

REPORT BY A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION ACCREDITED TO ACT IN AN ADVISORY CAPACITY TO THE COMMITTEE ON ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

**Deadline: 15 February 2023
for examination in 2023**

*File may be downloaded at:
<https://ich.unesco.org/en/forms>*

*Please provide only the information requested below.
Annexes or other additional materials cannot be accepted.*

A. Identification of the organization

A.1. Name of the organization submitting this report

A.1.a. *Provide the full official name of the organization in its original language, as it appears on the official documents.*

Contact Base

A.1.b. *Name of the organization in English and/or French.*

Contact Base

A.1.c. *Accreditation number of the organization (as indicated in all previous correspondence: NGO-90XXX)*

NGO 90120

A.2. Address of the organization

Provide the complete postal address of the organization, as well as additional contact information such as its telephone number, email address, website, etc. This should be the postal address where the organization carries out its business, regardless of where it may be legally domiciled. In the case of internationally active organizations, please provide the address of the headquarters.

Organization: Contact Base

Address: 188/89 Prince Anwar Shah Road, Kolkata 700045

Telephone number: 91 33 40047483

Email address: banglanatak@gmail.com
Website: www.banglanatak.com
Other relevant information: We trade as banglanatak dot com

A.3. Contact person for correspondence

Provide the complete name, address and other contact information of the person responsible for correspondence concerning this report.

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): Ms
Family name: Bhattacharya
Given name: Ananya
Institution/position: Director
Address: Contact Base
Telephone number: +919830173382
Email address: ananya@banglanatak.com
Other relevant information:

B. Contribution of the organization to the implementation of the Convention at the national and international levels (Chapter III and Article 19 of the Convention, paragraph 156 of the Operational Directives)¹

Distinguish between completed activities and ongoing activities contributing to the eight thematic areas of the Convention's Overall Results Framework², as well as to the preparation of periodic reports, nominations, proposals and requests under the Convention's international cooperation mechanisms. If you have not contributed, this should be indicated. Also describe any obstacles or difficulties that your organization may have encountered in such participation.

B.1. Describe your organization's contribution to strengthening *institutional and human capacities* for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.

Not to exceed 250 words

The members regularly conduct workshops with academic institutions, cultural organizations and also Government Agencies like Administrative Training Institute, management and business schools, tourism institutions on subjects life safeguarding ICH, contribution of ICH in sustainable development, creative economy, cultural tourism, heritage management, heritage sensitive commercialization, artist rights and ethics of business with traditional practitioners, cultural mapping and inventorying, technology and safeguarding etc. Online training workshops have also been held with World Craft Council, ICHCAP, British Council, WIPO, UNESCO, ICCROM for people from different countries.

1. In case your organization operates in several States, please indicate clearly which State or States are concerned by your answers where appropriate.
2. For further information on the Overall Results Framework, please refer to the Chapter 8 of the Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/basic-texts-00503>

Contact Base specialises in capacity building of community based institutions for safeguarding of ICH. We have trained several artist collectives (formal and informal) in heritage management, heritage commercialization, use of social media and digital tools, storytelling, IP and ICH etc.

To counter the crisis caused by COVID 19, we enhanced capacities of cultural practitioners in the digital medium. Micro-enterprises in the craft sector have been trained to participate in E-commerce ventures (from uploading photographs and information on their inventory to order management and delivery). The performing artists on the other hand have been trained in purposive usage of social media, so that they can document their cultural offerings and share the same. Performing artists now frequently conduct live programmes in social media channels, which apart from enhancing their popularity, has acted as a source of livelihood in the tough times of the pandemic. We have also built capacity of folk musicians in music recording and few now have their studios.

