

## PaRD Annual Work Plan 2021

The International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD) brings together governmental and intergovernmental entities with diverse civil society organizations (CSOs) and faith-based organizations (FBOs) to engage the social capital and capacities vested in diverse faith communities for sustainable development and humanitarian assistance in the spirit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

PaRD counts to date (January 2021) **135 members**, and is guided by a Steering Group of 12 elected members from the three membership constituencies and lead by three co-chairs (USAID, KAICIID and ACT Alliance), each representing one of these groupings. In addition, there are four work-streams focusing on the SDGs Good Health and Well-Being (SDG 3), Gender Equality and Empowerment (SDG5), Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6), Climate Action (SDG 13), Life below Water (SDG 14), Life on Land (SDG 15) as well as Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (SDG 16).

This Annual Work Plan provides a comprehensive overview of PaRD's engagement areas and foreseen activities for 2020/21. It should be noted that PaRD's efforts are based on the current annual funding from BMZ. While BMZ is prepared to cover PaRD's core costs (including secretariat) until the end of December 2022, additional funding is required for a successful implementation of the envisioned joint activities and beyond. Hence, the acquisition of additional core-funding beyond the existing engagement has been identified as the highest priority by the PaRD Steering Group and the PaRD Membership at large.

The Work Plan is divided into an explanation report and a listed overview of activities. The first part comprises PaRD's priorities of engagement (A.) that affect PaRD's work throughout the upcoming year as well as efforts from the PaRD work-streams (B.) as well as other PaRD engagement (C.). Finally, the planned activities are illustrated in a table, reflecting PaRD's aspirations for capacity building, knowledge exchange and informing policies.

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### A. PaRD's Priorities of Engagement for 2021

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PaRD has identified three (I.-III.) engagement areas for 2020/21 as priorities for engagement. Apart from pursuing day-to-day partnership-related coordination tasks, these topics will receive special focus and considered as cross-cutting themes in all other PaRD activities.

#### I. Strategic Planning

A strategic planning process was initiated in December 2019 and needs to be further developed by a specifically created Task Team. Members of this Strategic Planning Task Team are Mohammed Abu-Nimer (KAICIID), Kirsten Evans (USAID), Atallah Fitzgibbon (IRW), Mercy Niwe (The World Bank Group), Hanno Spitzer (BMZ), Maria Lucia Uribe Torres (Arigatou), and the PaRD Secretariat. PaRD seeks to utilise the strengths and resources of its different members in designing and developing this strategic plan. An external expert with vast experience will be identified for developing and facilitating such a process to develop a strategic plan for PaRD. The Strategic Planning Task Team will re-convene by the end of 2020, thereafter to the Terms of Reference for the external consultant will be drafted.

#### II. PaRD Annual Forum and General Assembly of Members (GAM) 2021

In 2020, the PaRD GAM was envisioned to be convened in Cape Town, South Africa, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the in-person meeting was **postponed to 2021**. The working title remains: "Partnering for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - Attaining the 2030 Agenda with Religious and Faith Communities".

Being a core motivation for many religious actors and the 2030 Agenda's guiding principle, special attention will be paid during the Annual Forum to the aspiration to Leave No One Behind (LNOB). The leadership of the Cape Development and Dialogue Centre Trust (CDDC Trust) and its subsidiary, the National Religious Association for Social Development (NRASD) in collaboration with other local South African FBOs/FIOs, has reconfirmed its commitment to the support and hosting of the fifth PaRD Annual Forum in Cape Town, South Africa (31.08.-03.09.2021 tbc).

By the end of 2020 and throughout 2021, PaRD aims to reach out to governmental entities in Southern African with special focus on the hosting country the Republic of South Africa, reach out to intergovernmental entities (African Union, AU) and reach out to Local Faith Actors (LFA) in Africa to further prepare the programme, provide the logistical support and preparation and convene a meeting within the PaRD GAM2021 Preparatory Committee and the Local Host Committee in South Africa.

### III. COVID-19 Response

The COVID-19 response and contribution to the mitigation of its short-, mid- and long-term challenges remains one of the priorities for PaRD in 2021. In order to support PaRD's response to the pandemic, a COVID-19 Task Group was formed. One of the Task Group's objectives is to gather insights on challenges for Local Faith Actors and FBO's during COVID-19 pandemic. Hence, an input for discussion on the (in-)visibility and need for increased funding for LFAs in humanitarian context will be developed.

