



Together The Global Solidarity Fund



Welcome

We live in a unique moment of challenge and opportunity.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the ecological crisis are strong evidence of the complexity of our world, where everything is interconnected. We cannot find effective solutions in silos. We need to work in solidarity, as partners.

The Global Solidarity Fund responds to this moment. GSF has been created to co-design innovative solutions for critical global challenges, working in solidarity alongside with the different actors in development as well as with those who are most vulnerable.

We are inspired by the moral leadership of **Pope Francis** and **Catholic Social Teaching**, and are grateful for the Holy Father's **heartfelt encouragement to us** in our latest private audience in October 2021. We also take inspiration from the 2030 UN Agenda, with its **17 Sustainable Development Goals**.

We are **guided** by **hundreds of thousands of men and women in religious life** who every day serve and empower poor people in our cities and in the most remote areas of the world.

We are **encouraged** by hundreds of large and small **companies**, which are changing our economic system to create a more inclusive world.

We are **driven** by **millions of the poorest and most marginalized**, who must reinvent their future every day to lift themselves out of poverty. Their imagination and energy guide us. Their hope is our responsibility and call to action.

Our distinctive role is to serve as **a catalyst for partnerships to create a more inclusive society and to protect our common home**.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



We are building bridges across 1) businesses, 2) development organizations and 3) faith-based communities, including the vast Catholic network of more than one million women and men religious who work in solidarity with the most vulnerable in the most remote areas of the world.



Why is building these bridges so critical to develop transformative, sustainable and equitable solutions? What happens when the Catholic network and other faith-based organizations meet private businesses, philanthropies, and international development organizations?

This report brings to life the power of these partnerships through a selection of concrete examples that describe GSF in action.



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GSF's Uniqueness in Action

The best way to understand GSF is to see our uniqueness in action through the collaborations we are bringing to life.

Together 1: Pope Francis, Global Citizen and the world's youth to advocate for equity in vaccine access and human development

GSF worked with the **Vatican** and **Global Citizen**, leading to a speaking slot for Pope Francis at a public event that reached millions of viewers worldwide – especially **young people** – with a message of vaccine access for the poor.

GSF is proud to partner with Global Citizen, which creates major events to build support for inclusive global development, and has an extraordinary reach among young people. As the issue of equitable global access to the vaccine became critical in 2021, we considered how we could help Global Citizen make the case to the global community. As we reflected together, we realized there is **no greater leader than Pope Francis – and that to bring his moral voice to a diverse global audience could have unique impact.**

Dear youngsters in age and in spirit... a very warm greeting from this old man who does not dance nor sing as you do, but believes, as you do, that injustice and evil are not invincible... This pandemic got us all into a crisis - but do not forget that we cannot get out of a crisis the same way; we either get out better, or worse. The issue lies in having the creativity to seek better paths.

Pope Francis at Vax Live



GSF was instrumental in making this a reality, drawing on our network of relationships to share the vision. Pope Francis made the decision to deliver a [heartfelt video message](#) to viewers of VAX LIVE: The Concert to Reunite the World on May 8, 2021.

Pope Francis stressed the need for deep healing, both from the effects of the COVID-19 virus and the virus of individualism and closed nationalism. **His message reached over 1 billion people.** Young people and activists as well as top-level decision-makers and heads of state across the world heard him speak from his heart.

The message was broadcast in the U.S. on ABC, CBS, FOX, YouTube, iHeartMedia broadcast radio stations and app, and AXS TV. Internationally it was seen on outlets such as Multishow in Brazil, Caracol in Colombia, SABC in South Africa, and MultiChoice across Africa. Italian and European TV and media covered it, and the Vatican communication and media department distributed the video through all its channels.

In addition, GSF also organized the voice of a Sister from South Africa being heard by the VAX LIVE audience on YouTube. Sr. Nkhensani Shibambu provided a [moving message](#) on the need for the vaccine in Africa and other developing regions.

Building on this positive experience, in September 2021 **GSF participated in Global Citizen Live, a 24-hour musical event shown to a global audience of millions at the time of the UN General Assembly to build support for equitable development in the post-pandemic era.**

A [video featuring GSF](#) showed the world the uniqueness of our work and spotlighted for a wide audience the unique positive value of the Catholic Church and other faith-based organizations as leaders in human development. Sr. Pat Murray of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG) called on the private sector, philanthropies

The Global Solidarity Fund, if it hadn't been created, we would probably need to be creating it right now. It's playing a vital role. It's going to play a fundamental role in making sure we live up to that aspiration of building back better.

Joe Cerrell, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, GSF Board Member



and international organizations to join our common effort in the video, and Matt Higgins, Co-Chair of GSF's Leaders Council, represented GSF, powerfully connecting the work the Church does globally to its work at the local level in a personal way.

