

SEED WORKING PAPER No. 50
Promoting the Culture Sector through Job Creation and Small Enterprise
Development in SADC Countries: Crafts and Visual Arts

The Trinity Session
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Note to the reader

For the purposes of this report, it is useful to clarify the definitions used for crafts and visual arts. The following definition for artisanal products was adopted by the UNESCO/ITC International Symposium on “Crafts and the international market: Trade and customs codification” (Manila, Philippines, October 1997):

Artisanal products are those produced by artisans, either completely by hand, or with the help of hand-tools or even mechanical means, as long as the direct manual contribution of the artisan remains the most substantial component of the finished product. These are produced without restriction in terms of quantity and using raw materials from sustainable resources. The special nature of artisanal products derives from their distinctive features, which can be: utilitarian, aesthetic, artistic, creative, culturally attached, decorative, functional, traditional, religiously and socially symbolic and significant.

Artisanal products can be classified under broad divisions, primarily based on the materials used, and, in certain cases, combining the material and the technique. The six main categories of this classification 1 are:

- *Basket/wicker/vegetable fibre-works; leather; metal; pottery; textiles; wood.*
- Complementary categories could correspond to *various additional animal/mineral/vegetable materials* embracing those other materials in craft production that are either specific to a given country, region or area, or rare, or difficult to work, such as: *stone, glass, ivory, bone, horn, shell, sea shells, mother-of-pearl, etc.*
- Finally, *extra categories* could be considered separately when different materials and techniques are applied at the same time. This might be the case, for instance, for *arms for ceremonial or decorative purposes or as theatrical properties, decorative items and fashion accessories, jewellery, musical instruments, toys, works of art* (see Visual arts below).

Artisans can be basically defined as persons who make products manually. They usually work individually, but can often be helped by family members, friends or apprentices, even limited numbers of workers, with whom they are constantly in close personal contact. This contact generates an intellectual sense of community and attachment to the craft.

However, in order to include all business initiatives which contribute to the development of the sector, the use of the term “artisan” should cover those craft entrepreneurs who: (a) although not actively participating themselves in production, specialize in research, market

negotiations or product design and conception; (b) also make use of machine tools or even machinery, yet not affecting the artisanal nature of the work and the production process; (c) beyond the usual cottage or artisan unit, have associated in cooperatives or any other form of organization (even informal); and (d) manage or form part of micro-, small- or medium-sized enterprises concerned with artisanal production.

Visual arts

Visual arts comprise arts and crafts, painting, photography, sculpture, installations, design, fashion. Visual arts consist of artists, gallery owners, curators, theorists, critics, publishers and the media. Unlike the crafts sector, where practical skill and raw materials are combined to generate income, visual arts are far more susceptible to international market trends and a diverse range of practitioners. Visual arts include commercial fine art (wildlife, landscapes, still lifes), often executed in traditional media (painting, sculpture, printmaking) and contemporary art, which incorporates new media technology, performance, experimentation, cross-disciplinary practices and public art.

For more information, see also the International Trade Centre's website: <http://www.intracen.org/mds/sectors/artisanal>

Box 1.1 The BAT Centre, Durban: An exchange programme initiative

Offering studio spaces, workshops for artists, galleries, restaurants and retail outlets for local art and craft, the BAT Centre is probably best known for its innovative project "DiroZulu", led by French artist Herve di Rosa with the Siyanda wire weavers. This involved traditional basket-weaving techniques with telephone wiring, incorporating di Rosa's geometric, abstract designs, but enlarged to a scale (some over one metre in diameter) that set these objects apart from the norm. The Centre is multidisciplinary in nature, hosting musical events and running an Internet café to supplement their income. A long-standing arrangement with the John Muafangejo Art Centre in Namibia enables one of the top Namibian students to spend a three-month residency at the BAT Centre working alongside the Centre's artists and producing pieces exhibited on what is usually their first solo exhibition. In their mission statement for exchange programmes and internships: "The BAT Centre wants to expand its artists exchange programme initiative to assist local artists to further their knowledge and skills, and gain exposure to the world beyond the boundaries of Kwa-Zulu Natal."

