

CONGO CINEMA REPORT

Prepared by Alessandro Jedlowski for the King Baudouin Foundation

Evaluation of the long-term results of “Atelier Actions” training activities

Background data about the research: The research for this report was conducted exclusively in Kinshasa where twenty-three Congolese film professionals were interviewed over a ten-day research stay. A few more conversations were conducted with professionals based in Brussels and via Skype. Interviews were conducted in French; the quotes presented in the report were translated in English by the author of the report. The research results do not apply to the situation of film production in other major centers such as Goma or Lubumbashi where film production activities also take place

Context: Between 2008 and 2015 a series of training initiatives were organized by the Congolese production company SUKA, directed by Djo Tunda Wa Munga, in collaboration with the Belgian film school INSAS, with the support of various partners including the King Baudouin Foundation/Fond Carlier. For the first three years (2008-2011) training sessions were shorter (an average of eight to twelve weeks) and the number of students lower – an average of fifteen students per year, among which six/seven people were later selected for a professional internship at SUKA. The success of the first three years of the experience attracted the interest of new funders, giving the organizers the possibility to further diversify and strengthen the training program. From 2012 training lasted eleven months and the number of students increased to an average of twenty-two to twenty-six (a few of whom were selected for internship at the end of training). The expansion of the program was supposed to follow a gradual trajectory toward institutionalization, so as to develop a permanent training center, with three-year long training curricula in all aspects of film making. However, as a result of a number of difficulties including lack of funding, the destabilizing effect of political turmoil in the country, and lack of support from the Congolese institutions, training had to be suspended.

General evaluation: Most interviewees underlined that the training had a major impact not only on their life, but on the state of cinema in Congo today. More than

How to evaluate impact

This research was commissioned to evaluate the long-term impact of the training initiatives organized by the Congolese production company SUKA, in collaboration with the Belgian film school INSAS.

Education is a particularly difficult sector to evaluate, as every individual reacts differently to training. The result of a specific training course mixes up together with other professional and educational experiences producing highly diverse outputs, which manifest themselves over a time span whose length is unpredictable.

For this report I interviewed both people who attended the training (eighteen of them, who attended training in different years) and people who did not (five), in order to combine insider and outsider perspectives on the effect of training. I focused mostly on the following data:

- a) **Individual evaluations** of the experience
- b) **Artistic outputs** (films and other media projects)
- c) **Entrepreneurial outputs** (business initiatives in the media and film sector)
- d) **Trickling effects** (initiatives with wider effects on the Congolese film and media sector)

half of the people interviewed suggested that current increase in film production in Kinshasa can be directly connected to the impact that the production and release of “Congo in 4 Acts” and “Viva Riva” (two SUKA productions which saw the participation of a large number of the first and second generations of training participants) had on younger aspiring filmmakers. The production and release of “Congo in 4 Acts”, a series of four short documentaries shoot by young Congolese filmmakers who participated to the first round of INSAS/SUKA training (Dieudo Hamadi, Kiripi Katembo, Divita Wa Lusala, supported by crew members also trained at INSAS/SUKA), had a particular impact as the film was the first Congolese production ever screened at the German Berlinale and later went on to be programmed in some forty-five other international film festival, helping to expose Congolese cinema well beyond the frontiers of francophone cultural circles.



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Moimi Wezam,
Filmmaker and producer

According to some interviewees there is hardly a set today in Kinshasa in which at least 50% of the people involved did not participate to the INSAS/SUKA training. The people I interviewed underlined in particular the quality and professionalism of the training, its international dimension, its strong connection with the professional sector (locally and internationally), its emphasis on practice, and the importance that was given to promoting film culture among the students through long session of film analysis and by encouraging students to watch many films and read a large number of textbooks on world cinema. In this sense, the most knowledgeable students were those who came from other regions of RDC and lived in the school in Kinshasa for the entire duration of the training, benefiting from permanent access to the school's book and film libraries. In the interviews, they emphasized the importance of being cut off from their everyday preoccupations to focus entirely on learning, and suggested this should be a formula to apply to all students. In general terms, while a number of students voiced the personal

difficulties they had in dealing with the rigid discipline that was imposed throughout the training, everyone recognized that precisely the emphasis on hard work and professional discipline is one of the most important things they have learned, and which they benefit from in their everyday life as media professionals.

Some of the interviewees were unhappy about the way they were pushed to focus on one aspect of filmmaking rather than another after the first few weeks of training, as they would have preferred to continue education in all areas of filmmaking until the end of the program, or they felt their true vocation was not fully recognized. At the same time, most of them considered lack of specialization as one of the key problem in the industry (see also section of the report on Recommendations) and underlined that, despite the disagreement they might have had at times with the trainers, the quality of the training they received made them able to stand out in the local industry. One of the students expressed dissatisfaction at how other students reacted to some aspects of the training organization. In particular, he mentioned the fact that students who enrolled for the last year of training were disappointed by the lack of scholarships for the participants. In fact, bursaries had been made available to students the years before, but they had to be cut in the final year mainly because of lack of funding. “Students had become more interested in money than in training, and this became a problem and a distraction for many”, he

said. According to him, rumors around issues related to funding participated in disrupting the activities during the last year. This is why, in his opinion, within a context like the Congolese one, strategies on how to handle the communication about scholarships and their allocation will have to be carefully planned before any attempt to organize a new training initiative.

Artistic output: The last ten years have been marked by a significant rise in film production in Kinshasa, and, as mentioned earlier, the people interviewed underlined how this dynamic was triggered in particular by the local production and release of “Congo in 4 Acts” (2009) and “Viva Riva” (2011), and by the production of two large international projects to which some INSAS/SUKA students collaborated, “Rebelle” (2012) and “Kinshasa Kids” (2012). According to interviewees, the quality of these productions convinced many aspiring Congolese filmmakers that it was possible to produce cinema of international quality standards in DRC, and attracted the youth toward professional filmmaking. The specific conditions of the local industry oriented filmmakers toward short films and documentary formats, but a few feature films have also seen the light.

- a) **Short films (fiction):** Most of the films produced today in Kinshasa are short films. According to one interviewee, around twenty short films made in Kinshasa are released every year. The most successful of them have been screened in international film festivals, helping to bring more attention toward the ongoing transformation of the local film production landscape. Among the short films which saw the participation of people who attended to the INSAS/SUKA training program as director and/or members of the crew, the most successful include “Olongo” (Clarisse Muvuba, 2012), “Mbote” (Tshoper Kabambi, 2013), “Mosinzo” (Kadima Ngulungu, 2014), “André le géant” (Patrick Ken Kalala, 2015), SOS (Tshoper Kabambi, 2016), “Une lettre à Paxy” (Tshoper Kabambi, 2017), “Eden” (Patrick Ken Kalala, 2017).
- b) **Feature films (fiction):** Because of funding, the production of feature films in Kinshasa has been relatively marginal until today (but more feature films in Swahili are produced in Goma for local and regional distribution in VCD). People have mentioned to me Patrick Kuba’s feature film “Cocaine Light” (2015), a film that saw the collaboration of a large number of INSAS/SUKA trainees, as the first entirely locally funded feature film shot in Kinshasa. More recently a few other projects have seen the light: Emmanuel Lupia’s “Matshozi” (2017), Macherie Ekwa Bahongo’s “Maki’la” (selected at Berlinale 2018 and coproduced by Emmanuel Lupia’s company Tosala Film), Tshoper Kabambi’s “Malika” (forthcoming), Perrin Kan’s “Les frères de Jesus” (forthcoming), and Keran Kam’s “Demon” (forthcoming).
- c) **Documentary films:** Beyond the internationally recognized work of Dieudo Hamadi (“Dames en attente”, “Atalaku”, “Examen d’Etat”, “Maman colonelle”, “Kinshasa Makambo”) and Kiripi Katembo Siku (“Après mine”, “Simphony Kinshasa”), who both participated to the INSAS/SUKA training, several short and feature documentary films have been produced over the past few years and circulated in international festivals in Africa and beyond. Among those which saw the participation of people who attended to the INSAS/SUKA training program as director and/or members of the crew, the most successful include, “Marché Kowait” (Paul Shemisi, 2015), “Kitendi” (Okoko Nyumbaiza, 2016), “Abalola” (Kadima Ngulungu, 2017), “Marathon” (Clarisse Muvuba, 2018), and “Bayindo” (Paul Shemisi, forthcoming).
- d) **Television:** A few of the people who participated to the training, such as Divita Wa Lusala and Kadima Ngulungu, had previous working experiences in the local television sector. After training, some of them went back to work in the production of television programs and series. Some of these productions have

achieved international distribution on TV channels such as TV5 and A+. Among the television series which saw the participation of people who attended to the INSAS/SUKA training program as director and/or members of the crew, the most successful include: "Mpangi'Ami" (Didace Kawang Kapang), "Nda Kisa" (Patrick Ken Kalala), "Equipe" (Patrick Ken Kalala), "Moziki" (Clarisse Movuba), "Zora" (Lengol Yohane).

- e) **Foreign productions:** Parallel to training, SUKA collaborated with several international partners and produced content for them. Trainees participated to these productions at multiple levels. Key partners and productions included: BBC ("Dan Snow: History of Congo"), CNN ("Aja Harris, Inside Africa"), Al Jazeera ("Baudouin Mouanda : Congolese Dreams"), TV5 Monde and IOM ("Retour à la paix"), Arte (documentary on the art scene in Kinshasa, produced by the German company Kobalt Production), Goethe Institute South Africa ("African Metropolis"), GIZ - German Development Agency ("State of Mind"), USAIDS, Search for Common Ground, DOC Society UK, KVS Brussels, and national broadcaster RTNC. Many INSAS/SUKA trainees also participated to the following international productions shot in Kinshasa: "Rebelle" (Kim Nguyen, 2012 - nominated for the Oscar as best foreign film), "Kinshasa Kids" (Maec-Henri Wajnberg, 2012), "Debut Kinshasa" (Sebastien Maitre, 2017), "Félicité" (Alain Gomis, 2017 – Silver Bear at the Berlinale 2017 and nominated for the Oscar as best foreign film)

Entrepreneurial output: Many of the people who participated to the INSAS/SUKA training created their own companies, participating to the development of the entrepreneurial environment on the basis of which the local film industry is slowly emerging.


