

AFRICAN VIBES

ISSUE #15 \$3.95 US/CAN

The Renaissance of **AKON**

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“We want to make sure that the help gets to the people directly”

signal for him to capture it. There is something warm and inviting about Kine. A reassurance that could not be missed. When we chatted earlier over the phone, I could feel her strength then but in person, I understood completely why her son teamed up with her for his Konfidence Foundation.

Akon's foundation had goals to tackle education and healthcare in Senegal with projects that will be used as models for other parts of Africa. So I ask him about some of their projects. "We are remodeling the schools that need it the most so the kids have a reason to want to come to school in the morning. We will do the same thing with the hospitals as well. In Senegal we started with the children because this generation has already done enough damage. The only way to fix it is to educate our youth.

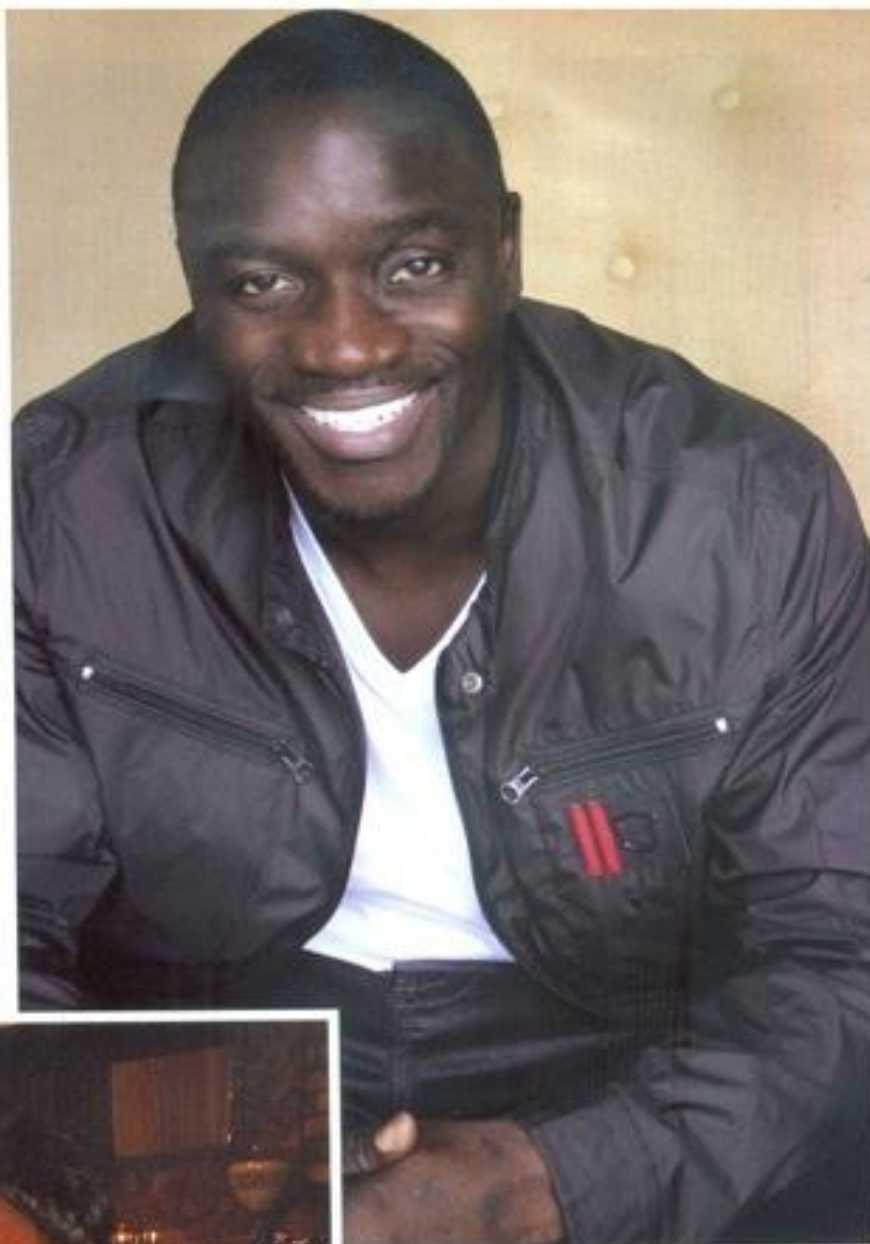
"I always had a passion for Africa because I am from Africa and I always felt Africa was being taken advantage of. As a regular person there is not much you can do but as a celebrity you can influence millions of people which makes it a lot easier. Things can happen a lot faster so I like to take advantage of that and find



more ways to bring opportunities into Africa."

Kine, like her son is very passionate about the work they do and the lives they touch. "We are doing this on our own" she says to me. "We are not handing the money out to anyone. We want to make sure that the help gets to the people directly. We visit the neighborhoods to see what they need and then work to help fix it. For example, we have remodeled some schools from the bottom up that had no chairs, no playgrounds, leaking roof among other things." But doing such good in Africa does not come without its share of challenges. "When you come with a different mentality of the people that are there, that is a challenge," she continues. "They would prefer for us to come in and look at the problem and say 'I'm going to give you X amount of dollars to fix it' but we just won't do that because it might never get done. That's why we go and get the job done ourselves."

Their work is not only impacting kids in Africa. "We've been engaging youth here on a different level as well" Akon chimes in. "Here it is crime that is the issue. We try to get to them before it's too late."



*Things can
happen a lot faster
now that I am
a public figure*