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Faith in Action:
Religion and Spirituality in the Polycrisis

INSIGHT REPORT

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Contents

Executive summary

Global leaders cannot afford to ignore the impact of religion and spirituality on today's interconnected challenges.

Eighty-five per cent (85%) of the world's population adhere to a religious or spiritual tradition[1]– with significant impact on how they define their values and how they participate in their communities, workplaces and societies. For most of the world today, religion and spirituality continue to inform what a good life is and how to best think about the challenges faced by families, nations and the world. For global leaders, underestimating the ongoing influence and role of religion in society can lead to missed opportunities for greater positive impact in multi-faith societies and significant oversights in understanding how religion and spirituality interact in the complex societal challenges happening today.

Indeed, a number of faith actors (from traditional religious institutions to inter-faith organizations to faith-motivated investors) are working in partnership with businesses and other global stakeholders to address key challenges in the current polycrisis – economic, environmental, geopolitical and technological. Several business and global leaders are increasingly seeing value in partnerships with faith actors: in understanding key opportunities for impact and navigating ongoing societal transitions today. These leaders are going beyond basic faith literacy and applying their strategic, contextual understanding of faith communities and traditions to achieve meaningful engagement and impact through partnerships. Faith actors, too, are exploring innovative approaches in how to work together and with other stakeholders for mutual benefit (to avoid "faith washing" and other collaboration challenges).

In partnership with global religious and spiritual representatives, experts and leaders across sectors, this report highlights the continued relevance of religion and spirituality in the current polycrisis. The report details eight faith-based partnership case studies – on the environment, health, resilience and technology governance – and identifies three key ways leaders can explore meaningful cooperation with faith actors at a time of deepening polarization and distrust in societies.

Introduction

The power of religion and spirituality in a world in crisis. By the numbers: Religion still matters for most individuals and societies today.

More than 8 in 10 people adhere to a religious or spiritual tradition – with profound implications on individual preferences, institutions, social norms and the public sphere across societies.[2] According to recent findings from the Pew-Templeton Global Religious Futures project, most major religious groups are expected to grow by 2050.[3]

– In Latin America, evangelical Christianity (mostly Pentecostalism and neo-Pentecostalism) is the fastest-growing religion, with one-fifth of the population identifying as evangelical, largely those who are poorer, women and Black.[4] In Brazil, the world's largest Catholic country, one-third of the population is now evangelical, with a new church opening almost every hour in the past decade according to the *Economist*.[5]

– According to the Pew Research Center, in countries in South and South-East Asia, nearly all adults "still identify with the religion in which they were raised," and "strongly link their religious and national identities."[6]

– In the United States, roughly 70% of the population identifies with a religious tradition, 64% as Christian and adherents of other religions totaling about 6%.[7] There are over 350,000 religious congregations (temples, mosques, churches, synagogues, gurdwaras and others) across the country, more than three times the number of schools and universities.[8] In addition to the over 200,000 faith-related non-profits working in health and social services, faith-based organizations and actors make up over a third of civil society organizations in the United States.[9]

– In Africa, the Middle East, South Asia and Latin America, the fastest-growing countries by population continue to be highly religious, while those with shrinking populations tend to be less religious. As a result, by 2060, more than 40% of the world's Christians will likely live in sub-Saharan Africa, shifting the population centre of the religion from the United States and Europe.

– With relatively younger populations in countries with increasing population growth, Islam will continue to outpace other major religions and by 2050, reach near parity with Christianity "possibly for the first time in history."[10]

Though the global projection of religious affiliation and practice is pointing upwards, significant media attention has focused on the rise of the religiously unaffiliated (particularly in Western countries), leading many global leaders to underestimate the importance of religion and spirituality in the modern world. Indeed, there has been significant attention on the rise of the nones: according to the Pew-Templeton Global Religious Futures Project, 3 in 10 adults in the United States now identify as atheist, agnostic or "nothing in particular", following similar patterns in Western Europe.[11,12,13]

One key misestimation of the importance of religion and spirituality is the relationship between religion and economic growth – with the presumption that a rise in economic prosperity is correlated with a decline in the practice and incidence of faith.[14] Another key misestimation relates to the role of religion as the single root cause of violent extremism, focusing on declining religiosity as beneficial to societal stability. Most experts on countering violent extremism have moved beyond this thinking, with significantly more evidence that "high levels of religious devotion or observance are poor predictors of support for or participation in violent extremism."[15]

For global leaders, underestimating the ongoing influence and role of religion in society can lead to missed opportunities for greater positive impact in multi-faith societies and significant oversights in understanding how religion and spirituality interact in the complex societal challenges happening today. Ignoring religion and spirituality also shrouds how they can be drivers of transformation and change across several current global crises.

The purpose of this report is to:

– Further inform how religion and spirituality can make an impact in today's interconnected polycrisis

– Showcase how faith actors are working in partnership with global leaders – in particular working in innovative partnerships with the private sector – to tackle these crises

– Drawing from key case studies, identify three key drivers in developing meaningful cooperation and greater faith fluency amid polarization and declining trust.

BOX 1 | Defining the faith actor landscape

This report defines "faith actors" as a broad range of organizations influenced by faith, inclusive of, but not limited to, the following types of organizations and leaders: local religious communities; religious institutions and faith leaders (local and transnational); faith-based organizations (global, regional and local); faith-based business associations, investor communities and networks; interfaith organizations and networks; multi-faith organizations; multi-religious organizations; faith-inspired social entrepreneurship and philanthropic organizations; academia and experts on religion, spirituality and values; and individual leaders across all sectors and industries (including business and government).

While all based on religious and spiritual identities, faith actors do not act as a monolith.[16] There is no one-size-fits-all term for defining faith actors. Faith actors and communities describe themselves (and are described by others) in various ways and distinct preferences.

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Religion and its institutions such as temples, churches, or mosques are as old as humanity itself. No other force known to human culture is older, rooted deeper in the human collective consciousness, or is able to connect humans with one another more extensively. Up to this day, religion is a reality for the vast majority of the people on this planet. And this reality shapes how people think, how they act – and not act.

Christine Schliesser, *On the Significance of Religion for the SDGs: An Introduction*, Taylor & Francis, 2023

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Faith and spirituality play a pivotal role in everyone's life, regardless of one's religion or lack thereof. They both serve as guiding forces, offering solace during challenging times and fostering a sense of connection to something greater than oneself. When properly channelled, faith provides a foundation for us to build our lives in alignment with the highest values. Spirituality, when properly pursued, opens our minds and hearts to a more expansive perspective that brings clarity and equipoise, allowing us to make the most intelligent and thoughtful actions.

Amma, Founder, Mata Amritanandamayi Math

1 The impact of faith-based action in the polycrisis

The impact of faith-based action and the continued influence of religion and spirituality make faith increasingly relevant for leaders today.

1.1 Interconnected crises require multistakeholder solutions

As detailed in the World Economic Forum *2023 Global Risks Report*,[17] the erosion of social cohesion and polarization have been key features of the polycrisis across all countries, in relation with environmental, economic, geopolitical and technological global risks. There is a widening gap in shared values and common interests, which poses an existential challenge to governments and social systems, as current divisions are translating into the political context. Polarization on issues such as immigration, gender, reproductive rights, ethnicity, religion, climate and even secession have characterized recent elections, referendums and protests worldwide. These factors lead to division and unrest in person and online, as social media deepens distrust and makes the path towards cooperation less visible.

Addressing these key global risks in the polycrisis will require greater recognition of religion's impact across these risks and the greater engagement of global leaders with faith actors – drawing on their global influence, mobilization of networks, and articulation of values across global challenges. For example, several faith actors are already working in partnership with global leaders from business and government:

– Faith leaders and faith-based organizations have increasingly participated alongside the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP) processes in the last few years, advocating for more ambitious rights-based policies. Faiths for Biodiversity brought together faith-based organizations and conservation groups to articulate a multi-faith response to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework at the United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP15).

