

Africa Impact Reports

February 2024

Ethiopia – 646261 – Metahara Catholic Church Clinic Emergency Project (Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady – FMOL, \$20,000)

Metahara is located in the eastern area of Oromia, Ethiopia. The population of the area where the Clinic is located is about 46,453. The average family size is 4.3 and 4.2 for urban and rural parts, respectively; most of the population is semi-nomad and pastoralist, with some farming concentrated along the Awash River basin. 75% of the people are Muslim, and 1% are Orthodox Catholic and Protestant Christians. The parish clinic offers service 24 hours a day but is concerned with the safety of the patients, staff, and sisters at the Clinic. The sisters asked for funding to renovate the security walls around the Clinic and convent, which were affected by environmental factors, including the Awash River overflowing and damaging the compound.

Impact: 15,000 adults and 8,200 children benefited from this project.

The sisters completed the project in three phases despite the scarcity of materials in the region. When asked what the persons being served shared with the monitor, he wrote:

"Those being served in the Clinic always feel at home and impressed by the progress shown in the Clinic and know it is because of the benefactors like your organization. (We tell them where the super CONRAD N. HILTON FUND FOR SISTERS is, a backbone of our mission in the area). So, they feel very comfortable and safe in a place for healing, a place where a sick person is healed physically and psychologically, and also the place where people with low incomes are held financially, physically, mentally, and psychologically. They are sharing the excitement of the construction, and they experience safety with the fencing and the improved rooms in the clinic compound."



October 2023

Uganda – 651855 – Notre Dame Education Centre (Sisters of Notre Dame, \$25,000)

In a departure from the traditional report format, I include one of our projects as written in the newsletter of the Sisters of Notre Dame:

In the spring of 2022, SNDs in the urban center of Mpala, Uganda, had a large section of their property that was a swampy mosquito breeding ground. They had long dreamed of making more responsible use of this portion of their property deemed unsuitable for building or gardening. During the COVID-19 lockdowns, some of the most severe worldwide, the urban poor suffered from food shortages and starvation. Sisters of Notre Dame saw this as an opportune time to revisit ways they could contribute to their local community.

The Hilton Fund for Sisters awarded the SND community a grant of \$25,000 in June 2022. Over the past year, the Sisters have built three fish ponds and a protective wall around the area. In just a few short

months, they were able to turn a mosquito breeding ground into a source of healthy food. The fish will be used to feed the sisters and children at Notre Dame Nursery School. In addition, they will be sold below market value to the poor, with the proceeds being used to support the outreach of the Sisters of Notre Dame in the region.

Sr. Christine Marie Mugume served as the lead Sister and project manager. In reflecting on her experience, she shared:

"Many people lack basic needs like food; they cannot afford it because of the prices which have gone very high for an ordinary person. So having such a project would be very important because we will be able to provide fish for the community at a lower price and create employment for some. Above all, we will support our women groups by uplifting them financially.

The project has helped us to work together as a community by coming together for decision making hence making each member responsible for the project; this has brought joy to the community. Secondly, the project has employed the youths, which has helped them earn a living. As the community, we have learned to be patient, transparent, and accountable in what we do."

Sr. Christine Marie Mugume, SND



June 2023

Zambia - 582265 - Providence Home (Little Servants of Divine Providence, \$20,000)

Congregation of Little Servants of Divine Providence was invited by Archbishop Telesphore George Mpundu, the Archbishop of Lusaka, to open a home in the diocese for physically and mentally disabled children and adults needing medical attention. Providence Home (PH) currently has 42 people, including paralyzed adults, children, and children with epilepsy. The impoverished parents or guardians cannot manage private treatment and regular physiotherapy. Recently, HFS funded equipment for PH and expanded education programs for the residents and others in the village. Since the sisters receive no compensation for their services, they requested funding to begin a mushroom farm that would become an income stream for PH and allow for ministry expansion. The project would include training the local community to develop farming skills and employ local men and women.

Impact: 400 children benefited from expanded programming; 250 people participated in training events and conferences; and 50 adults learned the art of mushroom farming.

The grant enabled the sisters to purchase the trays, boiler, and tanks necessary to begin the farm. The project already provides funding to pay and supply housing for the workers, offer additional services to PH and the local community members, acquire a plot of land 300 km from Lusaka, and start constructing a boundary wall. The sisters plan on having another facility for 100 disabled adults and children within two years. The results described by the sisters are excellent.