These experiences have confirmed our belief in the power of unprecedented and unusual partnerships – sometimes they have the greatest impact of all! We do not know what further surprising collaborations we may be able to spark in the future together – but we are always seeking the next opportunity for transformation.

Together 2: Catholic Sisters and the development community for pro-poor development approaches

GSF has catalyzed new partnerships to **ensure that Sisters' experience and insights are added in key SDG policy discussions and decision-making fora**, including in the post COVID-19 global dialogue.

Recognizing the extraordinary service Catholic Sisters provide to vulnerable people working alongside men religious, close to GSF's heart is the ambition to further empower Sisters as agents of change in global development. We began by establishing a strong relationship with the International Union of Superiors General (UISG), the largest umbrella group of leaders of women's congregations, representing more than 700,000 Sisters around the world. GSF is working together with UISG to support its ambition to make advocacy to the global development community part of the Sisters' ministry.

Laying the groundwork for advocacy with the development community, GSF has collaborated with UISG to design a **framework for campaigns for human trafficking, ecology and health**. Part of this work is to identify a **network of Sister-leaders** – including those at the grassroots level – who can bring a powerful voice to these issues. A **database of 60 Sisters leading** in different sectors has been created, and **530 Sisters** across the world have **attended advocacy and communications training** since the beginning of our collaboration.

An example of our collaboration is the work we have been conducting with **Talitha Kum**, a network of Sisters acting in 90 countries to stop human trafficking, led by Sr. Gabriella Bottani. In partnership with GSF, Talitha Kum has been able **to map its global network** to lay the foundation for expanded advocacy.

They developed themes around Gender Equality, Economic Justice and Migration in the fight against trafficking, and **created a powerful document, [Talitha Kum's Call to Action](#)**, to inform the global dialogue and programming.

This launched a powerful advocacy campaign, beginning in 2021, through which insights from Sisters from different regions are being heard by governments – including the G20 – and development partners on behalf of the poor.

One important step was on September 14, as **Talitha Kum brought its advocacy voice against human trafficking to the G20**. Sr. Gabriella delivered an address on the theme 'Time to Heal' to the [G20 Interfaith Forum](#) in Bologna. Sr. Gabriella's intervention is part of this process to raise the voice and influence of Sisters. Her remarks previewed key recommendations to governments and the development community included in the call to action paper. The influence of Talitha Kum could be seen clearly in the declaration from the Forum, for example in a call to action to "work to reset the global 'moral compass' " on trafficking.





Partnering with GSF is creating and enhancing opportunities for Sisters to advocate for and with the communities we serve. We see advocacy as a key aspect of our ministry, and we're grateful for the partnership of GSF and the new supporters with whom they've connected us.

Sr. Patricia Murray, Union of International Superiors General

Another key milestone was November 25, as Talitha Kum marked the UN International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women by launching its Call to Action. This document presents **concrete actions to tackle the systemic causes of human trafficking, empowering everyone – and especially women – to foster safe and thriving communities.** It includes specific policies for governments and other stakeholders to commit to long-term support for trafficking survivors, including quality education, work permits and job opportunities, medical and psychosocial assistance, and access to justice and compensation.

The event brought together voices from Talitha Kum's global network, the Holy See and the international development community at UISG's headquarters in Rome, raising the visibility of Sisters as leaders against human trafficking. As Talitha Kum's international coordinators presented the elements of the document, the Vatican Secretary of State, **Cardinal Pietro Parolin**, recognized the Call to Action a "prophetic voice the world rightfully needs to hear." Other supportive reflections were offered by Dr. Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, former United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Trafficking; Dr. Azza Karam of Religions for Peace International; Amb. Pietro Sebastiani, Italy's Ambassador to the Holy See; Laurence Hart of IOM; Sr. Angela Reed, Head of Mercy International; and Srs. Jolanta Kafka and Pat Murray of UISG.

Another important step toward telling the story of Sisters' work as actors for change in development was **the #YouAreMySister campaign around COVID-19.** UISG and GSF worked together to identify key communications messages to deliver, and to select Sisters' voices to promote in the campaign. Film crews were sent **to Kenya, India, Cambodia and Brazil** to interview Sisters and show their leadership within their communities. Videos, still photos and quotes from the interviews were made into a range of products in English and Spanish and shared widely.

The **campaign was launched in time for the 2020 UN General Assembly (UNGA) to raise the voice and example of Sisters** among partners in the development community and facilitate the engagement of new partners that were also working at UNGA. UISG seized the opportunity to greatly expand its institutional capacity for future communications and advocacy. The campaign also enabled UISG to build new bridges with potential partners whose networks can accelerate and amplify its future advocacy efforts. For UISG, the highly positive responses it received from varied partners, in and beyond the Catholic community, were deeply encouraging as it turns to planning future advocacy in partnership with GSF.

