

# **Sustainable Research Data Collection for ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region**

## **PROJECT REPORT**

**FY 2019-2021**



**International Research Centre for Intangible  
Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region  
(IRCI)**

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## PREFACE

The International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI) was established in 2011 within the National Institutes for Cultural Heritage (NICH), Japan, as a Category 2 Centre under the auspices of UNESCO. Since its establishment, IRCI has been working extensively to enhance research for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in the Asia-Pacific region by implementing research projects in cooperation with research institutes, museums, NGOs, and government sections within and outside the region.

Since FY 2013, IRCI has been collecting research information related to ICH and its safeguarding through projects such as the Mapping Project and the Literature Survey. In the course of implementing these projects, it has become urgently necessary to establish a more comprehensive and systematic data collection mechanism with the help of institutional cooperation and the research network of the country. Against this background, the project ‘Sustainable Research Data Collection for ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region’ was launched in FY 2019. The aim of the project is to collect research information related to ICH in a sustainable manner and to effectively update the IRCI Research Database, thereby promoting research on ICH safeguarding. In this project, IRCI collaborated closely with research institutions in Asia, mainly in Southeast Asia, for the last three years.

It is our great pleasure that IRCI is able to present this project report summarising the three-year data collection activities and to share the lessons learned from the project together with the summary submitted by the three countries’ National Counterparts. From FY 2022, IRCI’s data collection will move on to the next step by changing its regional focus, and reviewing these three-year activities will surely help us further develop the project.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the National Counterparts and Collaborators who worked diligently to collect valuable research data. Thanks to their support, we were able to collect and add a substantial amount of information to the database during these three years. They also helped us understand the current ICH research situation in each country. We were always thankful for their invaluable inputs and suggestions with regards to the project.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the Agency for Cultural Affairs in Japan for their generous support for this project through the Intangible Cultural Heritage Partnership Program for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, programme

under the International Contribution Project for Cultural Heritage. Without its support, it would not have been possible to implement this project.

I hope this report and the collected research information available in the IRCI Research Database (<https://www.irci.jp/ichdb/>) will contribute to the promotion of ICH safeguarding and research for safeguarding ICH.

March 2022

IWAMOTO Wataru  
Director-General,  
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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>COVID-19</b>	Coronavirus Disease 2019
<b>FY</b>	Fiscal Year
<b>ICH</b>	Intangible Cultural Heritage
<b>IRCI</b>	International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region
<b>SIDS</b>	Small Island Developing States
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>VICAS</b>	Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies
<b>The 2003 Convention</b>	The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

A decorative blue line graphic that forms a large, irregular, rounded shape, resembling a speech bubble or a stylized frame. It starts at the top left, curves around the top, then down the right side, across the bottom, and back up the left side, with some overlapping and crossing lines.

# 1

## **Sustainable Research Data Collection for ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region: Project Summary**





# SUSTAINABLE RESEARCH DATA COLLECTION FOR ICH SAFEGUARDING IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION: PROJECT SUMMARY

International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage  
in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI)

## PROJECT BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The project 'Sustainable Research Data Collection for ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region' was launched in FY 2019 as one of the research projects under Activity Focus I: Promoting Research for ICH Safeguarding. In the project, the International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI) collected research information, such as articles, books, theses, and proceedings related to ICH and its safeguarding with the cooperation of research institutions in Asian countries. The collected research information has been added to the IRCI Research Database<sup>1</sup> that is accessible online.

### Development of the Data Collection Project

IRCI has been collecting research information in the field of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) through various projects. The first project focusing on the research data collection was called the Mapping Project<sup>2</sup>, started in FY 2013 and continued as Literature Survey until FY 2018. In this project, IRCI has identified information on researchers, research institutions, and research activities in the ICH field and 'mapped' such information scattered across the region. The Mapping Project was a collective term for three inter-related activities: International Experts Meeting, Literature Survey on ICH Safeguarding Research in Asia-Pacific Countries, and Research Data Collection on ICH Safeguarding in the Asia Pacific Region and Optimisation of Its Use (Figure 1).

In the International Experts Meeting, IRCI invited experts in the field of ICH, who conducted research data collection/literature survey, to analyse the collected research

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<sup>1</sup> IRCI Research Database: <https://www.irci.jp/ichdb/>

<sup>2</sup> Mapping Studies on the Safeguarding of ICH in the Asia-Pacific Region, implemented as the Activity Focus I.



**Figure 1: Structure of the Mapping Project**

information and to grasp the ICH research situation in the region. At the meetings, participants also discussed challenges found in the course of the Literature Survey project, as well as effective ways to collect research information. In the Literature Survey project, IRCI collected information from publications, such as books, journal articles, and reports, and also information on researchers, research institutions, and research activities related to ICH safeguarding, in cooperation with researchers in each country.

The Research Data Collection on ICH Safeguarding in the Asia Pacific Region and Optimisation of Its Use was related to the development and management of the IRCI Research Database. The database is one of the accomplishments of the Mapping Project. To constantly update the database, IRCI continuously collects research information by launching the current Sustainable Research Data Collection project.

In the Mapping Project, IRCI mainly cooperated with individual researchers, and the target information was, in principle, limited to research information on 'ICH safeguarding'. However, several challenges were identified during the course of the project. For example, it was revealed that, although many countries in the Asia-Pacific region had ratified the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (hereinafter referred to as 'the 2003 Convention'), a basic understanding of the definition of ICH has not been popularised thoroughly among research institutions and government officials in the region. Thus, the quality and focus of the information varied depending on researchers due to the differential understanding of the 2003 Convention and ICH safeguarding. There were also other issues such as limited information sharing among research institutions and a high risk of the loss of archived research materials due to poor storage conditions and limited access.

In assessing the data collection activity conducted between FY 2016 and FY 2018, IRCI gathered recommendations and suggestions from ICH experts. As mentioned above, because some challenges were found in cooperation with individual researchers, it was suggested, among others, to continue the literature survey under the new project by establishing partnerships with institutions.

### **Launch of the Sustainable Research Data Collection for ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region**

Against this background, IRCI launched the project ‘Sustainable Research Data Collection for ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region’ in FY 2019 to establish a new mechanism for data collection in cooperation with research institutions.

Since IRCI has found some issues in cooperating with individual researchers in the Mapping Project, such as inconsistent data quality or interruption of data collection due to personnel change, it has established partnerships with research institutions, including universities, museums, and NGOs. The expected advantages of inter-institutional cooperation are as follows:

- 1) Project continuity: Even if the person in charge of the project is changed, the project can be continued with another applied person, ensuring the sustainability of the data collection.
- 2) Accumulated research information: Many research institutions have already accumulated research information, including their publications, which facilitates data collection.
- 3) Effective promotion of ICH research and its safeguarding: By establishing a data collection network at the institutional level, information sharing would be more effective, and research will be promoted. For instance, cooperation with universities allows young researchers, including students, to learn about the current state of ICH research, instigating their own research.

The purpose of the project is not only to collect research information and make it available on the IRCI Research Database but also to enhance research on ICH among research institutions. In the project, collaborating research institutions were expected to build a network among institutions within the country while conducting data collection over multiple years to effectively and sustainably collect information. This also

allows them to share the latest research related to ICH and encourages further research on ICH. Workshops and meetings inviting researchers, including students and young researchers, were held multiple times during the course of the project.

## DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

### Selecting Cooperating Institutions (National Counterparts)

The data collection process started with selecting cooperating institutions in the Asia-Pacific region, which functioned as a focal point and hub for collecting research information in each country. These cooperating institutions are called ‘National Counterparts’ and are chosen from among those who have comprehensive research experiences related to ICH in their own countries. In the selection process, priorities were given to research institutions with which IRCI had already cooperated in past projects, while other organisations were considered in the hope of building a new relationship.

### Phases of Data Collection

Data collection was conducted in three phases, and the major activities in each phase are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Major activities by phase**

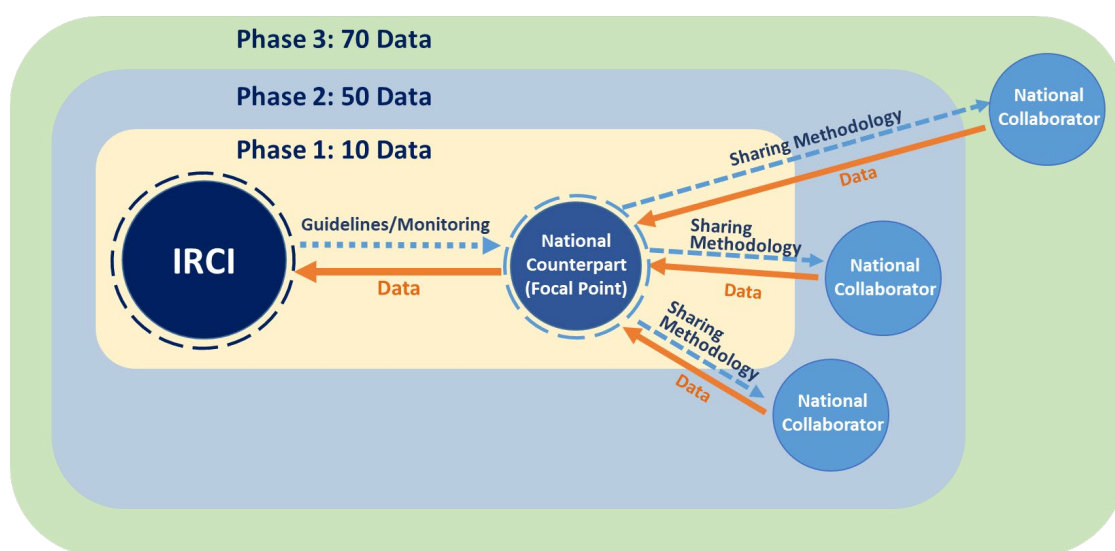
Phase	Major Activities
Phase 1	- Collect 10 research information by their institution.
Phase 2	- Identify 2 cooperating research institutions in their country, and establish a data collection network. - Collect 50 research data in total (National Counterpart: 10, each National Collaborator: 20).
Phase 3	- Add at least one cooperating institution in the existing data collection network. - Collect at least 70 research data in total (National Counterpart: 10, each National Collaborator: 20).

Phase 1 is regarded as a ‘pilot phase’ of data collection, and in this phase, National Counterparts are expected to collect 10 pieces of research information by themselves.

In Phase 2, National Counterparts were asked to find two research institutions in their country to cooperate with and establish their own data collection network (Figure 2). The purpose of doing this is not just to collect research information systematically but also to enhance information sharing in ICH research among institutions within the country. It was expected that information sharing among research institutions would widen the focus of research, thereby contributing to the country’s ICH safeguarding through academic activities and the promotion of the 2003 Convention. The cooperating institutions of the National Counterparts are called ‘National Collaborators’.

National Counterparts are responsible for coordinating and corresponding with each National Collaborator for all activities related to the project. They are also responsible for reviewing the information gathered by the National Collaborators before submitting the data to IRCI to ensure the integrity and quality of the collected data.

The amount of information to be collected by National Counterparts is 10 items, as in Phase 1. The amount of data to be collected by National Collaborators is 20 items each; therefore, 40 items were collected from the National Collaborators. Accordingly, the total amount of research information collected in each country was 50 items.



**Figure 2: Data collection mechanism during FY 2019–2021**

Phase 3 is the last phase of the project, and the National Counterparts are expected to expand their data collection network by adding at least one new National Collaborator. The amount of data to be collected is the same: 10 items from the National Counterpart and 20 items per National Collaborator. In this phase, 70 research data points were expected to be collected.

### **Uploading Collected Data to the IRCI Research Database**

After receiving research information from each National Counterpart, IRCI reviewed the data entry sheet to examine whether all necessary information was provided properly and correctly. For example, if research information is accessible online, it is crucial to check if the given URL is valid. In addition, typing and grammatical errors in English abstracts were reviewed and corrected.

After the review and corrections, all data were uploaded to the IRCI Research Database.

### **Criteria for Data Collection**

The National Counterparts were expected to collect research information, such as journal articles, books, and theses, which are related to ICH and its safeguarding. If there were publications from their own institution that matched the project's scope, IRCI asked the National Counterparts to collect them on a priority basis.

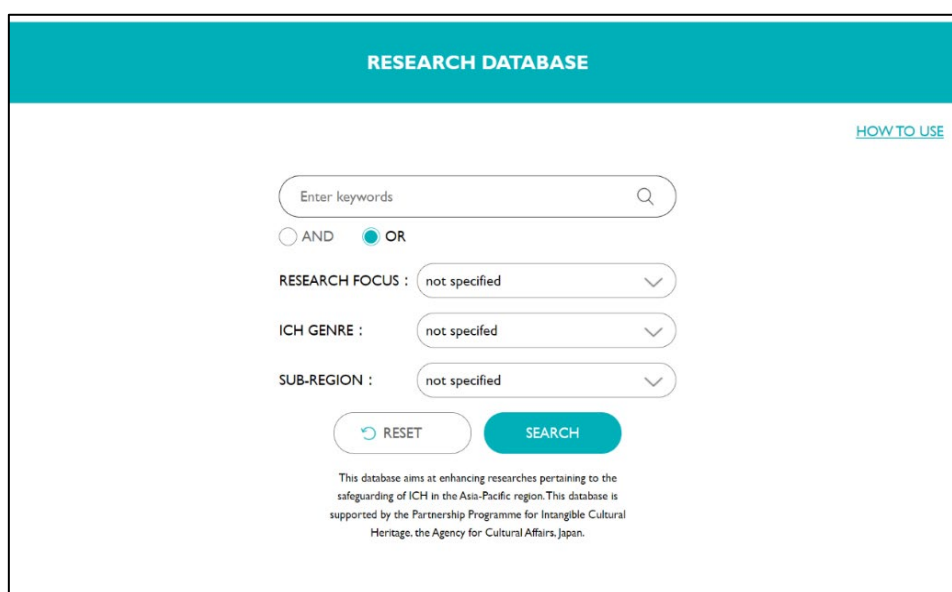
Data collection was conducted according to the guidelines developed by IRCI. In these guidelines, the variety of research information to be focused on and the data collection procedures were specified. In addition to the guidelines, IRCI has developed data entry sheets in Excel format, in which the National Counterparts were expected to fill in the necessary information, such as basic bibliographic information including article title, author name, and publisher name, as well as additional specific information for the purpose of the IRCI Research Database (e.g. ICH genres, research focuses, and abstracts in English; Table 2).

ICH genres, research focuses, and English abstracts are important information for understanding the value of materials in terms of research on ICH safeguarding. In the IRCI Research Database, ICH genres and research focuses are currently used as search options, which enables the user to find specific research information (Figure 3). In addition, the words used in the English abstracts were searched in the keyword box.

**Table 2: Information collected in the project**

<b>Basic Information</b>
Title in the original language
Title in English
Journal or book title in the original language
Journal or book title in English
Publication format
Keywords
Pages
Written language
Author's name(s) in original language and English, as well as author's affiliation
Year of publication
Publisher
Place of publication
ISBN/ISSN/e-ISSN/DOI (if available)
Publication category
Peer-review (done or not)
URL link to the article/essay (if available)
<b>Research Focus</b>
Name(s) of ICH element(s) concerned in the study
Academic field of study
ICH genre(s) oral tradition; performing arts; social practices; rituals; festive events; ecological knowledge and practices; worldview; traditional craftsmanship; sports/games; food culture; traditional medicine; ICH in general; others.
Region/community/ethnic group/any other group of people/individuals discussed in the study
Research focus(es) identification; policy-making; documentation; promotion; transmission; revitalisation; training; definition; education; awareness-raising; capacity building; intangible-tangible interface; heritage management; disaster prevention; others
<b>Abstract in English</b>
Summary/Abstract for each article (*less than 500 words)

English abstracts are the most important information to be given in the data entry sheet. In the former Mapping Project, it was found that there were still a number of research information written in various languages in the Asia-Pacific region. However, research materials written in a non-English language is hard to find for the researchers who are not familiar with the language, even though they have a significant research value and potential to contribute to ICH safeguarding. To overcome this situation, IRCI Research Database has been providing English abstracts with the aim of enabling such research information to see the light of day.



**Figure 3: Search options of the IRCI Research Database**

The usefulness and effectiveness of both the guidelines and the data entry sheet were reviewed at the end of every fiscal year, reflecting the inputs of the project participants. Minor revisions were made without changing the basic direction of the data collection project.

In addition to collecting research information, National Counterparts were asked to gain permission from the authors or the person/institution who had the right to the publication. This was an important process in this project.

## ACTIVITIES IN THE PROJECT

### FY 2019

Within FY 2019, IRCI undertook activities as summarised in Table 3.

**Table 3: Major activities in FY 2019**

Date	Activities
April 2019	Identify target countries and potential partners.
26–27 June 2019	The First Working Group Meeting (in Tokyo).
August 2019	Translate the Guide for National Counterparts in local languages.
1 October 2019	Submission of the research data and summary report.
4–5 February 2020	The Second Working Group Meeting (in Tokyo).



## **Project Planning**

The activities in FY 2019 began with the identification of the target countries and potential partners. Consequently, seven organisations in six countries (i.e. Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, the Philippines, and Viet Nam) were selected as project partners or National Counterparts to lead data collection activities in each country. To explain the project and discuss possible cooperation with these institutions, IRCI organised the First Working Group Meeting in June 2019.

### **The First Working Group Meeting**

Venue: Tokyo National Museum

Date: 26–27 June 2019

Participants: Potential cooperative institutions from Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, the Philippines, and Viet Nam

Inviting researchers/experts from potential cooperating institutions, the First Working Group Meeting was held on 26–27 June 2019 in Tokyo to discuss the new data collection scheme and cooperating mechanism. Accordingly, six research institutions from Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, the Philippines, and Viet Nam agreed to establish a partnership with IRCI and collaborate in data collection. The Guide for National Counterparts was also developed at the meeting, which was translated into seven languages (i.e. Burmese, Javanese, Malay, Russian, Thai, Tagalog, and Vietnamese) with the aim of better understanding the instructions.

### **Data Collection**

Duration: July 2019–October 2019

IRCI was able to conduct data collection in five countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam. Regarding research institutions in the Philippines, data collection in this fiscal year became difficult because of schedule conflicts. In Myanmar, the process of concluding an agreement with an institution with which IRCI originally sought to establish cooperative relationships did not proceed smoothly. However, a repository of Yangon University was connected to the IRCI Research Database in course of the project 'Research Data Collection on ICH Safeguarding in the Asia Pacific Region and Optimisation of its Use'. In this process, research information was submitted and uploaded to the IRCI Research Database.

After beginning data collection, IRCI closely monitored their activities, including organising a follow-up meeting and regularly checking up for updates to assess the progress of data collection. Finally, 52 research information items were collected and submitted on 1 October 2019 (Table 4).

### The Second Working Group Meeting

Venue: Tokyo National Museum

Date: 4–5 February 2020

Participants: National Counterparts

After the submission of the collected data, IRCI organised the Second Working Group Meeting. The purpose of these meetings was twofold. First, the meeting allowed participants to share the results of the data collection and analyse the findings in detail. Second, the meeting provided the participants and IRCI an opportunity to evaluate the activities carried out in the first year (Phase 1) and discuss possible measures for improvements. This includes the revision of the Guide for National Counterparts and the idea of organising National Workshops for some countries in the process of data collection. In addition to the researchers who participated in the data collection in FY 2019, three research institutions in India and Bangladesh were invited to join the meeting as observers and potential collaborators in the next fiscal year and shared the current status of ICH research in each country.

