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Film Cities, Film Services: Political economy of production, distribution, exhibition
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Abstract
Texts arise out of contexts. The contexts include political economy, industry, marketing and genres, state policy, structures and support, ideological assumptions, and historical conditions. The relationship between texts and audiences define genres, while audience development and product delivery (via film services) is always an issue in South Africa. This paper draws on film city, film service, and film friendly concepts, to examine how an indigenous cinema can be supported via the generation of appropriate value-chains that simultaneously locate South Africa’s competitive advantage in a global context, while also bringing cinemas to huge dormitory areas lacking in entertainment services. Job creation, entrepreneurship and black township audience development are argued to underpin indigenous film making strategies. The project develops a holistic methodology involving many research partners in developing academic-industry partnerships in influencing city, provincial and national film policy. This paper thus examines the relationship between texts and contexts within a political economic framework that links textual generation with industry-policy-support-delivery-audiences in a single value chain.

Studies on the political economy of the post-apartheid film industry are scarce, and none have focused on studios, media precincts, cultural factors and exhibition, financing models or the networks characterising cities in which these are located.

The project outlined below aims to develop systematic analyses of trends and drivers of change and competitive-ness in South African ‘media cities’. While film offices and provincial commissions have been put in place in some areas, systematic research remains to be done on the financial, spatial and cultural impacts of such initiatives. The economics of film and media are no longer subject to conventional economic theory as this industry draws also on cultural, social and creative/symbolic capital.

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The next section examines four factors of any economy and adds a fifth, active creative capital deriving from cultural intelligence.

**Economic Competitiveness of Cities and Nations**
Research on the topics of competition and strategy has been largely dominated by studies on internal firm activity. From a clustering perspective, innovation is no longer invested in the individual product but is found in processes, the *ensemble of technologies and practices* (Porter 1990). A cluster is a geographically proximate group of interconnected firms, suppliers and associated industries in a particular field, linked by commonalities and complementarities, arising in particular locations. Innovation in film is therefore likely to be found in the services provided to production, whether in the combination of services or in transactions and interactions (Goldsmith and O’Regan 2005: 52) [Italics in the original].

Much thinking on the competitiveness of nations has focused on the economy as a whole with national economic policy identified as the dominant influence. Cities generate their own impulses, leading to growth or decay, independent to some extent from the national picture. A comprehensive study should consider the particular character of business and labour, and sector support via film offices and commissions with regard to national funding and regulation. It may also require analysing city authorities as agents for stimulating and shaping economic growth, obviously examining the linkages with civil society and key economic actors (see Drake 2012). That is, how do cities anticipate the competitive advantage of nations and inflect this into benefit which attracts international production (Goldsmith and O’Regan 2005:xii).

The key **factor endowments** of economic theory (land, labour, location, natural resources, population) assume a passive (inherited) view of national economic opportunity. Sustained industrial growth has, however, hardly ever been built from these conventional inherited factors (Porter 1990). The Information Age requires that new post-industrial factors be identified and, in the case South Africa, other considerations such as “elite formation” that muddy efficiency, service delivery and normative economic logic are often over-determining (Mbeki 2009; Terrblanche 2012).

**Competitive advantage of nations** results from four interlinked advanced factors and activities in and between companies in these clusters. These can be influenced in a pro-active way by government. The interlinked advanced factors in Porter’s (1990) framework are:

1. **Firm Strategy, Structure and Rivalry**: the world is dominated by dynamic conditions, where direct competition impels firms to work for increases in productivity and innovation. How does this work in an industry that is partly private, partly state-owned, and public? It is subsidised in specific sectors by, for example, the National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF), the Department of Trade and Industries (DTI) and donor organisations?[^5] [Where, for example, do

[^4]: A metonym for the entire subject area of moving pictures, including the film industry, production, marketing, distribution, exhibition, viewing, reception and study (Chandler and Monday 2011:148). For our purposes, we also include all screen industries.

[^5]: The government’s developmental intent is demonstrated by a variety measures including the NFVF. Some of the most significant initiatives include: tax incentives for production managed by DTI, the funding of skills development managed primarily by NFVF and universities, the provision of loan finance for commercially-orientated production
the grassroots ReaGile modular constructed mini-cinema complexes fit into this schema? Where do low budget productions intersect public-private partnerships?) (See below; also Mboti, 2013).

2. **Demand Conditions:** the more demanding the customers in an economy, the greater the pressure facing firms to constantly improve their competitiveness via quality, innovative products, etc. In South Africa, this plays out in audience development projects, cultivating leisure-time habits that include cinema-going. [Examples are the ReaGile initiative and city festivals, the NFVF’s intention to open 150 screens in township venues etc.]

3. **Related Supporting Industries.** Spatial proximity of upstream and/or downstream industries facilitates the exchange of information and of ideas and innovations. [The knock-on effect of the still still-born film studio6 seriously constrained developments in Durban in all sectors including education, denying the city the premier status as a media city. When post-production is exported to other better serviced cities, the production city’s infrastructure remains nascent and competitiveness suffers.]

4. Contrary to conventional wisdom, Porter argues that the “key” factors of production (or specialized factors) are created, not inherited. Specialized factors are skilled labour, capital and infrastructure. [What role do municipalities assign to city offices: developmental? Organisational? Servicing productions? Tourism promotion? Or, are they instrumentally perceived as extensions of municipal PR functions promoting the city or political parties rather than the city promoting film? Film offices should build critical mass as launching pads for productive sectoral growth by facilitating a services approach.]

“Non-key” or general use factors, such as unskilled labour and raw materials, can be obtained by any company, and hence do not generate sustained competitive advantage. However, specialized factors involve heavy, sustained investment. These are more difficult to replicate. This leads to competitive advantage, because if other firms cannot easily reproduce these factors, they become uniquely valuable. [Durban, for example, largely loses its home-grown specialised video and TV graduates to media cities elsewhere where employment prospects are better. Conversely, Durban attracts production to its beaches, and adjacent wild life reserves.]

