

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Danida

Culture and development

Strategy and guidelines



Culture and development Strategy and guidelines

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Culture and development must build on the fundamental human rights with the objective of strengthening cultural diversity and achieving a global ethic.

Introduction:

No development without culture

“The Greek hero Peleus married the sea goddess Thetis. All the gods were present at their wedding except for Eris, the goddess of discord, who had not been invited. Angered by this omission she inscribed on a golden apple the words: To the most fair and rolled it in among the goddesses. Hera, Athene and Aphrodite all claimed the prize and decided to ask the Trojan prince Paris to judge among them. Each of them sought to influence his judgment by bribery, but when Aphrodite promised him the most beautiful woman in the world, he awarded her the apple.” (Homer, The Iliad)

All cultures have common myths and narratives that help to create a shared store of ideas concerning change and development. The Greek myth of the apple of discord and the prince who allowed himself to be seduced by the promise of the most beautiful woman in the world has given Europe a story that everyone knows and has become part of a shared European culture. We are familiar with Athene’s wisdom, Aphrodite’s beauty – not to mention Nordic mythology with its tales of the power struggles and raw strength of Thor and Odin. These tales are elements in the complex mosaic of Danish culture. The cultures of the countries we cooperate with are based on other myths and tales – new as well as old.

The objective of Denmark’s development policy is poverty reduction. The basic premise of the present Strategy is the close correlation that exists between culture and development. Development processes are not solely related to economic and social factors. They are fundamentally a question of human development and thereby equally of history and values, of self-understanding and the processes of social interaction. For this reason culture is a key element in all development cooperation.

The present document aims to strengthen understanding of the links between culture and development and on this basis to provide guidance for the practical work of the cultural dimension in Danish development policy. The strategic objectives are based on the experiences gained working with the cultural dimension in Denmark’s development cooperation and on the recent Danish and international recognition of the importance of the cultural dimension. Chapter 1 describes the value basis of the Strategy, while Chapter 2 presents principles, criteria and guidelines for this work in the future.

To fulfil its purpose, the Strategy must have a broad impact throughout Denmark's development cooperation, among external advisers and NGOs. This poses special demands both of its formulation and its implementation. It therefore seeks to strike a balance between general analysis and concrete guidelines that at the same time leave room for the very diverse cultures and contexts in which Denmark's development cooperation takes place.

The success of the Strategy can only be judged on its use. The sections containing guidance have been made as practical as possible in the hope that they will help to inspire and further develop the work involving the cultural aspect at embassies, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as among the external resource base and NGOs. It will be a special task for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to follow up on this work and further develop the guidelines and criteria contained in these sections. The implementation of the Strategy will require ongoing monitoring, and efforts must be made to increase our knowledge base and to extend experience sharing within the cultural dimension.

The present Strategy is based on Denmark's development policy "Partnership 2000", which defines the overriding objectives of Denmark's development cooperation as poverty reduction through the promotion of sustainable development processes and support for broadly based, pro-poor economic growth with equal participation by women and men. Human development is to be promoted through support for the social sectors and promotion of democratisation and popular participation.

1. Value basis: Human rights, cultural diversity and a global ethic

Culture must be understood broadly

The present Strategy operates with a broad definition of culture. This means that culture is not viewed as being in opposition to development, but as something that is continually changing and being created in step with changing social processes while at the same time constituting a common point of reference in the global development.

Culture may be defined as the total complex of spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterise a society or social group. Culture is mental structures, the general patterns of understanding prevalent in a given social group: conceptions of the world, religion, gender role patterns and the management of natural resources. But culture also comprises more specific forms of expression through works of artistic or cultural value. Operationally, this twofold definition means that work with the cultural dimension involves (i) culture as the sum of social practices in the form of, for example, religion, language, education and social and family practices, and (ii) culture as artistic expression in the form of, for example, literature, dance, music and films.

