



Asmae Association
Sœur Emmanuelle

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FRANCE

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TO YOUNG MOTHERS
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EDITORIAL

Children at risk don't wear yellow vests.

In these times of national debate, a part of the population is holding demonstrations and raising its voice. Millions of people, however, do not have this power, particularly the 3 million* children who live below the poverty line in France. Yet they are the primary victims of the instability affecting a growing proportion of society.

Asmae welcomes the appointment of Adrien Taquet as Secretary of State for Child Protection in France. We hope he will be able to help the 30,000 homeless children and 264,000 "ASE children" (Aide Sociale à l'Enfance — child welfare) in France and their families be heard.



We would, however, like to alert public decision-makers and the general public on the unacceptable situations with which we are dealing, with insufficient resources.

In France, thousands of children sleep on the streets every night, including infants who have just left maternity units. The problem is magnified in Seine-Saint-Denis, where we house these children, along with their mothers under the age of 25, in a mother-and-child centre, to help them rebuild their lives and make a new start. But department budgets are falling relentlessly. We are therefore being asked to support these families for ever shorter periods and, in practice, to send them back out onto the streets or to other facilities, or to place children separately from their mothers. This reduction in the support period results in untenable situations on a human level and in increased cost for the public authorities in the medium term.



This article appeared in the *Ouest France* newspaper of 20–21 October 2018

But a child at risk is a child at risk, regardless of the budget! And Education and Protection for children are highly "profitable" investments for society, as economists have been demonstrating for a long time.

We also work overseas to provide the most vulnerable people with education and protection for the most vulnerable people; there, too, we are observing a shocking disparity between the richest and poorest groups, both of which are steadily increasing in size, and we encourage the State to uphold its budgetary commitments to support development. Note that only 2%** of the development aid provided by France is allocated to basic education.

We would like to share Asmae's key principles of action, which have been tried and tested over almost 40 years: 1/ See all children as if they were our own, making them a non-negotiable priority, regardless of their cultural, social or religious background. 2/ Take into account all aspects of child development: physical, cognitive, emotional, psychological and social. 3/ Involve and support parents. 4/ Involve beneficiaries; do things with them rather than in their name and involving local actors. 5/ Carry out every action with the ambition of changing lives and promoting effective public policy. **Education is the most powerful tool we have to change the world.**

We don't need to remind you that it brings with it respect for democracy, gender equality, social, economic and human development, peace and security.

2019 is the 30th anniversary of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child. This will provide the new Secretary of State with an opportunity to take a coherent approach to mobilising the Ministries concerned, the departments and the relevant associations.

Let us not forget that a society's level of development is judged according to the way it treats its children.

Sources: * INSEE 2018. ** New report for 2019 by the Coalition Éducation [education coalition], of which Asmae is a member.

By **Alain Barrau**, Chair of the Board of Directors and **Philippine Leroy Beaulieu**, actress and member of Asmae's support committee



Sœur Emmanuelle with two young ragpickers in the Suez Canal (Egypt)

For 39 years, Asmae has been continuing the work of its founder, always staying true to 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 do so, Asmae also works to support families, considering their environment.
- To build the capacity of local actors 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.

Our values

- Trust • Commitment
- Justice • Freedom
- Respect • Solidarity

Asmae in figures

- 49,964 beneficiaries (children and families) across 68 projects in 8 countries
 - 761 sponsors
 - 51 partner organisations
- 123 professionals worldwide
 - 38 volunteers



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LEBANON: RAYON D'ESPOIR — THE STORY OF A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP TO SUPPORT CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.

Convinced that solutions come from people themselves, Asmae works in partnership and offers long-term, tailored support for local actors working in the areas of education and child protection. The aim is to empower local organisations. Here is a focus on Rayon d'Espoir, a Lebanese association which was supported by Asmae until 2018. Ten years of support crowned by great success.

Located in Zahle, the regional capital of the Bekaa, Rayon d'Espoir is a not-for-profit association that runs a medical, psychological and pedagogical institute for children and adolescents with intellectual disabilities, offering an education adapted to their level and mental abilities. It



receives around 150 children and 260 families every year. From 2005 to 2018, Asmae provided structural support for the association, specifically by sending technical advisors, sponsoring children, providing financial support and sending volunteers on solidarity camps.

