

International Partnership Programme for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage
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Case Study Report: Indonesia
Traditional Weaving Inventory

Department of Culture and Tourism

Introduction of the target ICH

Indonesia is one of the countries in the world having the most weaving, both in the techniques of making and the variety in ornamental details. Those things are not separated from its meaning and functions every day. In some tribes in Indonesia, the use of woven cloth with certain colors, patterns and details is based upon the social status of the wearer in his/her society, for example, the color of yellow and gold in Malay society can only be worn by royal family.

Beautiful woven pieces from early weaver generations have both high creative value and the ability to absorb foreign influence elements. This might happen due to trade relations with other countries, which has existed since hundreds years ago. This condition indirectly gives quite a big contribution in enriching our country's variety of weaving types.

One of the examples is the weaver from early generation at first only used cotton thread as the weaving material. However, the influence of trade between China, India, Arab and Europe which brought variety of thread types seems to influence the weaving art of our country. This thing can be seen from the weaving which looked so simple at first but then is developed into complicated and beautiful woven cloth with the gleam of golden and silver thread plus other colors which are gotten from silk thread. This thing seems to give a new color to weaving art both from the technique of making or the ornaments.

Therefore, weaving using cotton thread with the original color from plants which results in natural colors in limited number has changed into a more varied, dynamic, passionate, and superior weaving. Furthermore, if we look at it more closely, in every piece of the woven cloth is actually the symbol of noble value as the manifestation of Indonesian society culture in the past. The complicated process of making it, from the weaving, coloring, or decorating with special tools has given a plus point to the weaving art.

That thing has attracted a lot of attention from foreign textile experts upon the potential and special quality of Indonesian traditional textile. We can see the result of this matter in the form of books from the research done so far.

In line with the matter, Directorate for Tradition, Directorate-General for Cultural Values, Arts and Film, Department of Culture and Tourism feels the urge to hold a programme in **safeguarding Indonesian cultural heritage in the form of traditional cloth inventory, especially woven cloth.**

Weaving is one of the manifestations of intangible cultural heritage, since basically the concept and technology of weaving is know-how owned by each weaver. As we know, the definition of intangible cultural heritage is cultural heritage which cannot be touched, both because of its abstract characteristic (as concept and technology) and the fading-as-time-goes-by characteristic (like music, dance, ritual, and other structured habits). Furthermore, weaving is called as a cultural heritage also because it is owned by a community or society although the creator or practitioners are only certain people with certain qualifications. Most of intangible cultural heritage have gone through development from generation to generation, in the line of a tradition. This general definition does not underestimate the possibility of the existence of a contemporary culture which is directly approved as national item.

In the perspective of Intellectual Property Rights we know some cultural richness which does not belong to individual, but to group (in the scope of community or society), and characterized by anonymity. This property can be categorized into three types, namely Folklore, Traditional Knowledge, and Genetic Resource. The three of them need proper safeguarding so that they will not be misused for the benefit of other parties. The former two, despite their tangible products, can also be categorized into intangible cultural heritage, while the last one, genetic resource, can also be a part of traditional knowledge, especially when it is related to food, medicine and cosmetics, and also the varied kinds of handicraft products.

Objectives of the Project

- 1) Observing the existing weaving tradition up to today in Indonesia.
- 2) Identifying the technique of weaving, types of ornamental details and the making of them.
- 3) Identifying problems related to weaving which have strong urge to be anticipated in relation to the safeguarding of Indonesian intangible cultural heritage;
- 4) Safeguarding Indonesian cultural heritage, especially the weaving which means the project takes good care and develop the functions of woven clothes in the life of Indonesian society;
- 5) Inventorying quality pieces and quality people in weaving arts and thus declaring them as “National Treasure” of the country;
- 6) Performing many kinds of campaigns or socialization so that society’s appreciation towards cultural heritage can be maintained or even increased.

Methods of Project Implementation

Making inventories in some areas by coordinating with 11 Technical Implementation Units in 11 History and Traditional Value Protection Offices (Balai Pelestarian Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisi). The weaving inventory has been undergone during 2008-2009:

- 1) Pedan Weaving, Jogjakarta (DIY)
- 2) Cual Weaving, Pangkal Pinang (Province of Bangka Belitung)
- 3) Mandar Weaving, Poliwali-Mandar (Province of West Sulawesi)
- 4) Sambas Weaving, Sambas (Province of West Kalimantan)
- 5) Bentenan Weaving , Menado (Province of North Sulawesi)
- 6) Lombok Weaving, Sukarara (Province of West Nusa Tenggara)
- 7) Tapis Weaving, Lampung (Province of Lampung)

- 8) Ulos Fampak Weaving (Province of North Sumatera)
- 9) Jambi Weaving(Province of Jambi)
- 10) Songket Weaving, Palembang (Province of South Sumatera)
- 11) Samarinda Weaving, (Province of East Kalimantan)
- 12) Kendari Weaving, Kendari (Province of Southeast Sulawesi)
- 13) Adonara Weaving, Kupang (Province of East Nusa Tenggara)
- 14) Timor Weaving, Sorong (Province of Papua)

Outcomes of the Project

- Improving cultural information on Indonesian traditional weaving.
- Weaving as Indonesian traditional textile can be preserved by development on its meaning and functions which is suited to the era.

Conclusion of Summary

In this era of creative industry, the existence of traditional textile both as cultural resources and economic resources is highly possible to be developed as one of superior cultural products in entering the struggle in this global era.