



The Program for Social and family reintegration of street children

Nazareth Centre

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APEF INFO

Association for the Promotion of Children's Integrity and of Women (APEF)

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2015

THE COORDINATOR



Happy New Year 2015 to all friends and well-wishers of Nazareth Centre for street Children.

As we begin this new year, we look back with gratitude to the year 2014 for all that we have achieved together with the Project for the reintegration of street children into family and society. The last few months of the year 2014 recorded a sharp and steady increase in the number of children received in Nazareth Centre. We had up to 85 children with the youngest being just nine years old. This is a call for reflection on some productive activities for the accompaniment of these children who have been neglected by our unjust society. The team at the Centre continue to put more effort in responding to the daily needs of these helpless children both at the Centre and in the slumps in town where they normally congregate.

Following our principal objective being to reunite street children with family and social reintegration,

we are also reflecting on possibilities to have stable and successfully rupture from street life into building a child's future. In this case, we are thinking of a program in place to help children who have been returned to their families to either learn a trade or further their education. There has been a greater tendency in the past few years for children returned to families to get back to the streets again because of either poverty or lack of means to build their own future.

To help initiate a consistent and progressive reinsertion of these children, the Centre is starting some creative activities, like art and design work, literacy classes, etc., that will help ignite the interest of some children to either go back to school or to learning a trade. Our only handicap with this activities will be insufficient space and material to carry on these activities. We are very grateful to some of our partners who are leaving no stone unturned

with regards to this project. As from September 2014, we have successfully returned 8 children to their families. Out of the 8, only four of them have started learning a trade. We are also looking at possibilities of sending some to school and some to learn a trade. Things have been very slow for us to engage into something due to our limited financial resources.

We are grateful to all our partners, benefactors and friends for the tremendous support they continue to give to us. The project in Nazareth Centre is what it is today thanks to your relentless effort in helping us reach out to these children in order to restore the dignity that has been stolen from them. We continue to rely on your generosity and support. May this year 2015 be a fruitful year in all your endeavors.

Christian Abongbung sm



STREET OUT-REACH



AT THE SERVICE OF STREET CHILDREN

Since 2007, the Marist family in Dakar has been firmly committed in the recovery of street children in Nazareth Centre.

After 40 years of missionary experience in Senegal, knowing the local language and also with my nursing profession, I find it quite easy to interact with people especially to have first contact with the street boys and to gain their trust. When I meet them in the streets, I try to listen to their stories and family situations, find out about their expectations and desires. I treat their wounds and attend to some of their basic medical needs.

We normally go out to meet the street children twice a week at various places around the city, that is where they normally find some shelter around garbage deposits and market places where they could normally get something to live on.

We invite them to Nazareth Centre once a week where they can have a proper shower, wash their clothes and we provide them with meals, give them some medical attention, listen to some of them individually, and do general sensitization on some important issues that could encourage them to leave the streets. We also help them with research of their families and negotiate a possible return to school, to home or to learn a trade.

I love these boys and my greatest desire is that they could re-integrate into the main stream of society, but it is not an easy job. As a matter of fact, it is important for us to have motivated and generous educators who are ready to go an extra mile with these boys. Their rehabilitation, training, social and family reintegration for a better future is our major priority.



Sr. Santana Sterni, smsm.



WEDNESDAY IN NAZARETH





FAMILY RE-INTEGRATION

ABU BÂ is a child now living happily with his parents in Toundodi village situated about 70km from Aeré Lao in the Podor Division of St. Louis region (Senegal). At the age of 7, his parents took him to a Koranic school (daara) far away from home in a village called Daara Djolof (Touba Division) in the Dioubel region. After spending about two years in the Koranic school, he ran away from the region of Dioubel to Dakar because he could not bear the torture and bad treatment he got from the koranic school. While in Dakar, he was living in the streets and he is now 13 years old.

After spending more than four years in the streets of Dakar, he wants to return home to meet his parents and wants to go to school in order to learn French. He could have returned home by himself but unfortunately, he could not make his way home since he left home at the age of seven and did not have any contact with his parents and family. After accompanying this young man every time he comes to Nazareth, the research and mediation process took quite a while to relocate his village and family. The process of his returning home was in three phases as follows: accompaniment (listening to his story), mediation and finally returning to the family.

⇒ **Accompaniment** (listening to his story): this period provided us with very important and necessary information that will help in our research. At this point, we got the full details of the koranic school in Daara Djolof and the names of the owner.

⇒ **Mediation:** this was the contact with the owner of the koranic school. It is often a delicate and sensitive issue when dealing with such people. But surprisingly the owner of the Koranic school quickly acknowledged that the young man had ran away from his school many years ago. He gave us the address of his parents and all the necessary contact details.

⇒ **Returning to family:** with the information that we got from the Koranic school, the young man was now ready and anxiously waiting to be reunited with his family.

The return of young Abu Bâ to family was such a moving experience because the family had long forgotten about him thinking that he was no longer alive. It was a successful mission but it does not end there. The greatest part now is to ensure a stable and fruitful family and social reintegration. Since returning home, We have kept on with follow-up by phone and

also a visit to his village. The initial plan for him was to go to school but the major problem is that, the nearest French school is about 60 km from his village (Yarélao) with no proper roads except tracks in the desert. However, Abou Bâ has decided to take care of his flock of sheep and he is happy in what he is doing at the moment.



Abou Bâ with his herd of sheep



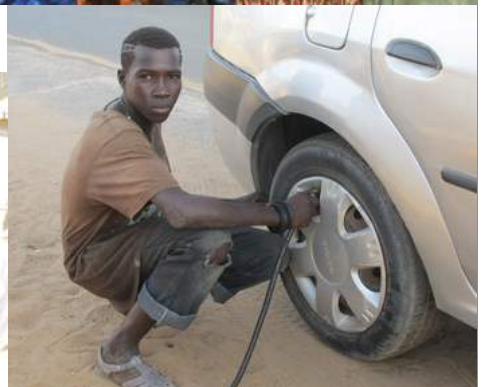
Atobou DIÉMÉ



Returning to family



Accompaniment and apprenticeship





It's with gratitude to God for all that I have achieved this far. I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to all those who have journeyed with me during these three months of my practical experience.

Thanks to the entire team of Nazareth Centre for the warm welcome, support and valuable advice in my formation as a social worker. I want to say a big thank you to the new director of the Nazareth Centre, Fr Christian Abongbung sm for his time, his encouragement, advice and dedication that has been a great source of motivation for me.

I will not conclude without acknowledging the great effort and help from my dear sponsor, Soizic Quentin and also to Sr. Jeline smsm who has been very helpful to me for the past years. Thanks for your continuous support and encouragement.

Finally I will not forget my friend and classmate of the 22nd batch of the School for Social workers Dakar, Mr. Demba Ba, with whom I shared good experiences in Nazareth Centre.

During our practical experience, we met a good number of street children and facilitators from different centres who accompany these children. Their suffering is hidden behind their empty and distant look. Our time of sharing, listening, and attending to their medical needs and to their various problems helped us to understand the level injustice these children are going through. Our meeting with them gives them at least some sense of life, dignity and acceptance in the society. The condition of these children shows how cruel

humanity can be to others. The greatest wish and hope of Nazareth Centre for these children is to restore the stolen dignity of these poor and innocent children. The results of this project may not be visible in the short term, but for long term thanks to the follow up and accompaniment of children who have been successfully returned to their families. The key in achieving this is mainly to have faith, hope, perseverance and courage.

I like to say Happy New year 2015 to each and every one who has contributed and is still supporting this project either morally or financially.

« AM NGEN JARAMA »



(mediation and family reintegration)

Christophe SAGNA

Projet de Réinsertion Familiale et Sociale des Enfants en Rupture Famille

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