PROJECT: REINTEGRATION AND REHABILITATION OF STREET CHILDREN IN SOKODE THROUGH EDUCATION, TRAINING AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

FINAL PROJECT REPORT

Implementation period: August 04, 2025 to July 31? 2026
Led by: URBIS FOUNDATION - TOGO
Financial and technical partners:

- Oliver Herbrich Foundation
- Urbis Foundation Allemagne (Munich)
- Urbis Foundation Togo (Sokodé)
- Direction Régionale de l'Action Sociale
- CREUSET TOGO
- Local authorities
- Religious leaders
- School and learning centres



Picture of children surrounded by parents and the project crew during the sensitization tour in Sokodé.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project « Reintegration and rehabilitation of street children in Sokodé through education, training and psychosocial support » was implemented by URBIS FOUNDATION TOGO for a period of 12 months from August 4, 2025 to July 31, 2026 with the support of its technical and financial partners. The project aimed at contributing to the protection and improvement of the living conditions of children living on the street in Sokodé and at high risk of falling into it, by offering them opportunities for school reintegration, vocational training and psychosocial support. During the implementation period, twenty-two (22) children were identified and cared. Of these twenty-two (22), five (05) have been reintegrated into the formal education system while seventeen (17) others have been directed towards vocational training adapted to what they aspired to and the opportunities available in Sokodé. All these children and young people had a psychosocial support adapted to their situation and the project allowed their family reintegration. During a workshop, **Nazifatou** had addressed this testimony: **"I am no longer ashamed of living in society and I feel considered within my family. My life is no longer a waste, I would never have thought it before"**.
Community awareness-raising activities, family involvement, material support and psychosocial support were the main strategic levers of the project's success. Despite some difficulties encountered during the implementation, the results demonstrate the relevance of the approach adopted and the positive impact of the project on the beneficiaries, their families and the community.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Contexte et justification

The city of Sokodé has been experiencing a growing phenomenon of street children for several years. These children face many forms of vulnerability, including social exclusion, school dropout, economic exploitation, physical and psychological abuse, harmful substance use and health problems, and lack of family protection.
In face of this concerning situation, URBIS FOUNDATION-TOGO initiated the project **Reintegration and rehabilitation of street children in Sokodé** in order to promote the **rehabilitation** and **sustainable reintegration**, **protection and social inclusion** of these children through an integrated approach combining education, training and psychosocial support. The project is linked to a global approach of promoting and fighting against social exclusion

1.2 General objective

This is about contributing to the social reintegration and sustainable rehabilitation of street children in Sokodé.

1.3 Specific objectives

- Identify children living on the street or at risk of losing their lives on it
- Strengthen community awareness on child protection

- Facilitate the reintegration of beneficiaries into school and employment
- Provide individualized psychosocial support
- Promote the family and community reintegration of the children concerned.

2. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The project implementation was based on a participatory approach involving families, local authorities, social services, religious leaders, vocational training centers and schools. The action was structured around several levels:

- Community sensitisation
- Identification and evaluation of the beneficiaries
- Psychosocial coaching
- School reintegration
- Voccational training
- Social and health assitance
- Family reintegration
- Post integration follow-up

3. IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES

3.1 Project launch

An official launch workshop was held at UFT headquarters in the presence of communal, customary authorities and civil society partners on August 4, 2025. The culmination of this activity was the signing of the project charter between UFT and 3 partners for the effective and efficient implementation to achieve the project results. A total of 20 participants attended the event, including 5 women.

An official note was distributed to all guests at the meeting. These are the technical services (Regional office of Social Action), the regional office of Health, Education, Security (Police and Gendarmerie), Civil Society Organizations (PAFED), RESODERC, Community-Based Organizations (Traditional Chieftaincy, CDQ (Neighbourhood Development Committee)), Religious Organizations (Muslim Union), professional media (Tchaoudjo radio station and Venus Radio station) and the Online Press (https://sokodeenligne.com/)

3.2 Experience feedback

In a quest for the best strategy to successfully implement such a high social risk project, it was imperative to collect successful experiences from other structures. In this research, Franz WANNER of UFA contacted the German-Togolese Association (AGERTO), a structure that has excelled in supporting rural communities and especially young people for their social and professional reintegration.

Indeed, the NGO AGERTO has three (3) centers in Togo, including Kpalimé, Notsè and Kéméni (Tchaoudjo 3). In these centers, dozens of girls and boys have already benefited from multifaceted support to build their lives for more than 10 years.

Following these successes, it is essential that the UFT team of this project can visit one of the sites to learn, learn and make a use of the successful practices of AGERTO.

At the end of this mission, the following results were identified:

- The terms of the apprenticeship contracts are known
- A directory of profitable vocational activities is established
- A success model is known
- The difficulties are shared.

3.3 Community sensitisation

Preparatory meetings were organized to reflect on the outlines of intervention and plan the awareness-raising tour. The following members were present at these planning meetings:

List of the meetings attenders

Attenders	Number of attenders
Social action office	1
Creuset - Togo	1
Regional Chamber of Trades	1
President of the young people of the large market (Roundabout) of Sokodé	1
President of Sokodé Central Market	1
President of the Komah Market	1
President of the Livestock Market	1
Urbis Foundation Togo	- Project director : MEMEM Islam - Co-director : MAMAH Oumorou - Program Director of UFT : Soli AFFO-WALOH - The Accountant : MOUMOUNI Wahabou - UFT Secretary : BAGUISSAGOU Alougounda Marguérite

Awareness-raising sessions were organized in the classes of Sokodé neighbourhood leaders for families, community leaders and local actors to promote the protection of children and the importance of their reintegration.

These meetings helped raise awareness about the dangers of living on the street and the importance of child protection.

Community leaders, religious guides, local authorities and families have actively participated in these awareness-raising activities.

AWARENESS TOUR PLAN

N°	AREA / NEIGHBORHOOD	PLACE	DAYS	HOURS	ATTENDERS
1	KOMAH	Royal court	Monday, 8th September 2025	Start at 3.30 PM	President of the youth from the roundahout: 1 Creuset -Togo: 1 Action Sociale: 1 Urbis Foundation Togo: 2
2	DIDAURE	Royal court	Tuesday, 9th September 2025	Start at 8.30 AM	President of the youth from the roundahout: 1 Creuset -Togo: 1 Action Sociale: 1 Urbis Foundation Togo: 2
3	KOULOUNDE	Royal court	Tuesday, 9th September 2025	Start at 3.30 PM	President of the youth from the roundahout: 1 Creuset -Togo: 1 Action Sociale: 1 Urbis Foundation Togo: 2
4	TCHAWANDA	Royal court	Wednesday, 10th September 2025	Start at 8.30 AM	President of the youth from the roundahout: 1 Creuset -Togo: 1 Action Sociale: 1 Urbis Foundation Togo: 2
5	KPANGALAM	Royal court	Wednesday, 10th September 2025	Start at 3.30 PM	President of the youth from the roundahout: 1 Creuset -Togo: 1 Action Sociale: 1 Urbis Foundation Togo: 2
6	JEUNES DU GRAND MARCHE DE SOKODE	Rondahout	Thursday, 11th September 2025	Start at 8.30 AM	President of the youth from the roundahout: 1 Creuset -Togo: 1 Action Sociale: 1 Urbis Foundation Togo: 3

3.4 Sensitisation with families

Home visits were organized with the families of the beneficiaries in order to promote responsible parenthood, the rights of the child and the importance of education and vocational training.

These exchanges have helped to improve the involvement of parents in the reintegration process of children.

3.3 Beneficiaries identification

Field missions helped to identify 83 children living or working on the streets. Each child underwent a social assessment in order to prioritize the project beneficiaries and determine their specific needs.

An identification operation conducted with the support of social services resulted in the selection of twenty-two (22) children who met the project criteria. In order to facilitate the selection of beneficiaries, a listening sheet was drawn up which made it easy to analyse the cases. It should be noted that the number of street children is constantly increasing even after selection.

Each child was subjected to an individual social assessment to develop an appropriate care plan.

Tangible results have been achieved through awareness-raising meetings, including:

- More than twenty-two (22) families awareness was raised on child right. In fact families have to be aware of the fundamental child right, such as education, health, protection against violence and a save family.
- The community is informed about the causes that lead children to the streets (poverty, neglect, domestic violence) so that they can identify and address these issues within their own family and community dynamics.
- Family members are involved in motivating children in their vocational or school training through regular follow-ups.
- Family members are informed about the details of the project to facilitate its implementation.
- Out of the 22 children, 17 are guided towards their preferred trade for their training.

3.4 School and professional reintegration

From the twenty-two beneficiaries:

- Five (05) children were reintegrated into schools
- Seventeen (17) children joined learning centers to acquire professional skills that will support their future independence.

The training programs were chosen in consultation with the children, their families, and social services.

The list of beneficiaries with their necessary information is attached as an Excel file.

The twenty-two (22) beneficiaries received individualized psychosocial support. Regular interviews, group counselling sessions, individual sessions, and educational activities were organized by a specialized team and helped boost their self-esteem, confidence, and social integration skills.

These include:

- Go meet children in their living environments to listen to them and provide help to meet their urgent needs. Ensure children receive food support and healthcare through the intervention of medical staff.
- Raise awareness among children and work on preventing risky behaviours (risky sexual practices, prostitution, drug use, delinquency, violent behaviour…).
- Protect children in situations of extreme vulnerability, help them overcome the traumas they have experienced in life, and support their resocialization process.
- Build with the child a plan adapted to their path, history, and current situation. All of this is done while ensuring the child participates in every stage of the process, from identification to the end of the stabilization period.
- Guide, support, and follow up with children in their integration journey: mediation, Family reunification, housing, schooling, and vocational training. - Comfort children and caregivers in distress and help them feel safe and calm.
- Provide emotional support

3.6 Family reintegration

Thanks to the mediation and follow-up efforts, nineteen (19) children were reintegrated into their respective families. Three (03) other children, whose family situation did not allow for immediate reintegration, were referred to the Creuset-Togo reception center, which is specialized in providing appropriate care.

3.7 Social, health and material support

The project provided beneficiaries with appropriate assistance, including:

- **Access to healthcare:** some children supported by the project benefited from medical assistance and healthcare during the project implementation due to health issues.
- **Food support:** a daily allowance is granted to each child in the project for breakfast and lunch to enable them to properly follow their activities.
- **Provision of clothing:** the 22 children assisted receive a monthly allowance for their clothing needs.
- **Legal assistance when necessary**: in total, 4 birth certificates were issued to beneficiaries who did not have this document.

3.8 Training beneficiaries on entrepreneurship

The main goal of this training is to help street children benefiting from the project gain the skills they need to create and run their workshop effectively.

The training was meant for

- Develop an entrepreneurial spirit,
- Learn workshop management techniques,
- Strengthen skills in marketing and financial management,
- Encourage innovation and creativity.

a. Training organisation

Given the short duration of the project, the entrepreneurship training initially took place through interview visits in the respective workshops and continued with a workshop bringing the beneficiaries together at the Formathèque premises.

The training brought together 16 participants from different fields of activity. One trainee in make-up named YACOUBOU Rawda was suffering from malaria and was absent during the training.

The training sessions were led by a qualified teacher specialized in entrepreneurship and business management. It should be noted that the training was conducted in French with interpretation in the local TEM language (Kotocoli) due to the low education level of some beneficiaries.

b. Training outline

- **Teaching methods used**

To make the modules easier to understand, several teaching methods were used:

- ✓ Theoretical presentations,
- ✓ Case studies,
- ✓ Practical exercises,
- ✓ Debates and experience sharing.

Those methods allowed an active participation from the participants.

- **Activities timeline**

The training lasted a total of 50 hours. The training program is presented in the table below.

N°	MODULES	HOURS
1	Introduction to Entrepreneurship	3
2	Market Study	10
3	Business Plan Development	7
4	Financial Management	10
5	Marketing and Communication	10
6	Leadership and Customer Management	10

a- Taught modules

- **Introduction to entrepreneurship**

This module allowed a better understanding of the fundamental notions link to entrepreneurship.

An entrepreneur has been defined as a person capable of identifying an opportunity and mobilizing resources to create a profitable activity.

The qualities of a good entrepreneur mentioned are:

- ✓ Creativity
- ✓ Perseverance
- ✓ Sense of responsibility
- ✓ Decision-making ability
- ✓ Leadership.

- **Identification of business opportunity**

The trainer explained the different techniques for identifying business opportunities based on:

- ✓ The needs of the population
- ✓ Problems observed in society
- ✓ Available resources
- ✓ Technological innovations.

This module strengthened the participants in market analysis and understanding customer needs.

- **Building a business plan**

The business plan is an essential document that allows the presentation of a business project.

Some explanations and practical examples on the concept of the business plan were discussed, particularly the presentation of a project, market study, marketing strategy, operational plan, financial plan, as well as risk analysis.

This module made it possible to understand the importance of planning in the success of a business.

- **Financial managment**

In this module, the trainer covered expense management, cost calculation, pricing, cash flow management, and profit calculation.

Finally, the trainer offered some advice regarding depositing the profits earned with a microfinance institution in the form of a tontine, which could facilitate obtaining a loan to expand the business.

This module demonstrated that good financial management is essential for the sustainability of a business.

- **Marketing and selling technics**

The lessons in this module focused on:

- ✓ communication strategies,
- ✓ advertising,
- ✓ customer loyalty,
- ✓ negotiation techniques,
- ✓ the use of social networks in commerce.

- **Leadership and client managment.**

In this module, the trainer demonstrated the importance of teamwork, professional communication, welcoming clients, and conflict management, with illustrative examples.

b- Aquired knowledge and competence

During the training, many theorical and practical abilities were acquired.

- ➢ **Technical competence**

The street children benefiting from the project have learned to:

- ➢ Realize that their learning was important
- ➢ Develop a business plan
- ➢ Conduct a market study
- ➢ Manage financial resources
- ➢ Develop marketing strategies.

c. Compétences personnelles

Thus, the training also helped to strengthen:

- ✓ Self-confidence
- ✓ Leadership spirit
- ✓ Analytical skills
- ✓ Organizational sense;
- ✓ Creativity.

4. PROJECT RESULTS AND IMPACT

4.1 Monitoring of children in their integration process

A monthly visit is organized in schools and workshops to ensure the proper conduct of the children. A follow-up form is prepared for this purpose, intended to collect

precise and useful information on each child in order to assess their performance. See the form in the appendix.

At the end of this follow-up, some areas for improvement were identified:

- Improvement of the children's psychological state: 100% of the children supported by the project participated in the psychosocial support program and were satisfied. The children are still attending school and workshops and are disciplined, so better social functioning is observed in all.
- Improvement of the children's living conditions: reduction of malnutrition, infections, and acute morbidity, appropriate clothing protecting from cold/sun and preserving self-esteem, early care for illnesses, vaccinations, reproductive and mental health, schooling and learning made easier, the guaranteed housing and family reintegration, positive relationship with social workers, ease of follow-ups and guidance.
- Community Reintegration: increase in the number of children returning to school, involvement of families in the reintegration process.
- Impact on the Community: positive changes observed in the perception of children in street situations, testimonies, feedback from community leaders.

INDICATORS	**RESULTS OBTAINED**	**RATE**
Number of identified beneficiary children	22	100%
Number of children receiving psychological support	22	100%
Number of children reintegrated into school	05	100%
Number of children referred to vocational training	17	100%
Number of children reintegrated into their families	19	86%
Number of children referred to a reception center	03	14%
Number of community awareness sessions conducted	06	100%

The rate of psychosocial support coverage reached 100% of identified beneficiaries. The overall reintegration rate (familial or institutional) also reached 100%, demonstrating the effectiveness of the adopted approach.

- ✓ **Improvement of family relationships:** 22 street children have returned to their families. Reduction of 22 children in street situations in Sokodé.
- ✓ **Improvement of educational and professional situation:** 5 street children are attending school and 17 are learning a trade of their choice, which explains a reduction in the time spent on the street.
- ✓ **Strengthening of social inclusion:** Enhancement of their self-confidence and their ability to socially integrate.
- ✓ Creation of a network of stakeholders committed to child protection.
- ✓ Increased community awareness regarding the issues of children in street situations.
- ✓ Strengthening of psychological well-being.

4.2 Progress of the results

The 22 street children targeted by the project were identified and then reintegrated: 5 into school and 17 into vocational training.

Product achievement rate

Outputs	Goals	Achievement	Achievement rate in %
Total number of reintegrated children	22	22	100%
Number of children in school	5	5	100%
Number of children in apprenticeship	17	17	100%
Number of psychosocial support sessions	50	50	100%
Number of months of vocational training provided	6	6	100%
Educational and training materials distributed	22 kits	22 kits	100%
Family awareness-raising	22	22	100%
Entrepreneurship training	22	22	100%

a- Progress to effects (Outcomes)

(Outcomes)	Indicators	Objectives	Achievement	Achievement rat in %
Improvement of the educational situation School retention rate in %	Improvement of the educational situation School retention rate in %	100%	100%	100%
Increase in professional skills	Increase in professional skills	100%	100%	100%
Employment rate	Employment rate	4 (Average)	4,5	
Improvement of psychosocial well-being Children's satisfaction (Scale from 1 to 5)	Improvement of psychosocial well-being Children's satisfaction (Scale from 1 to 5)	22	19	86%
Strengthening of family ties Family participation	Strengthening of family ties Family participation	5 activities	5 activities	100%

- **Results analysis**

✓ **Outputs**

- ✓ All planned products have been completed, indicating an effective implementation of the project.
- ✓ The completion rate for all outputs is 100%.

Progress to Outcomes

- The results in terms of education are promising, with a school retention rate of 100%.
- Although the rate of professional integration is not yet measurable, it is essential to continue monitoring this variable after the training.
- Children's satisfaction is high, which is a positive indicator of psychosocial support.
- Family participation rate is slightly below the target, suggesting that it could be beneficial to increase outreach and family engagement efforts.

This report highlights the successes of the project in terms of reintegration of children in street situations, while identifying areas for improvement, particularly in family engagement. Future actions could focus on raising family awareness and the continuous assessment of children's professional skills.

Reintegration Follow-up dashboard

Indicators	Reference value	Noticed value	Gap	Remarks
Total number of reintegrated children	22	22	0	Goal achieved
Number of children enrolled in school	5	5	0	Goal achieved
Number of children in apprenticeship	17	17	0	Goal achieved
School retention rate in %	100%	100%	0%	All children stay in school
Success rate (at the exam)	100%	100%	0	Goal achieved
Professional insertion rate in %	100%	100%	0	Goal achieved
Number of psychosocial support sessions	100%	100%	0	Goal achieved
Children's satisfaction (Scale from 1 to 5)	4	4,5	0,5	Good level of satisfaction
Family participation in %	100%	86%	-14%	Needs improvement

Results interpratation

- **Goal achieved :** children were successfully reintegrated, and schooling and training objectives are achieved
- **Success and retention rate:** children had a successful school year, what means children have made progress.
- **Psychosocial monitoring:** Children's satisfaction is highly measured, a sign that the monitoring was beneficial.

- **Families engagement:** Although close to the goal, it is important to increase family participation to strengthen the effectiveness of the program.4.2 Analyse des performances

a- The project's success points

This project, rehabilitation of children living on the streets has demonstrated several successes, including:

- **Children reintegration has been successful:** All targeted 22 children have been reintegrated, with 5 of them enrolled in the educational system and 17 benefiting from vocational training. This demonstrates an effective implementation of reintegration activities.
- **Access to education:** The 5 school-aged children represent a key step for their personal and academic development. Schooling gives them not only a formal education but also a stable environment. ...
- **Vocational training:** The 17 children in apprenticeship acquire practical skills that increase their future employability. This representes a solid foundation for their economic independence
- **Psychosocial monitoring:** The children receive psychosocial support that allows them to overcome the traumas related to their experiences on the street, thereby promoting their mental and emotional well-being.

b- Gap analysis

Despite the successes, some goals haven't been achieved or show gaps:

