REPORT ON THE STATUS OF AN ELEMENT INSCRIBED ON THE LIST OF INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN NEED OF URGENT SAFEGUARDING

DEADLINE 15 DECEMBER 2019 FOR EXAMINATION IN 2020

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. COVER SHEET</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.1. State Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>People’s Republic of China</td>
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<tr>
<td>A.2. Date of deposit of the instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession</td>
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<td>This information is available online.</td>
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<td>December 2, 2004</td>
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<td>A.3. Element inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List that is the subject of this report</td>
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<tr>
<td>For multinational elements, please indicate the other States concerned.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of element: Hezhen Yimakan storytelling</td>
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<td>Inscribed in: 2011</td>
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<td>A.4. Reporting period covered by this report</td>
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<td>Please indicate the period covered by this report.</td>
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<td>Beginning date: January 2016</td>
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<td>A.5. Other elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, if any</td>
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<tr>
<td>Please list all other elements from your country inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, together with the year of inscription; for multinational elements, please indicate the other States concerned.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qiang New Year festival (2009)</td>
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<td>Traditional design and practices for building Chinese wooden arch bridges (2009)</td>
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<td>Traditional Li textile techniques: spinning, dyeing, weaving and embroidering (2009)</td>
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<td>Watertight-bulkhead technology of Chinese junks (2010)</td>
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<td>Wooden movable-type printing of China (2010)</td>
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<td>Meshrep (2010)</td>
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### A.6. Executive summary of the report

Please provide an executive summary of the report that will allow general readers to understand the current status of the element, any positive or negative impacts of inscription, the implementation of safeguarding measures during the reporting period and their possible update for the following years.

Between 400 and 600 words

The Hezhen people have long inhabited the reaches of three rivers including Amur River, Sungari River, and Ussuri River in northeast China. With a population of 5,354, accounting for merely 0.0004% of the total population of China (according to the Sixth National Population Census in 2010), it is one of the smallest ethnic minorities in China. Yimakan storytelling is a time-honored oral art in the form of singing and speaking that has been transmitted from generation to generation by the Hezhen people. It is narrated by performers in the Hezhen language in both a rhythmic and prosaic manner. Its themes cover heroic deeds, shamanic beliefs, fishing and hunting life, folk customs and romance, thus showing Hezhen collective memory, education, and entertainment in seasonal labor and festivals. In May 2006, Yimakan storytelling was inscribed on the list of representative elements of national intangible cultural heritage. In November 2011, it was inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List. In May 2016, President Xi Jinping came to Tongjiang City, Heilongjiang Province. He visited the Hezhen folklore exhibition and watched the teaching of Yimakan storytelling. He praised the Hezhen people for their long history and rich culture, especially their superb fishing and hunting skills, exquisite pattern art, and the great charm of Yimakan storytelling.

Since the first periodic report in 2016, the Hezhen people have carried forward their culture with more enthusiasm, and more people have spontaneously participated in the safeguarding and transmission of Yimakan storytelling, and conducted a series of activities accordingly. This promotes the protection of the Hezhen dialect and the revitalization of their cultural traditions, as well as further strengthening the cultural identity and historical continuity of relevant communities, groups, and individuals. Chinese governments at all levels and local cultural authorities continue to support community construction, policy making, capital investment, and other relevant aspects, which makes traditional practices maintained, and more non-governmental organizations and civil society are actively involved. During this reporting period, the safeguarding of Yimakan storytelling was more comprehensively implemented as follows:

Firstly, the practice of Yimakan storytelling in transmission and practice centers and the form of independent learning have been paralleled, and the size of the inheritance group and its social popularity have been multiplied. Secondly, the team of bearers continues to grow, and the number of female practitioners has increased significantly, forming a group of bearers of old, middle-aged, and young people. Thirdly, after taking local actions within communities, one *sagdį ūrėnu* (Mergen stories and long legends) and many *uskulė ūrėnu* (short stories) have been revitalized, and live practice has been strengthened in the local cultural context. Fourthly, teaching the Hezhen dialect in transmission and practice centers and WeChat groups continues to improve, and great achievements have been made in preserving the Hezhen language. Fifthly, importance has been attached to research of the art of Yimakan storytelling, compilation of teaching materials, establishment of special topics, and publication of safeguarding outcomes. Sixthly, the transmission and practice centers, WeChat, and family inheritance are used as practice channels, and the mechanisms of community and intergenerational transmission are becoming mature. Seventhly, the right to transmit and recreate Yimakan storytelling is respected, its formats are diverse, flexible and personalized, and its content has involved in the daily life and deeply integrated with folklore practices. Eighthly, the cognitive, educational, and entertaining functions of folk storytelling have been improved. The new presentation forms, such as performances by Yimakan storytelling art troupes and Yimakan plays, have brought the element from the classroom to the stage, from the
community to the whole country. It has promoted the dynamic transmission of Yimakan storytelling, and reduced various risks that have once threatened the element.

The above safeguarding practices have given a positive response to the specific suggestions from the Committee in 2017 (Decision 12.COM 8.c.8):

1) continue to identify several bearers and provide financial assistance, thus stimulating the community’s cultural self-confidence and consciousness to safeguard the ICH as a whole;

2) continue to support the transmission of Yimakan storytelling and protect the Hezhen dialect, and expand the network of transmission centers in Hezhen communities;

3) continue to consolidate the digital archiving of the element, laying foundation for the establishment of a thematic database;

4) While Yimakan storytelling is incorporated into formal education, traditional modes of transmission have been improved. Currently, the social awareness of Yimakan storytelling has achieved regional consensus and received wide attention and support from the whole society. Hezhen Yimakan storytelling has become an important symbol of ICH in Heilongjiang Province. In 2019, the safeguarding of Yimakan storytelling was selected by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of China as a case of good safeguarding practice. However, the impetus for the maintenance and development of oral arts is still insufficient, especially the extreme endangerment of the Hezhen language has not yet been fundamentally reversed, and then the oral transmission and communication of the element are plagued with difficulties, and its viabilities is still threatened and at risk.

### A.7. Contact person for correspondence

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title (Ms/Mr, etc.):</th>
<th>Ms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family name:</td>
<td>Wu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Given name:</td>
<td>Xuan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution/position:</td>
<td>Center for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Heilongjiang Province, China / Head of Research Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>FL-20 Jinrong Dasha, No. 10 Hongjunjie, Nangang District, Harbin City, Heilongjiang Province 150001, China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone number:</td>
<td>0086-15145096963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email address:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hjlsfybhzx@126.com">hjlsfybhzx@126.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other relevant information:</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hljfwz.cn">www.hljfwz.cn</a> (website for Heilongjiang Intangible Cultural Heritage)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.hezhezu.com">www.hezhezu.com</a> (website for the Hezhen people in China)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. STATUS OF ELEMENT INSCRIBED ON THE URGENT SAFEGUARDING LIST

Refer to the nomination file or to previous reports, if any, as the basis for reporting on the current status of the element, and report only on relevant changes since the date of inscription on the List or since the previous report. Nomination files, specific timetables and earlier reports, if any, are available at [https://ich.unesco.org](https://ich.unesco.org) or from the Secretariat, upon request.

