

The letter

No. 122 • JUNE 2022



Asmae Association
Sœur
Emmanuelle



MADAGASCAR:
IMPLEMENTING INNOVATIVE
TEACHING METHODS

LEBANON:
A FUTURE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



EDITORIAL

We have to provide emergency responses in addition to our development work.



Solidarity with the people of Ukraine

At the time of writing, more than 4 million people have already fled the country to escape the war in the space of a few weeks. According to UNICEF, 50%, or 2 million of them, are children. They are mainly accompanied by women, because

men of fighting age have been called to arms to defend their country. We have therefore decided to set up a "special fund" to support Caritas France. In conflict zones, this fund will help to supply urgent humanitarian needs: shelter, food, hygiene kits, protection and reuniting families. In Poland, Romania and Slovakia, it will primarily provide support for taking in and caring for women and children. **We can already foresee the serious consequences that the war will have on food supplies in our countries of intervention, particularly Lebanon and Egypt.**

Emergency work in Madagascar and the Philippines

In Madagascar, our work is focused on assisting 3 partners in Antananarivo affected by cyclone Ana and the resulting floods. Using school canteens, the objective is to prevent children and young people dropping out of school or vocational training. These canteens are a motivation to come to the facilities and relieve the pressure placed on them by their families to find food and means of supporting themselves. In the Philippines, we have also set up an emergency project to come to the aid of 190 families whose homes were completely devastated by a fire. In the space of a few hours, 800 people, including almost 400 children, lost everything. The Sama Bajau tribe, which was already a particularly marginalised ethnic group, is a "rejected" nomadic fishing community from Malaysia, who have lived as migrants for over 30 years. In response to the emergency, Asmae's team provided the affected families with kits containing basic necessities: bedding, hygiene products, meals etc. In addition to this material support, psychosocial support was provided to ease the trauma of the experience, particularly among children, teenagers and women.

Long-term changes with our partners and public authorities

Development projects remain our priority: work that combines immediate benefits for children and families with medium- and long-term benefits for society as a whole, through the strengthening of local associations and the development of public policies. In this issue of the Letter, you will find concrete examples of these projects in Lebanon, Egypt, Madagascar and Burkina Faso.

On behalf of Asmae's teams, happy reading and our sincere thanks for your support.

Adrien Sallaz,
Director General



Sister Emmanuelle and Abbé Pierre

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 achieve 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

- **31,900 beneficiaries** (children and families) through **21 projects** in **6 countries of intervention**
- **23,800 donors**
- **34 partner** associations
- **108 professionals** worldwide
- **30 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 Mèliès, 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 Sallaz, Aude Guyon, Sara Machtou, Lizanne Danan, Edith Laville; Photos: © Asmae; Layout: Stéphanie Poche; Printing: Imprimerie Vincent, May 2022; Copyright: June 2022, ISSN 1254-2865



10-31-1087 / Certifié PEFC

Ce produit est issu de forêts gérées durablement et de sources contrôlées. / pefc-france.org



A training session with young people

Improving young people's socio-economic circumstances with vocational training and entrepreneurship

As part of the project launched in January 2022, **270 young people** (60% women, 40% men) between the ages of **15 and 24 will be supported** and almost 6,000 people will benefit indirectly. Three vocational training programmes will be held each year. The young people will be directed to one of the partners based on their interests and the courses on offer: marketing, computer coding etc.

"Young people affected by the explosions will be able to set up a business or start a new job"

Nadeem Khaddaj, Asmae's country representative in Lebanon

165 young men and women will benefit from a 4-month entrepreneurship training programme, which will cover developing their plan, as well as sessions on commercial marketing and sales techniques. This will be followed by 3 months of tailored coaching to support the young people with the brand image or financial side of their organisation.

According to Nadeem Khaddaj, this means that *"young people affected by the Beirut explosions will be able to set up a business or start a new job at the end of the training programme, thanks to vocational training, entrepreneurship training, and employment and entrepreneurial opportunities"*.

9 sessions on positive leadership will also be held to help them develop their skills in areas such as managing emotions and positive negotiation. The young people will also take part in positive team-building sessions.

AT THE HEART OF THE ACTION | LEBANON

"YALLA FOR EMPLOYMENT AND PROTECTION" (YEP): WORKING TOWARDS A BETTER FUTURE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THE BEIRUT PORT EXPLOSION

Lebanon is facing unprecedented socio-economic and political instability. For young people, the combination of psychological distress and an uncertain socio-economic future makes it difficult to see a way forward and picture a happy future. This is the context in which Asmae launched the *"Yalla for employment and protection"* (YEP) project, which is scheduled to run for 3 years. The objective is to improve the psycho-socio-economic circumstances of young people affected by the Beirut port explosion by supporting two local partners: Nabaa and Farah Social Foundation.

Psychosocial support adapted to young people's needs

"Following the disaster, there is a huge need for sustainable interventions aimed at developing psychosocial resilience in children and young people"

Nadeem Khaddaj

All the young people will be supported with group psychosocial sessions to improve their well-being. As Nadeem Khaddaj explains: *"Following the disaster, there is a huge need for sustainable interventions aimed at resuming socio-economic activity and developing psychosocial resilience, particularly in children and young people"*. The emphasis will be on improving social skills, interpersonal relationships, and the issue of friendship or peer pressure. For young people who need them, one-to-one sessions will be set up.

Mobilising young people and their community

One of the benefits of the project is that young people's involvement is valued, allowing them to mobilise members of their community. Young people will be chosen to take part in awareness **campaigns on early marriage, child labour** and the importance of education.

Asmae would like to offer its sincere thanks to its partners, the Fondation de France and the French Development Agency, for their support on this project.

KEY FIGURES

200 dead and more than **7,500 injured in the explosion** (Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations - European Commission)

+55% of the population of Lebanon has fallen into poverty and is fighting to meet the most basic needs (Oxfam, February 2021)

1,500,000 Syrian refugees, 9 out of 10 of whom live in extreme poverty (Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon, 2021, a joint UN agencies report).



SPECIAL REPORT CAP JEUNESSE

YOUNG BENEFICIARIES BECOME AGENTS OF CHANGE FOR A BETTER FUTURE

The aim of the “Cap Jeunesse” programme is to promote young people’s rights to education, protection and empowerment. It runs in our 5 countries of intervention overseas, and involves improving access to schooling and appropriate vocational training, defining a framework to protect against violence and strengthening their power to act and their engagement as agents of change. Increasing young people’s power to act makes it easier for them to get involved in their country’s development, become engaged citizens and build a better future. Since the launch, various systems have been set up to help involve young people in the projects being run.

Boosting engagement among young people through youth clubs and student associations

In Burkina Faso, **6 youth clubs with 189 pupils** have been set up. Their members have run awareness-raising activities for their friends, using a number of techniques: film debates, forum theatre, educational discussion etc. 132 sessions have been organised on the following topics: early and unwanted pregnancy, sexual and reproductive health, drug use, violence in schools, citizenship and discipline.

In the Philippines, members of student associations have been supported through training, particularly in the area of leadership.

A programme to empower young people and promote the rights of young people with disabilities

In Egypt, 2 training sessions were held for our partners’ staff and about thirty young volunteers with the support of our

partner Lekaa. In addition, **Lekaa developed a programme to help empower young people with 3 modules.** The first is about **leadership and self-discovery.** The second focuses on the rights of young people with disabilities, gender equality and civic engagement, and the third concerns the design and implementation of community initiatives aimed at **defending the rights of young people with disabilities.**

Inter-country working group

The organisation of our first inter-country working group gave about fifteen employees an opportunity to **find out about an approach to child and youth participation** in the project presented by a long-standing partner of Asmae’s in India: Arunodhaya. A second group focused on training and professional integration, sharing previous experience from Lebanon. It should be possible to identify best practices at the end of phase I. These might include getting young people involved on working committees for projects, an approach that has been tried in Madagascar and Burkina Faso.

