

FONDAZIONE MARISTA PER LA SOLIDARIETÀ INTERNAZIONALE ONLUS

**“FMSI’S SOLIDARITY POLICY AND PROJECT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA”  
2021-2025**

**Approved by the Board of Directors  
on October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021**



## 1. OBJECTIVES

The Marist Missions around the world carry out a large number of development and solidarity projects to help children and young people relegated to the margins of the societies in which they live<sup>1</sup>. It is therefore necessary to identify the set of procedures most relevant to the projects that FMSI is willing to support.

This document establishes guidelines to identify the projects that exemplify FMSI's values and to comply with the eligibility criteria and international standard indicators, in order to facilitate their submission to potential donors.

The following are FMSI's **Vision, Mission** and **Values** from which the selection criteria are derived:

### VISION:

We believe in a world where childhood is respected and guaranteed, free from violence and fear, where children are fully-fledged citizens and are recognized as active members in their communities and society.

### MISSION:

We act to develop the potential of children, especially those who are the most vulnerable and marginalized, through education, advocacy and solidarity initiatives.

### VALUES:

- **Equity:** In a world where inequalities are increasing, we work to guarantee equal opportunities for all children, boys and girls, regarding access to education and their universally recognized rights.
- **Solidarity:** The will to serve, to act for the common good and to generate opportunities for all, especially the most vulnerable and excluded are key.
- **Justice:** We work at international level to give voice to those who have no voice. We stand up for children and assist communities and decision-makers to defend children's rights in order to promote peaceful and inclusive societies.
- **Non-discrimination:** We ensure that ALL children exercise their rights, regardless of gender, ethnicity or religion.

## 2. PRINCIPLES OF PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

FMSI will support projects following two different but integrated general criteria:

- a. Congruence with FMSI's Mission, Vision and Values and the need to respond to the emerging global challenges for the "most vulnerable" children "living on the margins of society" and who "have no voice"<sup>2</sup>.
- b. Compliance with internationally identified standards:
  1. Children rights
  2. Inclusive education
  3. Community development and social transformation

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<sup>1</sup>In accordance with the concept of solidarity expressed in the Fourth Call of the XXII General Chapter - "*To journey with children and young people living on the margins of life*" - mentions as one of the elements: "*be creative in giving resolute responses to their needs*".

<sup>2</sup>Message of the XXII General Chapter - Institute of the Marist Brothers Rionegro - Colombia September 8<sup>th</sup> – October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017

<sup>3</sup>Source: United Nations

4. Children protection
5. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Laudato Si' Goals (LSGs)

## 2.1 Children rights<sup>3</sup>

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) outlines - in its 54 articles - the fundamental rights of children. The articles of the Convention can be grouped into four categories according to the guiding principles that inform the Convention as a whole: they include the principle of non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, the right to life, the right to listen to the views of children and the duty of adults to listen to them and to take their opinions into proper consideration<sup>4</sup>.

## 2.2 Inclusive education

FMSI firmly believes in the Right of every child to receive a fair and quality education, which cannot be separated from inclusiveness.

- Inclusive education, as defined in the *Salamanca Declaration*<sup>5</sup>, implies "*the recognition of the need to work towards "schools for all" - institutions which include everybody, celebrate differences, support learning, and respond to individual needs*"<sup>6</sup>. **The right to inclusive education for persons with disabilities is a fundamental human right.**
- Inclusion in the context of education is based on the premise that all children should learn together, regardless of their particularities. Inclusive education is based on the premise that all pupils are endowed with unique characteristics, interests, abilities and special needs for learning and, furthermore, that pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) should have equal opportunities to access education.
- The international community has emphasized the importance of quality education and training and the need for all individuals - especially those belonging to the most vulnerable groups - to have access to education and training appropriate to their needs and the context in which they live in order to ensure the improvement of the living conditions of individuals and communities as a whole<sup>7</sup>.
- Gender equity<sup>8</sup> is a fundamental principle that FMSI applies to all its interventions, committing itself to promoting equity between boys and girls: all activities should contribute to the equal empowerment of women and men in their diversity, ensuring that each person reaches his or her full potential and enjoys the same rights as their peers.

