UNICEF Global Programme Guidance on Faith Engagement

FAITH AND POSITIVE CHANGE
FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Towards Achieving Positive Change for Children, Families, and Communities

Religions for Peace

Joint Learning Initiative on Faith & Local Communities
Strengthening Evidence-Based Faith Engagement

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UNICEF GLOBAL PROGRAMME GUIDANCE ON FAITH ENGAGEMENT

Towards Achieving Positive Change for Children, Families, and Communities

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

- AAP – Accountability to Affected Populations
- ACRL-RfP – African Council of Religious Leaders – Religions for Peace
- ANC – Antenatal Care
- C4D – Communications for Development
- CBOs – Community-based Organisations
- CE – Community Engagement
- CPDs – Country Programme Documents
- CDC – Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- CM – Child Marriage
- COs – Country Offices
- CRC – Convention on the Rights of the Child
- CSA – Civil Society Advocacy
- CSO – Civil Society Organisation
- CwC – Communicating with Communities
- ESARO – Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office
- FAMA – Facts, Association, Meaning and Action
- FBO – Faith-based Organisation
- FGM/C - Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
- FPCC – Faith and Positive Change for Children, Families, and Communities Initiative
- GBV – Gender-based Violence
- HQ – Headquarters
- IEC – Information, Education, and Communication
- IFB – Islamic Foundation of Bangladesh
- INGO – International Nongovernmental Organisation
- IPC – Interpersonal Communication
- IRC – Interreligious Council
- IRCK – Inter-Religious Council of Kenya
- COEPA – Interreligious Council of Panama
- IATF – Inter-Agency Task Force
- JLI – Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities
- JOC – Journey of Change
- KAP – Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices
- LLIN – Long-lasting Insecticidal Nets
- M&E – Monitoring and Evaluation
- MFACC – Multi-Faith Action Coordination Committee
- MoRA – Ministry of Religious Affairs
- MOU – Memorandum of Understanding
- NGO – Nongovernmental Organisation
- PFP – Private Fundraising and Partnership
- PCA – Programme Cooperation Agreement
- PSNs – Programme Strategy Notes
- RCCE – Risk Communication and Community Engagement
- RfP – Religions for Peace
- ROs – Regional Offices
- SBC – Social and Behaviour Change
- SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals
- TOC – Theory of Change
- TOR – Terms of Reference
- UN – United Nations
- UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund
- UNCRC – United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund
- USAID – United States Agency for International Development
- USIP – United States Institute of Peace
- VAC – Violence Against Children
- WHO – World Health Organisation

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PREFACE

UNICEF is a well-established and recognised leader in Community Engagement (CE) and Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) in global development and humanitarian work. UNICEF occupies key roles in global SBC initiatives with close to 400 full time staff working on this area in country programmes (COs), alongside partners across the world from governments to civil society organisations (CSO). Against this background, UNICEF's CE strategies recognise that faith actors are or can be central SBC catalysts. UNICEF is well-positioned to nurture strategic partnerships with faith influence within wider CE strategies and, by extension, to find convergence with other development partner strategies. In addition to strengthening its own approaches internally, UNICEF has the opportunity to demonstrate good practice in faith engagement, which can benefit both the wider UN system and the global development and humanitarian agenda.

Towards this end, UNICEF launched the Faith and Positive Change for Children, Families, and Communities (FPCC) Global Initiative in 2018. **The FPCC Initiative aims to re-evaluate and re-shape current approaches to faith engagement and to institute system-wide change for more strategic, equitable, effective, and sustainable ways of establishing and maintaining faith-based partnerships with faith actors towards improving the lives of children, families, and communities.** The FPCC Initiative seeks to move COs away from project-based engagements to re-think how UNICEF understands and supports partnerships with faith actors.

FPCC is an initiative with three main partners and multiple collaborating partners around the world. Alongside UNICEF, Religions for Peace (RfP) is the interfaith convening partner for the global initiative. It is the largest and most representative multi-religious coalition in the world. The Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities (JLI) is the knowledge partner for the initiative, working on gathering evidence about faith engagement in development. JLI also has a wide membership of FBOs and as an umbrella organization helps to bring the coordinated voice and inputs of FBOs into the partnership initiatives. UNICEF, RfP, and JLI each bring a powerful and unique set of knowledge, skills, and relationships to the initiative at global, regional, country, and local levels.

Based on evidence from desk reviews, learnings from practice, and drawing on unique opportunities of global partnerships with strategic inter-faith partners, this guide provides direction for mainstreaming cross-cutting faith engagement within UNICEF's country programming towards achieving sustainable results for children, families, and communities. This guide is the culmination of over 3 years work of the FPCC initiative and will be updated in the future as the initiative evolves.

Who is this Guide for?

This guide is primarily for UNICEF staff who aim to engage more strategically with faith actors, particularly for social and behaviour change and high-level advocacy, but also for wider programmatic efforts. This guide will also be useful for a diverse set of development and humanitarian partners (hereafter referred to as development partners), including those in the broader UN system, given that its content is based on several years of evidence generation and analysing both programming and resources on faith engagement and social and behaviour change. The following provides a more specific overview of the guide's intended use:

- **Programme specialists:** With cross-cutting faith-based partnerships for children, families, and communities, thematic specialists are able to benefit from and contribute to UNICEF's strategic faith engagement as subject matter specialists with knowledge of specific issues, needs, and evidence on best practices. The guide can help ensure that faith engagement efforts become more evidence-based, coordinated and sustained programme areas to improve the impact of UNICEF's work.
- **Staff working on Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE), including SBC staff:** UNICEF is frequently the co-lead for Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) related to public health outbreaks and other types of emergencies at national level. This guide is intended to help promote and encourage the establishment or strengthening of partnerships with inter-faith networks to help position faith actors as first line responders in supporting affected populations.

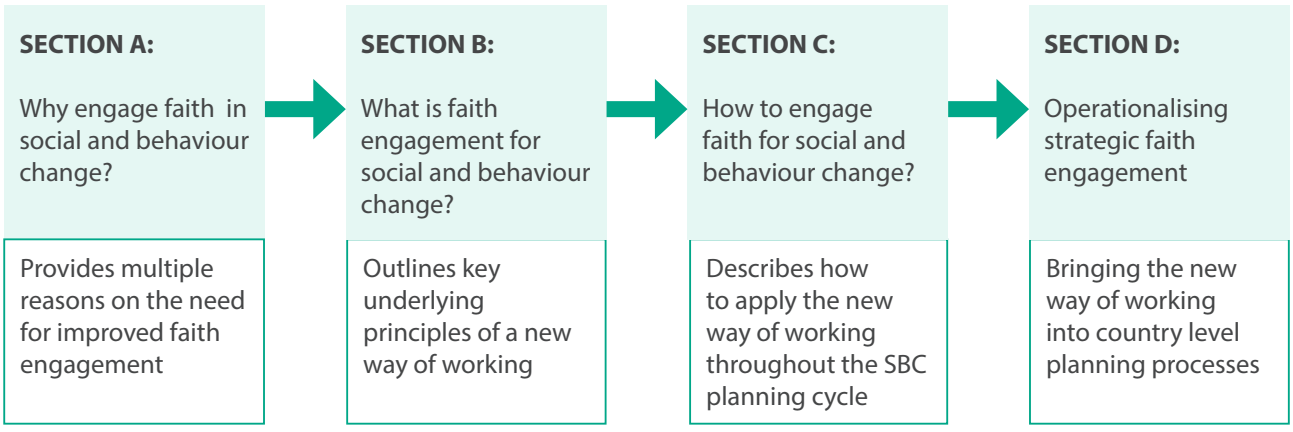
- **Communications and advocacy staff:** Religious leaders can play highly influential roles in advocacy efforts alongside other civil society actors. However, these engagements with high-level religious leaders and faith actors are more effective if they are a part of sustained, cross-cutting, and long-term community-based partnerships. This guide aims to centre faith engagement for advocacy as part of a wider set of engagement strategies.
- **Senior managers:** To ensure an enabling environment for faith engagement, it is important that senior managers within UNICEF support both the general principles of faith engagement (Section B) as well as the embedding of strategic faith engagement approaches within country programming processes (Section D). Senior managers also have an important role to play in mobilizing funding to support faith engagement work and promoting faith engagement strategies with other UN country teams, other development partners, and with senior government counterparts.
- **Other development partners:** Outside of UNICEF, programmers working in SBC, as well as in RCCE, can benefit directly from this guide and the strategic faith engagement process it promotes.

Religious leaders from the Buddist, Christian and Hindu faiths participating in an inter-faith meeting.

What is in this Guide?

The following provides an overview of the structure for the rest of the guide:

Figure 1. The sequence of this programme guide



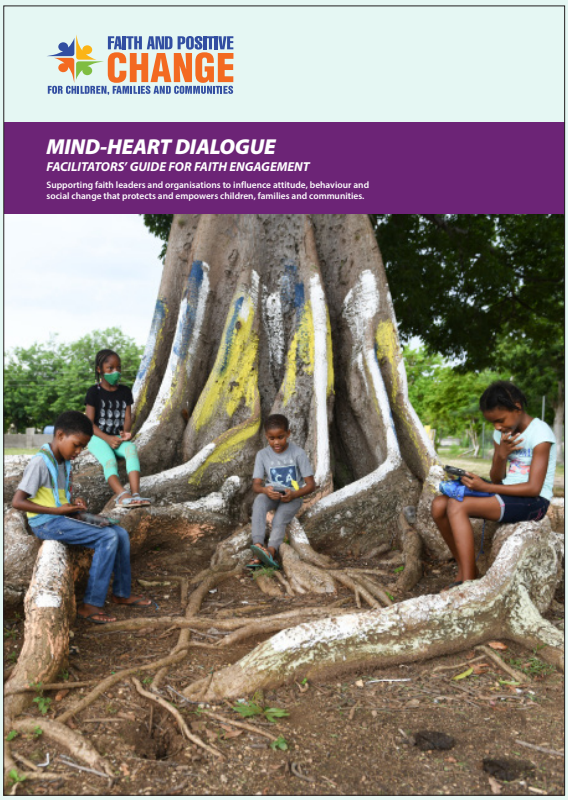
Alignment with Complementary Resources

This guide is designed as a complementary part of a wider FPCC package of supporting resources, which should ideally be used together to support the implementation of the guide's recommendations. These resources are outlined below:

- **FPCC Mind-Heart Dialgue Facilitators' Guide** – The Facilitators' Guide outlines the process, methods, and exercises needed to implement Mind-Heart Dialogue, the foundational approach proposed in the FPCC Journey of Change (JOC) (explained in Section C below). The Facilitators' Guide should be used in conjunction with this Programme Guide to put into practice the core idea of building bridges between development and faith actors. Faith partners can also use the Facilitators' Guide independently, whereas this Programme Guide is designed specifically for UNICEF/development or humanitarian agency staff.
- **Thematic Guides** – Given that UNICEF's work spans multiple sectors and thematic areas, the FPCC Initiative endeavours to produce evidence-based guides for faith engagement in multiple thematic areas for application of the Mind-Heart Dialogue approach. As this guide was being developed, a thematic module on child marriage (CM) was also developed. Further guidance documents will be released on www.faith4positivechange.org.

  COVID-19 Guidance Documents: The FPCC Partnership also prepared 6 guidance documents to guide religious leaders and faith communities response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These can also be found on the FPCC website:

  1. Adapting How we Gather, Pray, and Practice Rituals
  2. Communicating to End Misinformation, Discrimination, and to Instil Hope
  3. Helping People Who are at Risk
  4. Addressing Violence Against Women and Children
  5. Promoting Child and Youth Participation
  6. Promoting Continuity and Uptake of Health, Protection, and Education Services for Children, Caregivers, and Communities during the Pandemic.
- **M&E Framework** – the FPCC M&E Framework is a standalone document that can be used in conjunction with the M&E section of this guide to support context-specific M&E plans for UNICEF-supported faith engagement.
- **FPCC Introductory Video** – For staff new to FPCC and faith engagement, this video is a good place to start. The video outlines key points covered in this guide, but in a video with representatives from the FPCC collaborating organisations who explain the reasoning behind the FPCC initiative and faith engagement. They also explain the FPCC JOC and provide specific learning questions at the end of each section, so the viewer can reflect on what they have heard.



1. SECTION A – WHY ENGAGE FAITH IN SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOUR CHANGE WORK?

1.1 Why Engage Faith in General?

- **Prevalence of faith as central societal force.** The number of people with a religious affiliation varies regionally, but it is commonly estimated that over 80% of the world's population have a religious affiliation.[1] Data also suggests the percentage of people with a religious affiliation will remain high in the coming decades, with no indication that it will decline.[2]
- **Religions are an evolving and changing part of our present and future.** While some countries have observed a recent fall in religious belief and practice, others have seen an increase or changes in religious dynamics. Migration is leading to increased religious diversity in some regions, while people are also adapting their religious practices to take on new forms of engagement, such as on social media and through trans-national links between faith communities.
- **Religious beliefs and practices are deeply influential and persuasive in societies.** Religion is at the heart of people's values and identity. Religious leaders and faith organisations have more access to family and community spheres, reaching the hearts and minds of millions of people in ways that humanitarian actors cannot. As major opinion-makers and norm-setters, faith actors are the most central social institutions operating at community level with direct roles in influencing beliefs, attitudes, behaviours, practices, and actions.
- **Need for understanding on the complexity of faith influences.** Beliefs are handed down through traditions, often communicated by religious and traditional leaders, and spread through peer influence in faith communities. Some beliefs can justify practices that harm children, such as corporal punishment, CM, female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), vaccine hesitancy, among others.[3] Several faith groups incite their followers to violent extremism and other faith actors have been disgracefully associated with abusing children and protecting abusers.[4] Rather than disassociating from faith actors because of these risks and complexities, this further justifies the need for strategic and evidence-based approaches to engagement with faith actors to proactively attempt to open dialogue on these complex issues.

As an influential social institution, faith actors have an outsized impact on individual behaviours, practices, and social norms. Religious beliefs and practices are, therefore, inescapable in social and behavioural change initiatives for children.

- **Equal focus on humanitarian and development programming.** Aside from their routine support to development programming, faith actors are first and last responders in emergencies, from sheltering the vulnerable and rendering organised relief services during disasters, to providing spiritual support and stability that can help meet people's psychosocial needs in the face of adversity. They are resilient and adaptable actors, able to contextually tailor their approach. Additionally, in situations of conflict, due to the moral influence and trust bestowed on leaders of faith communities, they can play significant roles in mediation and reconciliation efforts, promoting harmony and helping to facilitate conflict resolution and prevent extremism.

1.2 Why Strategic Faith Engagement in UNICEF Programming?

- UNICEF's work is guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). As highlighted, "there is a strong complementarity between the guiding principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the core values of religious teachings."[5] UNICEF has been working for decades with faith actors across a variety of programme priorities. UNICEF's Civil Society Partnerships Division conducted a global mapping in 2014 which showed that 95 UNICEF COs were engaged in some way with faith actors. However, the countries mapped showed little evidence of coordinated and strategic faith engagement. The findings of the study provided insights into the gaps and requirements for improvement. The following captures some of the implications of the mapping:

- **Need for coherence, quality, and coordination**
  Despite engagement with faith actors on several outcome areas, this has been siloed for the most part, focussed on a single faith, and one-off or short-term relationships.
- **Need for more equitable partnerships**
  Engagement with faith actors by development and humanitarian partners is prone to the instrumentalisation of faith actors, i.e. largely engaging faith actors as a means to an end to take advantage of their wide communication networks or when a complex problem arises. Instrumentalisation carries a great risk[6] – faith actors may lose trust and respect for the relationship and back out of any future engagement if they feel they have been used. There is a need for more sustained and equitable partnerships with faith actors.
- **Relevance in community systems strengthening**
  A major role of UNICEF in SBC is to support community systems strengthening and there is a push towards implementing quality standards for more convergent, multi-sectoral, and at-scale programming in both development and humanitarian contexts. In relation to this priority, faith actors are a central stakeholder.
- **Linkages to large networks of women, children, and youth**
  Working with faith actors provides a unique opportunity to work with specific networks that can serve as stakeholders for specific parts of the population within wider faith networks, including religious leaders, women in faith, and youth in faith.
- **Support to multi-sectoral, integrated, and life cycle approach to programming.**
  Faith actors, with the call of 'serving the whole person,' have holistic approaches aligned with UNICEF's principles and proposed approach to programming.

For the reasons outlined above, engagement with faith actors is an important consideration for strategic long-term partnerships that can contribute significantly to the overall goals and priorities of every UNICEF country programme. *Specifically, UNICEF's faith engagement model, across programming, communications, and advocacy, can help increase demand for and utilisation of essential services, improve caregiving practices, address deep-rooted socio-cultural practices and norms, and support systems for social accountability.*

UNICEF's 2014 global mapping across 125 COs, revealed the following characteristics of engagement with faith communities:

75% of the countries mapped reported some level of partnership with faith actors.

The main type of faith engagement (70%) across offices was social and behaviour change related (sensitisation: 32%, social mobilisation: 20%, advocacy: 17%)

Approximately 40% of COs engaged with faith actors on three or more outcome areas but there was seldom an overarching engagement strategy to bring these efforts together.

There were few inter-faith efforts with most engagement with single Christian or Muslim actors, the former making up two thirds of the total engagements.

In 2018, a smaller follow up analysis of 17 COs demonstrated that faith engagement has rarely been strategic or guided by standard practices. 53% of partnerships were formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), or less frequently, a Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA). **But the majority of overall relationships were still informal.**

Spiritual leader of Nigeria's over 70-million Muslims, Sultan of Sokoto, Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar (seated) and his aide Emir of Argungu participating at the FPCC inaugural worshop in Bangkok, Thailand.

2. SECTION B – WHAT ARE THE FUNDAMENTALS OF FAITH ENGAGEMENT FOR SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE?

2.1 A Practical Understanding of Religions

Scholars endlessly debate the definition of "religion." For example, some say it is not possible to give a universal definition of "religion." As a basic principle for FPCC, it is imperative to engage with faith actors themselves to understand how they define the contours of their religious beliefs and practices. This will vary hugely from context to context. A discussion to understand religious beliefs and practices could be part of a Mind-Heart Dialogue explained in Section C. To provide an initial orientation to this theme, the following provides some practical understandings of commonly used terms.

Religion mostly refers to the systems, structures, and institutions that arise from practices and beliefs in the divine/transcendent.[7]

It is important to focus on religious practices and not on beliefs alone. This may be referred to as "lived religion." This is the everyday practices of ordinary people in relation to religion, i.e. religion is not only about the institutions and experts/leaders in those institutions, but the "lived religion" of people practising and embodying their beliefs as they go about their daily lives.

Faith refers both to a person's belief in the transcendent and can be used to refer to a faith tradition and the group of people around that tradition, such as a "faith community."

In humanitarian and development worlds, "faith" has often become a default term to refer to religions, and "faith-based organisation" is one of the more commonly known and used terms in this area. However, the preferred term within the FPCC partnership is "faith actor."

Faith actor is the generic term we use in this guide to refer to a range of possible actors, of which faith-based organisations are only one type. By using the term "faith actors," we aim to recognise the wide range of actors that could be potential faith partners in the FPCC initiative.

We aim to avoid overreliance on the term "religious leaders," as we acknowledge there are many more types of faith actors that can be involved and provide leadership. Religious leaders can refer to many different levels of leadership, and only focussing on religious leaders can exclude many faith actors, including women and children. Only use the term "religious leaders" when referring specifically to a formally recognised person in a leadership position and not as a default term to mean all "faith actors." The table below lists different types of faith actors.