The State Party shall pay special attention to the role of gender and shall endeavour to ensure the widest possible participation of the communities, groups and, where applicable, individuals concerned as well as relevant non-governmental organizations during the process of preparing this report, and is asked to describe how it has done so in point D below.

B.1. Social and cultural functions

Please explain the social and cultural functions and meanings of the element today, within and for its community, the characteristics of the bearers and practitioners, and any specific roles or categories of persons with special responsibilities towards the element, among others. Attention should be given to any relevant changes related to inscription criterion U.1 ("the element constitutes intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention").

Between 200 and 500 words

Yimakan storytelling always advocates heroes, promotes justice, bravery and kindness, pursues freedom and peace, which reflects the harmony between man and nature. It has profoundly influenced the values and spirit of the Hezhen people in the long collective practice of its communities. With the effective safeguarding, the element is respected and loved by the people, and more and more young Hezhen people are consciously participating in the transmission and practice. Based on Yimakan stories, Hezhen people have enriched their cultural life in communities by increasing diverse artistic creation, thus the number of new works has increased sharply and the audience is gradually expanding. The cultural identity, ethnic self-esteem and self-confidence of the Hezhen people have been drastically improved, and community cohesion has developed in pace with social inclusion. Yimakan storytelling has been strengthened in such festivals as Urgun Festival, Deer Festival, Horkan Cultural Festival, and life rituals including weddings and birthdays. Its oral practice also exerts multiple social and cultural functions of maintaining collective memory, teaching traditional virtues and entertaining. At the same time, through the Yimakan storytelling art troupes, Yimakan eco plays and dance dramas, Hezhen folklore garden tours, and other new ways, Yimakan storytelling is merged into local cultural exchanges and the exhibitions and performances of ICH. Thus, it acts as a dynamic window to understand Hezhen communities and enhances cultural dialogue and mutual respect among different ethnic groups, communities, and regions.

Remarkably, the transmission and practice of the element has started an upsurge of learning the Hezhen dialect, and Hezhen language learning has become the curriculum in many schools. It has been popular for community members, especially young people, to learn their own language consciously. For the Hezhen language, which was identified as "seriously endangered" by UNESCO, the people are now more active and have shouldered the responsibility spontaneously to organize dialect learning and Yimakan storytelling exchanges, thus gradually bringing this endangered language, which bears historical memory and cultural roots, back to daily life.

Yimakanqi mafa,Yimakan storytelling folk artists, are now identified as the representative bearers of ICH by cultural authorities at all levels upon recommendation of communities, and their identities have changed from leaders, shamans, and elders to the custodians and spokespersons of their cultural heritage. They shoulder the special responsibility of transmitting Yimakan sagdi jarnmu and uskulj jarnmu, story motifs, traditional titles, intonation and tune, and narrative art. They transmitted Yimakan storytelling off work and displayed in festivals and rituals, with the increase of social activities and the constant improvement of cultural status. Under their leadership and inspiration, more and more
Hezhen people in local communities have become enthusiastic practitioners of Yimakan storytelling, thereby creating a strong atmosphere of transmission and practice. Some practitioners have got the chance to perform after learning the element. Those who cannot participate in the on-the-spot training at the transmission and practice center actively asked the organization responsible for safeguarding the element to share audio and video materials on the Internet, thus a group of self-learning and self-training practitioners grew up through online exchange. You Di, a female trainee, expressed that “Yimakan storytelling is an ethnic treasure that has recorded numerous stories of our ancestors. I hope we can better transmit it, let more people understand it, and live up to the attention given to the Hezhen people from all ethnic groups in China!”

There is a total of 84 practitioners. They respectively teach in six Yimakan transmission and practice centers in Heilongjiang Province every week. Meanwhile, four practitioners have organized teaching activities in four WeChat groups which were spontaneously established by Hezhen people on Internet platforms, including “Hezhen People”, “Bacha Hezhen Language Learning”, “Hezhen Yimakan Language”, and “Pioneer of International Phonetic Alphabet”. These representative bearers are playing the role of transmitting, helping, and leading with full enthusiasm, making due contributions to the cultivation of intergenerational talents of Yimakan, the expansion of the range of practitioners and the formation of a community transmission network, to ensure the viability of the element.

### B.2. Assessment of its viability and current risks

Please describe the current level of viability of the element, particularly the frequency and extent of its practice, the strength of traditional modes of transmission, the demographics of practitioners and audiences and its sustainability. Please also identify and describe the threats, if any, to the element’s continued transmission and enactment and describe the severity and immediacy of such threats, giving particular attention to any strengthening or weakening of the element’s viability subsequent to inscription.

*Between 200 and 500 words*

Through years of safeguarding, Yimakan storytelling has been recognized by Hezhen people and the public, and has increased prosperity of Hezhen folk culture. Currently, the practitioners of Yimakan storytelling are taking an active part in various transmission, practice and festival activities, and Yimakan storytelling is presented in many cultural and arts activities, including traditional festivals, international cultural and artistic exchanges. In particular, its tie with daily life has been improved. Local people usually tell corresponding Yimakan stories at weddings, funerals, rituals, ceremonies and family gatherings. Therefore, Yimakan storytelling and Hezhen language-speaking have become a fashion of Hezhen people. The numerous practitioners learn from each other in a united and harmonious atmosphere. Compared with the period of inscription in 2011 and the first periodic report in 2016, the bearers have been increased from 5 to 14 and to 84, including 63 females and 21 males. Among them, 14 bearers are under 20 years old (7 females and 7 males), 6 bearers are 20-30 years old (4 females and 2 males), 36 bearers are 30-50 years old (30 females and 6 males), 29 bearers are over 50 years old (23 females and 6 males). At the same time, the audiences of Yimakan storytelling have spread from original concentrated practice areas to all Hezhen communities, and even to the total Hezhen population across the country.

Although the number of activities in the transmission and practice centers has decreased since the first periodic report, the number of transmitting activities on WeChat has increased year by year. Nearly 300 hours class have been taught in six transmission and practice centers over the past four years, and more than 600 hours class have been taught on WeChat. The number of trainees who learn Yimakan storytelling has grown from nearly 200 to more than 400. Their average age is about 40, and most of them can speak the Hezhen dialect for daily use.

After the inscription of Yimakan storytelling, its viability has been greatly improved, but the threats to its continued transmission and practice still exist without radical changes. In summary, there are five factors: First, due to the process of global economic integration and the impact of foreign culture, the Hezhen people’s living environment for fishing and hunting has undergone drastic changes, and the cultural space that Yimakan
storytelling relies on is diminishing. Second, the critically endangered trend of the Hezhen dialect has become a major obstacle for its continued transmission. As the elders passed away in recent years, there are only a dozen people who can proficiently use the Hezhen language. Only 30% of the language has been revived through the transmission and practice of Yimakan storytelling, the teaching and revival recording of the language. Third, few young people are willing to devote to the learning and practice of Yimakan storytelling, and the currently expanding practitioners are also at risk of reduction at any time. Fourth, some trainees quit due to the lack of pragmatic communication environment and the difficulty to learn Yimakan storytelling and Hezhen languages. Fifth, there is an over-commercialization tendency to improperly change traditional Yimakan storytelling for stage performance. Such decontextualization has reduced some storytelling activities to simplistic performances, and it cannot sustain the livelihood.

