

The strategy of drinking-talk is to manipulate role relations among the participants thereby maximizing one's own share of drink and talk in order to assume "esteem-attracting and authority-wielding roles." All drinking sessions follow a rigid cultural pattern. Beginning with initial tasting and simple terms of address, those of lesser verbal ability are gradually eliminated. Finally, discussion and argument usually lead to litigation. The session ends with a prestigious display of true verbal art which involves stylized patterns of Subanen song and verse composition. Not only are songs and poems improvised, but a recital of traditional Subanen tales from memory is required. The most skilled in "talking from the straw" are de facto leaders of the society.

—From *PIME in the Philippines* (<https://pimephilippines.wordpress.com/2009/11/19/drinkingtalk/>)

7. Putting the mixture in the *bukag*, a rattan basket filter, and sealing it with banana leaves for two to three days;
8. After three days, mixing the stored blend (called *inaman*) with $\frac{1}{4}$ kilogram or more of rice hull;
9. Placing the resulting mixture inside a glazed jar, sealed and stored for two weeks to three years to fully ferment;
10. Labeling the jar is with the date of storage or sealing.

After two weeks, the wine is ready for drinking. The longer the wine is stored, the more it can produce its own juice called *lihing* (beverage) and will taste better and can be stored longer for few more months or even years.

LEARNING SESSION 1

Cultural significance of *gasi* and beliefs associated with it

1. Lesson opener: Making *gasi* is an obligation but fun

The learning facilitator introduces the module. It should generate eagerness and interest among the young learners. It is definitely tedious but it is definitely rewarding with lots of “fun.”

2. Main activity: Gathering of the essential ingredient and preparing the root crop (*gbanggala*)

The following are done by the young learners:

Burning of the rice hull, an important ingredient of *pangasi*

Photo by Paul Omar Gangoso





- 2.1 *Mangalot og Kamanting gikan sa uma*
- 2.2 *Panitan ang kamanting ug hugasan*
- 2.3 *Tulahon o pabukalan ang kamanting*
- 2.4 *Tadtaran ang naluto nga kamanting*

Subanen women prepares the cassava, the main ingredient of the pangasi
 Photo by Paul Omar Gangoso

3. Reinforcing activity: Setting up a clean and comfortable workplace

While waiting for the cassava to boil, the young learners clean up the workplace and all the equipment to be used in the preparation of a *gasi*.

4. Sounding-off and feedback

When the first steps are neatly done, the facilitator wraps up the activities and motivate the young learners for the continuing lessons being prepared for the next days.

LEARNING SESSION 2 The preparation process and social obligations

1. Lesson opener: Things to do today

The instruction to the young shall consist of the tasks for the day and the proper decorum or behavior required for everyone to observe and religiously follow.

2. Main activity: Preparation of the fermentation agent (*tapay*)

The preparation of the fermentation agent is crucial in wine

The *tapay*, the fermentation agent of the *pangasi*
Photo by Paul Omar Gangoso



making. The following steps should be undertaken with utmost care and attention.

- 2.1 Maghulom og bugas;
- 2.2 Human og hulom ug humok na, pa-ughon ang bugas;
- 2.3 Sagulan og mga sangkap nga mga lumadnong tanum sama sa sili, luy-a, gamut sa tuyabang, udlot sa dahon sa shelumpet, thebayag ug uban pa;
- 2.4 Lubkon ang mga gipang-sagul nga sangkap ug bugas hangtud nga mapulbos kini;
- 2.5 Alig-igon ang mga gelubok;
- 2.6 Basaon sa tubig;
- 2.7 Hulmahon kini nga mu porma og lignin;
- 2.8 Ibulad og 3 to 4 ka adlaw hantung nga andam na nga timplahon sa kamanting.

3. Reinforcing activity: Preparation of *dlintek* (tipasi sa humay or rice hull)

The *dlintek* is an important ingredient for preserving the wine. The learning activity continues with the preparation of this ingredient:

- 3.1 Sunogon ang *dlintek*; kahoy ang gamiton sa pag-sunog samtang ukay-ukayon og taman hantud sa hingpit na nga masunog;
- 3.2 Pabugnawon human og sunog;
- 3.3 Isulod og saku inig mabugnaw naipa-pundo sa saku sulod sa tulo ka adlaw.

4. Wrap-up, summary sounding-off and feedback

When the first steps are neatly done, the facilitator wraps up the activities and motivate the young learners for the continuing lessons being prepared for the next days.

LEARNING SESSION 3 Completing the process of *gasi* making

1. Lesson opener: Gentle reminders

The class is about to do the actual process of fermenting the

local wine, a most difficult process and must be done with absolute responsiveness and civility.

2. Main activity: The right preparation of the *gasi*

The following steps should be done with precision and conviction:

- 2.1 *Kung andam na ang tanang sangkap (kamanting ug thapay) sagulon kini*
- 2.2 *Ang pagsagol buhaton sa binukhad nga banig*
- 2.3 *Kamot lang ang gamiton sa pag-sagol*
- 2.4 *Ang pagsagol sa kamanting ug thapay gitawag og ginabin*
- 2.5 *Ibutang ang ginabin sa bukag nga gihanigan og dahon sa saging*
- 2.6 *Pa-asuhan ang ginabim gamit ang baga nga kalayu apilan og sili og dlisan, e tuyok ang baga sa baba sa bukag nga gi butangan sa ginabin*
- 2.7 *Adunay mga tulumanon nga paga-himuon sa pagpa-asu*
- 2.8 *Ipatung dayun ang sili og ang dlisan ibabaw sa ginabin human og pagpa-aso*
- 2.9 *Hiulaton nga mapreserba sulod sa tulo ka adlaw*
- 2.10 *Human sa tylo ka adlaw andam nan g isagol ang ginabin ug ang sinunog nga rice hull*
- 2.11 *Ibutang ang mga sangkap sa sulod sa gbandi o tibud (earthen jar)*
- 2.12 *Tulo hangtud unom ka bulan amg pag-preserbar niini una kini mahimong gamiton o innum*

3. Reinforcing activity: Things to avoid when making *gasi*

Throughout the process, the learning facilitator shall gently remind everyone on the following unsuitable behavior.

- *Dili magdala og mga aslom sama sa suka, lemonsito og uban pang mga aslom sa lugar nga naay naga himu og gasi*
- *Dili pwede mag away-away o mag lalis sa lugar nga naay naghimo*



A Subanen women pounding the tapay made from several herbs and rice grains
Photo by Paul Omar Gangoso



Chopping the cassava, the main ingredient of *pangasi*

Photo by Paul Omar Gangoso

- *og gasi*
• *Kinahanglan nga hinlo nga malinawun ang lugar kung asa himuon ang gasi*

4. Wrap-up and summary

The young learners are again encouraged to express their feelings and thoughts about the activity. Then the facilitator highlights the important points.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY Preparation of a traditional cuisine

The learners are asked if they can bring to class samples of traditional cuisine prepared in their homes and to explain to their fellow learners the preparation process.

These items shall be displayed in the planned ground-breaking ritual for the agreed upon community garden that shall be established.

During that day, the young learners shall demonstrate the process of preparing the traditional cuisine.

APPLICATION SESSION Safeguarding the local or indigenous knowledge

The young learners in small groups are asked to discuss their proposals for the safeguarding of protection of their Subanen's secret knowledge concerning the preparation of the *gasi*. At the same time, they are also requested to propose safeguarding measures of the ICH elements that are distinctly Subanen.

The *pangasi* mixture preserved in the Subanen jar
Photo by Paul Omar Gangoso



Traditional Farming System and Culturally Significant Plants: Revitalizing Indigenous Knowledge System

Traditional Knowledge

Objective

This module shall enhance the young learners' appreciation on the richness of their cultural traditions and at the same time broaden their understanding of the rootedness and resiliency of their culture. Specifically, this learning module aims to:

- Heighten the young learner's appreciation on the Subanen's indigenous knowledge system (IKS) manifested in their traditional learning system as part of their intangible cultural heritage (ICH);
- Encourage the young learners to be engaged in community cultural action toward achieving sustainable development of their community.

