

## Protecting She Ethnic Minority Sports: Challenges and Strategies in Intangible Cultural Heritage

Yonghong Guo

Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia & Lishui University, China  
Email: P20212002967@siswa.upsi.edu.my

Zulakbal Abd Karim

Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia  
Corresponding Author Email: zulakbal@fsskj.upsi.edu.my

Naila Nazar

Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia  
Email: nailanazar2015@gmail.com

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### Abstract

Preserving the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) of sports among the She ethnic minority in China confronts substantial hurdles amidst modernization, globalization, and shifting generational interests. The absence of formal documentation and official recognition, coupled with inadequate integration into educational curricula and extracurricular activities, impedes the effective dissemination and preservation of these traditional She sports. Addressing this challenge requires a comprehensive understanding of the specific barriers faced by the She ethnic minority, as well as the formulation of targeted strategies to overcome them, ensuring the continued vitality and transmission of their sporting heritage. The research purpose are addressing challenges and developing strategies in intangible cultural heritage. This research utilized a library-based research method, focusing on academic journal articles. The research findings highlight a range of challenges and corresponding strategies concerning the preservation of intangible cultural heritage within the She ethnic minority community. These challenges encompass the preservation of She sports heritage, intergenerational inheritance difficulties in traditional sports, and the need to bridge generational divides. To address these challenges, proposed strategies include integrating She sports into educational curricula and extracurricular activities effectively, leveraging advanced technologies for preservation efforts, and fostering a deeper understanding of the cultural and social significance of She sports within the broader community. In conclusion, addressing

challenges and implementing effective strategies for preserving She ethnic minority sports heritage is crucial for cultural preservation. This research underscores the importance of culturally sensitive approaches to heritage preservation and highlights the potential for cross-cultural collaboration in global heritage conservation efforts. Recommendations include integrating She sports heritage into educational curricula, leveraging technology for preservation, and fostering greater awareness of cultural significance through community engagement.

**Keywords:** Intangible Cultural Heritage, She Ethnic Minority Sports

### **Introduction**

Protecting the intangible cultural heritage of the She ethnic minority's sports presents a multifaceted challenge requiring nuanced strategies. Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) encompasses the rich tapestry of traditions, knowledge, and expressions passed down through generations. Among these, She Ethnic Minority Sports stand as vibrant reflections of their unique cultural identity, encompassing traditional games, dances, and physical expressions. However, safeguarding these practices presents distinct challenges, including the risk of cultural erosion and the need for inclusive preservation efforts (Donggang, 2021; Katelieva et al., 2020, Jiayi, 2022). This introduction examines the complexities of protecting She Ethnic Minority Sports within the broader context of ICH, exploring the challenges and strategies essential for their conservation and promotion.

### ***Intangible Cultural Heritage***

Intangible cultural heritage comprises essential traditions that shape cultural identity, transmitted orally or through direct experience. She Ethnic Minority Sports include specific traditional games, dances, and physical activities crucial for preserving their cultural identity. The domain of sports intangible cultural heritage is a vital aspect of China's broader intangible cultural heritage, epitomizing the nation's rich traditional sports culture. Recent research has delved into various facets of this heritage, including how it meshes with national fitness initiatives, the methods through which traditional sports culture is transmitted, and its significant role in shaping policy and cultural identity. An insightful visual analysis highlights sports intangible cultural heritage as a burgeoning research area, pinpointing the latest trends and hotspots within this field (Haozhuo, 2023; Ming, 2020; Katharina, 2018).

The Chinese government has established a comprehensive legislative and policy framework to safeguard intangible cultural heritage (ICH), which includes traditional sports culture. This framework, developed over decades, aims to protect, preserve, and revitalize various aspects of China's rich cultural heritage. Key legislative efforts include the protection of Traditional Chinese Medicine varieties since 1993, the adoption of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Physical Culture and Sports in 1995, and the Regulations on the Protection of Traditional Arts and Crafts in 1997. These laws encourage the recognition of traditional sports culture and establish a foundational framework for identifying, documenting, and protecting traditional craftsmanship, including both intangible and tangible cultural heritage. ICH have been integrated into the international framework, particularly after China joined the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2004. The State Council issued foundational documents in 2005, systematically defining the background, principles, objectives, mechanisms, and structures for safeguarding and developing ICH practices in China. These documents clarified that the protection and rescue of ICH is a national priority, marking a significant step in China's efforts to protect its cultural

