Towards the Development and Integration of a Museum Policy for (Regional) Museums: Study Case – (Regional) Museums in Nepal

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Acknowledgments and overview

Irena Žmuc
ICR Chair

This Special Project “Towards the Development and Integration of a Museum Policy for (Regional) Museums: Study Case – (Regional) Museums in Nepal” was developed in response to the needs identified during ICR’s 2017 first Special Project (Regional Museums’ Role in Assisting to Rebuild their Local Communities after an Earthquake).

Four recommendations were accepted, one of which was to support the adoption of new sustainable legislation that would govern Nepali museums. ICOM categorised ICR’s and ICOM Nepal’s application for a Special Project in December 2018 to be of such importance, that it decided to support two projects within 3 years in Nepal. ICR participated with its budget, as did ICOM Nepal (congratulations to Bijaya Kumar Shahi, former ICOM Nepal Chair, who got sponsors) and UNESCO Nepal.

Special thanks go to Vinod Daniel, Executive Board member, who gave a well-attended workshop for museum professionals on risks of collections titled ‘Ten agents that can have an impact on cultural collections and development’ a day before the conference.

ICOM’s Strategy document for 2016 – 2022 declares that ‘Museums are holders of social roles’. In ICR we believe that ICOM members should assist less privileged countries within ICOM, countries in which museums are never mentioned on the political and cultural agenda, where questions of heritage, tangible and especially intangible heritage are undervalued. This Special Project aligns with ICR’s mission to encourage ‘the development of regional museums
for the benefit of their communities, through providing a forum for communication, co-operation and information exchange among curators, museums, and other organisations.’ ICR linked this project to the ICOM 2016-2022 Strategic Plan which supports its main objectives and specific aims, ‘The Strategic objectives / articles #2, #3 and #4: Independence - Integrity - Professionalism.’

The main goal of the project is to raise a professional interest and a level of awareness of museum practice among museum professionals in Nepal. However, reaching a consensus for sustainable museum legislation demands a long-winded discussions that result in a difficult process.

We strategically envisaged an entire range of professionals to work on the museum legislation in the ASPAC region, most of whom are ICOM members, Nepali museum professionals and university lecturers on museology. The participants represented all types of Nepali museums – state, regional, local and private.

From the very start we presented our initiative to the representatives of the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of Nepal. In order to remain in line with Nepali internal laws and receive advice on any special aspects related to the topic, we included a Nepali lawyer in the organizing board.

Prior to the meeting in Kathmandu, Bijaya K. Shahi prepared an analysis of the 5 questions survey on the situation of museums in Nepal. The questions were sent to the museum professionals in advance.

During the conference we organised a workshop, lectures, participatory sessions as well as an excursion to the Gorkha Museum.

The invited speakers from Asia and Europe tried to cover any geographical imbalance and enable mutual networking. When writing to chairs of National Committees in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Mongolia
and Iran we assessed their situations in this matter. The discussion on museum legislation is also a part of certain ICOM National Committees.

Iran has a different situation, as they have The Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Ministry which covers the areas of science, research and study with a mission to create policies, plan, supervise, prepare and compile plans and vision.

It is always good to know how the neighbours did it. As regards good museum relations between Nepal and India, it could be a good starting point to study the book Country Profile: India. International Database of Cultural Policies (2017). We would also like to thank UNESCO’s office in Kathmandu for publishing the essential ICOM’s Code of Ethics for Museums in the Nepali language.

However, we have to admit that there are fundamental assignments when operating a museum— from research, collection, preservation, documenting, exhibiting, all of which need to be taken care of, if we wish to achieve a sustainable operation of a museum. We can find help in the key documents on cultural policy published by UNESCO’s and ICOM, e.g. UNESCO’s Recommendation Concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society adopted in 2015.

Our aim was not to teach our colleagues in Nepal, but to cooperate with them, as they have the best knowledge of their country and museums. This collaboration resulted in the initial push to start a draft for a new museum legislation. Another important step is to cooperate and discuss the topic with various museums communities.

Useful keywords could be: national heritage, cultural policy, sustainable source of budgeting museums on different levels, museum net (to identify the number and variety of museums and to establish the structure within the country); museum’s mission statement...
(why does the museum exist, identifying the goal of its operations, defining the area of its collecting policy); not to forget deposits, maintaining objects, etc.

This e-publication presents selected papers from the conference. I would like to thank the ICOM Secretariat, ICOM Nepal, UNESCO Nepal and everyone who participated at the conference on behalf of ICR and ICOM Nepal.
Inauguration speech

Dr. Hridaya Ratna Bajracharya
Vice-Chancellor, Lumbini-Buddhist University, Nepal

Dear Chairs of ICOM Nepal and ICR,
Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

I feel privileged to attend and address the inaugural ceremony of ICOM Nepal and the ICR Special Project as the Chief Guest.

Nature is interesting, intriguing and captivating and people have always been fascinated by it. We are fascinated by everything, from the lush green forests, the scorching deserts, the vast savannahs to the towering mountains overlooking the deep seas and lands inhabited by bountiful animal and plant species. We, humans, are also a part of nature. And yes, we are also fascinated with ourselves.

Humanity has gone through many phases in which it has struggled to survive. The planet has preserved evidence of all our efforts, including that of the entire animal kingdom and its own geographical history. All this evidence represents a heritage of humanity and its environment. In a way, one could say that the world itself is a heritage for posterity, as is our existence at this very moment. Our languages are intangible cultures and our knowledge, skills, expressions and cultural practices will prove invaluable. Since the primary function of a museum is to collect and conserve these heritages, the entire global collection of components falls within the scope of museums.

This line of thought sheds light on the broad definition of museums from the open-air planetary level to the collection within a general household. Thus, the general and traditional public acceptance and the practice of institutionalized form of museums will fall short
of addressing the need of new and varied forms of collection and preservation practices. People like collecting various types of objects. With ever increasing new discoveries of innumerable heritage objects, by both, the general public and researchers, ensuring their scientific preservation, safety and security has become a major challenge. The general public lacks the awareness and expertise to safely preserve the collected items, while government agencies lack policies, rules and regulations that would monitor these private and communal collections. In Nepal, the policy gap is even more evident.

Nepal has a rich and varied geographical setting. Each and every region possesses its own unique cultural and natural heritage. In this context, it is impossible for the government to single-handedly fund museums that would protect and preserve all types of heritages. Private support and public participation are thus important if we wish to ensure the preservation and conservation of artifacts and objects. Policies that would monitor, assist, and train everyone willing to show their private collections to the general public are vitally important.

This can be promoted through:
• The formation of an association that welcomes all types of collectors,
• Making people and communities aware and asking them to report their collections,
• Training how to manage and take care of other aspects needed in museums.

The ICR special project in Nepal is expected to represent a milestone in the formation of the necessary policies and legislation that will govern the museum sector in Nepal. Thus, ICOM ICR should be thanked for its initiative. The Department of Nepalese History Culture Archaeology (NeHCA) at the Lumbini-Buddhist University is always willing to collaborate in the accomplishment of this task.

Thank you.
20th November, 2019
Between 20th and 22nd November 2019, ICOM Nepal, the National Committee and the International Committee for Regional Museums (ICR) organized an international workshop in Kathmandu, Nepal. The theme of the special project workshop was “Towards the Development and Integration of Museum Policies for (Regional) Museums: Study Case – (Regional) Museums in Nepal”.

The project was approved by ICOM (International Council of Museums) in Paris, France. The project aimed to work closely with Nepali and other museum colleagues in devising a plan that would outline the active role of the International Committee for Regional Museums in aiding Nepali museums preserve Nepali cultural, social or natural heritages. Three months prior to the beginning of the project, ICOM Nepal and ICR sent five questions to all members of ICOM Nepal and other museum professionals and officials working in Nepali museums (approximately 60 people). Even though we asked them to send back their replies, only a few individuals actually replied.

We have evaluated, analysed, edited and summarized the answers that have been sent back by the museum professionals. The summary of the answers can be found below.

**What are the most relevant and important contributions museums can contribute to society over the decade to come?**

- Museums play a social and educational role in society.
- Museums support the reciprocal understanding between cultures and people.
• Increase the social inclusion of marginalized groups and promote peace.
• Increase national unity and social harmony, making a better future.
• Provide a better understanding of history, culture, and technology.
• Promote social diversity.
• People can learn about the past and future social structures.
• Museums are diplomatic hubs, innovation centres, science laboratories and research centres for society.
• Museums can become tourist hubs.
• Museums are learning centres, which teach us about history, culture, arts and society.
• Museums can make society realise the importance of preserving tangible and intangible cultural heritage and foster social cohesion.
• Museums play a big role in identity politics.
• Museums aid the creation of national identity.

What are the strongest trends and the most serious challenges Nepal will face over the decade to come?
• Political instability.
• Air pollution which will cause major health problems for a large share of the Nepali population, and this will, in turn, lead to lower life expectancy.
• Climate change will affect all parts of Nepal, we will witness an increase in natural disasters.
• Scientific management and regulation of museums.
• Linking everything and everyone to the ICT/virtual world (trend).
• Travelling within the country will be on the increase.
• Several temples, monasteries, mosques and churches could be turned into museums (trend).
• The Himalayas, cultural heritage, and the social structure are a great open museum (trend).
• Lacking museum awareness within society.
• Museums and culture will not be high on the list of government priorities.
• Corruption in cultural management, in the government as well as in NGOs.
• Poor museum management system.
• Lack of policies and laws regulating the operation of museums.
• Human trafficking.
• Stealing antiques and cultural objects.
• Managing the media, especially social media.
• Fighting against corruption.
• Ensuring youth employment.
• Corruption and lack of dedication at work.
• The spreading of the pandemic.

**What are the strongest trends and the most serious challenges museums in Nepal will face in the decade to come?**

• The most serious challenges will occur in the fields of conservation and presentation of objects, storage rooms, maintenance, and education.
• Museums are understood as a part of the national identity and a learning centre.
• Scientific management and regulations.
• The establishment of numerous new museums.
• Connecting museums to the general public and helping it benefit from museums.
• Museums are not regulated by legislation.
• Reducing natural disasters and human malfunction over the coming decade.
• Financial challenges when operating museums.
• Establishing the best collection of Asian art.
• Lack of academically trained museum staff.
• Effect of the pandemic on museums.
How do museums need to change and adapt our principles, values and working methods over the next decade in order to meet these challenges and enrich our contribution?

- Nepali museums should have better trained and more committed staff, in particular in the fields of conservation and presentation.
- Educational activities should be developed and implemented.
- Partnering with international museums could be of great help.
- Legal tools and dedicated and skilled human resources.
- The need for advocacy that would ensure museum policies and programmes on all three levels of government.
- In order to overcome the challenges, we need to conduct research that would explore the issues and programmes.
- We should connect the various media in order to bridge the gap between museums and the general public / authorities and academic institutions.
- UN must be strict in applying protection principles for world heritage sites.
- UN and INTERPOL have top revent stealing and looting of world heritage sites.
- ICOM should help enhance museums in developing countries rather that holding theoretical seminars and workshops.
- UN/UNESCO should be annually evaluated for museum management in each individual country.
- ICOM should lead a global network of museums (under an e-net umbrella) in which the pros and cons of running museums would be shared.
- Local UNESCO offices should act as a “heritage police” in each individual country, with the aim of applying pressure on development.
- UNESCO should fight collectively against global challenges.
- Nepal needs to promote museum education as a part of civic education.
• Nepal needs to run a campaign that would establish the museum sector in different areas throughout the country and link it to domestic and foreign tourism.
• Museums should employ an appropriately qualified workforce.
• Museums should be engaged in community activities.
• Museums should prepare at least 2 temporary exhibitions annually.
• Museums should introduce digital technology and interactivity within the museum space.
• Museums must change the traditional display format.
• Museums should provide better information.
• Museums should, together with the government, prepare a contingency plan that would address the pandemic situation.

What aspects of museum responsibilities, activities and functions should be considered by the Government of Nepal when developing the cultural heritage policy and legislation?

• Museums should be strengthened with qualified staff.
• Systematic training should be ensured (within the country as well as internationally).
• Partnerships with foreign museums should be legally facilitated.
• Bureaucratic procedures should be reduced and decision-making processes smoothened.
• Educate people about museum.
• The museums’ activities should be developed as a learning centre for various target groups.
• Museums should function as educational, social, cultural, investigative, etc., institutions.
• Museums should establish communication with local people and ensure that they can participate in the policy making process, as well as in the process of designing and implementing activities.
• Museums should perform various research and include academic institutions in this process.
• Promoting museum education as a part of civic education.
• Establishing a fund-raising policy that would aid the survival of museums.
• The government should formulate a single door policy for governmental, private, community, open-air and other museums.
• Museums should not be controlled by the Department of Archaeology; a separate department (for museum) in the Ministry of Culture should be established.
• The government should implement the celebration of International Museum Day and other museum related activities.
• The government should start a public awareness program.
• The government should identify and establish new heritage spots.
• The government should encourage regional and international workshops/seminars.
• There should be more seminars on museology.
• A “museum of museums” that would encourage networking of museums on the national level should be established.
• Data should be collected from existing governmental/private/public museums.
• The government and museums should coordinate and cooperate with local governments, donors, individual museum lovers, etc.
• The government should encourage cultural research and publications.
• Museums should demand a new museum legislation.
• Museum education should be a part of the school curriculum.
• Activities that would sensitise the local people to museums should be designed and implemented.
• The government should take the lead in policy-making.
• The government should provide training facilities for the development of the museum sector.
• The government should promote museums as centres for learning.
• The government should prioritize museums as potential tourist destinations and a source of national identity.
• The government should promote and protect the intangible museum nationally and internationally.
• The provincial and local government should be responsible to establish and conduct various museums on their respective level by law.

Conclusion

Even though I have received only a few responses from my museum colleagues, the answers were comprehensive, logical and practical. Many highlighted the issues linked to sustainable policies, plans and government ownership. They also pointed out the lack of concrete museum legislation and a dedicated government department that would look after museums.

Most claimed that the government should give priority to the development and stability of all types of museums in the country.
Five questions questionnaire
Towards the Development and Integration of a Museum Policy for (Regional) Museums
Reconsidering the governance of museums and heritage in times of global change. The Reform Law of Italian museums

Alberto Garlandini
President of ICOM

This paper is about the changes in the museum landscape and the new global trends in the governance of museums and cultural heritage.

Section 1 of the paper is dedicated to the social and extended role of contemporary museums. I present the ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums and show how the museums have to work in close collaboration with the communities from which their collections originate.

Section 2 deals with museum governance and the crisis of traditional public models of museum management. I focus on the main characteristics of a new, effective governance: greater autonomy, decentralization, the increasing role of private bodies.

Section 3 examines the 2014 Reform Law of Italian State Museums and the changes in their governance. I present ICOM Italy’s support for the Reform and show its positive results, as well as some criticisms and open issues.

Finally, I look into certain concerns related to the governance of private museums and highlight some features of good governance.
Section 1

Museums are part of global change

ICOM is reflecting on the impact on museums that will result from the challenges our changing societies are facing: inequality and racism, migration and inclusion, diversity and decolonization, urban regeneration, the digital revolution, climate change ...

All over the world museums have changed and are still changing. Following World War Two the number of museums has increased remarkably and their role has expanded greatly.

Initially, the quantitative growth took place in the western countries, where it is estimated that approximately three quarters of all museums have been established since 1945. If we take Italy as an example of the European scenario, we can see that 45% of the 4,976 museums were founded between 1960 and 1999 and 39% since 2000. Recently, this trend has increased dramatically in the rapidly urbanising and developing countries. A noteworthy example is the People’s Republic of China, which had 2,970 registered museums in 2008 and in the next ten years this number had grown to 4,692, with an average increase of 287 new museums per year.

So many museums are being built globally that some critics have started to wonder what content will be shown in them and whom they are being built for. Will all these new museums serve their communities and will they be sustainable? Will governments keep providing the necessary human, material and financial resources for all these museums?

The increasing social role of museums

 Communities and authorities are asking museums to increase their social role. The core functions of museums are conservation, exhibition, education, communication and promotion of collections. However, today’s museums have new responsibilities. The museums
“in the service of society and of its development” have also become communication hubs: they promote participation, inclusion and mediation, engage in intercultural dialogue, address new audiences and use new languages and media. These were the issues discussed by the 4,500 professionals that convened in Kyoto, Japan, at the 25th ICOM General Conference, on 1-7 September 2019. The theme of the Conference was “Museums as Cultural Hubs: The Future of Tradition”. The 24th ICOM General Conference was held in July 2016 in Milan, Italy (Museum International, 2017; ICOM Milano, 2016), and discussed "Museums and Cultural Landscapes". It highlighted the idea that museums promote not only the collections conserved within their walls, but also the heritage and landscape that surround them. Museums have expanded their activities; they have become territorial facilities that work far and wide and manage tangible and intangible heritage disseminated over vast areas. At the end of Milan’s General Conference, ICOM’s General Assembly adopted a Resolution on the Responsibility of Museums Towards Landscape and recommended that:

“Museums should extend their mission from a legal and operational point of view and manage buildings and sites of cultural landscape as ‘extended museums’, offering protection and accessibility to such heritage in close relationship with communities” (from the ICOM’s 2016 Resolution on the Responsibility of Museums Towards Landscape).

These issues were also discussed at the Seminar organised in Wilanów, Poland, on 16-17 May 2017 by ICOM Europe and ICOM Poland titled “Planning an Extended Museum: Cultural & Natural Heritage – Society – Economy – Land & Townscape” (Folga-Januszewska, 2017).

Museums in the contemporary age

Since 1977 ICOM has organized the International Museum Day every year, with which it wishes to promote the role of museums and
discuss their challenges. In 2017 the IMD theme was how museums deal with contested history and with what is considered “unmentionable” by most people. When we look around, we see that museums are institutes of reconciliation and participation as well as places of critical thought and pluralistic views. With the 2017 IMD, ICOM highlighted that museums can help communities discuss and reconcile divisive memories of the past, such as segregationism, colonialism, slavery, civil wars and genocides.

The ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums: museums and the communities from which their collections originated. The Code of Ethics is ICOM’s cornerstone.

Translated into 38 languages, it sets out the general principles accepted by the international museum community, as well as the minimum standards of conduct and performance to which museum professionals should conform throughout the world.

The Code consists of eight general principles arranged in a number of guidelines, and it is constantly updated on the basis of the changes in society and museology.

