



Marist International
Solidarity
Foundation ETS
FMSI
For the benefit of children



**ANNUAL
REPORT** 2023



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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends and Supporters of FMSI,

I have the honour of presenting FMSI's annual report illustrating the activities carried out by the Foundation during 2023.

FMSI, continues in its commitment to provide support for children in challenging situations. The Foundation aims to guarantee their fundamental rights of education, participation, and justice.

These rights are often neither preserved nor respected. Through its projects, the Foundation empowers local communities, prioritizing interventions with a focus on education and children's rights.

FMSI's work is based on two main pillars: **the defence of the rights of the child and solidarity**. Both are realized through Projects that support children in the most vulnerable conditions, providing for them a better future.

During 2023, the Foundation continued its work supporting migrant children, refugees, victims of violence and children with disabilities. This was done through solidarity, advocacy, and emergency projects.

FMSI's presence at the United Nations is significant and incisive.

The Foundation actively participates in the Universal Periodic Review and has access to international Human Rights mechanisms. **In 2023, FMSI participated in the Universal Period Review for Bangladesh, Cameroon, Colombia, Nigeria, Mexico, Vanuatu, and Uruguay.**

FMSI also continues its involvement in Marist solidarity networks around the world with the aim of achieving long lasting improvement in the lives of children and young people. In this complex time, FMSI reinforces its commitment in favour of children to guarantee them the full enjoyment of their Fundamental Rights. First and foremost, among these is the equal access to quality education.

FMSI asserts the imperative to uphold the dignity and rights of every child under all circumstances, guiding its use of images, words, and communication in adherence to principles centered on the protection, development, participation, non-discrimination, and prioritization of the child's highest interest. The guidelines on ethical storytelling launched by FMSI, is crucial as it represents an evolution in communication strategies, emphasizing ethical storytelling, eliminating stereotypical narratives, and promoting a culture of echo rather than ego, to create a bias-free environment that respects cultural diversity in their solidarity projects and initiatives worldwide.

During 2023, the 'Advocacy and Child Rights' area maintained collaborative relationships with other organisations. The Foundation actively participated in the Steering Group of BICE (Bureau International Catholique de l'Enfance) and CCIG (Centre Catholique International de Genève) initiating several joint undertakings. During the course of this year FMSI also cooperated effectively with other religions organisations. The relationship with Edmund Rice International and with the La Salle Foundation enables FMSI to maintain a fruitful exchange of information on the

Projects developed by each of the Congregations. The event on the 20th of November, the World Children Day, is now a permanent event for the whole institute and a platform to engage all stakeholders on the subjects of child rights and advocacy.

We live in a world where children continue to go hungry, to fall ill without receiving adequate medical care, to be exploited and abused, and to be denied access to the fundamental right of education. Such deprivation dramatically accentuates existing inequalities and reduces opportunities of those children already most deprived. FMSI continues to work to provide opportunities for some of these children in vulnerable conditions to live a better life.

I wish to conclude by thanking the members of the FMSI Staff and Board: The Foundation would not exist without their commitment for the benefit of children. The FMSI Staff is committed day by day to the successful implementation of initiatives in favour of the children in vulnerable conditions, faithfully following its **Mission and the Marist Brothers Charism**.

The Board has shown commitment and dedication in the governance of the Foundation, with directives, guidelines and suggestions that have enabled it to improve its operations. Finally, I would like to thank our Partners and our Donors: it is thanks to you that we are able, day after day, to implement projects small and large in favour of children in the most fragile conditions in the world's peripheries.

My sincere thanks to you all.

Br. Ken McDonald





VISION

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

MISSION

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

VISION, MISSION & VALUES

WHO WE ARE

Established by the Congregation of the Marist Brothers of the Schools in 2007, the Marist Foundation for International Solidarity ETS works around the world for the rights of children and adolescents to ensure better living conditions for them.

The Institute of the Marist Brothers was created in France on 2 January 1817 by Saint Marcellin Champagnat and today has more than 2400 members who - assisted by over 7,000 Marist lay people - work in 79 Countries on 5 continents. The Marist Network operates through 590 schools as well as 26 universities, social works, youth movements and programmes, and wherever children and young people are most in need.

For 16 years, FMSI has been dedicated to nurturing the potential of children and youth, empowering them to play active roles in social transformation within their communities.

Throughout its history, FMSI has supported over 500 projects and initiatives focusing on inclusive education, solidarity, and child rights across 68 countries worldwide, with a particular emphasis on addressing vulnerability and marginalization.

In a world where inequalities are increasing, we work to guarantee equal opportunities for all children and young people, boys and girls, regarding access to education and their universally recognized rights.

The will to serve, to act for the common good and to generate opportunities for all, especially the most vulnerable and excluded are key. More than just a word used in difficult times, it is an essential value in our daily work.



We work at an international level to give voice to those who have no voice. We stand up for children and young people and assist communities and decision-makers to defend the rights of children's and young people in order to promote peaceful and inclusive societies.

We work to ensure that ALL children exercise their rights, regardless of gender, ethnicity or religion.

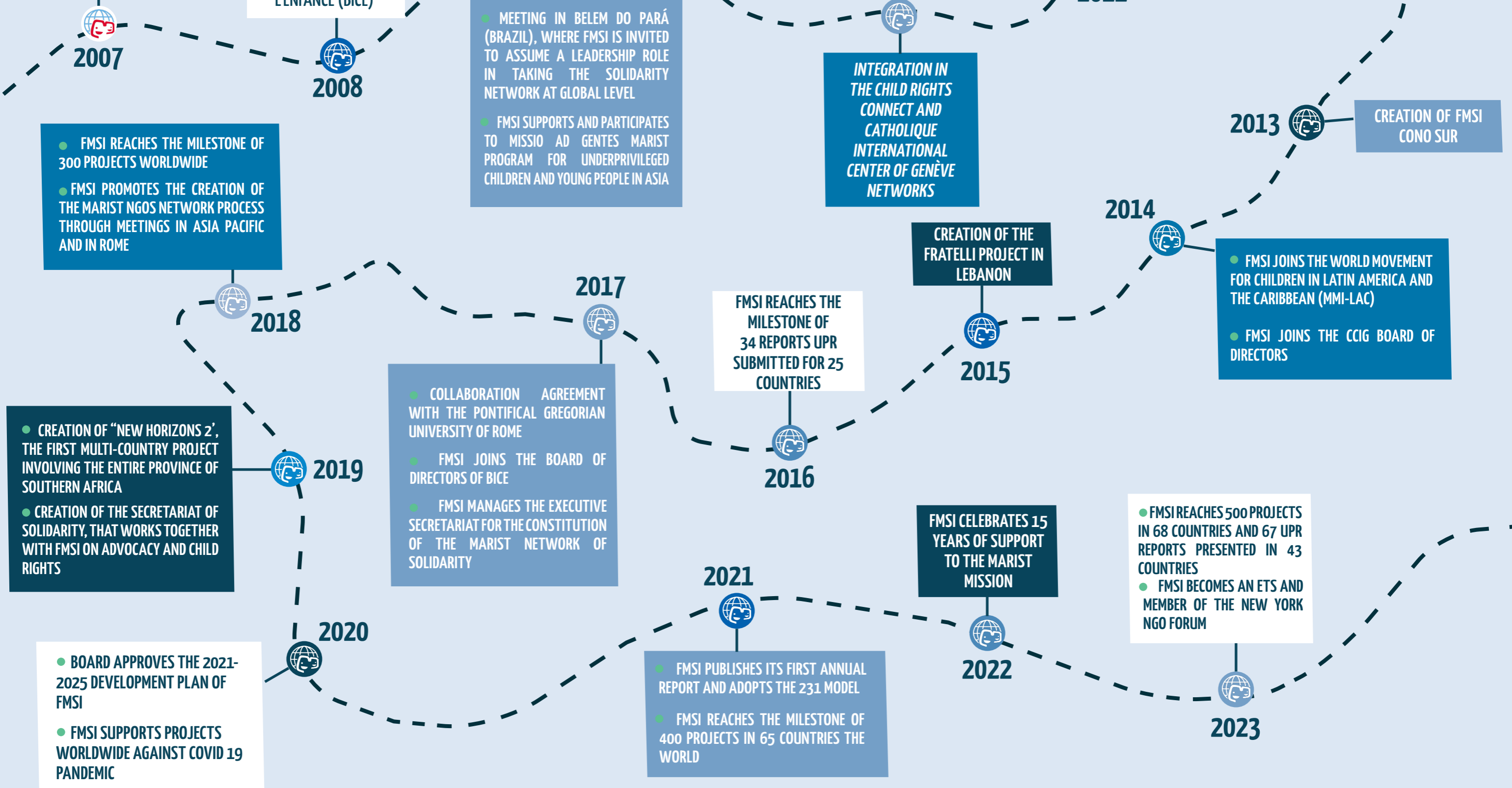


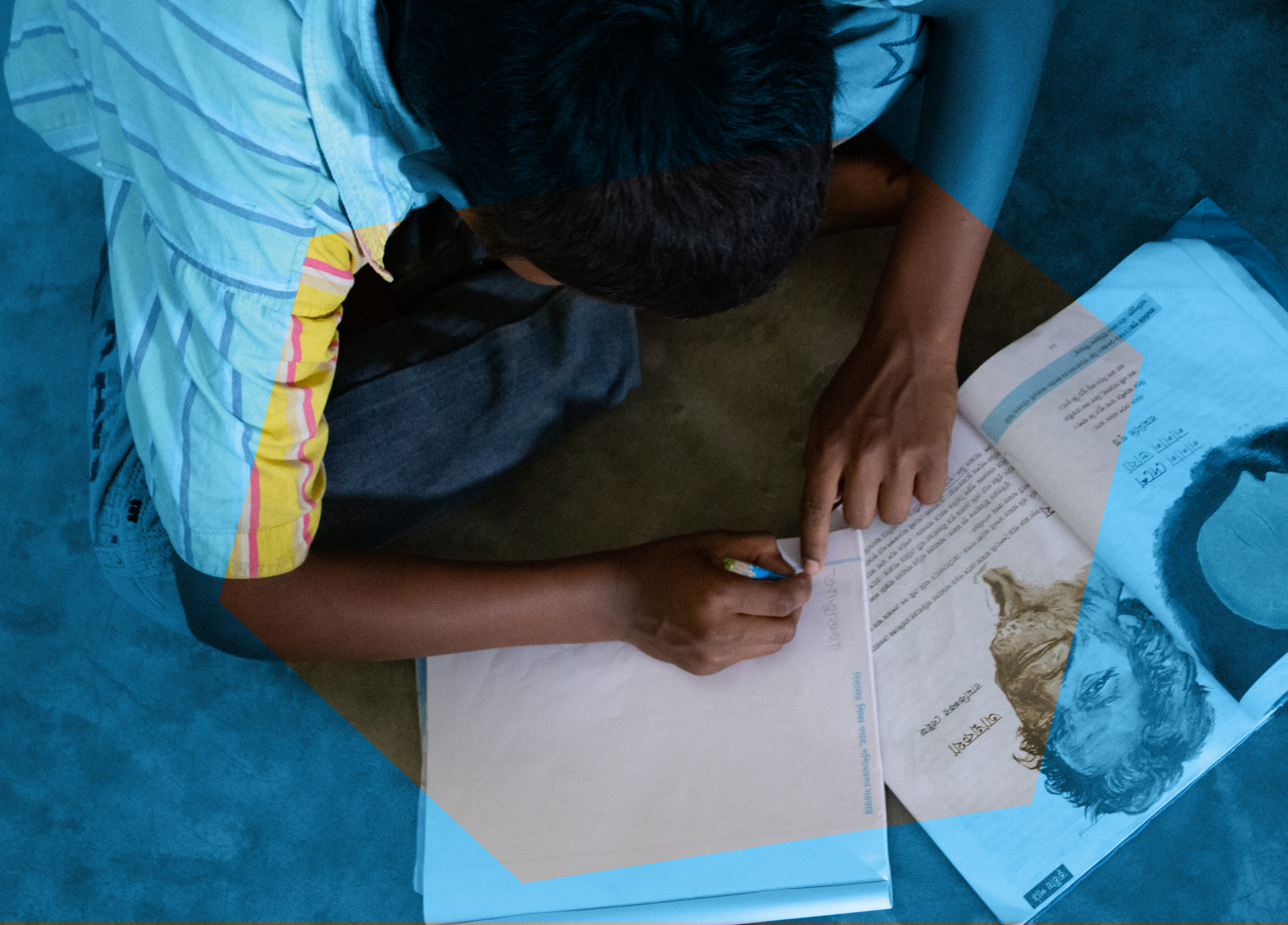
 **FMSI**
Perif Bone-der-Bambour

QUALITY

OUR HISTORY

FMSI CREATION





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ପଢ଼ାବୁଦ୍ଧି, ଶୁଣାବୁଦ୍ଧି, ଚିନ୍ତାବୁଦ୍ଧି

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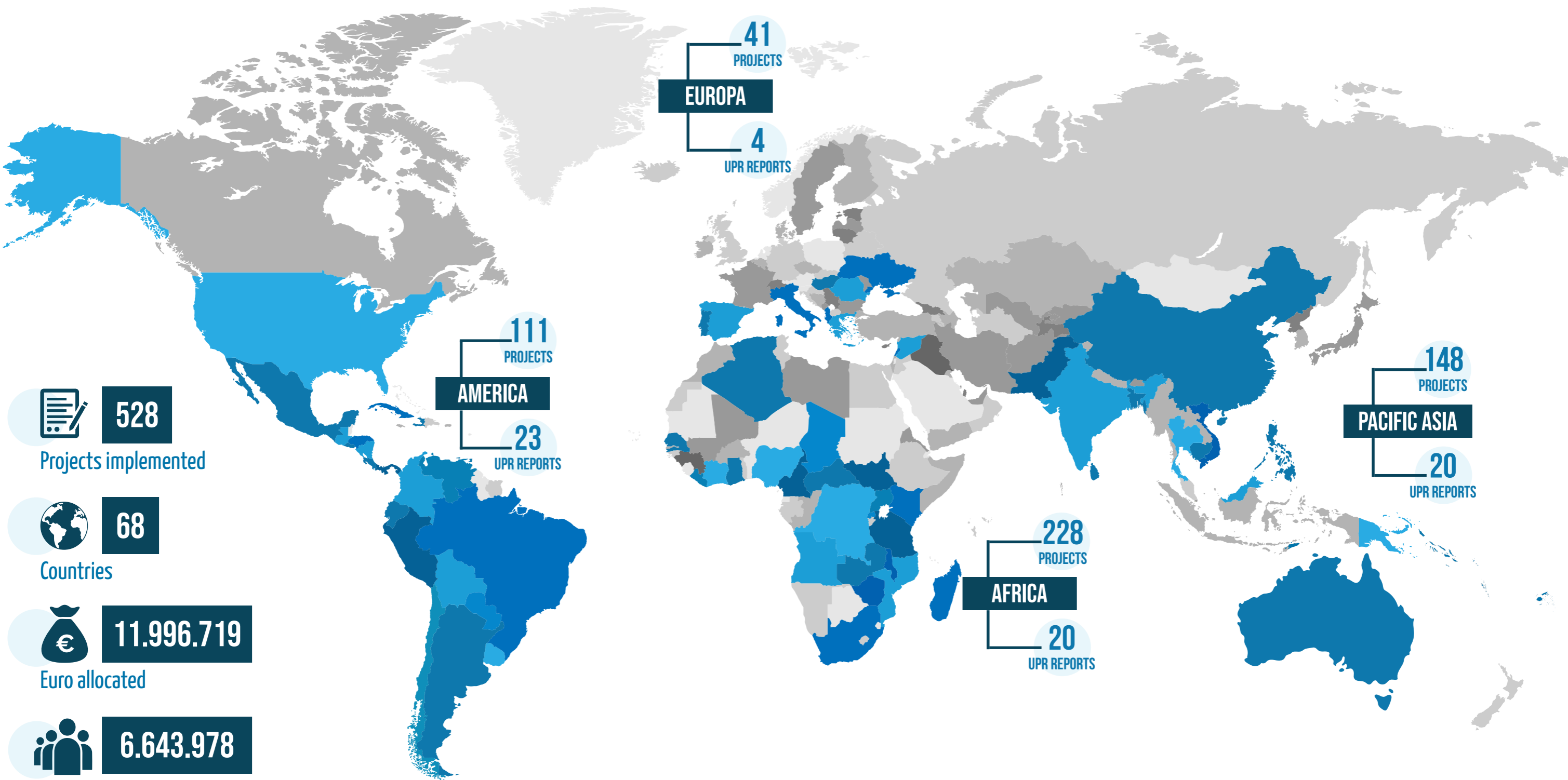





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FMSI in numbers (2007 - 2023)

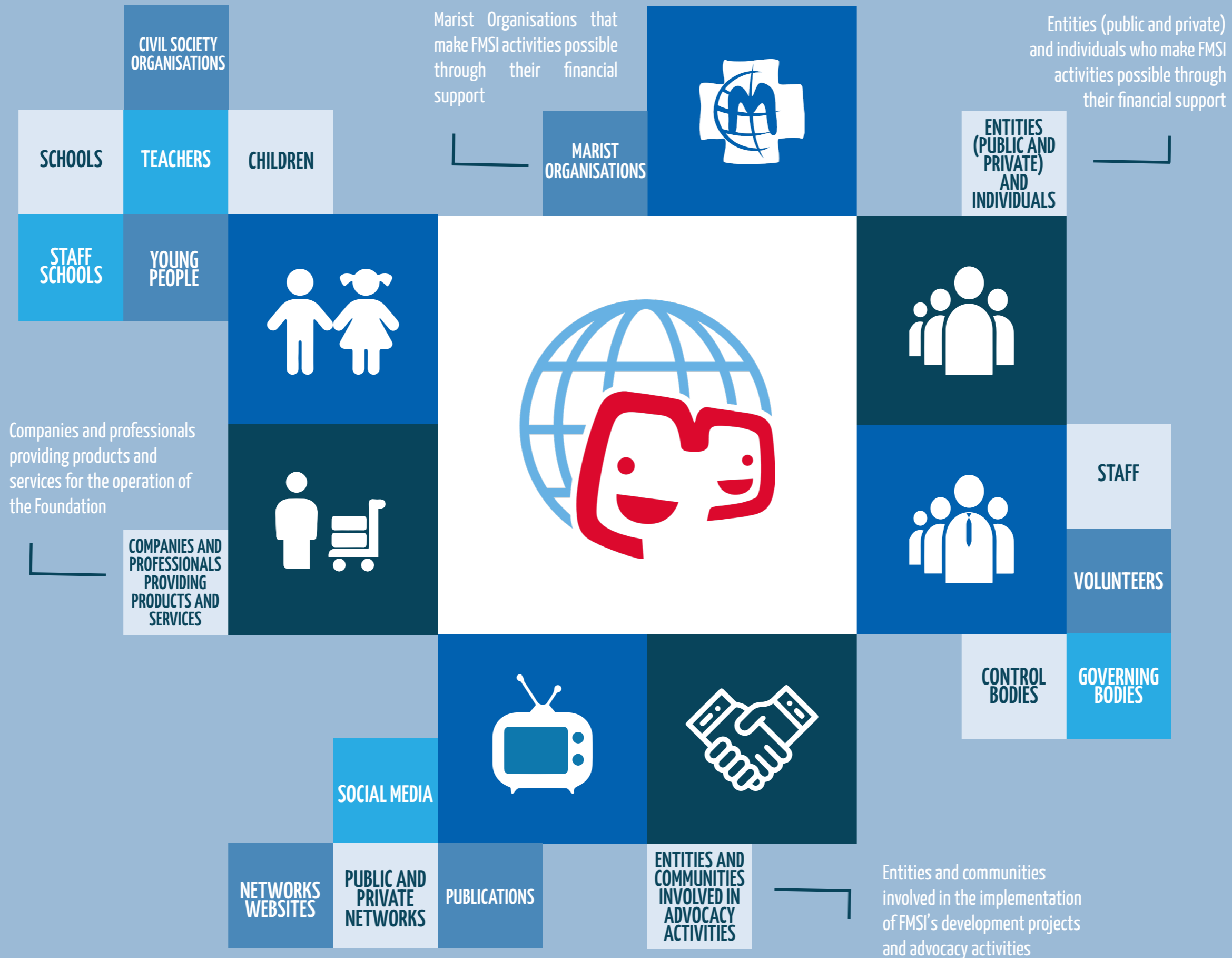


-  **528**
Projects implemented
-  **68**
Countries
-  **11.996.719**
Euro allocated
-  **6.643.978**
Beneficiaries
-  **67**
Reports on Child Rights submitted through the UN Mechanism of UPR

CHILD RIGHTS, ADVOCACY, TRAINING, PUBLIC AWARENESS

Meetings and training courses on Children's rights	31
Information and awareness-raising events	3
Consultations for the participation of children in the defence of their rights	5
Agreements with universities and other relevant partners for the realisation of courses and other joint initiatives	5
Researches and publications	7

STAKEHOLDER MAP





THE IMPACT OF FMSI'S ACTION

During 2023, FMSI continued to carry out its activities of drafting, implementing and reporting on development projects (education, solidarity and rights of children and youth) and emergencies in the peripheries of the world and wherever the Congregation of the Marist Brothers of the Schools is present - with its works.

