



## CULTURAL PROJECTS

### CULTURAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT AS A SCENARIO FOR INCLUSION, ONE ASPECT OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION THAT THE WORLD NEEDS

*“Inclusion implies ensuring visibility as full subjects of rights for actors and social sectors whose stereotypes do not correspond to what is culturally considered normal in a given society, or who has historically been relegated and subordinated in the equation of power; this means converting differences into attributes to enrich democracy and social and cultural life.”*  
(UNDP, 2008).

#### 1. FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS IN THE CULTURE/SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION RELATIONSHIP

The cultural sector is oriented to produce changes mainly associated to the well-being of people, to promote the creation, expression and access to universes of art and culture. In short, to improve quality of life. For this reason, the broad concept of *social transformation* must be understood as a fundamental aspect when determining what the deepest meaning of cultural interventions is in the world. In the context of the interrelation between social transformation and culture, inclusion is a key element.

As proposed by Gemma Carbó, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Interarts Foundation of Barcelona, “culture has always been the centre of all social transformation, because what transforms a society is precisely its way of understanding itself, to define its priorities and values, to coexist with difference, and to adapt to the environment according to the conditions, which nowadays tend to be increasingly extreme. Artistic languages advance and express these visions.”<sup>i</sup>

Now, from the perspective of development, there are three fundamental concepts that associate cultural practices and projects with the idea of social transformation: integral development, well-being and cultural development in itself. These three themes are explored in a very general way below.

#### Integral development

Chilean author Emilio Cheyre points out that “Integral Development is a process that is achieved through a coordinated set of political, social and economic actions based on the promotion of personal dignity, solidarity and subsidiarity to improve the conditions for the full development of families and individuals, contributing to a social and human climate of mutual trust, with special attention to the situation of the problems of those

who have less possibility of access to the benefits of modernity, in an environment that protects the habitat and in a dimension that also ensures it for future generations”<sup>ii</sup>.

In other words, integral human development holds the dignity of the person at the centre of attention. In this approach, “the anthropocentric vision prevails in languages and postures; therefore, it is necessary to transcend from individual to collective thinking to adopt new worldviews and paradigms that propose the sustainability of life and that establish reciprocal relationships between the person and all forms of life”<sup>iii</sup>.

## Well-being

For its part, the concept of well-being, as widely recognised by social sciences, refers to states of the human being in relation to social, emotional, physical, spiritual and mental dimensions. In the social sphere, it refers to the interrelation with people and the environment; emotionally, it refers to the control and expression of emotions; physically, it refers to the body, illness and capacity to recover; spiritually, to the beliefs and values; and mentally, to the ability to maintain healthy, loving and positive relationships with others.

For Colombian psychologist Rubén Ardila (2003), quality of life is "a state of general satisfaction, derived from the realisation of personal potential. It has subjective and objective aspects. It is a subjective feeling of physical, psychological and social well-being. As subjective aspects, it includes intimacy, emotional expression, perceived security, personal productivity and perceived health. As objective aspects, material well-being, harmonious relationships with the physical, social and community environment, and objectively perceived health."<sup>iv</sup>

Gonzalo Martínez-Zelaya, M. Ángeles Bilbao and Darío Páez point out in their document *Culture as a modulator of well-being* (published in the book *The happiness of Chileans: studies on well-being*) "There have been many ways of grouping different studies on well-being, as well as ways of understanding the concept. One of the traditions is Subjective Well-being (SWB), which understands well-being as a personal assessment of one's own life, both in its cognitive (satisfaction with life) and affective (emotional reactions) components (...) Subjective Well-being can be understood, broadly, as a concept that encompasses experiencing high levels of pleasant emotions, low levels of negative emotions and high satisfaction with life (Diener & Diener, 1995; Keyes, Shmotkin & Ryff, 2002; Diener, Oishi & Lucas, 2009). Well-being has social determinants, including cultural values, and refers to those elements that intentionally guide our personal activities and provide means to modify happiness levels. At the same time, these are constructed (and co-constructed, in a dialectical relationship) with the subject's environment. Cultural values are understood, in the context of this research, as the mechanisms to adequately adapt to the surrounding social reality."<sup>v</sup>

When talking about his work *Stories of conflict and happiness for development. The role of narration in the cultural construction of social problems and subjective well-being*, Mexican writer and academic Gonzalo Soltero says that various investigations showed a paradox: countries with the highest human development indexes – the Scandinavians, along with Canada and sometimes Australia – have a very high suicide rate. Meanwhile, Latin American nations, as a group, always have a high level of life satisfaction or happiness, despite having other low indexes of well-being. Thus, the assertion arises that, if this happiness is not due to material factors, it must necessarily be the result of cultural elements.

