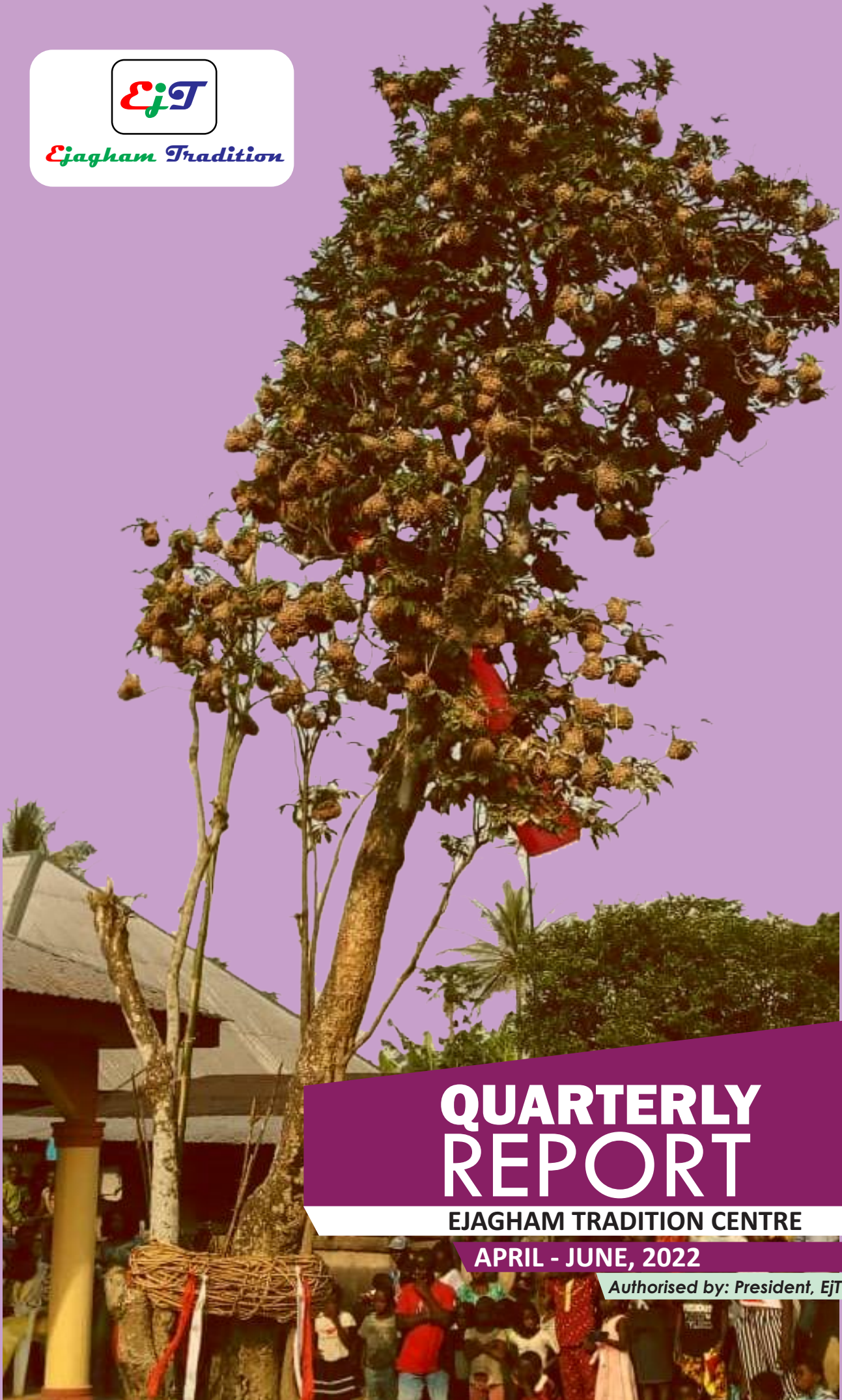




Ejagham Tradition



QUARTERLY REPORT

EJAGHAM TRADITION CENTRE

APRIL - JUNE, 2022

Authorised by: President, EjT

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ORGANISATIONAL DIRECTION

OUR MISSION

“To Host, Promote, Harness and Update Ejagham Traditional Practices (ETP) and Ejagham Cultural Expressions (ECE) in order to Safeguard and Preserve Ejagham Tradition as a true Legacy of Ejagham People.”

