

**Evaluation
of the Talent project
at Førde Traditional and World music festival**

**by
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Table of content

Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

2. Methodology of the review

- 2.1. Review of documents
- 2.2. Field trip and meetings with the administrators
- 2.3. Interviews
- 2.4. Reflections on the methodology

3. Background

4. Analytical description of the Talent project – including achievements and findings

- 4.1. Administration
- 4.2. Participating countries
- 4.3. Artistic leaders
- 4.4. Talents
- 4.5. Inviting and preparing
- 4.6. Arriving in Førde
- 4.7. Seven-day crash course
- 4.8. An inter-human or artistic project?
- 4.9. Returning to the participating countries
- 4.10. In the aftermath of the Talent project

5. Reflections on the goals of the Talent project

6. The Talent project in the light of the Grant Scheme Rules

- 6.1. The overreaching goals of the Grant Scheme Rules
- 6.2. The secondary goals of the Grant Scheme Rules

7. Focal points on Norwegian cultural development

8. The Talent project in relation to other Norwegian musical aid in developing countries

9. Recommendations

- 9.1. Redefining the goals of the Talent project
- 9.2. Ensuring the synergies and continuity in the concrete actions of the Talent project

Final Conclusions

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We, the evaluators and authors of the present evaluation, would like to thank Førde Traditional and World music festival and Concerts Norway for giving us an insight to the Talent project. We are particularly grateful to all the informants: administrators, artistic leaders, talents, contact institutions and persons as well as music experts and journalists who have shared their experiences and opinions on the project. We have done our best to put their information and experiences into words.

Executive Summary

The Talent project is a collaboration between the Førde festival, as the project owner and thus administrative and economic responsible, and Concerts Norway. Since the mid 1990's, the project has gathered nine young musicians from three countries during and after the Førde festival, in order to exchange and develop musically, as well as get insight into each others cultures and build friendships. The year after, during the return visit to one of the participating countries, the talents and the artistic leaders have met again with a goal to build further on the experiences established.

The project has grown and developed during the course of its existence and by 2015 reached more than 200 talents in 34 countries. It has connected people, networks and institutions worldwide, and has had a social, personal, cultural and artistic impact on those involved as well as other stakeholders linked to it.

The project has provided a valuable multicultural platform for the talents involved, given them an opportunity to develop through cross-cultural capacity building activities and collaborations as well as functioned as a professional career toolbox. Further, it has contributed to establish long lasting and international meeting points and networks for the talents, artistic leaders and other stakeholders, despite further activated and developed mainly by the latter and not by the administrators or within the project.

Key institutions and persons in developing countries have been included in order to propose talents as well as arrange for the return visits. In order to reach a more comprehensive incorporation of the latter with the goal to let them take part in and achieve long term profits on the experiences made, new measures must be taken.

The project has given culturally and politically oppressed music genres a stage on which they can present themselves, but not directly contributed to strengthening the musicians' right to freely develop their music or their profession within their respective countries. Consequently, and regardless of serving as a micro level addition to the overall work on human rights through the life changing opportunities it might give, it is difficult to define to what degree the project has contributed to ensuring the accomplishment of the freedom of speech. Nevertheless, the Talent project's active approach towards cultural rights and gender balance strengthens its societal relevance and efficiency and should therefore be encouraged and appreciated continuously.

With a review of its overall goals and measures in line with Norwegian policies and goals on cultural collaborations in developing countries, the Talent project would be an even more relevant contribution to the latter and thus have an even greater impact on the strengthening of free cultural expressions and freedom of speech, as well as of cultural proficiency and infrastructure in developing countries in the future.

As for the research and processing of findings, we have tried to reach out to a representative selection (29 persons in total) of role players, such as administrators, artistic leaders, talents as well as music experts or journalists, making an emphasis on "dialogue based" interviews. The interviews (Annex 2) and the documentation (Annex 1) have contributed to our recommendations.

The main recommendations are:

9.1: Redefine the long term and short term goals of the Talent project.

- 9.1.1: Update and redefine the Frame Agreement between the Førde festival and the MFA.
- 9.1.1: Strengthen the flow of relevant information between the administrators and the MFA.
- 9.1.2: Develop a mandate for the artistic leaders in which their tasks are linked to the goals named in 9.1. and 9.1.1.
- 9.1.3: Mark the participation in the Talent project with ceremonial actions.
- 9.1.3: Improve the presentation of the Talent project on the web sites of the Førde festival, Concerts Norway as well as on social media in general.
- 9.1.3: Create a web site for the Talent project.

9.2: Ensure better connections, synergies and continuity between the different levels of the Talent project.

- 9.2.1: Establish measures to connect the talents and the artistic leaders prior to the week they stay in Førde.
- 9.2.2: Perform research on the talents prior to the stay in Førde.
- 9.2.3: Perform return visits to both participating countries.
- 9.2.4: Establish follow-up measures to ensure the continuity and the durability of the seeds sown in the Talent project.

1. Introduction

The Talent project was first held in 1995. It is a collaboration between the Førde Traditional and World music festival (Førde festival) and Concerts Norway supported by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Since then, nine young musicians from two countries in addition to Norway have met and stayed together a week during the Førde festival, in order to create music together under the guidance of two artistic leaders. The year after, they have met again in one of the participating countries.

The Talent project is part of the Førde festival that was arranged for the first time in 1990. Today the festival is the most important presenter of traditional music in Norway as well as the largest traditional and world music festival in Scandinavia. In 2015, National Geographic Travel ranked the festival as one of the top-seven music festivals in Europe. Yearly, a public of in total 28000 people have the pleasure of listening to the nearly 300 artists from 30 countries worldwide that enter the many stages of Førde, including more than 6400 artists from 130 countries since its beginning in 1990. As for the Talent project, it has received the UNESCO title "Young artist for intercultural dialogue Between the Arab and Western worlds" in honour of young artists for their efforts to promote dialogue between Arab and Western culture. The title was given to the 2008 project in which Egyptian and Palestinian talents were connected.

Regarding the purpose of this evaluation, the MFA has supported the Talent project since 2001 and thus contributed to its solid base of experience and knowledge. By 2015, the Ministry wishes to evaluate the project in order to discuss whether it has achieved its own goals and discuss to what extent these goals are relevant to the Ministry's over all goals and for the Grant Scheme Rules for Culture (03) and the focal points for Norway's work on cultural development in particular. This evaluation, which has been defined as such in accordance with the MFA, is performed correspondingly with the Terms of Reference dated 30 June 2015.

As for the structure of the evaluation, we have chosen to compose analytical descriptions through which the findings are presented. This is due to the complexity of the Talent project and its many layers of actions and roles. Regarding the different roles the *administrators* are the representatives from the Førde festival and Concerts Norway. Further, the *artistic leaders* and especially the *talents* play the main roles; in the evaluation no distinction is made between the foreign and Norwegian talents. The *contact institutions/persons* are part

of the administrators' network from the representative countries. The *journalists and/or experts on music* from the collaborating countries, are the ones following and supporting the talents in Førde. Sometimes the former and latter are concentrated in the same role. The so-called “artistkontaktene” are the *local helpers* from the Førde region who assist the talents with different tasks at the festival as a whole.

2. Methodology of the evaluation

2.1. Review of documents

We have studied documents, in Norwegian, English and Spanish, such as reports from meetings between different stakeholders, yearly reports from the Talent project from 2003 to 2015, articles in relevant newspapers and magazines worldwide, as well as films and photos on blogs, YouTube and Facebook. The list of documents and Internet links is to be found in Annex 1.

