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Leonardo Martins Dias on culture, leadership and sustainability

CREATED ON FRIDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2014 14:45



Lead Europe and Brazilian Fellow Leonardo Martins Dias is presently running a social integration project in partnership with the Brazilian Embassy in Madrid, FCHB - Hispanic Brazilian Cultural Foundation, SESI Bahia - Brazilian Industry Social Services and VINO & Dendê, which places art and culture as central to encouraging leadership within civil society, which he argues in turn improves social sustainability.

Leonardo says "Culture has a strong impact on leadership skills, with an emphasis on personal development including increased self esteem, self confidence, communication, while it also develops a more holistic understanding and knowledge of society within participants".

"These leverage points help empower leaders within civil society to address severe social issues, such as education, income generation, housing, health, and infrastructure".

In Brazil, the importance of focusing on areas of deprivation is especially acute:

- More than 11.4 million Brazilians live in deprived areas (IBGE - Brazilian statistics institute, 2012)
- Practically all the 5,554 municipalities in Brazil have favela settlements (IBGE*, 2012)
- 42% of all the favelas in Rio de Janeiro have no high schools
- 72% have no vocational schools and 44% have no adult literacy programmes (CUFA, PPIs and Rede Globo, 2008)

The Challenge

The main challenge is to improve social integration:

- Building trust, enhancing the partnership between European and Brazilian organisations
- Raising awareness through the Brazilian Favelas' positive agenda diffusion, which brings positive visibility to the local inhabitants
- Selecting European Companies to present their spectacles in Brazil

How is this being facilitated?

- Project strategy, co-creation, implementation
- Coalition building / collective impact facilitation
- Promotion of the Favelas's positive agenda
- Representation of Brazil as responsible for the new business models through social action in deprived areas, also known as the Base of the Pyramid, as well as using the Arts as a platform for social integration
- Selection of plays to bring to Brazilian Theaters
- Definition of theatre plays from the Favelas to bring to European Festivals

Main results so far:

- Inclusion of 3 shows from Brazilian favelas to be presented in further editions of the Festival in Europe
- Selection of 3 European shows to be presented in Brazil
- Collaboration in the co-creation process of the Brazilian musician Peu Meurray's presentation in the Festival
- Reinforcement of the partnerships between the Festival, European Companies and Brazil
- The European Theatre Company 'Baychimo' is presenting its plays in Brazil

For more information please see [Leonardo's webpage](#)

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