

RELIGION AND DEVELOPMENT

The Contribution of Faith-Based Organizations to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Argentina



Secretaría de
Culto
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto
República Argentina

Consejo Nacional
de Coordinación
de Políticas Sociales



Presidencia
de la Nación

creas
Miembro de **actalanza**



Front photograph: top left: ADRA Argentina - Bruno Grappa / bottom right: ADRA Argentina - Joaquín Weiss / bottom left: CREAS / top right: CREAS.

© Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo, 2019, Esmeralda 130, 13° Piso, (C1035ABD)
Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires, Argentina - www.ar.undp.org - Todos los derechos reservados.

It is prohibited to reproduce, transfer or store in a recovery system any part of this publication, in any form or by any means, whether electronic, mechanical, photocopied, recorded or otherwise, without prior authorization. The analysis and recommendations of the policies contained in this work do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Development Program, its Executive Board or its member states. The work is an independent publication commissioned by UNDO and is the result of the work of a team of professionals.

Total or partial reproduction is prohibited. All rights reserved.

Index

4 PROLOGUE

8 INTRODUCTION

13 CHAPTER 1 | RELIGION AND DEVELOPMENT

14 The relation between religion and development

18 Religions and International Organizations

21 2030 Agenda for sustainable development

22 From MDGs to SDGs

25 2030 Agenda in Argentina

26 Challenges for the future

27 CHAPTER 2 FBO'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE 2030 AGENDA IN ARGENTINA

28 FBOs contribution to SDGs

29 Methodology

30 Measurement of the FBOs contribution to the SDGs

34 Contribution to the SDGs targets

34 SDG 4: Education

37 SDG 8: Employment

38 SDG 10: Inequality

40 SDG 13: Climate Change

41 SDG 16: Peace and Justice

43 SDG 17: Alliances

44 Findings of the contribution of the FBOs to the SDGs

47 CHAPTER 3 | ROS AND FBOS PERSPECTIVES IN THE DEVELOPMENT FIELD

48 Methodology: mapping of actors and documents

49 Findings of the documents and actors mapping

Prologue

The implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) conveys the decision of the member states of the United Nations to take transformative actions for the world to walk firmly towards paths of sustainability. This agenda is guided by an ambitious principle: to free humanity from poverty and hardship so that “no one will be left behind”; whilst taking care of the planet, our common cause.

The 2030 Agenda urges us to foster inter-cultural understanding, tolerance and mutual respect. It encourages us to reflect on the need to redefine our values in the light of new national and international challenges, to think about the values we prioritize as a society; to elucidate our own behavior, our own ethics, understanding it also as our habits, traditions and ways of being.

The UN was created 70 years ago on the ashes of a devastating world war and it was inspired on the values of peace, dialogue and international cooperation. The UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights constitute the highest expressions of these values.

The 2030 Agenda presents us with a huge challenge and a big opportunity which we cannot afford to miss. In order to reach the SDGs, Governments have a very important role to play in the three basic dimensions of sustainable development and its intersections: economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection. Although it is clear that Governments alone will not reach the Goals unless they establish partnerships of active collaboration with broad sectors

of the society. The need to constitute such partnership is purposefully enunciated in SDG 17: “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development”.

UNDP recognizes the significant role that the non-governmental faith-based organizations (FBO) play to address humanitarian and development challenges. With a holistic approach based on the recognition of the dignity and the intrinsic value of each human being, FBOs bring the ethical and spiritual dimensions to the development table. They are actors that exercise their constructive influence and leadership in multiple levels and spaces.

In collaboration with the Argentine government, UNDP has done a great job with FBOs creating an innovative and inclusive partnership, which represents the most preponderant creeds of Argentina: Christianity, Judaism and Islam. This document presents information about the basis of action of the various standpoints of faith and offers metrics on the contribution of the faith-based organizations in Argentina to the SDGs.

We hope this becomes a valuable resource for FBOs staff, national and provincial governments, society in general, and humanitarian and development international organizations.

A lot has been achieved thus far through an intense collaboration between FBOs, the National Government and UNDP. This document is part of the results of such work, and we trust that it will become an instrument to strengthen this partnership for a sustainable human development.

René Mauricio Valdes

Resident Coordinator a.i. of the United Nations System and
UNDP Resident Representative in Argentina

Faith-based Organizations (FBO) and Religious Organizations (RO) play a fundamental role in sustainable development, as they have a significant presence and an important scope through humanitarian actions and social services, specially in communities in the rural and urban areas. In this perspective, Rabbi Adam Russell Taylor, leader of Faith Initiative of the World Bank group spoke during his participation in the religious leaders meeting of the Interreligious Regional Alliance for 2030 Agenda. The event took place in Buenos Aires in late March 2016. In fact, religious leadership has a key role in building peace where there is conflict or tension. It is also important that their voices continue to be raised and continue to influence the governments and the interested parts so they can keep the promises they made to attain sustainable development. FBOs as well as ROs establish a convergence with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but what represents an added value is that their actions are a concrete answer coming from their beliefs, their faiths and spirituality, and their values; before they respond to the SDGs. This means that OBFs and ROs have a distinctive commitment that links their actions and partnerships with a new development paradigm that reflects on the value of religions in a sustainable development which "leaves no one behind".

During the International Conference on "Religions and the Sustainable Development Goals", held in Vatican City from 7-9 March 2019, Reverend Dr. Martin Junge, Secretary General of the World Lutheran Federation, used a biblical parable to explain the christian perspective in the inaugural panel of his presentation of the perspectives of Abrahamic religions. The parable he used was about the shepherd who was taking care of 100 sheep, and one of them gets lost; He left behind the 99 in order to look for the lost one. After much searching, he eventually found it. (Gospels of Matthew 18:12-14). Dr. Martin Junge illustrates with this metaphor the direct connection between the 2030 Agenda and its motto of "no one will be left behind" with christians faith convictions and practices. He stated that the 2030 Agenda is "an important platform to stem the tide of the growing gaps between people in our world, a tide that stands in stark contradiction to the vision we share. (...) Our voice needs to be straightforward. A development

paradigm that operates on the basis of exclusion cannot be called development but is exploitation."

Her Excellency, Mrs. Amina Mohamed, Deputy Secretary General of the UN, during the Plenary session of the 3rd ACT Alliance General Assembly, held on 29th October 2018 in Uppsala, Sweden, had already mentioned it: "religious organizations and their leaders play a fundamental role in satisfying the needs of those left behind".

The Holy Father Pope Francis, addressing the attendees to the International Seminar about "Religions and Sustainable Development Goals" in March 2019, mentioned in his general audience his conclusion: "Dear brothers and sisters, today, after three and a half years since the adoption of the SDGs, we must be even more acutely aware of the importance of accelerating and adapting our actions in responding adequately to both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 49) - they are connected."

This publication is a clear testimony of the effective contribution that FBOs and ROs make in Argentina through their actions. Even though, in this first stage they congregate Abrahamic religious organizations: Judaism, Christianity and Islam; it would be expected that experiences from other FBOs as well as from other communities of different religions were incorporated in a second stage.

This publication refers to documents of different FBOs and ROs at a regional and international level, which invite us to analyze the convergence that exists between beliefs, faith and spirituality, and values and the SDGs. At the same time, the quantitative measurement instrument that FBOs and ROs have used to learn about their contributions through their actions in Argentina has been ratified. Both the description and the analysis of the documents of reference of the religious actors, as well as the measurement instrument can be used for other FBOs in the country or abroad with the proper adaptation and contextualization.

I would like to thank everybody involved in this publication, as it is a demonstration of the real contribution that FBOs and ROs make to the SDGs.

Humberto Martín Shikiya

Vice-president of CREAS-ACT Alliance
Regional Inter Religious Alliance for 2030 Agenda

In the final document of the resolution approved by the United Nations General Assembly “Transforming our world: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, held on 25th September 2015, we read:

“Billions of our citizens continue to live in poverty and deprived of a dignified life. Billions of our citizens continue to live in poverty and are denied a life of dignity. There are rising inequalities within and among countries. There are enormous disparities of opportunity, wealth and power. Gender inequality remains a key challenge. Unemployment, particularly youth unemployment, is a major concern. Global health threats, more frequent and intense natural disasters, spiraling conflict, violent extremism, terrorism and related humanitarian crises and forced displacement of people threaten to reverse much of the development progress made in recent decades. Natural resource depletion and adverse impacts of environmental degradation, including desertification, drought, land degradation, freshwater scarcity and loss of biodiversity, add to and exacerbate the list of challenges which humanity faces. Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time and its adverse impacts undermine the ability of all countries to achieve sustainable development”.

Notwithstanding the achieved progress during these almost four years, who can guarantee that the diagnosis has not remained the same and that the efforts mentioned in the Agenda do not need to be intensified? We are facing the need for substantial change, in the sense of fundamental changes, such as the way in which we produce and consume goods, the way in which we relate with other people, living beings and with the planet, as stated in the 2030 Agenda. In the same document we can read: “We acknowledge the role of the diverse private sector (...), and that of civil society organizations and philanthropic organizations in the implementation of the new Agenda.” (2030 Agenda, 41). Although not explicitly mentioned, this includes the special contribution of the Faith-based Organizations (FBO), which are addressed in this document with an ecumenical approach. We must remember the meaning of the word “ecumenism” that comes from the Greek “oikoumenikós”. The root of this word is *oikos* -home- and its original meaning is related to people living inside a house (“living together” would

be a close translation). In that sense, and by extension, it was applied to every inhabited part of Earth where people “live together” or “share a house”. Then, it is not a coincidence that “ecumenism”, “economy” and “ecology” share the same root “*oikos*” and, thus, we can affirm that these 3 human realities are interrelated and that they have an intrinsic relational dimension: all humanity living together, the administration of the goods we need for life, and the land we inhabit together.

These organizations based on “Abrahamic Religions” (also known as religions of the book): Judaism, Christianity and Islam are very lively in daily life. In fact, speaking of substantial changes, the Bible acknowledges the human being as a creation from the “*humus*”, the earth that shelters us and of which we are part; although it should also moves us “forward”. To transcend (“*trans*”: across and “*candere*”: climb) means to go from one place to another, crossing the limits that separate them. And, clearly, “religious transcendence”, as conveyed in this book, also implies to cross a limit, from a society where lots of people feel their dignity is not being respected to a more humane and just society, where the future of humanity and the planet is harmoniously included. Consequently, their contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals is double: from the specific actions to reach the goals and targets (as many organizations have shown) to the contribution of their own ethical values for a “transcendent” perspective of man.

The 2030 Agenda is challenging the development model, but it is also challenging the way FBOs think and act. It is a call for reflection and for global action encouraged by the motto “no one will be left behind”. I would like to thank the organizations connected to the FBOs for their motivation to bring us closer to a new reflection which manifest the words of Paul VI: “Blessed are these hard times for they force us to be saints”, a holiness in the here and now, a holiness which transforms us into active participants for development. As Pope Francis said in *Laudato Si'*: “These situations have caused our sister Earth, along with all the abandoned of our world, to cry out, pleading that we take another course”.

Once more, let me thank FBOs for this contribution.

Gabriela Agosto

Executive Secretary

Consejo de Coordinación Nacional de Políticas Sociales (CNPS)
Head of Government | Presidency of Argentina

The United Nations High-Level Political Forum in the General Assembly in New York was the setting for the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. It is a universal and transformative program with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and 169 targets which represent a universal call for the adoption of the measures to eradicate poverty, to protect the environment and to guarantee peace and prosperity for the entire world. The historical process of the World Goals negotiation involved the 193 member states of the UN, including our country: Argentina highlighted the need to give an equal treatment to all three dimensions of sustainable development (promoting equally strong actions in the economic, social and environmental dimensions), and to apply in a transversal way both gender equality and human rights perspectives. Likewise, we claim the importance of understanding the commitments on the means of implementing the Agenda, including the technology transfer to developing countries, in terms of their capabilities' development. Simultaneously, Argentina contributed to the negotiations that concluded in the creation of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, established as the regional mechanism to follow up and review the implementation of 2030 Agenda at a regional level.

From the start, the National Government has shown a deep commitment with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for a Sustainable Development. As it was emphasized in December 2015 when the National Public Administration established as a priority that all Ministries and National Bodies should work towards the design of long-term strategic plans.