## 2.3 Community development and social transformation

The United Nations defines community development as "*a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems*".

It is a term that identifies the actions of civic leaders, activists, citizens and professionals who work to improve some aspect of society, usually with the aim of building stronger and more resilient local communities.

Community development aims to equip individuals and groups of people with the skills necessary to

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<sup>4</sup> *Convention on the Rights of the Child: Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989 - entry into force 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49*

<sup>5</sup> Declaration issued by representatives of 92 governments and 25 international organisations at the World Conference on Special Education and Needs held in Salamanca (Spain) from 7 to 10 June 1994 (U.N.E.S.C.O.)

<sup>6</sup> *UNESCO Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policies and Practices in Special Needs Education, World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality*, para. 3, June 7-10, 1994, Salamanca, Spain

<sup>7</sup> SDG 4: "*Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*"

<sup>8</sup> In the United Nations' definition, gender equity is part of Sustainable Development Goal No. 4 "*eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations*".

bring about change in their communities. These skills are often gained through the formation of social groups that work with a common agenda. FMSI supports projects that, through multi-stakeholder collaboration, promote respectful and inclusive educational perspectives and practices that aim to improve societies.

## **2.4 Children Protection**

The term "child protection" is used in reference to the prevention of and as a response to violence, exploitation and abuse of children, including sexual exploitation, trafficking, child labour and harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation and early marriage. Child protection programmes target particularly vulnerable children, such as children who do not receive the necessary care from their parents or guardians, who live in the absence of rules or in countries with armed conflicts. Child protection violations occur in all countries and are grossly underreported. Children subjected to violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect are exposed to mental and physical health problems, sometimes at the risk of their own safety.

## **2.5 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Laudato Si' Goals (LSGs)**

Children - at the core of all dimensions of sustainable development - have the right to grow up, develop their full potential and live in a sustainable world.

Poverty reduction, access to health and education, gender equity, social inclusion and development must be addressed together and with an intergenerational vision of society's development as the foundation of the goals. Without such a vision, nations will not be able to achieve sustainable development.

## **Conclusion**

FMSI intends to promote and be proactive in supporting and enhancing all projects that:

- Promote, support and defend the rights of children.
- Involve children and families with a special focus on the most vulnerable: the poor, the displaced, the neglected, the invisible and those living on the margins of society.
- Refer specifically to the Sustainable Development Goals and/or Laudato Si' Goals related to the FMSI Mission
- Include a child protection policy.

## **3. FURTHER PRINCIPLES OF ELIGIBILITY: EMERGENCY PROJECTS**

Emergency projects aim to respond quickly and effectively in the initial stages of natural disasters and humanitarian emergencies. Examples of the types of intervention that can be supported include:

- Water supply, construction and/or repair of sanitation facilities, provision of health services, construction of emergency shelters and initiation of emergency food programmes
- Distribution of emergency non-food items (such as: tents, tarpaulins, blankets, mosquito nets, buckets, jerry cans, cooking utensils);
- Protection and support activities for the local population, refugees or displaced persons.

In addition to the principles set out in point 2, emergency projects should address the needs of women, children, refugees, displaced persons, persons with disabilities and/or prioritize areas of extreme poverty and social and economic inequality

Project proposals must respond to a number of fundamental principles, such as: impartiality, non-discrimination, dignity and participation of beneficiaries, accountability and care requirements aimed at reducing vulnerability, building resilience in individuals and communities, and contributing to disaster response capacity<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Please refer to: <https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2021-07/code-of-conduct-movement-ngos-english.pdf>

### 3.1 Special conditions for endemic and pandemic diseases

FMSI is participating in the global movement to respond to the problems caused and exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in highly vulnerable countries, primarily those with weak health systems. When designing and drafting a new project proposal, it is essential to be up-to-date with the guidelines of the country's government and the World Health Organization. Only information from these sources should be made available to beneficiaries and target communities.

It is also essential that high standards of hygiene and sanitation are maintained at all stages of the project by all staff and stakeholders. When implementing projects, it will be necessary to implement physical distancing measures and avoid crowding. The use of personal protective equipment is considered of paramount importance, especially for those working in close contact with patients with infectious diseases or suspected cases.

## 4. QUALITY EVALUATION CRITERIA

FMSI evaluates the educational and solidarity projects in line with the principles listed below:

- **Coherence:** Given the growing challenges in developing countries, FMSI will try to direct its resources where they are most needed to face the challenges, especially educational ones and also where they can have the greatest impact, especially in favor of children in need.
- **Effectiveness:** FMSI aims to assess the impact of projects in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals, thus ensuring coherence with its strategic objectives. Because projects are change-oriented and address root causes rather than providing solutions to immediate needs, they are able to provide **long-term** benefits to the community. The impact, sustainability and added value of each proposal are important dimensions that will be properly assessed. FMSI does not limit its support only to large-scale proposals, as benefits can also be achieved with small-scale interventions, provided they demonstrate the **capacity to generate a long-term impact for the community.**
- **Efficiency:** Each proposal must aim to achieve the best relationship between the resources deployed and the results obtained. Therefore, implementing partners on the ground must be able to demonstrate that the expected results will be achieved in the most cost-effective way. Consequently, the number of beneficiaries should be proportionate to the requested funding.

Each proposal will be duly evaluated by the FMSI Evaluation Committee - composed of all the staff of the Organization - taking into account 5 different criteria:

1. Relevance of the intervention
2. Impact of the action
3. Effectiveness and feasibility
4. Cost-effectiveness
5. Sustainability

## 5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF FMSI

In accordance with Article 2 letter D of the Statutes, the Foundation *“organizes, plans and coordinates, provides technical assistance and/or financial support (complete or partial), projects having as their goal the development of the Foundation's mission and the promotion, implementation and/or dissemination of the values of social solidarity [...]”*.

FMSI will coordinate all the operations mentioned and listed in its manual of procedures. To this end, the Organization will be responsible for collecting and cataloguing all the information received from the local project manager in order to draw up the project proposal following the form and guidelines of the donor to whom it will be presented<sup>10</sup>.

This process will ensure that:

- A. Projects achieve the expected results (outputs and outcomes) identified in the proposals;

- B.** The expected results of the project produce positive long-term effects for local society (impact);
- C.** The application of the procedures in the report to the donor is appropriate;
- D.** The principles of safeguarding and protection of children are implemented and respected;
- E.** Financial management and expenditure are constantly monitored throughout the project implementation phase

## **6. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR FUNDRAISING**

In the field of fundraising, FMSI - in accordance with international guidelines - will apply the basic standards of ethics and good practice, such as:

- a.** Not engage in activities that are detrimental to the Mission, Vision and Values of the Organization
- b.** Not engage in activities that conflict with its fiduciary, ethical and legal obligations.
- c.** Effectively report any potential and actual conflict of interest between FMSI personnel and donors.
- d.** Never take advantage of the relationship with a donor, volunteer, client or employee for the personal benefit of one of the members of the Organization or for that of the Organization as a whole.
- e.** Comply with all applicable local, provincial, state and federal civil laws.
- f.** Define the nature and purpose of any contractual relationship at its inception and be responsive and available to the parties.
- g.** Protect the confidentiality of all donor and recipient information.
- h.** Not discredit other Organizations working in the field of International Development Cooperation.
- i.** Ensure that all requested documents, materials and communications are accurate and properly reflect the Organization Mission and the use of requested funds.
- j.** Ensure that donors receive documented, accurate and ethical advice on the value and tax implications of contributions and to ensure that contributions are used in accordance with donor approvals.
- k.** Ensure proper administration of all sources of income, including timely reporting on the use and management of funds.
- l.** Obtain the explicit consent of donors before changing the terms of financial transactions.
- m.** Not disclose confidential information to unauthorized parties.
- n.** Use accurate and consistent accounting methods when reporting the results of fundraising, in accordance with guidelines adopted by the competent authority.

<sup>10</sup> Please, refer to the document "*FMSI Project Monitoring - Principi e procedure di esecuzione del progetto e il ruolo di FMSI nel monitoraggio e controllo*"

