

BUILDING A HOPEFUL WORLD
FOR CHILDREN

GNRC

STRATEGY 2030





About Arigatou International

Arigatou International is “All for Children” and works with people from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds to build a better world for children. Believing that every girl and boy is a precious treasure of humanity, Arigatou International draws on universal principles of common good found in religious and spiritual traditions and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Arigatou employs interfaith and intercultural approaches to promote children’s rights and well-being, seeking to bring about positive change at all levels—from the grassroots to the global. Arigatou values children for who they are and fully involves them in its work, ensuring their safe and meaningful participation while affirming their human dignity. Arigatou International collaborates with religious leaders and faith communities, international agencies, civil society organizations, governments—and most importantly, children and young people themselves—in more than 80 countries around the world.



About Global Network of Religions for Children (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. 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.

**BUILDING A HOPEFUL WORLD
FOR CHILDREN**

GNRC STRATEGY 2030

Global Network of Religions for Children

2024





ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The GNRC Strategy 2030 was developed through an inclusive and collaborative process involving key stakeholders. The report on the comprehensive assessment of the GNRC network served as a basis for creating this Strategy. The GNRC coordinators, co-coordinators, contact persons, communication associates, working groups, the GNRC Secretariat, directors and staff of Arigatou International initiatives, the Arigatou International Advisory Group, and the Arigatou International leadership in Tokyo contributed in developing this Strategy. We are tremendously grateful for their participation and guidance.

We also express our deep gratitude to the GNRC Sixth Forum International Organizing Committee (IOC), its Senior Advisors, the Children's Advisory Group (CAG), the Sixth Forum Taskforces, the GNRC Sixth Forum Steering Committee, and everyone involved in the operational and strategic planning processes of the Forum for their invaluable inputs, which immensely contributed to this Strategy.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

APN	Alliance for the Protection of Children
BRAVE	Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism
CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CAG	Children’s Advisory Group
CAYIN	Children and Youth Interfaith Network of South Africa
CRAVE	Creating Resilience Against Violent Extremism
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECP	End Child Poverty
EEC	Ethics Education for Children
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FPCC	Faith and Positive Change for Children
GCCA	GNRC Country Communication Associate
GNRC	Global Network of Religions for Children
IAFSC	Interfaith Alliance for Safer Communities
INEB	International Network of Engaged Buddhists
IOC	GNRC Sixth Forum International Organizing Committee
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MENA	Middle East and Northern Africa
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PAC	Prayer and Action for Children
PESTEL	Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal and Environmental analysis
PVE	Prevention of Violent Extremism
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SO	Strategic Objective
SG	Strategic Goal
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CONVENOR



INTERFAITH COOPERATION FOR A HOPEFUL WORLD FOR CHILDREN

Children are the treasure of humanity and the creators of the future. However, looking around the globe today, we find that so many children are rapidly losing safe space, affected by wars and other armed conflicts, fleeing from their hometowns as refugees, and suffering from violence at home and sexual exploitation in cyberspace.

With the world seemingly moving further toward division, conflict, and discrimination, the efforts of religious communities, especially interfaith cooperation for the sake of the world's children, are more urgently needed than ever.

In 2002, Rev. Takeyasu Miyamoto, President of Arigatou International, spoke to the Special Session on Children of the United Nations General Assembly on behalf of the GNRC, pledging to generate "a silent revolution for children."

With the GNRC growing in 80 countries and new technologies making it easier for people around the world to connect, the role and influence of our members at the grassroots have grown exponentially. **We have a real opportunity to amplify our efforts and make revolutionary changes that ensure that no child is left behind.**

At the GNRC Sixth Forum in Abu Dhabi, in November 2024, we pledged to answer the call of the child. We continue collaborating across our different cultures, regions, religions, and spiritual traditions, working more closely with children, listening to their voices, and always keeping them at the heart of our efforts to build a safe, secure and sustainable world.

This GNRC Strategy 2030 will serve to guide the GNRC's ongoing effort to answer the call of the child. We can and must build a world where all children have the opportunity to grow, thrive, and reach their full potential. **Let us, together, build a hopeful world for and with children!**

Rev. Keishi Miyamoto
President, Arigatou International
Convenor, GNRC

LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY- GENERAL

THE CALL TO BUILD A SAFE, SECURE AND SUSTAINABLE WORLD

Much has changed since the GNRC was convened in 2000, but the Network's determination—to build a better world for children—is as resolute as ever.

This Strategy is launched at the GNRC Sixth Forum, marking its first milestone, and as we prepare to commemorate the GNRC's 25th anniversary in 2025. The Strategy builds on the tremendous work done by our members at the grassroots and the decades of impact that the Network has had on children, families, and communities around the globe. It reaffirms the GNRC's vision and mission and sets out the Network's strategic goals for 2030. It lays out the steps to achieve more significant and profound impact as we work to protect all children, build their resiliency and hope, and free up their limitless potential.

This Strategy is the result of a process of deep reflection and extensive consultation and engagement with all our stakeholders, including children and young people, which captured diverse ideas, views, and aspirations. It responds to the rapid changes we are witnessing in the world, including increased violence against children, widening inequalities, more conflicts, more climate-related disasters, food insecurity, and the digital revolution.

The Strategy is our answer to the call of the child. It responds to the valuable advice from the planning process of the GNRC



Sixth Forum, in which senior religious leaders from diverse faith and spiritual traditions and leaders from multilateral, intergovernmental, and non-governmental organizations advised the GNRC Sixth Forum. The Strategy provides the operational framework for the Abu Dhabi Declaration and Call to Action adopted at the GNRC Sixth Forum in November 2024.

The GNRC recognizes that **children must be actively involved in shaping their futures**. As such, child and youth participation is at the heart of this Strategy, its implementation, and all our efforts. We also acknowledge with deep gratitude the extraordinary support of the GNRC members, staff, partners, and the Arigatou International leadership, without whom we could not prepare or carry out this Strategy.

Our ambition is immense, but with all of us working together—religious and spiritual leaders, their communities, GNRC members, bilateral and multilateral partners, youth, and children—**we can indeed build a hopeful, safe, secure, and sustainable world for all children**.

Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali
Secretary-General, GNRC
Director, Arigatou International – Nairobi

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We formulated the GNRC Strategy 2030 to guide Network members in mobilizing faith communities, religious and spiritual leaders, partners, and key stakeholders towards building a hopeful and peaceful world for and with children. The Strategy outlines an operational framework that will guide and enhance the performance of the Network to effectively fulfil this mission by 2030. It highlights and identifies key focus areas – Safety, Security and Sustainability – and places priority where the need is most critical and underscores the GNRC’s commitment to upholding and centering the rights of children as stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

The Strategy has been developed through a consultative and participatory process with members, partners, donors, and stakeholders. Among those who played a key role in its formulation are the GNRC coordinators, co-coordinators and contact persons, the GNRC Secretariat, GNRC working groups; and staff and directors of Arigatou International and its initiatives. This document has also benefited from inputs and ideas from the GNRC Sixth Forum planning process that incorporated guidance from the leadership of the Forum, including its senior advisors, the International Organizing Committee, Forum taskforces, and the Forum Steering Committee.

The formulation process for the Strategy began with a comprehensive assessment of the GNRC that identified the Network’s strengths and weaknesses as well as priority focus areas. Following the assessment, a thorough analysis of the internal and external environments in which the Network operates was conducted with participation from GNRC coordinators and contact persons in all regions. The ideas and recommendations from the GNRC Sixth Forum provided added context and currency and helped flag the most urgent issues requiring the attention of the world’s faith communities and their leaders.

Thus, the GNRC Strategy 2030 will focus on three strategic goals with 12 objectives identified through the assessment and during the planning of the GNRC Sixth Forum. These are:

1. Building a safe world with children
 - i) Building family resilience to guarantee the safety and well-being of children
 - ii) Fostering supportive communities
 - iii) Safeguarding children against online abuse and sexual exploitation
 - iv) Promoting preparedness and children’s mental health amidst emerging crises and pandemics

2. Building a secure world with children
 - i) Addressing the root causes of conflicts and wars
 - ii) Combating xenophobia, hate crimes, and extremism
 - iii) Building resilience to conflicts
 - iv) Fostering peaceful, inclusive, and thriving communities
3. Building a sustainable world with children
 - i) Fostering responsible lifestyles
 - ii) Ending hunger, child poverty, and inequality
 - iii) Promoting ethical values and education for sustainable development
 - iv) Taking action for children affected by climate change

The Strategy will be broken down further into annual operational work plans. Implementation will be guided by the Implementation Matrix of the GNRC Strategy 2030 – *Answering the Call of the Child*, which provides a roadmap outlining key milestones till 2030, detailing output targets, indicators, outcomes, and corresponding timelines. Each of the areas of intervention planned for implementation has been evaluated and selected based on the GNRC’s priorities and focus areas. To ensure effective implementation, a robust monitoring and evaluation framework will track progress against set targets. Reviews will take place biennially, with the first review scheduled at the end of 2026 and the second and third reviews at the end of 2028 and 2030, respectively.

To realize the objectives outlined in the Strategy, a coordinating team will be established comprising of members of the GNRC Secretariat and Arigatou International initiatives, as well as key GNRC actors (including members, regional working groups, national committees, youth networks, children’s committees and the interfaith women in action networks). The GNRC Secretariat will be responsible for driving, facilitating and monitoring progress of the Strategy’s implementation and in doing so will draw on the resources available through Arigatou International and its initiatives. A monitoring and evaluation framework has been developed to track progress and facilitate performance reviews against strategically set targets.

GLOBAL CONTEXT FOR CHILDREN: 2024

We live in a world of incredible scientific breakthroughs, tremendous economic prosperity, and greater gender equality than ever before. Yet the number of children globally, on and offline, who are facing grievous harm and stand in need of protection has never been higher.

According to UNICEF, nearly one billion children live in multidimensional poverty, and another 333 million children live in extreme poverty.¹ These shocking, historically unprecedented figures are being exacerbated by growing inequality, the long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, devastating food and energy crises, a climate emergency, and new and protracted conflicts. Between the end of 2022 and the beginning of 2024, more than 10.5 million² children were forced to flee their homes, mainly due to conflict and violence. The number of displaced children around the world is now estimated to be over 50 million,³ while the number of those living in conflict zones and vulnerable to grave human rights abuse exceeds 460 million.⁴

Children in these conditions not only face imminent danger to their lives but also a highly uncertain future with the trust between them and the systems that should nurture them at breaking point or having broken already. The current global disregard for the sanctity and inherent dignity of human life, along with our collective violation of the sacred trust we have as guardians of future generations, represent deeply troubling desecrations of the shared values that lie at the bedrock of all our faiths.

Even in supposedly “normal,” stable, and peaceful settings, children confront a silent emergency of extreme poverty, inequality, violence, and exploitation, some of it in the name of religion. Gender-based discrimination, especially affecting girls, or harmful traditional practices such as the continuing prevalence of child marriage and female genital mutilation and cutting are examples of harmful practices that faith communities have a special role in preventing.

The GNRC is the only global network of organizations and individuals that takes an interfaith approach to building a better world for children. No other network focuses exclusively on children and faith like the GNRC. Since its inauguration in 2000, the GNRC has directly and indirectly impacted the lives of more than 100 million people worldwide. Our members are spread over 80 countries on six continents, work with the most profound sense of purpose, and are focused on ensuring that all children live in a hopeful world free of violence.