In this context, the Secretary of Worship of the Nation enthusiastically celebrates the publication of a detailed and clarifying document. This information will allow the National, Provincial and Municipal

Governments to identify religious actors, who could potentially become strategic partners in development programs, considering they are already working in their corresponding spheres, and identifying possible articulation and cooperation spaces.

We acknowledge the important role that the religious communities and FBOs play at addressing different complex global challenges, highlighting that this document contributes to explaining the relation between religion and development, as well as advertising the 41 implemented actions by the 14 organizations that contribute to the SDGs. These organizations are: Cáritas Argentina, Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina (AMIA), Agencia Adventista de Desarrollo y Recursos Asistenciales (ADRA) Argentina, Instituto Islam para la Paz, United Religions Initiative (URI), Fundación Protestante Hora de Obrar, Comisión Episcopal de la Pastoral de Migrantes e Itinerantes, Ejército de Salvación, Fundación por el Desarrollo Comunitario San Andrés, Church World Service, Sumá Fraternidad (Movimiento de los Foculares), Servicio Evangélico de Diaconía (SEDI), Asociación Cultural y Espiritual de las Iglesias Reformadas de la Argentina y Centro Regional Ecuménico de Asesoría y Servicio – CREAS.

Finally, we would like to stress the words of our Chancellor, Mr. Jorge Faurie, at a high-level meeting about transition and cooperation towards sustainable development during the 2nd High-Level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40): "Global challenges require collective answers". On that note, we celebrate the publication of this document as it is a valued means by which the public sector, civil society and religious entities can broaden their dialogue, in order to move forward to a process of strategic and constructive collaboration to implement the 2030 Agenda, allowing us to find collective solutions to global problems.

Ambassador Claudia Russo Bernagozzi

Under-Secretary of Worship of Argentina
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship

Ambassador Alfredo Abriani

Secretary of Worship of Argentina
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship

INTRODUCTION

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations, announces 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Such goals promote an action plan based on three main principles of the Agenda: respect for human dignity, sustainability and the pledge that “no one be left behind”.

Based on these principles, the implementation of actions and the realization of the transformative changes on policies and practices necessary to achieve the SDGs are encased by an intrinsic ethical dimension. This dimension of the Agenda provides a frame of reference to maintain the long-term commitments and actions. The ethical approach refers to values, and values many times are rooted in faith and a religious dimension which has a significant role in most of the global population.

In recent years, different studies and international practices have recognized the role that religious communities and Faith-based Organizations (FBO) play when addressing complex global challenges as corollary of their work in sustainable development, in extreme poverty situations, in natural disasters, in peace-building processes and in areas of violence and conflict. In the last decade, some literature on “religion and development” has flourished and so have the alliances between international development organizations, governments, international cooperation agencies and religious communities, especially to reach the development goals.

Since the 2030 Agenda was approved, several investigations have been conducted on the ethical dimension of development and the religious perspectives, regarding the methodological foundations of how to build a new development model which would “leave no one behind”, whilst caring for the planet.

Goal 17 of the 2030 Agenda called “Partnerships for the Goals” mentions that “for a sustainable development agenda to be effective alliances between governments, the private sector and the civil society are required. These alliances are constructed on the base of principles and values, a shared vision, and common goals which set the people and the planet as their priority; and that are necessary at global, regional, national and local levels.

Civil societies and religious organizations play a significant role in developing proposals, monitoring progress and guaranteeing that all voices be heard and able to participate in the process. The challenge consists in creating a space for constructive and strategic collaboration to implement the 2030 Agenda. Religious identity, which is expressed by individual and groups choices, practices and activities, could be taken as a factor of analysis for development and provide innovative proposals for a sustainable and human development.

This report aims at expanding the dialogue and the analysis of the 2030 Agenda, and the various approaches of faith in relation to development. In addition, it offers a contribution on the theme of “development and religion” in Argentina, and encourages the formulation of questions, the identification of challenges and the analysis of viable paths towards articulated actions and strategic alliances.

Not trying to exhaust the topic in these pages, this document is offered as a tool for religious actors as well as for governmental entities and international organizations, which work in the field of development and international cooperation.

Two specific challenges lead its development:

1. Knowing the position that religions have about development and, specifically, about the 2030 Agenda. To that end, a map of religious actors was created, and documents and texts with relation to the addressed topics were analyzed;
2. The development of metrics and indicators to measure FBOs' contribution towards SDGs in Argentina.

Several individuals, entities and organizations have helped during its gestation. Gabriela Agosto, Executive Secretary of CNCPS; Humberto Shikiya, CREAS Vice-President; and René Mauricio Valdés, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System in Argentina, have inspired this initiative.

Special thanks are due to Paola Bohorquez, Gabriela Catterberg and María Eugenia Di Paola from UNDP Argentina for their continuous support and technical collaboration; to Graciana Argiro, from UNDP Argentina, for the translation of this report from Spanish to English; to José Oscar Henao for the creation of the metrics and the data organization; to Irene Kerner, in the graphic facilitation of the workshop. David Bianco (Moquo), responsible for the reports design; Martín Felipe Castagnet, for text editing and correction proofreading.; Laura Chacón, responsible for communication.

A special appreciation for the documents and actors assessment to Lucía Maureliz, from Alianza de Iglesias Reformadas y Protestantes de América Latina (AIPRAL); to Zacarías Abuchanab, Fundación Islam para la Paz; Alejandro Kontos, Iglesia Ortodoxa Griega; and to Rabbi Jonás Shalom, Congreso Judío Latinoamericano (CJL).

We are especially grateful to the religious organizations and faith-based organizations for responding generously to the call for participation in this process, and for providing the necessary information to measure their work's contribution to development: Cáritas Argentina, Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina (AMIA), Agencia Adventista de Desarrollo y Recursos Asistenciales (ADRA) Argentina, Instituto Islam para la Paz, United Religions Initiative (URI), Fundación Protestante Hora de Obrar, Comisión Episcopal de la Pastoral de Migrantes e Itinerantes, Ejército de Salvación, Fundación por el Desarrollo Comunitario San Andrés, Church World Service, Sumá Fraternidad (Movimiento de los Focolares), Servicio Evangélico de Diaconía (SEDI), Asociación Cultural y Espiritual de las Iglesias Reformadas de la Argentina and Centro Regional Ecuménico de Asesoría y Servicio – CREAS. We would also like to thank Luis Di Pietro from the Consejo Nacional de Coordinación de Políticas Sociales (CNPS) and the Ambassador Claudia Elisabeth Russo Bernagozzi, Under-Secretary of the Secretary of Worship of the Nation for accompanying this process.

Chapters 1 and 3 answer to the first proposed challenge: knowing the relation between the spheres of “religion” and “development”, as well as the religious perspectives on development, and specifically about the 2030 Agenda.

In this way, the first chapter begins with an introduction on the relation between religion and development, and provides a synthesized theoretical framework, in which key processes and concepts are identified to achieve a better understanding. This chapter mentions the debates that created the different approaches to the relation between religion, ethics and development; and the facts and progresses in each sphere that have molded new relation dynamics, like among religious actors and international organizations. Thus, it is offered as an introductory guide to analyze the inter-relations between religion and development. Then, there is a presentation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, lessons learned from the Millennium Development Goals, and a mention to the prior consultation process in which different religious actors and faith-based organizations have participated, as well as the National Adaptation Plan for Argentina.

The second chapter addresses the second proposed challenge: to develop a metric and some indicators to measure the FBOs' contribution to the SDG in Argentina, and it explains the used methodology. Then, the results of the collected data from FBOs are exposed in accordance with the answers regarding their specific contribution to SDG 4, 8, 10, 13 and 16. This prioritization was established at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, a United Nations platform to follow-up the 2030 Agenda.

The third chapter "Religious Communities and Faith-based Organizations' perspectives on the field of development" introduces the perspectives of the religious actors and FBOs that substantiate their work in terms of development, and its possible correlation with the 2030 Agenda. This document focusses only in the "Abrahamic traditions": Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

There is a short introduction to such traditions from the analysis of several texts and documents with a focus on development, and a presentation of some organizations that work on the field of development. The mapping of documents and actors is quite descriptive and does not address all the existing documents and actors, since that objective would surpass the intended result of this report. Different documents, organizations, and ecumenical and inter-religious organizations are used as reference.

Lastly, at the end of each chapter there is a set of conclusions about the findings obtained during this process and a collection of future challenges.

It is important to mention that this process has as an immediate precedent in the "Faith-based Organizations and 2030 Agenda Encounter for dialogue", held on 1° September 2017 at the Ministry of Social Development of Argentina. On the one hand, the meeting proposed to open a participation and communication Channel to analyze the SDGs and to reflect about development from faith perspectives; it was also stated that the 2030 Agenda has an ethical component that determines a course of action. On the other hand, the 2030 Agenda was introduced together with the multidimensional concept of development, and special attention was given to the motto "no one be left behind" as it requires a strategic effort from all actors. The present Faith-based Organizations presented their work in the field of development and identified the correlations between their actions and the SDGs.

We hope that the process that lead to the creation of this document inspires new reflections on the Ethics of development, the relations between religion and development, and that it becomes the starting point for new cooperation and articulation dynamics so that "no one be left behind".

Elena López Ruf

Coordinator of "Religion and Development"
CREAS - ACT Alliance

What is this report about?



Provides key concepts and processes in relation to

- ✓ Religion and Development
- ✓ Sustainable Development
- ✓ Religious Actors for Human Development
- ✓ Capabilities Approach
- ✓ Sustainability

Develops a metric and indicators which measure the contribution of the Faith-based Organizations (FBO) in Argentina to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

- ✓ **6** SDGs, selected by the High-Level Political Forum about Sustainable Development to be analyzed in 2019
- ✓ **38** Targets
- ✓ **7** Survey Instruments

Identifies findings made and future challenges

Presents religious perspectives concerning development and the 2030 Agenda

- ✓ **3** Religious traditions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam

Creates a map of religious actors who work in the fields of development and international cooperation

Offers analysis of religious texts and documents that make reference to Sustainable Development

Reveals ecumenical and inter-religious cooperation initiatives for a Sustainable Development



**International
Organizations**

**Religious actors and
Faith-based
Organizations (FBO)**

**International
Networks for
Development**

**The report
is a tool
for**



**Civil Society
Organizations
(CSO)**

**Governmental
Bodies**



Who participated in its elaboration?

- UNDP and CREAS.
- The National Council for the Coordination of Social Politics (CNPS) and the Secretary of Worship of the Nation provided close support.
- 14 FBOs from Argentina: Cáritas Argentina, Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina (AMIA), Agencia Adventista de Desarrollo y Recursos Asistenciales (ADRA) Argentina, Instituto Islam para la Paz, United Religions Initiative (URI), Fundación Protestante Hora de Obrar, Comisión Episcopal de la Pastoral de Migrantes e Itinerantes, Ejército de Salvación, Fundación por el Desarrollo Comunitario San Andrés, Church World Service, Sumá Fraternidad (Movimiento de los Focolares), Servicio Evangélico de Diaconía (SEDI), Asociación Cultural y Espiritual de las Iglesias Reformadas de la Argentina y Centro Regional Ecueménico de Asesoría y Servicio – CREAS.
- 5 young Argentineans collaborated with the documents and actor's analysis from following institutions: Alianza de Iglesias Reformadas y Protestantes de América Latina (AIPRAL); Fundación Islam para la Paz; Iglesia Ortodoxa Griega; Congreso Judío Latinoamericano (CJL), Iglesia Católica.



Chapter

1

RELIGION AND DEVELOPMENT

THE RELATION BETWEEN RELIGION AND DEVELOPMENT

In the past twenty-five years, the interest on the relation between religion and development has grown exponentially. Thus, many investigations highlight that, not only in the speech but also in the practice of development, there is a change in the way in which religions are addressed and approached, acknowledging their role in terms of development.

Presently, a significant portion of development aid is channeled through initiatives of FBOs. Also, there has been an increase in the inter-religious initiatives in terms of international cooperation for the development of religious actors and FBOs². Therefore, religious organizations have become a strategic actor with regards to development.

For a long time, religion and development were completely separated spheres with no points of contact³. It was a novelty when, in 1980, the academic journal devoted to the investigation of development studies called *World Development* published a special edition entitled “Religion and Development”. Back then, religion was not a field of investigation in the framework of development studies⁴.

