LET’S BUILD THE CITY TOGETHER
A CITY BY AND FOR THE INHABITANTS

urbaSEN is a Senegalese association that brings together professionals working on urban issues. It is committed to helping vulnerable populations and works to improve their living conditions.

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LET’S BUILD THE CITY TOGETHER

A CITY BY AND FOR ITS INHABITANTS

For several years, urbaSEN has been pursuing the idea that at the heart of urbanism lie human beings.

This association was born from the implementation of a project of participative urban planning which started in 2009 in the suburb of Dakar in Senegal. Its creation resulted from this field experience combined with a reflection of the inhabitants of the suburbs concerning the redefinition of what could and should be the city. Until then, the construction of the city had been the business of the State and the municipality. Yet, an essential link in this construction chain was missing: the population.

In order to make the voices of the vulnerable inhabitants of the suburbs’ informal neighborhoods heard, urbaSEN helped found the Senegalese Federation of Inhabitants (Fédération Sénégalaise des Habitants, FSH) to represent them. These two entities accompany the inhabitants in the definition and implementation of urban development projects, placing them at the center of planning decisions. In this sense, these two structures work together to promote the emergence of an inclusive city in order to combat social inequalities and urban fragmentation. They work tirelessly to improve the living conditions of vulnerable populations in Senegal’s cities in order to provide them with access to decent and sustainable housing.

To achieve this, they regularly develop innovative project approaches to design and build a better city together, for and by its inhabitants.
BRIEF HISTORY

Since the late 1980s, the suburbs of Dakar have suffered recurrent floods, causing considerable damage, particularly in the neighborhoods of Djiddah, Thiaroye and Kao (DTK). For some 20 years, some habitat areas have been flooded for several months a year, forcing part of the population to abandon their homes, rebuild them, or live in particularly precarious conditions with significant health risks.

From 2005 onwards, the State launched an emergency plan, the Jaxaay plan, aimed at rehousing flood-affected populations in a new city 30 km from Dakar and constructing retention ponds on the freed up areas. Very quickly, a part of the population rose up against these evictions and mobilized to seek lasting solutions to this social, urban and environmental problem.

The populations affected by these floods then set up the urbaDTK_1 project with the support of the Swiss NGO urbaMonde and a local technical team. The objective was to establish a program for the restructuring and regularization of irregular neighborhoods in the neighborhoods of Djiddah, Thiaroye and Kao (DTK), focusing primarily on the management of water risks through participatory urban planning.

The fight against floods was therefore at the heart of the concerns of the actors mobilized around this territorial planning. Considerable efforts have been made to strengthen local capacity for urban development and water infrastructure in particular.

Subsequently, the project urbaDTK_1 gave rise successively to two complementary structures: the association urbaSEN, and then the Senegalese Federation of Inhabitants (FSH). The aim was to broaden the geographical and thematic scope of the actions in favor of the precarious urban populations.

Today, this federation forms the core of a local urban governance that fills a void in the city’s construction chain. The expectations and needs of the people in the informal settlements were not sufficiently taken into account until now. The FSH is composed of the inhabitants of the precarious districts of DTK as well as the inhabitants of neighboring communes and other localities of Senegal.

The FSH has been operating since its inception thanks to the technical support and advice of urbaSEN, which is, for its part, an association of professionals gathered around urban issues.

These two structures are consequently indissociable and together form the two sides of the same coin. This proximity is illustrated by the common denominator of their visual identity: housing and the community.
Construisons la ville ensemble
KEY MILESTONES

2007 - FIRST STEPS
On behalf of the Djiddah Thiaroye Kao Association Collective, Djibril Diallo contacts the Swiss NGO urbaMonde to find sustainable solutions to flood problems.

2009 - PROGRAM URBADTK_1
The program urbaDTK_1 is launched. The urbaSEN team is formed around its coordinator Papa Ameth Keita. The headquarters of urbaSEN is created in the Point E neighborhood.

2013 - PROGRAM URBADTK_2
The program urbaDTK_2 is launched and makes it possible to perpetuate the work carried out under the program urbaDTK_1. The office of urbaSEN is moved to Guédiawaye near the suburbs.

