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Intangible Cultural Heritage

# NGO Review of Accreditation

ICH-08 Report – Form

## REPORT BY A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION ACCREDITED TO ACT IN AN ADVISORY CAPACITY TO THE COMMITTEE ON ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

**Deadline: 15 February 2023  
for examination in 2023**

File may be downloaded at:  
<https://ich.unesco.org/en/forms>

*Please provide only the information requested below.  
Annexes or other additional materials cannot be accepted.*

### **A. Identification of the organization**

#### **A.1. Name of the organization submitting this report**

A.1.a. *Provide the full official name of the organization in its original language, as it appears on the official documents.*

Many Hands International

A.1.b. *Name of the organization in English and/or French.*

Many Hands International

A.1.c. *Accreditation number of the organization (as indicated in all previous correspondence: NGO-90XXX)*

NGO-90379

#### **A.2. Address of the organization**

*Provide the complete postal address of the organization, as well as additional contact information such as its telephone number, email address, website, etc. This should be the postal address where the organization carries out its business, regardless of where it may be legally domiciled. In the case of internationally active organizations, please provide the address of the headquarters.*

Organization: Many Hands International

Address: 1209 Mt Dandenong Tourist Road, Kalorama, Victoria 3766, Australia

Telephone number: +61 448 336 213

Email address: contact@manyhands.org.au

Website: www.manyhands.org.au

Other relevant information: Postal address has recently changed to the address provided above.

### A.3. Contact person for correspondence

Provide the complete name, address and other contact information of the person responsible for correspondence concerning this report.

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Ms

Family name: Holly

Given name: Schauble

Institution/position: Director

Address: 1209 Mt Dandenong Tourist Road, Kalorama, Victoria 3766, Australia

Telephone number: +61 448 336 213

Email address: holly.schauble@manyhands.org.au

Other relevant information:

## B. Contribution of the organization to the implementation of the Convention at the national and international levels (Chapter III and Article 19 of the Convention, paragraph 156 of the Operational Directives)<sup>1</sup>

*Distinguish between completed activities and ongoing activities contributing to the eight thematic areas of the Convention's Overall Results Framework<sup>2</sup>, as well as to the preparation of periodic reports, nominations, proposals and requests under the Convention's international cooperation mechanisms. If you have not contributed, this should be indicated. Also describe any obstacles or difficulties that your organization may have encountered in such participation.*

**B.1.** Describe your organization's contribution to strengthening **institutional and human capacities** for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.

*Not to exceed 250 words*

*Note 1:* MHI's ability to contribute to the implementation of the Convention during the reporting period was heavily curtailed by COVID-19. This was due to local lockdowns as well as to MHI's sense of responsibility to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by limiting travel and holding of in-person activities. This was an acknowledgement that a) ICH custodians are often more vulnerable due to being (generally) older, and b) that the whole community is more vulnerable due to poverty.

1. In case your organization operates in several States, please indicate clearly which State or States are concerned by your answers where appropriate.
2. For further information on the Overall Results Framework, please refer to the Chapter 8 of the Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/basic-texts-00503>

Note 2: All MHI's events and activities are delivered free of charge to the community.

### **Strengthening of human capacities**

MHI has continued to build the capability of staff and community members in Timor-Leste in ICH research, data management and modes of transmission for the purpose of ICH safeguarding. MHI Directors mentor staff to integrate ICH into regular activities, such as our youth performing and visual arts programs. For example, by including traditional dances in performing arts classes. MHI also builds the capability through one-off projects. For example, in 2020, MHI received a grant from the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) Library's Modern Endangered Archives Program. The purpose was to digitise the endangered vaihoho (sung-poems) collection of local Fataluku cultural researcher, Justino Valentim (deceased). While UCLA's focus was on preservation of archives, MHI's was also on the safeguarding of vaihoho as an element of ICH. MHI staff worked with the family of Justino to:

- Locate and digitise the vaihoho collection.
- Conduct further cultural research about the vaihoho with the community members who had originally shared the vaihoho (or, when deceased, with their families).
- Document the research findings and add the new data to the digitised collection.

The digitised collection is now stored in the archives of UCLA as well as with MHI and the Valentim family. A book of the collection was produced for community members to share knowledge about this element of ICH. Throughout the project, MHI Australian volunteers provided training and mentoring to MHI staff and the Valentim family in material culture conservation, digitisation processes and the identification and collection of missing ICH information. Advice was also provided by UCLA. The project was important in that a number of the vaihoho custodians had already died, and of the custodians who were still alive, the majority had forgotten some or all of the vaihoho they had shared with Justino. Custodians expressed happiness that the vaihoho had been returned to them and that the vaihoho were now safeguarded and could continue to be passed on to future generations.

In 2019, MHI support its Team Leader and Cultural Research Manager Idefonso da Silva to undertake training to advance his video editing skills using the software Adobe Premier Pro. These skills are essential for creating viewer-friendly ICH videos that support transmission and education.

In the second half of 2018, MHI supported its (then) Team Leader Nelinha Pereira to undertake an English language scholarship in Melbourne, Australia. The scholarship was awarded by *Matadalan Ba Malu* Timor-Leste Research Program, RMIT University. This program was established for women from Timor-Leste who display outstanding community-mindedness and leadership. The scholarship included an internship at the Box Hill Community Arts Centre to support Nelinha to further develop her skills in the management of a cultural organisation. MHI provided accommodation and additional financial support.

MHI has also continued to strengthen staff capability in a range of skills that support safeguarding activities, such as program planning, project management, document management, evaluation, engagement and communications.

### **Strengthening of institutional capacities**

MHI is co-located with the State Secretariat for Arts and Culture (SEAC) in the Lautem Cultural Centre. The Lautem Cultural Centre is a facility that was conceived of by MHI and realised in partnership with the Government of Timor-Leste. A government facility, MHI runs the centre's programs (the only regular activities to be delivered in the centre), which include delivery of daily visual and performing arts classes, an exhibition and cultural performance program, and other one-off cultural projects. These contribute to ICH safeguarding through sharing ICH with participants and audiences. MHI supports local and national SEAC staff to be involved in and

learn from MHI safeguarding activities. SEAC regularly requests MHI to deliver or be involved in delivery of activities for SEAC based on MHI's expertise.

**B.2.** Describe your organization's participation in activities related to the **transmission of and education for intangible cultural heritage**. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

*Not to exceed 250 words*

### **Educational activities**

MHI continues to help safeguard ICH by providing ongoing opportunities for young people and their communities to learn about, express and form stronger connections to ICH through the programs we run out of the Lautem Cultural Centre. MHI established this centre with the Government of Timor-Leste in 2013. Through the Youth Arts Program, students learn traditional and new visual and performing arts skills. They explore elements of ICH with MHI staff and community custodians of cultural knowledge and practice. They use these elements as inspiration, giving them expression through the creation of new works.

MHI cooperates with schools in Lautem to deliver opportunities for young people to engage with their ICH and understand its importance for sustainable development. For example, in 2019, the Government of Timor-Leste announced the country's aim to become plastic-neutral, and in February 2021 a ban on single-use plastic came into effect. Despite the ban, use of single-use plastic bags continues to be prevalent due to limited community awareness and understanding of the ban, continued availability of single-use plastic bags, and a market-deficiency in sustainable alternatives. In response to this issue, MHI held an environmental workshop with 50 students from the Central Junior High School in October 2021. The objectives of the workshop were to a) increase students understanding of the impact of plastic bags on the environment, b) equip them to help address this issue by making and using traditional woven baskets and, in doing so, c) support ICH safeguarding through transmission of knowledge and skills. In the workshop, staff from the State Secretariat of Environment presented the government's policy and implementation plan, MHI's Community Engagement and Impact Officer Thomas Lopes shared information on the impact of plastics on environmental and human health, and then five women basket weavers (contracted by MHI) provided hands-on training in the production of traditional baskets. The workshop was a great success, with evaluation revealing that:

- 89% had gained new cultural knowledge and skills in basket-weaving
- 68% had gained new knowledge of plastic bag pollution and its negative impact on the environment
- 95% felt that the workshop had been important to them (no response was given by the other 5%)
- 92% reported they would like to use traditional baskets instead of plastic bags in their daily life
- 92% intended not to use plastic bags in future (no response was given by the other 8%)

The Director of the Central Junior School was so pleased with the workshop and the level of engagement experienced by her students that she subsequently asked MHI to provide daily creative cultural workshops for her 400 students. However, due to funding constraints, MHI was unable to accommodate this request; we continue to look for funding to enable us to meet her request.

Other examples of MHI's activities supporting transmission and education follow below.

### **Performances/events sharing and exploring ICH**

MHI produces monthly cultural nights in which MHI Youth Arts Program students and other community members perform one of more of:

- Traditional dances
- Modern dances incorporating elements of traditional dance
- Traditional music
- Modern music incorporating elements of traditional music
- Traditional sung-poems and poems
- Short theatre works including incorporating expressions ICH

The different works are introduced with a short overview of the ICH involved. The artworks of MHI visual arts students are also exhibited as part of the monthly performances. These often draw inspiration from or depict elements ICH and associated material culture.

MHI also puts on other events, such as those created for national celebration days. For example, in July/August 2021, MHI ran a school holiday program in which participants developed theatre, dance and drumming works (both traditional and modern) to commemorate FALINTIL (the Armed Forces of National Liberation of Timor-Leste) Day on 20 August. These works were performed at a concert staged by MHI at the Lautem Cultural Centre. Local musicians also performed and artworks created by MHI's visual arts student that celebrated culture and history were exhibited.

In 2019, MHI contracted performance artist Lena Caminha from Teatro Timor to work with young students from the MHI Youth Arts Program to create a theatre performance for community. Four short performance pieces were created by the students, including one that explored issues related to *barlake* (bride price practices) in the modern social context. This was a theme proposed by the students and for which they looked at how *barlake* had evolved from its original purpose (equal exchange of goods to cement family relationships) and practices to its current practices.

### **Mother Tongue Books**

During 2018-2020, MHI produced five different children's picture books published in three mother tongue languages. One of the books, *Let's Count! Traditional Instruments of Lautem*, supports children to learn about their cultural heritage at the same time as developing numeracy and literacy skills.

**B.3.** Describe your organization's participation in the **inventorying and research** of intangible cultural heritage. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

Not to exceed 250 words

In 2021, MHI worked with young women to implement the creative research project *Honouring Female Veterans of Lautem Project*. Funded through a Returned Australian Volunteer Network (RAVN) *Go Back Give Back* grant, this project sought to develop public recognition of the contribution of women and their ongoing role in building strong and peaceful communities as freedom fighters, mothers, grandmothers, mentors and community leaders. Many women in Timor-Leste played a vital role in the nation's fight for independence and yet very little is known about their contribution. To publicly honour the Timorese veteran women, 20 women from across the Lautem municipality were invited to share their stories, reflections, life learnings and advice on how to have positive family and community relations. The women were interviewed by 20 young female participants, supported by MHI staff skilled in research. The young female

participants recorded the women's stories in writing and MHI staff captured the stories on video. Rico then worked with the MHI team to edit the recordings into documentary videos. The young participants painted the veteran's portraits at the Lautem Cultural Centre under the tutelage of MHI's Youth Arts Program Leader Cesario Lourdes and with support of MHI senior art students. The portraits, written stories and documentary videos of the women were then publicly celebrated through an exhibition at the Lautem Cultural Centre. The women veterans were in attendance during a school holiday program so that students could meet, hear from, and ask questions of them. The project received extremely positive feedback from participants, community, government and funders.