heritage (Haozhuo, 2023; Yawen et al., 2022; Rui, 2023). The protection of sports-related intangible cultural heritage aims to solve issues in traditional sports education by clarifying government responsibilities, regulating protective measures, and establishing evaluation standards. This approach seeks to standardize sports ICH protection, enrich the protection system, and promote the sustainable development of sports ICH. The inclusion of sports ICH in educational settings, particularly in physical education (PE) curricula, is seen as an effective method to foster interest in traditional sports, helping students master sports ICH skills and contributing to the preservation and continuation of national culture. These policies and legislative efforts underscore the Chinese government's commitment to preserving its cultural heritage, including traditional sports, by integrating them into modern educational frameworks and ensuring their continued relevance and vitality for future generations.

The integration of intangible cultural heritage education within campus sports has made progress, yet it falls significantly short when compared to the anticipated goals. Research indicates that despite initial achievements in promoting intangible cultural heritage education, these accomplishments are still far from meeting set objectives. Further analysis of educational practices highlights existing issues, particularly the lack of diversity in teaching methods and content. This deficiency prevents effectively addressing the needs of students at different educational stages, thereby impacting the effective transmission of intangible cultural heritage. From the perspective of network building, the importance of protecting intangible cultural heritage through education is discussed, along with profound insights on how to tackle these systemic issues. By synthesizing these studies, the challenges faced in integrating intangible cultural heritage education within campus sports are clearly revealed, along with corresponding improvement strategies. These offer significant guidance for future research and practice.

These impediments suggest that the amalgamation of sports intangible cultural heritage into scholastic curricula has not been successfully integrated with extracurricular sports activities. The prevailing comprehension of how to efficaciously merge these elements is still in an embryonic stage, culminating in a superficial fusion rather than a substantive integration. This deficiency in effective amalgamation hinders the attainment of the established objectives for physical intangible cultural heritage education in educational settings. Furthermore, it underscores a delay in theoretical research within this domain, which is crucial for proficiently directing the practical facets of propagating sports intangible cultural heritage in the context of school sports (Katharina, 2018).

The preservation of She Ethnic Minority Sports is vital for cultural identity. Despite legislative efforts and integration attempts in educational settings, challenges persist in effectively incorporating intangible cultural heritage education into sports curricula. Continued research and strategic improvements are needed for successful preservation and propagation.

### ***She Ethnic Minority Sports***

The sports culture of the She ethnic minority is rich and diverse, encompassing traditional activities that reflect their heritage. It includes unique games, dances, and physical expressions deeply intertwined with their cultural identity. Fangyuan (2023) delve into the intricate realm of traditional sports culture and material design characteristics among the She nationality within the field of Design. Researcher's work underscores the profound connection between the physical expressions of She sports and their cultural, societal, and existential significances. Collectively, these studies elucidate the pivotal role of She ethnic minority sports

not only in enhancing physical aptitude and athletic prowess but also in fostering a sense of nationalistic fervor and bequeathing cultural and social benefits to succeeding generations. The elevated status accorded to these activities by both the political establishment and the nation underscores their importance. As such, the research concerning

She nationality sports in China whether approached through practical efforts of retrieval, curation, and safeguarding of indigenous sports traditions or through theoretical examinations of their characteristics and developmental trajectories holds profound significance. The folk sports paradigm characteristic of the She nationality in China is portrayed as having a lengthy historical continuum and a broad typological diversity. The intricacies of preserving sports intangible cultural heritage through the lens of spatial information technology, set against the backdrop of the rapidly evolving Internet of Things (IoT) landscape. This research underscores the stringent demands for precision and efficacy in the methods employed to safeguard these cultural treasures. Sun's analysis foregrounds the pivotal role that advanced technological frameworks play in enhancing the strategies for the management and protection of intangible cultural heritage, thereby ensuring its transmission to future generations with integrity and authenticity (Jiaxi, 2022).

