

Support programme to People's Museums in Uganda

Report on first workshop for initiators

Kampala, 22-26 June 2009



Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda

Kampala, July 2009

Day 1: Monday 22nd June

Introductions The first day started with a round of introductions. This was done by asking each of the teams present (representing one ‘museum’ at the time) to talk about their initiative and, especially, to explain their motivation for setting up their museum (see box 1 for examples and Annex I for a list of participants with contact addresses).

These introductions were helped by projecting a map indicating the location of the various initiatives represented in the room (see Annex II).

Emily Drani then introduced the Cross-cultural Foundation of Uganda, the reasons for its interest in ‘people’s museums’ and how this came about. This was informed by CCFU’s emphasis on harnessing the positive aspects of culture for national development through three programme areas, focusing on ‘culture in development’, ‘heritage work’ and ‘cultural diversity’ (see Annex III).

Box 1: Motivation for setting up a “people’s museum”: some examples

- Koogere museum (Fort Portal): to preserve our culture amidst the local people and to equip people to use local cultural resources to face development challenges
- Human rights focus (Gulu): to bring peace in the region through non-military means
- Kikonzo language and cultural centre (Kasese): to promote the culture of the Bakonzo and sustain it, especially for the younger generations, and to address rebellion
- Kabarole Kingdom: to ensure that regalia are no longer under lock and key and to showcase 4,000 years of history, especially metal-smithing.

Workshop programme and objectives Emily also took the participants through the objectives of CCFU’s 2–year programme of support for people’s initiatives in Uganda and the various activities that this will include (Box 2). She explained how this design had emerged from an inventory exercise carried out in 2008 (funded by UNESCO), when all the museums represented in the workshop were visited and their support needs discussed. Finally, she took participants through the programme for the week and its rationale (see Annex IV).

Box 2: Objectives of the programme and main activities;

The over all objective of the workshop was “to develop the skills of museum initiators to better manage their cultural assets”.

Specific objectives included:

- To acquire knowledge and skills on preservation techniques, presentation and marketing of individual initiatives
- To develop basic financial management and fundraising skills
- To develop business plans based on knowledge and skills acquired
- To learn about challenges and achievements of existing museums

Trends in museography The rest of the morning was devoted to a presentation by Dr. E. Kamuhangire, from Cheremaco consultants and formerly Commissioner for Museums and Antiquities, followed by a discussion. The focus of the session was on ‘new trends in museography and living museums’ (For a copy of the paper, see Annex V). Dr. Kamuhangire’s point of departure was the challenges that the CCFU mapping exercise had identified in relation to the peoples’ museums visited at the time, viz:

- Limited marketing and income generation skills.
- Limited skills in presenting, preserving and managing their collection.
- Limited infrastructure for displays
- Initiatives are isolated (from the wider environment and from each other)
- Legal challenges (e.g. securing land titles)

Dr. Kamuhangire suggested that such challenges could not be solved by a small grant, but by new ideas, linked to the concept of a ‘living museum’, where visiting a museum becomes a lasting experience, and where there is a strong community focus. These are in contrast to the more conventional museums that tend to be static, often irrelevant to the local population and even depict African culture as backward.

He ended by suggesting that peoples’ museums could become akin to a cooperative society or an NGO, with additional sources of revenue in the form of membership fees and donations. This would help the museum to become more sustainable and move on from a purely individual initiative and its limitations. Secondly, a local initiative could benefit from seed capital from a wealthy individual, but its governance would then have to ensure that community interests are preserved as paramount. A case in point is the Igongo Cultural Centre initiative, which is being built and will include various facilities in

Box 3: steps Mind map of a Living Museum.



addition to a museum (library, cottages, etc.). Ownership can also be enhanced at community level if some of the revenue returns to the community and if there is a supreme management committee with community representation.

A lively discussion ensued, with a key question being addressed by participants: “How far or how is our initiative from a ‘living museum’?” Many examples were given, including having donors of artefacts captured on video as they explain what they wish to give (URDT museum in Kagadi); linking the collection to live dance and drama performances (Moroto women’s museum); linking the museum to local radio programmes (Kogeere, Edirisa, URDT); having annual cultural exhibitions (various); link the collection to contemporary events (Kawere) and development challenges, such as peace building (Gulu museum); partnering with government and other institutions, e.g. the Wildlife Authority (Igongo).

