

2018-2022 Catholic Sisters Strategy

Our vision is for Catholic sisters to become recognized as global leaders in sustainable human development, grounded in the vitality of their services and spiritual witness.



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Since our inception, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation has remained committed to improving the lives and ministries of Catholic sisters. Sisters are selfless leaders and often serve in the most difficult and remote places where needs are deepest. They are well-positioned to be vital actors and front-line workers in the global promise to end poverty by 2030 and beyond—a component of the Sustainable Development Goals’ (SDGs) universal call to make significant, positive change for people and our planet.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning within this initiative has set a path to help realize this future. The Foundation has produced a rich body of knowledge on Catholic sisters globally, created in partnership with the Center for Religion and Civic Culture at the University of Southern California. This research identifies opportunities to develop the capacity of sisters and their networks of support, and to heighten the visibility of sisters’ work with a public audience.

The goal of our strategy is to reinforce and support two synergistic elements of Catholic sisters: 1) the vitality, strength and sustainability of their congregations and conferences, and 2) the reach and effectiveness of their human development ministries which are the outcome of that vitality. The Foundation will continue to support sisters through education, formation, and organizational support. Previous work to strengthen the global sisterhood will be complemented with new undertakings to support sisters in their role as resourceful, efficient leaders in sustainable human development. Our strategy brings sisters’ services into partnership with public and private organizations that share their mission to serve disadvantaged people from all backgrounds—building bridges within and across these networks and amplifying sisters’ leadership in the global community.

FOCUS COUNTRIES



The Foundation makes investments in four inter-related focus areas:



Education

The Foundation will expand sisters’ access to post-secondary and higher education. We seek to increase sisters’ organizational strength via leadership training, sharing best practices for management and financial planning of Catholic sisters’ congregations and conferences, and initial and continuing formation programs.



Human Development

With emphasis on Africa, Mexico and the United States, the Foundation will strengthen services for vulnerable and underprivileged youth (age 15-25) and their families through areas in which sisters have particular expertise: education, food security, healthcare, human trafficking and youth entrepreneurship. Prioritizing work performed in measurable ways and at scale will demonstrate that such services can improve the condition of these people.



Knowledge

The Foundation’s approach will be two-fold:

- **Shorter-term** focus on training, skill-building and dissemination of best practices for data acquisition, storage and use.
- **Longer-term** focus on longitudinal research that will dramatically increase understanding of trends in the vitality of sisters’ organizations and the impact of their human development work.



Innovation

The Foundation will invest in select long-term, ambitious experiments with the potential for high payoff: developing globally-applicable solutions to common financial and human resources sustainability issues of sisters’ organizations. This process will include landscape analysis to identify promising answers, support for implementation and communication of lessons learned.

Capacity building, communications, leadership and networking will be common elements across the focus areas.

CATHOLIC SISTERS THEORY OF CHANGE

