

viewpoint

Faith in development: Coping with paradox

Faith has always had an intense, but uneasy, relationship with development. Until recently donors and development theorists have largely neglected faith-based organisations (FBOs)¹. They viewed faith as something divisive and regressive; best avoided and ignored. But donors are becoming increasingly aware of the contribution that FBOs make in service delivery, as well as the influence of faith on people's behaviour. As a result, many are trying to work out how they can best engage with such diverse and different development actors.

A number of FBOs themselves are also now grappling with questions of how their faith identity positively affects who they are, what they do and how they do it. This is a challenging and sensitive process. The relationship between faith and development remains uneasy, fraught with suspicion and mistrust. To engage effectively with faith in development requires coping with paradox.

Faith is a highly flammable fuel in development. There are many horror stories of how religion has harmed development. The excesses make the headlines and stick in our memory. But FBOs have also been amongst the best and most transformative development agencies. As Father Sjeff Donders cautions: 'We should realise that there is good religion, bad religion and very bad religion'. When we work with FBOs we work with complex, ambiguous and paradoxical organisations.

Potential contributions of faith to development

Predictions about the decline of religion have been misplaced. In most parts of the world, levels of religiosity are actually increasing. The secularism of Western Europe is not the global norm. To listen to peoples' own priorities and aims for development requires understanding and appreciation of religious worldviews. FBOs may have an advantage here.



© 2008 Father Bert Otten, Society of Jesus, Zambia

A solar vegetable drier project, supported by the Jesuit Fathers in Zambia

¹ Although this is a contested term, for the sake of simplicity we use FBO. Clarke defines an FBO as 'any organisation that derives inspiration and guidance for its activities from the teachings and principles of the faith or from a particular interpretation or school of thought within that faith'. (2008:6)

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In this issue:

Rick James presents an overview of faith's intense, but uneasy, relationship with development. Donors are becoming increasingly aware of the contribution of FBOs, as well as the influence of faith on people's behaviour. Many are now trying to work out how they can best engage with such diverse development actors. A number of FBOs are also now grappling with how their faith identity affects who they are, what they do and how they do it. This is a challenging and sensitive process.

Jonathan Benthall's article outlines how charity is rooted in most religious traditions. Religions give access to vast civil society networks, as alternatives to political structures and may have the advantage of 'cultural proximity' and shared values.

Carole Rakodi, director of a DFID-funded research initiative, then gives an overview of some of the findings of this ground-breaking series of studies. It appears that so far it is almost impossible to disentangle the contribution of faith from that of culture.

Later on, Lisette van der Wel from ICCO and Mamoun Abuarqub from Islamic Relief Worldwide illustrate how two European FBOs approach the question of faith identity. For ICCO they are finding out what now unites and inspires them. For Islamic Relief they are ensuring all their activities abide by the principles of Islam while at the same time meet international standards for humanitarian work.

As Jonathan Benthall points out in his article later in this ONTRAC, charity is rooted in most religious traditions. He points out that religions give access to vast civil society networks, as alternatives to political structures. They may have the advantage of 'cultural proximity' and shared values.

Analysts recognise that FBOs provide a significant proportion of health and education services. They can potentially provide efficient services and reach the poorest at the grassroots, though this should not simply be assumed. They can have a powerful influence on individual behaviour and public opinion.

But most donors do not have a well-developed understanding of how faith affects development, nor how to relate effectively to FBOs. Some describe themselves as 'faith-illiterate'. Many have been investing in learning more about this 'new' subject.

Donor responses – investigating the evidence

A number of donors have invested in understanding more about the relationship between faith and development. The World Bank set up a 'Directorate on Faith' (now called the Development Dialogue on Values and Ethics). It is funding 'policy relevant empirical work', much of it through the Berkley Center at Georgetown University².

The Dutch government has created a Policy Platform 'Knowledge Forum on Religion and Development Policy'. They have annual thematic discussions between the Minister for Development and FBO leaders in the Netherlands.

In the UK, DFID has funded a five-year research programme with University of Birmingham. Carole Rakodi, the director of this research initiative³, gives an overview of some of the findings of this ground-breaking series of studies in her article. It appears that so far the findings on faith and development are mixed. It is almost impossible to disentangle the

contribution of faith from that of culture. FBOs are proving diverse and paradoxical, making necessary generalisations highly problematic. The performance and contributions of FBOs varies between and within faith boundaries.