B.2. Describe your organization's participation in activities related to the **transmission of and education for intangible cultural heritage**. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

Not to exceed 250 words

A key outcome of our projects with Government of West Bengal and Rajasthan in partnership with UNESCO has been developing eco system for skill transmission of ICH within the tradition bearer families. Senior cultural practitioners have developed curriculums of Bhawaiya, Baul, Chau, Langa and Manganiyar traditions. Tools like audio visuals, textual documentation of songs, books explaining different aspects of dance and music have been developed by the communities. The following link is an example of audiovisual toolkit developed by Chau Masters in 2022 (Chau is inscribed in UNESCO Representative List of ICH) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90J_TtpSAMI)

We have designed toolkits for use by teachers in formal education system and have organised programs and workshops in hundreds of schools and colleges in this reporting period. Children from countries outside India have also participated in online programs during and after the pandemic. A sample heritage awareness toolkit for learners in Rajasthan is available online (<https://rb.gy/znrzdvd>). The toolkit has activities for young children for learning through drawing and colouring. Various schools and colleges regularly take the students to different rural locales to familiarize them with the cultural offerings and interact with the tradition bearers to learn more. Taking online heritage education classes has become a new avenue of income for some tradition bearers. We have developed online mobile application Unique Bengal for engaging students to learn about ICH.

In the post-secondary level, we have linked craft practitioners with design institutes, which have acted as a catalyst in bringing product and design diversification while retaining the heritage components. Several institutions (colleges) now regularly organising workshops for sensitisation of students on ICH.

B.3. Describe your organization's participation in the **inventorying and research of intangible cultural heritage**. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

Not to exceed 250 words

In 2022 we have documented traditional culture and lifestyle of 17 indigenous communities living in Arunachal Pradesh in India and equipped them with tools (18 films, website (<http://www.arunachallivingheritage.com/>) and illustrated book to promote their story of nature-culture journey (U.S. Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation). In 2019, German Consulate Kolkata supported research on revival of Shola (white cork) tradition (www.sholacraft.com). Since 2020 we extensively worked with the cultural practitioners of western Rajasthan and have field recorded around 300 songs of Langa and Manganiyar folk musicians, which are available in the mobile application named Safar Tunes. We have also documented the musical intricacies, heritage and practice of Langa and Manganiyar folk music in consultation with the senior Gurus (https://cms.rajsthansafar.com/wpcontent/uploads/2020/10/Langa-Manganiyar-Handbook-Book_Final.pdf). In West Bengal, we have field recorded around 3000 songs of rural folk musicians, which are available in the mobile application named Folks of Bengal and also on other online platforms like iTunes, Spotify, Saavn, Amazon music, etc. We have also released CD of Jhumur folk songs, where folk musicians sang new compositions created by contemporary Jhumur poets. We have also created websites which are updated by the tradition bearers. These include <https://baulfakiri.com/>, <https://www.puruliachau.com/>, <https://bengalpatachitra.com/>, <http://www.rcchbengal.com>. In collaboration with multidisciplinary experts from Coventry University and three communities (Baul, Chau, Patachitra traditions) we researched heritage sensitive IP and digital tools for commercialization of ICH (<https://www.hipams.org>) and the project resulted in improved viability as well as resilience of the practitioners. A toolkit has been developed on community planning for sustainable development through ICH and widely disseminated across countries.

B.4. Describe your organization's participation in developing **policies, as well as legal and administrative measures**, for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