Description

The lessons in this module introduce the young learners to the origin, nature, component parts and functions as well as the distinctiveness, seasonality and beliefs associated with the practice of traditional farming. They shall be guided by local farmers who are adept with the traditional methods and cultural management of the farm.

An interesting theme integrated in this module is the phenomenon of climate change adaptation and the degree of resiliency of the Subanen society and culture. The concerns for the protection and promotion of biodiversity of the Subanen's Ancestral Domain shall likewise be tackled. Thus, the young learners are urged to participate in a community-led inventory of culturally-significant plants within their territories. Concretely, the inventory shall allow the young learners to:

- 1) Enumerate and list the species and varieties of plants that are culturally significant;
- 2) Actively help in the development of a community herbarium and in the establishment of an organic communal garden or learning farm; and
- 3) Pursue the implementation of culturally-appropriate and affordable conservation measures to enhance the biodiversity of ecosystems within the Subanen Ancestral Domain.

Learning competency

The facilitator, in collaboration with cultural masters, endeavors to help the young learners achieve significant level of cultural competence. After this course, the young culture bearers can:

- Demonstrate how IKS as ICH elements can be applied in actual life situations as building blocks for a successful community development programs and projects
- Articulate how the young members of the community can value, pursue and advance youth-oriented safeguarding measures to revitalized IKS and sustain the ICH element.

Content breakdown

Learning Session 1: Cultural background and significance of traditional farming

Learning Session 2: Seasonality of the traditional farming system

Learning Session 3: Development issues in cultural management of the farm

Learning Session 4: Climate change and status of vulnerability, adaptation and early warning

Learning Session 5: Culturally significant plants of the Subanen

Application Session: Youth project: Enhancing a community herbarium and establishment of a learners' communal garden

Methodology

Learning by doing through actual apprenticeship under a cultural master and local farmers for three weeks. In the following weeks, the young learners shall audit the semi-structured learning sessions in the learning center with short inputs, motivational small group discussions and individual reflection sessions.

Assessment

Two tiers of assessment process: a) Learners' Peer-Assessment on Learning Targets and Performance Standard; and b) Mentors' Assessment on Learning Competency

A Subanen cultural master in her home garden

Photo by Living Asia Channel



LEARNING SESSION 1: Cultural background and significance of traditional farming

1. Lesson opener: Mapping a farming system

The young learners are provided with materials and instructed to draw a map of the farm where they were fielded. The map should include, with as much details as possible, a view of the geological formation including land and water bodies, the status of the farm ecosystem, the diversity of the flora and fauna, and land-and-water conservation measures installed, etc. This exercise shall allow the young learners to highlight the significant observations of their immersion process and record them in visual form. The cognitive maps are displayed and the young learners shall participate in the gallery viewing. A short forum shall follow moderated by the learning facilitator.

2. Main activity

The young learners are asked to share their filed observations and interviews with farmers during their immersion on traditional farming system. The sharing shall focus on the major phases or steps employed as enumerated and explained below. To help the learners in their discussions, the following guide questions can be presented.

a) **Site selection.** What are the important activities done in selecting the appropriate or desirable site or land area to be cultivated?

b) **Clearing.** How do farmers clear the field before planting is done? How long would it take to finish the clearing of the site or land area?

c) **Planting.** Name the common crops that are planted in the farm and identify the appropriate time or season for planting the diverse crops (both annual and perennials).

d) **Maintenance.** What are the important activities done after planting? What are the purposes of these activities? Who does the activities mentioned?

e) **Integrated farming.** What other activities do the farmer and the members of the family do while waiting for the harvest season? Is livestock raising integrated in the farming practice? How about

THE IMMERSION AND APPRENTICESHIP PROCESS

A short immersion program for a period of three (3) week-ends shall be arranged with Subanen small-holder, upland farmers who are still practicing traditional farming system and applying the indigenous farming technologies such as diversified or multiple cropping, taunga or multi-storey planting, crop rotation, organic or indigenous pest management and observation of fallow period, among others. The young learners are fielded to the small farms and are encouraged to participate in farm-related activities and acquire as much knowledge and data on the topics: farm site-selection, land preparation, planting, cultural management, harvesting practices, post-harvest activities and fallow period.

Participatory monitoring activities are initiated by the E-SLT coordinating team and after the immersion period, the young learners continue to attend the regular sessions conducted at the E-SLT.

gathering of food and other plants from the nearby forest or brush lands? Are the farmers engaged in the production of crafts? What are the examples of crafts and/or other processed products in the community?

f) **Harvesting.** When is the right time to harvest each crop planted? How are they harvested and who participate in harvesting? What is the common sharing system practiced as benefits to the neighbors who have participated in the harvest?

g) **Post-harvest.** Where are the harvested crops stored? What other activities done after harvest? Is the fallow period still practiced? How?

Each team shall only tackle one topic or phase and given enough time to discuss. The creative sharing of the group report is done through role playing. The teams are given time to prepare for their mini-showcase. After each role-playing, representative from the team shall give a summary of the report that highlights the significant lessons learned about the topic. The facilitator then synthesizes the discussions with emphasis on the culture content of the reports.

3. Reinforcing activity: How about chemical farming?

A plenary discussion on the practice of “chemical farming” ensues duly animated by the facilitator. The young learners are encouraged to express their observations of the practice: The advantages and dis-advantages, risks and vulnerabilities, challenges and options to take.

4. Session ender: Let the elders speak

A village chieftain is invited to listen to the discussions, reporting and reflections of the young learners. Then, he/she is given time to share stories of actual experiences and lessons learnt on revitalizing the traditional farming system.

5. Class assignment: Name the Crops, Identify the Season

The learners are asked, as their assignment, to construct a list of all plants found in the immersion site and the period when they are propagated.

POINTS TO PONDER

In general, the biodiversity-based crop production systems of indigenous peoples in the Philippines are anchored on their cultures and their intimate relationships with their environment, along with their limited financial and material resources. They use simple agricultural tools and planting techniques and apply very limited external inputs. They also make use of indigenous pest-water-and-nutrient management systems and seed-storage practices (Zamora, et al., 2014).

The IPs’ complex upland food-production systems of what appears to be a chaotic mess of annuals and perennials is actually a highly sophisticated mixture of species and varieties that provide food, feed, fuel, medicines, building materials and cash crops. Up to the present time, indigenous peoples in their swidden farms have numerous species and varieties planted at the same time. Growing of livestock (including fishes), even in rice fields adds even more diversity to the system (Zamora, 2010).

LEARNING SESSION 2: Seasonality of the traditional farming system

Suggested activities:

1. Lesson opener: Naming our season

As a preliminary exercise, the learning facilitator asks the students what they know about the meanings of the Subanen words pertaining to the months of the year. (e.g. January is Pulo-pulo or Pharang-kugon. September is Selunghigi). What does Pulo-pulo and/or Selunghigi mean for you?

When the young learners have verbalized their opinions on the meanings of the Subanen words for the months in the Gregorian calendar, the facilitator presents a visualized concept of the traditional agricultural calendar. He/she encourages the young learners to review their insights and findings during the immersion with farmers in relation to the visualized seasonality calendar.

2. Main activity: Agricultural calendar and the farming practices of the Subanen

The young learners who are grouped in small teams. The teams are asked to supply the major activities in the farm falling under specific months or periods. Likewise, they shall identify the type of crops raised under the different months of the year, indicating the times for land preparation, planting, maintenance and harvesting. They shall base their answers on the data they have generated during their immersion period. Their data should be inscribed in the visualized seasonality calendar.

