

Asia-Pacific Impact Reports

India: Madhya Pradesh--349503--Enhance Life Standard of Rural Women and Children: Congregation of Samaritan Sisters

The Sisters designed a project that partners with Manav Vikas Seva Sangh, the Social Apostolate of Sagar Diocese and the Sagar Diocesan Service Society. Women and children from the landless and the “poorest of the poor” classes in the neighboring villages are the target group. These people have no source of income except daily wages, when work is available. Most of the families have only one member who is earning. They have little money for educating and preparing their children for a better future. As a result, around 60% of the youth in the villages and slums have not been able to study above the 8th or 10th grade level.

This project proposes to benefit the poor, marginalized and underprivileged of the society who are unable to pursue further studies. The Sisters linked the people with government and NGO programs in which they are able to learn skills and enhance their livelihood. These programs, as well as the workshops and programs offered by the Sisters, cover many areas including empowerment of women, health and hygiene, sustainable agricultural, child rights, and natural resources management. The project also supports them with small income generating programs, which will raise the standard of the women in the group and the village.

IMPACT: The project affected 1,100 women and children.

The Sisters report: “While working in the rural areas with the women, we realized that the solution to end poverty is not by providing money but rather by extending social services. In 12 months, we formed ten groups of women, allowing women from various castes, class and religions to come together several times in a month and discuss issues and action plans. The women have come to address the problems of the villages and work together in solving them by themselves. There are also three centers where drop-out girls are taught elementary math, Hindi and moral studies. This helped **137** students to become interested in education and mainstream into schools.”

The Sisters believe that they also experienced transformation. “When we stay with them, look like them, dress like them and dine with them, it provides us as well as them to see the truth from a different angle. They start serving others and work for others.”



February 2018

Australia--338287--Skills Workshop for Sudanese Migrants: Daughters of Mary Help of Christians

The Salesian Sisters serve the refugees and migrants from the Republic of Sudan and South Sudan. Most of these families have fled their country after experiencing war and trauma, with nothing but the clothes on their backs. They resettled in Western Sydney within the low socio-economic suburbs of Blacktown, St. Mary's and Penrit. The refugees experience a high rate of unemployment. The sisters provide counseling, vocational training, personal development and referral programs for the young people and requested funding for a two-day workshop for the young adults who would like to gain access to employment and further education opportunities. The workshop includes the development of leadership and employment skills, group dynamics and mental health issues.

IMPACT: 250 Young-adult Sudanese Migrants

The monitor reported that many of the young-adult clients received suitable employment opportunities and practical assistance to ease into the workplace. Several young people with identified leadership potential subsequently attended a youth leadership conference in Melbourne and are already utilizing their newfound skills and enthusiasm in their local context. “I have personally witnessed their enthusiasm and leadership in action.” One young person reported, “I was shy at first but by the end of the week, what I learned and took away helped me.”

The sisters invited various community groups and providers to give presentations to the youth during the workshop. The networked approach provided many opportunities for the young people.



June 2018

Asia: Philippines--357085--Marcel Van Second Chance Program: Missionaries of Mary

Since 1997, the Missionaries of Mary at ACAY Mission have founded several programs offering a second chance to at-risk youth through creative and innovative pedagogical methods. One of the programs, the Marcel Van Second Chance Program (MVP), established in 2002, reintegrates children in conflict with the law (CICL) back into society with a 90% success rate. Specifically, the MVP program provides services for male CICL during and after their detention.

Most of the families of MVP youth are living below the poverty line surviving hand to mouth. They reside in squatter areas; their homes are so small that the whole family cannot fit inside at the same time. The parents have either not been to school or have an elementary education. There are usually five to ten children to feed.

The grant provided the following:

- **Social Preparation:** The boys inside the detention center are prepared for reintegration into their families and society.
- **Aftercare Program:** Once out of the center, the young men have an intensive program of 25-30 life skills and professional training, as well as retreats, recollections and 'survivor' training.
- **Families:** Participation of the parents is crucial to the rehabilitation of the boys. The Sisters provide monthly parents' meetings and home visitations as well as an annual family seminar integrating the siblings of the youth.
- **Victims:** Wherever possible, MVP works in partnership with the Justice System and the boys to prepare a dialogue with the victim and to repair the past damage.
- **Pillars of the Justice System:** Staff members attend the hearings of the boys, advocating for their rights and ensuring that the best interest of the child receives priority.

IMPACT: 96 boys and their families participated in the program.

During the grant period, the prison introduced a new strategy for the 25 ACAY boys. With the judge's permission, the boys left the detention center for a day of spiritual and self-development

training. This allowed the boys to re-enter society and feel at ease. Their parents are also included and participate in their own formation; thus forging a stronger relationship between the parents and staff and with their children. The parents create a support system among themselves.