Eid celebration at Parmarth
Photo Source: UNICEF India

2.2 Faith Actor Typology

Local and National Faith Actors

- Formally registered faith actors and networks, such as interreligious councils or national faith based-organisations (FBOs), which have a national or regional reach, are frequent partners with government ministries, and are generally located in national capitals. They may also have links to the UN and other international organisations, including through their participation in worldwide religious networks.
- Smaller but still formally registered faith actors, usually based outside national capitals, with some transnational ties, but not as regularly linked to the UN or international development organisations. They may be supported by a few religious centres in the Global North (churches, mosques etc) but with fewer international ties.
- Informal faith actors carrying out humanitarian/development-like work that is small-scale and local, may be linked to local places of worship. This could include parish committees or zakat committees. They are much less likely to have formal links to the UN and other international organisations. They have some organisational structure within their faith community, but they are not separate, registered organisations.
- Places of worship and their communities which may support development and humanitarian work but do not have a structure for this social outreach work. However, groups may spontaneously mobilise at these places of worship and within these communities when there is a crisis.
- Religious leaders who can be valuable allies in promoting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and humanitarian goals. Religious leaders span local, national, and international levels of formal and non-formal leadership.

For the FPCC Initiative, local and national actors will also include **traditional/tribal networks/leadership.** These often include clan and kin networks, tribal councils/council of elders who are highly influential in maintaining cultural practices and social norms. A traditional network is constituted by spiritual leadership, wise councils, and elders, while in some cases there are strong ancestral ties with extended families. In UNICEF's SBC work in many countries, engagement with faith actors often combines engagement with traditional networks in terms of their strong influence in forming opinions, norms, and practices within local communities.

International humanitarian and development actors

International actors are defined as international NGOs, multilateral and bilateral agencies. NGOs can be faith-based or secular:

– Large formal international faith-based organisations (FBOs), with faith ties related to their organisational mission, vision, affiliation, and some elements of fundraising and recruitment, but with otherwise largely secular operations. They may have ties to local faith actors and partner with them on some activities.

– Secular INGOs, multilateral, and bilateral agencies are those actors who do not identify as or affiliate with a faith group in their organisational mission, vision, fundraising, and recruitment policies or operations. However, they are important potential partners with international FBOs and local faith actors.

Source: Adapted from Wilkinson, O, Tomalin, E, Logo, K, Wani Laki, A, De Wolf, F (2020) Bridge Builders: strengthening the role of local faith actors in humanitarian response in South Sudan, Islamic Relief, Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities, RedR UK, Tearfund, Tearfund Belgium, University of Leeds.

2.3 Religious Literacy: Understanding How to Analyse Religions' Roles in Society

Many of us were exposed to religious studies in school, at home, or in our communities with a focus on specific religions only. The FPCC Initiative encourages a broader appreciation of religions that understands their roles in societies. Understanding the role of religions goes beyond learning about the core tenets of a religion (e.g. the Five Pillars, or the Ten Commandments) and instead inspires a more comprehensive understanding of how religions work in our lives.

According to the Religious Literacy Project at Harvard University, a religiously literate person has *"the ability to discern and analyse the fundamental intersections of religion and social/political/cultural life through multiple lenses."* [8]

Three key principles of religious literacy include the understanding that:

1. **"religions are internally diverse** as opposed to uniform."[9] Reductive views and stereotypes of religions (e.g. Muslim women are always oppressed, Buddhists are always nonviolent, Christians always oppose abortion) do not recognise the wide range of opinions, interpretations, and differences within a religion. A country will have majority and minority religions and within each there will be different understandings and beliefs. For example, in Niger, a country where 98% of the population is Muslim, it is critical to understand the nuanced sensitivities of the gatherings of religious leaders from the various affiliations and schools of Islam.

Multi-religious actors at the 2018 inaugural FPCC workshop in Bangkok, Thailand
Photo Source: UNICEF/Choniakan Worrakhunwisam

2. **"religious influences are embedded in all dimensions of culture** as opposed to the assumption that religions function in discrete, isolated, "private" contexts. Religions are collections of ideas, practices, values, and stories that are all embedded in cultures and not separable from them."[10] They are a part of public life and not (only) confined to the personal and private. Religious influences are interconnected with all other aspects of society, such as other social, cultural, political, and economic influences. For example, in a review of over 60 studies on religions and vaccines, the authors found that reasons for vaccine hesitancy, which at first seemed religious, were commonly tied to a vast range of other reasons, such as structures in social networks and other beliefs.[11]
3. **"religions evolve and change over time** as opposed to being ahistorical and static."[12] Religious interpretations change across time and different places and spaces, sometimes even reversing over time. For example, religious positions on slavery are immensely different across time and place. As the Harvard project explains, "the practice of slavery has been both justified and vilified by all three monotheistic traditions in differing social and historical contexts."[13]

2.4 Challenges to Faith Engagement in Social and Behaviour Change

The FPCC Initiative envisions a deeper and more holistic way of working with faith actors. Yet from evidence work around the world, there are several common barriers that prevent effective partnerships between development actors and faith actors. The design of FPCC aims to resolve these challenges through strategies that will be presented throughout the rest of this guide. The following attempts to capture some of the **common challenges and barriers:**

- **Predominance of ad hoc engagements:** As shown by the global mapping, UNICEF's past engagement with faith actors has often focussed on one-off trainings and other ad hoc engagements. Faith-development relationships may be weak, not well-established, and lack strategic planning and designated focal points, which result in a lack of continuity, or an overreliance on one person from a faith partner leading to burnout.
- **Instrumentalist development-faith relationships:** Faith actors have been largely approached as sub-contractors for larger development organisations, rather than partners. Development actors have relied on faith actors for their assets without full and fair engagement, leading to faith actors feeling burned out and not keen to continue development partnerships. Development partners often have an over-reliance on messaging and create programmes and materials that are top-down and not co-developed with faith partners. At times, development partners only bring in faith actors when a problem is encountered or to focus on religious norms alone, rather than a broader, multi-sectoral approach. This risks religious leaders and faith communities resisting or misinterpreting development partners' intent, as well as a build-up of resentment or lack of trust. New staff sometimes inherit perceptions based on previous partnership shortcomings, often built on decades of development-faith suspicion and a lack of transparency.
- **Development actors' reticence to engage with religion:** The personal background and experiences of development actors in relation to religion often influence their decisions and actions towards faith partnerships. Religion is deemed a messy, challenging, and at times taboo topic that is avoided in conversations within humanitarian development organisations.
- **Politicisation of development and religion:** Power and power imbalances related to the social and political standings of various faith, development, and civil society actors can harm partnership potential. Religions are incredibly diverse and even within the same religion there is a full spectrum of progressive and conservative opinions. Some faith actors can be susceptible to instrumentalisation by fundamentalist/extremist interpretations of religions. Fear and mistrust can quickly grow between groups (between faiths, between development actors and others, and between faiths and other civil society organisations, resulting in discriminatory actions and the exclusion of some groups), including hate speech. Likewise, there is an increasing understanding of the underlying biases and power imbalances in development that have co-opted people into systems and structures that do not serve their best interests.
- **Patriarchy and gender inequity:** Many religions tend to be male-led, driven, and centred, meaning women may hold less visible positions of power. There is risk therefore that partnerships with faith actors reinforce the subordination of women and girls. However, with explicit and on-going efforts to sensitize and "unpack power relationships" as well as jointly set objectives for gender equity and girl/women empowerment, including through women-of-faith networks, partnerships with faith can actually be an important strategy for achieving gender equity.

- **Overfocus on single faiths:** In some cases, COs partner with one specific faith which may be more dominant, or easy to access. Given the wide diversity among faith actors, a sound knowledge of the context and partners is needed to ensure a more impartial multi-faith approach.
- **Instances of proselytization:** Some faith actors have been known to proselytise with development aid by using assistance to incentivise conversions, while other faith actors are strongly against such actions. Mapping faith-based organisations is important to understand when proselytization might be a risk, and when it is not an issue.
- **Overreliance on faith actors alone can distort interventions:** Faith actors are an important and influential part, but only one part of the mix of civil society in the multiplicity of organisations that this represents. Faith engagement is not a one-stop solution.
- **Work of faith actors is not fully visible to development actors:** There is limited documentation of evidence and evidence-sharing from faith actors in the development arena. As a result, development actors are not fully conversant on the extent of their impact or the work they do. Faith and development worlds exist in parallel even if they have overlapping areas of interest and activity.
- **Lack of capacity within both faith and development partners:** Cultural divides (including language divides around technical jargon and divides in terms of organisational culture) and ideological differences mean all partners can lack understanding of each other. For faith actors, they may not only lack subject-specific knowledge, but also administrative and operational capacities, such as in monitoring and evaluation (M&E). For development partners, a lack in capacity often manifests as a lack of flexibility and capacity to work with smaller, more local organisations and a lack of understanding about the diverse religious landscape of the context in which they work. A lack of religious literacy and self-reflection is found amongst both development and faith actors. Engaging effectively requires sharing and understanding, both oneself and each other.
- **Diverging faith and development priorities:** With faith actors, there can be concerns that they will not see eye-to-eye with the goals of development partners and each partner may hold strongly divergent values related to specific issues, such as reproductive health. While there can be deep discrepancies between understandings of global human rights and religious interpretations, there is also much space for contextualisation and understandings within varied religious traditions and "keeping faith with human rights."[14]

The rest of this document presents strategic approaches to overcome these common challenges and to engage faith, even around sensitive issues, through multiple strategies and, particularly through deep joint learning and sharing.

Bishop Edward Heboro supporting the "Keep environment clean" day in Yambio town of Western Equatoria State, South Sudan. Photo Source: UNICEF South Sudan

4.5 Strategic Overview of Faith and Positive Change for Children, Families, and Communities: Global Initiative on Social and Behaviour Change

Table 1. The FPCC initiative's strategic intent

■ Inclusive and multi-faith engagement including traditional leaders, women's faith networks, and youth faith groups
■ Principles of co-creation, non-instrumentalisation, and non-dependency
■ Dual focus: 1. high-level advocacy, 2. participatory engagement with local faith actors
■ Cross-cutting across all sectors in both humanitarian and development work
■ Diverse engagement/entry points as covered in the Theory of Change (Section C)
■ Systematic faith engagement embedded in country programming eg. via Country Programme Documents [CPDs], Programme Strategy Notes [PSNs]) (Section D)
■ Sustained and at scale via ongoing partnerships and national coordination mechanisms
■ Evidence-based and evidence-generating with continuous learning exchange

The rest of this document addresses these areas of strategic intent in more depth and provides approaches for change that respond to possible concerns and barriers.

Evidence base

In keeping with the fundamental principle of UNICEF's SBC strategies, the content of this guide was developed from an evidence base compiled over several years:

- An evidence review[15] carried out as background work for the FPCC Initiative summarised findings on faith actors' engagements in relation to UNICEF's four main **Social and Behavioural Outcomes** (uptake of services, adoption of positive behaviours, abandonment of harmful social norms and adoption of positive ones, and community engagement and empowerment).[16]
- There are extended case studies[17] of faith engagement in UNICEF programming, detailing the activities, results, and opportunities and challenges of each. JLI and UNICEF HQ co-developed these case studies based on survey submissions from COs, key informant interviews with the staff of COs and their faith and government partners, and further documentary reviews.[18]
- There was also a review of 27 guides, manuals and toolkits[19] on faith engagement from UNICEF, other UN agencies, donors, and NGOs.
- The evidence base benefitted from JLI's library of over 1000+ resources[20] on the role of religion in development and humanitarian work. This library is constantly growing and can be freely accessed online for the most up-to-date evidence in this area.

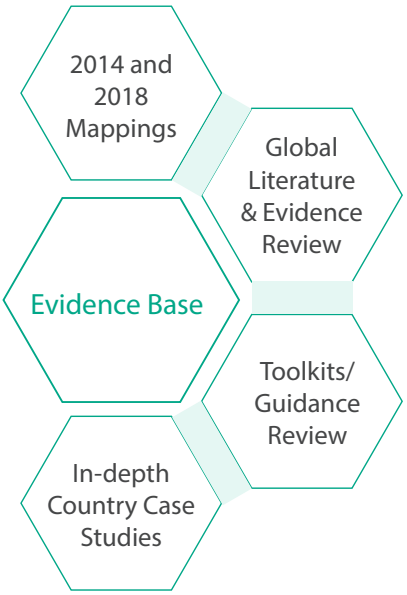


Figure 2. A summary of the evidence base for this guide

Examples of evidence from the FPCC Global Evidence Review on the impact of faith engagement across multiple priority areas for children

In Ghana, an evaluation of a "Council of Champions" programme conducted after 1.5 years of implementation showed that 24% more women in the intervention area were accessing early antenatal care (ANC), whereas the same indicator had decreased by 21.5% in the control area.[21]

In Liberia, a programme of faith leaders from Muslim and Christian communities using a Facts, Association, Meaning and Action (FAMA) Learning-Dialogue approach demonstrated that after 2 years, girls and women in the intervention areas who experienced gender-based violence (GBV) were 13% more likely to report incidents and seek support.[22]

In Iraq, a study found that local religious leaders played an important role in resolving disputes, including those around early marriage and the protection of children, as well as in addressing violence against women.[23]

In Angola, a NetsForLife programme with local faith actors in malaria-prone areas helped increase the number of children under 5 sleeping under long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs) by 85%.[24]

In Rwanda, after one year of implementation, a programme that mobilised local faith actors to promote family practices to prevent malnutrition showed that 52% of households in the intervention districts began storing water in closed containers, as opposed to 44% in the control group.[25]

2.6 Principles for Faith Engagement

Table 2 below summarises the key principles of FPCC by outlining the differences between the traditional approach to faith engagement in development practice, which leads to many of the above-mentioned challenges, and what is now envisioned as the new way of working on faith engagement through the FPCC partnership initiative. The FPCC Advisory group developed these principles during which UNICEF, JLI, and RfP staff worked with a group of researchers and practitioners experienced in faith engagement. With UNICEF as the UN lead for CE, these principles are also aligned with the Community Engagement Minimum Standards,[26] namely, 1. Participation, 2. Empowerment and Ownership, 3. Inclusion, 4. Two-way communication, 5. Adaptability and Localization, and 6. Building on Local Capacity. The FPCC Initiative also acknowledges and promotes awareness of the Beirut Declaration and its 18 Commitments on Faith 4 Rights.[27]

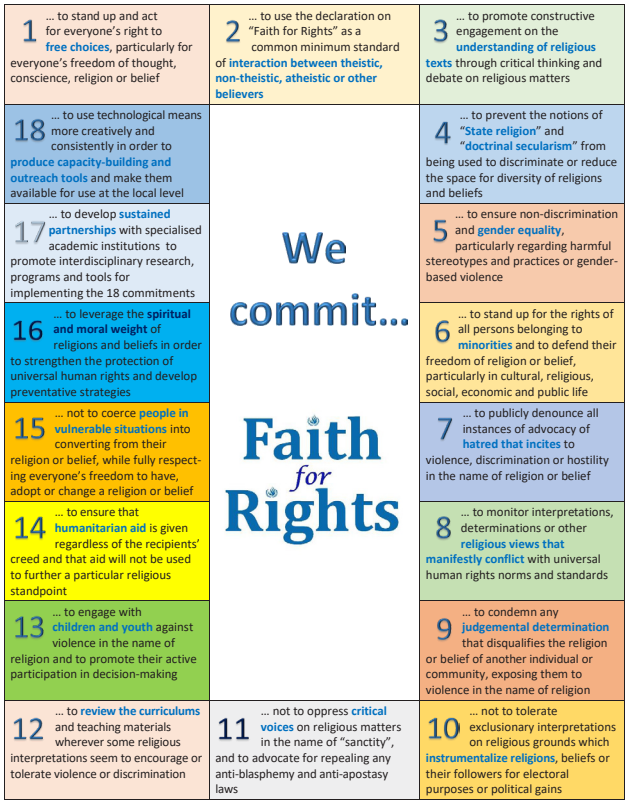


Table 2. The principles of engagement for a more rights-respecting way of working between development and faith partners

Top-down, instrumentalising approach to religion most common in current development work	Ground-up, participatory, aspirational future for strategic faith engagement promoted by FPCC
People and communities approached as resources to be leveraged for social and economic progress	Recognition of inherent human dignity, equality, and affirmation of the agency of each person and group
Mutual discomfort, suspicion, and bias between faith and secular actors with fear related to speaking about sensitive or taboo topics	Complementary learning between actors, valuing the transformational power of faith and mind-heart dialogue to overcome misunderstandings or differences in values. Openness and safe spaces to engage on sensitive issues
Top down; hierarchical	Confidence in community solutions: participatory, co-created, multi-level
Donor funding dependent, dependency mindset	Non-dependency mind-set, agency, asset-based, multiple funding sources
One-off lecture-style religious and development literacy and capacity building trainings. International actors as the capacity "holders" and local and national faith actors viewed as lacking capacity	Two-way knowledge exchange and capacity sharing, with recognition of mutually beneficial capacities and complementarity.
Unchecked power imbalances; subcontractor relationship between development partners and local faith actors	Participative analysis of power imbalances and joint decision-making relationships
Global North directing the Global South	Increased South-South cooperation and knowledge exchange
Guidelines on ways of working compiled by Global North actors based on international standards only	Evidence-based guidelines on thematic topics validated or developed collaboratively by a range of actors, including researchers in countries where the guides will be used
Vertical, siloed, and thematic or single sector interventions	Multi-sectoral, integrated, and holistic across the development-humanitarian continuum
Message-focussed faith engagement	Partnerships focussed on reflective Mind-Heart Dialogue approach
Short-term, project-based	Sustained with focus on long-term community systems strengthening
Focus only on high-level formal religious leaders, mostly male	Inclusive, equitable approach also engaging informal, traditional leaders - especially women and youth leaders
Limited, default options for partnerships (favouring pre-established relationships)	Broadening relationships through mapping and formative research to understand how existing structures work, who is excluded, and why. Engaging the whole of a community through a plurality of non-faith, faith, and traditional actors
Focus on religion and faith actors as "isolated" partners	Focus on faith actors in connection with other groups in civil society, and faith as integral to all aspects of lives
Assumption that there will be a cascade effect through religious structures after trainings of trainers	Co-development of participatory processes and follow-up leading to ownership, sustainability, and effectiveness at different levels
Little and generic M&E with results that stay with the donor	Tailored and participative M&E and follow-up processes that share results