The work of FMSI in the field of solidarity and education has been continuous and fruitful and has led, in 2023, to **the realisation of 72 projects implemented in 27 Countries of the world**, constantly placing child rights at the centre of its actions and working to eliminate all kinds of social inequalities.

The Institute of the Marist Brothers and FMSI place paramount importance on the centrality of child rights, ensuring that they are at the forefront of all its actions and initiatives, with a commitment to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children. In 2023, FMSI and the Secretariat of Solidarity have successfully collaborated to submit a total of 7 UPR reports. These reports, a result of close partnerships with various stakeholders, were presented for Nigeria, Mexico, Colombia, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Vanuatu, and Uruguay.

In 2023, FMSI's action included the global fundraising campaign for Syria, including the distribution of medical equipment. All these initiatives on Inclusive Education, Solidarity and Advocacy, were constantly inspired by these founding principles:

COHERENCE:

Aware of the growing global challenges, FMSI has responded by concentrating its resources and capacities where they are most needed, with a particular focus on interventions in the regions of the world that suffer the most economically vulnerable conditions.

EFFECTIVENESS:

FMSI has promoted fair, effective, efficient interventions with a broad social impact in favour of children and youth in Syria, Madagascar, Bangladesh, Colombia, Nigeria and wherever intervention was needed to guarantee the fundamental rights of people in vulnerable and marginalized condition, in line with the Foundation's statutory purpose. FMSI has not only supported large proposals, as it is believed that long term benefits can also be achieved with small but very specific interventions, as long as they are able to generate long term results for the communities.

EFFICIENCY:

Each FMSI project aims to ensure the best relationship between resources employed and results achieved. All projects, therefore, must be able to demonstrate that the planned results are achieved with a fair and balanced cost/benefit ratio.

TRANSPARENCY:

Operating thanks to the financing of private and institutional donors, FMSI promotes transparency and legality in the use of the funds received as an act of responsibility towards those who support and sustain the initiatives and activities of the Foundation. For this reason, FMSI guarantees transparency and accountability through a multiplicity of instruments: the 231 model, the institution of a supervisory body, timely reporting of projects, annual publications and certification of the financial statements in accordance with the regulations of the Italian Civil Code.

The tools used to provide information to the public on the resources collected and their destination are: narrative and financial reports according to the procedures and models provided by the donors, the FMSI website, social media and this document.



METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The process of preparation of the report has been marked by a strong desire to provide its stakeholders with a clear and complete picture of how FMSI implements its statutory principles in the context in which it operates.

This document was prepared on the basis of the provisions of the “Guidelines for the Preparation of the Financial Social Statements of Third Sector Entities” adopted by decree of the Minister of Labor and Social Policies (published in the Official Gazette no. 186 of 8-9-2019). The objective is reporting all FMSI activities carried out in 2023; the frequency and the boundaries of reporting coincide with those of the 2023 Annual Report Sheet, approved by the Board of Directors at the meeting on 27th May 2024. In defining the themes and methods of reporting, particular attention was paid to the information to be provided to stakeholders.

For this reason, the Social Report has been created with a participative process that involved various actors at different levels:

- All FMSI Staff, including the people involved in accounting and those involved in communication.
- The FMSI Board.
- The Donors, through the official project documents and reports submitted in the period Jan-Dec 2023.
- The Local Project Managers responsible for each project funded and implemented.
- External control bodies in both the design and revision phases of both the content and financial sections of the document.

In order to provide complete and transparent information to **stakeholders**, and with the intention of guaranteeing comparability over time, this Social Report 2023 implements the same classification and presentation of achievements proposed in the 2022 edition.

The analysis of the results achieved by the implemented projects was carried out on the basis of the official project documents and reports submitted in the period from January to December 2023: the focus of the analysis was therefore placed on the changes produced by the intervention, which were relevant for the achievement of the results and measured through a system of indicators. As project implementation does not correspond to the calendar year, for those projects financed in 2023 but not yet finalised as at 31.12.2023, the official project data in the application form are taken into account.

All projects started after October 2023 (COL0200, KHM0410, MDG0900, ZAF0220, NGA0200, TCD0400, KEN0800) and uncompleted construction projects (KEN0600) are not included in the count as this would be too premature in relation to the status of implementation and thus the achievement of results. In contrast, the count takes into account the results produced by projects excluded for the same reason in the previous period (BOL0300, BDG0310, HTI0500, MEX0400, ZWE0200, ZAF0300 period 2023).

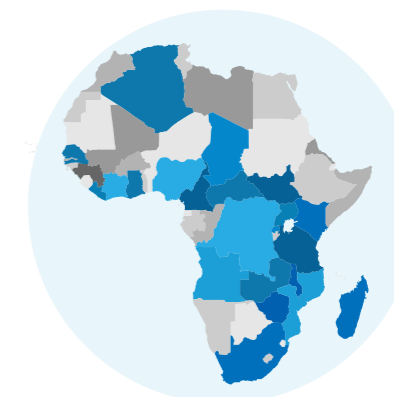
With regard to Advocacy and Child Rights projects and activities, in 2023 FMSI, together with its partner CCIG, devised a set of impact indicators to measure it over the long term.



LIST OF PROJECTS FUNDED IN 2023

AFRICA

Project title	Country	Amount in €
Construction of school infirmary at the Centre Scolaire St. Marcellin Champagnat, Bouaké	Ivory Coast	23.579,00
Humanitarian Emergency 2023	Cameroon	10.000,00
Renovation of refectory at Saint Albert's College	Cameroon	4.500,00
Support to the communities affected by the floods	Democratic Republic of the Congo	15.000,00
Support to the communities affected by the floods	Democratic Republic of the Congo	15.000,00
Support to the communities affected by the floods	Democratic Republic of the Congo	19.000,00
Construction of Multipurpose Hall at the Marist Preparatory/Junior High School in Sabin-Akrofrom	Ghana	40.125,00
Support to Primary School Our Lady of Orove, Ogande Special School, Kuja School	Kenya	8.032,05
Support for bursaries for the Bishop Mugendi School in Roo	Kenya	7.000,00
Food for students and pupils at Our Lady of Orove School, Bishop Mugendi School in Roo and at St. Monica Widow Group in Roo	Kenya	7.000,00
Support to Bishop Mugendi School in Roo and to School Our Lady of Orove	Kenya	7.500,00
Rebuilding the Marist Brothers Residence in Orove	Kenya	31.370,00



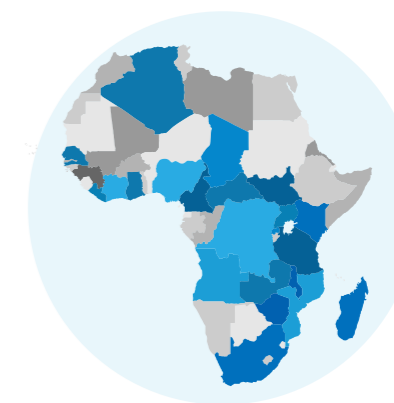
AFRICA

Project title	Country	Amount in €
Rebuilding the Marist Brothers Residence in Orote	Kenya	22.529,00
Rebuilding the Marist Brothers Residence in Orote	Kenya	20.000,00
Support to the people affected by the drought in Kenya	Kenya	15.000,00
Construction of a Multipurpose hall in order to offer an appropriate learning conditions at Ampahidrano - Fianarantsoa	Madagascar	100.000,00
Strengthening of safeguarding knowledge and systems across the Marist schools in Madagascar	Madagascar	12.800,00
Feeding Programme: Lycée Privé St. Vincent de Paul School, Betroka	Madagascar	9.780,00
Request for a Toyota LC for seven Marist Schools in Madagascar	Madagascar	21.000,00
Request for a Toyota LC for seven Marist Schools in Madagascar	Madagascar	7.800,00
Equity of access to clean water, sanitation and quality education for the pupils of the Saint Charles Primary School in Fianarantsoa	Madagascar	37.140,00
Construction of Multipurpose hall & hostel for boys and girls	Malawi	122.727,00
Equity of access to quality education for girls and disadvantaged children in Malawi	Malawi	103.217,00



AFRICA

Project title	Country	Amount in €
Support to the people affected by the cyclone in Malawi	Malawi	15.000,00
Una nuova speranza per il futuro	Nigeria	12.000,00
Training new generation in South Sudan – Solidarity Teacher Training College	South Sudan	5.000,00
Community program for the access to education of the vulnerable children in Koumra	Chad	10.200,00
Access to computer skills and competences for children and young people in Koumra	Chad	15.000,00
Allestimento dell’Aula informatica presso il Centro Marcellino Champagnat di Koumra	Chad	11.600,00
Three2six refugee Children’s educational Project	South Africa	112.515,00
Three2six refugee Children’s educational Project	South Africa	35.000,00
Horticulture project at Nyatate High School - Poultry Production	Zimbabwe	2.900,00



AMERICA



Project title	Country	Amount in €
Humanitarian purposes and health care Colegio Marista "Gabriel René Moreno" de Comarapa	Bolivia	1.200,00
Hearth without borders: reducing school drop-out rates through the promotion of integral development	Colombia	15.000,00
Corazón Sin Fronteras Maicao "Aula digital"	Colombia	6.405,86
Support to the people affected by storms and flooding in La Pista, Maicao	Colombia	15.000,00
Formación y programa escuela para padres de familia en Maicao	Colombia	17.450,00
Fratelli Maicao - Emergency aid	Colombia	500,00
Education and training opportunities for children domestic workers, vulnerable youth and teachers in Jérémie	Haiti	22.250,00
Création d'un jardin communautaire en faveur des jeunes filles et garçons de différents établissements scolaires de Dame-Marie	Haiti	1.500,00
Feeding Program: Ecole Mariste de Champagnat in Jeremie	Haiti	17.996,76
Formación sobre gestión del ciclo de proyecto	Various	1.000,00
Curso de formación en Gestión del ciclo del proyecto - Nivel intermedio	Various	200,00

AMERICA

Project title	Country	Amount in €
School materials Instituto Catolico Técnico Vocacional (ICTV)	El Salvador	1.300,00
Influence on public policies for food sovereignty and the appropriate promotion of healthy eating, based on Mayan traditional knowledge	Mexico	14.500,00



ASIA AND OCEANIA

Project title	Country	Amount in €
Moulvibazar Education Program	Bangladesh	22.075,00
Sponsorship Moulvibazar Editoriales	Bangladesh	13.743,82
LaValla School for disabled Children, health and rehabilitation programme	Cambodia	5.000,00
LaValla School for disabled Children, health and rehabilitation programme	Cambodia	5.000,00
Marcellin program: Protecting poor Children Children at Risk and Children in conflict with the Law	Philippines	32.685,00
Improving education of Santali girls and boys through study centers and promoting gender equality	India	5.300,00



EUROPE AND MIDDLE EAST

Project title	Country	Amount in €
Marists for Ukraine	Ukraine	5.100,00
The Fratelli Project	Lebanon	104.108,50
Support to ensuring access to quality education for vulnerable children at Saints Coeurs School in Jezzine City	Lebanon	2.000,00
The Fratelli Project	Lebanon	10.000,00
Infrastructural Renovation at Socio Educational Centre at Rmeileh	Lebanon	20.000,00
Support for the students of the Fratelli Project	Lebanon	5.000,00
The Fratelli Project	Lebanon	100.000,00
The Fratelli Project	Lebanon	20.000,00
Provision of medical equipment	Syria	354,00
Seeds - Psycho-Social Support Program	Syria	61.900,00
Seeds - Support Emotional Expression Development Skills	Syria	7.000,00
Syria Earthquake Emergency	Syria	10.000,00
Syria Earthquake Emergency	Syria	30.000,00
Syria Earthquake Emergency	Syria	9.465,14
Syria Earthquake Emergency	Syria	18.192,00
Syria Earthquake: support for people left homeless	Syria	35.000,00



EUROPE AND MIDDLE EAST

Project title	Country	Amount in €
Support to the people affected by the earthquake in Aleppo	Syria	15.000,00
Humanitarian aid to people affected by earthquake in Aleppo	Syria	10.515,00
Support for the Aleppo population	Syria	53.000,00
Summer clothes for children	Syria	30.000,00
Clothes distribution	Syria	72.434,00
Support for the Aleppo population	Syria	60.387,66





AREAS OF INTERVENTION

MORE THAN HALF OF THE WORLD'S CHILDREN ARE EXPOSED TO SOME FORM OF VIOLENCE OR DISCRIMINATION EVERY YEAR.



EDUCATION FOR ALL

Projects in this area aim to achieve specific outcomes, such as increasing access to education at all levels and increasing literacy levels and attendance, especially for girls.

This includes initiatives to ensure access to vocational training, to increase the number of qualified teachers, to build or adapt school facilities to be sensitive to the needs of children, disabilities and gender equality in order to provide safe, inclusive and high-quality learning environments for all.

In forging these initiatives, we envision a future where education becomes a transformative force, breaking barriers and providing a Foundation for children to actively contribute as agents of peace and positive change.

250 MILLION CHILDREN (OF WHOM 129 MILLION GIRLS) ARE OUT OF SCHOOL

OVER 600 MILLION CHILDREN WORLDWIDE ARE UNABLE TO ATTAIN MINIMUM PROFICIENCY LEVELS IN READING AND MATHEMATICS

246 MILLION GIRLS AND BOYS EXPERIENCE VIOLENCE IN AND AROUND SCHOOLS



ADVOCACY & CHILD RIGHTS

FMSI works to recognise, promote, and guarantee the rights of children, particularly in contexts where they are denied access to and enjoyment of basic human rights: education, protection from violence, access to proper medical care, active participation in society.

Today's children face new threats that undermine the full enjoyment of their rights, but they also have new tools and opportunities to realise and defend them.

FMSI's initiatives at the United Nations are aimed at building strong policy systems at regional, national and international levels, based on development strategies for children's rights.

FMSI also promotes initiatives in which children and young people become aware of their rights, participate in situations that affect them, hold and defend civil, social, political, cultural and economic rights.

CHILDREN ACCOUNT FOR 35% OF ALL IDENTIFIED VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING

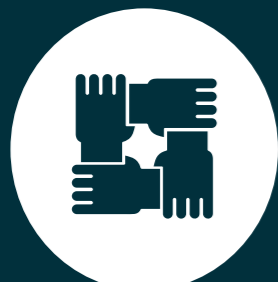
BETWEEN 2005 AND 2022, MORE THAN 105,000 CHILDREN WERE VERIFIED AS RECRUITED AND USED IN ARMED CONFLICTS

MORE THAN ONE MILLION CHILDREN ARE DEPRIVED OF THEIR LIBERTY BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS

MORE THAN 30% OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN 25 COUNTRIES HAVE EXPERIENCED VIOLENCE AND THEY ARE TWICE AS LIKELY TO FACE NEGLECT AND/OR SEXUAL, PHYSICAL OR MENTAL ABUSE AS CHILDREN WHO HAVE NO DISABILITIES



Data source:
 INVESTING IN CHILDREN - An Accelerator for the Sustainable Development Goals - 2023,
 UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children



EMERGING LOCAL NEEDS

New global challenges impact on fundamental areas such as health, education, local economies and they increase inequalities and generate new forms of poverty among children. Among local and emerging needs: hunger and malnutrition, difficult access to basic services, discrimination and social exclusion, as well as lack of participation in decision-making processes.

The projects in this area are based on development strategies in favour of the most economically vulnerable people.

The projects are gender sensitive, support actions against poverty, hunger, injustice, climate change, and lack of access to services or adequate health systems.

FMSI's emergency projects target all individuals in vulnerable situations in order to reduce their exposure to extreme weather events, wars, epidemics, disasters and economic, social and environmental shocks.

MORE THAN 50 MILLION CHILDREN ARE DISPLACED - THE HIGHEST EVER FIGURE, WITH NUMBERS MORE THAN DOUBLING SINCE 2010

1 IN 6 CHILDREN LIVE IN AREAS AFFECTED BY ARMED CONFLICT

SUICIDE IS THE FOURTH LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH AMONG THOSE AGED 15 TO 19 AND ALMOST 46,000 CHILDREN AGED 10 TO 19 END THEIR OWN LIVES EACH YEAR - ABOUT 1 EVERY 11 MINUTES



SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This area pursues responsible environmental, social and governance strategies to address inequalities and discrimination, ensuring economic stability guiding all activities towards environmental and social sustainability.

We intervene to reduce environmental risks, protect decent work, and promote the adoption of responsible behaviours. The significance of education in building a sustainable world cannot be understated and it is crucial to champion children and young people as proactive agents for change.

1 IN 6 CHILDREN LIVE IN EXTREME POVERTY

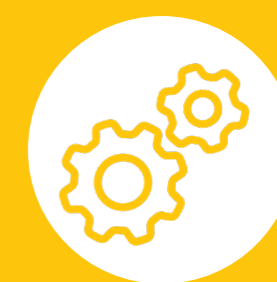
1 BILLION CHILDREN LIVE IN AREAS AT HIGH RISK OF CLIMATE CRISIS

160 MILLION CHILDREN ARE ENGAGED IN CHILD LABOUR AND THEIR NUMBERS ARE INCREASING AS A RESULT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

15% OF CHILDREN HAVE REPORTED CYBERBULLYING VICTIMIZATION

CHILDREN LIVING THROUGH ECONOMIC FRAGILITY, POLITICAL INSTABILITY, CONFLICT OR NATURAL DISASTER ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE CUT OFF FROM SCHOOLING - AS ARE THOSE WITH DISABILITIES, OR FROM ETHNIC MINORITIES

2 IN EVERY 3 CHILDREN ARE SUBJECTED TO VIOLENT DISCIPLINE BY CAREGIVERS



CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF THE MISSION

FMSI is at the service of the Institute not only to provide financial support to projects but also for the strategic development of solidarity on a global level.

It carries out support activities for Marist communities belonging to Provinces and Districts around the world, identifying tools to respond adequately to their needs as a Global family.

