

**The International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development  
(PaRD) | Annual Forum and General Assembly of Members 2021**  
in Stellenbosch, South Africa | November 8-11, 2021

**Approving a 5-years strategy, new PaRD steering group and co-chairs, the  
Partnership focuses on “Becoming More Together”**

**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Executive Summary**



The hybrid PaRD Annual Forum and General Assembly of Members (GAM) 2021 had over 100 participants, made-up of representatives from civil society, religious and faith-based actors, governments, multilaterals, and academia. Participants were evenly distributed

between in-person and online and showcased the true hybrid nature of the event – the new normal. The four-day event was held in accordance with COVID-19 protocols and with regular testing.

The South African Government representatives announced to endorse Bishop Sipuka's request, that the government of South Africa join PaRD as an official member, before President Ramaphosa.

The in-coming PaRD steering group members were inaugurated, and members bid farewell to the outgoing steering group. Hazel M. D. Dixon, African Union Commission; Adam Phillips, USAID and Peter Prove, World Council of Churches, were named as new co-chairs.

The five-year strategic plan was approved and adopted ([download here](#)). The strategy will be the guiding document until 2026 and will be complemented by a work plan alongside indicators to measure progress. The PaRD Secretariat is mandated to begin work on an implementation plan.

The GAM reaffirmed its long-term engagement in four work-streams and updated PaRD members on its activities and progress. In the coming year, the work-streams will identify intersecting themes and find areas of joint collaborations. A food security working group, led by Peter Prove, WCC and Andrea Kaufmann, WVI, was created.

The Steering Group recognised the interest of PaRD members to consider cross-cutting topics. At the same time, it equally acknowledged the constraints in terms of money and resources available to work on these. Religious-based organisations (RBOs) and governments, including the Danish representatives, proposed to initiate an exchange on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB). There was a consensus to develop a framework for guidance on how to address this cross-cutting topic and integrate it into the core SDG-oriented mandate of PaRD. The framework will specify contributing PaRD members' engagement. It provides the foundation for two thematic pillars (1) sharing best practices and lessons learned, and (2) engaging, networking and identifying and resolving FoRB infringements. Following approval of the framework by the Steering Group, an invitation to join the FoRB initiative will be sent to all PaRD members.

## Introduction

At the closing of the 2019 GAM held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark in Copenhagen, the PaRD Steering Group gratefully accepted the invitation by PaRD member - Cape Development and Dialogue Centre Trust (CDDC Trust) - to hold the GAM 2020 in South Africa. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the in-person GAM was postponed to 2021. One year later, the 2021 PaRD Annual Forum and General Assembly of Members (GAM) took place 8-11 November in Stellenbosch, South Africa. The event was organised by the PaRD Secretariat in collaboration with the National Religious Association for South Africa (NRASD), a subsidiary of the PaRD member CDDC Trust in South Africa.

The current 144 PaRD members and observers were invited to participate in the event virtually or in person. Over 100 participants, comprised of representatives from civil society, religious and faith-based actors, governments, multilaterals, and academia, participated in the event. GAM 2021 consisted of public sessions, PaRD-internal plenary sessions, where they worked on the strategic plan, meetings of the PaRD Steering Group and its sub-committees, PaRD work-streams and workgroups, parallel open forum sessions (where members presented their ongoing initiatives), and side events. All agenda items provided opportunities for discussion and mutual learning.

## Day 1 | November 8

The Annual Forum began with **welcoming remarks** by **Khushwant Singh**, the new Head of the PaRD Secretariat. Singh emphasised the special momentum in PaRD's evolution that the event represented. With a new five-year PaRD strategy developed in inclusive and respectful cooperation, while PaRD brings together a larger and more diverse group of members than ever before, he called for the guiding principles of the strategy to be lived authentically and to "Becoming more Together". He thanked all those involved in organising the event and working on the strategy. Singh reflected on defining personal experiences and inspiration he drew from outstanding South African personalities such as Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu (find his [speech here](#)).

After warmly welcoming the participants, **Bishop Sithembele Sipuka**, the local co-host and President of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC), spoke about South Africa's pivotal role in the development of the African continent. He expressed his wish for the South African government to join PaRD as an official member. Sipuka pointed out that the pandemic has disproportionately affected the poorest and most marginalised communities. He highlighted the common denominator of all stakeholders present: concern for people's well-being and working together towards this goal.

The first roundtable discussion centred around the role of development cooperation in ending both **Extreme Poverty** and **Ensuring Food Security**.