February 2023

Zambia – 612509 – Sancta Maria College of Nursing and Midwifery (Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary \$14,200)

The Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary established a mission in Zambia's Lukulu and Mitete districts, the poorest province in the country. In opening the trade school, the sisters provided an opportunity for the tertiary and professional training for impoverished youth of the area to address the shortage of health professionals and the high unemployment that contributes to the ongoing cycle of poverty.

The funding requested will equip the library with medical and nursing texts and provide the skills laboratory with the medical models and equipment necessary for the students to learn relevant information and practical skills as part of their nursing training.

Impact: 60 women benefited from the project.

The project's goals have been met by refurbishing and equipping the older structures and providing well-equipped training facilities for nurse training in an area where no training currently exists. The 60 students have completed half of the first year in a three-year program. The impact on current and future potential students has been very significant as it gives them hope and opportunity. The provision of specialized books and state-of-the-art models for the skills lab ensures an optimal training program equal to any in the country.

The school has worked with the local government and believes there is significant collaboration with Mangango Mission Hospital (in a nearby district) and the Lukulu District Hospital (Government-run) for student practical experiences.



October 2022

Liberia—583990 – Fish Town River Gee Women's Empowerment (Sisters of the Holy Family \$10,000)

In the spirit of their charism, the Holy Family Sisters organized a women's empowerment group in Fish Town, River Gee County, in 2005. The Liberian civil war left many women widows to live unbearable lives and fend for themselves and their children. The core family values disintegrated. The families of many deceased husbands took the properties from the women, so underage girls were forced into early marriage, and the rate of suicide among women increased. Against this backdrop, the Holy Family Sisters organized the group to assist the women through workshops, seminars, and counseling for women. The sisters also designed a project to empower women to provide food for their families and give them the fees to send their daughters to school. Sixty-seven (67) women: teenage/single mothers and widows would participate in seminars, workshops, town hall meetings, and women's group forums to learn their right to own property as prescribed in the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia. In addition, counseling sessions assisted the women who were sexually abused. Workshops would also help the women learn the skills to maintain a garden and raise small domestic animals to generate income.

Impact: 160 women benefited from the project.

The monitor believes that the sisters accomplished their goals. During his visits, he met several beneficiaries. "They feel so good about the project and continue to admit that it has brought them relief and protection; it opened their eyes to the truth and economically empowered them. They are proud to assert that they know their rights."

The sisters shared this story: Nyemade, a mother of six children, was evicted from a four-bedroom house by her late husband's brother when her husband died in the war. She lived in a makeshift two-bedroom house and could barely pay the rent at the end of the month. The children were not going to school, and the mother found it difficult to buy food for the children. Nyemade attended the psycho-social counseling sessions; she started a vegetable farm which eventually produced a bountiful harvest. Income from selling the vegetables enabled Nyemade to pay the rent on time, feed her children, send them to school and provide for their needs.



June 2022

Tunisia—593867 - Notre Dame de Carthage Residence (Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matara \$10,000)

The project seeks to provide for sub-Saharan girls in their 20s, immigrants to Tunisia who have come for work studies but have encountered racial and religious discrimination. Some have recourse to prostitution to face these problems. The sisters aim to provide a safe home where the girls can live with dignity, have a 'family' helping them meet their basic needs and necessities, pursue their studies, and return safely to their native countries. The sisters, responding to their charism of evangelization of the culture, also wish to form these young women in faith and life values.

The request includes books and videos to educate young women. The funding will also provide equipment for the house, rent, food, and supplies, including hygiene products and cleaning supplies.

Impact: 70 persons benefited from the project; 70 training sessions were part of the project

Despite the pandemic, the sisters had regular weekly formation sessions and organized various activities, including retreats, cultural events with musical, artistic, and theatrical presentations, English and baking courses, and outings. Some of the girls finished their university studies and returned to their countries.

The sisters recounted the story of their women, caring for one of the residents as she battled cancer. They also visit the sick and help them in their needs and are always ready to give of their time to help others.



February 2022

South Sudan—552566 - SDMIC Food for Families Program (Society of Daughters of Mary Immaculate and Collaborators \$15,000)

For years, the Society of Daughters of Mary Immaculate and Collaborators (DMI) have served the war victims, farming families, and marginalized women and children in Wau, South Sudan. The inhabitants of this region are illiterate, and 90% of the families are dependent on farming as their primary source of livelihood. The team observed that over 3,234 acres of land are under-cultivated due to the primitive agriculture practices of the farmers. The sisters requested funding for 200 farming families with small landholdings to receive agriculture and food security training.

The project's objectives include:

1. To mobilize and organize 200 farming families (men, women, and youth) into farming associations in five hamlets to improve food production and ensure sustainability.
2. To train the association leaders and members on sustainable agriculture methods, including organic manure, seed preservation, multi-cropping, manure composting, weed management, pest and disease control.
3. To distribute saplings of fruit trees (mango, jack fruit, passion fruit, papaya, banana, sweet lemon, and avocado) to 100 families to create alternative income and address malnutrition and stunted growth.
4. To provide quality seeds to 100 families and essential agriculture tools for five farmers' associations to increase agriculture productivity and share the seeds with their neighbors.

Impact: 200 participants at training events benefiting 550 men, women, and children

The sisters formed ten farmers' association groups with 200 members. Farmers' associations organized Village Saving Loan Associations to cultivate savings and initiate economic activities. As a result of the training, 70% of farmers practice sustainable farming practices in the field. The farmers have access to healthy diets to improve the health of their families.

The sisters partnered with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD) during this project. The partnerships were beneficial and will provide ongoing support.

Success Story: "My happiness is my farm," said Ladu, a 42-year-old married woman. "I can increase my groundnut production from 200 kilograms to 450 kilograms through the support of DMI, using agronomic practices like row planting, crop rotation, and timely planting. I received quality seeds, working tools, and plowing with a tractor. I shifted my subsistence farming to sustainable farming to increase food production, household income, and food security. I have access to food in my home and this has given me happiness. I have also cultivated the habit of saving money weekly."



October 2021

Nigeria—511723—Most Precious Blood Happy House—Daughters of Charity of the Most Precious Blood (DCPB) (\$15,000)

The congregation runs an orphanage, nursery, and primary school on the grounds of the convent. The sisters live among "peasant farmers who farm on a small scale to sustain their family." A good number of the families within the community cannot provide needed protein foods for their children.

The sisters believed that the construction and management of a fish pond would provide good job opportunities for some villagers close to their community. Managing a fish pond will provide jobs for up to ten people. With the rising cost of fish in the market and the inability of some needy families to purchase protein, the sisters wanted to sell the fish after harvesting. Apart from helping the needy, the fish pond would provide food for the children in the orphanage and generate income to provide additional assistance to the families.

Impact: 820 people served

The sisters have reduced the level of hunger and created job opportunities for the people, reducing the high level of unemployment. They sell the fish at below-market prices, providing a source of protein for the families. They have also helped the vulnerable ones in the village by giving them fish. In addition, the sisters can provide the children in their orphanage with a protein source. While the sisters had many challenges to overcome, they would encourage others to embark on this project to benefit their communities.



June 2021

Four countries—590981—Emergency COVID Preparedness—LifeNet International—(\$50,000)

LifeNet specifically empowers and improves faith-based health facilities to care effectively and compassionately for the women, children, infants, and men--of all ages-- they serve in Burundi, the DRC, Uganda, and Malawi.

In response to these serious threats to life, LifeNet is training and equipping 60 health facilities in the four countries, managed by Catholic sisters. These 60 facilities have over 350 frontline health workers, including 120 sisters. Our work will ensure that each health worker can provide high-quality primary healthcare to all and prevent, diagnose, and adequately treat patients with COVID-19 symptoms.

Impact: 991,000 people served, 120 Sisters trained, 60 Sister-led health care facilities assisted

The LifeNet team successfully met all of the goals outlined in the application. By equipping sisters in Burundi, the DRC, Malawi, and Uganda with the knowledge and tools they need to address COVID-19 in their health facilities:

- Seven hundred twenty health care workers, including 120 sisters, were trained to provide high-quality primary care and prevent and treat COVID-19.

- Sixty facilities were equipped with personal protective equipment and training to address COVID-19 and other diseases. LifeNet successfully delivered 9,097 pieces of PPE and other tools to sisters.
- Nine hundred ninety-one thousand people in a collective catchment area had access to trained health workers.
- Medical personnel improved the quality of healthcare through 536,616 patient visits.
- Sisters were given nine pieces of essential technology, including computers, for digital training and reinforcement.