Not to exceed 250 words

We have worked with the Patent Information Centres, Department of Science for registering Geographical Indication (GI) for six craft traditions. We have also assisted 122 tradition bearers from six craft traditions (Dokra, Chau Mask, Patachitra, Terracotta, Wooden Mask and Madur) in getting registered as GI users. As part of the HIPAMS (Heritage-sensitive Intellectual Property & Marketing Strategies) project (<https://www.hipamsindia.org/>), we drafted two policy briefs, *Rural Tourism in India with A special focus ON West Bengal: Policies for Empowering Traditional Artists through Rural Tourism* and *Intellectual Property Rights in India for Traditional Cultural Expressions: Recommendations for training and support FOR traditional artists*. These have been used in drafting tourism and IP policies at state and national level. The recommendations have been drafted to enhance the rights of the cultural practitioners on promotion and circulation of their creative produce and to endow them with better negotiating strategies to encash benefits premised on copyright. We have also developed Art Codes of Codes of Ethics with the artist communities and these have been used by them in drafting contracts and business linkages. The Tourism Department, Government of Rajasthan and Department of MSME&T, Government of West Bengal have imbibed our model Art for Life linking, ICH, practitioner and habitat development (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jUGXV_Hnwrg) in development of rural cultural tourism and MSMEs in creative sector. In 2021 West Bengal Government scaled up the Rural Craft and Cultural Hub Project to cover 50000 tradition bearers. Department of Tourism, Government of India has also used the model of promoting village tourism as a strategy of post pandemic recovery (#GILocal #RestartTourism, Incredible India Weekend Getaway). The Prime Minister of India appreciated the village of Patachitra painters for the community's leadership and resilience (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aAJpjKVUbHA&t=2s>). The West Bengal Government has invested in building folk art centres for artist collectives in 10+ villages.

B.5. Describe your organization's participation in promoting the **role of intangible cultural heritage and its safeguarding in society**. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

Not to exceed 250 words

Our organization has been working for over two decades with rural and indigenous communities for safeguarding their ICH, strengthening their pride and recognition, fostering social inclusion and economic empowerment. The work has led to revitalization of 30+ art forms and now covers 60K traditional practitioners. As an outcome, the overall quality of life, health and hygiene standards, education and socio-economic parameters of cultural practitioners have significantly improved. There has been reduction in unsafe migration in search of work. Improved mobility and education among women has been a key outcome. Most of the tradition bearers are from marginalised communities and development of community museums and village festivals have brought forth transformative change. The impact of work was clearly visible during Covid when these communities, instead of desperation due to disruption in market conduits, invested time and energy in training young people, documenting their ICH and innovating and developing new cultural products. These ranged from songs, dance productions, paintings to painted cloth and paper mache masks for use for Covid protection. Seeing the impact the West Bengal Government has scaled up the initiative in 2021. The Minority Affairs Ministry is also exploring roll out of the model. We have showcased the evidences on role of ICH in different national and international forums and published papers and book chapters as part of national and international advocacy highlighting the potential of culture in being a tool for development. As a result of our work, general awareness regarding rural folk art and artists has got enhanced and they are enjoying more visitors to villages and better access to market opportunities. Over the last few years there was a major global movement of artists from the rural hubs with 150+ performing and craft artists visiting 18+ countries in Asia, Europe and in USA. Our work has contributed to SDG1, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 11, SDG 12. We have partnered with Google Art and Culture to bring the stories online.

B.6. Describe your organization's participation in **raising awareness** about intangible cultural heritage. Explain, in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.

Not to exceed 250 words

Our activities have been conducive in mainstreaming traditional cultural practices. Even a decade back, community culture was seen as a non-significant element and artists were treated as 'daily unskilled labour'. Culture & Development was not in development vocabulary. We created a network of public and developmental organizations, conducted knowledge sharing sessions and showcased practical evidence

reflecting the potential of culture and culture-based practices in bringing holistic rural development. At present, over 500 cultural practitioners from rural West Bengal and around 100 cultural practitioners from western Rajasthan have travelled across India to present their creative offerings. Many among them have also transcended national boundaries and enchanted global audience with their cultural products. These tradition bearers, upon getting digital training, are now actively using social media accounts and promoting their art and crafts through digital platforms. We have also sensitized various tourism stakeholders regarding the rural cultural destinations. We have conducted familiarisation tours and workshops covering 200+ tourist guides and travel agents in three states, sensitising them on responsible cultural tourism. We also conduct annual village festivals celebrating local ICH. These festivals attract huge tourist footfall and have been crucial in giving visibility and recognition to local ICH and the practitioners. Since 2011, we are participating in WOMEX, the largest international music expo to highlight the potential of Indian folk music to global music stakeholders. This awareness raising has resulted in Rina Das Baul, folk musician from Bengal, getting invited to perform in the main event of WOMEX in 2022. During the pandemic we supported daily online programs on ICH to engage the artists. Following the pandemic we have organised several festivals, school awareness programs, village festivals to rejuvenate the art forms. We curated Folk Safar festival in West Bengal, Rajasthan and Goa in 2021, 2022 and held Sur Jahan every year since 2011 except 2021, 2022 (www.surjahan.com)