Culture and development must build on the fundamental human rights with the objective of strengthening cultural diversity and achieving a global ethic

The work with the cultural dimension in development cooperation must build on a value basis that expresses what is regarded as positive cultural and social values and change. The knowledge and acceptance of this value basis is a precondition for cooperation on culture in the practical work. This applies both to Denmark's partners in the developing countries and for Danish participants in development cooperation.

As laid down in the Act on International Development Cooperation, Section 1, Denmark's development cooperation is based on the fundamental principles of the UN. International norms for how people can permit themselves to treat one another and their surroundings have changed since the founding of the UN. During the past 50 years Denmark has contributed actively to the bearing principles and values of the UN, and

this is reflected in the development of the international human rights conventions and declarations on gender equality and the environment. Social welfare, human rights, equal opportunities and concern for the environment are thus today central values both in international cooperation in the UN and also in Denmark's development cooperation.

In recent years local and national values have acquired renewed importance around the world. In the years to come it will therefore be a challenge for Denmark to influence the development of fundamental principles and values worldwide. On the one hand, it will be necessary to work towards making local and national values the foundation of the global reality. Efforts must be made to strengthen the cultural diversity of the world. Globalisation can only be secured as a stable and positive process by ensuring that it has a solid cultural base. On the other hand, this work must be firmly rooted by international law in the fundamental human rights. The goal is to achieve a world society founded on a global ethic. Culture – whether it be local, national or international – can never be used to legitimise chauvinism, misuse of power, ethnic persecution and cleansing, terrorism, genocide, or other forms of abuse and humiliation of human beings. The work for sustainable and reciprocal globalisation requires cultural self-awareness, based on human rights and mutual respect.

Goals for Denmark's work with culture and development

The goals for a conscious and systematic incorporation of culture in Denmark's development cooperation can be summarised as follows:

Promotion of the cultural dimension as an important component of poverty reduction

An awareness of the cultural context is necessary in the planning and implementation of all development cooperation. The overriding objective of Denmark's development cooperation is to contribute to poverty reduction through the promotion of broad-based, pro-poor economic growth with equal participation by women and men. To achieve this result culture must be incorporated as a resource to be drawn upon rather than be allowed to function as an obstacle to the process. It is at the same time important that local culture and knowledge are taken into account as an integral component of development programmes in sectors such as education, health, agriculture and water – both for the benefit of local communities and as a contribution to continued global cultural diversity.

Promotion of culture as an active instrument in strengthening the very poor

Cultural projects can in general be used as an active instrument in promoting understanding for such values as social justice, equality of opportunity and sustainability and to promote the identity and dignity of poor people and of hard-pressed population groups. These groups stand in need of higher status and respect in society in order to

improve their opportunities of influencing and benefiting from developments in society. As part of this process special attention must be devoted to the situation of women and indigenous peoples.

Promotion of cultural diversity on the basis of human rights and tolerance

The keener focus on the cultural dimension in Denmark's development cooperation must contribute to the preservation and development of cultural diversity, and an active effort must be made to strengthen mutual cultural respect. Tolerance and respect for human rights and for different cultures must be promoted as an important element in securing the cultural identity of the developing countries.

Stronger focus on culture in the international debate

Culture was firmly placed on the international agenda when UNESCO and the UN established a World Commission for Culture and Development in 1992 with the UN's former secretary-general Pérez de Cuéllar as chairman. In 1995 the Commission published the report "Our Creative Diversity", the main premise of which is to regard culture as the basis for all development. The report was later followed up by a series of conferences and reports, most recently World Culture Report 2000 under the heading "Cultural Diversity, Conflict and Pluralism". The report focuses on cultural diversity and on culture as the source of social creativity, but also of violence and exclusion. It also emphasises that all cultures whose values are tolerant towards those of other cultures must be respected on the basis of a binding global ethic founded on universal values, human rights and mutual respect across cultural boundaries.

