WHO WE ARE

We are an innovative philanthropic global thought leader with an action-oriented approach. As a volunteer-led, data-driven non-profit with special consultative status to the United Nations, we pilot initiatives, leverage resources and scale success for community advancement globally.

WHAT WE DO

We apply evidence-based, best practices to design, test and scale sustainable development solutions in health, education, justice and women’s empowerment.
VIRTUE FOUNDATION

HOW WE DO IT
1. Invest in local women leaders
2. Create collaborative models
3. Map data for interdisciplinary innovation and evidence-based intervention
4. Train local professionals
5. Facilitate public-private partnerships

OUR PARTNERS
Our Institute is a model approach to sustainable development, facilitating solutions to advance health, education, justice and empowerment in Ghana. With the support of Chief Justice Georgina T. Wood, our goals are to:

1. Facilitate cross-sector collaboration among local and global partners.
2. Support innovative research for development solutions.
3. Build capacity and train local professionals.

To achieve these goals, we provide:

1. Research support
2. Strategic collaboration
3. Data access and sharing
4. Seed grants
5. Professional trainings
VIRTUE INSTITUTE HEALTHCARE INITIATIVES

The Institute serves as a model institution to facilitate development solutions for women and children’s advancement in Ghana. It supports projects in Virtue’s key focus areas—health, education, justice, and empowerment—as critical leverage points for successful development.

In an effort to design a new approach to address existing and emerging global challenges of the 21st Century, the Institute builds upon proven strategies while incorporating innovative ideas for success. In the health sector, we have implemented the following projects:

Medical Teaching Missions

Volunteer health professionals deliver critical surgical care and medical trainings at Korle Bu, Komfo Anokye, and Tumu Hospitals.

Noninvasive Ventilation Program

We implement a noninvasive ventilation pilot program for children under five that is reducing cause-specific child mortality rates due to respiratory failure from 14 to 4 percent in Korle Bu and Tumu hospitals.

Medical Supplies Donation

We have donated more than $300,000 USD worth of medical equipment and supplies for distribution to hospitals and clinics in 21 districts in Ghana.
In the justice and empowerment sectors, we have partnered with the Judicial Service of Ghana to implement the following projects:

**Supreme Court Clerkship Program**

Promising young women attorneys are providing Ghanaian Supreme Court Justices with research support while receiving legal experience, training and mentoring.

**Ghana Jurist in Residence Program**

We select exceptional Ghanaian women judges for training in the problem-solving court model.
We map statistical information for data driven development solutions. Our maps show exactly how and where resources can best meet needs for high impact interventions in health, education, justice and empowerment. Director of International Programming and Global Affairs Dr. Ebby Elahi’s extensive experience generated the Get on the Map! Initiative. Access to information is critical to ensure that development investments yield desired results. Our vision is to provide open access to data for a more targeted, evidence-based approach to development. With our partners at Harvard, we are mapping complex data and developing tools for individually customizable and project specific analysis.

Get on the Map! for Women and Girls
As a new interactive online mapping tool that showcases projects that support women and girls, this map allows organizations to share information, videos and photos about their work. The aim of the map is to provide a single portal where one can go to find out about organizations and projects empowering women and girls around the world.

Get on the Map! for HIV Prevention in South Africa
In 2009, 5.7 million people were living with HIV and AIDS, a number higher than any other country. As an expansion of the Data Mapping initiative, we are partnering with the Charlize Theron Africa Outreach Project to map organizations combating the epidemic in South Africa and efficiently link resources to needs to improve our collective response to HIV.
ACID VIOLENCE HEALTHCARE INITIATIVE

Acid violence is a form of gender violence in which cheap, available acid is used as a weapon for settling interpersonal disputes and destroying victims’ lives. Since 2004, Dr. Ebby Elahi has led medical teams to train local surgeons and provide care to victims.

The plight of one Cambodian woman-survivor, Yem, and her child, Sophorn, the youngest documented survivor of acid violence, inspired us to produce an awareness-raising documentary, Stolen Faces. Narrated by Liev Schreiber, the film chronicles the medical team’s activities in Cambodia and was screened at the United Nations High-Level Segment of ECOSOC in 2005. In 2011, their story was featured at the Women in the World Summit on a panel entitled “Stealing Beauty: An Acid Violence Survivor’s Story.”

In 2011, we conducted a comparative analysis of acid violence and access to justice and released the report entitled Combating Acid Violence in Bangladesh, India, and Cambodia.

Future initiatives include hosting a multi-disciplinary conference on combating acid violence and providing program support to prevent acid violence globally.
EL SALVADOR MODEL HEALTHCARE INITIATIVE

In collaboration with local partners, we lead a model healthcare initiative in Caluco, El Salvador. Our purpose is to improve primary and preventive healthcare delivery through innovative, targeted solutions that can be replicated and scaled.

