

**AN ESSENTIAL ADDITION TO OUR
LAST NEWSLETTER :**

Our thanks to Stefan Vanistendael, of BICE in Geneva who, after reading our last Newsletter sends these comments :
"Yes it's true that good intentions don't suffice and that professional standards are required ; but it is equally true that professional standards alone are insufficient, - a "human" professionalism is required.

The human-being builds and rebuilds to a great extent through its meetings with others, professionals and amateurs. The content relationships with amateurs is vital, often more important than the very technical purely professional approach. Thus and in certain cases, a well-wishing voluntary amateur working in conjunction with the professionals can make an invaluable contribution to the quality of the work. When a voluntary worker is involved in a useful, gratuitous, human relationship it becomes : "I'm interested in you as another human and not because I've a job to do and professional responsibilities to fulfil."

Such voluntary work is complementary to the professional work, and not a means to get over the financial shortages. Sometimes the voluntary worker is better placed to do the job than is the professional, in prison visitation for example."

**A TESTIMONY FROM BRASIL :
AMAR, OUR PRINCIPLES IN EDUCATION.**

"There's no planning ahead for those living on the street you have to survive one day after the other. It's total freedom, just passing time with a friend, or getting pleasure from cheating the rich and swapping experiences. It's the law of the jungle, join a gang and defend one's pitch. You're a hero if you can beat up or make a rival gang run. Death doesn't matter, what's important is freedom, doing what you want, and drugs can help to excite the imagination, they can give a feeling of well-being as with alcohol or a sexual climax ; the illusion of love.

One of the youths, Evandro, wrote : "I lived in another world, I didn't know what love was. It's a world on the fringe of reality, difficult to describe (...). There's no one description possible : each case is unique, they are aggressive because they have been aggressed and this world is governed by the law of the strongest."

So what sort of education is required ? What can be done ?

After having met up a child in the streets, held a conversation with him on several occasions, perhaps shared a sandwich with him, and if his confidence appears to be won we ask him if he wants to try and change his way of life and we tell him the few rules that he must accept – abandon drugs ; no stealing ; always tell the truth ; live in a group with three or four others. He also knows that he's free to return to his old ways at any time he so wants (...).

The essence of our teaching is to learn to tell the truth, gain a minimum of self-esteem, and to replace violence with discussion and sharing.

We favour small groups of 4 or 5, with one boy 18 years old, who has the role of leader. This helps to create a family unit where each one helps the other and dialogue established (...).

In Brazil, everyone is brought up to believe in God, but we make no propaganda in favour of one religion or another. We do, however, encourage the reading of the New Testament and we explain some extracts.

Our type of education is popular and Brazilian, our primordial ambition is to give to each child the ability to make his own way decently."

AMAR, Brazil. E-mail : pierredemou@hotmail.com

NEWS FROM THE NETWORK

AFRICA

LIFE has come to Yaoundé, Cameroon, thanks to the perseverance of a group of students concerned about helping street-children. Our hearty encouragements and good wishes for the success of this enterprise ! E-mail : life_ong@yahoo.fr

AEDM, Aide aux Enfants à Nouakchott, Mauritania, with the support of UNICEF, has given a ten-day training course to a group of girls in the art of making and mixing colourful dyes and sewing to make various items of clothing. Twelve other girls took a course in modern hairdressing, followed by instruction on how to manage their affairs financially. (From information supplied by AEJT)

FSH, Bukavu, Rwanda, over the last 13 years has been helping girls who are the victims of sexual exploitation. 480 girls, so exploited, aged between 8 and 18 yrs. have been identified in areas where FSH has activity. In order to help in the best possible circumstances FSH makes door-to-door visits and proposes a choice of activities (a club of solidarity to help financially, training in a few trades, literacy and revision programmes). During the hours of such training, baby-sitting facilities are supplied. This work has widened the opportunities to meet and discuss with the girls in the FSH centre where they can wash clothing and get sound advice on different problems, or a voucher for anti-virus medicines.

Meetings are organised to discuss methods of contraception, but the large number of pregnancies indicate that most girls have sexual relationships without any protection. During the first 6 months of 2005, 25 girls have been re-inserted in their families and 23 others have found homes elsewhere.

E-mail : fshbkv@hotmail.com

GROUPE ALTERNATIVE, Osaka, Japan is composed of young Congolese girls resident in Japan who wish to help their compatriots resident in Congo. They have purchased a plot of land, 8 hectares in dimension, near Kinshasa to make a farming school. Opening is planned for March 2006. E-mail : glossa@io.ocn.ne.jp

LATIN AMERICA

LAKAY, Haïti takes care of some 150 children and tries to re-insert them in their families. All are given schooling, learn a trade in one or other of the eleven trades selected and take part in social activities. Two major problems remain – finding employment after the training and avoiding Aids. E-mail : strattilio@yahoo.fr

ASIA

CGF Cambodia (Constuire les Générations Futures de Cambodge) has a project to help the schooling of some 440 students (refurbishment of buildings, new class-rooms, a computer centre and an infirmary). In Phnom Penh, a cultural and educational centre offers a basic schooling to children, plus sessions in professional training and in sports and games. Its success has led to the need for larger facilities. E-mail : cqfcambodge@yahoo.fr

GALOPINS de CALCUTTA, India. The 24 boys are now all receiving tuition. The project continues along the lines as planned, in spite of the worry occasioned when there are those who run away. E-mail : fabienneuhame@yahoo.co.in

ASHALAYAM, Calcutta, India. Because of the steadily increasing numbers of children on the streets, Father Mathew George (who succeeds Father Mathew Parakonath who managed Ashalayam during 11 years) is determined to find ways of re-introducing these children into their families where they can make a home. The police at the station in Howra have suggested that they work together with Ashalayam in order to stop the sale of drugs in the station and its surrounds. Here there are some 300 drug addicted children, 100 living actually in the station.

The registers are being updated, each child is photographed and personal details and descriptions recorded and dated.

For the first time at Ashalayam : the opening of a beautician school. Students, after 3 months training, can work in a beauty parlour or start up a business of their own at home and with the necessary tools and fittings which are supplied. The help supplied by the young people of "Rue des Enfants" from France, has been an invaluable help in getting this started. Another piece of good news : Ashalayam is to open a shop in Calcutta to sell the produce from its school. This should improve sales turnover and be a source of stimulation to the children who sell their work.

Ashalayam can manage the financing for this project and the "Association de Soutien à Ashalayam", implanted in France, is thus able to consider helping in the finances of a similar project in Thailand.

E-mail : dbasha@cal12.vsnl.net.in

LES AMIS DU PERE GUEZOU, Yelagiri Hills, India, reports that life is returning to the normal after the tsunami of December 2004 : never before has India overcome such difficulty, largely on its own, which indicates a profound improvement. The first essential measures of help are complete and the long-term measures follow on. The all important project to supply boats will begin in 2006. E-mail : fquezou@yahoo.com

POMME CANNELLE, Kathmandu works in Nepal since 2001. We have opened another 5 small hostels near the children. One is a family hostel for children who have lost all contact with their own families. The second is a centre for games where children come off the streets to play together, to learn to share and to experiment discipline. The third offers help in schooling and help to those on the street but who still live at home. A fourth centre is for older children in need of professional training and in help to find work. The fifth is a night-shelter for urgencies brought in by a team of social workers who are in the streets of Kathmandu each night. E-mail : contact@pommecannelle.org

VIRLANIE Manila, Philippines, perseveres in the help of children threatened by imprisonment. A partnership with several of the police stations in town, has been developed to meet and help children in need of legal aid and advice. The judge for children accepts to forgo a prison sentence if Virlanie promises to supervise the child in his home or in the Virlanie hostel. An independent dedicated centre, as an alternative to prison, is required - a new challenge for Virlanie, who is also engaged in training policemen in the special problems of children on the streets. E-mail : virlanie@virlanie.org

ERDA FOUNDATION, Philippines, began with 6 children in 1974. To-day they number 32,108 spread over varying scholastic levels from kindergarten to university. A technical branch was started in 1994 which integrates with the professional training cursus. E-mail : PierreTritz@vasia.com

FRANCE

CONSTELLATION, France. Over the past 10 years, with the help of trained artists, Constellation has endeavoured to help children to express themselves through the art of painting. At the present time, 43 groups in 22 countries if Latin America, Asia, Africa and Europe function with a total of 1500 children. Several associations, members of the REPPER network, have invited Constellation and have been delighted with results.

The aim of Constellation : to help children to express themselves and feel some esteem for their work and to open up to others through the sharing of mutual appreciation of their paintings.

In 2005 the programme "My Earth seen from the Sky" gave some very good results. Exhibitions were held in France, Equatorial Africa, the Congo, Nicaragua , Mali, etc.. The best paintings were published as postcards, to the great pride of the children whose talent was so recognised. The proceeds of sale helped to buy more materials for painting.

We recommend a visit to the website www.constellationart.org ! The postcards can be obtained through E-mail : constellation@constellationart.org or at Constellation Villarbenon, 73140 Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne, France.

LES TROIS QUARTS DU MONDE, together with **SOLO PARA MUJERES**, Guatemala, manage two hostels for girls, one particularly reserved for girls with drug-associated problems. Only about one third of the girls manage to really make a clean start. Amongst those who return to the street are many who choose to give their child to the care of one of the hostels where some schooling is provided. The ties with of the street are broken, the child is saved! Prostitution increases amongst increasingly young girls, increasingly on drugs, who accept to have un-protected sex which is better paid. Recently Maya Indian girls have turned to prostitution in increasing numbers. In the second hostel we celebrated the success of 2 girls in the Baccaluriat. All are very keen to succeed, even the Maya girls whose mother tongue is not Spanish www.lestroisquartsdumonde.org

**We wish all readers a very happy new year
and prosperity in all projects for 2006.**

REPPER

110, avenue du Roule - 92200 NEUILLY-SUR-SEINE - FRANCE – Téléfax : 33 (0)1 47 22 71 73

E-mail : martineberge@club-internet.fr

REPPER is edited by the association Construire - Registered office : 16, rue de la Glacière - 75013 PARIS - FRANCE