Another relevant aspect in this discussion is the relationship between well-being and development. The first country to propose the idea that GDP was not enough to measure development was Bhutan (in 1976), introducing the Gross National Happiness (GNH) or Gross Domestic Happiness (GDH) index. This is an indicator that measures quality of life in more holistic and psychological terms than Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The term was proposed by the King of Bhutan in 1972 in response to criticism of his country's economic poverty. While conventional economic models observe economic growth as the main objective, the concept of GNF is based on the premise that the true development of human society resides in the relationship between material development and spiritual development. The four pillars of GNH are: the promotion of sustainable and egalitarian socio-economic development, the preservation and promotion of cultural values, the conservation of the environment and the establishment of good governance. Measurement is carried out through a questionnaire of 180 questions considering 9 dimensions:

1. Psychological well-being
2. Use of time
3. Vitality of the community
4. Culture
5. Health
6. Education
7. Environmental diversity
8. Standard of living
9. Government

On the other hand, the *World Happiness Report* is a survey carried out by UN, measuring how the happiness of citizens has evolved over recent years in 156 countries. The report uses data from the Gallup World Poll, in which respondents are asked to rate their lives from zero to 10, with zero being the worst possible life and 10 being the best. In addition, six factors are taken into account: GDP levels, life expectancy, generosity, social support, freedom, and corruption. In 2020, the report was built on three broad dimensions: social, urban, and environmental.

## Cultural approach to development

From another perspective, as expressed by Alfons Martinell in the *International Meeting of experts in measurements of the contribution of culture to development*, which took place in October 2013 and was organised by the Ministry of Culture of Colombia, "A cultural approach to development allows integrating and relating other development approaches such as human development, socio-economic development, capabilities and functionalities, sustainable development and the environment. The principles and values of a cultural approach allow for the elaboration of a conceptual framework that makes it possible to delimit and understand that it is not the same to speak of cultural development as of contributions of culture to development, the cultural dimension of development, or generating capacities for development."

These four things are very different. Now, a cultural activity in itself is not proper development. For this to be so, it depends on the intention with which said action is carried out and the results obtained from its execution. Regarding the relations between culture and development, and taking into account the possibilities of said relationship, the following elements are observed:

Cultural development implies:

- Improvement of the cultural conditions of citizens
- Increased possibility of expressiveness
- Development of the cultural sector
- Creation of collective memory
- Active participation in cultural life
- Strengthened cultural organisations
- Territorial balance in initiative attention, supply and development
- Equitable access and consumption
- Cultural diversity

Contributions of culture to development are measured in:

- Direct and indirect impact
- Contribution to socio-economic indicators
- Social cohesion and political life
- Well-being
- Employment
- Impact on other systems of society

The cultural dimension of development is established from:

- Cultural values
- Ways of life
- Contributions to quality of life
- Knowledge available

- Cross-cutting presence of culture in different areas of development (education, health, environment, etc.)
- Contributions of expressiveness and creativity to innovation and social change

Generating capacities for development implies:

- Cultural education
- Knowledge
- Critical capacity
- Promotion of potentials
- Valuing social assets
- Contributions of cultural capacities to the dynamics of development<sup>vi</sup>

For its part, UNESCO has made a number of speeches and interventions (especially focused on cultural measurement) that tend to understand the relationship between culture and development, with emphasis on a look at the effects of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Diversity in Cultural Expression:

“The UNESCO Culture for Development Indicators Suite (CDIS) demonstrates the driving and facilitating role that culture plays in sustainable development. Thanks to an innovative methodology, this normative and promotional instrument makes it possible to evaluate, through quantitative data, the multidimensional relationship between culture and development. The study of 7 key dimensions of culture and development through 22 central indicators responds to the needs and characteristics of low and middle income countries. The abundance of quantitative data produced through the application of CDIS promotes better-informed cultural policies and the integration of culture in development strategies, thus contributing to the application of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Diversity in Cultural Expression. The CDIS methodology is the result of a four-year research process (2009-2013). By the end of 2013, the project had been implemented in 11 countries around the world, demonstrating its potential to have a concrete impact on cultural policies. Colombia began to implement the CDIS in May 2011, and finalised the process in June 2014. This analysis highlights the results, implementation details, and impact of this project in Colombia.”<sup>vii</sup>

The dimensions studied are the following:

- Economy
- Education
- Governance
- Social participation
- Gender equality
- Communication
- Heritage

The various study scenarios on the culture/development correlation show a valuable conceptual path to place the issue of cultural inclusion from the activities characterising this sector.

## 2. CULTURAL PROJECTS: FROM DISCOURSE TO ACTION

It is in the management of **cultural projects** where theoretical discourses permeate real life. Certainly, cultural projects are designed and implemented to generate changes in society or, at least, to favour situated actions, truly committed to vital processes within communities.

In general terms, the most valued **cultural projects** are those that explore aspects related to inclusion from the perspective of promoting equitable development and well-being: two terms that the cultural sector embraces. The former, from the idea of integrality (integral development); the latter, from the quality and dignity of human life.

