

# FIDESCO

CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY



ACTIVITY REPORT

2023







## CONTACT



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Above photo Mission SALVADOR DE BAHIA [Brazil] / Cover photo Mission AVRANKOU [Benin]

Graphic design MayeuleBym.fr

“**T** raining, accompaniment, support: three key words marking 2023. Fidesco has emerged from being directly impacted by the coronavirus crisis, which itself has left long-lasting effects on society as a whole, at the heart of an instable world marked by numerous conflicts.

The context of the outside world drove FIDESCO to **strengthen once again the foundations of its training** through integrating a network of experts. Objective: to enrich and update the subject matter, and enable a better response to the issues of our time. This is illustrated by the newest version of the **Challenges of the Church course**, offered during the commissioning conference. For South-North, the opening of the VSI statute (Volunteers for International Solidarity) concerning the **Reciprocity volunteers** allows us, as of 2023, to send more experienced volunteers and fortify our expertise in this area.

In a similar dynamic, we initiated a thought process to **intensify the accompaniment of returning volunteers**. This is still underway and will reach its conclusion in 2024. Accompanying also means **taking care of our Country Managers**, of which there are fifty. A form of continuous training has been established, a course enabling them to better understand and so better serve volunteers in the field. Included in this are our Retirees volunteers, who sign up using the dedicated form, for 4 years, and whose deployment in the field then follows, with 14 volunteers in 2023.

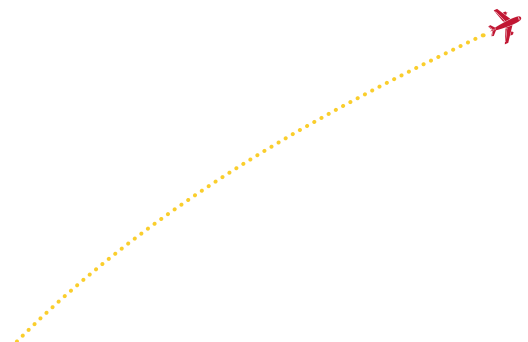
And finally, 2023 was marked by our activity in **projects support**, an additional way in which FIDESCO strives for international development. Financial, structural and fraternal support was offered to new countries (Madagascar, Brazil, Cameroon) and took on a professional identity, supporting some existing and long-lasting structures like the Saint Gabriel dispensary in Guinea Conakry, or focusing on initiating new activities; going there going where others won't others won't. FIDESCO also offers support by being present at the sides of former volunteers in their own mission of witness and to call to mission, in particular through Regional Correspondents in France, and via a presence in different missionary domains.

These evolutions all go down the same path of **being both professional and fraternal**. In this way, we wish to continue responding to calls from our partners, for the good of the poorest, and continue training, sending and accompanying our **253 volunteers at work in 2023, across 27 countries**, including France, in the context of its reciprocal volunteers.

The film A nos enfants, was released in 2023, **carries the voice of the most diminished**, and magnificently illustrates the mission belonging to all FIDESCO volunteers: to be witnesses witnesses and bearers of Christ's love the love of Christ to everyone; to be signs of Hope in a world which is suffering, questioning itself, and looking for, sometimes with much doubt, the light of Hope which is born from the bold gift of self.



**Hubert Laurent**  
Director of Fidesco





“

**M**ission is a life school, a continuous learning process in all areas: learning about my job in a different form, learning to trust God in each day. That goes by learning about relationships with others... And above all, learning about myself. »

**Ombeline**

on mission to AVRANKOU [Benin]







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# FIDESCO CATHOLIC NGO FOR INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

For over 40 years Fidesco has been offering a response to the demands of international solidarity. In all four corners of the world, numerous Church partners have reached out to our NGO to help them strengthen, support and make a success of locally initiated development projects.



## Our mission

As a major actor player in development since 1980, we are deeply committed to our partners in Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe, by sending out volunteers of international solidarity and, more recently, through project support.

**Our activity is based on the preferential option for the poor and guided by the common good.** Respecting the principle of subsidiarity and orientated towards the development of the human person as a whole, we take into account the totality of the human person (material needs, intellectual, cultural, emotional and spiritual growth), investing in the idea of transmission.

## Our vision

**Constructing bridges between populations, going out to meet the other, in all of their differences, creating solid links between people, coming to the aid of the most fragile and diminished: this is our objective.** We aim to respond to the Church's call to go against the current trend and be builders of solidarity, to be servants and brothers and sisters of one another.

Today, we are looking to deepen our missionary presence, broaden our activity in international solidarity to reach other horizons, revolutionize the logic in the domain of development, and reconcile the desire to serve in far away places with the constraints of age or country of origin.

After more than 40 years of mission, we continue to build a fraternal culture through investing in multidirectional missionary action, which can be adapted to each and every situation..

## Our activity

### ■ SENDING VOLUNTEERS

Our partners - dioceses, parishes, congregations, catholic foundations – are in need of skill sets they can't find locally. Fidesco responds to their needs by sending volunteers on long missions (1-3 years) putting their competences in service of other people, and making no distinction between race, culture or religion. **By adopting a listening ear and an attitude of patience, volunteers experience an authentic encounter with another culture.** Working with a spirit of service and self-gift, posing an act of faith, they live their mission as an opportunity to grow, through contact with others, on both a human and spiritual level. They are inhabited by the desire to put others first and believe that in giving we can transform the world.

### ■ PROJECT SUPPORT

Working in favor of international solidarity also means supporting local projects, both financially, structurally, and fraternally. Every year, we are committed to our partners who launch and implement activities and projects in favor of development, but also emergency aid, in service of the poorest of the poor. **In 2023, thirty projects in education, health, society and ecology were supported across all continents.** This project support is a complementary way in which Fidesco responds to the issues of solidarity, through allowing and launching, with a certain audacity, interventions in new areas of suffering.

### ■ ADVOCACY

Firm believers in the role we have to play in making the voice of the most diminished heard, and with more than 40 years of field experience, we also deploy advocacy work to make Fidesco's vision and values heard by influential leaders and networks.



“

**W**ith an open heart and hands ready to serve, the volunteers ardently desire to contribute to the good of the mission. They give hope to those they serve. »

**Sister Piyachat**

head of the centre of *Fountain of Life*  
PATTAYA [Thailand]





## RECOGNITION OF FIDESCO

### At the heart of institutional

**FIDESCO is an NGO recognized as an association under the French law of 1901.** Since its creation in 1980, Fidesco has been recognized by institutional authorities and is a member of several organizations that act in the field of development and international solidarity.

- 1991: FIDESCO gets in France the statute of a **charitable organization**.
- FIDESCO is approved by the French **Ministry of Foreign Affairs to send International Solidarity Volunteers**.
- 2012: The **Fidesco Foundation** was created, under the auspices of the **Caritas France** Foundation. This structure allows the donators, subject to the tax on property, high incomes or fortunes, (IFI) to generously support the work of Fidesco serving the poorest in the world.
- 2013: FIDESCO's German Office gets the **"DZI-Siegel"**: a German certification necessary to obtain public funds.
- 2020: FIDESCO obtained the **"Civic Service approval"** from the **Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sports**.
- FIDESCO is on the **steering committee of France Volontaires** (French Volunteers), contributing in France to the development of various forms of voluntary commitment at an international level.
- FIDESCO is a **member of the Liaison Committee of NGO Volunteers** (CLONG Volunteering). The committee brings together associations that send volunteers on cooperation missions in developing countries. As a place to share experiences and good practices, this group enables a dialogue and consultation with the public authorities.
- FIDESCO is also a **member of Coordination SUD** (National Coordination of French International Solidarity NGOs) Coordination Sud facilitates the professionalization of French NGOs and ensures their advocacy with public and private institutions in France, Europe and worldwide.

### At the heart of the church

- FIDESCO was founded by the **Emmanuel Community**.
- FIDESCO is part of the **National council for solidarity and diaconia**, created in 1989 at the general assembly of the bishops of France. the council coordinates reflection and oversees the work of the main charitable bodies of the church of France.







## SERVING IN THE FIELD

In 2023, a total of 252 volunteers were working in the various mission countries to help the most disadvantaged.

### Volunteer profile



34%  
Families



27%  
Couples



39%  
Singles

53% Women

47% Men

Eldest  
70 years old

Average  
age  
34 years old

Youngest  
20 years old

  
252  
volunteers  
in service in 2023

  
211  
French  
volunteers

  
12 different  
volunteer  
nationalities\*

\* Germany, Belgium, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, USA, France, Netherlands, Philippines, Rwanda, Togo



“If the management of people is a universally delicate subject, it's even more so when there is a whole difference in culture separating us. And so, I had to choose my battles and take time on site to 'win over' the team and especially the site manager, by going twice a day, sometimes even just to say hi or give them some bread.

I took the time, day after day, to explain to one person, then another, the reason for my mission, avoiding technical discussions, to make them understand that I wasn't there to survey their work but to build something with them, uniting our skills, to bring good to the project. After 2 months of site work, I could slowly see some fruit, and the labourers, mostly Muslim, were touched by our decision to go on mission as a family. On my side, I was profoundly touched by the enthusiasm, respect and even the devotion with which they built this place of worship. »

Anne on mission in BAFIA [Cameroon]



“There were numerous times I wanted to accelerate the daily work in order to multiply opportunities, complete chores, but, reminding myself of the specific advice I'd been given, I chose to put on the brakes to avoid getting caught in the temptation to 'do'. As they told us many a time during training, before departure, it's better to have the motto of 'being' with people rather than 'doing' something for them! Because if we were only there to do things, put things into place, realise projects, or

make sure they got done, we could have almost stayed sitting in our office in France. Yet, this is what is perhaps expected of a project manager for an NGO, or someone sponsoring the local missions from the comfort of their own country of origin, but this is not the case for a Fidesco missionary, sent on mission into the heart of a local population, to serve the most diminished. »

Romain on mission in LUBUMBASHI [Democratic Republic of Congo]



Xavier on mission as project manager of a social ecological project in LIMA [Peru]



Louise on mission as a nurse in AVRANKOU [Benin]



Cyprien on mission as coordinator of a residential household for the disabled in TANJOMOHA [Madagascar]

## Mission places

### Africa

54% of volunteers

### Latin America

20% of volunteers

### Asia

13% of volunteers

### Europe

9% of volunteers

### Middle-East

4% of volunteers



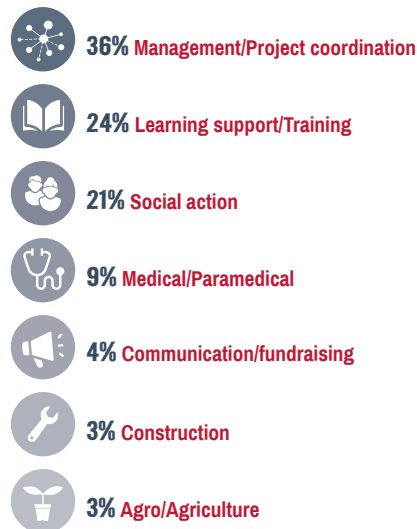
“The plantation itself only makes sense if it serves as a vector for raising awareness. Planted on the mountainside, it’s visible from Manchay. As Pope Francis urges us in his encyclical *Laudato Si*, the heart of this project is helping the local population develop an awareness of the environment in a wider sense. We receive groups, to which we share about the importance of plants, the urgent need for preserving the planet, and we plant trees. In September, for example, we hosted young adults from Lima, who were introduced to working the land, but were also shocked to realise how people around the plantation were living. »

Mayeul and Ségolène

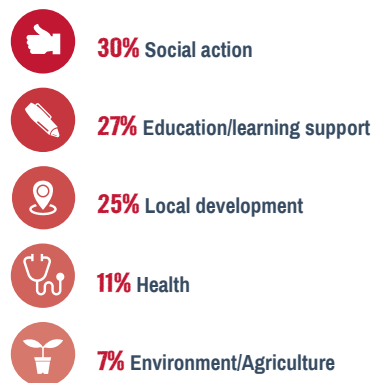
on mission in MANCHAY [Peru]

## Projects and fields of activity

### VOLUNTEERING MISSIONS



### PROJECT AREAS BEING SERVED AND DEVELOPED:







## OUR MISSIONS IN 2023



NEW MISSION 2023

### 📍 L'Arche

Two volunteers involved in the South-North mission joined the L'Arche houses in France. Living with people suffering from mental disability, they participated in house management and animating convivial moments, in a process of mutual aid.

#### FRANCE

👉 24 volunteers  
📍 1 new mission

#### TUNISIA

👉 6 volunteers

#### ALGERIA

👉 3 volunteers

#### REPUBLIC OF GUINEA

👉 8 volunteers

#### BENIN

👉 13 volunteers

#### TOGO

👉 2 volunteers

#### CAMEROON

👉 20 volunteers  
📍 1 new mission

#### IVORY COAST

👉 18 volunteers

#### DR CONGO

👉 9 volunteers

#### ANGOLA

👉 3 volunteers

#### CUBA

👉 1 volunteer

#### MEXICO

👉 4 volunteers

#### COLOMBIA

👉 4 volunteers

#### PERU

👉 10 volunteers

#### BRAZIL

👉 12 volunteers  
📍 1 new mission

#### CHILE

👉 12 volunteers

#### ARGENTINA

👉 8 volunteers



NEW MISSION 2023

### 📍 Rio Maria

One hour's drive from the mission at Redençaõ, in Brazil, our volunteers joined four social education projects focussing on accompanying teenagers and young adults at risk in their social situation.



NEW MISSION 2023

### 📍 Ngaoundéré

Supported by the diocese of Ngaoundéré, a growing town in Cameroon, our volunteers offer support in the financial management of the diocese and the education projects it covers.





NEW MISSION 2023

### 📍 Phnom Penh

In the Cambodian capital, the Salesians of Don Bosco have developed a large education structure providing an integral education for their students. Market gardening, poultry and fish farming, and hospitality, are subject areas thought to enrich the education and training offered to students. Our volunteers get invested in the school's education and social animation.

#### THAILAND

👉 12 volunteers

#### CAMBODIA

👉 5 volunteers

📍 2 new missions

#### PHILIPPINES

👉 7 volunteers

#### TIMOR ORIENTAL

👉 9 volunteers



NEW MISSION 2023

### 📍 Sihanoukville

At the heart of the network of training centres run by the Salesians of Don Bosco, is the school at Sihanoukville which offers technical training (electrician, hospitality, car mechanic, secretary...). The boarding school enables students to come from different regions of Cambodia. Our volunteers work in the training support of students in English, which is vital for entering the professional world.



NEW MISSION 2023

### 📍 Fort Dauphin

In the far south of Madagascar, more than a thousand kilometers from the capital, the Congregation of the Mission work for the education of the poorest, and street children. Through managing mission projects, our volunteers work for the future of the children of Fort Dauphin.

#### ROO

nteers

mission

#### RWANDA

👉 2 volunteers

#### BURUNDI

👉 1 volunteer

#### ZAMBIA

👉 11 volunteers

#### LESOTHO

👉 4 volunteers

#### MADAGASCAR

👉 34 volunteers

📍 1 new mission

#### SOUTH AFRICA

👉 10 volunteers





## A DYNAMIC SERVICE TEAM

Permanent and volunteering team members are working together at the service of the mission and collaborate with professional experts.



Hubert LAURENT  
Director



Père Benoît ROZE  
Chaplain

### RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING



Tasnim BOUCAUD  
Director



Marie LAFITTE  
Training



Bruno CHAMPION  
Recruitment



Eloise MANDELLI  
Network animation

Meeting the candidates and accompanying them through their initial thought process, is the primary mission of the Recruitment and Training team. It then pilots the training of volunteers before, during and after mission, leaning on the wider Fidesco team and external professionals (psychologists, experts in international solidarity, etc.) 16 Regional Correspondents volunteer at their hub to animate the alumni network, give testimonies and raise awareness for volunteering missions.

### COORDINATION OF MISSIONS AND FOLLOW-UPS



Pierre-Yves FRACHON  
Director  
& follow-up for Africa and Asia



Constance GILLIER  
Follow-up for Africa and Asia



Wandrille COSTREL  
Follow-up for Asia, Latin America, and Africa



Eloïse VINCENT  
Follow-up for Asia, Latin America, and South-North

+ CONTINENTAL MANAGERS: Montse HUIX (Latin America) - Pierre-François and Christine GRAFFIN (Africa) - Philippe and Florence de BOISREDON (Asia)

The follow-up coordinators closely accompany volunteers in the field. Side-by-side, Country Managers dedicate themselves to the service of the mission. Thanks to their deep knowledge of the field, they follow jointly the missions on the ground, supporting volunteers and providing the link between local partners. Once a year, they visit the place of mission.

### COMMUNICATION AND FUNDRAISING



Michaëlle FEVRE  
Director



Camille LE CAMPION  
Communication



Ines RENOUL  
Communication



Naditza PAVLOVITCH  
Sponsorship

In charge of spreading the experience, message and values of Fidesco, this team participates in developing the prominence of Fidesco and calling new candidates to mission. It establishes communication adapted to the different parties involved (volunteers in the field, alumni, friends, donors, NGO, etc.). Relying on communication tools, the team also works to find the necessary resources for Fidesco's activity, via sponsorship and other forms of funding.

### ADVOCACY, PROJECTS AND INNOVATION



Francesco MARTIALIS  
Director



Diana HUCHON COLUNGA  
Projects and Advocacy



Florie LAMOINE  
Projects and Advocacy

This team encompasses a triple mission. To develop and accompany new formulas of mission (Mission "Sud-Nord" – "South-North", the programme for Retirees volunteers, Mission Naïm Espérance). Supporting financially, structurally, and fraternally projects of international solidarity and development across the world. Deploying active advocacy in order to make the voice, vision and values of Fidesco heard by leaders and influential networks.

### FIDESCO INTERNATIONAL

At the heart of 6 international offices (Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and United-States), a network of unpaid volunteers, as well as 5 salaried employees, give life to the Fidesco mission, in the areas of communication, fundraising and recruitment of international volunteers. The latter use the same training programme as the French volunteers.



Francesco MARTIALIS  
International Coordinator

UP FOR THE MISSION  
OR FOR SUPPORTING A PROJECT  
OR A VOLUNTEER ? CONTACT US !



contact@fidesco.fr





## A WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR

**Freedom and security** – extract from a speech given by Archbishop David Macaire, metropolitan archbishop of Saint-Pierre and Fort-de-France in Martinique, and our sponsor for 2023, addressing volunteers during their commissioning.

“In today’s society, they want us to **choose between security and freedom**. We can see it on the internet, we’re ready to let our phones be spied on because we think, ‘*If we can’t spy on dangerous terrorists etc.*’ And this goes for many areas, even when it comes to love: we prefer security to freedom. That’s why some people prefer staying single to using their freedom to make a choice, which is a mature freedom, the freedom of an adult, the freedom that has chosen, for their life, an indissoluble love, despite all its difficulties.

In short, this opposition between security and freedom plays out in very concrete ways at each moment of our life. We are in a society which prefers security because it is marketable, it can be bought, whereas freedom is dangerous, we’re afraid of it. **And yet, the Church is always on the side of freedom because she is on the side of Christ.** Christ is also known as the Liberator, him who makes us take a risk. **And faith, is to take a risk.** Faith is to take the risk of believing the words of a witness.

To give an example, I would say that when you overtake a car or lorry on a mountain road, you have two choices. Either, you stay behind the lorry for the whole journey, and that will take hours. Either, at an opportune moment, the lorry driver gives you a sign and you overtake him. So, you risk your life on the word of a witness. Security, is to stay behind the lorry your whole life. **Freedom is the opportune moment to risk your life on the word of someone who can see and who gives you a sign**, but at the same time, I’m not sure I should risk my life. And faith will always be on the side of freedom. And so, we go from having the feeling of security on a human level to acts of freedom on a supernatural level. »



**Archbishop David Macaire** ◊ Metropolitan Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Fort-de-France–Saint-Pierre, and patron of the promotion 2023



At the conference with Mgr Macaire during the commissioning event for sending out volunteers in July 2023





# STRENGTHENING THE BASIS







## ENRICHENING THE TRAINING WE OFFER

Always trying to offer training that's rich and useful for volunteer fieldwork, we undertook an enriching of the training programme. To do this, we sought help from a network of experts coming from different domains; charity sector, academia, international solidarity. Each bring the fruit of their experience and work on a subject in particular. This crossover in perspectives enables us to **dig deeper and finetune the training given to volunteers during their preparation for mission, both in the field but also upon return.** Numerous subjects are addressed during training. Communication technologies and achieving a balanced use of them, for example, gives a mission a particular dimension, and is the object of a certain part of the training, thus giving volunteers all the keys they need to carry out their mission in depth.

**This year, we brought out a new version of the programme "Challenges of the Church"** for the commissioning conference in July 2023. Addressing volunteers who are about to take off for mission, its objective is to enable them to take into account the weight of the challenges faced by the Church, notably anthropologic. It engages in subjects like ecology and globalisation, seen in the light of Church teaching.



## BETTER ACCOMPANYING THE RETURN OF VOLUNTEERS

Back from mission, volunteers go through various stages, experienced with higher or lesser degrees of intensity, depending their differences in character. Leaving the field, a life axed towards serving the poorest, and the given simplicity of daily life, to find oneself back in western culture, with all of its tensions and excesses, is not always easy. **To enable their mission to be the professional and personal springboard it deserves to be, we initiated a discussion around intensifying how we accompany the return of missionaries.** The return is prepared even before the end of the mission, in anticipating the material conditions of arriving back in your country of origin. During a weekend specially dedicated to the subject of returning, which is held every year in autumn, volunteers who have returned from mission during the year, are also offered professional support. Coaches, psychologists, and marriage therapists are available to help them reflect on and see the value on their mission.

A revision project for the return programme was initiated in 2023, to better satisfy the needs of the volunteers returning from far away missions (lasting one or two years). The objective is to obtain a renewed and enriched programme for the volunteers returning from mission in 2025.







## TRAINING FOR THE COUNTRY MANAGERS

At the heart of the team, and more particularly, the pole for mission, accompaniment and coordination, fifty Country Managers (RP in French for Représentant Pays) work in supporting volunteers in the field. Facing demands of their mission, they manifested the desire to be more closely accompanied, using a form of continuous training. A complete training course was set up in order to help them better understand the volunteers they are following, which facilitated exchanges and gave them an effective support in the field.

