

PROJECT TITLE: Cultural Preservation Project for Mangra Tibetan Communities

PROJECT LOCATION:

Village	Township	County	Prefecture	Province
60 个行政村 60 Tibetan Villages	6 个乡、镇 6 Townships	贵南 Mangra ལའོ་རྫོང་།	海南 Hainan འབྲུག་ཡུལ་།	青海 Qinghai འབྲུག་ཡུལ་།

IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION:

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TARGETING TO:

- Basic Literacy [] Basic Healthcare []
- Gender Equality/Justice [] Poverty Alleviation []
- Cultural Preservation [] Rural Development []
- Community Development [] Individual Empowerment []
- Environmental Protection [] Sustainable Development []

PROJECT PURPOSE/GOAL:

This project addresses the problem of cultural loss in Tibetan communities in Mangra County where people live in clusters, engaged in agriculture, semi-agricultural, herding, and semi-herding activities as lifeways. Their daily lives are permeated with songs, which differ from one community to another. The death and sad cultural loss of these living treasures is accelerating as local Tibetans increasingly establish contact with radio, television, DVD/VCD players brought into these rural areas as part of government efforts to improve roads and bring electricity to countryside areas. The net result of this over time has been the loss of cultural transmission from the older to the younger generation. The latter find the traditional store of music lacking when compared to what they see on television and video recordings. The net result of this is teenagers being thoroughly unfamiliar with their parents' and grandparents' store of songs. For example, many Tibetan nomads have been resettled in communities where electricity is provided and the loss of the precious folklore known to the older generation is not repeated because younger people and children much prefer more modern music that is easily available to them.

To address this problem, this project aims to record traditional songs, videotape

local festivals, and conversations with local elders. The material will be edited, commentary will be given, and it will be put on-line (e.g., Internet Archive) and thus available to anyone in the world to access and download. Furthermore, the locals will feel that videoing and recording their knowledge is an honor, especially when it is available to them in the form of DVDs/VCDs that will be given to them after the process of digitalization is complete. We feel this will communicate to the entire community that local folklore is valuable and encourage the younger generation to learn it. Importantly, the material will be preserved and thus at a future time if people wish to consult the material to revive a lost song or festival, they will have the materials to do so.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Objectives of this project are to preserve and document traditional music and festivals through digital audio and video recording, to then edit the material, and preserve it by making it on-line through, e.g., the Internet Archive. We expect, by making compact disks available to local people after the project is completed, that there will be a renewed interest in local culture; the archived material will always be freely available to local people. Friendship Charity Association members will choose villagers to train in local villages in Mangra County. Trainees will also discuss a specific action plan--how to record, whom to record, how to use needed equipment, what to record, and so on. This participatory meeting will further empower local community members in a sense of the value of what they are doing.

This effort stands in stark contrast to a local government initiative that filmed a traditional wedding, but this was never put on-line. As a result, there is no record of this today.

PROJECT SIGNIFICANT:

The songs and other traditional knowledge that this project will record are the heart of local Tibetan culture. With children increasingly being educated in the Han Chinese language and being bombarded on every side by the notion that 'modern is best', there is little place for traditional forms of culture such as songs. What will Tibetan culture be then, in two decades, in such areas as Mangra? We hope to preserve a record that later generations can fall back on and re-learn. We also hope to increase a sense of value of tradition among young people who will be engaged in this project. Finally, we hope that this project might serve as a model for other minority communities across China; that it might be well-known enough, especially through internet sources (Internet Archive is not blocked in China) that other minority peoples might follow suit

PROJECT URGENCY:

The death of culture accelerates when it is not regularly practiced. As times passes, weddings in Mangra become increasingly abbreviated because people are 'too busy' and no longer very interested. In many areas of Qinghai, for example, no wedding songs are sung at all. Instead, one or two large TV screens play DVDs/VCDs of

Tibetan and Chinese performers. Each year that a song is not sung increases its chances to never be heard again. Songs need to be sung to be remembered, but they are not sung unless there is an audience. Each time an aged villager dies who knew traditional knowledge--songs, festival details, and so on--this irretrievable cultural heritage passed down over countless centuries also vanishes. It is this threat that this proposal is painfully aware of and has developed in response to.

WHY FRIENDSHIP CHARITY ASSOCIATION?

FCA is a registered NGO whose mandate includes cultural preservation and education and its members are local Tibetans.