Chile's *Guide for cultural project management* defines cultural projects as follows: "In a cultural project, certain concepts representing it are integrated and specified. A project is a process of reflection, of permanent relationship between theory and practice, the action of foresight and anticipation, a formalised result of our ideas, an instrument for negotiation, participation and co-management, management organisation, an instrument of teamwork. A project has a temporal dimension, an end, a requirement and, fundamentally, a creative process, a fundamental element in order not to lose sight of our purpose: using projects as instruments to achieve purpose, and not making them the purpose in themselves."<sup>viii</sup>

## 3. CULTURAL PROJECTS AS REPLICABLE EXPERIENCES

Cultural projects are analysed, with increasing frequency, by multilateral and management organisations that find in them very important knowledge since they are replicable, successful experiences that produce effective changes among people and communities, in light of the most varied aspects of social transformation. That is, they offer real examples of achievements, goals and purposes fulfilled in terms of inclusion, among other factors of integral development, for example.

For instance, in 2011, the Organisation of American States - OAS produced the research project ***Culture, common denominator for development*** which "is made available to public policy-makers, creators, cultural promoters and in general those who influence decision-making that affects cultural development, to promote reflection, exchange and creative adaptation that allows taking advantage of the enormous transformative role of culture for the benefit of economic and social development "<sup>ix</sup>.

Based on the analysis of aspects related to the implementation of cultural projects in 18 countries of the Americas, this research highlights the value of the cultural projects analysed in light of the following categories of incidence in demonstrable social transformations:

- Generation of economic growth
- Better quality of life
- Conflict resolution and peaceful relationships in groups with high rates of violence
- Attention to women, youth, people with disabilities, indigenous communities or other vulnerable groups
- Contribution to urban regeneration
- Generation of sustainable development or
- Promotion of social inclusion
- Protection of cultural diversity
- Contribution to the strengthening of identity and intercultural dialogue
- Promotion of social participation and democratic coexistence

On the other hand, this research establishes that the implementation of the cultural projects studied leads to the strengthening of successful practices that promote and facilitate aspects such as participation; communication; training; institutional coordination; professional and multidisciplinary human resources and networking. In other words, successful cultural projects, from the management point of view, promote inclusive institutional practices.

In the research project *Aprendiendo de Colombia*, carried out by the Kreanta Foundation in 2009 within the framework of cultural cooperation between Spain and Colombia, 18 good cultural practices from Bogotá, Medellín and Manisales are analysed, which were selected taking into account the following factors:

- **Innovation**, understood as a way of combining existing resources in a creative and new ways to solve common problems, often linking elements that seem contradictory. Innovation can be found in different aspects of a project, from content to management systems and project methodology.
- **Cross-cutting presence** as the ability to link different areas in this case, with special emphasis on the education-culture binomial, but also seeking to link these areas with social and urban issues, etc.
- The **success** of the project, based on its effectiveness and feasibility. Effectiveness is understood as the achievement of established objectives as well as the positive impact produced on the beneficiaries by good practices. Feasibility is understood as the adequacy of resources to the problem solution proposal within the context of the intervention.

- **Exemplarity**, in the sense of good practices as a tool for transformation and with a multiplier effect.

In terms of management, the projects studied were selected considering:

- Co-responsibility, as the assumption of differentiated responsibilities between the partners for the successful achievement of the established objectives.
- Sustainability, understood as the participation of groups of citizens in the management of the project throughout its life.
- Planning, understood as a strategy that draws lines of work that allow the achievement of medium- and long-term objectives, as well as their evaluation.
- The existence of evaluation and impact indicators as methods of evaluating the effectiveness of the project in relation to the initially proposed objectives and the actions taken in the event of possible changes in the context or unforeseen circumstances<sup>x</sup>.

In 2014, the Ministry of Culture of Colombia, in association with the Pontifical Xaverian University and Centro Ático, created the *Bank of significant experiences in culture*, to obtain direct qualitative information from the country's cultural actors and generate knowledge exchange to trigger value enhancement and experience conceptualisation processes.

In the workshops, it was established that the central aspects to be considered in all 45 selected good practices are:

- Promotion of citizen participation and inclusion
- Recognition, respect, and exercise of cultural diversity
- Strengthening cultural institutions

The valuable conclusions reached by this research project, led by Alfons Martinell, include the following:

- There is a generalised opinion that culture must incorporate the challenge and commitment of knowing how to contribute to the problems and social needs of its environment with a human development approach.
- Pondering the contribution of culture to development also implies considering the impact achieved from cultural activities. It is considered that there must be an ability to observe and know how to show the effects of culture on citizens who, without being material impacts, improve their quality of life.
- Demonstrating the participation of culture in human development requires measurement and evaluation processes that are complex, given the fact that they relate to immaterial aspects of human life.
- The systematisation and research from practical experience are fundamental, because it allows the cultural sector and its organisations to give an account to



the society of the change they generate. It is necessary to have knowledge, data, systematisation and evaluation of impacts, among others, such as strengthening cultural management that integrates citizen participation and generates capacities for development.

- The need is reaffirmed to respond to how the contribution to development is made concrete and evidenced from the cultural dimension, to recognise that culture affects human development and the personal fulfilment of citizens. This recognition must reach operational and political levels, both among municipal administrations and cultural organisations themselves.
- Experience shows that access to art and culture through activities proposed by organisations promotes conditions that impact the social development of artists, their families, and their social environments.
- It is found that cultural activity is of essential importance for citizen participation and inclusion. The ways and means to achieve this are most varied, and require a large number of differentiated strategies.
- Project achievements are an engine that generates greater commitment within organisations to continue carrying out activities and promoting community participation.
- Within organisations, recognising the contribution in creating opportunities for inclusive participation in cultural life is an innovative, motivating approach.
- It is observed that projects allow people to find mechanisms to strengthen creative and original processes, and generate the expansion of cultural life in their environment as a fundamental right.
- A contradiction between contemporary and traditional cultural manifestations is not observed in the practice of cultural management<sup>xi</sup>.
- Cultural life has different tiers, from local/regional to national/international. The experiences of managers feed their views on what it means to participate in cultural life and allow for its expansion. Cultural diversity also enhances cultural life.
- There is a need to raise awareness that cultural action contributes to facilitating participation in cultural life for people of all kinds. Advancing in this process affects the exercise of cultural rights.
- It is evident that cultural initiatives gain quality to the extent that they can dialogue with society through practice and appropriate languages. One way this appropriation happens is to allow audiences to be a back and forth actor.
- Projects affect cultural life to alter daily life and promote updating processes, mainly in creative innovation.

- Cultural life is not homogeneous. It is diverse and offers multiple possibilities for people to participate, according to their interests. Placing projects in a cultural life perspective opens horizons and possibilities to strengthen and expand initiatives.
- Diversity of expression is fundamental to the development of a cultural initiative. In other words, open opportunities for traditional and contemporary practices to coexist and for other proposals to circulate and enrich initiatives.
- It is important to note that many projects do not have prior references that allow establishing whether a cultural project can work or not. This implies that many cultural projects have uncertain success. For this reason, knowledge management of past experiences in the sector is relevant.
- Sometimes, projects are introduced in contexts where there were no previous cultural initiatives or clearly identified audiences. At the beginning, projects focus on generating knowledge about the proposal and meet previously established tastes and interests among target population. What is sought is a complementary effort that allows the expansion of cultural life and a greater participation of communities.
- Participation in cultural life implies previously identifying project actions.
- Cultural project management often has a high degree of risk, measured in practice and in a dialogue with cultural life.
- The appropriation of certain cultural processes, within the framework of cultural rights and freedoms, progressively takes place within communities. It is different from cases in which an "imposition" has been promoted by force of cultural and artistic practices in a community, which alters its characteristics.
- A project that does not take into account the characteristics of cultural life (despite providing a complementary alternative) is not possibly sustainable.
- Cultural life is not only about artistic practices. It is broader, but relates especially to what a community accepts as the components of that cultural life and the possibilities for creative expression.
- Reflections on the future of cultural are not frequent. Generally, reflections focus on the past. This relates to one's own views on projects. Whether they are considered a "finished" product, or their possibilities and a constant sense of change are emphasised, constant evaluation and adoption of new goals give vitality to projects.
- Being attentive to changes in the environment, to cultural life, and to new communication possibilities, is a substantial element when considering project sustainability.
- Cultural initiatives need to be evaluated every day. "Cultural emergencies" lead to changes that provoke transformation in cultural life and affect systematic analysis of projects.

- It is observed that, on occasion, projects must “fight” against manifestations of cultural life that are contrary to the purposes of initiatives. One of the mechanisms is to carry out a “re-elaboration” of these manifestations. Additionally, innovation, rather than a product of creative processes, is sometimes the result of taking advantage of the resources offered by the environment.

#### 4. INCLUSION IN CULTURAL PROJECTS

From the historical evaluation of cultural interventions in the most diverse territorial and social settings, it is clear that many of them promote different forms of inclusion, as defined in this document.

Social inclusion in the field of **cultural projects** is understood, in effect, as the possibility that they offer to create scenarios of communion between the transforming power of culture and the arts and the social changes that today's world requires in the face of inequity, exclusion, marginalisation and the rejection of difference.

According to the City of Barcelona Council and its *Citizen Agreement for an Inclusive Barcelona*, which was put into operation in 2010, the inclusive dimension of culture is understood as “a common space of relationship between organisations in social and cultural fields, oriented to action and reflection on culture and social inclusion (...) that places special emphasis on<sup>xii</sup>:

- The development of the creative capacity of citizens, especially of people and groups at risk of exclusion.
- The promotion of access to cultural facilities and projects, in any of the phases of the cultural cycle (creation, production, dissemination, access and training).
- The promotion of cross-cutting platforms in which entities from the cultural and social fields cooperate.
- The promotion of a system of civic values of citizenship, which favours a shared construction of the city.

This public policy finds that exclusion not only occurs in terms of populations with specific problems such as disability, but also incorporates the aspects highlighted below, consistent with the need included in this document, to identify when, how and why a cultural project generates true processes of inclusion.

