

# SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE WITHIN OUR ORGANISATIONS



# CONTENTS



**1**

A COLLECTIVE CO-  
PRODUCTION

---

**2**

VARIED INTERVENTION  
CONTEXTS

---

**3**

COMMON THEMATIC AREAS

---

**4**

OUR VISION OF SUPPORT

---

**5**

OUR TOOLS

---

**6**

RELATIONSHIPS WITH  
YOUNG PEOPLE

---

**7**

TESTIMONIALS AND  
PERSONAL JOURNEYS

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# 1. COLLECTIVE CO-PRODUCTION

Within the **Train to Transform** collective, several organisations work with young people, adolescents or young adults, in very varied contexts. The will to discuss supporting young people arose from dialogue between partners during a collective seminar in 2022.

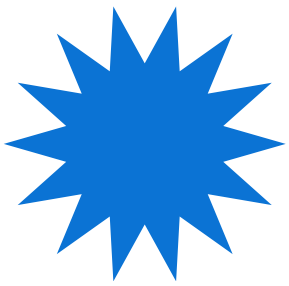
From December 2022 to February 2024, **an online community of practice** brought together facilitators from seven organisations: APEF, BATIK International, Cenca, Concept, Duhamic-Adri, Fedina and FDH. These sessions were led by four co-referents: Demba DRAME (Concept), Claire GANNE (Frères des Hommes), Atia KIGOMBE (APEF) and Yvette OWANGA KALUKULA (APEF). (Full list of sessions and participants in appendix).

During these discussions, we were able to see collectively that although our contexts were very varied, **we share methods of intervention, positions and support tools.**

It is from this observation that this co-production was born: the product of work, from several sessions of the community of practice, of 5 organisations: APEF, BATIK International, Concept, Duhamic-Adri and Frères des Hommes.

Every organisation initially answered a series of questions, then we divided up the analysis work. In this way, everyone contributed to the writing of this document.





## 2. DIFFERENT CONTEXTS FOR INTERVENTION

### The context of APEF



In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the association for the promotion of female entrepreneurship (**APEF**) aims to support women and low-income households working in the rural and urban popular economy sector in the region of southern Kivu.

Since the 1990s, the Kivu region has faced a climate of violence and armed conflict. Women are the first people to be targeted by the rebels with the widespread use of rape used as a weapon of war. As in the rest of the country, in Bukavu, women are faced with situations of great socio-economic vulnerability, structural inequalities and relationships of subordination.

APEF supports women and young people in their emancipation and empowerment through the implementation of projects in areas such as the promotion of human rights, the fight against gender-based violence and the consolidation of peace ; entrepreneurship and leadership; strengthening the technical capacities of women and young people through training in technical professions, through functional and awareness-raising literacy as well as emancipatory and entrepreneurial training.



# The context of BATIK International

Marseille's 15th arrondissement is one of the most vulnerable areas in the city. Marked by a precarious socio-economic context, the young people who live there are quickly confronted with learning different gender roles. If they fail to do so, they run the risk of social exclusion. However, within this context, a number of dynamics of solidarity are emerging, genuine sources of hope and catalysts for other committed initiatives, particularly those initiated by and for young people in the neighbourhood.

BATIK International works in partnership with the local social centres, which are seen as spaces for socialisation and emancipation. Through education in citizenship and international solidarity, the association helps young people to get involved in issues that are important to them. Involvement and participation in these social centres is sometimes volatile, and represents a challenge for the associative players who support them.



# CONCEPT The Concept Context

As part of a project to support the empowerment of young people in Senegal, **Concept** works in two working-class neighbourhoods in Dakar, Parcelles Assainies and Grand Yoff, where the following conditions occur:

- Young people in vulnerable situations
- Arrivals from the rural exodus
- Large youth population
- Informal workshops for many
- Young people who are illiterate or have dropped out of school
- Illegal immigration
- High levels of insecurity
- Areas with a high concentration of craft activities
- Promiscuity in housing.