As long as there are people in our world in situations of vulnerability, Sisters will be there – and we will need to hear their voices.

The unique contribution and proposal that the network of Talitha Kum hopes to offer through its Call to Action... is a prophetic voice that the world rightfully needs to hear. If heeded, it will bring necessary change to the way in which the international community, including at the local level, responds to the scourge of modern slavery.

Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican Secretary of State



Together 3: *Global businesses and congregations in an Innovation Lab to create new solutions for employment of migrants in the Global South*

GSF has catalyzed an **Innovation Lab** — a platform to connect businesses with **congregations** to create pathways to job opportunities for migrants, refugees, and internally displaced people (IDPs).

Convened in collaboration with Tent Partnership for Refugees and Goal 17 Partners, the Innovation Lab partners are working together during 2021 and 2022. With concrete commitments by participating companies, the partners are creating actionable solutions that can be scaled up and replicated by faith-based organizations worldwide.

For GSF, the impetus was this reality: for millions of migrants in developing countries, accessing labor markets and securing jobs is a huge challenge – one that the economic dislocation of the COVID-19 pandemic has only intensified.

Faith-based organizations are often the most trusted resources for those who are most vulnerable. In particular, many Catholic women’s and men’s congregations work closely with migrants, refugees and IDPs. They know their needs, and many have developed successful innovative models to integrate them into the labor market. What congregations often lack, however, are partnerships with companies. Only together can they solve the bottlenecks preventing companies from hiring migrants to meet their workforce needs and at the same time offering a new life to the ones who are forced to migrate.



What makes the Lab special to me is bringing together quite different types of sectors, you've got the private sector, you've got, NGOs, you've got faith-based communities ... very complementary skill sets that when you put them together, I think can have a hugely positive impact.

Rebecca Marmot, Unilever, GSF Board Member

We know that through the relationships they have, and the direct work with migrants, knowledge of the challenges they face, that GSF's network will ensure that private sector partners we are ringing in will be guided by specific problems to solve and the solutions we are generating will deliver more immediate and tangible impact.

Susan Myers, Goal 17 Partners



The Innovation Lab was launched on July 15, 2021, with a global briefing featuring leaders from the private sector, the Vatican, and Catholic women’s and men’s congregations discussing bottlenecks and opportunities at the intersection of job creation and migration.

Church and private sector participants in the Innovation Lab launch included:

- Cardinal João Braz de Aviz, Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, Vatican
- Fr. Leonir Chiarello CS, Superior General, Scalabrinian Missionaries and GSF advisor for religious life
- Sr. Ruth del Pilar Mora, FMA, Provincial Superior of the Salesian Sisters AES
- Fr. David Holdcroft SJ, Professional and Post-Secondary Education Specialist, Jesuit Refugee Service, International Office
- Heather Johnson, Vice President of Sustainability and Corporate Responsibility, Ericsson Group
- Antonio Guerrero García, Director of Transformation, Axity
- Rebecca Marmot, Chief Sustainability Officer, Unilever and Board Member, GSF



This dialogue revealed significant opportunities for collaboration. To advance the partnership, the Innovation Lab utilizes Catalyst Sessions, bringing together:

- Innovation Lab founding partner corporations deeply engaged with migrants and refugees
- Faith-based service providers from across the Global South
- Global development experts leading job creation for migrants

These leaders are engaging a new generation of companies in shaping joint ambitions on collaborative action to facilitate inclusive labor market access through:

- Engaging scalable technology platforms
- Developing business skills and acumen
- Deploying executives as high-level advocates

One exciting possibility is with Axity, a technology company focused on Latin America. Working with the Scalabrinian congregation, Axity has developed an application that supports the congregations to capture and manage information relevant to job placement and matching for migrants in its homes around the world. Based on good information about migrants' skills and needs, the partners were able to collaborate on information technology training and enroll migrants in the Cisco Networking Academy. Working with Axity, this is exactly the kind of innovation that GSF and the Lab partners will foster and work to bring to scale in multiple geographies.

Through the Innovation Lab, leaders and companies are lending their expertise and assets to work with congregations to drive change. Progress continued at a high-level gathering around the G20 Summit in Rome, where with the help of **Scalabrini, Jesuit Refugee Service, the Salesian Sisters and the Diocese of Addis Ababa**, participants drilled down together to understand the challenges. Private sector participants – including **DHL, Eni, EAT, and CleanChoice Energy** – and development organizations, such as **UNHCR and USAID**, shared ideas for concrete solutions to overcome these issues. The first half of 2022

will involve public dialogue at Davos, as well as two working sessions for participants to develop and advance solutions. The partners are working toward announcing concrete progress on solutions in the second half of 2022.

The solutions created by the Innovation Lab will yield near-term breakthroughs in employment of migrants. But that won't be the end of the collaboration, as GSF creates an ongoing partnership of congregations and businesses, working together in a cyclical way, with needs identified at the grassroots level, solutions created by the global partnership, and the solutions shared with communities.