Int.Partnership Religion & Sustainable Development @P... · Nov 11  
 #SouthAfrica Deputy Minister of International Relations & Cooperation Candith Mashego-Dlamini spoke about realistic ways to end #poverty & ensure #foodsecurity and what #DevelopmentCooperation can do! 1 of many high-level speakers at #PaRDGAM2021 #DIRCO  
 @DIRCO\_ZA



This session was opened virtually with key input from the South African Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, **Candith Mashego-Dlamini**. She stressed that even though governments have a special responsibility in coordinating efforts, all sectors of society share responsibility for achieving the SDGs. Calling for an integrated and inclusive approach to the SDGs, she shared her hope that the event will mark the beginning of closer cooperation with PaRD. In this regard, **Mashego-Dlamini announced that she**

**would endorse Bishop Sipuka's request for South Africa to join PaRD as an official member before President Ramaphosa.**

**Ms Mastoera Sadan**, Chief Sector Expert, Social, National Planning Commission Secretariat (NDP) of the Government of South Africa, presented her work concerning the National Development Plan (NDP) for South Africa and its current status quo. Presenting an attempt to localise and nationalise efforts to achieve the SDGs, Ms Sadan noted that the impact of COVID-19 on national development has been severe as poverty has worsened, hunger has increased, life expectancy has decreased, and unemployment has considerably grown. This indicates the need for greater cooperation between the government and religious actors, including preparing upcoming national development plans.



@PaRDSecretariat |

The welcome addresses were followed by a panel discussion moderated by **Prof Jerry Pillay** of the University of Pretoria. Virtual and in-person panellists included **Peter Prove**, WCC; **Nontando Hadebe**, Side by Side; **Fred Nyabera**, Arigatou International and **Denise Kodhe**, AU-ECOSOCC. The session highlighted the extent to which COVID-19 has intensified food insecurity and negatively impacted the gains many countries had made on poverty reduction.

In a roundtable format, the second session focused on the **Localising Aid Agenda**, especially on the funding challenges for local actors during their COVID-19 response. Even though the localisation of aid has been on the international agenda for years, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the process. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced international actors to hand over more decision-making power and resources to local stakeholders. Still, many local (religious) actors face challenges accessing funding resources due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The roundtable saw engaging discussions with representatives of donor agencies like **Adam Nicholas Phillips**, USAID and various civil society and religious actors, including **Smruti Patel**, Charter4Change; **Mejindarpal Kaur**, UNITED SIKHS; **Shaykh Achmat Sedick**, NRASD and **Waseem Ahmad**, CEO of Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW). The discussions focused on the various challenges and possibilities, and potentials of a comprehensive localisation approach within the COVID-19 response and beyond. **Phillips**, the director of USAID's Neighbourhood Partnerships and the Local, Faith and Transformative (LFT) Partnerships Hub,

shared experiences of the LFT-Hub; its uniqueness is in fast-tracking procurement reform to strengthen USAID's ability to partner with diverse and non-traditional partners such as religious actors. He focused on local actors and how they can be identified, and the various obstacles governments face while working with local (religious) actors. Various panellists emphasised that policies have not caught up with current realities and need to change to better reach those in need and respect their agency. New models of cooperation should go beyond top-down program planning.

During the second half of day one, PaRD members received a summary on the progress of the partnership. It continues its work on **knowledge exchange, informing policy and capacity building**. Members active in the work-streams used the General Assembly of Members as an opportunity to discuss and revise the draft work-plans of the **four work-streams**, to establish next steps and to identify key advocacy events for each work-stream. All work-streams relate to SDG 17, which is the core of PaRD's identity: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development. PaRD currently has four work streams on **health (SDG 3), water, environment, and climate action (WECARE-SDGs 6,13,14,15), gender equality and empowerment (SDG 5), and sustaining peace (SDG 16)**. PaRD will continue to maintain flexibility to respond to current crises and themes, including cross-cutting issues. Accordingly, PaRD has initiated an exchange on food advocacy and Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB).

## Day 2 | November 9

The first session of day two addressed **Vaccine Equity**, the understanding that no nation should have a priority over another in terms of vaccine distribution or, as panellists reiterated: "Nobody is safe until everybody is safe." The session had contributions from various experts, including **Sarah Hess** from World Health Organisation (WHO) and **Helena Ballester** from the UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office. The current global divide is well illustrated as one dose of vaccine is delivered to sub-Saharan Africa for every 15 doses delivered to G20 countries. A critical insight that ran throughout the presentation was that the approach of managing a global crisis at the national level through individualised solutions does not do justice to the transnational nature of the pandemic. Hess and Ballester made clear that religious actors are critical strategic partners in pandemic responses. They shared recommendations for fields of action such as reducing vaccine hesitancy and increasing trust in the vaccines, offering logistical support, and the function of religious leaders as role models.

Among the panellist were **Dr Katherine Marshall**, WFDD. She called for more attention to the "interconnectedness" of pandemic development and not to view the health crisis as an isolated problem. Looking at the research data collected so far on the COVID response, religious actors are not recognised as the central part of the response that they have played, earning them a "seat on key tables". Moreover, **Dr Marianna Leite**, ACT Alliance, shared insights from the recent ACT Africa workshop and the published declaration on advocating for vaccine equity - a shared responsibility. Additionally, **Dr Mohamed Elsanousi**, Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, also shared examples from the *Faith4Vaccines* initiatives and



what concrete actions religious actors in the US have taken. Such interventions by **Faith4Vaccines** could be scaled up also in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The second session discussed how the **impact of religious actors on the SDGs** can be **measured**. This session was led by **Dr Esben Lunde Larsen**, former Danish Minister for Higher Education and Research and Minister for Environment and Food and currently, Director of the World Resource Institute (WRI) Faith and Sustainability. This session focused on how the accomplishments of religious actors and organisations can be measured, primarily in the realisation of SDGs around climate change prevention. There was a consensus that metrics need to be developed in an inclusive approach and that PaRD could play an important role.