Box 1.2 The John Muafangejo Art Centre: Teaching visual arts in Namibia

Established in 1994, this Centre has become a teaching facility in visual arts. It is the only facility in Namibia that provides comprehensive training to young Namibians who wish to pursue a career exclusively in visual arts. The Centre is developed as an independent cultural institution in cooperation with the National Art Gallery of Namibia and the College for the Arts Extension Programme and hosts workshops by visiting artists, open studio space and

practical classes. The Centre has received assistance in the form of materials from the French Mission for Cooperation and Cultural Affairs in Namibia.

Box 1.3 The Namibia Craft Centre: A small-enterprise opportunity

The Namibia Craft Centre is directly linked to the National Gallery. It was identified by the Government as an opportunity for small-enterprise development and a catalyst for economic growth for rural men and women living in poverty in Namibia. The Government, in conjunction with the Rossiing Foundation, established the Centre as a retail outlet. It consists of facilities for 26 small businesses that work independently and trade under one roof and rental is kept to a minimum. To encourage competition and to provide unique products to a target market that demands quality the Centre has set the following criteria for crafters: the product adds overall value to the Namibia Craft Centre; preference is given to handcrafted objects over semi-manufactured; objects should be “indigenous” to Namibia in terms of style and cultural interest. The Centre is in great need of marketing support as it is directly involved with helping people in rural areas and teaching skills and therefore does not have excess funds for public relations and marketing. Supporters are the European Union, and foreign visitors, mainly from Germany and the United States.

Box 1.4 The United Republic of Tanzania: George Lilanga, from trainee to sculptor

A former security guard, George Lilanga is one of the most successful sculptors to emerge from the arts and crafts training centre, Nyumba Ya Sanaa in Dar es Salaam, the United Republic of Tanzania. He has made a name for himself in carved wood sculptures, exhibiting in art galleries and on exhibitions. He also sells from the studio market to tourists.

Box 1.5 Johannesburg/Northern Province: Ritual performance artist, Samson Mudzunga

A sculptor and performance artist from the Northern Province, Mudzunga practises the Venda carving tradition, as well as seeking success in Johannesburg, using his sculptures in complex ritual performances in urban centres and in his rural village in the Northern Province. He is represented through galleries and agents dealing in African art.

Box 1.6 Durban: The creative diversity of Daina Mabunda, Bronwen Findlay, Faiza Galdhari

These three women from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds collaborated on an exhibition for which they received an FNB Vita Art Prize nomination in 2002. Bronwen Findlay is a well-known Durban painter. Daina Mabunda is a rural Zulu woman with whom

Findlay collaborates on large embroidered textiles (they collaborate on the design and Mabunda executes the work). Faiza Galdhari is a young Muslim woman who critically engages Muslim beliefs and traditions into her painting, printing and ceramic work.

Box 1.7 Competition not exploitation: The Bus Factory Craft Project, Newtown, Johannesburg

This recent craft initiative is a core project for Inner City Renewal plans. Project initiators received funds to reconstruct an old bus repair shed to house sheltered craft workshops. The objective is to improve and develop skills in the South African crafts sector so that crafters can compete with the global market rather than be exploited by individuals who promote their work abroad. Crafters are provided with working space, training and marketing skills. Historically disadvantaged crafters are the target group and the initial phase focused on products in wood, metal, ceramics, textiles and weaving and candle work.

Box 1.8 Targeting the historically disadvantaged: Joubert Park Public Art Project, Johannesburg

With minimal seed funding, the Joubert Park Public Art Project (JPP), with a central administration and creative direction core of artists, educators and students recently initiated a series of workshops and activities with various youth groups and community centres in an inner city slum surrounding a park. The community centres include a clinic, a group of freelance photographers and the Y-connection youth group. The JPP 2001 Open Day, in addition to a programme of presentations by academics, artists, independent cultural workers and members of local council, exhibited the results of the workshops, which included creative map-making, theatre, dance and collaborative performance art with a strong social-awareness focus.

In 2002, the JPP hosted their public art programme and exhibition, in which over 30 local and international artists participated. This project has made huge contributions towards the “facelift” of the area and collated a massive archive of footage documenting workshop processes, as well as short films and video impressions by artists reflecting on life in a rapidly changing urban environment.

