



**Asia Pacific
Faith-Based Coalition**
for Sustainable Development

**Alianza
Interreligiosa**



TRILATERAL PARTNERSHIP OF REGIONAL FAITH-BASED NETWORKS FOR THE SDGs

HIGH-LEVEL MEETING AT THE “INSPIRING FAITH, HOPE AND TRANSFORMATIVE ACTION TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS TOWARDS THE SDGs” NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

The 2023 SDG Summit of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), under the auspices of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), will serve as a critical platform to review and follow up on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As the world grapples with multiple and interlocking crises, such as climate change, conflicts, poverty, inequality, and the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, it becomes imperative to respond with transformative and accelerated actions to achieve the SDGs by the target year 2030.

Eight years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs, most of the world's low-income countries (LICs) have been struggling to achieve even a single goal, including the two key targets: the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger by 2030. The Sustainable Development Report (SDR), released by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) on June 21, 2023, has singled that there is a risk that the gap in SDG outcomes between the LICs and the world's high-income countries (HICs) will be larger in 2030 than when the goals were universally agreed upon in 2015. Half way to 2030, the SDGs are seriously off track, with the poor and highly vulnerable countries suffering the most.

In the face of this scenario, there is a need to instill faith and hope and embrace moral and spiritual imperatives to advance the SDGs with a sense of purpose and resilience. Recognizing the power of interreligious cooperation, the Trilateral Partnership of Regional Faith-based Networks for the SDGs, from Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean, has emerged as a catalyst for the faith engagement with the 2030 Agenda. In line with this goal, the Trilateral Partnership is preparing for a high-level meeting to be held during the 2023 SDG Summit. The High-Level Meeting aims to leverage the expertise, experiences, and collective strength of these regional networks to inspire faith and hope, promote moral and spiritual imperatives, and provide high-level political advocacy for transformative action.

The 2023 SDG Summit paves the way for the highly anticipated Summit of the Future, scheduled for 2024, which holds the potential to breathe new life into the multilateral system so that it can deliver on the promises of the United Nations Charter and the 2030 Agenda. The Summit of the Future will be a once-in-a-generation opportunity to enhance cooperation on critical challenges and address gaps in global governance, reaffirm existing commitments including to the SDGs

and the United Nations Charter, and move towards a reinvigorated multilateral system that is better positioned to positively impact people's lives.

Objectives

- a) **Review and Reflection:** The High-Level Meeting will offer a space for the Trilateral Partnership to review and reflect on the progress made in implementing the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. It will also examine the challenges faced, lessons learned, and best practices collected from the regional faith-based networks and their member organizations, highlighting their unique contributions and approaches.
- b) **Accelerating Action:** It will explore strategies and initiatives that can accelerate the implementation of the SDGs in the face of multiple crises, through actionable recommendations for transformative actions that can be undertaken by religious communities and faith-based and interreligious organizations, including children, youth and women interfaith networks.
- c) **Strengthening Collaboration:** It will provide a platform for fostering collaboration and synergy among the Trilateral Partnership, regional faith-based networks for the SDGs and their member organizations, United Nations (UN) agencies, governments, and other stakeholders. Participants will identify opportunities for joint initiatives, knowledge sharing, and resource mobilization to enhance the impact of multi-religious cooperation on implementing the SDGs.
- d) **Inspiring Resilience, Faith and Hope:** It will affirm actions and processes that inspire resilience and empower religious individuals and communities, including children, youth and women, to take action towards the SDGs. It will recognize the need to nurture faith and hope and tap into moral and spiritual imperatives as sources of motivation and strength in the face of challenges. This objective includes providing a platform for sharing stories of resilience, highlighting the transformative power of faith and hope in driving SDGs efforts.

