



Newsletter

June 2020



Dear Friends in Don Bosco!

I am happy to send you my greetings as General Councilor for Missions.

I was elected during the 28th Salesian General Chapter at the outbreak of COVID-19 virus pandemic! Due to the pandemic the General Chapter had to be cut short and I was able to come to the Salesian Headquarters in Rome. Last 25 March, the Missions Department and Don Bosco Network organised an on-line strategic planning meeting. Thanks to the untiring effort of Fr George Menampampil, the Coordinator of Don Bosco Worldwide Solidarity Against COVID 19, and Don Bosco Network, all Salesian Mission Offices in all continents, in rich and poor countries, are all networking and coordinating our initiatives to save human lives.

This emergency is already teaching us important missionary lessons. Above all, the pandemic pulled the curtain back on a hard truth: we neither have all the answers nor the means. Sometimes, we might not be even asking the right questions to respond to an emergency. Hence, we cannot just be satisfied with the good we do. We need to coordinate with others to effectively help more people. This could be intimidating, but it is also inspiring and refreshing. Learning from our past mistakes, the pandemic is teaching us above all the power of networking and coordination and that it takes humility to be able to collaborate with others as equal partners. Together we can make a great difference!

The pandemic is gradually decreasing in many countries, while in some others it is just reaching its peak. Experts warn of a more deadly second wave. We now realise that face masks, hand sanitizer and social distancing will be with us for a while. Many call this the 'new normal'. I would like to think that for us the 'new normal' would imply rethinking boldly and creatively our goals, structures, journey together as partners, networking and coordination.

As a network of development NGOs inspired by the charisma of Don Bosco, we reach out to all without distinction of race, ethnic origin or religion. Yet, for us these initiatives are concrete expressions of our love for Jesus Christ, who assures us that at the end Life will triumph over death; God, not evil, will have the last word.

Fr Alfred Maravilla SDB
General Councilor for Missions



Dear brothers and sisters in Don Bosco!

“Solidarity”, “taking care”,

These two words have been used very often these last weeks and months.

“Solidarity” has been the driving force behind the joined actions of the Missions department and the Don Bosco Network, on behalf of the most vulnerable youth in this COVID-19 emergency and this solidarity could only be put into practice thanks to you, the Salesian NGOs and Mission Offices.

“Taking care” is another word used many times! Many of us ended our conversations by “take care of yourself and your beloved”

This makes me think about what Giovanni Bosco means by integral and holistic education. “Taking care” of the person as a whole, it is a very open word with many facets, and in solidarity with the vulnerable youth.

The world will not be the same as a few months ago, situations have changed, we have changed and we must think differently!

We showed already that we have changed the way we work as Green Alliance formulated it: “Rethink and reconnect”, by organizing our meetings via Zoom.

Do we realize the number of flights the participants would have taken to come to Rome for these meetings? This is good for the climate but it is good to be reminded that **Laudato Si’** is not dealing only with climate and ecological problems, but also with social problems. Sr Sarah from Geneva said, “We have to speak the Human rights language”, **Laudato Si’** is in fact a matter of human dignity, of solidarity, of taking care.

Another statement I took up during these zoom-meetings is what Fr Alfred said: “We should not bite off more than what we can chew”, changes can only be a success if they are not too radical and if we take time for reflexion. “Qui va piano va sano!” (Who goes gently goes safely).

We have to continue - we from DBN, together with the Congregation - to put **“solidarity”** and **“taking care”** in practice.

With my best wishes,

Take care of yourself and your beloved!

With Kind Regards,

Peter Annegarn,
DBN President

COVID-19 COORDINATED RESPONSE



Over the course of a few weeks, COVID -19 became a pandemic involving the whole world. While the contagion spread day by day in new regions and countries, the Don Bosco Network (DBN) has been hard at work. Under the patronage of the Rector Major, Fr Ángel Fernández Artime, it has initiated a coordinated response to the current emergency under the guidance of the Emergency Response Coordinator – the coordinator of the Congregation’s Mission Offices Fr George Menampampil.

On 25 March, he promoted a video conference in which 47 people participated, Salesians and lay people, from all the Regions of the Congregation and from the Salesian Central Office.

In addition to sharing information and good practices, they decided to follow a number of actions: map the needy people the Salesian centres can reach at this moment, identify what they need; evaluate the resources available for the needs of individual Provinces/Vice Provinces; share best practices; carry out advocacy work through the Salesian presence at the UN and the European Union; develop fundraising campaigns in an orderly and coordinated manner; monitor and accompany the distribution of resources – both bilaterally and internationally.

The emergency response team, promoted by the Mission Sector and supported by the Economist General,

have developed the operational tools to follow up on these lines of action (protocols for requesting/offering aid, materials for information, auditing, reporting, etc). These tools were shared with the 90 Circumscriptions of the Congregation and a regular flow of information and the sharing of materials and resources has been registered via, also, the email address created for the occasion: solidarity.covid19@sdb.org.



Over 220 projects were submitted so far and 175 of them were already financed by the DBN Members and Mission Offices – a great sign of solidarity between Salesian organizations. All materials and information on projects are available on DBN Platform www.donbosconetwork.org



DBN GA AND WG MEETINGS



On 26-27 May 2020 members and partners of the **Don Bosco Network (DBN)** including the **Councillor for Missions Fr Alfred Maravilla**, **Councilor for Youth Ministry Fr Miguel Ángel García Morcuende**, **Economer General Bro Jean Paul Muller** and the **Coordinator of Mission Offices Fr George Menampampil**, took part in the annual General Assembly and Working Group meetings online.

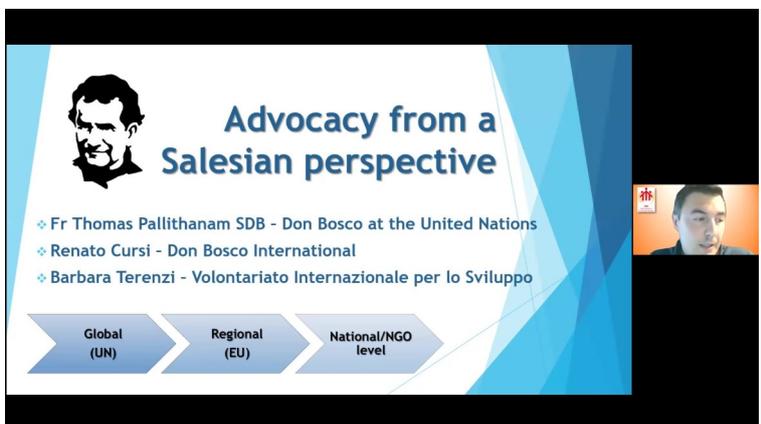
On 26 May Advocacy planning meeting discussions were led by the **SDB UN representative, Don Bosco International (DBI)**, **Don Bosco Green Alliance (DBGA)** and **IIMA Human Rights Office of the Salesian Sisters FMA**. Participants shared their experiences and planned cooperation between official representation at United Nations, European Union, African Union and other international fora.

During the DBN General Assembly, Development Education and Development Cooperation Working Group meetings 25 representatives of **Don Bosco organizations** from Europe, USA, India and Africa discussed COVID-19 impact on programs, projects and operations, effective coordinated response to this pandemic and plans for the new post emergency situation. Working together DBN organizations continue to provide effective support to Don Bosco Mission Worldwide in this difficult time for all.

PDO ADVOCACY WORKSHOP

On 9-10 June 2020 Don Bosco Network (DBN) facilitated an online advocacy workshop for **Planning and Development Offices (PDOs)**. The **Economer General Bro Jean Paul Muller** and the **Coordinator of Mission Offices Fr George Menampampil**, accompanied the workshop.

SDB UN representative, Don Bosco International (DBI) and **Volontariato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo (VIS)** shared their advocacy work, best practices and planned with the participants effective cooperation between Salesian Family organizations in this field. **Don Bosco Green Alliance (DBGA)** shared with the participants their current programs and campaigns including the outcomes of the **Energy for Ever Conference**. **DBGA** encouraged all to take an active part in **Laudato Si' year** activities announced by Pope Francis. **Don Bosco Network and Misiones Salesianas** facilitated the session on **Child Safeguarding** explaining how to set up good standard policy on Provincial and project level. 110 participants from all over the world took part in the 2-day workshop and they are now better equipped to advocate on behalf of and with young people in need in their own countries and at international level. Materials from the workshop are available on DBN Platform, you can contact DBN for access at: info@donbosconetwork.org



Advocacy from a Salesian perspective

- ❖ Fr Thomas Pallithanam SDB - Don Bosco at the United Nations
- ❖ Renato Cursi - Don Bosco International
- ❖ Barbara Terenzi - Volontariato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo

Global (UN) → Regional (EU) → National/NGO level

DON BOSCO NETWORK

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