February 2020

Congo—438127—Education for Deaf-Mute Children—Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul

In 1959, the Daughters of Charity began serving the people of Bolobo, District of Mai-Ndombe, DRC, through the creation of the Elikya Primary School and the Bondeko training center for women. This congregation is the only one serving a small but significant population of deaf-mute children in Bolobo. Deaf-mute children are considered ignorant and unreachable in this community.

The goal of this project is to eliminate illiteracy through academic education for deaf-mute children in this rural area. To begin the project, the sisters must renovate a space in the school to provide for deaf children and their parents. Many of the parents who have deaf-mute children are uneducated themselves and have no idea that with the proper educational techniques, their children can study academics, learn skills, and become a valued member of a working society. This project will change the lives of the children who cannot speak or hear, giving them an opportunity for high-quality academic education and new skill-sets. Their parents, immediate family members, and the community will also benefit as these children find themselves, and become better integrated into society. This grant will be combined with a grant from the Loyola Foundation and individual donor support to reach the needed project goal of \$43,807.

Impact: 27 deaf-mute children educated

The Daughters of Charity successfully renovated three classrooms and an office to provide a high-quality education to 27 deaf-mute children. These children, living with significant disabilities, are so appreciative and excited. They are playing in the schoolyard, many of them playing for the first time in their lives. The sisters report the children have improved their study habits. The sisters are expecting the class size to triple in the new school year since parents who were previously unaware of the services now wish to send their children to the school.



October 2019

Nigeria—299258—Alternate source of electricity using solar energy—Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

Our Lady of Fatima hospital is a referral center for many clinics and maternity centers in a remote area of Osun state. The hospital provides all services from birth to death. The infection rates of HIV and tuberculosis (TB) are high, making it more crucial that the hospital provides for medical technologies such as lab analysis, medical equipment, and diagnostic testing.

The population of the area is poor, with mostly the women providing for the needs of the family. The people have little, if any, education. There is no electricity in the area, so the hospital equipment provided by generators. The high cost of the diesel makes it difficult for the hospital to run the equipment and especially to provide emergency services during the night. Furthermore, with no electricity to run the pumps, the water provided through the boreholes is carried by hand to the hospital and homes.

Stating the obvious, that electricity provides the backbone for any functional healthcare, the sisters asked for the installation of solar panels at the hospital.

Impact: 47,344 inhabitants of the area

The primary contact sister states: “Within the past twelve months of using solar energy, the cost of generating power from other sources has been reduced. There are no disturbances by the erratic power supply. The maintenance cost on generators has been reduced. Thus, there is an increase in revenue. Medical procedures are carried out at night with ease. There is no noise pollution. Hospital is constantly illuminated for safety and security.”

The sister also states:

- The patient database has increased by over 200%, with over 100% of our target audience - the grassroots masses.
- The medical bills are lower.
- The staff receives higher salaries and additional incentives.
- The staff morale is higher with greater motivation to render services.
- The hospital has replaced some outdated equipment and commenced some renovations in the hospital.



June 2019

Cameroon—448485—La Sainte Union Catholic College—Sisters of the Holy Union

La Sainte Union Catholic Bilingual Comprehensive College is a learning institution created during the academic year 2016-2017 by the Holy Union Sisters in the diocese of Yokadouma, Cameroon. The college serves the east region of the city where 90% of the population are subsistence farmers. Life expectancy is rather short and the infant mortality rate is high. Due to its thick forests and equatorial climate, the area is home to a host of tropical diseases. The area has a high illiteracy rate, particularly among females. The sisters asked for funding to purchase a generator to provide reliable power to the College and surrounding area. The benefits will be twofold: allowing the college to be a safe learning environment for the students and helping the population initiate and carry out new economic activity thereby improving the standard of living.

Impact: 150 students and boarders

The generator was purchased, transported, installed and is functioning daily. With the presence of this reliable power, the students no longer experience electricity outages, as is the case in most towns and villages in Cameroon. The students appear to be more highly motivated in their new reality. The sisters commented on the challenges of motivating the



men who were transporting and installing the generator. Sadly, the report did not address the benefit and impact of the generator on the village.

