

[ANNEX 2]

Field Survey Project on the Traditional Tug-of-War in South-East Asia

INTERIM REPORT
Philippines

The tug-of-war is one of the ethnic games played in many parts of the Philippines and called by different names – *magbalut* (Yakan of Basilan); *guguyyod* (various places in the Cordilleras of Northern Luzon); *suongan* (Mangyan of Mindoro); *goruyodan* (Hanunoo Mangyan of Mindoro); *culliot* (Batangueño of Batangas and Ilocano of Nueva Ecija); and *bonlotay* (Cebuano of Cebu).

But among these ethnic games only one has so far been identified as part of an agricultural rite – the **punnuk**. The punnuk is the traditional tug-of-war of the Tuwali, one of the two subgroups of the ethno linguistic group Ifugao, living in Barangay Hapao, Municipality of Hungduan in Ifugao province.

The survey team, led by Dr. Norma A. Respicio as head researcher, went to the municipality of Hungduan in Ifugao province on March 15 to 17, 2013 to conduct preliminary documentation on the **punnuk**. The information contained in this questionnaire is based on the initial data collected, which will be expanded after documenting the harvest rituals in June or July and post harvest rituals in August to be able to put the **punnuk** in its proper cultural context and an integral part of the Ifugao agricultural cycle.

Survey Questionnaire

1. Identification of the element

1.1 Name of the element in English.

Tug-of-war

1.2. Name the element in the language and script of the community concerned if applicable.

Punnuk

1.3. Provide a short, informative title of the element, including an indication of the ICH domain(s) concerned.

Punnuk: *Closing the Harvest Season with the Tug-of-War at the River Hapao*

Primary domain: Social practices, rituals and festive events

Secondary domain: Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe

Oral Traditions and Expressions

1.4. Name of the community(ies), groups, or if applicable, individuals concerned.

The Ifugao is one of the major ethno linguistic groups of the Philippines living in the 12 municipalities that constitute the province known by the same name Ifugao. There are two main Ifugao subgroups: the Tuwali and the Ayangan, however, interaction between the Tuwali and the Kalanguya, a totally distinct language group also living in Ifugao, produced a third subgroup - the Hanglulu, which is in turn made of two sub-sub-groups, the Yattuka and the Keley-i. There are distinct linguistic differences between the two main subgroups. Even among the Tuwali speaking groups there are slight variations in their speech. There are areas which use H instead of L or S.

Only the Tuwali living in three areas of barangay Hapao, municipality of Hungduan namely, Hapao Proper, Ba-ang and Nungulunan practice the **punnuk**.

The **dumupag** is the designated lead family in all agricultural activities particularly the **huowah** or post-harvest ritual-activities comprised of the **baki**, **inum** and **punnuk**.

A **dumupag** comes from a family that owns the widest and biggest number of **payoh** or rice fields and has the exclusive privilege to declare the commencement of harvest.

The **mumbaki** or village priest/s presides over the performance of the **baki** and **inum** rituals.

1.5. Provide a brief summary of the element that can introduce it to readers who have never seen or experienced it.

The **punnuk** is the third and last of the **huowah** ritual-activities. It is held on the day after the **baki** and the **inum**. Traditionally, the able bodied men, whether young or old, join the actual tug-of-war in the river while the women whether young or old content themselves joining the march up to the river embankment where they cheer their village mates and jeer or taunt the members of the opposing or rival communities.

In the **punnuk**, a **tinaggu**, or tightly bundled figure made of rice stalks is thrown into the river and becomes the subject or object of contention between two groups/communities.

Using a **pakid** or a stem of the attoba tree, each of the contending two groups tug and pull the tinaggu to their side. Since there are three communities participating, several matches are held one after the other. The community that wins the most number of matches is the over-all winner or champion.

1.6. List the geographical location(s) and range of the ICH element.

Only the Tawali living in three villages of barangay Hapao, municipality of Hungduan, province of Ifugao, practice the **punnuk**. The three villages are: Hapao Proper, Banga-an and Nungulunan.