Economists Charles Wilber and Kenneth Jameson pointed out in their article “Religious Values and Social Limits to Development” that religion constitutes a framework that provides a set of rules to evaluate the legitimacy of the development process, a moral base of society that should not be ignored. “Successful development can occur only if the economic processes of growth and structural change correspond with the social limits, or guidance, determined in the moral base.” Thus, the expression “social limits” in the title makes reference to the need for “a development process guided by and in consonance with its moral and religious base and with the values of a country’s population. This may cause a redefinition of development which is broader than the economist’s (...) which do not discount the possibility and even desirability of growth but which suggest limits on that process that make it qualitatively different - and ultimately more successful.”⁵

Almost forty years after the publication of the special edition “Religion and Development” in the *World Development* journal, arises the notion that certain facts lead religion to be increasingly included in development studies:

1. The uninterrupted presence of religion in the lives and identities of the people and the society. Many studies show that more than 80% of the world population practices a faith.⁶ The number of believers keeps increasing not only in countries where there is a plurality of religions but also in countries with different levels of economic development.
2. Globalization is presenting us with an important religious plurality and a variety of beliefs. And, thanks to the significant processes of human mobility in the recent years, societies, and specially the big cities of the Global South, where most of the active people and young people reside, are being demographically transformed as a consequence of the arrival of migrants with different backgrounds, cultures and beliefs. This reality brings great challenges of integration and coexistence. As mentioned in the IOM report “The World Migration Report 2015”, “migrants, both internal and international, move to cities and urban areas, bring diversity and connect communities within and across borders to create new linkages among localities”⁷ (IOM, 2015).
3. The uninterrupted work of service, relief and aid provided by the religious organizations is being recognized. In that sense, Caritas Internationalis, World Vision, and Islamic Relief among many others conform the backbone of the international humanitarian system. Simultaneously, FBOs and religious communities make a significant and specific contribution to the development of the

communities worldwide. Traditionally, the biggest contributions of the ROs have been in the sphere of education⁸ and health⁹. They also work in humanitarian situations, disasters and risks, in situations of poverty and violence, and in human rights and advocacy campaigns, inter alia. Even though the services provided by the religious actors are significant, there is still a lack of systematization of the data of the services the FBOs provide.

4. FBOs' funds are estimated in 10 trillion dollars worldwide. That number turns them into institutional investment leaders, and, as a block, they are placed at least in the fourth biggest investment group in the world¹⁰.
5. Religions are known as transnational and global actors. In a world order that is globalized, interconnected, plural, multipolar and, at the same time, very fragmented, the religious organizations (ROs) became transnational actors (Haynes, 2013). They are able to get involved in a multi-track diplomacy, and to lead, from the bottom up until political levels, peace-building processes, mutual understanding practices and inter-religious and intercultural dialogues.
6. The relation between religion and politics is constantly updated. As stated by Professor Scott Appleby, religions play a complex role in modern political conflicts: they can be the source of inspiration for violent acts, as well as for peace-building and human development promotion processes (Appleby, 2000). Thus, it is important for the studies on development to be aware of the complex relation between states, religions and societies; and of how these relations can influence on the local development processes.
7. Religions have assumed to have a "prophetic voice". Inspired on social justice -a central teaching in most religious traditions-, they organize advocacy campaigns to raise awareness on certain matters, such as: the civil rights movement in the United States, in the field of human rights in unjust systems; pro-democracy movements; the Global Jubilee 2000 campaign; and currently, climate change campaigns and the "care for our common home" campaign.

Simultaneously, in the past thirty years, significant changes have been observed in development studies:

- The gradual understanding of poverty as a multidimensional phenomenon;
- The concept of human development depicted in UNDP's Human Development Report in 1990, and the presentation of the Human Development Index as an instrument of measurement and its posterior developments.
- The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and the Millennium Agenda with its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), moved forward on the concept of sustainable development and the awareness on the environmental and climate change dimensions, as well as on the measurement methodologies for the MDGs.
- The capabilities approach of the economist Amartya Sen and his following works, were one of the most significant contributions on the field, and were established as a framework from which debates on development policies can be conducted.

These advances in development studies around a concept of human development found a new milestone in 2015 when the General Assembly of the United Nations approved the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Since then the concept of development changed towards a multidimensional and holistic understanding, that interrelates the social, economical and environmental aspects of development.

Bibliography

¹ Thomas, 2005; Ver Clarke, 2007; Haynes, 2007; Marshall y Van Saanen, 2007; Rakodi , 2007; Deneluin y Bano, 2009; Lunn, 2009;

² As an example, PaRD, "International Partnership of Religion and Development", <http://www.partner-religion-development.org/about/vision-and-structure/>. In recent years, development agencies of governments and of international and multilateral organizations have consulted with FBOs, like in the case of the publication of the Department for International Development (DFID) of the British Government about the guidelines on development with FBOs. DFID and UK Aid "Faith Partnership Principles. Working effectively with faith groups to fight global poverty", 2012. Available in:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67352/faith-partnership-principles.pdf. Also, the European Union. See: Perchoch, Philippe, "The EU and faith-based organizations in development and humanitarian aid", European Parliamentary Research Service, Briefing, Nov. 2017 [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/608800/EPRS_BRI\(2017\)608800_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/608800/EPRS_BRI(2017)608800_EN.pdf)

³ Charles K. Wilber and Kenneth P. Jameson, "Religious values and social limits to development", "World Development", Vol. 8, P. 471. The authors point out that: 1. Religion is seen primarily in instrumental terms: how can it affect development and economic growth; 2. Religion as a social institution is seen as an impediment to development, unless it helps the masses obediently accept the leadership of an entrepreneurial elite; 3. Religion is seen as a private matter; 4. Religion and development as independent variables. Society can develop without a religious-moral basis. This is not a determining factor for development and growth. Until recently, these were the dominant conceptions of religion.

⁴ Ver Beek (2002) searched articles from the three best known academic publications on development from 1982 until 1998, and scarcely found any reference on role that religion played in development.

⁵ Charles K. Wilber and Kenneth P. Jameson, "Religious Values and Social Limits to Development", World Development, vol. 8, pp. 472, 475-476.

⁶ Pew Forum Research Center, April 2017, "The Changing Global Religious Landscape Report", <http://www.pewforum.org/2017/04/05/the-changing-global-religious-landscape/>

⁷ IOM (2015), "World Migration Report 2015, Migrants and Cities, New partnerships to manage mobility" <https://www.iom.int/world-migration-report-2015>, Genève, International Organization of Migration

⁸ Religious traditions are estimated to carry out education centers and education networks at different levels, gathering up to 50% of the world-wide education system.

⁹ In Africa, for example, between 30% and 70% of the Health-care services are provided by religious actors. See: World Health Organization 2008, "Building From Common Foundations: The World Health Organization and Faith-Based Organizations in Primary Healthcare", Cap. 2.; 2008; see also: Aylward, Lynn y Marshall Katherine, "Health in Africa and Faith Communities: What Do We Need to Know?", Policy Brief, No. 9, June 2013; Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Georgetown University.

¹⁰ "Confessions own approximately 8% of the inhabitable Surface of the Earth, and approximately 5% of all commercial forests. They run, manage and fund nearly half the schools in the world, and 64% in sub-Saharan Africa, according to UNICEF. They own more radio and television stations among them than the whole EU, and publish more books, newspapers and magazines than any other network. They also own approximately 10% of the world financial investment. In ACR, "The Zug Guidelines to faith consistent investing. FAITH IN FINANCE. What do you do with wealth to make a better planet?", P. 5 y 6; October 2017 http://www.arcworld.org/downloads/ZUG_Guidelines_to_FCI_2017.pdf

Religions in the global scene

The study of the influence of religions on international relations has been consolidated, in the past years, as a field of study. Specially, after the Twin Towers Terrorist attack in 2001, many studies and publications reinforced a negative view of the religious factor as they saw it as a cause for international instability in the global scene, mainly from the association of terrorist acts with religious fundamentalisms. However, academics, diplomats and government entities have begun to work on different initiatives and research in which they recognize the importance of taking into account the religious factor, no longer as a merely cultural fact, but structural in the analysis of politics and international security, in the analysis of violent conflicts, in the design of peacebuilding processes, in the practice of a preventive diplomacy (Ferrara, 2012), in the design of public policies of understanding and intercultural dialogue, as well as, in the design of a foreign policy for the protection of religious freedom.

This phenomenon, a newly acquired visibility and public presence of religions, and the new interest it has drawn recently, is known as “Resurgence of Religion” (Thomas, 2005) or “The Return of Religion” (Hatzppoulos and Petito, 2003) to the global and public scene in different levels – local, national and international-.

“The Resurgence of Religion” challenges two central aspects of Modern Europe. First, the assumption that humanity, by becoming increasingly modern, would in time become more secular, causing the disappearing of religions. Second, the assumption that religion and politics would have radically different spheres, where religious convictions would limit themselves to a private sphere, without interfering in the public and political sphere. Scott Thomas, from the University of Bath, refers to these premises with the following expression: “Westphalia Presumption”.

Religions and International organizations

In the last twenty years, inter-institutional initiatives in matters of international cooperation for development with religious actors and FBOs have multiplied. Many development agencies, both national and international and the United Nations, among others, have formalized cooperation agreements with religious actors to work jointly, specially in terms of development and the 2030 Agenda. Incidentally, religious actors, like many other actors of the civil society, interact in a variety of forums and different instances of participation.

From multiple initiatives, three processes will be mentioned: the “UN Inter-Agency Task Force – Engaging Religion and Faith-Based Actors for Sustainable Development” (UN-IATF-FBO) and the United Nations system inner channels; the International Partnership of Religion and Development (PARD)” and the “Development Dialogue on Values and Ethics” from the World Bank.

1. United Nations

The United Nations have a wide-ranging history of partnership and commitment with FBOs and religious leaders. Azza Karam¹¹ notes that inside one UN agency there are many different working experiences with religious actors and FBOs. Accordingly, the approach from the United Nations towards the partners vary widely from UN agency to UN agency. For example, it is highlighted that most United Nations development agencies and most humanitarian actors are relatively more conscious of the value and potential of such associations. Thus, particularly UNFPA, since the 70's, has become the main agency with whom partnerships with FBOs have emerged. They have carried out many joint initiatives and it has been the channel that has incorporated the concerns of religious actors within the United Nations. UNFPA has published many documents that explore the role of religion and of culture, and it was the first member of the UN system to perform a “mapping” of its own commitments with FBOs, focusing in the period 2000-2007. This inspired other agencies inside the United Nations to embark in a similar mapping to assess the scope of their works with FBOs. On another note, most UN agencies started showing their interest in partnerships with FBOs by the end of 1990 and beginning of 2000. The main fields of action were the promotion, attention and provision of services by the World Trade Organization (WTO), UNAIDS, UNEP, UNICEF and the World Bank. Also, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) have recently begun to investigate the potential and promote the importance of partnering with FBOs.

UN Inter-Agency Task Force – Engaging Religion and Faith-Based Actors for Sustainable Development¹²: In June 2010, directors of many development agencies of the UN approved the official creation of the “UN Inter-Agency Task Force – Engaging Religion and Faith-Based Actors for Sustainable Development”, led by Dr. Azza Karam. Its purpose is to perform as a consulting mechanism inside the United Nations¹³ to lead dialogues on politics and to call faith-based organizations to face shared challenges in terms of humanitarian assistance and development. Recently, this body has worked on the incorporation of religious actors in the post-2015 processes and is currently involving them with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development¹⁴. FBOs' round table of this group turned into the nucleus of PaRD, created in 2016.

