

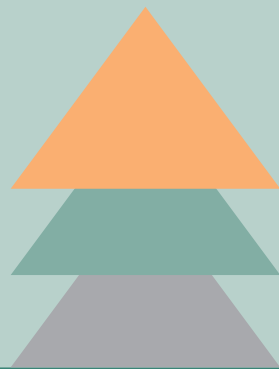
Religions and Development Research Programme

Interactions between Religion, the State and Civil Society in Pakistan: Some Implications for Development

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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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Key words: Islam, Sunni, faith-based organization, madrasa, women, charity, sectarian conflict

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. The research in Pakistan commenced in 2005 and was conducted by a team of country-based researchers. The programme was centred at the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) from 2007 onwards, under the leadership of Professor Mohammad Waseem, School of Humanities, Social Sciences and Law, who was also a member of the management group for the programme as a whole. The research team included members affiliated with various institutions spread across the country and independent researchers. Dr Nida Kirmani was a Research Fellow with the Religions and Development Research Programme, International Development Department, University of Birmingham, and took up an appointment at LUMS in January, 2011.

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:

- Khalid Ahmed, journalist, Lahore
- Aazar Ayaz, consultant, The Researchers
- Ayesha Tammy Haq, journalist, Karachi
- Simi Kamal, consultant; Member, Commission on the Status of Women
- Dr. Khalid Masud, Chair, Council of Islamic Ideology
- Dr. Ayesha Siddiqua, independent researcher, consultant and author
- Prof. Bernadette Dean, Principal, Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore

Six research projects were undertaken in Pakistan (see Appendix). Each was part of a wider international comparative research project, coordinated by a researcher based in the UK. Each was led by a senior researcher, who worked with the overall project coordinator to identify research questions, design and implement research relevant to Pakistan. The team leaders worked with additional team members and research assistants as necessary. 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.

The research team in Pakistan much appreciates the assistance of the advisers and all those who participated in the projects as researchers or respondents. In addition, the author of this paper acknowledges the feedback on the first draft received from Professors Waseem, Singh and Rakodi.

Summary

Religion has been central in the formation and evolution of Pakistan. It has served as a source of legitimacy for the state and a motivation for the betterment of society, as well as a source of division and conflict.

Six research projects carried out as part of a research programme that examined some of the links between religion and development explored two main themes:

- the relationships of the state with religion and its implications for development:
 - religions, politics and governance
 - faith-based service providers and their changing relationships with the state
 - the role of faith communities in conflict transformation and long-term development
- non-state actors involved in development-related activities and their relationships with religion:
 - relationships between religious values and development concepts and practices
 - mapping the terrain: the activities of faith-based organizations in development
 - the development activities, values and performance of faith-based and non-governmental organizations

Some key findings from the studies are:

- Historically, the Pakistani state has strategically coopted religious discourses and actors, with harmful impacts on the country's development. Since its formation in 1947, the state has tried to manage and control religious ideologies and institutions to serve its own interests, with detrimental effects, particularly on the rights of women and minorities. Not all of its efforts have been successful. For example, attempts to encourage madrasas to teach non-religious subjects have largely failed because of poor understanding between the state and religious establishments. At the same time, the state's attempts to co-opt religion have strengthened the symbolic and political power of certain religious actors and institutions.
- Religious discourses and actors are intertwined with the state apparatus. The dangers of alliances between religious actors and the state are, however, highlighted in a study of sectarian conflicts in Jhang and Gilgit, where the state's involvement and its failure to prevent the violence stoked the flames of sectarian conflict. While the violence has subsided in recent years, its lack of a proactive strategy to promote peace and its failure to act in an impartial manner has left the wounds of conflict open.