1.7. Provide a brief description of the region(s)/location(s).

Ifugao is one of the six provinces of the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), situated in the Philippines' North Central Luzon. It is a landlocked watershed province bounded by a mountain range to the north and west that tempers into undulating hills towards the south and the east. The highest elevation is 2,523 meters above sea level (masl) with the rice terraces lying above 500 masl.

The province has a total land area of 251,778 hectares distributed in eleven municipalities. The province is composed of several micro-watersheds with three major river tributaries that exit to the Magat River. About 70 percent of the Ifugao watershed flows to the river.

The province is well-known for its rice terraces which are found in the nine upland municipalities. No data exists on the land area covered by these rice terraces in the province. The forests and the rice terraces are the ancestral domain of the Ifugao people under the provisions of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997 (R.A. 8371) and in the eyes of the Ifugaos themselves (SITMo, 2008).

Hungduan is a 5th class and the smallest municipality in the province of Ifugao. It has a share of 5.3 percent to the total population (180,815 persons recorded) of the province (National Statistics Office, 2007).

The municipality is politically subdivided into nine barangays: Abatan, Ba-ang, Bangbang, Maggok, Poblacion, Bokiawan, Hapao, Lubo-ong, and Nungulunan.

2. Characteristics of the ICH element

2.1. Tangible aspects

2.1.1. Is the rope newly made each time? Yes ___ No ___

If no, how often is the rope made and how is it stored? Describe, if applicable, whether there is a person who guards the rope before the game.

The punnuk tug-of-war features two important material elements, these are: the **tinaggu** and the **pakid**. The tinaggu, also called *kina-ag*, is a figure made up of rice stalks tightly bundled with vines. The figure often resembles the scarecrow. It is the object thrown into the river and the subject of tugging between two opposing groups using a pakid or stem of the attoba tree to pull the tinaggu to their side.

The tinaggu is newly made and the pakid is newly procured during every punnuk.

2.1.2. Describe the process and schedule related to producing the rope.

Production of the tinaggu is done three days before the punnuk while the pakid is gathered days before the event as the attoba tree where it is taken grows predominantly in the forest hills, far from the communities. Often times, the tree for the punnuk has been reserved prior to the harvest period to give them time to look for the longest tree.

2.1.3. Provide a description of the material used to make the rope, the people who collect/prepare it, and the period when the material is prepared.

The tinaggu is of rice stalks that are tightly bundled with vines. The pakid, on the other hand, is the stem of the attoba tree (also called *atolba*) [*Callicarpa formosana* Rolfe of the family Lamiaceae]. Both the tinaggu and the pakid are prepared by the men of each participating community. At least two pieces each of tinaggu and pakid are prepared and brought to the river for the tug-of-war.

2.1.4. Describe the form/shape in which the rope is made, and if applicable, the meaning of its form/shape.

The tinaggu is formed like a scarecrow or a human figure but there are other forms such as a large monitor lizard and monkey. At least two tinaggu and two pakid are prepared and brought to the river for the tug-of-war. In the event that there is a tie and necessitates a rematch or another round between contending groups, there are ready replacements.

2.1.5. By whom, by how many people, and in what period is the rope made?

Both the tinaggu and the pakid are prepared by men from each participating community. (Please see 2.1.3)

2.1.6. Is there a special place where the rope is made? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, give a description of the place, the reason why the rope is made at that certain place, and if applicable, the reason the tug-of-war is held at a different place from the place where the rope is made, and describe the transporting process in detail.

None

2.1.7. Is there any ritual ceremony held during the rope-making process? Yes ___ No ___

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If yes, describe the ceremony, including a description of the conductor, period, process, and if any, songs, dances, or music related to the rope-making ceremony.

No data yet on this.

2.1.8. Are there any special tools for making the rope? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, are the tools for making the rope also made each time when the rope is made, or is it stored and reused? If reused, where are they stored?