The role of government in Porter’s Model (Fig 1) is in acting as a catalyst and challenger; to encourage – or even push – companies to raise their aspirations and move to higher levels of performance, to stimulate early demand for advanced products, and to focus on specialized factor creation. (It is not by accident that Invictus was produced on location in Cape Town, partly due perhaps to the availability of an ethnic concentration that could be cast to play South Pacific Islanders’ and some players in the New Zealand rugby team. Similarly, the cultural proximity of

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Durban and its large Indian diaspora creates clear synergies with Bollywood in both: i) exhibition of Indian-made fare (Avalon-Nu Metro Theatres); and, ii) production (Videovision’s *Mr Bones* movies released in India) and some low budget Indian ethnic South African-made features. These interacting factors Porter has represented thus (Fig 1):

![Porter’s Diamond Model](http://www.google.co.za/search?q=michael+porter’s+diamond+model&hl=en&tbo=u&tbs=isch&source=univ&sa=X&ei=ywr1UMvLDNCxhAfs3IHQDg&ved=0CCsQsAQ&biw=1170&bih=771)

A cluster is the manifestation of a diamond at work. The enduring competitive advantages in a global economy are often heavily localised, arising from concentrations of highly specialised skills and knowledge, institutions, rivalry, related businesses, and sophisticated customers (Porter 1990).

Porter’s 4 Factors need to be supplemented with a fifth:

5. that of **human/intellectual/creative/cultural and symbolic capital**. The skilled labour Factor 4 should include education, training and creativity, entrepreneurship and strategic planning in Factor 5. These need to be leveraged by adequate capital investment in appropriate infrastructure (F4) and access to capital. In South Africa, public-private partnerships have yet to be systematically leveraged. Such factors should apply also to state funding bodies in thinking about the bigger developmental picture that includes grassroots
employment initiatives and micro growth points. The modular based mini-cinema complexes devised by ReaGile discussed below would offer an example-in-practice of all five Factors. The skilled labour rubric should include education and creativity, entrepreneurship and vision. These need to be leveraged by capital and infrastructure (Factor 4) as it is cultural capital that creates industrial innovation, finds new markets, invents new products and generates new ways of improving performance.

Relevance of the Research within the South African Context:


The industry is comprised of two main parts: i) the service sector which provides creative and technical support; and ii) that sector which involves the production of local content for television and cinemas. The success of the national industry is based largely on its capacity as a service industry. Cape Town, in particular, is a popular location for international filmmakers who are attracted by the weak currency, the diverse locations, the good services infrastructure including well-trained crews, top hotels (demanded by crews and actors) and the long sunny days of the summer months.

The demise of apartheid coincided with a number of critical developments, namely, the ascendancy of globalisation and economic liberalism based on markets, and the emergence of the ‘third wave’ of democratization. This conjuncture also coincided with an undercurrent of increasing dissatisfaction with the post-industrial global order and its associated market fundamentalism, and negative consequences for equitable development, governance, and environmental sustainability (Mhone and Edigheji 2004, p.1).

Attempts to balance the sometimes-conflicting objectives of market-led development on the one hand, and democratization on the other, pose enormous challenges to policy regulation design and its implementation. Similar to other ‘transitional societies’, South Africa is attempting to realize two sometimes contradictory agendas of economic development and democratic transformation. However, it is important to also take note of the ways in which the state (and arguably private bodies) are playing an active role in supporting and promoting globalisation:

The contemporary globalisation of economic processes is often presented as undermining the ability of national governments to manage and regulate the economic activities located within their territorial jurisdictions. Rather than presenting an opposition between a globalising market and the nation-state, it is more appropriate to conceptualize a restructured nation-state playing an active part in promoting those processes routinely subsumed under the convenient rubric of globalisation (Barnett 1998, p.551).
On the Globalization of the Film Industry

Globalization accounts for a combination of different factors, conceptualized as the “transcendental homogenization of political and socioeconomic processes and theories” (Akindele et al 2002: 7). Globalisation denotes the ubiquitous movement towards an intensely interacting world order, particularly evident in three intersecting dimensions –

i) global financial markets (currency levels, stock exchanges, commodities and energy future-prices);

ii) the global security system post 9/11 (United Nations, threat of terrorism, issues of conflict); and

iii) international communication (the Internet and web, global telecommunications and broadcasting, satellite and undersea cabling networks).

Such networks: i) act as the catalyst of global capitalism; and ii) are instruments of democratization and development. In the case of post-apartheid South Africa, a young democracy inheriting a history of human rights abuse and severe inequality, such networks are relevant both for economic empowerment and also to enable democratization.

In approaching this study, our overarching conceptual framework is graphically illustrated as follows:

![Conceptual Framework (Frindte).](image)

Marshall McLuhan’s (2011) early concept of “a global village” (1964) is indicative of how the globe has contracted via the immediate transmission of information. This term, a precursor to the
Internet, has enabled the: “spread of capitalism, western imperialism and the development of a global media system” (Robertson, 1992: 22).

Transnational cinema is made and received in a global arena in which directors, funding institutions and film crews are active beyond geographical, national and cultural limitations. Contemporary production is less attached to specific nations, but is influenced by an ‘imaginary community’ defined by attributes such as gender, generation, religion, ethnicity, political beliefs and so on. The term ‘transnational’ combines the notion of ‘the nation’ but at the same time ‘trans’ as an implication for unevenness and mobility and links people or institutions across nations (Durovicova and Newman 2010: x). The concept of transnational cinema helps to locate the context of a film within economic, social, political and cultural influences on the one hand, while on the other, emphasizing the importance of factors such as networks, knowledge exchange, characteristics of viewers, co-productions and international film festivals. We have also applied this term to studies of micro-budget cinema within specific cities in the context of the Nollywood model of production (see Mboti and Brown, forthcoming). Global markets and global production (Hoskins & McFadyen, 1991), global flows and intra-regional flows (Chadha & Kavoori 2000), international competition (Shin, 2005), co-productions (Taylor, 1995) and so on, are additional sub-factors that sustain transnational cinema.

The rise of transnational consumer tastes (e.g. Hollywood, Nollywood) is an additional outcome of globalisation (Lorenzen, 2008). The “new consumer” is a paradox between “industrial assumptions of passive mass consumption” and the behaviour of increasingly interactive audiences (Grainge 2008: 13). Manuel Castells’s theory of the ‘global network society’ emphasizes this complexity in consumption and organisation. Social structures are “organizational arrangements of humans in relationships of production, consumption, reproduction, experience, and power expressed in meaningful communication codes by culture”. Networks, influenced by globalisation, shape and control human lives in the form of financial markets, transnational production, management, and the distribution of goods and services, science and technology, the mass media, the Internet, entertainment, international institutions, social movements and more (2009: 24-5).

The debate between European ‘cultural exceptionists’ and American ‘free traders’ is germane. ‘Cultural exceptionalism’ is a strategy of contained resistance against American dominance. This form of symbolic capital considers cinema as art, heritage and identity/ideology versus the free-trade perspective of cinema as entertainment and business (Frau-Meigs, 2004). As a result of this debate the influence of globalisation has two different effects on filmmaking: homogenization of formats, but simultaneously the struggle for content pluralism and cultural independency.

The above framework elucidates general impacts of globalization in the form of economic, technological, political and cultural effects. This in turn influences different spheres of the film industry as part of global media. It manifests in effects, such as economic and technological aspects (e.g., access to electronic media, advancement of film production equipment), production and co-production (e.g. new genres, and new distribution and exhibition models [see ReaGile below]), vertical and horizontally integration (e.g., film companies move into exhibition or the exploitation of the movie content into different products) and consumption and organisation (e.g. global consumers and interactivity in media consumption, the ReaGile model).
Global Media & the Film Industry

A distinction should be dawn between two theories: “globalizing of media theory” and “theorization of global media” (Durovicova and Newman 2010: 36). This project applies both models. Considerations addressed are:

- Passive consumption, historically, characterised analogue media. Digital media however enable interactivity, co-creation and immediate recirculation.
- Ongoing R&D continuously results in new formats, genres and forms of consumption.
- New digital platforms create a massive demand for content, fed not just by media and entertainment companies, but also by individuals.
- Online distribution means that any medium can obtain global access; a problem in South Africa due to high connection fees and inadequate bandwidth.
- Participants in global media positioning will need to understand and invest in the process of content localization.

These interconnected processes are presented in Fig. 3:

![Figure 3: Future of Media – 4 changing Factors: Format, Content, Revenue, Distribution. Future Exploration Network (2006)](image)

Against the above background, our particular study:

- analyses how different points of the film industry value chain interrelate;
- provides a network analysis of interlinks within and Durban city industries with emphasis on the contribution of studio complexes to local growth;
- analyses the multiplier effects for cities’ financial and space economies and for infrastructural provision;
• considers the additional multiplier effects for the provinces in which each of the three cities is located.
• By studying relevant development nodes in the industry, the project will provide a comparative analysis between the likely impact of current and future industry development measures on the one hand, and the state’s desire for redress and equity on the other.
• A related aim is to analyse occurrences where a duality of purpose and/or tension exists between the state’s attempt to provide for both its citizens and the needs of global capitalist economy.

Our project builds on pioneering work conducted for the Australian Film Commission by Tom O’Regan, Susan Ward and Ben Goldsmith (2003, 2005, 2010a, 2010b). They analyse the significance of studio complexes in conferring ‘film friendly’ city status. High-end studios equipped with multiple sound stages are capable of meeting the production needs of high budget productions while simultaneously servicing telemovie, television series and commercials. At full capacity, Cape Town Film Studios, for example, is able to generate between 736 and 1361 direct jobs per annum, on average, three times more than a location based film. Multiplier effects emanating from a busy studio include commercial and residential activity in its vicinity. In Durban, which lacks a studio, we have examined how below-the-radar low budget films like Attack of an Indian Werewolf (2011) intersect or exit the formal value chain being promoted by city offices.

Studios are categorized according to the “extent and type of production work they do and for the degree to which they enable concentration of this work in a single place” (Goldsmith & O’Regan 2003, p.31). The three models are:

- The production precinct, services production, but lacks extensive post-production facilities and services (Durban).
- The cinema city complex is orientated towards film and television drama work and contains the full range of production and postproduction services (Johannesburg).
- The media city includes all of the features of the cinema city but additionally recognizes a broader range of broadcasting production facilities and new media services (Ibid, p.31; see also Goldsmith and O’Regan 2005). Studio complexes provide a ‘one-stop-shop’ for local and international filmmakers (Cape Town).

In the Australian studies, studios are mapped according to their size and location (Goldsmith & Regan 2003, p.22). The objective is to predict future growth by: i) measuring levels of production and other key indicators; and ii) evaluating the significance of the ‘studio complex idea’.

Few domestic production industries are able to sustain consistent local work flow. They are therefore necessarily focused on growing the volume of internationally mobile feature productions, while also creating co-production partnerships with other industries. Although these production centres are principally organized to service international production, this necessarily occurs in relation to local/national film and TV production. “Studio complexes are thus integral components of international production ecology as well as, often, national production ecology” (Goldsmith and

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7 Figures provided by Nilesh Singh, Videovision. See also http://www.capetownfilmstudios.co.za/about-us
O’Regan 2005, pp.9-10). Studios service ‘runaway’ international productions that create local employment. Studio studies identify key actors, calculate industrial strengths of such individual and associated firms, and estimate the multiplier effects of spending on local economies and employment levels. This mapping exercise will provide a clearer picture of how the industry functions in the three respective cities and how different points of the film value chain interrelate.

**Local Issues: Research Questions**

The following questions are signposted here to frame the discussion

1) What are the below-the line informal production and exhibition activities occurring at grassroots levels in the smaller cities? How can their economic impact be calculated?

2) What is the potential of these micro-activities in generating local nodes of development?

3) How do these informal initiatives represent and leverage local cultural repertoires with what effect?

4) In what ways can these initiatives be integrated into existing precincts, the cinema complex and eventually the media city?

5) How would informal producers and exhibitors be brought into the formal, taxable, sector?

As a case study for Durban, where the project is being piloted, the development nodes investigated include:

- skills development programmes such as the formal training provided by the Video Technology Unit at the Durban University of Technology and other training initiatives (see Ogunlela 2011).
- The Durban Film Office (DFO), launched in 2003, which has developed its own strategic plans (see Dakile 2011).
- The KZN Film Commission, launched in 2007, relaunched in 2012.
- Value chain analysis of Durban-produced low budget films (Naidoo 2011; Nyokona 2012; Jokhun 2012; Ramdutt 2012; Mhethwa 2012); the value of Durban’s locations (see Zwane 2011), casting potential in Durban (see Njisane 2011), principal photography services (see Frindte 2011), and the under-the-radar ‘adult’ sector (see Tyali 2011). A number of reports commissioned by the Durban Film Office (DFO) from Martin Cuff Consulting offer baseline assessments in the value chain, economic impact, gap analysis and so on (2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2009d)
- The annual Durban International Film Festival (DIFF) which from 2010 has co-hosted with DFO the Durban Film Mart, and which runs the annual Talent Campus. DIFF’s huge outreach programme facilitates workshops and screenings in both formal city cinemas and townships and informal settlements where cinema (i.e. exhibition) facilities are scarce. The spatial organisation and financial impact of the relevant projects need to be assessed, and the general objectives and activities analyzed within the larger context of Durban as a cinema and/or media city complex.

