



Asmae Association  
Sœur Emmanuelle

# La lettre

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## MADAGASCAR

**PROMOTING  
ACCESS TO  
QUALITY  
EDUCATION  
FOR CHILDREN  
EXCLUDED FROM  
THE SCHOOL  
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**30 YEARS OF THE ICRC:  
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CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN FRANCE.**

# EDITORIAL

## Tough decisions for a confident approach to the future

Since 2015, Asmae has begun implementing an ambitious strategy with the aim of carrying out projects with a greater impact on beneficiaries as part of a consistent strategy tailored to each country. To do this, we have strengthened our teams and co-created exciting projects with our local partners.

As part of this approach, Asmae has invested in strengthening its teams in terms of both quality and quantity, as well as staff safety and standardising its administrative position in each of its countries of intervention.



This policy of professionalisation has made it possible to create a very positive dynamic in our countries of intervention with civil society organisations, funding agencies and representatives of public authorities, resulting in lasting changes for the education and protection of the most vulnerable children and their families: child refugees from Syria, street children in Manila and Antananarivo, and disabled and excluded children in Burkina Faso and Egypt, for example.

These projects were designed to be funded by donations from the public and national and international public and private donors. However, despite a significant increase in our financial resources in various areas, to date, there has not been enough to cover all our expenses.

As such, after 20 years in India and 10 in Mali, as we come to the end of a jointly planned period of collaboration with most of our partners to ensure that children and their families continue to be monitored, the Board has decided, with regret, to withdraw the association from these two countries in the first quarter of 2020.

In addition to these decisions regarding our social mission, we will make savings at head office by reducing operating and fundraising expenses.

The association fully intends to continue its work in France and in 5 countries overseas – Burkina Faso, Egypt, Lebanon, Madagascar and the Philippines – continuing with the strategy in place and reorganising resources, ensuring they remain effective.

On behalf of the Board and our teams, I would like to offer my sincerest thanks for your faith and loyalty.

With you at our side, we can look to the future with confidence and enthusiasm, staying true to our values and proud of our work.

Onwards and upwards! For every child whose future will be shaped by our combined commitment: Yalla!

By **Alain Barrau**, Chair of the Board of Directors



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 promote child development through a global approach. To achieve this, Asmae also works to support families with their environments firmly in mind.
- 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 share information.

### Our values

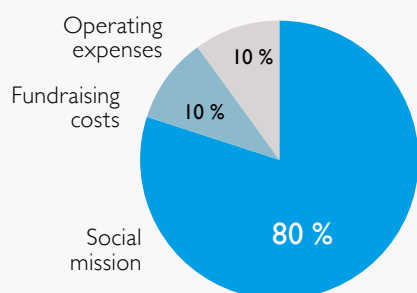
- Trust • Commitment
- An ideal of justice • Freedom
- Respect • Solidarity

### Asmae in figures

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

## FUNDRAISING FROM THE PUBLIC: HOW ARE YOUR DONATIONS

UP TO 2022



Our aim for the coming years is to rationalise our resources in order to allocate an increasingly large share to the social mission.



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# MADAGASCAR: PROMOTING ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN EXCLUDED FROM THE SCHOOL SYSTEM.

According to a study conducted by Unicef<sup>1</sup>, one million children aged 6 to 10 are excluded from education in Madagascar, so schooling is a huge challenge. There are many reasons for this educational exclusion: parents with financial difficulties, children with disabilities, low quality of education available and inaccessible schools, for example. Since 2001, Asmae has been working alongside its local partners to respond to these major challenges. In 2018, 11 local associations and more than 3500 children and families benefited from our work. In this issue of the Letter, we focus on Manda, a local association based in Antananarivo and a partner of Asmae since 2009.

Founded in 1999, this NGO works with street children in Antananarivo, offering them a preschool education and literacy classes with a view to getting them back into education at a state primary school. Manda has a preschool education and professional specialisation centre with a weaving workshop and carpentry classes, among other things, and an overnight shelter. It also offers parents socio-economic assistance.

Since 2009, Asmae has regularly appointed Technical Advisors to work with Manda. They provide 2 different types of support:

- **Technical support:** Individual and group support for educators, social workers and the partner (training, workshops, follow-up visits, information sharing among professionals) in the areas of literacy, specialised education and family support.

**Giving makes a difference!**

**Our donors are generous!**

In July 2019, the Manda Centre opened a brand-new building funded by Mr Hervé Odermatt, a major donor of Asmae's. Named "La maison de Claire et Jeanne" (Claire and Jeanne's house) after the donor's wife and his mother, the centre will provide training for 40 young people every year. Various types of training will be offered: sewing, weaving, raffia work, chicken keeping and basketwork for girls, and aluminium work and woodwork for boys.

Three quarters of young people find employment after completing this type of training.

This support is provided as part of the project funded by the Agence Française de Développement (French Development Agency): "Promoting educational and social inclusion among vulnerable children in Antananarivo".

- **Organisational support:** Supporting the partner in its management and governance.

<sup>1</sup> • Educational exclusion and means of inclusion in primary education in Madagascar, Unicef, 2012

Opening ceremony for the buildings in July 2019.



# 30 YEARS OF THE ICRC: ASMAE'S WORK TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN FRANCE.

*On 20 November 2019, the International Convention on the Rights of the Child celebrates its 30th anniversary. Adopted on 20 November 1989 by the United Nations General Assembly with the aim of recognising and protecting the specific rights of children, this text extends the concept of human rights to children, based on the model of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This text recognises fundamental rights for children, such as the right to non-discrimination and the best interests of the child, as well as the right to education.*

**Despite the fact that it has existed for 30 years, this text is still not well known.**

In 2015, 62% of children in France had not heard of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, and 71% did not know its content<sup>2</sup>. The ICRC is Asmae's frame of reference. The association based its operation framework on this text. It guides the association's actions to support children and

their families through various projects. More recently, Asmae's Child Protection Policy was created based on several reference documents, primarily the International Convention on the Rights of the Child.

To help increase awareness of the text, in 2014, Asmae set up the Yalla! For Children's Rights project. This project is a citizenship and international solidarity education

programme to raise awareness and mobilise children in relation to their rights in the world. Asmae's teams work within educational institutions to give children the means to find out about and understand their rights, become aware of inequalities in the application of these rights and become actors for solidarity.

The Yalla! For Children's Rights project is first and foremost a project

Volunteers on civic service placements with Asmae tell pupils about children's rights.



set up for young people and run by young volunteers on civic service placements who contact schools and run the workshops. The awareness-raising sessions end with the suggestion of the pupils taking action, organising collections or awareness and information sessions for other pupils or adults. The children are fully involved in the project, acting on the message initiated by Asmae. This educational project also offers an environment for reflection, and activities that complement conventional school learning methods. It encourages children to participate, discuss and cooperate as they carry out a concrete act of solidarity. In these workshops, pupils take on board the values of solidarity

and commitment to contribute to the construction of a fairer world.

In 2018, more than 2196 pupils received training at almost 128 partner educational institutions. Around half of these institutions then wanted to go on to get the pupils properly involved through solidarity activities (fundraising, children's rights ambassadors etc.). There was a positive reaction from teaching staff in the project evaluations.

1 • International Convention on the Rights of the Child

2 • COFRADE, *Les adultes et les enfants connaissent-ils les droits de l'enfant?* (Are adults and children familiar with the rights of the child?), press file, 13/11/2015

## YALLA! IN BUSINESS

Since 2018, Asmae has been trying to raise awareness among adults too, by expanding its work on the Yalla! project to business. This gives employees the opportunity to take part in workshops to find out about children's rights and their applications in the world. In 2019, three major companies have got involved, namely Google, Laboratoires Expanscience's head office and its historic production site. Aside from the success of the awareness training, the sessions provoked plenty of emotions, surprises and questions.

