

PROVINCE SAINT RICHARD PAMPURI D'AFRIQUE

PREPARATORY WORK FOR THE GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE HOSPITABLE ORDER OF SAINT JOHN OF GOD

WORK BY THE SENSING GROUPS

WRITTEN REPORT ON THE SENSING GROUP WORK

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

Provincial coordinator: Mr Gérard DALAKENA

NUMBER OF SENSING GROUPS	LIST OF TOPICS	GROUP COMPOSITION
06	1. Our centres confronted by the financial crisis	<u>Brothers :</u> 1. TCHOU Parfait Mèhèza <u>Co-workers :</u> 1. KODJOVI Défor 2. MEDENOU Baudoin 3. ODJO Mireille 4. EKLOU Lydia
	2. The life of the Brothers	<u>Brothers :</u> 1. GNAMI Léopold 2. KEZIE Jonas 3. ALOULA Ignace <u>Co-workers :</u> 1. AMEGNIKPO Koffi
	3. Shared mission (Brothers, Co-workers, technical and financial partners, government institutions)	<u>Brothers :</u> 1. ALOUADJOU Victor 2. KOUDAHE Bernard <u>Co-workers :</u> 1. GAYITO René 2. SOSSA Marielle
	4. Ecological Management of the Centres	<u>Brothers :</u> 1. N'SALE Nicolas 2. SANHONGOU Fidèle <u>Co-workers :</u> 1. AZAKPA Léopold 2. DALAKENA Gérard
	5. Adapting our charism to the new social situations	<u>Brothers/Priests:</u> 1. Brother ATILAN Marcel 2. Father SOSSOE Théodore <u>Co-workers :</u> 1. ZITTI Luiz 2. OURO-SAMA Salifou

	<p>6. Good governance of the Province's centres (human and financial resources)</p>	<p><u>Brothers :</u> 1 Henri GBABA 2. Abraham ADAVON <u>Co-workers :</u> 1. Dr AHLOU Renaud (Coordinator) 2. Mr KOUAMIMA Damien 3. Mr. PETONI KODAR Mouhaman</p>
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B. SUMMARY OF TOPICS COVERED

I. Theme 1: *The Province of Saint Richard Pampuri Centres confronted by the financial crisis*

II. Why did you choose this theme?

This theme was chosen in view of the financial difficulties facing almost all the centres in the Province and the current global financial crisis, in order to help the Province deal with this situation over the next six years.

III. What surprised you about the experience dealing with this topic and what it generated?

- ☞ The financial crisis facing our facilities is not only linked to the global situation, but is also partly linked to problems of poor governance within our facilities during the past few years.
- ☞ The impression of some people who maintain that our facilities are not facing a financial crisis.

IV. What did you discover? What have been the conclusions you have drawn from this topic?

- ☞ Serious problems in implementing the recommendations of the experts and the audits carried out over several years to improve the management of the centres.
- ☞ Some managers do not agree with the procedures for improving the management and are reluctant to implement the recommendations.

V. What did this confirm for you?

The need for rigorous charismatic management of the centres.

We must improve the skills of the Brothers and Co.workers involved in management.

VI. What assumption/biases have you had to abandon?

Always expecting help from outside (Western partners) to run our centres and to care for the needy.

VII. What key questions has this process raised for your Province in the future?

- ☞ The relevance of entrusting the management of the facilities to the Co-workers in our Province;
- ☞ Awareness of the responsibility taken on by the management of the Province's centres: What type of authority does management have to implement recommendations and what are the possible penalties for not doing so?
- ☞ What system can we put in place to limit the debts our facilities have incurred by caring for the most impoverished people?

VIII. And for the Order as a whole?

What mechanism or approach should be adopted in a collective effort to guarantee the continuity of the Order's mission in all the Provinces, especially in assisting those most in need?

I. Topic 2: The life of the Brothers

II. Why did you choose this theme?

To gauge the evolution of the life of the Brothers and their impact on the charism in the life of the mission.

III. What surprised you about the experience you had in dealing with this subject and what it generated?

- ☞ In the life of the mission, most Co-workers appreciate managing the centres by delegating duties, the quality of the human resources and the constant improvement of our technical facilities,
- ☞ The scant interest by the Brothers and Co-workers in the survey questionnaires. This would explain why we have been negligent in the process leading up to the organisation of the General Chapter.
- ☞ The retention rate of Brothers in formation in both the novitiate and the scholasticate has been 94.97% and 92.50%, respectively, over the last ten years. This situation shows us that the Order still has a promising future in Africa and more particularly in the Province of Saint Richard Pampuri.

IV. What did you discover? What are the main conclusions you have drawn from this theme?

- ☞ Most of the brothers say they are proud to belong to the Hospitaller Order.
- ☞ The collaboration between the Brothers and the Co-workers is not consistent with the Order's magisterium.
- ☞ According to the Co-workers, the charism of Saint John of God is being proclaimed well, but practised less, by the young Brothers;
- ☞ There are shortcomings in the management of financial and material resources.

V. What did this confirm for you?

There is a need to strengthen the mechanism for the senior Brothers and their leadership to transmit the values of the Order both to the young Brothers and to the Co-workers.

VI. What assumptions/biases have you had to abandon?

Anything that is recognised as being out of step with the work required and that constitutes an invasion of the Brothers' private lives has been ruled out.

VII. What key questions has this process raised for your Province in the future?

Enhancing the spirit of solidarity between the Province's centres.

VIII. And for the Order as a whole?

Enhancing the spirit of solidarity between the Provinces of the Order.

I- Topic 3: Shared mission

II- Why did you choose this topic?

To get an in-depth picture of the state of collaboration between the Brothers of Saint John of God, their Co-workers and partners.

III- What surprised you about the experience you had in dealing with this subject and what it generated?

Many Co-workers do not share the way in which this mission is being lived.

The Co-workers interviewed felt involved in the mission.

IV- What did you discover? What are the main conclusions you have drawn from this topic?

To truly understand the mission to which the Order is calling us, we must begin by understanding the values it is defending. These values must be taught, updated and lived harmoniously within the Province. They include :

- ☞ Promoting and defending the rights of the sick and needy, taking into account their personal dignity
- ☞ Valuing and fostering the professional qualities and skills of the Co-workers, encouraging them to participate actively in the Order's care and apostolic mission, and inviting them to take part in decision-making in the centres according to their respective aptitudes and responsibilities.

Viewed as a challenge, the next six years must be a journey of bearing witness. Witness in the sense of making the various bodies involved in this mission the guardians of the charism of Saint John of God. From now on, the Co-workers and partners must be prophets of hope and dignity.

V- What did this confirm for you?

This experience confirms that there is still work to be done on our shared mission.

VI- What assumptions or biases have you had to abandon?

Improving salary conditions was emphasised by all the respondents, but it was omitted in this report. Added to this is the medical care of our staff, which is becoming increasingly precarious in our hospitals year by year.

VII- What key questions has this process raised for your Province in the future?

- ☞ How can we improve the quality of collaboration between Brothers and Co-workers?
- ☞ What other partnership approaches could be developed between the Province's partners and Centres?

VIII- And for the Order as a whole?

- ☞ How can we ensure the long-term future of our hospitals throughout the Order?
- ☞ How can we uphold the reputation of the Saint John of God hospitals in the various countries?

I- Topic 4: *Ecological management of the Saint John of God hospitaller facilities*

II- Why did you choose this topic?

The environment plays a key role in determining health, and the healthcare sector leaves a significant ecological footprint in terms of energy consumption, biomedical waste production and the management of a variety of physical, biological and mechanical vectors that constitute risk factors for hospital-borne infections.

III- What surprised you about the experience you had in dealing with this subject and what it generated?

The respondents were aware of the dangers associated with biomedical waste and environmental protection. This gave us the impetus to delve more deeply into the issue.

IV- What did you discover? What are the main conclusions you have drawn from this topic?

- ☞ Biomedical waste management (liquid and solid) is inadequate and is becoming a source of discomfort and infection
- ☞ Some defective infrastructures are becoming breeding grounds for insects and animals, posing a risk to health
- ☞ The upkeep of the land inside the hospitals is inadequate, posing a risk of breeding dangerous animals and insects (reptiles, mosquitoes and others).
- ☞ The machinery and equipment produce fumes and are a source of noise pollution. This pollutes the air and disturbs patients' ability to rest.

These discoveries have a negative impact on the ecological state of the works and call for an in-depth investigation of this situation.

V- What did this confirm for you?

This confirmed the inadequate management of biomedical waste, the insufficient use of renewable energy and the lack of protection of biodiversity.

VI- What are the key questions that this process has raised for your Province in the future?

- ☞ How can we set up a system to increase the use of renewable energy?
- ☞ What eco-responsible policy should be implemented for biomedical waste management?
- ☞ How can we improve the protection of biodiversity without harming plants and animals?

VII- What are the key questions that this process has enabled you to raise for the Order as a whole?

What policy for sharing positive experiences of ecological management should be put in place throughout the Order?

I. Topic 5: *Adapting our charism to the new social situation*

II. Why did you choose this theme?

Starting from the assertion that Hospitality is the flagship value of the Hospitaller Order of the Brothers of St John of God, and that this charism is one of the distinctive pillars of the African Province of St Richard Pampuri, adapting the charism of the Order to the newly-arising social situations unquestionably requires us to address how Hospitality has to confront them.

III. What surprised you about the experience you had in dealing with this subject and what it generated?

The interviewees were unanimous in their praise for the hospitality shown by our centres in a West African context where there is little health insurance cover and care for the people and communities with low purchasing power.