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8 Runaway production is a term used by the American film industry to describe filmmaking and television productions that are "intended for initial release/exhibition or television broadcast in the U.S., but are actually filmed in another country (Wikipedia [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Runaway_production](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Runaway_production))"
The promise of the proposed film studio in Durban. Support for studio complexes is an integral part of the portfolio of film policy initiatives alongside film training, production and script development support and marketing assistance (Goldsmith and O’Regan 2003, p.15). The highly-funded public-private partnership of the long-awaited Cape Town studio was pre-empted by other private, smaller, initiatives able to respond more quickly to the more immediate demands of global productions. In contrast, the contestation over the Durban studio proposal offers a textbook case study of the problems and consequences that occur when municipal governments allegedly fail to follow proper procedure.

Much work already exists on media-induced tourism and the benefits it brings to the locations where successful films were made. Film crews are high consumers of high end local hospitality services (see Ward and O’Regan 2009). (Our research in the Kalahari in 1996 revealed that a mini safari industry and cultural villages developed around the very remote desert town of Tshumkwe, Namibia, from the *Gods Must be Crazy* series of movies).

Examination of ReaGile’s plans to locate mini-cinemas on municipal land serving informal and sub-economic urban areas, and to establish a modular container manufacturing plant in Durban. The intersectoral multiplier effects of this proposed initiative will become clear within the year as its roll out begins in Katlahong in January 2013.

The formal exhibition sector is also to be mapped (Ster-Kinekor, Nu-Metro, Avalon, independents, Cinema Nouveau, and Imax, now closed, and other outlets.)

Scouting for potential sites for ReaGile and map how they could expand the reach of DIFF and the KwaMashu Film Festival while simultaneously creating local nodes of economic development, production and exhibition for local programming.

Beyond the formal nodes (and the mini cinema complexes enabled by ReaGile) are many informal activities including small-scale festivals, community video-making initiatives, wedding and funeral videos, and the street-based both legal and illegal distribution of pirate DVDs. How can the pirates be disabled and/or brought into the formal sector?

In researching the relationship between the regional industry and the global economy, it is important to note that film and television production could be to a certain degree described as a model global industry since it involves the movement of individuals, cultural and investment capital, information, goods and services across national borders (Ward and O’Regan 2009, p.19). Therefore, how Durban, Johannesburg or Cape Town link with other international industries is a key question. For Durban, the growing links with Bollywood, both in terms of reciprocal exhibition markets, exhibition of Indian fare, etc., is a new trend indicated in the introduction a few years ago of a weekly Bollywood wraparound of the *Daily News Tonight* section.

**A Film Services, Film Friendly Approach**

The methodology is adopted from the O’Regan and Goldsmith (2003) studies done on the Australian Gold Coast, and their global study on *The Studio*. Their methodology offers a description of the:
- policy framework and the contemporary film studio;
- spatial economy of the industrial value chain; and
- networks that link the industry within specific cities.

The framework we have developed for South Africa is:

**Fig 4: Research Flow Chart**

**Toward a Film services Framework**

Following Goldsmith and O'Regan, the Durban leg builds on the assumption that intervention is not targeted at the film product itself, but rather at the range of intermediate inputs, organizational arrangements, and expertise associated with processes involved in developing projects.  

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* For an initial report on Phase I of the Durban Media City project see: [http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1077&Itemid=142](http://ccms.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1077&Itemid=142)
Fundamentally, film services approaches are concerned with capabilities of film cities in terms of skills, infrastructures, and networks. These capabilities underwrite the capacity of an industry in a region or locality to create, innovate and grow, with a concern for the optimal functioning and development of facilities, capacities, and technological infrastructure.

In summary, services approaches serve a family of governmental purposes:

- Services approaches provide a vehicle for the location interests of particular places promoting locally the tasks of international film services provision (see Zwane 2011 for an application to Durban). They assist in pitching for international projects by foregrounding the provision of services by a range of providers to footloose international production. This attention considers the health, character, and skills development of the film services themselves, irrespective of whether these skills and technologies are exercised in local or international productions.

- A film services approach encourages the identification of identifiably different market segments and therefore focuses attention on: i) where gaps exist, ii) the ways in which such services can viably supply both international and local production, and iii) how supplying these different market segments might be better facilitated through connections between the different production sectors (see Naidoo 2011, below).

- Film services policy encourages government and industry to focus on the ‘component’ rather than ‘total product’.

- The film industry becomes the provider of valued inputs into other creative industries, the service sector, and ICT – variously urban entertainment businesses such as theme parks, digital content and applications industries, gaming, tourism, and even real estate and place marketing. In this way, film is directly joined up to other – often more compelling – governmental and public priorities. Film becomes important here not in its own right but for its potential to enhance, enable and innovate not only adjacent creative industries, but also broader service sectors and even cities and regions.

- Film services approaches provide policy recognition of the structural organization of the cultural economy into networks of small to medium-sized companies supplying disaggregated inputs into transient film projects. In so doing, they provide scope for the development of actions capable of enhancing and facilitating inter-firm interaction and collaboration. The approach lends itself to policy intervention to secure viable, healthy, and outwardly oriented creative clusters, precincts, and networks. Government facilitation, as was the intention with the contested Durban studio, aimed at enabling clustering and inter-firm collaboration to generate demand for services. Governmental support for studio complexes, infrastructure provision, and an understanding of the transformative effects of studios, in relation to evolving forms of public-private partnership, and consideration of the relationship between international and local production, are all sensible within this kind of film services framework.

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10 Summarized from Goldsmith and O’Regan (2005, 55-58)
• Services frameworks are friendly to emerging creative industries policies concerned with coordinating, integrating, and facilitating connections among the different parts of the film industry and other arts-related industries. In emphasizing inputs and interrelatedness, they permit the boundaries between industries to be crossed, allowing film and TV production to be placed alongside related cultural product and entertainment industries like music, games, and multimedia on the one hand and information and communication technology on the other (see, e.g., the Durban Smart Xchange Producers Lab).

• The international industry is attracted to, and involved with, a particular region because of the state and character of the local industry and the professionalism of the services offered. Producers are therefore interested in the state, nature, character, and creativity of local industries, which may have been principally but not exclusively developed in local productions but that now services an international component. This means that the state of international interest is partly dependent on the existing local industry and that there is as a consequence a dynamic relationship between the two industries.

The above framework was applied to the study low budget films shot in Durban which have attracted sustaining audiences, and which did not get support from NFVF or leverage designated services offered by DFO. The value chain looks like this:

![Value Chain Diagram](image)

Fig 5 (South African Film and Television Industry Report, 2008: 48)
Micro-budget eThekwini Films and Indigenous Knowledge Production

The systematic study of micro-budget films in Africa is a result of the popularity of the Nigerian video film industry, or Nollywood.

