

1 Oral History as a Social Tool for National Development 2 and Transformation

3
4 *Oral history, as cultural heritage, is a general trio umbrella term to refer to*
5 *collection of cultural heritage (content), genres (form) and practices of people*
6 *(traditions). Such heritage includes collections in memory institutions (museum,*
7 *libraries, archives) in such formats as books and manuscripts and oral history*
8 *selected based on time, place, people, subject and theme, form and style. Oral*
9 *history as a collective property tells people's history and helps the present*
10 *generation to understand their place in history. Identification of such heritages*
11 *sets distinctive linguistic, material, and intellectual features as a way of*
12 *promoting societal integration, a driver to socio-economic growth. One strategy*
13 *available is the utilization of oral history, an invaluable tool for understanding*
14 *individual experiences, within a certain historical, cultural and social testimony*
15 *that will reveal and illuminate both the individual and social experience to*
16 *transform the society. The paper echoes experience of utilization of oral history*
17 *from classical, colonial and contemporary reminiscences. This paper explores*
18 *opportunities available for utilizing oral history as a tool for socioeconomic*
19 *transformation in science, technology and innovation and proposes strategies*
20 *for utilization of oral history for national transformation.*

21
22 **Keywords:** *Oral History, Oral History Practices, Oral Traditions, Social*
23 *Transformation, Documentary heritage*

24 25 26 Introduction

27
28 *[Books (documentary heritage) are the legacies that genius leaves to mankind, to be*
29 *delivered down from generation to generation, as presents to those that are yet*
30 *unborn (Addison in Prochnow-1955)]*

31
32 The nature of a documentary heritage is manifested in three forms: the source
33 - oral traditions and/or objects), the records/archives on the object) and the
34 knowledge in form of publications. Oral history is one of the documentary heritages
35 described as a general trio umbrella term to refer to a collection of cultural heritage
36 (content), genres (form of documentation and/or practices [process] of inquiry into
37 the memories of people who have experienced the recent past) and practices of
38 people (traditions/recollections). Oral recollections include orally transmitted and
39 recounted facts about an object, event or activity that arise within the performance
40 of a given society. Oral history has national, regional and worldwide significance,
41 with the twin objective of making heritage accessible to as many people as
42 possible and using the most appropriate technology.

43 The paper echoes on experience of utilization of oral history from classical,
44 and contemporary reminiscences to provide strategies of oral history as a tool for
45 social transformation. The paper explores African Challenge of documentary
46 heritage and Oral History as abridging tool for social socioeconomic transformation
47 and provide strategies as way forward for oral history for transformation for
48 African countries.

1 **Literature Review**

2
3 Oral history has been evident in informing the civilization characterized by
4 the early civilizations in the river valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates
5 (Mesopotamia) in about 4000 BC, in the Nile valley, and a thousand years later in
6 the Indus valley. The post-second world war period and the customary archival
7 role of the custodians or keepers of local, state, and central government records in
8 the colonial times and after independence changed the nature and the demand of
9 the documentary records needed for supporting colonial administration (Meredith,
10 2005). In terms of the form, oral history guided the planning and implementation
11 of the time of scramble for, the time of colonial rule, and the time of struggle and
12 during independence of most of the African countries, where there was barely
13 noticeable imprint (Alegbeleye, 1993). The post-second world war period and the
14 customary archival role of the custodians or keepers of local, state, and central
15 government records in the colonial times and after independence changed the
16 nature and the demand of the documentary records needed for supporting colonial
17 administration. This gave rise to the need for the preservation of documentary
18 heritage by African countries adopting the concept “Africana” (Bekker, Walt and
19 Theron, 1995). Africana signified virtually anything that deals with Africa and
20 includes all activities, objects and records of human activities in Africa. The
21 documentary heritage kept in Africana include written, printed, objects, books,
22 maps, rare books, local history collections, oral history, archives, manuscripts in
23 form of text, digital, microform and other forms of historical importance in
24 connection to Africa that in most cases kept in museums, libraries and archives.
25 Therefore, preserving heritage regarding peoples, languages and cultures, politics
26 and government, wildlife, and crafts becomes a socio-economic obligation. Indeed,
27 Steppat (2024) reviews the African Imprint by excluding African myths in the any
28 accounts of influences on Shakespeare, qualifies the literature as a “legacies of
29 knowledge culture originating in Africa” that has had a profound impact modern
30 literature. It is indeed not a surprise to find a politician, a religious person or
31 academia quoting Shakespeare in any communication, a literature that has become
32 a heritage of Africa.

33 Generally, oral history has been captured, recorded and preserved in different
34 forms of formulars (names, titles, slangs); diadactic): poems, riddles, legends,
35 rhymes, proverbs, language, recitations, word games, life histories or historia
36 narratives, curative chants, epic poems, histories, panegyrics, liturgical, epics, lists
37 (place names, genealogy (Vansina, 1971), history, biography, and memories. In
38 fact, oral literature has now become a medium of story-telling. As a practice, it
39 refers to an activity or a process of inquiry into the recollections, use of
40 storytelling/folklore/legends, proverbs, riddles, or life stories, and comics, Humour,
41 among others, and is unavoidable in any communication in a contemporary
42 society. For example, the recollection of religious and spiritual records are a
43 source of witnesses of oral history. Humour is as important in everyday activities a
44 human beings engages in whether culture, race or religious beliefs (Wood, 2018).
45 Wood refers to Buja (2013) and contends that “humour has its origins in antiquity,

1 with both Aristotle and Plato”, which explains what makes us laugh, an oral
2 history attributed we need to implore.