¹ <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/14-billion-children-globally-missing-out-basic-social-protection-according-latest>

² <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/worlds-10-largest-crises-force-over-10-million-children-their-homes-one-year>

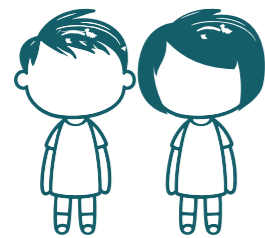
³ Ibid.

⁴ <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/unicef-executive-director-catherine-russell-remarks-launch-unicefs-2024-humanitarian>

GLOBAL CONTEXT FOR CHILDREN

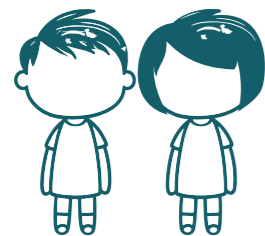
We live in a world of incredible scientific breakthroughs, tremendous economic prosperity, and greater gender equality than ever before. **Yet the number of children globally, on and offline, who are facing grievous harm and stand in need of protection has never been higher.**

IN 2024



ONE BILLION

children live in **multidimensional poverty.**



333 MILLION

children live in **extreme poverty** – UNICEF



Wars and conflicts have so far displaced over

50 MILLION



Between the end of **2022** and the beginning of **2024**

10.5 MILLION

children were forced to flee their homes, mainly due to conflict and violence – UNHCR

The number of those living in conflict **zones and vulnerable** to grave human rights violations

460 MILLION

– UNICEF

GNRC 20 YEARS

OUR VISION

A hopeful and peaceful world where every human being and institution takes full responsibility for the dignity, safety, joy, and well-being of all children.

OUR MISSION

To mobilize the potential of all religions and empower grassroots actors to make unique faith-based contributions to the realization of every child's right to attain full physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, ethical, and social development while seeking partnership with leaders, individuals, and communities, international, regional, and national institutions, grassroots organizations, and people of goodwill everywhere.



OBJECTIVES OF THE GNRC



Mobilize GNRC members, faith communities, religious leaders, and other stakeholders to make uniquely faith-based contributions to building a better world for children.



Engage adults and children in interfaith cooperation, using a participatory approach that ensures their safety and security while amplifying their voices to promote interreligious dialogue.



Increase actions by GNRC members, faith communities, religious leaders, and other stakeholders to build a global movement for children that enables and safeguards opportunities for children to engage with others for a sustainable future for children.



Promote and advocate for protecting children's rights as defined by official documents, including the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) and the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#).



Support members and partners in their efforts to build a world where all children can grow up in safe and secure environments that foster their development and well-being.



2.0 OVERVIEW OF THE GNRC

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.⁵ Compelled by 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.

It was at this first global Forum that the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) was founded. Today, the GNRC is a global-scale interfaith network of organizations and individuals specifically dedicated to securing the rights and well-being of children everywhere. The global forums remain a flagship activity of the GNRC and are held every four to five years. The forums bring together diverse stakeholders – senior leaders from the world's religious and spiritual traditions, GNRC members, children, youth, policymakers, and representatives from governmental, intergovernmental, multilateral, and child-focused grassroots organizations – to discuss and identify concrete actions to address issues faced by children.

Over the last 25 years, the GNRC has spread to 80 countries around the world—30 in Africa, 11 in Asia, 9 in Europe, 14 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 14 in the Middle East and North Africa, and two in North America.⁶ GNRC members come from all of the world's major religions and spiritual traditions and are committed to creating a world where every child can grow up safe and sound—a world where every child has the chance to shine. Members work for children's rights and well-being at all levels with deep conviction that this is the most direct path to a world of peace and justice for all.

2.1 VISION, MISSION, AND CORE VALUES

Vision

A hopeful and peaceful world where every human being and institution takes full responsibility for the dignity, safety, joy, and well-being of **all** children.

The GNRC is the only global network of organizations and individuals that takes an interfaith approach to building a better world for children. No other network focuses exclusively on children and faith like the GNRC. Since its inauguration in 2000, the GNRC has directly and indirectly impacted the lives

⁵ <https://gnrc.net/en/knowledge-center/documents/document/1200-gnrc-assessment-report>.

⁶ <https://gnrc.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/GNRC-Annual-Report-2022-2023-Spreads.pdf>

of more than **100 MILLION** people worldwide. Our members are spread over 80 countries on six continents, work with the most profound sense of purpose, and are focused on ensuring that all children live in a hopeful world, free of violence.

Mission

To mobilize the potential of all religions and empower grassroots actors to make unique faith-based contributions to the realization of every child's right to attain full physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, ethical, and social development while seeking partnership with leaders, individuals, and communities, international, regional, and national institutions, grassroots organizations, and people of goodwill everywhere.

Steadfast in our belief in the infinite value of every human life and the shared universal values and common humanity of all peoples, the mission of the GNRC is fulfilled by its members, who come from all of the world's major religions and spiritual traditions and are committed to creating a world where every child can grow up safe and sound—a world where every child has the chance to shine. Members work for children's rights and well-being at all levels with deep conviction that this is the most direct path to a world of peace and justice for all.

Core Values and Guiding Principles

The work of the GNRC is rooted in and guided by the following values:

- a) Interfaith, Intercultural, and Intergenerational
- b) Idealistic, Visionary, and Hopeful
- c) Inclusive, Compassionate, and Caring
- d) Inspiring and Empowering
- e) Cooperative, Responsible, and driven by the spirit of Volunteerism.

2.2 THE GNRC STRATEGIC NICHE AND COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

No other organization or network exists in the world whose singular, sole, and exclusive mission is to build a better world for children through interfaith cooperation. The GNRC fills this gap.

Through its broad, far-reaching structures comprising committees and networks, children's committees, anchor organizations, regional working groups, youth networks, and interfaith women in action, the GNRC mobilizes faith and spiritual leaders and their communities to bring the values of faith to bear in building a better world for children. These actors inform decision-making and implementation of GNRC activities, projects, and programs at all levels, from grassroots to global.

The GNRC's unique mandate is translated into action by highly committed, experienced, and competent members who function within a flexible yet structured and welcoming network that encourages inclusivity and collaboration. GNRC members' deep understanding of children's issues at the grassroots level has been critical to the Network's success in helping it maximize resources, extend its reach, and deliver impact. Members' invaluable expertise has shaped the targeted outputs of the objectives of this Strategy, ensuring that all efforts are grounded in practicality and relevance.

The GNRC typically holds a global forum every four to five years, bringing together diverse stakeholders, including GNRC members, religious leaders, children, youth, and representatives of international institutions, governments, and civil society organizations. The forums provide a valuable platform for participants to share knowledge, create and strengthen partnerships, build synergies, and address the challenges they encounter in advancing children's rights.

2.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE GNRC

- ❑ Mobilize GNRC members, faith communities, religious leaders, and other stakeholders to make uniquely faith-based contributions to building a better world for children.
- ❑ Engage adults and children in interfaith cooperation, using a participatory approach that ensures their safety and security while amplifying their voices to promote interreligious dialogue.
- ❑ Increase actions by GNRC members, faith communities, religious leaders, and other stakeholders to build a global movement for children that enables and safeguards opportunities for children to engage with others for a sustainable future for children.
- ❑ Promote and advocate for protecting children's rights as defined by official documents, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- ❑ Support members and partners in their efforts to build a world where all children can grow up in safe and secure environments that foster their development and well-being.

2.4 SCOPE OF THE GNRC

The scope of the GNRC is broad and includes a range of initiatives and activities aimed at building a better world for children and advancing children's rights and well-being. These include promoting interfaith cooperation and intergenerational dialogue and action, promoting ethical and moral values in children, engaging in advocacy and outreach initiatives to raise awareness about issues affecting children, and developing educational resources for children.

The GNRC addresses specific challenges facing children in different parts of the world. These challenges include ending violence against children, eradicating child poverty, and nurturing child spirituality, among others. Overall, the scope of GNRC is focused on promoting the well-being and rights of children through interfaith cooperation, education, and advocacy.

2.5 GNRC STRUCTURE

The GNRC operates through a flexible network promoting interfaith cooperation and collaboration. A highly dedicated team of volunteer coordinators and contact persons supported by co-coordinators, youth coordinators, and GNRC Country Communication Associates (GCCAs) drive GNRC activities at the grassroots, national, and regional levels, engaging local communities and facilitating collaboration with other stakeholders.

These dedicated teams also function as the veins and arteries of the GNRC, connecting and coordinating members, committees, and local and national networks in 80 countries to the GNRC Secretariat—the heart

of the Network. (See Appendix E for the Guidelines for GNRC Coordinators, Contact Persons, and Country Communications Associates).

With its unique structure, the GNRC also promotes collaboration and coordination with and among Arigatou International's other initiatives: Ethics Education for Children, Prayer and Action for Children, and End Child Poverty. GNRC members actively engage with these initiatives, providing reach and expertise that amplifies their efforts and makes the most of available resources.

