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In the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), the consequences of the ongoing political and social crises are severe. Cultural identity is threatened and few safe outlets exist for expressing the pervasive feelings of bitterness and hopelessness resulting from the violence-affected environment. In this context, art and culture have a unique role to play. In the Gaza strip the Qattan Foundation has been conducting educational theater activities with children (picture). As a result, children's social skills, self-confidence and capacity to overcome conflicts strengthen, which in turn reflects in their school performance and family relations.

SDC's support to artistic and cultural expressions in the South and the East

Overview 2013

1. Introduction

This overview presents SDC's support to artistic and cultural expressions in the South and the East in 2013. It synthesizes the results of a study carried out by the Team Culture and Development (C&D) of the Division Knowledge-Learning-Culture on mandate of SDC Board of Directors. Support to culture in SDC partner countries is managed by SDC field offices in a decentralized way and there is no exhaustive real-time overview of SDC-supported cultural activities worldwide. A first survey carried out in 2009 gave a mainly quantitative and descriptive picture of SDC support to culture, providing a base-line. Four years later, this second overview makes it possible to track the trends – both quantitative and qualitative - in SDC support to culture.

2. Methodology

The study was conducted with the corporate domains Regional Cooperation; Cooperation with the East; Global Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid. Information was collected on financial volume, type of activities and the added value of the cultural projects to SDC's work in the country or region. This information was obtained by means of an online questionnaire e-mailed to 51 SDC field offices (cooperation and programme offices); 37 participated in the study.

In addition, SDC Team C&D carried out an online discussion among the members of SDC Community of practice "Culture Matters" that made it possible to add a qualitative reading of the survey results.

Box 1: Principles of SDC cultural policy

Recognizing that culture is at the heart of development, SDC promotes cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue with the aim of consolidating the processes of development and transition in the countries in which it is active.

According to the guiding principles SDC established in 2002 and confirmed in 2012, **at least one percent** of the total budget in its partner countries is allocated to the promotion of local culture.

To the extent possible, these contributions are managed locally and primarily by SDC **field offices** in order to best adapt the support to local needs and realities.

All types of cultural expressions are eligible. Funds are primarily utilized to build up knowledge, institutions and networks (versus infrastructures).

Wherever possible, engagement at micro level (support to cultural projects) is combined with measures at macro level (enhancement of framework conditions for cultural expression, namely freedom of speech, access to culture and information).

Full version of these principles on **SDC website**, SDC Culture Strategy 2010–2015, "Axis B" (p.6 and Appendix 5)

Box 2: SDC's types of project in the field of arts and culture

Arts and culture programmes: the term "programme" refers to a long-term intervention, carried out over several, multi-year phases. A programme is based on a thorough strategic reflection (entry proposal), where options in terms of focus and partnerships, and the added-value of SDC's intervention are analysed. Objectives go beyond production and diffusion of artworks; they may address issues of capacity and institution strengthening with selected partners, framework conditions, etc. Programmes strive for sustainable results for the development of the local culture sector. A programme usually selects a limited number of partners, but can however keep a "small action fund" component. Programmes can be carried out at the level of one or several countries (regional programmes).

One-off activity (Small actions): the terms "micro" or "small action" refers to support to a one-off activity, limited in time. Small actions are managed by field offices using their "global credit". The time-frame is limited to 18 months, not renewable. The financial scope is max 300'000 CH per country; most small actions in the field of arts and culture amount to between 1000 and 100'000 CHF. Small actions typically support artistic production and diffusion (a theater play, music or film festival, etc.).

Cultural activity integrated into a programme on a different theme: in the design of programmes in other thematic areas, support to cultural or artistic activities can be integrated with a specific objective, e.g sensitization through theater or film in a health or climate change programme; or support to crafts, cultural industries or cultural heritage/tourism sector as part of an "employment and income" programme.

3. Results

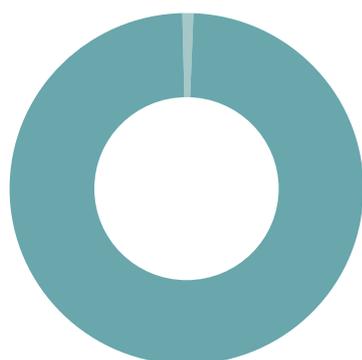
3.1 Percentage of SDC budget allocated to culture

In 2013, SDC allocated a total budget of CHF 4'867'781 for cultural activities in its partner countries and regions. This represents 0.53% of a total budget of CHF 913'370'000¹.

