## COMMUNITY MUSEUM MANAGEMENT : A CASE STUDY OF THE IFUGAO MUSEUM IN THE PHILIPPINES

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## Abstract

This paper discusses the case of the lfugao Museum in Kiangan, lfugao Philippines. The researcher found out the importance of looking into the country's economic condition to determine the kind of management that is suitable to its cultural institutions. Through the experience with the lfugao Museum, a plan of a systematic management style for community museums was formed based on the particular needs, resources and expectations of this indigenous group of people.

Management planning for community museums in the Philippines is no easy task. Any viable management plan must take into consideration various factors like the unstable economic situation of the country, the very diverse socio-cultural arena of each indigenous groups or ethnic communities and the shadow of heavy politicking that looms in every socio-economic-cultural affair of the country.

My interest with the lfugao Museum as my case study for research started in 2001 when the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), people from the National Museum and some representatives from the Department of Tourism and few people from Kiangan and Banaue, Ifugao had a ground breaking ceremony in Banaue, Ifugao for the establishment of a Tuw ali Ifugao Village Museum (TIV). This village was envisioned to serve as a "living museum" that will make the visitors /tourists experience the authentic Ifugao life with the locals serving as the guide through the Ifugao rituals that will be presented in the village. It was designed to host the School of Living Traditions, which was established by NCCA to teach the arts and crafts of the Ifugao people directly from the Ifugao artists and craftsmen. As an added attraction and for

tourism convenience a craft shop and the tourism office of the province will be constructed here.

The most notable thing on the whole plan, how ever, was a proposition to transfer the lfugao Museum (IM), also know n as the Kiangan Museum from Linda, Poblacion in Kiangan, Ifugao to the Tuw ali Ifugao Village in Banaue. Kiangan, Ifugao is located more than 50 KMS east of Banaue. When the people of Kiangan heard about this proposal they made know n their strong objection based on the follow ing grounds, to wit:

- Most of the collections in the Ifugao Museum came from the people of Kiangan. These collections are authentic pieces that were used in some of their rituals and part of a family heirloom. They believe that taking all of these away from their community will separate them from what links them to their ancestors.
- 2. The intended transfer was premised on the fact that the IM building has deteriorated. The deterioration was allegedly due to the lack of budget to maintain the IM. Finding a legal basis on the General Guidelines of the Proponents Guide to Culture and Arts Projects of NCCA, section 5.1b which state that "no grants shall be made for construction or other infrastructure, equipment, or acquisition of objects for museum, library and archival purposes", the people from Kiangan and some cultural groups outside the Ifugao community questioned the logic behind such move. Indeed, it is simply illogical to state that the government has no money, then set up a new museum wherein it will spend more for its construction instead of using the budget intended for such plan for the maintenance and development of an already existing community museum.
- 3. The said one-hectare land allegedly donated by Limangan family of Banaue to be used as the "village" was not actually donated. Contrary to such claim the land will be leased to the government for 25 years and according to reliable reports this property is still under dispute by the family members of the Limangan family.

From all the foregoing, it is safe to conclude that there was really no study and public consultation undertaken for this project for if there was really no study and public have been resolved. I believe that for a project of this kind to be successful and effective all problematic issues must be looked into and answered immediately. This is all reflective of a good management style that I think is lacking in these government cultural agencies involved in the project. In the end, the Tuw ali Ifugao Village project was put on hold - probably dead in the water.

### IFUGAO MUSEUM

The Ifugao Museum also known as the Kiangan Museum stands in the historic Philippine Veterans Administration Office (PVAO) compound facing the Philippine War Memorial Shrine. The Ifugao Museum collections consist purely of Ifugao ethnographic materials acquired by the National Museum through researches undertaken in the area, through purchase, and by the donations of civic-spirited citizens of Ifugao.

As a community museum, the Ifugao Museum enhances the natural and cultural heritage of the community where it exists. It accumulates information on socio-cultural and environmental heritage of the Ifugao. It interprets the cultural identity and natural environment of its people and communicating all of these to the wider public especially those not within this particular community through its permanent exhibit.

One of the most important responsibilities of a community museum is to operate according to the expectations, requirements, resources and situation of its area. Its focus

should not only be for the benefit and enjoyment of the tourists coming in the museum but also in the community's own agenda of preserving the overall identity that belongs to its people.