The JPP has now managed to secure executive status on the Creative Inner City Initiative, funded by the Department of Arts, Crafts, Science and Technology. This is a long-term project which, at the time of writing in 2002, was in the proposal phase. It aims to transform conditions in the city by working hand in hand with cultural industries, commerce and local policy-makers.

Box 1.9 Broadening horizons in Malawi with interregional and international travel and exchange

Malawian artist Boston Mbale suggests that the biggest step forward for visual arts in Malawi is the opportunity for travel and exchange, both within the region and the continent, and abroad. This would provide Malawian artists with a clearer sense of identity and enable them to ascertain whether their work is a good reflection of the issues they are concerned with. “Many artists in Africa have the same problems and we must share this experience and learn from each other, because the art from Malawi is completely different from what you see in other countries.” He suggests that this is as a result of very limited formal training in Malawi, with Chancellor College in Zambia being the only tertiary institution for fine art training. The focus is on skills, not theory, and he sees this as something of a limitation, although it celebrates that most Malawian artists are selftaught and their ideas are “completely individual”.

Box 1.10 The Bag Factory: An early success story from South Africa’s past into the present

Founded on the basis of creating a conducive environment for artists to work and exchange ideas, the Bag Factory offers studio space to 12 local artists with three studios reserved to host artists through their worldrenowned international residency programme. Initiated at a time when South Africa was all but cut off from the international art and culture environment, the studios are centred around the residency programme, which draws artists from the continent and beyond. Each artist-in-residence is expected to show the work produced during the period (usually three months) at an exhibition open to the public. Funded by both the public and private sectors, the Bag Factory is one of Johannesburg’s success stories, with prominent artist, critic and curator David Koloane serving as its director. The Bag Factory is affiliated to the Triangle Artists or Arts Trust, 17 Greatmore Studios Cape Town and London’s Gasworks Studios.

Box 1.11 LOSA (London-South Africa)

This is an ongoing collaborative project between British designers and South African crafters developed by Sotheby’s and KhumbulaZulu Craft. The partnership facilitates international designers to work with South African skilled craft workers to reproduce new designs in beadwork, wood, textiles and other media. The products already completed have sold out at record prices at exhibitions and auctions. LOSA reinvests the profits into product development and job creation in rural South Africa.

Box 3.1 Makonde Carvers’ Market, the United Republic of Tanzania

An interesting dynamic exists in this popular studio market in Dar es Salaam, where male producers sublet their studios to women entrepreneurs who sell the carvers’ work for them.

The craftsmen work outdoors under the trees while the women act as their agents and sell the carvings.

Box 3.2 The Venda tradition

The Venda tradition of sculpture has been identified as one of the richest in southern Africa. Venda producers carve primarily in wood, but also use ceramics. Artists work in the rural Northern Province, previously the homeland of Venda. The area is characterized by rich traditions, African mythology and a sacred lake around which all activities are focused. Venda sculpture became popular among dealers in the 1980s and has been regarded as problematic, because much of the work was produced in relative isolation by sculptors with a strong spiritual drive. Works were often placed in natural environments, regarded as “sacred”, powerful and intended for private contemplation or to empower or protect the local community. By bringing these works into galleries, many felt the sculptors and their work were being compromised through commercialization on a large scale.

Box 4.1 Stimulating artists to form associations also stimulates their creativity

In Malawi, for example, the mandate from government to artists was to form their own associations. This has resulted in a very strong and dedicated community of visual artists who are clearly proud of being able to show their work in their new gallery, established at the National Museum as a result of government support. Artists are required to pay a membership fee to belong to the association. The sense of ownership in this venue is stimulating new ideas and better quality production among these artists.

Box 4.2 Seychelles: SIDEC’s 2001 training programme and fairs attract high participation

In the field of technical training in the Seychelles in 2001, the focus was on the craft sector. SIDEC received regional assistance from PRIDE (Projet Régional Intégré des Echanges). The launching of a granite craft project by the Ministry of Industries and International Business, whereby artisans were encouraged to make souvenirs from granite off-cuts, will contribute further to support for the craft sector. Emphasis was also placed on crafting souvenirs from timber leftovers.