### B.3. Implementation of safeguarding measures

*Please report on the safeguarding measures described in the nomination file, and previous report, if any. Describe how they have been implemented and how they have substantially contributed to the safeguarding of the element during the reporting period, taking note of external or internal constraints such as limited resources. Include, in particular, information on the measures taken to ensure the viability of the element by enabling the community to continue to practise and transmit it. Include the following detailed information concerning the implementation of the set of safeguarding measures or safeguarding plan:*

#### B.3a. Objectives and results

*Indicate what primary objective(s) were addressed and what concrete results were attained during the reporting period.*

*Between 200 and 500 words*

(1) Representative bearers has been supported and encouraged to take apprentices. The representative bearers are subsidized to solve their worries and enhance their motivation to take apprentices. They actively take part in transmission and safeguarding activities in communities. So far, there are 16 bearers to teach in transmission and practice centers, with more than 100 regular trainees, and more than 80 excellent successors of the element has been cultivated.

(2) Importance has been attached to Hezhen language teaching, and efforts have been made to rescue the dialect. The Hezhen language is taught at Yimakan storytelling transmission and practice centers and through Hezhen language WeChat groups. Hezhen language courses have been offered in schools in main settlements. Hezhen language learning is also available on the transmission network of minority languages, and five Hezhen language tutorials or reference books have been published. At present, the number of people who master more than 20% of the Hezhen language has increased by more than 100; thus, the Hezhen language has effectively been revived from its endangered condition.

(3) Transmission and practice centers have been improved and the transmission mechanism has been enhanced. Besides the five Yimakan storytelling transmission and practice centers established in the communities, the Fuyuan Transmission and Practice Center has been newly established and equipped with supporting facilities. The Center for the Safeguarding of ICH compiled two *sagdi jarimku* teaching materials in four years, and organized bearers to carry out transmission and practice activities. A competition or assessment is held every six months or once a year. In combination with family inheritance and social transmission of spontaneous WeChat groups, the community transmission and intergenerational inheritance mechanism has been improved to ensure its continuity.

(4) Field research was organized to enrich the archives. The cultural authorities, safeguarding and research institutions at all levels continued to organize experts, scholars and relevant professionals to conduct field research in the communities, in order to make the status of the element and its practitioners recorded, collated and researched,
and to establish a big data platform for Hezhen cultural heritage.

(5) A platform for exhibition and performance was built to increase the frequency of practice. In the Hezhen Cultural Ecological Reserve, activities such as transmission, performance, promotion and exchanges were regularly held. The Hezhen Cultural Center and the Hezhen Folklore Garden were established, where the Yimakan storytelling exhibition area were set up. Five areas were collectively organized to launch the publicity and exhibition events of Yimakan season. Yimakan storytelling was recommended to present at the National Cultural and Natural Heritage Day and the National Quyi Week, and it was widely promoted through the news media, festivals, and cultural exchanges between China and foreign countries.

(6) A series of research results was published, and a host of literary and artistic works was created. More than 10 research results such as *Yimakan Storytelling: China's Masterpiece* were published. In 2017, Yimakan eco-drama *Lahasus* was performed in Beijing, which has introduced Hezhen culture to Beijing. Based on Yimakan storytelling, many literary and artistic works were created to reflect the life of Hezhen people, including the music works *Being Amazed with Hezhen Landscapes*, and the song and dance drama *Shengqir Flowers Are Blooming*.

### B.3b. Safeguarding activities

List the key activities that were carried out during this reporting period in order to achieve these expected results. Please describe the activities in detail and note their effectiveness or any problems encountered in implementing them.

*Between 500 and 1000 words*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Since 2016, the national finance department has successively subsidized 160,000 RMB to the representative bearers of Yimakan storytelling to guarantee their basic life. In order to consolidate the intergenerational transmission, 60,000 RMB was invested to establish four transmission and practice groups of different ages, namely the elderly, middle-aged, young and adolescent group. Incentive measures were taken to reward outstanding trainees to stimulate their enthusiasm for learning, and desktop computers, laptops, cameras and recording pens were all equipped to provide a material guarantee for transmission and practice. A subsidy system was implemented to make up for trainees' missed work, which tended to lead trainees to deviate from their learning purpose of publicizing ethnic culture, and was changed to a quarterly assessment system in 2018. Bonuses ranging from 100 to 500 were given to those who participated in the transmission and practice for a long time to encourage them to learn Yimakan storytelling.</td>
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<td>(2) Since 2016, the safeguarding of the Hezhen dialect has been strengthened to guide the Hezhen people to learn and appreciate Yimakan storytelling. The main activities include: the implementation of bilingual teaching both in Chinese and Hezhen languages in Jiejinkou and Bacha’s primary and secondary schools, which has achieved remarkable effects; the Center for Safeguarding of ICH of Heilongjiang Province, Tongjiang Hezhen Research Society and Jiamusi Vocational Education Group published books such as <em>Dictionary of Commonly Used Words in Hezhen Language</em>, School textbook <em>Hezhen Language, Dictionary of Grammar Function in Hezhen Language</em> and <em>700 Sentences of Hezhen Language</em>. The Hezhen language and Yimakan storytelling were displayed, spread and promoted through stage plays in the Hezhen language, language learning and competitions, and Internet platforms such as QQ and WeChat. At present, the percentage of the Hezhen ethnic group that can speak the Hezhen language has seen an increase from about 0.5% to nearly 2% as compared to more than 10 years ago.</td>
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<td>(3) Since 2016, to safeguard Yimakan storytelling in an all-round way, the application for the national cultural ecology reserve of the Hezhen has been actively promoted. A total of 964,500 RMB has been invested to hold regular events to transmit, publicize and display Hezhen culture which is represented by Yimakan storytelling. Through the Yimakan Publicity Season and a variety of activities, including Yimakan Classroom, Yimakan Storytelling Entering the Campus, the Military Camps, the Parks, and the Scenic Spots, Yimakan Publicity and Performances on the National Cultural and Natural Heritage Day and other activities, it has expanded the audience of Yimakan storytelling</td>
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transmission and showcased the achievements of Yimakan safeguarding. A Yimakan Storytelling Exhibition and Experience Area was set up in the Hezhen Folk Culture Experience Hall to allow visitors to experience the storytelling art, and to widely publicize the traditional Yimakan and Hezhen culture.

(4) From 2017 to 2018, two Hezhen literary and artistic works were launched to transmit the art of Yimakan storytelling. Jiamusi Performing Arts Co., Ltd. launched China's first original Hezhen dance drama *Ussuri Song*, in which Yimakan storytelling was skillfully integrated. The drama toured 32 times across China and improved the visibility of Yimakan storytelling nationwide. Based on a traditional Yimakan story, the eco-drama *Lahasus* was performed in Tongjiang after touring several areas. It played a great role in transmitting and spreading Yimakan storytelling and promoting Hezhen fishing and hunting culture and its folk culture.

(5) Since 2016, the State has allocated 270,000 RMB to carry out comprehensive field research and digital archiving on Yimakan storytelling through local cultural authorities. The archiving and research were centered on the elderly Yimakan storytellers and eight representative bearers, and video documentaries were recorded.

(6) Starting from 2016, the State has invested 160,000 RMB to support the Heilongjiang Intangible Heritage Society, the Hezhen Research Society and individual experts to successively publish a series of Yimakan storytelling recordings and research results including *Tongjiang in China - Yimakan Storytelling of the Hezhen Ethnicity*.