2. **PARD - “International Partnership of Religion and Development”**¹⁵, is a platform created in 2016 by development aid agencies from more than 8 governments, 8 inter-governmental organizations, more than 70 FBOs and religious organisations (ROs), and civil society organizations which are actively working on the field of development and humanitarian aid. It acknowledges the roles of its members in the attainment of the 2030 Agenda and builds coordination and knowledge networks as well as it bolsters initiatives that can contribute with the consolidation of an inclusive and

effective agenda on the field of religion and development. The initiative is funded by the Federal Ministry of Economic and Development Cooperation of the German Government (BMZ) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

3. **World Bank**, under the presidency of James D. Wolfensohn (1995-2005) two initiatives were created in relation with FBOs. In 1998, together with Lord Carey, then Archbishop of Canterbury, they jointly promoted the creation of the World Faith Development Dialogue (WFDD), with the purpose of enabling a dialogue about the relation between religion and development, and its consideration in the design of development policy programs. Two years later, in 2000, Wolfensohn created a small unit inside the World Bank called "Development Dialogue on Values and Ethics" (DDVE) whose purpose was to contribute to the analytical work, capacity-building, and the dialogue on topics such as values and Ethics. For more than ten years, under the leadership of Katherine Marshall, the DDVE was an articulatory area in the intersection religion and development. Marshall indicated that the main reason to partner with FBOs consists in the positive role that religion can play in the fight against poverty, and she added that the secular and religious spheres -traditionally seen as separate domains- can join forces to achieve common goals, such as a poverty reduction¹⁶. In 2015, religious leaders, FBOs and World Bank officials, reflected their commitment in a joint declaration: "To eradicate extreme poverty: a moral and spiritual imperative"¹⁷.

Literature

¹¹ Karam, Azza; "Religion And Development Post-2015 Report Of A Consultation Among Donor Organizations, United Nations Development Agencies And Faith-Based Organizations

¹² Also known as "UN Inter-agency Task Force on Engaging Faith-Based Actors for Sustainable Development".

¹³ Lead by UNFPA/FNUAP and constituted by the following United Nations Agencies: UNDP (United Nations Development Program); UNAOC (United Nations Alliance of Civilizations); UNESCO; UNICEF; UNHCR (United Nations High-Commissioner for Refugees); United Nations Volunteers; WHO (World Health Organization); UNAIDS; UNWOMEN; WFP (World Food Program); UNEP (United Nations Environmental Program); UN-Habitat; World Bank; the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee; UN DESA (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs); UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide and Responsible to Protect; DPI (UN Department of Public Information);

¹⁴ UN-IATF- FBOs – (2018) "Engaging Religion And Faith-Based Actors On Agenda 2030/The Sdgs 2017" Annual Report Of The United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force On Engaging Faith-Based Actors For Sustainable Development <https://jilfcl.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Annual-Report-IATF-on-Religion-and-Development-Jan-18.pdf>

¹⁵ <http://www.partner-religion-development.org/about/vision-and-structure/>.

¹⁶ Marshall, Katherine, June 2005, "Faith and Development: Rethinking Development Debates", World Bank <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/PARTNERS/EXTDEVDIALOGUE/0,,contentMDK:20478626~menuPK:64192472~pagePK:64192523~piPK:64192458~theSitePK:537298,00.html> (Ultimo acceso: 03 de Noviembre 2018)

¹⁷ Declaration: "To eradicate extreme poverty: a moral and spiritual imperative". <https://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/es/la-fe-el-grupo-banco-mundial-y-el-fin-de-la-pobreza> (Last Access: 03 November 2018)

Modernity and religion: from the secularist thesis to post-secularism

The secularist thesis coined in modern times stated that the process of development and modernization of societies would be marked by a secularization process of the society, and therefore, for the “disappearing” of religions. Thus, the premise remained: “Being modern means being secular, and in consequence, being religious means not to be completely modern” (Casanova, 2010).

The German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, one of the most renowned contemporaneous representatives of rational tradition and political secularism, claimed that our societies have become “post-secular” in two ways: firstly, in terms of their predicaments, our societies are experiencing a change of consciousness by noticing the continuous resilience of religions in the public sphere; and, secondly, in a regulatory sense, modern societies need to develop a new post-secular sensitivity that integrates religion as a source of public rationality in order to “address important ethical and political matters” (Ferrari and Petito, 2013).

In the framework of development studies and in the practice of international cooperation for development, it was affirmed that religions were considered as “obstacles to the achievement of development goals” (Rakodi, 2007;4).

This perception would have created certain challenges in the mutual understanding between the “religious sphere” and the “secular sphere”.

Therefore, many reports (e.g. UNFPA’s report called “Religion and Development post-2015”, built on the consultations with donors, United Nations Development Agencies and FBOs) have recommended the creation and promotion of initiatives for dialogue and training on the history and dynamics of religion for a better understanding and a mutual cooperation. In addition, it becomes necessary to train the religious actors in terms of development. The report “Realizing the Faith Dividend: Religion, Gender, Peace and Security in Agenda 2030”, carried out by UNFPA and DIGNI in 2015, points to the need that every actor performing in the development field should know and learn three fundamental languages: Human Rights language, religions language, and local language; otherwise, valued actors could get lost in development.

2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The United Nations General Assembly, in 2015, approved the 2030 Agenda which proposes a new transformative paradigm of development policies focused on sustainability. Development is no longer understood as only economic growth; and sustainability, involved in a harmonious relation between economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection, becomes a sine qua non condition for genuine development. Since then, many investigations on the ethical dimension of development and the religious perspectives -in terms of the methodological basis on how to build a new development model so that “no one be left behind”, whilst securing our planet- have been conducted.

That same year, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change was adopted by the COP21, as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for the Financing for Development, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, which in conjunction with the 2030 Agenda propose a twist to the development style and a more integral and holistic vision. The implementation costs demand for a great mobilization of financial resources from both the public and private sectors, as well as changes in their financing, organization and allocation. A process that should be complemented by good practices of cooperation and global governance.

The financial system also plays a vital role in this process as it becomes crucial to benefit from its instrumental potential in the transition of the global economic. There is a need to align the financial system to the Sustainable Development Agenda. There have already been certain efforts in that sense. UNEP has initiated the “Inquiry into the Design of a Sustainable Financial System”, in January 2014, to generate policies that result in radical changes in the effectiveness of the financial system to mobilize financial resources towards a sustainable and inclusive economy.

The 2030 Agenda is the new development agenda of the United Nations and contains 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets to be accomplished by 2030. They reflect in a practical way what the United Nations understands by sustainable development. Because of its universal nature, having been adopted by and for all countries, it invites all actors to create strategic alliances to work jointly and effectively in the face of global challenges.

Likewise, it implies an unavoidable necessity: to have more and better information, for which it is a requirement to develop new measurement methods and multidimensional development indexes. In order to move towards the SDGs, it is a must to have reliable, timely and accessible information, which can be used to create new indicators and indexes that can measure base lines and development gaps. These measurements would facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of projects and programs, and thus would account for the progress in the achievement of goals and targets, used to feed the formulation of policies based, increasingly, on empirical evidence.

It is also highlighted that development requires a good governance -especially in terms of the quality of the public institutions and access to justice-, the strengthening of the alliances and the mobilization of necessary resources to implement the Agenda. In this context, civil society and the faith-based organizations, as a part of it, can play a significant role in the implementation, adoption and acceleration of the 2030 Agenda.

From MDGs to SDGs

At the 2000 Millennium Summit, The United Nations General Assembly declared that it was unacceptable to enter a new millennium with extreme poverty's scandal affecting billions of people. The world leaders agreed on eight Millennium Development Goals to join forces, so that the right to development was a reality for all. In the fifteen years of implementation of the MDGs, great accomplishments were achieved: there are less people living in extreme poverty, more girls and boys attending primary school, a lot more people have access to clean water, to a better nutrition, essential medication and basic medical care.

However, progress in different goals and in different countries has been uneven. The MDGs focused on national averages, but not on what happened with respect to specific groups within a country. The most marginalized are often the ones that less progress. Factors such as inequality between men and women, disability, ethnicity and geographic location are determining factors of exclusion. Even when the objective of halving the number of people who subsisted with less than 1 U\$D a day by 2015 was achieved, the spirit of this first goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger was not accomplished. In addition, millions of people living in extreme poverty are now more vulnerable than ever to the impacts of climate change and environmental deterioration. Simultaneously, in many cases, the effort of years of development has vanished from one moment to the other due to conflicts or natural disasters.

Since 2011, the international community began to reflect on what had to be done, once the MDGs deadline was over. A consultation process was initiated which included international organizations, governments, academia, the private sector, religious actors and the civil society. Thus, instances of participation in governmental processes were opened, through advocacy aimed at governments, continental bodies and the UN. In this way, the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda were formulated with contributions from all these actors, even though the final decisions were made by national governments, at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015.

The new SDGs aim to address the roots of poverty, inequality within and among countries, climate change and environmental degradation, lack of peace and justice.

Important lessons have been learned since the Millennium Summit. The SDGs represent important changes compared to the MDGs:

- **Universality**

The SDGs are universal, which means that they are applied in an equitable manner to all countries, with ambitious goals for both rich and poor nations. They can be used to advocate for a more equitable development based on fighting the fundamental causes of poverty and sustainable development.

The MDGs focused on poverty in developing countries and most of the goals defined actions in low-income countries. Only MDG 7, on environmental sustainability, and MDG 8, on global cooperation, held rich countries accountable for the actions. From the lessons learned from that experience, SDGs are universally adopted.

- **Sustainable and integral development**

Sustainable development includes social, economic, environmental and spiritual dimensions. The SDGs aim at balancing the three dimensions, which constitutes the first effort the UN has carried out to integrate this approach into such a wide-ranging initiative. MDGs focused largely on important issues of social development – such as poverty, health and education- but excluded, to a large extent, the economic and environmental aspects.

- **No one be left behind**

The pledge that “no one will be left behind” is a fundamental aspect of the SDGs.

One of the main central challenges of the Agenda refers to the scandalous inequality gaps. Globalization and the growth of some developing economies, especially those of Asia, have promoted a significant reduction in the income gap between countries. However, not everyone has benefited equally from globalization. Piketty (2014), Stiglitz (2015) and Atkinson (2015), among others, have documented with their studies that in the last decades there has been an important increase in global inequality. Despite the economic growth, shown in the World Inequality Report (2017), in many countries income distribution inequality has increased. At the same time, Oxfam International diagnosis (2017) highlights the concern about the concentration of income and wealth by noting that 8 people in the world concentrate the same wealth as 3.6 million people (half the humanity).

Inequality negatively impacts the development of peoples, erodes social cohesion and corrodes the democratic system. This is especially evident in the Latin American and the Caribbean region, the most unequal region of the world. In which, according to INTAL's report Latinbarómetro (2016), while 25% of the inhabitants of our region cannot guarantee daily access to food, paradoxically, 23% of that universe owns a smartphone.

- **Participation**

The SDGs formulation process was much more inclusive as there were national dialogues and thematic consultations, in which a lot of people from all around the world participated. Each and every member state has agreed to implement them (193 countries). It is understood that this strong sense of appropriation should be an effective force for change in the next few years. The SDGs are a useful advocacy tool for civil society and religious communities to work together with the government in order to achieve sustainable development for their citizens.

Many religious actors have committed and participated in the configuration of the development policies in the wide negotiation process both within the UN and through the largest civil society consultation ever held. This was possible through the website www.worldwewant2015.org, and it was documented that more than seven million people participated in the survey until the end of 2014. During the consultation process and the implementation phase, the UN has made an effort to involve the civil society actors, including the religious organizations. The “UN Inter-Agency Task Force – Engaging Religion and Faith-Based Actors for Sustainable Development” (UN-IATF-FBO) plays a leading role in this commitment.

The SDGs consultation process began after the Rio+20 Conference in 2012, where the new narrative of sustainable development at a global level was rebuilt. Governments, civil society

and private sector have been increasingly participating in the adoption of approaches and methods aimed at the implementation of the goals. For example, a number of civil society actors, including religious actors, participate in the annual meetings of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, as well as in the process of the Voluntary National Reviews (VNR).

The governments are also conducting national consultations to decide the national indicators for the SDGs and are implementing initiatives to collect relevant data to measure development and monitor progress.





2030 Agenda in Argentina

Argentina, by subscribing to the 2030 Agenda, has committed to its implementation and to the establishment of a systematic progress follow-up and analysis process towards the achievement of the SDGs during the next fourteen years.

President Mauricio Macri, when undertaking the management of the country, ratified the National Council for Coordination of Social Policies (CNCPS) as focal point and responsible for the coordination and articulation of all Public Ministries to implement the adaptation process of the goals in the national context. He also entrusted the CNCPS with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development follow-up, and with the articulation with other governmental and non-governmental actors for the adoption of this Agenda. Argentina, in the adaptation to its national context, considered the indivisibility, integrity and mainstreaming of the 2030 Agenda.

On this basis, it included the 17 SDGs and selected the priority targets according to the aspirational objective to eradicate poverty and to the national priorities. This work was carried out by the CNCPS between December 2015 and March 2016. During those two years, an intense work was done with the adaptation of the targets to the national context, with the selection of follow-up indicators and with the creation of the corresponding technical datasheets.

A first outcome of this work was the Voluntary National Review that Argentina presented at the UN High-Level Political Forum in July 2017. The presentation of this review established the starting point for the SDGs follow-up process carried out by the Interinstitutional National Commission, based on the consolidated monitoring framework and the publication of the Voluntary Reviews and Country Reports.

CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE

In accordance with the findings made from this research about the contribution of religious actors and FBOs to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, a fruitful collaboration agenda in the area of Sustainable Development is visualized.

Such collaboration could be deployed in the following fields:

1. In the strengthening of new international cooperation paradigms for development:
 - a. FBOs have created a development aid system whose sustained practice over the years can offer fruitful lessons to contribute to the consolidation of a new development cooperation system that is no longer focused only on National States and official agencies on development aid;
 - b. Since the world religious population is located in the global south, new cooperation relations between different FBOs located in that region could be projected and strengthened. This in turn could strengthen the South-South cooperation network;
 - c. At the same time, given that many FBOs that for historical reasons are in northern countries and their development programs are implemented in the global south, new relation practices for triangular cooperation could be conceived.
2. In deepening the debate about the concept of Development based on inter-religious dialogue and cooperation.
3. In the commitment and the capacity of joint and inter-religious response to provide the essential services of humanitarian assistance, accompaniment to victims, and in long-term development programs.
4. FBOs can make known and collaborate in the consolidation of the 2030 Agenda in their local religious communities.
5. FBOs and religious actors position themselves as observers and guardians of the fulfillment and implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Consequently, they claim and carry out advocacy campaigns towards National States and international organizations so, with their leadership, they can promote their effective compliance, implementation and accountability.
6. In the creation and consolidation of a impact indicators system for FBOs.
7. In the promotion and development of a culture that measures the results and scope of the FBOs' programs and actions, as well as becoming of a culture of accountability.
8. In the tracking of the SDGs at the municipal level, due to their greater presence in the field.
9. In the contextualization of the SDGs, through a language adaptation, and in reference to cultural elements of that community.
10. At the "Faith in Finance" conference, organized by The Alliance of Religions for Conservation (ARC), held in Zug, in November 2017, guidelines were presented for how to invest in an ethical manner and in line with faith in the environment and sustainable development. From that commitment, a new challenge arises: the adaptation of those guidelines at a local and national level.

Chapter 2

FBO'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE 2030 AGENDA IN ARGENTINA

FBOS CONTRIBUTION TO SDGS

FBOs, in their capacity of active players in the promotion of development, identified different actions of their organizations that they consider as contributing, at different levels, to the SDGs identified by the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) for 2019.

- 14 FBO participated in the survey, with almost a total national presence.
- 41 collected actions.

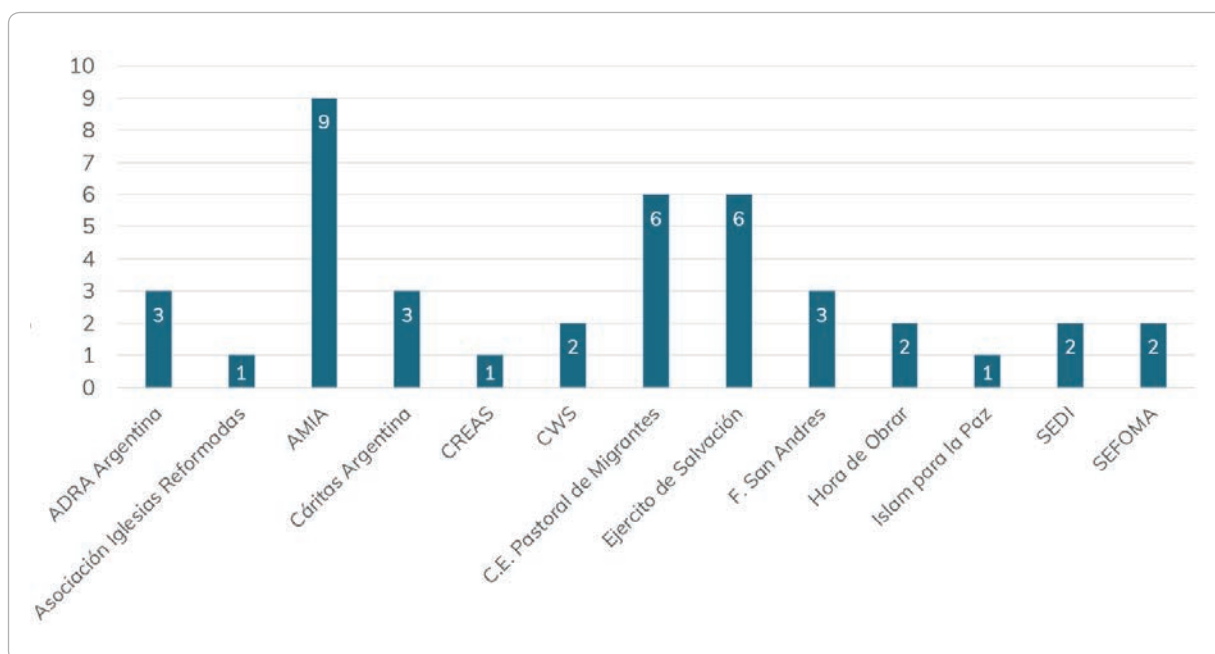


Chart 1. Amount of actions per FBO.
Data: PNUD-CREAS.

- 6 SDGs selected by the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development to be analyzed in 2019
- 38 analyzed targets
- 7 Survey Instruments:
 - An instrument to define the organization;
 - An instrument to define the action;
 - Five instruments per prioritized SDG: SDG 4; SDG 8; SDG 10; SDG 13; SDG 16.

METHODOLOGY

In order to measure FBOs contribution to SDGs in Argentina, the following were considered:

- The goals and indicators defined by the National Government in the “2018 Country Report – Sustainable Development Goals”,
- The “National Report on Human Development 2017”¹⁸
- The goals selected by the High-Level Political Forum for 2019.

High-Level Political Forum On Sustainable Development



The UN High-Level Political Forum is a central platform for follow-up and revision of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. It fosters the acceleration of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at a global level, and it serves as a global forum providing political leadership, guidance on the achievement of the SDGs through the exchange of experiences, including success stories in the field; as well as recommendations to strengthen the implementation, follow-up and revision of the SDGs. On this last function, the Forum fosters accountability and encourages the exchange of best practices and international cooperation.

Every July, this platform -under the sponsorship of ECOSOC (the Economic and Social Council)- brings together different national delegations, international leaders, technicians, development cooperation organizations and sustainable development specialists. In this framework, countries also submit the Voluntary National Review (VNR), as part of their follow-up and revision mechanisms.

The scheduled topic for the 2019 HLPF is to “Empower people and guarantee their inclusion and equality”¹⁹. The following SDGs were prioritized:

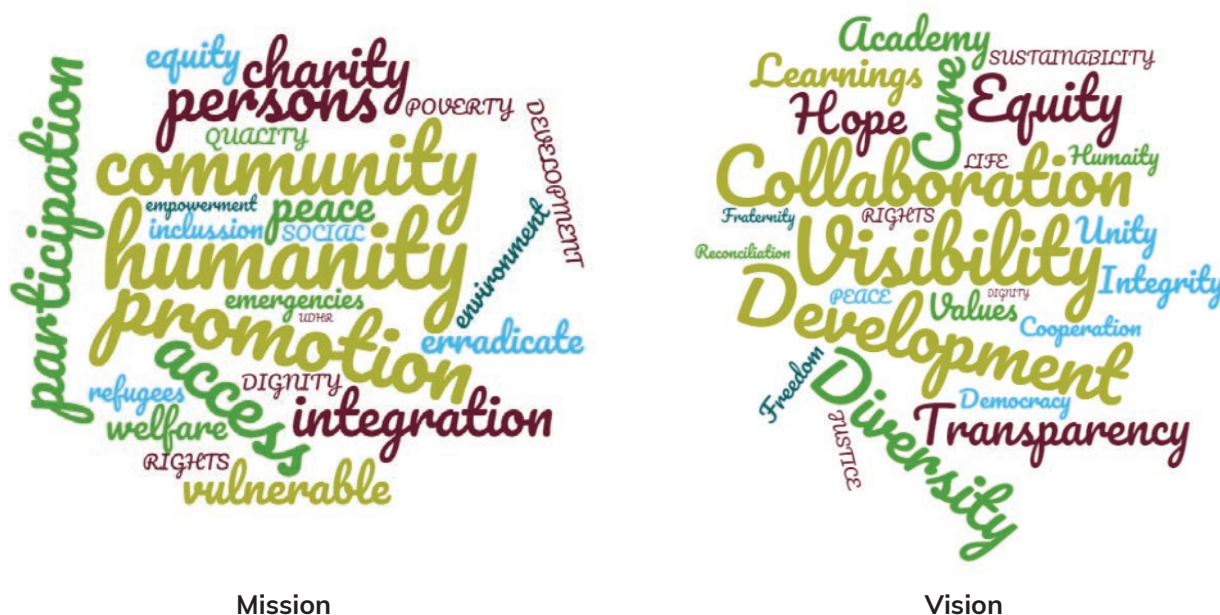


¹⁸ This report was consulted on 10 July 2018. Website: <http://www.odsargentina.gob.ar> y http://www.ar.undp.org/content/argentina/es/home/library/human_development/INDH2017/

¹⁹ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2019>

MEASUREMENT OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF FBOS TO SDGS

The first instrument that the BFOs responded to was designed to identify the mission and vision of their organizations.

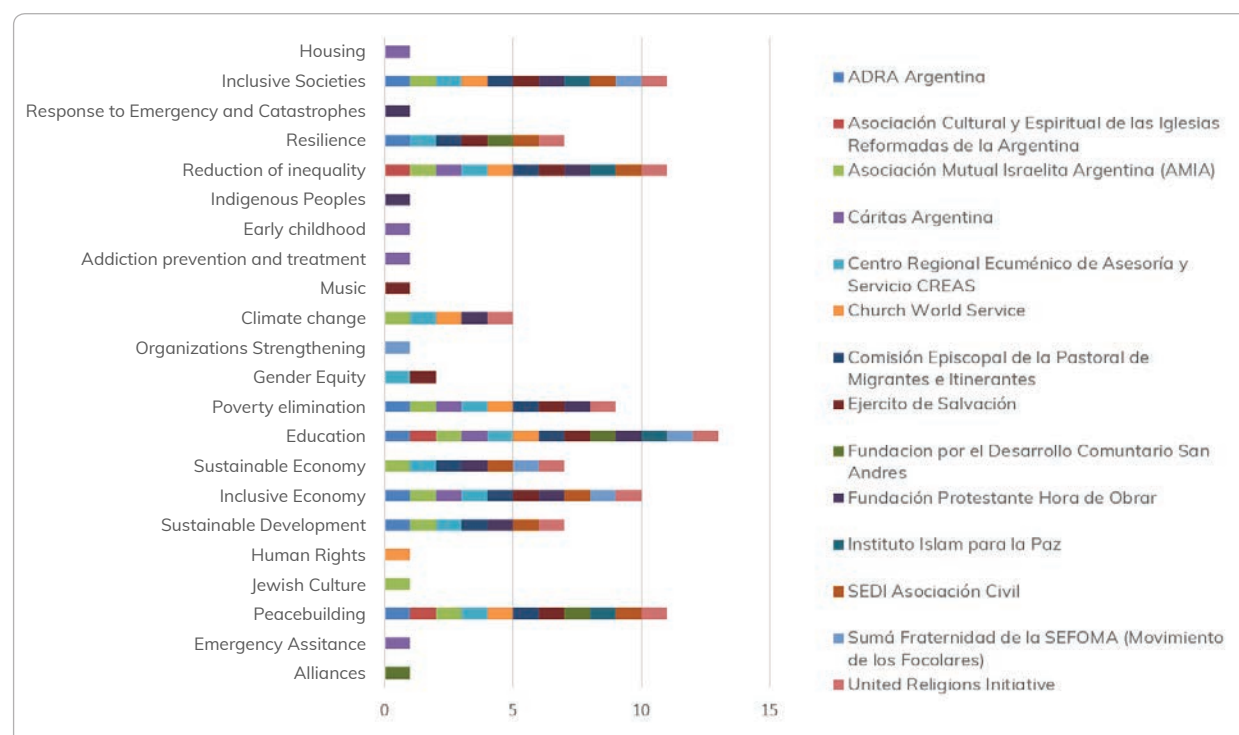


Picture 1. Mission and vision of BFOs and their contribution to SDGs.
Information: Technical Instrument.