The objective is to allow them to **respond to different evolutions during the projected mission arc** (from the initial enthusiasm to the difficulties of being far away or acclimatising to a different culture) and give them keys to better decrypting what is at play in the relationships involved in a mission. This year, for example, Florence Goujon, a psychologist who was also invested in the volunteer training, ran a course on resolving a conflict cycle.

### What is a conflict cycle?

“ Conflict cycles are when there is a disagreement and every time the people involved try to make it better, they can't stop feeding it and reinforcing the disagreement. It's the idea behind the dynamic of a vicious circle, which must be stopped and turned into a virtuous circle.



To break it, there has to be a change:

- in how we see the other person, ourselves and the situation
- in behaviour (showing your willingness, and showing the other person we understand what they find irritating or exasperating about us).

**Conceived to enable better accompaniment for volunteers in the field, this training is also the way to gather together the network of Country Managers.**



“ Sometimes I have a conflict with a colleague, and we leave the room without it being resolved, because both of us are entrenched in our positions or because we're having a bad day. Once I've rested my head a bit, I systematically come back to the subject to find a resolution, apologising for having run away with myself. **Which is nothing extraordinary for me and everything but ordinary for them. A foreigner, a white man, who comes and sits down in their house and starts with, "Sorry for this morning..."**. I realised this just a little while ago, whilst talking with our Country Managers. I was focusing on the conflict, the negative aspect, when in fact it's always compensated with an act of forgiveness, a positive aspect. In the end, from these moments, which I always saw as grey, true dialogue was born, where we humble ourselves to forgive people or ask for forgiveness; and in the end "going out to meet" also happens in this way. »

Clément on mission at LUKAFU [Democratic Republic of Congo]



## INTEGRATING THE PROGRAMME FOR THE RETIREES VOLUNTEERS INTO GENERAL OPERATIONS

The programme for the Retirees volunteers, in 2023, constituted 14 field volunteers in Thailand, South Africa, Rwanda and elsewhere. In the group for 2023, sent out on mission last July, one couple and a single person joined the 11 volunteers already in the field. The restructuring of the programme for the retired, already making good progress since its institution in 2020, reached completion this year with an integration into the general operations of Fidesco. The proof? The creation of a volunteer guide for the

programme. Conceived as a reference document, it's been elaborated using feedback from experienced volunteers. Dedicated to the specificities of the programme for the retired, its objective is to guide volunteers in what to put into place before, during and after their arrival in the field. Administrative obligations, medical advice and testimonies from missionaries: a condensed summary of everything you need to know for a successful mission.





## REINFORCING OUR EXPERTISE ON RECIPROCITY

The fourth group for the South-North mission, composed of 11 volunteers, left this year under a different statute than their predecessors. Since the adoption of a law opening the volunteering for international solidarity (VSI) to reciprocal volunteers, in August 2021, its legal structure was established in 2022, allowing it to be applied in 2023.

For our volunteers and our partners, this is important news. The possibility of sending volunteers either under the new statute VSI or under the statute of civil service opens up a diversity of profiles, to better respond to the needs of the field. The VSI has taken away the age limit and so allows us to send out more experienced volunteers.

Furthermore, our expertise on the subject of reciprocity has benefited from a growing recognition in civil society and amongst French authorities. In this capacity we were called to pilot a work group to consider the question of reciprocity with the NGO Liaison Committee (CLONG), platform for French Civil Society Organizations.



“From this incredible year I will always remember the generosity of the people living on the streets, who are the living proof of such a truth, and who demonstrate love for those who take them as they are and welcome them; the joy of simple moments, little things, tiny steps forward; detachment from the chronic search for efficiency of our world, the joy of “losing time”; the humility of receiving from someone to whom we are “meant” to be giving to, the strength to keep smiling and to always give love, to the best of our ability, when it’s going wrong. »

Ange-Pierrot on mission with Aux Captifs, la libération, in PARIS [France]



## SUPPORTING DEVELOPMENT

In the making for several years, and in line with our practise of international solidarity, our development project support was professionalized during the year 2023. It gives us the ability to go further afield, in a variety of geographic zones and areas of activity. This practise is inscribed into our DNA: to be at the service of the poorest, using local initiatives, with a Christian vision of development. The objective is to look seriously at working with partners who have little or no support. **In short, to go where others won't** and enable a movement of initiation for new and essential action.

To do this, the year was punctuated with big steps consecrated to the writing and setting up of procedures, the analysis of demands, follow-ups, and measuring the impact of projects. Once chosen, the projects were then able to benefit from financial, structural, and fraternal support from us.

The development project support reinforces our practice of international solidarity. It complements the gear levers of activity which are the sending out of volunteers, and advocacy, and carries the preferential option for the poor even further abroad.



### So the world may hope

The dispensary Saint Gabriel, in the suburbs of Conakry, in Guinea, founded and supported by Fidesco benefitted this year from donations collected during the evening Pour que le monde espère ! (So the world may hope!) run by the Emmanuel Community. **Thanks to generous donors, we were able to collect 53.050€!**





# DEVELOPING UNITY







## BRINGING TOGETHER THE VOLUNTEERS OF 2023

Every year, the commissioning conference is a determining part of the volunteer's training. In 2023, it was issued with an even greater importance because, **for the first time, it gathered together all the volunteers of the year: the North-South mission and the South-North mission**, who had arrived in France the day before. The week alternated between lectures and specific times dedicated to the needs of each mission, giving volunteers key points to having a successful mission. It was a decisive event for the Fidesco family, allowing rich exchanges to take place between volunteers, on fire with mission.

