AFRICAN CENTRE FOR CITIES
urbanism from an african perspective

Incorporating cultural mapping, cultural planning and impact assessment into policy development

for sustainable and just urban futures

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
IYUNIVESITHI YASEKAPA · UNIVERSITEIT VAN KAAPSTAD

SA-EU STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP
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MISTRA
URBAN
FUTURES

3 **Policy note**
Part 3 of the SA-EU Dialogue series

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About the series

Funded by the European Union, through the "SA-EU Dialogue Facility Project", this dialogue brought together a variety of South African and European practitioners, academics and experts to explore the role of culture in urban development. The dialogue series created a platform to share case studies and best practices about the role of cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment in promoting sustainable and just cities. The SA-EU Dialogue built on existing relationships between government and the African Centre for Cities through the Mistra Urban Futures' Cultural Heritage and Just Cities project.

The SA-EU Dialogue focused on the following three dimensions:

Policy instruments: reviewing local and regional policy instruments identify ways to strengthen policy implementation through cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment.

Good practice: examples of good practice from different contexts that can shape policy discussions. Partners bring a wealth of knowledge in this regard and can share the kinds of action-oriented experiences that may strengthen policy discourses and practices.

Dialogue: The exchange provided a platform for dialogue between role players from Durban, Cape Town, Johannesburg, Gothenburg, Bilbao and Dublin, with an interest in developing sustained relationships between different partners that ideally extend beyond the scope of the SA-EU dialogue opportunity.
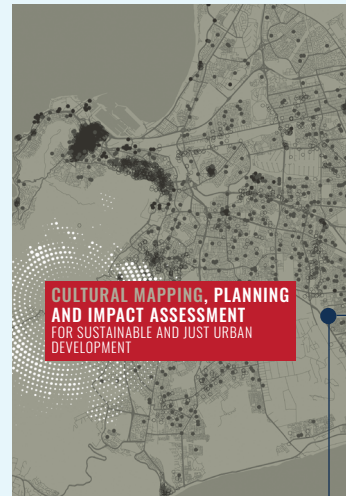
This series of 4 toolkits and policy orientated action briefs is based on the South Africa–European Union Dialogue on *Cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment for Sustainable and Just Urban Development*.

CULTURAL MAPPING, PLANNING AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT
FOR SUSTAINABLE AND JUST URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment
for sustainable urban development

Strengthening urban policy to address cultural diversity
Good practice case studies from Europe and Africa

Incorporating cultural mapping, cultural planning and impact assessment into policy development
for sustainable and just urban futures

Holding government accountable
for cultural sustainabilty and just urban development

Background

In the context of a profoundly urban and globalised age, there is little sensitivity to, understanding nor acknowledgement of the impact of culture in urbanisation processes and vice versa. Cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment good practice can enable policy development and implementation.

Cultural mapping

Cultural mapping is essentially **a mode of enquiry that applies a diverse range of research techniques and tools to map a city's tangible and intangible cultural assets**. A cultural map acts as a vehicle for culture-related information and comes in many different forms, from an artist's rendering to a web-ready, hyper-linked, multi-media interface. The mapping process draws attention to the existence and importance of cultural resources highlighting any gaps and opportunities. Additionally, the publishing of cultural maps and the associated awareness creation and publicity can be used as leverage for the inclusion of cultural issues in urban development policy.

Cultural planning

Cultural planning is a process of **inclusive community consultation and decision making that assists local government** in identifying cultural assets (tangible and intangible) and to think strategically about how the assets can help a community to achieve its civic goals. It is a strategic approach that integrates the community's cultural assets into a wide range of local government planning activities. It considers the increased and diversified benefits the assets could bring to the community in the future, if planned for strategically.

Cultural impact assessment

Cultural impact assessment is a **process for investigating the multifaceted values and impacts of cultural activity** - economic, social, cultural, environmental, etc. An alternate, emerging perspective focuses on the cultural impacts of all public plans, policies, decisions, and actions. The latter approach aligns with contemporary discussions about cultural dimensions of sustainable development, as well as concerns with the cultural health, vitality, and sustainability of all cultures.

South African context

Cultural policies in South Africa seem to have very little cognisance of the role culture should play in sustainable and just urban development (Sitas, 2017). There is some reference to the potential of arts and culture in place making within city culture policies, however this is not necessarily framed within an understanding of city planning and development, nor within a broader understanding of culture as a practice that informs all aspects of society.

