

The global Catholic sisterhood is a vibrant network of over 700,000 vowed women religious rooted in their profound faith and belief in the dignity of the human person. Catholic sisters are committed leaders and advocates for the communities they serve to foster peace, equity and justice. Through their hands-on ministries and local, national and global partnerships, Catholic sisters transform the lives of children, youth, families and communities around the world, particularly those suffering from structural disadvantages. Conrad N. Hilton had deep respect and admiration for the work of Catholic sisters. The Catholic Sisters Initiative enthusiastically continues his legacy by supporting strong and sustainable congregations, effective services and collaboration among Catholic sisters worldwide.

## Ideal state

The global Catholic sisterhood is a vibrant network of local, national and international leaders. Their lives offer prophetic witness as they lift up the value of human dignity and advocate

for the poor and underserved through their strong and sustainable congregations.

Through their ministries and partnerships, sisters help to transform the

lives of children, youth and families living in conditions of disadvantage so that they are self-sufficient and independent, contributing to the vibrancy of their communities.

## History and background

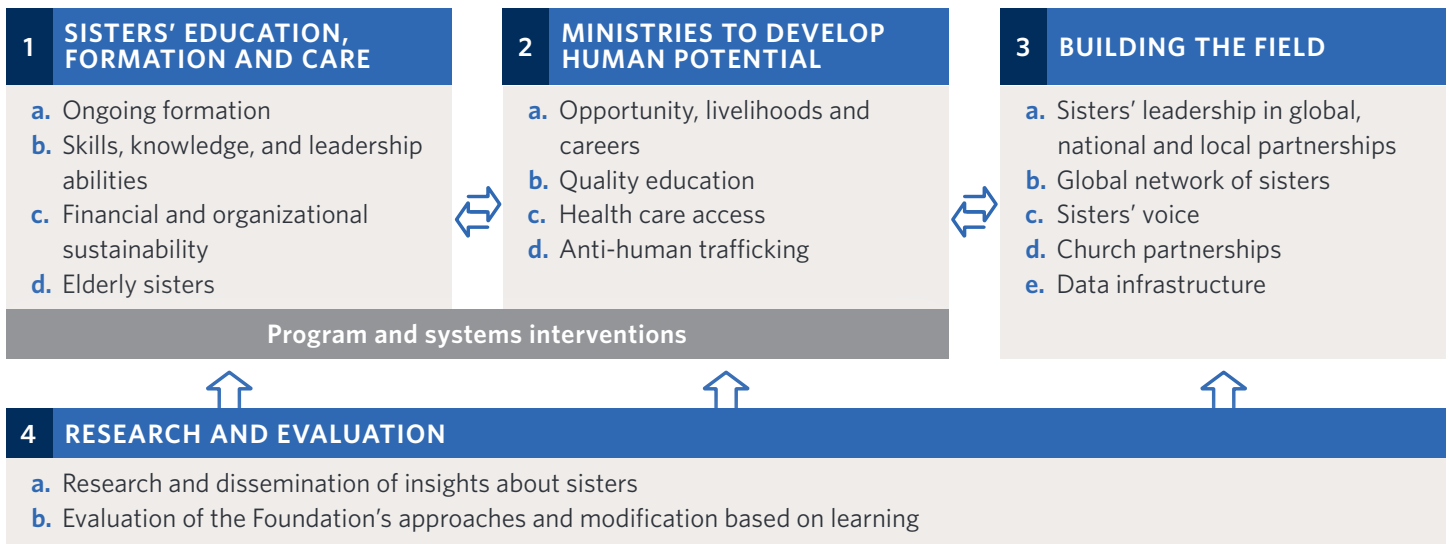
Since 1944, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation has supported Catholic sisters at home and abroad. Phase I of the Catholic Sisters Initiative (2013-2018) addressed the membership, leadership and resource gaps that sisters face by increasing their capacity to form and educate effective leaders, as well as to attract and steward human and financial resources. The Phase I Strategy laid a strong education and training foundation for sisters around the globe by supporting 184 sisters to graduate with an advanced degree (641 enrolled during the strategy); 1,858 sisters to achieve a post-secondary training certificate; and 1,314 sisters to receive technical training for their ministries.

Phase II (2018-2020) of the Initiative continued to reinforce the internal capacity and vitality of Catholic sisters and their congregations. The Foundation supported their work to deliver human development services to youth in the areas of education, food security, health care, anti-human trafficking and entrepreneurship. The strategy saw significant progress made across its four portfolios and cross-cutting activities, including 3,826 sisters trained in finance management or a ministry-related technical area; 491 sisters awarded advanced degrees; 35,655 youth reached through human development services run by sisters; and 4,195 students and their families from

low-income households reached in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The success of the Phase II Strategy is a testimony to sisters' strength and ingenuity since a significant portion of program activities were undertaken during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Strategy25 (2021-2025) builds upon the successes of Phase I and II by continuing to bolster sisters' formation and education while strengthening their partnerships with the Church, key networks and other entities. The Initiative will continue to support the efforts of sisters to foster human development and ensure that children, youth and families living in conditions of disadvantage are able to live self-sufficient lives.

