

# Annual Report Itaka Escolapios 2019·20



We are an organization promoted by the Order and the Fraternity of the Pious Schools to carry out their educational and social mission, in the different countries where we are located. We promote the education of the most disadvantaged people as the best way to transform the world and achieve a better tomorrow, making the new generations to contribute with the best of themselves responsibly.

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# Live

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**Last school year we were accompanied by the slogan “LIVE” and it was certainly very appropriate for the serious health and social situation we entered and still continue to be in.**

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nternationally, it has been a time of seeing the vulnerability of society, of feeling powerless in the face of a very tangible and harmful “enemy”. Thousands of people have lost their lives, many of them close to our Itaka - Escolapios Network. The vast majority of the world is facing, in addition to a dreaded disease, an economic and social crisis that requires an effort of international solidarity on the part of all.

In the midst of this situation, from Itaka - Escolapios, we understand this LIVE as a sign of hope and as a call to take care of one's own life and, above all, of others, always starting with those who are the most vulnerable.

For this reason, this past year has been, despite the necessary lockdown, a time of great effort to maintain the educational, evangelising and social projects with much imagination and with the support of many kind people. This is something we can see in these pages of the Report.

Not everything has been possible. School centres and socio-cultural projects have been closed, as have most of the face-to-face activities. However, we have maintained a lot of life: homes and residences, food and personal support, virtual education with a lot of imagination and not in all places with adequate resources, close-

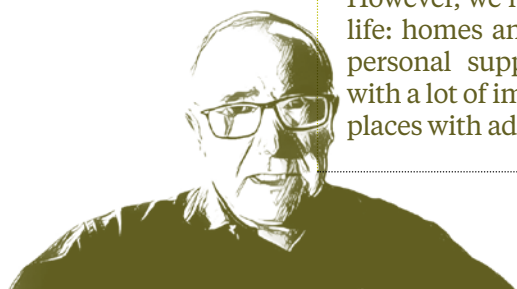
ness to people, appeals to solidarity, innovative meeting places...

This year, when we have been more isolated, we have learned to connect with people and organisations close to us, as well as with people in other countries. We have realised that the whole of humanity is connected and that networking is possible to build a better world.

That is why we end the year with this call to life, to live and help to live. And we do so with a new motto, RESTART, which we want to give us renewed encouragement to move forward in the midst of so many difficulties and challenges.

We begin this new year by thanking all the people and entities that have collaborated with us in the construction of a better world. We also begin with a call to restart the life of each one of us, the teams and the projects that are so necessary in this situation in which we find ourselves.

Thank you and go ahead in this task of RESTART every moment, every day, every year, all the life that our Itaka - Escolapios Network contains.



**Javier Aguirregabiria**  
CHAIRMAN'S ITAKA-ESCOLAPIOS

# Difficulties amidst weakness

Cameroon,  
Equatorial  
Guinea and  
Gabon

**In Central African countries, despite the theoretically low number of Covid-19 infections, the situation has been concerning because of the weakness of the health systems and measures adopted, which have been difficult to enforce due to the context.**

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or instance, schools were closed in Cameroon for more than two months and reopened at the end of the school year. The conditions and means available prevented access to online education during the confinement, therefore other distance learning alternatives have had to be sought. The efforts of our projects have also focused on addressing other needs such as food and supporting the implementation and access to sanitary measures, especially by distributing face masks. This crisis is compounded by the pre-existing humanitarian tragedy caused by the armed conflict in the northern region (anglophone) of Cameroon.

More than ever, it has been necessary to be with our students and the families around us with few resources, supporting them in this worrying health situation.

In one way or another, teachers, lay Piarists, students and their families benefited from Itaka-Es-

colapios. There were some Covid cases that were able to be treated. Thanks to the support of the Itaka-Escolapios network, the Province was given the capacity to fight Covid-19 by reaching out to all schools, communities, religious, teachers and vulnerable people with the necessary resources.

Regarding the impact of Covid-19 on the life of religious communities, we can say that, in most communities, we have maintained preventive measures with many precautions. A few cases were diagnosed in some communities, mostly in the training house in Futru. However, after appropriate treatment there were no major complications. The youngest siblings resumed classes and finished the academic year normally.

Activities in the field of non-formal education have been reduced — in particular, in Guinea

More than ever, it has been necessary to be with our students and the families around us with few resources,





Calasanz Socio Educational Center. Bafia (Cameroon)

and Gabon, many activities were not started.

Itaka-Escolapios has two priorities in Central Africa: the equipping of the new secondary school in Messamendongo and the new secondary school and teacher training college in Bamenda, which we started this year. Some of the classrooms in these two schools are ready to welcome students, but the basic equipment is still lacking: benches, chairs, tables...

Another of the projects that Itaka-Escolapios Cameroon has been involved in is the sheltering of children displaced by the anglophone crisis in the country.

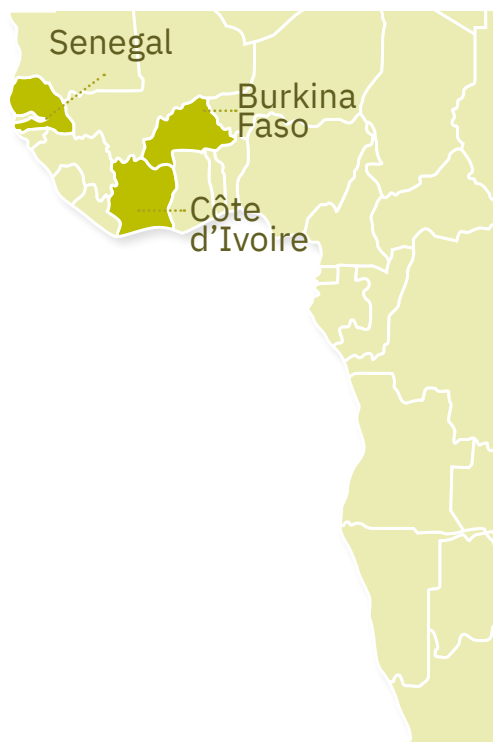


**CENTRAL  
AFRICA**

# A shocking and unpredictable situation

Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso

**Itaka-Escolapios West Africa has been no stranger to the coronavirus pandemic. The year started off well with its outlook for activities, but in March 2020 everything changed. Schools, churches and social centres were closed, and the government banned meetings.**



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n this way, the most affected works have been boarding schools and parishes. As a result, the 2019-2020 academic year ended last September after three attempts at catching up. This resulted in a late start of the school year, on the 12th November 2020, for the academic year 2020 - 2021. The return to school was timidly carried out with preventive measures still in place.

As for our inmates, they joined the boarding schools on the 11th of November 2020. Nowadays, students continue to attend school despite the unstable health situation. Nevertheless, all essential protective measures have been taken in the school environment. As for this year's school calendar, students do not have Christmas and New Year' holidays in order to limit traveling. Therefore, inmates will not be able to spend Christmas with their families as usual.