**Table 4: List of National Counterparts and the number of submitted data in FY 2019**

Country	National Counterpart	Submitted Data
Indonesia	Faculty of Cultural Science, Department of Archaeology, Gadjah Mada University (UGM) [Ms Mahirta]	10
Malaysia	University of Malaya (UM) [Mr Hanafi Hussin]	12
Myanmar	University of Yangon	10
Thailand	Thammasat Museum of Anthropology, Thammasat University [Mr Tiamsoon Sirisrisak]	10
Viet Nam	Vietnam National Institute for Culture and Arts Studies (VICAS) [Mr Bui Hoai Son]	10
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>52</b>

## Feedback on the Activities in FY 2019 from the Collaborators

At the meetings and through a questionnaire survey, IRCI solicited feedback on the project from the participants, and some challenges were identified.

Although the challenges involving different understandings of ICH and its safeguarding were addressed during the First Working Group Meeting, a concern remained that the importance of research as a safeguarding measure was not sufficiently recognised compared to more obvious measures, such as inventory making. Some data collection results showed a significant emphasis on inventory making because of the country's strong political agenda to inscribe more elements to the representative list of the 2003 Convention.

Other concerns, such as a lack of interest in ICH research among the academic community, low motivation, and the limited number of young researchers, were also raised. In addition, conditions related to copyright and censorship in some countries have hindered or slowed the data collection process and affected the selection of data to be collected.

After reviewing the data submitted at the meeting, all 52 pieces of research data were added to the IRCI Research Database and made publicly available in March 2020.

## FY 2020

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Within FY 2020, IRCI undertook activities as summarised in Table 5.

**Table 5: Major activities in FY 2020**

Date	Activities
March 2020–April 2020	Identify new target countries and potential partners.
May 2020	Revise the Guide for National Counterparts.
June 2020	Web meetings with National Counterparts for project orientation.
27–28 July 2020	National Workshop in Indonesia.
4 August 2020	National Workshop in Malaysia.
1 October 2020	Submission of the research data and summary report.
9 February 2021	The Third Working Group Meeting.

## **Planning**

In FY 2020, four National Counterparts in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Viet Nam agreed to continue collecting the research data in Phase 2. However, in finding new cooperating research institutions, IRCI faced difficulties due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, which began to spread in December 2019.

Prior to the beginning of FY 2020, IRCI contacted three research institutions in Bangladesh, one each in India, Pakistan, and Myanmar, with which IRCI cooperated in a database-related project, to ask their interest in participating in the project. Consequently, two research institutions in Bangladesh, one research institution in India and Myanmar expressed their interest. However, the rapid global spread of COVID-19 compelled IRCI to observe the situation first, and the discussion and communication on cooperation did not progress significantly. To overcome this situation, IRCI contacted research institutions in countries that were less affected by the pandemic. Consequently, the University of the Philippines-Diliman expressed interest in joining the project and agreed to conduct data collection in the Philippines.

Finally, data collection in FY 2020 was conducted in five countries in Southeast Asia: Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Viet Nam as Phase 2 and the Philippines as Phase 1. However, due to the impact of COVID-19, coordination with National Counterparts in a timely manner was difficult, and delays or changes in programmed activities were inevitable.

## **Data Collection**

Duration: June 2020–October 2020

The National Counterparts in Phase 2 were expected to establish a data collection network by cooperating with two research institutions in their country. However, due to the regulations caused by the pandemic, many universities were closed, and coordination with cooperating universities was difficult for the National Counterparts. Despite such difficulties, three National Counterparts, excluding Thailand, were able to find their cooperating institutions and establish a data collection network.

The research data collected in FY 2020 totalled 170, and they were uploaded to the IRCI Research Database in March 2021 (Table 6).

**Table 6: List of National Counterparts/National Collaborators and the number of the submitted data in FY 2020**

Country	Phase	National Counterpart & National Collaborators	Submitted Data
Indonesia	2	Faculty of Cultural Science, Department of Archaeology, Gadjah Mada University (UGM) [Ms Mahirta]	10
		Hasanuddin University	20
		Balai Pelestrani Nilai Budaya (BPNB) * Office of Cultural Value Preservation in Yogyakarta	20
Malaysia	2	The University of Malaya (UM) [Mr Hanafi Hussin]	20
		University Malaya Sarawak (UNIMAS)	10
		University Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)	10
Viet Nam	2	Vietnam National Institute for Culture and Arts Studies (VICAS) [Mr Bui Hoai Son]	10
		Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences	20
		Vietnam National University	20
Thailand	2	Thammasat Museum of Anthropology, Thammasat University [Mr Tiamsoon Sirisrisak]	20
The Philippines	1	Folklore Studies Program and the Department of Anthropology of the College of Social and Philosophy, University of the Philippines-Diliman (UP) [Mr Carlos P. Tatel, Jr.]	10
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>170</b>

### National Workshop

As recommended in the Second Working Group Meeting in FY 2019, National Workshops were held in Indonesia in July and Malaysia in August 2020. Considering the COVID-19 pandemic situation, these workshops were held in a hybrid style; local participants attended the meetings in place and IRCI joined them online. The details of the workshop are as follows:

### Workshop in Indonesia

Venue: Gadjah Mada University (online/in-person hybrid)

Date: 27–28 July 2020

Participants: National Counterpart, National Collaborators, researchers from selected Indonesian research institutions, young researchers, students, and IRCI

Purpose:

- Introducing the ‘Sustainable Research Data Collection’ project and the IRCI Research Database to participants
- Sharing information on current ICH research in Indonesia, thereby raising awareness of the importance of ICH study and ICH safeguarding

Content:

- Introduction of the data collection methodology by Gadjah Mada University
- Presentations by National Collaborators and Indonesian researchers on the latest ICH research in Indonesia
- Discussion on the challenges in ICH research

### Workshop in Malaysia

Venue: University of Malaya (online/in-person hybrid)

Date: 4 August 2020

Participants: National Counterpart, National Collaborators, young researchers including students, and IRCI

Purpose:

- Introducing the ‘Sustainable Research Data Collection’ project and the IRCI Research Database to participants
- Sharing information on current ICH research in Malaysia, thereby raising awareness of the importance of ICH study and ICH safeguarding

Content:

- Presentations by National Collaborators on the latest research projects they were carrying out
- Presentations by young researchers on their experiences in ICH research
- Discussion on ICH research and its safeguarding

## **The Third Working Group Meeting**

Venue: Tokyo National Museum

Date: 4–5 February 2020

Participants: National Counterparts and National Collaborators

After the submission of the research data from the National Counterparts, the Third Working Group Meeting was organised by IRCI as a summary of the data collection activity conducted in FY 2020. The purpose of the meeting was to share the outcomes, review the collected data, and discuss the challenges found in the course of the data collection, as well as the activity plan for the next fiscal year. The meeting was held online on 9 February 2021 and attended not only by National Counterparts but also by National Collaborators, as well as potential cooperating institutions from Bangladesh and India for the next fiscal year.

At the meeting, each National Counterpart analysed the data collected in their country and presented the results. Mr Hanafi Hussin from the University of Malaya also conducted an overall analysis of the data collected in FY 2020 and reported the results at the meeting as well.

In addition, one research institution in India and two in Bangladesh presented the current status of ICH research in their country by referring to their publications.

## **Feedback on the Activities in FY 2020 from the Collaborators**

Similar to the previous year, at the meeting and through the questionnaire, IRCI gathered feedback from project participants. The challenges identified in this fiscal year are as follows.

The challenges in FY 2020 were mainly related to the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, since universities and libraries were closed in many countries due to the emergency regulations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, access to research information was difficult, leading to a delay in data collection.

In addition, the process of obtaining permission from the authors to release their publication information in the IRCI Research Database took a relatively long time in some countries.

## FY 2021

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Within FY 2021, IRCI undertook activities as summarised in Table 7.

**Table 7: Major activities in FY 2021**

Date	Activities
March 2021–June 2021	Identify new target countries and potential partners.
May 2021	Revise the Guide for National Counterparts.
25 November 2021	National Workshop in the Kyrgyz Republic.
29 November 2021	National Workshop in Malaysia.
30 November 2021	National Workshop in Viet Nam.
1 December 2021	Submission of research data.
20 December 2021	Submission of the summary report (Phases 1 and 2)/ final report (Phase 3).
21 January 2022	Regional Workshop.

### Planning

In FY 2021, four National Counterparts from Indonesia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, and the Philippines agreed to continue the project. Concerning the National Counterpart in Thailand, the continuation of the project was difficult due to personnel changes. However, they proposed other possible cooperating institutions in Thailand. Consequently, Srinakharinwirot University took over the project from Thammasat University and conducted data collection in Phase 2.

Concerning the new countries participating in the project, IRCI was initially in communication with research institutions in India and Bangladesh. However, organisations in both countries were severely affected by COVID-19, and it became unlikely for them to participate in the project. Meanwhile, IRCI looked for institutions in other countries that would be capable of undertaking the project activity within this fiscal year, considering each country's COVID-19 situation. Finally, the Aigine Cultural Research Center (Aigine CRC) in the Kyrgyz Republic had an interest in the project and joined it as a National Counterpart.

Accordingly, six National Counterparts in Indonesia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, Thailand, the Philippines, and the Kyrgyz Republic collected data in FY 2021.



## **Data Collection**

Duration: June 2021–December 2021

In Phase 3, National Counterparts were expected to expand their data collection networks by adding at least one National Collaborator. Despite the severe pandemic situation in the region, the National Counterparts of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Viet Nam found a new cooperating institution. Meanwhile, the National Counterparts in Thailand and the Philippines found two cooperating institutions as they started Phase 2. The National Counterpart in the Kyrgyz Republic collected 10 pieces of research information on their own as Phase 1 country; however, they also identified their potential National Collaborators for the coming phase to facilitate the next step of data collection.

The research data collected in FY 2021 totalled 320, and after the examination in IRCI, the collected data were uploaded to the IRCI Research Database in March 2022 (Table 8).

## **National Workshop**

In FY 2021, National Workshops were held in Malaysia, Viet Nam, and the Kyrgyz Republic, all in November 2021. Similar to FY 2020, the workshops were held in a hybrid style considering the COVID-19 pandemic.

The purpose of the workshops in Malaysia and Viet Nam in this fiscal year was mainly to share information on the latest ICH research, similar to FY 2020. However, since the National Counterparts in these countries were in Phase 3, the final phase of data collection, a summary of 3-year activities was also shared at the workshop. In contrast, in the Kyrgyz Republic, the National Workshop was served for pre-coordination between the National Counterpart and the potential National Collaborators and training for collecting research data. The details of the workshop are as follows:

**Table 8: List of National Counterparts/National Collaborators and the number of the submitted data in FY 2021**

Country	Phase	National Counterpart & National Collaborators	Submitted Data
Indonesia	3	Faculty of Cultural Science, Department of Archaeology, Gadjah Mada University (UGM) [Ms Mahirta]	10
		Hasanuddin Universtiy	20
		Balai Pelestrani Nilai Budaya (BPNB)	20
		Jambi University	20
Malaysia	3	University of Malaya (UM) [Mr Hanafi Hussin]	10
		University Malaya Sarawak (UNIMAS)	20
		University Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)	20
		University of Malaysia, Kelantan (UMK)	20
Viet Nam	3	Vietnam National Institute for Culture and Arts Studies (VICAS) [Ms Vu Dieu Trung and Ms Pham Lan Oanh]	10
		Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences	20
		Hanoi University of Culture	20
		Association of Vietnamese Folklorists	20
The Philippines	2	College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines-Diliman (UP) [Mr Carlos P. Tatel, Jr.]	10
		Folklore Studies Program, University of the Philippines	20
		Aliguyon-UP Folklorists	20
Thailand	2	Faculty of Fine Arts, Srinakharinwirot University (SWU) [Mr Kasidesh Nerngchamng]	10
		Mahidol University	20
		Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University	20
The Kyrgyz Republic	1	Aigine Cultural Research Center (Aigine CRC) [Ms Aiza Abdirahmanova]	10
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>320</b>

### National Workshop in the Kyrgyz Republic

Venue: Aigine Cultural Research Center (online/in-person hybrid)

Date: 25 November 2021

Participants: National Counterpart and their potential National Collaborators for FY 2022, and IRCI

Purpose:

- Training and exercise concerning data collection for potential National Collaborators to carry out intensive research data collection activities in FY 2022

Content:

- Introducing the IRCI's research activities, including the 'Sustainable Research Data Collection' project and the IRCI Research Database
- Explaining the responsibilities and expectations for the National Collaborators by the Aigine Cultural Research Center
- Practical exercise: review and analyse examples of papers; drafting annotations and their analysis
- Discussion on prospective cooperation between the Aigine Cultural Research Center and potential National Collaborators

### National Workshop in Malaysia

Venue: University of Malaya (online/in-person hybrid)

Date: 29 November 2021

Participants: National Counterpart, National Collaborators, young researchers including students, and IRCI

Purpose:

- Information sharing on the current ICH research in Malaysia
- Awareness-raising of the importance of the ICH safeguarding and research for young researchers

Content:

- Introducing IRCI's research activities, including the 'Sustainable Research Data Collection' project and the IRCI Research Database
- Presentations on awareness of ICH and its safeguarding, as well as the need for data collection by National Collaborators
- Presentation on their experiences in ICH research by young researchers
- In-depth discussion of the gathered research information in FY 2021 among National Counterparts and National Collaborators

## National Workshop in Viet Nam

Venue: Vietnam National Institute for Culture and Arts Studies (VICAS) (online/in-person hybrid)

Date: 30 November 2021

Participants: National Counterpart, National Collaborators, Vietnamese researchers, and IRCI

Purpose:

- Information sharing on the current ICH research in Viet Nam among Vietnamese researchers

Content:

- Introducing IRCI's research activities, including the 'Sustainable Research Data Collection' project
- Reporting the summary of data collection activity in FY 2019–2021 by VICAS
- Presentations on the latest ICH research in Viet Nam by Vietnamese researchers

## **Regional Workshop**

Venue: online

Date: 21 January 2022

Participants: National Counterparts, National Collaborators, and IRCI

The Regional Workshop was held on 21 January 2022 as a summary of the 3-year data collection. The purpose of this meeting was to share the outcomes of data collection activities, discuss possible ways to utilise the collected data for ICH safeguarding, and enhance further research activities involving inter-institutional cooperation. Since the current project that has been implemented for 3 years was to be completed in March 2022, the intention of the workshop was to summarise and review the experiences in data collection activities by the National Counterparts in those 3 years to further develop a sustainable mechanism of research data collection.

It was expected that the current challenges in data collection, as well as possible solutions, would be recognised through discussion. In addition, issues are related to the future of research data collection, such as how to ensure the sustainability of research data collection after completing the 3-year collaboration with IRCI and how the IRCI Research Database as a repository of research information could be further optimised to support research activities in the Asia-Pacific region.

The summary of the Regional Workshop is provided in the next section.

## Regional Workshop (21 January 2022)

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### The Workshop Structure

The workshop was divided into two sessions: presentation and discussion. In Session 1, the national counterparts presented the outcomes of research data collection activities, focusing on the following points:

- What kind of information was not gathered? (e.g. research focus, academic fields, ICH genres, and methodological approaches)
- Do the results reflect the trend of ICH research in your country?
- What are the challenges and findings during the data collection?

While the National Counterparts in Phases 1 and 2 gave a presentation concerning data collection in FY 2021, the National Counterparts in Phase 3 presented a summary of the 3-year data collection activities.

For a detailed report summarising the data collection activities in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Viet Nam that has completed the 3-year data collection, please see Chapter 2 (Data Collection Summary by National Counterparts) of this volume.

### Summary of the Discussion

After the presentation session, IRCI facilitated a discussion session. Participants discussed diverse topics related to data collection activities and ICH research, focusing on the following points:

1. Review of the current data collection mechanism
2. Benefits of collecting research information on ICH safeguarding for each stakeholder
3. Utilisation of the collected research information
4. Recommendations for further project development, including the management of the IRCI Research Database

The following sections are the summary of the inputs gathered from the participants.

### Introductory discussion of the current state of research on ICH and its safeguarding in each country

Before starting the discussion on the above topics, IRCI asked participants about the current situation of ICH research, particularly how the safeguarding of ICH has been addressed.

Current research trends in the ICH field in participating countries are explained as follows:

- Currently, the government in Malaysia is encouraging documentation of ICH by providing grants as part of the promotion of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set forth by UNESCO. Publication in this regard may increase from the next year.
- Research papers written by non-academic researchers have been published in the Kyrgyz Republic. This kind of information is also important for safeguarding against ICH. Another research trend in the Kyrgyz Republic is research on ethnic minorities.

In addition, some issues regarding current ICH research were mentioned by the participants. For example, one participant mentioned an issue related to language. Currently, language tends to be treated as a sub-category of 'Literature' or 'Oral Traditions'. However, language itself should be considered a research category.

Another issue raised in the discussion is the interface between tangible and intangible cultural heritage. One participant commented that, because these two heritages are liked closely, the division between tangible and intangible is untenable and should be questioned.

As a possibility in ICH research in the future, the importance of documentation for younger generations was mentioned by a participant.

### Review of the current data collection mechanism

To assess the effectiveness and usefulness of the current data collection mechanism, IRCI asked participants if any points could be improved in the future. Consequently, IRCI has received relatively positive responses that the current data-collection mechanism is effective. Some points noted by the participants were as follows:

- We can choose multiple ICH genres and research focuses on one research datum, and I find this reasonable.
- Collected research information is not limited to academic papers, and this makes local researchers not left behind.

Suggestions to the current categorisation of ICH genres were as follows:

- ICH genres designated for the project should be reviewed. For example, the worldview may be the same as that of a ritual. Therefore, we need to develop proper guidelines for ICH genres.
- Regarding ICH genres, performances such as music, there are multiple targets. Multiple tagging can be performed for overlapping genres. An epic, for example, is a performance, an oral tradition; if written, it is also literature.

An opinion related to the COVID-19 pandemic was also raised:

- The data mechanism is adequate. However, the current problem with the pandemic is mobility and access to resources, especially because many materials have not been digitalised.

#### *Benefits of collecting research information on ICH safeguarding for each stakeholder*

In this question, IRCI asked the participants if the project actually benefited them, and if so, in what ways. In the discussion, IRCI received diverse answers as follows:

- The collected data helped disseminate the research works (since they were published in the IRCI Research Database).
- The project is a win-win situation for participants and stakeholders. Communities that store and protect heritage can be learnt from researchers. Policymakers can learn about the current situation (by understanding the current situation of ICH studies), and the government can help the private sector from a financial perspective.
- I think hearing what everyone is doing is inspiring. I certainly gained new ideas on how to do things and new ways of looking at them. Workshops similar to this are important because, sometimes when you are working alone, you do not realise that there are other ways of doing things and other points of view.
- These data are also a rich source for researchers and a jumping-off point for future research. This tells us what has been studied and directs us of where and how to move the study forward. It also informs us which studies we need

to return to communities. With this database, we will also learn what has not yet been done.

- Our benefit lies in a better understanding of the current situation in the academic field. In addition, strong bridge-making occurs in different fields.

#### Utilisation of the collected research information

IRCI also asked how the collected data could be utilised and for what purpose the IRCI Research Database can be used.

- Academic data are shared widely to examine the current gap and for future research; therefore, sharing information on academic papers is very useful.
- The database can be utilised by different stakeholders to enhance basic knowledge and to determine what ICH belongs to what country, for example, from both academic and non-academic perspectives.
- Open access database is a good source for the public.
- This also opens up the possibility of more collaborative research. If, for example, I see someone in the database who conducted a study on a topic, I can access their work and contact them for possible collaborations.
- The collected research information can be used for educational purposes, such as raising awareness among communities.
- Data collection can play a role in bringing back outcomes to the community and briefing policymakers on how to help ICH.

#### Recommendations for further project development, including management of the IRCI Research Database

At the end of the workshop, IRCI gathered recommendations to further elaborate on the data collection activities in the future and received the following suggestions:

- It will be important to have regular meetings, conversations, symposia, and conferences because new papers, studies, interests, and strategies will be produced, which can eventually be added to the database.
- We recommend being more flexible with data entry sheets and collected data; for example, collecting audio-visual materials would be good.



- We hope for additional international sharing, not just with countries currently participating in the project.
- Research data such as films should also be target materials to be collected.
- In terms of museology, free access to research data should be ensured.

In the course of the discussion, collecting audio-visual materials was suggested. It was also noted that audio-visual materials are sometimes made for promotional purposes, which tend to be over-exaggerated or over-edited, rather than providing in-depth recordings of ICH. In response to this, one possible criterion proposed was that the audio-visual materials to be collected for the purpose of the IRCI Research Database should be those obtained in a research context or as part of research. Such materials should include information such as the producer, shooting period/location, purpose, and background. This is one point that should be considered in the future.

In this topic, IRCI also asked the National Counterparts in Phase 3 if they would continue data collection on their own because it was one of the project intentions that each research institution would continue data collection autonomously even after their project termination. Consequently, IRCI received positive answers indicating that they would continue data collection. One participant expressed his motivation for the next few years to create a repository of ICH data, including non-academic data in his country. Another participant mentioned that her institution was planning to encourage national and international data collection and information sharing and attempt to bring out the collected data.

#### *Other inputs on ICH research in general*

During the discussion, opinions on current ICH research, in general, were also gathered.

- A bottom-up approach is necessary. Local communities are fighting for ICH safeguarding in various ways.
- We need to encourage the combination of knowledge and practices of ICH safeguarding, as well as performance.
- Before collecting materials, the areas that need to be prioritised should be considered through the documentation of ICH.



## OVERALL DATA ANALYSIS

As a summary of the 3 years of research data collection, information collected by the National Counterparts was analysed. The purpose of the analysis is to grasp the trends of the collected data, for example, which research area is more or less covered and which areas should be further researched.

The analysis covers 542 pieces of research information collected in seven countries, namely, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Philippines, and Viet Nam between FY 2019 and FY 2021.

The number of the collected data by country is shown in Table 9.

The analysed categories were ICH genre, research focus, language, publication category, and publication year.

**Table 9: List of the participating countries and the number of the collected research information**

Country	Total	Period
Indonesia	130	FY 2019–2021
Viet Nam	130	FY 2019–2021
Malaysia	122	FY 2019–2021
Thailand	80	FY 2019–2021
The Philippines	60	FY 2020–2021
Myanmar	10	FY 2019
The Kyrgyz Republic	10	FY 2021

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### ICH Genre

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#### Result

##### **Most collected:**

1. Performing arts
2. Social practices
3. Rituals

##### **Least collected:**

1. Sports/Games
2. Food culture
3. Traditional medicine

## Data Description

In the 2003 Convention, five ICH domains were defined as follows: oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of intangible cultural heritage, performing arts, social practices, rituals, and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and traditional craftsmanship.

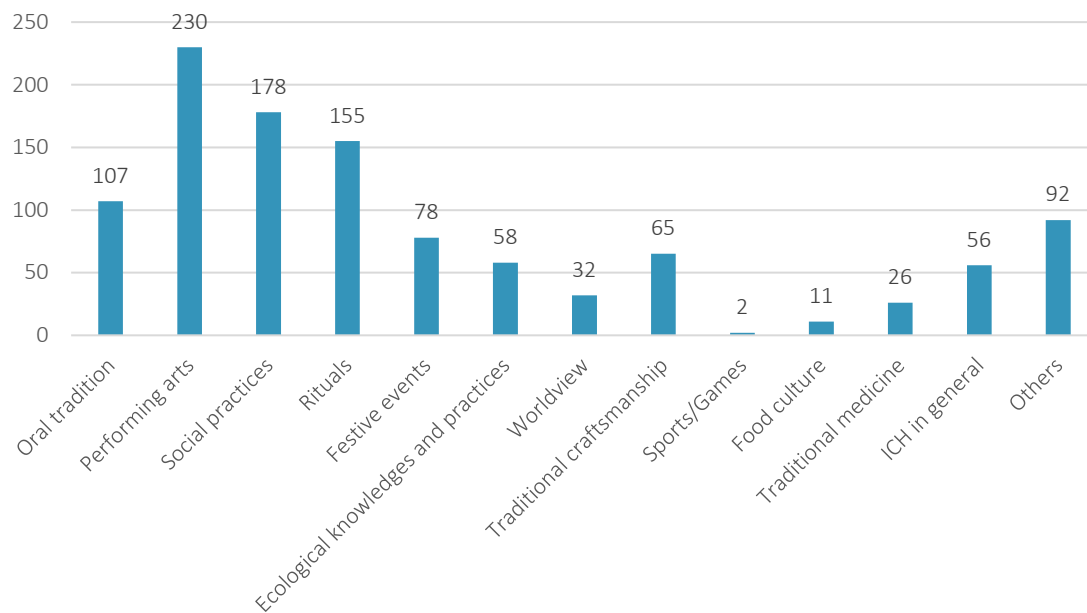
However, these domains are broadly defined, and to gain a more specific picture of the collected data, IRCI set a more detailed categorisation as follows:

- Oral tradition
- Performing arts:
  - Music
  - Dance
  - Drama
- Social practices
- Rituals
- Festive events
- Ecological knowledge and practice
- Worldview
- Traditional craftsmanship
- Sports/Games
- Food culture
- Traditional medicine
- ICH in general
- Others

In this category, multiple-choice was possible.

In FY 2019 and 2020, the ICH genres of performing arts, music, dance, and drama were separated. However, from the viewpoint that music, dance, and drama are one of the expression forms of performing arts, IRCI decided to include these domains in the performing arts; that is, IRCI categorised these as performing arts: music; performing arts: dance; and performing arts: drama. In this analysis, all of these categories were calculated as 'performing arts'.

In FY 2019 and FY 2020, there was only the category of 'sports', and from FY 2021, IRCI recategorised it as sports/games.



**Figure 4: ICH genres of research data collected in FY 2019–2021**

### Findings

The graph shows that the most collected ICH genre is performing arts, and the number of data was 230 (Figure 4). Since the performing arts include various forms of performance, such as dance, music, opera, and theatre, it is assumed that research handling this genre is conducted more than other ICH genres. The second collected ICH genre was social practices, the number of collected data was 178, and the third place was followed by rituals.

In contrast, the least collected research information was related to sports and games, and only two studies were collected. One of these pieces of information was a journal article collected in the Philippines on the national sport *arnis*, a form of martial arts, and the study examines its historical meanings and the values that may be accorded to it in the future.

The reason for the lack of research on sports and games may be that these categories are not well recognised as intangible cultural heritage in the first place, and only a limited number of studies have been conducted. However, UNESCO is stating the importance of traditional sports and games as ‘Safeguarding and promoting Traditional Sports and Games (TSG) as sports practices and intangible cultural heritage is a key challenge for the future development of sport and societies. TSG also enhance

intercultural dialogue and peace, reinforce youth empowerment, and promote ethical sports practices'.<sup>3</sup>

To enhance the safeguarding of this ICH category, it may be necessary to promote research in this genre.

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### Research Focus

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#### Result

##### **Most collected:**

1. Documentation
2. Identification
3. Transmission

##### **Least collected:**

1. Disaster prevention
2. Capacity building
3. Training

#### Data Description

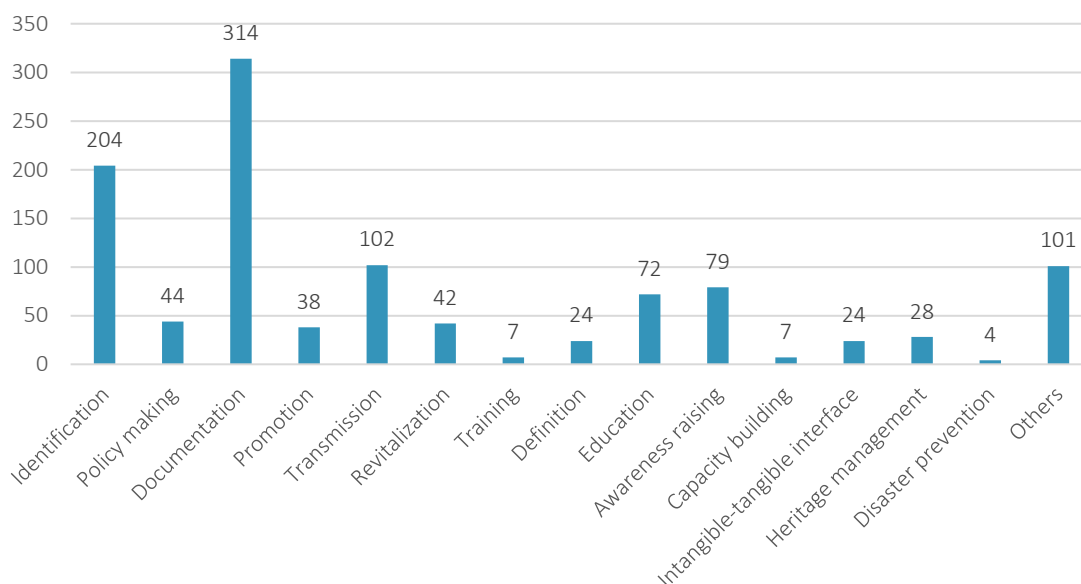
In the project, the focus of research in relation to ICH safeguarding is divided into 14 categories and 'others'.

- Identification
- Policymaking
- Documentation
- Promotion
- Transmission
- Revitalisation
- Training
- Definition
- Education
- Awareness raising
- Capacity building
- Intangible-tangible interface
- Heritage management
- Disaster prevention
- Others

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<sup>3</sup> UNESCO, Traditional Sports and Games <https://en.unesco.org/themes/sport-and-anti-doping/traditional-sports-and-games> (Referred: 28 February 2022)

Among these, ‘heritage management’ and ‘disaster prevention’ were added to FY 2021. In this category, multiple choices were made.



**Figure 5: Collected research focus in FY 2019–2021**

### Findings

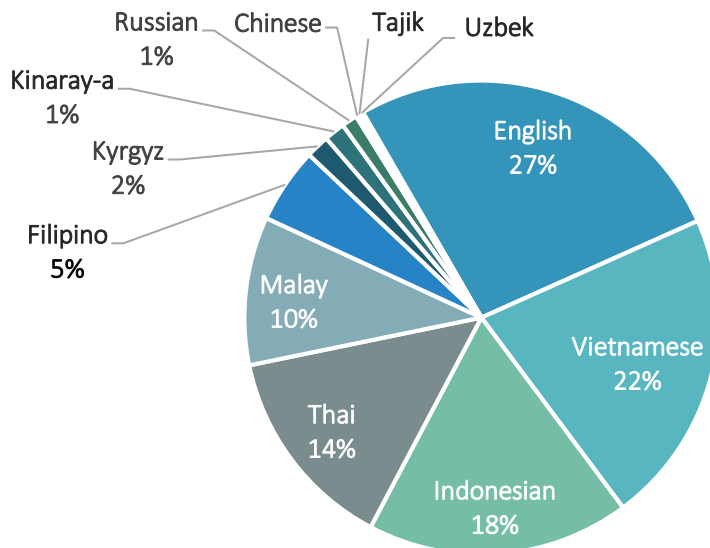
Figure 5 shows that the research focus of the most collected data was documentation, and this may imply that documentation is regarded as crucial in ICH research. This is understandable because documentation of ICH elements plays an important role in transmitting it to next generations, or in case the ICH element is endangered, the documented data are essential to ‘preserve’ the ICH. The second most collected research focus was identification, followed by transmission.

However, only a limited amount of research has focused on training, capacity building, and disaster prevention. The lack of data in the area of training may be due to the lack of training itself, and even if training takes place, they are rarely reported or documented as publications. Concerning disaster prevention, this focus was added to FY 2021 as a new category, which may be the reason for the low number of collections. However, it is expected that this area will be more researched because of the current rapid global climate change and its impact on ICH.

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## Language

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**Figure 6: Ratio of English and other languages of the collected data in FY 2019–2021**

### Findings

Figure 6 shows the ratio of languages used in the collected research information.

As a result, around a quarter of the collected research information was written in English, and about three-quarters was written in languages in the Asia-Pacific region.

In some countries, research information is written in multiple languages. For example, research information submitted from the Philippines was written in local languages, such as Kinaray-a, Filipino, and English. In the case of the Kyrgyz Republic, four languages (i.e. Kyrgyz, Russian, Uzbek, and Tajik) are used in a single publication.

The ratio of research information written in English varied per country. For example, English is one of the official languages of the Philippines; therefore, many research papers written in English exist in the country. Meanwhile, it was notable that, in Thailand, all submitted information was written in Thai.



Below is the percentage of information collected from each country written in English.

- |                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Myanmar: 100%        | 4. Indonesia: 22,3%        |
| 2. The Philippines: 65% | 5. Viet Nam: 11.5%         |
| 3. Malaysia: 52,4%      | 6. The Kyrgyz Republic: 3% |
|                         | 7. Thailand: 0%            |

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### Publication Category

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#### Result

##### **Most collected:**

1. Journal/Journal article
2. Book
3. Thesis

##### **Least collected:**

1. Website
2. Book section
3. Report

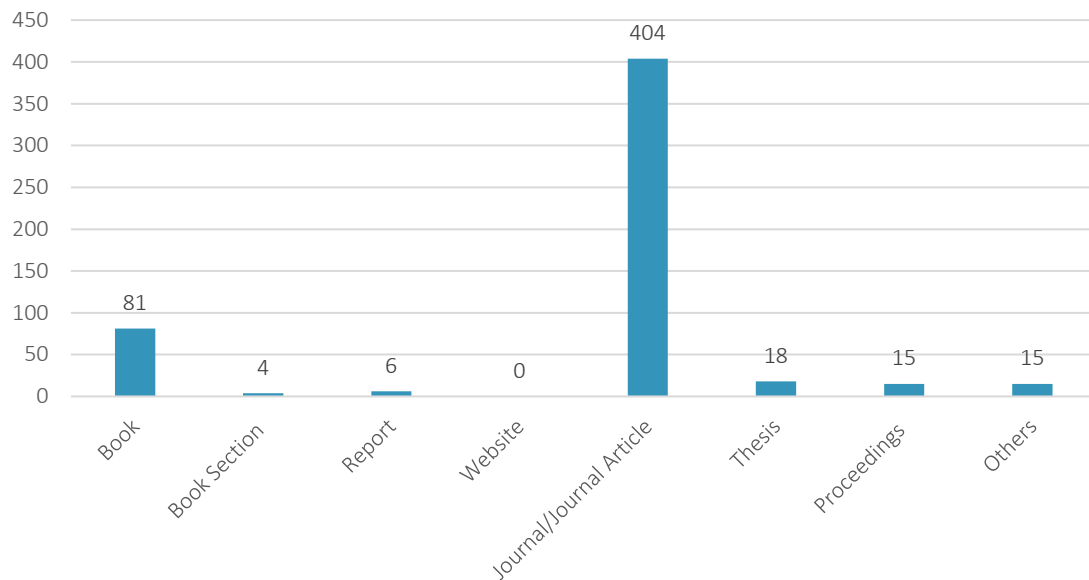
#### Data Description

The publication category is divided into eight categories and 'others':

- Book
- Book section (added in FY 2021)
- Report
- Website (added in FY 2021)
- Article (FY 2019-2020)
- Journal
- Journal article (added in FY 2021)
- Thesis
- Proceedings (added in FY 2021)
- Others

In FY 2021, IRCI reviewed the publication category, and as a result, some categories, including book sections, websites, journal articles, and proceedings, were added.

In this analysis, the category of 'Article' and 'Journal' are combined and calculated into 'Journal/Journal article'.



**Figure 7: Collected publication category in FY 2019–2021**

### Findings

The graph shows that the most collected publication category was a journal or journal articles, and the total amount of collected data was significant (Figure 7). In some universities, periodic journals are published on their own, which may be the reason for the substantial number of journals or journal articles.

The second most collected publication category is books, and the third place is theses, but the number is not as prominent as journals or journal articles. It is assumed that a number of theses and dissertations are unpublished and buried despite their research value. Therefore, it will be necessary to consider this publication category in the future.

The fourth place is proceedings, and most proceedings submitted in the project, were unpublished. However, a number of conferences on ICH are being held in many countries nowadays, and such publications actually help grasp the latest trends in ICH research and its safeguarding in each country and region.

On the other hand, the least collected publication categories were book section, report, and website. Reports are less visible due to the limited distribution; however, it would also be an important category, as reports by research institutions, NGOs, or governments would more directly address specific activities related to ICH safeguarding.

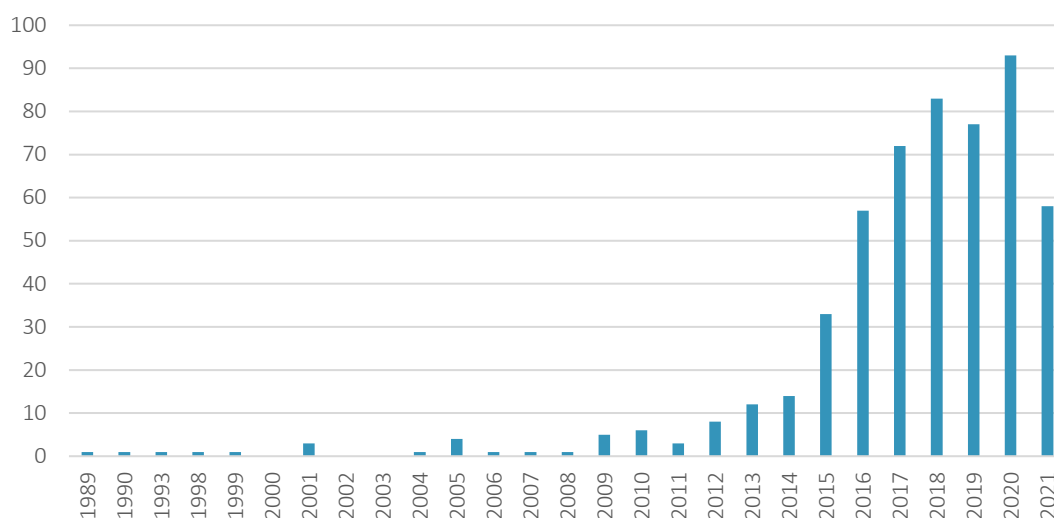
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## Year of Publication

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### Data Description

This graph shows when the research materials such as articles were published. If the item was not published, the period when the research articles were written was recorded.



