

# Constitutions and Statutes of RELAF

## CONSTITUTIONS

« Unity of heart and mind among the Brothers of the Region and all those who are committed to the mission is established and increases through effective communication and exchanges. The Region enables those who work in it to co-operate and benefit from a common vitality, as well as from a closer contact with the Centre of the Institute. » R. 135

### **1-Pastoral Ministry of Vocations and memory of the Lasallian Mission in Africa.**

We find the origin of our different vocations in the great figures of the Lasallian Educational Mission like Brother Raphaël Louis Rafiringa (1856-1919) beatified in 2009. The intercession and influence of our Brothers and Lasallians are powerful means for pastoral of vocations. The history and memory of the pioneers of the Lasallian Educational Mission in Africa, most of which is still unknown, is deserved to be written and valued.

*« For a pastoral ministry of vocations to become an effective invitation to share the life of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, it is necessary: – that by their own lives, the Brothers witness to the presence of God among people, to the liberating force of his Spirit, and to the tenderness of his love; – that communities which make a point of being open and welcoming, put into practice, in a fraternal and apostolic way, the words of the Gospel “Come and see”; – that the Institute works effectively to renew itself by responding to the most urgent needs of the world of young people waiting to be evangelised.» R. 86*

*« The pastoral ministry of vocations normally depends on the educational values of the establishments and movements that young people and adults belong to. The promotion of a culture which takes vocations into account makes individuals aware of their gifts and invites them to put them at the service of others. » R 84.2*  
*«First-hand experience of the poor through voluntary service, and living and working with them, offers young people the opportunity to understand the value of a vocation and the service of others. » R 84.*

### **2-The Lasallian Mission in Africa:**

Seized by the situation of abandonment of the many children left themselves in our continent mainly in urban areas and in response to the contemplation of the salvation plan of God, We, Brothers of the African Region and Lay

Lasallians associate ourselves to the Lasallian charism, in order to create and to reach the most unprivileged through quality works for human and Christian education in a context where education tend to be reduced into business assets.

**The institute invites us to strengthen our solidarity and at the same time to be self-sufficient.** We understand that the main objective of the Institute's policy is our *self-management* at the local level with self-sufficiency of qualified personnel and finances and her Educational Mission. The community and the Mission are, in this sense, two different domains of action. If it seems unrealistic to aim for short-term self-sufficiency, we must however adopt good management practices and investment for a self-management. The self-management of our Districts, Delegation and our Region is for us a question of dignity and responsibility.

### **3-Our vision towards the 46<sup>th</sup> General Chapter**

**Without realism, vision provides no dynamism and will transform us in no way. But realism without the spirit of faith may be simply paralyzing.**

« For John Baptist de La Salle, the Christian education of the poor is the work of God and must be carried out by men led by the Holy Spirit. He invited the Brothers to unify their life: "*Make no distinction between the affairs proper to your state and those of your salvation and perfection*". Faced with the challenges encountered in his ministry and in his personal and community life, the Brother recognizes an invitation from God to deepen his communion with him, with his Brothers and with those entrusted to him. » R 63

Taking into account the different propositions of the Acts of the 45<sup>th</sup> General Chapter, our Region develops its own vision on the following points: ***communication, association and lasallian mission of education (CIAMEL), bilingualism, higher education, self-management, a significant common work of our option for the most unprivileged, catechism, Pastoral Ministry of Vocations.***

### **4-The Structures for the unity of the Region:**

To achieve the objectives of her vision, the Region has set up effective structures. These are mainly :

- The Regional Office. Its running depends on the financial resources and on the personnel of the Region.
- Project Office which should manage projects in the Region.

- Restructuring: undergoing process that should reinforce the unity of the Region.
- Committee for the project of a Lasallian University in Africa.

## **STATUTES**

### **PREAMBLE – NAME**

In accordance with the orientation given by the Rule (R.135) and guided by a care for unity, dialogue and collaboration, the Districts and Delegation of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Africa associate into a Region called Lasallian Region of Africa (RELAF).

