

HLPF 2026 PARALLEL EVENT

Communities of Hope: Advancing Human Dignity and Development for Sustainable Futures

Date: July 10, 2026

Time: 9:00 – 10:30 am

Venue: 10th Floor, Church Center, 777 United Nations Plaza

In the framework of the 2026 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), faith-based organizations and religious congregations are organizing the side event entitled “**Communities of Hope: Advancing Human Dignity and Development for Sustainable Futures**”, with the aim of creating a space for dialogue and exchange of experiences on the contributions of local communities and grassroots organizations toward the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Sponsoring Organizations

Proclade International, Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Medical Mission Sisters, Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, School Sisters of Notre Dame, Dominican Leadership Conference, Justice Coalition of Religious

Background

The world continues to face multiple interconnected crises, including increasing poverty and inequality, armed conflicts, forced displacement, environmental degradation, growing social fragmentation, and emerging challenges linked to the rapid and often unregulated development and use of artificial intelligence, which can deepen inequalities, misinformation, exclusion, and ethical concerns. In this context, local communities, faith-based organizations, and civil society actors continue to provide concrete responses rooted in human dignity, solidarity, resilience, and hope.

Long before the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda, faith-based organizations and religious congregations had already been responding to the economic, social, cultural, environmental, and political realities affecting the well-being of communities. Many religious congregations were founded in response to the injustices and human suffering of their times, shaping ministries centered on education, healthcare, community development, peacebuilding, care for creation, and social inclusion. In this sense, the values and aspirations embodied in the SDGs are not new to faith-based actors; rather, they resonate deeply with longstanding commitments grounded in faith, lived realities, and close accompaniment of communities, especially those experiencing poverty, exclusion, displacement, and vulnerability.

Through decades of grassroots engagement, faith-based organizations bring not only practical experience but also wisdom rooted in spiritual traditions, ethical reflection, and the lived realities, hopes, and struggles of the people they accompany. As the international community enters the final years leading to 2030, there is an urgent need not only to highlight effective grassroots initiatives,

but also to critically examine persistent barriers, implementation gaps, and the transformative actions needed to accelerate progress.

The HLPF offers an important opportunity to highlight these grassroots experiences and to strengthen dialogue among local communities, Member States, and faith-based actors committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda.

This side event seeks to showcase how community-led initiatives contribute not only to the technical implementation of the SDGs, but also to the construction of more inclusive, humane, peaceful, and sustainable societies. It also aims to reflect on the ethical, cultural, and spiritual dimensions necessary for sustainable development processes.

General Objective

To provide a multi-stakeholder platform for grassroots communities, faith-based organizations, civil society, and other development actors to share experiences, critically reflect on challenges and implementation gaps, and identify transformative actions that advance human dignity, social inclusion, and sustainable development during the remaining years of the 2030 Agenda.

Specific Objectives

1. To showcase and critically reflect on grassroots and community-led initiatives, particularly those inspired by faith-based values and local solidarity, highlighting both their contributions to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the persistent challenges, barriers, and structural gaps affecting progress toward 2030.
2. To foster meaningful dialogue and mutual learning among community leaders, faith-based organizations, civil society actors, Member States, on pathways toward inclusive, people-centered, and sustainable development.
3. To reflect on how communities become communities of hope and transformation and on the contribution of faith-based perspectives, hope, solidarity, and human dignity in strengthening social cohesion, resilience, and sustainable futures for all.
4. To identify best practices, shared commitments, bold recommendations, and strong proposals for coordinated and transformative action during the remaining years leading to the evaluation of the SDGs in 2030.

Priority Themes

- Local communities as builders of hope, resilience, and transformation
- Human dignity and social inclusion in sustainable development
- Contributions of faith-based organizations and religious congregations to SDG
- Grassroots realities: lessons learned, implementation gaps, and accountability
- Youth, Indigenous Peoples, and women as key actors of change
- Multi-stakeholder cooperation for sustainable futures
- Ethical, prophetic and human-centered approaches to current global challenges and sustainable futures

Expected Outcomes

- Increased understanding of both the achievements and persistent challenges in SDG implementation from the perspective of grassroots communities and faith-based actors.
- Strengthened dialogue, cooperation, and mutual learning and cooperation among grassroots communities, faith-based actors, Member States, United Nations agencies, and civil society organizations.
- Identification and sharing of replicable community-based experiences and best practices that can inspire other communities and stakeholders
- Enhanced opportunities for partnerships, inter-institutional collaboration, and collective action in support of the 2030 Agenda.
- Renewed commitment to prophetic hope, solidarity, human dignity, and ethical leadership as essential foundations for sustainable and transformative development.
- Generation of bold recommendations and accountability-oriented reflections to accelerate progress during the remaining years of the 2030 Agenda.