Organized by the Muslim Council of Elders in partnership with the COP28 Presidency, the United Nations Environmental Programme and the Catholic Church, the United Arab Emirates hosted the Global Faith Leaders Summit for COP28 and the first-ever Faith Pavilion as a global climate summit for faith leaders.

– Acting as a "network of networks" linking strategic multi-religious and interfaith networks, the recent G20 Interfaith Forum (IF20) brought together leaders from religious communities to accelerate global action alongside the G20 process, reflecting four central areas of mobilization – the COVID-19 emergency, the climate crisis, conflicts and the welfare and protection of children.

– The Rome Call for AI Ethics, initiated in February 2020 through collaboration between religious organizations, global tech companies, international bodies and government, advocates for an ethical approach to artificial intelligence (AI) to ensure its responsible integration into society and that AI technologies are developed with humanity, dignity and inclusivity in mind. Leading organizations such as the Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace are further emphasizing the need for shared responsibility to promote transparency, inclusion, accountability, impartiality, reliability, security and privacy in the deployment of AI.

– In an effort to drive gender parity in technology and business, City Sikhs and City Hindus Networks, in partnership with the United Kingdom Parliament and Black Business Institute, brought

under-represented voices into conversations with government leaders as part of the Women in Business and Technology Parliamentary Series. Through engagement with lawmakers and policy-makers, the series has helped drive conversations and influence policies that promote equal opportunities for all, regardless of gender, ethnicity or religious background.

In addition to their leadership and participation in a number of global partnerships, religious institutions are also leveraging their assets to address challenges to human prosperity and flourishing. Arguably, faith-based investors were the frontrunners in the push for environmental, social and governance (ESG), impact investing and socially responsible investing long before these became common nomenclature, with an aim to reduce societal challenges and inequities.[18]

Recent data from the University of Oxford's Faith-Aligned Impact Finance Project has mapped 360 faith-based funds globally from across Abrahamic and Dharmic traditions with total net assets of $5 trillion; in 2020, the size of Islamic sovereign wealth fund assets represented approximately 3.8% of the global economy.[19,20] Faith-based investor campaigns such as UNIAPAC (International Christian Union of Business Executives) and the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) have developed industry transformation strategies and taken action by using their stock to challenge issues through shareholder resolutions.[21,22,23] Following a multistakeholder roundtable discussion in 2019, ICCR developed a statement outlining investor expectations on just transition policies and plans. To date, 99 investors have signed this statement, representing $4.3 trillion in assets under management or advisement.

> In my travels to the communities that we serve around the world, I have seen how faith-based leaders are often the most trusted and effective changemakers in their communities. I've witnessed their unique ability to draw from wide networks to convene important, difficult conversations, to bring people together and to inspire action […] they are often the first to arrive and the last to leave…and when we partner with these changemakers, the results can be extraordinary.
>
> Samantha Power, Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development[24]

1.2 | The relevance of faith for global leaders

With 85% of the world's population adhering to a religious or spiritual tradition and the recognized impact of faith actors in addressing societal challenges, global leaders cannot afford to ignore religion or be religiously or spiritually illiterate across the breadth and diversity of faiths and spirituality. Faith fluency – the ability to apply strategic, contextual understanding of faith communities and traditions for meaningful engagement and impact – is critical for leaders from government, business and international organizations.[25]

It is worth noting three fundamental factors that illustrate the enduring power of religion and spirituality – community, creed and citizenship – and why faith fluency is critical for global leaders. Understanding these diverse religious trends is crucial for business leaders, as these trends significantly influence global market dynamics, shape consumer and voting preferences and play a key role in determining the cultural competence required to operate successfully in diverse markets. Religion and spirituality also influence media consumption patterns and shade the contours of which messages people listen to and from whom.

Community – religious and spiritual identity among consumers and the workforce

The practice of faith acts as a social entity and collective identity, spanning gender, class, race, nationality and other identities and contributing to "processes of social, economic, ecological and cultural transformation."[26] Faith shapes the community's perception of itself within social structures and informs how they respond to their neighbours. As physical and sacred places, houses of worship "play a critical role in the life, spiritual, physical and mental health, and overall well-being and resiliency of their members and of the surrounding community, which became especially evident during the COVID-19 pandemic, revealing the extensive need for community through the collective isolation experience."[27]

In the workplace, a worker's religious identity has been largely excluded from the broader diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) movement in recent years, with companies fearing legal entanglements or an "open door" to proselytization and cultural conflict.[28] From mutual respect in the office to religious observances, religious freedom in the workplace contributes to a diverse, inclusive and engaged workforce, enhancing talent retention, improving employee satisfaction, fostering cultural competence, strengthening customer relations, and driving innovation within businesses, all of which are key components of a strong business case for championing religious freedom in the workplace.

Faith fluency is particularly relevant for businesses looking for access to new consumer markets in which these consumers will have strong expectations for how brands respect and reflect their values. For example, Kerry notes the global halal market reached some $2.221 trillion in 2022 and is forecast to have an 11% growth rate, reaching $4.1 trillion by 2028.[29] Notably, this is one of six other important Muslim consumer market segments, including "Islamic finance, modest fashion, media and recreation, Muslim-friendly travel, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics."[30] Similar dynamics exist for Kosher, Hindu-friendly and Mormon-friendly products. Global companies such as Walmart, McDonald's and Nestlé are similarly introducing "faith-compliant" products in some countries to engage these faith-influenced consumers.[31]

BOX 2 | **Championing religious freedom in the workplace**

The Corporate Religious Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (REDI) Index ranks Fortune 100 companies based on a variety of criteria related to their public commitment to providing faith-friendly workplaces, showcasing where companies that engage religious diversity as an asset can improve social cohesion in their workplaces and improve performance.[32] The index includes the presence of religious employee resource groups (ERGs) that help build positive corporate cultures for religious employees and their needs in the workplace. According to the 2023 REDI Index, Intel Corporation was the most faith-friendly corporate workplace among the 500 largest companies in America, with American Airlines, Equinix, PayPal, Salesforce and Dell Technologies rounding out the top six places.

Key aspects of the business case for religious freedom in the workplace:

– Diverse and inclusive workforce: ERGs and religious diversity and inclusion workshops foster diversity and inclusion in the workplace, promoting collaboration and productivity among employees.

– Talent retention and attraction: Inclusive religious policies, including religious ERGs, attract diverse talent and retain existing employees, reducing turnover costs and ensuring a skilled workforce.

– Improved employee engagement: Religious ERGs enhance employee engagement by providing a sense of community and belonging, leading to higher job satisfaction and productivity.

– Cultural competency: Religious ERGs expose employees to diverse faith traditions, enhancing their cultural understanding and enabling effective engagement with global markets.

– Customer relations: Workplace inclusivity and religious accommodation improve a company's brand image, increasing customer loyalty and positive public perception.

Creed (or cosmology) – and its impact on economic life, ethics and changing societal preferences

Drawing from principles and traditions formed over centuries, creed (also referred to as cosmology) refers to the distinctive feature of religious and spiritual communities to create worldviews and meaning that synthesize "what is important for people in life, what a good life is for them and to what they are committed."[33] This ideological dimension of religion shapes the mindsets, belief systems and behaviours of leaders and communities, defining individual and societal norms and expanding across generations.

With increasing demands for the private sector to take a more active role in addressing inequality amid record-breaking government debt, religious traditions can offer values-based guidance and frameworks to guide, inform and inspire decision-making; this is especially resonant in an age when discerning what is right and what is wrong can be difficult for business leaders. Religion and spirituality inspire paradigm shifts in understanding corporate citizenship and business leadership in crises through the articulation and promotion of values transcending current divisions. The theological underpinnings of most religious and spiritual traditions speak to economic livelihoods, property rights and shared prosperity – with deep significance for the acceptable use of resources and fairness in economic systems.[34] These concepts have persisted across multiple generations and societal contexts, predating the political discourse around ESG mandates and stakeholder capitalism.

