

Remarkable contributions to culture sector, creative industries celebrated

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Brussels, 10 February 2018/ ACPCulturesPlus/ ACP: Pioneering projects such as *Lamb* - the first Ethiopian film ever to be selected at the Cannes festival, and Docusound - a network of radio documentary makers, many of whom are disabled, were celebrated amongst a wide range of success stories at the final conference of the [ACPCultures+ Programme](#) ^[1], held 8-9 February at the ACP House in Brussels.

From 2012 to 2017, the ACPCultures+ Programme, financed by the European Development Fund, backed 54 initiatives in approximately 60 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, implemented by more than 200 ACP and EU cultural operators. Using a partnership-based and inclusive approach, these projects gave priority to building and consolidating cultural and creative enterprises and industries in ACP countries.

“Culture is the vector to create pluralism, coexistence and respect within societies and between north and south”, stated ACP Secretary General H.E. Dr. Patrick Gomes during the conference, attended by more than 150 participants, including leaders of beneficiary projects who shared best practices implemented over the last five years.



“ACP Secretariat believes culture could be the conduit to tackle ripple effects of unrest and disenchantment that are often compounded with poverty and unemployment, such as radicalism and marginalisation”, he added.

Participants applauded the support dedicated to a range of activities, from choreography to audio-visual production, music, 3D animation, architecture, literature and other artistic endeavours. These have made tangible contributions to ACP sustainable development, such as the creation of jobs (almost 4 000) and strengthened capacities of operators (8 000 professionals trained). These projects also helped to substantially increase the supply of cultural goods and services with an



output of no less than 1 000 products.

Thanks to ACPCultures+, major film productions in ACP countries have created quality jobs, trained numerous professionals in the field, and improved distribution of works. The programme has also allowed young artists from different ACP regions to meet via creative residences, share knowledge, create networks, and improve and innovate their craft. Still other projects contributed to the significant improvement of the regulatory framework and the cultural policies of various ACP countries.

“There are so many difficulties facing young filmmakers in Ethiopia today. There aren't proper support systems in the country. The movie could not be produced without ACPCultures+... As the film as selected in Cannes and travelled in more than 120

festivals, the local authorities are now aware that the film industry can contribute to the development of the country and promote Ethiopia in the world,” attests filmmaker Yared Zeleke, who benefited from a €495,000 grant from the programme.



Director-General of the European Commission for International Cooperation and Development at the European Commission, Mr. Stefano Manservigi underlined the EU's ongoing commitment to the development of the cultural sector in ACP countries, as demonstrated in a new €40 million support programme for ACP cultural industries, financed under the 11th European development Fund (EDF).

“At this stage, when we are bombarded with negative forces, extremism and radicalism, we need art and culture more than ever to reach communities, especially the young, with alternative narrative”, said Mr. Manservigi.



The new programme is set to kick off this year, and will build on the achievements made by the ACPCultures+ programme, which was also financed through the EDF for an amount of €30 million over five years. The new initiative will seek not only to promote creativity, but also contribute to jobs, economic growth, wealth, social cohesion, cultural diversity, peace and stability. Key priorities include production of quality goods, innovation, sustainability, access to markets, leveraging new sources of funding and audience development are the key sectors of the new support programme.

The programme structures are due to be finalised over the coming months, before calls of proposals will be made for funding opportunities.



[Visit the ACPCultures+ website](#)

[1]

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(Photos from top: Winners of the 15,000 ACP-EU Film Prize awarded at the FESPACO 2017. Ousmane-William MBAYE (Senegal), Twiggy MATIWANA (South Africa) and Alain Formose GOMIS (Senegal) were able to participate at the Cannes Film Festival and promote their work, thanks to the ACPCultures+ programme; ACP Secretary General Dr. Patrick Gomes (right) greets Co-Producer of Ethiopian award-winning film LAMB; European Commission's DG DEVCO Director General Mr. Stefano Manservigi and Head of Unit Ms. Aida Liha Latejicek; Participants at the Final Conference on 8-9 February in Brussels; ACP Assistant Secretary General in charge of Political Affairs and Human Development Ambassador Leonard Ognimba (left) with meeting delegate.)

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Links:

[1] <http://www.acpculturesplus.eu/>

[2] <http://www.acp.int/sites/acpsec.waw.be/files/ACPCulturesPlus-Report.pdf>

[3] <http://acp.int/category/story-type/news-articles>