



THE SEVEN KEYS IN BULAWAYO

INTRODUCTION: THE UCLG COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND THE SEVEN KEYS

The City of Bulawayo and its civil society partner Nhimbe Trust/Bulawayo Cultural Affairs Office were the hosts of the first **Seven Keys** workshop on 10 December 2020. The workshop approach designed by the Committee on Culture of **United Cities and Local Governments - UCLG** for cities, local and regional governments all around the world, seeks to integrate the cultural dimension in the localisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The process works with local development challenges faced by a municipality linking it to their cultural assets, activities, and policies with the lens of the **Guide for Local Action on Culture in the SDGs (UCLG, 2018)**. The “Seven Keys” represent concrete commitments local actors make to localize SDGs through culture policymaking based on their specific conditions.

UCLG Committee on Culture is a unique global platform of more than 830 cities, organisations and networks to cooperate and promote the role of “Culture in Sustainable Cities”. Its mission is “to promote culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development through the international dissemination and the local implementation of Agenda 21 for Culture”, and to foster and make more explicit the relation between local cultural policies and sustainable development.

CONTEXT: THE CITY AND ITS KEY CHALLENGES

Bulawayo is a city of between 650 000 to 1,5m people, the 2nd largest municipality in Zimbabwe. Bulawayo was formally declared a municipality in 1897, building on a colonial settlement established on the site of an 1840 kraal set up by the Ndebele King Mzilikazi (and later expanded on by his son Lobhengula). However, the area has existed as a settlement in various forms over two centuries - the Khami Ruins outside the city is one of two UNESCO World Heritage Sites near the city which recognize the area's Outstanding Universal Value. The other, the Matobo Hills, hosts important San Rock Art. Bulawayo is known as the City of Kings for these rich histories. The city is the centre of the Matabeleland, a region of predominantly Ndebele people, a counterpoint to the majority Shona population in the rest of the country. Following Independence in 1980, tensions between these two key ethnic groups arose but are less extensive today. The city's vibrant histories are regarded as a strong resource.

A city of rich opportunities, Bulawayo nevertheless faces a number of significant challenges. It hosts the country's railway headquarters and is a key transport nexus. It was previously the main industrial and manufacturing hub of the country, until a range of economic crisis led to mass closures. This has led to high unemployment, growing poverty, food insecurity, malnutrition, health concerns, and increased informality, exacerbated by extreme water shortages (due to drought and management challenges). Its large youth population is especially adversely affected. As a result of these pressures the municipality notes, in its SDG scorecard, an increase in child mortality and a drop in high school enrolments. Financial challenges have also impacted on the building and maintenance of municipal infrastructure. Water, energy and public transport provision, as well as poor service delivery are key concerns. All these prevent new investments into the city. The municipality is committed to developing partnerships with its citizens as a means of addressing these challenges.

The Bulawayo City Council has committed to localising the SDGs and is actively working with departments towards this end. It reports annually on 11 of the goals. It has also developed policies for gender equity, urban agriculture, public transport and a citizen's charter to meet the challenges it faces through policy interventions. It is branding itself as a "Smart City" and using technology to improve citizen access to services.

Using the Seven Keys Workshop format, 9 representatives from diverse Bulawayo City Council departments, and 9 civil society representatives worked collaboratively to understand the challenges of Bulawayo. They looked at how these challenges were reflected in the SDGs, identified the city's cultural assets, spotted gaps and developed a set of unique keys relevant to their context to localise the SDGs using culture.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SESSION INCLUDING CULTURAL MAPPING AND SPOTTING THE GAPS

Zayd Minty, Expert of UCLG Committee on Culture and facilitator of the workshop, welcomed participants and gave introductory remarks, jointly with Nhimbe Trust representatives. Mlandu Ncube, Deputy Mayor of Bulawayo, gave a short supportive welcome as well.

The first exercise of the session dealt with developmental challenges and the SDGs. The challenges faced by Bulawayo, noted by participants, closely followed the issues picked up in the council's own documents. Most participants were not fully au fait with the SDGs, although council has begun an exercise to share these publicly.

During the "Cultural Mapping" exercise, a wide variety of cultural assets both of a tangible and intangible nature were recognized. There was a strong focus on heritage - people & traditions (diversity, cuisine, language, indigenous games), heritage (naming, sites and centres) architecture, public spaces, places of learning, arts assets (cultural spaces, festivals, artistic expressions, individual artists and cultural institutions).¹

In "Spotting the Gaps", it was noted that the use of culture in sustainable development is a new area of consideration. Issues such as water, energy, gender and food security with its link to culture have not been fully considered. Examples of the ways in which other municipalities have worked with the kinds of contexts and challenges faced by Bulawayo, drawn from the UCLG [database of good practices "OBS"](#), were shared.

Four groups of diverse participants² from the City Council and civil society were thereafter established to work on the key question: What cultural policies or actions could be adopted at the local level to help achieve the SDGs?

¹ See Appendix 1: Cultural Mapping.

² See Appendix 2: List of participants.

THE SEVEN KEYS IN BULAWAYO

The first ever Seven Keys workshop was held in Bulawayo on 10 December 2020. The 18 participants agreed on the crucial importance of culture in the localisation and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. They developed **8 keys** for the city of Bulawayo, since after identifying 7 keys they agreed to devote another one to gender issues only. The 8 keys relate to themes of economic development, education, environment and youth, and are strongly linked to tangible and intangible heritage.



ART THERAPY AND WELL BEING FOR CHILDREN AND ELDERLY IN CITY OWNED FACILITIES, RECOGNIZED THE GROWING CHALLENGE OF MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES AND AN INTERGENERATIONAL DISCONNECT.
[SDG 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 16]



INDIGENOUS FRUIT TREE PLANTING IN PUBLIC SPACES AND HOMESTEADS, AIMED AT INCREASING FOOD SECURITY AS WELL AS PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELL-BEING. THIS WAS LINKED TO ENSURING TRANSFERENCE OF KNOWLEDGE, ESPECIALLY THROUGH INTERGENERATIONAL SHARING.
[SDG 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 15]



MAINSTREAMING THE GENDER POLICY WITHIN BULAWAYO'S ARTS ECOSYSTEM. THE PROFILING OF FEMALE ARTISTS IN THE CITY NEWSLETTER, GENDER SCORE CARD AND ANALYSIS OF FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL EVENTS WAS PROPOSED AS AN ACTION BUILDING ON THE CITY'S GENDER POLICY.
[SDG 5, 8, 11]



MASIYEPHAMBILI: REINFORCING YOUTH ACTION TOWARDS ATTAINING SDGS. INTERACTIVE ONLINE PLATFORM FOR THE YOUNG TO DRIVE AWARENESS, INFORMATION DISSEMINATION, NETWORKING, INTERACTIONS AND THINK TANK ON INNOVATIONS AROUND SDGS.
[SDG 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 15, 16]



ISIBANE PLAN 3 "B": AN ALTERNATIVE NATURAL ENERGY. ENERGY PRODUCTS (BIO-BRIQUETTES, AND BIO-GAS) USING HARMFUL ALIEN PLANTS (ESPECIALLY THOSE CLOGGING UP WATERWAYS). COLLECTION OF PLASTIC REFUSE AND SAND FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY (WASTE TO ENERGY) AND BIO-BRICKS (RECYCLED BUILDING MATERIAL) WERE PROPOSED AS SELF-HELP PROJECTS.
[SDG 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16]



BULAWAYO CULTURAL TOURS: A CULTURAL TOURISM PROJECT THAT ENABLES A LOCAL OR A VISITOR TO GET TO KNOW THE CITY BETTER AND BUILD ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES. LINKED TO VISITING HERITAGE SITES, CULTURAL CENTRES, ENJOYMENT OF LOCAL FOOD, IT ALSO SUGGESTED CREATING LOCAL BNBS IN TOWNSHIP HOMES TO ADVANCE MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES.
[SDG 1, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 16]



THE KINGS CUP: A SOCCER, SOCIAL COHESION, ART AND HISTORY FOCUS. CELEBRATING CITY HISTORY OF THE "KINGS" WITH ART PERFORMANCES BEFORE SOCCER MATCHES WITH LOCAL CUISINE ON SALE. KING MZILIKAZI'S PRINCIPLE OF INTEGRATION AT ITS CORE. TARGETING LOCAL TEAMS, MESSAGING SOCIAL COHESION AND CONFLICT PREVENTION.
[SDG 3, 4, 5, 8, 11, 16]



BULAWAYO FOOD AND CULTURAL FESTIVAL. TAP INTO THE ETHNIC DIVERSITY OF THE CITY, PROMOTE AND PRESERVE THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST - TOGETHER WITH ARTS AND WITH A FOOD MARKET.
[SDG 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17]

Emerging unformed concepts: Three less clearly defined concepts emerged:

- o **Education and Culture:** Cultural tours for schools.
- o **Global South Cultural Exchanges.**
- o **Tapping the Matsheumhlope Aquifer under the central business district (CBD).**

Questions: How to incorporate informal markets, Old Bulawayo, the city's existing youth festival and Bulawayo Day into any of the ideas above? How do we build partnerships with sister cities, especially eThekweni and Polokwane?





SEVEN KEYS WORKSHOP



CONTACT

United Cities and Local Governments UCLG Committee on Culture

culture@uclg.org
[@agenda21culture](https://twitter.com/agenda21culture)

Bulawayo City Council

Mrs Nesisa Mpofu, Director of the
Public Relations Department
nmpofu@citybyo.co.zw

Nhimbe Trust

Lisa Sidambe, Programme Officer
lisa.interaffairs@nhimbe.org

Expert

Zayd Minty, Founder and Director
of Creative City South
zayd.minty@gmail.com