The Art of Development:
Understanding cultural heritage as a creative agent for change
The Art of Development: Understanding cultural heritage as a creative agent for change

Jeni Burnell
January 2012

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the MA degree in Development and Emergency Practice, Oxford Brookes University.
Abstract

The objective of this study is to explore the roles of cultural heritage and cultural action as catalysts for change in the context of human development. This study will show how culture embodies valuable resources for development and that cultural action - or the use of the arts for education, development and social impact⁴ - unlocks assets which are essential to building resilient and sustainable communities.

In both practice and theory this study will test the assumptions that: 1) culture embodies valuable resources which are essential to achieving development; 2) creativity through cultural action inspires change because it unlocks assets; and 3) community artists as development practitioners facilitate change. The case file offers an example of how the arts and cultural action can be used in development, and demonstrates how Small Change community development principles can be applied in practice. The opportunities and challenges for achieving development through cultural action will be investigated and principles developed to move forward the debate surrounding the role of cultural heritage in development; these fuel a series of suggestions for future practice, learning and policy-making.

Statement of originality
This thesis is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by explicit references.

Signed: .......................................... (candidate)
Date: 31 January 2012

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

Signed: .......................................... (candidate)
Date: 31 January 2012

Statement of ethics review approval
This dissertation involved human participants. A Form E1BE for each group of participants, showing ethics review approval, has been attached to this dissertation (p.85).
## Contents

Abstract ...................................................................................................................................... iii
Statement of originality and ethics review approval ................................................................. v
Contents .................................................................................................................................... vii
Acknowledgements ................................................................................................................ ix
List of abbreviations .................................................................................................................. xi
Glossary .................................................................................................................................... xii
List of figures (with sources) & List of tables ........................................................................... xv
Prologue .................................................................................................................................. xvii

Introduction ............................................................................................................................... 19
Research methods ..................................................................................................................... 22

Chapter one
Looking back: Understanding development .............................................................................. 29

Chapter two
On the edge: Why culture matters ............................................................................................ 43

Chapter three
Letting go: The art of cultural action .......................................................................................... 59
Case file: Creative thinking ........................................................................................................ 61

Chapter four
Moving forward: Understanding cultural heritage as a creative agent for change .................... 73

Bibliography .............................................................................................................................. 77
Ethics form ................................................................................................................................. 85

Appendix one: Primary research notes ..................................................................................... 87
Appendix two: 50 social impacts of participation in the arts (Matarasso, 1997) ......................... 101
Appendix three: Creative Thinking workshop lesson plans and evaluation ............................. 103
Acknowledgements

Thanks to Nabeel Hamdi for his guidance, supervision and friendship throughout this process. I am extremely grateful to Katy Beinart, Emma Chetcuti, Karl Greenwood, Torange Khonsari, François Matarasso and Danielle Smith for taking time out of their busy working lives to contribute so generously to this research.

With regards to the field research, I would like to thank Multistory, Oliver Hamdi and Sunil Collet from Innovations in Participatory Education (IPE), and Anshu Sharma and Rheka Shenoy from SEEDS India. Special thanks must also go to the class teacher, Madam Stanzon, school staff and the year nine students at the Girl’s Higher Secondary School in Leh, Ladakh, for their dedication and commitment to the Creative Thinking workshop. I am also grateful to Monish Ahmed, Tashi Morup and staff at the Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation (LAMO) in Leh for their involvement in the Creative Teaching workshop.
### List of abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABAs</td>
<td>Asset-based Approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAM</td>
<td>Community Arts Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCD</td>
<td>Community Cultural Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCR</td>
<td>Creative Conflict Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRR</td>
<td>Disaster Risk Reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HD</td>
<td>Human Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDI</td>
<td>Human Development Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDR</td>
<td>Human Development Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>Sustainable Livelihoods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLAs</td>
<td>Sustainable Livelihoods Approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLF</td>
<td>Sustainable Livelihoods Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDHR</td>
<td>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INGO</td>
<td>International Non-Governmental Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPE</td>
<td>Innovations in Participatory Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAMO</td>
<td>Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCoC</td>
<td>Liverpool Capital of Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGDs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRA</td>
<td>Participatory Rural (or Rapid) Appraisal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLA</td>
<td>Participatory Learning and Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Glossary**

**Assets** or capital endowments are “a broad array of resources that enable people and communities to exert control over their lives and to participate in their societies in meaningful and effective ways” (Ford Foundation, 2002). Capital assets are most commonly identified as physical, financial, social, human and natural. Assets not only include these five tangible assets, but also an array of intangible assets such as aspirational, psychological, and political (e.g. human rights) (Moser, 2009: 18).

**Culture** can be defined as “the complex whole of knowledge, wisdom, values, attitudes, customs and multiple resources which a community has inherited, adopted or created in order to flourish in the context of its social and natural environment” (Verhelst & Tyndale, 2002: 10). Importantly, culture is not a frozen set of values of practices but constantly changing with time and circumstance (UNDP, 2004).

**Intangible cultural assets** are the traditions or living expressions inherent in a society. These include oral traditions, social practices, rituals, festive events and/or the skills and knowledge to produce traditional craft (UNESCO, 2009a).

**Tangible cultural assets** are the monument and collections of objects which are of cultural significance to a people and place (UNESCO, 2009a).

**Culture and development** “is about the role of culture and cultural processes in achieving development, as in issues of poverty, human rights, gender equality, health, environmental concerns, and associated fields” (Eskamp & Gould, 2000: 4).

**Cultural action** is “action undertaken through the arts for education, development and social impact” (Goldbard, 2006: 242). The main objective of cultural action is development. It aims to achieve this by using participatory arts activity to build social and human assets, which in turn contribute to building community resilience.

**Community** is the term used to define a “unit of social organisation based on some distinguishing characteristic or affinity...” (Goldbard, 2006: 241). This affinity can be based on culture, interest, place/location, practice or resistance (Hamdi, 2004: 67-69).
Community cultural development includes community or participatory arts practice and “describes a range of initiatives undertaken by artists in collaboration with other community members to express identity, concerns and aspirations through the arts and communications media, while building cultural capacity and contributing to social change” (Goldbard, 2006: 242).

Community artists are creative professionals whose work is community-based, interactive and often designed to; “make a creative response; challenge existing ways of doing things; reflect, deconstruct and create alternative meanings; and support the expression of people’s stories of place in new and innovative ways” (Matarasso, 2010).

Development has the objective of creating an “enabling environment for people to live long, healthy and creative lives” (UNDP, 2010: 12). According to Nabeel Hamdi (2004: xvi), development is “that stage you reach when you are secure enough in yourself, individually or collectively, to become interdependent; when ‘I’ can emerge as ‘we’, and also when ‘we’ is inclusive of ‘them’.”

Human development is a “process of enlarging people’s choices. The most critical ones are to lead to a long and healthy life, to be educated and to enjoy a decent standard of living. Additional choices include political freedom, guaranteed human rights and self-respect” (UNDP, 2010: 12).

International development describes the sector or industry working to address global issues such as poverty reduction, generating wealth, helping the needy, improving well-being and responding to the effects of climate change (Hamdi, 2010). It also describes a process by which resources and the needs of people and communities are analysed in order to plan an intervention with the aim of rectifying a problem or deficiency (Goldbard, 2006: 244).

Social capital “is the wealth of the community measured not in economic but in human terms. Its currency is relationships, networks and local partnerships. Each transaction is an investment which, over time, yields trust, reciprocity and sustainable improvements to quality of life. The assets of social capital are the skills and capacities, local knowledge and networks of each community” (Gould, 2001: 69).
List of figures (with sources)

- Figure 1: Examples of the arts being used in community development (refer to images)
- Figure 2: Research methods diagram
- Figure 3: Poverty headcount ratio at $1.25 a day (World Bank, 2011)
- Figure 4: Informal settlements in Caracas, Venezuela (chieforganizer.org)
- Figure 5: Conceptual framework for human development (UNDP, 2010)
- Figure 6: Australian aboriginal dancers (www.ciaf.com.au)
- Figure 7: Cultural action and SLA (Sanderson, 2009)
- Figure 8: From Vulnerability to Resilience (V2R) (IDS Knowledge Services, 2009)
- Figure 9: *Folk Stones* by Mark Wallinger (folkestonetriennial.org.uk)
- Figure 10: Protecting Haiti’s cultural heritage (refer to images)
- Figure 11: Saharawis and Sandblast (refer to images)
- Figure 12: Women’s Suffrage Movement (spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk)
- Figure 13: Liverpool Capital of Culture 2008 (littletimemachine.com)
- Figure 14: Mapping risk (Jeni Burnell)
- Figure 15: Cloudburst disaster (2010) in Leh, Ladakh, India (refer to images)
- Figure 16: Participatory arts activities as part of the Creative Thinking Workshop in Leh, Ladakh (Jeni Burnell and Multistory)
- Figure 17: Participatory photography (Jeni Burnell and Multistory)
- Figure 18: Participatory portrait photography by Creative Thinking workshop participants (Jeni Burnell and Multistory)
- Figure 19: *Creative Thinking* exhibition (Jeni Burnell and Multistory)
- Figure 20: Teacher training (Jeni Burnell and Multistory)
- Figure 21: Percentage totals for workshop questionnaires
- Figure 22: Seeds India reconstruction work in Leh (www.sarikagulati.wordpress.com)
- Figure 23: Principles for cultural action in development (Jeni Burnell)
  - Front cover by Grunge Textures (grungetextures.deviantart.com)
  - Paint splatters by Osarion Studios (osarionstudios.deviantart.com)

List of tables

- Table 1: List of people interviewed for primary research
- Table 2: Opportunities and challenges to development using the arts and cultural action
- Table 3: *Creative Thinking* workshop statistical information
- Table 4: *Creative Thinking* opportunities and challenges summary
Prologue

In a working class housing estate outside London people are singing. The song is difficult. It is written in Latin with intricate harmonies, and the two hundred and fifty plus people of the South Oxhey Community Choir are struggling with the challenge. It’s a challenge that’s been set by the BBC celebrity choirmaster, Gareth Malone, who first came to this deprived neighbourhood with the ambition of making people’s lives better through music. At first people were reluctant to join the choir, but through perseverance and passion Malone captures their imaginations and creates a focus for their ambitions. Soon children, pensioners, widowers, single mums, families and the local ‘lads’ are united by a common interest - to sing! This unity has also expanded to other parts of the community. When the choir performed at the South Oxhey community festival a local resident commented that: “It makes you proud to come from South Oxhey, which not many people would say…” (BBC, 2011).

At the end of Malone’s nine months working with the South Oxhey Community Choir, the once reluctant residents appealed with him to stay on as their choirmaster. As the spokeswomen for the choir said: “You’ve not only given us the wonderful opportunities to perform but you’ve given us the gift of self confidence…” (BBC, 2011a). Malone stayed on as choirmaster for another eighteen months before handing over the post and becoming the choir’s patron. The South Oxhey Community Choir continues to grow and has performed at venues including London’s Westminster Central Hall and the Roundhouse. Talking about his work for the BBC2 television documentary series, The Choir, Malone says that it’s not him or the choirs he creates which give people a voice… it’s music (BBC, 2011b).

Malone’s “The Choir” is an example of how the arts, in this case choral singing, act as a catalyst for creating sustainable communities. Through the activity of singing the South Oxhey Community Choir gained much more than musical ability. They gained social capital or assets through a sense of belonging and identity; all of which are key to building resilience in communities and are fundamental to development.
Introduction

The objective of this study is to explore the role of cultural heritage and cultural action as catalysts for change in the context of human development. This study will show how culture embodies valuable resources for human development and that cultural action - or the use of the arts for education, development and social impact\(^1\) - unlocks assets, which are essential to building resilient and sustainable communities. Implemented through community or participatory arts programmes, creative cultural projects “give people access to a means of self expression, even of self-definition, that no other form of collective action offers” (Matarasso, 2007:457).

Long-term human and social impacts have been attributed to people’s participation in the arts.\(^2\) These impacts build social capital and social, human, cultural and financial assets.

This study will explore, in theory and practice, ways in which culture and cultural action are applied to developmental and societal contexts. In doing so the research asks the question: what are the opportunities and challenges for creating sustainable communities through cultural action? This study aims to test the assumptions that: 1) culture embodies valuable resources which are essential to achieving development; 2) creativity through cultural action inspires change because it unlocks assets; and 3) community artists as development practitioners facilitate change. Evidenced from primary and secondary sources of information,\(^3\) this study will develop a series of principles about cultural heritage, creativity and cultural

---


2 Refer to Appendix Two: 50 social impacts of participation in the arts (Matarasso, 1997) for further details (p.101).

3 Refer to research methods (p.22) for details.
action in development. These can be applied to future learning and practice in human development.

The dissertation is structured in four sections. A brief description of each chapter is as follows:

Chapter 2, *Looking behind: Understanding development*, contextualises culture in development by selectively mapping the evolution of modern development trends. With a focus on human development, this chapter highlights asset-based approaches. Specifically the sustainable livelihood model as a practice approach and conceptual framework for understanding culture as a resource and applying cultural action in development. This is because a focus on assets (such as cultural action) “is essentially about recognising and making the most of people’s strengths…” (Friedli, 2011:11).

Chapter 3, *On the Edge: Why culture matters*, attempts to further the debate on culture’s role in development by defining culture and exploring, through practical interventions, how the arts and cultural action are being used in post-conflict / disaster and long-term development programmes. A summary of the opportunities and challenges for cultural action in development will be presented along with an investigation into the role of the community artist as development practitioner.

Chapter 4, *Letting Go: The art of cultural action*, presents a practical example of how the arts and cultural action have been used in development. Drawing on field research, the *Creative Thinking* case file is analysed for qualitative and quantitative evidence regarding how cultural action can inspire developmental impacts.
The case file also presents evidence of how *Small Change* community development theory can be applied to cultural action. The predominately positive participant responses to the *Creative Thinking* case file provide encouragement that this creative community development approach has the potential to achieve long-term positive change, and to be scalable in size and development impacts. It also highlights how creative development approaches can contribute to human development objectives.