3 As a form, oral history can be distinguished from other cultural heritage
4 records into tangible and intangible forms. The tangible form includes material
5 heritage (it can be physically touched) such as monuments, buildings, statues,
6 paintings, objects, architectural works, monuments, archaeological sites, historical
7 centres, groups of buildings, cultural landscapes, historical parks and gardens,
8 botanical gardens, industrial archaeology, etc. In this case, oral history records
9 can be recorded about those forms of tangible heritage. The second deals with
10 immaterial heritage such as music, dance, literature, theatre, languages, know-
11 how, religious ceremonies, traditional performances, etc. Information about these
12 forms of heritage resides in movable sources: museum collections, libraries,
13 archives or in communities and peoples’ heads.

14 This, thus, qualifies oral history as a documentary heritage - the characteristics
15 of which include: movables made up of signs/codes, sounds and/or images;
16 preservables (carriers are non-living); reproducibles and migratables; and results
17 from a deliberate documenting process; and content and carrier. Only then can we
18 be sure that recordings will be preserved and made accessible for current and
19 future generations.

20 As a practice of people (oral traditions), oral history plays a role in
21 preservation of that heritage. This involves heritage inherited and transmitted from
22 the past to the future generations. It is a legacy we receive from our ancestors, our
23 parents, the cultural and natural environment and transmitted to future generations.
24 The value of such heritage is based on *time, place, people, subject and theme, form*
25 *and style, historical and spiritual significance* (UNESCO, 2002). Generally, many
26 African countries have attempted to safeguard their natural and cultural heritage in
27 the form of social traditions, crafts, music, dances, folklore, food and dressing and
28 with limited emphasis on preservation and conservation of this heritage. These
29 however lack the capacity to preserve oral history, a technological gap that
30 requires attention.

31 32 33 **Methodology**

34
35 This paper is based on a background recognisance study on “preservation of
36 oral history in Market places”, that aims at providing strategies for social
37 transformation. The paper is based on literature search on global, African and
38 African developments exhibited in the promotion of oral history as a tool of
39 transformation. The selection of the documentary reviews was based on various
40 programmes exhibited in various international programmes at the African Union,
41 United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)
42 programmes at African and national levels and a review of various policies,
43 legislations and activity reports done with Africa and beyond that attempts to
44 exhibit the efforts done on oral history initiatives as a transforming tool for social
45 transformation. For clear articulation of the challenges for Africa, Cases from
46 Uganda was used. The discussion of the study was based on the foundational

1 principle of the seven spheres of influences of transformation of society developed
 2 by Dr. Bill Bright, Loren Cunningham, and Francis Schaefer in 1975: Family,
 3 Religion/Church, Education, Government, Media, Celebration (Arts, Entertainment,
 4 and Sports) and Economics (Business, Science, and Technology) (Benedict, 2013).

7 **Results: Oral History as abridging Gap on Documentary Heritage in Africa**

9 *Global Perspective on Documentary Heritage*

11 Globally, the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
 12 supports a strong cultural identity, an affirmation needed for building cultural
 13 heritage and Memory of the World programme and Documentary Heritage. There
 14 are a number of bodies that have guided preservation and safeguarding of
 15 documentary heritage including the IFLA (International Federation of Library
 16 Associations and Institutions (IFLA), International Council on Archives (ICA) and
 17 International Council of Museums (ICOM). The ICOM and the World Heritage
 18 Convention are masterpieces of intangible heritage, and safeguarding and
 19 preservation of moving images (1980). This is in addition to the UN Universal
 20 Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Convention on Civil and Political Rights
 21 and the UNESCO Charter on the Preservation of the Digital Heritage (2003).
 22 Specifically, there are a number of declarations, international treaties and other
 23 documents that support documentary heritage oral history including: The
 24 “Universal Declaration on Archives” (2010) accepted by the International Council
 25 on Archives (ICA), and endorsed by the 36th session of the General Conference of
 26 UNESCO (2011), “International Convention for the Protection of Performers,
 27 Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organizations” (1961) and the 2007
 28 “United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”.

29 In particular, UNESCO has for a number of years supported, studied and
 30 provided guidelines on preservation and safeguarding of documentary heritage.
 31 Most especially, UNESCO has addressed many aspects of documentation of
 32 national heritage, including guidelines for legal deposit (Lariviere, 1981) and the
 33 establishment of National Archives (Thomas, 1986); oral history and oral tradition
 34 (1986); UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001); and the
 35 Convention on the Protection of Diversity of Cultural Expression (2005). There
 36 are a number of UNESCO conventions and recommendations that inform
 37 documentary heritage: “Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and
 38 Natural Heritage” (1972), “Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible
 39 Cultural Heritage” (2003), “Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the
 40 Diversity of Cultural Expressions” (2005), “Recommendation for the Safeguarding
 41 and Preservation of Moving Images” (1980) and “Memory of the World
 42 Programme”, 1992.

