



Keeping Faith in 2030: Religions and the Sustainable Development Goals

Religions and Development in Ethiopia

Interdisciplinary conference in Addis Ababa 20th–21st September 2018

In recent years development agencies and major funders in the West have begun to recognise the role of religions in their work and are now increasingly funding projects that include religious actors. This corresponds to growing research on religion and development, and a wider interest of religion in the public sphere. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) process has also laid a greater focus on the cultural and religious roots of development goals and practices, seeking to include local actors on a greater scale than before.

This interdisciplinary conference explores how this global interest in the intersection between religions and development relates to current debates and practices in Ethiopia. How do religious values and practices affect/shape development outcomes? How do Ethiopian religious actors engage with the international and national development agenda and what input do they seek to make? What is the contribution of faith-based organisations to the non-governmental development sector? How do religious identities influence how development organisations and clients interact? What specific challenges arise for the engagement of faith actors in the increasingly plural religious landscape of Ethiopia? How has the Sustainable Development Goal process influenced the involvement of religious actors?

The two-day conference will bring together academics and practitioners to discuss this theme in various papers and workshop activities. We especially invite NGOs and FBOs working in Ethiopia to attend, as well as academics with an interest in this theme.

Conference organisers: Dr Jörg Haustein, SOAS, London
Professor Emma Tomalin, Leeds University, UK
Dr Dereje Feyissa, Life & Peace Institute, Addis Ababa

This conference is part of the international research network “Keeping Faith in 2030: Religions and the Sustainable Development Goals,” convened by the University of Leeds and the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. See religions-and-development.leeds.ac.uk/research-network

We thank our Ethiopian and international project partners for their collaboration and support:



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Programme

20 September 2018

9:00–9:30 Registration and Refreshments

9:30–10:00 Welcome and Introduction

10:00–12:00 Religion and Gender-Based Violence (SDG 5)

- Faith inspired action to end GBV. Lessons learnt from Somali Regional State of Ethiopia: Combating Gender-based Violence against Women and Girls in Dekasuftu Woreda – Duretti Haji, Islamic Relief Ethiopia
- Sustainable development through local knowledge: Understanding conjugal violence in rural Aksum, Ethiopia and the role of the Orthodox Täwahədo Church and clergy in addressing the problem – Romina Istratii, SOAS
- Faith based organizations contribution to the Ethiopian government commitment to end FGM and Child marriage by 2025 – Kidist Belayneh, Norwegian Church Aid

12:00–13:00 Lunch

13:00–15:00 Religion and Education for Development (SDG 4)

- Efforts to Integrate 'Sustainable Development' into the Curricula of Theological Institutions in Ethiopia: Breakthroughs, Challenges and Prospects – Professor Aklilu Dalelo, Addis Ababa University)
- Gender, Health and Theology Interconnection in Academia and Engagement – Addise Amado, EGST
- Preaching the Limits of Growth: Confining Development in Protestant Southern Ethiopia – Julian Sommerschuh, University of Cambridge

15:00–15:30 Refreshments

15:30–18:00 FBOs and Community Organising (SDG 16)

- The Role and Significance of Faith in Transformational Development in Ethiopia: a Practical Approach – Maregie Habtu, World Vision Ethiopia
- The Role of Religious Institutions in Rural Community Development: The Case of Sellassie Monastery of Debre Elias Woreda, Amhara National Regional State – Menberu Bekabil Workneh, Debre Markos University
- Self Help Groups in Holistic Transformational Development: Experiences from Ethiopian Kale Heywet Church – Dr Tesfaye Yacob, Kale Heywet Church
- Social Medias as an Alternative Space for Faith: Inter and Intra-Religions Polemics among the Ethiopian Diasporas – Mohammed Jemal Ahmed, Wollo University



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21 September 2018

9:00–10:30 Panel Discussion: Religion and Ethiopia's development vision

- Tezera Tazebew, University of Gondar
- Mohammed Yimer, Arba Minch University
- Mulugeta Jaleta Gobeno, Addis Ababa University
- Dr Andrew DeCort, EGST
- Dr Alelign Aschale Wudneh, Addis Ababa University

10:30–11:00 Refreshments

11:00–12:00 FBO/NGO Introductions

- Session devoted to FBOs and NGOs presenting their work in relation to the SDGs, as well as questions emerging for religions in engaging with the SDGs.

12:00–13:00 Lunch

13:00–15:00 Workshop “Religions and the SDGs”

- Set of workshop activities for exploring and discussing the practical engagement with SDGs by Ethiopian FBOs and NGOs.

15:00 Close and Refreshments

Registration

Workshop participation is free, but capacity is limited. To register your interest, please contact Dr Jörg Haustein: joerg.haustein@soas.ac.uk.