SETTING-UP A FAB LAB AS INNOVATION INSTRUMENT IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY

THE FAB LAB PARAMARIBO SURINAME CASE

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- Consultant on setting-up a Fab Lab in Paramaribo, Suriname

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1. BACKGROUND

One community, many backgrounds

Major differences

Fab6 2010: 50 Fab Labs, doubling every 1.5 years, Fab9 2013: 200+ Fab Labs
1. BACKGROUND

Major differences:
- Target groups
- Services offered
- Life cycle stage
- Old industrial building / new modern design studio
- Autonomous / embedded
- Subsidized / self-supporting
- Rich / poor neighborhood / country

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Suriname is situated at the North coast of South America, part of the Caribbean. Paramaribo is its capital.
2. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

2. Socio-economic context

Suriname: community

Amerindians, Creoles, Hindustani, Javanese, Maroons, Chinese, Europeans, Jews, Lebanese, Brazilians

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Pop.</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coastal plains</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>Agriculture, Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interior</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Minerals (gold), petroleum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>400 x 400 kms</td>
<td>530,000</td>
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2. Socio-economic context

**Suriname Challenges:**
- Introducing high tech in all sectors: New industries, Innovative products, Pioneering processes, Higher standards
- Avoiding damaging the environment
- Improving productivity
- Increasing the manufacturing industry
- Finding new agricultural products
- Raising higher interest for technical professions
- Lowering the number of dropouts
3. ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Fab Lab Paramaribo is a policy instrument of the government:

- Extra visibility
- Extra attention from politicians and media
- Not their only priority
- Sustainable?
Fab Lab Paramaribo is part of the Cabinet of the Vicepresident:
- Close to the center of power
- Procedure oriented culture
3. ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Fab Lab Paramaribo is located in the central Government Building:

- High level officials / visitors
- Barrier for free and open access
4. BUSINESS CASE

Fab Lab Paramaribo: Inputs
- Initial funding from government budget
- Annual funding from government budget
- Volunteers / Fab nomads
- No long term commitments
4. BUSINESS CASE

- Fab Lab Paramaribo: Outputs
  - Opening hours
  - Number of visitors
  - ...

Outcomes
- Informed citizens
- Learning outcomes
- Business initiatives

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4. BUSINESS CASE

- Fab Lab Paramaribo: Effects
  - Technology more popular
  - New businesses
  - New products and processes
  - International visibility and cooperation
5. SYSTEMS VIEW

Scorecard

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5. SYSTEMS VIEW

Humans systems view:
- No isolated processes for different target groups
- Systems approach to “convert” 100 visitors into 10 users into 1 new entrepreneur
Knowledge management systems view:

- Not only documenting user experiences as Fab Moments
- But also building a knowledge management ecosystem

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6. FOLLOW-UP

Practice oriented follow-up:

- Continue setting up Fab Lab Paramaribo
- Collaborate and exchange with peers
  - Socio-economic context
  - Organizational context
  - Business case

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6. FOLLOW-UP

- Theory oriented follow-up:
  - Study the differences between Fab Labs and derive main characteristics

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THANK YOU!

Agenda
1. Background
2. Socio-economic context
3. Organizational environment
4. Business case
5. Systems view
6. Follow-up

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