The teams are given thirty (30) minutes to complete their calendar. Then they share their respective seasonality calendar to the entire class.

When all the groups have reported, the facilitator summarizes the data shared and all other related insights raised by the young learners. Then, the following key concepts closely related to the IP farming systems are highlighted and discussed further.

- Agro-forestry system
- Multiple or diversified cropping (or poly-culture versus mono-culture)
- Crop rotation
- Fallow period

Then, the young learners are given time to ask questions on farming practices. Afterwards, the facilitator instructs the young learners to share stories that they have heard or have observed in the Subanen farms about the key concepts associated with traditional farming systems. The teams are given another twenty (20) to share and listen to their stories of observations.

3. Reinforcing activities

Planning a communal E-SLT diversified garden.

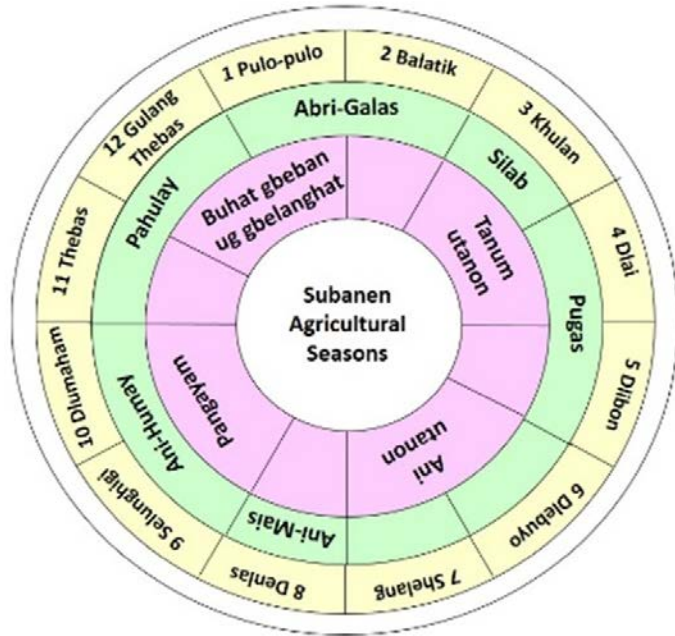
4. Summary, feedback and sounding-off

The facilitator moderates the feedback session and wraps up

Agricultural Calendar

Legend:

- 1 - January (Pulo-pulo)
- 2 - February (Balatik)
- 3 - March (Khulan)
- 4 - April (Dlai)
- 5 - May (Dilbon)
- 6 - June (Dlebuyo)
- 7 - July (Shelang)
- 8 - August (Denlas)
- 9 - September (Selunhigi)
- 10 - October (Dlumaham)
- 11 - November (Thebas)
- 12 - December (Gulang Thebas)



the important points raised.

5. Session ender

The facilitator introduces a round song or chant on farming practices. While building the chanting game, he/she points at one young learner to verbalize the lesson learnt during the day. This is done in several rounds.

6. Class assignment

The learning facilitator introduces the concept of agricultural rituals then ask the young learners to inquire from their parents and relatives what activities do most members of the community do in the performance of the rituals.

A view of the lake in Lakewood, Zamboanga del Sur

Photo by Paul Omar Gangoso



A Subanen home garden

Photo by Paul Omar Gangoso





LEARNING SESSION 3: Cultural management

1. Lesson opener: Theatre games

Variety of physical and mental group exercises are introduced to excite the young learners and develop alertness in putting their ideas to action.

2. Main activity: “What follows next?”

This session focuses on several significant activities employed in the traditional farming system after the planting period up to the time when the crops, especially upland rice, are ready for harvesting. The facilitators presents a collection of “conflict situations” and ask the learners to dramatize their specific responses to the question: “What happened next?” When all the small groups have presented their mini-showcase, a summary of the insights and lessons are highlighted. Example of conflict situation: A young Subanen man places a marker near the tree.

The marker signifies that he has the right to harvest the honey in the tree where the bees built their hive. He plans to harvest the honey the following day. Upon returning to the area the next day, he notices that the marker is gone, and the honey was harvested by someone else.” What happens next?

3. Reinforcing activity: Discussion on gender issues in cultural management

A brief discussion on gender domains and gender-related issues in the management of Subanen farms is moderated by the learning facilitator.

4. Session ender: Let the elders speak

A village chieftain is invited to listen to the discussions, reporting and reflections of the young learners. Then he/she is given time to share stories of actual experiences and lessons learnt on revitalizing the traditional farming system.

5. Class assignment

Observe or inquire on stories of “early warning” of probable disaster.

LEARNING SESSION 4: Climate change and early warning

1. Lesson opener: “Climate change is real”

A short video on the challenges of climate change is shown. Then, the young learners are asked to comment or react to content of the video documentary.

2. Main activity

An invited guest shares to the young learners the phenomenon of climate change. This is to allow the learners to level-off their awareness on the vulnerabilities of the community and the ecosystem to the increasing trend of weather extremities and disasters.

LET THE ELDERS SPEAK

Some adhere to age-old 'early warning' beliefs related to disasters

In Cebuano

Kanunay namong obserbahan ang dagan sa ug posisyon sa bulan ug ang ting-taob ug ting-hunas sa katutubigan sa dagat.

"Dili magtanum kung mao pa ang pag-subang sa bulan kay daghan og dangan"

"Kung daghan og bitoon, daghang kamote. Kung makuhaan na ang bulan, dili na maayong mag-pugas sa humay."

Pag-abot sa Dhanlas (August), panahon na sa 'walo-walo' (severe rain). Atong mamatikdan nga ang mga kakahoyan sulod sa lasang mamulak, mobundag ang taas nga ulan hangtud dili mahuman ang pag-panglagas sa mga bulak niini.

Ang bulan sa Salunghigi (September) mao ang tigpamulak, mobundak ang ulan apan kung mamunga na ang kahoy, mo-init na ang panahon aron mahinog ug malaya ang bunga dayon mangahulog sa yuta ug moturok na usab.

Ang kahoy nga Hagimit (Tree), kung imong samaran ug mamatikdan nga daghan og duga, kusog nga ulan ang pangandaman. Kung gamay ra ang duga, ting-hulaw na usab.

Ang kahoy nga Thaluto (tree), kung mamatikdan nga malaya ang mga dahon, taas nga hulaw ang moabot. Kini nga kahoy mabuhi bisan wala nay dahon. Moabot ang ting-ulan kung manalinsing na ang bag-ong dahon sa maong kahoy.

In Subanen

Dlelayon name peshulyanan su hebetang nu gbulan muha su fhab bu kheti ditu dagat. Gendi megimula ba hesebang pa gbulan hagina gmelon gmengan ba mehibangan na su gbulan, gendi na pahay meggerek phalay.

Mateng su Dhenlas (August) thimpo gwalo (8) ndaw dupi. Mebetihan su nga gayo, mephon memulok. Moddhak I gempayat dahus gempales dupi sampay megela meledlog I nga gbulak gayo.

Mateng bhelunghigi (September) Gempales da rema dupi. Legaid ba memuya na su gayo memeres na sampay menginog na su gbunga gayo dahag medlabo ditu dlupa dari mentubo puli.

Gimit (kahoy) sama thangan mo gmelon thubig maanto meshagipa pu gempalas dupi, sama khampon na thubigen, maanto mayan gempayat pheres sama mendalag su daunun mayan I dlego.

Sama mengindaen na maanto, dlibok.

3. Reinforcing activity: Reading of two stories from Lanayan, "The Hunter" and "Caring for the Pests"

These are culturally-based practices to cope with vulnerabilities to climate-change related risks and hazards.

4. Session ender: Let the elders speak

A village chieftain is invited to listen to the discussions, reporting and reflections of the young learners. Then he/she is given time to share stories of actual experiences and lessons learnt on early warning system for disasters.