- 1) **Film production:** Tshoper Kabambi (Bimpa Productions), Emmanuel Lupia (Tosala Films), Patrick Ken Kalala (Image-Drama), Kadima Ngulungu (Ngulungu Productions), John Mbingilay (Matrix-R), Deschamps Matala (FixerCongo Productions), Jimmy Tisanabo (Safari Pictures), Moimi Wezam and Okoko Nyumbaiza (Lelo-Lobi NMW – together with Nelson Makengo), Lengol Yohane, Michel Wetshi and Anthony Mandevo (Genjutsu) created film production companies over the past few years. In most cases these companies have the key objective of producing the filmmakers' own films, while also working on commissioned projects such as NGO films, advertisements, and more rarely, television programs. But some of them (like Bimpa Productions, Tosala Films and Image-Drama) also actively look for other people's projects to produce. A few of this production companies (Bimpa Productions and Image-Drama, together with Clarisse Muvuba's Clarimage Films) have recently launched the project "Kin à longueur" to support the production of low-budget feature films in Kinshasa, with the objective of boosting the audience's interest for local films (and thus the economy of their local circulation) via the increase in the number of films produced yearly.
- 2) **Sound and editing studios:** Some trainees specialized in sound or editing, and opened their own sound recording or editing studios. Cedric Mbongo is the best example of this trend, as his work as a sound engineer is particularly appreciated not only in the film industry but also in the local music sector. But other people like Divita Wa Lusala (editing and camera), and Daddy Mbiye (sound), have managed to build a career as free-lance film professionals by focusing on their fields of specialization.
- 3) **Rent and technical assistance:** If, on the ground of the "lisungi" or mutual aide system, Kinshasa film professionals tend to help each other by lending the equipments they have, a few people moved a step forward in the professionalization of this sector. John Mbingilay's company (Matrix-R) is one the best known locally in this sense, but also Tshoper Kabambi's

Bimpa, Patrick Ken Kalala's Image-Drama, and some other production companies rent out their equipments in order to maximize the profits.

Trickling effects: Many of the people who participated to the training did not only continue a career in filmmaking and media entrepreneurship, but they went on to organize activities geared toward the consolidation of the local film industry in the field of training, film distribution, festival organization, and online platforms. They also contributed in strengthening the local film sector by transmitting their knowledge to aspiring film professionals on film sets, online chats, and in other occasions, multiplying the trickling effect of the initial training.

a) **Training:** Most of the people I interviewed consider lack of permanent film training centers as one of the main weaknesses for the growth of the local film industry (see also section of the report on Recommendations). In order to address this gap, a number of people who attended the INSAS/SUKA training activities decided to set up local training initiatives, often taking the format of the program they attended as a model. Up until today, most of these initiatives are self-funded and in search for a fully functional economic model. In the case of the first three initiatives mentioned below, trainers work without remuneration, on the basis of what people call the "lisungi" or mutual help model. In most cases, after a process of selection, students can attend free of charge (as in the case of FICKIN), or by paying a small fee to cover running costs (as in the case of Image-Drama and Atelier CineCongo). Despite lack of funding, these initiatives have managed to provide basic training to a significant number of young Congolese who have joined the emerging industry. Here is a short list of the initiatives that were presented to me during the interviews:

- 1) **FICKIN training workshops:** This is one of the first initiatives of this kind that saw the light. It is a training program organized in connection with the Kinshasa International Film Festival (FIKIN – see below), and directed by Tshoper Kabambi and his production company, Bimpa. The training was inaugurated during the second edition of the festival (in 2015), and saw the participation of three students during the first year, two the second year, and fifteen the third year. Students are trained in all aspects of filmmaking by Congolese film professionals who attended the INSAS/SUKA training earlier, and are then accompanied through the production of their first short film, which is then presented at the following edition of the festival. A few of the students continue the training through professional internships in Kabambi's production company Bimpa. The training program benefits from the logistic support of the American Language Institute, where the courses take place.



WE NEED TRAINING THAT IS SPECIFIC TO THE CONDITIONS IN WHICH WE DO CINEMA HERE. IN KINSHASA MOST FILMMAKERS NEVER HAD A CHANCE TO ENTER IN A CINEMA THEATRE, BECAUSE THERE IS NONE. WE NEED TO TEACH PEOPLE NOT ONLY HOW TO MAKE FILMS, BUT HOW TO MAKE FILMS IN CONGO"

Tshoper Kabambi,
Filmmaker, producer and
festival organizer

- 2) **Image-Drama**: Image-Drama is a theatre and media production company, as well as a multipurpose center created by Patrick Ken Kalala in 2010. It organizes three-month-long training courses every year in all aspects of filmmaking, and a small number of participants are selected for internship in the production company. Students pay a small fee to finance the logistics of the program since the initiative does not receive any external funding. Trainers are in most cases people who attended the INSAS/SUKA program. Image-Drama also organizes weekly film screenings, every Friday evening, in which a local or an international film is screened, followed by a debate with the audience. (Website: <http://www.imagedrama.com/>).
 - 3) **Atelier CineCongo**: These short-term ateliers, organized by Eric Kayembe, focus on script-writing and take place at the Maison des Savoirs, a cultural center partly financed by the Francophone International Organization. They are organized regularly and see the participation of maximum ten students, who are asked to pay a small fee to finance the rent of the facilities. Trainers are mostly people who attended the INSAS/SUKA training. The ateliers are part of a larger number of activities that Kayembe organizes via its online platform "Un cinéma pour le Congo" (see also the Mongita Awards below), an online database on Congolese cinema that he created a few years ago (<http://cinecongo.org/accueil/>). The platform also runs a weekly cine-club, with free screenings every Saturday afternoon at the Maison des Savoirs.
 - 4) **Congo Film Lab**: This project by Emmanuel Lupia has not yet seen the light and the company is currently fundraising. The project will consist in short-term intensive workshops on script-writing, with the participation of international trainers, followed by the selection of a few project for production in collaboration with Lupia's production company, Tosala Films.
 - 5) **Cinema Na Biso**: This project by Deshamps Matala has not yet seen the light, but the project is at an advanced stage and the organization is currently fundraising. Matala intends to organize a program similar to the INSAS/SUKA training that he attended and has contacted INSAS for support. The program is supposed to adapt to the current needs of the industry and to focus on training toward specific areas of filmmaking, with the objective of promoting the emergence of specialized technicians and professionals in areas such as sound, image, and editing
- b) **Distribution**: All interviewees agreed that distribution is a key challenge facing Congolese filmmakers today (see also section of the report on Recommendations). Some of the people who attended the INSAS/SUKA training programs developed initiatives to try to address this problem:
- 1) **Festival organization**: In 2014, with the support of both local and international partners, Tshoper Kabambi initiated the Kinshasa International Film Festival, **FICKIN** (<https://www.facebook.com/Fickin-festival-616770265070645/>) which became also a platform to launch the training initiative discussed above and to organize meetings and workshops with international film professionals. In 2017, Eric Kayembe, as part of the initiatives promoted by his platform "Un cinéma pour le Congo" initiated the **Mongita Awards** (<http://mongita.cinecongo.org/>), an award ceremony to celebrate the best achievement in the industry every year. In 2014 Clarisse Muvuba, a Congolese filmmaker

and producer who did not attend the INSAS/SUKA training, launched another festival, the CINEF, entirely dedicated to the work of female filmmakers.

- 2) **Cinema theatres:** Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s cinema theatres completely disappeared in Kinshasa, but things are slowly changing. Beyond the screens located in the foreign cultural centers, a private company, CINEKIN, opened two cinemas in 2016 and other projects are underway. These theatres are located in elite neighborhoods and until today have screened exclusively foreign films, but, as some interviewees pointed out to me, the owners are open to screen also local contents. In a development that is more relevant for this report, Tshoper Kabambi's company Bimpa is fundraising for the creation of a network of small neighborhood cinemas, provisionally named "**Cine Na Biso**" (Our cinema), which will use re-adapted shipping containers as halls to reduce costs. The pilot cinema should open in June 2018 and Kabambi plans to open twenty of them in Kinshasa by 2020, and later expand the network also to other Congolese cities.
- 3) **Web platforms and apps:** When Congolese filmmakers cannot find a commercial distributor they mostly use YouTube and Vimeo to make their work available to the public. However, two projects are underway to create economically viable web platforms for the distribution of Congolese contents. On the one hand, Eric Kayembe has the project of developing a **Video on Demand platform** attached to the database "Un cinéma pour le Congo" and he is currently developing the economic and technological aspects of the project. On the other hand, Moimi Wezam is working on the development of a **website and mobile app** called "Bibili For Beda" which will include the information about Congolese cinema that Wezam collected after the end of training, during a one-year-long period he dedicated to research, and a platform to access short film contents. Beyond this more structured projects, some of the people who participated to the training contributed in setting up Whatsapp groups connecting filmmakers in Kinshasa, such as the groups "Parlons cinema en RDC" and "Faisons notre cinéma". These groups, which now see also the participation of people based in the diaspora and in other regions of the DRC, are used to exchange practical information (call for application, call for submission to film festivals, etc), job offers, demand for collaboration, request for mutual help, and often host also heated debate about technical and aesthetic aspects of filmmaking.

