

Evaluation mission 1
on the reconstruction of

Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga
Tombs of Buganda Kings at Kasubi

A World Heritage property of Uganda



*Mission undertaken from 9th to 23rd May 2014 by
Sébastien Moriset, architect, CRATerre-ENSAG*

*Activity managed by the UNESCO regional office for East Africa in Nairobi
This mission was implemented in close collaboration with the **Government of Uganda** and the **Buganda Kingdom***

*Project implemented with funding provided by the **Government of Japan***

Evaluation mission report **1** on the reconstruction of

Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga

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A World Heritage property of Uganda (C 1022)



This document is the result of the mission undertaken in Kampala from 9th to 23rd May 2014 by **Sébastien Moriset**, CRAterre



This mission is the first of a series of 4 missions financed by the Japan Funds in Trust at UNESCO to evaluate the reconstruction process. It is part of contract N°4500235487 between the UNESCO regional office for East Africa in Nairobi and CRAterre in France.



This mission was implemented in close collaboration with the Government of Uganda and the Buganda Kingdom

For more information on the reconstruction project, contact:

Sébastien Moriset

CRAterre
International centre for earth construction, National Superior School of Architecture of Grenoble
CS 12636
38036 GRENOBLE Cedex 2 FRANCE
Telephone + 33 4 76 69 83 35 Cell: +33 6 46 52 74 35
email: sebastien.moriset@grenoble.archi.fr

Marc Patry

UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa
P.O.Box 30592-00100 Nairobi - Kenya
Telephone + 254 20 762 2630
email: ma.patry@unesco.org

Rose Nkaale Mwanja, Ag. Commissioner Uganda Museums

Department of Museums and monuments, Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage
P.O. Box 5718, Kampala, Uganda
Telephone +256 41 232 707 Cell: +256 77 248 56 24
email : mwanjankale@yahoo.com

Jonathan Nsubuga

Architect, j.e.nsubuga & Associates
P.O. Box 6577, Kampala, Uganda
Cell: +256 77 270 2655
email: nel.arch@gmail.com

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Kabaka Ronald Muwenda Kimeru Mutebi II
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Owek. Rita Namyalo Ksitu, Minister for Tourism
Owek. Sekimpi Mahmoud Ssemambo, 2nd Deputy Katikkiro and Minister for Culture, Royal Tombs and Heritage
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The guides at Kasubi tombs site



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1. Background information

This mission to Uganda was organised from 9th to 23rd May 2014, with the support of the Government of Japan, in order to assess the progress made in the reconstruction of Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga and suggest with both the National Government and the Buganda Kingdom, recommendations to maintain the outstanding universal values of this site. The implementation of this mission was coordinated by the UNESCO Office in Nairobi who made sure several experts were in Kampala at the same time, to facilitate collaboration between Ugandan and Foreign experts.

List of simultaneous expert missions:

11-23 May	Sébastien Moriset, CRAterre
11-14 May	Lazare Eloundou, Officer in Charge of the UNESCO Office in Bamako
12-14 May	Marc Patry, UNESCO Regional office for East Africa in Nairobi
12-14 May	Masakazu Shibata, UNESCO Regional office for East Africa in Nairobi
12-15 May	Karrel Baker, ICOMOS, University of Pretoria, South Africa
11-19 May	Kazuhiki Nitto, Junichi Hasegawa and Sugasawa Shigeru, Japanese specialists on roof thatching and disaster prevention

1.1. CRAterre work assignments and mission objectives

This mission is the first of a set of four missions that CRAterre should implement as part of the contract to evaluate the reconstruction process of Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga.

Assignments

The work assignments for CRAterre are described as follows in UNESCO contract N°4500235487:

Evaluation missions

- To organise four evaluation missions to Kasubi, approximately one every 5 months depending on the advancement of the reconstruction works.
- To document the reconstruction process in such a way that in the future, maintenance and construction of other roofs will be easier.
- To report to UNESCO on the observations made during these missions, including any recommendations for improvement in the reconstruction work

Capacity building: tourism

- To organize a one-day workshop with the guides of this World Heritage Site during one of the four missions in order to assess their knowledge of the site and evaluate their needs in terms of communication tools. The training will focus on conservation ethics, reconstruction approaches, Ganda craftsmanship and traditions, risk prevention and customer care.
- To prepare a simple guide on the history and values of the site based on the booklet published by CRAterre.

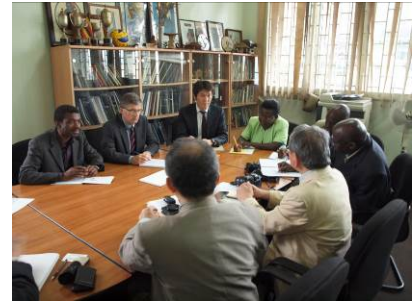
Capacity building: technical guide on thatch

- To prepare a technical guide on how to build a traditional Ganda thatched roof. In doing so, CRAterre shall liaise closely with the Japanese experts who prepared the reports on the subject.

Objectives of this first mission

The objectives of this first mission were the following:

- To evaluate the site and report to UNESCO
- To prepare the training of the guides and agree on the content of the technical guide
- To collect information to prepare the technical guide on thatch



Site visits and meetings with the UNESCO/ICOMOS/JAPAN EXPERTS delegation



Ceremony to launch the Japan Funded project



Site custodians

Meeting with Kabaka Mutebi II



Discussion on the ongoing preparation for the thatching of Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga



Site inspection and discussion on new developments with contractors and architects Nsubuga and Namayanja

1.2. Mission activities

Monday 12 May 2014

- Meeting of the entire delegation (UNESCO, ICOMOS, CRAterre, Japan) at the National Museum with Rose Nkaale Mwanja and Remigious Kigongo.
- Meeting of the delegation with Augustine Omare-Okurut, Secretary General of the National commission for UNESCO.
- Site visit to Kasubi Tombs.

Tuesday 13 May 2014

- Launching Japanese project at Kasubi.
- Technical Advisory Meeting on the Reconstruction of Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga at the Uganda Museum, with a wide group of stakeholders.

Wednesday 14 May 2014

- Discussion with the Japanese experts on the size and location of the firefighting equipment.
- Photographic analysis of the site evolution from 2000 until today.
- Meeting with Owek Peter Mayiga, Katikkiro (Prime Minister) of Buganda.
- Meeting with Karel Bakker and Jonathan Nsubuga to discuss current projects.

Thursday 15 May 2014

- Site visit to Wamala Tombs to study on-going thatching work.
- Documentation of the reconstruction process.

Friday 16 May 2014

- Inspection of the reed panels installed on the new block wall.
- Interview with Christopher Kawoya Wabulakayole.
- Climbing Muzibu Azaala Mpanga roof with Japanese experts to examine the structure.
- Meeting with the contractor and discussions with the custodians.

Saturday 17 May 2014

- Meeting on the preparation of the thatching work (supply and preparation of materials) with the Japanese team, the contractor and Bishop Michael Senyimba, Deputy Chairman, Kabaka Foundation.
- Discussions with the custodians.
- Work on the state of conservation of the site.

