

Faith and Development Leaders' Meeting
Faith-inspired networks and organizations:
Their contributions to development programs and policies

A meeting organized by the Development Dialogue on Values and Ethics at The World Bank, the UK Department for International Development, and the World Faiths Development Dialogue

Accra, Ghana, July 1-3, 2009

Meeting Highlights

Background and Objectives

Over July 1st and 2nd, 2009, 85 development and faith leaders from 28 countries met in Accra, Ghana to take stock on the common ground and goals of religious and development organizations on fighting poverty. A smaller meeting on July 3 focused on health.

The meeting was coordinated by the World Bank's Development Dialogue on Values and Ethics (DDVE) and the World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD), and further supported by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID). Co-chaired by Graeme Wheeler, the Managing Director for Operations of the World Bank Group, and Lord Carey of Clifton, former Archbishop of Canterbury and also Chair of the WFDD, the meeting included participants from dozens of organizations. These varied in size and type, including nonreligious institutions (the World Bank, the WHO, UNAIDS) and faith-inspired organizations (Christian Health Associations, Tearfund, the Tony Blair Faith Foundation) that are all focused on improving the lives of the world's poorest and most vulnerable.

The Accra meeting followed on four prior meetings, the first of which, held in February 1998, aimed to strengthen understanding and networks among development and faith leaders. The most recent of the series took place in Dublin, Ireland in January 2005 and centered on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). There it was agreed that periodic meetings were important but the hope was expressed that future meetings would move to greater specificity and direct links to policy and operational action.

Two specific emphases of the Accra meeting were Africa and service delivery. The conference was held in Ghana to make it more accessible to African organizations and leaders, and there was a strong contingent of participants from the continent. The focus on service delivery, and the presence of many involved with health-related programs and organizations, were evident in the presentations and discussions throughout the meeting. Sessions of the conference included presentations by delegates, followed by open discussions around the topic; each session focused on a specific topic, such as the current economic crisis or faith-based organizations' roles in working towards the Millennium Development Goals and peace promotion.

Agenda and Style: Overview

Each presenter brought a unique perspective to the links between faith and development, and related successes and challenges they have experienced through the course of their work. There was an overwhelming sentiment among both religious and nonreligious representatives that the mobilization and coordination of faith-inspired actors is essential to maximize the impact of aid and development agencies worldwide and achieve the MDGs. Discussions often centered on how

to best link different types of organizations, especially major nonreligious institutions, with smaller faith-inspired organizations.

July 1: Opening and Introductions

In his welcoming remarks, Archbishop Robert Aboagye-Mensah highlighted the importance of the meeting, urging that “faith must go to work”, and that “it must have actions to prove it.” He applauded the focus of the agenda on service delivery, saying that in his experience faith-inspired work in education and health leads in high quality and to real service reaching rural communities and the poor.

Participants then introduced themselves, highlighting the broad range of institutions (from multilateral development institutions to local, grassroots NGOs) and faiths (Christian, Muslim, Jewish, and Hindu) represented at the table.

Graeme Wheeler, World Bank Managing Director, offered a warm welcome and then a sober assessment of Africa’s challenges in the context of the global economic crisis, which comes after a period of great hope for the continent. He cited one statistic from the Bank’s economists that projects that every 1% growth decline in the average rate of GDP growth in Africa translates into 20 million more people in poverty. He talked about the political tensions inherent in the current economic environment, and how these tensions are accentuated by climate change, as rainforests equivalent to the size of Poland are cut each year. Africa, Mr. Wheeler said, is especially vulnerable in these times. He emphasized that now, more than ever, is the time to strengthen partnerships with faith institutions. He highlighted the positives of such organizations, including their extensive role in service delivery, their ability to innovate and produce results, and their leaders’ willingness to speak courageously on failures of public institutions. In closing, Mr. Wheeler reaffirmed the commitment of the World Bank to strengthen its work in this area.

Lord Carey of Clifton, Chair of the World Faiths Development Dialogue, traced the history of WFDD from its beginnings in 1998, where his own engagement began with a surprising phone call from then World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn, during which he proposed an interfaith meeting to address both common ground and differences. This initial meeting and subsequent ones highlighted the common hopes and dreams to break poverty’s iron grip that are shared by religious and nonreligious organizations alike. Lord Carey stated firmly that he remains convinced that the two sides can work closely together on many issues. He talked about his hope that the Accra meeting would inform future plans for WFDD as a network and help elaborate its specific work programs.

July 1, The Current Economic Crisis and its Implications

Ishac Diwan, World Bank country director for Ghana, highlighted the breadth and depth of the crisis’ impact in Ghana, especially for the urban poor. He also stressed that the most significant consequence, as he saw it, would be the reduction of present and future rates of growth. Governments and partners are working together to limit this effect but the situation is still cause for much concern.

Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, formerly the prelate of the diocese of Washington, D.C. and long associated with WFDD, highlighted the importance of the participants who had come to Accra, all deeply engaged on poverty programs, and lauded the meeting as a fulfillment of the original vision of both Lord Carey and James D. Wolfensohn. He noted debates, especially in the United States, about the separation of church and state, but emphasized that adherence to this principle

need not preclude *partnerships* between religious institutions and governments. Because of the unique reach of faith-based actors in many underserved areas of the world, these partnerships are essential in the context of efforts to end poverty. Stressing, though, the need for both sides to see the other as an equal, Cardinal McCarrick recalled James D. Wolfensohn's bold statement that churches "do not own the poor."

Recounting a heartrending story of a Sudanese family forced by abject poverty to sell their daughter, Cardinal McCarrick noted that advocacy for the poor is the duty of every religious person. Working for truly sustainable models of globalization is the task facing the global community and it demands that different religious traditions come together in a common cause.

Ingrid Srinath, President of CIVICUS, a global network of civil society organizations, also highlighted the importance of partnerships and particularly of engagement with civil society, of which faith institutions are a central element. Arguing for a voice for all relevant parties in policy debates, she quipped that unless one is "at the table, one will end up on the menu." She highlighted the moral implications of the current economic and social crisis, the importance of resisting the temptation of triumphalism by critics of the global economic order ("we told you so"), and also stressed the need for real solidarity in the face of what she termed a systematic grabbing of power by elites. Continuing, she saw hope even in this dark hour. There is, Srinath said, broad agreement on human rights principles, as well technology that can be used to disseminate information and mobilize people. She said that what must be addressed are both deficits of democracy and deficits of trust, and closed the presentation by saying, "We cannot be too modest, too bold, or too gutsy," in the pursuit of justice for the poor.

Warren Nyamugasira, executive director of the Cape Town-based Africa Monitor, talked about the story of the organization's founding in 2005. The Monitor's founder, then-Archbishop of Cape Town Njongkulu Ndungane, was inspired by the bald and troubling suggestion of a London taxi driver, that all funding for development assistance going to Africa would be "wasted", to create an organization dedicated to improving the outcomes of development assistance. Mr. Nyamugasira cited problems in Africa with data gathering by governments and NGOs which make coherent monitoring efforts next to impossible. This situation has led the Africa Monitor to seek different approaches, including a series of "poverty hearings," in which a wide range of voices were heard telling about the impact of both programs and social change. These hearings highlighted the stark realities of poverty – in them people spoke above all of hunger, including children eating cow dung, brought on by agricultural failures. He pointed towards smart subsidy programs for farmers, such as those in Malawi, as offering great promise.

Mr. Nyamugasira said that he was heartened that investment levels in agriculture are rising, but that dangers still persist. He relayed comments he has heard, like that of a young man who said, "When I see a rich person, I want to rob them", that highlight the potential he sees for unrest and violence. He encouraged active and coordinated efforts to improve monitoring, and to rebuild trust and confidence in international development institutions.

An active discussion following the presentations focused on the challenges of translating talk and promises at meetings into action, and specifically on how to engage faith leaders and institutions more actively in international organization and government policy processes. A point of consensus was that what is needed, at the Accra meeting and beyond, is a process of learning together – that both religious and secular actors committed to working on development challenges should approach each other in a spirit of openness and cooperation. Several commentators agreed that both development and religious leaders see real moves towards transparency as having a special importance in discussions around development.