Chapter 5, *Moving Forward: Understanding cultural heritage as a creative agent for change*, provides a summary of the key principles explored by the study. In addition a series of suggestions is offered that aim to move moving forward the development sector’s understanding and use of cultural resources and cultural assets as creative agents of change in human development.

This study is not based in one geographical location; instead, examples of culture and cultural action in development are sourced from a range of countries including Britain, Haiti, India and parts of Africa. This study rarely makes the distinction between the ‘developed’ and ‘developing’ world contexts. This is because culture and creativity are universal issues in that “[e]very people, every culture, every time has its own art, because through it they express their values, as well as their dreams, fears, hopes and desires” (Matarasso, 2011). Lastly, this study does not advocate that cultural action or the arts alone can resolve the complex socio-economic issues faced by many disadvantaged or disempowered communities (Matarasso, 2007). Instead, it promotes an integrated development approach that recognises cultural heritage and cultural action as important components of the developmental process.

4 For details about the Small Change approach please refer to research methods (p. 24 & 25).
Research methods

This study has been carried out using qualitative research methods from primary and secondary sources. Information has been gathered through a literature review, semi-structured key informant interviews, questionnaires, and a case file which is based on field research. Practical interventions are cited throughout the work which contextualise theory in practice. The theoretical investigation has informed the creation of a number of assumptions which are tested by the case file analysis. An outcome of this work is to present principles which move forward the debate surrounding cultural heritage and cultural action in development. The research methods therefore combine to develop these principles.

The literature review has two ‘dimensions’: contextualising culture in development by selectively mapping the history of development highlighting human development, assets-based approaches and the sustainable livelihoods model as frameworks for applying cultural heritage and action to development; and, exploring the role of culture for development including defining culture and understanding the opportunities and challenges faced to achieve development through cultural action and creative cultural development. Information for the literature review is sourced from peer-reviewed articles, book publications, grey literature and online electronic sources. The literature review provides quotations and core content for the study.
Primary research was conducted through key informant semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and field-based research. Information sourced from the interviews and questionnaires is used to contribute to core content, develop the challenges and opportunities for cultural action (refer to p54 & 55), and to inform the assumptions and principles. It was essential that contributors had first-hand experience of working in community cultural development and came from a range of working experiences. The following participants were interviewed or completed a questionnaire as part of the research:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Research method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Katy Beinart</td>
<td>UK based freelance community artist</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma Chetcuti</td>
<td>Director of UK charity and community arts organisation, Multistory</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karl Greenwood</td>
<td>Project Manager, Multistory</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torange Khonsari</td>
<td>Founding member of London-based art and architecture collective, Public Works</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>François Matarasso</td>
<td>Researcher, writer and consultant interested in community engaged art</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danielle Smith</td>
<td>Founder and Director of the UK arts and human rights charity, Sandblast</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. List of people interviewed for primary research. Refer to Appendix One: Primary research notes for details (p. 87).

The field-based research was carried out in India during a two week study trip in August 2011. This trip included participating in and assessing the implementation of a community cultural development project entitled the Creative Thinking workshop. Qualitative and quantitative research material was gathered during the field work which provides baseline data for the case file analysis.

The Creative Thinking project was developed through a partnership between the UK charity and community arts organisation, Multistory and two other organisations: UK organisation, Innovations in Participatory Education (IPE) and the Indian NGO, SEEDS India. Located in the remote Northern Himalayan region of Ladakh (India), the project explored the role of creativity and participatory arts in education and as a tool for disaster risk reduction (DRR) in the region.
The case file is presented by a short description of the context and activities followed by an analysis and discussion about the process. The discussion highlights the opportunities and challenges of such an approach as well as either validating or invalidating the assumptions that: 1) culture embodies valuable resources which are essential to achieving development; 2) creativity through cultural action inspires change because it unlocks assets; and 3) community artists as development practitioners facilitate change.

From a theoretical perspective this study applies cultural action to the Small Change community development approach. Small Change theory has been devised by development practitioner and academic, Nabeel Hamdi (Hamdi, 2004). It starts with the common sense assumption: if you want to achieve something big, you start with something small and you start where it counts. Small Change therefore explores how small, practical and mostly low budget interventions, if carefully targeted, act as catalysts for bigger long-lasting change; change that is designed to improve where people live and their opportunities.

Small Change offers a theoretical framework and a practice approach by which cultural action can engage with development. This is because Small Change (like cultural action) embraces local innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship to catalyse change. Building local assets is essential to Small Change and one way of achieving this is to be practice-based. According to Nabeel Hamdi, (2004: xviii) this is because: “intelligent practice builds on the collective wisdom of people and organisations on the ground – those who think locally and act locally – which is then rationalised in ways that make a difference globally.” Small Change theory informs the case file and development of the principles. This is because the case

---

**Small Change: Code of conduct**

Ignorance is liberating  
Start where you can: never say can’t  
Imagine first: reason later  
Be reflective: waste time  
Embrace serendipity: get muddled  
Play games: serious games  
Challenge consensus  
Look for multipliers  
Work backwards: move forwards  
Feel good

*Source: Hamdi, 2004: xxvi*
file uses education and the arts as catalysts for long-lasting development while the *Small Change* framework is as an example of an asset-based approach and, therefore, offers opportunities to create principles which are relevant to the human development context.

Limitations regarding this research relate to bias, time constraints and resource restrictions. For example, the literature review is limited to information published in English. Primary research is limited to the time and resources available to carry out field-based research and interview contributors. The case file research is limited to project outputs and is restricted in its data regarding long-term developmental impacts. Regardless of its limitations, this study offers key insights and principles into ways in which cultural heritage and cultural action can inform future human development policy and practice.
Chapter one
Looking back: Understanding development

Imagine an equitable and sustainable world free of poverty, injustice, inequality and disease. For many these are the aspirations for development along with, for example, generating wealth, helping the needy, improving well-being and saving the planet from climate change (Hamdi, 2010). When the international development industry emerged in the 1940s its focus was on global security, reconstruction and economic prosperity after the Second World War. Since this time, development has had many guises both in policy and practice. By reflecting on trends and patterns in modern development this chapter will selectively map its history. Specific focus will be given to human development and asset-based approaches because they (like cultural action) “…are about strengths and in particular, resilience or what enables individuals and communities to survive, adapt and/or flourish, notwithstanding adversity” (Friedli, 2011:12). This chapter will also contextualise culture in development and present a framework for applying cultural action by using the sustainable livelihoods model. A series of principles will be developed that summarise the key points and which can be used to inform future learning and practice.

Poverty is primarily the issue that development aims to address. It can be defined in many ways. Chronic or absolute poverty refers to a person’s inability to meet their basic needs. In developed countries, such as Britain, poverty is often defined as relative and measured against indicators including a person’s income and employment, along with their standard of housing and access to services such as education and health facilities (Palmer, G., n.d.). Whatever the name or indicator, the reality of living in poverty often results in lower life expectancy, dramatically

“People are the real wealth of a nation. The basic objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives.”

Source: UNDP, 1990: 9
reduced access to opportunities, and increased exposure to risks often leading to compounded vulnerability.

According to the 2011 Human Development Report (HDR), published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), about 1.7 billion people, out of the 5.5 billion combined population surveyed (79 percent of the world total in 109 countries) lived in multidimensional poverty between 2000 and 2010. That equates to approximately 30 percent of people around the world suffering multiple deprivation in health, education and standard of living (UNDP, n.d.). Whilst the magnitude of this issue is immense, there is progress being made. The UNDP’s 2011 HDR noted that the world’s average Human Development Index (HDI) “...increased 18 percent between 1990 and 2010... reflecting large improvements in life expectancy, school enrolment, literacy and income” (UNDP, 2011). It highlighted that, on average, people living in countries such as China and India continue to prosper, especially the emerging middle classes. Others however, such as those living in Southern Africa and the former Soviet Union, are not so fortunate. To understand the issues of the present it is worth reflecting on the past. To this end, let us explore the origins of development and some of the principle trends in its evolution since the 1940s.

1 The Human Development Index (HDI) is a statistical calculation for measuring development. It combines indicators of life expectancy, educational attainment and income to form a composite human development index (UNDP, n.d.(a)).

Figure 3. Poverty headcount ratio at $1.25 a day. This map depicts the number of people living in poverty as a percentage of the country’s population. The graph highlights inconsistencies that occur when measuring poverty. An example is China, where its global development indicators are high while, nationally, approximately 60% of its people continue to live on about $1.25 per day. Rural and urban factors need to be taken into account. Nevertheless, this example highlights issues which can arise when trying to measure poverty purely from an economic perspective.
With its roots in the European Enlightenment, modern concepts of development are synonymous with industry, growth and progress. According to development writer Maggie Black (2011:10), the “idea of ‘development’ was invented in the post-Second World War world to describe the process by which ‘backward’ countries would ‘catch up’ with the industrialised world – courtesy of its assistance.” The international development industry was created to address security and then need on a global scale. In the process it aimed to progress the world’s poorer populations socially, politically and economically.

For some people the idea of international development is controversial. A product of the post-colonial age, sceptics argue that development was a construct of the West designed to retain power and economic supremacy in a globalising world. Black (2011: 18) suggests that international development is, in fact, an illusion and that: “Action at the international level is confined to a supporting role, providing funds and forums in which to carry on debate, much of which is tenuously connected to what is happening to people on the ground.” Some even suggest that the development ‘project’ has failed. Oswaldo De Rivero (2001: 4), in his book The Myth of Development, argues that despite decades of ‘development’ the “greater part of humankind continues to exist with low incomes, in poverty, technologically backward and governed by authoritarian regimes or, at best, in low-powered democracies.” There are countless stories where development projects have reinforced poverty situations and wreaked havoc on the lives of the people they intended to help. Mapping the various approaches to development assists in understanding why development practice has failed in some situations and been successful in others.

Figure 4. An informal settlement in Caracas, Venezuela.

It is predicted that 5 billion people will be living in towns and cities by 2030 and that 80% of this growth will take place in the developing world. The urban poor are increasing in drastic numbers. They remain, however, a “largely underrepresented and misunderstood section of the poor community” (see Practical Action, 2011). As poverty increases, one wonders how the development sector is going to respond to such need.
Human development is the expansion of people’s freedoms and capabilities to lead lives that they value and have reason to value. It is about expanding choice. Freedoms and capabilities are a more expansive notion than basic needs. Many ends are necessary for a “good life”, ends that can be intrinsically as well as instrumentally valuable.

Source: UNDP, 2011:1

Economic development and poverty reduction strategies dominated the initial decades of development thinking and practice. In order to provide for people’s basic needs, many actors including national governments, multilateral and bilateral organisations, private companies, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) adopted a needs-based approach. This approach relied on aid or resources, including money, knowledge and goods, being supplied to poor communities to address a problem or deficiency. By the 1990’s, however, this approach was coming under scrutiny from development practitioners who argued that development was largely failing because poor people were beneficiaries of aid rather than active and equal agents in the process. They also suggested that the approach neglected local social, economic and political landscapes, whilst reinforcing the idea that “only outside experts can provide real help” (Mathie & Cunningham, 2003: 476). The needs-based approach continues to be implemented, however, alternatives have been available since the 1990s. At this time, human development emerged with its policies and practices that recognised the multidimensional nature of poverty and made people central to the development process.

Human development emerged, in part, as a reaction to the needs-based approach and ‘structural adjustment’ policies which dominated international development thinking in the 1980s. Implemented by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, “…structural adjustment consisted in a kind of ‘big bang’ liberalisation, deregulation and privatisation, exposing in short order the underdeveloped countries to global economic competition, aiming to make them efficient capitalist economies” (De Rivero, 2001: 89).
The effects of structural adjustment were devastating for a number of underdeveloped economies. Many were plunged into vast amounts of debt and faced restricting trade sanctions - imposed by the richer countries in the West - which reduced their ability to prosper on the world market. The consequences of structural adjustment generally resulted in richer nations getting richer while poorer nations got poorer. By the end of the 1980s, many agreed that economic development alone was failing to eliminate poverty and that a new approach was needed.

In 1990, the UNDP published its first Human Development Report (HDR). Chapter 1, *Defining and measuring human development* opened with the statement: “People are the real wealth of a nation” (UNDP, 1990: 9). Human development recognised that there was no direct or automatic link between income growth and human progress (UNDP, 1990). Instead it advocated “that development is about freedom, both human choice (opportunity freedoms) and a participatory process (process freedoms)” (UNDP, 2010: 12). This philosophical approach was based on Amartya Sen’s *capability approach*, which, in turn, was drawn from a long lineage of influential thinkers (UNDP, 2010). According to Fukuda-Parr (2011: 123), Sen’s approach suggested:

“…that human life can be seen as a set of “beings and doings” (termed “functionings”) and that a person has a range of functionings from which a person may choose (termed “capabilities”). Development can expand capabilities and thus enlarge the freedoms people have to lead valuable and flourishing lives…”

Participation of local people in the development process was, and is, an essential component of human development. Development based on participation
“used multiple, subjective indicators of poverty status that emerged out of the poor’s reality, collected through participatory techniques” (see Moser, 2009: 19). As early as the 1970s, development practitioners, such as Robert Chambers, were developing a range of socially engaged participatory techniques so as to better understand local people’s aspirations for development. By the 1990s - thanks to the work of Chambers and others - a paradigm shift was taking place in development thinking. According to Caroline Moser (2009: 19), it “differentiated between defining poverty as a static concept and vulnerability as a dynamic one, and focused on defining concepts such as assets, vulnerabilities, capabilities, and endowments.” Asset-based approaches (ABAs) emerged as a result of this new thinking. ABAs acknowledged that people, no matter how poor or impoverished, have value and are essential to the process of achieving sustained development. As Alison Mathie and Gord Cunningham (2001:474) explain:

“...the appeal of ABCD [Asset Based Community Development] lies in its premise that people in communities can organise to drive the development process themselves by identifying and mobilising existing (but often unrecognised) assets, thereby responding to and creating local economic opportunities.”

Contextualised by human development, the ABAs produced a proliferation of analytical concepts, operational approaches and developmental frameworks since the 1990s. These include the ‘asset-accumulation framework’, the ‘asset-vulnerability framework’, and the, perhaps more well known, ‘sustainable livelihoods model or approach’ (Moser, 2009). The distinction between poverty and vulnerability remains fundamental to each framework or model. Vulnerability can be defined in many ways. Mark Pelling, author of The Vulnerability of Cities: Natural Disaster and Social Resilience (2003:7), defines it as “exposure to risk and an inability to avoid or absorb potential harm.” While Blaikie et al. (2004:5), in the seminal text At risk, natural hazards, people’s vulnerability and disasters, say it is “the characteristics of a person or group and their situation that influence their capacity to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover...”. Moser (2009: 20) clarifies, noting that: “...although poor people are among the most vulnerable, not all vulnerable people [are] poor...”. This statement suggests that while everyone is susceptible to vulnerability, not all people will become impoverished. ABAs argue that people have an increased likelihood of experiencing poverty if they do not have the capabilities or freedoms to access and accumulate assets.

---

2 This approach was initially known as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). It later became known as Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA) followed by Participatory Learning and Action (PLA). For details refer to Chambers, R. (2008) Revolutions in Development Inquiry. Earthscan: London. p. 86

Generally, assets are the stock of resources that people use to build livelihoods. They also “give people the capability to be and act” (Bebbington, 1999; see Moser, 2009:25). Acquiring assets is not a passive act but requires agency, and is therefore linked to the empowerment of individuals and communities (Mos, 2009; Veltmeyer, 2011). According to Sen (1997; see Moser, 2009: 25), assets “are identified as the basis of agents’ power to reproduce, challenge, or change the rules that govern the control, use, and transformation of resources.” ABAs are interested in the types of assets that people have along with the associated strategies by which these assets are accumulated (Moser, 2009).

An example of a financial asset accumulation strategy is the Co-operative Movement and the Friendly Societies, which were prolific in Britain during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Initially thrift or mutual aid organisations, they were created by the working class as a way of collectively safeguarding financial assets so that households could provide welfare support at a time of minimal assistance from the state or employers. Kathleen Jones (1994:49) further explains:

“It became custom for groups of men to meet in the local inn for a drink on pay-day, and to contribute a few pence a week for some common purpose. Dissenters, who did not drink beer, met in the chapel. Such groups served a variety of purposes: good fellowship, exchanging information about available work, providing sickness and burial funds for their members. From these simple beginnings, friendly societies, trade unions, housing associations, people’s banks and co-operatives were all to develop.”

### Types of assets

**Physical capital**: stock of plant, equipment, infrastructure, and other productive resources.

**Financial capital**: financial resources available to people (savings and supplies of credit).

**Human capital**: investments in education, health, and the nutrition of individuals.

**Social capital**: an intangible asset, defined as the rules, norms, obligations, reciprocity and trust embedded in social relations, social structures, and societies’ institutional arrangements.

**Natural capital**: stock of environmentally provided assets such as soil, atmosphere, forests, minerals, water, etc.

Source: Moser, 2009: 18
This strategy relied on social capital to start and be sustained. Trust, social cohesion and people abiding by common rules and social norms were also required. The Co-operative Movement, therefore, not only helped with accumulating financial assets but also assisted with building human and social assets for Britain’s working class.

Assets can be person, household or community-based and are commonly categorised as either tangible or intangible. Tangible assets are commonly divided into physical, financial, human, social, and natural (Moser, 2009; Mathie & Cunningham, 2003). Intangible assets are less grounded in empirical measurement and include “aspirational” and “psychological” assets (Moser, 2009). Dreams and ambitions can also be defined as intangible assets. These assets are often difficult to measure, however, they embody important human, social and cultural capital which is essential to building resilient and sustainable societies.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) suggests that culture is also made up of tangible and intangible assets. According to UNESCO (2009a: 3), tangible cultural heritage includes the monuments and collections of objects that are of cultural significance to a people and place while intangible assets are the:

“…traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts.”

Figure 6. Australian aboriginal dancers. This image shows an example of intangible cultural heritage as defined by UNESCO. Here intangible assets are expressed as traditional dance, song and ceremonial ritual.
Sustainable Livelihoods Approaches (SLAs) offer a practice approach and conceptual framework for understanding human development, ABAs and the role of cultural heritage in development. Livelihoods approaches are underpinned by the asset-vulnerability approach. Sustainable livelihoods (SL) thinking “places people and their priorities at the centre of the development process” (Eldis: n.d.). With a focus on poverty elevation, SLAs operate by “empowering the poor to build on their own opportunities, supporting their access to assets, and developing an enabling policy and institutional environment” (Eldis: n.d.). While frameworks and methods differ amongst organisations, the guiding principles remain the same. An example of a livelihoods approach is that championed by the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

Since the mid-1990s, DFID’s development policy and practice has focus on a sustainable livelihoods approach. The following principles underpin this approach: “people-centred, responsive and participatory; multi-level [or holistic]; conducted in partnership; sustainable; and dynamic” 4 (Eldis, n.d.). These principles encapsulate the aims of SLAs while the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) provides the analytical tools that can be applied when implementing SLAs. According to Mary Ann Brocklesby and Eleanor Fisher (2003: 186-187), the SLF has four main components:

“First, people are conceived of living within a vulnerability context in which they are exposed to risks, through sudden shocks, trends over time and seasonal change. Second, people have a number of capital assets, which they draw upon to make their livelihoods [social, natural, financial, physical and

Livelihoods principles (DFID):

“People-centred: focusing on poor people’s priorities, understanding the differences between groups of people and working with them in a way that is appropriate to their current livelihood strategies, social environment and ability to adapt.

Responsive and participatory: listening and responding to the livelihoods priorities identified by poor people themselves.

Multi-level: working at different levels to reduce poverty - ensuring that micro level reality informs development of policy and an effective enabling environment, and macro level structures support people to build on their own strengths.

Conducted in partnership: with the public and private sector.

Sustainable: balancing economic, institutional, social and environmental sustainability.

Dynamic: recognising the dynamic nature of livelihood strategies and responding flexibly to people’s changing situations.”

Source: www.eldis.org

4 Refer to Livelihoods Principles (DFID) in column (right) for details.
Human capital]. These five capital assets are put together to form an ‘asset pentagon’, which is used to assess people’s overall asset base. Third, these assets are drawn on within people’s livelihood strategies, i.e. choices and activities through which people seek to generate a living... Fourth, policies, institutions and processes are held to shape people’s access to assets and livelihood activities, as well as the vulnerability context in which they live. It is here that linkages can be made between livelihood activities taking place at the micro-level and the meso- or macro-level institutional and policy context.

SL thinking, as used by organisations such as DFID, CARE International and the UNDP, can be applied to national-level planning, project planning, community-based planning, responding to an emergency, input into participatory poverty assessments, policy process analysis, monitoring and evaluation, and in a review of existing programmes (Carney, 2002:18). Whilst SLAs are designed to create a people-centred development approach, some doubt has been raised among development practitioners as to whether various SLAs, such as DFIDs, have the capacity to understand community-led dynamics and how people respond to external interventions (Brocklesby and Fisher, 2003:190). Furthermore, DFID’s approach has been scrutinised for the creation of a ‘significant gap’ between its SLA and community-level practice. According to Brocklesby and Fisher (2003:191):

“Reference to communities, or the drawing of community-level ideas connected to participation, cannot be equated with a carefully considered community development strategy or community development practice, nor does it engage with and reflect the complexity, diversity and dynamic nature of micro-level community mobilisation and institutional formation.”

Prioritising culture as a resource for development is one way of addressing the limitations of SLAs. The notion that cultural heritage is essential to the development process is implicit in SLAs, ABAs and human development. According to the HDR 2010: “Human development carries the melody of their culture, values and current priorities in a way that reflects inclusive democratic choices” (2010: 24). Cultural liberty was the theme for the 2004 HDR (2004:1), where it noted that “[c]ultural liberty is a vital part of human development because being able to choose one’s identity – who one is – without losing the respect of others or being excluded from other choices is important in leading a full life.” David Sanderson (2009), in his PhD thesis entitled Integrating development and disaster management concepts to reduce vulnerability in low income urban settlements, developed a graphical representation for understanding SLAs. This diagram (Figure 7) depicts the dynamics that are created between
people and how they secure basic needs along with their assets and access to resources. It highlights some of the barriers to achieving this aim, namely discrimination and/or the institutional practices which restrict their freedoms (Sen, 1999) to access resources and, in turn, reduce vulnerability to shocks and stresses. The author of this study contributes to this work by adding cultural action and cultural context to the diagram. Cultural action is a tool for programme intervention, while the cultural context influences asset types, asset accumulation strategies and institutional practices which determine community-level dynamics and project outcomes.

Figure 7. Cultural action and SLA. The above diagram is a graphic representation of the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach as developed by David Sanderson (Sanderson, 2009). The author of this study has added cultural context and cultural action to the diagram. This depicts that human development occurs within a cultural context and that cultural action is one method by which people’s assets can be accumulated. Cultural action is also a tool for unlocking resource controls and addressing discrimination. An example is the Disability Rights Movement in the UK (1990s), where art and creative action were used to vocalise and visually represent the Movement’s political aspirations. This process contributed to the Movement’s success attained with the introduction of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995).
Development continues to evolve from the original needs-based approach practiced in the 1950s to the early 1970s. Qualitative measurements of poverty, as used in these earlier decades, have largely been replaced by human development’s quantitative understanding and indexing of multidimensional poverty. With its focus on people, human development enabled the cultivation of assets-based development and sustainable livelihoods approaches. As a consequence, development underwent a paradigm shift from a process imposed by outsiders on local people, to one where local people defined their development priorities and actions; participation and empowerment became synonymous with this development approach.

Equity and environmental sustainability were the focus of UNDP’s 2011 HDR. As the gap between rich and poor people continues to widen, so does widespread environmental degradation. Asset-based development and SLAs are adapting to respond to disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation. Asset-accumulation strategies are now shifting the focus from reducing vulnerability to strengthening the resilience of people (refer to Figure 8 for details). Cultural heritage and cultural action have important roles to play in

Figure 8. "From Vulnerability to Resilience (V2R) is a framework for analysis and action to reduce vulnerability and strengthen the resilience of individuals, households and communities. It sets out the key factors that contribute to people’s vulnerability, explains the links between these factors, and includes ideas for action to strengthen resilience.” © Practical Action

Source: IDS knowledge Services, 2011:7
implementing asset-accumulation strategies. According to Matarasso (2001:1) this is because:

“We understand better not just that culture can be a mechanism for, or an obstacle to, development, but that it is intrinsic to sustainable human development itself because it is our cultural values which determine our goals and our sense of fulfilment. Development processes which fail to recognise this, which simplistically divide people’s resources from their aspirations, or their health from how they feel, struggle to produce lasting improvements in people’s lives. Instead, we have to engage with development in the context and through the medium of human cultures.”

To progress development there is a need for policy-makers and practitioners to further recognise cultural heritage as a valuable resource for achieving development. This study proposes that cultural capital becomes a defined capital asset alongside social, natural, financial, physical, and human assets. This asset would include tangible and intangible cultural heritage as outlined by UNESCO. Naming cultural assets, while recognising that they are inclusive of some social assets, would prioritise cultural resources in the development process. This is important because within cultural assets people’s dreams, aspirations, hopes and desires are most freely expressed, and without this development cannot succeed. To these ends, cultural heritage is a resource which contributes to human development by unlocking assets and, in turn, building resilience for communities and for creating sustainable development.

**Principles**

**Poverty** is multidimensional and therefore requires qualitative not quantitative approaches to delivering development.

**Development** agendas should be defined by local people rather than outsiders.

**Human development** is people-centred, offering local people opportunities to prioritise and action their aspirations for development.

**Assets** and asset-accumulation strategies build people’s resilience to sudden onset shocks and/or daily stresses brought about by living in vulnerable situations.

**Culture** is the context within which all development takes places, therefore understanding and engaging with its manifestations is essential for achieving development.

**Culture** embodies valuable resources for development because it determines our goals and aspirations.

**Cultural action** through participatory arts activity builds social and human assets which, in turn, contribute to building community resilience.
Chapter two
On the edge: Why culture matters

Making the arts available to everyone was viewed by the economist and first chairman of Arts Council England, John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946), as a way of alleviating the ‘poverty of aspiration’ in post-World War II Britain. This poverty, according to Keynes, “got in the way of all attempts to lift people out of physical poverty...” (see Frayling, 2009). The arts offered people inspiration, or as Keynes put it, “When our spirits were at a low ebb [during the second world war]... [we] carried music, drama and pictures to places which otherwise would be cut off from the masterpieces of happier times” (see Frayling, 2009). Whether involving people in a participatory art process or as created by artists, the arts offered people in post-war Britain - as they do today - opportunities to be challenged, inspired and entertained. Furthermore, the arts communicate cultural heritage and help define tangible and intangible social and human assets.

Cultural heritage, expressed through creative individual practice or cultural action, offers development as a resource for building community resilience. According to Matarasso (2007:457), this is because “cultural projects give people access to a means of self-expression, even of self-definition, that no other form of collective action offers.” Regardless of its attributes, the importance of culture in development remains an ongoing debate within the international development sector. While greater significance has been given to it since the introduction of human development, its relevance to aid and long-term development programmes remains relatively marginalised. With the aim of progressing the debate about the role of culture in development, this chapter will define culture and...
explore - through practical interventions - how the arts and cultural action are being used in development contexts. A summary of the opportunities and challenges for cultural action in development will be presented, along with an investigation into the role of the community artist as development practitioner.

Historically, culture has been recognised by the development sector in a number of ways. In 1948, it was recognised as a human right by the United Nations (UN) in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. While in 1966, UNESCO published its first culture-based policy, *The Declaration of the Principle of International Cultural Co-operation*. Since this time, UNESCO has developed a series of policies and conventions designed to safeguard tangible and intangible cultural heritage and promote culture-based development. At the 1982 *World Conference on Cultural Policies* in Mexico City, UNESCO (1982) members devised the following definition for culture:

“... 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...”

The many definitions that followed have attempted to capture culture’s amorphous nature. According to Thierry Verhelst and Wendy Tyndale (2002:2), culture consists of the “particular aspirations, attitudes, mentality, values, belief, spirituality [along with a person’s] sense of the

---

1 One of the policy’s aims was “…to enable everyone to have access to knowledge, to enjoy the arts and literature of all people…and to contribute to the enrichment of cultural life” (UNESCO, 1966).

sacred and of happiness, [and] their own skills, expertise and creativity." In a publication for UNESCO entitled Recognising Culture: a series of briefing papers on culture and development, François Matarasso (2001a: 3) suggests that: “Culture is the expression of human values... [it is] everything we don’t have to do to survive – but are compelled to do to feel human.” Another important observation regarding culture was made by the UNDP in their 2004 HDR (2004:4):

“Culture is not a frozen set of values and practices. It is constantly recreated as people question, adapt and redefine their values and practices to changing realities and exchanges of ideas.”

As discussed in Chapter one, culture is made up of tangible and intangible assets. Also known as living heritage, intangible assets continue to gain significance in the development sector. This is because they offer opportunities to communicate across cultures, while also being a valuable resource upon which to build development interventions. The advantage of culture-based development programmes is that they are designed to address a local context. In contrast, cultural resources can be adversely manipulated and turned into products, often by output focused development practitioners, who use them “as a mechanism of control [where people] become subjects whose projects, dreams, values and meanings are supplied by others” (Parmar see Veltmeyer, 2011:156). Care and caution therefore need to be applied when using cultural resources for development purposes.

The role of culture in development spans both policy and practice. According to Aradhana Parmar (see Veltmeyer, 2011:153 & 154), culture is generally used in the following ways:

“...(1) to differentiate among diverse ways of doing things that reflect a society’s dominant beliefs and values; (2) as a condition (and thus an explanation) of social and economic development; and (3) as a resource for development – a tool for mobilizing action for progressive or radical change.”

At policy level, culture has a role in achieving social stability and cultural liberty; both of which are important components for achieving sustainable development goals. As Mark Mallock Brown (UNDP, 2004: v) explains:
“Unquestionably, there is no form of development that is not inter alia cultural. But culture can never be a mere tool for development, since the transformation of a society or other human group entails structuring and differentiating on many different dimensions. The best way for cultural projects to foster the development of the societies in which they are implemented is to be not simply cultural.

John Crowley
Source: ARCADE, 2010:17

“...If the world is to reach the Millennium Development Goals and ultimately eradicate poverty, it must first successfully confront the challenge of how to build inclusive, culturally diverse societies. Not just because doing so successfully is a precondition for countries to focus properly on other priorities of economic growth, health and education for all citizens. But because allowing people full cultural expression is an important development end in itself.”

UNESCO (2010:2) also outlines the role of culture in achieving sustainable development:

“Culture in all its dimensions, is a fundamental component of sustainable development. As a sector of activity, through tangible and intangible heritage, creative industries and various forms of artistic expressions, culture is a powerful contributor to economic development, social stability and environmental protection.”

The creative industries contribute to development through revenue generated from arts and culture activities. These include public art programmes, tourism, museums and galleries, historical buildings and architecture, fashion, design, crafts, publishing, film, television and radio, and the performing arts (DCMS, 2001). Often viewed as outside mainstream international development activities,
the creative industries have the potential to support and invigorate the development process. An example is shown by the current work of UNESCO in Haiti.

After an earthquake devastated large parts of the Caribbean island in January 2010, UNESCO (2011) “immediately advocated the integration of culture in the reconstruction strategies as a fundamental source of renewal and social cohesion.” Working alongside the Haitian people and its Government, UNESCO is assisting with the rehabilitation of the built heritage, giving technical assistance in development planning for museums and cultural institutions, creating a legal framework to support cultural policies along with carrying out activities to revitalise cultural industries for youth and disadvantaged populations (UNESCO, 2011). Re-establishing Haiti’s cultural industries, and supporting the reconstruction of its cultural tangible heritage, contributes to economic development and offers meaning and value to the identity and continuation of the Haitian society (UNESCO, 2011). This is best articulated by the Haitian storyteller, Mimi Barthélémy, when she says:

“Haiti will certainly not die, because its painters started painting again, its poets started creating, its singers composing, its writers writing, and stories started circulating, very soon after the disaster of 12 January 2010... The clean slate is now the catalyst for a new era.” (UNESCO, 2011a)
In post-conflict situations cultural heritage is also used as a resource. *Living heritage*, expressed through the arts, can be used as an expression of self-determination⁴ and as a tool for conflict resolution. Creative Conflict Resolution (CCR) is a discipline practiced both inside and outside the development sector. It is based on the principle that to transform conflict situations one must “treat the human condition rather than just the physical symptoms of deprivation and conflict” (Sainsbury, 2009:1). According to mediation consultant and art therapist Marian Liebmann (1996:1):

“The arts have been used for a long time to portray and describe conflict, whether in pictures of battle scenes, epic poems of heroism, clashing music, or plays describing family and societal conflict.”

While Liebmann acknowledges the merits of representing conflict through the arts, she stresses the importance of moving beyond it if conflicts are to be fully resolved. Liebmann highlights that one needs to understand the process of the conflict and work with it to create a resolution.

In practice, CCR is used to engage diverse groups of people in a wide range of conflict situations. General themes include social issues (i.e. bullying, low self-esteem, anger) and work with discriminated or marginalised groups (i.e. homeless people, torture victims, conflicting community groups or victims of war) (Liebmann, 1996). The arts - including drama, theatre and the visual mediums - offer people the opportunity to reflect and process their experiences. According to Liebmann (1996:2), they are an invaluable tool for enabling this process because they:

“...immerse people in an active learning experience in order that they might understand someone else’s point of view; engage participants in an external activity and in so doing distance them from the issues, therefore, allowing them opportunities to gain new insights and personal perspectives into the conflict; establishes cooperative projects that teach the skills of working together in order to resolve conflict; and creates alternative, non-verbal methods of communicating and resolving conflicts.”

The work of a UK charity, Sandblast, demonstrates where the arts are used for self-determination and political activism in a protracted conflict, occupation and exile situation.

---
⁴ Self-determination is “the right of a people to determine its own destiny. In particular, the principle allows a people to choose its own political status and to determine its own form of economic, cultural and social development” (available at: http://www.unpo.org/article/4957).
Founded in 2005 by the director Danielle Smith,\(^5\) Sandblast is an arts and human rights charity “working with the indigenous people from Western Sahara, the Saharawis, whose identity and culture is threatened by the impact of exile and Morocco’s occupation” (Sandblast, n.d.). The charity was created so that the repressed Saharawis people can tell their own story, promote their culture, and earn a living through the arts (Sandblast, n.d.). As part of this research, Danielle Smith (2011) shared valuable insights into the opportunities and challenges that she has encountered while using the arts and cultural action to inspire change in the Western Sahara.

Smith comments that, for the Saharawis, creativity offers opportunities for raising awareness about their issues, cross-cultural exchange, self-expression, self-determination, monetary income and personal growth. The process, however, is not without its limitations. Smith (2011) highlights that entrenched cultural and religious beliefs, along with some longstanding social attitudes, restrict the process:

“The Saharawis are a Muslim society with desert nomadic roots. They believe any figurative art is not acceptable to Islam and so tend to reject it. But the new generation who have been exposed to other cultures and ways of thinking are trying to change these attitudes and find ways to educate their people especially the older generation...”

Further tensions have arisen due to the traditional attitudes about the practice of making art. Traditionally, singing, dancing and craftwork have been associated with the ‘inferior’ classes of the Saharawis. One way that Smith

\(^5\) Danielle Smith has an MA in Anthropology and has worked extensively as a freelance documentary photographer and filmmaker. She was associate producer for a BBC2 Correspondent program about the Western Sahara in 1998. Her award-winning film on the Saharawis, ‘Beat of Distant Hearts’, has featured in festivals in Europe, Africa and the US.
and her team are overcoming this barrier is by framing people’s participation as a way of supporting their collective cause. This, however, has had a tendency to politicise the art work, which becomes a vehicle for serving the political objectives of the struggle as opposed to an individual’s artistic expression. Other restrictions relate to the act of making art which has traditionally been a communal act; the idea of an individual artist was a largely alien concept to the Saharawis. Furthermore, artforms such as film, photography and painting have not traditionally been practiced by the Saharawis, who instead rely on a strong oral tradition. Administrative issues also arise because of many Saharawis being refugees who are dependant on aid. This results in a constant shortage of and limited access to art resources, such as film or photographic equipment, which are required for their craft. The complexities are great and can lead one to question the value of the arts in this context. According to Smith, the process is and has always been one of experimentation, participation and learning. However, during her 20 years of being involved with the Saharawis, Smith has seen how the arts have been a catalyst for change. According to Smith (2011), this is because they:

“...are a powerful vehicle for engaging the hearts and imagination of the wider public with issues that are otherwise marginalised and overlooked...; meet the challenge of crossing frontiers and universalizing issues that otherwise seem to be of narrow interest; and provide a two-way benefit that promotes development for both the supporters and the community. To elaborate, creative and cultural processes ultimately lead us to question and redefine our assumptions about humanitarian work and concepts of development.”

The work of Sandblast in the Western Sahara and UNESCO in Haiti offers insights into how cultural heritage and cultural action are being used as catalysts for change. Buildings of historical significance are being reconstructed and restored in Haiti. Local Haitian artists are being supported so that they can create and local people are being given opportunities to engage in their living heritage. Sandblast continues to support creativity along with political and cultural expression in the Western Sahara. Awareness about the issues facing the Saharawis is being raised. The Saharawis are also learning new forms of creative expression and enjoying new livelihood opportunities which come from selling their artworks. In other development situations, creative conflict resolution is giving people a mechanism for self and communal healing post-conflict. While policy-makers are exploring how cultural resources can further inspire cultural liberty, diversity and sustainable development; outside of the international development sector, community arts continues to spearhead cultural engagement in development. Let us now reflect briefly on how this has evolved.
Cultural action in community development has been recognised as an effective tool for engaging civil society since the 1960s with the emergence of the Community Arts Movement (CAM) in countries such as the United States, Britain and Australia (Newman et al. 2003; Laundry et al. 1996). Community arts was a dramatic departure from avant-garde concepts of art. According to Grant Kester (2004:12), avant-garde art’s role:

“...is to shock us out of this perceptual complacency, to force us to see the world anew. This shock has borne many names over the years: the sublime, alienation effect.. In each case the result is a kind of epiphany that lifts the viewers outside the familiar boundaries of a common language, existing modes of representation, and even their own sense of self.”

In the 1960s and 1970s, however, there was a shift taking place in conceptual and minimal art which influenced community-based art practice. According to Kester (2004:13,14) there was:

“...a gradual movement away from object-based practice; the interest in making a given work dependent on direct physical or perceptual interaction with the viewer...; and a related shift towards a durational, rather than instantaneous, concept of aesthetic experience... Taken together, these transformations set the stage for interactive, collaborative art practice...”

Since the introduction of the CAM, artists have experimented with socially engaged artistic practices based in communities - either of culture, interest, place or location, practice or resistance (Hamdi, 2004: 67-69). Within Britain, participatory arts have become synonymous with addressing social exclusion (Gould, 2003).
Here issues include health, education, gender issues, housing, poverty, conflict resolution, rural exclusion, homelessness, disability, basic skills, cultural diversity, criminal justice, refugees and asylum seekers, and regeneration (Gould, 2003). The arts have also played a pivotal role in raising awareness and advocating for political change. Throughout British history the arts have been used to vocalise and visually represent political movements. Examples include the Women’s Suffrage Movement in the late 1800s along with the UK Disability Rights Movement of the 1990s.

In regeneration, Britain (like the rest of Western Europe) has opted largely to apply the arts through a Festival City approach. The European Capitals of Culture programme, commissioned by the European Union, is arguably the largest and most well-known example of how culture and the arts are being used in large-scale regeneration. This programme was established in 1985 by the European Commission with the purpose of celebrating cultural diversity and European ties while fostering European citizenship (European Commission, 2011). Since this time, cities throughout Europe have competed to become Capitals of Culture. Winning cities gain vast amounts of financial resources to regenerate infrastructure and cultivate their creative industries. The economic advantages this programme brings to participating cities are enormous, however there remains continued scepticism as to how effective these programmes are in terms of achieving genuine development, especially for the more deprived sectors of society. This is evidenced in a review of the English city of Liverpool, which was selected as the European Capital of Culture 2008.

It is estimated that the Liverpool Capital of Culture (LCoC) programme “generated £800 million for the local economy and attracted an additional 27% more visitors to the city” (Arts Council England, 2010:5). This programme had positive physical and economic
outcomes for Liverpool in terms of improving infrastructure and increasing tourism. Nevertheless, according to the *English Indices of Deprivation 2010* report, Liverpool remains one of the highest ranked in England in terms of multiple deprivations (Communities and Local Government, 2011). It can be argued that an inherent weakness of the Festival City approach is due to the programme largely investing in capital works which are focused predominately on international marketing and tourism. There are few creative projects that are part of these programmes, which genuinely engage local people in participatory art processes with the aim of improving where they live and their opportunities. That said, Festival City programmes have played an important role in British urban regeneration since the mid-1980’s. Because the long-term social benefits remain unclear, however, there has been a subsequent shift in policy and practice with a focus “less on capital projects, and more on the capacity of the arts activity to support community-led renewal” (Laundry et. al.,1996: summary).