2.2. Field trip and meetings with the administrators

A field trip to the administration of the Førde festival was conducted by one of the evaluators from 12 to 14 October 2015. During the field trip the evaluator had continuous dialogue with the administration, and performed interviews with the director, the head of communication and the head of arrangements. Additionally, the evaluator examined the above mentioned archives on the Talent project and was supplied with archival information when requested. Meetings were also held with Concerts Norway as well as the MFA. Throughout the course of the evaluation, the evaluators continued the communication with the above mentioned via e-mail.

2.3. Interviews

Of the in total 29 persons that were interviewed, there were five administrators, 14 talents, six artistic leaders, five music experts or journalists and two external journalists. Further, seven persons who were contacted never responded or didn't want to contribute to the evaluation. The interviews were performed through personal meetings, Skype, e-mail or Facebook in Norwegian, English or Spanish. Due to a holistic approach to the material, the questions were established on the basis of the Terms of Reference and further developed in parallel with our interpretations. Several informants were contacted multiple times for follow-up questions. Due to the current political situation in Iran, we were unfortunately not able to reach the Iranian informants of the 2015 Talents. The list of informants is to be found in Annex 2.

2.4. Reflections on the methodology

Even though the Talent project has been regularly reported on and the archive is easy accessible and understandable, the project as such has a rather complex structure to which the archives alone don't do justice. In order to grasp the many layers of the project, and interpret them in relation the overall goals of the Førde festival as well as those of the MFA, we found the “dialogue based” interviews of even greater and more informative value than the former. Additionally, as the informants gave strongly personal and emotional narrations, with the social, cultural and musical experiences closely interwoven, we have tried to mirror this in the use of quotes and the generally “down to earth” wording of the evaluation. As for the quotes, these have been verified by the informants.

3. Background

In 1995 the first Talent project was arranged at Førde Traditional and World music festival. During five days a group of 12 young and talented musicians from Egypt, Zimbabwe and Norway got to meet, jam, learn from each others' experiences and become friends. The idea of the Talent project had been born the year before, during a project in which the Førde festival served as an arena to present and support Norwegian talents on the field. Being inspired by the artistic, professional and social benefits that arose from this national encounter, the administrators asked themselves: 'Why don't we try this out on an international level?' Since then, the idea has developed into a ritual. Each year, three musicians aged 18-25 from three different countries meet for a week during the Førde festival and create music together under the guidance of two artistic leaders. Experts or journalists on music from the invited countries also take part. During the stay in Førde, the talents work together in order to produce and perform concerts at the festival. The following year, the group meets again in one of the participating countries to follow up where they left a few months before and yet again to experience the fellowship of playing together. By 2015, this 21 year old ritual has gathered more than 200 musical talents from 34 countries.

According to the latest Framework Agreement between the Førde festival and the MFA (2010-2013), the main goal of the Talent project is to provide a platform for young talented musicians, by giving them an opportunity to develop through collaboration with other young musicians across cultural and geographic borders, and under professional guidance. Through this encounter, the goal is also to create and strengthen mutual cultural respect as well as insight into the talents' own cultures. Further, the aim is to contribute to the construction of professional careers as well as creating long lasting and international meeting points and networks for all parties involved. As the Talent project presents musicians from cultures that often encounter difficulties and restricted conditions in their home countries, it is further, a goal to help strengthen as well as support the young musicians' right to freedom of speech, to develop their music as well as their profession within their respective musical traditions. While the above mentioned goals are targeted mainly towards young talented musicians, and secondly towards artistic leaders and relevant institutions, the last aim is targeted towards the great audience of the Førde festival, as having them experience the results of the musical collaboration performed and presented by the talents is essential.

The goals are to be achieved through the following actions: First and foremost through the Talent project itself, by choosing talents based on artistic and geographic criteria, by facilitating musical encounters between the talents invited to the Førde festival, and finally by arranging a return visit to one of the participating countries. Second, through collaborating with other institutions in Norway and in developing countries, and thus ensure that the experiences made also include and profit the institutions in the above mentioned countries. Third, having journalists from collaborating countries, preferably from the same countries as the talents, to take part in the Førde festival, and by that strengthen the overall knowledge on traditional music worldwide, as well as by profiling the project, the talents and their music in Norway as well as in the collaborating countries.

4. Analytical description of the Talent project

- Including achievements and findings

4.1. Administration

The Førde festival holds the overall administrative and economic responsibility of the project which is performed in close collaboration with Concerts Norway. Further, the festival has the main responsibility for the encounters and actions taking place in Norway, whereas Concerts Norway is the project manager of the international coordination and collaboration. The project covers a period of two and a half years: the autumn of year one at which time the initial planning starts and countries and talents are chosen, the spring and summer of year two at which time the talents are invited and take part in the project during the Førde festival, and spring of year three at which time the talents meet again in one of the other participating countries.

4.2. Participating countries

The selection of countries seems to have followed four defining factors. First and foremost, the selection is conducted in dialogue with the MFA with an attempt to respond directly to the Ministry's priorities as well as 03-countries. Second, it's a goal for Concerts Norway to see and relate the Talent project to other tasks they perform on behalf of the Ministry. The third factor is defined by the aim to combine neighbouring countries or countries in the same region, in order to strengthen the possibilities for bilateral collaboration after the ending of the project. Fourth, the geographical factor also is important for the choice of instruments and the genre, making it easier for the participants to find common grounds prior to, during and after the stay in Førde. As for criteria three and four this has been a focus since 2007 when China and Nepal were connected in the same group of talents, and have continued with, for instance Zambia and Tanzania in 2009, Morocco and Tunisia in 2012, the Philippines and Indonesia in 2013 and Peru and Venezuela in 2014. In rare cases, common language has been a criteria, as in the case of the latter as well as in lusophone Cape Verde and Brazil in 2010.

4.3. Artistic leaders

In parallel with the choosing of countries, the artistic leaders are selected. In the pursuit of creating a complementary team, three main criteria are crucial. For one, the artistic leaders must have broad skills and experience in traditional music, as well as the right personal, pedagogical and social qualities. Second, recognizing the value and the need of both female and male instructors has become clearer during the years. This has proven to ease the communication between the talents and the leaders, as for instance, many young women have felt more comfortable in communicating with female instructors. Third, in recent years the administration has given a stronger focus on how and in what way the artistic leaders could complement each other with regards to cultural background or affiliation. Therefore, and in addition to the Norwegian leader, the administration has given priority to engage with one leader that holds in depth knowledge of one of the music traditions or the participatory countries, often by living in or, being originated from, one of the latter. This was the case for the 2011 project, where one of the artistic leaders was a Norwegian-Serbian traditional musician, with thorough knowledge of both cultures. As for the 2014 group, that combined hispanophones from Peru and Venezuela with Norwegian talents, the administration hired an artistic leader that, despite being Norwegian by origin, held thorough knowledge of Spanish as well as of South-American traditional music. This cross-cultural knowledge has proven to improve several aspects of the Talent project, such as the communication with regards to language barriers and gender, as well as the preparations of the revisit to one

of the collaborating countries. At the same time, using an artistic leader with a certain cross cultural background has functioned as a confirmation of this leader's status as a professional artist in his or her country of origin as well as in Norway. Some of the artistic leaders have worked on the Talent project for many years, whilst others, mainly for practical reasons or the criteria mentioned above, have attended the project only once or a few times. During the course of the years, it seems that the administrators have strived to uphold a continuity, and maybe a certain predictability, when it comes to the choosing of artistic leaders. This has been important when it comes to grasping the “soul” of the project. As years have passed, and as the professional standing of the Førde festival has increased, a need to further develop, conceptualize and “professionalize” the Talent project has arisen, and the innovation and change have been given more space, with regards to the choosing of artistic leaders.