The main dimensions of cultural intervention that promote inclusion are:

- Attention to vulnerable population
- Attention to segregated social and population sectors
- Projects that promote inter-sector and cross-cutting actions

- Projects focused on conflict resolution, reconstruction of social fabric, and peacebuilding

#### 4.1 - Vulnerable, in-need populations

The definition of vulnerability varies according to the social realities of the countries and specific contexts of intervention. In the case of Colombia, for example, the National Planning Department establishes that the country's vulnerable populations are:

- Population in a situation of forced displacement due to violence.
- Children in abandonment or protection, in accordance with the definition of the Youth Code (art. 31).
- Senior adults in poverty conditions.
- People with psychomotor, hearing and visual limitations in conditions of poverty.
- People in conditions of extreme poverty.

The evaluation of vulnerability in Colombia is assumed, then, from two perspectives: (i) vulnerable populations due to special conditions of "defencelessness", and (ii) the proposal of models for estimating vulnerability associated with risk in three dimensions : health, education and livelihood<sup>xiii</sup>.

In Mexico, to quote another example, the 2007-2012 National Development Plan (PND) defines vulnerability as "the result of the accumulation of social disadvantages and a greater possibility of suffering damage in any dimension, derived from a set of social causes and some personal and/or cultural characteristics. It considers various population groups as vulnerable, including girls, boys, young people living on the streets, migrants, people with disabilities, the elderly and the indigenous population, who, beyond their poverty, live in risk situations."<sup>xiv</sup>

From a European perspective, "vulnerable social groups' are groups of people considered to be at risk of poverty or social exclusion because of physical disabilities, age factors, ethnic origins, lack of housing, or substance abuse. These people, who were already struggling with financial, social and employment difficulties before the 2008 economic crisis, have become further disadvantaged, and the gap between them and the rest of society has grown even wider. Three subgroups stand out as being most affected by the European economic and financial crisis. The number of people experiencing **in-work** poverty is rising, with economic constraints forcing them to work in increasingly precarious jobs or obliging them to accept self-employed status. **Disabled people**, already confronted by barriers hindering their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others, have, as a result of the crisis, lost a great deal of social, economic and mobility support and their chances of re-entering the labour market have diminished. Finally, changes in family structure mean that the number of **single parents**, especially **single mothers**, has increased in recent years. These parents struggle to achieve a work-life balance on account of their multiple

obligations, and as a group they are also suffering from the effects of the crisis. The situation of vulnerable groups has been of concern to the European institutions for the last decade, from the point of view of poverty as well as of labour market participation and gender equality.”<sup>xv</sup>

For the UNDP, the dimensions of social vulnerability are limited to the following aspects:

- Level of poverty
- Lack of or limited access to resources such as information, knowledge and technology
- Lack of or limited access to political power and representation (marginalisation, exclusive)
- Lack of or limited social capital including social networks and connections
- Inadequate beliefs, customs and attitude in response to risk or disasters
- Vulnerable residential settings (i.e.: weak structure, poor protection, poor maintenance, etc.)
- Frail and physical limited individuals
- Lack of or Limited access to critical services such as communication, transportation, power supply, water supply, sanitation, etc.<sup>xvi</sup>

Thus, cultural projects focused on addressing vulnerabilities and that would generate inclusion in its broadest sense are:

- Projects that address vulnerabilities or weaknesses in access to culture, especially groups or people most disadvantaged by economic, educational, class, origin, physical condition, including disability.
- Projects that are developed in less favoured areas, or that serve the most vulnerable groups in society.

#### 4.2 - Social sectors (age, gender, sexuality) and population sectors (language, ethnicity, common historical legacy)

From another logic not necessarily directly associated with poverty, it is also necessary to understand the concept of exclusion and its relationship with social inequality.

For Juan Pablo Pérez Saínz, for example, the origin of social exclusion “lies in the exercise of power of one social group against another. Second, as a corollary to the above, exclusion is a manifestation of the production of social inequalities; in fact, it is its most extreme expression. Third, this exercise of power generates processes of social closure that would not be consummated, but would only have relative effects to a different degree. Fourth, exclusion is a multidimensional phenomenon, that is, there are different types of exclusions that can interact with each other, reinforcing exclusion dynamics. And fifth, exclusion would be synonymous with the weakening of social citizenship, thus being able to question its architectural function of legitimising

inequalities. From this precision exercise, we need to highlight the conceptual link between inequality and social exclusion (...)"<sup>xvii</sup>.

As expressed by José Miguel Insulza in OAS's publication *Inequality and social inclusion in the Americas*, "inequality, therefore, is not only expressed in the enormous purchasing capacity's diversity of people's incomes, but derives from discrimination due to class, race, gender, geographical origin, different physical capacity, etc., which, practised categorically (i.e.: excluding all or almost all members of a group), makes it a multidimensional phenomenon incompatible with our democratic ideals"<sup>xviii</sup>.