Awareness-raising workshop at Google France in June 2019



**"MAKING YOUNG PEOPLE  
AWARE OF THEIR RIGHTS  
ALSO MAKES THEM MORE  
SOCIAALLY AWARE."**

**Interview with Elisabeth Rastoin,  
teacher at Jeanne d'Arc school  
in Colombes.**

### **Why did you decide to hold awareness training at your school?**

I always find it quite interesting to see how pupils behave when they are involved in a project that is not strictly academic. It's a different way of teaching.

### **What has been the impact of the Yalla project in your school?**

The issue of children's rights has made the pupils aware of how lucky they are, because children's rights were a totally abstract concept for them. It has also helped them to develop their ability to work in a group, because they then went on to train younger children at the school. Some of them also understood how useful and necessary solidarity projects are.

### **How did the children find the workshop?**

The 15- and 16-year-olds felt valued and responsible, while the primary school children loved playing the game. They learnt things because the workshops were fun. The power of this project also comes from the fact that the people talking to the children are young themselves! The children learnt that having rights also means having obligations. For example, the right to education brings with it the obligation to go to school.

**For information about the Yalla!  
For Children's Rights project, please contact:**

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Project Officer, by telephone on +33 (0)1 70 32 02 65 or by email at [pdeschamps@asmae.fr](mailto:pdeschamps@asmae.fr)

# INDIA: PREVENTING AND COMBATING CHILD MARRIAGE.

*A girl under the age of 15 is married somewhere in the world every 7 seconds<sup>1</sup>. This hinders her development, and deprives her of her education, her health and her future. Sadly, millions of children around the world are forced into marriage without being given the right to choose. In India, along with 2 local associations in the State of Tamil Nadu, Asmae began a project in April 2019 to prevent and combat this phenomenon. Here, we take a closer look at the project.*

## DESPITE LEGISLATION, 40% OF THE WORLD'S CHILD MARRIAGES TAKE PLACE IN INDIA.

It is the second worst record in Southeast Asia, after Bangladesh. Child marriage in India remains a common ancestral practice, and seriously harms children's development and futures. It results in a high school drop-out rate, negative effects on health and well-being and failure to achieve professional qualifications, as well as financial dependence and exposure to all kinds of abuse, including violence and exploitation. **It is a major obstacle to children's, and particularly girls', education.**

