



**Mariama
Souley, 25 years**

**Bissaou
Zarma
village
(Banibangou
district)**

"My name is Mariama Souley, I am 25 years old and mother of four children, including a daughter. I live in the village of Bissaou Zarma. Life in this community has been peaceful lately. Nevertheless, before that, we had been victims of several acts of violence in our community. I lost my first husband in an armed attack, which destroyed me. The violence has had many repercussions in our lives by creating a trauma that haunts us day and night. »

Mariama is the president of a *fada* (informal association) called "Salma Harey" which means enjoyment. The girls in her village thought it would be useful to create this group to exchange and learn from each other. The members of her group believe that each has specific knowledge that could be shared among women in order to better support each other in their everyday life. "In my village, young people are listened to a lot, because we are convinced that ideas can come from all generations. There were several situations in which the young people were able to assert themselves and give their opinions to the older ones." Despite the bad memories that torment her, according to Mariama, thanks to her faith and endurance, she is now trying to recover from the death of her first husband who was shot and burned before her eyes. "I hope for a bright future and full of opportunities for my husband so that we can live a peaceful family life."



Living in the village of Kabafo Inékan, Souleymane Zakou, is 26 years old and father of a boy. He spends his days in the fields cultivating the land. In his feedback about the Youth ACT program, Souleymane mentions all the attention paid to young people in terms of decision-making and information in their village. He dreams of a future in which all the suffering in the past will end. Through the intervention of several social cohesion activities, he hopes that peace will continue to reign in his village forever. "I am a member of a youth organization. Let's promote cohesion between us to support each other. We hope Youth ACT will do a lot for us in terms of governance and capacity building so that we can ban banditry and apply this advice to our *fada*. "



"My name is Abdou Boubacar, I'm 20 years old." Like many young people in his village during the rainy season, Abdou devotes himself to farming to help support his family. Back from the field, Abdou also takes care of the animals of his family. It has been six years since Abdou left his uncle's home in Deykougou to rejoin his family. He lives a relatively peaceful life in this village. According to him, the use of violence comes from a lack of education. "We must inculcate exemplary behavior in young people from an early age, because a child without follow-up often develops inappropriate behavior." Abdou emphasizes that children need coaching because when they are left to their own devices, they are able to indulge in any kind of banditry. "In our village senior citizens are quite attentive to the concerns of young people when they seem relevant". Abdou is a member of a *fada* called "Young Smart". This *fada* is a youth savings initiative in his village. "Every week we contribute 100 CFA francs which helps us to cover the specific events of the members of our *fada*, that is to say in case of marriage, illness, etc." An amount of 5000 FCFA is allocated to the person in charge of the event when it comes to disbursement. Abdou hopes that the Youth ACT program teaches them about governance so they can better lead their *fada* in a spirit of social cohesion.



**Mariama
Issoufou, 17
years**

**Kabafo Inékan
village
(Banibangou
district)**

Mariama Issoufou is a young resident of Kabafo Inékan village. Mariama is 17 years old and has been married for a few months. She spends her days doing domestic chores. Mariama says life in her village is quiet right now. According to her, the violence happens as a result of juvenile delinquency, which is on the rise in village. "In my village, young people are listened to, because even when we defend a cause that is not part of the standard of living, adults guide us towards better reasoning."



"Nafissa Alhousseini, 20 years old, is a native of the village of Moudouk. She is a student in third grade at the health center of Banibangou. She would like to become a doctor at the end of her training. According to Nafissa, the prevalence of violence is explained by delinquency and idleness. Many young people feel socially and economically excluded because they are left to their own devices. To cope with the situation, young people must be educated so that they acquire good notions and values that will accompany them forever.

Outside her classes, the school girl is a member of a *fada* called Alsilam, which means Muslim women and in which the girls of her village gather around several themes in order to better educate themselves. "We get to know each other better and live together in society".

"The Youth ACT program is a good initiative and we hope it will guide us to develop our future ideas."