

MARIST ASSOCIATION MISSION ASSEMBLY AUGUST 2015

MARIST SOLIDARITY

Working in partnership for change

The three Province offices of international solidarity: Australian Marist Solidarity (AMS), Marist Asia Pacific Solidarity (MAPS) and Marist Volunteers Australia (MVA) have, since the Mission Assembly of 2012, worked towards a more integrated approach to our shared vision *“to bring young people on the peripheries of life towards the centre”*. All three offices in Brisbane are served by one team as we commit to Nairobi’s *“global missionary mindset”* focussed on 16 countries in Asia and the Pacific.

What’s emerging is the new life generated through an engagement by AMS as a faith based Non-Government Organisation for development of marginalised communities in the region. As an international NGO we engage in the public domain of education for solidarity across the province, especially in MSA school communities, so that the Montagnes of our region, and not just Australia, remain central to the Province Mission.

A faith based NGO has been a dormant structure in the province but now drives much of our Marist life offshore. Seriously engaging in development work brings us to reflect a core Marist Solidarity team value echoed in the Mission Assembly 2012 statement: *“developing their capacity to transform their own lives and communities”*. What’s emerging at Marist Solidarity is that all solidarity projects now start from within the local communities abroad. These communities increasingly call on Australian volunteers for skills’ transfer to the young; for new education institutions and resources that improve inclusiveness for those with disabilities or low educability; for evangelical empowerment to forge *“new ways of building God’s kingdom within a global Marist family.....”*.

Although both funding offices are audited, among the new requirements of our NGO life are higher levels of accountability, greater transparency and best practise as required by AMS’s memberships of the peak development NGO body (the Australian Council for International Development).

Finally, a very diverse pattern of new partners has emerged with our province international solidarity team. Our MSA school communities will always be central to MAPS, but as AMS entered the public domain in the past two years we are supported now by parish and service groups, specialised education and disability foundations and charities, major European funders and a growing group of alumni.

New structures, new partners and new digital presences and marketing enable the team to see more clearly engagement with the participation potential of the global South in the Australian Marist Province life. Our mission confronts our team daily with the liberating power of the Gospel in our neighbours’ communities. Together with many supporters across the province we give practical implementation of our new tagline: *“Working in partnership for change”*.