OUR VISION

To be a one-stop-shop for information and data about, relating to and concerning Ejagham Traditional Practices (ETP) and Ejagham Cultural Expressions (ECE)

OUR OBJECTIVES

- *Safeguard and preserve the cultural heritage of Ejagham people.*
- *Protect the secret and sacred cultural heritage of Ejagham people.*
- *Encourage Research and Development (R&D) on Ejagham tradition.*
- *Ensure that the none-secret and non-sacred knowledge of Ejagham Traditional Practices (ETP) and Ejagham Cultural Expressions (ECE) are globally available and easily accessible.*
- *Explore the Socio-economic potential of Ejagham tradition for the empowerment of Ejagham People and Local Communities (EPLC).*

FROM THE PRESIDENT

EJT: AN EJAGHAM HERITAGE INSTITUTION

Our mission, vision and objectives as EJT are crystal clear. However, I would like to take some time to further shine some light on EJT as an Ejagham Heritage institution.

EJT, to all intents and purposes, is an Ejagham Heritage institution. This is because we are engaged in key activities that define a heritage institution. Among others, our activities include:

- ❖ *The conservation, interpretation and dissemination of cultural, scientific, and environmental knowledge of Ejagham people. The scope of this engagement includes but are not limited to: Oral Tradition & Literature; Performance Arts; Fashion, Beauty, Arts & Crafts; Ejagham Sights & Sounds; Social Practices & Festive Events and Knowledge of Nature & the Universe.*
- ❖ *We engage in the promotion of activities designed to inform and educate Ejagham people and the general public on associated aspects of culture, history, science and the environment of Ejagham people.*
- ❖ *We engage in the maintenance, revitalisation, documentation and digitalisation of Ejagham heritage.*



Engr. Chris Anom CEng, CMarEng, FIMarEST, FRINA

- ❖ *We facilitate peoples' interaction and engagement with Ejagham heritage.*
- ❖ *We promote cultural understanding, intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity, and the transmission of Ejagham culture across generations.*

Given the above, there is no doubt in my mind, neither should there be any in yours, that EJT is essentially an Ejagham Heritage centre and therefore an Ejagham Heritage institution.

This message is intended to highlight the need for all Ejagham people and friends of Ejagham to be active participants in Ejagham community network of influencers. Your individual role is to help build this Ejagham Heritage institution, that we may collectively *Document, Digitalise* and *Disseminate* Ejagham Traditional Practices and Cultural Expressions. EJT is Ejagham's web to the world.

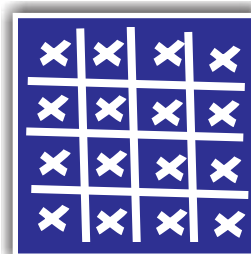
I strongly believe that since there is clarity of purpose in what EJT stands for, delivering on our mission is a certainty. Furthermore, our well-informed members will be able to brand the organisation and provide clarity wherever and whenever it is required.

Clearly, we are still a long way from being accomplished in the aforementioned activities, but we are making the needed progress. As mentioned in previous messages, the analysis of *potential versus accomplishment* of the current Ejagham generation leaves much to be desired. Play a role to make the needed change.

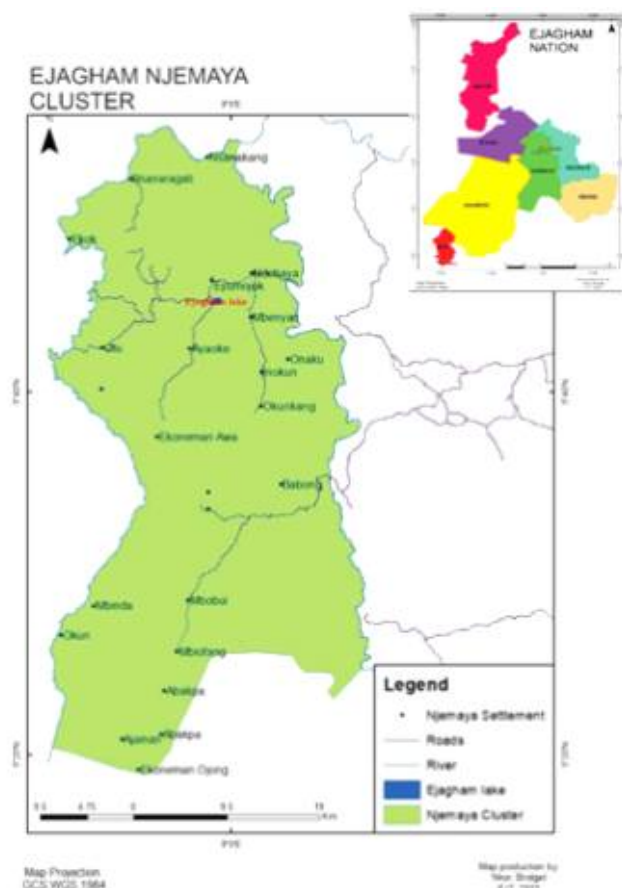
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anom C. M.".