The tools are the knives used in the farm and forest, e.g. the uwa or large knife to cut down the branch of the **attoba** tree for the **pakid** and certain vines to bundle the **tinaggu**, and the **kumpay** or scythe for gathering rice stalks used to make the tinaggu.

2.1.9. Is the rope considered sacred? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, describe the sacred meaning of the rope, and indicate, if any, the person in charge, the period, and the reason for guarding the rope.

No data yet on this.

2.1.10. List any other tangible elements, such as instruments, specific clothing, space(s), or ritual objects, associated with the enacting of transmitting the element.

Dong-a, the red-colored leaves of plant dong-a [*Cordyline fruticosa* (L.) A. Chev. family Agavaceae] which is usually planted along embankment of the terrace fields. The leaves

are adorned on the head of participants and/or held and waved by them while marching down to the river. The leaves are also adorned on the tinaggu.

The red color of the leaves is believed to be attractive and pleasing to the gods.

2.2. Intangible aspects

2.2.1. Are there any customary practices, such as ritual ceremonies and exorcisms governing access to the element or to aspects of it? ✓Yes ___ ✓No___

If yes, please answer the following questions.

2.2.2. Describe the preparation process, when and where the ritual ceremony is held, and whether any special meaning is given to the ceremony.

First is the **baki** which is performed in the morning. It is a ritual divination with 3-5 chickens (sometimes pig) as sacrifice. It is conducted by a mumbaki or village priest who chants expressions of gratitude to the gods for the harvest and to the ancestors (reciting names of 3-5 generations) for the rice fields bequeathed to the present generation.

The second ritual following the baki is the **inum** or the drinking of rice wine. It is done in the evening of the same day as the baki. Three jars of varying sizes are brought out. The mumbaki invites the ancestors of the dumupag and his/her spouse (from 4-6 generations) calling their names one by one to partake in the drinking of wine. Then the mumbaki is given the honors to open each of the jars and have the first taste of the wine after which the rest of those present are offered a drink and later members of the community join to have a taste of the wine.

2.2.3. How are the conductor and the person who prepares the ceremony hired?

The mumbaki or village priest/s who conducted the rituals in the past is the one called to preside.

2.2.4. Describe any taboos to the ceremony.

During the entire duration of harvest, the community members including the dumupag or lead family, the mumbaki or village priests and village elders are prohibited from eating leafy vegetables, shells, and fishes. Since leafy vegetables shrink when cooked, and shells with delicate shell covers get easily crushed, it is believed that these could have similar effect on the harvest. The harvest could be easily depleted. The smell of fish is believed to displease the gods.

Also the dumupag and the mumbaki are prohibited from bathing during the entire duration of the huowah.

2.2.5. Describe any music, songs, or dances played during the ceremony.

Drum is played during harvest. (Note: more data is to be gathered on this)

2.2.6. Describe any other intangible elements associated with the enacting or transmitting the element

Just before the tug-of-war begins, a participant called *munggopah* from each of the competing groups, recite a 4-line verse imploring blessings from the gods of earth, sea and the sky, for the community's well being and good luck in the game. The recitation is delivered and composed impromptu and done in repartee.

2.3. Action

2.3.1. Is the element enacted during its original/traditional occasion? ✓Yes ___ ✓No ___

If no, describe the transition of its enacted period.

2.3.2. In what time of year is the element enacted? If not enacted every year, how often is it enacted, and why it is enacted at the specific period?

Harvest in Hapao is from late June to early July. And since the punnok or tug-of-war is the final ritual-activity of the huowah or after harvest ritual-activities, it is usually held around August between the period the 2nd quarter moon to the full moon. The period of the new moon is believed non-auspicious and therefore avoided.

2.3.3. Describe the scale of the element, the number of people participating the game, and if applicable, the qualification to participate.

There are no less than 500 participants who join the march to the river and no less than 100 participants for the actual tug of war. Any member of the community (men and women, children or adult) can join in the march.

2.3.4. How are the start and the end of the game announced and by whom?

Village elders usually take charge.

2.3.5. Describe the sequence of the tug-of-war, including the number of matches held to determine the winning team of the game.

