



## **Culture at Work Africa**

The public value of intercultural dialogue  
for social cohesion in urban Africa

# Table of Contents

<b>PREFACE</b>	6
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	
The Culture at Work Africa initiative	8
Why this publication?	10
<b>CHAPTER 1. Strengthening artists and cultural actors' capacities for social cohesion and transformative change.</b>	
<b>Introduction</b>	9
i. Génération Positiv	14
ii. Les Pinceaux de l'intégration	16
iii. Culture en partage: lieux sûrs en Afrique	18
iv. ENAKPAMI 2: 2ème Expérience Nouvelle d'Assistance aux plasticiens pour leur ascension via le multimédia et l'internet	20
v. PenPen Africa	22
vi. Photography and visual literacy for active citizenship	24
<b>CHAPTER 2. Freedom of expression and intercultural dialogue: Creating cultural spaces and synergies for peace-building and democratic societies.</b>	
<b>Introduction</b>	26
i. African Space Makers	28
ii. Stimulating Intercultural Dialogue in East Africa using Technology	30
iii. Relinking Communities Through Culture	32
iv. Young Ugandans and Kenyans demonstrate the value of social cohesion	34
v. Ciné-débat pour la paix: pour le dialogue interculturel et la cohésion sociale au Cameroun	36
vi. Action jeunesse pour le dialogue interculturel et la dignité pour tous en Afrique	38
<b>CHAPTER 3. Empowering communities, women and the youth through local cultural action and critical thinking.</b>	
<b>Introduction</b>	40
i. La tournée du Cirque Nu Dagbe	42
ii. OpenMic project	44
iii. Women through the lens	46
iv. Hors Limites	48
v. Uliza Wahenga Dada!	50
vi. Alteritude	52
vii. Pourquoi pas moi? Plaidoyer pour les droits des personnes handicapées	54
viii. Femmes en création	56
ix. Beyond Caring	58

**CHAPTER 4. Strong institutions and communities: Cultural action for governance, dialogue and transborder exchanges.**

Introduction	60
i. Energizing cross border cohesion and inter-cultural peace in the East African Nomadic Cattle Corridor of Karamoja (Uganda) and Turkana (Kenya) through participatory theatre, folk arts, and inter sports	62
ii. Arts et culture pour l'inclusion citoyenne : l'Université Abdou Moumouni jette des ponts	64
iii. Creative diversity and social inclusion (Credisi)	66
iv. Éducation citoyenne et à la paix par l'expression de la diversité culturelle et artistique en milieu scolaire	68
v. Artistic and Cultural Action in favour of Social Cohesion and Accountable Governance	70
vi. Makeshift constructions of trust: music-making, placemaking and movement-building	72
vii. Mirages et perditions	74

**CHAPTER 5. Cultural heritage, territories and spaces: Building inclusive communities and sense of place.**

Introduction	76
i. Narratives from Zimbabwe	78
ii. Projet des Arts de l'Oralité et des Scènes Urbaines (PAOSU)	80
iii. Sukiana, une créée publique pour la paix et la cohésion sociale entre peuls et cultivateurs dans le nord du Bénin	82
iv. Blueprint for Majestic Cinema Culture Hub	84
v. Sounds of the Sacred Web Festival	86

**CONCLUSION: THE POWER OF CULTURE IN SHAPING THE FUTURE OF OUR SOCIETIES.** 88

**ANNEX 1 – Localising SDGs/Project** 96

**ANNEX 2 – African Union 2063 Agenda Goals/Project** 98

**ANNEX 3 – Thematics/Project** 100

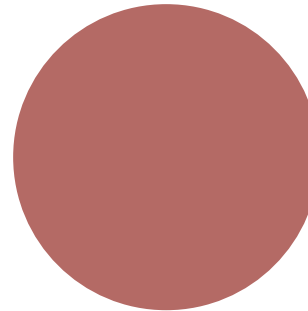
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enjoy, with *Culture  
at Work Africa.***



**Culture  
at Work  
Africa**



Culture is the way we understand our lives and the meaning we make of them. Culture nourishes the values that are the foundation of people-centred development. Culture is also the active participation in the celebration of life, the safeguarding and renewal of heritage, the processes of creative expression, and the discovery of diversity.

Much has been written in the last 40 years on the place of culture in development, but it is difficult to find documents or reports that illustrate in practice, at work, how culture changes our societies in an empowering way. The document you are reading – *Culture at Work Africa. The public value of intercultural dialogue for social cohesion in urban Africa* – addresses this gap.

It explains the reality of 15 African countries and provides details about 33 projects and programmes co-funded in the context of the initiative; from the frames and narratives to the final outcomes and outputs, from the successes to the difficulties experienced. All the projects described in the report can be understood – should be understood – as learning experiences.

# Introduction

## The Culture at Work Africa initiative

***Culture at Work Africa*** – *The Public value of Intercultural Dialogue for Social Cohesion in Urban Africa* was an initiative launched by a consortium of eight African, European and international cultural organisations and networks: Arterial Network, BOZAR, CERAV, Culture et Développement, The Culture Fund of Zimbabwe Trust, Interarts, International Music Council and United Cities and Local Governments' Committee on Culture; with three associated partners: the African Centre for Cities and the School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics at the University of Cape Town, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Centre for Linguistic and Historical Studies through Oral Tradition (CELHTO); and co-funded by the European Union through the European Commission Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation (DG DEVCO) under the programme Intercultural Dialogue and Culture.<sup>1</sup>

*Culture at Work Africa* aimed at creating new opportunities and mobilising stakeholders to promote intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity, in urban and peri-urban areas in Africa, as drivers for social inclusion and sustainable human development. It operated in 15 different countries in Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

*Culture at Work Africa* included two calls, launched in 2018 and 2019, granting a total of 33 projects and divided into two specific lots. The first lot sought projects aimed at enhancing public and private cultural spaces as safe spaces for intercultural dialogue, with the involvement of active stakeholders in the public sphere (e.g., organisations active in the social, educational or environmental fields, youth and cultural centres, schools, universities, libraries, or local authorities). The second lot aimed at granting capacity-building transnational projects for institutions and professionals in the field of intercultural mediation, specifically targeting cultural and creative organisations as well as operators for social cohesion.

*Culture at Work Africa* carried out a wide range of activities including: support for innovative on-the-ground projects aiming at developing safe and neutral spaces for intercultural dialogue, active citizenship and intercommunity relations; training and capacity-building of cultural operators, public authorities and cultural mediators; networking and exchanges between different stakeholders; and raising awareness of the importance of culture and cultural diversity for sustainable human and people-centred development.

The initiative was carried out in the context of the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the Agenda) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a universal “plan of action for people, planet and prosperity”, adopted by all UN Member States in 2015. The Agenda defines 17 Goals as a blueprint to address global

<sup>1</sup> This programme contributes to the implementation of the objectives put forward in the Joint Europe External Action Service (EEAS) – European Commission communication “Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations”, that indicates three strands to advance cultural cooperation with partner countries: culture as an engine for sustainable social and economic development; intercultural dialogue for peaceful inter-community relations; and cultural heritage.



challenges – including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, and peace and justice – and to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. In 2019, the UN Secretary-General called on all sectors of society to mobilise for a decade of action to achieve the Goals by the target date of 2030, and to act on three levels: global action, local action, and people action, including youth, civil society, the media, the private sector, unions, academia, and other stakeholders. To this end, *Culture at Work Africa* mobilised cultural action as an engine to achieve the Sustainable Development Agenda through several Goals in a multilevel and multi-stakeholder approach. This publication links all the projects described with the SDGs reached by the action.

*Culture at Work Africa* also developed in the context of the adoption in January 2015 of the 2063 Vision Agenda by the African Union, which defined seven key priorities in line with “an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, led by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force on the world stage”. In 2021, the main theme of the African Union is “Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want”. The 2063 Agenda also includes seven aspirations, the fifth of which reflects an “Africa with a Strong Cultural Identity, Common Heritage, Values and Ethics”, where the African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent. Out of the three key priority areas embedded in the *Culture at Work in Africa* initiative, two are fully in line with this agenda: (1) Cultural Values and African Renaissance and (2) Cultural Heritage, Creative Arts and Businesses.

*Culture at Work Africa* also operated in the context of another global framework promoted by United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG): Culture 21 Actions, which advocates for the operationalisation of culture in sustainable cities and the effective implementation of cultural policies, programmes and projects at the local level for a people-centred development of local communities. Culture 21 Actions renews the commitments of cities and territories to highlight the interdependent relationship between citizenship, culture, and sustainable development. It supplements the Agenda 21 for Culture, approved by UCLG in 2004, and transforms it into nine concrete commitments and 100 concrete actions around the areas of: cultural rights; heritage, diversity and creativity; education; environment; economy; equality and social inclusion; urban planning and public spaces; information and knowledge; and the governance of culture. Culture 21 Actions facilitates the exchange of, and gives visibility to, good practices on culture, including cultural policies, programmes and projects, implemented at the local level.

It is also worth noting that the initiative was implemented in the period from 2017 to 2020, which was marked in 2020 by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic worldwide, including in the African region. Therefore, the development of most of the initiatives promoted and supported in the context of the initiative by the *Culture at Work Africa* consortium were impacted and faced major changes, which are partially reflected in this publication.

This publication, led by UCLG, is a key outcome of the *Culture at Work Africa* initiative and it attempts to document the development and implementation of the initiative as a learning tool for future opportunities as well as for local, regional and international promotion.

# Why this publication?

The publication aims at providing an overall conceptual analysis of the main thematic issues, challenges and opportunities addressed by the sub grantees co-funded in the context of the initiative. This includes achievements, relevant outputs and best practices, but it also highlights the difficulties, major challenges, problems and lessons learned. It describes: a general presentation of each project and related partnership; project outputs and outcomes; statistics and data on different aspects, such as youth and women participation or gender disaggregation; beneficiaries' feedback; an overview of vulnerable groups addressed; the types of activities and materials produced, as well as topics addressed and other relevant information. It also provides recommendations for subsequent activities at local, national, regional or African and EU level.

Along with providing valuable lessons in addressing local issues and challenges, this publication also aims at documenting, promoting and providing international visibility on the 33 projects and programmes co-funded in the context of the initiative. It has been elaborated in relation with two accompanying [conferences and a multimedia exhibition](#) organised in parallel by BOZAR in Brussels (Belgium) and Arterial Network in Abidjan (Ivory Coast) in spring 2020. These events showcased initiatives that fostered intercultural dialogue and facilitated a process of reflection by the audience through audio-visual or installation-based art works. With this publication, we aim at providing both a printed and digitalised record of the experiences of both the Consortium and the pool of subgrantees of the *Culture at Work Africa* initiative.

Part of the added value of *Culture at Work Africa* is that it aimed at bridging a wide range of African regions to overcome the linguistic divide and promote regional and interregional cooperation, covering not only anglophone and francophone territories but also a range of spoken and/or written local and/or indigenous languages such as Ndebele, Swahili, Hausa, Fula, Baatonou, Nago, Dendi, Kinyarwanda and more. Consequently, and in order to reflect this diversity, the coordinators of this publication chose to deliberately preserve the original titles and features of each initiative included in the chapters below.

CHAPTER 1

# Strengthening artists and cultural actors' capacities for social cohesion and transformative change.

**Main theme:** Artists and cultural actors' capacities (professionals)

## **Introduction**

*To be able to contribute to transformative change, a society needs to strengthen the capacities of those actors and processes that have culture and creativity at their core. In fact, these cultural actors and processes play an important role in comprehensive and sustainable economic and social development, as well as in the full realisation of social cohesion and peaceful coexistence.*

Building and strengthening capacities of creative actors and sectors has proven to be a true lever for the integral development of communities, contributing to the promotion of sustainable and inclusive growth. Local cultural and creative actors' capacities allow the renewal and creation of economic activities, boost entrepreneurship and employability, make up an important part of the attractiveness of places, and contribute to the development of tourism. It has been proved that economic models that prioritise short-term economic impact at the expense of long-term sustainability have driven the abusive exploitation and undermining of local cultural resources, resulting in inhabitants no longer identifying with their local area. Therefore, a sustainable use of cultural resources is fundamental to foster a development that is respectful of core values and contributes equally to cultural, social, economic and environmental development.

Three main global agendas, all of them approved in 2015, reflect these considerations. Firstly, the United Nations 2030 Agenda and SDGs include several targets related to the importance of innovation and creativity (target 8.3) as well as to the connection between local cultures and sustainable tourism (targets 8.9 and 12.b) and the need to have quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure available to everyone (target 9.1 in which cultural infrastructure needs to be included). Furthermore, the strengthening of artists and cultural actors' capacities could be also related to the SDG 8 on economic growth. Secondly, the African Union 2063 Agenda deploys seven Aspirations, including the 5<sup>th</sup> aspiration, which is dedicated to culture and numerous priority areas which are either explicitly or implicitly related to cultural aspects and the cultural dimension of local sustainable development in Africa. Thirdly, the guide *Culture 21: Actions* includes several commitments and actions related to local cultural and creative capacities, social cohesion and transformative change, which highlight the importance of recognising artists and cultural professionals, ensuring access to their works, promoting corporate responsibility, and providing an adequate range of support mechanisms for cultural and creative projects.

The initiative *Culture at Work Africa* supported several projects that are excellent examples of the connection among cultural and creative local actors' capacities, social cohesion and transformative change. "**Génération Positiv**" in Yopougon has successfully developed new schemes (60 workshops) and spaces (including the "Cogito") and has targeted specific populations (63 young people) to develop cultural and creative practices as a lever for social cohesion and intercultural dialogue. With artistic residencies, a virtual caravan and an international workshop, the transnational Burkina Faso and Mali project "**Les pinceaux de l'intégration**" has proved that capacity-building in the domain of visual arts is possible and can include a gender perspective and an emphasis on public spaces. In Benin, "**Culture en partage: lieux sûrs en Afrique**" has undertaken strategic activities so that the actors involved in secondary and high-schools educational programmes could improve their capacity in the field of music, theatre, literature, storytelling and heritage. With intercultural dialogue as its engine, the project has carefully considered transborder peaceful relations, incorporating marginalised minorities and a very interesting gender perspective. In Uganda, the project "**Photography & visual literacy for active citizenship**" also aimed at strengthening cultural and creative local actors' capacities. The project trained a group of university students on visual literacy, with components related to freedom of expression, gender equality, creativity and tangible and intangible heritage. In Nigeria and Kenya, through a cross-cultural residency programme in Abuja and Nairobi "**PenPen Africa**" has used a critical perspective to explore and widen cultural identities; writers were empowered to contribute actively to the valorisation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage through their literary creations.

All the projects included in this chapter have also undertaken advocacy and awareness-raising activities aimed at local and national governments to ensure the long-term impact of the programmes.

## GÉNÉRATION POSITIV

*“Generation Positiv”: Strengthening nearby spaces and engaging youth participation to promote intercultural dialogue and social cohesion.*



Since December 2018, the city of Yopougon, a suburb of Abidjan on the Ivory Coast, has seen the emergence of new types of cultural and creative activities and events aiming at strengthening spaces and social participation in cultural life across the city. Especially targeting the youth and vulnerable populations from excluded and marginalised neighbourhoods, the “Génération Positiv” project seeks to strengthen local cultural spaces and actors across the city, as a lever for social cohesion and intercultural dialogue through culture and the arts.

The project not only offers new spaces for targeted populations to develop cultural and creative practices, but it also provides them with safe and permanent spaces to show, share and exchange about their practices. In addition, through cultural mediation processes and artistic training, it also fosters a pacific and sustained dialogue between people who were usually marginalised and left out of the social, cultural, economic and political life of the city.

Capacity-building training was previously carried out with a group of twenty managers who were running local cultural spaces across the city in order to provide them with tools, techniques and knowledge for

enhancing cultural mediation practices. The training lasted ten days and included the participation of four experts in a range of different fields, such as social communication, sociology, cultural engineering and human resources management. Four modules were provided, covering topics such as legal and administrative standards, techniques of artistic programming, social mediation processes and techniques, and the strategic management of cultural spaces.

The project also entailed the reforming of a “nearby space” or “space of proximity” called “Cogito”, located in a strategic district of the city. The aim was to rehabilitate the neediest space, among the group of targeted spaces, which then benefited from the 10-day capacity-building and training workshop.

Thereafter, sixty training sessions were organised regularly during the following 6 months, in the second half of 2019. These sessions targeted young people, girls and boys from three different vulnerable and marginalised neighbourhoods of the city, who had left or had been left out of the educational system. The workshops, carried out in a strategic venue in Yopougon and equipped to guarantee the full effectiveness of the project, offered extensive training in the fields of music, dance and theatre. In total, more than sixty-three young people were trained in several artistic disciplines.

The project also permitted the emergence of a virtual network, including the group of twenty young participants, which aims at promoting intercultural dialogue. The network was set up as a following-up mechanism to ensure the continuity of the action beyond its initial implementation. The network was established under the leadership of the Directorate of Sociocultural Affairs of the City in order to guarantee its continuity at the institutional level.

As a final result of the project, an artistic tour took place in February 2020, with specific shows and performances in three of the nearby spaces – including the recently rehabilitated “Cogito” cultural space – which took part into the initiative. The tour allowed twenty-five of the sixty-three young participants to present their creations in dance, music and theatre publicly to a larger audience from the city of Yopougon.

## Agenda 2063

1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
4. Transformed economies
12. Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place
13. Peace security and stability is preserved
16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



**Goal 4:**  
Quality education



**Goal 8:**  
Decent work and economic growth



**Goal 9:**  
Industry, innovation and infrastructure



**Goal 10:**  
Reduced inequalities



**Goal 11:**  
Sustainable cities and communities



**Goal 16:**  
Peace, justice and strong institutions

## LES PINCEAUX DE L'INTÉGRATION

*“Les Pinceaux de l'Intégration”: Facilitating transformative change for more cohesive living in Burkina Faso and Mali through African youth painting.*



“Les pinceaux de l'intégration” brings together artists at the core of urban life, across the borders of Burkina Faso and Mali, to reclaim public cultural spaces for the youth. The project enables young African artists to ensure their own artistic and social development, and has strengthened the role of culture as a vector for peace. Specifically, the project contributes to the opening of borders between the two sister countries, which for some years have been facing an unprecedented security crisis, in which their borders have fallen prey to armed bandits, jihadist groups and complex conflicts.

This collaborative project was coordinated by a consortium with 10 years of experience collaborating in the advocacy of visual arts as a driver of social cohesion and economic development in Africa. It was formed by the Centre Soleil d'Afrique (which led the initiative and ensured the smooth running of the project), the Atelier Afrique en Couleurs-SARL in Burkina Faso (which focused on the creation and training especially of girls and women in the field of arts and crafts), and the Medina Gallery in Mali (which offered a space exhibition for young artists). The selection of the artists was made by an external jury set up in consultation with the committee of experts formed by members of the consortium. For greater transparency, virtual spaces were also created in order to share information with the decision-makers involved.



The project brought together artists from the two countries to participate in a programme of activities promoting intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and respect for human dignity. The project developed in three different activities: artists' residencies in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) and Bamako (Mali); the Burkina-Mali Virtual Artistic Caravan; and the symposium atelier entitled "Art and social commitment. Which approach?". The activities had to be adapted due to the growing insecurity at the borders of Burkina and Mali, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the social and political crisis that shook Mali for months. However, those circumstances also permitted the organisations benefiting from the project to strengthen their infrastructures, improve their visibility and develop south-south collaborations.

Young artists from Ouagadougou and Bamako had the opportunity to be part of the two artists' residencies organised in both countries for two weeks. The artists' residencies brought together seven experienced artists to each country, 14 in total (50% of whom were women). Artists created and discussed on the theme "Sub-regional consolidation and gender through art" and performed in schools and educational centres. Their works produced were the subject of two large exhibitions.

The "Caravan of artistic and regional integration in Africa" had originally planned to tour to three major cities in Burkina Faso and Mali with artists and diverse cultural actors, but this activity had to be adapted. Instead, the "Burkina-Mali Virtual Artistic Caravan" was implemented. It consisted of an in-house workshop that brought together the 14 artists who had already participated in previous workshops in Ouagadougou and Bamako, plus six new artists. They all worked at home and two teams of photographers illustrated the experience. Furthermore, a related exhibition in Ouagadougou brought together more than 100 people.

Finally, under the topic "Art and social commitment. Which approach?" a symposium atelier took place in Bamako during the Biennale of African Photography. This innovative activity brought together art historians, artists, municipal authorities and press workers to discuss, analyse and evaluate the contribution of art to social, economic and security development in Africa. A total of 73 people were mobilised and an audience of more than 80,000 people was reached thanks to media and social networks. The meeting became a demonstration of the awareness of African youth on the main challenges at local and global level, including the creation of healthy environments for the emergence of women in the fields of arts and crafts and visual arts.

In order to ensure the massive participation of women and young people in those activities, great emphasis on gender ethics was highlighted in the selection of beneficiaries, and the committee of experts adopted specific strategies for approaching young people prior to each activity. Around 15,000 to 20,000 people took part in the activities of "Les pinceaux de l'intégration", and the activities reached more than 10 million people through several communication channels. As a result, regional authorities have begun to acknowledge the impact of culture and the art sector in the socio-economic context in African countries, as well as their role in creating peaceful and tolerant societies, as demonstrated in the national consultation sessions organised by Mali.

As the project evolved, new partnerships with key institutions and private stakeholders were developed (such as with the Ministry of Culture of Mali, the Embassy of Burkina Faso in Mali, the Embassy of Mali in Burkina Faso, the Ministry of Culture and Crafts of Burkina Faso, KYA Network and the DOEN Foundation). The Ministry of Integration, German Cooperation (GIZ) and the Ministries of Security of Burkina Faso and Mali were approached with the objective of opening up the project to other subregions.

## Agenda 2063

1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
4. Transformed economies
11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
12. Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place
13. Peace security and stability is preserved
16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life
18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



Goal 4:  
Quality  
education

Goal 5:  
Gender  
equality

Goal 8:  
Decent work  
and economic  
growth

Goal 16:  
Peace, justice  
and strong  
institutions

Goal 17:  
Partnerships  
for the goals

## CULTURE EN PARTAGE: LIEUX SÛRS EN AFRIQUE

*“Culture en partage”: Promoting intercultural dialogue, intercultural mixing, access to cultural goods and capacity-building for artists and their productions.*



The Association Theatre Mayton Promo, together with the International Federation of Cultural Associations and Networks for the Living, Visual and Fine Arts and Literature, joined forces to develop a series of hybrid and culturally diverse creations in 2020 in the context of the International Itinerant Festival of Theater of the Lycées and Collèges of Benin (also known as FITHELYCOB) and of the ADJROU festival.

Over the years, both the ADJROU and the FITHELYCOB festival have become national institutions and core events in the cultural life of Benin, respectively celebrating their 17th and 6th edition in 2020. In this context, the promoters of the “Culture en partage” project decided to develop a unique cultural offer with the aim to mix not only cultures and national identities, but also disciplines and cultural fields.