4.4. Talents

The international talents are chosen in mainly two ways. First and foremost, they are reached through and chosen by networks, as both Concert Norway and the Førde festival hold impressive and worldwide contacts on the field. The latter even holds an updated database on its collaborators dating back to the beginning of the festival. Having contacts in almost every single country in the world, the administrators have always a place to start, either through an institution or a person such as artists, professors or festival managers. These, normally international, key persons recommend talents from their countries for the administrators to pick from. The administrators highlight that they work with people they have known over time and trust, and who hold a certain artistic authority in the country or region. Nevertheless, one main challenge has been revealed by this approach: the different agendas that the key persons might have. In some of the projects, institutions have proposed young musicians on whose behalf they have certain ambitions. These young musicians might not be real talents, but rather persons that the key persons are related to or have a personal connection and/or obligation. Occasionally, these participants have proven to be very little socially or musically compatible with the other talents, often asking for special treatment, and thus created challenges for the artistic leaders or the group as a whole. Despite that the dangers of different agendas and cronyism are there, both the administrators and the artistic leaders have trust in the network approach. A second, and rarer, approach, are the auditions. Sometimes Concerts Norway attends auditions that are held by an institution in the country of question. This approach seems to have been more a practice by coincidence than a strategic choice, and has by 2015 only happened in Egypt, South Africa and Nepal. For Concerts Norway, the auditions prove to have been a good way to secure a certain professional overview of the selection process. Further, the auditions have proven to be crucial when it comes to discovering talents that are unknown to the networks and the key persons in question. For instance, the auditions held at Nepal Music Centre in the spring of 2007, revealed an artistic surprise from the Nepalese countryside, as the talent of a young vocalist and player of the traditional instrument sangari, Barta Gandharba got the attention of the administrators. Participating in the Talent project proved to be a life changing experience for her professional, and thus personal, life as she has developed into an internationally known artist holding concerts in Nepal, India and Sri Lanka, and has also taught music at the Norwegian University of Agder and Nepal Music Center.

The Norwegian talents are also chosen on the basis of the broad network of the Førde festival. One of the administrators' main tasks is to keep track of folk music talents in the country, a rather easy one according to themselves and the artistic leaders, as “everybody knows everybody” in the Norwegian traditional music community. The talents are chosen from institutions such as the Norwegian Music Academy, the Rauland Academy, the Ole Bull Academy, and Vinstra college. In the preparation of the selections, the administrators discuss with teachers of the institutions on who could function in such a project, both from an artistic and social perspective. The administrators also attend traditional music gatherings and festivals, such as Landskappleiken, Vestlandskappleiken and Jørn Hilme-stemnet, as well as examine the results of the competitions that have taken place in order to discover new names.

4.4.1. Age, gender, and ethnic background

The talents must be between 18 and 25 years of age. In order to ensure that they hold high musical skills and are about to define their professional way, an unwritten criteria that they preferably should be in the process of a professional education in traditional music has developed. For the goal of their personal development, the talents should also be young adults in the process of forming their identity.

Requiring the participation of both genders was not originally a defined goal, but was somewhat taken for granted as an unwritten guideline by the administrators. As certain challenges involved in reaching female talents became revealed, the goal of including both genders became a defined goal during the last ten years. Occasionally this aim has proven to be a challenge with regards to countries in Western and Northern Africa as well as the Middle East, as women in these regions may not be permitted to perform on stage by themselves or to travel alone. During the later years, the administrators have become even more determined to give women a voice, as in the case of the 2015 group, by inviting three female talents as well as the artistic leader from Iran. In some cases more talents have been invited in order to establish a gender balanced group, as this is also important for its convivial atmosphere.

Eventually, the administrators have deliberately chosen musical traditions that suffer difficult conditions in their countries due to ethnic background, with an objective to have them presented, supported and strengthened. Such was the case for the Berber traditional musicians from the Moroccan High Atlas Mountains in 2012 and for the Afro-Peruvian traditional musicians in 2014. By inviting musicians representing cultures that suffer low status and oppression in their countries to take part in the Talent project, they are not only given a possibility to exchange knowledge and traditions, but also to present themselves on the biggest stage for traditional music in Scandinavia.

4.5. Inviting and preparing

After deciding on the participating countries, Concerts Norway normally starts the process towards the latter, whereas the Førde festival starts by contacting the Norwegian talents. Because the festival as well as the Talent project have become very well known among Norway's young traditional musicians over the years, the initial contact is rather easy and most are flattered and eager to participate. Even though many of the international counterparts are also well aware of the existence of the Førde festival and the Talent project, the preparation process requires more steps. As a start, the administrators inform the contact institutions or persons of the project by providing a document describing the background and intentions of the Talent project, as well as what to prepare for the stay in Førde. Finally, a contract between the Førde festival and the international counterparts is signed.

The next step is to invite and prepare the talents in the respective countries. This is done by the contact institutions or persons. From the moment the talents are informed of their participation, they describe a feeling of a "motivating fever", finding it a huge privilege to have been invited to this musical encounter. During the preparations, they all intensify their work in order to be at their best when in Førde. According to some of the talent descriptions, their journey to and participation at a high ranking traditional music festival in a foreign country is understood as an acknowledgement for the local community as a whole in which the hometown citizens express great pride and expectations as well as give the talents huge attention before leaving. Already at this point, the Talent project creates a certain value for the talents' hometowns. As for the practical preparations for the stay in Førde, all talents are asked to prepare a repertoire of approximately 30 minutes as well as a few songs or melodies that could be achievable for the talents. The goal is to motivate reflections and creativity, as well as preventing the talents from taking upon a somewhat passive role when they first meet with the other talents. Further, the talents are asked to meet with their national group prior to their travel to Førde. During this first encounter, they have to work together, mainly without an instructor, in order to discuss the repertoire during their participation in the project.

4.6. Arriving in Førde

The talents normally arrive on a Sunday. Upon arrival they are welcomed by the administrators and go to Sunnfjord folkehøgskule, situated in the Førde city centre. This high school becomes their home for the next week, and is also where they spend a lot of time together, for instance by sharing rooms and having all meals together. The first three days are all about getting to know each other both personally, culturally and musically, and through this process create a musical programme. During the first session the talents pick up their instruments and start jamming. In parallel with the musical exchange, the process of getting to know each other reaches its peak at the excursion, a social activity of some kind that transforms the former, rather distant and shy acquaintances into open hearted friendships. By the end of Wednesday, the talents are as ready as can be for the festival's many activities and obligations. From then until Sunday, there is a continuous chain of occasions and stages on which the talents rehearse, do sound checks, and perform. There is the 90 minutes concert at the Jølstra Museum by the lake on Wednesday, the parade together with the professional artists as well as the 10 minute performance at the grand opening on Thursday. On Friday the concert including a 20 minutes performance by each country takes place at the Førde Conference. Saturday night, the talents perform their "own" concert, after having played at the open air stage in Førde city centre earlier in the day. Sometimes the talents give other performances, such as in the mountains of Hafstadfjellet or at the local church. Finally, and after a concluding dinner at the hotel, with warming words of mutual gratitude and a handing out of diplomas, the talents commence the long journey back to their home countries, with the promising words of keeping in touch before they get to meet again in a few months.