During the reporting period, MHI continued to edit video footage from its endangered ICH research project (implemented before accreditation). The videos and other research data continued to be organised and uploaded to a digital collections website (OMEKA).

**B.4.** Describe your organization's participation in developing **policies, as well as legal and administrative measures**, for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

Not to exceed 250 words

N/A

**B.5.** Describe your organization's participation in promoting the **role of intangible cultural heritage and its safeguarding in society**. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

Not to exceed 250 words

## Articles

In May 2021, MHI wrote an article about the *vaihoho* (sung-poem) collection of Justino Valentim with the support of former MHI volunteer and writer Marian Reid. Entitled *Vaihoho*, the article explores *vaihoho* as a cultural expression, its importance for community and the staff members' journey to safeguard Justino's collection. The article was published in Garland Magazine which is produced by the World Crafts Council Australia (a national entity of the World Crafts Council Asia Pacific). The magazine is a platform for thoughtful writing about craft and design within the Asia-Pacific region and aims to promote dialogue and opportunities. The article can be read at [https://garlandmag.com/article/rekindling-the-vaihoho-song-poems-of-timor-leste/?fbclid=IwAR3HjnXiQWuq4do9G84XqX1O9ezSaywsRp2GJXHJvgjru\\_2IRI4iKPspjDU](https://garlandmag.com/article/rekindling-the-vaihoho-song-poems-of-timor-leste/?fbclid=IwAR3HjnXiQWuq4do9G84XqX1O9ezSaywsRp2GJXHJvgjru_2IRI4iKPspjDU)

## Speaking events

In 2021, Director Holly Schauble was a guest presenter at an event organised by the Mornington Peninsula Friends of Lospalos community group. Holly spoke on the role of culture and development in Timor-Leste, including the importance of ICH safeguarding.

In 2019, the MHI team took part in the Timor-Leste Studies Association's Conferences New Research on Timor-Leste. MHI's Cultural Research Manager Idefonso da Silva presented on MHI's research project supporting Fataluku people to record, store and digitally share their endangered forms of intangible cultural heritage expression. This included discussion about the role of ICH and why it's important to safeguard it.

In the second half of 2018, MHI team member Nelinha Pereira was a guest presenter at the Melbourne East Timor Activity Centre. Nelinha was in Melbourne on an English language scholarship and she spoke to the audience about MHI's activities in Timor-Leste, including the importance of ICH and our work with communities to safeguard it.

In the second half of 2018, MHI Director Holly Schauble presented on a panel at the 22nd Biennial Conference of Asian Studies Association of Australia, hosted by the University of

Sydney. In her presentation titled *Using the OMEKA Platform to Share Cultural Heritage*, Holly discussed the progress of MHI's work to support the Fataluku people of Timor-Leste to safeguard critically endangered ICH elements, which included discussion of the role of ICH.

**B.6.** Describe your organization's participation in **raising awareness** about intangible cultural heritage. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

Not to exceed 250 words

MHI raises awareness about ICH as a matter of course in all its activities, as can be seen in previously detailed activities.

During the reporting period, MHI shared ICH research videos and associated information from its endangered Fataluku ICH research project on Facebook. These videos (in Fataluku language) have been viewed thousands of times, with the most popular video having been viewed 24,800 times. The videos are also available on YouTube and the OMEKA. In the videos, community members share their knowledge and practice of endangered forms of Fataluku cultural expression. On the OMEKA site, recordings are accompanied by additional cultural information and other metadata. The OMEKA site requires a lot of data and good internet connection to play the videos, both of which are problematic in Timor-Leste. Consequently, MHI is now in the process of creating a dedicated website with embedded YouTube links that will result in improved quality and accessibility for Fataluku communities in Timor-Leste and their diaspora. This project is being supported by the IOM in 2023.

MHI also shared ICH research findings from other projects, including the Portrait Avo (grandparent) project which support young people to a) conduct research interviews with their grandparents about their personal histories and culture, b) paint their grandparents portraits and then c) share this information and art with community through a public exhibition.