The idea was to pair eight theatre director with eight duets of storytellers and musicians in order to produce eight theatre shows and eight story shows. The project included international partnerships with collaborators from Burkina Faso, Niger, Senegal and Togo. A special emphasis was put on the active inclusion of women creators, with five women out of the eight directors, and ten women out of the 16 musicians and storytellers.

Through multicultural and international creation, the project aimed at promoting intercultural dialogue for social cohesion and transborder peaceful relations, as well as fostering the sharing of cultures and knowledge between culturally diverse communities and different social groups (such as marginalised minorities, populations from different national cultures and identities, women and youth).

The final creations, that included theatre plays, musical performances, dance performances, tales and storytelling, have not only been showcased in the frame of the two must-see festivals previously mentioned, but they have also travelled to several secondary schools and high schools from eight cities and towns of Benin. This tour of schools opened up paths for intercultural dialogue as well as debates on local and national identity, customs and traditions, tangible and intangible heritage, religious and personal beliefs, and more. These debates all had at their heart one common element: culture.

Although both the FITHELYCOB and the ADJROU festivals had been postponed because of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the eight creations were shown at a later stage in 2020 to wide acclaim. Prior to this, several improvised and rehearsed representations had been organised in a number of theatres and cultural venues across the city of Cotonou, at the Mayton Space and at the Adjrou'houe Tale Village. Eventually, the 17th edition of the FITHELYCOB festival and the 6th edition of the ADJROU Festival were successfully organised in strict compliance with the specific COVID-19 measures and mainly by broadcasting on social networks.

In total, over 1,300 people have been reached directly or indirectly by the initiative, including: children, young adults and adults as audience members; artists, creators and cultural actors who were involved in the creation of the shows; and creative professionals from a diverse range of cultural and creative fields (such as comedians, directors, professors of literature and theatrical studies and writers) who were involved in capacity-building workshops aimed at training the directors, storytellers and musicians involved in the show.

Last but not least, the project facilitated the launch and development of thematic meetings and advocacy activities in Benin, in the capital Porto Novo as well as in the localities of Abomey, Agonmé, Lobogo and Parakou. These were occasions to strengthen the connection and interaction with local and national cultural actors and stakeholders, and to educate local public authorities of the afore-mentioned cities on the real added value of having theatre practices being integrated into secondary and high-schools educational programmes.

## Agenda 2063

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16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life
18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



## ENAKPAMI 2: 2<sup>ème</sup> Expérience Nouvelle d'Assistance aux plasticiens pour leur ascension via le multimédia et l'internet

*"ENAKPAMI 2": Training and capacity-building of young local artists and creators to promote the local creative scene in North Benin.*



**B**enin is a country where one finds a wide range of cultural practices and artistic disciplines: from sculpture to video art, from painting to installations, from photography to performances. The creative and cultural scene extends to all of Benin, including the four departments in the north of the country: Atacora, Donga, Alibori and Borgou. However, in these regions, the isolation and dispersion of creators, combined with the absence of a formal framework for dialogue and exchange, tend to downplay the practice of the visual arts.

Thus, the "ENAKPAMI 2" project finds its origins in the desire to bring together the contribution of North Benin creators, and in particular young people, and to develop the cultural and creative scene of the territory through the identification and creation of synergies, interactive activities and the mobilisation and visibility of local visual artists. The project was carried by the Association for the Development of Visual Arts in North Benin (ADAV-NORD BENIN) with the collaboration of the Beninese Association of Plastic Arts FOUR P (ABAP-FOURP), and the support of various partners, including the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts.

The project also aims to promote local culture and artistic creation, to improve its access for, and adoption by, local populations, and to boost the local economic development of the targeted sectors and creators. To do this, 30 young visual artists were identified by the lead association to receive training in order to strengthen their technical skills in the fields of fine art photography, photo editing, video art and video editing.

Although the project originally aimed to target 30 young artists and designers, including 10 people with disabilities and 10 young designers, the initiative eventually led a jury of three qualified members to select a group of 30, including 21 young male designers, eight women visual artists and one designer with disabilities, based on the 40 applications received. This process required the organisers to revise their initial objectives. With the collaboration of the DEDJI, an NGO of disabled people of the Littoral, the project was able to involve another eight people with intellectual disabilities in the workshop. The selection process was coordinated by ADAV-NORD BENIN and the dissemination of the initial call was facilitated by the local authorities of the Municipality of Abomey-Calavi, among others.

The group of 29 visual artists, including nine with motor and intellectual disabilities, had the opportunity to participate in training workshops. A first workshop was organised over two stages of five days in December 2019 and January 2020. The first part of this workshop focused on fine art photography and the practice of photo editing and image painting software and was led by a professional trainer. There, participants had the opportunity to learn how to use a professional camera and to practice the techniques and rules of the art of photography. The second part of the workshop was organised a few weeks later under the supervision of a second professional trainer and introduced professional photo and image editing software, through practical exercises given to each participant.

A second workshop was organised alongside the first in December 2019 and January 2020, during the same periods. The first part of this second workshop focused on video art training and provided access to professional video shooting equipment. The second part of this second workshop was oriented towards audio-visual editing and allowed participants to use the materials created in the first part for their audio-visual creation. This last part ended with a viewing session where a compilation of videos produced by the participants was shown. Both parts were followed and guided by professional and qualified trainers.

Finally, the second national census carried out in the 12 departments of Benin made it possible to produce a directory of visual artists and other participants in the visual arts sector in Benin. The directory features 370 visual artists including 34 women, eight federations, 51 associations, 48 places or promotional spaces, five historians, 21 journalists and seven collectors.

Overall, the project specifically reached a targeted audience of 38 trainees who had the opportunity to acquire and develop technical, practical and creative skills and knowledge through their participation in the workshops. Beyond this core group of creators, the project reached approximately a further 400 people whose access to local photo and video production was improved thanks to both the website, which was aimed at promoting the project, and the promotion of the creative work developed by the 30 creators who participated in the training activities.

## Agenda 2063

- 1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
- 4. Transformed economies
- 11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
- 16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
- 17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life
- 18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



**Goal 5:**  
Gender  
equality

**Goal 8:**  
Decent work  
and economic  
growth

**Goal 11:**  
Sustainable  
cities and  
communities

**Goal 17:**  
Partnerships  
for the goals

## V PENPEN AFRICA

*“PenPen Africa”: Exploring cultural identities and fostering social cohesion through a gathering of talented writers of diverse regions to interact and share cultural expressions of African heritage.*



**“P**enPen Africa” (PPA) is a cross-cultural residency programme for writers that fosters social cohesion among African writing communities by deepening the diversity of cultures existing in Africa. The programme, implemented from July 2019 to June 2020, included parallel residencies in Abuja (Nigeria) and Nairobi (Kenya) for 21 days, where connected writers of varied backgrounds had the chance to learn more about African cultural heritage and experience different culture expressions, reflecting on their commonalities and unique practices. Through intense series of workshops, seminars, interactive sessions, creative writing assessments and group tasks, the 12 selected participants (six women and six men) wrote two non-fiction stories each, which were compiled in an anthology.

African Writers Development Trust, an artistic, cultural and educational not-for-profit organisation, led the initiative in partnership with Writers Guild Kenya, an organisation that works mostly with writers to create networking and publishing opportunities. They both have experience as partners; since 2018 they organise the annual African Writers Conference, which brings together creatives from various cultures to network, learn and grow their craft. On the occasion of PPA, they worked together again to connect writers of varied backgrounds with the common goal to improve cultural and social cohesion between the writing communities of Africa.

The residency programme consisted of a residence in Nigeria with six writers from West and Central Africa (two from Nigeria and one from Gambia, Cameroon, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire), and a residence in Kenya with six writers from East and Southern Africa (three from Kenya and one from Zambia, Uganda and Rwanda). The writers were exposed to the various cultures of the host country – Nigeria and Kenya – as well as the cultures of one another. They became aware of cultural stereotypes in literature and how to avoid their use, thus contributing to the exploration and widening of critical perspectives on cultural identities.

Writers were carefully selected from their indigenous writing or literary communities with the objective of ensuring high quality exchange and collaboration among them. Judging criteria included technical capability, content, organisation and expression of entries submitted by candidates. The participatory approach of the programme allowed writers to experience transnational exchanges by interacting together both in person and through the daily progress of the programme online for those who were following from all regions of the continent. They wrote two non-fiction short stories which revolved around different cultural themes, resulting in a total of 24 short stories which were compiled in an anthology entitled "Twaweza", both published in paperback and eBook formats and disseminated to universities, high school libraries, national libraries, and literary groups. The President of Nigeria, H.E. Muhammadu Buhari, received copies of the anthology as well.

National Government institutions and departments involved in the preservation and promotion of culture in Nigeria were invited to visit the residency, such as the National Council for Arts and Culture and the National Institute for Cultural Orientation. Embassies and High Commissions representing the origin countries of some participants were also invited to follow closely the progress and achievements of the programme.

Indeed, collaboration with local and regional stakeholders was essential for the success of the programme. The team worked closely with Writers Association of Gambia, Self-Ish (West Africa), Yasmin el-Rufai Foundation (YELF), Coalition of African Literature Nigeria (COAL-NG), Writers Space Africa – Ghana and Writers Space Kenya, Afflatus Africa, Art Moves Africa and the Creative Writers League. Future plans for strengthening and expanding the network of activities across the regions include approaching organisations such as the Goethe Institute Kenya, the French Cultural Centre Kenya, the French Cultural Centre Tanzania and Writers Space Africa – Zambia.

All in all, the programme demonstrated that creative actors, namely writers, contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, through the valorisation of tangible and intangible heritage of regions and cities, by capturing in their works the values and cultural expressions that shape the identities of individuals and groups. Additionally, writers inspire the exploration and renovation of the imagination, memories, rituals, and costumes, encouraging inclusiveness, tolerance, respect, peace and diversity in societies.

## Agenda 2063

1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
13. Peace security and stability is preserved
16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life

## SDGs



**Goal 5:**  
Gender  
equality

**Goal 11:**  
Sustainable  
cities and  
communities

**Goal 16:**  
Peace, justice  
and strong  
institutions

**Goal 17:**  
Partnerships  
for the goals

## VI PHOTOGRAPHY AND VISUAL LITERACY FOR ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

*“Photography & visual literacy for active citizenship”:  
Promoting local democracy and inclusive sustainable societies  
in Uganda through artistic education.*



“Photography & visual literacy for active citizenship” provides students with the knowledge, skills and experiences to develop visual literacy and promote the role that it plays in democratic and sustainable societies. Through the inclusion of photojournalism and visual literacy workshops in extracurricular education at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, students in media and journalism, as well as general student population on the campus, could develop research and photographic techniques, critical thinking, openness and respect to different cultures. The project intended to address the underdevelopment of visual literacy in the university curriculums in Uganda, and the students became did in fact become active participants who could envisage the professional opportunities that the project brought.

The project was led by FOTEA Foundation, which was responsible for conceptualising the workshops and developing their methodology, as well as writing the terms of reference for each of the facilitators and exhibition curators. Other tasks included the financial management and the coordination of visual communication and graphic design elements. The Department of Journalism and Communication at Makerere University managed the faculty timetable and identified students interested in the project. The partnership was designed to encompass photography training and to promote intercultural dialogue,



encouraging active citizenship, intercommunity relations and a necessary critical approach to colonialism. It also increased the use of public spaces at the Makerere University campus for creative expression.

Over the course of the project, more than 50 students participated in a series of four in-depth workshops (including several online and in-person sessions adapted to the COVID-19 outbreak) and one exhibition. An introductory session served to inform students about the project and encourage their participation, at which 49 students attended (65,3% women) from the Department of Journalism and Communication and the Department of Performing Arts and Film, both under the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the Margaret Trowell School of Industrial and Fine Arts under the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology (CEDAT). After the introductory meeting, four sessions addressed four main themes within Workshop #1: “Critical thinking”, “Visual literacy”, “History of photography on the African continent” and “Research methodology in photojournalism”.

Workshop #2, “Activate the archives”, included a session about the critical exploration of archival photography and experimenting with different techniques, as well as a public lecture on “The History of Photography in Uganda”, an exchange with African Photography Initiative founders, a creative thinking workshop, a public photographer’s talk and a presentation on how to read photographs and use them in research. Workshop #3, “Basically Photography”, provided students with online sessions on technical skills, storytelling, pitching and basic workflow to streamline the business side of photography. Finally, workshop #4, “Documenting Democracy Masterclass”, developed community-based projects around the electoral processes in Uganda.

Workshops counted on the participation of acknowledged artists, filmmakers, entrepreneurs, educators and independent professionals. They taught young students the importance of critical thinking and the logical connection between ideas and narratives in raising awareness on essential issues in society, focusing on how creativity and visual languages such as photography can convey meaning through imagery. In this regard, the workshops tackled the issues of the way photography was used during the colonial era in the African continent and the power balance connected to the work of local artists and photojournalists, styles and genres.

Practical exercises and assignments valuing African visual culture were intended to help students define their career paths in the field of visual creativity. In addition, one exhibition showcased students’ work at the Campus of Makerere University, helping them to contextualise their learnings. Alongside panel discussions coordinated by three students after the workshops, the teaching Faculty at MUK and professional photographers engaged in a “Train the Trainers” series of workshops, and a Communications Seminar explored the potential of the virtual sphere.

Despite the challenges encountered at the end of October 2019, due to the students strikes protesting against a 10% increase in tuition fees which were brutally opposed by the police and the COVID-19 restrictions, “Photography & visual literacy for active citizenship” registered a considerable progress towards achieving its goals, including the participation of more than 15% women, often underrepresented in the photography industry, in each activity. Setbacks made it necessary to reschedule some activities, yet it did not prevent the project from succeeding in raising awareness on the importance of providing African youth with artistic education, of encouraging an active citizenship and of promoting the defence of freedom of expression, gender equality, creativity and tangible and intangible heritage through visual narratives.

## Agenda 2063

- 2. Well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation
- 11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
- 16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
- 18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



## CHAPTER 2

# Freedom of expression and intercultural dialogue: Creating cultural spaces and synergies for peace-building and democratic societies.

**Main themes:** Freedom of expression and intercultural dialogue

### Introduction

*Intercultural dialogue stands as one of the most important challenges of our societies. Mobility and migration, as well as the acknowledgement of cultural diversity at all scales, are structural components of African societies.*

The respect for and the value of diversity requires the integration of both multicultural strategies that recognise people with different cultural backgrounds who live together and intercultural strategies that create bonds between them. Active participation in the creation and production of culture allows the creation and recreation of communities in which people can freely construct their individual selves, with freedom of speech as a fundamental right that guarantees real dialogue. Special attention must be paid to the different realities of people of indigenous, minority and migrant communities. Cultural processes and expressions, such as slam poetry, cinema, video or storytelling, are incredibly useful techniques to support an intercultural dialogue that needs to be useful, operational and empowering.

Development Agendas – the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the African Union’s 2063 Vision Agenda (AU 2063 Agenda) and Culture 21 Actions – reflect these considerations. The SDGs include a clear target related to the importance of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in education (target 4.7) and it is also possible to understand that freedom of speech and intercultural dialogue is implicit in Goal 10 (“Reduce inequality within and among countries”) and in Goal 16 (devoted to promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, and with target 16.10 demanding the enhancement of public access to information and the protection of fundamental freedoms). SDGs also include references to support domestic technology development, research and innovation (target 9.B) as well as to access to information and communication technology (target 9.C). On the other hand, the AU 2063 Agenda, *The Africa We Want*, dedicates a special focus to culture in its aspiration five, which aims at an African region with a “strong identity, a common heritage, and shared values and ethics” where the African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent, embedding three key priority areas, namely: (1) Values and Ideals of Pan Africanism; (2) Cultural Values and African Renaissance; and (3) Cultural Heritage, Creative Arts and Businesses. Culture 21 Actions is more explicit in the consideration of intercultural dialogue and freedom of speech, especially in the commitment devoted to “Culture, Information and Knowledge”, which highlights the need for fundamental freedoms to be at the centre of local cultural policies: “freedom of expression, including artistic expression, freedom of opinion, freedom of information, respect for cultural diversity and respect for privacy” as well as the importance of measures to “access to free and plural information” are all vital.

The programme *Culture at Work Africa* has supported several projects that illustrate the importance of fostering freedom of expression and intercultural dialogue if we are committed to building peaceful and truly inclusive and democratic societies. “**African Space Makers**” in Nairobi has involved five local creative spaces formed by artists, community groups and social entrepreneurs and gave voice to their teams to create a “mockumentary series”, in which critical issues such as race, gender, age, religion, sexuality and more were discussed and shared. The project took the opportunity to connect with international peers and with the local government of Nairobi. The project “**Stimulating Intercultural Dialogue in East Africa using Technology**” involved cultural actors in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda for the production of the *Kikatuni* series (12 episodes, a teaser and a promotion video) that creatively address key issues like fundamental freedoms, climate change, the future of work, technology, social development and cultural development, in a process that has been collaborative and participative. Intercultural dialogue has been at the core of the “**Relinking Communities Through Culture**” project, which aimed at enhancing empathy and building social cohesion between the Shona and Ndebele ethnic groups of Zimbabwe. The project had the courage to explicitly consider difficulties (the transmission of information, national identity building, ethnic polarisation, intolerance or linguistic divides) and involved arts and culture practitioners, freelancers, columnists, social media commentators, citizen journalists and journalists using creative methodologies to promote dialogue. Similarly, the project “**Young Ugandans and Kenyans demonstrate the value of social cohesion**” involved 100 peace clubs in Kenya, and 21 cultural heritage clubs and community museums in Uganda, to reimagine competition with a new “contest” aiming to underline positive values (intercultural dialogue, social cohesion and peaceful coexistence) in the border areas of both countries. In all stages of the project, participants discussed key issues (which were often sources of mistaken perceptions, misunderstanding and tensions leading to systemic conflicts) and created something new, the basis for a future which prioritises dialogue and peace. Conflicts in Cameroon were the basis of the “**Ciné-débat pour la paix: pour le dialogue interculturel et la cohésion sociale au Cameroun**”, a project that brought together film projections and debates aiming at contributing to peacebuilding among communities and populations in five regions of the country: North-West, South-West, West, Littoral and Centre of the country. The project fostered the cinema as a safe and neutral space for intercultural dialogue and peace. “**Action jeunesse pour le dialogue interculturel et la dignité pour tous en Afrique**” built on the potential of virtual communication as a lever for intercultural dialogue and peace among young people in Senegal, Benin and Cameroun, by taking advantage of the outreach capacity of slam poetry and poetry as storytelling techniques that can help reduce violence, intolerance and socio-economic exclusion linked to ethnicity or religion.

## AFRICAN SPACE MAKERS

*“African Space Makers”*: Developing the first interactive 360 video mockumentary on Space Making made in Africa.



**A**frican Space Makers” tells the stories of women and men from creative spaces and art collectives from Nairobi, Kenya. This is the first ever *“interactive participatory virtual reality mockumentary series”* made in Africa. “African Space Makers” involves, and gives voice and visibility to, cultural and community spaces from the capital metropolis of Kenya, and it is planning to expand to other African cities. Each segment of the project has been developed together with members of five art centres, a music collective, graffiti artists and skater’s groups, gathering a total of 37 artists and creatives.

The project is led and coordinated by Cultural Video Production Ltd, also known as TheNrbBus collective (a creative space itself), in collaboration with Goethe Institute, which helped to identify and establish the cultural spaces, and Black Rhino VR, which provided the technical expertise.

The series tells the story of five local creative spaces formed by artists, community groups and social entrepreneurs: *Maasai Mbili* (a self-financed collective of artists); *Brush Tu* (an art centre); *Keroche* (an independent graffiti artist); the *Skaters* (a community group); and the *Zazi collective* (an urban subculture

music collective). These spaces were selected because they are creatively and culturally diverse, they are self-sustained and independent from any institution, and they volunteered to be part of the project and to have their experiences presented to the public.

“African Space Makers” shows how independent cultural and creative actors can become the agents of social, economic and community development. The project shows how cultural actors contribute to rethinking current urban models, raise key urban debates by questioning social norms related to critical issues such as to race, gender, age, religion, sexuality and more, and create safe spaces for minorities to express themselves and thereby enhance social cohesion between communities.

Reflecting the true spirit of the local stories was key in the success of the mockumentary series. Hence, the leaders of the initiative and the identified groups met several times in order to collaborate, have in-depth conversations and co-create what was going to become the mockumentary, making sure the fictionalisation process guaranteed the embodiment of the vision of each group. The project also sought to influence local decision-making to advocate for a better recognition of the culture and art sectors, better support for cultural creation, production and diffusion, and the acknowledgement of the culture sector's value regarding the use of public space, urban planning and local social and economic development.

“African Space Makers” succeeded in involving the Municipality of Nairobi as a partner of the initiative, through the involvement of the Urban Planning Department of the city, with the aim of increasing public and institutional support for the creation of safe community spaces. As “African Space Makers” developed, new partnerships with key institutions and private stakeholders, such as the German leading virtual reality company INVR.SPACE or the international institution Hivos, were established. This allowed the project to grow both in development and ambition, leading to the involvement of different local professionals (professional actors, production designer, costume designer, marketing professionals and more) thus contributing to stimulate local employment as well as gaining access to key events across the world.

Surfing on these accomplishments, “African Space Makers” was able to win the Lumiere Award for best director 2020 and XR Must Impact Award 2020. It was also selected to be part in major events and international stages throughout 2019, such as the Berlinale Africa Hub (Berlin), the Venice Biennale Financial Gap (Venice), the African Crossroads event (Mombasa), and the “Booster” business event (Brussels). The premiere was organised in Nairobi in 2020 during the festival Jibambe Na Tec, co-hosted by the French and the German Cultural Institutes. Two private showcases were also held in 2019 in the Nrb Bus, at the Cultural Video Production Office (Nairobi). The “African Space Makers” succeeded in bringing the stories of a range of local artists, creatives and art collectives from Nairobi to more than 400 people worldwide, opening up a new path to freedom of expression and to the conversation on intercultural dialogue.

## Agenda 2063

- 4. Transformed economies
- 10. World class infrastructure criss-crosses Africa
- 11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
- 12. Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place
- 16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent

## SDGs



**Goal 8:**  
Decent work  
and economic  
growth

**Goal 9:**  
Industry,  
innovation and  
infrastructure

**Goal 11:**  
Sustainable  
cities and  
communities

**Goal 16:**  
Peace, justice  
and strong  
institutions

## STIMULATING INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE IN EAST AFRICA USING TECHNOLOGY

*“Stimulating Intercultural Dialogue in East Africa using Technology”:  
Promoting cultural and creative initiatives as safe spaces to strengthen  
intercultural dialogue in Africa.*



Culture and Development East Africa (CDEA) is a creative think tank that collaborates with creatives and cultural spaces in order to enable much needed debates and networking events mainly in Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya. Those spaces invite local inhabitants, and in particular women, young people and cultural actors, to discuss critical issues and sensitive political concerns related to social justice and accountable governance.

The Electronic and Postal Communications (Online Content) Regulations of 2018 and Tanzania’s Cybercrimes Act 2015 tend to limit freedom of expression of people, including artists and activists and in particular young people. Coordinated by CDEA, the “Stimulating Intercultural Dialogue in East Africa using Technology” project was implemented in collaboration with the creative platform KQ Hub Africa that promotes the dialogue and exchange of experiences between entrepreneurs, academics and creators with the objective of fostering intercultural dialogue and knowledge. Through a combination of technical tools, including audio-visual materials, virtual platforms and the social media, the project offered open, safe spaces for a free dialogue on issues which are more difficult to raise, or lack visibility, in traditional institutional spaces, especially in Tanzania.

The project created the KIKATUNI series (12 episodes, a teaser and a promotion video) with the aim of offering a safe space for critical thinking, social dialogue and free expression around topics such as social justice and community building, using an innovative audio-visual incubator process involving local cartoonists, film-makers and musicians. Alongside this activity, KQ Hub Africa produced six episodes of Creative Talks Africa, both in presence (mainly in Kampala) and online, addressing a diverse range of issues such as: the relation between arts and freedom of expression; creative practice and mental health; creative innovation and disability; culture and creative entrepreneurship; creativity and waste management; fashion and arts; funding the arts; and culture in a digital world. These activities were held with the support of the British Council in Uganda, Hivos East Africa and the Design Hub of Kampala, as well as specific partnerships and collaborations with relevant local stakeholders, which ensured the relevancy and effectiveness of each activity.

The development of the KIKATUNI series was not easy and several difficulties were faced. Obtaining authorisation for the filming licence and licence for content dissemination were some of the main obstacles. The roof of the shooting venue – the Eco Sanaa Terrace – collapsing a few days before one of the episodes was to be shot was another. Among other difficulties were the lack of resources, a constant breakdown of the internet network and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020.

Despite those obstacles, 12 episodes (four episodes per cartoonist), a teaser and a promotion video were produced. All the episodes of the series showcase social and intercultural debates based on the cartoon work of three local cartoonists from Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya who address key issues like climate change, sustainable practices, the future of work, technology, social development and cultural development. The episodes are available on Youtube and were broadcasted on the Midundo online radio.

The KIKATUNI series was produced in collaboration with the Tanzania Youth Vision Association and the Dar es Salaam University Creative Arts Department to ensure the participation of young people and students not only to the debates, but also in the production of the series. A partnership was established with a local women's artist organisation called Binti Leo, in order to make sure girls and women would have a voice in the conversation. With this in mind, a special live streamed creative talk dedicated to women and women artists, was hosted by the KQ Hub Africa platform through their Facebook page. The online event highlighted the social and cultural factors that condition women's careers, including family and social norms.

The combination of these online and in situ creative talks thus promoted the KQ Hub and CDEA's online platforms as safe spaces for the intercultural dialogue and community-building in Africa. The initiative reached over 90,000 people: a third (at least) of were women and a large majority were young people and students, but it also included civil society leaders, journalists, artists, academics and researchers. The experience proves that there is a need for more initiatives of this kind in those countries, as local communities demonstrated their need for more social justice, freedom of expression and intercultural dialogue.

## Agenda 2063

- 2. Well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation
- 11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
- 13. Peace security and stability is preserved
- 16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
- 17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life
- 18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



## RELINKING COMMUNITIES THROUGH CULTURE

*“Relinking Communities Through Culture”: Enhancing empathy and building social cohesion between the Shona and Ndebele ethnic groups of Zimbabwe.*



Zimbabwe is a country marked by social conflicts and political oppression, although efforts are being made by a diverse range of stakeholders to promote national cohesion and a resilient national identity. For years the country has been the theatre of ethnic and community intercultural divides, causing unresolved tensions and conflicts, sometimes leading to ethnic and inter-ethnic violence, and marring the complex process of postcolonial nation-building.

As a response, the Nhimbe Trust, a Zimbabwean not-for-profit and non-governmental organisation which works at the intersection of culture and development to foster local socio-economic development, together with Savanna Trust a not-for-profit organisation that uses theatre practice to trigger social transformative change, launched a joint project aiming to enhance empathy and build social cohesion between the Shona and Ndebele ethnic groups of Zimbabwe. Interventions centred on the provision of safe, inclusive and enabling platforms for meaningful conversations on ethnic identities within an urban context.



A series of activities took place in the capital Harare and the second largest city Bulawayo, from December 2018 to November 2020, focusing on community-based actions and cultural collaborations which provided opportunities for fostering dialogue on ethnic identity, polarisation and divergence within and across cultural divides. These contributed to peacebuilding and to slow and progressive reconciliation between local populations.

The first intercultural dialogue consultative forum gathered 10 Harare based media practitioners who interacted with media through various platforms and in different capacities. The demographic included freelancers, columnists, social media commentators, citizen journalists and journalists attached to mainstream media outlets. The diversity of the participants provided the project with a model for a preliminarily mapping of how media practitioners were exercising their right to freedom of expression in the transmission of information on intercultural dialogue and national identity building, while navigating spaces of operation that are riddled with ethnic polarisation and linguistic divides.

The second consultative forum mobilised 10 cultural and creative stakeholders representing a diverse range of disciplines. Among other issues, participants discussed the role of creatives and creativity in navigating controversial ethnic identity issues, historically seen as a taboo, and how cultural and ethnic discords have suffocated creative and innovative efforts aimed at creating conditions for intercultural dialogue. They further considered how freedom of artistic expression can become a source of conflict, and how creative methodologies have been used within Zimbabwe's arts and culture sector to challenge scripted stereotypes that promote intolerance and cultural conflict.

In addition to discussion platforms, "Relinking Communities Through Culture" supported several cultural and creative projects such as: Africa Day in Njube (ADiN), a platform which seeks to celebrate Africa Day through cross-cultural and multi-disciplinary art forms (drumming, storytelling, dance, music, spoken word, visual art); an album launch of Ngoma Ingoma, a young Afro-fusion music band with members coming from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds, predominantly Shona and Ndebele ethnicities; and the Roil Bulawayo Arts Awards, which promote the principles of interculturalism, social cohesion and empathy across cultural, ethnic and linguistic divides.

As of July 2019, two consultative forums have been facilitated for 20 media, arts and culture practitioners. More than 30 multi-disciplinary acts had been showcased through cultural collaborations, engaging 147 artists and 30 creative content producers and facilitators involved in promoting social cohesion and intercultural dialogue. Up to 6,570 people attended the different events convened, organised and coordinated by the project.

## Agenda 2063

- 11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
- 13. Peace security and stability is preserved
- 16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
- 18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



**Goal 10:**  
Reduced  
inequalities

**Goal 11:**  
Sustainable  
cities and  
communities

**Goal 16:**  
Peace, justice  
and strong  
institutions

## IV YOUNG UGANDANS AND KENYANS DEMONSTRATE THE VALUE OF SOCIAL COHESION

*“Young Ugandans and Kenyans demonstrate the value of social cohesion”: Fostering social dialogue and peaceful cross-border coexistence between Uganda and Kenya through youth participation.*



Historically, Uganda and Kenya have had a high rate of youth within their demography, with up to 70% of their population being young people and young adults. At the border between the two countries, cultural diversity has often been seen as a source of community conflict and political tension, with transborder competition and opposition felt by local residents and communities.

This project has been framed by the thought that cultural diversity, beyond creating opposition, can play the role of a bridge between cultures and communities, and can serve as a vehicle towards peaceful coexistence through adequate mediation processes and inter-cultural dialogue. As the youth make up more than half of the population in this cross-border territory, involving children and young people (mostly below the age of 21 years old) in the emergence of a new inter-community dialogue has been important from the very first steps of the project.

Therefore, the Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda, an entity aiming at promoting the recognition of culture as vital for a human development approach that responds to Uganda's identity and diversity, partnered with the Community Peace Museums and Heritage Foundation, a Kenyan organisation which aims at using knowledge of cultural heritage as a resource for conflict resolution and sustainable development.

Together – and bringing with them more than 150 cultural heritage clubs in Uganda, 100 peace clubs in Kenya and 21 community museums from Uganda – they reimagined the concept of competition and created a cultural and creative contest based on positive values, such as intercultural dialogue, conflict management, sharing, social cohesion and peaceful coexistence. The competition aimed at welcoming a diverse range of creations, including drawings, paintings or 3-minute videos, demonstrating a particular cultural practice.

More than 7,000 young people from Uganda and almost 6,300 children and young people from Kenya (with respectively an average of 50 and 60 members in each heritage or peace club) took part into the contest, bringing with them their vision and understanding of how to live peacefully together with their neighbours. With individuals and groups they were until then in opposition and conflict with, they shared their tangible and intangible cultural heritage, traditions, beliefs, and differences, such as folk arts, tales, rituals, ceremonies, dances, music, crafts and so on. There were 13 outstanding drawings and paintings that were used to design and produce 1,000 copies of the 2020 east African Heritage calendar, which was launched at a regional event held in Uganda's capital city, Kampala, in December 2019. Copies of the calendar were disseminated in both countries to inspire leaders and policy makers to reflect on alternative conflict management mechanisms in their respective societies.

In total, 250 debates were conducted both in Uganda and Kenya, bringing together young people from diverse transborder communities and ethnic groups. The debates discussed key issues which were often sources of mistaken perceptions, misunderstanding and tensions that led to systemic conflicts. Rural and urban schools were mobilised in the process, in order to involve a wider diversity of communities and to ensure that children and young people from all social backgrounds would have the opportunity to express themselves and have a say.

The number of dialogues successfully held demonstrates both the success of the project and the significant interest of the participants. It also illustrates the crucial need for such an opportunity in the region and, most probably, the lack of such opportunities that existed at the local level regarding these issues before the project was implemented.

Among the 250 urban and rural schools mobilised in this project, some engaged even further in the debate and decided to continue similar activities beyond the framework of the project. These schools would like to further explore cultural resources and mechanisms, such as the creative competition, to promote peacebuilding, conflict resolution and unity among culturally diverse and cross-border communities.

## Agenda 2063

- 11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
- 13. Peace security and stability is preserved
- 16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
- 18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



Goal 4:  
Quality  
education

Goal 16:  
Peace, justice  
and strong  
institutions

Goal 17:  
Partnerships  
for the goals

## V CINÉ-DÉBAT POUR LA PAIX: POUR LE DIALOGUE INTERCULTUREL ET LA COHÉSION SOCIALE AU CAMEROUN

*“Ciné-débat pour la paix”*: Creating safe and neutral spaces for intercultural dialogue between communities, and the collective building of peaceful coexistence and active citizenship in Cameroon.



Since 2016, Cameroon has been experiencing an important crisis, leading to the loss of more than 1,850 individuals and the internal geographical displacement of more than 530,000 people. Additionally, the results of the 2018 presidential elections have had terrible consequences for the local populations, with the uprising of tribal communities, the severe augmentation of violence generated by conflicts between the local population and tribal peoples, and the lack of a political solid response to it.

As a response to this situation, in September 2019 the Cameroon Itinerant Association of Digital Cinema decided to partner with two locally based organisations, namely the Cameroon Humanitarian Organization Initiatives (CHOI) and Cameroon Art Critics (CAMAC), in order to propose a combination of film projections and debates aiming at contributing to peace-building among communities and populations in five regions of the country: North-West, South-West, West, Littoral and Centre of Cameroon. Spaces for inter-community dialogue were created to enable the populations of the regions affected to express themselves on this crisis and on the evils undermining peace in Cameroon, and to propose their solutions.

The project led to the projection of 45 films followed by educational talks and inter-community debates, creating spaces for intercultural dialogue between communities and enabling different populations from these regions to freely express themselves on the crisis they were facing as well as to discuss the factors which were undermining peace and social cohesion in the country. Village chiefs, community, religious and traditional leaders, women's, men's and youth groups and displaced people's communities were finally able to sit together and start proposing collective solutions to the different threats and obstacles they were facing, as well as to openly dialogue on the conditions of their peaceful coexistence.

The screening of the films, followed by educational talks and inter-community debates, was announced during a press conference held in September 2019 at the National Museum of Yaoundé. Additionally, the crew visited each of the five targeted regions to spread the word and disseminate the call for movies, with the central themes being peace, living together, conflict resolution, citizenship, tolerance, and the prevention of school violence and gender-based violence against women and girls in Cameroon. This first step facilitated initial conversations with local populations, who already started to share their daily-life preoccupations, ranging from the impact of the crisis to tribal violence.

The screenings, initially scheduled from April 2020 and finally starting in August 2020, brought cinema to populations who did not necessarily have access to it. Some screenings were carried out in schools, establishing a new cultural practice in the schools in close collaboration with the National Ministry of Youth and Education, such as the creation of cine-debate clubs in five different schools. An additional screening was organised in the high school of Ekounou on the special request of its officials, who had taken part into a previous session. By working with local and regional authorities, religious authorities, local organisations, schools, communities, and in some specific cases women and youth's associations, the project contributed to building local capacities and increasing the capacity of local actors to support intercultural dialogue and social cohesion.

The screenings and following discussions raised awareness on active citizenship, tolerance and mutual acceptance among more than 9,600 people across Cameroon, including women (with an average of 29% participation from women) and young boys and girls (with more than 2,800 pupils reached in schools). Populations were warned against tribalism and violence, and were also encouraged to improve conflict resolution and the welcoming and integration of displaced persons, families and communities, which resulted in several villages' and neighbourhoods' chiefs promising to increase efforts to develop actions and projects for the integration of displaced populations from the crisis.

## Agenda 2063

- 11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
- 13. Peace security and stability is preserved
- 16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
- 18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



Goal 4:  
Quality  
education

Goal 10:  
Reduced  
inequalities

Goal 16:  
Peace, justice  
and strong  
institutions

## VI ACTION JEUNESSE POUR LE DIALOGUE INTERCULTUREL ET LA DIGNITÉ POUR TOUS EN AFRIQUE

*“Intercultural dialogue and dignity for all Males and Females in Africa”:  
Fostering intercultural dialogue and cultural pluralism at local and national levels, engaging youth in the construction of a plural and peaceful society*



Although African youth are increasingly interconnected through information and communication technologies (ICTs), communication does not always imply an inclusive and peaceful coexistence. “Intercultural Dialogue and Dignity for All Males and Females in Africa” project (DID) takes advantage of the potential of virtual communication as a lever for intercultural dialogue among young people in Senegal, Benin and Cameroun, thus reducing violence, intolerance and socio-economic exclusion linked to ethnicity or religion, and fostering cultural and human rights, freedom of expression and press and sustainable development.

Rester et Réussir, a not-for-profit organisation based in Senegal, led the initiative and was responsible for the administration and coordination of all activities. Scoutisme Béninois, a national scouting organisation in Benin with expertise in youth leadership, and the Cameroonian Committee for the Promotion of Women’s Human Rights (CCPDF), with expertise in protecting the human rights of women and girls, were the main collaborators. As the project developed, principal actions were concentrated in Senegal, and Scoutisme Béninois took responsibility of the online communication campaign and the baseline study, whereas CCPDF’s tasks needed to be redefined.

The project was targeted to young people aged 18 to 35, and principally towards school and university students from underprivileged backgrounds in the cities of Guédiawaye-Dakar and Saint Louis (Senegal),

Cotonou and Parakou (Benin), and Yaoundé and Douala (Cameroon). Other beneficiaries included schools, universities, youth centres and associations in the project sites. The project aimed at enabling young beneficiaries to organise successful cultural exchanges, in the process becoming familiar with their own and other people's cultures, while mastering storytelling and oral literature techniques to promote and disseminate the values of intercultural dialogue.

Initial activities included: (1) a baseline study on the knowledge, attitudes and practices of young beneficiaries on intercultural dialogue, elaborated from responses to a questionnaire that was distributed to 1,500 young people in Senegal, Cameroon and Benin (with 60% participation from women); and (2) a launch event celebrated on 27 November 2019 at Espace Jeunes in the Dakar suburbs of Guédiawaye, which gathered 300 hundred young people alongside associations, partners and local authorities. The success of this meeting relied on the capacity of the partners to involve a great number of local collaborators, such as the High Institute of Art and Management, Espace Jeunes de Guédiawaye, the Prefecture of Guédiawaye, the Communes of Guédiawaye, the Départemental Centre for Popular and Sportive Education and Jeunes Etudiants de Podor.

After the launch of the project, further activities included various capacity-building group discussions on the promotion of intercultural dialogue, principles of tolerance and cultural exchanges for young participants. They were organised in Akoémame (Cameroon, 27 November 2019), Cotonou and Parakou (Bénin, 2 and 13 December 2019) and Podor and Guédiawaye (Senegal, 21 and 23 December 2019). In Cameroon, officials of the Cameroonian Committee for the Promotion of Women's Human Rights organised the "Youth Forum on Intercultural Dialogue in Africa", bringing together 113 young people from Akoemame. In Benin, the Scoutisme Béninois organised another youth forum on intercultural dialogue, which brought together 192 young people (including 77 women). Finally, in Senegal, Rester et Réussir, together with local stakeholders, organised a third forum involving 592 young people in both locations. Young beneficiaries responded enthusiastically and shared their views on what intercultural dialogue and peace meant to them, helping to create a community of practice around the issue.

Other activities included a digital campaign for intercultural dialogue produced by the consultant who elaborated the questionnaire, which reached 300 young people aged between 18 and 35 in Senegal, 500 in Bénin and 179 in Cameroon. There were also three workshops to provide young people with the necessary tools and knowledge to enable their effective participation in the International SLAM and Poetry Contest, a competition targeted at young 'Slameur' poets in the three countries, which awarded prizes to two participants from Benin and one from Cameroon. A radio and TV programme was also designed and hosted by four of the young beneficiaries, which was held at Radio Oxy-jeunes FM, a radio station located in the suburbs of Dakar. Finally, an international conference on the theme "African youth facing intercultural dialogue and living together" was held on 29 December 2020 and gathered a dozen participants from different countries, including Cameroon, Senegal, Benin, Ivory Coast and France.

As a result of the collaborative efforts, the project is now well-known in Senegal and Benin, and counts on several potential partners in Cameroon to help it grow. This is the case of the Collective of Cultural Experts and Entrepreneurs (CODEC), a professional not-for-profit organisation which aims to contribute to the development of the cultural sector, reaching out to isolated people from the rural, urban and diaspora worlds. Overall, the DID project has shown that a crucial component to success is the will to work for a harmonious interaction between people and groups with different cultural identities.

## Agenda 2063

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- 16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
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## SDGs



**Goal 4:**  
Quality  
education

**Goal 16:**  
Peace, justice  
and strong  
institutions

**Goal 17:**  
Partnerships  
for the goals

## CHAPTER 3

# Empowering communities, women and the youth through local cultural action and critical thinking.

Main theme: Empowerment

## Introduction

*“Leave no one behind” needs to become a reality in all continents, countries, regions, cities and places around the world. This motto requires that public policies devote special attention to those who are more vulnerable, to those who require public services and to those in the community who are more in need of help from their communities.*

Empowering people might be the best way to leave no one and no place behind, that is, providing the power to minorities, marginalised communities and vulnerable groups (including women, the youth and local communities) to choose the lives they wish to live. Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum have explained that development is, in fact, this process of empowerment; of widening freedoms and being able to freely decide upon our lives and fully exercise our human rights. In this sense, the enhancement of the cultural capabilities of communities and the most vulnerable groups of society is a key factor for an inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development.

The SDGs have devoted a single Goal to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” (Goal 5) and the Goals also include considerations related to the end of poverty in all its forms and dimensions (in Goal 1), the inclusion of all (in Goal 4, devoted to education, and in Goal 10, devoted to the fight against inequalities) and the development of inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities (in Goal 11). With similar objectives, the African Union’s 2063 Vision Agenda devotes the entire 6th Aspiration to the issue, aiming for “An Africa Whose Development is people driven, relying on the potential offered by African People, especially its Women and Youth, and



caring for Children". Similarly, Culture 21 Actions devotes a complete commitment to "Culture, Equality and Social Inclusion". Today, in Africa and all around the world, the process of empowerment has an obvious cultural component. Critical thinking and active participation in cultural life are the key aspects in empowerment. They provide the motivation for and possibility of increased civic participation, they lend cultural visibility to minorities, they foster mutual recognition and cooperation between different generations and cultures, and they boost employment. Culture is an important means for establishing new social spaces, for developing new collective meanings, and for improving a city or region's security and image. It can also contribute to conflict resolution, the strengthening of the social fabric, and greater resilience in groups and communities. It is simply impossible to widen freedoms when there is any kind of cultural violence against the more vulnerable.

The initiative *Culture at Work Africa* has supported several projects that have had critical thinking and empowerment as the axis of the work. "**La tournée du Cirque Nu Dagbe**" in Cotonou, Benin, has helped children and young people living in the street to become active in social, economic and cultural life, with professional artists and cultural workers providing the technical and interpersonal training they need to gain confidence and be autonomous. In the Nakivaale Refugee Camp in Isingiro District, Uganda, the "**OpenMic**" project has used spoken word poetry as a means of self-expression, creativity and awareness on human rights, sexual reproductive health and gender equality. Participants acquired skills in creative writing and performance, and gained knowledge in raising awareness around relevant issues through culture. The project "**Hors-limites**" aimed at empowering young refugees living in camps and young indigenous people living in nearby communities, in Burkina Faso and Niger. The project was conceived as a series of dance workshops for "breathing, opening, discovering, mobilising and raising awareness", incorporating critical thinking about the current challenges faced at local, regional and global level. "**Women through the lens**" has a focus on photography: women from various communities in Nigeria were mentored through an analytical photography education framework, including intensive entrepreneurial training, which was delivered by an intercultural and international team of five female professionals working in the wider photographic field around the world. Similarly, "**Uliza Wahenga Dada!**", through a feminist approach, analysed archives, collected women's storytelling and re-elaborated the narrative to include the perspectives and contributions of women in the history of Tanzania. The project has restored the fundamental contribution of women in national history and memory, and its results were showcased at an exhibition entitled "Bibi, Mama and I". "**Alteritude**" is also a successful project of women empowerment that used a diverse range of activities, including: the organisation of a "Parlement Populaire"; the organisation of oral and storytelling shows in performance halls, public gardens, neighbourhood playground areas, public transport vehicles, buses and train stations, followed by debates and discussions; and the organisation of a story writing contest, with participants from 16 African countries. "**Beyond caring project**" has involved and given visibility to Rwandan and Congolese domestic workers. Building on the initial identification of the needs of this collective (through conducting interviews, and implementing tailor-made artistic and multidisciplinary workshops), the project produced two theatre plays and achieved wide dissemination via radio shows and social media. "**Pourquoi pas moi?**" took place in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo and encouraged participation in society of children and youth with mental and sensorial disabilities as citizens with full rights, using cultural training and mentoring techniques. Finally, "**Femmes en création**" aimed at the professionalisation of actresses and visual artists in Togo, Benin and Mali, not only enhancing the artistic talent and capacities of women, but also strengthening the cohesion of the whole cultural ecosystem of participating cities and regions.

It is important to highlight the international connectivity of these projects; almost all of the them belong to world-wide or continental networks.

## LA TOURNÉE DU CIRQUE NU DAGBE

*“The Nu Dagbe Circus Tour”: Reintegrating into society children and young people left of their own through circus.*



In Cotonou, Benin, a local association helps street children and young people living in the street to reintegrate into social, economic and cultural life. The Nu Dagbe Circus School Association, together with the Camaro Foundation, initiated the project in order to open cultural and artistic activities to children and young people living in the street, and to provide them with ongoing support and opportunities to facilitate their social reintegration.

Aiming at acting “as a family for the children”, the Nu Dagbe Association provides training, health and social accompaniment to some 20 children abandoned to the street, including accommodation for some of them. Thanks to the association, the children and young people were taught technical and interpersonal skills by several professional artists and cultural and social workers.

From January 2019 to November 2020, the children were able to take part in a diverse range of courses and workshops, including in acrobatics, dance, music and singing, slam, acting and juggling. All these activities were delivered by professional and qualified artists, and they emphasised the transmission of some artistic dimensions echoing West African cultural traditions and local identity, as a way to reconcile participants with their identity.

Additional activities and workshops also strengthened social dialogue, transmitting a range of positive values to them, which might help them rebuild themselves. In this way, young people who had previously experienced situations of exploitation or indignity got the opportunity to emancipate and empower themselves by choosing an artistic and creative path; it was as an opportunity to fulfil themselves and live their lives fully and freely.

The organisation of a number of encounters and celebrations around the final circus show also allowed the children, young people, volunteers and teachers to meet and exchange, thus building and strengthening social bonds, as well as fostering dialogue and expression. The objective of these events was for the children to feel safe again, offering them a welcoming environment that invited them to freely express themselves and their dreams.

During all these activities, participating children and young people had one goal: to write, produce and disseminate a circus show. Thanks to a weekly French course, the group was taught by a professional teacher to read and write. Not only this, the teacher also slowly guided and coached them to express themselves and share traumatic experience through reading and writing learning activities. The result of this process was a collaborative script that integrated parts of the stories and traumatic experiences of six of the children who took part in a full-time, sheltered-in residence.

The residency included shelter, training and learning activities for the six young people during a period of six months, in the second half of 2019. The residency established a collaborative Charta, elaborated and signed by each participant in order to guarantee the respect of a set of common living rules and to restore their power to decide for themselves.

The residency included two days of circus school (juggling, acrobatics, balance courses on objects, clowning) and four French lesson (writing, reading and counting) sessions per month, as well as additional courses with an external teacher (in martial arts, such as karate, dance, and other types of music training). Artists from “The West African Circus” were involved in the project from the beginning.

The project raised awareness about street-children to a larger audience, locally, nationally and internationally. The show was brought to several local, national and international events organised by international partners such as the German Embassy, the British School or the French Cultural Centre of the city. These events informed and gave more visibility to the issues faced by street-children in Cotonou, and in Benin in a more generally.

Additionally, the project recorded audio and video throughout its development. The records were turned into a documentary film of the project, elaborated on by a professional. The idea was to bring this film to a wide range of local, national and international partners, including at the European level, to raise awareness about the issue and to strengthen synergies around creative development for social and economic inclusion.

“The Nu Dagbe Circus Tour” contributed to empower 20 children and young people who had been left behind, not only by their families but also from society. It might be too soon to observe long term social impact on these children, but at least they might have discovered a fundamental path of positive development thanks to the creative practice of circus.

## Agenda 2063

- 1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
- 11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
- 13. Peace security and stability is preserved
- 16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
- 18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



Goal 1:  
No poverty

Goal 4:  
Quality  
education

Goal 10:  
Reduced  
inequalities

Goal 11:  
Sustainable  
cities and  
communities

## OPENMIC PROJECT

*“The OpenMic Project”: Promoting spoken word poetry among vulnerable youth as a means of self-expression, creativity and awareness on human rights*



The “OpenMic Project” amplifies the voices of young people living in refugee settlements in Uganda, the world’s third biggest refugee-hosting country, and the biggest one in Africa. The project, which is based on the use of spoken word as a “sustainable art form especially popular among youth and with a long history in African Culture”, has offered safe cultural spaces for intercultural exchange and freedom of expression for young refugees of Nakivaale Refugee Camp in Isingiro District, a settlement that was established in 1958 and hosts refugees from countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda and Somalia. The project promotes the acquisition of skills in creative writing and performance, and raises awareness of issues such as sexual reproductive health rights and gender equality through culture.

OpenMic Uganda (OMU), an organisation that works in the cultural sector on projects that engage young people in performance arts, led the project in collaboration with Public Health Ambassadors Uganda (PHAU), an organisation which uses educational and leisure activities (edutainment) to focus on improving knowledge about and access to public health and sexual reproductive health rights services. Based on their common experience in past collaborations, which started in 2017 and included events such as “Outspoken Woman” organised for the International Women’s Day Celebration, the partners developed this new project in Isingiro District.

“OpenMic Project” provided the Nakivaale Refugee Camp in Isingiro District with spoken word workshops and performances to foster social cohesion, encourage intercultural dialogue and safely promote the use of the arts for collaboration within communities of highly diverse cultural backgrounds and nationalities.

Following the initial two meetings in the Nakivaale refugee settlement, where local authorities and other stakeholders were informed about the project, a mapping exercise was carried out by the team, with the collaboration of Opportunigee (an organisation operating locally in Nakivaale refugee settlement). Being a community-based organisation run by young refugees, Opportunigee acted as a local mobiliser for the project. The mapping served to understand the cultural dynamics and organisation of the settlement, as well as to select three intervention areas – Rubondo, Juru and Base Camp – with adequate characteristics to ensure the success of the project. These characteristics included the presence of a wide representation of nationalities and backgrounds and cultural infrastructure, such as an amphitheatre and youth centres, to conduct performances and training sessions.

The main activities focused on awareness-raising sessions designed to raise interest of the project among refugee youth in Rubondo, Juru and Base Camp, which presented the objectives, activities, expectations and benefits to participants. Besides informative talks, sessions included poetry performances and open mic shows, that proved very positive and inspirational and showed the existing artistic talents in Nakivaale Refugee Settlement. Mobilised by Opportunigee and the Youth Office in Nakivaale, over 400 young refugees participated in the awareness-raising sessions (40% of who were young women aged between 17 and 34). Open mic community workshops were also delivered in Nakivaale over 8 days to train young refugees in the performing arts. A total of 190 participants (42% of who were young women aged between 19 and 35) took part in the workshops and enjoyed the poetry, dance, comedy and rap activities, which were created and performed by themselves on some occasions.

Since the “OpenMic Project” also intended to empower young refugees to become professional cultural actors, capacity building activities were also implemented. A total of 26 young people from Rwanda, Burundi, Congo, Somalia and other countries were interviewed and selected as poetry youth leaders (20% of who were young women aged between 20 and 30). They were trained and mentored in the art of spoken word, poetry, creative writing, performing arts and events management in Kampala over five days. Some activities were facilitated by relevant cultural organisations and top artists, and included visits to the Uganda Museum and the National Theatre. All in all, the activities allowed them to learn about the local cultural scene, as well as to understand the importance of cultural events in public spaces and relate cultural activities to the economic context.

At the end of the process, and with the support of the organisers, participants were able to create open mic shows which targeted over 300 local residents within the different communities of Nakivaale refugee settlement (42% of who were women aged between 17 and 35). They felt confident about their capabilities, with one explaining: “I learnt my inner voice when writing I learnt how to behave on stage, how to earn money and to live through my poetry”. Finally, an online Mega Concert premiered via the Open Mic Facebook page and Youtube channel to celebrate the achievements of the project, reaching over 5,500 people.

Within the process of implementation of the project, OpenMic identified and forged new partnerships with youth-led local organisations, such as Nakivaale Refugee Basketball Academy (NRBA), and with local public stakeholders, such as the Office of the Prime Minister and the Office of the Commandant, which facilitated legal issues. At a global scale, collaboration with Windle Trust International was seen as essential in order to expand activities in schools and connect more explicitly the sectors of culture, social inclusion, health and education.

## Agenda 2063

1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
2. Well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation
11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
13. Peace security and stability is preserved
16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



Goal 1:  
No poverty



Goal 4:  
Quality education



Goal 8:  
Decent work and economic growth



Goal 10:  
Reduced inequalities

## WOMEN THROUGH THE LENS

*“Culture en partage”: Promoting intercultural dialogue, intercultural mixing, access to cultural goods and capacity-building for artists and their productions.*



The project aimed at professionally training and artistically mentoring a group of women over 9 months, so that they could empower themselves and professionally grow as artists. One of the main outcomes of the initiative was the production of an exhibition. The collective exhibition was organised at the Moneda House, Lekki Lagos, in the context of the “PASSPORT” themed Lagos Photo Festival in 2019. Over almost one month, this group of young female photographers discussed and presented their photography work, including in a panel discussion entitled “How habits form Identity”. The session allowed the women to share how their environment had shaped their identity, and how their identity had in turn influenced their work. The session also explored the impact of some projects on the mental health of artists.

The project was developed by the African Artists’ Foundation, in partnership with three local organisations: Fast Forward. Women in Photography, a research project concerned with women in photography based at University for the Creative Arts in the United Kingdom; LEAP Africa, a youth-focused leadership development not-for-profit organisation; and Dare2Dream, a youth empowerment platform set to channel young creative talents into entrepreneurship.

Over nine months, 10 young female photographers coming from various social backgrounds and geographical areas and with different levels of experience, were mentored through an analytical photography education framework. It was delivered by an intercultural and international team of five female professionals working in the wider photographic field – such as photojournalists, visual storytellers, cultural managers and fine art photographers – from Belgium, the Philippines, the United States of America and Nigeria.

Two weeks of intensive entrepreneurial training were organised to encourage the beneficiaries to become self-sufficient and to develop an artistic project that was economically sustainable. The group of 10 young women, selected through an in-depth selection process that prioritised individuals initially lacking a creative education and confidence in their own practice, participated in several training activities. The activities also involved business components, which are often identified as missing skills for many artists and actors in the creative field, such as budget planning, investment strategies and business strategies.

Theoretical lectures, roundtable discussions and practical activities provided the mentees with a contextual understanding of photography and helped them to interrogate their own practice. Bonding activities were also organised to make sure that the mentees built a strong and sustainable network amongst each other. Thanks to these activities, the 10 women photographers became more confident as individuals and gained trust in their profession.

The involvement of local organisations that work on initiatives and programmes related to youth and female empowerment was key to the success of the project. LEAP Africa provided a capacity-building environment for the mentees, and the additional theoretical, conceptual and technical training the mentees were offered supported them to become aware of their agency and to believe in their individual narratives.

The aim was also to provide them with the tools for a more independent career path. In this vein, training and capacity-building activities also included project pitching in the creative sector, business and contract analysis, delivering presentations and agreement analysis, as well information about photographers' legal status in terms of image use, creation and property rights, which are often misunderstood by young photographers and artists.

The experience of the organisation Fast Forward was crucial in the development and implementation of the project. The organisation shared their long-term experience in fostering new debates related to photography and the sector, re-writing the history of photography and including female photographers from across the globe who have not been given a voice yet, and their long-term mentorship programme was of particular interest. Fast Forward also encouraged the participants to engage in their activities and network, activating and sharing their knowledge and network resources.

The workshops not only enabled the group of young women photographers to share their knowledge and the knowledge of their local communities, but it also allowed them to address relevant socio-political issues, such as health care, the LGBT scene, women empowerment in rural areas and what is it to be a woman in Nigerian society. Through their subjects, the young photographers not only created a discourse within the portrayed ecosystems and communities, but they also challenged authorities in hospitals, public institutions, churches and in the general patriarchy. Their courage in portraying female identity and gender conflicts influenced their environment, possibly leading to further debates.

## Agenda 2063

1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
2. Well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation
4. Transformed economies
16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life
18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



Goal 1:  
No poverty



Goal 5:  
Gender  
equality



Goal 8:  
Decent work  
and economic  
growth



Goal 10:  
Reduced  
inequalities



Goal 17:  
Partnerships  
for the goals

## IV HORS LIMITES

*“The Hors Limites” project: Dancing for peace with young refugees and indigenous people in Burkina Faso and Niger.*



“Hors Limites” (“Off-limits”) aimed at helping to forge human bonds of solidarity between young refugees living in camps and young indigenous people living in nearby communities from Burkina Faso and Niger. The project was developed from December 2018 to February 2020, and consisted mainly of a series of dance workshops for the benefit of refugees living in these countries. The project explained that it is a time for “breathing, opening, discovering, mobilizing and raising awareness” that allows recovery and dialogue within a social environment through an openness to creativity. Through experimentation with contemporary dance and music outside the camps, participants had the chance to break divisions, express and empower themselves freely, contributing to the reduction of violence in their communities and developing collective critical thinking about the current challenges faced at local, regional and global level.

The project, carried out by the Centre de Développement Chorégraphique (CDC) – La Termitière in Burkina Faso and the Association Néma in Niger, benefits from the experience gained during the previous interventions of these organisations in camps in 2014 and 2015 and the development of a methodological guide for further actions, which continue to invest in youth from displaced and indigenous communities. CDC-La Termitière oversaw the general coordination of the project, including organising and monitoring



communication and visibility tools, and centralising financial and technical information of activities in both countries, while Association Néma focused on collecting and reporting financial and technical information on activities taking place in Niger. The commitment of both organisations allowed for a climate of openness and mutual understanding throughout the process.

The dance workshops were the basis from which actions of broad conceptual scope were developed. The first sessions served to identify talents that could animate communities and carry out the workshops in the camps. Selected trainers had the opportunity to help release the creative potential of African youth, raising awareness on topics of great social relevance such as peace, inclusiveness, climate change, tolerance, respect, cultural rights and human dignity. The official launch of the project in Ouagadougou during the “Dialogues de corps festival” featured a documentary recounting the December 2018 workshops with 16 refugees, which showed poignant stories about the lives of refugees and the hope that “Hors Limites” gave them.

During the implementation phase of the project, the climate of insecurity in northern Burkina Faso deteriorated significantly, due to terrorist threats that led to the closing of schools and other facilities, and the kidnapping of people working in humanitarian projects. Consequently, the first sessions of the workshops underwent considerable changes with respect to the actions initially agreed upon by the partners. Some activities planned in Mentao and Goudobo had to be relocated to the rehearsal spaces of CDC La Termitière. For this reason, 61 participants travelled to Ouagadougou, while in Niger hangars set up in the camp of Abala hosted the workshops.

In addition, the age range of the beneficiaries was expanded to include children from seven to 12 years and young people over 25 who showed a real motivation. A total of 291 participants from seven to 30 years of age, including 171 girls (58.76%) and 53 young people from nearby communities, took part in the first and second workshop sessions. Those concrete changes have demonstrated the need for such a project for the empowerment of young people of Burkina Faso and Niger to build a sustainable future.

Although the majority of the participants had never heard of the concept of contemporary dance before, “Hors Limites” proved that they were able to use dance as a means of communication and awareness-raising. The methodology used, based on a spirit of sharing, contributed to end intra-community violence in the camps and in the nearby communities. On stage refugees and indigenous people came together physically and emotionally, helping each other to master techniques and break down barriers, as shown at the Rue Dance Niamey festival in Niger and at a show organised in Ouagadougou. Together, refugees, trainers, musicians and dancers progressively became aware of their value as a community that can grow and feed other communities, despite exile and marginalisation. As one participant said, “We have created more than one family among Aboriginal people and refugees!”

Without a doubt, the solid collaboration between CDC – La Termitière and the Association Néma, accompanied by the institutions in charge of refugees in Burkina Faso and Niger and the responsible ministries and municipalities, proved key to achieve those results. Other partnerships with CONAREF (“Commission Nationale pour les Réfugiés”) and the CNE (Commission Nationale d’Eligibilité) helped to support the mobilisation of participants. In view of the results already achieved during the first stages, “Hors Limites” secured financial support from the UNHCR to transport refugees to Burkina Faso and to set up more training projects in other refugee camps and in the transit camp in Niger.

## Agenda 2063

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16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
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## SDGs



Goal 1:  
No poverty

Goal 4:  
Quality  
education

Goal 10:  
Reduced  
inequalities

Goal 17:  
Partnerships  
for the goals

## V ULIZA WAHENGA DADA!

*“Uliza Wahenga Dada!”: Placing female experiences and women’s narratives at the centre of the Tanzanian political, social, historical and cultural memory.*



Identifying the huge gap of women’s footprints in local and national cultural memory, the “Uliza Wahenga Dada!” project aimed at empowering the community of female creative writers and visual artists to reimagine the historical narrative of Tanzania and to include the perspective and contribution of women. The project was based on the need to create women’s archives and through a feminist approach it sought to collect women’s storytelling to restore their fundamental contribution in national history and memory.

The project was led by Readership for Learning and Development, which also runs Soma Book Café, whose main objective since 2008 is to foster the emergence of the next generation of storytellers through innovative practices. They worked in close collaboration with Bookstop Sanaa, a visual art library and creative learning hub, to facilitate the research and co-curating/co-convening of exhibitions and public events. The project sought to build on the expertise of gender advocates, activists and women organisations from the local, regional and national level in order to guarantee a feminist approach.

In late 2019 and early 2020, a call for participants and contributions was disseminated across Tanzania, relayed by Soma's networks of artists, creators and cultural actors as well as by several sister networks and organisations at the local, regional, and national levels. The call reached more than a thousand women visual artists and creative writers from Tanzania, out of which a diverse group of 26 women, aged from 22 to 40 years old and coming from several regions of the country, were selected.

A total of 12 women artists were finally short-listed to participate in an extensive training course facilitated by experts and professionals, in which they were provided with fundamental conceptual and methodological frameworks, including: feminist research methods; African feminism; the Indian Ocean history; and the role of creatives and creators in reimagining and archiving women's history and memory. The workshop took place over two days, creating space and time for the participants to experiment with theoretical lenses, develop practical exercises and open debates and exchanges of perspectives. Basically, the training focused on the whys and hows of feminist storytelling, as well as on multidisciplinary, participatory research methods investigating feminist ethos and researching creative expression, specifically through storytelling. The workshop was set up as a foundation for refining and finalising women finalists' project ideas, in preparation for their resubmission for final judgement by a jury. The jury was selected by the promoters of the project and was composed entirely of women of diverse backgrounds, ages and disciplines. An advisory board was also established in order to monitor and advise the work of the finalists with regards to the final selection of projects.

In parallel, research activities were implemented in order to collect, gather and articulate the artistic, cultural and historical contribution of women to Tanzanian history and memory. This data facilitated the exploration, articulation and preservation of political and cultural memories of the country through a range of art forms, including painting, visual arts, sculpture, drawing, literature and poetry.

The final works of four (down from the selected six) women creative writers and visual artists were showcased at an exhibition entitled "Kutoka Uani/From the Backyard", created by Soma in partnership with Bookstop Sanaa and curated by Rehema Chachage, one of the few women contemporary visual artists from Tanzania who has made a mark in the international arena. Rehema Chachage has also played a pivotal role in the training and mentorship process, together with Sarita Lydia Mamseri of Bookstop Sanaa. The Exhibition, whose opening was on 17 February 2021, could be accessed by the public for two weeks to allow for COVID-19 protocols to be observed. Overall, 94 people visited the exhibition. The opening also included a public dialogue curated by Jesse Gerard, an art management practitioner currently working with Nafasi Artspace. The literature about the exhibition, images and artists profiles can be found on the project website.

## Agenda 2063

- 4. Transformed economies
- 11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
- 16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
- 17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life
- 18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



**Goal 5:**  
Gender  
equality

**Goal 10:**  
Reduced  
inequalities

**Goal 11:**  
Sustainable  
cities and  
communities

**Goal 16:**  
Peace, justice  
and strong  
institutions

## VI ALTERITUDE

*“Alteritude”: Strengthening cultural understanding as a contribution to the mobility of young artists and to promote access to culture for all, including women, children and disadvantaged groups.*



Launched in July 2019 by the Naforo – Ba Company in partnership with the Maison de la Parole de Bobo Dioulasso, the “Alteritude” project aimed at fostering the physical and mental mobility of young people, as well as enhancing their networking, through contemporary, pan-African artistic creation. The project was designed to create and disseminate cultural and artistic work with the goal of strengthening intercultural dialogue, communities’ mutual understanding and respect for diversity.

The promoters of the project used orality, storytelling and writing as a means for cultural, social and political expression. This was developed through a diverse range of activities, including the organisation of a “Parlement Populaire”, a decentralised participatory activity aiming at bringing high quality artists and artistic shows to local populations and communities by investing in public and private space. This approach enabled social and intercultural dialogue and, in some cases, the emergence of synergies to work collectively on specific issues.

This led to the organisation of storytelling shows in performance halls, public gardens, neighbourhood playground areas, public transport, buses and train stations. These shows were followed by debates and discussions with the populations about a range of important issues related to sustainable development, with a special focus on the multiple realities faced by women and children in Africa. This led the organisers to make women and girls central in the programming of cultural activities and events of the “Parlement Populaire”, including with the special event “Femmes Battantes en Concert” on the occasion of the International Day for Women’s Rights. These activities impacted over 1,000 people, at least half of who were women.

A story writing contest was also organised in order to inspire young people from 16 African countries to imagine a future they want to construct. The young men and women, aged from 18 to 35, were asked to create a story with a female character named Alterity, and to depict the world they want to imagine. The result of this contest was the development of stories by 16 youths from vulnerable neighbourhoods and/or fragile environments.

All these creations and productions were widely promoted through communication channels and virtual spaces, such as the website of the organiser, social media or email. This created a real digital repository by consolidating the website as an extensive virtual media library and making it freely accessible by all, thereby creating an interface between arts and culture and sustainable development. The website also hosts a web TV and a web radio, which both aim at broadcasting all the cultural actions and creative performances that are organised in physical public or private spaces like, for example, the participation of young storytellers from nine French-speaking countries to an event called “Contes d’un soir”, promoted by the International Organisation of Francophonie.

Because of the traditional and ancestral character of oral practices, the cross-continent and international dimension of the project is significant. The project initially involved people from, and took place in, 16 different countries from Africa, including nine French speaking countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroun, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal and Togo) and seven English-speaking countries (Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe). This was severely impacted by the global health crisis due to COVID-19, which prevented key stakeholders and collaborators from travelling because of confinement measures, as well as causing the late availability of grants originally expected from the main donor.

By building capacities, fostering knowledge and skills, and promoting the exchange of practices between cultural actors and creative artists, the project aimed at empowering local people and communities. It also promoted a wider access to culture by local populations, with around 10,000 people directly impacted by the physical and virtual activities organised, approximately 80% of who were young people (mostly aged from 24 to 34 years old) and 39% were women and girls. This included a significant representation of marginalised and disadvantaged groups and individuals, thus recognising and embracing the richness of cultural diversity.

## Agenda 2063

1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
2. Well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation
16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life
18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



## VII POURQUOI PAS MOI? PLAIDOYER POUR LES DROITS DES PERSONNES HANDICAPÉES

*“Pourquoi pas moi?”: Showing the artistic talents of children and youth with mental and/or sensorial disabilities in Democratic Republic of Congo and encouraging their participation in society as citizens with full rights.*



**“P**ourquoi pas moi? Plaidoyer pour les droits des personnes handicapées” calls for the full inclusion of children and youth living with mental and/or sensorial handicaps in Democratic Republic of Congo. Through the encouragement and showcase of artistic talents, the project worked towards the cultural rights of children and youth, including the right to access, participate and benefit from cultural activities, the right to equal opportunities, and the acknowledgement of their contribution to society. Along with the 30 selected youngsters, parents and educators, local artists and local authorities collaborated and became beneficiaries of the project as well. This resulted in a transformation from preconceived ideas to offering full support of and commitment to radical change and further advocacy on this issue.

The project was an initiative of the Renaître Grand Lacs Hafenis, an association based in the eastern part of DRC which promotes social inclusion and welfare for disadvantaged groups, such as youth, women and people with disabilities, through cultural exchanges. They worked in partnership with KAAMI Arts, based in Kigali, Rwanda. Their partnership was based on their previous collaborations on similar projects. Both organisations are well aware that in DRC, specifically in the eastern part of North Kivu Province, and in Rwanda, children and young people with disabilities, and especially with mental disabilities, are

stigmatised and deprived of their right to access education and culture. They are considered the bearers of evil due to religious beliefs and cultural traditions. As a result of this, the project aimed at defending and promoting these vulnerable people's cultural rights.

Initial activities consisted of the identification and selection of the direct beneficiaries – children and youth with mental and/or sensorial disabilities – as well as the artists conducting the training. A total of 50 youngsters with mental and/or sensorial handicap were identified. Nevertheless, because of some resistance from parents, or due to logistical obstacles, finally 30 of them were selected for the project. They belonged to different categories, including: deaf (11); deaf and mute (seven), blind (six) and mentally handicapped (six). More than 29 families, 15 educators and 40 artists agreed to participate.

The detection of talents and orientation of selected youngsters in different artistic and cultural activities was followed by rehearsals with artists, which took place before the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown in March 2020. When circumstances allowed, rehearsal sessions were delivered and included music and dance, among others. The songs learnt by participants were published and videos of the sessions were made available on the website of RGL/HAFENIS. This contributed to the necessary visibility of the project and to building a sense of ownership among participants, families and artists.

In parallel, a series of meetings took place, aiming at identifying key local stakeholders as well as informing communities about the project, its objectives and its planned activities. Meetings included local artists based mainly in Goma (music writers, pianists, guitarists, theatre actors and painters), educators from public and private schools, families, public leaders and members of judicial and security organisms. In some cases the direct beneficiaries took part in the meetings, as well as taking part in the awareness raising actions about the inherent cultural and human rights of the children and youth with disabilities. They also served to jointly identify potential direct beneficiaries of the project, with the participation of communities.

Regarding the meetings, it is noteworthy to highlight two issues. The first one is that public leaders, such as the representatives of “Tribunal de premiere instance” in Goma, took the opportunity to reaffirm their commitment in protecting the rights of people living with a disability, and warned against the persisting violence in different forms against people with a disability. The second one is that artists, who initially doubted the feasibility of the project, changed their minds when understanding, throughout the course of the meetings and the rehearsals, that youth with disabilities were perfectly able to participate in artistic and cultural activities. These two points demonstrate the potential of the project to help change negative attitudes and reduce stigmatisation of people with a mental and sensorial disability.

Despite the challenges encountered at the start of the project due to the Ebola epidemic in Eastern Congo from July to October 2019, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic which caused a total lockdown of Goma in March, April and May 2020, the project registered considerable progress towards achieving its objectives. “Pourquoi pas moi?” demonstrated the need to include children and youth with mental and sensorial disabilities as cultural actors with full rights, and to stimulate their inhibited artistic talents through training and mentoring from local artists and families, which would help them participate in cultural life and better interact with the communities as citizens. Setbacks caused the rescheduling of some activities, yet they did not prevent the project from succeeding in raising awareness about the issues within the local administration, with civil society stakeholders at local and international level or with the general public (through activities such as concerts and festivals).

## Agenda 2063

1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
2. Well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation
3. Healthy and well-nourished citizens
16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



**Goal 3:**  
Good health  
and well-being



**Goal 4:**  
Quality  
education



**Goal 10:**  
Reduced  
inequalities



**Goal 16:**  
Peace, justice  
and strong  
institutions



**Goal 17:**  
Partnerships  
for the goals

## VIII FEMMES EN CRÉATION

*“Femmes en création”: Training, creating and promoting in dramatic arts for the professionalisation of actresses and visual artists in Togo, Benin and Mali.*



**“F**emmes en création: towards the Emergence of a New Generation of Professional African Women in the Arts” was an artistic capacity building project with a three-fold approach, focusing on women, development and culture. The project arose when the three partner organisations (the Kadam-Kadam Association in Togo, the Noudjiou Association “L’Enedit” in Benin and the Cote Cour Association in Mali) identified the absence of women in the arts at local and regional level. The project contributed to the emergence of a new generation of professional African women by strengthening the artistic and professional capacities of nine young actresses and six visual artists from Togo, Benin and Mali.

The three partner organisations have collaborated for several years, taking part in many projects which enhanced their joint work over time. For the “Femmes en création”, the three organisations managed the activities of the project and jointly participated in decision-making. In particular, Noudjiou published the calls and selected participants for the workshops with the help of INAMAANK University, and Cote Cour coordinated the second training workshop in Bamako. As a result of their fruitful efforts, new joint projects are underway.



The official launch of the project took place on 24 September 2019 at the headquarters of Kadam-Kadam, with the presence of representatives from the European Union in Togo, the Ambassador of Mali in Togo and a representative of the Minister of Arts and Culture of Togo, as well as 100 young artists (50% of who were women) and around 20 journalists. That event gave way to training workshops in writing, acting, scenography and body painting, as well as a residency-creation of two plays. The two plays were then disseminated in Benin, Togo and Mali.

The first series of training workshops focused on dramatic writing and acting and were addressed to the nine actresses. They took place in Lomé for an average of 8 hours per day over two stages. At the end of that phase, two plays were written on the topics of social cohesion and the rights of the marginalised. The second series of workshops, in Bamako, focused on scenography for the six visual artists and scenographers, and they delivered proposals for the scenography of the two plays under the title "Contribution of women to social cohesion and the fight against marginalisation". In Calavi, the training-creation residency for 10 actresses and scenographers focused on the two plays, which revolved around the rights of the marginalised and the participation of women in social cohesion. The residency included an online element, focused on key dramaturgical concepts, and a practical element, aimed at studying the texts resulting from the workshops on dramatic writing through creative techniques. The residency included a work in progress presentation to an audience, which allowed the team to improve the plays.

All activities were accompanied by radio broadcasts and other communication efforts, which reached as many artists, citizens and organisations as possible. On 18 July 2020, an outreach tour began in Benin and ended with radio and television broadcasts, disseminated by various media in Togo and Mali. This outreach through media outlets was an important element, considering the restrictions due to the COVID 19 pandemic in each of these countries. There was effective participation by all the beneficiaries, specifically the applicants, artists, trainers, media and local populations. Furthermore, the close contact of the partner organisations with a wide network of cultural journalists ensured the media coverage of the main activities.

The positive results not only showcased and enhanced the artistic talent and capacities of women, but they enabled beneficiaries to strengthen cohesion within the cultural ecosystem of the participating cities and regions. Moreover, "Femmes en création" raised awareness of the rights of women and marginalised minorities (orphans, people with disabilities, abandoned children, etc.), and strengthened cultural action within the territories by bringing together populations around events promoting peace, gender equality, intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity. This all worked towards the development of healthy and sustainable communities.

## Agenda 2063

- 4. Transformed economies
- 16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
- 17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life
- 18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



**Goal 10:**  
Gender  
equality

**Goal 8:**  
Decent work  
and economic  
growth

**Goal 10:**  
Reduced  
inequalities

**Goal 17:**  
Partnerships  
for the goals

## IX BEYOND CARING

*“Beyond caring”: Empowering women and girls through cultural cooperation and raising awareness on cultural and human rights.*



**“Beyond caring”** responds to one of the most difficult challenges at local, regional and global level: inequality. The project has given a voice and visibility Rwandan and Congolese domestic workers, the most undervalued and unacknowledged workforce in Africa, and has advocated for their cultural and human rights. Building on the needs of this collective identified through previous interviews, the project designed and organised tailor-made artistic and multidisciplinary workshops and activities, with the collaboration of young local artists from different disciplines, NGOs, human rights groups, legal experts and local leaders. Two theatre plays were created, based on and inspired by the contents of the interviews, the workshops and discussion groups. The plays creatively raised awareness about some of the critical issues that domestic workers face, including excessive work hours, domestic violence, sexual abuse and infectious diseases.

The project was led by Ishyo, a women-led non-governmental organisation that was created in 2007 by eight Rwandan women, with the main objective of making culture available for everyone. Ishyo operates as a platform for artists and cultural practitioners and has worked on projects such as the creation of the first performing arts centre in Kigali, “Ishyo Arts Centre” and “Arts and Memory”, a project to support,

through arts, the preservation, promotion and democratisation of the memory of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. *Renaître Grands Lacs Hafenis* (Handicapped Women and Children in Survival Initiatives) also collaborated on the project, since one of its main goals is to contribute to the sustainable development of Rwanda by promoting the participation of the most vulnerable. This alliance builds on a previous collaboration, “Breaking barriers – Building bridges”, a two-year project to support advocacy for and empowerment of youth with disabilities through cultural activities.

To ensure that the activities would meet the needs of the beneficiaries, 50 interviews took place in Rwanda and DRC in three phases, reaching 51 domestic workers, most of them female, and 11 families. Interviews were recorded and translated, and they entailed in-depth conversations. Furthermore, three artistic tailor-made workshops were implemented, to develop the artistic and networking skills of Rwandan and Congolese cultural and social workers. They gathered 45 domestic workers, families and artists (musicians, playwrights, actors and dancers) in Kigali and Goma (31 women and 14 men). In addition, multidisciplinary workshops with experts reunited 121 people (73% of who were female) to discuss the living and working conditions of domestic workers in Rwanda and DRC. These workshops included local authorities, human rights experts, cultural practitioners and other representatives of civil society, as well as domestic workers from both countries. These activities considered the complexity of domestic workers’ realities, and at the same time helped to develop their artistic and networking skills and raise awareness on gender equality and citizen rights.

These activities were followed by the creation of two theatre plays based on the challenges faced by domestic workers and inspired by the theatre play “Beyond Caring” by Alexander Zeldin. The plays were designed to be performed at people’s homes and were created together with artists and playwrights from Rwanda and DRC. In addition to supporting the capacity of cultural workers to address social issues, the purpose of the plays was to reinforce the advocacy of the project and to encourage greater visibility and intercultural dialogue between communities. The writing of the plays – in Swahili and Kinyarwanda to reach a wide audience – was also based on and inspired by the contents of the interviews and experiences shared during the workshops and discussion groups. Interviews were sent to writers on a monthly basis, and in parallel actors in DRC met every week to improvise on the themes addressed in the interviews, thus reflecting the participatory and decentralised dynamics of the project.

Collaboration with local stakeholders enhanced as the project developed. Two female journalists joined the initiative to document it and to produce radio shows specialised in women empowerment and addressing social issues. This brought together human rights defenders, domestic workers and artists as part of the communication activities, which included promotion through social media channels. With the aim of initiating collaboration between international partners, and to ensure the continuity of the project, proposals were submitted to key development partners, such as UNDP, UNOWEN, UNFPA and to human rights and cultural organisations.

Overall, “Beyond caring” demonstrated that the need to promote cultural cooperation and to raise awareness on cultural and human rights is critically urgent and is currently underdeveloped in Rwanda and DRC. The domestic workers, organisations and stakeholders involved had to face setbacks and adversities, such as the fear of talking about their working conditions and expressing their demands through art, or the spread of diseases such as Ebola and the climate of political instability, which eventually led to military attacks. Nevertheless, the process showed that with a strong commitment and willingness to change efforts are rewarded.

## Agenda 2063

- 1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
- 4. Transformed economies
- 11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
- 16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
- 17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life

## SDGs



Goal 1:  
No poverty

Goal 5:  
Gender  
equality

Goal 10:  
Reduced  
inequalities

Goal 17:  
Partnerships  
for the goals

## CHAPTER 4

# Strong institutions and communities: Cultural action for governance, dialogue and transborder exchanges.

**Main theme:** Governance, and strong institutions and communities

## Introduction

*Culture is always at the border. Between past, present and future. Between the avant-garde, the cutting-edge, the contemporary and the traditions. Between the memories and the heritage. Between the local and the universal. Culture and cultures do not always correspond to political limits and borders. Culture is a catalyst of transborder exchanges of all kinds.*

Today, more than ever, humanity has the tools to undertake in-depth dialogues on creation, tradition and modernity. Cultural processes, such as theatre practices, cultural and artistic clubs, initiation ceremonies, debates about tradition and customs, heritage spaces or fictional documentaries, can address the most difficult issues of our societies, but only if the techniques (of awareness-raising, mediation or coaching for example) include a critical perspective and the conviction that we all need to build our sustainable future together. Cultural processes can open spaces for dialogue and exchanges, as well as spaces for expression and revindications. If cultural practices and traditions can sometimes be the cause of conflicts, they can also inspire peace building through mobilising people, both in their individual and collective dimension, to resolve tensions and conflicts. Cultural processes also open the possibility to enhance institutional dialogue and governance, and can be a way to build community resilience and peace. As a fundamental dimension of sustainable development, culture also needs strong and efficient mechanisms of governance and institutional actions, as well as new horizontal and participative models of action.

The SDGs celebrate the importance of strong governance, institutions and communities, specifically through Goal 16 about peace, justice and strong institutions, Goal 17 on partnerships and Goal 8 on creativity and innovation (which implicitly supports the international mobility of artists and culture professionals). On the other hand, the 3rd and 4th Aspirations of the AU 2063 Agenda consider respectively good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law, and peace and security as key priorities for development. Additionally, Culture 21 Actions is explicit in the need to enhance cultural governance and to promote international cultural cooperation programmes, to “pay special attention to the protection and promotion of cultural diversity” and to involve “people active in the cultural sector to participate in international cooperation networks”. In a more general view, Culture 21 Actions can be seen as a complete toolkit for institutional dialogue based on cultural rights.

The vast majority of projects supported by the initiative *Culture at Work Africa* have devoted attention to local, national and international institutional dialogue, have considered and organised international exchanges, and have implemented actions to enhance advocacy for cultural and institutional enhancement. The projects that are presented in this chapter have given special and explicit attention to transborder cultural cooperation and/or institutional dialogue, although activities also address interculturality and social inclusion. The **“Energizing cross border cohesion and inter-cultural peace through participatory theatre, folk arts, and inter sports”** project took place in the East African Nomadic Cattle Corridor of Karamoja and Turkana. Through theatre practice and awareness-raising workshops, some 120 to 150 young people from six different cattle villages and around 30 nomadic clan chiefs and tribal elders were sensitised to the need to reintroduce social dialogue between themselves. The project found that analysing in-depth cross-border identity issues and using intercultural dialogue are fundamental endeavours to promote peace and justice. The Niamey-based project **“Arts et culture pour l’inclusion citoyenne”** developed institutional dialogue in several ways, such as through: promoting cultural mediation activities to raise awareness on African tangible and intangible heritage, which included the production of fictional documentaries; promoting the connection between culture and environment, which involved the rehabilitation of a green space and the organisation of a symposium; and promoting creativity, which featured the launch of a new literary prize for young adults. In the province of Bazega, in Burkina Faso, the project **“Éducation citoyenne et à la paix par l’expression de la diversité culturelle et artistique en milieu scolaire”** gathered actors in the fields of culture, education, popular education and the social and solidarity economy to create **“cultural and artistic clubs”** in 84 schools, with coaching sessions on different artistic disciplines. In Bulawayo, the “Creative diversity and social inclusion (Credisi)” project focused in institutional dialogue at a local level in order to rethink the use of public and urban spaces. The project involved more than three thousand people, belonging to artistic and creative sectors, communities and industries, local populations and communities, or public authority departments and services, and it included a range of minority, vulnerable and ethnically diverse groups, women and creative groups, and local youth-led grassroots organisations. Similarly, the project **“Artistic and Cultural Action in favour of Social Cohesion and Accountable Governance”**, which took place in the region of Gao (the scene of numerous human rights violations, the crumbling of social and cultural ties and the low participation of young people in governance), implemented several actions related to institutional dialogue and the recognition of cultural diversity. The project has been able to recuperate the population’s ownership of socio-educational and cultural activities. **“Makeshift constructions of trust”** developed an exchange programme between university students and more than 40 young residents of Port Harcourt’s informal waterfront settlements. Together they designed an immersive, interactive online media platform, conceived to enable the community to be seen and heard. **“Mirages et perditions”** addressed terrorism as a contemporary phenomenon with a necessary cultural approach and a critical perspective. The project produced a theatre play and film that channelled emotions related to collective and individual experiences of violent extremism.

## ENERGIZING CROSS BORDER COHESION AND INTER-CULTURAL PEACE in the East African Nomadic Cattle Corridor of Karamoja (Uganda) and Turkana (Kenya) through participatory theatre, folk arts, and inter sports

*“Rafiki Theater”: Energizing cross border cohesion and intercultural peace through participatory cultural practice.*



This project began with the need to find an answer to the conflictual relations that exist between the inhabitants of the territories of Karamoja (Uganda) and Turkana (Kenya). As the inhabitants of the region have been experiencing land ownership and cattle raiding issues, as well as cross-border identity issues, Rafiki Theater and the Agency for Pastoralists Development (APaD) identified the need to regenerate intercultural dialogue to promote peace.

The idea was to organise outreach and training activities among local communities in order to restore cross-border dialogue between several localities in the region, including in rural communities. Through theatre practice and awareness-raising workshops, some 120 to 150 young people from six different cattle villages and around 30 nomadic clan chiefs and tribal elders were sensitised to the need to reintroduce social dialogue.

In order to better identify the needs of the local people, including local or traditional leaders and residents along the border, a situational survey was conducted by the promoters of the project. It was important for the survey to reach local community political and traditional leaders, as well as people from grassroots

communities living or doing business along the frontier. This was made possible thanks to collaborations with the local council administration for the political side and elders and village chiefs for the traditional side, all of who were from the Karamajong and Turkana communities.

The findings of the study led to clearly identify land ownership issues, cultural and inter-border identity issues, and tribal factors as key priorities to be tackled in the development of activities. For this reason, training activities were adapted to these needs and primarily targeted multicultural nomadic individuals and leaders who had family on both sides of the border, and who mostly came from Karamajong, Pokot, Turkana or Masai tribes. Special attention was given to gender-balance and to the inclusion of people with disabilities, something that is growing in importance in the region.

The selected group undertook a seven-day training that included sessions on movement in space, improvisation, memory and imagination, society, family, and personal life, experiences, acting skills, and included community outreach. A theatre production aiming at sparking engagement and inter-dialogue was designed to enhance community outreach. It incorporated elements of: performing folk arts of nomads, tribalism and individualism, tribal domestic and inter border conflict, politics and cross- or inter-border identity issues, the challenge of why cattle rustling and inter-tribal violence cannot be properly solved since they are part of culture, and after-performance dialogue and debate.

Several outreach theatre activities were held in the localities of Makutano, Olwora and Kacheliba on the Kenyan side, and in Karita for the Ugandan side. In all these localities, both the general populations in rural urban trading centres on one hand, and community chiefs and elders on the other hand, were able to expose not only their own analysis of the conflictual factors, but also to share possible ideas to resolve conflicts.

Cooperation with the local police was also part of the process, in order to plan cross-border activities for the youth who were mostly ex-warriors or who were trying to resettle into normal life (such as *the boda bodas* for example), and to realise a five week-training activity for the youth related to security, livelihood and peaceful coexistence.

All this work let community members consider solutions to two extremely important issues that had been threatening social cohesion for years. Firstly, they agreed on the urgency to solve the lack of clarity of the populations' identity on the borders, which was the main cause of the insecurity and anti-social behaviour issues in the region, and which is a decision that needs to be taken by the local populations themselves. Secondly, they emphasised the need to strengthen inter-border cooperation, particularly as it relates to nomadic groups since there seem to be numerous individuals who vote on both sides of the border between Kenya and Uganda.

Cultural exchanges and visits have been suggested for selected elders from both sides of the border. In the second half of the project, there will be several cultural exchange visits through inter-border cultural and peace festivals in the region.

## Agenda 2063

1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
4. Transformed economies
11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
12. Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place
13. Peace security and stability is preserved
16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



## ARTS ET CULTURE POUR L'INCLUSION CITOYENNE : L'UNIVERSITÉ ABDOU MOUMOUNI JETTE DES PONTS

*“Arts et culture pour l'inclusion citoyenne”: Promoting social inclusion through cultural cooperation in Niamey.*



“Arts et culture pour l'inclusion citoyenne” provides African youth with knowledge and resources on culture and sustainable development to build the societies of tomorrow. Based on the strengthening of institutional dialogue and exchange among cultural and academic centres in Niger, the project has enabled the Arts & Culture Programme (A&C) of Abdou Moumouni University (Niamey) to collaborate at the local, regional and global levels with several organisations, to understand “the essence and aspirations of African adolescents as individuals and as members of local and global communities, and [to prepare] them for development challenges”.

The A&E piloted the initiative with a three-fold approach in the fields of creativity, heritage and the environment. The project took shape through: cultural mediation activities to raise awareness on African tangible and intangible heritage; activities around the connection between culture and environment; and activities focused on the promotion of local creativity.

Cultural mediations, carried out by 40 students (32% of who were women), underpinned the inclusive approach to culture pursued by the project, and encouraged dialogue between symbolic heritage and contemporary creation. Students explored the artworks of African artists who worked in disciplines such as music, theatre and visual arts, and selected a target audience. Developed by a team of two to four A&C students, in collaboration with museum guides and a pedagogical team, mediations raised public awareness



about African tangible and intangible heritage, and sparked reflection on the construction of African identities and the role of African youth and artists within the society. Special attention was paid to the role of women in society. Interventions took place in middle or high schools, on the Abdou Moumouni university campus and at the National Museum, and they reached over 500 people (40% of who were women).

Under the direction of the renowned filmmaker Jean-Marie Teno and a young production company (BackTechno), the A&C students made short films featuring youth, urban culture and the National Museum's collections. A total of 14 A&C students (including three females), several external artists and other students outside the A&C acted in the films, which will be distributed widely through film festivals and art schools' networks in Africa. All in all, this cultural mediation process allowed students to put into practice the theoretical knowledge gleaned from their courses on cultural mediation and aesthetics, and laid the groundworks for a course on national heritage.

Activities based on the connection between culture and the environment included the rehabilitation of the Botanical Garden in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Abdou Moumouni University, and the organisation of the International Symposium "Arts and environment (better) living in the city", from 11 to 13 February 2020. Local collaborators included the Faculties of Health Sciences (Garden of Medicinal Plants), the Faculty of Agronomy and the Department of Geography. The Symposium brought together 13 international speakers from 10 countries (France, Senegal, Cameroon, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Burkina Faso, Benin, Ivory Coast, Italy and Morocco) alongside over 20 local panellists and more than 100 participants. This event, which included field trips through Niamey, explored the related issues of urbanism, social well-being and the participation in cultural life, which align with the Agenda 21 for Culture.

Partners accompanied the rejuvenation of the Botanical Garden as a green and cultural space, highlighting the biodiversity and the ancestral and traditional practices, and targeting citizens and students of the campus. Rehabilitation activities, which were delayed due to the floods in Niamey, included the characterisation of the existing vegetation as well an ethno-botanical field enquiry regarding their medicinal uses by the urban population, which was carried out in the markets of Niamey.

Finally, the first edition of the "Sarraounia Literary Award for Young Adult fiction" was created, not only to promote reading among teens, but also to provide a window into understanding the world of African youth. The first edition received more than 60 applications in English, French and Hausa (the latter being one of the most widely spoken and written indigenous languages of West Africa) from 19 nationalities, illustrating the interests and ambitions of African youth today. The submissions revolved around topics such as sexuality, intergenerational conflict, immigration or religion. The winner of the Prize, Paul Kisakye, is a Uganda-born writer. The Senegalese publishing house Amalion, partner of the project, published 1,000 copies of his book "The Rainmakers" both in English and French.

The wide scope of the activities undertaken allowed the establishment and fostering of collaborations with diverse actors engaged in culture and sustainable development. The three press conferences organised are an evidence of the far-reaching nature of the project, which has strengthened ties with the Art Department of Aix-Marseille University (France) and is now securing future collaborations with other partners, such as the Institut Français and the Goethe Institute Sub Saharan Africa. The project has shown how exchanges among students, professors and the wider community, can drive and benefit African creative and cultural entrepreneurs, foster social inclusion and enhance sustainable development through culture. The project stimulated local and global debates, opened doors for new generations of African youth and stimulated their ability to partake in a wide range of socially important creative practices.

## Agenda 2063

1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
2. Well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation
7. Environmentally sustainable and climate resilient economies and communities
16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent

## SDGs



**Goal 4:**  
Quality  
education



**Goal 10:**  
Reduced  
inequalities



**Goal 11:**  
Sustainable  
cities and  
communities



**Goal 15:**  
Life on land



**Goal 17:**  
Partnerships  
for the goals

## CREATIVE DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (CREDISI)

*Iyasa and the “Credisi” project: Facilitating the interactive dialogue between artists and the local authority in order to rethink the use of public and urban spaces.*



This project originated in Bulawayo, the second largest and most populated city of Zimbabwe, in the southeast part of the country. It emerged as a response to the fact that most of the public spaces and cultural infrastructure in Bulawayo used to be neglected, with many of them having been turned into religious venues, preventing citizens and communities, especially the youth and women, from benefiting from cultural activities.

In addition to reduced access to cultural life and creative industries for communities and inhabitants, artists' and creators' access to renting offices, studios and creative venues was also threatened because of the rising rental cost across the city, reflecting a country-wide trend.

As a response, the Inkululeko Yabatsha School of Arts (IYASA) partnered with the Cultural Department of Bulawayo's City Council with the aim to facilitate a cohesive and constructive dialogue between local artists, creators and public authorities. The issues included engaging with public deciders on the importance of culture and the arts, raising awareness on the crucial role of the arts in building socially cohesive societies, and developing urban policies that respect individuals, communities, cultural expression and creativity in Bulawayo.

Through a combination of interactive workshops, debates and performances, the project brought together over 100 young creatives, 50 women artists and creatives, creators from ethnic minority groups and communities, with more than 30 arts administrators and experts, and four policy makers and councillors from the local authorities of Bulawayo to discuss the need to ensure the access to safe spaces for cultural dialogue and artistic creation. together with.

The gathering of the different cultural and creative stakeholders of the city facilitated the development of a common and collective understanding of local public policies regarding culture and creation, and enabled discussing on the ways artists and creators can better access venues and existing infrastructures. Among other outcomes, this resulted in the opening of various cultural spaces and safe venues for local artists and creators to create, perform and present their diverse work.

The involvement of youth-led organisations, women's arts groups, and ethnic minority groups, projects and initiatives from various languages, backgrounds and origins, permitted the project to cut across gender, cultural, language, religious, political and age divides. This diversity led to the discussion of particular issues which tended to be absent in public debate and which were only partially tackled in public policy-making until then.

Among others, a dedicated workshop was organised with the objective to open a space for women artists and female creatives to freely express themselves and safely address critical issues they were facing daily. These issues included systemic discrimination, health and sexual rights, gender-biased life experiences, social etiquette, the weight of cultural norms and financial and economic autonomy.

A range of presentations, creative shows and cultural performances also displayed the diversity of local artists and communities through the showcasing of a wide range of both traditional and modern cultural practices in the fields of dance and music. These presentations established a continual dialogue with the youth, to foster the transmission of values and practices and to promote intergenerational learning and capacity-building.

The COVID-19 pandemic outbreak also had a strong impact on the development of the project's activities. The organisers revised their strategy to include a range of online dialogues and shows, such as a specific dialogue on the Credisi industries in the post-COVID-19 era. A virtual "lockdown party" or an online "Stay home stay safe party" was also organised in order keep people safe and entertained during the quarantine measures, accompanied by creative, educational and entertaining messages.

In total, more than 41,100 people were reached, including some 630 creatives, local populations and communities, and public authority departments and services. These groups included a range of minority, vulnerable and ethnically diverse groups, women creative groups and collectives, and local youth-led grassroots organisations.

In a nutshell, the project not only succeeded in boosting the access of inhabitants and residents of Bulawayo to local creative activities and cultural life, but it also triggered the enhancement of creative and cultural opportunities for local artists and creators. It also contributed to the initiation of structural dialogue with public authorities, thereby opening a path for further cultural lobbying and advocacy activities, as well as for further work on governance issues more generally.

## Agenda 2063

1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
4. Transformed economies
11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
13. Peace security and stability is preserved
16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life
18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



**Goal 5:**  
Gender  
equality

**Goal 9:**  
Industry,  
innovation and  
infrastructure

**Goal 11:**  
Sustainable  
cities and  
communities

**Goal 16:**  
Peace, justice  
and strong  
institutions

# N ÉDUCATION CITOYENNE ET À LA PAIX PAR L'EXPRESSION DE LA DIVERSITÉ CULTURELLE ET ARTISTIQUE EN MILIEU SCOLAIRE

*"Diversité culturelle et éducation": Fostering cultural diversity through civic education and peace.*



Launched by Solidarité Laïque, an association seen as a collective for the public good that brings together 48 organisations related to public schools, popular education and social and solidarity economy, the project undertook activities in several localities and communities of Burkina Faso from October 2019 to November 2020 in collaboration with Bienvenue Théâtre du Bazega, a theatre based in Kombissiri, a small Burkinabe locality.

The project had a three objectives. Firstly, the project sought to promote cultural and artistic expression as a lever for education and raising awareness about citizenship and peace in 100 primary and secondary schools of the Province of Bazega, in Burkina Faso. Secondly, it aimed to develop the skills of 10,000 children, adolescents and young people, as ambassadors for qualitative changes to citizenship and peace in their communities. Thirdly, it advocated for the integration of education on citizenship and peace through art and culture in the school curricula of Burkina Faso.

The project targeted a total of 100 primary and secondary schools across the country, and it was implemented in 100 school clubs. It mobilised related communities and local stakeholders in order to ensure the facilitation, supervision and coaching of the clubs. The operationalisation of the project was conducted in close collaboration with several national Ministries, including the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Human Rights and Civic promotion, as well as with decentralised local and regional authorities.

Over the months of implementation of the project, around 8,450 boys and girls from 84 schools of the Bazega province were reached by the education activities and the educational, cultural and artistic animation tools specifically developed in the context of the project. Additionally, the parents' associations of every school, as well as the educational teams and teaching staff of each school, were actively involved in the project and positively impacted by the process.

It has not been easy to create a cultural and artistic learning environment in the 84 primary and secondary schools. It was vital to actively involve the ministries for education, culture and human rights, the decentralised local education and cultural institutions, and the parents and their associations throughout the process in order to develop specific educational instruments and cultural tools.

All the 84 schools' cultural and artistic clubs were provided with contents, tools and educational plans to facilitate animation and awareness raising activities. In some cases, these tools were designed together with the local educational and teaching teams, with the help of artists and professors, and in consultation with the parents' associations. This ensured the efficiency of these instruments and encouraged key stakeholders to take ownership of the project.

Cultural and artistic clubs were created in each of the 84 schools and gathered, on average, 10 to 15 students of all ages. These clubs were facilitated by local cultural and socio-educative professionals, and resulted in the multi-disciplinary delivery of civic and education activities to more than 8,000 young learners. Through coaching sessions on the different artistic disciplines and media of expression, in fields like theatre, storytelling, tales and recitals, drawing, painting, humour, dance or music, the children and young people learnt more about citizenship, peace and peacebuilding.

Overall, the following 16 themes were developed during the project: citizenship, peace, civics, living together, culture to educate, education, education to COVID-19, hygiene education, art to educate, peace and security, eco-citizenship, solidarity, security, sanitation education and health education. They were delivered through a total of 128 animations, exercises and coaching sessions that used a children and youth-based approach. The project also stands out for the governance mechanisms it implemented in the field of education. Today, an impressive 59 out of the 84 schools' clubs remain functioning and continue to conduct community and awareness-raising activities through artistic and cultural projects.

## Agenda 2063

- 2. Well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation
- 11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
- 13. Peace security and stability is preserved
- 16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
- 17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life
- 18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



Goal 4:  
Quality  
education



Goal 16:  
Peace, justice  
and strong  
institutions

## V ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL ACTION IN FAVOUR OF SOCIAL COHESION AND ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE

*“Artistic and Cultural Action”*: Triggering the role of cultural action as a mechanism for the promotion of intercultural dialogue, the recognition of cultural diversity and the defence of human rights in the Gao region of Mali.



For several years, Mali has been the scene of numerous violations of human rights, in particular regarding the right to freedom, the right to freedom of expression and the respect of cultural differences. This has led to the erosion of social ties, as well as to the loss and destruction of cultural landmarks and properties, and to a decreasing participation of the population in cultural, social and political life and governance. This is especially the case for the youngest generations. As a result, access to the exercise of governance and decision-making has been severely reduced.

In response to this situation, and given that the youth constitutes more than half of the population in the country, the Regional Directorate for Culture, in partnership with the GAO Education Academy and the Youth Association for the promotion of culture in northern Mali, launched the project “Artistic and Cultural Action in favour of Social Cohesion and Accountable Governance”. The project is a response to the demand expressed by the populations of the Gao region, through educational and cultural practices.

The project aimed at supporting the population (especially the youth) to reclaim ownership of an accountable governance at the local level, through socio-educational and cultural activities. These activities sought to strengthen the knowledge of the community’s role and responsibility as citizens, promoting the spirit of solidarity and tolerance between culturally diverse communities, and strengthening the social mechanisms which already exist within the framework of the promotion of cultural activities.

The overall goal of the project was to contribute positively to the emergence of a just and inclusive society, which recognises and respects cultural diversity, promotes active citizenship for all and protects the human and cultural rights of everyone. In a nutshell, the project sought to support communities in their fair human development, by accompanying them in the building of a common understanding of their role, rights and responsibilities regarding the peaceful coexistence of all and the sustainable people-centred development of their localities.

To this end, several activities were undertaken with relevant strategic partners, including the establishment and development of five safe spaces for inter-community dialogue and exchange, where some 125 people from three different localities (Gao, Soni Ali Ber and Gounzoureye) were able to discuss conflict resolution practices and reconciliation processes. These activities included the involvement of young people and women's groups, community female and male leaders, female and male political leaders, and local and regional decision-makers, as well as key cultural stakeholders and actors from a diverse range of creative sectors.

Among the activities, three cultural outings were also organised in three different secondary schools from the urban area of Gao in June 2020, allowing 60 students (among which there were 39 young girls and 21 young boys) and 10 teachers, guides and social agents to visit three historical and archaeological sites: the site of Kankou Moussa, the Tomb of Askia (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) and the Sahel Museum of Gao. These visits provided a learning environment to raise awareness about the historical connections that exist between their different local communities. A series of four cultural competitions were also organised in the region in July and June 2020 to promote governance, social cohesion and the promotion of human rights through artistic and cultural disciplines. These involved sketches, poems, solo or choir performances and modern and traditional dance, and reached more than 900 people, among which 45% were women and girls.

In parallel, a consultation process was established and facilitated every month, starting from June 2020, in order to guarantee the promotion of multi and interculturalism among the localities and communities. This consultation process contributed to the mobilisation and construction of loyalty among local cultural actors, who became facilitators and mediators in the local population. The process also drew from the recommendations and suggestions received to identify or create synergies between the Directorate for Culture, the promoter of the initiative, and local stakeholders and actors involved in the cultural life of their localities.

Building on these activities, an awareness-raising campaign was developed in order to promote citizenship and human rights among the targeted territories and populations. The campaign took the form of a tour, which visited the urban area of Gao and the rural commune of Gounzoureye, which included several cultural activities, artistic workshops, and intercultural dialogues and debates. These activities used disciplines like music, dance, theatre and poetry in order to sensitise populations and young people around their role in the shaping of their societies, as well as their rights and duties in the development of their locality.

In total, more than 1,750 individuals – young people, women and residents, but also creative practitioners, social mediators, local leaders and decision-makers, as well as representative from a diverse range of formal and informal cultural organisations and institutions – took part in and were positively impacted by the activities. The project hoped to raise the interest and ownership of the populations in the development of their own communities, and particularly targeted the youth, women and marginalised people.

## Agenda 2063

- 11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
- 13. Peace, security and stability is preserved
- 16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
- 18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



## VI MAKESHIFT CONSTRUCTIONS OF TRUST: MUSIC-MAKING, PLACEMAKING AND MOVEMENT-BUILDING

*“Makeshift constructions of trust”: Creating safe cultural platforms for the voices of young people living in waterfront informal settlements in Port Harcourt (Nigeria) to be heard and valued.*



“**M**akeshift Constructions of Trust: music-making, placemaking and movement-building” started in August 2019 as a project to create open and inclusive platforms for informal waterfront settlements in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, which are the home to up to 480,000 people. Waterfronts are among the densest and fastest growing neighbourhoods in Rivers State, which in 2009 started a programme to demolish them. This project empowered young residents, especially women, and promoted their acknowledgement as people who participate actively in the shaping of the city, despite their precarious situation. “Makeshift Constructions of Trust” worked towards increasing the visibility of socially marginalised slum communities and their capacity to voice their vision of an inclusive city through digital, physical and organisational platforms. The project used tools and techniques of self-representation (from music to maps, architecture to litigation) and contributed in a meaningful way to the social, spatial, technological and political changes involved in the next urban transformations.

The Collaborative Media Advocacy Platform (CMAP) led the initiative, fostering collaboration between partners and participating waterfront communities, and undertaking monitoring, evaluation and learning, as well as the financial management and reporting tasks. The Faculty of Humanities at University of Port Harcourt (UniPort) was responsible for providing the project with research resources and support, event facilities and logistics, curriculum development and academic dissemination. The results of this collaboration were visible in the second half of the implementation phase, where an exchange programme between



university students and Chicoco Radio participants – involving around 40 young local participants elaborating the design of an immersive, interactive online media space for their community station – took place.

The first activity implemented was the design, development and launch of an immersive, interactive online media space for Chicoco Radio. More than 40 young residents of Port Harcourt's informal waterfront settlements were involved in the design of a streaming platform through a participatory process. Workshops helped to identify the strategic objectives and technical functions for the platform, conceived to facilitate community voice and allow the most marginalised people in the city to make themselves seen and heard. This was followed by the design and construction of a performance and a gathering space for the new online platform Chicoco Sounds and the host community, which counted on the expertise of the internationally acclaimed Venezuelan architect Alejandro Haiek, who explored participatory design strategies (using case studies from Caracas and other sites) with more than 60 participants, 40% of who were women.

The next step of the project was the launch event, featuring live performances and projections, which were also streamed on Chicoco Sounds. During that phase, the band and individual musicians of the music team wrote over 15 new songs, which they performed at events and disseminated via their personal social media accounts. Regular concerts and collaborations built both capacity and audience, and involved the participation of 250 waterfront residents across the city and 30 young participants (45% of who were women and girls). This led to collaboration and engagement with other slum communities and activist networks. The project team also organised an end-of-year gathering to celebrate advances (such as the participation at the Venice Architecture Biennale) and to build solidarity within the members of the project.

Although collaboration with UniPort was delayed due to the remodelling of the university's infrastructure, new academic partnerships were established with UC Irvine and MIT Media Lab's City Science Unit through the convening of an academic conference on the performance space that invited project participants and residents of host communities as interlocutors. Those partnerships led to the production of an installation piece centred on the relationship between food and community, with the participation of a team videographers, photographers, journalists and technicians. The initiative drew the attention of Urbanism Masters, a member of the Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, that became a potential partner for the project as well.

To conclude the project, the journalism and tech teams worked on the production of radio features, news and current affairs programmes, undertook on-air practice, and participated in critical listening and feedback sessions. An archive of six timeless radio features to populate the streaming platform was built, with pilot programmes addressing a wide range of topics of interest for the community, from gender inequality to forced evictions, sometimes approaching rights-based issues through short, humorous episodes in Pidgin English as well as standard English.

The project team can affirm that the different cultural spaces created within the course of the project marked the start of an exciting exploration of a human rights movement in Port Harcourt, as well as the possibilities for the interaction between physical and digital spaces, which is particularly relevant in the current local and global context. Cultural expressions – music, radio live talks, press articles, arts performances, architectural and urban design, and others – proved how young people in such settlements are shaping the face of cities across the continent, although they are politically under-represented and largely excluded from non-violent political processes in Southern Nigeria. Beyond its tangible outputs, this project is contributing to a wider objective: giving access to educational and employment opportunities, health services and municipal decision-making to the most underprivileged.

## Agenda 2063

1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
2. Well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation
7. Environmentally sustainable and climate resilient economies and communities
11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
13. Peace security and stability is preserved
16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



Goal 1:  
No poverty



Goal 10:  
Reduced  
inequalities



Goal 11:  
Sustainable  
cities and  
communities



Goal 16:  
Peace, justice  
and strong  
institutions

## VII MIRAGES ET PERDITIONS

*“Mirages et perditions”: Depicting the reality of terrorism through theatre and film in Burkina Faso and Mali, in which creativity serves as a vehicle to raise awareness on the importance of building peaceful societies.*



“**M**irages et perditions” addressed terrorism as a contemporary phenomenon from a necessary cultural approach. Through creativity, using theatre and film, the project raised awareness and called on young people to mobilisation against violence and intolerance. Participants wrote and performed a play, and a documentary on the process was produced and disseminated in theatres, on television channels and on social media. Sensitisation sessions by religious communities were also held, contributing to (1) building citizenship and a sense of responsibility towards terrorist attacks, and (2) learning how to express emotions related to collective and individual experiences of violent extremism.

Carrefour International de Théâtre de Ouagadougou (CITO) led the project and was responsible for planning, coordinating and supervising all the project activities. CITO also provided travel and accommodation for participants from Guinea and Mali, and ensured the administrative and financial management of the project. Collaborators included the cultural association Acte SEPT from Mali (in charge of the follow-up of participants and the preparation of the tour scheduled in Mali), the CARTEL Federation (responsible for

writing the text of the play), as well as Imagine Institute and the Association of Burkinabe Producers for the Management of the Support Fund for Cinema Success (SCBF), both of which ensured the proper execution of the audio-visual production. They all formed the PLE Consortium.

The project's implementation schedule had to be revised due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The new schedule was set between December 2019 and November 2020. Thus, the creation and production of the theatre play started with the selection of the author of the play in December 2019. The text, which was written in Ouagadougou and submitted on 28 February 2020, showed the consequences of engaging in terrorism. Following activities included auditioning and casting 42 candidate actors and actresses, involving the two co-directors and assisted by three members of the CITO Artistic Committee. A final 14 artists (five women and nine men) were selected.

It is relevant to mention that the selection did not meet the gender parity criteria because the plot of the story imagined and written by the author did not include an equal number of male and female characters. The under-representation of women participants was therefore not a deliberate discriminatory choice, but the result of the decision to respect the author's creative choice. That clearly showed how individual and collective imaginations, memories and stories are influenced by culture, not always in a positive way, and can be used to legitimise choices on the values of a society. This reveals the difficulty of establishing mechanisms to effectively include women and girls as active participants with equal rights in artistic and cultural creation, as well as in the overall co-creation of societies.

During March and April 2020, the start of the rehearsals brought together a creative team composed of actors and actresses, co-directors (a man and a woman from Burkina Faso and Guinea), a set designer, a costume designer, sound and light technicians, stage technicians, communicators, partners and an administration team. The performance was filmed by a dynamic and enthusiastic professional team. The documentary chronologically recorded all stages of the process and was accompanied by a dozen articles with images that reflected the progress of the project. Articles also were produced to ensure the visibility of the process, to inform public opinion and to prepare the audience. They were published on the platform of *Culture at Work Africa* and on the website of CITO.

The project engaged a significant number of partners, including the CAWA network (with the beneficiaries from the *Culture at Work Africa* in Burkina: CDC, Solidarité laïque, Bienvenue Théâtre), the network of private cultural spaces in Ouagadougou (ECG, ATB, Cartel, CDC, GRAVO and CITO), the National Assembly, several ministries (such as the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism and the Ministry of Youth and the Promotion of Youth Entrepreneurship) and various embassies (Denmark, China, Mali, USA, Belgium). Yet the COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted the final phase of the project, and safety measures caused a general delay of activities. Despite the unfavourable situation, members of the PLE Consortium could count on the collaboration of formal and informal networks in diverse countries (Mali, Niger, Ivory Coast, Togo, Benin, Guinea, Chad and Senegal) and planned the future creation of a formal network between actors from Burkina Faso, Togo and Benin.

## Agenda 2063

11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
12. Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place
13. Peace, security and stability is preserved
16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



**Goal 8:**  
Decent work  
and economic  
growth

**Goal 16:**  
Peace, justice  
and strong  
institutions

## CHAPTER 5

# Cultural heritage, territories and spaces: Building inclusive communities and sense of place.

**Main themes:** Tangible and intangible cultural heritage and cultural territories and spaces

## Introduction

*“Leave no place behind” has become a central motto in the last years, as it summarises very well the importance of all places and identities in our common fight to achieve sustainability in all its dimensions: environmental, cultural, social and economic.*

Diversity is a concept that marries well with the motto because it is in the interaction of biodiversity and cultural diversity that heritage has its origins and in which it becomes a catalyst to create a sense of place. In the African region, like in any other region of the world, places are marked by their human inhabitants' vision of the world. Territory is a bearer of history and meanings and is, by extension, also cultural. This cultural dimension is made up of the practices and the vision of the world of citizens; ways of organisation the environment, such as through heritage, architecture, design, public art, landscapes, the shaping of the natural environment and the organisation of space, express meanings, symbols and senses. Cultures are also a powerful instrument for the construction and transformation of spaces, in which citizens can express their identity, recognise their differences, recognise and understand themselves and each other, belong and freely embark on their life projects. Culture allows us to build meaningful, inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable spaces, and to reimagine the world, to invent ourselves and to project into the future.

If the SDGs are known in the cultural sectors it is because of the existence of target 11.4 (“strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage”). Furthermore, it is obvious that culture has a wider role to play in the achievement of the entire Goal 11, to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”, a Goal that also pushes

for the balance between urban, peri-urban and rural spaces, and identifies public spaces as key assets in urban and regional planning. The 5<sup>th</sup> Aspiration of the AU 2063 Agenda, and the main thematic of the African Union for 2021, is about the cultural and heritage agenda as means for the building of sustainable and resilient cities, territories and communities. The Culture 21 Actions also provides very clear advice on the importance of tangible and intangible heritage for the sustainable development of cities, with Commitments devoted to “Heritage, diversity, and creativity” as the foundations of cultural life and to “Culture, Urban Planning and Public Spaces” in order to plan cities and regions with cultural awareness and meaning.

The initiative *Culture at Work Africa* has supported several projects that consider the importance of heritage, territories and spaces to achieve a “sense of place” that allows communities to be more inclusive and more sustainable. “**Narratives from Zimbabwe**” focused on intangible cultural heritage and created an interactive digital archive, conceived as a large collective database from which audio-visual artists and creators can, through film and storytelling, generate new cultural artefacts for society. Similarly, in Benin, “**Arts de l’oralité et des scènes urbaines (PAOSU)**” focused on intangible heritage, through urban contemporary artistic expressions, namely storytelling and slam. The project raised awareness on the crucial value of artistic education at an early stage, and enhanced the existing national frameworks for the reception, expression and dissemination of urban arts. The “**Sukiana, une criée publique pour la paix et la cohésion entre peuls et cultivateurs dans le nord du Bénin**” project also took place in Benin and similarly focused on intangible heritage. In the project oral arts was used as means of conflict prevention, in which cultural professionals and media equipment facilitated dialogue among communities (the Fulani and the farmers) and collected evidence of misunderstanding and lack of communication, in order to find traditional modes of conflict resolution. The process was recorded through a database, a multidisciplinary show and a radio documentary. Tangible and intangible heritage merged in the project “**Blueprint for Majestic cinema culture hub**”, which recovered a cultural space for permanent dialogue in which the audio-visual heritage of the community in Zanzibar was valued. Outcomes of the project included a feeling of ownership and sense of place among local community, and a cultural programme with activities based on the needs of the community, which included a gender perspective. Finally, “**Sounds of the sacred web**” recognised African vernacular architecture as an expression of the traditional knowledge and values of communities in Nigeria and Zimbabwe, and made visible the influences of indigenous tangible and intangible heritage on contemporary art, design and sustainable development. All the projects in this chapter have also undertaken advocacy activities towards peace, social inclusion, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue.

## NARRATIVES FROM ZIMBABWE

*“Narratives from Zimbabwe”: Capturing people’s oral stories to creatively enrich collective identity.*



**“N**arratives from Zimbabwe” retrieved the voice of people living in Zimbabwe and treasured it in an interactive digital archive as part of the region’s intangible cultural heritage. The project, which highlighted the “limited available time to capture those stories”, has enhanced the role of creative practitioners and inhabitants in preserving and transmitting the wealth of historical narrative present in the memories, knowledge, costumes and experiences of a society. A special research team created the archive, conceived as a large collective database from which audio-visual artists and creators can generate new film and storytelling cultural artefacts for society to interact with, through a process of identifying and filming ethnic groups, heritage sites and cultural activities.

The project was led by the Zimbabwe International Film Festival Trust (ZIFFT), a platform dedicated to the discovery and development of filmmakers, artists, and audiences, as well as to the creation of documentaries showing first hand narratives from relevant political and historical events, such as Zimbabwe’s war of Liberation. Within the project, ZIFFT coordinated and organised the main actions and set up the research team. The project also counted on the collaboration of two partners: Zimbabwe Heritage Trust (ZHT), which was responsible for providing contacts and training the research team on methodologies to record

the narratives; and IThemba Academy, which was appointed to conduct workshops to train and guide filmmakers on how to use and implement the archive. However, ZHT was dismissed shortly after the start of the project and its tasks were carried out by ZIFFT.

The first stage of the project focused on research and included Zimbabwe's ethnic groups and relevant people from difference provinces, and obtaining information about the historical period beginning with the origins of the Bantu in the middle Nile Valley, following their migration to East Africa and Zimbabwe, and finishing with Independence in 1980. The second stage focused on production, capturing as many perspectives on the memories, roots, costumes and rituals of inhabitants as possible. The production team, composed of two camera people, a sound and lighting technician, an interviewer, a director and an administrator, interviewed community social and spiritual leaders, as well as academics and experts.

In order to ensure the diversity of voices within the identified groups, as well as a breadth of approaches that could encourage a greater cultural understanding, the team worked with at least one person from each community as well as other key stakeholders (such as National Museums and Monuments, Zimbabwe Tourism Authority, National Archives of Zimbabwe and local government officials, among others). In addition, women were asked to participate in chiefs' and spiritual leaders' interviews, although in some communities, women are not allowed to speak directly to foreign visitors. More than 25 interviews and recordings of cultural sites took place during the first eight months, reaching historians, dancers, community guides, herbalists and older people from diverse ethnic groups (such as Zezuru, Karanga, Budya, Korekore, Doma, Kunda, Ndau, Shangaan and Tsonga) from Mashonaland, Masvingo and Manicaland provinces.

Despite numerous setbacks, such as a delayed start due to a general failure of the internet and the banking system at national level, recurrent electricity and fuel outages as well as the socio-economic instability in the country (the latter causing political upheavals with periods of total strikes, riots and demonstrations throughout the country), the project adapted to the situation. The project concentrated on setting up one strong team, made up of 11 people, among which 55% (six individuals) were women. The team was based in Harare and they undertook targeted training before travelling around the country. Nevertheless, the unstable environment caused doubts about the project in some communities with which previous agreements had been established. Yet the project managed to continue, as there was a strong belief in its potential to encourage greater dialogue and stability and provide a source of social cohesion between the various communities and ethnic groups within the country.

Thus, during the project, "Narratives from Zimbabwe" undertook an advocacy task towards peace, social inclusion, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. The project has shown that Zimbabwe's cultural and historical narrative is incomplete without the stories of neighbouring countries. Immigrants' experiences are part of the intangible heritage of the region and as such were considered valuable resources to include in the archive in the form of footage clips, written material, animations and illustrations. In this view, there are plans for strengthening networking activities within Zimbabwe and across the region, specifically in Zambia, South Africa, Botswana and Mozambique. Above all, the project highlighted the important role of people and communities in tangible and intangible heritage conservation, since under the guidance of the project's team everybody can contribute to build the archive, even with social media content.

## Agenda 2063

1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
12. Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place
13. Peace, security and stability is preserved
16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life
18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



## PROJET DES ARTS DE L'ORALITÉ ET DES SCÈNES URBAINES (PAOSU)

*“Arts de l’oralité et des scènes urbaines” : Empowering local cultural actors in Benin so they can better contribute to sustainable development.*



“Arts de l’oralité et des scènes urbaines (PAOSU)” brings together cultural institutions, organisations and actors from Benin and strengthens their professional capacities, offering a space for exchange, networking and creating synergies that allows them to collaborate in the promotion of social inclusion, creativity and intercultural dialogue. The project, designed as a means to restructure the Beninese Federation of Storytelling and Oral Arts (FéBéCAO), has demonstrated the importance of raising awareness of artistic education at an early stage. It has also enhanced the existing framework for the reception, expression and dissemination of contemporary artistic expressions in urban spaces, specifically storytelling and slam, thereby contributing to building a diverse, inclusive and peaceful society.

PAOSU was led by Association Katoulati, an association that oversaw the project’s design, organisation and implementation, in partnership with Iminrio, that also led the organisation of the Rencontres Internationales des Arts de l’Oralité (RIO 2019), the closing event of the project. Both organisations have been partners for several years and have fostered collaborations with cultural actors, such as the French



Institute of Benin, and have participated in important events, such as the Peace Summit in Bamako and the Niger Festival in Ségou. As a result of this lasting and fruitful partnership, Katoulati and Iminrio initiated this project together and drew upon their network of previous collaborators. Other partners included the FéBéCAO and Asbl Téré Culture, which facilitated internal and external mid-term evaluation of artistic educational activities.

Activities implemented within the project included capacity-building workshops for 13 artists and 12 cultural organisations (who were members of the FéBéCAO), 12 artistic and socio-educational courses in 12 schools from nine communes of Benin, and the 7th edition of the International Meetings of the Performing and Oral Arts (RIAO 2019). The RIAO 2019 in particular was a chance to demonstrate the achievements of the project and establish future collaborations with organisations sharing similar goals and ambitions.

Workshops for artists (31% of who were women) focused in the practice of storytelling and slam, and how it can be used to promote peace, social cohesion, cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and other relevant issues at local and global level. Workshops for cultural organisations and institutions, on the other hand, aimed at strengthening coordination between cultural actors at all levels, and provided participants (34% of who were women) with skills in cultural mediation and management designed to enhance partnerships and to revitalise the FéBéCAO. As for the activities promoting artistic education, 342 students aged seven to 15 (52% of who were girls) benefited from storytelling and/or slam training at school from two to three hours per week. Students were made aware of the value of intangible heritage and could experience creative ways to participate in local and global dialogue on sustainable development. Initially planned to be carried out in five communes, those activities finally took place in nine communes, and the participation of artists increased from 15 to 50, thanks to the efforts of organisers and collaborators.

The RIAO festival centred on the communication and dissemination efforts of the project. The 2019 edition centred on the promotion of gender, intercultural dialogue, peace and social cohesion, and it presented shows, training workshops, professional meetings and cultural visits in nine communes in Benin. There were 48 members of the festival team, composed of the presidency, general management, support committee, welcoming committees in each of the communes and volunteers. For two weeks, the RIAO 2019 made it possible to reach around 11,578 people – including 250 prisoners from the Parakou Civil Prison, 123 users of the CAEB media library in Parakou and 92 patients from the Louis Pasteur Clinic in Porto-Novo – who enjoyed the work of 50 artists and groups of artists (65% of who were women) and who shared a message of peace, solidarity and inclusiveness.

Throughout the implementation of the project, collaboration with public and private sectors and civil society, including local authorities, artists, cultural organisations, cultural practitioners, students, families and audience, facilitated the implementation of the activities, especially in the nine communes. The French Institute of Benin, Katoulati France, Aora Cultures, Moov'on Arts Africa, Culture Funding Watch, the Ministry of Culture of Benin are just a few of the organisations that joined the project; the full list is long. These organisations were an outstanding support to the project and without their contribution this activity would not have had the expected effects. Lessons learnt from this experience imply that it is important to learn to work on “multi-actor” and “multi-levels” to better promote the public value of culture. Additionally, it was observed that it is beneficial to rely more on civil society organisations and the cultural sector to accelerate the achievement of sustainable development goals.

## Agenda 2063

1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
12. Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place
13. Peace security and stability is preserved
16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
17. Full gender equality in all spheres of life
18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



## ||| SUKIANA, UNE CRIÉE PUBLIQUE POUR LA PAIX ET LA COHÉSION SOCIALE ENTRE PEULS ET CULTIVATEURS DANS LE NORD DU BÉNIN

*“Sukiana”: Lifting the veil on traditional conflict solving methods in the North of Benin and contributing to community reconciliation through multidisciplinary artistic creation.*



The north of Benin is traditionally inhabited by two communities: the Fulani (or Fulbe people), one of the largest nomadic ethnic groups in Sahel and West Africa, and farmers, who are sedentary cultivators and producers. Because of their different customs and traditions, these two groups have been in tension for several years, with widespread violent clashes between the two communities that are mostly generated by resource-related and land-practices conflicts. Convinced that the oral arts as an ancestral means of conflict prevention can contribute to reducing this permanent source of ethnic conflict between Fulani and farmers in Benin, three local associations (IMINRIO, Aora Culture and Paroles d’Afrique) joined forces to propose the Sukiana project. The project, based on a comprehensive approach to conflict resolution in the region, sought to collect the stories, interviews and testimonies of those who experienced conflict between the two communities, in order to understand how these conflicts had been resolved and to give visibility to these conflict resolution methods through artistic creation and dissemination. The project was carried out in three specific areas of the northern region of Benin, namely Savè, Tchaourou and Sinendé.

A “home” was established in each of the three cities to serve as focal points for the establishment of a permanent dialogue between the two communities, and resources for conflict resolution were provided to residents from both groups. These three homes were adequately equipped and counted on the contribution of at least 15

support staff (cultural professionals, historians, sociologists, journalists, breeders, farmers, heads of NGOs, local elected officials, griots and ordinary citizens). The establishment of these houses, together with the first discussions with key stakeholders, involved more than 250 people (among which 37% were women). This was a first step towards the ownership of the intercultural reconciliation process by local residents.

The involvement of representatives from the administrative, political, religious and traditional authorities in the different artistic and cultural mediation activities and debates was key for the success of the whole project. The active implication of several local institutions, trade unions and associations, such as the Communal Producers Union (UCP), the Communal Fulani and Breeders Union (UCOPER), and various women and female producers' associations, has been key in the identification and engagement of individuals from both communities. Through this process, there was a diversity of participating individuals who felt supported and protected. The creation of safe spaces that guaranteed their right to express themselves fully and freely (without any form of discrimination or censorship) enabled the participants to take part in activities that addressed sensitive and problematic issues, thus ensuring the effective implementation of a structured intercultural dialogue.

In the different workshop and debate sessions that were organised, culture and the arts facilitated the discussion of long term and community-rooted misunderstanding and lack of communication between Fulani and farmers. This opened the way for permanent and peaceful dialogue between the two communities, with the objective of finding and discussing possible solutions to end the existing conflicts. In this process, the development of respectful terminology was key to ensure the conditions for a peaceful dialogue. Some examples include changing from calling the farmers "peasants" to "producers" and from "Fulani" to "breeders". Out of these working sessions, a reliable database was created, recording accounts of conflicts as well as traditional modes of conflict resolution between Fulani and farmers, with the aim of establishing a systemic understanding of the processes.

Out of this, several reliable support mechanisms were elaborated, including: the creation of a multidisciplinary show, which was broadcasted from 24 August to 17 September 2020 in the markets and on public transport stations of each the three targeted cities; the organisation of a creative residency from 24 August to 8 September aimed at gathering synergies to create the show; and the creation of a radio documentary to document the project and promote its achievements across the whole country.

The development of the project was impacted by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which prevented operators and participants from taking part in some of the activities initially planned. This led the organisers to imagine new ways of realising some of the activities in the context of the new physical distancing and sanitary measures. For example, a virtual conversation group was created to enable key stakeholders and interlocutors to continue dialoguing remotely.

The 28-minute radio documentary, which was originally planned to be 13-minutes long, was made available in four languages, including Fula, Baatonou, Nago and French. This was broadcast several times at strategic moments of the year on various local community radio channels in the region. The timing of the broadcasts was significant, as seasons are an important variable to take into account in both communities' transhumance customs and land and resource-related practices. The broadcasts were usually well received and attended by the different sub-regional groups in the region. A Facebook page promoting the project was created with a final reach of over 10,000 people.

## Agenda 2063

1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
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12. Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place
13. Peace security and stability is preserved
16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



**Goal 11:**  
Sustainable  
cities and  
communities



**Goal 16:**  
Peace, justice  
and strong  
institutions

## IV BLUEPRINT FOR MAJESTIC CINEMA CULTURE HUB

*“Blueprint for Majestic Cinema Culture Hub”: Reviving a cultural space for permanent dialogue and valuing the cultural heritage of the community.*



**B**lueprint for Majestic Cinema Culture Hub” is one of the first projects in Zanzibar aimed at recovering an historically important community space. This project marked the start of the process, leading to the restoration and re-purposing of the old cinema as a culture hub – a space for dialogue, creativity and gathering for Zanzibar’s cultural operators and community. The project started in September 2019 and soon became a powerful way to gain in depth knowledge of the history of cinema and acknowledge the role of the restored Majestic Cinema in Zanzibar over the years. The project fostered a feeling of ownership and a sense of place among the local community, through the development of a relevant cultural programme with activities based on the identified the needs of the community.

Hifadhi Zanzibar led and coordinated the project and was involved in facilitating interviews with the local community and professionals during project preparation, as well as undertaking historic and sociocultural research activities. Reclaim Women Space (RWS), Busara Promotions and Zanzibar Film Festival (ZIFF) were involved in the project as co-applicants. A team composed of members of those organisations held regular

meetings to assist in the selection of interviewees and a graphic designer, supervise exhibition production and event programming, and monitor progress. Members of the team acted as community liaisons through work in their respective organisations and enhanced the support of local authorities.

After the preparation phase of the project, a second phase of research reached 24 men and women participating in the activities of RWS (46% of who were women) and included members of the local community and local professionals of the cultural sector. Beneficiaries engaged in community consultations and interviews (which were properly recorded, transcribed and summarised) and helped to complete the historical record of the Majestic Cinema with local testimonials. Those activities raised awareness on local cultural heritage, as well as on the importance of the Majestic Cinema as a cultural space around which the community grew.

Furthermore, the last phase of the project focused on the programming of activities in order to provide a sustainable cultural programme for the future use of the cultural facility. Activities were targeted to the project partners, who were also one of the main beneficiaries of the project, and took place during the Sauti za Busara Festival. They were built on the material collected during the research phase and on interviews with relevant stakeholders of the local culture ecosystem. This emphasised the participatory methodology embedded at the core of the project and defined the future Culture Hub as a space for dialogue.

It is very relevant that the project succeeded in involving a substantial number of women in the process, through community consultations, and identified key people in the local community who could facilitate the ongoing involvement of women. With regards to youth, it was jointly decided to involve young community neighbours after the research phase, to discuss the future use of the building rather than the past. At the end of the project students from Kawa Training Centre were invited to create a guided tour, with cinema in Stone Town as the main subject. The project revealed that youth had generally been overlooked in several cultural activities in Zanzibar and attempts were made to involve them, mainly through social media.

As a result of the successful development of the project, the main partners could work with other collaborators to elaborate future plans for strengthening the networking activities within the country and across the region. They could also consider artists, performers and tourists attending festivals at an international scale as well. These potential future collaborators included the Stone Town Conservation and Development Authority, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Information and the Ministry of Education in Zanzibar. The project also had discussions with other organisations and institutions, such as the Embassy of Japan in Tanzania, the EU delegation in Tanzania, the Emerson's Zanzibar Foundation and the Dhow Countries Music Academy in Zanzibar.

Following achievements resulting from the involvement of diverse organisations, institutions, stakeholders, cultural agents and civil society, the project team noted the importance of both the transparency in developing the activities and the continuous communication with stakeholders. Bringing all the project partners together proved a bit complicated given the different schedules and dynamics, and was one of the areas the team worked on to improve, with successful results.

## Agenda 2063

1. A high standard of living, quality of life and well being for all citizens
4. Transformed economies
11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
12. Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place
13. Peace security and stability is preserved
16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



**Goal 9:**  
Industry,  
innovation and  
infrastructure



**Goal 11:**  
Sustainable  
cities and  
communities



**Goal 16:**  
Peace, justice  
and strong  
institutions



**Goal 17:**  
Partnerships  
for the goals

## V SOUNDS OF THE SACRED WEB FESTIVAL

*“Sounds of the Sacred Web Festival”: Celebrating African vernacular architecture as an expression of the traditional knowledge, values and hopes of communities.*



**T**he “Sounds of the Sacred Web Festival” (SOSAWEF) celebrates and recognises African traditions and knowledge embedded in architecture, as a significant factor in facilitating, sharing and preserving indigenous cultures and knowledge systems. This project developed a thematic African village, set up with the Nigerian and Zimbabwean model villages. The village hosted the “Sounds of the Sacred Web Festival and it contributed to the development of alternative cultural spaces that enable community engagement, training and exchange of knowledge on African vernacular architecture.

The Dzimbanhete Arts and Culture Interactions Trust from Zimbabwe and the Oja Cultural Development Initiative of Nigeria joined forces to produce and host the Festival, thus contributing significantly to the development of cultural programming in Zimbabwe and Nigeria. The lead organisation ensured that the implementation and management of activities in both countries provided exceptional experiences for artists, stakeholders and audiences, through participation and access to social, intercultural, recreational and educational experiences.

Initial activities developed included a preliminary cultural research trip to Nigeria from 14 to 21 October 2019 (carried out by the Oja Cultural Development Initiative, with the collaboration of the Institute of African Studies at the University of Nsukka and the Vine Shield Creative Hub) to research on the indigenous architecture, rituals, traditions, cuisines, religion, wealth and agrarian life of the Igbo people. After a general meeting of all stakeholders at the Zvimba Rural District Office, the project undertook the design and development of the All Afrika Village the venue of the Festival following techniques used in indigenous shelters. The development of the village involved many children and young people who assisted with the plastering and shaping of the shelters out of their own interest (a total of 75 people, 41.3% of who were female).

Other activities included an architectural residency for five male artists, designed to explore, challenge and resuscitate the influences of indigenous architecture on contemporary and modern designs. No women responded to the call in the first phase, but during the second phase a female Namibian cultural technician got involved. A cultural conversation also took place under the flagship event of the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, “Harare Conversations”, which is a well-established artistic platform where key people in the creative industries discuss their work. Finally, the project also implemented the Sounds of the Sacred Web Festival itself, as well as the subsequent Zimbabwe and Nigeria community outreach of the festival.

The festival was launched on 7 December 2019, and it coincided with the opening ceremony of Zimbabwe’s traditional year, “Bira”. Activities included traditional performances, gastronomy displays and stories, mainly from Zimbabwe (four ethnic groups), South Africa and Malawi. The activities principally targeted young people under 35, with a special focus on the participation of vulnerable groups. After the launch, the rest of festival activities, around performance, gastronomy, fashion, music, architecture, spirituality and dance, were postponed to 11–13 December 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions. The SOSAWEF team worked to empower women, particularly from some of the neglected farming communities surrounding the All Afrika Village, and they also put their efforts into engaging young people who remained isolated from their indigenous culture and the knowledge of other African cultures. The site rehabilitation allowed 65% of attendees and performers to stay at the All Afrika Village for the three days of the festival, which became a critical space for many art expressions.

Other activities in the context of the festival included: the celebration of traditional ceremonies (Bira Rekuvhara Mwaka); community youth mentoring outreach and dance workshops to raise awareness of child abuse; the “Traditional Healers Conference”, with five panellists who explored the connections of art and culture, nature, technology, architecture, social welfare, resilience and sustainable development; the “Culture as a Healing Tool Conversation” with young cultural practitioners; and a three-day film screening with the organisation Sembene Across Africa. All the activities boosted intergenerational and transnational dialogues between communities in Zimbabwe and Nigeria, facilitating knowledge sharing and tolerance. The interactions enabled progressive reinforcement of the public debate about African identity, values, indigenous culture and knowledge systems, including tangible and intangible heritage.

The success of the project drew the attention of local and regional authorities, who envisaged the project as a cultural asset to the province, as well as a contribution towards innovative education and sustainable domestic tourism. SOSAWEF attracted schools and preschools to the “Kumusha Children’s Day Camp”, designed to expose children to village life. The tour organised by CAW also triggered interest among other African countries, thus contributing to the establishment of new partnerships and alliances.

Collaborations included the Ministry of Youth Sports Arts and Recreation, the National Gallery of Zimbabwe, Chief Zvimba, the Institute of African Studies University of Nigeria and Tambira Lab, the latter being an independent cultural space run by young creatives that hosted SOSAWEF planning meetings, whose renowned filmmakers also became part of SOSAWEF’s documentary team. In addition, the project team started conversations with the Nigerian Embassy to Zimbabwe and the Namibian Embassy to Zimbabwe. Collaborations with the Ministry of Defence, the Nyaradzo group of Companies, Nash Paints, CBZ Financial Holdings or Standard Chartered Bank were considered as well.

The project faced diverse setbacks in addition to the COVID-19 outbreak, including the difficulties to manoeuvre through shifting bank systems, the lack of electricity and fuel shortages, and the adaptation to the schedule of participants living in rural areas. Despite everything, the project team managed to bring the project to a satisfactory end, having built solid bridges to continue promoting cultural spaces for a sustainable future.

## Agenda 2063

- 4. Transformed economies
- 7. Environmentally sustainable and climate resilient economies and communities
- 11. Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched
- 12. Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place
- 13. Peace security and stability is preserved
- 16. African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent
- 18. Engaged and empowered youth and children

## SDGs



# CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION







# Conclusion:

## THE POWER OF CULTURE IN SHAPING THE FUTURE OF OUR SOCIETIES

From Bulawayo to Bamako, from Cameroon to Rwanda, in a world where we must not leave anyone or any territory behind, 33 projects from 15 African countries<sup>2</sup> are helping to build the Africa we want by 2063. Culture, in all its forms, is an area of capital investment that requires the evolution of policies in order for the cultural sector to participate in the establishment of new policy and governance frameworks for Africa and the world. African cities and territories are spaces of innovation, where secular traditions mingle with contemporary practices to shape hybrid urban spaces. These spaces are capable of establishing an astute and judicious citizenry, capable of establishing themselves as examples for metropolises and their diaspora around the world.

These 33 projects, which tackle art, culture and heritage, draw from the histories of diverse communities and bring generations together in order to create and question practices in the contemporary context. These projects are a response to the challenges of a globalised world, one that is faced since 2020 with the impacts of the global health crisis. From the SDGs of the United Nations to the Charter for the Cultural Renaissance of the African Union, via the 2030 Agenda and the AU 2063 Agenda, culture is the breadcrumb trail that reminds us that the world is made up of women and men who share many aspirations and have many common values.

Co-funded by the European Union through the European Commission DG DEVCO, under the programme Intercultural Dialogue and Culture, the *Culture at Work Africa* initiative built on the expertise and competences of a diverse consortium, formed by eight African, European and international members and three associated local partners. The initiative provided a wide range of capacity-building, learning and networking experiences to the sub granted projects. The

<sup>2</sup> Bénin, Burkina Faso, Cameroun, République Démocratique du Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigéria, Rwanda, Sénégal, Tanzanie, Togo, Ouganda et Zimbabwe.

results of the *Culture at Work Africa* initiative show the impressive power of culture in shaping the future of our societies. There is no way to achieve “sustainable” societies unless the contribution of cultural actors is explicitly considered, and this means respect for their work, adequate funding, suitable infrastructure and their full involvement in regional, national and local development plans.

If these conditions exist, cultural actors can achieve excellence in the following areas:

- Strengthening social cohesion at a local level
- Providing a platform for long-term transformative change, making cultural and creative capacity-building available to all
- Fostering diverse ways of nurturing intercultural dialogue and peace-building processes, drawing from existing community knowledge and intangible heritage practices
- Using innovative and contemporary creative expressions to discuss issues facing a society
- Advocating for freedom of expression and guaranteeing this right at all levels
- Developing all kinds of cooperation at a local level that generate trust among inhabitants
- Working explicitly with those that are in more need (women, youth and marginalised communities) and identifying cultural obstacles that impede their full involvement in society, embodying the call to “leave no one behind”
- Promoting transborder exchanges and cooperation to build confidence among communities and to “leave no place behind”
- Mobilising tangible and intangible heritage as key drivers of sense of place
- Enhancing solidarity within Africa and between Africa and the rest of the world

**The results of *Culture at Work Africa* illustrate that the cultural dimension of development is not “an option”; unless culture is duly considered, development cannot take place.**

**The results of the *Culture at Work Africa* initiative also show the impressive power of culture to contribute to the achievement of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs in Africa. The initiatives demonstrate that culture can achieve excellence in the implementation of SDGs:**

- By strengthening artists' and cultural actors' capacities, initiatives have enhanced socio-economic conditions of local cultural actors, especially reaching the Goal 8 on economic growth, and improved innovation and creativity (target 8.3) as well as the connection between local cultures and sustainable tourism (targets 8.9 and 12.b). Initiatives have also improved the availability, the quality and the social and urban impact of cultural infrastructure and spaces, especially reaching the Goal 9 on infrastructure.
- By enhancing freedom of expression and intercultural dialogue, initiatives acted as an important engine for democratic societies, social cohesion and peacebuilding, especially reaching Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions.
- A major number of initiatives contributed significantly to improving the equal access to a quality and inclusive education, especially reaching Goal 4, with a substantial contribution to the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, as well as the importance of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue in education (target 4.7).
- By empowering communities, women and youth through cultural action, initiatives contributed to the objective to reduce poverty in a variety of its dimensions and forms (Goal 1), and they improved the socioeconomic conditions of vulnerable groups (Goal 8) as well as contributing significantly to reduce inequality within countries (Goal 10).
- Most of all, many initiatives achieved gender equality and empowered all women and girls through cultural action (Goal 5).
- Initiatives also enhanced institutional and community dialogue, community resilience, and local governance, especially reaching SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions. Furthermore, in most cases, initiatives were developed through south-south and south-north international cooperation and promoted transborder exchanges for peacebuilding and capacity-building, reaching Goal 17 on partnerships.
- Finally, initiatives also worked to improve the protection and the sustainable use of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, contributing to strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage (target 11.4). Most of all, they built on a wider

understanding of the cultural dimension of territories and spaces to develop inclusive communities and sense of place, and to mobilise culture to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” (Goal 11). In one case, an initiative also addressed the protection of traditional plants, contributing to the preservation of biodiversity (Goal 15).

Interculturality and artistic education are becoming essential and urgent subjects, both of which are emphasised in the AU Agenda 2063 and the African Cultural Renaissance Charter. Cultural operators work to address these topics not only in schools; they also engage with the wider community, as well as with diverse and less professionalised sectors in villages and cities. This work is focused on preparing not only the next generation of creators, but also the audiences, decision-makers and entrepreneurs of tomorrow.

**This calls for medium-term and long-term actions (until 2030 or 2063) of cultural stakeholders to:**

1. **connect territories through incubators and cultural facilities;**
2. **make public space a common space to foster creative practices, thinking and urban transformation;**
3. **consolidate distribution circuits and networks;**
4. **create local, regional and international policy on tangible and intangible African heritage;**
5. **develop a digital policy supported by and adapted to cultural ecosystems; and**
6. **involve African diasporas in cultural development.**

The results also illustrate that long-term programmes that relate cultural actors and processes with social inclusion and transformation are extremely important at local, national and international levels. The political actors that wish to gain global leadership in the 21st century will need to not only acknowledge the power of culture in shaping the future of our societies, but also provide substantial support to ensure that this contribution is fully realised.

# The objectives of the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance

- A** To assert the dignity of African men and women as well as the popular foundations of their culture;
- B** To promote freedom of expression and cultural democracy, which is inseparable from social and political democracy;
- C** To promote an enabling environment for African peoples to maintain and reinforce the sense and will for progress and development;
- D** To preserve and promote the African cultural heritage through preservation, restoration and rehabilitation;
- E** To combat and eliminate all forms of alienation, exclusion and cultural oppression everywhere in Africa;
- F** To encourage cultural co-operation among Member States with a view to the strengthening of African unity, through the use of African languages and the promotion of inter-cultural dialogue;



**G** To integrate cultural objectives in development strategies;

**I** To promote in each country the popularization of science and technology including traditional knowledge systems as a condition for better understanding and preservation of cultural and natural heritage;

**J** To strengthen the role of culture in promoting peace and good governance;


















**K** To develop all the dynamic values of the African cultural heritage that promote human rights, social cohesion and human development;

**L** To provide African peoples with the resources to enable them to cope with globalization.

**H** To encourage international cultural co-operation for a better understanding among peoples within and outside Africa;



## ANNEX 1 – Localising SDGs/Project

	 <b>SDG 1</b> - No poverty	 <b>SDG 2</b> - Zero hunger	 <b>SDG 3</b> - Good health and well-being	 <b>SDG 4</b> - Quality education	 <b>SDG 5</b> - Gender equality	 <b>SDG 6</b> - Clean water and sanitation	 <b>SDG 7</b> - Affordable and clean energy	 <b>SDG 8</b> - Decent work and economic growth	 <b>SDG 9</b> - Industry, innovation and infrastructure	 <b>SDG 10</b> - Reduced inequalities	 <b>SDG 11</b> - Sustainable cities and communities	 <b>SDG 12</b> - Responsible consumption and production	 <b>SDG 13</b> - Climate action	 <b>SDG 14</b> - Life below water	 <b>SDG 15</b> - Life on land	 <b>SDG 16</b> - Peace, justice and strong institutions	 <b>SDG 17</b> - Partnerships for the goals	
<b>1</b> African Space Makers									×		×						×	
<b>2</b> Stimulating Intercultural Dialogue in East Africa using Technology									×								×	×
<b>3</b> Relinking Communities Through Culture										×	×						×	
<b>4</b> La tournée du Cirque Nu Dagbe	×			×						×	×							
<b>5</b> Energizing cross border cohesion and inter-cultural peace in the East African Nomadic Cattle Corridor of Karamoja (Uganda) and Turkana (Kenya) through participatory theatre, folk arts, and inter sports												×					×	×
<b>6</b> Women through the Lens	×				×			×		×								×
<b>7</b> Génération Positiv: Projet de renforcement des espaces de proximité et des jeunes de Yopougon				×				×	×	×	×						×	
<b>8</b> Young Ugandans and Kenyans demonstrate the value of social cohesion				×													×	×
<b>9</b> Arts et culture pour l'inclusion citoyenne l'Université Abdou Moumouni jette des ponts				×						×	×				×			×
<b>10</b> Les pinceaux de l'intégration				×				×									×	×
<b>11</b> Hors limites	×			×						×								×
<b>12</b> Narratives from Zimbabwe					×						×	×					×	×
<b>13</b> Beyond caring	×				×					×								×
<b>14</b> OpenMic project	×			×				×		×								
<b>15</b> Projet des Arts de l'oralité et des scènes urbaines (PAOSU)										×	×						×	×
<b>16</b> Creative diversity and social inclusion (Credisi)					×				×		×						×	
<b>17</b> Culture en partage				×													×	×
<b>18</b> Éducation citoyenne et de la paix par la valorisation des expressions culturelles et artistiques en milieu scolaire				×													×	
<b>19</b> Action artistique et culturelle en faveur de la cohésion sociale et de la gouvernance redevable											×						×	





## ANNEX 2 – African Union 2063 Agenda Goals/Project

		<b>GOAL 1</b> - A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all	<b>GOAL 2</b> - Well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation	<b>GOAL 3</b> - Healthy and well-nourished citizens	<b>GOAL 4</b> - Transformed economies and jobs	<b>GOAL 5</b> - Modern agriculture for increased productivity and production	<b>GOAL 6</b> - Blue/ocean economy for accelerated economic growth	<b>GOAL 7</b> - Environmentally sustainable climate and resilient economies and communities	<b>GOAL 8</b> - United Africa (Federal or Confedrate)	<b>GOAL 9</b> - World class infrastructure criss-crosses Africa	<b>GOAL 10</b> - Decolonisation	<b>GOAL 11</b> - Democratic values, practices, universal principles for human rights, justice and rule of law entrenched	<b>GOAL 12</b> - Capable institutions and transformed leadership in place at all levels	<b>GOAL 13</b> - Peace security and stability is preserved	<b>GOAL 14</b> - A stable and peaceful Africa	<b>GOAL 15</b> - A fully functional and operational APSA	<b>GOAL 16</b> - Africa cultural renaissance is pre-eminent	<b>GOAL 17</b> - Full gender equality in all spheres of life	<b>GOAL 18</b> - Engaged and empowered youth and children	<b>GOAL 19</b> - Africa as a major partner in global affairs and peaceful co-existence	<b>GOAL 20</b> - Africa takes full responsibility for financing her development
1	African Space Makers				×						×	×					×				
2	Stimulating Intercultural Dialogue in East Africa using Technology		×									×		×			×	×	×		
3	Relinking Communities Through Culture											×		×			×		×		
4	La tournée du Cirque Nu Dagbe	×										×		×			×		×		
5	Energizing cross border cohesion and inter-cultural peace in the East African Nomadic Cattle Corridor of Karamoja (Uganda) and Turkana (Kenya) through participatory theatre, folk arts, and inter sports	×										×	×	×			×		×		
6	Women through the Lens	×	×		×												×	×	×		
7	Génération Positiv: Projet de renforcement des espaces de proximité et des jeunes de Yopougon	×			×								×	×			×		×		
8	Young Ugandans and Kenyans demonstrate the value of social cohesion											×		×			×		×		
9	Arts et culture pour l'inclusion citoyenne l'Université Abdou Moumouni jette des ponts	×	×					×									×				
10	Les pinceaux de l'intégration	×			×							×	×	×			×	×	×		
11	Hors limites	×	×														×		×		
12	Narratives from Zimbabwe	×										×	×	×			×	×	×		
13	Beyond caring	×			×							×					×	×			
14	OpenMic project	×	×									×		×			×		×		
15	Projet des Arts de l'oralité et des scènes urbaines (PAOSU)	×										×	×	×			×	×	×		
16	Creative diversity and social inclusion (Credisi)	×			×							×		×			×	×	×		
17	Culture en partage	×			×							×	×	×			×	×	×		
18	Éducation citoyenne et de la paix par la valorisation des expressions culturelles et artistiques en milieu scolaire		×									×		×			×		×		
19	Action artistique et culturelle en faveur de la cohésion sociale et de la gouvernance redevable											×		×			×		×		

	<b>GOAL 1</b> - A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all	<b>GOAL 2</b> - Well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation	<b>GOAL 3</b> - Healthy and well-nourished citizens	<b>GOAL 4</b> - Transformed economies and jobs	<b>GOAL 5</b> - Modern agriculture for increased proactivity and production	<b>GOAL 6</b> - Blue/ocean economy for accelerated economic growth	<b>GOAL 7</b> - Environmentally sustainable climate and resilient economies and communities	<b>GOAL 8</b> - United Africa (Federal or Confederate)	<b>GOAL 9</b> - World class infrastructure criss-crosses Africa	<b>GOAL 10</b> - Decolonisation	<b>GOAL 11</b> - Democratic values, practices, universal principles for human rights, justice and rule of law entrenched	<b>GOAL 12</b> - Capable institutions and transformed leadership in place at all levels	<b>GOAL 13</b> - Peace security and stability is preserved	<b>GOAL 14</b> - A stable and peaceful Africa	<b>GOAL 15</b> - A fully functional and operational APSA	<b>GOAL 16</b> - Africa cultural renaissance is pre-eminent	<b>GOAL 17</b> - Full gender equality in all spheres of life	<b>GOAL 18</b> - Engaged and empowered youth and children	<b>GOAL 19</b> - Africa as a major partner in global affairs and peaceful co-existence	<b>GOAL 20</b> - Africa takes full responsibility for financing her development
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20	ENAKPAMI 2: 2 <sup>ème</sup> Expérience Nouvelle d'Assistance aux plasticiens pour leur ascension via le multimédia et l'internet	×		×							×					×	×	×		
21	Sukiana, une criée publique pour la paix et la cohésion sociale entre peuls et cultivateurs au Bénin	×									×	×	×			×		×		
22	Uliza Wahenga Dada!			×							×					×	×	×		
23	Alteritude	×	×													×	×	×		
24	Cine-débat pour la paix										×		×			×		×		
25	Pourquoi pas moi? Plaidoyer pour les droits des personnes handicapées	×	×	×												×		×		
26	Photography and visual literacy for active citizenship		×								×					×		×		
27	Blueprint for majestic cinema culture hub	×			×						×	×	×			×		×		
28	Action jeunesse pour le dialogue interculturel et la dignité pour tous en Afrique										×		×			×		×		
29	Makeshift constructions of trust	×	×				×				×		×			×		×		
30	Penpen Africa	×									×		×			×	×			
31	Mirages et perdions										×	×	×			×		×		
32	Femmes en création				×											×	×	×		
33	Sounds of the sacred web festival				×		×				×	×	×			×		×		

## ANNEX 3 – Thematics/Project

		Cultural policies	Governance	Public space & urban planning	Tangible & intangible heritage	Economy & creative industries	Education	Citizenship	Diversity	Identity, history & memory	Cultural & artistic expression	Freedoms & human rights	Peace, justice & security	Social inclusion & cohesion	Intercultural dialogue & migrations	Access & participation	Cooperation & networking	Technology	Information & knowledge	Institutions & advocacy	Training & capacity-building	Awareness-raising	Sustainability	Development	Empowerment	Environment	Youth	Women & gender equality	Intergenerational	
1	African Space Makers			x		x		x	x		x	x				x		x		x										
2	Stimulating Intercultural Dialogue in East Africa using Technology										x	x	x		x							x						x		
3	Relinking Communities Through Culture	x			x					x		x	x	x								x						x		
4	La tournée du Cirque Nu Dagbe				x	x					x			x								x			x			x		
5	Energizing cross border cohesion and inter-cultural peace in the East African Nomadic Cattle Corridor of Karamoja (Uganda) and Turkana (Kenya) through participatory theatre, folk arts, and inter sports					x					x	x		x	x															x
6	Women through the Lens					x					x	x										x	x	x		x		x	x	
7	Génération Positiv: Projet de renforcement des espaces de proximité et des jeunes de Yopougon	x		x				x						x	x	x						x			x			x		
8	Young Ugandans and Kenyans demonstrate the value of social cohesion				x				x				x	x	x		x					x						x		
9	Arts et culture pour l'inclusion citoyenne l'Université Abdou Moumouni jette des ponts				x											x	x					x		x		x		x		
10	Les pinceaux de l'intégration								x				x	x	x	x					x	x							x	
11	Hors limites												x	x	x		x					x	x					x		
12	Narratives from Zimbabwe				x									x	x					x		x	x							
13	Beyond caring				x											x					x	x	x			x		x	x	x
14	OpenMic project					x			x		x	x			x		x								x			x		
15	Projet des Arts de l'oralité et des scènes urbaines (PAOSU)								x			x		x			x				x	x	x		x				x	
16	Creative diversity and social inclusion (Credisi)	x		x		x								x							x							x	x	
17	Culture en partage										x					x	x					x								
18	Éducation citoyenne et de la paix par la valorisation des expressions culturelles et artistiques en milieu scolaire						x	x	x			x	x									x						x		
19	Action artistique et culturelle en faveur de la cohésion sociale et de la gouvernance redevable		x					x	x			x	x	x							x	x						x		



# The consortium

The consortium is made up of eight African, European and international members, cultural organisations and networks, working on a large range of issues related to culture, creativity and the arts, sustainable local and human development, and international and decentralised cooperation, and operating at different scales and in various fields and disciplines.

## Leading partner



**Interarts** is a private agency with international projection that contributes to human development through culture, supports the design of cultural policies, promotes knowledge and information in the field of culture, advocates for the role of culture in public governance and networks at European and international levels.

## Partners



**The Arterial Network** is a dynamic network of artists, cultural activists, NGOs, institutions and enterprises engaged in the creative sector across Africa. Its mission is to create civil society networks of cultural role players and empower their work for the cultural dimension of development.



**The Centre for Fine Arts (BOZAR)** is a multidisciplinary arts centre where artistic programmes involving different disciplines are being developed. It is a driving force behind initiatives to tighten the cultural ties between Belgium, the member states of the European Union, European institutions and various partners throughout the world



**Culture et Développement** is a non-governmental organisation that contributes to international reflection on cultural development and the economy of culture while carrying out on-the-ground actions to support cultural practices and strengthen cultural and artistic enterprises in southern countries



**The Regional Centre for the Living Arts in Africa - CERAV/Afrique** is a Category 2 institution of UNESCO that aims to promote the African living arts in their diversity, taking into account all their creative potential and encouraging exchanges and cooperation between African countries.



Changing The Lives of  
Ordinary Zimbabweans  
Since 2007

**The Culture Fund of Zimbabwe Trust** is a non-profit organisation that helps build creative capacities through investing resources in actions that enable the mainstreaming of innovative solutions into sustainable development interventions, including: women and youth empowerment interventions, enhancing of community livelihoods capacities and fostering of citizen rights awareness.



**The International Music Council (IMC)** is a non-governmental organisation with the status of official partner of UNESCO. Its mission is to develop sustainable music sectors worldwide, to create awareness about the value of music, to make music matter throughout the fabric of society.



**The Committee on Culture of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)** is the global platform of cities, organisations and networks to learn, to cooperate and to launch policies and programmes on the role of culture in sustainable development. Its mission is to promote culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development.

## Associate partners

**African Centre for Cities and the School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics at the University of Cape Town** is a university-wide resource and network where scholars with multiple perspectives and projects are encouraged to meet, mix, share their research, base their urban research projects, and contribute to vital teaching.

**The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)** is a regional economic union of fifteen countries located in West Africa that aims to achieve “collective self-sufficiency” for its member states by creating a single large trade bloc by building a full economic and trading union kamagra online.

**The Centre for Linguistic and Historical Studies through Oral Tradition (CELHTO)** promotes African cultures and supports the effective coordination of the African Union Members States activities in the field of culture, innovative cultural development programmes and networking and co-ordination with Universities and research Institutions.

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