- Levels of trust between religious actors and the state and between non-state organizations that identify themselves as 'religious' and those that consider themselves to be 'secular' or non-religious are low. One result is that the government is unable to control religious institutions, which remain powerful. Nevertheless, some cooperation between actors on both sides of the religious/secular divide occurs.
- Strategic alliance-building is mainly between the state and religious actors. For example, the initial success of the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), the religious political party coalition that won power in the then Northwest Frontier Province between 2002 and 2007, can be attributed to its anti-American rhetoric and criticism of the Musharraf government, although it cooperated with external donors and the central government once in power.
- Partnerships were not found between religious and secular organizations, between which there was very little interaction.
- The term 'faith-based organization' is problematic in Pakistan and is best avoided. First, it is difficult to identify an organization as 'faith-based' because religion is implicit in many organizations, particularly those engaged in charitable activities – it informs their activities, motivations and sources of funding. Further, many organizations prefer not to be labelled 'faith-based' because of the negative connotations this term has accrued in recent years. The status of organizations associated with religious minorities is less ambiguous.
- There are differences between self-identified religious and secular organizations in terms of their approaches to development, their ideological foundations, their motivations, their attitudes to social issues, especially gender, the types of activities in which they are engaged and their funding sources.
 - First, those which identify themselves as 'religious' are generally engaged in education and welfare activities rather than advocacy, long-term development, or peace-building. This may be partly attributable to their reliance on religious forms of charity, such as *zakat*, the uses of which are clearly stipulated.
 - Professional development organizations, in contrast, claim that they are secular and are more likely to engage in long-term development activities, advocacy and women's empowerment. They generally do not rely on religious forms of funding and are more likely to receive support from institutional donors.
 - Members of religious and secular organizations also advance different analyses of and proposed solutions for poverty.
- However, there are also commonalities between religious and secular organizations engaged in development activities. First, while the approaches they adopt may be different, they all aim to alleviate poverty and improve society according to their respective visions, and most stress the importance of

education in this process. Further, they all serve to fill gaps in the provision of social welfare by the state. As well, many are critical of the Pakistani state's management of development issues.

Implications of the findings include:

- The Pakistani state's use of religion to legitimize its rule has given rise to power struggles between political and religious institutions that have unpredictable consequences, demonstrating the advantages of separation between religion and the state.
- A counter discourse based on pluralism and equal citizenship is needed, to remove the justification for sectarian violence provided by the current public debate, ensure that policies are inclusive, remove incentives for exclusionary sectarian politics and foster non-sectarian civil society organizations able to build bridges between people associated with different sectarian traditions.
- The integration of Islam with the state has been problematic for the achievement of social development objectives, including equality, justice and poverty reduction.
- To assess the desirability of further state support for madrasa education, more accurate data on enrolment are needed, as well as further research into, for example, the content of madrasa curricula, the quality of education provided, the social characteristics of pupils and the subsequent careers of graduates.
- The term faith-based organization should generally be avoided in the Pakistani context because it is associated with radical religious organizations with extreme views.
- A broad distinction between local charities with philanthropic aims and professional development organizations is more appropriate than one between faith-based and non-religious organizations.
- Religious and non-religious organizations and their members both support education for girls, but their views on the purpose and content of schooling for girls and boys differ.
- Development partners' decisions about whether and how to engage with voluntary organizations must be made on a case-by-case basis, based on an understanding of individual organizations and their context – a general preference for those that are religiously inspired is not appropriate, any more than it is for secular NGOs.

1 Introduction

Religion has in many ways been central in the formation and evolution of Pakistan. It has served as a source of legitimacy for the state and a motivation for the betterment of society amongst various civil society actors, as well as a source of division and conflict. However, little systematic research has been conducted on the nature of the relationships between religion and processes of development. In order to address this gap, the Religions and Development Research Programme undertook a series of studies that explored various aspects of these complex relationships and their impact on a variety of development-related issues.

As in the other three countries involved in the programme (Nigeria, Tanzania and India), a range of topics considered important in the Pakistani context were identified. Studies examined the relationships of a variety of state and non-state actors with religion, in the form of institutions, identities, beliefs and practices, in order to understand the implications of these interactions for the achievement of development-related goals.

Specifically, research was conducted on six topics:

- Religions, politics and governance
- Faith-based service providers and their changing relationships with the state
- The role of faith communities in conflict transformation and long-term development
- Relationships between religious values and development concepts and practices
- Mapping the terrain: the activities of faith-based organizations in development
- The development activities, values and performance of faith-based and non-governmental organizations

The studies can be divided into two main categories: those that explored the relationships of the state with religion and its implications for development in terms of governance and conflict resolution, and those that focused on a range of non-state actors involved in development-related activities and their relationships with religion.

The findings of each of these components were written up as individual reports and have been disseminated in a variety of forms.¹ The research has also been shared in Pakistan (in Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad) with academic and non-academic audiences and in international forums through seminars, workshops, and academic conferences.²

A number of policy briefs have been published, drawing on discussions with audiences engaged in policy and practice to identify some of the implications of the findings (see Appendix 2).

