

## Opinion

# Arts and Tourism in Developing Economy: Prospects in Nigeria

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Arts and Tourism are important to a nation's economy. As such, the culture-related industries, also known as "creative industries," provide direct economic benefits to Nigeria. Arts and Tourism create jobs, attract investments, generate tax revenues, and stimulate economies. Since these enhance quality of life, arts and tourism are important complement to Nigeria's development, enriching local amenities and attracting young professionals to an area. To help the country realize her full potential and economic benefits of arts and tourism sector, Nigerian government must identify the pivotal creative industries or clusters in Nigeria. Then she can adopt strategies that support and strengthen these industries. The creative industries offer numerous benefits to Nigeria's economy, and the country has the opportunity to both improve livability and boost the nation economy by investing in the sector. This paper offers insights to help Nigerian government incorporate arts and tourism in the nation's economic development strategies and tips on how to understand and measure his creative industries, develop plans to capitalize on the benefits of those industries, and provide support that helps sustain the contributions of arts and tourism sector.

**Keywords:** Arts and Tourism, Developing Economy, Nigeria

## INTRODUCTION

There is running water and regular electricity in my country. Does that make my country economy developed? No one really has a definition for what a developing economy is. As a rule, a developing economy is one where people have a lower standard of living and less developed industries than other countries. However, it's all relative. One of the easiest ways to determine whether a country has a developing economy is in the population. Developing economies tend to have higher birthrates. Traditionally, it has been necessary to have a higher birthrate to maintain the population against diseases and bad living conditions. In a developing country things are a little better, but the lack of contraceptives and sex education means that people keep having babies. Death rates are also

higher and life-spans are shorter because medical care isn't quite as good as in developed economies, but it doesn't compensate for the high birthrate. Because of that, the population in a developing economy rises much faster than in a developed economy.

A developing economy can also be determined in part by the way an economy makes money. In a developing economy a country relies on its natural resources. In a developed economy the country makes use of information and communication technology - computers and the Internet.

The term "developing economy" is becoming more common among urban planners, arts administrators, economic developers, and business and municipal leaders.<sup>1</sup> These term reference a variety

of types of jobs, people, and industries, including the sectors of visual, performing, and literary arts, as well as applied fields like architecture, graphic design, and marketing. Whatever label is used, this use of terminology linking art and tourism and the economy indicates recognition of the connections among the fields of planning, economic development, and arts and tourism.

Nigeria confronts a global economy that is increasingly competitive and in which the country is no longer assured of a dominant position in West Africa. Smaller countries are outpacing Nigeria in key indicators such as economic growth, new product innovation, broadband penetration, and educational attainment among younger generations.

As this gap widens, Nigerian arts scholars recognize that a competitive edge and a creative edge go hand-in-hand to support economic prosperity. In today's economy: Creative and new media industries are growing in number and playing increasingly prominent economic and social roles; The market value of products is increasingly determined by a product's uniqueness, performance, and aesthetic appeal, making creativity a critical competitive advantage to a wide array of industries; The most desirable high-wage jobs require employees with creativity and higher order problem-solving and communications skills; and Business location decisions are influenced by factors such as the ready availability of a creative workforce and the quality of life available to employees.

Creative economy is defined in a variety of ways, depending on the composition and character of businesses, nonprofits, individuals, and venues that exist in any given area. The creative economy may include human, organizational, and physical assets. It also includes many types of cultural institutions, artistic disciplines, and business pursuits. Industries that comprise the arts and culture sector may include advertising, architecture, the art and antiques market, crafts, design, fashion, film, digital media, television, radio, music, software and computer games, the performing arts, publishing, graphic arts, and cultural tourism. Creative industries are important to Nigeria's economies.

Researchers have shown economic contributions of the arts and tourism using a range of measures, from the work of nonprofit arts agencies to the impact of cultural tourism. In addition to direct financial contributions, the arts and tourism can offer the nation a wide array of other economic benefits, such as: Helping weak economic areas, recruiting and developing a skilled workforce, and Attracting Tourism Naira.