(7) From 2016 to 2019, relying on community transmission, the safeguarding mechanism was improved in a joint effort to carry out the safeguarding and transmission of the Hezhen Yimakan storytelling. Under the guidance of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of China, the Heilongjiang Provincial Culture and Tourism Department and relevant cultural authorities in Tongjiang City, Raohe County of Shuangyashan City, and the suburbs of Jiamusi City, as the primary governing bodies, and the Centers for the Safeguarding of ICH at all levels, as the specific enforcement bodies, have deployed nearly 80 people to assist relevant communities and groups in updating and implementing various safeguarding measures. Meanwhile, the Branch of Studies on the Hezhen under the Society of Ethno-national Studies in Heilongjiang Province, the Yimakan Storytelling Art Troupes, Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences, Heilongjiang University, Dalian Minzu University and other non-governmental organizations, academic groups, scientific research and teaching units of universities have also played roles in intellectual support and professional consultation.

At present, more than ten non-governmental academic organizations directly or indirectly participate in the transmission and safeguarding of Yimakan storytelling in Heilongjiang Province, and more than 200 people engage in the research, training and practice, and other supportive work relevant to the transmission of the element. Villagers’ organizations, bearer groups and young generations in related communities are key grassroots forces, and more than 100 individuals have engaged in the academic research of Yimakan storytelling. Five villagers’ committees from Hezhen communities, more than 400 villagers and 84 trained practitioners from the elderly, middle-aged, young, and adolescent groups are actively engaged in safeguarding, transmission and practice activities focusing on consolidating community transmission. It has greatly improved the practice frequency of the element, thus enhancing its viability.

### B.3c. Participation of communities, groups or individuals in the safeguarding activities

Describe how communities, groups or, if appropriate, individuals as well as relevant non-governmental organizations have effectively participated, including in terms of gender roles, in the safeguarding measures. Describe the role of the implementing organization or body (name, background, etc.) and the human resources that were available for implementing safeguarding activities.

*Between 200 and 500 words*

(1) Hezhen people are spontaneously organizing community-based transmission activities. In centralized transmission areas of the element, Hezhen communities are actively participating in the formulation of safeguarding plans and the implementation of safeguarding measures organized by cultural authorities. Representative bearers are
actively performing their responsibilities and obligations for transmission, thereby playing a key role in safeguarding the element. Hezhen people in Tongjiang are actively seeking government support and establishing ethnic cultural and creative funds to support the safeguarding activities of Yimakan storytelling. Yimakan storytelling has become necessary in mass cultural activities such as wedding, sacrifice ceremonies and family gatherings, thus occupying a fundamental cultural space. Community members actively participate in such activities, and the number of females is significantly higher than that of males, and they are more active than ever.

(2) NGOs are promoting the research and publicity of Yimakan storytelling. The Hezhen Research Society organizes relevant experts to compile and publish books and language tutorials on Yimakan storytelling, publish academic papers, and provide rich cultural and historical materials for the transmission of Yimakan storytelling. Meanwhile, the Society collaborates with the township cultural centers to hold activities that integrate the safeguarding of Yimakan storytelling into the community action to increase public awareness of ICH and its importance. The Hezhen Ethnic Language Association of Tongjiang City compiled relevant language teaching materials for Yimakan storytelling. Ethnic language classes were opened in the central schools in Jiejinkou and Bacha Hezhen Ethnic Township. Yimakan Storytelling Art Troupes have been established successively in five areas to promote the protection of Hezhen culture by means of narration and singing.

(3) Relevant communities and groups have received all-round support from governments and cultural authorities at all levels in each stage of implementing safeguarding plans. Relying on unified deployment of the Heilongjiang Provincial Culture and Tourism Department, the safeguarding organization, Center for the Safeguarding of ICH of Heilongjiang Province, is entrusted to assist relevant communities in scientifically formulating safeguarding plans, organizing research, recording, investigation and assessment, so that the safeguarding of Yimakan storytelling can be implemented in a scientific, regulated and systematized manner. Meanwhile, this professional center has collaborated with more than 20 scientific research institutions, industry associations, schools and other units to promote the safeguarding of Yimakan storytelling. It has established an expert advisory group to carry out transmission and promotion activities in cooperation with communities. For example, since 2016, more than 120 safeguarding and transmission activities have been held across the province. In the centralized practice area of the element, local governments have included the safeguarding in their priority project, which is under the direct jurisdiction of the county and district leaders in charge. In the past four years, more than 400 people have been deployed by various stakeholders to assist relevant communities, groups, bearers and practitioners to effectively participate in the implementation of safeguarding measures.

### B.3d. Timetable

*Indicate, in a timetable, when each activity was implemented.*

*Between 200 and 500 words*

(1) 2016-2019: safeguarding and training of Yimakan storytelling bearers

Two types of teaching activities both in the Yimakan storytelling transmission and practice centers and in WeChat groups are carried out on a regular basis each year, the tracking and research of teaching is conducted regularly in a unified way to promote the oriented transmission of the sagdi jarimku of Site Mergen, and outstanding performers will be rewarded.

In 2017, more Yimalan storytelling transmission and practice activities were carried out in campuses, towns and communities, ensuring that a centralized transmission and practice activity be held once a week.

In 2018, the Center for the Safeguarding of ICH of Heilongjiang Province conducted a comprehensive research on the safeguarding status of the Hezhen Yimakan storytelling. The provincial ICH division and relevant Yimakan experts has formulated an evaluation report on the safeguarding status with more than 10,000 words.

In 2019, a training class of Yimakan storytelling was opened in Aoqihezhe Primary School, and bearers were organized to visit the Taoli Language and Art Training Center
in Raohe County to teach the children to sing *Shalan Mergen*. They prepared music for the aria section of the newly compiled teaching materials about the *sagdi jarimku*. In the same year, the text and music score editing as well as audio recording were carried out for learning resources.

(2) 2016-2019: Documentaries of Yimakan storytelling were shot, and the oral history of representative bearers was recorded during the field research.

In 2016, *Yimakan Forever* (Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3), a documentary of Yimakan storytelling, was shot;

In 2017, *Video of the Oral History by Representative Bearers of Yimakan Storytelling* was shot;

In 2018, documentaries including an exclusive interview with Ge Yuxia, a provincial representative bearer of the Hezhen Yimakan storytelling, were shot;

(3) 2016-2019: Exhibitions and performances of Yimakan storytelling were held.

In 2016, relevant personnel went to Jiamusi to perform for local people, officers and soldiers; participated in performances such as the Sino-Russian Border Cultural Season; organized bearers to visit Russia and participate in Sino-Russian cultural exchanges; Yimakan shadow play *Siwen Mergen* toured 7 cities in Jilin, Liaoning, and Hebei provinces, with a total of 21 shows.