**Figure 8: Publication year of the collected data in FY 2019–2021**

### Findings

As shown in the graph (Figure 8), as the year of publication became more recent, the amount of collected data also increased.

The oldest research item collected over 3 years was published in 1989 and was from Malaysia. The study was titled ‘Bases of Traditional Authority among the Orang Asli of Peninsular Malaysia’ and was published in the form of a journal article. According to the submitted abstract, its aim is to examine some basic factors connected with authority and leadership in traditional Orang Asli society.

Malaysia ratified the 2003 Convention in 2013; however, this research article was published prior to ratification. In other countries, information on research that was conducted before the ratification of the 2003 Convention was submitted as well, but the amount was quite low. This may imply that ratification of the 2003 Convention contributes to promoting ICH research in each country.

## CONCLUSION

### Findings and Challenges in the Project

A number of findings and challenges were identified throughout the implementation of the project. One of the challenges is the current cooperative mechanism. Even though cooperation was established between IRCI and research institution itself, cooperation was not continued with one institution due to personnel changes. In addition, the amount of ICH research information accumulated in each research institution remains limited, and this sometimes makes the continuation of the collaboration between the National Counterpart and its collaborators difficult.

It was also found that, in some countries, research information related to ICH is not well digitalised, and online accessible research information remains restricted. Moreover, there are several unpublished materials, such as proceedings and theses, that can be an important resource for ICH studies.

There are also challenges in the current data collection methodology. For instance, as mentioned in the discussion at the Regional Workshop, the current categorisation of the ICH genre given in data entry sheets is not clear enough. Therefore, it would be necessary to review and recategorise the sheets and develop proper guidelines.

The copyright issue was also raised by the project participants. To publish the research information in the IRCI Research Database, it is necessary to obtain permission from the authors, publishers, or other parties who possess the right of publication. However, some National Counterparts mentioned that it took too much time to obtain permission, which sometimes caused delays in data collection in some countries.

In addition, project collaborators raised a suggestion on the target materials to be collected in the project. In the current project, IRCI collects various written materials, such as research articles or books. However, some collaborators consider it necessary to broaden the target data to audio-visual materials. These materials are certainly one of the informative sources, but they need to be carefully considered whether they can be a target of a collection because IRCI's target is those that reflect its academic value. If audio-visual materials could be a target of data collection, careful consideration should be given to the criteria to be applied in collecting such materials.

There were also some positive results. Through discussions with the project participants, it was found that meetings/workshops held in the course of the project helped the

participants understand the current state of ICH research in their country and other countries in the region and sometimes encouraged bridge-making in different fields.

The benefits of the IRCI Research Database have also been highlighted by collaborators. For example, referring to research by other researchers in the database can open the possibility for collaborative research. Because the collected research information is open to the public, the database can be an important platform that brings back the research outcomes to the community. In addition, one collaborator stated that the database could be utilised not only for academic use but also for non-academic use. For example, the database can be used to raise awareness among communities and for briefing policymakers on how to safeguard ICH.

Concerning the challenges in the project, such as categorisation of the ICH genre, target research data of collection and cooperation mechanisms need to be reviewed and developed for the next step of the project.

## **Prospects**

From FY 2022, the regional focus of the project will move to Central Asia and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) within the Asia-Pacific region. Although some modifications may be applied to the current data collection methodology and cooperation mechanism, the fundamental direction, including data collection network building, appears to be applicable to Central Asian countries. However, for SIDS, an alternative methodology and cooperation mechanism may be necessary because of the limited number of research institutions and human resources in each country, as well as the nature of ICH-related research undertaken in these countries.

Concerning the National Counterparts that had completed the 3-year data collection in this project, it is hoped that they will continue to collect ICH research information on their own and possibly develop their own data collection mechanism that is effective in their country.

Since the Asia-Pacific is a vast region, with 42 countries that ratified the 2003 Convention, the sub-regions to be targeted in the project have to be shifted every few years. It is expected that data collection will be conducted again in Southeast Asia, and by then, more ICH research will be conducted to update the state of ICH research. As noted in the project, the number of research programmes that directly address the safeguarding

of ICH will increase in the coming years. Such developments associated with the further promotion of the 2003 Convention should be studied as well.

Finally, research data collection is a never-ending process provided research on ICH continues. IRCI hopes that this 'Sustainable Research Data Collection for ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region' project contributed to promoting ICH research and its safeguarding in the region while providing opportunities for each country to review the current situation of research as a critical measure for safeguarding ICH.



# 2

## **Data Collection Summary by National Counterparts**





### Mahirta

Head, Undergraduate Study Program in Archaeology, Gadjah Mada University

#### A. Data Collection Process

Generally, the process of data collection for the IRCI Research Database that we joined in 2019 is as follows. Initially, we peruse more research results and/or articles than IRCI suggests, that is, 30 articles in the first data collection phase, 101 published articles in the second phase of data collection, and 100 articles in Phase 3. Our goal is to collect data from as many fields of study as possible and from a wide variety of ICH genres and research focuses. Selections were then made from among the collected articles to reach the target number of abstracts IRCI requires for upload based on the following:

- a. The depth of information in the research and area coverage of the research (not only focusing on Java Island but also Indonesia as a whole)
- b. We favour articles that are published in open-access journals and are available online.
- c. When the research genre representative is not available in open-access journals throughout the year, we then choose articles from non-open-access journals, and we seek permission from the journal publisher(s) and/or author(s).

This strategy was applied to ensure that the published abstracts we upload to the IRCI Research Database represent research in the ICH genres from different fields of study in Indonesia.

In the first phase of the project, held in 2019, we did not yet have a national collaborator. Our team consists of 3 people who collected research data through a library and an online database such as open-source journal websites. In this phase, we uploaded 10 pieces of research data. Most of them were collected from journals published by Universitas Gadjah Mada, and some others were collected from open-source journals published by other universities, including the Institute of Art Indonesia.

In the second phase of data collection, in 2020, we asked the archaeology department of Universitas Hasanuddin and Balai Pelestarian Nilai Budaya (Office of Cultural Value Preservation) Yogyakarta to be our collaborators. The purpose was to involve other

national institutions as our collaborators to ensure that we can cover a variety of ICH research genres from the vast areas comprising the Indonesian region. It is hoped that our Universitas Hasanuddin counterpart will have more data on the ICH research in eastern Indonesia, while BPNB Yogyakarta, which focuses on the cultural value, was targeted to find ICH research related to the Javanese culture as well as other ethnicities in Indonesia. The 3 institutions agreed to upload published abstracts and articles for which copyright permission has been obtained from the journals or their editorial team in the case of non-open-access journals.

In the third phase of data collection, in 2021, we cooperated with the archaeology department of Universitas Hasanuddin, Balai Pelestarian Nilai Budaya (Office of Cultural Value Preservation) Yogyakarta, and the archaeology study program of Universitas Jambi. The purpose was to add Universitas Jambi to our collaborators because in the previous data collection phase, we lacked data from Sumatera. Since Universitas Jambi is located on Sumatera Island, we hope that more ICH research data can be collected.

## **B. Challenges and Findings**

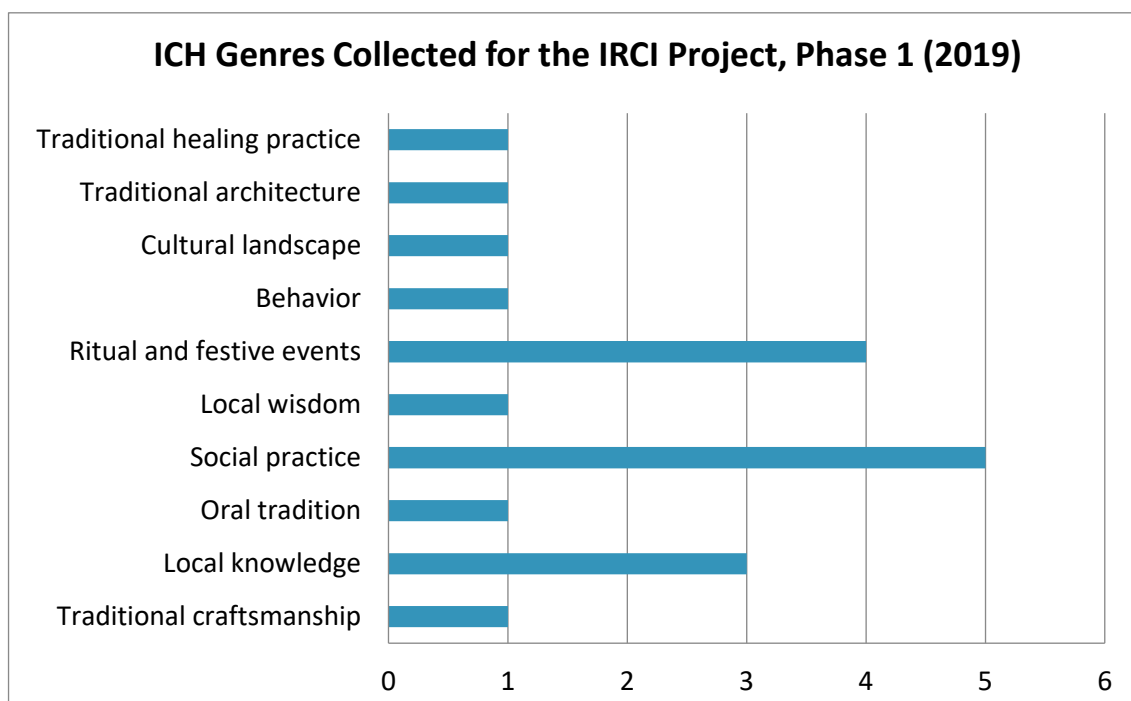
In Phase 1, we did not encounter significant challenges during the data collection process because the number of target articles was low, at only 10. Moreover, almost all the faculties of Universitas Gadjah Mada have open-access journals, which allowed us to browse ICH genres from different fields of study. Of course, some faculties and programs have more ICH research, considering that the ICH is their main field subject; these include anthropology, Javanese studies, and the archaeology study program to some extent. We emphasised the collection of articles that were published in our university's (Universitas Gadjah Mada) open-access journals, as well as 1 article published in the journal *Institute Seni Indonesia*, the author of which is affiliated with Universitas Gadjah Mada. Initially, we collected 30 articles published between 1994 and 2019 to represent different varieties of ICH research in open-access journals and open-access proceedings by Universitas Gadjah Mada, but we only uploaded 10 articles, as required. Since only 10 articles were required, and we only perused articles published in Universitas Gadjah Mada journals, these data may only be valid as an overview of the variety of research on ICH at Universitas Gadjah Mada.

In Phase 2, we collaborated with two other national institutions (Universitas Hasanuddin and BPNB Yogyakarta). A total of 101 articles were collected by 3 institutions for increased reliability in the context of statistical analysis. The UGM team collected 28 research abstracts and selected 26 abstracts to upload, the Universitas Hasanuddin

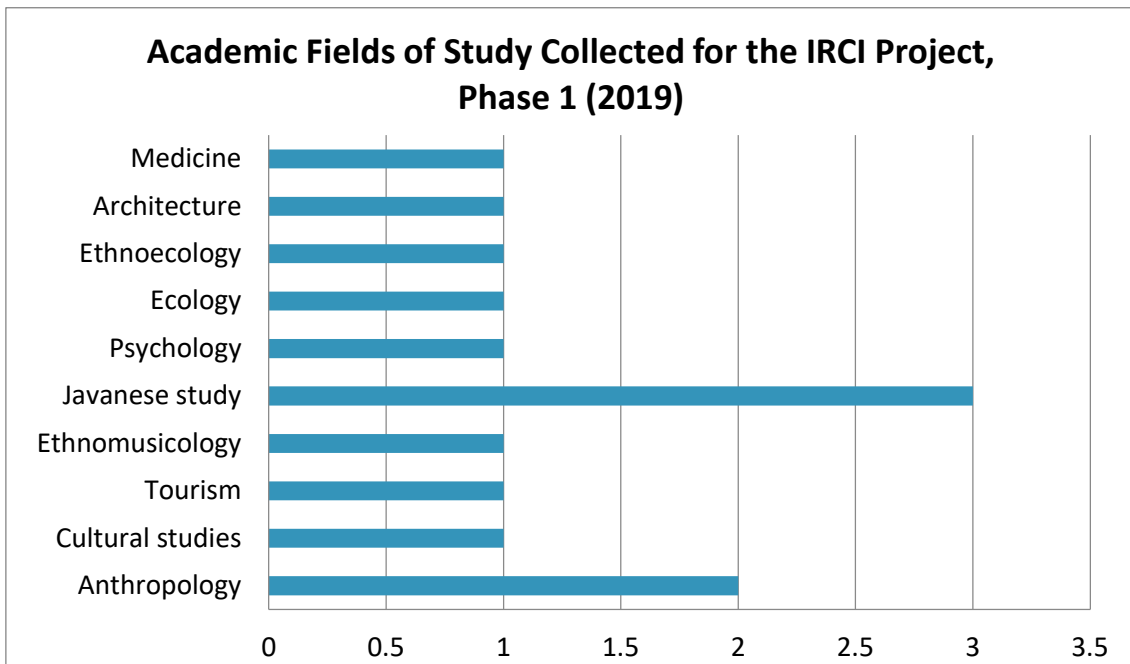
team collected 28 research abstracts and uploaded 16 abstracts, and the BPNB team collected 22 research abstracts and selected 8 abstracts to upload. Social practice is the most popular ICH research genre among researchers, followed by ritual practice. It is interesting to note that traditional craftsmanship, as in the 2019 project, appears to have only attracted a few researchers, accounting for only 7 research results among our 101 ICH research results.

Given that IRCI only requires us to target 50 abstracts, we tried to evenly distribute the number of articles that we have to upload between 3 institutions to ensure that the area covered by the research encompasses Indonesia as a whole. However, since some BPNB research has not been published, and the authors of the articles published in non-open-access journals have not given permission for the use of their work, the Universitas Gadjah Mada team must collect more articles to reach the target number of abstracts. Authors’ responses to requests for permission to use their articles published in non-open-access journals are not always easily obtained before the due date.

Below is the ICH genre distribution among the abstracts uploaded to the IRCI Research Database from the 2019 to 2021 data collection period.



**Figure 1** Distribution of ICH genres in research published in Indonesia in UGM journals uploaded to the IRCI Research Database in Phase 1.

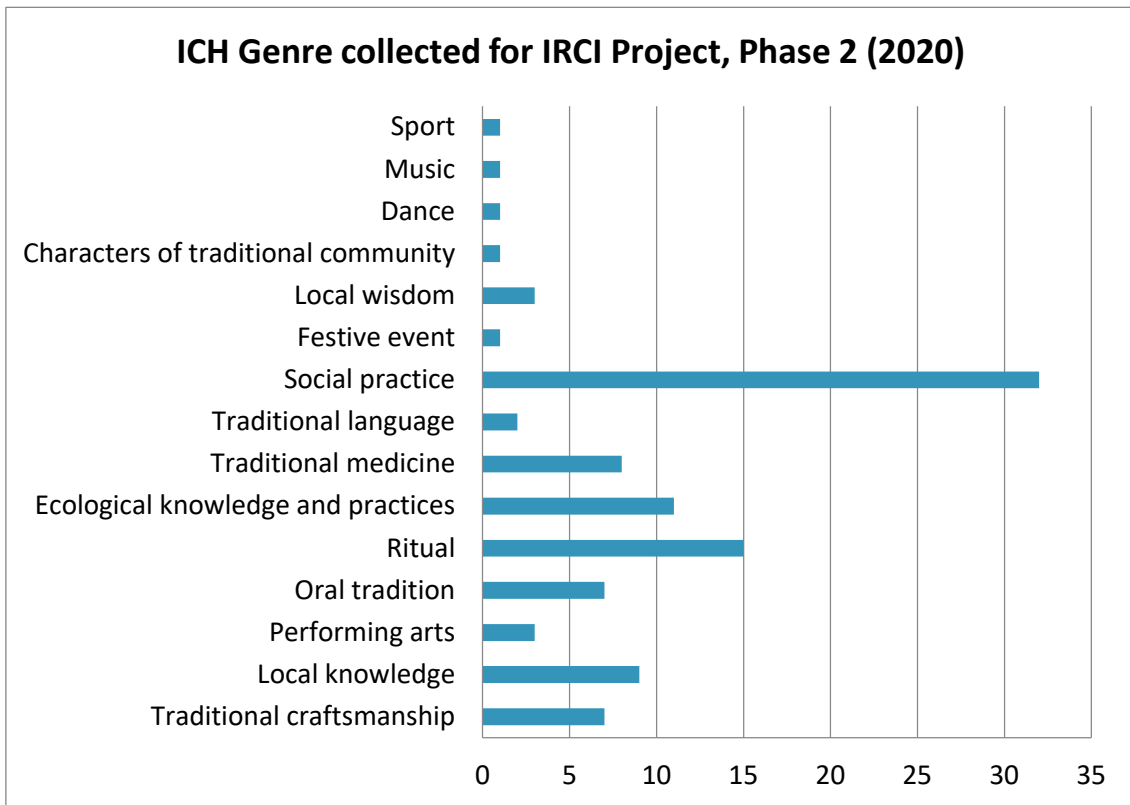


**Figure 2** Distribution of academic fields of study in Indonesian ICH research published in the UGM journal and uploaded to the IRCI Research Database in Phase 1.

Since the distribution graphs were compiled based on only 10 articles, I doubt that the distribution represents the actual condition of ICH research in Indonesia as a whole in 2015–2018. However, the academic fields of anthropology and Javanese studies may represent the fields in which the most ICH research was conducted in 2015–2018 at Universitas Gadjah Mada.

