

Liberian Community Performance Project

Community Cultural Development Worksheet

PROJECT: Liberian Community Performance Project

PARTNERS: Roadside, PFP, Liberian Artists Group/Liberian community (altogether, the Project Ensemble)

TIMEFRAME: January 2012- December 2012 (1st phase)

PROGRAM GOALS and ASSESSMENT

In Common

Liberian Artists

1. Show conditions here in Philadelphia
2. Show/tell what Liberians have gone through to get here
3. Identify problems between people in the Diaspora and the people back home (for example: the problem of inequality)
4. Improve communication between generations
5. Create awareness of and respect for the parts of our culture that we value and that are being lost
6. Learn what Liberians in Philadelphia value about our culture
7. Incorporate traditional dance in project performance in order to model respect
8. Model respect in society by listening and caring about people's stories
9. Collect stories about Liberian experiences in Philadelphia

Philadelphia Folklore Project

- 1. To produce a powerful public program with positive transformative impact: i.e., the project surfaces and addresses pressing concerns of Philadelphia Liberians, and uses folk arts (in respectful and perhaps new ways) to do so.**

Assessment: Reports/feedback from participants; engagement of local people in process; public comment (media); attendance; opens way for next steps (artists create "new" mode of performance; we and other participants develop clarity about possible social change actions).

- 2. To use [local/national] partnerships and collaborations to explore the intersection of traditional arts, community cultural development, and social justice.**

Assessment: Documentation and publication (in various forms) articulate project learnings in ways that can have impact.

- 3. To develop solid methodology and practices for hosting folk arts and social change residencies.**

Assessment: Clear / tested tools and processes; adapted tools help create climate of creativity and critical reflection (across diverse groups).

- 4. To increase PFP's local and national visibility around work in folk arts and social change.**

Assessment: Local and national conversation about the project; clear next steps.

Roadside Theater Like the creation of a new work of art, all community cultural development (CCD) projects are essentially experimental; while there are methodologies and guidelines to follow, each project is irreducibly different. The Liberian Community Performance Project employs iterative cycles of planning, doing, and reflecting, thus assessment is ongoing and expected to alter the course of the project as both missteps and new opportunities are discovered. The following project goals are understood to be situated within the limits of the project's resources.

- To effectively support the purpose and goals of the PFP-Liberian Artists Group/Liberian Community collaboration.
 - Assessment: Achievement of identified outcomes
- To increase PFP's local and national visibility as an organization that uses local partnerships and collaborations to explore the intersection of traditional arts, community cultural development, and social justice.
 - Assessment: Local and national conversation about the project
- To document the collaboration's process and outcomes.
 - Assessment: The documentation's effectiveness as a teaching tool and its ability to inspire other community groups to explore their local life

DOCUMENTATION GOALS and ASSESSMENT

In Common

Liberian Artists

- To document the stories, performance traditions and experiences of Philadelphia's Liberian community.
- To have access to the archived documentation of the project's process and performance.

Philadelphia Folklore Project

*** To use various media to create a record of the project's process and outcomes in ways that explore and share insights about the intersection of folk art and social change**

Assessment: archived materials, publications plan, formats/plans that advance artists and community interests

*** To create media and publications outputs that strengthen the capacity of all partners.**

Assessment: Use of publications/media; improved PFP technical skills; well-documented record of the project's process

Roadside Theater

- To document all phases of the collaboration in multiple media, including video, audio, photo, and written word, in order that the project can serve as an inspiration and guide for others to use art and local cultural practice for community development.
 - Assessment: Effectiveness of documentation on Roadside's website
- To develop a virtual space where people can participate in the residency or enrich the residency's live activities.
 - Assessment: The online component of the residency complicates, complements, or expands the reach of the live activities

ISSUES IDENTIFIED

- How to keep options open and process fluid?
- How to connect to the stories of peoples' everyday lives?
- What are contemporary incarnations of archetypal hero and trickster figures?
- How to manage project ambitions and expectations within the limits of available financial and human capital?

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In Common

Within designated roles and responsibilities, all partners bear equitable responsibility for the project's process and outcomes.

Artists

We will document the stories, performance traditions, and experiences of Philadelphia based Liberians. We will participate in planning and performing community performances. We will help spread the word about the project and support community participation. We will surface concerns and questions as they arise.

PFP

As host, we take responsibility for ensuring that the project develops in accordance with overall shared / common values (to be further developed). We manage the budget, schedule, and communications, troubleshoot; manage primary documentation and archiving; fund-raise.

Roadside

With the end goal of helping its partners become self-reliant, Roadside will lead and follow as appropriate to the particular circumstance and point in the project's development. Within this context, Roadside's shifting roles include advisor, facilitator, teacher, and learner.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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PROJECT SCHEDULE (TO BE REVISED BASED ON WHAT THE ENSEMBLE IS LEARNING)

- **January:** Project organizing (introductions; orientation to Roadside's nonprofit values, aesthetic, and methodologies; project planning, including goal-setting)
- **February- March:** Research/community in-reach: What's the buzz? What are the untold stories your friends and neighbors think the community most needs to hear? Are people organizing around particular issues? What are the untold stories people outside of the Liberian community most need to hear? The research will be periodically shifted in an iterative process of collection and analysis. Which stories are similar? Which are contradictory? What research questions will help us probe more deeply?
- **April:** Scripting
 - Selected transcription of recorded stories categorized, assembled, and reviewed
 - What themes and questions emerge, and what are the relationships between them?
 - Be aware of the advantage of using first voice (i.e., whole statements and stories from community people)
- **May:** Rehearsal
- **June:** Public performance I
- **July – August:** Collecting additional material
- **September:** Scripting
- **October – November:** Rehearsal
- **November – December:** Public performance II