Studies of Nollywood are now common, but, to our knowledge, only one practice-led study has focused on Nollywood as a production and financing strategy in South Africa (Passchier 2011). Locating low budget micro films at the intersection of a number of cultural politics and discourses and how these films are positioned by their (some of them young, even ‘born free’ – after apartheid) practitioners, offers a uniquely South African take on the topic.

Micro-budget filmmakers struggle to make ends meet because production is a high-risk, high-cost investment with few viable or clear pre-production distribution, exhibition or screening paths. The growth of the Nigerian and Ghanaian industries, is an example of how low-end filmmaking can constitute a form of national expression that transcends ethnic and geographical boundaries and that defies economic constraints. Such films are completed in a few days or weeks on shoe-string budgets, burned onto video discs and promptly sold on the streets. Though often technically challenged, Nollywood-type movies draw African audiences because they are meaningful to them. That is, the cultural modes and codes utilised in the films always ring a bell, as it were. Indeed, Nigerian and Ghanaian video films are a form of indigenous expression, a response to the local and the global world through local creativities and innovations.

In South Africa, where poverty and wealth surround and feed off each other, low-budget filmmakers are yet to get much traction, even as attempts to build and launch the local film industry gather pace. A micro-budget film in South Africa has a production budget of between R100 000 and R3 million. In Durban, the figure is lower – R60 000 to R150 000. Few low-budget filmmakers have national profiles, even though numbers have been increasing since 1994. The advent of DStv’s African cinema channels, catering to the needs of this constituency11, and the fact of their being a permanent fixture at international film festivals (such the Durban International Film Festival), has meant that low-budget filmmakers are becoming more and more culturally and economically important. In January 2012 alone, 11 such films were made in Durban. The formal constitution of an eThekwini Filmmakers Association (EFA) followed. The establishment of the KwaMashu based KwaZulu Natal African Film Festival (KAFF) in 2004 had already indicated the momentum generated by the formerly marginalised filmmaker. Plans for a micro-film fund to be made available by the eThekwini Economic Development Unit, through the Durban Film Office (DFO), are at an advanced stage. DFO has prioritised the development of emerging film-makers with programmes such as the Producers Lab, an incubation programme for film-sector Small Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMES), in partnership with the SmartXchange Technology and Innovation Hub. The SmartXChange SMME incubator hub has been churning out more and more emerging filmmakers from Durban. The NFVF’s Slate fund also recognises the growth of this space in South Africa.12

11 In July 2011 Mzansi Magic put out a call for project submissions on 10 low-budget feature-film projects from KwaZulu-Natal, to be developed into 60 to 90-minute films, and aired on the DStv channel. Mzansi Magic has commissioned 10 projects for development.
12 The institution put out a call in July 2011 for applications for a slate fund which would see three production companies being awarded development and production funding for a slate of films, targeting upcoming creative talent and giving preference to first
Despite their low-budget status, micro-films have been well suited to the eThekwini film industry’s financial limitations. They are a critical growth strategy for independent producers, and a training ground for emerging filmmakers. This sector of the project is examining how the emerging economy of the micro-film in eThekwini functions as a form of layered indigenous discourse that utilises a hybrid of indigenous knowledge systems and received filmmaking wisdoms to create a unique space that more expensive productions have not bothered to fill. Because most of these emerging filmmakers are young black South Africans, our research is learning about the potential of this form of cultural production in the context of past histories, transitional presences and emerging futures. The study focuses on the development of the micro film in Durban from story to exhibition-stage, concentrating on: i) production; ii) narrative strategies; iii) cultural politics; and iv) political economy utilised and how these constitute performances of Durban-ness, being South African and being African in a global world. The lack of funding support forces the films to be firmly grounded in the lived. We are concerned with locating micro films at the intersection of cultural politics and discourses and how these films are positioned by their (some of them young, even ‘born free’) practitioners. In eThekwini, younger directors are developing do-it-yourself, independent filmmaking which is privately financed low-budget filmmaking without distribution guarantees shot on low-cost digital video. Their modus operandi is not, it would seem, necessarily suited to the bureaucracy of public funding models or even systematic city support.

A schematic description of the relationship between production and the city of Durban as encountered by one low budget Durban producer is sketched in Fig 6 below:

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time filmmakers who have been unable to break into the competitive feature film market. The fund will award R1 000, 000 per year for development of at least 4 projects and R1 000, 000 per year to produce one of the films out of the development slate. This funding will continue for a period of three years.
Lynette Naidoo’s framework needs to be repurposed every time it is used in specific contexts. Her study reveals very strong, strong and weak links and (close-to-broken) very weak links, with regard to the particular film studied. Sindisa Nyokona (2012) later operationalised Naidoo’s model thus with regard to *Knife Edge* (Sithebe 2012) (Fig 7):
### Table 1: research question one

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Data Collection</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Purpose/Rationale</th>
<th>Data analysis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the startup resources and skills needed by a filmmaker in bringing together the film services in the Durban film industry?</td>
<td>Semi-structured and in depth interviews</td>
<td>Philani Sithebe, Durban based, script writer, director, and producer, Durban Motion Pictures.</td>
<td>To find out which services were used in the making of the movie Knife Edge (Sithebe, 2012) and the quality of these services for a low budget film</td>
<td>Drawing up an illustration of the film services used in the film Knife Edge (2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which film services are afforded in the making and the exhibition of the movie Knife Edge (Sithebe, 2012)?</td>
<td>Semi-structured and in depth interviews</td>
<td>Philani Sithebe, Durban based, script writer, director, and producer, Durban Motion Pictures.</td>
<td>To find out which services were used in the making of the movie Knife Edge (Sithebe, 2012) and the quality of these services for a low budget film</td>
<td>Drawing up an illustration of the film services used in the film Knife Edge (2012)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2: research question two

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<tr>
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<th>Data Collection</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Purpose/Rationale</th>
<th>Data analysis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the roles of the Durban Film Office, IDC/DTII and NFVF in micro (low-budget) films? Sub question: Furthermore, in understanding this relationship, how do the micro filmmakers comply with economic development (i.e. job creation &amp; skills development) as a prerequisite for capital investment?</td>
<td>Informal interview and Semi-structured interviews, Field work through observation (taking field notes), Document and content analysis</td>
<td>Tony Monti, the CEO of the Durban Film Office (DFO), eThekwini Filmmakers Association (EFA) of the low-budget/emerging filmmaking scene in Durban, DFO Reports, IDC/Dept. Trade and Industry (DTI) Reports</td>
<td>To gain a general understanding of the environment of the film industry in Durban. To find out how Durban filmmakers qualify for support services facilitated by the DFO, and what prerequisites does the DFO demand. To analyse the mandate of the DFO and DTI etc. in assisting the micro filmmakers in Durban</td>
<td>Contemplation and interpretation of field observations and interviews as factors influencing the Durban film industry Qualitative analysis and interpretation of textual material</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Table 3: research question three