The various steps that the people’s museums represented in the workshop had taken to move in the ‘living museum’ direction and from which one could learn from each other were summarized in the form of a mind map (see Box 3).

The morning ended with a recap: the key points emerging from the presentation and subsequent discussion to achieve more sustainability and relevance (see Box 4).

- Box 4: To achieve a greater degree of sustainability and relevance, let us think about:**
- Moving towards a ‘living museum’ (evolving, progressive, infinite)
 - Community: community involvement, in all facets, is important
 - Ownership and Governance: let’s go beyond an individual’s or family’s initiative

Managing collections The focus of the afternoon programme was on “managing one’s collection” and was led by Nelson Abiti, a Conservator at the Uganda National Museum (see Annex VI).

Mission statements After this first part of his presentation, John De Coninck, from CCFU, took the participants through an exercise to reflect further on the purpose of their museum, by helping them to develop a mission statement for their museum. He emphasised that a mission statement should ideally explain why an organisation exists, what it does, for whom it exists and anything else that makes the organisation unique or special. A mission statement should also be brief, unique and clear; memorable and inspiring; demanding but achievable (see AnnexVII).

Based on these criteria, participants developed mission statements for their respective museums and subjected their drafts to peer reviews. These were completed in the evening (see Box 5)

The last part of the afternoon was devoted to the practicalities of managing one's collection, with the rest of N. Abiti's presentation (see Annex VI). Participants were given a sample format of an inventory form to fill as an exercise (Annex VIII).

Box 5: Examples of mission statements:

- To conserve and show case the human heritage in the ancient regalia of the kings of Bunyoro-Kitara
- To research and preserve Busoga's Cultural knowledge and Art for Pride. (CRC)
- To Recognize, Protect and Research on Tooro Cultural Heritage for

Day 2, Tuesday 23rd June

After a recap on the previous day (by Anthony Arineitwe from Edirisa), day 2 of the workshop focused on two themes: marketing and collection preservation.

Marketing Regarding the first topic, Deus Muhwezi from Makerere University led a presentation on "Marketing one's museum" (see Annex IX). This aimed at introducing participants to the concept of a customer and how to attract a customer to a small museum; and at introducing different marketing techniques that can be used by small museums to attract and retain customers. Salient points from this presentation included the following:

- A museum experience is about people: the customer must be a prime focus. A customer is not an interruption of our work...s/he is the purpose of it. It is therefore important to invest in educating both consumers and staff on the benefits of interaction and to educate the museum staff on how to manage client – staff interaction when selling the experience.
- The experience can be made more tangible by converting it into physical handouts (e.g. pictorial references, duplicates of arts/souvenirs and notes to reinforce images of a visit at a cost).
- All products rot when unsold and this means that managing demand and capacity is very important.
- If one thinks marketing is expensive, what about a smile? And what about word of mouth marketing?

Small groups of participants shared ways in which they currently market their initiatives. These included:

- Flyers and brochures
- Visiting interested or potentially interested institutions (e.g. schools)
- Concerts and other performances
- Word of mouth
- Internet websites
- Discounts given to groups, such as schools

- Sale of crafts
- Lobby (as with the local government's education department)

To this, the presenters added other possibilities, such as sponsoring local events, inviting journalists, and cooperating with other like-minded museums. A project at Makerere University, the ICT incubator initiative, could be usefully accessed in this regard, such as in creating a common website.

Brochure development A practical way to market one's museum is to have a brochure and participants were later helped by Naomi Kabarungi of CCFU to develop their own 'dummy' brochure. This was introduced by a 'Chinese whispers' exercise to underscore the need for clear communication, to which a brochure can and should contribute (Annex X). It was pointed out that a brochure could help in:

- Selling one's museum;
- Emphasise one's commitment to the museum
- Show permanence
- Show professionalism

The participants and the presenter developed a list of criteria for an effective brochure (see Annex X). This included:

- A clear, brief but comprehensive message
- An attractive, even unique presentation
- A call for action

It was explained that the support programme could help the individual museums develop and produce individual brochures if so desired.