It can be observed from the obtained answers that:

- 100% of FBOs contribute to SDGs through the implementation of programs and projects.
- 50 % of FBOs participate in articulation networks.
- 42,8% make their contribution through advocacy actions and public and private inter-institutional management.

The most relevant and recognized thematic focusses for sustainable development for BFOs are:



Picture 2. FBOs actions by thematic focus of Sustainable Development.
Data: UNDP-CREAS.

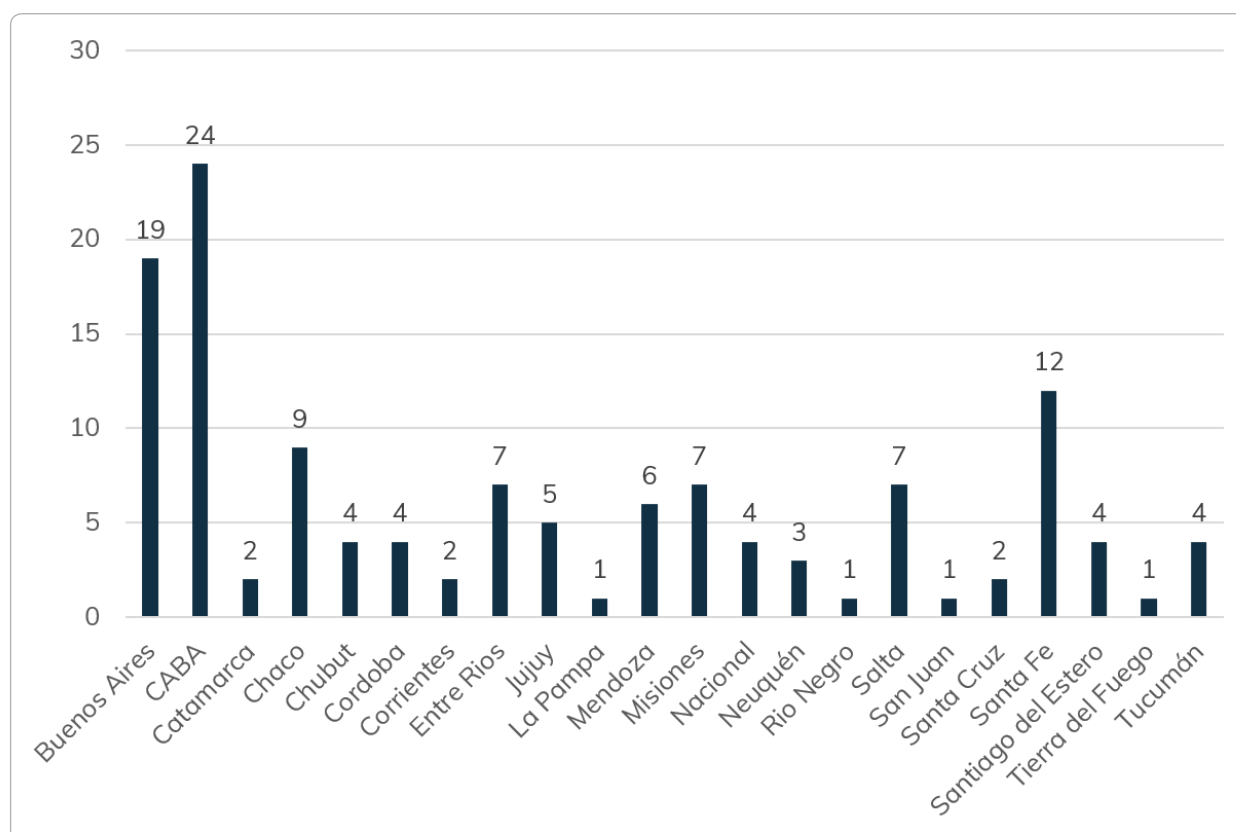
Knowledge of the 2030 Agenda:

- 100 % of FBOs are aware of the Agenda,
- 92,8% of FBOs boards of directors are aware of SDGs,
- 78,5% of the Operative areas of FBOs are aware of SDGs,
- 35,7% of the FBOs Administration and Accounting areas are aware of SDGs.

Areas of participation of the FBOs in the 2030 Agenda:

- 85,7% of these organizations participated in spaces, scenarios and meetings for the implementation of the SDGs,
- 33% at the local level (municipal), 17% at the regional, national e international level;
- 17% at a national and international level,
- 17% at international level,
- 8% at local, regional and international level, and
- 8% at regional and national level.

It is noted that FBOs contribute to the 6 selected SDGs through **41 actions, implemented in 78 cities and 21 provinces.**



Picture 3. Number of executed actions per province.
Data: UNDP-CREAS.




In terms of the manner of implementation of the actions:

- 78% of the actions contribute to the SDGs with on the field participation actions through the implementation of Programs and Projects,
- 20% of the actions contribute through both categories (advocacy and field participation),
- And only 2 % consider they contribute through institutional advocacy actions.

Target population of actions

Through the implementation of the 41 identified actions, the 14 FBOs that participated in this study serve a total of:

- 710.474 people.
- 1.300 communities²⁰.
- 30.000 families.
- 600 organizations.

	Boys and Girls	209.644
	Adults	388.538
	Senior Adults	112.292
	Total	710.474²¹

Graphic 4. Population attended by FBO's actions.
Data: PNUD-CREAS.

In a hierarchical way, the picture shows how they are distributed according to sex and age. Population served by sex and age.



Picture 5. Data: PNUD-CREAS.

FBOs Funding Sources

To implement their actions, FBOs receive financing from:

- 63 % international FBOs
- 41 % private institutions
- 26 % municipal governments
- 23 % international cooperation (different from international FBOs)
- 19 % other NGOs
- 17 % National Governments
- 12 % Provincial Governments
- 7 % Government agencies from other countries

²⁰ For the purposes of this report, Family is understood as the group of people who share a house unit, related by an emotional and/or consanguineous bond, and are approximately 4 members. Communities are understood as a set of families located in the same territorial space, e.g. a neighborhood. Organizations are understood as the group of persons, families and/or communities that together develop a Project and/or entrepreneurship that provides an income or solutions to the specific problems of a community.

²¹ The total number of people served corresponds to the quantification performed by each FBO. However, from the obtained answers it follows that the population served could be higher than the one reported here. Also, this total could be higher, taking into account those actions aimed at families, communities and organizations, which can be individualized through the composition of each of these.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE SDGS' TARGETS

The following is an extract of the results based on the information filled out in the corresponding instruments, disaggregated by the corresponding SDG and target.



Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

From the survey, it appears that 27 of the 41 actions contribute to SDG 4, in 9 specific targets:

Target 4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

Target 4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.

Target 4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.

Target 4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

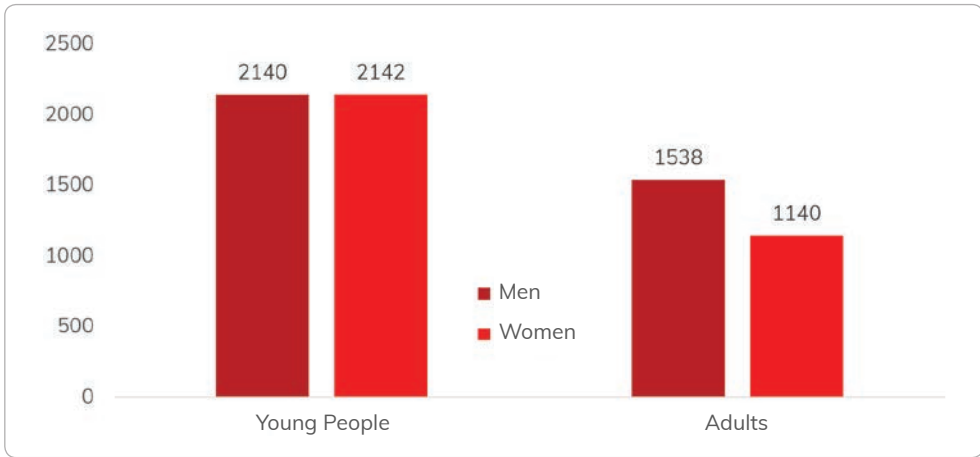
Target 4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.

Target 4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.

Target 4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

Target 4.b By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries.

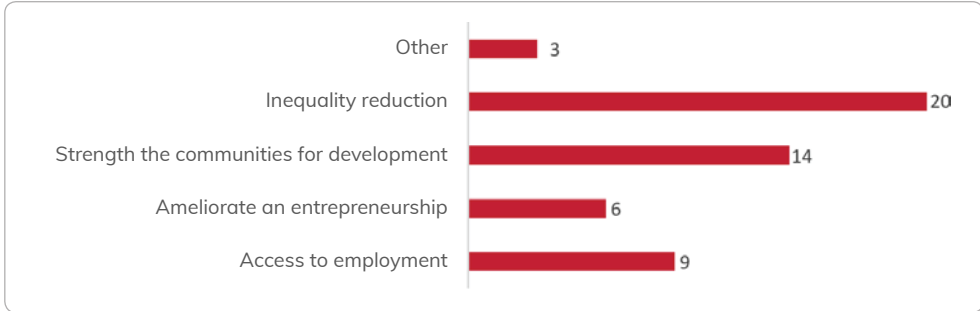
It is observed that 7,160 people access education processes, of which 59.8% are young people and 40.2% are adults.



Picture 6. Population served in actions containing education processes.
Data: UNDP-CREAS.

From the actions' implementation, FBOs consider that they contribute to:

- Access to employment 33,3% (9 out of 27 actions).
- Entrepreneurship improvement 22,2% (6 out of 27 actions).
- Strengthen communities for development (self-management processes): 51.8% (14 out of 27).
- Reduction of inequity and inequality: 74% (20 out of 27 actions).
- The remaining 11.11% (3 out of 27 actions) consider that they contribute to other options, such as prevention from trafficking, sexual and other types of exploitation of boys, girls, teenagers and adults; peace-building; and cultural promotion.



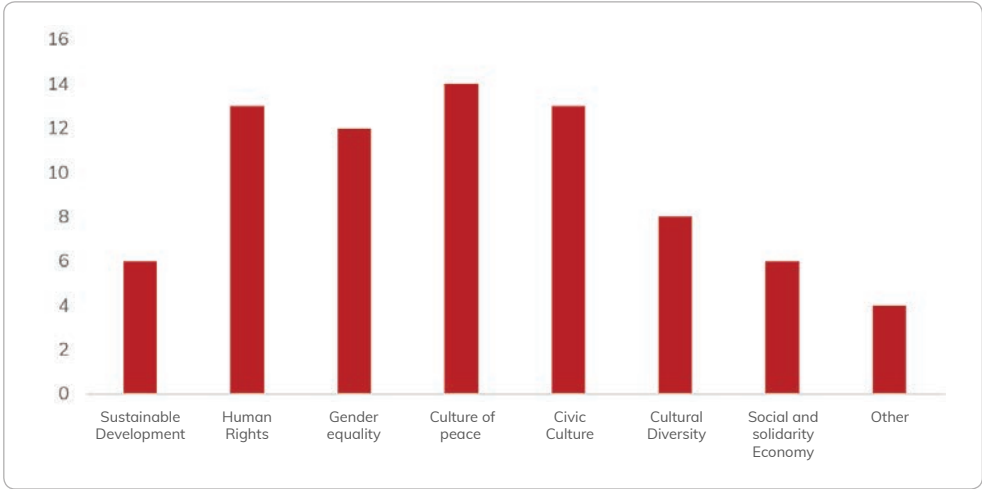
Picture 7. Contribution of the action through Education. Data: UNDP-CREAS.

The served population is located: 90% in urban areas and 10% in rural areas.

78% of people are in poverty; 90% of communities are in poverty; 63% of organizations are located in areas of vulnerability.

From the 27 actions, 8 include literacy processes; 3 include arithmetics training processes; and 4 include both processes.

