



Asmae Association
Sœur Emmanuelle

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EDITORIAL

With the world in crisis, we must continue to be guided by children's best interests.



In 2020, the health, economic and social crisis linked to COVID-19 accelerated social inequality, and it continues to do so, both in France and around the world. Children are the primary victims of this, for reasons we tend to be unaware of.

To give just a few examples related to the closure of schools: how many children whose parents were already poor have lost their income, and what does the future hold for them? How many children who have had to work will not return to school? How many girls and boys have married because they are not at school, where they are protected? How many girls have suffered female genital mutilation as a result of being at home for so long? How many children have been victims of domestic violence?

We are fully mobilised alongside those made most vulnerable by COVID-19, as well as the child victims of the Beirut explosions. As you know, our teams have developed post-emergency actions providing 200 families, including 100 children, with high-quality psychological and social care. This support will help them to overcome the trauma they have experienced, both physically and psychologically.

For these children, our fight for education, protection and access to their rights is a comprehensive and effective response. But it is also a question of respecting their fundamental rights. A child's environment is key, which is why Asmae is mobilising its efforts and skills to support relevant local caring parties in their work with families and ensuring that local authorities are better mobilised.

As 2020 draws to a close, I would like to salute the unwavering commitment of Asmae's teams and offer them my sincerest thanks. Employees, volunteers, professionals: there have been many challenges but they have risen to every one. I am thinking in particular of the challenge of distancing and the need to incorporate digital solutions into our practices to ensure that our missions could continue during the lockdowns that affected all our countries, with capacity-building sessions with our partners being carried out via video conference, for example.

Our thoughts are also with our colleagues—aid workers, teachers and educators—assassinated in the most cowardly way in Niger and Guatemala. Such events remind us that the work we do is not without risk, despite the strengthening of our security systems.

After 40 years of action, our mission has never been more essential or engaging. In the face of inequality and all forms of fanaticism, education remains the most powerful tool we have to build a fairer and more peaceful world.

On behalf of all Asmae's teams, I wish you all the best for 2021.

Adrien Sallez, Director General



Sister 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

- 48,000 beneficiaries (children and families) through 52 projects in 6 countries
- 730 sponsors
- 37 partner associations
- 128 professionals worldwide
- 38 volunteers

FRANCE: QUESTIONS FOR SANDRA PALISSE, COORDINATOR OF THE "ESPACE PETITS PAS" (SMALL STEPS SPACE) PROJECT

In Seine-Saint-Denis, 4,300 children, 2,500 of whom are under 7, live in 127 halfway-houses. Living conditions in halfway-houses are very unstable and disrupt children's cognitive and psychomotor development. In 2006, Asmae opened La Chrysalide, a housing centre for highly vulnerable single mothers with young children. Ten years later, at the facility's family crèche, a parent-and-child centre was set up to provide a space for listening, discussion and free play. In 2020, Asmae extended its intervention by deploying a mobile parent-and-child unit, which goes out to these families 3 days a week in 3 halfway-houses in Seine-Saint-Denis. We interviewed Sandra Palisse, the former coordinator of this project, known as "Espace Petits Pas" (small steps space), who answered our questions with engagement and conviction.

What do you think are the key features of the "Espace Petits Pas" project?

Kindness, whether that is in the welcome we provide for children and their families, or kindness in the way we look at them and maintain that when we speak to the children and the people with them. Sharing that moment with respect and neutrality in terms of what we see, what we discuss, what we receive and what we give as support workers.

How would you describe the situation of the children who benefit from the project, and what specifically does it change for them?

The instability of their housing means that the children are not able to develop in a balanced way. The "Espace Petits Pas" allows them to move freely, shout, jump, play and go backwards and forwards to the key adult for reassurance. The space provides an opportunity for children to meet each other and 'get an understanding of others who are different to them...

Can you tell us about a typical day?