After the 4-line verses are recited, a tinaggu is then thrown into the middle part of the river by one of the groups and in a split of a second the pakid of both groups strike the tinaggu to make the hook firmly hitched on the tinaggu. From there, the tugging begins. The constant pulling and tugging by each group invites deafening cheers from those on the river embankment. The group that pulls the tinaggu closer to their side would be the winner. The winning team then competes with the remaining group for another match. There can be several matches played until everyone gets tired. The group that wins the most matches is the champion.

2.3.6. Describe, if applicable, any other events related to the element including an award ceremony.

There is no award ceremony held.

2.3.7. Describe, if applicable, the rope disposal process.

The tinaggu gets destroyed during the match and is swept away by the river currents so that when the remains are seen by those in the lower communities, they know that the harvest in Hapao has been completed.

2.4. Meaning

2.4.1. Describe the element's origin.

Provide historical background and information on legends or folktales related to the origin of the element.

(Longer research and data gathering is needed)

2.4.2. Describe the element's meaning in relationship to the rice farming or agriculture.

It is a form of revelry among the communities involved, after several weeks of harvest work in the fields. It formally closes the harvest season and the agricultural cycle.

2.4.3. Describe the element's meaning in relationship to the religion.

Gratitude to the gods for the harvest and to the ancestors for the fields bequeathed from generation to generation, and imploring the gods continued blessings for god health and bounty in life till the next agricultural cycle are expressed in all the huowah rituals, namely baki, inum (conducted by the mumbaki or village priest/s), and in the punnuk where verses are recited prior to the start of the tug-of-war.

2.4.4. Is there any special meaning or authority to the winning side? ✓Yes ___ ✓No___

Yes, describe the meaning or significance related to the outcome.

The team that wins the most number of matches is declared the over-all champion not only in the punnuk or tug-of-war game but symbolically of the year's harvest season. The winning community go back home oozing with pride as it is generally believed that they will be enjoying a year of plenty and that the harvest kept in their granary will never get depleted.

2.4.5. Describe any social and cultural functions and meanings of the element for its community(ies) today.

Their sportsmanship and unity as communities are enhanced and promoted.

It is considered a form of revelry and celebration for the completed harvest and a way to thank the gods and ancestors and implore continued blessings from them.

2.4.6. Is there any public mood or national psyche attached to the element as a form of intangible cultural heritage?

None but the local government officials recognize the importance in the continued practice of the tradition, being a unique practice among terraced farming communities in Ifugao.

3. Safeguarding measures / Transmission

The continued practice of the huowah tradition in which punnuk is an integral part and the very climax – where participation is open to everyone (children and adults/men and women) somehow ensures transmission and continued practice.

3.1. Bearers / Practitioners

3.1.1. List any bearers and practitioners directly involved in the enacting or practicing the element, including the individual's name, age, gender, professional category, etc.

- >Elena Pangiwan Uyammi, female, 62 years old (dumupag or lead family)
- >Jose Oyammi, male, 61 years old (husband of Elena Pangiwan Uyammi)
- >Monaliza Uyammi Bimuyag, female, around mid-30s (caretaker of Inheritor's rice fields), municipal government officer
- >Rey Bimuyag, male around mid-30s (husband of Monaliza Uyammi)
- >Bandao Atolba, male, 90 years old (mumbaki or village priest)
- >Antonio Bumangabang, male, 79 years old (village elder and mumbaki)
- >Gano Napadawan, male, 84 years old (village elder and mumbaki)

- >Victor Melong (Mandulyaw, native name; male, 78 years old (village elder and mumbaki)
- >Joseph Nakake, male 59 years old, mumbaki and former Councilor of the municipality of Hungduan

3.1.2. List other people in the community who are less directly involved but still contribute to practicing the ICH element or facilitate its practice or transmission, for example in preparing stages and costumes, training and supervising.