- c) **Wider trickling effect:** According to some of the interviewees who did not attend the training, the presence on a local film set of one or more people who attended the INSAS/SUKA training is particularly welcomed, as people who did not attend training have an opportunity to learn new tricks and, more generally, get an idea of how work should be done professionally. The intervention of trainees in Whatsapp discussions and other exchanges is considered to have a positive effect, as it is seen as a trigger which pushes people who did not attend training to do research and further document themselves in order to defend their opinion in front of those who have studied. The wider trickling effect of the training also affects the industry in more concrete terms, as people who have attended



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Cedric Mbongo,
Sound engineer

training and who have created their own production companies (such as Emmanuel Lupia, Tshoper Kabambi and Patrick Ken Kalala – see above) are able to identify and support new projects from self-taught filmmakers, or from people who attended other international or local training initiatives. The best example in this sense is the recent success of Macherie Ekwa Bahongo's first feature film. Bahongo is a young self-taught female filmmaker whose film, "Maki'la", was co-produced by Emmanuel Lupia and his production company Tosala films. The film, which saw the participation, as crew members, of several INSAS/SUKA trainees, was selected at the Berlinale 2018 forum section and will be the first Congolese film to be released by the newborn Congolese cinema chain CINEKIN.

Conclusion: The young Congolese filmmakers I interviewed for this research perceive their work as a mission. They want to change the narrative about Congo by producing films that put their perspective center-stage, and by giving voice to untold stories that will transform not only the representation of the country created by international media, but also, over time, the reality of the country itself. They face great challenges, but they are confident that the world needs them, that there is demand for new, fresh narratives about the African continent able to trigger social and political transformation. At the same time, members of the new generation are not idealist, or dreamers. They have a clear understanding of the difficulties ahead and they actively work to change the situation. Many of them are entrepreneurs, and cinema is not only their passion, but also their job, which makes them able to feed their families and support their friends and relatives. In Congo today cinema is not only a dream factory, it is also a professional sector that, thanks to its multiple ramifications and connections to the field of advertisement, television production, web design and social media communication, is slowly producing an economy which is destined to expand and consolidate in the years to come. As creative industries have emerged as strategic areas of interest for international and local investors throughout the continent, cinema in Congo has the potential to become a thriving sector and offer job opportunities to the many aspiring professionals that today look with admiration at the work of the new generation.

CONGO CINEMA REPORT

Prepared by Alessandro Jedlowski for the King Baudouin Foundation

Recommendations



“IF A FOREIGN DONOR
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SHORT-TERM
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THAT IT DOESN’T COME AT
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PROJECTS CREATE
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WANT TO CREATE A SELF-
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Jason Sheriya Twana,
Congoese filmmaker

Background data about the research: The research for this report was conducted exclusively in Kinshasa where twenty-three Congoese film professionals were interviewed over a ten-day research stay. A few more conversations were conducted with professionals based in Brussels and via Skype. Interviews were conducted in French; the quotes presented in the report were translated in English by the author of the report. The research results do not apply to the situation of film production in other major centers such as Goma or Lubumbashi where film production activities also take place.

General context: All the people who participated to this research bitterly emphasized the structural deficiencies affecting the Congoese audiovisual sector. Simply put, there is not a single area of filmmaking (be it training, production, funding, distribution, scriptwriting or else) that appears to be working efficiently. Nevertheless, as the section of the report on the state of cinema production underlines, several production, training and distribution initiatives do take place in Kinshasa and elsewhere in the country,

and there is much critical awareness about the economic and cultural potential of audiovisual production in DRC, as well as lively debate around what kind of interventions could best benefit the professionals on the field. Key recommendations are summarized below:

Training: Most interviewees underlined lack of permanent, up-to-date training facilities as one of the greatest challenges to the development of the sector. Beyond the “Ateliers Action” discussed in the previous section of this report, several short-term training initiatives have been organized over the past few years in Kinshasa, mostly as the result of the activity of foreign cultural centers such as the Goethe Institute, the French Institute and the Wallonie-Bruxelles cultural center. But these activities are seen as insufficient by most professionals, as they lack continuity. Several interviewees underlined that discontinuity creates dependency, while the new generation of Congoese filmmakers wants to create an autonomous and self-sustainable industry. In particular people expressed the following needs:

- a) To develop a **permanent training center**, able to train both newcomers – through courses in all aspects of film production (sound, scriptwriting, editing, camera, light, production, etc) - and already experienced professionals - who need to make a step forward in their career.
- b) To create opportunities for specific, **in-depth training in sound, production and scriptwriting**. Several professionals stressed the fact that today in Kinshasa everyone wants to be a filmmaker in order to gain better economic and social recognition. But the people who are

actually the most requested on the local job market are the people who have specialized skills in areas such as those mentioned above. These skills are the least developed in the local industry, and the improvement of these areas could strongly contribute to the growth of Congolese cinema.

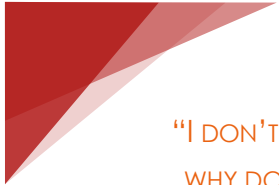
- c) To encourage the use of **African and Congolese trainers** who are able not only to teach “how to make films”, but “how to make films in Congo”. Many interviewees suggested that the training experiences they had mostly prepared them to work in ideal conditions (with all the technologies and infrastructures one could possibly need). But once the training is over Congolese filmmakers find themselves in a hostile environment, with little funds and materials at their disposal. They have to be able to improvise with what the Congolese reality can offer to them, and these skills can be taught best by people who went through the same experience.

Production: Most interviewees were concerned with the general **lack of local, professionally-trained producers**. People underlined that, while there is no lack of good stories and artistic creativity in DRC, people who are able to prepare a well-structured film project, accompany it from pre- to post-production, prepare thoroughly researched budgets and applications for funding, and entertain fruitful relations with international partners are extremely few. As described in the previous section of this report on the long-term results of the “Atelier Action” initiative, a few proactive producers have emerged, but they are still too few. Training in this area has thus been recommended as an absolute priority.

Distribution: As discussed in the previous sections of this report, most of the film productions taking place today in Kinshasa are based on what is locally termed “lisungi” or mutual support. This is because the industry lacks a viable economic model to monetize the circulation of the films. Many interviewees considered **lack of effective local distribution platforms** as one of the major issues to be addressed. Some filmmakers complained that lack local distribution networks pushes filmmakers toward international festivals and reduces their willingness to engage with topics, genres and aesthetics that could better work with local audiences. Most interviewees indicated that the few local active producers generally do not prepare a distribution plan ahead of production. Training in this area is thus considered another important priority. But even more than training, film professionals have expressed the need to have **opportunities to meet international producers and distributors**, in events such as pitching sessions and market events. Also, they expressed the need to develop better relations with the local television sector and existing DVD distributors; this could be achieved through the organization of initiatives (like workshops, audiovisual content fairs, or business forums) that can put the people who are active in the local sector of audiovisual creation and distribution around the same table to discuss possible convergences and collaborations.

Institutional framework: All interviewees stressed the fact that **cinema lacks institutional recognition in DRC**: there is no policy to frame the sector, no funding scheme to support production or training, no officially recognized association or institute that could advocate for the needs of local filmmakers or represent them at official gatherings. The presence of local authorities is felt only for its negative aspects, i.e. police harassment during outdoor shooting sessions and the need to pay expensive fees to obtain the authorization to film. The lack of institutionalization has an impact also on the activity of international donors (who often require institutional partners as a condition to invest locally) and on the lack of co-production deals

with other African and non-African nations – something that many interviewees underlined as an important strategic objective which could be achieved only via the official involvement of local institutions. The few attempts to create a local filmmakers association failed, not only because of the lack of commitment of the country's political authorities (which hardly consider cinema a priority), but also because of what interviewees defined as the “ego problem” of Kinshasa film professionals, that is, an excessive concentration on personal jealousies and rivalries between filmmakers that has compromised all efforts to create any effective union or association. Taking these failures as a starting point, some interviewees suggested the need for a radical shift in the model adopted to intervene in the sector: rather than insisting on associations and institutions, it would be advisable to multiply the efforts in **support of private entrepreneurship and individual initiatives**, so as to create an ecosystem as independent as possible from the vagaries of the local political environment and from the unpredictable effects of jealousies and rivalries among professionals.



“I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY DONORS ARE SO CONCERNED WITH PROCESSES OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION. FILMMAKERS' ASSOCIATIONS NEVER WORKED HERE AND WILL NEVER WORK. WE NEED A PARADIGM SHIFT”

Clarisse Muvuba,
Congoese filmmaker and
producer

Funding: All interviewees agree that access to funding is a major problem for Congoese filmmakers. There is no local fund and no viable distribution system, and many filmmakers are not aware of existing international funding schemes, or even when they are aware of them they struggle with the complicated language and format of international applications. As mentioned above when discussing issues related to production, training in these fields (i.e. how to prepare an application, a budget, a well-structured project including impact and distribution plan) would be extremely helpful. Many filmmakers also underlined the need for the **injection of cash in the industry** – a fund that could radically increase the number of film produced so as to make more visible the industry and consolidate the momentum that the present generation has inaugurated. This would also help attracting local audiences and, consequently, the interest of local distributors and investors. Most of the people who expressed this kind of recommendation have the Nigerian model in mind: in their opinion, Nollywood managed to thrive because it overflowed the market with large numbers of low-budget films, progressively created a viable economic market for them, and slowly upgraded also the quality of the contents.

Technology and infrastructure: Closely related to the issue of funding is the problem of technologies and infrastructures. Beyond the structural deficiencies that characterize the Congoese environment (i.e. unreliable power supply, bad road infrastructures, etc), filmmakers suffer from the lack of up-to date film equipments. Technological innovation has generally made equipment more affordable but local suppliers are rare, and rent is very costly. Interviewees thus suggested that whatever action to support the industry in the country should also include grant schemes to **support the acquisition of equipment** and the training needed for the correct maintenance.