The monitor also explained that the Sisters in France initiated a similar program. The boys in the Philippines receive a French pen pal. Both the French and the Filipino youth can practice their English and relate with someone of their own age who is also trying to make choices for a new beginning. This interaction is a source of inspiration for the youth and provides a venue for self-expression.

The monitor further states: "Thank you for helping the Sisters to provide ways forward for these youth and for the Filipino society as they reach out to the families and communities of these young people."



February 2018

Asia/Pacific: Philippines--355679--Eco-Farm and Food for Children--Religious of the Good Shepherd

The sisters founded Kadasig Community Center in 1989 to care for 12 young girls who were victims of trafficking. Since that time, street children from the market area were welcomed and now the project caters to young girls who are in danger or at risk because of siblings and/or friends involved in drugs and prostitution. The project provides counseling, spiritual formation, shelter, food, clothing, proper hygiene and values education. When possible, the girls attend formal school. The eco-farm at the center provides the food for the children. The sisters asked for funding to purchase a shredder for organic composting to support their diversified, integrated and organic farming system.

IMPACT: 86 girls and young women

Because of the grant, there was enough food on the table, the children never got sick and were able to study well. Many had excellent school performance; several were on the Dean's List; and one was recognized by Cebu City as an outstanding student. This project not only provides sustenance but also builds the capacity and skill level of the girls and young women.



September 2018

Asia-Pacific: Myanmar—457918—Hostel for Girls—Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition

In 1965, the government nationalized all private schools in Burma (Myanmar since 1969). Losing their schools, the sisters transformed their mission, providing nursery classes and teaching English, music and vocational skills. The sisters also opened a hostel for those young girls looking for jobs or other vocational and professional training. The sisters opened the doors, in the spirit of Pope Francis, to accept girls of all religions and races. They come from remote areas where education is not available; many are internally displaced persons (IDPs), victims of natural disasters, or civil unrest.

Now, after four decades of nationalization, the sisters are applying for a permit of occupancy for a new structure, constructed by the Porticus Foundation, for 45-55 girls. The sisters are seeking funding for beds, bookcases, electric fans, kitchen utensils, dining room tables, and a water tank and plumbing.

IMPACT: 65 girls housed and educated

The hostel has furniture! In addition to providing a dignified and secure environment to the young women, the sisters are providing social, moral, and spiritual assistance to the girls. Several factors challenged the sisters during this project. Due to the instability of the country and the poor economy, the prices increased after the budget was submitted, so the sisters had to do more with less. The sisters also experienced the prejudice of some in the community who believe that these girls are not worthy of their assistance. The sisters have hope for the future but have learned that they must prepare by formulating a strategic plan, which includes training for a mistress in the hostel.



October 2019

Asia: Srilanka--349361--Transforming war victims into women entrepreneurs

After the civil war of 2009, many unskilled and uneducated women in the region of Jaffina found themselves responsible for providing for the family units. The Sisters saw the need to provide a program for these women to learn skills that would enable them to gain employment outside the home. This project, working with ENGINEERS WITHOUT BORDERS who provided the equipment and training in using it, taught the women to use the local resources to produce *pappadam* (small tortilla-size, paper-thin, crisp wafers, made from lentil, chickpea, or rice flour). The HFS grant was used to purchase black gram powder and to help to market the product. The women were successful in learning to make, package, market and deliver the product to the local villages. Together they worked through the challenges of purchasing the ingredients locally, distributing it regionally and gaining a positive image in the market.

IMPACT: In the first year, the project manager and monitor report that the project's impact includes:

- 24 women who were living under disadvantaged situations earned salaries to raise their standard of living.
- 15 of the 24 women are now permanent staff.
- The standard of quantity and quality of the production is maintained.
- The project captured a wide distribution market providing food to a larger area.
- Surrounding area children are given better education.
- Local products were purchased giving support to local farmers.

October 2017

India: West Bengal--398567--HIV/AIDS Awareness, treatment & Support for People Living with AIDS Program--Congregation of Theresian Carmelites

In 2008, the Asansol Diocese in North India began the Chetana Community Care Centre. The center is in a poor part of the diocese where many become infected through drug addiction and/or engaging in prostitution. In 2011, the sisters started a home within the center for the orphaned children affected by HIV/AIDS. The sisters provide the children with accommodations, education, nutrition, clothing, treatment, medication and antiretroviral therapy (ART) as well as spiritual and psychological support. Collaborating with the National AIDS Control Program and the Catholic Bishops Conference of India, the sisters are also providing care and awareness programs for the children and people of the area.

