

# 20 YEARS OF INTERFAITH COOPERATION FOR CHILDREN

A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE GLOBAL NETWORK  
OF RELIGIONS FOR CHILDREN

2000 – 2020



 **ARIGATOU** | G N R C  
INTERNATIONAL  
*All for Children*

With Recommendations for the Future

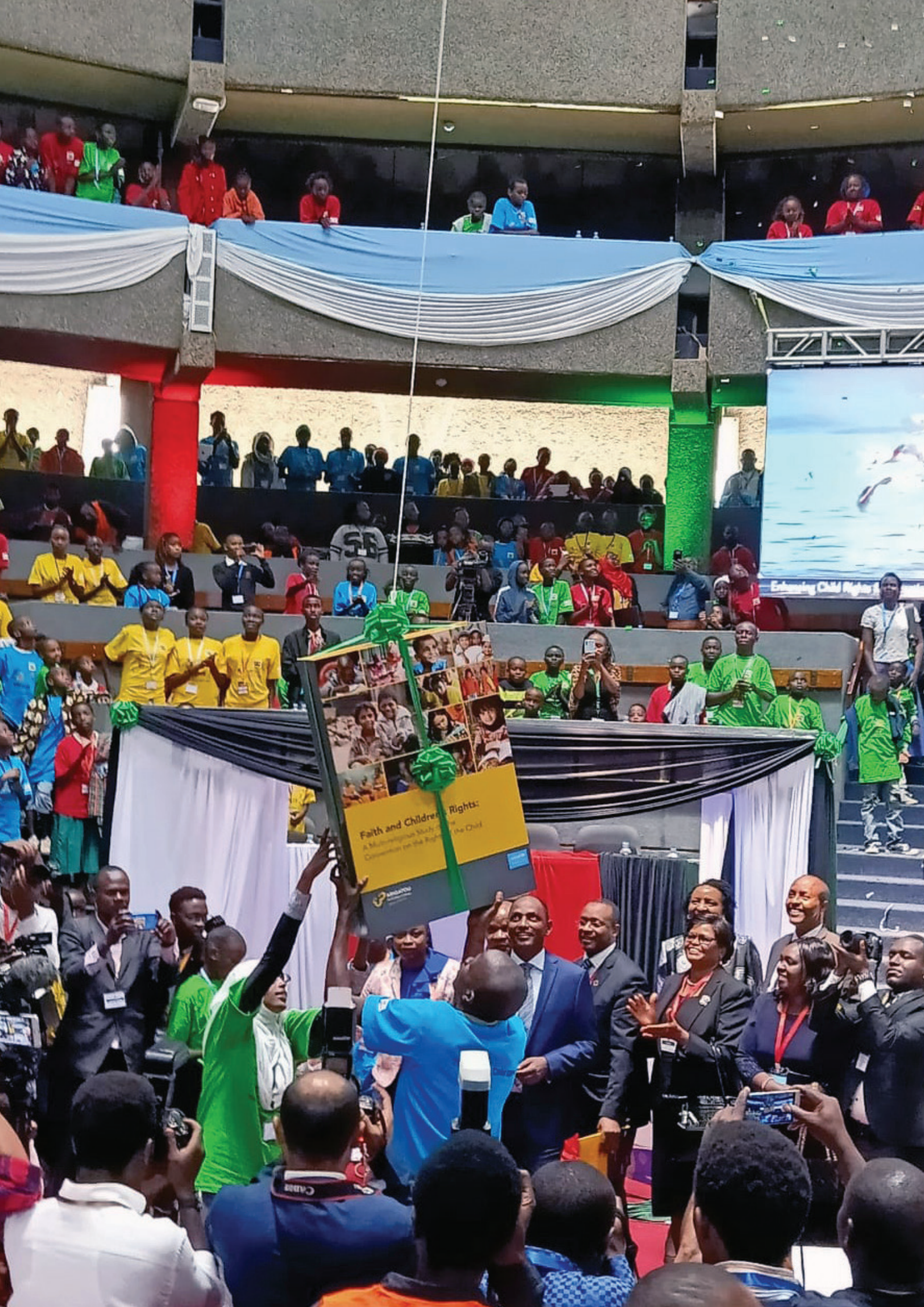




**"Every child born comes with a message that God has not yet despaired of humanity."**

*Rabindranath Tagore*





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List of **Acronyms** and **Abbreviations**

<b>AI</b>	Arigatou International
<b>APFC</b>	Asia Pacific Faith-based Coalition for Sustainable Development
<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>AUCSRT</b>	African Union Center for Study and Research on Terrorism
<b>BAKWATA</b>	Baraza Kuu la Waislamu Tanzania (National Muslim Council of Tanzania)
<b>BRAVE</b>	Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism
<b>CIPK</b>	Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya
<b>COVID-19</b>	Corona Virus Disease of 2019
<b>CRAVE</b>	Community Resilience Against Violent Extremism
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>CSEA</b>	Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>DAC</b>	Day of the African Child
<b>DE-PRIVE</b>	Diminishing the Prevalence of Radicalization Into Violent Extremism
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo
<b>EEC</b>	Ethics Education for Children
<b>ESANRC</b>	East and Southern Africa Network
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FBOs</b>	Faith-Based Organizations
<b>FCA</b>	Finn Church Aid
<b>FGDs</b>	Focus Group Discussions
<b>FOZ</b>	Friends of Zanzibar
<b>FRAVE</b>	Family Resilience Against Violent Extremism
<b>G7</b>	Group of Seven
<b>GCERF</b>	Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund
<b>GI</b>	Goldin Institute
<b>GMO</b>	Genetically Modified Organisms
<b>GNRC</b>	Global Network of Religions for Children
<b>IACPSOAS</b>	Inter-American Child Protection System of the Organization of American States
<b>IAFSC</b>	Interfaith Alliance for Safer Communities
<b>ICT</b>	Information Communication and Technology
<b>IDEP</b>	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

<b>IDP</b>	International Day of Peace
<b>IDPs</b>	Internally Displaced Populations
<b>IFK</b>	Islamic Foundation Kenya
<b>IGAD</b>	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
<b>IIECP</b>	Interfaith Initiative to End Child Poverty
<b>ISIS</b>	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
<b>ISNA</b>	Instituto Salvadoreño Para el Desarrollo Integral de la Niñez y la Adolescencia
<b>KAICIID</b>	King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue
<b>KMYA</b>	Kenya Muslim Youth Alliance
<b>LAC</b>	Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>LMP</b>	Leadership and Mentorship Program
<b>LTLT</b>	Learning to Live Together
<b>M and E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MENA</b>	Middle East and North Africa
<b>NCA</b>	Norwegian Church Aid
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>NRTP</b>	Network of Religious and Traditional Peacemakers
<b>PAC</b>	Prayer and Action for Children
<b>SHARE</b>	Sheikhs Against Radicalization and Extremism
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SENNIAF</b>	National Secretariat for Children, Adolescents, and the Family
<b>SUAVE</b>	Sheikhs and Ulamaa Against Violent Extremism
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates
<b>UCD</b>	Universal Children’s Day
<b>UNHLPF</b>	United Nations High Level Political Forum
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Program
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund
<b>UNMFAC</b>	United Nations Multi-Faith Advisory Council
<b>URI</b>	United Religions Initiative
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>WCC</b>	World Council of Churches
<b>WDPAC</b>	World Day of Prayer and Action for Children
<b>WMC</b>	World Muslim Congress
<b>WSC</b>	World Sikh Council
<b>YOLRED</b>	Youth Leaders for Restoration and Development







## Foreword



In May 2000, Rev. Takeyasu Miyamoto, founder of Arigatou International, invited 294 religious leaders and grassroots organizations from around the world to Tokyo, Japan, to discuss the plight of the world's children. With a deep belief in interfaith dialogue and collaboration, he was convinced that promoting shared action among grassroots child-focused organizations from every religious tradition was the key to addressing some of the most challenging problems facing the world's children. At that first global forum, the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) was born. Within a year, with the assistance and leadership of six coordinators in different world regions, six GNRC regional networks had been launched.

Twenty years later, the GNRC has expanded in its grassroots work and reach and is coordinated by a team of 61 coordinators and contact persons in 61 countries located in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, and North America. Thanks to the tireless efforts of these volunteers, the GNRC is working with people from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds to build a better world for children, and has so far positively impacted the lives of countless children worldwide.

In the year 2020, the GNRC Secretariat carried out an extensive assessment covering the entire GNRC network around the world. I am pleased to share with you the results of this survey, contained in this summary report, which is based on an analysis of data collected throughout the Network in a very thorough and broad-ranging process using multiple quantitative and qualitative methods.

It is my hope that the results of the assessment and recommendations shared in this summary report will help to reinvigorate and strengthen the GNRC, both during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has brought enormous new stresses to the lives of children in homes, families, communities and congregations.

You—the GNRC member, the GNRC coordinator, the GNRC contact person, the religious leader working to build the

Network—are spearheading the effort to reduce the pandemic's impact on children and families. You all are, every day, building a better world for children where it matters the most—the grassroots. The GNRC serves as the main interfaith platform through which Arigatou International brings together religious leaders and children dedicated to this cause. On behalf of Arigatou International, I take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude to all the GNRC coordinators and members that participated in this assessment.

Arigatou International's office in Nairobi, Kenya, which is home to the dedicated staff of the GNRC Secretariat, promotes cooperation and coordination among GNRC members. Our support for the GNRC and its entire network remains unwavering. We consider all GNRC members part of the "Arigatou family," and we are deeply committed to supporting you as we promote interfaith cooperation for children.

**Keishi Miyamoto**

President, Arigatou International

Convenor, Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC)





## Preface



With gratitude, I present to you the report of the GNRC assessment carried out by the GNRC Secretariat. Titled *Twenty Years of Interfaith Cooperation for Children*, this report is a result of a long and thorough process that took place over 18 months—from April 2020 to October 2021.

The assessment sought to, through a participatory process, to reinvigorate and strengthen the GNRC, while building on its 20 years of extensive interfaith collaboration in shaping and advocating for a better world for children. The content of this report primarily represents the views of GNRC members, including former and current GNRC coordinators/contact persons, grassroots members, religious leaders, and partners, as well as GNRC Secretariat and Arigatou International staff.

The assessment exercise involved in-depth interviews with members of the GNRC, religious leaders, partners, children, as well as directors and staff of Arigatou International. It also involved an online survey, questionnaires and desk review. Interviewees and respondents came from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and North America regions. In total, 100 adults participated in the in-depth interviews, and 81 children and three Arigatou International directors in the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Sixty-eight adults and 86 children took part in the online survey, while eight others filled in prepared questionnaires. The exercise then culminated in assessment result validation workshops held with GNRC members in all regions.

The assessment was based on three broad categories designed to bring out the key elements, successes, gaps, and challenges faced by the GNRC. These categories were: GNRC Network and Connectivity; GNRC Network “Health” and Capacity; and GNRC Network Results and Significance.

We hope that this summary report will be a useful resource to everyone involved in the GNRC network worldwide, all GNRC committees, contact persons, members and their partners, religious leaders, and Arigatou International and its partners.

On behalf of the GNRC Secretariat, I assure you of our commitment and support for implementing the recommendations that emerged from this assessment. I also invite you to engage and work with us as we strive to develop an even more vibrant network that will advocate for and help to build a just, inclusive, peaceful world of progress where all children thrive.

Yours Respectfully,

Mustafa Y. Ali (PhD)

Secretary General, Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC)  
Director, Arigatou International – Nairobi





# Acknowledgements

The success of this GNRC assessment was a result of the dedicated efforts and passionate contributions of many GNRC members, and friends—adults and children. We thank the more than 200 participants of this exercise. Your contributions are valued and will help us strengthen and reinvigorate the GNRC.

Deep appreciation is extended to Arigatou International headquarters in Tokyo for its support. We thank the Arigatou International directors and staff members for your invaluable inputs and contributions. We are grateful for your insights and ideas during the development of the concept note, and the support and insightful discussions during the focus group discussions (FGDs). The process benefited greatly from Arigatou International's other global initiatives: Ethics Education for Children, Prayer and Action for Children, and the Interfaith Initiative to End Child Poverty.

We would not have achieved the objectives of the assessment without the input of all our interviewees. We thank the GNRC coordinators (past and present), contact persons, GNRC members, religious leaders, members of the Arigatou International Advisory Group, partners, staff and children for your commitment, especially amid the great challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Each of you contributed openly and objectively, giving unique suggestions and concrete recommendations during the one-on-one interviews and in the FGDs.

Special mention goes to the GNRC members who identified and assisted the child interviewees. Our deep thanks also go to the parents and guardians for allowing their children to participate in this exercise. We are particularly grateful to Arigatou staff members Vera Leal, Ornella Barros and Sandra Yopez for being part of the amazing working group on children's participation, led by Silvia Mazzarelli, Coordinator, GNRC Latin America and the Caribbean.

Finally, to all our partners and collaborators, we appreciate your cooperation and support and we look forward to your continued collaboration in building a just, inclusive, peaceful world of progress where all children thrive.

The team at the GNRC Secretariat led this assessment with the deepest passion and dedication, working tirelessly to bring this process to successful completion, and they are recognized individually here.

## THE GNRC SECRETARIAT TEAM:

Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali, Secretary General, GNRC, and Director, Arigatou International – Nairobi; Dr. Dorcas Kiplagat, GNRC Network and Programs Coordinator; Silvia Mazzarelli, Coordinator, GNRC Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC); Florence Omtokoh, Executive Secretary; Abdulrahman Marjan, GNRC Communications Officer; Yasin Lokaale, Finance and Accounts Officer; Abdulswamad Alawi, Administrative Assistant; Humphrey Macharia, GNRC Programs Assistant; Zenab Bagha, Communications Consultant; and Ramadhan Hassan, Intern.

## The GNRC Secretariat Team



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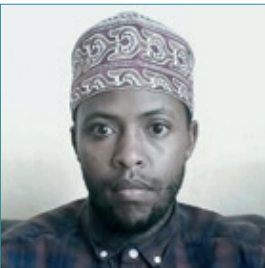
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## Executive Summary

The GNRC Secretariat conducted an assessment of the entire GNRC network from April 2020 to October 2021. The assessment covered three main areas: GNRC Network and Connectivity; GNRC Network “Health” and Capacity; and GNRC Network Results and Significance. A total of 100 adults participated in the in-depth interviews, and 81 children and three Arigatou International directors in the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Sixty-eight adults and 86 children took part in the online survey, while eight others filled in prepared questionnaires. Interviewees and respondents came from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA) and North America regions.

The GNRC assessment revealed the GNRC network as a diverse, multi-religious and multi-cultural platform. An open and flexible network, GNRC comprises 1,200 organizations and individual members spread over 75 countries around the world. Sixty-one of these countries had organized GNRC networks led by 61 coordinators and contact persons.

The GNRC provides a space and platform for interfaith collaboration for the rights and well-being of children, as well as for implementing other projects, activities and programs touching on child protection and building a better world for children. Most projects and activities were implemented by members as part of their daily work, while others had purposely designed multi-year, multi-country projects and programs.

Key recommendations were made on the three thematic areas assessed namely GNRC Network and Connectivity; GNRC Network “Health” and Capacity; and GNRC Network Results and Significance assessed. These recommendations were;

### The GNRC Network and Connectivity

- Intentionally focusing on programs that contribute to greater diversity, inclusivity and equity as a way of strengthening the network and its connectivity.
- Improving the diversity of religious and spiritual traditions represented and their participation, as well as augmenting intergenerational aspects of the network.
- Encouraging more responsive, stronger, accountable and better networking mechanisms by including different categories of members, especially children and religious leaders.
- Enhancing participation across all regions.
- Encouraging formalization of membership, including creation of national interfaith committees in all countries and regions were also cited as important for enhancing connectivity.
- Expanding geographical presence and reach within the country, and to other countries.

### GNRC Network “Health” and Capacity

- Improving the shared purpose, strengthening the GNRC Secretariat to better serve the network and enhancing resource mobilization for members.
- Consider registration of the GNRC national committee(s) as legal entities.
- Encourage horizontal development of the country networks and appointment of regional coordinators.
- Streamlining the GNRC structure in relation to Arigatou International’s architecture and infrastructure, in order to make it clearer and better understood by members.
- Projecting a more cohesive picture of how Arigatou International Initiatives are implemented by the GNRC network, rather than seeing them as four separate entities.
- Deeper involvement of Network members in the creation and development of initiatives and programs, instead of being seen only as a platform to “implement” them.
- Standardization of reporting guidelines and procedures, and developing tools to measure the network’s efficiency, were also recommended.
- Developing a unified communication strategy for Arigatou International, reviewing the Arigatou International Brand Guidelines, and optimizing the use of the five websites in the Arigatou International family.
- Increasing the visibility of the GNRC members on the websites, and highlighting the work of the GNRC committees and members.
- A focus on “storytelling” about what happens in the field, on social media channels, particularly Instagram, YouTube and Twitter, and ensuring these platforms are attractive to younger generations.
- More opportunities for regional, sub-regional and cross-regional interactions among GNRC members, promoting the sharing of experiences, learning and knowledge—physically and virtually.

### GNRC Network Results and Significance

- More resources should be raised for the GNRC committees and members for long-term processes, initiatives and programs.
- Developing a monitoring and evaluation system, including clear indicators, and building internal capacity for members and staff to monitor and evaluate the achievement of results.
- Recording the voices of children as well as “stories of most significant change” was encouraged.
- Advocacy, sensitization against harmful cultural and religious practices.
- Strengthening capacities of GNRC members to address issues facing children in armed conflicts.
- Further raising awareness of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, especially among religious leaders.



## Background and Introduction of the GNRC Assessment

### A Brief History of the GNRC

The Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) is a global-scale interfaith network of organizations and individuals specifically dedicated to securing the rights and well-being of children everywhere. GNRC members come from all of the world's major religions and many other spiritual traditions. GNRC members are committed to creating a world where every girl and boy can grow up safe and sound—a world where every child has the chance to thrive.

The GNRC was inaugurated in May 2000 at its First Forum in Tokyo, Japan<sup>1</sup>, by 294 religious leaders and grassroots child-rights workers representing all of the world's major religious traditions, at the invitation of Rev. Takeyasu Miyamoto, founder of Arigatou International. Every five years (for the first several forums, every four), the GNRC holds a global forum, bringing together members, religious and civil society leaders, and children and young people to advance the efforts of the Network.

“Moved by the plight of children and compelled by our religious commitments, we, women and men, coming from all continents and belonging to many of the world's religions, have come to Tokyo, Japan, to inaugurate the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) at the invitation of the Arigatou Foundation. ... We are convinced that we need to cooperate with one another in our concerns for children.”

*GNRC First Forum Statement. May, 2000, Tokyo, Japan.*

**In May 2002, the GNRC was invited to deliver a statement to the United Nations General Assembly during the Special Session on Children. Speaking on behalf of the GNRC, Rev. Takeyasu Miyamoto, President of the Arigatou Foundation, committed to developing a global program of ethics education for children, supporting the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child through prayer and action, and mobilizing religious communities in the fight against child poverty.**

<sup>1</sup> Global Network of Religions for Children. (2000). *First Forum of the GNRC*. Retrieved from <https://gnrc.net/en/what-we-do/gnrc-forums/first-forum>



### GNRC 1<sup>st</sup> Forum



May 2000: The GNRC was inaugurated at the First Forum in Tokyo, Japan. 294 religious leaders and grassroots child-rights workers represented the world's major religions and spiritual traditions.

### GNRC 2<sup>nd</sup> Forum



May 2004: At the Second Forum in Geneva, Switzerland the Interfaith Council on Ethics Education for Children was established.

### GNRC 3<sup>rd</sup> Forum



June 2008: Under the theme, "Learning to Share: Values, Action, Hope," the Third Forum held in Hiroshima, Japan established the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children.

### GNRC 4<sup>th</sup> Forum



June 2012: Under the theme, "Ending Poverty. Enriching Children: Inspire. Act. Change," the Fourth Forum held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania launched the Interfaith Initiative to End Child Poverty.



## GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum



The **GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum**, held on 9-11 May 2017 in Panama City, Panama, was attended by 526 participants—leaders and members of the world's religious and spiritual traditions, girls and boys, women and men, from 70 countries, together with representatives of governments, the United Nations, as well as international and grassroots organisations.

The forum affirmed the moral imperative to protect children from harm as enshrined and protected in the teachings of all of the world's religious and spiritual communities and in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and its optional protocols, discussed

at the Forum. Participants at the Forum addressed the challenge of ending violence against children, especially physical, psychological and sexual violence, violent extremism, and recruitment of children into gangs. Their insights are detailed in the **GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum Report**.

At the Fifth Forum, participants shared how to address the challenges of violence against children, including the 10 shared commitments that Forum participants made in the **Panama Declaration**. These commitments included listening to children with empathy and respect, ensuring all places, including religious places, are safe for all children, and reinforcing partnerships and strengthening families and local communities.

"...Pope Francis is happy to learn that the Global Network of Religions for Children together with other faith communities and multilateral institutions are engaged in addressing the challenges facing the children of our time..."

*H.E. Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, President, Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Holy See (2017).*







### History of the GNRC: 2000 – 2012

From 2001 to 2012, the GNRC was coordinated by a volunteer Secretary General based in Tokyo, Japan. There were seven regional networks. These were the GNRC East and Southern Africa Network (ESANRC), GNRC Arab States, GNRC Central Asia, GNRC Europe, GNRC Israel, GNRC Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and GNRC South Asia. Regional coordinators managed the regional networks.

ESANRC was inaugurated in 2001 with Sr. Jean Pruitt as its first Coordinator. It was later expanded to cover all of Africa in 2003, with Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali serving as its Coordinator from 2003 to 2012. GNRC Arab States was inaugurated in 2001, with Fadi Yarak serving as its first Coordinator. He was succeeded by Most Rev. Prof. Dr. Qais Sadiq, who served from 2005 to 2012. GNRC Central Asia was coordinated by Razia Ismail Abasi (2001 – 2008), while GNRC Europe was coordinated by Marta Palma (2001 – 2012). GNRC Israel was led by Coordinator Dorit Shippin (2004 – 2010), succeeded by Evi Guggenheim (2010 – 2012). GNRC South Asia was inaugurated in 2001 under the coordination of Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne, who served through 2012. GNRC Latin America and the Caribbean was inaugurated and coordinated by Mercedes Roman from 2001 to 2012.

The structure of the GNRC was revised in 2012 to concentrate on country-level coordination and foster more grassroots members, groups and action. Now, supported by the GNRC Secretariat based at Arigatou International – Nairobi, 61 coordinators and contact persons now lead the work of the GNRC in 61 countries. The GNRC Secretariat, which has staff located in Nairobi, Kenya and Panama City, Panama, provides technical assistance to GNRC members around the world, seeking to promote and coordinate their activities and unifying their efforts to build a better world for children.



**Sr. Jean Pruitt, (Late)**  
Coordinator, ESANRC  
2001-2003



**Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali,**  
Coordinator, GNRC  
Africa, 2003-2012



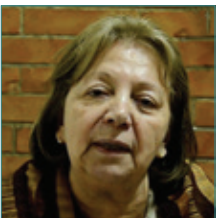
**Mr. Fadi Yarak,**  
Coordinator, GNRC  
Arab States, 2001-  
2005



**Rev. Fr. Qais Sadiq,**  
Coordinator, GNRC  
Arab States, 2005-  
2012



**Ms. Razia I. Abasi,**  
Coordinator, GNRC  
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2008



**Ms. Marta Palma,**  
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Europe, 2001-2012



**Ms. Dorit Shippin,**  
Coordinator, GNRC  
Israel, 2004-2010



**Ms. Evi Guggenheim,**  
Coordinator, GNRC  
Israel, 2010-2012



**Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne,**  
Coordinator, GNRC  
South Asia, 2001-  
2012



**Ms. Mercedes Roman,**  
Coordinator, GNRC  
LAC, 2001-2012

### Contextual Background

In June 2020, the GNRC Secretariat conducted a series of regional consultations to understand from members how they were responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, and how they and children were being impacted. Consultations with GNRC members from five regions—Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Middle East and North Africa were concluded the same month.

From these consultations, all members expressed their keen interest in addressing existing and new challenges that children were facing around the world, and to reinvigorate and bolster the GNRC, especially in the context of the pandemic. GNRC members also expressed the need for strengthened grassroots advocacy as well as direct support for children and more concrete action to fulfill the commitments to prevent violence against children made during the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum.

Other recommendations raised for consideration included:

- Strengthening the GNRC at all levels—regional, national and local;
- Assessing the models and tools used to manage GNRC projects and activities;
- Mobilizing resources for the GNRC and members' projects, as well as for local and grassroots initiatives;
- Assessing communication between the GNRC and the Secretariat, between Arigatou International Initiatives and the Network, and among GNRC members;
- Assessing social and online media activities and engagement by members;
- Raising visibility of the work of the GNRC members and committees with a specific focus on grassroots initiatives;
- Assessing children's participation in the Network with a view to strengthening their contributions;
- Assessing the current members and membership of the GNRC;
- Assessing the current GNRC committees, groups and contact persons.

The year 2020 marked the 20th anniversary of the GNRC, two decades on from its establishment in 2000. It was a fitting moment to take stock of the GNRC's achievements, while looking forward to a stronger and reinvigorated network.

It was agreed that modalities, plans and strategies for strengthening and reinvigorating the GNRC would be worked on, starting with a comprehensive assessment. Presentation of the assessment results was to take place at the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum follow-up meeting in Tokyo planned for 2020. This meeting, however, was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



### Assessment Framework

Responding to this need, the GNRC Secretariat began the process of assessing the Network. The Secretariat formulated tools to undertake the assessment. A detailed assessment framework was developed by adapting the assessment framework developed by Network Impact and Center for Evaluation Innovation<sup>2</sup>, to respond to the context and needs of the GNRC network. Using the framework, the GNRC Secretariat conducted in-depth interviews, FGDs, and one-on-one conversations with members of the GNRC, religious leaders, senior members associated with the GNRC and Arigatou International Initiatives, Arigatou International directors, partners, children and staff. The assessment focused on three broad areas—GNRC Network and Connectivity; GNRC Network “Health” and Capacity; and GNRC Network Results and Significance.

Under **GNRC Network and Connectivity**, the membership of individuals and organizations that participate in the GNRC as members and friends was assessed. The study also looked into how connections among members are structured, as well as what flows through those connections.

Under **GNRC Network “Health” and Capacity**, the assessment investigated the value and shared purpose of the Network at all levels, and its capacity for joint value creation. Secondly, the assessment investigated resources GNRC needs to sustain itself and the infrastructure—the internal systems and structures that support the GNRC including the secretariat, guidelines and processes for annual planning and reporting.

Under **GNRC Network Results and Significance**, the assessment determined interim outcomes as members work to implement their goals and follow-up on the ten commitments on ending violence made in the GNRC Panama Declaration. The assessment focused on reach, outputs, outcomes and impact of the GNRC in the fields of child rights and child protection and the broader areas of peace-building, poverty alleviation and ending violence against children.

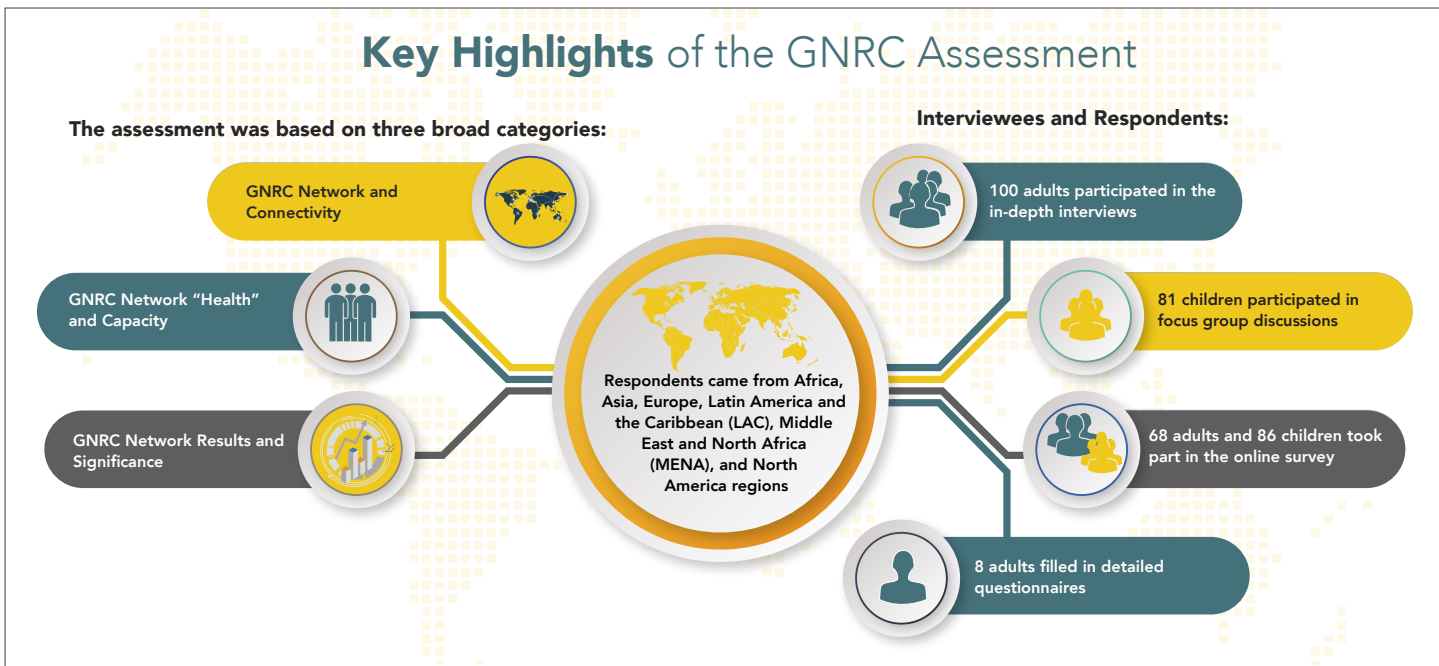
The assessment also looked at **three dimensions of children’s participation**<sup>3</sup> in the Network:

- **Scope:** The degree of children’s participation that the GNRC has achieved.
- **Quality:** To what extent have participatory processes complied with the agreed standards for ethical and effective practice.
- **Outcomes:** The outcomes of children’s participation in the GNRC, on children themselves, on their families, the committee members, and the wider community.

These dimensions were included into the broader assessment framework.

<sup>2</sup> Network Impact and Center for Evaluation Innovation. (2014). *The State of Network Evaluation, and Evaluating Networks for Social Change: A Case Book*. Retrieved from <http://www.networkimpact.org/the-state-of-network-evaluation-a-guide/>

<sup>3</sup> Lansdown G. and O’Kane C. (2014). *Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluating Children’s Participation: Save the Children*. Retrieved from <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document-collections/toolkit-monitoring-and-evaluating-childrens-participation>



### Scope and Methodology

The assessment used a combination of methods to collect and analyze data;

- **In-depth Interviews**

The GNRC Secretariat conducted 100 in-depth interviews and conversations with current and former coordinators and contact persons, members, Arigatou International staff, as well as religious leaders, selected grassroots partners and supporters. In a few cases, direct interviews were impossible due to language barriers and scheduling challenges, and so questionnaires based on the interview guide were administered to respondents.

- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)**

The assessment benefited from the input of three Arigatou International directors: Rev. Fred Nyabera, Director, Interfaith Initiative to End Child Poverty; Maria Lucia Uribe, Director, Ethics Education for Children, and Rebeca Rios-Kohn, Director, Prayer and Action for Children. From the GNRC Secretariat, Dr. Mustafa Y Ali, Dr. Dorcas Kiplagat and Silvia Mazzarelli also participated in and moderated the FGD.

A total of 81 children from around the world took part in ten FGDs; 21 from Africa, 10 from Asia, 30 from Europe, 13 from Latin America and the Caribbean, and 7 from the Middle East and North Africa. One hundred adults participated in the in-depth interviews.

- **Online Survey**

Sixty-eight adults and 86 children took part in the online survey, while eight others filled in prepared questionnaires. Respondents came from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Middle East and North Africa regions.



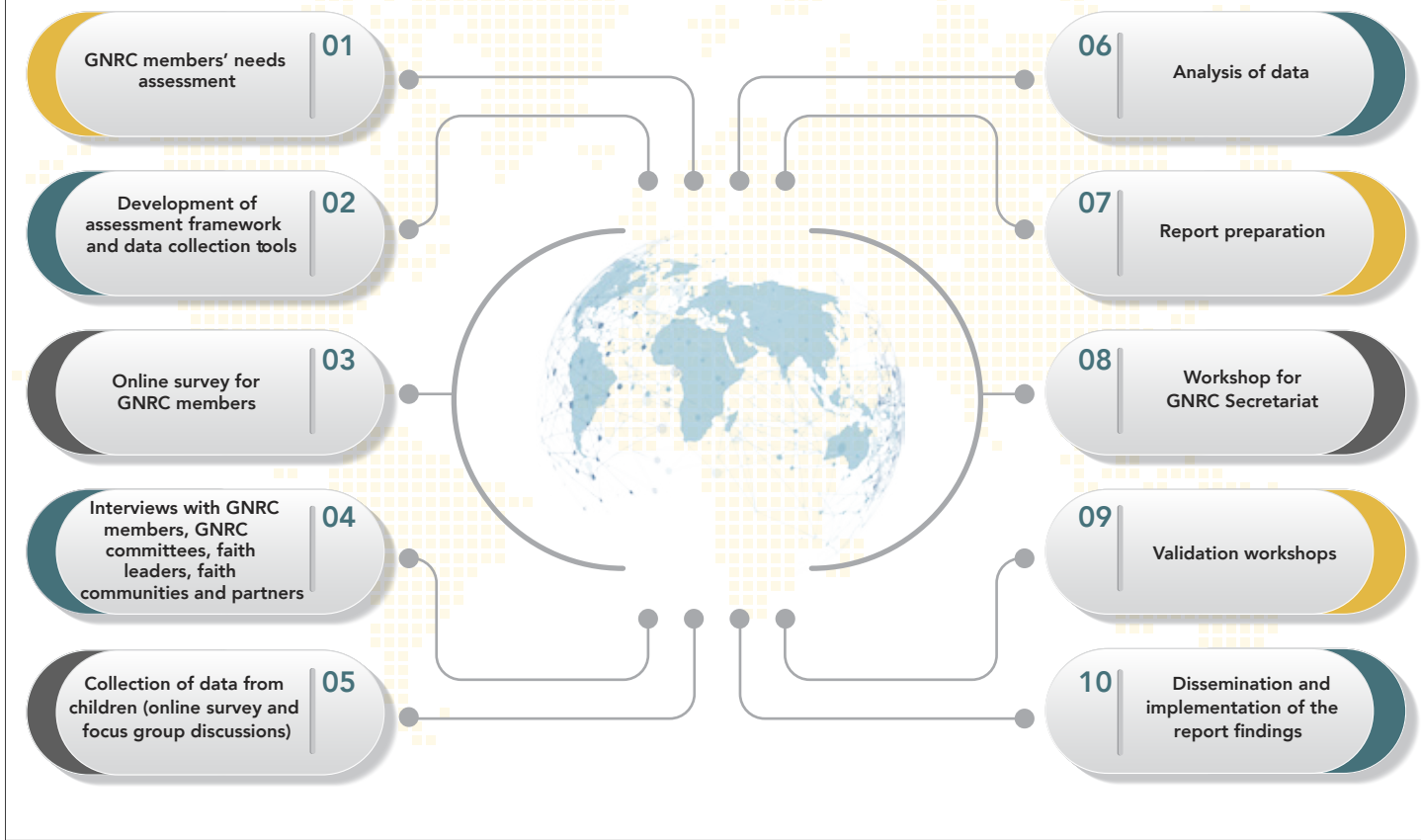
The design of the survey followed the same framework as the interviews. Adult respondents included GNRC coordinators, contact persons and members at the national and grassroots levels. The aim was to corroborate information collected through the interviews, questionnaires and FGDs. In this data collection process, the respondents answered in English, French or Spanish.

Two-thirds of adult participants responded in English and one-third in Spanish between February 27 and April 12, 2021. The 86 children (58 female, 28 male) came from five regions and 12 countries. For children, the survey focused on assessing the scope of their participation in GNRC activities.

• **Desk Review of GNRC Reports**

GNRC documents including reports, audiovisual materials and other sources of information were reviewed to further verify the condition of the Network in various countries, including its health, capacity, and reach. These documents consisted primarily of GNRC forum reports, annual reports, and program and project reports.

**The GNRC Assessment Process**





## GNRC Network and Connectivity

Under “GNRC Network and Connectivity,” we assessed the Network’s membership and structure. Under Membership, we assessed the people and organizations that belong to and participate in the GNRC and contribute to its shared purpose. Under Structure, we examined how connections between members are structured, and what flows through those connections.

### The GNRC Membership

The assessment revealed that the GNRC is made up of both individuals and organizations (together, “entities” below) across Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa and North America. The network has carried out work in 75 countries, currently having members in 61 countries.

In 2020, the core of the Network consisted of a dedicated membership of roughly 1,203 entities from all major religious and spiritual traditions. Another 200 partner organizations and individuals identify as “friends” of the GNRC. At various times, especially when multi-year programs are implemented, membership in and association with the GNRC rise steeply.

The GNRC is designed to be flexible. Membership is made easy. The GNRC changes and adapts to the challenges and situations it faces in different regions of the world, and at the grassroots level. Since the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum in Panama in May 2017, the Secretariat has recorded an increasing number of entities interested in formally joining the Network.

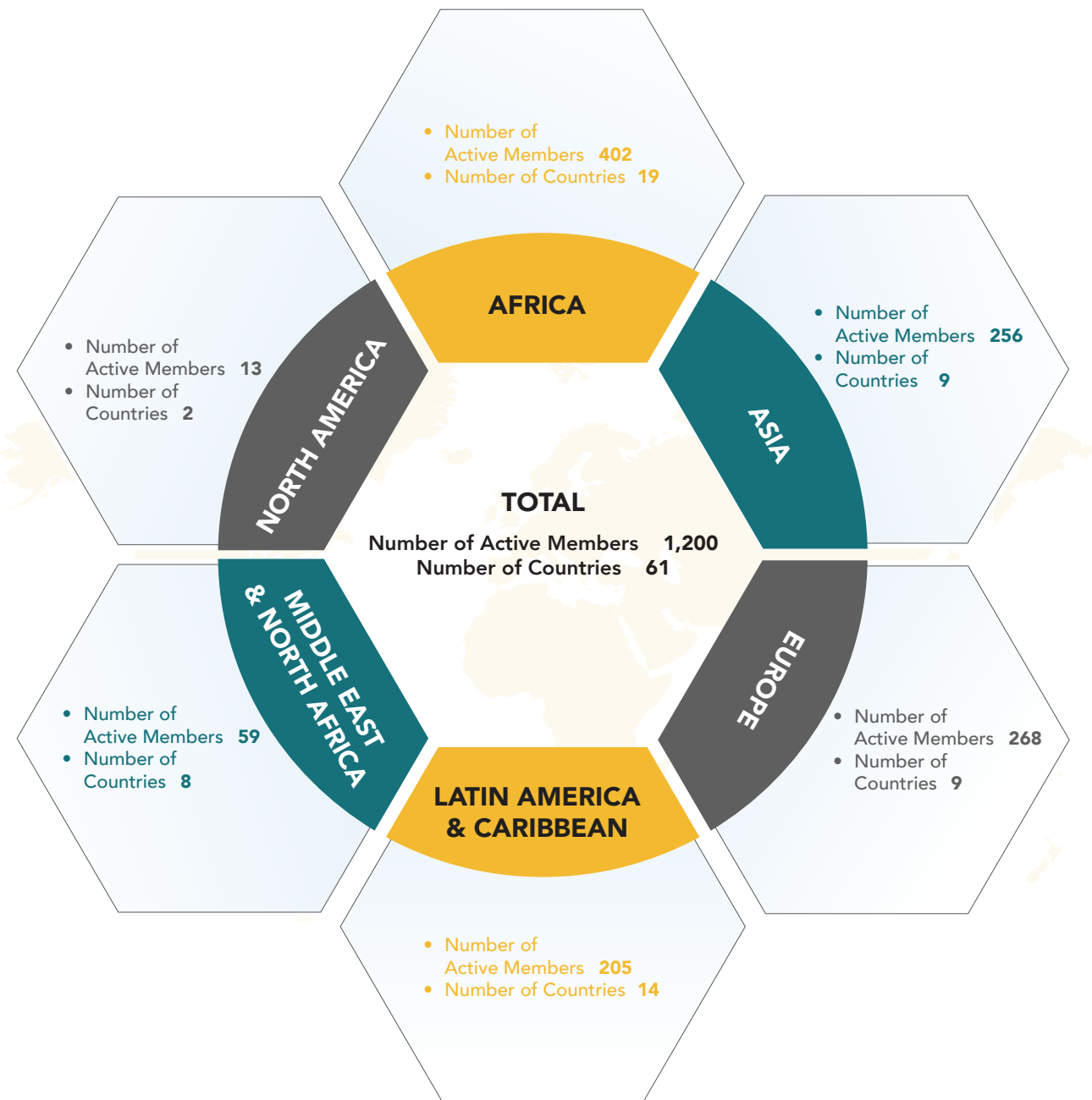
“I would like to express once more, on behalf of the Global Network of Religions for Children, our most profound commitment—we shall devote ourselves to bringing about, through prayer and practice, this global, ‘silent spiritual revolution’ for the future of children.”

*Rev. Takeyasu Miyamoto, Inaugurator, GNRC:  
Message to the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children, 2002.*

# CHAPTER 2

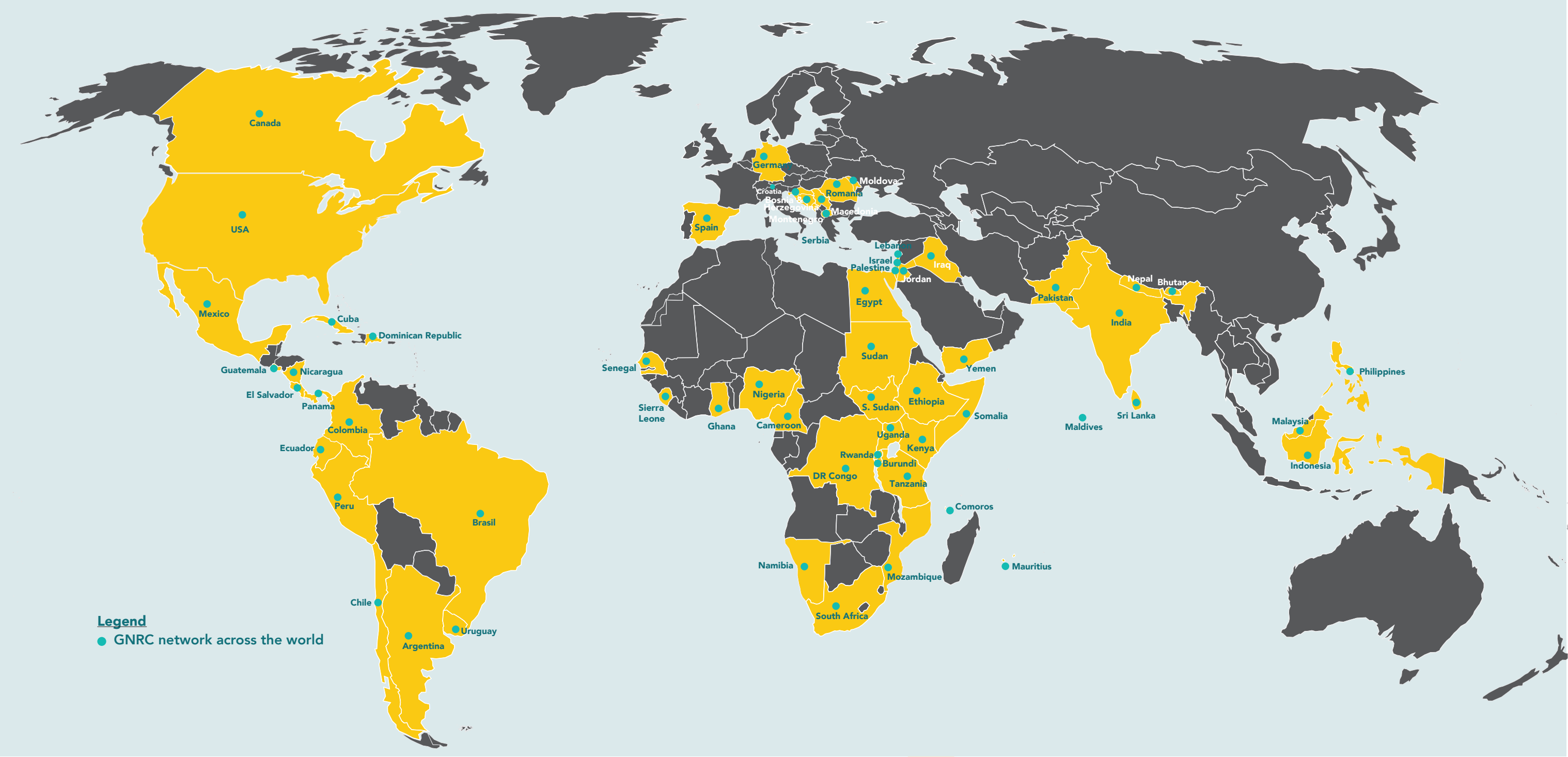


The assessment revealed the distribution of members and country committees and networks are as follows.





GNRC Presence in the World

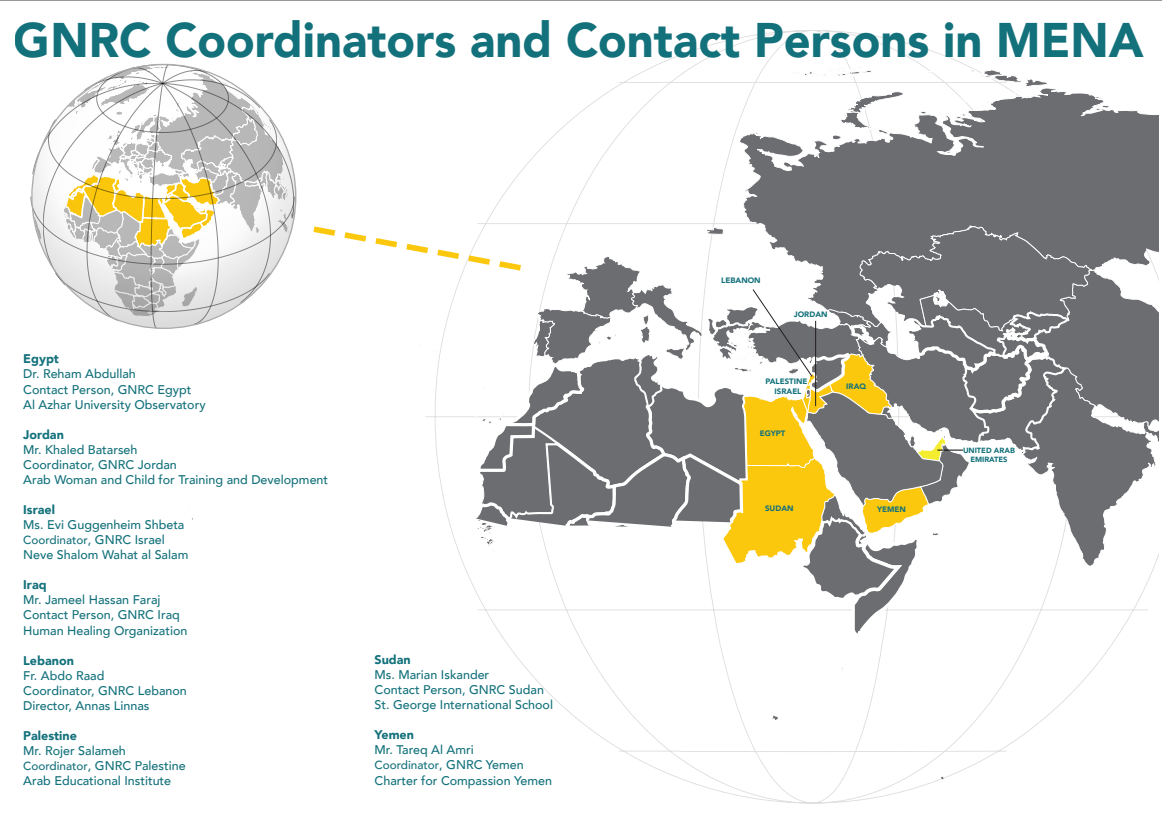


“The Buddha once said, ‘all people are equally my children.’ It follows therefore that there is no distinction between my child and your child. So we have to create a peaceful world for our own children.”

Rev. Keishi Miyamoto, Convenor, GNRC  
Message at the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum, Panama City, Panama, 2017.



GNRC Country Maps









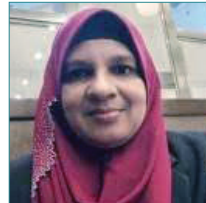







### GNRC in Africa



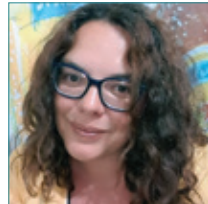





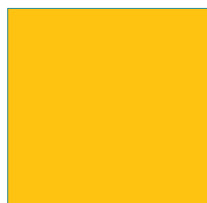
<b>GNRC Burundi</b>  <b>Ms. Sandrine Nkurunziza</b> Contact Person, GNRC Burundi APDEJ Turashoboye	<b>GNRC Cameroon</b>  <b>Mr. Alexander Gwanvalla</b> Contact Person, GNRC Cameroon. Community Green Engagement Cameroon	<b>GNRC Comoros</b>  <b>Mr. Akim Said M'changama</b> Coordinator, GNRC Comoros. Director, Conseil de la Paix	<b>GNRC DR Congo</b>  <b>Mr. Jonas Habimana</b> Contact Person, GNRC DR Congo Bureau d'Informations, Formations, "BIFERD"	<b>GNRC DR Congo</b>  <b>Ms. Yvette Munyerenkana</b> Contact Person, GNRC DR Congo
<b>GNRC Ethiopia</b>  <b>Mr. Eyob Yishak</b> Contact Person, GNRC Ethiopia Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus	<b>GNRC Ghana</b>  <b>Mr. Emmanuel Ametepey</b> Contact Person, GNRC Ghana Youth Advocates, Ghana	<b>GNRC Kenya</b>  <b>Sh. Ramadhan Aula</b> Coordinator, GNRC Kenya Director, Centre for Sustainable Conflict Resolution (CSCR)	<b>GNRC Mauritius</b>  <b>Mr. Belall Maudarbux</b> Contact Person, GNRC Mauritius	<b>GNRC Mozambique</b>  <b>Mr. Muhammad Yassine</b> Contact Person, GNRC Mozambique
<b>GNRC Namibia</b>  <b>Ms. Natasha Kanguatjivi</b> Contact Person, GNRC Namibia	<b>GNRC Nigeria</b>  <b>Sr. Agatha Chikelue</b> Contact Person, GNRC Nigeria	<b>GNRC Rwanda</b>  <b>Ayoub Nsanzintwali</b> Contact Person, GNRC Rwanda Umbrella for Vulnerable	<b>GNRC Senegal</b>  <b>Mr. Ba Abdoul Aziz</b> Contact Person, GNRC Senegal. Movement for Peace and Harmony, Senegal	<b>GNRC Sierra Leone</b>  <b>Ptr. Peter Alfred</b> Coordinator, GNRC Sierra Leone Christian Outreach Justice Mission Sierra Leone
<b>GNRC Somalia</b>  <b>Mr. Abdiweli Waberi</b> Contact Person, GNRC Somalia. African Youth and Child network for Human Rights	<b>GNRC South Africa</b>  <b>Ms. Saydoon Nisa Sayed</b> Coordinator, GNRC South Africa	<b>GNRC South Sudan</b>  <b>Bishop Martin Mogga Ifoga</b> Contact Person, GNRC South Sudan. Hands of Grace	<b>GNRC Tanzania</b>  <b>Ms. Joyce Mdachi</b> Coordinator, GNRC Tanzania	<b>GNRC Uganda</b>  <b>Geoffrey Omony</b> Coordinator, GNRC Uganda Youth Leaders for Restoration and Development







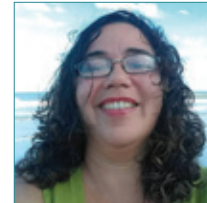
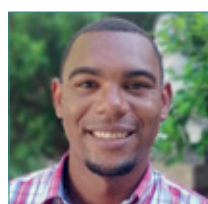








## GNRC in Asia

<b>GNRC Bhutan</b>  <b>Mr. Phurba Sonam Waiba</b> Coordinator, GNRC Bhutan Young Writer's Society	<b>GNRC India</b>  <b>Mr. Gopal Vijayaragavan</b> Coordinator, GNRC India Shanti Ashram	<b>GNRC Indonesia</b>  <b>Ms. Nerlian Gogali</b> Coordinator, GNRC Indonesia Mosintuwu Institute	<b>GNRC Malaysia</b>  <b>Dr. Shazmin Rafeeq</b> Coordinator, GNRC Malaysia I CAN Malaysia	<b>GNRC Maldives</b>  <b>Ms. Fathimath Afiya</b> Contact Person, GNRC Maldives. Maldivian Network for Empowering Women
<b>GNRC Nepal</b>  <b>Dr. Chintamani Yogi</b> Coordinator, GNRC Nepal Peace Service Centre	<b>GNRC Pakistan</b>  <b>Mr. Iftikhar Mubarik</b> Contact Person, GNRC Pakistan Director, Children's Advocacy Network	<b>GNRC Pakistan</b>  <b>Mr. David Paul</b> Contact Person, GNRC Pakistan St. Mary's Public School	<b>GNRC Philippines</b>  <b>Bai Rohaniza Sumudad-Usman</b> Contact Person, GNRC Philippines Teach Peace Build Peace Movement	<b>GNRC Sri Lanka</b>  <b>Ms. Lakshman Sashikala</b> Coordinator, GNRC Sri Lanka Sarvodaya Movement

## GNRC in Europe

<b>GNRC Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>  <b>Ms. Ismeta Begic</b> Coordinator, GNRC Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Director, "UZ" Mozaik	<b>GNRC Croatia</b>  <b>Ms. Ana Žnidarec Čučković</b> Contact Person, GNRC Croatia Nansen Dialogue Centre	<b>GNRC Germany</b>  <b>Ms. Natalia Seriakova</b> Contact Person, GNRC Germany Founder and Director, JuBuK	<b>GNRC Macedonia</b>  <b>Mr. Dragi Zmijanac</b> Coordinator, GNRC Macedonia, and Director, First Children's Embassy in the World Megjashi	<b>GNRC Moldova</b>  <b>Ms. Angela Chicu</b> Coordinator, GNRC Moldova. Association of Professional Women from Moldova
<b>GNRC Montenegro</b>  <b>Ms. Sabra Decević</b> Contact Person, GNRC Montenegro Djeca Crne Gore-Children of Montenegro	<b>GNRC Romania</b>  <b>Ms. Laura Molnar</b> Coordinator, GNRC Romania Education For Change	<b>GNRC Serbia</b>  <b>Mr. Srdjan Vlaskalic</b> Coordinator, GNRC Serbia Sombor Educational Center	<b>GNRC Spain</b>  <b>Ms. Sonia de la Puente</b> Contact Person, GNRC Spain	

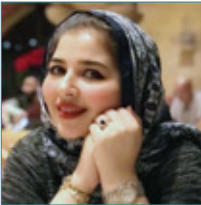
## GNRC in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

<b>GNRC Argentina</b>  <b>Ana de Medio</b> Coordinator, GNRC Argentina Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI)	<b>GNRC Brasil</b>  <b>Rabbi Pablo Berman</b> Coordinator, GNRC Brasil Comunidade Judaica do Paraná	<b>GNRC Chile</b>  <b>María José Ananías</b> Coordinator, GNRC Chile Asociación Chilena de Diálogo Interreligioso	<b>GNRC Colombia</b>  <b>Luis Alberto Rubiano</b> Contact Person, GNRC Colombia Iglesia Luterana	<b>GNRC Cuba</b>  <b>Alicia Sevilla</b> Coordinator, GNRC Cuba Fraternidad de Iglesias Bautistas de Matanzas
<b>GNRC Dominican Republic</b>  <b>Cándido Heredia</b> Coordinator, GNRC Dominican Republic Muchachos y Muchachas con Don Bosco	<b>GNRC Ecuador</b>  <b>Mr. Marco Laguatasi</b> Coordinator, GNRC Ecuador	<b>GNRC El Salvador</b>  <b>Larry Madrigal</b> Coordinator, GNRC El Salvador	<b>GNRC Guatemala</b>  <b>Lorena Coy</b> Coordinator, GNRC Guatemala	<b>GNRC Mexico</b>  <b>Sr. Diana Garcia</b> Coordinator, GNRC Mexico
<b>GNRC Nicaragua</b>  <b>Azucena Lopez</b> Coordinator, GNRC Nicaragua	<b>GNRC Panama</b>  <b>Isis Navaro</b> Coordinator, GNRC Panama	<b>GNRC Peru</b>  <b>Esperanza Principiom</b> Coordinator, GNRC Peru	<b>GNRC Uruguay</b>  <b>John Hamilton</b> Coordinator, GNRC Uruguay	



GNRC in MENA

GNRC Egypt



**Dr. Reham Abdullah**  
Contact Person, GNRC  
Egypt  
Al Azhar University  
Observatory

GNRC Israel



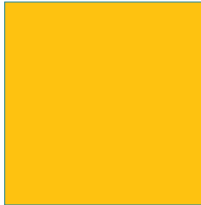
**Ms. Evi Guggenheim  
Shbeta**  
Coordinator, GNRC  
Israel  
Neve Shalom Wahat al  
Salam

GNRC Jordan



**Mr. Khaled  
Batarseh**  
Coordinator, GNRC  
Jordan. Arab Woman  
and Child for Training  
and Development

GNRC Iraq



**Mr. Jameel Hassan  
Faraj**  
Contact Person, GNRC  
Iraq. Human Healing  
Organization

GNRC Lebanon



**Fr. Abdo Raad**  
Coordinator, GNRC  
Lebanon  
Annas Linnas

GNRC Palestine



**Mr. Rojer Salameh**  
Coordinator, GNRC  
Palestine  
Arab Educational  
Institute

GNRC Sudan



**Ms. Marian  
Iskander**  
Contact Person,  
GNRC–Sudan  
St .George  
International School,  
Sudan

GNRC Yemen



**Mr. Tariq Al Amri**  
Coordinator, GNRC  
Yemen  
Charter for  
Compassion Yemen

GNRC in North America

GNRC Canada



**Dr. Fozia Alvi**  
Contact Person, GNRC  
Canada  
President, Humanity  
Auxilium

GNRC USA



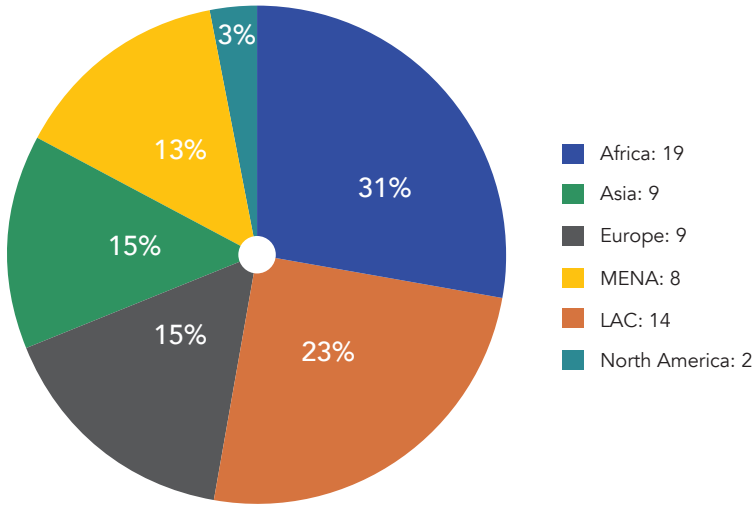
**Rabbi Diana Gerson**  
Coordinator, GNRC  
USA  
Associate Executive  
Vice President of the  
New York Board of  
Rabbis (NYBR)

GNRC USA



**Sage Williams**  
Contact Person, GNRC  
USA  
Project Manager,  
Religious and Spiritual  
Advisory Panel, All The  
Children

No. of Countries with GNRC Members



Membership varies significantly across regions, in terms of numbers of members; their sizes (which varies from large NGOs or religious communities to small grassroots organizations); to the nature of members (volunteer, non-volunteer, hired staff and/or consultants); and other characteristics (such as age, gender, religious affiliation and other attributes). Across all regions, GNRC members are mostly institutional (faith communities or faith-based organizations). However, in Africa, Europe, Asia and MENA, some individuals are registered as GNRC members.

One common element across regions is that members have a faith. They are religious communities, faith-based and inspired organizations, or people of faith who participate in the GNRC to engage in interfaith cooperation. They help conceive and design programs and projects in their local areas, contributing to the objectives of the GNRC. The assessment found, however, that some non-religious organizations also belong to the Network.

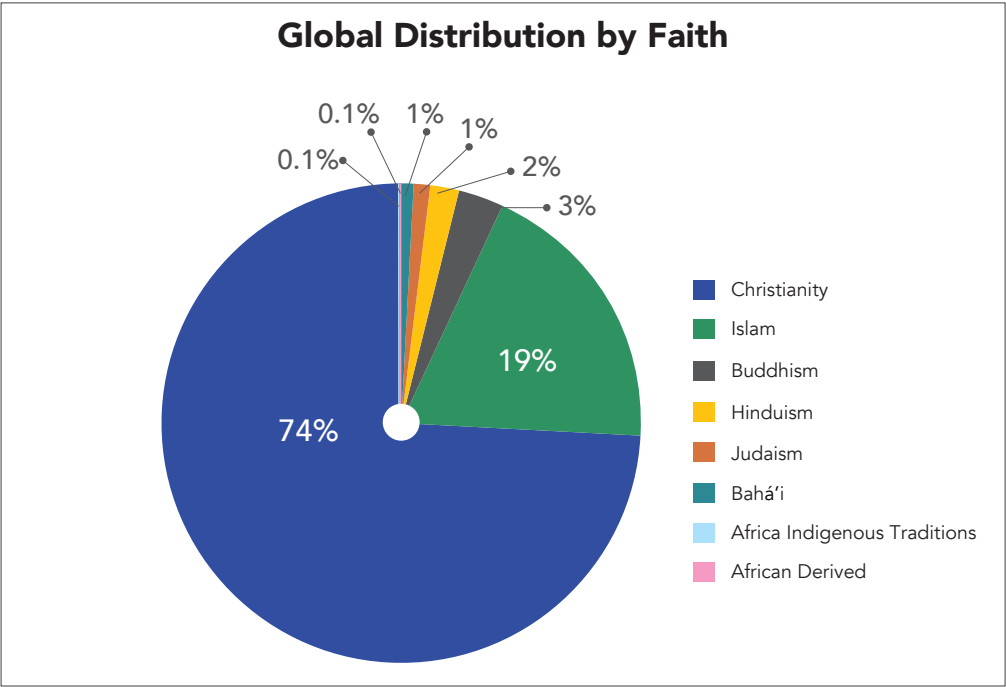
Membership criteria, roles, and responsibilities as well as the processes for reviewing and admitting members to the GNRC are loosely defined in the Guidelines for the GNRC Network Coordinators and Contact Persons (May 2018). The guidelines state that “faith-based organizations or groups as well as individuals of faith that are working with and for children anywhere in the world are invited to join the GNRC.” The guidelines establish four criteria for membership. GNRC members should be:

- Actively engaged in promoting children’s rights and their well-being.
- Observant members of a faith or religion.
- Engaged in work whose aims are in full harmony with the aims and work of the GNRC.
- Willing to cooperate with other GNRC members in building a better world for children.

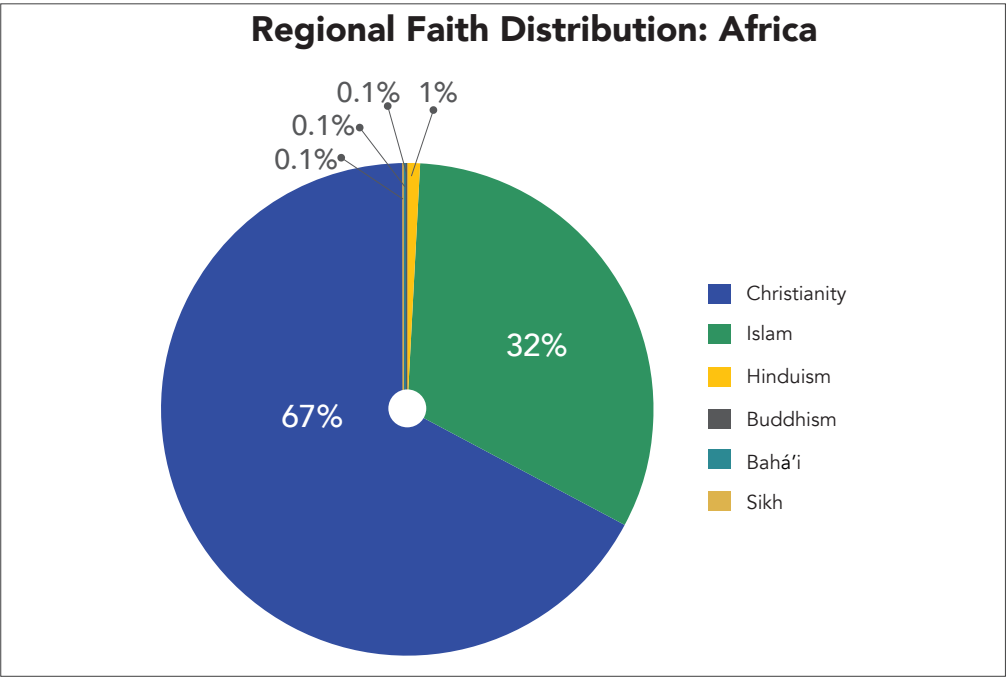
In terms of religious diversity, globally, 74% of the registered members by 2020 belonged to the Christian faith, 19% to Islam, 3% to Buddhism, 2% to Hinduism, 1% to Judaism, and 1% to the Baha’i Faith. Members from the Sikh, African-derived, indigenous and other spiritual communities are also present in very low percentages. Members from explicitly interfaith organizations and initiatives are well represented in some countries, while in others, their presence is low.



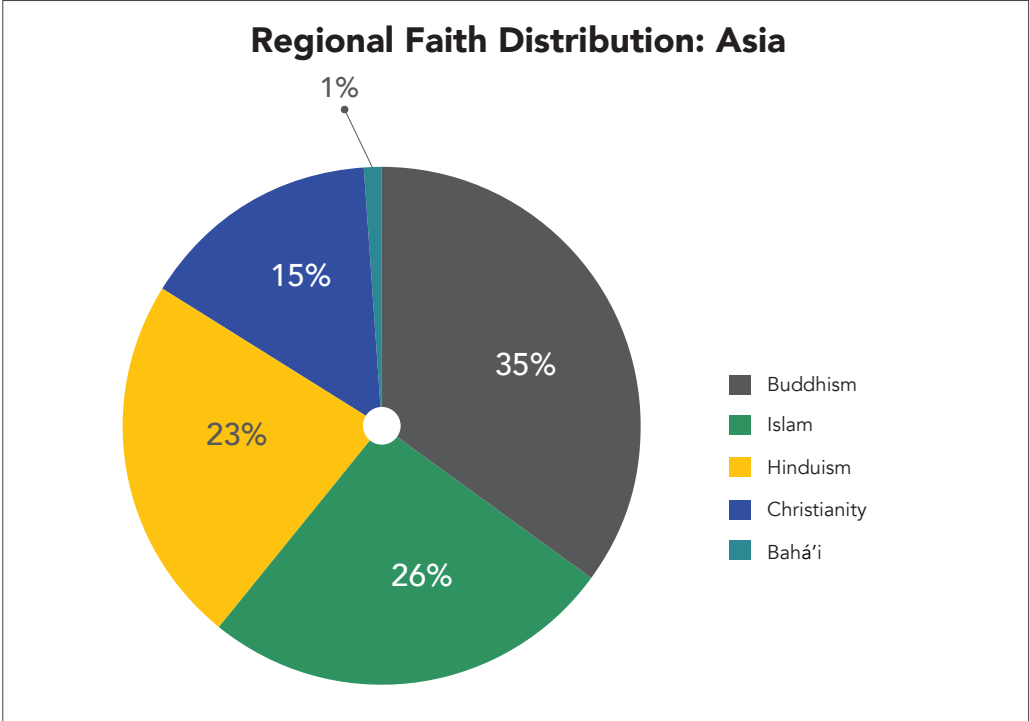
The pie-chart below shows the distribution of members by religion and spiritual tradition.



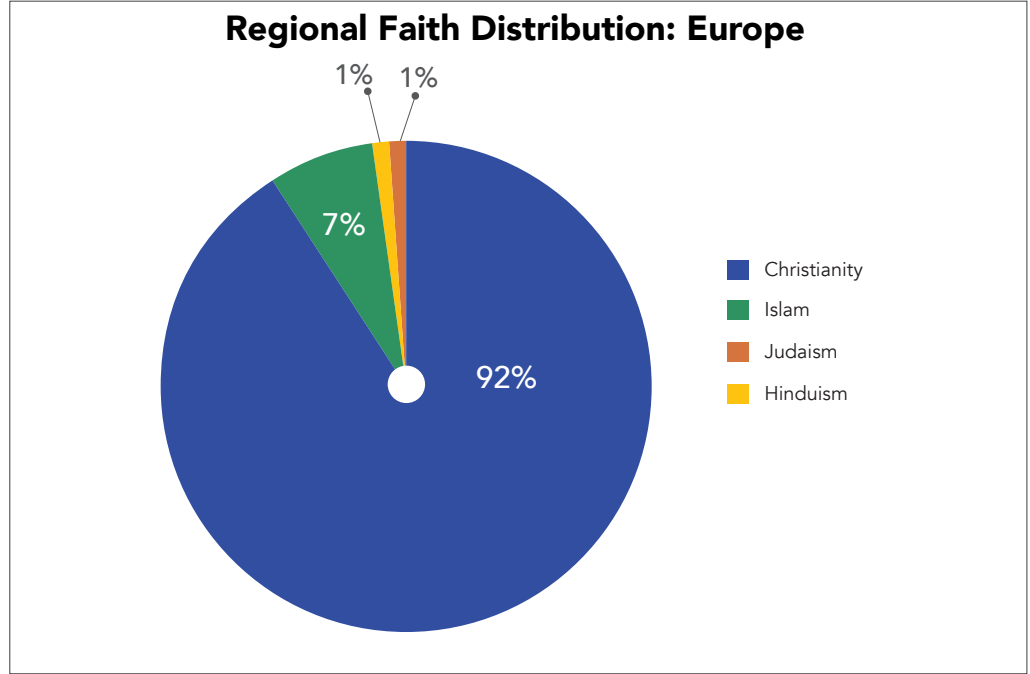
In Africa, 67% of the registered members belong to the Christian faith, 32% ascribe to Islam, and 1% to Hinduism. African indigenous, Bahá'í and Buddhist traditions are also represented.



In Asia, the majority of members ascribe to Buddhism, followed by Islam, Hinduism and Christianity. The Bahá'í Faith accounts for 1% of all members in the region.

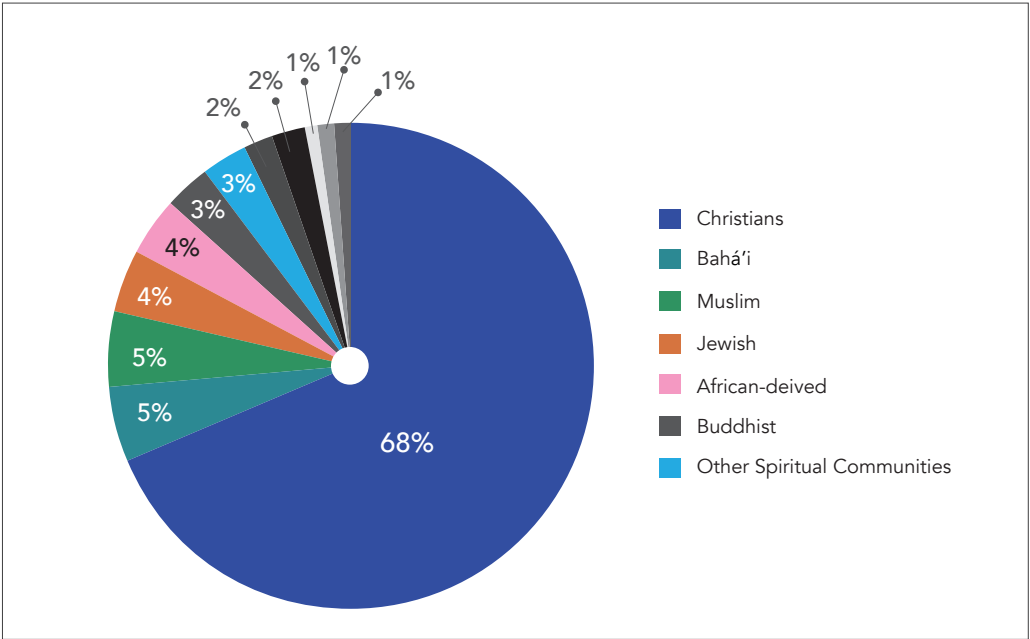


Members from the Christian faith form the majority in Europe, at 92%, followed by Islam at 7%, and then Hinduism and Judaism at 1% each.

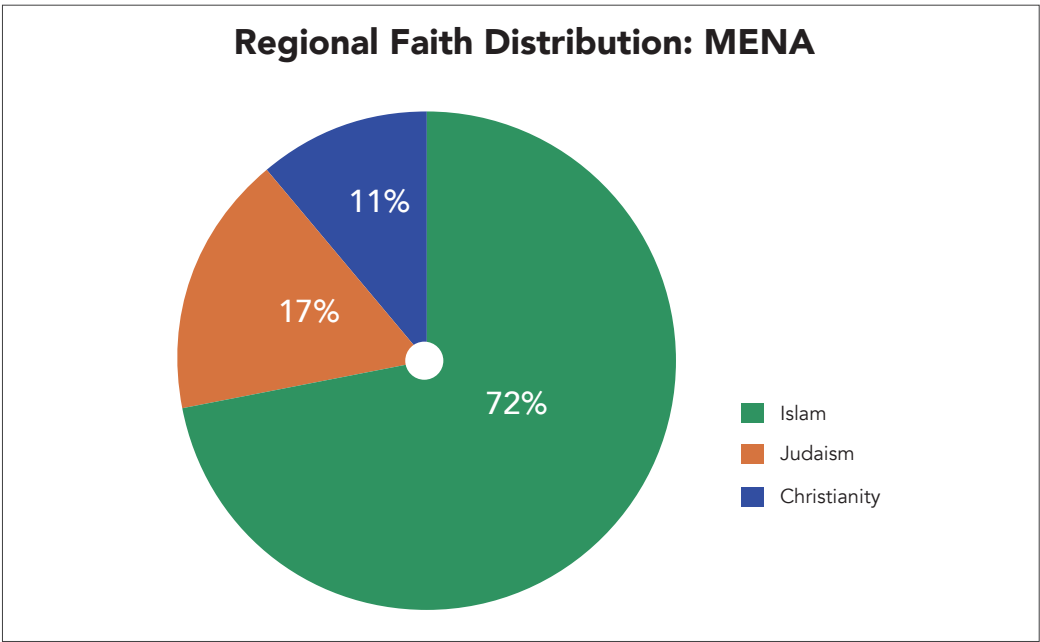




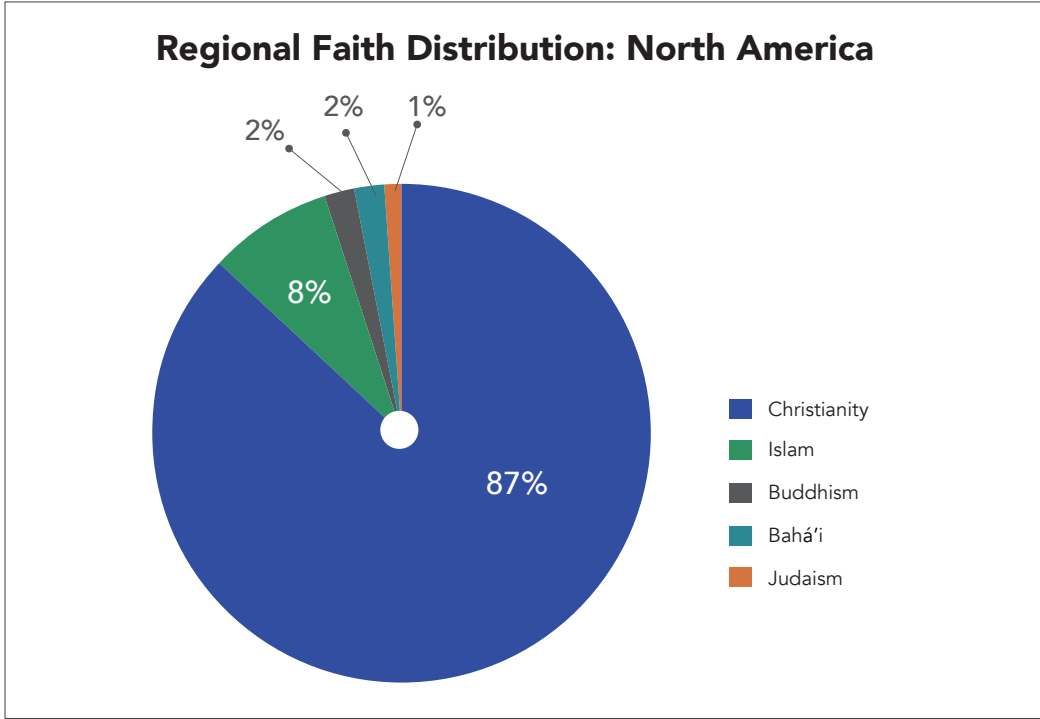
In Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), most GNRC members are from the Christian faith, which is in keeping with the religious landscape of the region, where approximately 68% of the population considers itself Christian (Latinobarómetro, 2018). A unique feature of the LAC region is that it hosts members who are from indigenous and spiritual traditions as well as African-derived religions.



In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, the dominant religion among members is Islam, at 72%. Seventeen percent of the members ascribe to Judaism and 11% to Christianity.



In North America, members belong to Christianity, Islam, the Bahá'í Faith, Judaism, and Buddhism, at 87%, 8%, 2%, 2%, and 1%, respectively. GNRC has active members in Canada and the United States.



The assessment showed that **children are at the heart of the GNRC** and are considered active members of the Network, even though they are not included as registered members in GNRC membership statistics, or mentioned explicitly as a type of member in the GNRC guidelines. In Africa, Asia, Europe, LAC and MENA, children participate in, lead, and organize activities alongside adults, including the commemoration of significant occasions, such as Harmony Week, the Day of the African Child, the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP), the International Day of Peace, Universal Children's Day, and the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children (World Day).

It is difficult to establish or estimate the total number of children who have participated in or benefited from the work of the GNRC globally. Desk research shows that between 2005 and 2013, for example, over 10,000 children in Tanzania were members of and directly benefited from the GNRC, as participants in the peace clubs established by GNRC Tanzania between 2004 and 2012.

Children who participated in this assessment acknowledged that the GNRC is successful in reaching out to and engaging with children of different faiths and socio-economic backgrounds. They consider this to be one of the most valuable characteristics of the GNRC. However, they pointed out that some groups of children, such as children with disabilities, younger children, and children who live in remote areas or who have limited access to the Internet, are not well represented in the Network.

Although the GNRC focuses on promoting the rights and well-being of children, several young interviewees said that the GNRC should also provide guidance and support to young adults above the age of 18, who could also support the work with the younger children at all levels.



Potential GNRC members become interested in the Network during presentations at conferences, forums, grassroots engagements, through radio and television coverage of GNRC events, or via websites and social media. Potential new members are typically invited to contact the GNRC country or regional coordinator, the GNRC Secretariat, or visit the GNRC website to apply for membership. Upon receipt of the application, the Secretariat reviews the application. Upon admission into the Network, the GNRC Network and Programs Coordinator links the new member with the country coordinators (where they exist), or with the contact person.

GNRC coordinators and national committees also invite new members to collaborate on particular programs at the local level. Oftentimes, records of such members are not kept by the GNRC Secretariat, but by the national committee. Regular updates are provided to all members via the GNRC's monthly newsletter, as well as emails and social media platforms.

### The GNRC Structure

The GNRC is a flexible network with varying structures across regions and countries. The **Network's structure ranges from national interfaith committees/networks and anchor organizations (that coordinate other organizations and individual members), to groups and individuals.** Some networks came into being as programs and continued as project-led structures. Most GNRC national committees are located in capital cities, although some countries have multiple groups present in rural areas and regions.

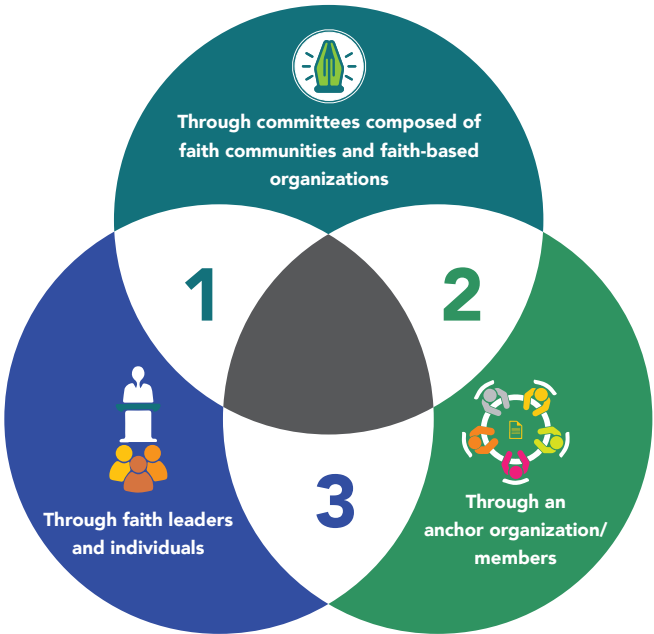
In Africa, the GNRC is present in 19 countries and active in 17. Comoros, Kenya, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Tanzania have GNRC interfaith committees led by coordinators. The networks in Ethiopia, Nigeria, Somalia and others refer to themselves as GNRC groups. While others, such as Burundi, Senegal and others, organize around an anchor organization. The assessment revealed that, in Africa, the GNRC was more active and had more members in Anglophone and less active with few members in Francophone countries.

In Asia, the GNRC is present in nine countries and active in eight. Malaysia, Sri Lanka and India, for example, are organized as committees led by coordinators. Pakistan, Indonesia, Nepal, Bhutan and Philippines, on the other hand, work around anchor organizations.

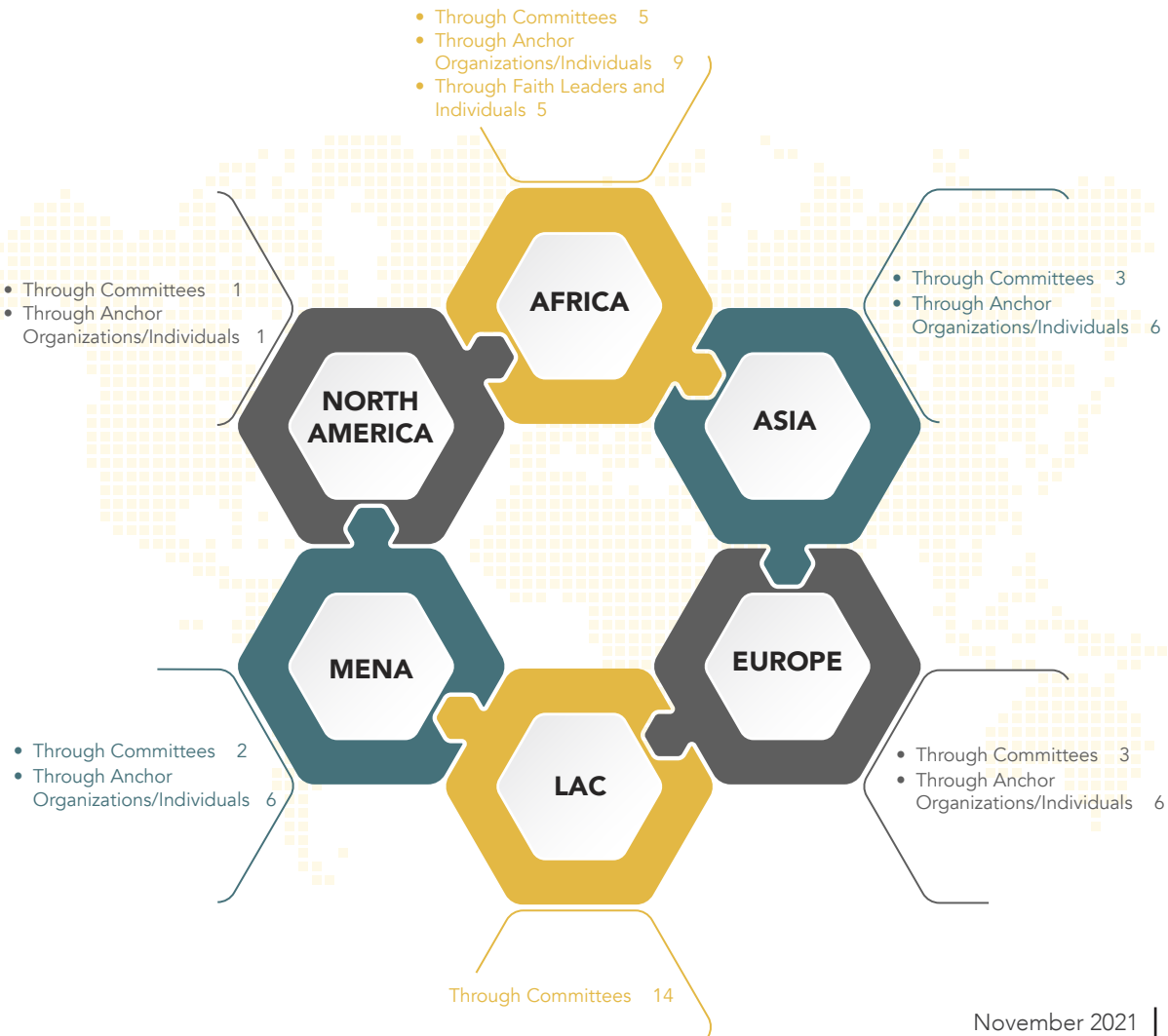
In Europe, the GNRC is present in nine countries. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Romania and Serbia are organized around committees led by coordinators. Some of these committees have a youth coordinator. Germany, Croatia, Montenegro and Moldova revolve around anchor organizations and individual members. Romania is unique in that it comprises a Community of Practice centered on Arigatou International's Learning to Live Together (LTLT) program.

In LAC, the GNRC operates through national interfaith committees, composed of faith communities and faith-based organizations, in all 14 countries where GNRC is present. The number of committee members varies, ranging between seven in Argentina and Nicaragua, to more than 20 in Brazil, Ecuador and Uruguay. In some cases, these committees are established as extensions of larger, pre-existing national interfaith bodies and operate as their "children's rights" bodies. Within all these national committees, members fulfill a range of roles and responsibilities, in most cases on a rotational basis.

### HOW THE GNRC IS ORGANIZED AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL



### How the GNRC is Organized at the Country Level





All committees in LAC have at the very least a national coordinator and a treasurer. However, some committees have established additional roles, for example, public relations coordinator, youth coordinator, secretary, or communications coordinator. Overall, interviewees in LAC felt that the structure of the Network was suited to their needs and adapted to the local context, although it was mentioned that more efforts should be made to extend the Network beyond the major cities.

In MENA, GNRC is present in eight countries but active in five. Lebanon and Israel exist as committees. Palestine and Jordan exist as groups, while in Sudan, Yemen, and Egypt, the GNRC is present through individual members belonging to organizations. The geopolitical reality in the Middle East makes it challenging for GNRC members to cooperate across countries, especially between those located in Israel on the one hand, and those in Lebanon, Yemen, Jordan, Palestine and Egypt, on the other.

In North America, GNRC Canada exists as a group, while GNRC USA exists as a committee. So far, a dozen organizations have expressed interest to establish a GNRC network in the United States of America.

**The assessment revealed that the informal nature of the Network is considered both a weakness and a strength.** Informal nature of the Network was considered a weaknesses, as it hampers continuity and sustainability. The Network's flexibility, however, is seen as a strength, as it makes it easier for individuals and organizations to come together and collaborate. Nevertheless, some of the respondents called for more formal structures and legal registration of national committees.

**The GNRC does not require a formal expression of commitment by its members.** However, efforts have been made in some countries, particularly in the LAC region, to formalize membership through membership agreements or other forms of signed commitments to provide greater continuity and better balance volunteerism, responsibility, and effectiveness. Interviewees mentioned that, while faith-based organizations generally feel comfortable signing an expression of commitment, some faith communities do not.

**The assessment revealed that, although most members engage in the Network on a voluntary basis, a significant number participate in the GNRC as part of their work with a particular institution or organization.** Others work full time for some GNRC committees as staff or as consultants, while others work, part time. For example, GNRC Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda are some of the committees that have hired staff members or consultants. The GNRC Secretariat has also contracted the services of consultants (including clinical psychologists, faith coordinators, program specialists, conflict resolution experts, teachers and researchers) to provide expert service on various GNRC programs.

For most interviewees, the **initial purpose of connecting** with the GNRC was an invitation to an event or project organized by GNRC members. The main entry points for many GNRC members were through the global GNRC forums; or regional meetings organized after GNRC global forums; or projects implemented by the GNRC. Other avenues for entry were through workshops and other activities organized by the other Arigatou International Initiatives: Ethics Education for Children, Prayer and Action for Children, and End Child Poverty.

Responses from all regions indicated that all the interviewees were motivated to join and remain in the Network because of its interfaith perspective and its clear focus on children and/or children's rights. The idea of a global movement with grassroots action and impact was another key motivation to join.

*I was inspired to join the GNRC as I helped coordinate its Fourth Forum. We should broaden membership of the GNRC. We should look beyond formation of peace clubs, to engaging senior religious leaders, and institutions of higher learning. It [GNRC] introduced the idea of peace journalism in Zanzibar and Tanzania. – Adult respondent, Tanzania.*

The assessment found that members engage and develop connections to the Network and to each other in a variety of ways, with significant differences within and across regions.

Opportunities to communicate, share, interact, and participate in collective action are very important in establishing a shared identity for the GNRC. All interviewees highlighted the importance of providing regular and systematic opportunities for face-to-face or online engagement at national, regional and global levels, such as regular meetings of national committees, regional meetings and global forums.

**Overall, relationships between members are strong and based on mutual trust and respect.** Interviewees in LAC felt that national committees were useful in facilitating connections between members, as well as distributing leadership and responsibilities. Most interviewees said that they could rely on each other to fulfill their shared purpose.

*Responsibilities were shared. This team in the Dominican Republic is a good team, made up of brothers and sisters, we love each other. Each person contributes with something. One is creative, one is good at following up, one is the spiritual one, another one is good at public relations. Each one contributes their grain of sand. – Adult respondent, Dominican Republic.*

**The way members engage with one another and develop connections to the GNRC reflects their appreciation of what flows through the Network.** They described it variously as:

"A stream of love and sense of connectedness," "ideas and inspiration," "shared deep concern about situations affecting children," and a "strong commitment and energy to create a better world for children." Some interviewees mentioned that they feel "spirituality" flowing through the Network, which has manifested in the way they have developed connections and learned to relate to themselves, to others, and to God or the Transcendent.

Finally, interviewees also mentioned that the Network allows for the sharing and transmission of programs and activities that impact the lives of children and families, as well as financial and technical resources, tools, information, and best or promising practices and models.

The children's survey revealed that more than 67.4% of children participated in some kind of children's or youth group, or Ethics Education group (29.1%). Children participated in a variety of activities organized by the GNRC, ranging from workshops, conferences, seminars and events, to campaigns for the prevention of violence against children, radio and TV programs. However, very few

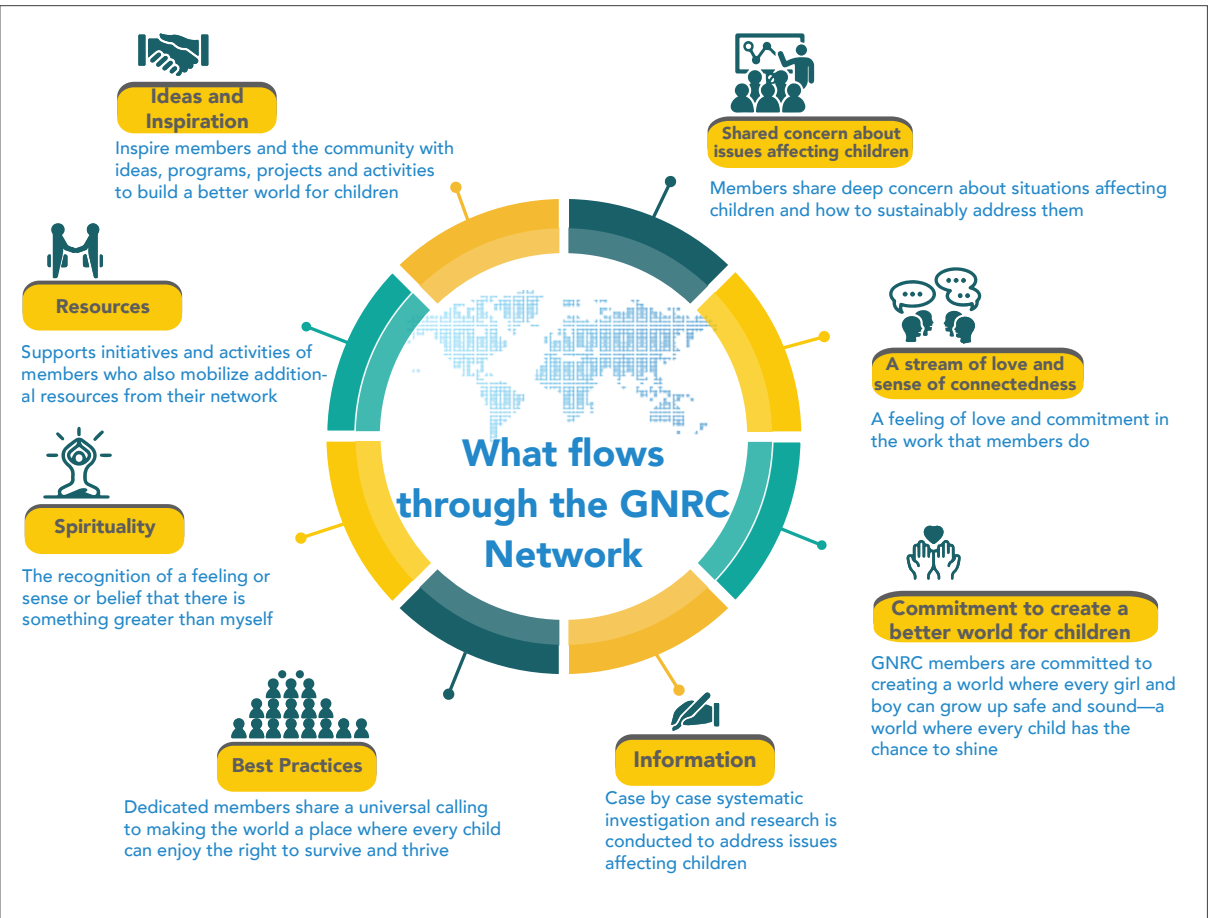
*"...Indeed, the work of the GNRC speaks volumes about what can be done by religions and faith-based organizations in efforts to create a society where children are valued, respected and happy. A society where children can be given the opportunity to grow to their fullest potential and become good and productive citizens..."*

*H.E. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania:  
Official Opening Address, GNRC Fourth Forum, 2012.*



are part of a national committee or engage in decision-making processes. Adult GNRC members also acknowledged the limited role they give children. However, some promising practices of child-led engagement exist and should be better documented, shared and replicated.

Most adult interviewees and online survey respondents keep contact with other GNRC members within their country or region, but not with members in other regions, mainly because of language barriers but also because of limited opportunities for such cross-regional engagements. Similarly, almost all surveyed children keep contact with other children in their countries (94.2%), but only half the children connect with children from other countries, either within their region or across regions.



### Recommendations on GNRC Network and Connectivity

The GNRC is a very open and flexible network. The diverse multi-religious and multi-cultural composition of the GNRC represents its members' shared purpose of providing a space and platform for interfaith collaboration for the rights and well-being of children.

Efforts should be made to ensure all key stakeholders are included as full members (if faith-inspired), or as GNRC friends, and to address challenges of diversity, inclusion and equity more intentionally.

The GNRC should encourage more responsive, stronger, accountable and better networking mechanisms at global, regional, national and local levels. The Network should explicitly include different categories of members, especially children and religious leaders, and enhance participation across all regions.

The following specific recommendations in the area of GNRC Network and Connectivity emerged from the assessment.

- Review and revise the GNRC guidelines with a defined membership model and criteria, and clear and formalized processes for reviewing and admitting members.**
  - Focus on membership quality rather than quantity and prioritize organizational membership over individual membership.
  - Include children as potential members in the Guidelines for the GNRC Network Coordinators and Contact Persons.
  - Consider different tiers of membership to accommodate and integrate a range of roles and responsibilities for different types of members (religious leaders, children, youth and others).
  - Encourage the formalization of membership (where possible) and/or other mechanisms to encourage continuity, quality and professionalism.
  - Develop TORs for the roles of coordinator, contact person and treasurer.
- Encourage the creation of National Interfaith Committees for Children in all countries and regions, as the preferred structure for the GNRC at the national level. These structures facilitate representation and integration of diverse voices, and create a space for encountering and bonding among members of different cultural and religious backgrounds.**
- Expand geographical presence and reach to other countries and within countries (going beyond the capital cities).**
- Strengthen the interfaith composition of the Network, reaching out to underrepresented faith and spiritual communities, and ensure gender balance in all regions. In particular:**
  - Increase representation of indigenous communities in LAC, Africa and Asia.
  - Increase representation of Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish and Muslim communities in Africa and Europe.
  - Include groups of children that are currently left out (in particular, children with disabilities, younger children and children who live in remote areas with limited internet access).
  - Achieve greater gender balance.
- Strengthen membership engagement within and across regions, through:**
  - The creation of the position of regional coordinator in all regions.
  - The development of multi-country or regional projects and initiatives.
  - The creation of more opportunities for members to travel and learn from other members and committees.
  - Increase networking opportunities within and across regions.
- Engage children in more meaningful ways and ensure more representative participation of children in the Network, including in governance and decision-making processes. This could be done by:**
  - Mainstreaming child participation, but also developing specialized child participation strategies and programs.
  - Developing a child-participation strategy for Arigatou International as a whole.



## GNRC NETWORK “Health” and Capacity

In this section, we assessed the competencies and attributes that the GNRC possesses for sustaining the enthusiasm, commitment, and participation of its members; and for promoting their ability to work together as a network to achieve their shared goals.

We looked at three sub-dimensions:

- **Shared purpose:** Members’ common interest and commitment to collective action, and the Network’s capacity for joint value creation;
- **Resources:** The resources the GNRC has or needs to sustain itself, and to ensure the Network’s functionality; and
- **Infrastructure:** The internal systems, structures and processes that support the Network’s functionality, including the GNRC Secretariat, which has been at Arigatou International – Nairobi since 2012.

### Shared Purpose

Overall, the assessment revealed that members share a common interest in and commitment to promoting and upholding the rights and well-being of children through interfaith collaboration. This is the GNRC’s visionary and collective goal, around which specific objectives are set, strategies are defined, people are mobilized, and activities are implemented and harmonized<sup>4</sup>.

The assessment team noted that the visionary goal of the GNRC is loosely described on the GNRC website, under “Our Invitation”:

Children who know they are safe, treasured, and loved change the world. They grow up to be compassionate adults, vibrant people who bring the gift of peace to everything they touch—their families, their communities, their nations, the globe. If we but care for the hearts of the children of today, a future of world peace is not far away. This is the vision of the Global Network of Religions for Children, and we invite you to join us on this journey to a planet of peace where we all rejoice in the glory of life<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Collective Mind. *Definition of Shared Purpose*. Retrieved from <https://www.collectivemindglobal.org/what-are-networks>

<sup>5</sup> Global Network of Religions for Children, (2015). *Our Invitation, Our Mission*. Retrieved from <https://gnrc.net/en/the-network/our-invitation-our-mission>



It is also implicitly mentioned in the Guidelines for the GNRC Network Coordinators and Contact Persons,<sup>6</sup> where 1.1 states:

The Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) is an inter-religious network of people, associations or organizations involved in working for children's rights and the well-being of children at local, national, sub-regional, regional and global levels, which promotes cooperation among its members, as well as with other interested parties, to achieve the aims described in section 1.2.

The Guidelines then list the five aims of the GNRC and its members, which are:

- To call members and others to make uniquely faith-based contributions to the creation of a better environment for children through engaging in prayer, mutual enlightenment, dialogue and cooperation among people of different faiths, including children, at the local, national, regional and global levels.
- To take concrete action with and for children through interfaith cooperation, and to engage adults and children in inter-religious dialogue for creating a better environment for children in a diverse and globalizing world.
- To encourage members and others to build a global movement for children in order to promote significant changes in the environment facing children, working in cooperation with international organizations, academics, the business community and people of all walks of life around the world.
- To promote children's rights in their entirety as defined by official documents including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- To assist members and others in their work, with and for children, to build a peaceful world of human dignity, where children can grow up in sound physical, psychological, and spiritual health.

The survey revealed that most interviewees and survey respondents believe that all members of the GNRC in their countries and regions share the same purpose and broad vision, despite the very diverse composition of the GNRC membership and the great variety of concrete work members do. In LAC, a few members highlighted that they had to work hard to build that shared vision, as initially it was not clear and people came to the Network with different aims and for different reasons.

In all regions, the great majority agreed (or strongly agreed) that members of the GNRC added value to each other's work, and that each member's participation furthered the Network's goal of achieving a better world for children—a world in which children's rights are guaranteed and upheld. This speaks to the Network's capacity for joint value creation.

In Asia, a few respondents added that there is need to continue cultivating that common purpose, because the shared purpose is something that needs constant nurturing. In some regions, some interviewees said that what pulls members together are the common challenges faced by children across countries and regions.

<sup>6</sup> Global Network of Religions for Children. (2021). *Guidelines for Network Coordinators and Contact Persons*. Retrieved from <https://gnrc.net/en/knowledge-center/documents/document/1198-guidelines-for-the-gnrc-network-coordinators-and-contact-persons>

*In the Middle East, I feel we share a common vision. We face the same problems and obstacles, for example violence against children. We also share the same traditions and culture; thus I can say we share the same vision. – Adult respondent, Jordan.*

Many mentioned the challenges that children face in all regions of the world cannot be addressed by individuals, organizations or faith communities on their own; therefore, it is necessary for faith communities and faith-based organizations to engage in interfaith dialogue and collaboration.

In this sense, **most members acknowledge the unique value added by the network model**—a model that goes beyond the “sum of the parts” to achieve greater impact. Across regions, almost all members agree or strongly agree that they are achieving more together than they would alone.

In Europe, most interviewees noted that while they may not share the same exact vision, they all share the same goals, such as “ending child poverty” or “preventing violence against children,” and they work together to achieve specific objectives (Romania) or implement common projects (Croatia).

The great majority of interviewees and survey respondents (between 90% and 100%) affirmed that the network plans in their countries reflect GNRC's global goals and priorities. Additionally, in Africa, the majority feel that it is these common objectives in their work that have allowed them to achieve a common vision.

Some interviewees said that GNRC members could benefit from collectively developing a theory of change, that would help the Network and its members better understand what pathways of change exist to achieve the visionary goal they set as their shared purpose. Finally, some staff members believe that a GNRC strategic plan would be very useful to achieving the Network's shared purpose.

The assessment revealed that **the GNRC's shared purpose has evolved over time**. The GNRC forums, especially the 5<sup>th</sup> Forum held in Panama, have given the Network more focus and strategic direction through the adoption of the forums' declarations. As a result, more members have committed more firmly to the GNRC's goals, and these in turn have become value propositions for them. Consequently, greater results have been achieved.

*The forums are opportunities to get current direction, current thoughts; focus on issues that matter, such as poverty or violence against children. They also serve as service audits. – Religious leader, Asia.*

*“I am convinced that this important forum, which has gathered outstanding leaders from different religions in various parts of the world, will truly contribute concretely to the betterment of our society and humanity. In a world often filled with despair and injustice, we share a common hope and desire to work together to bring about reconciliation, justice and peace. ...”*

*Rev. Dr. Ofelia Ortega,  
President for the Caribbean/Latin America,  
World Council of Churches, 2012.*



All interviewees and survey respondents from all regions rated the **GNRC forums** (and their experience at the forums) highly. They considered them to be unique opportunities to connect and share practices with other members from around the world. The multi-stakeholder and interfaith nature of the forums was also highly appreciated by members, as were the interfaith prayers, which some described as “uniquely transformative experiences” and the children’s participation, which was described as “very genuine” and “highly inspirational.” Interviewees however, highlighted the need to ensure more space for regional and cross-regional sharing and learning, and to strengthen follow-up on commitments made at the forums.

**Most interviewees and survey respondents rated their experience in the GNRC variously as good, very good or excellent, and many affirmed that it had improved over time.** In Africa and in Asia, interviewees stated that their experience in the GNRC has changed for the better, as it has created opportunities for them to develop new partnerships and programs; strengthened their leadership skills and protection of children’s rights; and increased children’s engagement and empowerment. In these two regions, most felt that the Network had done very well, especially nationally, but that there was room for improvement globally, but more particularly, at the regional level. In Europe, respondents noted that their experience with the GNRC had been very good, especially at the country level, due to the spirit of collaboration among members.

When asked about the **added value of the GNRC**, Arigatou International staff and directors, and most respondents across all regions highlighted that it is the only interfaith platform that brings people of different backgrounds and beliefs together to focus exclusively on children, especially children’s rights.

*We don’t only speak about children’s well-being. We speak about children’s rights, in line with CRC [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child] standards and principles. – Arigatou International Director.*

In the MENA and Africa regions, most interviewees pointed out that the major benefit of the GNRC is at the grassroots level, especially for children, as the Network provides a unique platform for children to exchange ideas and experiences, and voice their issues. This was also highlighted by interviewees in Europe and Asia, who mentioned that the GNRC empowers and enables children to connect globally and share experiences from diverse countries (Bhutan), and appreciate diversity (Nepal). Directors also noted the GNRC’s added value in empowering grassroots movements given that it is a global network strongly rooted at the local level. Similar affirmations were made by interviewees in Kenya.

In LAC, several members mentioned the GNRC’s unique approach of combining prayer and action to ensure that reflection and dialogue always translate into concrete action. In Asia and Africa, particularly in India, Pakistan and Kenya, the inclusion of the faith-based and interfaith approach to children’s rights work was considered one of the main added values of the GNRC.

*The added value is faith, the interfaith approach, and the grassroots focus. – Religious leader, Kenya.*

When asked, “**what keeps you engaged after so many years,**” interviewees across the regions answered the following:

- The mission of the GNRC: interfaith cooperation for the rights and well-being of children
- A sense of responsibility and commitment to the cause
- Hope and desire to contribute to a better world for children
- The people that belong to the Network

To contribute to achieving its shared goals, the GNRC undertakes a wide range of functions and activities. The ones that emerged most strongly from the assessment are: advocacy and influencing; capacity building to make the members and the Network itself more effective in the work they do; information sharing; knowledge generation; service delivery coordination; community and peace-building; and development of thought leadership in the fields of interfaith cooperation for children’s rights.

Through these collective actions, within and across regions, the GNRC is creating value that is more than the sum of the parts.

## Resources

Overall, the assessment revealed that the GNRC has good levels of the human resources needed to sustain the Network, ensure its functionality, and advance its goals, but that a lot more financial resources were needed to achieve greater impact at the regional and grassroots levels.

When asked what **kinds of resources** the GNRC members receive from Arigatou International to sustain itself, interviewees mentioned the following:

- Financial contributions (seed funding for activities and projects);
- Technical resources, such as guides, manuals and toolkits, videos, tools and technical advice; and
- Opportunities and invitations to participate in events, including the GNRC global forums, workshops and conferences.

Additionally, in LAC, most interviewees specifically mentioned the regional coordinator, who is a GNRC Secretariat staff person, as an important resource, as she provides the national committees and members with guidance, support and advice.

It should be noted that most interviewees acknowledged that **members are the most important resource both for the Network and for advancing Arigatou International’s work as a whole.** In the 20 years since the GNRC was established, members have contributed immensely to the achievements of the Network’s goals. The assessment revealed that member contributions range from direct financial resources to in-kind contributions of time, skills, expertise and additional staff support. In fact, in all regions, GNRC members volunteer significant amounts of their time to build the Network, and to implement programs and projects contributing to the Network’s goals, or to the broader mission of Arigatou International. Members participate in the Network as part of their duties in the organizations they work for, or give additional volunteer time personally, or in the context of their faith or spiritual communities.

Likewise, Arigatou International offices provide various kinds of resources to GNRC members, including: technical support and assistance in various thematic areas such as child participation and safeguarding; seed funding for Network activities; capacity development opportunities; access to partnerships and collaborations; and opportunities to amplify their voices.



In line with this, directors and staff of other Arigatou International offices stated that the main “resources” they receive from the GNRC and its members are:

- Financial or in-kind resources to implement their projects and initiatives, including the cost of accommodation, transportation, logistics for workshops and other activities;
- Members’ time, energy, enthusiasm and commitment to implement activities at the country level; and
- The access members provide to the grassroots and to the faith communities at the local level.

Most children interviewed as part of the assessment found that GNRC resources are child-friendly and useful, and that activities are implemented in a way that is easy to understand, fun and engaging. However, some children (especially in DR Congo and India) mentioned some language barriers and highlighted the importance of translating all materials and resources into their local languages.

Arigatou International headquarters supports the GNRC Secretariat with the financial resources needed to operate the GNRC Secretariat, which has six full-time and one part-time staff, based in Nairobi, Kenya and Panama City, Panama. Moreover, every year, Arigatou International allocates additional financial resources to provide GNRC committees and members with seed funding to leverage the Network’s functions across regions, and to support network building and strengthening. This is done through a process of annual budget plan applications that are submitted by GNRC coordinators or contact persons.

Other Arigatou International offices also allocate some limited financial resources for GNRC committees and members to implement specific activities and projects related to the initiatives they lead, namely: Prayer and Action for Children, Ethics Education for Children, and End Child Poverty. These funds complement the seed funding provided by the Secretariat, which is of critical importance in “keeping the Network alive.”

Most GNRC members would like to have the financial resources increased to meet the growing needs of their networks and communities. Some recalled that funding for their countries had reduced significantly in recent years. This occurred because the number of countries where the GNRC is active has increased while the overall global and regional budgets have remained the same.

In LAC, some respondents pointed out that not all countries have the same costs or the same size. Some countries in the region, like Chile and Panama, have high costs of living while others are very large, like Brazil; therefore, they said, the funding allocation criteria should take these differences into account.

Overall, **resource mobilization** for the GNRC is done in various ways, including:

- Directly through the GNRC Secretariat, which mobilizes, receives and manages funds;
- By GNRC members to support GNRC programs and activities in countries/regions;
- By Arigatou International Initiatives of Ethics Education for Children, Prayer and Action for Children and End Child Poverty, individually or jointly;
- The GNRC Secretariat assisting GNRC members to access funding, in which case the members themselves are in charge of managing these funds; and
- In-kind support where GNRC members themselves contribute to Network activities.

GNRC Secretariat staff are involved in mobilizing additional resources for individual GNRC member organizations or GNRC committees for projects and programs that contribute to the GNRC objectives. The assessment revealed that, over the years, concrete projects have been designed and implemented through this model of resource mobilization. In Africa, GNRC Kenya, GNRC Tanzania and GNRC Uganda were the main beneficiaries of resource mobilization accomplished by the GNRC Secretariat. In Europe, GNRC Bosnia and Herzegovina and GNRC Serbia were the main beneficiaries, while in Asia, GNRC India and GNRC Philippines benefited from GNRC Secretariat efforts to mobilize resources. In LAC, efforts are underway to mobilize resources for several multi-country projects and regional initiatives.

In terms of **resource mobilization capacity**, although several GNRC members have successfully raised additional resources for their networks/committees, overall, resource mobilization remains limited. The assessment found that financial resource mobilization is easier and more effective in countries where Arigatou International has a presence as a legally registered entity. Therefore, for some regions, such as LAC and Asia, it is very difficult to mobilize resources, as Arigatou International does not have offices there and the GNRC committees in these regions do not have legal status. In LAC, several interviewees recommended setting up and register regional office with resource mobilization experts to support the work of the national committees.

Another obstacle that was mentioned by some interviewees is the fact that the GNRC is an initiative convened and led by an international organization, and a network with a global reach. This limits the possibilities for fundraising at the local level.

However, GNRC Argentina, GNRC Bhutan, GNRC Bosnia and Herzegovina, GNRC El Salvador, GNRC India, GNRC Kenya, GNRC Malaysia, GNRC Montenegro, GNRC Romania, GNRC Serbia, GNRC South Africa, GNRC Sri Lanka, GNRC Tanzania, GNRC Uganda, among others, have been able to utilize seed funds from Arigatou International to leverage more funding from a range of donors and partners. Similarly, GNRC USA has started mobilizing resources and hired the services of a contact person to build the national committee.

The assessment revealed numerous programs, projects and initiatives specifically designed, resourced and implemented by GNRC members around the world. Most are multi-year and country-based. However, there is a trend toward focusing on larger projects and prioritizing those that are regional or multi-country.

Examples of successful programs are, among others:

GNRC Kenya: Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism (BRAVE), Family Resilience Against Violent Extremism, Deep Dialogue, Dialogue Days and Communications for Peace programs.

GNRC Uganda and the Goldin Institute helped establish Youth Leaders for Restoration and Development (YOLRED), an organization run by former child soldiers. YOLRED then started various programs, including Music Therapy to heal trauma experienced by the former child soldiers, income generating activities, a scholarship, and internship programs helping former child combatants to access job opportunities and means of livelihoods.

Additionally, there are a number of multi-year, multi-country programs implemented in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Europe. These include Community Resilience Against Violent Extremism (CRAVE) in Eastern Africa, and the Alliance for Protection of Children in Honduras, El



Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico, which works to prevent the recruitment of children into gang violence and organized crime.

Some of the partners that have supported the work of the GNRC with project funding include the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (with funding from the Government of Japan); United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID); European Union (EU), Norwegian Church Aid (NCA); Finn Church Aid (FCA); Interfaith Alliance for Safer Communities (IAFSC); the Goldin Institute; the Network of Religious and Traditional Peacemakers (N RTP); the Islamic Foundation Kenya; the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF); Naweza Sustainable Development Solutions; Plan International; World Vision International; and the governments of Canada, Kenya, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates and the United States of

America. Many more organizations and governments have supported the work of the GNRC at the national levels where GNRC members are active.

The survey revealed, however, that **GNRC programs, projects and activities are generally under-resourced and under-funded**. Most members called for significant additional human and financial resources to meet the set objectives. In fact, at times it is the limited staff of the GNRC Secretariat that is charged with implementing project activities, which in turn reduces the time that the Secretariat can dedicate to network facilitation, coordination and management. In LAC, some interviewees highlighted the need for more financial resources to build and strengthen the national committees, including resources to support the work of the GNRC coordinator.

Across all regions, interviewees believed that **GNRC members had the human skills and competencies needed to achieve the Network's goals**. Most thought they also had the basic technical knowledge and capacities required to advance the mission of the Network.

Directors and staff think there are some specific areas that need to be strengthened, as the Network is mostly run by volunteers who are not necessarily experts in the field of children's rights and interfaith collaboration.

Of the skills and technical capacities that need strengthening, the following were highlighted: human rights/child-rights-based approaches; theological foundations of the main religions; pedagogical methodologies; advocacy and influencing; English language; ICT; program cycle management (especially monitoring, evaluation and reporting); resource mobilization; partnership building; religious literacy; specific technical and thematic areas related to violence against children (such as therapeutic treatment of victims of child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA), and child safeguarding); and child poverty.

The assessment revealed that Arigatou International provides spaces and opportunities for capacity development and strengthening such as workshops, training and regional meetings. However, it also showed a need to increase opportunities to address other thematic areas of interest. Moreover, in LAC some opportunities for capacity development are offered more frequently in English than in Spanish.

In all regions, interviewees highlighted the importance of providing more opportunities for capacity development as well as for the sharing of experiences and knowledge among members, within and across regions.

## Infrastructure

Under Infrastructure, the assessment looked at the structural design of Arigatou International in relation to the GNRC, as well as the internal systems, structures and processes that support GNRC's core operations, specifically: network leadership, member engagement and project management; and the operational systems that support the networking functions, particularly in the area of communications. Attention was placed on the Secretariat.

## Arigatou International Structural Design

The GNRC, launched in the year 2000, is one of the four global initiatives of Arigatou International. The other three initiatives are Ethics Education for Children, Prayer and Action for Children, and the



Entities Supporting the GNRC



Interfaith Initiative to End Child Poverty, launched in 2004, 2008, and 2012, respectively.

The **GNRC** is a global-scale interfaith network of organizations and individuals specifically dedicated to securing the rights and well-being of children everywhere. GNRC members come from all of the world's major religions and many other spiritual traditions. The GNRC is committed to making the world a place where every child can enjoy not only the right to survive, but also to thrive, making positive contributions of his or her own to a world of peace and dignity for all.

**Ethics Education for Children** promotes values-based education for children, supporting the right to education set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and seeking to contribute to children's holistic development. Ethics Education for Children utilizes a transformative approach to interfaith and intercultural learning, which affirms the dignity of all children, ensures their meaningful participation, and empowers them to become agents of positive change who can help build just, peaceful societies.

**Prayer and Action for Children** convenes diverse religious leaders and faith communities to promote interfaith cooperation and advocacy for policy changes that benefit children, to advocate for their rights and to influence positive social and behavioral change to end violence against children. Children are included in activities whenever possible to ensure their voices are heard. Guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Prayer and Action also facilitates the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children on November 20, Universal Children's Day.

The **Interfaith Initiative to End Child Poverty** mobilizes faith communities and faith-inspired resources to help build a world free of child poverty. It addresses the root causes of poverty in the human heart, and the structural causes of poverty in society. This is accomplished by promoting theological reflection and action, advocacy and knowledge-sharing, and community-driven initiatives at grassroots and global levels to assist children in poverty. End Child Poverty invites all people of faith and good will to work together to end child poverty worldwide.

The figure below depicts the **basic architecture of Arigatou International** and indicates a relationship of equals between initiatives.

In LAC, however, some confuse Arigatou International and the GNRC, and sometimes GNRC members have presented themselves as "Arigatou International." Moreover, several interviewees highlighted the limited communication and collaboration between Arigatou International offices, which appear to be four separate organizations, instead of one.

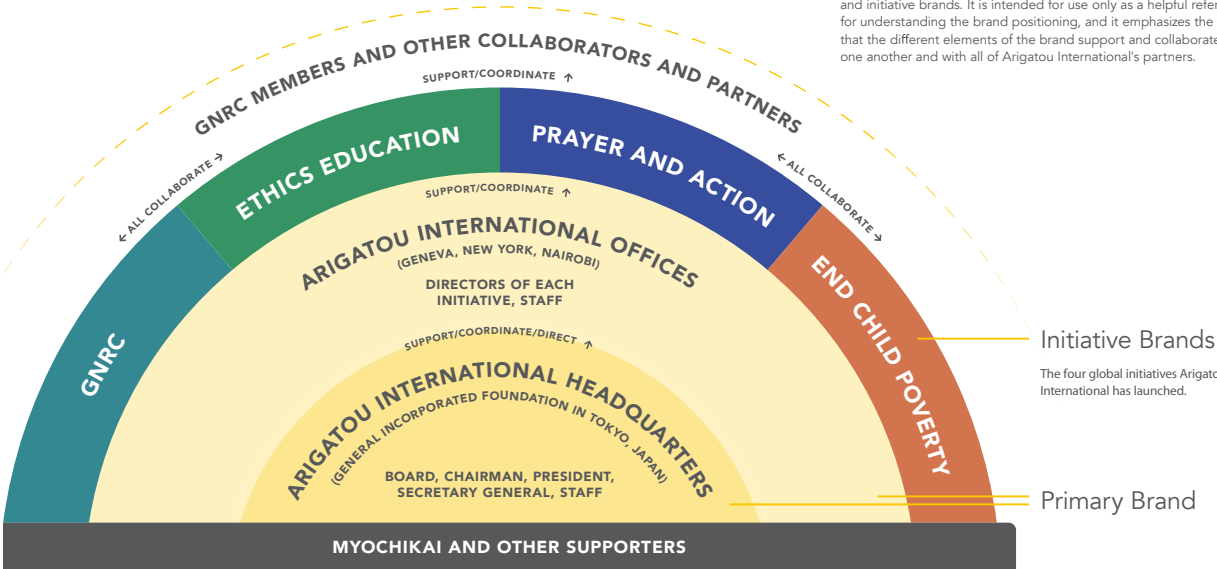
*Now that it has been divided into initiatives, I find it very segmented. We are promoting wholeness and it has become segmented and departmentalized. There is something that needs to be done to see it as one organization. – Adult respondent, Perú.*

Although GNRC members have made enormous contributions to the implementation of the other three Arigatou International Initiatives, some believe that the GNRC should be seen as much more than an "implementer" of the Arigatou International Initiatives. Instead, the Network should be seen as an equal partner, and members should be invited to participate in the creation and development of initiatives and programs. In other words, several interviewees, especially in the LAC region, called for a more equal relationship between the GNRC and other Arigatou International Initiatives.

*We have the four initiatives. GNRC is the fulcrum that lifts all the other initiatives. It is GNRC that implements all the other initiatives. – Adult respondent, Nepal.*

### Arigatou Brand Architecture

This figure depicts the basic architecture of the Arigatou International brand, indicating the relationships among the primary and initiative brands. It is intended for use only as a helpful reference for understanding the brand positioning, and it emphasizes the way that the different elements of the brand support and collaborate with one another and with all of Arigatou International's partners.



Staff members of the other initiatives called for more frequent interaction and collaboration, especially on strategic matters. They also asked for more opportunities for them to contribute to building the Network. This, they said, would strengthen synergies among offices.

Overall, the majority of those that maintain communication with other Arigatou International Initiatives say they are satisfied with the interactions, because they have always been based on mutual respect and understanding. Additionally, the assessment revealed that the collaboration and work with the other Arigatou International Initiatives has had positive effects on membership engagement; has helped strengthen connection among members; and has furthered the achievement of GNRC goals. The initiatives support GNRC members and committees in various ways, including with resources and funding.

Directors were quite satisfied with the level of collaboration and synergy among the four initiatives. They were of the opinion that communication between offices had increased and improved during the COVID-19 pandemic, which had led to the offices working more closely together.

### GNRC's Structural Design and Infrastructure

The **GNRC is managed and coordinated by the GNRC Secretariat**. The Secretariat supports the GNRC's core operations. It manages most of the Network's functions. These include:

- Promoting cooperation and coordination among GNRC members
- Assisting members who wish to form regional and national GNRC Committees, or seeking to build platforms for ongoing dialogue, exchange and inspiration
- Strengthening GNRC members' implementation capacity, providing them with technical assistance on programs, projects and activities as well as monitoring and evaluation



- Resource mobilization
- Managing resources, administration and finances for the Network
- Facilitating functions such as advocacy, information sharing, knowledge generation, service delivery and project management
- Enrolling and inducing new members into the GNRC
- Coordinating the planning and organization of the GNRC forums. (Following its relocation to Nairobi, the GNRC Secretariat coordinated the planning and organization of the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum held in Panama City, Panama)

The GNRC Secretariat is staffed by the GNRC Secretary General, the GNRC Programs and Network Coordinator, the GNRC Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the GNRC Communications Officer. Arigatou International–Nairobi employs an Executive Secretary, Finance and Accounts Officer and a part-time Administrative Assistant, who also help with administrative and financial components of the Network. The staff members are located in Nairobi, Kenya, and Panama City, Panama. When and where required, additional staff and interns are hired to support implementation of the GNRC projects and activities.

The GNRC Secretariat's capacity is augmented by full-time or part-time staff, consultants, and coordinators that help build the Network in specific countries. They also manage implementation of GNRC programs. For example, GNRC Tanzania (with three to seven full-time staff members); Uganda (with one to three full-time staff members and one part-time member); Kenya (ranging from one to eight full-time staff members at different times, and about 15 to 30 consultants) help with implementation of programs supported by resources mobilized by the GNRC Secretariat or its members.

The GNRC Secretary General oversees the development of the GNRC, and contributes to the mobilization of resources as well as representing the Network in various forums. The GNRC Programs and Network Coordinator, and the Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean manage membership engagement; build partnerships; coordinate implementation of programs, projects and activities with the GNRC contact persons and coordinators at various levels; strengthen the GNRC committees (where they exist); engage in resource mobilization; and represent the Network at various conferences, forums and seminars.

The GNRC Secretariat was first established in Tokyo, Japan in 2000 during the inauguration of the GNRC. In June 2013, the Secretariat was relocated to Nairobi, Kenya, and the Arigatou International–Nairobi office was established.

The assessment found that most interviewees across all regions expressed full satisfaction with the GNRC design and infrastructure, and affirmed that it met the Network's needs and priorities. The Arigatou International staff and directors stated that the GNRC infrastructure is appropriate.

In LAC, many interviewees highlighted that the national committees are very important as they are the "engine" of the Network.

*The committee provides order, gives the GNRC the character, and a sense of belonging. The committee safeguards international commitments, the Panama commitments, the days that we commemorate. The national committee is the heart and brain of this network. – Religious leader, Uruguay.*

In LAC, however, some believe the infrastructure should be reviewed and adapted to the new context. A few think more energy should be spent on the "people" (the individuals) rather than on the "institutions and organizations," due to a rise in institutional crises and the growth of social movements globally. Therefore, the GNRC could be redefined as a movement rather than a network of organizations. Others suggest adding a sub-regional level between the national committees and the regional coordinator.

Many highlighted that, where possible, the same design should be replicated in all regions, for example, national committees and regional coordinators in all regions. Between 2001 and 2012, regional coordinators existed in all regions. Today, only the LAC region has a coordinator.

With the GNRC's structural transformation in 2012, membership in the GNRC Arab States declined. The region was restructured into GNRC Middle East and North Africa, and new members were recruited. GNRC members in Europe also declined, before strengthening again and being expanded to bring new members on board, with new national networks. However, membership still remains relatively low.

Efforts to have GNRC cover more ground in Africa have been challenged by the vastness of the continent, comprising 54 countries. GNRC was weakest in the Francophone countries, where more efforts are needed to build and strengthen membership. Members requested that a strategy to strengthen their networks and link them to the rest of the continent be developed. GNRC networks were strongest where concrete grassroots programs were implemented, especially in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and South Africa.

In Asia, GNRC networks are strongest in South and Southeast Asian countries. The region has undergone various transformations since the GNRC was established. GNRC Central Asia, initially with members from Azerbaijan and others, was discontinued. A member exists in Afghanistan, but due to a variety of challenges, has been unable to form a network.

The assessment revealed that **many interviewees and respondents, across all regions, desire a regional coordinator**. In Pakistan, for example, some mentioned that a regional coordinator could help raise the visibility of the Network at the regional level.

In LAC, the only region where a GNRC regional coordinator currently exists, all interviewees, except one, believed that **the role of the regional coordinator is very important, even critical, for effective functioning of the Network**. Reasons for this include:

- It allows for greater contact and interaction between countries and, therefore encourages and facilitates dialogue and sharing within the region
- It provides technical advice and support to the national committees to respond to concerns and solve conflicts
- It keeps the focus on the agenda and goals and ensures compliance with guidelines, regulations and policies
- It finds ways to adapt the global priorities to the regional context, and implements the Arigatou International mandate, with sensitivity to the idiosyncrasies and the culture of the region
- It plays an important leadership role and keeps the Network dynamic and alive



- It makes the region visible at the global level. It is the bridge between the GNRC in the region and other Arigatou International Initiatives
- It ensures that information reaches the country-level and helps bridge the communication gap

Some members in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as Asia and Africa, however, stated that there is no need for regional coordination, as country coordinators are enough and better understand the local contexts.

*No, since most of the work is being implemented at the grassroots, coordinated by country coordinators and the GNRC Secretariat. – Adult respondent, Kenya.*

One issue that was raised is how to bring the global infrastructure (especially the Secretariat) closer to the people on the ground. Some members feel that the GNRC Secretariat is distant from the members. Some shared about a need for more bottom-up approaches. Others cited the need for more space for members at the grassroots levels to participate in decision-making processes, and to contribute to the building of the global network, beyond the limited opportunities provided through the global forums.

To support the GNRC’s operations, the Secretariat has developed several project/program management tools and procedures, including the budget plan application process and the narrative and financial reporting tools and procedures. The majority of interviewees, across all regions, are satisfied with these tools and procedures, and appreciate that they are simple, clear and practical.

In Africa and MENA, however, some mentioned the need to have the forms and templates translated into the local languages, since not every member is fluent in English. A few also thought the tools are time-consuming. In Asia, MENA and LAC, some interviewees stated that reporting tools and procedures should be standardized across all Initiatives, to avoid confusion and duplication of efforts. They called for Arigatou International to have one standard reporting procedure.

Most online survey respondents believe that the GNRC has mechanisms in place to promote accountability among members. However, some believe that **tools to measure the Network’s efficiency, effectiveness and impact are still lacking.**

**Operational Systems – Communication**

Effective communication by and within the Network is a continuous process and eventually contributes to its shared purpose and objectives. **The GNRC utilizes different ways to communicate its messages internally** to its members and externally to partners and other stakeholders. These include reports (quarterly and annual); electronic newsletters; resource guides; social media (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn); email; the website; press releases; presentations; branded materials; videos and photographs; and broadcast media. The aim is to share new information about grassroots engagements, advocacy, updates from the Network, and engagements with other Arigatou International Initiatives.

The **Arigatou International websites** are a good source of information and inspiration. However due to internet challenges and/or lack of time, some members are not able to access them. The GNRC has been made visible and accessible on **social media**. However, many interviewees believe more efforts should be made to increase the numbers of followers of some accounts, in particular Instagram.

Moreover, most interviewees highlighted that they would like the global GNRC social media accounts to better highlight and showcase the activities carried out by GNRC committees and members at the local levels.

All national committees have at least one social media platform where they post GNRC activities. However, some members require training and guidance on how to use social media and on other communication-related issues such as consent in the use of photos and other personal information.

All interviewed directors and staff believe that social media engagement is very important. Similarly, more than half of the surveyed children follow Arigatou and the GNRC (especially their local GNRC groups) on social media.

**Connections among adult members** are maintained via social media, WhatsApp, emails, and face-to-face or online meetings. The GNRC Secretariat has established a regional WhatsApp group in each region to maintain communication with (and among) coordinators and contact persons. These WhatsApp groups are administered by the GNRC Secretariat staff. Some countries, including Kenya, Romania, and Serbia, and all committees in LAC, have their own GNRC country WhatsApp groups. Children connect and interact mostly through WhatsApp (in LAC), or face-to-face (in other regions).

With regard to **networking opportunities**, interviewees preferred face-to-face interactions, followed by virtual engagements. Many members, including children, highlighted **the need for more regional and cross-regional engagements**. Some noted they would like to have more opportunities to interact with the Secretary General of the GNRC, the President of Arigatou International and Arigatou International’s Advisory Council members, to get inspired and keep the motivation and energy of the Network high. Such opportunities could be provided through online webinars, short videos, visits to grassroots members, among others.

Across all regions, a significant number of interviewees wish to have more information on Arigatou International’s **Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct**, which also applies to all GNRC members. Among those who are familiar with it, the majority have not communicated about it with children. Several highlighted the need to organize workshops targeting all regions, to sensitize members on the policy and encourage its implementation in all activities and engagements.

From 2000 to 2020, the GNRC has gradually developed as a network from a germinal stage, to nascent, expanding, and strengthening, to maturing stages. The following table highlights the different stages of network development.

“My government is committed to participating with all governments and faith-based religious leaders and communities in the fight to end violence against children. Panama will give its best for the world.”

*H.E. Juan Carlos Varela, President, Republic of Panama:  
Official Opening Address, GNRC Fifth Forum. 2017.*



GNRC Network Development Matrix

	GNRC NETWORK AND CONNECTIVITY	GNRC NETWORK "HEALTH" AND CAPACITY		GNRC NETWORK RESULTS AND SIGNIFICANCE	
	NETWORK BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING	CAPACITY AND DEVELOPMENT	COMMUNICATION AND MEMBER OUTREACH	PROGRAMS/ PROJECTS/ ACTIVITIES	ADVOCACY
<b>Stage 1</b> Germinal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Potential member applies for GNRC membership or GNRC Secretariat initiates conversation with potential member</li><li>• Introduced to, and learns about the GNRC Network</li><li>• Any of the Arigatou International (AI) initiatives makes first contact with a potential member</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First contact with the GNRC Secretariat</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Potential member is informed about the GNRC through grassroots activities, global advocacy, online engagements</li><li>• Potential member applies for GNRC membership through the website and details are recorded by the GNRC Secretariat</li><li>• New member is connected to GNRC engagements and Coordinator</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Capacity at the individual or organizational level</li><li>• No GNRC activities as yet</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimal to no advocacy actions</li></ul>
<b>Stage 2</b> Nascent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applicant accepted as a GNRC member</li><li>• Member added to GNRC and Arigatou International database</li><li>• Forms a GNRC Group with a Contact Person/Coordinator</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Member gets acquainted with the Network, Arigatou International and its initiatives</li><li>• Member gets acquainted with children's participation and Child Safeguarding Policy &amp; Code of Conduct</li><li>• Minimal coordination between members at this point</li><li>• Implements activities in collaboration with faith communities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New GNRC members are sensitized on how to use the online tools to share their activities</li><li>• GNRC connects the members with AI, it's initiatives and their programs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Invited to GNRC forum</li><li>• Member appreciates interfaith approach to addressing children's issues</li><li>• Member works with, or implements one of the Arigatou International's initiatives' work (Ethics Education for Children, Prayer and Action for Children or End Child Poverty)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• General advocacy as local issues may demand</li></ul>
<b>Stage 3</b> Expanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• GNRC group expands, moves towards formation of a GNRC Committee</li><li>• Induction of members by the GNRC Secretariat done virtually</li><li>• GNRC actively participates in Arigatou International activities, meets new partners through the Arigatou Network</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individual members and organizations see the need to work together on identified issues around children's well-being</li><li>• Children's participation more visible</li><li>• Invites local faith leaders to attend and contribute at GNRC events</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• GNRC connects the members with Arigatou International's offices and their programs</li><li>• Members share their engagements with the Secretariat, on time, and on the online platforms</li><li>• The Secretariat documents and shares engagements achieved by GNRC members on the online platforms</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More than three members meet and form an interfaith committee, apply for support from the GNRC Secretariat</li><li>• Implements activities under one or two goals of GNRC and submits narrative reports</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partners with Arigatou International's initiatives and commemorates UN International Days relevant to AI priority areas</li></ul>

	GNRC NETWORK AND CONNECTIVITY	GNRC NETWORK "HEALTH" AND CAPACITY		GNRC NETWORK RESULTS AND SIGNIFICANCE	
	NETWORK BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING	CAPACITY AND DEVELOPMENT	COMMUNICATION AND MEMBER OUTREACH	PROGRAMS/ PROJECTS/ ACTIVITIES	ADVOCACY
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Secretariat is informed by the AI offices of their engagements</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• GNRC member or group in deeper engagements with one or two of the Arigatou International (AI) initiatives</li></ul>	
<b>Stage 4</b> Strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• GNRC members belong to a functioning Committee and a Coordinator/Contact Person is s/elected by the members</li><li>• Regular committee meetings</li><li>• GNRC members in the committee working with, and resourced by the Arigatou International Initiatives</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Senior religious leaders express interest to be part of the committee</li><li>• Importance of children's participation acknowledged by GNRC members and incorporated in planning</li><li>• Acting Coordinator engages members in advancing children's rights and protection from violence</li><li>• Faith leaders play key roles in the activities of the GNRC</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work shared on social media and other Arigatou International media platforms and GNRC subscribers receive grassroots updates such as e-newsletters</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The interfaith committee is visible, and draws more members to join, and is supported by Arigatou International</li><li>• Implements activities in more than two GNRC goals; submits narrative and financial reports; represents GNRC in national civil society engagements</li><li>• GNRC member or committee works with, implements any or all of the Arigatou International initiatives' work</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uses advocacy tools developed by the GNRC Secretariat and other AI initiatives</li><li>• Commemorates UN International Days relevant to Arigatou International priority areas</li></ul>
<b>Stage 5</b> Maturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• GNRC Committee fully functional with a dynamic Committee</li><li>• Dynamic Coordinator, establishes partnerships and regular support from partners</li><li>• Strong interfaith composition of the Committee with participation of senior religious leaders</li><li>• GNRC Committee raises funds from partners for activities and projects in the name of GNRC</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Senior religious leaders are fully involved with grassroots leaders</li><li>• Children's participation fully mainstreamed in the Committees (vibrant children's committee exists; children involved in decision making)</li><li>• Active Coordinator s/elected by the members, serves and leads other members in advocacy, network building and development</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Active engagement on the online platforms; tags GNRC in social media posts on all their activities/ programs</li><li>• Contributes to writing blogs articles related to GNRC priority areas</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regularly shares financial and narrative reports; represents GNRC in global, regional, sub-regional, national and local engagements; designs and fundraises for projects</li><li>• GNRC committee implements activities and projects identified as GNRC priority areas</li><li>• Members or committee engaged with and implement all of Arigatou International Initiatives' work</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supports development of advocacy tools relevant to issues prioritized by GNRC, in line with country context</li><li>• Uses advocacy tools developed by the GNRC Secretariat; commemorates all UN International Days observed by Arigatou International</li></ul>



## Recommendations on GNRC Network “Health” and Capacity

On the basis of the assessment findings, the following recommendations are made to support the Network’s health and strengthen its capacities.

### Shared purpose

- Create more opportunities and spaces for GNRC members to participate in envisioning the Network and its processes, as well as building and strengthening it.
- Consider developing a theory of change to identify the pathways of change to achieve the shared purpose, as well as a strategic plan.

### Resources

- Develop a flexible and comprehensive strategy to facilitate resource mobilization for the GNRC Network, taking into consideration the regional differences.
  - Consider legal registration of GNRC Committees (where necessary and possible).
  - Explore the possibility of a regional office with a resource mobilization officer for GNRC national committees in LAC.
  - Share the information resources developed by GNRC members with others facing similar challenges
- Strengthen the GNRC Secretariat with adequate human resources to meet the needs of Network members.
- Build office capacity for small anchor organizations, including office equipment to support the national networks.
- Identify and allocate more resources to develop and run the networks in Francophone-Africa and Central Asia which are considered to be the weakest (or non-existent) at the moment.
- Increase investments in longer term multi-country and regional programs such as those in some of the African countries, instead of short-term projects and activities.
- Provide more frequent opportunities for capacity building of GNRC members in all languages, through the creation of an Arigatou International e-learning campus, and prioritizing the areas that emerged from the assessment.
- Whenever possible, leverage the skills and technical expertise of GNRC members, before looking for expertise elsewhere.

### Infrastructure

- Rethink the Arigatou International architecture and infrastructure, in relation to the GNRC.
  - Encourage a more horizontal relationship and stronger connection between the Network and other initiatives, to project a more cohesive message (instead of that of four separate entities).
  - Involve Network members should be more involved in the creation and development of the Initiatives and programs, viewing the GNRC uniquely as the platform to “implement” them.
  - Develop strategies to bring Arigatou International infrastructure (its headquarters, leadership, and the GNRC Secretariat) closer to members in the various regions and countries.

- Appoint a regional coordinator for each region, and with special consideration for the MENA region’s geopolitical realities.
- Develop a standardized reporting procedure and template for all Arigatou International Initiatives.
- Develop tools to measure the Network’s efficiency and effectiveness..

## Communications

- Develop a unified communication strategy for Arigatou International.
- Review the Arigatou International Branding Guidelines.
- Provide GNRC Committees with resources for communication.
- Reduce and/or rationalize the use of five websites in the Arigatou International family
  - Update the Arigatou International websites more frequently in all languages. Consider adding the Portuguese language.
  - Develop an e-learning platform, to be included on the Arigatou International website.
  - Provide more space on the GNRC website to highlight and make visible the work of the GNRC National Committees and members. Focus more on “storytelling” of what happens in the field.
- Focus energy and resources on social media channels, particularly Instagram, YouTube and Twitter.
  - Consult regularly with children and youth to ensure social media is attractive to the younger generations.
  - Ensure information is posted in the main languages spoken by GNRC members.
  - Provide guidance for local social media accounts of GNRC Committees.
  - Bring more discussions around interfaith cooperation for the rights of children and well-being to the social media platforms
- Develop a strong dissemination and implementation strategy for the Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct, including learning modules and targeted resources. Put in place strong procedures and online systems for efficient and effective implementation.
- Provide more opportunities for regional, sub-regional and cross-regional interactions between members of the Network, to promote the sharing of experiences, learning and knowledge (face-to-face forums and meetings, country-visits and virtual interactions).

“Through divine cooperation by the GNRC, religious leaders and religious communities have a unique opportunity to build their own capacity to protect the rights and well-being of children and youth. These processes have ensured significant reach; thousands of young people now have hope and plans for the future and are able to engage their peers towards common good.”

*Sh. Ibrahim Lethome,  
Secretary General, Center for Sustainable Conflict Resolution, and  
Legal Advisor, Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims.*





## GNRC Results and Significance

“The GNRC is opening the doors and windows for the light to enter and illuminate us.”

Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate.

Under GNRC Results and Significance, the assessment sought to assess the results of the GNRC at various levels. More specifically, the assessment gauged if the GNRC was making a difference in people’s lives, especially children and members.

This section looked at three sub-dimensions:

- The Network’s reach from 2016 to 2020;
- The intermediate outcomes achieved as the Network works to reach its goals and follow-up on the Panama Commitments adopted in 2017 at the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum; and
- The nature of the Network’s impact. The lasting or significant change in children’s rights and well-being brought about by GNRC’s long term interventions in a country or region was the focus of the assessment on this theme.

### The GNRC’s Reach (2016 – 2020)

This aspect of the assessment looked at two key areas: number of adults and children reached directly at the local, national, continental/regional and global levels, and those who were reached indirectly.

The assessment discovered that content produced and disseminated by the GNRC reached a wide audience, especially through broadcast and online media, as well as directly to its members. It was difficult to obtain actual figures of all those reached since the GNRC was established in 2000. However, it is estimated that an audience of more than 54 million people was reached in the last five years (between 2016 and 2020).

Below is a table capturing the numbers at the global and regional levels for four of the regions.

REGION	Number of Faith Leaders Reached Directly	Number of Other Adults Reached Directly	Number of Children Reached Directly	Total Direct Reach	Estimated Indirect Reach
Africa	6,417	201,060	187,704	395,181	>47,539,279
Asia	599	32,511	240,033	273,143	>5,423,325
Europe	78	18,218	38,534	56,830	119,706
LAC	2,865	14,778	20,473	38,116	>840,720
MENA	252	11,072	9,610	20,934	112,050
Total	10,211	277,639	496,354	784,204	>54,035,080



## Network's Outcomes: Follow-up on the Panama Commitments (2017 – 2020)

The GNRC Panama Declaration on Ending Violence Against Children<sup>7</sup>, adopted at the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum in 2017, has shaped the strategic direction of the Network in the years since then. The GNRC's global priorities for the period 2017-2022 center around preventing and eliminating all forms of violence against children. They are:

- Protecting children from violent extremism, gang violence and organized crime
- Nurturing spirituality and ending violence in child upbringing
- Ending sexual exploitation and abuse of children
- Ending child poverty and supporting vulnerable children
- Strengthening the Global Network of Religions for Children

All GNRC Committees and members have aligned their action plans with these global priorities and are using the Panama Declaration to guide their work across the globe. Although thematic action priorities vary from country to country, according to the local context and main challenges and human rights violations children face, all local actions are contributing to implementation of the Panama Declaration and its 10 commitments, to strengthening the Network at the local, national and regional levels, and to promoting children's rights and well-being.

The main priorities of local GNRC programs, projects and events highlighted by interviewees are:

- Promoting ethical values and nurturing spirituality in children;
- Ending child poverty;
- Promoting food security and nutrition;
- Building or strengthening the Network at the grassroots level;
- Preventing and ending all forms of violence against children, with a focus on online violence and sexual violence, corporal punishment, violent extremism, gang violence and organized crime;
- Ending gender-based violence;
- Promoting child participation;
- Combatting climate change and promoting climate resilience; and
- Increasing awareness of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Other thematic areas that have been prioritized in some countries are:

- Ensuring access to education for the most marginalized children, especially girls and children on the move;
- Leadership development in young people and children;
- Improving child survival rates;
- Building capacity of religious leaders to raise their voice on issues affecting children; and
- Creating safe spaces for children.

In 2020, many GNRC members and national networks focused on protecting children's rights during the COVID-19 pandemic and promoting overall child well-being.

<sup>7</sup> Global Network of Religions for Children. (2017). The Panama Declaration on *Ending Violence Against Children*. Retrieved from <https://gnrc.net/en/knowledge-center/documents/document/1173-gnrc-fifth-forum>

All interviewees shared that working together has helped them advance the aims of the Panama Declaration. Many highlighted that working together has unfolded their creativity and increased their reach and outcomes in the lives of children. Most believe that interfaith, network-focused interventions add enormous additional value, especially in terms of creating synergies.

Overall, the assessment found three main results achieved in relation to the Panama Commitments on Ending Violence Against Children.

First, GNRC members contributed to placing the topic of violence against children higher on the agenda of religious leaders and faith communities. The work of the GNRC has increased awareness within faith communities of the different forms of violence that children experience across the world, including sexual violence and online violence, and on the role they can play in preventing and responding to these diverse forms of violence. This, in turn, has allowed for a stronger commitment by religious leaders to work together, and to speak out when violence against children does occur. It has contributed to stronger mobilization of faith communities around the elimination of violence against children. Finally, it has encouraged more faith actors to participate in national, regional and global multi-stakeholder platforms where the problem is addressed, including the Global Coalition to End Violence Against Children, and/or to support campaigns to address specific forms of violence against children.

Second, a huge achievement was noted in relation to children's participation and empowerment in the movement to end violence against children. GNRC members were able to raise children's voices against violence and promote their participation in humanitarian and development processes at the national, regional and global levels. Several interviewees mentioned an increase in children's participation in community activism and leadership, including in faith communities. This is especially important in societies where, culturally, children are traditionally expected to be "seen but not heard." This specifically contributes to Panama Commitment 1, "Listen to children with empathy and respect, welcome their wisdom and gifts, and continue to work side-by-side to address violence against them." Additionally, the assessment found that, through UN-recognized international days such as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP), children are being supported by the GNRC to come up with solutions that support their optimal growth and development, and to influence actions and policies that affect them.

Third, the GNRC has been able to strengthen the capacities of members, religious leaders, and families in the areas of child rights, violence prevention and related topics, as well as to empower children to claim their rights and report violence against them.

The Arigatou International directors and staff who were interviewed as part of the assessment highlighted an increase in reach, visibility, presence and quality of work of the GNRC members since 2017, noting that their work had moved in general from implementing one-off activities to carrying out more sustainable processes and programs, in partnership with other stakeholders, and with a clear focus on the prevention and elimination of violence against children, while addressing its links to child poverty and education.

Interviewees also mentioned some concrete inter- or intra-faith regional initiatives that arose as direct effects of the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum, to specifically address violent extremism and the participation of children and youth in gang violence and other organized criminal groups. These are the Alliance for the Protection of Children in Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico, launched in 2017 to tackle the recruitment of children in gang violence and organized crime, as well as the GNRC



Working Group on Preventing Radicalization and Violent Extremism in the Horn of Africa, which is tackling the radicalization of children and youth into violent extremism in the sub-region.

The assessment found several specific types of direct benefit of GNRC interventions for participants (children, teachers, parents, religious leaders, and other professionals). Some are:

- The GNRC provided direct support to vulnerable children in the form of basic supplies, such as food and clothing, school supplies and shelter
- Children were empowered to claim their rights and to report violence against them
- Returnees who had been recruited into extremist groups, such as al Shabab, Daesh and others are being rehabilitated through the efforts of the GNRC and its partners
- Women and youth access to employment has been enhanced, through small businesses or via organizations as a result of experience or skills gained through the GNRC
- They have received capacity building in child rights and value-based education for children, through the use of the LTLT manual. In some countries the LTLT approach has been integrated into the school curriculum, a major milestone indeed

Several results were also achieved through advocacy by GNRC Committees and members. The survey revealed that many GNRC members carry out advocacy at various levels—global, regional, national and local.

At the **global and regional levels**, the GNRC Secretariat staff, together with some GNRC members and partners have carried out advocacy efforts at the United Nations and its agencies (UNICEF, UN Habitat, UNDP) and with regional bodies, such as the African Union (AU), African Union Center for the Study and Research on Terrorism (AUCSRT), European Union (EU), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the Inter-American Child Protection System of the Organization of American States, among others. Some advocacy efforts have been carried out in partnership with religious institutions or faith-inspired organizations, such as Al-Azhar University, the Vatican, the World Council of Churches (WCC), the World Jewish Congress, World Sikh Congress, among others.

As a member of the United Nations Multi-Faith Advisory Council (UNMFAC), the GNRC Secretariat took the lead in planning the event to celebrate the United Nations' 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (2020), and produced the UNMFAC commemorative video, in which key GNRC members and Arigatou International leadership were featured. The GNRC Secretariat, in this capacity as a member of UNMFAC, works on advocacy with UN Habitat to address poverty and environmental degradation.

GNRC leaders and staff actively participated in advocacy efforts at the 2019 UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF), the G7 Interfaith Forum in Tokyo (2019), the Interfaith Alliance for Safer Communities Forum (2018), the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children (2018), and at various universities in Africa, Europe and USA. GNRC leaders are also members of these organizations, participating in influencing policy decisions in these bodies. In LAC, Arigatou International/GNRC is an active member of the Global Movement for Children in Latin America and the Caribbean, the main multi-stakeholder platform advocating for the rights of children.

Tools used in advocacy vary case-by-case. They range from those produced by Arigatou International Initiatives—such as the *Interfaith Guide to End Child Poverty*<sup>8</sup>, or *Advocating for Children's Rights*

<sup>8</sup> End Child Poverty. (2017). *An Interfaith Guide to End Child Poverty*. Retrieved from <https://endingchildpoverty.org/en/idep/idep-resources/interfaith-guide>

and *Well-Being: An Interfaith Approach*—to those prepared by the UN, governments and GNRC members and partners. This advocacy normally targets government and intergovernmental institutions and seeks to influence law and policy development for the rights and well-being of children, and to promote peace and development.

At the **national and grassroots levels**, GNRC members often carry out advocacy efforts and activities together with other civil society networks and faith-based organizations or coalitions. They use tools adapted to meet the needs of local realities, including those prepared by Arigatou International and its partners. The advocacy approaches include use of short clips and videos, the media, open forums, press conferences, joint statements etc.

The assessment revealed notable results achieved through advocacy by GNRC Committees and members in several thematic areas, including: ending sexual exploitation and abuse of children; ensuring children are safe online; reducing genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and supporting organic-based farming; ending early child marriages; and promoting child rights.

For example, the work carried out by GNRC Tanzania in partnership with several NGOs led to changes in the country's Children's Act. As a result, the law now prohibits marriage of children below 18 years of age. GNRC Tanzania's advocacy and awareness efforts have also led to the protection of children living with Albinism, who were being targeted and killed in the country. In Pakistan, GNRC members advocated for a comprehensive child protection policy in the government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

In LAC, several GNRC Committees have advocated for the prohibition of corporal punishment of children in their countries and have gathered the support of senior religious leaders for legal reform. In El Salvador, advocacy efforts by the GNRC resulted in an agreement with the Salvadoran Institute for the Comprehensive Development of Children (Instituto Salvadoreño Para el Desarrollo Integral de la Niñez y la Adolescencia, ISNA), acknowledging that children in educational institutions are not necessarily Catholics, and committing to provide spiritual support and accompaniment, respecting children's beliefs, religions and traditions, and to help connect these children to places of worship, according to their wishes and beliefs. Through advocacy also, GNRC has responded to the humanitarian/migration crisis at the border between Mexico and the US. In Argentina, the GNRC follows up on observations and recommendations that the Committee of the Rights of the Child makes to the government.

Some of the **direct effects of these advocacy efforts** are listed below:

- Children and young people have a voice to address issues affecting them and are involved in decision-making
- Teachers, parents, and caregivers have been educated on child protection and well-being
- Children are informed on how they can protect themselves online and offline
- Children and youth are extensively using the social media to share their stories and experiences
- There is increased participation and engagement of religious leaders and faith communities on issues affecting children, especially violence and environmental issues

Global commemorations such as the International Day of Peace, International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP), the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children, the Day of the African Child (DAC), the Interfaith Harmony Week, and others, are important days that the GNRC uses for advocacy purposes.



Despite several interesting results, the assessment also revealed that, in some countries, GNRC's advocacy efforts are still weak and sometimes felt/visible only at local levels, minimizing impact. This is the case for instance in the MENA region and in some countries in Europe, Asia and Africa. Members attributed this to low capacity for advocacy, and it is thus recommended that members' advocacy skills be improved across all regions. More efforts should be made to forge partnerships with organizations that have large capacity for advocacy, or to expand the voices through GNRC inter-country and cross-regional coalitions.

The assessment also revealed the main outcomes of the participation of children in the Network. These can be summarized into four categories:

- Changes at the level of acquisition of knowledge and skills;
- Changes in their perception of, and interaction with the world around them;
- Their sense of empowerment; and
- Their personal dreams, hopes and goals.

*The GNRC changed my goals completely! I discovered what I wanted for my life, which is contributing to structural changes through my career as a political scientist. It made my dream of learning about other cultures and religions a reality. It made me realize that God is in every person, and that children and young people have a lot to contribute as the true agents of change that they are. – Former GNRC child, LAC.*

All these results are contributing to the achievement of SDG targets 16.2, 8.7 and 5.3—on ending all forms of violence against children; ending all forms of modern slavery and child labor; and gender equality and ending all harmful traditional practices against women and girls including early, forced marriages.

## The Nature of the Network's Impact

The assessment revealed that the GNRC has generated and continues to generate a "chain of impact." This chain includes the Network's impact on its members; the members' impacts in their local communities (including on children and their families), and the members' impacts on their broader environment.

**Members report that the GNRC has transformed their lives.** In fact, most interviewees described their experience with the GNRC as a "transformative" one; a giving-receiving process through which they have learnt to see the world through the eyes of children, and which has strengthened their capacity to engage in promoting children's rights and well-being.

*The GNRC has given me a lot of peace in my heart. It has given me the support, the confirmation that as an adult I am on the right path to teach other adults to relate in a different way with children, and I myself learn a lot from children. – Adult respondent, Chile.*

Some noted that they had become good role models on matters related to children's rights and the fight against all forms of violence against children. They now care deeply for others, for themselves, the planet and the community at large. Many shared that through the GNRC they had become more open to diversity. This is expressed in the way they have learned to value diversity, inclusivity and equity, and in their ability to live and interact with people from diverse backgrounds, both religious and cultural.

*I have learnt to live with everyone and appreciate our differences when it comes to religion, race, and background. – Adult respondent, Tanzania.*

Most survey respondents indicated that the GNRC is indeed promoting and protecting children's rights and well-being, and that it is bringing about **lasting and significant change in the lives of children and their families**. Similar views were held by Arigatou International staff and directors, and by the children themselves.

The assessment also revealed that a form of good practice is emerging in which GNRC members in one country are extending a helping hand to vulnerable children in other countries, especially in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, a GNRC member in Canada has been training medics in Bangladesh, focusing on the Rohingya refugee children, while also distributing surgical masks, gowns, soaps and other essentials to limit the spread of the virus. This kind of support is extended to children in other parts of Bangladesh, rural Pakistan, and Myanmar to provide better and accessible medical health care services for the vulnerable especially women and children.



Several "stories of most significant change" (MSC) were collected through the internal assessment. The examples provided refer mainly to the area of attitude and behavioral change. They indicated that the GNRC has positively transformed the way children relate with themselves and others, with nature, and with God or the Transcendent. It has impacted the comprehensive development of children, particularly those who are the most marginalized, displaced and/or refugees. Children who participated systematically in GNRC children's groups and programs, including the LTLT program, and in the GNRC global forums, exhibit stronger self-esteem, skills and agency. Their spirituality and ethical values have been nurtured, and all this has translated into actions for the rights and well-being of their peers, families and communities. Several child-led projects and initiatives were created by children and youth who had participated in the GNRC (for example, the child-led India Poverty Solutions program from GNRC India and the Knowledge Centre, hosted by a GNRC member in Sri Lanka).

*The GNRC increased my sense of social responsibility to do community service... – Child from India*



Significantly, the GNRC has also provided children from all over the world with safe platforms to connect and to express themselves freely. It has also provided children with a space where they can seek advice and support from their peers, as well as reach out for help when in need.

Through education support provided by Arigatou International to GNRC members, several children were able to go to school and complete their education. This, in turn, has provided them with other opportunities to grow and thrive.

The assessment also highlighted stories of significant and sustainable change in teachers, educators, parents, and religious leaders, especially in the way they relate and interact with children and educate them through respectful parenting methods.

Although the GNRC is making a difference in all regions, the assessment revealed that it takes time to organize a network effectively and for it to show results. Therefore, the GNRC needs to invest more in sustainable programs and long-term processes, instead of annual plans and activities. There is a need to find and allocate more resources to run the GNRC networks in Francophone-Africa and Central Asia, where its footprint is slight, or non-existent.

### Recommendations on GNRC Reach and Significance

Significant results have been achieved by the GNRC. A great deal remains to be done. The following recommendations on reach and significance emerged from the assessment:

- a. Increase resources for GNRC Committees and members for long term processes, initiatives and programs.
- b. Provide more resources to support network building/strengthening at country levels and promote collective action as the preferred way to achieve social change for the rights and well-being of children.
- c. Develop a monitoring and evaluation system, including clear indicators, and build internal capacity for members and staff to monitor and evaluate the achievement of results. Establish a portal for data on GNRC's reach and impact so that each country can showcase its achievements.
- d. Better collect and record the voices of children and their participation in the GNRC, as well as the "stories of most significant change."
- e. Strengthen the capacity and capabilities of GNRC members to sensitize against harmful cultural and religious practices as well as to build strong partnerships for advocacy.
- f. Strengthen capacities of GNRC members to address the issues facing children in armed conflicts.
- g. Continue raising awareness of the CRC, especially among religious leaders.
- h. Strengthen the capacity of the GNRC Secretariat to meet the needs and requirements of members.

## Conclusions and Way Forward

The GNRC has grown progressively since its inception. As of 2020, the Network had over 1,200 dedicated members and some 200 "friends" and partner organizations supporting its work. These members were spread over 61 countries. The recommendations suggested by this assessment will inform the plans to reinvigorate and strengthen the GNRC.

### "The GNRC 3.0"—As Envisioned by the Children

As part of the assessment, children were asked to describe the GNRC they would like to see in the next ten years, or "GNRC 3.0." Their vision of the GNRC can be summarized as follows.

Children envision a larger and more "universal" network, better positioned in society, with greater presence in more countries and greater impact. They also would like to see a more inclusive network that works to close the connectivity gaps that exist in certain areas, so as to ensure participation of people and children living in marginalized communities.

Almost all the children believe that technology will play a critical role, especially in connecting children, youth and adults of different cultures and religions, across regions. The GNRC will make use of interactive, innovative and child friendly methodologies and techniques, including arts, sports, drama, science, and technology.

Most children envision a greater role to be played by children of all ages (including younger children), as well as a stronger role for youth above the age of 18, who will serve as mentors for younger children. Child participation will be strengthened, including in the Network's leadership and decision-making processes.

In addition to continuing to work to prevent violence against children and end child poverty, children envision a GNRC that prioritizes the protection of the environment and that addresses climate change, as an ethical imperative.

The GNRC of the future will create more spaces and opportunities to promote intergenerational dialogue between children, youth and adults (including parents), as well as opportunities for children to engage meaningfully with religious leaders and government officials.

Finally, GNRC 3.0 will increase opportunities for children to engage with one another within and across regions, through online meetings and forums, as well as face-to-face events and country visits, overcoming the existing language barriers.



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## APPENDIX I: Statement of the First Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children

Tokyo, Japan | May 16-18, 2000

Every child born comes with a message that God has not yet despaired of humankind, observes the poet Rabindranath Tagore. The ultimate and inviolable dignity of the child is understood to be rooted in reality by each religion in its own terms. Thus, the reality of the child expresses for each religion in its own way the mystery and meaning of human existence. Together, people of religious conviction agree that every child is promise, sacred gift, and pledge of the future. Our diverse religious visions shape our approaches to the child; they call us to repentance, hope, and commitment.

Moved by the plight of children and compelled by our religious commitments, we, women and men, coming from all continents and belonging to many of the world's religions, have come to Tokyo, Japan, to inaugurate the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) at the invitation of the Arigatou Foundation. We are already actively engaged as individuals and in organizations dedicated to the rights, dignity, and well being of children. We are convinced that we need to cooperate with one another in our concerns for children.

Our hearts cry out! Today our children are under siege.

- They are the often-targeted victims of armed conflict, coerced to kill as child soldiers, and are disproportionately killed or maimed by anti-personnel land mines. They make up more than half of the swelling refugee and internally displaced populations. As the most vulnerable, they perish and suffer grievously from economic sanctions. With grotesque distortion, violence is pervasively portrayed to youth as attractive and exciting in television, film and other forms of entertainment.
- 30,500 children die each day – 11 million each year – from largely preventable diseases. 200 million children are malnourished. Another 1.2 million are living with HIV, and over 11 million have been orphaned by AIDS, most of them in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Despite unprecedented economic prosperity, mostly in Northern industrialized countries and related to rapid globalization, more children are being born into poverty than ever before. 1.2 billion people in developing countries, half of them children, live in absolute poverty, surviving on less than a dollar a day. Because of crippling economic conditions, families often lack the resources essential for the care and development of their own children. While 60 million children are trapped in abusive and hazardous forms of labor, countless others are homeless and forced to live in the street, and often vulnerable to victimization by authorities.
- 130 million school-age children, more than two thirds of them girls, are growing up in the developing world deprived of the right to education, which thereby limits their possibilities to assume their chosen roles in society. Authoritarian standards or other forms of coercive social pressure can also be detrimental to children's development. Children are often denied religious rights, and the lack of religious education can lead

## APPENDICES



to spiritual impoverishment. We recognize spiritual poverty as a form of deprivation for children with far reaching consequences.

- Children fall prey to sexual abuse and exploitation in both domestic and commercial settings, including 2 million who become victims to the sex industry every year. Increasingly, children around the world are being exposed to shallow, distorted, and exploitative interpretations of sexuality, including child pornography, through film, television and Internet.
- Children are increasingly subjected to deteriorating environmental factors including polluted air and water, the poisoning of the food and land, the dangers of radiation, deforestation, and desertification. They are inheriting a world out of balance that has resulted from the often-reckless use of non-renewable natural resources.

We recognize that all of the deplorable conditions noted above are often interrelated.

These grim realities can be changed, and this is the measure of our moral obligation to act. Our religious traditions, cultures, economies, governments, societies, communities, and families are responsible for the well being of our children. We must acknowledge where they have failed, and as religious persons we acknowledge in particular and repent for when our religious traditions have not put into practice their own deepest insights into the dignity of the child. Children are not objects. They have not only the right to protection and care; they also are entitled to recognition as subjects of their own destiny. All of our social institutions must be transformed and empowered to protect and care for, as well as nurture, our children as builders of society. We rejoice in the many signs of children taking constructive actions for the benefit of all.

Even as we prepare to form Working Groups to take concrete next steps (see Group Reports), we call upon

**Women and Men of goodwill:** To refuse to tolerate the abuse of children, work to protect those within their reach, and promote their full inclusion in strong, healthy, and nurturing families and other forms of society.

**The media:** To take up the positive role of educating the public, including children, on the dignity and plight of children, and to exercise self-restraint regarding degrading and exploitative materials on violence and sexuality.

**Governments:** To enact national legislation designed to protect children in conformity with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to accept it as a framework for action for children. To re-allocate national resources, with attention to reducing expenditures on armaments, to ensure the protection, education, and well being of children and their families. To develop procedures and standards that link the remission of the debt of the poorest countries to their child-friendly practices.

**Intergovernmental Organizations and in particular the United Nations and its agency, UNICEF:** To uphold the UN Charter impartially, to exercise their mandates to monitor and encourage States compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and to engage in pro-active educational and service programs on behalf of children. To continue to develop

partnerships with religious leaders and organizations, with particular attention to the Special Session of the UN General Assembly in 2001, which will review the achievements of the World Summit for Children and shape a new global agenda for them.

**Religions:** To engage their deepest religious and moral teachings for the advocacy of children and the defense of their rights among their own believers and in the public at large. To mobilize their social institutions in the service of children. To engage in multi-religious action programs on behalf of children, including peace education.

**Ourselves:** To recognize our respective religious experiences and traditions as major resources in our commitment to working for children. To mobilize our commitment in the building of relevant coalitions and partnerships among our organizations, and across our religious boundaries, so as to enhance our abilities to respond effectively to the plight of our children and to learn from them.

**The Arigatou Foundation:** To assist religious individuals and communities to sustain the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC), as a child-focused network dedicated to the sharing of information and the building of action coalitions.

**Children are for us a source of hope, they bear promise, and they confirm for us the sacredness of reality.** We draw strength from them and from one another's commitments to them. In this context, we acknowledge with gratitude the Arigatou Foundation for initiating, convening, and facilitating the GNRC.



## APPENDIX II: Guidelines for the GNRC Network Coordinators and Contact Persons

### 1. Name, Definition, and Aims

- 1.1. The Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) is an interreligious network of people, associations and/or organizations involved in working for children's rights and the well-being of children at local, national, sub-regional, regional and global levels. It promotes cooperation among its members, as well as with other interested parties, to achieve the aims described in section 1.2.
- 1.2. The aims of the GNRC and its members are:
  - 1.2.1. To call members and others to make uniquely faith-based contributions to the creation of a better environment for children by engaging in prayer, mutual enlightenment, dialogue and cooperation among people of different faiths, including children, at local, national, regional and global levels.
  - 1.2.2. To take concrete action with, and for, children through interfaith cooperation, and to engage adults and children in interreligious dialogue to create a better environment for children in a diverse and globalizing world.
  - 1.2.3. To encourage members and others to build a global movement for children to promote significant changes in the environment facing children, working in cooperation with international organizations, academics, the business community and people from all walks of life around the world.
  - 1.2.4. To promote children's rights in their entirety as defined by official documents, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
  - 1.2.5. To assist members and others in their work with, and for, children to build a peaceful world where children can grow up with sound physical, psychological, and spiritual health.

### 2. Membership

- 2.1. Faith-based organizations or groups as well as individuals of faith that are working with and for children anywhere in the world are invited to join the GNRC.
- 2.2. GNRC members shall meet the following conditions:
  - 2.2.1. They are actively engaged in promoting children's rights and well-being.
  - 2.2.2. They have a faith and practice the teachings of that faith.
  - 2.2.3. The aims and work of the GNRC members shall be in full harmony with the aims and work of the GNRC.
  - 2.2.4. They are willing to cooperate with other GNRC members in building a better world for children.
- 2.3. Should any of the above criteria change for any GNRC member, the GNRC Secretariat, in consultation with the GNRC coordinator from that member's country, sub-region or region may reconsider the status of his/her/its relationship with the GNRC.

- 2.4. GNRC members may establish "GNRC" networks at local, national, sub-regional, and regional levels, with the facilitation and endorsement of the GNRC Secretariat and Arigatou International.
- 2.5. Organizations, networks and individuals that are not faith-based may be fraternal members.

### 3. GNRC Networks

- 3.1. For practical purposes of the GNRC 's work, there shall be a GNRC national committee in each country formed by GNRC members residing in that country.
- 3.2. An organization or individual meeting conditions to become a GNRC member may submit an application to the GNRC Secretariat
- 3.3. Once contact with the GNRC Secretariat is made, the person taking the lead as contact person may convene a meeting of organizations and individuals committed to the objectives of the GNRC to form a network led by the national committee
- 3.4. The GNRC national committee will be coordinated by a country coordinator who will be elected (or selected) by local members. The GNRC Secretary General in consultation with, and with the endorsement of Arigatou International will then confirm the coordinator.
- 3.5. The GNRC country coordinator will ordinarily come from a faith-based institution
- 3.6. Countries belonging to a specific sub-region may form a sub-regional group or network. A GNRC contact person (a.k.a. accompaniers) may be appointed as the contact point for the sub-regional group or network.
- 3.7. Countries and sub-regions belonging to a specific region may form a regional group or network. A GNRC contact person may be appointed as the contact point for the regional group or network.
- 3.8. A local GNRC network or group can be formed through the facilitation of the GNRC country coordinator.
- 3.9. Local, country, sub-regional and regional networks are formed as needed to facilitate the work of the GNRC in respective regions, sub-regions and locales.
- 3.10. A GNRC contact person for a region or sub-region will normally be chosen from the pool of GNRC country coordinator in a sub-region or region.

### 4. GNRC Coordinators and Contact Persons

- 4.1. GNRC coordinators and contact persons are GNRC members who serve as focal point persons for GNRC networking, who promote GNRC activities, and who contribute to the building of the Network at global, regional, sub-regional, national and local levels in consultation with other members and/or contact person(s) in their respective sub-regions, regions, countries and local areas.
- 4.2. GNRC coordinators work with the Secretary General through the Network and Programs Coordinator to determine the general framework for Network activities, deliberate on issues, and participate in decisions concerning the GNRC within their jurisdiction.



- 4.3. GNRC coordinators present proposals to the GNRC Secretariat that have been discussed collectively with GNRC members at the local, national, sub-regional, or regional level.
- 4.4. GNRC coordinators coordinate the mission and work of the GNRC at the national, sub-regional and regional levels.
- 4.5. GNRC coordinators are accountable to the GNRC Secretary General through channels established by the GNRC Secretary General in consultation with Arigatou International and are responsible for the implementation of decisions made collectively by local members.
- 4.6. Each coordinator's tasks and responsibilities include:
  - 4.6.1. Monitoring GNRC activities in the country of their responsibility as a whole, and developing new strategies aimed at making GNRC work more effective and relevant at local, national, sub-regional and regional levels.
  - 4.6.2. Building the GNRC at local, national, sub-regional and regional levels; through visits, correspondence and various forms of communication with other GNRC members and/or contact person(s) in the respective areas, while ensuring that the "GNRC" networks established are multi-faith, intergenerational and inclusive in their composition and promote interreligious dialogue.
  - 4.6.3. Facilitating and coordinating the implementation of GNRC policies and programs at the local, national, sub-regional and regional levels (of their responsibility) and addressing related matters.
  - 4.6.4. Implementing GNRC projects to address the specific needs of children, and enhancing GNRC initiatives at local, national, sub-regional and regional levels, while ensuring that projects and programs are implemented in a spirit of interfaith cooperation through the establishment of interfaith committees whose members represent religious groups and institutions.
  - 4.6.5. Implementation of initiatives proposed at GNRC forums.
  - 4.6.6. Monitoring the implementation of GNRC projects and the appropriate use of funds provided by Arigatou International; ensuring that the local organization that receives the actual disbursement of the Arigatou International grant carries out project accounting and produces a detailed financial report.
  - 4.6.7. Organizing GNRC meetings when necessary, in coordination with members, and allowing for representation of all members in the respective areas.
  - 4.6.8. Formulating overall objectives and policies for local, national, sub-regional or regional activities in consultation with the GNRC members in their areas and, advising members of ongoing activities at local, national, sub-regional and regional levels.
  - 4.6.9. Reviewing projects proposed by the members in the area, and advising the GNRC Secretariat on their merit.
  - 4.6.10. Drawing up an annual country activity plan with a proposed financial budget, to be submitted to the GNRC Secretary General through the GNRC Network and Programs Coordinator in conformity with the financial procedures and guidelines set by Arigatou International.

- 4.6.11. Preparing an annual country or regional report of activities with an annual country or regional financial report, to be submitted to the GNRC Secretariat in a timely manner.

## 5. GNRC Contact Persons

- 5.1. In certain cases, the GNRC Secretary General in consultation with, and with the endorsement of Arigatou International, may appoint a GNRC contact person for a specific area, sub-region or region or organization.

## 6. GNRC Coordinators and Contact Person Meeting

- 6.1. To provide a venue for discussing issues related to GNRC's mission and initiatives, Arigatou International through the GNRC Secretariat organizes GNRC coordinators and contact persons meetings, as needed, to which representatives from regions or sub-regions may be invited. The organizer may invite other GNRC members and resource persons, where necessary, to these meetings.

## 7. Financial Support

- 7.1. Arigatou International through the GNRC Secretary General will facilitate GNRC activities by providing financial support of the three types described below, as well as administering assistance. Arigatou International is limited in its capacity to provide financial support, and neither the organization nor the GNRC Secretary General is able to make any commitment to meet requests for support before a final decision is made by the Arigatou International Board of Directors.
- 7.2. GNRC Coordinators may pursue financial assistance from institutions other than Arigatou International, to be used in implementing GNRC projects and programs under the same provisions as indicated in these guidelines.
- 7.3. Operational Support for GNRC Coordinators
  - 7.3.1. At the request of the GNRC coordinator to the GNRC Secretariat, Arigatou International, within the limits of its capacity, financially supports activities proposed by members.
  - 7.3.2. Applications for support are prepared by the GNRC coordinator (or contact person) to the GNRC Secretary General (separate guidelines for projects proposals and applications are available).
- 7.4. Support for GNRC Projects
  - 7.4.1. Arigatou International, within the limits of its capacity, will provide financial support for projects that are in accordance with the purposes of the Network and implemented by GNRC networks at local, country, sub-regional and regional levels, taking into consideration the unique circumstances of the region/country.
  - 7.4.2. The term "GNRC project" unless otherwise approved by the Secretary General, means a project that involves concrete action for children, undertaken through interfaith cooperation, and initiated and implemented by more than one religious organization or group from different faith backgrounds in accordance with the aims of the GNRC.



- 7.4.3. GNRC coordinators are expected to mobilize funding for GNRC projects and encourage members to contribute financially or in-kind to projects in their countries or sub-regions or region.
- 7.4.4. GNRC projects should contribute to one or more of the thematic priorities of the Network:
- Promote the development of GNRC regional, sub-regional or country networks
  - Enhance poverty eradication
  - Enhance ethics education for children and other educational initiatives
  - Create a peaceful environment for children
  - Promote prayer and action for children and the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Some of the specific expectations of such projects are that they should, to the extent possible:

- Strengthen the capacity of GNRC members working on child rights, ethics education and poverty eradication from interfaith perspectives.
- Promote interfaith cooperation and networking between GNRC members at regional, sub-regional, national, and local levels, as well as the establishment of new GNRC networks.
- Entail a greater number of organizers, greater number of participants, participation of a more diverse range of religious and spiritual traditions, and a broader beneficiary area.
- Feature strong participation by children and young people.
- Make significant contributions to the promotion of children's rights and children's well-being from the point of view of the role of religions.
- Indicate a favorable ratio of self-help efforts by the members implementing the project.
- Contribute to any or all of the three specific commitments that the GNRC made at the UN Special Session on Children in May 2002.
- Contribute to ending violence against children, including the implementation of the Panama Declaration (with its 10 commitments), adopted at the GNRC 5th Forum held in Panama in May 2017.

7.4.5. Activities should be designed to meet the specific needs of the target group identified by the project.

7.4.6. The financial support for GNRC activities must be budgeted on an annual basis. Multi-year projects will be subject to annual evaluation to determine whether new funds will be granted by Arigatou International to support the continuation of such projects.

7.4.7. The directors of Arigatou International Initiatives will provide technical support to the GNRC funded projects

7.4.8. How to Apply for Project Assistance

7.4.8.1. Project applications with budget proposals presented by GNRC members must be submitted, with the endorsement of the GNRC country coordinator, to the GNRC Secretary General through the GNRC Network and Programs Coordinator.

7.4.8.2. The GNRC Country Coordinator may submit a request to Arigatou International for financial support for GNRC projects, coordinating the various needs of the GNRC within the respective country, as part of his or her annual country activity plan and budget proposal.

7.4.8.3. When receiving a request for financial support from a single organization or person for a project that does not meet the criteria for GNRC projects in section 7.4.2, the GNRC Country Coordinator for the respective country will examine the potential for the project to be modified so as to contribute to the development of the GNRC and be considered a GNRC project. If this is not possible, he or she will consult with the GNRC Secretary General, who will then advise the organization or person to make the request for assistance directly to the Secretary General of Arigatou International as a non-GNRC project.

7.4.8.4. When a GNRC member makes such a request, Arigatou International will inform the relevant GNRC country coordinator, asking for comments for reference purposes as part of its process of consideration. Further, when Arigatou International receives a request for financial support from a non-GNRC member, religious organization, or other organization for a project that is thought to have an influence on GNRC activities, Arigatou International will provide information to the GNRC Secretary General who will in turn consult with the GNRC country or sub-regional or regional coordinator where the request originated.

#### 7.4.9. Monitoring and Reporting

7.4.9.1. The GNRC Secretary General will inform GNRC coordinators of the decisions of Arigatou International concerning applications.

7.4.9.2. Each GNRC coordinator will monitor the status of implementation of GNRC projects/activities supported by Arigatou International at the country level.

7.4.9.3. The beneficiary of the project or activity must keep accurate and regular records and dedicated, transparent accounts of the implementation of the project.

7.4.9.4. The GNRC country coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the local organization implementing projects/activities uses the funds for the approved purpose. Financial reports should be itemized in the same way as the original application for funding, with no more than 10% of any line item used for a different item than originally requested. The GNRC coordinator must request prior approval from the GNRC Secretary General through the GNRC Network and Programs Coordinator before sanctioning any change larger than this.

7.4.9.5. When a new bank account is required to manage a GNRC project, its signatories should consist of no fewer than three organizations, all of whom must be GNRC members.

7.4.9.6. After completion of each project or activity, the GNRC coordinator should submit a summary report on the project or activity and a detailed financial



report to the GNRC Secretary General. The financial report must be accompanied by original receipts.

7.4.9.7. At the end of each fiscal year, the GNRC coordinator should submit a full report on all projects and activities undertaken during the period, including a thorough evaluation.

#### 7.4.10. Deadline for Receipt of Applications

The deadline for the submission of applications/budget proposals for projects to take place during the upcoming fiscal year (April 1 to March 31) is the end of November.

#### 7.5. Support for GNRC Networking Activities

7.5.1. Arigatou International provides, within the limits of its capacity, financial support for GNRC networking activities, as part and parcel of GNRC projects facilitated by the GNRC coordinators or contact persons.

7.5.2. Requests for Support for GNRC networking Activities should be submitted in advance to the GNRC Network and Programs Coordinator at the GNRC Secretariat as a part of the annual country activity plan and budget proposal. This may also include sub-regional or regional networking for GNRC.

7.5.3. GNRC Coordinators are expected to mobilize funding for GNRC networking activities and encourage GNRC members to contribute financially or in-kind to GNRC networking activities in their regions, sub-regions and/or countries.

### 8. Submission of GNRC Annual Activity Plan and Budget Proposal

8.1. The coordinator will draw up an annual country activity plan with a budget proposal for the upcoming fiscal year (from April-1 to March-31).

8.2. The annual country activity plan with a budget proposal should be submitted to the GNRC Network and Programs Coordinator by the end November of each year.

8.3. An expense report for the current fiscal year that details the use of the budget to date and remaining anticipated expenses for the fiscal year should be attached and submitted at the end of April.

## APPENDIX III: List of Interviewees and Respondents

NAME	COUNTRY	ROLE IN GNRC	RELIGION	DATE OF INTERVIEW
GNRC COORDINATORS AND CONTACT PERSONS				
AFRICA				
1. Ms. Sara Niyonsaba	Burundi	Former Coordinator, GNRC	Islam	August 12, 2020
2. Ms. Sandrine Nkurunziza	Burundi	Coordinator, GNRC	Islam	August 12, 2020
3. Mr. Alexander Gwanvalla	Cameroon	Coordinator, GNRC	Christianity	August 13, 2020
4. Mr. Akim Said	Comoros	Coordinator, GNRC	Islam	July 9, 2020
5. Mr. Jonas Habimana	DR Congo	Contact Person, GNRC	Christianity	August 3, 2020
6. Ms. Yvette Munyerenkana	DR Congo	Contact Person, GNRC	Christianity	Questionnaire
7. Mr. Eyob Yishak	Ethiopia	Contact Person, GNRC	Christianity	Sep 3, 2020
8. Sh. Ramadhan Aula	Kenya	Coordinator, GNRC	Islam	July 8, 2020
9. Mr. Belall Maudarbux	Mauritius	Coordinator, GNRC	Islam	Sep 8, 2021
10. Ms. Natasha Kanguatjivi	Namibia	Contact Person, GNRC	Christianity	Sep 23, 2021
11. Sr. Agatha Chikelue	Nigeria	Coordinator, GNRC	Christianity	August 31, 2020
12. Mr. Ayoub Nsanzintwari	Rwanda	Coordinator, GNRC	Islam	29 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2021
13. Mr. Ba Abdoul Aziz	Senegal	Coordinator, GNRC	Islam	July 29, 2020
14. Pst. Peter Alfred	Sierra Leone	Coordinator, GNRC	Christianity	Jan 1, 2021
15. Mr. Abdiweli Waberi	Somalia	Coordinator, GNRC	Islam	Aug 14, 2020
16. Ms. Saydoon Nisa Sayed	South Africa	Coordinator, GNRC	Islam	July 21, 2020
17. Ms. Joyce Mdachi	Tanzania	Coordinator, GNRC	Christianity	July 16, 2020
18. Mr. Abubakar Kabwogi	Tanzania	Contact Person, GNRC	Islam	Aug 6, 2021
19. Mr. Geoffrey Omony	Uganda	Coordinator, GNRC	Christianity	July 10, 2020
20. Ms. Nageeba Tegulwa	Uganda	Contact Person, GNRC	Islam	Sep 23, 2021
ASIA				
21. Mr. Phurba Sonam Waiba	Bhutan	Coordinator, GNRC	Buddhism	August 7, 2020
22. Mr. Gopal Vijayaragavan	India	Coordinator, GNRC	Hinduism	July 23, 2020
23. Ms. Nerlian Gogali	Indonesia	Coordinator, GNRC	Christianity	Aug 14, 2020
24. Ms. Shazmin Rafeeq	Malaysia	Coordinator, GNRC	Islam	July 13, 2020
25. Dr. Chintamani Yogi	Nepal	Coordinator, GNRC	Hinduism	July 22, 2020
26. Mr. Kul Gautum	Nepal	Member, GNRC, and Former Deputy Executive Director, UNICEF	-	October 14, 2021
27. Ms. Kriti Giri	Nepal	Contact Person, GNRC	Hinduism	July 22, 2020
28. Mr. Sumrat Yogi	Nepal	Contact Person, GNRC	Hinduism	July 22, 2020
29. Mr. David Paul	Pakistan	Co-Coordinator, GNRC	Christianity	July 17, 2020
30. Mr. Iftikhar Mubarik	Pakistan	Co-Coordinator, GNRC	Islam	July 16, 2020
31. Ms. Sarah Queblatin	Philippines	Contact Person, GNRC	N/A	Sep 9, 2020
32. Ms. Kavitha Vijayaraj	Sri Lanka	Former Coordinator, GNRC	Hinduism	July 29, 2020
33. Ms. Sashikala Lakshman	Sri Lanka	Coordinator, GNRC	Hinduism	July 29, 2020



NAME	COUNTRY	ROLE IN GNRC	RELIGION	DATE OF INTERVIEW
EUROPE				
34. Ms. Ismeta Begić	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Coordinator, GNRC	Islam	July 24, 2020
35. Ms. Zvonimira Jakić	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Contact Person, GNRC	Christianity	July 24, 2020
36. Ms. Ana Znidarec	Croatia	Coordinator, GNRC	Christianity	July 27, 2020
37. Ms. Natalia Seriakova	Germany	Coordinator, GNRC	Christianity	August 12, 2020
38. Ms. Laura Molnar	Romania	Coordinator, GNRC	Christianity	July 15, 2020
39. Mr. Dragi Siminaj	Macedonia	Coordinator, GNRC	Christianity	July 21, 2020
40. Ms. Fatmire Adjari	Macedonia	Contact Person, GNRC	Islam	July 21, 2020
41. Ms. Angela Chicua	Moldova	Coordinator, GNRC	Christianity	Questionnaire
42. Ms. Sabra Decević	Montenegro	Coordinator, GNRC	-	August 7, 2020
43. Ms. Ivana Barać	Serbia	Contact Person, GNRC	Christianity	August 3,2020
44. Mr. Srdjan Vlskalic	Serbia	Coordinator, GNRC	Christianity	August 3,2020
LAC				
45. Ms. Ana de Medio	Argentina	Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Christianity	July 8, 2020
46. Rabbi Pablo Berman	Brazil	Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Judaism	July 22, 2020
47. Ms. Vania Leite	Brazil	Coordinator, GNRC Committee/Treasurer	Christian Catholic	August 8, 2020
48. Ms. María José Ananías	Chile	Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Representing Interfaith organization	July 16, 2020
49. Mr. Luis Alberto Rubiano	Colombia	Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Christianity	July 16, 2020
50. Ms. Alicia Sevilla	Cuba	Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Christianity	August 28, 2020
51. Mr. Marco Laguatasi	Ecuador	Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Christian Catholic	July 9, 2020
52. Mr. Larry Madrigal	El Salvador	Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Christian Catholic	July 21, 2020
53. Ms. Diana García	Mexico	Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Christianity	July 15, 2020
54. Ms. Azucena Lopez	Nicaragua	Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Christianity	August 13, 2020
55. Ms. Isis Navarro	Panama	Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Christianity	August 5, 2020
56. Hna. Esperanza Principio	Peru / Panama	Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Christian Catholic	July 23, 2020
57. Mr. John Hamilton	Uruguay	Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Christian Catholic	August 5, 2020
MENA				
58. Ms. Evi Guggenheim <sup>1</sup>	Israel	Coordinator, GNRC	Judaism	August 13, 2020
59. Mr. Khaled Batarseh	Jordan	Coordinator, GNRC	Christianity	August 7,2020
60. Fr. Abdo Raad	Lebanon	Coordinator, GNRC	Christianity	July 14,2020

<sup>1</sup> Also served as the GNRC Coordinator for Israel, with the Former Regional Coordinators

NAME	COUNTRY	ROLE IN GNRC	RELIGION	DATE OF INTERVIEW
61. Mr. Hassan Fawaz	Lebanon	Contact Person, GNRC	Islam	July 20, 2020
62. Mr. Roger Salameh	Palestine	Coordinator, GNRC	Christianity	Aug 13, 2020
63. Mr. Tareq Al Amri	Yemen	Contact Person, GNRC	Islam	Questionnaire
NORTH AMERICA				
64. Dr. Fozia Alvi	Canada	Contact Person, GNRC	Islam	Aug 8, 2021
65. Rabbi Dianna Gerson	USA	Contact Person, GNRC	Judaism	Aug 10, 2021
CURRENT GNRC COMMITTEE MEMBERS				
66. Ms. María Eugenia Crespo	Argentina	Member, GNRC Committee	Christian Catholic /Interfaith organization	July 13, 2020
67. Mr. Gabriel Vera	Argentina	Member, GNRC Committee	Christian Catholic	July 24, 2020
68. Mr. Jimmy Reyna	Guatemala	Treasurer, GNRC Committee	Buddhism	July 17, 2020
69. Rabbi Gustavo Kraselnik	Panama	Member, GNRC Committee	Judaism	July 22, 2020
FORMER GNRC REGIONAL COORDINATORS				
70. Ms. Mercedes Román	Regional	Former Regional Coordinator, LAC	Christian Catholic	July 13, 2020
71. Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne	Sri Lanka	Religious leader/Member, Arigatou International Advisory Group	Buddhism	Feb 18, 2021
72. Ms. Marta Palma	Chile/GNRC Europe	Former Regional Coordinator, Europe/ Former Member, GNRC Chile	Christianity	August 12, 2020
FORMER GNRC COORDINATORS AND FORMER GNRC COMMITTEE MEMBERS				
73. Ms. Olga Lucía Sierra	Colombia	Former Treasurer and Former Member, GNRC Committee	Buddhism	July 16, 2020
74. Mr. Nipur Bhasin	Mexico	Former Coordinator and Former Member, GNRC Committee	Buddhism	July 10, 2020
FORMER GNRC COORDINATORS AND CURRENT GNRC COMMITTEE MEMBERS				
75. Mr. Marcelo Neira	Chile	Member, GNRC Committee/ Former Coordinator	Christian Catholic	July 15, 2020
FORMER GNRC COORDINATORS				
76. Ms. Alexandra Silveira	Brazil	Former Coordinator, GNRC Committee	African-derived	August 4, 2020
77. Mr. Victor Rey	Chile	Former Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Christianity	July 7, 2020
78. Ms. Carmen Julia Gómez	Dominican Republic	Former Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Vedic Wisdom	July 10, 2020
79. Ms. Leonor Cruz	Dominican Republic	Former Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Christian Catholic	August 10, 2020
80. Ms. Mónica Ramírez	Guatemala	Former Coordinator, GNRC Committee.	Christianity	July 21, 2020
81. Mr. Jaime Tercero	Nicaragua	Former Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Christianity	July 13, 2020
82. Mr. Sebastian Camacho	Uruguay	Former Coordinator, GNRC Committee	Christianity	July 14, 2020



NAME	COUNTRY	ROLE IN GNRC	RELIGION	DATE OF INTERVIEW
<b>PARTNERS (LAC)</b>				
83. Rev. Harold Segura	Costa Rica	World Vision - Regional Office LAC	Christianity	Sept 1, 2020
84. Mons. Charbonneau	Honduras	Representative, CELAM in Alliance for the Protection of Children	Christian Catholic	Sept 4, 2020
<b>GRASSROOTS MEMBERS</b>				
85. Oprea Diana	Romania	Member, GNRC	Christianity	Questionnaire
86. Mark Shaldon Naicker	South Africa	Member, GNRC	Christianity	March 25, 2021
87. Tatu Issa	Tanzania	Member, GNRC	Islam	Questionnaire
<b>RELIGIOUS LEADERS</b>				
88. Bishop Method Kilaini	Tanzania	Auxiliary Bishop of Bukoba, Tanzania	Christianity	Aug 17, 2021
89. Dr. Kezevino Aram	India	Religious leader/Member, Arigatou International Advisory Group	Hinduism	Feb 16, 2021
90. Sh. Ibrahim Lethome	Kenya	Religious leader/Member, Arigatou International Advisory Group	Islam	March 15, 2021
91. Bishop Julio Murray	Panama	Member, GNRC Committee/Member, Arigatou International Advisory Group	Christianity	Oct 14, 2020
92. Hošić Enver	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Representative, Medžlis IZ Faith Community, Sarajevo	Islam	Questionnaire
93. Midhat Čakalović	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Representative, Medžlis IZ Islamske Zajednice, Visoko	Islam	Questionnaire
94. Miljan Rađenović	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Representative, Orthodox Church, Visoko	Christianity	Questionnaire
95. Sh. Iyad Al-Abdullah	Lebanon	People for People Association	Islam	Interviewed
<b>ARIGATOU INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORS AND STAFF</b>				
96. Rev. Fred Nyabera	Kenya	Director, End Child Poverty	Christianity	Sep 24, 2020
97. Ms. Maria Lucia	Switzerland	Director, Ethics Education for Children	Christianity	Sep 24, 2020
98. Ms. Rebeca Rios-Kohn	USA	Director, Prayer and Action for Children	Christianity	Sep 24, 2020
99. Ms. Sandra Yopez	Brasil	Arigatou International – Geneva	Christianity	Sep 23, 2020
100. Ms. Nyambura Gichuki	Kenya	Arigatou International – Nairobi	Christianity	Oct 1, 2020
101. Ms. Ornella Barros	Colombia	Arigatou International – New York	Christianity	Sep 22, 2020
102. Mr. Suchith Abeyewickreme	Sri Lanka	Arigatou International – Geneva Office	-	Sep 23, 2020
103. Ms. Vera Leal	Portugal	Arigatou International – Geneva	Christianity	Sep 21, 2020

## APPENDIX IV: Assessment Framework

The assessment is based on the assessment framework developed by Network Impact and the Center for Evaluation Innovation<sup>2</sup>. The GNRC Secretariat has adapted the three dimensions of this framework to the context and needs of the GNRC and Arigatou International.

The Internal process will assess three dimensions of the GNRC:

1. GNRC Network and Network Connectivity
2. GNRC Network “Health” and Capacity
3. GNRC Network Results and Significance

### • GNRC NETWORK AND CONNECTIVITY

This will include two sub-dimensions: Membership and Structure

- **Membership: People and organizations that participate in the GNRC**
  - o Who are the GNRC members? Religious leaders? Grassroots organizations? Faith-based communities? Large faith-based NGOs?
  - o Where are they based?
  - o How did they join the GNRC? What was the initial purpose of connection and participation in the GNRC?
  - o Do they participate in the GNRC on a voluntary basis or as part of their jobs?
  - o How long do GNRC members remain active in the Network? Does the participation of the members change over time?
  - o Are there different levels of engagement? If so, what are the different levels of engagement?
  - o What religions/faith traditions do the members represent or belong to? Are members satisfied with the composition of the GNRC in their country? How can the Network strengthen its religious diversity? What would be needed?
  - o Are children part of the GNRC at the global, regional, national and local level? What is the role of children and youth in the Network activities and decision-making processes?
- **Structure: How connections between members are structured and what flows through those connections.**
  - o How is the Network structured at local, national, regional, global levels? Does the Network work through a GNRC committee at national level? Or do members work through an anchor organization or contact person? Are there defined roles within the committee (coordinator, secretary, treasurer, contact person? etc.)? If yes, how are those roles defined?
  - o How and in what ways are GNRC members connected to one another?
  - o How are the connections between children and adults in the Network and what do you think it can help strengthening them?

<sup>2</sup> Network Impact and Center for Evaluation Innovation, The State of Network Evaluation, 2014. And Evaluating Networks for Social Change: A case book. Available at <http://www.networkimpact.org/the-state-of-network-evaluation-a-guide/>



- o What flows through the connections that the Network makes? At what levels?
- o How efficient are the connections made through the Network?
- o How dependent is the Network on the GNRC coordinators? On one organization? Or on individual(s)?
- o Is the current structure of the Network adjusted to meet changing needs and priorities? Is it adapted for local local/grassroots contexts?
- o What are the connections of the GNRC with other GNRC networks in the country? Region? What are the connections of the members of the Network across regions?
- o What are the connections of the GNRC with other civil society networks or multi-stakeholder platforms? Interfaith platforms? Has the Network benefitted from global and regional partnerships promoted by Arigatou International (GNRC Secretariat and other Arigatou International Initiatives)? If yes, how has it benefitted the Network?
- o How is the Network connected to other Arigatou International Initiatives and offices (Geneva Office, New York Office)? How does the work with the other Initiatives help strengthen GNRC work and connections?

## • NETWORK “HEALTH” AND CAPACITY

**This dimension analyses the state of the Network(s), their Capacity(ies) and the overall members’ satisfaction.** It will assess the capacity of the GNRC to sustain the enthusiasm and commitment of (voluntary) engagement and participation of its members and promote their ability to work together (as a network) to achieve shared goals.

It will look at three sub-dimensions: Added value/shared purpose, resources, and infrastructure

- **Added Value/Shared purpose: The Network’s Capacity for joint value creation**
  - o How does the GNRC engage its members? How does GNRC sustain engagement of its members?
  - o What has the experience of the GNRC members been over time?
  - o What are the members’ most important value propositions and how well do they feel they are being met?
  - o What do you think it is the most important value added of the GNRC?
  - o How do members feel about the Network? How do the GNRC members envision the Network?
  - o How could the GNRC be improved?
  - o What level of engagement in Network activities does each member have? How does the infrastructure enable engagement—and what barriers do members face?
  - o How does the Network provide value added to children and young people?
- **Resources: The resources the GNRC has/needs to sustain itself (funding, capacity building, etc.)**
  - o What kind of resources does the Network receive from Arigatou International (GNRC Secretariat and other Arigatou International Initiatives)?
  - o How are financial resources received from Arigatou International used?
  - o Is the seed funding received on a yearly basis enough / useful to strengthen the Network?

- o Do members mobilize additional financial resources for GNRC networks at national/local level? How? What has worked? What are the challenges?
- o How do members contribute with resources/in kind to the GNRC in their country?
- o Is there need for resources dedicated to Network meetings? For strengthening the Network?
- o Any suggestion(s) on how to improve the funding support process?
- o Do members have the capacity they need to achieve the Network’s objectives?
- o What kind of opportunities does Arigatou International provide for capacity development of GNRC members? How can it be improved?

## • **Infrastructure: the internal systems and structures that support the Network** (GNRC Secretariat, GNRC Guidelines, GNRC rules and processes for annual planning and reporting, etc.)

- o How do GNRC members perceive Arigatou International’s structural design (offices and Initiatives) and particularly in relation to the GNRC?
- o Are GNRC members satisfied with the infrastructure of the GNRC? What should be improved? What should be discontinued? What should be added?
- o Is the Network’s governance arrangement and internal structure (GNRC national committees, GNRC Secretariat, regional GNRC coordinators) effective/efficient? Does it serve the purpose of the Network?
- o Are the members satisfied with the reporting procedures and tools (narrative and financial) established by the GNRC Secretariat? What improvements would they like to see?
- o Do members use/access the Arigatou International online community platform? GNRC, EEC, ECP and PAC websites? Are they useful? Do they facilitate communication/connection? What additional information would they like to see on these websites? If they don’t use the online community platform, why not? What or how would they like the online community platform improved?
- o How do children and young people use the different online tools (websites, online resources, community)?
- o Is it useful? If yes, how frequent do they engage in the platform (throughout the year, quarterly, per activity etc.)? Does it facilitate communication/connection with other members as well as possibility to share, exchange and engage in dialogue?
- o Which communication areas or practice would they like Arigatou International to improve so as to support their work better?
- o Are members aware of the Arigatou International Branding guidelines? If yes, how do they use them?
- o Are members aware of the Arigatou International Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct? How do they use it?
- o Do members feel GNRC is visible enough and informative enough in the social media? If not, what would they want to see?
- o What kind of networking/connection opportunities (face to face and virtual) would GNRC members would like to see/have?
- o What do you recommend to improve efficiency, sustainability and better networking and results of the Network?



• NETWORK RESULTS AND SIGNIFICANCE

This dimension assesses the results of the GNRC at different levels. The assessment will try to answer this question: Is the GNRC making a difference?

It will look at three sub-dimensions:

- **Network's Reach (2016-2020)**
  - o Number of people reached directly in the country. How many were religious leaders? How many were children?
  - o Number of people reached indirectly in the country.
- **Network's Interim Outcomes (2017-2020):** results achieved as the Network works to reach its goals and follow-up to the Panama Commitments.
  - o Direct effects of GNRC's interventions (projects/programs) on the participants (children, teachers, parents, religious leaders, GNRC members and partners).
  - o Changes/progress with regard to the GNRC goals and Panama Commitments at local, national, regional levels.
  - o Advocacy outcomes. Does the Network engage in advocacy? What has been more effective for the GNRC Network in advocating for change at the local/national and regional levels? Examples of concrete results?
- **Network's Impact** (since its creation to 2020): Lasting or significant change in children's rights and well-being brought about by GNRC's long term interventions in a country/region.
  - o Long term effects in the lives of members of the Network
  - o Long term effects in the lives of children
  - o Significant stories of change
  - o Are interfaith network-focused interventions effective in the field of children's rights and well-being?

Assessment of Children's Participation in the Network

The information collected will focus on three dimensions of participation<sup>3</sup>:

- **Scope:** What degree of participation has been achieved in GNRC, at what level of development and with which children (what is being done?)
- **Quality:** To what extent have participatory processes complied with the agreed standards for ethical and effective practice (How is it being done)?
- **Outcomes:** What have been the outcomes of children's participation in the GNRC? (on children themselves, on their families, on the committee members, etc.).

<sup>3</sup> Lansdown G., O'Kane C., Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's participation, Save the Children, 2014, available at: <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document-collections/toolkit-monitoring-and-evaluating-childrens-participation>.

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The assessment will use a combination of several methods:

- The analysis of quantitative and qualitative reports by GNRC networks (quarterly reports, annual reports, others)
- An online survey for GNRC members
- An online survey for children
- One-on-one interviews and conversations with GNRC coordinators / contact persons, some additional GNRC members, Arigatou International staff and directors, selected partners
- Focus group discussion with children, in each region
- Collection of stories of most significant change.

The assessment will be carried out by GNRC staff members and will be assisted by staff from other Arigatou International Initiatives.

**"Children are for us a source of hope, they bear promise, and they confirm for us the sacredness of reality. We draw strength from them and from one another's commitments to them. In this context, we acknowledge with gratitude the Arigatou Foundation for initiating, convening, and facilitating the GNRC."**

*GNRC 1<sup>st</sup> Forum Statement. May, 2000, Tokyo, Japan*



Ending Violence Against Children: Faith Communities in Action







## 20 YEARS OF INTERFAITH COOPERATION FOR CHILDREN

A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE GLOBAL  
NETWORK OF RELIGIONS FOR CHILDREN

**2000 – 2020**

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With Recommendations for the Future