The sports culture of the She ethnic minority stands as a testament to the richness and diversity of their heritage, encompassing unique games, dances, and physical expressions deeply ingrained in their cultural identity. Fangyuan (2023) have meticulously explored this intricate realm within the field of Design, shedding light on the classification, origins, and representative design features of She nationality traditional sports projects. Their research underscores the profound connection between She sports and their cultural, societal, and existential significances, highlighting their role in fostering nationalistic fervor and imparting cultural and social benefits to future generations.

### ***Protecting She Ethnic Minority Sports***

Protecting the sports heritage of the She ethnic minority is imperative for preserving their cultural identity and fostering intergenerational continuity. This endeavor involves safeguarding traditional games, dances, and physical expressions unique to the She nationality. This section highlights the significance of preserving She sports within the broader context of cultural heritage conservation. Katelieva et al (2020) delves into the broader context of intangible cultural heritage, including its safeguarding and utilization in tourism.

Katharina (2018); Haozhuo (2023) explores the protection of intangible cultural heritage in China, with a specific focus on the safeguarding of traditional martial arts over the last three decades. guide on preserving the world's intangible cultural heritage, emphasizing the importance of mutual respect among diverse cultures. The necessity of engaging communities in preserving their cultural practices, from oral traditions to festive events, stressing the need for an inclusive approach that celebrates cultural diversity. The challenges of integrating modern technologies with traditional practices, suggesting that digital tools can both threaten and enhance cultural preservation. Researchers advocates for collaborative efforts between governments, cultural organizations, and communities to establish effective policies for safeguarding intangible heritage, ensuring its survival for future generations. This work is a crucial resource for anyone involved in cultural preservation, offering practical strategies to protect the rich tapestry of human creativity and diversity.

Sports intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in China underscores the efforts to preserve and promote traditional sports as a vital part of the nation's cultural legacy. With a legislative and policy framework in place, the Chinese government aims to integrate traditional sports into

educational settings, thereby fostering national identity and cultural continuity. However, challenges in effectively incorporating sports ICH into educational curricula highlight the need for more diverse teaching methods and content. The significance of traditional sports, particularly for ethnic minorities such as the She nationality, emphasizes their role in enhancing physical health, national pride, and cultural benefits. Advances in technology, such as spatial information technology and the Internet of Things (IoT), offer new avenues for safeguarding and managing sports ICH. Despite progress, the need for improved integration strategies and broader engagement in preserving these cultural practices remains a crucial area for future research and policy development.

Safeguarding the sports heritage of the She ethnic minority is crucial for preserving their cultural identity and ensuring intergenerational continuity. Efforts include protecting traditional games, dances, and physical expressions unique to the She nationality. Collaboration between governments, cultural organizations, and communities is essential for effective policy development and cultural preservation.

### **Challenges in Intangible Cultural Heritage**

Addressing challenges in intangible cultural heritage preservation is crucial, encompassing the protection of She Sports Heritage and overcoming intergenerational inheritance obstacles within She minority traditional sports. Bridging the generational divide is imperative for ensuring the continuity and vitality of these cultural practices.

The challenge lies in effectively preserving She Sports Heritage, ensuring its protection and continuity amidst evolving cultural landscapes, while safeguarding its authenticity and significance for future generations (Donggang, 2021). The intergenerational inheritance challenges of She minority traditional sports involve ensuring the transmission of these practices across generations while navigating societal changes and evolving cultural dynamics (Minling, 2021). Bridging the generational divide involves fostering understanding and collaboration between different age groups to ensure the continuity and preservation of cultural traditions, including She minority traditional sports.

#### **(i) Challenge and Protection She Sports Heritage**

The preservation of She ethnic minority sports within China a critical element of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) is imperiled by the swift currents of modernization, globalization, and evolving generational interests. These forces not only threaten the physical practice of these unique sports and games but also risk diminishing the cultural identity and heritage they embody. As China's economic development propels integration into the global community, traditional lifestyles face increasing threats. The encroachment of global or mainstream practices often leads to a cultural homogenization, overshadowing local traditions and diminishing the transmission of knowledge about She sports to younger generations, who may favor global sports icons over local traditions. In this context, Donggang (2021) discusses the opportunities and challenges of safeguarding ICH in an ethnic theme park in China, highlighting the importance of including the ethnic minority group in the safeguarding process to ensure effective transmission to younger generations. This inclusion is vital in mitigating the impact of modernization and globalization on the preservation of ethnic minority sports, offering a model for how to balance traditional heritage with the pressures of contemporary society.