43 The Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural
 44 Heritage (1972) is premised on the fact that some places on earth are of
 45 Outstanding Universal Value and need protection. Uganda for example became a
 46 State Party on 20/11/1987. Uganda has had three sites: Tombs of Buganda Kings

1 at Kasubi (has of recent been removed), Bwindi Impenetrable N.P, and Rwenzori
 2 Mountains N.P. For the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural
 3 Heritage (2003), it is an international agreement adopted in 2003 that deals with
 4 safeguarding and promoting living heritage. Uganda became a State Party on
 5 13/05/2009. The intangible cultural heritage is in form of living expressions or
 6 traditions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants .It
 7 includes: oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive
 8 events, knowledge and practice concerning nature and the universe, and
 9 knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts.

10 The Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural
 11 Expressions (2005) is a binding international legal instrument with a goal to
 12 protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions as embodied and
 13 conveyed in cultural activities, goods and services. It provides a legal framework
 14 and its guiding cultural policies aid the production, distribution, access and
 15 enjoyment of a range of cultural expressions. It defines the rights and obligations
 16 of State Parties with regard to the protection and promotion of cultural
 17 expressions, both at the national and international levels. It encourages dialogue
 18 among cultures to ensure wider and balanced cultural exchanges in the world for
 19 intercultural respect and a culture of peace. It also promotes respect for the
 20 diversity of cultural expressions and raises awareness of its value at all levels.

21 Since 1992, UNESCO has attempted at promoting the *Memory of the World*
 22 (*MOW*), a UNESCO programme and has provided General Guidelines to
 23 Safeguard Documentary Heritage (UNESCO, 2002) for purposes of ensuring the
 24 national and regional and world documentary registers. Accordingly, Memory of
 25 the World (UNESCO, 2002):

26
 27 *“is the documented, collective memory of the peoples of the world – their documentary*
 28 *heritage – which in turn represents a large proportion of the world’s cultural*
 29 *heritage. It charts the evolution of thought, discovery and achievement of human*
 30 *society. It is the legacy of the past to the world community of the present and the*
 31 *future”.*
 32

33 The key functions of MOW are: identification of documentary heritage,
 34 raising awareness, preservation and access, structures, status and relationships. In
 35 particular, preservation and access helps to define preservation, principles of
 36 preservation, methods and principles for access – digitised and otherwise, and
 37 publicity and awareness raising. The MOW criteria of selection for inclusion in
 38 national, regional and national registers include, among others, considerations of
 39 time (creature of its time), place, subject and theme, form and style, significance
 40 (historical, geographical), spiritual and sacred values. In particular, spiritual or
 41 sacred values consider how the community demonstrates its emotional attachment
 42 to the documentary or documents for the way in which these contribute to that
 43 community's identity and social cohesion.

44 To mitigate this global need, UNESCO, on 17th November 2015, at its 38th
 45 session, adopted the 2015 UNESCO recommendation on documentary heritage
 46 concerning the preservation of, and access to documentary heritage including in
 47 digital form. This recommendations represent a significant milestone in UNESCO’s

1 efforts at preserving documentary heritage, providing universal access to it, and
 2 raising public awareness of its shared cultural values. Considerations here were,
 3 among others: documentary heritage that unfolds human thought and events; the
 4 evolution of languages, cultures, peoples and their understanding of the world; a
 5 need for promoting the sharing of knowledge to promote peace and respect for
 6 freedom, democracy, human rights and dignity; and enabling intercultural education
 7 and personal enrichment, scientific and technological progress as a crucial
 8 resource for development, fundamental freedoms of opinion, expression and
 9 information as human rights.

10 The first step to knowledge is to know that we are ignorant (Prochnow1955).
 11 Thus, to enable universal access to documentary heritage, requires the legitimate
 12 interests of rights-holders and the public and recognizing aspects of the history and
 13 culture that can conveniently be accessed through oral history. This is every
 14 important considering that over time considerable parts of documentary heritage
 15 have disappeared due to natural or human disasters and rapid technological
 16 change, a challenge that requires to be addressed to accommodate the needs of
 17 preserving digital heritage and international standards but bearing in mind the need
 18 for States, communities and individuals to take appropriate measures for
 19 enhancement and preservation of the value of documentary heritage.

20
 21 *African Agenda with Documentary Heritage*

22
 23 Africa plan for structural transformation guided by the African Union –
 24 United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030
 25 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals aims at the Africa that has a strong
 26 cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics. The key actions are the values
 27 and ideals of Pan-Africanism. For example, at the continental level, the
 28 Encyclopedia Africana has to be completed; the Charter for African Cultural
 29 Renaissance has to be implemented; and the Algiers Declaration on the
 30 Harmonization and Coordination of cultural policies and programmes has to be
 31 implemented. For example, the AU Encyclopedia Africana Project that is meant
 32 to develop and implement frameworks for the setting up of regional centres of
 33 excellence aims at promoting African cultural and creative industries. This is in
 34 Addition to the Cultural Values and African Renaissance targets to be achieved, at
 35 least 70% of Member States have to fully implement the Charter for African
 36 Culture and Renaissance. The strategy here is to build the capacity of Pan-African
 37 cultural institutions. At the continental or regional level, one of the targets is to
 38 research, record and disseminate African traditional stories that offer lessons for
 39 young people to take pride in their Africanness. The African Union already has an
 40 agenda of African great Museum Africa, which is an African project that started
 41 with Algiers in 2009, and member states have already accepted. Therefore, a
 42 documentary heritage programme has to reflect on the African integration and be
 43 guided under the framework of A2063 according to its priorities. Some of the
 44 strategies include: develop/implement regulations and policies to promote
 45 increased local content in all media (print and electronic); create inventory of
 46 national icons and recover cultural footages abroad and develop strategies to

