



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
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Swiss Agency for Development  
and Cooperation SDC

A photograph of two women in traditional Indian attire. The woman in the foreground is wearing a blue sari with gold embroidery and a large gold necklace. She has a bindi on her forehead and is looking towards the camera. The woman behind her is wearing a white sari with gold embroidery and a gold headband. She has a red bindi and is also looking towards the camera. They are both holding a white smartphone up to take a selfie. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

# SDC Culture and Development Policy

*Dancers are taking photos with their  
mobile phones before going on stage for their  
performance.  
Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2016*

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*Dancers are getting ready to perform on the stage at the National Museum. Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2016*



*Honorine Diama, 27, (centre) waits for her turn to perform during the "Diakoya Dogotoro Le Médecin malgré lui" (Molière), production by Assitan Tangara in Niarela. Their projects have been supported by SDC.  
Bamako, Mali, 2016*



# Introduction

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*“Culture stands at the beginning and the end of all development”*

**Leopold Sédar Senghor**

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This SDC culture and development policy paper presents a framework for understanding the multiple links between culture and development and for including them as a factor in all of the SDC’s development work.

The SDC, in its efforts to contribute to the reduction of poverty and inequality, seeks to identify and build on the cultural resources, local knowledge, and creative forces on hand in the societies where it works. This approach is applied in all of the thematic areas and regions where the SDC is active. In addition, the SDC allocates funding specifically earmarked for the culture sector of its partner countries.

The SDC’s commitment in the area of culture and development has its statutory basis in the Federal Act on International Cooperation of 1976, among the specific purposes of which is to “encourage people to develop their abilities and give them the possibility of actively participating in the economic, social and cultural development of the societies they belong to”. It accords, moreover, with the obligations undertaken by Switzerland in ratifying the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. It is a commitment that rests on the SDC’s 30 years of experience in this area.

It should be noted from the outset that the SDC does not have a mandate to work for the promotion of culture in Switzerland. This responsibility falls to the communes, the cantons, and the Federal Department of Home Affairs. It is also not the task of the SDC to promote Switzerland’s image around the world (which is the mandate of Presence Switzerland) or to increase its own visibility through the cultural activities that it supports, though it does make a contribution in these areas.



# Why is culture important for development?

*“People are not developed by others, they develop themselves”*

**Joseph Ki-Zerbo**

The importance of the relationship between culture and development has been pointed out at the SDC since the 1980s. That relationship has become the focus of renewed attention in the post-2015 development agenda debate, in response to the need for a more holistic and integrated approach to sustainable development, an approach that considers not only outcomes, but also the processes that lead to them. The Swiss position on a framework for sustainable development post-2015 states that the “new transformative framework for sustainable development needs to include and make strong reference to human rights, including economic, social, and cultural rights as well as civil and political rights”. It further notes: “Promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue as well as leveraging the potential of cultural and artistic resources supports the inclusion of marginalised groups. It is also important for fostering peace and for sustainable development as a whole”. The Federal Council’s 2013-2016 Dispatch on International Cooperation introduced the notion of considering art and culture as further channels for achieving its objectives. The 2017-2020 Dispatch is expected to recommend that this approach be maintained.

The SDC’s approach to culture and development can be understood as being grounded principally – though not exclusively – on the following concepts and arguments:

## Culture as a resource and a right

Within the context of this policy paper, culture is understood in the broad sense as “the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterise a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and

beliefs.”<sup>1</sup> As such, it represents a set of resources – inherited, but also renewable – unique to each individual, group, or society. Culture expresses the meaning that people attach to their own existence and development. As a source of identity and dignity, a generator of social capital, culture fosters self-confidence in individuals, and cohesiveness and resilience in groups. It serves as a springboard, enabling people to re-invent themselves. Cultural rights – including the right of access to, and of participation in, the cultural life of one’s own choice – are fundamental human rights and are indispensable to human dignity and the freedom to develop one’s own personality. In a word, culture is a lever of fundamental importance for sustainable development and the fight against multi-dimensional poverty.

Because it possesses these features, there is always a risk that culture will be exploited, particularly for political or ideological purposes, or that it can become a source of unfair discrimination. While these risks must be squarely faced, they do not in any way diminish the intrinsic value of culture nor the potential that it represents for human development.