The second half of the day focused on the **strategic plan for 2022-2026**. The strategy with the title “**Becoming more Together**” was developed on a consultative approach supported by Kaleido Consultancy, with input from the PaRD membership and leadership under the coordination of PaRD’s Secretariat. The strategy includes PaRD’s mission and vision, strategic and organisational priorities, and the principles under which PaRD will operate.

During the meeting, the Steering Group election results were announced.

**PaRD's new co-chairs are: Hazel M.D. Dixon AU; Adam Philips, USAID and Peter Prove (WCC).**

**The new steering group members are** Fred Nyabera, Arigatou International; Hazel M.D. Dixon AUC-CIDO; Denise Kodhe AU-ECOSOCC; Hanno Spitzer BMZ; Mercy Munene, Cynesia; Atallah Fitzgibbon, IRW; Mohammed Abu-Nimer, KAICIID; Kristian Westad Bertelsen, MFA Denmark; Mejjindarpal Kaur, UNITED SIKHS; Adam Nicholas Phillips, USAID; Peter Prove, WCC; Stefan Sengstmann, WVI.

Int.Partnership Religion & Sustainable Development @P... - Nov 11 ...  
@peterprove from @WCC\_JA joins the #PaRD Steering Group as co-chair | Cooperation between Religion, Government and Multilaterals has never been more important than now, he says it's "time to get even busier!"



**The outgoing PaRD leadership was sincerely thanked for their long-standing engagement.**

Int.Partnership Religion & Sustainable Development @P... - Nov 11 ...  
PaRD welcomes new co-chair Hazel M.D Dixon from @ African Union | Together, governments, multilateral entities and religions can use existing networks to achieve the #2030agenda | #TogetherForOurPlanet | #LocallyLedAdaptation



Grammy winner **Ani Zonneveld** dedicated her song “In my soul” to the former leadership. The **outgoing Steering Group** was composed of co-chairs **Prof Mohammed Abu-Nimer**, KAICIID and **Jørgen Thomsen**, Dan Church Aid/ACT Alliance, and members **Maria Lucia Uribe Torres**, Arigatou International; **Hellen Mugo**, CYNESA; **Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati**, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance; and **Mercy Niwe/Kimberly Parent**, World Bank.

## Day 3 | November 10

The day kicked off with a fishbowl discussion on fostering **social and religious cohesion** during the COVID-19 pandemic. This session was moderated virtually by **Prof Mohammed Abu-Nimer**, KAICIID. **Abdulkareem Majemu Shefiu**, Strength in Diversity Development Centre and **Rubina Bhatti**, National Commission on the Rights of Child Pakistan, opened the discussion with concrete examples of current challenges for social cohesion due to the COVID-19 pandemic, using local examples of their organisations' work in Nigeria and Pakistan. Both

shared good examples and evidence of how religious actors are instrumental in promoting social cohesion for communities such as religious minorities, women, youth, people with disabilities even during a pandemic.

**Caroline Thomas, Adyan Foundation; Hazel Maureen Danetta Dixon, AUC-CIDO and**

Int.Partnership Religion & Sustainable Development @P... · Nov 10 ...  
Grammy winner @AnizConneved founder and president of Muslims for Progressive Values @mpvusa uses all of her talents at #PaRDGAN2021 🎤 | Ani dedicated the song "In my Soul" to the outgoing PaRD Steering Group  
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**Yumiko Yokozeki, UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building**, shared their experiences working on inclusive approaches to religious and social cohesion from a country and regional perspective. The panel linked the topic to previous discussions, such as the need for vaccine equity, localisation of development cooperation, poverty reduction and food security, highlighting the need for an interdisciplinary, comprehensive approach to foster religious and social cohesion. Local (religious) actors implement many initiatives to foster social cohesion. To engage the transformative power of those local actors to

foster social inclusion for all, it was proposed for PaRD to work with existing networks and enhance learning and exchange across different areas of engagement and regions.

Afterwards, hybrid working sessions took place, and members participated in the respective sessions, for example, the parallel work-stream sessions and meetings of the steering group sub-committees (Budget & Finance, Membership Growth, Communication).

**The members unanimously approved and acclaimed the new five-year PaRD strategic plan.** This marked the conclusion of a process that shows PaRD's potential for cooperation at eye-level among all key entities.

The third day's final roundtable session covered the topic of **climate action** in the format of a multi-disciplinary discussion on the contributions of religious actors addressing climate change. **Prof Dr Francois Engelbrecht**, Director and Professor of Climatology at the Global Change Institute, gave input on Africa's vulnerability to climate change and shared perspectives from the IPCC Assessment Report related to the African continent. **Joan Okitoi-Heisig**, Project Manager at the World Evangelical Alliance and co-lead of the WECARE work-stream, moderated the session and introduced the first panellists, **Yukiko Yamada Morovic**, Technical Director for External Engagement and Programming, informed participants about World Vision's approach to environmental stewardship and climate action to advance climate justice. **Daniel Perell**, Representative to the Baha'i International Community's United Nations Office, shared his perspective on environmental justice, peace, and inclusive society and how humanity is in a constant independent interplay with nature and the natural world. **Mercy Wambui Munene**, Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa (CYNESA), explored the role of the youth in the fight for climate action and their call for action for older and current generations. **Ilana Stein**, Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development, added to the debate by elaborating conservation efforts on the African continent while partnering with local communities in Africa. During an animated discussion and Q&A session, participants and panellists discussed the different measures and activities to



advance climate action and climate justice by enhancing cross-cutting collaboration, for example, through multi-stakeholder partnerships like PaRD.