INTERVIEW AMAL ANTOUN, Asmae Technical Advisor on inclusive education for young people with disabilities



In Egypt, young people with disabilities face major difficulties accessing employment, related to a variety of factors: inadequate disability training, a poorly adapted labour market and, sometimes, discrimination in recruitment. The work carried out as part of the “Cap Jeunesse” project in Egypt – “Protection and Inclusion of Young People with Disabilities” (YPIP) – began in January 2021 and aims to develop the potential of girls and boys with disabilities. This means supporting them as they progress towards their professional goals, defend their rights and become citizens who can be agents of positive change for society.

What is your role within this project?

The first part of it is to strengthen the capacities of educators from partner NGOs to set up awareness-raising activities to increase awareness among parents, pupils and community leaders of children’s rights in various areas of their lives, particularly education. Training is based around inclusive education strategies. My second role is to provide technical support related to “pre-vocational training” for partner NGOs. The objective is to offer practical vocational training for various trades. Finally, I am also responsible for supporting educators from partner NGOs to help them improve their performance in providing specialist services to children with disabilities and their parents.

How do you work with young people on a day-to-day basis?

A technical advisor works for children. First of all, by improving the skills of educators from partner NGOs in using specialist programmes, and then by training teachers on educational inclusion strategies. For example, this might mean explaining the lesson based on the pupils’ individual differences or training mixed groups of pupils to ensure that a child-to-child approach is implemented. This requires inclusive classroom management skills, as well as a selection of specialist and educational tools. The teacher’s motivation plays a key role in the process of inclusive education.

What difficulties do you encounter on a day-to-day basis?

I sometimes see school staff refusing to accept the inclusion of young people with disabilities in schools. Many parents of pupils (with and without disabilities) also reject the inclusion of pupils with disabilities for

fear of it having a negative impact on their children. Some teachers are reluctant to change their teaching strategies, preferring traditional methods. A lack of teaching tools and the number of pupils per class (90 to 120) are also barriers to inclusion.

How can these difficulties be overcome?

It could be setting up awareness campaigns. And bringing in a specialist teacher provides very positive results. You also have to work with teachers and parents to find solutions: training, awareness sessions, adapting school buildings etc. Equipping inclusive schools’ resource centres with specialist tools is also an effective measure.

What do you get from this role on a personal level?

I get a feeling of satisfaction and pride from supporting partners and knowing that it will be of benefit to them in the long term. Working with people from every walk of life has improved my capacity to meet people’s needs and support target groups consisting of children with disabilities, who are still highly marginalised. I am happy to be able to improve access to school and inclusion in society for children with disabilities by increasing their families’ awareness of their rights.

The French Development Agency is providing 60% of the funding for the “Cap jeunesse” multi-country programme. The programme is also supported by partner companies and foundations: the Technip Energies endowment fund, Mille et un Repas, Fondation Sancta Devota, Fondation Valoris, the Air France Foundation and the Sawiris Foundation.

LA CHRYSALIDE: SUPPORTING FEMALE SURVIVORS OF ABUSE

In 2006, Asmae opened a mother-and-child centre for highly vulnerable single mothers: La Chrysalide. The centre accommodates young mothers in difficulty who are socially excluded, having experienced abuse or neglect in their childhood or youth. The mother-and-child centre is a safe space that allows them to regain confidence in their ability to build a future and find a place for themselves back in society. With the help of comprehensive social and psychological support and group mediation workshops, they gradually rebuild their lives. It's about supporting those early years in a child's life, which are fundamental to their development, and working on the mother-and-child bond. We spoke to Catherine Valadaud, service manager, and Zornitza Zlatanova, psychologist at La Chrysalide, who told us about the specific issues related to supporting women who have experience sexual abuse.