2014 - CREATION OF THE FSH
The Senegalese Federation of Inhabitants (FSH) is officially founded. The FSH is now the privileged partner of urbaSEN.

2016 - TOWARDS A CITIZEN’S MOVEMENT
This project, which initiates the partnership between urbaSEN, FSH and Plan International, aims to support initiatives by inhabitants of the suburbs of Dakar.

2017 - PROGRAMME URBADTK_3
Support to the FSH in strengthening the social production of habitat that was initiated within the framework of the reconstruction support program urbaDTK_2.

2017 - KNOW YOUR CITY
This project aims to mobilize women’s groups around the mapping of their neighborhoods in order to collect data useful for the development of maps. This project is carried out in partnership with SDI.
Formalized in 2009, the association urbaSEN has been developing projects in the suburbs of Dakar since 2007 already. Its activities include urban restructuring, land regularization, flood control, reconstruction of housing in disadvantaged areas, organization and empowerment of citizen groups for increased participation in the management of public affairs.

In particular, the association provides technical support to groups of inhabitants in the precarious areas of the cities of Senegal. As such, urbaSEN is the privileged partner of the FSH in the implementation of its projects and works to build its capacity and its progressive empowerment.

As a technical partner, urbSEN is organized around clusters that together accompany the realization of projects intended primarily for the members of the FSH. These clusters are: reconstruction and sanitation, savings, community animation/development, land tenure/use and communication.

The urban problems of the territories where urbaSEN is active are mainly linked to the floods. Consequently, the work carried out in the field concerns in particular the construction of individual sanitation facilities for families such as the installation of toilets or the construction of sumps.

The office is currently composed of about fifteen professionals with complementary profiles specialized in the field of city planning.

Through all its actions, urbaSEN is committed to reinforcing the resilience to the hydraulic and land risks of the territories and populations of the suburbs. To this end, it promotes joint planning of municipalities and contributes to the reconstruction of housing for the benefit of the most vulnerable inhabitants in order to improve their living environment.
FSH: A FEDERATION OF INHABITANTS

The Senegalese Federation of Inhabitants (FSH) is a federation of savings groups – composed mainly of women from the suburbs – founded in 2014 thanks to the support of urbaSEN.

Today, the FSH has more than 3,000 members, mainly in the suburbs of Dakar but also in other regions of Senegal (3,030 members in July 2017).

The Federation is primarily responsible for community aspects such as information sharing, admission of new groups and choice of beneficiaries, within the framework of projects related to the improvement of the living environment of the inhabitants of the precarious urban areas.

All members of the FSH save to improve their habitat and the living conditions of their families. Through saving, it becomes possible to take concrete action to improve the living conditions of the local populations. Therefore, each member of the FSH saves within their group and at the level of the federation. Savings can be lent to other groups / members to carry out their projects, which ensures an equitable allocation of resources.

The federation also mobilizes its members as much as possible to make their voices heard by the public authorities and work closely with urbaSEN to carry out urban projects such as sanitation, reconstruction and land regularization.

In 2015, the Senegalese Federation of Inhabitants became a member of Slum Dwellers International (SDI), one of the largest network of inhabitants of informal settlements in the world.
COMPLEMENTARY MISSIONS WITH A COMMON GOAL

The activities of urbaSEN and the FSH are complementary and pursue a common objective, the improvement of the living conditions of the precarious neighborhoods’ inhabitants. Their respective missions are presented in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>urbaSEN</th>
<th>FSH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conduct urban studies, cartographic surveys of informal settlements and collect information on neighborhoods and their inhabitants.</td>
<td>Encourage people in informal settlements to form groups and participate in data collection to better understand their neighborhood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and implement individual and collective sanitation works (toilets, sumps, etc.)</td>
<td>Create substantial collective savings to enable the development of projects to improve the living environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen the land tenure security of the inhabitants through the issuance of land tenure certificates.</td>
<td>Mobilize members to advocate with public authorities to ensure security of tenure in informal settlements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support and accompany the activities of the FSH (technical support and advice).</td>
<td>Develop income-generating activities to improve the standard of living of the inhabitants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify urban issues and develop new urban projects.</td>
<td>Keep its members informed of the progress of the projects and the ongoing reflections on future projects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Construisons la ville ensemble
PROJECTS AND MAIN RESULTS