Six technical advisors appointed by Asmae helped the association to develop its structure. Their missions focused on monitoring and evaluating projects, implementing a financial strategy and strengthening the association's internal organisation after carrying out an organisational assessment.

In 2015, 10 years after it began providing support, Asmae carried out an evaluation of the partnership together with teams from Rayon d'Espoir. The aim was to identify

joint achievements, the level of autonomy reached by the partner, its needs in terms of support, and how the partnership should continue. Based on the conclusions and recommendations of this evaluation, it was decided that the partnership would continue for 3

additional years to support the association into this new phase, both financially (construction of the centre) and technically (implementation of financial strategy for fundraising). This commitment came to an end in 2018. However, Asmae's relationship with its partners does not end when the support stops.

Asmae hopes that, in 2019, Rayon d'Espoir will become a resource partner in the area of disability. For Rayon d'Espoir, this will involve strengthening partners' professional skills and supporting the implementation of projects for disabled people. In exchange, Asmae will provide ad hoc support to Rayon d'Espoir based on needs identified in the context of its development.

Historical background of the partnership between Asmae and Rayon d'Espoir

- 2005** Start of the partnership. 4 volunteers sent on international solidarity workcamp and one technical advisor sent to support structuring.
- 2006** Israel-Lebanon conflict
- 2007** Funding provided and teams trained on the protection of children with disabilities; Technical advisors and volunteers sent on international solidarity workcamp to set up fun educational activities and run holiday camps.
- 2010** 30 children sponsored per year.
- 2011** Funding for "Club Rayon d'Espoir" project began. The Saturday club project arose following the war in 2006, with the aim of providing Rayon d'Espoir pupils with a space in which to express themselves and flourish to help them talk about and combat difficulties and trauma.
- 2013 to 2015** Two technical advisors trained teams in project management, helped to set up an accounts department and supported the Rayon d'Espoir team in the design and launch of a construction project for a new centre.
- 2015**
 - A consultant appointed by Asmae supported Rayon d'Espoir in developing a financial strategy to enhance its fundraising.
 - Joint development of a withdrawal plan in 2015.
 - Work to capitalise on best practices developed by Rayon d'Espoir and sharing of experiences with other Asmae partners in Lebanon.

BURKINA FASO: TEACHING CHILDREN TO READ TO HELP THEM SUCCEED AT SCHOOL!

A reading session in a preschool or primary class would be nothing out of the ordinary in France. But not in Burkina Faso, where the illiteracy rate is almost 80% and a book is considered a luxury. Reading is a key discipline for all other aspects of schooling, so Asmae develops recreative educational methods to help educators teach children how to read.

The beneficiaries in figures

- 9518 children between the ages of 3 and 13 and 88 education professionals have benefited from this project.

- 98% of children who use the picture book master standard pre-literacy and language skills (82% of children who do not use the picture book)
The picture book can therefore improve pupils' skills by 10%.
(source: final internal evaluation)

- School drop-out rates have fallen by 65% on average in state primary schools that have benefited from the project

- 90% of first-year primary educators and teachers are using participatory teaching methods by the end of the trial

- 85% of second- to fifth-year primary teachers are using more participatory teaching methods by the end of the trial



The picture book helps children to develop their imagination and their language. A child who reads is a happy child.

PRESCHOOL EDUCATION IN BURKINA FASO: A KEY CHALLENGE FOR THE FUTURE

In Burkina Faso, only 4% of children between the ages of 3 and 6 are in preschool education¹. The proportion of children aged 3 to 6 who go to school in Burkina Faso is among the lowest in Africa. In addition to difficulties in accessing education, in keeping children at school

and in equity, there is a low level of knowledge acquisition. The discrepancy between the use of national languages in children's home (such as Mooré in Ouagadougou) and the French used in teaching also plays an important role in the difficulties experienced by pupils at school.

Learning in a second language presents a major problem for many children who, not having a good command of French when they start primary school, experience significant learning difficulties as soon as they enter school. At primary level, the school system faces problems with pupils dropping out and repeating years.

In addition, teachers are insufficiently trained, classes are overfilled and there is a shortage of educational materials.

