

REVIEW OF ESCAZÚ'S CULTURE 21: ACTIONS SELF-ASSESSMENT

MAY 2017



culture 21

Agenda 21 for culture



In accordance with its participation as a pilot city for Agenda 21 for culture, in February 2017, the city of Escazú carried out a self-assessment exercise on its cultural and sustainable development policies. This exercise was based upon the [Culture 21: Actions](#) document approved by the United Cities and Local Governments Committee on Culture in March of 2015. It allowed cities all over the world to examine their strengths and weaknesses with regards to these policies, based on common guidelines. Furthermore, the exercise compared the evaluation of each city with those opinions taken from a panel of experts on a global level.

This self-assessment was carried out in a participative manner, an exercise that allowed participants to provide a perspective on the current state of the Escazú as well as to share their aims and proposals for transforming the city. The exercise carried out in Escazú relied upon the participation of people in a number of services from the municipality of Escazú. This included the national government as well as a various public, private, and citizens' organisations (See list in Appendix 1).

This document was written by Antoine Guibert, an expert in the implementation of Agenda 21 for culture, in close collaboration with the Secretariat of the UCLG Committee on Culture. It summarises and analyses the assessments made in the city of Escazú, compares these with elements of the global average, and posits suggestions for some aspects that may warrant follow-up (Part 1). This document summarises and analyses the proposals made and prioritised by the participants, which were the result of the debates and exercises carried out during the workshops. It also based on an external analysis of the present situation (Part 2). The report should serve the city of Escazú in helping it to develop its work programme within the framework of its participation in the Pilot Cities Project of Agenda 21 for culture.

