



Media release – for immediate release

Education for All Appeal



Sadly, many children in Asia and the Pacific can't go to school or access a quality education.

Imagine if your child or grandchild couldn't access drinking water at school? Or study there safely? Young people face barriers every day preventing access to education.

Helping disadvantaged children in Asia and the Pacific access education is the focus of this year's Australian Marist Solidarity mid-year campaign.

The Education for All Appeal aims to give every child the opportunity to learn.

Young people like Davi*, a 9-year-old-boy in Timor-Leste, who is currently unable to attend school.

Davi desperately wants to go to school. Instead, he helps his father, an agricultural day worker, in the fields near their rural village.

There is a school close by, but it's too dangerous to attend. The structure is decaying and the roof leaks zinc into the classrooms, making it toxic and unsafe.

So now the nearest school is more than two hours by road – making education for Davi and his four siblings currently impossible.

Nearly all the schools and learning materials in Timor-Leste were destroyed in 1999 and the country is still struggling to rebuild, with life-long consequences for its young people.

Half the children enrolled in grade two will not even make it to grade five.

Even those who can attend school, only do so for half a day – there's just not enough teachers, classrooms, or materials to go around.

AMS CEO Rebecca Bromhead said donations to the appeal will help fund safer, better learning environments, quality education and learning support for children such as Davi.

"AMS has a long history of upgrading schools in Timor-Leste," she said.

"Schools like St Terezinha's in Quelicai, which is the 12th school we have helped rebuild.

"Donations to the Education for All Appeal will help children like Davi go to school.

"Education is life changing. It reduces poverty, decreases social inequalities, empowers young people, and enables them to reach their full potential.

"With your support, AMS can make investments in education in places like Timor-Leste and help young people like Davi learn and thrive."

Previous AMS campaigns have successfully funded diverse education projects, such as the 2021 Let Children Learn Appeal to expand senior high school in Bougainville.

There are only four senior high schools in all of Bougainville, so only one in four students can complete their full secondary education.

Thanks to generous Australians, building of classrooms and accommodation has already commenced at St Joseph's College in Mabiri. This will allow the school to accept students for senior high school study in 2023. It will also become just the fifth senior high school in Bougainville.

The Education for All Appeal runs until 30 June and all donations are tax deductible.

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Australian Marist Solidarity (AMS) is the agency for the aid and development work of the Marist Province of Australia throughout Asia and the Pacific Islands. AMS works with the people in this region on a combination of long-term and short-term development projects. These projects aim to develop, or support, locally sustained education opportunities for the young people in these regions.