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 January 2015

for examination in 2015

*File may be downloaded at:*

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

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| 1. **Identification of the organization**
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| **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 on all previous correspondence: NGO-90XXX)* |
| NGO-90120 (Accreditation letter reference - CLT/CIH/ITH/2010/386)  |
| **A.2. Address of the organization** |
| *Provide the complete postal address of the organization, as well as additional contact information such as its telephone, e-mail 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 case of internationally active organizations, please provide the address of the headquarters.* |
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| Organization: | Contact Base |
| Address: | 58/114 Prince Anwar Shah Road, Kolkata 700045 |
| Telephone number: | 91 33 24178516, 91 33 2417 8518 (Telefax) |
| E-mail address: | banglanatak@gmail.com |
| Website: | www.banglanatak.com |
| Other relevant information: | Our trading style is banglanatak dot com |

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| **A.3. Contact person for correspondence** |
| *Provide the complete name, address and other contact information of the person responsible for correspondence concerning this report.* |
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| Title (Ms/Mr, etc.): | Ms |
| Family name: | Bhattacharya |
| Given name: | Ananya |
| Institution/position: | Contact Base, Secretary |
| Address: | 58/114 Prince Anwar Shah Road, Kolkata 700045 |
| Telephone number: | 919830173382 |
| E-mail address: | ananya@banglanatak.com |
| Other relevant information: |   |