3. SECTION C – HOW TO ENGAGE FAITH ACTORS FOR SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

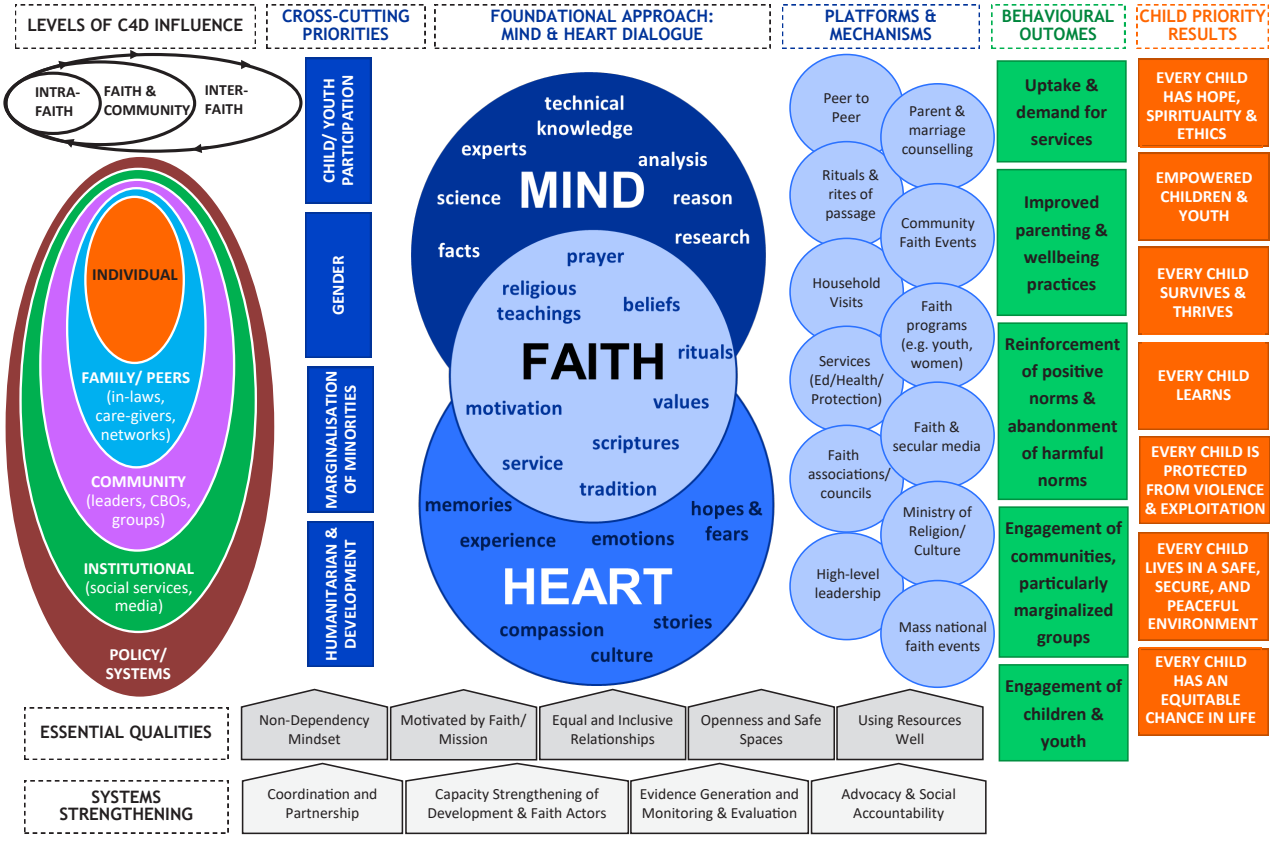
A Theory of Change (TOC) is an evidence-based vision which outlines the pathways for how specific strategies and activities are expected to produce a series of results that contribute to achieving the intended outcome or impact. In UNICEF Social and Behaviour Change programming, SBC Theories of Change apply the social ecological model to analyze dynamics at different levels including socio-behavioural barriers and drivers at individual, family and community level as well as institutional and policy/system bottlenecks or opportunities. This is followed by a definition of desired results to address each of the levels of required change identified. Having outlined the results, a range of strategies, activities and SBC platforms are identified to ensure that the selection of these will be appropriate for the various rights holders and influencers within the different levels of influence. The TOC is a foundational tool for developing a results framework or Monitoring and Evaluation framework for SBC that will be used to specify and track the different levels of results. A TOC must be co-developed with the stakeholders engaged in efforts to influence change and therefore requires consultation to secure the views and buy-in of programme partners.

Building on the Global SBC Theory of Change (TOC) (Annex 1) and previous theories of change that examine the role of faith in development, The FPCC core team analysed the evidence base to highlight a) key levels of influence; b) cross-cutting issues; c) entry points, platforms, and mechanisms for engagement; d) behavioural outcomes, e) expected results for children, and e) the enabling environment to support strategic change in the context of faith engagement.

The resulting TOC is referred to as the FPCC Journey of Change (JOC) (Figure 3). This term is more relatable for faith actors to describe the journey that faith and development partners need to take together to ensure that change is facilitated in a systematic, at scale, and sustained and effective manner.

3.1 The Faith and Positive Change for Children Journey of Change

Figure 3. JOC on faith and positive change for children. Developed by UNICEF HQ Communication for Development Section in collaboration with JLI and RfP, 2019-2021



- For the peer review process, members of the JLI from academia, NGOs, and agencies, with long-standing experience of engaging local faith communities, as well as inter-faith members from RfP, discussed the JOC.
- The JOC was further updated in 2021 after validation in 5 residential 5-day workshops, known as "WorkRocks," and follow-up faith engagement processes in South Sudan, Malawi, Cameroon, Liberia, and Niger in 2019 and virtual COVID-19 related webinars in East and Southern Africa with participants from Malawi, South Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Zambia in 2020 and early 2021. These sessions helped to further refine the JOC and demonstrate the utility of the framework and the "foundational approach" of Mind-Heart Dialogue.

The JOC is an evidence-based process model for achieving SBC at scale that is aimed at UNICEF COs in their partnerships with national and local faith actors, but also accessible to other UN agencies, donors, and NGOs working in similar ways. There is also another simpler version of the JOC referred to as the "Transformation Tree" developed with faith actors' input. The "Transformation Tree," which is included in the FPCC Facilitator's Guide, translates the JOC for greater understandability among faith audiences.

The JOC encapsulates the deeper and more comprehensive way of working proposed by the FPCC Initiative. The JOC is presented as an overarching and guiding framework. It is intended that COs both adapt the JOC to be relevant for their own national and local contexts and also tailor and customise its application for specific thematic areas. (See Figure 13 and the version of the JOC customised for CM in the Malawi country context).

The rest of this section unpacks each element of the JOC and details how these elements fit into each step of a planning cycle that COs can undertake to start or refresh their faith engagement strategy.

3.2 Operationalising the Journey of Change

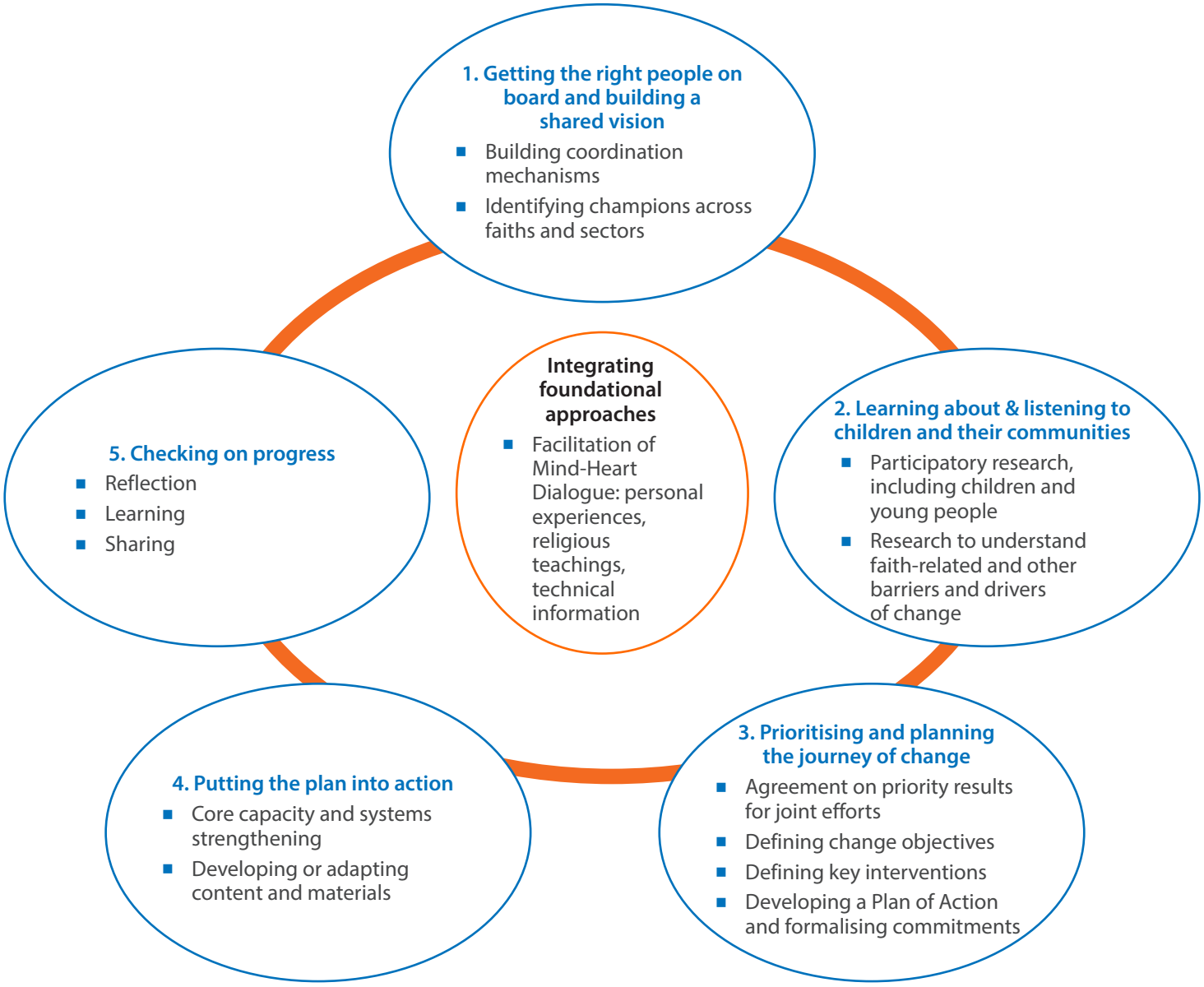
Applying the FPCC Journey of Change through the Social and Behaviour Change Planning Cycle

The standard SBC planning cycle follows a 5-step journey from assessing and analysing the situation or context to designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating a programme or initiative on faith engagement overall or that is issue-specific. The JOC uses elements from the SBC planning cycle to unpack how to engage faith actors more specifically for SBC. It must be emphasised that this process, like any application of the planning cycle, is most often non-linear with elements, such as learning and evaluation, beginning early in the process and requiring integration throughout. At each stage, the guide also underlines how engagement efforts with faith actors require a new way of working, which are outlined in the principles above, and deliberate incorporation of elements of the FPCC JOC into practice.

Religious leader looking at numerous examples of Faith engagement that informed the FPCC Journey of Change

3.3 Faith for Social and Behaviour Change Planning Cycle

Figure 4. Faith for SBC planning cycle



3.3.1 Foundational Approach: Mind-Heart Dialogue

The FPCC method is built on a foundational approach that can be used at almost any state of Faith engagement. This approach is fully described in the FPCC Facilitators' Guide, which is a key complementary document to this Programme Guide. Mind-Heart Dialogue is based on the FPCC principles and an understanding that work between development and faith actors can cover sensitive topics that require time and space for everyone to explore. The foundational approach is introduced at the beginning of this planning section to underline its centrality in the process of developing and implementing a JOC amongst faith and other partners. Once this model is familiar to all partners, it can be re-used as an intervention or as a method of consultation for any step of the process including monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

Applying a Mind-Heart Dialogue approach for strategic faith engagement involves an in-depth process in which partners progress through a series of steps to pinpoint key ideas to build a JOC and action plan to move forward together. A 4-5-day process, called a WorkRock, was piloted to help systematise a strategic Mind-Heart Dialogue process. FPCC coined the name "WorkRock" to indicate that this is not business as usual (i.e. a standard lecture or less participatory workshop with technical information delivered from the front) and that a central aim is to build a foundation for sustained partnerships (the rock on which the partnership is built). The Facilitator's Guide provides more in-depth step-by-step instructions of how to set up and run a WorkRock. Reports on the WorkRocks from each of the pilot countries can also be useful in guiding similar future efforts and can be found here: www.faith4positivechange.org/2019-workrock

The vision is that WorkRocks will not only be conducted at national level but will be replicated in simpler forms at sub-national level by champions who have been a part of the original process.

Core Concepts behind Mind-Heart Dialogue

Mind-Heart Dialogue is the short-hand term used to express the need for faith and development dialogues to discuss and then work across three main areas:

- technical/scientific (Mind);
- religious scriptural teachings (Faith);
- and personal/emotional/self-reflective (Heart) background to any development issue.

During the FPCC's evidence building process that examined many different development-faith partnerships, it was found that often only one or two of these domains was being addressed. For transformational change, all three areas of focus need to be combined together. Instead, **all three need to work together.** Figure 5 explains each in more detail below.

Engaging in Mind-Heart dialogue is an opportunity for all partners (UNICEF staff, faith actors, government partners, and any other partners involved) to self-reflect and demonstrate their reflexivity and willingness to dialogue with each other. The dialogue provides an opportunity for partners to uncover any unconscious bias they might have and grow in their understanding of themselves and others. It puts partners on an equal footing and helps establish equitable partnerships. This is an appropriate process to undertake with existing, as well as new, faith actor partners.

Religious leaders may tend to feel that they already have comprehensive knowledge of their faith tradition and that they do not need "religious literacy". However Mind-Heart Dialogue helps to reveal potential 'blind-spots' by having faith leaders and all stakeholders reflect at a deeper level.

The process recognises that everyone has knowledge and experience to bring to the table and share with each other. The dialogue encourages everyone involved to examine the ways in which religions intersect with development issues. The Mind-Heart Dialogue is the central part of trust-building between partners, and the joint analysis of barriers and drivers for change that will be vital for the success of the partnership.

Components of Mind-Heart Dialogue

Mind - Technical information and knowledge

Led by UNICEF expertise, with support from other technical experts among faith, government, and development partners. This can include support for the design of formative research, information sharing on the latest knowledge and policies on a particular topic, and information about UNICEF activities, initiatives, and campaigns that are of interest.

It is important to move away from lecture-style presentations and the overuse of PowerPoints, towards learning styles that help participants engage with new information, including in small group reflections and allowing plenty of time for questions and answers interspersed throughout.

Faith - Religious teachings and interpretation

Led by faith actor expertise, often with particular leadership from religious scholars who can interpret religious teachings and connect them to development goals. This can include consultation processes with religious scholars, but also guided discussions among general participants about their own interpretations of religious teachings regarding children, for example.

It is important to have a knowledgeable guide in these discussions who can carefully offer interpretations for commonly held assumptions around religious teachings that could have negative effects on children.

Heart - Self-reflection and transformation

Led by all partners' own experiences. This is the process of self-reflection in which participants from all partners (development, faith, government, civil society) reflect on their own perceptions of religions and development, exploring how their cultural and social context has also shaped their ideas. There are several participatory methods to help explore this, such as asking people to reflect on their own childhood memories and experiences of practices related to religion that might have helped or harmed them. These methods are all included in the FPCC Facilitators' Guide.

Initial pilots demonstrated that it can be helpful to start with the heart work. Rather than loading early dialogue with too much technical or scriptural information and analysis, discussions can start with people sharing their stories, which helps to break down their impressions of each other and build trust, while also already beginning the process of analysing the drivers that link religious beliefs and practices to child wellbeing.

Other participatory social and behaviour change methodologies to support the process

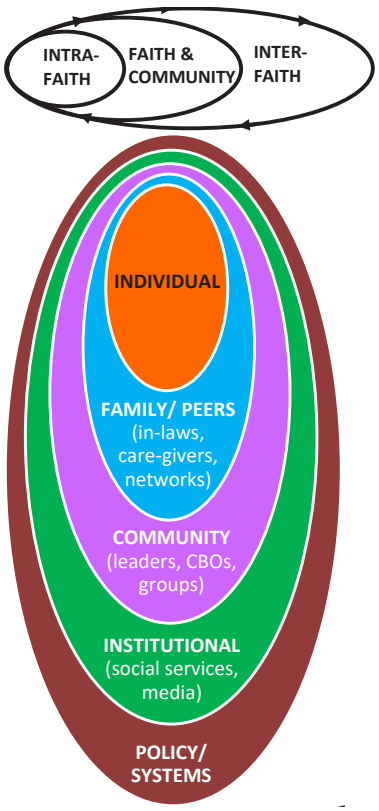
The Mind-Heart Dialogue approach embraces the creative use of innovative methods, such as those exploring technological possibilities, but more significantly those methods that advance ways to engage people on social norms and enhance CE through participation. Some of these include **Participatory Theatre for Change**, which is particularly useful to explore key drivers around religions and behaviours. A **Positive Deviance approach** is also encouraged to pinpoint champions at different levels (UNICEF, faith communities, government, civil society), that can influence their peers and serve as key brokers amongst their main reference group and between partners. A Positive Deviance approach is relevant at all stages of this process – in identifying initial partners, in formative research, and when planning activities.

As noted, the Mind-Heart Dialogue is the foundation for planning towards a JOC and action plan to implement it. When devising and then planning how to implement the JOC, the following steps and dimensions should be considered as part of the planning cycle.

3.4 Getting the Right People on Board and Building a Shared Vision

3.4.1 Identifying People Across Faiths, Sectors, and Levels

Figure 5. The FPCC JOC levels of influence



- One of the global SBC theoretical models UNICEF uses is the Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological framework, which focusses on different level of influence. The levels of influence recognise that at each level different actors, behavioural drivers, and barriers to change exist and therefore different corresponding approaches are required to effectively reach and influence change for each of these different groups, i.e. from the individual, to family and peers, to community, to institutions and service provides, and to policy makers and overarching systems.
- The overlapping and looping circles above the levels of influence have been added specifically for the JOC for Faith engagement. They relate to the better known levels of influence of the Socio-ecological model (SEM):
  a. **Intra-faith:** Internally/within their tradition (acknowledging that there can be deep differences and divides within one tradition).
  b. **Faith & Community:** with other communities around them and the broader society (a religious literacy approach encourages us to analyse how faith actors interact with other social, political, economic, and cultural groupings).
  c. **Inter-faith:** with other faiths (acknowledging the importance of inter-faith cooperation to ensure common elements and comprehensive and inclusive approaches but also always recognising that inter-faith engagement may not be appropriate for every forum, strategy, or context).
- **Linkages often arise between governments, faith actors,** and UNICEF as the development partner. Different contexts have different levels of separation or overlap between religion and state. Working with government can mean working with a religious affairs ministry alongside a health or education ministry, for example, where the government contact is the primary link to faith actors. At other times, the link is with the faith actor first, who can then help make links with government departments. In any case, UNICEF has an important role in supporting linkages between faith partners and government-led development and humanitarian decision-making mechanisms as well as with supporting the alignment of faith engagement work with other development partners.
- **Faith actors are part of civil society** and, as such, they are linked to and part of other civil society networks and institutions. As noted in the religious literacy principles, religions are embedded in their cultural, social, political, and economic contexts. Faith partnerships can be part of joint partnerships with other civil society actors.
- **Traditional leadership and customary authorities** can also be interlinked with faith actors, with leaders sometimes taking roles that cover both customary and religious leadership positions.

Examples of Faith partnerships across levels of influence

Choosing strategic partners for different levels of influence is context dependent. Below are 3 examples across 3 levels of influence (system, institution, community) to demonstrate how some strategic examples of how UNICEF COs have previously worked with faith actors. As FPCC moves forward the aim will be to build on such strategic successful models to ensure greater focus on some of the key principles of FPCC. (eg. how to move beyond single-sector, single-faith or humanitarian-response mode to more integrated or multi-faith initiatives that address both humanitarian and broader development programming.

