

# World Day of Prayer and Action for Children



## 2020 Report

Advocating for Children's Rights and Well-being:  
An Interfaith Approach





## World Day of Prayer and Action for Children Report 2020

### An exceptional year

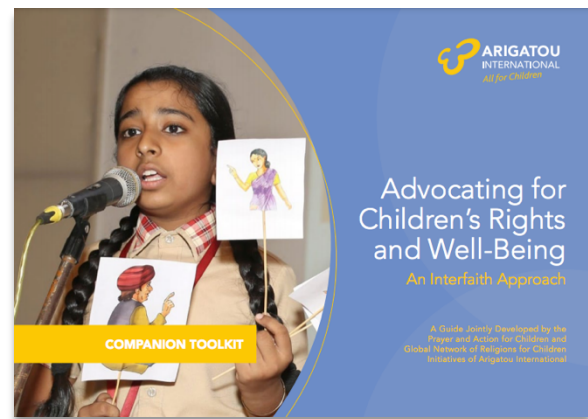
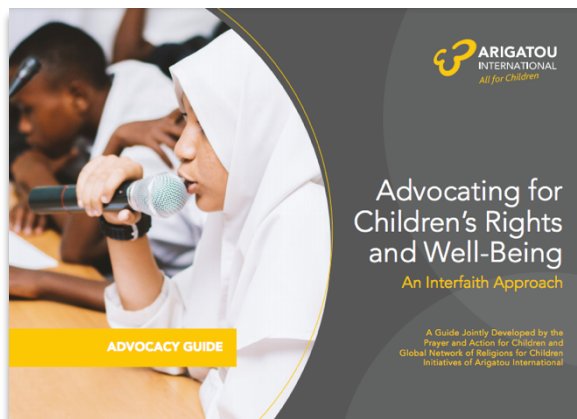
The World Day of Prayer and Action 2020 was marked by challenges to plan and implement face-to-face activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The World Day has historically been celebrated through in-person activities across the world. Since the COVID-19 outbreak in March 2020, the PAC office was in communication with the GNRC Secretariat to discuss the best way forward given the limitations to plan and implement the World Day.

After following up directly with GNRC members and receiving their concerns about the lockdowns, potential second waves, and challenges in holding large gatherings, the PAC initiative decided to avoid putting any pressure on the GNRC members and the World Day implementing partners to adapt their celebrations. Priority was given to offer our support in case any of them found it feasible to celebrate and work on the development of a resource that could strengthen local efforts to advocate for children's rights during and beyond COVID-19.

### Our focus

Limitations to organize face-to-face World Day celebrations and the increasing need to strengthen local efforts to advocate for children's rights during and beyond COVID-19 were factors which motivated: the development of the Guide and Toolkit ***Advocating for Children's Rights and Well-being: An Interfaith Approach***; the interest to co-convene the **Global Week of Faith in Action for Children**; the creation of opportunities for **online World Day celebrations**; and the **support to local World Day actions**.

1. [\*\*\*Advocating for Children's Rights and Well-being: An Interfaith Approach\*\*\*](#): The Guide and Companion Toolkit—developed in collaboration with the GNRC—were PAC's main contribution to the World Day 2020 as PAC aims to support local efforts to respond to the aggravating and harmful issues affecting children by strengthening interfaith approaches to promote children's rights and well-being.



The development of the Advocacy Guide and Toolkit started in April and included regional consultations with 23 GNRC members from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East, and Latin America to gain a better understanding of their local advocacy efforts and needs. The Guide and Toolkit build upon the GNRC experience advocating for children's rights and introduces an interfaith approach to advocacy as a way to create meaningful and collaborative interfaith advocacy that is based on interfaith dialogue, a common vision of the child, and opportunities to take action for children's rights and well-being. The Guide also introduces the advocacy cycle and practical tools that adults and children may use for strategic advocacy planning and implementation using an interfaith approach.

In collaboration with the GNRC Secretariat, GNRC members, Peter Billings, and Zipline, the Advocacy Guide and Toolkit was launched on November 20<sup>th</sup>. The materials, as well as a microsite, are available in English and Spanish.



## 2. Global Week of Faith in Action for Children:

Our interest to create online opportunities for the World Day celebrations and to contribute to the Faith in Action Campaign, led to a collaboration between the PAC initiative and the Ethics Education Initiative to co-convene the Global Week of Faith



in Action for Children. Together they shared the lead in convening the technical teams from the other initiatives to plan and implement the Global Week.