B.7. *Describe your organization's participation in facilitating the engagement of communities, groups and individuals, as well as other stakeholders, for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.*

Not to exceed 250 words

Our flagship initiative Art for Life (AFL) has established proven model of development of eco systems for community led safeguarding of ICH. AFL promotes Village, Artist, and Art together and has evolved the process of art and culture led rural development. Our model is also being studied by IIT-IIT and has been adopted by state governments of West Bengal and Rajasthan to bring ICH-led development. Our work has led to safeguarding & strengthened identity and pride of marginalised communities. Income and quality of life has improved manifold leading to poverty alleviation and reduction of migration. Women have been empowered with increased income, mobility and social status. Artist collectives registered as community organizations are sustaining training and promotional activities beyond project span. Community led cultural tourism integrating intangible, natural and built heritage has led to greater ownership and interest for safeguarding and preservation in the heritage sites and provided a new positive identity as centres of culture and creativity, rather than that of deprived rural villages. Village festivals are getting organized to celebrate local heritage. We are also building capacities of artist clusters to use IP tools like Geographical Indication (GI) and labels like Craft mark. We are working with youth and teachers to explore how ICH can be integrated in education and used for building peace. We are a field-driven organization working with the local communities. Our extensive field knowledge has enabled us to understand that each cultural heritage has a unique history and practice and hence deserves a unique strategy for development. To make the developmental parameters contextually suited, we incorporate local community members, so that they can become protagonists in their own process of development and chart out a strategy best suited to meet their local needs and challenges.

B.8. *Describe your organization's **engagement in cooperation at the bilateral, subregional, regional or international levels** for the implementation of the Convention, including initiatives such as the exchange of information and experience, and other joint initiatives.*

Not to exceed 250 words

In 2021, our organization organised in collaboration with UNESCO offices in South Asia and ICHCAP an online South Asia subregional meeting on Strengthening Creative Economy through Sustainable Development of ICH. The meeting initiated fruitful discussion and deliberation by 41 panellists and discussants from 11 countries, where government institutions, representatives from UNESCO New Delhi Office, UNESCO Dhaka Office, UNESCO Kathmandu Office, UNESCO Pakistan Office, WIPO and World Bank, entrepreneurs, experts and cultural organizations participated. The session initiated a dialogue between participants on ways to strengthen creative economy and facilitate promotion, propagation and safeguarding of global ICH. Members of our organization also participated in different international courses and sessions dedicated to initiate dialogue centring ICH. The courses include Asian Regional Course on Promoting People-Centred Approaches to Conservation of Nature and Culture by ICCROM (2019, 2021), summer program titled "Music and Intangible Heritage– Leadership in Contemporary Creative and Curatorial Practice" on June, 2022 organized by Central European

University in Budapest Hungary, where 18 people from all over the world participated and residential programme in Istanbul, Turkey on “Culture and the SDGs: Enhancing Cross-sectoral Collaborations”, organized by Culture and Sustainability Lab on Sept, 2022 and funded by European Union, where 16 participants from all across the globe participated. Apart from these, we are regular attendees in WOMEX, the largest global music expo. In this reporting period we collaborate with WIPO, British Council, UNESCO, ICH NGO Forum, ICOMOS, World Craft Council, UNWTO, Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Heritage, Goethe Institute, Danish Cultural Institute, Bengal Heritage Foundation and others for stakeholder sensitisation, strengthening dialogue, training, documentation and dissemination of case studies, facilitating cultural exchange and awareness building etc. We are a Global Partner of UNWTO for Promoting Responsible Cultural Tourism since 2018. We have worked with cultural organisations in Bangladesh, Nepal, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Norway, Hungary, Kenya in recent years to facilitate cultural exchange, build capacity and foster cultural collaboration.

