



# Helping youth build a better future



India

## Salesians Missions NEWSLETTER 2020

### Director's Message

Dear Friend of Salesian Missions,

2020 has been an extraordinary year for all of us. Covid-19 is causing havoc in most countries.

While it has been a challenging and tough time for us in Australia, developing nations have far fewer resources and facilities for dealing with the pandemic.

You may have read there are currently more than a billion youth in 160 countries out of school right now which is a staggering statistic.

The effect of the crisis will be profound for youth living in the world's poorest places. These children already struggled to access or afford education needed to build better futures.

For children and families across the developing world, going to school is so much more than just an education. Going to school is also about:

- **Better nutrition** through a guaranteed daily meal.
- **Social protection and support** for orphaned, abandoned and abused children.
- **Age-appropriate social development** fostered through interaction with peers.
- **Economic opportunities** for parents while their children are in school.
- **Preparing for the future** by learning vital social and job skills to become contributing members of society.
- **And many other challengers.**

For vulnerable students around the world, going to school is vital to their health, well-being and ability to thrive.

I hope you can help us support our Partners who are working with and for victims of the coronavirus crisis.

Yours sincerely in St John Bosco

(Br) Michael Lynch  
Director

With a greater need and a different focus, the Salesians work in India continues to bring aid and comfort to the 'poorest of the poor'.

Currently the country is recording over **70,000 new Covid-19 cases a day** and prolonged lockdown measures are leaving many at risk and in need of assistance. The Salesians of Don Bosco are assisting communities through this disaster.

The **Don Bosco Schools** in various locations have been transformed into **quarantine centres** to help those struggling with Covid-19 related issues.

In **Bangalore**, the Salesians have reached out to minority groups such as single mothers, widows, the elderly and orphans in 11 villages providing them with essential food supplies, along with a further 500 families from remote tribal villages who have lost jobs due to extended lockdowns.

With unemployment on the increase, Salesians in **New Delhi** are running vocational training courses in sewing as a long-term strategy to build the self-sustainability of families.

**Don Bosco Mumbai** are providing relief to the people living in mountainous regions. This work becomes vital as the economic situation continues to decline by almost 24%. Don Bosco Development Society along with various partner organisations have successfully completed a Covid-19 food distribution project, assisting over 11,000 villagers and poor farmers.

To date in Bangalore over 250,000 masks have been made and in excess of 210,000 cooked meals and food kits have been distributed. Many vulnerable people will require assistance for the coming months. Your help would be most appreciated.



## East Timor

*The Salesian Priests, Brothers and Sisters are making significant contributions to Timor Leste through their schools, orphanages, training centres and medical clinic. Education remains the key to helping individuals acquire skills for better living and allows them to actively participate in the development of their country. The Salesians tireless work is highly valued and continues making a real difference.*

**Don Bosco Co-educational Technical High School, Maliana**, is an important social and educational centre for meetings and youth gatherings. The School, with boarding facilities, offers a three year Diploma course in General Electricity. After school, the students are encouraged to work in the vegetable garden, which provides food for the boarding home.

At **Don Bosco Technical School Fatumaca**, 200 students have the opportunity to specialise in building construction, mechanics, electrical installation and electronic communications. The Radio and Television Stations remain a great success, providing work experience opportunities for the electronics students; broadcasting to villages within a 50km radius.

The focus of **St Anthony's High School Baucau** is the creation of a genuine centre of learning. The Luncheon Program continues to provide students with the nourishment they required to learn, especially for those students who walk long distances to school without breakfast.

With 95 boys, aged 6 – 16, the **Don Bosco Orphanage in Lospalos**, aim to educate boys to be self-disciplined, organised and live responsibly. This also includes those that come 'after school' to work in the vegetable garden.

With more than 75 per cent of the population deriving their livelihood from farming, **Don Bosco Agricultural College, Fuloro** plays an important role in promoting better care of livestock and increasing the yield of crops. In 2020, the school continues to work towards becoming more self-sustainable by increasing farm production of corn, animal feed, horticulture and coconut oil.

The **Maria Auxiliadora Medical Clinic** provides medical care to the 13 surrounding villages in the mountainous region of **Venilale**. Over 9,000 patient consultations are conducted annually, primarily focusing on mothers and children. The Clinic promotes health education classes in local schools and nearby villages while the mobile medical clinic services remote villages conducting health checks.

The **Salesian Sisters Orphanages in Laga and Venilale** cater for girls in need aged 6 – 16 with a home, education and a secure environment. Through 'integral education' incorporating studies such as theatre, dance, music, sewing and sport we encourage the development of their skills and talents.

The **Womens Training Centre in Fuloro** offers courses in computing, basic office management and sewing. Students entering the program are mainly from rural poverty-stricken families. A high proportion of our graduates' secure work in Dili or Baucau.





## The Pacific



*Over the past forty years, the Salesians of Don Bosco have been working alongside the local community to improve the lives and futures of young people throughout Samoa and Fiji.*

**Don Bosco Technical College (DBTC) in Alafua** offers vocational education and trade training courses to prepare students for employment. It gives an opportunity to disadvantaged students to obtain a high-quality technical education that is supported by Samoa Qualifications Authority (SQA).

It has been an eventful year for the College, with the enrolment of female students for the first time and the introduction of a hospitality course. It is expected to provide all students with job opportunities within the local tourism industry. With the assistance of the Australian High Commission Office in Samoa, 20 sewing machines were purchased. The School also introduced a new 10 week evening sewing course open to the local community and 20 women have enrolled.

**Don Bosco College and Vocational Technical Centre Salelologa, Savai'i** is very important for the future livelihood of young people, as Savai'i is essentially still comprised of subsistence farmers. There is a growing tourism business on the island and the College is providing qualifications in Cert.1 Hospitality to expand on job opportunities for locals. The College is an important Community Centre where outside school hours its facilities are used for multi-purpose events.

Although Samoa has remained free of Coronavirus infections, the pandemic has had a detrimental impact on the already fragile Samoan economy. Boarder closures have crippled the tourism industry of which many families rely on for their livelihood. Many students are finding it difficult to pay schools fees and in turn the schools struggle to meet operating costs. We are so thankful to benefactors who enable the good work of both schools to continue.

The Youth and Education Centre, Suva, Fiji is progressing well after some delays due to the early onset of the wet season and worldwide pandemic. The walls are up, the roof is on and the floor is being prepared for concrete to be laid. Expectations are that the bathroom facilities and mezzanine level will be completed this year. The Community Garden is going extremely well with locals using the space to grow garden produce to feed their families.

This project which includes a multipurpose community space, open areas for learning and a community garden; will help create a central hub where young people will be able to meet in a safe environment accompanied by their peers and their Salesian mentors to expand their life skills.

The Salesians "outreach" into the community after the lockdown is continuing by visiting vulnerable families and listening to their challenges during this time. Some families are experiencing cutbacks to hours worked while others remain unemployed.





Ethiopia



South Sudan

The current situation in Ethiopia has become extremely challenging with the country grappling with health, food, and social emergencies that are growing day by day. Covid-19 infections are increasing and add to the common active outbreaks of cholera, measles, and malaria. The country has also been the victim of a second wave of locusts, destroying hectares of much needed crops.

The Salesian communities continue to provide support to the local street children and vulnerable elderly over 14 educational and youth centres in 5 regions. Marginalised groups have been severely impacted during the pandemic lockdown, leaving them at greater risk of infection and malnutrition.

Covid-19 outreach programs conducted by the Salesians have provided health prevention tools and awareness training to more than 24,000 children and young people throughout the country. The distribution of hygiene materials, food and masks, is combined with the Covid-19 awareness to learn the basic safety measures to help minimize the spread.

Don Bosco Mekanissa are supplying water to thousands of poor people living in slums for better hygiene practices thus contain the spread. The Salesians have repaired an old truck and 5000 litre reservoir tank to transport water daily to the area.

Salesians remain focused on assisting poor malnourished children and destitute families with food, medicines, education and rehabilitation whilst also helping needy students in rural schools.

The Salesian Community in Gumbo, South Sudan consists of a Parish, Technical-Vocational Training Center, Elementary and Middle Schools, Women's Promotion Center, Youth Center and an Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) Camp which was established in 2014 after the civil war. Don Bosco Salesians continue to support over 10,000 children, orphans, women and elderly IDP's with food, water, education, hygiene supplies and medical care.

Despite the difficulties during Covid-19, the regular distribution of much needed basic necessities to vulnerable families is welcomed. Salesians provide Covid-19 awareness education to refugees and the protocols of the Ministry of Health, to wash their hands often, maintain hygiene and body care.

The biggest fear is the real possibility of an epidemic in the camp. Tents are close: there is no room for social distancing. The camp is adjacent to several crowded local communities. It is impossible to prevent the flow of people between the camp and these communities.

Instability in the country remains high. Funding is inadequate and fails to meet the needs of all internally displaced people. South Sudan is a largely rural country with 80% of the population living in poverty, whilst more than a third of the population not having access to food.



## 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.

## ONLINE DONATIONS

Can be made through our secure website [www.salesianmissionsaustralia.org.au](http://www.salesianmissionsaustralia.org.au)

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

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