

The International Fund for Cultural Diversity: a new tool for cooperation in the audiovisual field

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This paper analyses the implementation of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD), emerged from the *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* (UNESCO 2005). The uniqueness of this multilateral fund is that most of its resources are aimed at supporting actions of non-governmental organizations functioning within the fields of cultural policy and cultural industries in developing and underdeveloped countries. Through a thorough study of different decisions and documents, this text analyses the IFCD's funding, the results of the first calls for initiatives and the support obtained by projects focused on the audiovisual industry. Conceived as an instrument to implement initiatives whose goal is to strengthen the cultural sphere of the poorest countries, the hitherto modest IFCD faces now questions about its future growth and effectiveness in terms of changing the existing imbalance at work within the flows of audiovisual content both regionally and internationally.

Keywords: cultural diversity; UNESCO; audiovisual policy; international cooperation; cultural industries

Introduction

The Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Cultural Diversity (henceforth 'the Convention') was approved at the 33rd General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), on 20 October 2005, with 148 votes in favour, two against (United States and Israel) and four abstentions (Australia, Nicaragua, Honduras and Liberia).

Once the minimum required support of 30 members was achieved (UNESCO 2013a, Article 29), the Convention was implemented on 18 March 2007, for those States and organizations of regional economic integration that had activated their instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval and accession, which internationally have the same legal effect, before 18 December 2006. On that day, they were a total of 35 States plus the European Union.

The Convention complements the two main UNESCO conventions within the cultural field: the Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972) and the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible

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Cultural Heritage (2003). Both these conventions exist to preserve cultural legacy that has been built historically, generation after generation. The Convention, conversely, is understood as an instrument for the present and the future. It is supposed to catalyse endogenous cultural productions and establish a certain balance within the international flows of goods and services.

Today (December 2014), 133 countries are part of the Convention. Both States – Fund MERCOSUR Cultural, German Commission for UNESCO (2010), etc. – and civil society organizations – coalitions for cultural diversity, the International Network for Cultural Diversity, the International Network on Cultural Policy, etc. (Harcourt 2012) – are working to implement the Convention. Amongst the different actions to achieve the goals of the Convention, there is a multilateral fund, the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD), which is designed to promote sustainable development and poverty reduction in developing countries that are Parties to the Convention. It does this through support to projects that aim to foster the emergence of a dynamic cultural sector, primarily through activities facilitating the introduction and/or elaboration of policies and strategies that protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions as well as the reinforcement of institutional infrastructures supporting viable cultural industries.

The following pages discuss the functioning of the IFCD, an essential element for the realization of the Convention. They pay special attention to the economic contributions of the IFCD during the 2007–2013 period, analysing thus the first four cycles of IFCD funding that support the implementation of different types of cultural projects in developing countries. Finally the text describes and analyses the audiovisual industry initiatives (Cinema, Recorded Music, Radio, Television and Videogames) that have received IFCD support throughout these years. Within a context of economic crisis and structural adjustment policies in many developed countries, taking a critical political economy of communication perspective allows us to focus our analysis in the multiple challenges that this new instrument of international cooperation is facing within the field of culture and communication.

The distinctiveness of critical political economy approaches to culture and communication, as noted by Golding and Murdock (2005, p. 61), is their engagement ‘with basic moral questions of justice, equity and the public good’. Within this analytical tradition there is a concern about issues regarding the interrelation of economic, political and cultural powers, both at the national and international levels (see, for example, Mosco 2009 and the collective works edited by Winseck and Jin 2011, Albornoz 2011, Wasko *et al.* 2012, Bolaño *et al.* 2012). We cannot forget that the ownership/control and the internationalization of cultural industries over the last hundred years has been a central issue for many scholars working in these approaches.

Despite the role played by a variety of new actors in recent years (Latin American television fiction, the Indian and Nigerian domestic film markets or South Korean pop music, for example) and the complexity of cultural flows around the world, the internationalization of cultural industries yields as a result the domination of most international culture trade by US and, to a lesser extent, European companies, and ‘the implantation of the commercial model of communication’ (Herman and McChesney 1997, p. 9). The issue of international cooperation regarding cultural industries – exemplified by the IFCD case – has a direct connection with the intensification of the internationalization of cultural industries business practices in the last three decades and the inequality that characterizes the

international flows of cultural goods and services. And this inequality, suffered by many small countries around the world, is in the basis of the Convention and the IFCD, as analysed in these pages.

This article is based on the study and analysis of the Convention and its Operational Guidelines (approved by the Conference of the Parties at its second and third meetings, held on 2009 and 2011, respectively), which include the Guidelines on the use of the resources of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (UNESCO 2009) and the Financial Regulations of the Special Account of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (UNESCO 2013a, pp. 115–116) documents. In addition, this text takes into consideration all decisions, working documents and information documents that stemmed from the sessions of the governing bodies of the Convention – the Conference of the Parties and the Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (hereinafter referred to as the Intergovernmental Committee or the IGC).¹ The evaluation report of the IFCD pilot phase (June 2009–June 2012) stands out among these documents (Torggler *et al.* 2012). Besides, this article also analyses the 2012 (four issues) and 2013 (three issues) newsletters on the IFCD (UNESCO 2012b, 2013e) and literature related to the development of the Convention (Bernier 2006, Graber 2006, Craufurd-Smith 2007, Grant 2011, Singh 2011) and the IFCD (Bernecker 2012, Vlassis 2012, 2013, UNESCO 2013b, 2013c, nd).

It should be acknowledged that, since 2012, the author of this article is regularly attending the meetings of the governing bodies of the Convention, acting as a civil society ‘observer’ in representation of the international scientific association Unión Latina de Economía Política de la Información, la Comunicación y la Cultura, ULEPICC [Latin Union for Political Economy of Information, Communication and Culture]. It is worth noting that the Convention itself recognizes ‘the fundamental role of civil society in protecting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions’ (UNESCO 2013a, Article 11) and provides mechanisms for the regular participation of different entities – such as International Network for Cultural Diversity, International Organisation of La Francophonie, European Broadcasting Union and African Arts Institute – in the meetings and activities organized by the Secretariat of the Convention.

The International Fund for Cultural Diversity

The Convention document establishes in Article 18 (UNESCO 2013a) the creation of the IFCD, whose goals are the promotion of sustainable growth and the reduction of poverty in developing and underdeveloped countries that are part of the Convention. According to criteria established at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (which UNESCO utilizes as a reference), on 2014, these were a total of 92 countries.

