Contradictions and controversies of developmental aid inherent in cultural programs

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Developmental missions in cultural domain are often caught in contradictions between tasks and duties (imposed by donors), and realities of the “terrain”. Working with highly bureaucratized state apparatus, realizing that “effects” and outcomes stays mostly on the paper, missions often tend to find real interlocutors in private and civil sector. Then, several issues are raising: How to approach the most dynamic part of civil society and engage in developmental processes, while not compromising their independence and authentic way of operation? How to verify ”sustainability” of cultural policy instruments and tools (done according to the Western standards)? Those expertise are driving apart NGOs from society who do not share same visions and ideas. In the same time, state apparatus becomes suspicious of changes which endanger their status. Thus projects and programs designed according to Western priorities (development of creative industries...) – might deepen further social conflicts and divisions (leadership programs), without applicability and longterm sustainability.

Bottom-up developments, where the Western knowledge, if any, was just a catalyst for domestic synergies resulted in the locally developed and operated capacity building programs for cultural managers, codifying local know-how which guarantee sustainability for both – programs and organisations meeting local needs.

Keywords: civil society, bottom-up policies, cultural policy priorities, cultural development missions