



# TELL US A STORY

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the social impact of culture

**Title of the project:** MakeDox Traveling Cinema

**Please describe your action/project:**

Screening creative documentary films in remote rural regions across Macedonia

**Tell us something more about your project/activity:**

Promotion of creative documentary films and revival of long forgotten region in Macedonia has been a dream of a group of enthusiasts for few decades until 2010. In 2010 for the first time the Creative Documentary Film Festival Makedox was organized in Skopje and a couple of months later for the first time the MakeDox Traveling Cinema organized 10 open air screenings in villages and communities where if there was ever a film screening it has happened at least 50 years ago. Since 2010, every August the traveling cinema treats a region with creative documentaries for 2 weeks. In the past 6 years, creative documentary films have been offered to the inhabitants of 36 remote communities throughout the country.

**Duration:** (from August 2010– ongoing)

**Location:** Macedonia

**Field/discipline:** Open air cinema in remote regions

**Tell us something about who did it:** individual(s), organization(s), formal, informal, their numbers, their role/skills, etc.



The MakeDox Traveling Cinema is formally organized and executed by MakeDox – an association for promotion of creative documentaries founded by a group of enthusiasts, documentary lovers and volunteers. A team of approximately 20 members of the organization with various professional backgrounds: filmmakers, journalists, graphic designers, linguists and educators are caring out the action.

## **Tell us something about the people who in your view received The most significant impact:**

The most significant impact was received by the audience, the locals from the villages, who supported our initiative with their presence and enthusiasm. Most of them had never seen a movie on a big screen before. About 6.000 people from the rural Macedonian regions attended our open-air and free of charge cinema.

Setting up an open air screen in a middle of village is attractive enough for the entire village to appear in front of the screen. With our MakeDox Travelling Cinema they are introduced to creative testimonies of realities from distant places they've never seen before and to a cultural content significantly different from the daily TV programs which are the only cultural offer in these communities. The quality of our program as well as the information received is later internalized in their system of values, knowledge and hopefully actions.

Another significant impact of our action is that our MakeDox Travelling Cinema emphasized the need for cultural decentralization in the country. Before our project, just few of the small towns had had some poor cultural offers. Since 2011, there are "summer cultural waves" organized happenings in around 10 towns in Macedonia. The Macedonian Film Agency approached us with an offer to organize cinema screenings in restored cinema halls in 8 towns around the country. Few villages that we've visited are organizing cultural happenings on their own and organizations and institutions from towns that we've screened our films as Shtip, Gevgelija, Prilep, Kavadarci are inviting us and asking to organize more screenings during the year.

The third impact that is also very important to us is the impact that concerns our organization and the members. We usually organize the MakeDox Travelling Cinema in a nomad style, setting up a camping site at one place and then traveling to the neighbouring villages. Our team spends valuable time together combining practice of life skills and professional duties in a camping setting. Experiencing and learning the "forgotten" traditions, local cuisine and products as well as listening to authentic stories is significantly enriching our personal as well as organisational capacities.

## **Was the impact planned from the start?**





There were expected reactions but the impact came as a later result, especially the cultural decentralization initiatives on other cultural operators in the country.

## **Tell us something about the context: recent history, social, economic and cultural features**

Since the beginning of the 90's, The Republic of Macedonia is settled in an ongoing transitional period. This majorly affected the small towns and rural areas from where people started moving out massively. The result of this intern migration from rural to urban areas brought a great extinction of any kind of cultural happenings in the remote areas. The MakeDox Travelling Cinema aims to revive this situation and bring new, fresh cultural ideas in the long forgotten areas of the country.

## **Tell us what were your expected results and the actual ones**

We are aware that the monitoring and evaluation of cultural projects is very difficult, sensitive and often neglected component, due to the impossibility to measure the results of activities which often manifest in long terms. Nevertheless, the project team developed monitoring and evaluation plan that enabled us to assess the quality of the experience gained by the participants, the influence films have on their opinion and views and their will to take action and make changes in their cultural life. The quantitative evaluation assessed numerical outputs such as: the number of attendances, the number of web-site visitors, e-newsletter subscribers and social media followers as well as the percentage of press presence and coverage. Professional Clipping Agency "Clipping" was hired since 2010 to monitor our media coverage and professional public research and strategic marketing agency "IPSOS" was hired in 2013 to assess the implementation of the MakeDox Traveling Cinema. Both types of evaluation were done using a combination of the following methods:

- Research: questionnaires, feedback groups and one-on-one interviews
- Documentation: photographs and video recordings of the events; reports and evaluation lists and average attendances reports
- Press clippings and media analysis
- Observation – information gathered by observations and opinions of the house staff and volunteers

The assesment done using this methods showed us that the actual results quantitative results of the action are higher than expected. The number of visitors, the number of media articles as well as the number of web page and social medias followers are almost double size than expected.





The impact of our activity on the decentralisation of the cultural activities of other cultural operators and more important, the cultural initiatives of the locals from the visited communities are the most treasureble and not expecetd results.

## **Tell us something about the most relevant resource inputs of your project/action: human, financial, organization, time**

The MakeDox Traveling Cinema is organized by the CSO for promotion of documentary films that has 35 active members. MakeDox does not have a permanent employed staff but engages its members on a contractual project base. Team of around 20 members composed of: programmer, project coordinator, project assistant, graphic designer, PR coordinator, 2 journalists, a translator, photographer, cameraman, sound man, editor, projectionist and 4-5 projection technicians and several volunteers composed our "Traveling team". The project circle lasts for 8 mounts including the film selection, location scouting, promotion and follow-up. The actual execution of the Traveling Festival last for 12-15 days. The MakeDox Traveling Cinema is a free of charge and does not generate any income. Its financial sources are strictly from project funding and own resources. So far, the Makedox Traveling Cinema has been supported by the National Endowment for Democracy, USA and the Embassy of Netherlands and USA in Macedonia and the Macedonian Film Agency.

## **Tell us how you have attained the main change: challenges, Innovation, obstacles, brilliant solutions, turning points, quantum leaps, etc.**

The assessment of the first two Traveling Festival editions manifested two weaknesses of our organizational and programming approach to this project. Up to 2012 we have organized the MakeDox Traveling Cinema combining screenings in small cities and small villages around the country. The turnout on the screenings in the cities was significantly lower than in the villages and the reactions and acceptance of the project in the rural communities was much more positive and pro-active. Having this experience in mind, we've decided to concentrate the Traveling Cinema to smaller, rural municipalities and develop another outreach programs for the cities. In the first two years we've traveled from city to city and spent more time and resources on travel and accommodation expenses. Our challenge was to lower the traveling time and accommodation expenses as much as possible and maintain or raise the number of the places visited. We have managed to meet this challenge by setting up a camping base for us in the central area of the targeted region. Up to 2013 we have done our region selection based on population data's from the State Statistical Office and realized that this approach was lacking valuable information needed to make comprehensive selection of the screening locations as well as the film program. The film program



of the Traveling cinema since 2012 included screening of one short Macedonian documentary film originating from the place we've screened and one film from MakeDox International festival selection. According to the interviews and discussions we had with the local population after the screenings, the MakeDox Traveling cinema was first cultural event after more than 30 years in most of the places. Most of the audience found the films "interesting", "informative", "clever" and "natural" but there are also those who found them to be "complicated", "too intellectual" or "boring", especially the elderly that couldn't follow the films if there weren't appropriate subtitles. One of the challenges we faced was being able to prepare special Makedox Traveling Cinema selection that would be focused on and take into consideration this population as well. In order to meet these challenges and overcome these weaknesses we have included location scouting period of two weeks of the region; hired professional public research agency to research the Visual Culture and knowledge of the chosen region and included more national documentary films in our program.

**Tell us the main area of impact of your project, i.e. a permanent or long lasting change in attitudes, awareness, behavior, conditions, economic status, income, occupation, perception, practice, quality of life, self-esteem, skills, social relations, etc. and for whom.**

The traveling cinema aims to enrich the experience, values, visual culture and perceptions of rural population of our country as well as their cinema going habit with exposing them to diverse and high quality film content.

**Which is the Big Idea behind your project/action?**

The idea of our project and action is sharing and reviving the culture initiatives in the rural areas in Macedonia.

**VIDEO: Traveling Cinema Chronicles from the past 2 years:**

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLlupBcQeOUPUQOzMVc0JsDLaq-qBu6XqN>

**PHOTOS: Traveling Cinema 2015** <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.969062206478351.1073741882.177940768923836&type=3>

**Traveling Cinema 2014** <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.774460712605169.1073741859.177940768923836&type=3>



## **Traveling Cinema 2013**

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.577742075610368.1073741839.177940768923836&type=3>

**Traveling Cinema 2012** <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.418031858248058.115928.177940768923836&type=3>

**Traveling Cinema 2011** <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.212488585469054.74356.177940768923836&type=3>