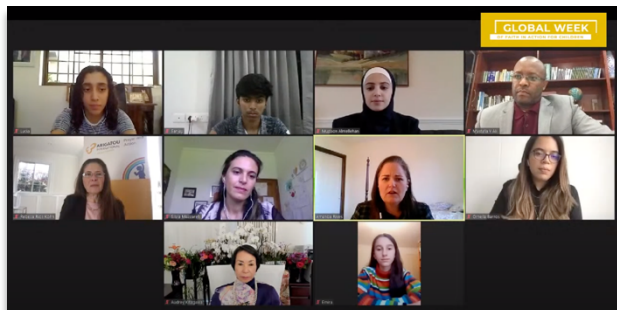
As a result, a week-long multi-faith, multi-lingual, multi-cultural and cross-regional event of 19 sessions took place during November 16-20, engaging over 1,700 people across the world.

3. **Online opportunities to celebrate the World Day:** Given the challenges of holding in-person celebrations, the PAC office aimed to mark the World Day 2020 through online opportunities for the GNRC members and World Day implementing partners to: i) connect in prayer for children; ii) get inspiration from regional efforts to support children during COVID-19; and iii) encourage meaningful participation of children as part of the solutions to issues exacerbated by the pandemic including access to education, violence against children, and poverty.

Four online **regional interfaith prayers** reached over 460 people in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East and Latin America. The regional interfaith prayers engaged 28 religious leaders and 19 children from 11 religious and spiritual communities.

Four **grassroots-led sessions** were suggested as part of the Global Week agenda for GNRC members to amplify the scope of their World Day actions. With the support of the GNRC Secretariat, the grassroots-led sessions had representation from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East and Latin America and engaged adults and children in dialogue about the situation of children in times of COVID-19 and discussed faith-inspired actions to respond to it.

The Global Week culminated with the **online celebration of the World Day** that included: i) a pre-recorded dialogue between Rev. Miyamoto and child members of the GNRC; ii) a live dialogue with children moderated by Ms. Muzoon Almellehan, UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador (children's perspectives on ending violence against children, promoting access to education, and taking action to end child poverty during and beyond COVID-19); and iii) a panel







discussion on faith-inspired approaches to advocacy for children's rights and well-being. The World Day online celebration engaged 522 people.

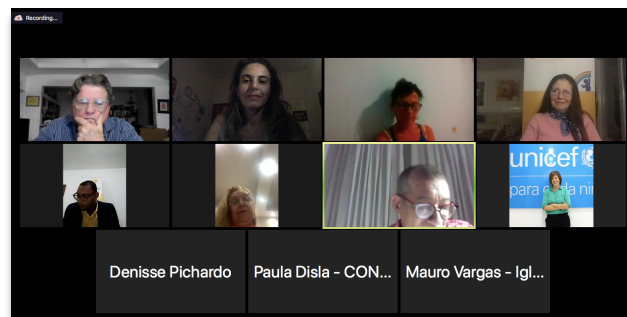
4. **Support to local World Day celebrations:** Despite the challenges, World Day celebrations were led by GNRC in the Dominican Republic, India, and Mexico and supported with seed money. GNRC members from Lebanon and Burundi also reported local actions, including interfaith prayers and workshops.



The prioritized topics included the harmful impact of COVID-19 on children, awareness raising on children's rights and the complementarities between the CRC principles and religious values, and positive parenting.

## What is next

1. **Internal presentation** of the Advocacy Guide and Toolkit to GNRC members
2. **Online courses** for in-depth knowledge on specific content of the Guide and Toolkit including the interfaith approach, collaborative advocacy, advocacy cycle, UN advocacy, and online mobilization.





3. **Follow-up and potential online adaptations** (using the interfaith approach and advocacy cycle) for the World Day 2021 in case it is not possible to do in-person celebrations.
4. **Pilots:** Grassroots implementation of collaborative (children-adult) advocacy to prevent VAC using an interfaith approach to advocacy informed by complementarities between the values of the world's major religions and the UNCRC principles.

**Objectives:**

- Increasing collaborative local advocacy for children's rights with emphasis on the role of faith communities to prevent violence against children.
- Influencing local efforts to end violence against children through the application of an interfaith approach to advocacy informed by complementarities between the values of the world's major religions and the UNCRC principles.
- Strengthening adult-children interfaith and intercultural collaboration for children's rights and well-being.

**Timeline:** Two-year project – from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2023.

**Target:** Faith-inspired organizations – meaning organizations who come from diverse faith communities, spiritual traditions and faith-inspired organizations.

**Number of pilots:** Four – tentative countries: Chile, Nepal, Serbia, Tanzania.