The aim of initiatives in this field is to enhance the ability to act on behalf of children with more effective actions and more sustainable strategic projects. These initiatives strategically contribute to strengthening the solidarity capacity of the Institute.

2023 RESULTS

SHORT-TERM OUTCOME

LONG-TERM OUTCOME



EDUCATION FOR ALL

6.945 PEOPLE

Increased literacy, numeracy, skills (including transversal competencies) and qualifications in formal, non-formal and informal settings.

21.137 PEOPLE

Enhanced equity of access to quality education for children in situation of vulnerability and marginalisation.

531 PEOPLE

School and the social context is safer, more inclusive and sustainable.

15 SCHOOLS AND PROFESSIONAL CENTERS

Enhanced quality education improving/updating appropriate learning resources and school facilities.

4.005 PEOPLE

Enhanced quality education using appropriate teaching methodologies.



4.233 PEOPLE

Children, or individuals in vulnerable conditions affected by war, forced migration, natural disasters, dangerous environments have enhanced their living conditions.

5.500 PEOPLE

Children and individuals in vulnerable conditions improved their capacity to face the emergency.

25.986 PEOPLE

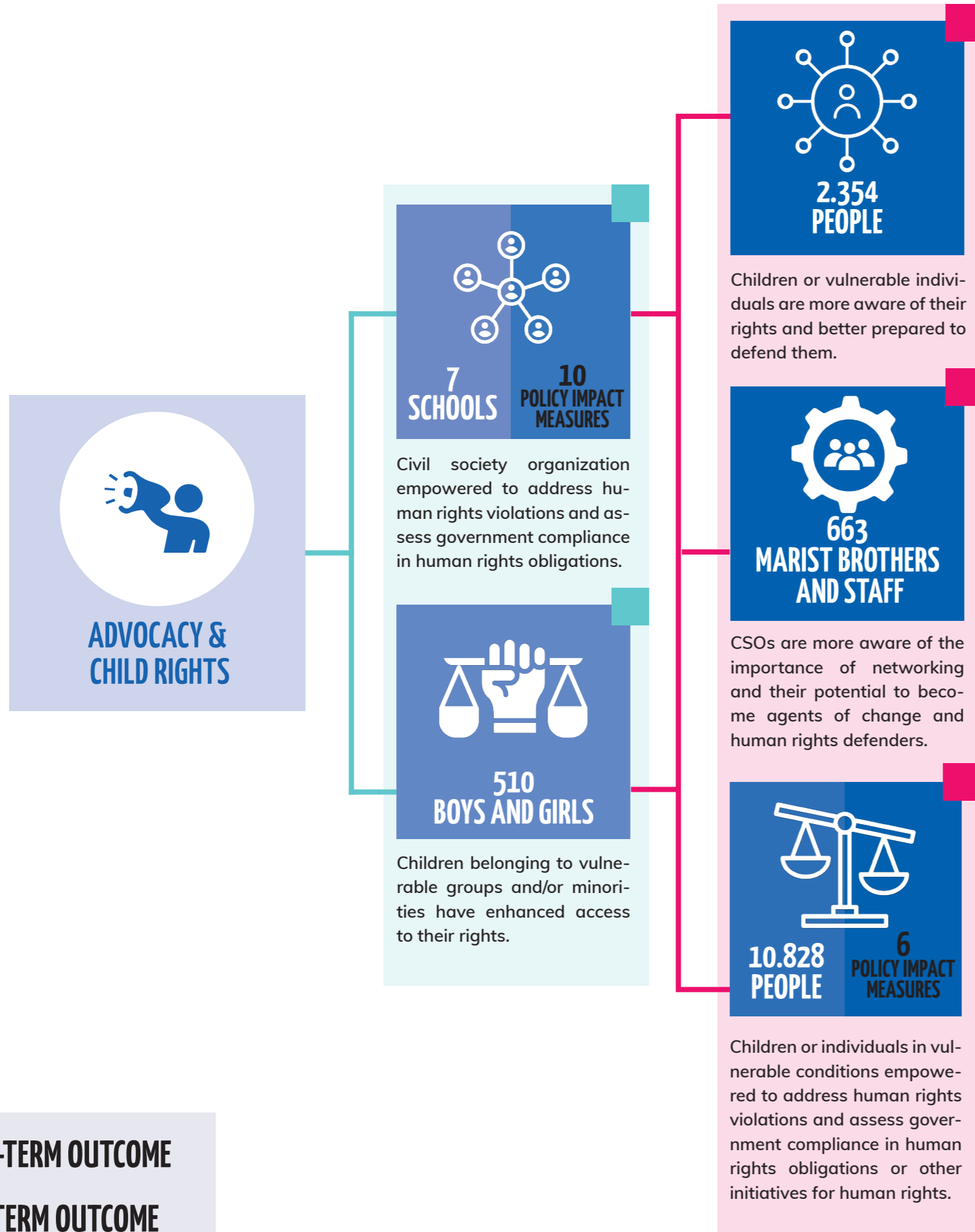
People affected by war, forced migration, natural disasters and other situations of emergency assisted in their basic needs (food, health, sheltering, psychological support).

599 PEOPLE

Health care initiatives: including resilience programmes, distribution of materials, psychological recovery/support programmes, medical interventions, awareness raising and informative campaigns.

1.118 PEOPLE

Children and vulnerable individuals have access to clean water, basic toilets and good hygiene practices.

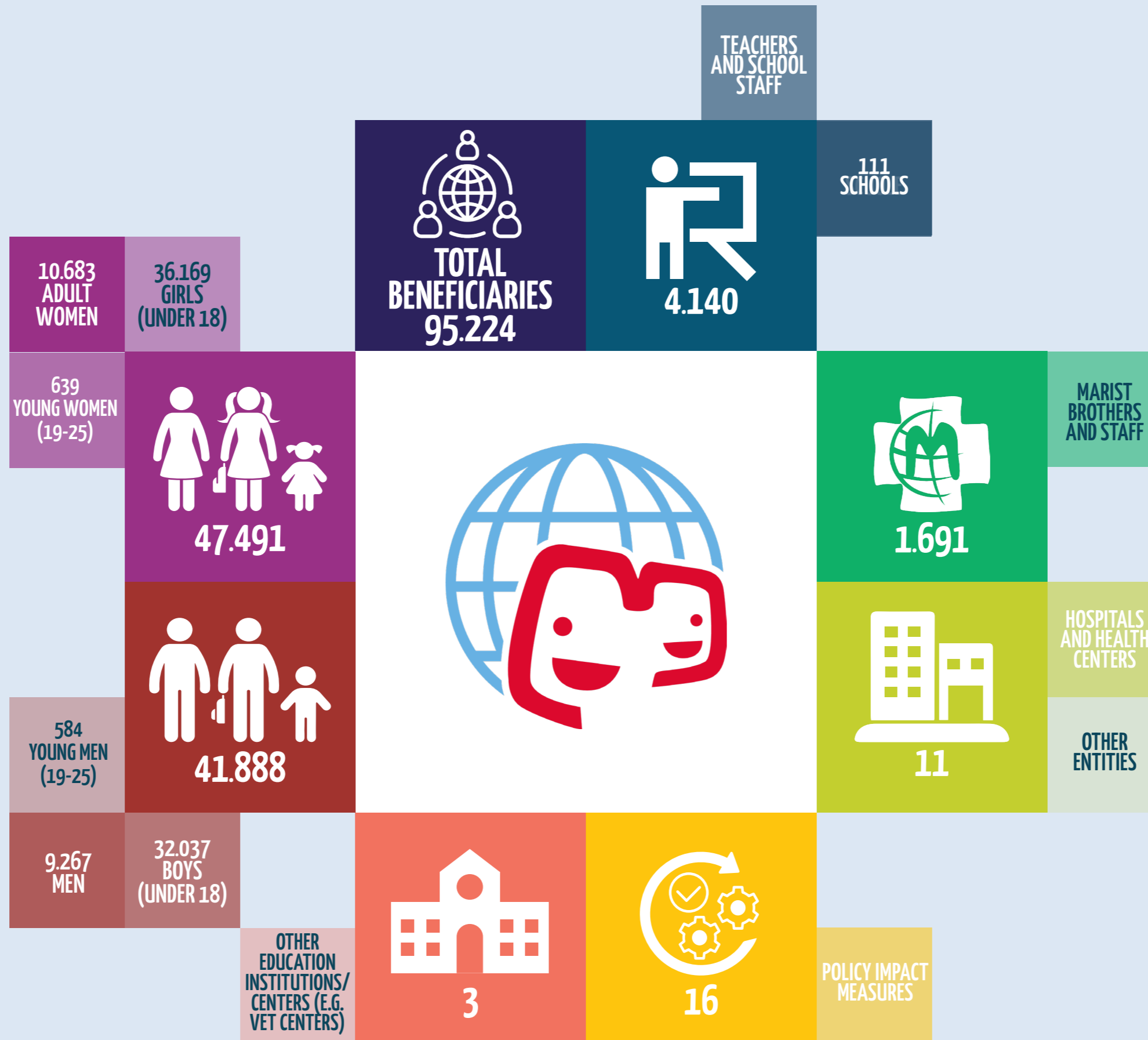


SHORT-TERM OUTCOME

LONG-TERM OUTCOME



2023 RESULTS





Focus on ADVOCACY & CHILD RIGHTS

FMSI's commitment to human rights has been a constant since its creation. FMSI is strongly and firmly committed to the promotion and defence of rights, especially of children and young people, and to their empowerment as agents of change.

Based on the collective experience of the Marist presence in the world, **FMSI plays an important role in highlighting, also at the international level, before States and the United Nations, the human rights situation of children and young people, especially those who live in the most vulnerable conditions.**

How does FMSI work to promote and defend children's rights through its advocacy activities?

To achieve its goals, FMSI, in collaboration with the Secretariat of Solidarity of the Marist Brothers engages in various UN advocacy mechanisms. **Among these, a key instrument is the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) which allows for the submission of reports and recommendations to the United Nations.**

UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW (UPR) is a process within the United Nations Human Rights Council that aims to assess the human rights situation of all member states, thus becoming a verification mechanism to screen and possibly strengthen the human rights situation in each member country.

The active engagement of FMSI and other civil society organisations in the review process of the state under review is crucial to improve the effectiveness and inclusiveness of the process. Such interactions lead to a broader exchange of resources and advocacy efforts, ultimately promoting a deeper examination of the human rights situation and a more robust framework for governments.

The UPR is an important mechanism to promote and protect human rights around the world.

It encourages countries to engage in self-assessment, peer learning and accountability; it also provides a platform for dialogue and cooperation among countries, and with civil society organisations, to improve the human rights situation.



UPR

In 2023, FMSI and the Secretariat of Solidarity successfully collaborated to submit a total of 7 UPR reports for Nigeria, Mexico, Colombia, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Vanuatu, and Uruguay.

 NIGERIA

 MEXICO













 COLOMBIA

 BANGLADESH

 CAMEROON

 VANUATU

 URUGUAY

SIDE EVENT(S) IN LOCO	SIDE EVENT(S) GENEVA	SINGLE SUBMISSION	JOINT SUBMISSION*	CHILDREN INVOLVED	LOCAL LANGUAGE/ CHILD-FRIENDLY	DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES LOCALLY OR INTERNATIONALLY
						
						
						
						
						
						
						

* FMSI in collaboration with other organizations.

Of the 67 REPORTS submitted by FMSI* from 2007 to 2023:

966

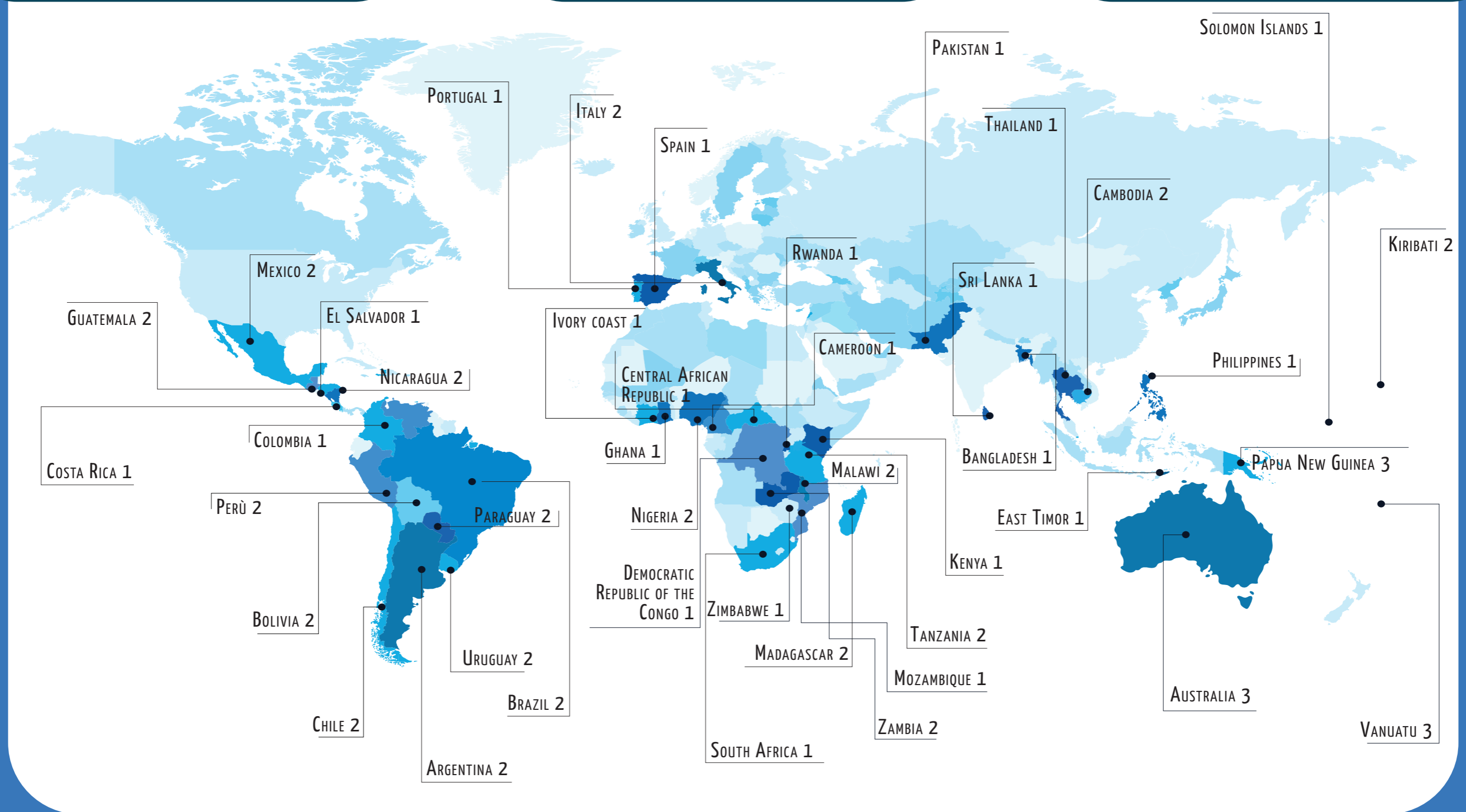
**RECOMMENDATIONS
PRESENTED BY FMSI IN
67 UPRs**

542

**RECOMMENDATIONS
ADDRESSING ISSUES RAISED BY
FMSI WERE ACCEPTED BY THE
STATES EXAMINED**

482

**RECOMMENDATIONS
ADDRESSING ISSUES RAISED BY
FMSI WERE CONSIDERED BY THE
STATES EXAMINED**



*From 2019, UPR reports were submitted in collaboration with the Secretariat of Solidarity.

Focus on ADVOCACY & CHILD RIGHTS

What's next?

In the last quarter of 2023, the FMSI team met to discuss the next steps in the area of Advocacy and Child Rights, specifically:

- **UPR REPORTS TO BE SUBMITTED** for Sessions 46, 47 and 48. During the meetings, **possible UPR reports and issues** to be analysed were identified, as well as future steps to be taken. This includes establishing connections with local actors, engaging potential partners, and organizing the processes of data collection and report writing.

- **ORAL STATEMENTS TO PRESENT**

FMSI is committed to participating in other advocacy mechanisms before the United Nations, such as the "Oral Statement", **an oral statement made by civil society organisations during the sessions of the Human Rights Council** which aims to take stock of accepted or "noted" recommendations on priority issues for the Foundation.

NETWORKS

To achieve its Human Rights Defence objectives, FMSI works together with several partners:

- **SECRETARIAT OF SOLIDARITY: COORDINATED AND JOINT WORK WITH THE SECRETARIAT OF SOLIDARITY IS FULLY INTEGRATED INTO DAY-TO-DAY WORK.**

A clear example is the work done to implement the mechanism in the **United Nations of the UPR**, analysed in the previous section. Similarly, the participation of FMSI members in the working groups of the Solidarity Network is significant. Particularly important are the participation in the "NGOs/Foundations" group, whose aim is to improve coordination with other Marist entities in various parts of the world, and in the "Children's Rights" group, whose main objective is to reflect and propose common actions to improve the situation of the rights of children and young people in the various Marist Missions.

- **IN THE MARIST WORLD: WE CONTINUE OUR COMMITMENT TO MAINTAIN RELATIONS AND COORDINATION WITH THE HUMAN RIGHTS DELEGATES OF THE PROVINCES THROUGHOUT THE MARIST INSTITUTE.**

This relationship allows us to communicate new developments, share best practices, learn from what is already being done in the field, and offer future collaborations in this area, in Provinces and Districts. In this regard, during 2023, FMSI's Advocacy area has developed a plan of visits, to establish more relationships with our partners on the ground, as well as develop or follow up on various projects directly related to this area, including Cuba, Vanuatu, Australia, Madagascar, Uruguay, New Zealand, the United States, Chile, and Thailand.

- **CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS: DURING 2023, WE WERE ABLE TO CONTINUE OUR INCREASINGLY STRONG PARTNERSHIPS WITH BICE¹, CCIG² AND CRC³.**

These collaborations allow us to deepen and broaden our impact in the defence of human rights, both through advocacy and joint activities.

¹ Bureau International Catholique de l'Enfance

² Centre Catholique International de Genève

³ Child Rights Connect

Focus on ADVOCACY & CHILD RIGHTS

INITIATIVES
AND TRAINING

- GHANA

We participated in a workshop on the rights and protection of children with a group of Marist Brothers from the 5 countries of the West African Province. This training was led by Brothers Ken (President of FMSI) and Ángel Diego García Otaola (President of Secretariat of Solidarity).

- ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARIST SOLIDARITY NETWORK (RMSI)

In the last quarter of 2023, preparations began for the next assembly of the RMSI, to be held in June 2024, in Rome, in which FMSI will actively participate, from the time of its preparation. The main theme of this assembly will be solidarity, with a specific focus on human rights.

- VIDEO ON "CHILDREN'S RIGHTS"

One of the initiatives carried out within the "Children's Rights" group is the creation of videos in which children, young people and adults can talk about the reality of rights in their countries.

- STRENGTHENING KNOWLEDGE AND PROTECTION SYSTEMS IN MARIST SCHOOLS IN MADAGASCAR

The project focused on training lay and Marist staff in Madagascar's schools in child protection. The objective of this initiative was to strengthen knowledge and protection systems in school facilities, involving 660 beneficiaries from Marist communities and other religious congregations such as the Daughters of St. Vincent de Paul, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny and the Good Shepherd Sisters. The main objective was to guarantee a safe and secure environment for all the children involved in the educational activities, while promoting a culture of respect and attention to the needs of the youngest.