URBADTK_1 - URBAN CITIZEN PLANNING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOALS</th>
<th>Establish an urban plan and a priority investment plan with the local population.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>START DATE</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>END DATE</td>
<td>2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUNDERS</td>
<td>Geneva Federation of Cooperation (FGC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARTNERS</td>
<td>urbaMonde, City of Djiddah Thiaroye Kao (DTK), GIE of regularization and restructuring and urbaplan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATION</td>
<td>Areas of Djiddah, Thiaroye and Kao, Department of Pikine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEY FIGURES (2017)</td>
<td>5,993 irregular cadastral concessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25 days of participatory workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 retail development plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 priority investment plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 municipal planning office</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The preliminary analysis and diagnosis work initiated in 2007 allowed to create the enabling conditions to carry out the urbaDTK_1 program. The implementation of this program also contributed to the birth of the urbaSEN association.

The project was initiated by the inhabitants of Djiddah Thiaroye Kao (DTK), organized within the DTK Development Associations (CADDTK), which solicited the Swiss NGO urbaMonde in support of the improvement of their living conditions, especially in relation to flood-related problems. The project made it possible to carry out a real urban diagnosis, notably highlighting the complex dynamics of floods, which are much more linked to urban planning issues (pumping of water table, absence of sanitation network) than to changes in rainfall.

Thanks to the setting up of a consultation between public, communal, scientific and associative actors, the pumping of the water table could be resumed.

Through numerous participatory workshops, the inhabitants were able to understand the challenges of urban planning for the future of their municipality. They formalized their proposals in a «urban plan» and a «priority investment plan».

The project also made it possible to set up a Municipal Urban Planning Office (BMU), the first in Senegal, bringing genuine urban planning skills to the municipality. Until then, the commune of DTK, although populated by more than 150’000 inhabitants, did not have a map. UrbaSEN and the BMU were able to coordinate an extensive field survey, enabling more than 6,000 concessions to be identified and mapped.
This aspect of the urbaDTK_1 project is now managed by the technical cluster « land tenure/use » within urbaSEN.

In 2017, nearly four years after the end of the project, the effects are still clearly visible: the BMU continues to operate and is financed by the City Council. The mapping regularly continues to be updated. The latter is even being formalized through the «land security project». The urban and priority investment plans are used by the State services to invest in the municipality’s infrastructure, in particular for the construction of roads.
The participatory urban plan developed during the project urbaDTK_1 proposes a series of measures to improve the living conditions of the inhabitants of Djiddah Thiaroye Kao (DTK). While some of these measures, because of their magnitude, can only be carried out with state investments, the urbaDTK_2 project aims to be a support component to civil society in the reconstruction of modest and sustainable settlements by the inhabitants themselves.

The objective of the project urbaDTK_2 is to enable the reconstruction of more than 200 houses damaged by the floods, based on the financial capacity of the inhabitants themselves, and thus to strengthen their capacity to take concrete action to improve their living environment. It highlights the need for an enhanced organization of the inhabitants for the reconstruction of their commune.

This project relies in large part on the Senegalese Federation of Inhabitants (FSH), which emerged as part of urbaDTK_1 with the help of urbaSEN. The FSH is a federation of – mainly female – savings groups, structures that are deeply rooted in Senegal. Each group that wishes to join the FSH must set up a «housing fund», resulting from the savings of the members and which allows them to borrow larger sums from a rotating fund managed by urbaSEN.

This methodology, inspired by the Slum Dwellers International network, which supports federations based on the same principle in more than 30 countries, is now operating impressively. More than 200 houses have already been rebuilt, entirely
financed by the inhabitants themselves. The solidarity of the groups ensures the sustainability of the rotating fund, allowing for the continuation of the reconstruction process and its extension to other geographical areas.

