

**Brief Report of the
PaRD Steering Group Meeting
November 7-9, 2018 Toronto/ Canada @WACC Office**

1. The second in-person meeting of the PaRD Steering Group after the constituting meeting during the General Assembly of Members in Bossey/ Geneva (June 2018) was held at the headquarters of the World Association for Christian Communication ([WACC](#)) in Toronto/ Canada. Jørn Lemvik (Lemvik Consulting) had been invited to moderate the sessions. The meeting kicked off with a round of introductions of participants and their respective organisations. Kirsten Evans (USAID) and Mercy Niwe (World Bank Group) were welcomed as new members and confirmed their ongoing commitment to the partnership. Subsequently, Mohammed Abu-Nimer (KAICIID) and Maria Lucia Uribe Torres (Arigatou International) provided an introductory on boarding to PaRD for the new SG members.
2. The Steering Group briefly reviewed the past activities and emphasized that the platform itself is an achievement. By eliminating the division of partners and members, PaRD is moving more towards a genuine partnership. PaRD (we) is (are) jointly working towards a common goal.
3. The Steering Group discussed its common vision for PaRD for the next 5 years. The participants reaffirmed their commitment towards creating more space for joint learning and knowledge exchange. PaRD has to be more evidence based, be able to present and share “best practices” and prove that joint advocacy actually leads to better policies on Religion & Development. Furthermore, in order to increase the number of members and ensure regional / strategic balancing of its members, PaRD needs to “sell the cause” and clarify its goals. Hence, it needs to be communicated what PaRD can realistically achieve as a strong network of governmental and intergovernmental entities as well as diverse Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)/ Faith-based Organisations (FBOs).
4. The Steering Group discussed the idea and proposal of having an UN Advisory Group to PaRD. Any advisory structure should be functional and reflect a reciprocal relationship between the parties involved. The Steering Group approved the proposal submitted by the former UN members in PaRD and decided to establish such an advisory group. The secretariat was commissioned to revise the Terms of Reference and the SG will propose the adoption of this proposal to the full membership of PaRD. The envisaged membership of this Advisory Group is initially by invitation only and limited to the former UN organizations in PaRD.
5. The Budget and Finance Sub-Committee’s work was presented and it was concluded that any funding strategy needs to be closely linked with the membership development and growth strategy. It was confirmed by the Federal German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) that they will cover the core costs (including staff salaries, staff travel, SG meetings, recurring office expenditures at the GIZ premises) of the PaRD Secretariat also in the coming three years. Hence, additional funding will be used for PaRD activities, especially work-streams and larger

meetings, such as the annual General Assembly and larger joint advocacy events. The Steering Group agrees on three priorities for activities, ranked as following: 1. Support of work-streams' agreed and approved activities; 2. Joint advocacy event(s); 3. Secondments.

6. The Steering Group discussed a joint advocacy strategy and eventually organising a larger joint advocacy event, including the need to address difficult issues. As mentioned above, the advocacy strategy needs to create opportunities to provide success stories that have influenced policies and aims to organise a "Davos"-like event on religion and sustainable development. In addition, PaRD should be present in larger events of other entities. The Steering Group agreed that PaRD needs to focus on one large advocacy event in 2020, depending on available funding. PaRD members are strongly encouraged to focus on different events regarding SDG 3, 5 and 16 to make the case.
7. In addition, the Steering Group agreed that PaRD does not have to be present at all events and criteria for representation has to be developed as conflict of interest may arise if members represent PaRD. Whereas, during key events, it is essential that the PaRD Secretariat shows physical representation. This decision will be made by the Steering Group if and when the Secretariat staff should be participating in global events.
8. During the second day, the Steering Group discussed a joint membership growth strategy, hence a Membership Sub-Committee was appointed representing Maria Lucia Uribe Torres (Arigatou International), Mercy Niwe (World Bank Group), Peter Prove (WCC; to be confirmed) and Thomas Lawo (PaRD Secretariat). The Steering Group agreed that membership from the Global South needs to be increased and several Steering Group members declared their willingness to contact potential governments from the Global South. The Steering Group proposed to review the list prepared by the secretariat to focus on new governmental members, and to invite their respective representatives to the next General Assembly of Members. Furthermore, it is important to have more diversity within the FBO sector and to develop a well-targeted membership drive strategy.
9. During the three-day meeting, the communication strategy and PaRD's unique selling points were discussed. As indicated above, the access to evidence and the access to all three entities is unique. Suggestions and decisions were made regarding the PaRD website, which will be integrated, and all members will be informed about the new functions via e-mail.
10. Furthermore, PaRD's working programme for 2019/20 was discussed. Co-leads of all three work-streams dialled in and presented their activities and challenges. The Steering Group approved all work plans and proposals. The Steering Group also discussed the participation of events in 2019. An overview will be shared in January 2019. Means of continuous exchange and communication between existing structures, including Steering Group, work-streams, secretariat and wider membership will be implemented in the next months.

The Steering Group developed the outline of a PaRD working programme 2019/20, which includes clear responsibilities for the secretariat and the Steering Group. The next General Assembly of Members will take place between the 29th April and 3rd May 2019 in Copenhagen/ Denmark, generously hosted by MoFA Denmark. The secretariat will develop a respective concept note in consultation with the Steering Group

11. The Steering Group also drafted an overview of PaRD's "Visioning-Goals-Products", which will be finalised prior to the General Assembly of Members 2019.