Community museums are integral parts of the historic dimension of the human personality and hence of the communities to which humanity belongs. A community museum promotes a common memory of the humanity's pedigree, of a common ideal – a *weltanschauung* that more than a common blood make a nation.

The Ifugao Museum is the house of an indigenous Filipino culture. It preserves the life and history of the Ifugaos who are known for carving the rice terraces along the slopes of their mountains. The importance of preserving the cultural heritage of this indigenous group is that they can give certain perspective and spirit to the prevailing nationalism in our country. The Ifugao is part of that puzzle that defines and identifies the Filipino-ness of our people.

#### National Museum of the Philippines

The National Museum of the Philippines (NM / Museum), particularly the Archaeological Sites and Branch Museum Division (ASBMD)manages the Ifugao Museum as part of the agenda of bringing museum services closer to the grassroots levels.

The NM initially started with a group of twelve (12) sites and branch museums in 1981. Today, how ever, this institution has under its care twenty one (21) sites and branch museums nationwide. This increase in the number of branch museum and the clamor for a stronger, centralized control system in the management of the existing sites and branch museums located in different parts of the country prompted the enactment of Republic Act 4846 also know n as "The Cultural Properties Preservation and Protection Act." Aside from guaranteeing the site's world class exhibits and properly maintained facilities, the ASBMD also keeps a close w atch over the important collections on display and to promote the site or the museum so that the ultimate benefit of sharing valuable cultural and historical findings to all the Filipino people is realized (A Voyage of 100 Years, 28).

The National Museum of the Philippines has just celebrated its centennial anniversary last October 29, 2001. In spite of the grandiose celebration, how ever the government cannot deny the present problematic situation of the Museum that is clearly presented in its 2001 and 2002 annual report. Every aspect of the Museum like the administration, which includes in particular personnel management, the marketing and public relations management, collections management, education and public programs has suffered unprecedented setbacks indicative of the declining performance of the Museum. Of those affected by the current situation, the management of its 22 branch museums nationw ide risks the greatest chance of being prejudiced.

The economic recession being experienced by the Philippines at present could be considered as the root factor behind the poor performance of its cultural institutions. Being classified as one of the countries in the Third World, helping these cultural institutions is the least priority of the Philippine government. Poverty alleviation naturally comes first.

On February 12, 1998, Republic Act No. 8492, know n as "The National Museum Act of 1998" w as passed into law, establishing a National Museum System, providing for its permanent home and for other purposes. The significance of this law lies in the fact of making the National Museum an independent institution detached from the then Department of Education, Culture and Sports (now Department of Education) and placing directly under the Office of the President solely for budgetary purposes. At present, through Executive Order No. 80 of former Pres. Joseph Estrada, the administrative supervision of the National Museum w as transferred from the Office of the President to the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

The National Museum has been mandated by law firstly, to preserve and develop and act as an official repository of its cultural heritage; and secondly, to inculcate aw areness, pride and nationalism among the people through its diverse activities covering the scientific, educational and cultural fields.

The National Museum is governed by a Board of Trustees (BOT) whose primary task is to see through the proper administration of the NM for the benefit of the public. From the law's point of view, a trust is a fiduciary relationship, whereby a party know n as trustee holds property that must be administered for the benefit of others, who are know n as beneficiaries (Malaro 1994,8), in this case the Filipino people. The Board is also the one responsible for the creation and adoption of programs and policies of the institution and is the most pow erful decision-making body with regards to all matters concerning the management of the National Museum. The law demands of a trustee a *duty to care, a duty of loyalty and a duty of obedience.* A *duty to care* requires the trustee to adhere to a certain level of diligence w hen carrying out trust duties. The *duty of loyalty* requires faithful pursuit of the purposes of the truth rather than pursuit of personal interests of

non-beneficiaries. The duty of obedience requires fidelity to the terms of the trust (Malaro 1994, 3).