In 2017, Hezhen Yimakan storytelling was promoted in the shooting activities of the *Beautiful China Cities* TV series sponsored by CCTV. The Yimakan performance troupe went to Yongqing Community in Tongjiang and participated in the festival of a cultural village themed “Jiejin, the Most Beautiful among Hezhen Group”, the artistic performance on the 10th Wurigong Meeting of Hezhen Ethnicity, and other events;

In 2018, the Center for the Safeguarding of ICH of Heilongjiang Province organized the Hezhen Yimakan Performance Season. The communities in five centralized transmission areas showcased Yimakan storytelling; successively participated in the publicity activities such as Local Arts of Raohe County in Shenzhen, the Global Promotion Conference for Heilongjiang Sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China. The Yimakan Art Troupe participated in the Fujin International Rural Carnival, Yimakan Storytelling Entering Yongqing Community of Tongjiang, and taught students and villagers Yimakan storytelling.

In 2019, the Yimakan Art Troupe successively participated in the National Cultural and Natural Heritage Day, the National Quyi Week for ICH, the Tongjiang Promotion Season of Eight Major Hezhen Cultures, ICH of Jiejinkou Hezhen Ethnic Township Cultural Village, Heilongjiang Performance Art Exhibition and Exchange of ICH, Shuangyashan Exhibition and Performance of ICH, and other publicity and exhibition activities.

(4) 2016-2019: publication of a series of research achievements on Yimakan storytelling

In 2016, *History of Studies on Hezhen Yimakan Storytelling and Hezhen Language* were published;

In 2017, *Oral History of Yimakan Storytelling by Representative Bearers and Concise Hezhen Dictionary* were published;

In 2018, the Yimakan Storytelling Art Seminar and Performance was held in four eastern regions of Heilongjiang Province;

In 2019, the text and music score collation of a new edition of Yimakan storytelling *Katan Manga Mergen and Eagle Girl* as well as *Chuqi Mergen and Birchbark Boat* was completed;

(5) 2017-2019: rehearsal art practice of Hezhen Yimakan storytelling *Lahasus*

In September 2017, the Yimakan eco-drama *Lahasus*, based on a traditional classic Yimakan story, was premiered. It was performed in Beijing in December, and performed in 2017 the Heilongjiang, Jilin, Liaoning and Inner Mongolia Joint Show and won the Outstanding Drama Award.
B.3e. Budget expenditures

Provide the detailed amounts of the funds used for the implementation of each activity (if possible, in US dollars), identifying the funding source for each (governmental sources, in-kind community inputs, etc.).

Between 200 and 500 words

- Special funds provided by central government
  (1) Safeguarding and training of Yimakan storytelling bearers: a total of 220,000 RMB, of which:
  From 2016 to 2019, the national-level Yimakan storytelling bearers’ allowance for transmission, totaling 160,000 RMB
  From 2016 to 2019, organization of trainings on bearers of the element in transmission and practice centers, totaling 60,000 RMB
  (2) Shooting of Yimakan storytelling documentaries, field research, text records and video recording: totaling 270,000 RMB, of which:
  In 2016, shooting, editing, and conversion of the promotional video of Yimakan Storytelling Entering the Campuses, totaling 50,000 RMB
  In 2018, editing and producing a promotional video for Yimakan Publicity Season and the standard storytelling of bearers, totaling 76,000 RMB, including: 43,000 RMB used for shooting the promotional films in Jijiamusi, Tongjiang, the suburbs of Jiamusi, Raohe and Fuyuan during the Hezhen Yimakan Publicity Season; 33,000 RMB used for the standard language recording of You Wenlan, a provincial representative bearer
  From 2016 to 2019, field research, text records and video recording: totaling 144,000 RMB
  (3) Supporting related regions to hold promotional activities for Yimakan storytelling: totaling 1,327,500 RMB, of which:
  From 2016 to 2019, purchasing the equipment and supplies required for transmission, practice and safeguarding activities, totaling 255,000 RMB
  From 2016 to 2019, holding the teaching, exhibition, and promotion activities for Yimakan storytelling, including tours to communities, campuses, and town squares; annual exhibitions and performances on National Cultural and Natural Heritage Day; and shooting promotional videos, totaling 964,500 RMB
  From 2016 to 2019, organizing academic seminars, forums, demonstration and discussions for the achievements, and field research, totaling 108,000 RMB
  (4) Publication of a series of research achievements on Yimakan storytelling: 160,000 RMB, including:
  In 2016, the compiling, publishing and printing of Dictionary of Commonly Used Words in Hezhen Language, totaling 70,000 RMB
  From 2017 to 2019, the design, compiling and CD production of teaching materials for Yimakan sagdi jarimku of Shalun Mergen, and the printing of special publicity issues, totaling 90,000 RMB
  (5) From 2017 to 2019, rehearsal art practice of Yimakan eco-drama Lahasus: 50,000 RMB
  The above fees amounted to 2.0275 million RMB, and the source of funds was government investment.

- Community investment
  (6) Production of comics of Yimakan stories for young readers: 727,000 RMB, including:
  From 2017 to 2019, comics of Yimakan stories, totaling 475,000 RMB
  In 2018, four fishskin paintings of Yimakan stories, totaling 83,000 RMB
  In 2018, the exhibition of Yimakan fishskin paintings at Tongjiang Fishskin Culture and
Art Museum, totaling 49,000 RMB
From 2018 to 2019, paintings of Yimakan stories, totaling 120,000 RMB
The above fees amounted to 727,000 RMB, which is funded by Jiamusi Mahua Hezhen Fishskin Culture Co., Ltd.
In the past four years, a total of 2.7545 million RMB, has been invested in the safeguarding activities of the element.

B.3f. Overall effectiveness of the safeguarding activities

Provide an overall assessment of the effectiveness of the activities undertaken to achieve the expected results and of the efficiency of the use of funds for implementing the activities. Please indicate how the activities contributed to achieving the results and whether other activities could have contributed better to achieving the same results. Also indicate whether the same results could have been achieved with less funding, whether the human resources available were appropriate and whether communities, groups and individuals could have been better involved.

Between 400 and 600 words

At present, the overall effectiveness of Yimakan safeguarding is basically the same as the expected goals stated in the nomination file, and the safeguarding achievements are beyond expectation. The funds invested in various activities have been used properly, and corresponding safeguarding effects have been achieved. The central and local finance departments have continuously allocated a large amount of special funds to provide necessary financial guarantee for the transmission, practice and promotion of Yimakan storytelling. A scientific, planned, and systematic transmission and safeguarding mechanism has been formed for safeguarding the element.

Six transmission and practice centers have been established, and basic transmission funds were provided by the central and local finance departments to ensure that representative bearers could regularly carry out social and intergenerational transmission in their communities and groups. In the past four years, there have been more than 4,000 person-times of transmission and practice activities. One Yimakan sagdi jarimku has been completely restored, and another sagdi jarimku and a number of uskuli jarimku have been effectively restored. The transmission groups and social popularity have expanded to almost the whole ethnic group. Hezhen language has been effectively preserved. In this way, Yimakan storytelling has gained a wider range of visibility. Years of transmission and practice activities for Yimakan storytelling have exerted a dramatic and profound social impact among Hezhen people. Nearly 90% of the trainees have grown from not owning language skills to mastering simple daily expressions, and then to telling a long episode of Site Mergen. As the disseminators of ethnic culture both in life and on the stage, these community members and their hard work and persistence in transmission and exploration are highly acclaimed by the society. They have played an immeasurable role in the acquisition of their dialect, the maintenance of cultural identity and the inheritance of ethnic culture.

