

## In Bangalore, the voiceless begin to speak

Twenty inhabitants of Bangalore and Bijapur shanty towns took part in Fedina's and Frères des Hommes's workshop on popular expression to illustrate the violence and poverty of their lives.

The works produced are the result of the meeting between German Vidal, a committed artist, and the inhabitants of the shanty towns. They show how inhabitants truly want to appeal to the public and put forward values such as solidarity and citizenship in their struggle against poverty.



An original workshop for creation and popular expression.



Collective art work and collage during the workshop in Bangalore, July 2008.



The works of art on the streets of Bangalore's shanty towns.

About twenty inhabitants of Bangalore and Bijapur shanty towns, mostly young women between 20 and 30, took part in a popular expression workshop organized by Fedina and Frères des Hommes during ten days in July 2008. Everyday **engaged in defending their rights and to the struggle against poverty**, the inhabitants used their experiences to create works of art. German Vidal, an artist who led the workshops, helped the participants in order **to make their expression easier and to capture the civic energy of these artists for a day**.

The participants could express the social violence that they experience daily : child labor, early pregnancies, discrimination against women and dalits, lack of drinking water, malnutrition and health problems. They graphically expressed **the strength of their non-violent commitments in the struggle against poverty**.

As the inhabitants were not used to graphical techniques, German Vidal taught them to grasp new ways of expression : painting, drawing, cutting out, collage, calligraphy... They added personal decoration (fabric, shellfish) and **created works born from collective thinking**. In 10 days, they achieved more than 150 high impact pieces.

Some of these works were printed on plastic sheets and exposed in Bangalore streets : the participants of the workshops appealed the passersby to describe the situations they have to cope with.

Since then, the works have been regularly exposed and convey to a large public a message of strength in non-violent commitments.



### The inhabitants of Bangalore and Bijapur shanty towns

In India, the poorest inhabitants, who often come from the country because they cannot provide their families with food anymore, gather in shanty towns. Infrastructure (electricity, drinking water, wastewater treatment...) and services (education, health...) are very poor, almost inexistent, and families live very harsh lives. Frères des Hommes and Fedina help them improve their living conditions and give a better future to their children.



### German Vidal

The artist German Vidal helps people speak by showing them how to express their situations graphically. People can share their feelings through drawing, painting and collage. He uses a graphical language we are all of us familiar with, that of propaganda, publicity, signalling, and also creates informative documents that convey the message of the voiceless and that aim to defend the rights of those most at risk.



### Fedina

Fedina was created in 1983 in Bangalore, Karnataka, and gives the most oppressed populations the means to defend their rights and to be active in their development. This foundation brings support to marginalized people, minorities, dalits, tribal people and workers at risk. 3 700 base groups, which represents 114 000 people, are engaged in the foundation's activities.



### Frères des Hommes

Founded in 1965, Frères des Hommes is an association of international solidarity, recognized as a public utility, which supports development projects initiated and implemented by local populations in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. We operate primarily in favor of peasant agriculture, the economy and civic democracy. In France, Frères des Hommes informs and educates the public about the global issues of solidary development.



Contact us for more information:

**Frères des Hommes** - 9 rue de Savoie 75006 Paris - [www.fdh.org](http://www.fdh.org)

Jean-Pierre Dardauid : [pdt@fdh.org](mailto:pdt@fdh.org) / 06 25 29 72 97

Benedicte Roget : [b.roget@fdh.org](mailto:b.roget@fdh.org) / 01 56 81 12 31