Generally, community arts can take many forms including participatory film and photography projects, painting projects (including public murals), group building programmes, along with community theatre and music events. How the arts are used varies across disciplines and individual artistic practices. An example of how the arts can be used as a developmental tool is discussed by Rod Purcell (2009) in his paper entitled *Images for change: community development, community arts and photography*. Purcell highlights two approaches when using photography in development. The first, *photo-elicitation* relies on photographs being taken by a professional or outsider of the subject under consideration which are used to spark discussion. In contrast, the *photo-novella* or picture stories method relies on external technical support being given by professionals so that local people can tell their own stories through pictures. According to Purcell (2009:116), “...the essential factor [regarding photo-novella] is that local people become the subject of their own investigation rather than the
A primary aim of community arts is to build social capital. This can be achieved through training, education and the use of creative techniques which empower. Therefore, participatory arts practice should, in theory, rely less on the *photo-elicitation* style of community engagement and more on the *photo-novella* approach. This approach can be applied across most artistic mediums used in creative community development initiatives.

There are a number of opportunities and challenges when using cultural action in development. Table 2 (below) presents a summary of the main points. This information is based on the literature review and primary research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Opportunities</strong></th>
<th><strong>Challenges</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human and social impacts</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>(Refer to Appendix two for the list of 50 social impacts of participation in the arts, p101)</em></td>
<td>Culture-based development remains marginalised in mainstream development practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic impacts (cultural tourism, creative industries).</td>
<td>Power dynamics if used inappropriately can misuse cultural action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributes to cultural identity and cultural diversity issues.</td>
<td>Professionalisation - terms such as ‘art’ and ‘development’ do little to improve everyday life situations for people living in poverty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture-based development is people-centred and contributes to human development. Cultural action post-conflict, post-disaster and long-term development interventions.</td>
<td>Policy and institutional structures have the potential to inhibit ‘bottom-up’ creative development initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources (time and money)</td>
<td>Resources (time and money)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes of cultural action cannot be guaranteed as there is nothing inevitable about the action of art on people.</td>
<td>Outcomes of cultural action cannot be guaranteed as there is nothing inevitable about the action of art on people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participatory arts can be radical and innovative and challenge the status quo.</td>
<td>Using cultural action purely to solve social problems constrains its potential to be radical, innovative and questioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artists can: make a creative response; challenge existing ways of doing things; reflect, deconstruct and create alternative meanings; and support the expression of people’s stories of place in new and innovative ways.</td>
<td>Artists working in participatory arts can reduce genuine community engagement by a preoccupation with professional artistic motives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participatory arts are safe, creative, empowering, inspiring, a resource and fun. Culture-based development and the arts cannot be done in isolation if social change is the end goal.

The arts in development can raise awareness, advocate, universalise issues and reduce conflict situations. Measuring the developmental impacts of the arts in development can often be difficult due to the human and social impacts being far reaching and long-term.

Cultural action can be used to foster networks and relationships that have the potential to spark change. Community development can be inhibited without strong community leadership.

Art and cultural action is a unique type of communication that can spark a powerful exchange of ideas. Neither art nor community activism can nurture a final response to the challenges that face disadvantaged or disempowered communities.

Participatory arts can encourage personal development and social cohesion. Group participatory practice is a third-sector approach to community engagement and one that is often alien to the participatory culture of deprived neighbourhoods.

The arts build on inherent community assets defined as the gifts, skills and capacities of individuals, associations and institutions within a community. Participatory community development (including arts practice) requires communities to be flexible and have time and resources to commit to the process.

### Table 2. Opportunities and challenges to development using the arts and cultural action.

Sources include: Arts Council England, 2010; Carey & Sutton, 2004; Matarasso, 1997, 2007 & 2011; Moseley, 2002; Kay, 2000; Phillips, 2004; Taylor, 2007; Williams, 2003; and information gathered from primary research.

Community artists as development practitioners are instrumental to creative community development. How they are important was discussed with arts consultant François Matarasso (2010), who noted that they have the ability: *to make a creative response; challenge existing ways of doing things; reflect, deconstruct and create alternative meanings, and support the expression of people’s stories of place in new and innovative ways*. A role of the artist in this context is to facilitate a socially engaged creative process with the intention of inspiring a response. A consequence of this role is that it establishes a power dynamic between the artist and the community as Kester (2004:137) explains:

“Community art projects are often centred on an exchange between an artist (who is viewed as creatively, intellectually, financially, and institutionally empowered) and a given subject who is defined a priory as in need of empowerment or access to creative / expressive skills. Thus the “community” in community-based public art often,
although not always, refers to individuals marked as culturally, economically, or socially different.”

This quotation highlights an issue common to development work, that being the role of the professional or outsider in the process. This raises issues of power, control and hierarchy. While Nabeel Hamdi (2004:xvi & xviii) acknowledges that “…development, like all human processes, needs designed structure with rules and routines that provide continuity and stability…”, he also questions “how much structure will be needed before the structure itself inhibits personal freedom, gets in the way of progress…and becomes self-serving?” Community artists add the additional complexity of bringing their personal creative interests and motivations to the development process.

Artists’ roles in community development are widely debated within the creative community. This idea was discussed with Torange Khonsari6 from the London-based art and architecture collective Public Works. Khonsari stressed that her organisation’s work with communities, while political and social in nature, was not designed to solve public problems. Instead, she said that their work was about making a creative framework within which social interactions could happen. Khonsari cautioned against cultural practice becoming a hijacked discipline accountable to rules and regulations. It was her belief that the cultural sector should be free to be radical and innovative in how it interprets and questions political, social and cultural structures.

London-based community artist Katy Beinart, also believes that the arts have an important role to play in development in Britain. She stipulates, however, that for

6 Refer to Appendix one: Primary research notes for details (p. 87).
This brief investigation into the roles of community artists in development highlights several issues. Control is the first. Artists do not want to be controlled by authorities, while communities, it can be argued, also do not want to be controlled by hedonistic artists. Authoritative control was recognised at the time of establishing the Arts Council England as Keynes (see Frayling, 2009) explains:

“The artist walks where the breath of the spirit blows him. He cannot be told his direction; he does not know it himself. But he leads the rest of us into fresh pastures and teaches us to love and to enjoy what we often begin by rejecting... The task of the official body is not to censor, but give courage, confidence and opportunity.”

Other issues include power and structural constraints. These relate to the longstanding development issue regarding how the development practitioner controls the participatory process using professional and/or organisational advantage. Artists are well-positioned to negate this process because of their often inherent wariness of authority and regulation, along with their creativity which can inspire innovative community development practice. Community artists are a unique resource for development. As development practitioners they offer insight, creative talent and powerful tools for communication and exchange. As facilitators they transfer assets to communities which include creative knowledge as well as transferable skills in the areas of finance, administration and management. Working strategically, community artists as development practitioners can...
address root causes of poverty or deprivation along with challenging and changing policy and future practice. Regina Gattiker (2009: 50), makes the following observation regarding culture’s role in development:

“We should cease to treat culture as something ‘added’ to development by referring to ‘culture and development’. Rather, we should treat it as an integral part of development calling it ‘culture as development’. With a holistic approach including culture as a working area in development cooperation, we could add culture as a tool (‘culture for development’) whenever it is meaningful. The mainstreaming of culture (‘culture in development’) should be compulsory in all development cooperation programmes.”

_Culture in development_ requires support and recognition from the development sector regarding the wide-ranging human and social impacts of creative development interventions, along with their contributions to human development. Creative cultural development unlocks assets by fostering social capital and capacity building. Cultural heritage, therefore, provides not only the framework for development but the practical tools for achieving it.
Chapter three
Letting go: The art of cultural action

Photography, drama, dance, music, painting, poetry and digital storytelling are creative techniques that are used in development. Implemented by interactive and participatory methods, these techniques can be used, for example, in conflict resolution, disaster risk reduction (DRR), HIV & Aids awareness, and as part of post-disaster reconstruction programmes. This is because the arts offer unique and culturally appropriate ways of communicating complex issues. Exchanging ideas artistically enables local people to express “their values, as well as their dreams, fears, hopes and desires” (Matarasso, 2011). This information is essential for development as it determines an intervention which is based on local people’s aspirations and priorities. Through exploration of the case file, this chapter provides an example of how the arts and cultural action are used in development. Drawing on field research, the case file is analysed for qualitative and quantitative evidence regarding the intervention’s developmental outcomes; the aim of which is to contribute information to future learning and practice.

The case file, entitled Creative Thinking, was located in India and is part of the Small Change: creative projects programme. It has been developed and is being implemented, in the UK and internationally, by UK charity and community arts organisation, Multistory.¹ The Creative Thinking project was carried out by Multistory in association with the UK organisation Innovations in Participatory Education (IPE)² and the Indian NGO, SEEDS India.³ Creative Thinking applied Small Change⁴ community development theory to cultural action.

¹ For further information about Multistory please visit: www.multistory.org.uk
² British teachers Oliver Hamdi and Sunil Collet are the founding members of IPE.
³ For further information about SEEDS India please visit: www.seedsindia.org
⁴ Refer to the section on research methods for further information.

Figure 14. Mapping risk. This image is the product of a participatory photographic activity where participants were asked to go out and take photos of possible hazards in their community. The pictures were then placed on a map of the area and used to spark conversation about disaster risk reduction.
The intervention was, therefore, based on the assumption that small, practical and mostly low budget interventions, if carefully targeted, act as catalysts for bigger long-lasting change; change that is designed to improve where people live and their opportunities.

The case file is presented using a short description of the context and activities, followed by an analysis and discussion about the process and the project outcomes. The discussion will highlight the opportunities and challenges of such an approach along with either validating or invalidating the assumptions that: 1) culture embodies valuable resources which are essential to achieving development; 2) creativity through cultural action inspires change because it unlocks assets; and 3) community artists as development practitioners facilitate change.
Case file
Creative thinking: Building community resilience through education and the arts

Background
In August 2010, a series of cloudbursts triggered flash floods and mudslides in the North Indian region of Ladakh. Hundreds of people lost their lives and many more were left homeless as a consequence of this disaster. The floods and mudslides caused extensive damage to housing and community infrastructure, with the capital city of Leh (population approximately 40,000 people) being worst affected. The disaster was exacerbated by the region’s mountainous terrain with its high peaks, large vertical faces and barren landscape. This remote Himalayan region is also prone to annual landslides, mudslides and avalanches along with months of isolation during the long winter months. Living mostly in the valleys or basins, Ladakh’s inhabitants are vulnerable to these risks along with the constant threat of earthquake.¹

Disaster risk reduction (DRR) - the systematic process of analysis and management of casual factors of disaster² - is one way of reducing people’s vulnerability and encouraging development in this region of the world.

Project
The Creating Thinking project was developed to contribute to Leh’s DRR strategy. It consisted of a six-day workshop, held in August 2011,³ with a year nine class from the Government Girl’s Higher Secondary School in Leh. The school environment was an important aspect of the DRR approach as it has been widely documented that:

1 Ladakh is located in seismic zone 5 of the Indian subcontinent, placing it at the highest risk of an earthquake occurring.
2 Refer to UN ISDR for details: http://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/terminology
3 Coincidently this took place on the anniversary date of the 2010 disaster.
“Children in schools are among the most vulnerable groups during any disaster” (Arya et. al. 2004: 7). The workshop combined teaching, the arts and DRR with the aim of strengthening the students’ resilience to future disasters. According to DRR specialist Ben Wisner, the objective of DRR in education is to increase local hazard knowledge and change risk behaviour in the community. Wisner (2006:10) explains that:

“…a disaster relevant curriculum would not only impart knowledge of the natural hazards themselves, but also would involve students in inspecting the school buildings, going outside to map the surroundings, and even interviewing elders about extreme natural events in the past. Such learning could be done in ways that reinforce basic skills in listening, writing, reporting and mapping. It could be integrated into the study of history, geography and natural science. Age-appropriate math, from simple arithmetic to statistics, geometry and trigonometry, could be used.”

The Creative Thinking workshop used several of the principles discussed by Wisner. The team developed a creative education programme designed to use active and contextualised teaching practices (as championed by IPE). The aims of the workshop were to:

- train and support local school teachers in active, place-based teaching methods
- collaborate with the students to learn about risks in Leh and DRR
- expose participants to fun and creative lessons which encourage active student participation;
- build self-confidence and enable self-expression through participatory arts practice.

The workshop combined lessons in Geography, English and Art with a range of creative activities. In this context, the arts was used as a tool to enhance learning by making it more fun, creative and interactive. The arts also aided the process making the learning place-specific and appropriate to the participant’s experience. The assumption for using the arts was that creative practice encourages self-reflection, expression and interpretation, which makes the learning experience less abstract and more relevant to the local issues.

Teacher training was an important component of the project. According to Wisner (2006), involving local teachers is essential if DRR is to be incorporated into the wider school teaching curriculum. The Creative Thinking team ran training sessions with the class teacher along with the remaining school teachers and the head teacher. These sessions shared learning from the workshop and discussed ways in which contextualised and active teaching practices could be applied to teaching the school and DRR in Leh.
**Creative activities**

*Creative Thinking* arts activities included individual mapping, creative writing, DRR leaflet design and a number of participatory photographic exercises (*refer to Appendix Three: Creative Thinking lesson plans and evaluation, p103, for further information*). The mapping exercise supplemented the lesson entitled *What is risk?* As part of this lesson the students were asked to draw the route from home to school, plotting any potential risks that they may encounter. Students highlighted car accidents, stray dogs, unsafe electric wires and *bad people* as some of the risks. The maps sparked class conversation and discussion about possible risk prevention.