One emerging finding from the different research initiatives is that much depends on how faith-based the agency is. The intensity of their faith identity matters. An FBO that uses their faith as a decoration for fundraising or only as a founding inspiration is unlikely to be different from a secular NGO. It matters how FBOs choose to operationalise their faith identity in their work. Distinctiveness should not be assumed. It is a choice.

FBO responses – understanding their faith identity

A number of FBOs themselves are also paying greater attention to their faith identity. In the past many tended to shy away from such potentially exclusive and divisive discussions. But as they recognise the need for organisational coherence between their beliefs and their actions – and as they find the environment increasingly open to such discussions, some are attempting to develop greater shared understanding of their faith identity and its implications for their work. To realise the benefits of being faith based, they are finding they need to be clearer about their faith identity and how it permeates what they do.

Later in this ONTRAC, Lisette van der Wel from ICCO and Mamoun Abuarqub from Islamic Relief Worldwide illustrate how two European FBOs approach the question of faith identity. For ICCO they are finding out what now unites and inspires them – in a vastly different context since they started 45 years ago.

For Islamic Relief they are ensuring all their fundraising and programme activities abide by the principles of Islam while at the same time meet international standards for humanitarian work. Unlike many Islamic agencies, they have chosen to be an integral part of the Western aid system.

Clarifying faith identity

FBOs need the courage to clearly define for themselves and to outsiders what their faith identity means and how it is operationalised in their work. They should not wear different masks for different stakeholders. Clarifying faith identity is certainly not an easy process. Beliefs are highly personal. People's interpretation of even the same faith and its implications for development are not always the same. It is tempting not to expose these differences as this might surface latent conflict within the organisation. Engaging with faith identity must therefore be done in a sensitive, respectful and inclusive way.

Conclusion

Faith can be a powerful, but flammable fuel for change. FBOs are highly diverse and complex. They put their faith identity into practice in different ways, with different strengths, through different partners, with different visibility and with different results. Indiscriminate funding that does not acknowledge this diversity can do more harm than good.

Working with faith and development is not for those who want simple solutions. Nor is it for those who are too bigoted to genuinely listen to the perspectives and beliefs of others. To take advantage of the considerable contribution that FBOs can bring and at the same time mitigate the inherent risks requires nuanced understanding of faith and FBOs. It needs the self-awareness to withhold judgement and appreciate how your own beliefs affect your understanding. It requires the courage to cope with complexity and paradox.

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² see <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/>

³ www.rad.bham.ac.uk/index.php?section=1

Mainstreaming religion in development: FBOs ride the wave

Most afternoons in a suburb of Bamako, Mali, a meeting of ALOVE, the Association Locale des Orphelins et Veuves, is convened. Its 60 members are nearly all widows. They meet most afternoons to read the Quran together with an imam, and to help each other. They also help other widows who are worse off than they are and manage a kindergarten for orphans, subsidised by Islamic Relief Worldwide. This UK-based aid agency also sponsors many of the orphans, in a programme designed to help the poorest communities. To support the kindergarten, ALOVE buys honeycombs locally and converts them in a workshop into three products: honey, soap and skin cream. In Mali, as in most Muslim societies, widowhood is still explicitly accepted as a 'marked' social condition rather than played down. Stimulating them to productive action seems an exemplary way to use external aid funds to reach the poorest.

In Lusaka, Zambia, the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (www.jctr.org.zm), publishes a monthly 'Basic Needs Basket' survey, first launched in 1991 to highlight the devastating impact of Structural Adjustment, and now accepted as a major input for policymakers, campaigners and communities. It exposes the struggle to meet basic needs by comparing the basic cost of living with average take-home wages and general household incomes. According to the Centre, it '... transforms from a pure statistical record of history to an active protagonist in the living drama'.

The Jesuit Centre illustrates how 'liberation theology', once condemned by the Vatican, has now been absorbed into the mainstream of Catholic social teaching. The Church sees its role as helping people to be actors in their own development, rather than passive victims. A programme such as the Basic Needs Basket throws into question two sharp distinctions that we often too readily make: between material as opposed to spiritual needs, and between reflection and action.

Mainstreaming religion in development

Gender was successfully 'mainstreamed' in many NGOs in the 1980s – integrated in

policy and practice at all levels. If gender is understood as including reproduction, sexuality and the family, its mainstreaming is valuable for thought and analysis. There is a stronger demand from recipient societies for the mainstreaming of religion. However, religions have marked exclusive as well as inclusive aspects, and are still highly patriarchal.

I suggest that the mainstreaming of religion is most welcome, provided that it is accepted that the boundaries of the religious field are *invariably* contested. Hence it is an illusion to think that one can find precise definitions for words such as 'religion', 'faith', 'spirituality' and the like.

Why are faith-based organisations (FBOs), of which I have given two examples, now riding the wave of the mainstream? First, charity seems to be rooted in religious traditions, even when it seems to cut loose. Second, religions give access to vast civil society networks, though they have only recently been recognised as part of civil society – for which I borrow Benoît Challand's definition: 'a space for voluntary collective action which can be a basis for autonomy'.

Third, these networks can give opportunities to bypass political structures that too often lead to squandering and abuse of aid flows. Fourth, FBOs can benefit from what has been called a 'comparative advantage' or 'cultural proximity' – a privileged relationship between donors and aid beneficiaries – even when they obey international codes of practice that forbid proselytism and discrimination. 'Cultural proximity' is now the subject of a small research literature. A common religion can be an advantage, but should not be relied on at the expense of a commitment to good performance.

Religion and development in the future

What might the future hold for FBOs and development? First, some of the major religious hierarchies are experiencing serious problems with their reputation and credibility. But they all have in common a social and



ALOVE widows' organisation making products from honeycombs

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humanitarian commitment that is more widely accepted, and they span national boundaries. We may predict more emphasis on their humanitarian traditions, and hence on FBOs. The gravest obstacle to this trend will be the serious political problems for Islamic aid agencies since 9/11 that are likely to last for some years, despite the efforts of the Charity and Security Network in Washington, DC, and the Islamic Charities Project¹ in Geneva, to have these obstacles removed for Islamic charities that can demonstrate their integrity.

Second, FBOs are not a separate species from other types of aid agency. It is clear that effective cooperation is possible not only between FBOs from different confessions (Islamic Relief and CAFOD) but also between FBOs and secular NGOs (Muslim Aid and Oxfam). Moreover, the most successful secular NGOs, such as Médecins Sans Frontières², are often marked by features – such as a foundation myth, charismatic leadership and an assertive moral code – that have much in common with faith-based organisations in the strict sense.

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² For more detail concerning this and other cases, see: Benthall, J. (2008) *Returning to Religion: Why a Secular Age is Haunted by Faith*, London: I.B. Tauris & Company Ltd.

Are religious organisations different?

It is often argued that ‘faith-based organisations’ (FBOs) make an important and distinctive contribution to development, because of their faith motivation, location in remote areas, closeness to the poor, and cultural affinity with people who share their religious beliefs. Research by the Religions and Development Research Programme based at the University of Birmingham has started to assess whether such claims are valid.

Attempts to map FBOs engaged in development in India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Tanzania show that their scale and scope varies, depending on the definition of FBO adopted and on local philanthropic traditions, as well as a country’s colonial history, religious composition, post-independence politics and policies, and dependence on aid. There is no universally accepted definition of an ‘FBO’ and systematic data is lacking, so precise estimates of the share of development activities contributed by FBOs are impossible. In addition, the term ‘FBO’ is problematic because:

- It arose in a Western context, specifically related to the rise of the ‘Religious Right’ in the US and, in developing countries, it is associated with the ‘development industry’ or not used at all, especially where the idea of ‘faith’ is not part of the main religious traditions or there is no exact equivalent of the word in local languages.
- It does not adequately capture the organisational expression of religious traditions and their development activities, many of which are associated with the activities of particular mosques, shrines or church congregations.
- It is difficult to distinguish between FBOs and non-faith based organisations.

As a result, a simple division of humanitarian organisations into two categories – ‘faith-based’ and ‘secular’ – is often unhelpful, especially where most people are religious believers or ‘secular’ organisations are regarded with suspicion,

such as in Pakistan. As with NGOs and civil society organisations more broadly, organisations that derive inspiration and guidance from the teaching and principles of a religion may not claim to be ‘FBOs’, may take many forms, hold different values and engage in a wide range of activities. Although some are inclusive and oriented towards the poor, many primarily benefit members of their own faith tradition, who are not always poor.