A database of information archives reflecting the basic features of Yimakan storytelling has been preliminarily established. The provincial and local centers for the safeguarding of ICH have established special Yimakan storytelling archives; each transmission and practice center has set up an archiving system of text, image and photo materials for teaching, activities and field research, and classified recording and collation of texts, pictures, videos and music scores are carried out in each transmission and practice class based on specific contents. These efforts have established a sound environment for information sharing in the safeguarding of the element.

The exhibition and performance activities have been promoted to boost communication and exchange. Firstly, to participate in large-scale activities and performances inside and outside the province. Apart from the local major festivals as the carriers of publicity activities, they also take active part in various artistic performances on TV and radio, and the exhibitions and performances in various regions. It has expanded the social influence of Yimakan storytelling. Secondly, to carry out activities such as Yimakan Storytelling Entering the Campuses, the Communities, the Squares, and the Military Camps.
Exhibitions and performances of Yimakan storytelling are held at irregular intervals in Hezhen-intensive primary and secondary schools. In this way Yimakan storytelling has been vigorously publicized and promoted. The Yimakan shadow play *Siwen Mergen* has been performed more than 50 times in communities, military camps, and campuses. In 2018, the Center for the Safeguarding of ICH of Heilongjiang Province deployed centralized publicity season activities in five regions. 24 performances were staged in three months with nearly 10,000 audiences.

Two *sagdi jarimku* textbooks were compiled and a series of research results were published. Firstly, two *sagdi jarimku*, namely *Site Mergen* and *Shalun Mergen*, were selected from the existing 47 Yimakan stories, and textbooks were compiled and revised to integrate Chinese, International Phonetic Alphabet and Chinese phonetic notation. An elderly Hezhen person who knows Hezhen language best was the final editor to protect the cultural genes and traditions as well as ethnic memory of the language to the greatest extent. In 2016, the *sagdi jarimku* of *Site Mergen* was revitalized in an all-round way, which was a milestone in the history of Yimakan storytelling safeguarding. In 2018, the tutorial textbook on *Shalun Mergen*, which had been compiled in two years, was distributed to each transmission and practice center. When trainees basically mastered the Hezhen phonetic spelling method, they would start a new round of transmission and practice by means of self-learning. Secondly, a series of research results were published. Nearly 20 monographs were published. The *Dictionary of Commonly Used Words in Hezhen Language* was distributed with the textbook *Shalun Mergen*. The publication of these works marked that the safeguarding of Yimakan storytelling had shifted from static to dynamic, with more abundant, comprehensive and systematic achievements.

**C. UPDATE OF THE SAFEGUARDING MEASURES**

**C.1. Updated safeguarding plan**

*Please provide an update of the safeguarding plan included in the nomination file or in the previous report. In particular, provide detailed information as follows:*

a. **What primary objective(s) will be addressed and what concrete results will be expected?**

b. **What are the key activities to be carried out in order to achieve these expected results? Describe the activities in detail and in their best sequence, addressing their feasibility.**

c. **How will the State(s) Party(ies) concerned support the implementation of the updated safeguarding plan?**

*Between 200 and 500 words*

(1) Continue to support representative bearers and encourage transmission and practice activities. Every year, each bearer is granted a fixed living subsidy and provided with the opportunity to participate in exhibitions and performances. Each bearer give public performance of Yimakan storytelling for five or more times per year. It will help to improve his/her social status and win more respect from the society.

(2) Preservation of the Hezhen dialect needs unremitting efforts and multiple measures. Yimakan storytelling transmission and practice centers conduct Hezhen language teaching as well. Hezhen language teachers teach at least four hours a week in the WeChat group. Hezhen language courses are opened in schools in major communities. Language tutorials or reference books are published to aid in learning. Language teachers in colleges and universities as well as bearers are hired to jointly research and summarize “pure pinyin characters and grammar” suitable for learning. In this way Hezhen language will be effectively preserved from its previously endangered status.

(3) Data archives to be completed and improved. The Provincial Center for the Safeguarding of ICH and the ICH center of the community jointly carry out field research and ethnographic interviews of Yimakan storytelling and other related elements, representative bearers, and elderly Hezhen people, as well as data archiving and study. The Provincial Center for the Safeguarding of ICH entrusts the National Library of China and renowned Yimakan experts to fully summarize the text materials related to Yimakan
storytelling.

(4) To improve Yimakan storytelling transmission and practice centers. Well-equipped teaching and publicity facilities are provided. Related personnel are organized to compile two sagdi jarimku teaching materials for the transmission and practice centers. Bearers would regularly teach Yimakan and Hezhen languages, and some trainees would be granted subsidies for missed work. Regular assessment and competition would be conducted for the transmission and practice task, and material and spiritual rewards given to outstanding trainees and teachers.

(5) To maximize publicity in Yimakan storytelling exhibition venues. Tongjiang Hezhen Cultural Center sets up the Yimakan storytelling exhibition area, Yimakan Storytelling Transmission and Practice Center and Hezhen Comprehensive Culture and Art Transmission and Practice Room. In combination with Dalian Minzu University’s big data platform for Hezhen cultural heritage, digital protection, three-dimensional light display and on-site experience are achieved for Yimakan storytelling.

(6) To strengthen integration of ICH and cultural tourism. A Hezhen Cultural Park, Hezhen Mural Town of Northeast China are established, and a performance theater is set up to provide a platform for the Yimakan Storytelling Art Troupe to perform on site during peak tourist seasons and to promote a sustainable livelihood.

(7) The establishment of Cultural Ecology Reserve of the Hezhen are advanced step by step as planned. An overall plan for the Jiejinkou Cultural Ecology Reserve Park is formulated, and provincial level Cultural Ecology Reserve of the Hezhen is set up in Heilongjiang Province. With the joint efforts of governments and cultural departments at all levels, the application for National Cultural Ecology Reserve of the Hezhen is to be finalized.

The implementation of each safeguarding plan is based on respecting the wishes of Hezhen people and their prior informed consent. It cannot be implemented without the participation of the Hezhen bearers of Yimakan storytelling. The Chinese government provides full support for the implementation of the safeguarding plan in terms of funds, policies, and intelligence. Relevant cultural authorities will perform their respective duties and responsibilities, and the organizations responsible for the safeguarding of the element will jointly put in human resources to complete specific objectives and tasks.

C.2. Timetable for future activities

Provide a timetable for the updated safeguarding plan (within a time-frame of approximately four years).

Between 200 and 500 words

In the next reporting period (2020-2023), the updated safeguarding plan will be fulfilled based on the following timetable:

(1) Continue to carry out transmission, practice, exhibition and promotion activities

With the coordinated deployment of the Center for the Safeguarding of ICH of Heilongjiang Province, the transmission and practice centers and the platforms, will continue to focus on the daily transmission and practice of the sagdi jarimku of Site Mergen and Shalun Mergen, and carry out publicity activities such as performances and exhibitions of Yimakan Storytelling Entering the Campuses and Scenic Spots during the annual National Cultural and Natural Heritage Day and important festivals.

In 2020, the sagdi jarimku of Site Mergen will be strengthened, and a new class of sagdi jarimku of Shalun Mergen will be opened. The publicity of Yimakan Storytelling Entering the Campuses and Communities will be focused in two months.