Figure 6. Examples across the levels of influence

Systems Level: Engagement with Government Structures (Ministry of Cults and Religions Cambodia and Sangkaikay Monk Council with UNICEF Cambodia)

Key Components:

Pagoda Child Protection Programme through the Buddhist Leadership Initiative:

1. Implementation of Child Safeguarding Policy in Pagodas
2. Awareness-raising and training of monks on child protection through Pagodas and Buddhist education system
3. Community awareness raising and mobilization to prevent and respond to violence against children (VAC)
4. Interfaith advocacy through events

An action plan was developed and disseminated through workshops, working with 16 government ministerial lines. 27 pagodas in 5 provinces reaching 2,058 Buddhist monks (1,126 child monks) and 3,533 people (3,302 children).

The programme is ongoing and integrated into ministerial efforts to oversee Buddhist education and pagoda policies.

Institutional Level: Faith-based Organisation (Pastoral de la Primera Infancia with UNICEF Guatemala)

Early childhood development programme adapted from Brazil's Pastoral da Criança to Guatemala

Integrated part of the Episcopal Church of Guatemala's programmes.

1. Starts with building community level support from faith leaders
2. Master trainers trained for 8 sessions (support by UNICEF Guatemala) who in turn train volunteers.
3. Volunteers then visit at least 15 homes a month to hold individual sessions with families focussed on spiritual and behaviour change. Community wide gatherings held to discuss topics every 2-3 months.

The programme took 5 years to establish. The local diocese and community volunteers led the M&E to meet the reporting to Pastoral da Criança in Brazil.

Over 5 years, it has reached 5,000 children. The programme showed improvement in exclusive breastfeeding, children with normal weight, and an increased demand for health services.

Community Level: Village by Village (UNICEF South Sudan and Integrated Community Mobilization Network)

Community Mobilization Network in South Sudan

During emergencies, religious leaders continue to be key influencers at the community level. Acknowledging this, South Sudan developed a network of over 4,500 volunteers in 78 of 80 provinces, each connected to a health centre, and often also to a faith-based organisation, religious leader, and/or community elder.

During a measles outbreak, UNICEF reached out through the network to their communities to achieve a 95% immunisation rate.

More systematic engagement and multi-faith engagement was subsequently planned through the South Sudan Council of Churches and Islamic Council through a MOU with the World Food Programme and UNICEF South Sudan.

Opportunities to engage with government ministries

As demonstrated with the example from Cambodia above, there are many opportunities for partnerships with government ministries either as a main faith partner (in the case where countries have ministries of religious affairs [MoRA]) or as a partner aligned with faith partnerships (for example, with a ministry of health and a faith partner in a joint project). When there is a MoRA present in a country, they have the advantage of being able to operate at a nation-wide scale, such as in Cambodia where the government structure allows for the potential rollout of child protection approaches and messages to thousands of pagodas. As in any partnership, finding champions within ministries is a key aspect to relationship building on faith engagement initiatives. Sometimes, faith partners are the ones introducing UNICEF to these champions within ministries as faith actors have built these existing relationships over many years. At other times, it is UNICEF who can introduce faith partners to government partners when existing relationships do not exist.

Assessing your current partnerships

The process of bringing people together and building governance structures will help evolve collaborations from non-strategic to mature partnerships. Building on the FPCC principles, the aim is to establish equitable, co-creating partnerships, built on evidence processes such as mapping, integrated across sectors, and linked into other key partnerships, such as those with government ministries. From the diagram below, COs should aim to assess their current level of faith partnership. If it is non-strategic or evolving, there is room for growth and improved maturity and effectiveness through the suggested mappings and mechanisms below.

Example: UNICEF Bangladesh engages female teachers in faith for SBC communications

The engagement of informal leaders, to ensure diversity in age and gender, is particularly important. In Bangladesh, UNICEF has developed a long-term partnership with the Islamic Foundation of Bangladesh (IFB), a Directorate under the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA). Part of the partnership consists of training imams and teachers on various thematic areas related to child rights and general skills on how to facilitate community dialogue. A specific IFB mosque-based pre-primary education programme mainly focusses on engaging female teachers across the country. The training includes information on child rights and and how to communicate key messages and engage with various influencers. *In 2018, 1600 Imams and 1200 female teachers received SBC communications training at district level.* Although this training took place before the development of the Mind-Heart Dialogue approach, this is the kind of structure through which a training of trainers on Mind-Heart Dialogue can take place to influence new ways of engagement at scale.

Advancing the quality and effectiveness of partnerships

Figure 7. The stages of faith partnerships

Non-strategic partnership	→	Evolving partnerships	→	Mature partnerships
Project-based short term funding Single sector or no linkages No mapping of partners, one default partner No linkages between government and faith partners		Initial pooling of funds for more substantive funding over more a period longer than a few months or year across two or more sectors/ programmes Across two or more sectors/programmes Several faith partners with connections to different groups/levels, but no common coordination mechanism Some linkages between government and faith partners		Mappings completed with identification of strategic roles for different faith actors' work Formal partnerships established for implementation with the most strategic partners that can support programming for range of thematic issues; scale and inclusion of marginalized group; participatory approaches. Different intra-faith partnerships implementing similar (but customized) approaches based on a common set of multi-theme objectives decided on and planned for jointly through a multi-faith coordinating mechanism as a part of existing inter-religious structures. Integrated within workplans of several programmes across the CO with funds pooled and managed by the SBC to support strategic engagement across multiple sectors/ programmes Clear and regular linkages between UNICEF, government and Faith partners.

3.4.2 Mapping and Assessing Capacity

A full mapping of faith actors will help establish which groups are important to engage. Other actors may already have completed mapping exercises which can be built on, including those from within the UN system. Some organisations undertake mapping on a regular basis with such mapping available for some countries eg. South Sudan, Libya, and Iraq by USIP[31] or the country analyses from World Faiths Development Dialogue on Bangladesh, Senegal, Nigeria, Cambodia, Guatemala, the Philippines, Kenya, and Tanzania. [32]

Balance and Inclusion

It is important to consider who has not previously been engaged and why, why some faith actors are the default partners for all UN agencies, and who else should and could be included. For example, UNICEF's 2014 mapping found that "Almost three-quarters of UNICEF engagement with religious communities occurred with Christian communities."[33] Although UNICEF engages Muslim communities relatively frequently, UNICEF interacts with other religions much less. Engagement will depend on the religious demographics of the country. Even within predominantly Christian or Muslim countries, it is important to analyse which denominations, branches, schools, or other religious groupings are not involved and why. For example, research has shown that Pentecostal denominations tend not to form development wings or formalised faith-based organisations and, therefore, do not interact frequently with development actors as partners, even though Pentecostal denominations aim to activate social transformations within their communities.[34] Key questions to map and assess potential faith partners are set out below in Figure 9.

Figure 8. Mapping and capacity assessment analysis questions on potential faith partners

Objectives & Results	Levels of Influence	Organisational Context	Programme Activities
■ What are the critical issues affecting children that faith and development actors should prioritise to work on together eg. Maternal and newborn health, nutrition practices; WASH; ECD or Education; Violence Against Children or Child Protection)? ■ Specifically, do any actors work on any of the behavioral outcomes or results in the FPCC JOC (eg. parenting practices; gender-based norms; adolescent empowerment)?	■ Which organizations are undertaking intra-fiath work, Inter-faith work or work between faith groups and the wider community or with government? ■ Which faith-based groups work at grassroots, national, regional, and/or international levels? ■ Where are actors based in relation to area-based religious demographics in the country?	■ Who are the well-established actors across different faiths? Who are the less visible faith actors (indigenous, traditional)? ■ What are the main institutional affiliation of each key faith partner? E.g. Development arm of a religious institution, faith-based healthcare or educational institution, interreligious council ■ Do they work with different constituencies in faith communities, e.g. women of faith and youth groups?	■ Staffing: Who are the leaders and what is the governance structure? Are there staff working on social and behavior change type activities? ■ Do they acknowledge and seek to address cross-cutting issues of gender inequalities, climate change, minority rights, and/or child/youth participation? ■ Are there sensitive issues that may present challenges for gaining the attention of faith groups ■ Which platforms and mechanisms from the JOC do they use? ■ Do they monitor or evaluate their work? What are some recent results?

Participatory mapping with a specific community can be an important way to identify key actors at a more local level. For example, UNICEF Nigeria has used social mapping to understand polio outbreaks and resistance to vaccination. In social mapping, participants work through various questions to create a map that identifies social groups, neighbourhoods, areas, community assets and institutions, networks, influencers, key actors, access, acceptance, resistance, and problems.

How do we identify when it is appropriate to engage with those less obvious/not already connected with international development partners? There may be some faith actors who are more suited to work with particular communities, depending on the predominant faith group within the programme area and target population. When inviting partners to Mind-Heart Dialogue sessions it is important to think about the balance of representation or understand when it might be appropriate to have smaller sessions for different groups in the first instance. The diagram below provides some questions and constituencies to consider when attempting to identify the right people to engage.

How to approach the right people in hierarchical and non-hierarchical religions

The people closest to communities are often the most local level religious leaders, their spouses, women's groups, or youth groups, and they will be the primary groups involved in a SBC engagement. However, it might be necessary to work with a higher-level religious leader initially to introduce an idea or gain approval in order to respect the faith tradition's hierarchy and command the necessary attention of a wider number of people in the faith community. If the work focusses on policy and systems-level change, advocacy with higher-level religious leaders might be the most appropriate engagement. Yet it cannot be assumed that working with high-level religious leaders will lead to messages cascading to the most local levels. Even with a hierarchy in place, there may be varying degrees of connection between the levels. Some faith traditions might not be organised in this hierarchical way and may be much more decentralised, which will mean building a wider set of relationships with individual leaders and other faith actors.

Figure 9. Questions and constituencies to consider when identifying the right people to be engaged

Questions to ask	Constituencies to consider
Who has the greatest reach and engagement within the community?	Formal and informal religious leadership
Who has the greatest trust?	Male and female religious leaders
Who has existing views aligned with programme areas?	High-, mid-, and grassroots level leaders
Who is a potential blocker that can prevent the success of the partnership and resulting activities? Is there a common issue in which to find a middle ground?	Inter-faith and intra-faith
	Adult and youth leaders
	Consider other contextually relevant points of inclusivity, such as class, race, and ethnicity

Adapted from: Elisabeth le Roux and Selina Palm, "What Lies Beneath? Tackling the roots of religious resistance to ending child marriage," Research Report, Girls Not Brides, 2018, p14.

3.5 Learning About and Listening to Children and their Communities

Undertaking evidence generation and analytical work together is the beginning of establishing and forming a solid, equitable, and long-term partnership. The analysis should happen within and across the levels of influence, including intra-faith, faith and community, and inter-faith. Evidence points towards the vital importance, but continued rarity, of formative research in development programming with faith actors.[35]

For the FPCC Initiative, the process of undertaking formative research becomes part of the relationship building process in this model. The following types of evidence can be used when starting a partnership and developing an action plan between faith and development actors:

- **Formative research driven by surveys** – this usually includes professional researchers conducting Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) surveys and other similar research to establish baseline information on certain behaviours as well as how religious beliefs and practices nfluence and are influenced by those behaviours. Standard formative research processes, such as KAP surveys, are an important methodology. For example, in 2018-2019, UNICEF Malawi joined with a number of research partners to undertake a study on traditional practices throughout the country, with particular findings around marriage and initiation rituals.[36] However, these are not the only types of evidence generation that should be applied. UNICEF COs have organised more in-depth surveys in which they have studied religious elements. Faith actors themselves may not have the finances to undertake large surveys, but they frequently have good links to communities and the ability to undertake forms of participatory research to consult those affected and focus on a priority or set of priority issues.

Formative research "is an activity conducted at the beginning of the social and behaviour change intervention or strategy design process. It is used to gain insight into the issue or behaviour the project intends to address; relevant characteristics of primary and secondary audiences; communication access, habits, and preferences; and the main drivers of behaviour. Formative research is critical to developing programme materials, tools, and approaches that are culturally and geographically appropriate."

- **Formative research that is participatory in nature** – religious leaders who are not researchers themselves can lead participatory research. Participatory research is particularly important to the FPCC Initiative as this form of research is the basis of joint investigation and discovery, which can build the partnership between development and faith actors in a way that is not extractive of information from faith actors, but prioritises working together, hearing everyone's voices (including children), and asking questions that are relevant for both faith and development partners. The UNICEF/University of Pennsylvania, Social Norms Group (PENN SoNG) guide, "Everybody Wants to Belong,"[37] also provides many useful participatory tools that can be used to guide much of this formative research process.
- **Formative research/listening to faith actors and children as the basis to initiate dialogue** – Although there may be previous KAP surveys and other formative research, it is still important to undertake a new process in conjunction with faith actor partners. This will allow UNICEF and faith actors to undertake research jointly with the faith community to find common ground in terms of key issues and concerns and build capacity with a key local actor. This will help to build a research base that is jointly understood and agreed between development and faith partners, that is contextually appropriate, and underscores the participatory and equitable approach that is the basis of the rest of the partnership.

Suggested Tool

In the Facilitators' Guide, there is a Journey of Life participatory research tool that UNICEF and faith partners can use to explore the background and current situation for child rights in a given context.

- **Establishing community feedback mechanisms with local faith partners** – the first step in a planned comprehensive "WorkRock process" is to undertake the Journey of Life participatory research mentioned above, but this process can represent the beginning of instituting regular dialogue and feedback with faith actors and their communities. Listening is not a one-off activity, but rather should be instituted as an ongoing process so that feedback is mainstreamed in a more systematic and on-going way. Information collected through community feedback mechanisms can also be shared with other colleagues to help guide and encourage their own considerations around forming faith partnerships. This could include establishing and updating a set of Frequently Asked Questions about faith and children that colleagues with queries can consult.

- **Formative research driven by secondary analysis of existing research** – this includes reviews of existing findings from other researchers, UNICEF COs, UN agencies, and NGOs. The FPCC Initiative recommends a framework for analysis of this existing research to identify key drivers of behaviours relevant to religions. This framework is described in the second part of this section below.
- **Identifying key drivers of social norms** – When searching for literature (academic articles, UNICEF and other UN and NGO research reports, etc.) in an area you wish to study, you can use the following framework on social norms theories and related behaviours to unpack how issues identified in the literature link to one of the social norm categories. This framework was developed from social norms theory and allows for an in-depth analysis. While this in-depth analysis is useful and is presented here as an additional tool, it might not always be possible given time and capacity limitations to support this level of analysis. The drivers are grouped around the norms in which they operate. Building on evidence from social norms theory, research on CM,[38] and on UNICEF's technical guidance on tackling social norms in SBC programming,[39] the following 5 areas of behavioural drivers have been grouped.

As part of the Mind-Heart Dialogue approach there are also various participatory tools and exercises that can be used in a WorkRock process to uncover drivers of social norms. For example, one tool is the "Drivers of Harmful Behaviour Participatory Drama" in which participants conduct a role-play exercise to demonstrate a story behind a particular social norm. In the WorkRock in South Sudan, the group chose to roleplay a story of CM, which included telling the story of a pastor's reasons for continuing with CM (they did not want to go against culture/custom), a mother's fear of losing status without the marriage and the impetus of financial gain for the family, the fact that the girl's voice was not heard in the decision making, the misinterpretation of religious teachings in the community, and the influence of peer pressure from other adolescent girls and young women.[40] The drama provided an opportunity to agree on and document specific and jointly-identified drivers of Child Marriage in the local context

We are now going to use the same example topic of CM to illustrate how to use the 5 areas in the above framework. As CM is a frequent area of activity for SBC with faith actors, we have chosen this topic as a relevant example for illustration. A search of the literature according to these primary social norms identified that faith is linked to CM in the following ways along the lines of the main levels of influence from individual to family to community to system level.

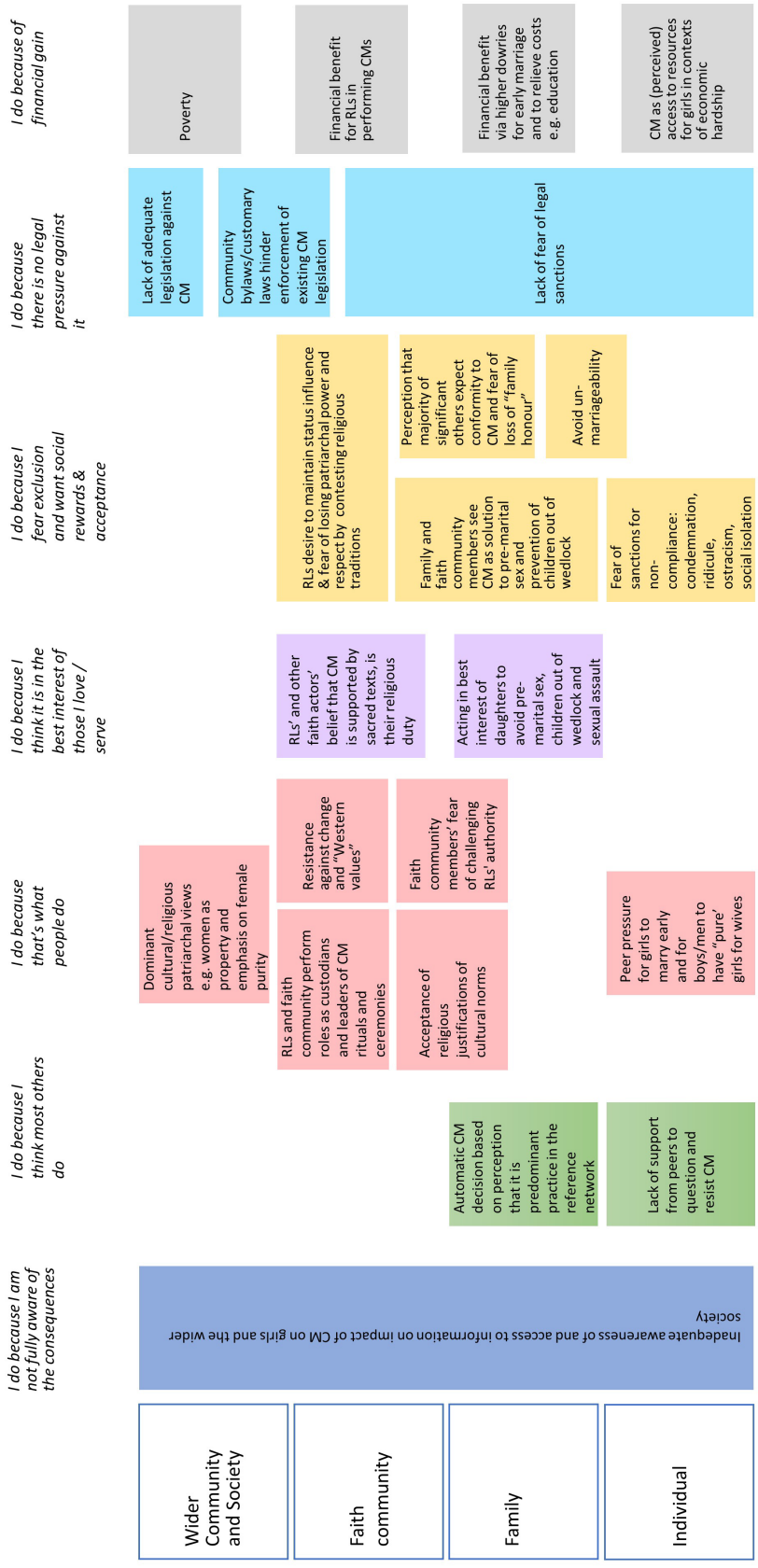
Table 3. The behavioural drivers framework

Type of Behavioural Drivers	Description of the Associated Drivers	Explanation of How the Driver Influences Behaviour
Access to Information	Drivers related to inadequate education and awareness about the consequences of CM on childre	"I do because I am not fully aware of the harmful consequences."
Descriptive Norms	Beliefs about what other people do	"I do because I think most other people do it." "I do because that's just what people do – it's normal."
Injunctive Norms	Beliefs about what other people approve of	"I do because I think it's right and in the best interest of those I love/serve." "I do because other people think I should do it."
Sanctions and Benefits/Outcome Expectancies	Beliefs about perceived benefits/ rewards or sanctions/punishments related to a behaviour	"I do because I fear exclusion and want social rewards and acceptance." "I do because there is no legal pressure against it." "I do because of financial gain."
Risk Perception	A personal judgement about the possibility and severity of a risk	"I do because I don't think the risk will affect me."

