

Sister to Sister

AAC:SS – A network of six sub-Saharan countries that supports educational and training programs for women religious who are caregivers to those experiencing extreme poverty and the twin crises of HIV/AIDS and Covid-19.

All-Africa Conference: Sister to Sister Vision and Mission 2023-2026

Our Vision

We are women religious and partners who collaborate globally to enhance our capacity as leaders in church and society and to improve the lives of others.

Our Mission

Guided by our Vision and commitment to the Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy, AAC:SS supports the initiatives of women religious in sub-Saharan Africa that respond to emerging needs and educates and inspires all people to share responsibility for a world in need of healing and love.

We will realize our Vision and Mission by responding to needs identified by the Sisters in Africa and work together to create strategic initiatives that foster transformative leadership for the common good.

A Banner Year for AAC:SS

2022 was a transformative year for All Africa Conference: Sister to Sister (AAC:SS). Sisters from all six participating countries traveled to Malawi in April to focus on mission sustainability through fundraising and communication. Attendees took what they learned back to their home countries and created similar sessions for sisters representing many congregations. Now sisters are working to raise funds in support of targeted goals they identified in Malawi.

And there is more. The dream of a counseling hub in Uganda became a reality in 2022, capitalizing on the counseling degrees so many sisters

have earned through Sister to Sister. In four of the six participating countries, sisters have completed or are currently enrolled in a three-year leadership program. A successful technology pilot program spearheaded by AAC:SS Malawi

became a springboard for sisters in other countries to improve connectivity.

The AAC:SS board is keeping pace with the dynamic activity of the sisters in Africa. With significant input from the sisters, the board developed a new strategic plan, built on revised mission and vision statements and clear strategic initiatives. AAC:SS is well positioned for continued growth.



Sisters in Uganda gather to learn more about the counseling center and available services.

AAC:SS is active in Cameroon, Malawi, Nigeria, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

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2022 Financial Results

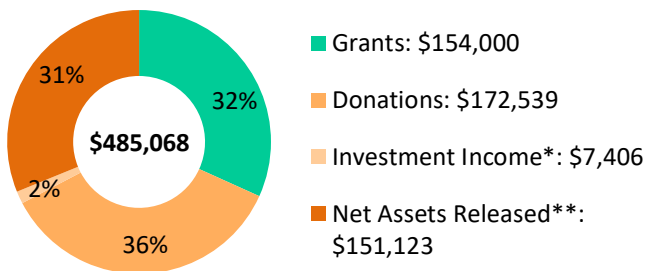
AAC:SS operates on a July 1-June 30 fiscal year. Our most significant expense in 2022, the Malawi conference, was funded primarily through the release of funds from a targeted grant.

AAC:SS has just three paid staff members – the Executive Director and, in Africa our Senior Program Officer and an administrative assistant. A small team of volunteers provide 80% of services including support

for workshop development, communications, accounting, and strategic consultation. A religious sister from each participating country serves as coordinating chair, also a volunteer position.

We are ever grateful for all the gifts that enable us to empower women religious in sub-Saharan Africa. With support from our donors, these remarkable women continue to collaborate and strengthen their impact on those they serve.

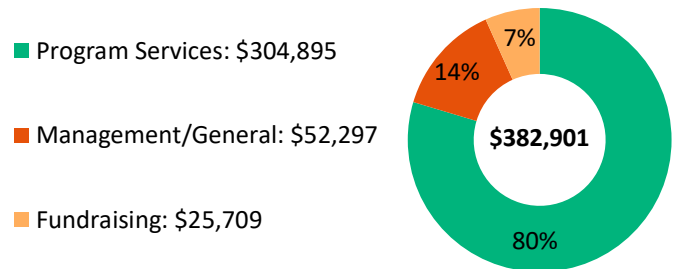
Revenue and Other Sources of Income



*Investments (6/30/2022): \$360,000

**Net Assets Released: amount released as needed from grant monies in interest-bearing account

Expenditures



Strategic Planning for a Secure Future

The AAC:SS leadership team and Board of Trustees developed a new strategic plan in 2022. The plan for 2023–2026 includes significant input from sisters in Africa, who participated in the process through a series of Zoom meetings with AAC:SS staff and board members. The result is revised mission and vision statements as well as initiatives that will guide AAC:SS activities over the next three years, with a major focus on collaboration and empowerment.