In 2021, the sagdi jarimku of Site Mergen will be consolidated, and Shalun Mergen will be transmitted and practiced. The Yimakan Storytelling Competition will be held. Experts will be invited for evaluation, and material rewards will be given to outstanding performers. Meanwhile, exhibitions and performances of Yimakan Storytelling Entering the Campuses, the Communities and Scenic Spots will be carried out all year round.

In 2022, teaching of the textbook on Shalun Mergen will be completed. Meanwhile, exhibitions and performances of Yimakan Storytelling Entering the Campuses, the
Communities and the Urban Scenic Spots will continue.  
In 2023, the *sagdi jarimku* of *Site Mergen* and *Shalun Mergen* will be consolidated. Meanwhile, exhibitions and performances of Yimakan storytelling will be carried out synchronously.

(2) Carry out academic research and publish the research results of Yimakan storytelling  
In 2020, experts and scholars of Heilongjiang Province will be organized to hold seminars on Hezhen Yimakan storytelling, and identify research topics and directions.  
In 2021, research and interviews will be carried out to collect and collate research materials.  
In 2022, work will be conducted to publish the research results of Yimakan storytelling  
*In 2023, Katan Manga Mergen and the Eagle Girl* and other research results of Yimakan storytelling will be published.

(3) Carry out data filing and video shooting of representative bearers  
In 2020, data filing will be conducted on representative bearers at the national, provincial, and municipal levels in the region. The audio, video and text records will be collated. Literature, pictures, audio-visual and other materials will be organized to keep more scientific, systematic and comprehensive records.  
In 2021, video shooting of national representative bearers will be conducted.  
In 2022, the documentary *Hezhen Groups Linked Heart by Heart, Yimakan Storytelling of Ancient and Modern Times*, will be shot.

(4) Improve the Yimakan storytelling database and information sharing platform  
In 2020, the editing and uploading of bearers’ text, audio and video materials will be carried out.  
In 2021, in cooperation with universities in Dalian, Hezhen language and Yimakan storytelling will be put on the minority language inheritance network, and then pushed to the whole world through a professional Internet platform.

(5) Preserve the Hezhen dialect and establish an Internet platform  
In 2020, the Center for the Safeguarding of ICH of Heilongjiang Province, the Heilongjiang Provincial Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee, and Heilongjiang Department of Education will jointly carry out the preservation of Hezhen dialect and popularize the smart reading edition of the *Graphic Textbook on 700 Sentences of Hezhen Language*.  
In 2022, a vocabulary contest will be organized for the Hezhen dialect. Based on the *Concise Hezhen Dictionary* published by Heilongjiang People’s Publishing House, the methods of compulsory answer, rush answer and oral narration of propositions in Hezhen language will be adopted. Experts will be invited for evaluation, and those with outstanding performance will be rewarded.  
In 2023, an information sharing column will be established for Yimakan storytelling on the WeChat public account to promptly update the academic and performance information, pictures, and audio-visual materials of the element. New media accounts such as Tik Tok will be opened to update the information synchronously.

(6) Promote contemporary literary and artistic creation and rehearsal activities of Yimakan storytelling  
In 2020, *Site Mergen* micro-animation script or stage myth drama will be planned, and 100 paintings of Yimakan story series will be completed.  
In 2021, the creation of *Site Mergen* micro-animation script will be completed.  
In 2022, debugging of *Site Mergen* micro-animation script will be conducted, and resources will be sought after for trial shooting of the micro animations.  
In 2023, shooting of *Site Mergen* micro animations or stage myth drama will be completed, then it will be released and screened. The creation, rehearsal and performance of *Chuqi Mergen and Birchbark Boat*, a new Yimakan sitcom of the Hezhen ethnicity, will be completed.
### C.3. Budget for future activities

Provide the estimate of the funds required for implementing the updated safeguarding plan (if possible, in US dollars), identifying any available resources (governmental sources, in-kind community inputs, etc.).

*Between 200 and 500 words*

To implement the updated safeguarding plan, the budget for the next reporting period (2020-2023) of the Hezhen Yimakan storytelling is as follows:

- **Government resources**
  1. The representative bearers of Yimakan storytelling will be subsidized to ensure their basic livelihood and fulfill their transmission obligation. An annual allocation of 60,000 RMB will be provided, totaling 240,000 RMB in four years;
  2. A financial guarantee will be provided for the transmission activities in the Yimakan storytelling transmission and practice centers and WeChat groups, totaling 220,000 RMB;
  3. The preservation of Hezhen dialect will be continuously carried out. The Chinese and Hezhen bilingual teaching will be conducted in resource-based areas. The role of transmission and practice centers will be maximized to simultaneously teach Hezhen language while teaching Yimakan storytelling. Hezhen language and Yimakan storytelling will be fully applied on the minority language inheritance network, so as to push them to the whole world through a professional Internet platform. The budget totals one million RMB.
  4. The archives of representative bearers of Yimakan storytelling will be established. Data will be stored in four modules, namely text, picture, audio and video. Then they will be collected, filed, archived and shot by dedicated personnel. The budget totals 500,000 RMB.
  5. Bearers, trainees and Yimakan storytelling Art Troupes will be organized to enter communities, scenic spots, and campuses to carry out transmission, practice, exhibitions and publicity activities. The budget totals 1.4 million RMB.
  6. Academic activities will be carried out, including seminars and forums on Yimakan storytelling, and subject research. Research results will be published. The budget totals 800,000 RMB.
  7. The creation and rehearsal of Yimakan micro animations, myth dramas and other literary and artistic works, totaling 5 million RMB.

- **Community investment**
  8. 100 paintings of Yimakan story series will be completed. Communities will raise 120,000 RMB for them.

To implement the above safeguarding plan, national financial department will allocate 9.16 million RMB. Communities will invest 120,000 RMB. The budget totals 9.28 million RMB.

### C.4. Community participation

*Please describe how communities, groups and individuals, as well as relevant non-governmental organizations have been involved, including in terms of gender roles, in updating the safeguarding plan, and how they will be involved in its implementation.*

*Between 200 and 500 words*

The people in Hezhen communities attach great importance to the safeguarding and transmission of Yimakan storytelling. They are actively participating in the updating and implementation of various safeguarding plans organized by governments and cultural departments, maximizing the advantages of communities, groups and individuals, independently carrying out respective transmission activities, and implementing specific safeguarding measures. For example, the Hezhen ethnic groups in Zhuaji Town, Fuyuan County spontaneously established Yimakan storytelling transmission and practice...
centers. The governments of Jiejinkou Township, Bacha Township and Sipai Township and Aoqi Village Committee provided free transmission and practice venues and necessary financial support. Jiamusi Vocational Education Group also provided free transmission and practice venues.

Some NGOs in Tongjiang City, Jiamusi City and other places, together with local governments, have carried out research, collation and archives of Yimakan storytelling database as planned. They have promised to continuously participate in the implementation of future safeguarding measures, and contribute to the intergenerational transmission of Yimakan storytelling. Other NGOs, such as the Hezhen Research Society, Jiejinkou and Bacha Central School, have actively compiled Hezhen language teaching materials. They have opened bilingual teaching courses for the Hezhen and Chinese languages and achieved remarkable effects. To promote the popularization of Yimakan storytelling, cultural enterprises have actively invested in the safeguarding of Yimakan storytelling. Jiamusi Mahua Hezhen Fishskin Culture Co., Ltd. invested a total of 727,000 RMB in the painting of comics for Yimakan story series with fish skin as the material, as well as the creation and exhibition of fishskin paintings for Yimakan stories.

