



Multi-Faith Action Committees for Children, Families and Communities (MFACCs)

Institutionalizing Faith and Positive Change for Children, Families and Communities (FPCC)

Background

Faith and Positive Change for Children, Families and Communities (FPCC) is a global partnership between UNICEF, Religions for Peace (RfP - the world's largest multi-faith convenor) and Joint Learning Initiative on Faith & Local Communities (JLI), knowledge partner and umbrella organization of international and local Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs). FPCC was conceived in 2018 by UNICEF's Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) section to help UNICEF move beyond single-sector, small-scale, ad-hoc and sometimes instrumentalist approaches to faith engagement. This partnership model is now mirrored at regional level in ESAR (East and Southern Africa), WCAR (West and Central Africa), ECAR (Europe and Central Asia), MENAR (Middle East and North Africa), and SAR (South Asia), with expressions of interest from LACR (Latin America and the Caribbean) and EAPR (East Asia and Pacific) and is gradually being rolled out across UNICEF Country Offices in each of these regions.

WHAT is the Coordination Role of MFACCs & WHY are they important?

MFACCs can become a mechanism to:

- ensure that the FPCC partnership model functions inclusively across multiple faith actors at country level, with a shared vision and joint action planning:
 - Inter-Religious Councils religious coordination bodies (convened by RfP)
 - Faith Based Organizations (proposed or guided with initial JLI input)
 - UNICEF Country Offices (and eventually other development agencies)
- Prevent FPCC from undermining any existing work of IRCs and FBOs, by building on existing faith engagement work, broadening partnerships with diverse faith actors and improving faith-based coordination on work around children, families and communities.
- Shift from one-off events, trainings and engagements to on-going capacity development to institutionalize the foundational approach of Mind-Heart Dialogue into all the partners' work for strengthened social and behaviour change - supported by trained Mind-Heart Dialogue facilitators and a more systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation supported by the FPCC Programme Guidance, Mind-Heart Dialogue Facilitators Guide.
- strengthen the voice of faith in national agendas and coordination mechanisms as UNICEF connects the MFACC to national government programmes and its various sectoral (eg. health, nutrition, child protection, education) and cross-sectoral programmes (eg. SBC, Early Childhood Development, Gender, National Risk Communication and Community Engagement) - enabling MFACCs to access UNICEF technical expertise.
- coordinate the faith engagement work supported by different parts of UNICEF (and later, other development agencies), ensuring it is coherent, resourced, sustained, aligned with national development strategies and wider coordination bodies and taken to scale.
- incorporate a specific and systematic focus on children, families and communities into the broader agenda of IRCs' and individual faith institutions.

- include less established/recognized faith groups in faith dialogue and planning, bringing in faith groups that are currently not formally part of existing IRCs (such as large traditional/tribal faith networks eg. Kibangusti (DRC), Voudoun (Benin), LegioMaria (Kenya)) and facilitating more systematic partnership with Women of Faith networks and Inter-Faith Youth Networks.
- enrich the body of evidence for learning, iteration and research purposes on what works and why within FPCC approaches through ongoing feedback and engagement.

HOW will MFACCs be established and function?

- **Establishment of Regional Partnerships:** UNICEF will work with Regional IRCs to establish Regional tripartite mechanisms, incorporating the most active FBOs working on children's issues, through systematic relationships and partnership agreements. Their role includes mapping faith-led work at country/regional level, prioritizing countries to roll-out FPCC, promoting the establishment of/supporting national MFACCs and connecting to the Global Advisory Group.
- **Establishment of National MFACCs:** With or without the regional mechanisms, IRCs will establish national MFACCs with the support of UNICEF's SBC leader or another staff member willing and able to invest time in ongoing partnership. National IRCs can work with UNICEF to send out an invitation letter to appropriate stakeholders (including key FBOs) to convene a first meeting to discuss the vision and commitments and to establish the MFACC. Existing tools to support this include 1) this information brief; 2) [the draft TOR](#); 3) FPCC Introductory Video.
- **Linkage to FPCC training:** National MFACCs should follow FPCC training so that they operate with the appropriate guiding principles, standards and guidance.
- **Planning and Monitoring:** MFACCs will develop, oversee and monitor the implementation of annual FPCC workplans, wherever possible integrating FPCC activities within various UNICEF Annual workplans and budgets - with JLI supporting global documentation of impact.
- **Internal organizational ownership of FPCC:** MFACC members will orient their organization on FPCC objectives, principles and methodologies and bring in colleagues to support FPCC e.g. UNICEF SBC staff will promote FPCC to deepen awareness, build ownership and support mainstreaming within country programming, ideally pooling resources to support FPCC.

HOW will MFACCs Support Children, Families and Communities?

Some of the specific roles of MFACCs include:

- **Mobilizing faith communities to help the most vulnerable through Mind-Heart Dialogue and linking them with social services:** mapping those most at risk, prioritizing needs, identifying and matching community assets; organizing volunteers; supporting follow-up and monitoring.
- **Gathering information on community needs and feeding back on quality of services:** identifying needs and community resources to support continued provision, improved quality and increased utilization of services in partnership with other religious and community groups.



- **Promoting the participation and active engagement of children, young people and parents:** ensuring their perspectives and needs are incorporated into community plans aimed at supporting continued access to services; linking IRC Youth Councils with the MFACC's work.
- **Linking faith communities and technical experts:**
 - promoting technical information and science alongside faith and supporting adherence to global guidelines on children's issues so faith groups can increase community demand for important services and increase recommended behaviours
 - aligning content proposed by technical groups with appropriate religious teachings/interpretations through consultation with trusted theologians and religious scholars.
- **Sharing information:** collecting and sharing factual, contextually appropriate information; identifying alternative communication channels for those who cannot connect to the internet.