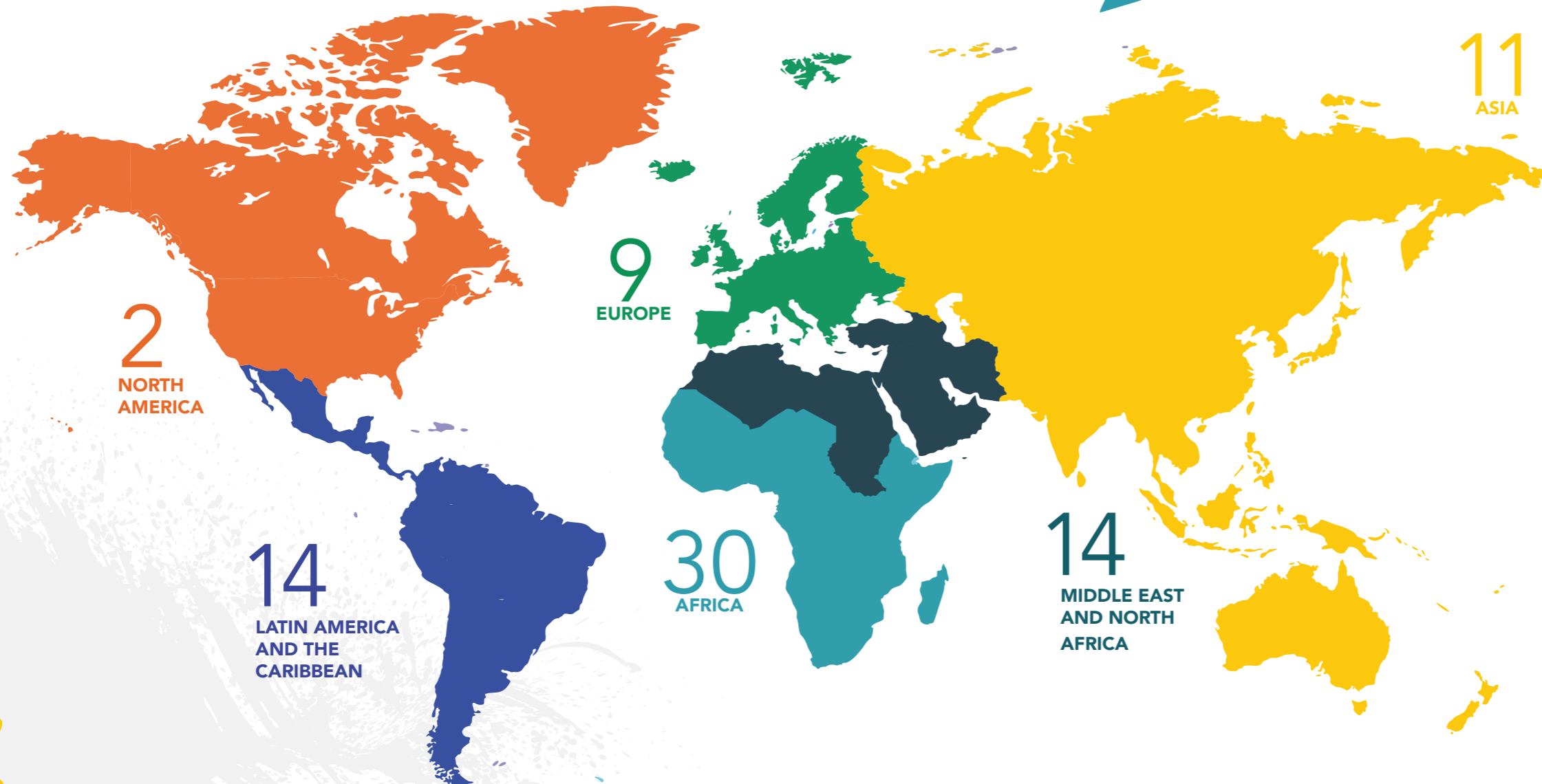
The GNRC Network and Its Members

GNRC members and partners include faith-based organizations, groups, and individuals working with and for children worldwide. GNRC members are:

- ❑ Actively engaged in promoting children's rights and well-being.
- ❑ In full harmony with the aims and work of the GNRC and Arigatou International.
- ❑ Willing to cooperate with other GNRC members to build a better world for children.
- ❑ Ready to establish the GNRC at local, national, sub-regional, and regional levels, with the facilitation and endorsement of the GNRC Secretariat and Arigatou International.



OUR REACH ACROSS THE WORLD



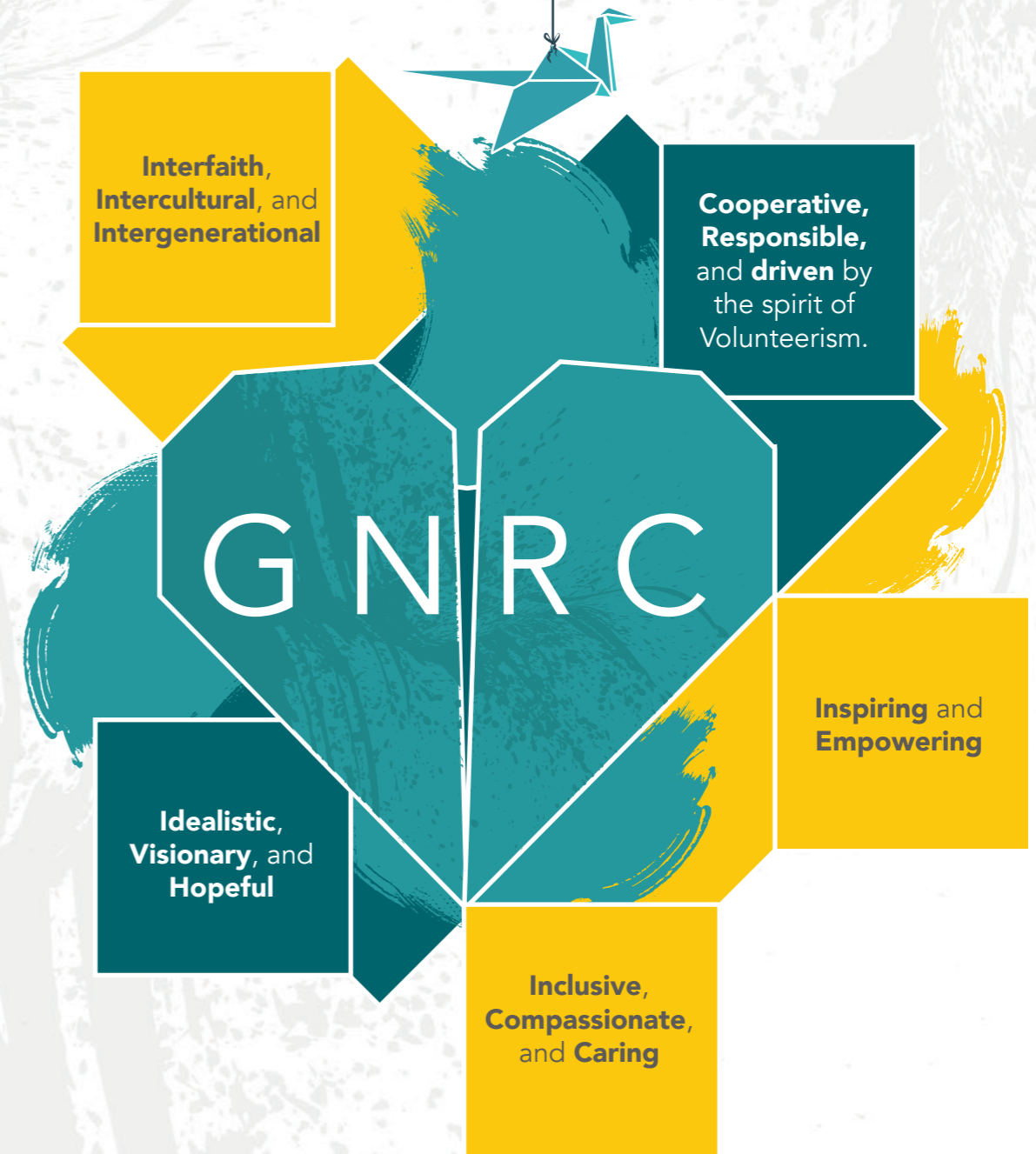
In these 80 countries, the GNRC operates through a flexible network promoting interfaith cooperation and collaboration. A highly dedicated team of volunteer coordinators and contact persons supported by co-coordinators, youth coordinators, and GNRC Country Communication Associates (GCCAs) drive GNRC activities at the grassroots, national, and regional levels, engaging local communities and facilitating collaboration with other stakeholders.

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CORE VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The work of the GNRC is rooted in, and guided by the following values:



3.0 DEVELOPMENT OF THE GNRC STRATEGY 2030

The development of the GNRC Strategy 2030 was an inclusive and collaborative process that involved all key stakeholders. GNRC coordinators, co-coordinators, and contact persons, the GNRC Secretariat, GNRC working groups, staff of Arigatou International initiatives, directors of Arigatou International initiatives, and the Arigatou International leadership in Tokyo all provided inputs to this Strategy in a three-phase consultation process.

Phase I

The formulation process involved an extensive assessment of the entire Network in phase I. The goal of the assessment was to appraise the Network's status, including its strengths, opportunities, and challenges. The assessment covered and provided recommendations in three main areas: *GNRC Network and Connectivity*; *'Health' and Capacity*; and *Results, Impact, and Significance*.

One hundred adults participated in in-depth interviews, and 81 children and three Arigatou International directors participated 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. 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*.

Phase II

In Phase II of the strategic planning, GNRC's internal and external environments were examined through Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) and Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environment, and Legal (PESTEL) analyses (see Appendices A and B). The process began with national and regional consultations of all GNRC members. They identified challenges and key action areas which were further refined in successive discussions between the GNRC Secretariat and GNRC member representatives, and the GNRC Secretariat and senior representatives of other Arigatou International initiatives.

Phase III

In this phase, recommendations from the GNRC Sixth Forum planning process were integrated into the Strategy 2030. This input came largely from the GNRC Sixth Forum IOC, senior advisors, CAG, Sixth Forum Steering Committee, and the Forum

taskforces. The ideas and recommendations from leaders of major world religious and spiritual traditions, GNRC members, and representatives from governmental, intergovernmental, and non-governmental organizations were incorporated into this document.

Phase IV

In this phase, we returned to GNRC members around the world to have them review and validate the Strategy. This was done through two primary platforms: regional meetings with GNRC members in Africa, Asia, Europe, MENA and the Americas, and five Pre-Forum preparatory meetings involving GNRC members and key stakeholders.

120 GNRC members from five regions participated in the online regional meetings. The Pre-Forum meetings, held in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), Amman (Jordan), Panama City (Panama), and (India) not only included GNRC members but were also attended by faith and spiritual leaders, GNRC partners, and representatives from UN, governmental, intergovernmental, and non-governmental organizations. Twenty-five national consultations convened by GNRC members made contributions to this strategy. About 200 participants attended the Pre-Forum meetings in person and virtually.

Data and information collected in all phases helped shape the GNRC's strategic direction as articulated in this Strategy.



4.0 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE GNRC STRATEGY 2030

Children are the custodians of the future, embodying the hopes and dreams of tomorrow. Ensuring their safety, security, and well-being is not just a responsibility but a moral imperative for the current generation.

GNRC's strengths are grassroots membership and action. Localization has been at the core of the Network's modus operandi since its inception. The Network respects and recognizes the immense role that grassroots and local actors play. GNRC members set their own agendas, develop solutions, and leverage their leadership and resources to implement transformational changes. Guided by the principle of subsidiarity, this Strategy is rooted in over two decades of experience demonstrating the importance of local leadership and grassroots actions for greater impact, effectiveness, and sustainability.

Over the past seven years, GNRC members have been guided by the 10 Panama Commitments discussed and adopted during the GNRC Fifth Forum. Participants at the Forum in Panama pledged to do all they could to end violence against children and advocate for their rights and well-being. In the period since the Forum, GNRC members have worked hard to deliver on these commitments and have made significant progress. Their interventions have directly impacted over 40 million (40,099,811) individuals and children through various projects and programs in partnership with grassroots, national, regional, and global organizations.

Despite these efforts, more needs to be done. More children than ever worldwide are facing harm and abuse, including grave human rights violations, due to violent conflict, climate disasters and global economic, food and health crises. The COVID-19 pandemic pushed an additional 150 million children into multidimensional poverty (bringing the total number of children living in poverty to almost 1.4 billion)⁷, exacerbated existing crises, and contributed to the unprecedented increase in displaced children (over 50 million)⁸.

To address these challenges, the GNRC Strategy 2030 provides a framework with goals and objectives to guide members in implementing activities, projects, and programs at all levels.

⁷ <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/14-billion-children-globally-missing-out-basic-social-protection-according-latest>

⁸ <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/worlds-10-largest-crises-force-over-10-million-children-their-homes-one-year>

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE GNRC STRATEGY 2030

The GNRC Sixth Forum is the first significant activity in this Strategy.



SAFE



SECURE



SUSTAINABLE

Interfaith Cooperation to BUILD A

HOPEFUL World for Children

4.1 GNRC STRATEGIC GOALS

Three Strategic Goals, each to be achieved through four Strategic Objectives, will guide the work of GNRC members until 2030. Together, the Goals and Objectives of this Strategy contribute to the GNRC's overarching vision of a hopeful and peaceful world where every human being and institution takes full responsibility for the dignity, safety, joy, and well-being of **all** children.