Education Areas: (see picture):
Culture of Peace, followed by Culture of Citizenship, Human Rights, Gender Equality, Cultural Diversity, Sustainable Development, Solidarity Economy and other options.



Picture 8. Education Areas used by FBOs.
Data: UNDP-CREAS.

52% of the actions that contribute to SDG 4 implement their training processes in spaces with basic infrastructure (electricity, drinking water and sanitary facilities) and 48% of the actions incorporate infrastructure and material for people with disabilities.

19 % of the implemented actions allocates scholarships or assistance for the application to scholarships.

In the last 12 months, 2.252 scholarships were awarded to people living in poverty.



Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

In 20 of the 41 reported actions, FBOs contribute to SDG 8 in 7 specific targets.

Target 8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.

Target 8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

Target 8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.

Target 8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

Target 8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.

Target 8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.

Target 8.b By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization.

- 30% of the actions incorporate productive activities.
- 59 entrepreneurship are financed by FBOs in 2018.
- 15 of 59 entrepreneurship perform rural production and commercialization activities.
- 2386 jobs created.
- 7 entrepreneurship on sustainable tourism were financed by FBOs.



Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries.

28 out of 41 actions contribute to reducing inequality, in relation to 3 specific targets:

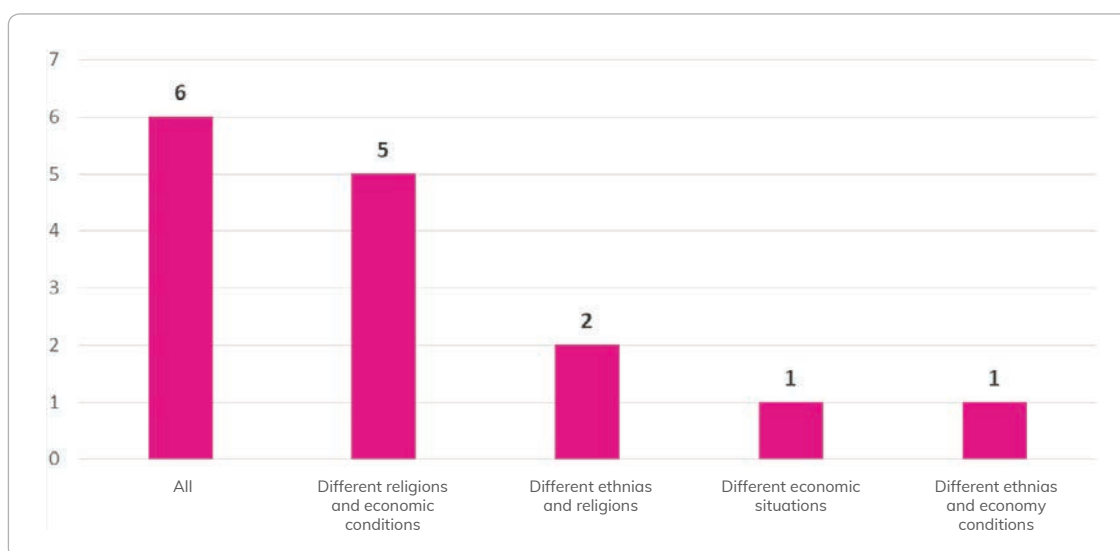
Target 10.1 By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 percent of the population at a rate higher than the national average.

Target 10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

Target 10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.

It is observed that:

15 of the 28 actions contribute to empower and foster social, economic and political inclusion of male and female beneficiaries regardless of their ethnicity, religion or economic conditions.



Picture 9. Data: UNDP-CREAS.

9 of the 28 actions that contribute to this goal transfer income to population in poverty. These transfers are sent directly to people or entrepreneurships.

- Regarding the actions that provide financing to entrepreneurships, FBOs affirm that they consist mainly in the promotion of economic activities that generate an income for the commercialization of a product. Some of the announced products are in the fields of serigraphy, bakery, perfumery, beekeeping products, plants (vegetables), clothing, among other.

100% of the actions reported by FBOs declare to foster Human Rights.

43% (12 out of 28 actions) of FBOs declare to promote activities to eliminate discriminatory practices inside the population, whether instigated by political, ethnic, religious or sexual reasons, among others. To that end, some of the activities performed by the FBOs show that:

- 42% carry them through participation in inter-institutional round tables;
- 8% through collective actions, and
- 50% carry out both of the beforementioned activities, in addition to the realization of mass campaigns on islamophobia, trainings and campaigns to raise the awareness of Human Rights and campaigns against stigmatization, among other.

21% of the actions include psychosocial care for victims of discrimination. In 2018, 414 people were helped.



Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

It was identified that 21% (9 out of 41) of the reported actions incorporate some process to assist the population affected by natural disasters and/or fight climate change in 2 specific targets:

Target 13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.

Target 13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning

It was noted that:

56% (5 out of 9 actions) has helped affected population.

33% (3 out of 9 actions) have incorporated risk reduction strategies for natural disasters.

2 actions assisted the affected population following the protocols designed in the risk reduction strategies.

Approximately, 17.500 people and 5652 families were assisted in the 2018 floods.

In 2018, emergency assistance for natural disaster causes was provided by FBOs at:

- the NEA region (March and April 2018).
- Reconquista, Province of Santa Fe (November 2018).
- Province of Salta (March 2018).
- Province of Chaco (January and March 2018).
- in Santa Fe, Province of Santa Fe (January 2018).

The main interlocutors of FBOs in case of natural disasters are:

- Municipal Authorities
- NGOs
- Fire-fighters
- Civil Defense
- In 3 actions there was articulation with:
 - Ministry of Social Development
 - Red Cross Argentina
 - Scouts Argentina
 - SMEs



Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

From the responses received, it is observed that 13 out of the 41 registered actions make some kind of contribution for the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies.

Target 16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.

Target 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

Target 16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.

Target 16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.

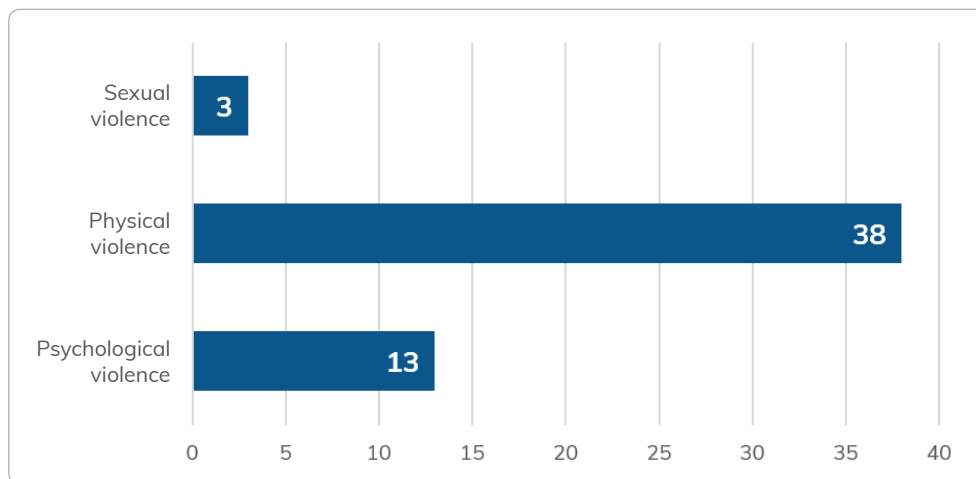
Target 16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration.

Target 16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.

Target 16.b.1 Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law.

It was noted that:

31% of the actions (4 out of 13) claim to have assisted victims of psychological, physical or sexual violence, in 2018. They assisted a total of 54 cases: 3 cases of sexual violence, 38 cases of physical violence and 13 cases of psychological violence.



Picture 10. Number of cases assisted by FBOs according the type of violence.
Data: UNDP-CREAS.

100% of the FBOs state that through their actions they promote the rule of law in their areas of intervention.

- 31% of their actions assist the migrant victim population
- 54% have accompanied the population to guarantee equitable Access to justice before the local authorities.
- 54% of their actions promote the rights and duties of migrants as citizens and residents; of families, communities and organizations.
- Approximately 497 cases of migrants and population in vulnerability situations have been attended and assisted in the access to their rights as citizens and residents.

54% of the reported actions have incorporated advocacy and community strengthening training processes. This training enables communities to identify needs and design proposals to present to the local authorities.

- 203 people have participated in the developed training processes.

In terms of the contribution of FBOs made towards the development of effective institutions, interinstitutional alliances have been fundamental.

46% of the actions assist management processes or of access to public services in communities and organization.

31% of the actions introduce assistance processes to guarantee that boys and girls under 5 years of age are registered with the civil authorities.

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

Target 17.16 Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries.

Target 17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.

The FBOs were consulted about the existence or not of interinstitutional alliances with public and private entities, whether local, national and international. They were also asked how the existence of those agreements guarantee greater effectiveness in the implementation of the action in the territory.

Through the information it was identified that:

- 41% of the actions have articulation processes with public institutions (there are agreements and joint implementation);
- 27% of the actions have articulation processes with private institutions;
- 32% of the actions have articulation processes with NGOs; and
- 15% of the actions have articulation processes with international organizations.

FINDINGS OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE FBOs TO THE SDGs

In this section, we will analyze the findings obtained from the collection of data from the 14 FBOs and their quantitative contribution to the SDGs.

For this, an analysis methodology based on Weaknesses, Opportunities, Strengths and Risks has been implemented.

STRENGTHS

- The acknowledgement of the served population for the assistance provided through different implemented action;
- Participation in local, provincial and, in some cases, national and international advocacy scenarios;
- The network of professional and non-professional volunteers committed to the implementation of the actions in the territory;
- Long-term permanence in the territory gives confidence to the local communities;
- The ability of FBOs to mobilize local resources to guarantee the Access to immediate need of the population.

WEAKNESSES

- There is a lack of available information from the FBOs' in terms of the quantification of the assisted population. In many cases, there was no disaggregated information by specific characteristics of the population, such as: sex, age groups, characteristics of family and housing unit, income levels, access to public services, among other information.
- Difficulties were observed in the handling of the measurement instruments. It was noted that there was no integration between the implementation of an action and the monitoring of the contribution to the SDGs and specific targets.
- It is evident that many of the FBOs do not have information on the direct and indirect impacts of their contributions. It is noted that they focus more on guaranteeing attention to their beneficiary population through its different projects than on developing impact measurement mechanisms. For example: on the number of jobs (formal and informal) created through the financing of entrepreneurship, etc.
- Difficulties were observed in guaranteeing public or private interinstitutional alliances to articulate the actions carried out in the territories.

OPPORTUNITIES

- FBOs have direct access in the territory, which allows them a closer contact with the population (individuals, families, communities and organizations), gives them direct knowledge of their problems, generates bonds of trust and gives them the possibility of involving the local population in the different stages of the projects, ensuring that the communities and local groups are promoters of their own development;
- The identification of religious actors in terms of disaster prevention and risk can help to establish a cooperation articulation network, at local and national levels, in emergency situations; and to channel the help received and effectively assist those in need.
- At the same time, FBOs which assist in risky fields could work with other organizations in the consolidation of action protocols for emergency situations.
- The improvement in the conversation with public and private institutions could strengthen and improve the provided assistance and, therefore, the assistance itself in the field.
- The continuity in the implementation of the methodology and the technical instruments, as well as the design of new instruments to grasp other SDGs' goals and targets.

RISKS

- The lack of interinstitutional relations in the short-term could put the continuity of the actions in the territory at risk.
- The continuity of many of the actions depend on the funding received, therefore, the need for FBOs to have different sources of funding to guarantee the continuity of their actions is warned.

Workshop “The Contribution of Religious Organizations to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”

On Thursday, November 8, 2018, UNDP Argentina, the National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies of Argentina (CNCPS) and the Ecumenical Regional Center for Advice and Service (CREAS), held the workshop “The Contribution of Religious Organizations to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, which included the participation of fifteen Faith-based Organizations (FBOs) with social and territorial work in the country.

At the opening of the workshop René Mauricio Valdés, United Nations System Coordinator and Resident Representative of UNDP Argentina, said: “We hope that FBOs help us undertake the ethical challenge that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda entails. We are very happy for this partnership between UNDP and the ROs as it will help in the analysis and identification of their contributions to sustainable development”.