5. Class assignment: Ethno-botany inventory

The concept of culturally-relevant flora is introduced and the inventory forms for documenting the plants are explained. The forms are to be filled-up by the young learners.

How Traditional Farming System of Indigenous Peoples Can Help Humanity

Over the centuries, indigenous peoples have provided a series of ecological and cultural services to humankind. The preservation of traditional farming knowledge and practices help maintain biodiversity, enhance food security, and protect the world's natural resources. It is important to be aware that indigenous farming practices have helped shape sustainable farming systems and practices all over the world.

1. Agroforestry

Agroforestry involves the deliberate maintenance and planting of trees to develop a microclimate that protects crops against extremes. Blending agriculture with forestry techniques, this farming system helps control temperature, sunlight exposure, and susceptibility to wind, hail, and rain. This system provides a diversified range of products: food, fodder, firewood, timber, medicine, etc. while improving soil quality, reducing erosion and storing carbon.

2. Crop rotations

The principles of crop rotation have been successfully used for thousands of years in agriculture and are still used today. Crop rotation is the practice of growing different crops on the same land so that no bed or plot sees the same crop in successive seasons. It is a practice designed to preserve the productive capacity of the soil, minimize pests and diseases, reduce chemical use, and manage nutrient requirements, all of which help to maximize yield. It builds better soil structure and increases the ability to store carbon on farms.

3. Mixed/Intercropping

Mixed cropping, also known as intercropping, is a system of cropping in which farmers sow more than two crops at the same time. By planting multiple crops, farmers can maximize land use while reducing the risks associated with single crop failure. Intercropping creates biodiversity, which attracts a variety of beneficial and predatory insects to minimize pests and can also increase soil organic matter, fumigate the soil, and suppress weed growth.

4. Polyculture

Polyculture systems involve growing many plants of different species in the same area, often in a way that imitates nature. By increasing plant biodiversity, polyculture systems promote diet diversity in local communities, and are more adaptable to climate variability and extreme weather events.

They also promote greater resiliency of plants to pests and diseases. Polycultures are integral to permaculture systems and design, and provide many advantages such as better soil quality, less soil erosion, and more stable yields when compared to monoculture systems.

5. Water harvesting

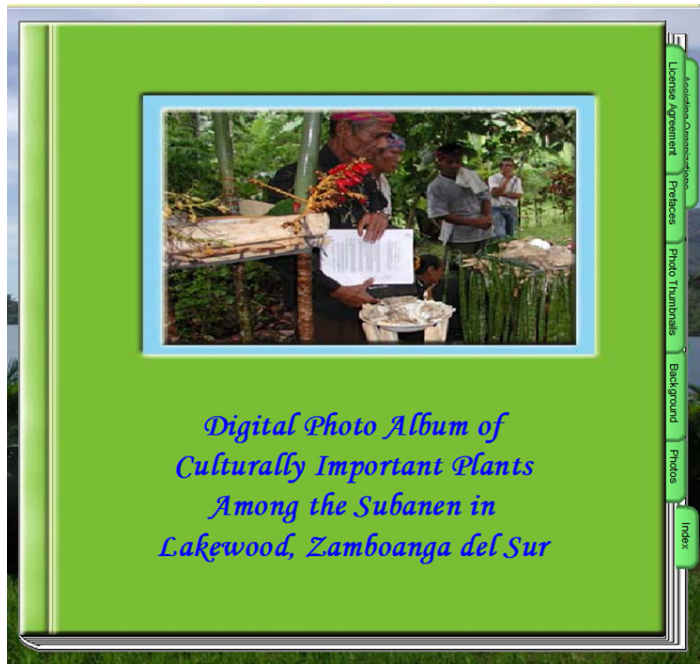
Water harvesting is defined as the redirection and productive use of rainfall, involving a variety of methods to collect as much water as possible out of each rainfall. Many water harvesting structures and systems are specific to the eco-regions and culture in which it has been developed. This may involve collecting water from rooftops, from swollen streams and rivers during monsoon season, or from artificially constructed catchments.

This ensures that farmers have a substantial amount of water stored up in the case of drought or limited rainfall.

Indigenous peoples play a key role in sustainable smallholder farming around the world, thanks to their traditional knowledge and understanding of ecological systems and local biodiversity.

The preservation and continued evolving use of this knowledge is embedded in the recognition of the fundamental rights of indigenous peoples fundamental to follow their own traditional ways of growing food.

From *Digital Photo Album of Culturally Important Plants Among the Subanen in Lakewood, Zamboanga del Sur* (2004) by the Mesaligan Pegsalabuhan Subanen in Lakewood, Zamboanga del Sur



LEARNING SESSION 5: Culturally significant plants of the Subanen

1. Lesson opener: Plants and their traditional usage

The facilitator introduces a variant of the word association game. He/she mentions a native specie of plant found in the Ancestral Domain, and let the young learners guess the common usage. Then four (4) volunteer learners share the samples of the plant species they collected as part of their cultural inventory.

2. Main activity

Sharing of Inventory ensues in small groups. Then the learning facilitator demonstrate how to develop a simple Community Herbarium project comprising of the inventories of culturally significant plants.

Potential Uses of Ethno-botanical Knowledge

By Vel J. Suminguit

Ethno-botanical knowledge can serve as an effective development tool to improve the living conditions of indigenous communities without degrading the environment. It can be used to increase and enhance livelihood options, revitalize agriculture, increase food security, improve health and promote a sense of cultural pride within the community.

1. Increasing and enhancing livelihood options

Many plants currently growing wild in the ancestral domain produce resin, natural dye, fibre, detergent and natural oil. Further studies and field trials can be carried out on ways to propagate and process these plants to obtain commercial products.

With close to 100 indigenous rice varieties in Lakewood, and probably more in neighboring areas, the Subanen can become certified seed providers of indigenous rice germplasm for commercial plant breeders.

Sixty-two percent of the plants in the ancestral domain were listed as having medicinal uses. Chemical compounds of these plants can be identified for the production of organic medicine.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources is interested in reforestation of native tree species. However, it does not have a supplier of seeds and seedlings of the trees. More than 100 tree species are good-quality timber trees in the ancestral domain of the Subanen that can provide such a source. With technical training in seed collection, processing, propagation and nursery establishment, the Subanen can generate income from seeds and seedlings without damaging the current forest stand.

2. Revitalizing agriculture and increasing food security

Ethno-botanical knowledge helps the Subanen cope with periodic food shortages by utilizing non-timber forest products. During the exercise, the Subanen people named over 200 undomesticated plants that are edible for humans. When crops fail or when there is a food shortage during the lean season, especially before the coming harvest season, the Subanen harvest nuts, berries, wild vegetables and honey and hunt animals in the forest. The forest provides them with a buffer from hunger. However, the culturally important plants are usually heavily utilized without any corresponding regeneration activities. As a result, some have become rare or endangered species. Ethno-botanical knowledge can be used to identify heavily exploited plant species in order to initiate field trials and other regenerative activities.

Some plants are already used for intercropping and soil erosion control, to serve as a trellis for climbing plants, and to provide insect repellent or organic pesticide. Using organic pesticide has the advantage over artificial pesticide because it is locally available, biodegradable and affordable for small farmers.

Technical assistance in processing organic pesticides from local raw materials could help reduce yield loss to pests and possibly open a new source of income for the indigenous community.

3. Improving health

The forest is the living pharmacy of the indigenous communities. It provides the medicines to cure common illnesses. However, medicinal plants in the forest are not always readily available when needed. Often they are only found in a specific part of the forest that may be distant and arduous to reach. This can be addressed by cultivating the identified medicinal plants in backyards or communal gardens making them easily available, and thereby improving community health.