The GNRC Sixth Forum is the first significant activity in this Strategy. Building on the Abu Dhabi Declaration and the Abu Dhabi Plan of Action adopted at the Sixth Forum, the Implementation Matrix of the GNRC Strategy 2030 – *Answering the Call of the Child*, details key activities that the GNRC members and partners will undertake to achieve these goals and objectives. Children will be involved in all activities whenever appropriate, possible, and necessary, in accordance with their evolving capacities.

The GNRC Strategy 2030 goals are:

- Strategic Goal One (SG 1): Building a safe world for, and with children
- Strategic Goal Two (SG 2): Building a secure world for, and with children
- Strategic Goal Three (SG 3): Building a sustainable world for, and with children

4.1.1 Building a Safe World for, and with Children

Children around the world face harm on multiple fronts. The intensification of multidimensional challenges from conflicts, global health, food, and economic shocks, coupled with new and unprecedented dangers from the internet and digital technologies, climate change, and other emerging trends, threaten the safety, mental health, and well-being of billions of children. Additionally, religion is often erroneously used to commit and justify harmful social and cultural practices against children, such as child marriage, exclusion of girls from education and female genital mutilation.

For most children, safety comes from the love, support, and sense of belonging they receive within their families. Working with faith and spiritual leaders and their communities, GNRC members will focus on building family resilience, fostering supportive communities, and on eliminating harmful social and cultural norms. They will work closely with government partners to influence social protection, making it stronger and adequately responsive to the real situations of children and their caregivers.

Leveraging their collectively vast networks and grassroots reach, GNRC members will also increase their efforts to create protective online and real-world environments for children. This includes advocating for more investment from governments, intergovernmental, non-governmental, and multilateral organizations, and the private sector, to safeguard children against all forms of violence, including online abuse and sexual exploitation.

4.1.2 Building a Secure World for, and with Children

Children face significant dangers and harm as threats to international peace and security rise globally. Addressing these hazards requires urgent action to build trust, foster constructive dialogue, and deepen cooperation.

Faith and spiritual leaders are uniquely positioned to encourage coexistence, tolerance and inclusivity in their communities. It is imperative that they impart the next generation of faith leaders and practitioners with the tools and wisdom to address the root causes of xenophobia, hate crimes, and extremism. Through their collectively vast networks and grassroots reach, GNRC members will support these efforts with a focus on promoting ethics education.

GNRC members will also increase their contribution to safeguarding the rights of children who have been affected by conflict, and especially those who are displaced. They will continue to advocate for greater investment by governments and intergovernmental, non-governmental, and multilateral organizations to address the root causes of conflict, build peace, promote tolerance, eliminate discrimination, and foster social cohesion.

4.1.3 Building a Sustainable World for, and with Children

Protecting our planet is essential for the well-being of current and future generations. Children are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation. Ensuring a sustainable environment is an investment in their future. We must strive diligently to preserve natural resources, mitigate climate change, and ensure our planet can continue to support life for future generations.

To realize our shared vision of a sustainable future where children live in harmony with one another and with nature, free from hunger, extreme poverty, and inequality, GNRC members will make strategic and transformative changes. They will increase their efforts and investments in fostering responsible lifestyles; eradicating hunger, child poverty, and inequality; promoting ethical values and education for sustainable development; and taking action for children affected by climate change.

GNRC members will work with faith leaders to promote the principles of stewardship and Sacred Ecology. Members will also advocate for more investment from governments, intergovernmental, non-governmental, and multilateral organizations, and the private sector in building a sustainable world for children.

4.2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES⁹

Recognizing the unique vulnerabilities and potential of children, GNRC has established the following objectives and outcomes aimed at guiding our programming as we approach the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

4.2.1 Strategic Objectives under Building a Safe World for, and with Children

As we navigate an era characterized by an unprecedented rise in conflicts, uncharted digital advancements, and escalating global crises, we must develop comprehensive strategies to safeguard our future generations.

By increasing their own efforts and contributions, and advocating for greater investment by governments, intergovernmental, non-governmental, and multilateral organizations, and the private sector, GNRC members will seek to achieve the following objectives and outcomes by 2030:

⁹ GNRC local and country networks, working group and/or committees will determine specific and/or additional focus areas under the various strategic objectives.

THE GNRC STRATEGY 2030 GOALS ARE:



1. SAFE

Building a Safe World for, and with Children



As we navigate an era characterized by an unprecedented rise in conflicts, uncharted digital advancements, and escalating global crises, we must develop comprehensive strategies to safeguard our future generations.

By increasing their own efforts and contributions, and advocating for greater investment by governments, intergovernmental, non-governmental, and multilateral organizations, and the private sector, GNRC members will seek to achieve the following objectives and outcomes by 2030.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1.

Building a **Safe** World for, and with Children

As we navigate an era characterized by an unprecedented rise in conflicts, unchartered digital advancements, and escalating global crises, we must develop comprehensive strategies to safeguard our future generations.

By increasing their own efforts and contributions, and advocating for greater investment by governments, intergovernmental, non-governmental, and multilateral organizations, and the private sector, GNRC members will seek to achieve the following objectives and outcomes by 2030.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES	SDG TARGETS
I. Build family resilience to guarantee the safety and well-being of children	a. Strong families built to cushion children against external shocks	1.5
	b. Children's spiritual development nurtured	4.7
	c. Families empowered to challenge social and cultural norms that condone all forms of violence	16.1
	d. Children protected against sexual exploitation and abuse in the physical world	16.2
II. Improve the safety of children through collaborative communities	a. Strengthened collaboration within and between faith communities	17.16
	b. Harmful practices targeting children, especially girls (such as FGM, child marriages and exclusion of girls in education) eliminated	5.3
	c. Enhanced partnerships between schools, parents, faith actors, governments, private sector, and communities	17.16
	d. Increased and more meaningful intergenerational and transgenerational dialogue and action	16.7
III. Safeguard the dignity of the child in the digital world	a. The dignity of children, including adolescents, in the digital environment is safeguarded	16.2
	b. Children, including adolescents, protected against sexual exploitation and abuse in the virtual world	16.2, 5.2
	c. Children imparted with enhanced digital literacy education and skills and ethical values	4.7,4.a,
	d. Ethics education improved to foster a human-centered approach to the increasing use and propagation of technologies	4.7
IV. Address global shocks, emerging crises and pandemics	a. Increased child-centered actions by faith communities in emergency and disaster preparedness and response	11.5,11.b
	b. Increased children's mental health and psycho-social support	3.4
	c. Enhanced efforts to promote greater and equitable access to vaccines and address setbacks in global immunization efforts	3.8, 3.b



2. SECURE

Building a **Secure** World for, and with Children



As we navigate an era characterized by an unprecedented rise in conflicts, uncharted digital advancements, and escalating global crises, we must develop comprehensive strategies to safeguard our future generations.

By increasing their own efforts and contributions, and advocating for greater investment by governments, intergovernmental, non-governmental, and multilateral organizations, and the private sector, GNRC members will seek to achieve the following objectives and outcomes by 2030.

2.

Building a **Secure** World for, and with Children

The GNRC recognizes the devastating impact of war on children and women and the unprecedented number of people caught in violent conflict around the world today, including those experiencing forced and protracted displacement.

By increasing their own efforts and contributions, and advocating for greater investment by governments, intergovernmental, non-governmental, and multilateral organizations, and the private sector, GNRC members will seek to achieve the following objectives and outcomes by 2030.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES	SDG TARGETS
I. Address the root causes of conflicts and wars	a. Impact of conflict and wars on children addressed	16.1,16.2
	b. Increased concerted efforts and commitments to safeguard the rights and well-being of displaced people	8.7, 10.7
	c. Root causes of wars and conflicts addressed beyond traditional responses	16.3, 16.a
II. Prevent and combat xenophobia, hate crimes, and extremism	a. Improved contextualized understanding of how to empower children and adolescents for peace and resilience building that contributes to prevention of violent extremism	4.7, 16.a
	b. The next generation of interfaith leaders and practitioners identified, trained and deployed to address root causes of xenophobia, hate crimes and extremism	4.7, 16.a
	c. Reduced discrimination, prejudice and intolerance	10.3, 16.b
III. Build peaceful and inclusive communities	a. Faith communities' pivotal role in preventing violence and conflicts applied and deployed	16.7,17.16
	b. Role of religion and spiritual traditions in encouraging co-existence and building resilient communities enhanced	11.b, 16.b
	c. Increased investment in ethics education for peaceful and inclusive societies	4.7
	d. Children's meaningful participation in building inclusive, equitable, and ethical communities enhanced	4.7
IV. Build resilience to conflict	a. Resources from faith and spiritual traditions applied to building community resilience to conflicts	16.a, 17.17
	b. Intrafaith and interfaith tools developed to address conflicts in communities	17.17



3. SUSTAINABLE

Building a **Sustainable** World for, and with Children



GNRC members will strive to make strategic, transformative changes to realize our shared vision for a sustainable future where children live in harmony with one another and with nature, free from hunger, extreme poverty, and inequality.

By increasing their own efforts and inputs, and advocating for greater investment by governments, intergovernmental, non-governmental, and multilateral organizations, and the private sector, GNRC members will seek to achieve the following objectives and outcomes by 2030.

3.

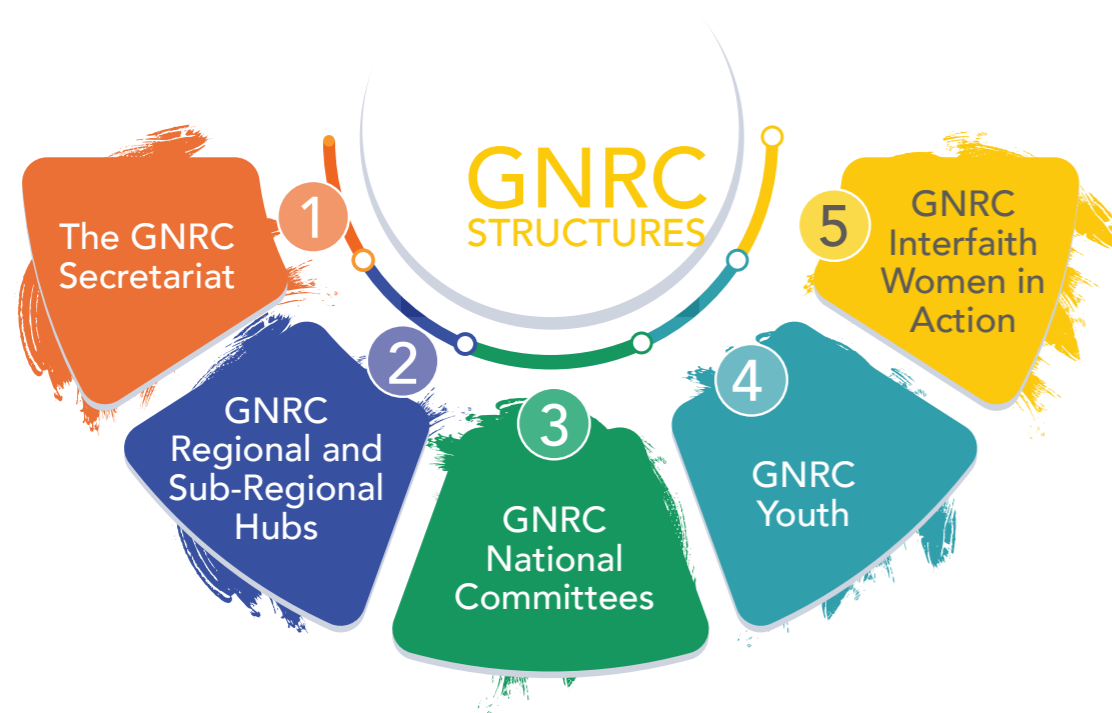
Building a Sustainable World for, and with Children

GNRC members will strive to make strategic, transformative changes to realize our shared vision for a sustainable future where children live in harmony with one another and with nature, free from hunger, extreme poverty, and inequality.