Principle 6 of the Code states that “Museums work in close collaboration with the communities from which their collections originate” (ICOM Code, 2017, p. 31). When a country of origin seeks the restitution of a specimen that has been exported or transferred in violation of international conventions and national laws, the museum concerned should, if legally free to do so, take prompt steps to cooperate in its return” (ICOM Code, 2017, p. 33). In a multivalent world, the authority of museums is challenged and the management of their collections has to be shared with the communities of origin. Decolonization is in the museums’ agenda and requires that they profoundly reconsider exhibitions, activities and policies. Many western “universal” museums are now facing urgent requests to return their collections from colonial times to their original communities.
Ownerships of museums’ collections are disputed for diverse reasons. The most numerous requests of restitution to the legitimate owners concern cultural property that was stolen or illegally acquired, i.e. without a valid title of lawful ownership.

The ICOM Code states that before any acquisition a museum should make a due diligence that establishes the full history of any item since its discovery or production.

Recently, an increasing number of requests for restitution have referred to human remains. The conservation and display of human remains raises many ethical issues. These items are to be presented with great tact and respect for the feeling of human dignity held by all peoples. Many museums are now positively answering the requests to return human remains to the families or communities of origin. Once restituted, these human remains are often buried in sacred ceremonies.

A third, crucial case of possible restitution is when a museum conserves items that are considered a national treasure or are sacred to the source community’s culture, especially if they are from colonial times. It is now a wide-spread belief in the museum community that the repatriation of heritage plundered by colonial powers is a part of the healing and reconciliation process between colonial and colonized nations. “Museums should promote the sharing of knowledge, documentation and collections with museums and cultural organizations in the countries and communities of origin… Museums should be prepared to initiate a dialogue for the return of cultural property to the country or people of origin” (ICOM Code, 2017, p. 33). The Sarr-Savoy French Report on the Restitution of African Cultural Heritage, toward a New Relational Ethics (Sarr and Savoy, 2018) has drawn great international attention and interest; however, so far it has not produced significant restitutions by French museums.
Section 2
New global trends in museum governance

What is governance? There are various definitions of governance; most of which refer to the systems and processes that ensure that an organisation is outward-looking, quick to react and efficient, as well as accountable, compliant and transparent (Kwok and Garlandini, 2019). Facing global changes, governance in museums has become a crucial issue and is deeply evolving.

The crisis of traditional public management of museums
In the past, the majority of museums almost everywhere in the world were owned by state bodies and managed by government departments. However, during the second half of the previous century new museums in Europe were founded and managed by public non-state bodies, such as municipalities, provinces, regions. These new public museums improved the diversity and role of museums, but their governance was similar to that of state museums: they had no statutory, administrative, financial and managerial autonomy. In Italy they are called “musei ufficio” – “office-museums”, since they are internal offices of public administrations.

The traditional public models of museum management have found themselves in a crisis. Often understaffed and under-funded, many public museums have great collections, but no means to manage and display them to the public properly. Over time, the typical bureaucratic constraints and lack of autonomy of the public management have strongly limited the role and activities of museums and hindered their performances facing the new social, scientific and managerial challenges. The request for greater autonomy and responsibility has become a relevant issue for museum professionals.

A new governance of public museums
In numerous countries, the transition towards greater autonomy has already started. The collections in public museums remain the
property of cities, regions and states. However, their management is becoming increasingly transferred to autonomous or semi-autonomous bodies, such as agencies, public/private bodies, associations and foundations. These new institutions have their own budgets, personnel and governing bodies such as boards of directors or trustees. As a consequence, their management has become more flexible and effective than it was in past governmental structures.

A second relevant trend in the new governance is the gradual change from public museums that are totally dependent on central, national governments to decentralized museums. The devolution of formerly centrally-controlled museums to provincial authorities is taking place in many countries (in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, ...). Decentralization usually results in a closer relationship between museums and the public they serve. However, decentralization also brings a major problem: the lack of qualified museum professionals. The transfer of national collections to provincial bodies and the creation of new local museums requires a great number of professionals that are not easily available on the local level. Successful decentralization demands the hiring of essential qualified professionals, large-scale professional training and capacity building activities.

As they are complex processes, systemic changes of governance take time, and are inevitably followed by tension and compromises. Many museums have just started the transition and are still in between the two poles of public museums centrally controlled and those that are autonomous under managing boards. The number of countries with such transitioning museums is growing all over the world.

**Private bodies in the management of museums**

Over the past twenty years numerous new private museums have been founded in Europe, the US, Asia (China, Indonesia, ...), South Africa, as well as in Russia and other former communist countries.
Private museums are privately funded and managed museums that are open to the general public. Some of them have relevant collections, are professionally run and promote high-quality exhibitions and successful activities. Private museums may be owned and governed by a single collector or a corporate entity or may be managed by autonomous bodies such as associations and foundations. It is a matter of ethical concern if these museums are run with no real autonomy from the owner, the owner’s family or profitable companies. In such cases, the permanence of the collections is not guaranteed and the items can be sold any time. Besides, the museum’s activities may depend too much on the whimsical tastes and interests of the owner. In other words, such private museums may be private collections rather than real museums.

When museums are owned and managed by both public and private bodies, the public benefit and the ethical mission are guaranteed through the common standards of management.

The procedures of accreditation, registration, or recognition may be useful tools that set the shared standards and improve the quality of museum services and activities. Networks, cooperation and public-private partnerships are indispensable in attaining high museological standards, especially for small and medium sized museums.

Section 3
The 2014 reform law of Italian museums

The Italian museum scenario is pluralistic and comprises of both, public and private museums. 64% of the 4,976 Italian museums are owned by public bodies, mostly local governments; less than 10% of Italian museums are owned by the national Ministry of Cultural Heritage. 36% of the museums are owned by private bodies, i.e. foundations, associations and religious institutions.
In 2014 the National Minister of Cultural Heritage approved the Reform of Italian State Museums. This has radically changed their governance and the museum national landscape. In 2016 the Reform gave special autonomy to thirty-two top state museums, such as the Uffizi in Florence and Villa Borghese in Rome, and partial autonomy to other state museums. In 2019 another seven large state museums obtained special autonomy.

Thanks to the Reform, each state museum with special autonomy now has a statute, governing body, budget, director and personnel. Previously, state museums had neither a legal character nor any form of autonomy: they were merely a part of the Soprintendenze, the state bodies in charge of protecting cultural heritage. The directors of state museums are now appointed by means of public European selections. The Reform has also established a new national Directorate General for Museums and an International School of Heritage.

Greater autonomy for museums was a long-standing request of ICOM, and ICOM supported the approval and the implementation of the Reform.

The Reform Law refers to ICOM’s Code of Ethics and professional standards. Article No.1 of the Reform Law literally quotes ICOM’s definition of a museum, including its non-profit nature. Italian legislation states that non-profit organizations may develop commercial activities, however, these commercial activities should not represent their main task and the income can only be used for the statutory non-profit goals. Article No.2 of the Reform states that national museums shall have a statute drafted in compliance with ICOM’s Code of Ethics. Article No. 4 states the necessary organization and personnel of state museums, including the competences and responsibilities of the directors.
In 2018 the Reform introduced the National Museum System that comprises of both, public and private museums. Public and private museums can be a part of the NMS only if they are organized in accordance with the national standards of management and ICOM’s Code.

**The results of the Italian Reform Law**

The greater autonomy guaranteed to state museums has already produced positive results. First of all, the Reform has promoted better professional management, thanks to the hiring of new directors with museum competences as well as of new dedicated personnel. Secondly, the Reform has increased social participation in the life of the museums: the new boards of directors in state museums comprise of museologists and experts. As a consequence, museums now have better relations with the civil society and local authorities. Research studies and statistical surveys have shown that once the Reform had been introduced, the displays and promotional activities of autonomous state museums have improved and the number of visitors increased significantly. Hopefully, the positive results of the new management of state museums will also be achieved by other public and private museums after 2020, once the National Museum System will be implemented.

In the beginning, certain critics pointed out that the separation of the museums from the Soprintendenze could reduce the conservation activities while favouring promotional activities. On the contrary, the author of this paper believes that more effective museums are more likely to improve the protection and promotion of heritage.

However, numerous bureaucratic obstacles remain, particularly in staff management and in the relations between autonomous museums and the central bodies of the Ministry, which still have decisive decisional powers in many fields. It is too early to say...
how long-lasting the positive effects of the Reform will be. Better museum management and governance need a cultural revolution and new approaches from public bodies. Additional time and further efforts, legal and operative, will be necessary.

**Final remarks on good governance in museums**

Autonomy is a prerequisite for good governance in museums. Good governance usually assumes the effective coexistence of a professional director and a board or a committee of directors or trustees, possibly comprising of civil society representatives. Checks and balances provided by a director and a board are a safe and effective model. Unfortunately, a significant number of small local museums do not have permanent professional directors or curators and are still managed by volunteers and/or board members only.

In numerous museums in Europe and North America, and increasingly in other parts of the world, directors have major managerial and operative powers, while boards are in charge of strategic decisions, such as budget, statutes, long-term planning and control. However, attaining an effective balance of power between boards and directors is complicated. In order to achieve the best results, boards and management have to work together and both sides need to be equipped for their role. In conclusion, the most important requisite of good governance is the quality of museums’ professionals, managers and decision makers.
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Legal provisions necessary for managing museums in Nepal

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Nepal is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-cultural, federal and democratic republic. It is characterized by its diverse population in terms of language, social values, religious beliefs and practices, art, customs and other characteristics. Museums are viewed as educational, social and recreational institutions which acquire, conserve, research, communicate and exhibit tangible and intangible heritage. However, in Nepal, these aspects are not legally recognized due to the lack of specific museum legislation and policies. As per the existing general legislation, all activities related to museums are highly risky, if anything happens within the museum; the general legislation interprets all activities as general offences, which means that a museum business is not considered proper legal activities.

The existing Ancient Monument Preservation Act, 2013 (1956 A.D.) does not cover all activities of museum management, collections, documentation, conservation, preservation, exhibition, research, etc.

In this critical situation, the main objective of this paper is to find the past and present constitutional, legal and administrative provisions on the subject of museums in Nepal. We are currently witness to the government handling different types of museums on the national, state, and local level in different parts of Nepal. Similarly, numerous museums have been incorporated into the community under the Association Registration Act, 2034 (1977 A.D.), while non-government and private museums have been established under the Company Registration Act, 2063 (2006 A.D.).
History of Museums

The history of museums in Nepal started in 1926, when the Silkhana Museum (Arsenal Museum), popularly known as Chhauni Silkhana, was established. The museum building was originally built as an arsenal by the order of Prime Minister General Bhimsen Thapa in 1819. The name Chhauni Silkhana was changed to the Nepal Museum in 1939. It has been known as the National Museum since 1967. Nepal has numerous museums, including community and private museums. All Government museums are run by the Department of Archaeology. At the moment, we have 12 government run museums, approximately 100 community museums and approximately 10 private museums in Nepal. We do not have a proper overview as we do not have a proper regulatory mechanism that would cover the field of museums.

Regulatory Authority

The Department of Archaeology was established in 1953 with a decree of the Nepali government. This is the central organization for archaeological research and protection of cultural heritage and museums in the country. The main concerns of the Department of Archaeology are to protect, maintain and manage archaeological sites, ancient monuments and remains of national importance. Museums are not the main concern of this department, however the government reached an administrative decision, with which it allocated and handed over museum related jobs to it. The Department of Archaeology also regulates all archaeological activities in the country as per the provision of the Ancient Monument Preservation Act, 2013 (A.D. 1956). The act also provides ample provisions to protect and preserve any individual monuments, group of monuments, sites and even vernacular edifices located throughout the country, in private or public ownership, as long as they have archaeological, historical, artistic or aesthetic values. The word ‘museum’ is not mentioned in the act, however the act considers ‘museums’ to be a part of the archaeological sector. This act authorizes
the Department of Archaeology as the principal governmental authority in charge of protecting and preserving the vast cultural heritage of our country. All existing government funded museums in Nepal are operated and regulated by the Department of Archaeology. Alongside government museums, there are over 100 museums that are run by non-governmental organizations and are not linked to the Department of Archaeology. These are governed and established by various authorities and under different laws.

**Constitutional Provisions**

The 2015 Nepali constitution states that Nepal is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-cultural, federal and democratic republic. Article 32 (3) of the constitution mentions the right to language and culture: “Every Nepalese community residing in Nepal shall have the right to preserve and promote its language, script, culture, cultural civilization and heritage.” Therefore, the right to culture is a fundamental right of every individual.

Similarly, with its directive principles, policies and state obligations which are the guiding principles of the Nepali government, the Nepali constitution clearly promotes the protection and promotion of ancient, cultural, religious, archaeological and natural heritages within Nepal.

The chapter of the constitution that addresses the state structure and the distribution of powers divides the state power into federal (central), state (provincial) and local (municipal) government.

The powers related to sites of archaeological importance and ancient monuments mentioned in article No. 34 of Schedule 5 are exercised in accordance to this constitution and federal legislation. The powers related to the protection and use of languages, scripts, cultures, fine art and religion mentioned in article No. 18 of Schedule 6 are exercised by state legislation. Similarly, article No. 22 of Schedule 8, defines the powers related to the protection and development of languages, culture and fine arts on the local level. The concurrent...
powers of the federation, state and local level are described in article No. 12 of Schedule 9, which defines that “archaeology, ancient monuments and museums.” and similar are to be controlled by federal, state and municipal legislation.

**Currently Used Legal Instruments that Govern the Museum Sector in Nepal**

1. Ancient Monument Preservation Act, 2013 (A.D. 1956): Under this act, all Government museums are operated and regulated by the Department of Archaeology.


3. Association Registration Act, 2034 (A.D. 1977): A number of community-based museums throughout Nepal were formed under this act; e.g. the Tharu Museum in Chitwan, the International Mountain Museum in Pokhara and the Jyapu Museum in Patan.

4. Company Act, 2063 (A.D. 2006): Numerous public as well as private museums throughout Nepal were established and are run in accordance with this act. Private museums are operated and run by the private sector, charities or non-profit organisations. Museums like this are known as public entities and are governed by the public; e.g. the Living Traditions Museum in Changunarayan, the Dudhpokhari Museum in Dudhpokhari, Lamjung, etc.
5. University Museums: Various Nepali universities have set up museums under their internal acts; e.g. the Nepali Natural History Museum and Forestry Museum set up by the Institute of Forestry, the Hetauda set up and governed by the Tribhuban University, etc.

6. Local Government Operation Act, 2074 (2017): With the exception of government museums, all private and community museums should be registered with the local authority and local authorities should develop museums to protect their art and culture.

7. According to their founding acts, the Guthi Corporation, the Lumbini Development Trust, the Pasupati Area Development Trust, etc. also have the right to open and operate museums.

8. Government institutions such as the army, police, court, civil aviation, publishing houses can establish and operate museums without the help of the Department of Archaeology; e.g. Army Museum, Police Museum, etc.

National Cultural Policy – 2067 (2010 AD)

According to the national cultural policy established by the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, the criteria and policies of the works related to culture, heritage sites, traditions, museums, language and religion will come under the jurisdiction of the ministry. Similarly, the ministry will develop a policy related to ancient sites and monuments, museums, national and international historical sites as well as heritage sites placed on the UNESCO’s World Heritage list.
Likewise, museum management, preservation and promotion of language, script, culture, art and religion, together with the management of the Guthi system, come under the jurisdiction of provincial governments. Similarly, local units shall work on the preservation and development of particular languages, culture and art in their respective areas, while provincial and local governments will have the responsibility of preserving and developing ancient and archaeological sites and museums in their areas.

Article No. 7.9 of the National Cultural Policy states its objectives to promote and establish museums as community cultural centres. The strategies defined in article No 9.4 clearly mention that museums operated by the government or public institutions, as well as private museums, shall display the collected cultural heritage as specified in the Museum Act, and other linked regulations and directives. This article focuses on private museums and museum industries.

Similarly, Article No. 9.38 of the strategies defines how traditional folklore is treated – in its policy the Nepali government mentions that it wants to establish and operate “living traditional museums”. Article No. 9.42 states that folklore shall be preserved and exhibited in museums in order for the folklore to be passed on to the generations to come. The conservation of archaeological objects is mentioned in Article NO. 9.54 – once they are studied and researched, archaeological objects collected through excavation, shall be preserved and exhibited in a museum. In article No. 9.56 the government listed archaeological and antique objects that shall be displayed in museums ran by communities, organizations or individuals.

The cultural policy focuses on the reform of the existing legislation as well as on the introduction of new legislation, regulations and directives related to government, public and private museums. Without new legislation and regulations that will address museums, the national cultural policy shall not be fulfilled.
Conclusion

The main intent of this paper is to discover the lack of specific legal instruments that form the basis for establishing and operating museums in Nepal and show the development of this process so far - even though we do not have specific museum related legislation. Museums in Nepal can be managed by the government, private or public sectors, and thousands of people visit museums each year. Museums are involved in collecting, conserving, preserving, researching and exhibiting tangible and intangible culture daily, however the established legal instruments provide merely the frame to open museums, but do not regulate their activities and standards. Therefore, direct (specific) museum related legislation is essential if we wish to promote, operate and regulate the day to day practice and governance of museums. Through its national cultural policy, the government of Nepal realized that it needs to implement a specific museum legislation, however, nothing has been done by the government so far.

In Nepal, the Nepal Bar Council, the Nepal Medical Council, the Nepal Engineering Council and the Nepal Press Council respectively regulate lawyers, doctors, engineers and journalists and theirs activities through specific legislation, so why should there not be a similar mechanism that would promote, operate and regulate day to day practices and governance of museums in private, community or government ownership throughout the country. This is of vital importance for all museums in Nepal.
Legal provisions necessary for managing museums in Nepal

Towards the Development and Integration of a Museum Policy for (Regional) Museums
Basic outlines for museum policies in Nepal

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The concept of establishing museums is taking over the centre stage in Nepal, as a result of which many new museums are being set up. However, due to the absence of specific museum acts or policies, most museums face problems from the very start, already when trying to register and fulfil other functionalities. Even though the government is trying to develop and establish museums, the absence of directives creates more problems than solutions. For these and other reasons, it is of prime importance to come up with a museum act or policy that would help us establish good museum management and promotion.