Participants then developed their own 'dummy' brochure, attempting to be as creative as possible. These will be taken forward after the workshop.

Preservation techniques Much of the afternoon was spent going to the National Museum to benefit from a practical session, led by Nelson Abiti, on how to preserve one's collection. The tour included a visit to the traditional huts and to the museum's store to explain preservation techniques.

Some key messages on collection preservation included:

- 'prevention is better than cure': simple measures to extend the life of a collection include:
 - Proper drainage outside any exhibition room so that wall as not damp.
 - Keeping the grass at bay to prevent insect and rodent infestation.
 - Not allowing food in the museum (also to prevent rodents and insects)
 - Showing staff how to handle fragile artifacts (e.g. holding a pot by its base)
 - To prevent loss and theft, carefully marking each item, using indelible ink for instance, each with their identification form.
 - Using some objects can also prolong their life e.g. milk gourds.
 - Preventing fires by having good electrical wiring (also having a fire extinguisher)
 - Newer objects are more prone to breakages (e.g. those made of uncured wood).

- ‘local preservation methods can be effective, cheap, available and less dangerous than chemicals’. While freezing offers a good way to kill insects, more affordable methods include:
 - Using rat traps or even better, having a cat to deal with the rats!
 - Smoking huts and other artifacts
 - Involving community members who are knowledgeable in identifying and using locally available plants and herbs, tress... (e.g. smoking red peppers to drive bats away)
- Restoration can be accomplished using simple means:
 - Carpenters’ glue for wooden items
 - Sewing textiles

Participants learn how glue can be used to restore broken objects



- Making an inventory of items can also involve simple technology:
 - Scales
 - A tape measure
 - A camera and a white back ground to place the object for taking the photo.

This was also an opportunity for participants to briefly visit the main museum in the country and to view some the exhibits.

Day 3, Wednesday 24th June

The participants shared key messages and lessons derived from the visit to the Uganda National Museum. The key messages were that preventive measures are better than curative measures;

Box 6: Use of Polythene materials as a Preservation method



cheap preservation methods (such as smoking, use of acid proof polythene wrapping, sun-drying, dipping items in spirit, maintaining good drainage, using rat traps and sealing cracks in a building) can be effective; chemicals are harmful to humans and should be avoided; where possible a freezer may be used to preserve items. A fire extinguisher should be provided as a safety measure.

Some of the lessons shared were that, since preference is often given to objects that are old rather than new, items need to be handled with care. Items should also be labelled with a permanent marker to avoid theft.

Field visits: On the third day of the training workshop, participants had an opportunity to visit three initiatives of private museums with the aim of learning new things in terms of preservation and conservation techniques for Museum objects, museum management and governance, marketing, sustainability and community involvement. The three museums visited were i) African Christian Museum located in Bunga about 4km from Kampala, ii) Kawere African Museum located along Masaka road, 5km from Kampala, and iii) African Research and Documentation Center, Nkozi University, 100km away . In preparation for the field visits, in groups of 3, led by a Chairperson and Secretary, participants spent the entire day in the field gathering the required information and later returned to prepare their presentations which were made on Day 4.



Day 4: Thursday 25th June

Reflections on field visit In the first session on the fourth day, rapporteurs of the three groups presented their group findings (See Annex XI).

All the three groups indicated that the three Museums visited are relatively being well managed though some lack governance structures for accountability purposes. With the exception of Kawere African Museum, the other two museums did not have marketing strategies, be it use of brochures or adequate sign posts. However, local communities were involved in different ways in the sustainable management of the museums visited. For instance, at Nkozi University Museum, the community is heavily involved in collecting objects and surrender them to the Museum and at

Kawere African museum, the local community relates well with the Museum and sometimes guide visitors. The visits therefore provided an excellent learning experience for the participants because of the new techniques they learnt, the glass cases at African Christian Museum and the use of light at Nkozi are some of the examples of preservation techniques. At the same time, the field visits provided an opportunity for the initiators of the museums visited to learn from other members with similar museums from other parts of the country for instance Edirisa and Nkozi University.

