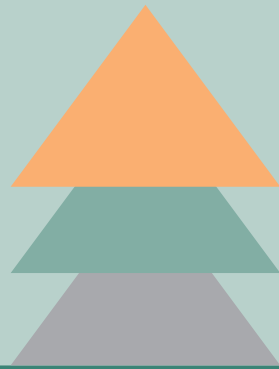# Religions and Development
Research Programme

Religious Organizations, Values and Rivalry in Nigeria: Exploring the Implications for Development and Politics

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Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research

Working Paper 64 - 2011

RaD

Religions and Development

Research Programme

The Religions and Development Research Programme Consortium is an international research partnership that is exploring the relationships between several major world religions, development in low-income countries and poverty reduction. The programme is comprised of a series of comparative research projects that are addressing the following questions:

- How do religious values and beliefs drive the actions and interactions of individuals and faith-based organisations?
- How do religious values and beliefs and religious organisations influence the relationships between states and societies?
- In what ways do faith communities interact with development actors and what are the outcomes with respect to the achievement of development goals?

The research aims to provide knowledge and tools to enable dialogue between development partners and contribute to the achievement of development goals. We believe that our role as researchers is not to make judgements about the truth or desirability of particular values or beliefs, nor is it to urge a greater or lesser role for religion in achieving development objectives. Instead, our aim is to produce systematic and reliable knowledge and better understanding of the social world.

The research focuses on four countries (India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Tanzania), enabling the research team to study most of the major world religions: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and African traditional belief systems. The research projects will compare two or more of the focus countries, regions within the countries, different religious traditions and selected development activities and policies.

The consortium consists of six research partner organisations, each of which is working with other researchers in the four focus countries:

- University of Birmingham, UK: International Development Department, Department of Theology and Religion, Centre for West African Studies, Centre for the Study of Global Ethics.
- University of Bath, UK: Centre for Development Studies.
- Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, New Delhi.
- Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, Ibadan.
- University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
- Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan.

In addition to the research partners, links have been forged with non-academic and non-government bodies, including Islamic Relief.

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Contents

Key words: Christianity, Islam, faith-based orgnization, women's movement, Jos, Kano, corruption

Preface

The Religions and Development Research Programme Consortium is an international research partnership that between 2005 and 2010 explored the relationships between several major world religions, development in low-income countries and poverty reduction. Research was carried out primarily in four countries: Nigeria, Tanzania, India and Pakistan, with some work in Bangladesh. This country focus enabled the research team to study most of the major world religions: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and African traditional belief systems.

The consortium consists of six research partner organizations, each of which has extensive links with policy makers, religious organizations and civil society groups. The partners worked with other researchers in the focus countries.

- University of Birmingham, UK: International Development Department, Department of Theology and Religion, Centre for West African Studies.
- University of Bath, UK: Centre for Development Studies
- Indian Institute for Dalit Studies, New Delhi
- Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, Ibadan
- University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
- Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan

The Programme was funded by UK Aid from the UK Department for International Development and managed by the University of Birmingham, with Prof. Carole Rakodi as Programme Director. As indicated above, RaD in Nigeria was housed in the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER) and managed by Prof. Olakunle Odumosu (Country Coordinator) and Dr. Antonia Simbine (Deputy Country Coordinator) (April 2006-December 2010). Prof. Odumosu was also a member of the management group for the programme as whole.

A Country Advisory Group with representatives from the policy, faith and academic communities, provided guidance on research questions and methodological approaches, feedback on findings, advice on the country communications strategy, and assistance with dissemination and uptake of the policy implications of findings. The members of the Nigeria Country Advisory Group in 2010 were:

- Rev (Dr) Ademola Ishola – Secretary-General, Nigerian Baptist Convention
- Prof. Dawud O.S. Noibi – Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies

- Prof. Charles Uche Isiugo-Abanihe, Professor of Sociology and Rev. Canon of the Anglican Communion
- Dr. Gabriel Gundu – Director-General, Public Service Institute
- Dr. Jibrin Ibrahim – Political Scientist

Nine research projects were undertaken in Nigeria (see Appendix 1). Each was part of a wider international comparative research project, coordinated by a researcher based in the UK. Each component was led by a research team leader, drawn from NISER or collaborating institutions, who worked with the overall project coordinator to identify research questions, design and implement research relevant to Nigeria. The team leaders worked with additional team members and research assistants as necessary. The Country Coordinators and team leaders ensured that the research teams included the range of expertise required to undertake each study, and encouraged members with different disciplinary backgrounds to work together on particular projects. The teams included both experienced and young researchers and aimed at a gender and religious balance. Terms of Reference were agreed with each researcher prior to commencement of the work. Each project completed an ethical review, and all researchers were made familiar with the programme's ethical guidelines. Detailed research planning was undertaken before the commencement of each study and regular reviews of progress were carried out. Capacity strengthening of some researchers was carried out locally and at the University of Birmingham. Additional advisers assisted the research teams, including Prof. Bolanle Awe, Dr. Joy Ezeillo , Hajiya Bilkisu Yusuf, Prof. Umar Danfulani, General Ishola Williams (rtd) and Prof. Okey Ibeanu.

The advice and assistance of the Director General of NISER, all the advisers, and those who participated as researchers or respondents in all the projects is much appreciated.

Summary

Religious belief is universal in Nigeria, where approximately half the population is Muslim and half Christian, although many continue to hold beliefs and engage in practices that are associated with African traditional religion. Religion is a key aspect of people's identity and of political and social relationships at all levels of Nigerian society. However, attention has mostly focused on the growth of new religious movements (for example Pentecostalism within Christianity and radical movements within Islam); religious rivalry, which is associated with political competition and an apparent increase in the frequency of inter-religious violence; and ways in which religious beliefs and organizations appear to hinder the achievement of development objectives, for example, gender equality. Many aspects of the links between religion and development continue to be neglected.

This paper synthesizes the findings of nine research projects that addressed aspects of

- the development activities of faith-based organizations (FBOs)
- the links between religion, governance and development
- relationships between values, religious teaching and development concepts and practices.

Undertaken as part of an international research programme, these studies addressed both issues familiar in the Nigerian context and some that have been neglected in development studies and policy. Using qualitative methodologies to increase understanding of complex social and political relationships, local interpretations of religion and aspects of development, and belief and value systems, the studies mostly undertook one or a limited number of case studies of localities or organizations. Work focused on selected states with differing religious compositions, mainly Kano, Plateau and Oyo (also Lagos and Anambra). While Kano is a majority Muslim and Anambra a majority Christian state, the remainder are religiously mixed, with differing proportions of Christians and Muslims. While the states and case studies were selected with care, the research is illustrative rather than comprehensive. Unlike much existing writing in Nigeria, the studies do not make normative assumptions about religion's positive or negative contribution to development, instead basing their conclusions on the evidence assembled.

The main findings include:

- Religious organizations are significant and widely but unevenly distributed. Because of Nigeria's religious history, most Muslim organizations are based (and strongest) in the north and most Christian organizations in the south, although neither are confined to these regions.

- Most provide social services, in particular education and health; fewer are engaged in activities such as community development or advocacy.

- In a society in which most people are religiously active, there are considerable similarities between the aims of secular and religious NGOs, but the latter also display a range of distinctive characteristics.

- Beneficiaries of FBO and NGO programmes prioritize service quality, but also often prefer the combined spiritual/moral and material approach adopted by FBOs engaged in activities related to HIV/AIDS.

- There is some evidence to support the supposed comparative advantage of FBOs (e.g. higher levels of trust, an ongoing presence, financial autonomy), although these are not exclusively associated with FBOs and NGOs are thought to have advantages for some activities.

- The core funding for FBOs comes from local religiously mandated giving, but like NGOs, many also rely on institutional and external funding.

- Many NGOs and FBOs work with each other and the state; this is particularly beneficial in religiously sensitive contexts.

- The scope for civil society participation in the preparation of poverty reduction strategies has been limited in Nigeria, and religious organizations have not taken advantage of the opportunities available, but a pilot project demonstrated that they can work together to assemble evidence of relevance to monitoring and policy review.

- Violent inter-religious conflicts reflect not only religious and ethnic rivalry but also competition for political power and control over resources. FBOs compensate for government shortcomings by playing short term roles in the immediate aftermath, but are rarely engaged in long term reconstruction and conflict prevention. They are not a substitute for competent security forces, justice systems and government agencies.

- Christians and Muslims share similar views on good governance and development, but State governments do not systematically support independent development efforts by religious groups, instead attempting to co-opt them to gain legitimacy.

- Reflecting their unequal and insecure access to State governments, religious organizations tend to see each other as political rivals, despite their shared engagement in the provision of basic services.

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- While encounters between the state and religious groups have facilitated dialogue, the potential for improving cooperation is undermined by their unequal integration into politics, with religious minorities being particularly marginalized and vulnerable.
- Attitudes to corruption reveal a gap between universally held religious values that label corrupt behaviour as morally wrong and perceptions that most public servants are corrupt and that most ordinary people have no choice but to act corruptly when faced with a corrupt system.
- While some campaigns for legal reform to secure women's rights have failed because of religious opposition, others have succeeded in part because of the support of religious groups.
- Poverty is viewed as having both spiritual and material dimensions; for most, spiritual power and living a holy life are expected to ensure material prosperity. Material wealth that is honestly accumulated and well used is seen as compatible with religiosity. People have a multidimensional view of development, attributing continued poverty and failure to achieve development objectives mainly to government failure.

Some of the main implications of the findings include:

- FBOs and NGOs engaged in development have many similar characteristics but differ in some important ways. Decisions by donors and policy makers about whether and how to engage with FBOs must be made on a case-by-case basis, based on an understanding of individual organizations and their context.
- More participatory approaches to policy making are needed in Nigeria and there is potential for religious organizations to play a role in policy formulation, monitoring and review.
- Inter-religious violence reflects underlying conflicts that can only be addressed by government, which also needs to improve the competence of its security forces and justice system.
- There is a potential role for FBOs in long term post-conflict rebuilding and conflict prevention, in addition to relief, but at present they lack the capacity.
- Religious rivalry and conflict are likely to increase unless the state is even-handed, religious groups have equal access to political representation and resources, and more forums for inter-religious dialogue are established.
- The most effective means of reducing corruption is seen to be enforcement of regulations and laws, but there is potential for religious leaders and organizations to play a role in anti-corruption initiatives providing they put their own house in order.
- The women's movement can learn how to work with religious groups from the tactics and outcomes of successful and unsuccessful campaigns for legal reform.

1   Introduction

According to the United Nations Development Programme, development is

> …….about much more than the rise or fall of national incomes. It is about creating an environment in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accord with their needs and interests……… [It] is thus about expanding the choices people have to lead lives that they value. And it is thus about much more than economic growth, which is only a means — if a very important one — of enlarging people's choices. Fundamental to enlarging these choices is building human capabilities — the range of things that people can do or be in life. The most basic capabilities for human development are to lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living and to be able to participate in the life of the community. Without these, many choices are simply not available, and many opportunities in life remain inaccessible (UNDP **http:// hdr.undp.org/en/humandev/**, accessed 1/3/2011).

Religion, on the other hand, has been defined, in a comprehensive sense, as "the relation of man to that which man regards as holy…the system by which man recognizes the existence of a super-human controller of the universe, the recognition of God as the object of worship, love and obedience which ultimately leads to practical piety and morality" (Kilani, 1998, p 16). Adherence to a particular faith tradition is an important dimension of people's identity, which is defined by Osaghae and Suberu (2005, p 5) as "any group attribute that provides recognition or definition, reference, affinity, coherence and meaning for individual members of the group acting individually or collectively". Different identities generate different levels of response from people, with some identities being more active and politically salient than others.

Despite longstanding recognition of the links between religion and culture and its role in politics, religion has generally been neglected in mainstream development studies and policy. Various explanations for such neglect have been advanced: lack of understanding of religion on the part of Western development agencies; a belief that as societies modernize they will also become more secular; a view that religious beliefs and practices are obstacles to the achievement of development aims; and fear of the socially and politically destabilizing effects of religious competition. In the eyes of many religious adherents, the sidelining of religion helps to explain much social malaise, so that the adoption of religious principles and partnerships with religious actors would solve outstanding development problems and enable development objectives to be achieved. Since the 1990s, this view seems to have received greater support, with some Western governments recognizing the potential

for working with faith-based organizations to achieve both domestic and international development policy objectives. However, evidence on the links between religious beliefs, practices and organizations and development concepts, practices and progress is scarce.

This paper reports on the results of a research programme that sought to throw light on some of these links in the Nigerian context. It is primarily a summary of the main findings of the studies undertaken, but will also try to tie together some of the themes that have emerged and reconnect them to the conceptual issues relevant to both religion and development. The findings are grouped thematically:

- the development activities of faith-based organizations (Section 3);
- the links between religion, governance and development (Section 4)
- relationships between values, religious teaching and development concepts and practices (Section 5).

The paper is intended for an informed readership that includes non-academic audiences, policy makers, faith-based organizations, civil society organizations, development partners and the media.