In relative terms, SDC didn't reached its 1% benchmark for 2013, which it had in 2009 (1.08%). This is however mainly explained by the fact that SDC overall budget has increased over the past years after the Parliament's decision to dedicate 0.5% of GDP to Swiss ODA by 2015. Support to arts and culture hasn't yet kept up with this increase.

In absolute terms, SDC spent CHF 1.2 mo less on culture in 2013 than in 2009 (approx. 20% less). This was foreseeable and directly reflects the closure of SDC largest cultural programme in the Western Balkans that accounted for over 45% of SDC support to culture in 2009.

In conclusion, while the global results in absolute and relative terms are negative in 2013, they hide positive trends towards a long-term increase and consolidation of SDC support to culture. Such trends can be observed by taking a closer look on the distribution between types of projects and countries.

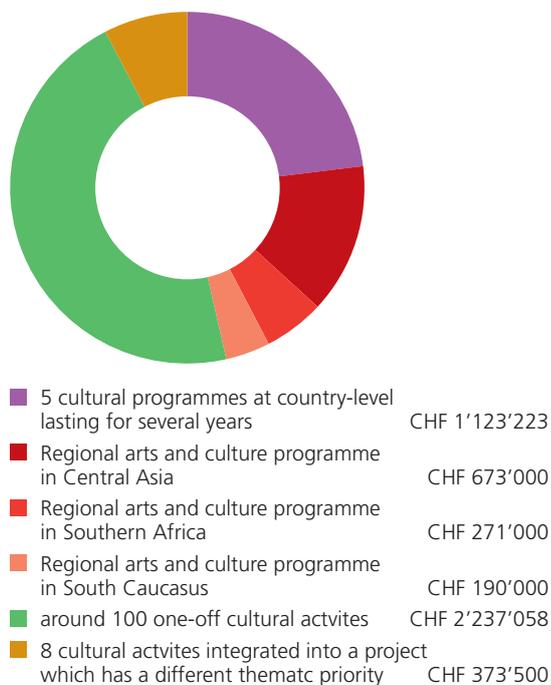


■ Total budget priority countries and regions 2013
■ Total budget cultural activities 2013 0.53%

3.2 Distribution by types of project

The overall picture represents a strong evolution since 2009 towards a better distribution of support across projects. In 2009, one single programme absorbed almost half of SDC support. In 2013, the largest cultural programme represents only 14% of SDC support.

In 2013, SDC support to culture was almost equally shared between culture programmes lasting several years on the one hand, and short-term activities (self-standing or integrated into a project which has a priority that isn't culture) on the other hand. For a definition of the different types of project see box 2.



¹ Total budget 2013 of SDC development cooperation and cooperation with Eastern Europe and the CIS in priority countries and regions (incl. special programs), and SDC humanitarian aid. Source: Statistics booklet of the 2013 Annual Report for Swiss International Cooperation 2013, tables 6, 8 and 10.

3.2.1 Arts&culture programmes

A strong trend to be noted is the increase in **field offices moving away from small actions to set up programmes** with a strategic focus, a limited number of partners and long-term objectives. Mozambique, the South Caucasus and Tanzania offices took the step in 2013, and more programmes are under preparation (e.g. Afghanistan, Laos). Besides, no field office that had a full-fledged programme in 2009 (Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Central Asia, Gaza and West-bank, Southern Africa, Western Balkans) has moved back to small actions. In the Western Balkans and in Southern Africa, where regional culture programmes from the 90's terminated in 2012 or will in 2014, two new regional programmes are to start in 2014/2015. All of these programmes explicitly include rural/ peripheral areas and favor links and exchanges between these and urban areas.

3.2.2 One-off cultural activities (small actions)

Small actions still represent the most popular way to support culture for field offices. They are indeed considered a flexible and effective entry point to identify partners and build relationship in the cultural sector. They further provide visibility to SDC – even though this is not their purpose. Both the volume and number of small actions have increased since 2009. This reflects the value that field office lay on supporting the arts and culture sector as part of their strategy. At the same time, many COOF reckon that managing such projects is very demanding in terms of administrative resources.

Following trends can be noted in small actions:

- While mainly supporting production and diffusion of artistic creation, most small actions also aim at strengthening capacities or providing a networking platform for professionals.
- Most small actions seek to favor cultural diversity and access to the artistic and cultural life by marginalized groups (marginalized communities, IDPs, disabled persons or women in generally male-dominated art and cultural activities). A few field offices mention a contribution to protection and promotion of **tangible or intangible cultural heritage**.

