

## Dear Friends & Colleagues,

We are pleased to present the latest edition of the BW newsletter.

This edition records some significant anniversaries of five of our member Centres:

Samaritans of Singapore (SOS) celebrated their 50th Anniversary

Bloemfontein Befrienders: South Africa their 45th Anniversary

Samaritans of Thailand (Bangkok) celebrated their 40th Anniversary

BW Tokyo; Japan celebrated their 20th Anniversary

Sourire de Reda; Morocco has been operating for 10 years.

Congratulations to you all on reaching these significant anniversaries.

Please let us know what is happening in your Centre and especially when you are celebrating significant events.

## Samaritans of Singapore (SOS) 50th Anniversary Conference – Unifying Communities; Strengthening Hope

In conjunction with Samaritans of Singapore (SOS) 50th anniversary, Unifying Communities; Strengthening Hope conference brings together experts in different fields of work to share their knowledge and experience on suicide and its prevention. This year, we have included opportunities to discuss matters related to the elderly, digital media, workplace mental health, and challenges faced by minority groups in Singapore.

You may find more details of the conference here:  
<https://www.sos.org.sg/blog/conference2019>

## This year, the Samaritans of Thailand turned 40

To celebrate this significant milestone of our organization, we organized an international conference on suicide prevention over the weekend of March 8-10, 2019, at a hotel in the ancient Siamese capital of Ayutthaya. The principal objectives of the conference are to foster closer relationship with like-minded organizations around the world, to provide networking opportunities for future collaboration, and, most importantly, to exchange ideas and learn from one another as we face the upcoming challenges as emotional support providers in this rapidly changing world. The theme of the conference was "Challenging the Challenges".

The conference was attended by close to a hundred delegates from suicide prevention centers in various countries across three continents. Locally, we also welcomed delegates from the government sector, other NGO's, the British Embassy as well as members of the local press.

We felt really honored that during this conference, three very prominent personalities have accepted our invitation to give keynote speeches.

## Contents:

Samaritans of Singapore (SOS) 50th Anniversary

Samaritans of Thailand (Bangkok) 40th Anniversary

20th Anniversary of BW Tokyo Japan

BW Miyazaki annual concert & lecture in association with World Suicide Prevention Day

Outreach Activities of Befrienders Penang

Befrienders Kenya: Breaking the Silence; Gatekeeper Training; World Suicide Prevention Day.

Samaritans of Singapore: activities in September

Letter from Befrienders Bloemfontein

News from Kaan Pete Roi; Bangladesh

Press release from Sourire de Reda

Activities of Befrienders KL (Kuala Lumpur; Malaysia).

Befrienders Kenya: Suicide Prevention workshop and training; Caring for the care givers; Mental Health Panel discussion; Outreach Programme and Charged for Attempting Suicide.



### To contact us:

To submit articles or information for the Newsletter, please contact the BW Secretary, Dave Watkins ([communications@befrienders.org](mailto:communications@befrienders.org)). Contact information for the Chair of the Trustees is: Martin Taylor ([chair@befrienders.org](mailto:chair@befrienders.org)).



Dr. Mechai Viravaidhya, a former Senator and Tourism Minister and pioneer of community works in Thailand who is affectionately known as Thailand's "Mr. Condom" for his pivotal role in reducing the population growth of the country, gave a very motivational speech on his work at a community-based rural school. The delegates felt very inspired by his speech and many renewed their commitment to continue with their work to bring positive changes to this world.



Mr. Michael Yoon, Safety Manager of Facebook in Asia Pacific, was another keynote speaker who provided insights to the audience about the company's commitment

of the social media company in suicide prevention through its collaboration with organizations such as the Samaritans of Thailand. He also discussed how technology can be utilized for suicide prevention work.



Finally, Mr. Pen-Ek Rattanaurang, an internationally acclaimed and multi-award winning movie director, talked

about his experiences on movie making with suicide theme, how he previously romanticized suicide in his movies, and how his perception about suicide changed after he came into contact with the representatives from the Samaritans of Thailand. He also discussed how he employed his artistic skills in helping the Samaritans of Thailand raise awareness of the gravity of the suicide issue in Thailand and shed light on how everyone may have a role in suicide prevention by "listening with their hearts".



Looking into the future, we see a number of challenges taking place within the next decade. With this in mind, we organized workshops focused on three main issues that we feel will become very challenging in the near future:

1. The problems associated ageing societies and how we can help people cope,
2. The increasing frequency of cyberbullying as the use of social media rises exponentially and how this problem can be alleviated, and
3. Whether the use of artificial intelligence and machine learning in emotional support work will become a challenge or opportunity for us who are in this line of

work. We discussed these issues extensively and came up with framework on how we may cope with these rising challenges.



In Thai culture, "having fun" is an integral part of our lives. Consequently, in addition to providing the opportunities to have serious discussions through workshops and listening to keynote speeches, we also ensured that our delegates had as much fun as possible. We hosted a welcome dinner on a

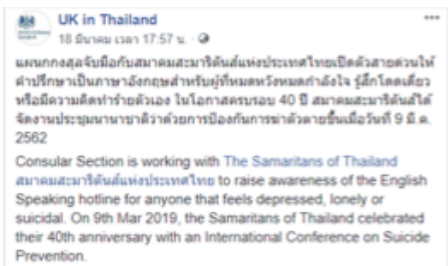


river cruise on Friday evening, where the delegates enjoyed the scenery of the historical ruins of Ayutthaya while having dinner and cruising. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all. On Saturday

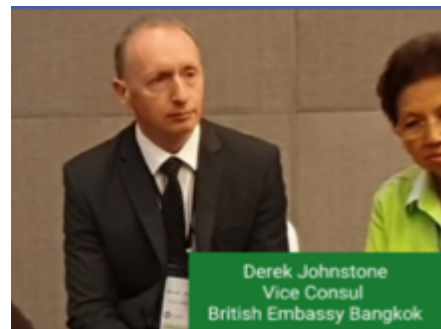


Continued from page 2...

night, we hosted the "International Night" where delegates from different countries performed on stage. The evening's event culminated in a Thai communal dance, participated by all delegates.



The conference concluded on Sunday, March 10, with the final speech by our Chairman summarizing the things we had discussed and learned together throughout the weekend and challenging the delegates to face upcoming challenges with confidence, courage, and commitment. Most delegates expressed their positive views about the conference we hosted. Meaningful friendships, both on the individual and organizational levels, were established during the conference. Many delegates have already told us that they were looking forward to returning once again in 2029 when we will be celebrating our 50th anniversary.



Many thanks to the British Embassy for producing and posting this clip on their facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ukinthailand/videos/2081400941979528/>

"BO-NENKAI" means generally a year-end party in Japan. As BO (forget) and BO (hope) are homophones in Japanese of each other, (Homophone (pronounced HAH-muh-fone) is Greek for "same sound." It's when two or more words have the same sound, but different meanings.)

A party for Befrienders hoping and looking to create a society where suicidal feelings shall not be denied easily and the decision to take one's own life shall be respected". The BW Tokyo Japan provided a Toll-Free Helpline from midnight of 31st August to 05:30 am on 2nd September for the World Suicide Prevention Day, 10th September in cooperation of BW

Centres in Japan. As many pupils and students of elementary school, junior high school, and high school tend to be suicidal especially at the end of the summer vacation or the first school day. Befrienders of Tokyo Centre care for themselves with everyone bringing snacks for a break and chatting. Some enjoy this special chance to meet each other.



## 20th Anniversary of BW Tokyo Japan

BW Tokyo Japan had a Lecture Meeting on 15th December 2018 celebrating the 20th Anniversary. The title was "Be honest, unique, and peaceful: Tips to relieve Depression, Anxiety, and Grief from a psychological point of view". Twitter Japan offered the venue as BW Tokyo Japan has admitted as their partnership organization from 2016. When someone tweets suicidal comment, Twitter Japan recommends BW Tokyo Japan Helpline. After the lecture meeting, we had a special party, "BO-NENKAI", celebrating our 20th anniversary. More than 40 people including supporters from the beginning, former Befrienders colleagues and Befrienders family gathered from all over Japan. Four new members had certified as listening volunteers and received the blessing of attendees. May the four be good listening volunteers.

Director of BW Tokyo Japan  
Machiko Nakayama



"Be honest, unique, and peaceful: Tips to relieve Depression, Anxiety, and Grief from a psychological point of view"

## BW Miyazaki; Japan

Every year, the BW Miyazaki Japan holds an annual concert with a lecture meeting for the World Suicide Prevention Day, 10th September. This year, the speaker of the lecture meeting was Dr. Masato Hiejima, a psychiatrist. He talked about risks of addiction, mental illness, and suicide. We learned how they are related to each other and what can we do for such people. Approx. 100 participants of the lecture meeting enjoyed the concert of the Mandolin Ensemble "All free!" as well.

**Dr. Masato Hiejima**



### Befrienders Penang

**Outreach Activities: 17 March - 17 May 2010**

**Publicity & Outreach Booth (conduct DASS21 and on-site befriending):**

Permatang Pauh Health Carnival; Mydin Bukit Mertajam ; SEGI College; TAR University College; Vitrox Technologies Factory; Batu Kawan.

Talks on Introduction to Befrienders Penang & Understanding Depression & Suicide Prevention:

St. Xaviers Institution; Georgetown Secondary School; Tanjung Bunga Health Clinic; Muntri Street Health Clinic; Macalister Road Health Clinic; Perak Road Health Clinic; Bandar Baru Air Itam Health Clinic; Bukit Jambul Health Clinic; Sungai Dua Health Clinic.

Workshop on Understanding Loneliness & Relationship: KDU University College.



Outreach Training & Refresher Potluck lunch Shared by members: Update on skills and knowledge



## Befrienders Kenya

We are delighted to bring to you the 7th Edition of Breaking the Silence 2018.

We are very, very small, but we are profoundly capable of very, very big things. (Stephen Hawking). This is why as Befrienders Kenya, we choose to do something about the prevailing situation on suicide and with support from our partners and well-wishers continue to provide free and confidential emotional support to those in distress as we also continue to educate communities on Suicide Prevention. As Befrienders Kenya we are proud to be members of Befrienders Worldwide and International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) national representatives for Kenya.

Breaking the Silence's overall goal is to provide information and educate its readers on the topic of Suicide which is still a taboo subject in Kenya and

to show how Befrienders Kenya is reaching out to those who are distressed and in danger of taking their lives as we also recognize that suicide is a concern for all and indeed everyone has a role to play in suicide prevention. Breaking the Silence is also part of Befrienders Kenya efforts towards reducing stigma associated with suicide through bringing the topic of suicide into conversation. Through Breaking the silence we also share with you our activities done through the year.

Having held various awareness activities through invitations by groups and community trainings in Kikuyu through the support of the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP), it is evident that there is increased level of confidence in our work as BK.

We are grateful to IASP, Befrienders Worldwide, Africa Mental Health



Foundation and like-minded individuals for continued support and encouragement. Last and certainly not least a big thank you to our committed volunteers who keep BK alive – thank you Team! We look forward to taking BK to greater heights in 2019 as we work together to prevent suicide.

## Befrienders Kenya Marked World Suicide Prevention Day

Befrienders Kenya marked the World Suicide Prevention Day in Kenya for the 7th year. The event was held at the Lutheran Plaza, Nairobi County with the theme: Working Together to Prevent Suicide. Befrienders Kenya Director Merab Mulindi emphasized on the need to adopt multi-level and cohesive approaches for suicide prevention efforts representing integration within and between disciplines, organizations, agencies, professionals, communities and the general public.

Mr. Hiram Chomba, a Befrienders Kenya volunteer psychologist shared with the participants the World Health Organization (WHO) suicide statistics in Kenya emphasizing on the need for communities, individuals and organization to work together to prevent suicide. He also took the participants through ways of identifying someone at risk of suicide

and depression as well as how to assist such a person.

Another item on the program was one of the participants sharing his personal experience as a bereaved parent – he shared on how he lost his daughter through suicide despite efforts made to manage her mental condition which the family was well aware of and were giving the necessary support. Although the loss was very traumatic to him and the entire family, it was an eye opener on mental health and he now joins forces with like-minded individuals and organizations in raising awareness on suicide prevention.

The event which brought together participants from various institutions and organizations saw the speakers emphasize on the importance of the theme. Participants took part in the traditional candle lighting ceremony where those that died through suicide,

suicide survivors and those bereaved through suicide are remembered. Participants were also shown a video "OUT OF THIS LIFE" by Patricia Esteve which features stories from survivors and bereaved persons. Time



## Befrienders Kenya Marked Suicide Prevention Workshop

Befrienders Kenya conducted a Suicide Prevention awareness workshop at Moi University, Yala campus with the theme: Connect, communicate and Care. The workshop was a response to a request made by the Peer Counseling Association.

During the training which was geared towards understanding why there are so many suicide cases among the young people, Hiram Chomba, Befrienders Kenya volunteer psychologist introduced Befrienders Kenya to the participants and took the students through the current statistics of suicide in the world as well as in Kenya.

He said, Mental Health is a state of well-being whereby one is at optimum mind function, such that one can navigate through life's stressful situations satisfactorily. This was an awakening to most students due to the realization that

mental illnesses are not only limited to schizophrenia and psychosis as they had deemed.

Additionally, Befrienders Kenya volunteer, Hellen Ogole took the participants through ways of taking care of their mental health and coping mechanisms that can be used to refresh oneself.

Among those that she shared included: exercise, sharing with friends and having a strong support system, crying, journaling or keeping a diary and proper rest. She also outlined ways of identifying a person in distress by citing the warning signs to look out for.

She further discussed the alarming tendencies of self-harm among youth and adolescents aged 14-23 noting that self-harm which is sometimes difficult to detect, is a complex phenomenon often caused by many different reasons and it is important to be sensitive to

the individual in their time of distress. These people are commonly known to have had adverse childhood experiences which include physical and sexual abuse, bullying, family discord and domestic violence at home and sometimes due to issues relating to their sexual orientation.

Ms. Hellen noted that people often engage in self-harm due to inability to handle their emotional distress, when they need to draw attention to their distress (problem) and when they are attempting to punish themselves for having negative thoughts. The students appreciated that Befrienders Kenya was able to respond to their request and carry out the one day workshop which proved very enlightening to the students.

By Immaculate Karanja

## Befrienders Kenya Mental Health Panel Discussion

Befrienders Kenya took part in a mental health panel discussion organized by Ryculture Limited on the 14th September 2018 at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) with the theme: Working Together to Prevent Suicide.

The event featured exhibitions from various organizations, an art show case, testimonials and panel discussions on Suicide and Mental health from a clinical angle and Management of suicide and support systems for survivors and those bereaved by suicide.

Befrienders Kenya representative to the panel Hiram Chomba took the participants through the statistics from World Health Organization (WHO) indicating that in Kenya 1,408 people die by suicide annually translating to four deaths by suicide daily. However, due to the stigma around the issue and

the fact that legally, attempted suicide is a crime, few suicides are reported as suicide. In addition to this he highlighted the predisposing factors to suicide noting that there's no single cause for suicide as it most often occurs when stressors and health issues converge to create an experience of hopelessness and despair.

Suicide is judged negatively in the society as the act of striking into the values of what life is. However, in this situation the aggrieved parties are also the family and closest individuals. During the discussion, it emerged that amongst the young people such problems as depression, alcohol & drug abuse and behavioral disorders account for the increased suicide rates. Making suicide public in the media also contributes to the increase in the number of these acts since young people are susceptible to

suggestions or to imitating behaviors.

The participants recommended that in order to deal with the issue of suicide, it was important to work on equipping young people with skills to help in coping with stress, how to act in conflict situations, increasing self-assessment and addressing and managing feelings of worthlessness, relieving inner tensions in oneself and promoting help-seeking behavior.

Hiram Chomba facilitating a session

By Befrienders Kenya team

## Caring For The Care Givers

On 10th December 2018 Befrienders Kenya changed focus from clients to the care-givers! This was recognition and appreciation of the work done by BK volunteers who give their time, resources and energy in service of the clients. Being a charitable organization, the role of volunteers cannot be over emphasized since the organization is hinged on volunteer efforts.

There was time for getting to know each other since volunteers work on different days and time schedules and

some do not get to interact much.

There was also time to reflect on the experience of serving in the organization and time for meals, games and team building activities. The director appreciated the volunteers for the commendable services they are rendering and encouraged them to keep up the good work knowing that service to humanity is never in vain and has immense rewards. All agreed that the shared time was worthwhile.

## Befrienders Kenya Outreach Program

Befrienders Kenya held a school outreach program in Embakasi constituency Nairobi with the aim of creating awareness on Suicide Prevention.

During the outreach the Form 1 and form 2 students were engaged in talks, group work and counseling sessions. The program focused on issues affecting young people in the area especially as the area is vulnerable to drugs/ alcohol use, rape, early pregnancies, crime and high school dropout rates.

The program ran between the months of January-March, and May- July taking a break when the school was on recess and leaving out September – December when the focus in schools is mainly on national examinations. The program saw the students taken through various topics including: Relationships, Suicide, Depression, Communication, Drug and alcohol use and effective study approaches.

The program was facilitated by Befrienders Kenya volunteers Hellen Ogole, Kristina Zedler and Mabel Inganji.

During the interactions with the

students it emerged that students have challenges sharing or expressing what they are facing on the available platform which is school counseling. Some of the challenges of counseling in schools as reported by the students during the activity were:

- Dual roles played by the school counselors who are also subject teachers. Playing the two roles impacts negatively on the counseling.
- Limited time for the school counselors to provide counseling services to students as the teachers have several other responsibilities.
- Some of the teachers who carry out the counseling are not adequately professionally trained for the role.
- Referrals for counseling are often made during a crisis making the counseling appear to be a form of crisis intervention.

A number of students have come to associate counseling with discipline and hence developed a negative attitude towards seeking the service.

By Mabel Inganji

## Befrienders Kenya Partner with IASP

Befrienders Kenya in partnership with International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) held suicide prevention and mental health awareness trainings as part of the Kikuyu/ Mutu-ini Community Project to raise awareness of the risks of suicide and the signs that can be identified within families, workforce and peer groups, and increase awareness of suicide and deliberate self-harm, address risk factors of completed and attempted suicides and reduce stigma associated with suicidal behaviours.

The trainings brought together participants from various professions; police officers, probation officers, health care professionals, church leaders, youth groups, Community elders from Mutuini Sub- County and Befrienders Kenya volunteers.

The trainings were conducted in different areas within Kikuyu and Mutu-ini.

# Charged for Attempting Suicide

By Hiram Chomba

In the last 10 years there have been media reports of persons who have been convicted of attempted suicide. The law stipulates that such persons are liable to a jail term for periods between 6 months to 3 years or fines up to Ksh 200,000.

There is an urgent need to amend these laws criminalizing suicide, this fact was brought home to me when I recently encountered a young man charged with attempted suicide. Fortunately the magistrate directed that the young man get an assessment before sentencing him.

James\* not his real name - was arrested for attempting to take his life by stabbing himself in the abdomen area, fortunately he was rushed to the hospital and though he was left nursing his wound, his life was saved. James after treatment would recuperate in Industrial Area Remand Prison where there are over 3,000 inmates. I was called upon by a probation officer who was part of the Befrienders Kenya gatekeepers training - the Magistrate required an assessment on James to determine whether he was at risk of making another attempt on his life if released and therefore a danger to himself. I met James and upon my introduction and purpose for my visit, a ray of hope shone through his eyes and he opened up and narrated his woes. We had a lengthy talk despite the fact that he was frail and talked slowly still holding the medication given at the hospital to ease the pain in his abdomen. James had left his rural home and come to Nairobi County in search of employment - his friend had promised him good tidings if he found his way to Nairobi, the friend even sent him bus fare for the travel so he travelled full of hope. However, upon arrival things took a different turn – he could not trace his friend as the only contact they had was through telephone and his mobile phone was turned off!

A stranger to the city, James would

spend the next three days in the streets...his hopes crushed as he gave the last of his pocket money to the mango vender for his last meal. James would spend the next 3 months in agony doing all sorts of menial jobs when they came his way and struggling to survive in this new setting with new experiences.

Eventually, it became unbearable for him - cold nights and more often than not, an empty stomach. On the fateful day he attempted suicide, he had made up his mind to walk to the police station in the hope that he could get some help only to get a hostile reception - for James that was the last straw, he was done living.... Then things took a new turn when he now found himself in hospital then in remand. I was able to make my assessment and present as directed. This particular case has a happy ending for James was later released to his uncle and directed to get counseling, but what about the other cases?

I met James and upon my introduction and purpose for my visit, a ray of hope shone through his eyes and opened up and narrated his woes.

The Kenya Penal Code chapter 63 section 225 stipulates that a person who attempts to kill himself is guilty of a misdemeanor. Many countries have decriminalized suicide including the United Kingdom where our current laws evolved from and who abolished laws criminalizing suicide in 1961. Do laws criminalizing suicide lead to fewer suicides? Research suggests that they do not – they actually have contrary effects. Change of these laws will call for concerted effort from all stakeholders as mental health and suicide begin to be recognized as major public health concerns. In the meantime, gatekeepers in all sectors need to be trained to assess risk for suicide and care for persons at risk and through that save lives through working together to prevent suicide.



## Gatekeeper Training

Befrienders Kenya in partnership with International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) held a gatekeepers training as part of the Kikuyu/ Mutu-ini Community Project on 19th November 2018 at PCEA Kikuyu Township hall and on the 4th of December, 2018 at the Mutuini Sub- County Hospital. This was the second lot of gate keepers trainings, the first one having been conducted by the then IASP President Prof. Ella Aresman assisted by Ms Wendy Orchard the IASP Executive director in June 2017. The recent trainings brought together participants from various professions; probation officers from Kikuyu Sub-County, Befrienders Kenya volunteers and Community Health Volunteers from Mutuini Sub- County. Befrienders Kenya counseling psychologist who was the lead trainer, Hiram Chomba took the participants through various topics including recognizing warning signs of suicidal behavior, common attitudes towards depression and suicidal behavior, depression and suicide, building bridges, risk factors of suicide, suicide and self-harm among others.

It was noted that lack of surveillance systems and criminalization of those who attempt suicide often lead to wrong documentation of the causes of death thus a challenge in getting the full picture of suicide occurrence. Religious positions, cultural beliefs and stigma around suicide in Kenya and other African Countries make it difficult for family members to report suicide cases as suicide or even report attempts. However, there is now growing awareness on mental health issues with several initiatives in the field supporting Government efforts. It was also noted that general attitudes towards suicide and suicide prevention are in transition from morality towards mental health.

Mr. Chomba explained that though depression is the leading cause of suicide, many people do not acknowledge their own depression due to the stigma around it. This leads people to shy away from seeking for help such as professional counseling or starting drug therapy once it is prescribed by the specialists. He added that health workers need additional

training to improve both knowledge and skills for suicide prevention.

He urged the participants to be aware of the signs and symptoms of depression in children and adolescents as well stating that verbal expression of sad feelings is an important indicator and observed that depression can be managed and even treated through psychotherapy, family interventions, socio-therapeutic and pharmacological treatment and even other emerging expertise in the field.

Mr. Chomba outlined some risk factors associated with suicide in Kenya as interpersonal challenges, mental and physical health problems, socio economic problems, drug and alcohol use and abuse, child abuse and trauma. He further emphasized on the need to build bridges which includes recognizing suicide risk, communication and interaction in order to give those at risk a chance to unburden. This would strengthen help seeking behavior, keep the affected person connected and delay acting on suicidal impulses.

By Befrienders Kenya team



## Samaritans of Singapore (SOS)

Activities organised for the month of September in 2019:

1. Suicide Prevention Week  
Centred around social media, SOS ran a week-long campaign across social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook and Twitter) titled #HopeThroughTheNight. This campaign aimed to invite the community to build onto this repository of hope. The campaign targets vulnerable youth in their 'darkest hours' of 12 midnight to 3 am - the hours when they are most likely to reach out to SOS. Through Instagram submissions, the campaign aims to help those in need find comfort in the words of others during this time. You may find more details of the campaign here: <https://www.sos.org.sg/blog/lets-spread-hope-in-the-darkest-hours>
2. Reminder bracelets  
In collaboration with a local jewellery company, SOS launched a limited edition bracelet series in the lead up to World Mental Health Day in October.

You may find more details of the bracelets here: <https://www.sos.org.sg/blog/charity-collection>

## Befrienders South Africa

Dear Reader,

Our Bloemfontein Befriender Branch celebrated their 45th birthday on the 1st June 2019 – what a privilege and honour to be part of an Organization who offers free, confidential and non-judgemental emotional support to anyone who may experience emotional distress and despair. Thank you to all the Bloemfontein Befriender Directors; volunteers; funding partners and friends of the Befrienders for their support, wisdom and leadership that steered the Bloemfontein Befrienders through the years.

In the 20th spot in an article on FaceBook by Mike Spohr: '37 things you'll regret when you're old', he put: not volunteering enough – "neering the end of one's life without having helped to make the world a better place is a great source of sadness for many."

The Universal Declaration on Volunteering (adopted IAVE Netherlands 2001): "All people in the world should have the right to freely offer their time, talent and energy to others and their communities through individual and collective action, without expectation of financial reward."

To give back to our communities is an opportunity to gain valuable skills, experience personal growth, gratitude and a great sense of satisfaction.

Fred Rogers: "When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.' To this day, especially in times of disaster, I remember my mother's words and I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers – so many caring people in the world."

The worldwide statistics on suicide remain a disaster. The Befrienders play an important role in suicide prevention by being available to listen, with caring, empathy and acceptance, to anyone whose pain exceeds pain-coping resources and who feels at that moment, suicide seems to be the only choice. To escape from the pain, not necessarily from life.

10 September 2019: World Suicide Prevention Day: "Working together to prevent suicide worldwide."

God Bless.

Anna

Anna van Aswegen



## Kaan Pete Roi's Marks Six Year Anniversary

Dear Friends of Kaan Pete Roi,

I am delighted to write to you all on Kaan Pete Roi's six year anniversary. Kaan Pete Roi is Bangladesh's first and only emotional support and suicide prevention helpline. The mission of the helpline is to alleviate feelings of despair, isolation, distress, and suicidal intent among members of our community. Kaan Pete Roi accomplishes this through confidential, compassionate, and open-minded listening.

Kaan Pete Roi is now open SEVEN days a week with SEVEN different phone lines. Since we first opened our lines on April 28th, 2013, we have taken more than eighteen thousand calls, and have trained more than two hundred volunteers working on outreach, awareness, capacity building all over the country, and of course, answering calls that come into our helpline.

I'm proud to announce that since the first day we opened our lines six years ago, we have never had our phones closed when they shouldn't be. Through storms and blazing Dhaka sun, hartals and sieges, Eid, Puja, Purnima and Christmas, we have always been open when we said we would be.

Kaan Pete Roi now has collaborations with organizations all over Bangladesh and across the globe. We are a proud member – the one and only in Bangladesh - of Befrienders Worldwide, a global authority on suicide prevention. In a collaboration with the Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology at Dhaka University, we have created a comprehensive database of references to mental health services across the country. We have done events at institutions and organizations across the country. We've been to Tangail and Moulvibazar; we've been to Rangamati and Chittagong. We have conducted community mental health interventions and trainings all over

Bangladesh. Research coming out of our helpline has been presented at national and international conferences and submitted to international journals for peer review. Our data management system, designed by helpline volunteers themselves, is being profiled at the International Association for Suicide Prevention Conference in Northern Ireland later this year. Through research and outreach, we are constantly trying to learn how to improve our services as well as better understand all of the issues we deal with in Bangladesh that might lead people to get on the phone with us.

At Kaan Pete Roi, we're extremely grateful to everyone who has made this work possible.

First and foremost, we are grateful to our generous donors and supporters, without whom our organization would not exist.

We are grateful to all the exceptional individuals who come forward to become volunteers. I am tremendously proud of the community that Kaan Pete Roi has become, rising to any occasion, striving to be bigger and better every day.

And we are especially grateful to those who trust us enough to call us and allow us into their lives; this trust is truly a gift.

I look forward to watching Kaan Pete Roi grow in the years to come. I hope you will join me. Please consider donating your time, skills, or resources – every little bit counts, and we would never have made it here without you.

And please spread the word – friends telling friends is the best way for us to let people know that we are here to help.

As always, I am deeply grateful.

**Yeshim Iqbal**

**Founder and Director**

**Kaan Pete Roi Emotional Support and Suicide Prevention Helpline**



# Sourire de Reda; Morocco

#Ana\_m3ak

This is a message of hope sent by artists and leaders to young people who are suffering, for the new Awareness Campaign of Sourire de Reda - Casablanca, February 5, 2019

10 years of actions

For 10 years, Sourire de Reda has been helping adolescents and their families to avoid having distress that is not expressed turn in crisis...

... by sensitizing public opinion

... by offering prevention workshops in schools

... by listening to young people who do not know where to turn to talk about their troubles

Just a few years ago, who would have imagined that in Morocco, we would be able to openly discuss taboo topics as sensitive as suicide? The media and Sourire de Reda helped foster this new openness contribute by constant and reassuring communications.

February 5th 2019: National Youth Suicide Prevention Day. For the 5th edition of its annual awareness campaign, Sourire de Reda has complemented its press, radio, web and social networks presence with an innovative video.

Personalities support the movement #Ana\_m3ak

Humorists, TV hosts, graffiti artists, comedians, YouTubers... these artists and media leaders are mobilized through a video that speak softly and clearly to express their solidarity and say to young people « ANA\_M3AK ». These people inspire millions of Moroccans and have an amazing capacity to mobilize. "They are the best placed to convey important messages to youths: messages of prevention, but also of hope for young people, and for parents who often feel powerless when their child is going through a difficult period" explains Véronique Fima, director of the association.

"Adolescence is often misunderstood. Some young people are unable to express what they are going through, others will express it in a way that adults may be unable to decode" says Meryeme Bouzidi Laraki, President of Sourire de Reda. "We want to tell them that they are not alone! We also want to reassure their friends and their families, and free them from their fears so that they can help those who need their support".

Help is not as hard as we think, all of us can help.



#Ana\_m3ak, is to realize that everyone can help in prevention.

#Ana\_m3ak, is to become part of a huge chain of solidarity.

#Ana\_m3ak, is learning how to identify and act.

#Ana\_m3ak, is understanding that a smile, a look, a word can change someone's life!

The video #Ana\_m3ak was made with the generous participation of:

- Asmae El Arabi/The Tberguig, Baddunes, Ed, Ghassan El Hakim, Hicham Masrar, Machi

Ana, Réda Allali and Souhail Echaddini  
- and young people: Radia Debbagh, Yasmin Chaimaa Ben

Rahhal and Othmane Doukha With the support of our partners: Mosaik Communication, Sigma Technologies and Mr Big Stuff

Watch the video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wX12VsOEo1s&t=8s> For more information: [www.sourire2reda.org](http://www.sourire2reda.org)

**Contacts:**

**Mosaik Events & Co:**

**Loubna Debbarh**

**[loubna.debbarh@mosaik.ma](mailto:loubna.debbarh@mosaik.ma) / 05 22 25 28 68**

**Sourire de Reda:**

**Véronique Fima**

**[veronique.sourire2reda@gmail.com](mailto:veronique.sourire2reda@gmail.com) / 06 17 300 200**

## Help is not as hard as we think, all of us can help.

- #Ana\_m3ak, is to realize that everyone can help in prevention.
- #Ana\_m3ak, is to become part of a huge chain of solidarity.
- #Ana\_m3ak, is learning how to identify and act.
- #Ana\_m3ak, is understanding that a smile, a look, a word can change someone's life!

The video #Ana\_m3ak was made with the generous participation of:

- Asmae El Arabi/The Tberguig, Baddunes, Ed, Ghassan El Hakim, Hicham Masrar, Machi

Ana, Réda Allali and Souhail Echaddini

- and young people: Radia Debbagh, Yasmin Chaimaa Ben Rahhal and Othmane Doukha With the support of our partners: Mosaik Communication, Sigma Technologies and Mr Big Stuff

Watch the video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wX12VsOEo1s&t=8s> For more information: [www.sourire2reda.org](http://www.sourire2reda.org)

### Contacts:

Mosaik Events & Co:

Loubna Debbarh, [loubna.debbarh@mosaik.ma](mailto:loubna.debbarh@mosaik.ma) / 05 22 25 28 68

Sourire de Reda:

Véronique Fima, [veronique.sourire2reda@gmail.com](mailto:veronique.sourire2reda@gmail.com) / 06 17 300 200



## The Befrienders KL (Kuala Lumpur; Malaysia)

1. Twitter: Engaging public with information and polls on our Twitter account on issues related to Suicide Prevention.
2. Released a Press Statement. Working together to prevent suicide <https://www.malaymail.com/news/what-you-think/2019/09/11/working-together-to-prevent-suicide-justin-victor/1789383>
3. Astro Awani Pagi – Live TV discussion <http://www.astroawani.com/video-malaysia/awani-pagi-bersama-mencegah-bunuh-diri-1808692>
4. Astro Radio Stations Interviews throughout the day.
5. Active Listening Workshop for Undergraduates.