The aim is to draw the attention of the Senegalese population to the prevailing situation, and also to emphasise the strict adherence to distancing measures and health regulations. For example, the compulsory wearing of masks on public transport and during worship services; the use of hand sanitiser gel at the entrance of churches; and, above all, the prohibition of all large festive or other gatherings in public spaces.

Regarding parishes, activities are limited, especially in Senegal, as well as in Burkina Faso. For instance, the Communion and Confirmation Feast was held under police surveillance to ensure that the rules of social distancing (keeping the correct distance of about 1 m) were respected.

Apart from this, the Calasanz Movement is also unable to resume its activities properly. Otherwise, the children's Christmas party will also be celebrated in a





sober way with one exception — the commemoration of the feast of St. Joseph Calasanz with the children and some volunteers in our schools (the 27th of November).

As far as the social centres are concerned, activities are still on hold regarding the compliance with health safety standards, especially in Senegal. In Côte d'Ivoire, the Social Centre has resumed its normal pace of activity with preventive measures.

Activities within the fraternity have also resumed. In short, this atmosphere of lethargic activity is a reality in Senegal. As mentioned above, activities in Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso benefit from a certain political generosity.

The other serious consequence of the pandemic has been the economic impact. The economic slowdown in the pandemic has caused increased poverty in our

countries. Some fathers who lost their jobs were no longer able to fulfil their commitment in our schools and elsewhere. We were forced to ask for help everywhere, also from the Itaka-Escolapios network, to be able to maintain the salaries of our staff, which brought some relief to these families.

As the situation remains worrying as school resumes, we are forced to find ways to keep children in our schools and boarding schools so that the vulnerability of families due to the pandemic does not affect their education. In our boarding schools, besides those who have been withdrawn by their parents for fear of Covid, everything possible has been done to bring back those who have to return. The economic consequences of this pandemic may last longer than the health consequences due to the unstable economic situation in our countries.

In conclusion, the problem lies in the fear that the pandemic is causing, especially in Senegal, with the increasing number of cases in the community by the end of 2020. In Senegal, since the announcement of the first case of a coronavirus patient so far, only 400 official deaths have been reported.

We hope that in the course of time this unpredictable and shocking situation will improve and allow people to go about their daily business freely, and that Itaka-Scolapios West Africa will be able to carry out its activities without restrictions in the different presences.

# Time to reinvent ourselves and restart

Asturias,  
Canary Islands,  
Cantabria,  
Castilla La  
Mancha, Castilla  
León, Galicia,  
Madrid and  
Valencia

**We began the 19/20 academic year with enthusiasm and new proposals with which we hoped to make great strides in the identification, commitment and implementation of initiatives for social transformation, both new and historical. Some of them have been successful, but others will have to wait for the health situation to improve before they can be implemented.**



**We have had to reinvent ourselves in some fields and we have been able to carry out projects and teams from the lockdown**

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rom September to March, we managed to open all our social projects, the Trastevere in Albacete, the Socio Educational-Centres (SEC) in Madrid and Valencia, and even some new ones such as the Shared Classroom Programme in the Malvarrosa neighbourhood in Valencia. There are also other tasks such as the promotion and monitoring of volunteering, awareness-raising campaigns, and support for the social action of our schools through the coordination of the provincial team.

Everything went smoothly and with enthusiasm, although it might seem that the world came to a standstill in March with the arrival of COVID-19. The health consequences are still very hard on all our presences (too many deaths in these months), but also the social and economic conse-

quences for many of the people involved in our Piarist projects.

During the three months that the state of alarm lasted in Spain, Itaka-Escolapios staff were teleworking, looking for the best way to support children and young people, and their families in the SECs' situation. We are also trying to move forward or investigate alternatives for the other tasks we carry out in all areas, as the face-to-face educational activities had to be cancelled.

Activities such as educational reinforcement in Albacete, Valencia and Madrid, family accompaniment or the creative laboratory in Valencia, the training of new volunteers, the experiences of the work camps in Madrid and Valencia, the visits to the different schools and the presence of Bethany from the provincial team, etc. Yet we are also thankful because





Calasanz Society Center. Aluche (Madrid)

we have had to reinvent ourselves in some fields and we have been able to carry out projects and teams from the lockdown, or even find new alliances with other Piarist entities in our province (such as Santiago Uno House-School), and jointly set up a very special work camp in July.

Even if it has not been the best year, we can celebrate. Celebrate the economic concert of the SECs *Amaltea* and *Akeloo* in Valencia with the regional government, celebrate the found synergies, celebrate all the work that has gone ahead, celebrate the involvement of staff and volunteers, and celebrate life. For all these reasons, we can surely continue to move forward in a spirit of self-improvement. Let's restart.



Amaltea Center. Valencia

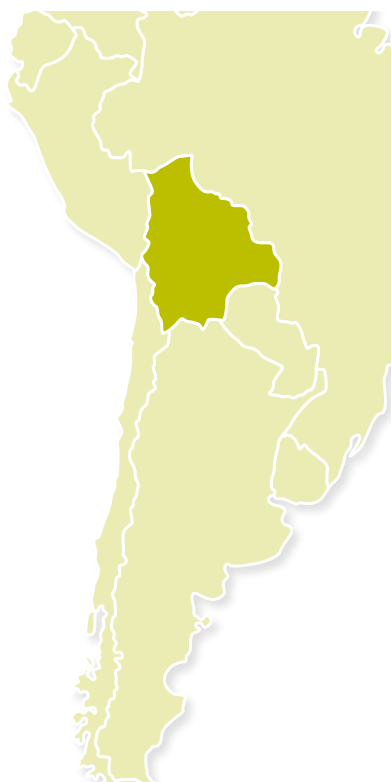
# Facing the future with hope

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**The school year in which the coronavirus hit the entire planet exposed us all to our own weaknesses, but also revealed the strengths of each of us. The same thing happened with various projects in Bolivia.**

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# W



e were forced to close all boarding schools and schools, showing that the rural environment was very different from the urban environment. While in the city there were more possibilities to follow online lessons, this was impossible in the countryside, so a system of distance learning was developed. These involved students taking copies of lessons and exercises, which they then handed in, to pick up new ones. Obviously, the difficulties have been great in ensuring the understanding of the lessons and the follow-up of the teachers. On the other hand, in the city, the family situations of those living on a daily basis were rapidly worsened by the pandemic and lockdown. Soon the number of people with difficulties in obtaining food increased, so we began to distribute basic food packages and small aid from the parishes of Santa Cruz and Cochabamba. In Cocapata and Anzaldo, rural environments more accustomed to

self-sufficiency, there were fewer supply problems than in the cities, and farming families still had some production to ensure the most basic sustenance. The coronavirus has barely reached the most remote, mostly poorly communicated places, although restrictions on movement or lack of some assets have also affected them.

Covid broke out in Bolivia somewhat later than in Europe, hitting the cities hardest, and impacting on an inadequate public and private health care system with no beds available during peak infection times.

In addition to the health crisis and the resulting economic crisis, the country's government has been in an interim situation following the departure of the president due to the failed elections at the end of 2019. Political and social polarisation has been permanent until the new elections,





San Rafael School. Cochabamba

and it remains to be seen whether Bolivia will be able to heal the open wounds.

Our schools, boarding schools, parishes and social centres have tried to accommodate to the changing situation at any given time, although instability has greatly complicated care, with, as almost always, the most disadvantaged suffering the most. The Anzaldo and Cocapata boarding schools have remained closed. The schools have operated remotely (in the countryside) and online (in the city). At the beginning of August, the government decreed the closure of the school year and automatic promotion of all students to the next grade. Although in our Educational Centres, by mutual agreement between management, teachers and families, work continued, a significant number of students dropped out of school activities.

Residence halls deserve a separate section, as many of the students come from rural communities without internet connections. When the university stated that online classes would be offered, it was decided to offer the boys and girls the possibility to remain locked up in the dormitory to follow the online classes. However, this was not possible in each instance, and some students opted to spend this time helping their families in the countryside.

We are taking advantage of the end of the academic year to adapt the facilities to the possible return of the students, still without knowing how the new academic year will begin in February 2021. However, we are aware that, whatever happens, it will be necessary to have more space for hand washing and cleaning and fumigation material. We will face the future with hope, trying to overcome difficulties as we have done so far, knowing that only



Calasanz Center. Cocapata

quality education improves lives permanently, and that it is especially important for those who face the hardest difficulties.

# Reinventing ourselves to adjust

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**2020 has been a very special year that will be remembered for decades to come. Brazil has been one of the countries most affected by COVID-19 in the world, mainly due to social misinformation and the consequent neglect of the population, but also because of the lack of seriousness on the behalf of those in power at the time. The low-income population has been hit the hardest.**

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On the economic front: many people have been fired from their jobs because small businesses have closed or gone bankrupt, and prices have skyrocketed. Regarding health, low-income people have not been able to go to public hospitals, because they have collapsed in many cities and private clinics are very expensive. The number of the deceased has been so high that they have even been buried in mass graves.

As far as education is concerned, public schools have practically maintained their activity because classes have been held virtually throughout the year, but low-income children and teenagers have been completely abandoned, classes have been taught via YouTube and those without internet have tried to use photocopied texts, but without any results...

In the government there is a great deal of discussion about how to save the economy through big business, about relations with first world countries, but they care little about the educational issue, nobody says anything. What is the reason for this? The answer is simple, for the powerful speak and their voice is heard, whereas the poor, even if they shout from the rooftops, no one listens to them and children and adolescents have no voice.

Itaka Escolapios in Brazil has worked tirelessly during this time. Food assistance has been given to families with serious economic problems in the surroundings of our Centres and Parishes, personalised educational accompaniment has been given to our children and young people; hygiene campaigns have been carried out to prevent the spread of Covid-19 through the





“São José de Calasanz” Socio Educational Center.

dissemination of videos or some online contacts. In an attempt to maintain normality, the Itaka Escolapios solidarity campaign “Sharing life” continued to raise funds for the campaign. Resource mobilisation has been carried out in order not to close our centres such as: Drive thru, solidarity action, concert via Live, which has been successful.

All the workers in our centres have reinvented themselves in the areas of management, education and support for our children and teenagers to adjust to the situation and continue to provide the necessary support.

The home for children and adolescents (Casa Lar) in the presence of Governador Valadares has been operating on a regular basis, because it has children and teenagers in foster care, so they cannot be sent to their families of



Itaka Belo Horizonte Socio Educational Center

origin. Thank God they have not had to face any further difficulties....

We hope that 2021 will be a year of taking off our masks and giving each other lots of hugs.

All the workers in our centres have reinvented themselves to adjust to the situation and continue to provide the necessary support

# Boosting virtualisation

Andalusia,  
Aragon,  
Castilla Leon,  
La Rioja,  
Navarra  
and Basque  
Country

**The 19-20 academic year in Itaka-Escolapios Emmaus began with the implementation of a new strategic plan that led us to think about a school year full of novelties. Two of the aims of the strategic plan were the deepening of the transforming character of the Itaka-Escolapios projects and the boosting of the organisation of the Calasanz Movement.**

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n the first quarter, the new Calasanz Movement team got down to work, structured in stages. Christmas camps and activities went on as usual, and no one would have thought that it would be just that, normality, that we would soon be missing.

In January 2020 we will hold the 2nd Meeting for Social Transformation in Granada. In it we reflect on the different dynamics that we develop from the Piarist missions in order to transform reality. The result was a publication that sums up very well what was thought there:

No one could have managed to convince us on that day that the 15th of March, with the state of alarm declared and the beginning of the lockdown phase, would be the first of a very difficult few months. What was initially intended to be a few weeks turned into months of being locked up in the houses, with all that this implied for an organisation such as ours.

Although home-based work was prioritised, many of our projects could not be

developed under these conditions. At the beginning, the attendance of some people was organised to take care of people who did not even have a home to confine themselves to, and it was possible to maintain the primary care provided in some centres: breakfasts, showers, washing clothes...

Following this motto of maintaining as much activity as possible from our homes, it is worth highlighting the effort made by the Calasanz Movement instructors to maintain the contact and the activity of the groups. In almost all the presences, "telecamps" were held during Holy Week, with activities and celebrations carried out by videoconference.

In the summer, despite the end of the lockdown, it was impossible to hold the face-to-face camps as planned. Even so, in almost all the offices, with a great deal of creativity on the behalf of the monitors, some activities were maintained that allowed the groups to stay together and respond to the need for the boys and girls to

socialise after so many months of isolation.

Home-based educators, where teleworking was obviously not possible, continued to be present, albeit with reduced shifts. Regarding the homeless shelters, Epeletan, it was decided to extend the scope of the shelter so that people who usually only slept and ate breakfast there could be safely confined.

Face-to-face literacy activities ceased on the same day that the end of school activities was decreed. Telephone contact was maintained with the participants and materials were provided to continue the programme, activating volunteers to support this task.

The provincial social guidance team drew up protocols for collaboration with the schools' guidance departments and the detection of new needs generated by the state of alarm. For example, the digital gap which, if always serious, is even more so in the situation of the generalisation of teledocency. We were able to arrange the donation of SIM cards and laptops so that all the pupils and families we attended could follow the classes.

The school support projects tried to re-establish contact with participating pupils and their families in order to meet their homework support needs.