IMPACT: 1,828 children and adults through various programs:

- 25 HIV infected children were given accommodations, food, daily medication, checkups and ART adherence. The children were also given skill training in tailoring, crafts, computers and music.
- HIV/AIDS awareness programs given in:
 - six villages for 960 individuals
 - two slums for 43 children and 62 elders
 - three schools for 420 children, 110 regular college students and 52 MSW college students (social work institution)
- 70 HIV infected people participated in a special program increasing self-confidence for a secure life.
- 28 outpatients received short-term shelter at an ART checkup center.
- 52 HIV infected children participated in a camp.
- Six children were sponsored for treatment through ART center.



September 2018

Asia/Oceania: India—587095 and 607246—COVID-19 Relief Activities—National Domestic Workers Movement (\$45,000)

The National Domestic Workers Movement (NDWM) has been at the forefront of championing women's domestic workers' rights for over three decades. Today the NDWM network functions across 16 states of India, engaging 200,000 domestic workers.

The nationwide lockdown confronted the domestic workers with increased hardships and financial challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic made evident the precarious nature of their marginalization and the urgent need to address the situation. Unable to travel and due to the stigma attached to the virus's potential carriers, many domestic workers

lost their jobs without adequate payment and have lost their livelihood. Since these workers have limited or no savings or financial backing, their families' lives were severely affected by the crisis. Sister Christin Mary, a Missionary Sister of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (ICM), proposed using the NDWM network to get funding to key sisters' congregations in various states. These congregations would participate in the distribution of food kits and sanitation materials to the affected families. Food kits could provide the families meals for 15 days.

Impact: 7 congregations in 8 states; 9000 people served

During the initial phases of the lockdown, the government announced aid for the people. The reality was that the poor domestic workers were not among those receiving the ration cards. The sisters set up a procedure to transfer the money to a local grocer, who distributed the food to those who had the sisters' coupons. This procedure became challenging during the lockdown since the government frequently changed the protocols for public gatherings and travel from one region to another. Often, the sisters walked great distances to get the money to the store owners and

the families' coupons.



June 2021

India: 585635 - Holy Cross Olive Hill Girls' Boarding (Congregation of the Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod \$20,000)

Holy Cross Olive Hill Girls' Boarding school is located in a poor, land-locked state in Northeast India with borders on three sides with Bangladesh. The area has high unemployment and extreme poverty. Its industrial base is small with low investment from outside. The school and hostel provide a valuable option to the low-education standards that the government-run schools offer and the difficulties of commuting in the rainy season. The municipal water supply is not clean, is only available at certain times, and cannot be used for drinking or cooking. The request included funding for clean water and beds and mattresses for the hostel dormitory.

Impact: 1,658 students, sisters, parents, neighbors, and farmers benefited

Within two weeks, the company completed the work, making safe drinking water available. One could see the joy and happiness of students and the neighboring families of the local community, who are the immediate beneficiaries. The manufacturers advised the sisters not to make the bunk beds because of the poor ventilation afforded by the low galvanized tin roofing of the mud house. The girls enjoy single steel beds with mosquito nets and new mattresses. The monitor reports, "I addressed them (the students) once, and while interacting with them, they expressed their joy & gratitude, of having a good drinking water source which they cherish in this new academic session. They also expressed their joy in having a comfortable bed, making their nights safer and more comfortable. As they wake up fresh, they can concentrate and focus better on their studies."



Philippines: 612990 - Salvatorian Pastoral Care for Children (Sisters of the Divine Savior \$11,600)

For 20 years, the Salvatorian Pastoral Care for Children (SPCC) office has promoted the protection of women, children, and members of the LGBTQIA group through its parish-based child protection program. Over the years, the program has evolved tremendously. In this application, the sisters asked for funding for the celebration year as the office published a book of the participants' success stories. The sisters also wanted to relieve 150 women and children during the celebratory year.

Impact: 2,806 persons trained as Civil Rights Advocates, and 250 children and their families received relief aid

Two hundred fifty children and their families received relief goods consisting of ten kilos of rice, two sets of blankets, 800 grams of coffee, one kilogram of milk, one package of biscuits, 800 grams of choco powder, packs of pasta with sauce, and one pail. These beneficiaries come from impoverished families in the Archdiocese of Manila, the Archdiocese of Cebu, and the Diocese of Alaminos.

The book entitled *Care and Protection of Children in the Parish Community: Two Decades of SPCC Experience (A Pastoral Strategy for Child Protection in Local Church Communities)* was released. The publication recounts the SPCC journey from 2001 to 2002, highlighting effective strategies, success stories, and the most significant changes and impact on the Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs) and parishes across five dioceses and archdioceses, as well as the lives of children, women, and families. During the year, SPCC hosted workshops to train Civil Rights Advocates (CRA), who then entered city commissions that support the dignity of at-risk persons in their communities.