BOX 3 | **Religious values and economic life**

Alexis Crow, Partner, Global Head, Geopolitical Investing, PwC, explains three key concepts from Catholic Social Teaching on economic life that "offer business executives a way of instilling stewardship in the societies in which they operate" – with excerpts from her recent article below:[35]

– Solidarity: "Implicit in an understanding of solidarity is the need to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with one's fellow workers in society. It recognizes the necessity to 'move beyond an individualistic culture,' endemic in our post-modern societies. A sense of solidarity was exhibited during the COVID-19 pandemic with support for essential workers. In the corporate world, solidarity also underpins the concept of co-ownership of businesses; affording employees the opportunity to own a share in the 'great workbench' on which they operate.[36] Such an opportunity to blend labour with the ownership of capital exhibits a way in which a business can become a 'community of solidarity'."

– Subsidiarity: "Intrinsically related to solidarity, the principle of subsidiarity acknowledges that each person and each segment of society matters – no matter how weak. Thus, the initiative, freedom and responsibility of the 'smaller' but 'essential' cells of society should be upheld and respected. A well-functioning society would support the development of the capabilities 'present at every level of society.' Those in positions of power and leadership have a responsibility to respect and support each person's dignity, private initiative and right to participate in economic life."

– Dignity of work: "Implicitly connected to this is the principle of dignity of work: that is, that all people have the right to participate in economic initiative, and have the right to productive work, living wages, and to fair working conditions.[37] Thus, even in an age of 'automation anxiety' – and fear of technological unemployment – the implication is that each person has a unique set of skills, gifts, and talents to bear in economic life. Vocational training, and continued 'learning for working' – might also be intrinsic to the dignity of work in an age of technological acceleration."

Citizenship and cultural preferences and interests

Religion acts as a political institution and actor, extending ideological influence into political participation and the articulation of the community's values and interests. From the histories of most societies, religion existed prior to nation-states and legitimized their power, shaping societal structures, governance and the collective conscience of communities, with adherents participating as citizens of both national and spiritual communities. Traditions, religious iconography and other identifiers signify the citizenship and experiences of the community, while common values help define shared rights and responsibilities.

Faith fluency is key for a greater understanding of social and cultural dynamics in certain countries – and how national citizens, consumers and workers make decisions and preferences based on their multiple affiliations. According to a 2022 Pew Research Center survey, in Cambodia, Sri

Lanka and Thailand (where over 70% of adults are Buddhist), more than 90% of Buddhists say being Buddhist is "important to being truly part of their nation." The majority of Buddhists in these countries "not only describe Buddhism as 'a religion one chooses to follow' but also say Buddhism is 'a culture one is part of' and 'a family tradition one must follow'."[38]

Additionally, faith actors and leaders from faith communities will also need to understand and explore how they may scale, innovate and go deeper through business and multistakeholder partnerships. Faith has traditionally worked with governments, institutions and NGOs in key areas of service delivery such as healthcare, humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding and education; however, amid record levels of public debt, governments are effectively tapped out and will need to increasingly rely on the private sector to scale ongoing work and address systemic challenges. Faith actors will need to explore new types of partnerships and develop new competencies for engagement.

Challenges in engagement

There can, however, be both perceived and real challenges for global leaders in engaging with faith communities and faith actors:

– **Deficits in religious literacy:** Deficits in religious literacy among different faith partners and among other stakeholders create barriers to sustainable and effective relationships. Religious literacy involves the "ability to discern and analyse the fundamental intersections of religion and social/political/cultural life through multiple lenses."[39] It is worth noting the need for accurate religious literacy, as extremist or inaccurate representations of religion are often featured in media and entertainment. According to a recent report from the Faith and Media Initiative, 63% of faith-related media content "depicts faith and faith institutions in a negative light."[40]

– **Perceived lack of neutrality and fears of proselytizing and preferential treatment:[41]** Some stakeholders hesitate to work with religious communities and other faith actors based on perceptions and evidence of veiled religious agendas associated with the partnership. This includes the fear of proselytization and preferential treatment for like-minded faith groups or beneficiaries, particularly concerning situations of significant vulnerability and fragile contexts. It should be noted that for faith actors, there is a complementary concern about "faith washing" in which stakeholders may engage with faith actors to obscure harmful practices or criticism.

– **Mutual value alignment in partnerships:** There is a need to ensure shared priorities and mutual respect are maintained in collaborations between faith actors and other stakeholders and to avoid potential instrumentalization and misalignment.[42] The Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities (JLI) and the World Faiths Development Dialogue, two international partnerships of faith actors in development and humanitarian action, discussed key challenges for effective faith partnerships in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing significantly on the lack of pre-existing, trusted engagement and the instrumentalization of faith leaders "to achieve a predefined end without engaging them as equal partners on their own terms."[43]

Building on key competencies and amid ongoing challenges, several global leaders are exploring innovative partnerships with diverse faith actors. The next section looks some of these initiatives to further understand the collaborations between faith actors and business. These examples are drawn from the global Faith in Action survey, stakeholder interviews and other research sources, and focus on both the impact, innovation and quality of the partnerships on a range of criteria.

> "
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> Like languages, however, religions are particular creatures. Just as it is not possible to speak of language in general (one must choose to speak one particular language), religious literacy in the abstract is an impossibility.
>
> Stephen R Prothero, *Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know--and Doesn't*, New York, 2008

2 | Faith in action

Business leaders are not leaving impact on the table. They are using their faith fluency to explore innovative partnerships with faith actors – on the environment, health, resilience and technology.

A number of business leaders are applying their faith fluency to explore innovative partnerships with faith actors. This section, in addition to providing overviews of key global challenge areas and related theological understanding across faiths, details real-world examples and offers insights into the complexities of such partnerships, including applicable lessons, challenges to overcome and potential opportunities and developments on the horizon. The case studies were derived from a six-week survey process shared with global and regional leaders from across industries and sectors (see Appendix 1 for details), along with interviews with various stakeholders from the faith and business sectors.

Selection criteria for each case study included identifying:

– **Projects between faith-based organizations and the private sector:** Examples of collaborative projects among cross-sector stakeholders – with a specific emphasis on the vital interplay between faith and business interactions aimed at providing sustainable solutions to pressing social challenges.

– **Area of impact:** Collaborative projects within thematic areas of concern related to current global crises.

– **Tangible outcomes:** Collaborative projects that have measurable and tangible outcomes. Cases that can provide concrete data and evidence of the impact created.

– **Scale of impact:** The magnitude of the impact achieved by each collaborative project, including the number of beneficiaries, the amount of financial investment and the geographic reach.

– **Innovation:** Collaborative projects that have developed innovative approaches or unique solutions to the challenges they are addressing.

– **Sustainability and longevity:** The long-term viability and sustainability of the impact achieved by the collaborative project. Cases that have demonstrated their ability to maintain positive change over time and have a lasting effect.

– **Diversity:** The final criterion for selecting the case studies, it ensures a balanced representation of collaborative projects from the eligible pool that encompasses various faith traditions, business types, thematic areas and geographic locations.

2.1 | Environmental care, just transition and sustainability

The interconnected challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, collectively known as the triple planetary crisis, are of major concern due to their impacts on livelihoods, health and business operations.

Businesses and religious actors are forging innovative partnerships to tackle these threats through collaboration and partnership. By harnessing their distinct skills, expertise, resources and networks, they are able to amplify their reach and impact. This includes working with local congregations and communities to facilitate the implementation of best practices for community resilience amid the worsening climate crises.

While faith actors often possess considerable size and influence, they often lack the expertise to bring environmentally conscious products and services to market. Conversely, businesses can leverage the networks and moral voices of faiths to strengthen their own activities to become more environmentally sustainable.