Sunday 18 May 2014

- Field trip with the Japanese experts and Remigious Kigongo to visit thatched houses around Makole.

Monday 19 May 2014

- Work with the guides at Kasubi on the guide book to be prepared this year.
- Work on the state of conservation “wheel”.
- Discussions with the custodians.
- Discussions with Uganda Museum staffs on Kasubi.

Tuesday 20 May 2014

- Preparation of name tags for the guides + entry fee panel for Kasubi.
- Meeting with Rose Nkaale Mwanja and Remigious Kigongo.
- Work with the guides.

Wednesday 21 May 2014

- Working session at Kubasi with the tour guides.
- Meeting with Kabaka Ronald Muwenda Kimera Mutebi II.
- Work on the report.

Thursday 22 May 2014

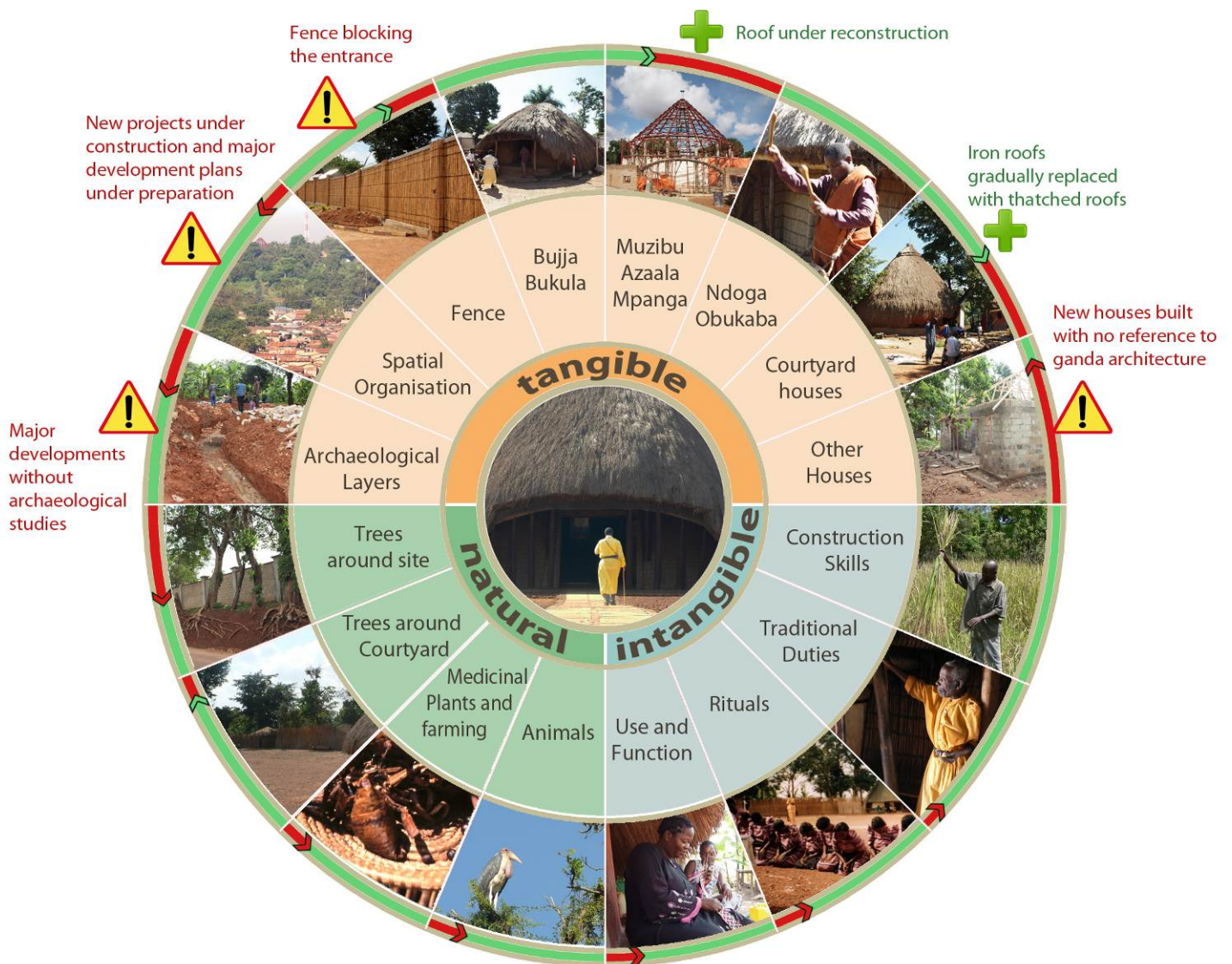
- Last site inspection with Architects Jonathan Nsubuga and Jacqueline Namayanja and contractors currently working at Kasubi.

2. Overall evaluation

2.1. General site evaluation

The following chart intends to present the state of conservation of the main components of the Kasubi Tombs site. Conserving these elements is essential to maintain the outstanding universal value of the site, and to reaffirm its World Heritage Status.

For each element, an assessment of the state of conservation is suggested on the outer circle of the chart. The green portion indicates strong authenticity and integrity. In opposition, the red portion signifies important losses or changes. Ideally, the outer circle should be entirely green. This evaluation was done through observation and discussions with site custodians.



Tombs of Buganda Kings at Kasubi
WORLD HERITAGE SITE

State of conservation



■ Strong authenticity and integrity
■ Modifications and Losses

Sebastien Moriset, CRAterre
May 2014

2.2. Strengths



Management and site development

- A Heritage and Tourism board has been created by the Buganda Kingdom
- Many people currently contribute to the management and development of the site
- The traditional management system is still in place
- The custodians are still performing their duties
- The site has been revitalised after the 2010 tragedy
- Human and financial resources are mobilised
- Wabulakayole has received a uniform and is now better treated than before.

Architecture

- The site has 4 thatched roofs that reflect the expertise of the thatchers
- 2 of them have kept a high degree of authenticity and integrity (Bujjabukula and Ndogo-Obukaba)
- Jonathan Nsubuga, the architect managing the reconstruction of Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga has a good understanding of the traditional architecture
- The mud house that almost collapsed has been restored
- The conservation technique is still alive and the materials still available
- The architectural values are understood by many custodians at the site who do not accept recent developments.