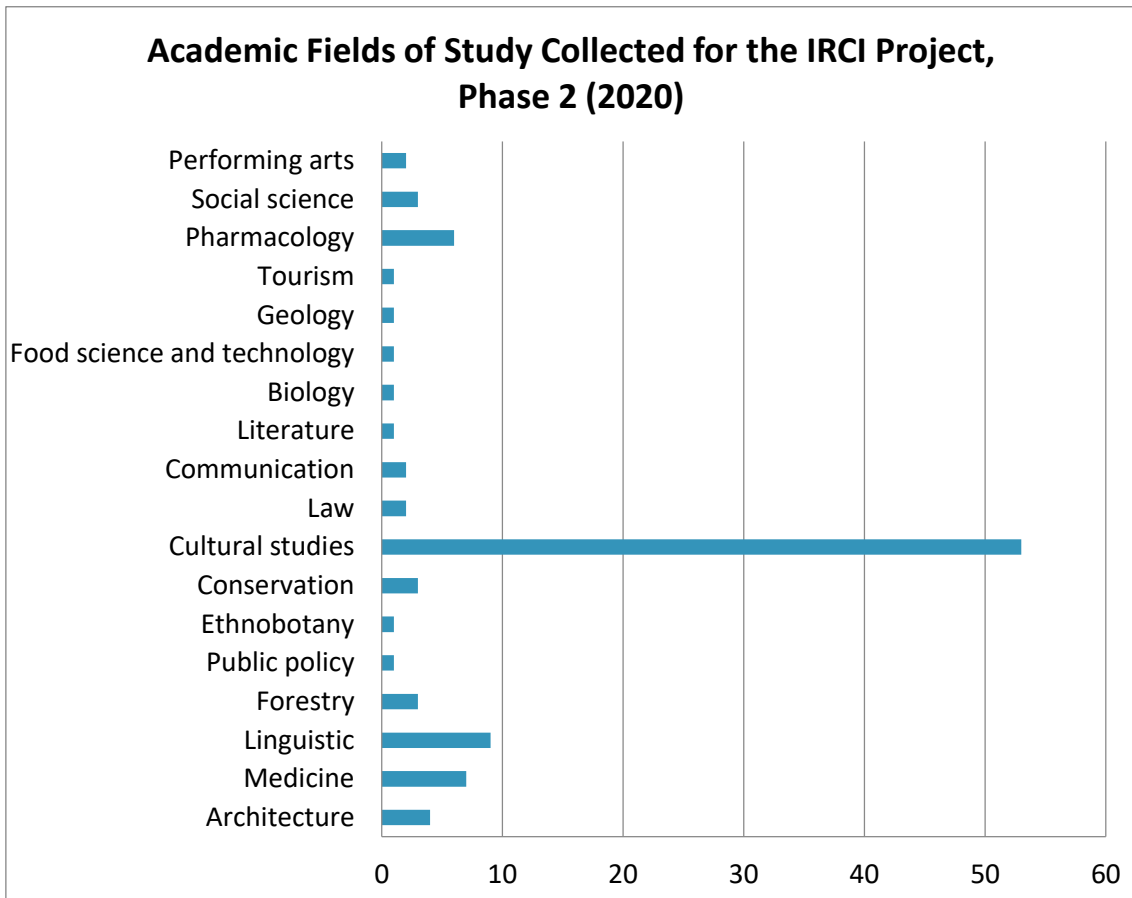


**Figure 3** Distribution of languages used in the ICH published research uploaded to the IRCI Research Database in Phase 1.

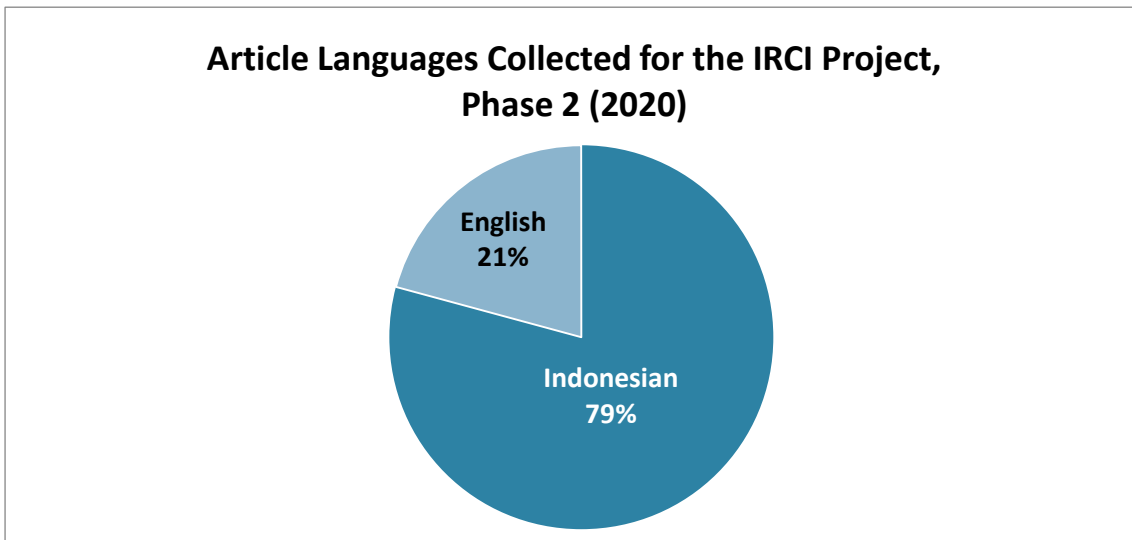


**Figure 4** Distribution of ICH genres in published research in Indonesia among the 101 published articles collected during Phase 2 of the project.

Figure 4 shows that the social practices and ritual genres are Indonesian researchers' favourite ICH research genres. The least favoured genres appear to be music, dance, character of traditional community, traditional language, and traditional craftsmanship. Regarding the academic fields of study, most ICH research is classified as cultural studies, though a few ICH studies were conducted in different academic fields (see Figure 5 below). The most popular type of ICH research is cultural studies. Within this group, ICH research is varied, including history, archaeology, and anthropology.



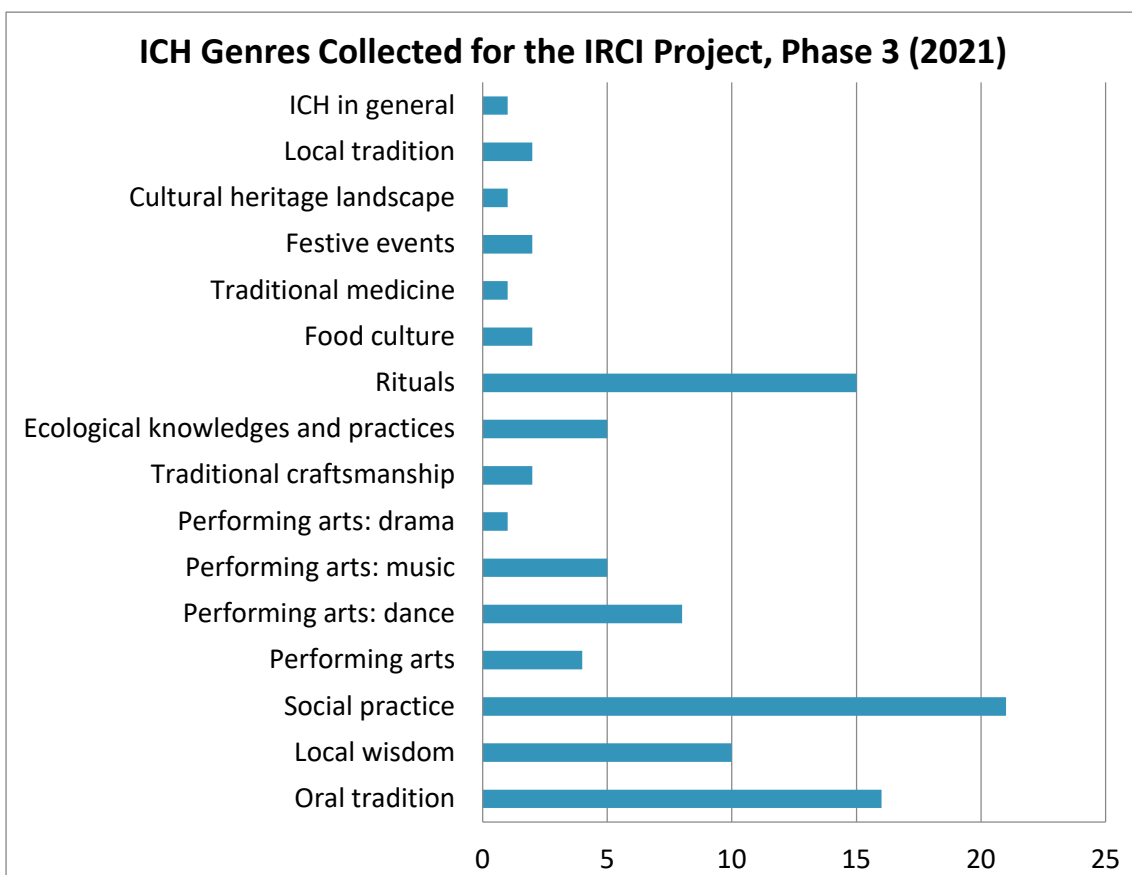
**Figure 5** Distribution of ICH fields of study among a total of 101 published articles collected during Phase 2 of the project.



**Figure 6** Pie diagram of the language distribution of the ICH research collected during Phase 2 of the project.

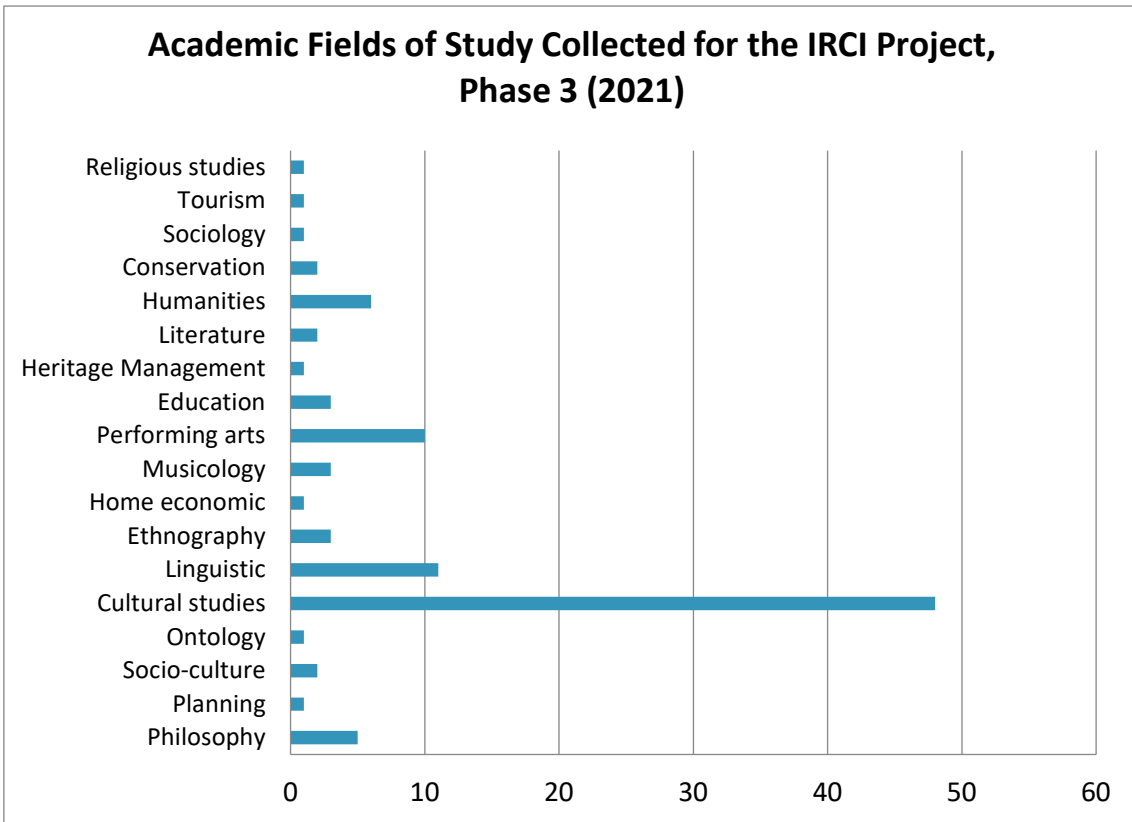
In Phase 3, we cooperated with three other national institutions, all of which are governments institutions, namely Universitas Hasanuddin, Universitas Jambi, and BPNB Yogyakarta. It is hoped that with more institutions involved in this project, a wider variety of data will be found, thus widening the research area covered. Universitas Jambi on Sumatera Island is responsible for finding more ICH research data on Sumatera Island.

Below is the distribution of ICH genres among the 70 articles uploaded to the IRCI Research Database.

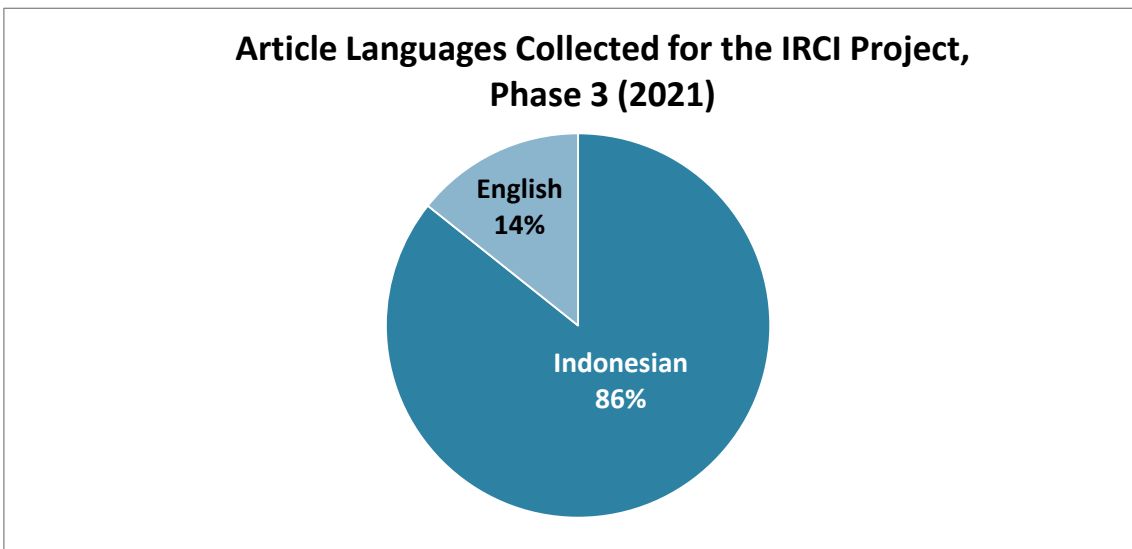


**Figure 7** Distribution of ICH genres in research published in Indonesia among 70 published articles uploaded to the IRCI Research Database in Phase 3.

Again, based on our Phase 3 data collection, we found that social practices and rituals are the favourite genres. If we examine the distribution of academic fields of study, cultural studies is the most popular, followed by traditional medicine and linguistics. ICH research is also conducted in other academic fields in Indonesia, but these only number 1 each. The increase in the volume of published research in the ICH genre traditional medicine is interesting, but the reason underlying this trend has not yet been investigated.



**Figure 8** Distribution of ICH fields of study among a total of 70 published articles uploaded to the IRCI Research Database in Phase 3.



**Figure 9** Pie diagram of languages used by Indonesian ICH researchers in publications uploaded to the IRCI Research Database in Phase 3.



## **C. Summary of the Data Collected in Phases 1 to 3**

### Phase 1

Information gathered in Phase 1 is listed below.

- a. ICH genre
  - 1) Social practice
  - 2) Rituals
  - 3) Festive events
  - 4) Knowledge of nature
  - 5) Oral tradition
  - 6) Local knowledge
  - 7) Local wisdom
  - 8) Traditional architecture
  - 9) Cultural landscape
  - 10) Traditional medicine
  - 11) Traditional craftsmanship
  
- b. Research focus
  - 1) Documentation
  - 2) Heritage salvaging and management
  - 3) Ecological resource management
  - 4) Policy making
  
- c. Academic field
  - 1) Anthropology
  - 2) Javanese studies
  - 3) Ethnoecology
  - 4) Ecology
  - 5) Ethnomusicology
  - 6) Tourism
  - 7) Cultural studies
  - 8) Psychology
  - 9) Medicine
  - 10) Architecture

Information not gathered in Phase 1 is listed below.

- a. ICH genre
  - 1) Sports/games
  - 2) Food culture
  
- b. Research focus
  - 1) Promotion
  - 2) Revitalisation
  - 3) Training and education
  - 4) Disaster prevention

## Phase 2

Information gathered in Phase 2 is listed below.

- a. ICH genre
  - 1) Performing arts (music, dance)
  - 2) Characters of traditional community
  - 3) Local wisdom and knowledge
  - 4) Social practice
  - 5) Traditional language
  - 6) Traditional medicine
  - 7) Ecological knowledge and practice
  - 8) Rituals
  - 9) Oral tradition
  - 10) Traditional craftsmanship
  - 11) Food culture
  
- b. Research focus
  - 1) Identification
  - 2) Documentation
  - 3) Revitalisation
  - 4) Policy making
  - 5) Education
  - 6) Awareness raising
  - 7) Philosophy review

- 8) Conservation
- 9) Intellectual property law on traditional medicine
- 10) Heritage management
- 11) Disaster prevention (natural and conflict)
- 12) Current knowledge
- 13) Development possibility
- 14) Scientific review and verification
- 15) Children's play as agrarian culture
- 16) Women's roles
- 17) Culture creation
- 18) Traditional function
- 19) Local tradition and society

c. Academic field

- 1) Performing arts
- 2) Social science
- 3) Pharmacology
- 4) Tourism
- 5) Geology
- 6) Food science and technology
- 7) Biology
- 8) Literature
- 9) Heritage law
- 10) Communication
- 11) Cultural studies
- 12) Conservation
- 13) Forestry
- 14) Linguistic

Information not gathered in Phase 2 is listed below.

a. ICH genre

- 1) Sports/games

b. Research focus

- 1) Promotion
- 2) Training and capacity building

### Phase 3

Information gathered in Phase 3 is listed below.

- a. ICH genre
  - 1) Performing arts (music, dance, drama)
  - 2) Local wisdom
  - 3) Social practice
  - 4) Traditional medicine
  - 5) Ecological knowledge and practice
  - 6) Rituals
  - 7) Oral tradition
  - 8) Traditional craftsmanship
  - 9) Local knowledge
  - 10) Food culture
  - 11) Festive events
  - 12) Cultural heritage landscape
  - 13) Local tradition
  
- b. Research focus
  - 1) Identification
  - 2) Documentation
  - 3) Awareness raising
  - 4) Education
  - 5) Revitalisation
  - 6) Heritage management
  - 7) Philosophy review
  - 8) Local tradition and society
  - 9) Definition
  - 10) Transmission
  - 11) Intangible–tangible interface
  - 12) Custom implementation
  
- c. Academic field
  - 1) Performing arts
  - 2) Musicology
  - 3) Cultural studies

- 4) Linguistic
- 5) Philosophy
- 6) Planning
- 7) Socio-culture
- 8) Ontology
- 9) Education
- 10) Heritage management
- 11) Literature
- 12) Humanities
- 13) Sociology
- 14) Conservation
- 15) Tourism

Information not gathered in Phase 3 is listed below.

- a. ICH genre
  - 1) Sports/games
  
- b. Research focus
  - 1) Promotion
  - 2) Training, education, and capacity building
  - 3) Revitalisation
  - 4) Policy making

#### **D. Representation of ICH research**

If we combine all the Indonesian ICH research that we have collected, the variety of genres among the results may reflect the ICH research genre trends in Indonesia. Many ICH researchers in Indonesia are not limited to research in the cultural sciences or humanities faculties, as their work also extends to other faculties, thus contributing to the rich variety of genres that our data collection uncovered from Phases 1 to 3. Take for example the researchers working in the pharmacy, biology, and law faculties; they all contribute to ICH research, though their research volume is not high. We also found that research in some genres is mostly conducted by researchers in the cultural sciences or at a special cultural institution such as BPNB. They prefer to do research on social practices and rituals.

In Phases 1–3 of data collection, we did not find that any of the research conducted focused on sports/games, and in Phases 1 and 2, we did not collect research on traditional food. In the past, this research focus was quite popular, but documentation was limited, and in cases where traditional food was served on the occasion of certain rituals, the research focused on the symbols of the food. Indonesia has a rich variety of traditional food that should be revitalised, so that rather than disappearing, traditional food can be transformed to suit the current lifestyle trends. Therefore, more research to revitalise traditional food should be conducted in the future. This can be achieved not only by researchers from the cultural sciences, but also by those from farming/agriculture technology, pharmacology, and other interdisciplinary fields. Interdisciplinary researchers working together can produce more significant research results.

Traditional games such as *egrang*, *engklek*, *congklak (dakon)*, *benthik*, and *jamuran* were popularly documented in the last decades. We found 1 study on traditional games, but we did not upload it to the IRCI Research Database because of its year of publication. With the development of the Internet, traditional games may disappear soon if we do not make an effort to preserve them. Researchers from oral tradition institutions (Balai Bahasa) in each of Indonesia's provinces may have studied the games the children of every ethnic group play, and some related manuscripts may be available in the library.

Although we tried to collect a variety of ICH research from all over Indonesia, we were still unable to collect published ICH research articles from the Lesser Sunda Islands and the Maluku Islands. This is perhaps because we prioritised uploading article abstracts from open online journals, and the articles from the aforementioned areas may be published in non-open-access journals.

#### **E. Institutions' Contributions to the Collected Data**

The data collected under the project 'Sustainable Research Data Collection for ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region' are actually very useful for visualising the distribution of ICH research Indonesian scholars have conducted from year to year. The collected data also show us that there are certain ICH fields that have been popular and certain fields that were unpopular or out of focus among Indonesian scholars in a certain year. Furthermore, when uploaded, these collected data will inspire other researchers to fill the research lacuna in certain genres or focus areas. However, the IRCI Research Database has not been very popular among researchers in Indonesia; therefore, the

database should be promoted more for the benefit of ICH as well as for research scholars.

#### **F. National Collaborators' Networking Prospects in This Project**

This project's national collaborators had strong pre-existing relationships, and each of us has our own network with other institutions that can work together on ICH research, especially to safeguard ICH and revitalise ICH elements, for example, to revitalise traditional medicine and traditional food research in collaboration with pharmacology and biology colleagues. Another example is in the field of engineering, where us scholars from the cultural academic field can work with architecture or chemical engineering scholars to revitalise the traditional conservation method for organic building materials.

In conclusion, our current cooperation on the 'Sustainable Research Data Collection for ICH Safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific Region' project has shown us that we still lack research in certain ICH genres and that more ICH research should be conducted by researchers working outside of the cultural field of study, such as in biology, law, pharmacy, medicine, economics, and tourism. When researchers working in these fields collaborate with researchers from cultural fields of study (i.e. anthropology, archaeology, and history), the result will be more comprehensive.





## RESEARCH TREND SUMMARY FOR MALAYSIA 2019–2021 OVERALL REPORT

Hanafi Hussin

Universiti Malaya Cultural and Heritage Research Centre (UMCHRC)

University of Malaya

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Data collection process, networking, and collaboration with National Collaborators**

The data collection process regarding the intangible cultural heritage of Malaysia started in 2019. Initially, only the University of Malaya was involved in the project's data collection. The data were in the form of research articles, books, and book chapters that the researchers published on intangible cultural heritage. In 2019, 12 papers on intangible cultural heritage published by University of Malaya researchers between 2015 and 2018 were collected. These papers were on intangible cultural heritage elements like performing arts, social practices, festive events, oral traditions, and language. In 2020, to collect the data, a collaboration was established involving two more Malaysian universities, namely University Malaysia Sarawak (UMS) and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). Consequently, 40 papers on intangible cultural heritage published between 2016 and 2020 by faculty of the University of Malaya (UM), University Malaysia Sarawak (UMS), and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) were collected. These manuscripts cover intangible cultural heritage elements like performing arts, rituals, oral traditions and language, drama, traditional craftsmanship, social practices, worldviews, textiles, traditional medicine, festive events, and ecological knowledge and practices.

In 2021, another Malaysian university, namely Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK), was included in the collaboration to collect data, in addition to the University of Malaya (UM), University Malaysia Sarawak (UMS), and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). First, data were collected from each of these institutions' own repositories, as well as by visiting the profiles of researchers at these institutions working on intangible cultural heritage. Second, data were also collected from Malaysian researchers working on intangible cultural heritage at other Malaysian universities. Consequently, 70 papers on intangible cultural heritage published by faculty of the University of Malaya (UM), University Malaysia Sarawak (UMS), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), and

Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK) between 2017 and 2021 were collected. These manuscripts cover intangible cultural heritage elements like performing arts, rituals, oral traditions and language, drama, traditional craftsmanship, social practices, textiles, traditional medicine, festive events, and ecological knowledge and practices.

Further collaboration is required to explore intangible cultural heritage genres in local regions and with other Malaysian universities located in different regions. Additionally, international collaboration with other universities is also suggested for comparative studies.

### **PROJECT CHALLENGES AND FINDINGS**

The following challenges were faced during the intangible cultural heritage data collection process:

- Many papers were published in the Malay language (Malaysian language), and because English translations were not available, these papers were excluded from the data.
- Papers on ICH were not easily available through the Google search function, but searches were conducted through either the university library or by visiting researchers' profiles.
- Some studies did not state a studied ICH genre.
- Some papers' abstracts were not available in English, so they were excluded.
- Some papers contained ambiguity regarding the heritage status of either tangible or intangible cultural heritage, so they were also excluded.
- The other challenge this project faced was obtaining the researchers'/authors' consent to publish their data.

The following are the important findings identified during this data collection project:

- Bangsawan art is categorised as urban theatre; the art form has been performed due to the rapid urbanisation in the cities. This is a rarely discussed issue, as the existing research focuses more on the elements of performing arts contained in the Bangsawan art form. This research aims to analyse the role of Kuala Lumpur as an important factor in the growth of Begawan groups and their audience in Malaysia.

- Performing arts like developing and creating the traditional Selangor Buginese ‘Poja’ dance and its reconstruction linked to the ‘Pakurru Sumange’ dance in South Sulawesi, Indonesia
- Rituals and ceremonies of the Bidayuh tribes in Sarawak Borneo, which are taken from *bajo asal* (traditional songs) and *girite Bidayuh damba* (stories and legends) are explored to authenticate manifestation of the Bidayuh culture and tradition in the numerous Bidayuh society areas in Bau, Padawan, and the Serian division of Sarawak.
- *Sayaw barong* is one of the traditional performances of the Bajau Sama ethnicity in Kota Belud, Sabah. It is a symbolic performance that represents the war dance in Bajau martial arts locally and is used as an offensive and defensive technique (*buah/jurus silat*) that merges in different streams (*aliran*) of *silat*, such as *silat kuntau*, *silat sping/sprint*, *silat betawi*, and *silat Nusantara*.
- The *nobat* ensemble is the last of the Malay court traditions still being performed in its original context – to install rulers. However, there is strong indication.
- *Makyung* has been documented for nearly a century, and recent developments have further encouraged academics to examine the threat to the art form's survival. The current documentation has managed to record almost all aspects of *makyung*, from its history to its music, dance, stories, and performance structure. One research study examines the currently available documentation on *makyung* at all relevant institutions.
- *Kuda kepang*, a traditional dance practised by the Javanese community in Johor, is also in danger of extinction due to the *fatwa* of the Johor religious authorities. Current documentation analyses the spiritual aspect of the performance and how it affects the cultural identity of the Javanese community in Singapore.
- *Main puteri* is an important aspect of the Kelantan Malay’s form of alternative healing and connects them to the practices of their ancestors. It has been proven to be effective at healing certain illnesses related to psychology and emotions.
- Dikir Barat has become an important part of Kelantanese popular culture and maintains its strong identity through use of the Kelantanese dialect and themes reflecting local social issues.

- *Sape* has been well documented and is still actively played in Sarawak. It has also been modernised to include electronic pickups and adjusted tunings, allowing for the instrument to be played in modern bands.
- Musical instruments of the Dusun Tindal in Kampung Tinuhan in Sabah. The Dusun Tindal belong to the state's larger Kadanzandusun ethnic majority. The development of the instruments, including their physical structure and musical elements, are analysed.
- Lundayeh dance forms performed in the areas of Tenom, Sipitang, and Long Pa Sia, along the west coast of Sabah.
- *Bisaya* dance in Beaufort is still performed and documented amidst the intensifying modernisation of Sabah.
- The practices of *tahlil* (a recital ceremony for the dead) and *tunggu kubur* (grave waiting) from the perspective of the principles of Islamic jurisprudence. In the Malay community, *tahlil* is a form of psychological and emotional support for the deceased's family, while the practice of *tunggu kubur* (grave waiting) is intended to protect buried corpses from theft and mystical activities.
- Traditional knowledge regarding the usage of gunpowder is explored based on manuscripts to provide a clearer picture of the textual dynamics of gunpowder knowledge and highlight its importance in enhancing the understanding of Malay gun technology.
- Local wisdom expressed in the *pemali* (taboo) tradition of the Indonesian people representing 12 different ethnic groups living in the East Kalimantan province of Indonesia is studied in terms of their safety, health, prosperity, marriage/mating practices, and education.
- Medicinal plants in Kampung Orang Asli Donglai Baru, Hulu Langat, and Selangor, Malaysia. The purpose is to document and preserve traditional knowledge about medicinal plants before it is completely lost due to the degradation of surrounding natural habitats.
- It also documents ethnomedicinal plants' diversity and population status in Kampung Masjid Ijok's home gardens and the associated traditional knowledge.
- Social practices of the Kampung Malay community are discussed regarding the garden elements and their landscape, which abide by the Malaysian Garden Concept's (MGC) basic guidelines. The findings highlight that these landscape and

garden elements seem to be unattractive to designers and are no longer a priority for continuity among homeowners.

## **SUMMARY OF THE DATA COLLECTED IN 3 YEARS (PHASES 1–3)**

### **Research Trend Summary for Malaysia 2019 (by University of Malaya [UM])**

University of Malaya faculty have published 12 papers on intangible cultural heritage from 2015 to 2018, including intangible cultural heritage elements like performing arts, social practices, festive events, oral traditions, and language. Among these 12 papers, 7 papers are about the vitality and protection of different local languages, and 2 papers are about performing arts like music and festive events. Additionally, 2 papers are about traditional food (gastronomy) heritage, and 1 paper is about the traditional health care practices (Jamu) of Malay women from the Javanese community.

Languages that are included in these studies are Mah Meri, which is spoken on Telo' Gunjeng (Carey Island, Selangor), Bidayuh (the language of one of the indigenous groups in East Malaysia), the Kedah variety of Acehnese, Malacca Portuguese Creole (MPC), Acehnese in Kampung Aceh, and Malacca Portuguese-Eurasians in Malaysia. The main aim of these research efforts was to gain a picture of the sociolinguistic situation in these areas. It was found that there is a high degree of vitality for the Mah Meri language, even though it is lower than that of the Bidayuh. Furthermore, there is evidence of a relatively high degree of endangerment for the languages spoken by the Orang Asli in general and for the Mah Meri in particular. Factors that seem to help preserve minority heritage languages have been identified, including encouraging endogamy largely by ensuring that the community does not become too dispersed, upholding traditional values, providing widespread support for multilingualism, and maintaining religious beliefs that are distinct from the dominant ones. It has been concluded that there is considerable variation between speakers of a variety of Acehnese used in Malaysia regarding their vowel system, specifically in the way each of the vowels is produced.

Regarding Malay gestures, it has been concluded that Malay speakers use various manual pointing gestures and other bodily actions involving gaze and torso as well as head movements to communicate distinct functions. Although some gesture forms and functions are shared among Malay speakers and other cultural groups, some direction-giving pointing behaviours are Malay-specific.

In the performing arts, the musical style of the Mak Yong, dating from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to current times, has been discussed, noting the musical features of periodic formal structures, the resultant rhythms, and the complex melodic content binding this genre to aspects of an ancient Southeast Asian musical style, as well as the influence of Middle Eastern music culture.

The second paper on the performing arts examines two festivals in Sama/Bajau culture in Kamahardikaan, namely the festival of Bongao in Tawi-Tawi province in the Philippines and the Regatta Lepa festival of Semporna, Sabah in Malaysia. A review of these tourist events in the southern Philippines and East Malaysia revealed the emergence of quite a number of festivals that veer away from the nature of traditional ones.

Intangible cultural heritage, especially food and traditional performing arts, has significantly contributed to the 'Malaysia Truly Asia' branding and to tourism development.

It has been found that in many aspects of life, particularly regarding traditional health care practices, the Javanese community still maintains their identity, while keeping the Malay image intact.

### **Research Trend Summary for Malaysia 2020 by the University of Malaya (UM) and 2 National Collaborators (University Malaysia Sarawak [UMS] & Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia [UKM])**

More than 50 papers on intangible cultural heritage have been published from 2016 to 2020 by faculty of the University of Malaya (UM), University Malaysia Sarawak (UMS), and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). These manuscripts cover intangible cultural heritage elements like performing arts, rituals, oral traditions and language, drama, traditional craftsmanship, social practices, worldviews, textiles, traditional medicine, festive events, and ecological knowledge and practices.

Among these 40 papers, 7 papers are about the rituals performed during different religious events and the food prepared for those rituals in the Iban community in Limbang (Sabak), Pakan (Leka Timang), and Kapit and Betong (Miring). Four papers are about the oral traditions and language of Bidayuh in the Sarawak and Cantonese Hokkien dialect group of Chinese in Kleng valley, as well as the folklores of Malay *syair*. Four papers are about the ecological knowledge and practices of the indigenous Malay people in the Orang Asli resettlement villages in the state of Terengganu and the

Bidayuh Bau-Jagoi community. Seven papers are about performing arts like the music and dance of *Wayang Kulit Kelantan*, the *makyung* dance, the tradition of performing *bangsawan* in theatre, and the Gamelan Sarawak and *kuda kepang* dance of Malay-Muslim communities. Traditional Malay theatre, *main peteri*, is believed to have physical and psychological/emotional healing effects, thereby qualifying it as a form of dramatherapy. Six papers are about the social practices of the Orang Asli, Javanese, Bajau, and Malay communities regarding alternative treatment using traditional herbal medicine derived from traditional flora and fauna. Three papers are about the traditional craftsmanship of *kelingkan* embroidery on veils in Sarawak, Selangor, Kelantan, Terengganu, and Negeri Sembilan in Malaysia, as well as in Pontianak, Ketapang, Daik, and Palembang in Indonesia, and the earliest textile techniques, *ikat tunggal* and *ikat ganda*, for weaving *sulam* and *pakon*. The wood carvings on the hilts and sheaths (*taguban*) of *parang* (machetes) created through Bajau craftsmanship in Kota Belud of Sabah are also discussed. Five papers are about heritage management in the traditional communities of Sarawak and Sabah, as well as in other states in Malaysia, and the heritage legislation act of National Heritage, 2005. Four papers are about the local wisdom used to prepare traditional Malay food in Saribas and the wisdom traditions evident in their thought patterns in Sarawak Iban *pua kumbu*.

The rituals covered in these papers are based in the Peranakan Chinese community's belief in sacred spirits and deities and are performed in Kampung Pasir Parit, in conjunction with the Datok Janggut (sacred spirit) site transfer, which took place on January 5, 2018. The papers cover rituals performed by Chinese communities in Malaysia, the Broga in Negeri Sembilan, and the Machap Baru in Melaka, as well as rituals performed by the Iban community in Limbang (Sabak), Pakan (Leka Timang), and Kapit and Betong (Miring). Regarding the Bajau, the traditional Sabah ritual performed in the community of Bajau Semporna, which is Magombo, honours their ancestors' spirits. There also exists the catastrophe rejection ritual practised by the people of Petalangan to prevent disaster befalling the individual, the village, or the society as a whole. This ritual was also called 'village'. The element of Islam was added through a religious fiesta for repulsive reinforcement. However, due to the community's lack of understanding of Islamic teachings, coupled with the low level of education and a strong psychological relationship with the surrounding community, this ritual persisted.

Languages that are included in these studies are the Bidayuh language, which is spoken in Sarawak, East Malaysia, and Hakka, and the Cantonese and Hokkien dialect groups that successively became dominant among the Chinese in the Klang Valley from 1860.

Traditional knowledge of natural resources among the Orang Asli in Terengganu in Malaysia and the indigenous knowledge (IK) contained in the Bidayuh folk narratives or *dondan* are also explored in the Bidayuh Bau-Jagoi community. These two types of IK are analysed within the context of the Gawai, that is, the cultural celebrations of the Bidayuh community.

In the performing arts, the Malay-Muslim communities *makyong* and *kuda kepang* are studied as a medium of education, medicine, and worship. Therapeutic aspects of the traditional Malay theatre, *main peteri*, which is believed to have physical and psychological/emotional healing effects, are also studied. The therapeutic properties of *main peteri* are explored and described in terms of their effects as healing agents. The tradition of performing *bangsawan* in Sarawak theatre, as well as stage structure and other elements, are also discussed.

The social practices studied in these articles are relevant to mantras related to Bajau women's beauty in Sabah, the embroidered Tepak sirih used at wedding ceremonies among the Kampung Seri Kedah, Sungai Leman, and Sekinchan Selangor, and the herbal medicine of the Javanese and other Malay communities. Plants and herbs that are known to be medicinal according to the indigenous tribes in peninsular Malaysia and traditional knowledge and usage of medicinal plants among the Semai in a village in the Malaysian state Perak are also studied. Traditional forms of craftsmanship covered in these studies include the gold and silver embroidery on veils in Sarawak, Selangor, Kelantan, Terengganu, and Negeri Sembilan in Malaysia, the *kelingkan* embroidery on veils in Pontianak, Ketapang, Daik, and Palembang in Indonesia, and the early Malay textile techniques of *ikat tunggal* and *ikat ganda* for weaving *sulam* and *pakon*. The wood carvings on the hilts and sheaths (*taguban*) of *parang* (machetes) created by Bajau craftsmanship in Kota Belud of Sabah are also studied.

### **Research Trend Summary of Malaysia 2021 by UM and 3 National Collaborators (University of Malaya [UM], University Malaysia Sarawak [UMS], Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia [UKM] & Universiti Malaysia Kelantan [UMK])**

More than 70 papers on intangible cultural heritage have been published from 2016 to 2020 by faculty of the University of Malaya (UM), University Malaysia Sarawak (UMS), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), and Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK). These manuscripts cover intangible cultural heritage elements like performing arts, rituals, oral traditions and language, drama, traditional craftsmanship, social practices, textiles, traditional medicine, festive events, and ecological knowledge and practices. Seventy



papers were chosen for this phase of data collection; the breakdown is as follows: 10 from UM, 20 from UMS, 20 from UKM, and 20 from UMK.

Among these 70 papers, 35 papers are about the performing arts of music, dance, drama, theatre, and martial arts activities performed during different religious and festive events. Performing arts that are covered in these papers include Bangsawan art, which is categorised as urban theatre due to the rapid urbanisation in the cities where the art form has been performed. Also included are the traditional Selangor Buginese 'Poja' dance and its reconstruction linked to the 'Pakurru Sumange' dance in South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The rituals and ceremonies of the Bidayuh tribes in Sarawak Borneo, which are taken from *bajo asal* (traditional songs) and *girite* Bidayuh *damba* (stories and legends), are explored to authenticate manifestation of the Bidayuh culture and tradition in the numerous Bidayuh society areas in Bau, Padawan, and the Serian division of Sarawak. Similarly, *Sayaw barong* is one of the traditional performances of the Bajau Sama ethnic group in Kota Belud, Sabah. It is a symbolic performance that represents the war dance in Bajau martial arts locally, and it used as an offensive and defensive technique (*buah/jurus silat*) that merges in different streams (*aliran*) of *silat*, such as *silat kuntau*, *silat sping/sprint*, *silat betawi*, and *silat* Nusantara.

Also covered are *nobat*, which is the royal court musical ensemble performed in the Malay courts of Kedah, Selangor, Perak, Terengganu, and Brunei; the traditional Kelantanese dance drama *makyung* or *mak yong*, which the Kelantan state government previously banned but which has recently been cleared for public performance providing adherence to the state's Islamic code of performance; and *dikir barat*, a popular folk art form and *main pateri* or *main teri*, which is a healing ritual involving music and theatre, similar to *makyung*. The *kuda kepang* dance performance is also covered; it is practised in the Javanese community in the state of Johor. Malaysian musical instruments are also examined, including the *sape*, a chordophone played in the Orang Ulu community in Sarawak. Additionally, the musical instruments of the Dusun Tindal in Kampung Tinuhan in Sabah, who belong to the state's larger Kadanzandusun ethnic majority, are discussed. Furthermore, the Lundayeh dance forms performed in the areas of Tenom, Sipitang, and Long Pa Sia along the west coast of Sabah and the Bisaya dance tradition in Beaufort are studied. Kuntau performance is a form of martial arts present in the Iban community in longhouses in Sarawak; it is performed only by men called *bujang berani*. However, as the years went by, Kuntau came to be performed as a form of entertainment during festive seasons such as the Gawai Dayak festival.

Traditional dance, including the Ngajat, a traditional dance that is synonymous with the ethnic group of Iban in Sarawak, is covered. This dance is usually performed at festivals such as the Gawai Dayak and matrimonial celebrations. In Sabah, instruments and genres of Makiang group music suggest evidence of diffusion from Sama'-Bajau and Suluk musical practices, including the *morunsai* vocal dance genre and performances of the *sampasang no gabang* and *sampasang no kulintangan* ensembles. This evidences cultural convergences through which east-coast Sama'-Bajau musical practices absorbed into interior cultures and transformed over time. The *usungan/tandu* parade is a unique traditional practice and is still performed in coastal Sarawak communities at the *khatam* al-Quran event. It is a tradition to celebrate their children's success at having just completed the Holy al-Quran recitation. Another line of research concerns the musical compositions of the Tazul Izan Tajuddin; for this research, the focus has mainly been on the musical analysis of the compositions themselves. Encapsulated within Tazul's *Kabus Pantun* (2018), it attempts to elucidate how John Rink's idea of a performer's creative process can contribute to preparing a performance with respect to works that push pianistic possibilities to the limit, if not beyond.

Sixteen papers are about the local wisdom and customs adopted during different activities and ceremonies and in the rule of life, including rewards and punishments suited to particular offences. Forms of local wisdom discussed in these studies include the practice of *tahlil* (a recital ceremony for the dead) and *tunggu kubur* (grave waiting) from the perspective of the principles of Islamic jurisprudence. In the Malay community, *tahlil* is a form of psychological and emotional support for the deceased's family, while the practice of *tunggu kubur* (grave waiting) is intended to protect buried corpses from theft and mystical activities. Traditional knowledge about the usage of gunpowder is explored based on manuscripts to provide a clearer picture of the textual dynamics of gunpowder knowledge and highlight its importance to enhance the understanding of Malay gun technology. The *pemali* (taboo) tradition of the Indonesian people representing 12 different ethnic groups living in the East Kalimantan province of Indonesia is studied in terms of their safety, health, prosperity, marriage/mating practices, and education. Rituals and taboos practised in the context of various life activities in the Iban community settlement in Sungai Passai, Sibu Sarawak are also discussed.

Customs adopted during the rule of the British North Borneo Chartered Company (BNBCC) in the Dusun community in Kimanis, Sabah are also covered. Officials and preachers of the Orang Asli community faced challenges carrying out the activities

planned by the MUIP around Pahang indigenous villages with respect to Da'wah's custom, which is an obligation for every Muslim. The evolutionary process pertaining to Malay clothes, especially the trend among male Baju Melayu in Malaysia, precipitated by social change and the transformative emergence of a new trend among the Baju Melayu, is also covered. The contradiction of custom and Islamic law with respect to marriage in the Murut Tahol community in Nabawan District, Sabah is another line of research on customs. Linguistic taboo is also a custom, in which societies determine the verbal rules to be accepted as dogma in daily life. The creation of a linguistic taboo is not an arbitrary decision, but rather one based on two main ideas drawn from relevance theory. The custom of Tepung Tawar is also covered, as many generations have believed in its ability to provide well-being and happiness to individuals who are sprinkled. Another Sarawak custom is *ngayau*, which is a headhunting practice based on the custom of the Iban community; it is their legacy. Additionally, the conservation of the Jerat Sembat of the indigenous Temuan tribe in Kampung Gapam, Jasin, Melaka is covered. Jerat Sembat is commonly used to trap animals in living conditions. Jerat Sembat must be maintained to preserve the local wisdom of the indigenous people.

Nine papers are about craft traditions. The craft traditions covered in these papers include the creation of blowpipe symbols by small businesses operated by the Orang Asli communities and the Kelarai pattern designs found on woven mats, as well as the philosophy used to enhance understanding and appreciation of the art of mat weaving, which has been gradually fading into obscurity. The future of this Malay art heritage is uncertain. Boat-shaped coffin artefacts found in the Painted Cave of Niah, Sarawak are also covered. Specifically, the design, function, and use of boat-shaped coffins in the past are discussed. Techniques to produce the creative designs reflected in the traditional Malay handicrafts *batik* and *songket*, which are prominent in Kelantan and Terengganu, are also discussed. *Kelingkan* embroidery, a traditional Malay art form that was passed on from generation to generation, specifically in Kelantan and Malaysia in general, is also discussed. 'Kain Telepuk', which is the most glorious Malay textile in the state of Selangor, is covered as well. The Telepuk textile is a rich fabric that was typically worn by royalty and members of the nobility 300 years ago. This study documents and compiles the aesthetic and philosophical value of the treasured Telepuk textile as the traditional Selangor Malay royal court fabric. The philosophy of the art motifs and designs published in connection with *bunga terung*, a symbol synonymous with the Iban ethnic group in Borneo, is also covered. In Sarawak, the *bunga terung* is worn by Iban men who have attained puberty to signify their entry into adulthood.

Four papers are about the traditional medicines and medicinal plants used in the Malay community. Traditional medicines that have been explored in these studies include medicinal plants in Kampung Orang Asli Donglai Baru, Hulu Langat, Selangor, Malaysia and the population status of ethnomedicinal plants in the home gardens of Kampung Masjid Ijok, along with associated traditional knowledge. These studies discuss the Malay heritage of making medicine, administering treatment, preparing materials, acquiring knowledge, and cultivating plants for medicinal purposes. The role of fruits in curing diseases within the Malay community is also discussed.

Three papers are about folk beliefs and customary rituals. The folk beliefs and customary rituals covered include *berburung*, which is a belief in animism that existed in the Iban community before the advent of Christianity and Islam. According to the birding belief, the Iban people use 7 types of birds, namely Ketupung, Beragai, Bejampung, Pangkas, Papau, Embuas, and Nendak. The 'miring' ceremony plays an important role in the Iban's Sarawak community. Miring ceremonies are held during annual festivals, paddy cultivation, and the early phase of house construction, as well as in connection with any activities for which the Sarawak practitioner's group considers the ceremony necessary. The gender socialisation belief system is based on the norms, values, and customs held according to the perspectives of the traditional Malay community.

Two papers are about folklore passed orally from generation to generation until they became known as archipelago folk narrative literature. The folklore included in these studies is from Mukim Bebar Pekan, Pahang, as well as the oral stories of the Jakun Orang Asli in Rompin, Pahang. The oral stories that exist in the Jakun Orang Asli community are declining; that is, they are gradually disappearing and are facing the threat of extinction. Conservation efforts are urgently needed, as this will affect the continuity of oral stories as part of the oral traditions that shape the Jakun Orang Asli community's identity.

One paper is about the social practices of the Kampung Malay community regarding their garden elements and landscape, in accordance with the Malaysian Garden Concept's (MGC) basic guidelines. The findings highlight that the landscape and garden elements seem to be unattractive to designers and are no longer a priority for continuity among homeowners. Findings also indicate that most of the *kampung* landscape elements do not significantly impact the supporting guidelines issued by the National Landscape Department (NLD).

## REFLECTIONS

**#What kind of information was not gathered?** (e.g. research focus / academic fields / ICH genres / methodological approaches, etc.)

- Dominant ICH genres studied are performing arts, medicinal plants heritage, local wisdom, and social practices.
- Many researchers are aware of and concerned about the preservation of ICH, and this project is an excellent effort to motivate them to protect different intangible cultural heritage elements.
- The focus of these studies is to document those ICH, so that they may be preserved for the coming generations.
- There is a dearth of studies on the ICH genres of traditional craftsmanship, rituals, food heritage, festive events, sports/games, and worldviews.
- There is a lack of community awareness-raising regarding ICH preservation and policy-making research.

**#Do the results reflect the ICH research trend(s) in your country?**

The data that have been collected during these 3 years show that the dominant ICH genres studied in Malaysia are performing arts, medicinal plants heritage, rituals, local wisdom, and social practices.

**#Which research areas and topics should be emphasised in the future?**

ICH genres that researchers at Malaysian universities need to explore are:

- Traditional craftsmanship
- Local sports
- Festive events
- Rituals
- Ecological knowledge and practices
- Food heritage

**#How can the collected data contribute to the promotion of ICH safeguarding and associated research activities?**

Through collected data, existing research trends can be identified that will be helpful to launch an awareness campaign in the associated communities regarding preserving and conserving their intangible cultural heritage and transferring it to the coming

generations. The data can also be used to identify the ICH genres that research has neglected. Doing so will help to motivate researchers to explore those understudied ICH genres, with the aid of different funding projects. ICH genres like festive events can be promoted at the national level to attract foreign tourists. This will not only help communities keep their heritage alive but will also help them to enhance their standard of living.

#### **#How can/will the network of national collaborators developed for this project be maintained into the future?**

Network building is important among different collaborative universities as a means of enabling such institutions to share their findings with each other. They may share their ICH research methodologies to refine and preserve different genres of ICH efficiently. This collaboration is also important to avoid repeatedly studying the same aspects of ICH genres, and it will help to expand the scope of the studied dimensions. It is also helpful to conduct a comparative study to identify the key regional differences among those genres that make them unique from the others.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The Malaysian ICH genre data collection process began in 2019; only the University of Malaya (UM) was involved, and 12 papers published by UM faculty were collected. In 2020 the University of Malaya established a collaboration with 2 more Malaysian universities, namely University Malaysia Sarawak (UMS) and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), and collectively selected 40 papers that these universities had published on ICH genres between 2016 and 2020. In 2021, 1 more national university, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK), was included in this collaboration, and 70 papers published by Malaysian universities were collectively selected. The ICH genres covered in these papers are performing arts, medicinal plants heritage, rituals, local wisdom, and social practices. This data collection project is an excellent effort to motivate researchers to preserve different intangible cultural heritage elements. This will help create awareness within the local communities regarding conserving their cultural heritage and transferring it to the coming generations. This project highlights the trends in the research conducted in Malaysia on different ICH genres. It is also helpful to identify the neglected ICH genres that Malaysian researchers could potentially explore in the future.

## REPORT ON DATA COLLECTION OF RESEARCH ON THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF VIETNAMESE ETHNIC GROUPS

**Vu Dieu Trung**

Director of Cultural Heritage Data Centre

Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies (VICAS)

### **I. The data collection process**

The Vietnam National Institute of Culture and Arts Studies (VICAS) collaborated with the International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI) to collect data on studies pertaining to Vietnam's intangible cultural heritage from 2019 to 2021. In 2019, VICAS selected, collected, and edited 10 articles about intangible cultural heritage by VICAS researchers. Applying the same method, VICAS, together with its 5 partners, collected 120 articles/books (2020: 50, 2021: 70) in 2020 and 2021. Data selection, collection, and review were conducted in accordance with the following steps:

*In 2019: Selection of 10 articles/books by VICAS researchers*

Project manager: Assoc. Prof. Dr Nguyễn Thị Hiền

The data collection process was conducted as follows:

- VICAS's leaders organised a meeting to discuss and determine criteria for selecting qualified papers/articles/books on ICH.
- VICAS's leaders assigned Assoc. Prof. Dr Nguyễn Thị Hiền as the head of the selection committee.
- Assoc. Prof. Dr Nguyễn Thị Hiền gathered and reviewed the content of the articles/books by VICAS researchers. Follow-up activities included:
  - Editing and translating the collected data
  - Categorising and inputting the collected data
  - Writing a report

*In 2020: Selection of 50 articles/books by VICAS researchers in the Department of Anthropology within the Hanoi University of Social Sciences and Humanities and at the Institute of Cultural Studies within the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences*

Project manager: Assoc. Prof. Dr Nguyễn Thị Hiền

The data collection process was conducted as follows:

- Assoc. Prof. Dr Nguyễn Thị Hiền worked with researchers from the Department of Anthropology within the Hanoi University of Social Sciences and Humanities and the Institute of Cultural Studies within the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences to choose data collection methods.

After collecting the data, follow-up activities included:

- Editing and translating the collected data
- Categorising and inputting the collected data
- Writing a report

*In 2021: Selection of 70 articles/books by VICAS researchers at the Hanoi University of Culture, the Vietnam Association of Folklorists, and the Institute of Ethnology within the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences*

Project manager: Dr Vũ Diệu Trung, Director of the VICAS Cultural Heritage Data Centre

- VICAS's leaders decided to appoint Dr Vũ Diệu Trung to be the project manager.
- Dr Vũ Diệu Trung tasked 4 staff members from the Cultural Heritage Data Centre, namely Nguyễn Trung Bình, Nguyễn Thị Hạnh, Phan Mạnh Dương, and Từ Thị Thu Hằng, with collecting and classifying all the data on intangible cultural heritage research from 2016 to 2021 and applying specific selection criteria in accordance with the current trends in and context of Vietnamese intangible cultural heritage research.

The specific criteria are:

- + Intangible cultural heritage of the least populous ethnic groups, i.e. those numbering under 10,000 people, in Vietnam.
- + Intangible cultural heritage in need of urgent safeguarding



- + ICH policies and the management of intangible cultural heritage
- + Other data on typical values, region-specific forms of intangible cultural heritage, and issues related to intangible cultural heritage that are of interest
- Dr Vũ Diệu Trung met with researchers from the Hanoi University of Culture, the Vietnam Association of Folklorists, and the Institute of Ethnology under the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences to select data collection methods.

The objectives of the meeting were:

- 1/ Reviewing and collecting data on papers/articles/books about intangible cultural heritage published between 2016 and June 2021 by researchers from member partners (i.e. Hanoi University of Culture, Vietnam Association of Folklorists, and the Institute of Ethnology within the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences)
- 2/ The Hanoi University of Culture, the Vietnam Association of Folklorists, and the Institute of Ethnology within the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences selected qualified articles/books by their researchers and sent them to VICAS for re-examination to determine whether they are in accordance with the criteria set out in 2021 for submission on IRCI's system.

After collecting the data, follow-up activities included:

- Editing and translating the collected data
- Categorising and inputting the collected data
- Writing a report

## **II. Problems during project implementation**

***The collected data can contribute to the promotion of ICH safeguarding and associated research activities:***

From 2019 to 2021, VICAS and IRCI collaborated to collect data on studies about Vietnam's intangible cultural heritage. This has yielded remarkable results, which are:

- VICAS researchers have read and quite carefully researched published works on intangible cultural heritage. At the same time, the system obtains data on intangible cultural heritage according to the criteria set for each year of cooperation.
- The studies on intangible cultural heritage were classified according to the criteria in the 2003 Convention, and weak points in the research on intangible cultural heritage in Vietnam were identified. This will make a definite contribution to the direction of research on intangible cultural heritage in the next period.
- On the other hand, through data collection, VICAS also obtained an important data source on intangible cultural heritage, which it can use to advise the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism on cultural development strategies, particularly regarding general and intangible cultural heritage. In the cultural development strategy for 2030, Decision No. 1909/QĐ-TTg dated 12/11/2021, Article 1, Part 3 (Tasks and solutions), Section 6 (Protection and promotion of heritage national culture) clearly states: 'a) Complete the formulation of planning tasks and planning for preservation, renovation and restoration of relics. To focus on investing in the preservation, renovation and restoration of special national relics, world heritage sites, historical-cultural relics of typical value, serving traditional education and economic development; combine conservation and promotion of cultural heritage with tourism development. b) Improve the quality of collection, research, inventory and classification of intangible cultural heritage and documentary heritage. Restoring and preserving a number of types of intangible cultural heritage and traditional arts at risk of extinction, with priority given to cultural heritages of ethnic groups with a population of less than 10,000 people. Promoting the value of intangible cultural heritages registered by UNESCO, contributing to promoting the image of the country and people of Vietnam. c) Consolidate and develop the museum system, renew the contents and forms of display, upgrade [the] equipment and display system, and promote the application of science and technology. Invest in building a number of national-level museums, central-level and local specialized museums; virtual museum development. Develop a legal framework for the establishment and operation of private museums. d) Innovating and improving the quality of cultural heritage education inside and outside schools by diversifying models, methods and scales; strengthen the socialization of heritage education activities. d) Innovating and

improving the treatment and honouring activities of artisans; create conditions for artisans to participate in teaching and promoting heritage in the community at home and abroad. e) Digitize and make digital maps of special national relics, national relics, national treasures and documentary heritages. Upgrading and effectively exploiting the data bank on cultural heritage of 54 ethnic groups in Vietnam in line with the requirements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution’.

***The National Collaborator network developed in this project can/will be utilised in the future:***

The International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI) has had a commendable policy of expanding its member partner countries, and in turn, each country adds new member partners, which contributes to expanding and strengthening the network for collecting intangible cultural heritage in the region. However, after 2 years of implementation (2020–2021), this policy has caused some problems that we need to discuss.

Firstly, Vietnam’s new member partners are mostly public non-business organisations/institutions, and resources for international cultural cooperation are mainly based on sponsorship funds without matching funds. The mobilisation of human and financial resources is thus very difficult.

Secondly, when VICAS invited its member partners (i.e. the Hanoi University of Culture, the Vietnam Association of Folklorists, and the Institute of Ethnology within the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences), they were not officially collaborators (unlike the legitimate cooperation between VICAS and IRCI), and they had the option of refusing VICAS’s invitation or accepting unenthusiastically. The data collection efforts, therefore, were not as effective as expected, which delayed the project’s progress.

For this reason, we (VICAS and IRCI) should consider strategies for dealing with member partners to achieve the best effect in terms of collecting ICH data.

Luckily, the conference on ‘Safeguarding and promoting the values of intangible cultural heritage in Vietnam: The current situation and solutions’ held on November 30, 2021 for ‘evaluating the protection and promotion of the values of cultural heritage of Vietnamese ethnic groups according to the 2003 Convention on the Protection of

Intangible Cultural Heritage, urgent issues in the protection of intangible cultural heritage today, and orientations and solutions to protect and promote the values of intangible cultural heritage of Vietnamese ethnic groups in the period 2021–2025’ was very fruitful, with strong participation from numerous member partners.

The IRCI's goal is to expand its membership partners to collect more data and provide a multi-dimensional view of many researchers at different organisations across Vietnam. Although we do not know how effective this work is in other countries, for Vietnam, expanding the member partner network through 1 main partner will not be effective for collecting data.

### **III. Data collection from 2019 to 2021**

#### **Data collection in 2019**

In 2019, 10 articles/books by VICAS researchers were selected for publication on IRCI Research Database, based on the following criteria:

- + A system of ICH concepts: concept, inventory, protection, and management of ICH in Vietnam under UNESCO’s 2003 Convention
- + ICH in folk culture: village festivals, folk songs, music, folk performances, handicrafts, traditional textiles, costumes, legends, stories, folksongs, and the indigenous languages of ethnic minorities
- + Solutions for safeguarding ICH: Most studies emphasise the safeguarding of ICH such as inventory, documentation, propaganda, and publicity. For example, there are a number of studies on safeguarding ICH including the role of museums, the role of village elders in preserving and transmitting traditional culture to the young, and the role of mass media in raising awareness. The studies also highlight the roles of artists and teaching experts in passing knowledge to the younger generation.
- + Policy and ICH management: cultural heritage law and the legal framework for safeguarding ICH in Vietnam. The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism is in charge of managing the safety and protection of ICH elements nationwide, from the central to the local level.

### **Data collection in 2020**

In 2020, we selected 50 qualified studies conducted by researchers from VICAS and VICAS's partners. The studies on ICH focus on the following issues:

- + The diversity of ICH in Vietnam: The collected data show the diversity of ICH including folk games, traditional festivals and ceremonies, folk practices, epics, water puppetry, shamanic rituals, and the ritual of transmitting folk knowledge. The data were approached from different interdisciplinary aspects such as folklore, ethnography, cultural studies, and anthropology.
- + Safeguarding ICH: Most studies emphasise ICH safeguarding such as inventory, documentation, classification, and dissemination of ICH.

### **Data collection in 2021**

In 2021, VICAS selected, summarised, and reviewed 70 typical books/articles on intangible cultural heritage by researchers working at VICAS and 3 member partners, namely the Hanoi University of Culture, the Vietnam Association of Folklorists, and the Institute of Ethnology within the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences. The books/articles were selected in accordance with the following criteria:

- 1/ Intangible cultural heritage of the least populous ethnic groups, i.e. those with under 10,000 people, in Vietnam
- 2/ Intangible cultural heritage in need of urgent safeguarding
- 3/ ICH policies and the management of intangible cultural heritage
- 4/ Other data on typical values, region-specific forms of intangible cultural heritage, and issues related to intangible cultural heritage that are of interest

### **Intangible cultural heritage of the least populous ethnic groups (i.e. those with under 10,000 people)**

Vietnam is a multi-nationality country with 54 ethnic groups, 16 of which are the least populous ethnic groups, with under 10,000 people, namely Si La, Odu, Brau, Rmam, Pu Peo, Cong, Mang, Bo Y, Lo, Klao, Ngai, Lu, Pa Then, Chut, La Ha, La Hu. In-depth research on issues related to the intangible cultural heritage of the least populous ethnic groups in Vietnam has attracted more interest from ethnologists since 2016. Using specialised methods, ethnologists and folklorists have studied ethnic cultures to orient and give

ethnography-based cultural and anthropological indicators for activities aimed at safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.

Studies on ethnic minorities have mainly focused on ethnographic descriptions of rituals and ways of safeguarding cultural heritage.

Regarding basic research on ethnic cultures, Nguyễn Hồng Hải and Vũ Diệu Trung have published comprehensive books on material and spiritual life, especially the intangible cultural heritage of the Bo Y, Co Lao, Pu Peo, and Lo people. Lê Thị Hương, Trần Thị Mai Lan, Sa Thị Thanh Nga, and Dương Thùy Linh have also studied these ethnic groups.

Regarding the Si La ethnic group, Phan Mạnh Dương studied funeral rites in Can Hồ commune, Mường Tè district, Lai Châu province, covering rituals such as showing the way (*nờ bô phơ* in dialect), banishing evil spirits (*ừ khe dụ ơ* in dialect), worshipping (*chì sư xư* in dialect), bringing the dead to the grave (*pà pị ế* in dialect), calling the living's soul back (*ạ xạ a ló khú* in dialect), visiting the grave (*à ve pho* in dialect), abandoning mourning (*gọ lẽ khớ pị* in dialect), and entering the altar (*xì chì thú* in dialect) in detail. These rituals describe the long journey of sending the dead to the ancestral world. In Đặng Kim Thoa's article 'Conservation of Si La culture in the current context', the current situation and causes of the disappearance of traditional culture are presented and solutions to preserve Si La culture are proposed. Hoàng Thị Lê Thảo and Trường Văn Cường's article 'Health care in the family and clan of the Si La people in Can Hồ commune, Mường Tè district, Lai Châu province' draws upon medical anthropological perspectives to study and analyse the relationship between health care and the family organisation and clan institutions of the Si La people in Can Hồ commune, Mường Tè district, Lai Châu province.

### **Intangible cultural heritage in need of urgent safeguarding**

Phan Quốc Anh's article entitled 'Problems posed in the transition from household pottery to fine art pottery in the Bàu Trúc pottery village, Ninh Thuận' addresses the Cham people's long-standing traditional pottery craft and the transition to fine art pottery to meet consumer demand and serve tourism, which is seen as a process of cultural transformation.

Từ Thị Loan's study entitled 'Xam singing – A cultural heritage in need of urgent safeguarding' evaluates the art of Xam singing to depict its beauty and essence, as well as the unique nuances of traditional music genres such as Cheo, Ca tru, Trong quan,

Quan ho, Vi singing, and lullabies. In the context of contemporary society, Xam singing is falling into oblivion and is in urgent need of safeguarding.

Lê Thanh Hồng's article entitled 'How "Ca Tru" – a form of original traditional music of Vietnam – turned into "Co dau" singing in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and its presence today' (researched in Hanoi) highlights the long history of Ca Tru, a type of traditional Vietnamese music, as well as its folk and scholarly characteristics and its many strict performance regulations. Vietnam proposed the urgent safeguarding of this type of heritage after UNESCO recognised it as intangible cultural heritage. In general, these studies demonstrate the basic characteristics of ICH and the orientation of the urgent protection work that is needed in the immediate and long term.

### **ICH policies and the management of intangible cultural heritage**

The revised Law on Cultural Heritage, along with related directives, circulars, and decrees, together create a legal corridor for the protection of intangible cultural heritage in Vietnam. On June 30, 2010, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism issued Circular 04/2010/TTBVHTTDL, which provides specific approval criteria for the recognition and inclusion of ICHs in provinces and cities nationwide on the national list of ICH. Thus, the state has cared for and safeguarded ICH, alongside the implementation of programs/projects aimed at raising communities' awareness and capacity to self-consciously protect ICH. The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism is responsible for the state-level management of ICH across the whole country. Studies have indicated effective strategies for protecting ICH at the state, provincial, and district levels, and to a small extent, also at the village/hamlet level.

Some studies emphasise the government's role in safeguarding ICH without presenting the active role of the community, which is the bearer of ICH. However, many other studies have indicated that the community is the best at safeguarding their own ICH, while the state should only play the role of supporting communities, so that they may improve their safeguarding capacity, as well as assist with ICH protection. Author Bùi Thị Thanh Thủy proposed 'the relationship between the conservation and promotion of cultural heritage values and tourism development in the current period' in her study. It is a two-way relationship involving mutual influence and interaction dependent on good, effective management for exploiting cultural heritage. She also mentioned the cohesion between cultural heritage values and tourism development.

Returning to the issue of safeguarding the traditional cultural values of ethnic minorities in the Central Highlands in the current context, author Bùi Minh Đạo studied the typical cultural values of local ethnic minorities in the Central Highlands through self-governing institutions, customary laws, communal houses, tomb houses, tomb statues, gong music, and epics. He also analysed cultural changes, their causes, and the impacts on stability and sustainable development. Nguyễn Thị Thanh Hoa, in her article entitled ‘Safeguarding and promoting cultural heritage of ethnic minorities through a human rights-based approach: From international discourse to practice in Vietnam’, affirmed ethnic minorities’ right to participate in cultural life (including the right to create, express, and distribute cultural values, practices and products), which is one of the basic rights of individuals and communities. This approach is supposed to help create positive changes in cultural development.

Research on the conservation and promotion of heritage values in the Central Highlands has been conducted by the authors Lê Anh Tuấn, Cao Trung Vinh, Lý Hành Sơn, and Nguyễn Thị Tám; their works mention the cultural heritage values prevalent in the Hà Giang province. Research on the conservation of Tai culture and the art of Xoe dance has been conducted by Chủ Thị Thu Hà, Nguyễn Thị Hạnh, and Nguyễn Mạnh Cường.

Author Phan Văn Tú expressed interest in the safeguarding and development of traditional arts in an article about the conservation and development of water puppetry through a case study on Rạch Village in the Hồng Quang commune, Nam Trực district, Nam Định province. He proposed solutions such as collecting water puppet shows, prioritising training, establishing a specialised water puppetry association, restoring unique plays, developing new items, and soliciting state financial investment in this art form.

Some authors have also discussed customary law and local knowledge to determine the best way to safeguard ICH and solve related contemporary issues. Trương Văn Cường wrote an article titled ‘The customary law or the law: The choice of the Raglai people in Khánh Hoà province in resolving conflicts and disputes today’, and Nguyễn Thẩm Thu Hà analysed the role of local knowledge and local knowledge combined with science in adapting to climate change at the community level among ethnic minorities in her study entitled ‘Local knowledge in adaptation with climate change of ethnic minorities in Vietnam’, a work in which she proposed some recommendations to improve communities’ capacity in this regard. Furthermore, Lương Hồng Quang and Bùi Thị Kim Phương studied the ‘management model of the woodblock heritage of the Vĩnh Nghiê



and Bồ Đà pagodas in Bắc Giang province’ and proposed viable options for safeguarding woodblock heritage including 1) content related to monuments and landscapes and 2) content related to the conservation and promotion of woodblock heritage values. Additionally, Lê Thọ Quốc recommended 5 solutions to prolong the life and maintain the quality and quantity of the existing woodblocks and prevent future damage to the woodblock heritage of Từ Đàm pagoda in his scientific publication entitled ‘The process of documentation and solutions to the conservation of woodblocks of Từ Đàm pagoda – Huế city’.

## **Other data**

### Research data on ethnic minorities in Vietnam

Studies have shown that researchers have conducted in-depth analyses of issues related to ethnic culture, cultural change, and adaptation to contemporary life. Khổng Diễm's article ‘Some issues of belief and religion in the mountainous ethnic minority areas in the North of Vietnam’ mentions some characteristics of traditional beliefs and current religions. The phenomenon of an increasing number of ethnic minorities in the mountainous northern area converting to and following the state-recognised religions Catholicism and Protestantism has also been studied. Trần Đức Sáng's study ‘“Têng ping” – tradition of the Co Tu people in Nam Đông district, Thừa Thiên Huế province’ has identified the important role of Têng ping in the cultural life of the Co Tu people and suggests conservation measures in accordance with the current new rural context. Among the collected data, there are 3 articles regarding the Ha Nhi ethnic group, including ‘Ancestral worship ritual of the Ha Nhi people and the marriage of the Black Ha Nhi people in Bát Xát district, Lào Cai province nowadays’ by Trị Thị Lan and ‘Houses of the Ha Nhi people in Huổi Luông commune, Phong Thổ district, Lai Châu province’ by Nguyễn Trung Bình. Research on the cultures of the Tay, Tai, Dao, and Giay people in the mountainous northern area focuses on issues such as marriage and the system of ethnic rituals; authors of these works include Ninh Thị Thương, Hoàng Văn Hùng, Vũ Thị Uyên, and Vũ Tuyết Lan.

### Studies on the cultural heritage of the Việt people

Regarding traditional art, author Nguyễn Đắc Toàn analysed the role of reputable people in the community, as well as that of artisans and the young generation in activities for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Đinh Công Tuấn, in his article entitled ‘The relationship between craft villages and craft streets of Thăng Long – Hanoi’, describes

the development of traditional crafts from ancient times through to the present in Thăng Long. The development of craft villages has not only played an important role in improving living standards, but such villages also make an important contribution to life as a mark of national cultural traditions. Bùi Xuân Đính's 'Researching the reburial custom of the Việt people' addresses some aspects of the origin of the traditional burial practice and its influence on the present life of the Việt people as scientific evidence for proposing solutions to the problems posed. Regarding beliefs and historical figures of the land, Phạm Lan Oanh, in her article entitled 'Belief in historical figures in the cultural space of the southwest region: Characteristics and values' offers a thesis involving sanctifying the biographies of historical figures in the anti-French colonialist period in the South, in which residents invent and make holy the biographies of historical figures. In so doing, the community engages in activities to honour their sacred heroes consciously and willingly. This may encourage residents to express their pride in the nation's history. In this regard, author Trần Đình Hằng provided a geohistorical view of the Quảng Nam land, associating the worship of Goddess Thu Bồn with cultural contact and exchange in the historical process. Furthermore, author Đoàn Thị Mỹ Hương discusses the image of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva Nam Hải in her article entitled 'The image of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva Nam Hải in the Việt people's beliefs – A connection between culture and heritage'. The Việt people have worshipped the Bodhisattva and considered her 'a protecting goddess' who watches over their sea trips. In the course of historical development, the image of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva Nam Hải has become a symbolic cultural phenomenon in the Việt people's beliefs.

#### **IV. Evaluation of the results collected during project implementation in the period 2019–2021**

##### **Key issues in the study of Vietnam's intangible cultural heritage**

Having examined research articles/books on Vietnam's cultural heritage from 2016 to 2021, we realise that, in recent years, most cultural heritage research has mainly focused on:

+ *Basic research on the cultural heritage of Vietnamese ethnic groups, with ethnographic descriptions*

1/ In-depth research on the rituals, crafts, folk performances, traditional festivals, etc., of the ethnic groups, especially of the least populous ethnic minorities, i.e. those numbering under 10,000 people, in Vietnam

2/ Overview of the ethnic groups' respective cultures, including their cultural heritage

+ *Applied research on the intangible cultural heritage of Vietnamese ethnic groups*

1/ In-depth research to recommend solutions for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage

2/ Anthropological/visual anthropological research to propose measures of safeguarding and promoting Vietnam's intangible cultural heritage through such products as academic, anthropological, and promotional films

### **Research trends and issues in intangible cultural heritage that need to be studied in the next period**

As previously mentioned, Vietnam is a multi-nationality country with 54 ethnic groups. Basic studies on the cultural heritage of Vietnamese ethnic groups, therefore, will be of great interest to researchers in the coming years. Studies aimed at identifying effective solutions to promote the value of intangible cultural heritage, especially in the context of treating culture as a driving force of development, will be prioritised. Therefore, research on cultural heritage in the coming years will emphasise the following four aspects:

1/ To study and promote the value of intangible cultural heritage associated with socio-economic development

2/ To study and promote the value of intangible cultural heritage in association with human resource development

3/ To study and promote the value of intangible cultural heritage that satisfies the spiritual life of cultural bearers

4/ To study and promote the value of intangible cultural heritage in accordance with the national target program for building new rural areas

## **VI. Some proposals for the next phase of collecting data on intangible cultural heritage in Vietnam and other countries**

### ***Plan 1:***

- VICAS continues the task of collecting data on research documents pertaining to Vietnam's intangible cultural heritage to update the data for IRCI's source (50 data entries).

- VICAS recommends that IRCI update their existing data and upload more data in the form of academic documentary films, anthropological films, and photos representing the intangible cultural heritage of the ethnic groups of Vietnam and other countries on the IRCI website as a means of promoting their ICH.

As for the case of Vietnam, according to the National Target Program on Culture, VICAS has been tasked with managing, collecting, safeguarding, and promoting the intangible cultural heritage of Vietnamese ethnic groups since 1997. After 22 years of implementing the program, VICAS currently possesses a huge amount of data on the ICH of Vietnam's ethnic minorities. The data are stored at the Cultural Heritage Data Centre; they include:

Documentary films on the intangible cultural heritage of Vietnamese ethnic groups: 312,615 minutes in SD standard stored on tapes, i.e. Betacam, DVCam, SVHS, and VHS, and digital files in full HD standard

Documentary photos: 91,648 photos

Academic reports: 854 reports on the intangible cultural heritage of Vietnamese ethnic groups, including traditional festivals, folk performances, traditional crafts, folk knowledge, etc.

Based on the source of the materials, VICAS and IRCI can carry out post-production activities such as filmmaking and the use of English/Japanese subtitles to promote the ICH of Vietnamese ethnic groups on the IRCI's website.

Funding:

Financial support from IRCI to pay for film montage/editing, directing, sound, lighting, writing, the translation of captions and subtitles, and interviewing researchers

VICAS provides professional editing equipment and visual materials to produce films.

**Plan 2:**

Based on the 2019–2022 data, IRCI has a fairly comprehensive view of the intangible cultural heritage in Vietnam and its member countries. IRCI has learned about the main issues concerning countries, as well as orientations for the protection of intangible cultural heritage in the coming years. Therefore, in addition to collecting research data on intangible cultural heritage, IRCI should post and publish new articles about intangible cultural heritage on the IRCI system with the following criteria set for each country:

1/ Collect cultural heritage data (50 data entries)

2/ Reach a target of 5 new research papers for full-text publication, with the following content:

- Protect and promote the intangible cultural heritage of ethnic minorities in association with economic and social development.
- Preserve various types of intangible cultural heritage and traditional art forms in danger of extinction, while prioritising the cultural heritage of ethnic groups numbering less than 10,000 people.
- Promote the value of intangible cultural heritage that has been registered with UNESCO and contribute to promoting the image of the country and people of Vietnam.

Funding:

- IRCI: Financial support for data collection and the payment of royalties for 5 newly published research papers
- VICAS will respond by establishing a committee to select articles and specifying related administrative procedures.

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The above is a report on reviewing research issues related to the project 'Collecting research data on the intangible cultural heritage of Vietnam'.