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| **B. Contribution of the organization to the implementation of the Convention at the national level (Chapter III of the Convention)**[[1]](#footnote-1) |
| *Distinguish completed activities and ongoing activities. If you have not contributed, so indicate. Also describe any obstacles or difficulties that your organization may have encountered in such participation.* |
| **B.1.** *Describe your organization’s participation in State efforts to develop and implement measures to strengthen institutional capacities for safeguarding ICH (Article 13 and OD 154), e.g. in the drafting of ICH related policies or legislation, in the establishment of national ICH committees or in other government-led processes.**Not to exceed 250 words* |
| Contact Base closely works with the Government of India and different State Governments for development of working models for safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage embedded in performing arts, oral traditions and traditional craftsmanship and integrating culture and development. We have participated in Governmental efforts for policy development, documentation and inventorying, heritage education and capacity development of artist community based institutions working for ICH safeguarding. We undertook an action research supported by the Planning Commission of India during 2011-12 to evolve how a skill development system may be evolved for revitalizing traditional skills. Our flagship initiative Art for Life which has demonstrated how ICH can contribute to socio-economic empowerment of indigenous communities has been supported by the Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre, State Governments of West Bengal and Bihar. Our recommendations have been incorporated in the policy being currently drafted under National Rural Livelihood Mission. We are involved in national consultations on development of traditional craft sector (Ministries of Rural Development & Textile) and developing policy for strengthening art management skills (Ministry of Culture). We have worked with the State Government of Punjab in 2013 to develop cultural policy for management of ICH. We have also worked with the Government in West Bengal, Bihar and Odisha for developing framework for building community institutions working for safeguarding ICH in alignment with prevailing schemes like formation of self help groups and activity clusters. We have been invited to present before the Parliamentary Forum on Artisans and Crafts people being constituted for safeguarding of traditional crafts.  |
| **B.2.** *Describe your organization’s cooperation with competent governmental bodies for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage (Article 13), including existing institutions for training and documentation of intangible cultural heritage (OD 154).**Not to exceed 250 words* |
| We work with Ministries of Culture, Rural Development, Textile, External Affairs, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises & Textiles, Backward Class Welfare Department and Tourism at national and state levels (5 states) for safeguarding of ICH through capacity building, heritage education and awareness, documentation (audio recording, texts on oral traditions, films), promotion of cultural enterprise , rejuvenation of ICH of backward communities etc. Since 2013 we are undertaking an initiative with the State Government of West Bengal & UNESCO to develop 10 rural creative hubs linked to international market to inform policy for developing traditional craft sector. Between 2012-2014 we trained district level functionaries and artist institutions in the states of West Bengal and Odisha on ICH management. We have supported the Government of Bihar in 2011-2013 in revitalising traditional ICH skills as alternative livelihood and was awarded the second best practice award in the World Bank supported Bihar Innovation Forum-II award. We regularly collaborate with the nodal institution for ICH, Sangeet Natak Akademi in their efforts for development of ICH inventory, capacity building and strengthening access. Heritage education and awareness programmes at the artists’ villages and at cities have been sustained through continuous support of various Departments of the State Governments. We have partnership with the Indian Council for Cultural Relations since 2011 for facilitating international exchange and workshops involving oral traditions and performing artists. We work with museums for supporting community led inventorying and showcasing of ICH. We work with Centre for Cultural Resources & Training Institute for capacity building of teachers for heritage education. We worked with Department of Culture and Tourism for designing policy and action plan for using tangible and intangible heritage for socio-economic empowerment of the people.  |
| **B.3.** *Describe your organization’s involvement in or contribution to the drafting of the State’s Periodic Report (OD 152).**Not to exceed 250 words* |
| We are involved in information consolidation, database creation, reporting and dissemination at multiple levels in the country. In a heterogenous and large country like India there are several agencies at national and state levels contributing to the country's periodic reporting. We regularly share our programmes and experiences with Sangeet Natak Akademi (SNA) the designated nodal institution for ICH in India and have been involved in their efforts for capacity building and dissemination for working towards the goals of 2003 Convention. We also work closely with Department of Culture in several states of India (West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Goa, Punjab) and with ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) India's nodal institution for external cultural relations.  |
| **B.4** *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 Best Safeguarding Practices.**Not to exceed 250 words* |
| We have worked with nodal institutions like IGNCA (Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts) and the Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre for preparation of nominations to the Representative List. The Chau dance which was inscribed in the Representative list in 2010 is one of the art forms we have worked with for more than 10 years and we had contributed in the preparation of the nomination file. We have also recommended nomination for several other art forms we work with and where the communities are actively leading revitalisation efforts. Our safeguarding practice has won award as an Innovative Practice in the World Bank supported Bihar Innovation Forum-II. A key challenge is the slow pace of nomination and also restrictions regarding number of submission of nominations and requests from a state and thus some of the nominations we have prepared are pending submission.  |
| **B.5.** *Describe your organization’s participation in the identification, definition (Article 11.b) and inventorying of ICH (Article 12, OD 80 and OD 153). Explain in particular how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals.**Not to exceed 250 words* |
| We undertake research and study for identification of ICH and mapping of experts and practitioners. Knowledge Attitude and Practice (KAP) Study, audio visual documentation on the art forms, process of traditional crafts, performance of living legends and creation of database on practitioners are other key components of inventorying work. We have contributed to inventorying of 50+ folk art traditions (oral traditions, folk songs, folk dance, folk drama, folk painting, rituals and traditional festivals,textile & traditional crafts), creation of databases on 9000 traditional practitioners in 3 states, textual documentation of 1300+ orally transmitted songs (3 folk art forms) , recording of 1200+ folk songs, 10+ documentaries on ICH, and 4 websites with information on the art traditions and festivals. Community engagement in research and inventorying on their own ICH has led to revival of lost styles, elements and practices like use of natural colour for folk paining (Patachitra or scroll painting of Bengal), lost styles of Chau dance emulating animal movement , Bangla Qawwali etc. We have established 14 local folk art resource centres in West Bengal state which have emerged as community run living museums providing access to traditional art and culture for communities as well as outsiders. We are also collaborating with museums and schools to support them to undertake identification and inventorying of their ICH. Our work has been supported by the Central and State Governments, US Department of State (Ambassador's Cultural Preservation Fund), EU (Invest in People programme) as well as Corporate houses. |
| **B.6.** *Describe your organization’s participation in other safeguarding measures, including those referred to in Article 13 and OD 153, aimed at:*1. *promoting the function of intangible cultural heritage in society;*
2. *fostering scientific, technical and artistic studies with a view to effective safeguarding;*
3. *facilitating, to the extent possible, access to information relating to intangible cultural heritage while respecting customary practices governing access to specific aspects of it.*