- >Ramon Gayadang, male, 49 years old, Barangay Captain of Hapao Proper
- >Rowena Sicat, female, 38 years old, Municipal Tourism Officer of Hungduan
- >Lucio Adamme, male, 80 years old, village elder
- >Romeo Buddihon, male 82years old, village elder
- >Pedro Mang-uhan, 60 years old, village elder

3.2. Safeguarding and transmitting activities

3.2.1. Who are the competent body(ies) involved in safeguarding/transmitting the element?

Provide the name, address, and other contact information of the competent body(ies), and if applicable, the name and title of the contact(s) responsible locally managing, safeguarding, and transmitting the element.

The local government units such as the barangay and the municipal tourism officer have taken measures to safeguard the tradition and ensure its continuity.

- >Ramon Gayadang, Barangay Captain, Hapao Proper Barangay Hall, Hungduan, Ifugao
- >Rowena Sicat, Municipal Tourism Officer, Hungduan Municipal Hall, Hungduan, Ifugao

3.2.2. Describe the modes of transmitting the knowledge and skills to individuals or to others in the each body, community or group.

Through continued practice and keeping the punnuk open to all members of the community including children, as per tradition.

3.2.3. Provide a chronicle of the activities of competent body(ies) related to safeguarding/transmitting the element.

No data at the moment.

3.3. Safeguarding Efforts

3.3.1. How is the element's visibility being ensured by the concerned communities, groups or individuals? What past and current initiatives have been taken in this regard?

Apart from the concerned communities, the tradition is not widely known in other parts of Ifugao, primarily because the other communities have their own agricultural rites, and the rest of the country.

Consciousness regarding the tradition is very apparent among community members (young and old, women and men), the mumbaki, the village elders, kadangyan and the *dumupag* especially seen in the practice or observance of community traditions especially those related to the agricultural life as demonstrated in the religious observance of rituals and continuous enactment of the huwah – baki, inum, and the punnuk. Through continuous observance and/or enactment, the transfer of the traditions to the younger generations is ensured

A couple of photojournalists have covered the punnuk and featured it in a newspaper of national circulation, however, the scope and coverage of the tradition is very limited.

3.3.2. How have concerned State Parties safeguarded the element? What are its past and current efforts in this regard?

None yet on the provincial and national levels.

3.4. Inclusion of the element in an inventory

3.4.1. Has the element been included in an inventory? ✓ Yes___ ✓No___

If yes, indicate its reference and identify the inventory in which it has been included and the office, agency, organization or body responsible for maintaining that inventory.

Inventory no. 271 under Domain No. 3, Social practices, rituals and festive events.

Agency: National Commission for Culture and the Arts, Philippines

Provide lists using a standard bibliographic format.

4. Refences concerning the element

Provide lists using a standard bibliographic format.

4.1. List any available literature in archives, museums, and private collections.

There are none at the moment.

4.2. List any audio-visual materials, recordings etc. in archives, museum, and private collections.

There is no extensive audio-visual documentation done on the punnuk at the moment.

4.3. List any other documentary materials and objects in archives, museums, and private collections.

A number of community members have photographs of punnuk held in the past few years. Some of these are in digital format and are stored as soft copies. Some photos have appeared in newspapers.

5. Data restrictions and permissions

5.1. Include consent from and involvement of the community(ies) concerned in data/information gathering.

The people interviewed are fully aware of the purpose of data gathering.

5.2. Name any restrictions on the use of or access to collected data/information.

Solely for use in the ICHCAP Symposium Presentation and Publication that may be produced in relation to the ICHCAP activity towards the safeguarding and transmission of the punnuk or the tug-of-war in the huowah, as an Intangible Cultural Heritage.

5.3. Name resource person(s): name(s) and status affiliation.

Please refer to lists in 3.1.1 and 3.1.2

5.4. State date(s) and place(s) of data/information gathering.

March 16 and 17, 2013 Barangay Hapao Proper, Hungduan, Ifugao.

The interviewees came from three Barangays involved in the punnuk and the entire Huowah. These are: Barangay Hapao Proper, Barangay Banga-an, and Barangay Nungulunan.