The project also aims to strengthen the skills of local craftsmen. According to the motto «Rebuilding is good. Rebuilding well is even better!», the urbaSEN construction team has put in place measures to improve the quality of the work on reconstruction projects.

One of these measures is to carry out monthly workshops on good practices in construction. The objective is twofold: to reinforce the skills of craftsmen mandated by the beneficiaries of the urbaDTC_2 program while sensitizing the FSH construction delegates to the field of construction.

These exchange workshops complete the setting up of a new brick factory designed to produce better quality concrete bricks than those currently used on the suburban sites.

Overall, this series of measures aims to strengthen the sustainability, in the constructive sense of the term, of reconstruction projects in the informal settlements of the outskirts of Dakar. This “constructive sustainability” is indeed an essential prerequisite for the socio-economic sustainability of the urbaDTC_2 program.
URBADTK_3 - CONSOLIDATION OF THE RECONSTRUCTION PROCESS

| GOALS | Fund and consolidate the process of rebuilding housing for 400 to 600 families in the precarious neighborhoods of Senegal’s cities. |
| START DATE | 2018 |
| END DATE | 2020 |
| FUNDERS | FGC, Fedevaco, Fondation Abbé-Pierre, Altadis |
| PARTNERS | FDH, SDI et urbaMonde |
| INTERVENTION ZONE | Department of Pikine |
| KEY ACTIVITIES | • Financing reconstruction: testing the sustainability of the FSH revolving fund  
• Develop the organization of the FSH: consolidate the structures of the FSH (groups and the office) and expand its scope of action  
• Develop local construction: facilitate technical assistance to local residents and artisans  
• Represent the inhabitants: develop the control of geographic, economic and social information to make it a relevant mobilization and negotiation tool |

UrbaDTK_3 is a continuation of Phases 1 and 2 of the program. The third phase aims to strengthen and sustain the social, financial and technological innovations experienced and implemented since 2010 in the suburbs of Dakar and to contribute to the change of scale. The challenge is to move from an innovative pilot experience to a strong citizen organization, based on sustainable and proven strategies and mechanisms, able to carry out its activities by and for itself.

AXIS 1 - TO PERPETUATE THE ROTATIONAL BACKGROUND INTENDED FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND CONSOLIDATE THE OPERATION OF THE FSH

Phase 3 aims to sustain the revolving fund for reconstruction on a national scale in order to allow new families (between 400 and 600) to rebuild their homes sustainably. The improvement of the financial and administrative management of the revolving fund as well as the strengthening of the role of the beneficiaries as project owner, are therefore at the heart of the process of rebuilding phase 3. Awareness and training workshops to savings and repayment of loans will be organized. On the other hand, the exchange workshops involving neighborhood craftsmen and beneficiaries, set up in phase 2 of the program, will be continued and deepened. Through these workshops the credit committees will be consolidated and the groups of inhabitants will assert themselves as the project owner.
AXIS 2 - PROMOTING AND FEDERATING

The FSH plans to expand its network and promote its savings and community organization practices in other regions of Senegal. This includes the geographical expansion of its field of action by establishing itself in other communes of the suburbs of Dakar victims of the same urban problems. The FSH also plans to expand in the regions of Louga and Thies. This dynamic of territorial extension, already underway in phase 2, will strengthen citizen mobilization for the sustainable reconstruction of housing.

AXIS 3 - CAPITALIZING AND SHARING

Thirdly, the control of geographical and socio-economic information, as well as the capitalization and documentation of the tools and methods developed by the FSH and by urbaSEN, will constitute the third axis of phase 3. In the long term, the objective is to create an effective citizen tool to support urban policies in the formulation of their response and the conduct of their actions on the ground to improve the living environment of disadvantaged inhabitants.
TOWARDS A CITIZEN’S MOVEMENT IN PRECARIOUS NEIGHBORHOODS OF THE SUBURBS OF DAKAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOALS</th>
<th>Support the initiatives of the inhabitants of the suburbs of Dakar.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>START DATE</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>END DATE</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUNDERS</td>
<td>European Union and Civil Society In Development CISU DANIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARTNERS</td>
<td>PLAN International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERVENTION ZONE</td>
<td>Neighborhoods Djiddah Thiaroye Kao, Medina Gounass and Wakhinane Nimzatt, departments of Pikine and Guédiawaye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEY FIGUERS WAITING</td>
<td>Autonomization of 4 to 8 OCB networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Realization of 40 to 80 microprojects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The project «Towards a citizen’s movement in precarious neighborhoods of the suburbs of Dakar» is co-financed by the European Union (80%) and CISU DANIDA (20%).

The objective of the project is to strengthen the capacity of Community-based Organizations (CBOs) of Dakar suburbs to improve the urban environment. It covers three target communes: Djiddah Thiaroye Kao (DTK) in the department of Pikine as well as Wakhinane Nimzatt and Medina Gounass in the department of Guédiawaye.

The project began on December 1, 2017 for a period of 24 months and has set itself the objective of financing micro-projects in the following five priority areas:

- Liquid sanitation
- Waste management
- Surface waters regulation
- Reduction of coastal erosion
- Urban development

The project responds to a lack of structuring, training, management and communication in these areas by building on existing CBOs, young people, women or other actors working to improve neighborhoods. This citizen’s movement aims to federate a large number of people who can mobilize their own resources. This project therefore focuses on strengthening the collective action capacity of these groups through targeted thematic training and their structuring in networks at the local, communal and intermunicipal levels in view of fostering the exchange of peer experiences and to ensure effective coordination of their actions.
Throughout the suburbs, the project aims to bring these CBO networks together in a framework of concerted action, which is essential for a common advocacy of the inhabitants of precarious neighborhoods.

Together, these CBOs will be able to take part in the negotiations with local authorities and position themselves as essential partners in the planning decisions of their municipalities. The CBOs are indeed a full player in the development of the city.

At the technical level, the action aims at strengthening the autonomy of suburban CBOs (4 to 8 CBO networks) in order to implement micro-projects (40 to 80) relevant to the improvement of their urban environment. At the economic level, action focuses on strengthening collective action capacity and aims to support CBOs in the management of funds and mobilization of local resources.
In informal settlements of the suburbs of Dakar, information is scarce. The maps show nothing, or very little.

In partnership with the Senegalese Federation of Inhabitants (FSH) and Slum Dwellers International (SDI), urbaSEN conducts a «Know Your City» campaign to mobilize women’s groups to map their neighborhoods.

The aim is to create profiles of the different informal settlements of Senegal, not only to highlight the problems that the inhabitants face, but also to enable them to give geographical coherence to their actions and to provide them with a leverage of negotiation with authorities.

A «Know Your City» pilot campaign is currently underway in the Medina Gounass commune in Guédiawaye (suburb of Dakar).

A delegation from SDI, which has already mapped more than 7,700 neighborhoods in more than 220 cities around the world, will accompany the process.
ACTION RESEARCH

In parallel with its technical support and advisory activities to the FSH, urbaSEN is developing new technical tools and explores new avenues for projects aimed at improving the living conditions of vulnerable populations.

SENEGAL FLYING LAB

In partnership with WeRobotics and the Directorate of Flood Areas Management (Direction de l’Aménagement des Zones d’Inondation) based within the Ministry of Urban Renewal, Housing and Living Environment of Senegal, urbaSEN is in the process of setting up the first competence center of the subregion in areal mapping by light drone.

Drone technology is a key tool for carrying out detailed surveys of the territory. The availability of accurate and up-to-date basic mapping (territorial/geographic) data is essential for any process related to land-use and town planning. Until now, the technical solutions (aircraft overflight, acquisition of satellite data) were only accessible to actors with considerable financial means, while others had no choice but to rely.

The cartographic data obtained by drones are of high quality and contribute to the process of securing land, an essential step in the regularization of the informal neighborhoods of the suburbs of Dakar. Securing land tenure is an essential step towards improving the socio-economic situation and the living conditions of the inhabitants.