This paper explores certain existing practices, the need for museum policies and the attempts to establish a basic outline for museum policies - from a pragmatic as well as academic point of view. The views expressed in this paper are the reflections of the authors in accordance to international and existing practices in Nepal, however they can be considered as a work in progress that requires government advice and intervention in order to accomplish its objectives.
An overview of the existing practices

- The government allocates a budget on the basis of a cabinet decision. This budget is allocated to the Department of Archaeology, the government body that overlooks state museums.
- The Ancient Monument Preservation Act, 2013 BS (1956 CE), includes a clause that states that anything more than 100 years old should be disclosed and registered with the government. However, so far, this has not come into practice. Therefore, private museums are hesitant to register as they fear they might lose their collections.
- There is existing legislation at the private level. The Organization Act 2034 BS (1977 CE) allows the registration of non-profit organizations (with a minimum of 7 members). Under this act, a private organization can establish a museum without functionally registering it. Challenges faced by this act are the annual renewal of the organization and holding the AGM.
- The Company Act 2063 BS (2006 CE) includes provisions for registering a non-profit organization (with 5 members), which needs to be renewed every 5 years.
- The National Cultural Policy 2010 CE aims to culturally unite and preserve the diverse culture of the communities within our country by encouraging the formation of folklore museums. It also encourages the establishment of museums in general and proposes to upgrade the standards of the existing museums.

Why do we need a museum policy?

Despite the existence of various policies and acts in the cultural sector, an act or policy pertinent to museums has not been established in Nepal. Even though the existing acts mention the establishment and promotion of museums, those that are formed without proper guidelines will not serve the intent of their establishment.
In this regards the formation of a policy or act should be prioritized by the Ministry of Culture or the Nepal Cultural Policy and should include the following components:

• Standardization
  • Good storage with adequate conservation
  • Adequate collection
  • Documentation
  • Safe construction
  • Permanent exhibition
  • Visitor facilities
  • Education programs & guide facilities

• Effective management & organizational development
  • Effective governing body
  • Appropriately qualified staff
  • Provisions for hiring experts and volunteers
  • Capacity building trainings for staff

• Financial distribution
  • Regular source of income
  • Other sources of income
  • Annual budget
  • Proper auditing

• Control mechanism
  • Nepotism
  • Budget misuse
  • Overall security
  • Irrelevant collection
  • Limit activities to those related to the museum and education

• Maintaining national & international relations
  • Maintaining relations with other museums within the country
  • Organising national workshops and exchange programmes
  • Maintaining relations with museums abroad
• Organising international workshops and exchange programmes
• Making provisions for loan facilities

• Museum registration
  • Abiding to national laws pertaining to the organization and registration of companies
  • Abiding to minimum museum standards
  • The name of the museum should disclose the scope of the museum

**Museum Policy Components**

1. Setting up a museum (Minimum Museum Standards)
   • Mission and vision statement
   • Source of income
   • Source of the collection
   • Minimum required space
   • Exhibition & changing exhibitions
   • Education and outreach activities
   • Governing body

2. Collection management policy
   a. Acquisition/accessioning policy
   b. Deaccessioning/disposal of collections; use of the proceeds gained from the sale of the deaccessioned collections
   c. Categorising the collection
   d. Inventories and/or documentation / numbering system
   e. Taking care of the collection
   f. Accessing and/or using the collection
   g. Developing the collection
   h. Collection security
   i. Scope of the collection
   j. Collection storage & conservation
k. Loans, incoming and outgoing
l. Researching the collection
m. Collection copyright
n. Insurance of loans: objects in storage

3. Financial Management
a. Various income sources
b. Budget planning
c. Fundraising activities/programmes

4. Exhibition
a. Goal of the exhibition - mission & vision
b. Type of exhibition: permanent/temporary/mobile/virtual
c. Exhibition duration
d. Workforce: steering committee/curators/designer/educator
e. Collection management - inhouse collection/loan/purchase
f. Insurance of loans: objects in exhibition/travelling exhibition/loans
g. Target audience
h. Conservation during exhibition
i. Tender for fabrication
j. Security during exhibition
k. Exhibition copyright

5. Education and outreach policy
a. Developing education programmes based on age sectors
b. Guided tour
c. Audio tour
d. Interactive activities
e. Seminar/workshop/symposium/training
f. Documentary shows
g. Research
   i. Library
   ii. Publication/exhibition catalogue
6.  
Public relation & marketing 
   a.  Digital (social-media) advertising 
   b.  Open source information 
      i.  Access to open source information 
   1.  Not claiming it as own 
   2.  Allow sharing with credit, link and reference 
   3.  No modifications allowed 
   c.  Relations with the press and publishers 
   d.  Relations with other museums in the country 
   e.  Relations with museums abroad 
   f.  Relations with other institutions 

7.  
Organization 
   a.  Staff (according to the size of the museum) 
      i.  Director 
      ii.  Curator 
      iii.  Conservator 
      iv.  Educator 
      v.  Designer 
   b.  Staff qualifications 
   c.  Contracted staff 
   d.  Hiring experts 
   e.  Volunteering 
   f.  Advisory committee/ board of trustees 

8.  
Code of Ethics
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Basic outlines for museum policies in Nepal
Towards the Development and Integration of a Museum Policy for (Regional) Museums
Brief History of Museums in Nepal

The first stage in the development of museums was a collection of antiques related to the development of humans, our culture and civilization. Private collections represented a primitive phase in the global development of museums as they were open to other interested people, and the public would come to see these antiques. Although the word ‘museum’ is supposed to have derived from the Latin word, pluralized as ‘museums’ or ‘musea’, it was in fact derived from the Ancient Greek ‘mouseion’ which meant the ‘seat of Muses’ and was a philosophical institution. It is said that the first modern museum in the world was the Alexandria Museum (Egypt), built around the 2nd century BC; it was built especially for scholars, preserving and interpreting the material aspects of heritage. Museums emerged in and around Europe during the 15th century, and during the 17th century the Ashmolean Museum was established as the first public museum (1663). Since then museums have been appearing all over the world, leaning on new scientific inventions and connections through the means of transportation.

The history of museums in Nepal started as late as the beginning of the 19th century, when the Arsenal museum (Chhauni SilKhana) was established by the first Prime Minister of Nepal, Bhimsen Thapa. It was established in 1810 as an arsenal house in which the Nepali Army stored their arms and weapons. The Arsenal Museum was converted into the Nepal Museum and opened to the public in 1839. The Nepal Museum was renamed the National Museum in 1967 and still operates as the National Museum of Nepal.
Juddha Jatiya Kalashala was built to house the national museum in 1941. It is said that this is the first purpose-built museum in Nepal.

Subsequently, the Department of Archaeology was established by the Government of Nepal in 1952, merging with the existing Department of Museums. Several museums were established thereafter, all before 1990, when the political revolution occurred in Nepal and the framework for establishing museums was completely sidetracked. Prior to this, almost all museums were established either by Royal Decrees or by the decision of the Government of Nepal. The following museums were established during this period: Rastriya Chitrakal Sangrahalaya (National Fine Art Museum), Bhaktapur, in 1960; Rastriya Mudra Sangrahalaya (National Numismatic Museum) Hanumandhoka, in 1962, later moved to the premises of the National Museum, Chhauni; Rastriya Kashthakala Sangrahalaya (National Wooden Art Museum), Bhaktapur, in 1967; Rastriya Dhatukala Sangrahalaya (National Bronze Art Museum), Patan, in 1962; Tribhuvan Smritti Sangrahalay (Tribhuvan Memorial Museum), Hanumandhoka, in 1968 and Mahendra Smritti Sangrahalaya (Mahendra Memorial Museum), Hanumandhoka, in 1976. All of these still operate as government museums. Two non-government museums, i.e. the Natural History Museum in Swayambhu, founded by the Tribhuvan University in 1975 and the Museum of Buddhist Icons, Swayambhu, founded by Swayambhu Bikas Mandal (NGO) in 1972 were also established during this period.

In line with the policy of the Government of Nepal, the Regional Museums in Dhankuta, Pokhara and Surkhet were established in 1984 in different regions of Nepal.

Following the great revolution in 1990, the context of Nepal had changed and the various races, ethnic groups or other groups of people, had an interest in establishing museums that would preserve and promote their identity. Several museums have been established as NGOs, sisterhood organizations or under the umbrella of a parental organization. All of these museums have been
registered under different legal tools and provisions of governance, as no single integrated legal system has been implemented for establishing and governing museums in Nepal. The existing Nepali museums have been governed through various legal tools or provisions defined in individual non-related acts, and have been registered either as per the provisions of multiple (different) laws or different decision-making systems within the government.

Thus, although Nepal does not have a long history of museum development, several types of museums have existed since the beginning of the 19th century when the first Arsenal Museum was established.

**Museum Legislation and Legal Tools Governing the Museums in Nepal**

In relation to the development of museums throughout the world, the context of establishing museums obviously varies from country to country. Similarly, as mentioned above, there are clearly two different contexts in Nepal, and they both led to and played a vital role in establishing museums in our country. Therefore, it would be better to examine the process using a clearly divided timeline as follows.

**Before 1990**

The history of museums in Nepal shows that there was no legislation that would define how to establish and maintain a national or any other standard of museums following the establishment of the first museums in Nepal at the beginning of the 19th century. There is no available evidence that would indicate that the first museum in Nepal, the Arsenal Museum (Chhauni Silkhana), was established on the basis of any legal provision at that time, except by the order of the Prime Minister. Although it is mentioned in the history of Nepal that Lagan Silkhana and Sundarijal Silkhana also functioned as museums, they were not established or converted into museums and never officially existed as museums.
As already mentioned, before 1990 almost all museums were government led museums, only a few were public (in the sense of beyond the government and led by the community or the public) or private museums; this could have been a result of the legal system at the time, which did not allow this kind of activity; however, if we wish to get to the bottom of this, further research is required. It has been observed that museums were established by the government and that there was no precise or specified legislation addressing the establishment of museums. However, government systems that oversaw the decisions for specific activities were in place and the government could follow certain processes and procedures in order to reach the decision to establish a museum or to perform any other activity.

In view of legal tools, it is clear that there was an absence of specific acts or regulations to follow when establishing or running museums and museums were established either by Royal Decrees or by government decisions. Therefore, all museums were operated as government offices; they could not go beyond the rules and regulations that governed regular or general government offices throughout Nepal. This meant that there were seldom opportunities to follow the technical and professional standards required by museums. The technical operations specific to museums and their functions are generally not similar to those of regular government offices and their functions do not match.

Hence, prior to 1990, there was an absence of specific museum legislation and museums were established only by the government, through an internal procedure, and operated by the government along the lines of regular government offices in Nepal.

**After 1990**

The established museums have existed and been in operation continuously since 1990, while the political scenarios and government systems have changed and people were given back several
fundamental human rights through legal provisions. The increase in the awareness of the identity of numerous people, either ethnic or general groups of people, resulted in the aspiration to preserve their identities. Many found that a museum is the best tool and way to preserve their identity and promote their culture. In this aspect, several museums have been established, however, there is still confusion as regards to which legal tools should be followed and what is the exact legislation for establishing a museum in Nepal? Several acts and rules have been implemented and the government has delegated powers to various institutions or authorities to implement them. Therefore, multiple acts and the delegation of power are present in this regard. As a result, several museums have emerged in affiliation with the Nepali government through these multiple acts and rules since 1990. Some of these museums are: the Jyapu Museum in Lalitpur; the Tharu Museum in Chitawan; the Community Museum in Panauti; the Champakpur Museum in Changunarayan-Bhaktapur (privately owned).

A category of private and organizational museums has been established and run through the Organization Registration Act 1977. The museums registered as per the provisions of this act can be run as non-governmental organizations. Many of the currently existing museums in Nepal are registered under this act, and are considered as one of the affiliations of the government.

Another way of running a museum in Nepal is via a Museum Development Committee. There is an act called the ‘Development Committee Act’, which clearly includes the provision that provides power to the government to reach decisions linked to establishing and running a museum as required in any part of Nepal. The government is required to pass an ordinance during its decision to create a specific museum development committee, which will usually be an autonomous institution, although it must follow all government rules and regulations beyond its own ordinance. Currently, there are several museums in Nepal that use such procedures, e.g. the Patan Museum Development Committee (Patan Museum); Hanumandhoka
Durbar Museum Development Committee (Hanumandhoka Durbar Museum) and Narayanhatti Durbar Museum Development Committee (Narayanhatti Durbar Museum). All of these museums are located in the Kathmandu valley.

Institutions, registered in line with the legal provisions of the Nepalese legislation, could establish non-profit making organizations - museums as a sibling institution, autonomous, yet under the guidance of its own parental or guardianship institution. There are a few museums established under these legislation provisions in Nepal, such as the Nepal Mountaineering Museum, Pokhara (under the Nepal Mountaineering Association); the Natural History Museum, Swayambhunath (under the Tribhuvan University) and the Mustang Eco Museum (under the Annapurna Conservation Area Project/ Nature Conservation Trust of Nepal); the Nepal Army Museum (under the Nepali Army); the Nepal Money Museum (under the Nepal Rastra Bank) and the Jyapu Museum (under Jyapu Samaj), etc.

Since the 19th century, numerous museums have been established in Nepal within this context, however, there is no single specific legal tool, or any act that can guide, establish, control, or monitor museums in Nepal as multiple legal provisions govern this field.

**Current Legal Status of Museums in Nepal**

As discussed in the previous paragraphs that addressed the legal tools or provisions for establishing museums in Nepal, it can be easily imagined that there are a few different categories of museums currently established and running in Nepal. As regards their basis of governing legal tools these museums can be categorized as following:

a) **Government Museums as General Regular Offices**

These are museums established prior to 1990, either by royal decrees or by government decisions. They are run as museums, and
these government museums must faithfully follow each and every rule and regulation in place for government regular offices. They cannot go beyond the common rules and regulations implemented for government offices and if they require specific activities they have to go through common and regular processes and procedures. All government museums, which were established in Nepal prior to 1990 are still operating as government museums; i.e. the National Museum, Rastriya Kala Sangrahalaya and Rastriya Mudra Sangrahalaya, etc.

b) Development Committee Museum (Autonomous Museums)

Museums of this type are established under the Development Committee Act of Nepal by government ordinance. The ordinance of the museum development committee is the major legislation that governs that specific museum. In addition to the ordinance, the museum must follow the prevailing rules and regulations of Nepal. Generally, they are known as autonomous museums, and most of them do not receive any government funding, thus they need to generate their income as an independent organization that follows the ordinance as their primary law as well as the prevailing Nepalese legislation. Patan Museum, Hanumandhoka, Durbar Museum and Narayanhiti Durbar Museums are a few examples of such museums.

c) Museum as a Non-Governmental Organization

A large number of existing museums are registered and established under the Institution Registration Act, 1977 as non-governmental organizations affiliated to the government. They also have to pass their ordinance during the mandatory registration process. This ordinance is the major law for running the museum which must also follow the prevailing rules and regulations of Nepal as required or instructed by the government. The power is
delegated to the Chief District Officer through the District Administration Office. Therefore, this type of museum must be registered in the relevant District Administration Office where the museum is to be located or established. There are 77 administrative districts in Nepal, in which anyone can register this kind of NGO museum. The museum must be established in the same district in which it was registered. The Tharu Museum in Chitawan, and the National Ethnographic Museum in Kirtipur/Kathmandu are two examples of this category of museum in Nepal.

Due to the increase in the attraction and awareness of cultural heritage and other professional activities, certain individuals are also extremely interested in establishing personal museums. Currently there are merely a few personally owned museums in Nepal and these are either registered with the local government as a personal, small, non-profit business institution, a small cottage industry or a private non-profit company; one such example is the Champa-kpur Museum in Changunarayan Bhaktapur. Similarly, some museums are registered as community museums, either under the local government or under the District Administration; e.g. Panauti Museum (run by the local community) in Kavre.

d) Institutional Museum

Museums in this category are usually not directly registered as a museum under any government law or authority, but are established by a legal institution which is affiliated to the government or its authority with the provision that it can establish a museum under its jurisdiction written into its ordinance. Therefore, once the main institution is registered as per the legislation of Nepal and has a provision to establish a museum within its ordinance, a museum may be established as a part of the institution.

Since 1990, museums of this type have emerged rapidly, either as independent museums or memorial museums; while their character
appears independent, they are strictly under the control of their par-
et organizations. The Natural History Museum (under the Tribhu-
vvan University); the Nepal Army Museum (under the Nepali Army) 
and the Nepal Mountaineering Museum (under the Nepal Mount-
taineering Association), etc., are a few examples of this museum 
category. There are several memorial museums which have been 
established under different institutions, which also makes them in-
stitutional museums.

e) 
Municipal Museum

Since the transformation of the federal government system in Ne-
pal, which is an ongoing process, local governments (municipal-
ities) are allowed to establish museums in their territory in order 
to preserve and promote their municipal culture. This is a special 
provision in the Local Government Operation Act, 2016 which is 
the key act determining the work of local governments. Recent-
ly, during the re-arrangement of government staff (from central to 
local government), some museums, including their key staff (with 
their consent) were transferred to the local government as per the 
decision of the federal government or the Government of Nepal. 
These were previously established as regional museums in Dhan-
kuta, Pokhara and Surkhet. Now these regional museums have 
been converted into municipal museums and are governed by the 
relevant local government, the municipalities. Therefore, there are 
currently three municipal museums in Nepal under local govern-
ment control and there are visible signs that several museums will 
be established in the near future as municipal museums, as many 
of the municipalities are promoting tourism in their localities with 
local and municipal museums as a major component of this drive.
Conclusion

At present, it is important to have a national standard for establishing and running museums in Nepal, as museums have been established and are run on the basis of multiple legal systems due to the absence or lack of a specific museum legislation. Therefore, they are difficult to manage in an integrated form and it is hard to create a standard for museums in Nepal, in their registration as well as in their monitoring after registration.