1.1   The Religions and Development Research Programme

The starting point for the RaD research programme was the desire shared by national governments, civil society organizations, citizens and international development partners (both governmental and non-governmental) to achieve development objectives at the national, local, family and individual levels. The economic, political, social and cultural context of a country is relevant to the identification of development goals, the selection of policies and the allocation of resources. Part of this context is its religious complexion. Yet in the multi-disciplinary field of inquiry that is academic development studies and in 'mainstream' development policy and practice of the 1960s and 1970s (which largely emerged in the West and from the Bretton Woods institutions and bilateral donors), religion was typically either seen as a private matter to be kept out of the public sphere or an obstacle to modernization. Subsequently, for 20 years or more religion was a largely invisible issue in development studies and mainstream development policy and practice (which is not to say that it was neglected in political analyses, anthropology, Islamic economics, or the literature produced by faith-based organizations) (Deneulin and Rakodi, 2011).[1]

In the last years of the 20th century, its importance was recognized (or re-recognized) but often as either a panacea or an obstacle. However, knowledge about its actual role in increasing (or hindering increases in) wealth and wellbeing remained patchy. The programme posed the following question: "If it is desirable that the important and pervasive nature of religious beliefs and organizations is reflected in development studies, and the implications for development policy and practice are recognized in appropriate ways, then what do we need to know?" The research programme aimed to produce systematic and reliable knowledge and better understanding of the links between religion and development, to provide knowledge and tools to enable dialogue between development partners and contribute to the achievement of development goals.

A series of internationally comparative research projects addressed the following broad questions:

- How do religious values and beliefs drive the actions and interactions of individuals and faith-based organizations?
- How do religious values and beliefs and religious organizations influence the relationships between states and societies?
- In what ways do faith communities interact with development actors and what are the outcomes with respect to the achievement of development goals?

Aspects of these broad social and political questions were addressed through a series of nine studies (see also Appendix 1):

- Mapping the activities of faith-based organizations (FBOs) in development
- The development activities, values and performance of FBOs and NGOs
- Faith communities and the policy process
- Relationships between madrasas and the state in Kano
- The role of faith communities in conflict transformation
- Religions, politics and governance
- The role of faith communities in contemporary social movements
- Religion, ethics and attitudes towards corruption
- Relationships between values, religious teaching and development concepts and practices

Because of the complexity of the issues involved, and the dearth of systematic data, the research sought to develop a better understanding of how people interpret ideas and actions related to both religion and development. It analysed written and oral materials produced by relevant organizations, such as government agencies and religious organizations, to identify current debates, policy statements, teachings and views about contemporary issues. In addition, it employed qualitative research methods, involving personal interaction and dialogue between the researchers and the researched. This approach facilitated a nuanced assessment of respondents' views on the relationships between religion and development. In most cases, data collection was based on a combination of semi-structured, face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions. The projects mostly involved one or more case studies, focusing on selected localities, groups or organizations. Given the lack of research attention paid to the links between religion and development over the previous forty years, much of the work was exploratory, revealing new evidence but also resulting in further questions.

Methodologically, each study began with a review of available literature. This helped to identify research questions, conceptual issues and a relevant methodological approach. Islam, Christianity and African Traditional Religion (ATR) are the three major religions in Nigeria and their adherents constitute the subjects of the research. These religions are not homogenous: each contains many groups, which are bound together by some major cords, but which differ in other respects such as mode of worship, practices, rituals, dress and festivals. In order to capture the three main religions in the country, four locations with a different religious composition were selected for most of the research projects: some are religiously mixed, while in others either Islam or Christianity is the majority religion: Kano in the North West (predominantly Muslim); Abuja, the Federal Capital, in the North Central (religiously mixed); Anambra in the South East (predominantly Christian, also ATR practitioners); and Ibadan in the South West (Christians and Muslims). The study sites of the research projects are shown in Appendix 1.

Case studies enable a detailed understanding to be developed of a locality, organization or population group. They were carefully chosen to reflect relevant characteristics, but care must be taken in generalizing from them: they are illustrative rather than representative. Inevitably, given the limited time and resources available to the research team and the enormous size and diversity of Nigeria, our

preference for using case studies to develop an understanding of complexity and qualitative methods to reflect people's own interpretations of their lives and societies means that relatively few of the country's many states, localities and groups have been studied. Care must be taken with any generalization about 'Nigeria as a whole' or to other states, localities and groups from the research reported here: validation of the findings and assessment of their applicability in other locations await further research.

Some challenges were experienced during data collection. While majority of the research subjects readily consented to interviews and graciously approved the use of tape recorders, a few needed considerable pre-interview discussion and persuasion before consent was obtained. Their reluctance can be attributed to the sensitive nature of religious issues in Nigeria. In addition, it might be attributable to recent discussions in government circles about taxing religious organizations, with the result that a few respondents feared that enquiries about their activities might provide a way to assess the amount of tax for which they would be liable.

Findings from the research projects are initially being published as working papers, including a more detailed explanation of the methodological approach adopted by each study. Full references to these are given in the relevant sections.[2] In addition to academic audiences, many of the findings have been shared with policy makers and practitioners.[3] A series of policy briefs in which findings are summarized and some of their possible implications identified is also in preparation (see Appendix 2).[4]

1.2 Structure of the paper

In Section 2 of this synthesis paper, some relevant contextual material on the religious composition and development situation of Nigeria is provided, followed by a summary of the initial review of literature on the relationships between religion and development concepts and practices in Nigeria. In Section 3, a summary of findings from research projects on the development activities of faith-based organizations (FBOs) is presented, while Section 4 considers research on the theme of religion, governance and development, and Section 5 examines the relationships between values, religious teaching and development concepts and practices. Finally, a brief overall conclusion and ideas for future research are provided in Section 6, which also summarizes some of the main implications for policy and practice.

2   Religions and development in Nigeria

2.1   The religious identity and demography of Nigeria

Nigeria is characterized by a complex of individual as well as criss-crossing group identities, of which religious identity is among the most salient, from the point of view both of the identities most commonly assumed by citizens, especially for political purposes, and those often "implicated in day-to-day contestations over citizenship, as well as competitions and conflicts over resources and privileges" (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005, p 7). [5]

Religious identities in Nigeria are usually classified into three – Christian, Muslim and 'traditional,' reflecting the three dominant religious traditions in the country. It is generally believed, but not proven for sure, that approximately half of Nigeria's estimated population of about 120 million, spread over a land area of 356,700 square miles, practise Islam. The remaining half practise Christianity, while a tiny proportion claims to practise indigenous or traditional religion or to have no religion.[6] It is not uncommon, however, to find adherents of Christianity or Islam combining their faith with the practice of traditional religion (US State Department, 2003; Pew Forum, 2010).

There is a strong correlation between religious differences and ethnic and regional diversity. The north, peopled mainly by the Hausa and Fulani ethnic groups, is predominantly Muslim, but there are significant numbers of Christians in the urban centres of that region. Both Muslims and Christians are found in the Middle Belt. There is no dominant religion in the Yoruba-dominated south-west, where population region is fairly evenly divided between Islam and Christianity, while some are practitioners of traditional African religions. The Igbo ethnic group is dominant in the eastern part of the country.[7] There, Christianity is the dominant religion, with Catholics and Methodists in the majority. But even in eastern Nigeria, many continue to observe rites and ceremonies rooted in traditional religion. For example, 11 per cent of respondents in the Pew Forum's Nigerian sample said that they believe sacrifices to spirits or ancestors can protect them from bad things happening and the survey report suggests that 8 per cent have "a high level of belief and practice in traditional African religious beliefs and practices", in that they gave positive responses to six or more of the eleven questions about traditional beliefs and practices (Pew Forum, 2010). A higher proportion (18 per cent) admitted to some or a great deal of knowledge about traditional African religions. It is unclear how much weight can be placed on these figures, since responses to such questions are influenced by the social and religious acceptability of acknowledging adherence to traditional beliefs and practices.

The three broad faith traditions can be divided into sub-categories, denominations or sects. The Christian population includes Roman Catholics, who constitute the largest denomination of Christians in the country (about 28 per cent), Protestants (Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, totalling 31 per cent), a growing number of Evangelical and Pentecostal Christian ministries, Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses and a host of 'home-grown' 'white garment' churches (e.g. Aladura and Celestial) (Pew Forum, 2006).[8] By some accounts (cf. Udoidem, 1997), Pentecostal churches represent a fundamentalist segment of Christianity. They have witnessed 'astonishing' growth in the recent past with many adherents, especially youths, crossing over from the older churches (Corten and Marshall-Fratani, 2001). In addition, segments within the more traditional churches have become more charismatic in their beliefs and practices.[9] The Christian groups have formed apex bodies like the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) and the Catholic Bishops Conference.

Nigerian Islam is predominantly Sunni, but Nigerian Muslims also belong to different sects, the most prominent being Ahmadiyya, Sanusiyya and Quadriyya.[10] There are a number of umbrella organizations that aim to propagate Islam, one of which is the Jamaatu Nasril Islam (JNI). The overall umbrella body is the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (SCIA). Since the Iranian Islamic revolution of the 1970s, radical Islamic groups have emerged to demand, amongst other things, purist Islam based on Shari'a law and the eradication of 'heretical innovations'. Such sects include Maitatsine, Izala and, most recently, Taliban (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005).

Traditional religious practices are differentiated between ethnic groups: conventionally it is estimated that there are more than 250 groups and many more sub-groups. Traditional religion is underlain by a belief in a supreme being who created and ordered the world, but does not directly intervene in it and is inaccessible to humans (Pew Forum, 2010, p 6; Alhassan Alolo, 2007). Lesser divinities or spirits, which differ between sub-groups, are sometimes believed to act as intermediaries. Ancestors, considered to be in the spirit world but also part of the human world, are also intermediaries, helping to maintain order and withdrawing their support if humans behave badly. "Lapsed social responsibilities or violations of taboos are widely believed to result in hardship, suffering and illness for individuals or communities and must be countered with ritual acts to re-establish order, harmony and well-being" (Pew Forum, 2010, p 6). Diviners are called upon to identify how people have offended and evil forces

are personified as witches or sorcerers. Rituals compensate for offences and infractions; they and sacred objects are believed to protect people against harm. Traditional religion thus provides a means of ensuring the wellbeing of individuals and especially communities in the present world rather than offering future salvation.

The many salient religious and other identities in Nigeria are interconnected and mutually reinforcing, leading to a tendency for them to be compounded or hyphenated, for example 'ethno-religious' or 'ethno-regional'. They have considerable historical significance. Osaghae and Suberu (2005), for example, argue that the category of 'ethno-religious identity' initially owed its origin to regional formations - it was useful for differentiating the predominantly Muslim north from the predominantly Christian south. It also helped to differentiate the dominant Muslim group in the north from the non-Muslim minorities in that region. Since the early 1980s, when the Maitatsine riots in Kano ushered in a regime of religious fundamentalism in the northern parts of the country, the ethno-regional identity category has been even more frequently used to describe conflicts involving an intersection of ethnic and religious identities.

Nigeria's complex of crisscrossing identities qualifies it as a 'deeply divided society', in which major national development issues are contested along complex lines of ethnic, regional and religious division, with the result that there are few points of convergence and consensus. Religious identity is one of the factors that is often mobilized and politicized to the level of overt conflict (Smyth, 2001; Osaghae and Suberu, 2005).

2.2   Development issues and achievements

Nigeria was by the 1980s a relatively wealthy country, based largely on oil production and exports, from which its federal government obtained significant revenue. Today it is categorized as a lower middle country in terms of its per capita GDP by the World Bank, but a low human development country by UNDP. Much of the oil revenue has been squandered or siphoned off to benefit relatively few individuals. The country has failed to achieve many of its post-independence growth and development objectives. Contributory factors include "inadequate human development, primitive agricultural practices, weak infrastructure, uninspiring growth of the manufacturing sector, a poor policy and regulatory environment and mismanagement and misuse of resources" (UNDP, 2008, p 9).

Although the real per capita economic growth rate in the years after the return of democracy in 1999 averaged 6 per cent per annum (2001-7), the UNDP noted that "economic growth has not resulted in appreciable decline in unemployment and poverty prevalence…[and] Human development has remained unimpressive" (p 9). Thus the incidence of poverty, which had increased from 20 per cent in 1980 to 66 per cent in 1996, only declined slightly (to 54 per cent in 2004), despite renewed economic growth.

One of the reasons why economic growth has not had wider benefits is the unbalanced structure of the economy: over 60 per cent of GDP comes from oil and agricultural production, with manufacturing stuck at 4-5 per cent, and the oil sector accounts for over 95 per cent of export earnings and 80 per cent of government revenue, although over half of all employment is in agriculture. Although the earlier decline in agriculture appears to have been reversed, this has not resulted in employment generation or increased incomes for many of those involved (UNDP, 2008, p 10-11). Another reason why economic growth has not improved the welfare of the poorest is the extremely high level of inequality, which worsened between 1985 and 2004. Contributory factors include prevalent corruption, the failure of redistributive policies and inadequate provision of basic services. Inequality between men and women is identified as a key policy challenge, with women being generally disadvantaged in access to education and employment, land and agricultural wage levels. "Gender inequality is fuelled by…socio-cultural practices, low economic status, patriarchy, and low education" (p 11). Although some social indicators, such as infant mortality, have shown some improvement in the last ten years, they are still extremely poor for a country with Nigeria's level of wealth.

