

**«Assistance technique au Secrétariat ACP pour la gestion du programme UE-  
ACP d'appui au Secteur Culturel (ACP Culture+)»  
EuropeAid/131180/D/SER/MULTI**

**Study into the artistic, economic and social impact of 6 ACP Festivals on ACP cultural industries**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

Catherine Buresi  
Brussels 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016



Mis en œuvre par  
le Secrétariat du Groupe  
des Etats ACP



Financé par  
l'Union européenne

## Study into the artistic, economic and social impact of 6 ACP Festivals on ACP cultural industries

Catherine Buresi, October 2016

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

#### Introduction

This report presents a study of the artistic, economic and social impact of the following festivals:

- Market for African Performing Arts – MASA (Ivory Coast),
- **Festival Africa Fête (Senegal), supported by ACPCultures+**
- **Festival Ile Courts (Mauritius), supported by ACPCultures +**
- Festival of Pacific Arts (Solomon Islands),
- Durban International Film Festival (South Africa)
- **Trinidad and Tobago Film Festival, (market supported by ACPCultures+)**

It is the fruit of a methodology common to the 5 experts involved locally. The quality and the quantity of data supplied by the festivals, the capacity for analysis of the local experts, as well as their familiarity with the world of festivals turned out to be variable.

It is also advisable to note that the number of working days allocated to this study has proven to be largely insufficient, for the main expert and for the local experts.

The festivals supported by the ACP Cultures+ programme (Africa Fête and Ile Courts) have been the most qualified to supply the necessary data, demonstrating that the **support of the programme gives the supported festivals a framework that allows them to supply data without difficulty and strengthens them in their search for future financing.**

#### 1. Social and societal impact

This impact is characterised by the creation, through the festivals, of a sense of belonging that touches different communities, minorities and genders and is expressed at different levels, locally, nationally or regionally

- The Festivals **create a common identity**

In countries that have been subjected to recent trauma, the festival becomes an element of mutual belonging for the whole population. MASA's return to a regular bi-annual rhythm is the sign of the return of peace to Ivory Coast and the population of the district of Abidjan. For the Solomon Islands, hosting FestPac in 2012 marked the return of safety to the islands.

This sense of belonging can be part of a regional identity: participants at the TTFF for example express their recognition of a common identity of the Caribbean, above and beyond national or linguistic differences.

- The Festivals **go out to meet their public**

All of the festivals studied extend their activities above and beyond their sole place of performance. **This decentralisation allows the participation of a wider public by going out to look for audiences in disadvantaged or in peripheral locations** (rural regions of Senegal (Louga and Tambacounda) for AF for example).

- The Festivals **are active all year long and in this way develop an audience in the long term.**

**Ile Courts can be considered as a model in this area**, because the festival is principally aimed at a young public due to its discipline (short films). Outside of its year-round screenings (55% of its total public in 2015), **its actions in educating the audience, including training of teachers** for example, are exemplary, with an additional effect of driving towards "cultural consumption" tangible in Mauritius in general.

The TFFF organises screenings all year long, in zones that are distant from Port of Spain where cinema is not available in a structured manner. The Durban DIFF also organises “community screenings”, although their results (low turnout) have not yet reached those hoped for by the organisers

- **Women are present at every level**

- **At the head of festivals:** for example for Africa Fête and Ile Courts and a woman is also co-director of the TFFF,

- **In programming:** At MASA for example, or in the TFFF database that has a section devoted to “Caribbean women in film”.

- **In all the activities in which the festivals have economic impact: catering, handicrafts** (the latter is particularly important for FestPac). “The trade in traditional arts and handicrafts is a significant source of income in the regions, particularly for women” (Official Draft Report for Hosting the 11th FOPA in the Solomon Islands).

- **In promoting festivals:** MASA for example calls on women “opinion leaders”, and almost all of the communications staff of festivals are women.

- **Festivals also reach minorities through the use of non-dominant languages:** Mauritian Creole for Ile Courts for example, Manding, Balanta, Bambara, Jola, Pular, Sonink, "Maure" or Sere for AF.

## **2. Cultural and artistic impact, promoting cultural diversity**

All of the festivals studied improve ties between the public and the artists and their audience numbers are increasing (see MASA, IC, AF), proof of the public’s appetite for these encounters. **They also encourage cultural or artistic practices among their audience.** Their impact on the **emergence of new talent** is also notable and lasting.

- **Developing the audience**

Festivals facilitate encounters between artists, their works and the public in a unique way.