B.9. Describe your organization's involvement in or contribution to the drafting of the national Periodic Report on the implementation of the Convention.

Not to exceed 250 words

We regularly update the Ministry of Culture, GoI, SangeetNatak Academy on our work on safeguarding ICH and specifically work on elements inscribed in the UNESCO Representative List and participate in Knowledge building forums

B.10. Describe your organization's participation in the preparation of nominations to the Urgent Safeguarding List or Representative List, requests for International Assistance or proposals of Good Safeguarding Practices.

Not to exceed 250 words

We have not participated in preparation of nomination process in this reporting period but informally supported the Government in preparation of responses during evaluation of the nomination of Durga Puja in Kolkata.

C. Cooperation with UNESCO

Has your organization carried out activities in cooperation with UNESCO? If yes, please tick the relevant boxes and provide information in the box below.

- ☒ Direct cooperation with UNESCO (Headquarters and Field Offices)
- ☐ Activities for which you have received the authorization to use the emblem of UNESCO/of the 2003 Convention
- ☒ Cooperation through the 2003 Convention's Global Network of Facilitators
- ☒ Cooperation with Category 2 Centres
- ☐ Cooperation with National Commissions for UNESCO
- ☒ Cooperation with UNESCO Chairs
- ☐ Financial support from the Intangible Cultural Heritage Fund
- ☐ Financial support from the Participation Programme
- ☐ Other types of cooperation

Not to exceed 250 words

Our organization is in Special Advisory Status to UN ECOSOC (2013). We have advisory Status to UNESCO's 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention since 2010. We are the ground implementing partners of UNESCO in promoting and safeguarding ICH in India. In West Bengal, the ongoing project Rural Craft and Cultural Hubs (RCCH) is a collaborative initiative of Department of MSME&T, Government of West Bengal covering 50,000 rural tradition bearers. In Rajasthan, the project “Strengthening ICH based Tourism in western Rajasthan” is a collaborative initiative of Department of Tourism, Government of Rajasthan and UNESCO covering 1500 tradition bearers.

D. Participation in the work of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

- D.1** *Has your organization participated in the sessions of the Committee? If so, please indicate which sessions you attended and whether you had any specific role during these meetings.*

Not to exceed 250 words

Ananya Bhattacharya has attended all the sessions in the reporting period. Dr. Madhura Dutta attended the 17.COM at Rabat. Ananya has played a key role in development and strengthening of ICH NGO Forum. Ananya is a member of the editorial board and also the Chair of the new working group on ORF. Madhura has published an article in the Heritage Alive publication on Musical Instruments. Ananya and Madhura have presented in the ICH NGO Forum symposiums. We have also participated in several online surveys by UNESCO and was also a respondent in one of the online interviews organised by UNESCO on 2003 Convention.

- D.2** *Has your organization served as a member of the Evaluation Body (paragraphs 26 to 31 of the Operational Directives), or as a member of the Consultative Body (between 2012 and 2014)? If so, please indicate the period.*

Not to exceed 100 words

No

- D.3** *In what way(s) has your organization provided advisory services to the Committee (paragraph 96 of the Operational Directives) or in what way(s) do you foresee that it might provide such services in the future?*

Not to exceed 500 words

We will be able to provide advisory services through reporting, evidence building, development of toolkits and guide books on implementation of the convention, role of ICH in society and impact of safeguarding ICH on sustainable development, use of ORF by NGOs.

E. Capacities of your organization to evaluate nominations, proposals and requests (paragraphs 27 and 96 of the Operational Directives):

- E.1.** *Nominations, proposals and requests are available for evaluation only in English or French. Do members of your organization or your staff have a very good command of English or French? If so, please indicate which language(s) and the number of those members or staff.*

Not to exceed 250 words

English is our business language and all our project executives (20+) are proficient in English.

