

Blueprint for “Documentation of Folk Songs of the Chokri (Chakhesang) Nagas” under the Scheme Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India, sanctioned under Sanction Letter No: 28-6/ICH-Scheme/53/2013-14/1368, Dated: 31st. March, 2014. /

### **1) Brief introduction of the project**

In a state inhabited by 16 major tribes along with other sub-tribes, their rich cultural heritage is passed down the generations through word of mouth, folk songs and oral traditions of stories. In the absence of language script and the tradition being oral, the beautiful traditions of folk songs sang in times of important life events such as celebrations, festivals, funeral and also as a medium of stories are practiced by select few and therefore needs to be preserved and promoted for the younger generations.

The sole media, which has kept the traditions alive, is folk tales and songs. Most Naga folk songs are about ways of life and celebrations. While romantic and historical songs reveal traces of ancestral incidents, most that survive today are songs of agricultural songs of sowing, harvest, thanksgiving etc. few are also known about eulogizing the bravery of warriors and heroes of yore, romantic tragedies in poetic melody.

No documentation exists with the community and the culture is passed on through oral traditions from generation to generation. With much importance being put on modern education and migration of increasing number of population to semi urban and urban areas, very few successors of this original heritage are aging. This is threatening to the survival of the beautiful folk tunes of the tribes. Therefore to preserve this intangible cultural heritage is felt to be an urgent need.

There happens to be no known research work carried out in these areas. A few documentary films are produced by broadcasting media. However, the same

remains inaccessible due to non existence of content archives, non sharing of the content, and the contents of the film were for a different purpose and as such do not fit with the desired use. Therefore, practical research and preservation measure such as audio visual documentation is a high priority and the specific factors for the elements seen as being at risk.

Some agreed reasons which threaten the survival of the skills and originality are as follows:

1. Population movements due to structural changes in the economy
2. Community depopulation due to poverty
3. Risk due to considerable changes to inhabitant's environment and circumstances such migration of population, dilution / fusion of a dialect)
4. Risk due to absent or insufficiently constructed system for inheriting (research systems, methods of transmitting knowledge, etc.)
5. Risk due to internal changes among youth (lessened interest, changes in religious beliefs, etc.)
6. Heavy impact due to worldwide globalization/westernization/popular culture/information explosion.
7. Risk corresponding to disappearance of cultural practices / heritage
8. Risk due to changing values

## **2) Objectives**

The main objective of documenting the records is for preservation, which would help the generations to understand the meaning and its significance, as well as see it and learn through demonstration / manuals.

The film content will be alternately investigative / narrative while live performance, demonstration and instructional formats may be incorporated wherever felt appropriate.

### **3) Implementation of the project**

The process of on field research on consultation and personal analysis, is best carried out by getting in direct contact with the experts who help practice it in the village, acclaimed /recognized achievers in the field in the state.

The experts who possess the original knowledge / skills are so few that it can be counted in finger. Other risk also exists in that the originality and significance and beauty of the age old ICH is in danger of becoming diluted in fusion with modernity without meaning. Towards this ends primary investigation has revealed that although practiced in various forms without refinement amongst the tribesmen, selected people in only few villages practice tradition of folk songs. Therefore the target shall zero-ed in to those which are exceptional and famous amongst the tribesmen.

Another means to capture this tradition is to identify popular cultural troupes which are active occasionally but not their full time occupation and therefore difficult to reach. This research shall investigate such troupes as an important source of data.

Audio visual documentation means of documentation will be used as a primary method. Traditional methods such as meetings, discussion and one to one interviews shall form the content wherever possible. The research has gone through consultation with community stakeholders, and has resulted in positive community response and direction and participation.

### **4) Time frame of the project**

|   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| Engagement with cultural troupe(s) / Society: | June – August 2014        |
| Interviews / meetings /Other input(s):        | August – September 2014   |
| Performance(s) / Demonstration(s):            | September - December 2014 |
| Editing and roughcuts :                       | December – January 2014   |

### **5) Locale**

Chrokri inhabited areas of the Phek District of Nagaland State.  
Tentative Villages : Chepoketa/ Ruzazho / Sakraba / Thurutsusu / Runguzu.

### **6) Photos (preliminary level) related to the project/art form)**

With the progress of the project, supporting graphics shall be emailed to the Sangeet Natak Academy.

### **7) Conclusion**

Following successful collection of contents, the postproduction of the film shall begin. Resources being obtained from various sources as stated earlier, the film record shall form an important resource material for preservation and promotion of the art form. Subsequently, the material may be shared with other tribes for possible ICH preservation reference and thereby finalize the compilation as a legitimate record and tool to protect the ICH of the community.

Peter Vero  
Soteria, High School Area  
Kohima, Nagaland. Pin: 797001  
Cell No: 9436016710



Scheme for “Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India”

Form for National Inventory Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage of India

- A. Name of the State **NAGALAND**
- B. Name of the Element/Cultural Tradition (in English) **Documentation of folk songs of the Chokri (Chakhesang) Nagas**
- B.1. Name of the element in the language and script of the community  
Concerned, if applicable **NOT APPLICABLE**
- C. Name of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned (Identify clearly either of these concerned with the practice of the said element/cultural tradition) **CHOKRI COMMUNITY OF THE CHAKHESANG NAGAS**
- D. Geographical location and range of the element/cultural tradition (Please write about the other states in which the said element/tradition is present  
**CONFINED IN THE PHEK DISTRICT (NAGALAND) DIVISIONS UNDER PHEK, CHOZUBA, CENTER CHAKHESANG**
- E. Identification and definition of the element/cultural tradition of the India  
(Write “Yes” in one or more boxes to identify the domain(s) of intangible cultural heritage manifested by the element. If you tick ‘others’, specify the domain(s) in brackets.)
- (  ) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage
  - (  ) performing arts
  - (  ) social practices, rituals and festive events
  - (  ) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe
  - (  ) traditional craftsmanship
  - other(s) ( )
- F. Provide a brief summary description of the element that can introduce it to readers who have never seen or experienced it  
**The chokri community is a sub community under the tribe Chakhesang (Naga). the community cherishes the folk song culture as their proud heritage, which forms as part of every walk of life –work, celebration, dances, folk media, war cry, solo, duet, trio and many such**

possibilities. the meolodius art today stands the threat of invasion of modern world cultures. however, people with original knowledge and talents have successfully transferred the heritage to the successive generation till date.

- G. Who are the bearers and practitioners of the element/Cultural Traditions? Are there any specific roles or categories of persons with special responsibilities for the practice and transmission of it? If yes, who are they and what are their responsibilities?

By nature, some skilled group of the elderly in every generation are entrusted to lead, train and exhibit the cultures and tradition. these are comprised of youth, elederly women and men. in modern times, villages have their own cultural commitees which finctions only during the special ocaasions of the village. chakheasng tribe as a whole have a chakhesang cultural research center situated at chetheba town in phek district, which could do little till date.

- H. How are the knowledge and skills related to the element transmitted today?

In the absence of literary script and the media being oral, the experts carry the knowledge in their memory. as such, these people are most wanted in the transmission of the element, as they possess the skill, knowledge and have all the idea in their memory.

- I. What social functions and cultural meanings do the element/cultural tradition have today for its community?

Every cultural function and festival is incomplete without the presence of the beauty of folk songs. culturally, the songs are a media to exhibit the presenters' talent itself, celebrate life, an accomplished personality, community, success, festival, rites etc. it also has deep reverance as the element is their heritage and unique to their identity to the outsider.

- J. Is there any part of the element that is not compatible with existing international human rights instruments or with the requirement of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, or with sustainable development? I.e. describe any aspect of the element/cultural tradition that may be unacceptable to Law of the country or may be in opposition to practicing community's harmony with others.

NON

- K. Your Project's contribution to ensuring visibility, awareness and encouraging dialogue related to the element/cultural tradition

The response of the community people has been overwhelming. initiatives which failed on the part of the pioneers owing to lack of fund, knowledge and idea have been shared with the producer for future endeavour- such as old method of recorded audio, writing and

translation of the genres of the element etc. as such, the present they have high expectations from the project in a big way.

L. Information about the safeguarding measures that may protect or promote the element/cultural tradition

a. (Write "Yes" in one or more boxes to identify the safeguarding measures that have been and are currently being taken by the communities, groups or individuals concerned)

i. (✓ ) transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education

ii. (✓ ) identification, documentation, research

iii. (✓ ) preservation, protection

iv. (✓ ) promotion, enhancement

v. (✓ ) revitalization

b. Write about the measures taken at local, state and national level by the Authorities to safeguard the element/cultural tradition?

At local level, the practices of the element is a way of life. They are oblivious of the fact that the invasion of information explosion poses a threat to the element.

At the state level, the community are used as a commodity for presentation/exhibitions at important functions to officials for some occasions for little remuneration. However, the knowledge and will to promote, preserve, document, etc are lacking, perhaps owing to various reasons such as lack of knowledge of the importance of the element, fund constraint, etc.

At national level, the present project such as ICH is the first ever known to the producer and the community as well.

M. Write about the threats, if any, to the element/cultural tradition related to its practice, visibility and future longevity. Give facts and relevant reasons based on the current scenario.

As aforementioned invasion of the information explosion of western influence, Bollywood, and internet, popular culture etc are the sources of threat.

Another threat felt by the people in the community is that fusion of the folk song element could corrupt the originality and beauty of the element and lead to replacement.

N. Safeguarding measures proposed

(This section should identify and describe safeguarding measures to protect and promote the element/cultural tradition. Such measures should be concrete and

can be implemented to formulate future cultural policy for safeguarding and promoting the element/cultural tradition in the state)

1. Institutionalisation of the element in education

2. Funding of research, multimedia teaching and learning aid for the element

O. Community Participation

(Write about the participation of communities, groups and individuals related to the element/cultural tradition in formulation of your project)

Due to poor economic condition of the people, there are only handful leaders who take the importance of the cultural element seriously. However, rich or poor alike are proud of their heritage.

The people in all levels are so welcoming. However, fund constraint in organising larger number of people for longer days of involvement is a hamper.

P. Concerned community organization(s) or representative(s)

(Provide detailed contact information for each community organization or representative or other non-governmental organization that is concerned with the element such as associations, organizations, clubs, guilds, steering committees, etc.)

- i. Name of the entity                      **Chakhesang Cultural Research Center Chetheba,  
Phek, District Nagaland**
- ii. Name and title of the contact person    **Mr Choyio, Chairman**
- iii. Address                                      **Chakhesang Cultural Research Center Chetheba,  
Phek, District Nagaland**
- iv. Telephone number                      **+91 9402809160**
- v. E-mail                                         **Not available**
- vi. Other relevant information

Q. Give information of any Inventory, database or data creation centre (local/state/national) that you may be aware of or of any office, agency, organisation or body involved in the maintenance of the said inventory etc.

**NON**



R. Principal published references or documentation available on the element/cultural tradition

(Books, articles, audio-visual materials, names and addresses of reference libraries, museums, private endeavours of artistes/individuals for preservation of the said element, publications or websites)

**Non**

Signature:



Name & Designation: **Peter Vero**  
**Beneficiary ICH 2013-14**

Address:

**Peter Vero**  
**Soteria, High School Area,**  
**Kohima Nagaland 797001**  
**Mobile : 9436016710**  
**Email: [petervero@gmail.com](mailto:petervero@gmail.com)**

## Progress Report on

“Documentation of Folk Songs of the Chokri (Chakhesang) Nagas” under the Scheme Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India, sanctioned under Sanction Letter No: 28-6/ICH-Scheme/53/2013-14/1368, Dated: 31st. March, 2014. /

In the process of acquiring information and data for the project, it has been found that the Chokrimi – people of Chokri community have been wishing and desiring for some documentation initiative such as the one being carried out to preserve various cultural heritage of the age old community practices.

The response of the people the producer met has been very encouraging and welcoming. As stated in the proposal, fusion of the original folk culture is taking place. Many surviving people who possess the original knowledge and talents have strong reservation of the fusion versions which they feel are abuses to the original. According to them, there are very few who could narrate and perform such original songs and their significance.

In this process many telephone inquiries, conversations, appointments, visits and meetings have taken place in villages and towns as follows:

- 1) Meeting with Mr. Choyio, Chairman of Chakhesang Cultural Research Center. (June 10, 2014)
- 2) Meeting with Cultural ‘Razuve’ of Chepoketami Village (June 22, 2014)  
Meeting with Thevopisumi Village folk song trainers / experts . (July 14, 2014)
- 3) Meeting with community leader of Dzulhami Village (Mr. Z. Vadeo), Khulazu Basa Village(Mr. Zacinu). (July 21, 2014)

- 4) Meeting with community leaders of Dzulhami Village, Sakraba Village and Phusachodu Village. (August 5, 2014)
- 5) Meeting with other village presenter of Phusachodu Village (August 18, 2014)

In undertaking activities mentioned above, the files in the attachment are videos acquired during the process. The video files are intentionally compressed to inferior quality (upto 30%) for web uploading problem. Therefore original video quality shall be far superior.



Dated 27<sup>th</sup> August 2014  
Peter Vero  
Soteria, High School Area  
Kohima, Nagaland. Pin: 797001  
Cell No: 9436016710