By increasing their own efforts and inputs, and advocating for greater investment by governments, intergovernmental, non-governmental, and multilateral organizations, and the private sector, GNRC members will seek to achieve the following objectives and outcomes by 2030.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES	SDG TARGETS
I. Foster responsible lifestyles	a. Principles of stewardship that care for creation are incorporated into daily practices	12.8, 12.a
	b. Increased faith-led advocacy on the disproportionate impacts of climate and environmental hazards on vulnerable communities (including protection of children's play spaces)	11.7, 13.1, 13.3
	c. Sacred Ecology-informed education for climate action and sustainable practices within faith communities increased	4.7, 13.3
	d. Faith communities engaged in promoting stewardship and shaping reciprocal relationships between humans and environment	12.8, 13.3
II. End hunger, child poverty, and inequality	a. Improved nutrition, food, and water security to address child hunger, with emphasis on protection of land and water quality	2.1, 2.2, 2.4
	b. Increased engagement with children to co-create solutions to tackle poverty and inequality by fostering their exploration of values and relationships	1.1, 4.7
	c. Enhanced role of faith communities in promoting equal opportunities for all children, especially girls	5.5, 10.3
	d. Increased faith-led advocacy to alleviate childhood poverty and address structural causes of inequality	1.1, 1.2, 1.b, 10.2, 10.3
III. Transform education for a sustainable future	a. Enhanced inclusive and holistic education, ensuring every child's access to quality learning	4.1, 4.7
	b. The nexus between faith, values, ethics, and education for sustainable development strengthened	4.7
	c. Education on sustainable development enhanced within faith communities and society at large	4.7
	d. Transformative pedagogies in education based on dialogue and participatory approaches that empower children as active agents of change integrated	4.7
	e. Role of interfaith education to contribute to freedom of religion or belief fostered	4.7, 16.10, 16.b
	f. Education on environmental justice promoted through the lens of community spaces where people live, play, learn, and pray	4.7, 11.7
IV. Climate-conscious stewardship	a. Nexus between climate change, child poverty, food security, displacement, and conflicts identified and addressed	1.1, 1.b, 2.1, 2.4, 13.1, 13.2, 16.1
	b. A resilient world and healthy environments for children fostered	11.7
	c. Greater focus on the importance of behavioral and policy changes to promote climate action and justice among children	13.3
	d. Enhanced role of interfaith, multisectoral collaboration in influencing climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies	13.b, 17.17
	e. Enhanced understanding of the importance of justice in environmental action	13.2, 15.9, 16.3, 16.10

IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES



5.0 IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES

GNRC members and grassroots actors have developed context-specific activities that are tailored to the specific challenges that the children in their countries and communities face. This Strategy brings together these various activities, interventions, projects, and programs within the umbrella of the GNRC’s strategic goals and objectives to be achieved by 2030.

To ensure that goals and objectives of the Strategy are met, an implementation matrix has been developed containing a roadmap detailing key milestones to be achieved by 2030, along with corresponding activities, outcomes, indicators, responsibilities and timelines. (For details, see the Implementation Matrix of the GNRC Strategy 2030 – *Answering the Call of the Child*).

Guided and supported by the GNRC Secretariat, execution of this Strategy will be undertaken by the GNRC members and partners who will be supported by the following GNRC structures.

5.1 THE GNRC SECRETARIAT

The GNRC Secretariat, based at Arigatou International – Nairobi, provides strategic guidance, coordination, and support to the GNRC members in their daily efforts to build a better world for children. Working closely with other Arigatou International initiatives, the Secretariat supports the GNRC members in various ways, including capacity building on advocacy and resource mobilization. The Secretariat team, led by the GNRC Secretary-General, consists of core and auxiliary staff members, supporting GNRC members through their respective coordinators, co-coordinators, GCCAs, and thematic focal points.

5.2 THE GNRC REGIONAL AND SUBREGIONAL HUBS

The GNRC has established twelve regional and sub-regional hubs based on natural geographic and linguistic divisions, for ease of coordination. These hubs are:

- a) GNRC Kenya for Eastern Africa
- b) GNRC South Africa for Southern Africa
- c) GNRC Nigeria for West Africa
- d) GNRC Democratic Republic of Congo for Central Africa and other Francophone countries in Africa
- e) GNRC Sudan for North Africa

- f) GNRC Jordan and GNRC Lebanon for the Middle East
- g) GNRC India for South Asia
- h) GNRC Indonesia for Southeast Asia
- i) GNRC Bosnia and Herzegovina for the Balkans
- j) GNRC Romania for Eastern Europe
- k) GNRC Chile for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)
- l) GNRC USA for North America

The regional hubs, supported by the GNRC Secretariat, support the work of national coordinators, co-coordinators, contact persons, GCCAs, and thematic focal points within their respective regions. The hubs coordinated by the host country coordinator facilitate engagement and assist Network mobilization and joint regional activities, projects, and programs to build a safe, secure, and sustainable world for children.

5.3 THE GNRC NATIONAL COMMITTEES

The GNRC national committees are informal structures led by a GNRC coordinator that support and promote Network activities at the country level. These committees comprise of a broad range of local actors, including GNRC youth and Interfaith Women in Action.

5.3.1 GNRC Youth

Today's generation of young people is the largest in history, with most living in developing countries. These young people are critical agents of positive change. By 2030—the target date for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that make up the global 2030 Agenda—it is projected that the world's youth population will have increased by an additional seven percent.

As young people increasingly demand more just and equitable opportunities and solutions in their societies, addressing their multifaceted challenges, such as access to education, health, employment, political participation and gender equality, has become imperative.

To ensure that decision-making processes include and protect the rights and interests of future generations, the GNRC network has established the role of GNRC youth advocate. These advocates represent the needs of young people in decision-making at the national level within the GNRC. Their role is especially critical in achieving the objectives of the Network, especially in working toward the SDGs and building a more hopeful world for all.

5.3.2 GNRC Interfaith Women in Action

GNRC advances gender equality by ensuring that equal opportunities, spaces and platforms are available to women and girls, particularly at the grassroots level, to facilitate their full engagement and leadership in their communities. Interfaith Women in Action includes women of faith and teachers who play a crucial role in building a better world for children.

6.0 METHODOLOGY

In achieving the strategic goals set out in this Strategy, the GNRC will strengthen its Network by:

1. Fostering greater multi-religious collaboration.
2. Enhancing the capacity of GNRC members to implement programs, research, and advocacy.
3. Mobilizing resources and developing new partnerships with government and private sectors.
4. Strengthening GNRC communications, outreach, and publicity.

6.1 NETWORK DEVELOPMENT AND MULTI-RELIGIOUS COLLABORATION

Over the years, the GNRC has grown and spread to 80 countries. It has also evolved as a network—transitioning through germinal, nascent, expanding, strengthening, and maturing phases. As the Network has developed, so have its members and partners, who have been able to connect with and learn from one another, share ideas, create synergies, and grow professionally.

To further strengthen the GNRC and boost multi-religious collaboration to implement GNRC projects and programs effectively, the GNRC Secretariat will invigorate the GNRC national committees, as well as the GNRC youth and interfaith women in action networks. Expected outcomes include:

- i. Increased number of members, committees and networks (from 80 to 120 countries by 2030), and stronger network connectivity at all levels
- ii. Growth in under-represented faiths and spiritual traditions
- iii. Increased collaborative efforts between and among children and adults from diverse regions and religions
- iv. Growth in the number of GNRC youth advocates to 360 by 2030

6.2 PROGRAMS, RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

To effectively implement GNRC projects and programs, the GNRC Secretariat will facilitate training for members in project life-cycle management (design, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation). This will enable them to implement programs better, at the country and regional levels more effectively and to address context-specific challenges. Other objectives will be to:

- i. Build the capacity of members for monitoring and evaluation
- ii. Build the research capabilities of GNRC members to conduct impactful studies and analysis on children's issues, interfaith dialogue, social justice and issues around building a safe, secure, and sustainable world for children.
- iii. Empower the GNRC members to effectively advocate for children's rights and influence policies at local, national, and regional levels
- iv. Facilitate the exchange of knowledge and best practices among GNRC members across different regions to address common and unique challenges
- v. Equip GNRC members with the skills to develop sustainable funding strategies for their projects and programs

6.3 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Successful implementation of projects and programs depends heavily on the availability of financial and human resources. To address this, the GNRC Secretariat will support GNRC members in their resource mobilization efforts and partnership development.

This will include strengthening existing alliances with government agencies, faith-based organizations, civil society and multi-religious groups, and all stakeholders dedicated to building a secure and peaceful world for children. To enhance overall Network resource mobilization and partnership development efforts, the GNRC will:

- i. Build the capacity of members in areas such as fundraising, project management, and advocacy
- ii. Encourage GNRC members to engage more volunteers passionate about building a better world for children
- iii. Foster and encourage members to form partnerships and collaborations with other organizations that share the same goals and values as the GNRC
- iv. Enhance collaboration with governmental, intergovernmental, and multilateral agencies
- v. Leverage technology to enhance fundraising efforts and reach a wider audience
- vi. Invite faith-based organizations and religious leaders to work with the GNRC at the grassroots, national, regional, and global levels

The GNRC Secretariat will support members to achieve the objectives of this Strategy by providing access to knowledge resources and learning tools used and developed by GNRC members, such as the *Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism (BRAVE)* and *Creating Resilience Against Violent Extremism (CRAVE)* interfaith manuals, as well as tools and resources from other Arigatou International Initiatives. Resources from Prayer and Action for Children include the *Advocating for Children's Rights and Wellbeing: An Interfaith Approach Advocacy Guide*¹⁰ and *Faith and Children's Rights: A Multi-Religious Study on the Convention on*

¹⁰ <https://prayerandactionforchildren.org/advocacy-guide/>

the Rights of the Child.¹¹ Resources from Ethics Education for Children include the *Learning to Live Together Manual*¹², the *Arigatou International Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct*¹³ and the *Nurturing the Spiritual Development of Children in the Early Years Toolkit*¹⁴. From End Child Poverty, members will have access to *An Interfaith Guide to End Child Poverty: Inspire. Act. Change*,¹⁵ and the Sustainable Development Goals Academy.

6.4 COMMUNICATIONS, OUTREACH AND PUBLICITY

To enhance advocacy efforts and better engage stakeholders and community members for collaborative action, the GNRC Secretariat will support the Network as a whole to strengthen its communications, outreach, and publicity efforts. At the national level, the GCCAs will be empowered to amplify stories of impact and success more effectively.