Social and behavioural drivers of child marriage

Figure 10. Social and behavioural drivers of child marriage

RL = Religious Leaders. CM = Child Marriage.



3.6 Prioritising and Planning the Journey of Change

The FPCC JOC framework and process allows religious leaders and faith communities to adapt the Faith and Positive Change for Children JOC for their own context and priority thematic issues. Once the initial partnership building and research is complete, this next step helps to formalise the joint strategy design, continuing in a spirit of equitable and joint decision making guided by the FPCC Principles.

3.6.1 Defining the Desired Change

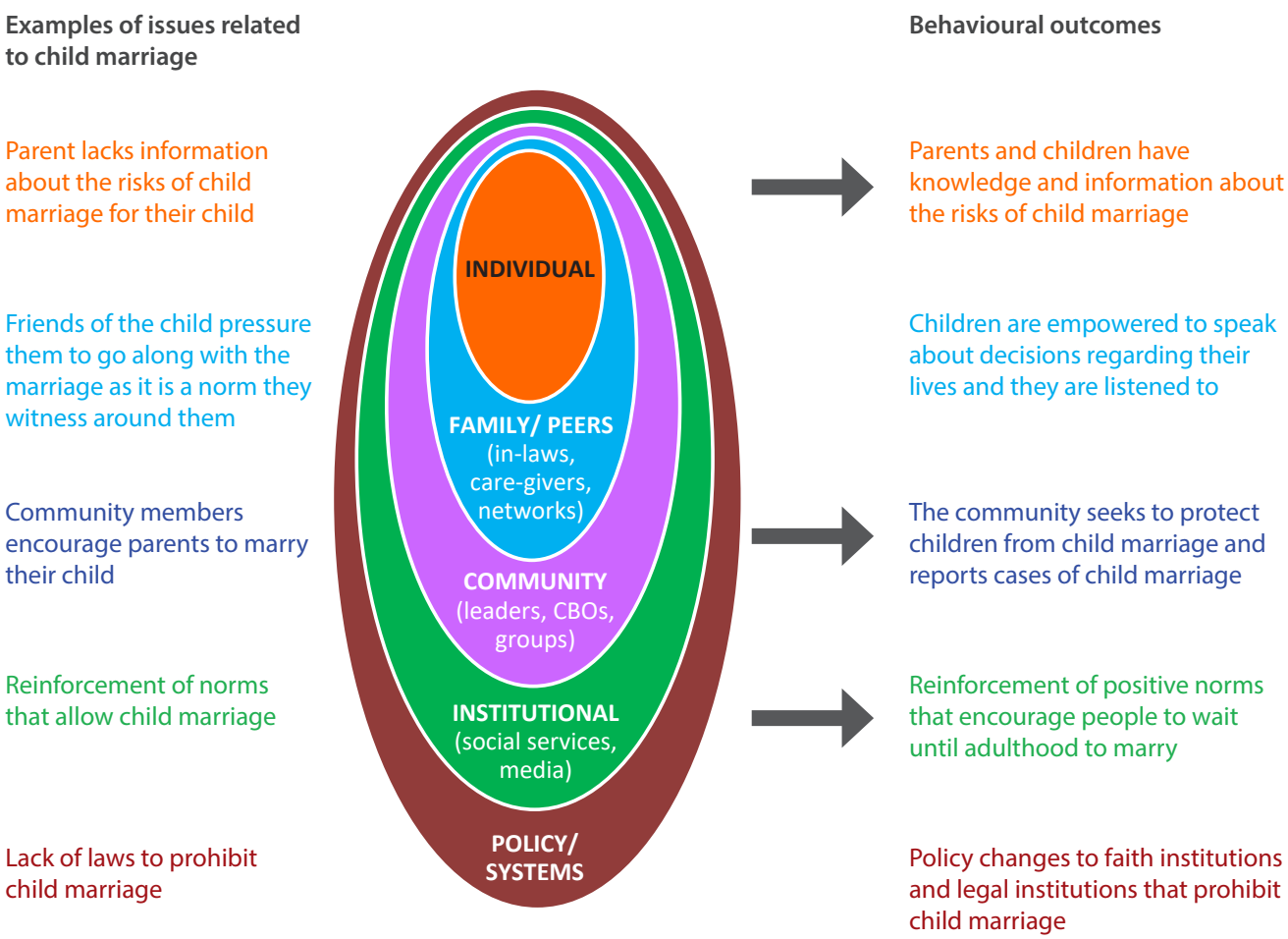
The formative research and analysis of issues at different levels described in the previous section now helps identify the outcomes to aim for in the programme.

In the FPCC JOC, the two ends of the diagram can be seen as "book ends" of the JOC: where we can analyse the issues, challenges, and barriers and drivers affecting different levels of society on one side (left), and then link them to the eventual long-term changes desired on the other side (right). In the FPCC JOC, the outcomes and results focus on large-scale objectives for change across the main UNICEF results areas and SBC outcomes. Some elements have been incorporated that are specifically relevant to work with faith actors, such as the recognition that hope, spirituality, and ethics may be seen as a high priority result.

The figure below gives some examples of issues children face and shows how they link to outcomes and results. Formative research and discussions between partners help define the issues facing children. In jointly defining outcomes and results, development and faith partners can understand where they want to go and how to get there.

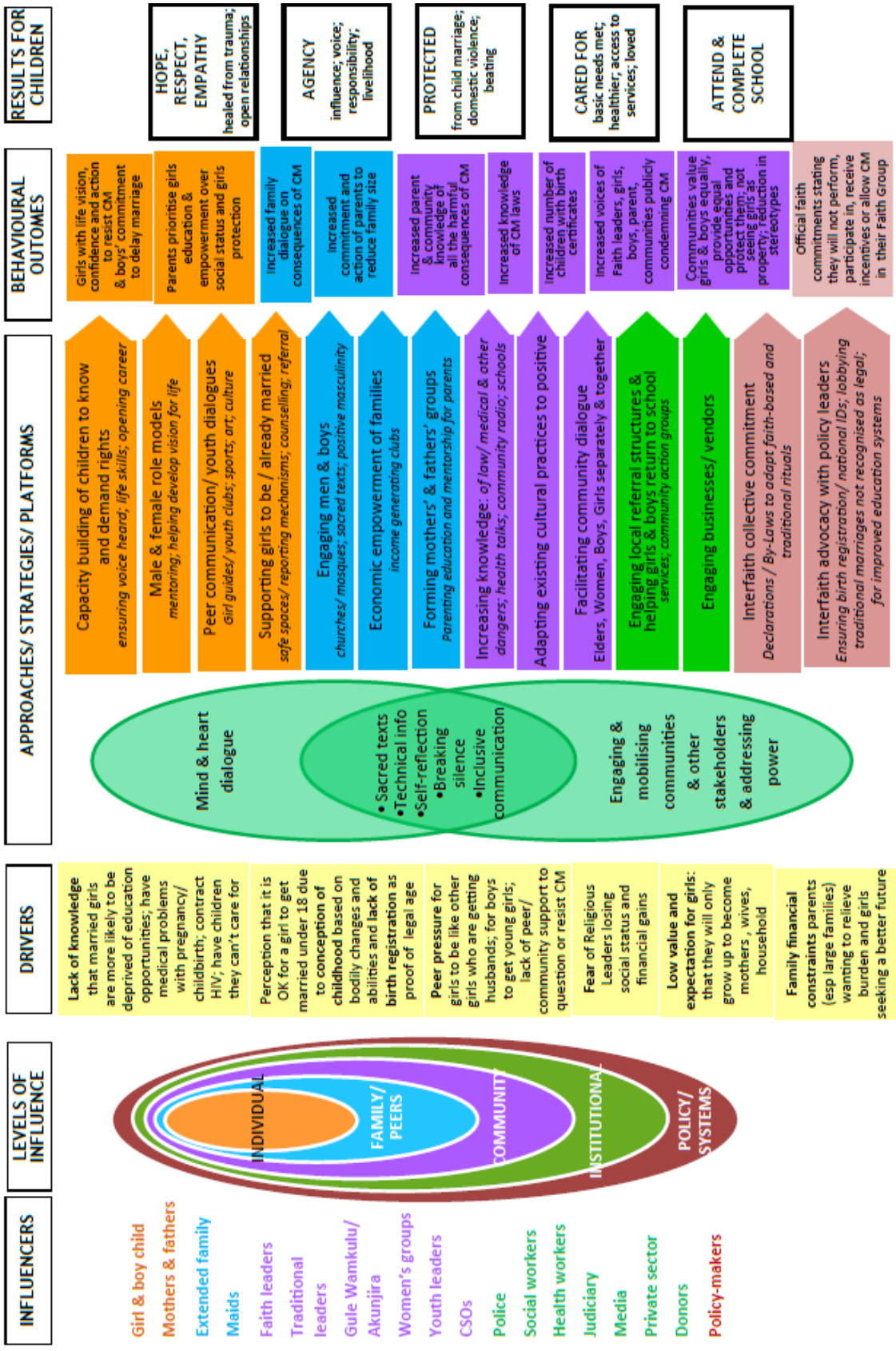
The figure below defines how to apply the JOC to a specific issue, again using the example of CM.

Figure 11. Linking issues across the socio-ecological model to behavioural outcomes



Malawi FPCC journey of change to end child marriage

Figure 12. The Malawi FPCC JOC to end child marriage



When adapting this part of your JOC, and in consultations with faith partners, there may be a focus on more specific outcomes and results related to the specific area of change, e.g. if the focus area is CM or vaccination, etc. it is important to go back to the barriers and drivers of change, building on the formative research and identification of barriers and drivers from literature reviews, as well as discussions during Mind-Heart Dialogues, to understand what impediments might be in the way of achieving the outcomes and results and what key drivers might be best to prioritise.

This is a complex process, and a high level of analysis might not be achievable in some contexts. However, the fundamental message here is that **outcomes and results should be jointly developed between faith and development partners, and that the identification of those outcomes and results should be based on as much formative research and analysis as possible.** The Mind-Heart Dialogue process outlined in the Facilitators' Guide, the complementary guide to this document, brings participants through a journey that allows these joint decisions to be made. For example, the UNICEF Malawi CO worked with its faith partners over a 5-day Mind-Heart Dialogue to create the following JOC, with their own jointly defined outcomes and results. The Malawi Journey of Change for Child Marriage above (Figure 13) shows how the development of a JOC is not only for an overall faith engagement initiative but can also be used to develop a framework to unpack a specific focus area.

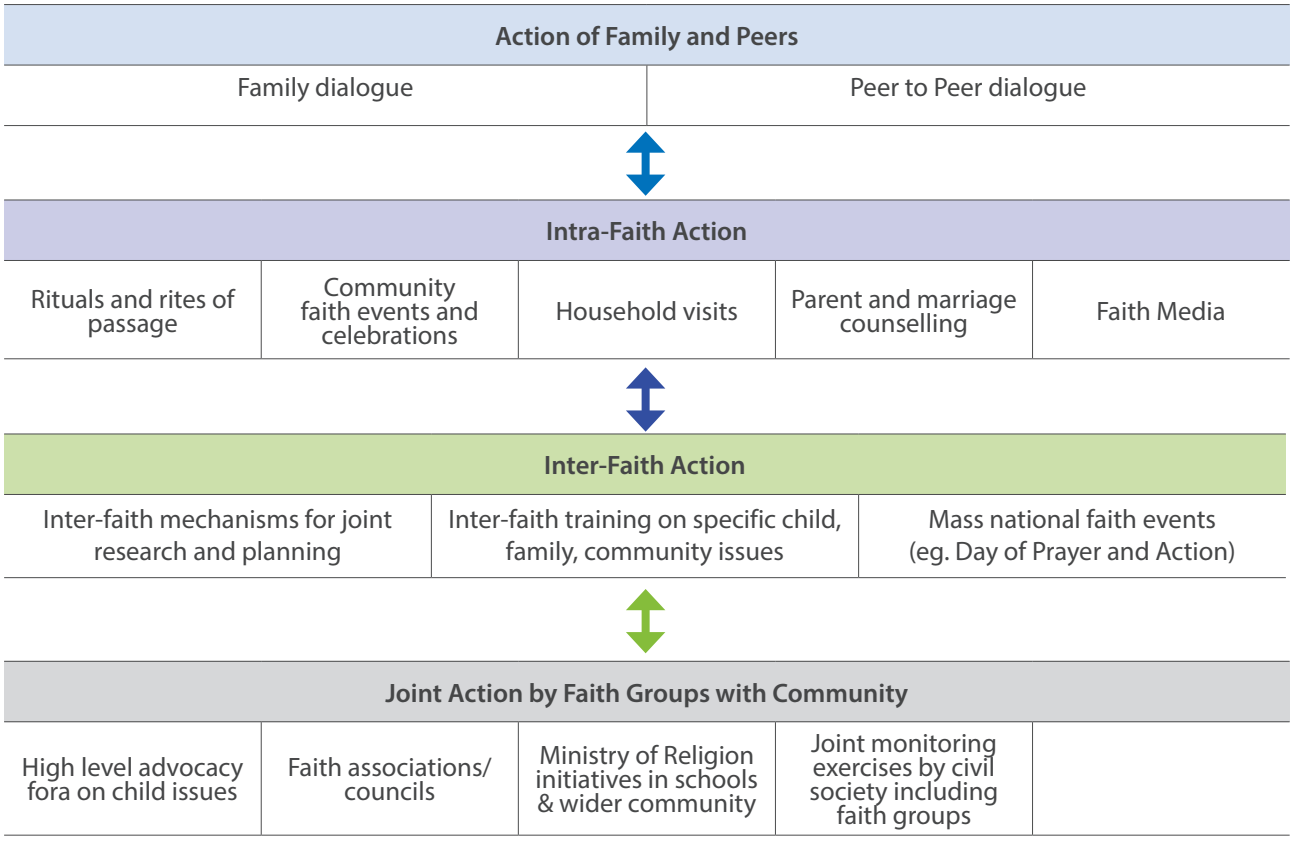
3.6.2 Entry Points/Platforms

The next step after defining the desired change, is to identify key entry points or platforms i.e. the mechanisms already in existence that can act as primary opportunities for engaging faith communities and influencing change. Figure 14 demonstrates some of the main entry points/platforms identified from the global evidence review.

It should be noted that this figure is not necessarily exhaustive, and there could be other entry points to identify in any context. The development partner and relevant faith actors should discuss the following aspects in relation to selecting priority platforms:

- Which entry points/ platforms are the most common/widespread (to maximize reach)?
- Which entry points/platforms are the most influential (to maximize engagement)?
- Which entry points/platforms are the ones most linked to the programme area of interest (to maximize relevance)?

Figure 13. Platforms and mechanisms that constitute some of the main potential entry points for FPCC, as aligned with core strategies and levels of engagement from the FPCC JOC



Key interventions

Mind-Heart Dialogue, as the foundational approach to faith engagement, can be organised at multiple levels. This section provides more specific explanation of the types of opportunities that exist within local faith communities for engagement and influencing change. These examples are drawn from the extensive evidence work undertaken for the FPCC Initiative.

Parent and marriage counselling - Religious leaders conduct marriage rites and marriage counselling. These are key opportunities for them to facilitate reflection on relationships, self-care, and parenting practices (e.g. discouraging CM, sharing child-care responsibilities, addressing violence against women and other key themes and practices for child wellbeing). For example, in Ethiopia, priests will engage with women who come to them for marital advice. Following training with the Centre for Interfaith Action, priests pledged not to promote FGM/C or CM and undertake pre-marital counselling to advise against these practices.

Household visits – Recognising that parents are their children's first teachers and that many challenges around children's wellbeing start at home, faith communities can organise networks of volunteers trained in Mind-Heart Dialogue to conduct household visits to guide parents on a range of caregiving skills and to provide spiritual and psychosocial support. This can be especially important for the most vulnerable families and parents who may not have received such support through government services.

Peer-to-peer – Beyond roles by the more established leadership, peer members of faith communities can be mobilised and trained to facilitate Mind-Heart Dialogue and serve as champions of change. Male gender champions can help break the silence on sensitive issues on GBV; women peer mentors can support breastfeeding mothers; youth peer mentors can support young people suffering from anxiety or depression. For example, as part of their COVID-19 response, RfP mobilised young people of faith in Kenya to offer peer encouragement to other young people who have been affected by unemployment and isolation. Youth leaders from the Kenya Interfaith Youth Network organised a campaign with music compositions that included messages of encouragement and connection for 10,000 young people in their network.

Faith meetings, celebrations, retreats – Regular faith meetings (e.g. Friday or Sunday worship) or faith-related mass gatherings (such as pilgrimages and religious celebrations) or observances (such as annual Days of Prayer and Action that occur on set calendar dates) can provide important opportunities to raise awareness and outreach to touch the minds and hearts of a wider population while religious retreats provide an opportunity for more in-depth Mind-Heart Dialogue sessions. For example, pilgrimages can be an important time for cooperation in Ethiopia. They occur on set calendar dates and can be incorporated into joint planning between UNICEF and faith partners with detailed engagement strategies. In Panama, UNICEF and COEPA (the Interreligious Council of Panama) have achieved outreach through an annual Day of Prayer and Action to End Violence Against Children. At the end of the campaign month, a Catholic mass is televised nationally with the participation of other faith-based groups leaders.

Rituals and rites of passage – Through Mind-Heart listening, dialogue, and reflection, religious leaders can find creative ways of adapting the where, when, and how of traditional religious rites, rituals, and practices (without losing their meaning), to address barriers and opportunities for children and family wellbeing. E.g. adapting the timing of religious ceremonies to announce women's pregnancies to communities has helped to increase women's willingness to begin essential antenatal care (ANC) visits on time; religious leaders agreeing to perform pre-birth ceremonies outside healthcare facilities has increased women's willingness to deliver their babies there to avoid more risky home births; adapting methods for washing, dressing, and perfuming corpses in collaboration with health authorities has helped reduce disease transmission in public health emergencies such as Ebola and COVID-19.

Faith and secular media – Developing faith-centred media content and programmes (e.g. talk shows, testimonies, docu-dramas, and social media messages) on both faith and secular media platforms - can help raise awareness of issues, show religious role models practicing desired behaviours, and spark dialogue amongst faith and wider communities. This is an opportunity not only to influence shifts in attitudes and behaviour, but also to demonstrate how to engage people in a Mind-Heart Dialogue. In Egypt, for instance, UNICEF and a number of partners, including the Ministry of Religious Endowment, Advocacy and Training Sector, Al-Azhar University, the Coptic Orthodox Church, the National Council for Childhood & Motherhood, and other faith partners, have developed SBC programming on ending violence against children (VAC) which

includes radio broadcasts discussing issues like good parenting, and an 11-episode docu-drama video series in Arabic with English subtitles, integrating information from medical and health, as well as religious, social, and cultural perspectives.