**(ii) *Intergenerational Inheritance Challenges of She Minority Traditional Sports***

The intergenerational inheritance challenges of She minority traditional sports involve ensuring the transmission of these practices across generations amidst evolving societal dynamics and changing cultural preferences. The preservation and active transmission of She ethnic minority sports are not just about maintaining physical activities but are deeply intertwined with the safeguarding of cultural identity and heritage. As recent studies suggest, the intersection of physical education and cultural heritage offers a promising avenue for engaging youth and ensuring the continuity of these traditions. For instance, Wenjie and Kerun (2023) emphasizes the profound cultural heritage embedded in the traditional sports of ethnic minorities, advocating for their integration into physical education to spark interest and facilitate the inheritance of these cultural practices. Moreover, Yawen et al. (2022) underscores the positive impact of including ethnic sports in school curricula on students' physical fitness and cultural identity. Their findings advocate for the educational system to embrace ethnic sports as a means of promoting cultural identity among minority students, thus contributing to the broader goal of cultural preservation and inheritance. These insights highlight the critical role of education in the preservation of She ethnic minority sports. By embedding these sports within educational curricula and community practices, there's an opportunity to address the challenges of formal documentation and recognition, thereby ensuring these sports not only survive but thrive, enriching future generations with the rich cultural tapestry of the She ethnic minority. Furthermore, the lack of formal documentation and recognition of She sports compounds these challenges. Comprehensive records of rules, techniques, and cultural significance are vital for their preservation and the education of future generations. The absence of official recognition as ICH by cultural heritage organizations limits opportunities for funding, support, and interest in preserving these sports. Thus, the survival of She ethnic minority sports hinges on a multifaceted approach that not only involves capturing the interest of the youth but also ensures the rich cultural significance, skills, and knowledge of these sports are effectively transmitted, preserved, and recognized for future generations.

**(iii) *Bridging the Generational Divide***

Bridging the generational divide in preserving She Ethnic Minority Sports entails overcoming cultural disinterest among younger generations influenced by modern trends. Integrating traditional sports with contemporary elements and emphasizing their cultural significance can spark interest and participation. Additionally, creating inclusive spaces for intergenerational interaction fosters mutual understanding and appreciation. Educational programs tailored to engage youth in learning and practicing She Sports Heritage instill a sense of pride and belonging.

One of the primary challenges in preserving She ethnic minority sports is bridging the generational gap. Younger generations, influenced by global culture and technological advancements, may find traditional sports less engaging compared to modern sports and digital entertainment. This disinterest hinders the transfer of essential skills and knowledge necessary for the preservation of these cultural practices. Immigrants who share social norms with the majority experience better outcomes. Cultivating a sense of shared identity and community around She ethnic sports, while also being open to integrating aspects of majority sports culture, could encourage younger generations to participate.

The preservation of She Ethnic Minority Sports within the broader context of intangible cultural heritage faces multifaceted challenges that necessitate strategic approaches. These

challenges include safeguarding She Sports Heritage against the pressures of modernization and globalization, ensuring intergenerational transmission of these traditions, and bridging the generational divide to sustain their vitality. The protection of She Sports Heritage is critical for maintaining cultural identity amidst evolving societal dynamics, requiring inclusive approaches that involve the ethnic minority community in the preservation process. Integrating these sports into educational curricula and community practices presents opportunities to engage youth and facilitate the inheritance of cultural practices. However, challenges such as the lack of formal documentation and recognition hinder these efforts, emphasizing the need for comprehensive strategies that address cultural preservation, recognition, and transmission. Bridging the generational divide involves fostering a sense of shared identity and community around She Ethnic Minority Sports, while also integrating aspects of modern sports culture to encourage participation among younger generations. By addressing these challenges holistically, there is a greater likelihood of ensuring the continuity and vitality of She Ethnic Minority Sports for future generations.