In the morning, the team of support workers leaves the "L'île aux enfants" family crèche, where we have our office, with the boot of the "Espace Petits Pas" car fully loaded!



Sandra Palisse

Boxes of games, mats... and the day can begin. We arrive at the venue at about 10 a.m. and leave at 4 p.m. There's no registration; families arrive when they want and stay for as long as they like. At the end of the afternoon, we set off back to Bobigny to have a debrief about the session together and clean the toys and games so that they are ready for the next day's session!

Have you had any feedback/thoughts from families about this scheme?

The families are happy with the scheme. Some take advantage of it

every week, others occasionally. At one of the venues, the majority of the children are school age. Before we reassessed the relevance of our interventions, we went there on Mondays. The families asked if we could go on a different day — understandably! So, from mid-October we will change things around to respond as closely as we can to the children's needs and the requests made by the families.

What message would you like to give to the people who have taken part and supported the project?

We are working on important concepts, including equality of opportunity. We are giving children a suitable place to play, which is crucial. Play helps children to develop the capacity to think, reflect, socialise, experience... We are continuing Sister Emmanuelle's work and "helping children to become free citizens". So, huge thanks to you!

How do you see the future of the project?

I hope that we can expand and develop the project, and that it can be extended to other areas. So many children, so many families are living in unstable accommodation. There is still so much to do, and so much need!



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BURKINA FASO – STRENGTHENING CHILDREN’S LANGUAGE AND READING SKILLS WITH INNOVATIVE TEACHING METHODS

In Burkina Faso, less than 4% of school-age children have a preschool education¹. The discrepancy between the use of national languages in children’s home environments and the French used in teaching also plays a major role in the difficulties pupils encounter at school. Standardising teaching practices, as well as the relevance and variety of the official teaching tools and materials for activities related to language and reading, also remain challenges for preschool education in Burkina Faso.

A project aiming to bring fun tools into widespread use and develop new community initiatives

In response to these challenges, the “Lire pour Réussir” (read to succeed) project aims to improve pre-school and primary-age children’s reading and language skills through complementary initiatives implemented institutionally and in the community. The basis of this work involves making a teaching tool developed during the first phase of the project, the “Yam Wekre” picture book, widely available. The project is also based on community initiatives to promote language and

reading, such as reading classes, so as to have an effect on children’s general environment with their overall development in mind.

Asmae is running this project with several partners. The Association Initiative Communautaire Changer la Vie/Nazemse (ICCV) (the Change Lives Community Initiative/Nazemse association) is responsible for the community aspect of the project. The ICCV supports the various partner libraries in setting up activities. The Ministry of National Education, Literacy and Promotion of National Languages (MENAPLN) is responsible for implementing the

institutional aspect of the project. As part of the “Lire pour Réussir” project, Asmae, with the assistance of the French Development Agency (AFD), is planning for the “Yam Wekre” picture book to be used in eighteen preschool facilities in the province of Kadiogo. With this in mind, educators from these different facilities were trained to use the tool by members of the trainer/designer team in the first year of the project. The project will run for 3 years, from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2021. Its objectives are to improve educators’ teaching practices and to distribute the picture book nationally. The project also aims to develop joint initiatives with families, libraries and schools.

Innovative and very promising workshops

The progress made with the first objective is very satisfactory: the trainer/designer team and educators were trained in group and participatory teaching skills, as well as how to use the Yam Wekre picture book. Their feedback on the relevance of these practices and tools was unanimously positive. Furthermore, the trainer/designer team noted during class observations that the tool was very consistently understood and used by the educators. When the Yam Wekre picture book was developed, particular attention was given to gender. This has made it possible to



Promoting reading and providing rewards for Burkinabe children

change the use of stereotypical texts and illustrations in the education of the young beneficiaries of the project, and to encourage oral expression from both girls and boys.

Regarding the distribution of the picture book, workshops were set up over the course of the first two years of the project to promote the tool among dozens of NGOs and associations working in the area of preschool education in Burkina Faso. Online platforms were also set up to raise awareness of the picture book among a wide audience. During the second phase of the project, which was launched in August 2020, this approach will continue so that the teaching tool can be rolled out nationally.

Support for partner libraries and schools

The support provided by the ICCV to partner libraries has been particularly appreciated, and the results of networking between schools and community libraries have been very satisfactory. The ICCV library celebrated the Day of the African Child

on 15 June 2019. The day, with the theme of “Humanitarian Action in Africa: Children’s Rights First”, was led by the librarians, and helped children to gain a better understanding of their rights and obligations. Reading clubs were set up, and the creation of a mobile library, also known as the “biblio-moto” (motorbike library),

was a great success. One of the major challenges of the second phase of the project is to set up a publishing house for community books, to make Asmae’s project, and its partners, more autonomous.

¹ Mandatory school age in Burkina Faso is 6. Preschool education therefore takes place during the period prior to starting primary school.

Early-learning workshop with the Yam Wekre picture book designed by Asmae and its partners.



The mobile library also known as the “biblio-moto”



EGYPT – DEVELOPING A TRAINING MODEL FOR GETTING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES INTO WORK

In Egypt, people with disabilities are excluded from society, mainly because of the huge stigma around disability and the failure of the national authorities to implement inclusion policies. However, new laws adopted in 2018 state that people with disabilities have the right to be included in vocational training and the labour market. In collaboration with Basmat Amal, an association based in Cairo, Asmae seized this opportunity to set up a project focused on creating a model to support young people with disabilities with their professional integration.

Social services sector affected by the health crisis

Basmat Amal mainly supports young people with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties. Since the start of the COVID-19 epidemic in March this year, all activities re-

lated to the social services sector in Egypt have been affected. This situation has an even bigger impact on children who were already vulnerable. The continuing health issue increases stress for parents and exacerbates children's behaviour

problems. Furthermore, although social distancing has been widely encouraged, the reality of daily life for people taking care of children and young people with disabilities is that it is sometimes difficult to implement the recommendations.

Specialist learning workshop led by an educator who has received guidance on the training model for getting young people with disabilities into work



A project to get young people with disabilities into work

With its partner Basmat Amal, Asmae has launched a project to create a vocational training model to get young people with disabilities into work.

The project is based on three objectives. The first is to build our partner's capacity to provide pre-vocational training to young people with disabilities. The second is to support Basmat Amal in raising community awareness of these young people's integration into the labour market. The final objective is to increase its network to support the socio-economic integration of young people with disabilities.

The project aims to support 20 educators working within Basmat Amal. The beneficiaries of the project also include around twenty highly talented and motivated young people with disabilities, aged between 14 and 21, as well as parents, members of the community and other civil society organisations.

The educators were assessed before and after the theoretical training, and their knowledge of vocational training was strengthened by the Asmae team. As part of the project, Basmat Amal rented a new space to use as its training centre. Asmae also helped its partner to obtain furniture, equipment and tools to get the space ready.

The project was completed in a short time during a difficult period because of the COVID-19 epidemic. In spite of that, significant results were achieved thanks to the commitment of the professionals at Basmat Amal and the Asmae team, but above all thanks to the incredible motivation of the young beneficiaries of the project.

LEBANON

Project status update

Beyond trauma - overcoming psychological challenges following the Beirut port explosion

The explosion that rang out throughout Beirut on 4 August—which was felt more than 200 kilometres away—devastated part of the city. More than 200 children, women and men lost their lives, 6,500 people were injured, 300,000 people found themselves suddenly homeless, dozens of buildings were reduced to rubble and thousands of other structures were seriously damaged.



The Asmae team in Lebanon accompanied by members of Naba'a, its local partner association.

Following the tragedy, Asmae sprang into action to respond to the needs of the population of the devastated areas. Children and their families suffered an intense traumatic shock, and most of them are in a state of stress, anxiety, depression or general apathy. Some families also lost loved ones. Our team in the field, in collaboration with local associations, has identified the most urgent initial needs in terms of psychosocial support. To respond to these needs, Asmae is working alongside Naba'a, a Lebanese NGO.

Currently, care is being provided for 200 families, including 100 children. Psychological first aid support is in place, in the form of group and individual sessions with social workers and psychologists to reflect on the trauma and how parents can help their children with these issues (positive parenting), or to work on self-confidence. Yoga classes are also organised to help people manage stress and anxiety. For the most seriously affected children and young people, art therapy sessions and thorough monitoring in collaboration with a psychologist are offered. Finally, as the phenomenon of domestic violence is exacerbated in this kind of situation, work was done to raise awareness among families and children in order to prevent it happening.

Asmae is providing both financial and technical support for this project. Asmae's technical advisor on child protection is supporting our partners' psychosocial support teams. This allows us to ensure that children and their families are receiving high-quality care and to help build their capacities.

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CORPORATE PHILANTHROPY MANAGER,
RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SOCIÉTÉ GÉNÉRALE
CORPORATE FOUNDATION'S AFRICA PROGRAMME.



Aurélie ROBIN

What place do education and training have in the Foundation's commitments?

Through its actions, the Société Générale Corporate Foundation, created in 2006, wants to give its partners, wherever they are, the means to develop sustainably and have a positive impact. By focusing its efforts on integration—whether in the form of education, employment, training, or cultural or sporting activities—the Foundation is certain that it is providing a powerful lever for everyone to find his or her place in our society, as well as a breeding ground for social innovation.

You are supporting Asmae's "Lire pour réussir!" (read to succeed) project in Burkina Faso. How does that fit into your strategy?

The "Lire pour réussir!" project was selected in March. Despite the lockdown, it was important to us not to stop supporting associations. The objective is 'to achieve a lasting reduction in drop-out rates and underachievement among children aged between 3 and 13, by improving reading and language learning methods. The project therefore fits in perfectly with our approach of integration through education and falls within the scope of UN SDG 4: Quality Education. Through this programme, 330 adults (teachers, educators, student-educators, members of the Ministry, library staff, young people and mothers who volunteer) will be trained and 3,500 children will benefit from these innovative tools and methods to improve their learning. Training teachers and educators means that the effects of the programme will be long-lasting. Our support for Asmae is part of our Africa Programme, which was launched in 2018, in line with the Group's strategic plan.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR COMMITMENT!

Awareness-raising and Bar du Monde in Brittany



Our super volunteer Brigitte Bardot worked with 7 educational institutions near Quimper in Finistère to raise children's awareness of their rights. She also ran an Asmae stall, along with Maria, Rodolphe and Nessrine, at the Rennes festival on Sunday 6 September. They served coffee, tea, fruit juice, pastries, crepes and more. The profits from the day went towards helping street children in Madagascar.

Charity cross-country event to support vulnerable children



Hundreds of schoolchildren from Fouesnant and its surrounding areas took part in a run for a good cause! Thanks to them, their teachers and Roland Kergoat (headteacher) for setting up this great event and raising €1,687. Philanthropists in the making!

A fundraiser for Lebanon

Sara and Manuel Pomar, also conscious of the situation in Lebanon, set up a private fundraiser among their family, friends and acquaintances. They raised €4,085, which has been allocated to provide emergency psychological support for children and their families.

An exhibition to help the children of Lebanon



From 1 October to 30 November, painter Salah Chaoui exhibited and sold his art to raise money for Asmae's work to support children in Lebanon affected by the explosions in August.

The exhibition was held at the L'Empreinte gallery in Vichy. A proportion of the profits from the sales will be given to Asmae.

For more information, contact our donations department at service.donateurs@asmae.fr.



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

Asmae_ONG soeur.emmanuelle yalla.pourmesdroits

Youtube: Asmae Association Sœur Emmanuelle

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