Due to changes in social structure and division of labor, the male-dominant Yimakan yimakanqiq mafa has gradually broken the gender restrictions for Yimakan storytelling transmission, and females are becoming the major force of transmission and practice. Currently, among 84 representative bearers, females account for 75%. Yan Qin and other female bearers unanimously expressed that as the bearers of Yimakan and Hezhen cultures, females are also shouldering great responsibilities. They should address difficulties and make due efforts to promote Hezhen ethnic culture, transmit and safeguard Yimakan storytelling. Eight representative bearers have promised to continuously participate in the implementation of the safeguarding plan and to cultivate more outstanding bearers, as conditions permit. Lu Yanhua (female), a representative bearer in Raohe County, is keen on the transmission of Yimakan storytelling, thus making her one of the best. She was invited to work in the Center for Safeguarding of ICH of the county in 2017. It has brought her a chance to engage in in-depth study and transmission of Yimakan storytelling. She said, “It was Yimakan storytelling that transformed me from an ordinary woman into an ethnic cultural worker. Not only did I earn income, but also I contributed to the cultural undertaking of the ethnicity. More importantly, I cherish Yimakan storytelling and the Hezhen culture.”

The Branch of Studies on the Hezhen People under the Society of Ethno-national Studies in Heilongjiang Province, the Center for the Safeguarding of ICH of Heilongjiang Province, Tongjiang Hezhen Ethnicity Association and other NGOs are actively communicating and cooperating with cultural authorities. They are compiling teaching materials while engaging in academic research on Yimakan storytelling. They have published a collection of works in an effort to promote and disseminate Yimakan storytelling, and promised to devote themselves to the safeguarding and research in a long run.

### C.5. Institutional context

Please report on the institutional context for the local management and safeguarding of the element inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List, including:

a. the competent body(ies) involved in its management and/or safeguarding;

b. the organization(s) of the community or group concerned with the element and its safeguarding.

*Not to exceed 150 words*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. the competent body(ies) involved in its management and/or safeguarding:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Governing bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heilongjiang Provincial Culture and Tourism Department;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Competent authorities:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bureau of Culture, Radio, TV, Film, Press and Publication, Tongjiang City, Heilongjiang Province</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bureau of Culture, Radio, TV, Film, Press and Publication, Raohe County, Shuangyashan City, Heilongjiang Province
Bureau of Culture, Radio, TV, Film, Press and Publication, Jiamusi City, Heilongjiang Province
Bureau of Culture, Radio, TV, Film, Press and Publication, Suburb of Jiamusi City, Heilongjiang Province
Bureau of Culture, Radio, TV, Film, Press and Publication, Fuyuan City, Heilongjiang Province
Government of Sipai Hezhen Ethnic Township, Shuangyashan City, Heilongjiang Province
- the organization responsible for safeguarding the element:
Center for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Heilongjiang Province;
- local organizations responsible for the safeguarding:
Center for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, Tongjiang City, Heilongjiang Province
Center for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, Jiamusi City, Heilongjiang Province
Center for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Suburb of Jiamusi City, Heilongjiang Province
Center for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Raohe County, Shuangyashan City, Heilongjiang Province
Center for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, Fuyuan City, Heilongjiang Province

b. the organization(s) of the community or group concerned with the element and its safeguarding

Cultural Center of Jiejinkou Hezhen Ethnic Township, Tongjiang City, Heilongjiang Province
Cultural Center of Bacha Hezhen Ethnic Township, Tongjiang City, Heilongjiang Province
Village Committee of Hezhen Ethnic Village of Aoqi Township in the suburb of Jiamusi City, Heilongjiang Province
Cultural Center of Sipai Hezhen Ethnic Township, Raohe County, Shuangyashan City, Heilongjiang Province
Yimakan Storytelling Transmission and Practice Center of Jiejinkou Hezhen Ethnic Township, Tongjiang City, Heilongjiang Province
Yimakan Storytelling Transmission and Practice Center of Bacha Hezhen Ethnic Township, Tongjiang City, Heilongjiang Province
Yimakan Storytelling Transmission and Practice Center, Tongjiang City, Heilongjiang Province
Yimakan Storytelling Transmission and Practice Center of Aoqi Hezhen Ethnic Village in the suburb of Jiamusi City, Heilongjiang Province
Yimakan Storytelling Transmission and Practice Center of Sipai Hezhen Ethnic Township, Raohe County, Shuangyashan City, Heilongjiang Province
Yimakan Storytelling Transmission and Practice Center, Fuyuan City, Heilongjiang Province
Yimakan Art Troupe of Hezhen Ethnicity, Tongjiang City, Heilongjiang Province
Yimakan Art Troupe of Hezhen Ethnicity, Raohe County, Shuangyashan City, Heilongjiang Province
Yimakan Art Troupe of Hezhen Ethnicity, Fuyuan City, Heilongjiang Province
Branch of Studies on the Hezhen under the Society of Ethno-national Studies in Heilongjiang Province
Tongjiang Hezhen Research Society of Heilongjiang Province
D. PARTICIPATION OF COMMUNITIES IN PREPARING THIS REPORT

Describe the measures taken to ensure the widest possible participation of the communities, groups and, where applicable, individuals concerned as well as relevant non-governmental organizations during the process of preparing this report.

Between 150 and 250 words

In July 2019, the Heilongjiang Provincial Culture and Tourism Department organized and established a leadership group for this period report, and convened the 2019 Preparatory Conference for the Period Report of Hezhen Yimakan Storytelling. The Center for the Safeguarding of ICH of Heilongjiang Province was entrusted to work with five communities to carry out comprehensive investigation and research and submit status reports on the implementation of the safeguarding plan of Yimakan storytelling and related issues. In September, the safeguarding organization combined the basic information, opinions and suggestions provided by communities, and promptly submitted a preliminary research report, which covered the safeguarding achievements, experience, problems and related data in the past four years. In October, the Heilongjiang Provincial Culture and Tourism Department organized experts to discuss the achievements and problems in safeguarding the element in recent years. Rational opinions and proposals put forward by experts and scholars from scientific research institutions such as Heilongjiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences and Harbin Normal University were included in this report.

In the process of drafting this report, relevant associations and groups including six Yimakan storytelling transmission and practice centers, the Branch of Studies on the Hezhen under the Society of Ethno-national Studies in Heilongjiang Province, Cultural Center of Hezhen Ethnic Township, and China Hezhen Website, have actively participated in the preparation of the report. They have focused on the opinions of representative bearers and young trainees. Ms. Qi Yanhua, former curator of the Tongjiang Mass Art Museum, served as a representative of women and provided relevant materials for the performance report.

The preparation of the report in this reporting period was conducted with the prior knowledge and consent of relevant communities, groups, representative bearers, and young practitioners. The period report was finalized on November 16, 2019 after soliciting opinions from all parties.

E. SIGNATURE ON BEHALF OF THE STATE PARTY

The report should be signed by an official empowered to do so on behalf of the State, and should include his or her name, title and the date of submission.

Name: Xie Jinying

Title: Director General, Bureau of International Exchanges and Cooperation, Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People’s Republic of China

Date: December 11, 2020

Signature: