



Asmae Association
Sœur Emmanuelle

La lettre

No 115 • January 2020

LEBANON

**TRAVEL JOURNAL
OF BRUNO COURTINE,
ASMAE SUPPORT
COMMITTEE MEMBER**

Page 3

SPECIAL REPORT

**EGYPT:
PROMOTING DISABLED
CHILDREN'S RIGHTS**



EDITORIAL

The second half of 2019 brought sad news.

Our Chair, Alain Barrau, suffered an accident that means he will not be able to continue with his role. As interim Chair, elected by the directors on 10 September 2019, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Alain Barrau for the work he did for Asmae and the time he gave to our association during a period of development and restructuring. All members of the association join me in wishing him all the best for his recovery.

Our Country Representative in Egypt, Shérif Abdel Aziz Ahmed, has died following an illness. We are very grateful to him for the projects he ran in Egypt and for the contacts he developed for Asmae. Our thoughts are with his wife, his young children and the Asmae team in Egypt, which he had led with commitment and professionalism since 5 March 2018.



This issue of the Letter focuses partly on our projects in Egypt and Lebanon. These two countries, which were the birthplace of the association, are currently the scene of major protests that are a source of concern for our teams, delaying the progress of our projects.

Lebanese people of all faiths have taken to the streets together to demand an end to corruption, the return of stolen sums of money to Lebanon and institutional change. At the time of writing, these protests are showing no signs of diminishing, leaving the country in gridlock. But the Lebanese people are in agreement that, for the first time, they are united by something beyond their religious affiliation, which is completely new for them, and a cause for hope.

I have just returned from Lebanon, visiting the refugee camps in Beirut, and I was struck by several things:

- The situation of Syrian and Palestinian child refugees in the camps is unsustainable: access to school, care for children traumatised by the war they have fled... nothing is available.
- There are good community initiatives emerging within the camps to help children, but they can only work with the limited means at their disposal.
- Asmae's work in the field, supported by the French Development Agency, is essential to transform these initiatives into structured, high-impact programmes.

In Egypt, civil society has also taken to the streets to protest against the authoritarian regime of President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, which led to a number of arrests during the month of September.

However, we must see in this a boost in public mobilisation and hope, especially for future generations. The young people who are the first to take action have the desire to shake up politics and society, for their own future, but above all for their children.

We must trust in youth; as Sœur Emmanuelle used to say, "it is incredible when it is motivated".

By **Denis Legat**, Chair of the Board of Directors.



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

For 40 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



Quarterly newsletter published by Asmae – Association Sœur Emmanuelle; Siret (company registration number): 347 403 156 000 40; APE (business activity code): 8899B; Address: Immeuble le Méliès, 259-261 rue de Paris, 93100 Montreuil; Tel.: +33 (0)1 70 32 02 50; Fax: +33 (0)1 55 86 32 81; Website: www.asmae.fr; Email: infos@asmae.fr; Chair of the association and Editor: Denis Legat; Editorial board: Adrien Sallez, Alain Juste Ngabo, Catherine Alvarez, Catherine Blanc, Emeric Gadrat; Photo credits: Asmae, Corentin Fohlen, Georges Saillard, Véronique Lecomte, Catherine Blanc; Layout: Olivier Dechaud; Printing: Imprimerie Vincent, December 2019; Copyright: January 2020, ISSN 1254-2865



10-31-1087 / Certifié PEFC / Ce produit est issu de forêts gérées durablement et de sources contrôlées. / pefc-france.org

LEBANON: TRAVEL JOURNAL OF BRUNO COURTINE, ASMAE SUPPORT COMMITTEE MEMBER

In September 2019, Bruno Courtine, lawyer and Asmae support committee member, went to Lebanon to visit our projects there. The aim of his trip was to gain a better understanding of our activities in order to mobilise his network to support Asmae. He sent us this report.

South Beirut, 26 September 2019, 10 am.

We enter the infamous Chatila camp. The heat is already noticeable, although it is not the same now we are in late September. The minibus taking us there fights its way through the crowded, narrow streets as best it can.

Officially, there are 40,000 people surviving in this 1-km² space, created and maintained by the stupidity of mankind since 1948.

But how many of these people are there in reality, under house arrest for no crime other than having been born Palestinian or Syrian?

50% of Chatila's population is under 25. They have no rights, other than the right to live in this camp of misery. They are not allowed to access the majority of jobs and many of them have no documents.

So where are they to find the hope to give them that spark of energy snuffed out by the drug dealers so

that they don't disturb the neighbours, with the shameful blessing of the international community?

After a short stroll among smashed up cars, unauthorised street traders and groups of men and young children leaning against miserable bars smoking cigarettes, we reach our partner's school.

Children rush to join their class. They are aged between 6 and 12. They are impeccably dressed compared to the children we passed in the street. Here, going to school is an honour, especially since the budget for the United Nations programme was cut, under pressure from the US. In the space of a year, the waiting list for enrolments has gone from 15 to 3000 children, depriving them of the only hope they might have left.

Here in Lebanon, Asmae's role is to support programmes partly co-financed by the French Development Agency to support local associations. Its aim is to act in a supporting role



Bruno Courtine, lawyer and Asmae support committee member.

and not to replace local initiatives. The Asmae team is involved in training and supporting teachers, many of whom were not allowed to take a university course because it was prohibited. Those who were able to find a way to obtain a qualification are quick to turn their backs on this hellhole for good. And who can blame them!

Asmae has also developed a support programme for children who have suffered all kinds of abuse inflicted by the folly of mankind.

In the camps, Asmae helps to create networks to ensure that children are taken care of and protected through points of contact who can identify critical situations in these lawless areas.

We reach the school rooftop, which serves as a playground. The children explode with joy and my eyes fill with tears.

There is joy everywhere, and the teachers, unqualified as they may be, share with these impoverished children the authority and love that has been missing from their lives. They shout, they sing, and then everything stops when the bell sounds. They fist bump and high five as they leave the yard in perfect lines...

My intention is only to provide a simple report. That is why I came here, as well as to say that now is the time for everyone who reads this message to act.

You can't imagine how important that donation is, however modest it may be, to those local associations inspired by the spirit of Sœur Emmanuelle and supported by Asmae.

**You can find the full report at
www.asmae.fr**

In spite of the poverty, there is joy everywhere. As well as education, the teachers share with the children the authority and love that has been missing from their lives.



EGYPT: PROMOTING THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.

In Egypt, children with disabilities are one of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. They face discrimination, often finding themselves excluded from the school system, and their opportunities to take part in social activities remain limited. They are often hidden away by their parents, and become invisible to society. Unable to access education, these children become more vulnerable, perpetuating the vicious circle of exclusion, which in turn creates a higher risk of incapacity. For the small number of children with disabilities in school, the learning environment is not inclusive and obstacles to accessing education and learning remain, both within and outside the education system.

To respond to this need, Asmae launched a project aimed at civil society in Upper Egypt and Cairo.

The project ran from June 2017 to December 2019, thanks to co-financing from the European Union and donations from the public, with the aim of improving access to and quality of services offered

to children with disabilities, as well as enhancing the collaboration between civil society organisations, communities and local authorities in order to better support disability.

Through this project, Asmae supported 3 local associations: Basmat Amal, based in Cairo, and the training and development association

and Saint-Vincent-de-Paul association based in Luxor.

After almost 31 months, the project has made it possible to:

- Provide high-quality care for more than **160 children with disabilities**, based on an adapted approach to teaching.

Claire Brundle, on the left, a Technical Advisor on specialised education appointed by Asmae, observes and trains an educator. ©Corentin Fohlen



- Strengthen the teaching skills of **32 educators** to improve care for children with disabilities, by providing **support from an Asmae Technical Advisor in classes**.
- Provide **two teaching resource rooms** for **40 pupils with learning difficulties in two state primary schools**.
- Raise awareness of rights to education and protection among **70 parents**.
- Raise awareness of inclusive education among **19 teachers**.
- Provide awareness-raising sessions on disability for **500 pregnant women**.
- Organise outdoor activities, events and camps for **65 families and their children with disabilities**.
- Provide 2 Asmae Technical Advisors on specialised education and child protection to support 3 associations.
- Publish a reference guide on subjects linked to technical and organisational areas of intervention related to high-quality education for disabled children and distribute it to educators.

"NOW, I LIKE SCHOOL BETTER THAN EVER"

That is how Samaa, a 12-year-old beneficiary, described how she felt after her school obtained teaching resources to support children with disabilities and learning difficulties.

Samaa is one of the thousands of children with learning difficulties enrolled in state schools open to all children in Cairo.

Equipping classrooms with suitable teaching resources not only helps teachers to respond to the specific learning needs of their pupils, but also gives them the space and tools to ensure that the learning process is enjoyable for the children.



© Catherine Blanc

GIVE ME THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION! A NATIONAL FACEBOOK CAMPAIGN TO RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE RIGHT OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES TO EDUCATION.

To raise public awareness in Egypt the rights of children with disabilities, Asmae, in collaboration with our partner associations, has run a campaign on Facebook. According to statistics, this is the channel with the greatest impact in Egypt.

In addition to the general public, the campaign mainly targeted parents of children with disabilities with the aim of raising awareness and giving them the tools to defend their children's right to access an education adapted to their needs. Through pictures and videos, it highlighted inspiring stories of children with disabilities, as well as providing testimonies from their parents and Asmae's partners. The campaign was launched on Thursday

31 October and has been seen by 526,730 Facebook users. 264,773 people have watched the campaign videos and 12,738 have taken action by sharing comments or leaving their own.



© Visuals of the campaign carried out within the framework of the project, to raise awareness of the rights of children with disabilities.



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 European Union in any way.

INDIA: FOLLOWING THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF OUR DEPARTURE, LETTERS OF THANKS FROM OUR PARTNERS

In India, as part of our withdrawal, an end-of-collaboration seminar was held with our partners from 23 to 25 October 2019 in Kannur, Kerala. Managers from 6 of our long-standing partner organisations (Arunodhaya, Bsac, MACT, Seed, TMCP and Swadhar) had the opportunity to meet and share their achievements and successes of the last few years, highlighting Asmae's contribution and support. Three of them sent us lovely letters of thanks, pointing out how Asmae has added value. We are delighted to share them with you, because it is thanks to your generosity that these projects were possible.



Dear Carmen,
(Asmae's current representative in India)

Greetings from Tara Mobile Creches Pune!

I understand how difficult it was for you to write this letter. And it was probably just as difficult for the director general of Asmae to make this decision, as well.

A partnership of almost 20 years is about to be put on hold. I say "on hold" because I hope that our relationship as partners will continue in many ways, ways we can't even imagine, in the future.

It has been an invaluable time for us at TMCP. The Child to Child project started by Asmae over ten years ago and the children's parliament project that followed developed to become truly participatory projects - a culture that has spread to all members of staff, children and young parents that are part of the TMCP family.

The early childhood project has also seen many mothers AND fathers from migrant communities strengthen their skills to become a real support network for each other, as well as examples for other parents of infants and young children. Children falling behind with their development have been identified very early on and have been motivated by the nursing staff to reach the appropriate stages of development for their age. Disabled children have received therapeutic care.

In addition to the financial support we have received, we have had continuous support to enhance our projects in terms of strengthening skills.

All the Asmae representatives who have visited us have embodied the association's vision. The Asmae coordinators in Maharashtra have given us the freedom to develop our projects based on the needs and requests of the beneficiaries and supported us throughout, giving us guidance and assistance where needed.

The annual partner meetings were also an opportunity to learn best practices from Asmae's partner organisations.

Overall, at TMCP, we all agree that the partnership with Asmae has allowed us not only to empower our partners in the field (the beneficiaries and their parents), but also to develop as an organisation. We are deeply grateful to Asmae for that!

TMCP has received Asmae's support for so many years. Now, it is our turn to offer it... Our coordinators will be delighted to share their experience of developing our "SAKSHAM" (participation) and "SANGOPAN" (early childhood protection and education) projects and train other organisations whose beneficiaries have similar needs.

And please remember that TMCP will be here whenever Asmae needs help...

My sincere thanks for all the support you have provided to TMCP to date.

Best wishes for this wonderful journey! Keep in touch!

On behalf of the children, parents and staff of TMCP,

Pranita Madkaikar
Chief Executive Officer
Tara Mobile Crèches, Pune

www.taramobilecrechespune.org



ARUNODHAYA

Centre for Street and Working Children

Ms. Catherine Alvarez
Ms. VIRGIL D'SAMI
Executive Director
France

15/9/2, Bazaar Street,
Royapuram, Chennai - 600 013.
☎ : 044-42632264, Fax : 25902283
e-mail : arunodhayaorg@gmail.com

Date : 5/8/19

Dear Ms Alvarez,

Greetings from the Arunodhaya centre for street children in Chennai, India.

We received your message of 25 July 2019 regarding the termination of Asmae's operations in India. Although we were prepared for this eventuality, it is a little difficult to accept.

I feel a strong need to put on record the positive and productive experience we have had with Asmae over a period of almost 18 years. Asmae provided support to Arunodhaya when we launched our first child participation initiatives. We received an enormous amount of support to enhance our child participation interventions, acquired new knowledge and had the opportunity to share our experience with other partners, and we were happy that there were others doing the same thing. Asmae's support brought together children's organisations in Tamil Nadu under the banner of two historic events: the Forum for the promotion of child participation and the Federation of children's movements for the right to participation. Asmae has always been ready to help us launch new initiatives, such as the project to raise awareness and advise and empower adolescents, and the care unit.

In addition to the financial support, we are hugely grateful for the technical support that has strengthened the organisation's capacity. The process of capitalising on experiences, the training sessions and the development of training modules continue to be valuable resources for the organisation. The technical support for human resources was a huge help to the organisation, and its effects are still felt even now.

We did not think of Asmae as a donor organisation, but as a development partner that listened to us, added value to our knowledge and experience, travelled with us and provided us with much help and guidance.

We would like to offer our sincere thanks and recognition to all the project coordinators for India, starting with Pauline, who made the first contacts with our organisation, Kristalna, Elise, Sara, Louis and the current coordinator, Carmen. They have all been a source of encouragement in all our initiatives. We would also like to thank all the technical advisors who have helped us to build on our initiatives, launch new projects and organise training to strengthen the organisation's capacities.

Naturally, it is not easy to say goodbye. I hope that this is not the end of our relationship.

Although the financial partnership is coming to an end, we would like to maintain this relationship with Asmae and continue to exchange and share ideas, opinions, knowledge and experience.

In solidarity,

Dr Virgil D'Sami PhD

In Solidarity

Dr. Virgil D'Sami Ph.D
Executive Director

PROJECT STATUS UPDATE

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

Burkina Faso: A new project for better integration of children with visual impairments.

The "Grandir Ensemble" (growing up together) project, which helps with the social integration of children between the ages of 3 and 6 with visual impairments and their families in the 2nd arrondissement of the city of Ouagadougou, began on 1 October 2019. It is financially supported by the Principality of Monaco and the Pro Victimis Foundation. The total cost of the project is €368,389. This 2-year project has been implemented in close collaboration with the Union Nationale des Associations Burkinabé pour la Promotion des Aveugles et Malvoyants (Burkina Faso national union of associations for the advancement of blind and partially sighted people) and the Centre National de Lutte contre la Cécité (national centre for combating blindness).

The project consists of 4 main parts:

Part 1. Raise awareness within the community and identify children with visual impairments

Part 2. Provide health and educational care for children with visual impairments

Part 3. Strengthen the skills of the professionals at the École des Jeunes Aveugles (school for blind children)

Part 4. Coordinate institutional actors and those from civil society / advocacy / capitalisation of experiences

The official launch ceremony for the project was held on 17 October in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of National Education, Literacy and Promotion of National Languages, the council of the 2nd arrondissement, international NGOs and local civil society organisations.

The content of the publication comes under the sole responsibility of Asmae - Association Sœur Emmanuelle and cannot be considered to reflect the opinion of its financial partners in any way.

FONDATION
PRO VICTIMIS
GENÈVE

Gouvernement Princier
PRINCIPAUTÉ DE MONACO

3 QUESTIONS FOR THE

Created in 1982 by Laboratoires Expanscience, the Mustela Foundation, under the aegis of the Fondation de France, works to support child and parental development all over the world. After supporting some of Asmae's international projects in the past, in September 2019 it committed to providing financial support for our La Chrysalide facility in Bobigny (France). Chantal Larcade, Chief Representative of the Foundation, explains why it works with Asmae.



Chantal Larcade

Why did you decide to support Asmae?

We are proud to support the La Chrysalide, project, and to be working once again with our long-standing partner Asmae, whose actions have entirely reflected the civic engagement of the Mustela Foundation for over 35 years. Our foundation's mission is to support child health professionals who are with children and their families every day. We support both university research projects and associations working in the field.

What does this partnership bring to the Mustela Foundation?

On the 30th anniversary of the ICRC, we wanted to support La Chrysalide, which provides shelter for young mothers in great difficulty and their children, giving them time to rebuild their lives. This partnership has also allowed us to raise awareness of children's rights in the world among Laboratoires Expanscience employees through participatory workshops led by young people on civic service placements with Asmae.

Why are poverty and children's rights important subjects for you?

The ICRC is, unfortunately, not enough to guarantee that children's rights are respected. That is why the Mustela Foundation is working with Asmae to help families living in poverty. With the social rental market saturated, the issue of rehousing is becoming increasingly pressing, and not just at our borders. It is therefore vital that as many people as possible take action!

The Mustela Foundation was created in 1982 by the father of the current CEO of Laboratoires Expanscience. More information: www.expanscience.com

PUBLIC SUPPORT

Over 800 Asmae members, donors and sponsors responded to our 2019 consultation and we are immensely grateful to you all. **Thanks to you, we are able to improve, and implement actions to help more children in our countries of intervention.**

We will share what we learned from this consultation in our next newsletter in June.

Your support is invaluable to us, allowing us to help more than 50,000 children and families every day in France and abroad.

Did you know that we have introduced some new ways to support us? Want to know what they are?



For your birthday, ask your contacts to support vulnerable children by setting up a fundraiser on Facebook. It's an easy, straightforward way to share what's important to you with your friends and family.

<https://www.facebook.com/Asmae.Association.Soeur.Emmanuelle/>



You can display the values of Sœur Emmanuelle and Asmae every day by giving a big "Yalla!" with a t-shirt showing your solidarity. Why not buy them as gifts for your friends and family?

<https://www.asmae.fr/en/tee-shirt-solidaire-yalla/>



If you are feeling sporty, you can take part in the Course des Héros race in June. There are 3-km, 6-km and 10-km courses to run or walk with friends or family.

You can contact us on +33 (0)1 70 32 02 63 or at service.donateurs@asmae.fr

Asmae is an association formed under the French law of 1901. Recognised to be of public interest and authorised to receive bequests, donations and gifts.

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

Immeuble Le Méliès - 259-261, rue de Paris - 93100 Montreuil

Tel: +33 (0)1 70 32 02 50 - Email: infos@asmae.fr



Asmae Association
**Sœur
Emmanuelle**