



Engaging with Faith Organisations and Communities In Development and Humanitarian Work

There is growing recognition in the international development and humanitarian communities of the role of faith in providing significant moral, social and political agency for human development and resilience in the face of hardship and adversity. Religious institutions, communities of faith and faith-based NGOs are carrying out critical development and humanitarian relief activities, including in entrenched situations of conflict. How can the resources these organizations bring to the table (human, financial and spiritual) be better understood and more effectively tapped by all of those working to serve the very same communities?

Many UN organizations and offices are today partnering with faith-based or faith-inspired service-delivery NGOs, local faith communities and religious leaders. Yet these forms of engagement also entail challenges and concerns. As the United Nations system reviews – and sets – its post-2015 sustainable development agenda for the decades to come, it is timely to examine the objectives, modalities and outcomes of such partnerships.

The aim of this Strategic Learning Exchange (SLE) is to explore the linkages between faith and the continuum of humanitarian to development work. It will consider the nature of development and humanitarian work, the timeframes for interventions and the types of populations served. The three-day meeting will examine human rights and gender equality as cross-cutting concerns, as well as lessons learned in the programme design, implementation and evaluation phases.

This SLE will bring together a range of UN staff members who have experience engaging with faith-based organizations and communities in the course of their respective work at senior programme and policy levels. Several faith-based partners will also be invited to reflect on their experiences of engaging with the UN in service delivery, advocacy and capacity building.

All participants are expected to bring their expertise on faith and various programmatic areas, such as health (HIV/AIDS, maternal and child health), gender equality, education, conflict transformation, humanitarian relief and climate change, in preparation for the course, as per standard case study formats.

The training method will follow the current trends in UN staff education and be primarily peer-to-peer learning, and information sharing.

AT A GLANCE:

WHERE:

Turin, UN
Campus

WHEN:

17-19 November
2015

DURATION:

3 days

TUITION FEE:

USD 1,000 for
staff of the UN
System, other
international
organisations and
bilateral agencies.

For NGOs and
faith-based
organisations, the
fee is reduced to
USD 500.

Participants are
expected to cover
the cost of their
own travel and
accommodation.

**DEADLINE FOR
ENROLMENT:**

30 October 2015

**FOR
ENROLMENT
AND FURTHER
INFORMATION:**

www.unssc.org

Expected Outcomes of the Strategic Learning Exchange:

Participants can expect to take away the following:

- *Enhanced understanding* and ability to clearly articulate the linkages between faith and development and humanitarian work in contemporary contexts.
- *Strengthened capacity* to identify and articulate opportunities and challenges, strengths, weaknesses, entry points and modalities for:
 - (a) Partnership with faith-based NGOs and communities in the areas of knowledge-transfer, capacity building, advocacy, and enhancement of national ownership processes; and
 - (b) Strategies aimed at strengthening and overcoming some of the challenges associated with these partnerships (government relations, NGO/CSO dynamics, etc.).
- *An on-line tool with access to resources on religion and development*, as well as an opportunity to connect across the UN system with focal points working on related issues alumni of the course.

Testimonials from past editions:

"Finally we can learn from each other on an issue we were not even allowed to acknowledge before – the power of religion in the lives of millions of people... Very pleased you also brought on board the FBOs so we are not preaching to each other only, but we actually have their own voices to inform us".

"I have learned from our own colleagues, from the FBOs and from other agencies. This has opened my eyes to so many issues of partnership, or trust building, and of opportunities to confront very real taboos and social restrictions".

"Rarely does one get an opportunity to boast about one's work and also be humbled by the work of other colleagues dealing with such challenges. What a rich experience".

For additional information, please contact:

UNSSC UN Coherence, Development, Gender and Human Rights Team @ development-humanrights@unssc.org

- Mr. Patrick van Weerelt, Senior Manager and Team Leader, UN Coherence, Development, Gender and Human Rights: p.vanweerelt@unssc.org
- Ms. Aida Ghazaryan, Course Coordinator: a.ghazaryan@unssc.org

UNFPA:

- Ms. Azza Karam, karam@unfpa.org, Lead Facilitator

UNAIDS:

- Ms. Sally Smith, smiths@unaids.org, Co-Facilitator

UNHCR:

- Mr. José Riera, riera@unhcr.org, Co-facilitator

To register online please go to:

<http://www.unssc.org/home/activities/engaging-faith-organisations-and-communities-development-and-humanitarian-work-0>