Being an expression of “the unity of hearts and minds among the Brothers” of the Region, the RELAF embodies the link that unites them to one another, to the Centre of the Institute and to the Institute as a whole.

### **1. MEMBERS**

1.1. In accordance with Article 135.1 of the Rule, RELAF is composed of Districts: Central Africa, West Africa, Antananarivo, Charles Lwanga of Africa, Congo Kinshasa, Gulf of Benin, and the Delegation of Rwanda.

1.2. Can be associated to RELAF other African sectors which, sharing the objectives formulated hereafter, adhere to the present statutes in accordance with Article 136 of the Rule.

### **2. OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of RELAF are:

- Reinforcing the unity of the Institute in Africa and the collaboration between the Districts and the Delegation;
- The embodiment and flourishing of the Lasallian charism in Africa, in communion with the local Church;
- The reflection about and development of programmes in favour of initial and ongoing formation;
- Research and action in the fields of education and evangelization;
- Studying and addressing specific problems: formation, new works, and exchange of personnel...

### **3. REGIONAL STRUCTURES**

To fulfil these objectives, the Region sets up the following structures:

### 3.1. The Regional Assembly for the Lasallian Educational Mission

3.1.1 RELAF holds at least one regional assembly between two General Chapters.

3.1.2. The participants of this Assembly are:

- The Participants in the Conference of Brother Visitors
- Elected Brothers delegates whose number is determined by the Conference of the Visiting Brothers,
- Directors of common structures: Novitiates, Scholasticate, CELAF, CTIE, and regional service staff.
- Elected delegates of Lasallian collaborators whose number and eligibility is defined by the Conference of the Brother Visitors.

3.1.3. The Conference of Brother Visitors is entitled to invite resource persons to the Regional Assembly.

3.1.4. The aims of the Assembly are:

- to evaluate the previous period;
- to appropriate the Acts of the General Chapter;
- to study particular subjects in relation with the Church and the Institute in Africa;
- to give orientations to MEL for the years to come;
- to approve the statutes and its possible modifications

3.1.5. The Conference of Brother Visitors elaborates and revises the **Interior Regulations** of the functioning of the Assembly.

### 3.2. **The conference of Brother Visitors.**

3.2.1. The goals of the Conference of Brother Visitors are:

- To be a supporting body in the service of the unity of the Region;
- To be a supporting body of the mission at the Regional level;

3.2.2. The Participants in the Conference of Brother Visitors are:

- the Brother General Councilor for the Region
- the Brother Visitors and Auxiliary Visitors of the Districts;
- the Brother Delegate and the President of the Delegation;

The Sector Coordinators can be invited to the Conference of Brother Visitors when the circumstances require it and the financial resources allow it. The Regional Team supports the work of the Conference of Brother Visitors.

3.2.3. The tasks of the Conference of Brother Visitors are:

- to organise the Regional Assembly for the lasallian educational mission;
- to carry out the decisions of the Regional Assembly;
- to evaluate the proposals two years after the previous Assembly;
- to adopt an Internal Regulation according to the orientations of the the RELAF Statutes;
- to prepare the next General Chapter;
- to ensure the preparation of formation personnel.
- Assess and approve reports and projects of common formation structures

3.2.4. The Conference of Brother Visitors holds a meeting at least once a year.

3.2.5. The Conference of Brother Visitors is bound to provide the personnel necessary to the good functioning of the services or ministries assumed by the Region.

### 3.3. **The Regional Commission for formation**

“All the Brothers, and in particular those responsible for formation, are careful, when dealing with candidates, to take into account their age, their culture, their social background, the level of their religious, intellectual and professional training, and their personal experience of the Church and of the Institute.” R. 88

#### 3.3.1. **The regional commission for formation will have the tasks:**

- To write an initial formation plan for the Region
- To examine the formation house program
- To examine reports and projects of formation houses
- To organize every two years a formation session and a joint retreat for all the Brothers who are preparing for the perpetual profession.
- Implement **the formation strategies** contained in the RELAF Strategic Plan

3.3.2. The Regional Commission for formation is composed of:

- The regional coordinator of MEL, (Coordinator of the commission)
- The regional coordinator of pastoral ministry of vocations
- The regional secretary (secretary of commission)
- Directors of both the novitiates and Scholasticate of the Region

All activities of the Regional Commission for Formation will be presented to the Conference of Brother Visitors for approval.

