

FASHION VILLAGE LAB: PILOTING CIRCULAR CREATIVE ECONOMY ECOSYSTEM IN FASHION INDUSTRY



AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



CULTURE 21 ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

2. HERITAGE, DIVERSITY, AND CREATIVITY
4. CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
5. CULTURE AND ECONOMY
7. CULTURE, URBAN PLANNING, AND PUBLIC SPACE

DEVELOPMENT, SUSTAINABLE, ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENT, CREATIVE INDUSTRIES, COMMUNITY, PUBLIC SPACE, TRAINING, CREATIVITY, COOPERATION, ACCESS

1. Context

Bandung is the capital city of West Java Province and has about 3 million inhabitants. It is known as a destination for culinary, fashion, and leisure experiences, and is home to more than 120 universities. Bandung retains its reputation since the colonial era as a destination for culinary and shopping experience, a producer of leather goods, textile, and other fashion apparels. Bandung joined UNESCO Creative Cities Network as a City of Design in 2015.

2. Bandung and culture

The Mayor of Bandung City (between 2013 and 2018) encouraged global partnerships. A group of Dutch academia and companies proposed collaboration projects, among which were the Fashion Village Lab (FVL) with Bandung Creative City Forum (BCCF) as the leading local partner.

FVL AIMS TO CREATE A PILOT FOR A CIRCULAR CREATIVE ECONOMY ECOSYSTEM IN FASHION INDUSTRY.

FVL focuses on sustainability issues of the Cigondewah area, where a garment factory that produces multinational fashion brands is located. The factory has been the source of water and soil pollution, and solid waste (textile scraps); while its workers and local inhabitants live in substandard housing, with limited access to adequate public space and facilities. FVL started in 2014 with research and studies; producing concepts and scenarios; implementing experiments and prototypes of solutions; collaborating with stakeholders, both internal (local authorities, youth and women groups, related municipal departments) and external (universities and research centres, funding bodies, etc.).

3. Goals and project implementation

3.1. Main aim and specific goals

FVL mainly aims to create a pilot for a circular creative economy ecosystem in the fashion industry. The factories in Bandung produce for multinational fashion brands, which means that the production cycle is influenced by the global consumption habits and demands, while the harmful impacts from the industry (such as water and soil pollution, and solid waste issues) affect the local production site and people. Therefore, it is crucial to create a prototype of a fashion industry production site that conducts a sustainable practice involving all related stakeholders.

The specific goals are:

- Create a destination for the fashion tourism industry, with the narrative "circular creative economy ecosystem in the fashion industry".
- Build a place that functions as a visitor and business centre to also be a showroom, gallery, and shop, and hold activities related to fashion production.
- Establish a parcel of land that grows samples of plants for natural fabrics and dyes.
- Establish a local cooperative that focuses on home-based or small enterprises, especially in fashion accessories products and services.

- Improve public space and public facilities.
- Incubate local start-up enterprises that utilise 'waste' from the factory as the main materials of their products, by providing training and workshops for entrepreneurship, design, packaging, branding, etc.
- Connect selected local businesses (whose products already meet certain quality standards) to local, regional, and global markets, and also assist the process that aims for the businesses' sustainability.

3.2. Development of the project

Main actions carried out

Among the main actions, targeting a beneficiary population of 21,500 Cigondewah inhabitants, we conducted:

- Research: mapping and identification of local actors, occupation varieties, assets, and other potentials; experimenting on materials; prototyping locally sourced products for local SMEs; analysing and recommending solutions, concepts, and scenarios for a sustainable fashion industry ecosystem.
- Advocacy: discussion sessions and workshops with different segments of local inhabitants; focusing on product development and entrepreneurship.
- Training and Workshop: for youth on entrepreneurship; for local SMEs and start-ups on fashion products development; for women on co-operatives; for all inhabitants on (mural) artworks and public (furniture) design.
- Projects: mural, public furniture, and the establishment of a co-operative.
- Dissemination: research reports, proceedings, and presentations in international forums.

FVL FOCUSES ON THE SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES OF CIGONDEWAH AREA, WHERE A GARMENT FACTORY THAT PRODUCES MULTINATIONAL FASHION BRANDS IS LOCATED. THE FACTORY HAS BEEN THE SOURCE OF WATER AND SOIL POLLUTION, AND SOLID WASTE THAT MOUNTS IN THE AREA.