The UNDP recommends that policy should aim not just to achieve economic growth but also to ensure that growth meets the needs of the poor by generating both farm and off-farm employment, focusing poverty reduction efforts on poor people and not just poor areas, and addressing inequality. It notes positive policy efforts, including the current government's 7-point agenda, but suggests a number of areas in which additional or re-oriented initiatives are required, especially investment in physical infrastructure; improvements to the effectiveness of public sector investment and regulation; further development of government capacity; strengthened arrangements for participation, coordination and transparency; and investment in human capital, especially through the provision of basic services and safety nets (UNDP, 2008, p 12-21). Other external agencies make similar diagnoses.

While the report's analysis of inequality points to the interlocking nature of economic, political and socio-cultural inequalities, which may be correlated with gender, family background and location to trap people in an 'inequality trap' that persists for generations (p 48), its analysis of inequality between geopolitical zones/states does not mention ethnic or religious dimensions. Only gender inequality is said to be "traditionally associated with socio-cultural and religious practices and patriarchy", as well as, more recently, unequal access to economic opportunities, employment and political representation (p 54). The UNDP report is fairly typical of mainstream analyses of Nigeria's development progress by the government and external agencies, in which religion is considered, if at all, mainly in terms of its contribution to political rivalry, inter-religious competition as a trigger for periodic violent conflict, and religious beliefs and practices as hindrances to certain behaviour changes considered to be desirable to achieve development objectives.

2.3   The status of existing knowledge

As part of the initial work of the Religions and Development research programme, a review of the status of existing knowledge on the relationships between religions and development was carried out, using available materials published in Nigeria and beyond (Roberts et al, 2009). This review identified and summarized analyses of the relationships between religions and development in Nigeria, to identify gaps and assist in identifying questions requiring further investigation. Its concern was with how religious values and beliefs interact with development ideas and practices; the relationships between religious groups, other social organizations and the Nigerian state; and the ways in which faith communities interact with other development actors, with what effects.

It was found that many of the available studies focus on the potentially positive role of religion with respect to morality, social harmony, sustainable development, social justice and the achievement of certain development objectives. The review highlighted the important role of religious organizations in the provision of education and health services, as well as their economic thinking and their roles in the economy, for example as employers and property owners. Many of the available studies focus on the relationships between religion and politics. They generally link religion to ethnicity and examine the relationships between religion and conflict, especially over access to state power and the introduction of Sharia law in the northern States. In addition, the review noted that a number of writers consider how religious values relate to questions of citizenship, political participation and leadership. Particular

attention is paid to gender issues, examining relevant teachings of the faith traditions and the implications of their application for the wellbeing of women. Finally, a small number of studies consider the historical and contemporary manifestations and roles of religious transnationalism.

The review concluded that relatively few of the sources identified are directly concerned with the relationships between religion and development. Many of the studies identified lack a strong empirical base. Most discuss the tenets and teachings of the main faith traditions (particularly Islam and Christianity), focusing on the integrating function of religion, which is said to (potentially) play a positive role in creating harmony and wellbeing. They suggest that better observance of ethical teaching would have a positive developmental effect. This emphasis is counterbalanced to some extent by the studies of religion in Nigeria's political economy, which foreground its contribution to conflict and the obstacles it sometimes poses to the achievement of development objectives.

What is clear is that most studies with a bearing on religion and development identify crucial questions that need to be explored more rigorously, logically and systematically. The prevailing weaknesses in the Nigerian literature presented a strong case for the launching of empirical research on the rich and dynamic field of the links between religions and development in the country.

3 The development activities of religious organizations

Internationally, there is a widespread view that religion and development do not mix; that religion (must) have negative effects on development (Weber, 1950; Wilber and Jameson, 1980; Williams 1990). Recently, however, it has been suggested that religion can play a positive role in the affairs of the world. In Nigeria, development has been intertwined with religion, influencing the country's development course. Religious groups play an important role in national development, but the nature, scale and activities of faith-based organizations (FBOs) remain poorly understood. In order to document and analyse the contribution of FBOs to development, four studies were conducted. The first was a mapping of the development activities of FBOs; the second compared the development activities, values and performance of selected FBOs and NGOs in order to assess whether and how FBOs make a distinctive contribution; the third was a study of the involvement of faith-based organizations in the policy process; and the fourth examined the involvement of religious organizations in the aftermath of inter-religious conflict.

3.1 Mapping the activities of faith-based organizations in development

The emergence, aims and activities of organizations associated with Christianity and Islam are linked to the history, expansionist goals, geographical spread, political aspirations and organizational characteristics of the two faith traditions that are dominant in the country. A review of the available secondary material showed that (Odumosu et al, 2009):

- Some organizations associated with Islam emerged in pre-colonial times, mostly for the purpose of converting people to the religion and teaching Muslims about their faith, while Christian FBOs were associated with missionary activities in the 19th century and combined efforts to convert non-Christians with social welfare activities.
- As a result, most Muslim organizations are based (and strongest) in the north of the country and most Christian organizations in the south, although neither are confined to these geographical regions.
- Because religion and politics are inseparable in Islam and Muslim states were established long ago in northern Nigeria, many Muslim organizations have a political agenda and are close to the state. In contrast, Christian missionaries had an ambivalent relationship with the British colonial authorities and contemporary Christian churches were neither close to political power holders nor spoke with a single voice in the period after independence. Their closeness to politics has, however, increased in reaction to the assertiveness of Muslims and the Muslim-majority northern States.

- Neither religious tradition is homogeneous, but Islam was traditionally linked to strongly developed state structures with associated sources of religious authority, while Christianity is characterized by competition between denominations and most of the mainline churches have autonomous bureaucratic hierarchical organizations.

The different ways in which the faith traditions are organized has implications for the organization, autonomy and funding arrangements of FBOs. Although there is no single agreed definition of a faith-based organization, they are generally seen in the Nigerian context to be characterized by one or more of the following: affiliation with an organized faith community; a mission that makes explicit reference to religious values; a governance structure in which the selection of executive members is based on their religious beliefs or affiliation; decision-making processes based on religious values; and financial support from religious sources. They can be seen as religion-based organizations that engage in development-related activities for the benefit of adherents of their own religious group or the population more broadly.

In the absence of complete and up-to-date directories or other sources, the mapping of contemporary FBOs engaged in development was based primarily on semi-structured interviews with representatives of a range of faith groups, umbrella organizations and FBOs. Resources did not permit comprehensive surveys at either the national or state levels, so information collection activities were concentrated in Abuja (the Federal capital), Lagos (the largest city), Plateau State (a religiously mixed north-central state) and Oyo State (a religiously mixed southern state) in 2007, with additional data collection in Kano State (majority Muslim) and Anambra State (majority Christian) in 2008. In addition, the study focused on larger organizations with more than a local reach. Brief descriptive profiles of a range of FBOs throw light on their legal status, organizational structure, membership strength, sources of funds, main activities, and relationships with other FBOs and the government.

The study revealed that:

- Active FBOs can be found in almost all the states of the Federation, although not all are registered and not all those that are registered are very active.
- A large proportion of religious organizations provide some social services, in particular education and health; fewer are engaged in activities such as community development.

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- Most of the FBOs mobilize and rely on volunteers rather than paid staff, enabling them to expand their activities at relatively low cost.

- FBOs assert that one of their main comparative advantages is their location in communities underserved by government, especially in the rural areas. In addition, their influence is greater than secular NGOs because through their religious and educational activities, they influence values and social rules governing, for example, family life and sexual activity. Furthermore, there is evidence that they command more respect and trust than either government or NGOs.

- A relatively small proportion of FBOs are primarily socio-political and advocacy organizations; many more are engaged in missionary activities.

- Little evidence is available on the scale and outcomes of FBO activities, but even in their own eyes their ability to sustain and expand their programmes is, for many, limited by their dependence on donations from adherents, their limited management capacity, competition with each other and lack of government support.

The initial mapping of FBOs engaged in development, socio-political and missionary activities indicates a need for development actors in Nigeria to:

- *develop an understanding not only of the aims, activities, organizational characteristics and funding base of FBOs, but also of their deep historical roots and political links*

- *recognize that the characteristics of FBOs vary between and within faith traditions and develop better ways of identifying the types of organization that are active in particular locations.*

3.2 The development activities, values and performance of FBOs and NGOs

It is often claimed that faith-based organizations have distinctive characteristics and approaches that may give them advantages over non-religious NGOs when engaged in development activities. An apparent increase in religiosity in many countries, renewed international interest in religious organizations and donors' ongoing search for more effective ways of delivering development programmes mean that it is important to assess claims about FBOs' distinctiveness and supposed advantages.

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This study made a start by examining two Muslim, two Christian and three secular indigenous non-government organizations active in HIV/AIDS-related work in Kano and Lagos States in Nigeria (Davis et al, 2011; Jegede et al, forthcoming). Using available documentary sources, including materials produced by the study organizations, semi-structured interviews with staff, religious leaders and local government officials, and interviews or focus group discussions with beneficiaries, the research examined whether and how FBOs' approaches to development activities are distinctive, by comparing them with NGOs engaged in similar activities in the same local contexts. It aimed to:

- understand the history of FBO and NGO operations in the selected States and Local Government Areas (LGAs), and to examine their relationships with each other and government
- compare the development aims, values, activities and organizational characteristics of FBOs and NGOs
- assess the perceived performance, outcomes and effects of FBO and NGO activities.

The study chose to focus on

- Kano and Lagos States, the former a largely Muslim state with an Islamic government that has recently adopted Sharia law, and the latter a religiously mixed state in the south of the country
- programmes related to HIV/AIDS, because (a) there has been much international funding for HIV/AIDS-related activities, allegedly distracting attention from other important development issues, and (b) it is likely that religious and secular organizations adopt different approaches.
- well-established and reputable organizations, so that comparisons would not be undermined by ineffective performance or allegations of malpractice and corruption.

The study concluded that the FBOs and NGOs studied have many similar characteristics, but also that FBOs are distinctive in several ways and are perceived to have a number of advantages over secular NGOs, especially in highly religious contexts.

3.2.1   Similarities and differences between FBOs and NGOs

The study did not find significant differences in the development-related aims, values, activities and management style of organizations self-identified as FBOs and NGOs.

- The FBOs and NGOs studied largely share a commitment to humanitarian, charitable and service delivery aims; some are also engaged in development, advocacy and conflict resolution activities, especially those exposed to international development thinking.

- FBOs generally justify their activities, including their HIV/AIDS-related work, in religious terms and use religious language and practices in their work. In addition, the truth claims of both Christianity and Islam encourage adherents to seek to spread their religion. FBOs therefore believe that they have a responsibility to evangelize, and often see their humanitarian activities as a means to that end.

- NGOs, in contrast, express their mission and values in secular humanitarian terms, even when their founders, employees and volunteers have religious motivations, as many do in a society where almost everyone considers him or herself to be religious. Despite this, observers consider NGOs to be less able and willing to adhere to religious principles in their practices.

Differences between FBOs and NGOs were evident with respect to programme design, and were even more marked in relation to their organizational characteristics.

- An organization's values influence the design, implementation and evaluation of the HIV/AIDS programmes it delivers. For example, they may influence which groups are targeted, with only the NGOs (Community Support and Development Initiatives CSADI, Society for Women and Aids in Nigeria SWAAN) targeting high risk groups who engage in behaviour of which FBOs disapprove, including truck drivers, sex workers, soldiers and policemen. In addition, the organizations vary in their willingness to advocate condom use by the unmarried, with religious organizations stressing abstinence and faithfulness to prevent transmission. Some foreign funders (especially those with religious affiliations) are willing to accept religious objections to condom use, enabling some FBOs (both Christian and Muslim) to access international funding for their programmes. FBOs may also use religious activities such as services or prayer meetings to reach target groups with messages or healthcare.

- NGOs' activities have a predominantly material focus, emphasizing improvements to physical wellbeing (through providing treatment and livelihood support programmes), while FBOs combine material and spiritual aims. This influences the content and delivery of their programmes. For example in HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention, NGOs such as CSADI emphasize physical aspects and choice and advocate the use of condoms. In contrast, FBOs use religious justifications for their messages and stress the moral basis for behaviour, emphasizing abstinence and stressing the importance of marriage and the family, but also providing spiritual succour to the users of their services. Most beneficiaries seem to prefer FBOs' combined material and spiritual focus, which is seen as being more holistic.

- All the FBOs studied deliberately recruit staff from within their own faith tradition, at least for senior and management positions. Recruitment policy for junior staff and volunteers varies: some FBOs are less restrictive, to facilitate working in contexts with a different religious composition. NGOs have non-

discriminatory recruitment policies, although they may seek to ensure representation from both religions amongst their staff and board members.