Faith-run services – Many faith-based organisations run their own healthcare services or special services e.g. Madrasas, shelters for migrants, drop-in centres for street children, or centres for children with disabilities. These networks of services can provide multiple opportunities to influence improved self-care practices and empower vulnerable groups. Faith groups and communities can also work with government-run services to become more inclusive and change attitudes and behaviours that form barriers to people accessing and using them. For instance, in Mexico, UNICEF works with 20 Catholic shelters throughout the country to engage and support Children on the Move, through a specific program aimed at improving the wellbeing of unaccompanied and accompanied migrant children and adolescents through the provision of psychosocial support.

Children and youth programmes: Specific worship and religious programmes organised for children and youth (e.g. Sunday schools, faith-based recreational clubs, and youth camps) can provide opportunities for direct Mind-Heart Dialogue with and for children and young people. This can be done through child-centred activities such as stories, storytelling, drama, and videos which can provide a means for children to reflect on and discuss their own problems and solutions.

Advocacy – When changes to policies and laws are needed to protect or improve the lives of children and the wider community, religious leaders can provide an influential force to call for and demand such change. They can develop a common stand through their own denominations and faith professional associations or even more powerfully through inter-faith efforts. On the other hand, religious leaders also have an important role to play in mobilising their followers to adhere to existing positive policies and laws that can help to improve lives. For example, in the country, the joint UNICEF-ABAAD program uses an integrated system-wide approach that involves the full participation of religious leaders of all major religions in Lebanon. ABAAD is a secular partner organisation implementing a country-wide program from policy to community level on the basis of its past experience in successfully navigating the complex religious and political environment. These advocacy efforts with influential faith leaders led to the abolishment of article 522 on prosecution of rape cases, which permitted rapists to avoid prosecution through marrying their victims.

3.6.3. Addressing Cross Cutting Priorities

A lens for cross-cutting areas is the final element to consider when designing your JOC and action plan to implement it. The Table on the following page in Section 3.6.3 provides an overview of Cross-Cutting Priorities that should be considered in all faith engagement work. The box below highlights the specific contribution that partnerships with faith actors can make in bridging support to both humanitarian and development goals.

Humanitarian-Development Nexus

UNICEF has a mandate across humanitarian and development scenarios. While UNICEF has linked humanitarian and development work in the past, there is the opportunity to do more and a need to harness these linkages as protracted crises occur and the lines between humanitarian and development work blur. The two are deeply interlinked as good humanitarian action can establish reliable recovery processes that lead to opportunities for long-term development, but likewise, sound development work that builds people's capacities and reduces their vulnerabilities to disaster risks can ensure that the impacts of shocks and crises are not as critical.

Recommended actions from the UNICEF procedure on linking humanitarian and development programming include building local capacity, improving emergency preparedness, monitoring the quality of linkages between humanitarian and development efforts, to conduct risk informed programming, and to build partnerships that can support crisis affected communities. Faith partners can be key in many Humanitarian-Development Nexus efforts, for example:

- **Local faith actors are both first and last responders** – they do not work within humanitarian and development silos per se but view situations and communities as a whole, naturally seeing overlaps in the nexus and working across development and humanitarian agendas.
- **Local faith actors are active not only across the humanitarian and development nexus but also the third aspect of the triple nexus – peace.** Interfaith peace work, for example, is an area in which faith actors are well known to operate and can have effects on long-term development and shorter-term abilities to provide a humanitarian response in crises.
- **Local faith actors benefit from capacity strengthening and sharing in regard to improving their own emergency preparedness plans and helping with risk assessments.**

There are 4 key cross-cutting issues that should be mainstreamed throughout all faith engagement processes: incorporating a gender lens, assessing and addressing the marginalisation of minority groups, including religious minorities, ensuring children and youth participation, and linking humanitarian and development silos. While these are the most critical cross-cutting issues across all contexts, other cross-cutting areas can be added or prioritised, as appropriate, such as environmental issues. The 4 key cross cutting priorities for faith engagement are described as follows:

Figure 14. Key cross-cutting issues in faith engagement

	Gender	Marginalisation of Minorities	Child & Youth Participation	Humanitarian-Development
Definitions of Cross-Cutting Areas	Promoting and supporting greater engagement of women of faith and from the wider community in both formal and non-formal leadership positions; and working with men and existing structures to remove gender barriers in faith and the wider society.	Ensuring that faith-led social and behaviour change efforts engage and give space to the voices, perspectives, and experiences of those from the most marginalised groups including and not limited to women, children, ethnic or religious minorities, and people with disabilities.	Ensuring children and youth influence the change process by engaging their faith and secular groups, clubs and networks; developing their role in leadership; and facilitating space for their voices to be heard and for them to influence decisions at all levels.	Engaging faith actors more systematically across humanitarian, development, and peace silos, especially at the local level and for children, recognising the increased frequency, scale, and intensity of protracted crises due to climate change and conflict that need multi-sectoral responses.
Examples of Cross-Cutting Areas	Tearfund's Transforming Masculinities approach involves the selection of "gender champions," community members whose role is that of facilitating dialogue and raising awareness in the community, for instance through training focusing on gender-related issues offered to young parents. This means finding informal positive deviant leaders in faith communities to act as peer-to-peer mentors to break the silence on delicate issues and eradicate, in this case, Gender Based Violence.	The Coalition for Religious Equality and Inclusive Development is working to demonstrate that the needs of religious minorities have been sometimes sidelined in humanitarian and development work. Religious minorities also face intersecting inequalities. For example, from research in Pakistan, the Coalition found that "Women who belong to religious minorities, who are socioeconomically excluded and are vulnerable to multiple sources of GBV in Pakistan, seem to have fallen through the cracks of the 'leave no one behind' agenda."	In Panama, UNICEF and COEPA have brought together diverse denominations to advocate for an end to violence against children. For over a decade, outreach to the wider population has been achieved through an annual Day of Prayer and Action to End Violence Against Children. COEPA and UNICEF established an annual Youth Assembly, through which adolescents learn more about their rights. UNICEF also conducted a study called La Voz de los Adolescentes, which found adolescents trust religious leaders more than local authorities.	In South Sudan, faith actors have long been identified as key peacebuilders in the young country's recent history. But in interviews for research on the humanitari-development-peace nexus, local faith actors also emphasised how they have consistently been working in the humanitarian and development fields too, bridging across silos by connecting with their communities to understand intersecting needs and creatively using their resources to respond to these issues.

3.7 System Strengthening for Strategic Faith Engagement

The previous sections have outlined an approach for working with faith actors to jointly develop a JOC that includes the key steps detailed above and use of the Mind-Heart Dialogue approach to encourage reflective discussion. To ensure that support to faith engagement can move beyond project-oriented approaches to achieve quality, at-scale, sustainable programming to achieve multi-sectoral results for children, families and communities, it is important that investments are made to strengthen the overall system for faith engagement. Planned and proactive supporting strategies can help implementation of the other component parts of the JOC by strengthening the inter-faith enabling environment in which implementation is happening. This relates to the bottom of the FPCC JOC diagram, and the following 4 key aspects displayed below (Figure 16). This section explains each of these aspects, except evidence generation and monitoring & evaluation, which are addressed in section 5 *(5. Checking on Progress – Monitoring and Evaluation)*.

3.7.1 Coordination and Partnership

- When building a new FPCC partnership and programme at country level, **a coordination structure is recommended.** Coordination is needed because some groups may be preferred over others, groups can otherwise work in silos and duplicate efforts which also divides the attention of faith actors instead of converging their attention on common and inter-linked goals. In most cases, a country will already have an existing inter-faith coordination mechanism (e.g. RfP's Interreligious Councils). The UNICEF CO should first investigate the nature of existing faith coordinating structures and then promote the establishment of a sub-committee of this structure specifically focussed on children, families, and communities.
- The proposed structure can be called a **Multi-Faith Action Coordination Committee (MFACC)** as proposed in the draft TOR (Annex 2). MFACC is a mechanism to support coordination between UNICEF (and subsequently other development partners) and country level faith actors, (including interreligious councils, religious leaders and local/national FBOs), on setting joint priorities for children, families, and communities, as well as for ensuring that an action agenda is jointly developed, resourced, and monitored. While recognising that the establishment of a MFACC will be a commitment over a period of time and may not be feasible in all circumstances, this is the recommended course of action to secure the long-term sustainability of UNICEF's strategic faith engagement in a country.
- A national MFACC serves as a country-level, voluntary entity to support more effective, efficient, and inclusive faith engagement on jointly defined priorities and actions for families and communities that are locally owned and sustainable. The main purpose of a MFACC is to provide strategic advice to and be a platform for complementarity and collaboration amongst faith actors and UNICEF/development partners supporting a child-family-community centred agenda. It will be responsible for the development, coordination, and reporting of inter-faith partnership activities and joint plans of action related to this agenda.
- Ultimately, to serve the wider development and humanitarian agenda, the aim is that in the long term the MFACC will serve as a national interreligious advisory body for wider issue-specific coordination mechanisms for children and families (e.g. National Maternal, New-born and Child Health Committees, National Child Protection or Violence Against Children Committees and Risk Communications and Community Engagement (RCCE) committees in the context of emergency or humanitarian issues, as well as for the overarching UNICEF or UN country programme). While the MFAC is still being established, it will be important for religious representatives to be invited to existing groups such as RCCE working groups. For more information on the recommended ways to establish and operate an MFACC, see Annex 2 for an example of a draft MFACC TOR which can be adapted for local use.

Figure 15. Systems strengthening approaches

3.7.2 Capacity Strengthening of Development and Faith Actors

Applying a systems strengthening approach encourages a comprehensive cross-sectoral effort to capacity sharing between development and faith partners. Capacity development is applicable for all in the partnership – both development and faith actors.

- **For development actors,** capacity development can be understood as growth seen in the FPCC way of working, including understanding and working from the core FPCC principles as well as understanding principles of religious literacy. UNICEF staff should participate as equals and counterparts in Mind-Heart Dialogues and, in so doing, should also experience a deepened understanding of faith partners and issues connected to faith, including increased self-awareness of how to understand the roles of religions in society. Mind-Heart Dialogues are not simply another training for religious leaders. Instead, they should equally serve as an opportunity for UNICEF staff to develop their capacities and sensitivities on meaningful faith and inter-faith engagement and partnerships.
- **For faith actors,** entering a partnership with a development partner comes with new demands. This is not to say that faith partners lack capacity in general, but rather an appreciation that development demands specific technical knowledge and capacities. There will be different and complementary capacities between faith and development partners. Faith partners may encounter some barriers in certain areas, such as administrative capacity to work with development requirements and compliance measures, which can be a difficulty and may benefit from additional capacity strengthening. This is in line with a capacity sharing (not one-way, top-down capacity building) principle of the FPCC. Just as faith actors will help development partners access communities and build child wellbeing, development partners should help faith actors fulfil their mandate to serve communities holistically.

3.7.3 Developing Supporting Materials

It is likely that UNICEF COs in collaboration with their faith partner will need to develop supporting materials to help guide programme implementation. Evidence shows that developing sermon and khutbah guides or messaging guides (with technical information) aimed at religious leaders is a default tool used in previous faith-development work. While these resources may still have a role to play, the FPCC Initiative encourages a move away from reliance on these types of materials alone, as they represent only one aspect (religious teachings/scripture) of the 3-pronged Mind-Heart Dialogue approach (leaving out the personal/reflective aspect that is required to influence change).

With any resource material developed to support faith engagement, an important step is to ensure recognised religious scholars from a number of religions (with a diversity of schools and denominations within each) validate toolkits. Scholars can review materials and make suggestions about how to appropriately cite religious teachings and integrate teachings alongside other technical information. Religious teachings should not be used without this validation nor is it recommended that religious teachings and technical guides be developed separately without cross-referencing. Again, the fundamental approach of Mind-Heart Dialogue reminds us to integrate and collaborate between technical and faith approaches.

Check the FPCC website (www.faith4positivechange.org) before developing your own materials to see if there are existing toolkits that can help your process.

Many toolkits and guides already exist for the mobilisation of religious leaders and faith communities on various matters related to development goals. Not all these materials represent good practice. They should be analysed in conjunction with this guide, particularly questioning whether they are in line with the principles of engagement and seek to work across the Mind-Heart domains. For example, be wary of toolkits that seem to focus on instrumentalising faith actors only for their assets without collaboration and cooperation. However, there are many helpful toolkits or aspects of toolkits, some of which are summarised on the FPCC website.

3.7.4 Training of Trainers

A key aspect of capacity development unique to the FPCC Initiative is the aim of building a consortium of FPCC accredited trainers, from international and national faith partners, who can serve as a loose network of persons that ascribe to the same core principles and foundation approaches to help others use and implement a Mind-Heart Dialogue. An FPCC consortium of master trainers will be able to facilitate the transfer of skills over time so that wider groups of faith actors, UNICEF, and other development organisation staff are equipped to support Mind-Heart Dialogue principles and approaches.

The FPCC training model is intended to be adaptable to the structures and needs of any context. For example, the models through which trainers can be trained include:

- Multi-country regional virtual trainings
- Inter-faith or intra-faith training at country level
- Incorporating training into the curriculum of religious leaders, e.g. partnership with Al-Azhar University in conjunction with UNICEF Egypt and MENA Regional office
- Building on government structures of religion through ministries of religion (as described in Section 3.4.1)
- In conjunction with training of faith-based professional associations on specific thematic areas (e.g. faith-based medical associations such as Christian Health Associations).

3.7.5 Advocacy and Social Accountability

Faith actors have often been at the forefront of activism and social movements, demanding accountability from politicians and other decision makers and gaining widespread support. While faith actors are already involved in advocacy and social accountability, UNICEF's leadership on child and community focussed national coordination structures can facilitate more systematic engagement and allow faith actors' voices to be heard in policy discussions. Mobilising and engaging faith actors on theme-specific advocacy agendas can also be facilitated at sub-national /community levels through sector and cross-sector social accountability mechanisms such as District Health Committees, Parent/ Community education committees, WASH committees, and local governance committees.

In humanitarian contexts, the UN emphasises the need for improved accountability to affected populations (AAP) during crises and communication with communities (CwC). In its humanitarian work, UNICEF has committed to AAP, particularly to ensure that "affected children and families participate in the decisions that affect their lives, are properly informed and consulted, and have their views acted upon." The role of UNICEF in co-leading national RCCE committees with governments in many countries can help in aligning the efforts of faith and development partners' work and can be a way for faith actors to represent community voices to increase advocacy and accountability and enhance each other's approaches.

In any FPCC initiative, the interventions must be accountable to communities by:

- Promoting community participation in decision making, which is a core part of the Mind-Heart Dialogue process, especially the formative research processes and emphasis on listening to children and young people
- Providing information on people's rights and entitlements and how to exercise them
- Providing safe and accessible complaint mechanisms
- Ensuring systematic feedback loops that clearly explain the actions taken in response.
- Openly tracking complaints and responses bringing further transparency to the process.

Advocacy

Much of development actors' existing engagement with religions is around advocacy initiatives with high-level religious leaders. While the Mind-Heart Dialogue approach and FPCC principles aim to move development strategies away from *only* engaging with high-level religious leaders on advocacy, this is still an important part of the overall approach in strategic faith engagement.

Advocacy with high-level religious leaders can influence dominant narratives in a context to a profound degree and, therefore, advocacy agendas must be judiciously selected and discussed with religious leaders to find meaningful common ground and shared priorities. Putting considerable time into initial "getting on the same page" exercises and discussions are necessary in any relationship-building process between development partners and faith actors. This does not include forcing opinions or making uncomfortable compromises but finding middle ground issues where substantive work can be achieved. This will include understanding and unpacking differences in core understandings and finding where there are similarities and agreements.

The risk of instrumentalisation is high here: if development actors engage religious leaders on every issue, religious leaders can start to lose their own trusted positions, as communities can increasingly view them as the mouthpieces of external agendas. But advocacy on issues of concern that are also of interest to faith communities can be hugely complementary and mutually beneficial for faith and development partners.

Examples of Advocacy priorities with faith actors include efforts to tackle the learning crisis secure investment and action to support families and communities to bring an end to neglect, abuse and childhood traumas, and work with and for children and young people to tackle environmental degradation and climate change. These are all priorities that many religious leaders have already spoken out on, from vaccine equity[47] to climate change.[48] The opportunities for finding shared common ground and the history of joint action between development and faith partners on advocacy goals provide a solid foundation for future collaboration that is equitable. The following provides an example of successful faith-centred advocacy around the UNICEF Back to School Agenda:

Pope and Grand Imam signing Elimination of Violence Against Children Declaration Cairo, Egypt

Example: Back to School Initiative with the Inter-Religious Council of Kenya and UNICEF Kenya

The world's learning crisis (the fact that half of all 10-year-olds in lower- and middle-income countries are unable to read) started long before the COVID-19 pandemic. But the lockdowns and school closures experienced during the pandemic further disrupted children's learning and deepened the education crisis. At the peak of lockdowns, it was estimated that 1.5 billion students were out of school around the world. In Kenya in 2020, school closures interrupted learning for over 17 million children, who missed more than 6 months of formal education. In late 2020, UNICEF Kenya partnered with the Inter-religious Council of Kenya (IRCK) to respond to this issue.

Kenyan religious leaders released a series of video messages encouraging parents to send their children back to school in January 2021, as part of a 'back to school' campaign by the Kenyan Ministry of Education, UNICEF Kenya, and the IRCK. The campaign, #ComeTwendeShule, stressed that children are safer in schools than out of schools. Through video messages by leaders of different religions and denominations, the IRCK supported a successful drive for parents to bring their children back to school when classes resumed on 4 January 2021.

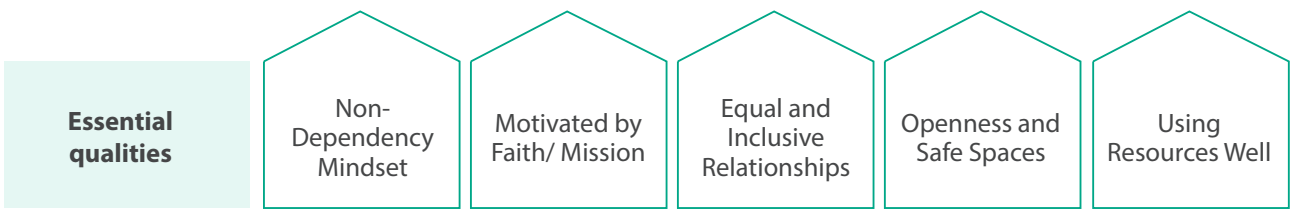
"The book of Hosea, Chapter Four, Verse Six, says that my people perished for lack of knowledge," he says. "It is important that we do not lose a generation because of us not giving them adequate knowledge." Reverend Father Joseph Mutie, Chairman of the Inter Religious Council of Kenya (IRCK)

"Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, said each one of you is a shepherd and each one of you is responsible for his flock." Sheikh Abdullatif, from the Kenya Council of Imams and Ulamaa, highlighted that children face increased risk of violence, child labour, and child marriage while not attending school.

Essential Qualities

In addition to the above components of systems strengthening for faith engagement, the following FPCC principles (covered in Section B) should always be considered as essential background qualities to aid systems strengthening. These are represented in the core "Essential Qualities" at the bottom of the JOC diagram.

