

EDUCATIONAL CITY FOR CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE YOUTH



AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



CULTURE 21: ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

1. CULTURAL RIGHTS
5. CULTURE AND ECONOMY
6. CULTURE, EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION
9. GOVERNANCE OF CULTURE

YOUTH, DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMIC, JOBS,
WOMAN/WOMEN, SUPPORT, INSTITUTIONAL,
TRAINING, CAPACITY, DIGITAL



1. Yopougon and culture

Yopougon was established in the 1970s in order to manage the urban sprawl of Abidjan, the country's economic capital. It is the largest municipality in Côte d'Ivoire, and 70% of its population (1,500,000 inhabitants) are young people whose development opportunities, particularly economic, have been strongly affected by the military and political crises threatening the city and the country. Yopougon is seen as the major hub of Abidjan's cultural life, which has also been heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic since 2020.

In 2003, the city began to decentralize culture in Côte d'Ivoire, and since July 2014 there has been a national cultural public policy document aimed at safeguarding national cultural heritage and professionalizing the artistic and cultural sector. The aim is to position culture at the centre of development strategies. Yopougon has therefore initiated the current program in order to make local cultural public policy a reality and a driver of its human and social development.

The promotion of the city's youth remains a major strategic focus. The municipality has chosen to base its cultural activity on the dynamism and creativity of youth, and on the participatory governance of the cultural sector, in order to make it an educational, innovative, and socially cohesive city. This approach is consistent with UCLG's Agenda 21 (culture and governance, social inclusion, and economy), as well as with the United Nations SDGs (education, clean water and sanitation, development of responsible consumption and production models).

THE AIM IS TO STRENGTHEN SOCIAL COHESION AND YOUTH INTEGRATION, AND TO MOBILIZE THEIR CREATIVITY IN ORDER TO CULTURALLY REVITALIZE THE REGION.



2. Project goals and implementation

2.1. Main goal and specific objectives

The aim is to strengthen social cohesion and youth integration, and to mobilize their creativity in order to culturally revitalize the region. This is based on a multi-actor approach, bringing together communities, associations, public and private cultural spaces, schools, and youth.

Specific Objectives:

- Develop youth cultural participation;
- Create the right conditions for creation and innovation;
- Promote the culture of digital entrepreneurship;
- Create collaborative creative spaces for all young people (men and women), especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

THE PROMOTION OF THE CITY'S YOUTH REMAINS A MAJOR STRATEGIC FOCUS.

2.2. Project development

This program is structured around three major projects:

- The Positiv Generation project: Promotion of the arts and reinforcement of social cohesion aims to (1) redefine some 20 local spaces as alternative venues and ways to promote social cohesion, and (2) identify and train some 60 youth from vulnerable neighbourhoods in the arts (performing, visual, and digital arts) and offer them socio-professional alternatives.
- The Youth and Knowledge Media Library Centre: Socio-cultural establishment aiming to (1) promote human development and the blossoming of creativity, (2) support the development of public reading in schools, (3) facilitate professional capacity-building for young people, (4) facilitate access to places of conviviality for disadvantaged groups who do not know how to read or write, and who wish to become literate.



- The Yopcréalab Project: Strengthening a community of innovators (Fab-Lab) aiming to (1) train qualified human resources who can contribute to diversify the local economy and repair the social fabric, (2) support companies of the collaborative economy by creating synergies between them, and (3) create an entrepreneurial ecosystem around a platform of services for the professionalization of the young people.

These multi-year projects, often led by youth themselves, seek to strengthen their place, as well as that of women and disadvantaged groups involved in collaborative processes between the city council and various local, national, and international partners. They are in line with the SDGs and rely on cultural activities and infrastructure, developing partnerships between different departments, and supporting civil society initiatives aimed at developing sustainable production models.

Support for the organization of cultural and artistic competitions and festivals encourages participation and accompanies the professionalization of young people in order to develop cultural channels that allow them to live off their talents. Cultural activities in the neighbourhoods encourage participation from as many people as possible, taking into account their income. The revitalization of cultural facilities aims to promote the cultural expression of the city's diverse youth, especially groups in vulnerable situations such as illiterate persons and migrants. Finally, specific actions are dedicated to gender.

3. Impacts

3.1. Direct impacts

The city council has seen Yopougon's potential as a resource for the cultural and creative sector. The city council has been investing with AFD to create the Yop.Crealab since 2018. The MJS and the Yop.Créalab have offered a versatile program which has attracted the enthusiasm of the actors, who find tools to unleash their cultural potential. These initiatives allow the targeted audiences to liberate themselves and fully exercise their cultural rights, regardless of their gender or origin. Municipal actions are attracting growing interest at the national and international levels.

3.2. Key factors

- The adoption of an approach to identify needs and issues and to plan achievements;
- The existence of reference documents for municipal action
- The existence of financing capacities allowing the community to self-finance or co-finance projects with partners;
- The quality of human resources
- Carrying out projects and providing facilities that attract the support of cultural actors and the interest of residents.

3.3. Continuity

Continuity is one of the factors that have been taken into consideration since the beginning of the project. In order to continue with the new approach, the city council has taken action along the following lines: reorganization of the department in charge of culture, ongoing training of staff, and allocation of a budget dedicated to the management of programs and infrastructure.



THESE INITIATIVES ALLOW THE TARGETED AUDIENCES TO LIBERATE THEMSELVES AND FULLY EXERCISE THEIR CULTURAL RIGHTS, REGARDLESS OF THEIR GENDER OR ORIGIN.

4. Further information

Yopougon 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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