

Summary of the symposium "Culture and creativity, factors in development" organized by the European Commission in Brussels, 1 to 3 April 2009.

The symposium organized by the Development Directorate of the European Commission (EC) had two aims: to set out what the cultural sector can contribute to development, and identify ways to strengthen cooperation between the EU and the ACP in this field. Its website <http://www.culture-dev.eu/> provides preparatory and final documents, speeches and various communications. Our purpose is to give a brief account of the work, to summarize the results and to inform members Cacao/Ccawa, and others interested in these issues, on possible next steps.

I. Progress of work

The symposium proceeded in three stages:

- a) *Meetings between artists and cultural operators of ACP and the EU.* Professionals were first divided into sectoral workshops (performing arts, music, literature, publishing, books and comics, visual arts, cinema and audiovisual), where they addressed five themes (information, communication and networks, training, legal framework and finance, creation and production; distribution and circulation) and make recommendations. They then split up into five cross-cutting workshops, each one centred on to one of the above-mentioned themes and led by one thematic rapporteur who was then able to incorporate new recommendations in their report. Finally, based on these sectoral reports, the scientific committee of the symposium drafted a paper entitled *Brussels Declaration* and submitted it for the professionals' approval.
- b) *Meetings between professionals, policy makers and donors.* An opening plenary session on the possibilities and challenges for creativity and culture in development, and some *success stories*. Workshops then addressed five themes: culture in national policies; culture and decentralised cooperation; the role of local government and society in cultural development; the financing of cultural development and interaction between the public and the private sectors; cultural policies and access to regional and international markets; creative management of cultural heritage. Each workshop was open to communications and concluded with a short discussion.
- c) *The closing session* comprised the reading of the Declaration and speeches. The European Commissioner for Development Louis Michel presented the recent decisions of the EC and its intentions with regard to cultural cooperation with the ACP.

The symposium invited about 80 artists and cultural practitioners from about thirty ACP countries. Nearly half came from West Africa, about fifteen from Central Africa, about ten from East Africa, the same from Southern Africa and from the Caribbean and five from the Pacific. On the political side, a considerable number of ACP countries were represented by their ministers of culture or another minister and/or a civil servant. The symposium was also attended by many professionals, politicians and officials from the EU and its member states.

II. The Brussels Declaration of artists and cultural professionals and entrepreneurs.

As Louis Michel said, it should be seen as a key document and future cornerstone of European development policy. As the text is quite complex, a digested version is provided below, to facilitate reading and ownership.

Probably because of the tight schedule of work and very short time left to professionals to study and amend the text, the Declaration is not as satisfactory as it could have been. Some important recommendations made by the workshops have been omitted, including the recommendation to the ACP to give priority to the development of cultural infrastructure, and the recommendation to the EC to improve the ACP operators' access to calls for tenders in the cultural field. Nevertheless, the Declaration is a positive document, bringing together the most important suggestions made by Cacao / Ccawa in its advocacy paper². At the forefront of its recommendations are those that we consider the most essential, namely:

For national and regional ACP authorities:

- Include culture as a priority to be taken into account in National and Regional Indicative Programs (NIP and RIP) of cooperation, as well as in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers;
- Recognise culture as the basis of development and implement a multisectoral strategy, taking into account the cross-cutting nature of culture and involving the participation of various bodies: youth, employment, trade, finance, tourism, culture, communication, education, professional training, transport...

For the EU:

- Support local and national authorities in the implementation of the actions referred to in the Declaration, and in particular encourage them to integrate culture in NIPs and RIPs;
- Develop cultural programmes, notably national and regional Cultural Initiatives Support Programmes (CISP).

III. EC decisions and proposals

In the closing session Commissioner Louis Michel announced the following decisions and proposals:

- ⇒ *At the national level*, Mr Michel will instruct the Heads of Delegation, together with the NAO, under the mid-term review of the NIP, to analyze the possibilities of allocating or increasing resources to support culture programs
- ⇒ *At the regional level*, he confirmed the EC intention to annex to its Economic Partnership Agreements with ACP regions a protocol establishing specific rules for access to markets for goods and services, modeled on the one agreed with Cariforum.
- ⇒ *At the African level*, at the EU-Africa summit in 2010, the EC intends to organise a touring exhibition of African art in Africa and Europe and to create a network of African and European museums.
- ⇒ *At the intra ACP level*, Mr Michel reaffirmed the EC intention that the next cultural cooperation programme should prioritize circulation and distribution, South-South and North-South exchanges, coproduction and skills transfers.
- ⇒ *At the level of all developing countries*, he announced the forthcoming establishment, in collaboration with UNESCO, of an institutional support fund that will provide expertise and training to countries wishing to develop cultural policies.

IV. The next steps

The recommendations of professionals and the EC commitments and proposals which require the most immediate attention are those relating to cooperation on NIPs and RIPs. At other levels, work is in progress: the institutional support fund to all developing countries is under consideration, and negotiations on the intra-ACP cultural program are continuing between the EC and the ACP Group. At national and regional levels, however, there is probably more work to be done to ensure that the recommendations of professionals and the availability affirmed by the EC result in concrete progress. Yet the timetable is tight, as the review process of the NIPs and RIPs will begin at the end of 2009. So the question is: who can do what?

Who is concerned

The ball is essentially in the authorities' court, but the cultural practitioners (public cultural institutions and cultural non-state bodies) can play an important follow-up, incentive and proposing role. Ideally, such a role should be played by professional organisations with the necessary resources and skills, because practitioners in the field are too busy with their own activities to fulfil it efficiently. Clearly this is one of the reasons for the recommendations regarding the development of professional organisations. But there is still a long way to go to achieve this. The development of civil society is a complex process, many organizations lack legitimacy and efficiency and raise the suspicion of the operators and/or authorities, and serious organizations that are beginning to work

well remain unknown and are often excluded from the debates. The symposium itself targeted independent organizations rather than national and regional bodies. So it is largely up to those who were invited, at least initially and as far as their capabilities allow, to ensure that the recommendations are implemented and if necessary carry out sensitisation and mobilisation activities.

How to promote cultural cooperation on NIP

As a reminder: the EC interventions in individual ACP countries are scheduled on a multiannual basis in documents entitled Strategy Papers and National Indicative Programmes. Current programmes cover the period 2008-2013³. A very small number already includes culture⁴, but the review process provides an opportunity to include it in other countries.

The development and revision of the NIP is primarily the responsibility of the State in the person of the National Authorizing Officer (depending on the country, the Minister of Finance, Foreign Affairs or Plan), in close collaboration with the EC Delegation. There are, in principle, consultations with non-state actors. Under the provisions of the Cotonou Agreement, non-state actors are encouraged to participate in the dialogue and can take the initiative to make proposals.

The role that non-state actors of the cultural sector can play will vary from one country to another. In general, it will be important to ensure two things:

- registration in the NIP of a cultural cooperation programme and, as far as possible, the integration of culture in other areas of cooperation covered by the PIN, such as education;
- the effective participation of cultural practitioners in the identification of the positioning of the cultural cooperation program and of measures aimed at transversalisation of culture in other areas.

Specifically, it may be advisable to proceed as follows:

- Check that the national authorities and EC delegations in each country are aware of the recommendations and commitments made at the conference, and if not, put in place information and sensitisation projects;
- Inquire as to the schedule and modalities of consultations planned with non-state actors for the midterm review of the NIP, and ensure the participation of representatives of the cultural sector;
- Promote the establishment of a platform where artists and field operators can give their serious consideration to the positioning of European cultural cooperation. This platform should involve both the most active organizations and independent actors known for their expertise, and ensure a fairly balanced representation of the various cultural fields and sensitivities.

In many countries, particularly the smaller ones, the overall funds available under the NIP are so small that it will be difficult to obtain funding for a cultural cooperation programme. It should at least be possible to gain an awareness of culture in other areas of cooperation, such as education or local development.

The scarcity of resources available to small countries is another reason to develop cultural cooperation at a regional level.

How to promote cultural cooperation on RIP

Regional cooperation is also scheduled to last several years and revised mid-term, under the aegis of regional organizations and in collaboration with the regional delegations of the EC, after consultation with non-state actors. The authorities at this level will normally be inclined to incorporate culture into the RIP as cultural goods and services are affected by the EPA and everyone agrees that trade measures should include measures of cooperation. It is important that non-state cultural actors (particularly any regional professional organisations) follow closely decisions taken at this level. They should pay particular attention to two issues:

- the practical ins and outs of the trade provisions of the EPA relating to culture, in particular requesting the EC to make popularisation efforts;
- the positioning of cultural cooperation programmes on RIP, to ensure they prioritize strengthening the sector in the region and developing its domestic market. This priority seems doubly justified. On the one hand, regional integration is a key challenge for the sector and requires specific efforts. On the other hand, regional programmes focused on regional development will best complement the interventions at other levels and in particular the intra-ACP program, more focused on the development of exchanges between the ACP regions and the rest of the world.

V. Overall monitoring

Following the recommendation of a monitoring committee, Commissioner Michel proposed to put it in charge of preparing an annual report to evaluate concrete progress of the recommendations. It is still unclear how this committee will be constituted and on what it will report: the progress of recommendations made to the professionals, to the ACP or to the EC?

An annual report produced by the EC and specifically focused on European cultural cooperation would already be remarkable progress. One notable weakness of this cooperation so far has been its lack of memory and the lack or dispersion of information about its actions, and therefore a lack of capitalization and transparency. The report should describe exhaustively the instruments of cooperation in each ACP country and region and the activities they have supported, bringing it closer to the atlas of cultural cooperation that Cacao / Ccawa advocated for in its advocacy paper. This would facilitate and promote information for actors, emulation, monitoring by all stakeholders, and the search for coherence and complementarity between the instruments.

Report for Cacao / Ccawa by Isabelle Bosman, 10 April 2009

NOTES

1. The scientific steering of the symposium was provided by the Association Francaise Culture et Développement (French Culture and Development Association).
2. *For greater and more effective cultural cooperation between the EU and the ACP: observations and suggestions formulated by the board of Cacao/Ccawa for the symposium in Brussels, March 2009.*
3. NIPs and RIPs are available on the EC website (including http://ec.europa.eu/development/how/iqsg/index_en.cfm?CFID=2010179&CFTOKEN=68414397&jsessionid=0806aed433f01a308222) and on the websites of its delegations.
4. Mali, Benin, Senegal, Mauritania, Niger, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Haiti.

BRUSSELS DECLARATION BY ARTISTS AND CULTURAL PROFESSIONALS AND ENTREPRENEURS

The Declaration is available on the colloquium website. This abridged version is designed to facilitate its reading and its ownership. We have kept the distinction between key requests, objectives and recommendations to various stakeholders, joined some close goals, and reorganized the many recommendations to the ACP by integrating subtitles.

Key requests

- that culture is the subject of public structural policies, at national, regional and international levels;
- that the cultural dimension is taken into account by other sectorial policies and defined in an integrated approach to development;
- that artists and creators are fully recognised as actors in development and have a professional and social status adapted to their own context.

Objectives

At the political level:

- To bring policy makers together to formulate cultural policies, where they do not yet exist, and to pursue support policies for the cultural industries and the creative economy; to create the conditions and the legal, regulatory and economic framework for the development of a creative economy;
- To convince ACP States and European Union member States of the importance of culture in the development process and to translate this new priority in budgetary and financial terms;
- To ensure that decision-making processes are transparent and democratic and involve the participation of the private sector and professional organisations;
- To strengthen the regional dimension in the building of infrastructure, institutions and markets, especially by promoting the creation of regional centres of excellence;
- To increase the participation of ACP States in the cultural environment of the North so as to reduce their dependence and strengthen cultural diversity for the benefit of humanity; to encourage the development of North-South, South-South and intra-ACP mutually beneficial trade.

At the economic level:

- To encourage the establishment of national and regional markets and increase the market-share of local content in these markets;
- To enhance the capacity of ACP countries to create, produce, distribute, and to ensure competitive dissemination of cultural products in domestic, regional and international markets;
- To strengthen the role of private operators in development strategies of cultural sectors;
- To promote business partnerships between North-South operators for access to international markets and for reinforcement of their capacities;
- To reinforce the contribution of culture to the fight against poverty and the improvement of living conditions of people in ACP countries, through cultural activities that create employment and wealth.

At social and cultural levels:

- To promote the protection of artists and creators as well as the respect of cultural rights of all individuals, particularly the most disadvantaged;
- To contribute to the dialogue between civilisations and intercultural dialogue, which are the guarantee of peace and security.

Recommendations

Preliminary recommendations for the implementation

- to create a climate of trust between public, private and civil actors;
- to promote cooperation and networking;
- to value the role of the Diaspora.

Recommendations to professionals of ACP and European Union States

- Create or develop professional organisations able to represent the interests of private actors, to support training and disseminate information;
- Contribute to the formalisation and the professionalization of ACP enterprises;
- Bring together the creativity of the cultural sector in order to create platforms for collective production and dissemination of information at national and regional levels in order to increase the visibility of ACP creations at the international level;
- Participate in training programs in order to transmit and acquire skills in technical and managerial domains;
- Participate in North-South and South-South accompaniment programmes, in order to increase the transfer of skills between practitioners.

Recommendations to local, national and regional authorities

(Priority actions relating to policy, institutional and regulatory framework)

- Include culture as a priority, taking into account the National and Regional Indicative Programmes (NIP and RIP) on cooperation and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers;
- Recognise culture as factor of development and implement a multisectorial strategy taking into account the horizontal nature of culture and involving the participation of various bodies : youth, employment, trade, finance, tourism, culture, communication, education, professional training, transport...
- Develop artistic education at all levels by involving the active participation of artists and culture professionals ;
- Develop support policies across each sector;
- Develop and implement audio-visual, broadcast and telecommunications policies to provide platforms for the production and dissemination of creative content in ACP and EU countries;
- Establish a tax and customs system favourable to improving the conditions of production and dissemination of cultural goods and services in order to create regional cultural markets;
- Harmonise and apply laws concerning the status of the artist, copyright laws and investment;
- Encourage cities to conduct activities supporting the cultural sector, particularly through the creation of infrastructures, training, and venues for creation and dissemination;
- Facilitate the movement of artists and culture professionals at an international level.

(Priority support activities)

- Develop a strategy to support the private sector: support funds, access to funding, training, support and advice;
- Open up eligibility for existing support programmes for micro and small enterprises to the creative industries;
- Strengthen the capacity of professional organisations by encouraging them to improve their governance and to develop training programmes and dissemination of information;
- Support groups of producers and distributors for collective presentations of their works in the main international markets, at national and regional levels;
- Support the organisation of seminars and regional professional markets;
- Professionalize and develop festivals, meeting and exchange places, training and pilot initiatives.

(Priority actions in the field of research and documentation)

- Develop national study programmes, collecting information and statistics on the economy of culture, relevant to all sectors.

(Priority actions in the field of training)

- Identify training needs, develop multidisciplinary programmes and promote the emergence of centres of regional and national excellence.

(Priority actions in the field of cultural heritage)

- Protect the cultural heritage and contribute to its development in order to improve the lives of people who are the carriers.

Recommendations to the European Union

- Support local, national and government authorities in the implementation of the actions mentioned above and in particular encourage them to integrate culture in NIPs and RIPs;
- Develop culture programs, notably national and regional Cultural Initiatives Support Programmes in order to promote the creative economy;
- Facilitate technical support for ACP operators and skills transfer in cooperation programmes;
- Improve the visibility of the cultures of ACP countries in the EU Member States by supporting large-scale festivals, show-cases and co-productions;
- Facilitate the free movement of artists and culture professionals in EU member states by encouraging them to create a cultural visa;
- Facilitate networks and support North-South and South-South partnership programmes used for the transfer of skills between operators of same area;
- Create a "culture facility" for development in order to support the cultural dimension of economic development and social cohesion;
- Create a support fund for the creation and circulation of cultural goods and services in ACP countries, with management conditions (procedures and selection criteria) adapted to the realities of ACP operators and the specificity of the artistic creation.

Recommendations to ACP States, EU and regional and multilateral cooperation agencies

- To improve coordination and synergies of their interventions with full respect for the autonomy of the artist and his or her creation.
- To significantly increase financial resources.

Final recommendation

- To establish of a monitoring committee.