

REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF HUMANITY

**Deadline: 31 March 2026
for possible inscription in 2027**

Instructions for completing the form are available at:
<https://ich.unesco.org/en/forms>

A. State Party or States Parties

India

B. Name of the element

B.1. Name of the element in the languages and scripts of the community(ies) concerned

अगरिया जनजाति के जंगरहित लोहा बनाने का ज्ञान

B.2. Name of the element in English

Agaria Communities' Iron Smelting Knowledge

C. Name of the communities, groups or individuals concerned

The **Agariya Lohar** community is a traditional artisan group known for their expertise in ironwork and blacksmithing. They have historically played a vital role in rural economies by crafting agricultural tools, weapons, and everyday iron implements. Their skills are passed down through generations, reflecting a deep understanding of metal, fire, and craftsmanship. Despite modern changes, many Agariya Lohars continue to uphold their ancestral occupation with dedication and pride.

Individuals and Villages:

1. **Gaura** – Tokh Singh, Heera Singh, Singh Bhanwar
2. **Kuthela** – Moti Singh Maravi
3. **Kiwad** – Naan Saay Maravi

1. General information about the element

*For **Criterion U.1**, States shall demonstrate that ‘the element constitutes intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention’.*

1.1. *Provide a brief description of the element that can introduce it to readers who have never seen or experienced it.*

Not to exceed 300 words

The Agarias are a traditional community of iron smelters that are scattered across villages in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh. In the traditional Agaria technique, iron ore is processed in a low-shaft furnace built of clay. The blast is produced by kettledrum-like bellows consisting of bamboo nozzles and hollowed wood. The air is blown in through a clay tuyere shaped like a trumpet. Unlike the modern iron and steel industry, which relies primarily on fossil fuels, the Agaria process of iron smelting is charcoal-based. They mine the ore manually, causing minimal damage to the environment. The traditionally manufactured agricultural implements but in the recent years they have diversified the craft significantly.

1.2. *Who are the bearers and practitioners of the element? Are there any specific roles, including gender-related ones or categories of persons with special responsibilities for the practice and transmission of the element? If so, who are they and what are their responsibilities?*

Not to exceed 100 words

A whole family is involved in the production process. Traditionally both men and women collect the ore and make the charcoal for the furnaces. At dusk the women clean and prepare the kilns for the next day's work, by cleaning and breaking up the pieces of ore and roasting them in an ordinary fire; the tuyeres (cylindrical clay vents for delivering air to a furnace) are rolled by hand and made by the women as well. During smelting operations, the women work the bellows, and the men hammer and fashion the ore on anvils. The construction of a new furnace is an important event involving the whole family: the men dig the holes for the posts and do the heavy work, the women plaster the walls, and the children bring water and clay from the river.

1.3. *How are the knowledge and skills related to the element transmitted today?*

Not to exceed 100 words

The knowledge is passed down generationally from their forefathers. All aspects of the craft from working the furnace to collecting the ore are taught to the younger male members of the family who take control of the family as a production unit.

1.4. *What social functions and cultural meanings does the element have nowadays for the communities concerned?*

Not to exceed 200 words

Agaria Metal crafting is the primary source of livelihood for the families involved in the same. Given the significance of the craft in their lives, they also revere the furnace — the very heart of their work — and worship it as the source of their sustenance. They also continue to produce agricultural tools that play a vital role in the broader farming practices of their region.

- 1.5. *Can the State Party or States Parties confirm that nothing in the element is incompatible with existing international human rights instruments?*

Not to exceed 50 words

Yes, it can be confirmed that nothing in the element is incompatible with existing international human rights instruments.

- 1.6. *Can the State Party or States Parties confirm that nothing in the element could be perceived as not compatible with the requirement of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals?*

Not to exceed 50 words

Yes, it can be confirmed nothing in the element could be perceived as not compatible with the requirement of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals

- 1.7. *Can the State Party or States Parties confirm that nothing in the element could be perceived as not compatible with the requirement of sustainable development?*

Not to exceed 50 words

Yes, it can be confirmed that nothing in the element could be perceived as not compatible with the requirement of sustainable development

- 1.8. *Are there customary practices governing access to the element? If yes, describe any specific measures that are in place to ensure their respect.*

Not to exceed 100 words

The metal products constructed are put for sale in the local market, thus the products are openly available along with the knowledge about the craft. Thus, there is no need to create safeguards to protect access to the element.

2. Contribution to visibility, awareness, dialogue and sustainable development

For Criterion R.2, the States shall demonstrate that 'Inscription of the element will contribute to ensuring visibility and awareness of the significance of the intangible cultural heritage and to encouraging dialogue, thus reflecting cultural diversity worldwide and testifying to human creativity'. In addition, States are encouraged, with reference to Chapter VI of the Operational Directives, to recognize the interdependence between the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and sustainable development.

Given its extensive nature, criterion R.2 will be assessed based on the information provided in the nomination file as a whole including the answers provided in this section.

2.1. Do communities concerned consider that the element contributes to the following?

- ☒ Ensuring visibility and awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage
- ☐ Encouraging dialogue
- ☒ Reflecting cultural diversity and testifying to human creativity

2.2. Do communities concerned consider that the element contributes to the following? (select only relevant options)

- ☐ Food security
- ☐ Health care
- ☐ Quality education
- ☒ Gender equality
- ☐ Inclusive economic development
- ☒ Environmental sustainability including climate change
- ☐ Peace and social cohesion
- ☐ Others (please specify):

2.3. Provide explanations in support of the statement(s) made above, as appropriate.

Not to exceed 200 words

The nomination will offer artisans a global platform to showcase their craftsmanship and creativity. For the community, craft is not merely an artistic pursuit but a vital source of livelihood that sustains entire households. Women form an important part of the household and help in creating the final output. The raw materials—particularly iron—are gathered with great care and respect for the environment, ensuring minimal ecological impact. This responsible approach highlights a harmonious relationship with nature, where resource use is thoughtful and regenerative rather than extractive.