4. Source of culturally relevant learning materials to revitalize traditional culture

Proper documentation of ethno-botanical knowledge produces a written cultural heritage that can be passed on from generation to generation. As such, it can be a source of cultural pride for the Subanen that can help revitalize traditional culture. It is also a culturally relevant educational resource for the Subanen literacy programs as well as the mainstream formal school system. By incorporating ethno-botanical knowledge into the formal curriculum of the Philippine educational system, young indigenous community members can be given a chance to learn about and appreciate the richness of their cultural heritage. In this way, they might imbibe the importance of preserving biodiversity and protecting the environment. Similarly, non-indigenous students may have a better understanding of indigenous culture, thus promoting cultural dialogue and mutual comprehension to enhance peace.

Source: Suminguit, Vel J. 2005. "Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Intellectual Property Rights: An Enabling Tool for Development with Identity." Workshop on Traditional Knowledge, United Nations and Indigenous Peoples, Panama, 21-23 September 2005. Asia-Pacific Database on Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) by Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (http://www.accu.or.jp/ich/en/pdf/c2006Expert_SUMINGUIT)

3. Reinforcing activity

Completing the data for the herbarium based on the digitized documentation done by the Subanen in Lakewood, Zamboanga del Sur.

4. Session ender

Ground-breaking ritual for the establishment of a communal diversified garden.

5. Class assignment

Task on propagation and maintenance of the communal garden that showcases the ethno-botanical collections of the young learners.

APPLICATION SESSION

Implementing a youth-oriented and culturally-focused project: Community herbarium and diversified communal garden

The young learners shall implement the following activities:

1. Final selection of entries in the herbarium project and identifying significance of the plants identified;
2. Completion of the first volume of the community herbarium;
3. Crop-planning of the diversified communal garden guided by the cultural master;
4. Completion of tasks for the maintenance and enhancement of the communal garden;
5. Highlight the garden for the scheduled learning visits of other youth in the community.

A view of the lush community forest located in Lanayan, Zamboanga del Sur

Photo by Nestor Horfilla



THE HUNTER

A story from Lanayan

Lanayan, Gbenwa nu nga dangen getaw Subanen.

Lanayan, an indigenous homeland of the Subanen,

Ditu mirapit ngmetastas gbelit gulangan is situated in an area with high elevation, in the fringes of the lush forest.

don e thinwang gulangan galapan gan, gayu, gway nga gbulong phegimula mehagabang di nga getaw.

The natural forest is considered as sources for food, timber, rattan, medicinal plants and other resources that support the survival of the people.

Tegena don e phanday ngmengayam peddalepa di gbawang hini,

Long time ago, a very skillful hunter lived in the area.

ginilala hyanin di phendayan dahus thegelanen di hethimuren gbinyasan genat di gulangan, dahus hengayam gbaboy talon

In this community, he was very much renowned for his skills and acumen in gathering forest resources and in hunting wild boar.

gbulog hagina maanto, pinitaen ni dahus hini mi gandya an di nga dleyn pegbenwa ditu gbawang,

However, he also exhibited a particular personal trait that is daunting for other members of the community.

Selabuk gebi, hini ngmengayam peshagipaenen dahus pethelamanen su nga gbesi nen di hengayam.

One night, the hunter was preparing and sharpening his hunting tools—

Su thelawan, phes, shelapang dahus su nga sebad gbesi nen.

spear, bolo, arrows and many more.

Mandyari, miharengge gmetenog dya.

Then, he noticed a loud noise.

Misunanen don e gbaboy talon di ngmesempel.

He was certain that a wild boar is nearby.

Ginalapen e gbesi nen dahus gumibek lumyawa tu phinto

He got his implements and rushed outdoor.

Dahag tuo, minuli pephisan na gbaboy talon genat ditu gulangan.

True enough, when he returned home, he was carrying a dead boar from the nearby forest.

Hagina, maanto, don na sap mirengge gen ngmetenog dlagaw

Then, another loud sound was heard.

Su mangayam, sahatiha ginalapen phana en luminyo nasap

The hunter, equipped with bow and arrow, hurried outdoor.

Genda manga, pephisan na sap gembagel gbaboy talon ba mihapuli.

Soon enough, another large boar had been hunted, which he brought home.

Seletaen ta don na sap mirengegen ngmetenog dahus ngmelon dlya,

Moments later, a much louder sound was heard.

Pedderemanen: "Hini na e gembagel malapen di dyalem gebi!"

He pondered: "This could be my biggest catch for the night".

Then, he went outside of the house to kill the biggest wild boar.

Mahalibuleng, gbagi-bagi mahalap yanin gembagel guntong,

Sadly, instead of hunting his biggest catch,

Su ngeangayam e pipatay nu gembagel gbaboy talon hiben da en pa mita.

the hunter was devoured by the biggest wild boar ever seen by him.

Reflection: "An indigenous person should only gather enough to satisfy his/her needs, otherwise the natural resources in the forest will soon be depleted and the next generation are deprived of resources to support their survival."

Elders dancing
in the Buklogan
platform
Photo by Roel Hoang Manipon



LEARNING MODULE 5
Attendant Rituals of the Buklog

Social Practices

Objective

This learning module envisions to inculcate in the minds and heart of the Subanen young learners their specific roles and responsibility in advancing the safeguarding measures to sustain the social practice of the Buklog, as part of their spiritual and social obligations.

In the same vein, it shall broaden their understanding on the rootedness of their cultural expressions with the end view of strengthening their sense of identity and pride of place. Specifically, the learning shall enable the young learners to:

- Specify the attendant rituals of the Buklog and articulate the symbols and meanings embedded in the rituals
- Collaborate with other learners in developing youth-oriented projects that safeguard the ICH element
- Propose urgent community-driven measures to safeguard and sustain the Buklog ritual system

Description

The lessons in this learning module shall make known to the young learners the origin, nature, focus, processes and significance of the sets of attendant rituals of the Buklog.

As practiced, the Buklog is planned by the head of a host family, usually a village chief called timuay, to appease and express gratitude to the spirits for many reasons such as a bountiful harvest, recovery from sickness or calamity, or acknowledgement of a new leader. All community members, regardless of sex, age, gender, status, social and education background, and level of mental and physical capability, are encouraged to join the rituals and festivities which last for several days.

All members of Subanen communities—men and women, elders, youth and children—are bearers and practitioners of the ICH elements. They consider the rituals as central to their identity, communal values, and their relationship to nature and the spirit world.

Learning competency

The young learners can:

1. Identify the cultural significance of the attendant social and spiritual rituals directly associated with the Buklog; and
2. Deepen their understanding of the shared community cultural values and the desirable qualities of the Subanen, as expounded by the symbols and meanings associated with the ICH elements in focus.

Content breakdown

Learning Session 1: Cultural significance of myths and ritual performance in Subanen society

Learning Session 2: Revisiting the Buklog and its attendant rituals

Learning Session 3: Rituals related to traditional agricultural practices

Learning Session 4: Rituals related to the Subanen rites of passage

Learning Session 5: Young learners' proposals for safeguarding the Buklog

Application Session: Several activities are planned to reinforce the lessons in this module to motivate the young learners to be engaged in the continuing practice of the Buklog ritual system rooted in the indigenous knowledge of the Subanen and affirmed by the members of the gohuman (council of elders) who likewise bolster the function of the

family in the transmission of the element. Moreover, the learners are guided to ensure the observance of customary laws, in the performance of the ritual as well as in safeguarding the element.

Methodology

The learning facilitators shall hold sessions with invited leaders and ritual specialist providing short inputs to trigger small group discussions and individual reflection. At the same time, creative and stimulating activities shall be introduced based on the principle of “learning by doing.”