In this context, there is no single focal authority to be affiliated with and monitored by the government rules and regulation, however, the Ancient Monument Preservation Act, 1956 somehow indirectly addresses museum objects as cultural heritage, not as a museum and its objects. The lack of a specific museum legislation is truly a very sensitive matter. Therefore, we need legislation or a legal tool that would oversee the overall museum management, standardization and monitoring of all kinds of museums in Nepal. One suggested proposal would be to establish a national museum council as a key authority that would register, coordinate, manage and monitor all types of museums in Nepal. This should be a part of any proposed act or museum legislation that is to be implemented.
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Museum and Legislation: 
a case study on museum development in Nepal

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Introduction

In the ever-growing world of museums, one can notice the increasing role of the community, especially ethnic groups and organizations as well as academic and educational organizations. A quick and cursory look into the history of the popular and scientific institutions such as museums could reveal the following pattern in the development of museum categories:

- Museums initiated and developed by big name universities as a part of their teaching and research mission
- Museums initiated and developed by government agencies as collections for enhancing national glory, as icons and depositories of history, culture, civilization
- Museums established to preserve the history of war, armoury, and dedication to war and peace
- Museums established for the preservation of natural history, science and evolution
- Museums established for the preservation of both, the tangible and intangible culture of ethnic groups within a country, a region
- Museums established to demonstrate the progress in science and technology, space exploration, underwater natural assets
- Art and crafts museums
- History, civilisation museums
- Specific and general museums established and donated by rulers, high profile individuals,
- Museums established though endowments – government, public, community
There are also integrated museums named after a country (British), city (Los Angeles, New York, Baroda, etc.), which are of iconic importance. In recent times, experts have also been talking about ‘sex museums’ but these have not been given much publicity so far. This only shows that museum categories have no limits.

The evolutionary history of museums in Nepal is short. The credit for the growth of this institution should be given to the Rana rulers who saw the need to establish an armoury in the aftermath of World War II. Once the war was over, they needed a museum to store the weapons and keep them for the public to see and learn about the history of wars in which Nepal participated as the nation of Gurkhas.

**Museums and policies**

First of all, I should mention that Nepal’s cultural policy is a few years old and it remains in the hands of the government for further actions. It also needs to be adjusted with the federal structure and provincial cultural policies. This has not been done. The policy does not elaborate on the policy on museums. There is thus a gap here.

At this point I think a brief review of ICOM handouts would be beneficial.

While writing this paper I helped myself with ICOM’s mail that I have received and I will start with the following quote:

“Policy is defined as “a statement of principles which provides a basis for action.” Policies guide an organization towards achievement of its vision or mandate. The establishment of a policy framework from which to operate is a key role of a governing body. A museum’s policies must follow from the Statement of Purpose, Mission or Vision Statement. Policy required for each institution will vary according to its nature and purpose, but most museums should have policies that
cover the key areas of operations. Policies are set to provide long-term frameworks and guidelines for decision making. Above all else they are established to foster the longevity of collections.”

The guidelines for Museum policies are equally valuable for us in Nepal where the museum wave is getting stronger day by day. The other important part the handout addresses is the ‘scope of museum work’. These short outlines are gurumantra in the process of museum establishment and development in a country like ours where the development history is a checkered one in the sense that the national museum, mother of all museums developed over the recent decades, came into existence after the war when the old armoury had no place to pile the weapons as unusable metal items. Later it dawned on the rulers that if they didn’t find place in the arsenal, they could still speak about history and therefore they could be saved and shown to people.

This intelligent curiosity gave birth to the National Museum as a depository of used weaponry.

That is how the National Museum, Chhauni, came into being nearly eight decades ago. This was followed by the three royal palace museums in the capital of Kathmandu – the Hanumandhoka Museum, the Patan Palace Museum and the Bhaktapur Museum.

Bhaktapur is an art museum which includes paintings as well as metal and wood works. It is not governed by any specific laws. The Department of Archaeology – DoA – manages its administrative system while the Ministry of Culture approved the Karyabidhi or Working Regulations. Its day-to-day affairs are run by the Managing Board chaired by the Secretary of the Ministry.

I should also mention the regional museums which were created during the Panchayat, when the nation was divided into five development zones. The underlying idea was to have one museum in each of the five zones. Today, there are four such museums run by the DoA –
counting from the East, they are – the Dhankuta Museum, the Gorkha Museum, the Pokhara Museum and the Surkhet Museum. Alongside the government run Pradesh museum Pokhara also has the Gurung Museum and a private Mountain Museum.

**Education and outreach policies**

The three levels of Nepali museums – the National Museum, Chhauni, the palace museums and the regional museums are now well established and function as important research and education institutions. They are well known among the people at home and abroad. They are gradually following the Outreach Programme initiated by the National Museum a few years ago, namely they, among other activities a) invite schools to visit museums, b) organize various competitions, and c) organize skill workshops for local artists and other interested in the upcoming generation.

The museum policy that we are looking to formulate must include such activities as a part of the operation of the museum.

**New developments in the museum field**

In recent years, museums have become popular in all corners of Nepal. The ethnic identity has been strengthened by political changes, the new constitution and new legislations regarding the harmonization of cultures, and through state support and the institutionalization of minority identity, people are showing an effort to preserve their cultures as the ultimate resource for their overall development and preservation of culture.

The Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) collaborated with UNESCO and conducted several training and documentation programmes involving local elites and community leaders. In several such programmes (Saina Maina, Halesi, and Rong in Ilam district) the team witnessed two phenomena, namely, a growing interest in homestays and museums.
According to field working DoA officials, there are a few ethnic groups that are now ready to launch their collections in a museum. Some have even constructed buildings for this purpose. One can call them a ‘museum’ in a limited, yet functional sense. These are – Thami and Jirel in Dolakha, and the Tharu in Thakurdada, Bardia. We have no specific information on the largest ethnic group in the hills – the Magar.

In Pradesh 4, Tanahu, the local community, descendants of friends and relatives of Bhanu Bhakta Acharya have established a museum carrying the name of the famous Poet Bhanubhakta. Further west in the Lekhnath Municipality, Pokhara, there is a Lekhnath museum which also carries the name of this famous poet.

The list goes on and will grow even larger in the near future. There could be museums carrying the names of the famous poets Bal Krishna Sama, Lakshmi Prasad Devkota, Siddhicharan Shrestha, and others, established in their birthplaces, providing additional points of interest for the visitors and followers. Again, in the absence of specific legislation, these regional and district museums are run according to the same karyabidhi principles.

These developments have taken place without any regulations, official permissions or preparations. The time for this will come, but at this point in time the people’s aspiration and need must be allowed to express itself in one way or another.

The old town of Dolakha is planning to establish a ‘numismatic’ museum because Dolakha was the first Newar settlement in medieval times to issue coins after the Licchavi and Thakuri periods. One can see the historic connection in this plan. The National Museum of Chhauni also has a numismatic museum.

In the mid-west, the Baijanath Development Committee is planning to establish a museum in the district of Accham.
In these cases, museums are mere ‘collections’ of items that represent ethnic cultures. In more recent times, there have been serious and sincere efforts to establish an integrated cultural complex with a museum for Other Backward Classes popularly known as OBCs in India and Pixadabarg in Nepal and in Pradesh 2, tarai, Nepal.

There is a plan to establish a museum representing the culture of all 32 OBCs in Pradesh, in the facility provided by the Dhanusha Municipality.

If the outreach programme initiated by Chhauni, the palace museums of Kathmandu and certain regional museums is replicated by the ethnic museums now in the offing, more people will benefit from museums now as well as in the future.

However, we are in urgent need of laws and regulations that would define the operation and functions of museums on all three levels of the federal governing structure.

In the near future, the time will come when legislation will define the function and draw the line between a ‘collection of items’ and a functional museum with social and cultural responsibilities. ICOM guidelines and templates circulated to the prospective writers and museum organizations have been useful in the structuring of this writing. It is in the belief of this writer that other writers present here today may have the same feeling as regards the usefulness of these handouts. At a time when Nepal will engage policy makers in formulating the museum policy, the following tips will be useful in the policy and legislation process:

1. Organization development
2. Collection management policy
3. Exhibition policies

4. Education and outreach policies

5. Organization development policies

Existing Nepali policies and laws addressing museums and culture.

In 2010 the Government of Nepal formulated the ‘cultural policy’ of Nepal. However, this was not the first work of its kind. Decades earlier Dr Saphalya Amatya, former DG of DoA prepared a monograph on the Nepali cultural policy which was published by UNESCO. The 2010 policy book was published by MoCTCA and distributed to all stakeholders. It appeared that the government didn’t properly ‘own’ this book as it was not made available to the universities, colleges and museums or, for that matter, to the Public Service Commission examination board.

With the new administrative structure – the federal system – there is plenty of space to adjust to the local needs and provincial users. A working committee of experts on the federal level can work on the text and make it applicable for the lower levels.

Similar efforts are required to draft museum laws and by-laws, the regulations that will govern the museum administration and promote culture/heritage preservation.

The 2010 cultural policy focuses on the role of the community and other relevant issues. On the local and provincial level, museums can function effectively in a situation where local and provincial governments accept the communities as culture creators and bearers and place culture in the central focus of their short and long term plans and implementation processes.
The 2015 Constitution of Nepal doesn’t mention museums but assigns archaeology as a federal government agenda, leaving culture and related issues in the custody of the provinces. Looking from this perspective one could guess that museums also belong under the federal system. One will have to wait until the federal and provincial governments further specify the division, scope and limitations regarding these sensitive issues.

National cultural museum, an aborted concept

One story comes to my mind. About 4 years ago, the minister of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation at the time, formed a committee and assigned a job aimed at developing and writing a paper on the establishment of a national level cultural museum with a special focus on Nepal’s ethnic structure and cultural diversity. It would be a large complex, representing all cultures within one complex – some kind of a ‘living’ museum as the minister described. The committee assigned the work of preparing the draft as explained by the minister to this scribe.

The task was performed and the paper submitted to the minister. Nobody knows what happened to the proposal submitted to the Ministry.

In fact, a proposed museum of this type already exists on the hill behind the Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur. So, why did the minister think another one of more or less the same nature was necessary? Nobody knows the answer.

The proposed ethnic museum has abundant land on the hill at its disposal, whereas the small ethnic museum in the form of a collection and display exists on Exhibition Road, Bhrikutimandap, Kathmandu.
Conclusion

1. If all categories of collections are to be counted as ‘museums’, there are at least 10 to 12 museums currently operating in Nepal. Some cite the following:
   1.2. Natural History Museum, Swayambhu, Tribhuvan University
   1.3. Mountaineering Museum, Pokhara, Gandaki Province, Dhankuta (Pradesh 1), Haripur (Dhanusha, Pradesh 2), Pokhara (Gandaki Pradesh) Kapilvastu (Pradesh 5), and Surkhet (Pradesh 6)
   1.4. Royal Palace Museums – Hanumandhoka, Patan, Bhaktapur and Gorkha
   1.5. Pradesh (formerly Regional) Museums
   1.6. Janjati Museums, Kirati in Halesi, Tharu in Saina Maina, and others
   1.7. Rong collection, Fikkal, Ilam
   1.8. Palpa Museum (in the offing)
   It needs to be clarified that this writer is not aware of other collections which would carry the name of a ‘museum’, however this does not mean these do not exist.

2. Museum is an expression of human creativity. Both tangible and intangible cultural heritages are best preserved in museums in which communities and cultures find their identity expressed and preserved. Museum management could be effective if it involved
communities whose artifacts and representative items form the main body of the museum.

3. The Constitution of Nepal and the National Cultural Policy address the need to safeguard the fundamental rights of the people. Cultural rights are best safeguarded through the establishment of museums. The government and the Department of Archaeology need to work out a partnership strategy for this area.

4. Museum legislation and other necessary legal tools should be formulated now. This is a cumbersome process. Lobbying for this should be performed on all three levels of governance.

5. Unplanned growth in any sector of society is chaotic. The people’s aspiration to open a museum in their cultural setting should be taken into account. However, a regulatory mechanism, some kind of basic requirement should also be a pre-requisite for the survival and continuity of institutions such as museums.

6. Monitoring the operation of the museum, especially its impact on society, its pro-people policy and its actions for a participatory approach is necessary if we wish to achieve the museum’s goals and sustainability.

7. The government machinery would be well advised to involve international agencies such as ICOM in the following activities:
   a) museum management,
   b) operation,
   c) developing training programmes for museum employees,
d) policy formulation and creating a strong bond with the community,
e) cultural expressions and especially the development of museums in major cultural areas and cultures.

8.
As a part of the ‘corporate social responsibility’ and development agenda, local businesses, industries and political parties can also play an important role in the process of museum development. Political parties can be persuaded to commit through the heritage preservation agenda in their election manifestoes.

9.
Unlike many nations, our universities do not own a university. This is an area universities could focus on in order to establish museums as an integral part of the education system.

10.
In a nation with cultural diversity, the need to culturally express oneself, achieve harmony and peace, a museum can be a centre of a coordinated approach to maintain mutual respect for all existing cultures in the spirit of national unity and solidarity.
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Introduction

Community museums are often defined as museums initiated, managed and run by the community. They develop as community members donate heritage objects and elaborate stories from their collective memories. Community museums emerge, not to display the reality of the other, but to tell the community’s particular story. Objects are not the dominant value of community museums, as they focus on the collective memory which is vitalized by the recreation and reinterpretation of meaningful stories. Thus, members of a community use the community museum to remember how things were before, to relive events and practices that marked their lives. In community museums people invent a way of telling their stories, through which they participate in defining their own identity.

Communities are the heart and soul of community museums. Community members decide what will be shown in the museum, how it should be run, and which priorities it should address. Community museums do not comply to the decisions reached by the central authorities, neither in its contents nor in its operation. It responds to the local government which represents the community in a more direct manner, but does not depend on state or federal institutions.

Due to the lack of museum institutions (act, laws, regulations) in Nepal, all museums are registered under the organizational act. Museums established under the organizational act are basically treated no different than any other non-governmental organization (NGO). The lack of museum institutions has represented a major problem...
for managing community museums in Nepal. Similarly, the lack of clear state policies fails to encourage better museum management.

Since community museums are registered under the organization register act, it is impossible to know how many community museums have been registered so far. However, following the 2006 mass movement and the post 2007 rise of the ethnic movement, ethnic museums have been established in the form of community museums throughout Nepal. Similarly, since the 2017 local elections, the new local representatives encouraged community museums and established community-based museums. There are numerous community museums that have not been registered yet, but are in operation.

Therefore, the number of community museums is unknown, but it is believed that there are approximately 700 (both registered and unregistered) community museums in Nepal.

In this article, I will demonstrate how community museums, initiated and managed by the community, can become a role model for the conservation of cultural heritage (tangible and intangible), and contribute to the sharing of history and producing knowledge. I will use the Tharu Cultural Museum and Research Center case study, through which I will try to demonstrate how cultural museums can become a hub for preserving cultural heritage.

**Background**

Nepal is a multi-ethnic, multilingual and multicultural country with rich cultural heritages, located between India and China. The 2011 Census recognized 125 caste and ethnic groups speaking 123 different languages. The new constitution of the Federal Republic of Nepal has recognized all spoken languages as national languages. The National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN) has recognized 59 indigenous nationalities residing in Nepal in 2002 (NFDIN 2011).
However, the 2011 census reported only 47 indigenous nationalities (CBS 2012). Among them, Tharu is the second largest indigenous group with a population of 1.7 million, residing in various districts of southern Nepal (CBS 2012).

The Tharu are indigenous inhabitants of the Tarai, the narrow strip of flat and fertile land that lies at the foothills of the Himalayas. Their physical features indicate a Tibeto-Burman ancestry, but due to the proximity of the Indian plain their language is similar to Bhojpuri and Hindi. The Tharu have unique rituals, festivals, and music, while their clothes and ornaments are similar to some ethnic groups found in India. Assimilation into the dominant Nepali culture is merely one of the many challenges the Tharu face. Once malaria in the Terai was brought under control between 1955 and 1965 (with the help of the U.S. Government, WHO and the government of Nepal), the rate of immigration skyrocketed, particularly of the Nepali hill people, whose culture, along with the use of the Western education system, was gradually adopted by the Tharu. The Tharu are thus under threat of slowly losing their ethnic identity and cultural values.

The Tharu people are rich in culture, knowledge and skills (Guneratne 2002; Krauskopff 1999). However, as a result of modernization, these cultures, knowledge and skills are under threat of becoming extinct (Mahato and Mahato 2010). The museum collects physical artifacts related to the indigenous Tharu as well as their intangible heritage, and keeps them all in the museum for the villagers, students and other visitors. The museum has been performing various activities with the aim of preserving history, culture, knowledge and skills. The richness of traditional knowledge and skills enable the Tharu people to produce a great variety of food and nutritional supplies.

Despite its multiculturalism, the government of Nepal never promoted or protected ethnic and indigenous cultures (Lawoti 2010; Sunam 2017; Hachhethu 2006; Hangen 2009; Onta 1996). As a result, many indigenous cultures and languages are on the verge
of extinction. The state mainstreamed the Khas/Arya culture and language and marginalised all other ethnic and indigenous cultures and languages. Indigenous communities are marginalized and excluded along with their culture and language (Lawoti 2005; Sunam 2017; Mahato, Rai (Paudyal), and Baruah 2019). In order to maintain multiculturalism and diversity, the state should treat, promote, protect and preserve all cultures and languages equally, thus giving them the chance for proportional and equitable development.

The promotion and mainstreaming of a single culture, a single language and a single community do not encourage diverse food production, various ways of food preparation and different food technologies. Cultural diversity promotes and protects diverse food culture and helps people learn from each other and mutually respect one another. Various indigenous people with different cultures reside throughout Nepal. They have different food cultures, as regards its growing and consumption. These food cultures are usually guided by different rituals and festivals and vice versa.

**Tharu cultural museum and research center**

The Tharu Cultural Museum and Research Center is a community based non-governmental and non-profitable museum that was established in 2005 by Tharu intellectuals, traditional leaders and youths from the Tharu indigenous community residing in the Chitwan district of Nepal. Realizing the threats to the Tharu culture and language, which emerged as a result of the dominating Nepali culture and globalization, the Tharu intellectual youths initiated the establishment of a museum that would preserve their culture through the museum collection, as well as through the organisation of various cultural programs and researches. The museum is located in the Bachhauili village in the Chitwan district, merely one kilometre east of Sauraha, the third most popular tourist destination in Nepal.

The Tharu community in the Bachhauili village has greatly contributed to the establishment, construction and institutionalisation
of the Museum. Every Tharu household in the village contributed funds as well as building material for the construction of the museum. In support of the cultural preservation initiatives, the National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC) provided some funds for the construction of the museum building. Most importantly, many Tharu people provided their personal traditional Tharu collections for the museum display.