The BOT of the National Museum is composed of eleven members with the former Director of the Museum as *ex-oficio* member. Its composition consists of the Chairman of the Committees on Education of the Senate and House of Representatives, the Chairperson of NCCA and seven representatives from private sector. Of the seven representatives from the private sector, there shall be included one distinguished Filipino Artist, one distinguished Filipino Scientist and one distinguished Filipino historian. The private sector representative shall be selected on the basis of their demonstrated interest in and commitment to arts and culture (Section 8 RA 8492). The Chairman of the Board and of the private sector representatives are appointed by the President of the Philippines w ho is the Museum's Honorary Chairman and Patron.

The Director of the Museum is the one in-charge of the over-all operations of the Museum and implement the policies set by the BOT and the programs approved by it. The two most important qualification of the w ould be director of the Museum are its proven track record of competent administration and know ledge on museum management. With regards to supervision over Regional and/or branch museum, as what actually this paper is all about, the Director of the Museum, through the Assistant Director shall have full supervision over regional museums and their personnel. Museum branches with ten or more personnel and/or high property accountability on cultural value shall be upgraded to regional museums upon recommendation of the Director of the Museum. The regional museum shall serve as an information and cultural centers offering comprehensive and substantial collection of local archaeological finds, objects of art and other local cultural treasures (Section 16, RA 8492).

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When I attended the House of Representatives Committee Hearing on Budget for NCCA and its affiliated agencies, wherein the NM is one of them, last November 2002, the Director of the Museum presented a report on the Museums expenditures in 2001 [Kindipan F2.doc] and a comparative breakdow n of income from 1999- 2002 [Kindipan F3.doc] and the highlights of Fiscal Year (FY) 2003 Budget Proposal "*as recommended by the President*" (as their initial proposal to the Department of Budget Management (DBM) in last May 2002 w as haggled to be a –0.24% decrease from what they actually needed) [Kindipan F4.doc].

(Currency exchange rate as of May 2003): 1 euro = Php58.00 / \$1 = Php 52.00+)

According to the Director's report, from the original Php 311, 196,000.00 budget proposal submitted to DBM last 03 May 2002, the DBM recommended for approval by the President, the amount of Php 109,679,000.00 only which is -0.24% low er than that of FY 2002 or the equivalent of Php 268,000.00. Very minimal decrease of 0.41% or equivalent to Php 229,000 in Personal Services is attributed to the exclusion of Terminal Leave Benefits for compulsory retirees from the regular requirements, but have been incorporated in a separate Special Purpose Fund of the DBM (NM Budget Estimates,2003). The 11.69% increase in the Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses is largely attributed to Water/Pow er/Illumination in w hich an additional amount of Php 5,000,000.00 w as pumped in to the current year's allotment of P16,470,000.00, thus, making the allotment for electricity and w ater in the amount of Php 21, 470,000.00. Moreover, a minimal increase of Php 147,000.00 is also reflected on Other Expenses. None is allocated for the Capital Outlay for FY 2003, thus, incurring a 100% difference/reduction as compared to FY 2002 budget level. A total of Php 5, 210,000.00 has been slashed from the Agency's Annual Budget, thus, **freezing temporarily all projects on Buildings and Structures im provements and the acquisition of new equipment** (NM Budget Estimates, 2003). Capital Outlay covers rehabilitation, refurbishment, maintenance and preservation of the branch and regional museums.

For the Retirement and Life Insurance Premium (RLIP), a very minimal percentage of 0.48% increase has been granted to augment the additional RLIP of promoted and new ly-hired personnel. Although not an earning institution, the National Museum was able to raise their total collections to Php 2,562,601.00 through its Museum of the Filipino People, Planetarium, Cultural Properties, Arts, Botany and Zoology Divisions (NM Budget Estimates,2003). This earning serve as a revolving fund of the Museum to answ er some of its expenses that cannot be covered by their very minimal budget.

It is not surprising thus if the mother institution of IM, i.e. the National Museum is going through a difficult stage of survival, the branch museums alw ays take the backseat waiting for dole-outs to subsist from the Museum.

On assessing the facts just presented concerning the lifeblood of a cultural institution which is its budget, we now have a clear picture of why the National Museum is undergoing this kind of retrogradation that affects its management functions over branch museums. The Philippine government cannot give enough assistance to its cultural institutions for the sole reason of lack of money to purvey.