## **Understand Nigeria's Arts and Tourism Industries**

It is important for Nigeria to measure her creative economy. Nigeria has unique enterprises in many of these creative industries, and understanding where these enterprises are and what they contribute to the nation's economy is a critical first step toward using creative industries as an economic development tool. To fully understand the economic contributions of these industries, Nigeria can "map" her arts and tourism assets. This involves performing an ongoing inventory of arts assets, conducting a cluster analysis, and maintaining arts industry data.

## **Incorporate the Arts and Tourism into National Planning**

After her cultural assets have been mapped and analyzed, Nigeria can use information to devise economic development strategies that harness the economic benefits of the creative industries on a national basis. Such strategies not only summarize the value of the arts to Nigeria, but they also identify new opportunities, point to productive initiatives, and reveal potential partners furthering arts-driven economic development in the country. The key elements of a good planning process are leadership and input from stakeholders, agreement on a clear vision, and visible kick-off efforts.

## **Develop Strategies to Provide Support for the Arts and Tourism Sector**

Once an overall plan has been developed, Nigeria can begin adopting specific policies, programs, or initiatives designed to advance economic development through arts and tourism. Nigeria typically target support for arts-related activity in the following areas, which are essential parts of Nigerian's arts infrastructure: industry clusters, small businesses, individual entrepreneurs, and networks.

## **Target Specific Sectors**

Just as Nigeria have identified specific energy, health, or information industries as important to her future economic success, so too should she identified a variety of creative industries that will offer significant potential for her economic growth. These may include film, design, crafts, music, traditional arts, environmental art, culinary arts, and many others.

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Once Nigeria has identified pivotal creative industries or economic clusters, it can then adopt different strategies—including incentive policies, development initiatives, training programs, or public-private collaborations—to encourage growth in that industry.

### **Strengthen the Nonprofit Arts and Cultural Infrastructure**

Nonprofit arts organizations provide educational and outreach services that help to cultivate demand for arts experiences—and, consequently, they benefit arts industries in general. Some nonprofit arts serve as incubators, providing essential design, communication, training, education or planning services to artist entrepreneurs and for-profit creative businesses. Others are the producers of artistic goods and experiences without which no creative economy can thrive. Still others are the “anchor” attractions in a community whose audiences provide essential business for nearby retail, restaurant and hospitality providers. As a result of these complex ties, efforts to foster economic growth in the arts must include the nonprofit as well as the for-profit sector, ensuring that nonprofits in the state have the capacity to be productive economic contributors and connectors.

### **Support Individual Businesses**

A small business sector in the arts can be important to Nigeria economies, particularly in rural areas. Nigeria can support business development in the arts by utilizing existing national networks, tapping national university systems, developing virtual networks, and supporting entrepreneurial collaborations. To foster the development of small businesses and micro-enterprises, Nigeria has networks of local, state, and federal programmes designed to assist small businesses and encourage entrepreneurship. These programs may provide a helpful boost to the arts industry, which is dominated by self-employed individuals or small businesses with fewer than five employees. These networks may be made available to entrepreneurs in the cultural or creative sectors.

### **Support Individual Entrepreneurs**

Individual artists are important producers of goods and services in every country’s cultural economy. It is through the work of individual artists that cultural goods are produced, small businesses are started, and innovative design ideas enter into the marketplace.

### **Support Collaborative Networks and Educational Services**

Nigeria can play an important role in connecting arts enterprises, artists, and entrepreneurs through the development of networks and partnerships that promote education, collaboration, and resource sharing.

Utilizing Public Higher Education: Nigeria can strengthen her creative workforce by incorporating critical arts skills into job training programmes for adults. Creativity can be cultivated through exposure to the visual, performing, and literary arts.

### **Leverage the Arts or Competitive Edge in Business**

Increasingly, benefits are realized from collaborations between artists and traditional industries. Arts and tourism can be used to support businesses in other industries, especially in product design. From ceramics to furniture, Nigerian companies face an international marketplace where value is increasingly determined by a product’s uniqueness, performance, and design. Creativity is becoming a critical competitive advantage.