1 negotiate and retrieve national treasures from individual and institutional
 2 collections; and expand access to cultural information through community public
 3 libraries. Indeed as contends by Kareem (2021), the consequences of new media
 4 “in film distribution is demanding an effective system to strengthen the overall
 5 distribution system by reducing the distribution costs and increasing revenue.

6 In an effort to implement the UNESCO 2015 Recommendation, a consultation
 7 meeting for the implementation of the above UNESCO recommendation was held
 8 from 25th to 27th June 2018 on the theme: “Documentary Heritage for Sustainable
 9 Development in Africa”, at Rockview Hotel, Abuja, Nigeria. Accordingly,
 10 member states are encouraged to support their memory institutions in preservation
 11 of documentary heritage in their territories and identify specific documentary
 12 heritage, the survival of which is at risk, a preservation challenge. This demands,
 13 member states to develop strategies to support preservation of documentary
 14 heritage. To address this challenge, the East African Caucus on documentary
 15 heritage proposed a periodical forum to discuss issues on documentary heritage
 16 with preference on discussing common and shared values summarized into four
 17 thematic issues: liberation heritage, slave trade/labour routes/heritage, genocide
 18 and atrocities, and religious manuscripts. The emphasis for East Africa would be
 19 placed on capacity to create heritage, exchange of knowledge, ideas and
 20 participation and increase the number of African heritage; and increased need for
 21 cooperation for UNESCO to support the preservation, and ensure support of the
 22 Memory of the World (MOW) in the respective nations. Nations like Uganda
 23 would exploit such opportunity to utilise oral history programmes for a transformed
 24 society.

25 In Africa, cultural societies have been sustained by respect among the citizens,
 26 language and oral traditions education. Indeed, Christianity in Uganda was
 27 favoured by native culture to raise up indigenous leaders to take up responsibilities
 28 in the affairs of the church. The practice and attitude today are changing as a result
 29 of generation gap influenced by exposure to foreign cultures, social media,
 30 changes in the globalized social world, difference in worldviews held by different
 31 generational cohorts and age gaps. This creates two different cultures - societal
 32 gaps antagonistic to each other. Traditional skills are disappearing thus depriving
 33 society of rights combined with lawlessness, total disregard of family and custom
 34 rules, and disrespect of wisdom from the elders by young generation, which has
 35 resulted in the degeneration of cultural values that previously ensured high moral
 36 standards, which puts the oral history at risk.

37 38 *African Challenge on Documentary Heritage: Specific Cases for Uganda*

39
40 In many of African countries, heritage is primarily at risk of conflict or climate
 41 change. In most cases, accessing these records is not easy because reference tools
 42 for accessing such documents are not available. In many cases, this heritage is not
 43 known to or, accessed by the public. Authors’ works are also faced with
 44 inadequate exposure to their existence, copyright infringement such as piracy, and
 45 unmonitored repeated titles and duplication. Most of the heritage in libraries,
 46 museums and archives is unique and irreplaceable and any deterioration or the

1 disappearance of a cultural property and the messages it conveys, requires
2 protection. Some of the works are now at risk of destruction from overuse, wrong
3 handling, as well as natural and man-made disasters. Such memory becomes
4 fragile and in most cases some irreplaceable parts of the memory disappear
5 forever. This has become a threat as evidenced by a number of disasters, ranging
6 from accidental or deliberate displacement of holdings and collections, floods,
7 catastrophic fire, effects of wars, temperatures, insects, intruders, weather and
8 climate as a consequence of global warming, a challenge that requires mitigation
9 through a disaster preparedness plan. Such plan resists threats dependent upon
10 technology obsolescence and dependence, risk of reliability and authenticity, and
11 loss of security, privacy and safety.

12 For instance, in Uganda, the Patents Statute (Amendment) Act, 2002, Uganda
13 Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act, 2006, the National Library of Uganda
14 Act (NLU) legal deposit provisions gives a guarantee of protection of literary,
15 scientific, and artistic intellectual works and sets the legal framework legislations.
16 When COVID-19 hit the globe, it affected the education and social sector, and in
17 response, the government has embraced home-based schooling, promoting teaching
18 in the local languages, promoting of locally authored books, open learning and
19 technology as mitigating resilience interventions. Vision 2040 aspires for maximizing
20 skilling and retooling the potential workers to address affected documentary
21 challenges such as copyright, piracy, ISBN, and public lending, among others.
22 These interventions require corresponding capacity providing cultural content.

23 However, in most of the African countries, the available accumulated
24 documents are scattered in different places and some of these documents are more
25 likely to get lost forever. Accessing some of these records is not easy and in many
26 cases this heritage is not known to or, accessed by the public, which has limited
27 access to the heritage because of the language barriers, obsolete and incompatible
28 formats and forms in which the heritage is captured, stored and preserved. There
29 are current threats evidenced by a number of disasters, ranging from accidental or
30 deliberate displacement of holdings and collections, to the effects of wars, weather
31 and climate, historical circumstances, political barriers, which all have a negative
32 effect on the national heritage. Such memory becomes fragile and in most cases
33 some irreplaceable parts of the memory disappear forever. There are also
34 challenges of inadequate storage facilities, limited information literacy skills (ICT),
35 lack of reliable electronic central platforms for information sharing and reluctance to
36 provide/transfer documentary heritage to institutions and communities. These are
37 combined with inadequate education, training and researches on documentary
38 heritage management and in particular oral history among communities, shortage
39 of qualified human resources and lack of expertise in managing and providing
40 access to the oral history records. In addition, there is exhibited lack of conservation
41 and preservation programmes of documentary heritage (analogue, digital and oral
42 history), and inadequate sensitization and lack of awareness among the public on
43 the need for the preservation of and access to oral history documentary.

44 When Covid-19 hit the globe, most of the African Countries were not spared.
45 For example, the World Health Organization (WHO) collection safety guidelines
46 on prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 as a result of using books, plastic circulating

1 materials such as CD's and DVD's and visiting cultural heritage institutions were
2 challenged with further damages of heritage over time. The pandemic equally
3 affected authors, particularly of primary and secondary schools, who were severely
4 hurt. To recover from the limbo of unpreparedness among authors, it is therefore
5 important for a country like Uganda to develop a capacity in documenting the
6 availability of this heritage, and the solution would be oral history.

7 A study supported by UNESCO in 2011 (Magara, 2011) indicated that oral
8 history is an area which many of the memory institutions (libraries, archives and
9 museums) have not handled. This was attributed to lack capacity of oral historians,
10 and inadequate support and conflicting mandates of the respective institutions.
11 What has happened is that, when you have a curator who is based in one area,
12 he/she puts emphasis in that area. There is little effort to preserve museums of
13 important personalities. There is a need for personal museums, for instance, of the
14 former presidents and other big personalities. Furthermore, museums are not
15 known and few people know about their importance

16 Whereas the national museum has a cultural heritage, it is under the Trade
17 and Industry Ministry whose mission is quite different from that of a museum. The
18 museum would be more useful if it is placed together with culture, libraries, and
19 archives to be able to preserve the documentary heritage. The Preservation and
20 Revitalization of Uganda's Oral and Intangible Heritage Programme including like
21 the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park and Rwenzori National Park provide an
22 outstanding universal value of cultural identity, human rights, and collective
23 memory. Indeed, some educational institutions in Uganda are attempting to transfer
24 indigenous knowledge on intangible heritages to the students in a number of areas
25 through music, dance and drama, sports, indigenous knowledge systems, promoting
26 traditional games and sports in schools and universities, *learning through oral*
27 *history* (Magara, 2005), a strategy whose placement in the social-economic national
28 transformation is required.

29 The challenge is that oral history products is stored in obsolete technologies
30 that were used in recording the proceedings, a challenge that limited oral history
31 recollection of culturally significant events or trends. As a consequence, oral history
32 has experienced a surge of interest in subjectivity and in non-traditional sources.
33 Thus, the Republic of Uganda (2006) through the Minister of Gender, Labour and
34 Social Development has come out with the Uganda National Culture Policy,
35 whose vision is: "A *Culturally vibrant, cohesive and progressive nation*". The
36 policy derives its objectives from the Uganda's rich and diverse endowment and
37 cultural heritage, which includes sixty-five indigenous communities with unique
38 characteristics. It provides strategies to enhance the integration of culture into
39 development that are an integral part of the Social Development Sector Strategic
40 Investment Plan (SDIP) whose mission is to "create an enabling environment for
41 social protection and social transformation of communities". The Department of
42 Antiquities and Museums is responsible for historical, archaeological, and
43 palaeontological sites within Uganda. These include traditional sites, buildings,
44 signposts, and tombs. A challenge of utilising the indigenous communities and
45 their diversity requires effort to document the historic and continuing process of
46 their transformational transfer. This requires a knowledge base and coordinated

1 documentary heritage. Now that Uganda is promoting the consumption and use of
2 locally manufactured goods and services through the Buy Uganda Build Uganda
3 (BUBU) Policy (2014), utilisation of oral history experiences is required. This is
4 why the cultural and institutional register of available oral history in the areas of
5 African traditions, customs and culture and indigenous technologies is of importance
6 for socio-economic transformation.