Mobile Health Clinic

In 2011, for example, we launched the Caluco Mobile Health Clinic to extend health professionals’ reach to remote populations. In 2012, the mobile clinic served nearly 4000 patients in Caluco’s 8 rural areas.

Dental Health Mission

In November 2012, a team of dentists and dental assistants traveled to Caluco to provide critical dental care and educational opportunities to local professionals on the ground. In collaboration with FUSADES and the local Mayor’s office of Caluco, the team was able to treat more than 40 patients in three days. In addition, Virtue Foundation donated more than $10,000.00 USD worth of equipment and supplies to the community to ensure that local professionals could continue to provide essential dental health care to the population.
MONGOLIA HEALTHCARE INITIATIVE

For the nomadic peoples living in remote areas of Mongolia, surgery is an inaccessible, unaffordable luxury. During our fifth Mongolia surgical teaching mission, we will bring life-saving, sight-restoring and other operations to Mongolians while educating local surgeons and healthcare professionals.

Last year, families traveled for days on foot or on horseback, camping outside of hospitals, hoping that a son, daughter, mother, father, or grandparent would receive desperately needed care. Some recounted praying daily that their children or they themselves not lose their vision to continue to work to support their families. These and other inspiring stories motivated our surgeons who spent more than 12 hours per day operating on hundreds of patients who would otherwise be blind or disabled by their conditions.

In 2012, we were able to serve nearly 800 patients and perform 175 sight-restoring surgeries in Mongolia. In addition, we provided 300 hours of best-in-class clinical training to local surgeons using the most up-to-date surgical techniques. This year, our team of 20 oculofacial/oculoplastics, microvascular, cataract, glaucoma and strabismus surgeons; anesthesiologists; pediatric intensivists, and others return to Mongolia to continue these worthwhile efforts.
TUMU HEALTHCARE INITIATIVE

Tumu is one of the most remote villages in Ghana. There, we are establishing a long-term initiative to improve healthcare toward community advancement.

Our surgeons are working to restore vision to burn survivors and other patients who would otherwise never receive care. Our pediatric intensivists are training healthcare professionals in noninvasive ventilation techniques that are significantly reducing under-5 mortality in the area. And our Austrian team from the University of Vienna is working on improving maternal health and women's healthcare service delivery in the region. Volunteer professionals will return to Tumu, Ghana in the fall to provide services and conduct trainings.

Additionally, in support of this project, Toyota has generously donated a Toyota Fortuna for us to better reach and serve Tumu’s rural populations.
LOUISIANA EDUCATION INITIATIVE

In 2005, we provided children living in post-Katrina trailer parks with a 21st Century technology-based education. Based on pilot successes, the Louisiana Governor scaled this program to all 6th graders across the State. We also led professional training workshops for teachers.

DIGITAL STORYTELLING INITIATIVE

We deploy a digital storytelling curriculum focused on philanthropy, community service and civic responsibility. Young people learn to use technology to tell their own stories of community service. We provide schools in underserved areas with technology, digital storytelling workshops and professional trainings.

PARTNERSHIP WITH JUSTICE SANDRA DAY O’CONNOR’S iCIVICS

We have also partnered with iCivics to create an integrated curriculum with online games and digital storytelling. Students tell stories of community service, citizenship, and the positive impact they are making in their communities.
WOMEN JUDGES IN THE PIPELINE INITIATIVE

Rule of law and gender equality play key roles in peace, sustainable development, and poverty reduction. Moreover, studies show that gender equality is an efficient driver of development, and investing in women has been proven to have a multiplier effect. Thus, laws that protect and lead to the empowerment of women and girls are critical tools for ensuring an environment favorable to sustainable development and peace.

We have found that women judges are an efficient means of advancing both goals. Justice O'Connor stated: “The key to peace is the Rule of Law, the key to the Rule of Law is an impartial judiciary and the key to an impartial judiciary is the participation of women judges.”

The goal of this initiative is to provide opportunities for women in the developing world to become judges, thereby increasing women’s participation in the judiciary. Virtue Foundation is working with senior Women Justices representing three continents to facilitate high-level meetings and to launch pilot projects that can be replicated and scaled across geographies.
SUPPORTING MUHKTAR MAI IN PAKISTAN
Honored as Glamour magazine’s “Woman of the Year,” Mukhtar Mai became a global women’s advocate after being gang raped in 2002. In an act of unprecedented courage, Mai took her rapists to court and won a tireless battle for her rights. In 2006, we invited Mai to the U.N. to discuss her important work and then partnered with Mai to develop schools, domestic violence shelters, and a hospital in her village in Pakistan. We have also supported medical missions and provided educational assistance in the region.