The research teams were organized differently, with most studies carried out by a small team of in-country researchers and a few by individual researchers. Almost all the research was qualitative in nature, utilizing a mixture of historical analysis, interviews with key informants, focus groups, case studies and limited ethnographic methods, depending on the questions being addressed. Because much of the research was focused on state and non-state institutions and organizations based in cities and towns, most of the studies were carried out in urban centres, including Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Jhang and Gilgit. Research was also conducted in a limited number of rural sites.

The purpose of this paper is to summarize the findings of the research conducted in Pakistan, in order to draw out emerging themes and some implications for the achievement of development goals. It is written for a general audience interested in the findings of the research and their potential implications. The paper is divided into two main sections, the first dealing with the links between religion and the state and their implications for development and the second exploring the relationships of a variety of non-state actors involved in development with religion. Implications for various development actors, including the government, non-state organizations and international development partners, are identified in the relevant sections. This is followed by a discussion of common themes emerging from the research. Finally, some key areas for further research are identified.

2 Religion, the state and development

Relationships between the state and religion in Pakistan, which have often been troubled, were explored in studies that examined the issue of religion and governance, the relationships of the state with religious institutions, and the role of the state in managing religious-based conflicts. First, the historical relationships between the Pakistani state and religion are explored and a contemporary manifestation of these relationships examined in more detail through a case study of an alliance of religious political parties, the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), which was in power in the then Northwest Frontier Province between 2002 and 2007. Second, aspects of the state's relationships with religious institutions are examined through a study of the 2002 Madrasa Reform Programme. Finally, a study of sectarian conflicts in Gilgit and Jhang explored the state's involvement in and management of Shia-Sunni conflicts in these urban centres. These studies highlight the ambiguous nature of the Pakistani state's relationships with religion and the challenges they pose for the achievement of development-related goals.

2.1 Religion, governance and development

The Pakistani state has had close relationships with religion from its inception, with Islam operating within state institutions as well as in opposition to the state (Waseem and Mufti, 2009, see also Policy Brief 5). Over time, the state has pursued a policy of exploiting Islam as a source of legitimacy and a means of consolidating its power, with military rulers in particular turning to Islamic groups for ideological support. By doing this, the state has both allied and competed with Islamic groups in spreading and disseminating religious messages, co-opting members of the *ulema* in the process in order to manage and control religious affairs.

Pakistan was arguably founded in 1947 on the basis of religious identity, although it originally had a secular constitution. A process of Islamization began with the introduction of the Objectives Resolution in 1949, which declared that Pakistan was an Islamic state. Although Islam was brought into the state by a series of leaders from Yahya Khan onwards, the process was accelerated in Zia-ul-Haq's era (1977-1988), when the state began to play a greater role in the management of religious affairs. This period also witnessed the adoption of a series of supposedly religious-based laws, the Hudood Ordinances, which had a negative impact on the rights of women and minorities. During this time, there was also a rapid growth in the number of madrasas operating in the country, some of which supported Islamist agendas.

The state both co-opted and attempted to contain the power of religious parties and institutions in order to consolidate its own power. However, the relationships of Islam with the Pakistani state cannot be understood purely in instrumental terms, as religious actors have often resisted the manipulations of the ruling elite. Hence, there is a tension in Pakistan between the state, which is dominated by a largely modernist elite, and religious institutions and parties, which seek influence through politics and use religion to legitimize their own authority. Hence, while the state attempts to co-opt and control religious discourses, it is by no means able to do this completely.

Although religion has been an intrinsic part of the political discourse in Pakistan, religious political parties have done relatively poorly in elections and have had little formal political power. One exception was the rise to power of the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), a coalition of religious political parties, which was in power from 2002-2007 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly the Northwest Frontier Province). An in-depth study of the MMA's policies and performance in three districts, based on published statistics, government documents and key informant interviews, demonstrated how a self-professed Islamic government dealt with the political and economic challenges it faced. An analysis of the extent to which the MMA was able to translate its ideological objectives into development outcomes shows that its government suffered from the same corruption, nepotism and inefficiency that characterizes political institutions in Pakistan in general. The study also demonstrated that, despite coming into power on a platform that was critical of the Musharraf regime, the MMA government established a cooperative relationship with the central government. Although one of the reasons for the MMA's electoral success was growing anti-US sentiment in the region, while in power it relied heavily on international donors to support many of its development programmes. However, the MMA remained suspicious of secular NGOs, arguing that these organizations undermine the cultural identity of Pakistan, particularly because of their support for women's rights. While progress was made on some development issues, with donor support, overall little was achieved and in 2007, the MMA government was voted out. The research concludes that the MMA's electoral success was exceptional in the Pakistani context and that the future role of religious political parties in mainstream politics will most likely be confined to a small but vocal presence within and outside elected assemblies at various levels of government.

Research on the interplay between politics and religion in Pakistan indicates that:

- *The Pakistani state's use of religion to legitimize its rule has given rise to power struggles between political and religious institutions that have unpredictable consequences, demonstrating the advantages of a secular constitution and state.*
- *The integration of Islam with the state has been problematic for the achievement of social development objectives, including equality, justice and poverty reduction.*
- *Electoral democracy can give religious parties a political voice and enable them to win power, but also provides a way of removing them from power if poor performance undermines their popular support.*

2.2 State-madrasa engagement

Madrasa education is controversial: some believe that it provides a sound grounding in Islam for both lay people and future clerics, while others dislike its association with socially conservative values, believe that the education provided is of little use in the modern world, and allege that madrasas are associated with sectarianism and terrorism. There were, according to the Ministry of Education, over 16,000 registered madrasas in Pakistan in 2006, and an estimated 30,000 unregistered madrasas, teaching at a variety of levels. Perhaps 1.4 million children (mainly boys) were enrolled, maybe 5 per cent of all children enrolled in primary and secondary schools.³

As noted above, the Pakistani state's relationships with religious institutions have often been contentious. The nature of these relationships was examined further with reference to the 2002 Madrasa Reform Programme, focusing on the ways in which the state and religious institutions interacted during the design and implementation of the programme. The study aimed to understand the working of the programme and to assess the level of acceptance the reforms have won within the madrasa education community, based on national data; interviews with key government and religious actors at national level and in Punjab, Northwest Frontier and Balochistan provinces; case studies of madrasas in Rawalpindi; and a policy workshop with key actors in Islamabad (Bano, 2008, see also Policy Brief 1).

It did not set out to examine the issue of whether madrasas play a role in radicalization and terrorism. In addition, analysis of the value orientation and content of madrasa curricula, assessment of the quality of the education provided, and tracer studies of the subsequent careers of graduates were beyond the scope of the study.

Madrasas in South Asia initially received support from the state during the period of Mughal rule, when they were the main education institutions. However, with the establishment of government and private schools to provide an education suitable for the officials required by the British colonial administration, madrasas retreated from 'worldly education' to 'religious education' and became reliant on voluntary contributions. It was during this time that the two major South Asian Sunni schools of thought were established, the Deobandi and Barelvi traditions, with which most madrasas in Pakistan are associated. Generally, their primary aim is to produce clerics and scholars of Islam rather than providing a holistic education, although their potential contribution to the achievement of overall educational objectives is also of interest to the government.⁴ Madrasas also aim to shape the state and society in line with Islamic teaching. Hence, the state and madrasas aim to influence each other, which can lead to both conflict and cooperation.

Since the 1960s, the government has sought to introduce modern subjects, such as English, mathematics, Pakistan studies/social studies and general science, to the madrasa curriculum. However, not only had progress been limited up to the 1990s, but also there was concern about the quality of teaching provided in these subjects. In 2002, therefore, a formal attempt to reform the madrasa school system was launched.

By the time the research was carried out in 2007/8, it was clear that madrasas had generally resisted state pressure to participate in the reform programme: only 250 out of 16,000 registered madrasas had enrolled in the programme. Apart from poor programme design, inadequate funding and weak administrative capacity, two of the main reasons for this lack of progress are identified in the study as:

- weak political will on the part of the state to enforce any reform affecting the Islamic establishment, because of its fear of a backlash from certain sections of society
- the independence and strength of the madrasa leadership, which is organized in five *wafaqs* (education boards) representing the main schools of thought, and supported by senior *ulema*, parents and donors.

Most madrasas, therefore, have no incentive to cooperate with the state. Furthermore, the study argues that there is a discrepancy between the state's understanding of the role of madrasas and that of the madrasa leaders, who see themselves as imparters of Islamic knowledge.

It is not possible to assess the desirability of further state support for madrasa education on the basis of this study alone:

- *More accurate data on enrolment are needed, as well as further research, for example, into the value orientation and content of madrasa curricula for religious and secular education at different levels, the quality of education provided, the social characteristics of pupils and the subsequent careers of graduates.*
- *If the government decides to persevere with reforms designed to introduce or strengthen the teaching of secular subjects in madrasas, the study suggests that*
 - *Appropriate reforms and improved progress depend on the negotiation of shared objectives between the state and relevant madrasa leaders.*
 - *Improvements to programme design, funding and implementation are needed.*

2.3 Sectarian conflict and conflict transformation in Jhang and Gilgit

The state's relationship with religion was also explored in a study of the sectarian conflicts in Jhang and their aftermath. The research traces the trajectory of Shia-Sunni conflict in these two cities since Partition, comparing Jhang, which is a Sunni-majority city in the Punjab, with Gilgit, in the centrally administered Northern Areas, which has a Shia majority. The study drew on published and official sources, key informant interviews and focus group discussions held during visits to the two cities in 2008 and 2009 and feedback from participants in policy workshops in Lahore and Islamabad. Setting the conflicts within the local, national and international contexts, the study highlights the state's role as an instigator of conflict, as well as its efforts to manage and contain the violence (Waseem, 2010; see also Policy brief 9).

Four main stages in the progression of the conflicts in Jhang and Gilgit are identified. In the pre-conflict period, an established social hierarchy served to settle local disputes. However, the seeds of inter-sectarian conflict were sewn during the period of Partition, when Sunni majoritarianism grew in the newly-formed state of Pakistan. It was during this period that religious and sectarian minorities began to be marginalized by the state. During the 1980s, conflicts between Shias and Sunnis were exacerbated by regional rivalries between Sunni-dominated Saudi Arabia and Shia-dominated Iran, which were played out on Pakistani soil. The conflicts in Afghanistan and Kashmir have also increased the availability of weapons. The study finds that the conflict in Jhang was fuelled by the militant Sunni group, Sipah Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), which orchestrated attacks against Shia leaders and religious sites and events. However, in Gilgit the study argues that the state encouraged immigration by Sunnis in order to change the local power dynamics and consolidate its own authority.

The violence in both cities, which took the form of targeted killings of religious and political leaders, violent protests and riots, was carried out by members of both sects throughout the 1990s, leading to perhaps 1,000 deaths. The study suggests that although the violence is orchestrated by religious actors, in reality the conflict reflects political and economic competition. Non-religious civil society organizations are absent in both cities, so those affected had to rely largely on the government for relief. However, the state's failure to mitigate the violence led to a heightening of sectarian boundaries, a breakdown of local social support systems and increased residential segregation in both cities.

The violence has since subsided in both Jhang and Gilgit due to the interventions of local and state authorities, including banning the SSP in Jhang and strengthening law enforcement agencies in both places. However, people continue to carry bitter memories of the violence, which contributes to ongoing tension between members of the sects. Neither the state nor civil society organizations have taken proactive measures to address the underlying causes of sectarian conflict. Instead, it is argued that the lack of separation between religion and politics in Pakistan contributes to creating the conditions for inter-sectarian conflict. Furthermore, the state's ambivalent relationship with religion, alternating between imposing its secular legal-institutional authority and taking a partisan (pro-Sunni) stance, has undermined its legitimacy and its ability to contain sectarian conflict.

Research into the dynamics of inter-sectarian violence in Jhang and Gilgit in the 1990s concludes that:

- *A counter discourse based on pluralism, equal citizenship and separation between religion and politics is needed, to refashion the ways in which identities are perceived and remove the justification for sectarian violence provided by the current public debate.*
- *The principle of a neutral state can and must be implemented, to ensure that policies are inclusive and the politics of sectarian exclusion are not rewarded.*
- *Measures are needed to reduce the availability of weapons.*
- *Non-sectarian civil society organizations should be fostered, to assist the state in addressing socio-economic inequalities and building bridges between people associated with different sectarian traditions.*

3 Religion, civil society and development

Religion has historically influenced the work of a variety of organizations engaged in development in South Asia. The non-state actors analyzed included religious political parties, particularly their welfare wings, a variety of faith-based organizations (FBOs) including madrasas, and non-religiously affiliated non-governmental organizations. The studies considered a range of questions, including the nature and scope of religious organizations engaged in development activities, the role of religion within such organizations, and the values and beliefs underpinning various organizations, both religious and non-religious. The studies highlight the importance of religion in the motivations and approaches of some non-state actors, along with an explicit secularity amongst others.