<http://www.seychelles-online.com.sc/archives/070302.html>

Box 4.3 Public and private sector funding in South Africa

In South Africa, artists can apply for funding in both the public and private sectors. BASA (Business and Arts South Africa) was launched by the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST) as a vehicle to further private sector support for arts and culture.

BASA receives an annual grant from DACST used to supplement funds raised from the private sector. In the private sector, most art-related sponsorship falls under the general portfolio of social responsibility. It seems that the few companies dedicated to supporting the arts do so through competitions, festival sponsorship and by building their collections. Public sector funding can be applied for through the National Arts Council and related bodies, the Arts and Culture Trust of the President (initiated by the private sector) and local government.

Box 4.4 Zambia: The Visual Arts Council

The Visual Arts Council in Zambia has a research and development department that is currently documenting works by visual artists and works in collections throughout Zambia and storing these and other related texts and information for the interested public to make use of.

Case study: Sussuta Boe as delivery agent

A trained artist from Angola, Fernando Alvim has developed an international delivery network for himself and fellow African artists with his company Sussuta Boe. Through the sustainability of acting as agents for two major African art collectors, Hans Bogatzke and Costa Reis, and receiving support from a range of funders, this organization has established itself. The organization Sussuta Boe has residencies in Brussels, publications such as Coartnews and exhibitions in Camouflage, Brussels and until recently in Johannesburg.

Case study: Key projects in Lesotho

While in Lesotho, contemporary painter and project initiator Mark Standing – now UK-based – was involved in setting up a range of projects. Some of these have survived while others have had to close due to lack of support. Other examples include the Kolonyama Pottery Studio which ran for 14 years and was forced to close in 1993 due to the state of the South African economy and lack of support. The once-popular Machabeng Arts Festival is now defunct. However, the Machabeng Art College and the Selibeng Arts and Cultural Centre are still both running.

Case study: Workshops and publication: The Lusaka Museum in Zambia

The Lusaka Museum in Zambia is engaging young producers through workshops where the results are published in local newspapers. They run childrens' drawing workshops with some of the local schools with works produced around a specific theme. Some are selected for exhibition in the museum and for publication on a weekly basis.

Case study: Sasol

Sasol was voted Sponsor of the Year last year by local contemporary art web site ArtThrob due to their continuing support of visual arts at the Klein Karoo National Arts Festival and the production of valuable catalogues that documented the festival over the last two years. This sponsorship is ongoing.

Case study: Graduates in South Africa

According to tertiary training institutes consulted in South Africa, some 1,200 students have graduated in the last five years. It is important to note, however, that most artists producing what is defined as “contemporary” art, especially the experimental or “cutting edge” variety must supplement their income by working in related or unrelated sectors. It is not uncommon to find such artists working full time in other jobs and producing art outside of regular working hours.

Case study: The John Muafangejo Art Centre

The *John Muafangejo Art Centre* was established in 1994 and has become a teaching facility in the visual arts. It is the only facility in Namibia that provides comprehensive training to young Namibians who wish to pursue a career exclusively in the visual arts. The Centre is developed as an independent cultural institution in cooperation with the National Art Gallery of Namibia and the College for the Arts Extension Programme and hosts workshops by visiting artists, open studio space and practical classes. The Centre has received assistance in the form of materials from the French Mission for Cooperation and Cultural Affairs in Namibia.

Case study: The Southern African Craftswomen Workshop

The Southern African Craftswomen Workshop, held in Windhoek, Namibia, between 10-27 October 1999, was organized by the National Art Gallery and the Namibia National Commission for UNESCO. It was an important step towards the factual transposition on the “Ten-Year Plan of Action for the Development of Crafts in the World (1990-1999). This kind of creative workshop is part of the UNESCO programme to safeguard and promote crafts work throughout the world. These workshops have the aim of encouraging the development of small crafts business, encouraging the sharing experience, sensitising craftspeople to the notions of creativity and marketing and providing additional training in the areas of innovation and promotion. Two similar experiences took place in 1997: a training for craftswomen in Central America, Guatemala, and a creative workshop for textile master crafts women in West Africa, Benin.