The volunteering team encouraged the project teams to keep in touch with the volunteers to take care of the tasks in our projects from home and to contact the platforms at municipal or provincial level that were organised to take care of the needs of dependent people in isolation.

In the Leisure Time Schools that had external courses in operation, the confinement has meant a boost to the process of virtualisation of our courses, which has opened up the option of taking part of our directors' and monitors' courses online. On the other hand, during these days of seclusion, the Ministry of Social Transformation made several and diverse formative proposals to make better use of the time of recollection.

One area that suffered a major decline in the 19-20 academic year was fundraising. Although online activities for the solidarity campaign took place in many places, the reach of the campaign was much lower than usual. This forces us to manage the available resources more responsibly, if possible, and to be more creative in order to obtain new income to sustain our projects and those of the entire International Network.

In overall, we can say that, although our hearts have shrunk when we have seen the suffering of so many people, here and around the world, within the limitations imposed by social and health measures, during the 2019-2020 academic year, we have continued to attend to the people we accompany, in high spirits, and we are already thinking about how to address the needs that will arise.



Ikaskide Socio Educational Center.  
Pamplona



Ojalá Program. Tafalla. Navarra



Materials from the 2nd Itaka-Escolapios Emmaus Social Transformation Meeting (available in European Spanish): <https://www.escolapiosemaus.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Encuentro-de-transformaci%C3%B3n-social.pdf>

Critical readings for thinking about the crisis. Materials developed by the Ministry of Social Transformation team (available in European Spanish). <https://www.escolapios21.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Lecturas-críticas-para-pensar-la-crisis-MTS.pdf>



# Hope and perseverance in the face of continuous adversity

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**A course characterized by misfortunes and the desire to overcome them. The awareness that education is the only thing that guarantees a decent future, with rights and justice, makes us keep on fighting and dreaming, without giving up.**

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uring the process of seeking support to restore the battered school of Kiblawan, in the southeast of the island of Mindanao, in the province of Davao del Sur, a terrible earthquake, with numerous aftershocks, destroyed a large part of the school and rendered the few buildings that remained standing unusable. The aftershocks generated great uncertainty and insecurity as it was not known when stability would be restored, and the tremors would end. We opted to keep classes outdoors, in some cases under cover in the sports field, or in a precarious installation built with the remains of the fallen classrooms. Maintaining the classes was our way of supporting the students and their families with the safest possible space in times of anxiety. Thanks to the support of some institutions and different Piarist schools and districts around the world, we began to plan the reconstruction of the school.

Unfortunately, the arrival of Covid before the start of the works forced us to reconsider the situation, take precautions and reschedule. In a country accustomed to struggling with hardship the coronavirus and its consequences are unknown. Strict

confinements mostly affect the most impoverished sectors of society, those people who earn their livelihood daily, for whom confinement means further impoverishment.

Almost the entire country has been confined for more than three consecutive months. Empty streets and establishments and aid promised by the government that did not end up arriving. All over the country, classes have been suspended. Once again, the hardest hit has been those who already have the most difficulties. In some well-equipped schools, where families could afford internet and electronic devices, online classes have replaced face-to-face classes. In the other schools the situations have been very diverse, in some cases the work has been practically reduced to 0.

At Kiblawan we have established a remote system whereby students or their families come to the center to pick up theoretical and practical materials and return them to pick up new material. The teacher reviews the exercises done by the students



and returns them corrected with indications. The system is not perfect, but it is the adaptation that seems to be working best in this pandemic context. We have managed to get the Ministry of Education to approve our system, so we maintain the official status of the school.

We have managed to start the work to rebuild the school in parallel to the distance learning classes. We have advanced slowly, forced by all the necessary security measures in the face of the coronavirus and because sometimes getting supplies was more complicated than expected. There are 6 new classrooms, lightweight constructions with anti-seismic specifications to guarantee their future resistance. Although the work carried out will allow classes to resume when the government allows it, it is still necessary to seek new funds to complete the reconstruction of everything destroyed by the earthquake.

The coronavirus also prevented us from carrying out the annual solidarity campaign that we carry out together with the rest of the countries of the Itaka Escolapios Network. With great regret we also had to interrupt the arrival of young people from the Sal program during July and August 2020. We are confident that we will be able to re-launch this program as soon as possible. We believe that it will be a great step forward in acquiring a network mentality and understanding that we are very diverse but have a lot in common. We have not been able to promote the Calasanz Movement in our works as we would like, although we have taken the opportunity to give a

## PHILIPPINES



twist to the organizational model and reflect on the training needed by the CM educators.

Better times will surely come, and we will take on new challenges, such as those we can sense with the formation of the new Piarist demarcation, the province of Asia Pacific, which the Philippines shares with Japan and

Vietnam. This course has served to remind us that the work is a lot, that sometimes we go back a little before advancing further and that hope calls us to trust in the future.

# Seeking solutions

**As of the 14th of December, India reported 9,884,100 confirmed cases of coronavirus. In recent days there has been a slight increase in the number of daily cases, which is now decreasing again.**

# A

fter more than 3 months, less than 30,000 cases (27,071) were registered on the 13th of December. The number of cases per million is 7,055. The total number of reported deaths is 143,355.

According to “The Quartz India”, an English-language business media, the slow growth in the number of cases in India has some interesting reasons. These reasons are: India’s confinement has successfully suppressed transmission counts; the elderly population has a small proportion of the total population; India’s high temperatures and humidity; and widespread BCG vaccination for tuberculosis or malaria resistance has greatly helped India control the ferocity of the pandemic.

The future consequences of the coronavirus pandemic will create significant changes in the workplace, education, diplomacy, ag-

riculture and the IT sector. Government experts are looking for some practical ways to boost the economy and avoid future stagnation and slow growth.

From the point of view of global journalists, India’s slowness and indifference to Covid-19 exposure remains an enigma. It is the dedication of health officials, the local governing body and local police officers that act as India’s heroes in this bewildering situation. It is their selflessness and sacrifice that has reduced the high risk of community spread. Without their time and dedication, 1.4 billion people would have been swallowed by the “Giant Corona Beast”.

Aside from the pandemic, India faces many existential problems, as the 45 million migrant workers had not been located before the lockdown. Public transport, all passenger movement, all domes-

None of the places  
and people linked  
to us have been  
infected by the  
pandemic

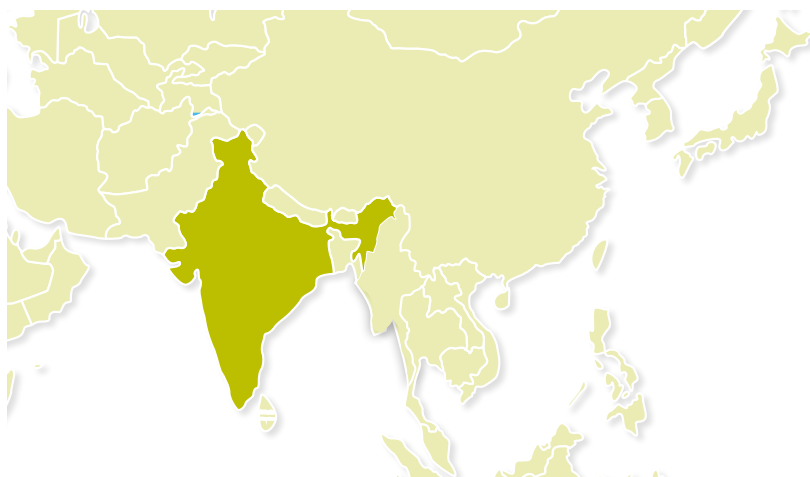


School in Kamda

tic and international air travel and religious places, educational institutions and entertainment venues have been completely suspended. There was a strict nationwide lockdown until the 17th of May 2020.

About Itaka-Escolapios and their mission together with the Piarists in India, so far, none of the places and people linked to us have been infected by the pandemic, and all are living safely in their respective communities and mission areas.

- » The Aryanad School has been closed since the 16th of March.
- » The Kamda School has been closed since the 21st of March.
- » The Kamda boarding school has not housed children since the 21st of March.
- » The Calasanz Movement has not started.
- » The Kanyakumari School has been closed since the 21st of March.
- » Our communities are functioning smoothly and the brothers in initial formation have already been sent to their families before lockdown.



# The work continues

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**The graph of the pandemic outlook in Indonesia continues to rise and does not yet appear to be peaking. Since it began in March last year, the number of those infected continues to rise.**

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**B**

y the end of December, the number of infected cases was reported to have increased by 20.6% (from 51,986 to 62,677). Thus, there have been more than 800,000 cases in the country since February 2020 (more than 700,000 cured and 122,873 infected).

Because of this the government of the country has decided to apply a generalised lockdown where all kinds of activities in various sectors have had to be stopped or reduced. Among these areas, the education has had to come to a complete halt. Online classes are held all over the country. There are no face-to-face classes, especially for students from high school to university. Infant and primary school pupils are still without classes, a situation that has been dragging on since March 2020, not even online.

This affects our reality and mission here in Atambua. Learning

With Calasanz is still unable to open. We cannot meet with the children, nor do the parents want to send their children to us, even though we have strictly followed and complied with health protocols.

The *boarding school* is also badly afflicted. With no face-to-face classes, most of the students' parents have decided to have their children stay and study from home. We are still running the boarding school, and we have notified them for the children who want to stay. It is, above all, to help them in their online classes, as most of them live in places with connection line issues. In fact, there are currently five children who, in agreement with their parents, have decided to stay at the boarding school. Perhaps, when the online classes start more intensively, more children will come to stay. Some have already informed us.

The country has decided to apply a generalised lockdown





Asrama Atambúa

With these five children, we continue with our work. We keep helping them with their online classes in the mornings, and give them three and a half hour classes every day from Monday to Friday: one and a half hours after their online classes in the morning, which normally only last two hours, and another two hours in the afternoon. We continue to stay in close communication with the schools to find out what they are studying, what homework and exams they have to do, etc.

In addition, we continue to work in the garden as we are in the rainy season. We are the religious, the novices (of which there are 9), the pre-novice, the 3 postulants and the five children who continue to look after the garden. Thus, we remain active while still saving some of the funds.



# Creative response

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**For Mexico, as in other parts of the world, it has been a challenging year given the pandemic situation, but at the same time it has provided an opportunity to respond creatively to its own challenges.**

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O

verall, we can say that we were able to consolidate at local level, while at the same time witnessing the birth of new projects. In this brief report we share some of the progress and challenges we face.

In the area of fundraising and management, on the 7th of March of 2020, the Itaka Escolapios team took a fundamental step by establishing itself as a non-profit civil association and began the process of becoming an authorised donor. It is worth highlighting the creation of a shared mission, integrating in the statutes the participation of people from the Fraternity and Religious.

Facing the pandemic, we migrated to digital training platforms, while at the same time developing projects in favour of those most in need. Special mention should be made of the Calasanz Scholarship project, which has succeeded in providing schol-

arships to children with limited resources in three schools in our province, through strategic alliances between various social actors, as well as the creation of a list of donors for this purpose, including donations from abroad in alliance with the Calasanz Children's Foundation of the Vice-Province of the Californias. This fundraising network includes the contribution of the fraternity of the Pious Schools of Mexico, who have begun to contribute financially to the goal's achievement.

The training and volunteering area has managed to complete the training processes planned for the year in distance learning mode. The pandemic itself has allowed us to integrate in formation activities with different provinces such as Bethany, Central America and the Caribbean, Central Africa, Vice-Province of the Californias, among others.

The pandemic  
itself has allowed  
us to integrate in  
formation activities  
with different  
provinces





Campeche Cultural Centre

The process of systematisation of volunteering gave birth to its guiding document, which is being used by different leaders in the province, who also completed a training process in six Piarist works in five different states. We are in the process of implementing this document.

The provincial Leaders' Workshop project was integrated, restructuring the modules and continuing with the involvement of young people and adults from our works. Various workshops were held, such as: Introduction to the Pious Schools, with the participation of three parishes; Didactics 5G; reflection on the Annual Report to Cardinal Tonti, etc.

Regarding Calasanz Movement, an alliance was achieved that allows to assist the groups in order to certify them with their own methodology; for this purpose, a team was formed between those



responsible for Itaka Escolapios and Calasanz Movement; this process is in the implementation phase.

The communication and awareness-raising team succeeded in promoting the "Sharing life" solidarity campaign in various projects in the province; this has made it possible, for the first time, to raise funds for the project itself. This step would not have been achieved without timely follow-up by the responsible team.

A team of local area managers is being set up with the aim of communicating the processes that are taking place at the network and provincial level, through the implementation of a website, Facebook, Instagram, etc.

All of the above leads us to thank the responsible participation of the various individuals who have made this significant progress possible: donors, volunteers, project leaders, the board of directors, among others. Thank you all very much.

# Committed to the people

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**Itaka-Escolapios is sharing and promoting globally in Mozambique the Piarist mission in this southern African country, where the Piarists arrived in 2016.**

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A great effort has been made to be close to the population and to provide them with the maximum support

T

he presence is located in the province of Cabo Delgado, in the north of Mozambique, with a mission that is fundamentally articulated through the pastoral, social and educational work in the rural area of the parish of São Luís Maria Grignon de Monfort de Meza, which has the *escolinha* (nursery school) “Beata Maria da Paixão”, in Minheuene.

In Mozambique, the impact of the Covid19 crisis has had a full impact on the 2020 academic year (education activity is governed by calendar years), as after the start of the academic year in February, all activities were suspended due to the state of emergency at the beginning of April. They were not taken up again throughout the year, which meant that the pupils of the *escolinha* (more than 120 boys and girls, aged between 3 and 6 years) could hardly attend it during the whole school year, which was almost completely lost.

On the other hand, the parish life has also been generally very affected, as celebrations, meetings and other planned activities could only be resumed from September onwards, progressively and with many limitations, moreover.

However, this does not mean that the work of Itaka-Escolapios Mozambique has been at a standstill throughout the year, far from it. A great effort has been made to be close to the population and to provide them with the maximum support for their needs in a very difficult situation, within our possibilities (which do not include online activity). It should not be forgotten that this is a population that already lives in conditions of widespread extreme poverty and is highly vulnerable.

The months of suspension of ordinary activities were also used to make progress on community initiatives with a great future for



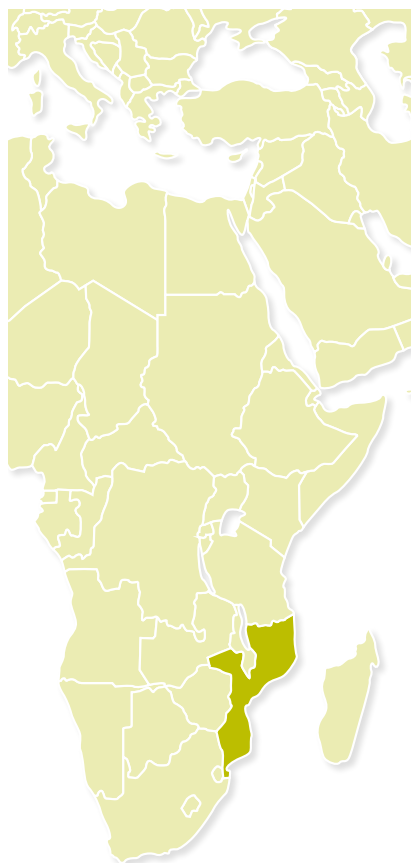


São Luiz Maria Grignon Parish in Montfort Mozambique

the mission, such as the project for the development of agriculture and agricultural training, which will improve living conditions, particularly food, and provide alternatives for young people. The school also carried out work to improve and extend the facilities, especially the *escolinha*, with a view to the long-awaited return of its pupils.

Moreover, while the impact of Covid-19 is minor in terms of contagions compared to other places (although it is worrying, as sanitary conditions are very precarious), there is another problem at the moment that is impacting the region more severely: the armed conflict in the area further north of Cabo Delgado, which is leaving thousands dead and hundreds of thousands displaced, as well as a lot of fear and destruction.

In this situation of conflict, the local Church of which we are members, with its bishop Luis



Fernando Lisboa at its lead, is being a reference point for its commitment to the people and its unwavering defence of peace and human rights, despite also suffering persecution.

In this context, the Piarist presence in Meza has seen dozens of families arriving daily, fleeing violence and looking for a place to seek refuge and subsistence. Given this humanitarian crisis, we have done what we can to help, welcoming these families and offering aid through the parish and Itaka-Escolapios, with food and other basic necessities.

# Small big steps

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**The 2019-2020 academic year was faced with enthusiasm and hope in the young reality of Itaka-Escolapios in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.**

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T

he projects initiated in Kikonka's presence were beginning to bear their first fruits: the women's group was expanding its production land; the newly renovated primary school was receiving books, desks, tables and chairs; water wells and latrines were to be built to improve the living conditions of the population; and the Calasanz Movement was preparing to develop its first awareness-raising campaign. Small steps in a complex context that is not free of humanitarian crises. The Piarist presence was beginning to be a point of reference in a population with very low human development indices.

The Covid-19 pandemic broke out and DRC, like the rest of the world, came to a standstill. Children stopped going to school, with no options for distance learning; women stopped training, although they could go farming; pastoral projects and actions were stopped; and the youth

movement was confined to their homes.

The social and economic impact has undoubtedly been far greater than the health impact. On top of already precarious socio-economic conditions, there has been a drastic decline in household incomes and the difficulty of returning to activities in the informal and formal economy. At the same time, the government has taken advantage of Covid-19 to cut budgets for social protection programmes and basic services. For example, teachers have not been paid since the start of the pandemic, which has meant an irregular start to the 2020-2021 school year.

Gradually, in July, new projects were taken up again, the 2019-2020 school year came to an end and the training process of the Kikonka women's group was concluded. In addition, work began in a new parish in Manenga

The social and economic impact has undoubtedly been far greater than the health impact

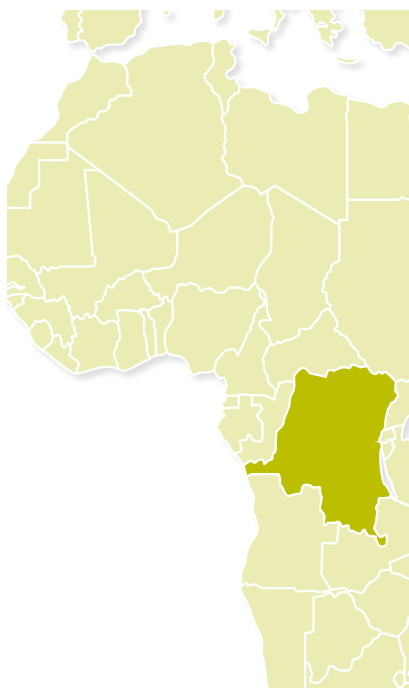


School in Kikonka

(Ngaliema-Kinshasa) where, besides pastoral activities, land was purchased for the construction of a secondary school.

At the end of August, at the same time as the end of the 2019-2020 academic year, this has been achieved:

- » women have been able to grow one hectare of land for agriculture. At the Women's Development Centre in Kikonka, 60 women are trained annually in literacy (French literacy), health and hygiene, agricultural techniques and other income-generating activities, and human values. During the 2019-20 academic year, a room equipped with sewing machines, didactic material, tables and chairs has been made available, which serves as a classroom and sewing and dressmaking workshop.
- » the construction of two drinking water wells in Kikonka



and the transfer of the land for the third well, guaranteeing the human right to water for 14,054 people (2,895 men, 3,361 women, 3,694 boys and 4,104 girls) in the five neighbourhoods of Kikonka.

- » the construction of latrines in the parish of San Pedro Kikonka, which guarantees access to improved sanitation, including gender-differentiated basic facilities, washbasins and toilet space in the women's area, to 245 people (192 women and 53 men) and to the population of Kikonka in general.
- » the start of the building of the nursery school in Kikonka.
- » the start of the construction of latrines at Saint Pierre Primary School in Kikonka.

This is combined with a process of capacity building for men, women and children.



# Reaching the most in need

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**The implementation of every project in Venezuela mobilises a large population of volunteers and beneficiaries. These are very busy days. The difficulty has arisen during the year 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic.**

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A

A very positive thing during this pandemic is growing in identity, solidarity and reinforcing knowledge with new strategies and ways to reach the children and young people in each project.

ttendance has been low compared to previous years. Keeping all the projects active has been difficult due to restrictions on isolation, use of space, care for the vulnerable and caution as a church in caring for others.

Only those projects with the neediest beneficiaries have been continued. The canteens have not stopped, measures were created to continue with this service: having fewer volunteers for the kitchen, distributing the food from house to house or collecting the food, the children's representatives creating schedules and responsible for areas to deliver the food to their neighbours, creating solidarity and service among them. Medical care and medicine deliveries continue. Regarding the cultural centres, everything has been put on hold until September 2020.

Doors are being opened to small groups respecting distancing and

security measures, to attend to school needs with school support and some workshop to help people to be distracted, that training if you can be cautious.

The Calasanz Movement has not been able to be completely active, but in some places the little ones are attended to with virtual catechesis. For those who do not have technological means of communication, the activity is taken to their homes, with the more adult stages and those with a small number of participants holding fortnightly or monthly face-to-face meetings.

During this time, we have taken advantage of this time to train volunteers, alternating between face-to-face and virtual training; the educators' school, offering virtual training via the WhatsApp platform for school staff and open to participation by anyone from the other platforms.

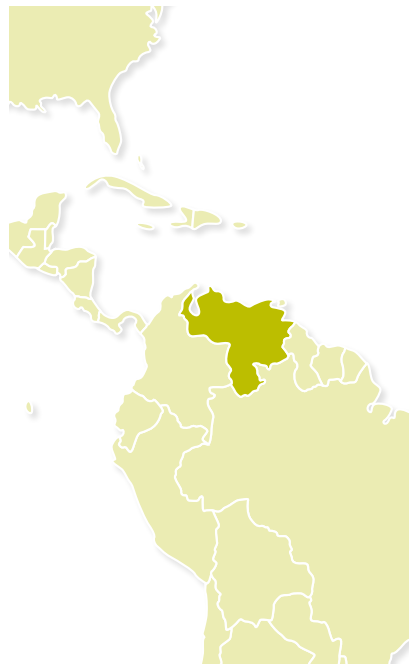


Calasanz Cultural Center. Carora

A very positive thing during this pandemic is growing in identity, solidarity and reinforcing knowledge with new strategies and ways to reach the children and young people in each project. Strengthening and generating alliances with other entities, making the foundation known as a Piarist organisation, carrying out campaigns in favour of children (toys, sweets, clothes for Christmas...).

For this new year 2021, Venezuela will continue with restrictions on schools that have not yet been activated in person, churches with half-open doors, fuel delivery almost non-existent, problems with the residential gas service, among other services that have worsened in the country for more than 2 years.

The Piarist mission does not rest, we will seek the means to continue serving those children, young and old most in need, looking for



smiles in this sailing in the midst of the complexity of the sea.



Food distribution

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# Economic impact

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**The network has refocused efforts on meeting the new needs brought about by the social and economic crisis unleashed by COVID-19, while at the same time monitoring the simultaneous decline in income experienced in all countries of the network.**

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**T**he COVID-19 health crisis and the measures taken by the countries have affected all the projects supported by the Itaka-Escolapios solidarity network. The progressive closure of face-to-face care in the projects, forced by mobility limitation measures or the confinements applied in the different locations, has meant that many of the projects have reduced their expenses, while at the same time new basic needs have arisen in the places where the Piarists are present.

However, incomes have also been affected everywhere. The impossibility for many economically vulnerable families to continue paying for their children's boarding or school fees or the difficulty of collecting money, among others, has led to a simultaneous decrease in income in all countries. In the network, the most noticeable effect has been felt in last year's solidarity campaign for socio-educational centres in America, which was already designed when the crisis broke out but had only been implemented in a few places. The campaign was maintained in some presences telematically, but, in economic terms, it has had an impact of 176,000 € in reduced revenue.

In April, in anticipation that the economic consequences could worsen, the network carried out a review of the current 2019-2020 budgets to adapt them to the situation in each country, redirecting efforts to telematic assistance in those projects that made it possible and to cover the new needs of the most vulnerable people in our projects. In anticipation of the economic difficulties that would ensue, countries reduced the deficit supported by the solidarity net-

work by 20%, 190,000 € less than already approved, despite suffering income losses everywhere. In Spain, the Itaka-Escolapios Foundation reduced its expenditure to 4.6 million €, below the 5.4 million € approved and even returning to figures prior to the previous year (4.9 million €).

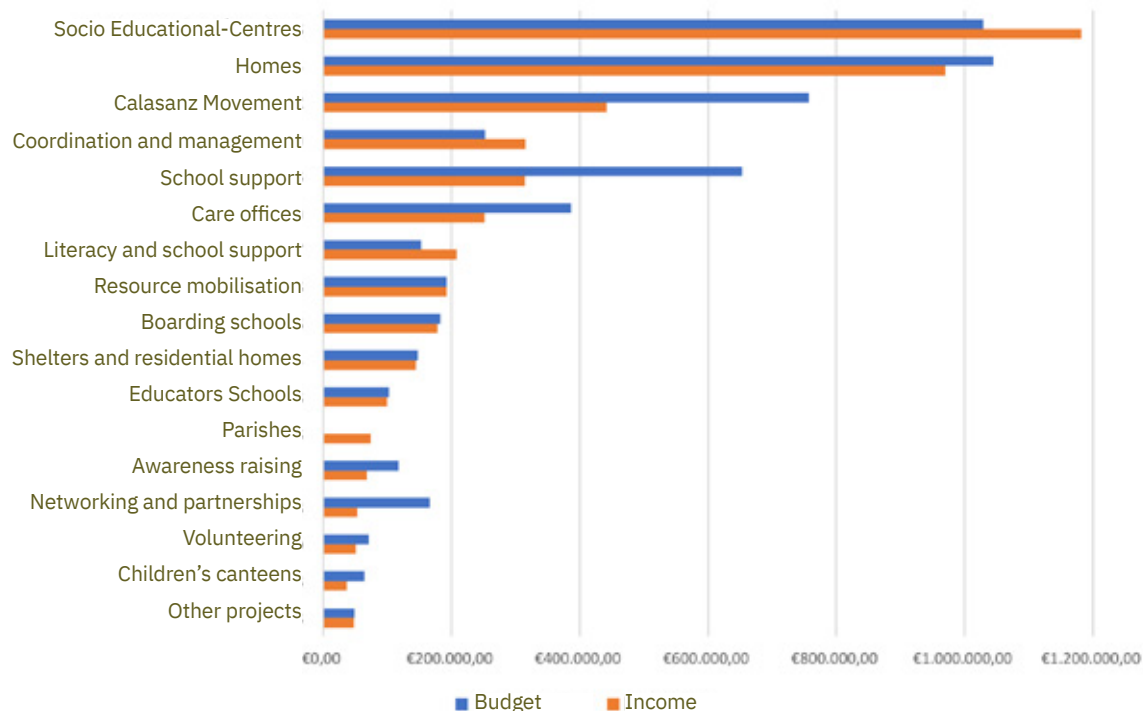
However, the drop in revenues achieved has been even greater. In addition to the impossibility of continuing the solidarity campaign as usual, there has been a logical decrease in income from the provision of services, only partly compensated by lower expenditure, as well as from other campaigns organised by the headquarters, which could not be maintained either. Although the 2020 subsidies have been collected, there are concerns about the effect of reorientation or cuts in subsidies in the coming years.

On the positive side, and especially to be welcomed, donations have not only not been reduced, but have exceeded pre-covid forecasts. The tithes of the fraternities and the contributions of the provinces, as well as the donations of the collaborating members, have increased. The response of solidarity has undoubtedly allowed us to maintain as much as possible the attention to the people in our projects while identifying and trying to support the new needs caused by the crisis.

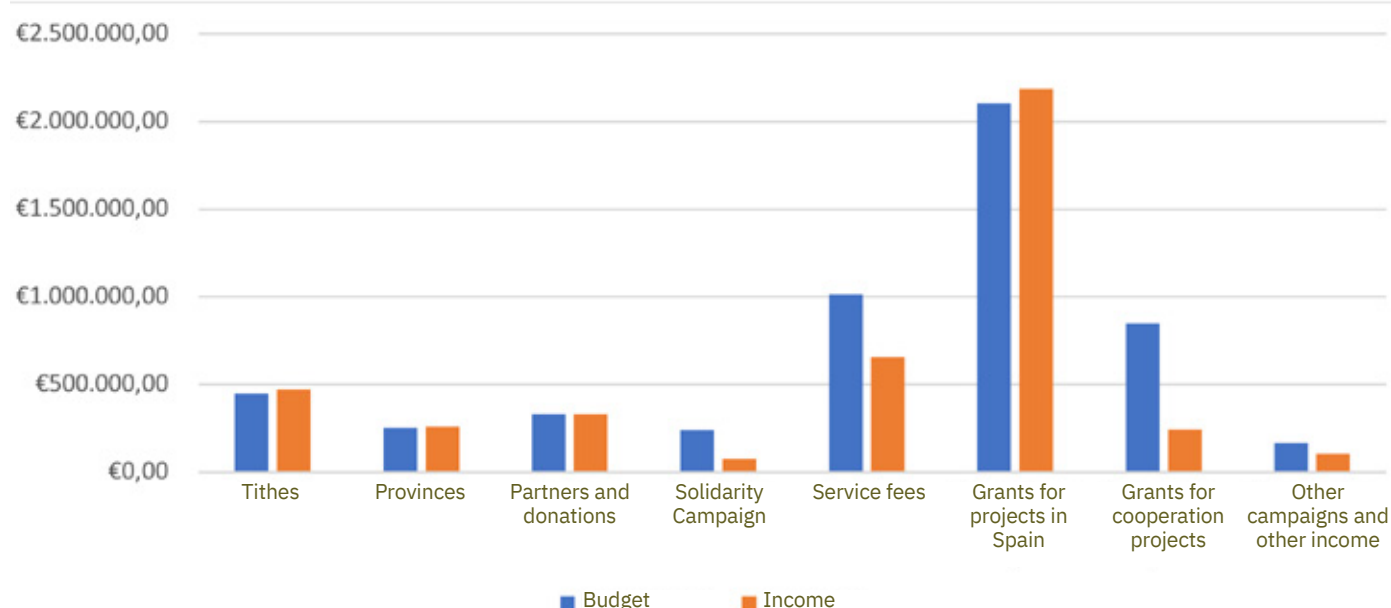


**The annual accounts of the Itaka-Escolapios Foundation will be approved at the next meeting of the Board of Trustees on 28 January 2021 and a full account of them, together with the audit report, will be made available on the Itaka-Escolapios website.**

**Expenses** of the Itaka-Escolapios network in Spain and projects supported in 15 other countries. Budget comparison of the 2019-2020 financial year and the implemented budget.



**Income** from the Itaka-Escolapios Foundation. Budget comparison of the 2019-2020 financial year and the implemented budget.



# Acknowledgements

**This year more than ever we would like to thank the hundreds of individuals who, as volunteers of Itaka-Escolapios, teachers at Piarist schools, collaborating members or who have contributed with their support to carry out our work.**



Special gratefulness and recognition also go to the Piarist districts and fraternities who, as founders and patrons of Itaka-Escolapios, bet and trust in this entity as a platform of solidarity.

Below is also a list of friendly organisations that support us through the Itaka-Escolapios Foundation in Spain.

Government of Spain: Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration.

Autonomous governments of Andalusia, Aragon, Navarre, Madrid, the Basque Country and the Valencian Community.

Provincial Councils of Alava, Granada, Guipúzcoa, Huesca, Teruel and Biscay

City Councils of Alcañiz, Andorra, Balmaseda, Berriozar, Bilbao, Cendea de Cizur, Cendea de Galar, Cuarte de Huerva, Ejea de los Caballeros, Erandio, Granada, Jaca, Logroño, Madrid, Monreal, Monzón, Pamplona, Tafalla, Tolosa, Tudela, Valencia, Vitoria and Zaragoza.

The municipal entity Bilbao Ekintza EPEL and the Basque Employment Service (Lanbide)

The foundations and social welfare projects of Bancaja, Bankia, Caja Granada, La Caixa, Ibercaja and Vital

The social and philanthropic foundations, Amanecer Maya, Carmen Gandarias, Enrique Esteve Balet (Enesba), Gondra Barandiarán, Menchaca de la Bodega and Víctor Tapia.

The ecclesial entities Manos Unidas, Religiosas del Sagrado Corazón, Parroquia Santa María de Tafalla and the Dioceses of Bilbao, Teruel and Vitoria.

Our supplier companies that, in addition to providing a good service, collaborate economically with our organisation; Autobuses Guillermo, Autobuses Hermanos Arriaga, Ausolan, Cianoplan, Giroa, Productos Vencedor, Veolia and Vistalegre.

And companies close to us, or not, that find in Itaka-Escolapios their platform of social responsibility; Consultoría and Mediación Corporativa S.A., Evolution C.B., Inmogestión, Julián Goñi e Hijos S.L., Residencia Naguspea and Vivisol.