

cultural heritage, offer opportunities for the development of a sustainable creative and inclusive economy, especially for young people and including the digital economy.

In Mozambique, the role of culture is well acknowledged in the government's five years plan (Plano Quinquenal do Governo – PQG 2019-2024) as part of priority I – Develop Human Capital and Social Justice. The PQG identifies the development of culture and the creative sector as a factor for economic development, job creation and women empowerment. The policy for cultural and creative industries, youth, and the national employment strategy also consider culture as a factor for development. However, the budget allocated for culture is low - corresponding to only 0.16 % of the total state budget in 2021 – and is mostly consumed by the ministry country-wide structure of public institutes, artistic higher education establishments and cultural venues, the majority of which is concentrated in the capital city Maputo. The ministry lacks the necessary qualified human and financial resources to implement its mandate. It has a network of houses of culture ('Casas da cultura') that are present in the district capitals of the provinces with the role of providing training to artists in several areas like music, dance, theatre and painting. They also organise festivals and cultural events. The existing cultural public infra-structures and facilities, including these houses of culture, as well the cultural heritage national sites and monuments, are in poor conditions and have extremely limited capacity to deliver. They do not provide the necessary tools and means to the sector's professionals and citizens to create, produce and enjoy cultural contents. At local level, municipalities have the potential to be an emergent stakeholder in the field of culture, as is the case in Maputo, but for the majority of them culture is not considered in their strategic agenda and insufficient human and financial resources are allocated to the sector.

The country's artists and cultural professionals pursue their careers mostly as self-employed and, to a lesser extent, in micro and small organisations, associations or private companies. It should be noted that due to the lack of specific regulatory frameworks, notably the absence of an artists' status, many of them work informally, without labour contracts, thus not contributing nor benefiting from any state or social security protection. The sector's diverse value chains have several constraints, notably the lack of intermediary organisations capable of assuring the production, agency and distribution of artistic and creative works and services.

Due to historical linkages, the EU and Member States are already key partners involved in the cultural sector in Mozambique through several projects, cultural diplomacy, policy dialogue and coordination mechanisms. The EU uses different instruments like grants to civil society as well in the regional project PROCULTURA, implemented in the PALOP-TL countries<sup>7</sup> covering topics of heritage, tourism and sports, and urban and community regeneration. These set good examples of how this sector can find innovative ways to bring new dynamics to deprived areas creating alternative forms of revenue and allowing for citizens participation and empowerment. Some of the EU Member States also collaborate within the scope of the local cluster of EUNIC, with the participation of Germany, France, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom as an associate member. Italy is also considering joining the cluster this year. Most of these Member States have cultural centres in Maputo. The cultural centres develop regular cultural programmes and provide infrastructure to local operators such as libraries, auditoriums and exhibition halls as well as financial support. One of the areas of action of the EUNIC cluster in Mozambique has been the challenges and new perspectives brought by digital culture, with a workshop on this topic having already been held and recently a digital platform being developed for the international promotion of the visual arts in Mozambique<sup>8</sup>.

The action contributes to the Gender Action Plan III (JOIN/2020/17 final) especially to the thematic area of engagement 'promoting equal participation and leadership' in the cultural and creative sector.

The action contributes to the priority area 2 'Growing Young' of the Multi-annual Indicative Programme for Mozambique. In particular, it will contribute to the objectives: "Enhanced opportunities for youth to obtain decent employment" and "Foster innovation and digital transformation for inclusive growth". This is in line with the Joint Communication "EU strategy for international cultural relations" (JOIN/2016/029 final) which recognises the role of culture as a vector for sustainable social and economic development. The EU Strategy seeks to promote

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<sup>7</sup> Official Portuguese speaking African countries and Timor Leste

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