### **Provide Planning Grants and Training to Communities**

Nigeria can help incorporate arts into community planning through both direct financial support and technical assistance or training. Encouraging Public and private investment in the Arts: With national leadership, private investments can be turned into economic as well as philanthropic investments.

### **Create Cultural Enterprise Zones or Communities**

A number of countries seek to encourage economic activity in communities by designating them as “arts districts” or “creative communities.” This strategy promotes exemplary local efforts and concentrates national resources in areas where local communities are prepared to undertake significant cultural development work to achieve positive economic outcomes.

### **Support the Development of Art Space**

As is true for many other industries, the successful production of cultural goods and events depends on the availability of adequate—and

sometimes specialized—facilities. In addition to supporting cultural production, arts spaces such as studios, galleries, and theatre help stir economic activity by attracting visitors from both inside and outside Nigeria. Often, cultural spaces become hubs for other kinds of activity, acting as magnets for citizen gatherings and civic events. In this way, cultural facilities can be a powerful Nigeria revitalization asset, even in economically distressed period.

### **Incorporate the Arts into National Tourism Strategy**

A major focus of national art strategies is strengthening tourism. Many travelers pick vacation spots not only for their natural resources but for their cultural offerings. Visitors plan or extend their trips to enjoy an area's unique food, art, or music. Festivals are one way an area can showcase these features.

### **Coordinate and Support Cultural Tourism Efforts**

Many localities have their own efforts and events aimed at attracting tourists. One way Nigeria can strengthen tourism is by coordinating cultural events on national level to give potential visitors a central resource for information on the arts.

### **Promote Distinctive Cultural Products**

Each region offers distinctive cultural products. Some towns are known for the quality of their ceramics, whereas other towns have attained distinctive success with their textiles, basketry, furniture, ironworks, calabash decoration, or other products. Nigeria can promote these products to help reinforce the brand identity of the town and can stimulate the expansion of markets for those products across national lines.

**Develop Unique State Branding:** Branding is an important marketing technique used to promote the sale of authentic art or craft.

## **CONCLUSION**

The arts and tourism have the potential to offer numerous benefits to national economies. Through the creative industries, Nigeria has an opportunity to create jobs, attract investments, generate tax revenues, and stimulate economies through tourism and consumer purchases. In addition, creative industries are contributing to the contemporary workforce, making

creative contributions to industries' products and services, and infusing culture into national development.

Nigeria can use the arts to boost her economies in a variety of ways, from incorporating arts into economic development and national development plans to supporting arts education and promoting arts assets as boosts to tourism. To get started, Nigeria should consider conducting a comprehensive scan of her cultural assets and include arts industries in her cluster analyses. After her cultural assets have been mapped, Nigeria can use information to devise economic development strategies that harness the economic benefits of the creative industries on a national basis. Such strategies not only summarize the value of the arts to Nigeria, but they also identify new opportunities, point to productive initiatives, and reveal potential partners furthering arts-driven economic development in the country. The key elements of a good planning process are leadership and input from stakeholders, agreement on a clear vision, and visible kick-off efforts.

Additionally, Nigeria should adopt strategies that support and strengthen the country's creative industries. This includes offering incentive policies targeted at the arts and tourism sectors as well as development initiatives, entrepreneurial training, marketing programs, or public-private collaborations to encourage growth and invest in specific creative clusters. It also includes leveraging the arts to gain a competitive edge in business.

In addition to incorporating the arts and tourism into her economic strategies, Nigeria can support the inclusion of art in community development strategies by offering grants and other support for localities for their planning efforts, establishing cultural enterprise zones, and creating public space for art, among others. Nigeria also can implement tourism strategies that use her unique arts and cultural attractions to bring tourism naira to localities while directly supporting arts enterprises.

By investing in the arts and incorporating arts and tourism into her economic development plans, Nigeria can reap numerous benefits —economic, social, civic, and cultural—that help generate a more stable, creative workforce; new tourism; and more livable communities.