In addition, the dossier on [Religion and COVID-19](#) on the PaRD website will continuously collect information on research and publications in the context of faith actors and their engagement in the pandemic. PaRD's engagement in COVID-19 responses is also manifested in the four PaRD work-streams: Health, Gender Equality and Empowerment, Water, Environment and Climate Action (WECARE) and Sustaining Peace.

Furthermore, the COVID-19 crisis has illustrated that developing countries are most at risk during – and in the after-math – of the pandemic. The global health crisis has a considerable impact on lives and livelihoods and is likely to cause long-term social and economic implications (food insecurity, school dropouts, etc.). Thus, PaRD takes SDG 1 (Ending Poverty), including aspects of gender and inclusion, systematically into consideration for the foreseen activities to address the current trends of poverty increase in the marginalized populations.

PaRD is particularly excited about the contribution on *Identifying Funding and Resource Gaps with COVID-19 in the Field: A Religious Actors Perspective on Health, Gender, Environment and Peace* of the four work-streams to the Geneva Peace Week (November 2-6, 2020). As their input, the work-streams submitted a podcast with voices from local faith actors from all over the world.

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## B. Areas of Engagement and Activities implemented by the PaRD work-streams

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### I. Health (SDG 3)

The work-stream is currently focusing on Mental Health and Psycho-social Support (MHPSS). After the evaluation on gaps and roles of faith/religious actors in MHPSS, the work-stream engaged in collaborating with actors working on mental health in the humanitarian field, especially those working with children living in fragile settings. In collaboration with Islamic Relief Worldwide and the Institute for Global Health & Development at Queen Margaret University (Edinburgh) the work-stream has commissioned a research on 'faith-based MHPSS with children in humanitarian setting', to be published at the beginning of 2021. In addition, the research will examine new developments and needs caused by the recent COVID-19 crisis in relation

to children's wellbeing and the ability of faith-sensitive programmes to respond to these challenges.

The work-stream currently plans to host an online seminar that present projects by religious/faith-based-organizations working on MHPSS. During the Geneva Peace Week, the SDG 3 work-stream together with the three other PaRD work-streams will participate in a roundtable dialogue.

## II. Gender Equality and Empowerment (SDG 5)

The work-stream focuses on achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls. The work-stream aims to achieve this goal through knowledge exchange among actors, capacity building and informing policies. The work-stream will focus on the 65<sup>th</sup> UN Commission on the Status of Women March 2021.

A new report *Looking Back to Look Forward: The Role of Religious Actors in Gender Equality since the Beijing Declaration* will be published in the end of 2020. The report aims to review the roles religious actors have played in advancing and hindering gender equality since the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995; identifying strategies to overcome current barriers; and provide an understanding on the roles attributed to religious actors in UN policy documents.

The PaRD Gender Equality and Empowerment work-stream will furthermore host a series of interactive dialogues. With different members, and invited guests, creating a space for diverse stakeholders to engage on gender equality, religion and COVID-19. Alongside the hosted dialogues, they will share a call for Papers for religious actors to co-create a publication on *Visioning a Just World Post-COVID19: Religion, Sustainable Development and Gender Justice*. To encourage participation from new voices, they propose awarding 8 papers selected for publication, a small travel bursary to support their participation in the General Assembly of Members in South Africa, September 2021.

## III. WECARE (SDGs 6, 13, 14, 15)

The work-stream WECARE (Water, Environment, Climate Action work-stream) launched a [WECARE Resource Catalogue](#). This is a living document which illustrates knowledge resources from the WECARE work-stream members and PaRD members alike, related to green and blue SDGs (6, 13, 14 and 15). Members willing to contribute resources are welcomed to contact the PaRD Secretariat.

In collaboration with Humboldt University Berlin (HU), WECARE co-hosted a Capacity Building Workshop on the topic *Religious Communities and Ecological Sustainability in Southern Africa* during the 2020 PaRD Virtual Annual Forum and General Assembly of Members. Building on the findings of the event, the HU will develop a **comprehensive report**, including research findings as well as policy recommendations, which will be presented to the Annual Forum 2021 in South Africa.

WECARE plans its participation at the *World Water Week* (Stockholm, Sweden), the *UN Climate Change Conference COP26* (Glasgow, United Kingdom), as well as the Annual Forum and GAM in South Africa.

## IV. Sustaining Peace (SDG 16)

The Sustaining Peace work-stream is commissioning a study that will look more closely into the level of effectiveness of local faith actors (LFAs) including religious institutions, faith-based organisations, and religious actors and leaders who have been working towards the achievement of SDG16 in the context of Myanmar, using the humanitarian-development-peace, or "triple nexus" as a lens for analysis. The study aims to identify the areas of challenge, highlight successes and identify the particularities of what is working in the context of Myanmar.

