

Final report on the research partnership between the Music Department of Rhodes University and the Ntinga Ntaba kaNdoda (NNkN) organisation based in Keiskammahoek.

Research: The bulk of the award was used for research purposes. The research entails traveling to the area where the research is being undertaken (a straightforward roundtrip entails around 600km), the renting of strong enough cars to handle the rough terrain, organising accommodation, food and beverages (subsistence), and paying the cellphone charges particularly of students and the co-ordinators of community fieldworkers who need to call them in our absence or prior to visits. Due to inflation the cost of subsistence increased dramatically. Research costs exclude audio and visual equipment and this expense is carried by the Department of Music and sometimes our personal resources. Local fieldworkers should actually have their own recording equipment as part of their training and development of skills but due to university policies and the NHC criteria this is not possible so the university resources are being used for this purpose when we visit so developing the technological skills of local fieldworkers is incremental but minimal. We do invite local fieldworkers to manage the equipment and have provided some training in interviewing skills during a workshop in January 2014, but a lot more needs to be offered. All these requirements, which are actually basic to field research, add up to a substantial amount of money and without the NHC grant this research would be impossible.

We have recorded and archived a substantial amount of research data. The metadata for each item is being stored in another file and this will be ratified with local fieldworkers in the near future. The metadata is not yet completed and I have solicited the help of students to complete the process of adding metadata to the data. This would require lengthy visits to Keiskammahoek and additional funding from somewhere to ensure that the information is correct as far as possible. There are many goals for collecting all this data: one is to determine the extent and nature of remaining cultural practices with a view to recording, documenting and archiving them for the future and possibly culminating in a heritage route. The Ntinga Ntaba kaNdoda Development Centre is in the process of ongoing discussions with various stakeholders in the area with a view to establishing a heritage route in the area. Another goal of the project is to establish an archive managed by the community. This archive will have its resources backed up by the servers at the International Library of African Music (ILAM). At ILAM there is a vast amount of digitised recordings and images. Visitors to its website who are interested in certain items are able to listen to recordings a few seconds in length, after which they may purchase the full-length item. The revenue collected in this way has paid a long way towards the upkeep and updating of ILAM's collections and has also paid for outreach programmes and the employment of students and community members. In similar fashion, it is highly possible that an archive at Ntaba kaNdoda could offer the community the opportunity for obtaining revenue based on its collections and recordings of heritage items in the community. This is one of the reasons why it is absolutely essential to have the correct metadata for all the items. The third reason for collecting all the data is to help identify key musical and other cultural practices and their practitioners, and to establish a relationship with schools where young people can learn from experienced practitioners. This will assist in keeping the heritage of the area alive. Another goal is that the recordings will assist with

teaching young people the creative arts of the area. In future Arts and Culture teachers will have access to the material for teaching purposes, and they may also call on practitioners who are deemed experts in their respective fields.

We would like to emphasise that the collection thus far represents only the beginning of the partnership between RU and NNkN because notwithstanding the large number of items we currently have, we have managed to deal with only the surface and this should be strengthened with ongoing, more thorough fieldwork which should go beyond the time limit of the funds issued by the NHC. The research up to now has also focused on particular villages and should be broadened to other districts as well. See the report submitted in October 2013.

1. Conference and workshops: Out of the R250 000 an amount of R77 640 was allocated for the conference but since we received only R110 000 it means that the actual amount available for the conference was half of that, at R38 820. This amount was inadequate for hosting a conference and we were compelled to borrow money from the university. Our oversight failed so there is a problem in the spreadsheet that accompanied the original application as it did not take into account the expense of organising a fully-fledged conference when only half the agreed amount is available. We had the conference on 27 and 28 February 2014 and the event was a great success with performances, keynote speakers, and discussions with the community. The heritage sites in the area and the items collected thus far during fieldwork will form the basis for discussion and for mapping out a way forward for the area and the partnership between RU and the NNkN.
2. Website: We engaged the services of a website developer who has developed a website especially for communities with limited access to the internet and also where communities are not completely computer or internet literate. The website is easily accessible for uploading and downloading of texts, videos and images, allows for blogs, threads and e mail messages. To date the media committee of Ntinga Ntaba kaNdoda (NNkN) has received two training sessions and the NNkN has decided to link the website to its existing host in Pretoria. The cost of hosting the website is another financial commitment which the NNkN is paying for at present. To date the website has not yet been launched.
3. Others: One postgraduate student submitted a thesis of 10 000 words on the research experience obtained in this project.

Closing remarks: The items above offer great potential for a number of issues which could develop the area further in the long term. These issues include heritage tours, eco-tourism, scholarship on indigenous knowledge, training of community members in tourism and heritage conservation, developing the esteem of performers and cultural practitioners, making the education curriculum more relevant to the local community, and others. A great deal more work needs to be conducted in the area particularly in the fields of education, conservation, consultations, and preparation for a heritage route. Generally we enjoy a wonderful relationship with the NNkN. The NNkN has local fieldworkers and co-ordinators without whom our task would have been substantially more challenging. Nonetheless, I sincerely hope that we can

continue this collaboration once we have secured more funds and that the website becomes a reality.

Sincerely,
Lee Watkins.