## Cultural diversity as a part of the heritage of humanity

Cultural diversity is as essential to humanity as biodiversity is to nature. It makes the world a richer and more varied place and enlarges the range of choices available. It is the breeding ground that allows different cultures to continue to develop and enrich themselves through contact with each other, without drifting towards rigid identities. It is one of the sources of development, which must be perceived not merely in terms of economic growth, but also as a means of attaining to a satisfying intellectual, emotional, moral, and spiritual existence. Culture, it must be emphasised here, is a dynamic concept. What is at issue is the principle of diversity itself, not the momentary state of a culture at any given point in time.

Cultural diversity must be fostered and protected. While globalisation has created the conditions for greater interaction between cultures, it has also given rise to the threat of a certain homogenisation,

<sup>1</sup> Definition taken from the “Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies”, 1982.



and with it an imbalance, where the economically wealthiest societies hold an advantage when it comes to the propagation of their cultures. Failure to grant recognition to a minority, a language, or the practice of a religion, can fuel tensions and even trigger conflicts. These challenges call for national and international public policies that promote respect for the rights of minorities, freedom of expression, and the exemption of cultural activities, goods and services – the bearers of identities, values, and meanings – from the rules of the free market.

### Intercultural dialogue and exchange as a foundation for peace

The free flow of ideas and open debate on differences make an essential contribution to mutual understanding and tolerance. Dialogue and intercultural exchange thus lay the groundwork for peaceful relations between individuals, communities and states. Development cooperation is itself intrinsically a process of intercultural exchange and dialogue.

### Artistic expression as a driver of change

One of the distinctive features of art is that it is both an *integral* part of the culture to which it gives expression and, at the same time, is also *extrinsic* to that culture, to the extent that it challenges culturally established practices. Because of this, artistic expression has throughout history served as a goad, urging both individuals and societies on to change their perceptions and to set themselves in motion. As a field of symbolic confrontation appealing both to reason and to the emotions, artistic expression makes it possible to broach sensitive issues and challenge social and cultural norms in a subtle but effective manner. It creates a space for reflection, self-criticism, and debate, providing a stimulus for a multiplicity of views and for social transformation. Art can help to encourage the exercise of freedom of expression where it has come under threat. After conflicts, artistic expression can make it possible to deal with the past, facilitate dialogue and mutual understanding, and restore the hopes and confidence of people in themselves and in their futures.

People are celebrating the Holi festival. Narayangonj, Bangladesh, 2016







*Lots of children and other neighbourhood residents come out to watch a performance of "Diakoya Dogotoro Le Médecin malgré lui" (Molière), by the theater group Assitan Tangara. Their projects have been supported by SDC.  
Bamako, Mali, 2016*

Over the past decade, the notion of the "creative economy" has attracted increasing attention, both at the United Nations and in many individual countries.<sup>2</sup> The creative industries have shown particularly strong growth and resilience, and this both in industrialised economies and in the developing world, on a local, national and global scale. Cultural tourism – with an interest in both tangible and intangible cultural heritage – generates a large share of global tourism revenues. Investment in culture and

<sup>2</sup> See the Creative Economy Reports, 2008, 2010, and 2013, published by the UNCTAD and the UNDP.





*Theater performers in a drama at the Shilpokola Academy. Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2016*

creativity has also proved to be an excellent means of revitalising the economy and creating jobs in cities, where an ever-growing proportion of the world population now lives. Such investments also generate other benefits, in the form of improvements in social cohesion and inclusion, in the prevention of violence, in capacity-building and in the promotion of innovation, particularly among the young. Nurturing these sectors requires only a limited financial investment and can yield tangible benefits for vulnerable populations while contributing, at the same time, to the protection of their natural and cultural heritage.

While recognising this potential, and the fact that artists and culture practitioners must be recognised as professionals capable of supporting themselves through their work, it should not be forgotten that the value of artistic expression cannot be measured in economic terms alone. A tension often arises between freedom of expression and the need to respond to market demand, between inclusion and commercial viability.