Figure 1:
Communities donating their labour during the construction of the Tharu Cultural Museum and Research Center

The main goal of the museum is to preserve the Tharu culture through different activities with direct and indirect involvement of the people in the community. It aims to preserve arts, culture, handicrafts and artifacts related to the indigenous Tharu People. Similarly, the museum displays an exhibition on Tharu history, life, culture and indigenous knowledge and skills. One of the primary objectives of the museum is to educate people - particularly pupils - about history through culture, photos, arts and handicrafts. Similarly, the
museum has been performing research on indigenous culture, history, literature, arts, crafts, paintings, knowledge, skills, etc.

The museum collections in the Tharu Cultural Museum and Research Center have been set up to preserve the Tharu culture, art and history, as well as research and further develop the community. The museum collects endangered artifacts related to the indigenous Tharu people residing throughout the Tarai area of Nepal. The collections comprise traditional agriculture tools, fishing and hunting tools, traditional knowledge and skills used in agriculture, healing, delivery, fishing, hunting and housing. This helps people know about the Tharu ways of life and their eating habits.

The museum also explores the Tharu culture, literature, arts, legends, songs, festivals, rituals, their indigenous knowledge, technology and skills. The indigenous Tharu people are rich in culture, literature and arts, but their stories and tales have been passed from one generation to the next through oral tradition (Müller-Böker 1999). Therefore, the museum has been researching, collecting, publishing and documenting its literature, arts, and songs for the future generations.

The museum has been redrawing the Tharu history through its collection of historical photos and its display. The museum has recently obtained 100-year-old historical photos and put them on display. The photos depict a royal hunt in the Chitwan district during the Rana regime, the Tharu culture of the period and the relationship between the Tharu and the state.

The museum puts on presentations on the Tharu history, culture, stories, songs, etc., for various pupils. The presentation informs the pupils as regards the history of their forefathers and provides information on culture, stories and songs.

The museum has been performing various research activities in different fields of the indigenous Tharu culture, history, as well as
studying their relationship with natural resources and the immigrants from the hills. The museum also researches the political accessibility and inclusion of the Tharu people in the government and public spaces. The museum has been continuously researching how the indigenous Tharu people have been displaced and detached from the right to natural resources once the Chitwan National Park has been established.

Once the museum staff performed rigorous research on the relationship between the park and the indigenous people, the museum set up a photo exhibition depicting how the Tharu people were forcefully displaced from the villages in the jungle when the park was being established and had not received any compensation so far. The research revealed how the Tharu were gradually pushed away from accessing natural resources. Similarly, the museum initiated and performed several types of research on Tharu history, culture, skills and knowledge.

The museum has been collecting different artifacts related to Tharu culture and history from different villages in Chitwan as well as from other parts of Tarai. The museum identifies different materials and artifacts which are on the verge of extinction and has asked people to report if they find historically important and classic Tharu material, art, skills and knowledge. In exchange for an admission fee, the museum displays the collected materials to its visitors. The collected admissions are spent on further developing the museum as well as on social, cultural and educational activities that aid and promote cultural preservation.

The museum has been working on the preservation and promotion of Tharu culture by organizing different cultural events within various festivals and rituals. The museum has been regularly organizing song and dance programmes among Tharu women during the Jitiya, a festival of women. With the help of local people and Tharu women groups, the museum also organizes other events. This has created a platform on which the Tharu people could show
their younger generation the value of their culture, knowledge and identity. Now, the Tharu culture is one of the main cultures promoted during important political events and when welcoming honorary guests, excellences and dignitaries to our region.

During various events, different Tharu women groups set-up stalls with Tharu ethnic food for the audience and guests. They also exhibit their clothes, way of life, ornaments and handicrafts. This exhibition helps to let people know about the organic ways of growing, cooking and eating food. Moreover, people discover different types of wild and homegrown vegetables and learn how to cook them and preserve the nutrients. Similarly, the exhibition of ornaments and handicrafts helps to promote the Tharu culture as well as link culture to the market.

**Museum activities**

**Historical photo exhibition**

The history of Nepal is characterized by the rule of different dynasties and families (Whelpton 2005; Joshi and Rose 2004). The mainstream history of Nepal is exclusive to the winners and rulers of Nepal and excludes the histories, culture, lives, knowledge and skills of indigenous people (Pathak 2017). Therefore, the mainstream histories are always linear histories (Foucault 1995). The mainstream histories of Nepal mostly covered Kathmandu and its territories and glorified the totalitarian Rana rulers and the Saha dynasty. The history of indigenous Tharu people is almost absent from the mainstream history.

The primary reason for excluding the Tharu history is that the Tharu people are marginalized indigenous people with no access to the state apparatus and are isolated from the state, both geographically and because of the epidemics of malaria in Tarai. Many people believe that Tarai is a buffer area between Nepal and India and that the malaria epidemics helped the Nepali state protect itself from the British Empire (Robertson 2018).
However, Tarai, particularly the Chitwan and Tharus, have had a special relation with the state and the rulers ever since the Rana regime. During the Rana regime, Chitwan was famous for big game, especially tiger and rhino hunting during the winter. Rana oligarchs often invited the British prince and Indian viceroys for big game hunt in Chitwan. With the help of indigenous Tharu knowledge, skills and technology, Rana rulers and the British prince would kill hundreds of tigers and rhinos.

In order to show the history of the indigenous Tharu and the state, as well as the international relations, the museum has collected more than 100 historical photos which were taken 100 years ago. The aim of the photo display in the museum is to show the history of the Tharus, their knowledge and skills, their traditional ways of...
life, their agriculture and fishing systems and how these changed over time.

The collection of historical photos (some of them taken 100 years ago, while others are at least 50 years old) of the Tharu people in the Tarai region, particularly in Chitwan, is one of the flagship collections on display in the museum. The photos display the life of the Tharu and how this changed over time. They also show the political relationship between the Tharu and the state, as well as their housing, food, agriculture and how they changed over time. They show the indigenous knowledge, skills and technologies the Tharu people used for hunting, fishing and agriculture. The photos have helped understand the multi-dimensional aspects of the Tharu – the social, cultural, political, environmental and economic lives of the indigenous Tharu people.

**Collection of agricultural tools and its display**

The museum has identified numerous tools that were used by the Tharu indigenous people in agriculture, fishing, housing as well as in their other daily lives and which have almost disappeared from the community. The museum has identified various agricultural tools that were used by Tharus for ploughing, planting, harvesting and storing food. The collection of these tools not only indicates a traditional, but also a scientific and environmentally friendly agricultural method and shows how these tools were replaced and disappeared over time.

The museum has collected various agricultural tools for its display which shows the villagers, visitors and pupils the environmentally friendly agricultural method used in the region. The collection of agricultural tools displays the ideas, knowledge, and technologies the Tharu people used when cultivating, growing, harvesting and storing crops. The display helps to understand the organic and environmentally friendly technologies used for growing crops, how these technologies have been replaced by so-called modern
methods and technologies and the impact this has had on the environment. This display helps the visitors understand the changing trend - from the most resilient ways and technologies used in agriculture to fragile and unsustainable agriculture, food technology and safety.

![Figure 3: Wooden cart used for transporting agricultural materials](image)

Source: Tharu cultural museum and resource center

The project was started in 2006 and is an ongoing project. The Museum has been researching and identifying different agricultural tools and their use in crop production, harvesting and storing. The museum interviewed people over the age of 70 and asked them about the traditional agricultural methods and tools. The museum also asked people if they had any traditional agricultural tools and if they would like to donate them to the museum. In most cases, the museum identified these tools and purchased them for a reasonable price. In many cases people donated the tools to the museum.
Collection and display of Tharu kitchen utensils

The indigenous Tharu people are rich in food and therefore also have a rich collection of kitchen utensils. Tharus are very good in collecting food from rivers and lakes. Similarly, they have rich knowledge in wild vegetables, fruits and herbs. Therefore, most Tharu villages in Chitwan are located on riverbanks and close to forests.

Since the Tharu people have rich knowledge of food, vegetables, sea foods, fruits and herbs, they also have rich knowledge and skills in preparing food. Thus, they need different types and shapes of kitchen utensils for preparing their diverse meals. As they are used to eating a diverse menu, they also have a rich collection of kitchen utensils. The indigenous Tharu people in Chitwan mostly used pottery and wooden materials for cooking, eating and keeping foods. They also used tree leaves for eating and storing their food.

Figure 4:
Kitchen materials in the museum display
Source: Tharu cultural museum and research center
The collection of Tharu kitchen utensils and their display in the museum show the use of kitchen utensils and how they changed over time. The aims of the programme are to show how the Tharu people used to store crops, which types of traditional materials they used for cooking and how people used to preserve cooked food for longer periods. The kitchen utensils reveal the traditional, locally available materials that were used in cooking and preserving the nutritional values of food over longer periods of time.

The museum uses a similar methodology for identifying and collecting kitchen utensils as it does for its collections of other indigenous materials. This is an ongoing project and we asked people over the age of 70 to share their knowledge, skills and technology for preparing Tharu food. However, the museum could not collect all the different types of cooking utensils as they have almost disappeared from society.

**Conclusion**

The Tharu cultural museum and research center is a community initiated and managed museum that helps preserve the cultural heritage of the indigenous Tharu people. The core value of the museum is that it gets the community involved in the conservation of its culture. Community participation helps to ensure community ownership and encourages the community to become involved in cultural heritage. The museum focuses particularly on engaging women in cultural preservation. In this way, the community museum can become a role model for the conservation of cultural heritage and community development.
Bibliography:


Regional Museums, Regional Resources: some insights from Aotearoa New Zealand

Jane Legget PhD FMA
Chair, ICOM Aotearoa New Zealand

It has been an honour to meet with such interesting Nepali colleagues and a privilege for me to be able to bring warmest museum greetings from Aotearoa New Zealand. There are long-established warm relations between our two countries, through our hero Sir Edmund Hillary and his partnership with your hero Tenzing Norgay atop Sagarmatha Mount Everest. Sir Ed is also connected to the museum world in many ways – he left his papers to Auckland Museum, which also holds other items related to him in its collection and which developed the international exhibition Sir Edmund Hillary - Everest and Beyond in 2002-2003 with National Geographic. His pioneering Antarctic expedition is celebrated at the Canterbury Museum in Christchurch, a heritage city which shares with Nepal the devastating experience of major earthquake damage and the long process of recovery. Sir Ed’s daughter Sara has worked at the Auckland Art Gallery as senior conservator for many years, yet another link to our professional field.

Introduction

It is good to know that ICOM Nepal is supporting Nepali colleagues in thinking about regional museums here and how best to make use of the limited resources available to support their work. Most New Zealand’s museums have a regional focus, whether that be a large administrative region or telling local stories in small community museum. I shall share some experiences from the situation in our island nation deep in the South Pacific Ocean firstly by introducing the New Zealand museum sector more broadly. Then I shall focus on regional museums. I shall
highlight some key issues which may resonate with the situation here and discuss some opportunities.

The New Zealand museum scene

Firstly a few statistics. Depending on how we define a museum (and this could be the subject of a whole different workshop!), there are approximately 500 museums, galleries or heritage collections accessible to the public on a regular, but sometime very limited, basis. Of these, about 125 have one or more paid staff who make management decisions about the museum’s operation. This is an important distinction from the nearly 400 others, which are governed and managed wholly by volunteers (Figure 1). In addition, we have a single national museum funded by central government – the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. It is located in our capital city, Wellington, and since 1998 has operated as a multi-disciplinary museum with collections of natural history, fine and decorative arts, and human history. It particularly highlights the two principal cultures in New Zealand – the indigenous Maori and the non-Maori, descendants of the early European settlers and more recent immigrants, with a strong commitment to the many Pacific peoples who now live in New Zealand. In this former British colony, both local and central government were modelled on British systems and values. New Zealand museums began as western cultural institutions, but in recent years they have taken a leading role in developing bicultural ways of working. Since the 1970s there has been growing recognition of Maori cultural values and these increasingly shape organizational structures and ways of working, with Maori active in museums at governance, management and advisory levels as well as in mainstream professional and volunteer roles.

Some more figures: there about 3,500 paid employees in our museums and 8000 volunteers. We think in terms of small (1-5 paid staff), medium (6-20 paid staff) and large museums (over 20 paid staff), as well as micro museums (mostly volunteers).
I use the term ‘museum’ to cover all kinds of public museums and public (non-commercial) galleries and institutions with heritage collections. Our museums hold over 40 million heritage objects, specimens and art works. More than 1000 exhibitions are produced annually and over 8 million visits are made. There is in excess of $NZ 300 million of operational and capital expenditure annually, making an economic contribution to our communities. Furthermore, our museums and galleries are ranked as the country’s top cultural attractions by overseas visitors; international tourism is one of our most important industries.

Table 1 provides an approximation of the proportional spread of museums by size of staff. Most museums and galleries with paid staff receive some (but not all) funds directly or indirectly from local government or universities or the Defence Forces.
The micro-museums have a local history focus or a specialist theme like agricultural machinery or the forestry industry, and are run by enthusiasts, often older retired people. They frequently have a homely feel, which can appeal to urban visitors. Few have facilities other than displays, but they often are helpful for personal heritage visitors, genealogy researchers and those with specialist interests. They tend to be open less frequently and for shorter opening hours, as the volunteers have other commitments in their lives. They may receive small grants from their local authorities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Museum scale</th>
<th>Number of museums</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National museum</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Over 300 paid staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large museums</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Includes two c. 50 and 1 c.200 (over 20 staff)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium museums</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>(6-20 staff)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small museums</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>(1-5 staff)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro museums</td>
<td>c. 400</td>
<td>Mostly operated (volunteer-run) and managed by volunteers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1:**
Staff numbers at museums and galleries of different scale

Some Maori kinship groups – iwi (tribes), hapu (subtribes), and whanau (extended families) – have been developing their own cultural centres and heritage tourism ventures, but many Maori taonga (treasures) remain in the care of museums. This has led to different kinds of museum-Maori partnerships. Since 1975 the New Zealand Government has actively engaged with Maori to recognize and address breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi 1840, when the British Crown (Government) and Maori iwi entered a formal partnership. However, it was rarely honoured by
the relevant Government agents or Pakeha (European) settlers. Thus, Maori lost land, natural resources and taonga, suffered deprivations and endured economic and cultural disadvantages which continue to affect their lives. Through negotiated processes of redress, Maori are now recognized as key constituents, stakeholders and partners in many public agencies, non-profit organisations and some commercial enterprises. In museums, this has led to co-development of bicultural museum practices which respect the different ways that Maori recognize and engage with their cultural treasures. Each museum is encouraged to develop relationships with the tangata whenua (people of the land), but this is often more challenging for the volunteer-run museums.

**Museums in the regions**

Our museums are spread throughout the country, wherever there are people, and collectively they contribute to our national life. As highlighted in 2014 by our professional organisation, Museums Aotearoa, our museums have become much more embedded in their communities, rather than being detached collecting institutions for their own sakes:

- New Zealand museums are actively focused on enriching their communities by enhancing the quality of their facilities, collections, programmes, products and services.
- Museums play a pivotal role in the national heritage, education, leisure, and tourism sectors, and they demonstrate and profile New Zealand’s innovation and leadership internationally.

We now recognize that museums contribute to their regions in many ways. They remain storehouses of knowledge — through their collected objects held as evidence of history, art and natural history, but also through the additional information associated with those objects, accumulated archives and supporting books and sources of reference. They can become a focus for community
pride and celebrate distinctive regional identity. They partner with local organisations to provide services and assist with special projects. They work with schools and other educational organisations. They are destinations for both international tourists and local visitors. They also can be ‘third spaces’, outside home and work, for local residents.

There is no single model in New Zealand. Our regional museums all have different origins, so we must recognize their diversity on many dimensions, including:

- Form of legal entity
- Primary purpose
- Staffing size
- Budget size
- Populations served
- Communities of support (not all are necessarily local)
- Professional or volunteer-run – this affects the museum’s capabilities
- Organisational structure and culture
- Funding sources
- Scope and themes of collections
- Exhibition types
- Buildings – heritage or purpose-built

While many of our museums are fiercely independent, especially some of our micro museums run by local historical societies or railway enthusiasts, I want to focus on those regional museum that receive public funding and therefore have an obligation to be accountable to their funders – usually ratepayers (local tax payers) for what they do. This issue of accountability for what and to whom is an important consideration for developing a regional museums policy. I shall summarise three ways in which our regional museums with paid staff are funded, starting with those which receive direct local government funding.
Regional museums receiving direct public operational funding are generally:

- Operated as units of local authorities, with staff as local government employees
- Governed by City or District Councils through a cultural services, community affairs or leisure and recreation committee or similar
- Funded by local taxes (rates)
- Receiving recurring funding annually
- Competing with other local services (libraries, sports grounds, sewage, roads, street cleaning etc.) for an allocation of the annual Council budget
- Reporting regularly to their Council committee on spending and activities
- Expected to generate some other income through commercial activities, external grants etc.

Regional museums receiving indirect public operational funding are generally:

- Independent trusts or incorporated societies, with staff employed by the trust or society which owns the collections and operates the museum
- Governed by a board of trustees or society committee
- Receiving annual (or three yearly) operating grants from a local authority (City or District Council), through “contestable funding”, which must be renegotiated annually or three-yearly
- Making autonomous decisions
- Operating under a Service Agreement with the City or District Council, which they report on annually, showing how they have delivered the agreed services and spent their budget allocation accordingly
- Actively seeking other funding, including commercial activities (gift shop, café, venue hire), donations, fund-raising activities, external grants, publishing etc.
Other museums operating within a regional context may include:

- University museums, accountable to their universities and ultimately to the Ministry of Education; corporate museums, which are subsidiary operations of companies, e.g. breweries, banks, etc.; defence force museums, which report to their own trusts and/or their branch of the forces; and private operations, which may operate as commercial heritage tourism enterprises but still hold significant heritage material as private collections.

Any of these regional museum actors may also receive central government grants for capital developments under various economic development schemes, tourism grants or programmes supporting regional cultural heritage, each with specific accountability requirements. These are generally one-off projects with no continuing operational funding, and there is strong competition for these few grants. Past performance and sound accountability are significant factors determining success in grant applications, in addition, of course, to a compelling project with a sound business case.

One thing that is common everywhere – there are never enough resources for museums to perform at their ideal level! The New Zealand Government has a very modest tax base.