Further, the work-stream will organize a side event on *Faith Action for Children on the Move (FACoM)* in coordination with the FACoM Steering Committee. The work stream will identify a relevant event (online conference/forum, etc...) to present this piece.

The SDG 16 work stream will co-host online seminars with topics pertinent to the group with the co-leadership of different work-stream members. Topics potentially identified touch on 1) Peace and COVID-19, 2) Working across Nexus, 3) Children on the Move, and 4) Interreligious work on combatting racism and xenophobia.

SDG 16 will attend several external conferences and events such as the Geneva Peace Week, the Ring for Peace conference, and the Alliance for Peacebuilding in December 2020. Additionally, it will address the implications of COVID-19 for peacebuilding in online seminars, joint papers, conference panels, etc.

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## C. PaRD Outreach, Communications and joint Activities

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The Steering Group has appointed three Sub-Committees. Each managing different tasks regarding (I.) Membership Growth, (II.) Communication or (III.) Budget and Finance. In addition, there is a series of other activities, PaRD engages in (IV.).

### I. Membership Growth

PaRD has grown from 16 in 2016 to 135 institutional members in 2020. Almost 90 percent of the members are FBOs/ FIOs/ ROs/ CSOs. Based on an analysis of the present membership according to constituencies, regions and religious affiliation, PaRD wants to engage in increasing the number of governmental members, which so far make up only 6 percent of the total membership. Furthermore, majority of members are headquartered in the Global North. Providing ample and appropriate opportunities for members of the Global North and the Global South to engage with one another will pave the way for a greater mutual benefit. Therefore, PaRD will focus on increasing representation of the Global South. Important activities are developing a respective growth strategy, updating the membership criteria and aiming for a greater and more inclusive membership diversification.

### II. Communication

Regarding the communication within PaRD and beyond, further possibilities of virtual interaction will be elaborated, since physical presence at events is likely to be suspended even for the coming months due to the ongoing restrictions imposed to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic around the world. The PaRD Secretariat will intensify the exchange with the respective communication focal points of PaRD members. Besides online-seminars, virtual workshops etc., PaRD will foster its internet presence by creating its own video channel to upload recorded virtual panels and meetings within the PaRD membership as well as further developing the website, newsletter and social media. A detailed analysis of the present user numbers of website, sections and newsletter will provide the basis for a more and better targeted outreach.

### III. Budget & Finance

With BMZ being the present sole core-funder for the secretariat and assured sponsorship until the end of 2022, additional core-funding beyond the existing engagement has been identified as the highest priority by the PaRD Steering Group. With the continued growth of PaRD, additional funding is required for envisioned joint activities as well as central services. The participants of the sub-committee have agreed that a stronger engagement with existing and potential new governmental members has the highest priority in order to ensure financial sustainability after 2022.

### IV. Other

- **G20 Interfaith Forum**

The 2020 Interfaith Forum addressed some of the world's most pressing humanitarian and development issues such as the COVID-19 pandemic, poverty, migration, conflict, gender equality, and climate change. The Forum ensures that religious voices are integral partners in global relief efforts.

- **Capacity Strengthening Working Group**  
During 2019 PaRD GAM, member expressed their interest to form a Capacity Strengthening Working Group within PaRD. This interest has been reiterated during the joint Co-lead and Steering Group meetings.
- **Freedom of Religion and Belief (FoRB)**  
During the GAM 2019 as well as the SG and Co-Leads meeting in Vienna 2019, a series of members expressed their interest in jointly engaging in FoRB, as a possible area of focus within PaRD. A first meeting had been scheduled for April 2020 to further discuss the potential engagement in FoRB but was eventually postponed due to COVID-19. With the continuous interest of members, the facilitation of a roundtable dialogue will take form once feasible date and circumstance can be identified by the hosting institution, Wilton Park, UK. The roundtable dialogue is an event in partnership with USAID and KAICIID and in association with PaRD and the FoRB & Foreign Policy Initiative of the University of Sussex.