# The context of Duhamic-Adri

In Rwanda, **Duhamic-Adri** works to strengthen the socio-economic capacities of households and groups, including young people, through various projects. In the context of young people, interventions target the following groups:

- Secondary school students/adolescent members of topic-based clubs (agro-ecology, agri-business, nutrition and reproductive health, and technical training).
- Young people in a situation of socio-economic vulnerability or from vulnerable families: medical support, education, sessions on reproductive health, rights and duties in this area
- Girls aged 10-24 including single mothers under 24 and prostitutes
- Young farmers united as a collective



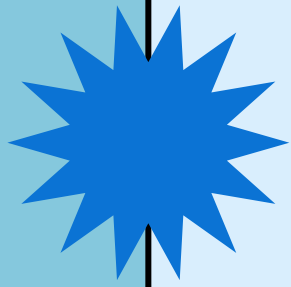
# The context of Frères des Hommes



In France, **Frères des Hommes** created the **International Solidarity Incubator** in 2015. Volunteer tutors accompany “Pépins” in order to co-construct an international solidarity initiative with partner associations abroad. The vast majority of Pépins are young people (18-30 years old), often pursuing higher education.

Since 2023, volunteers have also been experimenting with implementing **social transformation initiatives in France**. The Lille and Paris teams have initiated and carried out action with young people who have recently arrived in France and who are living in extremely vulnerable conditions, in conjunction with local associations.





### 3. COMMON THEMATIC AREAS

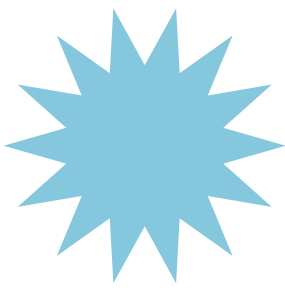
Organisations work within a framework called *mobilisation space* which promotes **engagement** and **participation**. Through their support, they promote the **consolidation of self-esteem and confidence, in order to strengthen the individual and collective power to act among young people**. It is also about contributing to their personal and community initiative through the creation of **alliances and collective structuring**. These actions can lead to job creation, increased empowerment, positive effects on their environment, consolidating their empowerment in a global manner.

Organisations choose to act on these themes firstly for the importance they have in the context of action, but also in view of the **principles and values which drive them**. Indeed, it is above all a question of tangibly translating the beliefs which underpin organisations and which also represent the six priorities of social transformation; **working with local people, experimenting with alternatives for social change, developing the power to act, etc.**

In terms of the the contexts, most young people in vulnerable situations are there due to social difficulties linked in particular to a lack of training or employment, which also result in a lack of self-esteem. **This is why work on strengthening self-perception and awareness of their individual and collective power to act is a prerequisite for each organization in supporting young people.**

We also see that the **collective** aspect is a link between the different organisations which highlight the notion of **commitment** and **citizenship** in general.

It is important to act on each theme, depending on the context of development of the people who are supported. Monitoring the itinerary makes it possible to co-construct the effectiveness of action with other with stakeholders so that the activities can be chosen or decided together. This allows organisations to adapt, learn and promote **mutual learning** among individuals by strengthening engagement using different tools and methods.



# THEMATIC APPROACHES IN DETAIL

**For APEF, the particular topic is supporting young people towards job creation.**

This topic was chosen because many young people living in the DRC in general and particularly in the city of Bukavu and its outskirts are unemployed, since access to the job market is reserved in the most part to people with authority or power. Several reasons explain this: for a part of the rural population who fled the conflicts does not have the means to return to their villages to resume agricultural work, access to resources is limited and access to schooling is low because their parents are financially poor.

This theme is therefore of paramount importance because job creation will allow young people to survive economically and this will help to reduce the cases of violence in cities and in rural areas where young people are enrolled in armed groups.

Currently, the action carried out by APEF in the field of agro-ecology and in the field of technical jobs, allow women and young girls and boys to create remunerative and sustainable employment.

Strengthening the technical, organisational, operational and managerial capacities of women and young people supported by APEF, makes it possible to develop their revenue-generating activity and increase their power to act and self-esteem in their households as well as within their communities.



## **BATIK International aims to promote the mobilisation of young people in the training spaces set up to contribute to their emancipation and to transform them into agents of change in their environment.**

This topic was chosen because of its crucial importance in the development of young people as active members of society. We firmly believe that mobilising young people in training spaces promotes their civic engagement, strengthens their self-confidence and contributes to building a dynamic community.

It is important to provide young people with a framework, so as not to leave them to negative outside influences (words used by young people themselves). The centre provides a framework for extra-curricular options.



## **For Concept, the main themes are commitment and participation.**

These are the consequences of the work carried out to make young people aware of their place in society and their professional and personal capacities.

The key is that they can assert themselves and have self-confidence to be able to make decisions and get involved in the areas they want to. Empowerment is the main objective of supporting young people. This theme is central to everyone's life and even more so for young people who are impacted by the vulnerability criteria mentioned above. Furthermore, regardless of the level of support, without the commitment and will of young people themselves, nothing will be achieved. It is a process that continues throughout life and touches all areas of it.

## **Duhamic-Adri works more specifically on strengthening the power for young people to act, through different means:**

- raising awareness among young people and improving knowledge of reproductive health among young people
- prevention of gender-based violence
- agro-ecology at school level,
- support for young people
- support for investment fund activities,
- support in classical and vocational education for the most vulnerable,
- engagement and participation of young boys in the promotion of positive masculinity through the BOYS FOR CHANGE approach in clubs at school level.

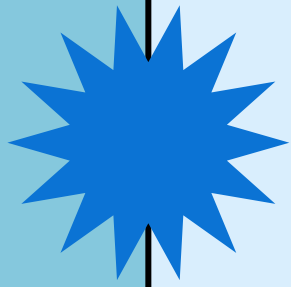
The choice of topics is based on the country's policy and priorities in working with young people as well as funding opportunities, and the findings of the organisation in supported households, as well as the desire to bring about lasting change.

## **At Frères des Hommes, the International Solidarity Incubator was created with the aim of providing a space for activism, and allowing everyone – including people far removed from the international solidarity sector – to form an alliance, and develop their sense of civic engagement.**

The system invites the Pépins to follow a path in seven stages: from their arrival in the system, to their lasting commitment to social transformation – in France, or elsewhere, with Frères des Hommes, or other groups. It therefore starts from individual impulses, and strives to evolve into citizen commitment, through the experimentation of the alliance.

In the context of action in France, the most important topic is awareness and the initial experience of one's own power to act.





## 4. OUR VISION OF SUPPORT

Despite different areas of intervention, the methods of supporting young people as defined by the different members of the Train to Transform collective converge on several fundamental principles. They make it possible to encourage participation and ensure we move towards ensuring positive change, which meets the needs of young people as much as possible.

First of all, the emphasis is placed on **the role of young people in the projects**. To provide useful and good quality support, **young people must co-construct the activities and be at the heart of the system, which must be adaptable according to the evolution of the specific needs of young people. Nothing can be definitively defined beforehand.**

This participatory approach involves **the active participation of young people in decision-making, and shared responsibility, by promoting involvement and autonomy.**

It is sometimes necessary to find a balance in the co-construction process to establish the initiative of young people, often in quite a limited framework.

**Support can be very tailored** (as in the case of the “Pépins” of the FDH Incubator, through tutor-Pépin pairs.) This makes it possible to provide support that is tailored to the needs of young people, by listening to their needs and motivation, and to better guide them in their participation in projects. **The way to provide good support also involves the forming into a collective**, whose group cohesion is constantly strengthened. As BATIK International points out, this makes it possible to create a safe and stimulating environment, where young people not only find a learning space, but also, a space to grow in confidence and flourish. This friendly place, also encourages their participation.