Fence

- The fence is now completed and it protects the entire site
- Encroachment is not possible from outside

Natural elements

- The fence will protect the farm land. Custodians and guides mention the return of animals that had become rare such as monkeys.
- Medicinal plants are still available in large numbers
- Different tree species can be found

Visitor's management and experience

- Experienced guides are available
- An open air exhibition is displayed at the site entrance. It is a very efficient education and interpretation tool
- The road signs leading to the site are still in place
- The traditional life on site is real (custodians are not acting for the visitors), they keep living, cooking, farming, using medicinal plants in the traditional way.
- The garbage heaps have been removed from the site
- A person has been contracted to clean the surface of the land and remove the polythene bags
- Toilets are now available all around the site

2.3. Weaknesses



Management and site development

- The national technical committee that linked the Kingdom, the Government and UNESCO is not holding meetings anymore
- Many people take decisions at the site without clear coordination
- The current site manager (Remigius Kigongo) is not permanently on site, despite the fast changes occurring
- UNESCO is not systematically consulted or informed when major changes are planned
- The opinions about the future of the site diverge and the decision making process is not clear
- There is no shared vision. Development plans are prepared in isolation. Custodians complain that they discover the plans as they are implemented
- Many custodians express their dissatisfaction with current changes
- The guides are not satisfied with their working conditions
- The craftsmen are not happy to see that part of their work is given to external teams
- Wabulakayole has become very weak

Architecture

- The strong aesthetic values represented by Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga are temporarily lost
- Contemporary building materials such as concrete, corrugated iron sheets and industrial paint are coming into the site in huge quantities. The proposed developments also rely on contemporary building materials
- The Ganda architecture is endangered. It almost disappeared from rural areas and the Kasubi Hill is no longer a "protected area" for these architectures
- New designs are produced and buildings erected without consulting the project architect supervising the reconstruction (Jonathan Nsubuga)
- Alterations are occurring very fast
- Many new buildings have been erected, but most of them do not reflect traditional architecture in terms of materials, know-how, shapes, textures, colours ...
- The visitors who come to see Ganda architecture are very disappointed, because there is very little to see apart from Bujjabukula, Ndogo-Obukaba and Kajjaga (bad comments on the web, also mentioned by the guides)

Fence

- The block wall is very high and does not reflect Ganda architecture

Natural elements

- Many trees are missing along the fence and around the courtyard

Visitor's management and experience

- The number of visitors is very low
- The place actually looks more like a construction ground than a cultural site
- The entry fees are not clearly displayed
- Visitors feel cheated (nasty comments on the web), they would like to receive more for the money paid
- No educational material or souvenirs can be purchased
- The booklet revised after the 2010 tragedy cannot be purchased
- Medicinal plants are not appreciated, they could be better protected and presented to the public

3. Evaluation of the tangible components



3.1. Spatial organisation

The current layout of the Kasubi Tombs site remains very close to what it was at the time of its construction. The location of Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga and other houses around a large central courtyard with a forecourt containing the drum house and the entry gate house represent typical Baganda Royal Palaces.

The site entrance has however been altered with the addition of a high wall hiding the entrance. The former large esplanade that marked the site entrance has disappeared behind this new fence. Bujjabukula is also hidden, whereas it should strongly mark the entrance. This affects the authenticity of the spatial layout in a significant way.

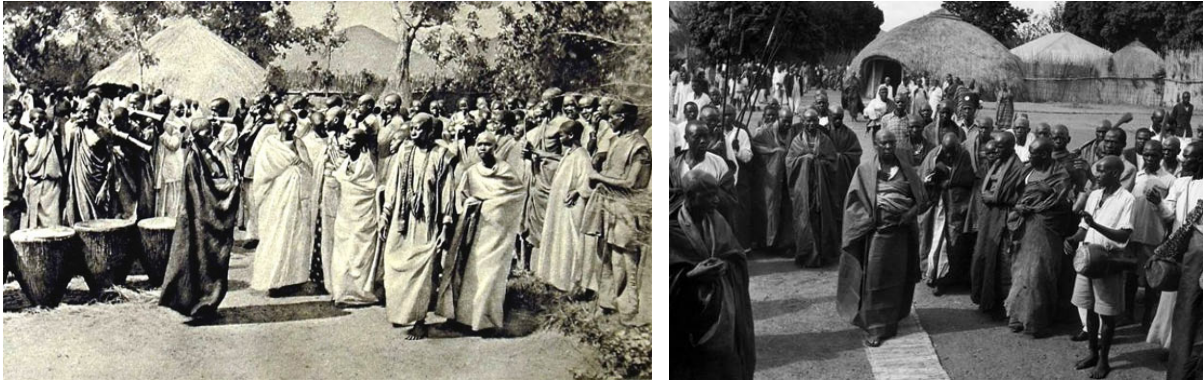
Plans to transform the large farmland have also been produced, and the construction of the foundations for a new museum started during this mission.



Entrance to Kasubi in 2009 and 2014. Bujjabukula and the esplanade have disappeared. There is no more space between the road and the entrance.



Entrance to Kasubi in 2008 and 2014. This large area is no longer accessible to public. This is unfortunate, because it allowed exchanges between the custodians and the local population. The guards have expressed their feeling being locked up. They are no longer able to communicate with the outside.



Archive photographs showing the importance of the esplanade in front of royal palaces



One of the Master plan options prepared by J.E. Nsubuga & Associates

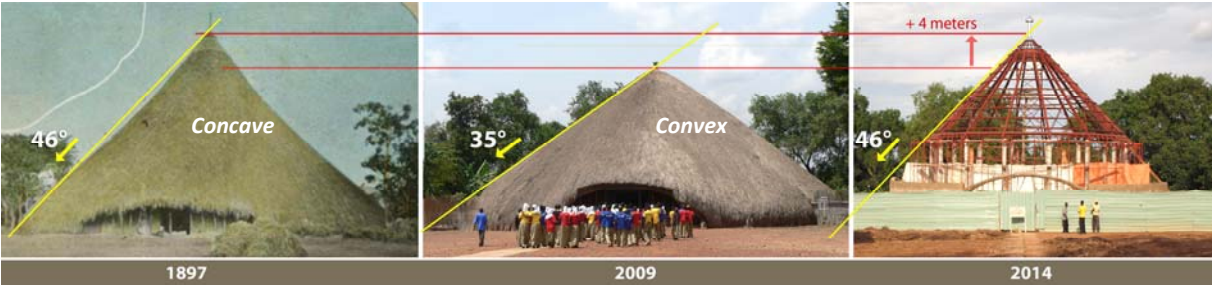
The transformation of the farmland into a recreation area will completely disrupt the existing balance between sacred and profane activities.

If this plan is implemented, the tourism and recreational values will surpass the sacred values of the site, and the Outstanding Universal Values recognised by the World Heritage Committee will be weakened.

3.2. Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga

Steel structure in place

The steel structure is now in place. The structural engineers and the architect have done an excellent work. The roof has been restored to its 1895 shape with a steep slope that will better drain off rainwater. The new structure is also designed to be more resistant than the previous one, and will receive a special coating to resist fire. The beams sections and material strength have been increased. The place is now set to receive the wood structure, the reed work and the thatched roof.



Comparison of the roof shapes in 1895, 2009 and today



Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga in May 2014



Details of the new roof structure

Wamala experience

The restoration of the Wamala tomb roof was a very efficient rehearsal exercise to understand the process of harvesting and preparing the materials and implementing the works. The restoration exercise was a real lesson for the team in charge of purchasing grass. It is indeed a difficult task as Bishop Michael Senyimba of the Kabaka Foundation explained:

- Suppliers should be trained in quality control for sorting and preparing straw,
- Delivering must be done quickly because grass deteriorates rapidly once cut,
- Transportation should be done before complete drying because the grass is more resistant when still green,
- Storage should be done on shelves for optimum ventilation of the bundles.

The many difficulties overcome by the Kabaka Foundation will facilitate work on Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga. The Kabaka foundation also established a reliable network of suppliers who are now ready to provide straw for Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga. Bishop Senyimba also explained that the fields where the grass was harvested in 2013 for Wamala are now ready for a new harvest, which is a blessing for Kasubi.

Grass storage houses

Both Wamala and Kasubi will need permanent storage houses to keep thatch bundles for repairs. Temporary houses have been erected at Kasubi and Wamala for the duration of the restoration campaigns. The Wamala version with shelves is the most efficient one. It allows perfect ventilation and storage of high quantities of grass in 6 layers. After completing Wamala, this house can be dismantled but a smaller version of it should remain at the site to constantly supply grass for regular maintenance.



Storage houses behind Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga at Kasubi



Ideal storage house with shelves at Wamala

3.3. Fence

The site is enclosed again, as desired for decades and suggested in the 2 management plans. It is a relief for custodians because the absence of a fence entailed serious pollution, security and destruction problems. All people interviewed are satisfied with the fence; even animals seem to enjoy more security because hunters cannot access the site anymore.

Position

The new fence follows the fig tree lane that marks the perimeter of the Royal site. The main change in the position is that the wall passes in front of Bujjabukula. As we said earlier, this undermines the importance of Bujjabukula which should prominently mark the entrance. The traditional guards complained about this new wall which keeps them “in prison”. The guards should constantly keep an eye on the surroundings. With this new wall, they cannot see what is going on outside or interact with the surrounding population.

Materials

The new fence is made of concrete blocks instead of the traditional reed fence. Considering the urban context and previous experiences, the choice of a more resistant material can be understood. However, the design should have been discussed with the Museum conservators and UNESCO, to share ideas on the various options and analyse archival materials. The paneled wall with capitals and lamps on each pillar does not refer to ganda architecture. To minimize the visual impact of the wall, reeds are currently placed on the external wall face, carefully tied to a metal structure. This is much better than the exposed cement wall, but a preliminary impact assessment would certainly have simplified the design. This make-up operation will not restore the authenticity of the place.



The new perimeter wall and the current installation of reeds to hide the cement blocks

3.4. Bujjabukula

Bujjabukula is one of the strongest architectural elements of the site in terms of authenticity and integrity, hence the importance of keeping it in the forefront. All the building details have maintained a high degree of authenticity. The roof however needs repairs; it seems to have sunk in the center, and several gullies in the thatch need to be fixed. The photo comparison below shows that the building is well preserved. The main threats to this element are twofold:

- Construction of inappropriate concrete walls in front and on the sides, which overshadow this jewel
- Preparing food with an electric hob inside, increasing the risk of fire



Comparative analysis of Bujjabukula over the years

3.5. Ndogo-Obukaba

Ndogo-Obukaba is the second best preserved architectural element on site. It was entirely restored in 2006 and is therefore not as old as Bujjabukula. But the building remains very authentic in terms of shape and construction details. The 2006 reconstruction aimed to restore the original roof shape that was lost, as we can see on the image below taken in 2000, which shows a very slight slope insufficient to conserve the thatched roof. It is also important to note that the drums are well preserved and regularly used to announce the arrival of prominent figures attached to the Royal Family.



Ndogo-Obukaba before and after the 2006 restoration



In 2014, Ndogo-Obukaba is one of the key features contributing to the site authenticity

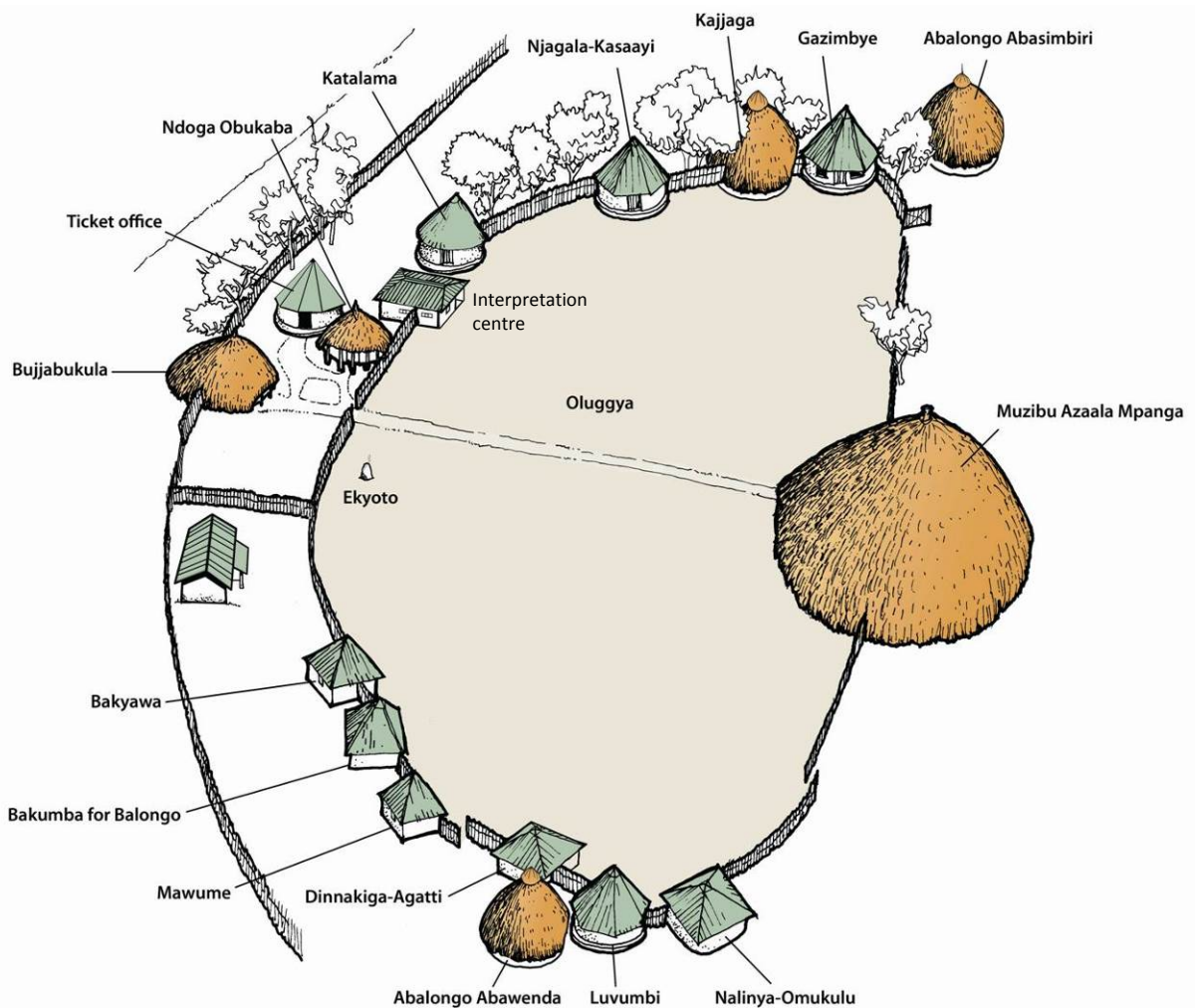
3.6. Courtyard Houses

The buildings placed around the courtyard are in a rather good state of conservation, but they present various degrees of authenticity. The Kajjaga (dress house), despite being the most recent addition to the site, is the most impressive element with its thatched roof.

