



A Summary of the Report

Towards cultural citizenship

–Tools for cultural policy and development



Cover:

Rock-carvings made 3.000 years ago in Tanumshede, Sweden. Photo by Victor Brott.

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Towards cultural citizenship: Tools for cultural policy and development

Introduction

This document is a summary of the report *Towards Cultural Citizenship: Tools for Cultural Policy and Development*, a Swedish contribution to the follow up of *The Stockholm Plan of Action*.

There is an urgent need to strengthen the knowledge base on culture and human development. This is required in order to repair the “distorted, culture-neglecting” view of reality which has so far characterised most development efforts. The aim of the report is therefore to develop and consolidate a new conceptual framework for the elaboration of “tools” for the assessment, planning and reporting of cultural policies for human development.

There has been a wealth of work at international, national and local levels to define the complex and diverse relationships between the two terms culture and human development. The totality of this work does not yet constitute a coherent “paradigm” for work on appropriate indicators. Various lists of criteria and values have been put forward on the one hand, and various conceptual directions have been flagged on the other. These hands are not quite, however, in a position to shake. Conceptual and policy “handshakes” will therefore be necessary in the form of the development of complementary methodologies for cultural assessment.

The report proposes two key operational tools as frameworks for assessment and implementation: cultural mapping and cultural planning. They are sufficiently open to accommodate the facts of cultural diversity and the strategic imperatives of applied work in the contemporary cultural field.

The report can be seen as a first step in trying to change cultural policymakers’ existing “toolboxes”. But the report is not a policy document ready to be used by policymakers around the world. The issues raised in this report have arisen in many environments all over the world. The ambition will be to try to build bridges to them and between them. A first step in that process will be to spread the report widely via many channels and international networks.

All quotes in this summary are from Professor Colin Mercer, the Project Director of the report. Specific issues especially related to the report should be forwarded to the Project Director.

Foundations for a new conceptual framework

In 1995 The World Commission on Culture and Development presented its report *Our Creative Diversity*. The Council of Europe presented a European report with the title *In from the Margins*. To draw political conclusions from the reports, UNESCO arranged an *Intergovernmental Conference of Cultural Policies* in Stockholm in 1998 that decided on an *Action Plan on Cultural Policies for Development*. The plan presented principles and policy objectives to be adopted by national governments in co-operation with actors at local and regional levels. The Action Plan stresses the need of communicating best theories and practices and stimulating the basic and applied research required. UNESCO was given the key responsibility for following up the Plan.

As part of the follow up process, a group of Swedish institutions launched an international project in December 2000 on *Towards cultural citizenship: Tools for cultural policy and development*. The project has been prepared as a collaborative effort by a research team with Professor Colin Mercer as Project Director. It is financed by Sida (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) and the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation. The Swedish Ministry of Culture, The Swedish National Commission for UNESCO, the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, and The Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs have also played an active part in the work.

One of the priorities of the follow up process is to strengthen the knowledge base on culture and human development. This is urgently required in order to repair the “distorted, culture neglecting” view of reality which has so far characterised most development efforts. The aim of this report is not to create new knowledge but to bring together the rich fields of existing knowledge and research in cultural studies, anthropology, political theory, economics, sociology and the operational field of cultural policy. The idea is to develop and consolidate a new conceptual frame-

work for the elaboration of “tools” for the assessment, planning and reporting of cultural policies for human development.

The aims are to:

- Provide an overview of tools required or desirable for the formulation, implementation reporting and assessment of cultural policies for development and provide justification for their need and use.
- Map and document existing, theoretical, methodological and institutional tools.
- Identify major “gaps” in existing methodologies and “toolboxes”.
- Suggest major deficiencies to be addressed, as a matter of priority, through research and development or through betterment in the practical application of existing knowledge and tools.
- On the basis of the above, suggest relevant and feasible methodologies adapted to a few different social, political, cultural and economic contexts.

Cultural indicators

In India the Narmada River Sardar Sarovar dam project has caused massive displacement and hardship to the communities in the area affected. The development project was no doubt subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment in order to gain funding and formal approvals. It is unlikely, however, that there was anything like a Cultural Impact Assessment that would measure its effects on the ways of living, lifestyles, identities, value systems and beliefs of the communities affected. Such factors are crucial to the acceptability and the sustainability of any development process. We have learned this for the environment, can we also learn it for culture?

We often forget that the land and environment are also cultural resources in which we invest with meaning and significance, can earn a living and consolidate a sense of place, often in profoundly spiritual and cultural terms. This is not a logic that is confined to traditional societies. But how can we persuade policy-makers and planners that there are “fig-

ures” in the field of culture and development that can be just as relevant as figures relating to industrial outputs, GDP, etc. How can we persuade them that, in the longer-term perspectives of sustainability and human development, these “figures” are likely to be even more relevant and meaningful than many of the current categories of National Accounts data?

As ways of bringing policy-relevant and policy-enabling cultural analysis and knowledge back into the mainstream this report have proposed methodological and evaluative frameworks that have been well-tested in other fields – quality of life indicators, value production chain analysis, value circulation analysis, and social and cultural capital assessment.

Based on research and consultation four cultural indicators are identified in this report. They form a matrix or analytical grid that can assist in the evaluation and assessment of cultural policies for human development. They combine both quantitative and qualitative factors and provide a sufficiently “open architecture” for strategic connection with macro policy agendas such as quality of life, sustainable development and human rights while retaining a necessary level of context-sensitivity.

The four categories of cultural indicators are:

1. Cultural vitality, diversity and conviviality

Indicators in this category measures both the health and sustainability of the cultural economy and the ways in which the circulation and diversity of cultural resources and experiences can contribute to quality of life.

Indicators in this set should evaluate the following elements:

- The strength and dynamics of the cultural economy.
- The diversity of the forms of cultural production and consumption.
- The sustainability of the cultural ecology including relationships and flows between commercial, public funded and community sectors.

- The extent to which these factors contribute to overall quality of life and the capacity to “live together” (conviviality).
- The existence, or otherwise, of policy settings, measures and instruments to enable and evaluate the above.

2. Cultural access, participation and consumption

Indicators in this category measures – from the point of view of users/consumers/participants – opportunities for, and constraints to, active cultural engagement.

Indicators in this set should evaluate the following elements:

- Access to opportunities for creation through to consumption.
- Evaluation by demographics of uses and users, non-uses and non-users of cultural resources.
- The ends to which cultural resources are used.
- The existence, or otherwise, of policy settings, measures and instruments to enable and evaluate the above.

3. Culture, lifestyle and identity

Indicators in this category evaluates the extent to which cultural resources and capital are used to constitute specific lifestyles and identities.

Indicators in this set should evaluate the following elements:

- The extent, diversity and sustainability of uses and non-uses of cultural resources for lifestyle and identity purposes.
- A recognition and assessment of the reality of sub-cultures that are currently below or beyond the policy purview including ethnic, gender, regional/local and age-based sub-cultural forms.
- Inequalities by demographics, location, income, etc of inequalities of access to these opportunities.

4. Culture, ethics, governance and conduct

Indicators in this category evaluates the extent to which cultural resources and capital can contribute to and shape forms of behaviour by both individuals and collectives.

Indicators in this set should evaluate the following elements:

- Evaluation of the role of culture and cultural resources to personal and community development.
- The contribution of culture and cultural resources to community cohesion, social inclusion and exclusion.
- The contribution of culture and cultural resources to the understanding of diversity and diversities.
- The existence, or otherwise, of policy settings, measures and instruments to enable and evaluate the above.

Cultural mapping and planning

A great deal of quantitative and qualitative ground has been covered already, among others the work jointly organised and published by UNESCO/UNRISD in the 1990s and the work of the two *World Culture Reports*, 1998 and 2000.

There has also been a wealth of work at national, sub-national and local levels that needs to be added to the picture. It is fair to say, however, that the totality of this work does not yet constitute a coherent “paradigm” for work on appropriate indicators. Various lists of criteria and values have been put forward on the one hand, and various conceptual directions have been flagged on the other. These hands are not quite, however, in a position to shake.

