

## **Summary of agreement at the JLI F&LC Steering Committee meeting October 29<sup>th</sup> 2015; and the way forward**

### **Agreeing the scope and mandate of JLIF&LC**

The JLI's core mandate is to serve as a platform/mechanism for collaborative learning about religious and faith-based activity and contribution to the health and wellbeing of local communities. Specifically, this encompasses: incubating, growing and supporting an eco-system of Learning Hubs; improving the quality, management and accessibility of knowledge; and communicating this evidence effectively.

The JLI's secretariat serves as a Hub of Hubs with the following mandate:

- **Supporting Learning Hubs:** Incubating, seeding and coaching Learning Hubs through their life-cycles, including the provision of seed funding for initial scoping surveys
- **Learning Hub Best Practices:** Identifying and codifying how Learning Hubs best function and their lifecycles and stages of development
- **External communication:** Raising the profile of the Learning Hubs; pushing out evidence to relevant audiences; hosting and convening events around the evidence and drawing/engaging wider stakeholders; sharpening the JLI's brand and committing its distinctive role; -Actively seek opportunities to bring the collective wisdom and learning of the JLI to new audiences and targeted stakeholders
- **Attracting funding:** Identifying resources and working collaboratively with Learning Hubs to secure funding for work/research programmes
- **Ensuring representation:** Monitoring and shaping how representative Learning Hubs are of faith, geography, gender and other diverse perspectives
- **Catalyst:** Scanning, spotting and serving as catalyst for setting up new Learning Hubs, as contexts change and opportunities arise (e.g. around Faith-based Finance, and Measurement & Metrics for Faith-based Initiatives)
- **Projects:** Pursue specific projects as funding and capacity allow, all still geared to furthering the core mandate of the JLI. Examples include: mapping faith-based assets and capacity, organisations and initiatives; becoming a 'network of networks; taking a country focus

### **Strengthening our organisational approach**

The JLI is a collaborative, coordinating mechanism. As such it should retain a simple, light and low resource structure. The current structure remains appropriate for the next three years: hosting of the JLI by a member (currently Tearfund) with regards fiduciary responsibilities; governance via a Steering Committee drawn from member agencies; a small central secretariat. However the current structure and organisational approach should be strengthened and clarified in the following ways:

- Form an Executive Committee, drawn from the Steering Committee, which provides more regular support and direction to the Coordinator
- Tighten and clarify the mandate, membership, term, role/responsibilities of the Steering Committee, and broaden representation
- Invite membership of the JLIF&LC and define terms: goal to broaden the user

- community and facilitate communications with them
- Hold an Annual General Meeting (same time as face-to-face Steering Committee meeting), inviting participation from a broader, representative group of stakeholders to focus on key strategic issues and opportunities for the JLI. Also focus the AGM on joint learning across disciplines and themes
  - Tighten the mandate and scope of the Secretariat (as above)
  - Clarify the mandate and freedom/constraints of action of Learning Hubs ; provide for the 'retirement' of inactive Hubs,
  - Provide for the establishment of website-based thematic foci for inactive Hub topics.
  - Provide adequate financial oversight of JLIF&LC and formalize TOR for JLIFLC fiduciary agency

### **Resolving specific issues and challenges**

There are a number of specific issues that emerged during the October 2015 Steering Committee which need to be addressed. These include:

- Tackling perception of UK-centricity
- Improving inclusivity and majority world representation
- Reaching out and engaging a broader base of academic involvement (e.g. connecting with PhD students)
- Possible need for rebranding, renaming of the JLIF&LC
- provide for an affiliation mechanism/advisory role for UN agencies and other multilateral and bilateral bodies

### **Developing and agreeing a 3 year plan**

A priority should be to develop a 3 year plan with clear goals and resourcing requirements for approval by the Steering Committee at the next quarterly conference call. Intention is, in this way, to secure 3 year funding commitments from Member Agencies and other donors. In 3 years there will be rigorous learning review of the JLIF&LC's impact, after which a decision will be made by the Steering Committee whether to continue for another defined period, or whether to end the initiative. Indicators might include:

- Number of Learning Hubs established;
- Levels of representation achieved;
- New partnerships initiated;
- New research undertaken in conjunction with Learning Hub;
- Positive feedback from key stakeholders;
- Website traffic;
- Perception as global entity/initiative;
- Other measures of impact on policy and practice.