



Somali Ministry of  
Education, Culture and  
Higher Education



Somali Academy of  
Sciences and Arts



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



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# Why a National Culture Strategy for Somalia?



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## What is a Culture Strategy?

A National Cultural Strategy is similar to a policy in that it presents a vision and a framework of measures and actions relating to the development of culture at a local, national, regional or international levels. The vision of Somalia's National Culture Strategy is to develop a vibrant and resilient Somali culture sector that contributes to national identity, social cohesion, peace-building and sustainable development through intergenerational and intercultural dialogue, and exchange at national and international levels.



## Why a Culture Strategy?

Somalia's National Culture Strategy and its associated Action Plan can guide the revival of Somalia's culture sector to be able to contribute to peace and reconciliation, rule of law, social and economic development as well as the conservation of its unique biodiversity and the promotion of its cultural diversity.

A Strategy also helps to anchor culture in all development policies, whether they concern education, science, communication, health, the environment or tourism.

## How to participate?

- Participate in the national consultations organized by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education.
- Become familiar with the fields of Culture in Somalia.
- Raise awareness of other stakeholders.
- Send your suggestions and comments by email: [info@moe.gov.so](mailto:info@moe.gov.so).

## The Culture of Somalia

Somali has a rich and diverse cultural heritage ranging from cultural and natural heritage sites to intangible cultural heritage practices to museums and underwater cultural heritage to the cultural and creative industries sector.



## Somalia: A Land of Poets

Somalis developed an oral tradition of poetry and storytelling since at least the 12th century and that has been passed down through generations. Although poetry has been mainly an expression for elders, today's young Somalis have been encouraged to develop their poetic talent.

## Performance arts and film industry

The theatre was part of a vibrant cultural life in Somalia in the 20th century. When Somalia became independent in 1960, Somalis established a motion picture industry themselves. They began setting up production companies, distributed their films worldwide, and even launched an annual international film festival in Mogadishu.

## Culture's contribution to sustainable development in Somalia

A strengthened culture sector in Somalia would have a multiplier effect on:

- Empowering civil society, helping it to become an agent for change and a driving force in efforts to create a more transparent and democratic society.
- Reviving cultural infrastructure and protecting cultural property.
- Increasing respect for human rights in general and freedom of expression in particular.
- Strengthening understanding and value for Somali culture and promoting cultural diversity and respect for other cultures.
- Building a potential source of revenue for the country in the form of cultural tourism and the creative economy.

The cultural and creative industries represent **2,250 billion USD**, generate more than **30 million jobs** worldwide and employ more people between the **ages of 15 and 29** than any other sector.



## | The power of culture

In today's interconnected world, culture's power to transform societies is clear. Its diverse manifestations – from our cherished historic monuments and museums to traditional practices and contemporary art forms – enrich our everyday lives in countless ways.

Heritage constitutes a source of identity and cohesion, especially for communities disrupted by conflict and economic instability. Creativity contributes to building open, inclusive and pluralistic societies. Both heritage and creativity lay the foundations for vibrant, innovative and prosperous knowledge societies.







## Somalia & UNESCO

- ❑ Culture is domiciled at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Higher Education.
- ❑ In 2020 Somalia has ratified the UNESCO 1972 World Heritage Convention and the UNESCO 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention.
- ❑ Through these Conventions, Somalia is encouraged to identify and safeguard its tangible and intangible cultural heritage to ensure their transmission to future generations.
- ❑ In 2020 Somalia celebrated the reopening of its National Museum, National Theatre and National Library within a cultural compound that was closed for almost 30 years due to civil war and conflict.





## | UNESCO Conventions

**1954** Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict



**1970** Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property



**1972** Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage



**2001** Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage



**2003** Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage



**2005** Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions

