



AMANI FESTIVAL

Evaluation of 2016 / Perspectives of 2017



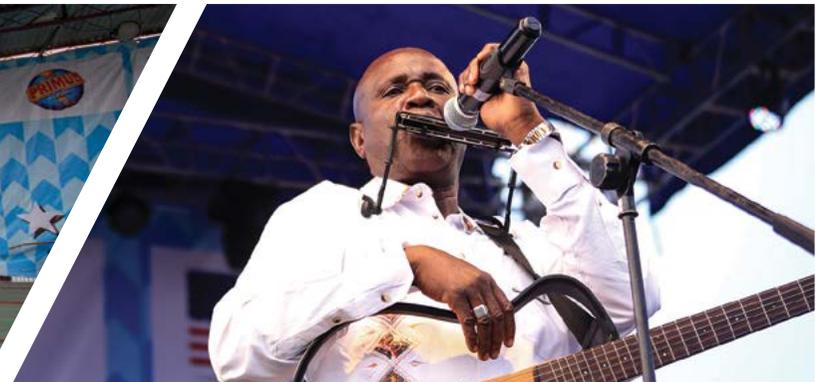
PLAYING FOR CHANGE, SINGING FOR PEACE



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*A music and dance Festival
that aims at bringing together
all the people
of the African Great Lakes region
for peace and reconciliation*

“





> FOREWORD

In Swahili, *amani* means peace. The Amani Festival is one of the major cultural events in the Great Lakes region where it aims to promote peace, reconciliation and socio-economic development.

During its 3rd edition in February 2016, it attracted 33,000 festival-goers who came to see 33 groups of musicians and performers from 11 different countries and 83 stands set up by young entrepreneurs, NGOs and local organizations.

The objective of these three days of music, dance and celebration in Goma in the Democratic Republic of Congo is to bring people together, local inhabitants and performers of the region to “play for change” and “sing for peace”. **Mission accomplished!**

Amongst the singers were **Nneka** from Nigeria, **Werrason** from DRC, **Ismaël Lô** from Senegal, **Zao** from Congo Brazzaville, **Kode** from Rwanda, **Innoss'B** from Goma... Thanks to them and all the other singers, musicians and dancers from the region and elsewhere, Goma was the host of three very special days of celebration and dance. In this benevolent atmosphere, people from different horizons sang and danced together to organizations quality music.

Another success of this third edition was the way thousands of festival-goers showed active involvement in the festival's core beliefs, i.e.

Peaceful Coexistence - Entrepreneurship - Environmental Protection - Dedication to Others.

A big thanks to the 670 volunteers, musicians, performers, sponsors and partners who made this event possible

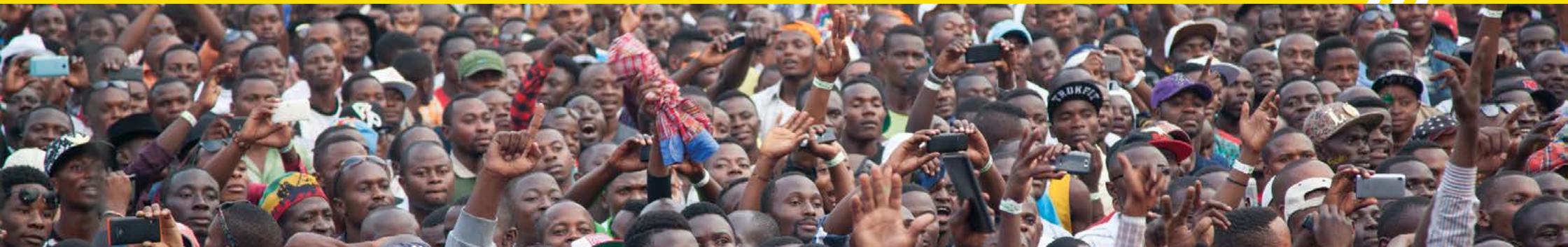
Eric de Lamotte, Promoter of the Amani Festival

Guillaume Bisimwa, Director of the Amani Festival

> CONTEXT

Since the events that took place in 1994, Eastern Congo has been and still is at the heart of many humanitarian catastrophes: displaced populations on a large scale, attacks, rape, war, pillaging, ethnic conflicts, ... the situation has been worsened by national and international players purely interested in the control of resources in this very rich region. Thankfully, the situation is getting gradually better. Located on the border with Rwanda, Goma is the capital of the North Kivu province and has a population of more than 1 million people. It is in this town, marked by conflict, that the Amani Festival takes place.





> OBJECTIVES

The Amani Festival aims to:

- Bring people together around music and art to build peaceful relationships between different groups and encourage the reconstruction of a society where people can live together in harmony.
- Reinforce the link that unites the people of the region around one event, that has now become a symbol of celebration and hope.
- Spread a different image of Goma and Eastern DRC, not that of a region characterized by war, rape and pillage.

The region is brimming with talent and young people committed and able to change the reality in which they were born.

- Promote entrepreneurship amongst young people. The festival aims at encouraging and recognising entrepreneurship amongst the younger generation and demystifying the whole process of starting a business. Amongst other things, it puts these young people in contact with the state services in charge of this process.

By promoting entrepreneurship, the festival wants to boost the socio-economic situation, a key element of building sustainable peace. The festival is organised by a dedicated team with the vital help of the *Foyer Culturel* in Goma. It is entirely non-profit and aims to be accessible to the whole population; it costs \$1 a day per person to enter the festival. Hundreds of young people volunteer and the majority of musicians and dancers perform on a voluntary basis. We are very grateful to all of them!

Any profits that might be generated from the event go towards the *Foyer Culturel* in Goma to improve their facilities and the organisation of the next edition. In 2015, \$10,000 were raised to buy new musical facilities for the *Foyer*.

In 2016, 10 young entrepreneurs received a grant of \$1,000 each to help them launch their business or musical project (see below).





> ORGANISATION

A small team of permanent employees and volunteers are responsible for the organisation of the Amani Festival. They prepare the event throughout the year and train themselves, by studying other festivals, amongst other things. They were able to go backstage at the Esperanzah festival in Belgium. Three months before the event, a dozen of volunteer team leaders join the group to organise all the practical details of the festival. 600 volunteers then come on board to insure the successful rolling-out of the three days that everyone has been looking forward to. A great big thanks to all of them!

To ensure the local population is fully aware of the festival and to encourage local performers, many activities are organised during the months leading up to the event.

- More than 20 “Sanaa Weekends” are organised at the *Foyer Culturel*; singers, dancers, musicians, acrobats and other talents come to perform every Saturday on a stage in front of approximately 3,000 to 5,000 people. More than 250 musicians, singers, traditional and modern dancers sign up to take part in these shows so that they might be selected to perform at the Amani Festival.
- 10 “Caravans” (mobile concerts on the open festival lorry) are organised by the selected dancers and musicians. They go to the different areas of the town to raise awareness of the festival’s peace-building objective and the event itself amongst all the inhabitants of Goma. These fun moments are shared between the musicians, dancers and the local population, united around common values.





> THE AMANI FESTIVAL IN 2016

On the 12th, 13th and 14th February 2016, 33,000 festival-goers came to the Collège Mwanga in Goma, DRC. During these three days, 33 musicians, groups of traditional and modern dancers and acrobats from 11 different countries including Senegal, Rwanda, Burundi, Congo-Brazzaville, Uganda, Germany and the Democratic Republic of Congo sang and danced together!

View the programme [here](#)

> Musicians

Artists from around the world were on stage!

Nneka, the hip-hop, reggae and soul singer spread a message of peace, harmony and protecting women's rights to the audience there. She also sang of the sadness she felt at seeing the suffering of the people in the region and her desire to see them come together.

Ismaël Lô, the pan-africanist singer from Senegal had the whole audience singing along to his songs "Africa", "Tajabone" and "Dibi Dibi Rek" as he played his harmonica and guitar.

Zao, the singer from Congo-Brazzaville sang the song everyone was waiting for, "Ancien combattant"; the audience was thrilled! He addressed the controversial issues of

everyday life in Africa (war, AIDS, malaria,...) in his comical dancing style; the festivalgoers identified with this tone instantly.

Werrason, a major star in the DRC, had the whole audience moving to the great Congolese dances. Ambassador of peace, he also raised awareness amongst the younger generation around the importance of non-violence.

The Yvonne Mwale - Ali Keita - Joël Sebungu Trio (from Zambia – Mali – Uganda) highlighted the beautiful sounds of traditional African instruments in a truly thrilling atmosphere.

Around them, many Congolese, Rwandan and Burundian musicians and dancers set the tone during these three days of celebration!

Amongst the singers, there was also **Inness'B**, the new rising star in DRC. His most recent soul, pop and RNB hits had the crowds jumping up and down; **Kode** from Rwanda, seduced the crowd with his love songs; **JC Kibombo** got the audience dancing to Congolese rumba; **Mista Poa**, from Congo, sang in his reggae style, the suffering of the people in Beni in North Kivu, victims of massacres for over a year; **Angel Mutoni**, a young Rwandan surprised the crowds with her incredible hip-hop skills; members of the audience cheered in support when she spoke of the importance of self-esteem; **Black Man Bausi**, a rapper from Goma, was strongly backed by everyone when he sang about the central role women play in Congolese society and culture; the two young girls from Goma



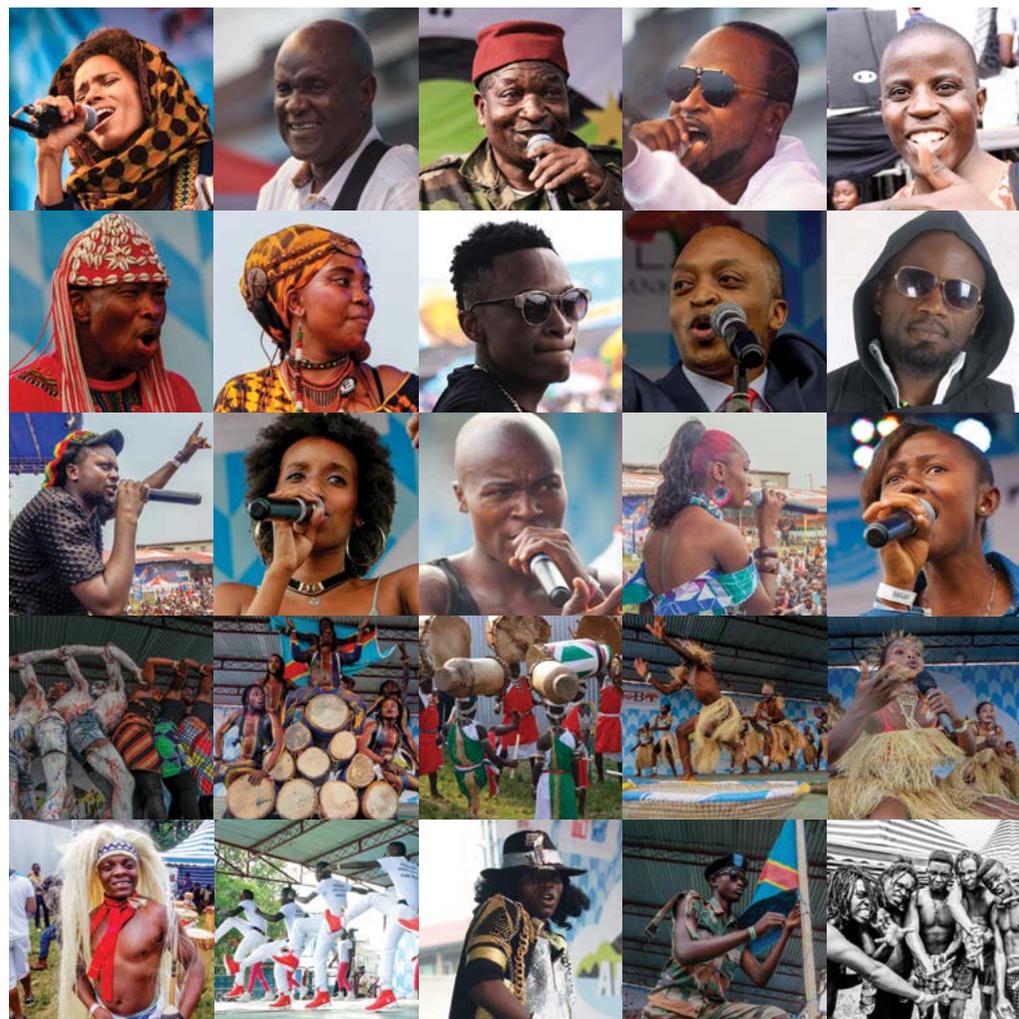
who form the **KeyVoices** duo impressed the audience with their voices, highlighting the talent of Congolese women. Finally, **Keren**, the youngest singer of all, gave a wonderful interpretation of Céline Dion's songs to the delight of all those watching, no matter what generation.

These singers were accompanied by the sounds of drums! The **Sango'a** group from Goma and the **Nsango Mbonda** group from Kinshasa showcased the traditional local drums, whilst the **Ndangakaranga** group brought the beauty and harmony of the Burundi drums back to life.

The traditional musicians and groups **Matakiyo**, **Tuhimbe**, **Malonga**, **Marcellin Shekibuti**, **Yira Mirembe**, **Intachogora**, **Impeta yumucho** and **Bhavu** gave a beautiful performance of traditional dances and songs from the North Kivu region and Rwanda. Indeed, these groups came from Goma, Matanda, Lulingu, Walikale, Lubero, Rutshuru in North Kivu and Musanze in Rwanda.

Alongside the traditional dance performances, the festival welcomed modern dance groups such as **Jazz Music**, **Michael In Live**, **New Young** and **Street Dance**, all from Goma. These performances were examples of originality, creativity and talent.

More information about these performers [here](#)





> Musical master classes

Alongside this three-day event, Amani Festival organized workshops and master classes between the international singers who had come to perform for the festival and the local performers from Goma. The following master classes took place:

- A singing master class with **Yvonne Mwale**
- Several master classes focusing on the music business and talent management with Sonia, Kode's manager and member of the **Afro Urban Movement**.
- A guitar master class with guitar player **Tangy Delooz**, a member of Kode's group.
- A song writing master class with **Nneka**.

> Musical projects

With the aim of encouraging and promoting the musicians of Goma, 6 musical projects received a grant of \$1,000. These musicians from Goma, selected by the population and a jury from the *Foyer Culturel* to take part in the third edition of the festival each presented a musical project and are now coached and financed by the festival to carry it through.

> The *Kwa Kesho Bora* Village (“for a better future” in Swahili)

Organised within the Festival walls, this area is for NGOs, local organisations and entrepreneurs so that they can exchange with the festivalgoers and promote their causes and activities.



Humanitarian area

68 local and international organisations were present and exchanged with the festivalgoers. Certain activities were particularly popular such as the red hand painting stall, the petition board against child soldiers organised by UNICEF or the dance classes given to festival-goers by Rina Crew's dance group from Goma ([here](#)).

This area is open to any NGO or organisation that contributes to peace building in the region and wants a space to raise awareness amongst the population about their cause. These organisations planned different activities to engage with festivalgoers and talk with them about the key issues, i.e reconciliation, peaceful coexistence and peace.



Entrepreneurship area

65 young entrepreneurs took part in a business plan competition that took place just before the festival. Its aim is to promote entrepreneurship amongst young people and encourage young entrepreneurs to persevere in launching their business. The four best projects were selected by a jury that included the *Fédération des Entreprises du Congo*, the *Ministère Provincial des Mines* and managing members of the Amani Festival. The winners received a grant of \$1,000 each to help them launch or develop their project.

These 4 entrepreneurship projects are:

- manufacturing of chalk sticks in Goma
- home building
- plastic and organic waste recycling and reuse
- speedy mail and small parcel delivery between the towns of Goma and Bukavu

15 entrepreneurs, the *Fond de Promotion de l'Industrie*, the US Embassy, TMB Bank, the Goma Entrepreneurship Academy (GVB), the Fonds Ngangi, ... promoted their different activities or entrepreneurship facilitation services in this area. Conferences about entrepreneurship for young people were also organised in the assembly hall of the Mwanga College.

Entrepreneurship must also be encouraged amongst the musicians and dancers. As mentioned above, (see musical projects), 6 grants of \$1,000 were attributed to the 6 groups selected during the Sanaa week-ends to help them promote their music.





> The Amani Ekiden race

510 athletes (85 NGOs, companies and teams of young people) took part in the first edition of the Amani Ekiden race. They were cheered on by the many local inhabitants of Goma who came out to support the runners.

It was the first time this marathon in teams of 6 was organised. Its aim is to stimulate team spirit within companies and organisations through sport.

The Ekiden is a relay race during which each runner, who is part of a team of 6, runs a specific distance and then passes on a scarf to the next relay runner.

It was a great success and will be repeated during the 4th edition of the festival.

> Media

One of the festival's objectives is to show the world another side of Goma and Eastern DRC, different from what is portrayed in the media and call upon national and international decision-makers to take action so that sustainable peace can be achieved in the region. Without peace, there will be no socio-economic development and subsequent improvement in the living standards of the millions who live in this region with so many natural resources!

The 2016 edition was a great success in terms of media coverage: 20 international and 30 local and national media covered the event!

The main media present were **RFI, RTNC, BBC, Digital Congo, CCTV, African, Africa News, Jeune Afrique, RTG@, Okapi, Le Soir, la Libre Belgique, ... representatives of the Rwandan, Burundi and Belgian press and all the main Congolese media.**

Several videos of the event were broadcasted and received a great success online with thousands of views. The links suggested by Google in the weeks following the festival show another side of Goma that it is not usually emphasized: 3 days of peaceful celebration!

Follow on **Amani Live 2016** with the press review.





> Partners

A festival that costs \$1 to get in would be impossible without the help of **partners and sponsors**.

Here you will see all those who supported us in 2016. We are extremely grateful to them. The first of them are TMB Bank, Pepele Mobile, Bralima and the US Embassy, without whose financial support the festival would simply not exist. We were also able to count on the CAA, the Tourism Ministry, the Monusco, RFI/FR24, the European Union and many others.

The organisation of the festival does everything it can to ensure these sponsors get maximum visibility and this was achieved as we worked with them, building on their feedback.

We would also like to thank those who have given their own time, motivation and skills towards making sure the festival is a great success. A special thanks to the **Foyer Culturel de Goma** for the local organisation, **ICE** for the communication and sponsorship contacts in Kinshasa, **Promo Jeunes Basket** and the **National Congolese Police** who ensured the whole event took place safely, **Kivu Youth** for the photos and videos, the **Goma Youth Centre**, the **Mwanga College** and the **Goma diocese** for enabling us to organise the event in such ideal settings.

Without doubt, the success of the festival would not be possible without all these people and organisations!

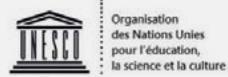
A big thanks to all of them. We're counting on them all for the next edition!



PARTNERS



Des chaînes du groupe France Médias Monde





> THE AMANI FESTIVAL IN 2017

With such a success, the Amani Festival is already preparing for the fourth edition in February 2017; the exact date is not yet decided but the school holidays will of course be taken into account.

Contacts with world-renowned musicians are already well advanced. We should soon be getting confirmations from the following, non-exhaustive, list of artists: the pan-africanist and musician **Yousou N'Dour**, the **Stromae** phenomenon, the renowned **Indila**, the RnB singer **Zaho**, the Gospel singer **Faada Freddy**, the multicultural group **Manu Chao**, the outstanding **Ayo**, **Angélique Kidjo**, **Keny Arkana**, **Rokia Traoré**, **Corneille**, **Ferra Gola**, **Felix Wazekwa**, **Jean Goubald**,... but also most certainly the great Congolese star **Fally**!

The confirmation of these musicians will depend on their availability and the conditions under which they accept to come, considering the fact that the event is non-profit.

Of course, local and regional performers will be present and the *Foyer culturel* in Goma will organise competitions to elect the best local artists who will get a chance to perform on the main stage of the Amani Festival and show how rich the local music and dance scene is.



Throughout all aspects of the fourth edition, the 4 core beliefs of the festival will stay at the heart of our concerns and continue to guide the development of different activities.

PeacefulCoexistence-Entrepreneurship-EnvironmentalProtection-DedicationtoOthers

Please feel free to get in contact if you would like to contribute in any way to the success of this event. Its constructive and peace-building approach has made it a key event in Goma and throughout the entire region.

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