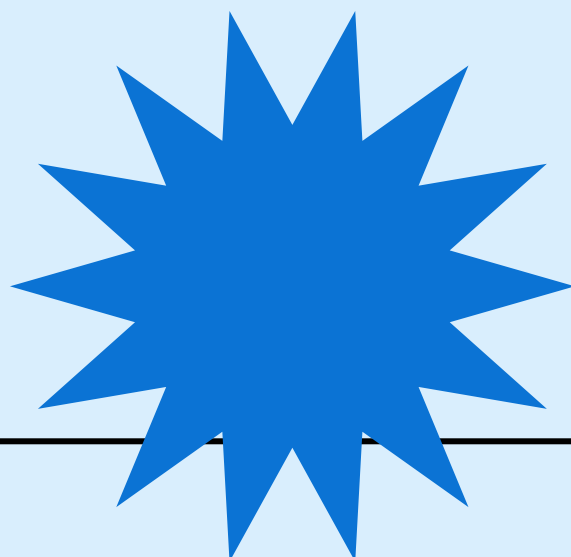
Furthermore, while the group space is important, **leaving that space is also important: exploring and discovering new horizons, can allow young people to escape their limitations and discover new perspectives.**

This is promoted by activities such as cultural outings, visits and meetings with external stakeholders.

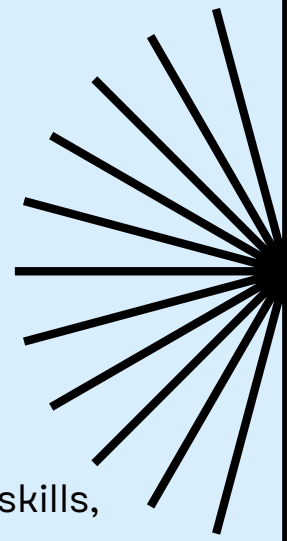
**Having close supportive circles** around young people who have a positive influence on them, whether it's family members or professional connections (master craftsmen, tutors, etc.) is considered a key factor in supporting for young people. It is essential to interest and involve parents or family members who can influence or strengthen the involvement of young people in the project activities.

Finally, the members of the Train to Transform collective promote the self-discovery of the supported young people, and this involves **activities aimed at increasing self-knowledge, strengthening self-esteem and developing social skills. This can be achieved through “vulnerability workshops” for example, or training focused on the development of “life skills”,** as proposed by Concept and Duhamic-Adri. Likewise, APEF offers **“emancipatory training”**.

All of these initiatives aim to strengthen the capacity of young people to flourish as individuals but also collectively in society.



# 5. OUR TOOLS



All of our organisations use three types of tools:

## **Educational tools**

- Educational courses for emancipatory training, linked to life skills, to the development of participatory action
- Icebreakers
- Games
- Image boxes or photolanguage activities

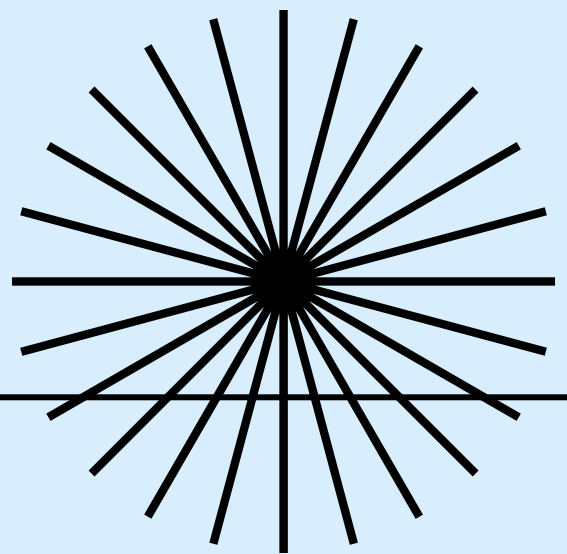
## **Individual monitoring tools**

- “digging into motivation” booklet from FDH’s Incubator,
- Concept coaching booklet,
- the empowerment grid used by APEF

## **Mobilisation tools**

- Whatsapp group with young people
- Our position (Be dynamic, in a good mood; Participate in activities with young people, strengthen the bond with them by also sharing our history and our lives when we can/wish)
- Commitment cards (created by Batik, based on the principle of “loyalty cards”, co-constructed with young people)

Some of these tools were able to be shared during the community of practice sessions.



