

The letter

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Asmae Association
Sœur
Emmanuelle

**PROTECTING CHILDREN
AFFECTED BY CONFLICT
AND EXCLUSION**

**OUR TEAMS ARE READY
IN EMERGENCIES**



EDITORIAL

Catherine Larrieu takes over the Asmae presidency from Denis Legat.



Denis Legat and Catherine Larrieu took part in a joint interview as the baton was passed on.

DL, what is your assessment of the last few years?

We bounced back quickly and positively after two loss-making years in 2018 and

2019.

2020 and 2021 marked a return to a stable financial situation, which allowed us to develop our work to support children and young people in France and overseas. This was necessary in a context of enormous need, where action requires motivation, professionalism and determination, all of which are demonstrated every day by our teams. The Board of Directors and operational teams have been strengthened, and there is great synergy between them. I am therefore very confident about the future as I hand over the presidency to Catherine Larrieu, who knows Asmae very well, having been a director since 2018.

CL, what are the issues to which Asmae needs to respond over the coming years?

Sadly, social inequality is increasing, both in France and worldwide. We have to play our part in building a fairer world, first and foremost for the most vulnerable children and young people. In France and overseas, we must also deal with the consequences of the Covid crisis, which has disrupted education and made millions of children even more vulnerable. Education systems have been weakened, children and families are suffering, crisis situations are increasing... associations have a decisive role to play in supporting the most vulnerable, in close cooperation with local, national and international authorities.

What is your vision for Asmae for the coming years?

Asmae will continue its development in France and overseas and play its part in building a fairer world in which children and young people are positive agents of change. We will maintain a high level of expertise and quality in our work, but we will remain pragmatic in our choice of work and in the way we adapt our work to local contexts. We hope to develop new projects to reach groups whose needs have so far not really been met, or have not been met well. We will do this in the countries in which we are already established, but we will also develop projects in new countries and projects that will strengthen our power to influence the creation of public policies that show greater respect for Children's Rights. Finally, as regards the trust placed in us by our donors and institutional partners, we will maintain a high level of vigilance regarding the maintenance of overheads, the proportion of which will now decrease each year.



Sœur Emmanuelle

For 40 years, Asmae has been continuing the work of its founder, following her principles.

OUR VISION

“A fair world where children are guaranteed the opportunity to live and grow up in dignity within their families and their environments to become free men and women who can contribute to society.”

OUR MISSIONS

- **To promote child development** through a global approach. To do this, Asmae also works to support families, with their environments in mind.
- **To increase the capabilities of local stakeholders** in the area of child development, to improve the synergy between them and to maximise their social impact.
- **To champion children's causes** by raising awareness and speaking out.
- **To experiment, to expand and to disseminate.**

ASMAE IN FIGURES

- **32,000 beneficiaries** (children and families) through **21 projects** in **6 countries of intervention**
- **24,000 donors**
- **34 partner** associations
- **110 professionals** worldwide
- **30 volunteers**

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AT THE HEART OF THE ACTION

OUR TEAMS ARE READY FOR EMERGENCIES

In addition to its development work, Asmae regularly responds to humanitarian emergencies in its countries of intervention and other areas with highly vulnerable populations. The island of Madagascar was recently hit by Storm Ana, which caused major damage, and there was a terrible fire in an area of the Philippines where Asmae beneficiaries live. And the war in Ukraine has caused population displacements on a scale not seen in Europe since the Second World War. In such emergencies, supporting local stakeholders working to meet the basic needs of vulnerable families is one of our key priorities. Find out how Asmae is responding in these three countries.

Floods in Madagascar: meals to combat school drop-out

After Storm Ana and the floods it caused at the end of January 2022, Asmae's team in the field, in collaboration with its 3 partners in Antananarivo, launched an emergency response to help 453 families living in extremely unstable conditions. The rising water deprived many families of their sources of income and resulted in the closure of many schools.

“After the storm, I had to do odd jobs like going to fetch water. Every morning, I go to the integration centre run by the NGO HAFA, and in the afternoon I do odd jobs.”

A young beneficiary of our local partner HAFA

The Asmae Madagascar team used the €16,770 collected to set up free canteens and prevent children and young people dropping out of school. Basic food items, as well as kitchen utensils and hygiene equipment, were purchased to supply the canteens. This helps to keep children and young people in schools and training centres because they are guaranteed at least one meal a day there.

Philippines: help for displaced Sama Bajau families

In January 2022, a fire broke out in the temporary resettlement areas of Wawa and Malitam, where 202 families from the Sama Bajau tribe were housed. The Sama Bajau, a nomadic fishing community that had already been driven out of their ancestral lands as a result of conflict and mining projects, have been threatened with deportation by the Philippine government. Asmae's local team worked to provide basic necessities and psychosocial support to the communities affected by the fire. A large number of Sama Bajau adults cannot read or write, which made it difficult to take a census of the families. Asmae, in collaboration with staff from the Batangas City Evacuation Center (BCEC) and the temporary centre set up in the Barangay of Wawa, provided support in taking this census. Emergency funds of €17,000 were raised, all of which was used for this project. A plan for resettlement in a new area is under discussion by the local authorities and our teams.

A special fund to support Ukrainian families

Since the war broke out in Ukraine, millions of children have either been internally displaced or become refugees, UNICEF estimates. Asmae was very quickly ready to come to the aid of Ukrainian families so that no child would fall by the wayside. Thanks to a general surge in solidarity, the association was able to create a “Ukraine special fund” of €16,375 through its Fondation Sœur Emmanuelle, to be used to support its partner Caritas, which is present in Ukraine. The fund will contribute to urgent humanitarian needs: shelter, food, hygiene kits, protection and reuniting families. This solidarity effort echoes our work at La Chrysalide, our centre for vulnerable young mothers and their children in Bobigny, as well as PEACE, our multi-country programme for the protection of children affected by conflict and exclusion.

We would like to thank our donors, without whom we would not have been able to mobilise so quickly to deal with these emergencies.



Sama Bajau people in shock after fire broke out in the resettlement area of Malitam.



SPECIAL REPORT PEACE

Children using the “Yam Wekré” picture book designed by Asmae and its partners.

“PEACE – PROTECTING CHILDREN AFFECTED BY CONFLICT AND EXCLUSION”

Of the 46 million people displaced within their own countries in 2020, 4 out of 10, or 19 million, were children, according to the “Lost at home” report published by UNICEF. This migration disrupts education and fosters the emergence of negative coping strategies, such as child labour and marriage, sexual exploitation and child trafficking. It also poses many difficulties when it comes to accessing essential services: secure housing, water, sanitation, health care, psychological support.

Support for more than 7000 children from displaced communities

Launched at the start of 2022 for a period of 36 to 48 months, the PEACE multi-country programme targets 7,600 girls and boys between the ages of 18 months and 17 years, 2,300 relatives and families and 514 professionals and members of public institutions and associations. The aim of the PEACE programme is to improve child protection services in Burkina Faso, Egypt and the Philippines, and it includes specific forms of action for each country that are appropriate to both the context and the community concerned.

Improving protection services for marginalised children in Egypt

In Egypt, the garbage city of Ezbet el Nakhl, along with those of El Marg and Manshiyat Naser, is home to communities from Upper Egypt that migrated to Cairo in the 1960s for economic reasons. Sister Emmanuelle shared their daily lives with them for almost 20 years.

The main aim of the PEACE programme in the country is to improve social and protection services for marginalised children living in unstable areas. The programme, which is aimed at children and young people, also targets teaching staff, school management teams, families and surrounding communities. Training sessions on protection and awareness workshops on children's rights will be run in the community.

Promoting Sama Bajau children's rights in the Philippines

In the Philippines, the indigenous Sama Bajau community is

being driven off the island of Mindanao, of which it is native, because of conflict and mining projects in the area. The aim of the PEACE programme is to acknowledge and take into account the tribe's children and families in local and national governance. This means strengthening Sama Bajau communities' capacities so they can represent themselves collectively (as displaced people and indigenous communities) and have their special status and rights recognised, particularly children's right to protection and education. This collaborative work also aims to improve ethnographic knowledge about their situation.