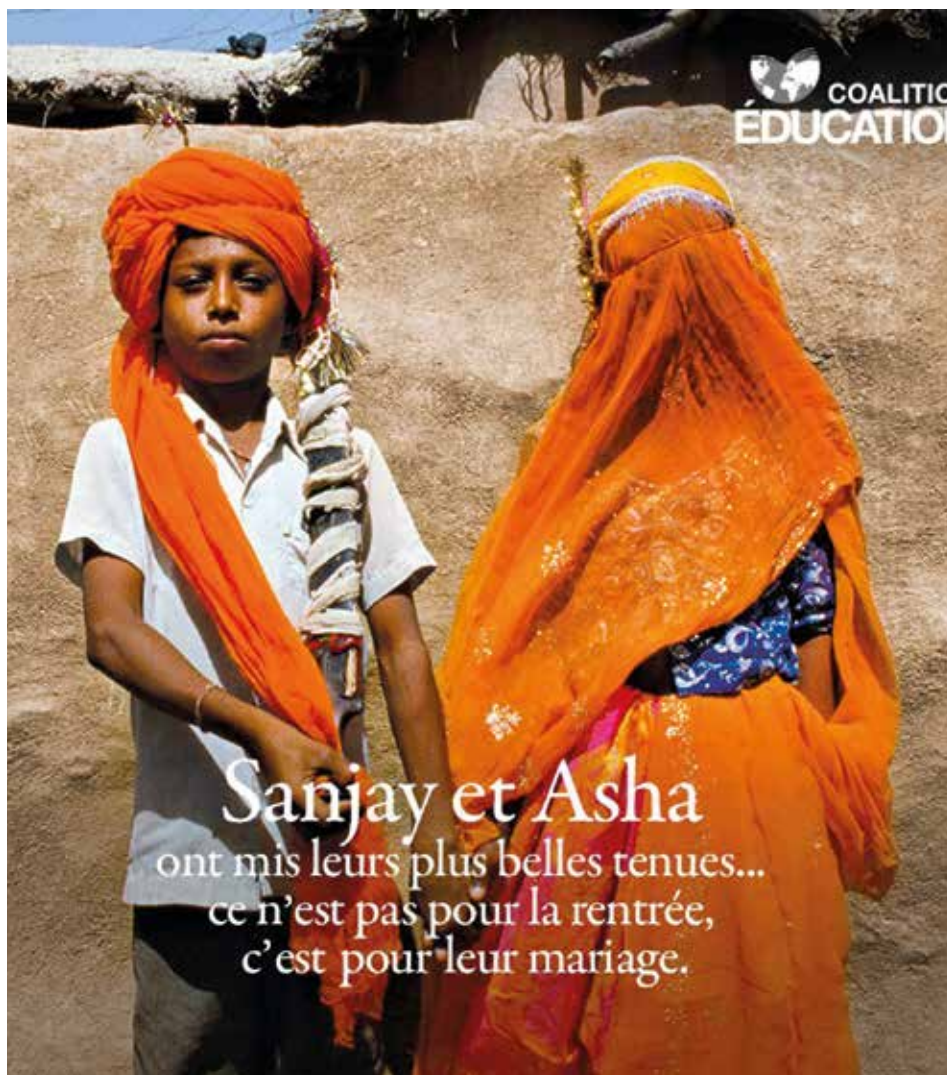
However, child marriage has been illegal in India since 1929. Women must be at least 18 to get married, and men at least 21. In 2006, the law was updated, with parents or older spouses risking up to two years in prison for organising or authorising marriages that do not comply with the law. Unfortunately, the law doesn't seem to have made much of an impression on the Indian people, and child marriage remains firmly rooted in society.

Thanks to the will of the Indian State and action taken by civil society and international organisations, the situation is improving. Ten years ago, according to Unicef, 47% of girls were married before the age of 18 in India. The figure is now 27%, or almost 1.5 million. Aside from the law,

this reduction has been attributed to better access to education and greater consideration of marriage and traditional cultures.

<sup>1</sup> • Plan International, <https://www.plan-international.fr/info/actualites/campagnes/notre-lutte-contre-les-mariages-precoces>, consulted 11 July 2019.

(c)Coalition Éducation, a group of 16 civil society organisations in France working to protect the right to education for all, of which Asmae is a member.





Asmae and Arunodhaya, a partner based in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, make young people aware of their rights. Once trained, the young people are actively involved in promoting their rights.

## THROUGH ITS WORK, ASMAE HOPES TO CONTRIBUTE ACTIVELY TO ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE IN INDIA.

In the State of Tamil Nadu, in the district of Dharmapuri, Asmae supports two local associations (Arunodhaya Centre for Street and Working Children and Vision for Social Development) that are already working on this issue. This support is provided in cooperation with the district and State authorities, as well as local organisations.

### The beneficiaries

- 3272 girls and boys between the ages of 6 and 18.
- 50 teachers from 9 state schools.
- 14 groups of women (168 women in total) in 14 villages.
- 14 child protection committees.
- 30 community leaders.



### The key objectives of the project are:

- To help create an environment conducive to protecting girls and boys against early marriage within communities.
- To increase the number of girls enrolled at secondary school and encourage them to continue their studies.
- To make children (girls and boys), parents, teachers, school management teams, community leaders and local authorities aware of children's rights to encourage them to commit to preventing and combating child marriage.
- To attract attention and raise awareness among all district and State authorities to encourage improved enforcement of laws and policies to combat child marriage.

