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LETTER TO FRIENDS OF SISTER EMMANUELLE

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« In a true relationship, one remains one, the other remains the other, but both recognize themselves as one flesh, one blood, one unique, sumptuous and fragile humanity ».

Dear Friends,

In September, I was in Juba with Marina Berney, a therapist in Sydney, who volunteered to come and give a five days training at the Lologo's Vocational Training Center. Ten trainees of the current session of the First Aid / Health awareness training and ten graduates of the previous session who are working at the military hospital have learnt about an acupuncture technique. For Marina, it was her first time in Juba. **Here is her testimony:**

Sudan is my country of heart, for my grandparents were living in Khartoum and as a child, I used to find there a warm and joyful environment, where I felt safe. These intimate feelings turned out to be at the opposite of what have been undergoing the inhabitants of this country (today divided in two) since decades of civil war!

I was excited to be able to offer a therapeutic tool requiring no equipment other than both hands, and yet allowing to sooth the nervous system and any anxiety, to bring more tonicity to the organs, to release intense emotions, and to soften post-traumatic reactions. The trainees I met were eager to learn, and showed confidence in an unfamiliar practice. Interaction between men and women was easy, kind and simple, without coyness when it came to touching each other as the technique requires it, but always with a lot of respect. The vast majority of participants had a much more precise awareness of their bodies than what I observed while teaching in Europe or Australia.

During the first trip from the airport, the joy of returning to this country was mingled with a mixture of helplessness and discouragement: so many evidences of the huge need of rebuilding the country after years of conflict, and the challenges that seem impossible to meet! Yet people like Betram - the local project coordinator - will demonstrate to me, day after day, that "there is no such word as can't", and that

there are some giants of patience, perseverance and dedication, who make it possible to achieve projects that gradually improve daily life.



Throughout my stay, it became clear to me that Patrick Bittar's annual visit played an important role for the association's employees. It's a time when they can show what they do, express themselves, confide in someone somewhat external, and have their

achievements highlighted. Patrick knows how to value everyone with kindness and a lot of sweetness. Acknowledging the work done helps to maintain motivation.

The strongest sharing times for me were lived in the Be In Hope home for ex-street boys. The road to Rajaf was long and tiring at the end of the rainy season. This remoteness from Juba keeps boys away from the temptations of the street and their possible old bad habits

I attended Ajuot's interview, which was carried out by Patrick. Being 18, Ajuot will have to leave the home soon. He told us about his childhood in his village, and the panic that broke out among the inhabitants the day armed men came, shooting everywhere. He related his journey to escape the fightings, and how he ended up in the streets of Juba. He intensely expressed what it meant for him to live in this home, to build fraternal bonds, and especially to go to school. He has clearly shown his thirst for learning and his concern about the prospect of leading his life as an adult. How not to compare with many of our young people who have an easy access to education and who show no motivation to make something of what they received! Patrick kindly listened to Ajuot and helped him see the benefits of attending a training at the Lologo Center to learn a skill and earn a living.



The highlight of this day was the football match in which Betram and Patrick took part. Patrick had brought outfits of the French football team, and the gift was much appreciated!

I would like to conclude by mentioning something that moved me a lot during the training. All the points that the trainees learned to spot on the body have names and symbolic meaning, and they were regularly repeated in chorus. I still have in the ear the particularly intense sound level and the vibration that animated the room when we got to a specific spot, that everyone without exception remembered from the beginning of the training, and which naming was pronounced at the unison: "PEACE!"

My visit report, which can be downloaded from the asase.org home page, will give you detailed information about the programs we are funding thanks to you.

In Haiti, the situation has been chaotic for several months. Violent riots broke out everywhere to demand the departure of the president, accused of embezzlement of public funds. The country is paralyzed: gas stations have been attacked, transport is stopped, food is scarce, inflation is high and people (70% unemployed) are stealing to eat.

In Hinche, the police station was devastated, government offices have been burned, shops destroyed... The Hospital has been closed. Like everywhere in the country, the JPM University and the schools of the programs have been closed for two months. In early October, Jean Claude François, the vice president of Haiti Cosmos, took a bus to go to Port-au-Prince. On the way to the airport, it was attacked, a protester pointed a gun at Jean Claude, and the bus had to make a U-turn. Finally, a few days later, Jean Claude was able to take a flight, although the airport had been fired on.

Despite this context, the Jean Price Mars University was able to organize the final exams at the end of September. Note that all the 2017 Agronomy and Civil Engineering graduates have found work; three of them even joined together and opened a technical school in Hinche.

A container with training materials arrived in Port-au-Prince.

Thirteen people graduated from a homeopathy training.

The phytotherapy laboratory still produces drugs for the dispensaries. As they have received government approval, they are now also distributed in pharmacies.

Thank you in advance for your generosity which allows us to keep on supporting the unfortunate inhabitants of these two countries.

Patrick Bittar
Director

We wish you all a peaceful and happy Christmas!