The SDG Project Coordinator at the National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies (CNCPS), Luis Di Pietro, made a general presentation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and affirmed: “Faith-based Organizations have a calling and vocation to equity and solidarity. How could we not join them in this deep motivation demonstrated in their daily work to ensure that no one is left behind?”.



One of the objectives of this workshop was to present the document “The foundation of Faith-based Organizations actioning: their contribution to the 2030 Agenda”, presented by Dr. Elena López Ruf, coordinator of the Religion and Development Program at CREAS and of the present investigation.

Economist and consultant, Mr. José Oscar Henao, presented the methodology and instruments for

the quantitative measurement of the contributions made by the FBOs to the 2030 Agenda in Argentina. The objective is to measure both the impacts of the social actions of the FBOs and the best practices they carry out in the promotion of sustainable development and thus, make recommendations to public policy.

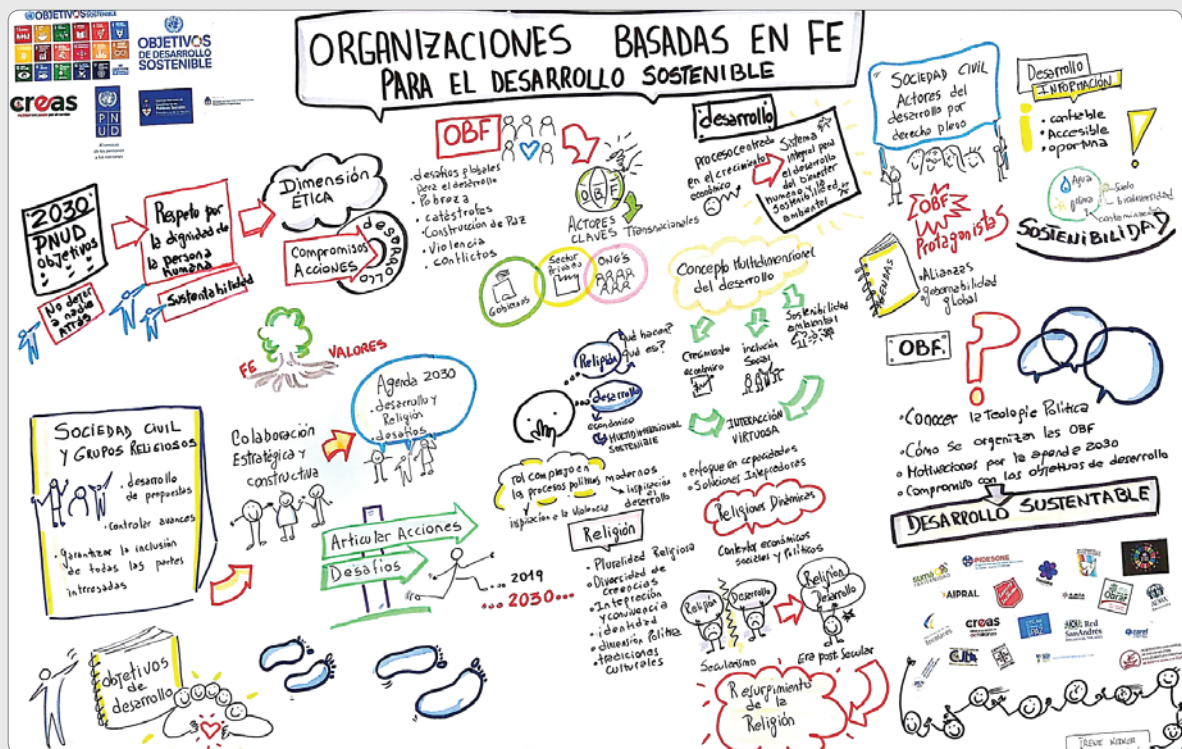
Claudia Russo Bernagozzi, Undersecretary of Worship of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, who accompanies this initiative, concluded the day expressing that “this measurement will help with the incorporation of a work tool that will help to visualize and dynamize the actions that FBOs daily work on regarding the SDGs”.



Participating organizations were invited to apply this tool in the workshop. The analyzed data in addition to the collected information will result in a quantitative report of their contributions to the 2030 Agenda.

The organizations that participated in the workshop were: Cáritas Argentina, Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina (AMIA), Comisión Justicia y Paz de la Pastoral Social de la Conferencia Episcopal Argentina (CEPAS-

CEA); Agencia Adventista de Desarrollo y Recursos Asistenciales (ADRA) Argentina, Instituto Islam para la Paz, United Religions Initiative (URI), Fundación Protestante Hora de Obrar, Comisión Episcopal de la Pastoral de Migrantes e Itinerantes, Ejército de Salvación, Fundación por el Desarrollo Comunitario San Andrés, Church World Service, Sumá Fraternidad (Movimiento de los Focolares), Servicio Evangélico de Diaconía (SEDI), Asociación Cultural y Espiritual de las Iglesias Reformadas de la Argentina y Centro Regional Ecuménico de Asesoría y Servicio – CREAS.



Chapter 3

PERSPECTIVES OF THE RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT FIELD

METHODOLOGY: MAPPING OF ACTORS AND DOCUMENTS

The objective of this section is to learn the religious perspectives on development and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and to contribute to enlarge the dialogue that is being carried out on this topic.

In this regard, two outcomes were obtained: first, the identification and analysis of documents and texts of Abrahamic traditions referred to development; second, the mapping of religious actors that work in sustainable development.

Many documents and texts from Jewish, Christian and Islamic traditions were analyzed to explain their actions in the sphere of development, and to identify the existence of meeting points or differences with the 2030 Agenda. Analyzed texts and documents belong to religious actors of Abrahamic traditions with regional, global and international scope. Organizations of national scope are not contemplated in this chapter. Special consideration was given to the concept of development referred to in the analyzed documents.

The mapping of religious actors analyzed the following characteristics: identification of mission and/or programs with sustainable development and environmental care; analysis of mission and vision of the organizations; the goals of some of their programs; positioning documents regarding topics related to the 2030 Agenda; and the consideration of whether they have strategic documentation which openly align their policies and programs to the SDGs.

At the same time, Ecumenical and inter-religious documentation, organizations and initiatives were studied.

This section, whose complete version can be found online, is structured as follows:

- Jewish Tradition
- Christianity
 - Orthodox Church
 - The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople
 - The Moscow Patriarchate
 - Catholic Church
 - Caritas Internationalis
 - Cáritas Latin America
 - The Anglican Communion
 - Evangelical and Protestant Churches
 - Interdenominational organizations and ecumenical initiatives
- Islam
- Inter-religious initiatives and organizations

The sections corresponding to each of the three traditions have a brief introductory review of their origin, their organization and their beliefs. This task was done in order to provide a historical-contextual framework, bearing in mind the complexity of the religious traditions and the risk of over simplification. Hence, this work is not intended to cover the rich and profound history of each of these religious traditions nor their theological issues, as they would clearly exceed the objective of this work. This same concept applies to the inter-religious initiatives and ecumenism sections.

²² In this document, the mapping was limited to the Abrahamic traditions and does not contemplate other traditions, such as Buddhism, Sikhism, Taoism or Hinduism.

FINDINGS OF THE DOCUMENTS AND ACTORS MAPPING

The analyzed documentation referred to the perspective of development that religious organizations have and to the religious actors working on the development field. At the end of the analysis, the following discoveries were identified and were advised to keep in mind in the sphere of cooperation for sustainable development:

1. In regards with international Organizations

- a. First, the emergence of a new narrative within the international organizations towards an approach to religious actors. This would allow the strengthening of alliances in matter of development cooperation, especially with religious actors.
- b. Second, most of the religious actors involved have a close relation with the United Nations, ECOSOC and have permanent offices in New York/Geneva. They are also active participants in the UN High-Level Political Forum.
- c. Third, the need for a “religious literacy” is noted, that is to say, a training in religious matters by the governmental entities and international organizations.

2. The way in which religious actors are organized:

At the time of conducting the research, specially in relation to the historical aspects and ways of organizing, it was important to take into account:

- a. The Knowledge of the political theology that each religious tradition has to which the respective religious actors belong. Political Scientist Daniel Philpott understands “political theology” as “the ideas religious groups have about the legitimacy of authority, which are based on doctrines adapted to the circumferences of time and place. These ideas determine one or another position towards the state”. This has direct consequences on our specific subject because it might have an impact on the adoption or not of a cooperative and proactive attitude with the states and international multilateral organizations, in the achievement of common purposes. In the analyzed cases, it is noted that there is a new narrative and attitude that overcomes the “religious” and “secular” distinction, which traditionally defined the relations between both areas, and moves forward an attitude of active cooperation in common challenges.
- b. The internal organization of the different religious traditions to which FBOs belong. Who is the authority and what role does this authority play in each specific community? For example, the Catholic Church has a hierarchical and monolithic structure: at the world level, the Pope; at the national level, Episcopal Conferences and bishops are representatives, spokespersons and speakers of the church in the relation with local, provincial and national governments. For their part, Orthodox Churches have the Patriarch as their supreme authority. Protestant Churches can be organized hierarchically or horizontally; simultaneously they can conform international institutions and federations, to maintain the congregational spirit of the Protestant Family, such as The Lutheran World Federation, The World Communion of Reformed Churches, among others. Conversely, the relations of the so-called “Diaspora Churches” with the national church of the country of origin must be taken into account. Different are the cases of Islam and Judaism that function in communities of horizontal organization, where the rabbi or imam, respectively, are religious referents but do not speak on behalf of Judaism or Islam.
- c. As a consequence of the last point, it is of outmost importance and need to know the different affiliations and intra-community differences to understand the internal relations and differences within the religious communities that are based on different interpretative traditions.

3. From the concept of development:

- a. From the analyzed documents a consonant voice emerges to address it in a holistic manner, based on the dignity of the human person and its relation with the creation.
- b. The condemnation of the religious actors to the unidimensional conception of development, understood only as economic process and growth, is explicit and firm.

- c. For the most part, they celebrate the change towards a multidimensional development approach that includes the economic, social and environmental dimensions.
- d. In many of the analyzed FBOs, it can be noted that a “theology of development” has been pursued, and is mainstreamed in the institutional organization, in the design of the institutional strategies, in their development programs, as well as in their theories of change.

4. Religious Actors and Sustainable Development:

- a. Many of the FBOs and Religious Actors involved participated in the consultation process prior to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. At the same time, they have expressed that the recommendations timely made during the process were collected and incorporated in the 2030 Agenda. Some of the recommendations were: the nature of universality, the centrality in the fight against inequality, the adoption of a multidimensional approach to development, among others.
- b. About the motivation in the adoption of the Agenda:
 - A common thread is noted: the motivation for the adoption by the FBOs is based on its ethical dimension, focused on the principles of respect for human dignity, sustainability and that “no one be left behind”.
 - However, it is necessary to make certain clarifications: although there is an agreement on the respect of human dignity, the source from which this dignity derives has a theological foundation (man as “imago Dei”). The pledge “no one be left behind” is based on a sense of justice. And the value of sustainability stands on the “care of the creation” y “inter-generational justice”.
 - At the same time, such affirmations have a strong theological, doctrinal and of faith foundation, related in turn to the mandate of service, charity and justice that they receive from their traditions.
- c. Some FBOs have already designed their strategic plans aligned to the SGDs, and they indicate which goals they are specifically committed to promote in their programs and organizations for a specific period of time.
- d. FBOs position themselves as leading actors of the Agenda to sensitize their members to it and encourage their implementation at different levels: local regional and international.
- e. At the same time, FBOs and religious actors also position themselves as observers and guardians of their compliance and implementation. Consequently, they report and carry out advocacy campaigns towards the national states and the international organizations so with their leadership encourage their effective compliance, implementation and accountability.
- f. FBOs and religious actors become a critical and prophetic voice in certain aspects of the Agenda where they warn of risks that could result in possible injustices, and in the strengthening of an exclusive globalization system. In this sense, they raise their “prophetic voice” to “take care” of development processes, proposing and suggesting alternative paths.

5. Interreligious Cooperation for Sustainable Development:

From the analyzed documents and the mapping of religious actors, there is an openness and a commitment to jointly intensify active collaboration in global challenges, particularly in reference to the care of the environment and the Earth, the “common house”, peace, modern slavery, poverty and inequalities; leading to new religious cooperation practices.

