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# Religion and Sustainable Development

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Waking the Giant Training of Trainers

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## Sustainable development

Local and global societal development

Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

Ecological, financial, political and cultural sustainability

## How does religion relate to sustainable development?

### Relevance of religion

84% of the global population identifies with a religious group and the percentage is growing

Religious values effect people's thinking and behaviour

Change is more permanent, if it is based on values and beliefs

## Religious leaders

Religious leaders have credibility and authority among their adherents

By effecting religious leaders one can effect entire communities

However, it is important to include also women and youth

## Significance of religion

Access also to the most remote areas

Existing and permanent networks

Local knowledge

Source of motivation and strength

## Religious communities

Promote inclusion

Offer peaceful channels for conflict resolution

Uphold human rights

Remind political leaders of their responsibility

Dr David Nabarro, UN Special Adviser on Agenda 2030

## Faith-based organizations

Many long-term development organizations have a religious value base

Faith-based organizations provide one third of all humanitarian aid in the world

They also have a significant role in organizing health care services, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa

## Religion and development – both old and new

Old: churches' diaconal work throughout the centuries

New: the role of religion in development cooperation

## Religion and development – why (only) now

Why now: need for new partnerships, acknowledging the distinctive value of religious actors

Why only now: secularization in the Western World, religion as a private matter, religious illiteracy, fear and experience of human rights violations

## An online resource: ACT Alliance Religion and Development E-course

[https://fabo.org/course/religion\\_development](https://fabo.org/course/religion_development)

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