*Dogon men can be seen wearing kanaga masks during the festival of masks and puppets in Markala, north of Segou. Markala, Mali, 2016*



# SDC objectives, approaches and measures

**Factoring in the cultural dimension:  
a warranty for effectiveness and sustainability**

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*"A stranger may well have big eyes,  
but he still sees nothing"*

**African proverb**

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Saints arrive to attend Hindu festival holy bathing. Sunamganj, Shylhet, Bangladesh, 2016



A woman's hand bag with an image of Audrey Hepburn joins hundreds of people during Sunday Easter Mass in downtown Bamako. Bamako, Mali, 2016



The failure of well-intentioned development programmes and the discrepancy between the Millennium Development Goals and the results achieved have revealed the inadequacy of development policies that take a blanket approach, ignoring the distinctive features that characterise different cultural contexts.

Culture plays a crucial role in negotiating development processes. When it lies at the heart of change, culture can act as a catalyst, opening the way to social and cultural transformation. However, it can also set itself up as a barrier to change, where change is perceived as unnecessary, all too precipitous, or even as a threat. For this reason, the cultural dimension must never be neglected in development cooperation efforts.

In implementing its development cooperation policies, the SDC adopts the following approach:

- › The SDC is **conscious of the values** and reference systems that underlie its strategies. It makes certain that the members of its staff are capable of understanding the distinctive cultural features that characterise the societies in which the SDC is active. At the organisational level, it takes cultural differences into account in all of its analyses and operations.
- › The SDC maintains with its partners **a dialogue between equals, in which cultural differences are respected**. It is cognisant of the fact that Switzerland's role as a donor country gives rise to an asymmetrical relationship that can be an impediment to open dialogue, and it works to overcome this challenge.







*Models are performing in a fashion show at Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2016*





*A few Malians come out to dance at the cotton club in Bamako on a Friday night. A year ago five people died in an assault claimed by an Islamist group on a Bamako nightclub. The most recent attack a few days prior on March 21st 2016 was when gunmen allegedly opened fire on a hotel being used as a base for an EU military facility in Mali's capital, Bamako. Bamako, Mali, 2016*

- › The SDC is actively committed to fostering **respect for cultural rights**. When cultural or religious practices are used to restrict or to violate other human rights, the SDC does not merely voice condemnation, but seeks rather to encourage constructive dialogue and mutual efforts to find solutions suited to the context.

The SDC sees this approach as the foundation of all development cooperation. It is an indispensable prerequisite both for the effectiveness of the SDC's operations and for obtaining inclusive and sustainable results.

**This approach underpins all of the SDC's operations in all areas.** This approach is expressly reflected in the SDC's gender policy paper, which specifies that "approaches to gender issues must be flexible and adapted to the individual context" and that "activities must be based on endogenous strategies". It is also of decisive importance in the field of education, where the SDC's priority is on ensuring access for all to a quality education that is adequate to their needs, is considerate of their values, and contributes to their ability to live together with others. Thus, for example, particularly in Africa, the SDC encourages teaching in the local languages, or bilingual education, with curricula that make use of local skills and are adapted to the needs and realities of the local communities. This approach is of crucial importance also in connection with such issues as food security, risk and disaster prevention, healthcare, conflict prevention, and governance. Local knowledge and practices, the traditional social, economic, and institutional structures, as well as the prevailing political structures and power relationships are, in all contexts, decisive factors in the definition and achievement of objectives.

## SDC measures

This SDC approach is reflected in the following measures:

### › **Diversity in the composition of teams and partnership networks**

At its cooperation offices, the SDC attempts to ensure that the staff is composed of culturally diverse teams. Similarly, it strives to create a network of partners that are themselves diverse and, at the same time, sensitive to the cultural diversity of the societies in which they operate.

### › **Intercultural skills**

Intercultural skills are among the fundamental requirements for members of the SDC staff, both at the recruitment stage, and as part of their continuing training. These skills include not only the basic principles of intercultural communication, but also the ability to reflect upon one's own identity, and to observe and analyse intercultural issues.