7 Oral history provides a source of emotional, spiritual and sacred values that
8 hold a society together. First of all, documenting oral history is a cultural collective
9 property which tells people's history and helps the present generation to understand
10 their place in history and to better cope with constant changes in society.
11 Identification of culture heritage sets distinctive linguistic, material, and intellectual
12 features to the society as a way of promoting societal integration as a driver to
13 socio-economic growth. In Africa, oral history practices and genres are ancient
14 forms of informal education, inculcate spiritual, ethical, moral and values, develop
15 self-discipline, tolerance and human fellowship. Oral history is thus an invaluable
16 source of evidence and illuminates both the individual's experience and the
17 historical period. It provides a holistic view of a phenomenon ranging from cultural,
18 historical, religious to scientific/technological means for socio-economic and
19 national development. For instance, Uganda aspires for positive cultural values for
20 socio-economic development, which embrace respect and recognition of all
21 citizens, and protect children and God fearing society. This is one way of fostering
22 respect for the Ugandan cultural diversity in the dispensation of religious differences
23 especially among the citizens. Thus, tapping the oral history promotes unity,
24 respect, patriotism and national pride. The respect of citizens in a multicultural and
25 religious society promotes a sense of self-examination with increased resulting
26 changes to the Gospel and offers Christians an effective way of relating to their
27 culture. This bridges the tacit and explicit knowledge in addition to preserving the
28 national, community and cultural memory.

29 The capacity to manage documentary heritage in Uganda is one of the
30 strategies that would foster industrial and socio-economic development. It would
31 have been expected that the Uganda Vision 2040 rolls up such aspiration with
32 regards to the development of national heritage. This is why a strategy for
33 safeguarding documentary heritage is required in Uganda. In Uganda, the legal
34 framework such as the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act, 2006 and the
35 National Library of Uganda Act (NLU) and other legal deposit provisions guarantee
36 protection of literary works, whose capacity requires intervention. Recently, the
37 government has embraced home-based schooling, teaching in the local languages,
38 promoting of locally authored books, student-centred learning, open learning and
39 technology as mitigating resilience interventions. To effectively embrace the
40 above requires a clear mechanism to access oral history. A strategy for increased
41 awareness on the accessibility of cultural heritage utilization of oral history for
42 socio-economic resilience and transformation is required.

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1 **Discussion on Oral History as a Tool for Social Transformation**

2
3 Oral history as a collective property tells people's history and helps the
4 present generation to understand their place in history. Oral history is an invaluable
5 tool for understanding individual experiences within a certain historical, cultural
6 and social testimony with the ability to reveal and illuminate both the individual
7 and social experience to transform the society. Utilization of oral history from
8 classical, hermeneutical, colonial and contemporary reminisces conveys diverse
9 messages and values that contribute to give a meaning to people's life (historical,
10 artistic, political, religious, social, spiritual, scientific, natural, etc.). It helps us to
11 expose opportunities available for utilizing oral history as a tool for socioeconomic
12 transformation in science, technology and innovation.

13 Identification of such heritages sets distinctive linguistic, material, and
14 intellectual features as a way of promoting societal integration, a driver to socio-
15 economic growth. As a form, oral history is first-hand evidence of the past which
16 requires to be recorded, documented and archived to professional standards. We
17 shall adopt the foundational principle of the seven spheres of influences, of
18 mountains for transformation of society developed by Dr. Bill Bright, Loren
19 Cunningham, and Francis Schaefer in 1975: Family, Religion/Church, Education,
20 Government, Media, Celebration (Arts, Entertainment, and Sports) and Economics
21 (Business, Science, and Technology) (Benedict, 2013).

22 23 *Governance*

24
25 The recollection of ordinary persons is the best to provide important records,
26 memories and life histories of the people. Oral history as a modern form has its
27 origin in the works of British Columbia by recording memories of significant
28 people in American life in 1948. A number of projects in the world have helped in
29 promoting oral history as a transformation of the economy especially in historical
30 documentation as a phenomenological hermeneutics by Richard B. Russell
31 Library for Political Research and Studies (2014). In National Library, Athens,
32 there is exhibited personal histories and community narrators including an oral
33 history of World War Two (Athens-Clarke Country Library, 1994).

34 Most of the features concerning the war and other social and political issues
35 such as the Black Oral History collection, the Civil Rights Digital Library, Digital
36 Library of Georgia, The Oral Testimony from Survivors of the World Trade
37 Center from the Encyclopaedia detailing the events of September 11 would be
38 impossible to comprehend without best testimonies about the horrors of that day
39 coming from the survivors. Such innovations give reflection on memories on
40 potential of oral history as a tool research in a society. For instance, the Oral
41 Archives of the World Heritage Convention provide opportunities where oral
42 testimonies can be an important way to understand historical events. Further, the
43 Memories of Occupation in Greece have brought together a number of oral
44 testimonies into a digital collection. The African oral history collection covering
45 the African veterans of the Second World War is achieved at Washington University
46 Library. Oral history is useful in both litigation and the precedents as a basis for

1 legal decisions and providing lives of outstanding jurists. Similarly, the complex of
 2 legal issues surrounding the creation, copyright, and "fair use" of an interview
 3 requires oral historians to progressively pay more attention to legal precedents.
 4

5 *Economics (Business, Science, and Technology)*
 6

7 Oral history facts and evidence, and biographical approaches to accounting
 8 research have commonly become more potential to enable the voices of those
 9 marginalised to be heard by capturing their lived experience influence of accounting
 10 (Hammond & Sikka, 1996: 92). The skills from such can help to promote the
 11 various innovative programmes such as Skilling Uganda, Skills (*Emyoga*), Parish
 12 Development Model, among others, to support effective utilization of available
 13 opportunities and skills in communities for development. Knowledge societies are
 14 only equitable if all people can access, share and use information in all forms of
 15 intellectual life for education and cultural development. There has been a number
 16 of oral tradition collections of African societies/communities particularly
 17 considered in the Memory of the World International Register and the "Intangible
 18 Cultural Heritage" Register.
 19