The Interpretation centre on the contrary is the least integrated into the overall context, with its rectangular shape that overlaps on the border line of the courtyard.

All the other buildings around the courtyard were rebuilt with bricks and metal sheet roofs in the 1960/70s. They have withstood the test of time but still lack authenticity. The green oil paint applied on the roof has been washed away. The roofs now have turned brown because of the corrosion of metal sheets. This new color is much more discreet in the site because it resembles the colour of thatch but still, the thatched roofs are the only option to reinforce the site authenticity. They are also the only roofs that Wabulakayole and his clan members are supposed to build on this site.

In the medium term, consistency must be restored in the architecture. All buildings should be representative of the Ganda construction techniques and be consistent in terms of roof pitch, materials, colour...





Evolution of buildings around the courtyard between 2000 and 2014

3.7. Other Houses

The other buildings behind the courtyard, in the private area, which house custodians and graves have mostly been reconstructed anew over the past year. One of them was restored in wattle and daub as it was originally. The others were built in cement and coated with bright green and orange industrial paint, with the exception of two thatched roofed houses. The construction program of concrete houses with external kitchens and bathrooms continued during our mission.

We regret that the architect who prepared the reconstruction strategy was not involved in the design of these houses that import an entirely new architectural style on site, which makes no reference to Ganda architecture and does not give the opportunity to Ganda craftsmen to practise their creative genius. Rebuilding these houses in a more traditional way would have offered the possibility to practice traditional skills and train more craftsmen.



Wattle and daub house under restoration during the mission. This work is perfectly in line with the conservation and development of traditional skills



Abalongo Abasimbiri covered with thatch. This house replaces a cement building (left).



Mud house destroyed



New concrete house with kitchen and toilet block built in the same location



New concrete houses built behind the courtyard in 2013/2014. Such buildings can be seen all over Africa, they do not reflect the fantastic skills and materials of the Buganda Kingdom.

3.8. Archaeology

Archaeology is a dimension that has not received much attention at Kasubi. Conservation problems on the thatched roofs and the absence of interference with the subsoil until now could explain why archaeological research had not yet been considered.

It is a key dimension of any historical site that experienced different phases of occupation, which is the case for Kasubi Hill. Any movement of ground must be preceded by archaeological studies to record traces of the past. Extensive works such as the perimeter wall or the platform under construction irresponsibly destroy layers of information that archaeologists can study and interpret, to enrich the historical value of the site. Kasubi is located near the university and the museum where archaeologists are easily accessible.



Works implemented without archaeological assessment. Historic data may potentially be disturbed or destroyed whenever new projects are implemented. What may be seen as an ordinary lateritic soil by contractors might actually contain valuable historic information that only archaeologists can recognise.

4. Evaluation of the intangible dimension



A detailed assessment of the intangible dimension of the site would be necessary, but conservation problems on the tangible elements unfortunately monopolized the team's attention during the mission. Here are some preliminary elements gathered from the custodians during the mission.

4.1. Use and function

The site has retained its function as royal burial ground guarded by custodians who serve the spirits of the deceased Kabakas. After the 2010 fire, the number of visitors has decreased significantly and the new functions embraced during the 20th century: tourism and education have momentarily almost stopped. As we noted in the 2010 and 2011 reports, the site has never been so alive and well served by the custodians.

We are however very concerned about the turn that the site is taking. If the redevelopment project of the agricultural section is implemented, the site will take a whole new functional dimension. It will become a recreation site for tourists rather than a sacred site presenting the great cultural and spiritual values of the Kingdom.

4.2. Traditional duties

The traditional system of duties is still in place, as indicated by the custodians. People interviewed told us they were able to perform all the duties imposed on them, despite the presence of new stakeholders. Traditional guards, for example, accept the presence of the Tourism Police. They do not see them as threatening competitors for their function. Only the thatchers expressed their concern to see people outside their clan involved in the preparation of reeds.

4.3. Skills

Traditional knowledge and skills are well preserved and still practiced at the site. Thatchers at Wamala have shown their expertise during the mission. Mat-making is also perfectly mastered by women living at the site. We can also note that cooking practices at the site are very traditional, which is very interesting for visitors.

4.4. Rituals

The custodians interviewed said that accessing or organizing rituals is still possible but the sacredness and practices are nevertheless in decline. We will endeavor to better study this issue during the next missions.

5. Evaluation of the natural components



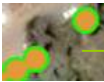
5.1. Trees around the site

The number of trees missing has increased since the preparation of the inscription in 1999. During the preparation of the management plan of 2009, we counted 110 trees missing. More have been cut down in the past 5 years. We fear an acceleration of this trend after the erection of the enclosure wall, because the trees are now outside the fence.

During this mission, we also noticed the general lack of consideration among some custodians for trees, which they see as simple cooking fuel. Serious work to raise awareness and to encourage the replanting of trees is required.

Surrounding population is the main threat to these trees. It is only by involving those people in the protection of the trees that we could safeguard this green curtain which represents a major component of the site. To protect future tree seedlings, we recommend involving local communities in monitoring and watering trees. Nearby schools could also take part in the programme.

The map below shows where the trees were missing in 2009.



Missing trees
(Approximatel
110 for the
fence alone)



Sections of the boundary where trees are missing
Replanting trees will contribute to mitigate the visual impact of the newly built cement wall.

5.2. Trees around the courtyard

The courtyard is also traditionally surrounded by a curtain of trees. Comparison of images over 15 years shows that some trees have grown, but others have disappeared. A tree planting program in the periphery of the courtyard would be necessary. As for the fence, only fig trees (*ficus natalensis*) should be planted around the courtyard. Other trees can be planted at the back or in the farmland.



Evolution of the trees around the courtyard over the years



Tree saved in extremis near the cemetery



cut tree

5.3. Medicinal plants and farming

The richness of the flora was already noted in the nomination file submitted to UNESCO in 2000. This is an essential component of the site that Sentenza George, one of the guides, has studied in detail. He reported over 100 different plants for medicinal use on site and noted their use. This is a treasure to be preserved to explain Ganda medicine and add educational value to the site.

A nature trail could easily be created without redeveloping the whole hill. A botanical trail with small discrete panels could be installed. The site also has a wide range of fruit trees and plants that have educational value for visitors. Kampala schoolchildren could learn to recognize plants at Kasubi and Western tourists could enjoy the coffee trees and other products they consume daily without ever having seen the plant that produces them. A tree/plants nursery could also be installed to sell medicinal plants.

5.4. Animals

The farmland and trees attract a significant wildlife on this urban site. Animals such as monkeys suffered a lot from hunting when the site was open. The situation has changed with the enclosure wall, and an increase of wildlife is expected.

6. Recommendations

6.1. Recommendations on site development

Sharing decisions through the National Technical Committee

If the World Heritage status needs to be maintained, we insist on the need to revive the National Technical Committee. Although the site belongs to the Kingdom, it is also registered as a National monument under the department of Museums and Monuments, Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities. Under the provision of the Historical Monuments Act of 1967, the site “**shall not be used for any use inconsistent with its character**”. In addition to this national protection, the World Heritage Status also means that the site should comply with the 1972 World Heritage Convention.

The site is therefore monitored by three entities: the Kingdom, the department of Museums and Monuments and UNESCO. Hence the importance to revive the National Technical Committee to share decisions and discuss options at a tripartite level before implementing them.

Respecting values

Current construction activities are not in line with the values that were set out in the World Heritage nomination. It would be necessary to rework this list of values with all stakeholders to ensure that the entire team working at Kasubi “*follows culture and tradition*”, as stated in the article below.

Kabaka commends Kasubi Tombs reconstruction

KAMPALA

By Vision Reporter

The Kabaka of Buganda, Ronald Muwenda Mutebi, has appreciated the work done by the Katikkiro, Charles Peter Mayiga and his team in rebuilding Kasubi Tombs. The Kabaka advised the team working on tombs to follow culture and the traditions (*Enono n’obulombolombo*) as they do the work. Mutebi made the remarks last week while meeting Sebastian Moriset, a UNESCO official, who was accompanied by Jonathan Nsubuga, the chief architect of the tomb’s reconstruction. The Kabaka said it is important to preserve the values and traditions of our ancestors and therefore whatever was on the tombs has to be re-instated. He commended Moriset for his efforts which ensured that the tombs are included in the UN cultural sites. Both Moriset and Nsubuga assured the Kabaka that they would have to strictly consider tradition while rebuilding the tombs.

New Vision, 22nd May 2014

The core values of the site are as follows:

- **Architectural** values (display of traditional building skills to its highest degree of perfection)
- **Cultural** values (production of craft products, bark cloths, mats, understanding Ganda culture through its traditional medicine, cuisine, clothing, music, dance...)
- **Social** values (the site unites the Ganda population, custodians living on site)
- **Spiritual** values (ceremonies, beliefs, cemetery, home of spirits, intangible heritage)
- **Natural** Values (trees, medicinal plants, traditional farming practices, animals...)

These are the values that attract visitors from around the world and made the World Heritage inscription possible. They should be preserved at all costs. Adding new features will not add value to the site, unless these features reinforce the unique existing values. The temporary site presentation panel installed at the entrance of the site explains these values very well.

Vision 2020

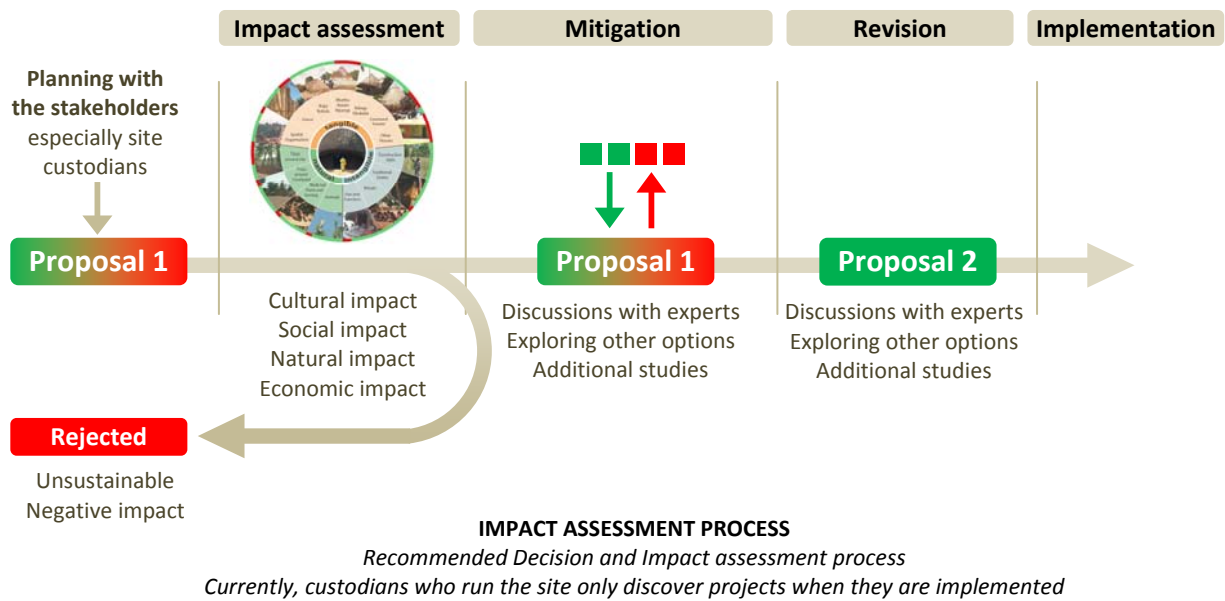
A new vision integrating the outstanding universal value must be written by stakeholders. We must ensure that everyone is going in the same direction, which is not the case now. This vision would be a one-page text that describes the site as we want to see it in a few years, in 2020 for example. This vision must be based on clear conservation principles and not by economic motivations.

Impact assessment

Any decision regarding the site must be assessed in terms of impact on all 16 components presented on the wheel, page 9. The loss of Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga brought the Kasubi tombs on the endangered list. Other major destruction could lead to the loss of World Heritage Status. This is why major policy decisions and development projects should be taken in a multidisciplinary way, with a maximum of national experts on board, even if the site belongs to the Kingdom.

Impact assessment should not only look at the financial impact for long term management, it should also consider the social, cultural and natural impact for those who keep the site alive, and those who come to visit it.

UNESCO and Uganda Museum can also advice on impact assessment as far as the cultural values are concerned. They should be informed and if possible engaged in the decision making process at the earliest stages.



Archaeology

The site is undergoing important physical changes that may be seen as opportunities for archaeological research. The normal practice would have been to carry out an archaeological pre-assessment of the whole area to mark out the areas that may contain important archaeological elements. The museum can handle this with the collaboration of the site custodians.

The construction of new buildings or the installation of water pipes and underground reservoirs requires digging deep into the ground, and interfering with the archaeological strata of the site. It is essential, as the Japanese experts said, to involve an archaeologist whenever the ground is excavated. The Uganda Museum has the expertise to conduct such research and document all excavations works. Important discoveries could be made on the use and spatial organization of the site in the past. This is essential for the interpretation of the site history.

Old steel structure and Museum

The steel structure rescued from the fire will remain on site, to respect cultural norms and testify of the tragedy. It will be shifted to the back of the site, some 250 meters away from Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga on the south-eastern side. The plan presented to us during the mission was to cast a 314 m² concrete platform to hold the structure. We recommend avoiding pouring concrete on site, and simply displaying this sculptural element on the ground, in its natural environment. A concrete platform will neither add value nor protect the steel.



Remains of the previous roof structure



Slab under construction to exhibit the burnt steel



*Alexander Calder sculptures displayed in Parks in France
The burnt steel remains could also be simply presented on the ground without a concrete slab.*

6.2. Recommendations on management

This site lacks a conductor, a manager who coordinates all activities. Each actor (architect, contractors, Nalynias, artisans, custodians, guides ...) acts on his side without coordination with the other actors. This causes a lot of confusion, surprises and frustrations from many people who do not understand what is happening.

Site manager

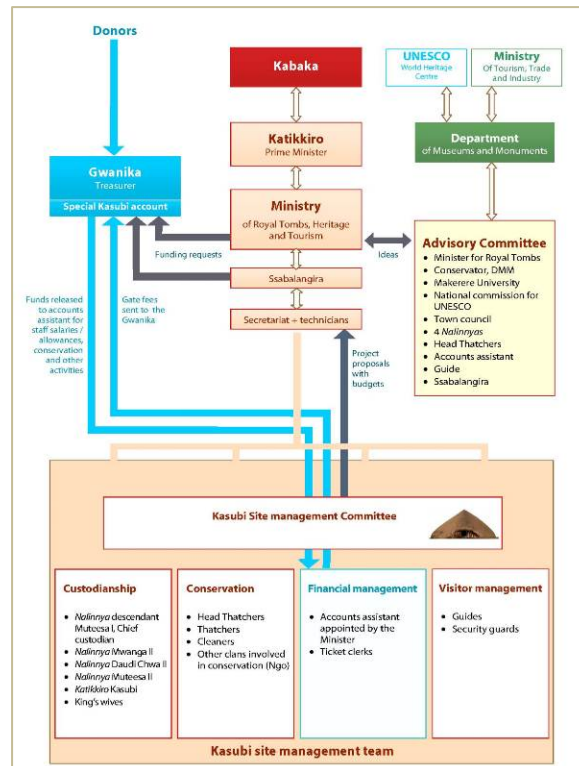
Remigius Kigongo is currently the official Site Manager. He is supposed to be on site almost every day to monitor and control the rapid changes taking place. His appointment was associated to very clear terms of reference. After several years of practice, it is time to evaluate his work and see if he actually plays the role of manager or not.

Project manager

Architect Jonathan Nsubuga is the current reconstruction Project Manager. He has proved his efficiency in understanding traditional Ganda architecture and fighting for the conservation of authenticity. It would be extremely desirable to expand his role to the entire site and not to Muzibu-Azaala-Mpaga only. Nsubuga seems to be the only person with the necessary sensitivity to design heritage-friendly site facilities. The new architecture of the houses and the fence were unfortunately drawn by other teams.

Management framework

The 2010 tragedy brought many new players on board. Their roles and responsibilities should be clearly described and the decision-making process clarified in the form of an organisation chart, similar to the one presented in the 2009-2015 management plan.



2009 Organisation chart

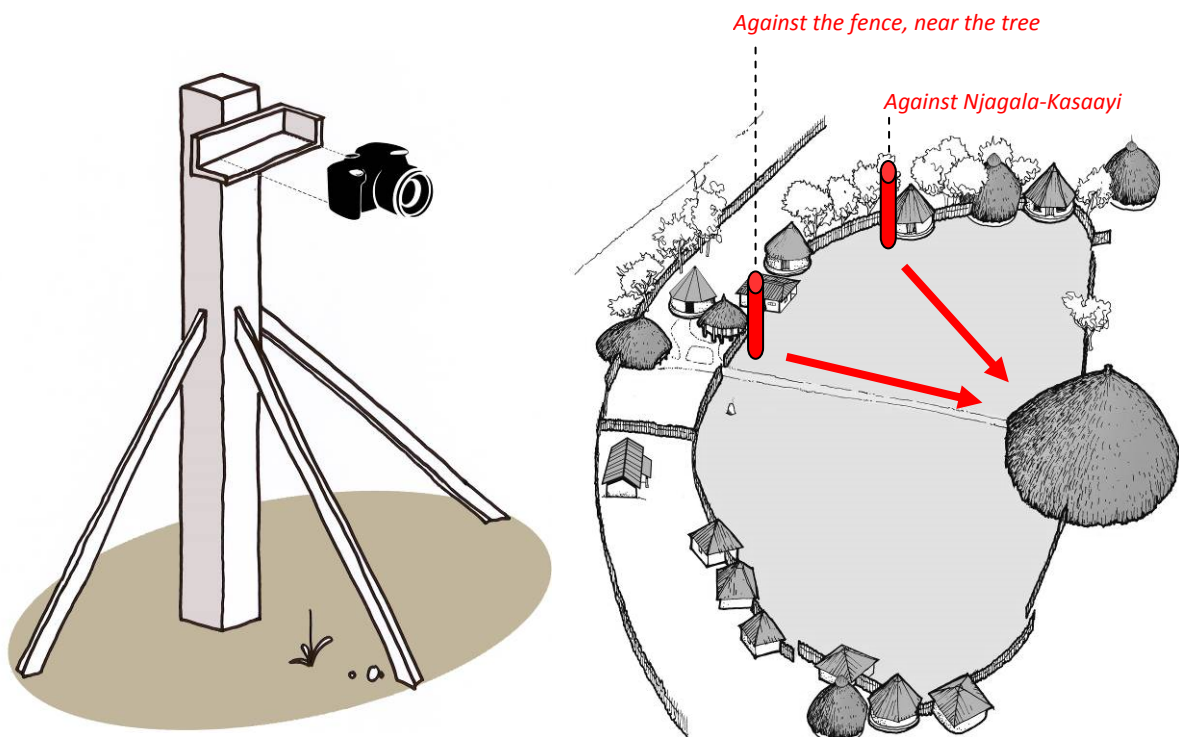
A new organization chart must be established as soon as possible, incorporating the new Buganda Tourism and Heritage board, the Tourism Police, the project manager, the site manager, the contractors, and all other stakeholders...

6.3. Recommendations on documentation

Several people are mobilised to document the reconstruction process. The architect's team regularly takes pictures of the site. Another team ensures a very systematic photographic survey. This team is supervised by David Kalanzi, assisted by two guides: Stephen Mpanga (chief tour guide) and Jackson Monday. Stephen and Jackson take photos every day, and they burn a CD at the end of each month. All CDs are kept in a locked drawer at the guides' office. Jonathan Nsubuga also keeps a copy on a hard disk at his office. With these photos, David Kalanzi prepares monthly illustrated reports and submits them to Jonathan Nsubuga.

These images would be very useful for preparing the technical guide on thatching that CRAterre has to prepare over the next 2 years.

During the mission, we discussed the installation of 2 stands for taking systematic photos of Muzibu Azaala Mpanga. These photos, taken from the same angle with the same camera will help to create a short video showing the full reconstruction process.



