

# REGIONAL FORUM

ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE UNECE REGION

29 – 30 MARCH 2023 | HYBRID EVENT | GENEVA & ONLINE



## *Health in the City: Enhancing Trust at Times of Crises*



How to engage with religious leaders and faith communities in your city when responding to immediate and longer-term threats? This session will provide lessons learned from COVID-19, which inform new collaborations in Urban Health and resilience.

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## Background and Rationale

A healthy city is one that continually creates and improves its physical and social environments and expands the community resources that enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and developing to their maximum potential. COVID-19 is a good case study for illuminating the important role of municipalities in dealing with Global Public Health emergencies and the gaps in their preparedness for the next one.

Faith Leaders and local Faith-based organizations in Europe have been an asset in minimizing the effect of the pandemic and in enhancing preventative measures.

We shall learn in this Session best practices from several countries in Europe and discuss:

- Why in the COVID-19 response, engagement with faith leaders was important?
- How to engage with religious leaders and faith communities in different contexts when responding to immediate and longer-term threats?
- How to navigate and overcome challenges that come from engaging with faith leaders in pursuit of SDGs' attainment?

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## Session objectives and expected outcomes

### Objectives

1. SDG 11: Highlight European best practice and lessons learned from Public Health & Faith leadership cooperation in enhancing trust and reducing hesitancy during COVID-19.
2. SDG 6,7,9,11,17: Offer directions for wider engagement of Faith leadership in European Cities towards advancing the SDGs.

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## Organizers

**Lead organizers:** Jerusalem Impact Vaccination Initiative

**Contributors:** Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations in Geneva and the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Office of the United Nations and to the other International Organizations in Geneva

**Focal points:** Dr. Inon Schenker

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## Agenda and Structure

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**Thursday, 29 March 2023, 13:15 – 14:45 (CET)**

**13:15 – 13:20 Greetings**

**Ambassador Meirav Eilon Shahar**, Permanent Representative of Israel to the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva

**Ambassador DR Hans-Peter Jugel** Deputy Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Office of the United Nations and to the other International Organizations in Geneva

**13:20 – 13:35 Setting the Stage**

The Role of Faith Leaders and Organizations in Community Trust Building during Crises.  
Speaker: **Dr Manoj Kurian**, Head of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, World Council of Churches

**13:35 – 14:35 Roundtable**

Moderator - **Dr. Inon Schenker**, Chair, JIVI

Participants:

**Dr. Annette Christ**, National Healthy Cities Network, Germany

**Dr. Ioannis Fostiropoulos**, Vice President, Hellenic National Healthy Cities Network, Greece

**Ms. Sarah Hess**, Health Emergencies Program, World Health Organization

**Prof. Ellen Idler**, Director, Religion and Public Health Collaborative, Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University, USA

**14:35 – 14:45 Inspirational Closing Remarks**

**Rabbi Prof. (med.) Avraham Steinberg**, Director, Medical Ethics Unit, Shaare Zedek Medical Center, Israel

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## List of Panellists

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Moderator - **Dr. Inon Schenker**, Chair, JIVI

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Sign-up / Registration Link

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Live from Geneva: <https://www.youtube.com/live/UCy3RK7K0e4?feature=share>