Media literacy: In more general terms, most interviewees underlined that filming in Kinshasa can be particularly difficult because of the **public's general mistrust of images and media**. This

attitude is seen by local filmmakers as the result of the complex historical legacy of film and television in Congo. Images of Congolese people taken by foreign media have produced partial representations of the country and people felt a sense of abuse in their pictures being commercialized (often) without their consent. But even more than that, interviewees mentioned the legacy of some television programs during Mobutu's regime which used filming as an instrument to control the population; the mistrust toward cameras that such programs created is still there. Interviewees also stressed the fact that the collapse of cinema theatres in the country and the proliferation of low-budget television production (known as "maboke" – something like filmed theatre) made **the public unable to recognize cinema as an art** which requires a specific craft. These aspects have an impact on both production (i.e. the difficulty of shooting in outdoor locations) and distribution (i.e. lack of cinema culture), and even if no specific recommendations were formulated to address them, long-term initiatives at the primary and secondary school level could help transform the population's average level of media literacy.

Female participation: Female participation in the industry is relatively marginal, as parents tend to discourage daughters who want to work in the entertainment sector and those who manage to participate to training struggle to complete it, or to continue working in the sector afterward because of the social and family pressure that pushes them to dedicate more time to family obligations than to their own passions. However, according to Clarisse Muvuba, filmmaker, producer and organizer of the CINEF film festival (a festival entirely devoted to female filmmakers), women are a minority in the industry because the sector is not yet economically viable and it lacks funding and resources. In her opinion, when working in the industry will become an adequately recognized profession, women will participate more. Macherie Ekwa Bahongo, on the contrary, underlined the difficulties of being a woman in the industry, the risk of harassment by male colleagues, and the challenge of the social representations of women working in the entertainment. She emphasized the importance of creating an **association for mutual help among female film professionals** and specific training courses able to respond to aspiring female filmmakers' needs.

CONGO CINEMA REPORT

Prepared by Alessandro Jedlowski for the King Baudouin Foundation

General report on the state of cinema production, distribution and training in Kinshasa



“CINEMA IS A KIND
OF COLLECTIVE
THERAPY. IT CAN
CHANGE THE REALITY
OF OUR COUNTRY”

Okoko Nyumbaiza,
Congolese filmmaker

Background data about the research: The research for this report was conducted exclusively in Kinshasa where twenty-three Congolese film professionals were interviewed over a ten-day research stay. A few more conversations were conducted with professionals based in Brussels and via Skype. Interviews were conducted in French; the quotes presented in the report were translated in English by the author of the report. The research results do not apply to the situation of film production in other major centers such as Goma or Lubumbashi where film production activities also take place

Historical context: The history of cinema in RDC has been deeply influenced by the tumultuous political history of the country and by the numerous wars that troubled it since the declaration of independence from the Belgian colonial rule, in 1960. Filmmaking started during the colonial era, through a series of initiatives mainly led by Catholic priests and colonial authorities, who considered cinema as an instrument of education (to western rule and culture), as well as a means of evangelization. A few Congolese were trained as part of these initiatives to reduce the costs of shipping crews from abroad, and some of them later participated in running the national television station (today named Radio-Télévision Nationale Congolaise, RTNC). If a number of influential personalities emerged in the period before and just after independence, such as the actor, theatre director, and filmmaker Albert Mongita, the actor and filmmaker Antoine Bumba Mwaso, and the filmmakers Ndoma Lwele Mafuta Nianza, Roger Kwami Mambu Nzinga, and Victor Matondo Kmanka (all active during the Mobutu regime), it wasn't until 1987 that the first Congolese feature film was produced, “La vie est belle” by Mweze Ngangura. Since then a few Congolese filmmakers have emerged, including Kibushi N'djate Wotoo, Zeka Laplaine, Josef Kumbela, Monique Mbeka Phoba, and later Balufu Bakupa-Kanyinda and Djo Tunda Wa Munga, but most of them were obliged by the country's political situation to operate mostly from abroad. Parallel to the slow evolution of Congolese film production, with the end of Mobutu's regime and the liberalization of broadcasting in the country, independent television production also started to develop, but mostly in the form of low-budget TV series, similar to filmed theater, locally called “maboke”.¹

While forms of commercial video film production in Swahili emerged in the Eastern part of the country (particularly in Goma) for circulation in neighboring countries such as Tanzania and Uganda, cheap TV series constituted the bulk of what was produced in Kinshasa throughout the late 1990s and the 2000s.

¹ For more detailed accounts on the history of cinema in DRC, see G. Covents, *Images et démocratie. Les congolais face au cinéma et à l'audiovisuel* (Kessel, Signis, 2006), G. Ndombasi, *Le cinéma du Congo démocratique, petiteesse d'un géant* (Paris, L'Harmattan, 2008), R. Otten, *Le cinéma dans les pays de grands lacs : Zaïre, Rwanda, Burundi* (Paris, L'Harmattan, 1984) and the African Documentary Film Found's report (<http://adff.org/the-report/>); on the history of the maboke genre see K. Pype, *The Making of Pentecostal Melodrama: Religion, Media, and Gender in Kinshasa* (Oxford, Bertghahn, 2012).

However, from the early 2000s a new generation of young filmmakers began to emerge who is slowly transforming the landscape of film production in the country. The emergence of this new generation has been fostered by the organization of a number of training initiatives in the country by Congolese filmmakers of the previous generation, such as Djo Tunda Wa Munga, Balufu Bakupa-Kanyinda and Monique Mbeka Phoba, in collaboration with foreign partners such as the Belgian film school INSAS, the French Institute, the Wallonie-Bruxelles center and the Goethe Institute. According to the people interviewed for this research, a particularly important role has been played by the local production and release of “Congo in 4 Acts” (2009) and “Viva Riva” (2011), and by the production in Kinshasa of two large international projects, “Rebelle” (2012) and “Kinshasa Kids” (2012). According to interviewees, the quality of these productions convinced many aspiring Congolese filmmakers that it was possible to produce cinema of international quality standards in RDC, and attracted the youth toward professional filmmaking. The production and release of “Congo in 4 Acts”, a series of four short documentaries shoot by young locally-trained Congolese filmmakers (Dieudo Hamadi, Kiripi Katembo, and Divita Wa Lusala with the help of a locally-trained crew), had a particularly powerful impact as the film was the first Congolese production to be screened at the German Berlinale, and later went on to be programmed in some forty-five other international film festivals, helping to expose Congolese cinema well beyond the frontiers of francophone cultural circles.

The state of film production in Kinshasa today: All the people who participated to this research emphasized the structural deficiencies affecting the Congolese audiovisual sector. In general terms, all interviewees underlined that, despite the new wave of dynamism that has emerged over the past few years, the industry still lacks a viable economic model, as there is no functional distribution system in place and only a very small number of projects manage to obtain financial support from local or international funding agencies (see also section on distribution and institutional framework below). For this reason, most films (being them shorts or features, documentaries or fictions) are realized according to what people call the “lisungi” (or mutual help) production style. According to this system people help each other in achieving their project exchanging work time rather than money. Some interviewees praised this system for it has allowed many young film professionals to gain experience and to develop their first projects, but there is growing concern about the fact that working according to the principles of “lisungi” could have negative long-term effects on the development of the industry as it doesn't make people gain the appropriate recognition for the work they are able to do, it easily creates misunderstandings and tensions among filmmakers, and it ultimately makes people unable to make a living out of their profession. For these reasons, many members of the new generation are actively working on the development of entrepreneurial projects beyond film production, in order to better structure the industry in terms of distribution and training. Below, I will make an attempt at summarizing the multiple initiatives taking place today by focusing on the areas of production, distribution, training, institutional framework and funding.

Production: Over the past few years several production companies have emerged in Kinshasa, including Keran Kam's Lynx Pro, Tshoper Kabambi's Bimpa Productions, Clarisse Muvuba's Clarimage Films, Patrick Ken Kalala's Image-Drama, John Mbingilay's Matrix-R, Deschamps Matala's FixerCongo Productions, Jimmy Tisanabo's Safari Pictures, Emmanuel Lupia's Tosala Films, Kadima Ngulungu's Ngulungu Productions, Moimi Wezam, Nelson Makengo and Okoko Nyumbaiza's Lelo-Lobi NMW, Lengol Yohane, Michel Wetshi and Anthony Mandevu's Genjutsu. In most cases these companies have the key objective of producing the filmmakers' own films, while also working on commissioned projects such as NGO films, advertisements, and more rarely, television programs. But some of them (like Bimpa Productions, Tosala Films and Image-Drama) also actively look for other people's projects to produce. A few of this production

companies (Bimpa Productions, Image-Drama, and Clarimage Films) have recently launched the project “Kin à longueur” to support the production of low-budget feature films in Kinshasa, with the objective of boosting the audience's interest for local films (and thus the economy of their local circulation) via the increase in the number of films produced yearly. In terms of output, most of the films produced in Kinshasa over the past few years are short films, but also a significant number of documentary films have been produced. Feature films and TV series are rarer, but they have begun attracting a growing interest among film professionals over the past few years.

- 1) **Short films:** The lack of a viable economic model pushed most filmmakers toward short and documentary film formats, as they are generally less expensive to produce. According to one interviewee, around twenty short films made in Kinshasa are released every year. The most successful of them have been screened in international film festivals, helping to bring more attention toward the ongoing transformation of the local film production landscape. Among them the most successful include “Olongo” (Clarisse Muvuba, 2012), “Mbote”(Tshoper Kabambi, 2013), “Mosinzo” (Kadima Ngulungu, 2014), “André le géant” (Patrick Ken Kalala, 2015), SOS (Tshoper Kabambi, 2016), “Une lettre à Paxy” (Tshoper Kabambi, 2017), “Eden” (Patrick ken Kalala, 2017).
- 2) **Documentary films:** Documentary films have probably been the most successful among the Congolese films produced over the past few years, with the work of Dieudo Hamadi (“Dames en attente”, “Atalaku”, “Examen d'Etat”, “Maman colonelle”, “Kinshasa Makambo”) and Kiripi Katembo Siku (“Après mine”, “Simphony Kinshasa”), being widely recognized both locally and at international festivals around the world. Beyond the work of these two particularly successful filmmakers, several other projects have seen the light, including, “Marché Kowait” (Paul Shemisi, 2015), “Milinga” (Nelson Makengo, 2015), “Kitendi” (Okoko Nyumbaiza, 2016), “Abalola” (Kadima Ngulungu, 2017), “Tabu” (Nelson Makengo, 2017), “Theatre urbain” (Nelson Makengo, 2017), “Marathon” (Clarisse Muvuba, 2018), and “Bayindo” (Paul Shemisi, forthcoming).
- 3) **Feature films:** Because of funding, the production of feature films in Kinshasa has been relatively marginal until today (but, as mentioned earlier, more feature films in Swahili are produced in Goma for local and regional distribution in VCD). People have mentioned to me Patrick Kuba's feature film “Cocaine Light” (2015) as the first entirely locally funded feature film shot in Kinshasa. More recently a few other projects have seen the light: Emmanuel Lupia's “Matshozi” (2017), Macherie Ekwa Bahongo's “Maki'la” (2018), Tshoper Kabambi's “Malika” (forthcoming), Perrin Kan's “Les frères de Jesus” (forthcoming), and Keran Kam's “Demon” (forthcoming). Macherie Ekwa Bahongo's “Maki'la” deserves a special mention here as, despite being her first film, it was selected at the Berlinale and was warmly received by international critics.
- 4) **Television:** Beyond films, the new generation of Congolese film professionals also engages in the production of television programs and series. Some of these productions have achieved international distribution on TV channels such as TV5 and A+. The most successful recent productions include: “Mpangi'Ami” (Didace Kawang Kapang), “Nda Kisa” (Patrick Ken Kalala), “Equipe” (Patrick Ken Kalala), “Moziki” (Clarisse Movuba), “Zora” (Lengol Yohane).
- 5) **Foreign productions:** Parallel to working on more artistic projects, many of the young filmmakers have collaborated with international partners and produced content for them.

Partners include BBC, CNN, Al Jazeera, TV5 Monde, IOM, Arte, Goethe Institute, GIZ - German Development Agency, USAIDS, Search for Common Ground, DOC Society UK, the French Institute, the Wallonie-Bruxelles center, and the KVS Brussels. Many members of the new generation also participated to the following international productions shot in Kinshasa: "Rebelle" (Kim Nguyen, 2012 - nominated for the Oscar as best foreign film), "Kinshasa Kids" (Maec-Henri Wajnberg, 2012), "Debut Kinshasa" (Sebastien Maitre, 2017), "Felicité" (Alain Gomis, 2017 – Silver Bear at the Berlinale 2017 and nominated for the Oscar as best foreign film).

Distribution: As mentioned above, most of the film being produced today in Kinshasa are based on what is locally termed "lisungi" or mutual support. This is because the industry lacks a viable economic model to monetize the circulation of films. Many interviewees considered lack of effective local distribution platforms as one of the major problems affecting the emerging industry as they pointed out that the lack of local distribution networks pushes filmmakers toward international festivals and reduces their willingness to engage with topics, genres and aesthetics that could better work with local audiences. Local television stations, which could be the ideal partners for the distribution of Congolese productions, are hardly approachable, and tend to ask producers and filmmakers to pay in order to have their content broadcasted. This is indeed the system that the "maboke" productions adopt, as they pay broadcasters in a bid to increase the celebrity status of the actors of the series by making them appear on the screen as often as possible. Celebrity then brings social and economic benefits, and in some cases also some juicy advertisement contracts. However, members of the new generation are willing to disrupt this system which, according to them, tends to foster unprofessionalism and nepotism. At the same time, many of the interviewees look at "maboke" with interest because of its success with local audiences, and some of them are working on projects that include the collaboration with "maboke" star actors, as a strategy to attract audiences toward new, higher quality productions.

In order to develop a sustainable distribution system without the collaboration of local broadcasters, some filmmakers developed alternative projects:

- 1) **Film festivals:** In 2014, with the support of both local and international partners, Tshoper Kabambi initiated the Kinshasa International Film Festival, FICKIN (<https://www.facebook.com/Fickin-festival-616770265070645/>) which became also a platform to launch some training initiatives (see below) and to organize meetings and workshops with international film professionals. In 2014 Clarisse Muvuba launched another festival, the CINEF, entirely dedicated to the work of female filmmakers. In 2017, Eric Kayembe, as part of the initiatives promoted by his platform 'Un cinéma pour le Congo' (see below) initiated the Mongita Awards (<http://mongita.cinecongo.org/>), an award ceremony to celebrate every year Congolese film professionals' best achievement. All these events have participated in making the new wave of film productions more visible and in attracting the interest of local and international stakeholders.



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WANT TO TELL"

Moimi Wezam,
Congolese filmmaker

- 2) **Cinema theatres:** Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s cinema theatres completely disappeared in Kinshasa, but things are slowly changing. Beyond the screens located in the foreign cultural centers, a private company, CINEKIN, opened two cinemas in 2016 and other projects are underway. These theatres are located in elite neighborhoods and until today have screened exclusively foreign films, but, as some interviewees pointed out to me, the owners are open to screen also local contents. In a development that is more relevant for this report, Tshoper Kabambi's company Bimpa is fundraising for the creation of a network of small neighborhood cinemas, provisionally named "Cine Na Biso" (Our cinema), which will use re-adapted shipping containers as halls to reduce costs. The pilot cinema should open in June 2018 and Kabambi plans to open twenty of them in Kinshasa by 2020, and later expand the network also to other Congolese cities.
- 3) **Web platforms and apps:** When Congolese filmmakers cannot find a commercial distributor they mostly use YouTube and Vimeo to make their work available to the public. However, two projects are underway to create economically viable web platforms for the distribution of Congolese contents. On the one hand, Eric Kayembe has the project of developing a Video on Demand platform attached to the database "Un cinéma pour le Congo" (see below) and he is currently developing the economic and technological aspects of the project. On the other hand, Moimi Wezam is working on the development of a website and mobile app called "Bilili For Beda" which will include the information about Congolese cinema that Wezam collected during a one-year-long period he dedicated to research on the state of Congolese cinema, and a platform to access short film contents. Beyond this more structured projects, some of the film professionals developed Whatsapp groups connecting filmmakers in Kinshasa, such as the groups "Parlons cinema en RDC" and "Faisons notre cinéma". These groups, which now see also the participation of people based in the diaspora and in other regions of the DRC, are used to exchange practical information (call for application, call for submission to film festivals, etc), job offers, demand for collaboration, request for mutual help, and often host also heated debate about technical and aesthetic aspects of filmmaking.

Training: Most interviewees underlined lack of permanent, up-to-date training facilities as one of the greatest challenges to the development of the sector. Several short-term training initiatives have been organized over the past few years in Kinshasa, mostly as the result of the activity of foreign cultural centers such as the Goethe Institute, the French Institute and the Wallonie-Bruxelles cultural center. But these activities are seen as insufficient by most professionals, as they lack continuity. The training program organized between 2008 and 2015 by the Congolese filmmaker Djo Tunda Wa Munga, in collaboration with the Belgian film school INSAS and the King Baudouin Foundation was probably the most successful among these initiatives, as it managed to train at least four different generations of students, some of whom managed to access other training experience in the following years, and achieved remarkably successful careers (the best examples in this sense are Dieudo Hamadi and Kiripi Katembo).

Beyond these internationally supported programs, local filmmakers have attempted to build their own initiatives in order to provide training opportunities to the younger generations of aspiring filmmakers. Up until today, most of these initiatives are self-funded and in search for a fully functional economic model. In the case of the first three initiatives mentioned below, trainers work without remuneration, on the basis of the already mentioned "lisungi" system. In most cases, after a process of selection, students can attend free of charge (as in the case of

FICKIN), or by paying a small fee to cover running costs (as in the case of Image-Drama and Atelier CineCongo). Despite lack of funding, these initiatives have managed to provide basic training to a significant number of young Congolese who have joined the emerging industry. Here is a short list of the initiatives that were presented to me during the interviews:

- 1) **FICKIN training workshops:** This is one of the first initiatives of this kind that saw the light. It is a training program organized in connection with the Kinshasa International Film Festival (FIKIN – see above), and directed by Tshoper Kabambi and his production company, Bimpa. The training was inaugurated during the second edition of the festival (in 2015), and saw the participation of three students during the first year, two the second year, and fifteen the third year. Students are trained in all aspects of filmmaking by more experienced Congolese film professionals, and are then accompanied through the production of their first short film, which is then presented at the following edition of the festival. A few of the students continue the training through professional internships in Kabambi's production company Bimpa. The training program benefits from the logistic support of the American Language Institute, where the courses take place.
- 2) **Image-Drama:** Image-Drama is a theatre and media production company, as well as a multipurpose center created by Patrick Ken Kalala in 2010. It organizes three-month-long training courses every year in all aspects of filmmaking, and a small number of participants are selected for internship in the production company. Students pay a small fee to finance the logistics of the program since the initiative does not receive any external funding. Image-Drama also organizes weekly film screenings, every Friday evening, in which a local or an international film is screened, followed by a debate with the audience. (Website: <http://www.imagedrama.com/>).
- 3) **Atelier CineCongo:** These short-term ateliers, organized by Eric Kayembe, focus on script-writing and take place at the Maison des Savoires, a cultural center partly financed by the Francophone International Organization. They are organized regularly and see the participation of maximum ten students, who are asked to pay a small fee to finance the rent of the facilities. The ateliers are part of a larger number of activities that Kayembe organizes via its online platform "Un cinéma pour le Congo", an online database on Congolese cinema that he created a few years ago (<http://cinecongo.org/accueil/>). The platform also runs a weekly cine-club, with free screenings every Saturday afternoon at the Maison des Savoires.
- 4) **Congo Film Lab:** This project by Emmanuel Lupia has not yet seen the light and the company is currently fundraising. The project will consist in short-term intensive workshops on script-writing, with the participation of international trainers, followed by the selection of a few projects for production in collaboration with Lupia's production company, Tosala Films.
- 5) **Cinema Na Biso:** This project by Deshamps Matala has not yet seen the light, but the project is at an advanced stage and the organization is currently fundraising. Matala intends to organize the program in collaboration with the Belgian film school INSAS. The program is supposed to adapt to the current needs of the industry and focus on training toward specific areas of filmmaking, with the objective of promoting the emergence of specialized technicians and professionals in areas such as sound, image, and editing

In discussing training, several interviewees underlined that discontinuity creates dependency and for this reason they underlined the need to develop a permanent training center, able to train both newcomers – through courses in all aspects of film production (sound, scriptwriting, editing, camera, light, production, etc) - and already experienced professionals - who need to make a step forward in their career. They also emphasized the need to create opportunities for specific, in-depth training in sound, production and scriptwriting, as these are seen as the areas which lack professionalism the most. Several professionals stressed the fact that today in Kinshasa everyone wants to be a filmmaker in order to gain better economic and social recognition. But the people who are actually the most requested on the local job market are the people who have specialized skills in areas such as those mentioned above. These skills are the least developed in the local industry, and the improvement of these areas could strongly contribute to the growth of Congolese cinema. Finally, interviewees underlined the importance of having African and Congolese trainers who are able not only to teach “how to make films”, but “how to make films within the Congolese environment”. Many interviewees suggested that the training experiences they had mostly prepared them to work in ideal conditions (with all the technologies and infrastructures one could possibly need). But once the training is over Congolese filmmakers find themselves in a hostile environment, with little funds and materials at their disposal. They have to be able to improvise with what the Congolese reality can offer to them, and these skills can be taught best by people who went through the same experience.

Institutional framework: All interviewees stressed the fact that cinema lacks institutional recognition in DRC: there is no policy to frame the sector, no funding scheme to support production or training, no officially recognized association or institute that could advocate for the needs of local filmmakers or represent them at official gatherings. The presence of local authorities is felt only for its negative aspects, i.e. police harassment during outdoor shooting sessions and the need to pay expensive fees to obtain the authorization to film. The lack of institutionalization has an impact also on the activity of international donors (who often require institutional partners as a condition to invest locally) and on the lack of co-production deals with other African and non-African nations – something that many interviewees underlined as an important strategic objective which could be achieved only via the official involvement of local institutions. The few attempts to create a local filmmakers association failed, not only because of the lack of commitment of the country's political authorities (which hardly consider cinema a priority), but also because of what interviewees defined as the “ego problem” of Kinshasa film professionals, that is, an excessive concentration on personal jealousies and rivalries between filmmakers that has compromised all efforts of creating any effective union or association. Taking these failures as a starting point, some interviewees suggested the need for a radical shift in the model adopted to intervene in the sector: rather than insisting on associations and institutions, it would be useful to multiply the efforts in support of private entrepreneurship and individual initiatives, so as to create an ecosystem as independent as possible from the vagaries of the local political environment and from the unpredictable effects of jealousies and rivalries among professionals.

Funding: All interviewees agree that access to funding is a major problem for Congolese filmmakers. There is no local fund and no viable distribution system, and many filmmakers are not aware of existing international funding schemes, or even when they are aware of them they struggle with the complicated language and format of international applications. Many filmmakers also underlined the need for the injection of cash in the industry – a fund that could radically increase the number of film produced so as to make more visible the industry and to

consolidate the momentum that the present generation has inaugurated. This would also help attracting local audiences and, consequently, the interest of local distributors and investors. The previously-mentioned initiative “Kin à longueur” goes somehow in this direction, even if without the enough resources to guarantee its success. Most of the people who expressed this kind of ideas have the Nigerian model in mind: in their opinion, Nollywood managed to thrive because it overflowed the market with large numbers of low-budget films, progressively created a viable economic market for them, and slowly upgraded also the quality of the contents.

General remarks: In more general terms, most interviewees underlined that filming in Kinshasa can be particularly difficult because of the public's widespread mistrust towards images and media. This attitude is seen by local filmmakers as the result of the complex historical legacy of film and television in Congo. Images of Congolese people taken by foreign media have produced partial representations of the country and people felt a sense of abuse in their pictures being commercialized (often) without their consent. But even more than that, interviewees mentioned the legacy of some television programs during Mobutu's regime which used filming as an instrument to control the population; the mistrust toward cameras that such programs created is still there. Interviewees also stressed the fact that the collapse of cinema theatres in the country and the proliferation of low-budget television production made the public unable to recognize cinema as an art which requires a specific craft. These aspects have an impact on both production (i.e. the difficulty of shooting in outdoor locations) and distribution (i.e. lack of cinema culture), and would require long-term initiatives at the primary and secondary school level to transform the population's average level of media literacy.

Another concern expressed by several interviewees is related to female participation in the industry as it is still very marginal. Parents tend to discourage daughters who want to work in the entertainment sector and those who manage to participate to training struggle to complete it, or to continue working in the sector afterward because of the social and family pressure that pushes them to dedicate more time to their family obligations than to their own passions. However, according to Clarisse Muvuba, filmmaker, producer and organizer of the CINEF film festival, women are a minority in the industry because the sector is not yet economically viable and lacks funding and resources. In her opinion, when working in the industry will become an adequately recognized profession, women will participate more. Macherie Ekwa Bahongo, on the contrary, underlined the difficulties of being a woman in the industry, the risk of harassment by male colleagues, and the challenge of social representations of women working in the entertainment. She emphasized the importance of creating an association for mutual help among female film professionals and specific training courses able to respond to aspiring female filmmakers' needs.

Conclusion: The young Congolese filmmakers I interviewed for this research perceive their work as a mission. They want to change the narrative about Congo by producing films that put their perspective center-stage, and by giving voice to untold stories that will transform not only the representation of the country created by international media, but also, over time, the reality of the country itself. They face great challenges, but they are confident that the world needs them, that there is demand for new, fresh narratives about the African continent able to trigger social and political transformation. At the same time, members of the new generation are not idealist, or dreamers. They have a clear understanding of the difficulties ahead and they actively work to change the situation. Many of them are entrepreneurs, and cinema is not only their passion, but also their job, which makes them able to feed their families and support their friends and relatives. In Congo today cinema is not only a dream factory, it is also a

professional sector that, thanks to its multiple ramifications and connections to the field of advertisement, television production, web design and social media communication, is slowly producing an economy which is destined to expand and consolidate in the years to come. As creative industries have emerged as strategic areas of interest for international and local investors throughout the continent, cinema in Congo has the potential to become a thriving sector and offer job opportunities to the many aspiring professionals that today look with admiration at the work of the new generation.

CONGO CINEMA REPORT

Prepared by Alessandro Jedlowski for the King Baudouin Foundation

APPENDIX 1: List of people interviewed for the report

People who attended the INSAS/SUKA training

NB: the first and second generation attended the short training, the third and fourth attended the longer one – see appendix 2 for more details.

1. Divita Wa Lusala (first generation of training)
2. Patrick Ken Kalala (first generation)
3. Deschamps Matala (first generation)
4. Dieudo Hamadi (first generation – only contact via email because he was ill)
5. Kiripi Katembo Siku (first generation, deceased – email contact with his sister)
6. John Mbingilay (first generation)
7. Tshoper Kabambi (second generation)
8. Daddy Mbiye (second generation)
9. Jimmy Tisanabu (second generation)
10. Eric Kayembe (second generation)
11. Cedric Mbongo (third generation)
12. Emmanuel Lupia (third generation)
13. Paul Shemisi (third generation)
14. Michel Wetshi (third generation)
15. Lengol Yohane (third generation)
16. Kadima Ngulungu (third generation)
17. Perrin Kan (third generation)
18. Jason Sheriya Twana (fourth generation)
19. Okoko Nyumbaiza (fourth generation)
20. Moimi Wazam (fourth generation)

Trainers

1. Laurent Gross (INSAS)
2. Djo Tunda Wa Munga (SUKA)

3. Arly Kosi (SUKA, admin – contacted via email)

People who did not attend the training

1. Clarisse Muvuba
2. Diane Bajjika
3. Macherie Ekwa Bahongo
4. Alain Ilunga Chovo
5. Kadhaffi Mbuyamba

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APPENDIX 2: List of students by year of training

[2008-2009] - FIRST GENERATION

(40 preselected candidates, 15 admitted for the full, eight weeks program)

1. Kiripi Katembo Siku
2. Divita Wa Lusala
3. Dieudo Hamadi (Kisangani)
4. Dechamp Matala
5. Patrick Ken Kalala
6. Michel Kabeya
7. Keran Kam
8. Miché Sunzu
9. Floyd Kwedisa
10. Patrick Gibango
11. Valery Sangi (Bas Congo)
12. Jose Musangana
13. John Mbingilay
14. JP Anyembo
15. Jolie Okako

NB: At the end of training, the seven best students were selected to continue professional training at SUKA. The others went back to their original professions, to apply the knowledge acquired through training. The seven students selected to continue the training program were:

1. Kiripi Katembo Siku
2. Divita Wa Lusala
3. Dieudo Hamadi
4. Dechamp Matala
5. Patrick Ken Kalala
6. Michel Kabeya
7. Keran Kam

[2010-2011] - SECOND GENERATION

(40 preselected candidates, 15 of them admitted for the full, eight weeks program)

1. Eric Kayembe
2. Renatte Wembo
3. Tshoper Kabambi
4. Jimmy Tissanabo
5. Nira Masumbuko
6. Sylvain Mitima (EST du Congo)
7. Papydjo Kabobela (EST du Congo)
8. Topo Musafiri (EST du Congo)
9. Michee Sunzu
10. Michel Kabeya
11. Flyod Ngoma
12. Moise
13. Jason
14. Divita Wa Lusala
15. Ngelesa Lumimba (EST du Congo)

NB: Some of the students who participated to the first season of training repeated the experience also during the second year. A number of the students who participated to the program were later selected to continue professional training at SUKA (the list is not available).