Lessons entitled *Causes of floods* and *Impacts of floods* aimed to increase student understanding about the factors that cause flooding along with the impacts that flooding can have on their community (such as in August 2010). Students made three-dimensional drainage basin maps while a small group took cameras home and photographed potentials risks in their neighbourhood. These were placed on an aerial map of Leh and used for further discussion.

---

**Class Rules**

- Don’t worry about getting it wrong
- Use your hand to answer a question
- No copying off the board unless told
- Everyone’s opinion is important
- Get involved, give 100%
- Have fun!

---

Figure 16. Participatory arts activities as part of the *Creative Thinking* Workshop in Leh, Ladakh. The four images depict the types of activities students participated in during the workshop.
Lesson 7 of the workshop was entitled *Creative Writing* and asked students to write creatively about how the floods affected people during the 2010 cloudburst disaster. Doubling as an English lesson, students were asked to write a poem based on their experience of the disaster. Using photographs and the prompts - *I feel...I hear...I see...I smell...I touch...* - students created their poems. They shared these within small groups and with the class as part of the exhibition. While more time was needed to enhance sentence structure and English skills, the poems proved to be highly engaging. They were also a successful tool for taking an abstract idea, such as a flood or mudslide, and relating it to a personal experience. Based on the poems, a series of principles for disaster preparedness and risk reduction were discussed.

The participatory portrait photography exercise was one of the most significant creative activities of the programme. Divided into separate tasks, students were asked to bring in an object that they would like to save if another disaster were to occur. The idea was that this object would be incorporated into their disaster preparedness kit (including first aid and food supplies), which students were encouraged to create at home as part of their family’s DRR strategy.

The second task of the activity required teaming up with a local arts group, the Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation (LAMO). Students were given cameras and asked - in pairs - to experiment with taking photographs of each other with their object. The aim was to learn digital camera skills and photographic techniques such as portraiture. This activity proved very successful in engaging students in the creative learning process while prompting discussions about risk, loss and disaster preparedness.

---

4 For further information about LAMO please visit: www.lamo.org.in
Figure 17. Participatory photography. Students experimenting with digital photography techniques. (above left) Taking a little inspiration from traditional Ladakh portraits which were on display at LAMO (above right).

Figure 18. Participatory portrait photography by Creative Thinking workshop participants. Asked to take portraits of each other with the object they would like to save in a crisis, the often timid students embraced the task. This highlights how creativity can overcome social barriers and empower people in the process.
Figure 19. *Creative Thinking* exhibition. At the end of the workshop the team created a exhibition showcasing the work the students had done during the week. This remains in the classroom as a permanent exhibition about disaster risk reduction and as an exemplar of student creativity.

Figure 20. Teacher training. These workshops were an important part of the *Creative Thinking* programme, giving local teachers the opportunity to exchange ideas with each other and IPE. At the end of the staff workshop, the teachers were asked to create an action plan for what they would do differently in the future regarding contextualised and active learning.
**Analysis**

Students completed a questionnaire at the conclusion of the workshop. The questions explored contextualised and active learning student experience. It also assessed student learning in relation to the creative tasks. Consisting of seven questions, students were asked to rate their answers from 1 - 4. A total of 28 students from a class of 54 were surveyed - 51% of the total class. The statistical information is as follows (Table 3):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I find writing the title and aims helps me understand what we are learning about</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I find creative tasks (poems, drawing, photography) help me understand difficult ideas</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I feel more confident giving my opinion and answering questions in front of the whole class</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I learn more by sharing ideas with a partner and in a group</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I feel better prepared to deal with the effects of a flood</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Trips outside the school help me to develop the things I have learnt in class</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I like it when my teacher praises me for doing well</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total (196)**

1 1 36 158

**Figure 21.** Percentage totals from workshop questionnaires. This pie chart shows the correlation of all answers, highlighting the total as a percentage. It shows that the majority of students enjoyed the creative tasks along with the contextualised and active learning experience.
Question 2 of the questionnaire asked students to assess the creative tasks. 92% of the students surveyed strongly agreed that creative tasks helped them learn. Qualitative data collected from the questionnaires also supports this claim. Comments from students included:

“I liked it the most when we enjoyed photographing and writing...”

“I liked photography and the leaflet design about floods in Leh...”

“...I developed my English speaking and was able to understand difficult meanings because of taking photos...”

Based on the data collected it can be deduced that cultural action in education helps students learn about developmental issues, such as DRR, and therefore successfully contributes to achieving developmental outcomes.

**Opportunities and challenges** encountered during the Creative Thinking workshop are outlined in Table 4 (below) as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language barrier</td>
<td>Language barrier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The language barrier required that the team work closely with the class teacher in order to deliver and at times translate lessons. This was advantageous as it increased teacher mentoring and training time. Visual arts also provided an opportunity for learning (both ways) as it did not rely on spoken language to impart information.</td>
<td>The Multistory team were aware of the barriers regarding teaching students with limited English language skills. Teaching in English was deemed appropriate, however, as it is part of the school curriculum and the language that students are examined in.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

The *Creative Thinking* workshop established a number of findings:

- Student understanding of DRR (specifically the local causes and impacts of flooding in Leh) and disaster preparedness were increased because of active, contextualised and creative teaching methods.

- The arts can aid developmental learning because they take abstract teaching principles and relate them to personal experiences. This is because of the arts-enabled personal expression and active participation in a learning process.

- School teachers require additional training if contextualised and active learning is to become mainstream within Leh and, in turn, within the Indian education system. Improvements to teaching standards takes time and requires support by the school administration and state teaching authority if they are to be formally adopted.
Analysis of the *Creative Thinking* workshop highlights that education - using active and contextualised learning techniques - and cultural action can be catalysts for development. This is because they impart information about development subjects (such as DRR) in a manner which is personal, culturally appropriate and empowering for the participants. This process unlocks tangible and intangible assets which are inherent in the subject - be these creative photographic skills or the confidence for a student to propose safety measures in their home because of their new-found knowledge about disaster preparedness. These assets build resilience for the student, their school community and their family. Combined together, these *small changes* help create a stronger, more resilient community in Leh.

The principles of cultural action can be applied to a range of development contexts as previously discussed. It is important, however, to recognise that creative techniques will vary in effectiveness and appropriateness depending on the cultural context and the user group or groups involved. For example, puppet shows used to raise awareness about HIV and Aids, while appropriate in a classroom or informal community setting, would be unacceptable for a presentation to government representatives or policy-makers. The scope of participatory creative activities available is immense. Therefore, it is important to understand the principle that cultural action can aid development because of its enabling qualities and a creative activity must be selected which suits a specific context.

Analysis of the *Creative Thinking* workshop, and observation of other development projects in Leh validates the assumptions that: 1) culture embodies valuable resources which are essential to achieving development; 2) creativity through cultural action inspires change because it unlocks assets; and 3) community artists as development practitioners facilitate change. Applying the principles of DRR to the Leh context enabled local solutions to the problems of flash flooding and mudslides to be developed. An example, is the reconstruction work that SEEDS India has carried out in Leh (refer to Figure 22 for details).

Figure 22. SEEDS India reconstruction work in Leh. Working with local builders and using vernacular building methods, SEEDS India, have developed ways of strengthening local buildings so that they might withstand future disasters, such as earthquakes and flooding. The Leh culture embodied the resources (construction knowledge, skills and materials) which enabled culturally appropriate development through this post-disaster reconstruction approach.
Time constraints mean that the assumptions can only be tested against the workshop’s outputs as opposed to its long-term impacts. Results from these outputs indicate positive enforcement of the assumptions. Follow-up periodic assessments with the class and teachers is required if the assumptions are to be certifiably validated.

Assumption two is partially validated by the data from the Creative Thinking workshop, which showed that 92% of the students surveyed thought that creative activities helped them learn. The data also highlighted that 75% of students strongly agreed with the statement that they felt better prepared to deal with the effects of a flood in the future. While there is no qualitative data to support this claim, the author observed that the students were more confident at the end of workshop to share individual thoughts and problem-solving ideas with the class. These initial observations lead to the conclusion that small but significant intangible assets (such as confidence and DRR knowledge) were unlocked because of cultural action.

Multistory’s multidisciplinary team included teachers and practitioners involved in community arts and development. It must be noted that while two of the Multistory team members have experience in delivering community arts projects, they do not call themselves community artists. Therefore assumption three cannot be validated by this case file. However, this assumption can be partially validated because the team worked in the capacity of community artists during their time at the school. Through lessons and training the team shared new creative skills with the students and the local teachers. They also enabled these stakeholders by delivering the workshop in a collaborative way with regards to development of the content, activities and outputs. It can, therefore, be partially deduced that community artists as development practitioners have the potential to facilitate change.

Lastly, this case file demonstrated how cultural action can be applied to the Small Change approach. To this end, Creative Thinking used education as a catalyst for building resilience in communities. The workshop was practice-based and started small in order to pilot a process that could be scaled up in terms of programme size and developmental impacts. Time constraints limited investigation into the long-term sustainability of the programme, however, positive participant response to the workshop provided encouragement that this approach had the potential to contribute to disaster preparedness and sustainable development in Leh. The Creative Thinking workshop is, therefore, an example of how cultural action using Small Change principles can inspire positive outcomes within a development context.
Chapter four

Moving forward: Understanding cultural heritage as a creative agent for change

The objective of this study was to explore the role of cultural heritage and cultural action as catalysts for change in the context of human development. The following key principles (Figure 23) have been developed which contextualise cultural heritage in development and show how cultural action can be applied to this context.

**Principle 1**
Culture is the context within which all development takes place. Development practice therefore needs to use culturally engaging methods to achieve long-term development impacts.

**Principle 2**
Human development is people-centred offering local people opportunities to prioritise and action their aspirations as part of the development process.

**Principle 3**
Asset-based approaches rely on accumulating and safeguarding assets to build people’s resilience to the shocks and stresses brought about by living in vulnerable situations.

The sustainable livelihoods approach offers a practice approach and conceptual framework for understanding human development and applying asset-based approaches to development.

**Principle 4**
Cultural action - use of the arts for education, development and social impact - unlocks social, human, cultural, financial and political assets by building social capital and people’s capabilities.

**Principle 5**
Small Change theory offers a practice approach and theoretical framework through which cultural action can be applied to human development.

Figure 23. Principles for cultural action in development.
The following suggestions aim to move forward the development sector’s understanding of cultural heritage as a creative agent of change.

- Adopt, as part of asset-based approaches, cultural assets (including tangible and intangible cultural heritage) as a capital alongside social, natural, financial, physical, and human assets. This would increase awareness within the sector about the importance of cultural heritage in development.

- Promote cultural action as a participatory tool for building resilient and sustainable communities. For example, this is because cultural action gives people a means of self and collective expression within which their ambitions, aspirations and development priorities are articulated. This information can be used to develop community-based risk management plans and adaptation strategies with regards to climate change.

- Create opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning and practice involving the community arts and development sectors. For example, The Small Change Forum (UK) offers development practitioners and people involved in the creative industries (including community artists) the opportunity to exchange knowledge and ideas regarding innovative and creative community development practice in Britain and internationally.

- Establish a repository of knowledge and evidence regarding the long-term developmental impacts of using cultural action as a tool for development. This information can be published through a variety of mediums including electronically. This will raise awareness and educate with the aim of influencing future practice, learning and policy.
Increase the number of creative community development programmes so as to scale up this approach in size and developmental impact (ie. contributing to creating sustainable communities). For example, Multistory’s *Small Change: Creative projects* programme is piloting a number of arts-based development initiatives in the UK. Together these initiatives offer practice-based evidence which can be used to promote the approach nationally, with local government authorities and housing associations, and internationally with actors involved in the development sector.

In an age of economic austerity when equity and sustainability are high on the international development agenda, new and innovative ways of promoting and supporting community-led development are important. Cultural resources and cultural action can assist with this process in the context of human development. While ABAs offer many opportunities for sustainable human development, one must be aware that assets approaches are largely based on the idea that achieving social change is “an organic, collaborative and apolitical agenda that benefits everyone” (Greenhalgh, 2009, see Friedli, 201:14). What is missing, according to Lynne Friedli (2001) from this description is vested interests and accountability issues along with political and power struggles. One also needs to be aware that service providers (for example the British Government) are relying on the assets approach in order to reduce *unaffordable demand* for public services. There are opportunities to create innovative and sustainable communities that are based on capabilities, social capital and empowerment. One must, however, always retain a level of support for the most vulnerable along with an understanding regarding the complexities of community-driven social change.

This study has evidenced, in theory and practice, ways in which the role of cultural heritage and cultural action act as catalysts for change in the context of human development. It has shown that creativity through cultural action unlocks assets - including social, cultural and human - resulting in increased social capital and capabilities. With reference to human development, this study has shown that these assets are key to building resilience in communities and that resilient communities are essential to sustainable development. This study, therefore, promotes a human development practice based on cultural heritage and cultural action, while offering principles and suggestions for future practice, learning and policy-making.
Bibliography


OECD (n.d.) *Development aid reaches an historic high in 2010.* Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) [online] Available at: [http://www.oecd.org/document/35/0,3746,en_2649_34447_47515235_1_1_1_1,00.htm](http://www.oecd.org/document/35/0,3746,en_2649_34447_47515235_1_1_1_1,00.htm) Accessed: 22 December 2011.