The document concludes that inequalities, in the case of the Americas, derive from:

- Unequal access to essential public services such as education, health, drinking water, housing, security, public transport;
- Discrimination still affecting women, indigenous and Afro-American groups, migrants, the disabled, and other socially vulnerable groups;
- Insufficient conditions in the exercise of human rights, such as access to justice and freedom of expression;
- Labour informality, which puts a large number of workers in precarious employment/income conditions, and deprives them from the protections to which they are entitled;
- Unequal possibilities for political participation, both in the exercise of voting rights, and in the possibility of effectively influencing the action of public institutions.

Thus, it is necessary to understand the real meaning of **social inclusion** and **social cohesion** as two vectors that can guide the formulation of cultural public policies and interventions that focus on helping to minimise social inequalities and inequities.

For Maryse Robert, "social inclusion is the process of empowering individuals and groups, particularly the poor and the marginalised, to participate in society and take advantage of opportunities. It gives people a voice in the decisions that influence their lives, so that they can enjoy equal access to markets and services, and political, social and physical spaces." Social cohesion is understood as "the perceptions of solidarity and reliability. A cohesive society seeks the well-being of its members, combats exclusion and marginalisation (social inclusion), creates a sense of belonging, promotes trust (social capital), and offers its members opportunities for upward social mobility."<sup>xix</sup>

From this point of view, it could be considered that, in terms of inclusion, it is necessary to promote implementation of cultural projects aimed at addressing the following aspects:

- Projects that favour intergenerational relationships between different age groups
- Projects that promote inter-culturalism

- Projects focused on marginalised groups due to age, gender or diverse sexual practices
- Projects focused on other stigmatised social groups (migrants, refugees)
- Projects focused on ethnic minorities or stigmatised races
- Projects that recover heritage associated with identity factors (language, customs, historical legacy and heritage)
- Projects that welcome people living in poverty, homeless individuals, and people struggling with substance abuse

### 4.3 - Cultural cross-cutting and inter-sector actions

The views on the interconnections between culture and other sectors of social life are very diverse. It is well known that, after the publication of UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a global debate has arisen on the place of culture – not explicitly included as one of the pillars of humanity's development. Therefore, mainstreaming and the value of culture as a catalyst for development occupy a prominent space in debates, research, think tanks and advocacy exercises of many cultural organisations, mainly in Europe.

In any case, history recognises that the relationships between culture and other areas of social life are fundamental. Such is the case, for example, of cultural tourism and the culture/education relationship.

In the case of cultural tourism, the most widely explored aspect is the relationship between the promotion of this great industry and tangible/intangible cultural heritage, the identity values of peoples and communities, and cultural diversity. In the field of education and its qualification, the contribution of the arts to the development of cognitive and social skills (such as creative and critical thinking, problem solving, trust, perseverance, collaboration and empathy) has been highlighted.

On the other hand, and in more political terms, it is pointed out that the place of culture in high-quality education does not stand alone, but relates to other key issues. As one of the *Brainstorming Reports* of the project *Voices of Culture* (European Commission) points out: “in order to unlock and deploy culture's contribution to inclusive and equitable quality education, and to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, we should first address a few interconnected key challenges. We identified five main challenges: (1) Digital capacity; (2) Cross-sectoral collaboration; (3) Non-formal learning infrastructures; (4) Access and representation; and (5) Policy frameworks.”<sup>xx</sup>

Sustainable development can be understood as satisfying present needs without compromising future generations' quality of life, and guaranteeing the balance between economic growth, environmental care and social well-being. Since 2011, the UN calls the attention to the importance of culture in sustainable development by

pointing out that culture is a source of enrichment that significantly contributes to the sustainable development of local communities, peoples and nations, empowering them to play an active role in development initiatives, and is a source of identity, innovation and creativity (Resolution 65/166 of 2011)<sup>xxi</sup>.

Similarly, it values diversity around the world and the fact that all cultures and civilisations contribute to the enrichment of humanity. It appreciates the positive contribution of local and indigenous traditional knowledge to the sustainable solution of environmental problems. Diversity is an important factor in the fight against poverty, promoting economic development options for peoples.

On this aspect, UN points out that “Cultural heritage, cultural and creative industries, sustainable cultural tourism and cultural infrastructure can serve as strategic tools for income generation, particularly in developing countries, given their wealth of cultural heritage and the size of their workforce”.

The aforementioned resolution invites the United Nations System’s organisations (particularly UNESCO) to help requesting member states to strengthen their national capacity to determine the most appropriate way to optimise the contribution of culture to development, especially through information exchange, best practices, data collection, research projects and studies, and use of appropriate evaluation indicators, in accordance with their national priorities<sup>xxii</sup>.

Naturally, the field of development also studies the cultural sector as a scenario that produces and mobilises financial, human and creative resources of enormous value to the world. This view includes cultural and creative industries and their value chains; the economic valuation of culture in national, regional and local economies; the social return on public and private investment in culture; and the dynamics of production, consumption, job creation and investment of financial resources in the sector.