### **Strategies in Intangible Cultural Heritage**

In the realm of Intangible Cultural Heritage, strategies encompass integration into educational curricula, effective amalgamation with extracurricular activities, utilization of advanced technologies, and understanding cultural and social significance. The domain of Intangible Cultural Heritage, various strategies are employed to ensure its preservation and promotion. These strategies include integrating cultural heritage elements into educational curricula to impart knowledge and appreciation among students. Additionally, efforts are made to effectively amalgamate these cultural aspects with extracurricular activities, fostering practical engagement and deeper understanding among participants. Furthermore, the utilization of advanced technologies such as digital platforms and virtual reality enhances accessibility and engagement with cultural heritage. Finally, understanding the cultural and social significance of intangible heritage guides the development of strategies that resonate with communities, ensuring their active participation in safeguarding their cultural legacy (Jiaxi, 2022; Fangyuan, 2023).

#### ***(i) Integrating into Educational Curricula and Effective Amalgamation with Extracurricular Activities***

The integration of sports as intangible cultural heritage into educational settings has been an area of focus in recent years. However, these initiatives have often not lived up to expectations, primarily due to a lack of diversity in both teaching methods and content. This homogeneity fails to address the varied needs of students across different educational stages. Consequently, the transmission of intangible cultural heritage within campus sports activities is less effective than it could be. It's crucial to recognize that students' interests, abilities, and learning styles vary widely. Without a diverse range of teaching approaches and content that can adapt to these differences, it becomes challenging to engage students meaningfully with the cultural heritage aspects of sports. This situation underscores the need for educational programs to incorporate a wider array of teaching strategies, such as experiential learning, storytelling, digital media, and cross-cultural exchanges, to enrich the learning experience and ensure the effective preservation and appreciation of sports as a vital component of our intangible cultural heritage (Yonghong & Zulakbal, 2023).

The challenge of effectively integrating sports intangible cultural heritage into scholastic and extracurricular activities remains formidable. Despite the recognition of its importance,

the methodology for blending these cultural elements with educational programs is still underdeveloped. This lack of maturity in approach often results in a superficial fusion, rather than a deep and meaningful integration, which is essential for the propagation of this heritage in educational contexts. The superficial treatment fails to capture the essence and depth of sports' cultural heritage, thereby missing the opportunity to instill a profound appreciation and understanding in students. A more substantive integration would involve embedding cultural narratives, traditions, and values inherent in sports into the curriculum in a way that resonates with students on a personal level. This requires innovative teaching methods, interdisciplinary approaches, and active participation from the community, including athletes, coaches, and cultural practitioners, to bring the rich tapestry of sports heritage to life for students. By creating a more dynamic and immersive learning environment, educators can facilitate a deeper connection between students and the intangible cultural heritage of sports, fostering a lasting appreciation and respect for cultural diversity and history through the universal language of sports (Rui, 2023).

### ***(ii) Utilizing Advanced Technologies***

Utilizing advanced technologies presents innovative opportunities in preserving She Ethnic Minority Sports. Digital platforms and virtual reality can provide immersive experiences, showcasing the cultural significance of these sports to wider audiences. Additionally, data analytics and spatial information technology can aid in documenting and mapping the intricacies of She sports heritage. Mobile applications and online platforms offer accessible avenues for learning and practicing these traditional sports. Moreover, social media platforms facilitate community engagement and knowledge sharing. Harnessing the power of technology enables the preservation and promotion of She Ethnic Minority Sports in an increasingly digitized world, ensuring their relevance and accessibility for future generations (Jiaxi, 2022).

Utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and virtual reality technologies, an innovative study delves into the spatial distribution of China's sports heritage, uncovering the predominance of martial arts across various regions. This analysis reveals a complex landscape marked by significant regional and ethnic disparities in the distribution of sports heritage sites (Jiaxi, 2022). The study identifies six main clusters of high-density areas, suggesting a pattern influenced by the ecological environment, the heritage declaration system, and the categorization of projects. These findings highlight the intricate relationship between the geographical distribution of sports heritage and the socio-cultural and environmental factors shaping it. The importance of devising protection strategies that are not only sensitive to the preservation of the intrinsic values of sports heritage but also adaptable to the demands of contemporary society.