Engr. Chris Anom

President, EJT



EJAGHAM NATION COMPOSITION



His Royal Highness (HRH) Ntufam Hon. Moses Obenofunde, President, Eyumojok Traditional Rulers Association.

Geographical Location

Ejagham Njemaya is one of the three Ejagham clusters in Eyumojock Sub Division, of Manyu Division, in the Southwest Region of Cameroon. The other two clusters are Obang and Ngunaya.

The Njemaya Cluster is made up of 26 towns and villages, according to government statistics. Ejagham Njemaya villages are heavily enclaved, as most of them are not accessible by motorable roads. Actually, it is not up to a decade that an all-season road passed through some Ejagham Njemaya villages and towns. The road runs from Mamfe, the Divisional capital of Manyu and forks out at Eyumojock.

The left branch forks out again some three kilometres after Eyumojock with the left branch heading to Ayaoke and the famous Lake Ejagham, while the right arm heads to Otu through Ejang Border to Calabar.

From Eyumojock also, the other fork heads to Ekok,

through Ajassor village, in Etung Local Government Area to Ikom, in Nigeria. This section of the road, which used to be the Mamfe-Enugu Road has been tarred right from Bamenda, the provincial capital of the Northwest Region of Cameroon to Enugu and is now being referred to as the Bamenda-Enugu Corridor.

The towns and villages that are directly on this highway include, Taboh, Mbakem, Akwen, Ndebaya, Mbeyan and Ekok. Other villages and towns in Ejagham Njemaya include; *Abakpa, Ajamen, Akwa, Araru, Ayaoke, Babi, Babong, Ekugatae, Ekok, Ekoneman Awa, Ekoneman Ojongarrey, Eyangmange, Eyumojock, Inokun, Mbinda, Mboboui, Mbofong, Ndoup, Nsanakang, Nsanaragati, Ogurang, Okuri, Okurikang, Onaku and Otu.*

From this highway, one can travel to Ayaoke, home to Lake Ejagham, and Ekoneman both of which are about 10 and 30 kilometres respectively from Eyumojock. Ekoneman is some six kilometres away from Awa the border village as one enters Cameroon from Nkameh in Nigeria.



Obasi Njom From Ejagham Njemaya

Neighbours

Ejagham Njemaya towns and villages like Taboh share boundaries with Ngunaya communities like Ayukaba; while Babong shares boundaries with Aya-Ayuk-Ndep. On the Southeast flank, Otu shares boundaries with Ekang. Ekoneman shares boundaries with Nkameh, while Okuri shares boundaries with New Ndebiji, in Akamkpa Local Government Area, Nigeria.

On the Northeast flank, Ekok shares boundaries with Okoroba and Ajassor; in Etung Local Government; while Nsan-Aragati shares boundaries with Ekugatae, also in Etung Local Government Area. Up on the Cross River sailing towards Mamfe, Agborkem Ossijinghi, shares boundaries with Agborkem Obi, which is also in Etung Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Further up the Cross River heading to Mamfe from Mfum, Esagem village shares boundaries with Kesham, a Boki-speaking village in Cameroon now under Akwaya sub-division of Manyu Division.

Economic Activities and Tourism

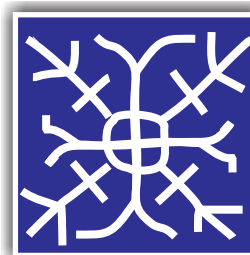
Ejagham Njemaya people earn their income mainly from cocoa farming. Since there are no huge population settlements, food crop farming is still predominantly subsistent. However, with the opening of the Bamenda-Enugu highway, the likelihood of large-scale food crop farming like plantains, bananas, cocoyam, yams, cassava and its varied derivatives now exists, because of its proximity to the huge Nigerian market.