## PROJECT STATUS UPDATE

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

### Lebanon: education and support for refugee children and adolescents.

Since 1986, Asmae has been supporting Lebanese NGOs working in the education and child protection sectors. In 2018, with the support of the French Development Agency, Asmae launched a programme to provide education and support for refugee children and adolescents in the Chatila and Bourj el-Barajneh camps in Beirut. This project is based on the development of new partnerships with two associations: Basmeh & Zeitooneh and Jafrat Foundation for Relief and Youth Development. This programme builds on the success of another project carried out in partnership with the French Development Agency, with which Asmae helped the Hermel Cultural Association to support young refugees in north Lebanon, as well as the Alpha association in south Lebanon. This experience allowed Asmae to develop its expertise in educational and psychosocial care for child refugees.

The aim of the project is to strengthen the capacities of associations set up by the Syrian communities in Lebanon through activities linked to childhood and adolescence and training for around 50 members of partners' teaching staff. This translates into access to quality education services for 900 children at the end of the project.



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# 3 QUESTIONS FOR LA FONDATION MONOPRIX



Karine Viel

Since June 2019, la Fondation Monoprix has provided financial support to our La Chrysalide facility. Karine Viel, Director of Sustainable Development and Chief Representative of the Foundation, explains the reasons for this support.

## Why did you decide to support Asmae?

To increase its involvement in inner city areas, Monoprix created its own Foundation in 2009.

Its aim is to strengthen social connections in towns and cities, and it has been working for 10 years to break down urban isolation and provide access to basic, essential products. The Chrysalide project in Bobigny falls exactly within the scope of our areas of intervention by targeting single women who are pregnant or have children and whose social connections have broken down because they are homeless.

## What does this partnership bring to your Foundation?

The number of single women on the street is increasing. It is unthinkable that they are living in these conditions with children for the obvious safety reasons, but also because of the isolation. The Chrysalide [chrysalis] project is aptly named: it offers women a cocoon in which to rebuild their lives, with accommodation and support tailored to preserving the bond between mother and child, among other things. The Foundation is therefore proud to be able to contribute to this initiative.

## Why is urban isolation an important subject for you?

According to the survey we carried out with IPSOS\* to mark our 10th anniversary, more than 9 out of 10 people think that the modern world contributes to loneliness. This hidden yet growing phenomenon therefore needs to be treated with consideration. La Fondation Monoprix tries to respond to it by supporting associations that act to forge social connections. And over the next 5 years, our work will focus on isolation on the streets.

\*Ipsos is a French survey firm and a global market and opinion research company.

## BEQUESTS, GIFTS AND LIFE INSURANCE TRANSFER AN ASSET TO CONTINUE SŒUR EMMANUELLE'S WORK

By making a bequest to Asmae, you are passing on Sœur Emmanuelle's fight, determination and values. Catherine Alvarez, Director General of Asmae, who worked alongside her for 17 years in her relentless fight for children's rights, explains why bequests are so important to Asmae.

### What is your connection to Sœur Emmanuelle?

It was a very close connection. She recruited me 29 years ago, when she first started her association, and we went along together with the Board for many years. Sœur Emmanuelle was very involved in implementing the association's strategic plan.

### Can you tell us about some of the testators' motivations that have made an impression on you?

Two main motivations come up fairly often. First of all, Sœur Emmanuelle was an exemplary personality and many people want to support her work by making a contribution. Alongside that first motivation, many testators are interested in the cause of children's rights. They want to give children in great difficulty the means to improve their lives and to succeed through education.

### Why are bequests important to Asmae?

Bequests and donations from the public fund more than 70% of our overseas projects. They also allow us to raise funds to complete funding for projects carried out with institutional donors. We can therefore organise projects on a larger scale that bring about lasting change for the education and protection of children in our 8 countries of intervention.



Catherine Alvarez

Please do not hesitate to call me on my direct line on +33 (0)1 70 32 02 51 so that I can answer any questions you may have, or arrange to meet you – in strict confidence and without any commitment on your part – if you need personalised advice in order to make the next step in your plans to donate. You can also email me at [legs@asmae.fr](mailto:legs@asmae.fr)

Asmae is an association formed under the French law of 1901,  
Recognised to be of public interest – Authorised to receive bequests



Find all our latest news at: [www.asmae.fr](http://www.asmae.fr)

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