February 2019

Nigeria—496030--Computer Laborator--Nigeria Conference of Women Religious

The Nigeria Conference of Women Religious (NCWR), founded in 1963, has 73 member congregations. Through a collaboration with African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC) in 2007, the conference was able to establish a computer laboratory with 30 Windows XP computers and internet access. The Nigerian sisters enrolled in the Sisters Leadership Development Institute (SLDI) training program, use the computer lab for courses in basic technology and web design. (SLDI is a project of the Hilton Foundation.) As an assignment, they must then train three additional sisters. The Windows XP computers are no longer suitable for the training. Since the training has a multiplier effect in the country, the conference requested a grant to replace the obsolete equipment.

Impact: 150 Sisters trained in the center.

The conference has been able to have five classes with 25 sisters each in 2017. As part of the program, the sisters must make a presentation of the outcome and impact their training has had in their apostolate and what they have been able to achieve in the last 12 months. Each sister has success stories to tell.

Because of the country's economic inflation, the conference was only able to purchase 15 computers. The sisters have doubled up on the computer use and are able to receive the training nevertheless. The unreliable power source and internet connection in their country continues to be a challenge.



June 2018

South Africa--384242--Disaster and Humanitarian Response Program: Little Sisters of Jesus

The Catholic Welfare and Development (CWD) center seeks to address social issues in the vulnerable and marginalized communities located in the western cape of South Africa. With a network of community centers located strategically in the communities, the CWD is able to respond quickly to the needs in the community. The residents of the informal communities scattered in the area live in makeshift dwellings, and 74% of the households have a monthly income of R3200 (USD 225) or less. The combined effect of the severe drought and the depreciation of the country's currency increased the cost of food by 9.8% in 2016, contributing to an increase in the food insecurity of the residents. Additionally, Cape Town is the "fire" capital. In recent years, changes in weather patterns have increased the number of fires in the area. In 2015, there were 1118 fires reported in the informal settlements affecting thousands of residents. The sisters working with the center asked for a grant to purchase and distribute emergency relief kits to assist some of the affected families.

Impact: 1789 people

The sisters made and distributed emergency kits to 514 shack-dwelling households (1603 people) who had lost their homes and belongings through fire or flooding disasters. These kits included a range of non-perishable food items, essential toiletries and basic school materials for the children. The kits enabled the families to survive for a brief period in which they had no resources

whatsoever. In 2017, they also distributed emergency kits to an additional 55 households (186 people) who, while not victims of fire or flood, were in crisis and in dire need of basic sustenance. Verbal and written feedback from the beneficiaries and others in their communities indicates that the center provided critical relief to those in the greatest need and helped to restore their dignity and their hope. “Our biggest challenge faced was reaching some of those who needed the help most. There are no roads to some areas.” They found that networking with other governmental groups and NGOs enabled them to have access to additional people in need.



February 2018

Kenya--295396--Anti-Trafficking Program: Little Sisters of St. Francis

Since 2005, the Youth Alive program ministers to youth from the Kasarani area, which includes the three slums. The program empowers vulnerable youth aged 15-25 by allowing them to develop the skills necessary to make informed decisions concerning social issues encountered. The Sisters target youth challenged by poverty, unemployment, sexual abuse, early marriages and pregnancies, depression due to stress and conflict, drug and substance abuse, and local human trafficking.

The Sisters requested funding to provide a four-day workshop for 50 vulnerable boys and girls. The Sisters designed the workshop to provide:

1. Ongoing training, to improve the self-esteem of the vulnerable young people by providing knowledge of basic life skills and helping them effectively address challenges of human rights violations and human trafficking.
2. Health care, medication and ongoing counseling services to individuals and groups of young people.
3. Support groups to address the major challenges of unemployment and eradication of poverty.
4. Support networks to identify and prosecute perpetrators of human trafficking.

Impact: 50 young people participated in the process. The Sisters and monitor listed some challenges:

- Threats and interference from some people involved in human trafficking as a move to silence the awareness programs.
- Relapse of two young people who were in the program.
- Ignorance among some young people who underestimate their exposure to human trafficking situations.
- Limited funds to take care of the numerous additional young people who came for the training sessions.

How did the Sisters respond to the challenges?

- Networking with government officials for protection against threats posed to their team.
- Vigilance in finding the young people who “innocently” become victims of relationships that could end in a trafficking situation.
- Imparting knowledge to youth on the danger of human trafficking.
- Setting strategies for further future anti-trafficking training.