Int.Partnership Religion & Sustainable Development @PaRD - Nov 11 ...  
Thank You! | 10 November 2021 | Prof Mohammed Abu-Nimer leaves the podium but stays on #PaRD Steering Group. @mabunimer\_nimer @KAICIID



The **closing remarks** were held by **Prof Dr Muhammad Ilyas**, Chairman, International Dialogue, Research and Awareness Center, Pakistan; **Günter Nooke**, the German Chancellor's Personal Representative for Africa, German Government; **Ejaz Alam Augustine**, Minister for Human Rights, Minority Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Government of Panjab, Pakistan and the outgoing co-chairs **Jørgen Thomsen**, Dan Church Aid/ACT Alliance and **Prof Mohammed Abu-Nimer**, KAICIID. The speakers stressed the uniqueness of PaRD's approach and the success of the GAM despite the challenges due to the pandemic. They highlighted that in five years, PaRD has established itself as an important global hub for policy engagement, sharing knowledge, experiences and finding new ways of coordination and collaboration amongst governments, multilaterals, and religious actors.

Int.Partnership Religion & Sustainable Development @PaRD - Nov 11 ...  
Thank You! | 10 November 2021 | Jørgen Thomsen from @ACTalliance leaves #PaRD Steering Group, he was co-chair since 2018 @ACTallianceEU #PaRDGAM2021



**Thomsen**, Dan Church Aid/ACT Alliance and **Prof**

**Mohammed Abu-Nimer**, KAICIID. The speakers stressed the uniqueness of PaRD's approach and the success of the GAM despite the challenges due to the pandemic. They highlighted that in five years, PaRD has established itself as an important global hub for policy engagement, sharing knowledge, experiences and finding new ways of coordination and collaboration amongst governments, multilaterals, and religious actors.

## Day 4 | November 11

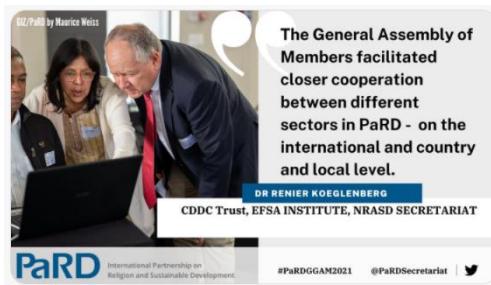
On the last day of the 2021 GAM hosted various side events convened by work-stream and member organisations. It began with a focus on the **contributions of young people**. Speaking online from Canada, **Abayjeet Singh**, co-founder of the Break the Divide Foundation, talked about how his student foundation created a global platform for exchange between young people, built on the idea of learning from others through listening and empathy. The foundation addresses issues such as climate change and mental health and aims to overcome divisions in society. Singh drew admiration and sparked an engaged Q&A session after highlighting how his religious background as a Sikh inspires his voluntary work.

One of PaRD's consistent aims has been to ensure that the voices of local religious and faith-based actors are heard. The PaRD Health work-stream organised two regional round table discussions for southern **Africa and Asia to amplify these voices**. The **round tables** brought together local religious and faith communities with key multilateral and government stakeholders to share best practices, challenges and experiences faced in the response. The roundtables focused on religious agency in the response and resources to COVID-19.

**Dr Elisabet Le Roux**, Stellenbosch University, presented a new Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities (JLIFLC) study on Religion and Gender in donor policies and practice ([see full study here](#)) that examines how donors view and work with religious actors in interventions for gender equality (SDG5). How well this concern is mainstreamed in policies and practice was a key question. The session concluded with a solution-oriented discussion moderated by **Kirsten Laursen Muth**, JLIFLC and **Jørgen Thomsen** DanChurchAid/ACT Alliance. Whilst progress is visible, the session recommended that PaRD uses the report for further policy discussion and to ensure that all stakeholders live up to the principles they wish

to promote. It was also suggested that the PaRD Gender Equality and Empowerment work-stream organises a tri-party gender policy consultation in 2022.

To conclude the GAM 2021, the International Network on Religious Communities and



Sustainable Development with the Stellenbosch and Humboldt Universities jointly **launched the new Journal Religion & Development** by the Brill publisher. **Dr Philipp Öhlmann**, executive editor of the journal, explained the need for a journal – so far lacking – that is dedicated to the interdisciplinary study of Religion and Development. Among the remarks was **Claudia Jordan** from the PaRD

Secretariat, noting that “with open, honest and profound research, which is presented in this journal, we can move towards a more just society and protect our planet.” Greetings came from around the world, and the opening panel of academics, religious actors and practitioners warmly welcomed the new journal as a visible platform for knowledge sharing (read more [here](#)).