4.7. Seven-day crash course

The seven-day stay in Førde is a crash course in every sense, as nine young individuals that carry with them a luggage of different cultural, social, personal and musical knowledge are to make things work in an extremely short period of time. In addition to the artistic leaders, two roles are crucial in this: the music experts and/or journalists and the local helpers. The former, not only help preparing for the journey abroad, but also give the talents a sense of security far away from home. When in Førde, the music expert or journalist may take upon the role as a translator, coach or even play together with the talents. In certain cases these persons have been a challenge with regards to the procedural aspect of the project, wanting to control and intervene in the talents' performance as well as in the general achievements of the project. In most cases, however, they have taken part in the talent group in a constructive way, doing their best to contribute to the group's functioning. Additionally, a handful of local helpers follow and help the talents at all times during their stay. The festival pays a lot of attention to finding the right persons for these tasks, both when it comes to language skills, educational background, and social abilities. In addition to giving structure to a rather busy and "chaotic" week, they also introduce the talents to their local community, and after this week of close interaction, long-lasting friendships are established.

4.7.1. New place and new language

The crash course starts with the long travel from the talents' hometowns to Førde, as many are travelling abroad for the first time. The journey itself is filled with new practical experiences, emotions and expectations, as well strange foods, languages, new people and an unfamiliar place. In Førde, the talents are supposed to use English as their common working language. Many, therefore, find themselves in a situation where they have to communicate in another language than their own mother tongue. In many cases this is a huge challenge, both with regards to the actual skills as well as with the willingness and/or ability to communicate in another language. As described above, the music experts come in handy for the talents that share the common language. As for the local helpers, the administrators strive to engage helpers that actually speak the mother tongues of the talents, such as in the case of the Cubans in the 1996 group and in 2015 when the local Rotary Club was engaged particularly with the Armenian talents as it had been focused on Armenian societal and political questions. As the talents get more acquainted, and thus feel more confident, the verbal communication gets easier. In the later years, the talents have also made use of Google translate in

their communications, and thanks to the misconceptions that often follow from this, rather ice-breaking and funny moments have arisen.

4.7.2. Personality, social and cultural background

Due to different personal qualities, and social and cultural differences, the dynamics of the talent group differ from one year to another. Different understandings of roles and authorities are two factors that influence the communication. Many are not used to communicating or collaborating with others with social differences and statuses, and in some occasions the artistic leaders have had to deal with talents that have refused to interact with some of the other talents due to gender, social, or ethnic backgrounds. During this week of everlasting coexistence and cooperation, however, most talents open up and broaden their horizons, learn about the others and thus about themselves. As the Filipino talent Bernadete Canay stated:

“Prior to the festival, I did not know anything at all about Norwegian and Indonesian music. Two years after the project, I still look for Indonesian and Norwegian music online. [...] Personally, one lesson taught to me by Talent is to be more receptive of music from other cultures. This is the first step to becoming receptive to the culture itself, and its people. When I hear ‘Norway’ or ‘Indonesia’ on the news, I stay tune. Talent was able to break down borders for me, and I believe I am more accepting of people from other countries as a result.”

4.7.3. The power of music

Language, personal, social and cultural barriers are crossed when the talents starts playing together. This “musical familyhood” that they create contributes to another aspect of communication which strengthens a sense of being together, striving for something together, and eventually achieving something together. According to the artistic leaders, the Egyptians and Palestinians of the 2008 Talent group suffered mutual intolerance in the outset of the project. When they started to play together, they slowly discovered common aspects in their music, on which they started to build mutual trust and respect. In the 2014 Talent group, a Venezuelan and a Norwegian connected, developed, and created musically in interaction with each other, despite that verbal communication hardly existed. This artistic interaction was further developed during the return visit to Peru. And as the Peruvian music expert, Jorge Olazo claimed:

“For me it's truly amazing how the group got along so well, coming from totally different backgrounds: Norway, Venezuela and Peru. So the Talent Project has been a lesson for me in the unbelievable power of music to tear down any cultural barrier.”

4.7.4. Solving many and complex tasks

Further, the talents learn to complete the exercise of solving a complicated task within a limited period of time, and finally to reach the goal of presenting the product of the process they have been going through: the concert. Within this chain of lessons, the creation of a concert programme, combining fast and slow melodies and creating a “flow” in the show stands out. The talents all express the relevance of this concrete knowledge together with the many stage performances, as several of them have never played in front of an audience of this size before. The most nerve-wracking experience according to the talents is the opening concert on Thursday evening at which time they present themselves to an audience of more than 2300 people as well as being filmed and showed on Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation. During this hour of attention, the talents get to demonstrate and give visibility to their knowledge and musical legacy through multicultural interaction. During their performances, they also contribute to bringing the “world to Førde” and thus broadening the horizon of the local community as well and that of the audience.

4.7.5. Meeting with the professional artists

Undoubtedly, the interaction with the artistic leaders gives the talents a certain insight into the life of professional musicians, as does the meetings with the artists attending the Førde festival as a whole. The talents that have had the opportunity to interact directly with some of the professional artists, report of eye-

opening conversations with regards to their potential future profession. Unfortunately, these encounters seem to be somewhat rare, and some talents express a wish for this to have been further prioritised during their week in Førde.

4.7.6. Meeting with the journalists

In order to have a taste of professional life, the talents are further challenged on handling journalists in general, and in the communication of their knowledge and musical identity in particular. As the talents are the first group of participants to arrive at the Førde festival, they are presented to local, national, and international media. As part of the festival's media strategy, the Talent project functions as a preparatory story in order to give the project as well as the festival the best visibility possible. Further, it's also a part of the media strategy to invite international journalists to attend the festival as a whole, with a view to connect and develop their network, as well as having these journalists inform relevant institutions and media in their countries about the Talent project and the festival.

4.8. An inter-human or artistic project?

The above mentioned actions and experiences are achieved under the guidance of the artistic leaders. The outcomes of these actions, therefore, depend on how these leaders understand, define, prepare, and perform their mission. Initially, the leaders are introduced to their tasks only through communication and e-mails. The administrators provide no formal mandate, only a contract stating the time period and the salary for the mission. Despite that this gives a certain liberty with regards to the interpretation of the mission, the leaders mainly see it as their task to get the talents to work together, by guiding them artistically, pedagogically, personally as well as socially. They differ, however, on what they regard as the main core of the Talent project: the inter-human or artistic aspect?

4.8.1. The inter-human aspect

Some artistic leaders favour its inter-human aspect. “The project consists of 48% music and 52% inter-human collaboration and understanding”, one of them proclaims. The leaders holding this point of view perform the preparations accordingly. When the talents are selected and informed, the leaders receive a list of the talents' names and instruments and occasionally some sound cuts. This initial information gives an idea of the talents as well as of their traditions and genres and is useful in the artistic and pedagogic preparations of the leaders. While in Førde, the leaders put great emphasis on the personal and cultural interaction that takes place between the talents, as they see it as crucial for the process towards the artistic product. During this interaction, the leaders find it important to be observant to, and hinder, possible challenges and to do their best to discover the talents' qualities and courage as well as to motivate the showing of it, with the goal to make them comfortable and proud once on stage.

As for the creation of the concerts to be performed at the festival, the leaders start from scratch, not taking for granted that the talents have prepared beforehand, but rather invite all of them into the same process at the same moment. This approach also runs in parallel with the notion of the starting point being the talents' actual knowledge – what they have in them – and to take it from there. As for the creation of the concert programme, these artistic leaders highlight that the talents have to make their own musical creations and learn from each other, and that the task of the former is to help to them “find the pulse” without too much intervention.