**Since hosting FestPac in 2012, an increase in artistic practices has been noted, along with institutional structuring of the cultural sector in the Solomon Islands,** for example, with the holding of capacity building workshops for cultural operators. In consequence, the Solomon Islands were chosen in 2013 to take part in the project *Renforcer les industries culturelles du Pacifique* supported by the ACPCultures+ programme.

The Ile Courts action, over and above these encounters, even led to the implementation of an “ephemeral school of cinema” during the 2015 festival.

- **Promoting artists, emerging talents, sustainability.**

Festivals are also **centres for artistic education** that allow the development of new generations of local artists by giving them access to training and networks that allow them to emerge more rapidly onto the national or international scene.

The DIFF and the Durban FilmMart have established international collaborations that allow them to launch works that could then go on to be selected for other festival, such as the Berlinale for example.

4 feature length films produced in Trinidad and Tobago were presented at the TFFF in 2016, bearing witness to the major artistic vitality in this territory (1.3 million inhabitants, professional statistics about production capacity per country evaluates it at 1 film per 1 million inhabitants).

For local artists, access to a festival is the guarantee of sustainable support (a recurring event) which furthermore generates income that can establish careers (see point 3).

- **Promoting cultural diversity**

**In all of the cases studied, the promotion and recognition of ACP works and artists on the cultural and artistic scenes** were the object of special attention: 33 African countries were represented at MASA 2016 compared to 23 in 2014, Ile Courts is now open to all countries that touch on the Indian Ocean and organises meetings in the context of the Forum Film Bazar, and collaborations already exist between Mauritius and Madagascar thanks to the festival.

With the FAFI, Africa Fête has launched a fertile cooperation dynamic between 3 African countries and most especially collaboration among artists through its residencies.

Through the TTFF, and its international associates, films from the Caribbean are reaching international screens, from Scotland to Latin American and they circulate within the Caribbean.

The DIFF and the Durban FilmMart are open to all African countries and the African diaspora around the world.

Finally, festivals are important places for recognition of the status of an artist and intellectual property rights: a symposium was organised on this theme at FestPac and all of the festivals studied pay royalties to copyright holders, most often in collaboration with local collection agencies.

### **3. Sales and circulation of works, professional networking**

The festivals under study are sources of notoriety **and also of income for artists because they earn fees or screening rights at film festivals.**

- **Sales**

- **Performing art festivals buy all the works that they present. Therefore, the commercialization rate of the works is 100%.** These fees paid to the artists represent around 20% of the budgets of the festivals studied (MASA and AF).

- For young artists, the launch pad effect is very important, because **selection at a festival marks their entrance into professional life** (and perhaps their first fees).

- **Ile Courts has several channels for selling the works it presents.** Each year modest yet recurrent sums are paid to local filmmakers.

- One of the main sponsors of the Trinidad and Tobago film festival is the SVoD operator FLOW, active throughout the Caribbean, that proposes festival films through its video on demand services and pays back 100% of the revenue to the filmmakers.

- Within this framework, **the festivals that have a market show a better capacity to sell the works** (over 50% of performances presented at MASA 2016 have already been sold to other events and on average 30% of the film projects presented at the Durban FilmMart are produced).

- However, **Ile Courts is the only festival to employ a person to follow up upon the artists and the sales of their works in a lasting manner.**

- **Circulation of works**

**Following up upon the career of the works presented is unfortunately performed only rarely by the festivals,** essentially due to staff shortages. However, the artists or producers questioned in the framework of the study all highlighted the multiplier effect, as did the festival programmers present at MASA or at the TTFF for example. The Durban Festival selects many films presented as projects at the Durban FilmMart to appear in competition in the following years.

- **Networking professionals**

Above and beyond the commercial aspects, the 6 festivals studied have been hailed by all the respondents as **unique networking opportunities:**

- It is the primary reason invoked by professional participants at MASA to justify their presence. The launch of dedicated activities in 2016 such as “speed meetings” or showcases have already proven their relevance with 3 of the 16 performances presented at the showcases sold, and 5 others in which distributors have expressed an interest.

- The artistic and professional contacts made during the FAFI residencies have led to unexpected associations: Imothep, Dj for the Marseille band IAM, has collaborated with the Senegalese rapper Fou Malade on some of the titles for his forthcoming album.

- The professional activities developed by the DIFF are impressive: African professionals who were selected benefitted from assistance with co-productions and talent development that have proven their worth at an international level (Cinemart at the Rotterdam festival, “Berlinale Talents”) and have gained access to a unique international network.

- The TTFF also offers remarkable professional development opportunities in this part of the world that has little presence in worldwide cinematography, in particular with the creation of the Caribbean Film Mart in 2015.