In order to enhance the awareness, knowledge and, in particular, the skills of its staff members, teams, and partners where questions of interculturality are concerned, the SDC provides the following resources:

- › **Support for experience-sharing initiatives**, providing opportunities to address and reflect on experiences, both good and bad, that staff members have had in connection with intercultural issues (Knowledge-Learning-Culture Division of the SDC)

- › Focused **training programmes**, particularly at the management level (SDC, in cooperation with the FDFA Directorate for Resources and outside professionals)

### › **Quality of processes**

The quality of processes designed to make possible the achievement of objectives is a matter of paramount importance for the SDC. Such processes should be people-centred, participatory, responsive to the distinctive cultural features of the places where the SDC operates, and maintain flexibility. Such characteristics are crucial if the communities concerned are to take ownership of these processes and maintain their autonomy. The SDC project cycle management tools<sup>3</sup> make it possible, to a certain extent, to take cultural aspects into account in the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of strategies and projects. All depends, however, on their being used with adequate skill, sensitivity, and flexibility.

<sup>3</sup> Impact hypothesis and theory of change, political economy analysis, monitoring of development-relevant changes (MERV), beneficiary assessment, conflict-sensitive programme management, etc.

## Fostering diversity in artistic and cultural expressions: a driver of change and cohesion

*“Art is about asking questions and allowing people to explore the complexities of the answers to those questions. It’s not about getting everybody to think the same thing. It’s about getting people to experience humanity on a different level”.*

**Gillian Slovo**

The SDC takes the view that **an independent, diverse and inclusive culture sector**<sup>4</sup>, particularly in transitional countries and fragile contexts, can contribute in a decisive and original manner to sustainable development, democratic transition, and the promotion of peace by advancing the following objectives:

- › Strengthening the role of civil society, as both a participant and an advocate in cultural life and in social and political processes
- › Protecting freedom of expression and nurturing the conditions for the emergence of democratic discourse, promoting the growth of pluralistic societies
- › Encouraging inclusion and social cohesion, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, and respect for otherness and minorities

- › Preventing violence and conflicts, facilitating conflict transformation, making it possible to deal with the past and enabling reconstruction at the level of the individual and of the society as a whole
- › Promoting discovery and access to new ideas, strengthening self-confidence, creativity and innovative capacity
- › Instilling dignity, meaning, and a sense of beauty, making possible hope and confidence in the future

The SDC sees development of an independent, diverse and inclusive culture sector in partner countries as an end in itself. It also recognises that the culture sector can be a source of valuable partners for achieving certain of the specific objectives of SDC programmes in its priority areas.

In many developing and transition countries there is no adequately funded policy for promoting cultural diversity. Equally absent is a developed market with an effective legal framework for the protection of intellectual property. Artists and other independent culture practitioners must struggle to accomplish professional training and to find resources for the pursuit and dissemination of their creative efforts. In some cases, they even place their own existence in jeopardy by practising their art. At the same time, the lack of adequate spaces for the dissemination of culture makes it difficult for the general population to have access to, and to participate in, the country’s cultural and artistic life, particularly outside the capital cities.

<sup>4</sup> Culture and creative sectors are referred to in this policy as all sectors whose activities are based on cultural values and/or artistic and other creative expressions, whether those activities are market- or non-market-oriented, whatever the type of structure that carries them out, and irrespective of how that structure is financed. Those activities include the development, the creation, the production, the dissemination and the preservation of goods and services which embody cultural, artistic or other creative expressions, as well as related functions such as education or management. The culture and creative sectors include inter alia architecture, archives, libraries and museums, artistic crafts, audiovisual (including film, television, video games and multimedia), tangible and intangible cultural heritage, design, festivals, music, literature, performing arts, publishing, radio and visual arts. (Definition used by the European Parliament in its regulation on establishing the Creative Europe Programme 2014-2020)





Actors are performing the drama "Karbala" at the Shilpokola Academy. Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2016



*Folk singers are performing in Lalon Mela.  
Kustia, Bangladesh, 2016*



*A dancer jumps up a wall during a  
contemporary dance routine in Kettly Noel's  
dance studio called Donko Seko in Bamako  
in Mali.*  
Bamako, Mali, 2016





These challenges are exacerbated at the international level. Because of the many technical and financial constraints that limit the mobility of artists from developing countries, they and their works have only limited access to international markets and networks. Such access is, however, an important source of opportunities and experience, a gateway to gaining recognition, obtaining funding, and establishing the professional contacts that can be useful, or even indispensable, for the pursuit of their creative activities.