- E.2.** *Does your organization have experience in working across several intangible cultural heritage domains? Please describe your experiences.*

Not to exceed 250 words

We work across several ICH domains: oral traditions, performing arts, traditional crafts, knowledge of biodiversity and natural resource management, festivals and rituals, martial arts, for strengthening several ICH across India. In West Bengal, we work with 18 craft and 13 performing arts tradition. In Rajasthan, we have worked with 10 ICH, out of which 5 are performing arts and the remaining are handicrafts. In Arunachal Pradesh, we have documented traditional culture and lifestyle of 17 indigenous communities and made 18 documentary films on the living heritage of the state. We received the 2022 ICOMOS Culture Nature Prize (special mention) for our work at Arunachal Pradesh. We received the 2019 Jeonju

E.3. *Describe the experience of your organization in evaluating and analysing documents such as proposals or applications.*

Not to exceed 250 words

Our members regularly evaluate abstracts, session proposals for knowledge symposiums. As we mentor young creative and social entrepreneurs, we regularly analyse business proposals and strategies.

E.4. *Does your organization have experience in drafting synthetic texts in English or French? Please describe your experience and indicate in which language(s) and the number of those members or staff.*

Not to exceed 250 words

We regularly publish articles, papers and write book chapters with a praxis (theory+practice) focus to showcase and highlight the relevance of culture as an asset for development. We are proficient in English and have 5 members who have experience in drafting synthetic text. Two have PhD and one is MPhil pursuing PhD. In the past four years we have published several papers and articles on traditional musical instruments, sacred groves, ICH and resilience, rural tourism, heritage sensitive commercialization, IP and ICH, contribution of traditional crafts to sustainable development etc. The publications are by Ministry of Culture GoI, Indian Trust for Rural Heritage and Development, ITRHD Publication, Routledge and CRC Press, SAGE Journal of Heritage Management, Culture.Society. Economy.Politics., ICHCAP, ASEF and various print and online media (national and international).

E.5. *Does your organization have experience in working at the international level or the capacity to apply local experience to an international context? Please describe such experience.*

Not to exceed 250 words

We participate in different international forums to strengthen dialogue with different developmental stakeholders to highlight the efficacy of culture as a developmental tool. We have created a network of public and developmental organizations, conducted knowledge sharing sessions and showcased practical evidence reflecting the potential of culture and culture-based practices in bringing holistic rural development. We have presented in different international forums to showcase the efficacy of our model AFL in rejuvenating and safeguarding traditional cultural practices of different global contexts. In 2019, in association with Hungary Heritage House, we presented on prospective ways to strengthen traditional Transylvanian culture using our AFL model (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7dx-OoErEVU&t=10s>). We have also presented in Bangladesh regarding the efficacy of AFL model and how the same when applied in the context of Bangladesh has the potential in transforming traditional cultural practices from 'fringe' to 'core' economic activity. Apart from these, we have also designed and facilitated 2021 South Asia Sub-regional Meeting "Strengthening Creative Economy through Sustainable Development of ICH" engaging the countries, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka to chart out contextual strategies for using culture as a tool for development. In addition to these, we have been regularly participating in WOMEX, the largest expo attracting global music stakeholders, to highlight the potential of music (ICH) in bringing social inclusion, harmony and cohesion.

F. Membership in the ICH NGO Forum

Indicate below whether your organization wishes to (continue to) be part of the ICH NGO Forum. Please note that membership is contingent upon the decision of the Committee to maintain the accreditation of your organization.

For more information on the ICH NGO Forum and its activities, please see: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/ngo-forums-00422>.

☒ Yes

☐ No

G. Signature

The report must include the name and signature of the person empowered to sign it on behalf of your organization.

Name: Ananya Bhattacharya

Title: Secretary

Date: 15 Feb 2023

Signature: 