The GNRC will also strive to:

- i. Create social media accounts for 100 GNRC networks by March 31, 2030
- ii. Maximize outreach through online resources and the GNRC website in all five working languages (Arabic, English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish) of the GNRC
- iii. Appoint GCCAs in all active networks by 2030
- iv. Strengthen internal and external communications via social media (for example, LinkedIn, X, Facebook, Instagram), online newsletters
- v. Improve advocacy and outreach through the mainstream media and like-minded media outlets to reach audiences at all levels, grassroots to global
- vi. Develop tools, including digital platforms and apps, to enhance communication and improve the visibility of the GNRC brand at the grassroots and globally.

¹¹ <https://arigatouinternational.org/all-with-children/faith-child-rights/faith-childrens-rights-multi-religious-study/>

¹² <https://ethicseducationforchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Learning-to-Live-Together-English.pdf>

¹³ <https://arigatouinternational.org/all-with-children/safeguarding/safeguarding-policy/declaration-form/>

¹⁴ https://childspiritualdevelopment.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Booklet-1-Conceptual_Framework-WEB.pdf

¹⁵ <https://endingchildpoverty.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Interfaith-Guide-to-End-Child-Poverty.pdf>



7.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The GNRC Strategy 2030 Implementation Matrix – Answering the Call of the Child, will be monitored continuously to ensure its effective implementation using a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework that will track progress and review performance against the set strategic goals and objectives. The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework will be informed by the GNRC Strategy 2030 Implementation Matrix – *Answering the Call of the Child*, which outlines key progress markers for all the Strategic Goals and Objectives.

A review of the Plan will take place every two years, with the first review scheduled at the end of 2026. The second and third reviews will take place at the end of 2028 and 2030, respectively. At the time of the midterm reviews, the Network may realign its programs and strategies to ensure the attainment of the desired outcomes of this Strategy. The work will be closely monitored by the GNRC Secretariat, which will be responsible for facilitating and coordinating progress.



8.0 CALL FOR PARTNERSHIPS

Escalating conflicts around the world have greatly jeopardized the lives of children. Children living in conflict zones are threatened by loss of life and limb, hunger, displacement, disease, abuse, exploitation, physical and sexual violence, early marriage, lack of education, psychosocial trauma, and a host of other grave human rights violations. Addressing these threats requires a collaborative approach among diverse stakeholders and partners.

The GNRC invites you and your organization to join our rapidly expanding volunteer Network committed to building a safe, secure, and sustainable world for and with children.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The GNRC operates in a context influenced by political, economic, socio-cultural, religious, technological, environmental, and legal factors. These elements positively or negatively affect the conditions in which children live and, therefore, the responses and interventions by the GNRC. A detailed analysis of external factors influencing the implementation of this Strategy has been conducted and used to develop the strategic thematic areas.

Political

Geopolitical shifts and the risk of conflict threaten children's survival and well-being and how the GNRC operates. Political violence is on the rise worldwide,¹⁶ disproportionately affecting children and youth who are among the groups that are most vulnerable to killing, maiming, recruitment, abduction and denial of humanitarian access. Additionally, shrinking civil space is further hindering the right of individuals to freedom of speech, assembly, and association, impeding efforts to advocate for children's rights and well-being.¹⁷ Yet despite these emerging risks and practical barriers to exercising political rights, children and youth are themselves demanding action on issues that matter to them (such as poverty, inequality, corruption and climate change) through constructive civic action and online activism.

The GNRC applies ethical and faith-based values that call for child participation, inclusivity, interfaith dialogue and mutual respect to promote peace and co-existence. At a time when xenophobic, discriminatory and extremist narratives, and rhetoric are on the rise, the GNRC, through committed members at the grassroots levels, is working to promote interfaith harmony, cohesion, mutual respect, and understanding with the goal of building a better world for children.

Economic

Global economic shocks are intensifying even as the world deals with the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing energy, food, economic and climate crises that pose unprecedented challenges for the most vulnerable: children. Prior to 2020, 47 percent of the world's children were severely deprived. The pandemic pushed an

additional 150 million children into multidimensional poverty.¹⁸ While children and young people were not those most affected by the virus from a medical standpoint, many have never recovered from the adverse economic impacts of the pandemic.

GNRC activities, like those of many other entities, were greatly challenged by COVID-19 restrictions and social distancing measures that hampered resource mobilization as well as program implementation. A few entities, including GNRC members, were also compelled to halt programs due to redirection of resources to fighting the pandemic.

Socio-Cultural

Within the general environment, members, partners, children, and the Network in its entirety are most certainly affected by xenophobia, discrimination, and an increase in extremist narratives in the world today. Despite this, the GNRC will always advocate for interfaith cooperation, tolerance and peace.

Many indignities and injustices faced by children are committed or justified under the guise of religion, culture and tradition. Practices such as child marriages, deprivation of education for girls and women, and female genital mutilation continue to exist even in this day and age. Globally, the number of girls married in childhood is estimated at 12 million per year.¹⁹ GNRC members in countries where these practices are prevalent are active in calling for the protection of children and are working closely with government, religious and civil society partners for the elimination of all harmful norms.

The GNRC is blessed with a wide global membership from diverse cultural, social, religious, and spiritual backgrounds. Members are brought together by the common goal of advocating for children's rights and well-being. The GNRC strives to uphold and enhance this by making diversity a prerequisite for all committees and member networks within the larger Network. However, as the GNRC strives to balance faith representation, the challenge is that some countries may have more members from one faith or spiritual tradition than others. For example, there are few Muslims and Jews living in some countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Technological

Every **half a second a child goes onto the internet** for the first time.²⁰ Children are entering the digital environment at an alarming pace, and while technology offers numerous benefits, these can sometimes come at a cost of a child's physical and mental health. As witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic, technology expanded and created new opportunities for information sharing, learning, collaboration, and creativity. On the other hand, technology has also highlighted the vast economic and social disparities within our societies. More tragically, it has been misused and manipulated to harm children in some of the worst possible ways. It has enabled bullying and sexual exploitation of minors in a new domain: the digital space. Predators are using the anonymity of the internet to lure children into sexual activity with greater ease. Additionally, the effects of artificial intelligence on children worldwide are still unclear.

¹⁸ <https://data.unicef.org/resources/impact-of-covid-19-on-multidimensional-child-poverty/>

¹⁹ <https://www.unicef.org/eca/press-releases/fast-facts-10-facts-illustrating-why-we-must-end-child-marriage#:~:text=Worldwide%2C%20an%20estimated%20650%20million,at%2012%20million%20per%20year.>

²⁰ <https://www.savethechildren.net/blog/child-protection-digital-world-why-it-needed>

¹⁶ <https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/media/4076/file/UNICEF-Innocenti-Prospects-for-Children-Global-Outlook-2024.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://plansverige.org/app/uploads/2021/11/policy-brief3-children-youth-and-civic-space-eng.pdf> (Accessed: December 18, 2022).

The GNRC in collaboration with partners such as the Interfaith Alliance for Safer Communities, ECPAT, and faith communities in most affected areas, is working to raise awareness of the dangers to children posed by technology and ensure that children remain safe as they use the internet. During the pandemic, the GNRC also shifted many of its operations to digital and online platforms to ensure that the Network continued to function optimally. Since then, the GNRC has maintained the use of these technologies to enhance its performance and strengthen the Network.

The Network has appointed GCCAs to highlight the grassroots work done by GNRC members on three major social media platforms: Instagram, Facebook, and X. In addition, the GNRC frequently conducts meetings on Zoom, Teams, and other virtual platforms. GNRC regional hubs and working groups (with members from around the world) now meet virtually on a regular basis, allowing for greater collaboration and strengthening of bonds within the Network. Members are launching GNRC committees in hybrid events (virtual and face-to-face), with equally significant impact. Not only has this helped the Network grow rapidly over the last few years, but it has also reduced its carbon footprint. Nevertheless, greater investment is needed to enable the members and the Network to reach and interact with beneficiaries more quickly and efficiently.

Environmental/Climate

Climate change is a significant component of the 'polycrisis' now facing the world. Natural disasters accelerated environmental degradation and extreme weather events, alongside COVID-19, increasing economic and social disparities and more frequent conflicts have intensified child poverty and vulnerability and are directly causing migration and displacement. Worldwide, 774 million children are facing the compounding impacts of poverty and the climate emergency.²¹

The polycrisis is having serious impacts around the world, but most especially on the most vulnerable families and communities. For children in such situations, it is creating increased developmental and learning delays, as well as impacting their mental and physical health, nutrition, protection, stimulation, and the responsive caregiving they are meant to receive. It is known that increased toxic stress can alter the development of children's brain architecture in ways that are likely to "impair memory, executive function, and decision-making in later life," thus negatively influencing academic performance, health, relationship formation, and other long-term life outcomes.²²

The work of GNRC members has also been affected by environmental factors. Climate disasters often result in loss of vital infrastructure which in turn impacts operations and efforts to reach the grassroots level. The GNRC is dedicated to positively impacting the environment with many of its members actively advocating for SDG 13 on climate action.

Legal

The legal basis of international children's rights lies in the UNCRC which was adopted in 1989 and came into force one year later. Since then, 196 countries have signed this Convention, which creates a legal obligation to respect, protect and fulfill the rights of every child. However, in many countries, child labor, underage

marriages, corporal punishment, harmful traditional/customary practices (e.g. female genital mutilation and cutting), and child incarceration are still allowed and/or legally recognized. For example, only 14 percent of the world's children are fully protected by law from corporal punishment.²³ Millions of children around the world are held in the justice system, orphanages, and immigration detention centers, and millions of others are forced to engage in hazardous labor.

Inadequate and/or ineffective legislation that discriminates against children is a major challenge for GNRC networks in many countries. Lack of protection of children's basic rights inhibits the functioning of members in certain countries. Nonetheless, the GNRC, within the Network and through its members and partners, strives to uphold the UNCRC. Protection of children's rights is central to everything that the GNRC does.

²¹ <https://www.savethechildren.net/blog/2024-tough-year-ahead-children-living-increasingly-hostile-world>

²² https://childspiritualdevelopment.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Booklet-1-Conceptual_Framework-WEB.pdf

²³ <https://endcorporalpunishment.org/countdown/>

APPENDIX B: INTERNAL ENVIROMENTAL ANALYSIS

The SWOT analysis centered on the current frameworks, structure, and workings of the GNRC to guide the development of this comprehensive Strategy. It aimed to provide a detailed snapshot of the Network to build on strengths, address the identified weaknesses, invest and capitalize on opportunities, monitor threats, and identify areas where resource allocation would bring maximum impact.