Following the three presentations participants reflected on the advantages and disadvantages of individual / institutionally management museums as follows:

- An individually run museum has the advantage of quick decision making processes, close supervision and management, low administrative costs, well protected items, high motivation to preserve and learn about the items and at the end of the day profits are enjoyed alone!
However there is limited human resource to manage the museum and business may close in the owner's absence which may result in loss of clients and money. All the costs and risks are borne by the owner, sustainability is weak in case of illness or demise of the owner; heavy work load may lead to fatigue and lack of creativity. With limited consultation, there is a risk of wrong decisions being taken.
- An institutionally managed museum has the advantage of being fairly stable and financial secure, potentially efficiently managed with continuity ensured in the absence of the museum manager; the workload is shared allowing space for creativity and less fatigue; marketing is made easier using the reputation and facilities of the host institution.

The disadvantages of an institutionally managed museum is that the decision making process may be slow with too much consultation; competing interests may find the museum at the bottom of the heap (not a priority for funding); limited ownership of items may lead to careless handling; depending on Board decisions may limit creativity and endanger the museums survival as funds may be diverted to other more pressing organisational needs.

It is therefore important to determine what aspects of management of a museum initiative are essential to ensure efficiency and effective management; and allow for creativity and sustainability.

Financial management In this session, Eresi Mbambu engaged participants in collectively defining financial management, which in simple terms is, "*how we raise and spend our money to achieve our desired objectives*". Financial management includes planning, organising, controlling and monitoring of funds / money. She described the contents of a receipt and payment voucher, on which financial transactions are recorded and are the basis of entries in a cash book. A cash book, which is a record of financial transactions in a given period (including date, description, reference, income, expenditure and balance), was discussed in relation to its use as a management tool. She likened a cashbook to a cupboard where items are sorted and categorised, making it possible to easily assess over/under expenditure and take financial management decisions. (See Annex XII)

In small groups of 3, participants were given a practical exercise to complete a cash book. The objective of this exercise was to enhance participants' book keeping skills by practically learning how to use a cash book by utilising information generated on receipts and payment vouchers, assess income from various sources and how it has been spent over a given period.

Participants doing an exercise.



Participants doing an exercise.

Fundraising and income generating session The purpose of this session was to understanding how and for what purpose funds may be raised. John De Coninck stimulated a discussion on reasons why people fundraise (including fundraising to generate money to accomplish a project, to generate new ideas, to market an organisation, to raise its profile of the organization, to raise awareness, to solicit participation and support from different partners, to identify new sources of support from individuals who may be interested in the initiative, to reduce dependency on one source of funds, and to allow for innovation and sustainability).

In order to fundraise, however, one needs to develop a fundraising objective and link this to a matching source of funding, set realistic targets (in what the initiators can do and what can be obtained from the funding source), and consider appropriate methods. Some of the methods include auctioning items, proposal writing (donors), renting out cultural objects, donation (money and objects) merchandising, and other services. (Annex XIII)

Working in three groups, participants were given an exercise to develop a fundraising plan to raise UGS.450, 000 for a signpost. The purpose of this exercise was to enable participants develop realistic and multiple strategies to generate income.

At the end of this session participants shared their learning points:

- Yes, this is possible (to develop fundraising strategies)
- Fundraising requires investment (which should be costed)
- Fundraising requires team work
- Multiple strategies are good

- Public relations is very important, care should be taken to front people with the right profile
- Planning ahead is important

Developing a business plan John explained what a business plan is and what it entails, in terms of mission, strategies, financial projections and plans. He shared a proposed format for a business plan (See Annex XIII). The main components also included objectives and related activities, resources required and indication of how success may be measured.

Participants from each organization (initiative) were tasked to develop a business plan by generating the following information from their existing initiatives:

- A Mission / desired impact (*what change do you want to make in the next 5 years?*)
- B Marketing (*market analysis – what are the needs your museum is meeting; what are the opportunities and obstacles in meeting those needs; what are the likely trends – progressive or retrogressive; what is your marketing strategy?*)
- C Financial projection (*what kind of resources do you need and how much?*)
- D Plan for the coming year

Participants were divided into 3 groups and each organization/initiative representative presented the draft business plan developed and received comments from their peers. It was agreed that these would be further refined in consultation with colleagues in the respective organizations/initiatives.