Assessment

Two tiers of assessment process: a) Learners’ Peer-Assessment on Learning Targets and Performance Standard; and b) Mentors’ Assessment on Learning Competency

Construction of the *Buklogan* through communal labor

Photo by Roel Hoang Manipon



Nature and functions of the *Buklog* attendant rituals

Buklog opens with the *sinulampong*, signifying the community's readiness to hold the *Buklog* and to ask permission from the spirits to gather materials from the forest. The offerings in the *sangat* seek to maintain the balance in the spirit world. In the *panmalwasan*, spirits of the departed are invited to the feast. The *gampang* and *gilet* are rituals invoking spirits of the water and land. The chanting of *giloy*, verses of praise, with the sounding of gongs, is performed in each ritual.

After the attendant rituals, the community starts the construction of an elevated wooden structure called the *Buklog*, where the ritual derived its name. At the center of the platform, a single pole called *phetaw* is installed to hit a hollowed-out log called *dulugan*. While dancing on the platform, the structure resonates with a sound, believed to please the spirits and to make known that the festivity is culminating.

The final ritual of the *Buklog*, called *giti-an*, is done on the platform, where the rules for the celebration are expressed. This is followed by the *gbat* (community dance). This moment is marked by joy and excitement, resulting from the renewal of spiritual and social relationships within the community.

All community members are engaged in the planning and preparation of the *Buklog*. Everyone prepares a contribution of food, offerings, labor and forest products, because those who contribute will partake in the blessings from the gods.

The *Buklog* strengthens ties between parties and individuals rather than fragments them. It invites people from various cultures, communities, sectors, and age groups to experience the joy of an age-long practice; through being welcomed into the Subanen practice, receiving its blessing, and enjoying oneself in the light-spirited moment of dance and music. In this regard, it also upholds mutual respect among communities.

The existence and recognition of the *balyan* as spiritual leaders, backed up by the strong governance maintained by the local *gohoman* in the relatively intact Subanen communities, are evidence that the element, despite the constraints, is indeed, a viable ICH of the Subanen.

All the attendant rituals ensure harmony among members of a family/clan and the community, as well as among the human world, the natural world and the spirit world. Harmony is requisite to the success of the *Buklog*, an indication of a socially strong and cohesive community. The active and informed involvement of the whole community in all the enormous mobilization of volunteer work, community labour and accumulation of huge resources reinforces social cohesion.



LEARNING SESSION 1

Significance of myths and ritual performance in Subanen society

Learning objective

The learners can:

- Articulate the essential elements of the Buklog ritual-celebration; and
- Deepen their understanding of the shared community cultural values as expounded by the symbols and meanings associated with the Buklog.

Suggested activities:

1. Lesson opener

A cultural master on dance and music is invited to share, in a chant, an episode of a Subanen epic that mentions the *Buklog*. The facilitator helps explain the content of the story highlighted in the chant.

2. Main activity

A short video documentary of the Buklog is shown. After the video, the young learners are asked to form small groups and enumerates the various rituals portrayed in the documentary. In addition, they are told to list down important questions about the rituals highlighted in the video documentary.

The invited cultural master and the spiritual leaders, in a cordial conversation, clarify the questions raised by the groups of young learners. A summary shall be provided by the learning facilitator

3. Reinforcing activity

Role-playing of the *Buklog* story chanted by the cultural master.

4. Summary, feedback and sounding-off

The learning facilitator moderates the feedback session and wraps-up the points raised.

5. Session ender

“Post It”. The video documentary is played again and the young learners are encouraged to watch it attentively. Then they are all requested to write, in bold letters, on a small piece of paper (one idea one paper) his/her personal reflections on the *Buklog* and lesson of the day.

Class assignment

The learning facilitator asks all young learners to interview and request their parents to recall the last time they attended a *Buklog* celebration.

The list should include the following data: Date of the event, name of the *Buklog* celebration, place held and the name of the leader/*timuay* who helped organized it.

Brief Descriptions of the Buklog Attendant Rituals

The *Buklog* is normally hosted by a family. The head of the family initiates, leads and promotes observance of the thanksgiving ritual to reaffirm their identity and integrity as a socio-political unit. The *timuay* (male) or *timuay libon* (female), along with other community leaders, negotiates and solicits the people's cooperation and support. He or she acts in consonance with the advice of the *gohuman*, the council of elders.

The *balyan*, together with assistants, officiates the building of the *Buklog* structure and perform the series of attendant rituals. Holding continuing access to power in healing, divinations and mediation, the *balyan* has the ability to see and communicate with the spirits, to discern their presence and actions, and to know how to deal with them even in exceptionally difficult situations.

DAGA. A preparatory ritual, the *daga* ritual symbolizes their pact of harmony. It is likewise done to enhance the powers of the *balyan* as well as to appease their respective spirit guardians or guides. Moreover, the *daga* reaffirms their close ties having been separated for years.

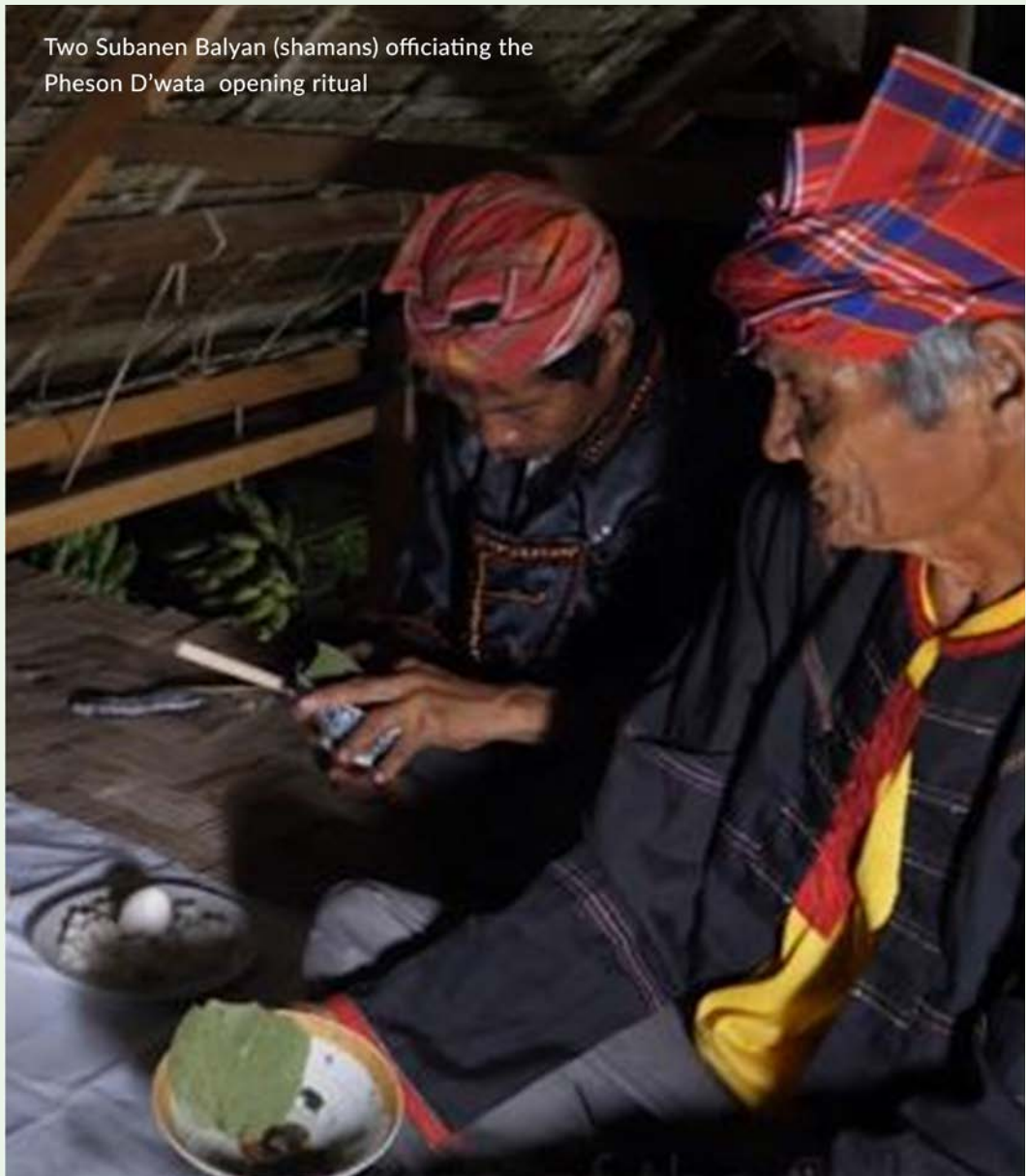


Subanen leaders, men and women performed the Daga prior to the start of the G'buklog Thendeg Ritual Thanksgiving Ritual

A. Rituals done inside the Subanen house

1. **PHESON D'WATA.** This ritual serves as the formal announcement of community's intention to hold a *Buklog* by invoking the presence and guidance of the spirits. A preparatory ritual offering of rice, eggs and meat of chicken on a plate is placed in the *lamin* (loft) of the traditional house, which is believed to be the resting place of the spirits. Then the main ritual commences at the central portion of the house.

