



Helping youth build a better future



Salesian Missions **NEWS** | NOVEMBER 2023

Dear Friends of Salesian Mission

I'm pleased to be sharing with you the impactful work carried out daily by the Salesians of Don Bosco and the dedicated Salesian family in supporting marginalized youth and communities in over 130 countries worldwide. The Salesians have a long history of commitment to education, training, support services and relief work. Their dedication to working closely with local communities is a key factor in their success. By operating at the grassroots level, the Salesians can better understand the specific challenges and needs of each community they serve.

This approach allows the Salesians to tailor their efforts to meet the unique circumstances and requirements of the people they

work with. It also fosters a deeper connection and trust within the communities, making their programs and initiatives more effective and sustainable.

I thank you for your contribution and continued support as this important work can only be done with your help.

From all of us, the entire Salesian Family, we wish you and your families a joyful Christmas season and a New Year filled with Hope and Peace.



With thanks
Tina Newton
Director

THANK YOU

The ongoing struggle to find security through an accessible and practical education continues.

This year I was able to spend some time listening to and working with our Salesian missions in Samoa, Fiji and East Timor. Each of these countries lack sufficient home resources to be self-sustaining. Each has a high percentage of eager young people who want to learn and contribute and each also has something to teach us about faith, hope and community solidarity. We simply need to help through basic resources and training expertise to assist them build their countries' futures.

As a challenging 2023 draws to a close, the celebration of Christmas once again brings its unique promise of new life. May the recurring gift of Christmas be celebrated by our families and inspire us to be grateful to our God and to hear the angels' message of peace and goodwill to all people.

I pray that the coming new year will be one of blessing for you, our deeply appreciated supporters and for those often very needy individuals and communities whose lives your support enables to be enhanced, or even simply sustained.

Yours sincerely in St John Bosco,



Fr Peter Carroll
Board Member

Dance for a Bus in SAMOA

Don Bosco in Salelologa held an online Tausala (fundraiser) in August to raise much needed funds for the purchase of a Bus and other school equipment. The Bus serves as a critical link for students from rural locations to have access to an education. The students, teachers and staff danced the day away and into the night to attract support for the school. The event was a great success raising almost A\$75,000. Current Cagliero volunteers, Billy, Nora and



Naomi were there to partake in the festivities and fun. Fr Petelo expressed his gratitude to all the participants, specifically acknowledging the

families and friends whose generous donations contributed to the success of the fundraiser.

In Alafua, Don Bosco's Electrical Engineering Department was honoured with the TVET Project Award at the Samoan Qualifications Authority Career Day. This award specifically recognized the outstanding work of the Electrical students. Assistance for the running of programs is always welcomed.

'Breaking the cycle of Poverty' through Education in TIMOR LESTE

Timor Leste, our northern neighbour, is located only 680km from Darwin. Despite its natural resources, it faces economic challenges and a significant portion of its population live below the poverty line. The Don Bosco Salesian Schools and Technical and Vocational Training Centres play a crucial role in addressing this issue by providing education and skill development opportunities.

In **Fuiloro** 80% of the community earn their living through farming. The **Don Bosco Agricultural College** gives students the opportunity to learn both efficient horticulture and animal husbandry by combining old and new technology with agricultural science. Produce is used both to feed the school boarders and to sell to the community.

In **Fatumaca** the **Don Bosco Technical School** offers specialized courses in carpentry, mechanics and electronics. Within the school is a FM radio and television station. The stations provide electronics students with 'hands on' experience of broadcasting and operating the facilities. The radio and television programs include locally produced Tetum material, educational sessions and local information.



In **Lospalos** the **Don Bosco Boys Orphanage** aim is to educate the boys to be responsible, self-disciplined, organized and live responsibly. The importance of a balanced diet, exercise and healthy living is emphasised.

The **Don Bosco High Schools and Technical Centres in Baucau, Comoro, Laga, Maliana and Venilale** offer courses in job related skills where youth from remote poor villages can access education. It is always a challenge to meet the running costs of the schools as government funding has declined. We appreciate donors support to help meet the costs of salaries, utilities and equipment. Luncheon programs are also provided to ensure students receive a nutritional meal each day.

The **Sisters Maria Mazzarello Technical Vocational High School in Venilale**, offers education in the usual range of academic subjects as well as basic training in hospitality, tourism and hotel management. Girls from remote villages can find accommodation in the boarding house.

Serving over 14 surrounding villages, the **Sisters Maria Auxiliadora Medical Clinic in Venilale** encourages good health through the education of students and families whilst maintaining treatment of general illnesses and diseases. Mothers and babies are a priority, together with the care of tuberculosis patients.

I would like to thank **Fr Cantamessa** and the **Salesian College Chadstone team** in helping to fill the shipping container for Timor Leste. I would also like to thank the people from **Back2Bikes** for their amazing contribution of refurbished bicycles and parts which will assist students to access education.



Creating Communities in AFRICAN Camps

The Salesians of Don Bosco are playing a crucial role in various countries throughout Africa, including **Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, DR Congo (DRC) and Uganda**. Their work spans across multiple sectors, including education, technical training, youth centres and support for refugee camps.

Ongoing conflicts, civil unrest and challenging climatic conditions have led to **food shortages** and **refugee displacement** in the region. Salesians are actively involved in assisting refugees, providing essential supplies and aiding thousands of families as they seek safer locations.

In **Juba, South Sudan** and in **Palabek, Uganda**, displaced persons' camps accommodate approximately **90,000 refugees**. The Salesians are running education programs and coordinating efforts focused on **efficient food production methods**. Additionally, they encourage the formation of community support groups and create opportunities for small businesses.

Fr Shyjan George in South Sudan

explains: *"education remains our focus; we are committed to being the voice for the voiceless, to make stories known. Please continue your support to assist this vital work. You can view our documentary entitled "Interrupted Meal" via Youtube."*

In the **DR Congo** there are numerous cases of advanced **malnutrition in the IDP camps**. Small meals were given to children showing signs of malnutrition whilst also providing hundreds of households with food rations and supplies. Many vulnerable people are sick, however medication can only be dispensed once they receive nutrition. *"We would like to thank all the Salesian Missions benefactors who are helping to make this possible. Union of prayers."* Fr. Carlos Balezi.



Creating opportunities in VIETNAM

The Salesians of Don Bosco School, particularly through the support via the **West Highlands Education project**, have made significant strides in supporting underprivileged students by providing tuition and ensuring teachers and coaches receive salaries. By incorporating diverse extracurricular activities like football, basketball, volleyball, table tennis and dancing, they offer not only educational but also social and sporting opportunities. These activities enhanced the students' skills and foster self-confidence and teamwork.

In the **Nghe An Province** basic food items and medical supplies were provided for the elderly as well as orphans and people with disabilities by the **Sisters of Charity**. This charitable endeavour helped ensure essential needs were met,

'Street Children' find HOPE in INDIA

It's wonderful to hear about the comprehensive range of programs and initiatives by Don Bosco in various regions of India, all geared towards supporting and **empowering marginalized communities**. From education for rural, tribal and street children to rehabilitation centres for child laborers, these efforts are addressing critical issues like child labour, education access, gender equality and substance abuse. The new **Laura Bhavan Rehabilitation Centre** is a well-equipped child labour centre which enables the rescue and rehabilitation of child labourers in a healthy environment suitable for their overall development.

In specific regions like **Bangalore, Kerala, Matunga and New Delhi**, Don Bosco's interventions are tailored to the needs of the local communities. The emphasis on education through traditional schooling, as well as innovative approaches like online learning in remote areas, showcases a commitment to ensuring educational opportunities reach even the most marginalized children.

In four districts of **Karnataka**, the initiatives targeting gender inequality, violence against women and empowering women are particularly commendable. By providing training and support, especially in skills development and self-reliance, these programs contribute to breaking gender barriers and empowering women to be agents of change within their communities.

Additionally, the focus on providing **vocational training**, such as tailoring and computer-based literacy, not only supports job opportunities but also



fosters financial independence and improved livelihoods for individuals in these regions. At the heart of the Don Bosco's mission in Matunga and Bangalore lies the determination to assist **minority groups** by offering self-help training programs. Street children are encouraged to obtain life skills and education to eventually secure meaningful jobs and live independently.

Don Bosco's efforts in **drug rehabilitation**, adult literacy and support for underprivileged members highlight a multifaceted approach aimed at improving the quality of life and offering hope to those in need.

Supporting these programs would not only sustain the positive impact they have made, but also expand their reach to further transform lives and offer hope to more individuals in need. These initiatives not only address immediate challenges but also work towards building a more equitable and empowered society in the long term.



contributing to their well-being and health.

In the **Chau Thanh District**, support was extended to the impoverished community by constructing homes for those living in dilapidated shelters that posed health risks, particularly for the elderly. Additionally, in response to the issue of contaminated floodwaters, domestic clear water containers were distributed to numerous families, addressing the immediate need for clean and safe water in the wake of flooding.

'Bridging the Gap' in PAPUA NEW GUINEA

A new initiative is taking place at the Don Bosco Gabutu Learning Centre in PNG, with a pro-active literacy and numeracy program aimed at children from the 'poor settlements' to attend school. These marginalised communities have established temporary settlements at the mercy of land owners adjacent to the school of which many have not received any formal education. Visits to the homes of each student ensures a better relationship with the parents and serves as an "out of school" follow-up on their situation and need. This also ensures that an appropriate approach can be adopted to cater for their needs more effectively. While children are attending classes, mothers are also welcomed to attend basic life skill classes where nutritional knowledge is shared and a meal is provided. Many of the families are single parents and have expressed appreciation and gratitude for the opportunities offered to their children.

Classes are divided into two groups: Senior students in the morning and younger students in the afternoon. This project is well monitored and shows that students have improved in self-discipline,



personal hygiene, confidence, basic etiquette and a sense of responsibility and sociability.

Providing extracurricular activities such as art classes and sports including soccer and basketball are provided during the "sports hour". Some celebrations have also been introduced to foster national and liturgical occasions, including birthday and picnic outings. The staff's efforts in monitoring students' progress, health, hygiene and providing necessary resources such as stationery and uniforms, showcase a commitment to the students' holistic well-being. At a cost of \$20,000 a year we hope you can support the 2024 program as it is crucial for the sustainability and continued positive impact on the community.

Improving female literacy in SOLOMON ISLANDS

The Salesian Sisters' Hostel in Henderson plays a crucial role in providing safe accommodation for young women from economically deprived backgrounds in Honiara.

In a region where only 7 percent of females have the opportunity to complete high school and a mere 20 percent of female adults are literate, the Sisters' efforts are pivotal in addressing this educational gap. The hostel is a beacon of hope, offering young women a chance to pursue their studies and create a better future for themselves.

The Home Economics Course is a crucial initiative that responds directly to the local needs of women with limited formal education. By imparting basic literacy, numeracy, computing and practical skills in areas like dressmaking, catering, cooking and health awareness, the course is empowering women with essential life skills. Furthermore, teaching home and



small business management contributes significantly to their economic independence and self-sustainability. With an emphasis on practical skills such as textiles and sewing, not only enhances their capabilities, but also opens doors for potential employment or entrepreneurship opportunities.

The Salesian Sisters' dedication to addressing the educational and skill-based gaps among young women is truly inspirational. They are seeking assistance to continue their work that will lean towards self-sustainability through the installation of solar.

BEQUESTS

Continue to make a difference

A bequest or legacy is a gift included in your Will. It is an act of generosity that can continue into future generations. By naming the Australian Salesian Mission Overseas Aid Fund (ASMOAF) as the beneficiary of a fixed cash amount or a percentage of the estate will ensure that the funds are dispersed to the project of your choice. For further information, please contact the Salesian Missions Office 03 9377 6060 or by e-mail salmiss@salesians.org.au or our website for more information.

Re-establishing safe schools in UKRAINE

The war continues, however I am pleased to report the Salesians remain committed to their unwavering dedication by making a real impact to Ukrainian lives by providing shelter, comfort, security and goods to those in need. The renovation of a Bunker Facility in Lviv is near completion. It will provide a safe shelter for up to 750 locals to retreat during continued bomb raids.

As donations decline locally and throughout Europe, the Salesians have redirected their attention to ensure the schools in Ukraine are a safe, comfortable and well-equipped places for students to continue their education. It is vital that the schools can function as close to normal as possible to create stability for the local youth. The schools are also used as a place where local communities can gather, share stories and run social activities. Your support has been amazing and of great importance to those in need.

ONLINE DONATIONS

Can be made through our secure website www.salesianmissionsaus.org.au

A tax-deductible receipt will be sent to your email address.

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