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Meet Up Discussing

Recognition of Creative and Cultural Industries (CCI) in Jordan

Held on 15 May 2023

Meetup Report

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Introduction:

The second Meet Up was held on 15 May 2023 in Amman with the presence of 30 actors from the creative and the cultural industries in Jordan including representatives from the Ministry of Culture and H.E. Dr. Haifa Alnajjar.

The Jordanian Ministry of Culture refers to the UNESCO definition when referring to the Creative and Cultural Industries (CCI)¹ which is the use of creativity and cultural expressions as primary inputs and have the potential to generate economic, social, and cultural benefits. They include a wide range of activities, such as: crafts and folk art, design, fashion, film, gastronomy, literature, music, performing arts, publishing, and visual arts.

For more understanding of the ecosystem of the Creative and Cultural Industries in Jordan, please refer to the concept note and report of the first Meet Up we have done on 21 March 2023. It can be accessed on IDare's website: <https://www.i-dare.org/CCI-Forum.html>.

The Ministry of Culture is currently finalizing a strategy and an action plan for the Creative and Cultural Industries in Jordan, and they plan to conduct several consultative meetings with relevant actors and stakeholders in the Creative and Cultural Industries in Jordan during the upcoming period before releasing the strategy in its final version.

Unclear role and lack of understanding for the TVSDC

The Technical and Vocational Skills Development Commission (TVSDC)² is a Jordanian government agency that is responsible for developing and implementing technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programs. The TVSDC plays a key role in providing training and certification programs for workers in a variety of industries, including the creative and cultural industries.

The TVSDC is working on developing several Occupational Standards related to various professions and occupations. These Occupational Standards will help to ensure that workers in these industries have the skills and knowledge that they need to be successful. The TVSDC is also working to develop an official ranking and certification mechanism that will recognize the learning and experience of individuals who have not completed formal education. This will help to ensure that all workers have the opportunity to succeed in the workforce, regardless of their educational background. However, some actors in Jordan are unclear about the role of the TVSDC and its entity. This is likely due to a lack of awareness about the TVSDC and its work.

¹ Creative and Cultural Industries is referred to by CCI in this report.

² <https://tvsc.gov.jo/en/>

Terminologies: Culture in Arabic (Thaqafa)

The need to distinguish between the terminologies used and what they refer to is crucial. Dr. Iyad Aljaber (founder of IDare) highlighted the need to distinguish between the meaning of "Culture" in English and "Thaqafa" in Arabic. In both Arabic and English, the terms convey the meaning of the heritage of culture (al mawrooth althaqafi). However, the Arabic term "Thaqafa" has an additional meaning that does not exist in English. The Arabic term "Thaqafa" means that culture has become stronger and better (strong as a sword) and it is reflected positively on the person's self-development.

Starting from this linguistic difference, using the Arabic term "Thaqafa" is crucial for the efforts leading in advancing the work on Creative and Cultural Industries in Jordan. This is because the Arabic term "Thaqafa" conveys the meaning of culture as a force for positive change. It is a reminder that culture is not just about the past, but also about the present and the future. It is a reminder that culture can be used to build a better society, one that is more just, more equitable, and more prosperous.

By using the Arabic term "Thaqafa," we can help to raise awareness of the importance of culture and its potential to contribute to the development of Jordan. We can also help to promote a more positive image of culture, one that is not just about the past, but also about the present and the future.

The use of consistent terminologies is essential for the effective development of the Creative and Cultural Industries (CCI) in Jordan. This is because it helps to avoid confusion and misunderstandings, makes it easier to communicate and collaborate with others, can help build trust and credibility, and can help create a more professional and unified image for the sector.

The first MeetUp discussed the issue of linguistics and terminologies in detail. The report from this MeetUp can be accessed through this [link](#). It emphasizes the need to have a common understanding and use of terminologies among the different actors, relevant stakeholders, and ministries working on the CCI in Jordan.

Six dimensions for recognition

IDare for Sustainable Development proposed six dimensions for exploring the recognition of the Creative and Cultural Industries (CCI) in Jordan. These dimensions are:

1. Personal: Self-recognition
2. Social recognition
3. Media
4. Education: Formal and non-formal education

5. Private sector
6. Political recognition

Definitions for each dimension of CCI recognition:

- **Personal: Self-recognition:** individuals working in the CCIs to have a sense of self-worth and self-confidence. And to believe in their own abilities and in the value of their work.
- **Social recognition:** the CCIs to be recognized and valued by society as a whole. This means that people are aware of the value of the CCIs and the contributions that they make to society. It also means that people are supportive of the CCIs and the individuals who work in them.
- **Media recognition:** the media plays an important role in shaping public opinion. It can be used to raise awareness of the CCIs and to promote a positive image of the sector and to highlight the contributions that the CCIs make to society.
- **Education:** having curricula for teaching students and actors about the CCIs and the opportunities that the CCI can offer.
- **Private sector:** role of private sector/business in investing in the CCIs and providing actors with the resources that they need to succeed.
- **Political recognition:** CCI recognition at the level of government in acknowledging its importance and avenues of support.

Further elaboration on the six dimensions of CCI recognition

Below are points being covered during the MeetUp, further exploration and research is needed.

1. Personal/self-recognition

In larger cities like Amman, where there is a more established creative ecosystem, professionals and practitioners are generally more familiar with the CCI term and its implications. They may have a better understanding of the various sub-fields encompassed by CCIs, such as visual arts, design, music, film, performing arts, crafts, and others. Whereas outside of the urban centers, particularly in smaller towns or rural areas, the awareness of the CCIs concept may be relatively lower. This is primarily due to limited exposure, resources, and access to formal education or training programs related to creative and cultural industries.

Currently we are not able to measure to which extent for the practitioners and actors who are active within the Creative and Cultural Industries are aware of and able to recognize themselves and their work as being part of the Creative and Cultural Industries as the concept of CCIs is relatively new in Jordan, and there is still a lack of awareness about it among people active within the sector. Yet, there is a growing awareness of the importance of CCIs for the economy and society, and this is leading to increased investment and support for the sector. It is widely

believed that the Economic Modernization Vision³ which was released in the last quarter of 2022 is playing an important role in coining the term Creative and Cultural Industries and putting strategies and action plans for realizing it.

Targeted research is needed to determine whether or the extent of awareness of young people in Jordan who are consciously choosing to study fields related to Creative and Cultural Industries. In addition to having informed decisions based on yearly released statistics about new jobs creations and future career opportunities being generated within the Creative and Cultural Industries. For this to happen, we would need action-oriented research entities and others who are showing the economic and social value of recognizing creativity and culture as crucial parts in the economic growth for Jordan.

Societal expectations and cultural norms might influence career choices, with certain fields being considered more socially prestigious or economically stable than others. Therefore, while some young people actively choose creative fields, others might opt for more traditional or perceived "safer" career paths due to social pressure or concerns about financial stability.

2. Social recognition of CCIs in Jordan

Social recognition could be considered a difficult part to be obtained due to its complications as we are talking about self-recognition among those who are part of the CCI as well as on the dimension of their peers, family members and friends. It feels that in Jordan we still have strong influence for having the classical education outcome of being an engineer, doctor, and pharmacist.

More comprehensive and accessible information about CCIs is needed to help in reaching a broader audience and to encourage wider participation and support. The community's promotion and support for a young person pursuing a career in CCIs may vary depending on various factors such as cultural norms, economic status, and individual perspectives. Creative fields may not be widely considered as traditional or economically stable career paths, and some families may prioritize financial stability over creative pursuits. There is a need to understand what specific CCIs sub-field that is more socially recognized than others in Jordan.

While introducing oneself as a member of CCIs can certainly offer value in terms of networking and professional connections within the creative community. It can also showcase skills, creativity, and expertise in a specific field and contribute to a sense of pride and belonging within the community. But it is not necessarily that this understanding is comprehended and/or being put into practice.

³ <https://www.jordanvision.io/en>

3. Media-recognition

The concept of creativity, arts, culture, and entertainment are often covered in the media, but it may not be explicitly framed under the term CCI. An ideal role for media in supporting the recognition of CCI would be to provide accurate and informative coverage of the sector. This would help to raise awareness of CCI and their importance, and it would help to dispel any negative stereotypes that may exist about the sector. Moreover, the media-recognition could play a role in promoting CCI by highlighting the economic and social benefits of the sector. This would help to create a more supportive environment for CCI to thrive.

The government of Jordan has made a commitment to supporting the creative and cultural industries. This commitment is evident in the development of a national strategy for CCI, as well as the provision of financial support for CCI. There is still potential for different media platforms to further promote and support CCI by increasing coverage, providing platforms for emerging artists and creative entrepreneurs, and fostering dialogues and discussions around the importance of creative and cultural sectors in Jordan's economy and society.

4. Education recognition

Traditional education systems often prioritize academic subjects and may not fully integrate creative and cultural aspects into their curriculum. An ideal role for education in supporting the recognition of CCI would be to provide accurate and informative information about CCI. This would help to raise awareness of CCI and their importance, and it would help to dispel any negative stereotypes that may exist about CCI. Additionally, education could play a role in promoting CCI by highlighting the economic and social benefits of the sector. This would help to create a more supportive environment for CCI to thrive.

Many universities have faculties or departments dedicated to arts, design, music, and other creative disciplines. These institutions often provide academic degrees in fields such as fine arts, architecture, graphic design, and media studies. universities may have a stronger emphasis on traditional academic disciplines

The Technical and Vocational Skills Development Commission (TVSDC) and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Jordan recognizes the importance of CCI as a sector. These institutions aim to develop and enhance vocational training programs to meet the needs of various industries, including CCI.

TVET programs may offer training courses and qualifications in specific CCI fields, such as visual arts, media production, graphic design, and handicrafts. The TVSDC and TVET work to align

vocational training programs with industry demands, including those within CCIs, to equip individuals with the necessary skills for employment and entrepreneurship in these sectors.