Figure 16. Essential qualities for faith engagement



3.8 Checking on Progress – Monitoring, Evaluation, and Evidence Generation

The JOC helps guide the M&E process to check progress against the outcomes and results that have been defined. This section includes information on the background to M&E in FPCC and then explains the basics of the FPCC M&E approach. This section should be used as an accompaniment to the FPCC Monitoring and Evaluation Framework document.

3.8.1 Background Evidence on Faith and Monitoring & Evaluation in UNICEF

UNICEF's previous faith partnerships have a mixed history of M&E and evidence generation. Non-faith specific KAP surveys were the most prevalent type of evidence generation with faith partners, as indicated in this mapping of methods from the 20 countries that participated in an FPCC workshop in 2018 (see Figure 18 below).

From the FPCC case studies conducted in 2018, almost all the 17 countries that took part reported struggles with M&E in faith-related work. M&E is often a difficult area with limited resources, but there were also some faith specific elements that added to the difficulties. Faith partners can perceive M&E as something to serve external partners and as an unnecessary burden if they do not see worth in the learning for them and also for their organisation. An understanding of monitoring and who faith actors are ultimately accountable to are different to development objectives for M&E (e.g. faith actors are primarily accountable to their faith community and to their concept of the divine. Reporting to a far-off donor organisation does not take priority.)[48] But this is a primary reason to advance M&E in equitable partnerships to create questions and indicators that are of use and relevance to both faith and development partners.

Standard M&E methods, such as surveys and focus group discussions, are applicable in these partnerships, but it may also be necessary to expand and innovate with methods when working with faith actors. For example, **most significant change stories have been particularly successful in previous work with religious leaders in some contexts.**[50] It is a method that suits a storytelling style that is familiar within some faith communities and resonates more immediately with the religious leaders involved.

It is a challenge to create a M&E framework that includes the desired impact measurements but is also sensitive to different ways of viewing learning and the fact that local partners can view traditional M&E frames as unduly burdensome. UNICEF previously developed the ACT framework for M&E on social norms programming around FGM/C with Drexel University and UNFPA. It provides a basis of key principles that resonate with the FPCC principles and focusses on social norms and behaviour change, from which to start. Much of the first two elements (A and C) should be incorporated in the other processes of the FPCC JOC and action planning. The final element is to understand the change created over time.

Types of research and evidence

Figure 17. Existing research and evidence-based approaches between UNICEF and faith partners from 2018 mapping

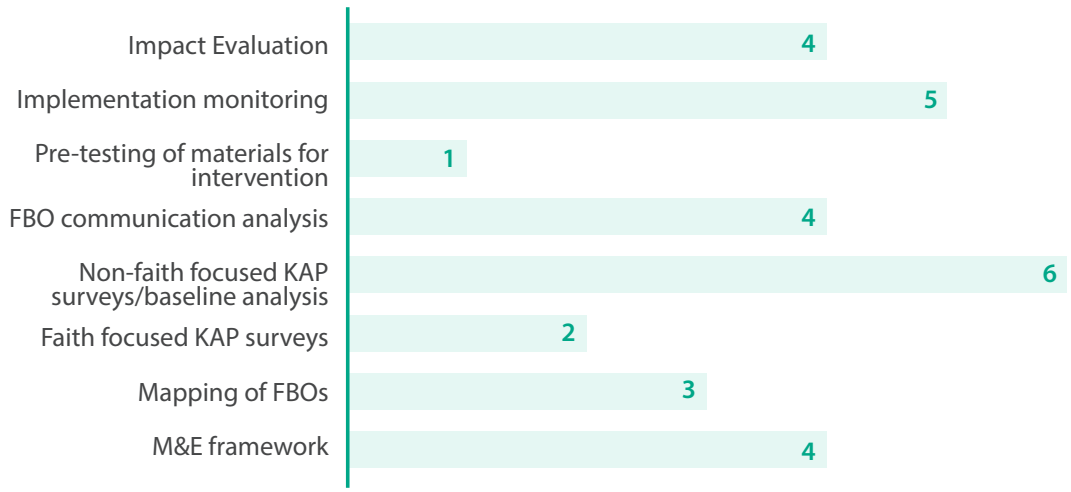


Figure 18. ACT framework for M&E on social norms programming connected to FGM/C

A	Assess what people know, feel, and do Ascertain "normative" factors: descriptive norms, injunctive norms, and outcome expectancies
C	Consider context, specifically gender and power Collect information on social networks and support
T	Track individual and social change over time Test and retest this framework

Starting with formative research, evidence generation and learning happens at every stage of the FPCC approach. With M&E, we can regularly check-in on progress and then intermittently evaluate longer-term impact.

3.8.2 The FPCC M&E Framework

The FPCC M&E framework exists to help guide M&E approaches in UNICEF's faith partnerships. The framework can be accessed separately on the www.faith4positivechange.org website. It is designed to provide a reliable, useful, ethical, and easy-to-use evaluation guidance and methodology that can be applied alongside ongoing monitoring work; and intends to capture evidence of change as a direct result of the FPCC programme. The M&E framework is designed to track change at 3 main levels, and which are intended to be influenced by FPCC strategies:

- Institutional/structural/partnership relations and coordination improvements
- Changes in communication and engagement processes
- Changes in factors affecting children, families, and communities

Religious Leaders Launching a Child Safeguarding Policy in Kenya
Photo Source: UNICEF Kenya

All partners of the FPCC JOC are accountable to each other in supporting change and therefore should have equal interest to know the extent to which and in what ways their joint efforts are making a difference. This information is important to inform changes that may be needed to improve further implementation of the efforts. Monitoring can take place at several different times and levels, including at the end of sessions and activities that are part of the Mind-Heart Dialogue approach (covered in the M&E section of the Facilitators' Guide).

Monitoring Religious Influence in Polio Campaigns

Monitoring on religious influence is already seen in many polio programmes within UNICEF. For example, there is reporting on the number of mosques making announcements, the number of religious leaders accompanying vaccinators, how many families knew about the campaign and from what sources, how many refused and how the numbers are changing. This is a specific approach for polio programmes and this type of data is particularly useful within campaigns. Monitoring around polio is somewhat different because there is a tangible result of taking a polio drop which is different than capturing attitudinal data, perception changes, and shifting social norms.

The M&E framework focusses on the programme level and specifies 3 domains where change should be monitored and evaluated. The following provides a summary outline of the main domains and core questions:

1. **Institutional/structural change in relation to faith actors**
   - Have there been any institutional improvements in inclusivity, partnership, coordination, and collaboration amongst faith organisations as a result of FPCC? This question focusses on the following dimensions:
     - Inter-faith inclusion/ownership/coordination
     - Intra-faith inclusion/ownership/coordination
     - FBO inclusion/ownership/coordination
     - Social inclusion
   - Have there been any improvements in coordination, coherence, and efficiency within UNICEF as a result of FPCC; and in the potential for sustainable coordination across global, regional, and country levels between UNICEF, religious leaders, faith-based organisations, and also between UNICEF with other organisations? This question focusses on the following dimensions:
     - Integration/consolidation of UNICEF-supported faith engagement across sectors
     - Mainstreaming faith engagement in UNICEF programming
     - Coordination within UNICEF
     - Non-instrumentalist approaches
2. **Changes in communication and engagement approaches**
   - Has there been an improvement in the quality of feedback and engagement facilitated by faith actors at the community and national level?
     - **RELEVANT and RESPONSIVE** in adapting to needs and emerging priorities.
     - **QUALITY** towards achieving the main aims (beyond messaging to participatory faith, Mind-Heart Dialogue approaches, more inclusive approaches, and power sharing).
     - **DIVERSE** in leveraging a range of strategies with a wider set of strategies/entry points as outlined in the JOC.
     - **TIMELINESS** in providing the right feedback/evidence at the right level for decision making, learning, and adopting what works
     - **ADVOCACY:** Have FPCC community engagement strategies been complemented by high level advocacy efforts to bring together prominent religious and government leaders to influence national policies and decisions?
3. **Change in factors affecting children, family, communities lives**
   - Has FPCC contributed to, or started to contribute to, making a difference in people's lives? Is there evidence that advocacy efforts of FPCC partners have led to policy change? Across the Journey of Change Priorities for Children:
     - Uptake of & demand for services
     - Improved parenting & wellbeing practices
     - Empowered children & youth with influence
     - Empowered marginalised communities & groups
     - Reinforcement of positive norms & abandonment of harmful norms
     - Peaceful, secure communities

Evaluation Methodology

Each of the domains has a full set of instructions and appropriate questions, which are not listed here to save space but are listed in the complete FPCC M&E framework. To ensure there is enough feedback to identify common themes, the framework recommends conducting approximately 48 one-to-one interviews and 8 focus group discussions, with no overlapping participants from each data source. The FPCC M&E Framework recommends speaking to different categories of FPCC partners to capture different viewpoints and to identify areas of agreement or disagreement from the various assessments of change, ensuring diversity of participants and disaggregating across age, gender, location, religious/cultural background, income/education level, and disability.

3.8.3 Indicators

FPCC, with its foundational Mind-Heart Dialogue approach, does not include pre-defined indicators. The reason for this is two-fold:

1. There are many different topics of focus and types of activities that might occur within the FPCC framing.
2. There is a desire to avoid being prescriptive and to honour the process of co-creation and equitable partnerships within the FPCC approach.

At the same time, there are many projects with faith partners that have previously developed indicators that can stimulate thinking and discussion on indicators that might be considered useful. For example, the Alliance for Peacebuilding has developed the Faith Matters toolkit to help guide M&E on interfaith peace projects (see p56-58 for example indicators). The Eirene database lists thousands of indicators that can be searched for those relevant to faith/religion. The main aim with indicators should be to identify those that are meaningful to all membership in the partnership, development and faith partners included. Some example indicators from UNICEF COs, Regional Offices (ROs), and Headquarters (HQ) are included in Annex 3.

3.8.4 Learning

The FPCC Initiative emphasises the need for continuous learning. Learning exchanges between faith and development partners can be beneficial and opportunities to share practice-based knowledge around faith engagement in SBC. For Country Offices, case studies, such as those already developed for some countries (https://www.faith4positivechange.org/case-studies) can help them analyse their work on faith engagement so far, which can in turn help identify the changes that need to be made in line with the rest of this guide's proposed principles and activities. The faith4positive change website (www.faith4positivechange.org) is the global FPCC knowledge management platform, updated with new case studies, guides, and other materials on a regular basis.

4. SECTION D – OPERATIONALISING STRATEGIC FAITH ENGAGEMENT IN UNICEF PROGRAMMING

This guide focusses on the programmatic pillar of UNICEF's faith engagement through the lead role of UNICEF's Social and Behaviour Change section, in collaboration with various Programme areas. Yet it is also important to understand how this scope of work fits in and must also align with other efforts led by other UNICEF divisions.

4.1 Global Level Structures within UNICEF Supporting Faith Engagement

The following diagram provides an overview of the main components and focus areas covered by 3 entities within UNICEF Headquarters that lead the faith engagement agenda: SBC Programme Division, Civil Society Advocacy in the Division of Communication, and the Private Fund-raising and Partnerships Division.

Figure 19. Components and focus of the 3 pillars of UNICEF's faith engagement

Components and Focus of the 3 Pillars of UNICEF's Faith Engagement		
ADVOCACY PILLAR	PROGRAMMATIC PILLAR	RESOURCE MOBILISATION PILLAR
- primarily HQ, with some RO/CO engagement (Civil Society Advocacy (CSA) within the Division of Communication)	- all HQ/RO/CO levels (SBC lead within Programme Division in collaboration with relevant programmes)	- HQ level (Private Fundraising and Partnerships (PFP) lead)
1. Representation on global task forces, e.g. - Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) on Religions and Development - Multi-Faith Advisory Council to the Inter-Agency Task Force	1. Support for implementation of the Faith and Social and Behaviour Change Planning Cycle, as described in Section C in collaboration with various Programmes	1. Management of Faith-specific funds and donations
2. Thematic Advocacy through campaigns and activities in line with the Global Advocacy Priorities, e.g. World Council of Churches Core Commitments for Children; Faith Action for Children on the Move; Global Network of Religions for Children; World Day of Prayer and Action for Children	2. Collaboration with other development partners to promote the coordination and alignment of programme strategies	2. Targeted fundraising strategies for UNICEF-supported provisions and services, e.g. Multi-Faith Giving Circle
3. Development and oversight of global MOUs with specific faith partners supporting UNICEF's work	3. Internal advocacy on FPCC mainstreaming in UNICEF programming and religious literacy on principles of FPCC	3. Development and oversight of MOUs with specific faith funding partners supporting UNICEF's work

4.2 Embedding Strategic Faith Engagement within UNICEF's SBC Work and Country Programming Cycle

As an international organisation in constant flux and bearing in mind the effects of staff turnover on projects, it is important to consider opportunities for moving beyond activity-level programming which has a limited life span, towards embedding a more sustainable and strategic faith engagement strategy within UNICEF's overall programming processes and cycle.

Positioning faith actors as routine partners at the table in programme planning

The most systematic way of ensuring that faith engagement can be mainstreamed within UNICEF's programming is to articulate this engagement as an integral part of the community engagement strategy of a new country programme planned jointly with the national government and key CSOs. In the same way that greater efforts are being made to have youth networks inform and engage in country programming, efforts should be made to bring major faith actors (and preferably inter-faith actors) to the table in country-programming processes.

Given that the key technical reference documents for a new country programme are the Programme Strategy Notes (PSN) and associated Theories of Change (TOCs), faith engagement strategies should be well articulated within these, using the FPCC JOC to inform both. This can be done at either or all three of the following levels:

1. **Articulating faith engagement within the sectoral PSNs/JOCs.** This will help to ensure specific programme leads have ownership over faith engagement and will position FPCC strategies to benefit from programme funding.
2. **Articulating faith engagement within a community engagement strategy defined as part of the country programme cross-cutting programme effectiveness or SBC PSN:** The Deputy Representative, with the responsibility for programme coordination, usually oversees the programme effectiveness component of a country programme. It is therefore strategic to have this level of senior management engagement, championing the overarching faith engagement strategy as part of a wider community engagement/SBC strategy. This can more coherently contribute to all of the programme results and avoid a siloed sector-by-sector approach to faith engagement.

Linkage with other global partners on faith engagement

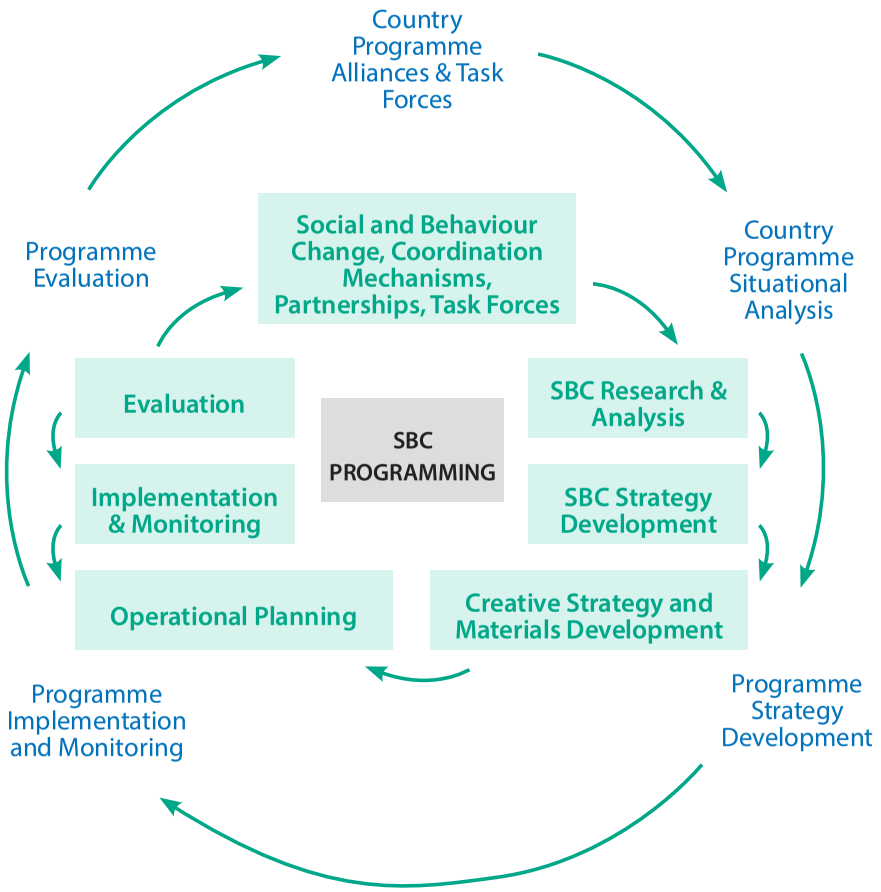
UNICEF's move toward more strategic faith engagement at a programming level through the FPCC Initiative began in 2018 with several years of generating and collating evidence. More recently, other development and humanitarian partners have embarked on (or revived) similar efforts on evidence generation and organisational strategy development (e.g. World Bank, USAID, CDC, WHO, and other UN organisations), particularly in response to the increased spotlight on the central role of faith actors in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Given this parallel and mostly uncoordinated work, there is great potential for duplication and increase in transaction costs for faith actors doing their best to serve local communities. Given UNICEF's lead role in community engagement, particularly in the humanitarian context, but more broadly in development work, efforts will need to be made at global, regional, and national levels to support the improved coordination and complementarity of respective resources and comparative advantages in terms of faith engagement to influence results for children, families, and communities.

In cases where a separate cross-cutting PSN/JOC has been agreed for SBC and CE Programming, this will be an important opportunity for fuller articulation of the faith engagement strategy.

If the country programme is already in mid-cycle and the suggestions outlined above and in the below diagram cannot be fully considered, some of these more strategic approaches can still be applied as part of the annual work-planning process.

The following diagram (Figure 21) outlines the recommended steps to embed strategic faith engagement within UNICEF's evidence-based SBC Planning, Implementation, M&E, and the wider programme and country planning and implementation cycle:

Embedding Strategic Faith Engagement in Unicef Sbc and Wider Country Office Programming Cycle



Evaluation on impact of faith actor interventions on Programme Priorities

Annual Reporting: report on what has been achieved in partnership with faith actors to deliver in contributing to results

Periodic assessment of expected intermediate results of faith actor work:

- Partnerships and coordination for sustainability and avoidance of duplication
- Quality of engagement for social transformation
- Positive change in lives of children, families, and communities

Integration of faith actor partners within sector and cross-sector annual workplans

Inclusion of faith engagement in programme funding proposals and pooling of funds from programmes for inter-faith work

Micro Assessment of faith actor partners not just financial but programmatic (core values and integrity, programmatic capacity and financial capacity

Establishment of formal Programme Cooperation Agreements (PCA) with faith actors

Joint development of capacity development plans for training of facilitators of faith engagement on priority children's issues and in the Mind-Heart dialogue approach

Engagement of faith groups in co-design of material/content development intended for inter-faith work and customisation for use in specific denominational groups with review and endorsement by respective Theologians.

Inclusion of faith actors in Programme Strategy Development Process

Including the development of SBC M&E Framework with agreed intermediate indicators that will contribute to outcome level programme results

Inclusion of an inter-religious body in the steering group for the national Situation Analysis on Women and Children undertaken by UNICEF and the government

Inclusion of religious perceptions and actors as part of the Sit An

Mapping of both formal and informal faith actors for stakeholder analyses and capacity assessments

Inclusion of Faith Congregational groups and faith actors in SBC National Alliances & Task Forces

Inclusion of inter-faith/Inter-Religious Council or Faith Actor Observatory in UNDAF process and definition of UN joint initiatives

Figure 20. Embedding strategic faith engagement in UNICEF country office programming cycle

4.3 Modalities of Partnership

FPCC underlines the need to move away from project-type faith partnerships and seeing faith partners as sub-contractors to longer term and systematic partnerships. Programme Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) can provide an important framework for this more systematic partnership with joint accountability for agreed programme results.