Additional comments included:

- The special roles of faith leaders beyond their civil society functions
- The importance of an explicit focus on the ethical dimensions of development
- The devastating practical impact of the credit crunch and failures of banking systems
- The impact of unfair trade practices, including agricultural subsidies in Europe and the United States
- The dangers in drawing too sharp of a distinction between advocacy and service delivery as, in practice, they are tightly linked
- A keen interest in the issue of data integrity, which is important for understanding what is actually happening
- The need for increased and improved action to combat corruption
- Questions about the plans for future World Bank engagement with faith institutions
- The importance of interfaith approaches in ensuring that tendencies towards exclusivity are combated
- The need for more action to bring women's and youth voices into policy discussions and program management

In closing the session, Cardinal McCarrick talked about different levels of listening and understanding, with honesty and appreciation as keys to truly understanding one another. Graeme Wheeler said he was heartened by the honesty and creativity of the dialogue and highlighted the importance of upcoming global discussions, especially those of the G20, which could benefit from the observations of the Accra meeting. He noted the importance of clear witness by religious leaders, as politicians are often under pressure to declare victory too soon.

July 1, Role of Faith-Inspired Organizations in Health

Joy Phumaphi, Vice President for Human Development at the World Bank, noted that until recently we “had little faith but some hope” that we would achieve the health MDGs (Millennium Development Goals). However, the crisis has added new dimensions to the already great challenges, and hopes have been chilled. However, she said, faith institutions must remain vital partners in the effort. Ms. Phumaphi said that we need to focus on the issues of affordability and access, and to create a new way of working together and a new awareness of partnership. She hopes to ensure that the faith community is fully represented in development discussions at the global and country levels, and to engage the faith community more actively in monitoring the quality of services. She closed by saying that better answers as to why faith services are often more effective are needed, and suggested that stronger accountability probably offers a good part of the answer.

Dr. Samuel Mwenda, representing the Christian Health Association of Kenya (CHAK), focused on the evolution of CHAK's work. He stressed the significance of results-based financing for health programming and mechanisms that allow communities themselves to hold health care providers accountable. He said that the need for clearer partnership arrangements that respect the work and role of faith organizations is vital, as faith health institutions are embedded in communities.

Dr. Makki Abdelnabi Mohamed Hamid from Islamic Relief traced the history of Islamic Relief and the evolution of its approach, focusing specifically on its sharpening focus over time on HIV/AIDS. Dr. Hamid stressed the linkages between issues of health, community attitudes and

religion, using personal hygiene as an illustrative example. Here, ancient principles can combine with modern understandings to bring real improvements in people's health and quality of life. When faith communities are ignored, he said, programs are far less effective, as faith is "deeply rooted in communities, whether others like it or not."

The discussion following the presentations highlighted the diversity of relationships at the nexus of government, faith, and health, with some, such as Zambia's, functioning well and transparently, and others experiencing less positive results. Inadequate funding levels and the lack of predictability of financial flows were cited as serious problems across the board, and lack of real agreement on respective roles is a problem in most situations. The roles of faith institutions are changing against an unclear policy backdrop, and working with governments is thus a common challenge. To make progress, much better data and agreement on standards are vital. The need for better documentation on best practices was highlighted, especially on cutting-edge work and effective partnership arrangements.

July 1, Faith-Inspired Organizations and Service Delivery in Ghana

Gilbert Buckle, from the Christian Health Association of Ghana (CHAG), impressed the group with his careful presentation of the long and arduous path towards clearer arrangements on health systems in Ghana, resulting at last in a Memorandum of Understanding between faith-run health services and the Ghanaian government. Some lessons he highlighted were the importance of defining common understandings of mandate and responsibility, the need for trust and mutual transparency, willingness to accept that "there are two sides, and both are right," and the need for faith institutions to come to terms with practical implications of governments' exercise of their mandate. The bottom line, Mr. Buckle said, is that both governments and faith institutions need each other, and in order to work effectively together there must be changes in the concepts of use of public funds, a shift in focus towards outputs and deliverables, and an increase in clear accountability mechanisms.

Joseph Kwabena Antwi, from Ghana's Inter-Faith Waste Management Initiative, recounted the history of this important and unusual initiative, which brought faith communities that had rarely, if ever, worked together into a common effort for the benefit of the people and country. He highlighted that 70% of diseases are linked to poor waste management, and noted the focus of the coalition (with ten participating bodies) on advocacy, education, and engagement of young people. Some lessons were that organizational management training was greatly needed by faith-based organizations, and that it was not feasible to try to run programs with no full time staff, no money, and only volunteers.

Alhaj Yacobu Abban, from the Muslim Ahlu Ssunna Wal-Jama'a, highlighted the importance of his organization's work through private schools that teach the young.

The discussion following the presentations focused on the question of what makes the contributions of faith-inspired groups unique. There was consensus that clarifying and defining this uniqueness needs more analysis and attention. Many commenters spoke about the importance of improving data collection, evaluation methods, and mechanisms for partnerships. Others suggested that "realism" in learning lessons is sorely needed. The arduous process of working towards Ghana's MOU was noted with appreciation.

July 1, Service Delivery Challenges in the Light of the MDGs

The final session on July 1 was a discussion moderated by Dr. Hany El Banna, President of the Humanitarian Forum and Agnes Abuom, Member of the World Council of Churches Central Committee.

Dr. El Banna focused on the “OFF (oil, food and finance) Crisis,” and encouraged active discussion about its practical and wide-reaching impact. He also mentioned his hope to achieve greater clarity on why there is so much defensiveness about faith and religion, given its importance for so many of the world’s people. Dr. El Banna emphasized that the question is how to bring the strengths of values into policy discussions, and to translate promises and ideals into practice.

Dr. Abuom focused on the question of what service delivery for the poor involves and on the issues of participation and exclusion, especially for women. She expressed concern about what she sees as increasing abuse of government power. Partnerships, Dr. Abuom said, must be built with integrity and clear focus on values, principles, validation of the real resources faith inspired organizations bring, and true mutual accountability. Data, its authenticity and its practical use require active exploration.

In the lively discussion that followed, themes included the following:

- A focus on issues of political will, and how faith communities can be more actively involved in mobilizing for political change
- Questions about how to make MDG accountability meaningful
- An emphasis of the idea that meaningful participation requires substantial investment of time, effort, and resources from faith-inspired organizations. Much can be learned from the faith involvement on HIV/AIDS, where time and skill were needed, as well as listening to donors, and “not just beating faith-based drums”.
- A focus on listening and working together
- The need for more shared dialogue and less arrogance
- A suggestion that tackling “religion-phobia” is essential
- The need for a “vision-led partnership [and a] partnership honestly dealt with.” Faith organizations need allies in partnership organizations.
- Changing the reality that most faith-inspired organizations tend not to be recognized both at home and abroad (the examples of the WHO Global Assembly and recent African Union meetings were cited as examples).
- The vital importance of coming discussions on climate change (termed by one commenter a “global armageddon”) that will transform discussions of poverty and development strategies. Faith institutions need to play a central part.
- The idea that “faith based institutions should be as good as the best, because the poor deserve the best.” What is needed is a focus on doing what faith institutions can do best; this will vary by situation and in some instances may mean just listening to those who are destitute and need support.
- A need to “look at ourselves,” and improve the work of faith institutions at least as much as critiques of systems and global institutions are offered.

Lord Carey closed the session and the day with an urging to look more closely at concerns about faith institutions that were fueling the “religion-phobia” that several had cited. He said that there

is a need to address people's concerns and understand them, and to get the story out about the fine work that is being done.

July 2: Role of Faith-Inspired Organizations in HIV/AIDS and Malaria

Canon Gideon Byamugisha opened the session by sounding a positive note on what he termed the "good news on HIV/AIDS": that we are much better off than 25 years ago because of far greater knowledge and new ways to ensure that affected people can live longer, healthy, peaceful, and positive lives. He then asked if the faith and development communities had exhausted all of the resources they had to keep people alive. Clearly this was not the case. Canon Gideon reiterated that stigma is a major problem still and that there needs to be major changes of attitudes.

Ruth Turner, Executive Director of the newly-formed Tony Blair Faith Foundation, recounted the story of Tony Blair's journey after he left office as Prime Minister and his determination to work to find practical and effective ways for religions to work together, so that religion can indeed be a force for good. The keys are, she said, building on common values and building respect. Interfaith work, though it has no natural constituency, can play a critical part and is thus a focus for TBFF. She highlighted the challenging phenomenon of real wariness from some quarters about working with religious groups, which calls both for more information and creative new marketing. These are crucial as policy makers cannot cope with things they cannot count.

The Foundation sees a major need to build bridges with the secular world as well as through interfaith work. TBFF will have as its initial focus malaria, in part because the path to eradication is fairly straightforward and can be easily explained to individuals. She closed by saying that the poor deserve the best, and should always benefit from developments at the forefront of innovation.

Sally Smith, Partnerships Advisor for UNAIDS, expressed keen appreciation for the work that participants do. She described important progress and thinking spurred by the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the creative roles played by faith institutions. She highlighted, among many issues, the vital need to address gender issues and in particular to stop violence against women and girls.

The discussion following the presentations focused on issues of stigma, on admiration for work done by many very different faith inspired groups, and on the important agenda of issues ahead. An exchange between Sally Smith and Cardinal McCarrick highlighted the "elephant on the table": secular concerns about faith community approaches to HIV/AIDS which, to faith communities, seemed to ignore the extraordinary work that is being done. As Cardinal McCarrick noted, it was important to "tweak the elephant's tail." The group stressed the importance of practical approaches and of dialogue, and of appreciation for the dedication and millions of hours of work of so many. No one is "putting our heads in the sand" – the work is done with "great generosity, great determination, and great love." There is need to focus on basic values, to honor each other, and to bring communities into thinking and programs.

July 2, Role of Faith-Inspired Networks and Organizations in Promoting Peace

Rev. William Leshner, Chair of the World Parliament of Religions, recounted the Parliament's origins and intrinsic mission of peace among religions (in the spirit of Hans Kung's famous comment that there can be "no peace among nations until there is peace among the religions"). He spoke about the important engagement in the upcoming Parliament of Religions in Melbourne (December 3-9, 2009) by the Australian government, which sees that the interfaith movement behind the Parliament can play a vital role in building social cohesion. He concluded by talking

about the importance of compassion, saying, “All my work has brought me back to compassion,” but emphasizing that the compassion of which he spoke was connected not merely to warm feelings but to action.

Mauro Garofalo, from the Community of Sant Egidio, described the journey of the Community and its deep conviction that “nothing is possible in a time of war – war is the mother of all poverty.” He said that the Community sees that religious leaders can work for peace, but cannot and should not replace traditional diplomacy. Some strengths of religious leaders in the context of conflict include tailored, personal interventions, the ability to “risk our reputation,” and the capacity to move fast. He also cited some risks, including possibly overlapping activities and shortcoming linked to lack of authority. His view is that peacemaking can never be profit making and competition is very dangerous. The Mozambique story, where Sant’Egidio was centrally involved, taught them a great deal about the mentality of rebels, and of victimization. Peace making, Garofalo said, is “not like a game of chess” – meeting people as people is the first priority.

Eugen Brand, leader of the International Movement ATD Fourth World Movement, highlighted the large numbers of people who still live in extreme poverty and how close the history of poverty is to the surface even in countries like Switzerland. We cannot lose the memory of the history of poverty, and its prison of shame, Brand said. He said that the well-being of any society is measured by the welfare of its worst off people. One of the projects of his organization is the chronicling of the stories of the poor. The act of gathering and sharing the stories is important, Brand said, in how it gives a voice to the poor, and how it spreads knowledge about the reality of poverty. He said that the stories ATD has gathered highlight the real pain of the poor.

Moulana Imam Umer Ahmed Ilyasi, Secretary General of the All India Organization of Imams of Mosques, gave a narrative of the important role that his organization plays in India, home to 100 million Muslims. His organization is the largest national organization of imams in the world, and is present in every corner of India. There is much relevant work in health and education, but in a far broader range of issues.

Jacqueline Ogega Morturi, Director of the Women's Mobilization Program of the World Council of Religions for Peace (WCRP), emphasized the importance of focusing on women and children, so often neglected not only in meetings but in action programs. She said that the suffering of women and mounting violence are a source of great concern. She said that there are hopeful signs but overall a need for far more attention and for a “a new transformation of relationships.” She closed by saying, “Africa says that it esteems family values” but that more needs to be done in the true spirit of *Ubuntu*, loosely translated as “I am, therefore we are.”

In the discussion following the presentations, the breadth of different work in the area of peace was highlighted, linking it to widely perceived problems of exclusion. Again, the importance of sharing information and good practice more widely was a strong common theme. Commenters repeatedly talked about how it is important to listen better, more deeply, more often, and more thoughtfully. The tragedy of terrorist groups claiming to speak in the name of the people and of religion was cited, especially with reference to the history of conflict in Ireland. Archbishop Diarmuid Martin pointed to the referendum held there as a turning point, allowing leaders to say to the terrorists, “You no longer speak in the name of the people.” There was some consensus around the idea that it is vital to address the root economic causes that fuel tensions.

July 2. Advocacy Opportunities and Challenges

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, from the Diocese of Dublin, Ireland, stressed that keeping donors to their pledges is a central priority. He recounted the case of Ireland, one of the leading countries in terms of both government and public support for development assistance (and support from celebrities like Bono and Geldorf); but this year, with the crisis, sharp reductions in budget allocations for development aid met public apathy. This is a worrying harbinger for broader support for development. Poverty, he said, is essentially the “inability to realize God’s potential” and is a special priority for faith communities: a poverty strategy is not a luxury. Faith leaders must remind both public officials and the public that the MDGs are promises made not to governments but to the poor, unconditional promises that recognize basic human values. He stressed the importance of clear communications, and the need to let people see what is being achieved.

Paul Remy, working with street children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, stressed the imperative of serving the very poorest, the “*moins que rien*”. The priority is to accompany the poor, with, not for the poor, and he cited the special importance of working with children at risk. His work involves building networks in Kinshasa. Bringing efforts together so that real progress can be achieved and duplication avoided are imperatives. Because the problems are increasing, evidenced in measures like increases in HIV/AIDS, in accusations of witchcraft, and in large numbers of child soldiers.

Carole Rakodi, Religion and development program, University of Birmingham, highlighted the need for well articulated and organized advocacy at all levels, global, national, and local. She described the emergence of advocacy networks especially towards the end of the last century, with awareness of unjust debt and uncertain development results. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Process offers promise, and consultation has improved as time has passed, so that there is scope for inputs. Nonetheless faith communities are generally poorly represented, and many are unaware of the process except in specialized areas. Many are unwilling to participate and frustrated by earlier engagement, seeing themselves as relatively squeezed out by secular NGOs. She outlined six challenges: (1) to beware the minefield between government, politics and religion, especially when finance is involved; (2) to find balance between confrontation and criticism and cooperation; (3) to learn to communicate across different languages (4) for faith communities to be well enough informed not to be intimidated; (5) to develop tools to demonstrate and realize strengths; and (6) to collaborate despite the history of tricky relationships.

David Saperstein, Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism, returned to the fundamental challenge that he sees for religious leaders, to recall that we are called by something beyond ourselves, that we seek to transform the world. The work we are discussing is truly holy work, God’s work. Thus faith leaders and institutions can and should be a moral goad to nations, serving as their conscience. He noted the US experience of powerful advocacy by coalitions of faith groups, for example on Darfur and on trafficking issues, and described the approach of the Obama administration, through the Faith-based and Neighborhood Council. Its 25 members will not compromise with their religious beliefs and are committed to help those in need. They played a role in framing the agenda reflected in President Obama’s speech in Cairo, and a structure of task forces will begin to work from next week. The aim is to reshape USAID and US foreign assistance more broadly, making foreign aid more transparent. The current multiple departments and organizations working in the field is not conducive to consistent standards. There are questions to address on the operational implications of constitutional requirements for separation of religion and state, including approaches to defining proselytization. Priority areas for action are

conflict resolution, food security a major issue, outreach to Muslim countries, and action on malaria and climate change. There is need to isolate religious extremists, and to address those who use religious justifications for force or violence. We stand, he argued, truly stand at a crossroads, and never was a moral vision for the future and the will to act more sorely needed.

The discussion highlighted the importance of strong advocacy for development and the significant turning point many saw in current challenges. The governance of multilateral institutions was a subject of questions, as was the overall climate in which civil society operates. Interfaith action was stressed by the group as a way to achieve multiple objectives. The importance of serving “the least among us” was a common theme. Working together is not an option; it is essential. Several highlighted the need for faith communities to focus much more on women and youth. The growing significance of organized crime and corruption was seen as central to the challenge, areas where faith communities should be more actively engaged.

July 2. Concluding Session - Looking Forward: Development and Faith

Quentin Wodon (World Bank, Development Dialogue on Values and Ethics) and Katherine Marshall (WFDD) reflected on their conclusions from the meeting and implications for future action. Quentin Wodon focused especially on the practical recommendations, seeking to put “legs on our ideas so they can run”. The aim is to make dialogue more useful, linking it to action. The priority should go to the issue of information including data, capacity building, and evaluation of impact. Looking to the future exploring issues around values linked to faith and the implications for development deserves more attention.

Katherine Marshall reflected on meeting highlights, notably the strong emphasis on getting better data, assessing its quality, looking to the aggregation of information to see the broader picture, and then looking to impact and quality of intervention. Issues of coordination of programs were less highlighted than might be expected, and there was less focus on issues of governance, in the sense of corruption and leakage, than might be expected. Issues for women and youth, including reproductive health, domestic violence, and voice (expressed as priorities) were important themes in the discussion. Looking to future work by Georgetown University’s Berkley Center and the WFDD, action and policy focused reviews of faith inspired organizations and priority issues (like governance, malaria, tuberculosis, and children) will be focal points. The interview series that seeks inter alia to explore what is different in faith interventions offer a rich source of insight. Country reviews that provide detailed information and highlight policy issues will be an important next step. .

A round of brief comments from participants underscored the meeting’s benefits, and also seconded the observations on issues deserving more attention, notably getting better data (fast), aid coordination, more forthright approaches to political leaders, bringing women and youth more into discussions, and acting purposefully on corruption. Hopes were expressed for a larger future World Bank role in engaging with faith communities. The role of the media also deserves more attention.

Lord Carey and Graeme Wheeler brought the meeting to a close with expressions of sincere appreciation for a frank, honest, open, and constructive exchange. It heightened understanding both of areas where partnership is essential, as well as areas where only faith communities can work and go, and areas where multilateral organizations like the World Bank have both assets and special responsibilities. The meeting affirmed many common values and shared sense of purpose, as well as shared anger at the scourge of poverty. The meeting reflects a strong shared

commitment to dialogue and action. In sum, there is an “enormous desire to work more closely together.”

Technical Session, July 3, Case Study: The Christian Health Association of Ghana
(additional co-sponsor, the Guerrand-Hermes Foundation for Peace)

Challenges in Health Service Delivery by FINOs: CHAG’s Experience

- Overview of CHAG activities in Ghana, Gilbert Buckle, CHAG
- Relationship between CHAG facilities and the National Insurance System, Alex Mensah, CHAG
- Governance and internal institutional arrangements, Charles Gerhardt, CHAG

Measuring the Role and Performance of Health FINOs in Ghana

- Measure CHAG’s role and performance in health care provision, Quentin Wodon, World Bank
- Comments, Laura Rose, World Bank
- Comments, Gilbert Buckle, CHAG

Participant evaluations

We received about 40 forms or notes assessing the conference, as well as personal comments and feedbacks. The overall assessment was positive - participants appreciated the opportunity to come together in this setting, were pleased to meet in Africa, applauded the breadth of the agenda, enjoyed the diversity of those attending, noted the quality as well as the range of topics covered in the presentations, applauded the opportunity for open discussion, and commented that they had learned both about the World Bank and about the work of other faith-inspired organizations. Many expressed eagerness to follow up with individuals as well as with the group as a network. Many specifically asked for a synthetic report from the meeting and sought ways to remain in contact as a network.

Some of the less-positive assessments focused on some imbalances in attendees (notably in the ratio of Christian and Muslim leaders at the meeting), rather thin preparatory materials available to participants, and the absence of concrete and transparent plans for future action. One individual made a broader “paradigm” critique (echoing a sentiment voiced clearly during the meeting), that the underlying approach of development institutions toward poverty and inequality needs to shift. We received many suggestions on next steps, including on future meetings both at the global and local levels. These included topics and specific areas for focus, for example on youth and women, active exchange on the widely-seen need for better data and evaluation work, and a focus on capacity building. Some suggested including government representatives more centrally as well as other UN agencies in future meetings. Others advocated a discussion group format that would allow for wider participation in specific topics. Several commented on the possibility of the World Bank, the DFID, and the WFDD serving as advocates for improvement in best-practices by faith-inspired organizations. There was specific reference to the need to address the perceived growth of the phenomenon of “religion-phobia” in the development / health service world. Other specific suggestions urged both global and country specific meetings organized along similar lines. Participants also felt that an important step forward lies in implementing through actions the ideas and discussions generated at the meeting.