Traditional incense are burnt by the *balyan* as they recite the prayer and together with the sounding of the porcelain bowl they dance seven times around the main offering placed on top of the *binalay* or the offering altar.





Two recognized thimuay and balyan gathered sacred plants before officiating the community ritual

2. **SINULAMPONG.** During this ritual, the *balyan* asks permission from the spirits for the cutting of timber to be used in the construction of the *Buklog* platform. Likewise, it signifies the readiness of the community to perform the entire *Buklog* ritual system.



The conduct of the *Sinulampong* ritual is done in the middle of the night by the Subanen Balyan

3. **SANGAT**. The offering of coins by all the members of the community to two strong spirits, that of the *Gasal* and the *Gukuman*, in order to maintain the balance in the spirit world.



Two coins of the same denomination are offered in the *Sangat*.

4. **SADLAY**. The hanging of the clothes in the rattan strips tied in opposite posts, usually done by women, as an act of reverence to the *Gukuman* spirit



Community members partake in the offering of traditional dances while others give their respective ritual offerings.

5. **PHANMALWASAN.** Ritual offering inviting for the spirits of those who had passed away to partake in the festivity.



Ritual offering during the *Phanmalwasan*



Subanen women actively participating the *Phanmalwasan* ritual

B. Activities/rituals done outside the Subanen house

6. **KANU GULANGAN.** Sacred *giloy* (verses) are chanted prior to cutting of the trees. The species of forest products that are gathered include:

- Bayug tree to serve as the *dulugan* (mortar), also symbolizing the spirit of Apo Asog
- *Theleteb* tree carved as the pestle
- Strips of *beledjawa* or *baludjawa* (a variety of bamboo) used as flooring,
- *Lebalud* tree serving as the floor beams and joists
- *Bakan* tree for the post



A Subanen young man participating in the cutting of forest resources used in the sacred attendant ritual of the Buklog.



A young Balyan Thimuay Banggi, chanting the sacred Giloy in the middle of residual forest of a Subanen ancestral domain considered as their communal territory



Subanen men on their way to the forest to gather materials for the ritual.





The carrying of the sacred log from the forest to the ritual site to serve as the *Dulugan*.



The traditional Subanen house built in the ritual site.

7. **GAMPANG.** Believing that the spirits dwell in the rivers, the Subanen performs the *gampang* to appease both the benevolent and the malevolent spirits. One end of a long strip of rattan is tied to tree on one side of the river and the other end is tied to another tree on the other bank, thus setting a boundary for the bad spirits not to enter the *Buklog* area.





Two Subanen *balyan* co-officiating a *gampang* in a nearby creek

8. **GHELET**. This ritual is performed for the spirits of the land. Each end of the long strip of rattan are tied to a tree or a post, delineating the boundary for the bad spirits.



The ritual specialists officiating the *ghelet*

9 **GAPAL**. A trench is dug to accommodate the *dulugan*, a hollowed resonating log placed above the trench dug deeper to accommodate empty resonating jars or bamboos. The ritual and prayer offering are as follows:

- *Gakat*, the transfer of the *dulugan* to the dug-out trench;
- *Daga sa gayu*, the blood-letting ritual for the sacred *dulugan*, believed to represent Apo Asug;
- *Gapal*, the final offering ritual for the *dulugan* in reverence to Apo Asug



The *Gapal* is performed upon the setting up the *Dulugan* and the *Phetaw*.



10. **GATI-AN.** Before the *gati-an* ritual is performed, the *bata*d (governing laws of the *Buklog*) is announced and agreed upon. The *timuay* makes three knots in a long rattan strip, symbolizing the amount of fine to be imposed to those who defy the law of the *Buklog*. The rattan strip is strung across the platform on which clothing are suspended as decoration and to tell the gods that an important ceremony is being held. For the *balyan*, the *gati-an* ritual performed in the *Buklog* platform is the most dangerous. He goes up the platform to open the ritual by chanting of the *giloy*. This is followed by a small group of men and women walking around center post (or the *phathaw*) seven times. After performing the ritual, the *timuay* asks all who participated in the *Buklog* to go back to the house.



The community members listened attentively to the community rules verbalized by the *Thimuay* after the *Gati-an* ritual.

11. **GHEDURAN**. As the closing ritual where food offerings are placed in seven- or eight-tiered altars, signifying thanksgiving to the Dwata Magbabaya. Then the *balyan* announces that the *Buklog* festivity is finally open.



Inside the house, the Gheduran is performed as a culminating ritual of the Buklog thanksgiving ritual system.

12. **G'BAT**. Community trance dance.



Community trance dancing that last for several days where the participants are tightly holding hands as a metaphor of a united and harmonious community.

LEARNING SESSION 2

Revisiting the *Buklog* and its attendant rituals

Learning objective

The learners can:

- Specify the attendant rituals of the *Buklog* and articulate the symbols and meanings embedded in the *Buklog* ritual; and
- Deepen their understanding of the shared community cultural values as expounded by the symbols and meanings associated with the *Buklog*.

Suggested activities:

1. Lesson opener: Historical timeline

The learning facilitator posts on the board or on a large sheet of paper a succession of periods with five-year intervals. The learners are asked to take out their assignments and posts the title of the *Buklog* and the place where the celebration happened, under the posted dates or year-period. The facilitator requests the young learners to express what they think about the date posted.

2. Main activity: Generating ideas

The facilitator posts all the idea cards prepared prior to the learning session. Inscribed in each card are names of the attendant rituals. The young learners are asked to form small groups, pick two idea cards and discuss their responses on the following guide questions:

What is the ritual all about?
When is the ritual celebrated?
What is the reason for holding the ritual?

The young learners are given fifteen (15) to twenty (20) minutes to answer the guide questions.

Then, they post the idea cards back to the board and share their responses to the rest of the class. If ever there are idea cards left, the facilitator explains the ritual before summarizing the points raised during the group reporting.

3. Reinforcing activity : Interviewing in triad

Role-playing of the *Buklog* story chanted by the cultural master.

4. Summary, feedback and sounding-off

The learning facilitator moderates the feedback session and wraps-up the points raised.

5. Session ender: Complete the sentence

The learning facilitator distributes a set of two (2) idea cards for each young learner. Written in the cards are: “What I learned today”; and, “What I expect to learn tomorrow?” Each learner is asked to supply ideas to complete the sentence and give the completed cards back before the learners leave the room.

Class assignment

The learning facilitator asks all young learners to interview and request their parents to recall the last time they attended a *Buklog* celebration.

The list should include the following data: Date of the event, name of the *Buklog* celebration, place held and the name of the leader/*timuay* who helped organized it.