#### **4. Economic impact**

For their regularity and their nature (requiring lasting teams, hosting artists, recurring transport, communication, infrastructure expenses...) the **festivals have an important local economic impact in terms of employment, and activity for local industries, in particular in the hotel industry, catering, services, and sometimes tourism.**

- **Job creation**

**Festivals create jobs, but their legal status influence the readability of the data and the wage bill's share of the budget.**

Festivals with private status (AF, Ile Courts and the TTFF) employ 5 to 17 people per year and **these jobs are all directly created.** These permanent staff members represent an important part of the annual budget of the events (respectively 50, 25 and 36%).

Festivals with public status (MASA, DIFF and FestPac) have bigger teams working throughout the year, but these staff members are generally seconded from supervisory institutions and may work on other projects, as is the case with the DIFF.

The seasonal staff numbers are generally very high (300 for the MASA, 127 for the DIFF), but the status of these positions is vary varied (volunteers, work experience, students, fixed-term contracts) and the limited duration of this study prevented exploring this question in all its facets.

It is however clear that **job creation is increasingly important when the festival develops its activities all year long. These direct jobs are mainly occupied by women** (4/5 for the TTFF, 11/7 for IC for example).

Festivals also create **indirect jobs** but it is more appropriate to say that they increase the volume of business for certain sectors (translation, communication, web, transport...), even if the AF festival has led to the creation of a travel agency in Dakar.

- **Impact on local industries**

Beneficiary sectors are mainly the hotel and catering industries, transport and service industries related to communication.

The festivals studied devote at least 50% of their budgets to those local industries.

- **Impact on infrastructure and local professionals**

In the area of infrastructure, **clear progress appears in most cases. Equipment is largely rented locally** and it is very rare to find equipment that has been brought in from other countries.

Festivals also contribute to **the improvement or creation of sustainable performance venues.** The most notable case in this framework is that of FestPac in the Solomon Islands, which has led to the construction of buildings (Auditorium and National Gallery) that have certainly employed many local workers and service providers.

The presence of a festival also allows local professionals working in technical industries (lighting, sound, photography, stage management...) to receive training, sometimes with the support of the festival concerned (in the case of MASA for example).

- **Impact on the tourism industry**

- Ile Courts is now part of the tourism package of the company "My Moris", specialised in cultural tourism,

- the number of tourists to the Solomon Islands has increased significantly since FestPac,

- the tourism office of the province of Kwa Zulu natal in which Durban is located has been organising an annual survey since 2015 into the impact of the DIFF,

- the number of festivalgoers who take advantage of their trip to visit Tobago (representing 45 nights in 2015) features in the statistics of the Trinidad and Tobago festival.

#### **5. Professional impact**

Festivals have multiple forms of impact in this field: on their teams, the local infrastructure and associated professionals and their participants.

**However, the study clearly shows that to exist artistically and professionally and to make a mark on mentalities, a festival must be held regularly.**

AF asserts itself as a real success story because it is the **only Senegalese festival to have been held for 15 years without interruption**. The same phenomenon can be observed with the TTFE which celebrated 10 years of existence in 2015, marked by a strong increase in attendance (+ 37%).

- **Impact on the teams**

**The directors of the festivals play a key role:** the MASA could never have come back to life without Professor Konate, the success of Ile Courts owes a lot to Elise Mignot (who has just stepped down as director), the regularity of AF is related to the charisma and professionalism of Daba Sarr... In contrast, despite many advantages, a stable financial structure and prestigious international collaborations, the DIFF is stalling in terms of attendance, but it also suffers from an impressive turnover of directors.

The teams that are in place are also crucial and it is in this field that gaps appear. Apart from Ile Courts, none of the festivals organise training for their staff.

Further to the interviews carried out with volunteers, it does however clearly appear that festivals have a primary role in bringing out vocations. One AF volunteer has since founded a production company, and others mention the sense of responsibility acquired working with teams that are often small in size but very committed.

- **Impact on the participants**

The existence of a festival is an advantage for young people living nearby who can be touched by the reach of the festival: their access to training provided is easier, whether in the artistic field concerned or in complementary disciplines. This closeness can even bring out vocations. For example, the number of students registered for the "Cinema and Audiovisual" option in Mauritius has greatly increased thanks to IC.

Young local professionals can also take part in workshops or conferences organised by the festivals more easily.

Market initiatives also have a multiplier effect on the production of works in the countries that host the festivals (TT and South Africa for example).

Finally, it must be noted that the "ACPCultures+ effect" is important in terms of professionalization: purchase of equipment and improvements in technical and artistic performance for Ile Courts, the possibility to develop professional initiatives for the TTFE.