- PROJECT STOP OSAEC (ON LINE SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN)

The program has been supported by Misesan Cara and coordinated by the Marcellin Centre, in collaboration with the Notre Dame Educational Association network, involving 72 schools in the Mindanao Region. This project focuses on the school community as a key agent in preventing, protecting and raising awareness against online sexual abuse and exploitation of children and adolescents. Through the training of school staff, students and parents, the creation of groups of young cyber-guardians for peer-to-peer activities, the updating of Child Protection Policies in the schools involved, and the mobilization of local authorities against OSAEC, it aims to create a safe and aware environment for the younger generation.

- MOULVIBAZAR EDUCATION PROGRAMME:

In collaboration with CCIG, one of our partners, an online training course on the UPR tool was implemented for the Marist Brothers of Bangladesh. This training course was aimed at explaining and showing the UPR mechanism in general, and then analysing all the different steps related to the elaboration and drafting of the UPR report. Through this initiative, the Bangladesh Marist Brothers received the necessary tools and skills to collect the necessary data and draft the report, involving the students of their schools and the local community. This promoted awareness and understanding of how to effectively prepare and present a UPR report, thus contributing to capacity building and active participation in the promotion and defence of human rights.



PUBLICATIONS

- BOOKLET UPR

In 2023, FMSI in collaboration with the Secretariat of Solidarity, published its first booklet "Right to be Children - Report 2023 on Children's Rights". The Booklet aims to explain and bring to light the work done on Advocacy & Child Rights, with a specific focus on the UPR mechanism. In the Booklet, there is a section entirely dedicated to the reports submitted to the United Nations in 2023, where it is possible to analyze the issues and difficulties that have emerged thanks to the valuable contribution of the Marist Missions of the various countries under review, which have made it possible to collect the information necessary to promote the protection of human rights. The CSOs act as overseers, advocates and voice-bearers for the people living in marginalized and vulnerable conditions, providing information, analysis and recommendations, helping to shed light on Human Rights violations and related challenges.

- ARTICLES AND NEWS

To continue to raise awareness on the importance of Human Rights, particularly of children and young people, articles on various topics continue to be published on both the FMSI website and the Marist Institute website, through its communications team.

Right to be Children

BOOKLET



TO LEARN MORE,
SCAN THE QR CODE!



EVENTS

- RIGHT TO BE CHILDREN – 20 NOVEMBER 2023

On 20 November 2023, on the occasion of the International Day of the Rights of the Child and Adolescent, FMSI and the Secretariat of Solidarity organised the Right to be Children event involving more than 50 people in attendance and nearly 200 online participants. This significant initiative, inaugurated as the first annual event dedicated to children's rights, addressed issues crucial to the protection and promotion of these rights. During the event, special attention was paid to the issue of children's rights in Africa. In addition, the importance of championing the cause of children's rights at the international level was discussed. The power of civil society in enhancing child protection at the United Nations was emphasized. In particular, the importance of addressing social tensions and child abuse at the grassroots level emerged, highlighting the need for joint efforts to create a safer and more secure environment for future generations.

This event marked a significant step towards concrete awareness and action for the protection of children's rights, promoting reflection and the adoption of concrete measures at the global level.

EVENT



TO LEARN MORE,
SCAN THE QR CODE!



The EARTHQUAKE CAMPAIGN in SYRIA

Aleppo, already devastated by war and its dramatic consequences, was further struck by a terrible earthquake of magnitude 7.8 on February 6, 2023, at 04:17 local time.

The situation was already extremely difficult: over a quarter of the population was displaced, and a considerable number of people living in economically vulnerable conditions. Many families could not afford basic necessities for their children, while the elderly, given the circumstances, were forced to live alone. To these economic and social hardships, the emergency caused by the earthquake was added, affecting the entire population of northeast Syria, destroying and damaging numerous buildings already precarious due to the war. International sanctions and the inability to purchase materials hinder their reconstruction, leaving the city in ruins.

To address this emergency, FMSI launched the fundraising campaign “Syria Earthquake,” which raised €470,275.95 from 538 different donors, 100% dedicated to the Blue Marists.

Since the night of February 6, the network of 155 Volunteers of the Blue Marists has tirelessly committed to assisting the population of Aleppo severely affected by the earthquake.

These funds allowed the Blue Marists Volunteers to reach 8,456 people, providing hot meals to those left homeless, food packages, and clothes to face both the winter and subsequent summer seasons. Additionally, it was possible to send 3 ventilators and 3 continuous airway pressure devices to the Saint Louis Hospital in Aleppo.

The “Syria Earthquake” campaign had a profound and positive impact thanks to the generous and supportive contributions of numerous donors. Transparency and efficiency in managing financial resources were crucial for successfully addressing the emergency in Aleppo and supporting the population in vulnerable conditions.

Last but not least, a thank you to the remarkable work of the Volunteers of the Blue Marists, who, despite fear and difficulties, always remained on the front lines and available to those in the most vulnerable conditions.



11/02/23

“ *Just half an hour after the earthquake, our doors were opened to accommodate 1000 people on the first day, between 500 and 700 people in the following days. We offer them shelter, mattresses, blankets, hot meals, sandwiches, clothes, heating, electricity to recharge their phones, and above all, our affection and a ‘Marist’ heart.* ”

**BR. GEORGE SABÉ,
MARIST BROTHER OF ALEPPO**



FOCUS on SOME of our PROJECTS

SOUTH AFRICA



THREE2SIX REFUGEE CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

CONTEXT

Thousands of unschooled refugee children in Johannesburg with valid immigration documents or with no documentation are currently not registered at schools and are sitting at home, because they cannot access state schools due to lack of adequate documentation. Constitutionally they are entitled to an education in South Africa.

Three2Six's goal is to provide access to quality education to those migrants and refugees children. The schooling situation in South Africa is fraught with difficulties, and equal opportunities are, unfortunately, not afforded to all refugee children, especially those who have limited financial resources and who are trying to attend the under-resourced state schools. In addition to this, South African schools use a registration system that requires a documentation number, automatically excluding undocumented refugee children from state schooling.

Most children come from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Zimbabwe. Child rights enshrined in various South African international laws and conventions are not implemented, and refugee children are systematically denied access to basic education.

Refugee children, already traumatized and lacking formal schooling, find it challenging to access education.

Xenophobic attitudes and behaviors in South Africa are a threat to refugee groups and a barrier to the realization of the right to basic education.

AIM OF THE PROJECT

The project has had a strong success rate in helping children access bridging education and transition into the mainstream education system.

The project currently supports refugee and migrant children in vulnerable conditions (boys and girls) from age 7 to 14 years who cannot access government schools in the degraded inner city of Johannesburg.

Three2Six builds the children's resilience and psycho-social skills by referring them to project partners for psychological support when struggling with the trauma that comes with being exposed to war, violence, poverty, xenophobia.

The project advocates and upholds the right of all humans by affording the same equal opportunities to refugees and migrants regardless of their country of origin by advocating for the right to education for all refugee children.

Three2Six continues to work in collaboration with other organizations working on refugee and migrant issues to be able to enable policy level changes. Three2Six also continuously engages the public to increase awareness of refugee issues and to prevent xenophobia.

The project intends to keep providing educational support to those children who, without the project, would be completely out of the education system and would have very limited prospects of joining mainstream schooling and ultimately of integrating into South African society.

THE THREE2SIX PROJECT'S CORE OBJECTIVES ARE:

- To provide safe, quality education to primary school refugee and migrant children who cannot access public education
- To advocate for the rights of refugee children, with special attention to the right to education
- To build the children's resilience





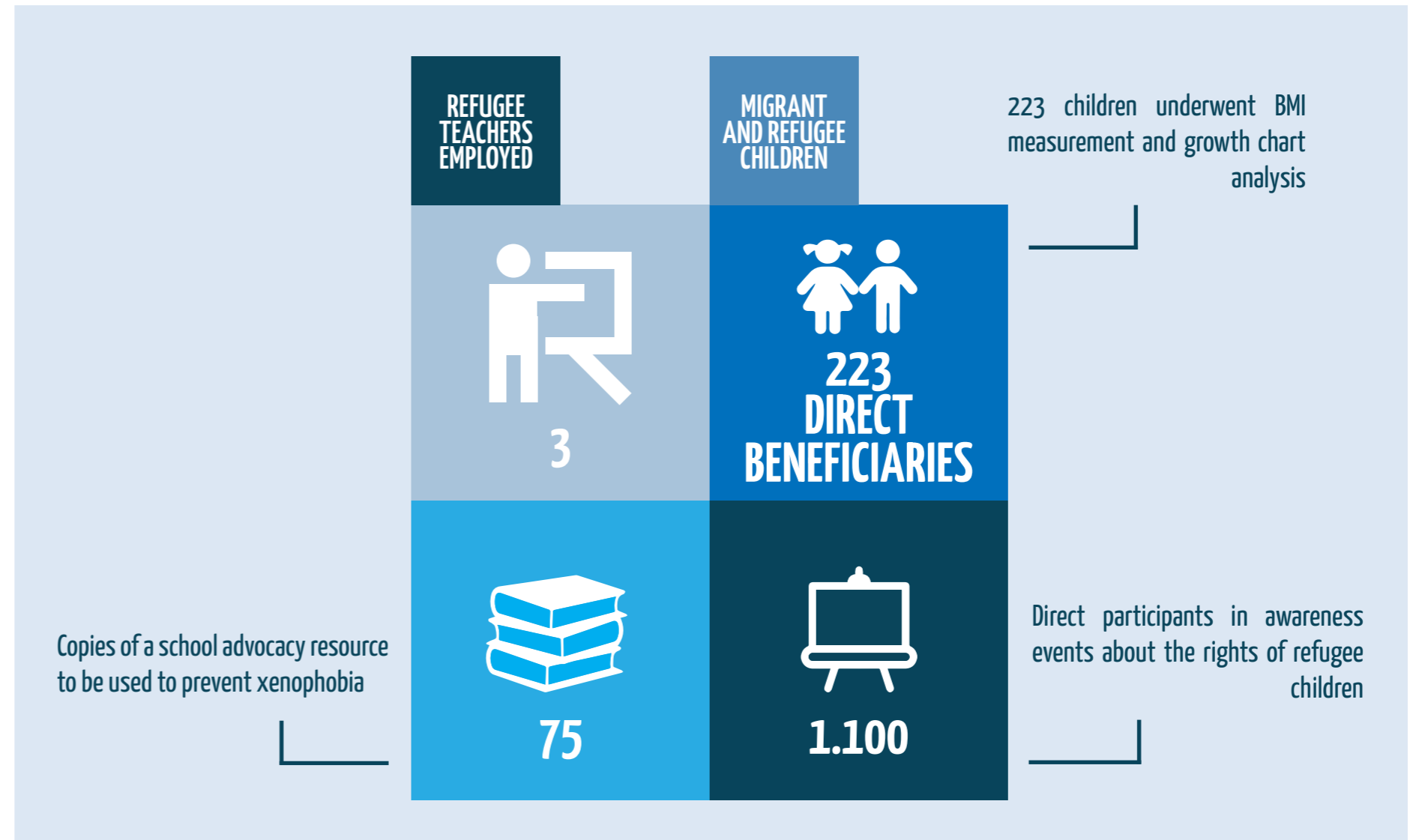
THE PROJECT IN NUMBERS:

SDGS:

- 2 ZERO HUNGER
- 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
- 4 QUALITY EDUCATION
- 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

LAUDATO SI GOALS:

- 2 ZERO HUNGER



FOCUS on SOME of our PROJECTS

BANGLADESH

MOULVIBAZAR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

CONTEXT

Tea plantation workers in Bangladesh, representing diverse ethnic groups, including Garo, Kashia, Bengali, Munda, Santal, Kondo, Uriah, Tripura, and Anglo, are among the social groups living in the most vulnerable conditions. They are socially excluded, primarily illiterate, and receive extremely low wages, approximately 69 takas per day (equivalent to 0,69 euros). Living in isolated shelters within the plantations, they experience a sense of detachment from the broader population. Lacking access to education and struggling to communicate in Bengali, they face challenges in maintaining a connection to their community and cultural roots. This vulnerability makes them susceptible to exploitation and further marginalization.

These vulnerable living conditions, meager wages, extended working hours, and social discrimination contribute to the inability of workers and their families to meet basic needs. Inadequate daily diets and substandard living conditions, particularly concerning water supply and sanitation, contribute to the spread of diseases, particularly among children.

Despite the presence of some primary schools built by plantation owners, the government, and NGOs, the number remains insufficient compared to the population of children and adolescents in the area. Moreover, the limited availability of secondary schools compounds the problem. The quality of education is compromised due to poorly trained teachers, leading to high dropout rates.

Many children abandon school prematurely to assist their parents as laborers, perpetuating the cycle of generational poverty.



AIM OF THE PROJECT

The project aimed to address the educational disparities faced by children and marginalized tea plantation workers living in vulnerable conditions in the Sylhet district of northern Bangladesh. Rooted in collaboration with the Catholic Diocese of Sylhet, the project stood on a foundation of inclusivity, involving not only the Catholic community but also fostering collaboration with Muslim and Hindu groups. This inclusive approach aimed to promote integration and interreligious dialogue, particularly among the younger generation.

Thanks to the work of the Marist Brothers of Bangladesh, the initiative placed a strong emphasis on advancing secondary education in the targeted region. This strategic focus aimed to bridge the educational gap and create a pathway for sustained academic growth. A pivotal aspect of the project involved enhancing the quality of teaching and learning outcomes for children living in vulnerable conditions. By implementing tailored educational strategies, the project sought to uplift the educational experience and outcomes for these children.

The project undertook a commitment to sensitize the local community, with a particular focus on advocating for the right to education for girls. It aimed to break down barriers and create an environment conducive to inclusive and quality education. In collaboration with the Catholic Diocese of Sylhet, the project extended its reach to 35 tea plantation communities, laying the groundwork for positive change.

Beyond educational endeavors, the “Moulvibazar Education Program” expanded its impact to address broader societal challenges. In the Giasnagor area, the project took significant strides to prevent malnutrition-related diseases among children and the elderly. This included implementing measures to enhance the health nutrition system and providing a food program benefiting students and 25 families in vulnerable conditions.

One noteworthy aspect of the project was its capacity-building initiatives on advocacy tools. The project acknowledged the critical role of understanding child rights and effective advocacy. Through the project, a key resource group was established and trained in the functioning and advocacy tools of the UPR. This online training provided the Marist Brothers of Bangladesh with insights into formulating questionnaires and conducting data analysis. The findings shed light on three specific issues: corporal punishment, child labor, and forced child marriages.

The data revealed alarming statistics, including 65% of



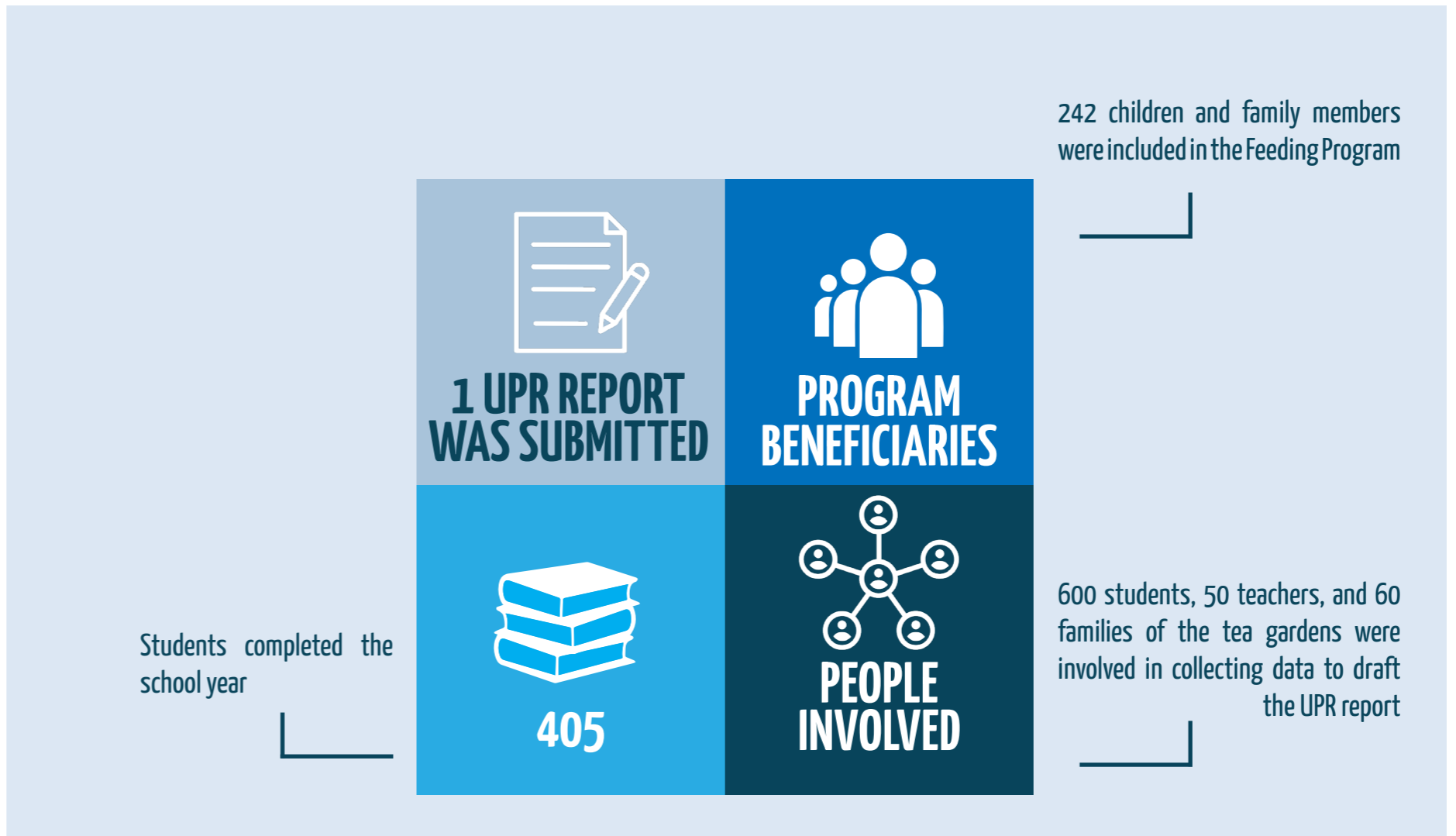
students experiencing physical abuse at home, 52% facing similar abuse at school, and significant instances of child marriages and child labor. These findings formed a comprehensive foundation for drafting and submitting the UPR report, urging attention to these critical issues in the government’s policy considerations.

The lobbying activities of the project ensured that the UPR’s recommendations, reflecting children’s rights, were addressed to the government of Bangladesh. In this way, the Marist Brothers of Bangladesh provided a solid basis for improving the compliance of national decision-makers with Bangladesh’s human rights obligations.

At the end of its implementation, the project demonstrated its impact in terms of its concrete contribution to the enjoyment of children’s rights, including the right to access to quality education for the children of the Giasnigor tea plantations.



THE PROJECT IN NUMBERS:



FOCUS on SOME of our PROJECTS

COLOMBIA



SUPPORT TO THE PEOPLE AFFECTED BY STORMS AND FLOODING IN LA PISTA, MAICAO

CONTEXT

Maicao is a city and municipality in the Department of La Guajira, Colombia, on the border with Venezuela, with an estimated 55,881 Venezuelan migrants and Colombian returnees, of which 7,172 are children in extremely vulnerable conditions, half of whom are undocumented (including indigenous Wayuu).

The emergency project has been located in La Pista, Maicao, the largest informal settlement in Latin America, with **more than 15,000 people experiencing serious violations of human rights and thousands of children are at risk of exploitation, trafficking, and abuse.**

Colombia's multidimensional poverty rate is 12.9%, while in La Guajira, it is 42.9%. The national monetary poverty rate is 36.6%, and in La Guajira, it rises to 65.4% (National Department of Statistics).

There is no official statistic on school dropout rates in Maicao, but according to Marists' censuses, 85% of the 5,000 children in La Pista do not have access to education.

AIM OF THE PROJECT

The problem to be addressed by the emergency project was the acute vulnerability of the families residing in the settlement of La Pista, in Maicao (Colombia). These families have experienced the devastating impacts of adverse weather conditions, specifically the second rainy season and the presence of the "El Niño" phenomenon, a climate pattern that affects several parts of the world, including Colombia. It is characterized by anomalous warming of the surface waters of the Pacific Ocean, which can have significant climatic consequences in different regions. In some parts of Colombia, such as La Guajira (where La Pista is located), anomalous weather patterns can be experienced during "El Niño", including heavy rains and thunderstorms.

In this context, several critical challenges have emerged: **1. Flooding:** Increased rainfall has led to frequent flooding within the settlement, affecting shelters and posing a significant threat to the safety and well-being of residents. **2. Destruction of shelters:** In addition to flooding, strong winds associated with the "El Niño" phenomenon have caused substantial damage to shelter structures, leaving families without shelter or protection and exposed to weathering. **3. Loss of personal belongings:** the aforementioned conditions in turn cause the loss of the few belongings and legal documents, further aggravating the already precarious living conditions of these families. **4. Spread of disease:** The presence of stagnant water, increased humidity and the overflow of their improvised septic systems have proliferated the breeding ground for flying insects and pests, which has led to the spread of respiratory diseases, gastrointestinal and skin rashes that pose a health risk to the community.

The "A Heart Without Borders" project is the only response with a continuous presence in the settlement "La Pista", so an effective system of trust and continuous contact with the affected families has been established. This facilitated the constant collection of information about their current and urgent conditions and needs. In addition, interviews and surveys have been conducted with the affected families to obtain a detailed understanding of their specific needs.

Priority has been given to issues related to shelter, loss of property and documents, access to and safe storage of water, as well as health and food security problems.

The information gathered has been cross-checked with observations made during visits to the territory, allowing for a precise identification of damages caused and risk factors due to climatic events.

The aim of the proposal was to improve the living conditions of 1550 people living in vulnerable situations in La Pista, Maicao, the largest informal settlement in Latin America, through the distribution of food, drinking water, shelter repairing kit, containers for safe water storage, medicines and family hygiene kit.

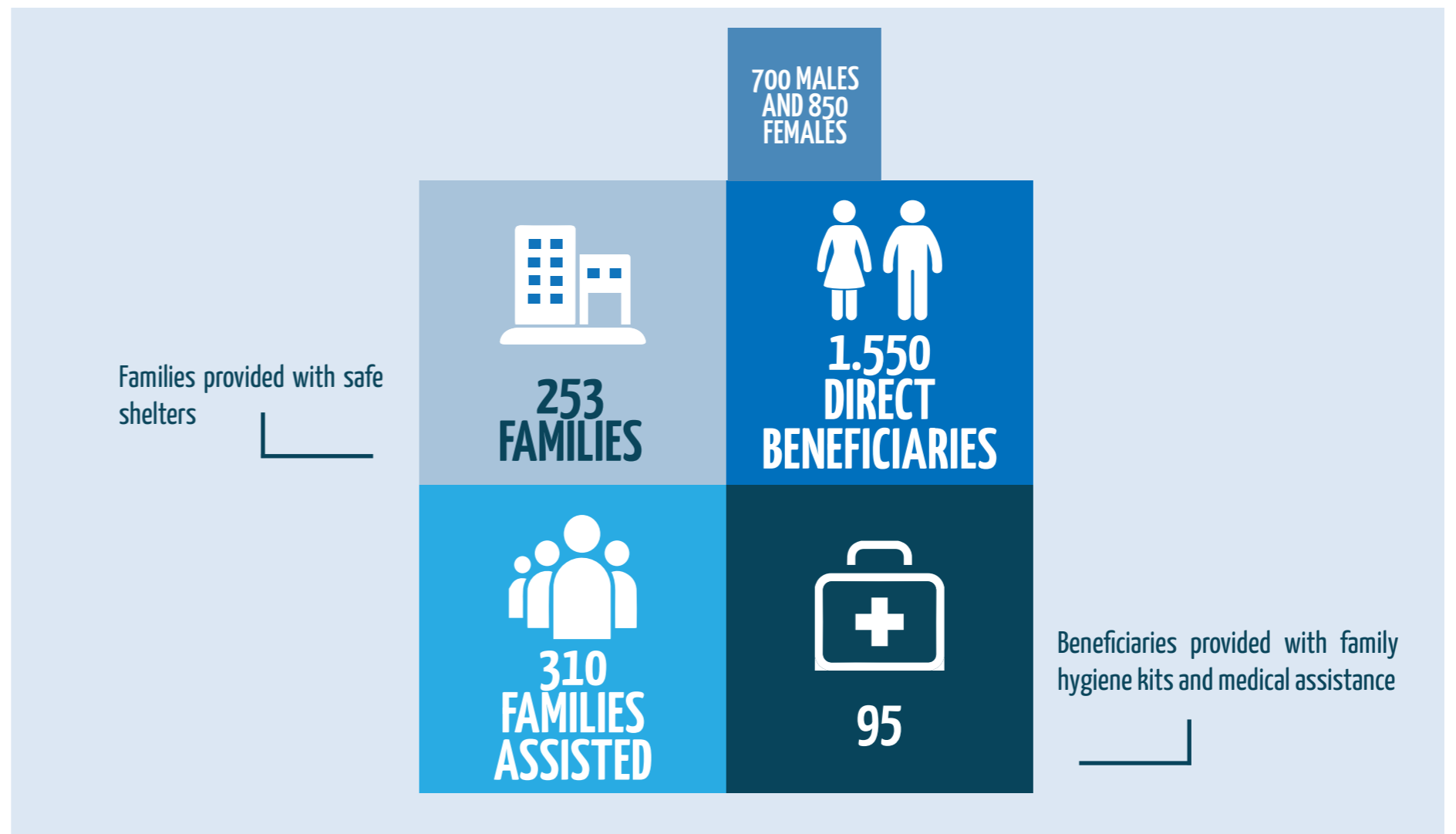
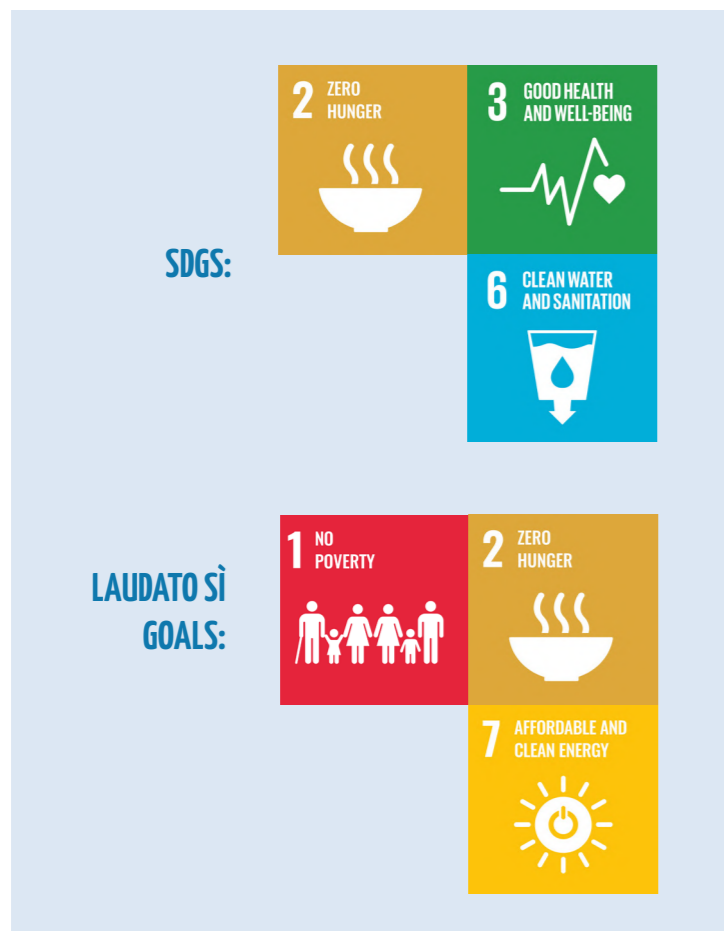


The beneficiaries were families in the most vulnerable conditions affected by the storms and flooding. The aim of the intervention was to give an emergency alimentary, and equipment support to these families.

This initiative was crucial to respond to the basic needs of families in the most vulnerable conditions in La Pista and it bring improvement of their shelter, nutrition and wellbeing state. 253 families have received food items, equipment and a shelter that supported them for one month.



THE PROJECT IN NUMBERS:



FOCUS on SOME of our PROJECTS

MADAGASCAR



STRENGTHENING OF SAFEGUARDING KNOWLEDGE AND SYSTEMS ACROSS THE MARIST SCHOOLS IN MADAGASCAR

CONTEXT

In Madagascar violence against children is considered a means of education, whether it is at home or at school.

Besides physical violence, there is a range of scenarios which hinders children development. In fact, the 40% of young Malagasy's report having worked before the age of 18. Parents often say that they send them to work instead of going to school because they are in economic vulnerable conditions. Making their children work is what makes them poor, by perpetuating a cycle in which education and the possibility of rising socially are not contemplated.

Young girls are even more vulnerable to this violence. Early marriage is part of the Malagasy tradition and is a problem for minors and for the country. More than one-third of girls between the ages of 15 and 19-years-old are already married or in a relationship and the 30% of the minors in the island have a child, as reported by a rating from the World Atlas 2015. This number reaches up to 50% in some areas of the capital. Another alarming statistic is the rising rate of sexual exploitation of girls for commercial purposes, particularly near petroleum and mining sites.

The Marist Brothers, by virtue of their experience in the Madagascar context, have encountered several issues affecting children in the different regions of the country:

- **Child abuse:** In many families, young girls are forced to marry during adolescence and young boys often interrupt their studies to start working early. For this reason, the dropout rate in the country is quite high;
- **Early marriages:** Early marriage remains a major challenge that hinders the right to quality education for Malagasy youth;
- **Addictions:** Many children and adolescents abuse drugs or alcohol because they are exposed from an early age to various forms of addiction;
- **Aloneness:** Many children move from rural areas to the city to continue their studies. They live alone in rented houses where they must take

care of their own needs. As a result, such children are deprived of many of their rights and are exposed to numerous dangers;

- **Broken families:** Many children and young people live in single-parent families following the divorce of their parents. The resulting stress factor requires schools and teachers to pay special attention to the emotional and cognitive development of the child;
- **Lack of leisure activities:** Leisure centres practically do not exist, and many children and young people easily indulge in dangerous diversions.

The following statistics from a National Survey further highlight the prevalence of violence against children in Madagascar: **a) the 86% of children in Madagascar have experienced some form of violent discipline in the home; b) the 62% of parents or other caregivers think that physical punishment is necessary to properly raise and educate children; c) the 24% of girls aged 15-19 have experienced physical violence and 10% sexual violence from a partner; d) more than half of young people have experienced violence in schools.** In this context, this project played a particularly important and significant role in protecting children's rights.

AIM OF THE PROJECT

To be able to respond to the new global challenges, in particular the ones that affect Malagasy children, it is necessary to prepare the people who work in education to be active and proactive in child protection, dealing with any child-related issue with a child rights approach, providing them holistic training and skills.

In this framework, this project promoted the participation of 660 people (Marists, Daughters St Vincent de Paul, Saint Joseph of Cluny, Good Shepherd Sisters) in an 8-sessions-training course within 7 Marist Schools across Madagascar that enabled them to acquire knowledge and skills in child protection and child rights.

This Mission Capacity Development initiative in Madagascar is a vital part of the Marist strategic presence in Africa, to improve its educational services across the country. The project aimed to involve all educators and staff who are directly working with children in the schools.

Program contents included technical training to acquire skills on children's rights, child protection, abuse prevention learning, professional psychosocial support through individual and group counselling provided by clinical psychologists, children and youths involved in gangs.

The program also aimed to improve the emotional and psychosocial capacity of educators and teachers for their benefit and to better serve children and their families in vulnerable situation. There was a need to provide practical advice on behavior management, the handling of often



complex and difficult cases, including child abuse, and to improve the skills of educators and teachers in promoting children's rights. The trainers' team was composed by child protection experts who travelled across the country to implement the program.

The training course has been divided into 8 sessions with the following topics: Children's Rights; Child Protection; Abuse Prevention Learning; Children and Youth involved in gangs.

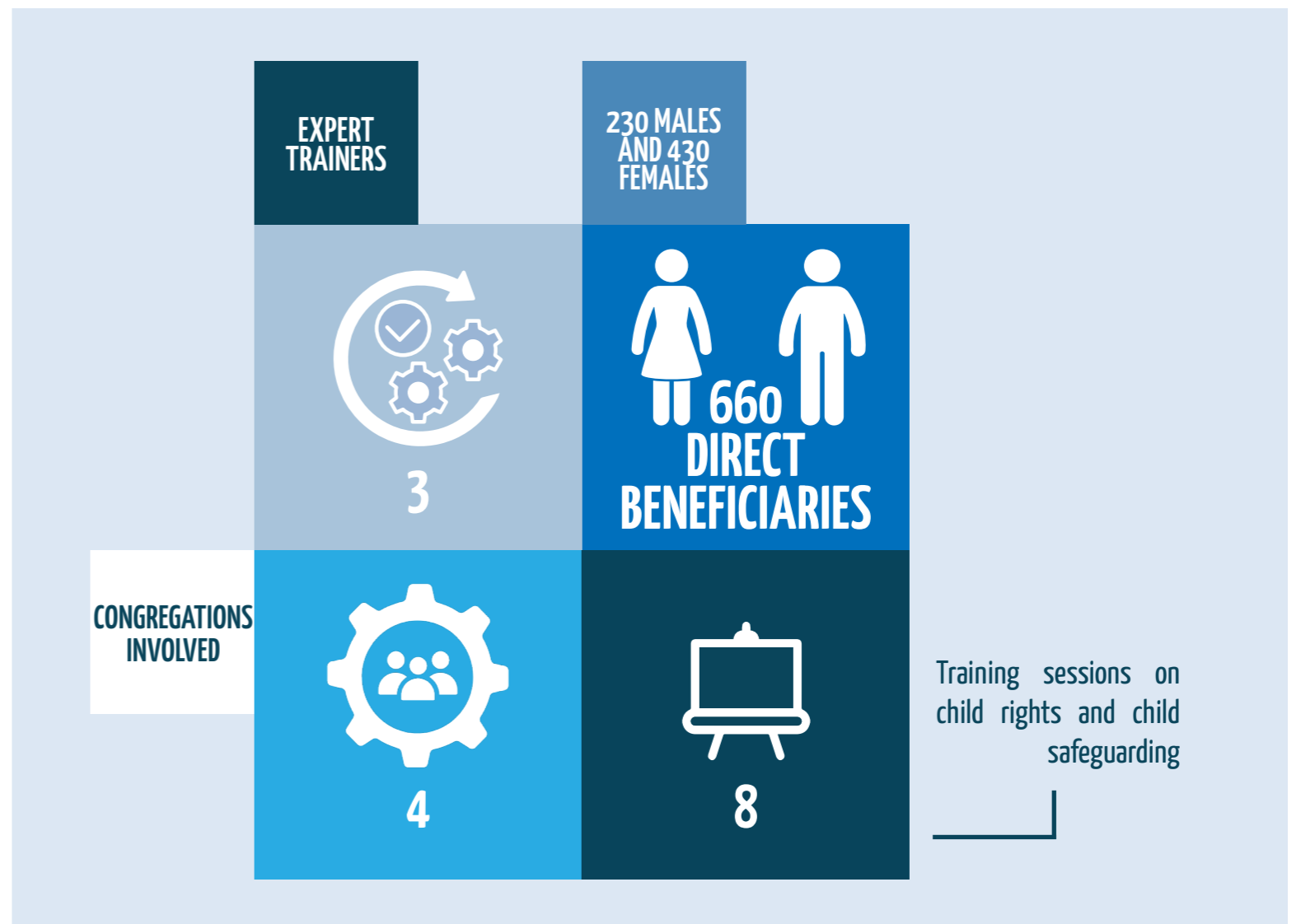
The learning group consisted of a total of 660 people, all working in Madagascar. The project helped the participants to become effective agents in the defence of child rights and achieve a higher level of protection for children and young people whom they serve.

The added value of the proposal is its **multi-congregational component**: the idea, given the Madagascar context in which the children grow up and are educated, is to address a process for improving the knowledge and skills of the Congregations operating in the area in order to improve access to the rights of the children entrusted to their care.

The beneficiaries attended the training first edition in the country that served as a pilot phase that will be replicated in the next years for other groups of Marist family's members. The benefit of the training is for the children in the schools where participants work and operate thus, other people who did not attend the training will be influenced by the group. The most significant change that the project brought is the change in the way beneficiaries handle situations involving children and their rights: thanks to the project they acquired skills and knowledge fundamental to working with children and young people.



THE PROJECT IN NUMBERS:



TRAINING ACTIONS

During 2023, the Marist Foundation for International Solidarity ETS (FMSI), in collaboration with the Secretariat of Solidarity of the Marist Brothers Institute, implemented three different training initiatives for Marist Missions worldwide.

The first two training initiatives – at the basic and intermediate levels – carried out in conjunction with the *Red Corazón Solidario*, targeted Marist Missions in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The basic training course, aimed at both religious and lay personnel, aimed at imparting an understanding of Project Cycle Management and acquiring skills in preparing proposals for International Organizations and other donors.

The course's ultimate goal was to provide participants with training in writing, managing, and communicating project proposals that adhere to international requirements. The focus was on gaining knowledge of the tools necessary to prepare high-quality project proposals, with a particular emphasis on developing planning and project monitoring skills.

The training process included presentations, group discussions, learning strategies, and practical applications. The course represented a significant opportunity to share experiences and establish deeper relationships with communities, NGOs, and solidarity offices in Latin America and the Caribbean, with the aim of collaborating to support solidarity programs and activities. The primary goal of the intermediate training course – which also involved in implementation the Marist NGO SED – was to enhance skills in the development, implementation, monitoring, and reporting processes of projects to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of Marist initiatives.

The specific objective of the course was to strengthen operational and governance skills necessary for effective strategic and

project planning, as well as to empower participants in project proposal preparation, implementation, project management, financial sustainability, and fundraising planning, in accordance with international requirements.

The training, conveyed through presentations, discussions, learning strategies, and practical applications, was conducted via the Zoom platform and involved the use of shared materials in a folder accessible to all participants during and after the course. This initiative was a relevant opportunity for sharing experiences, best practices, analyzing areas for improvement, but also for sharing practical advice to optimize the impact of projects in Latin America and Caribbean.

The third training initiative – at the introductory level – implemented in collaboration with the Secretariat of Solidarity of the Marist Brothers Institute and AMS (Australian Marist Solidarity), targeted Marist Missions in Asia, Madagascar, Syria, and Malawi.

The course was designed to provide participants with the essential tools needed to excel in the fields of project management and fundraising. The main objective of the training program was to offer Marists, both religious and lay people, a comprehensive understanding of Project Cycle Management and the ability to craft effective project proposals. The training program adopted a holistic approach, balancing theoretical knowledge with practical applications.

