

REIMAGINE BULAWAYO



AGENDA 2030 - ODD



CULTURE 21: ACTIONS - ENGAGEMENTS

1. CULTURAL RIGHTS
4. CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
5. CULTURE AND ECONOMY
6. CULTURE, EQUALITY, AND SOCIAL INCLUSION
9. GOVERNANCE OF CULTURE

SUSTAINABLE, DEVELOPMENT, INSTITUTIONAL, SUPPORT,
COOPERATION, STRATEGY, CULTURAL, INCLUSION, COMMUNITY,
PROMOTION, PARTICIPATION, ACCESS, REGENERATION,
LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, CLIMATE CHANGE

1. Context

Bulawayo, with between 1 – 1.5 million inhabitants, is Zimbabwe's second city. Bulawayo was influenced by many cultures and languages and became home to a rich diversity of minority cultural expressions due to migration. Also, it was acknowledged as Zimbabwe's City of Culture.

Over many decades, an authoritarian central government and repressive legislation have marginalized many communities, impeding their development and resulting in social fragmentation. This, coupled with the deindustrialisation and an ever-deepening economic crisis has had profound detrimental effects on the city. Despite these difficulties, the city's cultural industries have come to symbolize the city's resilience.

2. Bulawayo and culture

The City of Bulawayo does not have a formal Cultural Policy document yet. However, it is being finalised and due for launch in the second half of 2021 – the city has provided programmes and facilities for the development of sports, culture, and creative talent.

The project was initiated by Bulawayo City Council's Department of Housing and Community Services with the support of the Ministry of Youth, Sport, Arts and Recreation, in response to the cultural community's call to acknowledge the value of the city's cultural assets, cultural diversity, cultural activities, and built heritage as key tools in urban regeneration and the promotion of the city as a touristic destination.

Bulawayo has strategically adopted 3 interlinked pillars for socio-economic development, linking industrial resuscitation, technological innovation, and culture to enhance local growth, social inclusion, urban regeneration, sustainable development and resilience.

THE PROJECT AIMS TO HARMONIZE HUMAN, MATERIAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES IN THE INTEGRATION OF CULTURE AS A KEY ELEMENT IN SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES, AND ENHANCE THE RESILIENCE OF THE CITY OF BULAWAYO

The project is consistent with Agenda 21 for Culture in meeting the following criteria:

- Integrating culture as a key pillar in the sustainable development of the city in a long-term vision.
- Enhancing awareness of Agenda 21 for Culture and the SDGs.
- Acknowledging culture as a factor in economic development, employment creation and poverty alleviation in marginalised communities.
- Acknowledging the strategic role of the cultural and creative industries and their contribution to cultural identity and cultural diversity.
- Acknowledging that access to cultural and creative industries are essential to enhance social cohesion and build social capital.

The project coincides with the *Decade of Action* in the attainment of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and is particularly consistent with the SDG 1 (poverty alleviation), SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 9 (industry innovation and infrastructure), SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities), SDG 13 (climate action), and SDG 16 (peace justice and strong institutions).

The project responds to the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and the Zimbabwean Constitution.

3. Goals and project implementation

3.1. Main aim and specific goals

The project aims to harmonize human, material and financial resources in the integration of culture as a key element in sustainable urban development strategies, and enhance the resilience of the City of Bulawayo.

Specific goals

To enhance the functionality and resilience of the city and its residents through solutions to current challenges of urban renewal, deindustrialisation, increased social inequality, cultural fragmentation and the threats of climate change.

THE PROJECT OFFERED THE OPPORTUNITY FOR CULTURAL STAKEHOLDERS TO RESPOND AND TAKE OWNERSHIP OF THE ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE POLICY, AMONG OTHER ACTIONS

3.2. Development of the project

Beneficiaries

- The Bulawayo City Council and its structures.
- Arts practitioners and cultural workers.
- All residents of the City of Bulawayo.

Main actions carried out

Activity 1 – 4 planning meetings to foster dialogue between local and out of town cultural stakeholders.

Activity 2 – Engagement of an International Cultural Policy Consultant for the finalisation of the Arts, Culture and Heritage Policy documentation in consultation with local cultural stakeholders and the Bulawayo City Council structures.

Activity 3 – A 2-day Validation Seminar for 40 participants providing an opportunity for cultural stakeholders to respond, and to take ownership of the final Arts, Culture and Heritage Policy.