GSF's global inter-congregational platform – described below – will be helpful in ensuring that the solutions are disseminated widely and implemented. **The Innovation Lab's global work is rooted in the local communities and is providing solutions that will be applicable at the local level at scale, ensuring a systemic change that will have a concrete impact on the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.**

Migrants and refugees want to be independent and able to fulfil their aspirations and dreams. They want a decent job to get fully integrated in the society and be able to have a safe and productive life. Migrants and refugees are part of the solution, not of the problem. Many companies are aware of this and willing to collaborate to include migrants and refugees. This is why I fully support the Innovation Lab. I believe it could be a transformational initiative. This is also why I appreciate the GSF focus on inter-congregational work launched in Ethiopia and soon also operative in Colombia. This partnership is a successful model to integrate the vulnerable communities into the local economy.

Fr. Leonir Chiarello cs, Superior General, Scalabrinian Missionaries and GSF Advisor for Religious Life



Together 4: Congregations of men and women religious worldwide on employment for migrants

GSF has catalyzed an **innovative global platform of eight leading religious congregations** to conduct joint research and develop joint programs on job creation and placement for migrants, refugees and IDPs.

This work reflects our belief that Catholic congregations of women and men in religious life have long worked on the front lines to empower the most vulnerable socially and economically. They are present in countless communities – including many of the poorest – in countries all over the world.



There is no other comparable network. In these challenging times, it is no exaggeration to say they have provided a lifeline for many.

In dialogue with us, many congregations working to connect migrants with good jobs agreed there is an opportunity to increase their impact by working together in a global network. Through collaboration, they believe they can break down silos, foster synergies, and create systemic and long-term partnerships with businesses, governments and other development actors.

Comment from a leader from one congregation involved in the global network of congregations:

“The vision outlined is relevant, focused and thematically coheres around Pope Francis’ call to Inclusive Economies. The combination of links with industry, coordination between religious congregations and a focus on creating work and income opportunities are compelling.”

With GSF’s support and encouragement, their first action together is to assess the impact of COVID-19 on job creation/placement for migrants across Latin America and Africa. This is a key step toward collaborating to craft programs that draw on their experience in order to advance the vision of an inclusive economy.

Crucially, the platform will accelerate bringing successful models – such as the one GSF has catalyzed in Ethiopia, described below – to scale in additional countries. **GSF has an ambition to scale up its innovative inter-congregational job creation and placement hub model in 10 countries in Africa and Latin America.** The congregations will be critical to this effort.

As they work on this new research and planning together, the congregations share GSF’s conviction that its potential for impact is huge – and they share our determination to move forward with urgency.

Participants in the global platform:

- Salesian women
- Salesian men
- Scalabrini International Migration Network
- Scalabrini women
- Missionaries of Charity women
- Ursuline women
- Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS)
- Daughters of Charity women



Together 5: Congregations in Ethiopia collaborating in a network to work with *businesses and government* to train and place migrants in jobs

In Ethiopia, GSF has created the innovative pilot approach of **women’s and men’s congregations working as a network for the first time**, with each playing a distinctive role in creating jobs for migrants. With this network established, they are able to work in a unified way with the private sector and government agencies.

In Ethiopia, a country with large populations of migrants, refugees and IDPs, GSF began by convening 10 congregations and other Catholic entities in Addis Ababa in 2019 to gather inputs and ideas to create a network to impact the lives of the most vulnerable. The idea of a shared effort to create job opportunities for migrants generated great enthusiasm.

Members and leadership roles in the new network:

- **The Socio-Pastoral Commission of the Catholic Secretariat to lead on the administrative and financial dimension**
- **The Conference of Major Religious Superiors**
- **Jesuit Refugee Service to lead on entrepreneurship training**
- **Missionaries of Charity to lead on synergies between health care/young mother programs and vocational training/job creation or placement**
- **Salesian Brothers to lead on job placement**
- **Salesian Sisters and Ursuline Sisters to lead on job training**

Despite many challenges during 2020, including political riots and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the congregations continued to meet to assess local needs and their own capacities, and – most important of all – to build a common vision and a new way of working together. Within just a few months of the kickoff in 2020, the congregations began working as a whole, and migrants began benefiting in a holistic way from the different services offered by each of the congregations.

GSF’s partners are creating a joint network platform to foster strong collaboration around virtual ‘hubs’ to meet the needs of migrants. This builds on successful existing projects run by the congregations, enabling each to contribute distinctive strengths to an integrated approach to deliver holistic services, enhancing job creation while connecting migrants to programs for health care.

The inter-congregational partnership is now well-positioned **to connect to a multi-stakeholder network of private sector partners to help migrants access the job market**, as well as to work with relevant government agencies.