[2012-2013] - THIRD GENERATION

(23 students were selected for the first eight weeks of training, 16 among them were selected to continue training for ten months)

1. Carole Maloba (Lubumbashi)
2. Td Jack Mohindo (Goma)
3. Lumière Nyola
4. John Daniel Kassalu
5. Paul Shemisi
6. JP Anyembo
7. Anthony Mandemvo
8. Yohane Lengol
9. Ermane Ntalamanou (Brazzaville)
10. Irenne Vaweka
11. Michel Wetshi
12. Clark Ntonono (as Congo)
13. Cédric Mbongo
14. Perrin Kam
15. Judith Kalanga (Lubumbashi)
16. Emanuel Lupia

NB: the following seven candidates participated only to the first eight weeks of training:

1. Rosette Luibi
2. Eriq Duffon (Goma)
3. Fatou Bisimwa (Bukavu)
4. Mango Djangala
5. Francine Namwezi (Kisangani)
6. Diolase Ramazani
7. Muanda Trésor

[2013-2014] - FOURTH GENERATION

(Twenty students participated to the first eight weeks of training, 15 were selected to continue but a number of them dropped out along the way – see Evaluation of long term results and Appendix 4 for further information on this issue)

1. Nizar Saleh Mohamedali
2. Nsiona Elima Ken
3. Ilunga Kalonji Billy
4. Boukaka Rykiel (Brazzaville)
5. Akwane Jean-jacques Lina
6. Freddy Mutombo
7. Safari Jean-Jacques (Bukavu)
8. Aristote Tshimanga
9. Benjamin Kajingu
10. Eric Kadima
11. Twana Sherifa Cedrick
12. Achille Nzeza
13. Arberick Nkanga
14. Mungimur Ebalamur Tresor
15. Nyangoma Rusinga Jenny
16. Mwadi Manueka Esaie
17. Kasongo Ngongo Olivier
18. Patient Wakilongo Raymond (Goma)
19. Aundu Monzia Cedrick
20. Moimi Wezam (Goma)
21. Physton Okoko Nyumbaiza (Kisangani)

NB: the following six candidates participated only to the first eight weeks of training:

1. Nsiona Elima Ken
2. Aristote Tshimanga
3. Achille Nzeza
4. Arberick Nkanga
5. Nyangoma Rusinga Jenny
6. Mwadi Manueka Esaie

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APPENDIX 3: List of projects and partnerships conducted by SUKA during the years of training

During the training program, SUKA got involved in several projects including partnerships with international broadcaster, international film projects, and independent productions. The opportunity to participate to these projects complemented the training program and helped the best among the trainees in gaining further professional experience. Below is a list of the activities conducted by SUKA in partnership with international stakeholders, to which students of the four different training generations took part

NB: for further information on how the work on these projects was divided among students of the different generations see Appendix 4, interview excerpt by Arly Kosi.

International broadcasters:

1. BBC World News (International Broadcaster). Dan Snow, 'History of Congo'

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/54zHIR30PT3XFz0DZxwgaCT/dan-snows-history-of-congo>

2. CNN (International Broadcaster). Aja Harris, 'Inside Africa'

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/harrisaja/>

3. Al Jazeera (International Broadcaster). Baudouin Mouanda, 'Congolese Dreams'

<http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/artscape/2013/04/201342211817638730.html>

4. TV5 Monde (International Broadcaster). Diffusion de 'Congo en 4 Actes' and 'Retour à la paix'

5. ARTE (International Broadcaster). Kobalt Production, Documentary on the Art Scene in Congo

<http://kobalt.de/en/>

NGOs and International Organizations:

1. DFID (Department for International Development), Production of 'Congo in 4 Acts' (2009)

<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/congo-four-acts-film-review-29306>

2. IOM International Organisation for Migration and UN, Documentary 'Retour à la paix' – Diffusion TV Congolaises et TV5 Monde

3. Institut Français Paris, Short film

4. Goethe Institute Cameroun, Radio Program sur le comportement sexuel en RDC

5. Goethe Institute South Africa, Short Film Production 'African Metropolis'

http://www.goethe.de/ins/za/pri/afm/enindex.htm?wt_sc=africanmetropolis

6. GIZ German Development Agency, Production of the documentary 'State of Mind' (2010)

<http://icarusfilms.com/if-som>

7. USAID US Agency for International Development, Education program, Campagne de sensibilisation pour les enseignants

<https://www.usaid.gov/democratic-republic-congo>

8. KVS Brussels, Festival & Documentary

http://old.kvs.be/index2.php?page=program&discipline=6&vs_id=822&lng=ENG

<http://www.kvs.be/en/focus/zesde-editie-festival-connexion-kin-kinshasa-2-tot-12-juli-2015>

9. Doc Society UK, Documentary, Norwegian Crime in Congo

10. RTNC, National Broadcaster, RDC, Diffusion de 'Story Tent'

http://old.kvs.be/index2.php?page=program&discipline=6&vs_id=822&lng=ENG

11. RTBF, National Broadcaster, Belgium

Private companies

1. Airtel DR Congo, Commercial
2. Airtel Congo Brazza (Commercial)

Foreign film productions:

1. 'Rebels/War Witch' (2012) – Film – Nominated best Foreign film Oscar (Former students were crew members)
2. 'Kinshasa Kids' (2012 – Film – Former students were crew members)
3. 'Félicité' (2017) - Film – Won Jury Grand Prix at the Berlin Film Festival (Former students were crew members)

Independent film productions:

1. 'Viva Riva' (2011) – Film – (Former students were crew members)

NB: Parallel to the experiences listed above, as well as after leaving SUKA, the students engaged also in independent production, training and distribution projects, which are discussed in the main section of the report. A full list of these projects is not available as most of the interviewed students participated informally to each other's projects, on the ground of the "lisungi", or mutual help system, discussed in the report – a modality of professional engagement which is hard to track down and record. Also, most interviewees do not have a written CV and during interviews mentioned only the projects they considered most relevant to them: these are the projects which were highlighted in the main report.

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APPENDIX 4: Comparing the outcomes of different generations of training

The analysis of the research results seems to suggest that students who attended the first two generations of training had better outcomes than those who participated to the following two seasons. This requires a deeper analysis of the collected data and a few additional information.

The time factor: A first important factor to take into account is the time that passed since each of the people who have been interviewed completed training. People who participated to earlier training sessions had more time to settle and develop their own activities. Secondly, the people selected for the first generations of training tended to be slightly older and already active in the audiovisual sector: training helped them advance in a profession they already used to practice, even if often at an almost amateurish level. The students for the third and fourth generations were recruited nationwide and were generally younger and less professionalized at the time of recruitment. Among those belonging to these generations who were available for interviews, the majority is in the process of developing production related projects, whose outcomes will be entirely visible only in a few years from now.

Research setting and limits: Research for this report had to be conducted on a very tight schedule and it was impossible to contact all the students who participated to the training programs. As a result of contingency, more students belonging to the first two generations were in Kinshasa and available for interviews at the moment of the research. Other students of the third and fourth generations living in Kinshasa who were contacted for the research (such as Anthony Mandemvo, Irene Vaweka, Lumière Nyola and Billy Ilunga) were either away from Kinshasa for work or not available for interview. Other students who had come to Kinshasa only for the training had come back to their cities of residence in other regions of DRC and were thus not available for interview (NB: interviews via skype could not be conducted for lack of proper internet connection). Most of these people are currently involved in production and training activities, but since they could not be interviewed, the outcomes of their training are not included in the report, thus contributing in creating the impression of stronger outcome for the first two generations.

Specific economic factors: Beyond the limits highlighted above, specific economic factors should be taken into account to understand the difference between the earlier and later generations of training. According to Djo Tunda Wa Munga (one of the trainer and director of the program) and Arly Kosi (the training program production manager), the third and fourth generations had access to a limited amount of economic resources if compared to the first two generations. Indeed, a few big foreign film productions took place in DRC between 2008 and 2012 (such as Kim Nguyen's "Rebelle" and Maec-Henri Wajnberg's "Kinshasa Kids") and SUKA was able to attract substantial funding support to achieve its own projects (including the feature film "Viva Riva" and the documentary film "Congo in Four Acts"). Numerous collaborations with international partners were also developed during the initial years of training, which resulted in commissioned production projects to which students actively participated (see Appendix 3). The long term effect of the international economic crisis and growing local political instability contributed in reducing the number of foreign commissions and partnerships from around 2013, and this had an impact on the kind of opportunities for training and professional experience available to the third and fourth

generations. Also, over the first few years, larger economic means translated into the possibility of bringing more trainers from abroad and of keeping them for longer periods – an opportunity that was not available in later years, when funding was running out.

The limited availability of funding coming from partnerships and SUKA's independent film projects also translated in the company's financial distress. In order to replace the lack of resources created by the decrease in international partnerships, SUKA applied for funding from international donors. However, the grants that SUKA accessed through international applications were often transferred to the company after considerable delays (in most cases due to slow bureaucratic processing of the required documentation by all involved parties). In a context like the DRC where access to a viable banking system promoting private entrepreneurship is extremely difficult, payment delays forced the company to borrow money on the black market, at high interest rates. As a result, part of the grants had to be used to reimburse debts and the money actually available to run the training program was severely reduced.