Regarding the relationship between culture and the environment, emphasis is placed on the determining influence lifestyle has on natural resources, as well as on cultural and educational guidelines in the relationship between humans and nature. In addition, local knowledge and traditional/ancestral knowledge in environmental care and management stand out, all of which allows us to understand and combat ecological challenges and mitigate the effects of climate change<sup>xxiii</sup>. According to UNESCO: “culture enables environmental sustainability at various levels: through the intrinsic links between cultural diversity and biodiversity, through its influence on consumption patterns, and through its contribution to sustainable environmental management practices as a result of local and traditional knowledge.”<sup>xxiv</sup> This is a similar outlook to UNESCO defines for the culture/health relationship.

Regarding the latter, the following recommendations stand out:



- **Promoting a culturally sensitive approach to health**, by integrating cultural practices into health services (e.g.: an intercultural health system has been established in the province of Sucumbios, Ecuador, to raise awareness about culturally appropriate childbirth and to enable patients to decide on the kind of care they wish to receive during childbirth).
- **Recognising the role of traditional health and education systems for more sustainable and appropriate approaches to sexual and reproductive health** (e.g.: to enhance the fight against HIV/AIDS in Mozambique, various traditional authorities work with formal counterparts to raise community awareness about the pandemic and ensure that sexual taboos and very specific cultural practices are taken into consideration)<sup>xxv</sup>.

Another sphere of the relationship between culture and development arises in communication and information technologies. This relationship has grown in importance in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The digital world and the Fourth Revolution imply the explosion of creative product circulation, generating content that flows in networks, nodes and devices towards a huge number of people who, being connected, can access new – and old – symbolic meanings of creation.

This phenomenon has, at least, two clearly identifiable results: the universalisation of access to information (simultaneous, instantaneous), and the appearance of new exclusions and social/geographical gaps in terms of access for those who cannot afford connectivity services. Additionally, GAFAM<sup>xxvi</sup> centralise circulation of cultural content in the digital environment, with the risks that this entails in various aspects such as dominance over content and its market, and the knowledge and information manipulation. As pointed out by Juan Carlos Miguel de Bustos, from the University of the Basque Country, the giants of the digital world have the ability to establish patterns that condition the future development of creative and cultural industries in a digital economic scenario<sup>xxvii</sup>.

According to UNESCO: “however, and although technological changes have undoubtedly allowed for greater access and expression of cultural diversity, the asymmetries implicit in the digital divide continue to limit the possibilities of true intercultural exchange” (UNESCO, 2012:18). In addition, new opportunities for interactive exchange and a greater content offer, "can lead to a 'false diversity' that masks the fact that some people are only interested in communicating with those who share the same cultural references." (UNESCO, 2012:19)<sup>xxviii</sup>.

In any case, it is necessary to acknowledge, as stated by *Emprendecultura.net*, that ICTs intervene in the cultural sector in various ways:

- In an instrumental way (digitisation of analogue cultural products);
- In an informative way (as a communication channel between producers and consumers);

- Facilitating the creation of networks between different cultural sectors;
- Enabling the creation of formats with cultural content especially oriented to these new media;
- Allowing the appropriation and transformation of these contents by users<sup>xxix</sup>.

Thus, cultural managers should consider, in terms of promoting inclusion from mainstreaming in the sector, implementation of projects that focus on the following issues:

- Inclusion of territorial cultural traditions
- Qualification of teaching/learning processes for disadvantaged population
- Acknowledgement and preservation of ancestral knowledge in environmental, architectural, gastronomic, and medical practices, etc.
- Creation of communication ties between different social, territorial and cultural environments
- Empowerment of women
- Use of technologies to break physical, access and knowledge barriers
- Generation of intercultural dialogue

#### 4.4 - Conflict resolution, reconciliation and peacebuilding

Conflict and war (and their subsequent effects) are one of the areas with greater possibilities for culture and the arts, and to generate profound and significant transformation. Their effects include: death, displacement, human exodus, forced disappearance, forced recruitment (including that of minors), PTSD, gender-based sexual violence, torture, exile, political persecution, dispossession, and stigmatisation, among others.

From the perspective of Sergio Néstor García<sup>xxx</sup>, the causes and motivations of conflict and war can originate in economic, political, social, cultural, historical, socio-affective, religious and territorial aspects. The areas or levels of conflict are private (personal family) and public (local, regional, state, international). The actors of conflict can be individuals, groups, sectors, collectives and countries, as shown in the following table.

**Table 1. Conflict and some of its characteristics.**

<b>CAUSES AND/OR MOTIVATIONS</b>	<b>CONFLICT LEVELS/ENVIRONMENTS</b>	<b>TYPES OF RELATION</b>	<b>ACTORS OR PROTAGONISTS</b>
Economic, political, social, cultural, historical, social affective, religious, territorial	Private (personal – family)	Inclusive and/or Exclusive Topics: good and/or bad	Individuals
Economic, political, social, cultural, historical, social affective, religious, territorial	Public Regional	Inclusive and/or Exclusive Topics: fair and/or unfair	Groups
Economic, political, social, cultural, historical, social affective, religious, territorial	Public State	Inclusive and/or Exclusive Topics: fair and/or unfair	Sectors, social classes, organisations, sectors, collectives
Economic, political, social, cultural, historical, social affective, religious, territorial	International Worldwide	Inclusive and/or Exclusive Topics: biotic and abiotic sustainability and/or unsustainable (bioethical dimension)	Countries, Transnational and International Organisations

For his part, Johan Galtung has pointed out that there are four types of violence: *cultural* (ideas, norms, values, traditions), *structural* (poverty, repression, pollution, alignment), *direct* (verbal, psychological, physical), and *symbolic* (manifestations through acts or rituals that give recognition to violence)<sup>xxxi</sup>.