## SDC measures

The SDC translates this approach into practice through the following measures:

### › **Culture programmes and projects**

The SDC supports diversity of cultural and artistic expressions in the countries of the South and East,<sup>5</sup> and promotes in those countries the vitality and development of inclusive culture sectors. To that end, the SDC carries out dedicated programmes and projects in partner countries and in Switzerland. With these programmes, it pursues, in particular, the following objectives:

› To provide **artists and culture professionals of the South and East** with an opportunity to receive training, strengthen their skills, and develop their careers, their organisations, and their networks, and to obtain respect for their rights, recognition for their work, and improved working conditions.

› To encourage **artistic expression and cultural creativity of the countries of the South and East**; to support the dissemination of works of art, and to promote the establishment of spaces for reflection, dialogue, and debate, particularly in connection with cultural productions that address social or development issues, while respecting the artistic freedom and programme autonomy of the SDC's partners.

› **To promote greater access to, and involvement in, the cultural and artistic life in SDC partner countries** among the local populations, particularly in rural, peripheral, or disadvantaged regions.

› **Through efforts in Switzerland, to facilitate access for artists and culture professionals from the South and East**, and for their works, to the Swiss and international public, markets, and professional networks.

See appendices 1 and 2 for the allocation of responsibilities, principles of implementation, and priorities for the SDC's culture programmes and projects.

### › **Artistic expression in the SDC's non-culture programmes**

In addition to its dedicated programmes, the SDC routinely gives consideration to the contribution of the culture sector in achieving certain specific objectives in the areas to which it assigns thematic priority. Where it appears useful, the SDC integrates cultural and artistic activities into programmes whose thematic focus is on areas other than art and culture. Thus a programme designed to create jobs and provide income could promote the competitiveness of a culture industry (e.g., artisanal crafts) with a strong potential in a given context. An educational programme could integrate artistic activities as an element of quality education. A programme addressing the causes of a conflict could avail itself of artistic creation as a means of establishing a protected space for intercultural dialogue. A programme designed to promote governance could provide support for arts advocacy activities. Finally, art, as a medium of communication, can be an effective tool for awareness-raising or prevention efforts within the framework of SDC programmes, particularly if the chosen form of artistic expression is intrinsic to the means of cultural communication among the people concerned.

In such cases, artistic expression is seen, above all, as a means to an end, and the objectives of the programme have priority over development of the culture sector. Where it makes use of art as a means of awareness-raising, the SDC is nevertheless sensitive to the fact that an all too interventionist approach can be counterproductive in terms of the message that it is trying to convey, and understands that talent and artistic freedom are essential to the creation of original works capable of appealing to and moving their audience.

<sup>5</sup> The term "countries of the South and East" refers to the list of countries eligible to receive official development assistance, which is revised at regular intervals by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD.

› **Multilateral**

On occasion, the SDC takes a stance on the subject of culture and development, as a participant in the procedures for establishing norms at the United Nations, in particular, at meetings of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Switzerland, through the SDC, contributes financing to the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD), which was established by the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

This contribution, amounting to 1% of Switzerland's total contribution to UNESCO, is intended to support the visibility and the implementation of the Convention, which was ratified by Switzerland in 2008 and which serves as a valuable normative instrument fundamentally consistent with the SDC's culture and development policy. Payment of the contribution to the IFCD is subject to the condition that the efficiency of the Fund is maintained. The United Nations and International Organisations Division of the FDFA's Directorate of Political Affairs monitors the contribution in coordination with the Federal Office of Culture.





› **Art and communication**

The SDC's support for cultural and artistic expressions in the countries of the South and East, whether in its operations abroad or in Switzerland, is not intended to promote the image of Switzerland nor that of the SDC and its activities. The SDC may commission work by artists in or-

*Edel Dolo, who is in his 50's, used to sell tickets for the movies before it closed down. He now lives and takes care of the abandoned "cinéma Le Vox", which has been part of his life for decades.  
Bamako, Mali, 2016*



der to document its activities, and such commissions may provide artists from the SDC's partner countries with income and a certain visibility and recognition. They are not, however, to be considered as support for culture as such, as they do not necessarily encourage free expression by the artists commissioned. The funding for such commissions is to be taken from a different budget, as a rule, the communications budget.

