

FACT SHEET: SALESIAN MISSIONS

ABOUT SALESIAN MISSIONS

- Salesian Missions is headquartered in New Rochelle, NY. The mission of the U.S.-based nonprofit Catholic organization is to raise funds for its international programs that serve youth and families in poor communities around the globe. The Salesian missionaries are made up of priests, brothers and sisters, as well as laypeople – all dedicated to caring for poor children around the globe in more than **130 countries**, helping young people become self-sufficient by learning a trade that will help them gain employment.
- To date, more than **3 million youth** have received services funded by Salesian Missions.
- These services and programs are provided to children regardless of race or religion.
- To date, more than **5 million Americans** have contributed financially to this work.
- The focus of the international work is to not just provide for the youth of the world, but to teach them how to provide for themselves, their families and their communities.
- Therefore, each program is embedded into the local community and is customized for their needs.
- Several different types of programs are offered in these countries around the globe. They include: vocational and technical education, life skills training, feeding programs, disease education and prevention programs, health programs, and more.
- While its impact has been huge globally throughout the past **60 years**, the work funded by Salesian Missions has gone on without much acclaim.
- To continue to raise funds and raise awareness of the needs of youth and poor communities around the globe, Salesian Missions is preparing its first-ever national awareness effort to launch this April.

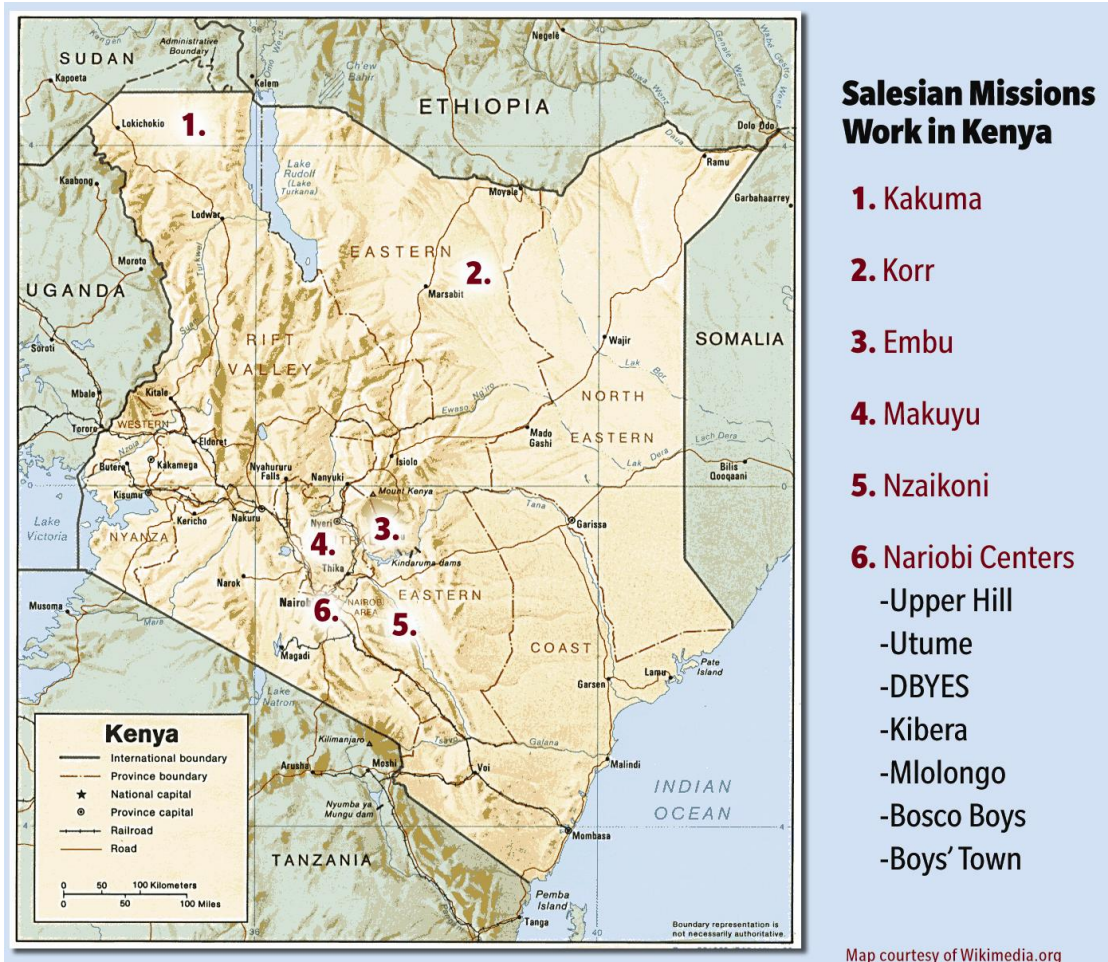
KENYA FAST FACTS

- Salesian Missions operates 10 centers in Kenya, 27 total in Kenya, Sudan, Uganda and Tanzania. (See map graphic provided with this press kit).
- Salesian programs in Kenya are currently serving more than **12,000 children in Kenya** – i.e. training institutions and schools (approx. 2000); Life Choices program (approx. 10,000).
- There are 159 Salesian Missions workers in this region with Nairobi as its headquarters.
- **In Kenya, to date 40,000 children** have been served through the Life Choices Program
- **In Kenya, there are more than 20,000 educational training centers and 100,000 children receive help through church programs/activities.**
- Salesian Missions began its work in Eastern Africa in 1981.
- They began providing programs in Kenya in 1992.
- Currently there are **350 youth** receiving educational services in the technical school in Embu and more than **2,000** in communities in Kenya.

SALESIAN TOWN CENTERS IN KENYA

- *Embu*
- *Kakuma*
- *Korr*
- *Makuyu*
- *Nairobi*
- *Upper Hill*
- *Don Bosco Utume*
- *Catholic Church Nzaikoni*

OF SPECIAL NOTE: Kakuma and Korr are arid and marginalized regions of Kenya with many social and economic challenges which reflect adversely on the people living there.



To accompany release: "Obama inauguration sheds light on Kenya and its people" Jan. 22, 2009

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POSITIVE RESULTS OF THE SALESIAN WORK IN KENYA

The Salesian Missions centers are the abode of the young with all their problems, potentialities and possibilities. By empowering the youth, the youth and their communities benefit. The positive impacts include the following:

- Creation of skilled labor
- Provision of job opportunities after completion of the training
- Rehabilitation of street children has made them valued in the society
- The street children act as role models to their peers hence reducing the number of would-be street children
- Reduction in crime rate since the street children are inculcated with positive living values and mentored to become useful members of the society
- Reduction in poverty levels since many youth are able to find gainful employment after completion

HIGHLIGHTS AT A GLANCE:

- In Kenya, Salesians have been training Sudanese refugees for more than 10 years, providing them with short term and long-term (3 year) courses in skills training for jobs that would enable them to earn a decent income upon their return to their homes or integration into host countries. Salesian Missions is currently working with 67,600 Sudanese refugees in the Kakuma, Kenya refugee camp, providing basic education and health services, as well as social services.
- Kakuma, Kenya: **In 2000, the camp contained 72,000 persons. There was also a group of 4,000** young males without relatives, the so-called “lost boys,” who fled from Sudan without their families and banded together for mutual support. Many of these “lost boys” have been settled in the USA.
- **To date “Life Choices” has reached more than 115,000 youth.** At its end, the program will reach more than 150,000 youth in all three countries in Eastern Africa. (See pg 4.)
- **Bosco Boys Langata:** This center was established in 1994 and is now our reception center. New boys who join the project are first sent to this center for rehabilitation. About 20-30 boys stay in this center. Here the boys get the opportunity to rehabilitate themselves from drug use and unhealthy lifestyles.
- **Bosco Boys Kuwinda:** At present, there are 163 boys staying here on week days. There is also boarding for the formal primary school students. From the center, 18 boys perform social work in the slum of Kuwinda. About 35 children attend the nursery school.

CONDITIONS AND CHALLENGES STILL FACED BY THE PEOPLE OF KENYA:

- Limited funds to assist additional deserving people.
- High expectations for more support from the poor communities than the Salesians can meet.
- Increasing number of destitute children as a result of HIV/AIDS pandemic and poverty.
- Transition rate from primary to secondary schools is still a challenge because of the high cost of education.
- Social misconception about vocational trainings as compared to formal education.
- Exploitation of girls due to the high poverty rates.
- Gender-Equity imbalance – making girls drop out of school due to teen pregnancies. There are about 10,000 – 15,000 girls involved.
- Life Skills education not in school curriculum until this year hence high number of children having sex before they are 15 hence exposure to HIV infection.
- Educating parents in order for them to freely discuss certain subjects with their children.
- Negative mass media influence to the target youth since it seems to glorify risky behaviors and glamour.
- Food insecurity in Arid areas e.g Korr, Kakuma and slums increases the communities expectations of the Salesians in terms of support regardless of the limited resources.
- Refugees' employment in Kakuma is still difficult due to the challenges of obtaining work permit as required by the law for foreigners to work in Kenya.
- Difficulties in tracing the students who relocate to their rural homes makes it difficult to take advantage of the job opportunities given by local companies.

WHAT IS THE LIFE CHOICES PROGRAM?

The Salesian Missions “Life Choices Program” is a peer led HIV/AIDS prevention AND Life Skills program implemented at youth centers, schools, orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) centers, and community/social outreach programs targeted at Kenyan youth (ages 10 to 19). To ensure that high risk youth are reached, regardless of social standing, peer educators have been selected and trained based on their commitment to volunteer for HIV/AIDS prevention activities from the entire spectrum of youth social niches and cliques. The program addresses a variety of issues such as: gender issues - sexual violence, coercion, trans-generational sex, male norms, stigma and discrimination. Through this program, the Salesians are supporting the Kenya government's efforts to promote HIV prevention among the youth. So far the program has reached 40,000 youth.

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