### **3.4. The Brother General Councilor for RELAF**

3.4.1. RELAF has a permanent representative: it is the General Councilor for RELAF elected at the General Chapter (cf. 45<sup>th</sup> General Chapter).

3.4.2. The Brother GCFR is by right the President of the Conference of Brother Visitors.

3.4.3. The GCFR plays a role of coordination and unity within the Region; He “fosters communication among the Brother Visitors of the Region, and supports them in their mission. He ensures that the Region remains in contact with the Brother Superior General. He follows up the application of decisions and programmes adopted for the Region as a whole. He fosters also cooperation and interdependence within the Region, as well as between it and other Regions.” (R. 136.2). He can be conferred a role of decision and authority in certain areas or in some cases by delegation of the Brother Superior General or if the Statutes approved by the Brother Superior General and his Council allow for it. (See. R. 136.1).

3.4.4. Being an expression of the unity of the Region and personifying contact with the Centre of the Institute, the tasks of the General Councilor for RELAF are:

- to be responsible for the Regional Services;
- to appoint, if needed, a Brother Visitor to represent him;
- to foster the exchange of personnel within the Region as needed;
- to convoke the Conference of Brother Visitors and to ensure that its decisions are carried out;
- to convoke the Regional Assembly, in agreement with the Conference of Brother Visitors;
- Facilitate the process of the restructuring process in the Region.
- To be the first responsible of common formation structures (both French and English)

3.4.5. The General Councilor has a Regional Team, which is representative of the whole Region.

This Team is composed of the Regional Secretary, the Regional Bursar and the Regional Coordinator for the Association, the Lasallian Educational Mission and Regional coordinator of projects. If necessary, the General

Councilor may convene a Regional Council composed of the Regional Team and other resources persons.

### **3.5. The Regional services**

#### **3.5.1. The Regional Services include:**

- The Regional Secretariat;
- the Regional Bursar's Office and the Resource Development;
- the Regional Service for Communication;
- the Formation: Brothers and Lay;
- the Service of the coordination of the Association and Lasallian Educational Mission.
- the Service of Resource Management. (CARLA)
- the service of Pastoral Ministry of Vocations and Young lasallians

#### **3.5.2. The General Councilor and the Conference of Brother Visitors ensure:**

- the good functioning of the Regional Services;
- the organisation of the Regional Assembly;
- the organisation of the Pastoral visits of Br. Superior general;
- the preparation of formation personnel;
- the self-management of the Region.

### **3.6. The resources**

3.6.1. The Regional Bursar submits the balance and the provisional budget of the Region at the meeting of the Conference of the Brother Visitors.

3.6.2. The Districts and the Delegation of RELAF are jointly liable for the functioning expenses of:

- the Regional Assembly for the Lasallian Educational Mission;
- the Conference of Brother Visitors;
- the Regional Team;
- the Regional Services.
- the Regional commission for Formation

## **4. MODIFICATION OF THE STATUTES**

The present Statutes are modified by the Regional Assembly for Lasallian Educational Mission. In case of necessity, the Conference of Brother Visitors can modify the Statutes of the Region by a 2/3 majority. Any modification should be approved by Brother Superior General.

*The present Statutes incorporate the amendments and corrections  
unanimously adopted on Tuesday 05<sup>th</sup> November 2019 by the RELAF  
Assembly in Nairobi.*

RELAF Constitutions and Statutes were approved by the Superior general  
and his Council on Wednesday the 05<sup>th</sup> of February 2020.