Evidence-based arts and culture planning

Examples from research on the performing arts in Cape Town

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SACOC 2016
- Established 2006
- Research on social and economic development
- Work in Africa and Asia
- Government and civil society programming
"You've either made something, have access to a collection *(custodian)*, or perform something you want people to see" ...”and you want more people to engage with it.”

Ukhona Mlandu
Research for the COCT since 2014

- Cultural Promotion Strategy
- M&E System (events)
- Sector skills research*
- Cultural mapping methodology^
- State of the performing arts*
- Audience research

Measurement & narratives
Some of the challenges

• Research is seen as scary, boring, irrelevant
• Linking evidence and strategy is hard
• Confusing the problem vs research method
• Competing agendas
• Theory-phobia
• Limited dissemination
CULTURAL PROMOTION STRATEGY

- benefits of a strong vision & strategy with clear objectives
- value of using theory of change and results frameworks
- importance of a cultural enterprise lens
- opportunities to incorporate both social and economic goals
Are we closer to a research agenda?

...deciding what research and evidence is needed versus what’s nice to have, can be a puzzle.
QUALITY
What type of data do we need?

UTILITY
How are we going to use it?

Our conversation should be about ...
Collecting basic data

Using data to develop Strategy

M&E

ACH Promotion
A framework/lens

Mapping & spatial analysis

The eventful city
Media use survey

50 Businesses Surveyed
- 50% in City Bowl, 50% outside

R131,8m million
Total Operating budget

R9,8m million
Marketing budget

5% Ave\textsuperscript{median}
marketing spend
Undifferentiated strategies

35% Employ marketing Manager
Ave # staff = 16; ave # marketing staff 0.6

20% measure marketing ROI

10% use a PR/marketing service
Now conducting an audience survey to understand consumption, segmentation, and identify opportunities for growth.

Assists large and small enterprises

opportunities for collaboration

Social and economic outcomes
Cultural mapping as empowerment tool

Putting community’s interests, needs and relationships at the centre of programming
To strengthen area-based cultural planning:

1. Clarify your strategic objectives. How can mapping your art, culture and heritage resources add social and economic value?

2. Check what data you already have. Do you need to spend a lot of money or is there data available from secondary sources?

3. Do you need a Geographic Information System? Who is going to use the data, update it and how often?

4. Who are your key stakeholders and boundary partners, and how they will support you in achieving your objectives?

5. Agree on how will you determine the success of your interventions.
STRENGTHEN YOUR M&E SYSTEM

The basics

• Focus on indicators and levels of measurement that management will use
• keep it simple and user-friendly
• keep it real, operationalise technical and fuzzy terms
• where possible, integrate with existing processes
• link it to your theory of change and results framework
• see the process as tactical rather than punitive, create an institutional culture of learning
• include stakeholders, because meaningful engagement makes a difference
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