*The International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD) was founded in 2016 by 12 members. PaRD has since grown to become a partnership of over 140 members with representatives from civil society, especially religious and faith-based actors, governments, multilateral entities, and academia. The Annual Meeting and General Assembly (GAM) of PaRD is coordinated by PaRD’s Secretariat, which supports members in implementing PaRD’s mission. The Secretariat’s office is located at the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), the government owned German Agency for International Cooperation.*

Day 1 | Monday, November 8, 2021

## 9.00 – 11.00 Opening and Keynote addresses

### Introduction and Moderation



**Jørgen Thomsen**, Dan Church Aid/ ACT Alliance & outgoing PaRD Co-Chair

Jørgen Thomsen, who has held various positions at Dan Church Aid/ACT Alliance since 1994, is now Senior Advisor for International Ecumenical Cooperation and Religion & Development. Previously, he served as Regional Coordinator first for Eastern Europe, Russia and Central Asia and later for Asia. His multi-faceted background also includes his work as General Secretary of the Ecumenical Council of Denmark (National Council of Churches) from 1990-1994. He is an ordained Lutheran pastor and has published several articles in Danish and international publications, most recently on Religion and Development/Agenda 2030.



**Mohammed Abu-Nimer**, KAICIID & outgoing PaRD Co-Chair

Professor Mohammed Abu-Nimer, an expert on conflict resolution and peace dialogue, is a senior advisor to KAICIID and a full professor at the American University School of International Service for Internal Peace and Conflict Resolution in Washington, DC. A distinguished professor with more than 20 years of teaching experience, Abu-Nimer has developed numerous courses dealing with various facets of peacebuilding and conflict resolution and publishes regularly on the subject. While his research focuses on a wide range of areas of peacebuilding and conflict resolution, recent research has included faith-based peacebuilding, interfaith dialogue in peacebuilding and social cohesion building, and pedagogical considerations for integrating peace and forgiveness education in the Arab world.

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### Welcome Remarks



**Khuswant Singh**, Head of PaRD Secretariat

Khushwant Singh studied Ethnology, Education and Social Anthropology, focusing on migration, intercultural communication and religion. Singh finished his M.A. in Heidelberg and M.Res. in London. Since 2006 he has been working in the field of international development cooperation. Singh was part of the team which established the "International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development" - PaRD. Since May 2021, he has been the Head of PaRD's Secretariat.



**Bishop Sithembele Sipuka**, President of the Southern African Catholic Conference (SACBC)

Bishop Sithembele Sipuka is the first Vice President of SECAM (Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar), Chair of the CDDC Trust: EFSA Institute and the National Religious Association for Social Development (NRASD), as well as the Chair of the National Church Consultation (NCLC).

In addition to a in theology earned in Italy, he received his Doctor of Theology from the University of South Africa.

## Round Table: The Role of Development Cooperation: Ending Extreme Poverty and Ensuring Food Security

### Input and moderation



#### Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay, University of Pretoria

Jerry Pillay a Professor in Church History at the University of Pretoria where he is also the Dean of the Faculty of Theology and Religion. One of his more recent articles is entitled The church as a transformation and change agent

### Keynote Addresses



#### Candith Mashego-Dlamini, South African Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation

Before her role as South African Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Mashego Dlamini was the Deputy Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform from 2014-2019. Mashego-Dlamini holds a Diploma in Public Management from the University of South Africa. Dlamini played an instrumental role in setting up a Detainees Parents Support Committee in the 1980s to thwart the impact of the arrests of many anti-apartheid activists.



#### Mastoera Sadan, Chief Sector Expert, Social, National Planning Commission Secretariat (NDP)

Mastoera Sadan is the Programme Manager of the Programme to Support Pro-poor Policy Development Phase II (PSPPD II) at the NPD. She was previously a Senior Policy Analyst in the Social Sector in the Policy Coordination and Advisory Services (PCAS) in the Presidency. She was a Visiting Scholar at the University of Oxford in 2002-03. She holds an MSc from the London School of Economics and is currently a doctoral candidate at Rhodes University. Her doctoral research examines the trajectory of poverty policies and programmes in South Africa in the post-apartheid period.

### Panellists



#### Denise Kodhe, Acting Presiding Officer, AU-ECOSOCC

Denise Kodhe is Acting Presiding Officer at the African Union Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC). Kodhe is also part of the board of the Institute for Democracy & Leadership in Africa (IDEA), a non-governmental organisation registered in Kenya. Since 2000, IDEA is an international think tank and capacity-building institution.



**Peter Prove**, Director Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, World Council of Churches,

A Lutheran lawyer from Australia, Peter Prove has almost two decades of experience in the international policy arena. He has served in numerous leadership roles in and civil society contexts, including as president of the NGO Special Committee on Human Rights (Geneva); as a member of the International Task Team on HIV-related Travel Restrictions, the UNCTAD Expert Advisory Group on Promoting Responsible Sovereign Lending and Borrowing, the UNAIDS International Advisory Group on Universal Access.