The opportunity to bring together 20 craftswomen from 12 SADC countries, over a relatively short span of time, to combine traditional and contemporary ways of weaving and sculpting

has been a significant contribution toward cultural development in Africa. The aim of the workshop was to stimulate diverse creativity, through exchange of experiences and knowledge transfer. Activities concerned the production of crafts, discussion, promoting intercultural dialogue between women from rural areas and the new generation of young African artists and included additional training in the field of innovation and promotion. [Namibian Newsletter, p.19]

MTN (Mobile Telephone Network) Art Institute

Recently the MTN Art Institute has become part of the MTN Foundation. Prior to this, the Art Institute aimed at the following:

MTN conflates an innovative marketing and branding strategy by using their private art collection for social upliftment. Through its Collection of African Art, particularly South African, MTN established a resource centre under the auspices of the MTN ART Institute. It produces information resources for art teachers who were experiencing a shortage of teaching materials. Employing trained artists, curators, art teachers and education specialists in collaboration with government departments and tertiary institutions, MTN is using its Art Collection to facilitate training projects in curatorship, art/craft making as well as a growing visual literacy program. Since its inception in 1999, the Institute has conducted lectures at their premises and schools, sponsored exhibitions, published art teaching resource materials, engaged in audience development and training, facilitated Artists in Residency Programmes and walkabouts of their collection, and encouraged art teachers and learners to raise the status of art at schools through the MTN ART Award. Their Art Bus takes aspects of the collection to outlying areas for visual literacy workshops.

Case study: Masiphembe Design Initiative

This South African initiative provides young designers an opportunity to enter into the international markets with minimum risk and cost by giving them access to facilities to register provisional patents on their design at a minimum cost. Through the use of 2D and 3D computer-aided design packages, the artists are allowed to experiment and innovate. Once the design is formed, a provisional patent is lodged with trade and industry and their designs receive publicity in Martin Creamer's column in the monthly engineering publication *Engineering News* to generate interest from potential entrepreneurs.

<http://www.englishlink.co.za/masiphembe>

Case study: Swazi enterprise ministry organizes entrepreneurs into a fashion industry cooperative

The Ministry of Enterprise and Employment of Swaziland, together with Taiwanese Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) experts currently assisting the Ministry in conducting seminars on SME Management and Investment, have organized about 25 entrepreneurs into a fashion industry cooperative. Formed in August 1998, entrepreneurs underwent training from the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives to operationalize the cooperative.

The cooperative's main objective is to start a savings scheme, stock sewing material and secure subcontracts from big textile and garment factories. A workshop will be set up in either Manzini or Mbabane.

<http://www.swazi.com/government/newsletter/1999/nl303.html>

Case study: Lad Kalonde

Malawian artist Lad Kalonde has made a living as a full-time artist for the past two years. Previously, he worked in graphic design and digital imaging. He does occasional freelance jobs but has now prioritized his art making. He occasionally uses the computer to generate images and is currently making a video showreel about his work. He is the only artist in Malawi interviewed who utilizes "new media" in the presentation or production of his work, although he focuses on painting.

Case study: World Heritage Site through UNESCO

This project looks at the effect that globalization has had on indigenous and cultural natural sites. Pierre Argo goes around the world reconstructing indigenous villages and in doing so, he hopes to combat the negative effects of globalization. Done in the form of travelling exhibitions and artists' exchanges under the auspices of constructing cultural identities in the context of globalization, he involves locals who are artists, art administrators, curators and academics in reconstructing environments that face ecological damage. The show has travelled to Malaysia, Tiebele in Burkina Faso and Mpumalanga in South Africa. Not only does the show restore vernacular culture, but directly transfers skills and generates income as tourists pay to see the villages.