The curriculum was carefully designed to ensure that participants acquired practical skills in project proposal writing, management, and effective communication, all while adhering to international standards and requirements.

The training program was conceived as an advanced experience compared to a common learning opportunity, aiming to foster

a sense of community and collaboration among participants. The topics of Project Cycle Management and Fundraising were explored through a multidisciplinary perspective, with contributions and expertise from various trainers experienced in conducting training courses for the benefit of Marist Missions.

All the aforementioned training programs provided an opportunity for Marist Missions to enhance their project management and fundraising capabilities, contributing to the improvement of the communities, NGOs, and solidarity offices involved.

TRAINING INITIATIVES IN NUMBERS:



Marist NGOs
in charge of
implementation

Secretariat of the
Marist Brothers
Institute in charge of
implementation

TESTIMONIALS



BR. FORTUNE CHAKASARA



My name is Fortune Chakasara, and I am honored to serve as a Marist Brother and specialize in child rights and child safeguarding. My journey in championing children's rights began in 2012 when I was invited by the former Director of FMSI to prepare a UPR report for Zimbabwe. Subsequently, I received further invitations to collaborate with FMSI on advancing children's rights and underwent additional training in Rome and Geneva. It was during this time that my expertise in gender issues, children's rights, and child safeguarding commenced.

Since then, I have been extensively involved in various endeavors aimed at promoting children's rights. This involvement has included conducting workshops within educational systems and designing programs to enhance awareness of children's rights and child safeguarding. Furthermore, I have actively participated in running comMissions within my Province dedicated to addressing issues pertaining to children's rights and child safeguarding, a commitment that continues to the present moment.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO TALK ABOUT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN THE MODERN WORLD? WHY IS IT SO IN AFRICA?

In today's world, addressing children's rights and safeguarding is of paramount importance. Historically, these issues were often overlooked, particularly in the aftermath of the First World War. It was only after the Second World War, with the establishment of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, that concerted efforts were made to address the plight of children affected by conflict. Since then, there has been significant progress in recognizing the vulnerability of children and the need to provide them with the necessary care and support to thrive. Statistics from Africa underscore the magnitude of the challenge, with over 650 million children below the age of 18 residing on the Continent. It is imperative that we prioritize discussions surrounding children's rights and safeguarding to ensure their well-being and protection.

It is undeniable that the population of African children demands our attention. Child labor remains pervasive, with numerous children subjected to exploitative work conditions. Additionally, the issue of child soldiers is distressingly prevalent, with Africa accounting for over 40% of children worldwide involved in armed conflict.

Furthermore, access to education is a pressing concern, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, where more than 50 million children are illiterate, with more than 50 percent having severe learning disabilities. Given these stark realities, it is imperative that we prioritize discussions on children's rights and seek solutions to assist these populations in vulnerable conditions. In response, it is crucial to emphasize the right to education as a means of safeguarding children from various forms of exploitation, including sexual abuse and child labor. It is imperative to prioritise the debate on Children's Rights and seek solutions to assist these populations in a vulnerable condition.

Fundamental to this endeavor is the integration of children's rights into the fabric of society, extending from individuals to families, communities, and all stakeholders on the continent. By fostering awareness of children's inherent rights as human beings, we can engender the development of systems and processes aimed at protecting and nurturing them. Therefore, ongoing dialogue and concerted efforts to promote children's rights and child safeguarding are essential, especially in the present moment.

In essence, there are numerous avenues through which we can enhance children's access to their rights. Investment in educational programs, plays a crucial role in this regard. By facilitating access to education, basic amenities like water, and educational materials, we empower children to exercise their rights effectively.

However, it is essential to emphasize the importance of raising awareness within communities. Children do not exist in isolation; they are integral members of broader societal frameworks.

Therefore, efforts to raise awareness among families, communities, and society at large about children's rights and the corresponding responsibilities are paramount. Furthermore, we adopt not only the approach outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child but also draw upon the principles enshrined in the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children, emphasizing the interplay between rights and responsibilities.

Providing adequate healthcare and infrastructure to communities effectively grants children access to their fundamental rights. I firmly believe that there exists a profound correlation between poverty eradication and the realization of children's rights and human rights in general. By addressing issues such as rampant child poverty in Africa, we create a positive ripple effect.

This holistic approach underscores the importance of initiatives like mentorship programs.

In light of the prevalent gender-based violence in South Africa, it is imperative to foster a culture of respect and responsibility among men and young boys. Hence, we have launched the "Breakfast with the Brothers" mentorship program, aimed at creating safe spaces for open dialogue on these pressing issues. Our focus on boys acknowledges the neglect they often face in discussions surrounding gender-based violence and other challenges.

Through this program, we aim to address societal expectations for boys and men, facilitate their transition into responsible adulthood, and promote values such as personal hygiene and respect for women. This initiative serves as a platform for meaningful engagement with communities, fostering constructive dialogue and facilitating positive change among boys and young men.

BR. JUAN CARLOS FUERTES MARÍ



I'm Juan Carlos, a Marist brother for 28 years. I am Spanish and have spent the majority of my Mission in Spain working with children and young people in education, social projects, and youth ministry.

In March 2022, I was sent to the *Fratelli* project in Rmeileh, Lebanon. So, I've been coordinating this center for almost two years as its director.

In my various roles, I've realized that regardless of my task, the goal is always to help others grow as individuals. Whether in education or working with populations in vulnerable conditions, the objective remains the same: to assist others in becoming the people they are meant to be. In the end, I always come to the same conclusion. I try to approach others to serve them, thinking I have more to offer, but the truth is that I gain so much from what I learn from others.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO TALK ABOUT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN THE MODERN WORLD? WHY IS IT IMPORTANT IN LEBANON?

It's important because we are all human beings. In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was proclaimed in Paris. Eleven years later, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child was approved. These were steps forward in recognizing the inherent value of every individual. If we want a better future, there are many ways to build it. One of them is to act from a perspective of care, protecting, empowering to provide a safer and more dignified present and future for everyone, without exception. All people, by virtue of being human, have the right to be cared for. Those with fewer opportunities in life, living in difficult conditions, or suffering the consequences of poverty or war are more likely to lack care and opportunities to exercise their rights.

In Lebanon, crises affecting the country have led to over 50% of the local population needing some form of humanitarian assistance, as well as 90% of Syrian and Palestinian refugees living here. This translates into unemployment, poverty, violence, and the most vulnerable feeling the consequences the most children and women.

Families, lacking resources, may reduce daily meals, stop sending children to school, avoid medical care, and resort to alternative home remedies. The number of children leaving school to work and child marriages as a source of income for families increases.

CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE PROJECT FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN IN LEBANON?

The project we are carrying out was initiated by the Brothers of the Christian Schools and the Marist Brothers in 2015. Specifically, we address the needs of refugee children from Syrian and Palestinian families, as well as Lebanese families in vulnerable conditions. We offer educational programs preparing them for enrollment in official schools.

Another program is for children aged 9 to 14 who were either never enrolled in school or have been out of the education system for more than two years. The third program provides educational support for those already attending school but facing difficulties in learning.

In total, we assist around 450 children each year.

All participants in our programs receive psychosocial support. Parents are invited twice a year

for training on improving their children's education. All those who come to the *Fratelli* center and participate activities, receive a daily breakfast to supplement the food they receive at home. Families are then given food parcels three times a year: at Christmas, at the beginning of Ramadan and in summer.

The aim is to supplement nutrition and assist in saving money or celebrating festivals. All participants in *Fratelli* receive training on protecting themselves and preventing abuse, with parents and educators also receiving training.

Regarding children's rights here, recent reports from UN agencies and the country's government indicate that the multifaceted crisis in Lebanon is affecting a significant portion of the population, with the most vulnerable, especially children, feeling it more intensely. Child poverty has increased, and children leave school to work and contribute to family support. Families may also stop sending children to school due to the cost of transportation, even though education is free.

Girls bear the brunt of poverty through child marriage, as parents receive money for the "dowry" paid by the husband's family, becoming a source of income for the family. This situation prevents children from leading a healthy life where they can grow in dignity and hope and become agents of a society that promotes their rights.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S ACCESS TO RIGHTS?

The first and most powerful means is education. Strengthening access to education and the education system itself. Providing quality education to our children is the best legacy we can give them. It should allow them to grow healthily as individuals from a comprehensive perspective and make them individuals in service to others. Alongside this, it is necessary to socially advocate for their rights.

This involves both public and private institutions providing sufficient resources to ensure everyone has what they need to live and develop fully. A third means is to create safe spaces where their rights are effectively protected. The fourth is the most ambitious and sometimes utopian. It concerns the social conditions in which families live.

Threats such as poverty, wars, violence of any kind, inequalities social inequalities, have to do directly with an environment that deprives them of the right to protection to health, to education, to family, to freedom. It is necessary to strike at the root of the problems. And that is the key, but it requires a global commitment to peace, solidarity and development for all. Perhaps in this way we will leave our children a world that is more human, more fraternal world to live in.

BR. JUNEL PIERRE



I'm Junel Pierre from Haiti. I'm a Marist Brother with a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership and Management. My studies also include a Bachelor's Degree in Education Sciences and Institutional Development and a Bachelor's Degree in Religious Sciences.

From my experience on the Mission, it is a complex job that requires a lot of availability, attention, and flexibility when working with children, youth, and each of the educational communities that I have had to accompany. I am a servant who listens and walks together to achieve educational goals for the growth and well-being of each person. My experience as a teacher, general director, and dean required a lot of patience, flexibility, closeness, and support in a very difficult context of the country's reality with constant crisis. But with a lot of love and responsibility from everyone, we are achieving goals for quality education according to the demands of our century.

From my experience on the Mission, I see that society is becoming increasingly complex, which means that we need a change in our approach with a service-oriented leadership that promotes participation, collaboration, shared responsibility, and a formative process centered on the individual.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO TALK ABOUT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN THE MODERN WORLD?

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT IN HAITI?

It is very relevant in today's global context that we take into account the rights of children because they will be the new leaders of tomorrow. Talking about this, whether in Haiti or in other countries, is important because they need to know their rights so that they are not manipulated and their dignity is respected. Talking about this means giving them their space, their place in society to contribute to their integral development.

CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE PROJECT IN FAVOR OF RESTAVEK CHILDREN THAT YOU HAVE RECENTLY LAUNCHED? HOW ARE THE RIGHTS OF THESE CHILDREN TRAMPLED ON AND NOT RESPECTED?

The project is in favor of Restavek children because it takes into account their rights such as: quality comprehensive education, their integration into society, the process for those who do not have it to obtain their birth certificate, access to schooling, accompanying them, and listening to them. Their rights are trampled on and not respected in the following ways: they do not have access to their basic rights such as: food, clean water, health care, quality education, and a decent place to live. They do not receive enough love in their biological or foster families, they are beaten and abused.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S ACCESS TO RIGHTS?

What can be done is to follow up on quality comprehensive education, taking into account training for parents and foster families, psychological support for their mental health, being attentive to their health and hygiene, providing them with daily meals or food. Accompany them in life so that they can move forward to continue their basic education and receive scholarships for high school and university. It is a whole process, but it is very relevant, otherwise they will continue to struggle to integrate normally into society.



BR. OSCAR EDUARDO QUIÑONES GARCES



My name is Oscar and I am graduated from the Compartir School, in the city of Cali, Valle del Cauca. I belonged to youth ministry groups at school and in the parish during my teenage years. I have stood out for my leadership, sensitivity, organization and teamwork. I entered the HHEECC community in 2005, with the opportunity to participate in different community and apostolic experiences as a teacher, coexistence coordinator, director and coordinator of Youth and Vocation Ministry. I had an exchange experience outside the country, in the city of Santa Cruz, in Bolivia, for a year. During my time of formation in the postulancy, I did the complementary cycle at the Normal Superior San Pío X, at the same time I did my studies in basic education with an emphasis on ethics, human values and school religious education. I graduated in 2011. I enjoy teaching. I have had the opportunity to guide the areas of philosophy, school religious education, ethics and human values, and art. I am currently doing a master's degree in Anthropology in the ethnographic research line, at the University of Magdalena, in the city of Santa Marta. I'm in my third semester in a blended format.

WHAT DOES THE *FRATELLI* MAICAO PROJECT CONSIST OF?

Fratelli in Maicao aims to manage and articulate necessary efforts related to the care of migrant children and youth in contexts of vulnerability. This project was designed to create opportunities for social and educational inclusion for children and young people neglected by the migratory situation in Maicao, in order to contribute to socioeconomic inclusion and the reduction of the gaps that deepen on the migrant populations that enter the territory of La Guajira through the Colombian-Venezuelan border.

The Lasallian and the Marist Brothers in Maicao have started with three lines of action that encompass different programs according to their spirit, from which we have managed to respond to different initiatives of the migrant community, not only children and adolescents, but also the adult population.

The lines that we are building are: education, development of skills and training for integration into social and productive life, presence as a church. All programs seek to educate or train the population from different areas.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FOR THE CHILDREN OF MAICAO AND THE SETTLEMENTS WHERE YOU WORK?

Knowing the reality that these children face, I believe that there are many challenges that they face, direct and indirect. Many of these children and young people have come to our project on their own initiative, their desire to study and improve themselves has inspired their parents to do the same, which has generated in the *Fratelli* project, educational programs also for adults.

A second challenge is assisting children and young people to identify ways to do something positive for others. Our programs aim to assist them in self-recognition and acceptance and to strengthen their self-esteem. We aim to help them have a better understanding of reality and what we can do to transform it.

And perhaps a third challenge would be to assist children and young people in the construction of their own life project; this experience has allowed us to accompany them in the recognition of their own history, the reconciliation with it, the identification of dreams and goals, and the visualization of a possible future, whether in Colombia or Venezuela.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILDREN OF MAICAO?

I feel that protecting their rights is educating them so that they know them and have the tools to enforce them. It is our responsibility as adults to give them what is rightfully theirs, education, health, food, identity, quality of life and more... But we cannot take away their responsibility to know their rights and the possibilities they have to ensure that these rights are really fulfilled so that they can have a dignified life.

BR. TONY BURROWS

I am Tony Burrows, a Marist Brother from Australia. I have been working at the LaValla Project in Cambodia now for 10 years. Before that I spent 16 years working in Melanesian countries – mainly in Solomon Islands at St Dominic's Rural Training Centre, providing vocational skills to young people who had limited formal education. I also spent two years working in the Australian Marist Solidarity Office. Before this missionary experience, I worked for 27 years in secondary schools in Australia.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO TALK ABOUT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN THE MODERN WORLD? WHY IS IT IMPORTANT IN CAMBODIA?

Children have always been exploited in different ways in different cultures, and it is not something confined to poor or developing countries. Currently, children are exposed to many different ideas and experiences, especially through social media and need to be constantly made aware of the ways they can be exploited using the social media. Whatever their situation, children have a right to safety, good health, nutrition and education. Part of the education should be to inform them of their rights in all these areas, and to keep them aware of the ways in which their rights can be abused. In Cambodia, where I am dealing specifically with children and young people with physical disabilities, these young people are further discriminated against because of their disability. Through education and building of self-esteem, they understand that they are capable of making a positive contribution to their families, community and country.

CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE PROJECT IN FAVOR OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES? HOW ARE THE RIGHTS OF THESE CHILDREN BEING TRAMPLED ON AND NOT RESPECTED?

The LaValla Project in Cambodia was started 25 years ago to provide education and health services for children with physical disabilities. LaValla School is a registered Primary school and teaches the Government curriculum subjects, as well as other subjects such as computers, art, sewing, physical education and English. The students live on site for the school term and return to their families during the school vacation. Currently there are 85 Primary students. When students graduate from primary school, some return to their families and attend their local schools.

Most, who would not be able to attend local schools, because of their disabilities, live at our hostel situated next to LaValla School, and attend the local



Government High School. There are 65 students currently living in our hostel, and we support another 85 students to attend their local schools. The project also supports our graduates to attend University and Vocational Skills programs. We operate a comprehensive Health and Rehabilitation program. We employ three full time physiotherapists and have access to a wide range of health services and providers of wheelchairs and

assistive devices as required. Our aim, as well as education and health is to give the young people a sense of and belief in their own self-worth and that they have a valuable contribution to make to their families and society. Many of these children have been discriminated against because they have a disability. Many started school from home when they were young but soon dropped out because they were badly treated. Some, because of family poverty, were forced to work from a young age and were injured and permanently disabled due to their work. Because of family poverty most had little or no access to any health and rehabilitation.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S ACCESS TO RIGHTS?

In our situation, we achieve this by demonstrating to people that those with disabilities can achieve worthwhile goals. We have demonstrated this to the Government and members of society through their participation in national and international events (Sport, IT competitions). We provide opportunities for our students to find meaningful employment. I think this type of approach, where people see that people with disabilities can achieve, is better than talking. In the case of children living in impoverished conditions, we assist by providing access to good health facilities, provide education and employment skills and liaise with families to ensure that the young people live in a safe environment.



OTHER SOLIDARITY ACTIONS



Equity, Solidarity, Justice, and Non-discrimination

THE VALUES OF FMSI GUIDE ALL ACTIONS OF THE FOUNDATION

IN 2023, FMSI CONTRIBUTED TO SUPPORTING NUMEROUS ACTIVITIES INCLUDING:

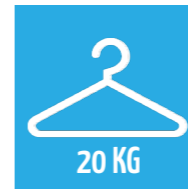
Three continuous positive airway pressure machines and three ventilators were transported to Syria and are currently in use at the civilian hospital in Aleppo



DISTRIBUTION OF MEDICAL EQUIPMENT DONATED BY THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE



DISTRIBUTION OF GOODS AND FOOD ITEMS



20 KG

Used and new clothes, blankets



450 KG

Long-lasting food items



180 KG

Pasta



120 L

Extra virgin olive oil



DISTRIBUTION OF ESSENTIAL GOODS



5 KG

Medicines



20 KG

Used and new clothes, blankets

For Ukrainian families and children affected by the war in their country, operated in collaboration with the Community of Sant'Egidio

ORGANISATION

GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The Marist Foundation for International Solidarity ETS is a Foundation of Participation and has its legal and operative headquarters at the General House of the Institute of the Marist Brothers of the Schools (its Founder) in Piazzale Marcellino Champagnat n.2 in Rome. Its fiscal code is 97484360587.

The mandate of the previous Councilors ended with the approval of the 2021 Annual Financial Statements. The new Council, in office since 01/06/2022, met three times during the year 2023 (on May 29, July 31, and December 5). The meetings took place in person at the Foundation's headquarters, and it was possible for some Councilors to join the meetings remotely, as provided for in the Bylaws. The mandate of the Councilors ends with the approval of the 2024 Budget.

In addition to the Council's ordinary management activities, including the approval of the 2022 Financial Statements and the 2023 Budget, and the 2022 Annual Report, all measures to comply with the new legislation D.Lgs. n.117/2017 - Third Sector Code were discussed and adopted. It is important to specify that the new Bylaws of the Foundation came into force following the valid registration of the Entity in the National Single Register of the Third Sector (RUNTS), pursuant to art.45 of D.Lgs. n.117/2017, which took place on 04/10/2023 with resolution no. G13035.

BOARDS OF DIRECTORS

ROLE	NAME	ORIGIN	TERM OF OFFICE
President	Kenneth Charles McDonald – FMS	Australia	2022 - 2024
General Secretary	Maria Inmaculada Maillo	Spain	2022 - 2024
Councilor	Jorge Gaio – FMS	Brazil	2022 - 2024
Councilor	Angela Matulli	Italy	2022 - 2024
Councilor	Rebecca Jane Bromhead	Australia	2022 - 2024
Councilor	Fortune Chiedzo Chakasara – FMS	Zimbabwe	2022 - 2024

The members of the Board of Directors do not receive any remuneration.

BOARDS OF AUDITORS

ROLE	NAME	TERM OF OFFICE
President	Mr. Giovanni Battista Provenzano	2023 - 2025
Reviewer	Mr. Luigino Fiorio	2023 - 2025
Reviewer	Mr. Fabrizio Levantini	2023 - 2025
Deputy	Mr. Giovanni Sebastio	2023 - 2025
Deputy	Mr. Rocco Positano	2023 - 2025

The total fees paid to the Control Body in 2023 were € 6.067,00.

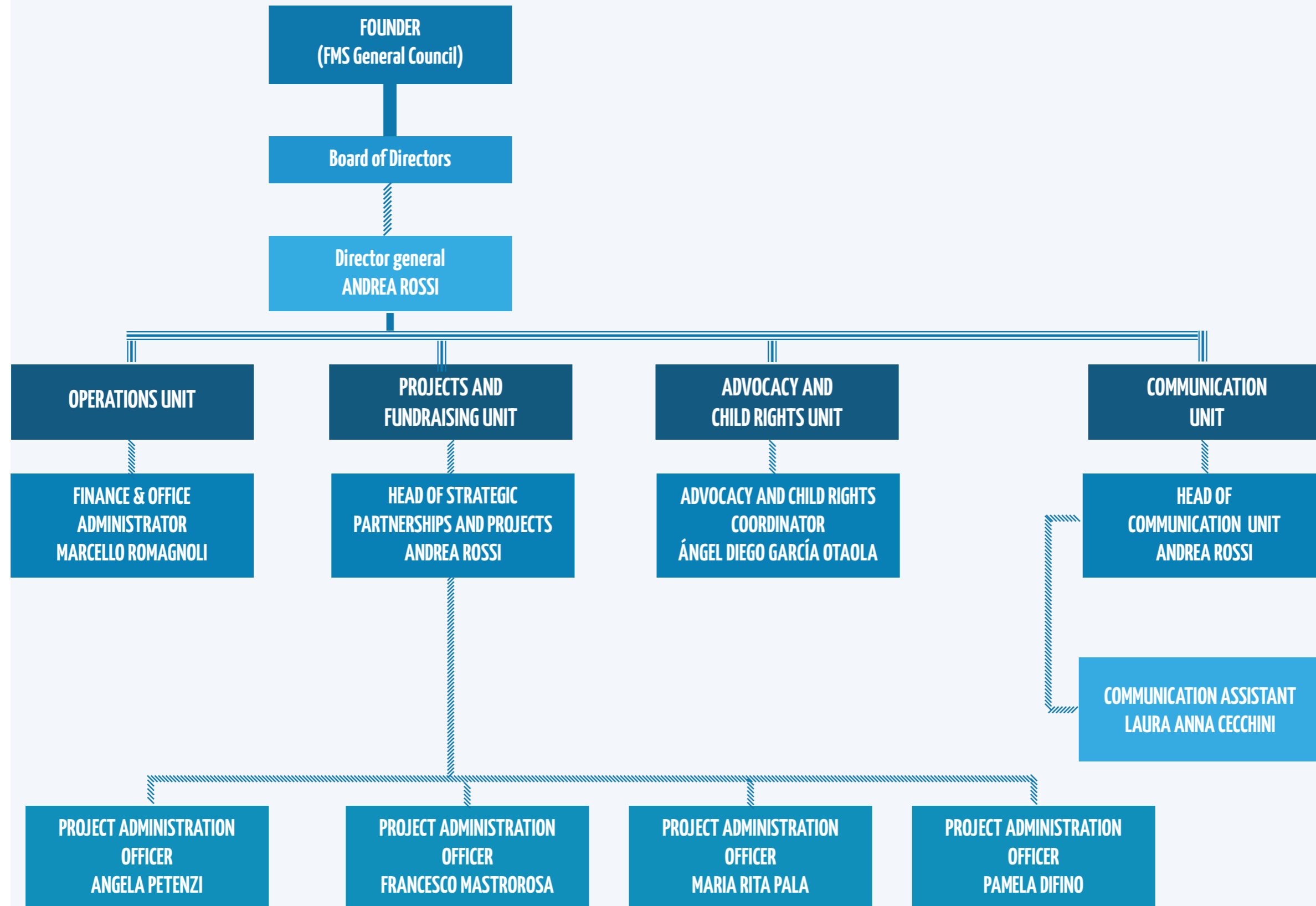
SUPERVISORY BOARD

Lawyer Luca Pardo

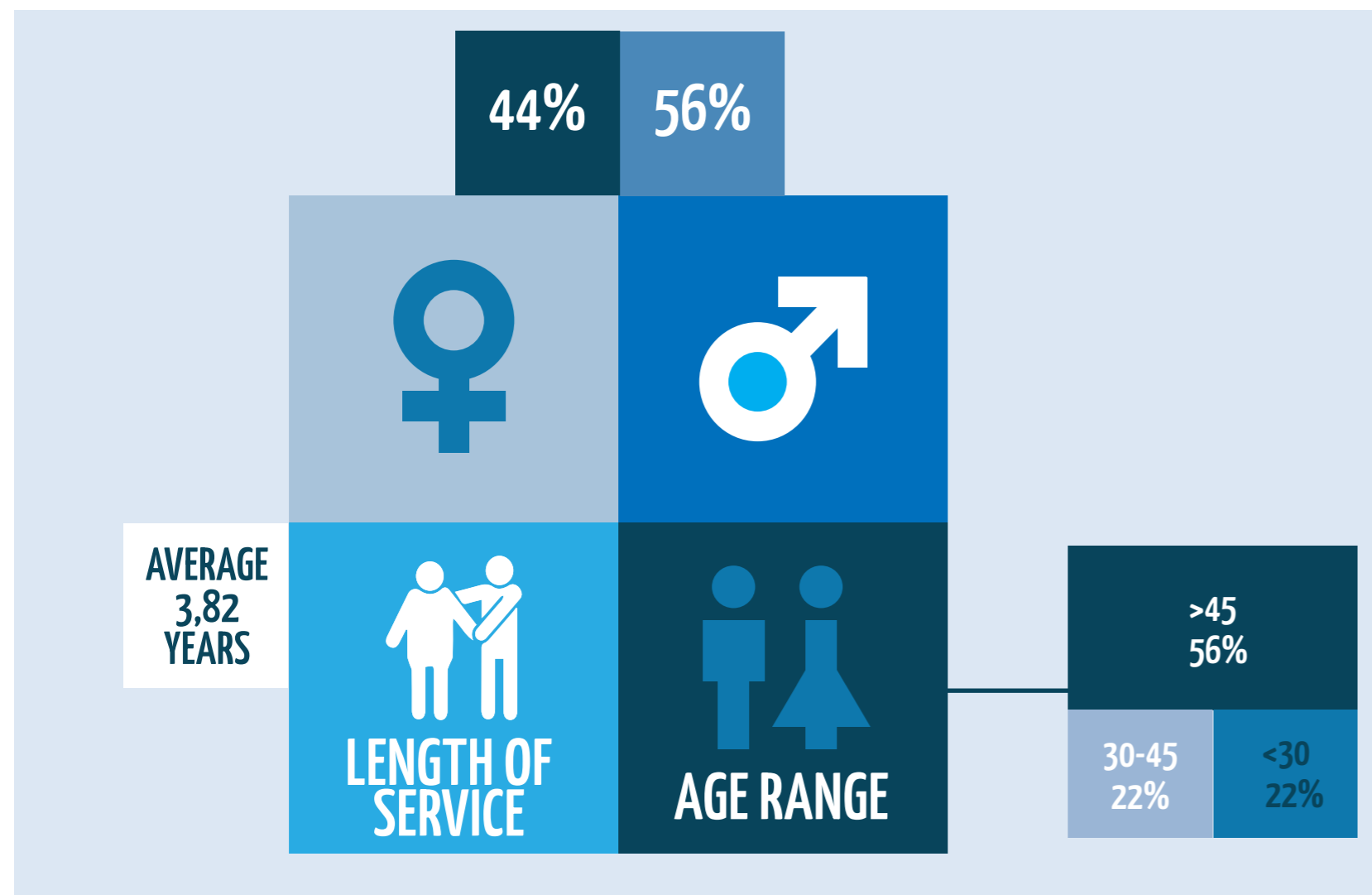
In accordance with the provisions of Legislative Decree No. 231/2001, although it is not required to do so by law, FMSI has its own MOGC 231 Model, a Handbook of Procedures, a Code of Ethics and a Supervisory Board, a position assigned to Lawyer Luca Pardo.

ORGANIGRAM

SITUATION AS OF DECEMBER 2023



OUR STAFF



Throughout the year 2023, the operational staff of FMSI consisted of 7 people: a General Director, 1 Unit Coordinator, a Communication Assistant, and four Project Managers. The applied contract is the National Collective Labor Contract “Social Welfare Institutions, AGIDAE,” and 70% of the employees as of 31/12/23 were hired on a permanent basis. Within the staff, there are two two-year apprenticeship contracts active. Additionally, there are three individuals who work on a voluntary basis in individual fundraising and awareness campaigns. It’s worth noting the valuable unpaid work provided by the two Brothers operating in the Advocacy and Child Rights unit. The work of volunteers and Brothers is valued in the “Figurative Costs” section of the Annual Financial Report.

In compliance with the Third Sector Code legislation, art. 16 of Legge Decree n. 117/2017, the ratio of salaries major difference between FMSI employees - calculated on the basis of gross annual salary - is 2.92, therefore much smaller than the 1 to 8 ratio ceiling allowed.

TABLE OF CONTRACTUAL LEVELS

ROLE	LEVEL	TIPOLOGY
Director	F2	Open-ended Full-time
Unit Coordinator	E1	Open-ended Full-time
Officer	C2	Apprentice-ship Full-time
Officer	D1	Open-ended Full-time
Officer	D1	Open-ended Part-time
Officer	D1	Open-ended Part-time
Officer	C2	Apprentice-ship Part-time

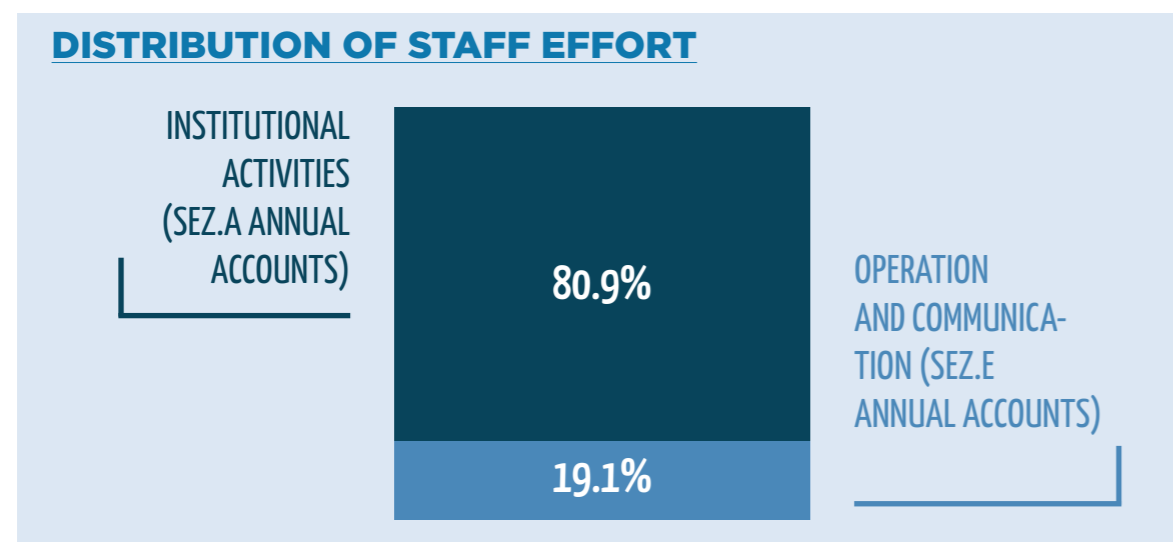
SALARY TABLE

RAL	N. EMPLOYEES	OF WHICH PART-TIME
15.000 - 19.999	4	3
20.000 - 24.999	1	-
25.000 - 40.000	2	-

During the year, an extracurricular internship was completed within the Projects Unit. The intern’s objective was to acquire and reinforce skills in the development and presentation of educational and promotion proposals for children’s rights and to support project managers in the implementation and reporting activities of ongoing projects, including communication activities. Subsequently, the intern embarked on an apprenticeship within FMSI.

The distribution of FMSI staff’s workload is strongly oriented towards managing ongoing projects in various countries worldwide and seeking funding opportunities for new development projects. Equally important are the efforts and attention devoted to ensuring proper and transparent organizational management and functioning processes of the organization.

In 2023, FMSI implemented an internal management control system to monitor and calibrate the workload of human resources in different intervention areas. This system allows for analytical reporting of work commitments in accordance with the classifications required by the Third Sector Code regulations. Additionally, a procedure for monitoring the financial progress of ongoing projects was introduced and implemented to enhance the efficiency of project financial management: identifying and preventing issues, improving reporting quality, facilitating information flow, providing calibrated tools, and strengthening field representatives’ skills, workload in accordance with the classifications required by the regulations of the Third Sector Code.

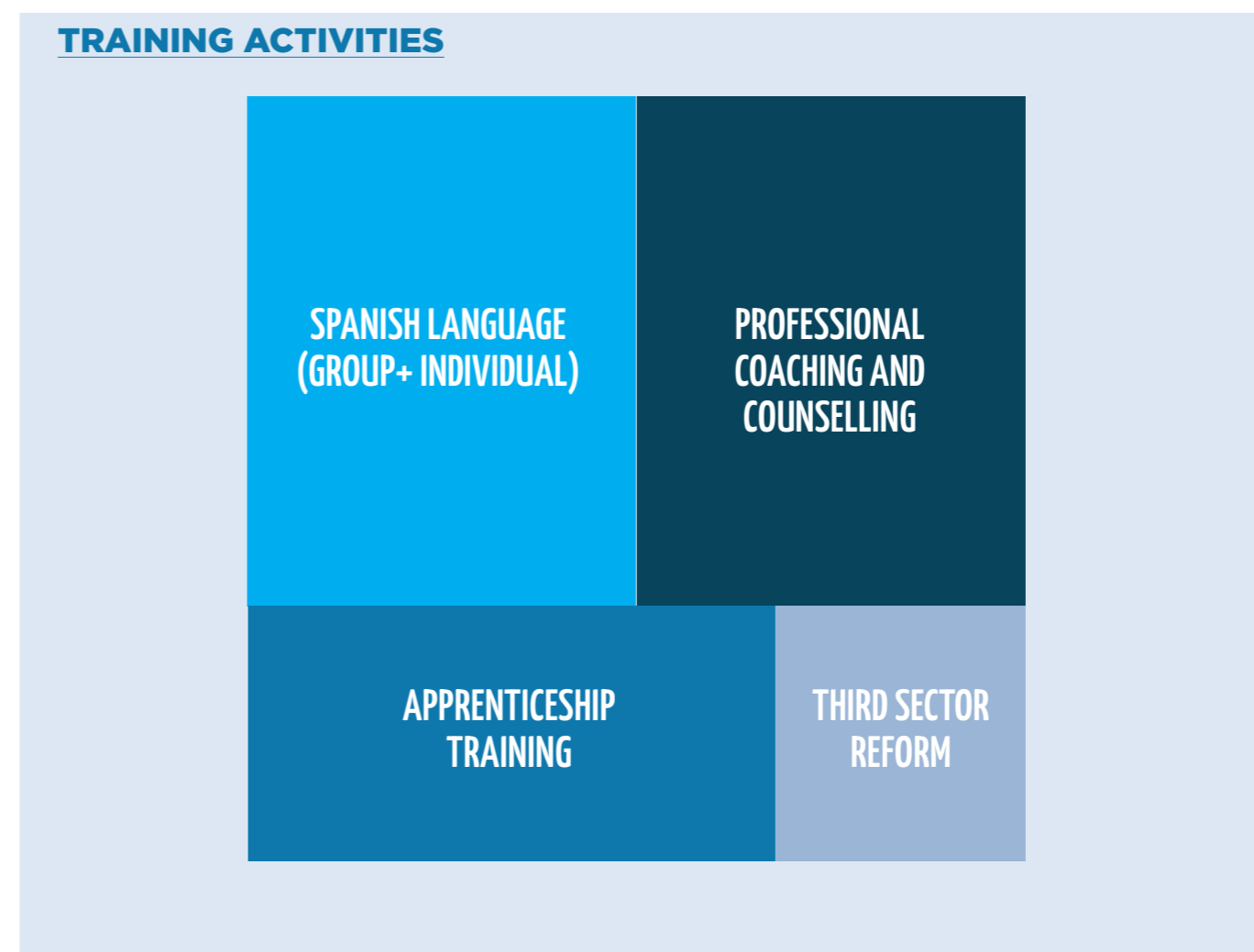


In accordance with the new classification of activities introduced with the Third Sector Reform, the projection reflects the allocation of human resources commitment adopted during the preparation of the Annual Financial Statements.

Annually, the FMSI Board allocates funds for the enhancement and development of its staff’s skills.

This year, there were 9 training events, totaling 166 hours of training provided, involving all Foundation employees, focusing on what have been identified as the main areas of interest:

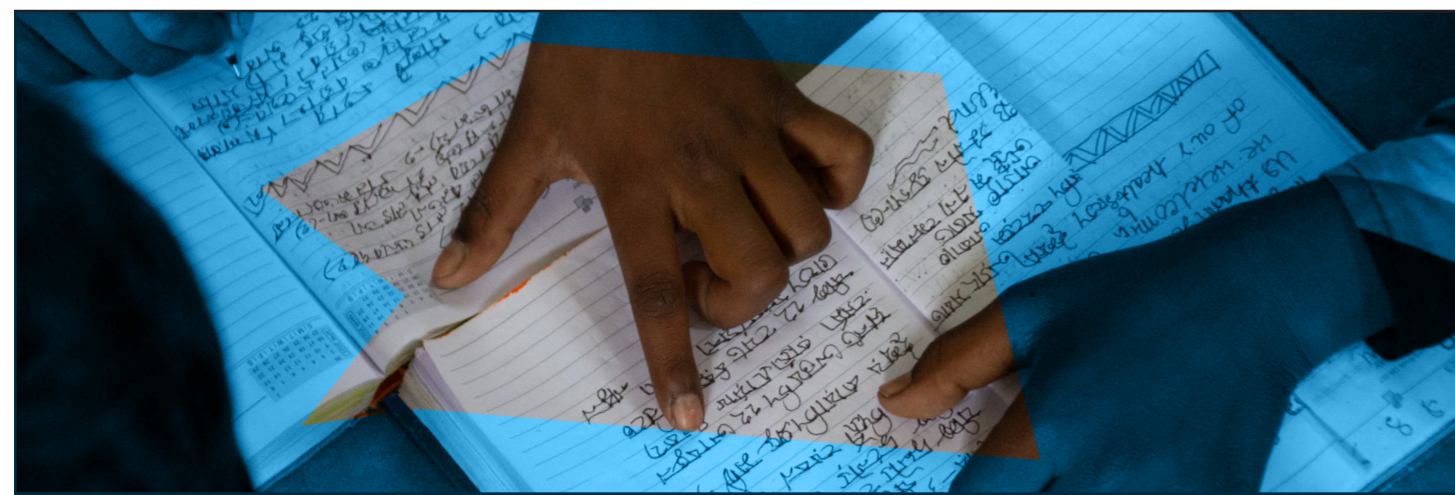
- **Linguistic skills: 3 courses involving 57% of the staff;**
- **Technical skills (project management and operational areas): 3 courses involving 43% of the staff;**
- **Coaching and professional counselling: 3 courses involving 43% of the staff.**



FINANCIAL REPORT

EXPENDITURES

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
A) Expenditure on general interest activities		
1) Supplies		966,80 €
2) Services	28.230,54 €	36.052,34 €
3) Use of third party assets	10.368,21 €	9.880,07 €
4) Staff costs	200.709,69 €	184.712,98 €
5) Annual amortizations	712,58 €	515,75 €
7) Other charges	17.935,31 €	16.506,52 €
7.1) Donations for projects	1.756.876,79 €	1.208.958,92 €
Total A)	2.014.833,12 €	1.457.593,39 €
C) Fundraising costs		
1) Costs for regular fundraising	7.192,26 €	6.539,20 €
Total C)	7.192,26 €	6.539,20 €
D) Charges from financial assets and liabilities		
1) Bank charges	4.184,57 €	1.489,64 €
Total D)	4.184,57 €	1.489,64 €



2023

2022

E) Operating expenses

2) Services	31.025,65 €	31.199,93 €
4) Staff costs	23.190,61 €	22.679,36 €
7) Other charges	896,56 €	13.491,97 €
Total E)	55.112,82 €	67.371,25 €
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	2.081.322,77 €	1.532.993,48 €

Figurative Costs

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
1) From general interest activities	187.935,80 €	187.332,88 €
Total	187.935,80 €	187.332,88 €

INCOME

2023

2022

A) Revenue from general interest activities

1) Donations from Founder	397.048,86 €	310.820,00 €
5) Public contribution (5 per mille)		23.734,46 €
6) Donations from private entities	1.717.148,66 €	1.124.683,55 €
10) Other revenues	2,58 €	200,21 €
Total A)	2.114.200,10 €	1.459.438,22 €

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
C) Revenues from fundraising activities		
1) Revenues from regular fundraising	5.286,23 €	23.115,04 €
Total C)	5.286,23 €	23.115,04 €

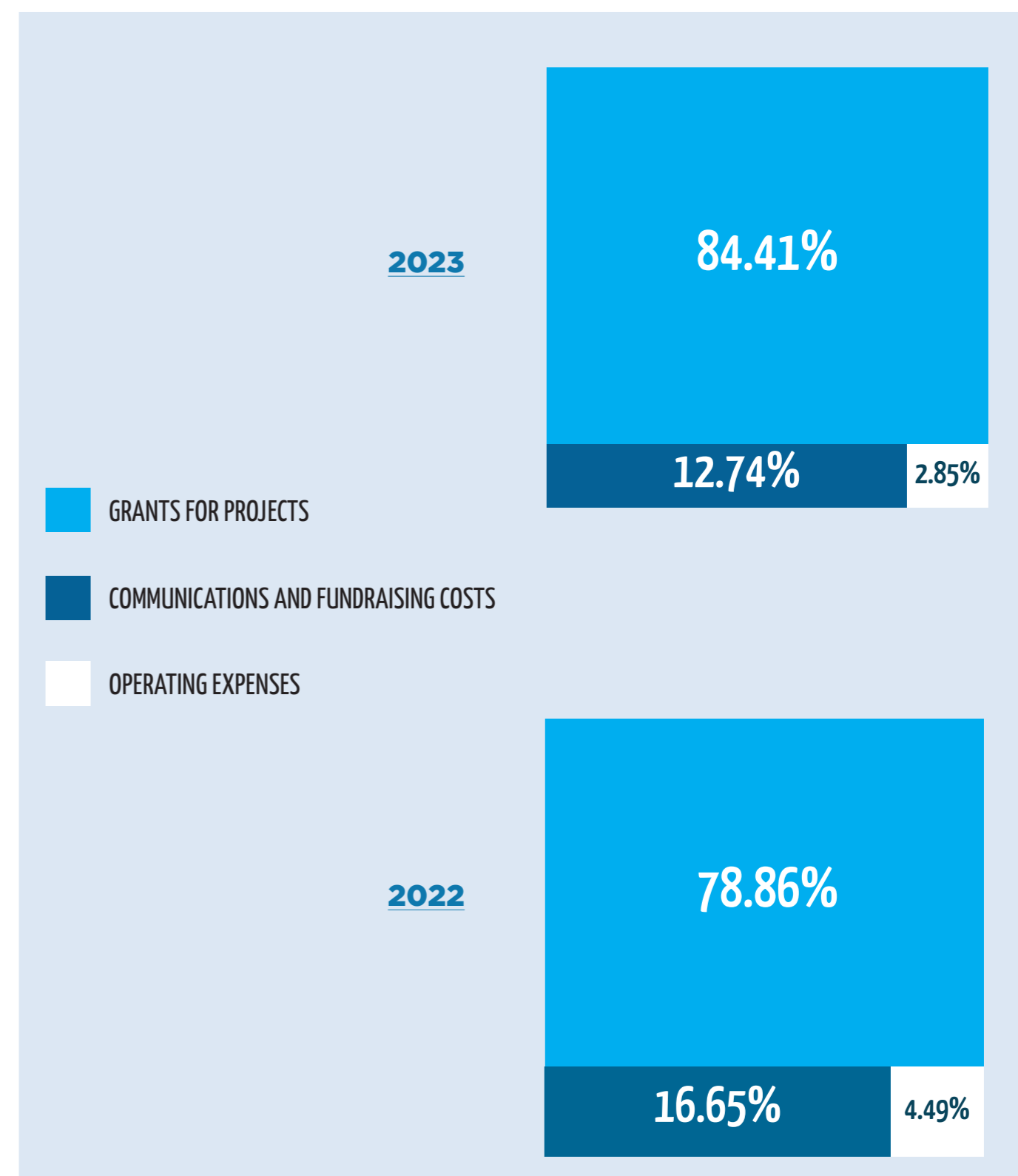
D) Revenues from financial and asset activities

1) From bank	1.255,54 €	1.201,59 €
Total D)	1.255,54 €	1.201,59 €

E) General support income

2) Other	5.871,44 €	
Total E)	5.871,44 €	

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Total INCOME	2.126.613,31 €	1.483.754,85 €
Operating result	45.290,54 €	-49.238,63 €
Figurative Income		
	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
1) From general interest activities	101.243,00 €	74.202,40 €
Total	101.243,00 €	74.202,40 €



NETWORKS AND PARTNERS

NETWORKS



BICE (*Bureau International Catholique de l'Enfance*) is an international network of more than 80 organisations around the world committed to defending the dignity and rights of children. BICE bases its work on the Convention on the Rights of the Child in which it participated in the drafting process. BICE works in partnership with its network members in various areas of the world where children are victims of violence, poverty, discrimination, war and forced displacement. BICE advocates for children's rights in national and international institutions, in particular at the United Nations, actively participating in the Human Rights Council and the Committee on the Rights of the Child. BICE also carries out a number of research projects, in particular on resilience, children's rights and spirituality. FMSI has been a member of BICE for more than 10 years, with whom it has carried out projects on the training of educators and local workers and on resilience. FMSI and BICE have also collaborated in submitting UPR reports on the situation of children for countries under reviews and in organising advocacy and awareness-raising events.



The CCIG (*Centre Catholique International de Genève*) was founded in 1950 and over time the network has involved an increasing number of organisations working in the fields of development cooperation, education, social assistance and human rights. With over fifty years of experience in working with the United Nations and its Consultative Status with ECOSOC, CCIG provides services and assistance to NGOs that relate to or work with the UN system. CCIG, through its network, promotes the exchange of information and good practices among NGOs in their relations with international organisations, offers training sessions and seminars on the mechanisms for the defence of Human Rights within the United Nations, and fosters the sharing of experiences through NGO meetings and public awareness-raising events. FMSI and CCIG jointly carry out projects to strengthen local communities and train operators as well as initiatives in defence of Human Rights - in particular children's rights - in different countries.



Child Rights Connect is a global network of 80 national and international non-governmental organizations committed to ensuring that all children fully enjoy their rights as defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Child Rights Connect works with independent NGOs in all countries that have ratified the CRC and/or its optional protocols. Since its foundation in 1983, the group of NGOs has gained significant experience on the issue of children's rights, providing a coordinated platform for NGO action and playing a central role in key developments in children's rights. As a network, it has members at national, regional and international level, including other child-led networks and organisations. Child Rights Connect has a working relationship with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and enjoys ECOSOC special consultative status at the UN, which makes the network fully entitled to take part in UN deliberations.



Edmund Rice International (ERI) is a non-governmental organisation committed to ensuring better living conditions for children and young people who are marginalised due to poverty, lack of access to education, legal status, the environment in which they live or who are involved in armed conflicts. ERI works at the international level to promote and defend the rights of children and youth, in particular the primary right to education. FMSI and ERI collaborate in international campaigns for children's rights and in reporting on the situation of children and young people in States participating in the United Nations Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism.



FOCSIV (*Federazione degli Organismi Cristiani Servizio Internazionale Volontario*) is the largest Italian federation of Christian organisations for international cooperation and volunteering, with 86 member organisations operating in more than 80 countries around the world to implement development projects in the following sectors: social health, agriculture and food, education and training, protection of children and adolescents, institutional strengthening, and defence of human rights and gender equality. FMSI is a member of FOCSIV and actively participates in the initiatives promoted by the Federation such as: awareness and information campaigns, fundraising, institutional lobbying and regional projects.



The Rome Catholic NGO Forum was created to promote the active role of NGOs in civil society at various levels (local, national and international) and at the United Nations, contributing to the implementation of Human Rights and the promotion of social justice.



The three Marist Publishing Houses - Edelvives in Spain, Gram in Argentina and FTD in Brazil - work in a network to create synergies and new opportunities for the Marist Mission through business, promoting education as a factor of human and social development. The three publishing houses support FMSI's programmes for access to school for children in situations of economic vulnerability and marginalisation.



Fratelli is a Lebanese association formed by the Marist Brothers and the De la Salle Brothers that was set up to implement joint programmes for children and young people - Lebanese and migrants/ refugees - in a more vulnerable condition. In particular, the Association is in charge of the Brothers Programme for the social inclusion, human and economic promotion of Syrian and Palestinians refugees in Lebanon through training activities (literacy, schooling, vocational courses), socialisation and recreational activities aimed especially at children, girls and young people.



The Marist Solidarity Network *Corazón Solidario* was officially founded in 2006 in Belo Horizonte to promote collaboration between NGOs, Foundations and other Marist entities in Latin America for solidarity and Children's Rights. FMSI participates in the network's coordinating committee which is responsible for defining rules for collaboration, planning strategies and initiatives, and promoting training courses for network members. The *Corazón Solidario* Network consists of 26 regional Marist Organisations for solidarity and promotion of children's rights, 5 international NGOs, 13 local and national NGOs, 42 local informal groups.



The Blue Marists, born in 2012 inspired by the Marist Charism, take their name from the blue colour of their T-shirts which makes them easily recognisable by the population. Since the beginning of the war in Syria, the group, made up of 155 people of all ages, Christians and Muslims, runs 15 aid programmes for the population of Aleppo and displaced communities in nearby camps, for assistance with basic needs (food, milk for children, hot meals for lonely elderly people, medical care, housing), training (schooling for children, vocational training for young people and adults, promotion of women) and starting up local micro-enterprises.



The De La Salle Foundation Solidarity International is a non-profit organisation founded by the Brothers of the Christian Schools to promote the rights of children in order to facilitate their access to education and training, with a special focus on children at risk of social and educational exclusion. Particular emphasis is placed on the promotion of gender equality and the sustainability of projects. FMSI and De La Salle Foundation Solidarity International have been collaborating for years in the realisation of projects to support migrant and refugee children and in the training of local educators.



Australian Marist Solidarity (AMS) is an Australian international organisation working in the field of development cooperation. Focusing its work in the Asia-Pacific region, AMS implements projects mainly in the education sector to ensure access to quality education for children and youth in vulnerable conditions by initiating programmes and building school facilities. The collaboration between FMSI and AMS has focused over the years on the implementation of inclusive school projects with the strong involvement of local communities.



The Spanish NGO SED (*Solidaridad, Educación, Desarrollo*) works for the promotion of the Right to Education in Africa, Latin America and some countries in Europe and Asia. In Spain it works in the field of development education and for social change for a more just and united world, through awareness-raising campaigns, promotion of the Sustainable Development Goals and Human Rights. Promoted by the Marist Brothers of Spain, SED trains more than 100 volunteers per year and accompanies them in their service in volunteer programmes in 14 countries.



The organisation Solidarity with South Sudan was born out of an initiative of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG) and the Union of Superiors General (USG) to promote the development of the State of South Sudan through education, health and sustainable agriculture. FMSI has supported Solidarity with South Sudan programmes in four communities, in particular the training of local primary school teachers, nurses and midwives.



Croce Rossa Italiana

The Red Cross aims to provide health and social assistance both in times of peace and war. The Italian Red Cross is placed under the patronage of the President of the Republic and is part of the International Red Cross Movement. In its actions at the international level it coordinates with the International Committee of the Red Cross, in countries in conflict, and with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for other interventions.



The *Marcellin Foundation* was founded in 1993 by the Marists of the Philippines to '*support and promote the general welfare of children at risk and children in conflict with the law*'. FMSI contributes to its work by supporting the Marcellin Centre, which provides a safe and familiar environment for street children and a comprehensive rehabilitation alternative to prison for children in conflict with the law, in partnership with the government, schools and local employers, promoting the improvement of the local juvenile justice system.



The Three2Six Programme - years in the making in South Africa - was established with the aim of providing migrant and refugee children with a quality education in order to be able to enter the formal school system. FMSI has been supporting and collaborating with Three2Six since 2016, with over 2,500 boys and girls successfully attending the programme. Three2Six has received national and international recognition and participates in numerous advocacy and awareness-raising activities on the issue of access to quality education for migrant and refugee children.



The Italian Army has been supporting FMSI's projects since 2018 - the year in which it made a concrete effort to support the commitment of the Marist Brothers community in Lebanon, which is engaged in the front line in guaranteeing quality education to Syrian, Palestinians and Lebanese children. The Italian Army, framed in a broader context of International Forces within the UN framework and faithful to its humanitarian vocation, provides an important contribution of a logistical nature within the *Fratelli* Project, which FMSI has been implementing in Lebanon since 2018. Equally important is the humanitarian support guaranteed through the Military Ordinariate in favour of individuals in a vulnerable condition.



The Community of Sant'Egidio is a lay movement of Catholic Christian inspiration. Started in 1968, the community has spread to more than 70 countries in different continents, giving life to numerous works to support people in a more vulnerable condition. Always committed to Peace and dialogue between peoples, the Community of Sant'Egidio has been present in Ukraine since the beginning of the war to help the population fleeing and under bombardment by offering food and medical care.



The Francesco Realmonte Association, established in memory of Professor Francesco Realmonte of the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan, works alongside social workers in Italy and abroad, training them to become guardians of resilience. In Italy, it offers support to persons with international protection. Abroad, it works in countries affected by wars and environmental disasters, in conditions of poverty and chronic vulnerability. In collaboration with FMSI, the Association has offered training in Syria, Lebanon and Haiti so that people can develop resilience skills and transform pain into a new starting point.



PUCRS is among the oldest higher education institutions in Brazil (the first Higher Course in Administration and Finance was created in March 1931 and recognised as a University in 1948. It is considered the best private university in the country's southern region by the Ministry of Education (MEC). A private non-profit organisation, it maintains a legal link with its sponsor, the União Brasileira de Educação e Assistência - UBEA, a philanthropic institution that is part of the Marist Network.



The NGO FUNDAMAR - promoted by the Marist Brothers of Central America - was founded in 2001 with the aim of promoting the sustainable development of children, young girls and families living in the poorest areas of Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador. Besides carrying out development projects, the organisation is a member of important NGO networks in South and Central America for the promotion and defence of children's rights. FMSI has long collaborated with FUNDAMAR for the realisation of projects in the field of education and training - especially for children, girls and young people from ethnic minorities - and for advocacy activities for children's rights in Latin and Central America.



Centre Culturel Champagnat Chad - The 'Champagnat' cultural and social centre offers young people living in a situation of economic and social vulnerability, opportunities to meet and train in a highly educational context, in which they can engage in sports, recreational and cultural activities and vocational training courses.



St. Paul's Mulungushi Primary School of the Marist Brothers, established in the rural Kapiri Mposhi District in Zambia, offers primary education to 465 pupils (221 boys and 244 girls) from families of labourers living in economic hardship.



Centro Educativo Marista Nuestra Señora del Pilar is an educational institution run by the Marist Family in Cochabamba, Bolivia, and is aimed at children, girls and young people in economically and socially vulnerable situations.



Instituto Tecnico Vocacional Jesus Obrero in Ateos in El Salvador is a centre that offers vocational training courses to help young people enter the labour market and not fall victim to criminal gangs.



Coeur Sans Frontières (CSF) is a community of lay Marist, created in June 2007 in Goma, which works closely with the Marist Brothers congregation in the Democratic Republic of Congo to protect the rights of children and ensure their access to education and vocational training. CSF works in synergy with traditional and religious leaders, local authorities, community child protection networks (RECOPE), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO).



Marist Preparatory and Junior High school (Sabin Akrofrom - Ghana) was founded in 1998 by the Marist Brothers of Ghana to provide quality education to the population in vulnerable condition of Sabin - Akrofrom and its surroundings. This peri-urban area in the Ashanti Region lacked school facilities in the face of a growing youth population, and families in difficult economic circumstances in Sabin Akrofrom did not have the means to send their children to schools in the city. Many children were thus left without access to a school. Since its foundation, the Marist School has continued to offer a qualified education and is currently the main school in the Atwima Kwanwoma district and among the top five schools in Ghana in terms of the academic performance of its students.



Fratelli Maicao, Colombia - The project creates opportunities for social and educational inclusion, protection and defense of the rights of children and adolescents neglected by the migratory situation in Maicao, in order to contribute to socio-economic inclusion and the reduction of the gaps that are widening for migrant populations entering from the Colombian-Venezuelan border in the territory of La Guajira, Colombia. To this end, the project promotes the personal development of children, adolescents and youth, with an integral approach, responding to their emergency primary educational needs. It offers spaces and moments for socio-educational projects that meet the different needs of Venezuelan migrants and Colombian returnees. It also accompanies children and adolescents in the construction of their life project, ensuring a caring, adequate and close presence to each one.



Parrocchia Sant'Ilario di Poitiers - is a local community support organization, involved in food preparation activities for people in a vulnerable situation, evangelization activities, socialization and welcoming services for migrant people and logistical assistance. FMSI has been working with the parish for years in supporting outreach projects.

Staff involved:

Br. Kenneth Charles McDonald - President
Br. Ángel Diego García Otaola - Advocacy and Child Rights Coordinator
Andrea Rossi - General Director
Marcello Romagnoli - Finance & Office Administrator
Angela Petenzi - Project Administration Officer
Francesco Mastrosera - Project Administration Officer
Maria Rita Pala - Project Administration Officer
Marta Morotti** - Communication Intern
Pamela Difino* - Project Administration Officer

** New staff member from January 2024

* New staff member from April 2023

Credits

Marcello Romagnoli
Maria Rita Pala
Pamela Difino
Marta Morotti

Languages review

Br. Patrick McNamara
Br. Angel Medina Bermúdez

All information in this document is verifiable and documented. Data is collected in a systematic manner. This Annual Report was approved by the Board of Directors on 27 May 2024.

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MARISTES BLEUS D'ALEP



**Marist International
Solidarity
Foundation ETS**

FMSI

For the benefit of children

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