**Dr Nontando Hadebe**, International Coordinator, Side by Side

Dr Nontando Hadebe is a laywoman theologian and current chair of the South African chapter of Circle of Concerned African women theologians. She is also a board member of several organisations, including Catholic Women Preach, Future Church, ACRP, and teaches part-time at St Augustine College. She completed her doctoral degree on Trinitarian theological response to gender in the context of HIV and AIDS. She also is a facilitator for the training program for FOCCISA on responses to violence against LGBTI persons.



**Fred Nyabera**, Director of End Child Poverty, Arigatou International

Rev. Fred Nyabera is the director of End Child Poverty; a multi-faith, child-centred, global initiative of Arigatou International that mobilises faith-inspired resources to end child poverty. As a social scientist and trained theologian, interest is in development and peacebuilding work. He previously served as pastor at Nairobi Baptist Church and Karen Community Church, respectively, and the Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA).

## 11.30 – 13.00 Roundtable discussion: *Localising Aid - Funding challenges for local actors during COVID-19 response*

### Moderation



**Kirsten Laursen Muth, Chief Executive Officer, Joint Learning Initiative on Faith & Local Communities**

With her rich experience in the field of international development in faith contexts, working with diverse stakeholders in more than 40 countries, Ms Muth now heads the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith & Local Communities as Chief Executive Officer. Previous positions include her role as Special Advisor for Leadership Development and Senior Director for International Programs at Episcopal Relief & Development and as Deputy Director of Programs at Church World Service.

### Input



### Dr Marlene Mahokoto, EFSA Institute

Dr Marlene Mahokoto is a Programme Manager at the EFSA Institute in South Africa. She is also an ordained Minister in the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA). Dr Mahokoto is a Research Associate at the University of Faculty of Theology - Department of Practical Theology and Missiology.

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### Panellists



#### **Adam Nicholas Phillips**, Director, Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships & Local, Faith and Transformative Partnerships at USAID

Adam Phillips is the Biden-Harris Administration appointee to lead Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. The Partnerships Center at USAID is part of the White Interagency Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnership efforts. It serves as a critical partner with civil society around international development, humanitarian work, and diplomacy.



#### **Mejindarpal Kaur**, International Legal Director of UNITED SIKHS

Mejindarpal Kaur has international advocacy experience spanning 20 years particularly for religious freedom rights for minorities. Currently, Kaur works with UNITED SIKHS, a civil and human rights, humanitarian relief and empowerment and education NGO with chapters in 10 countries spanning Asia, Europe, North America, Africa and Australasia.



#### **Sheikh Achmat Sedick**, Vice Chairperson, National Religious Association for Social Development (NRASD)

Sheikh Achmat Sedick holds the position of Vice Chairman of the National Religious Association for Social Development (NRSAD) and First Vice Chairman of the Muslim Judicial Council in South Africa.



#### **Smruti Patel**, Charter4Change

Smruti Patel is the founder of the Global Mentoring Initiative (GMI). She has been working in and on humanitarian action since 1995. She was one of the evaluators and authors of the Tsunami Evaluation study on the impact of international relief response on local capacities. She participates in the Charter4Change, an initiative led by both National and International NGOs, to practically implement changes to how the Humanitarian System operates to enable more locally led responses.



### **Waseem Ahmad, CEO of Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW)**

Prior to Waseem's appointment as CEO of IRW, Ahmad served as the Director of IRW's International Programmes Division, managing the design and delivery of the global humanitarian and development work, which provided vital support to 9.5 million people in more than 40 countries – including life-saving aid for people affected by humanitarian crises. He has been part of the Islamic Relief family for 15 years, having first joined as a Programme Officer in Balochistan, Pakistan.

## **Open Forum I-II | Monday, November 8 14.00- 15.30 | Tuesday, November 9**



### **Renáta Nelson, Coordination Officer at the International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID)**

An expert in international relations and dialogue and interfaith peacebuilding, Coordination Officer Renáta Nelson has represented the International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID) on a wide range of international platforms. Most recently in 2021, a publication on *Evaluating interreligious Peacebuilding and Dialogue: Methods and Frameworks* co-edited by Nelson and Prof. Mohammed Abu-Nimer has been released as part of the KAICIID Beyond Dialogue Series. Nelson holds a in Political Science and a MA in International Studies from the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna.



### **Hellen Wangechi Mugo, Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa (CYNESA)**

Hellen Mugo serves as Deputy Executive Director as well as leads the CYNESA Kenya chapter as Country director. In addition, Ms Mugo is also responsible for partnerships at CYNESA and has served in this capacity on the PaRD Steering Group. The Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa (CYNESA) is an Africa-wide network of youth addressing environmental degradation and climate change in different contexts.

## **Day 2 | Tuesday, November 9**

### **9.00 – 10.30 Panel Discussion: Vaccine Equity**

#### **Moderation**



### **Stefan Sengstmann, World Vision Germany**

Stefan Sengstmann, a development expert with more than 15 years of professional experience at World Vision, currently leads World technical advisory group as Director. Previously, he worked as a Technical Advisor on HIV and AIDS and Reproductive Health. Stefan has a degree in geography and most recently served as co-lead of the PaRD Work-stream Health (SD3).