In essence, the image that can best reward the SDC for the support it provides for cultural and artistic expressions in the South and East is one of an organisation that embodies the values that Swiss foreign policy seeks to promote, including respect for democracy and human rights, and peaceful coexistence between peoples. It is the image of an organisation that does this by taking an interest in what its partners have to say, allowing them to express themselves through artistic works produced by their own creative efforts.

*An old movie reel can be seen in the empty and abandoned "cinéma Le Vox" in Bamako. Many classic cinemas have closed due to lack of interest by the public.  
Bamako, Mali, 2016*



# Knowledge management and coordination

*"It is through conversation that knowledge flows directly from person to person, learning takes place, insights are gleaned, connections are made and relationships are built".*

**David Gurteen**

*Souleymane Niaré is currently the highest ranking elder of the Niaré family, which is the founding family of Bamako and is such seen as 'royals'.  
Bamako, Mali, 2016*

*A group of women are waiting for the cultural function to start.  
Mymensing, Bangladesh, 2016*





The SDC's Knowledge-Learning-Culture Division provides encouragement and guidance in the sharing and capitalisation of experience related to the links between culture, art and development. It deals with requests by staff members for advice and network contacts, in particular, by facilitating a community of practice. It assists with the integration of learning into key SDC procedures, working together with the Quality Assurance Section.

The Knowledge-Learning-Culture Division also coordinates the SDC's culture and development activities with other federal agencies, both at the strategic and at the operational levels, employing effective, efficient, and transparent information-sharing and coordination mechanisms.











*Bangladeshi people participate in a colorful parade to celebrate the first day of the Bengali New Year or Pohela Boishakh in Dhaka, Bangladesh on April 14, 2016. Thousands of Bangladeshi people celebrate it with different colorful rallies, cultural programs with traditional dance and music, this Bengali year was introduced during the regime of Emperor Akbar to facilitate revenue collection in the 16th century. Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2016*



# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Implementation principles for SDC support to the culture sector in partner countries

The SDC provides support for the local culture sector in partner countries through dedicated projects and programmes (“cultural percent”).

### Implementation principles for the cultural percent

#### 1. The SDC devotes a minimum of 1% of its budget to art and culture in its partner countries

A minimum of 1% of the SDC’s operational budget in any given country/region is devoted to support for initiatives in the local artistic and culture sector through dedicated projects and/or programmes. This commitment is incorporated into the cooperation strategies and funding is taken from the respective framework credits foreseen in the quadrennial Dispatch on Switzerland’s International Cooperation.

#### 2. The principle of the cultural percent applies in all four domains of SDC operations

The principle of the cultural percent applies in all four domains of SDC operations: Cooperation with Eastern Europe, Regional Cooperation, Global Cooperation, and Humanitarian Aid. Within each of these domains, responsibility for implementation of the principle falls to the SDC’s geographic divisions and global programmes. Authority for the specifics of implementation of culture projects and programmes is delegated, to the fullest extent possible, to the SDC cooperation offices (including SDC offices integrated into an embassy).<sup>6</sup> By decentralising authority in this way it is possible to define support priorities in accordance with the local context, needs, and opportunities. The SDC offices abroad make the requisite staff resources available for monitoring culture programmes and ensuring that programme managers have access to appropriate continuing training; they employ local or international experts as required.

#### 3. Culture programmes have their own legitimacy

Culture programmes and projects make a practical contribution to the achievement of the SDC’s overall objectives for development, transition, and humanitarian aid, particularly with regard to governance and the strengthening of civil society. Culture programmes have their own legitimacy: there is no requirement that they be adapted to the SDC’s thematic priorities for a given country.

