



# **Untapped potential of inter-faith leaders in Early Childhood Development Advocacy**

**Presenter:**

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# Presentation Outline

- ECD Inter-faith Advocacy program overview
- Why inter-faith leaders in advocacy.
- Role of interfaith leaders in influencing policy and implementation of ECD agenda
- Challenges and solutions experienced
- Lessons Learnt
- Conclusion



# ECD Inter-faith Advocacy program overview



## Program objectives

1. Strengthen capacity of interfaith leaders on nurturing care framework for ECD
2. Increasing visibility of interfaith leaders in advocacy of ECD policy frameworks



# Why inter-faith leaders in advocacy

Congregational platform

Niche/Reach

Moral and spiritual leadership

Community perception and Trust

Moral Guardians

# Role of interfaith leaders in influencing policy and implementation of ECD agenda

- Deeper collective understanding of nurturing care components of ECD in relation to the religious teachings.
- Advocate for increased uptake and practice of holistic nurturing care framework components to enhance child survival and optimal development at community levels
- Enhance male and father's engagement for responsive caregiving
- Engage in ECD networks and sector/technical working groups with key opinion leaders at National and county levels.
- Address policy formulation, development, and implementation with key opinion leaders at government level to ensure resource allocation and investment for the benefit of the larger society.

# Challenges and solutions of the ECD interfaith Advocacy program

## Challenges

- Some religious norms and beliefs are against nurturing care framework
- Interpretation of some religious teachings
- Community change of behavior and attitude
- Program dependent on donor support

## Solutions

- Build capacity of the interfaith leaders on nurturing care framework
- Integration of nurturing care components to religious teachings
- Use of existing structures such as congregations, state and non state actors' committees/technical working groups

### Lessons learnt

- Capacity building interfaith leaders with knowledge and information on ECD **equips them to articulate** and voice out pertinent ECD components.
- Increased engagement of interfaith leaders ensures **impartial decision making** on matters policy with key opinion leaders.

- There has been evidence on the impact of religious leaders on **peace and governance, Human papillomavirus (HPV) and covid-19 vaccine uptake.**
- These findings clearly show that interfaith leaders have a significant impact on advocacy ECD notwithstanding.



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Thank you!

*“If we change the beginning of the story, We change the whole story”*