Strengths (Internal)	Weaknesses (Internal)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The GNRC has clearly defined goals and objectives so members can easily implement projects. b. Working with registered organizations makes it easy to build partnerships for project implementation. c. Coordination from the center provided through the Secretariat allows for effective M&E, learning, and impact measurement. d. The GNRC has a consistent, timely, and reliable core funding source. e. Children’s inclusion in committees ensures that their voice is heard, enabling the achievement of the ‘All for Children’ goal. f. Working with grassroots organizations means that the GNRC’s programs reach the most vulnerable and marginalized populations while contributing to the advocacy of matters that are of national and global concern. g. The great diversity of religion, faith, culture, geographic and socio-economic backgrounds among GNRC members and partners. h. Strong GNRC committees at national levels. i. GNRC has committed members with high capacity at the grassroots to implement projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Some members may lack the capacity to sustain the projects they design outside of funds provided by GNRC and other Arigatou International initiatives. b. Due to limited funds or isolated efforts, activities are implemented on a one-time basis which weakens their impact. c. Vast networks and underdeveloped management boards among grassroots member organizations make monitoring and accountability difficult d. Some religions/faiths are underrepresented in some regions, and more must be incorporated. e. The power imbalance between members of international stature and those that are based at the grassroots. f. Activities, and networking often becomes a supplementary/ secondary activity. g. Aside from the global forums and regional hubs, networking at the grassroots is still informal. h. Individual members may find it difficult to pinpoint the benefits of networking, thus it is challenging to set aside financial resources to uphold focal-point activities. i. Low levels of commitment and participation among members can make Network activities ineffective and unsustainable. j. Lack of regional coordinators in all regions k. GCCAs have other day jobs and commitments and may not have the time to post about the GNRC on social media. l. Some countries have less funding and cannot accommodate the appointment of a GCCA.

Opportunities (External)	Threats (External)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. There is an opportunity to make GNRC a household name since there are only a few faith-based organizations that are focused on child rights; hence, there is room to engage. b. Opportunity to partner and support governments’ agenda at all levels (local and national level) c. Opportunity to partner with the private sector and develop links to grow the Network. d. Synergy building with other Arigatou International initiatives, including using their spaces and materials, for example, the SDG Academy and the various training guides. e. Local networks have the potential for expansion into national, sub-regional, and regional networks f. Having GCCAs in all countries that are active in the GNRC would greatly increase visibility. g. Opportunity for the GNRC Secretariat and members to mobilize resources through GoFundMe and the donate button on the GNRC Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Our small member organizations must often compete for resources with larger, more established NGOs working in the same field b. Other organizations are performing similar work, leading to duplication of efforts and the creation of unsustainable platforms focused on short-term objectives with limited project cycles

APPENDIX C: GNRC NETWORK DEVELOPMENT MATRIX

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

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

APPENDIX D: EXAMPLES OF GNRC PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS BY MEMBERS

A global network rooted in local communities, GNRC members across the world are united in their mission to create a safe, secure, and sustainable world for children. Working with a broad range of representatives from world faith and spiritual traditions, governmental, intergovernmental, and civil society partners, GNRC members around the globe are implementing initiatives within the framework of the SDGs and the UNCRC and aligned with the GNRC Strategy 2030.

Below are just some of the projects and programs that GNRC members are leading to holistically address the needs of children and their communities.

Africa

Working in partnership with national, regional, and international organizations, GNRC members across Africa are actively engaged in initiatives that aim to ensure the well-being and safety of children:

Country	Project
South Africa	GNRC members in South Africa, in collaboration with schools, the Children and Youth Interfaith Network of South Africa (CAYIN), and other partner organizations, are spearheading the establishment of Peace Clubs. This initiative fosters dialogue and action among children and youth, promoting mutual understanding and peacebuilding within communities.
Comoros	GNRC members in Comoros in partnership with UNICEF and the French Embassy in Comoros and other stakeholders are exploring sustainable solutions for safeguarding the rights and well-being of children, youth, and women in the Comoros. They have developed a strategic plan to streamline and lead child protection efforts across the country.
Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)	In partnership with Child Mercy–Sweden, GNRC DRC members support young children and their mothers who have been victims of the ongoing conflict in the South Kivu region through the “Save a Girl” program.
Central African Republic	Collaborating with government entities, GNRC Central African Republic members are focusing on educating vulnerable children and raising awareness among parents of children with disabilities about the importance of school enrolment.
Uganda	In partnership with Eirene Suisse, GNRC Uganda members are strengthening the resilience and economic stability of vulnerable former child soldiers in northern Uganda. The program offers community-based reintegration, psycho-social support, and educational assistance to these children and their communities.
Rwanda	GNRC Rwanda members, in collaboration with the Umbrella for Vulnerable, are addressing hunger and environmental degradation through projects to combat malnutrition and promote environmental conservation. Children actively participate in tree-planting initiatives, fostering a sense of responsibility for the environment.

Country	Project
South Sudan	GNRC South Sudan members conduct workshops in schools to promote coexistence, empower girls, and revive ethical values. The focus is on protecting children’s rights and promoting freedom of religion or belief.
Kenya	GNRC Kenya members are engaged in preventing violent extremism among faith communities, with specific focus on youth and children, and in partnership with several government, multilateral and intergovernmental organizations.
Tanzania	GNRC members in Tanzania are engaged in peacebuilding with young people. In partnership with CEFA Olus, an Italian Non-Profit organization, they are implementing the “Building Peace on the Swahili Coast” program, funded by the European Union. The program aims to empower and mobilize young women and men in the coastal regions of Kenya, Mozambique, and Tanzania to become leading actors in peacebuilding and dialogue.

Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

GNRC members in MENA are implementing programs that address the unique challenges faced by children in that region:

Country	Project
Palestine	In collaboration with the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), Misereor, and local women’s civil society organizations, GNRC Palestine members empower young women to lead advocacy efforts for improved services in vulnerable communities. Additionally, partnerships with Mission and Friends of Young Bethlehem promote Muslim-Christian religious education to foster interfaith coexistence.
Iraq	Working with the UN in Iraq, GNRC members educate children about the importance of minority rights, the role of minorities in decision-making, and the prevention of extremism.
Lebanon	GNRC Lebanon members promote environmental conservation, foster youth entrepreneurship, and enhance adult literacy among refugees and asylum seekers in partnership with Annas Linnas.
Regional collaboration	The “Harmony Across Horizons” project is a pioneering four-year initiative uniting GNRC members from Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, and Egypt. This project leverages interfaith dialogue to address the challenges faced by children on the move in the Middle East.

Europe and North America

GNRC members in Europe and North America are focusing on education and challenges facing children in schools such as bullying, and child poverty through innovative programs.

Country	Project
Serbia	In partnership with local organizations, GNRC Serbia members offer free education services, peer-to-peer mental health education, and entrepreneurship training for youth. These initiatives create safe spaces for youth participation and growth.
Romania	GNRC Romania members address violence and bullying in schools by promoting socio-emotional education, equipping students with the skills to communicate assertively, regulate emotions, and resolve conflicts peacefully.
Montenegro	GNRC Montenegro members provide training for teachers and professionals on gender equality and the rights of girls with disabilities while also promoting intercultural education in schools.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	GNRC Bosnia and Herzegovina members, in collaboration with local partners, conduct workshops to combat child poverty, raise awareness on mental health, and foster inclusive social opportunities.
Canada	GNRC Canada members through the Humanity Auxilium is on the ground with its partners in Gaza assessing the situation and providing emergency assistance, relief, and aid to displaced people. They have also supported the victims of the violent earthquakes that hit southern Türkiye and northwestern Syria.

Asia

GNRC members in Asia are focused on creating safe spaces for children, promoting interfaith cooperation, and supporting vulnerable communities:

Country	Project
Nepal	GNRC Nepal members partner with schools to promote safe spaces and peace education, empowering children and teaching positive parenting in vulnerable communities.
Maldives	GNRC Maldives members raise awareness on living together, girl-child empowerment, and the revival of ethical values.
Thailand	Supported by the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), GNRC Thailand members foster interfaith cooperation to enhance child protection and promote the well-being of children from various religious communities.

Malaysia	In collaboration with I CAN Organizations, GNRC Malaysia members support informal education for children who are unable to attend school, providing learning resources and daily community center activities.
Country	Project
Indonesia	GNRC Indonesia members operate a mobile library that moves between communities, offering educational support to vulnerable children.
India	In India, GNRC members, in collaboration with Shanti Ashram, are implementing projects and programs that contribute to creating to a safe and sustainable world for children. They are actively working to end violence against women and children by engaging boys as allies in dialogues to challenge gender-based violence. Among their notable campaigns is 'Say No to Child Sexual Abuse.' Additionally, members are involved in India Poverty Solutions, an initiative launched by Shanti Ashram to address child poverty. They have collaborated with partners such as the University of Mumbai and the Focolare Movement for the "Intergenerational Reflection and Dialogue on Rediscovering 'Humility' and 'Humanity' in the Midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic" to create awareness on contemporary challenges facing children.
Pakistan	Children in Pakistan face multiple forms of violence—physical, psychological, and sexual—as well as exploitation, including economic exploitation and child trafficking. According to UNICEF, around 3.3 million Pakistani children are trapped in child labor, depriving them of their childhood, health, and education, and condemning them to a life of poverty. GNRC members in Pakistan have partnered with media and government agencies to raise awareness about these issues affecting children in the country.
Sri-Lanka	In Sri Lanka, GNRC members are committed to ending child poverty through various initiatives. A key platform is the SDG Academy, hosted by the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement. Together, they provided relief to low-income families, children, people with disabilities, elders in care homes, and women in shelters during the severe third wave of COVID-19. Additionally, the members have partnered with the Sri Lankan Ministry of Women and Children Affairs to create safe spaces for children.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Country	Project
GNRC Dominican Republic and Brasil	GNRC members in the Dominican Republic in partnership with the local UNICEF office are developing a project on eradicating physical and corporal punishment. GNRC Brasil is implementing the Toolkit Nurturing the Spiritual Development of Children in the Early Years
Regional Project Alliance for the Protection of Children (APN)	Following the GNRC Fifth Forum in Panama, GNRC members in LAC established the Alliance for the Protection of Children (aka the Alliance) within the framework of the Panama Commitments. The Alliance brings together faith-based and faith-inspired organizations and communities to protect children and advocate for the prevention and eradication of violence against children in the region, with particular focus on the countries of El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico.
Faith and Positive Change for Children (FPCC) Initiative	GNRC members in Latin America have partnered with UNICEF LAC Regional Office, Religions for Peace and the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith & Local Communities for the Faith and Positive Change for Children Initiative (FPCC). The FPCC initiative aims to enhance partnerships with faith actors to improve children’s lives, especially by accelerating immunization rates. The initiative facilitates multi-stakeholder collaboration focused on safeguarding children’s health and well-being.
Inter-American Children’s Institute (IIN-OAS):	GNRC members in Latin America have developed of a course based on the Multifaith Study on Faith and Children’s Rights, conducted through the IIN platform, for the participation of regional GNRC members, faith-based organizations, and individuals from the States from LAC.

APPENDIX E: GUIDELINES FOR GNRC NETWORK COORDINATORS AND CONTACT PERSONS

1. Introduction

- 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 objectives of the GNRC and its members are:
 - 1.2.1. To mobilize GNRC members, faith communities, religious leaders, and other stakeholders to make uniquely faith-based contributions to building a better world for children.
 - 1.2.2. To engage adults and children in interfaith cooperation, using a participatory approach that ensures their safety and security while amplifying their voices to promote interreligious dialogue.
 - 1.2.3. To increase actions by GNRC members, faith communities, religious leaders, and other stakeholders to build a global movement for children that enables and safeguards opportunities for children to engage with others for a sustainable future for children.
 - 1.2.4. To promote and advocate for the protection of children’s rights as defined by official documents, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
 - 1.2.5. To support members and partners in their efforts to build a world where all children can grow up in safe and secure environments that foster their development and well-being.
- 1.3 This document sets out the requirements for membership in the GNRC; the procedures for taking up membership and initiating new local, national, sub-regional or regional networks; as well as the guidelines for leadership of these networks and the roles and responsibilities of coordinators and contact persons.