As such, the acquisition of language and reading skills remains a major challenge for the entire educational community in Burkina Faso. **The trial of the picture book and reading classes was launched by Asmae in 2015, in partnership with the Initiative Communautaire Changer la Vie (Change Lives Community Initiative – ICCV) association, in response to the challenges of improving pupils' language and reading skills².** On 31 July 2018, the Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de l'Alphabétisation (Burkina Faso Ministry of National Education and Literacy – MENA) approved this initial pilot phase for the picture book, which was a source of pride for Asmae and its local partner associations!

1 • Burkina Faso - Rapport d'état du système éducatif national: Pour une politique nouvelle dans le cadre de la réforme du continuum d'éducation de base [Burkina Faso Education Country Status Report: For a new policy in the context of reform of the basic education continuum], Ministries for education and training, UNICEF, IPE-Pôle de Dakar - UNESCO, 2017.

2 • See our report in Letter no. 104 on pre-school education in Burkina Faso (www.asmae.fr/ressourcesdocumentaires)



A family's yard transformed into a classroom for children from the Cissin neighbourhood in Ouagadougou (very poor district of the city). A large majority of children in Burkina Faso do not have access to preschool education, which forms the basis for all learning.

FOLLOWING THE SUCCESS OF THE TRIAL, ASMAE IS TO ROLL OUT THE PROJECT NATIONALLY

Given the contextual challenges and positive results of the first phase of the project, Asmae and its partner ICCV wanted to start a second phase. The Agence Française de Développement [French Development Agency] agreed to continue the project. The second phase started in August 2018 for a three years' period.

The aim of this second phase is to extend the use of the picture book to other types of preschool education and to support the MENA in rolling it out nationally. It will also involve putting those involved with the project in contact with NGOs that develop and test new educational methods and tools in order to create synergies within the area of education, under the supervision of the ministry. Almost 300 education professionals and 12 representatives of the MENA will benefit from this project.

In phase I of the project, the ICCV teams tested the reading classes method in state schools and informally in families' yards. This trial of the reading classes helped to create a link between the formal and informal in order to develop or reinforce a taste for books among children in primary school. Community initiatives to promote language and reading, such as reading classes, will therefore be developed by ICCV and six partner libraries

during this second phase. These initiatives will involve the community and families, but also schools and institutional representatives (municipal library, ministry of culture). Through these activities, the project aims to reach at least 3500 children between the ages of 3 and 13.

The strategy for this project is based on complementary initiatives being implemented at institutional (ministry and schools) and community level (libraries, the community) so as to have an effect on children's general environment with their overall development in mind.

The project was launched with the involvement of our institutional partners and civil society on 6 November 2018 in Ouagadougou.



The content of the publication comes under the sole responsibility of Asmae - Association Sœur Emmanuelle and cannot be considered to reflect the opinion of the Agence Française de Développement in any way.

FRANCE: ASMAE OFFERS A ROOF AND A FUTURE TO YOUNG MOTHERS IN DIFFICULTY.

In France, around 22% of homeless people living alone are women – a figure which does not include single women with children. More and more of them are calling 115 (Emergency Shelter Helpline)¹. The number of homeless women has soared in recent years. In Paris, for example, it has increased by almost 70% in ten years. A quarter of them are only able to find refuge in emergency accommodation. The situation is alarming. Ten years on from the death of Sœur Emmanuelle, her fight is more relevant than ever. In Bobigny, Asmae welcomes young mothers in difficulty and their children at the La Chrysalide mother-and-child centre.

LA CHRYSALIDE: HELPING MOTHER AND CHILD TO FLOURISH.

La Chrysalide was opened in 2006 in the presence of Sœur Emmanuelle, shortly before her death. Its objective is to combat the instability that threatens mothers and children who are victims of violence or whose families have broken down.

La Chrysalide is a housing facility where 19 families live in self-contained accommodation. It's a stopping place that provides a proper break on a bumpy road. Beneficiaries stay at the facility for 26 months on average and receive support to help them with parenting, integration and their children's schooling. The aim is to give young mothers a break to put them in the best position to envisage a future again and take the best possible approach to their children's education and development, just like Jasmine, a mother of 4, who says that the centre has "changed her life" and who is now "preparing a training to become a police officer" while her children are at

the crèche. For example, there are workshops for sharing and learning about reading books and nursery rhymes.