Key tourist attractions in Ejagham Njemaya include the almighty Lake Ejagham and the vast cocoa small holding farms that, combined together, actually look like huge plantations.

A boat ride from Akwen down Monaya to the main Cross River could take one either further down to Mfum and down to Ikom and Calabar or up the river to Mamfe. The Akarem river on the Ayaoke-Inokun road also provides wonderful scenery as it runs through Mbenyan to join Mmonaya at Akwen.

Indeed, for lovers of ecotourism, trekking from one village to another through the rich, virgin tropical forest is a delight.

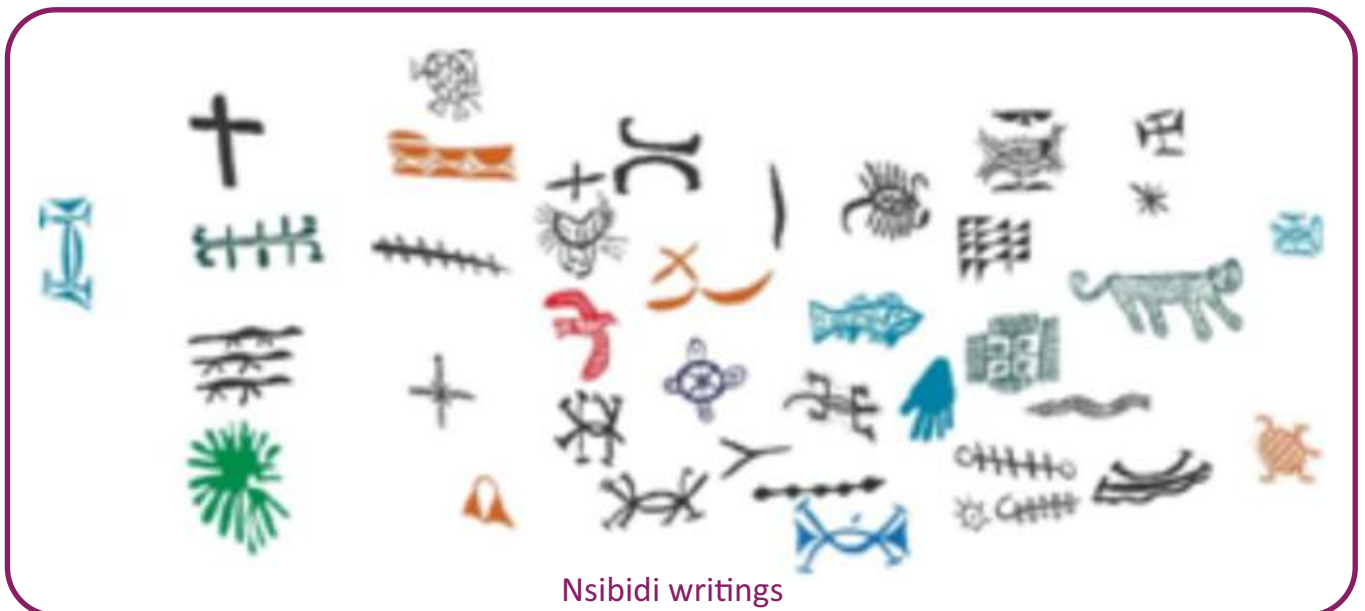
By Cyprian Ntiamba Obi Ntui



STRIDING TOWARDS A UNIVERSAL EJAGHAM LANGUAGE AND FASHION

While this report provides a comprehensive update on all Major activities carried out by us in 2022, we encourage you to consider reading through our earlier Reports to gain full insights into our works. As evident in this Report, we design all our activities to suit our Mission. Here, the major highlights are on Ejagham Language Codification, which was commissioned in May 2020, and Ejagham Fashion Collection, launched in October 2021.

However, we encourage you to read and share this report within your network. Feel free to email your feedback, suggestion, or queries on any activity here captured via our email: ejt@ejaghamtradition.org. Each of these projects has its milestones and we have a lot more to cover. Hence, our continuous appeal for financial support and hope that this report will demonstrate in concrete terms how valuable every little support offered to EJT can translate into a huge transformation of the Ejagham universe at large. Enjoy your read!