*Explain in particular how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and, where relevant, individuals when participating in such measures.**Not to exceed 250 words* |
| Our flagship initiative Art for Life (AFL) has established innovative and substantive model of development of eco systems for nurturing community owned and managed grass root creative enterprise. Our work has led to revival of 15+ dying art forms. Inclusive development has resulted from 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 especially empowered with increased income, mobility and say in family and community. AFL initiated in 2005 has so far covered 5000 folk dancers, singers, musicians and painters and 3000 crafts persons from the eastern Indian states of West Bengal and Bihar. The programme has been supported by the Central and State Governments, the European Union, and the US Department of State. For sustainable engagement of communities in revitalisation of their art forms, we have mobilised them to form self help groups or common interest groups (500+ such groups in 2 states) and dovetailed our projects to Government programmes supporting rural enterprise development. We have also formed and capacitated artist organisations like Folk Artist Federations, Co-operatives of Crafts persons, Artisan Clusters in 3 states of India to work for skill transmission, dissemination and promotion of their art forms. Another strategy has been developing community led cultural tourism integrating intangible, natural and built heritage. This 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. We have used festivals as a tool for promotion of ICH and networking of practitioners.  |
| **B.7.** *Describe your organization’s involvement in measures to ensure greater recognition of, respect for and enhancement of intangible cultural heritage, in particular those referred to in Article 14 and ODs 105 to 109 and OD 155:*1. *educational, awareness-raising and information programmes aimed at the general public, in particular at young people;*
2. *educational and training programmes within the communities and groups concerned;*
3. *capacity-building activities for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage;*
4. *non-formal means of transmitting knowledge;*
5. *education for the protection of natural spaces and places of memory whose existence is necessary for expressing the intangible cultural heritage.*

*Explain in particular, how your organization cooperates with communities, groups and where relevant, individuals when participating in such measures.**Not to exceed 250 words* |
| We support strengthening ICH skills of communities by organising 3-5 months training programmes under the aegis of living legends and exchange and collaborative workshops involving the experts (Gurus) and national and international artists for new innovations. Since 2005 our work has benefitted 8000 traditional practitioners (oral traditions, performing arts, crafts). Our efforts have led to reinstitution of the traditional Guru-Shishya Parampara (master-disciple tradition) way of learning leading to training of young in ICH. There have been striking results like young girls coming forward to learn the Purulia Chau (inscribed in the UNESCO Representative List) which is a martial and acrobatic male dance. Artist clusters or co-operatives formed and trained by us are playing a critical role in sustaining on ground heritage education and promotion efforts. The 14 rural folk art centres established by us have become seats of learning, exchange, exposure and dissemination. We promote heritage awareness among public through innovative programmes like heritage photography and public place exhibitions (covered 3 cities),social media, development of a regular calendar of rural and urban heritage festivals, free for all urban cultural space (at Kolkata) etc. We organize heritage education programmes for schools and colleges (covered 500+ schools and colleges at West Bengal, Bihar, Delhi and Goa) where students get opportunities to interact with the traditional practitioners. We are partners of CCRT for building capacity of school teachers on heritage education. We are working with academic institutions and museums at India and abroad for engaging traditional artists in demonstration of their oral traditions, art and craft skills and participation in various seminars, conferences and other forums leading to increased capacities.  |
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| **C. Bilateral, sub-regional, regional and international cooperation** |
| *Report on activities carried out by your organization at the bilateral, sub-regional, regional or international levels for the implementation of the Convention, including initiatives such as the exchange of information and experience, and other joint initiatives, as referred to in Article 19 and OD 156. You may, for example, consider the following issues:*1. *sharing information and documentation concerning shared ICH (OD 87);*
2. *participating in regional cooperation activities including for example those of category 2 centres for intangible cultural heritage established under the auspices of UNESCO (OD 88);*
3. *developing networks of NGOs, communities, experts, centres of expertise and research institutes at sub-regional and regional levels to develop joint and interdisciplinary approaches concerning shared ICH (OD 86).*

*Not to exceed 250 words* |
| We actively promote exchange and collaboration between ICH practitioners in South Asia which have shared heritage through workshops and festivals with support of partners like British Council, American Center, Alliance Francaise etc. We have participated in international forums like WOMEX jointly with our partner organisation in Bangladesh and presented shared heritage of Bengal. Our flagship annual festival Sufi Sutra (since 2011) is an international festival supported by ICCR, Ministry of Culture, Government of West Bengal, Goa and Bihar and Corporate. 19 countries and 29 teams have performed Sufi and traditional music and done collaborative workshops. In 2015 the festival travels to Bangladesh. The festival has created awareness on Baul and Fakiri music (inscribed in the representative list) among Sufi practitioners. Our international partners like Maison des Cultures du Monde -France, Missing Voices-Denmark, World Music Network, Mithila Museum-Japan,Songlines-UK,Case de la India, Zaman Productions-France have supported dissemination and participation of 100+ traditional practitioners in diverse forums in 10 countries. We have collaborated with ICHCAP in their initiatives for research, capacity building and dissemination of safeguarding practices through their newsletters and conference on implementing 2003 tasks (2013). We are also collaborating with ICHCAP for greater networking and experience sharing among NGOs in the Asia-Pacific region and participated in two forums organised by them. Our models for ICH inventorying and safeguarding and development of cultural industries & tourism have been documented as best practices/case studies by UNESCO, UNWTO and various journals and international conference publications. The Ministry of External Affairs has supported sharing of our AFL model in Indian Ocean Network. We are regularly networking with stakeholders in advocacy for inclusion of culture in the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals).  |
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| **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 Committee meetings or those of the General Assembly? If yes, please indicate which meetings you attended and describe the nature of your contribution to the Committee’s work.**Not to exceed 250 words* |
| We participated at the 3.GA; 5.COM; 6.COM; 7.COM; 8.COM; 9.COM.We thank UNESCO for supporting our participation at 7.COM and 8.COM. Contact Base has actively participated in efforts by the ICH NGO Forum to strengthen networking and experience sharing on methodologies and approaches for safeguarding ICH. We have also participated in drafting of NGO statements and voicing of NGO view points during the IGCs. Some of the key points raised have been facilitating greater participation of NGO’s in mechanism of the convention and improvement in the transparency on the nomination procedures of experts and NGOs for the evaluation body. We have been an active member in the meetings of ICH NGOs held during the IGCs. In 8.COM we presented to the committee the view of NGO Forum on the point on evaluation criteria of NGOs. We are a member of the Editorial Board of the online magazine Heritage Alive (disseminated via ICH NGO Forum website) which targets dissemination of methodologies and good practices for safeguarding ICH. We are also a member of the working group on lighter ways of sharing safeguarding experiences.  |
| **D.2** *Has your organization served as a member of the Consultative Body or Evaluation Body (OD 26), or was it appointed in 2009 or 2010 to evaluate a nomination to the Urgent Safeguarding List or a request for International Assistance? If yes, 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 (OD 96) or in what way(s) do you foresee that it might provide such services in the future?**Not to exceed 500 words* |
| We have not provided any advisory services to the Committee so far. We have very strong on ground experience in safeguarding ICH (several domains and diverse demographies in India) and mediating between the state and the communities. We also have extensive research, evaluation and documentation skills. In the past 5 years, we have played a significant role in the international discourse on integrating culture in policy and planning for sustainable development. We can contribute in the following ways : (a) examination of effects of safeguarding plans, evaluation of safeguarding programmes and actions, (b) evaluation of requests for international assistance, (c) training and capacity building, (d) integration of culture in development policeis and (e) dissemination. We also look forward to extended scope for NGO participation in the mechanism of the Convention as raised in the IGCs in recent past. |
| **E. Capacities of your organization for evaluation of nominations, proposals and requests (as described in OD 27 and OD 96):** |
| **E.1.** *Nominations, proposals and requests are available for evaluation only in English or French. Do members of your organization or your staff demonstrate a very good command of English or French? If yes, please indicate which language(s) and the number of those members or staff.**Not to exceed 250 words* |
| English is our working (business) language in India and 15 members of our staff have strong competency in English. 4 of them have Master degrees in English. We have 6 persons in our management team who have relevant experience in evaluation and also excellent competency in English. We have only one staff with knowledge of French.  |
| **E.2.** *Does your organization have experience in working across several ICH domains? Please describe your experiences.**Not to exceed 250 words* |
| We have work experience in the following ICH domains: Oral Traditions & Expressions, Performing Arts, Traditional Crafts, and Knowledge on nature and universe, Rituals and Festive events. Our textual and audio visual documentation work has covered oral traditions and expressions, traditional crafts, rituals and traditional festivals of indigenous people including songs and rituals related to agriculture, weaving handlooms, life cycle events like marriage and child birth, death etc. The communities we have covered belong to diverse ethnic, religious and linguistic groups. They include coastal and nomadic communities, forest fringe communities, tribes in hills etc. Dying folk festivals have been rejuvenated through our community led cultural tourism efforts. The writers of ballads and songs, the artists performing social satires, storytellers and scroll painters have found new audiences and applications of their skills as they now work with local governments in social communication efforts. We have undertaken study on the traditional agricultural practices of forest communities to find out ways to integrate the same with scientific methodology. We have documented knowledge recognizing natural disaster among rural people. We are nationally and internationally recognised for playing a pioneering role in empowering rural and indigenous communities for working towards revival and revitalisation of their ICH.In 2011 UN Women and Master Card, Singapore awarded us the Most Innovative Community Outreach Project ( Project Inspire Award). Our Founder Director Amitava Bhattacharya received the prestigious Amazing Indian Award by India’s leading television channel Times Now for contribution towards revival of traditional arts (2013).  |
| **E.3.** *Describe the experience of your organization in evaluating and analysing documents such as proposals or applications.**Not to exceed 250 words* |
| We are advisory to the Department of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Department, Government of West Bengal and are involved in expert review of proposals and applications for various projects for development of the traditional craft sector. We have also evaluated nominations and applications for contests like media awards on rights of girl child (UNFPA Laadli Media Award), project ideas on social enterprise in contests organised by management education institutions etc.  |
| **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* |
| All our documentations on ICH, databases, website contents, research reports, policy and strategy documents, policy reports are in English. We have also published papers in English in several International Journals and books. We have 15 staff members proficient in drafting synthetic texts in English.  |
| **E.5.** *Does your organization have experience in working at the international level or the capacity to extrapolate from local experience to apply it within an international context? Please describe such experience.**Not to exceed 250 words* |
| We have been invited in various international forums to share our model and experience and explain how it may be applied in international contexts. UNWTO is actively promoting our model of community led responsible tourism and integrating intangible heritage in tourism itineraries in various forums like Silk Routes Ministerial Countries meeting (2013) and forums on responsible tourism at Bali (2011), Vietnam (2014), Bahrain (2014), Berlin (2013) etc. We have presented at forums of ICOMOS ISC on Cultural Tourism, several other academic networks like Tourism-Contact-Culture Research Network , UNESCO UNITWIN Network – Tourism, Culture, Development & Centre for Tourism and Cultural Change, UK . Our model for safeguarding ICH and leveraging ICH for social and economic contribution has been included in books on ‘ICH-brokers, facilitators and mediators. Critical success factors for the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage; and ‘Museums, Heritage and International Developments’ apart from publications by UNESCO, UNWTO and journals like International Journal on Living Heritage. A team of traditional practitioners from Bhutan has visited our rural creative hubs for capacity building under a project supported by EU. We have inspired youth at Kenya by sharing our model at IFCD supported African Stones Talk Symposium (2012). We have shared about Art for Life model at conference on integrating culture in developmental policy and planning at Hangzhou(2012), Korea (2014), World Culture Forum at Bali organized by Government of Indonesia (2013), Womex at Cardiff, Copenhagen and Spain, French Centre on ICH at Vitre (2014) etc. International teams of scholars regularly visit our creative hubs to understand our model and apply their learning. We have had researchers from all continents in our sites.  |
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| **F. Cooperation with UNESCO** |
| *Report on activities carried out by your organization in cooperation with UNESCO (both direct cooperation with UNESCO as well as activities carried out under the auspices of UNESCO or for which you have received the authorization to use the emblem of UNESCO/of the 2003 Convention, or financial support, such as e.g. funding from the Participation Program).**Not to exceed 250 words* |
| UNESCO New Delhi Office was an associate in our initiative Ethno-magic Going Global (EGG) supported by the European Union between 2009-2011. The project EGG targeted development of creative enterprise and strengthening access to local culture. We currently have national partnership with UNESCO, New Delhi office for rolling out our Art for Life model across India. We have collaborated with UNESCO in 2013 for development of cultural heritage policy for the State Government of Punjab. UNESCO and the State Government of West Bengal have signed a MOU for collaborating for safeguarding traditional craft. We are the implementing agency of a joint initiative by UNESCO and the Department of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise, Government of West Bengal to develop Rural Craft Hubs benefitting 3000 families of traditional crafts persons. At the international level we have been invited by UNESCO to present on Culture and Development at the International Congress "Culture: Key to Sustainable Development" held at Hangzhou (China) from 15 May to 17 May 2013. We regularly collaborate with UNESCO in capacity building initiatives targeting Government Functionaries in various autonomous organizations under the Ministry of Culture.  |
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| **G. Signature** |
| *The report must include the name and signature of the person empowered to sign it on behalf of the organization.* |
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| Name: | Ananya Bhattacharya |
| Title: | Secretary |
| Date: | 15.1.2015 |
| Signature: | Ananya Bhattacharya  |

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1. . In case your organization operates in several States, please clearly indicate which State or States are concerned by your answers when filling in parts B, C and E. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)