#### 4. The SDC favours long-term commitments

To the extent possible, the SDC prefers to support multi-year programmes rather than sporadic short-term projects, because the former make it possible to achieve more sustainable results in the local culture sector, among other things, by influencing the framework conditions within which the sector develops. Such long-term programmes also make it possible for the SDC to adopt a partnership approach (as opposed to a sponsorship approach), and to better focus its financial and human resources.

#### 5. The SDC may initiate regional programmes

Where the SDC has a regional presence covering a group of countries, it can initiate regional culture programmes. It is recommended that such programmes be firmly anchored at the national level. The regional dimension makes it possible to promote cultural exchange, which serves as a source of regional cohesion and can generate new opportunities for artists.

#### 6. The SDC respects its partners’ artistic liberty and freedom of expression

The SDC respects the rights of its partners to artistic freedom and to freedom of expression, while making certain, at the same time, that support is not given to extreme positions that could be perceived as offensive or harmful (“do-no-harm” approach). It assesses each situation on a case-by-case basis and strives to build relationships based on trust with partners who share its values.

<sup>6</sup> “Small grants of the Embassies in the field of international cooperation” financed by the SDC are not counted among the measures used for implementing the cultural percent, although they may sometimes have similar objectives.



### **7. The SDC implements its programmes in a coordinated manner**

Within the framework of its programmes, the SDC seeks dialogue with other international donors, both public and private, who are active in the field of culture. It attempts to identify opportunities for coordinating support mechanisms in order to limit the transaction costs for partner organisations working in this field. The SDC may also delegate to others the implementation of its culture programme in a given country; in so doing, however, it forfeits a precious opportunity for direct interaction and a preferential relationship with some of the most committed and creative members of the civil society.

### **8. The SDC monitors results in a manner that is suited to the nature of culture programmes**

In general, culture programmes are monitored using the SDC's standard monitoring tools. In working with its partners, however, the SDC takes into account, both at the planning stage and in its assessment of results, that such programmes are intended to bring about changes that are primarily qualitative in nature, and thus often difficult to measure or to predict. It is careful to observe, to listen, and to identify the intangible effects of its support, making use of information sources (testimonials, narratives) that complement its standard tools (logical framework approach).

## Priorities for the cultural percent

### **9. The SDC gives priority to support for civil society activities**

The SDC gives priority to support for activities and initiatives by civil society organisations. Such initiatives may also include advocacy work, dialogue, and cooperation with public authorities and institutions for bringing about improvements in framework conditions (cultural policy, protection of intellectual property, etc.).

### **10. The SDC gives preference to capacity-building vs. infrastructure funding**

The SDC provides artists and culture professionals with an opportunity to be trained and build their capacities, to develop their professional activities, their organisations and their networks. In cases where there is an absolute necessity, it may contribute to the funding of infrastructure or to the preservation and rehabilitation of tangible cultural heritage.

### **11. The SDC encourages cultural diversity, diversity of opinion, and dialogue**

The SDC promotes cultural and artistic activities that create a space for dialogue and debate, building bridges between different population groups, and encourages cultural diversity and diversity of opinion. When supporting cultural production it is consistently mindful of the opportunities for dissemination. It avoids association with elitist activities.

### **12. The SDC promotes equal and decentralised access to cultural life**

The SDC promotes efforts to provide rural and/or disadvantaged communities with access to, and opportunities to participate in, cultural life and artistic expression. In particular, it provides support for their activities and for centre-periphery exchange. It also encourages the participation of young people and inter-generational exchange. It promotes equal participation of women and men.

### **13. The SDC assists culture professionals in connecting with local markets**

Where there are local or regional markets for artistic or cultural production, the SDC seeks to assist artists, artisans, and culture entrepreneurs in connecting with those markets and taking advantage of the available opportunities.

## Appendix 2: Implementation principles for SDC support in facilitating the access of artists from the South and East to the Swiss and international public, markets, and networks

Working out of Switzerland, the SDC facilitates access for artists, culture professionals, and cultural productions from the countries of the South and East to the Swiss and international public, markets, and professional networks.

The SDC's culture programme in Switzerland is managed by the Culture and Development Team of the Knowledge-Learning-Culture Division. The SDC implements the programme through awards of federal grants and mandates.

