





EMPOWERING
WOMEN
RELIGIOUS
TO ADDRESS
AFRICA'S
CHALLENGES



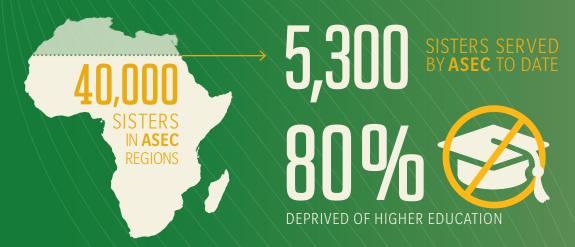
# **MISSION & HISTORY**

The mission of ASEC is to facilitate access to education for women religious in Africa that leads to enhancement and expansion of the education, health, economic, social, environmental, and spiritual services they provide.

Established in 1999, ASEC was built on a foundation of solidarity and global sisterhood developed between Catholic sisters in the USA and Africa. The organization continues to forge partnerships that enable ASEC to grow, and, in turn, benefit sisters and the people they serve.

#### Why Focus on Catholic Sisters in Africa?

Women religious dedicate their lives to social and human development. However, sisters often do not have access to the education and training they need to effectively carry out their work.



A survey of congregational leaders in ASEC's countries of operation revealed that nearly 80% of sisters have not received higher education. ASEC is working to reduce this gap in educational opportunities. To date ASEC has served more than 5,300 sisters through its programs, and that number continues to grow.

Graduates of ASEC's programs demonstrate that educating a sister can result in rippling, far-reaching impacts that significantly contribute to sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa. From improving healthcare and access to clean water, to building infrastructure and initiating income generating projects, educated and empowered sisters are key players in overcoming many of Africa's biggest development challenges.

Core Values:















Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences Mwenge Catholic University Saint Augustine University of Tanzania Tanzania Catholic Association of Sisters Water and Environment Management Consultants

St. Francis Nsambya Hospital Training School University of Kisubi Uganda Martyrs University Association of Religious in Uganda

Pan-African Institute for Development-West Africa

Catholic University College of Ghana Holy Family Nursing and Midwifery Training College Berekum Ghanaian Conference of Religious

Sacred Heart School of Nursing Veritas University Abuja Nigerian Conference of Women Religious Habatta Global Nigeria Limited

Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Scranton, PA Neumann University, Aston, PA Sisters of Saint Francis of Philadelphia, Aston, PA

Rosemont College, Rosemont, PA The Society of the Holy Child Jesus, Rosemont, PA

Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, Georgetown University, Washington, DC

# EMPOWERING SISTERS TO LEAD

The Sisters Leadership Development Initiative (SLDI) is a leadership development program which seeks to build the technological, administrative, and financial capacity of women religious in Africa.

As ASEC's largest program, SLDI has **served more than 2,200 sisters** and stakeholders to date. Since its inception in 2007, SLDI has expanded from 5 countries of operation to 10, and is serving more and more sisters each year. In the current three-year phase (2016-2018), more than 900 sisters and Superior Generals have been served so far and the program anticipates **serving at least 1,300 sisters and stakeholders during the 2016-18 phase**.



THROUGH SLDI WORKSHOPS, SISTERS ARE EQUIPPED WITH SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE. THEY GAIN CONFIDENCE AS THEY LEARN HOW TO WORK MORE EFFECTIVELY AND COLLABORATIVELY.

Sisters first receive training in either basic technology or web design, and then subsequently participate in either an administrative leadership track or a financial leadership track.

Once the workshops end, sisters receive continuing education in the form of alumnae workshops and are expected to share the knowledge and skills they gain through mentoring other sisters and community members.

In addition, SLDI facilitates workshops for congregational leaders to build their leadership skills and increase their understanding of ASEC's programs.

Importantly, all SLDI workshops are adaptable to the specific needs and contexts in which sisters live.

ASEC recognizes that sisters work and live in changing environments, and therefore utilizes instructors from both the U.S. and countries in Africa to deliver and regularly update the SLDI curriculum.





#### One SLDI alumna stated:

I came to realize after completing the SLDI program that I am no more the same person. I have more knowledge. During recreation, I share with my sisters. [In] the school, the head teacher consults me for many things. And it's through what I learnt that I am able to make meaningful contributions. That makes me happy, and I am thankful to ASEC. I have a voice.

# PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Sisters use the skills, networks, and confidence developed through the SLDI workshops to take on a range of tasks in their professional roles, including grant-writing, strategic and financial planning, budgeting, designing and implementing projects, program evaluation, and much more.

» Read more about what SLDI alumnae are accomplishing in the Impact section.

# SLDI ALUMNAE SUCCESS STORIES

**Sr. Eulalia, Phase III** | (Finance track), Zambia

Through partnerships, **secured a total of \$261,109 for the Mother Earth project** via grants and fundraising.

The project plants moringa trees, which are exceptionally nutritious with a variety of potential uses. More than 6,000 moringa trees have been planted and 100 moringa farmers are undergoing training for organic farming.

The project reaches out to women in the rural areas (800 women per year) to promote improved nutrition and created 4 jobs.

The project also **uses renewable energy** such as windmills, solar power, biogas, and earth bags to sustain the project.

**Sr. Josephine, Phase III** | (Administration track), Kenya

Received almost \$14,000 in funds from donations and a grant to implement a project that seeks to empower poor and HIV positive women in urban and rural areas.

Collaborated with the Diocese of Nakuru to implement the project, which uses **economic empowerment and peace building initiatives**.

# ASEC RECOGNIZES THAT TO EDUCATE A SISTER IS TO EDUCATE A COMMUNITY

Initiated in 2013, Higher Education for Sisters in Africa (HESA) ensures that women religious receive credentials to enhance service to their communities. HESA provides opportunities for Catholic women religious in 10 African countries to access tertiary education at the undergraduate and master's level in academic fields identified as relevant and needed to their congregations, ministries, and communities.

## HESA IMPACT & PHASES

2013-2017

7 218 BACHELOR'S DEGREES 62 COLLEGE DIPLOMAS

2016-2020

THE PROGRAM ANTICIPATES SERVING AT LEAST **850** SISTERS

By 2020, HESA will have served approximately 1,200 sisters at 22 partner colleges and universities, with about one-third of HESA participants completing a portion of their studies online.

# PROGRAM MODEL

To deliver HESA, ASEC facilitates collaborative partnerships with universities in the USA and in Africa, as well as national conferences of women religious.

Model A, online-onsite hybrid, sisters study for one-year online at a partner university in the USA, completing 27 credits.

In *Model B, onsite*, sisters study on campus at a partner university in Africa.



HESA recruits sisters to study at its partner institutions in cohorts of 4 to 20 sisters. Together the sisters participate in HESA orientation and annual reflective learning. The cohort serves as a support network throughout the sisters' studies.

# HESA IS DELIVERED IN TWO MODELS AT ASEC PARTNER INSTITUTIONS IN AFRICA •

AND THE U.S.A. ◦——

PARTNER COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN THE USA

Chestnut Hill College \*

Marywood University \*

**Neumann University** 

Rosemont College \*

Catholic University College of Ghana

PARTNER COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Veritas University Abuja, Nigeria

Catholic University of Cameroon Bamenda

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Kenya

University of Kisubi, Uganda

Zambia Catholic University

Monze Registered Nurse and Midwife Program, Zambia

Mwenge Catholic University, Tanzania

Uganda Martyrs University, Uganda

Sacred Heart School of Nursing, Nigeria

St. Augustine University of Tanzania

Chemchemi Ya Uzima Institute, Kenya

Tangaza University College, Kenya
Catholic University of South Sudan

The Catholic University of Malawi

Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences, Tanzania

St. Francis Nsambya Hospital Training School, Uganda

Holy Family Nursing and Midwifery Training College Berekum, Ghana

National University of Lesotho

\* U.S. institutions currently offering online programs for HESA are linked with African partner by arrows.

Sisters obtain a relevant undergraduate or master's degree, either continuing on to higher levels of education or returning to their communities to serve as congregational and community leaders, meeting the needs present in their local communities through their educational, social service, pastoral, and other ministries.



# SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

ASEC's Scholarship Program provides two-year scholarships for women religious to complete high school or a college diploma. The program was initiated in 2012 to meet the unique educational needs expressed by sisters in Tanzania.

OF SISTERS
LACK SECONDARY
EDUCATION



ASEC found that many sisters from Tanzania were not qualifying for enrollment in undergraduate degree programs. There are 14,500 women religious serving in Tanzania, in 95 congregations. Approximately 60 percent of sisters lack secondary education.

In 2016, ASEC expanded the Scholarship Program to Malawi and Zambia to fulfill the need for secondary and diploma level education among women religious.

ASEC HAS **SERVED NEARLY 200 WOMEN** IN TANZANIA, MALAWI, AND ZAMBIA.

# PROGRAM MODEL



Sisters receive two scholarships to complete high school

OR a college diploma Qualifying them for entry to higher levels of education

Sisters studying for college diplomas are studying:

- Education
- Social Work
- Nursing
- Medical Laboratory Science

Business Administration

200\*

- Accounting
- Finance



# SERVICE LEARNING

ASEC administers a spirituality-based global immersion experience that enables students from ASEC's founding colleges and universities to travel to one of the 10 countries served by ASEC for 2-3 weeks of service learning during the summer. ASEC's Service Learning program promotes global leadership, a key attribute in building the next generation of leaders.

100 STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

9 FACULTY PARTICIPANTS



Since 2008, nearly
100 students and
nine faculty from
Chestnut Hill
College, Rosemont
College and
Marywood University
have participated
in ASEC's Service
Learning Program.



IN 2017, STUDENTS FROM MARYWOOD UNIVERSITY & CHESTNUT HILL COLLEGE ATTENDED A 3-WEEK SERVICE TRIP TO KENYA. THEY PROVIDED SERVICE AT VARIOUS SITES, INCLUDING A REFUGEE CENTER, A HOSPITAL, A HOME FOR STREET BOYS, AND AN ORPHANAGE FOR BOTH PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY DISABLED CHILDREN.

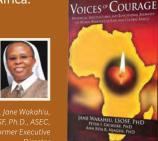
## RESEARCH INITIATIVE

Sisters are playing an integral role in creating sustainable change in Africa, but their work is not well-documented or widely known.

Very little scholarly research has focused on Catholic sisters in Africa, creating a literature gap that ASEC's research initiative plans to address.

ASEC has taken several initial steps towards increasing the scholarly research on Catholic sisters in Africa:

In 2015, published a book,
 Voices of Courage,
 to share the work and
 lives of sisters
 in Africa.



 Facilitating workshops to increase sisters' and ASEC's university partners' capacity to conduct research, which may result in studies that can be published and shared through another book publication.

To date, 35 African researchers (including sisters) have been funded to conduct their research.

 Building the capacity of congregational leaders to collect and analyze data through workshops for Superior Generals and other events.  Seeking to engage sisters in increased monitoring and evaluation of their own funded projects, as well as assisting in ASEC's evaluation processes.



# BUILDING SISTERS' CAPACITY TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

ASEC is committed to increasing the capacity of sisters to conduct research, evaluate ministry projects, and collect congregational-level data. Formally initiated in 2015, ASEC's Research Initiative provides opportunities for women religious in Africa to engage in workshops and opens pathways to publication of research. Evaluation and evidence-based strategic planning are also built into the SLDI program curriculum.

Most recently, ASEC delivered two research training workshops for sisters and religious life scholars. More than 60 participants from East, Central, and West Africa engaged in two workshops on qualitative research and data gathering during 2015/16.



IN 2016, ASEC PARTNERED WITH THE CENTER FOR APPLIED RESEARCH IN THE APOSTOLATE (CARA) AT GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY, TO LINK WITH ITS VISITING SCHOLARS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM. CARA WILL HOST SISTERS FROM AFRICA FOR SIX-MONTH FELLOWSHIPS AT ITS OFFICE IN THE USA, TRAINING THE SISTERS IN DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS. ASEC WILL HELP TO IDENTIFY AND MENTOR THE SISTERS, ALSO LINKING THEM WITH A NETWORK OF ALUMNAE AND PARTNERS.



# DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE AND COLLECTING DATA THROUGH EVALUATION

ASEC is also committed to disseminating knowledge about sisters in Africa through research and publication. ASEC collects data on women religious in the countries it serves through superior surveys and programs evaluation. Additionally, ASEC administrators and faculty at partner universities are provided support to produce research on ASEC programs and women religious in Africa.