As relationships with faith actors become more formalized, so too should the specific roles of UNICEF staff within a Country Office be more clearly defined in terms of the partnership with faith actors. SBC staff working on Community Engagement will need to play different roles to those teams working more specifically on communication, advocacy, and/or partnerships. In the case that there is only one staff member covering SBC and external communications, it is still important to differentiate between the varying types of strategies required to address the various levels of change. Too often external advocacy with a few high-level religious leaders is the extent of faith partnerships. FPCC strategies underline the importance of focussing on the multiple dimensions of partnerships, which includes different approaches, roles, and a spectrum of SBC activities including advocacy. The following table describes the wide spectrum of roles that should be considered for faith partnerships.

Children of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya, and local students attend the morning prayer session, at Baluka UG UP school in Keonjhar, Odisha
Photo Source: UNICEF India

Table 4. Roles for management of strategic Faith engagement across a country programme

Delineation of Specific Roles/Tasks Required for Systematic Faith Engagement	Roles specific to community engagement & social and behaviour change	Roles specific to communication, advocacy, and partnerships
Formalisation of a National Partnership	Joint advocacy with the highest level of leadership of the respective groups to formalise intra-group and inter-group (e.g. "Single-faith-specific" and "Inter-Faith") partnerships with commitment on priority issues related to: a) agreed SBC priorities b) advocacy agenda Where a faith actor has both a central religious body (the seat of high-level religious leadership) and a specifically designated development arm (working on faith-based development projects with programmatic staff), a SBC focal point might be best positioned to lead the latter relationship (e.g. programmes) while a Communication/ Advocacy focal point, along with the Representative or Deputy Representative, might be best positioned to serve as the direct interlocuter for the former (e.g. high-level leaders).	
Research & Mapping	Coordination of research and network analysis of perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs in and specific influencers in relation to priority behaviours and social norms. Mapping and analysis to inform the faith actor partnership strategy and action plan.	Support to mapping questions and analysis.
Alignment with Broader National Agendas	Development of strategies to align with government sector and multi-sector related flagship schemes and programmes.	Facilitation of alignment with national level advocacy strategies (e.g. Parliamentarians).
Alignment of National with Sub-national and Global Efforts	Negotiation and establishment of CSO alliances/platforms at areas and district level in UNICEF-supported states and facilitation of linkages between the CSOs and areas/district government coordination mechanisms.	Aligning global, regional, and country level partnerships with global advocacy agendas.
Micro-Mapping and Planning	Micro-mapping of main potential entry points for SBC within each network (e.g. faith-media; rites of passage; pre-marital counselling; etc)	Micro-mapping of key events and opportunities for high-level and mass advocacy, in particular recurrent ones.
Community System Strengthening: **Standards, Capacity Development**	Promotion of FPCC principles and "Mind-Heart Dialogue" approach to Faith Engagement; capacity assessments; customised training packages; resource materials and models for post-training quality assurance where possible linked with government systems	
Content/ Message Development	Development of resource materials based on opportunities identified e.g. development of multi-media materials to stimulate dialogue, demand, and mobilise action.	Development of public friendly documents on facts and figures.
Knowledge Management	Joint development of documentation of good practices in relation to faith actor partnership strategies and stories on the implications of challenges and potential for change. Joint facilitation of learning and sharing fora for inter-faith alliances.	

5. CONCLUSION

The FPCC Initiative provides UNICEF with an opportunity to shift its faith partnerships definitively from unsystematic engagement to coordinated and strategic engagement. This more strategic faith engagement will enhance outcomes for children by improving effectiveness of partnerships between development and faith actors.

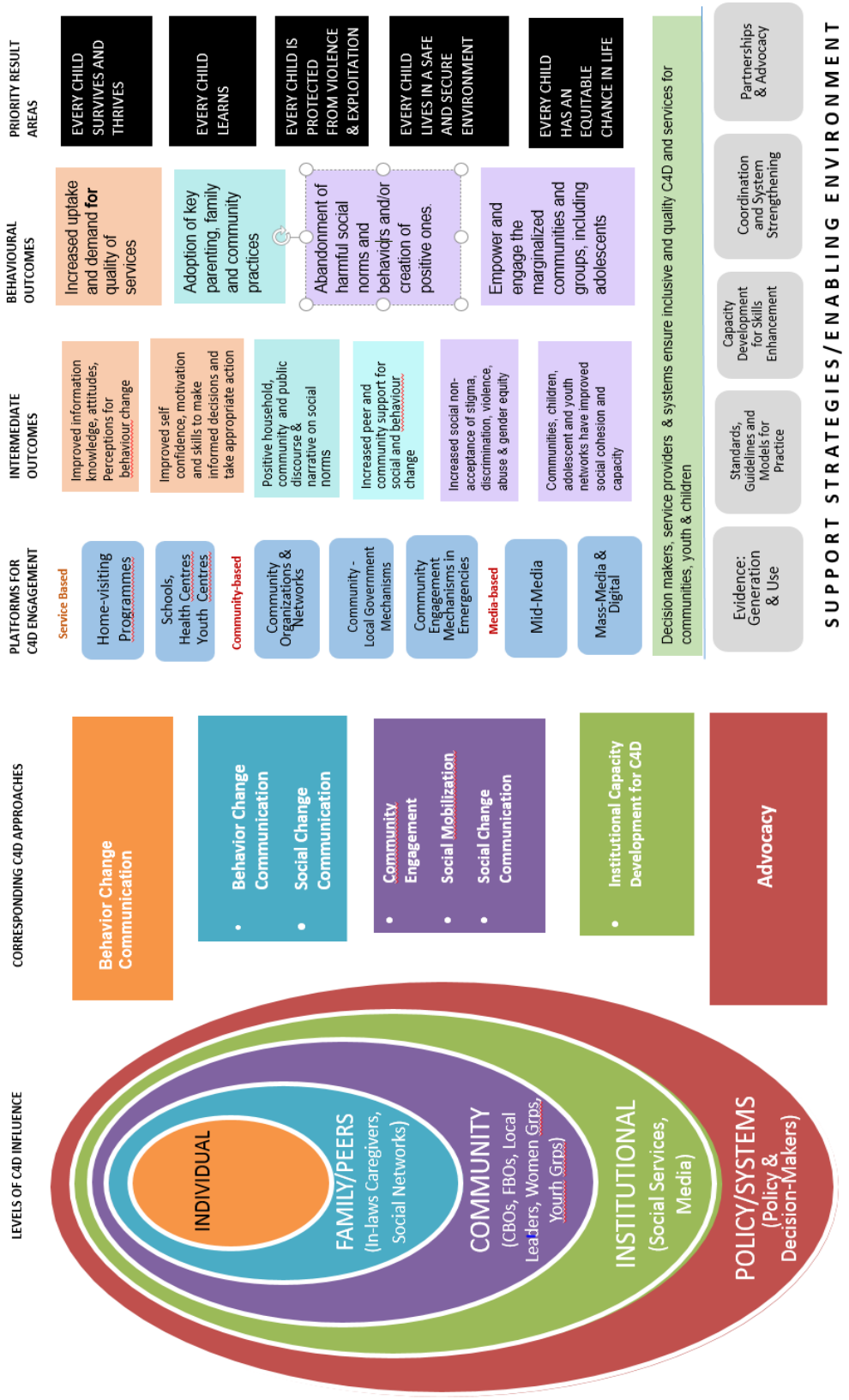
This programme guide has comprehensively covered the major considerations for UNICEF staff regarding faith engagement across the organisation. The FPCC principles establish a set of standards for a new and better way of working on faith engagement. The FPCC JOC provides a template that can be adapted by any CO in conjunction with its faith partners to prioritise and guide key areas to work on together.

The foundational approach of Mind-Heart Dialogue provides a method through which development and faith partners can meet, build trust and relationships, and work towards defining joint goals that promote children's wellbeing. The operationalisation of these tools through the SBC planning cycle outlines, at each stage, how to implement faith engagement in line with the FPCC principles. Finally, strategic faith engagement, as outlined by this programme guide, must be embedded throughout the various steps and modalities of UNICEF programming. The guidance in this document demonstrates that not only is this possible, but that it is aligned with UNICEF's goals and can become a fundamental part of UNICEF's way of working on positive change for children, families, and communities.

Video viewer Group in Egypt with Muslim and Christian followers discuss Edu-tainment docudrama produced by Al-Azhar and the Coptic Orthodox Church as a part of interfaith Positive Parenting initiative on gender-based and disciplinary violence.

6. ANNEXES

Annex 1: UNICEF Social and Behaviour Change Global Theory of Change



Annex 2: The Multi-Faith Advisory Coordination Committees on Children

Terms of Reference

When building a new FPCC partnership and programme at country level, a coordination structure is recommended. Coordination is needed because groups can otherwise work in silos and duplicate efforts. In some cases a country will already have such a mechanism set up. The UNICEF CO should first investigate if there is such a structure. If not, the FPCC recommends establishing the following coordination committee.

The proposed structure can be called a Multi-Faith Action Coordination Committee (MFACC). MFACC is a mechanism to support coordination between UNICEF (and subsequently other development partners) and country level faith communities, (including interreligious councils, religious leaders, and local/national FBOs), on setting joint priorities for children, families, and communities, as well as for ensuring that an action agenda is jointly developed, resourced, and monitored.

Purpose

A national MFACC serves as a country-level, voluntary entity to support more effective, efficient, and inclusive inter-faith engagement on jointly defined priorities and actions for families and communities that are locally owned and sustainable. A MFACC provides strategic advice to and is a platform for complementarity and collaboration amongst faith actors, religious leaders, and UNICEF. It will be responsible for the development, coordination, and reporting of partnership activities and joint plans of action.

Ultimately, to serve the wider development and humanitarian agenda, the aim is that in the long term each MFACC will serve as a national interreligious advisory body for the overarching UN country programme and other development partner agendas. It is vital that this proposed committee is linked to other national committees around children and community engagement eg. ones for Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) for emergencies; Violence Against Children; Early Childhood Development; etc).

Composition of tripartite mfacc (approximately 12 members)

RfP Interreligious Councils (IRCs), including Women of Faith Networks and Interfaith Youth Council representation

- Local representatives of faith-based organisations (from JLI membership), and other local unaffiliated FBOs
- UNICEF Representative/Deputy Representative or their delegated staff, and other UNICEF staff.

Efforts will be made to ensure context-specific religious representation and a balance of gender and age representation. Faith groups will include appropriate representation of both the more established and less well-established groups (majority and minority religious representation), as well as traditional leaders.

Mandate

- Serve as an inclusive coordination mechanism for FPCC at the country level and inter-faith support to children, families, and communities in alignment with national government policies, plans, and programmes.
- Develop, in a consultative process, together with UNICEF focal point(s), joint priorities and a national joint FPCC action plan that clearly outlines –
  - Priority objectives, activities, deliverables, and a timeline
  - Indicators and process for monitoring
  - Responsibilities of each of the tripartite member organisations
    - Each member organisation will in turn assign responsibilities within its respective organisation
  - Resources available – technical, financial, and human
  - Gaps in resources and the entity that would be responsible for seeking and bringing in those resources
- Function as an "oversight and accountability" entity for the implementation of the national FPCC action plan, with clear reporting mechanisms at appropriate levels

- Serve as an advisory body to UNICEF, a platform for joint priority setting and joint FPCC action planning, and as a reference and resource body to one another in the implementation

MFACC should be supported by this Programme Guide, the Facilitators' Guide, and the FPCC supporting evidence and thematic guidance documents. This must include a briefing for all members of the MFACC on the FPCC principles and foundational Mind-Heart Dialogue approach.

Terms and selection

Local representatives of RfP, UNICEF, and JLI will meet and draw up a plan reflecting the terms of reference (TOR) to recruit and gather MFACC members, including agreeing on criteria for selecting FBOs

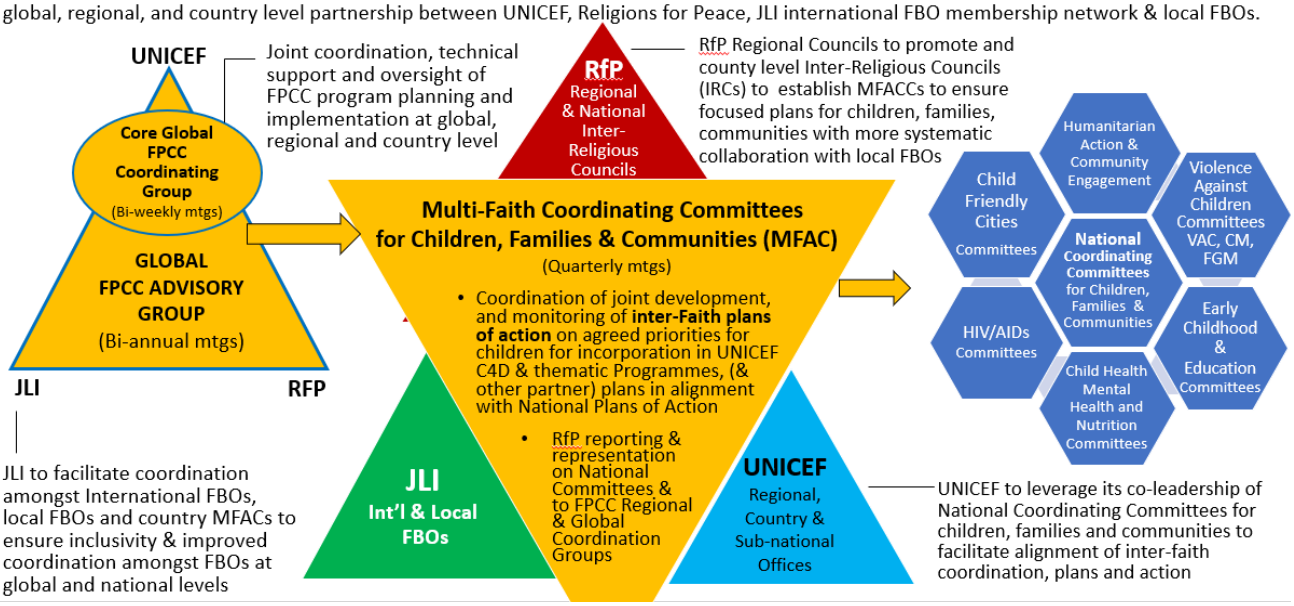
- Up to 12 members will be appointed for an 18-month term. The term will be renewable.
- RfP's IRCs will nominate 4 representatives.
- UNICEF COs will nominate 2-4 representatives including a SBC/RCCE focal point and focal points from selected programme sections.
- 4 representatives of local FBOs will be nominated (nominations to be supported by JLI) who meet gender and vulnerable population inclusion criteria, and who have a track record on child-related issues, including:
  - 2 nominations from local FBOs that are locally registered NGOs
  - 2 nominations from international FBOs that partner with a local partner FBO; International FBO partners will be JLI members and will be invited to nominate based on their prior engagement on FPCC, the number of local FBO partnerships they have, and a demonstrated focus on children and families.

Meetings

- At the first meeting the members will select their co-chairs, selecting one from the IRC, one from the FBO, and one from UNICEF
- Regular meetings will be set and organised by the MFACC's co-chairs
- MFACC members will serve in a voluntary capacity
- Working groups may be established for specific tasks or areas of work
- MFACC FBO representatives are encouraged to host an open meeting with local FBOs at least once a year to report back and consult with the local FBO community

Faith & Positive Change for Children, Families & Communities (FPCC)
Multi-Faith Action Coordination Committees (MFACCs)

Aim: To ensure on-going coordination, technical support, cross-sectoral planning and leveraging of resources for strategic, at-scale and evidence-based multi-faith engagement on development and humanitarian actions for children, families & communities through global, regional, and country level partnership between UNICEF, Religions for Peace, JLI international FBO membership network & local FBOs.



Annex 3: Example Indicators from UNICEF COs and ROs, used in their Existing Faith Partnerships

These offer some examples of possible indicators but are not necessarily useful for all.

Indicators adapted from ESARO/ACRL-RfP Faith and COVID-19 Work

	Indicator		Indicator		Indicator
Process		Output	increased knowledge of faith actors as demonstrated in post-training assessments	Outcome	Intent
	# of people trained on "Mind Heart Dialogue		% of respondents (faith leaders) reached with accessible information who recall at least 3 preventive practices		% of respondents (faith leaders) reached with accessible information that declare being willing to take the recommended actions
	# of partnerships developed with faith media or mainstream media to engage faith partners		# of information, education, and communication (IEC) materials produced (TV, radio spots, printed material, media statement etc.) and disseminated / broadcasted through interfaith actions % of respondents (faith leaders) reached with accessible information who recall at least 2 key messages		Trust
	# of people reached through social media on key lifesaving behaviour change messages through interfaith actions		Social accountability / Community feedback		% of respondents (faith leaders) reached with accessible information who have trust in recommended social service/s
	# of high-level advocacy events conducted through interfaith actions		# of people sharing their concerns and asking questions/clarifications for available support services to address their needs through established feedback mechanisms		Self-efficacy
	# regional interfaith actions RCCE coordination team meetings # of faith-led engagement and feedback mechanisms established and functioning		# of feedback reports shared with relevant national committees to inform planning and action		% of respondents (faith leaders) reached with accessible information who feel confident that they can practice the recommended behaviour/s
	# of rumour tracking reports shared through interfaith actions		# of multi-faith plans of action developed by the FPCC coordination mechanism at country level		Risk perception
	#of Multi-Faith Action Committees meetings held for the quarter/year.				% of respondents (faith leaders) reached with accessible information who perceive the negative behaviour as a risk to their wellbeing

Indicators from Ethiopia CO engagement with FBOs

Outcome 1: Faith-based organisations and leaders have firm stand against FGM/C and CM	# of public statements/declarations by FBOs against FGM/C and CM
	# of cancelled CMs due to faith leaders and FBOs interventions
	# of girls who registered as uncut
	# of FBOs that integrated FGM/C and CM in their structures and routine activities
Output 1.1: Awareness of faith leaders and faith communities increased on FGM/C and CM	# of faith leaders who enrolled in different awareness creation events (dialogues, consensus building sessions)
	# of faith communities reached with different messages on FGM/C and CM
	# of parish churches and mosques disseminating messages of FGM/C and CM to their members
Outcome 2: Faith-based institutions take action to respond to at risk and those affected by CM and FGM/C	# of women and girls who are at risk and those affected by CM and FGM/C are protected and access services
Output 2,1 Referral mechanisms for girls affected by CM and FGM/C strengthened	# of girls referred to health service delivery points (both at risk and affected by FGM/C and CM)
	# of girls who are at risk and affected by CM and FGM/C targeted through school-based intervention
	Coordination between the different service providers established
	# of cases on FGM/C and CM reported to police
	# of cases that received a verdict
Outcome 3: FBOs accountability mechanism is functional	Commitment is demonstrated by individual FBOs and the established national and regional task force
	FBOs are active in various national, regional, and local level coordination mechanisms
output 3.2 FBOs have established coordination mechanisms	# of regular reports collected from the regional taskforces and compiled
	# of Interfaith dialogue forums organised at various level
	# of trainings and capacity building sessions organised for taskforce members
	# of monitoring and joint review meetings organised with local level women and children affair bureaux

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