

Working towards decolonization

Name of the organisation

Kuumba vzw

Website of the organisation

Kuumba.be

Location of the organisation

5 Passerstraat, 1070 Anderlecht Anderlecht, Belgium

E-mail address of the organisation

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Good practice aspect(s)/themes of youth work

- Non-formal education/-learning

Good practice category

A practice of processes and methods

Good practice aim & purpose

Our diverse society shows an increasingly rich variety of cultures. However, there is not always much contact and encounter between all these different cultures. The goal of vzw Kuumba is to stimulate and activate the interest and demand for more encounter and exchange. It also builds bridges between the different African communities and mainstream institutions.

We start from the diaspora that sometimes also has no knowledge of the colonial history that Belgium shares with Congo. Together we learn more about this. This shared past has a great impact on the present and we would like to see changes in this impact. The prejudices that exist once started from somewhere and the discrimination that exists can no longer be ignored. Hereby we wish to bring about policy changes through sensibilization and awareness.

Good practice description

Getting to know the past that binds Belgium and Africa can be done through guided tours, buffets and workshops. Through these activities, we often give people a first taste of the many different African cultures and the uniqueness of it.

Culture is the instrument par excellence that serves as a binding agent in these encounters. Kuumba wants to be the bridge between communities that might not otherwise meet. At Kuumba, everyone is welcome. Are you white, brown, black, male, female, gay, straight, young or old? In Kuumba, it doesn't matter. Everyone is welcome there to be who they are, to engage, create and be with others.

Our cultural events aim to remove barriers and bring together people from different backgrounds and histories. They also aim to give new and unknown artists of Belgian-African origin or artists with a heart for African culture, a stage and an opportunity to practice and share their talent with the rest of Belgium. Where they previously encountered barriers to being able to show their talents, we remove these barriers and guide them to be able to perform on other stages.

Building bridges between these starting artists and mainstream institutions remains an important role for Kuumba. We see our events as a jumpingboard for new artists and would love to see them grow into much larger institutions.

Good practice result & concrete effects

We reach a lot of young people from the African diaspora who in their neighborhoods even introduce the subject to groups or other youngsters. Based on the growth of demand for our workshop, tours and activities, we see its importance growing. The fact that we are now getting funding from the government also indicates that the subject can no longer be ignored. We also see new collaborations emerging with major institutional organization such as Africa Museum, Bozar, KVS,

We started with one staff member who volunteered to introduce this topic. Now we are an organization with 3 full-time employees and more than 30 volunteers and even more young people and artists. We are reaching more and more international groups interested in the decolonization activities.

Good practice chapter of the European Charter on Local Youth Work

Organisation and practice