Design and proposed location for the 2 stands

6.4. Recommendations on site interpretation

The small outdoor exhibition explaining the site and the reconstruction project is extremely well done. This is far better than what we initially envisaged and we congratulate the team who designed it. Lots of people stop in front of the panel to study the information provided or simply enjoy the images. It also serves to explain technical issues or to simply describe the site to visitors.

The idea of the exterior panels is very interesting for presenting the site as it allows a permanent and very democratic access to information, which would not be the case if these panels were locked into an interpretation centre. We recommend such exhibition panels to be installed on site, in different locations but in smaller versions. This does not exclude having a secure place to present valuable objects, including the artefacts rescued from the fire.



*Very efficient information panel installed at the site entrance
Christopher Kawoya Wabulakayole, head thatcher, using the panel to explain the roof
to the UNESCO-Nairobi team*

7. Work with the Tour guides

7.1. Meeting at the site

Several meetings were devoted to the guides during the mission to discuss the following questions:


- Current problems affecting their work,
- On-going documentation,
- Images needed in the guides' manual to be prepared this year by CRAterre,
- ID cards,
- Entry fees.

Entry fees

The Entry fee is not a problem; all guides charge the same price to the same categories of visitors. The problem raised by several visitors on the web is that these fees are not displayed at the entrance. Some tourists feel cheated, or refuse to pay an entrance fee. It was therefore decided with the guides to design a sheet with the prices clearly announced. This sheet was printed and laminated during the mission and placed on the guides' office who collect the entry fees.

Welcome to the Kasubi Royal Tombs Site


Entry Fees



	Kids 0-10	Students 11-18	University Students	Adults
Ugandans	1 000 UGX	1 000 UGX	2 000 UGX	3 000 UGX
East Africans		3 000 UGX	5 000 UGX	
Resident Foreigners		5 000 UGX	10 000 UGX	
Non resident Foreigners		10 000 UGX		

REGULATIONS

- Entry fees should be paid at the gate office only
- Groups above 10 : group leaders (lecturers, teachers, guides from outside) enter for free
- This is a sacred place, walking around the site without a guide is not allowed
- In case of any problem, please contact the Tourism Police Officer at the site

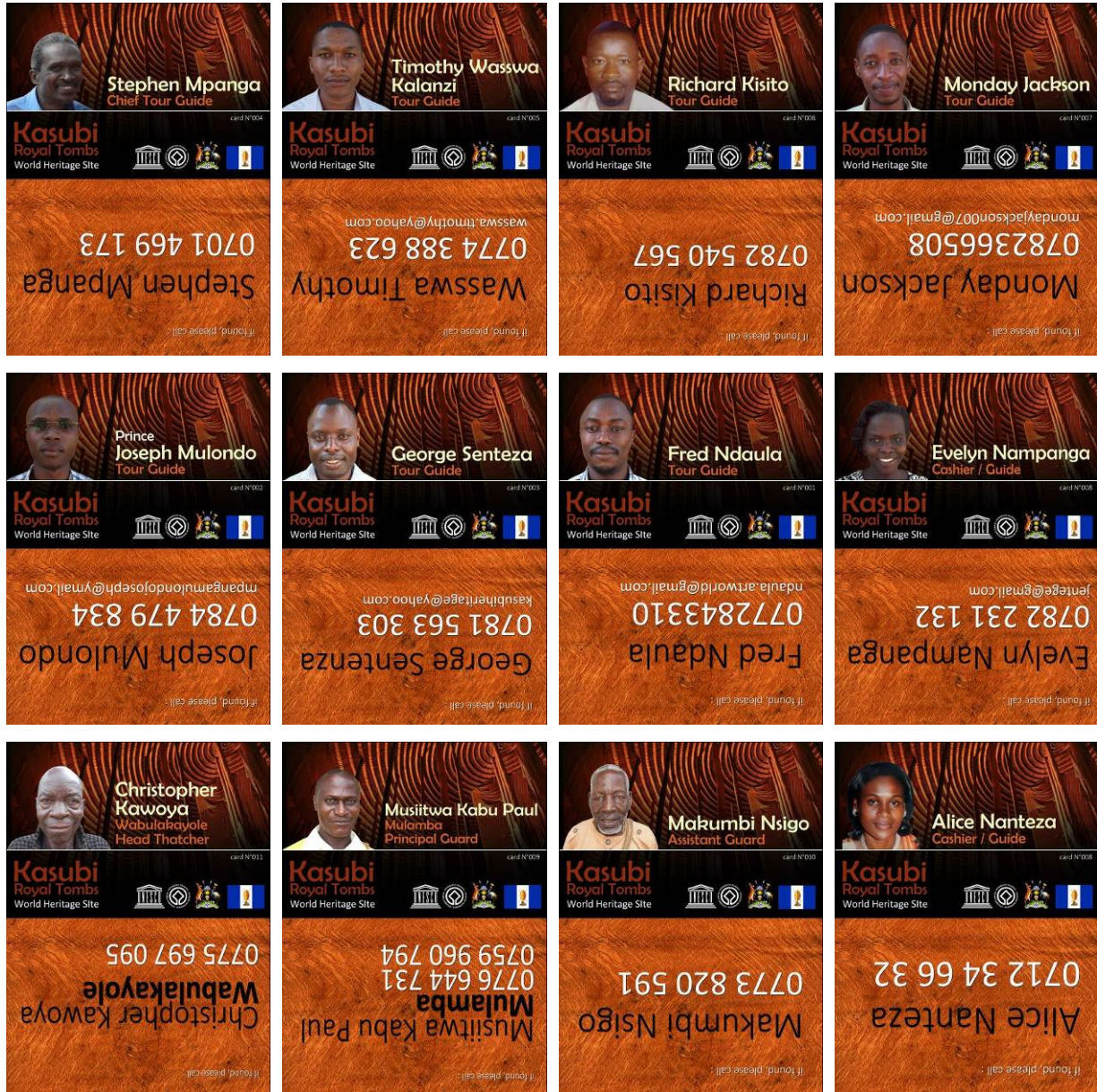


Kasubi Royal Tombs
A World Heritage Site

Panel prepared with the guides to announce entry fees to visitors

ID cards

The guides expressed their will to have ID cards because they do not wear distinctive signs at the moment. Visitors do not recognize them easily and do not necessarily give them the confidence they deserve. ID cards were therefore designed with them. A soft copy was left on a CD.



ID cards designed with the guides

7.2. Activities to be implemented with the guides during next mission

As provided in the contract, a training day for the guides will be organised during next mission. In the meantime, a handbook for guides will be prepared by CRAterre and 8 copies sent to the site, this means one for each guide. The content and format were discussed with the guides. They requested for an A4 size binder with removable laminated sheets, so that each guide can adapt the binder to its guiding skills and needs.

The training day will include the following sessions:

- a training session about the use of the new binders,
- an interactive session on the values of the site,
- an on-site discussion to spread information between the guides. Each guide has special knowledge that other guides do not have (such as medicinal plants for example).
- We will also attempt to list the weaknesses experienced by visitors and define an action plan to improve the visitor experience.