



CAMPUS EURO-AFRICANO DE COOPERAÇÃO CULTURAL

22-26 de junho de 2009. Maputo, Moçambique

Workshop: Arts Networks

'The International Network for Cultural Diversity (INCD)

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Maputo, 22-23 June 2009

THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR CULTURAL DIVERSITY (INCD)

The International Network for Cultural Diversity (INCD) is a worldwide network of artists, cultural NGOs and civil society institutions dedicated to monitoring and countering the adverse effects of globalisation on the arts and culture.

After an initial idea for an international network for cultural diversity was mooted at a UNESCO conference in Stockholm in 1998, the INCD held its founding meeting in Greece in 2000 during the 3rd meeting of International Network for Cultural Policies (INCP), which is a meeting of Ministers of culture of various countries. Thereafter there have been symbiotic relationships between INCP and INCD at the annual general meeting of the former wherever they are holding their meeting.

What is the history of the INCD in Africa?

The INCP – the network of culture ministers – has always had representation from African countries such as Senegal, South Africa and Botswana. Similarly, the INCD has had African members from its inception. But when the INCD hosted its annual conference in Cape Town in October 2002, it was not only its biggest conference to date, but also had the most African representation at any of its events.

This conference had a huge impact on the INCD and raised the profile and voice of Africans, not only at the conference, but within the INCD as a whole. As a direct consequence of this conference, the Network for Arts and Culture South Africa (NACSA), a national body to represent all disciplines in South Africa was launched, and is now the key civil society body in the arts in South Africa. NACSA also serves as the INCD's partner in the country, and the intention is that similar, nationally representative structures would be recruited into the INCD or the INCD – with the help of local artists' associations – will assist African partners in building such representative structures to be powerful lobbies in the interests of artists in their countries, and to represent their interests in international forums like the INCD.

How INCD is structured?

The INCD is an international network of individual artists, cultural institutions and NGOs from all continents. A Steering Committee elected by members coordinates the INCD and provides leadership. The Steering Committee is elected to ensure that it is representative of the different continent, with representatives from all regions. The Steering Committee has

teleconferences and communicates via e-mail in making decisions, and from time to time, when funds are available, meets during the year.

The head office is located in Ottawa, and a full-time administrator used to run the office. A Coordinator – the equivalent of a General Secretary - works on a part-time basis for the INCD, and is also located in Canada.

The plan of the INCD is to establish regional offices in South America, Africa, Asia, Europe and North America to further and coordinate its work in these areas. Africa is the first to have an INCD regional office in Senegal.

You can join the INCD or at least sign up to be part of the mailing list on the continent. You could also provide us with the names and contact details of others in your country that you think would be interested in being part of the INCD. And finally, you could provide us with the names and contact details of politicians, government officials, public funding bodies and others who have influence with regard to the cultural industries and decisions regarding trade matters. They will be placed on a mailing list to ensure that they receive information that may help to inform their decisions

Activities of the network

The INCD along with other cultural NGOs supported the promulgation of UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity in 2001, its adoption in 2005 and through advocacy worked for the ratification of the convention by different countries. Right now INCD is also working for the full implementation of the policy.

INCD is also lobbying for the promotion of the concept of a Global Fund to support cultural industries, particularly in the developing world. There would be little point in having an international convention to protect local cultural industries and cultural diversity, if countries did not have the means to create and distribute the cultural products that would give real local content to cultural diversity. The concept of such a Global Fund has been adopted by the INCP, and it is necessary for the global civil society movement to ensure that it takes effect.

Thirdly, INCD is also lobbying to launch a campaign for a percentage of all development funds to be allocated to the arts and the cultural industries in countries benefiting from such funds. INCD approach is to campaign for cultural development to be integrated into broader development practices.

The INCD has taken parts in various cultural conferences and have contributed to cultural discuss as facilitators, contributors as well participants.

The INCD circulate Newsletter – though not regular

Research has been carried out on how creative industries can aid poverty alleviation in Africa. Tagged Roadmap for INCD, Burama K. Sagnia was commissioned and he presented the report to INCD on “**Strengthening Local Creative Industries and Developing Cultural Capacity for Poverty Alleviation**” in Senegal 2005

Network Survival

A proper understanding and appreciation of cultural dynamisms will in the long run aid the survival of any network. That is, it must be flexible and in tune with current world trend, for instance the word ‘globalisation’ in this regard readily comes to mind. With this in mind, the ability to be able to change, expand and admit more groups or individuals without losing focus will in the long run establish the relevance of the network within the appropriate quarters.

If the aims of networks are basically to share ideas and create opportunity for associations, groups, countries and above all individuals to set target towards achieving a common goal. If network also provides enabling opportunity for the development of human resources through training, opens doors to local, regional, continental and intercontinental markets in terms of development in creative goods as well as distribution. It must be emphasised therefore networks must be structured in such a way to continue to give individual member or group the opportunity to express themselves and retain their identity.

Individuals, groups or institutions look forward to positive result that may bring short and long term benefits from the network. This in itself aids the network to recruit new members because even decision makers now know that investment in cultural activities can yield both short and long term returns which are beneficial to the people and measureable as contributing to the GDP of each country.

In a diversified and multicultural society like Africa, networks also become avenue to create opportunity for better appreciation of each others’ culture as well as opportunity to unite in whatever way you want to look at it.

Challenges

Fund

The impact of ICT on networks

If there are over 200 cultural networks in Europe, how do we want to faction cultural networks in Africa and cultural networks between Africa and Europe?

The Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA), Swedish International Development Agency
(SIDA)

Arterial
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