

Overall Provincial Plan¹

(long or short term, 3-5 years)

Operative Model – Proposal 1

¹ Strategic plan for animation and government that accompanies the development and the continuity of the province (cfr. GC25, nos.82-84). It is a practical tool that helps reaching the aim of all the educative and pastoral resources within the province. It is also a point of reference for all the programmes and projects of communities and works (*SYM Frame of Reference*, 290-291.311).

Presentation (short introduction by the Provincial)

[Motivation, contents, aims and how the document evolved. It is good to indicate the sources and the basic points of reference that run through the reflections and guidelines of the OPP: General and Provincial Chapters, the Salesian Youth Ministry Frame of Reference, guidelines of the Church and the Congregation, etc.]

I. CONTEXT OF THE PROVINCE “ _____ ” (analysis of the reality)

[Short presentation of the socio-cultural and educative situation at a national, regional or continental level where we are present - 1 or 2 pages].

II. CENTRAL OPTIONS

[4 or 5 priorities in the form of general positive objectives that serve as an inspiration, and guide the development of the province as it takes shape within all our works]

Example:

- 1) Recognize the need for a gospel conversion which is personal, communitarian and as a province. Aiming at a **consecrated life that is a witness** that we are open to read the signs of the times.
- 2) Give priority to “**presence among the young**” as a response to be where they are to be found (new spaces and environments); strengthen the option for the poor and marginalized (family homes, structural interventions, relocating ourselves in densely populated city outskirts areas ...).
- 3) Invest more energy in a better **charismatic, educative and evangelical qualification** of the confreres and laity, through good pastoral **planning** which is in tune with the needs, demands and expectations of the young.
- 4) [...].

III. MAIN AREAS OF ACTION

[The OPP is the spiritual and operative ‘vademecum’ of the province for the next 3-5 years, that is, short or long term. It is, first, the result of the experience and sharing within the province, pointing out and naming the signs of the times. Secondly, the document is the expression of the journey that God is calling us to take. For this reason, we need to choose in a clear way 4 or 5 main areas for the coming years.]

*Various methods are available, for example, the method of the **Constitutions**:*

- consecration (primacy of God and spiritual life, fraternal life, observance of the vows, charismatic identity, etc.);
- salesian mission (geographical distribution of our presences, sectors of our educational intervention, criteria that need to be adopted for relocating our works or re-dimensioning of the same, educational interventions within the particular territory, etc.);
- formation (general analysis, initial formation, on-going formation, etc.);

*Or, following the nuclei of the **General Chapter**, etc.*

*Some provinces have tackled each of the 4 or 5 priority areas with the ‘**community discernment**’ method, following the method of «God’s call» -> «the situation» -> «lines of action», or, “listening” -> “reading” -> “path”].*

1. Our Consecration

***God’s call**, or, **what is God asking of us** (with our gaze fixed on God, on the Church and on Don Bosco, after having gone through the process of discernment, what do we see God is asking of us today).*

[...]

Our situation**, or, **how do we see the province

[At this point it is important to point out:

1. *a **chart of the salesian presences of the province**: the religious communities, works, pastoral sectors and settings of pastoral animation;*
2. *a **map of the present animation projects of the province**: Provincial Directory, Local Community Project, Provincial Formation Plan, Province SEPP, Vocation Animation Plan, Formation Plan for the Laity, Missionary Animation Plan, Salesian System of Social Communication, etc.;*

3. a brief presentation to **the context where we are present**, both the positive aspects and those which are challenging, fully aware that God speaks to us in the events that unfold around us].

[...]

What are we called to do [here **practical points that need to be put into action** are to be presented. These lines of action and decisions give a vision and time frame of what needs to be done, to favour a change both in mentality and structure. Lines of action are listed by way of importance. They indicate the importance that the province attaches to various areas. Various subjects are called to play a part (each salesian or lay, the religious community, the province, the provincial Council) and various areas (formation, ministry, administration, etc.).

These **few practical points** should be 'concrete' (they are the result of discernment as experienced within the provincial community, they are not drafted on a desk), 'necessary' (since they have been pointed out by many lay, confreres and community) and 'operational']

Example

- 1) At a personal level. Each salesian should each year draft his **life's project** so as to renew his own consecration and give more enthusiasm to his mission, thus assuring fidelity to his own prayer life and that of the community, to the sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation, and to spiritual direction.
- 2) At a community level. At least every three months, the Rector offers to the community the **experience of sharing the Word of God**, in the style of lectio divina, making use of the community meeting or through other similar initiatives (spiritual exercises, retreats, etc.).
- 3) At a provincial level. The provincial and his Council twice a year will organize a meeting for the **Rectors** to accompany and sustain them in their ministry through dialogue and exchange of experiences. [...]

2. Salesian Mission

[...]

3. Formation

[...]

IV. OPERATIVE CRITERIA

[The following criteria – maximum 5 or 6 – are meant to sustain the discernment of the life and action of the province: taking them into consideration will help to verify and understand whether the road taken is the right one. They are like fixed points in the **horizon against which each decision is taken**]

Example

- 1) Giving due **attention to the person of each confrere** appreciating his qualities, helping him in his difficulties, so that he can live his mission within the community in a way that he may fulfil his religious calling.
- 2) Renew the option to **give importance to the marginalized in all our presences and works**, to promote education towards responsible adulthood in our educational processes, to promote respect for human rights and social and political commitment.
- 3) Give life to the EPC by strengthening **community spirit and co-responsibility between salesians and lay collaborators** through reflection, sharing, prayer, and in putting into action those decisions that will help a true experience of Church.
[...]

V. GENERAL GUIDELINES IN TWO DISTINCT AREAS

1. Preparation of personnel

Example

- 1) *In view of strengthening salesian spiritual life the role of animation by the rector is essential. Those who have this mission need to be adequately prepared. For this reason it is advisable to have multiple roles.*
- 2) *Initial and on-going formation plans for salesians and lay who are entrusted with roles of responsibility (heads of schools, directors of TVET centres, lay with responsibility of oratories and centres for the marginalized) need to be present in the provincial Formation Plan as per local and provincial level. The office in charge of the formation sector in the province will study and offer proposals and criteria for specific formation for the laity. It prepares the right resources in view of lay formation.*
- 3) *Initial and on-going formation plan for lay and youth animators, on provincial and local levels, needs to be presented explicitly in the Province SEPP. Those entitled to specific formation are: administrators, teachers of schools and TVET centres, non-teaching staff, professional educators, catechists, group animators, sport animators, cultural animators, volunteers.*
- 4) *In the budget projections, both at local and provincial levels, provision needs to be made for the item of formation for salesians and lay. [...]*

2. Economic and structural development

Example

- 1) *We intend to proceed in the way of an equal distribution of resources: of our works and personnel, with special attention to poorer and more needy areas. In connection with this, attention needs to be given as to how invest the economic resources that come to us through providence, our work and our benefactors. Priority needs to be focused on the mission for the young in a way that a true journey of evangelisation can occur. Such investments are to be geared towards projects that assure sustainability of their structures.*
- 2) *A criterion of evaluation of our works, amongst others, needs to be that of assuring a financial balance and offer part of the resources towards solidarity in the province. Our action needs to be sustainable and fruitful. We should avoid the logic of debts that future generations will have to pay, a logic so much present in today's society. Rather, it is our call to facilitate for future Salesians a serene commitment in youth ministry.*
- 3) *We need to study, deepen and experience good collaboration with lay people, especially in areas of competence, that may result in a positive support of our works.*
- 4) *Many activities are managed, or will be managed by outside agents (associations or persons); while they are being handed on to others, may such collaborations never lose their being part of the salesian mission and still keep a transparent management.*