# 6. RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

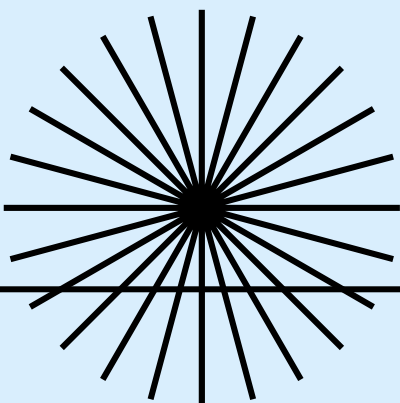
Even though the contexts of intervention are different within the Train to Transform collective, we agree on the type of relationships that are created between young people and the facilitators.

These are **professional and social relationships, based on mutual trust, respect, active listening and support**, which create an environment where young people feel free to share their ideas and concerns.

Relationships need **time** to evolve. Initially, the role of status can get in the way of forming a bond, but over time, thanks to mutual knowledge and common action, a strong connection can be created. The relationship can then go beyond the framework that was initially set up.

The relationship of trust, respect, equality, mutual learning, and respect for the commitments made by the project nourishes the trust between the team and the young people.

For each organisation, we find the idea that these relationships go beyond the professional or voluntary framework and the status of each person. **These relationships are built over time, with a strong element of reciprocity: trust, respect and mutual learning.**





# 7. TESTIMONIALS AND JOURNEYS

## The testimony of a young person trained by APEF

*“I am Hekima. I am 24 years old and I am a seamstress trained by APEF. After my training at APEF, I received a sewing machine, which was a valuable help in starting my business. I work hard to improve my sewing. For the moment, I have a sewing workshop, and thanks to the training I received from APEF, I am also starting to train other girls who want to become seamstresses. For the future, I plan to open a large store where I can sell sewing materials and different items. »*





## **Inspiring stories of young people supported by Concept**

Fatou's commitment remained the same despite her change in status (from apprentice to self-employed employee), it even led to greater self-confidence.

During the setting-up competition, Coumba made a speech about how much his work had progressed, his ambitions and the commitment to participate and take advantage of every opportunity offered by the project in the training and activities offered.

Aissatou was very shy, but she gained a lot of confidence and spoke in public at meetings. She is responsible for taking written notes or recordings to share with the other young people in the project.

Rokhaya learned about her own limitations. She took responsibility for working on public speaking, body language and taking the initiative with regards to her professional projects.

## **From despair to independence: The inspiring journey of Faina, teenage mother supported by Duhamic-Adri**

The IGIRE-JYAMBERE activity in Rwanda, supported by PEPFAR/USAID and implemented by DUHAMIC-ADRI, is a pillar of hope for vulnerable young women and children in the districts of Nyarugenge and Muhanga. This powerful initiative offers more than financial support through unconditional household aid; it offers a way out of poverty and a chance for a fresh start.

One of the lives touched by this program is that of Faina, a 24-year-old mother of two who lives in Kigali city, Nyarugenge district, Mageragere sector. Faina's early years were marked by difficulties. Abandoned by her father, then by her family after becoming a mother at 18, she had to face the harsh realities of life alone.

“I had nothing...no food, no house,” Faina recalls of her past, a time when she had to resort to desperate means to survive. Her situation became even worse when she welcomed her second child into a world full of uncertainty.

However, 2022 brought a ray of hope in Faina's life with the introduction of the IGIRE-JYAMBERE activity in the Nyarugenge district. The program, which aims to prevent HIV infections and reduce the vulnerability of young women and children, welcomed Faina, providing her with vital education in health and personal development. She learned about her sexual and reproductive health rights, gained confidence and understood the importance of resilience.

The program's support has had a transformative effect. Faina used the financial assistance she received to start a small business growing fruit and vegetables. She even started raising goats, using natural fertilizer for her farm. Her hard work paid off, allowing her to purchase a plot of land worth RW 300,000 in Muhanga district and dream of owning a house in the near future.