There can be differences between private and public institutions in how they deal with CCIs. Private institutions often have more flexibility and resources to develop specialized programs and facilities tailored to CCIs. They may have a closer connection to industry professionals and can offer more practical training opportunities, internships, or collaborations with CCI's stakeholders.

5. Private sector recognition:

The use of the term "CCIs" in job promotions by employers in Jordan may vary. While some employers may explicitly mention the term, especially those within the creative industries or organizations closely associated with CCIs, others may use more specific job titles or descriptions related to particular fields within CCIs. It depends on the employer's familiarity with the term and their understanding of the skills and competencies required for the job.

The expectations regarding salary and remuneration within CCIs can vary among individuals. While some may expect competitive compensation for their creative work, others may have different motivations beyond financial gain, such as pursuing their artistic passions or contributing to cultural development. It is worth noting that compensation within CCIs, like in any other sector, can vary depending on factors such as experience, demand, and the specific field within CCIs.

Many employers within CCIs recognize and value the competencies and skills acquired by individuals working in these industries. Creative and cultural sectors often require specific technical skills, artistic abilities, and innovative thinking, which can be highly valued by employers in relevant fields. These competences can include creativity, adaptability, problem-solving, collaboration, and a deep understanding of artistic and cultural contexts.

The availability of well-trained youth in CCIs and the provision of special training opportunities can vary depending on the specific field within CCIs and the resources available. Some employers may find it relatively easy to find well-trained individuals, particularly in more established sectors like visual arts or music, where formal education programs are available.

In emerging or niche fields within CCIs, finding well-trained individuals may be more challenging. In such cases, employers might provide on-the-job training or specialized programs to bridge the skills gap and meet their specific needs. Additionally, non-profit organizations, cultural institutions, and government initiatives in Jordan have been working to provide training opportunities and capacity-building programs within CCIs to support the development of skilled professionals in these sectors.

6. Political recognition

The Ministry of Culture plays a key role in supporting and promoting CCIs. The ministry oversees various cultural and artistic initiatives, programs, and events that contribute to the development and recognition of CCIs. It works closely with cultural institutions, organizations, and artists to support and enhance the creative and cultural sector in the country.

The establishment of a CCI syndicate or professional association dedicated to supporting CCIs or its sub-fields can be beneficial for the sector. Such an organization could serve as a platform for professionals and practitioners to come together, advocate for their interests, facilitate networking and collaboration, and provide resources and support specific to their field. A syndicate or professional association can play a crucial role in representing the interests of CCIs professionals, promoting professional standards, and providing a unified voice for the sector. It could also work towards creating professional development opportunities, organizing events, and advocating for favorable policies and legislation for CCIs.

There are no specific laws or legislation dedicated solely to CCIs in Jordan. However, there have been efforts by the government and other entities to develop policies and initiatives that support the growth and sustainability of CCIs. This includes provisions within existing laws related to culture, arts, intellectual property rights, and entrepreneurship that indirectly impact CCIs.

Conclusion remark by H.E. Haifa Alnajjar, Minister of Culture

- There is a tremendous opportunity for Jordan today to proactively advance the Creative and Cultural Industries (CCI). In order to achieve this, we must prioritize interactive listening and understanding our own diversity. Collaboration is essential among various stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education and others.
- Our efforts towards CCIs should adopt a holistic approach. The national culture strategy, which positions culture at the core of Jordan's modernization vision, already recognizes the importance of CCIs. We envision CCIs as a vital engine for our industries, driving comprehensive economic growth.
- Renewing our heritage and preserving traditional crafts, such as the Nay and Samasimiya, play a significant role. Understanding and valuing our heritage is a step towards showing it on the international stage.
- We have seen individuals forming groups and making important contributions, but the role of the private sector in supporting these efforts is still missing. We need sustainable efforts and must address the necessary support and legislation. It is worth highlighting the investments made in Jordan, particularly in the various governorates.
- To become powerful and self-supporting, we must help ourselves first. The efforts exerted provide us with strength, hope, and energy. We should capitalize on our

collective Jordanian narrative, emphasizing unity over regional divisions. Collaborative work, such as agro-industrial and agrotourism (Agritourism), can thrive under this unified approach.

- The Ministry of Culture has already implemented legislation and approved the strategy for Thaqafa (culture) and its action plan. Jordan stands as a stable presence in the region, offering flexibility and opportunities.
- The work of the Business and Professional Women Association⁴ is of great importance in this regard. It represents a collaborative effort that deserves recognition and utilization.
- Attitudes play a crucial role in influencing the perception of life and CCI. We must remain optimistic and hopeful, fostering a positive outlook.
- General education plays a pivotal role, as a rooted Jordanian identity is necessary. Empowering public education and public health are vital. Innovations thrive when proper infrastructure and basic needs are met.

⁴ <https://bpwa-amman.org>