### Implementation principles

#### 1. The SDC supports the initiatives of competent organisations

SDC support is not granted directly to the artists and productions from the countries of the South and East but via professional organisations active on the Swiss cultural scene, in particular from civil society (associations and foundations). These organisations have at their disposal the expertise and networks needed to assist the SDC in achieving its objectives.

#### 2. SDC support is awarded as a complement to market forces and in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity

The SDC supports projects whose costs are not fully covered by market resources. These are projects that aim to support and disseminate cultural productions that convey identity and meaning, and whose value cannot be measured exclusively in commercial terms. The funding structure of such projects must include donations from other public or private sponsors. SDC assistance is granted only on condition that the project is not already being subsidised for the same purpose by any other federal agency.

#### 3. The SDC seeks culture partners who share its values and respects their right to design their own programmes

The SDC seeks partners committed to the values that underpin the SDC's support for culture and the arts. In particular, it expects its partners to offer equal opportunities to both male and female culture professionals. While engaging in regular dialogue with its partners on those issues, the SDC is respect-

ful of the independence they require to work and maintain their reputation.

### Priorities

#### 4. The SDC gives priority to medium and long-term partnerships

In the interest of continuity and greater effectiveness, the SDC gives preference to partners in Switzerland that enjoy international recognition and that dispose of high-quality platforms specifically designed for facilitating the access of artists from the South and East to Swiss and international professional markets and networks. These platforms are integrated into their regular activities, are renewed annually over many years, and operate on an ongoing basis not limited to one event in the year. The SDC may form multi-year partnerships with such organisations, which are monitored using the applicable project management tools.

#### 5. The SDC may support other initiatives that generate tangible benefits for artists of the South and the East

The SDC may support individual, one-time initiatives, organised locally or by organisations without a dedicated platform for access to the international market, but which generate tangible benefits for invited artists from the South and East (artist fees, quality exchanges with their peers), and which contribute to the development of an audience throughout Switzerland for the cultural productions of the South and East. It delegates to others the implementation of this part of its programme. The quality of the platforms in terms of the SDC's objectives is of greater importance than the quantity of initiatives supported, as it is not the goal of the SDC to promote the development of the Swiss cultural scene as such.

#### 6. The SDC places special focus on the cinema

This decision is warranted by the importance of international co-productions for films in general and, in particular, for the production of cinematic works in countries where the film industry is not (well-)developed. Though not alone in this, film is a medium that is easily accessible and particularly well-suited



for provoking reflection and debate. Further considerations that speak for a special focus on cinema are the large number of internationally recognised culture organisations in Switzerland with professional contacts in the industry, and the extensive knowledge and experience that the SDC has acquired through its work in this area over the years. The SDC devotes a maximum of 60% of its culture programme budget in Switzerland to cinema projects.

**7. The SDC gives preference to artists and productions from partner countries**

Within the bounds of its limited resources, and in the interest of maintaining the coherence of its activities, the SDC gives preference to initiatives and programmes that involve artists and productions from its partner countries. This prioritisation makes it possible, where appropriate, to furnish artists receiving support within the framework of the SDC's local culture programmes with a means of connecting with the Swiss and international cultural market.

**8. The SDC favours the active participation of artists and culture professionals in the dissemination of their works**

While the SDC does not exclude providing support for artistic production, it does nevertheless have a special interest in promoting the dissemination of cultural works and in providing artists and culture professionals with an opportunity to participate in that dissemination process, to engage in exchanges with their public, and to establish contacts between themselves and other professionals. The SDC sees this as a central element of intercultural dialogue, a

means of creating new opportunities and of building capacities.

**9. The SDC encourages the networking role played by diaspora communities living in Switzerland**

The principal beneficiaries of SDC cultural support are artists living in countries of the South and East. When allocating funding, however, the SDC pays attention to considering the outreach and networking activities by representatives of diaspora communities living in Switzerland. The SDC also welcomes the role such representatives can play in the decision-making bodies of the organisations it supports. They indeed often have special ties with the cultural life of their home countries, giving them access and connections that can help to facilitate the work of the SDC in supporting development of the culture sector there.

*Dancers are performing in a cultural show on the stage of the National Museum at Dhaka. Dhaka, Bangladesh, 2016*



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