



## **Interfaith Development Goals** <sup>1 2</sup> (ACWAY IDGs)

### **Introductory statement**

The Interfaith Development Goals (IDGs) were initiated to fill a gap in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UN SDG16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) addresses, essentially, political and human rights issues; *abuse, exploitation, trafficking, promoting the rule of law, reducing illicit financial and arms flows, reducing corruption and bribery*, but it does not address or make reference to inter religious and inter-cultural peace building.

Furthermore, the IDGs compliment the SDGs not only by including the interfaith sector but also by the fact that all 10 IDGs contribute and align with 5 of the SDGs (5, 10,11,16 &17).

The IDGs allow us to capture and demonstrate how religious, faith, spiritual and interfaith groups, their communities and leaders contribute to building peace and harmony around the world.

ACWAY consists of young people from more than 90 countries around the world, promoting interreligious and intercultural peace and understanding. These IDGS were developed over two and half years by young people from different faiths and cultural backgrounds with support from senior interfaith leaders. These goals have been adopted by ACWAY to align all our interfaith activities with the relevant IDGs.

We call on religious, faith, spiritual and interfaith communities and organizations to adopt these IDGs in their local, national and international work thus allowing for a more collaborative approach in achieving our common purpose - a more peaceful world for all.

### **Goal 1- Strong Interfaith Cooperation**

Promote cooperation among cultural groups and different religions on matters of common interest.

#### *Objectives*

- 1.1 Promote and support platforms where different religions and faiths can address matters of common interest;
- 1.2 Foster cooperation between various societal groups affected by and concerned with interfaith harmony;
- 1.3 Nurture respect and dialogue in environments of diversity of belief and thought.

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<sup>1</sup> In this document, we encompass interreligious and intercultural in the term interfaith. We also include secular-religious and religious-humanist dialogue.

<sup>2</sup> As of 15 January 2018

## **Goal 2 - Peace Through Dialogue**

Promote interfaith and intercultural dialogue as a means towards conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

### *Objectives*

- 2.1 Engage religious, cultural and community leaders in the promotion of respect towards different religious or ethnic groups by direct outreach to community members;
- 2.2 Support interfaith activism and use positive traditional narratives as a reminder of a given group's values during turbulent times, in order to prevent the escalation of the conflict;
- 2.3 Establish safe space in order to facilitate conversations between various communities in an atmosphere of openness and mutual respect to help resolve conflicts.

## **Goal 3 – Universal Freedom and Protection of Religion**

Seek in any arena to uphold freedom and protection of thought and religious identity in every expression around the world.

### *Objectives*

- 3.1 Develop yet unarticulated objectives to end discrimination based on religious ground and closely correlated with other human rights issues, such as age, race, sex, language, national or social origin, sexual orientation, political opinion or other status;
- 3.2 Promote existing rules established by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to work against discrimination, taking into account the distinctions of each specific community and target group;
- 3.3 Increase awareness about discrimination at the grassroots level and foster a culture of zero tolerance for discrimination.

## **Goal 4 - Intergenerational Engagement**

Stimulate youth engagement in interfaith and intercultural activities towards fostering cross-cultural understanding.

### *Objectives*

- 4.1 Enable youth to build bridges with their own tools and innovations to foster dialogue and acknowledge the contribution of youth in existing programs to encourage them to work sustainably;
- 4.2 Enable access of young people to educational and social interfaith platforms;
- 4.3 Assemble and disseminate tools, frameworks, and guiding principles as a solid knowledge basis for intercultural competences for youth;
- 4.4 Arrange programs and events (e.g. fellowship and capacity building programs) to engage youth of diverse backgrounds, particularly in multicultural contexts, to analyze and implement responses on the pressing local and global issues;

4.5 Develop and engage in practices which will enhance the freedom of expression in interfaith work.

### **Goal 5 - Protection of Women's Dignity and Rights**

Engage religious and spiritual communities in protection and empowerment of girls and women against violence and abuse.

#### *Objectives*

- 5.1 Empower people to addresses gender inequalities and violent mistreatment against girls and women in the name of religion;
- 5.2 Support the creation of initiatives and regional bodies that can work to protect the dignity and rights of religious and nonreligious girls and women;
- 5.3 Foster and encourage spaces where women can express their beliefs and needs, and safely exercise personal choices.

### **Goal 6 - Access to Interfaith Education and Religious Literacy**

Raise cultural and religious awareness and promote religious literacy in multiple forums to develop an understanding for the Other and work against prejudice and ignorance.

#### *Objectives*

- 6.1 Strengthen the understanding of one's own religion, as well as others, within religious spaces and houses of worship;
- 6.2 Promote religious/cultural understanding and literacy in formal and informal educational contexts through field trips, student exchange programs, cultural events, seminars, dialogues, etc.

### **Goal 7 - Cooperation with Non-Religious Actors**

Promote collaboration with non-religious actors to foster greater understanding and mutual cooperation to tackle pressing issues of our time.

#### *Objectives*

- 7.1 Work towards strong partnerships with national, international and civil society organizations to address religious and non-religious related issues;
- 7.2 Share platforms such that all stakeholders are included as serious actors when addressing common issues.

## **Goal 8 - Religion as a Tool for Peace**

Engage in the education and interpretation of religious, spiritual and faith communities as historic and inexhaustible foundations for the theory and practice of peace. Religion is neither used as a justification, nor scapegoated as a reason for war, violence and discrimination.

### *Objectives*

- 8.1 Continue to uphold the peacemaking potential of religions, faith and spiritual communities;
- 8.2 Seek to unmask the appropriation of religious, faith or spiritual communities and principles for political ends;
- 8.3 Strengthen the members of religious, faith and spiritual communities in their understanding that religion is an empowering tool to resist violence and provide assistance in making known those who already promote peacemaking and development through their doctrines and practices

## **Goal 9 - Recognition and Protection of Religious and Ethnic Minorities and Vulnerable Groups**

Encourage religious, faith or spiritual communities to recognize and protect national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, as well as vulnerable groups such as LGBTQ+ and differently abled persons.

### *Objectives*

- 9.1 Engage religious leaders in the promotion of respect towards persons and communities belonging to minorities;
- 9.2 Promote awareness about the particular challenges and prejudices faced by minorities;
- 9.3 Encourage the participation of minorities in interfaith forums.

## **Goal 10 - Respect for Religious, Faith and Spiritual Symbols and Places**

Ensure treatment of religious, faith and spiritual symbols with respect and sanctity. Collaborate between religions and faiths to protect spiritual and religious symbols, houses of faith and worship, sanctuaries and cultural sites.

### *Objectives*

- 10.1 Encourage the acknowledgement, respect and protection of the symbols of the entire human community;
- 10.2 Collaborate in the protection of each other's holy symbols, places and languages; and strengthen the importance of their protection in non-religious forums and secular societies.
- 10.4 Promote respect for differences by providing young people with a safe space for dialogue and a counternarrative to hate speech.