The plan builds on the AAC:SS model, which equips sisters from many congregations to learn with, train, and support one another.

Board chair Jan Attridge is enthusiastic about the strategic planning effort. “God gives us the capacity to look to the future – to dream,” she says. “I believe strategic planning helps dreamers turn their wishes for the future into goals and action plans. My experience with Sister to Sister makes me a believer that good planning produces amazing results.”

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Strength through Shared Leadership

Eneless Chimbali, SMBV, completed her first year as Senior Program Officer, a position created to provide shared leadership in Africa and the United States.

“I have seen growth and change, with a lot of collaboration among the sister leaders in Africa and USA,” says Sister Eneless. “The desire to do more is there in many. This encourages me to continue strengthening the initiatives... AAC:SS remains an organization that focuses on the individual sister, and this has been and will remain our niche. I am very privileged to be part of AACSS.”

AAC:SS Executive Director Rosemary Jeffries, RSM said that having Sister Eneless coordinate programming for Sister to Sister on the continent has dramatically enhanced consistent and creative programming in all six countries where AAC:SS is present.

“Eneless works in partnership with the in-country Sister to Sister teams. She brings to this role her administrative skills and, most importantly, her deep commitment to promote the leadership and influence of women religious in Sub Saharan Africa to enhance and expand ministries for people in need,” said Sr. Rosemary.



Sister Rosemary (fourth from left) and Sister Eneless (third from right) celebrate 20 years of AAC:SS with coordinating team leaders from each country.

Key Grants Support Major AAC:SS Initiatives

Significant grants enabled AAC:SS to expand its reach in 2022. A three-year grant from the Raskob Foundation for Catholic Activities covered the April 2022 conference in Malawi and continues to fund follow-up sessions and related activities. The grant will enable sisters to gather again in 2024.

"The Church is the largest global humanitarian network in the world and at the heart of this service are women



Raskob's Kerry Robinson captures sisters' hearts in Malawi.

religious," says Raskob's Kerry Robinson, a keynote speaker at the Malawi conference. "To witness the impact philanthropy can make in enabling the

sisters to convene for prayer, to share best practices, and to receive mission sustainability training was an immense blessing. Sisters get the job done! And we are all better for their inspiring leadership."

Generous support from GHR Foundation over several years enabled more than 150 sisters to become trained counselors, most with bachelor's degrees and several at the master's level.

Now, thanks to the Conrad Hilton Foundation, AAC:SS and the Association of Religious in Uganda (ARU) AAC:SS have secured funds needed to create a counseling center in Uganda. The grant is also enabling AAC:SS to establish a counseling hub, where trained counselors can share resources and access professional development programs.

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Beyond Malawi

Since they met in Malawi last April, sisters have created similar training programs for other women religious in their home countries. Project advisor Sister Joanne Whittaker, RSM stays in close contact with them.

“The sisters developed and implemented workshops on mission sustainability while holding down full-time jobs and, in some countries, traveled to regions with high levels of insecurity to do the presentations,” said Sister Joanne. “They achieved remarkable results reaching many sisters. The inclusion of prayer and social activities added to the excellence of the experience for the participants.”



Sisters in Cameroon celebrate new fundraising and development skills at the close of their recent in-country workshop.

Now sisters are following through on plans to raise USD 10,000 to address a specific need – from training sessions in human development and spiritual formation, to grassroots mobilization for civic engagement, to financial management skills, to connectivity and technology advancements.

When they reconvene in 2024, sisters will share experiences and strengthen their skills in financial accountability and management.

What's Ahead

Building infrastructure remains a priority for AAC:SS, primarily through technology advancements and a dedicated coordinating team in each country. Key goals in our strategic plan include additional staff members in Africa, more volunteers in the United States, creation of a targeted marketing plan and international communications task force, a more robust website, and identification of legacy partners to help sustain the AAC:SS mission.

Support comes in many forms – through prayer, financial contributions, sharing our story with others, and by volunteering. To our current supporters, thank you. If you are new to AAC:SS, we invite you to learn more and share our mission.

For details on giving and underwriting opportunities, please contact me or go to www.allafrica-sistertosister.org.

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