Case study: The Lesotho Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Project

This is a project that addresses conservation problems of the Maloti-Drakensberg Mountains. The natural beauty of the area already attracts tourism. This project has added value to this emerging market by featuring the cultural heritage of these sites, including galleries of rock art paintings by the San people. This project also includes The Lesotho Highlands Water Project (www.lhwp.org.ls) that provides water to Gauteng Province in South Africa and generates revenue for Lesotho. There is a fairly developed craft focus with traders along the river's edge.

www.maloti.org.za

Case study: The Triangle Arts Trust and The Triangle Workshops

As a worldwide workshop and network organization, particularly in Africa, all artists agree that reliable modes of communication will enable and enhance the relationships forged

during residencies and workshops. New technologies such as email, the World Wide Web and mobile networks all prove to be the best method of sustainable contact and artists are increasingly turning to online chat rooms for dialogue and exchange. Websites are proving to be valuable data-capturing mediums as well as marketing and point-of-sale mechanisms for artists.

Case study: Sanman (Southern African New Media Art Network)

Sanman provides a range of services (experimentation, facilitation, education, collection, promotion and preservation) to develop local relationships between art, business and technology. In 2000 it supported an exhibition for the Klein Karoo National Arts Festival, Oudtshoorn, designed to give audiences a better idea of the relationship of traditional media and creative uses of new technologies. The exhibition showcased two works by South African artists, one work which is technology based, (net art, CD ROM or video) and the other work in a more traditional medium such as sculpture, photography and drawing. The exhibition was supported by companies such as Sasol and LG Electronics.

Case study: SACIS

The Southern African Information Systems (SACIS) project was set up to collect cultural data from the region and disseminate the information throughout the region and beyond. The project aims to establish a system whereby interested parties worldwide can access information on the cultural aspects of the region. The information will cover a variety of cultural products, institutions and policies, conventions, legislation and copyright issues, based on the data received from SADC member states.

<http://www.sadcreview.com/sectoral%20reports%202001/cultureinformation&sport.htm>

7.2.1. The Regional Triangle Arts Trust

Born out of the model of the International Triangle of networking artists from the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada this regional body coordinates workshops with artists from different genres and using different mediums to work in isolation for a period of 15 days with a stipend. Although heavily reliant on scarcely available funding, these workshops have proved invaluable in transferring skills and allowing exchange of experiences and ideas with a continued network. The region has seen artists with limited training and few opportunities to travel, which is the case of a typical SADC artist, who nevertheless produce innovative art-works.

7.2.2. Sussuta Boe

Sussuta Boe is an organization run by Fernando Alvim, an artist from Angola, which has developed a series of projects aimed at supporting the contemporary arts in different countries of the SADC region. Projects have included the following:

- Centre of Contemporary Art of Southern Africa and Camouflage, a gallery network that originated in Brussels to profile artists from the region and which had its presence in Luanda and until recently in Johannesburg;
- Coartnews, a contemporary arts publication focusing on the southern African region; and
- Consulting to and administering collections of contemporary African art.

7.2.3. Artist Proof Studio

This NGO is run by Kim Berman and Cara Walker and provides training, exposure, projects and working space for printmakers. The studios in Johannesburg act as centre or info base for printmaking networks across the region and international opportunities, initiating international/cross regional exchanges. Printmakers generate income through edition sales of prints by the artists and the studio exhibits printmakers regularly. Major projects that have been initiated across the region include:

- The Karoo project, a collaborative training project between Botswana and South Africa developing skill with the objective of training indigenous artists to collaborate; and
- Friends Across the Border established in 1996/97 as part of the “Paper Prayers Campaign” primarily focused on skills transfer for women particularly in paper making and linocut prints and batik, with training focus on AIDS awareness.

7.2.4. Linkfest

Linkfest is an organization that is directed by Nomadlozi Kubheka with funding from the Swedish Embassy (SIDA-Stockholm) and the Rockefeller Foundation (United States). The organization is networked and active in South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, Botswana and Zambia. This multidisciplinary festival is a biannual celebration of the arts and culture of the region. Participants hail mainly from countries in the SADC region with guest artists from the United States, Canada and Europe. Linkfest hosts an arts and craft market, over 20 performances, and morning discussions sessions regarding global arts and culture. Topics have included preservation and promotion, arts and culture management and intellectual property issues. Linkfest usually takes place in Bulawayo. In 1999, the host country was Namibia. It is hoped the festival will tour the region.