With its strategy paper from 1999, "Culture and Sustainable Development – A Framework for Action", the World Bank has also begun to take the cultural dimension into account in its loan policies. The World Bank wishes to promote a development process rooted in the local culture and in the knowledge and needs of the local population. Thus, the World Bank is continuing its work on evolving participant-oriented development instruments and has recently, with Danish support, engaged in a project to incorporate and develop the concept of 'social capital' in its development work.

In a number of countries – not least the Nordic countries – the cultural dimension plays a prominent role in development cooperation. There is a general tendency towards incorporating the cultural dimension as an integral component of development cooperation. Much attention is devoted to drawing upon the cultural dimension as a key to a deeper understanding of local conditions and conflicts that may affect development work. This shift in emphasis should be seen in the light of the trends currently influencing the development debate. The following section outlines three of the most significant trends that, each in their own way, have served to focus attention on the cultural dimension.

Poverty orientation, national strategies and globalisation are increasing the focus on culture

Three central trends in the general international development are focusing attention on the cultural dimension in the development process, namely poverty orientation, national strategies and globalisation:

Understanding of the nature of poverty and strategies for poverty reduction

Recent years have seen the emergence of a new international consensus that poverty should not solely be regarded as a lack of economic and social resources, but also as a lack of rights, influence, status and dignity. In step with this growing recognition, work has been done on developing new strategies for poverty reduction, a key element of which is the principle that all development work must take its point of departure in the local context and in national poverty strategies.

Recent analyses undertaken by the World Bank of how the poor regard their own situation pinpoint vulnerability, insecurity and lack of status as significant factors in their perception of poverty. In its guidelines for poverty reduction, the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) operates with a socio-cultural dimension in its description of poverty, which also contains aspects such as status and dignity.

In Denmark's development cooperation it has long been recognised that the question of the status of the poor in society and their possibilities of organising and thus obtaining political influence on the basis of their own visions and ideas are decisive in determining whether social development will in fact benefit the poor. The question of democratisation and respect for human rights and the possibilities of the poor to exert influence on the development of society on the basis of their own values occupy a central position in Denmark's strategy for poverty reduction. Against this background, the recognition of the role to be played by the cultural dimension becomes an important component in a general strategy for poverty reduction.

Efforts to strengthen and preserve cultural diversity and at the same time to promote respect for other cultures can counteract the marginalisation of social groups such as ethnic or religious minorities. Respect for cultural diversity can nuance and lessen tensions between different cultural groups – tensions that may in the worst-case lead to armed conflict. The promotion of cultural diversity is therefore an element of a general strategy for poverty reduction and for supporting the participation of poor or marginalised groups in social development.

Partnership and national strategies

Denmark's development cooperation with the developing countries must be founded on reciprocal partnerships that take their point of departure in the developing countries' own strategies and priorities. The developing countries must themselves assume responsibility for and ownership of the development process. The planning of development cooperation must take place through dialogue in which – as in all forms of dialogue – there must be room for differences. This means that also in connection with the cultural dimension Denmark must retain an awareness of and stand by its fundamental values such as respect for human rights and the maintenance of cultural diversity.

In order for the developing countries to be able to assume genuine ownership of assistance activities, it is necessary to attach considerable importance to the building of institutional capacity in recipient countries and to supporting their ability to formulate and implement their policies for the various sectors. This also applies to the cultural dimension, where Denmark's cooperation must take particular account of national priorities and the need to secure local ownership.

The cultural dimension offers especially good opportunities for genuine partnerships, in that it holds out greater prospects for cooperation on an equal footing than does the economic dimension. The link between development and the cultural dimension will often initiate a process in which all involved parties exert an ongoing influence on one another.