Today, Faina can pay for her children's education, provide for her family, pay her rent and access health care. She is grateful to IGIRE-JYAMBERE for the life-changing support it provided, including family planning education, HIV/AIDS prevention and the opportunity to join support groups.

Faina's journey from a troubled young girl to an empowered mother is a testament to her resilience and the profound impact of the IGIRE-JYAMBERE program. She is no longer defined by her past difficulties, but represents a symbol of strength, independence and a brighter future. Her story is an inspiration, proving that with the right support, anything is possible. Faina Uwimana doesn't just make ends meet; it paves the way for a prosperous and fulfilling life.





## **Testimony of Lauriane, Pépin Frères des Hommes who worked with Concept, in Senegal**

“My journey in Pépinière began with a strong feeling of powerlessness, the feeling of not having the power to act for the causes that are close to our hearts. People got involved with me to carry out this project: my tutors, then other members of the Incubator team, then members of the partner Concept, then my relatives, then the young people. It was others who strengthened my power to act, giving me the tools, but also the necessary conviction. And we built this project together. I'm afraid that if I don't commit now, then as I get older I will have other priorities, and ultimately I will never follow through on my commitment. And now that I think about it, I hope, and I will make sure that from now on, it will be now, but also afterwards, and forever. We are never too young to embrace our power to act. And those who have proven this best to me are the young people in the project. I joined the Senegalese NGO CONCEPT. There they found the people and the program to propel them and assure them every day that yes, even young people have the power to act. And that's exactly what La Pépinière does, here in France.

**Words from young people in vulnerable situations who have co-constructed initiatives in France, with volunteers from Frères des Hommes**

*“At first I thought it was going to be difficult, but now it’s good”*

*“Before I didn’t speak French, now it’s okay I can speak. Sometimes I know the words but I don’t speak. Now I talk when I see people, I chat, it’s more”*

*“We will continue to do this”*

**Testimony of a Frères des Hommes volunteer who carried out action with young people in vulnerable situations**

*“We co-constructed this action in a very rigorous way, with educational procedures. Then came the first session. What I can say is that we learn by doing. Because even if we have aims as we progress, things don’t always go as planned. But that is precisely what discovery and co-construction are all about. We quickly understood the level of French and were able to revisit and adapt things to suit this audience and context. To achieve this, we had a debriefing session after each workshop to gauge the mood, listen to each other and adjust things for the next modules. This was very helpful.*



# **YOUTH COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE SESSIONS**

Session 1 – 12/12/2022 – Presentation by the Concept team on the topic: How to create a relationship of trust with young people?

Session 2 – 01/31/2023 – Presentation by Keley (CENCA) on CENCA's work with young people.

Session 3 - 03/09/2023 - Methods for entering into contact with young people. Presentations of the different organisations and discussions on the topic.

Session 4 – 05/04/2023 – Individual or collective entrepreneurship, and the implementation of action and activities by young people: what funding? What support? What follow-up? Presentations by the different organisations and discussions on the topic.

Session 5 – 06/13/2023 - Joint session with the Gender Co-development group on the theme of involving young people in issues related to gender equality.

Session 6 – 09/12/2023 – Relations between young people and counsellors. Presentations from the different organisations and discussions on the topic.

Session 7 - 10/17/2023 - Collective development of a framework of questions for co-production.

Session 8 – 11/28/2023- Presentation of the responses of the different organisations to the co-production framework.

Session 9 – 01/10/2024 – Continuing work on co-production.

Session 10 – 02/28/2024 – Presentation of the co-production document.

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# LISTS OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

**APEF : Djamila AISHABINTIAMISI, Atia KIGOMBE, Yvette OWANGA KALUKULA, Fidèle MACHUMU, Sylvie MAPENDO, Kulimushi MUSHIBIRURU**

**BATIK International : Flora BARON**

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**Fedina : Bipin GAJBHIYE, Ganga SEKHAR, Keerthana MANNAYAM**

**Frères des Hommes : Emma BOURIOT, Marie-Pierre DJEKOU, Marc FAUVEAU, Alexis GASSIAT, Claire GANNE, Marie Sara Herpet, Fabien MARILLEAU**