4.8.2. The artistic aspect

Other leaders favour the artistic aspect. This approach is representative for a somewhat new(er) generation of leaders that holds the artistic development and performance, including the preparations that it requires, as the core of the project. These leaders see it as their main task to contribute to the creative evolvement of the talents during the seven days in Førde. This way they can help the talents profit from the situation, by

encouraging their musical endeavours and help them being able to present themselves alongside the professional musicians with a strengthened artistic integrity intact. This approach, requiring different and more thorough groundwork, was initiated with the preparations of the 20th anniversary of the Fårde festival in 2014, when one of the artistic leaders performed research by going on a field trip to the participating countries of Peru and Venezuela. While there, the leader got to know the talents, their home environment, music and traditions, while the talents were introduced to one of the leaders as well as were able to discuss and prepare themselves musically and mentally for the upcoming event in Fårde. The following year, the artistic leaders, including an Iranian living in Iran, took wisdom from the 2014 preparations, and gathered background material, such as sound and film clips and photographs from Iran and Armenia. As a result, the preparations made contributed to the creation of a somewhat more professional scenography, added a new dimension by giving the audience a deeper insight into the talents' backgrounds as well as gave higher visibility to the Talent project as such.

From the pedagogical point of view, the artistic leaders in question also more actively took part in the playing, both during rehearsals and concerts. By interacting with the talents, they transmitted their knowledge and energy in the making of the art. As a conclusion, by giving stronger emphasis on the preparations and by participating, these artistic leaders managed to create something new, and further, the realisation of a better concert, according to several, was made possible. This approach also proved to be more in parallel with those of the international counterparts, as they often placed heavy emphasis on the artistic performance and prestige.

4.8.3. Inter-human or artistic?

Requiring different methodologies and giving different results

So which aspect is most relevant to the Talent project? The administrators themselves stress that the inter-human and artistic aspects are equally important. Seen from a global perspective, the different approaches could be explained in light of the societal context that has changed since the mid 1990's, slowly but radically turning the focus on the amateur level of traditional music towards professionalism, and thus simply representing the point of view of two generations of traditional musicians. Regardless of the reasoning behind these diverging aspects, they seem to create different methodologies, processes, and also to a certain extent long-term results. Taking this in consideration, the Talent project goals should be discussed thereafter.

4.9. Returning to the participating countries

Planning the return visit is principally in the hands of Concerts Norway, the Fårde festival and eventually in those of the host country. Network, reliable contacts and institutions, possibilities for collaboration as well as the host country's political situation are taken into consideration. Some countries are not or do not want, to be considered, due to a difficult political situation and/or an unstable level of security. In some cases, the return visit has been hindered on an institutional or even ministerial level, as a consequence of power structures or for instance personal conflicts. Again; the good network proves to be crucial, and after processes of dialogue, most cases have been solved and the return visit made possible.

4.9.1. Together again – with a stronger sense of collaboration and musical kinship

A certain amount of time passes between the stay in Fårde and the return visit. The reason why is twofold. First and foremost, it takes time to coordinate many people with rather busy schedules as well as prepare the counterparts in the hosting country. Second, the talents have had time to reflect on what they have taken part in, developed their relationships as well as gained an artistic “ownership” to the material. When it's finally time for the return visit, which has been looked forward to with great pleasure and expectations, both talents and artistic leaders are eager to meet, chat and play together again. As Filipino talent Sabrina Tan expressed: “Ever since our last day in Fårde, I was already looking forward to our reunion, so to see everyone again in Bandung was a very special moment”.

During the return visit, the talents perform the same concert as they did in Førde. As the music is still present in the heads of the talents, and with the social-ice long since broken, the talents are now in an even better position to develop their artistic work. Again they start jamming; sometimes new compositions or melodies come up and local musicians are invited into the group. Occasionally, the return visits produce concrete outputs in terms of CD recordings, such as in Egypt and Brazil.

For the return visit to be a success on a professional level, collaborative and active network as well as good planning are essential factors. First and foremost, the level of success depends on whether other local or national actors are involved and thus whether the administrators are able or willing to think further than the interest of their own institution. Second, there has to be a programme, requiring a certain level of administration and organization. For instance in Indonesia in 2014, the host institution, the Indonesian College of Art (STSI), managed to create a programme that gave new knowledge and experiences to all parties involved. The combination of the STSI and their assistant professor, Ismet Ruchimat, contributed to this success. First, there was a common agreement between the institution and Ruchimat, that he should use the potential of his network and give something back to the institution. Second, by being one of the two artistic leaders for the 2013 talents, Ruchimat had thorough knowledge of the Talent project, the Førde festival as well as of Norwegian society, which made him able to better grasp the ideas and intentions of the administrators. As a result, the activities were several and linked together with a view to discuss and exchange knowledge. In addition to the rehearsals and concerts by the talents, the organizers held seminars for the STSI's teachers in order to learn from the artistic leaders, they further arranged for visits to other institutions and centres on education and music as well as presented their own country and culture. This example of a very successful return visit, according to the administrators, artistic leaders and talents, shows the importance of defined goals, structure and definition of responsibility in the achievement of concrete results. Regardless of the organizational level of the return visit, the informants have always encountered it with great personal and social pleasure, and particularly appreciated workshops and gatherings with a view to exchange knowledge and experiences.

4.9.2. The local value

How many people that are directly or indirectly involved and affected by the return visit differs. In Indonesia, both professors and students from the above mentioned university, nearly 50 persons, attended the seminars, while the concert performed by the talents and the nearly 30 local dancers and musicians took place in front of an audience of approximately 500 persons. As for the visits to the institutions, at least 125 students were involved. During the return visit to Serbia in 2012, more than 300 people attended the concert that, in addition to the talents, also included several professional Serbian musicians on stage. Additionally in Beograd, the Talent group visited institutions and took part in workshops counting more than 30 students as well as presented the Talent project on television.

Regardless of figures, the return visit has proven to be of great local value due to the visibility and pride it raises in the communities and the people living in them. When in Peru in 2015, for instance, a visit to the known artist and composer, Susana Baca, and her culture centre in the making was part of the programme. During this visit and the following concert, many people from the local community showed great appreciation for the fact that their Afro-Peruvian culture was highlighted and presented, not only abroad but also in Peru, Lima and Cañete. Attaching the Talent project to Susana Baca's institution and students seemed to have contributed to the strengthening of her professional position, as well as the one the students, in the local community. Thus, the Talent project as a whole proved to have a strong positive impact on the Afro-Peruvian culture in Peru.

The talents representing the countries that didn't have the pleasure of hosting a return visit also accentuate the positive attention and pride that their participation creates in their local communities even though the concrete impacts are not the same. Venezuelan talent Salvador Hernández explains about his village Nirgua's

response to the participation of his group, Orquestra Sinfónica:

“Everybody knows everybody in my village. Imagine that someone from our village was asked to represent Venezuela! Everybody – even the mayor gave us his blessings. Our representation in Førde was a big honor for them. They were so proud that we, from the small village of Nirgua, got to travel abroad to represent Venezuela and not someone from the capital.”

When the talents returned home from Førde they were welcomed by a village in full celebrations:

“ Friends, family members and people in the village organized a party. They welcomed us with posters with our names on and played our music, and congratulated us while giving us big hugs. Some of them even cried of joy. We also did a caravana - honking cars driving in line through the streets – celebrating our arrival and the participation at the festival. People even stepped out of their houses to see us and support us.”

4.9.3. Informing the Norwegian embassies

The communication with the Norwegian embassies during the return visits seems to be somewhat random. According to the administrators, the embassies are informed of the Talent project both prior to their stay in Førde as well as of the return visit to the country in question, to which the response differs greatly. Some exceptions are to be found, particularly in the first year of the project, as the Norwegian Minister of Culture invited the Talent project to take part in her official visit to Egypt. In Nepal in 2008 and in Serbia in 2012, the embassies were actively involved, embracing the Talent project with great interest and presence, and thus contributed to creating arenas for meetings, exchange and networking.