When considering what difference religion makes, it is necessary to analyse how and to what extent religion is manifest in any organisation’s motivation, perceptions of development, choice of activities, management practices, sources of funding and criteria by which performance is assessed. Features of any of these can indicate not just *whether* religion is important in particular organisations, but also *how* this influences their operations and affects the outcomes of their activities.

In **Pakistan**, research in Sindh examined six large locally-led religious organisations in some depth and several professional development organisations for comparison. It shows that they can be distinguished from one another in terms of three characteristics:

- Their sources of funding. The main source of funding for local organisations is individual, religiously mandated, donations as opposed to international institutional donors.
- The focus of their activities. These lie along a spectrum from a primary focus on the provision of immediate relief and welfare, which typifies local charitable organisations, to a concern with longer-term development.
- Their relationship with religion, in particular in relation to the recruitment of staff and organisational identity.

In **Tanzania**, Christian churches play an important role in education and health provision nationally and may also choose to engage in other development activities. There are few similar organisations associated with Islam. Research in two

districts – Newala, which is remote, poor, and largely Muslim; and Magu, which is in a prosperous agricultural region and largely Christian – found that most CSOs other than mosques and churches are dependent on external donors. Most external funding since around 2004 has been linked to HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention and welfare support for poor children and orphans. Because of this, most CSOs, both faith-based and secular, saw these as their key areas of work even though many had been established to undertake other activities.

In such a donor-driven and aid-dependent environment, the assumed differences between secular and faith-based organisations dissolve: many of those involved in CSOs are religious believers, while many FBOs are engaged in development activities identical to those of other organisations. The influence of religious values across many settings makes their impact on development outcomes difficult to assess, compounded by the fact that much of the available funding is for intangibles such as HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

Conclusion

This research programme, which is funded by DFID (UK Aid) (2005-2010), is far-reaching, but not yet complete. The programme has involved 11 separate research projects and partners in the UK, India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Tanzania. The programme has already produced more than 45 working papers and policy briefs which can be downloaded at www.rad.bham.ac.uk. As evident from the two examples summarised in this article, it is possible to come to very different conclusions about faith and development in different contexts: there are no hard-and-fast links, and we can’t always assume FBOs are distinctive. The overarching findings of the programme are still emerging and taking shape. Keep an eye on the website for further developments.

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Religious empathy: a vital resource for development work

Faith is a vital force in people's life in many parts of the world. Yet, many faith-based development organisations in Europe are struggling with their faith identity. What does it mean to be faith-based in a secular context? ICCO, in the Netherlands, has taken up the challenge to go back to its roots in order to move forward.

Religion in development

Whenever I visit Africa, Asia or Latin America, the strong presence of religion in many forms throughout society strikes me. Churches, mosques and temples are full of life. Farmers make offerings before sowing or harvesting their land. Businessmen and women seek spiritual blessings before concluding business deals. Villagers resort to faith healings as much as to western medicine. Religion permeates all areas of life. It informs people's values, worldviews, choices and decisions, for better or for worse.

A loss of religious empathy

Despite this, I have seen the knowledge and understanding of religion gradually disappear from Dutch development organisations. When I joined a faith-based NGO 25 years ago, many of my colleagues were former missionaries with a deep understanding of the societies they were concerned with, and a great sensitivity to the role that religion played in them, either positively or negatively.

Throughout the years, these people retired and were replaced with a new generation of development workers: highly educated and motivated young professionals, often with a secular¹ worldview. This reflected the wider transformation of Dutch society from a faith-based to a secular society. Hence faith-based development organisations like Cordaid and ICCO² gradually lost their empathy for the role of religion in social change.

Renewed interest

In recent years, however, a renewed interest in religion is manifest among Dutch development organisations. ICCO's leadership realised that the organisation needed to rearticulate its faith identity and its relationships with churches in order to stay vibrant and recognisable to its employees and constituency. This process was speeded up when the government required 25% own-income as a condition for receiving government funding.

These factors made ICCO decide to join hands with the Protestant Church and its fundraising arm Kerk in Actie. In addition to this, national and international trends, such as the upsurge of new religious movements and contested manifestations of Islam, also contributed to a reawakening of interest in religion as a force in society and development.

Thus, ICCO's management decided to start on a path to encourage reflection on our identity and strengthen our knowledge and skills on religion and development. While this is still work in progress, I would like to share four important lessons here.

1. No outreach without inreach

A key lesson which we learned in ICCO is that one cannot expect staff to be sensitive to the role of religion in development without reflecting thoroughly on how the organisation understands our roots and evolution throughout the years. This is perhaps best illustrated by the ongoing discussion



ICCO's management started a process to encourage reflection on ICCO's identity.

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about whether our organisation is 'faith-based' or 'value-driven'.

Those who adhere to the first view point to ICCO's rootedness in protestant church organisations and embeddedness in the global ecumenical movement³. Adherents of the 'value-driven' view, on the other hand, argue that the label faith-based is too narrow and exclusive to do justice to ICCO's evolution into a professional development player, which cooperates with NGOs and sustainably operating companies as much as with faith-based organisations, depending on who qualifies best for achieving development goals.

With the growing cooperation between ICCO and Kerk in Actie and the recent decentralisation of ICCO's work to regional offices, management and staff feel

¹ In this context, 'secular' refers to the view that religion is, or should not be, part of public life, but restricted to the private sphere. It does not imply that a person holding such a view is an atheist.

² Cordaid (Catholic) and ICCO (Protestant) are two of the largest faith-based development organisations in the Netherlands. ICCO was founded in 1965 by the missionary boards of reformed churches and by some Christian-social organisations as an inter-church committee to channel government funds to churches' social work overseas. ICCO became an independent foundation in 1971. Since 2004-05, it works together closely with Kerk in Actie. Both organisations are pivotal in the 'ICCO alliance' with six other Dutch (Protestant) development organisations. ICCO's current annual budget of about 130 million Euro is used to support development programmes in 50 countries worldwide.

³ ICCO is recognised as a 'specialized ministry' of the World Council of Churches and is member of the ACT Alliance of 100 churches and church-related organisations that work together in humanitarian assistance and development.

the need for renewed grounding in what inspires and unites the organisation. In response to this need, a small staff team has been assigned to write the corporate story of ICCO.

2. Core values

One emergent insight in ICCO is that what unites is not faith but values. We have identified three core values with biblical roots, which have consistently underpinned our thinking and behaviour throughout the years. These are **Justice**, **Compassion** and **Stewardship**.

These values reflect our commitment to stand with those who struggle for social, economic and cultural justice through non-violent means, our reverence for and solidarity with impoverished and marginalised people as subjects with dignity, and our care for the well-being of the whole living earth.

To make and keep these values alive, a toolkit for management is being developed on how to implement the core values in our work practices.

3. Leadership

Considering the strategic nature of reflecting on an organisation's identity, values and the role of religion within it, exemplary leadership and the active support of senior management in this area are paramount. Leadership should be willing to walk its talk. Trust and credibility are crucial factors for success.

4. Faith literacy

Both because of our background and our ambition to be an effective development player, we think it is important for our staff to be faith-literate. This means one should be knowledgeable about the values, language, motivations and culture of religious communities, and have the skills to cooperate across cultural and religious differences.

This obliges the organisation to offer capacity development to staff members, which is currently being piloted. To encourage organisational learning and exchange of experiences, ICCO is an

active member in the Knowledge Centre Religion and Development⁴ and is co-funding the academic chair on Religion and Development at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague.

Conclusion

We have embarked on an exciting journey to articulate what unites and inspires ICCO in a vastly different context compared to when the organisation was formed 45 years ago. On this road, we wish to be true to both our Christian roots and to our evolution into an international organisation with a culturally and religiously mixed staff and partner network.

Inclusiveness is a key principle in defining our vision, values and inspiration. Religious empathy is a key feature we wish to maintain among all that changes.

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Working with FBOs – INTRAC consultancies

INTRAC recognises the importance of faith-based organisations (FBOs) involved in international development, and we are able to offer a variety of services to FBOs. Our consultants have a clear understanding of the diversity and complexity related to working with these organisations.

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Visit www.intrac.org/pages/en/consultancies.html for more information about our consultancy work.

⁴ www.religion-and-development.nl

Islamic Relief: Faith and identity in practice

Inspired by his Islamic faith, Dr Hany El Banna, an Egyptian immigrant, founded Islamic Relief (IR) in the UK in 1984. IR is a faith-based organisation (FBO) and the largest Muslim humanitarian aid organisation in the West¹. Faith is a major factor in shaping its identity as well as its values and choices. Islam indicates that each individual has a duty to care for the poor and is accountable for his or her deeds on earth. Therefore, it is important that the organisation abides by Islamic principles and values while contributing to fighting poverty. Faith defines the organisation's identity; it influences its performance, choices and actions. In practice, IR's fundraising on the one hand, and projects on the other hand, demonstrate the spirit of its Islamic humanitarian work.

Sources of support

The organisation receives donations from multilateral and bilateral institutions and individual donors. It has entered into partnerships and cooperation agreements with Christian FBOs, such as CAFOD, as well as secular organisations. Likewise, IR's individual donors include both Muslims and non-Muslims. Many Muslim donors prefer to pay their donations according to Islamic traditions and rituals. The principles of charitable giving are established in Islamic teaching through the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (*hadith*) and as such, they are more than 1400 years old. Muslims are obliged to provide for the poor, marginalised and vulnerable through *zakat*, or almsgivings. In addition, Muslims are also encouraged to make voluntary contributions, or *sadaqah*, to help the poor and needy, or to contribute to other social welfare purposes such as orphans' sponsorships. *Waqf* or charitable endowments constitute another mechanism for the provision of services to the public.

IR has developed specific processes and systems to cater for these traditions of giving, which take into account the different types of faith-based donations. For example, during Ramadhan (the month of fasting) IR undertakes specific feeding programmes (as do many Islamic FBOs). The organisation makes sure that it



Group discussion at a conference on Islam and HIV/AIDS organised by Islamic Relief

uses such donations according to Islamic guidance, while at the same time abiding by the standards of the international humanitarian sector in the way it delivers the service to its beneficiaries.

How faith identity is reflected in activities

The ways in which faith identity is reflected in Muslim FBOs' activities are diverse. The traditional focus of Muslim charities, including IR, has been largely on satisfying the basic needs of poor and vulnerable people; providing food parcels, clothing, shelter, and sponsorship for orphans. However, the organisation also focuses on tackling the causes of poverty, such as conflicts, exclusion and environmental degradation. This is all in line with the Islamic moral framework on development and sustainability.

Besides areas that have adopted a general faith-based approach to social development, such as IR's work in reproductive health, education, and conflict transformation, the organisation's faith identity is illustrated through concrete projects and initiatives. One example is IR's microcredit projects. IR gives beneficiaries interest-free loans, which is a faith-compliant approach inspired by Islamic economic principles. Likewise, the faith of the organisation has shaped its approach to HIV/AIDS. In 2007, IR organised a conference on Islam and HIV/AIDS in South Africa. The goal of this was to consult with others to formulate and promote an Islamic approach outlining how Muslims can contribute to the international effort to fight the disease. Finally, IR's contributions to the Jubilee Debt Campaign on international debt relief and the United Nations Convention against Corruption campaign are further examples of Islamic

teachings inspiring IR's work in tackling the causes of poverty.

IR works with Muslim and non-Muslim beneficiaries. According to Islam, charitable work should be free from any expected return on the beneficiaries' side. There should be no discrimination against beneficiaries based on ethnicity, religion or colour. Therefore, humanitarian aid and charity cannot be conditioned on religious affiliation. *Da'wa*, or inviting others to Islam, is obligatory for each Muslim, always through reasoning rather than luring and coercion. But *da'wa* has very little to do with international development and should remain a separate activity from humanitarian work. Therefore, while it is important for IR to demonstrate and maintain its faith identity and meet the expectation of its religious donors, the primary focus of the organisation will always be the needs of the poor and vulnerable.

In conclusion, Islamic Relief's vision, mission and practice are inspired by Islamic teaching and values. The organisation demonstrates its faith identity through its activities which cater for faith-based donations, its faith-based approach to social development, its faith-compliant and -inspired projects, and finally by promoting Islamic perspectives on international development issues such as international debt, governance and HIV/AIDS. It seeks to be both true to its faith and at the same time adhere to international humanitarian and accountability standards. It intentionally and explicitly integrates Islam's perspectives with professional relief and development.

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¹ Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) headquarters is based in the UK. IR has 12 partner offices, and has field offices and work in 26 countries

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