20 *Academia and Literacy*
 21

22 Recently there has been a number of attempts to adopt home-based schooling,
 23 teaching in the local languages, promoting of locally authored books, student-
 24 centred learning, open learning and technology as mitigating resilience interventions,
 25 most of which utilise use of oral history programmes. Oral history makes our
 26 memories and heritage connect. The pedagogical implication is that oral history
 27 occupies a number of people with a common identity and common social, political,
 28 and historical development, as well as other social factors such as economic
 29 growth, educational background, age, and religious beliefs (Chong, 2008).
 30

31 Through family history, each member contributes to the community history.
 32 This multidisciplinary facet makes oral history an incredible tool to implement in
 33 the classroom and an opportunity for including the community in the university
 34 curriculum. Oral history for educators in the classroom bridges the gap between
 35 the curriculum and community. It brings history home by linking the world of
 36 textbooks and classroom with the face-to-face social world of the students' home
 37 community. This serves both as a means to preserve the contemporary history of
 38 education as a discipline and as a teaching strategy in social studies. Initiatives of
 39 projects to record the history of instruction in a given field focus on teaching,
 40 providing effective lesson plans for using oral history in the classroom. Oral
 41 history is not only a tool or a method, it also is a theory of history which maintains
 42 that the common folk and the dispossessed have a history and that this history
 43 must be written. There is need for balance between historical records that are
 44 formally documented with those whose culture has no unwritten records.
 45 Furthermore, oral history provides a special attribute to gender studies for oral
 46 history projects on women by harvesting recollections of groups and classes of
 people largely disenfranchised from the historical records.

1 *Family and Society*

2

3 In Africa, Folklorists have made significant contributions to the methodology
 4 of oral history (see the discussion of oral history manuals below), while
 5 membership roles in oral history associations often cross with those in folklore
 6 societies. Sometimes the two fields hold joint conferences. One explanation for
 7 these crossings is the oral nature of many of the traditions recorded by folklorists
 8 and oral traditions (the legends, the myths and folktales). Methods for collecting
 9 oral lore and oral history overlap, though the former tends to be more spontaneous
 10 in collecting approach. The narrative genre of the "life story" is different from life
 11 history or oral biography. Life story is not necessarily interested in in the historical
 12 accuracy of life narratives, but the way the story is expressed. Indeed, the
 13 International Council of Archives (ICA) Annual Conference, held in Yaounde,
 14 Cameroon in 2018 on the "Indigenous Peoples of the World"- African countries
 15 showcased the South Africa (SA) peoples, the indigenous Indian communities in
 16 the USA and Canada, including the Aborigines of Australia, and the Maoris of
 17 New Zealand that models the place of Oral history in the transformation of society.
 18 In addition, the "*Once Upon a Time: Oral Traditions as History of Africa*" project
 19 has had an impact on recollections of most precolonial Africa civilization used in
 20 oral history. The idea behind this is that when one uses a word and designates a
 21 name and believes in that name, he has acquired knowledge of the essence of that
 22 person" (Vansina (2003). According to Vansina, all cultures are distinguished by
 23 important words backed by speech. Such words inherited from fore fathers are
 24 promoted by the oral traditions and the attitudes of members of society towards
 25 speech. This is why a strategy to help literate society shed off the ideological
 26 prejudice is required.

27

28 *Media and Celebration (Arts, Entertainment, and Sports)*

29

30 Oral history has a long stand in Media and Literature, as there have been
 31 writers before the use of literature. Overtime, oral people have conducted interviews
 32 to document the literary process and its context (Dunaway, 2018). Oral history has
 33 influenced literary studies in primary education: biography, both oral and written;
 34 and literary history, literary profession and publishing (as well as the work of
 35 specific writers). One inter-disciplinary quarterly which examined this trend
 36 is *Biography*. With such knowledge, skills and values in heritage tourism, if well
 37 developed, will enhance sustainable development (since it emphasizes the
 38 conservation of cultural heritage resources and it is non-consumptive (Woodward,
 39 2004). This requires long-term development of the tourism sector.

40

41 In broadcasting, producers have explored historical subjects in both
 42 documentary and fiction formats. In radio, television, and film, producers have
 43 sought to raise popular historical consciousness, to broadcast "to the man [and
 44 woman] in the street" in order to develop "historical mindedness". For example,
 45 oral testimony has even been incorporated into full-length Hollywood feature
 46 films, such as *Reds and Zelig*. In Hong Kong Heritage Project (HKHP), Walking
 Books (Allsop, 2022) is a major business archive and a soon-to-be museum and its

1 work in collecting and recording oral histories since 2007 has recorded 530 oral
2 history interviews. The exhibition fosters audience engagement as well as
3 encourages understanding and empathy for history as well as other people. As
4 Kareem (2021) emphasizes, to create an effective film distribution system based
5 only on new media, it requires coordination between traditional and online
6 distribution as traditional distribution. Kareem thus recommends increased content
7 makers, online distribution processes, a task that requires increased utilisation of
8 oral history techniques to enable easy access and utilisation of already documentary
9 Heritage.