### ***(iii) Cultural and Social Significance Understanding***

Understanding the cultural and social significance of She Ethnic Minority Sports is paramount for their preservation and appreciation. These sports serve as tangible expressions of the She people's identity, traditions, and values, fostering a sense of belonging and pride within the community. Furthermore, they play a crucial role in social cohesion, bringing people together across generations and reinforcing bonds within the community. By participating in and celebrating these sports, individuals connect with their heritage, instilling a deeper sense of cultural identity and belonging. Additionally, the cultural and social significance of She sports



contributes to the broader cultural landscape, enriching the diversity of human expression and fostering cross-cultural understanding.

Fangyuan (2023) underscores the need for a deeper understanding of the cultural, societal, and existential significances of She sports. The profound connection between the physical expressions of She sports and their cultural implications requires comprehensive studies to ensure their preservation and continuation for succeeding generations. This involves not only the practical efforts of retrieval, curation, and safeguarding of indigenous sports traditions but also theoretical examinations of their characteristics and developmental trajectories.

Strategies in intangible cultural heritage encompass a multifaceted approach, including integration into educational curricula, effective amalgamation with extracurricular activities, utilization of advanced technologies, and understanding cultural and social significance. The integration of sports into educational settings faces challenges due to a lack of diversity in teaching methods and content, hindering effective transmission. Utilizing advanced technologies, such as GIS and virtual reality, presents innovative opportunities for preserving She Ethnic Minority Sports and understanding their spatial distribution. Understanding the cultural and social significance of these sports is crucial for fostering a sense of belonging and preserving cultural heritage. Comprehensive studies are needed to ensure the preservation and continuation of She sports for future generations.

### **Conclusion, Implication and Recommendations**

In this section, researchers delve into the conclusion, implications, and recommendations arising from the exploration of challenges and strategies in protecting She Ethnic Minority Sports within the realm of Intangible Cultural Heritage. By examining the multifaceted challenges faced in preserving these cultural treasures and the innovative strategies proposed to address them, we gain insight into the significance of safeguarding She sports and the broader implications for cultural heritage conservation.

#### ***( i ) Conclusion***

The safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) of sports, particularly those of the She ethnic minority, demands immediate and comprehensive strategies to counteract the impacts of modernization, globalization, and shifts in generational interests. The challenges facing the preservation of these sports not only put at risk the physical enactment of unique traditions but also threaten the cultural identity and heritage that these practices encapsulate. The absence of formal documentation, recognition, and detailed records on the rules, techniques, and cultural value of these sports underscores the critical need for devising effective preservation strategies. These strategies are essential to engage the youth and ensure that the rich cultural significance, skills, and knowledge of these sports are adequately conveyed, preserved, and acknowledged for the benefit of future generations.

#### ***( ii ) Implications***

The struggle to integrate She ethnic minority sports into educational curricula and extracurricular activities highlights significant shortcomings in our current approach, notably the lack of diversity in teaching methodologies and content. This limitation hinders the effective transmission of ICH to students across various educational levels, reflecting a broader challenge in nurturing appreciation and understanding of traditional sports among the younger populace. The imperative for innovative teaching methods and the integration of

traditional sports into educational frameworks cannot be overstated, as these measures are critical to bridging the generational gap and fostering deeper connections with cultural heritage.

***(iii) Recommendations***

Researchers are recommended to prioritize community involvement, advocate for education programs, and explore technological integration to safeguard She Ethnic Minority Sports effectively. Below are the recommendations:

(a) Firstly, community involvement and empowerment. Foster active participation from the She ethnic minority community in the preservation and promotion of their traditional sports. Empower community members by providing training, resources, and support to take ownership of safeguarding initiatives.

(b) Secondly, education and awareness programs. Develop educational programs within She ethnic minority communities and broader society to increase awareness and appreciation of She Ethnic Minority Sports. Incorporate these sports into school curricula and cultural events to ensure their transmission to younger generations.

(c) Thirdly, technological integration. Utilize advanced technologies such as digital platforms, mobile applications, and virtual reality to document, showcase, and disseminate information about She Ethnic Minority Sports. This integration enhances accessibility and engagement while preserving the authenticity and cultural significance of these sports.

Through these recommendations, researchers can play a pivotal role in ensuring the continued protection and promotion of She Ethnic Minority Sports for the benefit of present and future communities.

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