Improving the quality of care services for displaced Burkinabe children

In Burkina Faso, the aim of the project is to improve the accessibility and quality of early childhood services and interventions. It is targeting the many internally displaced people fleeing unsafe areas in the Sahelian region of the country. The project also involves identifying children who are vulnerable or in danger. Another of its aims is to distribute the “Yam Wekré” picture book for use. This tool helps children to develop their psychomotor, socio-emotional and cognitive skills. These skills are acquired through interaction between the learners and the adult educator in a fun, participatory setting, but also a safe space.

Asmae is preparing to expand its intervention programme to the north-west of Côte d'Ivoire, which borders Burkina Faso and since 2021 has, according to the United Nations, been taking in Burkinabe groups fleeing insecurity in the south-west and seeking refuge in bordering villages.

INTERVIEW SALEYMATA GADIAGA, head of the PEACE programme in Burkina Faso



Saleymata Gadiaga, Asmae's Projects and Partnerships Manager in Burkina Faso

Currently, in Burkina Faso, more than 1 million children are internally displaced in 6 provinces in the north and in the Boucle du Mouhoun region. This humanitarian crisis is a result of the ongoing conflict in the Central Sahel affecting several regions of Burkina Faso. Since 2022, the main aim of the “PEACE” multi-country programme has been to improve the accessibility and quality of early childhood services and interventions in highly vulnerable areas of Burkina Faso. Saleymata Gadiaga, Asmae's Projects and Partnerships Manager in Burkina Faso, explains the background to the project and the work carried out in the field.

► What is the situation like at the moment for displaced children and families in Burkina Faso?

On 31 March 2022, there were more than 1.8 million internally displaced people in the country, of which more than 1 million were children. The number of children under the age of 5 was almost 300,000. Internally displaced people have to struggle to access basic services like health and protection services. Some children under the age of 7 don't have access to any care or support services because there are no early childhood facilities.

► What actions are you putting in place to help children in areas where communities have been displaced?

To respond to children's care and support needs, NGOs have set up Child Friendly Spaces where early learning and psychosocial support activities can be run. Other children attend existing preschool education and early learning centres (Centres d'Éveil et d'Éducation Préscolaire — CEEP). Asmae's role is to enhance the quality of the activities for young children in these various facilities by strengthening the skills of the activity leaders and educators. The aim is both to provide psychosocial support to the children and to support their cognitive, language, motor and other types of development. To do this, Asmae uses its flagship tool: the Yam Wekré picture book.

► How do you make families from displaced communities aware of the importance of their children's schooling and protection?

The association works with Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), which are established associations accepted by the community, to implement an early intervention system (EIS). This system allows us to identify extremely vulnerable children so we can provide them and their families with comprehensive social support. The awareness campaign focuses on topics related to protection: violence against children, the parent-child relationship etc. It is also about the importance of this critical early childhood period, to encourage parents to give their children access to care and support facilities where they will be stimulated and able to develop effectively.

► How do you adapt to this context?

Asmae has a strong local foundation and works to support partner CBOs to help them adapt their attitudes and operations to a deteriorating security situation. It is becoming vital, to maintain access to our beneficiaries, for our partners to take social and security issues into account, to be able to react quickly and to be able to adapt to population movements. It is therefore essential to understand and adhere to the 4 humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality, independence and humanity. Asmae also trains activity leaders from partner NGOs on using the Yam Wekré picture book for psychosocial activities. This helps them to provide better support to children suffering from varying degrees of stress or trauma, and to increase their resilience.

Asmae is preparing to expand its intervention programme to the north-west of Côte d'Ivoire, which borders Burkina Faso and since 2021 has, according to the United Nations, been taking in Burkinabe groups fleeing insecurity in the south-west and seeking refuge in bordering villages.

Asmae would like to thank Association Sœur Emmanuelle Belgium for its support of the PEACE programme.