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Purpose/Rationale</th>
<th>Data analysis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What value is added by each film service in the movie Knife Edge (Sithebe, 2012)? Sub question: How does each film service add and/or limit value to the overall success of the Knife Edge (Sithebe, 2012)?</td>
<td>Semi structured interviews</td>
<td>Philani Sithebe, Durban based, script writer, director, and producer, Durban Motion Pictures.</td>
<td>To map out the value chain of each service used in Knife Edge (2012)</td>
<td>Drawing up an analysis of the value added by each film service used in Knife Edge (2012)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taking Nyakona’s model into the textual and symbolic realms, we generated the following research question:

To what extent is indigenous cultural politics and political economy behind the surge in micro filmmaking in Durban?

**Sub-research questions**

- To what extent do emerging filmmakers in eThekwini use micro-film as a mode of cultural expression?
- Is the surge in micro-film production an expression of new modes of cultural identity and politics?
- To what cultural end is micro-film being used by these emerging micro-filmmakers?
- What regulates knowing, seeing, speaking, hearing and performing of identity in these films?
- What local and global forces, if any, impinge on emerging production and distribution models?
- How are these emerging production models challenging, if at all, the limits of contemporary South African cultural policy?
- To what extent is an indigenous impetus reconfiguring national production systems and rendering traditional financing, production, and distribution models less viable?

**Theoretical Framework**

1. **Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS).** The Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) Policy, as adopted by the South African Government, is offered as an enabling framework to stimulate and strengthen the contribution of indigenous knowledge to social and economic development in South Africa. The main IKS Policy drivers in the South African context include:

   a. The affirmation of African cultural values in the face of globalisation – a clear imperative given the need to promote a positive African identity;

   b. Practical measures for the development of services provided by IK holders and practitioners, with a particular focus on traditional medicine, but also including areas such as agriculture, indigenous languages and folklore;

   c. Underpinning the contribution of indigenous knowledge to the economy – the role of indigenous knowledge in employment and wealth creation; and

   d. Interfaces with other knowledge systems, for example indigenous knowledge is used together with modern biotechnology in the pharmaceutical and other sectors to increase the rate of innovation.
Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) is defined by Quiroz (1994) as the sum total of the knowledge and skills which people in a particular geographic area possess and which enable them to get the most out of their environment. Three types of IKS exist: tacit, explicit and implicit (Prah 1994). Tacit knowledge refers to the unconscious and intuitive knowledge gained through experience that allows individuals to make decisions without referring to rules or principles (e.g., knowing how to network at a conference). Explicit knowledge is articulated and accessible to anyone who reads, hears or looks at it (e.g., a training guide on using a software package or the conclusions of a policy briefing paper). Lastly, implicit knowledge helps individuals to know what is socially and culturally appropriate in a given circumstance including shared beliefs, values and expectations (e.g., understanding management attitudes within a given organization). De Carvalho (2010) observes that IKS can lead to increased revenue from sales as well as increase job opportunities in harvesting, preparation, transportation, and manufacturing and distribution sectors. In this project, we see IKS as compatible with the value chain analyses of local film industries and it is the very essence of the ReaGile project.

In this project we are interested in the complex creation, use, conversion and adaptation of local knowledges in the micro-film industry in Durban, a phase to be undertaken during 2013. We interpret different modes of IKS and their context-derived uses and adaptations in contemporary environments by film practitioners such as the emerging filmmakers in eThekwini. Whether or not these filmmakers are using modes of IKS born out of frustration with mainstream funding, cultural and technological policies is assessed below. Using Nollywood (and its Ghanaian derivative) as a benchmark, we identify below different modes of economic adaptations of IKS, cultural-discursive adaptations of IKS and technological adaptations of IKS.

Entrepreneurship, Spectators and Development

One of the most pressing issues is the small South African cinema-going population. The geopolitics of apartheid resulted in almost all cinemas being located in large shopping malls found in traditionally white and now affluent ‘black’ areas. Few cinemas service poor black townships. However, the nascent ReaGile Community Upliftment initiative which aims to locate container-based mini-cinemas, refreshment and service complexes on municipal property and on school grounds in disadvantaged areas is addressing this lack. The series of pictures below give some indication of the nature and scale of the project (see Mboti, 2013).

The project will conduct action research into the operation’s start-up and monitor and shape its development. Permission from the Johannesburg City Parks has been secured to place ReaGile Cinemas in city parks, endorsement in writing has been received from the Minister of Arts and Culture, and the Department of Education has been approached to locate Cinema Complexes with Computer/Internet Training facilities on or near school grounds.

Each complex comprises 27 Co Op employees/owners. Sixty seats per cinema x 8 shows x 30 days = 14400 seats per month. That is, each person in a 30 000 catchment area can see one movie every 2 months to fill the cinema to capacity. A walking distance of +,-2 km radius, covers 6000 houses x 5 people in a normal township, = 30 000. In rural areas the radius is about 5km and the catchment population is 20 000.
Fig. 7. Interior picture of the computer lab attached to the ReaGile mini cinema complex

Fig 8. Plan of the ReaGile Complex
ReaGile is intended for townships, informal areas and rural communities with high unemployment. The company identifies twenty five unemployed individuals in a catchment area of
±30 000, offers them ownership of the complex located on public open space municipal land or school property. The cinema complex is constructed in containers, is air-conditioned, equipped with sensurround sound, tiered seating, curtains, projection equipment and security mechanisms. It’s a real cinema. Under the roof of the cinema facing outwards are five 2.7m TV screens. Income is generated through the sale of tickets (±R7), refreshments, advertising etc. Start up finance is provided via the National Empowerment Fund.

Development communication is usually explained as a balance between failure and success. For example, cultural and ontological factors resulted in the rejection of a R136 million Biblical and western movie studio, to have serviced global productions at Pella in the Northern Cape (Evans 2008). ReaGile, however, after engaging in extensive community consultations, seems to have all its bases covered. It aims to:

- teach entrepreneurship,
- discourage dependency;
- provide education and training;
- impose clear auditing controls,
- provide a security strategy.
- works with small production cooperatives to encourage local production, screening and viewship
- The complexes are movable and if not viable - or poorly managed in one place - they can be easily relocated to a new site. It takes just two days to erect the full setup.