- All the organizations have a top-down management style, in which founders, board members and senior staff take all the major decisions. This is stronger in the FBOs, where the authority of senior individuals is reinforced by their perceived status as religious people and their leadership positions in the wider religious bodies with which they are associated, such as the Methodist Church of Nigeria and the Redeemed Christian Church of God.

- In addition, FBOs display symbols of their religion in the dress of their staff, in their facilities and on their vehicles. They also (like at least one of the selected NGOs) observe daily prayer rituals.

3.2.2 Perceptions of the outcomes and impact of HIV/AIDS programmes

Organizations perceived as committed to relevant development objectives, effective and reputable were chosen for this study, so major differences in priorities, perceived performance or allegations of malpractice were not anticipated. Unsurprisingly, their leaders, staff, local stakeholders and beneficiaries had positive perceptions of their performance. In addition, responses indicated that differences in the perceived performance of FBOs and NGOs are not marked.

- However, while some beneficiaries feel that the NGO approach to condom use is likely to be more effective, others prefer FBOs' focus on abstinence and behaviour and their approach to HIV/AIDS education, which uses moral and religious (rather than secular and humanitarian) language, values and messages.

- What appears to matter most is the perceived quality of the service provided, judged in terms of an organization's local presence, frequency of contact with local communities and the nature of the services provided.

- Few, if any, NGOs and FBOs do systematic assessments of the outcomes and impact of their activities. While those organizations that receive official donor funds are required to systematically monitor progress against objectives (using targets and quantitative indicators), FBOs believe that whether their operations and activities comply with religious values and injunctions is a more important criterion for assessing performance.

3.2.3   The comparative advantages of FBOs and NGOs

Many beneficiary respondents feel that FBOs, in general, have some advantages over NGOs (e.g. a long history, an ongoing presence, frequent contacts with communities, higher levels of trust, greater financial independence, and autonomy in setting their own locally responsive development agendas). FBOs' (partial) financial independence depends on religiously mandated giving from their members and associated congregations, which is significant for most of the FBOs studied. However, several also rely on international donor funding (as do the NGOs), and in one case (Nasiru-Ilahi Fatir Society of Nigeria NASFAT) on income from its own business investments.

For some functions, however, NGOs may have advantages. For example, some have greater expertise, and one of the Kano State studies notes that NGOs are considered to be better at prevention campaigns, while FBOs are considered to be more effective in providing care and support to PLWHAs.

3.2.4   Relationships between FBOs, NGOs and the state

The relationships between FBOs, between FBOs and NGOs, and between non-government organizations and government vary. Most of the FBOs studied are members of umbrella organizations, but not all of them collaborate with other FBOs, especially across faith/denominational boundaries. NGOs and FBOs may collaborate. For example, CSADI works with two Muslim hospitals (including the Al-Noury Hospital, which was also studied), as part of the AIDS Relief consortium to deliver comprehensive treatment and care for people living with AIDS in Kano and its environs. Also SWAAN provides briefings for both Christian and Muslim clergy. However, FBOs do not cooperate with organizations that do not share their values and beliefs, restricting their choice of partners.

In some instances religious and secular organizations compete with government for scarce resources, while in others they collaborate in service delivery and the implementation of development programmes.

Both Christian FBOs and NGOs find it difficult to work in largely Muslim Kano State. People Oriented Development of the Evangelical Church of West Africa (POD-ECWA) responds by downplaying its religious identity and concentrating its activities in villages with mainly Christian populations (the result

of earlier conversion efforts), where Muslim FBOs and NGOs do not work. Although it collaborates with other Christian organizations, it does not work with Muslim organizations or NGOs, which in Kano State are almost all run by Muslims. NGOs working in this context find that traditional religious leaders (and Islamic FBOs) can provide them with legitimacy and access to local communities; indeed it is thought that NGOs are more successful if they work with FBOs and religious leaders. Thus the context in which an organization works matters and this may affect their performance more than any religious/secular difference.

Implications for policy and practice:

- *A standardized preference on the part of donors and policy makers for funding NGOs, based on their assumed advantages over governments, has led to the emergence of many less than ideal types of NGOs, donor dependence, loss of autonomy, and a lack of transparency and accountability. Religious organizations should be aware of this history in their quest for additional funding.*

- *FBOs and NGOs engaged in development have many similar characteristics but differ in some important ways, with respect to their mission, funding sources, organizational characteristics and modes of operating. However, these characteristics and the ways in which faith is manifest in their activities also depend on the context in which they operate. Thus decisions by donors and policy makers about whether and how to engage with FBOs must be made on a case-by-case basis, based on an understanding of individual organizations and their context.*

- *NGOs and FBOs both have strengths that can be harnessed to tackle development issues effectively. For example, the wide reach, high degree of legitimacy and moral authority of FBOs can make them appropriate partners for government and NGOs, especially in highly religious areas, where traditional leaders are also religious leaders, and when dealing with religiously sensitive issues. NGOs may have greater expertise and access to international funding, but can be more successful in such contexts by working with FBOs and religious leaders.*

3.3   Faith-based organizations and the policy process

There has been a growth in the numbers and activities of faith-based organizations in Nigeria in the last thirty years. Most claim that their mission is poverty reduction and allied social concerns. Over the same span of time, Nigeria has changed development policies frequently, the most recent including a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and its successor, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) and its equivalents at state (State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies - SEEDS) and local levels.

Religious groups portray themselves as significant social institutions because they have organizations that encompass all areas within the country, including remote and rural areas, and because of their closeness to the people. Whether they do in practice speak on behalf of the poor and disadvantaged has not been assessed. More generally, although the visibility of civil society organizations and their activities in the area of development have increased greatly in Nigeria in the past few decades, the extent of their participation and involvement in policy development and implementation remains unclear. In particular, given FBOs' numerical expansion and growing influence, it was considered pertinent to probe into the extent to which they have participated in articulating development policies in Nigeria.

The preparation of poverty reduction strategies is tied to the Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative, with one of the conditions for debt relief being a participatory approach to the design of policies aimed at reducing poverty. Despite considerable scepticism internationally and domestically about governments' commitment either to prioritizing poverty reduction or to participatory approaches to policy making, in some countries the requirement to consult widely in the course of preparing poverty reduction strategies has widened the space for civil society engagement in and influence on policy and decision-making.

The rhetoric surrounding the processes leading to the formulation of NEEDS and SEEDS in Nigeria claims the orchestrated involvement and participation of all stakeholders in crystallizing the final product. It has often been trumpeted as a major point of departure from historical economic policy formulation experience. This study had two aims:

- To determine the extent to which religious organizations in Nigeria had been involved in formulating development policies by examining their participation in the preparation of the NEEDS and selected SEEDS, and to identify any constraints on their involvement.
- To facilitate the preparation of a constructive, competent and united written submission to government by FBOs, with a view to developing a potentially replicable approach for ongoing involvement in policy formulation and review.

First, FBOs' participation in the preparation of the initial NEEDS[11] was ascertained, based on semi-structured interviews with 32 religious organizations, as well as national officials and responsible officials in two illustrative States (Oyo and Plateau) (Odumosu et al, 2008, 2010, forthcoming; Taylor, 2011). During the preparation of the I-PRSP and NEEDS 1, the government failed to consult non-governmental actors. Although civil society organizations arranged some parallel deliberations on the draft strategies, there is no evidence that their views were reflected in either document. More opportunities were created during the preparation of NEEDS 2, but the tendency to invite only selected high profile civil society organizations continued. Not unexpectedly, therefore, religious organizations reported that there had been few opportunities to participate and only those that already collaborated with government in activities such as health care had heard about the process. In addition, they felt excluded by the CSOs that had been invited by the government to participate in the consultations. In addition, government officials charged that religious organizations do not show enough capacity and competence to step up to the plate as far as the serious business of policy making is concerned. In their view, the faith communities neither speak with a united voice nor make constructive inputs. FBOs themselves claimed that they have both good grassroots contacts and local knowledge and attributed their failure to participate not just to the lack of opportunities but also to a lack of knowledge and limited capacity to do so.

The report of the first stage of the study was presented at a stakeholder forum, which drew the participation of some of the crafters of NEEDS. A consensus emerged from the discussion that development failures in Nigeria are due, for the most part, to non-implementation of the proposals outlined in successive policy documents, most of which were supported by those attending. The forum considered what role FBOs could play to address this concern. It was resolved that they should, as a group, assemble evidence on progress with implementation in the key areas of agriculture and health and prepare a written submission to government. The latter would examine why

generally acceptable policies often fail to be realized and how their implementation at whatever level, from national to local, could be improved.

To facilitate this process, support and capacity building were provided to a group of six Muslim and eight Christian organizations that opted to participate, under the guidance of a management group formed by five of the organizations involved. Training in data collection and analysis was provided to 27 staff members, nine in each of the three locations (the Federal Capital Territory, Oyo State and Plateau State) in mid-2008. Each of the trainees carried out two interviews with local informants and organized a focus group discussion. These addressed three main questions: what is the evidence of implementation failure, what factors are thought to be responsible and what can be done to improve implementation? A draft report was prepared during a 'writeshop' in December 2008 and validated by representatives of all the participating FBOs before being presented to ministers, politicians, officials and religious leaders during 2009 (Section of FBOs, 2009).

The submission itself demonstrated that the faith communities and FBOs could work together. In addition to identifying problems, it contained suggestions for how both government and faith communities themselves might contribute to improving implementation. In particular, engagement by the latter can, it was suggested, ensure that facilities and services are delivered to the right constituencies and reduce the incidence of misappropriation. A senior official concerned with NEEDS reacted positively to the report, but the death of the President, changes to ministerial appointments and impending elections meant that conditions for influencing policy were not propitious in 2010.

As a pilot, the action research project was evaluated to assess whether the organizations involved had improved their capacity to participate in policy formulation and had developed an approach that can be replicable and sustainable for future faith community participation (Odumosu et al, 2010). An assessment of the written submission was "cautiously favourable" (Taylor, 2011): it was considered to be competent and constructive, to represent the united voice of the faith communities and to include material that reflects the knowledge and views of ordinary people at the local level. Some weaknesses were identified in the capacity building process, but the organizations involved believe that they can and will use the skills again. In addition, the pilot project resulted in the creation of a new network of FBOs in which Muslim and Christian organizations worked together and which is apparently continuing in each of the three locations.

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On the basis of this experience, the group of participating organizations resolved to explore further the prospects of working with the government to improve policy implementation in Nigeria. Specifically, they propose partnerships with government in the following specific areas:

- Sensitization and awareness creation on policy implementation;
- Supervision, monitoring and evaluation of government programmes in order to eliminate corruption;
- Feedback on implementation progress, outcomes and challenges to the government;
- Setting up accountability committees at the grassroots level in order to make political office holders answerable to the people;
- Advocates at different levels of governance;
- Acting as agents for distributing services at grass root level.

Despite the difficulties encountered when making the submission to government, the pilot project appears, therefore, to have highlighted a possible way in which FBOs can work together to share limited resources and maximize their potential to strengthen the voice of poor and marginalized communities in policy processes. A workable model has been tried and tested, although the capacity for both data collection and analysis and productive interaction with government needs to be further consolidated and improved. However, the pilot was heavily dependent on external funding and support[12] and may not be replicable and sustainable without further external financial and institutional inputs.

The limited scope for civil society engagement with the consultation processes linked to the preparation and review of NEEDS and SEEDS has also excluded religious organizations, although a pilot project to strengthen their ability to work together to make constructive inputs demonstrated that they have the potential to do so. The project has the following implications for the various actors involved:

- *For the national and state governments, it shows that mechanisms for civil society participation in policy making and review should be more meaningful and inclusive, and that there is potential for constructive dialogue with religious organizations.*
- *For religious organizations, the project showed that their grassroots organization and institutional and moral resources can enable them to make positive contributions to policy making, implementation and review.*

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> ■ *For external actors, the experience demonstrated that FBOs from different faith traditions can work together to produce evidence relevant to policy, in particular information from local areas and ordinary people, but that their capacity limitations require external financial and institutional assistance for the approach piloted to be replicable and sustainable.*

3.4   Faith-based organizations and post-conflict transformation

Nigeria has a recurring problem of violent conflict in urban areas. These conflicts are manifest mostly as ethnic and religious identity conflicts, as attackers and their sympathizers instrumentalize these forms of identity. While there has been extensive analysis of the inter- and intra-religious conflicts themselves, what happens in the aftermath of violent episodes has been little studied, despite the importance of this period in rectifying the damage inflicted on victims' lives and livelihoods, public facilities and social relationships, and determining the likelihood of future violence.

The study was particularly interested in the role of religion and religious organizations in the violent episodes themselves, the short term restoration of order, longer term reconstruction and peace building, and the longer term goal of conflict transformation. It was undertaken in 2008/9 and focused on Kano and Jos, where violent conflicts of an ostensibly ethno-religious nature have intensified since the restoration of multi-party democracy and the introduction of Sharia law in many of the northern states (Best, 2009).

A review of existing literature and secondary sources of data aimed to reveal the causes of conflict and the nature of post-conflict transformation processes in Nigeria generally, and in the north of Nigeria in particular. The study adopted a qualitative approach, utilizing in-depth interviews with knowledgeable local informants and FBOs (for example ten Muslim and eleven Christian organizations in Kano), focus group discussions, and informal discussions with the leaders and other officials of the organizations studied, as well as other individuals. The personal experiences and observations of the researchers, all of whom had lived in either Kano or Jos through the violent conflicts under study, were also drawn on.

In addition to Muslim-Christian competition and mutual distrust, Christians' fear of the Muslim desire for an Islamic state and perceived government injustice, informants felt that religion is used to mobilize rival groups in competition over political control of local government and for other resources such as land and business opportunities. Those affected by the violence take refuge in army or police barracks or religious buildings and relocate in the short or long term to safer areas, within the same city or elsewhere. Over time, this is leading to religion-based residential segregation, with new or relocated places of worship and schools being built in segregated neighbourhoods, overcrowding where religious minority communities cannot access land owned by indigenous groups, and the emergence of vigilante groups in some areas where there is lack of confidence in the police to provide protection.

In the aftermath of the violence, FBOs played tangible short term roles, especially those the state did not or could not play well, even though most had not been set up to play such roles. However, they have only played very limited long term roles. Both international and national, and both Christian and Muslim groups were involved.

- They mostly provided immediate relief e.g. temporary shelter, food, clothing, bedding, medical supplies, toiletries, potable water.
- Such services were normally limited to members of their own faith tradition.
- Spiritual and counselling services like prayers, fasting and spiritual support were provided, especially by Christian FBOs.
- Search and rescue services, including ambulance services, were provided during the intense period of violence.
- Documentation and fact finding was carried out, both for propaganda and to help with provision of assistance to victims.
- Their attempts to meet longer term needs focus on the provision of education and building of faith-based health facilities, mainly in newly segregated residential areas.
- In addition, workshops and seminars are organized to develop ideas of tolerance and non-violence and to encourage reconciliation and forgiveness.

A number of NGOs (including ethnic and diaspora organizations) were involved in similar activities, mostly the provision of short term relief, but also for some, conflict prevention and assistance with the rebuilding of homes.

In the absence of government assistance, the short term activities filled some of the gaps, although civil society organizations cannot compensate for the inadequacy of the security forces, especially the police. However, religious organizations have not, for the most part, developed longer term transformative programmes (e.g. rebuilding houses or livelihoods) and their attempts to prevent further conflicts have been limited, as demonstrated by the occurrence of further violence in Jos since the research was completed. In addition, victims feel let down by government (especially State and local governments), leading them to believe it is not neutral: they have not been paid compensation, the perpetrators have not been brought to justice, reports of enquiry are neither published nor acted upon, and the problem of inequitable access to land has not been addressed.

Because the causes and aftermath of the violence have not been addressed, deep-seated prejudices remain and mutual distrust between the ethno-religious groups, indigenous majorities and in-migrant minorities, people and the state has been reinforced and exacerbated. The results include

- the militarization of local society through the purchase of weapons by residents for self defence, arming of vigilantes, increased use of armed security forces to protect religious buildings and services, and revenge attacks
- increased segregation of residential areas and social services
- ineffective government agencies with little legitimacy.

This does not augur well for the prevention of future violence, the attraction of long term investment, increased prosperity, the reduction of inequality and or the achievement of human development objectives in the two cities.

Findings from a study of the aftermath of violent inter-religious conflict in the cities of Jos and Kano have implications for government and civil society organizations:

- *The state and its agencies at all levels must be the key driver of post-conflict transformation, through proactive governance strategies and paying more attention to the prevention of future conflict, as well as improving the capacity of the security forces to restore order, providing adequate post-conflict support for victims, and bringing perpetrators to justice.*

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> ■ *Both religious and secular organizations can play roles in long term reconstruction and conflict prevention in addition to relief, but for them to do so, their capacity needs to be enhanced to enable them identify, prioritize and more efficiently perform such functions.*

3.5 Relationships between madrasas and the state in Kano

Religious groups invariably have arrangements to impart key religious teachings to children, newcomers and adherents, as part of socialization processes and in order to ensure that the religious beliefs and practices of the group are reproduced. Such arrangements include madrasas, Sunday schools and so on. In addition, they generally have institutions established for the purpose of producing religious professionals: senior madrasas and seminaries. In addition, they may seek to provide general education at one or more levels.

Madrasas (Islamic schools and seminaries) have been the focus of reform in most Muslim majority countries during recent decades. Post-September 11, concern has heightened in some countries. Reasons for state intervention vary. The usual explanation points to the modernizing ambitions of the secular elite in post-colonial Muslim states who, led by a vision of modernization and nation-building, have sought to reform religious schools to bring them in line with the demands of modernity and sometimes to address Muslims' perceived educational disadvantage. In particular, the reforms have typically sought to introduce secular subjects into the curriculum to enable graduates to compete for jobs in government and the wider economy, pay and train some or all teachers, improve buildings and teaching materials, and, sometimes, create a religious leadership that will propagate a more liberal interpretation of Islam.

The South Asian states of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh have made active but generally not very effective attempts to reform madrasas. In contrast, the State government's engagement with Islamic schools in Kano, one of the most populous Muslim states of northern Nigeria, has been essentially tolerant of traditional religious authorities. Drawing on interviews with key informants from the State government, Muslim leaders and informed observers, a small study examined the aim and content of attempts to reform various types of Muslim primary and secondary education, by encouraging the

adoption of curricula containing both secular and religious subjects and providing other types of support (Bano, 2009).

In Kano, where the population, traditional leaders and most government leaders are Muslim, and the State government has recently adopted Sharia law, the study showed that

- Demand for Islamic education continues to be strong.
- Demand for a curriculum containing secular as well as religious subjects comes from both religious teachers and parents.
- State support for Islamic schools, in the form of curriculum development, training and pay for some teachers, improved teaching materials and some financial support is generally welcomed.
- Higher religious education has been left in the hands of religious scholars.

As elsewhere, the study concludes that the historical and institutional factors shaping state relationships with Muslim groups and leaders influence the feasibility of reforms to madrasa education systems. However, it only examined a few aspects of the Kano State government's policy towards madrasas. Assessment of the values promoted through madrasa education, the quality of education provided, gender aspects and the livelihood trajectories of graduates were beyond the scope of the study, but are needed to assess the outcomes of government support. Without further research, therefore, it is not possible to either assess the desirability of providing support to the madrasa education system or prescribe the content of future programmes.

4 Religion, governance and development

The last two decades have witnessed the 'return of religion' to public life in both developed and developing countries. This resurgence was dramatically highlighted by the terrorist attack on the United States on September 11, 2001. However, especially in developing societies, it has broader resonance in the rise of religious nationalism, ethno-religious conflicts, and religious movements against the post-colonial secular state, which may seriously call into question the legitimacy of the state and pose basic challenges for governance and development. These developments underline the need for an assessment of the relationships between faith communities, organized religious bodies and contemporary governance and development.

The studies under this theme focused on the involvement of religious groups in politics and its implications for political stability, the associated politicization of religion and emergence of religious movements, issues of leadership both within and outside the church, participation, and the role of women. This section of the paper is subdivided into three. First, work that examined general relationships between religion and politics in Nigeria is summarized. The second section presents the findings of a study that investigated religion, ethics and attitudes towards corruption; and the third section deals with the role of faith communities in contemporary social movements, specifically women's movements.

4.1 Religions, politics and governance

Religion has become increasingly important in Nigerian politics because of the political liberalization associated with the return to civilian rule in 1999 and the degree of autonomy accorded to State governments in a federal system (Danjibo et al, forthcoming; Nolte et al, 2010). The rise of religion has been associated in particular with the introduction of Sharia law in twelve northern Nigerian states since 1999. This has led to a broad debate about the country's constitution, which guarantees religious freedom and prohibits the adoption of a state religion. Attempts to give Muslims and Christians equal symbolic representation in the state include the equitable treatment of Christians and Muslims in most federal appointments, as well as the creation in 2000 of the **Nigerian** Inter-Religious Council (NIREC), comprised of 25 prominent representatives of both major religious communities, as a space for inter-religious dialogue and state-religion interaction.

Although religious difference has been managed relatively well at the federal level, religious rivalry has often played an important role in conflict and violence at the State and local levels. Violent episodes have mainly reflected rivalry between Islam and Christianity, although there have also been intra-Muslim conflicts. In addition, religious intrigue has affected relationships between Christian denominations and has sometimes involved other groups, such as those who adhere to traditional religious beliefs.

In order to better understand the increase in religious competition at the State and local levels, this research focused on identifying the factors that have contributed to the political mobilization and participation of religious groups in the three States of Anambra, Kano and Oyo. These states are located in the east, north and west of the country respectively; they have different religious and ethno-regional compositions; and they have had different historical experiences. Through a review of relevant documents and semi-structured interviews with representatives of religious groups, faith-based organizations and government officials in each state, the research explored informants' views on state-religion relations, as well as religious views on some key policy issues.

4.1.1   *Main findings*

The three State-level case studies show that relationships between the state and Muslim and Christian organizations are frequently ambiguous: both world religions provide moral frameworks for people and both have groups and organizations that articulate their demands of the state, but they also critique the state and challenge state institutions.

The Muslim critique of secular law has led to the introduction of Sharia penal law in twelve States, while Christian demands for a re-privatization of former mission schools currently under State control might reinforce Muslim disadvantage in education. Muslims' freedom to practise Islam, including Sharia law, in their view permits the introduction of Sharia at State level. Many Christians, in contrast, focus on the constitutional provision that no state religion be adopted and feel that the introduction of Sharia law is unconstitutional because it affects their religious freedom to live without Sharia.

The ability of religious organizations to participate in politics and governance in Nigeria is strongly related both to their position as a local majority or minority religion and to their association with

indigenes or non-indigenes in the State in question. The nature of power and discrimination are often determined by local circumstances, especially a State's religious, ethnic and native/in-migrant mix.

As a result, and given the close links between ethnicity and religion, religious competition is interwoven with the other rivalries that dominate Nigerian local politics. In addition, the relationships between the state and religious organizations are non-equitable: in all the States studied, some groups and organizations have good access to State institutions, while others are excluded from participation in local politics. Conflicts over religious participation in politics are closely tied up with disputes over access to material and ideological resources, from access to land to control over the State budget and local radio and television channels.

Interviews with religious leaders and government representatives show that State governments primarily view religious organizations as political mobilizing agents. As a result, State institutions often attempt to co-opt specific religious groups and FBOs for political purposes, rather than providing support for their development activities. Often, such co-optation takes place through political appointments or through strategic donations to influential religious groups: while many religious groups seek close relations with government, others fear its corrupting influence.

All the State governments under study work with some religious organizations, thereby creating spaces in which members of different groups can interact. However, the uneven relations between the state and religious groups, which are characterized by the exclusion of some groups and the preferential treatment and co-optation of others, contribute to mistrust between religious groups. The resulting fears about religious or other identity-based forms of exclusion may be contributing to deepening social divisions. Nevertheless, in some instances the inclusion of religious groups in State institutions or processes has contributed to increasing mutual understanding between them and the government. In addition, the creation of some spaces for inter-religious negotiation means that some religious groups have been able to enter into a dialogue with each other, as well as with the state.

Forums and spaces for mutual encounter are important, because representatives from different religious backgrounds share many concerns about the Nigerian state. All the respondents in the research commented, almost despairingly, on Nigeria's increasing poverty. They appear to agree on a

vision of development that prioritizes infrastructural development, service delivery and good governance. Many Muslims and Christians referred to the Qur'an or Bible to explain why, in their view, the government has a responsibility to better the life chances of its people.

4.1.2   Conclusions

- Religious Nigerians from different parts of the country share similar views on good governance and development. These are shaped by Biblical and Qur'anic ideals of justice, equality and 'the fear of God'. They emphasize the importance of infrastructural development, education and health care for all Nigerians.
- Many religious groups make efforts to provide their members with access to education and other services. Sometimes their services and facilities are open to members of other religious groups.
- State governments do not systematically support independent development efforts by religious groups. Instead, according to most informants, they attempt to co-opt religious groups in order to gain grassroots support and legitimacy.
- Reflecting their unequal and insecure access to State governments, religious organizations tend to see each other as political rivals, despite their shared views on government failure to provide education and health-related infrastructure, and despite their shared engagement in the provision of basic services.
- While encounters between the state and religious groups have facilitated negotiation and dialogue, the potential for improving mutual understanding and cooperation is undermined by the unequal integration of religious groups and FBOs into politics.
- Because excluded religious groups are often linked to minorities and non-natives in a particular state, who are already experiencing discrimination in other ways, conflict and violence can occur, and religious rivalry often reinforces rivalry between different local groups.

Policy implications

- *Many religious groups are united by their critique of the failure of the Nigerian Federal and State governments to deliver welfare to citizens. This suggests that they could be important participants in a national dialogue about the country's future.*
- *Attempts to reduce religious conflict must address concerns over unequal treatment and the fear of marginalization felt by many religious organizations, often arising from favourable treatment for*

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indigenous and majority groups. For rivalry between different religious groups at State and local levels to be reduced, non-indigene and migrant groups must be able to participate in democratic politics and benefit equally from development policies.

- *Politicians' efforts to co-opt and give preferential treatment to religious organizations fuels the politicization of religion and should be discouraged by, for example, discouraging, or placing a ceiling on, private and public donations to individual religious organizations by members of State and local governments.*

- *Institutional spaces that provide opportunities for creative engagement both between the state and religious groups and between different religious groups appear to increase Muslim-Christian understanding and co-operation. There is a need to analyse the achievements and limitations of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) at the federal level, and to assess whether it might provide a useful model for inter-religious councils in each State.*

- *Formal and informal spaces for inter-religious encounters already exist at both national and local levels (e.g. professional associations, local development associations, Youth Corpers). In addition, religious and civil society organizations collaborate in attempts to deepen democracy and improve state accountability. A better understanding of the characteristics, achievements and limitations of these networks and collaborations is needed, to assess the potential for promoting and encouraging them as channels of dialogue between religions and between religions and the state.*

4.2   Religion, ethics and attitudes towards corruption

Many think that the pervasiveness of religion in the lives of Nigerians should moderate the tendency to engage in corruption, commonly defined as 'the abuse of public office for private gain'. The belief is that in a society such as Nigeria's, where faith is an integral part of people's lives, the ethical and moral templates that religion offers will dissuade people, especially public officials, from engaging in corrupt practices. Religion is indeed an important source of ethics, often providing a set of guidelines or rules by which to live, some of which can be interpreted as being of particular importance to fighting corruption.

However, despite the high level of religiosity, corruption is endemic and Nigeria ranks as one of the most corrupt nations in the world according to Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI), whose 2009 survey places her 130th of 180 countries, 10th out of the 16 West African countries, and 27th out of 47 nations in sub-Saharan Africa (Akosile, 2009). Over 80 per cent of Nigerians regard political corruption as a very important problem (Pew Forum, 2010, p 44).

The combination of high religiosity and pervasive corruption raises a number of questions: in what ways are attitudes to corruption shaped by religious beliefs? Do public servants see religious teachings on ethics as implementable? Do the reactions of religious leaders to corruption influence the laity's attitudes? What roles might religious values, faith-based organizations and their leaders play in anti-corruption initiatives? (Aiyede et al, forthcoming; Simbine et al, 2010, forthcoming; see also Section 5).

A study of the links between religion and attitudes to corruption aimed to:

- assess how public servants' individual religious beliefs influence their attitudes towards corruption, which in turn could influence their disposition to engage in corrupt practices and their reactions to anti-corruption initiatives;
- examine the influence of religious organizations on the discourse on corruption among their members, in order to assess the potential for their engagement in the fight against corruption.

The study employed semi-structured face-to-face interviews, focus group discussions and case study scenarios to probe the attitudes of selected respondents to religion and corruption. The respondents included members, employees or representatives of religious bodies and people occupying positions that expose them to everyday practices of corruption, such as public servants and officials of anti-corruption agencies. In addition, religious texts and secondary data from media reports, periodicals and communiqués of religious organizations were analysed to expand or interpret the views of respondents. The case study scenarios were used to check for consistency or contradictions in responses. The work was concentrated in Kano in the North West (predominantly Muslim), Abuja, the Federal capital, in the North central (religiously mixed), Owerri in the South East (predominantly Christian, also practitioners of traditional religion) and Ibadan in the South West (religiously mixed).

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The study found that public servants, and indeed most Nigerians, are aware of and committed to religious injunctions about corruption: they regard corrupt behaviour as wrong, both for themselves and others, and quote religious teachings to support this view.[13] However, they describe the difficulties they themselves face in putting their ethics into practice in day-to-day life, either as public servants or users of public services, while at the same time being critical of others' failure to live in accordance with their religious beliefs. They attribute the gap between values and behaviour to factors such as greed, the pervasiveness of corruption, and the need to participate in order to get a response from government agencies, especially in the light of the massive gap between basic service provision and needs. Thus many do not feel bound to live out religious ethical teachings in their jobs or callings and indeed deliberately ignore them in practice. Furthermore, they note that denunciations of corruption by religious people and religious bodies have had little impact on the level of corruption in the public sphere.

The evidence indicates that positionality has a role to play in attitudes towards corruption. It seems that the closer a person is to opportunities for self-enrichment, the greater is the temptation to engage in graft: exposure to an environment in which illicit wealth/influence can be acquired creates a stronger push factor to engage in corruption than the counteracting force of religious beliefs. Because public offices are mostly held by men, the majority perception that men are more corrupt may thus be a question of opportunity rather than gendered differences in attitudes.

Respondents' views about the role of religious teachers and organizations in instilling a sense of right and wrong and potentially playing a role in addressing corruption are mixed. Although as noted above, most are familiar with the moral teachings of their own faith traditions, they attribute their values to socialization within the family more than exposure to religious teaching. In addition, despite high levels of respect for religious leaders[14], many are critical of their failure to question sudden surges in the financial or material status of their followers (especially when these are reflected in increased donations to the church or mosque) and the engagement of some in corrupt acts themselves. As a result, religious leaders are seen as complicit or compromised, with the result that they lack the moral authority to sermonize or check their followers' corrupt behaviour – they suffer from a credibility deficit.

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As a result, the most important and effective way of reducing corruption is seen to be enforcement of the regulations and laws that prohibit it, together with rewards for hard work and integrity. Nevertheless, many respondents (as well as religious organizations themselves) believe that religious groups and leaders can help the fight against corruption by condemning proven cases of corrupt enrichment within their own fold and society at large in the strongest possible terms, contributing to the anti-corruption discourse, and acting as role models.

Policy implications

- *The most important means of tackling corruption is considered to be enforcement of the regulations and laws that prohibit it.*
- *Religious bodies can supplement the role of the family in providing values education for children, but values education for adults is seen as having potential only for reinforcing the expectation that ethics will be translated into behaviour.*
- *Increased investment in basic services to ensure that supply meets needs can remove some of the incentives for corruption.*
- *Religious leaders and organizations can contribute to anti-corruption initiatives because of their high standing in society, but must put their own house in order first.*

4.3   The role of faith communities in the contemporary women's movement

Movements for social change are rarely impervious to the strong influence of religious faith or censorship, particularly in Nigeria, where respect for the sacred or supernatural and the expression of religious faith are highly visible in both private and public spaces. Gender and religion interact in complex ways. As both custodians and captives of culture, Nigerian women's attempts to promote social change constitute a social movement that has been both shaped and resisted by religion. Depending on the issues at stake, religion may serve as a barrier to reform or provide moral and/or institutional support to particular objectives and programmes, including secular ones.

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Certain belief systems and religious tenets are at loggerheads with the ideals of gender-inclusive democracy, women's rights and fundamental freedoms, and the principles of gender equality articulated in international legislative frameworks, national policies and development plans. This has far-reaching implications for the successful implementation of all social change agendas, but especially those that are important to women because of their limited access to political and economic resources.

In view of the importance of religion in the lives of women and its impact on the success or otherwise of any struggle for the promotion of women's rights, it is important for those involved to understand religious points of view and to strategize on how to engage with religion. Two case studies were carried out as part of an investigation of how social movements engage with religion: a campaign for legal reform that enjoyed the support of religious institutions – the widowhood rights campaign in Anambra State - and one that did not – the campaign for the domestication of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

4.3.1   The widowhood rights campaign

Campaigning by the women's movement in Anambra State was instrumental in the introduction of a new law designed to prevent the maltreatment of widows in 2005. Religion is often implicated in gender inequality and discrimination against women, but religious leaders and organizations played key roles in this campaign. The case study enabled the researchers to address the question of when, why and how religious actors facilitate rather than obstruct legal reform intended to realize women's rights (Adamu et al, 2010, 2011,' forthcoming).

Many of the rituals and practices with which widows in largely Igbo Anambra State have traditionally been expected to comply are both incompatible with Nigeria's 1999 Constitution and today regarded as inhumane and degrading. Widows are also discriminated against by Igbo inheritance rules, which prescribe that property is inherited through the male line. Women are not entitled to inherit land from their fathers and widows are not entitled to any share in the property of their deceased husband, even property acquired during the marriage. Many of the rituals and practices are associated with traditional religious beliefs. They and the inheritance rules are enforced by the male and female relatives of the deceased man, sometimes quite brutally. They are humiliating and can reduce widows and their children to destitution.

Protests against widowhood practices started in the late 1980s but were uncoordinated. In the 2000s, the campaign for legal reform was spearheaded and organized by CENGOS (Coalition of Eastern NGOs), an umbrella organization of over 100 NGOs in the nine states of the old Eastern Region, including Anambra. The assistance of professional associations of women lawyers and journalists and religious organizations was vital. Growing concern over the maltreatment of widows, including their own members, by women's organizations associated with the dominant Catholic and Anglican denominations in this majority Christian state led to them becoming involved with the campaign. The initiative was taken by the Catholic Women's Organization, which brought in the Mothers' Union and the Women's Guild, both associated with the Anglican Communion.

- They initiated and led on the community level campaign, seeking from the outset to obtain support from their own members, religious leaders, and traditional organizations and leaders, especially men; and justifying the campaign in terms of religious language and beliefs, for example, the incompatibility between traditional and Christian funeral rites. Community level support both increased the legitimacy of the State level campaign and led to local pressure for changes in practices.

- Although secular NGOs and professional associations led on the campaign to persuade the State House of Assembly to pass the bill that became the *Anambra State Malpractices against Widows and Widowers (Prohibition) Law No. 2005,* the FBOs' role in lobbying Assembly members and obtaining the support of religious leaders was vital. Churches provided a platform for campaigners to spread their message, including to people in the State House of Assembly. They and religious leaders provided credibility and legitimacy for the campaign, pastoral support, prayer and material resources. Tactical compromises, for example, including widowers as well as widows in the law, helped to reduce opposition from men.

- The 2005 law prohibits and penalizes the maltreatment of widows and widowers. Pressure for effective implementation has been maintained, with an emphasis on educating women about their rights and providing support to women seeking redress through mediation or the courts. Informants reported women's increased awareness of the law and their rights, and a decline in (though not elimination of) harmful traditional practices.

- However, it has proved particularly difficult to implement the provisions on inheritance included in the 2005 law, because of the entrenched nature and complexity of issues related to land and property. In addition, the campaigning momentum on this issue has been lost, as organizations have moved on to other issues.

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> *Some implications of the successful campaign for legal reform in Anambra State for the women's movement more widely include:*
>
> ▪ *Church involvement helped to bridge the elite-grassroots divide that has weakened the Nigerian women's movement – the faith-based women's organizations' ability to generate grassroots support strengthened the campaign, has increased ordinary women's knowledge of their rights and is resulting in changes in local practices.*
>
> ▪ *The support of FBOs was forthcoming because widows in general and their members in particular are harmed by traditional practices and there is scriptural justification for the campaign.*
>
> ▪ *Tactics to avoid alienating key groups were vital to the success of the campaign, including obtaining the support of (male) religious and traditional leaders and compromises on the content of the law.*
>
> ▪ *A women's movement is a diverse fluid network of organizations and individuals. Within it, a coalition can form for a limited period around a shared cause and goal. A successful coalition contains actors who are both affected by the issues or practices of concern and capable of changing them.*

4.3.2 Campaign for the domestication of CEDAW

The second study examined engagements between the Nigerian women's movement and religion in relation to the campaign for the domestication of the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (Para-Mallam et al, 2011, forthcoming). In 1985 the Babangida-led Nigerian government signed and ratified CEDAW with no reservations, indicating its formal agreement to be legally bound by its provisions. Nevertheless, attempts by a coalition of women's organizations to domesticate CEDAW into national law met with failure. The *Abolition of all Forms of Discrimination against Women in Nigeria and Other Related Matters Bill, 2006,* introduced by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, was rejected by the Federal House of Assembly in 2007, despite extensive campaigning by women's organizations.

While ostensibly supporting women's rights, religious leaders and members of the House of Assembly opposed gender equality and various clauses in the Bill. A review of secondary material and semi-

structured interviews with key informants in six cities (Abuja, Lagos, Ibadan, Jos, Kaduna and Kano) enabled the researchers to analyse the role of religion and religious organizations in the campaign and the fate of the Bill. Interviewees included nine principal actors from NGO members of the CEDAW coalition, two from the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, one from the National Assembly, one from UNIFEM, nine working in four key faith-based organizations, and eleven religious leaders (six Muslim and five Christian).

It emerged that:

- The CEDAW coalition had underestimated the extent to which religious actors would regard aspects of CEDAW as controversial, as well as their capacity to mobilize formidable opposition that cut across various faith communities, sects and denominations. Few attempts were made to investigate the views of faith communities and engage with them and their leaders to explain the content of the Bill, address the contentious issues included in it and solicit their support.
- Lobbying focused on members of the House of Assembly, but coalition members made fewer efforts to create awareness of the content of CEDAW and garner support among religious leaders (or traditional/ community leaders and grassroots women). As a result, the religious leaders interviewed, including those who had opposed the Bill, were often unaware of the specific content of CEDAW. In addition, grassroots organizations engaged in programmes to address women's practical needs were not integrated into the campaign.
- Although faith-based women's organizations were consulted by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and others, there appears to have been little effort to involve them in the CEDAW campaign itself. Given their influence and acceptability in their faith communities, the coalition's failure to enlist them as allies was a tactical error.
- Muslim and Christian leaders and FBO activists interviewed support the principle of women's rights, but some (and many members of the overwhelmingly male National Assembly) expressed strong reservations about the concept of 'gender equality'. Their preference for more acceptable terminology, such as gender 'equity' or 'partnership' hints at resistance to gender equality both on their part and among believers more widely. Conservative interpretations of sacred texts, which are perceived to be compatible with indigenous cultural norms and practices, were central to the opposition's case. However, it is difficult to disentangle opposition on religious grounds from men's fear of a threat to their dominant roles in the family and other social institutions, and general appeals to 'culture.'

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- Christians and Muslims have similar views on some aspects of CEDAW, but not others. They identify different aspects as being contrary to their religious tenets.   None of the major religious organizations or faith communities has issued a statement supporting or opposing CEDAW. Views about it vary among adherents within and across both religions.

- Opposition to CEDAW focused on specific issues contained in Articles 5, 10, 12 and 16, which relate to reproductive rights (mainly Catholics but also Muslims); women's rights in marriage and its dissolution; the minimum age of marriage (Muslims); and gender roles in marriage, religious spaces and society (both Christians and Muslims). Many, especially Catholics, saw the Bill as attempting to surreptitiously legalize abortion. It was regarded by its opponents as anti-family, anti-God and part of a Western feminist agenda.

- Some research participants highlighted the role of the media in perpetuating misconceptions about CEDAW, as well as the coalition's ineffective use of media advocacy in the campaign.

In the absence of legislation that incorporates the CEDAW provisions, Nigeria lacks a properly constituted legal framework within which gender-based human rights violations can be addressed. For example, the 35 per cent affirmative action provision for enhancing female political participation, as specified in the 2006 National Gender Policy, remains a *moral* obligation rather than a *judiciable* legal requirement. Furthermore, in a cultural context that condones wife battery, existing laws do not adequately protect women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence.

Therefore, despite the failure of the Bill, the campaign is ongoing. For example, the CEDAW coalition submits its own reports to the UN Committee that reviews national progress in achieving CEDAW's aims to counter what it perceives as the Nigerian government's exaggerated claims. In addition, there is some agreement that religion can play a positive role. Some religious leaders and FBOs have identified scriptural references to use in campaigning, arguing that unlike traditional culture, Christianity and Islam recognize women's rights. Activists in civil society organizations and government believe that lessons have been learnt from the campaign, but lament the lack of a solid financial base for pursuing it to its logical conclusion. Low levels of female literacy, widespread poverty and women's reluctance to challenge the status quo of male supremacy pose continuing challenges.

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Some implications of the experience of campaigning for the domestication of CEDAW are:

- *Secular and FBO activists believe that a more pragmatic approach to domesticating CEDAW might be to: a) extricate its more contentious aspects and incorporate the remainder in a partial Bill or include them piecemeal in a variety of national laws, and b) focus on the African Union Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (2004) as a more acceptable alternative.*

- *Campaigners need to identify potential sources of opposition to proposed legal reform, seek to address their concerns and solicit their support, including not only elected representatives but also religious leaders and organizations, men and grassroots women's organizations.*

- *To address the deficiencies in media support, informants suggested that sensitization workshops on CEDAW, the AU protocol and the National Gender Policy should be held to generate support for the campaign among media personnel.*

5 Relationships between religious teaching, values and development concepts and practices

Until recently limited research attention has been given to links between religious teachings and people's ideas about development in Nigeria. This is surprising considering the central role played by religion in people's lives and Nigerian society. As noted above, all religions are a source of values and ethical codes intended to guide adherents and help them negotiate the economic, political and social spheres of life. Both Islam and Christianity emphasize peace, justice and morality in their teachings. African traditional beliefs and practices are also very much alive and continue to have a significant impact.

However, there may be differences between the formal teachings of religious leaders, institutions and organizations, including how they conceptualize 'development', the interpretations of those who impart teachings locally and the views of local people, who may accept aspects of the public discourse but reject others. The first aim of this study was to understand how religious teachings of relevance to selected development issues are disseminated and interpreted in local contexts. It aimed to understand local perspectives on the concept of development and particular concerns of mainstream development policy and practice, especially gender relations and poverty. To provide a more specific focus for the research, it sought people's views on selected and sometimes controversial tools used to advance gender equality and reduce poverty: equal access for girls to education and micro-credit.

Semi-ethnographic research techniques comprised of semi-structured interviews, observation and informal interactions were used in two successive fieldwork periods in two sites with both urban and rural localities: Jos in Plateau State (north central, majority Christian, minority Muslim) and Ibadan in Oyo State (south west, roughly equal proportions of Muslims and Christians). Views and opinions were collected from religious teachers, ordinary individuals, and religious organizations on the core values of religion and the extent to which religion affects their perceptions of development.[15]

Respondents view poverty as having both spiritual and material dimensions. Spiritual poverty is understood as a lack of power and an inadequate spiritual life. For example, if an individual cannot communicate with the Supreme Being to bring about good fortune in their lives, they are considered to be spiritually weak and therefore poor in spirit. Most respondents contended that a person who is spiritually poor is also likely to be materially poor and most of the religious leaders interviewed believed that an individual can reverse his or her materially poor circumstances through more intense

spirituality and living a holy life.[16] This process was often termed 'spiritual emancipation' by informants and seen in terms of greater religiosity, more regular church attendance and increased cash donations. Known as the prosperity gospel, this view is gaining ground not only in Christian but also in Muslim circles. It was clearly seen in the emphasis placed by Muslim leaders on prayers for personal and family wealth, protection from poverty and economic decline, and solutions to other problems affecting wellbeing.

Respondents blame the continued high incidence of poverty on bad governance, which in their view has existed throughout Nigeria's recent history, from the military period to the establishment of a democratic government. Those in leadership positions are said to amass illegal wealth, living lavish lifestyles at the cost of the majority of the Nigerian people, who live in abject poverty. Most respondents admitted, however, that corruption occurs in religious circles as well. Nevertheless, they generally agreed that religious leaders should be more prominent in the fight to challenge and eradicate corruption and poverty (see also Section 4.2).

As with poverty, development is seen as multi-dimensional: for individuals it is said to include the acquisition of skills and capacity, greater freedom, scope for creativity, and acceptance of self-discipline and responsibility, as well as material well-being. Thus most understand improvements to their own wellbeing in both physical and spiritual terms: it means socio-economic empowerment in order to improve material wellbeing, but also a good spiritual life. Most of those associated with organizations set up by Christians affirmed that Christian missionaries had left a development legacy by embedding charitable work into the fabric of many Christian churches. Missionaries are credited with initiating many aspects of what is now considered as 'development', for example, mass education, health care, improved infrastructure and the establishment of civil society organizations. In many Muslim countries, the potential role *zakat* contributions[17] can make to either public or private development initiatives is emphasized. However, *zakat* is not seen as central to the practice of Islam in Nigeria.[18] Many of the respondents attributed its insignificant role to the relative poverty of the majority of Muslims in the country, but further investigation of the reasons for its lack of prominence was beyond the scope of this research project. Respondents accept that the Nigerian government has a development agenda, but lament that its initiatives have not yielded the desired results because of poor implementation policies and other vices such as corruption.

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Nigerian society is patriarchal and its male dominated social structure is deeply culturally embedded. Women's limited role in the public sphere and their subservience to men are reinforced by religious beliefs and teachings and their marginal role in religious leadership. However, cultural differences emerged when comparing practices within Islam in the north and south of the country (Dugbazah and Labeodan, forthcoming; Hassan, forthcoming). While in the north a large proportion of Muslim women are in *purdah*, this is less frequently practised by Muslims in the south. *Purdah* is religiously justified by the Islamic teaching that men are responsible for providing their families with shelter, food and security, and seems to be generally accepted by Muslim women in Jos. While it prevents women from participating in public activities such as trading, it is not synonymous with being exclusively a housewife - many Muslim women in Jos are economically active. While some stated that their husbands claim some of their profits, others said that their earnings are for their personal use. In addition, women in Jos do not worship in the mosque with men, while in the south they are allowed to worship in mosques. Interviews with Muslim women in Jos revealed that although this is not acceptable, they have no choice.

Both Muslims and Christians in Nigeria emphasize education for everyone, including women. Educating girls is regarded as essential for a positive transformation of society, although for many the purpose of education is to better equip women for their gendered household roles as wives and mothers, rather than to achieve gender equality. Thus according to some (including Muslim women), education is supposed to socialize women into accepting the authority of men and religious leaders in particular contended that education for women is important to enable them to fulfil their roles in child rearing and the socialization of the next generation. However, the rhetoric is far different from the practice. Not only are there more Christian schools, but in both research sites, a higher proportion of Christian parents send their children to school than Muslim parents. In part, this is because the latter are reluctant to send their children to Christian schools for fear that they will be converted to Christianity.

Micro-credit has for years been promoted by development agencies as a means of enabling poor households to improve their livelihoods. However, until recently the influence of users' views on debt on their attitudes to micro-credit was rarely considered. Subsequently, most attention has been given to Muslim teachings on *riba* (interest). In this study, divergent views on Christian teaching on debt and

credit emerged and none of the Christian organizations and religious groups offered clear guidelines on the issue of debt and credit. While some believe that money lending is a legitimate economic practice, as long as it does not involve usury (excessive interest), others contend that the Bible warns against borrowing, saying that taking a loan for a personal project may indicate materialism, compromising one's faith. Reference is made to the Old Testament requirement that every debt must be paid back in full. Muslims believe that the Qur'anic principles of equality and shared risk imply that no interest should be charged on loans. Respondents agreed that Islamically, all debts must be paid on time and in full, because this demonstrates that the debtor is truly religious and is obeying Islamic religious principles.

Both Christian and Muslim respondents were knowledgeable about government credit facilities (and some were beneficiaries), but lamented that the interest rates charged are too high. One participant suggested that this often leads to acute hardship, resulting for example in the confiscation of property if people are unable to repay loans. Both Muslim and Christian organizations contacted during the research provide credit facilities to their members, but reported that the scale of provision is limited by available funds. Fewer women than men can access credit facilities because they do not have access to land, wealth or houses to use as collateral. Instead, many participate in rotating credit associations (*adashe*). These groups are not necessarily organized along religious lines and are not underpinned by religious beliefs.

All the religions present in Nigeria make pronouncements on current human and social problems and respondents in the study expected religion (or rather religious leaders and institutions) to provide them with solutions to their problems.[19] Cultural attitudes favour the accumulation of wealth as long as some of it is distributed amongst those who consider that they are entitled to a share. These are buttressed by religious views that regard material wealth to be acceptable and generally compatible with a good spiritual life.

6 Conclusion

Religion has been such a contentious issue in Nigeria that researchers have shied away from studying it. Respondents become emotional and touchy when discussing issues of religion and public officials are sensitive about religious issues. Religious affiliation has not been included as a census question since 1963.

Although there are three main religions in Nigeria, Christianity and Islam predominate. There is increasingly bitter rivalry between the two religions, in which each seeks to stamp its authority on the public domain. The religious disturbances that have occurred as a result of this rivalry have posed great threats to peace and development.

The refusal by religious groups to accept a marginal role in the public sphere has given rise to a situation in which matters of social justice that affect the political community at large are increasingly viewed through a religious monocle. Even the secular status of the constitution, once thought to be safe from the arrows of faith, has come under attack from some adherents. Political leaders have been complicit in the process through their conscious exploitation of religious sentiments and symbols, illustrating how those in charge of state affairs are often caught, at crucial moments, between spiritual and secular rationales.

The struggle between Islam and Christianity to dominate the public sphere is part of a broader jostling for political capital, economic resources, and influence over the character of the Nigerian state and the nature of the strongly contested federal arrangements. As many commentators on the subject have pointed out, the situation has always been complicated by the overlaps between religious and ethno-regional identities.

There seems to be a general conviction that the noticeable resurgence of religiosity is connected to the combined impact on citizens of the twin processes of reduced state expenditure and economic stagnation. In addition, frustration at the state's failure to deliver on its promise to provide basic social welfare, coupled with the moral degradation that is thought by many to accompany secularism, appear to have provided a conducive environment for faith-based groups to emerge and grow in influence.

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In recent years, religious organizations have grown in importance in the public sphere and new religious organizations have been established to fulfil a variety of potentially conflicting objectives. While some were brought into being with the simple aim of bridging the gap bequeathed by state retrenchment, especially in vital areas such as health and education, others were established with a more political intent. A recent trend is for faith-based groups to establish private universities. It emerged during the studies summarized in this paper that many faith-based organizations have become increasingly dissatisfied with their limited role within a secular social order, leading to tensions in the public domain. Because such organizations use a wide range of strategies to make their impact felt, they seem to inspire intense religious rivalry, with implications for all involved - religious organizations, adherents, and the state.

Holders of state power are often caught between the need to defend the state's secular credentials and affirm the autonomy of the public sphere on the one hand; while on the other pandering to, even deploying, religious symbols, personalities and institutions in the service of the state's own project of incorporation and expansion. Thus a predictable social paradox has emerged in Nigeria, in which the same religion to which the mass of the people have increasingly turned in response to the crisis of the state has become an inextricable part of this crisis. Religion is thus "intricately interwoven with politics in Nigeria" (Williams, 1991, p 41). When religious groups are satisfied, their contribution may be positive, but when "favouritism, partiality [and] bigotry creep in, negativity sets in. Contributions from the dissatisfied cannot [in Williams' view] be healthy, progressive, functional or positive" (Williams, 1991, p 41).

The research reported on in this paper has merely touched the surface of many of the complex links between religion and development in Nigeria. While producing useful insights, a variety of research questions need further exploration, of which only a few are mentioned here.

First, the coverage and representativeness of the mapping of FBOs active in development needs to be extended, to include international development FBOs, organizations with significant and innovative local roles, and development activities undertaken by congregations rather than separate organizations. As well as developing more comprehensive documentation on the education and healthcare services provided by religious organizations, assessments are needed of the

characteristics and quality of the services they provide and their relationships with their parent organizations and the state, to clarify the scale and nature of their contribution compared to public and other non-state providers.

In addition, further research is needed to develop a thorough comparative understanding of whether and how faith is manifest in NGOs as well as FBOs; the similarities and differences between FBOs from different religious and denominational traditions; the nature and outcomes of partnerships between FBOs and other organizations; and the outcomes, effectiveness and impact of FBO and NGO programmes. Involving the organizations concerned in such research can provide them with improved evidence on the outcomes of their own activities and encourage them to act on the findings.

More evidence is needed on the outcomes of initiatives to build inter-religious understanding and cooperation, including efforts to prevent violent conflict, not just at the federal level but also at state and local levels.

Finally, before effective measures to tackle problems such as corruption can be devised, a deeper understanding is needed of the divergence between the religiously informed ethics and morals avowed by the nearly nine out of ten Nigerians who claim to attend the mosque or church at least weekly and their behaviour in the public sphere. Complementary research should compare how moral standards are applied in the public sphere and the private context of individual lives and families.

Implications for policy and practice

- Attempts to reduce religious conflict must address concerns over equal treatment and the fear of marginalization felt by many religious organizations, often arising from favourable treatment for indigenous groups.
- Some of the new public institutional spaces that provide opportunities for creative engagement between both the state and religious groups and different religious groups may increase Muslim-Christian understanding and have the potential for wider use.
- Better understanding is needed not only of the aims, activities, organizational characteristics and funding base of FBOs but also of their deep historical roots and political links. It is important to recognize that the characteristics of FBOs vary between and within faith traditions and to develop better ways of identifying the types of organizations that are active in particular locations.

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- NGOs and FBOs both have strengths that can be harnessed to tackle development issues effectively. For example, the wide reach, high degree of legitimacy and moral authority of FBOs can make them appropriate partners for government and NGOs, especially in highly religious areas, where traditional leaders are also religious leaders, and when dealing with religiously sensitive issues. NGOs may have greater expertise and access to international funding, but can be more successful in such contexts by working with FBOs and religious leaders.

- Both religious and secular organizations can play a role in long term post conflict transformation and development, but need enhanced capacity to identify, prioritize and more efficiently perform such functions.

- The state at all levels and its agencies must be the driver of long term post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding through improving security and governance, supporting victims' post-conflict coping strategies, and securing justice for perpetrators.

- To reduce corruption, priority needs to be given to enforcement of relevant regulations and laws and universal provision of basic services to reduce the incentives for corrupt behaviour, but this can be accompanied by the reinforcement of moral messages.

Appendix 1

	Research projects	Research sites
1	Mapping the activities of FBOs in development	Oyo Lagos Anambra Enugu Kano Federal Capital Territory
2	The development activities, values and performance of FBOs and NGOs	Kano Lagos
3	Faith communities and the policy process	Abuja, FCT Jos, Plateau State Ibadan, Oyo State
4	Relationships between madrasas and the state in Kano	Kano
5	The role of faith communities in conflict transformation	Jos Kano, Kano State
6	Religions, politics and governance	Oyo Anambra Kano
7	The role of faith communities in contemporary social movements	National Anambra
8	Religion, ethics and attitudes towards corruption	Owerri, Imo State Ibadan Abuja, FCT Kano
9	Relationships between values, religious teaching and development concepts and practices	Jos Ibadan

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Appendix 2

List of policy briefs

All the Religions and Development policy briefs are available from

http://www.religionsanddevelopment.org/index.php?section=54

Those that summarize the findings from research carried out in Nigeria are listed below:

7   Religion, politics and governance in Nigeria

13   Are FBOs distinctive? Religious and secular NGOs' approaches to HIV/AIDS-related work in Nigeria

15   Religion, women's movements and legal reform in Nigeria

16   Strengthening the voice of the poor: participation by religious organizations in PRSPs in Nigeria and Tanzania

Notes

[1] Inaugural presentation to Religion, Politics and Society in Pakistan conference organized by the Religions and Development Research Programme country team, LUMS Lahore, 11-12 Feb 2010.

[2] The working papers (and short summaries) can all be downloaded from **http://www.religionsanddevelopment.org/index.php?section=47**

[3] In particular, a dissemination conference was held on 14th December, 2010, in Abuja, see : **http://www.religionsanddevelopment.org/index.php?action=download_resource&id=278&module=resourcesmodule&src=%40random454f80f60b3f4**

[4] These can be downloaded from **http://www.religionsanddevelopment.org/index.php?section=54**

[5] A Pew Forum survey in May-June 2006 found that 76 per cent of Christians and 91 per cent of Muslims said that religion is more important to them than their identity as Africans, Nigerians or members of an ethnic group (Ruby and Shah, 2007). Other salient identities identified by Osaghae and Suberu (2005) are ethnic, regional and communal (sub-ethnic) identities.

[6] There is no reliable figure for Nigeria's population and no question on religious affiliation has been included in the census since 1963. In 1953, 45 per cent of the population was Muslim, 21 per cent Christian and 33 per cent belonged to other religions, mostly traditional religions. "By 1963, the proportion of the population that belonged to other religions had declined by 15 percentage points, nearly matching the 13.1 point increase for Christians; during this same time period, the percentage of Muslims increased by less than 2 percentage points. The number of Christians increased by another 13.1 percentage points from 1963 to 1990. This growth trend flattened out by 1990, with the Christian share of the Nigerian population growing by less than 1 percentage point from 1990 to 2003. The Muslim population, however, increased by 3 percentage points during that same time period" (Grim, 2007, p 10). The 2003 Demographic and Health survey of a nationally representative sample of women aged 14-49 and men 15-59 found that 48 per cent of respondents claimed to be Christian, 51 per cent Muslim, 1.4 other and none non-religious. Two more recent sample surveys give different results: while a majority of respondents in a 2009 Pew Forum nationally representative sample of 1,516 adults 18+ claimed to be Muslim (52 per cent), a majority in a 2008 Afrobarometer sample claimed to be Christian (56 per cent). The proportion claiming to be adherents of traditional or other religions was a mere 1 per cent (Afrobarometer, 2008; Pew Forum, 2010)

[7] In the Pew Forum's 2009 sample, 30 per cent of all respondents were Hausa, 24 per cent Yoruba and 19 per cent Igbo. 39 per cent of Christians were Igbo and 23 per cent Yoruba, while 54 per cent of Muslims were Hausa and 25 per cent Yoruba (Pew Forum, 2010, p 310).

[8] Of the 46 per cent of respondents in the Pew Forum's 2009 survey sample who were Christian, 37 per cent were Catholic (17 per cent of the total) and 60 per cent Protestant (29 per cent of the total, of which 12 per cent Pentecostal, 4 per cent Anglican, 4 per cent Baptist, 4 per cent African Independent Church, 5 per cent other) (Pew Forum, 2010, p 147).

[9] The 2006 Pew Forum national probability sample survey of Nigeria's population of approximately 130 million (adults 19+) found that 16 per cent of the population consider themselves renewalists – including charismatics (8 per cent) and Pentecostals (18 per cent). 30 per cent of Catholics consider themselves charismatics. 54 per cent of Protestants (excluding the African Independent Churches) consider themselves Pentecostals and a further 8 per cent charismatics (Pew Forum, 2006, p. 83).

[10] Amongst Muslims included in the Pew Forum sample, 38 per cent regarded themselves as Sunni, 12 per cent as Shi'a and 3 per cent as Ahmadiyya (a sect not believed to be Muslim by many Muslims), but the relative unimportance of these sectarian differences is demonstrated by the 44 per cent who consider themselves to be 'just Muslim'. 44 per cent identified themselves with a Sufi order (mainly Tijaniyya or Qadiriyya), and 14 per cent with the Tablighi, 11 per cent with the Salafiyya and 14 per cent with the Wahhabi movements (Pew Forum, 2010, p 21, 31-17).

[11] Preparation of an interim PRSP started in 2001, followed by the final strategy, NEEDS 1 (2004-7), in 2003/4. Review of NEEDS 1 and preparation of NEEDS 2 was undertaken in 2007, but was overtaken by the incoming President's 7-point Agenda and was still unpublished in 2010. PRSP preparation also started at the state level in 2004 and SEEDS have now, after a slow start, been drawn up in most states, including Oyo and Plateau.

[12] Although the participating organizations contributed significant resources in terms of staff time and management support, the funding was provided as part of the DFID-funded research programme, the technical expertise mainly by NISER and also by the University of Birmingham, and support to reach politicians and government officials by members of the Religions and Development's advisory group.

[13] The World Values surveys show that about four out of give Nigerians believe that the religions give adequate answers to moral problems and the needs of individuals, and three quarters have a great deal of trust in religious institutions, compared to only a third in the civil service and half that in the government as a whole. Two thirds believe that it is never justifiable for someone to take a bribe, but nine out of ten believe that most or almost all public officials are engaged in corruption **www.wvsevsdb.com/wvs/WVSAnalyzeQuestion.jsp.**

[14] A BBC/Gallup International sample survey in 2005 found that 85 per cent of Nigerians trusted religious leaders, and 18 per cent of respondents said that a religious leader had had the most influence on decisions they had taken about their life during the year prior to the survey **http://www.bbc.co.uk/print/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2005/09_september/15/ africa.shtml**. A belief that most political leaders are corrupt seems to be associated with generally low levels of mutual trust in a society (Wike, 2008).

[15] Various papers have been produced on aspects of this research, but to date none have been published.

[16] 96 per cent of Christians interviewed in a Pew Forum sample survey believed that God grants material prosperity (and 97 per cent that He grants good health and relief from sickness) to all believers who have enough faith, with very little difference between Pentecostalists and other Christians, unlike many other countries (Pew Forum, 2006, p 29). 73 per cent of Nigerian respondents in the 2009 Pew Forum sample survey expressed a belief that God grants wealth and good health to those who have enough faith (77 per cent of Christians, 70 per cent of Muslims (Pew Forum, 2010, p 197).

[17] Zakat is one of the five pillars of Islam. Contributions are mandatory for Sunni Muslims and are normally equivalent to 2.5 per cent of annual wealth. The purposes for which zakat is used are specified in the Qur'an, generally to assist the poorest on an individual basis. Additional forms of voluntary charitable giving are also specified.

[18] Oddly, 80 per cent of Muslims questioned in the 2009 Pew Forum sample survey claimed to give a set proportion of their wealth as zakat to charity or the mosque (Pew Forum, 2010, p 226). However, the use of a structured questionnaire did not permit further probing.

[19] This is borne out by responses in the World Values Survey, in which in 2000 70 per cent of Nigerian respondents stated a belief that religious organizations are giving adequate answers to moral problems, 79 per cent to problems of family life, 85 to spiritual needs and 73 per cent to contemporary social problems (Halman, 2007, p 215-18).

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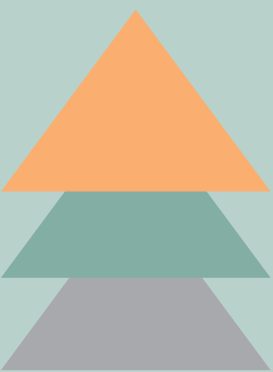
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