Benchmarking Diversity in Museums

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Prof. Galla’s publication record focusing on inclusion and active citizenship ranges from World Heritage: Benefits Beyond Borders, 2012; to Heritage Curricula and Cultural Diversity, 1993. He was Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Intangible Heritage and current founding Editor of the International Journal on the Inclusive Museum. He was Professor of Museum Studies, University of Queensland, Brisbane and Professor & Director of Sustainable Heritage Development Programs, Australian National University, Canberra. During 1994-99, he was the International Technical Adviser for the transformation of Arts Councils, National Museums and the National Parks Board (now SAN Parks) in post-apartheid South Africa. He worked on the implementation of Museums and Cultural Diversity Promotion at the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, the Netherlands.

His work, listed as best practice in the 2009 World Culture Report by UNESCO, includes the establishment of World Heritage Areas as culture in poverty alleviation projects – Ha Long Bay and Hoi An, Vietnam and Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, India. He has been honoured internationally on several occasions including Outstanding Conservationist of the Year Award, Vietnamese government (2002), and the European Best in Heritage Award (2008). ICOM Australia conferred on him the 2012 Individual achievement award of excellence for his extensive and on-going commitment to museums, sustainable development and poverty alleviation through culture.
**BENCHMARKING DIVERSITY IN MUSEUMS**

Denmark is listed as the happiest country in the world. The simple question that the Danes in the street ask is why they should change when life is good. Perhaps the world is changing around them. There is also the next generation with different expectations. It could also be that to be insular in a rapidly changing world that inevitably exposes one, perhaps even makes one vulnerable, to the accelerated pace of all forms of globalisation. Transformations are manifestations of the dynamism of a society where cultural democracy is valued. So, what is the position of museums in this context?

Denmark is gradually emerging as a culturally and linguistically diverse country. The ambition of the civil society appears to be appreciative of the diversity of cultural expressions, across time and space – both diachronic and synchronic – and for this new social value to inform empowerment and development of the Danish society into the future. Denmark is one of the richest countries in the world with an enviable GDP, even among the OECD countries. It has an admirable social net to ensure the maximum possible benefits for its citizens. However, cultural policies are yet to be developed at the national and local levels that inform growth and development, positioning culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development along with social, economic and environmental. So, what do museums as social learning spaces mean?

Are exhibitions based on the current state of collections and curatorship adequate to inform the practice of cultural democracy in the 21st century? The Learning Day on Active Citizenship I facilitated on 31 October 2012 at Arken, with 32 museum employees from middle management – educators, curators, conservators and public programmers – underlined the state of the national profile, which is a disconnect between “collections and communities”. There was further concern that there was no balance of gender at the decision-making levels in Danish cultural institutions. This came as a surprise given the gender compliance requirements next door in Sweden and Finland. The buy-in was also mentioned as lacking from directors, governance mechanisms and administrators for genuine inclusion and cultural diversity planning in the democratic transformations of cultural institutions.

**INCLUSION – A TOTAL MUSEUM DISCOURSE**

Inclusion has become the mantra in Denmark and Europe, calling for a conceptual or contextual understanding. The fact that there is an aspiration and near consensus for change was evident from the 247 museum employees and researchers that gathered at the 6th International Conference on the Inclusive Museum at the National Gallery of Denmark. The theme was Museums and Active Citizenship. Papers and books are undergoing peer review from the gathering, in which nearly half of the delegates came from Denmark and the rest came from 47 other countries. Informed by the above mentioned Learning Day at Arken, three museum day practice seminars and workshops were scheduled as part of the Inclusive Museum Conference.

The first activity focused on urbanism. It is frequently mentioned by the UN Habitat and various planning agencies that nearly 200,000 people are moving into an urban landscape every day across the world and that in Northern Europe, Oslo has become the fastest growing city. Copenhagen is facing rapid demographic changes as well. The Museum of Copenhagen and its dynamic staff facilitated thematic engagement on: Urban Archaeology as a Site for Active Citizenship, Participatory Contemporary Collecting, the exhibition Becoming a Copenhagener and The WALL – co-creating common cityscape themes.

Place Making – Parkmuseerne (the Park Museums) was the second workshop activity. The Park Museums comprise six museums and three parks, all joined up to form a vast recreational district at the heart of Copenhagen. Here, you are promised the best experiences that art and nature have to offer. Experiential choices can be found both indoors and outdoors. The Park Museum district is easy to access, and everything can be reached on foot. Discussion drew on comparative museum districts such as the Smithsonian Mall in Washington DC, Museum Park in Pretoria and Reconciliation Place in Canberra.

The third activity focused on how cultural institutions address the practice of gender mainstreaming. The question as to how the gender dimension is defined and negotiated in a range of cultural institutions was vigorously debated. KVINFO, the International Institute for the Inclusive Museum and the Danish Institute for Human Rights convened this one-day seminar in order to scope, assess and understand the extent to which cultural institutions are addressing gender mainstreaming and perhaps even come up with a set of strategic directions.

It is significant that all three seminar/workshops were co-facilitated by the directors of major Danish cultural institutions working together with the international leadership of eminent museum directors. It emerged that appropriate and inclusive leadership is critical for Denmark beyond managerialism. There is a demand for policy-driven and arm’s length development of museums. Moreover, on first diagnosis, it appears that the deficit model of “multiculturalism” that plagues the international museum sector is beginning to infect the Danish cultural scene. The tyranny of the discourse of binary oppositions, especially us, museums, and them, communities/
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CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The Danish situation is symptomatic of Europe. Crisis as a Challenge has become the hackneyed theme of conferences in the past two years. But most of the focus has been on reactions to financial pressures and cutbacks. The threat of closure of the Tropen Museum in Amsterdam has come as a shock to the global museum community. Amalgamation of smaller museum collections under the umbrella of larger ones and the decontextualisation from the knowledge-producing contexts has become a threat to both the cultural diversity and the sense of place and identity of rural populations. This is within a policy vacuum and in the face of rapid and rabid globalisation in all its dimensions, economic, social, cultural and digital.

In the past year, both German Chancellor Angela Merkel and British Prime Minister David Cameron made sweeping statements that state-sponsored multiculturalism is not working and that integration is the way forward. This is nothing new in pandering to populism. Neither leader was informed that there is a difference between immigration and settlement services and multiculturalism as a public policy in culturally and linguistically diverse societies. Those of us at the forefront of public policy debates have consistently cautioned against assimilation policies that are in contradiction to the EU commitment to cultural diversity and human rights. What we have always advocated is integration based on sound governance principles of equity and access. So integration it is and “not more of the same” or a cultural reproduction by the establishment.

If museums are to become civic spaces then they must address the hegemonic discourse of assimilation that is rampant and sketch pathways for integration through inclusion based on mutual respect. Ethno-specific exhibitions and immigration stories are a dime a dozen in Europe. As important as they are to raise awareness about European cultural diversity, there is a need for transcending essentialism of the “other” in exhibition discourse and rethinking collections and their multidimensionality in meaning, historical contexts and multiple interpretations. For example, someone like me cannot be reduced to simply an essential identity of “Indian”, whatever that might be for 1.3 billion people. This can be a challenging task within the predominantly monolingual and monocultural population of Denmark. To hide behind the size of a small country in Europe can be at best escapism from the realities of the nascent diversity of the country.
participation in the Copenhagen Inclusive Museum Conference was so seminal and relevant that it captured the attention of the global museum community. Resolution 4 of the 28th General Assembly of the International Council of Museums was unanimously adopted at the Triennial General Conference in Rio de Janeiro on 17 August: Assess the extent to which ICOM programmes and activities are in accordance with the 2010 ICOM Cultural Diversity Charter and implement a gender mainstreaming policy as an integral part of ICOM’s strategic directions.

In detail, Resolution No. 4 read as follows:

**Museums, Gender Mainstreaming and Inclusion: Benchmarking against the ICOM Cultural Diversity Charter, Shanghai 2010**

Noting that:

- ICOM adopted the ICOM Cultural Diversity Charter during the 25th General Assembly in Shanghai, in November 2010.
- ICOM also adopted during the 25th General Assembly ongoing support to the Inclusive Museum Knowledge Community.
- The International Symposium on Inclusion and Gender Mainstreaming in Copenhagen as part of the Inclusive Museum Knowledge Community conference in April 2013 (Co-chaired by the President of ICOM, Hans-Martin Hinz) expressed strong concern about the inadequate engagement with gender and women’s issues in museums.
- Gender mainstreaming and other cultural borders of diversity such as race, ethnicity, class, faith, age, physical ability, economic status, regionalism and sexual orientation are important for the development of the principle of inclusiveness in museums.
- ICOM must continue to expand and become inclusive of the members and their communities and countries across the world, in its goal to become a globally representative INGO (Internal Non-Government Organisation).

It is resolved by the 28th General Assembly of ICOM meeting on 17 August 2013 in Rio de Janeiro that the newly elected President and the Executive Council:

- Develop a systematic approach to assessing the extent to which its programs and activities including various Committee deliberations address cultural and linguistic diversity benchmarked against the ICOM Cultural Diversity Charter and as part of this agenda.
- Develop a Gender Mainstreaming policy and actively ensure its implementation as an integral part of ICOM’s strategic directions.

**In addressing Gender Mainstreaming:**

- We recommend that museums analyze the narratives being told from a gender perspective.
- In order to have a gender policy, we recommend museums to work with audience, staff and programs from a gender perspective and at the same time with the embodiment of ideas.
- We recommend museums to use the analysis of inter-sectionality (race, ethnicity, gender, class, faith, sexual orientation and so on) to realize the ideas of inclusiveness in Museums.

**NEED FOR CULTURAL POLICIES IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT**

Museums do not exist in isolation. In the 21st century, museums with diminishing resources and an alienated youth that are the next generation of tax-payers and political decision-makers for the cultural sector, it has become imperative for systematic and relevant cultural policies to inform the museum domain. The Netherlands was one of the first countries to adopt a comprehensive national cultural policy. The latest being Australia, which has unfortunately opted for a minimalist approach without even the recognition of its intangible heritage. While there are several national and local cultural policies, few have addressed the location of culture in sustainable development. This is despite the call for such cultural understanding by the UN World Commission for Culture and Development in 1995.

“Development divorced from its human or cultural context is growth without a soul. Economic development in its full flowering is part of a people’s culture... Unlike the physical environment, where we dare not improve on the best that nature provides, culture is the fountain of our progress and creativity.”

The World Culture Forum in Bali, November this year, calls for fostering a Holistic Human Development Ethic where culture is located in all its manifestations and its localised diversity as an integral part of sustainable development. As Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations, puts it: “Global economic growth per capita has combined with a world population [passing 7 billion last year] to put unprecedented stress on fragile ecosystems. We recognize that we cannot continue to burn and consume our way to prosperity. Yet we have not embraced the obvious solution – the only possible solution, now as it was twenty years ago: sustainable development.”

The Director General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova, said “Heritage stands at the crossroads of climate change, social transformations and processes of reconciliation between peoples. Heritage carries high stakes – for the
identity and belonging of peoples, for the sustainable economic and social development of communities. She argued that “heritage does not represent luxury; it is a capital investment in the future. It is the sound foundation without which nothing lasting can be built. Disregarding heritage, severing our roots, will inevitably clip our wings.” She has consistently advocated a paradigm shift to further sustainable development, “a new approach to research that is interdisciplinary, solutions oriented and policy relevant, with a stronger social science component.”

One way of addressing this challenge is to redefine what we mean by human development. In this regard, there is widespread agreement with Helen Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, that “progress needs to be defined and measured in a way which accounts for the broader picture of human development and its context,” which would emphasize “equity, dignity, happiness, sustainability.”

In its report Resilient People, Resilient Planet, the UN Secretary General’s High-Level Global Sustainability Panel concluded that “the international community should measure development beyond GDP and develop a new sustainable development index or set of indicators”. These views are also reflected in the OECD's Better Life Initiative and the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission and numerous other similar initiatives, which call for a broad range of social indicators to complement GDP figures.

Recently, these efforts have resulted in two landmark resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, N. 65/166 and N. 66/208, which emphasise the crucial importance of culture as “an essential component of human development, a source of identity, innovation and creativity for the individual and the community.”

Rio+20 in June 2012 reiterated this concept by recognising that “all cultures and civilizations can contribute to sustainable development” (Section 41 of the outcome document, The Future We Want) and that “many people, especially the poor, depend directly on ecosystems for their livelihoods, their economic, social and physical well-being, and their cultural heritage” (Section 30). The Rio Conference also stressed the “intrinsic value of biological diversity, as well as its ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic values” (Section 197).

In 2015, the international community will review the progress made in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (adopted in 2000), and define a new set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will set priorities for the post-2015 Development Agenda. In this context, it is crucial to ensure that the conservation and wise use of heritage, both natural and cultural, is taken into account and fully integrated into future sustainable development policies and programmes with consolidated sets of experience and evidence-based arguments.

Most activities associated with the stewardship of cultural and natural heritage developed over centuries if not millennia of slow adaptation, do indeed have a much lower impact on the environment compared with other sectors while generating sustainable local employment opportunities, including the fostering of creative industries based on local arts, crafts and other products.

Finally museums are essential to human spiritual well-being for its powerful symbolic and aesthetic dimensions. Conservation of the diversity of cultural and natural heritage, fair access to it and the equitable sharing of the benefits deriving from its use, enhance the feeling of place and belonging, mutual respect for others and a sense of purpose and ability to provide for succeeding generations, which contribute to the social cohesion of the community as well as to individual and collective freedom of choice and action. Another recurring point is the value and role of responsible tourism in the conservation and promotion of museums.

In the above context, the World Culture Forum in November 2013 is the first in a series of planned international forums to be convened in Bali in order to discuss vital global issues for culture in development. These are significant to countries from every region of the world that seek to preserve their local culture and values while at the same time maximising on the benefits of globalisation – whether educational, economic, cultural or social. The aim is that the World Cultural Forum will become part of the annual global agenda shaping issues in cultural development in a similar way to that in which Davos in Switzerland has evolved to impact on global economic policy, and Rio de Janeiro meetings provide leadership on world environmental issues.

At this historical juncture, Indonesians promote the importance of examining the strategic role of culture in strengthening relationships among countries. They also seek to formulate policies that allow national and local cultures to contribute to national development and world civilization in an age of unprecedented globalisation. This ambition resonates with the strategic goals for internationalisation and cultural exchanges of the Danish Agency for Culture.
MUSEUMS AS CIVIC SPACES

It is often emphasised that museums must aspire to become civic spaces for intercultural, intergenerational and interfaith dialogue. Denmark has launched significant projects such as the User Survey to create the context for the relevance of museums and to promote active civic engagement. The ambitious goal of promoting citizenship in museums anticipates processes of inclusion through:

- **Active participation and engagement at the local and global levels in all aspects of museum business.**
- **Synergies in collaboration, collective action and strategic and relevant partnerships between all stakeholders, be they institutional or community agencies.**
- **Spaces for mediation enabling ‘reflective, revealing and confronting’ intercultural dialogue, promoting mutual respect and reconciliation of differences, especially between museums and youth.**
- **Convergence of all forms of communications and interactivity to maximise on knowledge generation and affordable accessibility.**

For any museum or heritage site or landscape that is embedded with the legacies of conservative museological discourse, transformative planning and learning requires unmasking in order to understand the layers of significance of the collections or heritage resource and the multiple voices, both silent and active, that inform the meanings that we wish to communicate.

The performance piece on the next page is from the Asian Civilisations Museum in Singapore during the ASEMUS meeting entitled Museum Hopping: The Asia Europe Market Place for Sharing Cultural Heritage, March 2004. On the right hand side is Dr Brian Durrans, then Senior Curator in anthropology at the British Museum who was responsible for Indian collections. Next to him is his display, a mask which gazes back at the visitors challenging them to consider whether they can only see the tangible mask but that they do not understand the people, communities and spaces behind the mask. The mask tells us more about the curator and collector than it creates an understanding of the multiple meanings and context of the source community. The message that is relevant to museums in my newly adopted country is that the scoping relevance and promoting active citizenship are about getting behind the mask.

Most establishment cultural institutions tend to brush off any discourse of inclusion and transformation by stating that they are already engaged and have been working with stakeholders and source communities since their inception. In order to deal with such resistance, museum funders have used a range of approaches including partnership-driven grants and throwing open challenges in generating resources. These are often grounded in appropriate policy frameworks. In the past, for example, *Turning the Page* in the mediations between Museums and First Nations in Canada, and *Excellence and Equity* in the USA. However, the complexity of 21st century population mix and hybridity calls for integrated local area planning and innovative approaches to promote integration that is not assimilationist.

There is no one-size-fits-all model or one correct way of doing things. There are several excellent examples in the world. Several of these have had a multiplier effect in the way museums have customised good practices. For example, the *Peopling of London* project from the Museum of London in 1992-93 has had a lasting impact on the museum world. It inspired exhibitions such as *Rotterdammers* at the World Museum in Rotterdam, *Canberrans* at the Canberra Museum and Gallery in Canberra, and *Becoming a Copenhagener* at the Museum of Copenhagen. The *Peopling of London* was based on the principle that everybody came to London from some 28,000 years ago and onwards, and the project finishes with the then latest migrants from Hong Kong. The project is based...
on the principle of mapping the layers of significance of populations, histories and objects. It was developed in partnership with the schools and residents in the stakeholder hinterland of the museum. Projects inspired by the *Peopling of London* project have resulted in contextual museums that bring together the tangible and the intangible, the moveable and the immovable, and natural and cultural heritage resources.

On opposite page is a summary diagram that promotes a holistic and inclusive museum development that provides a service for all.

This model calls for, as far as possible, evidence-based benefits to multiple publics, diverse audiences and stakeholders through integrated cooperation and coordination mechanisms and more participatory governance structures for culture. It also requires a deeper statistical understanding of the importance of the cultural sector to sustainable development and far greater awareness-raising strategies about the cultural dimension of development.

**BENCHMARKING Transformations In Museums**

In times of change and increasing demands for accountability and relevance, we need cultural indicators or principles to benchmark our performance. ICOM, has developed since its Quebec General Conference in 1992 and adopted its Cultural Diversity Policy in Melbourne in 1998. In 2005, a new initiative started with the establishment of the ICOM Cross Cultural Task Force. It was mandated to build on the previous work of ICOM “in order to continue to examine and report on the ways that museums throughout the world are addressing the wide range of issues with cross cultural dimensions; develop inclusive approaches and guidelines concerning the way that museums should endeavour to deal with cultural diversity in general and indigenous and multicultural issues in particular; and advocate and make appropriate recommendations concerning the ways that cross cultural perspectives should be enhanced in the work of ICOM and its committees."

In 2010, the Task Force completed its work with the adoption of two resolutions at the ICOM General Conference in Shanghai. One focused on supporting the Inclusive Museum Knowledge Community. The second adopted the ICOM Cultural Diversity Charter. The Charter provides a set of principles that could assist in the benchmarking of the transformations of museums in Denmark and other countries in their aspiration to become relevant and inclusive.
Below, I have provided a brief summary of the Charter principles:

PREAMBLE
As an integral part of the outcomes of the activities of 2010 — The International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures, The International Year of Biodiversity, and The International Year of Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding; and in response to the ICOM Cross Cultural Task Force recommendation for a set of guiding principles that are consistent with the 1998 Cultural Diversity Policy Framework of ICOM, and in continuing to address the wide range of issues with cross cultural dimensions through intercultural and intergenerational dialogue, and in developing inclusive approaches and guidelines as to how museums should endeavour to deal with cultural diversity and biodiversity, the 25th General Assembly of the International Council of Museums meeting on 12 November 2010 in Shanghai adopted the following set of principles as the ICOM Cultural Diversity Charter:

1. DIVERSITY: To recognise and affirm all forms of cultural diversity and biological diversity at local, regional and international levels, and to reflect this diversity in all policies and programmes of museums across the world.

2. PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY: To promote enabling and empowering frameworks for active inputs from all stakeholders, community groups, cultural institutions and official agencies through appropriate processes of consultation, negotiation and participation, ensuring the ownership of the processes as the defining element.

3. COOPERATION & COORDINATION: To cooperate and coordinate in sharing projects and enhancing professional exchanges so as to maximise resources and expertise at regional and global levels.

4. PEACE & COMMUNITY BUILDING: To promote the sense of place and identity of diverse peoples through appreciating their multiple inheritances – natural and cultural, tangible and intangible, movable and immovable – and fostering a shared vision inspired by the spirit of reconcilation through intercultural and intergenerational dialogue.

5. INNOVATION & INSPIRATION: To foster creativity and to develop challenging approaches to stimulate inclusive heritage consciousness in culturally and linguistically diverse museum contexts.

6. CAPACITY BUILDING: To make directed and sustained endeavours to increase the operational capacity of museums to respond with vigour and insight to transformation and change in culturally and linguistically diverse societies.

7. PRODUCTIVE DIVERSITY: To maximise approaches that will encourage the diversification of resources to address and reconcile the competing demands of cultural diversity and biodiversity with economic imperatives.

8. STANDARD SETTING: To discuss and debate various UN and UNESCO international heritage law instruments, both soft law recommendations, charts and declarations and hard law conventions and treaties, providing strategic professional leadership, especially with reference to the cultural suite of international legal instruments.

9. SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE: To locate culture as the fourth pillar along with economic, social and environmental sustainability and to address the cultural and creative dimensions of climate change.

10. DIGITAL DOMAIN: To understand the differences between digitisation, digital access and digital heritage, to support digital access in all activities, and to recognise that digital access is not a substitute for return, restitution and repatriation.

CONCLUDING REMARKS
The new century began 13 years ago with several challenges. First of all, we spent the night of 31st December 1999 wondering whether all our digital mechanisms would collapse, so much so that several predictions were made about nuclear holocausts and the end of the world. Well, it did not happen. Then on 11 September 2001, the geopolitical formation of the world with the USA at the centre was shattered and new forms of global instability emerged. War and terrorism took on a new dimension. There is also a greater awareness of the lack of tolerance and cross-cultural understanding.

Concern increased about culture in all its forms and the value of preserving diversity and the tangible and intangible manifestations of humans and their environment. It was in this state of insecurity in the post-September 11 environment that the whole world adopted, on 2 November 2011, The Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity of UNESCO. Since then counter terrorism strategies even recognised museums and started funding exhibitions and projects to promote cross-cultural understanding.
After decades of deliberations, the UN General Assembly finally adopted the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in September 2007. Both of the declarations place emphasis on dialogue among communities and across communities, among nations and across nations, and across cultural systems. ICOM’s Strategic Plan has been drafted in such a way that an inclusive museum could aspire to become a vehicle for such communication at the local and supra-local levels.

Cultural diversity has several borders that museums need to take into consideration in the complexity of projects. These include race, ethnicity, class, gender, faith, age, economic status, regionalism, sexual orientation and so on. These are cross-cutting themes. Perspectives on the environment are also diverse as are local knowledge systems. Most pre-colonial knowledge systems do not have the binary opposition of nature and culture as perceived in the Judaeo-Christian world view. Yet it has become the norm since colonial times. Indigenous peoples in particular point to the non-duality of nature-culture in their world views.

I started the paper with a reference to the happiest people on earth. Quality of Life indicators: The six basic categories of the Qualities of Life (QOL): local economy, natural environment, personal goals and aspirations, fairness & equity; basic needs and social inclusion, tend on the whole to be measured by primarily economic indicators such as relative income and percentage of income spent. Whilst this is useful for identifying the “have” and the “have-nots”, many of the “intangible” cultural values that contribute to a society’s cohesion and people’s sense of well-being cannot be measured by the mere flows of capital.

Benchmarking is often misunderstood as pandering to bureaucracy. It can be a tool to locate culture in QOLs. It is indeed for “Listening, Learning and Leading”. The greatest impediments in Europe that are focused on integration and inclusion are select hearing, silences and embedded racism derived from colonial signatures in the knowledge systems of the establishment.

Benchmarking for corporate cultural transformation requires actions that are strategic and not confused with the operational. Most projects that address diversity tend to be caught up at the operational level without institutional transformation. Even the inspirational and innovative Mining the Museum project did not lead to lasting changes in the conservative and Caucasian centred host in Baltimore.

Based on my first-hand experience in dealing with the transformation of museums that aspire to become democratic and inclusive, I found the following steps useful. These could be used along with the above principles in the ICOM Cultural Diversity Charter.

- Identify any key structural and functional characteristics that have contributed to your institution’s excellent reputation.
- Describe your governance structure, roles and responsibilities. What are the reporting lines into the governance body? How do you separate governance and operations roles?
- Describe your mission-direct philosophy and the major functions in terms of their scope, scale, staffing, spans/layers, budgets, areas of achievement, recruitment and talent development.
- Describe your mission-support philosophy and strategies, e.g., in-house/outsourced, shared or department-specific, scope, scale, budgets.
- Describe your funding and revenue generation strategy.
- How does your institution relate to other cultural institutions within the country?
- What do you see as areas for particular attention, and that could have structural and/or functional impacts, because of their growing importance or increasing risks?
- What significant organisational change initiatives are you planning or executing?
- Share any lessons learnt / pitfalls in your institution’s evolution that we should avoid.

I would like to finish the paper with a quotation from Nobel Laureate, the late Chinua Achebe.

“Coming Out of the Skin:

…the only place where culture is static, and exists independently of people, is the museum... even there it is doubtful whether culture really exists. To my mind it is already dead. Of course a good curator can display the artefacts so skillfully that an impression of completeness or even of life can be given, but it is no more than the complete skin which a snake has discarded before going its way.”
Endnotes

1 Denmark is hosting the Eleventh International Conference on Environmental, Cultural, Economic, and Social Sustainability: http://onsustainability.com/2015-conference
2 http://onmuseums.com/conference-archives/2013-conference
3 Our Creative Diversity: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0010/001055/105586e.pdf
4 http://inclusive-museum.org/world-culture-forum-bali/
5 The Future We Want, International Herald Tribune, 24 May 2012.
6 Opening address to the General Assembly of the States Parties to the World Heritage Convention, 7 November 2011.
7 Address to Preparing the way to sustainable development after Rio+20: Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development, 27 June 2012.
8 High-level forum at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 20 June 2012.
10 http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/
13 http://www.unccd2012.org/thefuturewewant.html
14 http://asemus.museum/

Credits


Benchmarking Diversity in Museums: Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue
Benchmarking Diversity in Museums

Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue