

FESTIVAL SUR LE NIGER

An arts and culture festival as an engine
of local development in Segou, Mali

Objectives **Festival sur le Niger**

- To promote Segou as a tourism destination, in particular through a cultural festival and the preservation of the natural environment, local traditions and crafts and the improvement of tourism services
 - Contribute to local development
 - Improve environmental protection, especially of river Niger
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Festival sur le Niger

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Activities

- Organise an annual cultural festival, with music, dance, visual arts, conferences, etc.
- Organise round tables, forums, etc. to discuss and propose solutions concerning local development issues, in particular, environment, public services and social problems.
- Create and manage a crafts centre: training, producing and promoting crafts in regular and perennial bases.
- Reinforce cultural sectors of activity through:
 - Support to local artistic production
 - Providing venues, technical facilities and artistic material to young artists
 - Networking and promoting local artists and creators
 - Training artists
 - Promote research through a resource centre that works on social and local development issues

FESTIVAL SUR LE NIGER 2012
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WWW.KYLEMUJLOF.BLOGSPOT.COM

Salif Keita



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Results

- Segou has become an important tourist destination. The festival itself attracts over 23 000 visitors a year, during one week.
- The Festival has significantly contributed to local economic development:
 - All sectors of activity benefit from the increase in tourism.
 - It can be estimated (evaluation report 2013) that the festival has created 750 permanent jobs in the city;
 - During the festival 2 000 direct temporary jobs are created and around 200 structures benefit from the festival activities;
 - The Festival is the most important single contributor to local taxes and economy.
 - 3 new hotels, several restaurants, 9 art galleries, 30 cultural venues have been inaugurated in the last 6 years;
 - 200 families propose accommodation during the festival, with a significant direct economic impact for local families;
 - Visitors to the city are stimulated to install new activities or develop local projects. An indicator of this is the multiplication of construction projects in the city, from 40 a year in 2005 to 200 in 2013, a part of which can be attributed to the Festival.

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Results

- The festival has implemented permanent structures to promote culture at a local and national level:
 - Creation of a cultural centre (Centre Koré) to provide a permanent venue, resources and facilities to local artists.
 - Creation of an Arts and Crafts institute (IKAM), giving training to local artists and cultural managers, supporting local crafts men, promoting and producing crafts, artistic education for school students, etc.
 - young artists a year are accompanied, promoted and supported.
 - 10 artist residences organized a year to stimulate creation and artistic exchanges.
 - Support to local cultural venues.



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Results

- The festival supports a holistic local development approach and proposed the implementation of a participatory body to promote socio-economic development in Segou
- Creation of a local Council on economic development, including Festival representatives, local authorities and local stakeholders. It promotes and runs local development projects
- Environmental protection has been reinforced through the creation of a long term programme of awareness raising and maintenance of the River Niger.
- The Festival has contributed to improve significantly the urban environment: promoted and encouraged the rehabilitation of buildings, venues, streets, river shore, local tangible heritage, etc.

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The success of Festival sur le Niger can be explained by:

- ▶ • Strong and collective implication of local private entrepreneurs,
- ▶ • Participatory process, including private sector, authorities and citizens,
- ▶ • Rigorous management and planning, competent managers, as well as the diversity of funding sources,
- ▶ • Multidimensional approach,
- ▶ • Creation of permanent structures in order to give durability to the Festivals action.