» Their collected works can be found on ASEC's website: asec-sldi.org/research

Through the Research Initiative, ASEC is also working to provide sisters in Africa the opportunity to publish research. On October 1, 2015, during a ceremony at Catholic University of Eastern Africa, ASEC launched its first book – Voices of Courage: Historical, Socio-cultural, and Educational Journeys of Women Religious in East and Central Africa. The work is a collection of research written by women religious in Africa and religious scholars.



ASEC'S BOOK, VOICE'S OF COURAGE
WAS DISPLAYED DURING A BOOK LAUNCH
CEREMONY AT CUEA IN OCTOBER 2015.

ASEC is currently working on a second book, *Transformative Partnerships:* Role of Agencies, Foundations, Institutions in Promoting Strategic Social and Sustainable Change for Women Religious in Africa. The publication of this book is funded by a grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.

**I**NDIVIDUALS

SLDI ALUMNAE AND THEIR MENTEES RAISED MORE THAN 12.2 MILLION FOR PROJECTS FOCUSED ON AREAS OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL IMPACT, HIGHLIGHTING THE INDIRECT RIPPLE EFFECT SLDI HAS IN AFRICAN COMMUNITIES. ARE SHARING

THEIR KNOWLEDGE

IN 2016, SISTERS REPORTED MENTORING MORE THAN 20,000 PEOPLE INDIVIDUALLY, IN GROUPS,

IN 2016 REPORTING, 82.8 PERCENT OF MENTEES WENT ON TO SHARE WHAT THEY LEARNED WITH OTHERS IN THEIR CONGREGATIONS, WORKPLACES, AND COMMUNITIES.



Sr. Lucy Anne, of the Little Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi (LSOSF) in Kenya, was mentored by Sr. Schola, LSOSF, over a period of about one year. In 2015, Sr. Lucy Anne secured \$16,509 in grant funding from two donors, Mensen met een Missie and Missionszentrale der Franziskaner.

She used the funds to implement a project focused on empowering single mothers with technical skills so that they can sustain themselves and their families. Sr. Lucy Anne reported that the most useful topic in which she received mentoring was grant writing.

PROJECTED UNDERGRADUATE AND MASTER'S **DEGREES BY 2020 IN ACADEMIC FIELDS** RELEVANT TO

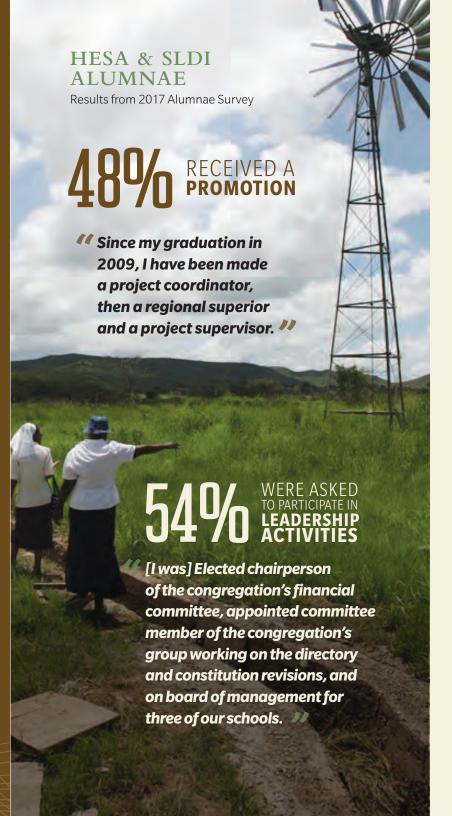
**Education**, achieving quality and equitable access at all levels

**Social work and counseling**, building sustainable and healthy communities Nursing and medical science, ens

Theology, supporting faith formation

# HESA

ASEC aims to create an education pipeline for Catholic sisters in Africa, whereby sisters can complete one ASEC program and potentially enter into another program that builds upon the skills and education they already received. ASEC's SLDI and Scholarship Program participants are well equipped to succeed in the HESA program. In fact, more than 25% of HESA students are alumnae of ASEC's other programs.



# IMPACT ON THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (UN SDG)

ASEC was founded by partners in the USA; today, partners in 10 African countries enable ASEC to sustain its programs and make progress toward the UN SDGs, which focus on eradicating poverty and creating a more just and equitable world. Partnerships for ASEC programs are opening access to education and empowering women and girls.