4.10. In the aftermaths of the Talent project

4.10.1. Keeping in contact and sustaining friendships

As the return visit heads towards its end, there are moments filled with discontent and a sense of sorrow, as the talents do not wish to stop playing together nor to leave their friends. Those who attended the project at an early stage in the 1990's tell about friendships that have been kept by e-mail, whilst the newer generations report on social interaction on Facebook and other social media. Even though the immediate contact may fade away with time, their mutual curiosity, understanding, and concern for each other withstands. The Filipino talents Sabrina Tan and Bernadete Canay state:

“I am still in contact with everyone I met, mostly through Facebook, and sometimes Skype. From our artistic leaders, Steinar, Hilde, Anne, Ismet and his wife Ati. Even our volunteers in Førde, Oddny and Trude. In our group, I'm still updated with everyone in the group, but I am closest with the girls Elisabeth and Yani. Three out of the seven in the group are now parents to newborns, so I am now an aunt to all three. I hope to visit the Indonesians again soon too.”

“I remember back when Typhoon Haiyan affected Philippines in 2013. A lot from the talent group wished us well, even though the talents from the Philippines were not directly affected by the typhoon. It showed that people from half a world away could still care for us here.”

4.10.2. Studies and artistic development in the light of another culture

As described above, the talents are normally students when attending the project. Several have become so inspired by the participation in the project and their new contacts, that they have returned to Norway to study at the Norwegian Academy of Music. When the Norwegian 2005 talent, Linda Gytri, completed her final exam at the Ole Bull Academy in 2006, she invited her new talent “colleague”, Mozambique Nelson Cifanica, to play with her at the concert. The Estonian 2006 talent, Sandra Sillamaa, felt so inspired by her

new friends from the Ivory Coast that she went there to learn more about their culture:

“It was a really crazy time. I did not do much research and when I got there then I found out that the civil war was just ended and every night the police was in the streets and the economic situation was not very good. And I could see it also from school. [...] I got dancing lessons - every day a few hours and in different styles. It was really great. And I saw lot of culture and real life, since I was in the community - not just as a tourist. I saw how hard they life can be and that we don't have nothing to complain about :) I think it educated me as a person and to see different perspectives of life.”

4.10.3. Artistic collaborations

The master-student relationship that characterizes the interactions between the talents and the leaders have, in several occasions, developed into artistic collaborations over the years. The examples are many, such as Tone Hulbækmo and Hans Fredrik Jacobsen inviting Jai Shankar Sahajpal, a 1995 Norwegian-Indian talent, Sekou Keita and Sadio Cissokho, both 1996 talents from Senegal and Aditi Das, a 1997 talent from India to tour with them in Norway in 1999. Artistic leader Steinar Ofsdal has functioned as a mentor in the artistic development for 2007 Nepalese talent Sanskriti Shrestha by introducing her to relevant networks as well as including her in his quartet “Steinar Ofsdal – LARA.” Another long term collaboration was initiated back in 2002 between Kenyan talent Wakake Otieno and artistic leader, Tellef Kvifte. The latter, that managed the Norwegian Collection of Folk Music at the time, invited the Wakake Otieno into his work in order to teach and exchange knowledge on traditional music, mixing and recording music in studios and musical archives. The Kenyan 2002 talent describes his collaboration with the Norwegian professor:

“[...] the collaborations immediately after the Talent project were insightful. I did keep in touch and I would always go to him for answers whenever I felt stuck. He was always ready to offer guidance in matters of music. He is a wealth of information. I think the fact that we kept in touch developed a need to explore our music extremes. Him from a formal knowledge and I from a cultural, or let me use the word traditional. The interactions took me to a higher level of understanding of my trade and built my capacity and capabilities to understand myself, and the things I can do not only musically but in terms of infrastructural development within the music industry. The vast information exchanged has actually formed the basis on which my present career runs. The process of making me understand possibilities of developing fusions between my music with others, helping me understand production skills and applying the making use of the same in making my music. [...] All in all I can confidently say that the interactions left a mark that will live on.”

4.10.4. Collaborations between institutions and local communities

The administrators report on few findings of bilateral collaborations on a state level. On an institutional level, nonetheless, Steinar Ofsdal claims that there is a direct link between his participation in the Talent 2012 project and his present collaboration with a primary school in the village of Ait Abdi in the Moroccan Atlas Mountains. One of the subjects that Professor Ofsdal teaches at the Norwegian Music Academy, Berber-20, has as a goal to contribute to capacity building through music and song among children in the rural Berber tribe. The aim is not to teach the children from a Western top-down approach, but rather to show interest and respect for their long time oppressed culture and interact with them through the music. Once or twice a year Ofsdal goes back to Ait Abdi together with some of his students in order to keep up the communication and develop the project. Eventually, this project that is inspired by the inter-human spirit of the Talent project will be expanded to include several villages in the area.

4.10.5. Crash course and continuity

The above mentioned actions demonstrate many examples of relationships, exchanges, and collaborations that are initiated by the talents and artistic leaders that have met thanks to the Talent project. In this view the project, as an intensive crash course packed with knowledge and experiences on multiple levels, carries an impressive strength. The continuation and development of the initiated actions, nonetheless, are made possible solely thanks to personal or institutional choices and efforts, as the Talent project doesn't include

any kind of systematic follow-up of the talents, artistic leaders, or other contact persons or institutions that it links along its way. As a result, the valuable continuity of the knowledge and connections achieved during the crash course often die in the making.

5. Reflections on the goals of the Talent project

Regarding the project goals defined in the Framework Agreement described in chapter 3, the Talent project indeed provides a valuable *platform* for young musicians, by giving them an opportunity to *develop through collaborations across cultural and geographic borders*. During and after this encounter, the talents also have proven to create and *strengthen mutual cultural respect* as well as *insight into their own cultures*. Concerning the aim to contribute to *building professional careers*, the project functions as an essential door opener, providing the talents with artistic and practical knowledge, inspiration, self-esteem and opportunities on which they can further build. Estonian talent Sandra Sillamaa states the following about her professional life nearly ten years after participating in the project:

“I think I am in a quite good position :) I have graduated schools in Viljandi and then at the Royal Academy of Stockholm and a masters degree in Tallinn. At the moment I am a freelance musician, mostly touring with Trad.Attack! which is a fresh band making so fast way to abroad. [...] I think everything together has made it – including the Talent project and also the fact that it lead me to Africa. And I think besides of learning new songs and traditions and working methods in the Talent project, it was also really good and motivating for my self-esteem. Being so young and to be chosen for such a thing!”

There is a link between the goals and the actions on which they are based, both with regards to the choosing of talents based on certain criteria, facilitating musical encounters between the talents, arranging return visits and finally involving journalists in order to strengthen the overall knowledge on traditional music worldwide.

With regards to the aim to *establish long lasting and international meeting points and networks for the parties involved*, the Talent project undoubtedly contributes to initiate such functions, even though these are activated and further developed on mainly by the talents and artistic the leaders themselves. This could be seen in relation to the fact that there is no specific follow-up plan of the project after the return visit, as well as in relation to which institutions the Førde festival, as the project owner, involves in its work and how. The latter has since the very beginning collaborated with Concerts Norway, which is named in the above mentioned Frame Agreement specifically regarding the return visit. Even though key institutions and persons in developing countries are included in order to propose talents as well as arrange for the return visits, the measure of a more comprehensive incorporation of the latter with the goal to let them *take part in and profit on the experiences made* has not been fully accomplished.