### **Exhibitions**

In November 2022, MHI was invited to participate in the Festival of Culture and Music on Atauro Island, organised under the patronage of the President of Timor-Leste. MHI exhibited students' art works and MHI staff shared information about the role of ICH MHI's work with communities to safeguard it, including with the President of Timor-Leste and government ministers.

In November 2021, MHI was invited to participate in the Manatuto Arts and Crafts Festival. MHI exhibited past and present students' art works and showcased information about MHI's cultural activities, including ICH safeguarding activities. A small number of MHI senior students had the opportunity to attend with MHI staff. The MHI exhibition drew a large crowd, and visitors were most impressed with the students' paintings and environmental artworks. The Minister of Education, Youth and Sport, Bonifácio Mau Coli dos Reis, and Vice Minister of Trade and Industry, Domingos Lopes Antunes, attended MHI's exhibition and were very interested to learn about the organisation, congratulating MHI on its work.

In September 2018, six MHI senior art students represented their peers at their very own art exhibition at the Xanana Reading Room in Dili. More than 100 student works were displayed in mediums of glass painting, lino print and papier mache. The theme of exhibition was entitled *My family, my culture: strengthening positive relationships through art*. Opening night drew a large crowd and the MHI students and Youth Arts Program Leader spoke about the role of ICH in developing and maintaining positive family (and community) relationships. The event was supported by Volunteer Service Abroad New Zealand and the Xanana Reading Room.

**B.7.** Describe your organization's participation in facilitating the engagement of communities, groups and individuals, as well as other stakeholders, for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.

Not to exceed 250 words

MHI facilitates engagement by partnering and co-designing safeguarding projects and program activities with individual ICH custodians, communities and government and non-government organisations.

MHI cooperates with village, municipal and national government in Timor-Leste to deliver activities that safeguard ICH. For example, in December 2020, MHI was invited by the State Secretariat for Art and Culture to help deliver the National Cultural Festival in Lospalos. MHI provided advice on how to organise a festival and also contributed by organising a cultural goods exhibition/market which facilitated community engagement with producers to learn about traditional crafts and other goods. MHI also produced an exhibition MHI students' artworks incorporating/inspired by ICH (for example, depictions of dance) as well as ICH research videos. Community members were very engaged in the exhibitions and enjoyed the opportunity to learn about and discuss ICH and its safeguarding.

MHI regularly engages with the Lautem Municipal Administration to discuss plans, activities and approaches, and to seek advice and provide it when requested. For example, in July 2022, MHI participated in a meeting at the Municipal administration for all NGOs to discuss their annual implementation programs. MHI presented its program and identified how this helps deliver on the National Development Plan and various international cultural conventions (such as the 2003 Convention). MHI's positive engagement has led to the Municipal Administration supporting MHI's activities, often speaking at MHI events as well as providing written support for MHI's various funding applications for ICH safeguarding activities.

**B.8.** Describe your organization's **engagement in cooperation at the bilateral, subregional, regional or international levels** for the implementation of the Convention, including initiatives such as the exchange of information and experience, and other joint initiatives.

Not to exceed 250 words

During the reporting year, MHI cooperated with the Australian Government and New Zealand Government through their volunteer programs. These programs enabled MHI to receive volunteers who have supported MHI staff and communities to develop skills that facilitate the safeguarding of ICH. MHI also received a grant from the Australian Government to produce children's picture books in mother tongue languages.

**B.9.** Describe your organization's involvement in or contribution to the drafting of the national Periodic Report on the implementation of the Convention.

Not to exceed 250 words

Nil to date.

**B.10.** Describe your organization's participation in the preparation of nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List or Representative List, requests for International Assistance or proposals of Good Safeguarding Practices.

Not to exceed 250 words

Nil to date.



## C. Cooperation with UNESCO

Has your organization carried out activities in cooperation with UNESCO? If yes, please tick the relevant boxes and provide information in the box below.

