



Through our actions, we must become

THE VOICE OF THE VOICELESS

tam-tam: the Emmaus news wall

“Through our actions, we must become the voice of the voiceless and in doing so, reconnect those in possession of power with those in need.” **Abbé Pierre**



Emmaus on the move

In every Region, Emmaus groups are leading by example: those most marginalised from society are at the very heart of projects and of the decisions that affect them.



AFRICA > BENIN

Since 2007, local residents have been at the heart of the project developed on the shores of Lake Nokoué (Benin). Working as an association, they manage the day-to-day running of the project and make the decisions which ensure its survival. Sofiate Sonouvou has been the association's treasurer for the last 2 years. “I am responsible for the administrative management of the project, and for monitoring and coordinating the work of the maintenance technicians, those who manage the hydrant and the operator in my village. The association was created by us and for us, there was no way I could just sit on the sidelines! I wanted to play my part, however small it was, in making my village grow and experience life in an association alongside men. The participatory approach is the key to the success, and to the transparent management of any association and any community development project.”



AMERICA > PERU

At Emmaus Piura, companions play a central role in the group's governance. They participate in discussions and training courses, and are encouraged to assume positions of responsibility. Having joined the group as a companion 15 years ago, Javier Guzmán Camacho is now a member of its management team. “For 7 years, I worked in the Emmaus community as a painter, carpenter and upholsterer. I then worked in the clothing warehouse, and collected unwanted items, before becoming a driver. Later, I was put in charge of the living community, the working community, and the shop. Working my way up like that helped me to understand what Emmaus was all about. Today, as a manager, I always strive to ensure that the common good prevails in every decision I make. I am delighted to be able to play my part in bringing a tiny glimmer of hope to those who have lost their own.”



ASIA > INDIA

Emmaus Tara Projects is developing a mutual health scheme allowing those most marginalised from society to organise themselves in order to gain access to healthcare and influence the decisions affecting the scheme. Sunita has been both a beneficiary and elected member of the scheme since its inception in 2011. “Alongside my jewellery-making business, I work as an elected member of the association. My role is to increase awareness of the mutual health scheme, recruit new members, lead group discussions about the scheme, and liaise with both healthcare workers and the project's many stakeholders. I greatly value the opportunity to participate in this democratic process. It is vital that we be involved in order to properly understand the project and take ownership of it. For the majority of members, this is the first time their opinions are being heard and considered important.”



EUROPE > UNITED KINGDOM

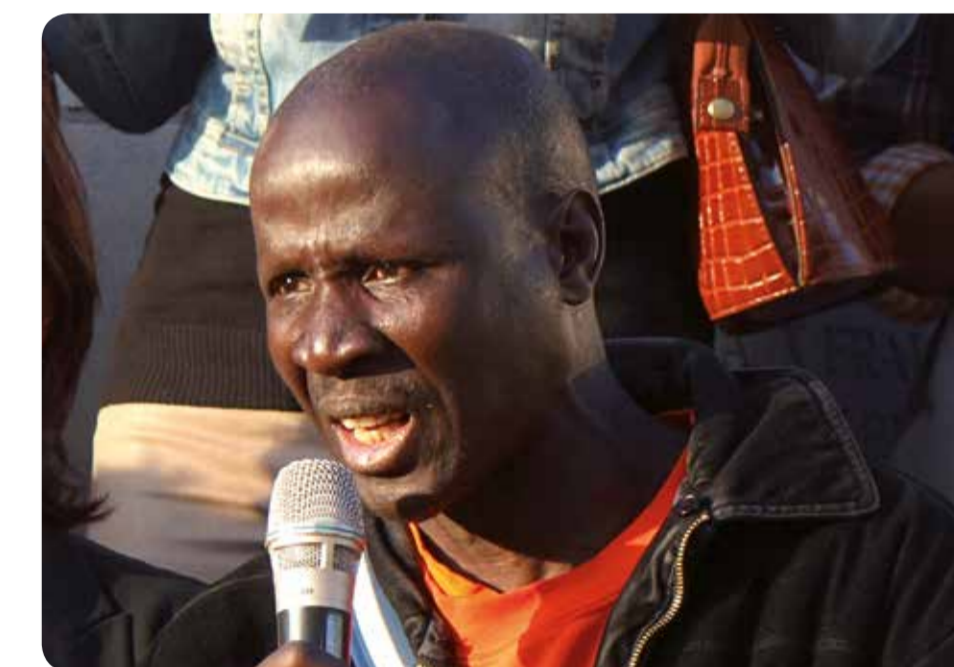
In 2015, Emmaus UK launched a consultation to collect companions' views on the best ways to combat marginalisation. Eight companions were trained in research methods and conducted the interviews. Mahesh Pherwani, a companion of Emmaus Lambeth, was among that eight-strong team. “Emmaus seeks to increase public awareness of homelessness and exclusion, and to shape policy in these areas. The aim of the consultation was to understand the day-to-day reality of life as a homeless person and the problems faced, in order to develop appropriate solutions. Having endured homelessness themselves, the companions were keen to share their experiences in order to spare others a similar fate. 91% of the companions we met wished to participate in the process and their input allowed us to issue a whole host of recommendations!”

Next port of call... Paris (France)

A migrant of Malian origin, Anzoumane Sissoko campaigns to ensure the views of undocumented migrants are considered when decisions which affect them are made. He is the spokesperson for the Undocumented Migrants Collective in Paris (France) and a member of the International Steering Committee on Undocumented Migrants.

Describe the journey which has led you here today. I'm one of seven brothers. Following several droughts in Mali, we decided that one of us had to go to France to help the family. I arrived in France 22 years ago, when the immigration debate was in full swing. I lived without documents for 13 and a half years and during that time I was arrested, placed in administrative detention and imprisoned several times, and numerous attempts were made to deport me... Then I joined the Undocumented Migrants Collective and was appointed spokesperson in 2004.

Which rights do you defend on behalf of migrants? First and foremost, I defend the freedom of movement and establishment. If those rights were protected, deaths and human trafficking would be avoided and security forces would be able to concentrate on the real problems at hand. But above all else, I campaign to ensure migrants' voices are heard, and to guarantee they participate in the debates on decisions which affect them. Today, associations, political



Why must migrants' voices be heard? In the courts, a migrant's word carries more weight when it is the lawyer alone who pleads his case. But when major decisions affecting migrants are taken, they cannot express their views directly. The use of intermediaries creates many misunderstandings and disputes, and means a migrant's situation can be manipulated to serve the interests of a third party. Migrants themselves are those best placed to describe the reality of their day-to-day existence.

Editorial

Silence kills By Jean Rousseau, Chair of Emmaus International

Having lost all hope of drawing the world's attention to the plight of the homeless, it was under the tragic circumstances of February 1954 that Abbé Pierre was able to “give a voice” to those suffering from the scourge, both in the literal and figurative sense. And it was enlightened by the unforeseen consequences of his public appeal that our founder published the first issue of his magazine

“Faim et soif des hommes: la voix des hommes sans voix” (Hunger and Thirst of Men: the Voice of the Voiceless) almost immediately following the appeal's closure. Thus, the Emmaus Movement was born of the firm belief that ignorance and indifference must be fought with unceasing vigour: only knowledge of poverty, of living conditions which strip men of their dignity, can lead a large part of society to change their

views, and lead politicians to make the right decisions. Over the years, and at times with mixed results, we have succeeded in shifting balances of power in order to force society to confront and change situations which cannot be accepted. Indeed, was our very first step as a united Movement not the publication of a Manifesto? Act and make aware – that remains our guiding mission to this day!



All aboard

→ **Come and take part in the World Assembly**, from April 18th to 23rd in Jesolo (Italy) to make your group's voice heard! Can't attend? Don't forget to send back your proxy vote to ensure your vote is counted when decisions are made.
Contact: Filippo Lo Bello – f.lobello@emmaus-international.org
Grégoire Chauveau – g.chauveau@emmaus-international.org

→ **Suggest self-organised activities** to present your group's proposals during the World Assembly. To do so, send us back your entry form by January 30th 2016.

All documents are available on the Intranet, in the file “World Assembly 2016.”
emmaus-international.org/connexion - Username: intranet | Password: 1949

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