6. The Talent project in the light of goals the Grant Scheme Rules

6.1. The overreaching goal of the Grant Scheme Rules and its target group

The overreaching goal of the Grant Scheme Rules is to *strengthen the culture sector in developing countries*. Even though the Talent project as such is too small to achieve this overall goal, and thus its societal efficiency somewhat impossible to measure, the descriptions above demonstrate that important seeds are

sown. Moreover, the project also responds to the Grant Scheme Rules' focus on *investing in civil society*, as it has an impact on many individuals and institutions on several levels and worldwide. The widely defined target group of the Grant Scheme Rules is also reached, as the Talent project works and has an impact on both personal and institutional levels.

6.2. The secondary goals of the Grant Scheme Rules

6.2.1. Promoting competence, quality and proficiency in the cultural sector

This is also a defined aim of the Talent project, and one of the main reasons why it exists. On a concrete level the project functions as a *professional career toolbox*, as it contributes to the exchange of knowledge and techniques, to arrange a concert including repertory and stage performance, etc. On a more overall level several claim that participating in the Talent project has been eye opening to them, and thus largely *contributed to their development as musicians*. Those who have put this experience into practice, for instance by collaborating with their newly gained network, have also added to the goal of achieving *higher competence, quality and proficiency in the cultural sector* in general. Kenyan 2002 talent Wakake Otieno reflects further on what the collaborations with Tellef Kvifte have brought him:

“[...] the knowledge I acquired seem to be light years ahead of time. Our market is ready, the world is ready, but in my country the music industry is thriving on pop music. That is a good thing, a very good thing if I may add. However there is a huge disconnect between our cultural identity and national identity. I am on a journey to bridge that gap. It seems to be a battle that very few are bold enough to tackle. It has been an uphill task trying to make musicians see beyond their commercial values. Then it hit me real hard. I am going to have to lead the way, slowly but surely, by putting systems in place and buying others into the idea of cultural cohesion through the arts, especially music. I am pulling in a few individuals and I am glad that there is light at the end of the tunnel. I am using the model and skills learnt from the Talent project to the collaborations I have had with Tellef.”

Nepalese Sanskriti Shrestha describes how her participation in the Talent project and her further career have a positive influence on the traditional music in her home country:

“How it changed me in different ways as a musician does directly benefit the Nepalese music scene. The Talent project connected me to different musicians, like Steinar with whose help I started studying here at NMH. During my study and all those years, I always present Nepal where ever I go and perform. [...] little funny thing to say, but I have realised that I have also been an inspiration to some of upcoming young musicians in Nepal. I also always bring the essence of Nepalese music in my compositions and the music I play. In that way I think there is a link between the Talent project and my contribution to the Nepalese music scene, which will always be there.”

6.2.2. Strengthening cultural infrastructure

The return visit in particular has an impact on the institutional level, as the attention from “abroad” gives visibility and pride to the universities and centres involved. Nonetheless, and as already stated in chapter 5.2., greater efforts could have been made in order to even more actively and profoundly incorporate relevant stakeholders in developing countries when it comes to *infrastructure strengthening measures*. That being said; the Talent project plays a crucial role as for the *creation, broadening and connecting with networks*, as while in Førde the talents connect with each other, the artistic leaders, administrators, local helpers and the professional artists that they occasionally meet. This snowball effect has a huge potential and long term impact when rightly made use of. Wakake Otieno claims:

“[...] the 13 years of interacting with Tellef have been very fruitful and key in building this mind that I have.

If I can I will at some point establish an institution that teaches and engages artists like I did with Talent project and collaborations with Tellef. I believe the time is now.”

The Talent project has also given hope and motivation to achieve something that has seemed impossible. Filipino Sabrina Tan tells:

“We regularly organize small events and concerts for Kontra-GaPi and we've also done fusion with popular music styles. so the Talent Project definitely enriched our experience for collaboration. I definitely want to be involved in cultural work here in the Philippines as well. So being in the Førde festival and seeing the "behind the scenes" of organizing it taught me quite a lot. It would be a dream come true to be able to hold a similar festival in my hometown of Bacolod.”

6.2.3. Safeguarding and strengthening cultural heritage

The Talent project contributes to safeguarding and *strengthening intangible cultural heritage* in particular. First and foremost it contributes to sustaining in-depth knowledge of the construction and use of traditional instruments worldwide. Secondly, learning to play these instruments is a bodily knowledge attained through countless imitations and repetitions over time. According to the UNESCO 2003 Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage, the transmission ensured by the latter, is the main core in the definition of safeguarding. The value and role of this knowledge also contributes to sustainable development in the society of which it takes part. Furthermore, the traditional music as cultural heritage is strengthened by being given visibility. The recognition from others given to the traditional music often with a rather low standing, might give great pride, motivation as well as function as a driving force to continue playing, and in this manner transmit the tradition to newer generations.

6.2.4. Strengthening free cultural expressions and cultural rights

The Førde festival, and thus the Talent project, has since the beginning been based on the notion of the importance and value of *multiculturalism*. This is confirmed by the participants of the project that all express great joy over having been given the opportunity to meet and interact with people from different cultures. With regards to the goal of *developing and strengthening free cultural expressions*, this is rather difficult to measure. Undoubtedly, giving culturally and politically oppressed music genres a stage on which they can present themselves holds an immense value, both when it comes to enhancing the self-confidence and the belief in ones own music as well as giving visibility to it. With regards to gender, the administrators defined the inclusion of female talents as a main target many years ago and have followed this principle ever since. Notwithstanding, the geographic, societal and political “stage” on which the young artists are given a voice is mainly Norwegian, or at least in a democratic societal context. Further, the material gives no direct information on to what extent or how the project has changed the artists' conditions in their own societies, and thus not whether the project contributes to *strengthening or supporting the musicians' right to freely develop their music or their profession* within their respective countries. Consequently, it is also difficult to define to what degree the Talent project contributes to ensuring any accomplishment of the *freedom of speech*, as described in the articles 19 and 27 of the The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Regardless of the project not directly contributing to the latter, undoubtedly it represents an essential, and sometimes life changing, opportunity for its stakeholders, and serves in this manner as a micro level addition to the overall work on human rights. Finally, the Talent project's active approach towards cultural rights and gender balance strengthens its societal relevance and efficiency and should therefore be encouraged and appreciated continuously.

7. Focal points on Norwegian support on culture development

The questions on increasing efforts towards initiatives that can act as a driving force for *human and cultural rights*, on strengthening the focus on *competence building and professionalism in the cultural sector* as well

as on greater use of *strategic partners and channels* and *networks* are all answered to in the former chapters. Further, the Talent project contributes to a certain extent to a greater *emphasis on economic development within the creative sector* as many of the talents see and develop on the possibilities that are revealed to them during the project. The Talent project also contributes to a more *targeted use of mobility schemes* for artists from developing countries as between six and ten artist and music experts or journalists are invited yearly. As for the questions on *increased support to change agents in developing countries* and a *stronger emphasis on basic analysis of the cultural sector*, the material gives no answers.