- Direct cooperation with UNESCO (Headquarters and Field Offices)
- Activities for which you have received the authorization to use the emblem of UNESCO/of the 2003 Convention
- Cooperation through the 2003 Convention's Global Network of Facilitators
- Cooperation with Category 2 Centres
- Cooperation with National Commissions for UNESCO
- Cooperation with UNESCO Chairs
- Financial support from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund
- Financial support from the Participation Programme
- Other types of cooperation

Not to exceed 250 words

N/A

## D. Participation in the work of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

**D.1** Has your organization participated in the sessions of the Committee? If so, please indicate which sessions you attended and whether you had any specific role during these meetings.

Not to exceed 250 words

N/A. However, participated (observer) in the 'Open-ended intergovernmental working group in the framework of the global reflection' in September 2021.

**D.2** Has your organization served as a member of the Evaluation Body (paragraphs 26 to 31 of the Operational Directives), or as a member of the Consultative Body (between 2012 and 2014)? If so, please indicate the period.

Not to exceed 100 words

N/A. However, participated (survey respondent) in UNESCO IOS Evaluation Office's 'Evaluation of the UNESCO's action within the framework of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage'.

**D.3** In what way(s) has your organization provided advisory services to the Committee (paragraph 96 of the Operational Directives) or in what way(s) do you foresee that it might provide such services in the future?

Not to exceed 500 words

MHI has not yet provided advisory services to the Committee but can foresee that it might provide services in the future when Timor-Leste submits nominates to the safeguarding list.

## **E. Capacities of your organization to evaluate nominations, proposals and requests (paragraphs 27 and 96 of the Operational Directives):**

**E.1.** *Nominations, proposals and requests are available for evaluation only in English or French. Do members of your organization or your staff have a very good command of English or French? If so, please indicate which language(s) and the number of those members or staff.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

Yes, English- three staff members.

**E.2.** *Does your organization have experience in working across several intangible cultural heritage domains? Please describe your experiences.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

Yes.

- Oral traditions and expressions
- Performing arts
- Social practices, rituals and festive events
- Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe
- Traditional craftsmanship

**E.3.** *Describe the experience of your organization in evaluating and analysing documents such as proposals or applications.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

Two of MHI's Directors have experience working in academic settings as researchers. These same Directors have contributed to the development of an evaluation framework for measuring the outcomes of cultural activities and have experience in evaluating proposals and grant applications in a government context (State and Local). MHI staff have an understanding of the evaluation of proposals and applications due to having written so many applications themselves; they have the ability to assess their own responses against the intention and criteria of grant programs.

**E.4.** *Does your organization have experience in drafting synthetic texts in English or French? Please describe your experience and indicate in which language(s) and the number of those members or staff.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

MHI's three Directors have experience synthesising texts in English. This includes drawing information for various sources, such as:

- Government reports and policies
- Academic journal articles and research reports
- Multilateral/international strategies, policies and reports.

Two Timorese staff have experience in synthesising texts in English, but require support to do so.

**E.5.** *Does your organization have experience in working at the international level or the capacity to apply local experience to an international context? Please describe such experience.*

*Not to exceed 250 words*

All three of MHI's Directors have experience working at the international level in a number of

countries. MHI's staff in Timor-Leste have the capacity to apply local experience to an international context. MHI's Youth Arts Leader has exhibited and participated in forums and exhibitions in numerous countries in the Asia Pacific Region and Europe.

## F. Membership in the ICH NGO Forum

Indicate below whether your organization wishes to (continue to) be part of the ICH NGO Forum. Please note that membership is contingent upon the decision of the Committee to maintain the accreditation of your organization.

For more information on the ICH NGO Forum and its activities, please see: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/ngo-forums-00422>.

Yes

No

## G. Signature

The report must include the name and signature of the person empowered to sign it on behalf of your organization.

Name: Holly Schauble

Title: Director

Date: 20/03/2023

Signature:

