

## The Founding Story – Why Faith to Action Network Was Created

As we begin our year-long 15th anniversary celebration, we return to where it all started an idea rooted in faith, dialogue, and collaboration.

In **October 2010**, three organizations Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (DSW), Christian Connections for International Health (CCIH), and Muhammadiyah came together to explore an important question:

**Could faith communities across religions work together globally to advance family health and well-being?**

Through a feasibility study and participatory consultations, they examined the strategic and practical considerations of working across faiths to improve funding, supportive policies, and access to family planning and reproductive health services both within faith institutions and in the broader policy environment.

### From Vision to Commitment

The consultations culminated in a landmark validation meeting in **June 2011** in Nairobi, Kenya. Religious leaders from diverse faith traditions and regions gathered to discern a shared path forward.

Together, they issued the **Interfaith Declaration to Improve Family Health and Well-Being**, widely known as the Nairobi Declaration. In this groundbreaking commitment, religious leaders pledged to:

- **Leverage their networks to expand access to information and quality services on family planning and reproductive health consistent with their faith teachings.**
- **Strengthen advocacy for supportive policies and sustainable funding.**
- **Establish a global interfaith platform to sustain collaboration.**



*Faith leaders from diverse religions and regions at the consultative meeting, June 2011, Nairobi, Kenya, resulted in Interfaith Declaration*

From this mandate, **Faith to Action Network was born.**

### Building the Foundation

In **December 2012**, faith leaders met again in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where the Network's structure, operational systems, and coordination mechanisms were formally agreed upon.

Importantly, the Network was created as a needs-based platform shaped by religious leaders who recognized the importance of continuous learning, dialogue, and showcasing the immense contribution of faith communities to sustainable development.



*In December 2012, FBO leaders from diverse regions and faith traditions convened in Addis Ababa, where they agreed to establish and coordinate the global interfaith network, Faith to Action Network.*



*2013, Secretariat staff recruited*



*The delegate elect the Steering Council members during the global interfaith meeting in Addis Ababa Ethiopia.*



*2013, Steering Council Constituted*

## From Vision to Global Network

What began as a shared commitment has grown into a vibrant global interfaith movement. Over the past 15 years, the Network has, among many other milestones:

- Expanded faith engagement in global health and policy platforms, including the International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP) which now has a dedicated faith pre-conference and faith-focused track
- Convened International Women's Rights dialogues , deepening theological reflection and advancing gender justice.
- Strengthened faith participation in global advocacy spaces such as UNCPD and CSW
- Fostered interfaith collaboration and community cohesion across multiple countries through joint enviromental actions, sports, arts and reciprocal visits to places of worship.

## Why It Matters

Faith to Action Network was created because religious leaders understood something powerful: Faith communities are not peripheral to development they are central to it.

Across the globe, faith actors are trusted voices, service providers, advocates, bridge builders and stewards of change.

As we celebrate this 15th anniversary year, we honour the courage of those founding leaders who dared to imagine a different way one where faith and action work hand in hand for healthier families, gender justice, and peaceful, inclusive communities.

On the 15th of each month, we will continue to share stories of impact and reflection from across the Network.

**The journey began with a declaration. It continues with all of us.**