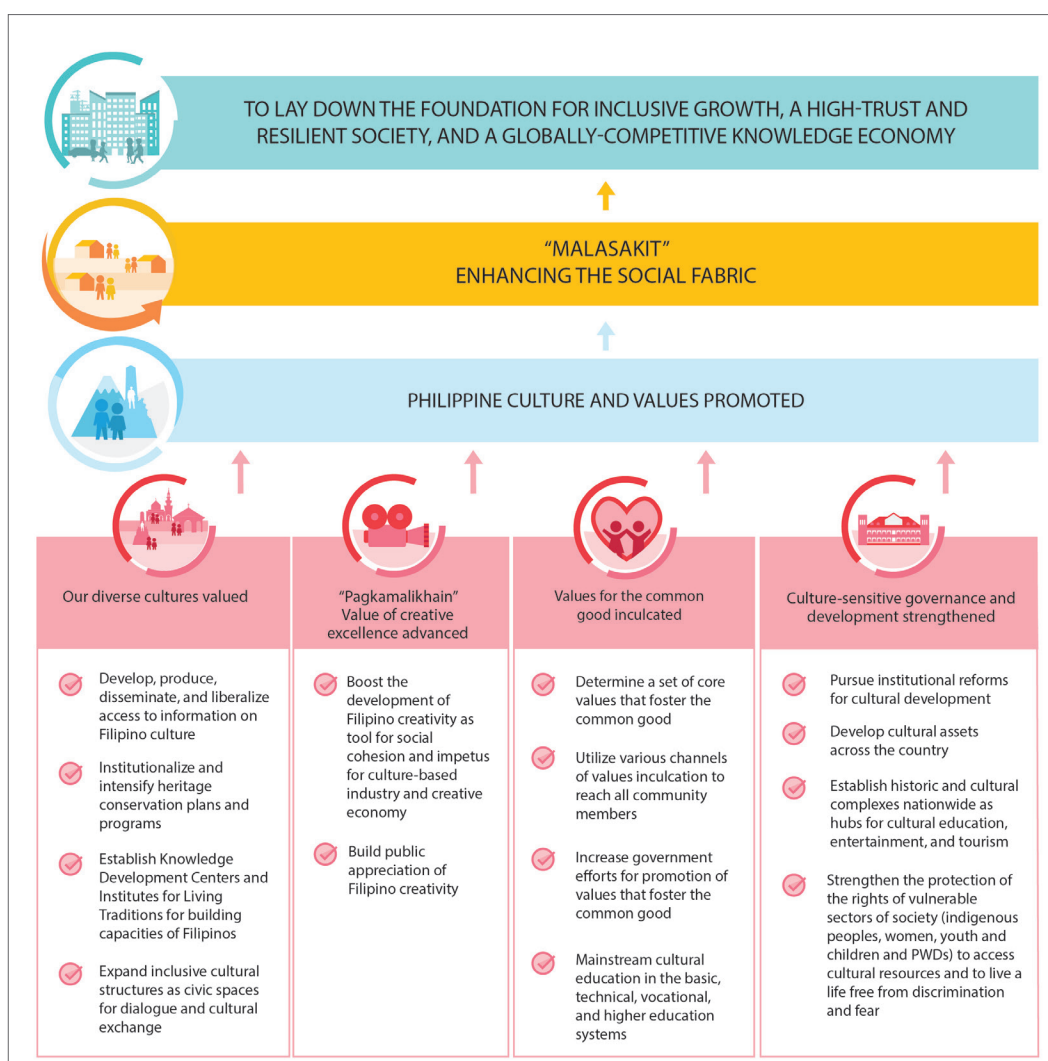


# 07 Promoting Philippine Culture and Values

# Promoting Philippine Culture and Values

Enhancing the social fabric requires promoting cultural awareness, identifying and inculcating values for the common good, cultivating creativity, and promoting culture-sensitivity in governance and development efforts. In the first year, limited strategies were employed, mostly focusing on consolidation and systematization of efforts or “putting the pieces in place” in preparation for bigger and broader reforms and actions. These primordial strategies of the culture sector include institution-building, systematic documentation and monitoring of ongoing programs, and identifying and addressing data gaps, among others.

**Figure 7.1 Strategic Framework to Promote Philippine Culture and Values**



# Accomplishments

Recognizing the importance of culture, the Social Development Committee (SDC) of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Board created the Subcommittee on Culture.<sup>1</sup> The SDC Subcommittee on Culture serves as a mechanism to oversee the implementation of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) strategies on culture, requiring close collaboration and complementation of efforts of various government agencies. Similarly, Regional Development Councils (RDCs) have begun to include concerns of the culture sector.<sup>2</sup> In 2017, strategies have been fleshed out into concrete actions and several significant initiatives have been rolled out.

Less than a year since the PDP was approved, output targets in the Results Matrix were met or even exceeded, with 19 agencies<sup>3</sup> actively working as members of the Planning Committee. Other agencies are taking part in the implementation of projects identified in the Public Investment Program 2017-2022. More data will be available with the approval of the Philippine Cultural Statistics Framework (PCSF) and the conclusion of studies in the coming years. Implementing and monitoring agencies will continue to work closely to generate the baseline data for culture.

## Valuing our diverse cultures

**Intangible cultural heritage is being preserved.** Digitization projects are underway to facilitate the documentation and preservation of important information and materials for the benefit of present and future generations. The effort includes documentation of indigenous knowledge systems and practices, language revitalization, and film restoration.

**Public access to cultural resources is being improved.** Improvements include the modernization of museums, waiving of entrance fees or requirements, upgrading of collections, and expansion of facilities, among other projects in the pipeline. To promote Philippine culture abroad, *Sentro Rizals* are being established in various host countries. The government also provides support for artists who would perform or compete in prestigious events. Most notable for 2017 was the return of the Philippines to the Venice Biennale after 50 years of absence to feature two artists. In 2016, Filipino films won major awards from the top three A-list film festivals in the world: Cannes, Berlin, and Venice. The Philippines also participated in international events. The country hosted the 1st *Budayaw* Festival to celebrate and promote the rich heritage and cultural diversity of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. This was an initiative to harness greater understanding and solidarity within ASEAN.

**Schools of Living Traditions are being maintained.** Through learning traditional forms of weaving, epic chanting, architecture, rituals, and languages, the youth can find inspiration for greater creative innovation.

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<sup>1</sup> The Subcommittee on Culture was created on June 28, 2017. It is headed by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts with the National Economic and Development Authority as co-chair. Other members of the Subcommittee include: Office of the Cabinet Secretary, Department of Tourism, Department of Education, Design Center of the Philippines, Commission on Higher Education, Presidential Communications Operations Office, Film Development Council of the Philippines, Movie and Television Review and Classification Board, and the Philippine Sports Commission.

<sup>2</sup> Culture interests are raised at the RDCs through the existing SDC and the invitation of Culture sector representatives to discuss concerns. In 2017, ten regions have started discussions on the creation of an RDC Subcommittee on Culture and initiated the invitation of culture sector representatives to become members.

<sup>3</sup> The agencies involved in submitting and providing data for the results matrix are: National Commission for Culture and the Arts, National Economic and Development Authority, Philippine Statistics Authority, Design Center of the Philippines, Department of Education, Philippine Information Agency, Civil Service Institute, Department of Interior and Local Government, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, National Commission for Disability Affairs, Philippine Commission on Women, National Youth Commission, Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino, Cultural Center of the Philippines, National Museum, National Historical Commission of the Philippines, National Archives of the Philippines, National Library of the Philippines, and the Film Development Council of the Philippines.

## Advancing *pagkamalikhain* values of creative excellence

**Effective interventions that encourage the cultivation of creative industries are being replicated.** Creativity in industrial design received a boost with the support of the Department of Trade and Industry for the development of more local products.<sup>4</sup> Government agencies also helped facilitate the application for patents and copyrights of these products.<sup>5</sup>

In 2017, the international community recognized Philippine creativity when Baguio City was formally included in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network under the Crafts and Folk Art category. This is a major milestone for the country.

The world saw a renaissance of Philippine cinema as creative genius in this art form when it was lauded with 77 international awards received by Filipino artists. Public access to Filipino films was made possible through regional cinematheques—Baguio, Manila, Iloilo, Davao, and Zamboanga—to provide an alternative to commercial film theaters. Various film festivals also enhanced the promotion of Filipino cinema all over the country, tackling different—often, socially relevant—themes with the participation of amateur and professional filmmakers. Key film festivals that promote local films include *CineLokal*, *Pista ng Pelikulang Pilipino*, and *Cinemalaya*, among others. Keeping this tradition alive, youth-led projects that promote Filipino culture and creativity were launched, such as the *Sine Kabataan*.

## Inculcating values for the common good

**Studies are currently being undertaken to determine the corpus of values to be promoted.** The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) commissioned a study to define the corpus of Filipino values, while NEDA has embarked on a study to establish mechanisms to quantitatively measure cultural values.

**Capacity-building interventions for government employees are being rolled out.** The Civil Service Commission (CSC) approved the implementation of its Public Service Values Program to ensure values inculcation among public servants across different levels. The program focuses on instilling a sense of responsibility towards achieving national development.

## Strengthening culture-sensitive governance and development

**Several measures have been taken to institutionalize culture-sensitive governance.** “Tourism, Culture and the Arts” was included as a new essential area in the 2017 Guidelines for the Seal of Good Local Governance of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). This is a good complement to the capacity-building efforts for local government units to promote, protect, and enrich culture and heritage. Bigger steps were also taken with the progress of draft legislations for the establishment of the Department of Culture at both Houses of Congress. The proposed legislation is likewise being discussed within the Executive branch.

**Various agencies have taken actions at conserving, restoring, and preserving built heritage.** The old Department of Tourism building was renovated to become the National Museum of Natural History. Rehabilitation efforts for the Manila Metropolitan Theater is also ongoing while preliminary work and studies for the establishment of culture hubs are in the pipeline.

<sup>4</sup> Initiatives such as the One Town, One Product Philippines, Go Lokal!, and the National Industry Cluster Capacity Enhancement Project were largely responsible for this boost in achievements compared to the previous year.

<sup>5</sup> The Philippines is compliant with the World Intellectual Property Organization requirements. Typically, applications for utility models take 5-15 months to award, while industrial designs typically take 2-13 months to finish.

## Moving Forward

Despite the significant milestones achieved in 2017, the culture sector still has a long way to go in pursuing and securing broader reforms to promote Philippine culture and values. The following strategies are critical in increasing the level of cultural awareness, inculcating values for the common good, cultivating creativity, and integrating culture in the development process of the government:

**Establish mechanisms to measure, evaluate, coordinate, and consolidate efforts towards cultural development.** This is a formidable challenge for the culture sector—notwithstanding the commitment to ensure its functionality and sustainability. In addition, the contribution of the culture sector in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) may not be reflected because the relevant indicator, SDG 11.4.1 on public and private expenditure on preservation, protection, and conservation of all cultural and natural heritage, is not monitored by the Philippine Statistics Authority.<sup>6</sup>

**Encourage participatory and inclusive cultural development.** Strategies to encourage and harness the participation of other sectors in promoting culture need to be set in place, especially among government agencies not directly involved with either culture or the arts. While achievements were made, particularly by the Subcommittee on Culture at the national level and the existing mechanisms at the regional levels, it may take more time and resources before the impact of the efforts of the culture sector can be felt.

A unique opportunity presented by this “Golden Age of Infrastructure” is for the culture sector to become more closely involved with infrastructure agencies in the Build, Build, Build Program. This can be done by encouraging the building of structures with iconic designs that can merit global recognition. Such infrastructure projects could become icons of history and heritage that the public could access and appreciate. Meanwhile, the drastic devastation to Islamic architectural heritage in conflict areas will require substantive public investment. Rebuilding spaces of worship, symbolic of Muslim Filipino identity, will be a significant step to rebuild communities in an era of peace.

Given the recent developments in Marawi, it is also important for the government to support *madaris*—schools that teach basic tenets of Islam and Qur’an recitation to young Filipinos. The culture sector also works to foster understanding of Islamic culture. The public needs to be engaged in constructive and educational discussions about terrorism and needs to be able to make a distinction between acts of terrorism and legitimate religious practices and traditions.

**Pursue institutional reform.** The creation of the Department of Culture,<sup>7</sup> which is part of the legislative agenda, is undergoing policy review by the stakeholders. This legislation seeks to respond to several structural weaknesses of the culture sector by: (1) acquiring the mandate and resources to implement initiatives from national to local levels, (2) rationalizing the overlapping functions among existing agencies, and (3) asserting the regulatory powers as prescribed by law.<sup>8</sup>

**Build culture hubs in the regions.** Through the initiative of the NCCA, feasibility studies for building the country’s first regional culture hub will be conducted to ensure its sustainable operation. This infrastructure project will be pursued to foster access, exchange, and development of Philippine culture, as well as to expand and promote tourism sites. Pieces of land have already been donated to NCCA by the local government units of Sorsogon, Bukidnon, and Bohol to become possible sites for the culture hubs.

<sup>6</sup> The indicator is classified as Tier 2, and its proxy indicator, defined as the NCCA budget, does not give the full picture. For the full description of the indicator, visit: <https://unhabitat.org/un-habitat-for-the-sustainable-development-goals/11-4-world-heritage>

<sup>7</sup> As of writing, drafts of this policy have been filed as Senate Bill 1528 and House Bill 6113

<sup>8</sup> For example, the Republic Act 10066 (National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009) gives NCCA the power to regulate the repatriation of cultural properties but given its current structure, it cannot fulfill this function.

**Mainstream culture in development planning.** An inter-agency initiative to be led by NEDA in cooperation with NCCA and DILG is to mainstream culture to ensure that local development plans reflect local cultures. Local government units will be made to understand the contributions of culture in achieving inclusive and sustainable development through a series of studies, module development, and capacity-building activities. This project will be implemented in phases throughout the medium-term.

**Cultivate the creative industry.** Just as manufacturing characterized the 19th and 20th centuries, the Creative Economy<sup>9</sup> Revolution is redefining 21st century economies. To keep up with the global shift, an inter-agency initiative led by the Design Center of the Philippines proposes the “Nurturing the Philippine Creative Industries Program”. The program aims to develop a thriving and globally-competitive creative economy through key interventions in the following areas: Creative Cities, Creative Clusters, Creative Education, and Creative Tourism. To allow the creative industry to thrive, a strong policy on protecting intellectual property for creative works is necessary, supported by efforts to raise awareness on and inculcate respect for Philippine culture and creative expression, to promote innovation rather than imitation, and to develop an ethical mindset.

**Provide skills development and social protection for artists and cultural workers.** To ensure continuous advancement, investment in human capital development in culture-related fields<sup>10</sup> needs to be encouraged. The government will continue to disburse grants and support artists through the National Endowment Fund for Culture and the Arts. It is also important to protect the social welfare rights of artists and cultural workers, many of whom are contractual workers.

**Study indigenous cultures and foster a social, political, and economic environment to ensure inclusive development.** Roughly 14 percent of the national population belong to an indigenous cultural community, majority of whom live in poverty. Towards this end, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples is leading efforts to generate a comprehensive set of cultural data on indigenous peoples across the country.

**Formulate evidence-based development strategies for cultural development.** Baseline efforts will continue to be pursued, including the ongoing studies on values for the common good. Results of the studies will help shape succeeding interventions. Alongside these efforts, the public sector will have to undergo capacity-building activities focusing on cultural development. Culture being a new development area and being highly complex, it is important for agencies to be creative, adaptable, and responsive so as to be effective in this aspect.

In order to effectively achieve the targets and goals of the sector, public investment needs to be channeled into priority programs and projects.

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<sup>9</sup> The “creative economy” covers advertising, animation, film, television, radio, visual arts, performing arts, digital media, digital games, design (product, fashion or graphic), and even culinary arts.

<sup>10</sup> Included in this chapter’s agenda are the establishment of the following: Institute for Cultural Heritage Conservation of the Philippines, *Kandungan ng mga Wika at Kultura*, *Linangan ng Likhaang Bayan* (National Institute for Living Traditions), regional arts academies, and more schools with special programs in the arts.

# Recommendations

In the coming years, it is expected that stronger partnerships and coordinating mechanisms will be established between and among cultural agencies, other government agencies, civil society organizations, and the private sector. Alongside the strategies discussed, recommendations in Table 7.1 should also be considered.

*Table 7.1 Supplemental Strategies to Promote Philippine Culture and Values*

CHALLENGES	RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Securing resources (financial, personnel, infrastructure) to maintain, operate, and develop cultural assets</li> <li>• Consolidating efforts in preserving and conserving heritage</li> <li>• Increasing traffic into museums, libraries, or other cultural sites</li> <li>• Providing social protection and human resource development to artists and cultural workers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue and expand cultural mapping across the country.</li> <li>• Digitize cultural properties (e.g. texts, film, visual arts).</li> <li>• Improve access to cultural services via information and communications technology.</li> <li>• Create a registry for artists and cultural workers.</li> </ul>	All culture agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacitating local planners to design, formulate, and execute culture-related plans and programs</li> <li>• Achieving smooth coordination among government agencies, especially those not directly involved with culture or the arts</li> <li>• Coordinating with decision makers for the formulation of policies that support cultural development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mainstream culture in development planning.</li> <li>• Commission policy papers for items under the legislative agenda.</li> </ul>	NEDA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing monitoring mechanisms to gather actionable data for culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct data audit in cultural agencies.</li> <li>• Design surveys based on the PCSF and results matrix.</li> </ul>	PSA