The globalisation process and its cultural consequences

Globalisation – as a process that comprises an ever-greater economic, political, social and environmental interdependency among the countries of the world – is one of the major challenges of our time. Closer contact between peoples and the exchange of human resources and ideas across national borders can lead to greater cultural diversity and enhance cross-cultural understanding. However, globalisation also places pressure on local cultures and patterns of life, which will in some cases be in danger of disappearing altogether. The positive consequences of cultural globalisation must be strengthened so that the process leads towards mutual respect and tolerance, pride without chauvinism and to a constructive “Clash of Cultures”.

The new information and communications technologies are opening up for access to knowledge and global communication on a wholly unprecedented scale. It is crucial that the developing countries should become active participants in this process – not just for economic reasons, but also to ensure cultural exchange and dialogue across cultural boundaries.

Denmark is working to ensure that the globalisation process will benefit the developing countries in the cultural dimension also. This requires that development cooperation also contributes to or participates in creating frameworks for the building of national and local cultural industries such as publishing houses, radio and TV stations, film industries, theatres and IT services. These are all measures that can help to ensure the development of local cultures on their own premises and to secure their role in the global supply of culture. At the same time a sustainable effort to strengthen cultural diversity requires that the developing countries should be able to benefit from international mechanisms for the protection of copyright in connection with artistic and cultural production.

2. Guidelines: Principles and criteria

Culture has always played a role in Denmark's development cooperation – either directly in the form of support for cultural projects or indirectly through the more or less explicit cultural considerations that are involved in all development planning. Nevertheless there is in general a need for a more systematic incorporation of the cultural dimension in development. It is necessary to focus greater awareness on this aspect in order to assure the quality of Danish development activities and for Denmark to continue to be internationally norm-setting in this field.

Chapter 2 presents general guidelines for the incorporation of the cultural dimension in development cooperation. The guidelines are addressed to the embassies, the Technical Advisory Service, country offices, NGOs and other actors in the field. The aim of the guidelines is to provide tools, inspiration and key words for the work with culture and development. How the guidelines are put into practice will depend on the given situation, but they should be used as a general point of reference for the work and understood as a first step towards the establishment of better practices in this field. The guidelines in themselves cannot stand alone but must be followed up by specific activities and continuous monitoring and knowledge exchange.

Operating with the broad definition of culture means that work with the cultural dimension in development can be divided into three main categories: (i) culture as mental structures and general practices and thereby as a precondition and context for development cooperation, (ii) involvement of specific forms of cultural or artistic expression in development cooperation, and (iii) multilateral activities.

Culture as a precondition for development cooperation

The work with culture in general in sector programmes and other development cooperation should take place at a number of different levels:

- It is necessary to secure better interaction between development activities and the cultural context, not least its traditional structures. This may, for example, be done through the integration of cultural components in sector programmes.
- The preparation, implementation and evaluation of sector programmes must make greater use of forward-looking analyses of the cultural dimension when mapping the poverty situation, the gender aspect, the environment and human rights (see also the current SPS Guidelines).
- The cultural dimension must also be more firmly integrated in the analytic preparation of programmes, and there is a need to strengthen socio-cultural competencies among advisers. In certain cases it may be necessary to carry out analyses of the socio-cultural implications of the development activities, for instance in the form of a Socio-Cultural Impact Assessment.
- Sector programmes and other bilateral cooperation must take into account and seek to counteract manifest and hidden cultural, ethnic or religious conflicts through the building of greater mutual respect and understanding.
- Work must continue on the further development of participant-oriented instruments in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of Danish assistance.
- Research must be carried out into the cultural preconditions for successful development cooperation, into the integration of the cultural dimension in development activities and into the cultural consequences of development cooperation.

Case: Castes and water supply in India

The design of a drinking water project in the Indian state of Orissa took into account both the caste system and the social space available for women. The advantages of the caste system were exploited constructively in order to secure the sustainability of the project, while its hierarchical aspects were circumvented through a dialogue based on the recognition of caste as a cultural reality.

In accordance with the caste system's jaimani rules, a local caste of artisans, the karmakhar, who work on agricultural equipment in the coastal districts of Orissa, have groups of regular customers in 10-15 surrounding villages. At the same time the artisans have a certain familiarity with other mechanical work. For example, they do bicycle repairs. The project trained these artisans to maintain the manual water pumps that had been installed, and they were then given the job of maintaining the pumps in the surrounding villages – against payment from the users. Here they were already known and had regular customers. Although there is general opposition in India to paying for water, the villagers felt that user payment for maintenance of the pumps accorded with the tradition of paying for their services.

In the same project all the castes in a village were consulted about the placing of the pumps. The higher castes rarely permitted the lower castes ("the impure") to take water from the same wells as they used. This resulted in a strategic placing of the pumps so that the lower castes did not get too close to the Brahmins' pump or well. At the same time water supplies for the lowest castes were secured by placing pumps in their parts of the village. By adopting this culturally adjusted strategy in the project area, it proved possible to avoid conflicts between castes concerning access to drinking water. This should be seen in the light of the fact that local newspapers carried stories about such conflicts every week, conflicts that were often violent and resulted in fatalities.

A second factor to be considered in placing the pumps was the needs and wishes of the women. The original premise had been that women spend too much time fetching water, time that could be used more productively. This is the generally accepted objective for water projects, and it is of relevance in most arid African countries, where women can spend half their working day fetching water. In areas with an abundance of water, like Orissa, this is not a problem. Nevertheless it was initially decided to locate the pumps as centrally as possible in the various parts of the village. The women were dissatisfied with this as it restricted their opportunities of chatting together about their own affairs. For this reason their wish for a slightly more distant placing preferably in the shade of a tree was complied with. Here they could have their own social space in peace.

Case: Benin – Women’s political rights

Traditions and specific cultural values are strongly rooted in Benin and lay down narrow limits for what women, in particular, are allowed to do. Both as children and adults, females are regarded as inferior to men and subject to their decisions. This comes to expression in both private and public life. Customs such as female circumcision, forced marriages and polygamy are still widely practised. One of the reasons for this is that women are significantly under-represented in political decision-making bodies and have little chance of appearing on the candidate lists of the political parties. The presidential election in March 2001 saw a female candidate for the first time in the country’s history, and she had to spend much of her time explaining – without much success – to voters that the constitution actually permits women to stand for the presidency and to occupy the post.

The purpose of the Danish-supported activities in Benin is to strengthen women’s active participation in the democratic processes of the country. The activities involve information seminars and campaigns on the equal rights of women and men to stand for election and to a secret vote in all elections. These activities are underpinned by a country-wide information campaign designed to reach various social groupings throughout the country. The campaign involves TV, radio and newspapers, and local discussion meetings are held in various parts of the country. These activities also contribute to heightening women’s awareness of the new opportunities for citizens to exercise an active influence on developments in their local district.

The incorporation of specific forms of cultural and artistic expression in development

Activities that strengthen artistic development can be incorporated in development cooperation in many ways: as an integral component of sector programmes, as a means of communication in special activities, e.g. the fight against hiv/aids, or as an autonomous activity in its own right based on considerations concerning cultural identity, personal dignity and strengthening the culture of poor population groups. Although the involvement of specific forms of cultural and artistic forms of expression will rest on a concrete assessment in each individual case, the following general criteria should be taken into account:

- (i) *Conformity with Denmark's strategic priorities*, both in relation to the overall framework of the strategy and to the value basis described above, not least to the strengthening of the culture of poor population groups and the promotion of cultural diversity.
- (ii) *Local/national basis*. A key criterion to be considered is whether the activity derives from a local initiative and the extent to which the local population is involved, both in the activity itself and as target group. Specific consideration must be given to national and local political priorities and institutions.
- (iii) *Broad aim*. Consideration must be given to the number of people that will come into contact with the specific activity, and, in particular, to its effect on employment, to the role of culture as a medium of communication and to pro-poor orientation of the activity.
- (iv) *Expected impact of the project*. This involves not merely concrete effects, such as the spread of knowledge, employment and, where relevant, economic gain, but also spin-off effects such as increased intercultural understanding, protection of local languages, etc. In this context consideration should also be given to the time span and sustainability of the project.
- (v) *Coherence with other development activities*. Efforts should be made to enhance the coherence among Danish development activities and to make better use of potential synergy effects, for instance through the integration of cultural components in sector programmes.