Research Ethics Form E1BE

SCHOOL OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT, OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY 2010/2011

RESEARCH ETHICS FORM E1BE FOR STUDENTS ON TAUGHT COURSES

Please read the Built Environment FormE1BE guidance notes at www.brookes.ac.uk/res/ethics/forms

Section A - You & your project

What is your name?
First name
Jeni
Surname
Burnell

What is your student number?
0 9 1 0 5 2 3 2

What is your email address?
jburnell@brookes.ac.uk

What is your supervisor's name?
First name
Nabeel
Surname
Hamdi

What is your supervisor’s email address?
nabs.hamdi@gmail.com

In which Department are you studying?
- Architecture
- Planning
- REC

What course are you taking?
MA Development and Emergency Practice

What is the topic area of your research?
Role of art and culture activities as catalysts for community development in the UK

On what kinds of topics will you be collecting data from the participants in the research?
Community arts and culture activities, community development

Section B - Your participants

What kind of participants will be involved in your research? (Please tick one – if more than one, then complete a separate form)
- Professional/management group
- Members of the general public
- Vulnerable individuals

Briefly describe these participants
Professionals including community artists, arts consultants. Members of the public include people involved in community arts projects.

How many participants will be involved?
Approx x. 10

How will the participants be selected?
Via work associations

Section C - Your data collection

When is your data collection likely to start?
2 8 0 4 2 2 0 1 1

What will be your method of data collection?
- In-depth interviews
- Face-to-face surveys
- Direct observation
- Other, please specify

Other, please specify

What kind of data will you be collecting?
- Quantitative/statistical/numerical
- Qualitative/written/text
- Images/drawings/maps

Will it be possible to avoid asking for personal data from the participants?
- Yes
- No

Will it be possible to ensure the participants are not being deceived in any way?
- Yes
- No

Will it be possible to ensure the participants remain completely anonymous?
- Yes
- No

Will it be possible to ensure the participants do not suffer any negative consequences?
- Yes
- No

Section D – Declaration

I declare that I will
- give all participants an information sheet conforming to university guidelines
- not contact any participant until my supervisor has approved my information sheet, research questions and methodology
- be sufficiently well-trained in necessary methods of data collection and analysis

Student signature

Supervisor signature

Research Ethics Officer signature

When your supervisor has signed this form send it to Pete Smith (School Research Ethics Officer) at the Department of Planning office. Allow one week before collecting a copy of the signed-off form from your own Department office (Architecture, Planning, REC) and you may then commence fieldwork

Research Ethics Form | 85
Appendix one

Primary research notes:
Katy Beinart
Emma Chetcuti
Karl Greenwood
Torange Khonsari
François Matarasso
Danielle Smith

Research conducted between September - November 2011
Sample of the questionnaire and interview questions

Objectives

- To better understand the opportunities and constraints to achieving community development through arts and culture projects (specifically in the UK).

- To better understand how cultural projects, and specifically participatory arts, can address the root causes of poverty and vulnerability and, in turn, challenge and change associated policy.

Questions

1. What purpose and value do you see the arts having on achieving development in the UK?

2. Within your professional practice, have you used community arts and culture projects with the aspiration of achieving development outcomes? If yes, can you give an example and explain why you used the arts specifically to achieve this aim?

3. Have you ever been involved in an arts project which you felt began to address some of the root causes of poverty, disadvantage and vulnerability within the group you were working? If yes, how?

4. Have you experienced an arts based development project challenging and changing policy? (i.e. how services are managed, neighbourhoods are designed etc.).

5. What do you see as the main opportunities and challenges to achieving community development through culture and the arts?
**Katy Beinart - Community artist (questionnaire)**

1. **What purpose and value do you see the arts having on achieving development in the UK?**

   I think that the arts has a potential role to play in developing models of research and practice towards development in the UK. I think that there needs to be a change of focus from commissioned projects and artists being brought in to fulfil pre-meditated roles, to co-authored projects between artists and institutions/authorities/communities which recognise the possibility of art as an approach to finding solutions to problems.

2. **Within your professional practice, have you used community arts and culture projects with the aspiration of achieving development outcomes? If yes, can you give an example and explain why you used the arts specifically to achieve this aim?**

   Yes, I have; sometimes intentionally and sometimes the development outcomes have been an unintended outcome. Working with children who were marginalised in the UK and abroad, I have used arts to build their self-confidence and promote their messages to policy-makers.

3. **Have you ever been involved in an arts project which you felt began to address some of the root causes of poverty, disadvantage and vulnerability within the group you were working? If yes, how?**

   I think a lot of the projects I have been involved with examined the root causes of poverty, disadvantage etc. but I feel that addressing these issues is not necessarily what I set out to do. It is rather to uncover and make public some of these issues, for example with the 'Alternative Bus Tour of Oxford' I told the story of the marginalised working class of the city and how they were pushed out from the centre to the suburbs. I don't think an individual artist can or should try to address massive issues like these - but rather through collaboration can suggest approaches to changing policy.

4. **Have you experienced an arts based development project challenging and changing policy? (i.e. how services are managed, neighbourhoods are designed etc.).**

   I am working with Funda Willetts for UWE/Sustainable Communities on a project which aims to use the arts as one strand of a strategy to change policy on neighbourhood regeneration.
5. What do you see as the main opportunities and challenges to achieving community development through culture and the arts?

**Opportunities**

Building relationships through socially engaged practices; these then have the potential to generate further change.

Providing focus and putting communities on the map, which increases a sense of pride and enthusiasm for place.

Conserving uniqueness of place whilst allowing change which reflects the nature and needs of the community.

**Challenges**

Lack of proper support and recognition for artists/practitioners; outmoded commissioning models that set briefs before an artist or a community have had a chance to work together; ideas of 'public art' that predict outcomes and ask for permanent responses; funding cuts by the current government.
Community arts are valuable because they offer opportunities for communities to see themselves. Art can be a validation about who you are, where you come from and what’s important to you. Art transforms the everyday into something that has power and meaning beyond the ordinary. It also raises the profile of place or community beyond local boundaries. It makes connections and in doing so offers opportunities for new experiences and change.

A challenge for the arts in development is that it’s not seen as a core service for communities. For this to change funding needs to be transferred from central sources to local authorities. Another challenge is that the most disadvantage neighbourhoods in the UK still do not have access to the arts. This needs to change so that these communities have a platform upon which to participate in the wider social debate.

Arts in development has the potential to be commandeered by policy-makers as a tool for social service. This happened to the Community Arts Movement (1960s and 1970s) where it because so embedded in policy as a way of addressing social need that it lost its originality and innovation. Art definitely has a role to play in community development, however, this role must allow art to continue challenging and questioning the status quo in order to initiate change.
Karl Greenwood - Community arts project manager, Multistory (questionnaire)

1. What purpose and value do you see the arts having on achieving development in the UK?

I think the role of the arts is becoming more widely recognised by regeneration professionals as an essential mechanism in community development to connect and inspire local people in innovative and creative ways. The arts bring attention to the cultural assets and resources a community has to offer, they help identify the uniqueness of a place and foster the development of social capital and organisational capacity of a community in order for them to make positive changes for themselves.

2. Within your professional practice, have you used community arts and culture projects with the aspiration of achieving development outcomes? If yes, can you give an example and explain why you used the arts specifically to achieve this aim?

Beyond Bricks was a series of temporary creative projects that worked strategically with Neighbourhood Managers to strengthen connections and provide opportunities for local people to respond to issues that affect them. All these projects addressed community development objectives as they empowered local people to work together and be active within their community. Over the past 3 years over 20 community development projects took part which included; Redhawk Logistical painted people’s doors to improve the aesthetics and sense of ownership within a community; Mothers in Pain produced a film about gang culture and gun and knife crime to take into schools to try and reduce young people getting involved in gangs and carrying weapons; Anna Garforth addressed environmental issues by working with local people to produce bespoke ‘bags for life’ for local traders; Hands on Handsworth, a community journalism programme enabled local people to learn journalistic skills and produce a local magazine about stories and issues that they wanted to talk about. The arts were used as they are instantly accessible and flexible as projects can be tailored to meet the needs and skills of the local community.

3. Have you ever been involved in an arts project which you felt began to address some of the root causes of poverty, disadvantage and vulnerability within the group you were working? If yes, how?

Yes, working with Mothers in Pain who are a grassroots organisation who have all had a relative seriously killed or injured as a result of gun and knife crime, we started to look into the wider social issues around gang culture and how vulnerable and susceptible these
young people were to gang culture within their community. Within the project it highlighted more than ever the need to network and link with other organisations to share resources and learning around specific issues as well as understanding the limitations of what a project can actually achieve.

4. Have you experienced an arts based development project challenging and changing policy? (i.e. how services are managed, neighbourhoods are designed etc.).

Scott Farlow worked on a community consultation project on the Beyond Bricks programme. We worked with a neighbourhood management team who have rarely worked with artists and were very sceptical about our approach. We managed to convince them that Scott could carry out some creative interventions to find out what people want in their area to inform a masterplan for the regeneration of the whole area. This process proved enormously successful and although it didn’t change policy it challenged the consensus and opened up new ideas and new ways of working within Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council who have stated it made them rethink how the arts can be used in community development.

5. What do you see as the main opportunities and challenges to achieving community development through culture and the arts?

I think integrating existing networks and developing creative partnerships is key to the arts and how it impacts community development. The arts alone can not develop a community, the arts has its limitations, as much as a planning team, or a set of urban designers and I think its important for people to recognise their strengths and weaknesses in order for successful partnerships to be formed to fill in the gaps. I think for the arts to achieve community development effectively it needs to embed itself strategically with partners on an equal footing where each division is seen as experts within their own right. Due to there not being as much capital invested into community development, imagination and being creative is essential in utilising skills, resources and opportunities to make positive social changes.

I think the main constraints for the arts in community development is people’s attitudes and the arts not being taking seriously on a professional level to enable and foster community development and cohesion. I think there will always be challenges from professionals and local people to the use of the arts and what it has to offer. It is therefore essential to showcase successful projects and find ways for people to access the arts in community development.
Torange Khonsari - Founding member of London-based art and architecture collective, Public Works (PW) (interview notes)

- *Opportunities for the arts in development* include raising awareness about a problem, making people aware of an issue along with revealing obstacles which could get in the way of change.

- *Public Works set out to do ‘development’*. Instead the organisation provides a platform for people to become active and more collaborative. It is less about a public service and more about putting aside the ‘expert’ and working with people in an empowering way.

- A challenge for cultural practice is when it is commandeered to provide a public service. The arts while capable of being social and political should free from policy restrictions to be more radical or else it will lose something fundamental.

- *Time and limited resources* are challenges for the arts in development. If the project is too short term in ends up being tokenistic. Money also becomes an issue - who pays when not commissioned to solve problems?

- *Cultural projects in the social realm don’t always have to scale up and be worthy*. Sometimes they achieve what they need to by just being fun and creating a place for people to meet and network.
François Matarasso (FM) - Researcher, writer and consultant interested in community engaged art (interview notes)

- **Professional motives**: FM doesn’t agree with the distinction being made between ‘development’ and ‘art’, as he argues that this serves professional interests only.

- **Development does not occur in the UK.** FM argues that development is something we, in the North, do to the ‘South’.

- **Power constraints**: In development one has to assess whether those facilitating or providing for change to happen are indeed happy to be affected by that change.

- **Interests**: For development to happen or not happen one needs to understand in whose interest it is to bring about change and what type of change it will be.

- **Community arts**: It is arguably easier to be more effective in bringing about change through the arts if it is a part of a broader political movement. An example is the Community Disability Movement (1990s) that used art as a vocal and visual representation of the issues. The Movement itself faced challenge from local authorities (as it advocated for change and challenged their power). In the end, the movement achieved success with the Disability Act being adopted etc.

- **Place-based art initiatives**: are harder to bring about change as you can improve place but it is more challenging to engage with issues of unemployment, local education etc.

- **The more effective you are, the less likely the people in power will be to support your work** (e.g. community disability movement, creative partnerships who were working successfully in deprived schools and lost their government funding)

- **An obstacle to change is the belief by people that things can be different.** The arts can be powerful in that it gives people new insights, ideas and the confidence to think that things can actually change.
Danielle Smith - Founder and Director of UK charity, Sandblast. (email correspondence)

Please note that the following information was written as a first, working draft.

1. **What do you see as the main opportunities and challenges to achieving community development through culture and the arts?**

**Opportunities**

- be a powerful vehicle for engaging the hearts and imagination of the wider public with issues that are otherwise marginalised and overlooked such as the Saharawi self-determination cause.

- meet the challenge of crossing frontiers and universalising issues that otherwise seem to be of narrow interest

- provide a two-way benefit that promotes development for both the supporters and the community or issue in question that is being addressed. Creative and cultural processes ultimately lead us to question and redefine our assumptions about humanitarian work and concepts of development.

**Challenges**

- **Cultural/religious beliefs and social attitudes**

With regard to the situation in Western Sahara and particularly in the context of the Saharawi refugee camps, I would say that there are cultural/social and educational issues that affect the Saharawis willingness to engage with the arts for the purpose of development. By way of examples…

The Saharawis are a Muslim society with desert nomadic roots. They believe any figurative art is not acceptable to Islam and so tend to reject it. But the new generation who have been exposed to other cultures and ways of thinking are trying to change these attitudes and find ways to educate their people especially the older generation to make them accept this form of creative expression.

On the social side the practice of the arts especially singing, dancing and craftwork have been associated with an inferior social class. This has presented the challenge of being able to engage Saharawis in the arts who are not originally from these backgrounds. Although they may have lots of talent their families are often opposed because it is not considered a respectable thing to do. (Respect in this context has more to do with maintaining the social structure) One way in which this situation has been overcome is to frame their participation as
a way to support their cause and through it bring recognition to the Saharawi struggle.

Another area of tension in terms of artistic production is that for the Saharawis creativity has traditionally been largely a communal activity. The notion of being an individual artist was largely an alien concept as is the case in many non-western societies. It is a recent phenomenon for Saharawis to describe themselves as an artist and some still are reluctant to do so as it seems to place them apart from the community. Ownership over creativity also has developed economic implications in today’s context which did not exist before in Saharawi society and this has also put some strain on communal creativity.

New art forms, economics and barriers of culture and language. Saharawi culture is built on a rich bed of oral traditions. Artforms such as film, photography, painting and western style theatre were never part of the ways in which they expressed themselves. Also although Saharawis are great story tellers they don’t have the tradition of writing their stories down or producing literature like novels. It is only since their exile that they have been introduced more widely to the visual artforms mentioned and to theatre so they are still at a nascent stage in these areas and will require time to mature and acquire their own distinct way of expressing themselves through them.

Another factor to consider is that particularly in the case of the Saharawi refugees who are dependent on aid and have very few economic means available to them, they suffer from constant shortage and access to the resources required to pursue film and photography which are far too expensive for most to afford. This means that significant inputs in terms of training and materials need to be provided for the Saharawi refugees to be able to develop their expression through these means.

In the short term then there are limitations regarding which art forms can most successfully and effectively be used to promote awareness, human rights issues and cultural identity. Using poetry which is the most advanced form of creative expression and defines a lot of Saharawi sensibilities and aesthetics is limited and complicated because of the difficulties of translating the unwritten Hassaniya dialect and giving intelligible meaning to the culturally specific context to which it is tied to, to convey a way of life, landscape and history that is unfamiliar to the average western audience.

This has meant that in terms of the work that I am doing I have ended up focusing on those artforms that can have greatest universal appeal and reach and which is still capable of expressing the distinct Saharawi cultural identity which are namely music and dance.
To a lesser degree I have also focused on short stories, photography and contemporary Saharawi Spanish and Arabic poetry as a means to express the experiences of their struggle.

- **Political agendas**

  Because the lives of Saharawis as a whole have been shaped by the political struggle, this means that almost every artform produced expresses some kind of political message. Very little art tends to express the personal or the non-political. This kind of artistic output has also been largely encouraged and promoted by the Saharawi political leadership since the early days of the conflict and so has become the norm. Art then has been treated more as a vehicle for serving the political objectives of the struggle than as an aesthetic expression in its own right. Art without a clear message has tended to be regarded as having little value or meaning. This means the leadership promoted Saharawi artists that express the struggle and marginalized or ignored those that expressed other themes, especially those who might use their art to express criticism of the current situation or leadership.

The over emphasis on the explicitly political in the arts has led to the raising of the importance of the message in the art above the quality of the art produced. It had had the effect of severely limiting the sources the artist feels able to draw on. This has led to a difficulty in separating the kind of art that is produced from the political agendas set by the Saharawi authorities.

In recent times however there is growing recognition that artistic expression needs to be freed from these constraints to become truly interesting and able to provoke thought and insight. The trick has been to persuade both the leadership and artists that the expression of personal dreams and aspirations and that of individual stories...
can be political, that in fact they can even be more powerful in communicating the political impact of the conflict and human rights situation has on individual lives in some instances and can touch those who are exposed to it in a more tangible way.

- **Intercultural differences regarding the value of art**
  
  *(The Western and non-western encounter within the artistic arena)*

Here we enter the tricky terrain of the often hierarchical relation between the West and non-western world in terms of who determines what constitutes good art and how it is valued. When faced with working with a people who are trying to gain the awareness and support of the international community through the arts this issue is one that constantly crops up. It is one that has to be handled with awareness and sensitivity when it is being approached to bridge these worlds through the arts and is being presented to audiences that are very different from the ones in which the art originates. Two different trends constantly threaten to overtake….the tendency to folklorize the exotic side of a culture’s artistic expression or overly modernize and reject traditionally inspired cultural sources in an attempt to appeal to perceived Western tastes The issue is one that never gets easier to grapple with and grows trickier as the arts go from serving political ends to appealing to a mass market.

- **Traditional notions of development**

Because the arts and cultural arena are not viewed as essential or priorities areas in terms of more traditional views of humanitarian aid or development, it is more difficult to secure funds for these kinds of projects. One of the challenges involves being able to show benefits and to resort to the use of measurable ways of assessing benefits: these often are not immediately evident. It is therefore much harder to convince agencies and funders of the relevance and importance of the arts to human survival and development.

In a situation of protracted conflict, occupation and exile like that found in Western Sahara, however, the urgency of supporting the expression and development of the artistic and cultural lives of a community almost begins to outweigh that of the more immediate humanitarian needs as the community faces the prospects of the loss of identity, history and traditions due to the impact of these disruptive realities on social relations and cultural transmission. Even in relation to evaluating the success of such an enterprise as that of building a nation state-as envisioned and embarked up by the Saharawi liberation movement-if it is one that aspires to be based on principles of democracy, equality and the respect for human rights, then the development and expression of that society through the arts becomes an important litmus test. So there is an educational component that must be addressed both for the funders sake and for the community in question to re-evaluate its notions of priorities and needs.
Appendix two

50 social impacts of participation in the arts

by François Matarasso

THE STUDY SHOWS THAT PARTICIPATION IN THE ARTS CAN

1. Increase people's confidence and sense of self-worth
2. Extend involvement in social activity
3. Give people influence over how they are seen by others
4. Stimulate interest and confidence in the arts
5. Provide a forum to explore personal rights and responsibilities
6. Contribute to the educational development of children
7. Encourage adults to take up education and training opportunities
8. Help build new skills and work experience
9. Contribute to people's employability
10. Help people take up or develop careers in the arts
11. Reduce isolation by helping people to make friends
12. Develop community networks and sociability
13. Promote tolerance and contribute to conflict resolution
14. Provide a forum for intercultural understanding and friendship
15. Help validate the contribution of a whole community
16. Promote intercultural contact and co-operation
17. Develop contact between the generations
18. Help offenders and victims address issues of crime
19. Provide a route to rehabilitation and integration for offenders
20. Build community organisational capacity
21. Encourage local self-reliance and project management
22. Help people extend control over their own lives
23. Be a means of gaining insight into political and social ideas
24. Facilitate effective public consultation and participation
25. Help involve local people in the regeneration process
26. Facilitate the development of partnership
27. Build support for community projects
28. Strengthen community co-operation and networking
29. Develop pride in local traditions and cultures
30. Help people feel a sense of belonging and involvement
31. Create community traditions in new towns or neighbourhoods
32. Involve residents in environmental improvements
33. Provide reasons for people to develop community activities
34. Improve perceptions of marginalised groups
35. Help transform the image of public bodies
36. Make people feel better about where they live
37. Help people develop their creativity
38. Erode the distinction between consumer and creator
39. Allow people to explore their values, meanings and dreams
40. Enrich the practice of professionals in the public and voluntary sectors
41. Transform the responsiveness of public service organisations
42. Encourage people to accept risk positively
43. Help community groups raise their vision beyond the immediate
44. Challenge conventional service delivery
45. Raise expectations about what is possible and desirable
46. Have a positive impact on how people feel
47. Be an effective means of health education
48. Contribute to a more relaxed atmosphere in health centres
49. Help improve the quality of life of people with poor health
50. Provide a unique and deep source of enjoyment

SOcial Impacts of Participation in the Arts

This list has been drawn up to give a sense of the range of social outcomes which the study has shown can be produced by participatory arts projects. Naturally, it is not complete, and there are many others which might emerge from a different analysis. Equally, no single project should be expected to deliver all of them, or to produce outcomes in the same way or to the same degree.
Appendix three

*Creative Thinking workshop lesson plans and evaluation*
*prepared by Jeni Burnell with Sunil Colett & Oliver Hamdi (IPE)*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1      | What is risk? | To identify areas of risk within the Leh community. To be able to categorise risks according to season and time of year. To be able to explain how some risks are more serious than others. | **Starter:** Using post-it notes, students brainstorm as many risks in Leh that they can – pairs to fours.  
**Main:** Students place risks on board to correspond with seasons. Students go into the playground. Teacher calls out risk, students arrange themselves along continuum.  
**Plenary:** Students are given a list of the top ten risks. Students decide as individuals which they believe to be the most serious. | Post-it notes | English  
Justification  
Discussion | • Good brainstorm activity of risks. Some students did not fully understand the term risk and therefore had to be prompted. Many of the risks identified were difficult to categorise into seasons.  
• Continuum activity lends itself better to smaller groups in order to engage active participation and justification of seriousness. (many students followed 2-3 of more able pupils)  
• We were able to identify which risks students perceived to be most serious independent of other students opinions however many either opted out of participating or did not fully understand task. |
| 2      | Mapping   | To understand what maps show. To practice creating personalised maps. | **Starter:** Students look through textbook and pick out what information is shown on maps and key features. Teacher feedback to build up list on board.  
**Main:** Students draw their own maps of route to school using symbols and annotations (happy places, unhappy places, areas of | Textbook  
Plain paper  
Colours | Mapping   | • Successful due to dear modelling by teacher. Student participation was good and high degree of personalisation by students.  
• Students were able to understand that maps can show a variety of information and understood the concept of |
<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3 | Drainage basin | To understand the features of a drainage basin | **Starter:** | Drainage basin circle  
E.g.:  
Veirr = River  
Oumth = Mouth  
Alde = Delta | **English:**  
Model-making  
**Justification:**  
**Thinking skills:** |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 4 | Causes of flooding | To understand the factors that cause floods  
To explain the causes of flooding in Ladakh in August 2010 | **Selected students removed from class to review homework. Students add mini polaroids to satellite map to illustrate areas and issues of risk**  
**Starter:**  
Order sentences to explain why floods happen in Leh:  
1. A cloudburst causes a lot of rain in a short period of time  
2. Rain does not soak into the ground  
3. Rain goes down steep slopes  
4. Buildings are swept away  
**Main:**  
Using Geog.1, students create mind map | **Geog.1 textbook**  
**Drawing:**  
- Mini polaroid activity was an excellent idea, however it was difficult to deduce areas of risk from photos/whether the students had understood the task. This was due to lack of interpreter when explaining homework and having a teacher present to ensure students handed over the photos. Many photos were brilliantly composed and used for display at end of project exhibition.  
- Starter activity worked well to get students thinking about |
| 5 | Impacts of flooding | To know the impacts of flooding in Leh
To be able to rank the impacts of flooding in Leh | **Starter:**
Brainstorm impacts of flooding in Leh. Pairs to fours, teacher feedback onto board with specific statistics

**Main:**
Class discussion to pick the top 9 impacts to be diamond ranked
Diamond rank impacts in pairs in notebooks.
Feedback to focus on justification. One group presents their ranking to class

**Plenary:**
Students write newspaper headlines to show flood impacts

**HOMEWORK:**
Students must bring in special item that will be in their ‘go bag’ to be saved in |

| Example newspaper |
| Diamond rank cards for board |

| English |
| Ranking |
| Justification |
| Pairwork |
| Groupwork |

- Starter allowed students to independently brainstorm impacts of flooding with high levels of peer learning.
- Diamond ranking activity created high levels of discussion and engaged higher order thinking skills.
- Relevance played a key factor in student engagement.
- Language was again a barrier to fully justify their answers. This activity needs to be done in mother tongue to allow students to express themselves more fully.
- Local teacher taking on an increasing role in delivery of lessons.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event of flood</th>
<th>Cameras</th>
<th>English language</th>
<th>Self-expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 6 2.5 hours    | Photography | 1. Student tour of facilities and exhibits  
2. Students wrote sentence justifying why they saved particular object  
3. Students created portrait with their object. Each member of group directs and takes a portrait | - Excursion worked really well to expose students to local arts and media resources in their local community.  
- Students were highly engaged in tour and exhibits.  
- Students thoroughly enjoyed using and experimenting with cameras. A good platform for further development of photography skills. Excellent portraits taken with low level of teacher guidance.  
- Students were reluctant to share their item and why it was important. This may be due to cultural barriers and not fully understanding the concept of the “go-bag”. Whilst a third of the class forgot to bring their item, the photography still went ahead with good outcomes.  
- Portraits were used excellently for display in the classroom.  
- Students were not able to give feedback about what they had learnt although did say they thoroughly enjoyed using the cameras. |
<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td>Reducing the impact of floods</td>
<td><strong>Starter:</strong> Crossword of key vocabulary</td>
<td><strong>Worksheet with variety of responses to flood</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To know how to reduce the impact of floods</td>
<td><strong>Main:</strong> Students categorise response statements into table before, during, after in relation to flood</td>
<td><strong>English language Categorisation Justification</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Plenary:</strong> Odd one out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>Revision</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To understand the main features of leaflets</td>
<td><strong>Starter:</strong> Students analyse examples of leaflets to identify conventions and features (e.g. images, columns, website address, information, title)</td>
<td><strong>Plain paper Colours</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To create a leaflet illustrating cause, impacts and responses</td>
<td><strong>Main:</strong></td>
<td><strong>English language Peer assessment of each other’s</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teachers in leading activities. Students were highly engaged in poems and writing frame enabled this to be successful. More time needed to enhance sentence formation. Many poems were highly emotive. Students were engaged due to relevance to their lives.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lesson almost fully led by local teacher due to complexity and requirement for translation, in addition to increased teacher competency. Additional activity was needed to enhance student understanding of key concepts. Students were able to categorise. We noticed at this point growing student confidence, participation and ability to justify their answers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Example leaflets were well utilised to engage students in leaflet design. Excellent activity for revision of week’s concepts and student outcomes demonstrated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | to flooding in Leh | Students design and create leaflet to show causes, impacts and responses to floods in Leh  
**Plenary:**  
2 stars and a wish – students swap work. Identify 2 good things and one thing to work on and improve  
**HOMEWORK:** Revise for test | work  
Leaflet design | significant learning from the week.  
- Local teacher was exposed to an activity which demonstrated that when students are fully prepared they can be left to work independently and therefore think and produce work creatively on your own |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | To gain summative evaluation of student progress  
To gather students perception of overall aims of the project | **Student test**  
**Student evaluation of project** | Test  
Student evaluation form |  
- Test scores ranged from 50-90%.  
- Average 72.5% |

**Work to be displayed in classroom**

Portraits  
Personalised maps  
Leaflets  
Poems  
General images of Leh  
Satellite map with annotations