

Minutes of the Advocacy Working Group (AWG) meeting

February 2nd, 2016 – 9:00 -10:15 am – WebEx video and audio Conference

Attendees

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|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Andrew Hassett | World Vision International |
| 2. Azza Karam | UNFPA - IATF-FBO |
| 3. Fred Nyabera | Arigatou International End Child Poverty |
| 4. Grove Harris | Temple of Understanding |
| 5. Husna Parvin Ahmad | Global One 2015 |
| 6. Imrana Umar | International Interfaith Peace Corps |
| 7. Joseph Cornelius Donnelly | Caritas Internationalis |
| 8. Liberato Bautista | United Methodist Church -GBCS |
| 9. Lynnaia Main | The Episcopal Church - Global Relations Mission |
| 10. Rebeca Rios-Kohn | Arigatou International End Child Poverty (proxy) |
| 11. Rudelmar Bueno de Faria | World Council of Churches (moderator) |
| 12. Ruth W. Messinger | American Jewish World Service |

Apologies

- Adam Taylor World Bank Group
- Gabriel Salguero National Latino Evangelical Coalition
- Sadhvi Bhagawati Global Interfaith WASH Alliance

No response to the call

- Cheryl Morrissey Pax Christi International; FFD NGO UN Committee
- Francisco Alvarez Catholic Church of Ecuador
- Genie Kagawa NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values
- Mohamed Ashmawey Islamic Relief Worldwide
- Victor Kazanjian United Religions International

Agenda

1. Update on the Steering Committee Meeting
2. Results of the survey
3. Work Plan for Advocacy
4. Any Other Business (AOB)

Update on the Steering Committee Meeting

Rudelmar (WCC) and Joe (Caritas) provided a **brief update** on the main issues and discussions during the second meeting of the Moral Imperative Steering Committee (SC). The major discussion points in the SC were around the update from each Working Group and how to **maximize synergy across** them. Some ideas raised were to encourage the Working Group leaders to work together to identify overlaps and interdependence. The World Bank team offered to receive the minutes from each WG meetings and share them with the other committees and SC until a communications platform is established.

The SC also discussed **criteria for country level engagement** and decided that this topic will be discussed during the next SC meeting based on a draft proposal that will be developed by the Collaboration Working Group. It was also discussed ideas for the creation of a communications platform, as it would be beneficial to have a new website, either through the Joint Learning Initiative (JLI) or similar network. It was decided that suggestions on domain name will be sent to the moderators of the SC meeting (Adam and Sadhvi). It will be collected more information on how

other websites work (e.g. PaRD). JLI will share the possible costs for hosting the website and the next step will be defined during next SC meeting. The website will also help in **expanding our FBO outreach**.

Ulrich from GIZ (Germany) provided general information on the launching of the **International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD)**. Meetings will take place in Berlin from 15-18 February this year, with more than 260 international and national participants. Members of the MI initiative (Azza, Jorn, Adam and Rudelmar) were invited to talk about the MI and the DUF process during the event.

Due to time constraints, the **World Humanitarian Summit** will be discussed in the next SC meeting. After the update, Azza requested to provide information on the current status of the events in the WHS (see Any Other Business session).

Results of the survey

Rudelmar presented the results of the survey to help the AWG members to define priorities and strategies to carry out its expected role. Based on the outcomes, the AWG members agreed with the following prioritization:

Priority objectives for advocacy work of the AWG for the next 6 months:

- Enable an environment for FBOs to be able to fulfill their varied roles in sustainable development and poverty alleviation (60% for the 1st and 2nd priorities)
- Leverage moral imperative as advocacy tool (60% for the 1st and 2nd priorities)

The **main role** of the AWG vis-à-vis the advocacy actions expected from the signatories of the moral imperative to end extreme poverty will be:

- Provide guidance to the signatories
- Define concepts, strategies (scopes and forms)

	Provide guidance to the signatories	Define concepts, strategies (scopes and forms)	Implement actions (mapping, tools, templates, etc.)	Total Respondents
Identify tools developed by FBOs in and for their work that are novel or innovative	92.31% 12	76.92% 10	30.77% 4	13
Map the country level on the entry points to strengthen FBO and religious voice in national policymaking	69.23% 9	53.85% 7	38.46% 5	13
Disseminate moral imperative among the faith community to raise awareness and foster multi-faith collaboration and joint action	61.54% 8	69.23% 9	38.46% 5	13
Create an advocacy and communications strategy to promote nondiscrimination focused on marginalized communities	61.54% 8	84.62% 11	30.77% 4	13
Identify the added value of FBO (approaches/strategies) tackling the same set of issues	76.92% 10	84.62% 11	30.77% 4	13

The majority of the survey respondents (61.54%) said that the AWG should **prioritize the SDGs where faith groups have particular contributions to make**, as oppose to define general strategies which may be applied to all SDGs, and/or focus only on SDG #1 - End Extreme Poverty. With this regard, the following SDG should be prioritized:

- ✓ SDG 1 - No Poverty (87.5%)
- ✓ SDG 2 - No Hunger (75%)
- ✓ SDG 3 - Good Health (75%)
- ✓ SDG 5 - Gender Equality (75%)
- ✓ SDG 16 - Peace and Justice (75%)

✓ SDG 10 - Reduced Inequalities (62.5%) Maybe

Post-factum: After the distribution of the minutes two of the AWG members expressed concern regarding the absence of Goal 6 - Water in the short list of prioritized SDGs, expressing that many faith based organizations are strongly working on this issue. This could be true for other SDGs as well. After exchange of emails between some of the AWG members, it was mention the need to include the interconnected nature of the goals and not to undercut the work of the whole set of goals. This discussion opened scope for further discussions on this topic, which will provide elements for strategies for engagement at national/regional actors. Discussion at the next AWG meeting will take place, also considering discussions in the SC on general strategies for the Working Groups.

Work Plan for Advocacy

Based on the results of the survey conducted by the AWG, the moderator asked what would be the best approach and strategy to prepare a work plan for the AWG. A lively discussion took place to **clarify issues** and also to **better understand the several challenges to put the framework for action into practice**, as well as the actions led by the AWG vis-à-vis the other two working groups and the SC.

It was recognized that the possible preferred actions of the AWG may be not in line with the approaches used by the other MI working groups. One example is related to work with FBOs/Governments at national level. While the AWG recognize that advocacy initiatives need to be taken by religions organizations and leaders at national level, it is not clear **who** at national level will be involved and **how** the MI working groups and SC will approach the national actors. Several ideas were ventilated in the discussions, but the **dilemma** is who should do/initiate the process.

The AWG moderator expressed his **concern** that practical work is taken too long since the MI framework for action was adopted in September 2015, and that we need to act soon if we want things happening on the ground and globally. There is the risk that we may lose momentum, including the intersection with other initiatives like the PaRD. Although members agreed with the need to action now, they also expressed the need that this process is done **collectively** and **consistently** with the work of the other two working groups. It was highlighted the importance to define the criteria for country engagement, which will be elaborated by the Collaboration Working Group.

Finally, the AWG members agreed that we need to **clarify the initiative and the expectations** as a whole, taken into account that the AWG has already agreed on the thematic areas, as well as approaches to be taken regarding the role of the AWG (see outcomes from survey). Therefore, the AWG want to **engage and work together with the SC and working groups to build and agree on criteria for country engagement**, as this will help to design strategies for the AWG work.

Additionally to the affirmation and commitment above, AWG members made suggestions for the preparation of an action plan:

1. Consider develop/compile an **Advocacy Package** to enhance partnerships around specific development areas. This Package would include communication tools.
2. To develop **moral arguments** from different faith traditions on specific issues contained in the SDG prioritized by the AWG (see Survey Outcomes);

Regarding the first action above, the AWG highlighted that is import to enhance partnerships around specific development areas we could compile, considering what a Package requires as input from

each on the AWG members. The work plan will include a timeline by which to complete the development of the Advocacy Package, which will be sync with the broader discussions at the SC level.

As to the second action, it was highlighted that we need to be aware that moral arguments may be different from country to country, even within the same religion tradition. Therefore, the proposal is to work on global moral arguments which will be serving as base for the national religious organizations.

Post-factum: On the proposal to develop moral arguments from different faith traditions on specific issues contained in the SDG prioritized by the AWG, Azza Karam recall that the AWG may not need to do this itself as one of the outcomes of the DUF (Donor-UN-FBO) Roundtables which was held in July of 2015 by the UN Inter-Agency Task Force, was precisely the need to develop a 'religious narrative' of the SDGs. This project was undertaken by the GIZ and the a book called "Voices from Religions on sustainable development", 160 pages 25 authors from around the world giving their point of view on Agenda 2030, will be launched in Berlin in the wee of February 15 2016.

Any Other Business (AOB)

Azza shared information on the World Humanitarian Summit which will take place on May 23-24 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey. She explained the changes in the management of the Summit by the WHS Secretariat (from outsourcing to own managed). The events at the WHS are classified in 3 categories (Governmental, non-governmental and special events), and all of them make part of the official program of the event. They will take place in form of plenaries, round tables, etc. The planned religion event falls into the category of special event. The UN Inter-agency Task Force for Engagement with FBOs put criteria and defined a list of selected partners to be nominated to attend the religion event. 150 participants (from 195 names proposed for FBOs) are expected to attend the event, but it is not guaranteed that all proposed partners will be invited.

The WHS Secretariat will draft what should be outcomes for the special events, which will last 2 hours. Jean Duff from the JLI and moderator of the Evidence Working Group is invited as advisor for the event.

Notes by Rudelmar de Faria on Feb 4, 2016 (Revision on February 8)