Muslim Platform for Sustainable Development
Europe Consultation Feedback
18 November 2016
London

1. Introduction

Throughout 2016, Islamic Relief Worldwide has been consulting with Muslim civil society organisations around the world about the need to set up a global network to support Muslim engagement with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) approved in September 2015 by the United Nations. Governments are responsible for the development of plans to deliver on the SDGs and multi-lateral and bi-lateral funders are committed to supporting such plans. The concern within the Muslim World is that the Agenda 2030 discourse is somewhat secular and alienated from mainstream faith discourse, which is likely to lead to disengagement or distrust, between faith based organisations- in particular Muslim civil society organisations- resulting in a fractured, disengaged and uncoordinated effort to deliver the SDGs.

The Regional consultations organised in 2016 for Asia, Africa, Middle East and Europe are aimed at the following:

1. Understanding the challenges and opportunities for FBO engagement on the 2030 Agenda in the Muslim World and what resources are available.
2. Understanding what a platform might realistically achieve and what appetite there is amongst Muslim CSOs to engage with the process.
3. What structure a platform might take and what actions are needed to establish and maintain it.
4. What resources are needed and available and what policy areas need to be prioritised.

Participants in the European Consultation

Country	Name of organisation	Name	Position
UK	MADE	Lucy	CEO
UK	Islamic Help	Kamran Shahid	Head of International Development Department
UK	IFEES	Mark Bryant	Researcher
UK	Human Appeal International	Insiya Salam	Programmes Coordinator
UK	Islamic Relief Academy	Dr Muhtari Aminu-Kano	Head of Research & Development
UK	Islamic Relief Worldwide	Atallah FitzGibbon	Policy & Strategy Manager
UK	Islamic Relief Worldwide	Jamie Williams	Senior Policy Advisor
UK	Islamic Relief Worldwide	Abdul Hamed Salem	Policy & Research Analyst

2.1. Understanding the challenges and opportunities for engagement on the 2030 Agenda in the Muslim World and what resources are available.

Participants were divided into two groups to conduct a SWOT Analysis, the table below highlight the results of this process

Strength		Weaknesses	
Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2
• Muslim FBO's play a central role • IDB Funding Direct • Strong social financial & social structures • Wealthy philanthropy	• Social change- UK minority/communities at forefront of change and impact • Case studies of faith based examples- establishing eco villages • Depth of faith based principles-direction/morals • Peoples core identity is driven and motivated by faith • Bridge in UK of understanding how secular world works and bring external context in • Sense of collective responsibility to be harnessed • Strong internal faith based network	• Muslim FBO's often seen as threat • Fragmented and conflicted politics • Lack of awareness within communities and organisations • Linkage with faith not understood • Giving not integrated or sustainable • Weak social media & use of ICT • Risk averse organisations used to narrow & limited ways of working • Tend to be averse to innovation • Restricted giving • Lack of EIAS of our work	• Muslims are defensive an don't outward looking • Limited understanding of putting basic Islamic principles to practice • Limited understanding of Islamic principles • Lacking a unifying leadership network to provide cohesive community • Prevalence of informal structures- can be disorganised • Show emphasis on UK-based internal resource flows to non/Muslims
Opportunities		Threats	
Group 1	Group 2	Group 1	Group 2
• Muslim FBO's can influence and contribute to national development plan • Muslim giving for infrastructure could be integrated into planning • Sadaqa Jaria- adopt a language and integrate conceptually • Great opportunities for spreading intermediate technology through social networks • Strong social capital/organisations for social financing • Bringing custodianship • Can engage from faith understanding	• Diversity outreach to minority ethnic communities including Muslims • Opportunity for punching above weight • Youth based engagement opportunities- faith based communities have connection to young people • Sending the right message and communication • Environmental issues provides platform for connecting everyone	• Consultations will be limited to quangos • Poorly presented agenda can be seen as a threat • Conspiracy theories/post truth • Muslim FBOs sometimes resist new innovation • Environment effecting economic growth • Reproductive health innovation resisted	• Geo-political situation of Muslims • Muslims seen as a threat • Secularisation agenda within international development- views being forced on others • Donors prefer to donate to humanitarian and impact related issues • Relentlessness of economic growth as an idea • Quick fix mentality- not wanting to make major changes

2.2. Current Engagement and Resources of Muslim FBOs devoted to SDG Delivery

The Participants were then given all 17 SDG's and were told to highlight the main three focus areas their respected organisations tackle as well as any other focus areas, see illustrated below.

