



People for development



WINGS MODEL

Narrative report of the activities carried out by
The Congo Tree in partnership with AVSI, from
November 2023 to October 2024.

Décembre 2024

SUMMARY OF EXECUTION



The WINGS project, led by The Congo Tree in partnership with AVSI, was a transformative initiative to strengthen the life skills of young people in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo. Through interactive training, artistic activities, social cohesion activities and community projects, the project reached 160 young people aged 18 to 25, spread over the different neighborhoods of the Commune of Karisimbi in the City of Goma.

The youth learned essential skills for the development of their personalities such as leadership, communication, teamwork, self-knowledge, vision, problem management and decision-making, while developing resilience and self-esteem. Arts activities like slam poetry and music have created safe spaces for personal and social expression, strengthening community connections and mental well-being.

Despite the various contextual challenges, the project has achieved or even exceeded its initial objectives thanks to a collective commitment and an innovative methodology. The results include a 92% satisfaction rate, an improvement in personal skills in 88% of participants, and the initiation of more than 160 actions in the community to solve major social problems.

The WINGS program is positioned as an inspiring model for empowering young people and building more resilient communities in conflict and post-conflict areas.

Thanks.

We extend our deep gratitude to all those who have contributed to the success of the WINGS project. Your efforts, commitment and unwavering support have made possible this initiative that has transformed the lives of many young people in Goma.

To our financial partners, especially CDP, thank you for believing in our vision and for supporting it generously. To the AVSI USA, Uganda and DRC team, your exemplary collaboration was essential to execute this project with rigor and impact. To our trainers, facilitators and local teams, you have been the pillars on which this project has been based.

To the young beneficiaries, thank you for your enthusiasm and commitment. You are living proof that youth, when well mentored, can overcome the most complex obstacles and become a force for change.

As an African saying goes: "If you want to go fast, walk alone, if you want to go far, walk together." Together, we have taken a giant step towards a better future for the youth of Goma.

With gratitude and hope,

The Congo Tree DRC

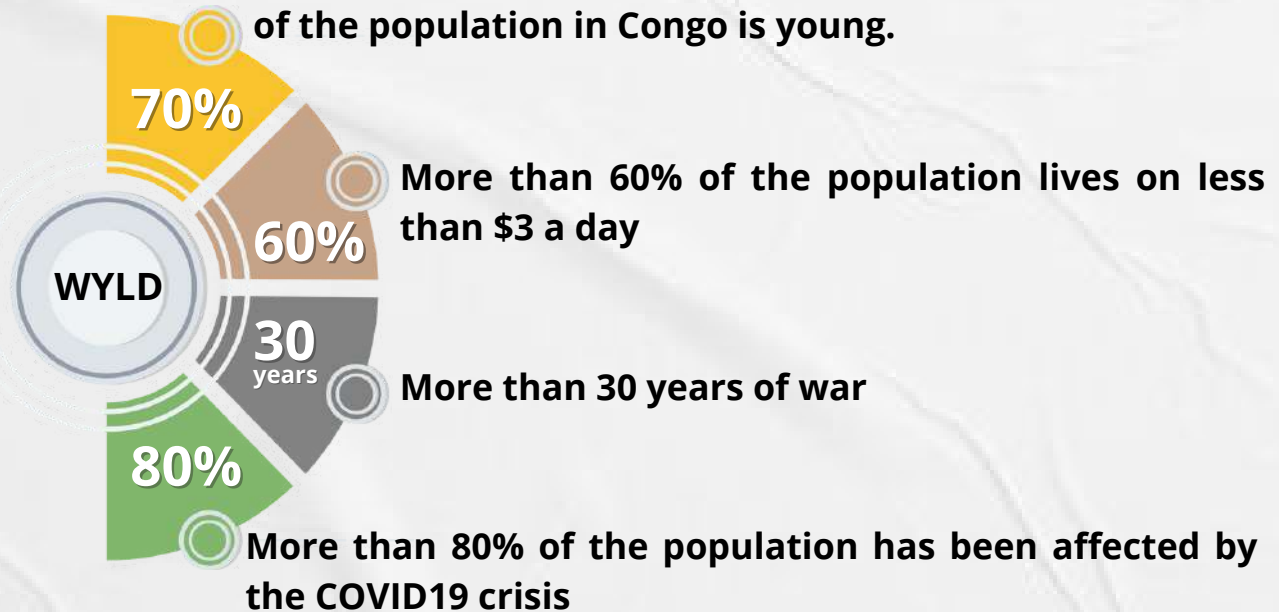


1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION



The city of Goma, located in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, is a region marked by complex socio-economic challenges. For several decades, it has been at the heart of recurrent armed conflicts, leading to massive population displacements, widespread insecurity and extreme and growing poverty. 2020, the Covid 19 pandemic has once again accentuated the already serious crisis. These difficult conditions have particularly affected young people, who make up a large part of the population. Many of them find themselves confronted with a lack of prospects, low self-esteem, and difficulties in integrating into stable and productive socio-economic environments.



In this context, the WINGS project, initiated by AVSI in partnership with The Congo Tree, has positioned itself as a strategic response aimed at strengthening the life skills of young people.

2 PROGRAM OBJECTIVES



The objective of this program is to strengthen the resilience of young people by empowering them to respond to real needs in the community.

This project was designed to address the following critical needs:

- 1 Equip young people with skills to enable them to cope with daily challenges such as poverty, unemployment and conflict-related trauma.
- 2 To promote the personal and professional development of participants so that they become agents of change within their community.
- 3 Create a space for building resilience, collaboration, and self-esteem.

3 PROGRAM TARGET

The project targeted **160 young people aged 18 to 25**, from disadvantaged or vulnerable backgrounds, living in northern neighbourhoods of Goma, known for their high density and socio-economic challenges. These recipients were selected from among 320 applicants, through a rigorous process that incorporated criteria such as motivation and entrepreneurial or professional aspirations.

46 young people in small business development



114 Young people in apprenticeships

4

RESULT ACHIEVED



The relevance of the WINGS project lies in its innovative approach, combining interactive life skills training, artistic activities, empowerment of substances to young people and individual follow-up through coaching. Through this initiative, young people have not only strengthened their resilience and ability to overcome personal challenges, but they have also been equipped to contribute positively to the development of their own communities.

The results obtained show that the participants developed essential skills such as self-knowledge, positive communication, conflict management, difficult decision-making, problem solving and many other skills useful for their personal development. The awareness days, focused on artistic activities such as slam, music, dance and comedy, had a significant impact, allowing young people to regain hope and break down social barriers.

Thus, the WINGS program is not limited to a temporary response, but is an important lever for building an autonomous youth, capable of meeting the challenges and actively contributing to a more stable and prosperous future for Goma. This report details the actions taken, the results achieved, the challenges encountered, as well as the prospects for strengthening and expanding the impact of this initiative.

Here are some of the results:

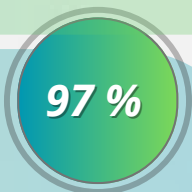
» NEXT

**100 %**

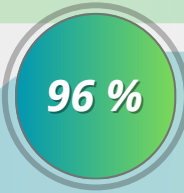
of our young people want to continue with the program we organize to develop their skills

"I had to be a new person thanks to the Wings program, I'm happy to be part of this family that has developed a lot of skills in me. I would like to continue and be a role model for many other young people in the community. Today I can be a good mentor to many because of what I have learned. »

of our young people are happy with the way our programs are organized (Methodology)

**97 %**

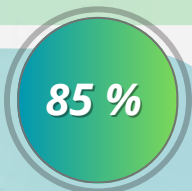
"We learned to have fun and that made learning easier. By being informal and especially by sharing our experiences on the different challenges in our communities, it has meant that I learn a lot from other colleagues. I think it's the best way to do it for young people to learn and I'm proud of myself. »

**96 %**

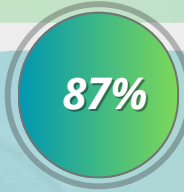
of our young people say they have developed their skills and have a clear vision of the future

"When I joined this program, I was very closed in on myself, I didn't want to exchange with others about all the situations that were happening in my life. Today I am the driving force of my team, I have developed my public speaking skills and especially the ability to listen because I am at the service of many other people. Thanks to these trainings I have learned that thanks to others I can learn a lot and develop my skills. I feel more useful than I was six months ago. I say thank you very much for all the support. »

say they are now involved in community actions

**85 %**

Our communities have a lot of problems and what I learned in the training is that I have to take the lead to provide the solution. I decided to have a club of 20 young girls with whom we discuss GBV. This allowed us to break the taboo. I feel proud to raise the voice of young girls higher. »

**87%**

of young people say they are developing their communication skills

"In my Business, I have to constantly deal with clients, at the beginning of the training I was afraid to express myself, especially with strangers, but today I have developed my communication skills and this allows my Businessness to evolve very well."

94%

of young people say they are uncovered about their strengths and weaknesses.

"Thanks to the training I discovered my strengths and weaknesses, I thought that I was in my comfort zone and that everything can work very well but today I know that I have to work on my weaknesses to be the best version of myself. I'm doing my best to turn those weaknesses into strengths. It helps me a lot in my interactions with my customers. »

5

ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

The implementation of the WINGS project was based on a participatory and structured methodology, designed to maximize the impact on the young beneficiaries while responding effectively to the local realities of the city of Goma. Here are some of the activities we had to organize:

➔ - YOUTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY IN THE CONGO CONTEXT

A study was carried out to understand the context of young Congolese but also to assess the primary needs of young people in the community. The study made it possible to meet young people, youth support structures, entrepreneurs, incubators, training centres, etc.

Result: Knowledge of the Congolese context on the level of adaptability and resilience of young people. We understood the real need of young people to adapt the Wings model. The study allowed us to select the right coaches, training centers, good business, ...

➔ - SELECTION OF BENEFICIARIES



The selection process was rigorous and inclusive:

- **Targeting of candidates:** 320 young people aged 18 to 25, residing in the northern districts of the city of Goma, were identified from the databases of The Congo Tree and SAD families, taking into account their entrepreneurial aspirations and potential.
- **Eligibility criteria:** young people had to demonstrate a motivation to actively participate in the project, in particular in life skills trainings. They also had to demonstrate the expectations of their participation.
- **Draw:** to guarantee representativeness and minimize the risk of bias, 160 beneficiaries were selected through a draw organized during a public session that brought together all the beneficiaries in the Katoyi site, Notre-Dame d'Afrique room.

As a result, thanks to this activity we had to select 160 young people, who benefited from our program throughout the project period.



- TRAINING OF FACILITATORS (COACH AND CBT)



The success of the project was largely based on the competence of the facilitators:

- They completed an intensive program based on the modules of The Congo Tree's World Youth Leadership Development (WYLD) program, adapted to meet the needs of the youth targeted for the Wings program.
- The facilitators' training sessions covered key themes such as: leadership, vision, personal development, communication, conflict management, teamwork, participatory facilitation, ...
- An interactive approach strengthened the capacity of facilitators to facilitate dynamic workshops and create a stimulating learning environment for young people.

Result: 8 coaches were able and were able to facilitate the different sessions with the young people.



- ORGANISATION OF TRAINING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.



The training courses for young people have been structured in a progressive manner to ensure optimal assimilation of skills:

- **Session content:** The training modules included self-knowledge, problem and conflict solving, teamwork, self-esteem and other sessions that you will find in the appendix. Each session combined theory and practice, using case studies, role-plays, and interactive exercises.
- **Training sites:** the trainings were organized in three sites: the St. Francis Xavier enclosure in Ndosho, the Notre-Dame d'Afrique enclosure in Katoyi, places but also at the Don Bosco Ngangi center. All three sites were secure and easily accessible for all participants.
- **Procedure:** Each site welcomed 3 to 4 groups of 20 young people per day. This organization has made it possible to maintain an intimate setting that promotes individual commitment and personalized follow-up.

Result: 160 young people equipped on personal development, aware of their strengths and weaknesses. These young people are now solution makers in their communities for positive change.



- AWARENESS AND SOCIAL COHESION DAYS.



To strengthen social integration and meet the emotional needs of young people, artistic and sports awareness days have been integrated into the program:

- **Activities carried out:** Slam, music, dance and comedy performances were organized, highlighting local artists and young talents.
- **Objective:** These activities aimed to reduce stress, strengthen the self-esteem of young people, and create an environment for constructive exchanges.
- **Active participation:** Beneficiaries were encouraged to share their own experiences and express themselves through recreational formats, which helped to break down social barriers.

6 INCLUSIVE AND PARTICIPATORY APPROACH



Throughout the project, an inclusive approach was adopted:

- Young people were involved in the planning and implementation of activities, strengthening their sense of belonging and commitment.
- Members of local communities, including the families of the beneficiaries, were sensitized to the importance of the project, which fostered greater acceptance and collective support. All the young participants were ambassadors of the project in their families as well as in their communities.

This methodology has created a structured but flexible framework, adapted to the needs of young people while taking into account the complex realities of Goma. Through careful and participatory delivery, the WINGS programme achieved its objectives by strengthening the life skills of beneficiaries and laying the foundations for sustainable community resilience.



- **AWARENESS AND SOCIAL COHESION DAYS.**



The project's impact has manifested itself in three tangible ways:

- **Personal transformation:** participants reported increased confidence and a better ability to manage daily challenges with clear visions of the future.
- **Increased financial independence:** Many young people have begun to apply the skills they have learned in their personal or community projects, marking a first step towards self-sufficiency. We are seeing the creation of small businesses.
- **Multiplier effects:** Some participants have started to pass on their new skills to their peers, thus contributing to the dissemination of learning beyond the direct beneficiaries.



- STRENGTHENED COMMUNITY DYNAMICS

The project created a collective dynamic encouraging the active participation of young people in their communities. The level of collaboration between them and leadership has been strengthened.

- **Enhanced collaboration:** Group activities fostered a strong team spirit among participants. This has an influence in the local communities where young people live.
- **Leadership:** Youth have shown an increased ability to take initiative and take on leadership roles in their social and family circles. But also in their own lives, they have been manifested as people who know how to steer.

7

SUCCESS OF TEACHING METHODS

The interactive and participatory methods were praised by the beneficiaries:

- **Role-playing and simulations:** These activities allowed the youth to practice skills such as problem-solving, conflict solving and difficult decision-making.
- **Case studies:** The youth were exposed to realistic situations, strengthening their ability to analyze and solve problems.
- **Hands-on exercises:** These activities encouraged collaboration and creativity, improving team spirit.

The WINGS programme has not only achieved the set objectives, but also laid the foundations for a sustainable transformation for the young people of Goma. By strengthening their skills, resilience and social integration, it contributes to the creation of a generation capable of meeting current challenges and building a promising future for their communities.

LEVEL OF IMPACT

The WINGS program has had a profound and measurable impact on the beneficiaries, their immediate entourage and the community of Goma. By addressing the social, economic and psychological challenges faced by young people, this programme has helped transform lives and create positive dynamics in an environment often marked by instability.



1. PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

The young beneficiaries have acquired essential skills that now allow them to better manage their daily lives and to project themselves into the future through the improvement of self-esteem and resilience.

The majority of participants reported a renewed self-confidence, feeling better equipped to meet personal and professional challenges. Through the training modules, the young people learned to overcome their fears, value their successes and persevere despite hardships. This transformation has also strengthened their ability to adapt to complex and unpredictable environments.

2. COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Beyond having the personal transformation of the young beneficiaries, the WINGS project has been a source of impact at the community level measured by:

- **Strengthening social relations and team spirit:** the trainings helped to break down social barriers between participants from different backgrounds. Through interactive workshops, role-plays, and group projects, youth learned to collaborate, actively listen, and work together to achieve common goals. This team spirit has not only improved their interactions, but has also laid the foundation for future community collaborations.
- **Development of community engagement:** Arts awareness days and collective projects stimulated the active participation of young people in their communities. They took the initiative to organize activities to raise awareness of local issues and encourage solidarity between neighbors.

➡ 3. CREATING A SAFE SPACE FOR YOUTH

The project provided participants with a caring environment where they felt listened to and supported. This safe space allowed them to express their emotions, share their experiences, and find comfort in the challenges they faced. The art sessions, in particular, have been a powerful way to release stress, strengthen their mental well-being, and cultivate an optimistic outlook for the future. The young people feel integrated into the active community through the interactions between them, despite the diversity and the different backgrounds.



➡ 4. INSPIRATIONAL TESTIMONIALS

In this section, we share the testimonies of two young beneficiaries of the project, including Aline N. and Jonathan W. These young people felt fulfilled and wanted to share their testimony with us. All the testimonies can be found in the Appendix.

a) Aline N., 20 years old, resident of Katoyi:

Before joining the WINGS project, Aline was a reserved young woman, marked by the trauma of the conflicts that affected her family. And now, thanks to the program:

- She has developed a better knowledge of herself, learning to recognize her strengths and overcome her weaknesses.
- Inspired by the session on conflict resolution, Aline began helping her neighbours resolve disagreements related to shared resources, becoming a respected mediator in her neighbourhood.
- She now facilitates a small focus group with other young women to share strategies on stress management and personal development.

(b) Jonathan W., 23 years old, resident of Ndosho:

He was a young man who had dropped out of school, unemployed and unmotivated, living in an environment where economic opportunities were scarce. The WINGS project has changed its perspective:

- Jonathan found his passion in art through the art awareness days organized as part of the project. Encouraged by the trainers, he began to practice music, using his words to express his experiences and aspirations.
- Today, Jonathan is an emerging artist in his community, organizing music workshops for children and teenagers in Ndosho. Her performances attract attention and inspire other young people to express their potential.



LONG-TERM VIEW



The project planted seeds of change that will continue to bear fruit for generations to come. We can read them as follows:

- Beneficiaries are now equipped to become productive citizens, capable of contributing to the economic and social development of Goma.
- The WINGS model provides a solid foundation for similar initiatives, proving that young people, when mentored, can overcome the most complex barriers.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation of the WINGS project has played a crucial role in measuring progress, documenting results, and identifying areas in need of adjustment. A rigorous methodology, combining qualitative and quantitative tools, ensured effective implementation and demonstrated the impact of the project.



1. APPROACHES USED FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- **Regular feedback:** feedback sessions were held with participants and facilitators to assess the relevance of the content and the effectiveness of the pedagogical approaches.
- **Participatory observation:** the trainers used observation grids to document the engagement of young people during the sessions.
- **Monthly Reports:**

Reports were developed monthly to monitor the progress of activities and document lessons learned.

- **Follow-up of community projects:**

Young people involved in collective projects have been specifically monitored to assess the implementation and results of these initiatives

LESSONS LEARNED



The WINGS project has yielded many valuable lessons about the design, implementation and impact of life skills initiatives. These lessons offer avenues for improving future interventions and maximizing their effectiveness.

- ➔ **1. IMPORTANCE OF ADAPTING TO THE NEEDS OF BENEFICIARIES**
- **Personalization of training:** although the modules were generally well received, the young people expressed specific needs, particularly in themes related to trauma management and entrepreneurship. Greater personalization of content could increase its impact even more.
 - **Diversity of profiles:** the young people had varying levels of understanding and skills. The participatory approach has been effective in responding to this diversity, but differentiated activities could improve inclusion and engagement.
- ➔ **2. EFFECTIVENESS OF ARTISTIC AND COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES**
- **Role of artistic activities:** the Arts Awareness Days have had a significant impact, not only in promoting social integration, but also in providing a platform for young people to express themselves and develop their creativity. These activities have also helped to improve their mental well-being.
 - **Team building:** Practical exercises and group projects strengthened collaboration between participants, creating a positive and sustainable social network that can support their future progress.



- 3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AS A LEVER FOR TRANSFORMATION**
- **Family and community participation:** The involvement of families and community members in certain activities has increased the acceptance and impact of the project. This dynamic has also made it possible to better integrate the beneficiaries into their social environments.
 - **Emergent Leadership:** Several participants took community initiatives after the training, demonstrating that the program had boosted their ability to take an active role in their communities.

➡ 4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION AS A TOOL FOR CONTINUOUS LEARNING

- **Responsiveness to feedback:** regular feedback from participants and trainers made it possible to quickly adjust the pedagogical approaches. This highlighted the importance of an agile and participatory monitoring mechanism.
- **Documenting progress:** The evaluation tools accurately measured improvements in beneficiaries' skills and attitudes. Better centralization of data could facilitate its analysis and use for future reports.

➡ 5. VALUING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH

- **Mental wellness:** Incorporating discussions about mental health has been particularly beneficial for youth, especially those who have experienced traumatic experiences. However, more structured mental health support could be considered to accompany participants in a deeper healing process.
- **Safe spaces:** Creating a caring, non-judgmental environment encouraged youth to open up and participate fully. This underlined the importance of cultivating a climate of trust in all projects.

➡ 6. STRENGTHENING SUSTAINABILITY

- **Youth empowerment:** The skills acquired have enabled many young people to become agents of change. However, post-training follow-up (mentoring or advanced workshops) could ensure a sustainable application of the learnings.
- **Support for initiatives:** community projects initiated by participants deserve ongoing support to maximize their impact and inspire other young people.

Ultimately, the WINGS project has demonstrated that an approach that combines training, artistic activities, and community engagement can make a lasting difference in the lives of young people. Lessons learned highlight the importance of adaptability, active participation of beneficiaries, and strengthening support mechanisms to ensure long-term impact.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The results and lessons learned from the WINGS project highlight the importance of continuing and amplifying efforts to strengthen the life skills of young people in Goma. Here are recommendations tailored to different key players to maximize the impact and ensure the sustainability of this type of initiative.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS TO AVSI

- **Strengthen post-training support:**

- ○ Set up a mentoring program to follow young people after the training and support them in the implementation of their community or professional projects.
- ○ Create a networking space for participants to share experiences and learn from each other.

- **Increase resources for artistic activities and social cohesion:**

Artistic activities have had a major impact on young people. AVSI could expand their reach by incorporating more local artists and supporting regular workshops to encourage creative expression.

- **Invest in a digital tracking mechanism:**

Develop an online platform to collect real-time data on youth progress and improve analysis of outcomes.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CONGO TREE

- **Strengthening community inclusion:**

- ○ Increase awareness-raising efforts to involve families and community leaders more in project activities.
- ○ Create partnerships with other local organizations to reach a larger number of beneficiaries.

- **Offer the content of other training modules:**

- ○ Add themes tailored to the specific needs of the identified youth, including Tree of Life and Team of Life to build resilience to crises.
- ○ Integrate in-depth career development elements to help young people enter the labour market.

- **Strengthen the team of facilitators:**

- ○ Train and recruit more facilitators to reduce workload and ensure consistent quality of sessions.
- ○ Organize capacity-building workshops for current facilitators, with a focus on innovative approaches.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CONGOLESE GOVERNMENT

- **Prioritize life skills development projects for youth:**

- ○ Allocate specific funds in national and local budgets to support initiatives similar to WINGS.
- ○ Integrate life skills modules into school curricula to reach a greater number of young people.

- **Create an enabling environment for young people:**

- ○ Strengthen security in sensitive neighborhoods to allow the continuity of educational and community activities.
- ○ Provide adequate infrastructure (training rooms, secure public spaces) for youth programmes.

- **Support community projects:**

- ○ Facilitate young people's access to funding for their local initiatives.
- ○ Recognize the young leaders from these projects and provide them with opportunities to collaborate with public institutions.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE WORLD (INTERNATIONAL NGOS, PARTNERS AND POLICYMAKERS)

- **Invest in local initiatives:**

- ○ Strengthen collaborations with organizations like The Congo Tree and AVSI, which are familiar with local realities and can maximize the impact of investments.
- ○ Provide long-term funding to support similar projects and ensure their sustainability.

- **Promote life skills education:**

- ○ Integrate life skills programmes into international development and humanitarian response policies.
- ○ Raise awareness on the importance of non-formal education to strengthen the resilience of young people in crisis contexts.

- **Encourage research and innovation:**

- ○ Support studies to better understand the needs of young people in conflict zones such as Goma.
- ○ Promote innovative approaches, such as digital tools and artistic platforms, to enhance the impact of programmes.

The WINGS project has proven that well-designed and well-executed initiatives can make a lasting difference in the lives of young people. These recommendations, tailored to different actors, underscore the importance of a collective commitment to multiply the impact and broaden the reach of this type of programme. By working together, AVSI, The Congo Tree, the Congolese government, and the international community can create an environment where every young person has the means to realize their potential and actively contribute to building a better future.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The WINGS program, led by AVSI in partnership with The Congo Tree, has proven to be a critically important initiative in addressing the complex challenges faced by young people in Goma. In a context marked by insecurity, trauma and limited opportunities, this project was able to propose innovative, inclusive and impactful solutions.

A transformative impact on young people

By strengthening the life skills of 160 young beneficiaries, the project not only addressed their immediate needs, but also laid the foundation for sustainable transformation:

- **Building self-esteem and resilience:** Young people, once marginalized or demotivated, are now more confident and able to take on complex challenges.
- **Development of team spirit and community engagement:** Through collaborative and artistic activities, the beneficiaries have forged strong bonds and become actively involved in local initiatives.
- **Creating future leaders:** Some young people, inspired by the trainings and activities, have emerged as leadership figures in their communities, contributing to positive social change.