## **6. Financial stability**

While the budgets of the festivals under study are very diverse (from EUR 17 million for FestPac to around EUR 140 000 for AF or Ile Courts), their financing methods are quite similar: a preponderance of public and sometimes international funding, weak self-financing (free of charge or low entrance fees), an important or sometimes crucial (for the TTFE) role played by sponsors and partnerships. In most cases, the teams lack staff qualified in seeking alternative financing.

- **Public funding**

National or local public funding is crucial (even if it is not always essential, from 100% or nearly for the FestPac, to 60/70% for the MASA or the DIFF and 20% for AF) because it is a sign of recognition of the event as part of the national cultural DNA. However, it sometimes leads to **greater cash-flow problems than budgetary problems** due to the late or even non-payment of grants despite confirmations being received. This has been confirmed for the MASA, the FestPac or AF and has an influence on the performance of the festivals.

- **International funding**

With the exception of MASA, FestPac and the DIFF that are public structures, **the other festivals studied remain very dependent on international financing**. For AF and IC, the support of ACP Cultures+ represents 80% of the financing and the question of the sustainability of these structures must clearly be asked.

However, it must be underlined that the support of the ACPCultures + programme has allowed them to find new funding (Ile Courts) or to obtain bank loans (AF). The case of the TTFF even shows that the networks and activities implemented through the support of ACPCultures+ can continue, even if the event has to downsize.

- **Sponsors and partnerships**

Recourse to this kind of financing can be decisive (for example in the case of the TTFF, for which local or regional sponsors are the main sources of funding) but it is very variable depending on the festival. For example, Africa Fête, despite the advantages of its high profile and regularity does not have a sponsor. However, there is progress, as demonstrated by the example of MASA and its new partnership with the Ivory Coast public broadcaster which has allowed it to obtain funds and to improve its media coverage.

- **Complete absence of crowd funding**

And yet all of the festivals studied have means of communication (social networks) which give them access to a community that could well be prepared to participate, even at a modest level. This gap could be related to a lack of information or a **lack of capacity in seeking alternative or innovative means of funding within the festival teams** (selling services outside of the festival for example).

## **Conclusions**

Even if most of the festivals studied are still seeking financial models that will ensure their stability, they appear to be **essential tools for:**

- **weaving links of affiliation and strengthening social cohesion,**
- **educating the audience** due to the close relationship established with the artistic practices,
- **training young talents and allowing the emergence of an artistic scene in ACP countries,**
- **making artists more professional and facilitating market access for their works, in particular using their networking capacities.**

Festivals are also:

- **sources of income for the artists,**
- **boosters for the local economies through job creation and strengthening the services sectors in which many women are employed.**

To fulfil all these missions, the festivals should be stable and reliable in their management and the **role of their directors is fundamental** to success.

## **Recommendations**

These conclusions have inspired the following recommendations that aim to strengthen the impact of festivals.

1. **Recognition of festivals as fully-fledged “cultural objects”** by donors, allowing support to be adapted to the special requirements of festivals, along with clear demands that accompany the support granted;
2. **Concertation between donors that finance the festivals** to allow better adaptation of the funding to the artistic and operational reality of the festivals and exchanges between funding sources on their role at a local, national and international level, as well as circulating best practices;
3. **Professionalization of festivals:** Donors should help the festival teams to become more structured by emphasizing the necessity to have a clearly structured team in which there is balance between managerial and artistic capacities. Vocational training should also be encouraged, in particular in the field of seeking alternative funding and tracking the circulation/sale of works;
4. **Set up tools to identify audiences** because this is fundamental for analysing the social and cultural impact of festivals (impact on minorities, on youth), but also to convince financial backers or sponsors (the size and type or origin of the audience);

5. **Ongoing presence throughout the year** (workshops, performances, screenings...), because this is a sure means to broaden public attendance at the event and it also has a positive impact on employment;

6. **Hold training workshops** (whether for the general audience or that of professionals) that will allow the audience to become familiar with cultural practices and maybe even train a new generation of artists. The example of Ile Courts, with presence in both the field of distribution and production along with film education is undoubtedly the most remarkable of the study, but the impact of the professional initiatives held by the TFFF on film production in Trinidad and Tobago and the heightened awareness of the Caribbean market dimension for young talent are also notable.

7. **Specific programming for young audiences:** they constitute an essential tool in conquering new audiences and they reach out to teachers and the school or university environment as well as parents, with a non-negligible multiplier effect.

8. **Networking:** organising professional meetings or any kind of activity that brings the cultural operators involved together during a festival is crucial for the promotion and sales of the works presented, as well as for the professional development of all the participants. The participation of the festivals themselves in a network of festivals allows an exchange of best practices and to widen the base of potential buyers/distributors for the works being presented.