

CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS WOMEN INDIA ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25



Message from the President



Sr. Maria Nirmalini AC

President, Conference of Religious Women India (CRWI)

“Grow to the fullness of God and Humanity.”

It is with a heart full of gratitude and hope that I present to you the Annual Report of the Conference of Religious Women India (CRWI) for the year 2024-25. This year has been a profound journey of faith, resilience, and prophetic action. Together, we have sought to remain rooted in Christ while responding courageously to the signs of the times.

Our initiatives this year have focused on the holistic empowerment of women religious, the promotion of mental health and wellness, and the fostering of synodal leadership. Through programs like the Holistic Empowerment Workshops, Training of Trainers on Geriatric Care, and our collaborative research efforts with Assam Don Bosco University, we have created spaces for growth, dialogue, and collective discernment.

I am deeply moved by the commitment of our members who have come forward to address social realities supporting displaced women in Manipur, accompanying the elderly, and championing safeguarding and grievance redressal initiatives. These efforts affirm our mission to be agents of hope and transformation in today's challenging world.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to the Executive Council, our Executive Director Sr. Molly Mathew, Administrative Staff, our collaborators, benefactors, and every sister who has contributed to the realization of our vision. May our journey ahead continue to be guided by the Spirit, drawing us into deeper communion with God, with one another, and with all of creation.

With best regards,

Sr. Maria Nirmalini AC,

President, CRWI

Message from the Vice President



Pilgrims of Hope, Builders of Peace

“Let us get up, therefore, and set out as pilgrims of hope... we too can bring news of joy, generate new life, and be artisans of brotherhood and peace.”
(Pope Francis)

Christians are called to embrace their vocation, whether through consecrated life, priesthood, marriage, or singlehood, by journeying daily with eyes fixed on Christ. Our pilgrimage is a response to God’s call to love, a purposeful journey toward a world of peace, justice, and compassion.

Every vocation ultimately seeks to make us bearers of hope. Amid diverse charisms and ministries, we are all called to embody and share the Gospel message of hope in a world facing profound challenges.

Religious life, rooted in Christ’s Resurrection, is a witness to this hope. Saints have shown us how to be peacemakers, and religious men and women are called to radiate Christ’s love as builders of peace.

At Institute Mater Dei, sisters undergo a transformative formation to become instruments of unity and hope. Inspired by Mary, the patroness of the Institute, they learn to embrace God’s will and bring hope to others through their ministries. Her faith and courage continue to guide the Institute’s mission of nurturing compassionate and peace-filled leaders.

May we all embrace this mission to be beacons of hope and architects of peace in today’s world.

Dr. Sr. Aruna Jose CHF
President, IMD
Vice President CRWI

Message from the Executive Director



Sr. Molly Mathew MSMHC

Executive Director, Conference of Religious Women India (CRWI)

This Annual Report reflects not just the activities of CRWI, but the pulse of our mission to empower women religious to serve as prophetic witnesses in a rapidly changing India. Each program, whether it was a leadership workshop, mental health initiative, or research project, was designed with care to respond to the real and emerging needs of our members.

I am particularly encouraged by the progress we have made in building systems for data-driven decision-making through the CRWI MIS and the Data-cum-Knowledge Centre at Assam Don Bosco University. These initiatives will help us plan better, measure our impact, and ensure transparency and accountability.

Collaboration has been at the heart of everything we did this year. From working with St. John's Medical College on geriatric care to Christ University on mental health support, we have experienced the power of partnerships in advancing our shared mission.

I wish to thank our President, Sr. Maria Nirmalini, the Executive Council and the Board of Trustees, our partners, and our generous donors for their trust and support. Most of all, I salute the courage and dedication of every sister in the field who carries forward the mission of CRWI with faith and commitment.

May this report inspire all of us to dream bigger, act bolder, and continue to “grow to the fullness of God and Humanity.”

With Prayers,

Sr. Molly Mathew MSMHC,

Executive Director, CRWI

Note of Gratitude

CRWI extends its heartfelt gratitude to all our collaborators, benefactors, and partners who have journeyed with us through the year 2024-25. Your generous support has made it possible for us to reach deeper into communities, strengthen the capacity of women religious, and respond to urgent needs with compassion and courage.

We acknowledge with special appreciation the Hilton Foundation and MISSIO, whose partnership has enabled us to implement transformative programs in the areas of safeguarding, leadership formation, mental health, and geriatric care. We are grateful to St. John's Medical College, St. John's College of Nursing, Christ University, and Assam Don Bosco University for sharing their expertise and resources in building sustainable and impactful initiatives.

Our sincere thanks also go to the regional CRWI leaders, congregational superiors, and every member who has contributed their time, talents, and resources to advance the mission of CRWI. Your trust in our vision and commitment to collective action have been the driving force behind every milestone we celebrate in this report.

Together, we continue to “grow to the fullness of God and Humanity,” creating a future where consecrated women are empowered to be prophetic voices, compassionate caregivers, and transformative leaders in Church and society.



Introduction

The Conference of Religious Women India (CRWI), under the visionary leadership of Sr. Maria Nirmalini AC and the Executive Council, continues its mission to promote leadership formation, wellness, safeguarding, and social empowerment of women religious across India. Guided by its FCRA license categories Religious, Social, and Educational CRWI strives to strengthen the life and mission of women religious by equipping them with tools for spiritual growth, professional competence, and collaborative action for justice.

The year 2024-2025 was marked by renewal and innovation for CRWI. Building on our mission of synodality and communion, we organized national and regional workshops, expanded safeguarding initiatives, invested in mental health and wellness programs, and strengthened inter-congregational collaboration through MIS digitization and research partnerships. Through our Centre for Innovations and Initiatives for Religious India (CIIRI), Institute Mater Dei (IMD), Centre for Research on Religious Life India (CeRRI), Grievance Redressal Cell (GRC), and Sisters-Led Youth Initiatives (SLYI), we touched the lives of thousands of sisters, lay collaborators, youth, and vulnerable communities.



Religious Formation and Leadership Development

The CRI National Assembly 2024, held in Bengaluru from May 14 to 17, brought together more than 600 religious men and women, including major superiors, superiors, and designated delegates. The theme, ***“Journeying with Hope: Relevance and our Prophetic Response,”*** resonated throughout the sessions as participants addressed current challenges and envisioned future pathways for ministry. Sr. Molly Mathew MSMHC presented the work and structure of CRWI, aligning it with the process of synodality, while Sr. Mini Joseph JMJ shared insights from her research conducted at CARA, Georgetown University. Sr. Jamesy’s presentation highlighted the importance of the Institute Mater Dei (IMD) and invited superiors to send more sisters for training and collaboration. At the conclusion of the Assembly, Sr. Maria Nirmalini was re-elected as President of CRWI, and the newly elected Executive Council members were announced, signifying a renewed commitment to the mission.

The Institute Mater Dei (IMD), a theological formation institute under CRWI, marked a significant milestone by celebrating its Diamond Jubilee in 2024-2025. The academic year was inaugurated with a solemn Eucharistic celebration presided over by His Eminence Filipe Neri Cardinal Ferrão, followed by a vibrant cultural and academic program. IMD also hosted a one-month Biblical Programme, providing participants with a deep dive into Scripture through interactive sessions and expert guidance. Other key initiatives included a seminar on ecological wellness and an inter-institute symposium titled ***“Deconstructing Tradition: Reimagining Priestly and Religious Formation in a Post-Institutional Era,”*** which brought together scholars and students to explore new models of formation.

In June, IMD witnessed a unique gathering dedicated to building human fraternity in intercultural communion. This gathering, attended by CRWI executive members, IMD staff, and lay participants, reflected on fraternity, ecological concerns, and citizens’ wellness initiatives, symbolizing CRWI’s commitment to synodal leadership and inclusive dialogue.



Social Empowerment and Safeguarding

Through the Centre for Innovations and Initiatives for Religious India (CIIRI), CRWI organized Holistic Empowerment Workshops across six regions of India, with participation from 363 sisters representing 77 congregations. These five-day programs focused on personal growth, self-confidence, leadership development, teamwork, and synodal leadership. Sessions addressed personality development, emotional intelligence, and intercultural communion, while fostering a spirit of solidarity among the participants.

CRWI also advanced its mission to care for the elderly by collaborating with St. John's Medical College and Nursing College to conduct a 20-day Training of Trainers program on geriatric care. Forty-one religious sister nurses from twenty congregations were trained in holistic elderly care, including lectures, hands-on training, and exposure visits to care centers. Renovation and equipment procurement for five elderly care homes were also undertaken as part of this commitment.

Safeguarding remained a central focus, with the Grievance Redressal Cell (GRC) conducting its annual members' meeting at ISI Bangalore, revising its mandate documents, and participating in CRWI's Holistic Empowerment Workshops to raise awareness. In January 2025, GRC organized a two-day training on safeguarding, gender equality, and child protection laws, equipping participants with practical tools to address grievances and create safe spaces. On International Women's Day, March 8, 2025, GRC hosted a powerful webinar titled ***"Religious Leadership in the 21st Century: A Journey Towards Equality,"*** attended by over 500 participants, calling for religious women to reclaim their role as leaders, challenge internal patriarchy, and stand for justice.

CRWI initiated vocational tailoring courses for 270 displaced women and girls using a "Learn and Earn" model, combining livelihood generation with psychosocial healing. Support was extended to at least fifteen relief camps, where training, accompaniment, and community-building activities were organized.



Educational and Research Initiatives

CRWI's Centre for Research on Religious Life India (CRRI) achieved a significant milestone by signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Assam Don Bosco University to establish a Data-cum-Knowledge Centre dedicated to research on the life, mission and ministries of religious women. This collaboration seeks to highlight their contributions to social development, education, healthcare, and nation-building. The centre serves as a hub for scholars and researchers, promoting evidence-based reflection on the role of women religious in society.

In February 2025, a delegation from the Hilton Foundation and CARA visited ADBU and the CRRI unit, engaging with students and staff on future plans for the Data and Research Centre. CRWI also continued its active participation in the Global Research Network alongside CERRA Africa and DSIRAM-Mexico, contributing to global dialogue on religious life and ministry.

Mental health and wellness for religious women remained a priority. CRWI, in collaboration with Christ University, developed and launched the Wellbeing Self-Care Kit and Mental Health Action Plan on March 1, 2025. This initiative included a nationwide needs assessment, a Training of Trainers program for 253 sisters, the establishment of peer leader networks, and the launch of sustainable gatekeeping initiatives for mental health support. A webinar titled "Renewing Spirits" drew over 1,500 participants, highlighting the urgent need for mental health awareness among women religious.

Additionally, CRWI continued to strengthen its Management Information System (MIS), enabling the consolidation and real-time monitoring of data related to women religious in India. This digital platform supports strategic decision-making, enhances coordination, and promotes transparency in operations.

Through the Sisters-Led Youth Initiative (SLYI), CRWI conducted a midterm project evaluation, inaugurated the "Threads n Beauty" initiative in Bangalore offering tailoring and beauty services while empowering youth and organized a three-day capacity-building training for SLYI staff in Mysore.



Financial Statements

CRWI EXPENSE MATRIX		
Budget Head	Amount	Beneficiary
Misso Project Expenses	37,68,639.00	1754
Hilton Objective 1 Expenses	74,86,537.00	976
Hilton Objective 2 Expenses	25,55,899.00	1856
Hilton Objective 3 Expenses	8,59,237.00	5454
Implementation Cost	14,50,374.00	
Personnel Cost	48,59,704.00	
Administrative Cost	6,83,024.00	
Assets	1,22,499.00	
Total	2,17,85,913.00	10,040.00

(Detailed financial report is available in our website: www.crwi.org.in)

Conclusion and Way Forward

The year 2024-2025 has been a testimony to the courage, creativity, and commitment of religious women across India. Through a diverse set of programs, CRWI has strengthened religious life, empowered sisters with new skills, supported the vulnerable, and created spaces for dialogue, research, and collaboration.

Looking ahead to 2025-2026, CRWI will focus on expanding mental health services and peer support networks, scaling up MIS for improved data-driven planning, deepening inter-congregational collaboration for safeguarding and wellness, and continuing to promote synodal leadership, intercultural communion, Government Collaboration on social service activities and ecological responsibility.

We express our heartfelt gratitude to our partners, benefactors, and collaborators, including the Hilton Foundation, MISSIO, St. John's Medical College, Christ University, Assam Don Bosco University, and all our member congregations, whose generous support and participation make this work possible. Together, we continue to journey with hope, building communities that embody compassion and communion.