The management of the IFCD’s economic resources depends on the Intergovernmental Committee, which is in charge of implementing the document Guidelines on the use of the resources of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (UNESCO 2009). This document, approved by the Conference of the Parties at its second meeting (June 2009), stipulates that the IFCD’s resources must be utilized for projects and programs that foster the creation of dynamic cultural sectors, supporting the introduction of cultural policies, capacity building, and the strengthening and creation of cultural industries. Similarly, the IFCD’s resources may also be

utilized to tackle ‘special situations’ (the protection of cultural expressions that are at risk of extinction, threat or may need urgent preservation), in order to help joining countries define their needs in terms of culture and prepare their aid applications. It may also fund the attendance to Convention meetings.

The Convention establishes that the IFCD will be constituted by fiduciary funds, according to the UNESCO’s financial regulations. The IFCD’s resources may come from voluntary contributions of the Parties, financial resources assigned by the UNESCO’s General Conference or contributions and donations made by other States, institutions or United Nations programs, regional or international organizations, public and private institutions and individuals.

According to the Guidelines on the use of the IFCD’s resources (UNESCO 2009), the following organizations are potential beneficiaries for the development of projects:

- all developing countries which are Parties to the Convention;
- non-governmental organizations (NGOs) coming from developing countries that are Parties to the Convention;
- international NGOs (I-NGOs);
- micro, small and medium enterprises of the private sector active in the cultural field of developing countries that are Parties to the Convention.

Two types of activities benefit from the IFCD’s economic support: on the one hand, programs/projects and, on the other, activities devoted to preparatory assistance. The IFCD provides a maximum of 100,000 dollars per programme/project whose goal is: (a) facilitate the implementation of cultural policies that protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions and, in some cases, strengthen the necessary institutional infrastructures; (b) strengthen cultural industries; or, (c) contribute to the emergence of new cultural industries. In addition, preparatory support is understood as those activities that allow the preparation of programs/projects, but not their implementation. In this case, a maximum of 10,000 dollars is awarded to: (a) identify the special needs of developing countries that are Parties of the Convention; or, (b) assist them in the preparation of funding applications. As opposed to the programs/projects, only the Convention’s Parties are eligible to apply for preparatory assistance.

Until now, the IFCD has collected almost 6.6 million dollars. Most of them have been utilized to activate 71 actions in 43 countries of Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Pacific Asia, and Eastern Europe in accordance to the goals established at the Convention.

IFCD funding

As opposed to those funds created by the *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (1972) and the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003), for which there were a series of periodical mandatory contributions, the IFCD chiefly depends on the Parties’ voluntary contributions. The fact that the IFCD depends on non-compulsory contributions, which is a handicap that should be taken into consideration, was alleviated with the introduction of a specification in the Convention that states that ‘Parties

shall endeavour to provide voluntary contributions on a regular basis towards the implementation of this Convention' (UNESCO 2013a, Article 18).

According to the specialist in economic international law, Bernier (2007, p. 8):

The verb to 'endeavour' is used here in the sense of 'strive', 'seek' or 'made an effort'. We can therefore speak of a 'best efforts' obligation to be met in good faith rather than in the sense of a strict undertaking. This obligation was further qualified by the expression 'on a regular basis', which implied that it could not be by means of a definitive, one-time contribution.

Taking into consideration the specifications of the 2003 and 1972 Conventions, Bernier understands that the indication about periodicity in relation to the voluntary contributions may be understood as an effective contribution 'at least every other year' (Bernier 2007, pp. 9–11). However, this is nothing but an interpretation that is repeatedly refuted by analysing real contributions to the IFCD, which will be discussed below.

In its first seven years – between 2007 and 2013 – the IFCD collected a total of 6,657,425 dollars as a result of voluntary contributions and donations from 44 countries. This fact signals that the majority of the Convention Parties have not contributed to the IFCD yet.

The top ten contributing countries are: Norway, France, Spain, Finland, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Belgium, China and the province of Quebec. The economic contribution of these ten countries, most of them from Western Europe, has been decisive for the IFCD's existence. Except in 2007, a year in which Andorra was the only contributor, these ten countries gave around 90% of the total amount in the years 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 (UNESCO 2013d).

Norway, which is the top country in the list, contributed 1,453,088 dollars to the IFCD in the years 2010 and 2011. Between 2008 and 2013, France, on its part, made regular contributions for a total of 1,260,027 dollars. In other words, Norway and France have contributed almost 41% of the total amount between 2007 and 2013.

Within the Latin American and the Caribbean region, only Mexico (321,040 dollars), Brazil (300,000 dollars) and Chile (4994 dollars) have made contributions to the IFCD in its first seven years. It is worth nothing that these three countries are also potential beneficiaries of the IFCD's resources. In fact, two Mexican projects were funded: one from the municipal government of Toluca (2010 call for initiatives, with 30,344 dollars) and another one put together by the local NGO National Conference of Municipal Institutions of Culture (2012 call, with 98,871 dollars). In addition, two Brazilian projects, carried out by the local NGOs Video nas Aldeias (2011 call, 97,580 dollars) and Thydêwá (2013 call, 90,950 dollars), were funded.

As one can appreciate in Table 1, the amount of contributors to the IFCD has doubled during the first years of its existence, going from ten to 20 countries between 2008 and 2012. In terms of the regularity of these economic contributions, only France and Finland gave money to the IFCD every single year from 2008 to 2013. Andorra has contributed six times in the last seven years; and Monaco and Mexico five times in the last six years.

In addition, the data in Table 1 allow us to appreciate that the total amount has increased year after year, surpassing 1.5 million dollars in 2011. However, the year 2012 shows an abrupt decline both in the collected money (34% less as compared to the total amount in 2011) and the top ten contributing countries. Both recovered

Table 1. IFCD main contributing Parties and States, 2007–2013 (in US dollars).