Conceptual and policy “handshakes” will therefore be necessary in the form of the development of complementary methodologies for cultural assessment based partly on the experience of successful “translation” in other fields such as that between social capital theory and social capital assessment.

We need to “map” the logic and dynamics of the connection between the cultural and other fields within different “rationalities” and cultural

systems. We also need to find a language to enable us to bring these things together within a “grid” of knowledge that is actionable for the purposes of policy.

Two key operational tools are proposed as frameworks for both assessment and implementation: *cultural mapping* and *cultural planning*. They are sufficiently open to accommodate the facts of cultural diversity and the strategic imperatives of applied work in the contemporary cultural field. They also respond appropriately to the complex and diverse relationships between our two lead terms: culture and human development.

Cultural mapping

Cultural mapping is both an analytical and a strategic planning tool. It can be more or less equivalent to “cultural auditing” or “community cultural assessment” and is a process, both quantitative and qualitative, of scanning the cultural resource base of a given community in order to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. In the context of development initiatives this is an especially useful tool as it focuses simultaneously on human values and beliefs, the objective cultural resource base, cultural obstacles to development, and the developmental potential of the cultural resource base.

Cultural planning

Based on the process of cultural mapping, cultural planning does not mean the “planning of culture”. It means ensuring that cultural considerations are present in all processes of planning and development. It has been defined as a strategic, integrated and holistic approach to cultural resources in the context of community development and planning and while initially formulated and applied in urban contexts its underlying philosophy is an “anthropological” approach to cultural resources that links them to broader agendas for economic development, sustainability and quality of life. At the heart of the actual practice of cultural planning lies the imperative to join up ideas linking cultural policy to mainstream agendas in economic, social and human development, regeneration, physical and human resource management. Building on a rich conceptual and ethical ground – including the “heresy” of actually involving people and communities in the planning processes of which they are nor-

mally the “object” – cultural planning provides an actually existing practical and operational framework that brings cultural considerations into the mainstream.

Cultural mapping and cultural planning link research, consultation, knowledge and practical implementation in the context of human development in productive and practical ways.

A community cultural assessment involves both consultation and a rigorous process of detailed research into diverse cultural resources and diverse cultural needs. This can both be quantitative and qualitative as the following example from a cultural plan for a new city in Australia indicates:

Quantitative and Qualitative Cultural Mapping for the Joondalup Cultural Plan

”...We used both approaches. On the quantitative side we commissioned the Australian Bureau of Statistics to produce figures on cultural consumption for the area based on the *Household Expenditure Survey*.

We discovered a couple of surprises. Surprise number one was that the residents of this area had one of the highest annual levels of spending in the culture, entertainment and recreation category in Australia. Surprise number two was that most of the money was being spent on cultural consumption inside the home (videos, computer games, gym equipment, etc.).

Armed with this sort of information we were able to argue to the local authorities that they had a bit of a problem here... ‘Don’t you think that sends a message about the quality of amenity in the area and wouldn’t you rather see that money going more directly into the local economy rather than to international entertainment companies?’

To this quantitative research we added a good deal of qualitative research in the form of imaginative cultural mapping and planning with local stakeholders.

We provided young people with disposable cameras and asked them to go out and take pictures of their favourite places. We persuaded urban design students from a local university to come with us to the local shopping centres and to sit down with groups of women, with young people,

with older people, with the local ethnic communities, to sketch their ideas about what they wanted their streets and their environment to look like.

We sent out a team with a video camera to catch a sense of the patterns of movement and activity in the area. We used, in other words, cultural resources to develop a more complex and composite framework for planning and we mounted an exhibition of images and expectations – from women, young people, the Vietnamese, the Aborigines, the elderly – with our ‘survey before plan’ which had very positive responses and outcomes in terms of defining the texture, quality and diversity of the new city.

You need to ask lots of questions in order to begin to identify key issues. And, in asking the questions you are setting in motion the first stages of community involvement and investment....

...Cultural assessment assesses a community’s strength and potential within a framework of cultural development. It establishes an inventory of local culture and takes a hard look at resources, gaps and needs enabling us to plan for better liveable, socially just and responsive communities.....”

Research in, of, and for, cultural policy must acknowledge and integrate into its analytical frameworks the facts of *diversity of cultural resources*, the *range of forms of participation in the cultural field*, from production to consumption, and the *forms of articulation* of the cultural field with social, economic, environmental and ethical policy domains.

The implication of this is that there needs to be a new and major emphasis on cultural assessment at local and regional levels (a “deepening” and enrichment of currently available forms of assessment) as well as considerable attention to the range of socio-economic variables that are currently applied at national and international levels – a “lengthening” and enrichment of the currently available indicator sets.

Structure of the recommendations

In this context the following key proposals for consideration by agencies and stakeholders are formulated.

Key proposal 1

Through the competent agencies of the member states in the UN system and through regional entities a programme of action should be established to bring together research efforts in the cultural field undertaken by UNESCO, the Human Development Report Office of the UNDP, and The World Bank.

Key proposal 2

At national, regional and local levels mechanisms should be established for the development of cultural policies and cultural strategies based on competent forms of assessment and consultation through the frameworks of cultural mapping and cultural planning proposed in this report. These mechanisms might, depending on institutional and policy arrangements, take the form of financial or statutory incentives to undertake assessments relating culture to quality of life, community well-being, and sustainable development.

Key proposal 3

In the context of both national and regional agreements national statistical agencies and other competent bodies should be encouraged to expand the remit of their research efforts in the cultural field in collaboration with other research-competent agencies in public, private and community sectors.

Key proposal 4

Within national research councils and other funding agencies new programmes of cultural research by universities and other research-capable entities should be encouraged in partnership with community and industry stakeholders in the cultural field to undertake both issue-oriented and goal-oriented research that is policy-enabling.

Development-oriented work in the field of quality of life evaluation, social capital assessment, and poverty reduction stand as models of this sort of research that do not currently have a strong presence within the field of cultural studies and cultural research.

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The report *Towards cultural citizenship: Tools for cultural policy and development* has been prepared very much as a collaborative effort by the research team comprising, apart from the under figured, Ms Andrea Theresa Sanseverino Galan (Latin America), Professor Penina Mlama (Africa) and Professor Carl-Johan Kleberg of the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation, who provided a report on three South East Asian Countries and much more. Professor Arjun Appadurai of the University of Chicago provided valuable input and advice at the early stages of the project. At the Nottingham base, Dr Jim Shorthose and Mr John Fryer provided an invaluable bedrock of methodological and empirical detail and Mr Chun Yu Liu provided a specialist case study on the countries of North East Asia.

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How to Order towards Cultural Citizenship: Tools for Cultural Policy and Development

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Cultural policy is increasingly central to national and international agendas. While it originally grew out of identification of and concern with the conditions in a fairly narrowly defined cultural sector, it is now a mainstream policy issue. Today the challenges, the opportunities and the responsibilities of cultural policy are changing, broadening, and connecting with economic, social and environmental policy. Cultural policy, that is to say, is about the fundamental human right of citizenship and the fundamental human objective of sustainable development. That was – and is – the basic message in *Our Creative Diversity* (1995) and in *The Stockholm Plan*, adopted at UNESCO's Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policy for Human Development – *The Power of Culture* – in Stockholm in 1998. Culture can no longer only or mainly be restricted to the opera house or gallery – 'the arts' – but must be looked upon and treated as a basic driving force behind human behaviour and central to human development.

The Stockholm Action Plan stresses the need of communicating best theories and best practices and stimulating needed basic and applied research in the cultural policy field. The book *Towards Cultural Citizenship: Tools for Cultural Policy and Development*, which this document is a summary of, is a Swedish contribution to this effort and is written by Professor Colin Mercer of The Nottingham Trent University, England in collaboration with researchers and specialists in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. Mercer stresses that the diversity of understanding the world, concepts and realities of 'culture' means that this is not a question of simply bringing together existing lists and aggregates of data. The core issue is to discuss and try to construct a framework for 'knowledge management' for the cultural sector: to make the connections between rich fields of existing knowledge and research in cultural studies, anthropology, political theory, economics, sociology and the operational field of cultural policy.



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