

RELIGIONS FOR PEACE
**GLOBAL WOMEN
OF FAITH NETWORK**

PLAN OF ACTION 2007-2011



Dear Sisters in Faith,

This Plan of Action is inspired by your different contributions made at the Kyoto Assembly in August 2006. It is also based on concrete recommendations made by you women of faith during numerous regional and national consultative meetings that have taken place in the past years. We want it to be a common document that will enhance our work together on global, regional, and national levels.

To achieve our goals, we have to remember the importance of grass roots relationships and networks and of formal and informal education of youth and adults. You are all sources of creativity and forces of suggestion.

The implementation of this Plan of Action will depend on your own activities and priorities. This plan is yours; it is up to you to transform it into reality! It depends only on your work on the ground. Sisters, we need your ideas, your input, and your experience to advance together.

—Mrs. Mehrézia Labidi-Maiza
Coordinator
International Women's Coordinating Committee

This plan is not intended only for women of faith but for action by our entire Religions for Peace movement. Produced by the International Women's Coordinating Committee, the plan embraces and expands the Religions for Peace strategic plan. By implementing it, we will be welcoming women of faith at the very center of our common work of building peace and promoting just and harmonious societies.

—Dr. William F. Vendley
Secretary General
Religions for Peace

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We share a conviction of the fundamental unity of the human family, and the equality and dignity of all human beings. We affirm the sacredness of the individual person and the importance of his or her freedom of conscience.

*— from the Kyoto Declaration,
Eighth World Assembly, August 2006*

Executive Summary

Common action for peace is the hallmark of *Religions for Peace*, and women of faith are at its center. This Global Women of Faith Network Plan of Action, 2007–2011, is a necessary framework for strengthening the capacities of the Global Women of Faith Network and other religious communities to advance peace and promote just and harmonious societies. The plan identifies four priority themes for multi-religious action:

1. *Network Building*

Women of faith possess valuable experiences and resources that, when mobilized, can strengthen community-based responses for peace and human development.

Building the Global Women of Faith Network will enable women of faith to:

- Share information, resources and capabilities.
- Strengthen and expand the unique leadership of religious women and their organizations.
- Facilitate multi-religious mobilization, communication and social action among women of faith working in different countries, locations, and regions.
- Fortify the operation and management of the network locally regionally, and globally.

2. *Peace and Security*

Religions for Peace recognizes religious women's organizations and their ability to mobilize their grass roots and broad social networks as key to building peace and advancing shared security. The Plan of Action affirms that women of faith have unique strengths in facilitating peace-building and acting as both mediators and advocates. It seeks to promote the peace-building approaches by women of faith that are grounded in faith values, relationship building, community mobilization, and human rights.

The plan acknowledges international instruments including recommendations in the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and the Beijing Platform for Action, as well as the United Nations' document, "An Agenda for Peace." Like religion, these international instruments are complementary in emphasizing the centrality of women in addressing issues of peace and security at all levels.

3. Women of Faith as Agents of Conflict Transformation

In today's polarized world where armed conflict, terrorism, and extremism have escalated, destroying the fabric of society and jeopardizing human security and development, it is necessary to affirm that women of faith play pivotal roles in averting violence and transforming conflicts. The Plan of Action aims to strengthen the role of religious women as agents of conflict transformation and to document good practices on the roles and resources of women of faith in conflict transformation.

4. Gender, Poverty, and Health

Gender is a determinant of health and well-being. Social, cultural, and economic violence and prejudices directly affect women's health, and the tremendous inequalities associated with human poverty affect women disproportionately. The Plan of Action acknowledges that religions can profoundly influence the status, role, and life opportunities of women.

The focus will be to:

- Build an ongoing multi-religious capacity to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Deepen awareness and understanding on the intrinsic linkages among gender, poverty, and health.
- Strengthen the capacity of national Inter-Religious Councils and groups in gender analysis and mainstreaming.

This Plan has been successfully completed through the tremendous support and leadership of International Women's Coordinating Committee.

The delegates of the *Religions for Peace* Women's Assembly and Eighth World Assembly that took place in Kyoto, Japan, in August 2006, forged a multi-religious consensus on the centrality of women of faith to build peace and advance shared security. Members of the *Religions for Peace* Global Women of Faith Network have held a series of national and regional consultative and planning meetings to identify thematic foci and priority actions, based on their local needs experiences and knowledge. Regional and national

Inter-Religious Councils have provided critical support in facilitating and organizing planning meetings and consultations among religious communities.

Partners have provided strategic contributions financially to support the processes that have led to the development of this Plan of Action.

On behalf of *Religions for Peace*, I would like to express our deepest appreciation to all the stakeholders, friends, and partners who have worked with commitment to make this plan possible. We look forward with the same energy and enthusiasm in our partnership to implement it.

—By Ms. Jacqueline Ogega
Director
Women’s Mobilization Program,
Religions for Peace

Plan of Action 2007-2011

INTRODUCTION

This Plan of Action serves as a framework for activities that will build and consolidate the capacity of the Global Women of Faith Network to advance peace and promote just and harmonious societies.¹

The plan outlines the objectives and activities of the *Religions for Peace* Women of Faith Network for the period 2007-2011, drawing from the calls to action that were adopted by the delegates at the *Religions for Peace* Eighth World Assembly held in Kyoto, Japan, in August 2006². During this assembly, representatives of the entire *Religions for Peace* Global Women of Faith Network came together to refine strategic priorities and fortify national, regional and international networking foci and structures of coordination and decision-making. The strategic priorities continued to be refined post-assembly in 2007 through a consultative process that included regional and sub-regional consultations, virtual discussions and planning among women of faith leaders, regional and national multi-religious councils, and senior male religious leaders.

The Plan of Action draws upon religious women's diverse experiences, knowledge, skills and relationships at local, national, regional and global levels, based on previous networking activities, interventions and convening since 1998 when the Women's Mobilization Program at *Religions for Peace* was launched.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Women of Faith Network Plan of Action are to:

1. Enhance multi-religious networking among women of faith.
2. Strengthen capacities of women of faith to build peace, promote just societies and transform conflict through congregations and religious women's organizations.
3. Promote gender equality and women's empowerment in multi-religious collaboration for peace.
4. Develop relevant strategic multi-stakeholder partnerships and alliances.

¹ This Plan of Action derives from the mission and goals of *Religions for Peace* Strategic Plan.

² This plan is intended to cover, at a minimum, the period until the Ninth World Assembly, anticipated to be held in 2011.

A Women's Pre-Assembly will be convened at that time to review the outcomes of the current plan.

PRIORITY THEMES 2007-2011

Religions for Peace Women of Faith Network allows women from different religions and cultures to coordinate strategies and pool resources and capabilities for cooperative action that will achieve results that would be difficult for any single member to accomplish alone. The priority themes for common action are:

- 1. Network Building**
- 2. Peace and Security**
- 3. Women of Faith as Agents of Conflict Transformation**
- 4. Gender, Poverty & Health**

1. NETWORK BUILDING

Network building is a crosscutting priority fundamental to the overall implementation of this Plan of Action. Women of faith possess valuable experiences and resources that, when mobilized, can strengthen community-based responses for peace and human development. The focus will be to:

1. Share information, resource and capabilities.
2. Strengthen and expand the unique leadership of religious women and their organizations.

3. Facilitate multi-religious mobilization, communication and social action among women of faith working in different countries, locations and regions.
4. Fortify the operation and management of the network locally, regionally and globally.

The process of building the network will build trust and strengthen the skills of members in mobilizing faith-based support and advocating with religious leaders, policy makers, and the public. The activity area for network building will be:

a). Strengthening information flow and coordination mechanism

- Establishment and/or strengthening of local, sub-regional and regional structures and leadership through Women's Coordinating Committees with focal points in existing Inter-Religious Councils (IRCs) or *Religions for Peace* national Chapters.
- Maintaining up-to-date regular communication with members through tools such as Internet-based communication, newsletters, mailing, web site, e-mailing, Skype.
- Utilizing members' existing newsletters and publications to disseminate information.
- Sharing of responsibilities and enhancing member participation; and identifying resources among members.

b). Networking at local, regional and international levels

The networking forums will focus on proposed themes in line with the Plan of Action. They will be aimed at providing multi-religious forums for sharing resources and capabilities, discussion, sharing experiences and skills, organizing solidarity visits or meetings across regions and/or countries, reporting on the implementation of activities and forward planning. Networking meetings may be convened in conjunction with other events organized by *Religions for Peace* or other partners.

c). Expanding the base of the Global Network of Women of Faith

- Strengthen the ongoing process of managing and updating the database of the already existing networks of women of faith in national chapters and inter-religious councils.

- Building multi-religious networks of women of faith nationally and regionally in Africa, Middle East, North America, Asia & the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe.
- Outreach through member organizations' existing resources.
- In collaboration with *Religions for Peace* Global Youth Network, ensuring the full participation of young women of faith and actively seeking their input and suggestions.
- Updating of *Religions for Peace* Global Directory of Religious Women's Organizations.

d). *Strengthening the institutional and operational capacities of religious women's organizations*

- Development of multi-religious tools and manuals.
- Educational training for religious women's organizations on institutional and operational management, including resource mobilization, information technology, and project management.

2. PEACE & SECURITY

Religions for Peace recognizes religious women's organizations and their ability to mobilize their grass roots and broad social networks as key to building peace and advancing shared security. Women of faith have unique strengths in facilitating peace-building and acting as both mediators and advocates. The peace-building approaches by women of faith are grounded in faith values through relationship building, community mobilization, empowerment and human rights.

The work of the Women of Faith Network acknowledges the recommendations in the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and the Beijing Platform for Action, as well as the United Nations' document, *An Agenda for Peace*.³ These international mechanisms are complimentary in emphasizing the centrality of women in addressing issues of peace and security at all levels. The focus will be to:

1. Strengthen women's human rights protection and promote shared security.

2. Establish a multi-religious policy-related dialogue on women and peace-building among the members of the network.
3. Elaborate the unique faith-based peace-building approaches and activities of women of faith.
4. Increase the full participation of women of faith in peace building and foster multi-religious peace-building structures that meet women's needs.

Activity areas include:

a). Advancing gender equality in post- conflict reconstruction and justice

- Build multi-religious capacity to promote gender equality in healing, reconciliation, demobilization and re-integration with national governments, and other regional and international civil society organizations and bodies.
- Rebuild women of faith networks and support community development and mobilization programs for post-conflict reconstruction.
- Provide religious contributions to policy debates around religion, women and shared security for a stable peace.
- Undertake research to better understand lessons learned in peace-building, coordinate multi-religious interventions by women of faith and popularize their reconstruction activities.

b). Multi-religious peace education

Women of faith often lead in providing peace and religious education in families and communities. Most of them have non-formal education and training in peace-building. Building on already existing peace education programs in religious communities, the focus will be to:

- Facilitate multi-religious training, skills building, awareness-raising and education on women, peace and shared security.
- Enhance religious education and the promotion of spiritual and moral peace values.
- Document the unique faith-based peace-building approaches of women of faith.

³Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice for the 21st Century, UN Document: Ref A/54/98

c). Integrating and mainstreaming gender in multi-religious peace-building

In order for peace building to promote positive sustainable peace, it must incorporate a gender perspective and emphasize human security, including human rights and the rule of law. Women of faith are under-represented in peace-building processes. Their experiences, knowledge and leadership must be utilized to promote peace. The focus will be to:

- Enhance the capacity, skills and leadership of women of faith and youth in peace-building processes.
- Develop an inventory of religious women experts in peace-building and religion from different regions whose expertise will serve national and international institutions.

d). Promote and advocate UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UN SCR 1325, 2000) on Women, Peace and Security emphasizes the need to strengthen women's participation and involvement in conflict prevention and management. Women are both actors and victims in conflict situations. Yet, they are often excluded from peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction. UN SCR1325 is an important tool to use for conflict prevention even in countries that are not currently in violent conflict. Actions will include:

- Education and awareness raising on UN SCR1325 for multi-religious communities.
- Formulation of action plans among religious communities to monitor and advocate the implementation of UN SCR1325.
- Advocate for the representation and inclusion of women of faith and gender equity in peace-building mechanisms at the United Nations, governmental and intergovernmental bodies and the civil society at all levels.
- Increase and strengthen the participation of women of faith to enable them to advance peace and security locally, in regional and international bodies, in the United Nations and in the support of international commitments and dialogues such as the Dialogue of Civilizations, the Decade of Peace for Children and the Decade to Overcome Violence.

“A culture of peace will be achieved when citizens of the world understand global problems, have the skills to resolve conflicts and struggle for justice non-violently, live by international standards of human rights and equity, appreciate cultural diversity, and respect the Earth and each other. Such learning can only be achieved with systematic education for peace.”

—Hague Appeal for Peace Global Campaign for Peace Education

3. WOMEN OF FAITH AS AGENTS OF CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Women of faith can play pivotal roles in averting violence, and transforming conflicts. Religious women’s work in conflict transformation is largely unrecognized at institutional and public policy levels. The faith perspectives and spiritual resources and values that motivate women of faith to transform conflict are seldom documented, commended or understood. There is need to broaden the base for support for women’s participation in conflict transformation at all levels.

Through their formal and informal religious women’s organizations and networks, women of faith engage in creative forms of grass roots organizing, activism and mobilization to confront violence, protect vulnerable populations and advocate for protection, justice and transformation. The inherent strength and creativity of women of faith to transform conflict ought to be utilized. The focus will be:

- Engaging multi-religious communities in gender analyses of the root causes of conflict.

- Organizing capacity-building workshops and leadership training in conflict transformation.
- Mainstreaming and supporting the leadership of women of faith through their organizations in conflict management and peace making at local, national, regional and international levels, including conflict prevention, negotiation and mediation.
- Building alliances, strategic partnerships and coalitions with other organizations for joint advocacy to end war and terror, confront religious extremism, stop the proliferation of arms, end impunity on the abuse of women and children and ensure their protection.
- Documenting good practices on the roles and resources of women of faith in conflict transformation.
- Providing leadership development for women and girls in conflict situations.
- Promoting networking and solidarity visits across borders in situations of violent conflict in order to enhance rapid response and support.

“While entire communities suffer the consequences of armed conflict and terrorism, women and girls are particularly affected because of their status in society and their sex.”

*—Extract from paragraph 136 of
Beijing Platform for Action (1995)*

“We are convinced that practices, prejudices or laws that prevent the full participation of women along with men in the political, economic, social, cultural and religious life of their countries are morally indefensible and should be eliminated.”

*—WCRP (Religions for Peace) III
The Princeton Declaration
Princeton (1979)*

3. GENDER, POVERTY & HEALTH

Gender, poverty and health are intrinsically connected. Gender inequalities exacerbate poverty. Violence against women is a pervasive hidden side of human poverty and poor health. Poverty and loss of livelihoods aggravate ill health in ways that dehumanize and impoverish individuals and communities. This situation is compounded in conflict and post-conflict areas, where social infrastructure and safety nets have broken down making gender, poverty and poor health the main threats to human survival. Religious leaders can play vital roles in identifying key development and social issues in their communities and leading faith-based institutions' responses to these issues. Although poverty and health have always been identified as critical issues in religious communities, there is need to build faith-based capacity to understand the intricate linkages between gender and women's empowerment on one hand and poverty and health on the other. Religions can profoundly influence the status, role and life opportunities of women.

The focus will be:

1. Building an ongoing multi-religious capacity to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

2. Deepen awareness and understanding on the intrinsic linkages among gender, poverty and health.
3. Strengthen the capacity of national inter-religious councils and groups in gender mainstreaming
4. Develop a multi-faith gender analysis framework

The activity areas will be:

a). Capacity building to eliminate violence against women and girls

Sustainable peace cannot be achieved until all forms of discrimination and violence perpetuated against women and girls are eliminated.

- Strengthening capacities for religious leaders and communities to establish early warning mechanisms to confront gender-based violence and enhance rapid response, recovery and protection.
- Building multi-religious capacities to advocate for the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, including trafficking, sexual slavery, rape as well as gender-based cultural, social, economic and psychological forms of violence.
- Engaging in multi-religious awareness, conscientization and education to address all forms of violence against women and girls.
- Strengthening coordination, programming, knowledge and information sharing of religious communities' efforts and initiatives to end gender-based violence locally, regionally and globally.

b). Gender and Health

Gender is a determinant of health. Women's health and well-being is directly impacted by gender inequalities and discrimination. Social, cultural and economic violence and prejudices directly affect women's health. Gender determines access to health services and resources as well as the quality of health care. The understanding that health policies and programs affect women and men differently is a necessary step towards achieving lasting peace grounded on human well-being. The distinctive health needs, including maternal health, mental well-being and livelihoods of women must be well understood and prioritized. Religious leaders

and communities are well-positioned to educate, advocate and support the attainment of women's health as central to the well-being of individuals and communities.

Activity areas will be to:

- Increase inter-religious knowledge and understanding on the linkages between gender and health.
- Strengthen capacities and skills of religious communities on gender and HIV & AIDS.
- Develop tools, resources, guidelines and documents for multi-religious advocacy and education on gender and health.
- Build partnerships and alliances with civil society, institutions, agencies and the United Nations to advocate on the centrality of women's health and well-being.

c). Gender and Poverty

The tremendous inequalities associated with human poverty affect women disproportionately. To address this, programs will:

- Deepen awareness and understanding on gender as it links to poverty.
- Advocate the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goal (MDG) on gender equality and women's empowerment as it links to all other MDGs, and responses to poverty alleviation.
- Strengthen multi-religious capacity to monitor and evaluate gender dimensions of poverty and impacts of poverty reduction initiatives.

d). Capacity building for gender equality and women's empowerment

Religions can profoundly influence the status, dignity and life opportunities of women and girls. In some communities, religions have advocated powerfully to end discrimination and worked creatively to increase opportunities for women. Yet, religions have also been hijacked and misused to subdue women and deny them of basic human rights. Harmful cultural and social practices, gender injustices and prejudices have sometimes been reinforced by individuals and communities. Religious leaders and communities must reject the misuse of religion and promote religious teachings and traditions that respect the equal dignity of women and men.

Activity areas include:

- Supporting multi-religious communities for awareness-raising and policy dialogue on spiritual values and religious resources that promote gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Providing gender-related technical and methodological support to religious communities and congregations; evaluating the gendered impact of programs and policies.
- Mainstreaming gender into multi-religious national, regional and global structures and programs.
- Promoting multi-religious gender analyses, database collection and/or utilization and research.

e). Leadership enhancement for women of faith

- Facilitating leadership training for women of faith and young women at all levels to strengthen their agency, decision making and representation.
- Building partnerships to invest in the empowerment of women.

“We (women of faith) commit to extend cooperation and strengthen partnerships with male religious leaders and counterparts, with other non-faith based development organizations and with the United Nations in order to promote human rights, stop war, reduce poverty and protect the earth.”

*—Religions for Peace 8th World Assembly,
The Kyoto Declaration, August 2006*

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Plan of Action will be carried forward through annual implementation plan cycles under the leadership of *Religions for Peace* International Women’s Coordinating Committee (IWCC). Regional and national women of faith networks will formulate their annual implementation plans under the leadership of regional and national Women’s Coordinating Committees.

A major mid-point internal evaluation will take place to enrich the Plan of Action with experiences gained and lessons learned during the implementation. There will be a final external evaluation at the end of the plan, prior to the World Assembly. The IWCC Annual Report to the World Council will provide updates and reviews of progress. Similar reports will be given at regional and national levels during meetings of Regional and National Inter-Religious Councils. Periodic meetings of the IWCC, regional and national WCCs will be organized for reporting on and reviewing progress.

Specific monitoring and evaluation indicators will be inbuilt into implementation plans,

programs, projects and activities at all levels based on the following general indicators:

- Regional networks established in two continents with regional Women's Coordinating Committees, and network with already existing women of faith networks in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Networking meetings convened annually for knowledge and information sharing, joint planning and reporting.
- Twenty national women of faith networks established.
- Increased capacity building through training, resources development, advocacy and technical assistance for fifty percent of the network members.
- Women of faith network focal points established and forty percent of the leadership of religious women mainstreamed in twenty national and five regional inter-religious councils of *Religions for Peace*.
- Increased multi-stakeholder partnerships with other organizations, institutions, networks and the United Nations.
- A women of faith endowment fund with a board of trustees for the Global Women of Faith Network initiated during this period.

IMPLEMENTATION

a). Women's Coordinating Committees' Implementation Plans

The Plan of Action will be implemented through the leadership of *Religions for Peace* International Women's Coordinating Committee (IWCC). National and regional implementation plans will be formulated under the leadership of regional Women's Coordinating Committees. The committees may develop synergies and solidarity across regions and plan to implement certain activities jointly and promote mutual reinforcement of activities, methods and approaches. The designated staff at *Religions for Peace* International Secretariat and regional offices will support this process.

b). Networking Delivery Platforms

As a network of networks, Women of Faith will seek to engage existing religious women's organizations and their leadership as delivery platforms. In this way, the network will multiply the scope of its work exponentially and have an impact across boundaries.

c). Faith in Action Groups

The priority themes of Peace and Security and Gender, Poverty and Health may be advanced through faith in action groups. IWCC will seek to bring together members of the Women of Faith Network who have expertise and/or are most passionate about one of these themes. Each faith action group will be selected to ensure Religious and geographical balance, as well as the integration of young women of faith.

The Faith in Action Groups will:

- Support the development and implementation of the thematic programs of the Women of Faith Network in line with the *Religions for Peace* overall Strategic Plan.
- Actively contribute to define strategies advancing initiatives for each thematic priority.
- Provide leadership in cross-learning and knowledge generation for thematic alignment in relation to other thematic priorities and reference relevant multi-religious texts, values and implications.

Thematic workshops may be organized that will bring together the network and other stakeholder as partners around thematic areas. This process will ensure visibility of women of faith as public actors, as well as increase support for partnership development between women of faith and secular civil society and women's organizations as well as donors and governments.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Effective implementation of this Plan of Action requires active mobilization of financial resources. Sustainable resource mobilization will seek to build a sustainable fund for women, combining long term resource mobilization with program/project-based fund raising through:

a). Member Contributions

Members of the network may provide gifts to support joint initiatives and cross-regional/border networking. The gifts from network members may be from individual members or from national and regional networks. If need be, the contributors may specify the kind of collaboration they may want to have and identify the region to partner with.

b). Development of funding partnerships for support of programs and specialized projects

This will include the development of proposals and concept papers to support programs and special projects relating to priority areas.

c). IWCC Fund

Members of the International Women's Coordinating Committee will coordinate, implement, and support a global multi-year fund-raising strategy to build the IWCC Fund. Such a strategy may include hosting fund raising events like dinners in different regions, which may coincide with other events and IWCC meetings.

d). Building a Women of Faith Endowment Fund

The Women of Faith Endowment Fund will seek to increase financial resources through three major categories of giving:

Category 1: Gifts from foundations, corporate entities, philanthropic organizations and other funding agencies.

Category 2: Gifts from Faith-Based organizations and/or institutions.

Category 3: Gifts from individuals.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1: *Religions for Peace*

Vision:

Since its founding in 1970, *Religions for Peace* has been guided by the vision of a world in which religious communities cooperate effectively for peace.

Mission:

Religions for Peace advances common action among the world's religious communities for peace.

Religions for Peace Goals are:

1. Stronger multi-religious cooperation to build peace.
2. Stronger *Religions for Peace* Global Network.

Global Agenda

Based upon deeply held moral principles widely shared by the world's faith traditions, *Religions for Peace* advances a positive notion of peace that acknowledges that the well-being of each person is related to the well-being of all. This notion of peace is multi-dimensional, recognizes the responsibility to reject the misuse of religion in support of violence and includes the need to transform violent conflict, promote just and harmonious societies, advance human development and protect the earth.

Religions for Peace advances common action among religious communities to build peace in the following ways:

1. *Transforming violent conflict, including war and terrorism, by*
 - Working to prevent violent conflicts, including wars;
 - Working to address the root causes of terrorism and related misuses of religion;
 - Advancing conflict resolution; and
 - Acting to eliminate proliferation of weapons and promoting disarmament.

2. *Promoting just and harmonious societies, by*

- Promoting justice, human rights and reconciliation;
- Assisting in social reconstruction and healing in post conflict societies;
- Confronting social and cultural violence; and
- Promoting peace education.

3. *Advancing human development, by*

- Promoting the rights and well-being of children and families;
- Promoting the rights and empowerment of women;
- Advancing poverty alleviation strategies related to building peace;
- Responding to HIV/AIDS; and
- Responding to major new or sudden threats related to building peace.

4. *Protecting the earth, by*

- Addressing environmental degradation as a threat to peace; and
- Addressing global warming.

APPENDIX 2: *Religions for Peace Women's Mobilization Program*

Religions for Peace Women's Mobilization Program was established in 1998 to ensure that the needs and perspectives of women are mainstreamed in all of *Religions for Peace's* programming and to strengthen the capacity of women of faith and their organizations as actors in peace building and human development. In 2001, the program launched the first-ever **Global Network of Women of Faith**. The network of networks is a valuable resource for women of all faiths to communicate and learn from each other and to build bridges and partnerships between faith-based women's organizations, major international agencies, and the United Nations.

Snapshot of achievements (1998-2006):

Regional and sub-regional Women of Faith Networks

The Women's Program has launched regional and sub-regional women of faith networks as follows:

- The African Women of Faith Network is a conduit for information sharing and networking for religious women in Africa. The network is mainstreamed into the African Council of Religious Leaders. Activities and networking foci over the past years have been on gender, conflict transformation, poverty and HIV/AIDS.
- The Latin American and Caribbean Women of Faith Network is mobilizing around gender violence, women and conflict, women's role in the national dialogue process, and eliminating discrimination against women.
- The European Women of Faith Network was established with the help of the Inter-religious Council of Bosnia Herzegovina. Its focus has been to advance religious cooperation and to affirm the role of women in the reconstruction, healing, and development of their respective religious communities. The network : "The network has convened networking meetings for women of faith from Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro and Macedonia.
- The Asian Women of Faith Network aims at collaborative action to address HIV/AIDS, conflict transformation and peace building in the countries.

National Women of Faith Networks

National network formation has been identified as a priority by many affiliated regional and sub-regional women of faith networks and IRCs and has been carried forward in the following countries: Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Liberia, Sierra, Leone, Kenya and India.

Consultative Meetings & Advocacy Activities

Several planning and/or consultative meetings have been held regionally and nationally around thematic priorities including gender, poverty, HIV/AIDS, violence against women, leadership and conflict transformation. Global and regional advocacy activities have been held, specifically during international meetings including regional HIV and AIDS forums, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, and International activism to end violence against women and girls.

Capacity Building Training

The Women's Mobilization Program continues to adopt a strategy to include women and gender-focused components in all activities and trains on issues ranging from conflict transformation to health and development. Additionally, gender specific trainings have been conducted for multi-religious women and men, including trainings on leadership, gender mainstreaming, advocacy and gender-responsive trauma healing for post-conflict reconstruction.

Information Sharing and Communication

For effective networking and information sharing, the Women's Mobilization Program highlights the tremendous work of women of faith in the field through:

- The semi-annual *Mosaic* Women of Faith newsletter, Web site, e-group and the Secretary General's Update.
- Compilation of Profiles of religious women.
- Management of a Database of Religious Women's Organizations.

Material Development

The Women's Mobilization Program continues to develop and/or disseminate various *Religions for Peace* resources in order to provide practical guidance to equip inter-religious networks to take actions.

Examples include:

- Guide on “Building and Equipping Women of Faith Networks” that provides understanding of the challenges, impacts and opportunities associated with establishing and strengthening multi-religious women of faith networks with examples of successful strategies developed by women of faith in the *Religions for Peace* networks.
- “A Woman's Place,” a publication on multi-religious reflections on the role of women of faith in building peace.
- Manual on “Women of Faith Transforming Conflict: A Multi-Religious Training Manual” that provides step-by-step sessions for trainers working on three issues: conflict transformation, communication and leadership skills, and media and advocacy.

Women's World Assembly

The Women's Program has convened two Women's World Assemblies to enhance networking at the global level and strengthen national, regional and global women of faith networks. The delegates to the assembly nominate and elect new members of the International Women's Coordinating Committee (IWCC), mandated to advise and provide direction to the *Religions for Peace* Women's Mobilization Program on strategic planning and implementation as well as policy development. Through working groups, the delegates conduct regional caucuses and recommend thematic priorities for action. The Assembly seeks to forge partnerships among religious communities and representatives of inter-governmental organizations and civil society.

- Prior to the *Religions for Peace* Eighth World Assembly, more than 400 religious women leaders from 65 countries representing the world's major faith traditions

convened for the *Religions for Peace* Women's Assembly in Kyoto, Japan, from 24-25 August 2006. The delegates were drawn from different faith traditions from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific. They adopted the Women's Assembly Declaration to confront violence and advance shared security with the theme "Women of Faith make available strength and hope when all seems hopeless."

- Prior to the *Religions for Peace* Seventh World Assembly, a Women's Pre-Assembly was convened in Amman, Jordan, from 22-24 November 1999. The assembly brought together 142 religious women leaders and community activists from 42 countries from Asia, Africa, America, and Oceania and from all the major religious communities.

Expanded Partnerships

The Women's Mobilization Program continues to expand partnerships for resource mobilization and for advocacy and joint action with the United Nations, civil society organizations and other faith-based and non-faith organizations.



Religions for Peace International **Women's Coordinating Committee (IWCC)**

1. **Ms. Mehrezia Labidi-Maiza**, Muslim, FRANCE, Secretary, Association for Women Progress and Coordinator of IWCC
2. **Rev. Yoshiko Izumida**, Buddhist, JAPAN, Dean, Hoju Women's College and representative, Deputy Coordinator of IWCC
3. **Rev. Judith VanOsdol**, Protestant, LATIN AMERICA, Women and Gender Pastoral Coordinator of the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI); IWCC Regional Coordinator of Religions for Peace Latin American and Caribbean Women of Faith Network (LACWFN)
4. **Mme. Mariama Sow**, Muslim, GUINEA, President, Muslim Women of Guinea, Executive Committee member of the African Women's Coordinating Committee
5. **Priestess Beatriz Schulthess**, Indigenous, COSTA RICA, Coordinator, Indigenous People's Spiritual Council
6. **Ms. Judith M. Hertz**, Jewish, USA, Co-Chair, Commission on Interreligious Affairs, Union for Reform Judaism
7. **Sister M. Victoria Gz. De Castejon**, Roman Catholic, SPAIN, Secretary General, International Union of Superiors General, VATICAN
8. **Rev. Gertrude Kapuma**, Protestant, MALAWI, Coordinator of All Africa Council of Churches for Southern Africa, Executive Committee member of the African Women's Coordinating Committee
9. **Hadja Katumi Mahama**, Muslim, GHANA, Trustee, Muslim Women's Association of Ghana, Executive Committee member of the African Women's Coordinating Committee, IWCC Co-Coordinator of *Religions for Peace* African Women of Faith Network
10. **Dr. Nirmala Deshpande**, Hindu, INDIA, President, Harijana Sevak Sangh
11. **Ms. Rajinderjit Kaur Singh**, Sikh, USA, Vice President, Sikh Heritage Organization
12. **Ms. Soher El Sukaria**, Muslim, ARGENTINA, Secretary General, Islamic Society of Cordoba, Argentina, Youth Representative to IWCC
13. **Mrs. Ravinder Kaur Nijjar**, Sikh, SCOTLAND, Interfaith Council of Scotland, Regional Coordinator of *Religions for Peace* European Women's Coordinating Committee
14. **Dr. Deepali Bhanot**, Hindu, INDIA, Asian Conference of *Religions for Peace*



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