All BCCF programs commonly go through the 3C phases:

- Connect: all related stakeholders are identified.
- Collaborate: each stakeholder executed its intervention, often simultaneously. Social mapping and potential identification by Praxis and ITB; connection and correspondence with principals of the multinational fashion brands in each respective country; research and concept/ development of scenarios around the topics of circular creative economy ecosystem; experiments on materials and processes; discussion with women groups about forming a co-operative that can support their home-/ micro industries; planning aesthetic and functional elements for the area, involving local inhabitants, artists, designers, and students.
- Commerce/Celebrate: presentation of "Collaborate" results. Not all laid-out plans were executed, so this phase is still on hold until more funding resources are secured. So far, FVL has produced a mural, public furniture, and "Kawisan" Co-operative.

4. Impacts

4.1. Direct impacts

Impacts on the local government

Bandung municipality has become aware of the problems of the Cigondewah area, including the pollution of Citarum River, which can only be solved with a strong collaboration among the neighbouring cities. The municipality, through facilitation and budget allocation, supports these community initiatives that implement design thinking and urban acupuncture methods.

West Java provincial government plans to grant one creative hub for every city of the province and to establish a creative economy agency at the province level. FVL would set an example of how a creative hub may function and would be among the first strategic activities of this agency, that should see the region as a whole ecosystem for the creative economy sector.

Impact on culture and on local cultural actors

Young people formally educated in the field of design would be able to implement their skills and knowledge in projects that require professionalism in design fields, comprehension of mass production and life cycle of designed consumer goods, and social empathy and communal sensitivity.

Through FVL, Bandung, as UNESCO City of Design, would be able to prove its viewpoints that design and creativity can offer solutions for urban issues.

BANDUNG MUNICIPALITY HAS BECOME AWARE OF THE PROBLEMS AT THE CIGONDEWAH AREA, THAT CAN ONLY BE SOLVED WITH COLLABORATION AMONG THE NEIGHBOURING CITIES.

Impact on the territory and population

Technological advancement should be balanced with social dynamics and cohesion, and yielding social innovation benefitting the city and its citizens. The improvement of the environmental situation and the promotion of a sustainable fashion industry progressively improve the well-being of the population of the territory as well as the income generation due to the new business opportunities generated.

4.2. Evaluation

The completion of the whole FVL project should still include one final segment. However, the results show that:

- Design thinking and urban acupuncture are effective for rapid, small-scale solutions, but require more works and commitments to remain/be developed into sustainable solutions.
- The 3C phases (Connect-Collaborate-Commerce/Celebrate) can be easily understood by all stakeholders, a useful tool to communicate plans and targets, allocation of budget and other resources.
- Implementation of the solutions should not rely only on one stakeholder, to avoid the risk of their termination due to a change of personnel after a certain period.

- Tangible interventions would uplift the spirit of the local inhabitants to proceed with the more complicated, intangible programs that would require more commitments.
- Communication in all interactions with the local stakeholders should use terms that relate to their interests and comprehensions.

4.3 Key factors

The key aspects are:

- Mapping and identifying all stakeholders and their roles or contributions.
- Identifying local leaders and main actors, who are an intermediary between the idea of the project and its implementation, and can communicate with the stakeholders.
- Having a roadmap with clear targets approved by all stakeholders to communicate within particular focuses, and convince sponsors to invest in the project.

4.4. Continuity

The Bill on Creative Economy for Bandung City was passed on January 2021, guaranteeing that creative economy will always be included in the development strategy. Strengthened by the bill, the annual DA.bdg will still be held to foster creativity and innovation for urban issues, and will continue producing recommendations that might improve FVL solutions. In a way, DA.bdg will retain and improve the ideas and methods of FVL and spread the methods, experiences, and all lessons learnt by other participants.

5. Further information

Bandung was a candidate for the fourth “UCLG Mexico City – Culture 21 International Award” (November 2019 – May 2020). The jury for the award drew up its final report in June of 2020, and requested that the Committee on Culture promote this project as one of the good practices to be implemented through Agenda 21 for culture.

This article was written by Dwinita Larasati, Chairperson of Bandung Creative City Forum (BCCF), Indonesia.

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