Format and Activities

- a) **Opening Remarks:** Eminent speakers, including representatives from the Trilateral Partnership, the United Nations, and relevant other organizations, will deliver opening remarks, underscoring the pressing need and significance of inspiring faith and hope and expediting efforts towards the realization of the 2030 Agenda.
- b) **Panel Discussions:** The High-Level Meeting will feature interactive panel discussions with representatives from the regional faith-based networks for the SDGs and their member organizations, and UN agencies, sharing their experiences, challenges, and success stories in implementing the SDGs. Panelists will explore innovative approaches, partnerships, and strategies that have proven effective in addressing crises and driving sustainable development.
- c) **Closing Remarks:** The concluding remarks will identify practical actions for transformative change and will summarize the key outcomes and recommendations from the High-Level Meeting, emphasizing the commitment of the Trilateral Partnership, regional faith-based networks for the SDGs and their member organizations, and other faith-based and interreligious organizations to inspire faith and hope, nurture resilience, and to accelerate action towards the 2030 Agenda.

- d) **Children and Youth's Visual Presentations:** Members from children and youth interfaith networks will be encouraged to create videos to share their perspectives on the SDGs, providing a powerful medium to convey their messages, experiences, and aspirations.
- e) **High-Level Political Advocacy:** A dedicated segment will focus on generating high-level political advocacy for transformative actions towards the SDGs. Participants will engage in discussions to formulate a statement to be presented to decision-makers and policymakers at the 2023 SDG Summit and beyond.
- f) **Networking Opportunities:** The High-Level Meeting will provide networking space, allowing participants to connect, share experiences, and explore potential collaborations for advancing the SDGs.

Expected Outcomes

- a) **Enhanced Awareness:** The High-Level Meeting will increase awareness among decision-makers, policymakers, and stakeholders about the critical role of religious communities and faith-based and interreligious organizations in achieving the SDGs and responding to multiple crises.
- b) **Actionable Recommendations:** It will produce actionable recommendations and high-level political guidance for transformative actions, providing a roadmap for stakeholders to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.
- c) **Strengthened Collaboration:** It will foster collaboration and partnerships between the Trilateral Partnership and other stakeholders, leading to joint initiatives and resource mobilization to achieve the SDGs.
- d) **Policy Influence:** It will contribute to the policy discourse at the 2030 SDG Summit, ensuring that the voices and perspectives of religious communities and faith-based and interreligious organizations are integrated into decision-making processes and actions for the SDGs.
- e) **Renewed Sense of Resilience, Faith and Hope:** By tapping into faith and hope, and moral and spiritual imperatives, it will ignite a collective motivation and strength, ultimately driving impactful and sustainable progress towards the SDGs.

Participants

The High-Level Meeting will bring together representatives from the Trilateral Partnership, regional faith-based networks for the SDGs and their member organizations, religious communities and other faith-based and interreligious organizations, UN agencies, governments, civil society organizations, academia, and other stakeholders engaged in SDGs initiatives.

Date, Time, and Venue

It is scheduled to be held on September 18, 2023, at 1:30-6:00 pm, during the 2023 SDG Summit, at the Baha'i International Community (BIC) New York Office. This shall be preceded by light lunch at 1:00 pm.

Organizing and Cooperating Organizations

The High-Level Meeting is jointly organized by the Trilateral Partnership and regional faith-based networks for the SDGs, from Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean, in cooperation with Religions for Peace, Arigatou International, the International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID), the International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD), ACT Alliance, World Vision International (WVI) and the Baha'i International Community (BIC).

The Trilateral Partnership brings together regional faith-based networks for the SDGs to build synergy for engagement and advocacy to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). It is composed by the Africa Faith Leaders Initiative on SDGs (AFLI), the Asia-Pacific Faith-Based Coalition for Sustainable Development (APFC), and the Interreligious Alliance for the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean.

It provides a platform to: a) Build internetwork synergy to enable effective engagement and stronger coordination to ensure that all voices of faith actors are heard in all stages of follow up and review of the SDGs implementation at the global, regional and national levels; b) Strengthen regional and national partnerships of religious communities and faith-based and interreligious organizations for greater impact in advocacy for the SDGs; and c) Reflect on their engagement in the HLPF and the Regional Forums for Sustainable Development.

The Trilateral Partnership acts to amplify the voices of individuals and communities left behind, and to bring together and strengthen the efforts of the regional faith-based networks for the SDGs in pursuit of a fairer, more equitable world where men, women, boys, and girls, regardless of nationality or ethnicity, religion, gender, language or other status, can experience life free from the adversities of deeply running poverty, injustice, inequality, and threats to the environment.

In cooperation with