Activity 4 – A 2-day capacity building workshop facilitated by an international consultant to instruct 15 council representatives on the SDGs.

Activity 5 – One Public Art Expression implemented under the guidance of a guest councillor and 2 internationally based artists to raise awareness of the merit of public art and its ability to inspire communities.

Activity 6 – The provision of the necessary equipment for the Bulawayo Cultural Affairs Office enhances its operational mandate.

Obstacles

- Limited financial resources.
- Reliance on available human resources, which limited the engagement of professionals and the consultative processes.
- Renewed engagement required after a change in the composition and leadership of the Bulawayo City Council due to the 2018 election.

Results

- The need for a structured framework to guide the implementation of an inclusive cultural policy is addressed through the Arts, Culture and Heritage Policy document.
- The need for cultural stakeholders to respond and take ownership of the final Arts, Culture and Heritage Policy is addressed through the Validation Seminar.
- Capacity needs within the Bulawayo City Council structures are addressed through the capacity building workshop.
- Capacity needs within the Bulawayo Cultural Affairs Office are addressed through the provision of the necessary equipment.
- The awareness of the merit of public art and its ability to inspire communities is addressed through the commissioning of a Public Art Expression.

4. Impacts

4.1. Direct impacts

Impact on the local governments

This project has shown the effectiveness of learning opportunities within the Bulawayo City Council enhancing capacity for independent critical thinking and the promotion of innovative solution to current challenges.

The adoption of an inclusive Arts, Culture and Heritage Policy integrated with the city's Strategic Plan will expand the Council's vision for future sustainable development and enable residents' concerns to be addressed from a more structured and informed position.

Impact on the culture and the cultural actors

The project has strengthened the cultural identity of minority groups and enhanced the respect for the diversity of cultural expressions and their value. It has also promoted an enabling and democratic environment across cultural divisions, access to career path opportunities and economic empowerment for arts practitioners.

Broader impact on the city/region and its population

Finally, the project has expanded the knowledge of citizens and marginalised communities to develop transformational ideas to create alternative realities; enhanced social cohesion and justice, cultural and social capital, and dignity of the economically marginalised; empowered the youth and women; and contributed to a more just, equitable, inclusive, responsible, transparent, and accountable society.

Ameliorating distortions and dismantling socio-economic myths has a long-term impact on the critical consciousness of citizens as they undertake initiatives that will determine their own destiny.

ONE OF THE KEY FACTORS OF THE PROJECT IS THAT IT EFFECTIVELY FOSTERS ETHNIC, LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL IDENTITIES AS IT RELATES TO THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE DIVERSITY OF CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS

4.2. Evaluation

The Bulawayo City Council's technical partner, Nhimbe Trust has a Monitoring and Evaluation for Accountability and Learning (MEAL) framework tailored to each project. The central thrust of MEAL is the systematic use of Theories of Change at each level of the project cycle to generate consensus on the envisioned change process and to underpin a systematic approach to MEAL.

The formulation of clear Evaluation and Learning Questions at each level is achieved with input from the communities involved to ensure clarity on the necessary data to provide relevant evidence of project interventions and MEAL activities.

4.3. Key factors

By being reliant on human resource capacitation rather than financial resources, the project effectively builds knowledge and skills within Bulawayo's City Council and its service departments.

Cognizant of Bulawayo's ethnic diversity, the project effectively fosters ethnic, linguistic and cultural identities as it relates to the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions.

Cognizant of the needs of all Bulawayo residents, the project effectively provides opportunities for the empowerment of marginalised groups especially women and youth.

Cognizant of the cultural rights of all Bulawayo residents, the project effectively incorporates rights-based and people-centred methodologies in providing strategies for sustainable development.

4.4. Continuity

As an indicator of the Council's commitment to its service delivery mandate to residents, Bulawayo City Council was commended for the 3rd time as the best run council in Zimbabwe at the annual Local Government Investment Conference in 2018.

Bulawayo City Council is committed to participatory budgeting in a strategic effort to promote local democracy and smart partnerships under the guidance of Local Authorities Capacity Enhancement Project Zimbabwe, to promote civic interest and participation in local governance, involve communities in generating self-sustaining livelihood options, and promote accountability and transparency in local public finance and budgeting.

5. Further information

Bulawayo 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.

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