Protection and promotion of cultural heritage and traditional culture

Afghanistan	handmade clothing, jewelry, art and crafts
Bolivia	conservation of ancient textiles
Mongolia	digitalization of hand written folk tales
Mongolia	cultural expressions of ethnic minority
Myanmar	safeguard of Bagan archeological area and monuments
Nicaragua	cultural heritage of Maya's traditions
Chad	enhancement of cultural heritage

- Beyond gender mainstreaming, 13 projects addressed specific **gender** issues (gender-based violence, human trafficking, role of women in society, women's rights, reproductive health) or female audience (skills development).
- A few projects also aimed at developing cultural industries and crafts as a source of **income and employment** (production sets, framing of paintings, bookbinding and printing art, costumes, organic paintings).
- A large share of small actions concentrated in **urban settings** (45%). While few small actions took place in **rural areas** (10%), an important share seek to link rural and urban areas (45%).
- Roughly two thirds of the small actions were implemented by NGOs or other types of organizations such as collectives, foundations, institutes, universities and associations. 18% were carried out by field offices themselves.

Type of artistic expressions in one-off cultural projects (several options possible)

Music	28
Theatre	21
Literature	16
Movies and audiovisual	15
Visual arts (painting, photography, installation)	13
Protection of cultural heritage	13
Dance	8
Other (ex: storytelling)	2

3.2.3 Cultural activity integrated into a programme on a different theme

A total of 8 activities were reported as being **integrated into another project on an SDC priority theme** (Afghanistan, Benin, Colombia, Cuba, Mozambique). The cultural component represents 0.3 to 50% of the total project and between CHF 6'500 and 200'000. Activities reported here are very heterogeneous. Most of them are **similar to "one-off cultural activities", but used with a specific sensitization objective** about the theme of the project (democracy, human rights, gender, health, education, water, conflict prevention). In some cases, they had longer-term objectives, e.g. supporting cooperatives and small entrepreneurs and building local capacity in cultural management and production.

3.3 Distribution by priority country/region

Field offices from all three SDC corporate domains (regional cooperation, cooperation with the East and humanitarian aid) **engaged in promoting local culture**.

Support to arts and culture is **very unevenly distributed across SDC's partner countries**. Out of 51 SDC field offices, 29 have supported arts and culture in 2013: 10 allocated more the CHF 200'000, 4 more than CHF 100'000, and 15 up to CHF 100'000 of their budget to arts and culture.

The **main reason for not supporting cultural projects** can be synthetize as lack of information on SDC cultural policy, and in particular the perception that embassies are solely responsible for the implementation of cultural projects. Other reasons were security constraints or lack of resources, both human and financial, after attending SDC thematic priorities.

Continent	Country	Total CHF/country
Africa	West Africa (regional)	29'680
	Benin	620'000
	Burkina Faso	500'000
	Burundi	21'400
	Egypt	244'020
	Mali	99'475
	Mozambique	250'000
	Southern Africa Region	271'000
	Tanzania	213'568
	Chad	28'896
Asia	Afghanistan	134'000
	Bhutan	20'900
	Cambodia	94'624
	Mongolia	65'000
	Myanmar	100'000
	Nepal	65'703
Latin America	Bolivia	389'600
	Colombia	7'000
	Cuba	176'500
	Haiti	63'150
	Honduras	55'000
	Nicaragua	384'042
Europe/the Mediterranean	Gaza and West Bank	146'223
Eastern Europe / CIS	Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan	673'000
	Moldova	25'000
	South Caucasus (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan)	190'000
Total		4'867'781

4. Conclusions for the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

- Based on the international commitment taken by Switzerland in 2008 with the ratification of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, as well as on SDC's commitment to work with the art and culture sector to achieve its development and transition objectives anchored in the bill 13-16, SDC is **further committed to its principle of "cultural percent"**.
- In 2013, SDC did not reach its benchmark of dedicating "one percent" of its operational budget to supporting artistic and cultural expressions. This result was foreseeable since 2009. It however hides a positive trend towards a better distribution of support across countries and a long-term consolidation of SDC support to culture. SDC "1% for culture policy" needs a **sustained communication and support by all SDC Divisions** in order to be known in the field.
- In 2013 all types of cultural projects were generally in line with SDC 2002 principles for cultural policy. SDC looks positively at the increase in the number of **full-fledged programmes** (vs. small actions) that are considered by field offices as good practice in terms of sustainability of results and management.

June 2014

Imprint

Editor:

Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
Culture and Development / Division Knowledge-Learning-Culture
3003 Bern
www.sdc.admin.ch

Photograph:

SDC/ Britha Helene Mikkelsen

Bern, 2015