These mini cinema complexes would operate seven days a week: The benefits for local communities are as follows:

- each complex will generate 25 guaranteed jobs. Over 30 000 jobs are envisaged nation-wide from 1 200 complexes with a projected income to the distribution sector of R350 million annually;
- the initiative builds business skills amongst unemployed communities, and
- provides cheap, secure and clean entertainment areas to communities who lack them;
- provides alcohol-free entertainment in areas where there are limited attractions;
- will build audiences for film and TV broadcasts. (Currently, Ster-Kinekor and Nu-Metro are strategic distribution partners).
- will become a node for other business activity in each area where complexes are located;
- will provide 30 PCs and internet access for local school and community use.
- will contribute to audience development on a large scale once underway with regard to spectators who do not normally frequent cinema.
- provide safe spaces for educational and cultural performance activities for residents of informal settlements and low income areas.
- Will engender a sense of community ownership.
- ReaGile also addresses the problem of crime and health by providing a container based office for community policing forums and a Care Centre and by eliminating the need for night-time travel to access these complexes.
From a business perspective, the following can be researched:

- How do uneducated and unemployed people become small-scale entrepreneurs?
- What encourages them to move from being dependents of state handouts to self-employed entrepreneurial agents?
- What are the multiplier effects for the catchment communities?
- How will ReaGile contribute to poverty reduction? And of course,
- what are the benefits to the film industry as a whole?

**Path Dependency**

Despite the sophistication of the ReaGile business plan, available private investment and public support from specific government departments like the National Empowerment Fund, and the enthusiasm of senior officials at other state departments, the devil is often in the detail. Operationalizing the project has been constantly stalled by local government inefficiencies, intransigent personnel, and, at local level, corruption. The lack of traction within all levels of the state can be explained by the concept of path dependency as regard to decision makers (see North 2010). Path dependency occurs when a successor state or organisation adopts similar strategies as the one it as replaced. As a result, the new state, having failed in many respects to provide due leadership, now, like the latter-day experience of the apartheid state, is increasingly finding itself cautioned, questioned and replaced by the increasingly strident NGO and civil society sectors. That is to say, governance is increasingly happening outside of the state itself. The result is:

- state suspicion of public-private partnerships, due to wanting to be both referee and player, without the capacity of doing either properly, let alone together. This results in:

- state suspicion of sectors acting as an internal opposition/collaborator /implementer in increasingly uneasy relations with the state (e.g., the Treatment Action Campaign is a prime example in the field of health).

- The NGO sector is perceived by the state to threaten aspects of the post-apartheid state as government has no strategy – other than co-optation and patronage – to manage the 30 million impoverished and increasingly restive citizens largely held external to the benefits accruing to the new ruling class alliance (including the COSATU trade unions).

The independent NGO sector is seen to be working amongst the 30 million, often competing with the state (e.g., the NFVF’s proposed 150 township ‘screens’). Civil society organisation and NGOs are therefore seen to be opposed – or at least – questioning the state’s patronage system and its failing strategy to manage the restive masses.

- The path dependency inherited by the ANC from both the National Party on the one hand and communism on the other, where many in senior state positions learned their

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13 Tom O’Regan and Eric Louw helped me to conceptualise and write this section.)
economics and politics, is that the economy is a fixed-size cake, to be cut up with the largest slices going to the new and old elites (Mbeki 2009; Terreblanche 2012). The economy is not easily understood by this fraction as a set of production factors, financial relations and organisational strategies that can grow the GNP cake into which many of the excluded can be integrated through the facilitation of small-scale ventures such as is being offered by, for example, ReaGile, amongst thousands of other potential ventures. Basically, and ironically, more resources for the poor (such as is being suggested by ReaGile) are reductively seen to translate into less resources for the rich. (This is the classic US Republican ideology).

- The strategy of patronage includes President Zuma’s chimerical promise of ‘jobs’ (5 million at last count) on which the state cannot deliver. But the state seems unwilling to squander the ironic ideological hold that it has on its increasingly angry rank and file supporters when ventures like ReaGile claim to be able to assist it to deliver on its job promises. The bugbear here is the issue of public-private partnerships. ReaGile’s challenge that it can stimulate 30 000 self-sustaining jobs on full roll out, given appropriate public-private partnerships, is possibly considered something of a threat to the state’s (ideological) claim to be the sole repository of job creation. By rhetorically holding this position, the state thus aims to retain voter support (even if this citizenry engages in violent acts of resistance) from those who will never get jobs under the current dispensation.

- Ventures like ReaGile, read through economist Mbeki’s analytical prism, are incorrectly assumed to host the consumptive economy rather than as part of a productive economy. As consumption, the state would rather own these kinds of ventures than work with them. Hence the sometimes opportunistic Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) interest in wanting shares in ReaGile rather than BEE representatives being concerned with what ReaGile will do to empower the poor.

- Ventures like ReaGile transgress two received path dependencies – what’s taken-for-granted - inherited by the ANC from the National Party’s sectionalist national-socialist apartheid economy. The private sector produces the wealth that is appropriated by the public sector and many of the BEE companies that consumes and squanders it (Mbeki 2007). Projects like ReaGile are creators of wealth, and do not collaborate with the state in consuming it (e.g. via bribery, tendrepreneurship, corruption, hand-outs, expedient share allocations etc.).

- If the path dependency is based on patronage and economic bondage, the immediate benefit of ReaGile to the state-dependent elite bureaucracy is unclear to this constituency, notwithstanding the promise of 30 000 jobs and those that the ReaGile complexes will generate via multiplier effects.

**Beyond the Path Dependencies: Small-mall-plexes**

- ReaGile’s development end is best enabled by urban renewal. That is, the ReaGile project is the informal locally-owned equivalent of a corporately-owned urban mall.
ReaGile is a small-mall-plex (smallplex), attracting users/consumers to ancillary activities centred on a group of ancillary services (community policing, primary health care clinic, refreshment kiosk, educational use etc.).

- As such, ReaGile aims to introduce a new kind of low volume community-centred commerce/public service that is of direct benefit to localised consumers, as what is spent, and the services to be delivered, largely remain in the catchment community.

- The smallplex offers a safe, clean, substance-free, leisure, entertainment and educational environment. The smallplex is the low income and informal settlement equivalent of a large city mall, where suburbanites get their entertainment and exercise in safe, clean, air conditioned and well-policed welcoming environments.

- Urban renewal = entrepreneurship / empowerment = job creation which results in upward class mobility. The economic cake thus gets bigger – it’s not a fixed size as socialists assume. There is more wealth to go around. Some within the 30 million poor and unemployed will begin to identify the benefits offered by such small-scale ventures. They become more stable citizens because each of the 25 employees of each ReaGile complex is now able to better support their own extended families.

