

NAME OF THE ELEMENT: THE RICH TAPESTRY OF SEFWI TRADITIONAL MUSIC AND DANCE;
“SEFWI SKAB 4” TRADITIONAL MUSIC

DOMAIN: ORAL TRADITIONS AND EXPRESSIONS

COMMUNITY: SEFWI ASAWINSO

REGION: WESTERN NORTH REGION

DESCRIPTION: The Sefwi traditional music and dance, encapsulated by the vibrant performances of the SKAB 4 Cultural Troupe in Sefwi Asawinso, is a captivating expression of intangible cultural heritage (ICH). Rooted in call-and-response traditions, the performances feature a dynamic interplay of instruments, such as the dawuro (Banana Bell), Akasa (Malakas), Ngyegyeho (Gyimbie), Adedema, Kwadum and Ajax drum. The dancers, guided by lyrics sung in the Sefwi language, perform partner dances reflecting a fusion of Osode, Adowa, Kpkalogo, Bosoae, and other styles. Social songs on themes like marriage and relationships dominate, promoting the Sefwi language while incorporating others for broader understanding.

The SKAB 4 Cultural Troupe comprises members aged 12 to 65, embodying gender diversity and even including a physically challenged individuals. Beyond the performers, the community involvement extends to traditional drum makers, blacksmiths, costume makers, and instrument dealers, all contributing to the cultural richness. The languages involved, including Sefwi, Twi, Ga, and Ewe, further highlight the diversity embedded in this cultural practice.

However, this cultural treasure faces threats to its continuity. Challenges include the encroachment of sound systems and live band music, logistical difficulties in rehearsals due to members' dispersed residences, and potential damage to instruments during performances. The transmission of this heritage faces hurdles, with issues such as the lack of interest among the youth and the challenge of training individuals without inherent talents.

Despite these threats, tangible elements like traditional drum and costume making remain viable, meeting the demand of various performing groups and traditional authorities. Festivals and traditional ceremonies in Sefwi continue, providing relevance and sustainability to practitioners. Safeguarding measures include training members in drum repair and dance forms. Relating to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Sefwi traditional music and dance aligns with SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequality), and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). These connections emphasize the socio-economic and cultural importance of preserving and promoting such intangible cultural heritage.

In conclusion, the performing arts of Sefwi traditional music and dance embody a rich cultural heritage, interwoven with community diversity. While facing threats, the commitment to safeguarding measures and alignment with SDGs underscores the importance of preserving this vibrant tradition for current and future generations.

Consent: SEFWI ASAWINSO

Submitted by: National Folklore Board