Collective action As part of this planning exercise, it was agreed in principle that the organisations present would like to have some common activities in relation to marketing and networking as follows:

- Marketing:
 - Development of a common brochure – for national and international distribution
 - Development of a common webpage to market their initiatives (*this could be linked to existing partner websites*). CCFU offered to find out the modalities of working with MUK (Deus Muhwezi) on their ICT programme.
- Networking visits: Visit neighbouring museums and share useful information by email (on progress, or specific information related to museums such as classification)
- Fundraising: It was suggested that in future participants could carry out internal fundraising from and for each other by exchange of artifacts, joint exhibitions and forming an association of people's museums (in 2010)

Way forward after the workshop Participants agreed on a number of steps to take in the coming period. These included:

1. Those who included production of a brochure in their business plans, were requested to complete the information for their brochures and send the final text and photographs to CCFU for editing, formatting and printing.
2. All business plans to be completed within 2 weeks (by July 13, 2009) and sent to CCFU for final discussion, conclusion of the contracts and remittance of funds.

3. Participants eligible for small grants were requested to ensure that they had organization accounts (rather than personal accounts) to which funds would be remitted.
4. CCFU would complete the workshop report and send it to the participants in 2 weeks' time.

Workshop evaluation Participants were asked to complete individual workshop evaluation forms. These are summarised in **Annex XIV**. There was a general consensus that the programme was very enriching, interesting, participatory and informative. However, a few participants felt the programme was very tight (time-wise).

Table 1: Summary Draft of initiators' Action Plans

	Museum	Main focus of action plans	Amount (UGX)
1	AR & DC, Nkozi University	i) Collect more artefacts, ii) Develop Show cases (display cabins), iii) Publicity (Brochures), iv) Make videos, audio tapes on oral history, traditional music, dance and drama	3,000,000
2	Kikonzo Language and Culture Centre, Kasese	i) Purchase equipment to record cultural stories, ii) Record traditional dances & ceremonies, iii) Radio program on cultural education.	3,000,000
3	Bunyoro Kingdom Museum: regalia of Bunyoro Kingdom	i) Make glass show fitted with lighting, ii) Repair the raffia, beads and metal craft works, iii) Make brochures, iv) Webpage, v)	3,000,000
4	Cultural Assets Centre (Uganda Rural Development Training), Kagadi	i) Collect more artifacts related to the history of Bunyoro, ii) Label objects, iii) Develop showcase, iv) Improve the live stock section, and develop a brochure.	3,000,000
5	Cultural Research Centre (Jinja Diocese)	i) Production of brochures, ii) Collection of Artifacts, iii) Purchase of cupboards/shelves, and iv) networking.	3,000,000
6	Human Rights Focus - Peace Museum, Gulu	i) Visit schools to young people the traditional reconciliation methods, ii) buy new artefacts, radio programs on traditional reconciliation & a video documentary, iii) Brochure.	3,000,000
7	Isingiro Women's group, mobile museum	i) collect more artefacts, ii) preserve the wood, iii) develop a brochure (Art paper), iv) construct a small hut(Akafuha), v) gather information on objects, and vi) Sign post	3,200,000
8	Karamoja Women's Cultural Group	i) Buy artefacts, ii) promote inter-dialogue exercise within different ethnicities in Karamoja, and a Brochure.	3,000,000
9	Kawere African Museum, Kampala	i) Production & Distribution of brochures, catalogue booklets, ii) Design & install sign post, iii) develop showcases, iv) Labelling objects, and set up a craft centre.	3,000,000
10	Koogere Community Museum, Tooro	i) Develop a brochure, ii) Collect artifacts & research, iii) Buy show tables for both Museum and craft shop, iv) buy 5 windows, v) Ply wood for partitioning the building, and vi) Lighting system	3,000,000
11	Butambala Heritage Centre of Civilization	i) Completing & equipping the foundry, ii) erection of Bark cloth making shed.	3,000,000
12	Edirisa, Kabaale	i) Make brochures, ii) conduct school visits to educate young people about Kikiga culture, iii) Buy fire extinguishers, iii) Collect more artifacts, iv) Change the website.	3,000,000