## Overview PaRD Action Points

A. PaRD's Priorities of Engagement for 2021	
I. Strategic Planning	
Develop Strategic Plan	Consultation with Strategic Planning Task Team and PaRD members
	Commissioning external Consultant
	Consultations with PaRD members and other stakeholders
	Approval of final Strategic Plan during GAM 2021
II. PaRD Annual Forum and General Assembly of Members (GAM) 2021	
Annual Forum and GAM 2021 South Africa	Reach out to governmental entities (incl. RSA), intergovernmental entities (AU) and LFAs in Africa
	Convening regular meeting with GAM Prep Committee and Local Host Committee
	Successful implementation in September 2021
III. COVID-19 responses	
Support initiatives on PaRD's response to COVID-19 pandemic	Facilitating exchange/ discussions within PaRD on funding accessibility, utilization and existing barriers
	Gathering insights and funding needs/gaps from LFAs/local FBOs
	Develop publication/recommendation document on funding LFAs
	Call for proposals on collaborative COVID-19 projects to financially support Work-streams' initiatives
B. Areas of Engagement and Activities implemented by the PaRD work-streams	

Capacity building	
<b>Workstream SDG 5 Gender Equality and Empowerment:</b>  Initiative- Visioning a Just World Post-Covid19: Religion, Sustainable Development and Gender Justice	Panel discussion to launch the initiative
	Bringing together diverse voices on gender, sustainable development and religion
	Initiating a Call for Papers for religious actors to co-create a publication
	Workshop ahead of GAM in September 2021
<b>Work-stream SDG 3 Health: Refocusing to MHPSS</b>	Questionnaire to further redefine focus of fragile contexts and children
	Increase participation of members
<b>Work-stream SDG 6, 13, 14, 15 WE CARE:</b> Capacity workshop	Workshop on religious communities and ecological sustainability in Southern Africa in collaboration with Humboldt University
Knowledge exchange	
International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP)	A number of PaRD members are preparing a series of events with faith/religious actors around ICFP Nov 2021
<b>Work-stream SDG 6, 13, 14, 15 WE CARE:</b> Online resource catalogue	Online resource catalogue regarding green SDG's of PaRD members
<b>Work-stream SDG 6, 13, 14, 15 WE CARE:</b> COP26 Digital Meeting	In collaboration with UNEP Faith for Earth hosting a side event (tbc.)
UNGA Panel discussion	Panel discussion by World Vision on Child Care
Inform policies	
<b>Work-stream SDG 3 Health:</b> Research Study on "faith-based MHPSS with children in humanitarian setting"	Conducting a research study in collaboration with Queen Margret University and Islamic Relief
<b>Work stream SDG 5 Gender Equality and Empowerment:</b> UN Commission on the Status of Women	Two Side Events at the UN Commission on the Status of Women 64: networking event at the Japan Society and a Side Event at the German Mission
<b>Work stream SDG 5 Gender Equality and Empowerment:</b> Research on Role of Religious Actors in Gender Equality since the Beijing Declaration	New Research Commissioned on the Role of Religious Actors in Gender Equality since the Beijing Declaration (forthcoming)
Geneva Peace Week	Joint podcast with several PaRD WS co-leads on the topic "Funding Gaps during Covid-19"

<b>Work-stream SDG 6, 13, 14, 15 WE CARE:</b> Follow-up study	Developing a comprehensive report on the capacity-workshop in September 2020, to discuss results in relation with other research findings, informed action points will be developed and presented at PaRD's Annual Forum 2021
<b>Work-stream SDG 6, 13, 14, 15 WE CARE:</b> <b>Side events at WWW (World Water Week)</b>	Organize Side Event (tbc.)
<b>Work-stream SDG 16 Sustaining Peace:</b> Study on "Role of Faith Actors across the Nexus" in Myanmar	Conducting research on the triple nexus (Humanitarian, Peace, Development) and the role of LFAs in Myanmar. Study will be launched at a high-level side event
<b>C. PaRD Outreach, Management and Communications</b>	
<b>I. Membership Growth</b>	
Membership diversification	Revise and implement membership growth strategy
	Drafting a robust mandate for the Secretariat to reach out to more governmental entities, intergovernmental entities like AU and LFAs in the global South
<b>II. Communication</b>	
Develop a communication strategy	Intensifying exchange with communication contact persons of PaRD membership
Expand communication channels	Finding new social media channels (YouTube, Facebook)
	Elaborating communication platforms to host online-seminars
	Relaunch Newsletter
<b>III. Budget and Finance</b>	
Implement Acquisition strategy	Increase in-kind contributions to PaRD
	Increase financial contributions to PaRD; in particular, core funding
<b>IV. Other</b>	
G20 Interfaith Forum	Continuous engagement with the G20 Interfaith Forum organizers (tbc.)
Capacity Strengthening Working Group	Initiate systematic discussion with interested PaRD members
Freedom of Religion and Belief (FoRB)	Hold initial discussion on FoRB within PaRD during roundtable in Wilton park, UK (April 2021 tbc)