In this highly complex terrain of human reality, a discourse on the construction of cultures of peace has been developed with the intention to point out the importance of educating in and about peace, in order to modify conflict at its root.

For Vicenc Fisas, Director of the School of Culture of Peace of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, “The culture of peace is an educational task that involves educating in and for conflict, unmasking cultural violence and patriarchy, educating for dissent, nonconformity and disarmament, in taking responsibility, in mobilising ourselves, in transforming conflict, in carrying out cultural disarmament, in promoting global ethics, and in seeking fundamental consensus on integrating human convictions, among other things”<sup>xxxii</sup>. He adds: “educating for peace, without a doubt, implies educating about conflict, which should not be confused with violence. We should spend more time learning from our own conflicts, since peace is nothing more than the highest phase of conflict; that is, the stage in which conflict is transformed by people and communities in a positive, creative, non-violent way. For this, it is essential to stimulate creativity, so that the quest for solutions to conflicts, mutual understanding, tolerance and the unblocking of positions, prevail. We therefore need to change our perception of conflict and how we approach it.”

UNESCO is the multilateral organism in charge of “Building peace in the minds of men and women”. Naturally, one of the topics most widely studied by the agency has been the relationship between culture and peacebuilding. In fact, the organisation recently published the research piece *Cutting Edge/Overcoming barriers to peace through culture*. The document states that “as a powerful force that bridges across differences, culture brings people together, and thus underpins social cohesion, peace and security. Notwithstanding this unifying function, the past 20 years have witnessed a growing instrumentalisation of culture for divisive purposes. This negative exploitation of culture has not only contributed to more protracted crises and relapses into conflict, as well as to the denial of human rights, including cultural rights. Culture is integral to who we are and where we come from. From heritage to creative expression, culture contributes to identity, belonging and meaning. As a resource for community vitality, well-being and expression, it shapes peaceful societies through the recognition of and respect for the diversity of cultures and freedom of expression.”<sup>xxxiii</sup>

From another perspective, artistic education and the formulation of cultural projects aimed at generating social cohesion and reconciliation are two scenarios in which art and culture play a main role to consolidate societies that value peace. UNESCO itself has pointed out that the arts are an effective universal instrument to promote mutual understanding and peace, and their practice is an important means to establish social relationships with others. The teaching of the arts helps to restore the relationship between scientific, emotional processes and intuition, which is a relevant element to cultivate attitudes that promote intercultural openness. Artistic education can also serve to address ethnocentrism, cultural bias, stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination and racism (UNESCO, 2012).

Therefore, cultural managers interested in contributing to peacebuilding and reconciliation should consider the following crucial aspects when formulating projects:

- Promotion of democratic participation

- Creation of scenarios for dialogue and communication in the community
- Generating reflections on situations and attitudes associated with conflict
- Healing, recovery from trauma, resilience
- Symbolic reparation
- Historical memory
- Interethnic communication
- Child and female empowerment
- Intercultural dialogue
- Freedom of expression and creation
- Creation of the community fabric
- Promotion of social cohesion
- Interculturalism
- Building social capital
- Expansion of social and containment networks

Therefore, action must mainly focus on:

- Projects oriented to groups with high rates of violence (physical, psychological, sexual, economic, gender-based, etc.)
- Projects that address issues such as displacement, refugees or direct victims of armed conflicts
- Projects that seek to solve conflicts between social groups or collectives
- Projects that address political, religious or cultural exclusion

## 5. FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS IN FORMULATING INCLUSIVE CULTURAL PROJECTS

To conclude, the following are some of the questions that cultural managers must ask themselves about the role of culture and the arts in the broadest sense of inclusion:

- Which are the parameters of cultural life where cultural projects are developed or are expected to be developed?
- Which are the deficits, limitations to activity, and restrictions in cultural life participation within the specific context?
- Is culture incorporated into local, regional and national development programmes?
- Does the project mobilise mutual understanding to promote peace and reconciliation?
- Does the project ensure cultural rights and promote inclusive social development?
- How do cultural interventions promote poverty reduction and inclusive economic development?
- Do projects strengthen culture to promote sustainable development?
- Does the project take advantage of culture as a resource to achieve sustainable urban development?
- Does the project capitalise on culture to strengthen innovation and cooperation models?

## RESOURCES

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Full SHIFT Inclusion Resources [here](#)

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### SHIFT Culture partner networks



A Regional Group of the  
International Music Council



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