SUSTAINABILITY:

FCA will follow the completion of the project with a final report. FCA will be responsible for future problems with the equipment. Consequently, this project is self-sustained with this one funding request.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES/DURATION:

2009	Activities	Participants
May 10	Receive funds.	FCA
May 15	Hold project meeting.	FCA
May 25	Purchase equipment in Xining City.	FCA
June 10	Train locals in how to use equipment.	FCA, villagers
July 1	Begin recording in sites identified through group discussion.	FCA, villagers
July 28	FCA members digitalize the data, archive online, and disseminate back to the communities.	FCA, villagers
August 15	Complete the project and send final report.	FCA

BUDGET:

1. Donor's Contribution

Projects	Description	Quantity	Per \$USD	Total \$USD
Computer	computers for the project that would digitalize the traditional songs, archive, and burn on DVDs/VCDs	2	740.00	1480.00
Video Camera	video cameras	3	778.71	2,336.13
Digital Camera	digital cameras	2	425.85	851.70
Sound Recorder	Sony brand sound recorder			

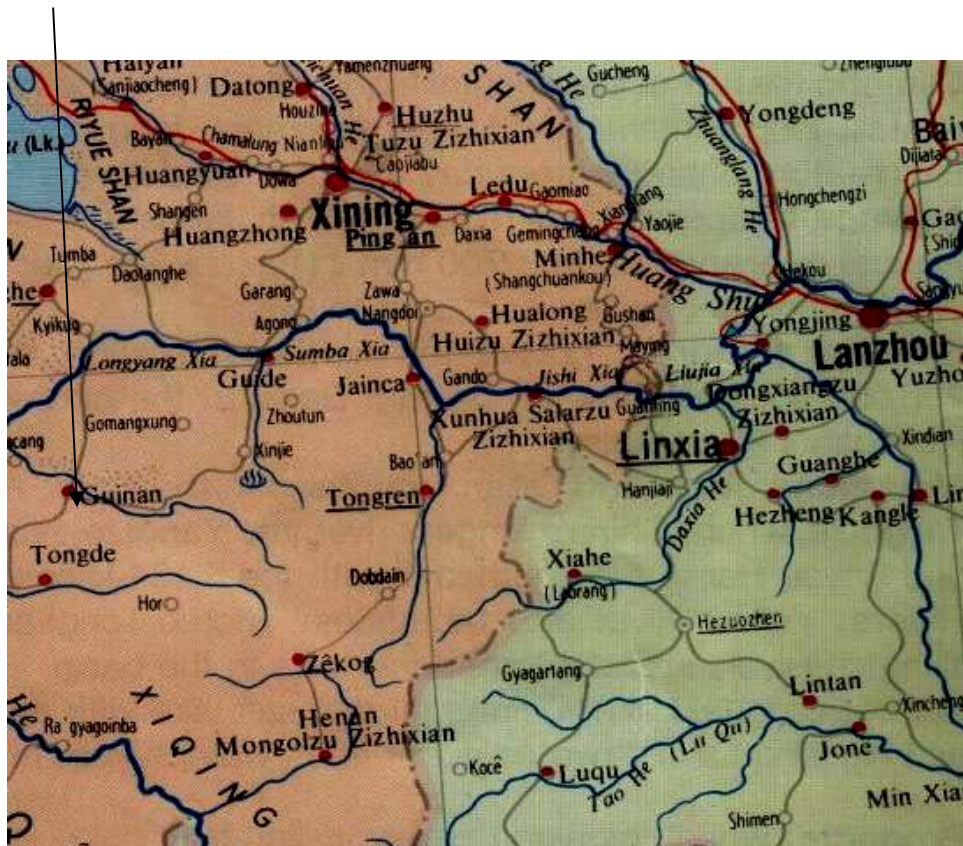
		5	381.08	1,905.40
MS/CF Cards	extra memory cards for each item	8	19.99	159.92
Card Reader	card reader for each computer	2	6.41	12.82
VCDs/DVDs	blank VCDs/DVDs for recording materials to archive and return to villages	3,000	0.436351	1,309.05
TOTAL				6,589.82

2. Local Contribution

Projects	Description	Per \$USD	Total \$USD
Training	Two trainers from FCA at 500RMB each	145.70	145.70
Food	Food for trainers and trainees	189.41	189.41
Transportation	Travel costs for trainers and trainees for collecting data.	72.85	72.85
TOTAL			407.97

Note: this currency conversion rate is: 1.00USD = 6.87620CNY

PROJECT SITE:



PHOTOS:



A local bride is accompanied by her brothers to the groom's family. It is a local custom to hide the bride's face.



A Lab tse festival is held twice a year. The man with the bow starts the festival. Few people now come for this since it is on a mountaintop of 3,400 meters in elevation.



A silver decoration women wear at weddings and during the New Year to be documented in the course of the project.