Country/Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
1. Norway				664,473	788,615			1,453,088
2. France		229,376	367,893	69,444	344,182	64,767	184,364	1,260,027
3. Spain			259,068	295,858				554,926
4. Finland		30,257	374,598	26,991	26,281	26,212	26,525	510,865
5. Canada		494,560						494,560
6. Mexico			71,208	71,208	71,208	71,208	36,208	321,040
7. Brazil		50,000					250,000	300,000
8. Belgium ^b			197,547			51,984		249,495
9. China				20,000	50,000	80,000	80,000	230,000
10. Canada (Quebec)		98,349			101,523			199,872
Total amount of top 10 contributing countries (% of total)	0 (0%)	902,542 (93%)	1,270,314 (90%)	1,147,974 (88%)	1,381,809 (88%)	294,171 (55%)	577,097 (71%)	5,573,873 (84%)
Total amount of all contributors (Number of contributors)	13,513 ^a (1)	964,974 (10)	1,410,070 (14)	1,357,982 (16)	1,563,216 (18)	536,671 (20)	810,999 (20)	6,657,425 ^c (44)

Note: To facilitate the reading of this table, the amounts in dollars and percentages have been rounded.

^aIn 2007, Andorra was the only contributor.

^bBelgium's contribution in 2009 stemmed from the French Community; in 2012, it came from the Flemish Community; these contributions are inscribed within the modality 'contributions, gifts or legacies', article 18.3 (c) from the 2005 Convention.

^cDonations from individuals are included, totalling \$6,666.

Source: Compiled by the author from UNESCO–IFCD contributions from 29 February 2014.

partially during 2013. This decrease shows the IFCD's fragility when the wealthy countries suffer the effects of a severe crisis and raises questions about its future.

It is worth remarking that certain countries with powerful cultural industries that joined the Convention – such as Germany, Netherlands, Italy, the United Kingdom and South Korea – have not contributed to the IFCD yet. Canada and Brazil, on their part, two countries that were committed to activate the Convention have only contributed once (2008) and twice (2008 and 2013), respectively.

In terms of private donations, individuals have only contributed to the IFCD sporadically and, consequently, have little weight in economic terms. In the period between 2007 and 2013, the total donations amount to 6564 dollars. It is worth mentioning contributions stemming from campaigns/events such as the 'Silent Party – Diversity for the ears', organized by the collective Taxi MundJal Musix, or Kili IFCD 2011 campaign, carried out by Congo-Québécois Neko Likongo.²

Finding future resources to feed and guarantee the functioning of the IFDC is a matter of concern for those agencies in charge of ensuring the continuity of the Convention. This is demonstrated by the report Evaluation of the Pilot Phase of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (Torggler *et al.* 2012), prepared by the UNESCO's Internal Oversight Service (IOS), or by the start of a fundraising strategy – commissioned to the external consulting firm Small World Stories in 2012 (UNESCO 2013c) –, which aims to triple the IFDC's revenue within a five-year period. This means going from about 800,000 dollars to 2.8 million per year, of

which at least 30% comes from the private sector. To achieve this goal, the strategy includes increasing the number of countries contributing regularly to IFDC and diversifying the funding sources by mobilizing companies and private sponsors.

Likewise, in an attempt to encourage the most developed countries to contribute, the Secretariat made explicit in the first IFCD bulletin (September 2012) that, due to the fact the IFCD's resources support governments, businessmen and cultural professionals in developing countries, all governmental contributions are entirely eligible as Official Development Assistance. Moreover, the Secretariat periodically encourages the Convention's Parties to make annual contributions that should at least be equivalent to 1% of a country's UNESCO contribution. The Mexican government has fulfilled this recommendation since 2009.

Given the contributions received by the FIDC, the balance of these early years is far from promising. The fact that the signatories of the Convention are not required to make minimum economic contributions plus the fact that there is not an established schedule for contributions caused the IFCD to come into existence as a weak international cooperation tool whose fate is tied to short-term contingencies. Moreover, the lack of commitment of the private sector is clear: no major media-cultural conglomerates have made contributions to the IFCD, although some of them, as Vivendi, have incorporated the promotion of cultural diversity as one of their strategic issues (VIVENDI 2013, pp. 54–70). For its part, the participation of civil society is merely testimonial. So far no international or national NGO acting in the cultural field has designed activities to raise money for the IFCD.

IFCD first funding cycles

The Intergovernmental Committee, following directions from the Conference of Parties, is in charge of managing the IFCD's resources. The distribution of funds is done through a series of annual periods in which a series of actors take certain steps.

As Figure 1 shows, first, the Secretariat is in charge of launching a call for applications. After that, the national Commissions make a first selection (today,

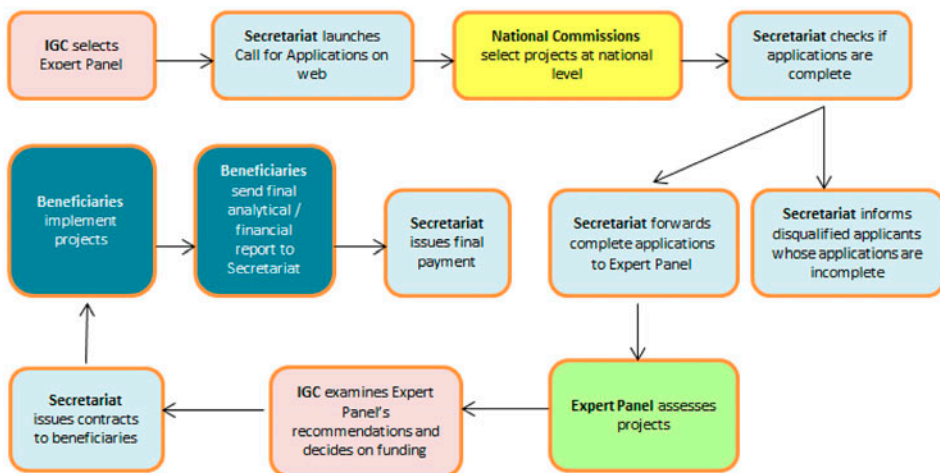


Figure 1. IFCD financial cycle.

Source: Internal Oversight Service (in Torggler *et al.* 2012, p. 32).

each country may submit a maximum of four proposals), which are, later on, submitted to the Secretariat. An Expert Panel³ receives the proposals from the Secretariat, evaluates them following the criteria established in the Operational Guidelines of the IFCD (UNESCO 2009) and submits recommendations to the Intergovernmental Committee. Lastly, the Committee approves the initiatives that will be activated. The beneficiaries, in turn, must report to the Secretariat, which is in charge of issuing the corresponding payments.

During the first four IFCD cycles, 2010–2011, 2011–2012, 2012–2013 and 2013–2014, the Intergovernmental Committee approved economic funding for 71 initiatives from a pool of 866 proposals.

The first call for applications, launched on March 2010, received 254 proposals from the State-Parties and a variety of NGOs. The Expert Panel evaluated 183 proposals, recommending the approval of 32 initiatives; finally, the Intergovernmental Committee approved 31 initiatives in its fourth ordinary meeting (December 2010). This 31 pioneering initiatives, from 25 different countries, received a total of 1,547,586 dollars, which is the greatest amount assigned until now for any call. The initiatives received an average of 49,922 dollars, with a wide spectrum of amounts ranging from 5000 to 100,000 dollars.

The second call for applications was launched on March 2011. Prior to that, the selection process was streamlined, establishing a series of criteria: maximum amount of money to be awarded (100,000 dollars per programme/project, 10,000 dollars for preparatory assistance), a limit of applications per country and specifications about the type of beneficiary (Party, NGO and I-NGO). In addition, the Expert Panel had the capacity to adapt the awarded money to the programs/projects. The adoption of some of these criteria had a direct influence in the reduction of the number of applications. In the second call for applications, the Secretariat received 197 proposals (from 59 countries, of which only 55 were eligible) and 23 international NGOs. It made a first selection (ruling out ineligible countries, incomplete applications or those submitted after the deadline, etc.) and passed on to the Expert Panel 64 proposals from 33 countries and 12 international NGOs. The experts, on their part, recommended funding for 17 proposals. Later on, at its fifth ordinary meeting, the Intergovernmental Committee (Paris, December 2011) approved economic aid for 17 initiatives from 17 countries.

Between the second and third calls, a report on the IFCD's Pilot Phase (its first 36 months),⁴ was published (Torggler *et al.* 2012). This report, published by the UNESCO's IOS, formulated a series of recommendations to improve the IFCD. One of them, number 34, suggested withholding the call for applications during 2013, and utilizing this calendar year to strengthen the work in progress that had already started during the Pilot Phase. Reversing this recommendation, the Intergovernmental Committee decided to launch a new funding cycle (2012–2013). In addition, it saved for the next cycle (2013–2014) 70% of the available funds on date 30 June 2014.

Consequently, the third call for applications, launched on March 2012, received 219 proposals from 68 countries. National NGOs were the main applicants. The Intergovernmental Committee approved 13 new initiatives, awarding 1,074,826 dollars at its sixth ordinary meeting (Paris, December 2012). These projects are currently in progress in 12 different countries.

The Secretary of the Convention received 196 proposals from 68 countries (of which 65 countries were eligible) and 28 INGOs for the current call for

applications launched on March 2013. The Intergovernmental Committee approved 10 new initiatives, awarding 464,102 dollars at its seven ordinary meeting (Paris, December 2013). These projects are currently in progress in 12 different countries.

Analysing the first four IFCD calls, it is worth noting that year after year, both the number of initiatives of different kinds, the number of benefitted countries and the money awarded to implement these actions has become lower. As one can appreciate in Table 2, whereas in 2010–2011, 31 initiatives received 1.5 million dollars, in 2013–2014 ten initiatives received around 760,000 dollars.

In the first four IFCD calls for applications, it is worth noting the degree of support to African initiatives. Of the 71 approved initiatives, more than half of them (40 total; 2010: 20, 2011: eight, 2012: five, and, 2013: seven) took place or are taking place in the African continent (UNESCO *nd*). South Africa received resources to develop five different initiatives, and Kenya the support to develop four initiatives. Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Nigeria, Senegal and Zimbabwe received funds to implement three initiatives each.

Latin America and the Caribbean, on their part, have benefitted with funding for 21 initiatives (2010: nine, 2011: four, 2012: three, and, 2013: five). Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Santa Lucia and Uruguay have been the beneficiaries for two initiatives, respectively.

Finally, six Asia-Pacific – Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Mongolia and Tajikistan – and five Eastern European countries – Croatia and Serbia: two each; Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro, one each – also received financial aid.

Table 2. Main data in the first four cycles of IFCD funding (in US dollars).

Funding cycle	Number of proposals	Number of approved initiatives	Number of benefitted countries	Total amount awarded	Average funds per initiative	Benefitted regions (en %)
2010	254	31	24	1,547,586	49,922	Africa (64.5) LA&C (29)
2011	197	17	17	1,290,409	75,906	Asia-Pacific (6.5) Africa (47) LA&C (23) Eastern Europe (18)
2012	219	13	12	1,074,826	82,679	Asia-Pacific (12) Africa (38.5) LA&C (23) Eastern Europe (23)
2013	196	10	12	763,748	46,410	Asia-Pacific (15.5) Africa (54) LA&C (38) Eastern Europe (8)
First four cycles	866	71	43	4,676,569	Average: 69,502	Average: Africa: 51 LA&C: 28.25 Eastern Europe: 12.25 Asia-Pacific: 8.5

Source: Compiled by the author from UNESCO's database.

In these regions, NGOs are in charge of the development of the majority of initiatives, and, to a lesser extent, in the hands of I-NGOs. These organizations have been in charge of 46 of the 71 approved actions (65%). The remaining 25 initiatives have been managed by public institutions of States that are Parties in the Convention, such as ministries of Culture, foundations or National Commissions for UNESCO.

Paying attention to the types of initiatives that were funded throughout the first IFCD calls, it is worth noting that they are very diverse. They range from studies about the impact of cultural industries in a specific country to the celebration of international meetings to debate the role of culture in contemporary societies, while also including set design courses for unemployed citizens or the training of local artists in the design/creation of new traditional motifs. Different social groups have undertaken this diverse set of initiatives: children, the youth, indigenous people's descendants, non-professional cultural creators, marginalized individuals, artists, women, among others.

Even though both the Convention and the Guidelines on the Use of the Resources of the International Fund for Cultural Diversity (UNESCO 2009) explicitly remark the strengthening and creation of cultural industries, which are defined by their commercial and industrial character, it is worth mentioning that several of the funded actions do not fit this definition since they are not industrial practices. This occurs when financial aid is given to sectors such as the performing arts, painting or artistic design of motifs.

For example, among the funded projects, there is one devoted to 'reactivate one of the most recognized, and simultaneously languishing, cultural industries of Madagascar: the *lambahoany*' (UNESCO 2012a, p. 30), through the creation of new designs of this traditional Malagasy clothing. Besides the symbolic work that any iconic design entails (in this case, the renewal of traditional clothing), these new designs are nothing but one more consumable good for the local textile industry.

This last case allows us to detect a certain lack of specificity in relation to the IFCD's fields of intervention. Behind this fact, there may be a tension between a notion of cultural industries –inherited from the Frankfurt School, which is widely extended amongst communication and culture political economy analysts – and the currently fashionable creative industries, an in construction concept utilized by government and international institutions, including the UNESCO. The extension of the field of intervention from cultural industries to creative industries is reflected in a recent campaign to draw in more resources for the IFCD: Your 1% counts for creativity. This action is part of the first phase of a strategy to raise funds. Its goal is 'to make clear the meaning of the [IFDC's] slogan Investing in creativity. Transforming societies' (UNESCO 2013c, p. 8).

Although the term cultural industries is difficult to define, there is consensus among academics and policy-makers to use this notion to refer to those industries capable of producing and distributing large-scale content (movies, radio and television, books, music recorded, newspapers, magazines or video games) that influence our understanding of social and personal life. While the term creative industries 'is applied to a much wider productive set, including goods and services produced by the cultural industries and those that depend on innovation, including many types of research and software development' (UNESCO/UNDP 2013, p. 20), authors such as Garnham (2005), Schlesinger (2011), Tremblay (2011) or Bustamante

(2011a, 2011b) point out the concealed purposes of the term creative industries and its derivatives, such as creative economy or creative cities. In Tremblay (2011, p. 133) words:

At the theoretical level, the concept of the creative industries contributes absolutely nothing to the work on the cultural industries. Quite rightly, the importance of creation had already been recognized. And the extension of the models developed to explain the specificities of cultural production and dissemination to other activities – such as design, fashion or software – is not undertaken convincingly. A practical demonstration would therefore be necessary before trying to implement the same public protection and promotion measures enjoyed by the cultural industries in the creative industries.

Following Tremblay's reasoning, the danger of extending the FIDC's field of intervention is that it may support projects within certain sectors or activities that, like the above-mentioned textile industry case shows, contribute only indirectly to the appearance of dynamic cultural sectors in specific parts of the developing world.

Also it should be noted that most projects supported by the IFCD only have local character. Therefore, they do not affect the imbalance that currently characterizes the flow of cultural goods and services at the international and regional scales. None of the supported projects is related to the provisions of Article 16 of the Convention, which states 'Developed countries shall facilitate cultural exchanges with developing countries by granting (...) preferential treatment to (...) cultural goods and services from developing countries' (UNESCO 2013a).

Support to audiovisual industry initiatives

Even though during the first four cycles of the IFCD there are initiatives that are peripherally or loosely related to diverse audiovisual fields, our intention is to analyse actions that strictly deal with specific audiovisual industries, such as Cinema, Recorded Music, Radio, Television and Videogames (Zallo 2011). This choice is related to the central role that the audiovisual sectors and activities play in the field of cultural industries as a whole (Hesmondhalgh 2013) and the high penetration and consumption that the goods and services of audiovisual industry have in contemporary societies.

Following this approach, it is possible to account for 12 initiatives within the audiovisual industry in 12 different countries – that is, 17% of the 71 actions funded so far by the IFCD. Five initiatives (out of 31) belong to the first funding cycle, four (out of 17) to the second, two (out of 13) to the third and one (out of 10) to the fourth. Local NGOs and one national commission for UNESCO have developed 12 projects, receiving 817,289 dollars out of the total amount of 4.6 million awarded. In other words, almost 18% of the total assigned funding. Assuming that the audiovisual sector is the most important cultural industry in terms of profitability – audiovisual global exports grew annually from 2000 at an average rate of 8%, reaching 35 billion dollars by 2007 (WTO 2010, p. 3) – and symbolic influence, it is noteworthy that less than 20% of the IFCD resources have been allocated to projects aimed at the audiovisual field.

Analysing the 12 audiovisual initiatives funded during the first IFCD calls, five of them deal with Cinema and Television:

- Foundation Kine, Cultural y Educativa (Argentina, funding cycle 2010) carried out the 8th Young Images within Cultural Diversity Festival, 17–21 October 2011, at the Spanish Cultural Centre in Buenos Aires. This Festival showcased 125 short films made by children and young people from different countries of ages between five and 25 years old. Field of intervention: film exhibition.
- The Cameroon Association for the Promotion of the Audiovisual and Entertainment (Cameroon, funding cycle 2010) designed the first Central African audiovisual productions database, known as the Central African Image Bank (BIMAC). This database works as a link between the production and the broadcasting worlds – mostly African and international TV channels. Through this project, APPAS has compiled and digitized hundreds of hours of films and audiovisual productions with the goal of creating a regional audiovisual map. Fields of intervention: compilation, archiving, advertising and distribution of films and TV series.
- The NGO Video nas Aldeias (Brazil, funding cycle 2011) produced an educational collection for classroom use, composed of a didactic guide and six films (both subtitled and dubbed). The films were made by six aboriginal communities – waiãpi, ikpeng, panará, ashaninka, mbya-guarani and kísédjê – and dealt with their own cultures and social practices. It attempts to promote cultural diversity and fight against negative stereotypes in relation to indigenous people. Fields of intervention: film distribution and production.
- The Institute for International Relations and Research of La Paz (Guatemala, funding cycle 2010), in collaboration with San Carlos University, created a centre for audiovisual training for three ethnic communities: one of Mayan origin, one Garifuna and one Xinca. It attempts to train and strengthen specific groups of civil society. Field of intervention: audiovisual capacity building.
- The NGO Perkumpulan Hijau Siberut (Indonesia, funding cycle, 2012) has designed a series of audiovisual production and management training activities for young indigenous people (both men and women in equal amounts) in the Siberut Island. This project attempts to create a competitive local micro-industry. Field of intervention: audiovisual capacity building.

Apart from the five above-mentioned projects, there are four other initiatives that carried out studies (one regional and three national) about cinema and other audiovisual sectors:

- The New Latin American Cinema Foundation (Cuba, funding cycle 2010) produced the Study of Community Film and Video Experiences in Latin America and the Caribbean: Possibilities for Development – published in Spanish under the title *Cine comunitario en América Latina y el Caribe* (Gumucio Dagron 2012). This study attempts to function as a collective instrument to monitor and evaluate the key processes of community cinema and audiovisual production in Latin America for decision-makers, filmmakers, researchers, institutions and the general public.
- The Association Visual Culture (Bosnia and Herzegovina, funding cycle 2011) drew a map of the country's film industry in order to create a Plan of Action that would highlight its economic potential. The elaboration of this entailed a thorough collaboration with different public institutions, audiovisual companies, filmmaking professionals and NGOs.

- The UNESCO Chair in Media, Dialogue and Mutual Understanding of the School of Journalism and Public Relations of FYR Macedonia (Macedonia, funding cycle 2012) conducted a study on the country's audiovisual industry, identifying good practices and innovative experiences in order to evaluate the audiovisual sector's potential and catalyse the local and regional development.
- The Malawi National Commission for UNESCO (Malawi, funding cycle 2013) is developing a project that aims at strengthening the national film industry in this country through the development of a national strategy and investment plan.

In addition, two of the funded projects focused on the production, distribution and commercialization of music:

- World Rhythm Productions (Benin, funding cycle 2010) organized a musical talent contest to select four musicians. Later on, it recorded, distributed, promoted and sold their first CD. Promotion included radio and TV commercials. The resulting income was reinvested in the local music industry.
- The Bactria Cultural Centre (Tajikistan, funding cycle 2011) organized a series of activities aimed at young musicians, agents and technicians of the music industry. It attempted to reinforce their competences in music management, self-production, promotion, sales and sound technology. Besides, it facilitated the musicians' mobility, improved the networks between the different actors in this sector and gave access to recording equipment.

Finally, one activity was devoted to author's rights laws in Film, TV and Music:

- The NGO Bal'lame (Niger, funding cycle 2011), in partnership with the Niger Office of Author's Rights organized courses to raise awareness amongst music, film and TV players (authors, producers, managers, studio owners, distributors, community radio and private TV station managers) and those in charge of guaranteeing author's rights laws (judges, lawyers, human rights associations) about the importance of defending author's rights laws. In addition, this NGO launched an awareness campaign about the importance of author's rights laws directed to general audiences through the local and national media.

As may be seen, the participation of different sectors of civil society in a number of developed or developing projects is clear. These are social groups, as in the case of young descendants of indigenous peoples, who have traditionally been marginalized by audiovisual systems in their respective regions. Many of these actions seek to transform children, youth and amateur creators into active agents of more plural and diverse audiovisual industries.

In addition, studies seek both the (re)cognition of a complex and multi-edge reality – as shown in the regional study about film and video made by the New Latin American Cinema Foundation (Gumucio Dagron 2012) – as well as a necessary diagnosis that is capable of contributing to the formulation of public policies in the audiovisual with the goal of ensuring the principle of diversity.

In contrast to these positive aspects, there is a significant lack of projects that conceptualize the audiovisual within the new digitally networked landscape (internet services, online portals, mobile applications, etc.) or work on the complementarity and synergies between the analogue and digital worlds (availability of offline digital catalogues, online complementary content, etc.). Also, a key sector in terms of digital literacy for the young generations, the gaming industry, has not attracted the attention of funded projects for the early IFCD's funding cycles.

It is also worth noting the absence of initiatives focused on a traditional medium like the radio, especially considering the important role that this media has played in the dissemination of information, ideas and cultural content in developing countries since the mid-twentieth century. Perhaps this absence is related to the implementation of other UNESCO programs such as the International Programme for the Development of Communication, which already supports projects focused on enhancing community radio experiences.

But, aside from the general positive and negative aspects that can be highlighted in relation to the 12 initiatives supported by the IFCD, we can analyse, to what extent the implementation of this new tool of multilateral cooperation is affecting the deep inequalities in the international trade of goods and audiovisual services. That is, how does the implementation of the IFCD challenge the hegemony of the US and the European Union in the international audiovisual market? We must remember that despite the presence of countries such as Canada, Russia, Argentina or China in the group of major exporters of audiovisual services, the United States and the European Union (27) remain on top – with exports in 2010 of 13,529 and 11,203 million dollars, respectively (WTO 2012, p. 183). Some analysts could perfectly argue that it is too early to assess the impact and the structuring effects of all the initiatives implemented with support from the IFCD. However, from our point of view, the dearth of projects executed in the audiovisual field, the local scale of most of them, and the small amount of resources available for each initiative (a maximum of 100,000 dollars) allow us to state that it is highly unlikely that the Fund will modify the existing situation.

Moreover, the significant absence of projects dealing with the new digital audiovisual landscape leaves intact the comparative advantage of US companies (Google, Netflix, Apple, etc.) in the field of new communication technologies. This is a serious shortcoming considering that intangible cultural goods and services represent the economic future of the cultural industries (Vlassis 2014, p. 297).

Final considerations

By the end of 2014, the Convention had the support of 133 States plus the European Union. Among the countries that have ratified their support, several of them have greatly developed autochthonous cultural industries – Australia, Canada and France – and new world economic powers – Brazil, India and China.

Although the Convention has achieved a great deal of support in the first years of its existence, there is still a lot of work to do since world powers such as Russia, Japan and the United States, countries like Pakistan and Turkey, or others from the Middle East and the Maghreb, such as Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Iran or Israel, have not ratified it yet. If these countries were to ratify the Convention, it would exponentially grow and more initiatives would be implemented.

In this context, the IFCD is an essential element in terms of the realization of the Convention and a new tool of international cooperation in the cultural field. The singularity of this multi-donor fund is that most of its resources are utilized to support the activities of local NGOs that work on cultural policies and industries in developing countries. In this sense, the IFCD is a key instrument to sponsor the collaboration South-South and North-South-South, as it was determined from its very launching. As mentioned above, most initiatives have been implemented in the African continent and the Latin American region.

The fifth ordinary session Intergovernmental Committee's report (Paris, December 2011) states the following:

All experts agreed that the IFCD remains unique in the international cultural funding landscape because it targets developing countries and their immediate local development needs and priorities without imposing an agenda that inevitably leads to top-down designing/selecting of the programs. In addition, the IFCD's innovative approach is allowing smaller and more specialized non-profit organizations to have access to funds that have traditionally been almost exclusively allocated to larger, highly networked organizations. (UNESCO 2011, p. 6)

However, as this text has demonstrated, the IFCD's dependence on the willfulness of the contributing countries is its Achilles' heel. In its first years, a few rich countries (mostly, Norway and France) have given out most of the funding. In addition, despite its intended periodicity, States, with a few exceptions, have not contributed regularly to the Fund. In the first years of its functioning, the IFCD has not managed to get the commitment of media corporations or civil society organizations working within the cultural industries field.

The IFCD's dependence on wilfulness is directly related to the current political and economic juncture since key countries of the Convention are going through a severe crisis, negatively affecting the IFCD. Prove of this is the amount of money raised in 2012 and 2013. In this context, it seems sensible to implement an ambitious plan to obtain resources by diversifying the pool of potential contributors – commissioned, as we see, to an external consulting firm. Another possibility is re-opening the debate in order to establish periodical mandatory contributions from the Parties of the Convention such as the World Heritage Fund or the Fund for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. One way or another, the future is about to be written.

Regarding the 71 IFCD's initiatives supported by the IFCD, it is worth mentioning that these are concerned with multiple issues related to the introduction of cultural policies, the capacity building of diverse groups, and the strengthening and creation of cultural industries. Beyond those aids that support the identification of specific needs and the preparation of funding applications, the beneficiary programs and projects deal with a wide variety of activities and sectors of intervention. In any case, the risk lies – as we analyse in this text – in working with inaccurate definitions and, consequently, in extending the IFCD's intervention to support projects that contribute only indirectly to the growth of dynamic cultural sectors.

In relation to the projects supported by the IFCD within the audiovisual industry, it should be noted that most of these are intended to 'create market' either through the launching of new products and services, the professional training of different agents or the development of research geared towards the acquisition of knowledge in regard to the potential of the audiovisual. In other words, it is possi-

ble to see the IFCD as a tool that ‘tends to increase the governance over culture and cultural expressions in the name of regulating the global economic processes (...) by using guidance, contracts and financial support in enhancing the economic efficiency of country-specific cultural production’ (Pyykkönen 2002, p. 560).

Five of the 12 audiovisual projects finalized their contract with the IFDC at the end of April 2012; three did the same on March 2013; other three finalized between March and July 2014; and the last one awarded, which belongs to the fourth funding cycle, is currently in progress. Therefore, at this point it is difficult to estimate the ‘structuring effects’ and ‘sustainability’ that these local NGOs-driven initiatives may have in the medium and long term. Precisely, the ‘structuring effects’ and ‘sustainability’ of the implemented projects is a growing concern among donor countries. This concern was expressed during the analysis of the IOS report’s recommendations (Torggler *et al.* 2012) and the discussions about the immediate future of IFCD.

However, although ‘IFDC is essential for the implementation of the 2005 Convention’ – as the Swiss ambassador Rodolphe Imhoof said, acting as chairman of the sixth meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee (Paris, December 2012) – we should not forget that the IFCD is a modest tool, which provides limited financial assistance for projects for a short period of time. Therefore, and without underestimating the importance that most of the projects funded by the IFDC may have at the local level, it is necessary to ask how and to what extents they can contribute to reduce the profound imbalances that characterize the circulation of audiovisual content both regionally and internationally. In our view, there is no evidence pointing to the fact that the IFCD is going to transform unequal international and regional flows.

We can take the example of the music industry, which has a very high level of concentration internationally. Three corporate groups dominate it: Universal Music Group, Sony Music Entertainment and Warner Music Group. According to *Music & Copyright’s* annual survey of the music industry, these majors had in 2013 a 75% share of combined physical and digital recorded-music trade revenues. Given the blatant character of these data, the question becomes obvious: how can the projects supported by the IFCD affect these three major corporations’ market control? We could also ask what kind of logic supports the approved projects. Are they truly encouraging different logics and behaviours from those practiced by dominant transnational companies? Or are they, conversely, reinforcing the existing business logic within the music field through the training in marketing techniques and the strengthening of copyright laws?

Despite the seemingly apparent good intentions behind the conception of this new tool of international cooperation in the field of cultural industries and the demonstrated commitment of a handful of countries, today it is unthinkable that the IFCD will manage to change the reality of international and/or regional trade of cultural goods and services. And this should be a priority for international cooperation within the field of cultural industries as well as for an international treaty that exists to protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions.

If we truly want to make the IFCD a dynamic element of change in regard to the international flows of cultural goods and services, so that they reflect the richness of identities within the different societies that exist in our world, it is necessary to implement a variety of measures. Firstly, it is necessary to establish mandatory and periodic financial contributions for the Convention’s signatory countries, and launch

an intensive campaign, involving States and international agencies, aimed at raising money from big media-cultural enterprises. Secondly, it is necessary to substantially increase the support for projects related to the audiovisual industry and encourage the presentation of projects that intend to reshape the digital audiovisual landscape. Finally, it would be desirable to consider the creation of a budget line to support larger projects (up to 100,000 dollars per project) and stimulate the implementation of initiatives that promote the circulation of goods and services within the cultural industries from developing countries into the markets of developed countries.

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Notes

1. The Conference of the Parties (plenary and supreme body) and the Intergovernmental Committee (consisting of 24 delegations of the Parties), supported by the Secretariat of the 2005 Convention of UNESCO, are the organs of this Convention (see articles 22, 23 and 24 of the 2005 Convention).
2. The ‘Silent Party –Diversity for the ears’ was celebrated in Bonn, Germany, on 16 May 2012, with the support of the German Commission at UNESCO. This event raised 3009 dollars. The Québécois Party representative, Neko Likongo, launched a campaign that accounted for 36 contributors who donated 1512 dollars in 2011 and 883 in 2012.
3. The first members of this panel were elected for a period of two years, and then extended for another year by the Intergovernmental Committee during its third session (Paris, December 2009). The choice of these specialists was based, among other criteria, on their capacity to represent the different UNESCO electoral regions and the complementary character of the member’s expertise. The first six experts appointed were: Ferdinand Richard (France), Tjarve Baiba (Latvia), Rosalía Winocur (Mexico), Li He (China), Kokou Koami Denakpo (Togo) and Khamis Alshamakhi (Oman).
4. The Conference of the Parties specified that the Pilot Phase would last 36 months, between June 2009 and June 2012, establishing that once finished, the Intergovernmental Committee should evaluate the IFCD, assessing the impact of the supported programs and projects and revising the working mechanisms of the Fund.

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Appendix 1. The IFCD: audiovisual industry projects

Initiative title	Sector	Project leader	Country	Amount (in u\$s)	Brief description	Protagonists	Observations
First Funding Cycle 2010–2011 (5 initiatives/amount: 301,797 u\$s; 19.5% of total)							
8th Festival Young Images within Cultural Diversity	Film exhibition	Kine, Cultural y Educativa Foundation (ONG/ www.fundacionkine.org.ar)	Argentina	58,973	Exhibition of 125 short films made by children and young people from 24 countries	Children and young people, between 5 and 25, from Latin America	Patronage from the Secretariat of Human Rights, Minister of Justice and Human Rights, Argentina
Proximus Rezo	Music production, distribution and commercialization	World Rhythm Productions – WRP (NGO)	Benin	20,000	Music talent context, selection of 4 musicians, CD production, distribution, promotion and sale	Non-professional musicians	The first 3000 copies of Sessimé's CD (afro-pop-rock) were sold in 3 months
Central African Image Bank – BIMAC	Film and TV distribution	Association Camerounaise pour la Promotion de L'Audiovisuel et du Spectacle – APPAS (ONG)	Cameroon	80,000	Design of the first Central African audiovisual (film and TV) database: Central African Image – BIMAC	Audiovisual producers	BIMAC Director: Rémi Atangana Abega Project manager: Paule Barbara Nga
Study about community cinema and audiovisual production in Latin America and the Caribbean	Regional study about film and video	The Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano Foundation–FnCL (NGO/ www.cinelatinoamericano.org)	Cuba	45,080	First study about community cinema in Latin America and the Caribbean: it documents the experience of 55 communities in 14 countries	Filmmakers, researchers, institutions and general public	Coordinator: Alfonso Gumucio Dragon. Counseled by the UNESCO's office in La Habana and the contribution of the UNESCO Mexican National Commission
Social intercultural Communications through audiovisual creation (COSICA)	Audiovisual capacity building	Instituto de Relaciones Internacionales e Investigaciones para la Paz – IRIPAZ (ONG/ www.iripaz.org)	Guatemala	97,744	Creation of an audiovisual training centre (and a training residency at USAC) for the use indigenous people	Guatemalan aboriginal youth:	In partnership with San Carlos University (USAC)
Second Funding Cycle 2011–2012 (4 initiatives/amount: 298,280 u\$s; 23% of total)							
Mapping out the film industry in Bosnia–Herzegovina	National study on film industry	Visual Culture Association – VizArt (ONG)	Bosnia–Herzegovina	35,700	Study on the film sector to put together a Plan of Action to highlight the economic potential of the country's industry	Public institutions, producers, film professionals and NGOs	Interviewed acting players in the sector and polls
Training and distribution for indigenous filmmakers	Production and distribution of educational audiovisual material	Video nas Aldeias – VnA (ONG/ www.videonasaldeias.org.br)	Brazil	97,580	Production of an educational collection (didactic guide and 6 films, dubbed and subtitled) for use in the classroom, to promote cultural diversity and fight against negative stereotypes about indigenous groups	Brazilian aboriginal people: ashaininka, mbya-guarani and kisêdjê	Children films. They will be given to the Ministry of Education for adaptation and distribution in primary schools

Strengthening of capacity building to promote Niger's emerging cultural industries	Training and raising awareness about author's rights	Bal'lame (ONG)	Niger	80,000	Training –courses– and awareness – national information campaign about author's rights	Courses for music and audiovisual industries agents: authors, producers, managers, studio owners and distributors; private TV stations and community radios; Agents in charge of guaranteeing author's rights: judges, magistrates and human right's associations	Bal'lame organized 6 TV debates, 2 in French and 4 in native languages. Information campaign (French, zema and hausa) in the national media (Télé Sahel, Télé Ténéré, La Voix du Sahel, Radio Ténéré and 16 community radios)
Strengthening and diversification of Tajikistan's musical production	Music production, distribution and commercialization	Bactria Cultural Centre (ONG/www.bactria.net), affiliated to the French I-NGO ACTED ACTED (Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development)	Tajikistan	85,000	Strengthening competences in music management, self-production, promotion, sales and sound technology. Improve the networks for the different actors in the sector. Support new tendencies and traditional styles	Young musicians, agents and technicians of the music industry	The Bactria Cultural Center cooperates with local and international partners: BBC, Global Music Center, Future of Music Coalition, Gurminj Museum, the band Shashmaqom Academy or the Tajiko National Conservatory
Third Funding Cycle 2012–2013 (2 initiatives/amount: 174,722 u\$; 16% of total)							
Develop an audiovisual micro-industry in Siberut	Audiovisual capacity building	Perkumpulan Hijau Siberut – PASIH (ONG/ http://siberutihjau.org)	Indonesia	99,982	Creation of a micro-industry in the island of Siberut through the capacity building of young indigenous people in audiovisual production and management. Development of a competitive indigenous micro industry	Young indigenous people from the island of Siberut: 150, half men and half women	In partnership with the Intercultural Multimedia Centre (IMC)
Measurement of economic contribution to the Macedonian audiovisual industry	National study on the audiovisual industry	School of Journalism and Public Relations – UNESCO Chair in Media, Dialogue and Mutual Understanding (NGO/ http://unescochair-vs.edu.mk)	Macedonia	74,740	Study about the audiovisual industry, identifying good practices and innovative experiences. Evaluating the audiovisual sector to catalyse regional and local development	Relevant agents in the local audiovisual industry and public institutions	To create a document that would contribute to the design of a National Strategic Plan for the audiovisual sector in Macedonia
Fourth Funding Cycle 2013–2014 (1 initiative/amount: 42,490 u\$; 5.6% of total)							
Building a viable and sustainable film industry in Malawi	Film industry	Malawi National Commission for UNESCO (Party)	Malawi	42,490	Strengthening the national film industry through the development of a national strategy and investment plan	Representatives from public institutions, civil society and cultural operators working in the audiovisual industry	Main activities: an open call for professionals and experts, a five-day roundtable, a press conference and the development of a platform for sharing ideas

Source: Elaborated by the author.