June 2022

Lebanon: 615952 – Computers for St. Vincent School (Daughters of Charity \$19,400)

The Daughters of Charity have ministered in Beirut since 1847, when it was a small village port with narrow sand paths. Their school serves the densely populated area of the city, a community living in poverty fueled by lack of employment and social poverty stemming from drug abuse, lack of nutrition, and inadequate healthcare. This setting, coupled with the devastating situations of the COVID crises and the Beirut Port explosion in August 2020, has made the living situation far worse. Families struggle to provide food and a home for the children. The one place of normalcy is in their school. The school suffered significant damage in the blast. The laptops and accessories were lost. The sisters asked for funding to replace the technology so that the sisters could continue their commitment to education in this community.

Impact: 24 teachers and 450 students were impacted by the reinstallation of technology.

This grant is featured not for the computers but to demonstrate how the HFS grants continue to make a difference in communities of underserved populations worldwide. The purchase and installation of 25 laptop computers and Internet at St. Vincent School restored student access to computers and educational technology, which helped return these children to essential elements of modern, high-quality education.



October 2022

Vietnam: 541536 - Dominican Federation of Vietnam Sisters Leadership Training Program (Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena \$7,000)

The members of the Federation of the Dominican Sisters of Vietnam share a common charism. This federation provides periodic training programs for the new sister leaders of the member congregations to strengthen their leadership skills and enable them to perform their leadership roles effectively and promote the mission of Christ in today's world. These leaders, in turn, animate the sisters in their respective congregations with the vision, energy, and courage they need in their ministries to God's people in fresh and compelling ways. The federation asked for funding to provide a three-day leadership-training program for leaders in eight Dominican Sisters groups in Vietnam.

N. B. This grant was funded by HFS rather than the Hilton Foundation grant for religious conferences and networks.

Impact: 44 participants of Dominican and other congregations who influence over 1000 members of their congregations

Through this leadership-training program, the leaders have internalized, absorbed, and imbibed Jesus's way of being. This program has encouraged the participants to exercise leadership and serve as graced companions who animate their sisters with the vision, energy, and courage they need in their ministries to God's people in fresh and compelling ways. The Dominican priest who hosted the conference and served as monitor recorded that he met several participants who felt that the experience was personally enriching. These leaders were eager to share their experiences and enthusiasm for the mission with members of their congregations.

The sisters also noted that collaboration and networking now exists among the leaders of the participant congregations. This networking will strengthen the mission of Christ in today's world.



February 2022

India – 611189 – Salesian Sisters Society (Daughters of Mary Help of Christians \$16,700)

For 75 years, the Salesian Sisters Society has been ministering in a rural area in south Tamil, a region with more than ten slum areas, where women, young girls, and children are prone to child labor and trafficking and are easily exploited. The sisters focused on giving dignity to the children and young women on the streets and preventing them from becoming dropouts by providing them with evening coaching, enrolling them back into Government schools, and providing follow-up.

Impact: 200 women and 400 youth and children benefitted from the activities.

The sisters provided skill training, entrepreneurial programs, and evening coaching classes to prevent the children from becoming dropouts. The women working as domestic servants are given courses on awareness of women's rights and how they might exercise them. The women gained confidence, learned how to access resources, and gradually became self-reliant.



February 2023

Vietnam - 636973 - Leadership Training Program (Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena: \$8,000)

The Federation of Dominican Sisters of Vietnam is a voluntary membership association of 11 Dominican congregations representing over 2,200 Dominican sisters. Every two years, the Federation of Dominican Sisters of Vietnam has a leadership training program for all the leaders, including significant superiors, leadership team, and formators. The sisters requested funding for a conference to address the urgent needs of vulnerable groups in the pandemic crisis. The program would train and prepare the sisters with sufficient knowledge to respond to pressing social needs and to help address anxiety and other concerns, including the loss of loved ones, jobs, and financial security. HFS has funded prior Dominican Federation conferences.

Impact: 400 sisters from 80 congregations participated in two conferences. The training directly benefited over 600 adults and children.

As a result of this project, the sisters can train more volunteers and build a network of individuals with sufficient knowledge to help their communities of the poor, marginalized, and oppressed to cope with COVID-19 and rebuild their lives in the post-COVID-19 world. The volunteers will address anxiety, prevent depression, create connectedness, and rebuild the community.



June 2023

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IMPACT: 250 Young-adult Sudanese Migrants

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The sisters invited various community groups and providers to give presentations to the youth during the workshop. The networked approach provided many opportunities for the young people.



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