

CULTURE PLAN / COVID-19 HEALTH EMERGENCY MODE



AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



CULTURE 21: ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

- 2. HERITAGE, DIVERSITY AND CREATIVITY
- 5. CULTURE AND ECONOMY
- 8. CULTURE, INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

ECONOMIC, RESILIENCE, CREATIVE INDUSTRIES,
STRATEGY, EMPLOYMENT, DIGITAL, INFORMAL, COVID,
CULTURAL RIGHTS, NATURAL DISASTER



1. Concepción and culture

The city of Concepción is located 500 km south of Santiago, along the Bio-Bio River. It has an area of 221 square kilometres and is home to 230,000 inhabitants. As the regional capital it is a true urban hub with 10 municipalities making up the greater metropolitan area, which houses a population of 1 million people and constitutes the largest economic and cultural centre in the southern region of the country. Its physical and environmental characteristics, as well as its infrastructure and accessibility, make it one of the best cities to live in Chile. Concepción is a university city, with more than 100,000 students from 13 universities and professional institutes.

Since it was founded, Concepción has had a significant role in the country's economic, social, and cultural development. In its history it has had to overcome earthquakes and multiple disasters, and these experiences have given its citizens a resilient and enduring nature. It is the cultural capital of southern Chile, with a clear and renowned identity as a musical city with high-level cultural infrastructure such as the Regional Bio-Bio Theatre, as well as public spaces capable of hosting major shows and festivals such as REC, an essential rock and roll venue in Chile.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic hit Concepción's creative sector very hard. Cancellations of live events and the closure of its spaces left the city's inhabitants without their rich cultural fabric, depriving artists, technicians, professionals, and workers of a significant portion of their income. The public health emergency exposed the fragility of the majority of the city's creative sector. Its highly informal nature was a factor that made it difficult for both SMEs and cultural workers to access economic aid from the State.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY EXPOSED THE FRAGILITY OF THE MAJORITY OF THE CITY'S CREATIVE SECTOR.



2. Project goals and implementation

2.1. Main goal and specific objectives

The objective of the Emergency Program was to support the local creative sector in its most critical areas in an effort to make it more resilient and able to weather the toughest months of the pandemic. The specific objectives of the initiative were to strengthen the sector through the promotion of associativity, to facilitate access to local artistic production across various neighbourhoods, and ultimately to support economic revitalization for cultural workers.

THE OBJECTIVE OF THE EMERGENCY PROGRAM WAS TO SUPPORT THE LOCAL CREATIVE SECTOR IN ITS MOST CRITICAL AREAS IN AN EFFORT TO MAKE IT MORE RESILIENT AND ABLE TO WEATHER THE TOUGHEST MONTHS OF THE PANDEMIC.

2.2. Project development

The plan consisted of 18 actions, which were prioritized on a participative basis. They can be summarized as follows:

1. Registry and indexing of creative artists in the community, in addition to the Registry of Community Cultural Centres, from which a database was created listing all creative artists residing in the community
2. Delivery of social assistance for artists in vulnerable situations.
3. FAICC grant fund with a special focus on the pandemic.
4. Digitalization of municipal cultural services: the Cultural Arts Centre (CAC) offered a number of online arts education in the 15 disciplines taught by the CAC to 410 children. Additionally, 20 workshops were held and were open to the community, serving 113 residents in the community.
5. Creation of digital platforms, particularly the creation of a platform for the distribution of Penquista (or rather,



locals of Concepción) creative content www.concepcioncultural.tv; and a platform for physical and virtual commercialization www.mercadodelasartes.cl.

6. Strengthening of the cultural ecosystem, which involved creating 18 projects, in addition to supporting 25 initiatives under the "Virtual Programming Laboratory" and the purchase of 6 pieces of audiovisual performing arts equipment.

The budget allocated to this program reached \$95.3 million pesos (equivalent to approximately 112,000 Euros), and was funded by the Municipality of Concepción. Furthermore, in order for the emergency plan to materialize, it was necessary to carry out important related work, seeking the broadest level of participation across the cultural sector in addition to collaborative projects with public and private institutions.

EMERGENCY RESOURCES, SUBSIDIES, AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR PROJECT DEVELOPMENT WERE ALL SUPPLIED TO THE CITY'S CULTURAL SECTOR. ADDITIONALLY, NEW DIGITAL PLATFORMS WERE SET UP AND PROMOTED AS A MEANS FOR SHOWCASING AND SELLING LOCAL CONTENT.

3. Impacts

3.1. Direct impacts

Emergency resources, subsidies, and technical support for project development were all supplied to the city's cultural sector. Additionally, new digital platforms were set up and promoted as a means for showcasing and selling local content, products, and services. Together, all of these supports contributed to the sector's sustainability during the pandemic.

The department of culture adapted its approach and successfully set up a system for providing online services, which made it possible to maintain access to a variety of services offered by its existing infrastructure, including the important training programs carried out by the CAC. All of this has been a significant learning experience. However, there is still much to be done, such as finding ways to ensure access to cultural rights for people who currently cannot use digital networks, as well as incorporating improved intercultural, gender, and senior citizens' perspectives.

3.2. Assessment

To evaluate the program, a system of indicators was created to monitor the process and evaluate the results obtained. For this purpose, quantitative information on participation was recorded, such as the number of people who participated in the activities and courses, the number of views of digital content, participatory evaluation sessions, positive evaluations on social networks, as well as impact metrics from social networks and the number of creative individuals identified in the registry.

3.3. Key factors

The success of the initiative was determined by 3 key factors:

1. Collaboration among all the actors involved, both the institutions and the beneficiaries of the program themselves, who have been largely responsible for implementing the prioritized actions
2. Participation has been very important, as it has allowed the program to be defined according to the priorities agreed upon by the sector's stakeholders. This ensured, that the actions proposed were relevant to the community as well as adherence to the program during its implementation.
3. A focus on long-term sustainability as opposed to specific short-term actions and assistance with little real impact.

3.4. Continuity

Several of the program's initiatives were developed as solutions that would remain in place after the pandemic. The platforms used to share local cultural content www.concepcioncultural.tv and the cultural products store in the Mall Plaza, are examples of innovative business models that consider direct management by local creative groups. In addition, the municipality's cultural programs will maintain a hybrid format so as to facilitate access and expand audiences for activities such as launches and exhibitions, as well as for the CAC's education programs.

4. Further information

Concepción 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.

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