- The smallplex will act like a central place for the catchment community of 30 000. It is within walking distance, located on municipal property, used by people who know and use these as public spaces, and consider them their own.

- The community policing facility will be run by individuals from the catchment community, conferring a sense of symbolic ownership of both the complex and of the community’s safety.

- The basic unit could be grown modular style once operation to include:
  - a food court to serve affordable traditional and nutritious meals – providing consumer choice and stimulating competition.
  - Eating and meeting areas, small gathering places
  - a public library
  - government offices
  - portable public swimming pool
  - and so on.

- The spatial-temporal use of the smallplex space and immediate environs (add-ons available to additional informal service providers), will:
  - eliminate the threat of theft at the smallplexes;
  - reduce the DVD pirate economy;
  - build new audiences for film and TV across the country;
  - extend the reach of advertisers to new consumers previously excluded from the cinema grid;
  - bring more people into the formal, taxed, leisure economy;
  - connect education lab PC users to the Internet and distance education facilities;
- offer alcohol-free alternatives to taverns and similar entertainments.
- offer models for acceptable social behaviour in public spaces.

- Where big urban multiplexes are middle class-based operations, indicative of upward mobility, smallplexes will attract the unemployed and working class, facilitating the emergence of nascent urban cores around which basic modernization impulses within peripheral zones can grow. These will be over time incrementally incorporated into the national space economy and facilitate job creation centered on, and spinning off, the smallplexes. This will occur initially via the taxes paid by the formal distributors and other suppliers to ReaGile itself. Over time such complexes will generate sufficient turnover for VAT rating purposes, and perhaps also income tax with regard to the five owners of each facility once tax thresholds have been reached.

- Smallplexes can be used to screen local films made by low budget film makers who are unable to gain mass distribution through the normal channels. This might enable them to earn a living from their production work and to develop a sustainable production career.

- Smallplexes, especially in cities offering film festivals, offer hassle-free venues for township screenings without the need to provide mobile facilities.

The final section of this paper examines two low budget films in terms of both production and consumption.

**How low can you go?**

**Micro-budget eThekwini Films and Indigenous Knowledge Production**

Durban Motion Pictures (DMP), a small production company, makes what Philani and Bonnie Sithebe call ‘ultra-low budget film. In Durban’s black townships, ordinary people live on the edge of the edge: the ultra-edge. This constant ultra-edge-ness is partly reflected in Sithebe’s film *Knife-Edge*, amongst others, both in the title and the action. “We produce films and television programmes that mirror and celebrate South African identity. We make movies which show the rich and colourful tapestry of our country, films with global appeal,” says Sithebe.

In *Knife Edge*, the mother who lost her child navigates the social edge of trauma. Ultra-low’ is not a marker of inferiority but a is calculated reference to Sithebe’s filmmaking identity: The Sithebes operate inside/outside the industry. The concept of ultra-low is a deliberate survival mode that the Sithebes deploy to remain competitive in the high-risk, demanding film industry – in the same sense as, for instance, ultra-low micro-processors turn out to have a longer battery life. Ultra-low defines a situation which seems as if no activity is taking place: a way to carefully avoid industry burn-out and resource loss. A sense of economy derives the process of ultra-low: Philani’s ultra-low strategy involves doing everything – from script to distribution – ‘Wherever there is a gap I will just fill it because we are aware that there is no money’. Not only does ultra-low budget mean

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14 [http://152.111.1.87/argief/berigte/dailysun/2012/03/06/DK/21/DK-%20Durban%20motion%20pictures_1025.html](http://152.111.1.87/argief/berigte/dailysun/2012/03/06/DK/21/DK-%20Durban%20motion%20pictures_1025.html)
that Sithebe fills many gaps, but their three-person company grows and shrinks as is necessary. Ultra-low helps to explain the relationship between locals and government:

*Unfortunately the people from Arts and Culture, I don’t know, I had a meeting with them last year, before uMzansi came in. I sent an e-mail asking for funding for this movie and they told me to can contact them after March. In March I did and they had forgotten about it.*

Applying the model developed by Naidoo (Fig 6), here is the experience of *Knife Edge*:

*Fig. 8. Value-chain diagram developed by S. Nyokana to explain ultra-low budget filmmaking*

*Pushpa’s Love Child (2011) is a comedy written and directed by Vivian Moodley. Moodley explains that he has done “a lot of work that has social relevance which is more [his] passion.” Moodley wrote the play for ‘Indian people, people of Indian origin’ in Durban. It is a comedy set in the 1970s in the Indian community – about a female teenager from a farm who is forced to move to town following her mother’s death. The film provokes dialogue on locally relevant issues such as Indian religious sensibilities, premarital sex and pregnancy out of wedlock, sexual identity and the*
culture of society in Durban, and the ‘fast moving’ city versus ‘backward’ rural life. The two gay men in the movie display the metropolis ideals, as one would not be as forthcoming in the rural areas about sexuality. The naivety of Pushpa contrasted to these men is a comment on the different cultures of Indian South Africans. The localisation of these themes is achieved by the use of distinctly Durban-style language, costume and the contextualising of the film in cultural terms familiar to the larger Indian community in Durban and surrounding areas. Though Moodley has had no training in scriptwriting or directing, he sees his trump card as his grounded-ness in the Durban and Indian South African community. He says he has ‘social relevance’.

Moodley’s projects are wholly independently funded. Pushpa’s Love Child had a budget of R100,000, commissioned by DSTV’s Mzansi Magic Channel. According to Moodley “the big challenge was that the budget for the movie was grossly inadequate”. Location-wise, ‘Most of the movie was shot in my apartment’. Furthermore ‘there are no actors so we had to train them”’. The film was shot under the Durban Motion Pictures (DMP) label, with fellow Durban filmmakers Bonnie and Philani Sithebe helping with the production and post-production. Moodley keeps going because it is not immediate sales that drive his vision, but a concern with ‘stories that need to be told’. The value chain looks like this:

Fig 9. Value chain analysis

In Conclusion

The above two examples, from the 8 value chain case studies conducted so far, in light of the above discussion as a whole, reveal that the ReaGile project would greatly advance state developmental policy in the following ways:
• Empower and resource low budget film makers with regard to the IKS vision by providing them with formal venues for screenings
• Stimulate self-financed low budget production, thereby contributing to poverty alleviation and jobs creation (in relation to the job creation potential already facilitated by ReaGile)
• The low budget sector is already attracting support from DSTV by providing content for DSTV and other channels, and thereby building the low budget sector’s footprint across Africa.

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