

Concept Note (Draft as of 09.09.2026)

PaRD General Assembly of Members & Annual Forum 2026: Beyond Partnership: Faith in Development for the Next Decade 10–12 October 2026 | Bangkok, Thailand

The 2026 PaRD General Assembly of Members and Annual Forum takes place at an important point in the development of the International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD). Ten years after its establishment, PaRD has become a unique platform that brings together governmental entities, faith-based organisations, multilateral entities, academia and civil society to strengthen the visibility of contributions by faith actors to sustainable development. As PaRD prepares for its future, this year's Assembly and Forum will focus on how the partnership can build on the experience of the past decade and prepare for the years ahead.

In cooperation with longstanding PaRD member **Institute of Buddhist Management for Happiness and Peace Foundation (IBHAP)**, the #AF 26 is hosted in **Bangkok, Thailand**, a city renowned for its religious diversity, vibrant civil society, and longstanding engagement in regional and global development cooperation. Situated at the crossroads of Buddhist, Muslim, Christian, Hindu, Sikh and other faith traditions, Bangkok reflects the diversity and inclusiveness that has always been at the heart of PaRD's mission and provides an inspiring setting to shape PaRD's future.

The environment in which PaRD operates has changed considerably since its establishment. Development cooperation is increasingly shaped by geopolitical conflict, shifting global affairs, shrinking financial resources, climate change, humanitarian crises and rapid technological developments. At the same time, faith-based organisations continue to play a vital role in supporting communities, delivering essential services, and advocating for social justice. Their local presence and trusted relationships remain valuable assets in addressing today's development challenges. Against this background, the PaRD gathering will focus on how PaRD can strengthen its role during its second decade, exploring both the future of the partnership itself and the contribution faith actors can make to sustainable development, integral human development, and flourishing and global affairs.

A key theme of the General Assembly will be the ongoing PaRD 2.0 transformation process. Building on the discussions initiated in 2025, as well as the findings of recent membership consultations, participants will review the progress made, discuss the remaining steps of the transition, and identify how they can actively contribute to the transition. The General Assembly will provide a space for members to reaffirm their commitment to PaRD's future and define their role in ensuring a successful transition.

In line with the Forum's guiding theme *Beyond Partnerships: Faith in Development for the Next Decade*, the Annual Forum will look past PaRD's structures to assess how the partnership can strengthen its role for the years to come. Discussions will explore how knowledge management and Artificial Intelligence can make the collective knowledge generated by networks more accessible, connected and actionable. Participants will address opportunities and challenges related to AI, including questions of quality, ownership, trust and responsible use, and will showcase PaRD's RelBot as a practical example of using technology to strengthen access to knowledge on religion and sustainable development.

As part of the Annual Forum, PaRD will convene the “Faith Matters! in Development Financing” side event alongside the 2026 World Bank Group/IMF Annual Meetings at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center. The event will bring together faith-based organisations, development finance institutions and other relevant partners to explore the potential of faith-inspired capital and partnerships to contribute to sustainable development. The side event will provide a valuable opportunity to connect PaRD’s expertise and network with the wider development-finance community, raise the visibility of faith actors as development partners, and identify concrete avenues for future collaboration.

The 2026 General Assembly and Annual Forum therefore marks a significant step in preparing PaRD for its next phase. It offers a chance to reflect on what has been achieved, agree on a common direction for the future and strengthen the partnerships that will carry PaRD into its second decade. At the same time, it marks a moment of shared responsibility: the continuation of PaRD will depend on members taking ownership of the partnership, investing in its future and collectively shaping an organisation that can continue to bring together faith actors and development partners to address global challenges.

Objectives of the Gathering

General Assembly of Members (10–11 October 2026)

The General Assembly will provide members with an opportunity to review the progress made over the past year and discuss the next steps in PaRD's organizational development. It aims to:

- review progress against the current strategy and work plan;
- discuss the transformation into an independent international organisation;
- strengthen member ownership of the transformation process;
- identify priorities for future collaboration; and
- agree on the next steps for PaRD's future development.

Annual Forum (12 October 2026)

The Annual Forum will bring together PaRD members and external partners to exchange knowledge and strengthen cooperation. Its objectives are to:

- discuss the potential of collective knowledge and AI to make insights on religion and global affairs more accessible, connected and actionable;
- strengthen collaboration between faith-based organisations and development actors, including development finance institutions; and
- share practical experiences, innovative approaches and scalable solutions that demonstrate the added value of religious actors in development.