The activities that have preoccupied us in the last Quarter typifies our commitment to helping rebuild the Ejagham Heritage and give it contemporary appeal and relevance. With a common Ejagham Language and Fashion, it cannot be debated that Ejagham identity will regain commendable visibility locally and internationally, and our unity a practical reality. Irrespective of our financial status – having functioned since inception without any corporate or major individual sponsorship – we have designed these two projects, among others, and continue to take little steps as permitted by our, hitherto, very limited financial resources. We are however blessed with a wealth of human resources who are always available to facilitate the quick and quality execution of our projects with adequate mobilisation.

EJAGHAM LANGUAGE CODIFICATION

Ejagham Language Codification Data Validation

After obtaining data (encoded wordlists and voiceovers) from all Ejagham Clusters in Nigeria and Cameroon, the Technical Team (Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Calabar, Nigeria) embarked on a thorough validation exercise of these data. Native speakers from all Ejagham Language variants were invited to conduct the exercise. Each native speaker validated the data obtained from their own Ejagham variant. Validators read the entire encoded wordlist and listened to the voiceover entered in their Ejagham dialect and pointed out areas of agreement or otherwise. This allowed the Technical Team to gather more information about

all the Ejagham dialects and equally ascertained the reliability of available data.

This validation exercise started in January 2022 when the Technical Team met once every week in a facility reserved for this project in the Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Calabar, Nigeria. Due to the ongoing Industrial Action by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) in Nigeria, the Technical Team increased their meeting days to complete the rigorous validation of the remaining Ejagham dialects.



L-R: REV. FR. DR. FELIX OJONG, MR. OGAR OKANG NTUI, PROF. BASSEY OKON, SESSEKU HON. DR. AGBORNDUKU ERET, PROF. STELLA ANSA, MR. MFON EKPE BROWNSON, & D. C. EKUP-NSE @ DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS AND NIGERIAN LANGUAGES, UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR DURING THE VALIDATION.

Given the strike, these passionate experts relocated their meeting to a new venue. Here, they met in relation to their schedule with validators, often between the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. GMT. In some instances, where the validation was tedious and/or the validator's availability for the second day was not ascertained, the team often exceeded their closing time to progress with the work. The validation of each Ejagham dialect took a minimum of two days. On another instance, the team would meet and dismiss without the availability of the validator as scheduled.

A more challenging time throughout the exercise was on how to get the validators from Ejagham Ngunaya (ENg) and Ejagham Obang (EO) in Cameroon to travel down to Calabar, Nigeria, where the exercise was stationed. Unfortunately, as it was

unforeseen, the two validators, Mr. Oben Ebeneza Eta (EO) and Mr. Oben Atem Samuel (ENg) arrived Ekok international border when it was closed due to the conflict on the Nigerian side of the border – Mfum Community. This situation not only increased their travel risks, having navigated the war-ravaged areas in Cameroon to Ekok, but significantly increased the logistics for the trip amidst the very limited resources available for the exercise in particular, and overall project in general.

This challenge was surmounted through the tenacity of the contingents as inspired by E, Sesseku (Iyamba) Hon. Dr. Agbornduku Eret VP-EC, who further engineered part of their travel logistics from the gracious charity of Chief Moses Obenofunde (President, Eyumojock Traditional Rulers Association). This financial support was part of the fulfilment of the promise of support made by Eyumojock Traditional Rulers Association to this project, as clearly captured in their letter to EJT dated 16 September 2020.



L-R: D. C. EKUP-NSE, MR. OGAR OKANG NTUI, MRS. ROSELINE NTUI EGBE, MR. OBEN ATEM SAMUEL, PROF. BASSEY OKON, MR. MFON EKPE BROWNSON, MR. OBEN EBENEZA ETA, PROF. STELLA ANSA, & REV. FR. DR. FELIX OJONG DURING THE VALIDATION OF EJAGHAM NGUNAYA AND OBANG.

Upon completing their validation exercise, Mr. Oben Ebeneza Eta and Mr. Oben Atem Samuel were treated to a tour of some historic sites in Ejagham Qua by EJT Ambassadors, Rev. Fr. Dr. Felix Ojong and Nta D. C. Ekup-Nse. It is noteworthy that the Ejagham Qua were the first inhabitants of

Calabar metropolis in Nigeria. The sites visited include: The Palace of the Ndidem of Calabar; Etai Ukwa (Ancient monolith), Ntoe Ika Ika Oqua II Historical House and Museum; and the University of Calabar.