- ✓ **Family participation:** If 86 % of families have been sensitized, 14 % could not be. This is due to some reasons: :
- ✓ **Logistical difficulties:** Some families of sponsored children live far from the city of Sokodé and have time or transportation constraints that prevent them from attending awareness sessions. This is the case for the 3 children placed at the Creuset center, whose families are in Kara and Sotouboua.
- ✓ **Lack of interest or confidence:** Some families are sceptical about the benefits of the program or have concerns about their kids' involvement.
- ✓ **Commitment to the educational process:** The family participation rate is 86%, below the target of 100%. This could indicate obstacles such as:
- ✓ **Economic barrier:** Families are facing financial problems that prevent them from supporting their children's education.
- c- **Social prejudices:** The stigmas associated with children living on the streets have affected families' willingness to engage in the process. Analyse des risks and hypotheses.

The implementation of the project is based on certain assumptions and involves risks that may affect the outcomes:

a- Hypotheses:

- The reintegrated children are motivated to participate in school and learning, which appears to be the case so far.

- Families will be ready to engage in the reintegration process of their children, but this requires strengthening communication and awareness.
- Educational and community partners will continue to support the project without major interruptions.

b- Risks :

- **Socio-economic changes:** An economic crisis or a rise in unemployment could affect families' ability to support their children's education.
- **Public health issues:** Health crises (like a pandemic) could interrupt access to education and training.
- **Persistent social stigma:** Children living on the streets continue to face prejudice, which could hinder their social and school integration.
- **Lack of monitoring and evaluation:** The absence of regular tracking of children's progress could lead to late adjustments of interventions needed to meet the changing needs of children and their families.
- **Resistance of some children to reintegration:** Some children cared for by the project have difficulties with management and social reintegration. For example, 3 children placed at Creuset Togo ran away from the center to return to the streets. Back there and face to the difficulties of street life, they brought themselves back to the URBIS premises to request their return to the Creuset center. According to the questioning, the children expressed their dissatisfaction with the “segregation” in the distribution of food following a punishment given by their supervisor in the center. To make the supervisor suffer, the three children fled the center, taking with them a younger child.
- Another girl in vocational training did not know to ask her employer for permission before being absent and ended up being expelled from the workshop. Our intervention allowed for reconciliation and the resumption of the learning activities for the girl took place.

5. SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE FOR FINANCIAL AUTONOMY

Children living on the streets constitute a vulnerable population, often facing precarious living conditions. Vocational training is an essential step towards their social and economic reintegration. By training them in specific trades, we have offered them the only opportunity to leave the streets and build a better future.

The main objective of this project is to provide them with the necessary tools to enable them to practice their trade and achieve financial independence. This involves:

- Provide individual support to each child.
- Equip children with the necessary toolkits to practice their trade.
- Promote financial autonomy and social integration of children.

However, we are facing budgetary challenges that require a reassessment of the financial resources allocated to this project.

a- Description of the workshops and necessary equipment

For each profession chosen by the children, specific workshops will need to be set up. A total of 12 workshops are necessary to settle the children and allow them to develop their activity. Here are some examples of the necessary equipment:

- **Tiling Profession:** wheelbarrow, level, tile cutter, trowel, pincers…
- **Hairdressing Profession:** hairdressing chairs, client chairs, brushes, scissors, mirrors, bib, razors, comb, fan…
- **Cooking Profession:** kitchen utensils, household appliances, basic ingredients, pan, spoons, forks, dish…
- **Livestock Farming Profession:** ewes (female sheep), breeding ram, poultry…
- **Ironwork Profession:** shears, claw tools, hacksaw, pincers, tape measure…
- **Carpentry Profession:** saw, tape measure, hammer, nail puller, pincers, plane, string, clamp, brace…
- **Secretariat / Accounting Assistant Profession**: desktop computer, photocopier, all-in-one colour printer, stapler, binder…
- **Braiding / Makeup Profession:** makeup case, makeup accessories, ring light, scarves, mannequin heads, client chairs, mirror, fan…
- **Braiding / Malian Tattoo Profession**: henna, blade, tape, henna product, TikTok henna (ref), henna habibi, glue, tattoo accessories, braid accessories, chairs; stuffed armchair…

b- Forecast Budget

The initial budget planned for the acquisition of equipment is insufficient to meet the actual needs of the 17 children. An estimate of the costs for each type of equipment has been carried out, and it appears that:

c- Request budget increase

To ensure the success of this project and enable children to benefit from the necessary tools for their success, we are requesting an increase in the budget

This amount will allow us to:

- Cover all needs in equipment
- Ensure quality monitoring and support for each child
- Establish workshops adapted to the skills acquired during their training (see the details of the training attended by the children and the detailed estimate of equipment costs in the appendix).

6. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- ✓ Forcast budget
- ✓ Expenses incurred

Documents attached in an Excel file.

7. DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED AND SOLUTIONS PROVIDED

Some difficulties were identified during the implementation of the project, notably:

- ✓ **Difficulties in locating families:** some children among the beneficiaries came from other surrounding cities to find themselves on the street. This was the case for the 3 children placed at Creuset Togo to facilitate their reintegration. It took a lot of time and effort to locate their respective families.
- ✓ **Financial constraints:** the project's provisional budget did not take into account adequate measures to address the difficulties of foster families, particularly poverty and hunger, in order to ensure that the children would not return to the street. Thus, the limited budget to set up workshops adapted to the skills acquired during the beneficiaries' training may not guarantee the project's success 100%.
- ✓ **Institutional constraints:** a large-scale project of this kind requires the creation of a children's reception center to facilitate their management and ensure the project's success.
- ✓ **Résistance de certains bénéficiaires à la réinsertion** : Some children under the care of the project face difficulties with management and social reintegration. This is the case of the three children placed at Creuset Togo who absconded from the center to return to the streets for eight days. Confronted once again with the challenges of street life, they brought themselves back to the URBIS premises to request their return to the Creuset Togo center. According to interviews, the children expressed their dissatisfaction with the "segregation" in the distribution of food following a punishment given by their caretaker at the center. To make the caretaker suffer, the three children fled the center taking with them a younger child.
- ✓ **Resolution** : The supervisor acknowledged having given the cornmeal to the three children due to a mistake she had made, while she served well-seasoned rice to the others. "It is this injustice that the children could not tolerate." Our mediation allowed the children to return to the center and made it possible to hold a meeting to prevent such an unfortunate event from happening again.
- ✓ Another girl in vocational training did not know to ask her employer for permission before being absent and ended up being dismissed from the workshop. Our intervention allowed them to reconcile, and the girl was able to resume her learning activities.

- ✓ A beneficiary who was already enrolled in a vocational training program was replaced by another at her own request, with the involvement and suggestion of her family. This young woman, already in fragile health and unable to continue, was able to be transferred to Lomé to receive appropriate treatment. To date, her replacement has successfully completed her training.
- ✓ **Parents' reticence**: Parents might have feared that rehabilitation programs weren't safe or effective. They had doubts about whether the institutions could actually help their children and were especially worried about the stigma associated with their child's street situation. They might also be afraid that rehabilitation could expose their child to further judgment or discrimination. In

some situations, parents might distrust the authorities or organizations offering rehabilitation programs because of past negative experiences or a perception of ineffectiveness. Also, children living on the streets often contribute to the family income, and parents fear losing that financial support if their children join reintegration programs that take them away from the streets temporarily.

- ✓ **difficulty in precise identification of children**: Mise en place d'une équipe de terrain formée et engagée et l'implication du président des enfants de rue de Sokodé dans le processus a facilité le travail.
- ✓ **On the impossibility of certifying an apprentice under 18 years of age for the Certificate of Completion of Apprenticeship (CFA) examination organized by the Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training of Togo:** During the meeting with the Chamber of Trades and the reception workshops for street children for their apprenticeship and the signing of training contracts, we were informed that children under 18 cannot take the final training exam. Furthermore, the six-month trainings are short modular courses and do not allow for taking an exam. Only certificates of completion can be issued by the reception workshops to the trainees.
- ✓ **Several lists recorded, but few children under the age of 18 :** The selection was not easy for us, given the age ranges provided, and we had to conduct a study of each case. The president of the street children at the roundabout insisted on including individuals aged 29, 33, and 47, whom you noted on the list, who are leaders and trackers of the group. The choice of beneficiaries made by the target group is a major asset for the project, promoting the success of social inclusion through the relevance of participant selection, as well as the transformative leadership role to be played to achieve the objectives.
- ✓ **Observation of the harmful presence of adults on the street living in conditions similar to those of the targeted children:** Our field visits revealed the existence of numerous adults on the streets who lacked family support, experienced extreme vulnerability, social isolation, and difficulties accessing essential services. These individuals shared living spaces with street children and sometimes posed a risk to the safety or care of minors.