SELF ASSESSMENT



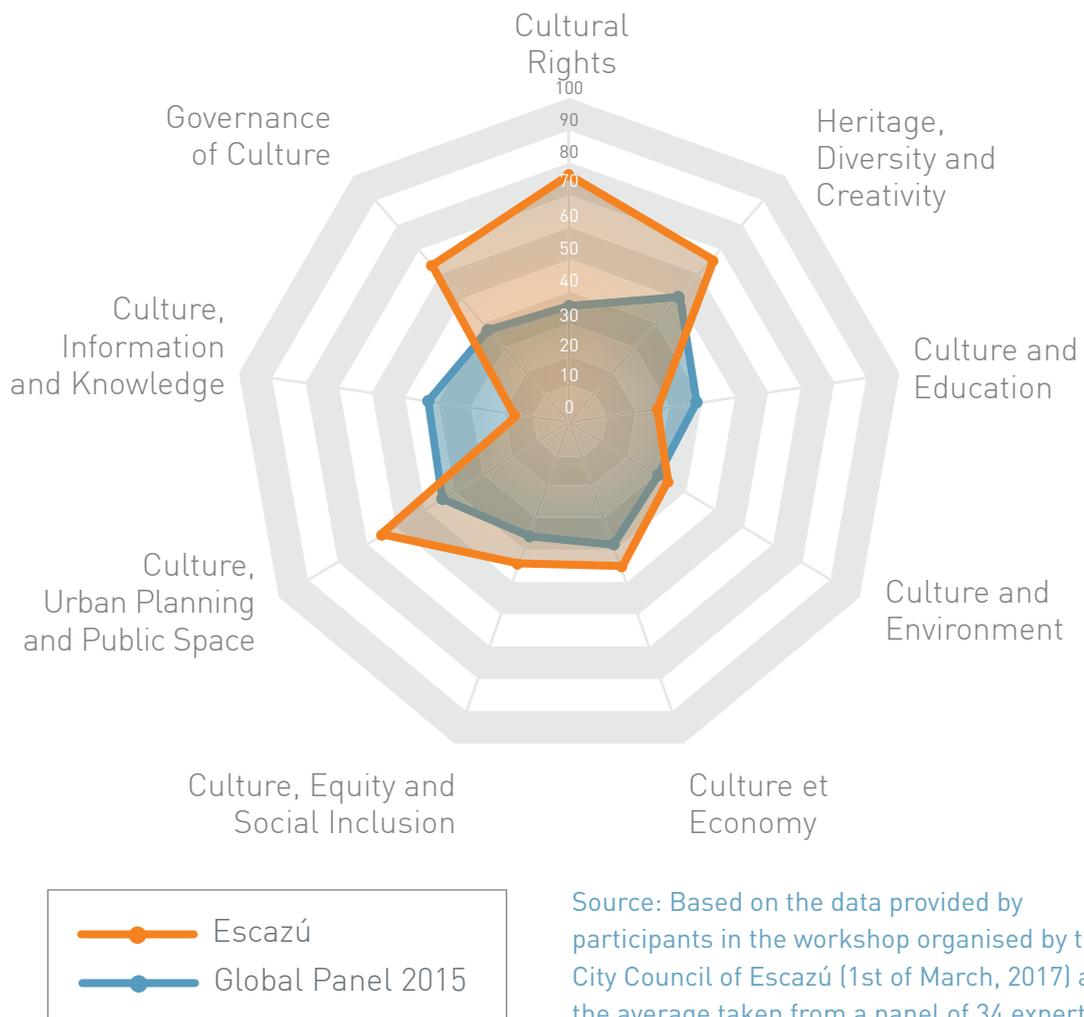


GENERAL BALANCE

In most of the areas and commitments analysed, Escazú placed higher than the global averages obtained by the 2015 global panel of experts. As figure 1 demonstrates, the city is particularly noteworthy in the areas of “1. Cultural rights” (76.25%, with a global average of 35); “7. Culture, urban planning, and public space” (66.67%, above the 44 average); “2. Heritage, diversity, and creativity” (with an average score of 65.63% above the global mean of 50); “9. Governance of culture” (63.64%, with a 37 worldwide). Escazú also obtained scores higher than or equivalent to the global average in the areas of “5. Culture and economy” (45.83%, with a 38 worldwide); and “6. Culture, equity, and social inclusion” (44.79%, with a worldwide average of 35). On the other hand, the city received below-average scores in the areas of “4. Culture and environment” (35, compared to the worldwide score of 30); “3. Culture and education” (26.25%, with a global average of 38); “8. Culture, information, and knowledge” (17.05%, with a 43 worldwide)¹.

¹ The Culture 21 Actions Self-assessment Guide asks cities to provide a score between 1 (undeveloped action or at the emerging stage) and 9 (action in full development) for each of the 100 actions that conforms to Culture 21 Actions, as well as to offer an indicative description in order to establish the cities' positions. For each action, a score between 1 and 3 corresponds to an “emerging stage”; a score from 4 to 6 indicates a “developing stage”; and an evaluation between 7 and 9 established the town at an “advanced stage”. The percentage figures accompanying each of the areas of commitment from Agenda 21 Actions are derived from those scores between 1 and 9 issued to every action that has been analysed.

Figure 1 : Self-assessment of Escazú and data from the Global Panel 2015



Source: Based on the data provided by participants in the workshop organised by the City Council of Escazú (1st of March, 2017) and the average taken from a panel of 34 experts from different regions around the world.



CULTURAL RIGHTS

Here Escazú was awarded 76.25%, significantly higher than the worldwide average of 35.00.

Out of the ten actions examined, Escazú had seven (7) at an “advanced” stage, and three (3) in the “developing stage”.

Escazú is particularly laudable in the area of cultural rights given that the municipality has undertaken significant social investment efforts for the region’s more vulnerable areas and groups. The city is also especially noteworthy for actions (g) and (e) where it received its highest marks¹. Effectively, cultural actions have taken vulnerable persons or groups into consideration, while analysing any obstacles impeding citizens’ access to, and participation in, cultural life. It should also be mentioned that with regard to gender, Escazú has placed a special focus on advocating women’s participation in cultural life. In fact, the city has actively adopted measures against gender discrimination, notably in action (h), where it also received a high score.

The city also received very high scores for actions (c), (d), (f), and (i). Among others, these actions relate to inhabitants’ participation in cultural activities, as well as to the existence of standards for minimum basic cultural services.

Conversely, Escazú received lower marks in the areas of (a), (b), and (j). Local cultural policies are not explicitly based on cultural rights, nor is there a reference text on rights, freedoms, and cultural responsibilities. Lastly, the city lacks efficient policies and programmes that foster participation and residents’ involvement in civil society’s cultural organisations.

In the area of cultural rights, one of the Escazú’s good practices is the creation of a Municipal School of Arts in the vulnerable areas of the canton. Every year, the school provides access to free arts classes for over 600 youth and children.

¹ Letters in parenthesis refer to specific actions within Culture 21: Actions. For practical reasons, the present text only outlines praiseworthy actions or those requiring more attention. For more information, see Culture 21: Actions; http://www.agenda21culture.net/images/a21c/nueva-A21C/C21A/C21_015_spa.pdf



HERITAGE, DIVERSITY AND CREATIVITY

In this area, Escazú received a score of 65.63%, above the global average of 50.00.

Of the twelve actions assessed, five (5) of Escazú's initiatives were classified at an "advanced stage", six (6) at a "developing stage", and one (1) at an "emerging stage".

Escazú is also particularly noteworthy for actions (a), (b), (d), (e), and (h) where it received its highest marks. The municipality has a department, area, or body dedicated to cultural policies, and the canton also dedicates a budget to culture, in alignment with national and international standards, suitable for enabling the sustainable development of local cultural life. Escazú is also especially laudable for holding cultural activities in public spaces, thus lending visibility to local artistic creation and establishing meeting spaces for the population. To a lesser extent, participants highlighted the existence of policies and programmes that build excellence through a close proximity to inhabitants and their initiatives, including policies that support the arts with a special focus on certain disciplines.

Escazú received average scores for actions (c), (f), (k), and (l), and lower marks for actions (g), (i), and (j). With regard to the protection of all forms of cultural heritage, there was a marked lack of a comprehensive inventory of the city's tangible and intangible heritage. The municipality also received low scores for actions related to the diversity of cultural expressions and intercultural projects. Finally, there do not seem to be any programmes dedicated to scientific culture.

Some good practices include the organisation by the municipality and civil society of a number of individual and community cultural activities. These events emphasise local identity, expressions, and heritage, such as the herdsmen festival or masquerades.



CULTURE AND EDUCATION

In this area, Escazú received a score of 26.25%, below the global average of 38.00.

Of the ten actions assessed, Escazú did not have any at an advanced stage, while seven (7) were in the developing stage, and three (3) at an emerging stage.

The city received its highest marks in this area for actions (h), (f), and (c). The city was noted for its local arts education through the municipal art centre, which provides education at all levels, accessible to people of all ages and abilities. Additionally, students' curricula in primary and secondary education include acquiring cultural skills and knowledge. In fact there seems to be a local platform or network that brings together public, civic, and private stakeholders in the field of culture education, and lifelong learning. The city was given average marks for actions (b), (e), (g), and (j).

Escazú received very low scores for actions (a), (d), and (i). According to participants, the education and training strategies do not adequately emphasise the value of local cultural resources, and cultural institutions provide an insufficient amount of educational activities. There is currently no local training in management and cultural policies available.

There are some good practices in this area, including the Municipal School of Arts, the city's cultural agenda, and proper contextualisation within the school curricula.



CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

In this area, Escazú received a score of 35.00%, slightly above the global average of 30.00.

Out of the ten actions assessed, Escazú did not have any at an advanced stage, while five (5) were in the developing stage, and the other five (5) were identified at an emerging stage.

It should be highlighted that Escazú was, and continues to be, partially comprised of an agricultural zone with natural areas and substantial farming activity. In addition, there is a strong tradition of gastronomy, as well as in fairs for natural products. However, Escazú has undergone some profound changes to its urban landscape due to a number of factors including being on the periphery of San José. Consequently, its rural character has disappeared in the lower part of the city as the result of its transformation into a commercial and residential area. Meanwhile, the threat of urban sprawl places pressure on the upper areas of the city that have maintained a unique rural identity.

The canton received its highest marks (yet still at an intermediate level) for action (a), (b), and (h). Escazú partially recognises cultural interest in natural spaces, and also somewhat takes culture into account in its local strategies for promoting environmental sustainability. Finally, local cultural policies seem to integrate certain environmental sustainability goals.

The city received average and low scores for actions (d), (e), (f), and (g), while its lowest marks were for actions (c), (i), and (j). Effectively, cultural organisations do not evaluate their environmental impacts, nor do they carry out activities for raising environmental awareness. Furthermore, there does not seem to be a coordination mechanism in place between the cultural and environmental departments. There are also no bodies or platforms that link together those public, private, and civil society agencies working on the relationship between culture and environment.

The notable good practice in this area is the Solid Waste Classification Programme, an area in which Escazú is highly advanced. However, there is no apparent cultural dimension in this programme.



CULTURE AND ECONOMY

In this area, Escazú received a score of 45.83%, above the global average of 38.00.

Out of the twelve actions examined, Escazú had one (1) at an “advanced” stage, and eleven (11) in the “developing stage”.

The city is laudable for action (a), where it was awarded its highest mark. According to participants, local economic development strategies demonstrate a clear understanding of the specific logic behind the economy of culture. They work with its various stakeholders so that this can become one of the key economic sectors in the city, or region. Escazú also received high marks for actions (k) and (e), yet which were still at an average level. The municipality is introducing corporate social responsibility programmes which include issues and projects in the cultural field. Lastly, and to a lesser extent, current programmes dedicated to access to employment and integration include cultural knowledge and skills.

The city received intermediate and low marks for actions (b), (g), (h), (j), and (l). While the city has a high level of cultural and natural tourism, it should be noted that there does not seem to be a tourism strategy that equally emphasises local cultural resources.

Participants identified actions (c), (d), (f), and (i) as areas requiring more attention. These actions are related to the importance of ensuring that recruitment and compensation schemes align with the characteristics of cultural sector workers, including the recognition of copyrights and other related rights. Additionally, the value of the region’s traditional cultural trades must be recognised, which involves measures necessary for their innovation and development. Finally, there is a clear lack of a municipal funding mechanisms for market-oriented cultural projects.

There are some good practices which can be considered exemplary, including a number of local events and fairs that seem to represent significant economic potential for the cultural sector. Other events include Haunted Sundays, the International Folk Festival, National Herdsmen Day, as well as the Painters’ Festival and Theatre Festival (during the Haunted Fair).



CULTURE, EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

In this area, Escazú received a score of 44.79%, above the global average of 35.00.

Of the twelve actions assessed, Escazú had one (1) classified at an “advanced stage”, ten (10) in a “developing stage”, and one (1) at an “emerging stage”.

It should be noted that the city has a significant number of social issues, particularly in Escazú and San Antonio, where there is a high level of poverty and social vulnerability. There are also significant social and economic inequalities throughout the area, with a sharp contrast between these two districts as well as the San Rafael district. The latter has recently become more urbanised with commercial and residential zones, creating a middle- and upper-class area of one of Costa Rica’s most privileged populations. The municipality seems to use these significant economic resources to invest in the social sector and in the development of other disadvantaged neighbourhoods, in order to reduce regional inequality and prevent potential social unrest.

The city received higher marks for actions (e), (f), (g), and (l). Escazú is particularly noteworthy in the area of gender and has developed a number of activities for women. A part of the city’s cultural budget and public resources are allocated to the active promotion of women’s participation in cultural activities and organisations. Generally, the canton has demonstrated a significant commitment to the social sphere, where it has established many programmes addressing social vulnerability. To this end, Escazú has carried out programmes that include disadvantaged groups, with a special focus upon the region’s most difficult areas in terms of poverty and exclusion. Many activities and institutions have been established in areas with more vulnerable populations, in order to provide them with access to initiatives such as the Municipal School of Arts. While more efforts need to be made, the city has adopted measures to ensure accessibility to facilities and cultural spaces for everyone, including persons with disabilities. Finally, participants underscored the fact that local civil society organisations have developed awareness-raising campaigns with the support of public institutions and cultural organisations.

The city received intermediate marks for actions (b), (c), (d), (j), and (k). On the other hand, participants emphasised a need for greater attention in actions (i), (h), and (a), where Escazú received lower marks. In fact, there are no programmes that promote intergenerational cooperation. There are also no local conflict resolution strategies that consider a cultural dimension, or that recognise the influence of cultural factors. Generally, local strategies for the social sphere (health, employment, well-being, and social inclusion) scarcely include cultural aspects, such as tools for social development.



CULTURE, EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

However, Escazú should be noted for its significant activity in the social sector. The canton has invested heavily in the social sphere and has established many good practices. These include training schools for vulnerable populations (leaderships school, employment training, courses for adults and seniors, and programmes for persons with disabilities, among others), actions geared towards vulnerable populations, and a variety of local social policies pertaining to gender, disability, youth and children, culture, and many others. This topic was assessed and received an average general score due to the lack of integration of cultural activity into social activity. Among other factors, the score also reflected a need to clearly identify cultural factors as drivers of social cohesion, and as a means to resolving the canton's various social issues.



CULTURA, URBAN PLANNING AND PUBLIC SPACE

In this area, Escazú received a score of 66.67%, above the global average of 44.00.

Of the twelve actions examined, Escazú had seven (7) at an “advanced stage”, four (4) in a “developing stage”, and one (1) at an “emerging stage”.

The city received its highest marks for actions (a), (c), (d), (f), (g), and (h). Overall, local urban planning explicitly recognises the importance of culture. The city is particularly laudable for its actions related to planning new cultural infrastructure as components of a cultural ecosystem. It is also notable for the existence of a number of spaces that, given their symbolic role, make up a communal good for inhabitants. Additionally, the city also explicitly considers the notion of the urban landscape in local policies, incorporating both natural and cultural aspects. The city also received medium to high marks for actions (c), (d), and (g).

Participants also noted actions that required more attention, including action (b) on evaluating cultural impacts, action (j) due to a lack of established architectural guidelines for renovations and new buildings, as well as action (k) pertaining to urban transport and mobility that should enable citizens’ access to cultural life. They also identified other less developed activities. These included action (l) on the population’s active participation in urban planning, and action (i) on the existence of conservation and development programmes for public art.

One good practice was the creation of an advisory committee as a means to evaluate properties for their value with regard to heritage.



CULTURE, INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

In this area, Escazú received a score of 17.05%, far below the global average of 43.00. This is the area in which Escazú was given its lowest score.

Out of the eleven actions examined, Escazú had four (4) in a “developing stage”, and seven (7) at an “emerging stage”.

It was given intermediate scores for actions (a), (b), (c), and (k). Among other issues, these pertain to freedom of expression, the observance of these freedoms, and access to free and pluralistic information. However, there seems to be a limited number of policies and programmes fostering international cooperation.

The city received very low marks for actions (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), (i), and (j). Participants identified a number of actions requiring greater attention. These included the access to free and pluralistic information, knowledge and information systems, as well as obstacles to accessing and using both information and communication technologies for a cultural purpose.

Overall, there was a marked lack of infrastructure and mechanisms for accessing the information and knowledge available to citizens. For example, Escazú does not have a public library, and the city lacks basic services for accessing vital spaces for knowledge and culture.



GOVERNANCE OF CULTURE

In this area, Escazú received a score of 63.64%, well above the global average of 37.00.

Of the eleven actions examined, Escazú had six (6) at an “advanced stage”, four (4) in a “developing stage”, and one (1) at an “emerging stage”.

The city was granted high marks for actions (c), (d), (e), (g), (h), and (i). It is especially praiseworthy for its actions related to participation and cooperation by citizens and civil society in local cultural policies. The city is also noted for actions pertaining to recognising and supporting management practices that are reflective of the local culture.

Escazú received its lowest scores for actions (a), (b), (f), (j), and (k). Participants identified a few actions that needed to be developed further. They included actions (f) on adopting a gender perspective in cultural programmes and institutions, and (j) on strengthening NGOs, trade associations, or unions in the aspect of culture, as well as other civil society actors that contribute to cultural life. Other areas requiring greater attention are actions (k) on collaboration frameworks between local, regional, and national governments, as well as (b) on the existence of local cultural plans at the neighbourhood or district level. Lastly, it should be mentioned that Escazú does not currently have a cultural policy with a defined vision for the future of the city; one that brings together public, civic, and private initiatives in a comprehensive and cross-cutting way, geared towards a joint project, such as action (a).

One good practice identified in this area was that of the management model with organised group committees, for events such as the masquerades or herdsman festival. This would enable civil society’s self-management of certain events and cultural expressions.



WORK PROPOSALS

FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CULTURE 21: ACTIONS

During the self-assessment workshop, multi-sector committees were set up so that participants were able to reflect and share work proposals for the implementation of Culture 21: Actions. Additionally, an internal workshop was held with municipal staff in order to gather internal ideas, and to submit proposals for strengthening a cross-departmental working group within the municipality. Finally, a number of interviews and meetings were held with local stakeholders, as well as with an in-house team dedicated to Agenda 21 for culture. The goal was to establish a global perspective of the situation in the city.

1. OVERALL ISSUES FACING THE CITY OF ESCAZÚ

In order to reorient cultural activity towards being more cross-cutting, and to create an overall city-wide project, a profile of general issues facing Escazú must be established. During the different workshops, the following problems stood out in particular:

» In the social sphere: It was strongly emphasised that one of the chief overall issues facing Escazú concerns the social sphere. In fact, participants continually expressed their concerns about social problems. These social issues seem to be especially concentrated in the Central Escazú (San Miguel) and San Antonio districts. Participants highlighted the scale of social exclusion and difficult situations for vulnerable people living in the area. They also underscored problems with violence and a general lack of safety, particularly for gender-based violence. There is also a clear challenge to managing cultural diversity due to a large number of immigrants and intra-community tensions. Overall, there is a marked need to work in closer proximity with vulnerable persons and specific groups such as youth, women, and seniors.

» In the urban and land planning sphere: The city presents considerable urban planning problems related to the city's substantial growth. There is a genuine challenge to dialogue between newly developed areas with higher resources, and more traditional sectors with scarcer resources where social issues are concentrated. There is a clear need to establish a social and economic dialogue across all sectors of society.

Additionally, such urban growth has also prompted a drastic change to the urban and rural landscapes. This is also the result of the fact that urban planning models

WORK PROPOSALS

do not seem to include identifiable architectural guidelines, while also tending to build generic public spaces. Participants indicated a general loss of identity as a result of these urban transformations. They also pointed out the importance of managing such changes in Central Escazú and San Antonio in order to prevent an uncontrollable change in the area's identity. Finally, the workshops highlighted the need to create more convivial public spaces and, among other issues, to foster coexistence and interaction between citizens, with a larger openness to pedestrian spaces.

» Governance: Within the municipality there are difficulties to coordinating public actions in a transversal way, across different departments and fields of public action. Participants noted the fundamental importance of developing more coordination and connections between different fields of work in this area. Furthermore, there is also a problem with regard to citizen participation in local governance. As a result, it is vital to nurture the conditions for partnership between public action and civil society. Finally, in the cultural sphere there is a marked lack of cultural policies for establishing clear targets, and a vision for the future, which bring together all local stakeholders in a coordinated and transversal way.

2. PRIORITY THEMATIC AREAS OF CULTURE 21: ACTIONS

Based on these overall problems, as well as the results of the self-assessment, the Agenda 21 for culture working group determined that the following Culture 21: Actions topics could be considered priority areas (in order of precedence):

- no 1. Culture and education
- no 2. Culture and economy
- no 3. Culture, equality and social inclusion
- no 4. Culture, information and knowledge

It was also determined that the following areas, which obtained the highest marks in the self-assessment, could be strengthened (in order of priority):

- no 1: Culture, urban planning and public space
- no 2: Heritage, diversity and creativity
- no 3: Governance of culture

Generally, participants noted the importance of creating a work programme for implementing Agenda 21 for culture whose cross-cutting and comprehensive pilot measures could be incorporated into these areas.

WORK PROPOSALS

3. WORK PROPOSALS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CULTURE 21: ACTIONS

During the self-assessment exercise, a space was opened so that participants could draft proposals for the implementation of Culture 21: Actions. In all the proposals, a prioritisation exercise was carried out so that participants could identify the actions that seemed to require the most attention. A summary of these proposals is attached to this document.

CONCLUSIÓN Y RECOMENDACIONES

» In its self-assessment, for most of the areas and commitments analysed Escazú placed higher overall than the global averages obtained by the 2015 global panel of experts. The city is particularly noteworthy in the areas of “1. Cultural rights”, “7. Culture, Urban Planning, and Public Space”, “2. Heritage, Diversity, and Creativity”, and “9. Governance of Culture”.

» On the other hand, the city received lower scores in the areas of “5. Culture and Economy”, and “6. Culture, Equity, and Social Inclusion”, and particularly low marks for “4. Culture and Environment”, “3. Culture and Education”, and “8. Culture, Information, and Knowledge”. These areas require greater attention.

» According to the results of the self-assessment, the issues facing Escazú, as well as the work proposals submitted by participants, there were some areas in need of more attention, including:

— **Revitalising the economy through culture in a comprehensive project with cross-cutting activities, in order to fortify socioeconomic and cultural development in the city’s most vulnerable areas.**

Here it must be highlighted that culture is a resource unlike any other because it helps to create meaning and identity. As a result, it is vital to manage it in a culturally sustainable way. One key to the sustainability process seems to be gearing cultural action towards prioritising citizens and their values, rather than seeing such activity as merely an economic resource. This economic sector could encompass a wide range of many different actions, creating synergy and a global vision for initiatives.

This sector could transform into a series of market-oriented support mechanisms for the cultural sphere (artists, artisans, etc.). It may also benefit by identifying and emphasising the value of heritage, especially due to Escazú’s substantial amount of intangible heritage. In their proposals, participants addressed both citizens and economic revitalisation by pointing out that a number of cultural activities could be developed. In order to generate

WORK PROPOSALS

sustainability, all of these actions must be based on the community's active participation.

With regard to the environment, this sphere could be transformed to focus on the value of traditional practices, local products, as well as the spaces that make up the natural and cultural landscape of Escazú.

The tourism sector could also be restructured to emphasise the tourism value of natural resources such as sightseeing tours, economuseums¹ for artisans, and many others. Special care must be taken to respect and support cultural values while not falling into folklorisation, thereby ensuring cultural sustainability.

With respect to governance, one suggestion was to establish a network of cultural and economic actors in order to implement this vision and strengthen partnerships.

Topics Addressed:

5. Culture and Economy
6. Culture, Equity, and Social Inclusion
4. Culture and Environment
2. Heritage, Diversity, and Creativity
9. Governance of Culture

To turn culture into a driver of social inclusion which brings cultural activity into the most vulnerable parts of the city. Escazú suffers serious social problems, and culture may be a key component in improving the situation and transforming the city in this way.

It is extremely important to specifically recognise culture as a pillar of comprehensive, social development for people. As a result, culture must be incorporated into the municipality's social programmes. In this area it would be necessary to outline clear goals and priority groups, as well as to determine places for such intervention. In this sense, a social and cultural mapping of the region may be required.

Such a comprehensive activity could be linked with the formal and informal education sectors.

Lastly, a special focus should be placed upon creating places of learning, such as libraries, in more vulnerable areas where this would address citizens' right to access culture.

¹ Economuseums are production facilities designed for tourism where visitors can perform and "learn by doing" the traditional, highly-valued intangible heritage activities. This provides important economic value from a cultural and environmental perspective. It is a type of museum curated and managed by artisans showcasing their own work. Its main objectives are: 1. To sell their products (shop). 2. To perform and explain their craft to visitors (museum). 3. To spread knowledge to students who wish to learn this type of craftsmanship (professional training).

WORK PROPOSALS

Topics Addressed

- 6. Culture, Equity, and Social Inclusion
- 3. Culture and Education
- 8. Culture, Information, and Knowledge

— **Culture, Urban Planning, and Public Space.** While the city received high marks in this area, participants strongly emphasised the need for further work.

There is a critical need for reflection on architectural guidelines and territorial identity in Escazú. This would help to encourage urban growth that is respectful of the city's identity and cultural character.

As suggested by participants, there should be community meeting spaces for citizens developed through cultural activities. This would revitalise certain spaces and create more welcoming environments. Such a project would require comprehensive actions, including urban, social, economic, and cultural initiatives. Participants recommended beginning with pilot projects for specific spaces.

Topics Addressed

- 7. Culture, Urban Planning, and Public Space

— **Governance for the cultural rights of citizens.**

It is of the utmost importance that cultural policies focus on the cultural rights of citizens, and that they establish a vision for the future while creating spaces for citizens' participation. With the aim of making culture a cross-cutting pillar of development for the city, coordination mechanisms could be set up to enable all local stakeholders to work together in a horizontal approach.

On an internal level, it is also vital to establish transversal coordination mechanisms in order to implement Culture 21: Actions.

Topics Addressed

- 1. Cultural rights
- 9. Governance of Culture

» Finally, it should be noted that leaders, officials, and civil society have made significant efforts to improving the city's development and the population's well-being. There is a marked desire to transform the city, and this impetus is undoubtedly one of Escazú's greatest strengths in building new paths towards a better future.

ANNEX 1: PARTICIPANTS AND TOPICS

PARTICIPANTS TO THE WORKSHOP

NAME - SURNAME	POSITION
List of invited people - First self-assessment - Agenda 21	
Alison Villalobos Solis	Corporate Social Responsibility Table - Davivienda
Marco Alfaro	Corporate Social Responsibility Table
Sofía Bolaños Hidalgo	Corporate Social Responsibility Table - TIGO
Mariella Villalobos	Corporate Social Responsibility Table
Mario Parra	Sculptor
Enrique Barboza	'Mascarero' - Escazú
Misael Chavarría	Farming Cooperative of Escazú
Elvia Solís Marín	Farming Cooperative of Escazú
Seidy Vargas	Music professor
Guido Sáenz Gonzales	Ex- Minister for Culture
Marvin Araya	Director, National Philharmony
Ministerio de Cultura	Director for Heritage
Rebeca Lopez	Minister for Culture
Denisse Daniela Fernandez	Cultural Director
Kevin Segura	Rebeca Lopez
Ileana Rojas B	Cantonal Committee for young people
Talía Jimenez	Cantonal Committee for young people
Guisell León	Local organization: Zero-kilometer Market (organic market)
Dr. Adolfo Ortiz Barboza	Association 'Boyero'
Claudia Ossenbach	Representing Leader Women of the Canton
Elena Troyo	Minister for Health
Andrés Morales	Local company: 'Magia Verde'
Fred Villalobos	Ministerio de Cultura
Luis Aguilera	Representing the Architects corporation
Jose Luis Solis	Folklore Table of Escazú
Marta Eugenia Jimenez	national Technical University

ANNEX 1: PARTICIPANTS AND TOPICS

PARTICIPANTS TO THE WORKSHOP

NAME - SURNAME	POSITION
State workers / Municipality	
Maria de los Angeles Hidalgo	Municipal archives
Cristian Montero	Infrastructures and public works
Denia Zeledón V	Municipal planning
Mariela Andrade Pérez	Environmental monitoring and control
Carlos Fonseca	Infrastructures and public works
Nadia Valverde	Assistant to the mayor
Jair León	Assistant. Infrastructures and public works
Andrés Montero	Representing the Cultural Heritage Municipal Committee
Freddy Guillen	Municipal police
Pilar Delgado Yalico	Institutional services
Amalia León	Human development, Disabled people
Claudia Jirón C	Human development, Gender equality
Freddy Montero Mora	Director, Human development
Luisiana Toledo Quirós	First Deputy-mayor
Diana Guzmán	President, Municipal Council
Silvia Gonzalez	Culture
Nuria Vargas	Human development, Capacity-building and Jobs
Grettel Alfaro	Municipal council
Silvia Rimola Rivas	Municipal planning
Alberto Arias Viquez	IT
Miguel Hidalgo	Vicepresident Municipal Council



ANNEX 2: WORK PROPOSALS

OF THE PARTICIPANTS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CULTURE 21: ACTIONS

During the self-assessment workshop, multi-sector committees were set up so that participants were able to reflect and share work proposals for the implementation of Culture 21: Actions. Furthermore, in all the proposals, a prioritisation exercise was carried out so that participants could identify the leading actions that seemed to require the most attention. The primary goal of this exercise was to highlight the most important proposals out of all the ideas generated. Given that the workshop was carried out with a small number of participants, and the fact that not all social sectors were represented, this exercise was not binding. It was used as a means to quickly detect and propose solutions to issues. Additionally, an internal workshop was held with municipal staff in order to gather internal ideas, and to submit proposals for strengthening a cross-departmental working group within the municipality.

Note: Similar proposals arose in different committees which were then merged into a single proposal to facilitate the document's visibility. The number of votes given for each action is identified in parentheses.

1. CULTURAL RIGHTS

Priority Actions

- To create and draft a canton-wide cultural policy, which enables the development of a local and institutional work guide, while considering integral elements for the region. To create a cultural association with various local stakeholders in order to outline this cultural policy. **(13 votes)**

Other actions

- To review, scan, locate, and diagnose local cultural organisations, so as to include them, in an action plan. **(2 votes)**
- To include within the local policy a system of cultural indicators and results measurement. **(1 vote)**
- To conduct training on cultural rights across all social sectors, customised according to the needs of each population. **(1 vote)**
- To establish a charter of rights and responsibilities related to culture, with the aim of outlining specific commitments and responsibilities which consider the question: "What is my right as a citizen with regard to culture, and what commitments can I take on?".

2. HERITAGE, DIVERSITY AND CREATIVITY

Priority Actions

- To set up a registry of intangible heritage to be used as a management tool for research, identification, education, outreach, and revitalisation. This registry must be created with the active participation of the community, as well as other social actors such as university researchers or students who require professional practice in the area of culture. **(7 votes)**
- To identify spaces and talents in the community in order to strengthen and spread culture. **(3 votes)**

Other actions

- To submit requests to the Ministry of Culture in order to declare assets with a cultural value and to ensure their conservation. **(1 vote).**
- To create strategic alliances with local private businesses, which may include social responsibility programmes, funding for cultural activities, infrastructure, and spaces for cultural creation.
- To renovate and update tangible, historical architectural heritage in a detailed and specific way.
- To develop a Costa Rican identity programme.
- To explore possibilities for developing programmes for scientific culture, organised alongside specialised authorities.

3. CULTURE AND EDUCATION

Priority Actions

- To take advantage of the existence of the canton's group committees, in order to provide support and logistical aid, as well as to give classes and host activities developed by the municipality. **(3 votes)**

Other actions

- To build cooperation and communication bridges with education centres and public schools, in partnership with the services offered by the School of Arts.
- To develop strategies with private businesses located within the canton on corporate social responsibility. These would provide support and course facilitators for artistic areas within the canton's public schools.
- To improve planning and coordination of initiatives by the municipality, as well as by local organisations and institutions. This would prevent redundancy in the provision of activities, celebrations, services, or courses.

4. CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

No actions were identified as a priority in this area.

Other actions

- To promote the conservation of the community's rivers and streams, as well as reforestation and clean-up programmes. **(2 votes)**
- To promote the area's local products, tourism, and attractions through cultural activities. **(1 vote)**
- To promote local products. **(1 vote)**
- To broadly promote culture with regard to preservation, buildings, protected areas, in accordance with the Escazú regulation plan. **(1 vote)**
- To promote the region's capability indices as a metric for developing construction, buildings, and environmental standards, and thereby seek consistency between infrastructure development and environmental protection criteria. **(1 vote)**
- To promote walking in the canton through marked trails and street signs.
- To carry out traditional activities with environmental organisations based in the canton, such as the CODECE.
- To establish impact programmes for a culture of recycle, reduce, and reuse. To implement a Blue Flag programme.
- To promote and organise walks with environmental guides and individuals from the canton's community for clean public spaces.

5. CULTURE AND ECONOMY

Priority Actions

- To establish a revitalising sector of the economy through culture with a series of projects, including:
 - Creating a cultural centre, that enables the use of a space for municipal theatre.
 - To develop a boulevard or "cultural promenade" which also includes the sale and display of local craftsmanship.
 - To organise sightseeing tours that focus on the importance of the canton's traditional spots, and attract people from the area as well as visitors. To also promote visits to these spaces by Escazú's children through coordination with the public education system.
 - To create a centre focused on training and conservation for traditions, which helps to keep history and traditions alive.
 - The traditional activities presently carried out by the municipality, including the "Haunted Sundays", could include important issues in order to also put out a positive message about community. **(9 votes)**
- To carry out a cultural analysis of the canton, and map out local stakeholders involved in culture and the economy. **(3 votes)**

Other actions

- To consider the possibility of including resources aimed at strengthening this pillar of culture and economy, with human resources and economic support, as well as specific infrastructure to this end.

6. CULTURE, EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

No actions were identified as a priority in this area.

Other actions

- To carry out assessments in the canton's more segregated zones (districts), which would make it possible to identify the needs and vulnerability that exists in homes throughout the area. **(2 votes)**
- To develop co-management processes that strengthen the work relationship between the municipality and groups, organisations, and civil society, as well as secure the permanence of community projects and the current skills within the community. **(1 vote)**
- To establish interdisciplinary teams with communities, organisations, and civil society for alternative conflict resolutions.
- To create programmes with a cross-cutting focus that facilitate exchanges of intergenerational knowledge on customs, traditions, and the history of the culture of Escazú.
- To develop campaigns that promote women's participation in different social areas, empowering them to exercise their full rights as citizens. As a result, there is a need to guarantee, support, and ensure budgetary investment allocated to women in the canton.

7. CULTURE, URBAN PLANNING AND PUBLIC SPACE

Priority Actions

- To assess the roads and pedestrian areas in the canton in order to create community living spaces such as boulevards. These will be used by groups and citizens in general, and will establish meeting spaces for people while using public space in a creative way. **(12 votes)**

Other actions

- To promote and use architectural language in current urban planning models to be in harmony with Escazú's environment. **(2 votes)**
- To carry out studies of both past and present architectural and urban planning models in order to achieve visual harmony with the canton's current landscape.
- To establish cultural pillars that are incorporated into the canton's architectural landmarks and important areas.

8. CULTURE, INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

Priority Actions

- To set up public libraries as meeting spaces for various activities within the community. These spaces will promote the development of activities and exchanges on important issues, which will be significant for both individuals as well as proposals included in the municipality's work plans. **(4 votes)**

Other actions

- To create an updated registry of associations, groups, and driving forces in the canton in the form of a general map. This database would enable fast communication that is vital for designing and drafting policies, as well as for important information and management within the municipality.
- To create a cultural bulletin, aimed at civil society, on areas of interest, services, and cultural options throughout the canton.
- To determine existing obstacles to accessing and using new technologies. The current Municipal Training Centre could offer other courses and/or programmes focus on cultural issues, as well as modern digital programmes.

9. GOVERNANCE OF CULTURE

Priority Actions

- To establish support networks with the community's social and strategic actors that involve grassroots organisations, citizen participation, public institutions located in the canton, and private businesses. For this networking process, the municipality of Escazú would function as a platform for connection and coordination. To establish cooperation agreements with institutions, organisations, and private companies based in the canton in order to promote cultural activity. **(5 votes)**

Other actions

- To perform assessments of the education needs in municipal schools (comprehensive School of Arts, Employment training centre, and the Women's Leadership School), as well as to understand the community's interests, needs, and requirements with respect to the municipality's services in the area of education. **(2 votes)**
- To establish clear channels of communication on information, management, and legislation in order to carry out events and large-scale activities. **(1 vote)**
- To create reliable measuring tools to evaluate activities, and subsequently gauge their social impact in various dimensions. **(1 vote)**
- To map out the region's social indicators, to help guide municipal investment. **(1 vote)**
- To consider and include citizens' contributions, support, and collaboration in the technical details of organising activities, events, and actions carried out in public spaces.

- To strengthen partnerships with the corporate social responsibility network, which is already linked to a substantial number of private businesses.

IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS FOR CULTURE 21: ACTIONS

This workshop was carried out with civil servants from a number of municipal departments with the aim of determining the implementation mechanisms for Culture 21: Actions. Participants also took part in a prioritisation exercise. A number of the proposals made here are already a part of the methodology in the pilot city process.

- To outsource or reassign a seat so that one representative may act as a municipal technical secretary. **(11 votes)**
- To formulate a plan for the “Agenda 21 for culture” project, including goals and seats, as well as to establish a process. **(10 votes)**
- To carry out an internal and external awareness-raising campaigns through many forms of communication (web-bulletins-scheduled events, etc.) **(8 votes)**
- To set up a commission with a combination of municipal officials, civil society representatives, and other actors in order to monitor work. **(7 votes)**
- To create an office guideline on the need for coordinating actions and processes. **(7 votes)**
- To create a leadership team with representatives from municipal departments. **(3 votes)**
- To raise awareness throughout the entire organisation. **(4 votes)**
- To hold follow-up workshops. **(4 votes)**
- To create a digital bulletin with updates on the process.
- To build a database with members involved in the process.



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