Sinulambi

Photo by Roel Hoang Manipon



A man places his offering during the *sangat*

Photo by Living Asia Channel

LEARNING SESSION 3

Agricultural rituals: A review

Learning objective

The learners can:

- Specify the attendant agricultural rituals and articulate their relations to the Buklog
- Deepen their understanding of the shared community cultural values as expounded by the symbols and meanings of the attendant agricultural rituals.

Suggested activities:

1. Lesson opener: Collective recall

The facilitator asks the young learners to recall their experience while they participated in the ground-breaking ritual of the site for their communal diversified garden. The important phases of the event shall be highlighted.

2. Main activity: Identifying agricultural rituals

Then the young learners are asked to revisit the farm maps that they had constructed in the previous lessons. The cognitive map shows the cropping patterns of the traditional farm. The young learners in their small groups shall discuss a particular related to the agricultural calendar:

- Group A: Site selection rituals
- Group B: Land preparation rituals
- Group C: Planting rituals
- Group D: Agricultural rituals during maintenance
- Group E: Harvesting rituals

When the young learners have signified to have shared substantial data, they shall share their data to the entire class.

3. Reinforcing activity

The facilitator distributes the group visualized calendar and asks the learners to draw the rituals discussed by them and the important highlights—activities, materials used, common beliefs, etc.

4. Summary, feedback and sounding-off

The facilitator moderates the feedback session on the lessons and wraps up the important points raised.

5. Session ender

The facilitator introduces a round song or chant on farming practices. While building the chanting game, he/she points at one young learner to verbalize the lesson learnt during the day. This is done in several rounds.

Class assignment

The facilitator introduces the concept of rites of passage and asks the young learners to inquire from their parents and relatives what activities they normally do to commemorate the different rites of passage.



Preparing the offering altar
Photo by Living Asia Channel

LEARNING SESSION 4 Rituals related to the Subanen rites of passage

Learning objective

The learners can:

- Specify the rituals performed in the households and articulate their relations with the Buklog ritual
- Deepen their understanding of the shared community cultural values as expounded by the symbols and meanings associated with the Buklog.

Suggested activities:

1. Lesson opener: Guessing game

The facilitator shows images of various rites of passage and asks the learners what the picture is saying. The collection of photos should not be less than fifteen (15) pieces.

2. Main activity: The image we choose

In small groups, the young learners get one picture and explain the traditional activities, events or celebration that the members of the Subanen community do or observe on a particular rite of passage as shown in the photo. All groups shall report to the class what they have discussed, and the facilitator summarizes the points highlighted in the group reports. A deeper discussion of the points raised shall also be included.

3. Reinforcing activity : Sing it and dance it

The facilitator reminds the class on the sets of songs/chants and dances that were introduced in the past sessions. Then, the learners are asked what songs and dances are most appropriate to perform during the rite of passage.

Enough time is allotted for the learners to practice and execute



the songs and dances or even compose new chants related to a specific rite of passage that they have focused on.

Two *balyan* place the ritual offerings for the *gampang* and *gilet*

Photo by Living Asia Channel

4. Summary, feedback and sounding-off

The facilitator convenes the class to a short sounding-off session and summarizes all the important points raised.

5. Session ender

The facilitator distributes sets of color-coded idea cards with letters written on it. The learners shall supply the missing letters to complete a word. Yellow cards are names of rituals while white cards are nouns or verbs. Then, they shall match the words in the yellow cards with those in the white cards. The first group to complete the tasks is rewarded. Below are examples:

Yellow cards:
G_M__G

White cards:
SA S__A

Matching words:
GAMPANG

SA SUBA



A *balyan* lights the *kamangyan* to let perfumed incense fill the air during the *gilet*

Photo by Living Asia Channel

LEARNING SESSION 5: Young learners' proposals for safeguarding the Buklog

Learning objective

The learners can:

- Specify the attendant rituals of the Buklog and articulate the symbols and meanings embedded in the Buklog ritual
- Deepen their understanding of the shared community cultural values as expounded by the symbols and meanings associated with the Buklog.

Suggested activities:

It is proposed that some members of the community attend this culminating session of the lesson, most especially the timuay, balyan and some parents of the young learners. It is also desirable if some government officials or representatives can grace the activity.

1. Lesson opener: Debate!

After the regular physical warm-up routines, the young learners are asked to form, in random, two straight lines with mixed gender. Then, the facilitator gives a short orientation of a the game, "Let's Debate"

Those in Line A shall take the position in the affirmative side while those in Line B shall assume the position of the negative side. The debate is done in pairs by the learners who are facing each other.

In this game, the facilitator provides the proposition. To enliven the game, debating pairs shall speak simultaneously or at the same time. The facilitator reminds the debaters that they are only given one minute to substantiate their positions and arguments.

The first proposition is announced:

"Subanen men, in general, are better the Subanen women."

The learning facilitator starts the countdown and commands the debaters to start verbalizing their arguments. After one minute, two pairs are asked to volunteer and replay their debate for everyone to listen to their arguments.

Then, the learners are told to change roles. Those in Line A shall take the negative position while those in Line B shall assume the affirmative position. The second proposition is announced:

"In this time of severe financial crisis, the Subanen should stop the practice of Buklog because it is no longer relevant".

The debaters are asked to start presenting their arguments, simultaneously. After a minute, two to three pairs are asked to perform their debate again, to give chance to all to listen carefully on what they would like to say.

2. Main activity: Proposed measures for safeguarding

The facilitator encourages the young learners to push the activity some more, not through a debate but on seeking consensus. Small groups are formed with five (5) to seven (7) members.

The facilitator throws the bigger question: *Do we need to continue the practice of holding a Buklog?*

Then the facilitator enumerates some of the leading constraints and challenges faced by the Subanen community: economic crisis, low farm productivity, climate extremities, organized religion, displacement of some communities due to armed conflict, digital age and influence from outside world, cellular phones and social media, among others.

The young learners are asked to discuss their consensus response to the question: *Should we continue celebrating the buklog? If yes, why, and if no, why not?*

Then, a follow-up question is posed: *What can the young generation do to help sustain the Buklog and safeguard the tradition?*

3. Reinforcing activities:

Sharing of the timuay, *balyan* and other invited guests to the proposals of the young learners.

4. Summary, feedback and sounding-off

The facilitator moderates the sharing session and gives a lesson summary and the agreed-upon actions to take to safeguard the *Buklog* as heritage.

5. Session ender

The facilitator extends appreciation to the guests who grace the learning session. Then, he/she calls the learners to present a brief showcase of their creative improvisations on traditional dances, songs, chants and instrumental music.

The elders officiating the *phanmalwasan*
Photo by Roel Hoang Manipon





Subanen elders who led the Buklog grand offering ritual system in Kumalarang, Zamboanga del Sur

Photo by Roel Hoang Manipon



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This learning guide focuses on education of the intangible cultural heritage of indigenous people, particularly, of the Subanen of Zamboanga del Sur.

The *Buklog* or *Gbeklug* is the biggest ritual and thanksgiving celebration of the Subanen that lasts for days, weeks and even months. It derives its name from the wooden structure holding the platform for dancing. The ritual is generally celebrated to propitiate the gods in specific events in which the entire Subanen community participates. The occasion may be a thanksgiving for a bountiful harvest, for healing, or for prestige for a new leader or a home comer. The *Buklog* is a body of rituals and ceremonies that marks the stages of life in Subanen society. The Subanen celebrate various types of *Buklog* that correspond to the different aspects of their life.

This publication aims to clarify the development framework of an Enhanced SLT program and its benefits to the local cultural community as well as help develop effective mechanisms for sustainability; elaborate the learning content, methodology and processes embraced by the SLT program; guide the SLT program implementers in the successful implementation of the planned learning activities; ensure the effective transmission of local knowledge and skills from the cultural masters to the young learners; and provide a guide for interested teachers in the formal basic education for integrating intangible cultural heritage as lesson content in the respective subjects they are teaching.