## Strategy architecture



## 5-year goals

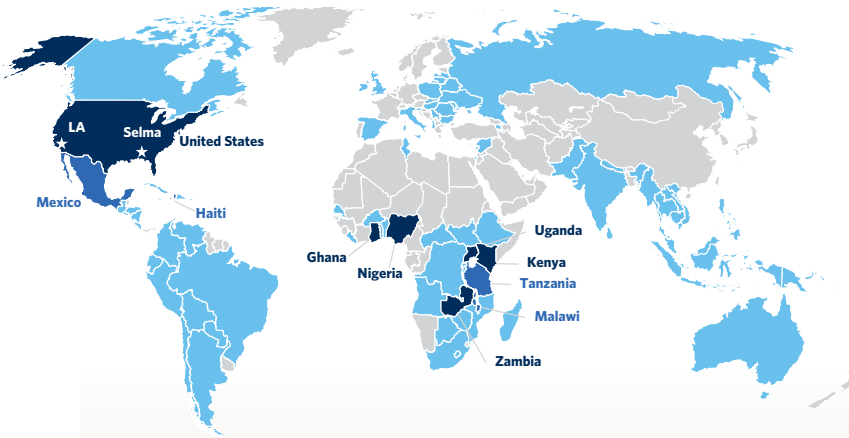
**3,800 sisters increase their professional skills, improve their leadership capacity and deepen their spiritual commitment, with at least 25 sisters in meaningful leadership positions on high-level Church committees and other organizations**

**25 new national or regional networks are created supporting sisters' service delivery, while strengthening an additional 10 existing networks**

**250,000 individuals (including 10,000 students and families who are low-income) receive academic, scholarship, counseling, job readiness training and other wrap-round technical services that lead to sustainable livelihoods and productive, fulfilling lives**

**3,000 at-risk youth and survivors of trafficking are protected and supported to safety, while receiving training in financial and job skills that lead to meaningful employment**

## WHERE WE WORK



- = **High engagement** (7 countries)
- = **Moderate engagement** (4 countries)
- = **Partnership with Hilton Fund for Sisters** (86 countries)
- = **Indirect engagement** (worldwide)

## EQUITY FOCUS

- Ensure sisters have equitable access to education, spiritual formation, resources and leadership opportunities
- Support sisters and their congregations to ensure sisters age with dignity and have a high quality of life after a lifetime of service
- Support sisters' ministries in serving children, youth and families who live in deeply disadvantaged situations
- Fund local congregations and networks, in addition to large international congregations and organizations

## OTHER KEY METRICS

- Build mechanisms to lift sisters' voices
- Leverage new funding sources to support elderly sisters and the financial sustainability of congregations
- Expand partnerships throughout the Church to create opportunities for sisters' leadership on critical issues of human development

### PROGRAM COSTS



#### Phase I

**(2012-2017):**

\$107,625,000

#### Phase II

**(2018-2020):**

\$52,400,500

#### Strategy25

**(2021-2025):**

Est. \$200,000,000

### CHALLENGES



- Overcoming the lack of reliable data about sisters and their ministries
- Balancing the goals of building the institutional capacity of sisters, while funding their outreach ministries and projects
- Understanding and operating within complex demographic, socio-cultural and geo-political contexts

### OPPORTUNITIES



- Exploring a global retirement fund for elderly sisters to age with dignity
- Partnering with the Vatican, leadership conferences, the local Church and other funders to strengthen and center the voices and leadership of sisters
- Supporting congregations' and conferences' efforts to increase financial and organizational sustainability

ILLUSTRATIVE PARTNERS*	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT AWARDED (2012-2020)
<b>Marywood University African Sisters Education Collaborative</b>	Working in partnership with 24 colleges and universities to provide financial and human resources, leadership training and higher education programs for Catholic sisters	\$50.6 million
<b>Catholic Extension</b>	Providing higher education, training and support to sisters from Latin America serving vulnerable communities in the U.S., including systems-level work to enhance congregation leadership, effectiveness and sustainability	\$8.4 million
<b>National Catholic Reporter Global Sisters Report</b>	Publishing news and stories from the field by and for Catholic sisters, serving as a hub for sharing innovative program ideas	\$8.3 million
<b>Catholic Relief Services</b>	Providing extensive program implementation and oversight experience globally through vast on-the-ground networks; collaborating with sisters on ECD and HIV/AIDS in Africa	\$6.2 million

*\*This list is not exhaustive of Illustrative Partners.*