KENYA JUDICIAL & TRIAL ADVOCACY TRAINING PROJECT
For the past 5 years, we have sponsored the Annual Kenya Judicial and Trial Advocacy Training Project. Led by the Hon. Ann C. Williams and Lawyers Without Borders, among others, the model strives to advance rule of law and women’s rights in Kenya.

REINTEGRATING CHILD SOLDIERS IN DEM. REPUBLIC OF CONGO
Since 2005, we have collaborated in the rehabilitation, education, and medical treatment of former child soldiers in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In 2006, the Foundation launched the “Child Soldiers Youth Initiative” to raise awareness of this problem among high school students.
Thanks to significant resources invested in solving issues of global health, communities across the globe are beginning to experience some meaningful advancements. Infectious diseases such as HIV and malaria are being thwarted as philanthropic giants such as the Gates Foundation and the Global Fund continue to address global health issues of immense scale. Advancements in both more basic and complex areas of health, however, appear to have a slower rate of improvement. While each developing world locale has unique complexities inhibiting advancement, certain common themes appear present in environments experiencing less progress: corruption, insufficient local skill base, lack of basic education, lack of coordinated international and local NGO efforts, lack of planned and coordinated evidence-based solutions, and failure to provide economically sustainable health care solutions.

Recent trends, particularly in the proliferation of NGOs, improvements in technology, increasing interest in developing world markets and advancements in the empowerment of women may provide a window of opportunity if such trends are leveraged in a studied and systematic manner. The below briefly outlines a five prong protocol that may provide insight into the next phase of advancements in global health:

1. Invest in women as agents of change by finding a reputable woman leader in country to serve as project sponsor.

In recent years, an increase in the number of local women leaders interested in providing access to justice and improved conditions for women and children has provided new opportunities for sustainable development. This trend is particularly apparent in the judiciary, where an increasing number of women have been appointed or elected as judges. In recognition of this development, international organizations such as the Avon Global Center for Women and Justice and the International Association of Women Judges provide support for such women leaders. In addition, recent research by organizations such as the World Bank and Goldman Sachs have demonstrated that investing in women is an effective lever of GDP growth. Providing a strong, incorruptible female leader as a project sponsor and supporting such women leaders is a new and important tool of global health and sustainable development.

2. Create cohesive model of collaboration for relevant local and international NGOs.

With the assistance of a project sponsor, providing a model of collaboration for local and international non-profits may be a second critical element of sustainable global health care solutions. Thanks to the recent proliferations of non-profits and NGOs, there are a significant number of local and international NGOs that seek to deliver one component of health and education services to populations in need. Such organizations, however, often face significant obstacles and inadequate links to other necessary services. Local organizations often fail to have the resources and know-how to provide quality inter-disciplinary services. International NGOs often find they are unable to provide locally sustainable solutions, as such international organizations often lack local buy-in and sometimes face various forms of corruption.
A carefully designed model of collaboration can provide an opportunity for local and international organizations to work in a more efficient and productive manner -- providing local NGOs with the skills and resources of larger international organizations, while granting international NGOs access to critical local partners and data. A physical center, where possible, may also provide more efficient care to those seeking assistance by offering one centralized location to receive the treatment and guidance they seek.

3. Work with local leaders, NGOs, and others actors in global health to map specific interventions through interdisciplinary, evidence-based study of high-impact interventions.

In each locale, an effective protocol must begin with a careful interdisciplinary needs assessment of both the target population and the landscape of organizations currently serving the population. Such studies should look for patterns in development and analyze where the highest yield interventions for that particular country reside. The most effective approach would leverage an inter-disciplinary team and would include local leaders as well as international practitioners. Ultimately, such results can be compared across communities, scaled, and re-localized where relevant.

4. Provide service delivery with side-by-side training of local populations.

In addition to providing access to healthcare delivery, a critical component of the model is the training of local practitioners to provide medical and surgical services relevant to the population. One approach that has proven successful is alternating professional international teams that visit and provide training and education programs as required for partner local teams, as well as working side-by-side in implementing solutions and documenting impact. The selection of the teams will depend on the hospital or clinic’s need and scheduling capability. In addition, thanks to advancements in information technology, such program can include Internet-based teaching and continuous training with international professionals who have participated in local training and education missions.

5. Co-create economically sustainable healthcare solutions, by viewing global health, where appropriate, as a tool of economic development.

One important aspect that should be explored in each locale is the viability of global health as a development tool that can also provide a self-sustaining mechanism for health care delivery. For example, an integrated model can serve as an innovation lab facilitating collaboration between the non-profit, public, and private sectors (medical device manufacturers, pharma industry, etc.) in developing improved technologies, techniques, and processes that are relevant to the health needs of the target population. Some health care products can even serve as a source of income when sold by local populations while addressing significant healthcare needs. In addition, skills-based training may prove to be a useful economic development tool creating local jobs while improving health care delivery.