The teachings from wisdom and religious traditions can be a driving force in these partnerships, drawing from the common thread of compassion and environmental care found across religious traditions. For instance, Buddhism emphasizes interconnectedness and advocates for compassion and non-harming towards all beings, including the environment.[44] Similarly, Hinduism, with its principles of dharma and karma, underscores the importance of environmental care and encompasses compassion for all living beings, the environment and the planet as a whole.[45] Sikhism teaches the interconnectedness of the universe, recognizing the divine in all aspects of nature. Many Indigenous traditions consider nature sacred and deserving of respectful treatment.

Judaism, rooted in the concept of "bal tashchit", advocates responsible resource use and stewardship based on the belief that the Earth belongs to God and humans are its caretakers.[46] Christianity, sharing scriptures with Judaism, highlights the stewardship of creation, emphasizing a love ethic in caring for the Earth.[47] Islam, with the principle of "taklif al-mithal", positions Muslims as stewards of the Earth, stressing conservation and resource efficiency.[48]

Just energy transition framework for company action

Name	Council for Inclusive Capitalism
City & country	New York, USA
Year founded	2019-2020

Frontier of practice

Who: Council for Inclusive Capitalism

Why: To support company action to transition to a net-zero economy that supports people and planet

What: A framework that provides concrete guidance that companies of all industries can use to lead a swift energy transition that benefits all involved

How: A consultative process undertaken – facilitated by the Council for Inclusive Capitalism, the Vatican, Boston Consulting Group – that brought together a wide range of stakeholders to develop the framework

The 2015 release of *Laudato si'* by His Holiness Pope Francis caught the attention of many people and companies working on climate change and other environmental concerns. In the years that followed its release, the Vatican organized a number of meetings and audiences with the Pope. Through these, they realized that while many were moved by the encyclical's message, businesses were struggling to translate one of its key messages into action: the need for a just transition.

Recognizing the critical need for businesses to adopt and move toward a just transition, Cardinal Peter Turkson, then the inaugural prefect of the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development at the Vatican, asked the Council for Inclusive Capitalism – whose members had an audience with Pope Francis in 2019 – to develop guidance that would help companies work toward a just transition.

Building on existing relationships, Boston Consulting Group offered its services pro bono to manage the project. Seven energy and energy-intensive companies were brought into the planning process (ACEN, Anglo American, bp, Eni, Reliance, Repsol and SSE), along with six academic, investor, civil, and social representatives (CalPERS, Grantham Research Institute, Inclusive Capital Partners, International Trade Union Confederation, State Street and the UN Special Envoy for Climate Action and Finance).

Two roundtable consultations were held to develop and test the framework, the first co-hosted by Cardinal Turkson to show the Vatican's commitment to the work and the importance of the topic. The resulting Framework had its virtual launch during the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow.

The framework has four pillars: 1) Universal Net-Zero Energy; 2) Workforce Evolution; 3) Community Resilience; and 4) Collaboration and transparency. Each pillar consists of five building blocks to guide companies in defining and implementing their transition plans through concrete actions.

Since launching, 13 multinational companies have shared commitments to action aligned with the framework: SSE, Salesforce, Repsol, PayPal, M&T Bank, IBM, bp, ACEN/ Ayala, Suntory, Vale, Just Skills Hub-Skill Lab, Reliance Industries, and Anglo American. The framework has been presented at COP27, the B20 in both Bali and New Delhi, the 2022 World Economic Forum and COP28, and it has been included as reference material in the work of the Glasgow Finance Alliance for Net-Zero (GFANZ), the International Labour Organization (ILO) – United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI) Just Transition Finance Pathways for Banking and Insurance Activities, and the UN Global Compact Just Transition Think Lab. The council has collaborated with other groups on additional research to demonstrate the framework's application to the energy and agriculture sectors, in addition to sharing the resource in a number of other fora, including the Laudato Si' Action Platform.

The Council for Inclusive Capitalism invites companies across industries to join its community, use the framework and share their just transition commitments. It also is pursuing and welcoming ongoing opportunities to partner with other faith, business, government and civil society actors to advance the framework's adoption and drive forward the just transition.

Hari Haribol Dairy Products

Name	Hari Haribol Dairy Products
City & country	Mumbai, India
Year founded	2020

Key lessons for faith in action

Lesson for business: Business opportunities exist in marrying global faith networks and their traditional religious practices with technology. Critical to this is understanding the practices of faith groups and their faith-mandated or inspired purchasing habits.

Lesson for faith: Faith- and values-led commercial solutions should be explored that serve the needs of faith communities which can also have positive social and economic benefits to a range of stakeholders.

Frontier of practice

Who: Hari Haribol Dairy Products, a food a beverage company based in India selling products to members of a global Hindu organization

Why: Take advantage of the opportunity to produce and sell products that meet the religious and ethical standards of a global faith tradition that had limited purchasing options

What: A range of food and beverage products that meet religious ethical standards

How: Climate-smart technology helps build trust with consumers and brings 2,000 farmers into their supply chain

Haribol, Sanskrit for "Praise God", is a food and beverage company based in Mumbai, India, that sells traditional Indian and Hindu groceries internationally, while empowering rural communities in India and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Since its launch in 2020, Haribol's annual revenue has reached $3 million, with a goal of reaching $10 million in the next 1-2 years.

The primary market for the business is the 700 temple communities globally of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), a Hindu religious organization. The business was established in recognition of both an opportunity and a necessity to provide these communities with products that are either unavailable outside of India or challenging to acquire. It also saw an increasing trend in the temple communities of customers wanting to purchase dairy products where the milk is from cows that have been treated humanely and in line with Hindu animal welfare ethics.

ISKCON has supported the business by facilitating introductions to local communities and faith leaders, giving a platform to the business during major religious gatherings and encouraging its members to purchase their products. In turn, the promotion of the business allows ISKCON to

emphasize the importance of caring for the environment and that members should be conscious consumers – striving to purchase products that align with their values.

Haribol's dairy products are from cows that are native breeds to India. These were selected due to the high-quality milk they produce, A2, and their lower levels of methane gas compared to non-native dairy cows. The cows are also individually tagged via a neck collar, allowing consumers to know exactly where their milk is coming from. This level of transparency builds trust among consumers as they can be sure that the cows are being treated in line with Hindu values.

The ethical treatment of the cows also extends to the farmers who produce the milk. Haribol works to ensure they are treated ethically and their communities benefit from being connected to the business. To date, Haribol has brought 2,000 rural communities into the supply chain from the Indian state of Gujarat, revitalizing rural communities. Haribol has conducted training sessions for the farmers on effective cow management to better care for the health of cows and increase the quality of the milk, which results in greater economic benefits.

2.2 | Health and healthcare

Worsening global health conditions are exacerbated by infectious diseases, inadequate healthcare infrastructure and socioeconomic disparities. The COVID-19 pandemic illuminated these fractures and demonstrated the consequences of not investing in equitable access to healthcare or in supporting healthcare providers, as well as an emphasis on mindful living and diet.

Various world religions converge in their shared emphasis on caring for the oppressed, upholding the sanctity of human life, and promoting access to health. This common thread spans teachings that advocate for self-care and the endorsement of the One Health approach and equitable access to healthcare to improve the overall well-being of society. These include the importance of faith-business partnerships to help faith-inspired small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) scale and become more financially secure, the potential in leveraging international faith networks, and the strong religious motivation faith groups have to help those in need.

Buddhist principles champion social justice and equitable healthcare access, reflecting a moral duty to ensure the health of all, while Buddhist practices of meditation and plant-based diets encourage mental and physical well-being.[49,50] For Muslims, there are a variety of teachings in both the Qur'an and the Hadith that prescribe methodologies for personal hygiene, the preparation of food, interactions with animals, and ways to preserve a healthy environment.[51] The Qur'an and the Hadith also emphasize the dignity of all human beings and the right to life and equitable care.[52]

Teachings in the Torah and Tanakh call for the care of the oppressed and downtrodden and to ensure that all people are treated with dignity and respect.[53] Jewish dietary laws (Kashrut) dictate religious practice for some individuals but can also be understood as a way to promote cleanliness and avoid certain health risks. Similarly, Christianity draws inspiration from the life of Jesus Christ, where throughout the Gospels, he crossed social and class boundaries to bring healing to suffering and calm to strife.[54] His life inspired an ethic among many Christians to advocate for the dispossessed and bring healing and succour to those who need it most.

Hinduism's holistic perspective, rooted in sacred texts like the Vedas and Upanishads, encompasses physical and mental well-being. Yoga, rooted as a spiritual practice, promotes health through postures and meditation, influencing dietary and lifestyle choices.

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> Religious communities, institutions and leaders played critical roles during the COVID-19 emergencies. Direct provision of health care and dissemination of public health messages was an integral part of service deliver in many settings, with particularly significant roles in encouraging and organizing vaccinations.
>
> Katherine Marshall, Vice-President, G20 Interfaith Forum

CASE STUDY 3
Transformational Business Network Alliance (TBN Alliance)

Name	Transformational Business Network Alliance (TBN Alliance)
City & country	Africa, Asia, Americas
Year founded	2003

Key lessons for faith in action

Lesson for business: In the realm of SMEs, faith-based organizations naturally thrive, making a significant impact and paving the way for collaborations with larger corporations seeking to amplify their frontline influence in this space.

Lesson for faith: The TBN Alliance showcases the successful integration of faith and business goals, avoiding the alienation of stakeholders with diverse or no religious affiliations. This achievement stems from a thorough understanding of the broad ecosystem, acknowledging the roles and connections of faith-based actors and a skilful ability to articulate faith principles in the language of the marketplace. TBNA's proficiency in bridging the gap between religion and business fosters significant partnerships centred on shared impact objectives.

Frontier of practice

Who: Transformational Business Network Alliance (TBN Alliance)

Why: To expand the vital SME business sector in frontier and emerging markets leading to products and services like healthcare delivery to the largely overlooked "missing middle" in those countries

What: Championing enterprise solutions to poverty in low-income underserved communities and regions around the world through a large global collaborative multi-sectoral alliance

How: Character-based entrepreneur formation; holistic, high-touch resourcing of SMEs and social enterprises; enabling environments that help entrepreneurs thrive and their businesses grow and scale; and engagement of diverse faith communities, corporations, and financial institutions as catalytic partners and impact investors

Kim Tan, a Christian businessman from London, began work in 2003 to address poverty through impact investing and the intentional expansion of successful SME enterprises by supporting local entrepreneurs to grow their businesses, create jobs, and transform communities. This marked the inception of what became the TBN Alliance.

In response to the dire need for healthcare services in Nairobi's Siani and Tassia communities, the TBN-supported Olivelink Healthcare initiative is a testament to the organization's impact on SMEs in the health sector. With the mission of providing affordable primary healthcare to 100,000 residents living on less than a dollar a day, this initiative has offered quality, accessible and convenient maternity and medical services through both in-person and online appointments, serving over 115,000 low-income earners, delivering 4,000 babies and impacting the lives of over 550,000 individuals.

In the marketplace, TBN Alliance offers Fortune 500 partners a business proposition centred on the belief that relationships are fundamental in business, with "character" being of utmost importance. At the TBN Alliance, the overlap between religion and business shifted from religious language to common marketplace terms such as "values", "purpose-driven", "impact" and "social enterprise". This shift enables effective communication using shared values and a common cause.

With this operative approach to faith and business, TBN formed a large multi-sector ecosystem, that has since grown into an intentional collaborative alliance with foundations, NGOs, corporations, financial institutions and universities/accelerators. The collaborative permits advanced strategic ecosystem-level cooperation for more effective frontline enterprise support and impact and ecosystem-level transformation.

ACT Alliance and Hospitainer

Name	ACT Alliance and Hospitainer
City & country	Geneva, Switzerland – ACT Alliance / Vaassen, Netherlands – Hospitainer
Year founded	ACT Alliance, 2010 / Hospitainer, 2009

Key lessons for faith in action

Lesson for business: Faith-based alliances with large memberships and international scope can aggregate demand for business products and services.

Lesson for faith: Fostering mutually beneficial collaborations between businesses and faith-based organizations requires a deliberate and intentional approach.

Frontier of practice

Who: ACT Alliance, a global ecumenical Christian alliance whose members work on humanitarian aid, gender and climate justice, migration and displacement, and peace and security to support local communities; Hospitainer, a business that builds and deploys mobile medical buildings around the world

Why: ACT Alliance members help in humanitarian crises to deliver emergency medical help and in countries that have inadequate medical services to meet community health needs

What: ACT Alliance members buy and deploy mobile medical clinics in war and natural disaster zones from Hospitainer; some members also provide Hospitainer medical clinics to communities with inadequate medical services

How: An ACT Alliance letter of intent with Hospitainer to promote Hospitainer products to members who need its products and services

ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together) is a global ecumenical Christian alliance consisting of 146 member organizations from 127 countries, with a combined budget exceeding $2 billion. This alliance plays a leading role in disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness and post-emergency rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts. Hospitainer, founded by Rolof Mulder, a Dutch national with a background in nursing, IT and business ventures, operates with a motto influenced by faith values: to provide medical solutions at the right time, at the right place, to minimize human suffering. While not explicitly a faith-centric business, faith values significantly impact Hospitainer's operations, delivering modular medical structures to the frontlines of humanitarian emergencies. Since its establishment in 2010, Hospitainer has treated 1,650,000 patients on five continents and in 30 countries, including 140,000 surgical treatments.

The collaboration between ACT Alliance and Hospitainer originated in 2019 when ACT Alliance sought to expand its engagement beyond the church sphere. Hosting a multistakeholder event focused on finding solutions to specific development problems, Hospitainer participated and, a year later, secured a letter of intent from ACT Alliance's secretariat. This agreement allows ACT Alliance's members to access Hospitainer's medical solutions and use its products in humanitarian crises and underserved healthcare areas. Approximately 20% of Hospitainer's clients are faith-based organizations.

One illustration of the collaboration between Hospitainer and a faith-based organization is the initiative with the Federation of Women for Peace and Development (FEPADE) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Through a collaboration facilitated by ACT Alliance member Tearfund Netherlands, FEPADE acquired a primary healthcare unit from Hospitainer. This mobile clinic, capable of travelling to three locations, plays a vital role in providing basic check-ups and small surgical interventions. In its inaugural six months of operation, the mobile clinic served 4,205 people, addressing prevalent health issues such as malaria, gastrointestinal disease, typhoid fever and malnutrition, thereby making a tangible impact on the health and well-being of the local population.

2.3 | Inclusive communities and resilient cities

It is estimated that over 65% of the world's population will live in urban areas by 2050, which presents moral and practical challenges for society.[55] These rates of urbanization continue, despite the emptying-out of cities during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, many Western societies are struggling with high levels of immigration and its impact on social cohesion.

The case studies presented here underscore the dynamic partnerships emerging between faith actors and businesses to tackle these and other societal challenges. There is a focus on inclusivity and justice, envisioning a society that both tolerates and actively creates space for diversity. They reflect the proactive efforts of faith actors and businesses and highlight the effectiveness of their efforts when they work together.

The teachings of early prophets in Judaism, encapsulated in Micah's call to "Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God," are foundational for many Jewish advocates. The early Biblical prophets taught and informed the life and mission of Jesus Christ. His teachings on justice inspired his followers throughout Christian history to find better ways of living with one another.[56]

Examining other religious traditions, the phrase "vasudhaiva kutumbakam" from the Hindu Maha Upanishad emphasizes the oneness of the world family, guiding Hindus in their quest for holistic and inclusive societies.[57] Islamic scholars stress Quranic principles for inclusive societies, emphasizing equal treatment irrespective of race, gender, class, or creed, with *Zakat* (charity) playing a central role in wealth redistribution.[58,59]

Buddhist teachings, epitomized in the Metta Sutta, advocate for universal love and goodwill, promoting inclusivity.[60] Zoroastrianism frames social justice in the context of human rights, viewing every being as a reflection of the Divine masterpiece deserving care and opportunity.[61] Confucianism underscores the importance of inclusive societies and social justice through teachings on benevolence (ren) and righteousness (yi), with Confucius emphasizing moral virtue and well-being for all as the cornerstone of a just society.[62]

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> Religious leaders, ethicists, and theologians have essential roles to play…the religions that they serve place the inherent dignity of the human being, as something given by God, at the heart of their concepts of social relations and development. Their ethical approaches are not utilitarian but absolute: we seek human flourishing because we are commanded to by our creator.
>
> Sheikh Abdullah Bin Bayyah, Secretary-General, Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies

Habitat for Humanity and Whirlpool

Name	Habitat for Humanity
City & country	US headquarters with a global presence
Year founded	1976

Key lessons for faith in action

Lesson for business: Businesses can find faith partners with brand alignment and business acumen with whom they can develop mutually beneficial partnerships. Whirlpool's enduring 24-year partnership with Habitat for Humanity exemplifies how business and faith-based organizations can collaborate effectively, fostering mutual respect and shared goals for the common good.

Lesson for faith: It is possible for faith-based organizations to develop high brand value, which can lead to immensely mutually valuable partnerships with businesses.

Frontier of practice

Who: Habitat for Humanity, a non-profit Christian organization with 47 years of experience collaborating with families, local communities, volunteers and global partners to make affordable and safe housing accessible to more people worldwide

Why: Housing is a basic human need but a lack of affordable housing to buy or rent is fuelling a global housing crisis whereby 1.6 billion people will be affected by the housing shortage by 2025

What: Working in collaboration with long-standing partners such as Whirlpool to help millions of people worldwide to build or enhance the place they call home

How: Families seeking to build an affordable home apply to their local Habitat for Humanity chapter to build it using the homebuyer's sweat equity, additional volunteer labour and donations to reduce the home cost, while also paying an affordable mortgage

Habitat for Humanity, established as a non-profit organization in 1976, has positively impacted 46 million individuals across more than 70 countries, assisting them in building or improving the place they call home. With a focus on both renovating existing homes and enhancing neighbourhoods, particularly in urban settings, the organization extends its efforts to address post-disaster housing needs. Motivated by Christian faith, the organization seeks to manifest God's love in action, bringing people together to build homes, communities and hope. Rooted in the principle of agape love, characterized by unconditional and sacrificial care for others, Habitat embraces inclusivity and nurtures connections among individuals of diverse backgrounds and beliefs.

Habitat for Humanity offers a model for successful collaboration between faith-based organizations and businesses, creating an environment where all parties feel respected and capable of working together for the common good. The extensive support received from corporate partners, the diversity of these partnerships, and the longevity of relationships, exemplified by the 24-year alliance with Whirlpool, serve as compelling evidence of the effectiveness of this collaborative approach.

There is exceptional brand alignment on home and hearth between Habitat for Humanity and Whirlpool, which originally brought the faith- based organization and a company together as partners.

Their *3.0 relationship* developed, according to Jonathan Reckford, Habitat for Humanity's Chief Executive Officer, as it grew more effective, successful and well-known, eventually attaining a $16 billion brand valuation. Brand value parity between the faith-based organization and non-religious for-profit company cemented the commercial value of the relationship. "The mutual value of the relationship between Habitat for Humanity and Whirlpool," according to Reckford, "has been repeatedly recognized and reinforced over the years to the point that we consider Whirlpool not just an important donor, but a *strategic partner* in the work we do. We consult with them often and value their input and feedback on new projects."[64]

Over Whirlpool's 24 years as a dedicated Habitat for Humanity partner, the company has contributed $125 million worth of major home appliances, benefiting nearly 197,000 households. The donations have helped more than 1 million people achieve stable and self-reliant homeownership. In 2021, the BuildBetter with Whirlpool programme was launched with the aim to build 250 energy-efficient homes. Whirlpool has also supported advocacy campaigns in the US as well as Global Housing Forums in Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia-Pacific and Europe, helping Habitat address the global need for affordable housing.

CASE STUDY 6

Unilever and Global Solidarity Fund (GSF) TRANSFORM Colombia programme

Name	Global Solidarity Fund
City & country	Geneva, Switzerland
Year founded	2018

TRANSFORM is an impact accelerator, launched in 2015 and led by Unilever, the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and EY. Working with a range of other collaborators, it supports impactful SMEs in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and beyond, testing and scaling new business solutions that tackle environmental challenges, improve health and well-being and build inclusive economies.

Bringing large organizations with different perspectives and values together can be challenging. Even more challenging is unlocking the knowledge and time of people in them. But by ensuring a mutual benefit for all, TRANSFORM has been able to support over 100 impact and research projects.

Building on the success in Africa and Asia, Unilever joined forces with the Global Solidarity Fund (GSF) to replicate the TRANSFORM approach in Latin America. The programme was launched at World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos in 2021 as a $1 million initiative to support marginalized communities in Colombia.[66] The partnership leverages TRANSFORM's capabilities and experience in delivering transformative market-based solutions that last.

The innovative private sector and faith-based partnership works with communities to achieve transformation, stimulate economies and support the most vulnerable populations, including migrants and refugees, in Colombia. The partners are united in a common ambition to focus on fostering social entrepreneurship and impacting labour markets for the inclusion of migrants and refugees.

The innovative private sector and faith-based partnership works with communities to achieve transformation, stimulate economies and support the most vulnerable populations, including migrants and refugees, in the global workforce. The partners are united in a common ambition to focus on fostering social entrepreneurship and impacting labour markets for the inclusion of migrants and refugees.

Unilever and GSF are already supporting social enterprises in the region, including Powered by People, a wholesale marketplace for conscious buyers enabling artisan makers to access global markets through its business-to-business tech platform, and Conceptos Plasticos, which is on a mission to promote sustainable recycling practices and create communities committed to recycling.

Clive Allison, Director at Unilever, says "GSF have been visionary partners and pivotal in enabling TRANSFORM to expand into Colombia. They have catalysed TRANSFORM to target marginalized populations, including migrants, women and youth in Latin America."[67]

Patrick McGrory, President of GSF, added, "The partnership between GSF and TRANSFORM in Colombia has strengthened two innovative and sustainable business projects that will serve as sources of employment and productivity for the communities. Creating synergies between different stakeholders is crucial for unlocking opportunities, especially for the most vulnerable."[68]

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> Faith-based partnerships have a vital role to play in creating more inclusive societies and advancing social justice. Humanity's existence is governed not only by physical forces but also by social and moral laws of cause and effect, into which religion offers profound insight. From this perspective, the path to a more inclusive and just world cannot be one of technological adjustment alone. It must also involve communities and societies learning to align themselves with higher principles.
>
> Bani Dugal, Principal Representative to the United Nations, Bahá'í International Community

2.4 | Technology governance

The advent of new technologies brings with it a dual nature, offering both benefits and the potential for harm to individuals and communities alike. Issues range from the amplification of hate speech and extremism to ethical concerns surrounding artificial intelligence (AI).

In response to these challenges, businesses and faith groups are collaboratively addressing the need for effective regulation and striving to mitigate potential harm. Amid this rapidly evolving landscape, the world's major religions can provide guiding principles to navigate the intricate interplay of society and technology.

The Hindu tradition, as expressed in the Vedas, encourages individuals to strike a balance between material and spiritual pursuits, advocating for spiritual growth and self-realization. Along with the other Dharmic traditions of Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism, the teaching of ahimsa is foundational, encouraging adherents to eliminate or minimize the intentional or unintentional harming of others and the world.

In the Islamic tradition, the introduction of new technologies is not problematic insofar as they are used to promote harm or cause oppression. The Quran instructs believers to "make peace" when conflicts arise,[69] which some Islamic scholars understand as applicable to anything from international conflict to interpersonal conflict, and can be used as a principle for protecting freedom and human rights.[70]

Pope Francis, representing the Catholic faith, underscores the ethical implications of robotics and artificial intelligence. Emphasizing the importance of technology serving the common good and promoting the dignity and well-being of every person, he draws on Catholic Social Teachings in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*.[71] A similar posture can be found in the Buddhist principle of Sila, or right conduct, serving as a reminder not to become overly reliant on technology, urging mindfulness of its impact on the world.

Within Jewish ethics, a strong emphasis is placed on the responsible and ethical use of technology, teaching that technology should improve the world and enhance humanity's well-being.[72] The concept of "tikkun olam", meaning "repairing the world", underscores the belief that technology can be a tool for addressing social and environmental challenges.

Anti-Defamation League (ADL) Center for Technology and Society

Name	Anti-Defamation League's Center for Technology and Society
City & country	New York, USA
Year founded	2017

Frontier of practice

Who: Anti-Defamation League

Why: To combat online antisemitism and hate speech

What: A centre for research, policy development and advocacy

How: Working through private engagement and public pressure to change how digital platforms operate in terms of antisemitism and hate

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) was founded in the 1910s in the United States to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all. In its more than 100-year history, the ADL has been at the forefront of combating hate speech.

Monitoring online hate has been an area of work for the ADL since the 1980s, when it published *Computerized Networks of Hate*, which shows how white supremacists were using computer bulletin boards to spread hate. This work continued and grew with the widespread adoption of the internet and the rise of social media. To strengthen this work, ADL established the Center for Technology and Society in 2017 to monitor, track, analyse and mitigate hate speech and harassment in online spaces.

ADL works with all major social media, technology and gaming companies through both official and informal relationships with a range of companies, including Google and TikTok. Where a company may lack certain expertise, the centre offers to connect employees from different companies to share best practices.

Recent years have seen a significant rise in online antisemitism. According to the ADL's *Online Hate and Harassment: The American Experience 2023* report, Jewish respondents experienced an increase in online harassment from 2022: 44% reported ever being harassed (up from 37%), 31% reported ever experiencing severe harassment (up from 23%), and 26% reported any harassment in the past twelve months (up from 21%). They were also more likely than in past years to avoid identifying themselves as Jewish, including on social media (25% in 2023 compared to 17% in 2022).[73] One study undertaken between February and May of 2020 and 2021 found a 41% increase in antisemitic posts on TikTok, a 912% increase in antisemitic comments and a 1,375% increase in antisemitic usernames.[74] These trends highlight the need for the ADL's work and for effective partnerships with technology companies.

Much of ADL's engagement with these companies is conducted in private, favouring quiet advocacy and dialogue over public demonstrations. There have, however, been instances when ADL has deployed public pressure, such as its Stop Hate for Profit campaign in 2020.

Given ADL's extensive experience and proven track record in this work, it regularly advises and shares contacts with partner organizations, such as other faith-based groups, to assist them in their outreach to technology companies.
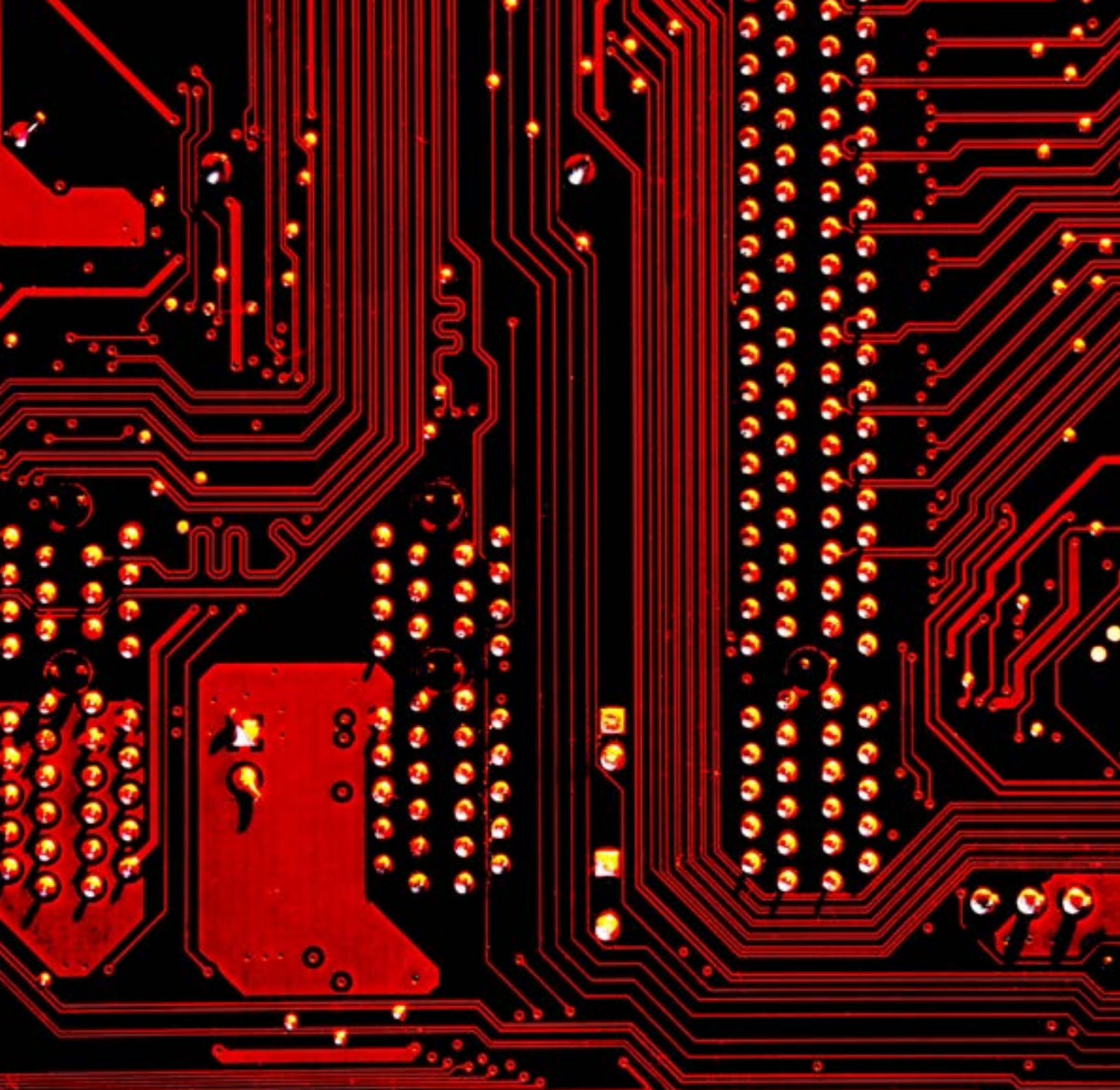
Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace and the Rome Call for AI Ethics

Name	Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace and the Rome Call for AI Ethics
City & country	Global
Year founded	2020

Key lessons for faith in action

Lesson for business: Businesses can benefit from collaborating with faith-based organizations by aligning their operations with shared ethical concerns and values. This collaboration fosters a sense of purpose beyond profit, allowing them to contribute to societal challenges and demonstrate corporate social responsibility.

Lesson for faith: For faith-based organizations, collaborating with businesses provides an opportunity to leverage shared ethical concerns and values for the greater good. By partnering with businesses, faith organizations can access additional resources and expertise to address societal challenges. This collaborative approach emphasizes the importance of mutual understanding between the religious and business sectors, encouraging cooperation and a joint commitment to making a positive impact on the communities they both aim to serve.

Frontier of practice

Who: Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace, Pontifical Academy for Life, global tech companies like Microsoft and IBM, international bodies and government

Why: As AI technology advances, its widespread adoption raises significant ethical concerns, including issues related to privacy, bias, accountability and the potential societal impact of AI systems

What: Outlining ethical guidelines and emphasizing shared responsibility among international organizations, governments, institutions and technology companies with the aim to ensure that AI technologies are developed with humanity, dignity and inclusivity in mind while safeguarding against the misuse of technology and promoting transparency, inclusion, accountability, impartiality, reliability and security and privacy in its deployment

How: Convening a diverse group of leaders to deliberate on AI Ethics (such as the Faith and AI Commission led by the Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace) and amplifying The Rome Call For AI Ethics to seek the endorsement of global religious leaders, tech executives, representatives from international organizations and government officials, then planning for its use as a foundational step towards further incremental actions addressing AI "algorethics"

The Rome Call for AI Ethics, initiated in February 2020 through collaboration between religious organizations like the Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace, the Pontifical Academy for Life, global tech companies like Microsoft and IBM, international bodies and government, is a statement advocating for an ethical approach to artificial intelligence (AI) to ensure its responsible integration into society. The document emphasizes the need for shared responsibility among international organizations, governments, institutions and technology companies to prioritize humanity and individual dignity in the development and use of AI.

The signatories, the first of which include the Secretary-General of the Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace, the President of the Pontifical Academy for Life, the Chief Rabbinate of Israel, the president of Microsoft, the executive vice-president of IBM, the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the Italian Minister of Innovation, commit to creating AI that serves every person and humanity as a whole, respecting human dignity and preventing the sole pursuit of profit or the displacement of workers.

The call underscores the profound impact of AI on human lives, emphasizing "Now more than ever, we must guarantee an outlook in which AI is developed with a focus not on technology, but rather for the good of humanity and of the environment, of our common and shared home and of its human inhabitants, who are inextricably connected... It is time to begin preparing."[75]

The call details three impact areas – ethics, education and rights – and six principles – transparency (AI systems must be understandable to all); inclusion (these systems must not discriminate against anyone because every human being has equal dignity); accountability (there must always be someone who takes responsibility for what a machine does); impartiality (AI systems must not follow or create biases); reliability (AI must be reliable); and security and privacy (these systems must be secure and respect the privacy of users).

Initiatives like these typically require time to produce measurable results. The impact is often gradual but becomes evident through subsequent iterative gatherings and statements, paving the way for the implementation of policies, regulations and ethical guidelines by governments, institutions and technology companies. Incremental progress is indeed happening, as seen by a consultation organized by the Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace, which brought together faith leaders and technologists in the Houses of Parliament in mid-2023, followed by the establishment in November 2023 of the AI Faith and Civil Society Commission that gathered key faith and civil society voices to provide input to the United Kingdom's closed-door, intergovernmental meeting on AI Safety. The agenda specifically explored the challenges that AI poses to communities and the need for international legislation and protections.

3 Guidance for developing meaningful collaborations

Guiding questions on three key drivers for meaningful collaboration with faith actors.

The case studies echo stories of partnerships involving global leaders using their faith fluency to explore innovative partnerships to solve problems. Faith actors and communities are also determining how to develop and take up such partnerships with the private sector.

Undertaking these partnerships involves navigating a complex web of issues. Drawing from the case studies and discussions, this section reflects three key factors for consideration as businesses and faith actors explore new partnerships.

1 | Organizational readiness for engaging with and respecting differences

Looking internally, a key aspect of collaboration between faith and business leaders relates to how organizations are fostering space for greater diversity and inclusion. How can organizations foster an environment that encourages engaging with and respecting differences while also addressing the inherent challenges and conflicts that such engagements may bring to the surface?

– **Challenge:** Skills and structure within businesses and organizations to engage in and facilitate difficult conversations across conflicting opinions or other differences through shared values and mutual recognition.

– **Strategy:** Creating an internal strategy and spaces in the workplace where those dialogues can become more commonplace; having your organization's house in order is key to creating spaces of belonging and building credibility in external partnerships with faith actors. Audit your own organization's practices related to religious observances, holidays and other specific areas related to a welcoming and accommodating organizational culture. Allow for religious employee resource groups and lay leadership to inform how groups within the organization are affected by external or internal changes related to their religious identities. Engage expert facilitators.

2 | Alignment on shared goals

Values and mission alignment are fundamental to establishing the partnership. Part of the challenge here will lie in communication: how business stakeholders develop faith fluency in a way that genuinely depicts their understanding and value from the faith-based partnership, rather than pursuing the engagement as a token gesture for employee well-being or public relations. Additionally, faith-based actors must also ensure that the partnership does not overshadow or undermine their spiritual mission and objectives (e.g. faith-washing). It is worth noting that finding mutually beneficial alignment is the goal – whether on deep, long-term collaborations or more transitory projects

How can businesses and faith actors authentically integrate values in the operations and decision-making processes of an initiative or partnership without alienating stakeholders who may have different or no religious affiliations?

– **Challenge:** Aligning religious/ethical/moral goals with business objectives. Unclear value proposition for faith engagement and understanding of potential pathways of engagement.

– **Strategy:** Develop a clear framework that integrates faith-based values with business practices. Encourage ethical business conduct and ensure that financial decisions align with the organization's core values. Adapt toolkits for business leaders similar to the broader faith and development guides for government development agencies. Ensure a collective voice on a shared priority or defined set of priorities. Define a moral and market imperative for faith and business action and clarity and consistency for faith engagement with business leaders. Advocate for streamlined bureaucratic processes and establish clear communication channels between collaborating organizations.

3 | Public perception and trust

How can faith-based initiatives educate the public about their faith and values without being perceived as proselytizing, especially in secular or multi-faith contexts? How can faith-based initiatives maintain authenticity and adherence to their spiritual values while actively managing public perception and countering media misinformation?

– **Challenge:** Ignorance about faith, lack of education and misunderstandings about the goals of faith-based projects. Misinformation, negative media coverage and lack of trust in faith-based initiatives.

– **Strategy:** Implement transparent communication strategies. Provide accurate information, engage with the media positively and showcase success stories to build trust and counter misconceptions. Launch awareness campaigns, workshops and educational programmes to inform the public about the faith, its values and the positive impact of faith-based initiatives. Encourage interfaith dialogue to bridge gaps in understanding. Institute a prominent strict no proselytizing policy.

Conclusion

There is a path forward for today's leaders to confront the multifaceted challenges of global society through innovative collaboration and partnerships grounded in shared values. The cases highlighted in this report serve as key examples showcasing the transformative potential when business leaders and faith-based organizations join forces for collective impact. Reflecting on the insights derived from these cases, it becomes evident that fostering deeper connections between these two spheres can yield both mutual value and powerful solutions to address pressing issues, from just transitions and environmental sustainability to health and technology governance.

However, additional work is needed to build on these insights and effectively translate them into actionable strategies. The future of engagement between business and faith will require the development of comprehensive toolkits for building greater faith fluency and dialogues, as well as the establishment of collaborative spaces that facilitate open communication and a proactive community of key actors who can champion these partnerships.

These activities will serve as practical guidance and contribute to the creation of more robust, scalable frameworks for effective collaboration between business and faith leaders.

In the face of current global challenges, no single entity can solve the challenges of the polycrisis in isolation. By forging partnerships based on mutual values, leaders can harness the strengths of both business and faith communities to effect positive change. This landscape report aims to be a catalyst for inspiration, conversation and action, encouraging leaders from diverse sectors to come together, learn from one another and collectively contribute to a more just, sustainable and compassionate world. The transformative potential goes beyond the collaboration itself to the enduring commitment to shared values, creating a legacy of impact that transcends individual efforts and resonates across sectors, belief systems and generations.

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