Second chances and a determination to come through the other side are values that were demonstrated by Sœur Emmanuelle and that are put into practice at La Chrysalide. Jasmine keeps in mind something that Sœur Emmanuelle said to her: "She told us it was important to be a good mother and that we shouldn't be afraid to believe in our dreams. Without the mother-and-child centre, I wouldn't be the person I am today."

To date, more than 100 mothers have been able to find accommodation and work, and more than 100 children are in normal schooling.

¹ • Source: SAMU social [emergency service for

“

La Chrysalide has everything you need. We stayed there for 4 years — the children were toddlers. They did lots of things with the nursery assistants: activities, outings...

They all went together to the crèche to play. They had everything they needed. It was pure joy, because when I was staying at the hotel there was nothing, no activities for them.

“

**Kani,
former resident
and mum to
Boubou, 9,
and Foussey, 7.**

the homeless] Paris, 2019.

To find out more about the projects run at La Chrysalide, read the issues below at www.asmae.fr/

Documentation resources:
Letter no. 109, January 2018
Letter no. 102, September 2015



At la Chrysalide, each family has its own space in which to rebuild the foundations for an independent life.

PROJECT STATUS UPDATE

Each issue gives us the opportunity to update you on large-scale projects supported by public funders.

Egypt: support for local associations working with children with disabilities

In Egypt, as in other parts of the world, children with disabilities are victims of educational exclusion. A study¹ has shown the relationship between children's disabilities and educational exclusion, violence and various other types of abuse. There are over 4 million children in this situation². That is why, in 2017, Asmae launched a major project to support children with disabilities in order to raise the general level of awareness in Egypt. This project is being run in partnership with Basmat Amal, a local association.

Based on the results, Asmae and the European Union decided this year to extend the project by 7 months to December 2019 (the project was originally scheduled to end in May 2019), with a shift in focus for some activities. Most of these activities relate to technical support for other associations working in the area of disability, strengthening collaborations with schools to work towards inclusion for children with disabilities, creating and distributing communication materials, organising conferences and developing a national reference framework to standardise action programmes.

1 • Hala Ibrahim Awadalla et al., Determinants of maternal adaptation to mentally disabled children in El Minia, Egypt, Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal

2 • According to estimates; it is not possible to give an exact number because of the difficulty to reach families.



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3 QUESTIONS FOR THE TURING FOUNDATION



Minke Van Rees

The Turing Foundation provided financial support to Asmae for the trial of the picture book and reading classes. Minke Van Rees, Director for Education and Nature, tells us about the Foundation's motivations.

Why did you decide to support Asmae?

Burkina Faso is one of our eight countries of intervention, and the aim of this project is to improve the quality of education, which aligns with the objectives we set out in our education programme. More specifically, we liked the fact that local communities were involved from the start in both developing and implementing the project. We also think that the authorities' contribution to this project is particularly relevant in ensuring it has a sustainable impact.

What does this partnership bring to your foundation?

We select partners that are experts in the area of education but that also have a good understanding of the operational context and have developed a strong local network. Asmae ticks all the boxes. We need partners that are open, communicative and critical, and we think that Asmae has all of those characteristics.

Why is education an important subject for you?

The founders want to contribute to developing and strengthening the middle class. They are convinced that an educated population is the main prerequisite for achieving this objective. It will allow people to go from survival mode to a feeling of confidence in their abilities to go further. Great progress can be made if you have the benefit of choice, because the majority of the population will endeavour to give the best of itself, which will have a positive impact on the community.

REGULAR SUPPORT

CRUCIAL FOR CHILDREN AND BENEFICIAL US AND YOU.

FOR YOU:

The choice is yours:

you decide how much and for how long, and you are free to end your support at any time.

A single annual tax receipt:

your donations for the previous year are grouped on a single tax receipt, which you receive at the start of the year.

Reduced management costs:

more of your donation can be used for our work in the field.

FOR US:

Help to secure the future of our projects:

your regular support allows us to offer our partners a commitment to actions over a period of time.

Help us to make savings:

your regular support will mean we have fewer tax receipts to produce. Lower management and operating costs mean more money for Asmae's mission and actions. And it's good for the planet, too.

Find all our latest news at: www.asmae.fr

Asmae_ONG soeur.emmanuelle Youtube: Asmae Association Sœur Emmanuelle

Association formed under the French law of 1901 –

Recognised to be of public interest – Authorised to receive bequests

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