Our population is c. 5 million, but of course only a proportion pay tax, so the Government’s income is limited. Thus, we have only one national museum. However, the Government recognised that other museums also work to maintain and develop heritage collections which collectively contribute to our national sense of identity. In 1997, a unit called National Services Te Paerangi was established as part of the national museum with a remit to serve the wider museum community and iwi to support the management of the nation’s heritage in the regions. They provide advice on all aspects of good museum practice, publish resources, offer training workshops and expert knowledge exchanges. They support
museum development through the New Zealand Museum Standards Scheme and offer small grants. They work closely with iwi to care for their taonga and assist museums to develop good working relationships with their local iwi.

Some current issues

Mention has already been made of some key issues for our museums which are likely to continue to guide our ability to thrive in response to a changing external operating environment: access to recurring funding; accountability; and effective partnerships with local iwi. Most of our public funding agencies recognise the 2007 ICOM definition of a museum as a key criterion for grant applications: “A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.” (International Council of Museums, 2007). Museums demonstrate how they meet this definition when they apply for public funding. However, we know that there is so much changing in the world. How museums respond to these changes has been – and continues to be – the subject of lively debate about what a museum is and does – and could and should do - and the values and beliefs that influence how they operate.

At the ICOM triennial conference in Kyoto, Japan, in September 2019, a new definition was proposed for discussion: “Museums are democratising, inclusive and polyphonic spaces for critical dialogue about the pasts and the futures. Acknowledging and addressing the conflicts and challenges of the present, they hold artefacts and specimens in trust for society, safeguard diverse memories for future generations and guarantee equal rights and equal access to heritage for all people. Museums are not for profit. They are participatory and transparent, and work in active partnership with and for diverse
communities to collect, preserve, research, interpret, exhibit, and enhance understandings of the world, aiming to contribute to human dignity and social justice, global equality and planetary wellbeing.”

No conclusion was reached, but the discussion remains timely. If we consider just a few of the recent developments which affect museums, these include: digitising images of collection items for 24 hour access; engagement with visitors, users, supporters and critics through social media; using new technologies such as 3D printing, virtual reality and augmented reality to enhance exhibitions and displays; community-led exhibitions where museum staff are facilitators rather than the authorities. All of these require essential resources: finances, staff, knowledge, creativity, professional practices and, importantly, political will and the support of the communities where museums operate and which they serve.

Complexity of functions, complexity of stakeholders

One of the first issues to recognise is the complex nature of what museums are and what they try to do. If I take the example of our largest regional institution, Auckland War Memorial Museum Tamaki Paenga Hira (Figure 2), it means different things to different people. As a multi-disciplinary museum, combined with a war memorial, it is both a research resource and a research facility; it is a collections centre and a site for displays and exhibitions; it provides educational programmes at all levels, formal and informal; it holds a library and archive and a digital resource bank; and through its conservation laboratory has a wealth of expertise in conservation techniques. From a commercial perspective it is also a venue for conferences and performances and event management; it operates a gift shop, with its own merchandising and publications; it sells tickets for its own events both at the museum and at other sites; it operates a café and paid-for car parking. It is a tourist destination, offering a range of visitor experiences, services and tours in different languages. In addition
to all this, Auckland Museum tries to be a community hub, partnering with iwi groups, welcoming different new immigrants and resident ethnic minority groups, facilitating visits for people with special needs and their families and also serving as a place of remembrance for the families of those who died during military service. This museum operates an extraordinarily complex business. All our smaller museums are trying to serve a range of present and future audiences in different ways usually with more modest ambitions.

Figure 2:
Auckland War Memorial Museum Tamaki Paenga Hira, a regional museum and war memorial serving a large metropolitan area with multidisciplinary collections.

This diversity of museum functions means that many people have an interest or stake in the museum’s success. For Auckland Museum, these stakeholders include its main funders: local rate-payers (even if they never visit the museum, these residents still pay for it through their local taxes); the local authority, Auckland Council, which manages the major public funding contribution;
granting bodies which support specific projects; and central government which awards occasional funding for capital projects such a building improvements. They all want to know that their money is spent for the purposes for which it was awarded and expect regular accountability reports. Furthermore, the local politicians want a museum that the city can take pride in. Maori groups expect respectful care and display of their material culture, with Maori staff able to manage Maori taonga in accordance with culturally sanctioned practice and ritual, and contributions from Maori integral to interpretation in exhibition and public programmes. Researchers, scientists, artists, historians and university students all want collections to be well documented and cared for and accessible by appointment. School teachers and pupils want displays and activities which can relate to their educational curricula. Tourism operators want their visitors to have informative and entertaining experiences, which members of the local community want to see their own histories reflected in the displays as well as informal learning opportunities and enjoyable visits. Donors past and present want to know that objects which they have given to the museum are well cared for and that the information associated with them is accurately recorded. Exhibition sponsors expect exciting exhibitions that attract large audiences and enhance the sponsor’s reputation and brand recognition.

With multiple functions and so many communities with interests in the museum, today’s museums must satisfy more people that their regional institution is worthy of their support. This also means that there are people to whom the museum must demonstrate its value but also its accountability.

**A clear purpose**

Every regional museum, no matter how large or small, will always be unique because the local history, heritage and culture have their one distinctive stories, experience and flavour. Museum people are generally very collaborative rather than competitive,
so they need to complement rather than duplicate what other museums in their area are doing. They have not always expressed this in a coherent way. It is vital to be clear about:

- what your museum is for – its purpose and functions
- who your museum is for – its principal audiences and stakeholders have been identified
- why you as museum people are doing what you do – recognising and articulating your responsibilities and accountabilities

Your answer to the question “Why do you have a museum?” must be compelling and relevant to the people who support it. You need a ‘social licence’ from your broader community to operate, but you also need to make a convincing case to those who support it financially (Figure 3). Why should public authorities support your regional museum rather than another museum or something completely different – a public swimming pool, a school or a new health centre?

Figure 3:
There are more kinds of value beyond economic value, but museums need operational funding. This New Zealand five-dollar note shows Sir Edmund Hillary with Sagarmatha Mount Everest in the background.
Demonstrating museum value

Making a case for your museum – or for a group of museums within a region – means thinking beyond the walls of the museum; thinking about the broader context in which your museum operates and the value which they contribute. In New Zealand, our local authorities are required to contribute to “community well-being”. Our Local Government Act 2002 identified four dimensions of community well-being:

- Economic well-being
- Social well-being
- Environmental well-being
- Cultural well-being

Museums can contribute to all of these, as I outline with examples below:

Museum contributions to well-being outcomes can include:

- **Economic**
  - as a visitor attraction, employer, catering, sales of local crafts and publications, employment opportunities, business partnerships with tourism ventures

- **Social**
  - as a community hub, store of local knowledge, volunteer opportunities, work with schools, showcase for community identity

- **Environmental**
  - as a research resource, natural history collections as scientific evidence, ecological research, distribution data on flora and fauna, educational activities
• **Cultural**
  • as a cultural resource, recording local history and customs, collecting and exhibiting local heritage and crafts, arts activities, creative programmes, partnering with performing arts groups, reviving traditional crafts skills and techniques, fostering indigenous language retention

Being able to tell a meaningful story about what museums do and the nature of the value which your museum provides to your regional and/or local community should be an important part of rationalising the why you operate a museum. Along with your museum colleagues working elsewhere in your region or nationally, you can build a strong case collectively for public support of your museums to local and/or national government. Effectively parts of the nation’s cultural and historic heritage is distributed throughout the country – a ‘distributed national collection’. That is why it is important for your museum colleagues to speak with one voice, highlighting the key benefits which museums bring to their communities regionally and nationally. For New Zealand, we have two organisations which help us to do this – Museums Aotearoa, our professional body, and National Services Te Paerangi. ICOM Aotearoa New Zealand also has a role in this, and I am sure that ICOM Nepal plays a similar part.

**Regional collaboration**

Collaboration is an important aspect to consider when reflecting on regional museums and regional resources (Figure 4). Collaborating within a region to make best use of limited available resources is increasingly essential for museums to thrive. Developing a regional collecting strategy which identifies distinctive collecting themes for different museums is very worthwhile. Reviewing the history and culture of a region holistically can generate specific foci for both larger and smaller museums. One or two major museums can provide a survey history through its displays and then direct visitors to individual smaller museums elsewhere
in the region to tell local stories as well as treat a particular theme in more depth – perhaps an important industry or cultural belief or practice or historical event or development which it makes more sense to describe in that area. There then may be possibilities to send visitors out from the local museum to visit heritage sites, buildings such as temples or fortresses, industrial sites or traces of traditional agricultural practices, battlefields or grave sites of key individuals so that they gain a full understanding of an aspect of regional or national history and culture. Enabling museums to develop a specialist focus or theme means that museums do not have overlapping collections, so each provides a unique story for visitors and tourists and highlights for local residents how their heritage adds a distinct element to the national story.

Figure 4:
The Canterbury Museum in Christchurch provided professional leadership when many museums and collections suffered during the earthquakes of 2010 and 2011. The Museum itself experienced relatively modest damage to the building and collections and was able to support other local museums to recover their collections.

Source: author.

At the level of the national museum profession, collaboration on research about the museum sector is helpful. The research can provide evidence to assist museums to make a good case to funding authorities and show that the museums know what is going on nationally and what the trends are with collections, visitation, training needs and resources. This evidence is useful
when advocating to government, influential bodies and individuals to show how museums can make a positive difference in their communities. Sharing the information about key issues and developments among colleagues ensures an informed and up-to-date profession, a task which I know ICOM Nepal strives to achieve. Sharing knowledge about ethical practice and codes of ethics builds trust among colleagues and between museums and their funders, donors, lenders and sponsors. Sharing advances in thinking about museum work helps museums to achieve good standards of museum practice and sound collection planning.

**Opportunity to reflect**

It is important to take time to reflect on how our museums have reached their current state and to consider the best ways forward. We cannot just continue as we are and risk stagnating and having no relevance in our communities. Our bricks and mortar museum buildings are costly to operate and increasingly we are competing with the digital domain. We need to have a strong presence with digitised collection, but I am not able to make any observations on the access of Nepali museums to fast broadband internet. Sometimes we need to ask some hard questions, particularly when key resources, especially funding, are scarce.

- Can really we afford all the museums that we already have?
- Are we being responsible and accountable for the museums that we already have?
- Do we even know what we have in our collections?

Increasingly museums are recognising that they may need to rationalise their collections. Storing and caring for each item has an ongoing cost, so our budgets need to be focussed on managing items which align most with our collecting policies. This means reviewing our collections and possibly deciding no longer to collect some kinds of objects and to offer some of their collection items to another museum where they will have more meaning
and can be better looked after. Maybe we have too many museums – how many are sustainable? A bit of honesty will help us with some of these decisions. We need to keep a record, too, of decisions made and to justify them as part of our responsibility to be accountable. We must remember that we are operating our museum on behalf others now and in the future. It is not about us and our museums careers but about handing on the heritage legacies in the best condition and with the best associated information that we can. It is also a responsibility of any museum’s governing body that they put the museum’s mission and needs first, and not the interests of individual members of the board or committee of governance.

Concluding remarks – success for regional museums

We know that our work is worthwhile; we just need to be able to explain its value to our many communities of interest, including key stakeholders who fund our museums, as well as our critics. To be successful, our regional museums of all sizes need to have a realistic appreciation of their wider operational environment – the local economy, political issues, community needs, demographic make-up, regional and national issues and trends.

We need to balance demands and expectations of both our community and visitors. We must be publicly accountable, reporting regularly and on time, with transparency about our spending and income. We can be entrepreneurial while focussing on our agreed vision and mission and operating according to established museum practice and ethics. We need to collaborate with our colleagues in other museums and use the same language when we promote the value of museums and demonstrate to our politicians their contributions locally and nationally. Most of all, we need to keep the conversation going!

I would like to finish by encouraging your small and large regional museums to work collaboratively. This is not just a key survival
mechanism but an effective way of stretching resources further. I have already learned from this workshop much about the diversity of collections and museum governance within Nepal and I can see that there is already an incredibly positive spirit among colleagues from regional museums of different scale and specialisms. I wish you all every success and I know that ICOM Nepal and ICOM’s International Committee for Regional Museums will continue to offer information and support as together you navigate the future for your regional museums.

Kia kaha – be strong!
Establishing biological museums in Nepali schools

Dharma Raj Dangol, Ph.D.
Ret. Professor, former Chief of the Natural History Museum at the Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Chairperson of the Institute for Social and Environmental Research Nepal

The Center for Education and Human Resource Development (CEHRD) of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of Nepal launched its Green School Directive on 5th November 2018. Amongst the many working sectors identified in this directive, one is the Establishment of Biological Museums in schools. On 26th November 2018, CEHRD, in collaboration with Nepal Prakriti Pashal, organized a workshop with the aim of developing the first Resource Handbook for Schools based on the Green School Directive. This resource book contains a chapter on the Establishment of biological museums. This chapter contains an introduction, and lays out the objectives and procedures for establishing such museums. This paper explains how the New Education Policy empowers schools to improve their green status through the active participation of the school management team, teachers and students. It also highlights certain achievements since the launch of the directive in terms of resource handbook publication, capacity building of students and teachers in schools and plant specimen collections by students under the supervision of their teachers and researchers from research organizations such as the Institute for Social and Environmental Research Nepal and the Natural History Museum.

The paper also discusses the importance of and need for a museum policy for running such school biological museums as a way of ensuring their survival and introducing further innovations. The proposed museum policy needs to address the following issues: specimen collection, specimen use, preservation techniques, networking, capacity development, student research development, museum management, etc.
Introduction

A Biological Museum is an institution in which plant and animal specimens are collected, preserved and displayed for education and research purposes. This type of school museums will help students and teachers understand the biodiversity of the schools’ surroundings, collect specimens found in the area and help understand the relationship between species and the local environment. The museum will also be an important asset for the purposes of teaching and learning.

Teachers experience difficulties in teaching biodiversity due to little or no research work, no biological museums in the vicinity of the schools or no natural history museum within the state. With the establishment of biological museums in schools, schools will have local resources for learning about biodiversity, but also be in the position to support the local government of Nepal in the study of the country’s biodiversity. The objectives of establishing these museums are the following:

- To support identification, nomenclature and classification of biological specimens
- To provide knowledge about biodiversity
- To assist the understanding of the relationship between humans, plants and animals with the environment
- To provide information on local and indigenous practices, knowledge and innovations
- To provide data on the social, economic and cultural importance of plants and animals
- To provide knowledge on museum technology used in specimen preservation
- To train students in the study methods on biodiversity and environment
- To exchange specimens among schools, universities and museums
The procedure for establishing the museum
Formulate school management team for establishing the biological museum

Provide rooms or spaces for the museum
Establish a support team that will gather financial and other support for the biodiversity museum

Establish an Implementation Committee with the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Chairperson</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biology teacher</td>
<td>Member secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Representatives from:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Representatives from:</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eco or Nature Club</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>University researchers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural History Museum</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide training for teachers on specimen collection, preservation and management
Teachers need to pass on their training to students
Organize regular refresher training courses for teachers and students
Organize seminars at the school, provincial and national levels
Conduct regular public awareness programs regarding the importance of school museums, raise adequate funds for museum development and capacity building
Allocate a budget for resource procurement, training events, and collection tours
Establishing Biological Museums in Nepali Schools

Towards the Development and Integration of a Museum Policy for (Regional) Museums

Assets necessary for establishing a biological museum:

- Showcases
- Herbarium cabinets
- Bottles, jars
- Herbarium sheets, cardboard sheets, herbarium press, mobicol, naphthalene balls
- Tables, chairs and other furniture
- Computer and printers
- Journals, flora and manuals

Specimen Preservation

- Clean the specimens, cabinets and rooms
- Protect the specimens from dust, fungi and insects
- Conduct training on museum management for teachers and students with the help of experts from the Natural History Museum and the National Herbarium
- Collect and preserve specimens regularly
- Spray with insecticides and place repellents or naphthalene balls regularly in order to repel insects

Working with schools
Creative Academy

As a part of the Kirtipur Biodiversity Research Project with the aim of training Grade 9 students, NHM and CA jointly organized a field trip to Chilancho, Kirtipur on 12th May 2018. On that day; students learnt about collecting and pressing plant specimens. The Kirtipur Biodiversity Research Project was launched by the Natural History Museum and Creative Academy on 11th August 2018. The launch of the program was inaugurated by the Vice Mayor of the Kirtipur Municipality in the presence of ward chairpersons from the 1st and 2nd school management teams who were joined by students, teachers and NHM staff.
Ministry of Education, Science and Technology:
Green School Directive


Biological Museum Establishments: Some Achievements

1. Green School Resource Book
In collaboration with Prakriti Pathshala, CEHRD published a resource handbook. This resource book contains a chapter on Establishing Biological Museums. This chapter introduces the objectives and procedures for establishing and maintaining a biological museum. Such biological museums will be established in schools with the active participation of the school management team, teachers and students. An e-copy of the Green school resource book can be downloaded from http://wcn.org.np/catalog/books/

2. Capacity building of students and school teachers
Natural History Museum
A Training Course on Museum Education for School Science Teachers was held at Rarahil Memorial School, NHM on 8-9 March 2019.

The course was attended by twenty-one participants from 16 schools (Baghbhairab School, Budhanilkantha School, Creative Academy, Ganesh EB School, Green Village Education Foundation, Hilltown...
School, Janasewa School, Kanjirowa School, Kindergarten Secondary School, Panga S School, Prabhat Tara School, Pushpa Sadan School, Rarahil School, The Excelsior School, Ujjwal Shishuniketan and Vaishnavi School.)

Kindergarten Secondary School (KSS)

On International Biodiversity Day (22nd May 2019), the Kindergarten Secondary School in collaboration with ISERN and NHM organized a “Training Workshop on biodiversity study for school students. 28 grade 10 students (13 boys and 15 girls) participated in this workshop.

Shree Jagadambha Madhyamik Viddyalaya (JSS)

JSS organized a 3-day training workshop in Bardia. In total, 40 participants (6 teachers and 34 students) from 4 schools attended. The participants acquired theoretical and practical knowledge on plant collection, preservation and herbarium preparation as well as basic taxonomy and ethnobotany techniques.