2. GNRC Vision

A peaceful world where every human being and institution takes full responsibility for the dignity, safety, joy, and well-being of **all** children.

The GNRC is the only global network of organizations and individuals that takes an interfaith approach to building a better world for children. No other network focuses exclusively on children and faith like the GNRC. Since its inauguration in 2000, the GNRC has directly and indirectly impacted the lives of more than **100 MILLION** people worldwide. Our members are spread over 80 countries on six continents, work with the most profound sense of purpose, and are focused on ensuring that all children live in a hopeful world, free of violence.

3. GNRC Mission

To mobilize the potential of all religions and empower grassroots actors to make unique faith-based contributions to the realization of every child’s right to attain full physical, mental, emotional, spiritual,

ethical, and social development while seeking partnership with leaders, individuals, and communities, international, regional, and national institutions, grassroots organizations, and people of goodwill everywhere.

4. GNRC Core Values

The core values of the GNRC are rooted in the following values:

- 4.1. Interfaith, Intercultural, and Intergenerational
- 4.2. Idealistic, Visionary, and Hopeful
- 4.3. Inclusive, Compassionate, and Caring
- 4.4. Inspiring and Empowering
- 4.5. Cooperative, Responsible, and driven by the spirit of Volunteerism

5. Membership

- 5.1. 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.
- 5.2. Any organization or individual desiring to become a member of the GNRC may apply for membership to the GNRC Secretariat. They must, however, meet the following conditions:
 - 5.2.1. Be actively engaged in promoting children's rights and well-being
 - 5.2.2. Their aims and work should be in full harmony with the aims and work of the GNRC and Arigatou International
 - 5.2.3. They are willing to cooperate with other GNRC members to build a better world for children.
- 5.3. 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.
- 5.4. Organizations, networks, and individuals who are not faith-based may be considered as fraternal members.

6. GNRC Country Networks

- 6.1. 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.
- 6.2. For practical purposes, there shall be a GNRC national committee in each country where GNRC members are active.
- 6.3. Once contact with the GNRC Secretariat is made, the contact person may convene a meeting of other individuals or organizations committed to the GNRC's objectives to form a country network led by a national committee.
- 6.4. Once formed, the GNRC national committees are coordinated by country coordinators who are elected (or selected) by local members and confirmed by the GNRC Secretary-General in consultation with and with the endorsement of Arigatou International.

7. Sub-Regional and Regional Networks

- 7.1. Countries and sub-regions within a particular region may form sub-regional and regional networks as needed to carry forward the aims of the GNRC at a broader level.
- 7.2. To facilitate the work of a sub-regional or regional network, the GNRC Secretary-General, in consultation with, and with the endorsement of Arigatou International, may appoint a contact person for the sub-region or region.
- 7.3. Regional or sub-regional contact persons are typically selected from the GNRC country coordinators in that sub-region or region.

8. GNRC Coordinators and Contact Persons

- 8.1. GNRC coordinators and contact persons are GNRC members. They promote GNRC activities and contribute to the building of the Network in consultation and collaboration with other GNRC members, coordinators, and contact person(s) in their local areas, countries, sub-regions, or regions.
- 8.2. A contact person may be appointed by the GNRC Secretary-General, in consultation with, and with the endorsement of Arigatou International, as the liaison for GNRC in a specific area, sub-region, region, or organization.
- 8.3. A contact person, with support from and endorsement by the GNRC Secretariat, may facilitate the formation of a national network by mobilizing the formation of a national committee.
- 8.4. A GNRC coordinator leads and coordinates the mission and activities of the GNRC national, sub-regional, or regional networks. S/he is typically elected or selected by members of his/her national network or national committee.
- 8.5. GNRC coordinators and contact persons ordinarily come from a faith-based institution and are volunteers.
- 8.6. GNRC coordinators and contact persons present proposals that members have discussed collectively in their networks to the GNRC Secretariat. The coordinators and contact persons work with the GNRC Secretary-General through the Network and Programs Coordinator to set the framework for activities within their networks.
- 8.7. GNRC coordinators and contact persons participate in decision-making concerning their networks within the larger GNRC Network and are responsible for overseeing the implementation of decisions made collectively within their networks.
- 8.8. Other tasks and responsibilities of the country coordinators and contact persons include:
 - 8.8.1. Monitoring GNRC activities within their networks and developing new strategies to make the GNRC's work more effective and relevant.
 - 8.8.2. Growing and strengthening their networks through visits, correspondence, and other communication while ensuring membership is multi-faith, intergenerational, inclusive, and promotes interreligious dialogue.

- 8.8.3. Facilitating and coordinating the smooth implementation of GNRC policies and programs within their networks.
- 8.8.4. Ensuring that GNRC projects address the specific needs of children while upholding interfaith cooperation.
- 8.8.5. Ensuring implementation of initiatives and recommendations proposed at GNRC forums.
- 8.8.6. Mobilizing resources for GNRC projects and encouraging members in their networks to contribute financially or in-kind to GNRC projects.
- 8.8.7. Organizing GNRC meetings, as necessary, in coordination with members and allowing for representation of all members within their networks.
- 8.8.8. Formulating the objectives and policies for their network activities in consultation with members and in line with the objectives and policies of wider GNRC networks (at national, sub-regional, and/or regional levels).
- 8.8.9. When necessary, prepare annual country or regional reports for submission to the GNRC Secretariat.
- 8.8.10. Liaising with the GNRC Secretariat to appoint GCCAs from within their networks.
- 8.8.11. All GNRC country coordinators and contact persons are required to sign and ensure observance of the guidelines for Child Safeguarding and any other guidelines, including the Code of Conduct issued by Arigatou International.

9. GNRC Country Communications Associate (GCCA)

- 9.1. GCCAs are active GNRC members between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five. They are selected by their GNRC coordinator and/or contact person, with the endorsement of the GNRC Secretary-General, to promote the work of the Network in their countries. They work closely with the GNRC Communications Team at the Secretariat to support and facilitate GNRC communications through established online and social media platforms. Specific duties include:
 - 9.1.1. Assist the GNRC Communications Team to implement and execute the Network's communications plans.
 - 9.1.2. Create social media accounts as guided by the GNRC Social Media Guidelines.
 - 9.1.3. Produce content (including blogs, vlogs, and high-impact stories) showcasing Network activities for social media and external reports.
 - 9.1.4. Actively post engaging and relevant content on the GNRC's social media networks.
 - 9.1.5. Execute the GNRC's communications and advocacy goals and strategies at the local and national level in close coordination with the GNRC Communications Team.
 - 9.1.6. Work with the GNRC Communications Team to ensure that all GNRC members, leaders, and champions, as well as staff of Arigatou International and its other initiatives, are actively engaged in GNRC web-based features, including its social media platforms.
 - 9.1.7. Share new and creative ideas on how to best increase the visibility of the Network.
 - 9.1.8. Ensure that all official GNRC communications and content follow brand guidelines.

10. GNRC Coordinators and Contact Person Meetings

- 10.1. Arigatou International, through the GNRC Secretariat, may organize GNRC coordinators and contact persons meetings, as and when needed, to discuss the GNRC's mission and initiatives in particular regions or sub-regions.

11. Support to GNRC Coordinators and Contact Persons

- 11.1. Arigatou International, through the GNRC Secretary-General, will support GNRC members with technical support, capacity-building (in areas such as advocacy, communication, and resource mobilization), networking opportunities, mentorship, recognition/ awards, and, where possible, also facilitate access to grants and funding opportunities.
- 11.2. GNRC coordinators may pursue technical and financial assistance from institutions other than Arigatou International to implement GNRC projects and programs under the same provisions in these guidelines.
- 11.3. Support for GNRC coordinators:
 - 11.3.1. At the request of the GNRC coordinator to the GNRC Secretariat, Arigatou International may offer support, within its capacity, for activities proposed by members.
 - 11.3.2. Applications for support are prepared by the GNRC coordinator (or contact person) and forwarded to the GNRC Secretary-General.
- 11.4. Support for GNRC Projects:
 - 11.4.1. Arigatou International, within the limits of its capacity, will provide technical, and in exceptional cases, financial assistance for a project that is in accordance with the aims of the Network and is implemented by a GNRC local, country, sub-regional and/or regional network as a "GNRC project" unless otherwise approved by the Secretary-General. The project must take concrete action for children, be undertaken through interfaith cooperation, and be initiated and implemented by two or more religious organizations or groups from different faith backgrounds.
 - 11.4.2. GNRC coordinators and contact persons are expected to mobilize resources for GNRC projects and encourage members to contribute financially or in-kind to projects in their countries, sub-regions, or regions.
 - 11.4.3. GNRC projects should contribute to one or more of the following thematic priorities and strategic goals of the Network:
 - 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
 - Promote the development of GNRC regional, sub-regional, or country and local networks.
 - Building a hopeful world for children through interfaith cooperation

- Strategic Goal One: Building a safe world with children.
- Strategic Goal Two: Building a secure world with children.
- Strategic Goal Three: Building a sustainable world with children.

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.
- Entail a greater number of organizers, a 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.
- Indicate a favorable ratio of self-help efforts by the members implementing the project.
- Contribute to any or all the three specific commitments that the GNRC made at the United Nations Special Session on Children in May 2002.
- Contribute to ending violence against children, including the implementation of the declarations, commitments, and call to action issued at the GNRC Forums
- 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.

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

11.4.5. The directors of Arigatou International Initiatives will provide technical support to the Arigatou International and the GNRC-supported projects.

11.5. How to Apply for Project Assistance:

11.5.1. The GNRC coordinator and/or contact person may submit a request to Arigatou International for in-kind, capacity building, and technical assistance for a GNRC project.

12. Monitoring and Reporting:

12.1. Each GNRC coordinator and contact person will monitor the implementation of GNRC projects/ activities supported by Arigatou International in his/her network.

12.2. At the end of each fiscal year, the GNRC coordinator or contact person may submit a report on projects and activities undertaken during the period.



THE GNRC SECRETARIAT



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Secretary-General, GNRC and Executive Director, Arigatou International – Nairobi



Ms. María José Ananias
Coordinator, GNRC Latin America and the Caribbean



Ms. Stacy Ndungu
Communications and Outreach Manager, GNRC



Ms. Halima Wanjiku
Network Support and Youth Coordinator, GNRC



Ms. Florence Omtokoh
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Mr. Yasin Lokaale
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Ms. Tracy Memusi
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THE ORIGAMI STORY



An origami crane is a traditional Japanese paper folding craft where a piece of paper is folded into the shape of a crane. The origami crane holds a special place in Japanese culture as a symbol of hope and peace. One of the most well-known stories associated with the origami crane is that of Sadako Sasaki, a young girl who developed leukemia due to radiation exposure from the Hiroshima atomic bombing. She began folding 1,000 cranes, inspired by the belief that doing so would grant her wish for recovery. Although she did not survive, her story has made the origami crane a symbol of perseverance on the path to peace and hope.



GNRC STRATEGY 2030



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