Interview excerpts on this topic (in French):

Djo Munga: Pourquoi la 3^e et la 4^e génération ont produit moins que les deux premiers? C'est très simple, il y avait beaucoup moins d'argent. La première et deuxième génération ont bénéficié du développement et des retombées de 'Viva Riva'. Une partie de l'argent que j'utilisais pour construire le long métrage, je l'ai employé pour les formations. J'ai investi beaucoup plus de cash pour garder l'énergie très élevée. Les étudiants allaient tourner chaque semaine et pouvaient se déplacer beaucoup plus loin. Dieudo a pu tourner son film deux fois, Dames en attente était raté la première fois. Je l'ai envoyé 5 mois à Bukavu avant qu'il ne trouve 'Maman Colonel'. Kiripi pareil au Katanga. Il a pu partir de long mois, chercher, travailler et trouver la magnifique histoire.

Mais surtout il y avait beaucoup plus de profs que l'on faisait venir. J'ai plus ou moins recréé les conditions d'une école normale en Occident où il y avait 3 ou 4 profs qui étaient là pour aiguiller les étudiants. Et ça pendant des mois. Lorsque j'ai tourné un documentaire avant mon long métrage, il y avait une équipe d'enseignants qui étaient là.

Quelle est la différence? C'est le retour. Pouvoir aller tourner de la matière, revenir, le projeter à une équipe qui va le commenter, mais surtout avoir des enseignants qui peuvent donner les petits détails pour améliorer, c'est fondamental. Une école c'est d'abord une philosophie et des enseignants.

Dans les promotions 3 et 4, les 5 talents qui auraient pu faire des films d'exceptions et changer la donne, je n'avais pas l'argent pour leur assurer le même développement. Oui, ils restaient plus longtemps, mais avec moins de prof. J'ai essayé d'avoir une économie moins énergique, parce qu'il y avait moins d'argent, tout en gardant la sagesse. Mais quand il n'y a pas les moyens pour générer l'énergie et la main d'œuvre pour faire avancer les choses. Les étudiants s'écroulent tout simplement. Lumière Nyola pouvait faire un film magnifique sur les chauffeurs de taxi alcooliques. Les préparations étaient bien. Mais sans le même encadrement, ni les moyens économiques, elle n'est pas arrivée faire le même travail tout simplement.

Nazir Saleh était un caméraman brillant. Mais il y avait trop de problèmes à la maison, et comme je n'avais plus de bourses à lui donner, il ne pouvait pas rester. Il y avait un autre étudiant qui était très bon dans le virtuel. Mais il a dû arrêter pour aller chercher un travail pour

sa famille. Il y a deux trois personnes remarquables par groupe qui tirent tous les autres vers le haut. Les groupes suivant je n'ai pas pu les aider de la même manière.

De combien parle-t-on comme investissement? Peut-être 100,000€; 200,000€. J'ai arrêté de compter à un moment. La raison pour laquelle j'ai consigné ces investissements, et je pense qu'ils doivent rester consigner, c'est qu'un pays pauvre coûte énormément d'argent. Pour démarrer, ça demande une énergie absolument folle qui passe par l'argent. Et l'autre problème de l'argent est que les bailleurs ne paient jamais à temps. Il n'y a pas de banque vers lesquelles se retourner. Il y a le marché noir où on est taxé à 40-50% d'intérêt mensuel. Tu peux faire le compte, tu emprunte 10,000\$ pour payer loyer, à manger pour les étudiants et le billet d'avion du prof.

Le paiement du bailleur arrive avec deux mois de retard. Ça te donne une idée du type d'inflation. Les coûts réels des formations par tête d'étudiant, j'ai préféré m'écarter de ces statistiques; qui finalement ne servent à rien. Dans un endroit où il n'y avait rien, il fallait d'abord créer de la réussite. Ensuite, on peut repenser les choses.

Il y a un autre soubassement qui est un point clé, c'est le soutien psychique. Les profs enseignaient, mais ils jouaient aussi des rôles de thérapeutes. Le soir nos réunions étaient beaucoup sur l'aide qu'il fallait apporter aux étudiants. 4 profs ça fait plus ou moins un pour 4 étudiants. C'est un rapport où on peut tenir son groupe et créer une unité. À partir du moment où il y avait un prof pour 15 étudiants, ça ne pouvait plus fonctionner. Voilà ce qui est arrivé à la 3ème et 4ème promotion.

Et il y a eu un côté pas de chance aussi. Il n'y a pas eu un grand projet comme un long métrage pour mobiliser un groupe dans une grande énergie collective. J'ai failli emmener le film Lumumba, dirigé par Joe Wright (celui qui a fait 'The Darkest Hour' récemment). Il a abandonné le film deux jours avant le départ pour Kinshasa. Un long métrage c'est un peu comme la construction d'un grand building. Tous les maçons, les menuisiers, les techniciens de toute sortes travaillent sur un énorme chantier qui leur permet de lever leur niveau. Les derniers groupes n'ont pas eu ces grands projets qui auraient pu les tirer vers l'avant. C'est juste pas de chance. Ce n'est pas faute d'avoir essayé.

Le Congo est un pays extrêmement pauvre. Ce qui n'est pas visible, c'est une souffrance importante qu'il faut dans un premier temps aider par énormément de volonté à faire avancer. Comme le prouve les premières générations, une fois que les gens ont compris, ils avancent tout seuls. Ensuite, ils peuvent générer leurs propres idées.

Arly Kosi: En tant que Coordinatrice de production à Suka, et chargé de production aux Ateliers Actions, j'ai pu observer certaines choses que je voudrais rajouter à la discussion. La première et la deuxième année de formation ont été des années très chaleureuses et exceptionnelles. Suka production avait en développement des grands projets et des tournages.

La Première promotion ils étaient 15 participants dont à la fin de la formation, les 7 meilleurs sont entrés dans le projet de formation et production qui a durée 7 mois. Les autres sont retournés dans leurs emplois respectifs, mais renforcés par les connaissances acquises durant la formation.

Ce qui sont restés pour la formation étaient supervisés dans leurs travaux. Mais ils pouvaient aussi travailler sur les projets en développement. En outre il y a eu :

- Les deux premières promotions ont eu la chance de participer comme assistants ou stagiaires, aux repérages, tournage et postproduction de 'Viva Riva'. L'équipe de professionnels venus de l'Europe et quelques un d'Afrique du Sud avaient un double contrat : Prestation et mais aussi formation d'un assistant ou stagiaire qui sera dans son département.
- L'étude de comportement sexuel: la recherche avec François Sardi
- Le Projet Media pour la démocratie et la transparence en RDC auquel ils ont développé avec l'aide des professionnels mis à leur service. (d'où découlent les documentaires 'Congo en quatre actes'). Un projet jamais vu grâce auquel ils ont pu voyager et faire des recherches au Bas Congo, au Katanga, à Kinshasa et à l'Est du Congo. Pour les aider à améliorer leurs recherches il y avait toujours un professionnel engagé par Suka qui venait pour le coaching.
- Ils ont aussi été engagés comme des assistants de la société pendant un temps afin de mieux comprendre comment le bureau de production travaille avec différents projets. Certains ont travaillé sur les formations des étudiants des promotions suivantes. Ils ont aussi fait du suivi de projet.
- Tout ceci explique qu'ils aient une expérience largement supérieure aux années suivantes.

Les deux dernières promotions ont été des années des petits projets. La société ne pouvait pas mettre tous les étudiants dessus de la même manière:

- Airtel Kinshasa et Airtel Brazzaville, étaient des projets courts auxquels ils ont eu la chance de tous participer.
- Projet BBC sur l'histoire du Congo (5 étudiants seulement ont pu y participer et voyager à travers le Congo. Le budget était trop petit.
- Projet Radio sur le comportement sexuel : quelques uns ont pu y participer et accompagner les équipes en provinces.
- Storytent : un projet intéressant dont on se savait pas aussi y faire participer tout les étudiants. quelques uns sélectionnés pour accompagner les équipes de production en provinces. (Pour Kinshasa nous avons créé des groupes où ils ont tous participé au moins deux jours pendant le déroulement du projet).

Nous avons d'autres projets de coproduction avec la CNN, une société de production Finlandaise, USAID, Al Jazeera, Développement du projet norvégien, Projet OIM (Retour à la paix à l'Est du Congo)... A chaque fois nous avons choisi ou sélectionné un étudiant pour y participer.

Cela explique qu'il y a eu plus de la continuité de l'apprentissage et pratique pour les deux premières années. A chaque Grand Projet de la société nous faisons toujours appel aux meilleurs. Et nous avons aussi aidé beaucoup d'entre eux avec nos propres fonds afin de développer leurs propres projets ; certains ne les ont pas finis.

La dernière année a été un peu dur vu que les étudiants n'ont pas eu assez des moyens financiers pour faire développer des projets et faire de la recherche. Nous avons dû vendre la Jeep de la société achetée à l'époque à 15000\$ et vendue à 9000\$ pour pouvoir finir l'année et payer le loyer. Et aussi la voiture de Djo Munga a été vendue à 5000\$ pour couvrir les repas et transport des étudiants. Nous avons connu trois déménagements pendant cette période pour permettre de diminuer le coût de logement afin de

permettre aux étudiants de finir leurs formations. Il y a du matériel qui a été vendu pour payer le transport des étudiants qui devrait retourner dans leurs provinces. Comme le but était qu'il puisse finir leur formation comme les autres nous avons essayé de faire l'essentiel pour clôturer le projet et que chacun puisse au moins développer ou réaliser un projet.

A ce jour il reste quelques matériels qui sont stocké dans une pièce que nous payons 100\$ (Le dernier paiement du loyer effectué a été Mars 2017). Quelques matériel ont été vendu récemment aux anciens étudiants dont la majorité demande réparation, cela à servi pour me permettre de mettre à jour mes diplômes ainsi que des documents administratifs pour me permettre de faire une inscription au master à l'université de Floride.