

Discussion Draft Concept Paper

Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians' Strategic Plan July 2019-2024

Religion/Theology, Environment and Sustainable Development Goals

Introduction

The Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians (henceforth Circle) is a Pan-African academic association of women researching, publishing and interacting with communities on issues relating to religion/theology---all religions resident in the African continent and affecting women of African descent in the various African Diasporas. Founded in 1989 under the vision of Mercy Amba Oduyoye, the Circle's main agenda was, and still is, to investigate how religions affect women's lives and how they can be interpreted for the empowerment of women and their communities. The Circle, therefore, carries out academic research that seeks to have transformative impact on the lives of African women and the communities they inhabit, indeed the world they inhabit. ***The agenda of the Circle makes it a gender-centered, interreligious, interdisciplinary, intersectional and transformative association.*** It carries gender-centered studies on religions' content and impact on women, children, economics, race, ethnicity, health, environment, among others.

The Circle research is carried out through a flexible structure that consists of continental; regional and country-based coordinators and research leaders, who mobilize members and mentor young-scholars along and the agreed theme of research. While an Africa-wide theme is chosen, regional and national Circle chapters have the freedom to shape their research focus according their contexts and interests. This structure ensures that research activities continue at various levels in the continent, addressing issues that are regional and country specific, while maintaining a shared continental agenda. Leaders (coordinators and research leaders) may initiate/encourage a research project, but individual members are equally free to initiate a research project of interest and invite members to participate. The Circle research structure also involves calling a Pan-African Conference every seven years (now five) on an agreed conference theme, whose papers are thereafter upgraded, edited and published.

The first research period (1989-2002) of the Circle's was characterized by building its capacity and interrogating how religions construct and impact women as well as imagining ways re-interpreting religions for the empowerment of women. In the second research period (2002-2019) the Circle focused on Religions/theology and HIV and AIDS as well as capacitating Faith-Based Communities for constructive response, given the gravity of the HIV & AIDS epidemic to the African continent and to African women and children, in particular. At its recently ended Africanwide conference (July-1-5, 2019), the Circle decided to adopt the theme of ***Religions/Theology, the Environment and Sustainable Development Goals.*** This theme was building on the conference theme; namely, Mother Africa; Mother

Earth and Religion/Theology/Ethics/Philosophy. Eight volumes are being co-edited from the conference proceedings.

Seventeen Sustainable Development Goals were launched in 2015 by 193 governments of the world as a 2030 agenda for the world. The 17 SDGs are:

1. No Poverty
2. Zero Hunger
3. Good Health and Well Being
4. Quality Education
5. Gender Equality
6. Clean Water and Sanitation
7. Affordable and Clean Energy
8. Decent Work and Economic Growth
9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
10. Reducing Inequality
11. Sustainable Cities and communities
12. Responsible Consumption and Production
13. Climate Action
14. Life below Water
15. Life on the Land
- 16 Peace and Justice Strong Institutions
17. Partnerships to Achieve the Goals

The third research theme will be implemented, within the Circle's structures of operation stated above and within its overall agenda, which as stated above is "*gender-centered, interreligious, interdisciplinary, intersectional and transformative.*" It follows that while there are 17 sustainable development goals:

1. Gender, (which is SGD goal 5) will remain a cross-cutting issue for all research on Environment and SGDs
2. Environment will be the main issue for all research on any chosen SGD/s
3. Religion (of any kind) will be the lens through which the environment and SGD's will be explored
4. Methods used will be intersectional, dealing with multiple social factors

5. Circle research and Publications will also quest transformation by engaging and training relevant religious communities
6. Circle chapters will network with relevant developmental agencies, government departments private sector, ecumenical bodies etc. according to our practice and SDG 17
7. Each Circle Chapter (regional and national) will choose the SGDs they wish to research according to their contexts, interests and areas of specialization among others
8. Each Circle chapter will also choose to either focus on several selected SGDs in one book, or to focus on one SGD in one book.
9. Individual members of the Circle may provide leadership on number 8 activity as well

Objectives of the Research Theme

1. Research country, region and context specific material concerning religion, gender environment and SDGS...
2. Write and Publish academically and socially transformative findings....
3. Network with various stakeholders in the areas of gender, environment and SDGs....
4. Empower Faith-Based Communities to champion SDGs.....

SGD 1: Religion, Environment and Ending Extreme Poverty 2019-2024

	Implementing Circle Chapter or member	Mode of Publication	Networking Partners (Stakeholders)	Transformation Mode	Funding: Budgets, Grant Application

SGD 2: Religion, Environment, Ending Hunger and Food Security 2019-2024

SGD	Implementing Circle Chapter	Mode of Publication	Networking Partners (Stakeholders)	Transformation Partners	Funding: Budgets, Research Grantwriting

SGD 3: Religion, Environment, Healthy Lives and Promoting Well Being for All 2019-2024

SGD	Implementing Circle Chapter	Mode of Publication	Networking Partners	Transformation Mode/partners	Funding: Budgets & Research Grant writing

SGD 5: Religion, Environment, Gender Equality and Empowerment of All Women & Girls 2019-2024

SGD	Implementing Circle Chapter	Mode of Publication	Networking Partners	Transformation Mode/Partners	Funding: Budgets; Research Grantwriting

SGD 6: Religion, Environment, Clean Water and Sanitation 2019-2024

SGD	Implementing Circle Chapter	Mode of Publication	Networking Stakeholders	Transformation Mode/partners	Budget: Research Grantwriting

SGD 10: Religion, Environment, and Combating Climate Change and Impact 2019-2024

SGD	Implementing Circle Chapter	Mode of Publication	Networking Partners	Transformation Mode

SGD11: Religion, Environment, Sustainable Cities and Communities' 2019-2024

SGD	Implementing Chapter	Circle	Mode of Publication	Networking Partners	Transformation Mode

SGD 14: Religion, Environment and Life Below Water 2019-2024

SGD	Implementing Chapter	Circle	Mode of Publication	Networking Partners	Transformation Mode

SGD 15 : Religion, Environment and Life on the Land 2019-2024

SGD	Implementing Chapter	Circle	Mode of Publication	Networking Partners	Transformation Mode