8. The Talent project in relation to other Norwegian musical aid in developing countries

This question is especially connected to the international work of Concerts Norway that initiated its first agreement on cooperation on international music with the MFA in 2000. Even though the international projects performed by Concerts Norway are not directly linked to the Talent project, the many projects still profit from each other, as for instance, the networks intervene. Moreover, Concerts Norway's collaborations with Nepal, Pakistan, Palestine and South Africa had direct links to the Talent project, as there were, among others, auditions arranged while Concerts Norway paid their annual visit to the countries in question. During the return visit of the 2009 Talents to Daar es Salam in Tanzania, for instance, the artistic leaders held a workshop at Bagamoyo College of Arts. The latter had been given economic support by the MFA and NORAD, as well as held a long time collaboration with the University of Stavanger. As the recent was included in the planning of this workshop, the Talent project contributed to building on and developing an already existing bilateral relationship. Even though certain synergies have been proven, both Concerts Norway and the MFA uphold a wish and ambition to improve the exchange of knowledge and information between the bilateral music projects.

9. Recommendations

9.1. Redefining the goals of the Talent project

Even though the Talent project seems to achieve its goals at large and particularly its short term goals, a redefinition of its goals, both overall and concrete, is recommended. This is first and foremost due to that the project has developed with time and so new aims have arisen. Second, the goals should be in even closer accordance with the overreaching goals of the MFA, such as the Grant Scheme Rules for Culture (03) and the focal points for Norway's work on cultural development. This way, the Talent project would strengthen and underline its position in the landscape of Norwegian culture cooperation in developing countries and at the same time ensure and sustain the core of the project itself.

Recommendation:

- Redefine the long term and short term goals of the Talent project.

The following recommendations are all connected to, as well as a consequence of, the main recommendation presented above:

9.1.1. Redefining the Frame Agreement and improving the communication in order to strengthen synergies

The last Frame Agreement between the Førde festival and the MFA on the Talent project expired in 2013, and has thus turned into a somewhat “passive” document. Contingent upon that the MFA will continue its economic support to the Talent project, an updated and redefined Frame Agreement should be developed. The Agreement should be evolved according to the reformulated goals mentioned in 9.1, in order to function

as a working tool in general. It also should particularly include actions to ensure an even better incorporation of networks and stakeholders in developing countries with regards to, among others, the choosing of talents as well as tasks directly linked to the implementation of the Talent project. Additionally, despite that there is an annual meeting between the administrators and the MFA with regards to reports and planning, as well as random and informal points of contact, the general communication between the parties should also be improved, in particular when it comes to mutual information on relevant projects and countries to which the Talent project might be connected. The measures proposed above would contribute to strengthening the long term synergies of the Norwegian overall work on culture in developing countries.

Recommendations:

- Update and redefine the Frame Agreement between the Førde festival and the MFA.
- Strengthen the flow of relevant information between the administrators and the MFA.

9.1.2. Defining the roles of the artistic leaders

Despite the frequent informal communication between the Førde festival and the artistic leaders in the preparations of the Talent project, no formal description is provided and several leaders express a need of a clearer definition of their tasks and role. This freedom to stake their own course undoubtedly gives the leaders both artistic possibilities and influences. In parallel their different approaches to the role might affect the long term implications of the project goals. A description of the artistic leaders' mandate, that is seen in relation to the goals of the Talent project and of the MFA would strengthen both their methodological approach as well as contribute to the definition of long term achievements. Finally, the mandate should also include an evaluation performed by the artistic leaders when the project is closed.

Recommendation:

- Develop a mandate for the artistic leaders in which their tasks are linked to the goals named in 9.1. and 9.1.1.

9.1.3. Ensuring better visibility

The standing of the Førde festival and the societal context in which it takes place have changed during the last 20 years and this should be better mirrored in the goals and measures of the project. Despite the many complimentary articles in the national and international press, as well as appreciative characterizations by the stakeholders, there is a discrepancy between these testimonies and how the Talent project is given visibility. Ensuring an even better visibility to the project as a whole, as well as within the frames of the ritual that it is, is recommended.

Recommendations:

- Mark the participation in the Talent project with ceremonial actions.
- Improve the presentation of the Talent project on the web sites of the Førde festival, Concerts Norway as well as on social media in general.
- Create a web site for the Talent project.

9.2. Ensuring synergies and continuity in the concrete actions of the Talent project

In a bigger societal context, the Talent project in itself is somewhat small as it includes only a tenfold of people each year. During the course of its existence, nevertheless, it has directly included more than 200 talents from 34 countries, as well as had an influence on an unknown number of relevant institutions, stakeholders, and local communities in developing countries. The Talent project tends to ignore the role and position it could take upon in the overall context of Norwegian cultural work in developing countries, and fails therefore to a certain degree to give it sufficient visibility in that regard and to strengthen its possible

long term impact in the societies in question. Even though the measures recommended below would generally require higher costs, and thus increased economic support, they could also establish a better continuity that would better ensure the achievements of the overall goals on Norwegian support on cultural development cited in chapter 9.1.

Recommendation:

- Ensure better connections, synergies and continuity between the different levels of the Talent project.

Depending of the overall goals of the Talent project the measures could be:

9.2.1. Enlarging the seven-day crash course

The seven-day crash course contains many aspects and potentials that end up incomplete, due to the multiple tasks that must be performed within a strict time frame in Førde. Many have commented on that the social, personal, cultural and artistic impacts could have been even greater if the talents had had more than three days of preparations prior to the festival, as this could give more time to, for instance, socialize, practice, arrange workshops or meet with the professional artists. As for breaking the social ice, there is also the possibility that the talents and the artistic leaders could connect on social media during the months prior to the Førde festival in order to get to know each other and exchange information. Yet, this might be difficult for talent from certain regions.

Recommendation:

- Establish measures to connect the talents and the artistic leaders prior to the week they stay in Førde.

9.2.2. Performing research former to the stay in Førde

The research performed by the artistic leaders during the recent years has proven to give new and different results. The research tour performed to the participating countries of the 2014 Talents proved to be useful for the leaders with regards to giving insight into the daily life and background of the talents, whereas the recent were given an introduction to what was ahead and so gained a sense of security. A far less expensive way of researching, was performed in relation to the 2015 Talents, through the gathering of photographs and films with a particular view to include the effect in the performances in addition to gaining insight. The long term impact of such measures is yet unknown, but they certainly create opportunities for the participants to get in touch prior to the Førde week as well as give a more thorough understanding of the project. Additionally, there is a possibility to consider the participation of the talents in this research, and not only the artistic leaders.

Recommendation:

- Perform research on the talents prior to the stay in Førde.

9.2.3. Visiting both participating countries

Even though the material gives little direct information on the possible long term impacts of a return visit to both participating countries instead of one, it seems that this would have been of great importance, both when it comes to the possible value for talents spending even more time together as well as to the local communities. Moreover, this could also contribute to bilateral contact and collaboration between the two partnering countries, without the Norwegian counterparts.

Recommendation:

- Perform return visits to both participating countries.

9.2.4. Follow-up projects subsequently to the Talent project

All informants, including the administrators, express a certain discontent regarding the somewhat prompt way of concluding the Talent project, often feeling that the valuable continuity of the knowledge and

connections established during the project die in the making. Moreover, the collaborations initiated and performed by the talents and artistic leaders themselves prove to a great extent to accomplish the overall goals of the Talent project as well as of the MFA, and thus represent potentials and ideas that should be taken further upon.

Recommendation:

- Establish follow-up measures to ensure the continuity and the durability of the seeds sown in the Talent project.

Final Conclusions

The Talent project is a solid project that has grown and developed during the course of its existence. It has connected people, networks and institutions worldwide, and has had a social, personal, cultural and artistic impact on those involved as well as other stakeholders linked to it. With a review of its overall goals and measures in line with Norwegian policies and goals on cultural collaborations in developing countries, it would be an even more relevant contribution to the latter and thus have an even greater impact on the strengthening of free cultural expressions and freedom of speech, as well as of cultural proficiency and infrastructure in developing countries in the future.