One month earlier, the preparation for departure weekend for North-South volunteers coincided with the return from mission weekend for the south-north volunteers of 2022. It was a rich time of meeting between future volunteers and their missionary predecessors, witnessing to the joy of meeting and serving together.



### Where is Fidesco ?

Bringing the volunteers' joy into the field, making us travel around the world and discover the missions of Fidesco: discover 'Where is Fidesco!' This year brings together the volunteers for a remix of 'La Goffa Lolita', a popular and festive song. The lyrics of the chorus were rewritten during an evening run by the volunteers during the commissioning conference.

*« It's Fidesco, from north to south, from the West to the East, and that's beautiful! Sent out by God and his Holy Spirit behind us, they are on a Fidesco mission. »*



## RELYING ON THE ALUMNI NETWORK

The regional correspondents (CR in french, for Regional Correspondents) are an essential bridge with the permanent team. Based in their region, they are actors in the call to mission, bringing together the alumni network and organising reunions within the Fidesco family.

In 2022, they were 18 from six different towns. This year, the network has developed, supported by the missionary energy which animates these former volunteers, excited to share the joy of returning from mission. In September 2023, they were 21, from 9 different French towns. To the six already very active towns can now be added; Lille, Marseille and Nantes.



### Mission congress

The 2023 Mission Congress held in France every year boasted thousands of young people gathered from many different French towns linked by their common desire for mission. We were present this year in seven towns to present details of the Fidesco mission.





## COLLABORATING WITH THE INTERNATIONAL OFFICES

Fidesco, also has its **International Offices**, in charge of relaying the call to mission and supporting the development projects supported by our NGO. Located in 6 countries (Germany, Belgium, United States, Netherlands, Poland and Portugal), they work in collaboration with the Team in Paris.

This year marked a change in the team, with Karel Dekempe going into retirement, being replaced by Francesco Martialis as international coordinator, as well as updating internal processes for a better pooling together of everyone's efforts.



“ Thanks to modern ways of communication, Fidesco's six international offices are regularly given updates on what is going on in the headquarters in France. Our new coordinator takes his work seriously and keeps in good contact with the six offices. It's good and stimulating. It's sometimes difficult to communicate in the right language but that reveals the international touch we have! »

**Hilde Sluiter**

In charge of communication and fundraising  
FIDESCO HOLLAND



## STRUCTURING MISSION NAÏM ESPÉRANCE



After having led an exploratory mission in Erbil, Iraq, **Naïm Espérance** went to offer support to people in South Sudan, at Aweil, in the diocese of Wau. Carine, director and now salaried member of the association, accompanied by Violaine, a permanent volunteer, went on mission in this bruised country, which in ten years of existence has seen seven years of war.



Naïm Espérance runs a mission of compassion and presence to the street children, in prisons and in refugee camps. **In order to spread further, the charity began reinforcing their administration and legal structure.** The administration council was extended to develop the expertise of its vision. The question of emergency protocols, rooted in the living reality of Naïm Espérance' areas of mission activity, were also consolidated to ensure full security of the team when working in the field.



## GROWING THE RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR PARTNERS

Our partners are essential to our activity in the field. They are the first actors in local development and are at the origin of the projects our volunteers commit to. **Taking care of our relationship through regular meetings is a central part of our mission.**

This is why field visits are fully part of the team's work and network of Country Managers. **They have a central role in the fraternal vision of development which is close to our hearts**, strengthening the relationship we have with our partners in the field to be even more sustainable and bear more fruit. They also help us to have an objective view on the reality of mission demands and of living in the country, they benefit greatly from being accompanied by volunteers who active in the field. These visits come in addition to links by telephone or email, between the Paris office and local church partners.



**“** My one-to-ones, nearly every week, with Mgr. Sosthène, were precious times where we could share deeply. Once we'd got the 'technical' subjects out of the way, we'd discuss society, the news, culture, which made me realise what a chance we have in having him as a partner in our mission!

He is a visionary pastor, a priest who looks after our souls, a rigorous leader for himself and for others, and is above all a man with a big heart.

We are fortunate to have received an education in which obedience does not rhyme with submission, and where respect doesn't impede direct and open dialogue in cases of disagreement.

**Mgr. Sosthène appreciates that and even asks to have that freedom of tone with me. I remember one of our first exchanges where he said to me, 'Antoine, it's important that you know how to say no to me. I'm counting on you!' »**

**Antoine et Maëlys** on mission in OBALA [Cameroon]



## The partners give a testimony

### Interview with Father Arun Charles

Fidesco partner since 2019 PHNOM PENH [Cambodia]

**After an initial experience during which you received Fidesco volunteers, then a pause during the time of Covid, what made you ask for our help again?**



– This comes from my experience with Fidesco volunteers: they are people of faith and I thought such an active and selfless presence would inspire our Buddhist students.

**How would you describe your relationship with Fidesco?**

– It's a friendly relationship. We are on the same path to holiness and to make God's love known to everyone, in particular our students and those working here.

**What good things will you take away from welcoming Fidesco volunteers?**

– When we welcome a Fidesco volunteer, it's an opportunity to share our mission with a young Catholic and offer them a positive missionary experience, so that they can keep this experience their whole life. This also enables our young Khymer to give witness to the selfless love of people.

**How are the Fidesco visits to your community important for the mission? How do you see the future of your cooperation with Fidesco?**

– It is beneficial when those in charge of managing Fidesco pay us a visit, to see the missions, and witness the regular activities of their volunteers. We hope to continue having Fidesco volunteers present in Don Bosco Cambodia.

**Can you tell us about the relationship between Fidesco and their colleagues? How do they integrate into the local community?**

– The Fidesco volunteers keep up good relationships amongst themselves. They are friendly and professional. They know what their responsibilities are and they help each other. The volunteers integrate well into the local community because they are open to learning, they've been well prepared and they are flexible in how they operate.



# INCREASING OUR SCOPE



*La formation, notre avenir.*





## MAKING THE VOICE OF THE MOST DIMINISHED HEARD

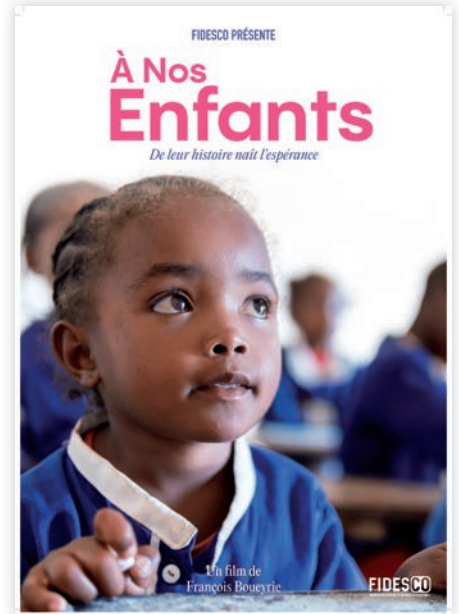


On the 9th of March 2023, on the giant screen of the UGC in Montparnasse, the premiere of the movie *À nos enfants*, was shown. Produced and financed by Fidesco, and it was directed by François Boueyrie. Shot in different Fidesco mission locations, where he met with families, cultures and the realities of daily life which inspired him. **This feature-length film takes the viewer deep into the daily life of three children: Tina, Cesilia et Valter.** They live in Madagascar, Zambia and Brazil, respectively, are 6, 10 and 11 years old, they live in the heart of the brushlands or in the favelas, but something links them together: their vision of hope and unconditional love, given to them by their family and educators.

Stripped of any special effects, this movie offers a discrete and immersive experience in the lives of these three children. *À nos enfants* is an invitation to contemplate and reflect on the line of transmission and the hope found in the heart of the most diminished situations.

After this first viewing in Paris, a working website has since been constructed and dedicated to the movie. You can see where watch it online, access a kit for organising a projection in your neighborhood, and read all the associated press articles.

A viewing was organized, in this way, at the end of September in a cinema in Angers. **Lots more to come!**



“

It's a great lesson in hope being born out of the gift of self. In this film, we dive into situations of life very different from our own. And it's not just about the lives of three children living in far flung corners of the world. *À nos enfants* tells us an even bigger story, that of their parents, and educators: a generation giving itself for the next generation. It's a story about transmission. »

**Emeric Clair** ◊ Director of Fidesco from June 2016 to March 2024



“ A sincere film, superb documentary full of the beauty of landscapes and faces, tender dialogues and an overwhelming authenticity, *À nos enfants* is edifying in more than one way. »

**Julie de Fontanges** ◊ Famille Chrétienne

“ Made with great simplicity, we dive so deeply into their daily life, we feel like we've walked alongside these children on their road for a bit. Congratulations to the director and long may this film be watched, may it bring inspiration, gratitude, momentum to solidarity, collaboration, tenderness... »

**Priscilla** ◊ spectator





## DIVING INTO THE HEART OF MISSION

Witness and radiate the call to mission; pass the microphone please! **Conscious of this reality and the need to respond to demands for more mobile propositions, we've relaunched Fidesco podcasts.** After an opening series of 'Confinement podcasts' recorded in 2022, 2023 saw the arrival of 'Heart of Mission'. In the first episode, which came out on the 1st of May, Jean-Baptiste takes us to his mission in Zambia. Infused with his stories, the listener discovers the joys and the pains of a faraway mission. Every month since then, the 'Heart of Mission' microphone has been passed between the missionary alumni. They speak to us of hope, their encounters, moments of being blown away by it all; they take us to Brazil or Lesotho, Madagascar or South Africa, and make us dive into the heart of mission.

Find it on our listening platforms!



**Coeur de mission**

1:02 1:33

♥ ◀ ▶ +

Nom de la musique	Durée	Artiste
 Anaisse Est-ce que tu m'aimes ?	32:16	Coeur de mission
 Virginie et Guillaume Comme nous pardonnons aussi	34:49	Coeur de mission
 Elodie Le droit d'aimer	38:03	Coeur de mission
 Laure Un petit paradis	29:39	Coeur de mission



## NETWORKING WITH NEW AMBASSADORS

This year, we've been addressing a new question: **how to spread Fidesco's message and values of hope, service and fraternity outside the habitual circles?** With this in mind, we collaborated with two creatives, for two postcard projects. Thanks to their unique talents and sensibilities, we arrived at the creation of a series of cards produced for the summer holidays and for New Year's. The objective of this collaboration? Enable the call to mission to be heard by new candidates through the talent and the networks of two committed artists, ambassadors of our values.







## PROMOTING THE PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR

Promoting the preferential option for the poor also means making their voices heard by national and international authorities. This is why Fidesco was invited, along with France Volontaires, to address the National review of French volunteer's conference with the United Nations. This invitation shows how much our field experience of forty plus years is recognized and valued as the expression of the voice of the most disadvantaged. In this way, the first step of our application to obtain certification from the economic and social council of ONU (ECOSOC) was validated. The creation of a strategizing committee, to encourage the fidelity of those supporting our advocacy project, follows the same goal: working for the development and support of the most deprived.

Fully invested in serving international solidarity, Fidesco sends out volunteers for fieldwork, as well as financing development projects, and providing advocacy in favor of the poorest.





