Chronicles of a living pact

Dembéni a breath in three waves

Axis 1 – Living with risks

Repair and slow down

Faced with the imbalances caused by runoff, subsidence and rising water levels, the project is implementing an urban planning strategy to repair and adapt areas weakened by drainage, reclaim and and relieve congestion in vulnerable areas, while working with natural elements rather than constraining them. Landscaped swales, agricultural terraces and refuge structures form a dynamic slowing mechanism designed to infiltrate, retain and redirect flows in harmony with living organisms.

Axis 2 – Reconciling the living

Fostering coexistence between environments

The project forges new links between residents and their environment. It is based on symbiosis with living environments, through mangrove renaturation, participatory clean-up actions and educational developments. Driven by a desire for spatial justice, it proposes coordinated rehousing, where each family has access to collective housing and a plot of land for cultivation. A new living economy is thus being built, rooted in terraced agriculture, local species and productive commons based on local knowledge.

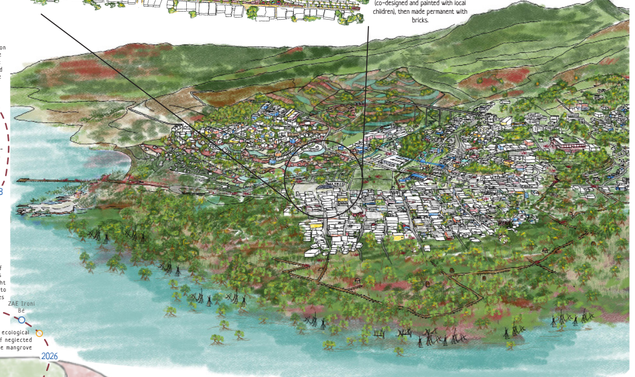
AXIS 3 – Rooting Culture

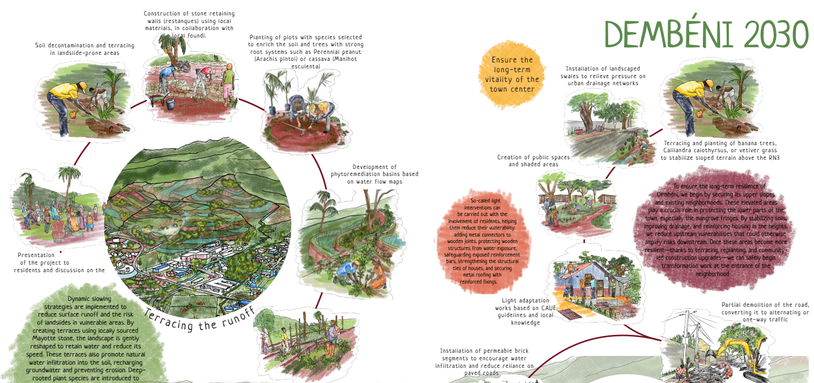
Living differently

The project aims to promote knowledge transfer through the direct involvement of residents in training workshops and local workshops supported by the construction industry college. The anchoring in the materiality of the territory is reflected in the use of bio-based materials adapted to the vagaries of the environment: raw earth, BTC, wood, bamboo, etc. This educational and popular approach mobilizes young people through a territorial civic service and is relayed by the university. The architecture of the link extends this spirit by organising the housing in clusters around shared centres and resilient infrastructure.

The entrance to the neighborhood has been redesigned as a true urban threshold, both functional and symbolic. Connected to the broader territorial framework and highlighting the site's identity, it replaces a road long dominated by cars with an alternating one-way street, punctuated by speed-calming devices – temporary at first (co-designed and painted with local children), then made permanent with bricks.

This transformation goes hand in hand with soil de-sealing, upstream rainwater management, and the return of vegetation. It takes shape as a " living barrier ": an active, inhabitable frontage combining housing, shared uses, and public spaces – encouraging encounters and resilience. Hosting back water upstream from the neighborhood is also a way to reduce its ultimate vulnerability. This gesture lays the foundation for a new local center and initiates an inclusive way of living.





DEMBÉNI 2030

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