10 Heritage is a collective property which tells people's history and it helps the
11 present generation to understand their place in history and to better cope with
12 constant changes in society. Heritage is a source of economic development. Cultural
13 heritage has always been among the main attractions for travellers in the 21st
14 century. Heritage tourism has increased immensely and has become an important
15 economic resource for many countries. Heritage is unique and irreplaceable. The
16 Uganda's Quadrennial Periodical Report 2020 provided the strategies for integration
17 of culture in sustainable development frameworks of various domains (cinema,
18 design, arts, music, performing arts, publishing and visual arts (MoGLAD, 2022).
19 A strategy to mitigate the deterioration or the disappearance of a cultural property
20 and the messages it conveys would be a source of pride for socio-economic
21 transformation of the country.

22 23 *Religion*

24
25 Oral records are the main tool of capturing the progress and events about
26 historical events, major developments in religion, especially Church and biblical
27 testimonies. It is a fact that the Quaran was preserved during the Prophet's time by
28 oral and written transmission. For example, the Jews' prayer from Deuteronomy
29 6:4 is based on oral history. The writing of the gospel after the death of Jesus is
30 based on stories that had been passed on. We would say that story telling was the
31 centre of Jesus Movement. For 40 years after the death of Jesus, there was nothing
32 written about the gospel or his life. During that time we have very little in terms of
33 written records on Christianity. Furthermore, the Old Testament was entirely oral
34 literature that gained written form at a later period. The spread of Christianity in
35 many parts of the world utilized the use of oral history. Orality has continued to
36 play a role in areas of translation, interpretation and evangelism. The purpose of
37 the church is to be a servant of its message - "You are the salt of the earth"
38 (Mathew 5:13). As salt is a preservative, the Church, must get into what it is trying
39 to preserve, thus a need for strategies for preserving oral history as a tool for
40 socioeconomic transformation.

41
42
43

1 **Conclusion and Way forward for Uganda**
2

3 There are three needs for integration of oral history as a socio-economic
4 transformation tool: need for building capacity, providing a forum for oral history
5 and promotion of preservation of documentary heritage including oral history.
6

7 *Capacity Building on Oral History Heritage*
8

9 There is need for awareness building, and training of trainers amongst
10 stakeholders on the need for oral history heritage including authors, teachers,
11 heritage custodians (librarians, archivists and museum curators), government
12 officials and publishers and book sellers. It shall involve participation in public
13 events in schools, museums, libraries, cultural exhibitions, schools, home and
14 community libraries, international and national celebrations. It shall involve oral
15 history awards, essays writing competition for junior writers. It shall also include
16 sharing of success stories, debates, open days, author expositions, young writers’
17 mentorship programs through writing competitions and recognition of various
18 authorities in Uganda literature including engagement in media/TV supported
19 events talk shows, and re-creations, benchmarking and publication. Training of
20 trainers would aim at developing skills and competences among authors and
21 custodians of documentation memory, publishers and policy makers on effective
22 documentation of cultural heritage. Some of the areas of emphasis are: code of
23 ethics for authors, copyright protection, publishers, writing digest, legal deposit,
24 authority description, general descriptions and metadata, compilation, narration
25 and conservation. Teachers would be trained on effective content integration in
26 teaching and learning and trained in using web-based instruction.
27

28 *A Forum of Oral History Tellers to Bridge Generational Gap*
29

30 A forum of oral history tellers and custodians to inspire and spark interest in
31 bridging the generation gap shall be held. It will include an open day with
32 exhibitions, essay competitions and a symposium with participation from
33 stakeholders that share cultural/heritage developments. Publicity and publication
34 will include engagement in media/TV/radio programmes and supported events
35 such as talk shows and recreations, benchmarking, oral history mentorship services
36 and publications. Occasional oral history mentorship meetings are meant to revive
37 the African fireplace experiences to bridge the generation gap. In addition, an
38 edited book that captures experiences of family history, recorded history in
39 memory institutions shall be published. Furthermore, there shall be an outreach
40 visit programme to memory institutions, schools, community centres to put oral
41 history under spotlight and raising public interest. Lastly, guidelines on access to
42 oral history collections pertinent to this project shall be developed to guide the
43 safeguarding memories and ensuring implementation.
44
45

1 *Preservation of Documentary Heritage*

2
3 Developments and best practice in scholarship, technology and science in the
4 preservation of oral history to be applied in our region is crucial shall be adopted.
5 To address most of the challenges of preservation of digital records, there is a need
6 for encouraging cooperation amongst government, memory institutions and the
7 private sector and utilization of good practices in terms of outreach programmes,
8 promotion programmes in schools, communities and official functions. Influence
9 curriculum to integrate the documentary heritage. Civil education, formation of
10 museum schools, school and community heritage clinics and form online
11 communities shall be embarked on In addition to raising awareness on the
12 importance of preservation and identification of national champions in promotion
13 of documentary heritage. There shall be sensitization of the public, recognition of
14 those who are in possession of these documents and the provision of incentives for
15 them to make these documents available for preservation and registering.
16 Connections to Community Heritage Grants and Funding opportunities, and
17 seeking ideas through meaningful engagement with the community shall be
18 initiated and encouraged. This program would encourage innovative thinkers to
19 utilise modern technologies to connect younger generations to existing heritage.
20

21
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