In fact :

- These adults shared the living space of the children, and their vulnerability had a direct impact on the minors' well-being and safety.
- The identified adults were also in a situation of extreme distress. These adults are a danger to these children, which is why we were obliged to take them in, to stabilize the environment and pursue the support of the children more effectively.

- ✓ **Relevance of the choice because it is mandated by the street children's association and validated by community and religious leaders:** Community and religious leaders are an essential voice in initiating any social change in the city of Sokodé, and obtaining their support for a project is often difficult. At the official project launch workshop, we had them sign the project charter to accompany us and ensure the successful implementation of all planned activities. This meant that the choices of the beneficiary children should receive their validation and, therefore, their assent. The 3 beneficiaries outside the category are known to these community leaders and identified by their peers, the street children, through their association.

- ✓ **A group of children without family support, the street children of Sokodé**: The street children of Sokodé sometimes form a group without family ties or support. They come from different neighbourhoods and surrounding villages, and live at the roundabout, that is, at the main market of Sokodé, where they conduct their daily survival activities. This organized group is led by a president and an office that exercise control over the entire group. During our awareness campaign on the dangers related to the phenomenon of street children, this president agreed to conduct the tour with us in order to explain to the population the magnitude of the phenomenon and the precarious living conditions they endure at the roundabout. At the end of this tour, the president of the street children provided a list of project participants. Furthermore, some neighbourhood chiefs of the city of Sokodé also recorded the street children from their neighbourhood who were not at the roundabout.
- ✓ **Why were 3 beneficiaries outside the age category (29, 33, and 47) chosen? :** These three people have been the driving force in tracking street children. They played the role of scouts. At the beginning of the project, we were advised to do everything possible to succeed with the real street children who gather at the roundabout of the Sokodé market. They play the role of bosses, transformative leaders, and can cause the project to fail in case of exclusion.

8- RECOMMANDATIONS

- **Strengthen post-reintegration monitoring mechanisms:** Continue close monitoring of the 22 reintegrated children to achieve 100% effectiveness.
- It is necessary to provide remedial classes for children enrolled in school.
- Create a focal point for information sharing.
- In the future, plan a children's reception center in a safer location to facilitate the success of the project.
- The number of street children taken into account by the project is very small. Review and increase the number soon.
- Find solutions for drug sellers, if possible, to change their activity.
- Establish a mechanism to combat drug use and sexual vagrancy at the roundabout in the city of Sokodé.
- Take measures against motorcycle taxi drivers who use drugs.
- Promote awareness sessions for parents to help them understand the rights and duties of children.
- Properly raise awareness among beneficiaries' foster families to avoid the misuse of assistance or support provided for children and to prevent families from appropriating their property. - Further develop professional training programs. - Increase the mobilization of resources. - Strengthen partnerships with social services and local authorities.

9. LESSONS LEARNED

Experience has shown that:

- ✓ The involvement of families is essential to the success of reintegration.

- ✓ Psychosocial support is indispensable.
- ✓ Vocational training constitutes an effective alternative for adolescents.
- ✓ Partnership with local actors strengthens the sustainability of actions.

CONCLUSION

The project made it possible to provide a concrete response to the issue of children living on the streets in Sokodé. The results obtained demonstrate that education, vocational training, and psychosocial support are effective levers for rehabilitation and social reintegration.

The continuation and expansion of this type of intervention will help consolidate the achievements and offer more children the opportunity to build a better future. **"I had an exceptional apprentice who became my confidant in daily life, a young man who once represented a threat to all of us. This project has been a transformer of behaviours and a builder of lives,"** testified a hairdressing employer interviewed by our team.