How do you know that a mother has experienced sexual abuse without her saying anything?

Catherine Valadaud: During the first assessment meeting, young mothers are given the opportunity to tell us about how they ended up living in a situation of social exclusion with their children. As they tell us some of the story of parts of their life, we try to understand their history and decipher what they might be saying about their suffering. The task of listening to and understanding a story depends on theoretical knowledge that allows us to simultaneously identify the psychological mechanisms at work and formulate hypotheses to help us understand their history. If we see that it would be harmful for them to face up to traumatic issues head-on, we respect their defence mechanisms.

What help do you put in place for a woman who has experienced abuse?

Zornitza Zlatanova: There isn't a protocol to follow. Each woman receives personalised, individual support based on a recommendation from a point of contact for meetings with the psychologist. The nature of these meetings is defined as they progress; it's all a question of balance, suggestion and further discussion. There might be some resistance on the part of the beneficiaries.

CV: The mediation workshops are places where emotions can be transformed or masked to make them bearable. For example, a "special correspondent" workshop is led by two instructors. It deals with the subject of types of abuse like forced marriage, and discusses the things to which the women have been exposed, issues of gender and racism. They are encouraged to debate these topics and express their feelings and opinions without talking directly about themselves.

How do you help these young mothers' children?

ZZ: We run an educational programme on how they can protect themselves and create a safe environment for children so that they in turn can provide that to their children. Sometimes, these are young women who grew up in an incestuous environment where their space and privacy were compromised. It is therefore important to remind them that everyone's privacy must be respected and guaranteed. We also work with the children, using materials such as pictures and books through the stories workshop, and in other spaces as well, to discuss issues relating to privacy, saying no to intrusion, and body boundaries in relation to their own bodies and other people's.

What are your main needs and expectations at the moment?

CV: These young women often need continued psychological support after they leave, because it takes a long time to treat the effects of trauma. Mental health centres are overburdened and have very long waiting times. We need to create a network of psychologists and find the funding for follow-up care to continue the work begun with the psychologist at la Chrysalide. For the last few months, we have had a specialist running a shiatsu massage area. We would like to continue with this and are thinking about developing other workshops using relaxation or dance to help them take back control of their mistreated bodies. The psychologist at the facility has already tried out this mediation through dance and we are considering it as a team.

Asmae would like to thank its financial partners, including the Seine-Saint-Denis Local Council, CAF, the City of Bobigny, ARS IDF and APOSS.

ZOOM SUR WOMEN LIVING IN POVERTY IN FRANCE



A mother and her child

- **+ 4.7 million women** live below the poverty line (French economic, social and environmental council)
- **70% of the "working poor" are women**, and the risk of poverty is increased for single-parent families (French economic, social and environmental council)
- **3/4 of adults** at the head of single-parent families **are women** (INSEE)

MADAGASCAR: TRAINING PARTNERS ON INNOVATIVE TEACHING METHODS

Food insecurity and a lack of access to basic resources (water, electricity etc.) are the kinds of unstable conditions under which many Madagascans live. Problems related to the family environment have a direct impact on children's schooling, causing difficulties with following the programme and potentially resulting in them dropping out of the school system. In addition to continuing problems with access to education, the quality of education is low, teaching staff are not properly trained and infrastructure is inadequate. Asmae is helping to respond to these major difficulties with the "Mivelatra" project.



Educators trained as part of the project

Active teaching: making science accessible

Used at primary level, **active teaching** involves getting pupils involved through activities such as oral discussions, practical experiments and question-and-answer games. This allows pupils to discover a more accessible, living science.

An investigative approach for secondary pupils

For secondary teaching, participants were trained in what is known as an "investigative" approach, combining **exploration of the world, scientific learning, experimentation and reasoning**, language proficiency and debate. Each class begins with a presentation of the objectives to motivate the pupils to achieve them. The teacher gives the pupils "research time", which might involve using equipment or looking on the internet. During their investigations, **pupils present their arguments and reasoning**, and share and discuss their ideas and results, thereby building their knowledge. The teaching staff from Asmae's 2 partners improved their skills in these two approaches and will be able to apply and pass on their knowledge. Following this training, classroom visits and interviews with pupils have been used to follow up.

This project was carried out alongside Fondation Illis and funded by the Government of the Principality of Monaco.

BURKINA FASO: NATIONAL ROLLOUT OF THE "LIRE POUR RÉUSSIR" PROJECT

A new phase of the "Lire Pour Réussir" (read to succeed) project in Burkina Faso was launched in August 2021: "Pour Une Petite Enfance Épanouie" (for a fulfilling early childhood), which will run for 3 years. The objective is to **improve the accessibility and quality of early childhood development services** in Burkina Faso through complementary initiatives implemented institutionally and in the community. For this purpose, use of the **"Yam Wekre" picture book**, a teaching tool developed by Asmae in the initial phases of the project, is scheduled to be rolled out more widely. This innovative tool helps to improve children's reading and language skills. 301 picture book kits will be printed and distributed. The objective is also to improve access to this tool in 105 early childhood facilities. As this **initiative has been rolled out in 4 regions in the country, the project will also benefit internally displaced children.**

Asmae would like to thank the French Development Agency and Fondation Société Générale C'est Vous l'Avenir for contributing to the funding of this project.



Children involved in the project using the "Yam Wekre" picture book

COMPANIES AND FOUNDATIONS: WHY BEGIN A PARTNERSHIP WITH ASMAE?

Take action to form a partnership that makes sense!

A business partnership so we can **work together to contribute to positive, comprehensive child development and the promotion of children's rights** in France and around the world.

We offer companies and foundations **bespoke commitments** based around working to support vulnerable children!

Your role is important: help us to have a positive impact on the lives of disadvantaged children by making a commitment.

- Financial sponsorship to support our projects
- Rounding salaries to mobilise your employees
- Rounding up at the till to mobilise your customers
- Fundraising events for team-building and unity
- A product partnership or a fundraising product
- A skills sponsorship to make use of your expertise

We offer partnerships to suit your support policy:

Contact the Corporate Philanthropy department to offer support that's right for you!

Vanessa Eymet, Corporate Philanthropy Manager, veymet@asmae.fr

A DONOR SURVEY: GETTING TO KNOW YOU BETTER

In September, we invited you to respond to a major consultation to help us get to know you better.

830 donors responded, with a 28% increase in those responding online compared with 2019. Our sincere thanks for that. Your responses are invaluable for helping us to improve the information we send to you about the projects you are supporting.

We noted various points from your feedback. Of the causes you support, care for at-risk children, early childhood protection and prevention of school drop-out are the three issues that you feel are the most important to champion. As regards the areas in which we work, you expressed a particular sympathy with France, Lebanon and Madagascar. Among the values you associate with Asmae are those embodied by Sister Emmanuelle during her lifetime: solidarity, commitment, trust and respect.

You are also highly engaged donors, who are prepared to give us even more support. 36% of you expressed a desire to increase your donations, and we received almost 50 offers of making collections to help us raise funds locally.

Most of you feel you receive enough messages. You can contact our donations department to change the frequency of our messages by emailing service.donneurs@asmae.fr or calling +33 (0)1.70.32.02.63.

Finally, you sent us many messages of encouragement and congratulations for our work. Thank you very much. Your kind words encourage us more than ever to put all our energy into helping children.



Asmae Association
Sœur Emmanuelle

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.



asmae.fr



Immeuble Le Méliès - 259-261, rue de Paris
93100 Montreuil - Tel.: +33 (0)1 70 32 02 50
Email: infos@asmae.fr