As an example, students who completed job training through GSF’s inter-congregational network project were invited to a graduation celebration at the Salesian Sisters Mary Help College in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. **Among the students were young mothers with children** referred from the Missionaries of Charity and refugees referred from the Jesuit Refugee Service.

Beneficiaries were trained by the Salesian Sisters in dressmaking, caregiving, computer maintenance and networking. Most of the graduates have already received jobs in restaurants, textiles and manufacturing sites.



Quotes by individual Ethiopia partners:

Fr. Petros, Socio-Pastoral Commission: The GSF project not only transforms the lives of the beneficiaries but also revitalizes the charisms of each participating congregation to give committed assistance to those in need especially in the current context of Ethiopia.

Sr. Ruth, Salesian Sisters: This experience has given us the opportunity to start building a network in which we learn to interact with one another, to gradually understand the challenges of very vulnerable people and to identify paths of improving the quality of our different services, in our case the educational ones, certainly recognizing the equal importance of other services in order to ensure better conditions of life to the people and communities that we involve in sustainable changes for their lives.

Sr. Maryla, Missionaries of Charity: The GSF project opens up for [young mothers] opportunities to gain skills which enables them to earn their own living and become self-reliant.

Neway Alemayehu, Jesuit Refugee Service: Thanks to this GSF initiative that practically answers the long-time wish of pulling resources with shared mission and identity to enhance our implementation capacity and creates synergy in our purpose and mission to the needy.

Sr. Azeb, Ursuline Sisters: For the Ursuline Sisters Congregation, the GSF Inter-congregation Addis Ababa network paved a way to know deeply what other congregations are engaged with, their capacity, need and systems of working. We got tremendous knowledge from other Catholic Institutions to scale up our training service in different ways like focusing on life-skill training, job placement, sharing information using available technology among the different institutions, and shared a lot of experience.

With GSF's strong support, the congregations are **focusing on the training and employment needs of women, driving systemic changes to strengthen families' economic resilience**. The Missionaries of Charity Sisters, the religious institute founded by Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta, are now able to place young mothers who have migrated to Addis Ababa in professional and appropriate vocational training run by the Salesian Sisters and other congregations, drastically improving their chances for a job and

transforming their lives and the futures of their children. The number of young women who want to participate in the program is spreading by "word of mouth" in the community, as many are eager to improve their life opportunities.

An example is represented by the **story of Lensa Keflu**. Lensa is one young mother who attended the dressmaking course from February to August 2021 at the Mary Help College - Salesian Sisters. The Sisters proposed to Lensa that she care for the children of all the young mothers because she is very kind and loves kids. She was in the first group of young mothers sent by the Missionaries of Charity, so she knows every child. Lensa will be employed by the Salesian Sisters to look after the 20 children that reside in their facility with their mothers.



Other examples of the network in action include:

- A common research and job market study to assess how to tailor each vocational training course to better empower women and girls
- Creation of a common mechanism to boost opportunities for entrepreneurs to start up their businesses in the region, supported by financial institutions
- Collaboration to partner with private sector companies, sharing among them their own contacts and established relationships

The congregations refer to these achievements as transformational. They are now working together, linking their own distinctive programs, charisms, missions, and knowledge, and drastically increasing their efficiency and impact. They are solving problems in the most efficient and effective ways, and creating new ideas together instead of running the risk of duplication. They are perceived as a unified Church by the people they serve, as well as by their counterparts in the private sector, the development community and the government.

The congregations want to further scale up this innovative model – not only in Ethiopia, but in other countries – which the global inter-congregational platform GSF has created will help to make a reality.



Food security and job creation: an innovative partnership with the Catholic Church and the City of Addis Ababa

Building on the inter-congregational project, GSF has supported the Socio-Pastoral Commission and the Addis Ababa city administration to create jobs while meeting the nutrition needs of the city's children. In addition to its negative impact on employment, the pandemic has also disrupted the school feeding programs that are a lifeline for many children in migrant and other poor communities.

Recognizing that bread is an important staple in Ethiopia, GSF is partnering with the Catholic Church and the city government to:

- Construct a bread factory to supply the school feeding program
- Expand the school feeding program into additional elementary schools and high schools, **reaching about 150,000 children per day**
- Directly **employ about 750 mothers** and other family members of vulnerable children as part of the school feeding program
- Provide vocational training for **about 730 mothers and family members of vulnerable children**
- Foster entrepreneurship in the production and distribution of bread for **about 670 family members and youth**

In a second phase the city will allocate plots of land for urban agriculture, training hundreds of youths to work on these plots of land in associations and grow diverse products.