# FINANCES : THE ACTIVITIES 2023



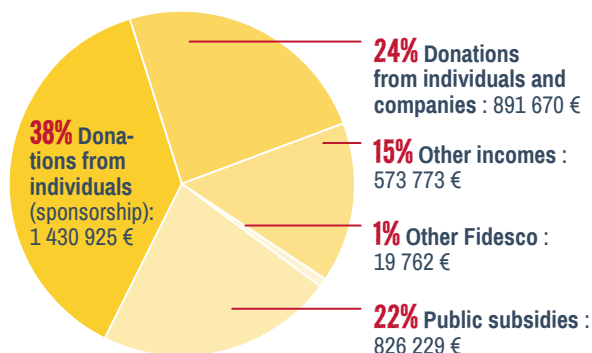
## ACCOUNTS

RESOURCES (chiffres en euros)	2022	Distribution	2023	Distribution
<b>Income related to public donations</b>	<b>2 890 308</b>	72%	<b>2 913 557</b>	78%
Donations from individuals	2 367 564	59%	2 183 112	58%
Corporate donations, foundations, endowment funds	64 772	2%	138 024	4%
Financial contributions received from other associations	305 164	8%	590 962	16%
Legacy, Life insurance	152 808	4%	1 461	0%
<b>Public subsidies</b>	<b>158 637</b>	4%	<b>573 773</b>	15%
French Ministry of Foreign Affairs	144 654	4%	561 048	15%
Others	13 983	0%	12 724	0%
<b>Other income</b>	<b>964 046</b>	24%	<b>255 029</b>	7%
Financial income	8 868	0%	58 972	2%
Miscellaneous income	113 384	3%	196 058	5%
Reversal of provisions	2 163	0%	0	0%
Recovery of funds related to deferred liabilities	839 631	21%	0	0%
<b>TOTAL RESOURCES</b>	<b>4 012 991</b>		<b>3 742 359</b>	

EXPENSES	2022	Distribution	2023	Distribution
<b>International and Solidarity and Development Mission</b>	<b>3 284 512</b>	83%	<b>2 931 358</b>	78%
Africa	2 120 580	53%	1 308 311	35%
Latin America	581 074	15%	781 083	21%
Asia	194 046	5%	273 422	7%
Middle East	353	0%	5 000	0%
Europe	53 307	1%	33 000	1%
France*	176 598	4%	328 570	9%
Communication to applicants and volunteers	158 555	4%	201 972	5%
<b>Donation collection and processing costs</b>	<b>263 303</b>	7%	<b>249 303</b>	7%
<b>Headquarters operating costs**</b>	<b>424 631</b>	11%	<b>560 615</b>	15%
<b>Provisions</b>	<b>3 492</b>	0%	<b>434</b>	0%
<b>Futur commitments</b>	<b>0</b>	0%	<b>0</b>	0%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>3 975 938</b>		<b>3 741 711</b>	

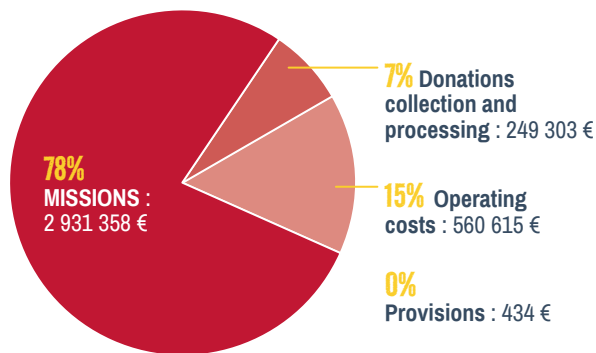
### RESOURCES

Origin of resources



### EXPENSES

Use of resources



\*Since 2023, South-North volunteers benefit from the VSI status (VSI for Volontariat de Solidarité International in French, so to say International Solidarity Volunteering), and their mission are funded by the JONFEP (for Fonds de coopération de la jeunesse et de l'éducation Populaire, so to say Cooperation Funds for Youth and Popular Education) : their allowance is not paid by the Agence du Service Civique (Civic Service Agency) but by Fidesco

\*\*Beyond the inflation and the rise of plane tickets costs that directly impact our budget, the increase of running costs at our headquarter level is linked to the development of our fields of activity (mainly project support and, to a lesser extent, the gradual deployment of our advocacy activity) as well as the production, in 2023, of the movie *À Nos Enfants*.



## DONATIONS

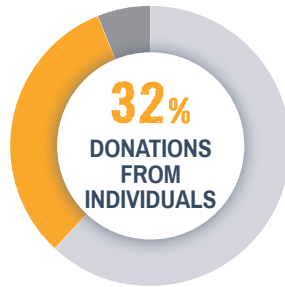
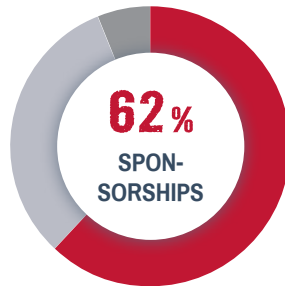
Thank you for your valuable support throughout 2023 ! During the year, we received **2 322 596 €**.

### Distribution of donations

Your donations allow Fidesco to send volunteers to live and serve daily in a simple way in the heart of the populations.

By responding to needs identified by local partners, volunteers work for development projects serving the poorest and participate in the construction of peace based on encounter.

Thanks to you, Fidesco continues its mission to be a major player in the field of development and international solidarity. Your donation has concrete repercussions on the populations that the volunteers serve in the countries of the South.



**17 000 €**  
cost of a volunteer by year

**375 €**  
minimum amount to sponsor a volunteer for 2 years of mission (200 € for a 1 year mission)

**15 €**  
Minimum monthly amount to sponsor a volunteer for the duration of his/her mission





RENDS LES AUTRES  
**VA, HEUREUX,**  
ET TU CONNAITRAS LA **JOIE!**  
FIDESCO

\* Go, make others happy and you will experience joy!