2.4. States are encouraged to submit audiovisual materials that convey the communities' voice in support of the statements made above (optional).

- ☒ Materials (written, audiovisual or any other way) are submitted (referred to as 'R.2 materials')

3. Safeguarding measures

For Criterion R.3, States shall demonstrate that ‘safeguarding measures are elaborated that may protect and promote the element’.

What safeguarding measures are put in place to protect and promote the element?

Include in your answer:

- *the description of the safeguarding measures;*
- *the communities’ role in the planning of measures described;*
- *the communities’ role in the implementation of measures described.*

Not to exceed 500 words

Traditionally, the artisans worked on producing agricultural implements. In recent years, the advancement of agricultural equipment has resulted in a decline in the demand for handmade tools. In addition to the same, the artisans find it difficult to compete with mass produced agricultural implements. To combat the same, the community has diversified into creating more artistic product expanding on the traditional craft. They are also working on making the craft more visible to the general population. This has been achieved through in-depth documentation undertaken by local museums like Indra Gandhi Manav Sangrahalaya and Tribal Museum, both situated in Bhopal. These museums also provide the space for the artisans to come and demonstrate the craft on regular intervals. In addition, to the same the craftsmen have been working with schools to showcase the craft to children. The increased visibility of the craft is a means to educate the general masses about the tradition and instil a sense of pride in the community for their own traditional craft.

4. Community participation in the nomination process and consent

For Criterion R.4, States shall demonstrate that ‘the element has been nominated following the widest possible participation of the community, group or, if applicable, individuals concerned and with their free, prior and informed consent’.

4.1. Describe how the communities, groups or individuals concerned have actively participated in all stages of the preparation of the nomination.

Not to exceed 300 words

All the information for the nomination was collected from the community. This involved the community providing video consent letters and active participation in providing detailed demonstration of the craft.

- ☐ Consent (written, audiovisual or any other way) to the nomination of the element from the communities, groups or individuals concerned is attached in support to the description above (referred to as ‘consent materials’)

4.2. Community organizations or representatives concerned

Contact person for the communities:

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.):

Family name:

Given name:

Institution/position:

Address:

Telephone number:

Email address:

Other relevant information:

- ☐ Additional contact information for main community organizations or representatives, non-governmental organizations or other bodies concerned with the element are attached in a separate annex, and their details can be published on the website of the Convention as part of the nomination

5. Inventory

For Criterion R.5, States shall demonstrate that the element is identified and included in an inventory of the intangible cultural heritage present in the territory(ies) of the submitting State(s) Party(ies) in conformity with Articles 11 and 12 of the Convention.

5.1. Name of the inventory(ies) in which the element is included

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5.2. Name of the office(s), agency(ies), organization(s) or body(ies) responsible for maintaining and updating that (those) inventory(ies), both in the original language and in translation when the original language is not English or French

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5.3. Reference number(s) and name(s) of the element in the relevant inventory(ies)

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5.4. Date of the element's inclusion in the inventory(ies)

Is the information concerning the updating and periodicity of the inventory(ies), as well as the participation of communities, groups and NGOs concerned to the inventorying process, included in the periodic report on the implementation of the Convention? ☐ Yes, the information is included in the periodic report. Specify in the box below the year in which that report was submitted ☐ No, the information is not included in the periodic report. Provide information in the box below <i>Not to exceed 200 words</i>
☐ An extract of inventory(ies) in English or in French and in the original language, if different, is submitted

6. Checklist for audiovisual materials

Confirm that the following audiovisual materials have been submitted:

- ☒ 10 recent photographs in high definition submitted
- ☒ Form ICH-07-photo is attached to grant rights for the 10 photographs submitted
- ☒ A video (from 5 to 10 minutes) is submitted
- ☒ Form ICH-07-video is attached to grant rights for the video submitted
- ☐ R.2 materials (written, audiovisual or any other way) submitted (*optional – with reference to section 2.3; audiovisual materials should last no more than ten minutes*)
- ☒ Form ICH-07-video is attached to grant rights for the R.2 materials submitted (*only if the materials are audiovisual*)
- ☒ Consent materials (written, audiovisual or any other way) submitted (*with reference to section 4.1; audiovisual materials should last no more than ten minutes*)
- ☒ Form ICH-07-video is attached to grant rights for the consent materials submitted (*only if the materials are audiovisual*)

7. Correspondence and signature

7.1. Designated contact person

Provide the contact details of a single person responsible for all correspondence concerning the nomination. For multinational nominations, provide complete contact information for one person designated by the States Parties as the main contact person for all correspondence relating to the nomination.

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.):
Family name:
Given name:
Institution/position:
Address:
Telephone number:
Email address:
Other relevant information:

7.2. Other contact persons (for multinational nomination only)

Provide below complete contact information for one person in each submitting State, other than the primary contact person identified above.

Title (Ms/Mr, etc.):
Family name:
Given name:
Institution/position:
Address:
Telephone number:
Email address:
Other relevant information:

7.3. Signature on behalf of the State Party or States Parties

Name:
Title:
Date:
Signature:

7.4. Name(s), title(s) and signature(s) of other official(s) (for multinational nominations only).

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