VI. What did you discover? What are the main conclusions you have drawn from this topic?

Hospitality really means 'salvation' for many communities and populations. However, people fear that this charism will decline or even disappear one day.

Current social changes require us to refocus our attention not only on recovering costs, but also on offering hospitality in the face of dwindling resources.

V. What did this confirm for you?

Hospitality is intrinsically linked to the growing need for care and assistance for the vulnerable and increasingly marginalised populations.

VI. What assumptions/biases have you had to abandon?

We have had to abandon the idea of any absolute equality in social care and support.

VII. What key issues has this process raised for your Province in the future?

It is vitally important for us to continue serving the public by meeting their medical and social needs, in areas that are often neglected by the public authorities.

- How can we find the resources needed to redistribute resources and provide adequate care for vulnerable groups?
- How can we gradually help these vulnerable populations to emerge from their current difficult living conditions?
- How can we keep the Brothers and Co-workers faithful to this essential and enduring vision of hospitality?

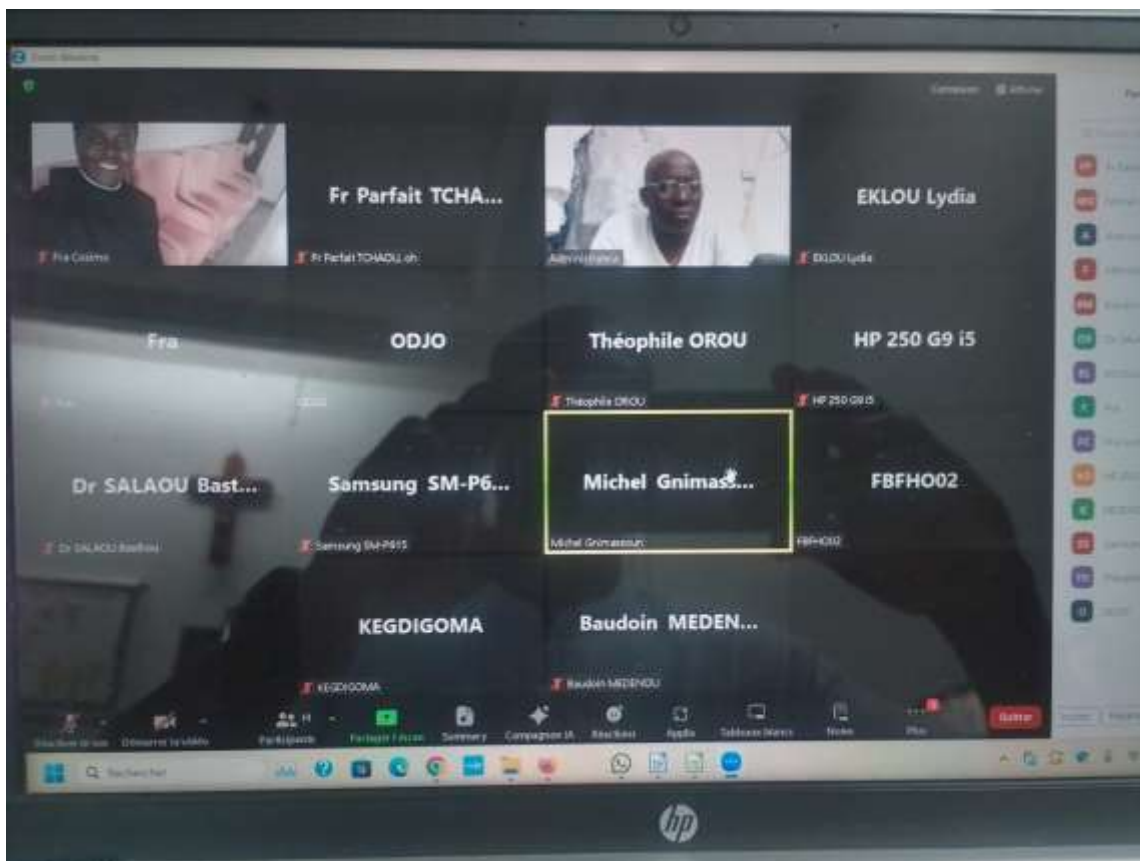
VIII. What about the Order as a whole?

We must continue to act as a link between the needy, philanthropists and the basic, high-quality health and social services offered to communities of all means and affiliations. And we must do so with quality.

Topic 6: Good governance of the Province's facilities (human and financial resources)

C- Description of the work of the sensing groups

The sensing groups used different approaches to deepen their understanding of their topic. Videoconferences, information-gathering sheets, group discussion sessions, user surveys, interviews, etc. were just some of the methods used by the provincial groups to broaden and deepen their understanding of the topics selected by the provincial government as part of the ground work for the General Chapter.



a- Videoconference led by an economist on the financial situation of the Province's centres



b- A group of Tanguiéta Hospital Co-workers discussing the topic "The shared mission".



c-Meeting of the coordinators of the sensing groups in the Province of Saint Richard Pampuri.