

The letter

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Asmae Association
Sœur
Emmanuelle

**J2A: SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH
VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

**LEBANON EMERGENCY:
ADAPTING OUR PROJECTS TO THE
OUTBREAK OF WAR**



EDITORIAL



BURKINA FASO IS DEALING WITH THE MOST IGNORED DISPLACEMENT CRISIS IN THE WORLD FOR THE SECOND YEAR RUNNING.

That's the stark observation of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in its latest report. It follows an analysis of all the various crises – 39 in total – that have led to the displacement of over 200,000 people. The report is based on three criteria: the lack of international political will, the lack of humanitarian funding, and the lack of media attention.

With a record number of **707,000 newly internally-displaced people** in 2023, Burkina Faso now tops the list for the second year in a row. That figure is in addition to the 2 million people already displaced within the country's borders.

Given the lack of interest shown by many countries in this crisis, the lack of media coverage and the decline in funding, hundreds of thousands of people are now cut off from aid. The numbers are shocking: 6.3 million people will need humanitarian aid in 2024, even though **France has frozen the majority of its development aid budget**, an essential defence against humanitarian risk factors in the medium term.

With more than **6,100 schools shut down in spring 2023**, Burkina Faso was home to almost half of all the closed schools in Central and West Africa. Up to 400 healthcare facilities have also been closed. In 2023, 3.6 million people were without access to healthcare, according to the NRC, an increase of 70% compared to 2022. According to the same report, barely more than a third of the population's needs were being covered in 2023, a figure that is down on 2022.

In this context of multiple crises – humanitarian, security, political and geopolitical – we've decided to keep our teams in place and maintain our efforts by adapting to the situation on the ground and our financial resources. I would like to pay tribute to the resilience and determination of our team based in Ouagadougou, as well as that of our partners working in places facing serious security threats.

Without the generosity of private donors, Asmae wouldn't be able to continue working in the country and supporting the most vulnerable children and young people in displaced zones.

On behalf of the thousands of children and young people we support in Burkina Faso – and in whom we're putting all our hope for a brighter, more peaceful future – I'd like to thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Adrien Sallez
Director General



For 43 years now, 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 with dignity in their families and environments to become free men and women who can contribute to society".

OUR MISSIONS

- **To promote child development** through a global approach. To do so, Asmae also works to support families, keeping their environments in mind.
- **To increase the capacities of local stakeholders** in the area of child development, improving synergies between them and maximising their social impact.
- **To champion children's causes** by raising awareness and speaking out.
- **To experiment, to expand and to share.**

ASMAE IN FIGURES

- **75,800 beneficiaries**
- **8 countries** of intervention
- **45 partner** associations
- **148 professionals** worldwide
- **39 volunteers**
- **21,100 donors**

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AT THE HEART OF THE ACTION

LEBANON EMERGENCY: TAKING ACTION IN HORRIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES, PROTECTING CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

According to UNICEF, more than 30,000 Lebanese and refugee children have now been displaced. Growing armed tensions between Israel and Hezbollah – combined with a major economic crisis – are having a serious impact in Lebanon. Faced with this situation, Asmae has had to adapt to meet the urgent needs of vulnerable populations.

Repercussions of the war in Gaza in southern Lebanon

The 7 October terrorist attack perpetrated by Hamas against Israel has intensified the armed conflict in the region, particularly in southern Lebanon. Daily exchanges of fire between Hezbollah, an ally of Hamas, and the Israeli army only increase the insecurity faced by civilians. These hostilities have led to massive population displacements and are worsening the country's already severe economic crisis. Over 90,000 people have been displaced so far, including 30,000 Lebanese and refugee children*.

Despite international efforts to reach an agreement, the exchange of fire is only intensifying. With this conflict, Lebanon is seeing its economic situation deteriorate further: Residents are facing increasing difficulties in accessing essential goods and services, such as food, water, healthcare and education. Fuel shortages are common, paralysing hospitals, schools and businesses. More than 70 schools have now closed their doors, jeopardising the education of some 20,000 pupils.



Beneficiary children in Lebanon

Responding to the emergency in Lebanon to help children and internally-displaced populations

We're working with thousands of beneficiary children in Lebanon to offer them a quality education while protecting their rights. We're also working to improve the social and economic situation of many young people who have either dropped out of school or are unemployed. Among four ongoing projects, the "Special" project, which offers early childhood services in the Tyre region, is particularly important. We began by immediately adapting our plans. To ensure the safety of our teams, some activities now have to be carried out remotely, while others have been temporarily suspended. Kits are being distributed to parents, including basic necessities such as milk, blankets and hygiene products. We've also expanded our beneficiary base to include internally-displaced parents and those who are particularly vulnerable.

Uncertainty remains as to how the situation is likely to evolve over the coming months and what the prolonged impact of the conflict on our projects might be. An indefinite suspension could have serious consequences for the children and young people we support in terms of protection, but also integration and education. Faced with growing challenges, we'll continue to respond to the urgent needs of vulnerable populations in southern Lebanon. In the event the situation persists, or even worsens, we stand ready to put an emergency plan in place that is adapted to the local circumstances.

Article written in June 2024.

*Source: International Organization for Migration (IOM)



SPECIAL REPORT J2A

Some of the peer educators who have benefitted from the J2A project in Madagascar

A BETTER FUTURE FOR VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE

Over a quarter of young Africans – around 72 million people – are not in education, employment or training. Two thirds of them are young women*. This situation is a drag on the future of Africa’s young people. Asmae wants to provide solutions in Madagascar and Ivory Coast where we already have a presence. We’ve introduced a new programme called J2A (Jeunesses Actrices de leur Avenir, or “young people taking charge of their futures”) to fight this pattern and boost young people’s autonomy. Phase one was launched back in November 2023 for a three-year period with the support of the French Development Agency.

*Source: International Labour Organization (ILO)

MADAGASCAR

Helping vulnerable young people into work

“Now I see the future more clearly and with hope”,
Noro, 18, a young person involved in the programme in Madagascar

In Madagascar, 75.3% of job seekers are under 30. As part of the J2A project, we’re working in partnership with a secondary school that supports vulnerable young people. The majority live in precarious conditions and get their tuition fees covered. The school also provides them with uniforms and textbooks so they can perform to the best of their abilities. The programme targets these young people to help them into work at the end of their studies. Other young people who have dropped out of school altogether and are particularly vulnerable (perhaps living on the streets) also receive support. Our activities began with some career guidance sessions to inform young people about the various industries they might consider, including agriculture, textiles and sewing, as well as the various vocational training programmes available in these fields. These sectors were chosen based on demand and the needs observed in Madagascar. “Now I see the future more clearly and with hope”, explains Noro, a final-year pupil who has benefitted from the project. There are no prerequisites to getting involved and the sessions are open to young people whether they’ve already left school or not. We adapt to all different kinds of young people and their situations in order to

help them into work. For those who express a desire to start their own business, we’ve also introduced sessions focused on entrepreneurship.

Training and supporting young educators: equal parts stakeholders and beneficiaries

As part of the J2A project, we’ve trained up 20 peer educators. “I left school in 2018 with qualifications in social work, but despite all that, I still couldn’t find a job. Asmae and their partners gave me all the training I needed to become a peer educator”, explains Mahandry, 22, who is involved in the project. It’s all about young volunteers supporting and raising awareness directly among their peers throughout their journeys into the world of work. They receive training on various topics, including sexual and reproductive health, hygiene, non-violent communication and citizenship. “The personal development workshops have made a real difference to my life. I learned how to make decisions with confidence and manage my emotions constructively”, adds Mahandry. Training sessions of two hours per week over a two-month period make up the programme.

These young educators are both targeted by the programme and also stakeholders in it. The programme is open to everyone and the young people receive bespoke support based on their individual needs and interests. Asmae is strengthening the capacities of the professionals working to support these young people, particularly educators. The wide range of people involved helps young people identify with their

journeys in life. This project is also a driver of opportunities and networking: Mahandry, originally a peer educator on the project, has now been recruited to work as a social worker with our partner school.

IVORY COAST

Identifying vulnerable young people and raising awareness within families

In the city of Korhogo in Ivory Coast, lots of young people find themselves living on the streets in precarious conditions and with limited access to education. Our partner ANAED offers emergency shelter for homeless children and young people. With their help – and with the support of child protection committees – we’ve been able to identify a number of vulnerable young people. Community stakeholders, such as village leaders, for example, have also been brought in to help by ANAED. These village leaders, who have very specific knowledge of their communities, have been able to help us identify young people in trouble. The project offers support that is consistent with their aspirations. “As a young mother since I was in year 9, this project gave me the chance to have a career”, explains Sephora, 22. We also lead protective efforts with the beneficiaries we support. For those experiencing difficulties at home, a shelter is available. “I couldn’t go back and forward to training every day because of the distance between the centre and my village. When I explained the issue to the staff, they welcomed me to the centre and resolved the travel problems I was worried about”, adds Sephora.

Before starting activities, some awareness work was put in place with the families of the young people being targeted. This helps guarantee family support, which is essential to keep young people motivated and committed. This initiative reduces the risk of dropping out along the way.

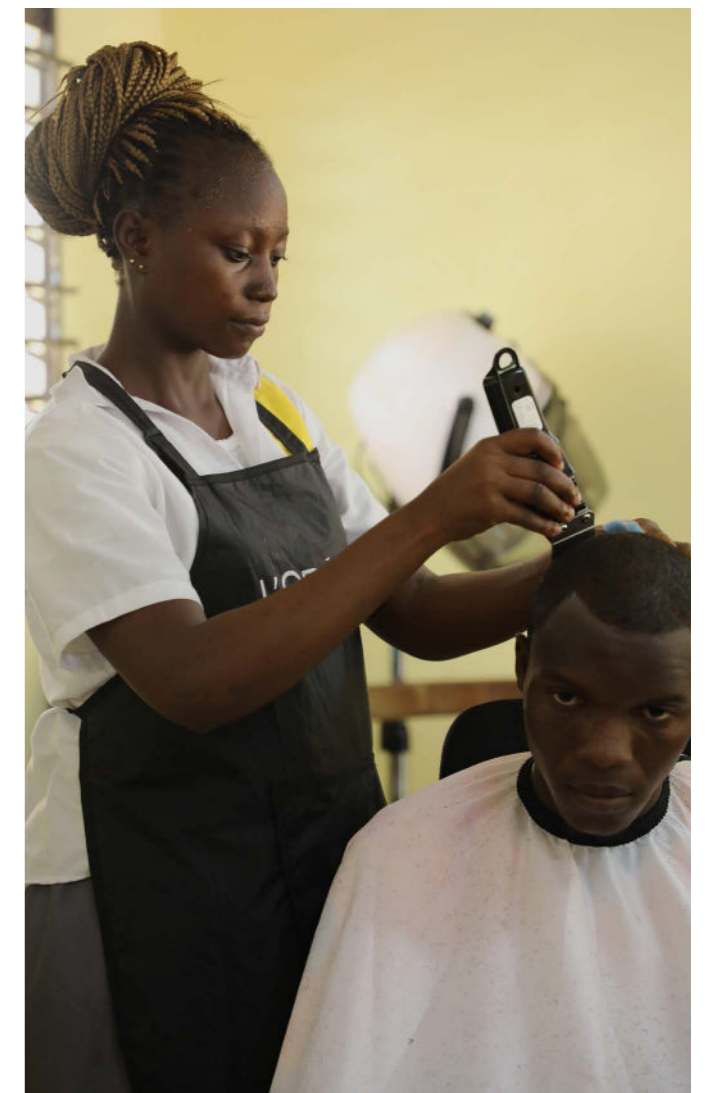
Improving the employment prospects of 120 young people and boosting their life skills

“Asmae’s free training was a real breath of fresh air”,
Yakou, 23, a project beneficiary in Ivory Coast

Within phase one of the J2A project in Korhogo, 120 young people are being monitored and supported over a three-year period. When signing up, they’re presented with a programme covering all different industries and sectors. They then take part in workshops to discover which professions might suit them best. Plumbing, electricity, sewing, hairdressing and welding are the fields that have been identified as always useful and always providing work. “I’m training in mixed hairdressing without having to pay a thing. I’m learning to do hair for both men and women”, explains Sephora. Beneficiaries are free to choose which pathway interests them the most, regardless of gender. They also have the opportunity to switch paths if they realise something isn’t for them anymore. “Asmae’s free training was a real breath of fresh air”, says Yakou, a 23-year-old beneficiary. To best support young people, we’ve also introduced literacy sessions for those who need them.

Local youth clubs put on awareness sessions across a range of topics, for example, on women’s rights and gender-based violence, including domestic and sexual violence. The aim is to turn young people into agents of change. For example, discussion groups for young mothers, in particular, help them open up about their needs and difficulties. Alongside the vocational training, we’re also helping participants develop their life skills. Through sessions devoted to essential skills, such as punctuality, dressing properly, communication and behaviour, these young people are now better prepared for life in the workplace.

Programme financial partner: French Development Agency



Vocational training in hairdressing in action

CAP JEUNESSE, INDIA, PHASE 2: HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE INTO WORK AND RAISING AWARENESS WITHIN COMMUNITIES

In India, half the population is under 25 years old, and two-thirds are under 35. Young people find themselves at the heart of some major challenges, such as education and access to employment. In the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, the obstacles to accessing these services are even greater. It's in this context that phase two of Asmae's multi-country "Cap Jeunesse" programme – jointly funded by the French Development Agency – is being introduced into this new country for us. The programme is designed to improve the inclusion and socio-professional integration of the most vulnerable young people while promoting their rights to education and protection.

Facilitating access to high-quality vocational training and opportunities for vulnerable young people

The city of Chennai, India, is home to a number of excluded and stigmatised communities. It's in these neighbourhoods – made up of informal settlements and restricted access to basic services – that we operate. Our partner, the Arunodhaya Association, has been working with local populations for years. Their knowledge has helped us identify some of the most vulnerable young people and give them access to training. As a local NGO, they specialise in child protection, in particular. Our collaboration has also made it possible to significantly increase the school enrolment rate among young people in the targeted neighbourhoods. Community stakeholders – including mothers who are well-known and respected in the area – have worked with us to identify at-risk young people. Over the course of the project in 2023, in collaboration with Arunodhaya, 120 young people received training in IT and 70% of them went on to find work. Since the start of 2024, new vocational training schemes in IT and accounting have been put in place and will reach 480 young people between the ages of 19 and 30 over the course of a three-year period. Beneficiaries attend classes for three months, after which they obtain a diploma. As part of these classes, life skills such as leadership, decision-making and managing emotions are developed. The training we offer opens the door to new career opportunities, such as becoming secretaries, accounting assistants, or even telephone advisors. To further increase opportunities, Arunodhaya organises company visits, in collaboration with our network of local business partners. These visits are beneficial for the young people in training, and can also lead to employment opportunities further down the line, as they're put in touch with the same companies once they've obtained their diploma, whenever vacancies arise.

Through this project, we're also supporting secondary school pupils and college students. Sessions on careers guidance and preparing for adult life are made available to help them better understand the future that lies ahead.

Supporting young people on a psychosocial level and developing their engagement

We offer comprehensive support, particularly psychosocial support, to the young people we target. Some face much more complex financial and mental health difficulties and receive regular monitoring and support by counsellors and psychologists as a result. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, increases in drug and gambling addictions have been observed among India's youth. A large number of them also face harmful traditional practices, such as child marriage (before the age of 18). Faced with these challenges, we've introduced awareness-raising sessions within communities. A club bringing together influential mothers from the communities has been set up. The mothers receive training in how to raise awareness among their peers on topics such as online safety, gender-based violence and drug addiction. Training sessions on civic engagement have also been arranged for the young people targeted to help them carry out community-based actions.

Financial partner: French Development Agency



Young people learning IT skills

"ESPACE PETITS PAS": COMBATTING THE ISOLATION FACED BY AT-RISK FAMILIES IN FRANCE AND SUPPORTING PARENTS

Since 2020, the "Espace Petits Pas" team has been running mobile parent-and-child units in the Seine-Saint-Denis region of northeast Paris. Every week, a play area is set up in the temporary accommodation centres provided for families by the local authority. The aim is to support parents and play a role in the children's early years education and socialisation.



Beneficiary families in the play area set up by our "Espace Petits Pas" team

Encouraging early-years socialisation and parent/child bonding

The mobile parent-and-child units help families come together once a week to play in an area specially adapted to children aged 0-6. We offer a guaranteed welcome – anonymous and free – with no prior registration necessary. The space encourages children's socialisation from a young age, helping them build bonds and share special moments of playtime together. As one parent put it, "I want my child to be able to see other kids". Helpers are on hand to support children as they learn to interact with one another. They welcome each of the children by their first name, which may sound immaterial, but really helps with their social interactions. The parent-and-child units are run in a friendly manner by a dynamic team and are helping to combat the isolation faced by many of the families. As one mother explains, "I don't have any family, but when I come here, I meet two smiling, welcoming ladies, which makes me want to come back. They make me feel safe". The helpers provide a reassuring environment where all parents can feel at ease, whatever their situation might be. They encourage parents to be independent in this setting. They're encouraged to resolve any issues they're experiencing with their children by themselves. This way, their skills are valued and they can improve their self-esteem.

The games we provide for the children also contribute to their healthy development. They encourage them to develop various abilities, whether sensory, cognitive, social, linguistic or motor skills. As one of the parents explains, "I come here twice a week. It's good for the children, it develops their brains and means we spend less time on screens". All the various play materials help create bonds between everyone, but particularly strengthen the parent/child relationship. The mobile parent-and-child units therefore offer beneficiary parents the opportunity to spend some quality time with their children in a playful environment, which is often difficult to achieve in their everyday lives.

Parent/child workshops and dedicated time to discuss parenthood

"I'm so happy here, I don't want to leave",
says one mother beneficiary

In parallel to the mobile parent-and-child units, other activities have been put in place to support parents by our *Espace Petits Pas* team. A number of activities have been arranged as part of the REAAP networks designed to listen to parents, support and guide them. These networks offer professional support, for example, through workshops on motor skills, like baby gym for children aged 0-3 and their parents. Among the various activities, families also have access to reading workshops, which help strengthen family ties. With the aim of promoting interaction between parents, some discussion groups have also been set up. They provide dedicated spaces for parents to open up about topics such as education and parenthood. Through the REAAP networks, parents also have the opportunity to turn to professionals for advice during workshops. The activities and the whole space are designed to meet the specific needs of families. "I'm so happy here, I don't want to leave" says one mother. In 2023, 1,731 families were supported and 768 mobile parent-and-child sessions took place.

Our team continues to host around a hundred families each week who remain happy with the system, according to feedback.

Financial partners: the Île-de-France Region, the Regional Health Agency (ASR), Fondation de France, Caisse d'Allocations Familiales, Samusocial and the PMI Foundation

ZOOM SUR

THE CLIMATE

We're developing a climate policy. Given today's environmental challenges, our association is determined to develop a coherent, tailored approach to the climate, both when it comes to implementing our projects on the ground and in our head office. As a pioneering association in the field of education, we place great importance on these issues and we're already working on policy areas of focus. We're actively working with other NGOs to advance the sector's commitments towards the climate and sharing best practices. Our policy will be published in 2024, with the aim of guiding our future actions and reducing the carbon footprint linked to our operations and projects.

MUSICAL FUNDRAISING!

Les Compères paid us the great honour of organising a charity concert to raise funds for Asmae – Association Sœur Emmanuelle.

To help fund the fight against bullying in schools, the **Les Compères** choir supported Asmae on 11 June at Salle Gaveau in Paris with a very special concert. Under the direction of their new conductor, Philippe Barbey-Lallia and accompanied on the piano by Arthur Aharonian, the concert paid tribute to Handel, Bach, Fauré... and solidarity!

The money raised will go towards funding our "Yalla! For Children's Rights" project. Since 2014, our team has been going into classrooms and working with pupils of all ages to raise awareness and mobilise children when it comes to defending their rights in primary and secondary schools, as well as colleges. Bullying and gender equality are particularly in the spotlight. With the help of the money raised at the concert, we hope to continue our efforts and make 20,000 more children and young people aware of their rights in 2025.

LEGACIES

Leaving a legacy is an act of generosity that endures

Leaving a legacy or bequest in your will is an act of real generosity, the most intimate and personal demonstration of your values in life. Legacies and bequests are ways of expressing what you want to happen to your estate after you pass away. By leaving a legacy, you can ensure your values and commitments in life will continue in death.

Sister Emmanuelle's fight must never die

Everything Sister Emmanuelle left us, we must in turn leave behind ourselves so that her fight and her values can remain templates for future generations. Through your legacies and bequests, you're passing down a strength that must never die! Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we're able to fund around 20 projects every year that benefit more than 75,000 children and families in eight different countries, including France. This is an immense undertaking that Sister Emmanuelle has left to us, which we will continue to push tirelessly thanks to our dedicated volunteers and staff.

"Sister Emmanuelle opened our eyes to the problems of suffering and poverty around the world. I decided to leave a legacy to Sister Emmanuelle's association because the work she did on behalf of the children with such charisma "must endure" even if Sister Emmanuelle is no longer with us".

Marie C.

OUR TEAM IS HERE FOR YOU



If you have any questions or want to discuss how you can support us, **Catherine Alvarez**, your dedicated contact for legacies and bequests, is here to help. Having worked with Sister Emmanuelle for 17 years, Catherine will be able to guide you and answer any concerns.

Get in touch directly on 06 75 89 04 76 or by email at calvarez@asmae.fr to find out more about how your generosity can help keep Sister Emmanuelle's fight alive to help the most vulnerable children in society.

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.

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