Together 6: Global health institutions, the global Catholic Church, and local communities on equitable access and behavioral communication around vaccines

Responding to the global pandemic, GSF has catalyzed collaboration between **the Vatican COVID-19 Commission** and **global international organizations** working on health, leading to collaboration to promote equity in vaccine access. In order to counteract vaccine hesitancy in developing countries, GSF has facilitated the creation of a strong network between **Gavi, the Vatican COVID-19 Commission, UISG, and women's and men's congregations** focused on behavioral communication and vaccine delivery in selected countries.

When the unprecedented emergency of COVID-19 began, Pope Francis and the Church were essential voices for a global response of solidarity. We believed that our unique network had much to offer to the global response, and responded to their call to action with urgency. GSF provided support to Pope Francis' immediate response, in addition to working with Catholic Sisters and meeting identified needs in Ethiopia. In the difficult and fast-changing environment of 2020, GSF built an important relationship with the Vatican COVID-19 Commission, which is playing a key role in the next phase of the recovery from the pandemic and its consequences, as well as the development landscape in 2021 and beyond.

The successful development of the vaccine created great hope but also a great risk – that the vaccine would not reach people in poor countries. **GSF thus catalyzed new collaboration between the Commission and the leading global health stakeholders leading the response, including the World Health Organization, Gavi, the ACT Accelerator, and Covax.** The Commission has played a critical role in ensuring that faith communities shape the vaccine rollout, offering both the Church's moral voice and its global capabilities to support truly equitable vaccine access for people in all nations.

As we move from millions of vaccine doses to billions... we always need to find the best-placed partners and then create an alliance that's bigger than the sum of its parts.

Guillaume Grosso, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance



To drive further collaboration and partnerships, in May 2021 GSF convened **Vaccines For All**, a high-level public event, **bringing together global businesses, the Vatican, and the development sector to identify opportunities to collaborate to build public trust in the COVID vaccine and ensure access for marginalized communities.**

As the pandemic developed, it became clear that providing equitable global access to the vaccine is only part of the battle. It's also essential to address issues of vaccine hesitancy in developing countries – often fueled by misunderstanding and even misinformation.

Catholic churches at the grassroots level are widely trusted by their congregations and often by wider communities. This trusted voice is uniquely positioned to provide accurate information that speaks to both the science and the moral ethical concerns people may have. To help this effort, the Vatican COVID-19 Commission produced helpful information for local church leaders.

As the global vaccination effort picked up speed in 2021, we brought together **Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance**, with Sr. Carol Keehan, who leads the Health Task Force of the **Vatican COVID-19 Commission**, along with Sr. Pat Murray of **UISG** and Funders and Donors Interested in Catholic Activities (**FADICA**). The **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** and the **Conrad N. Hilton Foundation**, two members of GSF, led this action.

Working together, we identified selected countries where vaccines were becoming available and where a strong Catholic presence in the country could make

collaboration to address vaccine hesitancy effective and efficient. The scale-up in these countries has been a powerful demonstration of what is possible when diverse partners with shared values come together in pursuit of a common vision.

Ethiopia is an early example of this collaboration in action. Trusted Catholic health institutions are among those selected by the Ministry of Health for the distribution of the vaccine. However, church leaders observed high levels of vaccine hesitancy in the population, with many people believing misinformation about it. **GSF stepped in to partner with the Church, led by the Socio-Pastoral Commission of the Addis diocese, and with the government on an aggressive, multilingual campaign in both print and broadcast media, as well as by organizing sensitization and awareness seminars** in different regions. The Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia is another key partner, helping to ensure that the information is received across varied faith communities through their trusted media outlets. The campaign seeks to **reach 15-20 million people** with lifesaving communication.

Importantly, the vaccine campaign in Ethiopia is being implemented in close collaboration with Sisters' congregations that run clinics, hospitals, vocational training colleges, schools and women's centers around the country. In addition, **through the 430 schools** of the Catholic Church throughout the country the campaign seeks to **reach 85 percent of their students** with behavioral communications. To ensure high-quality information, the campaign is informed by World Health Organization key messages on the vaccine, adapted to local languages and circumstances.

We could never have created the vaccine if the silos around partnership hadn't come down in the way that they had. We can't lose that.

Charlotte Kirby, Salesforce





By collaborating with the Church at global and local levels, GSF is helping to advance Pope Francis' agenda, adding value thanks to our network's expertise in the fields of health, social impact and corporate responsibility, in order to build more equitable systems to address other challenges. As we move forward, GSF will also work to tell the story of Church leadership during the pandemic so that lessons can be learned to inform responses to future challenges.

Working together, we are catalyzing a bold way forward that reaches well beyond what any one institution can do alone.

Together 7: Diverse Catholic communities as advocates for care for the Earth

Inspired by Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical Laudato Si', GSF has supported Catholic partners in bringing their distinctive voices to international community forums.