With the above criteria in mind, the incorporation of the cultural dimension in Denmark's development cooperation should focus on four areas in particular:

National cultural policies

Denmark's development cooperation is based on the developing countries' own national objectives, and it is therefore crucial to ensure the local ownership of development processes. This is particularly true of cultural activities, where national priorities and local will to assume responsibility for cultural development should as far as possible be at center of considerations.

It is therefore particularly important that partner countries establish a framework for and seek to implement national cultural policies. Support can be given to the formulation and implementation of national cultural policies with a broad involvement of civil society, the private sector, parliament and the population in general. It must be a basic premise of such policies that they aim at securing and developing cultural diversity with respect for the fundamental human rights.

Case: A national cultural fund in Tanzania

The goal of the fund is to support democracy and human rights, cultural diversity and freedom of expression. The criteria for receiving support comprise: (i) artistic quality, (ii) experiments, and (iii) new productions. The cultural fund was established in an attempt to develop an instrument that can strengthen local culture and lead to a constructive distribution of economic support. The decision as to what projects should be supported is passed on to the recipient country via the fund.

The criteria for applications for economic support are advertised in the press, and applications are then processed by the board of the fund. A key person, who assists applicants with specialist advice in connection with the formulation of individual applications, has been selected for each cultural field (theatre, dance, music, etc.). Grants have been given to relatively small-scale projects relating to cultural heritage, art production, the cultural industry, literature, films, radio and multimedia productions.

The number of applications has risen dramatically from 127 in the first year to more than 600 applications from all over the country in 2001. The fund is supported by Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Norway. Namibia and Swaziland are in the process of establishing funds along the lines of the Tanzanian model.

Regional cooperation and south-south relations in the field of culture

A major objective for the incorporation of the cultural dimension in Denmark's development cooperation is to promote mutual cultural respect – not merely along a north-south axis, but also internally among countries in the south. Therefore support can be given to cooperation and cultural exchange among these countries. This may be in the

form of support for regional cultural centres, transnational cultural networks and the exchange of specific projects.

Case: A network of African publishers

APNET is an organisation of African publishers with a secretariat in Harare, Zimbabwe. The organisation was established in 1992 on the initiative of a number of donors and African publishers. In order to strengthen the marketing of indigenous publishing APNET has defined six main focus areas: (i) training, (ii) marketing, (iii) capacity building, (iv) information and publications, (v) research and documentation, and (vi) networks and international relations.

In recent years APNET has succeeded in establishing contact with African publishers in 41 countries, covering all regions and language areas of the continent. In 2000-2001 the organisation participated in 11 major book fairs in Africa as well as in three major international book fairs. During its short life APNET has made a considerable contribution to making African publishing firms known and thus to strengthening the publishing industry in Africa.

Culture and the private sector

Culture is by no means an isolated segment separate from the surrounding world. It forms a natural part of everyday life and its processes such as the exchange of goods and the ongoing globalisation. Many poor countries possess large cultural resources, and Denmark will support the efforts of partner countries to benefit economically from these resources.

This may take place through improved access to markets for processed products from the poor countries (see below the section on culture and development in multilateral contexts), but also through helping developing countries to make better use of existing market opportunities for their cultural production. This applies not only to such products as local craftsmanship, music, theatre and dance, but can also be realised through support for the formulation of policies for tourism. It will be necessary to take into account the role played by the informal sector.