Creative Academy

The Creative Academy has submitted a proposal to the British Council and received the International School Award for implementing the Kirtipur Biodiversity Research Project. The main objectives of the project are to organize training for teachers and students, in which they will learn how to assemble a plant collection from 10 wards of the Kirtipur Municipality, and prepare and set-up a herbarium in the museums within two schools; it will also conduct a student seminar in which the findings will be shared. The Creative Academy will run this project in partnership with the Janasewa Secondary School, a model public school in the Kirtipur Municipality.

Capacity building: On 8th November 2019, the Creative Academy, together with an expert from the Institute for Social and Environmental
Research Nepal (ISERN), conducted training for teachers and students in which they showed them how to build, preserve and manage a plant specimen collection. In total, 6 teachers from the Creative Academy and 40 students (30 from the Creative Academy and 10 from the Janasewa Secondary School) were trained.

Plant specimen collections: Students from both schools will collect plant specimens under the supervision of their teachers and researchers from the Institute for Social and Environmental Research Nepal and the Tribhuvan University. Specimens will be identified by plant taxonomists from the ISERN, the TU’s Department of Botany and the National Herbarium of Godawari. Herbarium preparation and setting up in school museums: The herbarium specimens will be prepared and set-up in the schoolmuseums.

Student seminars: Students will present their findings in seminars at their respective schools.

Need for a School Museum Policy

This paper also discusses the importance of, and need for a museum policy for the running of such school biological museums in order to ensure their sustainability and continue with their innovation. The proposed museum policy needs to address the following issues: specimen collection, specimen use, preservation techniques, networking, capacity development, student research development, museum management, etc.

Specimen Collection Policy: School teachers and students should be familiar with the conservation policy of the country. Everyone involved in the collecting should know which species are allowed to be collected and which are not.
Specimen Use and Promotion Policy:
There should be a policy that will govern the use of school museum specimens by the schools themselves as well as by outsiders.

Preservation Technique Policy:
A preservation technique policy needs to be developed.

Networking and Partnership Development Policy:
In order to sustain the biological museums in schools, schools need to establish strong networks with universities, research organizations, local governments and ICOM Nepal who will provide them with technical and financial support. Schools also need to develop partnerships with other schools in order to share experiences, work and learn together, and share their findings.

Capacity Development Policy:
Capacity development for teachers and students on collecting, preservation and management should be conducted regularly.

Research Fund Policy:
Schools should create a research fund for teachers and students to perform research on the biodiversity in the schools’ surroundings and for collecting and preserving specimens. Schools can create such a fund with the support of the local government.

Museum Management Policy:
Schools need to develop innovative policies for managing the school museum.

Information Dissemination Policy:
Schools need to organize an annual seminar at which teachers and students will share their research findings. They also need to publish reports from the seminars.
Volunteering and Intern Service Policy:
Schools need to have a policy of including volunteers and interns in the collecting and managing of specimens and build the capacity of the involved teachers and students.

Opportunities

The Green School Directive has created the opportunity to establish a biological museum in every government school. If this goal is realised there will be approximately 36000 museums in Nepal’s state schools. We can imagine the need for training in museum establishment and museum education for teachers and students in all government schools in Nepal. These museums will play a pivotal role in quality science education in schools.

This innovative approach to learning would also represent a great lesson for the international school community. Participating in establishing school museums will also be an excellent opportunity for ICOM Nepal and other research and academic institutions.
Conclusion

The initiative (Kirtipur Biodiversity Research Project) by the Creative Academy of the Kirtipur Municipality is a very innovative, timely and necessary project. This initiative has trained all science teachers and grade 8 and 9 pupils from the implementing schools (Creative Academy and Janasewa Secondary School).

In addition, this initiative also supports the establishment of museums in schools as a contribution to this research project through the strong participation of teachers and students. In the future, the museum will be a great resource center for learning about biodiversity at the municipality level. This also supports the building of networks and partnerships among schools, universities, research institutions, ICOM and individuals. It is hoped that an innovative school museum policy will be developed that will support schools in achieving quality education for school children and empower teachers in their research and development.
Running of the Jyapu museum in Lalitpur, Nepal

Santa Man Maharjan
Senior Vice President of the Jyapu Samaj, Head of the Departments for Social, Justice, Museums and Foreign Affairs

Introduction

Jyapu Samaj (Jyapu Society)

The Jyapu Society, established on 10th September 1994, is one of the leading non-profit social organizations in the Nepali district of Lalitpur. The Society was set up with the mission to preserve and develop our language and culture and guarantee social, economic and political rights of the people, especially in the Jyapu area of Lalitpur.

Jyapu

The Jyapu are the indigenous people of the Kathmandu valley. They live as an agricultural society and Dhimye is their national musical instrument. The Jyapu museum was established under the Jyapu Society treaty in order to preserve the Jyapu or Newar identity and pass on the knowledge of our ancient civilization to the generations to come. During the first phase of the establishment of the Jyapu Museum, the museum collected various artifacts such as tools, utensils, costumes, ornaments from the members of the local community and documented them all. These artifacts were classified and placed on a simple exhibition table. During the 2nd phase, the Jyapu Museum documented over 1000 objects, which were exhibited in the following sequence.
Gallery No. 1
1. Types of clay found in the Kathmandu Valley
2. Clay utensils
3. Bamboo and wooden utensils
4. Metal utensils
5. Vocational instruments
6. Local weaving tools used in general households
7. Local farming tools used in general households

Gallery No. 2
Traditional costumes and ornaments:
1. Costumes worn by children, women and men
2. Ornaments
3. Traditional musical instruments

Gallery No. 3
1. Rites of passage rituals (Desh Karma Kanda) i.e. rituals performed between birth and death
2. Food grains produced by the Jyapus people
3. Samples of seasonal festive food
4. Demonstrations of a wooden bridge and brick architecture

Gallery No. 4
1. Demonstration of Mah Puja
2. Indigenous people of Nepal
3. Demonstration of Jatra
4. Demonstration of Kumari

The operation of the Museum

The Jyapu Society has 15 subcommittees, including ones for Social, Justice, Museums, Tourism and Foreign Affairs. The Jyapu Museum is run by our own staff. The entrance fee is 2 $ for foreigners, 25 NPR for Nepali people and 10 NPR for Nepali students. The first phase of the museum has been completed and all historic objects have been protected, including arts and artifacts that reflect the Newar culture and its customs.
This museum will play an important role for future generations, as it will help them understand the Newar language, culture, traditions, lifestyle, food habits, etc. and will represent an excellent destination for anyone wanting to research the Newar people and their customs. The Jyapu museum helps to preserve the Newar nationality and builds our national integrity.

A fully-fledged museum with the capacity to perform all of the functions described above was planned, however, this has not been carried out due to the lack of human and financial resources.

In the near future, the Jyapu Society is planning to establish a museum with Asian standards, with all the necessary modern facilities for visitors and researchers.

A. Museum Information Centre
B. Cultural Heritage Gallery
C. Clay Gallery
D. Ethnic Nationalities Gallery
E. Rites of Passage Gallery
F. Religion, Fairs and Festivals Gallery
G. Land and Economy Gallery
H. Ceramic Culture Gallery
I. Residence Pattern (Open Gallery)
J. Jyapu House (Original Habitat of the Jyapu People)
K. Balcha (Field Rest House)
L. Lampati (City Rest House)
M. Kangah (Method of Extracting Black Clay)
N. Musical Instruments Gallery
O. Research Centre
P. Metalworks and Handicraft Gallery
Q. Fabric Techniques and Dress Ornaments Gallery
R. Gallery of Kangah

Proposed Gallery Design

The museum will be divided into 12 galleries (indoor and outdoor) in which the collected materials will be displayed in accordance with the nature of the gallery, with a panel board introducing the meaning and significance of the gallery collection.

The gallery plan and visitors flow will proceed as follows:

A. Museum Information Centre
Firstly, the visitors will enter the museum information center, where they will find various basic information and other facilities. In this first room they will have access to the following materials and services:

a. General introduction to the museum
b. IT guide system or Quick Response
c. Ticket and locker box
d. Digital activities advertisement
e. Audio visual device deposit
f. Personal digital assistance which will provide a general introduction for the visitors
g. Mobile AV device application and charging system
h. ATM door lock
i. Self check-in for museum members
j. Museum shop
k. Museum café

B. Cultural Heritage Gallery
In this gallery visitors will be able to enjoy a projection of the main cultural heritage events with which the Jyapu Society marks different occasions.

C. Clay Gallery
This gallery will introduce different types of clay discovered by the Newars (Jyapu) in the Kathmandu Valley. The Jyapu people have had an affinity with the different types of clay from the very beginning of their settlement in the valley. Newar’s traditional knowledge of the different varieties of clay and soil helped them use the clay and soil to their best advantage. This gallery will highlight the nature, function and significance of the different kinds of clay. The gallery will include a diorama of clay digging. In this gallery
we will exhibit Kalimati fossils found during the excavation of Kalimati in the Kathmandu valley.

We will also provide microscopic lenses for visitors, so that they can look for signs of fish, leaves, etc. found in the Kalimati fossils. We hope that the Kalimati exhibition will help us to prove that the history of Jyapu started approximately 5000 years before the Bagmati civilization.

D. Ethnic Nationalities Gallery
This gallery will show miniature clay figurines representing the different ethnic groups in Nepal. An introductory panel board will highlight the main characteristics of the various ethnic communities, their origin and their history.

E. Rites of Passage Gallery
This gallery will include materials associated with the rites of passage, the rituals that accompany the Newar/Jyapu people from birth to death. Special preference will be given to daskarmakanda, particularly birth, initiation, barta bandha, Yihee, marriage, Budha Janko and death rituals. This gallery will highlight the multifaceted significance of rituals in the life of the Newars. A miniature diorama and visual clips will also be on display in this gallery.

F. Religion, Fairs and Festivals Gallery
The Newar people are influenced by both, Hindu and Buddhist philosophy. As far as religious practices are concerned, neither religious group can be placed strictly into a single category. Both parties visit and worship the same deities in Hindu and Buddhist temples. This section of the museum will display the materials associated with Newar religious practices. The monthly festivals celebrated by the Jyapus will be exhibited with all necessary information.
G. Land and Economy Gallery
This section of the gallery will introduce the nature and quality of the soil and rocks found in the Kathmandu Valley. This gallery will show the special techniques for making fine pottery that have been used since the very first settlement of the valley. Due to the specific nature of the soil, which meant that oxen and ploughs could not be used in the valley, the Newar/Jyapu people developed a distinct type of a narrow-bladed spade called kodali (koo), as well as other specific tools used in agriculture. This gallery will also show farm tools and farm products.

H. Ceramic Culture Gallery
With the beginning of agriculture, fire burnt earthen pots of various shapes and sizes started to appear. Pottery was needed to support the new economy, its sharing of surplus grains and water. Soft black soil could be found in abundance in the valley and the Newar/Jyapu people developed a special technique for digging out the Kalimati as well as initiated various farming and domestic techniques. Clay goods are essential to both Hindu and Buddhist Newars as they are used in numerous religious ceremonies. The Newar people in the Kathmandu valley preserved one of the oldest forms of art, the profession of pottery making, until this very day. Along with the various clay objects, this gallery will also include a diorama of a miniature pottery yard.

I. Residence Pattern (Open Gallery)
This gallery will display a copy of a typical Jyapu residence, no less than three stories high, built from kiln burnt brick and tiles, with a rectangular low ceiling sloped on two sides, plastered with a special clay called Liun. A diorama depicting the preparation of flattened rice with a pestle and mortar and wine making will also be on display in this gallery. A field rest house called Bala, which used to be built close to Jyapu farms, could also be added to this display. The traditional Macha Khacha, the straw mattress, and shoes as well as other household items will be displayed in this gallery.
J. 
Musical Instruments Gallery
The Newars are jovial people who like to be merry on every occasion. They have a large collection of folk songs and dances. They are equally skilled in songs, music, plays and dances. This gallery will highlight instruments played by two hands, mainly string and wind instruments that are used in community fairs, festivals and other events. Each instrument will be presented with a general introduction.

K. 
Research Centre
The research center is an integral part of any modern museum. It includes a library, a laboratory as well as other facilities that research scholars might want to use. This centre will be used to research the social life, culture and economy of the Jyapus and Newars.

L. 
Metalworking and Handicraft Gallery
This gallery will display metal utensils used by our ancestors, in modern cabinets, with appropriate lighting and descriptions. It will also display metal artworks such as bronze sculptures, repousse art, as well as stone carvings, wood carvings, etc. created by the Jyapus over the last few decades, even though this is not their main occupation.

M. 
Fabric Techniques and Dress Ornaments Gallery
Spinning and weaving were the traditional occupations of the Newar people, including the Jyapu. A diorama of the traditional Newar technique for making cotton products/textiles will be displayed in this section. This section will also display traditional dress ornaments of the Newar people.

N. 
Gallery of Kanga
A diorama of Kanga, a process of digging out the Kalimati, which is used as a traditional fertiliser in farming will be displayed.
In this gallery the visitors will be able to take selfie photographs in a traditional Newar costume. We all hope that in the near future the Jyapu Museum will stand as a museum with modern facilities that will satisfy even the most demanding visitors.

**Conclusion**

The Jyapu Museum will play an important role in the understanding of the Newar culture and tradition for the generations to come. It will help promote the establishment of ethnographic museums in different parts of the country, as well as straighten our national integrity. The Nepali government should adopt the museum act and implement it so that all government and non-government museums could come under a single umbrella. The Jyapu Museum will be established under the new museum legislation.
Figure 1:
Jyapu Museum

Figure 2:
Male clay model
Figure 3:
Museum Galleries

Figure 4:
Museum Galleries
Nepal is a South Asian land-locked nation with rich natural and cultural diversity. Kathmandu Valley, the seat of the federal government of Nepal, is composed of three culturally rich cities. Kathmandu, ruled by kings of different dynasties has been the capital of Nepal since ancient times. Actually, Kathmandu valley is an open-air cultural museum with historical monuments from centuries before Christ until the present day. Kathmandu is also rich in intangible cultural heritage.

In Nepal, the concept of museum appeared almost a century ago. The first museum in Nepal is known as the National Museum in Chhauni. It succeeded the Shilkhana, an arsenal started and maintained by the Rana rulers. This was the first official museum in Nepal. Since the 1960s Nepal’s government began to establish museums in different parts of the country. Following the dawn of democracy in 1990, many local communities and ethnic groups began establishing and operating museums in their own ways.

The term Museum Branding used in this article refers to a tool that builds a center of attention for potential museum visitors. It creates the marketing planning of museums through expectations, targets and goals. It is one of the best ways to reach and interact with the target audience.

In the case of Nepal, the concept of Museum Branding is used only partially to mean the basic components such as advertisements. In fact, the implementation of Museum Branding includes concepts such as the museums’ operating directives, legislative acts, policies, rules and regulations as well as related promotional activities.
Most museums in Nepal are managed by the Government of Nepal through the Department of Archaeology. However, in the last few decades local communities and ethnic groups have also been creating and running collections in the form of a museum. The collection of items that display their history helps them take pride in their history, heritage and identity. The government museums were run under the direct management and monitoring of the government. Most of these collections include art, historical and archeological objects in their exhibitions.

In addition to typical ethnicity related items, other articles are similar to objects displayed in any other museum. That is, there are thematic collections such as the (ethnic) community museum, a traditional museum, an aircraft museum and many other museums which are run according to their own private policy and under their own management. Due to the lack of a single door policy for establishing museums, most private or community museums are run in their own way as determined by their management bodies.

Universally, museums have played a major role in the economy through tourism and related activities. Through their exhibitions and educational activities, they also play an important role in the promotion of art, culture, traditions, customs, tangible and intangible cultural heritage. The main function of a museum is to collect, preserve and conserve objects according to their objectives, as well as research and display them. Thus, a museum is a public space in which the transfer of knowledge on a specific theme or subject, the interaction with exhibited objects, and the safeguarding for the generations to come all take place simultaneously.

**Museums**

According to the Cambridge Dictionary a museum is “A building where objects of historical, scientific, or artistic interests are kept”. Similarly, the Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines a museum as “An institution devoted to the procurement, care, study and display of objects
of lasting interest or value”. The Business Dictionary states the follow-
ing: “A museum is an institution that cares for a collection of ar-
tifacts and other objects of scientific, artistic, cultural, or historical
importance and makes them available for public viewing through
exhibits that may be permanent or temporary.”

According to the International Council of Museums “A museum is a
non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its de-
velopment, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, research-
es, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage
of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study
and enjoyment.”

The museum is not only a space for enjoyment and sharing informa-
tion about the exhibited objects; it is also a place where knowledge
and technology for the preservation and conservation of the collected
objects are visible. Through research and display, the transmission
of knowledge as well as the activities for the promotion with brand-
ing are carried out all over the world.

**Branding**

A museum should brand its activities. Without a brand it is un-
able to fulfill the mission stated by the museum management. In the
21st century branding is considered the backbone for increasing the
number of visitors to a museum. Museum products are unique and
they must be shared with the potential visitors to spread the knowl-
dge. In this respect, branding aims to reach people through the vi-
sion, innovation and commitment invested by the museum. Accord-
ing to one definition branding is “The process involved in creating a
unique name and image for a product in the consumers’ mind, main-
ly through advertising campaigns with a consistent theme. Brand-
ing aims to establish a significant and differentiated presence in the
market that attracts and retains loyal customers”.

The Cambridge Dictionary defines it as “The act of giving a company
a particular design of symbol in order to advertise its products and
services”. Thus, we can consider branding as a marketing tool and a medium through which a museum can interact with the members of the public, such as its potential visitors, and invite them to visit the museum.

**Museum Branding Policy in Kathmandu**

The Kathmandu Valley museums are not very experienced in branding their services, as proper planning for developing museums and museology has a short history, although the government of Nepal began to establish museums in different parts of the country as far back as 1960. The first museum in Nepal was the National Museum in Kathmandu. Following the dawn of democracy in 1990, various local communities and ethnic groups began operating museums in their own ways. Most museums use minimal tools and activities related to branding, marketing and promotion, such as: establishing a website, social media, word of mouth promotion i.e. recommendation to friends and families, publications, school activities, temporary exhibitions, mobile exhibitions, etc. These activities are related to marketing and promotion purposes only. The goal of branding is for each and every potential visitor knowing about the museums and their collections.

It must be emphasized that branding must reach out to visitors through the products of the museum. It may be the museum’s architecture, artifacts or the uniqueness of its objects, which attract the visitor. In business terminology, at least a few ‘features’ of a given museum must be seen as ‘trademarks’.

It would be helpful if the management of the museum aimed to work towards raising the potential visitors’ desire to visit museums. One simple example can be relevant here. In Kathmandu there are hundreds of private schools, but parents swarm to a few schools or colleges (despite the high fees), hoping to get their children enrolled. These schools are considered to be ‘branded’ schools with excellent performance, management and facilities, among other features.
From the point of view of tourism, the museums in the Kathmandu valley should be included amongst the most important tourist destinations and should be listed on various itineraries. According to the museology standards all museums were developed with informatics. Museums sought to create branding through their logos, publications and frequent temporary exhibitions. Likewise, the National Museum of Nepal often organizes a temporary exhibition on a specific theme, with a museum catalogue and publication. Similarly, the Patan Museum, which is the most visited museum in Nepal, regularly organizes temporary exhibitions, publications, and museum education sessions. For branding purposes, it uses a logo, it has expanded its galleries and provides audio-video rooms. It has also promoted the museum’s artifacts though posters and guide books and presented temporary exhibitions on special themes related to the cultural heritages of local communities. Other museums can share the experience of the National and the Patan museums.

If we wish to further develop our museums, we need a museum management policy. Museum policy is connected to the legislative, financial and administrative arrangements made by governments, with which they wish to establish and support museums, as well as with the decisions taken by each individual museum to establish its role within its community. At the moment, Nepal does not have a museum policy as such. Museum policy is not linked only to the running of museums; it will also help the branding of museums, artifacts and the museum’s efficiency of operation.

Conclusion

Museum branding is a modern tool that helps build a center of attention for the potential museum visitors. It consists of a marketing plan with expected targets and goals. Branding is one of the best ways of reaching and interacting with targeted visitors. Branding helps museums plan their marketing and create targets and goals. Therefore, if we want our museums to run effectively and efficiently, we need a museum policy as well as directives, legislative acts, rules
and regulation. But in the case of Nepal, we lack such policies even for the operation of the already established museums. Most private and government museums operate in their own ways. Therefore, in order to enhance the level of operation of museums, we need to urgently register the museums with the use of a single door system and, most importantly, create The Museum Council of Nepal. This will not only be best for museums, but it will also be essential for the promotion of tourism through branded museum destinations.
References


ICOM Statutes, adopted by the 22nd General Assembly in Vienna, Austria, on 24th August, 2007.


Figure 1:
Main entrance of the Patan Museum “Patan Museum is always welcoming with its Golden Door”

Figure 2:
Some examples of logo branding in Nepal
Figure 3:
A traditional musical performance at a museum complex. Such events help museums increase their footfall and attachment to the local community.
Figure 4:
Museum branding and the promotion of a museum thorough a temporary exhibition addressing the local community.
Museums and ICOM against illicit trafficking of cultural property

Alberto Garlandini
President of ICOM

This paper is about the ethical and operational commitment of ICOM and museums against illicit trafficking of cultural heritage. How can ICOM and museums contribute toward effectively implementing the measures of international and national legislation against illicit trafficking of cultural property? Which are the operative instruments that ICOM promotes against illicit trafficking?

In the first part of this paper I will present the international legal framework against illicit trafficking of cultural property and the crucial role that it assigns to museums. I will highlight United Nations Security Council’s Resolution 2347 (2017) on cultural heritage protection and UNESCO’s 2015 Recommendation on Museums and its implementation. In the second part I will focus on ICOM’s Code of Ethics for Museums as a global reference for museum management and fight against illicit trafficking. In the third part I will look into ICOM’s three operative instruments against illicit trafficking: the Red Lists of Cultural Objects at Risk, the International Observatory on Illicit Trafficking and Object Identification ID.

The international legislation against illicit trafficking

The two pillars of the international legislation against illicit trafficking of heritage are UNESCO’s Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (UNESCO, 1970) and the UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects (UNIDROIT, 1995). UNESCO’s Convention was approved in Paris on 14th November 1970 and has been ratified by 140 Member States.
Nepal ratified it on 23rd June 1976. The Convention requires its Member States to implement preventive measures, to recover and return cultural items stolen or illegally acquired, as well as strengthen the cooperation among and between the signatory states.

The UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects was adopted in Rome on 24th June 1995 and has been signed by 48 states. Nepal has not signed it yet. The UNIDROIT Convention is a complementary instrument to the UNESCO 1970 Convention. Under the UNIDROIT Convention, Member States commit to a uniform treatment for the restitution of stolen or illegally exported cultural objects and allow restitution claims to be processed directly through national courts.

The relevance of the protection of heritage and the fight against illicit trafficking is also highlighted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015) and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Goal No. 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities - Make Cities Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable includes Target 11.4: “Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage” while Goal No. 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions includes Target 16.4: “By 2030, significantly reduce financial and arm flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all form of organized crime”.

The United Nations Security Council’s Resolution on the destruction of cultural heritage in armed conflict and the Al-Mahdi case


1 The Agenda and its goals were approved unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly on 25th September 2015. See: https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/
The historic Security Council’s Resolution condemns the destruction of cultural heritage, including the destruction of religious sites and artifacts, as well as illegal excavation, looting and smuggling of cultural property from archaeological sites, museums, libraries, archives, and other sites. It also affirms that such actions are a war crime and that the perpetrators of these attacks must be brought to justice.

The Resolution calls upon its Member States to prevent and fight trafficking of cultural property illegally appropriated and exported in the context of armed conflicts, notably by terrorist groups. It also encourages the Member States to establish specialized units and dedicated law enforcement personnel. In order to prevent the trade with stolen or illegally obtained cultural property, the Resolution asks its Member States to improve their cultural heritage inventory lists, using digitalized information whenever possible. It also asks museums, relevant business associations and antiquity market participants to respect the standards of provenance documentation and due diligence. Finally, the Resolution requests of its Member States to create educational programmes on the protection of cultural heritage and affirms that the mandate of United Nations peacekeeping operations may encompass assisting relevant authorities in the protection of cultural heritage from destruction, illicit excavation, looting and smuggling.

Another token of the increasing awareness of the importance of heritage protection is the Al-Mahdi prosecution by the International Criminal Court in The Hague. This was the first prosecution to focus solely on cultural destruction as a war crime. On 27th September 2016, Al-Mahdi, a member of a terrorist group associated with Al Qaeda, was sentenced to nine years’ imprisonment for intentionally destroying cultural, religious and historic monuments, i.e. nine mausoleums and a mosque in Timbuktu in 2012.
UNESCO’s 2015 Recommendation on museums and the role of museums against illicit trafficking

The UNESCO’s Recommendation Concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role was adopted on 17th November 2015 (UNESCO, 2015). Its draft was the remarkable result of the close cooperation between ICOM and UNESCO.

The Recommendation defines the policies for museums and heritage that the Member States are invited to promote. It raises awareness of the importance of museums in today’s societies and highlights their new social role as well as their primary functions: preservation, research, communication and education. It also considers the ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums, its definition of a museum and its standards to be the most widely shared international reference and it encourages its Member States to promote their adoption and dissemination:

“26. Good practices for the functioning, protection and promotion of museums and their diversity and role in society have been recognized by national and international museum networks. These good practices are continually updated to reflect innovations in the field. In this respect, the Code of Ethics for Museums adopted by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) constitutes the most widely shared reference. Member States are encouraged to promote the adoption and dissemination of these and other codes of ethics and good practices, and to use them to inform the development of standards, museum policies and national legislation.” (UNESCO, 2015, p. 9)

Paragraphs 8, 18 and 21 of the Recommendation highlight the role of museums in fighting illicit trafficking of cultural property:

“8. A key component of collection management in museums is the creation and maintenance of a professional inventory and regular control of collections. An inventory is an essential tool for protecting
museums, preventing and fighting illicit trafficking, and helping them fulfil their role in society. It also facilitates the sound management of collections mobility.” (UNESCO, 2015, p. 7)

“18. In instances where the cultural heritage of indigenous peoples is represented in museum collections, Member States should take appropriate measures to encourage and facilitate dialogue and the building of constructive relationships between those museums and indigenous peoples concerning the management of those collections, and, where appropriate, return or restitution in accordance with applicable laws and policies.” “21. Member States should ensure that museums implement principles of applicable international instruments. Museums are committed to observe the principles of international instruments for the protection and promotion of cultural and natural heritage, both tangible and intangible. They also should adhere to the principles of the international instruments for the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property and should coordinate their efforts in this matter. Museums must also take into account the ethical and professional standards established by the professional museum community. Member States should ensure that the role of museums in society is exercised in accordance with legal and professional standards in the territories under their jurisdiction.” (UNESCO, 2015, p. 9)

**UNESCO’s High Level Forum on Museums** took place in Shenzhen, China, between 10\(^\text{th}\) and 12\(^\text{th}\) November 2016. The High Level Forum is an advisory body to the UNESCO Director General on issues of museums and heritage that was created in order to implement the 2015 UNESCO Recommendation on Museums. A Session of the Forum was dedicated to the illicit trafficking of cultural property and the importance of documentation, inventories and authentication.

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2 Shenzhen’s Forum gathered more than 50 world class museum directors and thinkers, policy makers and stakeholders to discuss critical issues for the future of museums. ICOM actively participated in the Forum and many ICOM representatives, such as Alberto Garlandini and Laishun An, the two ICOM Vice Presidents, greatly contributed to the Forum’s debates and decisions.
The Forum approved the *Shenzhen Declaration on Museums and Collections* (UNESCO, 2017). The Declaration confirms the social, cultural, educational and economic roles of museums and their vital role in fighting against illicit trafficking as well as safeguarding, conserving and promoting heritage, both in times of peace and conflict or natural disaster. It also underlines the moral obligation and capacity of museums to counter illicit trafficking in cultural objects, in particular through research, awareness raising and applying due diligence.

UNESCO has recently published a *Report on the Implementation of the UNESCO 2015 Recommendation on Museums* (UNESCO, 2019). The report shows the important activity undertaken by Member States to supervise museums, and in particular the activity implemented since the publication of the Recommendation in 2015. Several Member States reported good practices in the restitution of stolen or spoliated property and noted that the protection and restitution of cultural property is an area that requires great attention on the international level, with regards to provenance research practices with a view to enabling private collectors, auction houses and museums to return objects.

**The fight against illicit trafficking as an ethical commitment of museums**

The *Code of Ethics for Museums* (ICOM, 2017) is ICOM’s cornerstone and the most widely shared international ethical reference for the museum community. It is a major contribution to the management of museums and the work of museum professionals and deals with the fight against illicit trafficking in numerous principles and guidelines. Principle II states:

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The ICOM Code has been translated into 38 languages and sets the general principles accepted by the international museum community, as well as the minimum standards of conduct and performance to which museum staff throughout the world aspire. It consists of eight principles supported by guidelines for desirable professional practice. The ICOM Code is constantly updated and revised on the basis of the changes that occur within the society and museums.
“2.2 Valid Title No object or specimen should be acquired by purchase, gift, loan, bequest, or exchange unless the acquiring museum is satisfied that a valid title is held. Evidence of lawful ownership in a country is not necessarily valid title.

2.3 Provenance and Due Diligence Every effort must be made before acquisition to ensure that any object or specimen offered for purchase, gift, loan, bequest, or exchange has not been illegally obtained in, or exported from its country of origin or any intermediate country in which it might have been owned legally (including the museum’s own country). Due diligence in this regard should establish the full history of the item since discovery or production.” (ICOM, 2017, p. 9)

Museums are expected to take complete due diligence investigations before any acquisition. According to the ICOM Code of Ethics, due diligence means that all required endeavor is made to establish the facts of a case before deciding a course of action, particularly in identifying the source and history of an item offered for acquisition or use before acquiring it. In other words, the due diligence implies all the necessary verifications regarding the legal provenance of a cultural property, i.e. the full history of the item since discovery, production or creation to the present day, through which authenticity and ownership are determined.

Documenting museum collections in accordance to professional standards plays a vital role in the fight against illicit trafficking. The lack of proper documentation hinders police investigations and restitution to the legitimate owner of stolen or illegally acquired cultural property.

“2.20 Documentation of Collections Museum collections should be documented according to accepted professional standards. Such documentation should include a full identification and description of each item, its associations, provenance, condition, treatment
and present location. Such data should be kept in a secure environment and be supported by retrieval systems providing access to the information by the museum personnel and other legitimate users.” (ICOM, 2017, p. 14)

Principles VII and VIII require that museums conform to international legislation and respect treaty obligations, national and local laws as well as the legislation of other states as they affect their operations. The Code states that museum professionals should never, directly or indirectly, support illicit trafficking of cultural and natural property or participate in dealing (i.e. buying or selling for profit) in heritage.

**The prescriptive force of the ICOM Code of Ethics**

The present edition of the Code of Ethics was approved in 2004 by the 21st ICOM General Conference in Seoul, Republic of Korea, after a six-year revision of the previous version. Since then the Code of Ethics has remarkably increased its relevance throughout the world. The effective prescriptive force of the ICOM Code of Ethics is often debated (Garlandini, 2018). On the basis of its prescriptive force, it may have different impacts on the management of museums and cultural heritage, on national and international policies, as well as on jurisdiction.

First of all, the ICOM Code is a deontological reference for professionals. The respect of the Code is a major binding commitment for ICOM members. A member’s infringement of its principles will terminate his/her membership status. Additionally, the ICOM Code is a “soft law”. With the term soft law, I refer to a provision that does not have any legally binding force, but sets standards of conduct that are universally accepted. As a soft law, the ICOM Code has a great moral value recognized not only by ICOM members and the museum professional community, but also by many other public and private bodies. Although it does not have a binding force, its reference role in the daily management of museums and heritage, as well as in jurisdiction, is significant.
However, in a growing number of countries, for instance in Italy after the 2014 Reform Law of State Museums, the ICOM Code has obtained a national legislative value and, as a consequence, a binding, prescriptive force. The UNESCO Members States’ implementation of the 2015 Recommendation will certainly increase the number of countries in which the respect of the Code will be compulsory by law.

**Three ICOM instruments against the illicit trafficking of cultural property**

1. **The Red Lists of Cultural Objects at Risk**

The ICOM Red Lists of Cultural Objects at Risk were designed by ICOM to highlight the categories of archaeological objects and works of art from the most vulnerable areas of the world that are subject to smuggling and illegal trade. The Red Lists are not lists of actual stolen objects. The cultural goods enumerated on the Red Lists are inventoried objects in museum collections which serve to illustrate the categories of cultural goods most vulnerable to illicit trafficking.

To be included on a Red List, the cultural property must meet the following three criteria:

1. It must come from regions that are victim of theft and looting;
2. It must be protected by legislation;
3. It must be in demand on the art and antiquities market.

The Red Lists are disseminated amongst police and custom officers, museums, auction houses and art dealers. With the Red Lists ICOM not only supports the fight against illicit trade, but also

makes an urgent appeal to auction houses, art and antiquities dealers and collectors to undertake a comprehensive due diligence on provenance before acquiring any cultural property.

Since 2000 ICOM has published 17 Red Lists concerning cultural property from 36 countries and regions: the most recent are the Red Lists concerning Mali, Libya, Iraq, Syria and Yemen. A new Red List is in preparation concerning Southeast Europe. The Red Lists are translated into numerous languages, i.e. English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese. Thousands of objects have been identified, seized and returned thanks to the Red Lists. The Red List for Afghanistan permitted United Kingdom’s custom officers to identify and seize 1,500 illegally imported cultural properties, and return them to the Kabul Museum in Afghanistan.

Further evidence of the Red Lists’ effectiveness is their inclusion in the Act to Amend the Law on Cultural Property approved by the German Bundestag on 24th June 2016. The new German law includes measures on the protection of national cultural heritage and introduces import restrictions on cultural property protected by other States’ national laws. In order to fight against illicit trafficking in cultural goods it introduces due diligence provisions for dealing with cultural goods, especially for the art market, and makes reference to the use of ICOM Red Lists.

2. ICOM International Observatory on Illicit Trafficking

The Observatory was created by ICOM in 2013, with the initial financial support provided by the European Commission. It is an international online platform and network that connects law enforcement agencies, administrations, research institutions, and experts. Its website includes a global database of 5,000 resources, a glossary, good practices and case studies. It publishes contributions from

5 Further information on the Observatory is available at: https://www.obs-traffic.museum/ [Accessed on 15 December 2019]
all over the world and produces online e-books such as *Countering Illicit Trafficking in Cultural Goods*.

3. The Object Identification ID

This is an international standard for describing cultural objects and provides essential information in order to facilitate their identification in case of theft. It is compatible with the INTERPOL data base of stolen objects. It was launched in 1997, conceived by the Getty Information Institute and developed through the collaboration of the global museum community, police and custom agencies, the art and antiques trade, appraisers and the insurance industry. ICOM holds the license rights to promote the use of this standard among museum professionals and is responsible (in collaboration with UNESCO) for promoting and managing its website and its use in the museum and heritage community. The Object Identification checklist comprises twelve categories of information: photograph, typology, materials, techniques, measurements, inscriptions, markings, title, subject, date or period, maker, short description.

**Final remarks on ICOM and the museums’ fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property.**

Supported by the provisions of the ICOM Code, museums around the world have adopted strict rules and due diligence for any acquisition and transfer of collections, thus limiting the risk of acquiring illegally obtained cultural properties. Museums are committed to creating a full inventory of their collections as well as promoting capacity building activities and professional training in ethical issues. This *modus operandi* is a best practice that should be followed by any individual and private or public body involved in the management of cultural heritage. In addition, ICOM is supporting

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museums in their decolonization agenda and the reconsideration of their exhibits, activities and policies. It is now a wide-spread belief in ICOM and in the museum community that the repatriation of heritage plundered by colonial powers to communities of origin is a part of the healing and reconciliation process between colonial and colonized nations.

In conclusion, ICOM asks governments to implement the UN Security Council’s Resolution on the protection of heritage and bring to justice the perpetrators of war crimes against cultural heritage, nationally as well as internationally. Governments should ratify and improve their implementation of international conventions and instruments. Too many states have not ratified or do not apply the existing legal international framework. It is also of paramount importance that the principles and norms outlined in the UNESCO 2015 Recommendation on Museums as well as the ICOM Code and instruments to fight illicit trafficking of cultural property, such as the Red Lists, are integrated into national laws and policies.
References


Towards the Development and Integration of a Museum Policy for (Regional) Museums