In comparison, there is a much stronger cognisance of culture within **urban planning policy**. There is a strong tendency that urban planning requires the engagement of urban dwellers and an understanding of their lives and everyday practices. However, how this informs and influences practice is questionable. In fact, the Integrated Urban Development Framework already points to significant challenges that have been identified in this regard. So, **while policy frameworks may be quite progressive and highlight the limitations of skills and the need for 'proper funding' for cultural planning in urban development, the implementation is particularly challenging**.

Cities continue to be vibrant spaces of cultural life and culture-based citizenship (Stevenson, 2003). It is these opportunities that need to be surfaced to ensure that culture can be leveraged for just and sustainable futures and more especially now in developing responses to and recovery from the additional pressures placed on society and everyday lives due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Key challenges identified in the global south

Limited capacity and resources to support cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment

Arts and culture are often side-lined in the face of urban polycrises

There are few policy instruments or imperatives that support cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment, particularly in urban policy spaces

Lack of an enabling implementation environment, and cultural policies not integrated into urban policies can be side-lined.
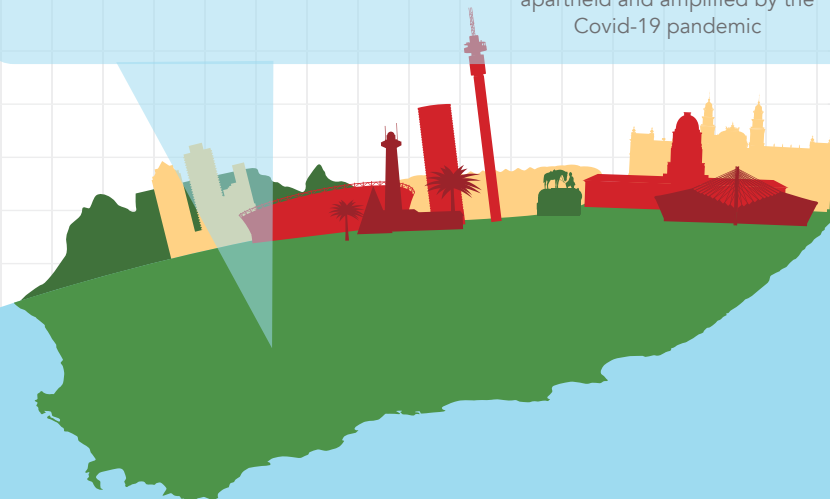
Challenges specific to South African cities

Poor service delivery

Food insecurity

Spatial segregation entrenched during colonialism and apartheid and amplified by the Covid-19 pandemic

Global policy imperatives are increasingly recognising the role of culture as key in creating liveable cities. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, The African Union's Agenda 2063, United Nations-Habitat's New Urban Agenda, and the United Cities and Local Government's Agenda 21 for Culture share a commitment to think of sustainability in environmental, economic, social, cultural and political terms. Despite these ideals, how these land in particular contexts, specifically on the African continent, has yet to be adequately explored and understood.

SOUTH AFRICA

Cape Town

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

culture 21
Agenda 21 for culture
Agenda 21 de la culture
Agenda 21 de la cultura

Agenda 2063
The Africa we Want

NEW URBAN AGENDA

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of Agenda 2030 emphasise the importance of protecting and safeguarding natural and cultural heritage, specifically in Goal 11.4 but with cultural dimensions implied across almost all the SDGs.

The City of Cape Town is committed to localising the SDGs across all departmental strategies, initiatives, programmes and activities. Alignment is sought with applicable City of Cape Town policies, strategies and plans, such as the Integrated Development Plan 2017 - 2022, Cultural Heritage Strategy, Resilience Strategy and Climate Change Policy. Cultural mapping and planning are well placed to do this and inserting cultural indicators in other development endeavours is crucial for long-term measurable success.

To explore the role of culture in urban development, the SA-EU Dialogue Facility brought together a variety of South African and European practitioners, academics and experts who collaborated through study trips, best practice and case studies sharing and exchange. The SA-EU Dialogue focused on reviewing local and regional policy instruments to identify ways to strengthen policy implementation through cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment.

Policy and Implementation Recommendations

Key recommendations

Processes, tactics methods and 'the multiplier effect'

- Use evidence-based project planning that is responsive to local contexts and power dynamics.
- Entrench inclusionary, participatory and co-produced project methods to ensure citizen engagement.
- Use mixed methods approaches that produce both quantitative and qualitative data.
- Ensure creative forms of research underpin projects.
- Communicate project findings to various stakeholders regularly.
- View cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment as an on-going process that has short, medium- and long-term objectives.

Shifting and strengthening narratives of culture-based development

- Establish the value of culture in sustainable and just urban development more coherently.
- Value tangible and intangible and the relationship between the two in policy and practice.

Further research

- Action-oriented research into cultural values and impact assessment.
- Research into capacity development for cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment.

Governance, financing and implementation

- Identify and distinguish between national, provincial and local government roles in governance and financing.
- Identify and clearly articulate the role of urban authorities and civil society in cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment.
- Ensure that local authorities play an enabling role.
- Ensure governance is distributed between public and civic actors.
- Build appropriate capacity in public and civic sectors.
- Ring-fence finance in relevant urban and cultural development budgets at a local, provincial and national level.
- Establish partnerships with private and civic entities to enable a wide range of resources.

Policy, legislation and enabling instruments that support cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment in just and sustainable urban development

- Identify and share key policy and legislation levers that connect across cultural and urban policy at national, provincial and local levels.
- Legislate the integration of cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment into national cultural policy mandates, and into urban development policy – particularly at the city scale.
- Ensure better integration of urban development policy requirements and needs into cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment.
- Enable co-production processes between city officials, civil society and scholars to identify impact indicators and find mechanisms to institutionalise them within local government.
- Include the mandate of civil society organisations and community and cultural activists within policy implementation procedures.
- Recognise where policy and legislation will be unhelpful.

Processes, tactics, methods and 'the multiplier effect'

Use evidence-based project planning that is responsive to local contexts and power dynamics

To avoid irrelevant or inadequately responsive cultural and urban planning processes, understanding local specificities is important such as power dynamics and intersectional politics linked to race, ethnicity, class, gender and sexuality. Combining neighbourhood scale knowledge produced by authorities, civil society and scholars can enrich the process of developing cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment processes at the outset of a project. The case studies show how local civic organisations, frequently linked with academic institutions, possess detailed knowledge and data on cities that authorities may not have the capacity to develop.

Entrench inclusionary, participatory and co-produced methods in cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment projects to ensure citizen engagement

A cultural strategy that aims to place culture at the heart of the city's narrative and to embed culture across all policy areas can be co-produced with residents, artists, and businesses of the city through an extensive and participatory community-engagement and discussion process. At its most basic level cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment are tools that directly have the potential to enable citizen engagement with policy and development implementation. Citizen-led grassroots cultural mapping projects can generate meaningful resident involvement and engagement in envisioning and planning their city but need resources to sustain this work.

Use mixed methods approaches to cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment that produce both quantitative and qualitative data

Cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment rely on different kinds of data. Technical and GIS data can provide information on cultural infrastructure, while in-depth qualitative methods based on ethnographic tools provide the fine grain texture of the sociocultural dynamics that make up the cultural ecologies of neighbourhoods. Where appropriate, explore technology-enabled mapping projects as they can develop and combine diverse types of data which can be analysed to reveal new insights on the cultural niches and dynamics of an urban region.

Ensure creative forms of research underpin cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment projects

The use of creative practices, by creative professionals advances the ability to ask complex questions, collectively explore and experiment, and as such come to different conclusions than might have been reached through more conventional strategies. What this partly points to, is the impact of garnering different forms of 'community imagination' in how communities are able to envisage who they are and who they want to be.

Communicate the findings of cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment projects to various stakeholders regularly

The case studies demonstrated how feedback loops to project participants are important to maintain dialogue between project partners and keep a sustained interest in and momentum for projects. Cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment processes take time and commitment from multiple actors and finding ways to build communication can also build confidence in groups that may have been historically mistrusting of each other. Communication of findings can keep authorities accountable to citizens, as well as provide a voice for those who are usually not visible to those in power. Fact sheets, exhibitions, posters, popular publications and artworks have all been used as successful ways to engage different audiences at different phases within projects.

View cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment as an on-going process that has short, medium- and long-term objectives

Cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment – with their focus on intangible, living, time based and often affective cultural practices, struggle to fit into the limitations of policy processes. The need for longer periods of time for better trust building, network development and greater take-up of complex processes is one key issue that is often in conflict with the time frames of urban development. Therefore, in addition to being planned and structured to emphasise the participatory processes of mapping, from which substantial value is generated, cultural mapping should be regularly replicated to keep cultural heritage and knowledges alive in a context of public sharing, to include newcomers to a community, and to renegotiate the shared visions of a community.

Shifting and strengthening narratives of culture-based development that include a wider range of cultural activities, that value tangible and intangible dimensions to culture and heritage

Land the value of culture in sustainable and just urban development more coherently

Cultural mapping and planning processes can reveal localised cultural knowledge and practices that have the potential to support sustainable development. However, significant efforts and high-level support are required to advance narratives and practices of cross administrative cooperation, and to integrate or mainstream culture into broader city systems. This requires credible external expertise, good communication and internal champions (at all levels of the municipality, both city councillors and officers).

Value tangible and intangible and the relationship between the two in policy and practice

Arts, culture and heritage are not adequately defined and understood across different government, civic and private entities in South Africa. Arts and culture are addressed as part of different mandates to heritage which creates unhelpful siloes. For example, the tangible and intangible aspects to cultural heritage are mandated through different government entities, while in practice they are inextricably interlinked. Cultural mapping and planning are well placed to surface these connections and these need to be developed collectively and communicated through clearly targeted instruments (e.g. policy notes, fact sheets).

Further research

Action-oriented research into cultural values and impact assessment

Cultural impact assessment, as an underdeveloped field of both research and practice, requires additional targeted efforts to advance meaningfully, including assessing leading conceptual frameworks and public practices underway internationally, cross-fertilising these insights and approaches, and strategically developing the next phase of experimentation and implementation, with trials embedded in diverse real-life urban contexts. Ideally this needs to be done through monitoring a process of cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment from its inception through initiation, and to longer term impacts.

Research into capacity development for cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment

More research and practical strategies need to be developed to upskill cultural practitioners conducting cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment to develop project frameworks that are able to articulate in varying ways, and to develop various ways of speaking to multiple disciplines. Concurrently, practitioners within the urban development space need to be upskilled to better understand the roles and impacts of culture in their practice. Developing accessible toolkits and training materials and methods requires further research in a South African context.

Governance, financing and implementation

Identify and distinguish between national, provincial and local government roles in governance and financing

National, provincial and local governments have different priorities, mandates and vehicles for action which are intended to be complementary, but in practice can be at odds with each other. They also face distinctive challenges and function differently in different contexts, particularly in the urban scale where they are situated in the local governance structures. Ensuring there is synergy between national policy, provincial priorities and local implementation is key.

Identify and clearly articulate the role of urban authorities in cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment

A greater focus on urban authorities' role within policy implementation is needed. In the design of any cultural mapping project, the forecasted mechanisms of take-up of the findings by local authorities and agencies needs to be established. Local authorities need to make a clear and resolute political commitment both before and after the mapping and to be engaged at each stage of the process. Municipal authorities must acknowledge, encourage, and empower changes resulting from such a co-produced model, which may mean overcoming resistance and letting go of old systems, processes, and decision-making mechanisms.

Ensure that local authorities play an enabling role

Local authorities do not always need to drive cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment processes. One of the key issues that emerges from cultural practitioners is the need for urban developers to 'make space' for complex processes to play themselves out. This requires that urban authorities get less involved in processes directly and focus more of their resources towards enabling others to drive processes they are better suited to executing. Urban authorities' roles then become facilitatory, enabling linkages and connections that ensure the various stakeholders best play their part.

Identify and clearly articulate the role of civil society in cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment

The case studies point to the specific role of civil society in encouraging rigorous engagement with policy; and the impact of activist practitioners, both cultural practitioners and city officials, in ensuring rigour and commitment to the community consultation and engagement process. It is this commitment to community that also specifically enables multiplier effects that go beyond the particular bureaucratic requirement.

Ensure governance is distributed between public and civic actors

The state is only one of multiple actors involved in the implementation of cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment. Taking the role and contribution of each actor seriously means that greater consideration is given to developing adaptive governance frameworks for projects that allow for broader citizen participation and foster change in institutional design. Vital to the process is creating an environment where accountability and responsiveness is shared equitably amongst partnering actors from the inception of the process.

Build appropriate capacity in public and civic sectors

Cultural practitioners struggle to find ways to connect the complexities of cultural practice to the specificities of policy and planning. Different disciplinary approaches employ different professional vocabularies but also, priorities and values. As such, more work needs to be done to enable the upskilling of all involved to enable better translation across different roles in the implementation chain. Additionally, the nature of this translation needs to be built into the very foundational fabric of processes and not simply at the end. This translation has significant potential for cross-sectoral and cross-interest advocacy.

Ring-fenced finance in relevant urban and cultural development budgets at a local, provincial and national level

Cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment processes need adequate resources to enable deeper engagement at a local level, and can speak to multiple cultural and urban development objectives. Identifying specific budget line items within Sports, Arts and Culture, as well as Heritage and strategic urban design budgets can better resource these processes as well as assist in building coalitions between different government departments.

Establish partnerships with private and civic entities to enable a wide range of resources

Partnerships for cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment are key. With limited public resources, private partners can be useful to draw into processes as they may have more readily available and flexible forms of capacity and resources. Civil society is often best placed for local implementation and to bring knowledge and non-monetary resources that may not be accessible through public and private means. This can bring citizenry into governance processes more effectively than participatory politics in its current form can enable within the cultural sector.

Policy, legislation and enabling instruments that support cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment in just and sustainable urban development

Identify and share key policy and legislation levers that connect across cultural and urban policy at national, provincial and local levels

South Africa has several well-placed policies and legislative instruments, but they are currently under-utilised and are sometimes at odds with each other. Identifying and clearly articulating specific levers where the Revised White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage (2020) intersects with the National Development Plan (2012) and the Integrated Urban Development Framework can shape national mandates. Intersecting this with local policies such as the City of Johannesburg Public Arts Policy or the City of Cape Town Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Policy and local Integrated Development Plans can identify policy coalitions that support cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment in supporting sustainable and just development.

Legislate the integration of cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment in national cultural policy mandates

Although cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment processes will primarily be implemented in local contexts, national mandates are key in shaping the way in which local governments can operate. Ensuring that cultural mapping, planning and impact values are imbedded within national mandates enables local governments to respond more effectively.

Legislate the integration of cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment processes into urban development policy, particularly at the city scale

Local Integrated Development Plans already identify social and cultural needs as important to urban development, but what this means and how this impacts developments still falters. Cities need to develop strategies that enable cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment processes that are dynamic, responsive and emergent and unencumbered by stringent budget allocations, tight time frames and specific outputs. The incorporation of the emergent data into decision making needs to be made mandatory.

Ensure better integration of urban development policy requirements and needs into cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment

For cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment to respond to sustainable and just development needs in cities, cultural planning processes should integrate urban development policy levers in the planning processes. This will better connect the social and cultural dimensions of urban development in the processes of cultural mapping and planning and will enrich the research developed in both realms. Identifying how cultural mapping, planning and impact assessment can strengthen objectives such as active citizenship (National Development Plan), participation and communication (Integrated Urban Development Framework) and ensure a broader commitment to economic development and poverty alleviation through identifying alternative creative economies to resource.

Enable co-production processes between city officials, civil society and scholars to identify impact indicators and find mechanisms to institutionalise them within local government

Local co-production processes have shown how different actors are able to bring different knowledge and practices to a process in productive ways. Cultural indicators are not straightforward and require flexibility in registering impacts, outcomes and return on investment. Cultural practitioners are adept at identifying the kinds of cultural values that can be measured; scholars bring a range of evidence-based approaches; and city officials are best placed to recommend how these can be institutionalised.

Include the mandate of civil society organisations and community and cultural activists within policy implementation procedures
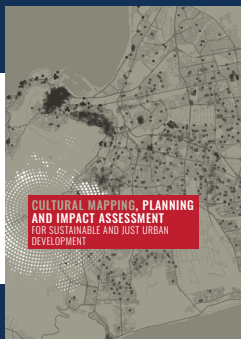
The inclusion of community liaison officers in some city planning processes is a step in the right direction as regards community engagement. However, this needs to be complemented with the mandated inclusion of existing civil society organisations and active community and cultural activists who already have experience, knowledge and expertise. The inclusion of already existing entities and individuals should be incorporated into the developmental processes and inform planning and impact assessment at early stages of the process.

Recognise where policy and legislation will be unhelpful

The structures of policy and legislation, and the requirements for its writing, articulation and implementation, as well as the running structures of the entities such as urban authorities charged with implementation of policy, sometimes remain at odds with the dynamism, complexity and unpredictability of cultural practice. In some cases, cultures are vulnerable or 'underground' and not meant to be captured and contained by the fixed and limited structures of policy and governmental implementation strategies. Policy as such needs to be able to be responsive on a case-by-case basis.

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