The steadfastness of the Technical Team throughout this exercise cannot be overemphasized, despite the meagre financial support from EjT. Through the indescribable leadership of Prof. Stella Ansa who doubles as the Chairperson of Ejagham Language Codification Committee (ELCC) and Head, Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Calabar, the technical team has completed the validation exercise and has progressed to the phonemic analysis of all the validated Ejagham dialects. This phase of the project shall be captured in the next Quarterly Report. Prof. Bassey Okon, who is the coordinator of the Technical Team, alongside other members of the team, continue to offer their best services to help develop the first-ever holistic Ejagham Language Orthography for use in learning institutions.

EJAGHAM FASHION COLLECTION

Data Gathering for Ejagham Fashion Competition

In view of updating Ejagham fashion for contemporary relevance and fostering of Ejagham identity, Ejagham Fashion Collection Project was thus initiated. To achieve this invaluable objective, amongst others - as a necessity, efforts were made to obtain images of old Ejagham fashion materials across all Ejagham Clusters in Nigeria (Akamkpa, Bakor, Etung, and Qua) and Cameroon (Obang, Ngunaya, and Njemaya). Data priority was towards old items produced locally or imported but used extensively and significantly in these Ejagham communities from the distant past. The goal was to capture and feature items from all Ejagham Clusters. But for certain factors, that could not be achieved. However, we succeeded in visiting and obtaining data from all Ejagham Clusters in Nigeria. Subsequently, efforts shall be made to capture and feature data from the Ejagham clusters yet to be visited.



AJIGIJAK (CAPTURED IN ABIJANG COMMUNITY, EJAGHAM ETUNG)

D. C. Ekup-Nse identified and collected all relevant data across all Ejagham Clusters in Nigeria. He was immensely assisted by Ugban Ita Akuku and Mr. Oba Ekum Ojogu in Ejagham Bakor and Akparabong. These tour guards both provided the analysis to some of the data obtained from their Ejagham Cluster. The data referred to here are clean pictures of old Ejagham fashion items. Upon gathering these data, they were all edited into a presentable format and appealing view. All the data captured and edited were presented to the Patron of this project, Ntufam Prof. Rowland Ndoma-Egba, by D. C. Ekup-Nse on 4 July 2022 at his office. The exhibition of these data to all interested participants in this competition is the next milestone in this project.



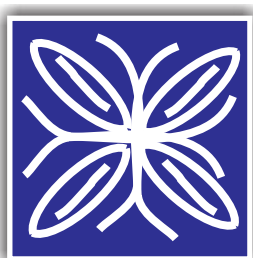
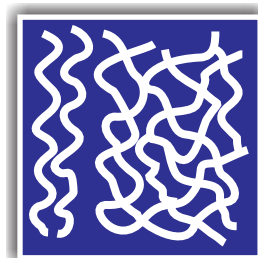
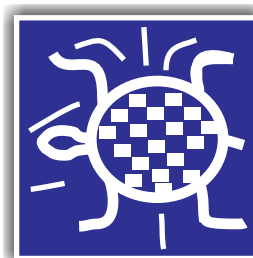
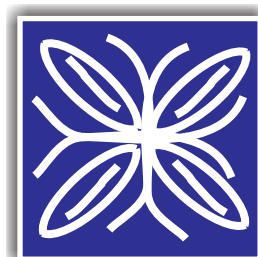
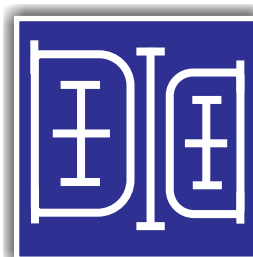
L-R: D. C. EKUP-NSE PRESENTING EFC DATA GATHERING REPORT TO THE PROJECT PATRON, NTUFAM PROF. ROWLAND NDOMA-EGBA

However, this engaging exercise offered the following critical learnings:

1. Christianity and westernization have influenced the deliberate neglect and/or destruction of old Ejagham artifacts and fashion items.
2. For fear of extortion and demonization, certain individuals and families resort to hoarding required items and could only make them visible upon protracted persuasion by the tour guide or someone else who is well known to them.
3. Some individual requested for payment before displaying their item(s) for image capturing.
4. Migration has influenced change of location of required items from communities they originally belonged to, with some items now located in non-Ejagham communities.
5. Knowledge of the makeup, utility, and general essence of most of the required items continues to recede.
6. Most of the required items are preserved under very unsuitable conditions, thereby factoring their continued depreciation.
7. Each priority item requires an in-depth study for a full appreciation of its makeup, utility, and general essence.