It will also be possible to support institutional and copyright protection in conformity with the provisions of the TRIPs Agreement.

Case: Culture as an export article

As a result of private initiative a project in which the handicrafts and traditions of former times are combined with modern know-how and technology is currently being implemented in Bangladesh. The project targets local tribes in which for generations weaving has been practised in accordance with traditional methods.

The local women participating in the project receive teaching and help in design, market factors and supplementary technical aids. They are offered opportunities of selling and exporting their traditional handicraft products via a professional wholesale network.

The project is helping to preserve and renew knowledge of traditional handicrafts and the local culture. It also means that it has become possible for participants to earn an income through working with traditional handicrafts. A good weaver can support 5 to 10 people. Although the weavers are usually women, this is as a rule acceptable for the men, as the income is generated in what is traditionally a female occupation. It is hoped that the results of the project can be translated into practice in other areas.

Strengthening cultural identity through language and communication

Poverty is not solely a matter of money, but also of human dignity. It is therefore possible to devote special efforts to the strengthening of cultural identity, particularly among the very poor. Language is a primary source of cultural identification, and Denmark will contribute to the preservation of linguistic diversity in the world. Language is also the basis for communication and for the ability to express oneself and is an essential factor in the attainment of self-worth, identity and a vital civil society.

Support can therefore be given to language development both in connection with literature, films and other form of cultural expression and also through, for example, support for school books, newspapers and ICT initiatives in local languages.

Case: Education is strengthening the cultural identity of the poor in Nepal

A large part of the Nepalese population live in Hindu-dominated areas, and a large part of this population is classified as low-caste. Many low-caste groups do not attend school, and their cultural identity is not merely ignored, but is actually perceived as subordinate and inferior. A Danish-supported sector programme in the field of education is focusing on low-caste women in the countryside. Many of these women are de facto slaves who have been “sold” by their families in order to pay off debts to local landowners. Teaching programmes and curricula targeting these groups are formulated in close collaboration with the students. There is a focus on techniques that invite the participants to reflect on, explore and discover their own cultural identity.

Denmark is also supporting another education programme for an ethnic minority called the Tharus. In pre-colonial times the Tharus lived as a tribal people in Rajasthan. They were deeply dependent on a local prince who was driven away after a confrontation with a rival. Together with his family he sought refuge in the trackless jungle area of Terai, a low-lying area on both sides of the Indian-Nepalese border. The Tharus followed him and established themselves in scattered settlements in the jungle. Thus, the Tharus have always been in a state of dependency in relation to a surrounding and more dominant culture. In the encounter with other cultures they have deliberately sought to strengthen their own cultural independence in order to preserve their identity and pride. The Tharus are very strategic in their ways of adapting to the surrounding and dominant culture. While holding on to their own cultural values, they also recognise their limitations. With respect to language, for example, they choose to have a foot in both camps. In their education programmes they insist on learning Nepalese so as to be able to control the trade in products from their own area and to obtain access to the opportunities of employment opened up by higher education.

Culture and development in multilateral contexts

Denmark traditionally channels a large proportion of its development assistance through the international development organisations and financing institutions and attaches great importance to international cooperation, especially the work to establish universal norms and codes of conduct. Multilaterally Denmark will work for a stronger focus on the cultural dimension within a number of institutions and organisations:

- In the dialogue with the multilateral organisations emphasis must be given to Denmark's development objectives, including the necessity of a broad concept of poverty that comprises social and cultural aspects. At the same time Denmark will work in the international organisations for an increased focus on cultural diversity based on respect for human rights.
- Denmark will work for improved market access for culturally processed products from the developing countries. This work will primarily take place through the EU and WTO. Here it will be necessary to devote special attention to the cultural priorities of the developing countries.
- Denmark will work for better protection of artistic property rights across borders. Today cultural production from the developing countries enjoys very little protection, and whether traditional cultural products or modern individual works are involved, the possibility of benefiting economically requires institutionalised mechanisms for the protection of copyright.
- Support can be given for the participation of the developing countries in multilateral cooperation in the field of culture, both cooperation in the international development organisations and financing institutions and also cooperation in international NGOs and culture and development networks.

Annex:

Development and cultural exchange

By the Danish Center for Culture and Development

Cultural exchange as a tool for development

Development can be defined as the attainment of a greater ability and capacity to make decisions and to put them into practice. Cultural exchange can be defined as a way of setting up a dialogue between cultures with a view to reciprocal inspiration, enrichment and renewal.

Cultural exchange can be regarded as a fundamental aspect of most development projects. Development cooperation is based on the meeting between two different experiential backgrounds and cultures. Within individual developing countries cultural exchange is concerned with a variety of sub-cultures: urban-rural, different ethnic groups, genders, generations, countries in regional groupings, etc., but at a global level cultural exchange is about the interaction between the developing countries and the rest of the world.

Although the majority of development projects will, seen in this perspective, have a fundamental cultural exchange dimension, there is nevertheless a significant difference between the simple recognition that this will inevitably be the case and targeted planning of development activities based on the experience and methods that have gradually been built up in the field of cultural exchange. In terms of development goals, planned cultural exchange is particularly effective in strengthening pluralism and inter-cultural competencies and in providing inspiration for change. For these reasons cultural exchange is often a dynamic component of programmes in support of democratisation, human rights and civil society, while from a socio-economic angle it has often been regarded as a way of stimulating mobility, adaptability and a positive development.

Planned cultural exchange can therefore be a way of seeking to achieve certain development objectives. Many developing countries, particularly in Africa, have, however, relatively few planned cultural exchanges locally, regionally and with other countries in the South that might stimulate new types of local and regional cooperation based on development needs. Cultural exchange has mainly been oriented towards the north, rather than towards local and regional places where there was relevant knowledge to be obtained.

The developing countries in international cultural exchange

Cultural institutions, educational institutions, association activities and media are the major channels for promoting the cultural understanding within and among countries that is a precondition for democratic development based on respect for diversity and human rights. It is therefore a problem – locally, regionally and internationally – that in institutions there is a great lack of cultural specialists, teachers and journalists equipped with inter-cultural competencies. Despite differences in context, this applies both in the developing countries and in the rest of the world.

Targeted and well-designed cultural exchange is particularly important for the cooperation between the developing countries and our part of the world. Both in the developing countries and in the rich countries there is a lack of people with inter-cultural qualifications, i.e. people who can function as bridge-builders in development cooperation as well as in other types of cooperation. This is particularly true of the core fields for cultural exchange: culture, the media and formal and popular education.

The Danish Center for Culture and Development

The Center's mandate covers cultural cooperation between Denmark and the developing countries, while activities connected with bilateral and multilateral assistance are outside its remit.

The Center focuses on the cultural exchange that takes place within a broad context of dialogue and cooperation. The Center does not, however, support cultural exchange and cooperation internally in the developing countries, locally, regionally and between countries in the south and the rest of the world.

The Center operates with a rolling 3-year programme of action. The programme sets out the activities planned by the Center, prefaced by an introductory chapter on objectives and principles. Here the Center has formulated a broad analysis of the consequences of globalisation for cultural cooperation in the world, a number of definitions of culture and development together with a description of the criteria, principles and strategies on which its activities are based. These activities are divided into two main pillars:

- Ongoing support and guidance for cultural exchange activities between Denmark and the developing countries.
- A plan for focusing over a limited period on improving Denmark's cultural exchange with selected parts of the world (in 2001-3 the focus will be on Asia, culminating with Images of Asia, while for 2004-6 the idea at present is to focus on the Middle East, culminating with Images of the Middle East).

Finally, the Center works to promote dialogue and debate on the questions and issues with that arise in connection with the Center's activities.

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