Organisation	SDGs																
	No Poverty	Zero Hunger	Good Health & wellbeing	Quality Education	Gender Equality	Clean Water & Sanitation	Affordable & Clean Energy	Decent Work & Economic Growth	Industry Innovation & Infrastructure	Reduced Inequalities	Sustainable Cities & Communities	Responsible Consumption & Production	Climate Action	Life Below Water	Life on Land	Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions	Partnerships for the Goals
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
IslamicHelp	First	Second	Other		Other	Third	Other	Other									
Human Appeal	First	Second				Third		Other		Other							
IFEES												Second	First	Third	Other		
MADE				First								Third	Second				Other
IR Worldwide	First	Second	Third	Other	Other	Other		Other								Other	Other
IR Academy			Third	First													Second

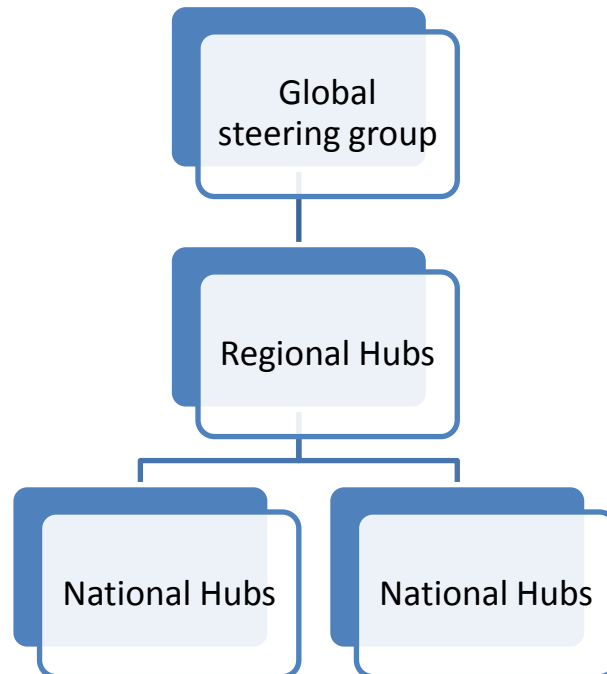|	
■ (dark red)	First Focus Area
■ (green)	Second Focus Area
■ (blue)	Third Focus Area
■ (orange)	Other Focus Areas

Reflection on gaps.

Similar to the Asia Regional Consultation, there seems to be a correlation in terms of organisations working on socially related SDGs. Given the diversity of the participants, environmentally related issues were high on the agenda of some organisations. Comparing both sets of results, participants identified that the reason why there is a disparity between the SDG focus areas between different NGOs was because organisations don't have the capacity to expand into those areas, or their strategic plans do not cater for work beyond humanitarian and social realms of the SDGs.

3.1. TOR for the Platform

Participants felt that the platform should identify a vision and mission similar to the ones identified in the Asia regional meeting.

The below figure illustrated the proposed structure

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Global
steering group
   |
Regional Hubs
   |
   +------------------+
   |                  |
National Hubs    National Hubs
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The participants thought that it was important that membership was applied to organisations that are currently focusing or engaging in the SDGs, the discussion generated the following criteria:

- Faith inspired and based only
- Represent the Muslim perspective
- Academic institutions which adhere to the above should be granted associate membership

3.2. Specific Areas for Development of Discourse within the SDGs

Although the SDGs have been designed to be connected with each other, participants suggested the platform take a more reserved approach, focusing mainly on the below factors which summarise the work most Muslim organisations are undertaking and raises an Islamic discourse where possible. The areas are:

- (4) Education
    - Importance of principle
    - Opportunity to improve quality of Islamic education
    - Teaching faith/universal message

- (5) Gender Equality
    - UN focus
    - Opportunity for propelling the Islamic message

- (12) Climate Action
    - Impact – urgent
    - Engages worldwide networks beyond Muslim and faith-based organisations
    - Developing tools to illicit attitude changes
    - Potential to be powerful

- (13) Responsible Consumption & Production
    - Impact – root cause of inequality/environmental justice
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4. Next Steps for the Platform & Conclusion

The MPSD needs to be a multi-dimensional tool, bridging between resources and networks both in reality and virtually. In doing so, discussions arose about the main uses of the platform:

- Amplifying the Muslim voice within the international development sector and wider, and providing an Islamic discourse
- Connecting expertise from other organisations and backgrounds and sharing resources
    - Providing for clear unified messaging with regards to the SDGs
- Connecting organisation from grassroots all the way to a national/international level
    - This provides collective advocacy campaigns, gives legitimacy and enables access to different spaces
- Development of joint positions on related work
- Engaging in social change across all social levels of the community
- Resourcing can be made easily available if the platform was inclusive and adopted a sustainable vision
- Implementation
- Holding governments and people of authority within governments accountable.

The Platform is now into its third regional consultation, where further consultation will generate more points to consider. The Platform's Global Steering Group, represented by a participant from every region, will convene a meeting where all discussions are reconciled and a plan of action is drawn up.