



# “MUNICIPAL CULTURAL MANAGEMENT MODEL” OF LA PAZ, BOLIVIA

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SEPTEMBER 2021



In the last two decades, cultural development in the municipality of La Paz (Bolivia) has occupied an important place on the public agenda, in social demand and government management. Also, the rank of culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development was gradually conferred.

In 2000, a municipal cultural management program was created according to the characteristics, realities and needs of the city. This triggered a substantial break from the traditional approach, and from the consolidation of the Autonomous Municipal Law 265-319 of Promotion, Safeguarding, Development and Enhancement of Cultures and Arts in municipal policies, a “Municipal Cultural Management Model” was constituted, subsequently recognised as one of the most important and comprehensive institutional initiatives in Bolivia.

In this context, in 2018 La Paz became part of the “Pilot City” Program, led by the UCLG Committee on Culture.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# TOWARDS STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURES AND ARTS

From 2018 to 2020, and after signing an interinstitutional agreement, La Paz started the “Pilot City” program of Agenda 21 for culture. In August 2018, an exercise of self-evaluation was carried out, by means of a participatory process with staff from different teams from the Municipal Autonomous Government of La Paz (GAMLPA), and representatives of the civil society, organisations, groups, as well as cultural actors and managers. La Paz ranked higher than the world average in six of the nine themes assessed.

Subsequently, between September 2018 and January 2019, a working plan was prepared in a participatory manner with the following objectives:

- Consolidate a strong connection with other public policies, based on a collaborative action with different cultural actors, strategic cultural policies and projects.
- Make visible the effective contribution of cultures to economic and social sectors, as well as to promote the development of different cultural economies.
- Promote active and committed participation of the actors, managers and cultural promoters of the municipality in the programs and plans to be developed.

This Program was developed between January 2019 and November 2020, and in June 2019 its implementation was evaluated from a participatory approach, which allowed adjustments to be made. We visited Bogota (Colombia) in order to deepen our knowledge, and participated in the closing sessions of the Pilot City Programmes of Concepción and Cuenca. On the 4th and 5th November 2020, we reached the final stage of the program with four work sessions and participatory evaluation, which were carried out online due to the Covid-19 measures. Finally, three international online seminars were organised with various Leading and Pilot Cities from the Latin American region.



# DETAILS AND RESULTS OF THE PILOT MEASURES

The implementation of the work program involved cultural actors and managers, as well as people from different organisational units of the GAMLP. Territorially, the program tried to develop activities both in rural and urban macrodistricts.

In terms of the programmatic work, it implied the development of strategic programs aimed at valuing and preserving cultural heritage, regulating the cultural sector, reinforcing artistic production and increasing the cultural infrastructure, paying special attention to “Culture and environment”, “Culture and economy” and “Culture, information and knowledge”, which were the weakest areas according to the self-evaluation exercise.

It comprised six work themes and fourteen pilot projects.

## **GOVERNANCE OF CULTURE.**

A strategic, comprehensive and interdisciplinary municipal planning of the cultural field was developed based on:

- Participatory planning of the Municipal Strategic Plan of Cultures and Arts 2021-2025 THAQUISAWA.
- Strengthening and renewing the responsible co-management mechanisms of the municipality.

## **CULTURE, INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE.**

An integrated system for the information, measurement and evaluation of cultural activities in the municipality was shaped, which implied:

- To elaborate a profile of this system open to institutions, cultural actors and communities of the municipality.
- To lay the foundations to shape the Observatory of Cultures of the Municipality of La Paz.
- To carry out the Survey of Perception of Cultures and Cultural Consumption of the Municipality of La Paz 2019-2020.
- To start constructing a platform of cultural indicators.
- To generate spaces to reflect and exchange knowledge on problems and issues concerning and related to the cultural sector.



# DETAILS AND RESULTS OF THE PILOT MEASURES

## **CULTURE AND ECONOMY.**

Progress was made in the implementation of a Municipal Policy for the Promotion, Enhancement and Strengthening of Cultural and Creative Economies based on:

- Deepening of the municipal program to strengthen cultural and creative economies.
- Implementation of a capacity building program and training for cultural productive sectors.
- Promotion of the municipality of La Paz as a destination for audiovisual production.

## **CULTURE, URBAN PLANNING AND PUBLIC SPACE.**

It focused on the recovery and enhancement of the architectural heritage of the Municipality through:

- The elaboration of draft Municipal Autonomous Laws of: “Incentive to preserve the image of urban heritage” and “Territorial administration of architectural heritage”.
- Implementation of the first phase of the project to recover and improve the image of urban heritage.
- Restoration of heritage sites and monuments through interventions of the “Escuela Taller”.
- Management of different projects to protect architectural and archaeological heritage.

## **CULTURE, EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION.**

The decentralisation and democratisation of culture were strengthened from the perspective of social inclusion through:

- The consolidation of the decentralised network of cultural spaces, the update of the Cultural Map of the Municipality of La Paz, the expansion of three district houses, the refunctionalisation of 5 zonal libraries with telecentres and the implementation of Strengthening and Modernisation plans. The promotion of the appropriation of cultural spaces by territorial actors and the development of macro-district programs.
- The implementation of the project “Habitarte” in neighbourhoods and Communities of Truth.
- Inter-institutional development of the “IntegrArte” program, conducting artistic presentations to vulnerable populations, generating an Integrarte Space in Cultural



# DETAILS AND RESULTS OF THE PILOT MEASURES

Fairs, supporting artistic initiatives in this sector and carrying out cultural caravans in rural areas.

## **CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT.**

The recovery of ancestral knowledge and the enhancement of cultural and natural heritages were promoted through:

- The promotion and dissemination of Intercultural Health.
- The programming of a pilot project of Tourist-Cultural Empowerment of the Rural District of Zongo



# OBSERVATIONS

The “Pilot City” program allowed to constitute the basis for the strategic planning process, which concluded at the end of 2020 with the first Municipal Strategic Plan of Cultures and Arts– Thakhisawa. It also allowed to demonstrate the state of public cultural management, the connection with civil society and other areas of the Municipal Government, the identification of routes for collective work and reinforce the importance of the collective construction.

This program evidenced the solid experience of the cultural management model in the implementation of Agenda 21 for Culture, as well as its place as a sustainable city, resulting in the acceptance of the invitation to be a “Leading City”.

On the other hand, a new cycle with the implementation of the Strategic Plan “Thakhisawa” needs to start with new institutionalism and greater coordination with the civil society, combining political will, technical conditions, approaches and social demands. At the same time, we need to overcome the sectoral view on culture; transcend the promotion of fine arts; carry out actions in a comprehensive and interdisciplinary, intra and inter-institutional way; banish reductionist, stigmatising and welfare concepts; continue to make visible the contribution of culture to the traditional economic sector; and incorporate other alternative economic and/or community dynamics. Also, it entails being a fundamental part of the urban planning, of the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda, as well as the continuity of proactive participation in national and international networks.

The results owed to the will and political support from the municipality highest authorities to the effort and management of the personnel of the Municipal Secretariat of Cultures, the contribution of Antoine Guibert and Jordi Pascual of UCLG, and to the collaborative work, as well as mutual trust with the cultural sector.

**NO SOCIETY CAN THRIVE WITHOUT ITS CULTURES, AND  
WITHOUT THEM, NO DEVELOPMENT IS POSSIBLE.**



# CONTACT

For more information on this exercise, please contact:



## Municipality of La Paz – Secretariat for Cultures

Email: [lapazculturas@lapaz.bo](mailto:lapazculturas@lapaz.bo)

Web: [www.lapaz.bo/culturas](http://www.lapaz.bo/culturas)



## United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) - Committee on culture

Email: [culture@uclg.org](mailto:culture@uclg.org)

Web: [www.agenda21culture.net](http://www.agenda21culture.net)







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