

The Hague, 16 October 2009

Dear partners of Arts Collaboratory,

A large majority of you were invited to participate in the Arts Collaboratory Baseline Study (ACBS) conducted by researcher Ms Iberia Perez last April-May. Once again thank you for your valuable contribution to that survey. Based on your inputs, Iberia produced an exceptional 157 pages! document which provides a wealth of information meant as a learning tool for improving Art Collaboratory's programme and policies.

Attached you will find a Summary document of the research findings for your examination which includes important conclusions and suggestions. In short, the survey concludes that the Arts Collaboratory partners were strongest in areas such as: improvement of artistic quality and innovation, promotion of meaningful intercultural South-South exchange, and development of cultural infrastructure. The weakest aspects of the initiatives in 2008 were: knowledge-sharing amongst the Arts Collaboratory network, audience diversification and interaction with minority groups, South-North exchanges and interactions, financial sustainability, and arts management capacities.

There are a number of (concrete) suggestions for improvement which cannot all be directly followed-up. A priority list needs to be drawn up and then worked upon by both the Steering Group of Arts Collaboratory and all the partners. It would be interesting to hear from you which issues you regard as most crucial, and where you would like to become more active with others in the network. Of course, as always, we are open to other suggestions too.

- Strategies to increase public outreach in general
- Discussions on (self)-censorship and strategies to deal with this issue
- Discussions and strategies to diversify audiences to include more minority and marginalized groups
- Strategies to diversify funding base
- Looking into and meeting ICT needs
- Suggestions on any other relevant issues???

Within the Steering Group of Arts Collaboratory the following actions have already been decided upon and are now in the process of being implemented:

- Website is being redesigned and renewed with a stronger focus on the projects, including a project of the month, more visuals, and more room for virtual interaction
- Once renewed the website will also be translated into French and Spanish, with main topics also to be translated, facilitating participation by French and Spanish-speaking participants
- Dutch organizations that have been involved in Arts Collaboratory projects are all going to continue to be listed on the website
- The Mondriaan Foundation will send a letter explaining the possibilities of Dutch exchange for both Dutch cultural organizations and artists-led initiatives in the Global South
- A small budget will be included in all contracts for the partners to physically distribute publications to other Arts Collaboratory partners
- At least once per year Arts Collaboratory organizes a meeting for (selected) partners
- Attached to such meetings, a practical one-day training on issues like financial management, ICT or arts management will be held.

Finally, we welcome any positive or critical comments you may have on the survey and the process involved. This will help us in improving things the next time around. We are already thinking of having fewer open-ended questions, defining certain concepts such as beneficiaries and minority groups, and making many of the questions less ambiguous. Other suggestions and comments are more than welcome.

Our planning is to undertake this survey each and every year to monitor progress and allow for learning. We expect that next year's survey for 2009 will be sent to the Arts Collaboratory partners in early March 2010.

Looking forward to receiving your valuable reactions soon.

Best wishes,

Marc ter Brugge (Hivos)
Juulke Brosky (Hivos)
Gertrude Flentge (DOEN Foundation)
Maaïke Lauwaert (Mondriaan Foundation)