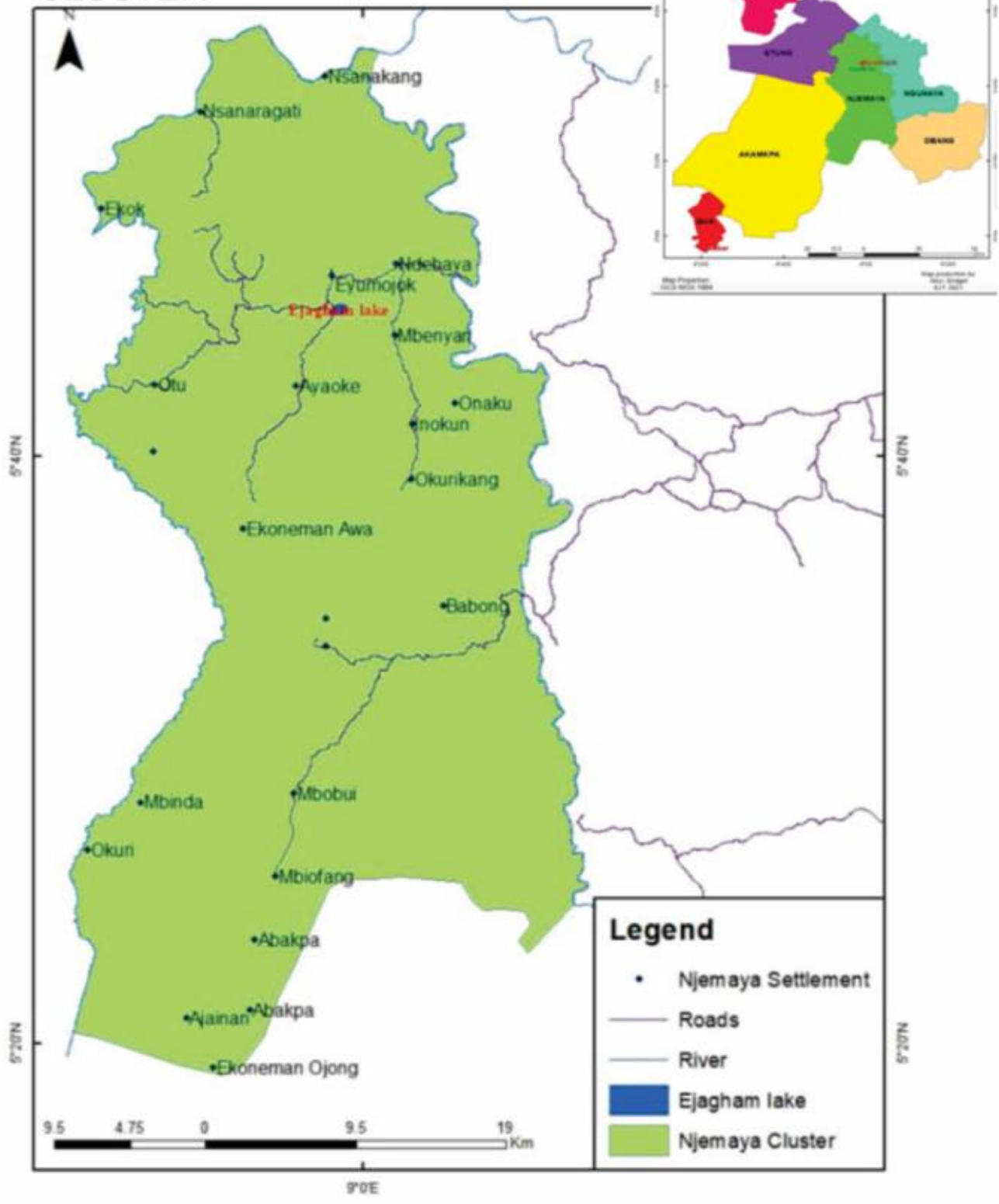
For this phase of the exercise, the following Ejagham Clusters were visited:

| Cluster | Clan/Village | Date Visited |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Ejagham Bakor | Ishi-Ibohr | 06-04-2022 |
| | Ndok Clan | 06-04-2022 |
| | Ekpokpa Clan | 08-04-2022 |
| | Agburagba | 08-04-2022 |
| | Ekukunela | 08-04-2022 |
| | Akparabong | 08-04-2022 |
| Ejagham Etung | Etomi | 07-04-2022 |
| | Abijang | 07-04-2022 |
| Ejagham Akamkpa | Oban | 22-04-2022 |
| | Mbarakom | 24-04-2022 |
| | Mbobui | |
| Ejagham Qua | Big Qua Town | 14-05-2022 |



Appendix 1

EJAGHAM NJEMAYA CLUSTER



Map Projection: GCS WGS 1984

Map production by: Nkor, Bridget EJT. 2021

Appendix 2



L-R: MR. OQUA ETA AGBOR, PROF. BASSEY OKON, PROF. STELLA ANSA, MR. M FON EKPE BROWNSON, MRS. ROSELINE NTUI EGBE, MRS. GRACE EDIM ITAPO & MR. OGAR OKANG NTUI, DURING THE VALIDATION OF EJAGHAM QUA.



VALIDATION OF EJAGHAM NGUNAYA AND OBAN IN PROGRESS



L-R: MR. M FON EKPE BROWNSON, PROF. STELLA ANSA, MR. OGAR OKANG NTUI, MRS. ROSELINE NTUI EGBE, D. C. EKUP-NSE & PROF. BASSEY OKON, DURING THE VALIDATION OF EJAGHAM AKAMKPA.



L-R: MR. OGAR OKANG NTUI, PROF. STELLA ANSA, DR. SOLOMON ABU EDET, MR. M FON EKPE BROWNSON, MRS. ROSELINE NTUI EGBE, DURING THE VALIDATION OF EJAGHAM QUA.



VALIDATION OF EJAGHAM AKPARABONG IN PROGRESS



L-R: D. C. EKUP-NSE, PROF. BASSEY OKON, BARR. MAXWELL ACHUK EBA BOJOR, PROF. STELLA ANSA, MR. OGAR OKANG NTUI, MRS. ROSELINE NTUI EGBE, & MR. M FON EKPE BROWNSON, DURING THE VALIDATION OF EJAGHAM AKPARABONG.

Tour



@NDIDEM'S PALACE, ASIM IKANG, QUA TOWN, CALABAR



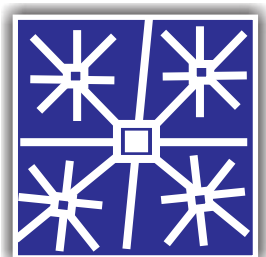
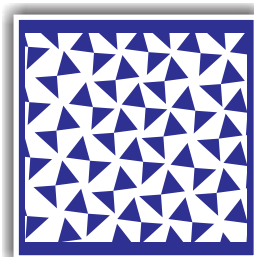
@NTOE IKA IKA OQUA II HISTORICAL HOUSE AND MUSEUM



@ETAI UKWA (MONOLITH), BIG QUA TOWN, CALABAR



@UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR, CALABAR



Appendix 3



Ekad



Ifua Iiio



Amogha'nkum



Agud



Nguu Akpamara Mgbe





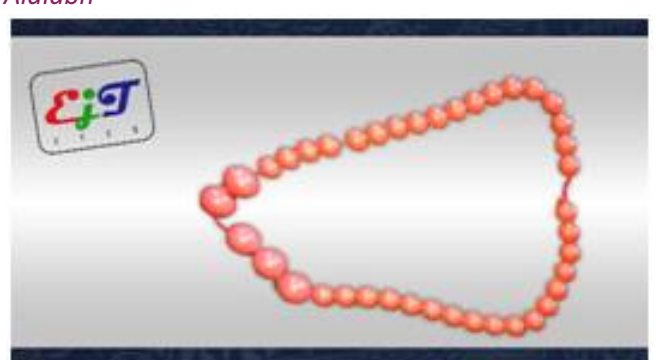
Amana'nsinga



Alalabh



Agra waist beads



Neck beads



Etamtam



Esang

