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# Promoting Local Content

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Paper presented by

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At WSIS PrepCom II

Multi-stakeholder Roundtable No. 2

**Access to knowledge, open access, cultural and linguistic diversity, local content**



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## WSIS: Challenges

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- Narrowing the digital divide
- Building international consensus on norms and principles
- Ensuring free flow of, and access to data, information and knowledge



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## UNESCO's mandate

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- Promote the **free flow** of ideas by word and image
- Maintain, increase and spread **knowledge**
- **UNESCO: The Content Organization**



## Information or knowledge societies?

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- Enhancing information flows and providing infrastructure is insufficient

### But

- Encouraging knowledge creation
- Ensuring knowledge preservation
- Promoting knowledge dissemination
- Enhancing knowledge utilization

### Therefore

- Establishing a holistic/comprehensive concept



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## UNESCO's vision

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### Creating knowledge societies that respect

- Universality, indivisibility & interdependence of **human rights**, including freedom of expression
- Right to **education for all**
- Right to **information for all**
- **Diversity** of cultures and identities



## Basic principles

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- **Universal access** to information (strong public domain of information and access to “global public goods”)
- **Equal access to education**, capacity-building and generation and production of knowledge
- **Freedom of expression**
- Preservation and promotion of **cultural diversity**, including multilingualism



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## Local Content: Key to Cultural Diversity

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*“Culture takes diverse forms across time and space. This diversity is embodied in the uniqueness and plurality of the identities of the groups and societies making up humankind. As a source of exchange, innovation and creativity, **cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature**. In this sense, it is the common heritage of humanity and should be recognized and affirmed for the benefit of present and future generations.”*

(UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, Article 1)



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## What is local content?

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- An expression and communication of a **community's locally generated, owned and adapted knowledge and experience** that is relevant to the community's situation.





## Communities as content creators

### Communities are

- Defined by their location, culture, language, or area of interest.
- Have strong cultural, linguistic, religious or common interest links.
- May have members who share the same location or are geographically dispersed
- Not static or exclusive
- individuals may belong to many communities at the same time



## **Challenges for local content creation**

- **Lack of local content:**  
Across all media and information channels.
- **Unequal content creation:**  
Most content comes from providers in the developed countries
- **Inadequate scope of content:**  
Many content reflects language, lifestyles and concerns that is different from those “consuming” the content.
- **Inadequate Intellectual Property Right provisions:**  
Local content creators are not sufficiently recognized in IPR systems



## Reasons for lack of local content

- Limited financial **resources** of developing countries for content production;
- Inappropriate **training** opportunities for content creators;
- Lack of access to advanced **technology** (production units, digital cameras, digital studios);
- Low motivation and commitment at the **decision-making level** to change the situation
- **Market forces**, which do not encourage diversity.

**But local talent is never a problem!**



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## **Examples of UNESCO's actions**

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- **Local Content for Development through ICTs**
- **UNESCO Programme for Creative Content**
- **Public Service Broadcasting**
- **Community Multimedia Centres**



## Local Content for Development Through ICTs

### UNESCO helps producing local ICT-based content

- **Innovative ICT-based content development**  
Applying 3D interactive software and multimedia techniques to produce electronic learning materials (e.g. for Rural Water Sanitation)
- **Development and dissemination of tools**  
Greenstone, a multilingual digital library development tool (Open Software; developed in cooperation with University of Waikato, New Zealand)
- **Capacity building**  
Training of trainers in how to develop CD-ROMs and multimedia applications, facilitating the production of new and improved curricula for teachers in Africa
- **Managing and revitalising traditional knowledge**  
Using multimedia techniques in preserving and disseminating local heritage (e.g. Revitalising Ancient Pacific Navigation application through ICTs.)



## UNESCO Programme for Creative Content

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### Supporting creativity and innovation in local content production for television, radio and new media

- To promote the expression of cultural and linguistic diversity through communication and information
- To encourage the production of creative, culturally diverse content in developing countries

### Through

- **Training** communication and information professionals.
- Providing **seed funding** for content production.
- Supporting **distribution/dissemination**



## Public Service Broadcasting

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### **Serving the interests of people as citizens rather than as consumers**

- Encouraging media coverage of educational and cultural matters
- Developing the capacity of disadvantaged communities to express and define themselves
- Promoting discussion between broadcasters, producers and other decision-makers about the coverage of cultural and educational matters by the audiovisual media.



# Community Multimedia Centres

**Radio Browsing:**  
*creating audio  
content based on  
digital resources*



**Community  
Multimedia  
Centres**

**Community  
Database:**  
*creating &  
storing  
content for  
development*

**Websites,  
posters, flyers...**  
*Local people  
creating their  
own content*