

## The Faith Pavilion

A space at WUF12 where religious and non-religious communities and practitioners can meet, share, learn, and build partnerships, united in the shared mission of localizing the SDGs for the common good.

The Faith Pavilion, a multi-faith initiative by Faith for Cities and its partners, makes its historic debut at WUF12. Built on a decade of collaboration and trust-building with UN-Habitat, the pavilion draws on participatory experience at Habitat III and WUF 9, 10, and 11, along with active participation in the World Urban Campaign.

Faith for Cities, as showcased through the Faith Pavilion at WUF12, is dedicated to fostering meaningful engagement among faith communities, local governments, and civil society, thereby enabling cities to tap into the transformative potential of faithbased organizations and networks as partners to address our urban challenges.



Pavilion  
Schedule

Our approach to multi-faith collaboration is founded on covenantal pluralism<sup>(1)</sup> which means supporting diverse faith communities in maintaining their unique identities while working together to build sustainable, inclusive cities. We summarize this perspective as “rooted and linked”—firmly rooted in our own faith traditions, yet open and eager to connect with others for collective action.



More about  
Faith for  
Cities

As cities grapple with urgent challenges like housing, essential services, and social cohesion, faith communities offer a unique ability to bridge divides and engage in local solutions. The Faith Pavilion at WUF12 provides a dedicated space to highlight the contributions of faith-based organizations and leaders in urban development, sustainability, and community resilience. Our presence at WUF12 serves two primary goals: first, to build and strengthen the internal capacities of religious organizations committed to urban development; and second, to build bridges between religious and secular organizations, practitioners, and communities that might otherwise overlook one another—hindering their efforts and limiting their impact. By connecting, they can more effectively create vibrant urban futures together.



Thank you  
to all our  
partners!

# A Fact Sheet | Why Engage Faith Communities in Urban Development?<sup>(2)</sup>

Faith-based organizations (FBOs) are key global stakeholders, possessing substantial resources and far-reaching influence. With approximately 84% of the global population identifying with a religion—and projections indicating that religious affiliation will grow, particularly across Africa and Asia<sup>(3)</sup>, through 2050—faith groups hold immense potential to drive transformative progress toward sustainable urban development and thriving communities for all.

**Financial Influence:** Religious institutions manage significant assets and investments worldwide, positioning faith communities as powerful contributors to impactful urban solutions.

**Education:** Faith-based organizations operate half of all schools globally, including 64% in sub-Saharan Africa. The Catholic Church, for instance, manages the largest non-governmental school network worldwide, fostering educational access across both urban and rural areas.

**Buildings & Facilities:** Faith communities own millions of buildings worldwide, from churches and mosques to temples and community centres, cafes, hotels etc. These spaces can serve as valuable resources for urban development, social services, and community gatherings.

**Healthcare Provision:** Religions deliver 30–50% of health services in many developing countries. The Catholic Church alone accounts for over a quarter of healthcare facilities in Africa, especially in HIV and AIDS initiatives.



“The Inclusion of germane faith-based perspectives, and working relationships with faith-based organizations cocommited to the common good, are necessary to the success of the New Urban Agenda.”

The Singapore Declaration – Faith-Based Urban Thinkers Campus, 2017

## Faith, SDGs, and Cities

Faith-based organisations play a crucial role in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in urban contexts:

- ▶ **SDG 1 (No Poverty):** FBOs provide essential services and support for the urban poor.
- ▶ **SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being):** Many faith groups run healthcare programmes to reduce health disparities.
- ▶ **SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities):** Faith groups advocate for inclusive urban planning, affordable housing, and public spaces.
- ▶ **SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions):** Faith networks work towards fostering social cohesion, civic engagement, and conflict resolution.

The Faith Pavilion exhibits how faith-aligned urban development contributes to creating the cities we need and highlights partnerships that enable us to “do better together.” By connecting practitioners and communities who may otherwise struggle to engage, we champion localised solutions that build thriving, sustainable cities for all.



Faith for Cities, developed by

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<sup>(1)</sup> Multi-Faith Covenantal Pluralism

<sup>(2)</sup> Information adapted from FaithInvest @ <https://www.faithinvest.org/why-work-with-faiths>

<sup>(3)</sup> Pg 17 The Routledge Handbook of Religion and Cities & <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2022/12/21/key-findings-from-the-global-religious-futures-project/>