The Global Solidarity Fund is proud to be supporting, through a grant, the Laudato Si' Movement's mission to raise awareness on the importance of biodiversity, with their "Healthy Planet, Healthy People" advocacy action toward the two landmark UN summits on biodiversity (COP15) and climate change (COP26) in October and November 2021 respectively. The Healthy Planet, Healthy People advocacy action, developed by the Laudato Si' Movement and its global partners, aims to mobilize Catholics and raise a unified Catholic voice around the COPs and take action, with a goal to **secure the engagement of more than 250,000 people.**



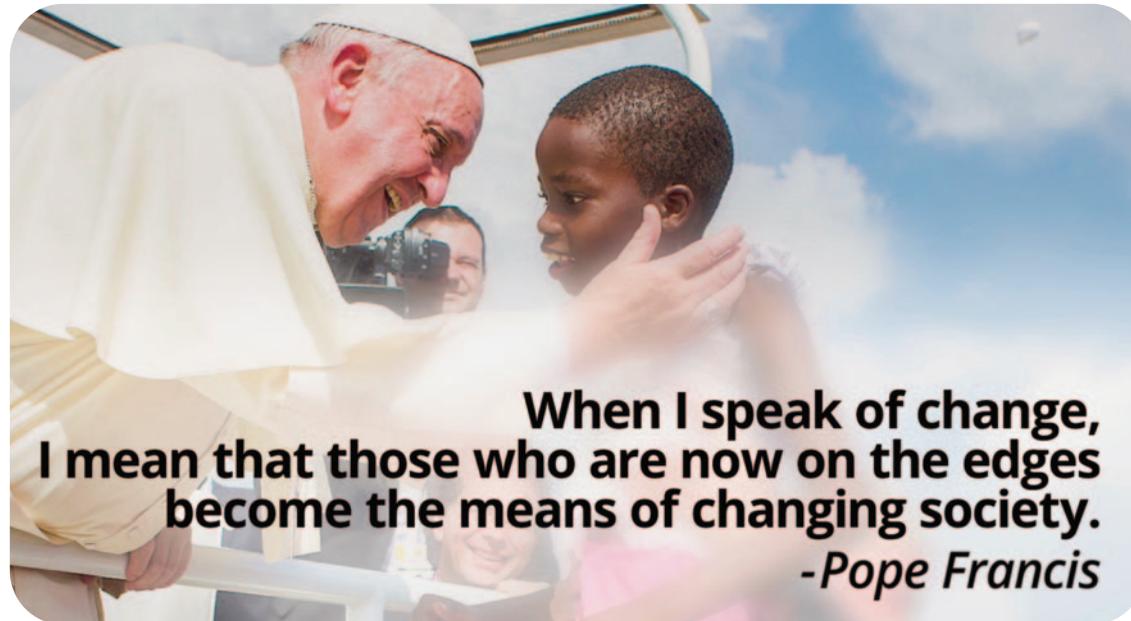
Developing collaborative partnerships of Catholic institutions and international organizations brings together the core competencies and collective experiences of leaders and organizations representing different sectors, which can unleash creative and innovative solutions essential to address complex problems facing the world's most vulnerable populations.

Susan Huber, Ascension, GSF Board Member

The Laudato Si' Movement has galvanized Catholics to take action engaging national policymakers in **5 target countries** where there is the strongest need for a bold Catholic voice: Brazil, France, Italy, Kenya and Spain.

The Laudato Si' Movement is engaging with three regional Bishops' Conferences and engaging in the COP15 and COP26 dialogues nationally. Catholic Sisters are also part of the action at the COPs, highlighting the urgency to take bold ambition on climate change and biodiversity. The Laudato Si' movement also planned **to recruit 200 partner organizations, with a focus on 14 priority countries** (US, Brazil, Italy, France, Australia, Canada, Mexico, Argentina, Poland, Germany, Spain, Kenya, South Africa, and the Philippines), to promote the action.

Integral to the campaign's success is its collaboration with the Vatican Dicastery for Integral Human Development, as well as Bishops' Conferences in countries around the world, enhancing its credibility as a vehicle for a unified Catholic voice. This project also paves the way for an even larger campaign that the Laudato Si' Movement has planned in 2022, centered on a film to be released around Earth Day that is being produced in a collaboration that includes the Laudato Si' Movement and the Vatican.



GSF has also supported Catholic women and men religious' collaboration with the development community on care for the Earth, with Sowing Hope for the Planet - UISG's initiative inspired by Laudato Si' – also focused on the **COP 15 and COP 26 moments**. They have sought to advocate on the seven Laudato Si' Goals:

- 1) Cry of the Earth (biodiversity and climate change),
- 2) Cry of the Poor (water/sanitation/hygiene, access to land for vulnerable groups),
- 3) Ecological Economics,
- 4) Sustainable Lifestyles,
- 5) Ecological Education,
- 6) Ecological Spirituality and
- 7) Participatory Action.