SLDI alumnae projects are directly addressing the UN SDGs. Alumnae projects impact nearly all of the 17 UN SDGs.

OF SLDI PROJECTS **IMPACT MORE** THAN ONE UN SDG





\$2,406,860

**IMPACT** 

It is important to note that 64.5% of projects initiated by SLDI Alumnae impact more than one UN SDG. In other words, it is common that one project can affect several areas of human and/or social development. For example, one sister working in Uganda at the Iganga Babies' Home secured funds to obtain nutritious food for the infants, construct a pit latrine, and install solar panels as an energy source. This project addresses 4 UN SDGs:

and Well-Being

Industry Innovation and Infrastructure

and Clean Energy

# GIVE THE GIFT OF A GOOD EDUCATION You can support ASEC's mission by making an online donation at asec-sldi.org/get-involved

√Yes, I want to give

the gift of education.

HOW

TO

**SUPPORT** 

ASEC

I will make my one-time or recurring gift online at asec-sldi.org/donate

NAME

**EMAIL** 

My gift is in honor/

Instructions

Please make checks payable to: **African Sisters Education Collaborative** 

2300 Adams Avenue | Scranton, PA 18509



**DONATE ONLINE** 

You can support ASEC's mission by visiting asec-sldi.org/donate

# ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

The African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC) invites colleges, universities, and congregations that are supportive of ASEC's mission to consider associate membership.

The function of associate members is to promote and further the mission of ASEC, make a financial contribution, and, if desired, participate in ASEC activities, which could include collaborating in ASEC programming, sharing your knowledge and skills, spreading the good word about ASEC through your networks, hosting African sisters, and other unique opportunities. Priority goals for ASEC are increasing technological skills of African women religious, increasing their access to higher education through distance learning, developing their leadership skills, and assisting in special projects as identified by them.

#### Criteria for membership as an Associate member are:

- Payment of \$5.000 minimum membership fee
- A delegate from the associate members will serve on the **ASEC** board
- If interested, participation on Board committees

All associate members shall have the option of having a representative attend an annual Advisory Board meeting held in March/April.









## FRIENDS OF ASEC

For a minimum \$100 contribution, any individual, organization, business, or other group can become a Friend of ASEC.

Anyone interested in this level of membership can contact ASEC for more information about how you can be an important part of empowering and educating women religious in Africa.

### Where your contributions go:

- \$500 supports a U.S. college student for a 2-3 week service learning trip.
- \$5.000 allows a sister to attend the three-year SLDI program.
- \$1,000 provides an annual scholarship for the two-year Scholarship program.
- \$7,300 enables a sister to complete a year of higher education towards a Bachelor's degree in the **HESA** program.



**EMPOWERING** WOMEN **RELIGIOUS TO** ADDRESS AFRICA'S CHALLENGES

#### Contact

US Headquarters with questions about membership at 570.961.4700 or visit us online at asec-sldi.org.

# **Empowering Women Religious to Address Africa's Challenges**

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFER ENCE BY...

Though our SLDI, HESA and Scholarship programs, we've learned that education builds a sister's self-confidence and increases productivity. It also improves service delivery and helps to sustain ministries and churches.

Educating a sister results in rippling, far-reaching impacts. Sisters are addressing some of the most pressing development challenges in Africa today. From the ground up, they are moving the needle on nearly all of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals.

#### **Building the next generation of leaders.**

We are also committed to promoting global leadership and supporting our future leaders through our Service Learning program. This program provides U.S. college students 2-3 week service learning opportunities in Africa. Students take part in service opportunities like tutoring English, serving food to the poor and assisting orphanage staff.

#### **Donating**

- Online at asec-sldi.org/donate
- Check made out to African Sisters Education Collaborative and mailed to 2300 Adams Avenue, Scranton, PA 18509

















ASEC Executive Director Sr. Cecilia Draru (center) with students from Uganda.

MAKING A
DIFFERENCE IN
THE LIVES OF
WOMEN RELIGIOUS
IN AFRICA

# EMPOWERING WOMEN RELIGIOUS TO ADDRESS AFRICA'S CHALLENGES

