



Le Don du Cœur

Chœur d'Enfants des Écoles Privées Genevoises



HIGHLIGHTS

India

- To mark the 10th anniversary of Anbumalar school, built by DDC, Committee makes special grant of CHF 5,000

Madagascar

- As school starts second year, with 360 children registered, the State takes financial control but DDC remains active

Cambodia

- 100% success for school leavers in final exams; diplomas awarded by Provincial Education Department; visit by Swiss Ambassador

Every Step Count

- The 35-day hike creates a buzz; money raised will allow the first 27 Ta Pen graduates to pursue their schooling

Don du Cœur Committee

Isabelle Chatel
President

Jean-Philippe Bernard
multimedia communication

Jean-Claude Brès
Project leader, Kenya

Claude-Alain Burky
Project leader, Madagascar

Michel Firmenich
Project leader, Cambodia

Catherine Firmenich
Schools liaison

Laurence Parent
Treasurer

Sue Power
Events

Madagascar: Andohasatra-Betioky school starts year 2 State now fully in charge, assumes financial responsibility

On 17 September our partner SOS Villages d'Enfants Madagascar met with the Ministry of Education for the official handover of the Andohasatra-Betioky primary school, which was built and financially supported for the past year by Don du Cœur.

Minister Paul Rabary – who himself inaugurated the school in October 2016 – paid tribute to the cooperative spirit surrounding the school at the local level. He was impressed by the results of the first year, especially the way the canteen was organised and the high attendance rate.

Despite the continued challenges related to the day-to-day running

of the establishment, it is now fully part of the state education system in South Madagascar. Don du Cœur will only continue to finance the school canteen for the start of the second school year – a question of survival for the 360 children who start school each day on an empty stomach. The World Food Programme is soon expected to take over this responsibility.

In 2018 Don du Cœur will work with the ToroHay bureau, a local grouping of the project's main backers, to focus on reading classes for the children and further training for the teachers.



L-r: **Dr Olivier Randrianarivelo**, Deputy Director of SOS Villages d'Enfants Madagascar; **M. Paul Rabary**, Minister of Education; **Mr. Daniel Paniez**, National Director of SOS Villages d'Enfants Madagascar; **Ms Faneva Raharimanantsoa**, ToroHay, representing Don du Cœur.

India

Anbumalar special needs school marks a decade of service

The Anbumalar School in Tiruvalur District, in India's Tamil Nadu State, was built in 2007 with the proceeds of the previous year's Don du Cœur concert, at the suggestion of our Swiss-based partners Friends of India. The school is the concrete realisation of the Anbumalar Social Service Vision laid down by its founder, Mr. P. Selvaraj, a veteran social worker in Chennai.

In its ten years, the school has provided specialised education for dozens of mentally challenged children. It has a residential unit for those whose families are unable to provide the necessary care. The establishment is recognised by the authorities and is almost self-sufficient, thanks to its income-genera-

ting activities.

Don du Cœur, together with Friends of India, supported the school financially until 2012. Now it has decided to award a special grant of CHF 5,000 to mark the 10th anniversary. This will pay for a 7-seat minibus to transport children with reduced mobility.

There are currently 45 pupils at the school, in the care of specially-qualified staff. All services are provided free of charge – a vital factor since most parents would not be able to meet the cost.

As well as learning basic life skills, children start every day with physical exercise. Those with physical disabilities are given appropriate physiotherapy. The children are



The play area is never empty

also given the opportunity to engage in sports and games, singing and dancing. Those sufficiently able are given training to produce saleable items such as doormats, towels, paper cups and candles.

The school also provides medical and dental screening for the children (a clinic was opened in 2007, funded by the Fondation Mérieux).

The Don du Cœur wishes Anbumalar many more years of joyful service to children in need!



Striking the right note: the band is the school's pride and joy



P. Selvaraj, the founder, giving an IT lesson

Association Don du Cœur
2, rue Munier-Romilly
CH - 1206 Geneva

+41 79 652 90 93
info@don-du-choeur.ch
www.don-du-choeur.ch

THE CAMBODIA PROJECT

Diplomas and bicycles for Ta Pen's 27 graduates

More than 100 people were present on 25 August to celebrate the first graduation ceremony at the school, presided over by the Governor of Banteay Srey District and officials from the Siem Reap Provincial Department of Education. A delegation from Don du Choeur was there, along with the parents of the graduates.

The ceremony began with songs and traditional Apsara dancing, followed by a "fashion show", with clothes made from rubbish bags and modelled by none other than Ta Pen's 27 first graduates!

After prizes were given to the top pupils at all levels, the 27 graduates – 14 boys and 13 girls – re-

turned and were given their diplomas by officials of the Education Department. Each also received a bicycle, funded by the proceeds from the epic "Pas du Choeur" walk carried out this summer in Europe (see below); the bikes will enable them to travel to Banteay Srey or around Siem Reap for their studies or apprenticeships.

A great day for Ta Pen, its families, teachers and the Don du Choeur – and above all, the man who built the school, Chamrong Lo, affectionately referred to by the children as "Ta" – grandfather.



Chamrong Lo, the school's founding father, giving out prizes



The graduates, here with their parents, show justified pride in their achievement



Mr. Sireidy Ung, adviser at the Ministry of Education and project initiator, hands over the bicycles

The Swiss Ambassador at Ta Pen



Sokmean Put (I), deputy director, DDC Cambodia, with Ambassador Sieber

Ivo Sieber, Switzerland's Ambassador to Cambodia, based in Bangkok, came to Ta Pen while visiting Siem Reap province and met with the school's teaching team, who briefed him and Ms Carine Salerno, Swiss Consul, about the school's activities and the children's development.

Step by step into the history books

"Pas du Choeur" hike raises nearly CHF 33,000

There were cheers, tears and sighs of relief as Vincent and Anne-Claire rode the last few hundred metres to their home in Veyrier, after five weeks spent walking – and a bit of cycling – from Knokke in Belgium to Geneva. Their amazing efforts raised a total of CHF 32,700 to finance three years of studies or apprenticeships for students who graduated from Ta Pen secondary school this year.

It was the first time such a huge individual fund-raising venture had taken place for the Don du Choeur.

Setting out from Knokke on 5 August, the couple travelled almost 800 km on a journey full of rich encounters and discoveries. They were in contact by Skype with the Ta Pen graduates on 25 August, the day of their award ceremony.

But by the fourth week Vincent was suffering from acute pain, thought to be tendinitis. The couple bravely completed the journey by bike, with a bit of help over the steep Col de la Faucille, arriving in Geneva on 10 September.

On 16 September, Swiss and Cambodian volunteers for Don du Choeur walked the 10 kms from the lakeside to the home of Anne-Claire and Vincent, to celebrate the success of the venture and enjoy a delicious buffet lunch.



Anne-Claire and Vincent at their arrival

More details on the journey:
➤ www.lepasduchoeur.ch

Pour tous ces enfants, vos dons sont les bienvenus.

Don du Choeur

Swiss non-profit association, tax-deductible since 2008

2, rue Munier-Romilly - 1206 Geneva
www.don-du-choeur.ch
info@don-du-choeur.ch

UBS SA. CP - CH 1211 Geneva 2
IBAN: CH 10 0024 0240 6036 14M1P
CCP: 17-540730-8

PARTNERS

Geneva Association of Private Schools, Brolliet SA, Fondation Coromandel, Fondation Covalence, Fondation International Maria Francisca, Vaovy La Fondation.