After a first test flight in April 2017, urbaSEN acquired the necessary skills, equipment and legal authorizations to carry out the area mapping autonomously. Today, a surface of up to 100 hectares can be mapped in one day at a very low cost and with a centimeter level accuracy (3 cm / pixel).
THE CHILD, THE CITY AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

As a continuation of the urbaDTK_2 program and the actions of urbaSEN in the field of urban planning, questions related to the development of public spaces appear essential. The city is a whole, composed of buildings and open spaces.

Our involvement in urban development naturally fits in with our commitment on the ground in favor of the precarious urban populations and children in particular. Indeed, population growth and the rate of urbanization on the African continent have reached unprecedented values. The suburbs of Dakar do not escape these global trends. This observation leads us to pay even greater attention to the cohabitation between the different generations in urban areas and the taking into account of the needs and expectations of children.

How can the free spaces of informal settlements be made more welcoming, especially for younger generations who represent the majority of their users? We start from the premise that all the children of the world like to play. Even so, should play areas be set up for them?

The exploratory urban study that we are about to finalize will provide answers to these questions and will open perspectives on the design and realization of future projects.
urbaMonde

*urbaMonde* is a Swiss association committed to helping vulnerable populations in the cities of the South in the field of spatial planning. It is working closely with urbaSEN since the urbaDTK_1 project, which started in 2009. This association based in Switzerland pursues the following objectives:

- Strengthening the capacity of local actors for the management and development of their territory
- Promoting the consideration of urban and regional issues in development aid policies
- Supporting balanced, sustainable and inclusive territorial development

Slum Dwellers International (SDI)

*SDI* is an international network of federations of women’s savings groups working for housing, urban development and improving the conditions of women in general. (The network, which emerged in India and South Africa, proposes a methodology of community organization, by and for people living in poor neighborhoods.

Since April 2015, the FSH is a member of this network active in more than 30 countries. It is in collaboration with SDI that the «solidarity financing» component of the project urbaDTK and the strengthening of the target groups will be developed.

Other partners

- Commune of Djiddah Thiaroye Kao, Dakar, Senegal
- Commune of Médina Gounass, Dakar, Senegal
- Commune of Wakhinane Nimzatt, Dakar, Senegal
- Commune of Tomboronkoto, Dakar, Senegal
- Directorate of Flood Areas Management (*Direction de l’Aménagement des Zones d’Inondation*) based within the Ministry of Urban Renewal, Housing and Living Environment of Senegal
- Engineers of the World, Lausanne, Switzerland
- Plan International
- Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Lausanne, Switzerland
- urbaMonde France
- WeRobotics, Genève, Suisse
- urbaplan, planning office, Lausanne, Switzerland
- Transitec, mobility design office, Lausanne, Switzerland
- Geneva Industrial Services
- Fondation Abbé-Pierre
- Fondation Altadis
- Association Brothers of Men
Main funders

- Fédération genevoise de cooperation (Geneva Federation of Cooperation, FGC), Switzerland
- Fédération vaudoise de coopération (FEDVACO), Switzerland
- International Solidarity Service of the Canton of Geneva, Switzerland
- City of Geneva, Switzerland
- Commune of Meyrin, Geneva, Switzerland
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THANKS

DEAR PARTNERS, DEAR COLLEAGUES, DEAR FRIENDS,

Mboolo Moy Doolé. Unity is strength, and by joining forces, anything is possible.

Thanks to your financial and technical support, valuable advice and continued enthusiasm, but also thanks to your longstanding commitment, today, a city - by and for its inhabitants - is under construction.

Years of effort and determination, sometimes raising doubts and challenging questions, have led to impressive and encouraging results. They are, without a doubt, perfectible, but very much tangible. Without you, this would have been possible.

In addition to your commitment, it took us time and patience. We do not build houses but communities, and we engage in a continued process that pursues long-term and lasting goals. Let’s keep up the good work, let’s continue to collaborate!

Thanks! Djerdedjef!