## **Maria Lucia Uribe, Executive Director, Arigatou International Geneva**



Ms. Maria Lucia Uribe Torres is the Executive Director of Arigatou International Geneva. She heads the strategic direction of the Ethics Education for Children Initiative as an International Knowledge and Action Hub with partners in more than 30 countries. She is also in charge of developing and maintaining Arigatou international's engagement in child rights initiatives with UN agencies and child rights focused NGOs in Geneva. Before her appointment, Ms. Uribe was the Coordinator and Deputy Coordinator for Education and Fragility for the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) and served as Program Officer for Arigatou International.

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### **Panellists**



#### **Sarah Hess, Technical Officer, Infectious Hazard Management, Health Emergencies Programme, World Health Organisation**

Sarah Hess is an experienced Public Health Professional with a demonstrated history of working in global health and international organisations. Skilled in Public Health, Infectious Diseases, Emergency Preparedness and Response and Global Health Policy, she has been working for the WHO for the past eight years. Hess holds a Master of Public Health (MPH) focused in International Public Health/International Health from Liverpool University.



#### **Helena Ballester Bon, Communication for Development Specialist, UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office**

Before joining UNICEF, Helena Ballester Bon was a Project Manager at ASAP Worldwide and worked as a communication and advocacy coordinator at the Consortium WASH RDC - Concern Worldwide. She has been working for UNICEF since 2014 as a Communication for Development Specialist (C4D) with a particular focus on Demand generation for Immunisation and, Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH).



#### **Angela Naa Afoley Odai, Acting Head of Diaspora Division, African Union Commission Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (AUC-CIDO)**

Prior to joining AUC-CIDO as a Diaspora Policy Officer, Angela Naa Afoley Odai worked as an advisor at the Migration for Development Programme at the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)* GmbH. Previously, she consulted the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (Ghana) at the Diaspora Affairs Bureau.



**Prof Katherine Marshall**, Director World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD)

Prof Katherine Marshall is the executive director of the WFDD at Georgetown University. She worked at the World Bank from 1971 to 2006 and has nearly four decades of experience on a wide range of development issues in Africa, Latin America, East Asia, and the Middle East. She led the World faith and ethics initiative between 2000 and 2006. Marshall has written extensively about religion and development, peacebuilding, women, and the fight against poverty.



**Marianna Leite**, Global Lead – Gender and Inequality and Chair of the ACT Alliance Gender Justice Reference Group

Marianna Leite is a lawyer, researcher, and activist with over 15 years of professional experience across the legal, academic and development sectors. She worked as a freelance consultant for many international organisations and civil society actors, more recently for CONCORD Europe and for the ACT Alliance Gender Justice Programme.



**Dr Mohamed Elsanousi**, Executive Director, The Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers

In his function as Executive Director of the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, Dr Mohamed Elsanousi serves the global network that bridges grassroots peacemakers and global players to work towards sustainable peace. He was the director of Community Outreach and Interfaith Relations for the Islamic Society of North America. He also served on the Core Group Taskforce for the Department of State's working group on Religion and Foreign Policy.

### 10.30 – 11.00 Measuring impact of religious actors to the SDGs



**Dr Esben Lunde Larsen**, Director, World Resource Institute (WRI) Faith and Sustainability

Prior to joining WRI, Esben Lunde Larsen had a political career in the Kingdom of Denmark as Member of City Council from 2006-2014, Deputy Mayor from 2010-2014, Member of the Danish Parliament from 2011-2018 and Cabinet Minister in Her Majesty the Government from 2015-2018. First as Minister for Higher Education and Research and secondly as Minister for Environment and Food.

## Day 3 | Wednesday, November 10

### 09.00 - 10.15 Fishbowl Discussion: Fostering social and religious cohesion in times of the COVID-19 pandemic



**Abdulkareem Majemu Shefiu**, Executive Director, Strength in Diversity Development Centre

Abdulkareem Majemu Shefiu, serves as the Executive Director of the Strength in Diversity Development Centre, the Islamic Platform Society of Nigeria, and the Islamic Resource Centre. He is also a member of the Religious Leaders Anti-Corruption Committee in Nigeria and zonal coordinator for the Interfaith Mediation Centre's south/west zone in Lagos.



**Caroline Thomas**, Director of Development & International Relations, Adyan Foundation

In her role, Caroline Thomas supports the cause of Adyan, which is a Foundation for diversity, solidarity and human dignity. Registered as an NGO in Lebanon, Adyan works locally, regionally and internationally for pluralism, inclusive citizenship, community resilience, and spiritual solidarity through home-grown solutions in education, media, policy, and intercultural and interreligious relations.



**Rubina Bhatti**, Member, National Commission on the Rights of Child

Dr Rubina Feroze Bhatti is a human rights activist and leadership consultant with 20+ years of diverse experience in both non-profit and academic spheres. Dr Bhatti specialises in leadership development, peacebuilding and promoting human rights. She earned her master's degree in chemistry from Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU) in Pakistan and her Master's in development studies from Ireland, where she was awarded with "Student of the Year" for her outstanding educational career.



**Yumiko Yokozeki**, Director, UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building

Dr Yumiko Yokozeki has extensive experience in assisting the development of curricula and capacity buildings for teachers in Ethiopia and various other African countries. Having worked as UNICEF's Regional Education Advisor for Western and Central Africa and later the same post for Eastern and Southern Africa. She has previously worked at the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), both at the Headquarters and in African field offices, to provide technical assistance to Africa in education.

## **14.45 – 15.45 PaRD work-streams in conversation with COP26 – Multi-disciplinary discussions on the contributions of religious actors to addressing climate change**

### **Moderation**



**Joan Okitoi-Heisig, Project Manager WEA Sustainability Centre**

Joan Okitoi-Heisig is Project Manager at the World Evangelical Alliance Sustainability Centre and an expert on communication and social media strategies. She holds a degree in International Relations and Marketing as well as in Development and Governance.

### **Input**



**Prof. Dr Francois Engelbrecht, Professor of Climatology, University of the Witwatersrand (Wits)**

Prof. Dr Francois Engelbrecht leads the climate studies, modelling and environmental health research group at the CSIR. He obtained a PhD in meteorology (University of Pretoria) and specialises in numerical climate model development and regional climate modelling. Francois leads the development of the first African-based Earth system model with national and international partners. He is an associate professor at North-West University and an honorary research associate at the Witwatersrand.



**Daniel Perell, Fellow, Bahá'í International**

Daniel Perell joined the Baha'i International Community's United Nations Office as a Representative in 2011. His work areas include humanity's relationship with the natural world, global governance, social and sustainable development, global citizenship, and disaster risk reduction. He currently serves on the Steering Committee for the Coalition for the United Nations We Need (C4UN) and as a co-chair of the Committee of Religious NGOs, Climate Working Group. He is formerly a Global Organizing Partner of the HLPF NGO Major Group and Chair of the NGO Committee for Social Development.



**Yukiko Yamada Morovic, Livelihoods Senior Advisor of External Engagement and Programming, World Vision International**

Since Yukiko Yamada Morovic joined World Vision in March 2020, Morovic has focused on climate action and child-sensitive social protection to address child poverty and vulnerability. She has coordinated the development of the Climate Action Policy and the Child Sensitive Social Protection Policy in close collaboration with the Disaster Management Cash and Voucher Programme and the Citizen Voice and Action (CVA) teams.



### **Mercy Wambui Munene, Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa (CYNESA)**

Through Mercy Wambui Munene pursuit of International Relations, she has gained broad exposure to the challenges of young people, which has served as a great motivation for championing her role in youth development. CYNESA provides a platform to engage with a larger audience of African youth and people of faith through its work.



### **Ilana Stein, Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development**

Ilana Stein holds a degree in Nature Conservation and English and combines both in her work as a writer for conservation and ecotourism entities in southern Africa. With a master's degree in Environmental Jewish Education, she lectures and writes about the relationship between Judaism and the environment.

## **16.00 – 17.00 Closing Ceremony: *Pathways to the 2030 Agenda***



### **Günther Nooke, The German Chancellor's Personal Representative for Africa, German Government**

Günther Nooke is the German chancellor's personal representative for Africa. From 1998 to 2005, Mr Nooke was a member of the German Bundestag, where he first held the title of deputy chairman (2000–2002). From 2002 until 2005, he then became spokesperson for cultural and media affairs of the parliamentary group for the centre-right political party CDU/CSU. Since April 2010, Mr Nooke has served as personal representative of the German chancellor for Africa



### **Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ilyas, Chairman IDRAC / International Dialogue Research & Awareness Centre Islamabad Pakistan.**

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ilyas is the Grand Imam & Speaker of the Largest Mosque of Pakistan ie; King Faisal Mosque Islamabad, Pakistan and a well-known scholar as Professor at the International Islamic University Islamabad where he serves as the Director General of Dawah Acadmy International Islamic University Islamabad Pakistan. Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ilyas is an advocate of interfaith dialogue and associated with PaRD member IDRAC / International Dialogue Research & Awareness Centre, Islamabad Pakistan.

**Day 4 | Thursday, November 11**

**SIDE EVENTS**

**Contributions of youth religious actors to the 2030 Agenda**



**Abayjeet Singh, Break the Divide Foundation, Canada**

Abayjeet Singh is a student at the University of Toronto, studying Global Health and Peace & Conflict Studies. He is the Co-Founder and Executive Director of Break The Divide Foundation.



**Maryam Haroon, Break the Divide Foundation, Canada**

Maryam Haroon is a student at the University of British Columbia, studying political science. She is the Director of Communications and Chapter Relations at Break The Divide Foundation.

**14.00-15.30 Presentation and discussion: Religion and gender in donor policies and practice: Discussions on ways forward in donor policy and practice and for faith actors working on gender equality/SDG 5**



**Elisabet Le Roux, Research Director, Stellenbosch University**

Elisabet Le Roux is a Research Director at the Unit for Religion and Development Research (URDR) in the Faculty of Theology of Stellenbosch University in South Africa. She holds a PhD in Sociology from Stellenbosch University, with a dissertation entitled *The role of African Christian churches in dealing with sexual violence against women: the case of the DRC, Rwanda and Liberia*. As a faith and development expert, she researches the globe, focusing particularly on gender and gender-based violence.

The biographical information and photos presented here have been either provided by the speakers or the organisations with which they are associated or are publicly accessible information.