An innovative and participatory methodology

The success of the project is based on a methodology that combines interactive pedagogy, community inclusion, and rigorous monitoring:

- Interactive training courses have made it possible to impart key skills while adapting to the varied needs of the beneficiaries.
- Arts activities have created a safe space to express emotions, overcome trauma, and build strong social relationships.
- The monitoring and evaluation mechanism ensured accurate documentation of results and learnings, providing a solid basis for improving and replicating this model.

Challenges turned into opportunities

Although the project encountered challenges – including logistical, economic, and contextual – these were transformed into opportunities for learning and improvement:

- The emotional needs of young people have led to the integration of deeper discussions about mental health, an innovation that could be strengthened in the future.
- Budgetary constraints have encouraged the optimization of available resources and creativity in the implementation of activities.

A MODEL TO BE PERPETUATED AND EXPANDED

The WINGS project should not be an isolated initiative. The results clearly show that this type of programme can sustainably transform the lives of young people in similar contexts:

- **For Goma:** Expand the project to other neighborhoods and communities to reach more young people, while adapting approaches to local specificities.
- **For Congo:** Integrate life skills into education policies and youth development programs to make it a national standard.
- **For the World:** Encourage international organizations, governments, and partners to invest in similar initiatives to address the needs of young people in conflict and crisis zones.

A CALL FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

The success of the WINGS project is a shining demonstration of what can be achieved when diverse actors work together to meet the needs of young people. Through its recommendations, this report calls for:

- Increased support from partners such as AVSI and The Congo Tree to strengthen and expand their interventions.
- A mobilization of the Congolese government to invest in young people as drivers of development.
- International attention to promote models that integrate life skills education and psychological support into humanitarian responses and development strategies.

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The WINGS program has not only changed lives, it has also given renewed hope to young people who are often left behind. By building a network of resilient, confident, and engaged youth, this project is helping to lay the groundwork for a more stable and prosperous future for Goma, for the Democratic Republic of Congo, and beyond.

It is a model that deserves to be amplified, supported, and celebrated.

ANNEXE



TESTIMONIES

Testimony of Aline N., 20 years old, resident of Katoyi

Life in Goma is not easy, especially for us young women. My family has been deeply affected by the conflicts in the region, and it has left me emotionally scarred. Before participating in the WINGS project, I was locked in my shyness and fears. I was totally lacking in self-confidence and I didn't believe I had the strength or the means to change anything around me.

When I joined WINGS, everything changed. The trainings on self-knowledge and conflict management gave me a new perspective. I have learned that even in an environment as difficult as Goma, where tensions and basic needs are omnipresent, it is possible to find solutions and help those around us.

Today, with the tools I have acquired, I have become a respected mediator in my neighborhood in Katoyi. For example, recently, I helped two families who were arguing about sharing a water point. We found a solution that satisfied everyone. It made me proud to help reduce tensions in my community.

In addition, I created a discussion group with other young women to share tips on stress management and personal development. In Goma, where daily life can be overwhelming, these discussions have become a space of comfort and mutual support. The WINGS project gave me hope and allowed me to believe that I could be an agent of change, even in the most difficult conditions.

Testimony of Jonathan W., 23 years old, resident of Ndosho

Living in Goma often means fighting against challenges that seem insurmountable. Before joining the WINGS project, I had no goals in life. I had left school, I didn't have a job, and I spent most of my time wandering the streets of Ndosho, a neighborhood where opportunities for young people are very rare. I lived in a kind of despair, convinced that nothing could change for me.

When the WINGS project came to our neighbourhood, I decided to give it a shot, without really knowing what to expect. It was a revelation. The artistic days were the starting point of my transformation. I discovered singing, an art that allowed me to put words to my experiences and my frustrations. In Goma, where we often live in silence in the face of suffering, this art has liberated me.

Today, I am no longer that idle young man. Thanks to the support of the trainers, I started to organize singing workshops for other young people in my neighborhood. For example, last week, I facilitated a session with a dozen teenagers to show them how to use their combined words to express their emotions with melody. It was amazing to see how receptive and motivated they were.

I have also become an emerging artist in my community. At an awareness event organized by WINGS, I performed in front of more than 50 people, including my neighbors and family. It changed the way people perceive me, but most importantly, it changed the way I see myself.

In Goma, opportunities are scarce, but thanks to WINGS, I found my way and a reason to believe in a better future. I want to continue to inspire other young people to know that they are not doomed to remain victims of their environment. With the right tools and a little support, we can make a difference.