

## **The places of religion within *A World of Neighbours***

*A World of Neighbours* is built on an inherent plurality of beliefs, motivations, backgrounds, and circumstances.

At an individual level, the practitioners participating in the network come from multiple religious traditions or none. Nonetheless, they are united by common values and ethical direction in their work of accompaniment and towards social cohesion. They also draw on a broad range of sources of inspiration, both secular and religious.

At a collective level, as a network rooted in interfaith praxis, *A World of Neighbours* acknowledges the importance of the religious dimensions in its activities. It does that in the atmosphere of respect and inclusivity.

The following principles express the assumptions adopted by the *A World of Neighbours* network.

### **Respect**

1. *The respect for diversity:*
  - a. We unconditionally appreciate the plurality inherent in the network in the spirit of equality.
  - b. We acknowledge that religious categories are not given, but that there are multiple versions and understandings of each tradition.
  - c. We accept and appreciate the disagreements arising from these differences and try to find constructive ways to engage with them.
2. *The respect for the dynamics of religion:*
  - a. We acknowledge that people come with a religious history that influences their understanding of their own and other religious traditions.
  - b. We acknowledge that religious identity has a dynamic character, and that it changes and develops over time.
  - c. We acknowledge that the boundaries between religious identities are not necessarily rigid, but can have a fluid character, drawing on multiple sources of inspiration.
3. *The respect for others:*
  - a. We always ensure continuous consent in engaging with others.
  - b. We accept and appreciate each other's beliefs, but refrain from imposing them on others.
  - c. Our work is driven by common practice, despite potential religious and non-religious differences.

### **Inclusivity**

4. *Place for religion:*
  - a. We acknowledge the difficulties of defining what religion is. Nonetheless, we believe that religious dimensions are an important aspect in the work with people on the move.
  - b. Thus, we provide spaces for religion within the network, in terms of discussions, motivations, and practices.
  - c. We also acknowledge and try to address inherent tensions between and within religious traditions, as well as between the religious and the secular dimensions.
5. *The challenges of faith-based work:*

- a. We acknowledge that there are barriers to engaging with faith-based organizations such as stereotypes, prejudices, as well as controversies concerning past and present practices and mistakes.
  - b. We acknowledge and address issues within our own communities.
  - c. We ensure gender inclusivity, child protection, and safeguards against abuse of power.
6. *The opportunities of faith-based work:*
- a. We engage in advocacy that highlights the positive character of religious and faith-based work, its benefits, and its resources.
  - b. We engage in building bridges between the faith-based and secular stakeholders.
  - c. We acknowledge that faith is an important aspect for many people on the move and utilize the faith resources of the network to provide them with places of understanding.