Majority of the Filipinos believe that the country's economy has worsened compared to last year. The nationwide survey conducted by IBON Foundation, Inc.(IBON 2002) last

July 11-28, 2002, show ed a majority of respondents, 88.56%, saying the state of the economy has either deteriorated or has show n no signs of improvement. The survey also shows that most Filipinos (59.86%) believe their family income is not enough. This corresponds with recent IBON studies stating that majority of Filipino families do not earn enough to make ends meet. The study compared IBON estimates of the daily cost of living – Php 434.67.00, with the daily minimum w age of Php 209.24 w hich also shows that nearly 77% of Filipinos or 13.4 million families are poor.

As of April 2002, as the required daily cost of living for every Filipino family of six is Php 434.67, the purchasing pow er of peso is equivalent only to 0.61 centavos (Vital Stats, 2002). This means that a Filipino w orker should at least earn Php 800+ a day to meet the basic needs of his/her family.

The impact of the crisis has translated into a more social unrest because of widespread poverty, loss of jobs and livelihood and economic and physical displacement of the people. Violent confrontations during strikes and human rights violation against workers also remained intense. If this kind of economic problem continues, it will surely result to a bigger insurgency problem that will surely worsen the Philippines' socio-economic condition.

Given the parameters of lack of funding and financial assistance, how can the lfugao Museum continue to fulfill its important tasks for the Filipino community and to the humanity as well?

### The Proposed Plan

When I am doing this research I was faced with the harsh reality that changes within the Museum system can not be done as immediate as it should be. It was a century long problem that is entangled into the web of a more complex societal issues and economic problems.

By analyzing every aspect that affects the management or mismanagement of branch museums, I come up with this preliminary plan to be applied to the management style of the Ifugao Museum. This plan will still be put under further studies as this research is still ongoing.

First of all, the Ifugao Museum will still abide by the provisions of NM Act of 1998 or RA 8492, being a branch museum of the National Museum, except that it will be a semiindependent museum in terms of allocation of its own funding for day to day operations, activities, projects and building rehabilitation. Its terms of reference will be partly base on what is stated in Article XIV Section 17 of the Philippine Constitution that, " the State shall recognize, respect and protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions and institutions. "

This Plan envisions a more systematic management style and a sustainable development program for the Ifugao Museum. It involves such strategies as :

- Netw orking with concerned government or non-government organizations and private sectors, local or international for the appropriation of endow ment fund for lfugao Museum.
- Encouragement of the local government's support in terms of manpow er, counterdisaster planning and security assistance.

- Encouragement of community support for cultural and artistic activities of the Ifugao Museum.
- 4. Coordination with the academic sector of the community to strengthen the indigenous arts and cultural education in all levels of the school system in the province and for the conduct of research and studies on cultural and historical traditions of lfugao.

This Plan will undergo three stages of development :

1. <u>Institutional Strengthening Stage</u> (working period of 2 years)

a. construction of laws/charter of the lfugao Museum as a semi-independent branch

museum from the National Museum.

b. Sourcing of financial support for the endow ment fund of IM

c. hiring and training of new museum staff of IM by the National Museum in accordance with w hat is stated in Section 14<sup>1</sup> of RA 8492

d. meeting with the academic community, local government unit and local art and cultural groups of lfugao to encourage support and coordination.

- 2. Infrastructure and Collections Management Stage (working period of 2 years)
- a. risk assessment on building
- b. building rehabilitation
- c. counter disaster management planning

d. collections management that involves cataloguing, making of a condition report on every collections and the immediate application of solutions to damaged collections.

e. formulation of housekeeping rules for Ifugao Museum.

f. rearranging of the Ifugao Museum area to include a mini-library and a museum shop

- 3. <u>Program / Activities Planning Stage</u> (working period of 1 year)
- a. planning of exhibit, lectures, forum and other in-house activities of the lfugao Museum

b. conducting of researches and studies on contemporary lfugao cultural life and traditions

c. publications of museum catalogue, postcards, reproductions and other cultural items to be sold at the museum shop.

This whole plan will be best describe by the diagram **Kindipan F5.doc**.

Base on the diagram, the National Museum will be retained as the primary institution that will manage the Ifugao Museum. It will be the one tasks in assigning and hiring people to be the curator of IM. They will train the new IM staff for curatorship that involves collections management, exhibit planning, marketing and educational programs. The objective of this training is to ensure that the new museum staff , especially the curator have the necessary skills and know ledge to perform their job effectively. Its purpose is to develop the skills, know ledge and attitudes of the employees tow ards their full dedication to this important job. This need for training can arise not only upon recruitment of new museum staff but most importantly when there is an observed and/or anticipated shortfall betw een actual performance and desired performance of the employees of the museum. The NM will also be the one responsible for the conservation and preservation of the artifacts inside IM having with them the laboratories, facilities and trained personnel to doe the job. They will also provide the salary for the curator and its promotion as provided in Section  $27^2$  of RA 8492.

The Municipal Government of Kiangan, Ifugao will also be cooperating to the system. They will provide the people to act as utility personnel, security guards, nominate somebody from the community to be the curator (but the decision on this will still be base on the prerogative of NM), coordinate the museum with the local disaster team for the disaster management planning of the museum.

My idea of involving the people from the local community is not only base on their concern for the preservation of their cultural heritage but mainly on their accessibility to the place . As much as possible also, the will be assistant curator must also come from the community. This assistant curator could be students from secondary schools in the community. IM will have an agreement will local schools to put basic museum curatorship in one of their electives. The curator that was trained by NM will be the one who will train these students. Its like shooting two birds with one stone- having a volunteer service in the museum to help the curator in managing the collections and setting up special projects and/or activities for the museum; and second, it is one way of making this young generation be aw are to the importance of preserving their cultural heritage through museum work.

From the provincial government comes the salary for security personnel and utility workers. This will be taken from the local government unit's fund that will be coming from the budget appropriated for the provincial government.

The NCCA will be the first agency to be tapped in seeking for the source of the endow ment fund for IM. The endow ment fund will be use for the activities and special projects of the museum like, exhibits, lecture, forum, research and building maintenance. The NCCA was created by RA 7356<sup>3</sup> in April 1992 and given the mandate to develop, promote and preserve Filipino culture and arts through the formulation of policies in coordination with affiliated private and public cultural agencies. I decided to tapped this institution first because it is the one that coordinates the programs of the cultural

agencies og government and administers the National Endow ment Fund for Culture and the Arts (NEFCA) which was established to support art and culture programs and activities throughout the country.

Wherever the Endow ment Fund of IM be allocated, the granting institution or agency will still manage the step by step releasing of fund upon written request by the curator of IM. There will be a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the National Museum, Ifugao Museum, the Municipal Government of Kiangan, the Provincial Government of Ifugao and the Funding institution that will provide the endow ment fund of IM to ensure the commitment of each body to one another.

As what I clarified in the first part of this preliminary plan that IM will still abide by the provisions in RA 8492, it will then still benefit from the regular operating budget provided by the National Museum to its branch museums. This includes operational costs such as the acquisition of collection materials, and the procurement of equipment and supplies of the museum. It should be clarified also that all donations and bequests to IM from the private sector will be exempt from any and all taxes as stipulated in Section 25 (Exemption from Taxes) of RA 8492. As the source of its day to day operation expenses, IM will appropriate their budget for this from the proceeds of the sales of reproductions, publications, cultural items produce by the local community and the charging of admission fees. Since 1984, IM do not charge admission fees to its visitors. This time it will be of great help to the museum to have these sources of funding to act as the revolving fund of IM for its day-to-day operational expenses. But it should be noted that all income of IM will be clearly put on record and attached to their annual report to the National Museum, this is of course to avoid the possible graft and corruption that might occur in this new kind of system. Charging of admission fees in IM will not go against the

moral thrust of NM as this is also stipulated in Section 33<sup>4</sup> of RA 8492. This issue of charging admission fees and other income generating activities/projects of the lfugao Museum may be a political one and not alw ays susceptible to rational argument. It should be clarified that any profits derived from these sources could help improve the facility and service of this community museum. Generating income is not the main concern of the lfugao Museum nor of the other branch museum of NM, but to survive to the present cost-conscious environment of the Philippines and to the stiff competition for visitor /audience attention among entertainment centers and amusement parks, these community museums should restructure its management style to fit in this kind of scenario. General policies on evaluation of fees and charges should be adopted together with the assurance that the services that these branch museums will provide is of high quality and will give intellectual satisfaction to its visitors.

#### Conclusion

The making of this plan was based on the assessment of the past performance of the lfugao Museum by way of a SWOT analysis (Griffits, 1994, p. 235) or the **strengths**, **weaknesses**, **opportunities and threats** of its structure. The strength of IM is its authentic collections and the presence of the community that still use and produce this material culture. Weaknesses covers the lack of budget, lack of trained curator, poor building, high risks facilities, and mismanagement of collections. Opportunities can be seen in possible expansion of the museum and the coordination of the local community in museum activities and projects, while threats may well come from competition and lack of finance.

I admit that the realization of these plan will not be as easy as it looks. I allow ed a period of 5 years for all of these to fully materialized. As of now my stature as a

researcher of Ifugao culture and a museum studies graduate student will be my capital to put all of these into thorough study and analysis. It would take quite a long time before everything settles on its own place. But there's no harm in trying anyway. Instead of just sitting down and watching the slow deterioration of IM or any other community museums, why not taking chances. I consider the clamour that was created from the threat of closing down the IM in Kiangan to be transferred to Banaue as a good sign that these people still have concern for their museum. It just need to be cultivated by a sincere effort to help them help their local community museum.

We only need to harness the participation of the different sectors of the lfugao community and of the other cultural agencies of the Philippines to see the realization of this plan. A rigorous, multi-sectoral effort towards the preservation and promotion of our indigenous cultural heritage will lead to a well-developed general consciousness that we Filipinos belong to a national community that share a common heritage and passion for the sustentation of our country's patrimony towards the betterment of our socio-cultural-economic life .

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undertake training and development programs to upgrade the capabilities of the

Museum personnel in the various functions of the Museum.

<sup>2</sup> RA 8492, Section 27. - Merit System; Salaries ; Annual Report of Salaries

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>RA 8492, Section 14. <u>Personnel Training and Development</u> - The Museum shall

<sup>3</sup> RA 7356, An Act Creating the National Commission for Culture and the Arts establishing a National Endow ment Fund for Culture and the Arts and for other purposes. April 3, 1992.

<sup>4</sup> RA 8492, Section 33. The National Museum shall be allow ed to charge admission fees.



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## National Museum Actual Expenditures FY 2001 (in thousand Pesos)

Particulars	Actual Releases	Obligations Incurred	Balance	% of Utilization
Personal Services	53, 743	53,652	91	100%
Maintenance and Other Operating	32,541	32,541	-	100%
Expenses				
Capital Outlay	-	-	-	0%
Equipment Outlay	1,992	1,891	101	95%
Building and Structures Outlay	4,941	5,032	(91)	102%
Retirement and Life Insurance Premium				
Continuing Appropriations – RA 8754	870	841	(29)	97%
Equipment Outlay	1,632	1,632	-	100%
Building and Structures Outlay				
TOTAL	95,719	95,589	130	100%

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National Museum Comparative Breakdown of Income FY 1999-2002 (in thousand pesos)

Description	1999	2000	2001	As of June 30 2002
Entrance Fees – Museum of the Filipino People	301,078	3,614,660	3,558,000	1,473,915
Film Show ing-Planetarium	1,922,280	2,229,200	1,770,000	587,860
Cultural Property (PD 374)	265,908	236,167	246,000	227,490
Authentication of Paintings – Arts	508,130	736,650	501,000	158,850
Interest Deposits with				
Government Banks	9,540	37,656	-	-
Miscellanous Income	120,307	209,985	65,000	6,436
Others	35,079	67,343	143,000	108,050
TOTAL	3,162,322	7,131,661	6,283,000	2, 562,601

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National Museum Highlights of FY 2003 Budget Proposal (in thousand Pesos)

Particulars	FY 2002	FY 2003	Increase/ (Decrease)	%
Personal Services	55,695	55,466	(299)	-0.41
Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses	44,022	49,169	5,147	11.69
Capital Outlay Equipment Outlay Buildings and Structures	2,510 2,700	0 0	(2,510) (2,700)	-100 -100
Retirement and Life Insurance Premium	5,020	5,044	24	0.48
TOTAL	109,947	109,679	(268)	- 0.24

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Ifugao Museum Management Plan

