

# REPPER

RESEAU D'ECHANGE DE PROJETS ET DE PROGRAMMES EN FAVEUR DES ENFANTS DE LA RUE

N°17

June 03

## The next meeting

will be held on

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2003 at 5.00 pm**

12 Rue de Martignac 75007 Paris

Metro: Assemblée Nationale

## □ *A FEW THOUGHTS ON CHILDREN LABOUR*

*In this bulletin we will give some additional information on children labour, with the help of information given to us by several associations.*

*Regretfully, place in this bulletin being limited, those interested should contact the associations thereafter mentioned. Our next bulletin could be devoted to the insertion of youngsters in our society. Should you have any experience on this subject, kindly let us know. Martine Berge.*

### **CAJED ( Paris France )**

The problem of children labour is a difficult one often confused by ideas of varied origins applied to different realities with often more passion than

rigor in their analysis. Briefly three points deserve to be clarified.

1/ The age of the child : The situation will be different if it concerns children

aged 7, 12 or 17 although from a legal point of view all three are children .

2/ The condition of these children “ Street children “ or “ Children in the street “ ?

Those “ in the street “ work there to make money but they are not independent from their family even if they live separated and return to their home village with their earnings.

The “ street children “ (emotionally separated from their parents)

Must earn money legally or illegally in order to survive. Begging after the age of 10 is rare since at that age one inspires scare rather than pity. Latter on one will carry out various activities and the elders will chase the younger. The difference legal/illegal, moral / immoral is irrelevant. The only controlling factor is to make money without being caught by the police. More often than ever “ street children “ steal, and the older they get the more there activities become illegal: Theft with violence, drug traffic, and racket of young children. Is that really working?

Living in the street precludes the practice of jobs necessitating tools (shoe boxes, post cards) who sooner or latter will be stolen. It is very unusual that these type of jobs last out. To try

and help them by supplying working material is wishful thinking. The only way to help children of the street is to get them of the street.

There is a relationship between the work in the street and living in the street. This relationship is not the same in South America and in Africa, social conditions not being the same.

3 / The real problem is not the actual work but the exploitation of the children and the real question is: To whom does child work benefit? It is to the child if he learns a job and therefore prepares his future, but it will be to the child’s employer if he is exploited. An exploited child does not prepare his future. A child who works means two redundant adults: His father because he takes his job for an inferior wage, and himself when he will have become an adult and will in turn be replaced by a child.

The exploitation of children is unacceptable. But it is a by-product of adult exploitation and must be fought as such. It is an illusion to believe the rights of children can be preserved as long as those of adults are not.  
EMAIL:marguerat@bondy.irdf.com



## **ASHALAYAM ( Howra et Calcutta. Inde )**

Hundreds of children ragmen work in Howra and surroundings many of which are under the age of five. The child ragman is the saddest of all children of the street. Searching permanently in refuse dumps he has lost all faith in himself. Having also lost his self-respect he believes he will never succeed although he achieves 75% of all garbage recycling and thus helps his community. He is being had and exploited by those who buy his collect at a very low price.

In order to give them more negotiating power and faith in justice, Ashalayam has open storage spaces where the daily collects of the children are grouped in order to sell them direct and at a fair price to the recycling merchants. This experience has worked and the children have benefited. In the event of the monthly meeting organised by Ashalayam for the children of the street, Hindustan Petroleum has offered to the rag

boys 150 caps, 150 pairs of gloves, and 150 pairs of rubber boots which will help them keeping cleaner and in a better health. But above all this action will have given them more dignity in their work, and made them realise that they contributed to the general activity and helped improve the environment.

Ashalayam has developed some professional formation programs, which should bring results. One of them concerns woodwork. The training is carried out in five different fields: Technology and drawing plans; knowledge of tools and species; woodwork mortice and tenon joint; turning; ornamental carving. A diploma is delivered at the end of the course. Gradually orders are received from clients, for instance 47 benches and chairs for a school. Three out of six of our first students found some work very quickly. EMAIL :  
Ashalayama @mantraonline.com

## **C.A.S. ( Catholic Action for street children at ACCRA. GHANA )**

A great number of activities and people are involved in the education of children. It has therefore become necessary to establish a working scheme for the teachers. Up to then we relied to much on the initiative of our teachers and this eventually led to confusion in the Childs mind. We find that it is important to know exactly what has been taught, how it has been taught, and what the children have learned. A coordinator has therefore been recruited. His task is, amongst other things, to follow the progress of the children .He makes sure that proper controls be carried out regularly in the workshops, and that the children are there to learn and not used as cheap labour. He also makes sure that all students have tools and adequate school kit. In brief he helps the teachers to carry out their task at best. EMAIL: [ficcas@ighmail.com](mailto:ficcas@ighmail.com)

## **ENDA TIERS MONDE JEUNESSE ACTION ( Dakar. Senegal )**

Published some time ago a study on the “ LITTLE MAIDS OF DAKAR “. Senegalese households would supply the greatest number of jobs. Household jobs concern over 80.000 people. The working conditions are very harsh: We are up from morning to evening non-stop with many chores and hardships. We are seldom entitled to bank holidays, receive an unfair treatment and make little money. We do not know what our rights are but we do know who we are. For more information right to EMAIL [jeuda@enda.sn](mailto:jeuda@enda.sn)

The Publications of the Social Urban Bureau of Kigali, Rwanda have also published a study on “ Households in Kigali “ For more info EMAIL : [avsikli@imul.com](mailto:avsikli@imul.com)

## **REFUGIOS PANA ( Valencia, Vénézuéla )**

We believe that integration of youngsters in the labour world is a double-edged possibility. Our society, and above all our youngsters, makes confusion between consuming and status symbol. To buy clothes with labels is a symbol of power, and through them the search is that of a status symbol. This can lead to a murder just for the sake of stealing some shoes with a known label.

Prior to introducing a youngster in the labour world, one should teach them the moral references giving them the true value of money. We have had a chance to give a contract for a short-term job to a youngster. He earned a salary sufficient to cover his personal needs (purchase of trousers, shirt, etc.) but very soon he wanted to buy other things, which he could not afford on his wages. He looked for other means to make money, like robbing his fellow workers and later on his employer. This behaviour made him lose his job and miss his chance of reinsertion. On the other hand a maintenance company took on another youngster, who had been with us for a long time. He got used to the discipline and to the hierarchy cashing his wages every fortnight and this without giving up his other activity of formation. This to us is a success.

EMAIL : [refugiospana@hotmail.com](mailto:refugiospana@hotmail.com)

**ENFANTS ET DEVELOPPEMENT** (France) support amongst others, Sovann Phoum ( a Cambodian association ) in its research of professional formation. The person in charge of this association has made a thorough research of craftsmen and small companies likely to take on a youngster to teach him a craft over a period of one to two years. Enfance et Développement covers the formation costs, if necessary the supply of the necessary tools, and lends a bicycle. The employer usually pays for the midday meal a lodging and pocket money. This agreement is confirmed by contract. A close follow up made by the person responsible of formation in the association is of utmost importance for the success of the formation. A further job can of course be found easily if the youngster has proved his ability.

EMAIL: [siege@ enfantsetdeveloppement.org](mailto:siege@enfantsetdeveloppement.org)

## **KROUSAR THMEY, Phnom Penh Cambodia**

This association has organised since 1995 a formation of fishermen in two early sessions; the first one ashore lasts three months and the youngsters learn the theoretical and practical basics. They go to sea in turn at night. They then look for work on the port for the following three months. Then a complementary formation is given over a period of two months.

Diplomas are given to them for the two sessions and they receive a daily allowance to make up for their loss of earnings. Fishing is a very physical activity and therefore hard on the children of the street. Some are not related to the fishing world or cannot even swim. Many give up during that year, but overall at least 15 and upto 25 youngsters come out with a job.

Jobs related with building are sought for (welders, masons, glazier, air conditioning ) as well as electricity and automobile mechanics. Others choose computers, cooking, or dressmaking.  
**EMAIL:** [krousar\\_thmey@bigpond.com.kh](mailto:krousar_thmey@bigpond.com.kh)

### **ENFANTS D'ABIDJAN. Cote d'Ivoire.**

Apprenticeship contracts are offered to youngsters whereby The association The youngster and BICE are partners. The youngster undertakes to carry out his apprenticeship of a job of his choice over a period of two or three year with an employer. "Les Enfants d'Abidjan" (based in France) finances the apprenticeship (the employer must be rewarded for his teaching) as well as the food, lodging and transport expenses. The BICE follows the progress of the youngster by meeting him at least once a month on payday. This arrangement avoids failures due to lack of money driving the child back in the street. It gives the additional guaranty of a proper teaching since in case of inadequate formation another employer will be found. Some employers live on the money they receive for the apprentice and employ them for a same repetitive task: a youngster can do some hems during one year and will never know how to make clothes.

A diploma proving a qualification rewards some apprenticeships and this will help the youngster to find a job. Sometimes the youngster will be assisted in starting on his own or in partnership with someone else. "Les Enfants d'Abidjan" will then pay for the necessary initial investment of tools. Once started the contract will help the young beginner in the management and in the professional technical advice. This help will last as long as necessary for the youngster to find some costumers. The financial assistance will decrease as the youngster takes over the settlement of his expenses.

**EMAIL:** [saintebarbe42@wanadoo.fr](mailto:saintebarbe42@wanadoo.fr)

### **OPDE Bujumbura Burundi.**

The apprenticeship of smithy craftsmen is in its third year. The duration has been increased by four months in order to improve by practice the technical knowledge of the children. They are from then on appointed to production. The youngsters receive 20% of the sales price on all sales. ( braseros, watering can, buckets, trunks, basins ). In shoe repairs, leather works our first students have reached production level: Satchels, shoes, belts, and cases. We are contemplating the opening of a shop in town to encourage our production. The successful students of the carpentry workshop helped by two young French carpenters have manufactured 199 tables. By now the dressmaking pupils are able to make some children clothes. The embroidery pupils can make tablecloths and napkins. The breeding project has a pig farm fattening 16 pigs and piglets. The farm capacity will soon need to be increased.

**EMAIL:** [opde-burundi@opde.org](mailto:opde-burundi@opde.org)



## **VECED Bujumbura Burundi**

Deals with a very special job: that of a child soldier. Further to 9 years of political crisis, the fighters need a bigger strength. This explains why they recruit child soldiers: Their number would be approximately 14.000. Some minors are enlisted officially in the army; others are used as “doriyas” or policemen. Children under the age of 18 get enlisted with forged ID. They live with soldiers responsible for security by helping them. They are trained to clean weapons, follow the military in their action, carry their weapons and ammunitions, and spy. Some end up joining the regular army. The young policemen make up a paramilitary force organised by the government to protect the civilians from attacks by the rebels. All young boys in good physical condition not going to school and with no regular occupation are liable to be recruited.

Rich peoples’ children are not recruited their father bribing the recruiters.

The rebels have recruited children under the age of 18, voluntarily enlisted or captured in the event of attacks of schools or in the hills.

Preventive operations are carried out towards the rebel chiefs by the local authorities, representatives of the church, and community organisations. An effort is made to improve schooling of children and lucrative activities for the families.

Reinstatement is helped by sensitive actions of the communities (tolerance and peaceful cohabitation) psychological help to children and encouragement to go back to school, professional help and support of families in case of return of a child, professional reinstatement for the demobs’.

EMAIL: [veced 2000@yahoo.fr](mailto:veced2000@yahoo.fr)

## **CHANDRODAYA at Katmandu, Nepal**

Children who work often see their savings stolen. Chandrodaya has opened a bank for deposits where children can hand in their money. Over 250 children of the street have opened an account.

EMAIL: [chandrodayashelter@hotmail.com](mailto:chandrodayashelter@hotmail.com)T

The French newspaper “ La Croix “ mentions a bank for children of the street in New Delhi. The older ones can obtain small credits to develop their business. Those who save money receive a 10% interest. A youngster has been chosen by his friends to run the bank.

## **REPPER,**

110 avenue du Roule, 92200 NEUILLY S/ SEINE.

TELEFAX : 01 47 22 71 73

Email: [repper@enfants-des-rues.com](mailto:repper@enfants-des-rues.com)