



## Brief project description

UNESCO Culture booth to be organised during the 2013 ECOSOC ARM High Segment (1-3 July 2013, Palais des Nations, Geneva)

# **Culture: Key to Sustainable Development Placing Culture at the heart of Sustainable Development Policies**

## **Main message: Our Culture, Our Future**

We believe culture is an integral part of the approach to sustainable development. In the face of mounting challenges such as population growth, environmental degradation, disasters, climate change, increasing inequalities and persisting poverty, the development strategies that have been followed so far seem to have reached their limits, despite the undoubted progress made. Clearly, there is a need for a new approach, to be defined and measured in a way which accounts for the broader picture of human progress and which emphasizes equality, dignity, wellbeing and sustainability, by giving more consideration to the cultural dimension of development.

Culture is what makes us who we are. It gives us strength. It is a wellspring of innovation and creativity. It provides deep insights and answers to many global challenges we face today. The extraordinary potential that culture holds to foster a truly sustainable development, both as an enabler and driver, should further be understood and integrated in the global policy debates for future global development agenda in a concrete manner.

Building on past and recent important statements of principles and lessons learnt, as well as facts and figures, in addition to best practices, from around the world, we wish to have the many voices of our partners in the field heard by the international community on the importance of culture for their fulfilment and material improvement. Ultimately, we wish to ignite and stimulate debates on the role of culture as an enabler and driver of global development in social, economic and environmental terms, and for the full integration of culture – through clear goals, targets and indicators – within agreed development strategies and programmes at global, regional and local levels, as will be defined in the post-2015 development agenda.

## **Name of the approaches/ tools/projects**

To show the scope and scale of our work for fostering culture for social, economic and human development as well as for promoting peace and dialogue in over 60 years in every corner of the globe, we will exhibit posters, share publications and audio-visual materials. We will also engage the public in dialogue through websites and other audio-visual materials (such as DVDs and videos) on topics including: a) promoting heritage, cultural infrastructures and sustainable cultural tourism as drivers of local economic growth and social inclusion; b) creating enabling environments for the

diversity of cultural expressions, vibrant cultural and creative industries; c) global partnership for cultural cooperation (MDG-F); d) post-conflict and disaster operations in the field of culture and peace building.

### **Description of our messages and materials**

#### ***a) Promoting heritage, cultural infrastructures and sustainable cultural tourism as a driver of local economic growth and social inclusion***

World Heritage represents our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration. Places as unique and diverse as the wilds of East Africa's Serengeti, the Pyramids of Egypt, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia and the Baroque cathedrals of Latin America make up our world's heritage. Nowadays, the international community has also widely embraced the notion of intangible heritage including traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts. Cultural infrastructures, such as museums and heritage houses, act as custodians of precious objects and mediators between places and public, showcasing tangible and intangible aspects of culture. All of the above are important sources of identity and pride for people who are their caretakers; resources for education as well as intercultural dialogue, and provide major attraction for the growing and sustainable cultural and heritage tourism. Programmes within the framework of UNESCO's major Conventions on World Heritage (1972), Intangible Heritage (2003), Underwater Heritage (2001), protection of sites and cultural property (1954 and 1970), programmes on museums and sustainable cultural tourism provide interesting insights into the power of heritage and cultural infrastructures enabling and driving sustainable development.

Materials to be shown/distributed: related websites, audio-visual materials (DVDs/videos) +publications (World Heritage maps, "Heritage beyond borders", World Heritage in Young Hands, immaterial heritage kit)

#### ***b) Creating enabling environments for the diversity of cultural expressions, vibrant cultural and creative industries;***

The UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions is a legally-binding international agreement that ensures artists, cultural professionals, practitioners and citizens worldwide can create, produce, disseminate and enjoy a broad range of cultural goods, services and activities, including their own. It was adopted because the international community signalled the urgency for the implementation of international law that would recognise the distinctive nature of cultural goods, services and activities as vehicles of identity, values and meaning; and that while cultural goods, services and activities have important economic value, they are not mere commodities or consumer goods that can only be regarded as objects of trade. Recognizing that culture can no longer be just a by-product of development, but rather is a mainspring for sustainable development, the Convention ushers in a new international framework for the governance and management of culture by encouraging the introduction of cultural policies and measures that nurture creativity, provide access for creators to participate in domestic and international marketplaces where their artistic works/expressions can be recognized and compensated and ensure these expressions are accessible to the public at large; recognising and optimising the overall contribution of the cultural industries to economic and social development, particularly in developing countries; integrating culture into sustainable development strategies and national development policies; and promoting international cooperation to facilitate the mobility of artists as well as the flow of cultural goods and services, especially those from the South.

Materials to be shown/distributed: related websites, DVDs/videos+publications

Project brochure on the International Fund for Cultural Diversity – UNESCO 2005 Convention

The Basic Texts of the 2005 Convention

Politiques pour la creativite – Guide pour le développement des industries culturelles et créative (in French and Spanish)

### *c) Global partnership for cultural cooperation (MDG-F);*

The MDG-F Culture and Development Thematic Window is a ground-breaking experimental investment in large-scale culture and development programmes. **18 large-scale development programmes** (referred to as Joint Programmes) have been conceived in this framework to be implemented over a period of 3 to 4 years and were implemented in Africa, the Arab States, Asia, Latin America, and South-East Europe, with a view to increasing socio-economic opportunities and improving cross-cultural understanding, paying particular attention to vulnerable groups. Established in December 2006 with an overall contribution of €528 million (US \$710 million) from the Spanish Government to the United Nations (UN) system, the **Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F)** is an innovative international cooperation mechanism seeking to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the MDGs worldwide. Building on the comparative advantage of United Nations organizations and their joint efforts in the context of the United Nations Reform, the MDG-F supports national governments, local authorities and civil society organizations in their efforts to tackle poverty and inequality in eight thematic areas referred to as “Thematic Windows”. Culture and Development (C&D) is one such Thematic Window. **UNESCO**, as the UN specialized agency with a specific mandate on culture, was designated as **Convenor** of the Thematic Window on Culture and Development with a leading role in this joint effort of the United Nations system.

The overall purpose of the Thematic Window on Culture and Development is to demonstrate that, even though culture is not explicitly mentioned in the MDGs, cultural assets are an essential component of national development, notably in terms of poverty alleviation and social inclusion.

Materials to be shown/distributed: thematic website, dedicated publications, DVDs/videos.

### *d) Post-conflict and disaster operations in the field of culture and peace building*

UNESCO led major recovery operations in post-conflict and disaster areas and worked intensively to restore cultural heritage and identities of the populations torn by conflicts. The most prominent examples are Cambodia (Angkor), Afghanistan (Bamiyan and the National Museum of Afghanistan), Bosnia (Mostar bridge), and most recently in Indonesia, Haiti and in Mali.

Materials to be shown: thematic websites on individual projects, dedicated publications, DVDs/videos.