

THE PROGRAMME "THIS IS LOCAL CULTURE"



AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



CULTURE 21: ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

1. CULTURAL RIGHTS
2. HERITAGE, DIVERSITY AND CREATIVITY
5. CULTURE AND ECONOMY
6. CULTURE, EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

**EMPOWERMENT, CAPACITY, RESILIENCE, BOTTOM-UP,
GOVERNANCE, PARTICIPATION, CITIZENSHIP, CREATIVE
INDUSTRIES, COVID, CULTURAL RIGHTS**



1. Bogotá and culture

Bogotá is the capital and largest city of Colombia. It is a diverse and multicultural meeting point for people from across the country. In fact it is home to 11 million inhabitants, which is equivalent to 23% of the country's entire population. The city is an ideally located development hub offering modern infrastructure, which can help grow the cultural and creative sectors. Together this makes Bogotá a national leader in development.

With respect to its political organization and administrative divisions, the city has 20 districts which each have Local Development Funds (FDL), which public, legally protected, and have their own separate, legally assured assets whose aim is to provide services to citizens.

The Culture is Local program has served as a strategy to ensure peoples' access to cultural rights. The program helped carry out activities in the fields of culture, art, heritage, and creativity, with the participation of all 20 districts of Bogotá in the 2020, 2021, and 2022.

The cultural sector was one of the hardest hit by the quarantine measures implemented by the national and local governments to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. From an economic perspective, taking information from the Satellite Account for Culture and the Creative Economy of Bogotá (SCRD, DANE), activities in the cultural and creative sectors saw a decrease in added value of 6.1% between 2019 and 2020. In terms of employment in the sector, there was a decrease of 2% during the same period. In addition to the economic impact on the sector's activities, cultural media production was significantly affected, which is fundamental for mental health and social transformation.

When comparing 2019 (pre-pandemic) to 2021 (post-pandemic) the cultural and creative sector recovered 6.76% during that period. Indeed, Bogotá's cultural and creative sector contributed \$13.87 billion pesos (approx. \$3.7 million dollars) to the city's economy in 2021, which represented 5.2% of the city's total added value.



CULTURE IS LOCAL IS A STRATEGY OF REVIVAL AND REVITALIZATION CONNECTING THE 20 URBAN AND RURAL DISTRICTS THAT MAKE UP BOGOTÁ.

2. Project goals and implementation

2.1. Main goal and specific objectives

Culture is Local aims to strengthen and improve citizen initiatives and projects related to the creation, production, distribution, showcasing, marketing, and promotion of cultural and creative goods and services. This is achieved by offering economic incentives as well as training on entrepreneurship and business skills in order to boost growth, sustainability, and network building as a means of initial promotion and development. Together these can help mitigate the effects of the economic and social crisis caused by the pandemic. Culture is Local has therefore become a city-wide strategy to strengthen community, social, and regional processes through art and culture via the revitalization and transformation of the cultural ecosystem. Under this program, citizen participation processes are promoted on the use of public funding for the cultural and creative sector. This encourages civic engagement and empowerment so people can actively take part in decision-making. It also helps increase calls to promote the development of existing capacities, the reinforcing of the social fabric, and the exercise of cultural rights in Bogotá under the principles of co-responsibility, equity, and social inclusion.

2.2. Project development

Two lines of action were established in the program:



WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF PARTICIPATORY BUDGETS, PEOPLE WHO LED ANY INITIATIVES THAT WERE SUBMITTED AND PROMOTED BY THE COMMUNITY BECOME “LOCAL BUILDERS” WHO ULTIMATELY EXECUTE THE PROJECTS.

- A. “Strengthening and support for local builders”: is related to the development, execution, follow-up, and support of cultural projects that arise out of citizen initiatives within the framework of participatory budgets wherein citizens choose the projects for which public resources will be allocated. In this area, the Culture is Local program proposed the idea that the people who led any initiatives that were submitted and promoted by the community become “local builders” who ultimately execute the projects. To meet this objective, a strategy was created that included training, execution, and monitoring activities.
- B. “Training for cultural and creative sector stakeholders”: pertains to the delivery of economic incentives for projects of different cultural and creative actors that are directly related to the goals of the Local Development Plans. Under the project’s implementation strategy, there is also a cross-cutting training process that aims to develop entrepreneurial and business skills. This would help strengthen cultural projects by local cultural and creative actors and ultimately help them achieve sustainability for their initiatives.

Overall, the Culture is Local program uses an inter-institutional partnership that brings together the Department of Culture, Recreation, and Sport, the District Institute for the Arts - IDARTES, the Gilberto Alzate Avendaño Foundation - FUGA, the District Government Secretariat, and 20 local town hall offices. The result of this alliance is that cultural transformation projects are implemented in the parts of the city where there is a synergy among civic, collective, and group interests, which subsequently sees all three directly contribute to project execution. Furthermore, they receive technical assistance from the governing bodies overseeing respective public policies, support and regional management from the affiliated entities, and oversight as well as access to socializing spaces from local town hall offices.



OVER ITS THREE YEARS, THE ECL PROGRAM HAS SUCCESSFULLY STRENGTHENED THE CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTOR'S 1,109 PROJECTS IN BOGOTÁ'S 20 DISTRICTS, DIRECTLY BENEFITING 38,889 CULTURAL STAKEHOLDERS.

3. Impacts

3.1. Direct impacts

Over its three years, the ECL program has successfully strengthened the cultural and creative sector's 2,362 projects with a budget of \$14.8 million dollars, and the participation of all of Bogotá's 20 districts. In total this has had an impact on an estimated 91,548 people and around 15,258 households.

3.2. Assessment

Culture is Local has a monitoring and follow-up line of action that connects various stakeholders and seeks to have permanent and updated information on the management progress and the program results under the established goals. For this purpose, a set of indicators associated with the population characteristics of the cultural stakeholders and project beneficiaries was created. These indicators would include consolidated developments and periodically reported progress to aid decision-making in different institutional spaces created for this purpose.



3.3. Key factors

Bogotá has been supporting and promoting the cultural and creative sector for more than 20 years. However, through the Culture is Local program, it was possible to understand how to create approaches to respond effectively and efficiently to the challenges faced by organizations in this sector that were negatively affected by the lockdown measures of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through a strategic alliance with the Local Development Funds, it was possible to deliver resources from the territories in a transparent manner to those cultural stakeholders that had not previously had access to public tender processes.

3.4. Continuity

Culture is Local is joint initiative under broader 2019 - 2038 District Public Policy on Cultural and Creative Economy, which ensures that work will continue on implementing revival and revitalization strategies throughout the value chain of the sector that are consistent and relevant to the needs of each territory. Currently, the larger plan has been transformed and is now structured in such a way that its components can adapt to the primary goal of economic revitalization. The approach aims to mend the hardship caused by the pandemic by transforming each initiative into a model for the strengthening and sustainability of cultural stakeholders based on the sector's unique needs.

4. Further information

Bogotá was a candidate for the fifth UCLG Mexico City – Culture 21 International Award (February - June 2022). The jury for the award drew up its final report in September of 2022, and requested that the UCLG Committee on Culture promote this project as one of the good practices implemented under Agenda 21 for culture.

This article was written by Catalina Valencia Tobón Secretary of Culture, Bogotá, Colombia.

Contact: catalina.valencia@scrd.gov.co

Website: www.bogota.gov.co