YALLA! FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS: A PROJECT IN DEVELOPMENT

The “Yalla! For children's rights” project is a citizenship and international solidarity education programme that aims to raise awareness and mobilise children, young people and adults around children's rights. The project continues to develop through partnerships with local authorities and the creation of modules on new topics. Tessa Laouiti, a volunteer on a civic service placement with Asmae, answers our questions.

Which new children's right have you been working on, and what's coming next?

Tessa Laouiti: For the 2021-2022 school year, we created the “No Rights for Clichés” module with the aim of raising awareness of the right to gender equality, as well as deconstructing stereotypes. We developed workshops suitable for all groups, from nursery to high school. It's about getting people to understand that stereotypes are dangerous because they go against the right to equality. They are at the root of inequality between girls/women and boys/men. We are currently developing a new module on bullying at school and cyberbullying, which will be offered as a workshop for the 2022-2023 school year.

What is included in the new section of your digital platform, “à l'école des droits de l'enfant” (children's rights school)?

TL: We offer the “No Rights for Clichés” module on our digital platform. There, children can find an educational video introducing the right to equality, a quiz on inequality and an audio story that deconstructs stereotypes by featuring a female pirate and a male ballet dancer.

What do you offer for adults in the community?

TL: Our training for adults involves sharing knowledge about children's rights. We do this by raising awareness among professional youth workers (in day centres and community centres) of children's rights and of the inequality in the application of these rights around the world. We spend time training activity leaders so that tools and activities on children's rights can be put in place for their groups. The aim is to develop the impact of the project, reaching more adults, the number one guarantors of children's rights, and increasing the number of children and young people being made aware. 53 activity leaders from day centres that are part of the Clermont-Ferrand and Savigny le Temple local councils have received training on our teaching materials. 22 managers of day centres and community centres in Savigny le Temple were also trained.

What impacts have you noticed on adults who have taken part in the training?

TL: The adults showed a lot of interest in and curiosity about the issue. They left the training having found out about certain children's rights, but also about the extent to which those rights are not respected. It was a great success, given 100% of those involved found it “relevant or very relevant”.

Our thanks to our financial partners: We Act for Kids and ID KIDS Action Funds, SC Johnson and the Technip Energies Endowment Fund.



Session with a primary school class.

ZOOM SUR THE YALLA! PROJECT IN COLLABORATION WITH THE FONDATION LA VIE AU GRAND AIR

As part of the “Yalla! For children's rights” project, Asmae has entered into partnership with the Fondation La Vie au Grand Air | Priorité Enfance. The foundation takes in, protects and supports children, teenagers and parents dealing with family issues. Asmae runs sessions to raise awareness of children's rights among groups using the foundation's services at its various facilities. Sessions have already taken place in Sens, Yvelines and Etampes. Children and young people were able to find out about children's rights through an escape game and fun awareness workshops.

PHILIPPINES: IMPROVING ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

In Las Piñas, a city in the Metro Manila region, 25% of people with disabilities are under the age of 19 and have never had any schooling. Launched in 2020, the “Access to Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities” project helps to improve inclusion for children with disabilities who are not in school through a community-based learning programme.



A young beneficiary of the project at a learning session.

Getting children with disabilities into formal schooling

Education for children with disabilities remains limited in the Philippines because of the low number of special educational needs classes and medico-educational facilities. Since the informal education programme was set up, 50 children under the age of 12 with disabilities have been able to take part in sessions 3 times a week to prepare them for the transition to formal education. In July 2021, a ceremony took place to mark the completion of the first phase of the project. Certificates of achievement were awarded to all the children who completed the 96 programme activities. In total, 12 children will be joining mainstream or special schooling. The pandemic had a major impact on children's education, particularly for families with pupils who were learning remotely, and even more so for those with children with disabilities who were included in the programme.

Supporting parents in key subjects

200 families of children with disabilities were also monitored as part of the project. Parents were able to take part in workshops to discuss the difficulties they encountered in their children's education. Parents of children with hearing difficulties or speech delays were also able to learn sign language skills. Parent-and-child sessions were also organised around some key topics, such as child protection, abuse and behaviours to adopt to better protect them.

A forum organised by the persons with disability federation

Asmae also supports local stakeholders in promoting the rights and well-being of children. The aim is to change perceptions about disability through awareness-raising and advocacy work within local communities. To celebrate National Children's Month 2021, the Las Piñas persons with disability federation held the 2nd Forum on early childhood care and development. Asmae and its local partners attended this second forum, entitled “Children with disabilities: from home schooling to inclusive schools”. The forum highlighted the issue of inclusion and access to routine health and preschool services for children with disabilities. The need for continuous disability awareness training in the school environment was also discussed.

Asmae would like to thank Paprec Group and the Air Liquide Foundation for their financial support on this project.

MADAGASCAR: PROJECT TO SUPPORT THE AIM CENTRE FOR THE HOMELESS – PHASE 1

Launched in March 2021, the project to support the Akany Iarivo Mivoy (AIM) centre for the homeless provides educational care for children between the ages of 3 and 12. The centre was initially opened to provide urgent assistance to the most vulnerable communities to protect them from COVID-19. Since then, it has continued to serve as a place to go for families who are homeless and experiencing major difficulties in the capital. Asmae's aim is to facilitate the integration of children from the centre into state primary schools. At the start of the project, the Asmae Madagascar team carried out diagnostic work to help them understand the context and the difficulties encountered in the children's educational care. Since then, Asmae has helped to set up literacy sessions with children from the centre and workshops with parents to involve them and inform them about topics related to the children's schooling. For Asmae and its partners, the aim is also to help train staff from the AIM centre and state primary schools on the “FOSA virus” tool, which helps to raise awareness about adhering to preventive measures.

Asmae would like to thank the Ile-de-France region and the Transatlantique Endowment Fund for their support.



Young beneficiaries attending a state primary school



Jérôme Fougéras

2 QUESTIONS FOR SANCTA DEVOTA JÉRÔME FOUGERAS, TREASURER AND TRUSTEE OF THE FONDATION SANCTA DEVOTA

What are the Fondation Sancta Devota's missions?

Historically, the Foundation's missions are "to provide aid and assistance to the most deprived". But over time, they have evolved to become more appropriate to the modern day. To have a real impact, the work had to have greater depth. That's why our aid and assistance missions focused more specifically on education and environmentalism, while retaining an emergency aid component.

These two main vehicles make it possible to achieve significant, sustainable changes for beneficiaries so they are able to live and thrive in the best conditions.

You support Asmae's work with disadvantaged children in Madagascar. How does this partnership fit in with the Foundation's position?

This partnership naturally found its place among the projects we support because it fits perfectly with our values and position.

We found the idea of a project that viewed education as a whole, in terms of both children and educators, both interesting and very relevant. Funding the production of the teaching tools and methods required to teach literacy or improve standards among vulnerable children as well as being involved in improving educators' teaching skills makes complete sense for the Foundation.

The quality of this partnership can be seen from the results of the work carried out with beneficiaries, but also through the follow-up and the regular discussions between our respective teams.

"YOGA FUNDRAISING AND HUMANITARIAN WEEK": AN EVENT TO SUPPORT THE PEACE PROGRAMME

From 20 to 26 June, Asmae's yoga fundraising and humanitarian week returned for its second consecutive year, in partnership with Yoga For a Cause. The event brought together almost 20 yoga instructors and hundreds of participants in several major cities in France and Switzerland. Participating instructors held free classes, and participants were invited to make a donation in return. There was huge enthusiasm among the participants!

Thanks to the generosity of everyone involved, we raised several thousand euros. This money helped to fund the *Protégeons les Enfants Affectés par les Conflits ou l'Exclusion* (PEACE — protecting children affected by conflict and exclusion) programme in Egypt, Burkina Faso and the Philippines.

with Asmae for this yoga fundraising week. Thanks also to all the instructors and their classes for taking part. See you next year!



Yoga session at Parc de Rentilly in Seine-et-Marne run by Shantala Yoga.

Thanks to Claire Livingstone for extending her partnership



Asmae Association
Sœur Emmanuelle

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