To set the stage for expanded efforts around care for the Earth, we are working closely with Sr. Sheila Kinsey, who leads Sowing Hope for the Planet. With our support, Sr. Sheila's team mapped a large number of Sisters' initiatives to identify and analyse the advocacy work done by the community of Sisters around the world in line with the seven Laudato Si' Goals.

We have been pleased to see the strong engagement and interest of the **Sisters: more than 260 shared interesting examples of their advocacy work** and were

willing to learn more from their fellows. Among these 260 stories, 38 were selected as examples of advocacy actions in line with the events of COP 15 and COP 26, and three were presented as good practices that were replicated during a virtual event on September 16.

As a result of this exercise, seven Sisters and two Brothers have been identified as leaders in their advocacy work. Through GSF's grant to UISG, this group will now act together as mentors to inspire and accompany others in their journey of advocacy.

Webinars will be arranged for this group of leaders to showcase their effectiveness in advocacy, followed by regional groups led by the leaders to identify the support the Sisters need. We are also defining with UISG how to use these stories to influence global debate with direct advocacy actions and through targeted communication activities.

In addition to supporting their efforts around the UN events, GSF's grant is supporting these leaders to act as mentors to inspire and accompany others in their journey of a dvocacy, through global and regional groups that provide information and support. For example, in a global webinar, **"Seasons of Creation," advocates from the United States, India and Pakistan** shared their experiences advocating for biodiversity in their respective regions, helping to support a growing circle of effective advocates for care for the Earth.

Through innovative partnerships such as these, GSF will continue to bring the unique voice of Laudato Si' to a world in desperate need of healing.



To strengthen our global community, we must build and maintain networks that facilitate collaboration and mutual exchange... Through opportunities to partner and build relationships with other members of the Church and with lay leadership, Sisters are an effective global force working to collaborate and bolster integral human development efforts.

Sr. Jane Wakahiu, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, GSF Board Member

Together 8: Leaders from different sectors in a new community of solidarity with the most vulnerable

From its inception, a key focus of GSF has been **catalyzing leaders from different sectors to work together**, creating innovative solutions for the most vulnerable. Creating new partnerships is essential in order to fulfill our ambitious mission.

To achieve this, GSF created the **Leaders Council**. As a vehicle for like-minded senior leaders to be part of our community, in solidarity with the most vulnerable, the Leaders Council has been a key part of GSF's remarkable growth.

At GSF's **private audience with Pope Francis** at the Vatican on October 27, 2021, Leaders Council members joined our Board of Directors and Advisory Board members for a memorable moment. Pope Francis said, "**Closeness, compassion, tenderness**; be these words which inspire your work. Continue your great work. Don't allow indifference to spread, **be guided by solidarity**, which is so beautifully embedded in your name."

As the Holy Father flipped through a GSF brochure presenting our work – care for survivors of human trafficking, job creation for migrants, equitable vaccine distribution and protection of the earth in the face of climate change – his message was clear: "**These are the right priorities and the right approach. Go, do it!**"

Two days later, at a reception to **celebrate GSF's achievements and plans**, we were honored to be joined by the Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, who offered words of inspiration and exhortation. We were also grateful for the presence of Cardinal Silvano Tomasi and Cardinal Peter Turkson, as well as Church leaders such as Sr. Alessandra Smerilli of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, Sr. Patricia Murray of UISG, Sr. Neusa de Fatima Mariano of the Scalabrinian Sisters and others. Development community participants included the heads of the US and UK missions to the Holy See. Matt Higgins, who serves as co-chair of the Leaders Council, was among the private sector leaders on hand.

GSF is deeply encouraged by the growing community of leaders energized by our vision. As we move forward, we will continue to **bring leaders from different sectors together to create innovation for the most vulnerable**.

Conclusion

The Global Solidarity Fund is a young organization. That has given us the freedom to experiment, to try new ideas, in order to make a difference for people in vulnerable situations. The unprecedented challenge of the global pandemic has also added urgency to our mission.

We have learned that with the right partners – ones who are willing to step out of their comfort zones into new collaborations, like the ones you have seen here – we can achieve much more than we ever expected.

It is remarkable to see how GSF has grown over the last two years. We have built a truly unique group of outstanding leaders from business, philanthropy, international development communities and the Catholic Church.

A unique characteristic of GSF is the ability to build deep trust among all this vast and diverse group of like-minded leaders that form the GSF community. This trust is anchored in our earlier actions and achievements, and our partners are unanimous in highlighting our unique partnership, through which we have started a transformational journey together.

Together we have the courage to stretch beyond our limits to transform our world into a more inclusive and fairer place.

The needs remain great – and the pandemic has set back progress toward the SDGs.

Yet we believe that we have much to offer in this moment. We don't know exactly where our collaborations will lead us in the years ahead, but we will chart a course to make a difference – **together**.