This section outlines the findings of this group of studies, which explore a variety of questions related to the role of religion within civil society organizations. First, a historical overview of the evolution of faith-based organizations in South Asia and a broad map of the types of faith-based organizations that currently exist in Pakistan are provided. Several studies then look at particular aspects of the role of religion in organizations involved in development activities. Kirmani and Zaidi's examine the role of religion in charitable and development organizations in Karachi and Sindh. Saigol and Ihsan's research explores how the values and beliefs of religious and non-religious organizations relate to a range of development issues in Lahore and Peshawar. Bano explores the growing phenomenon of female madrasas and the nature of the welfare wing of the largest Islamic political party in Pakistan, the Jama'at-i-Islami.

3.1 The evolution, scale and scope of faith-based organizations

Historically, there are both similarities and differences in the ways faith-based organizations have evolved across a variety of faith traditions (Bano with Nair, 2007). The desire to serve humanity is common to organizations associated with all the South Asian faith traditions, but there are differences in emphasis, with Hindu and Christian organizations more geared to the provision of a broad range of services, while the most common Muslim organizations are madrasas. British colonialism had a significant effect. For example, new religious movements emerged during the colonial period, many of which established their own charitable organizations.

FBOs have continued to provide services in the post-independence period, with religious political parties contributing to the growth of FBOs in the region. The Jama'at-i-Islami in particular operates an

extensive network of welfare-related organizations. However, religious organizations do not operate in isolation: states play an important role in their development, supporting particular types of organization and sidelining others, depending on their own interests.

Although religion influences many of the organizations engaged in development-related activities in Pakistan, systematic knowledge of their nature and scope is limited. Drawing on a larger study conducted as part of the Johns Hopkins University Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project (Ghaus-Pasha and Iqbal, 2003), the *National Education Census Pakistan* (Ministry of Education, 2006) and interviews with selected organizations, an overview of the scale and types of faith-based development-related organizations operating in Pakistan was developed (Iqbal and Siddiqui, 2008). FBOs are considered to be a sub-set of a larger sector, defined as non-profit organizations that deliver at least one social service and that are self-identified as religion-based through their mission/objectives statement or through affiliation with a religious congregation. The study points out that in the Pakistani context it is often difficult to identify an organization as an 'FBO', because religion, especially Islam, underlies the motivations and activities of many welfare organizations — even those that do not explicitly identify themselves as 'FBOs'. In addition, the association of the term FBO with the rise of the religious Right in the US on the one hand, and radical religious organizations with extreme views in Pakistan on the other, leads to widespread reluctance to use it.

Despite the ambiguities of the term 'FBO', the study estimates that approximately one-third of organizations within the non-profit sector can be defined as 'faith-based'. The report categorizes FBOs in Pakistan according to religious community, sub-dividing Muslim FBOs into madrasas; small, medium and large FBOs; the welfare wings of religious political parties; radical FBOs; and non-conventional FBOs. Amongst Christian FBOs, the report identifies organizations that are formally affiliated with the Catholic or Protestant churches, as well as others linked to international organizations. Finally it identifies a small number of FBOs associated with the minority religions, including Hindu, Parsi, Ahmadi and Ismaili organizations.⁵

As would be expected, the majority of FBOs in Pakistan are Muslim and the vast majority of these are madrasas. Other types of Muslim FBOs tend to focus on the provision of welfare services, in addition to religious activities. Christian FBOs are largely focused on education, although some also engage in

welfare and development-related activities. Finally, it is noted that FBOs affiliated with other minority religious communities, particularly Hindu and Parsi organizations, which historically played an important role, have significantly declined in recent years.

3.2 The role of religion in the charity and development sector

Building on the mapping exercise, further research focused on the role of religion in a variety of organizations involved in development-related activities related to poverty reduction in Karachi and Sindh (Kirmani and Zaidi, 2010, see also Policy brief 18). Case studies of six large philanthropic organizations were undertaken:

- the Al Khidmat network
- the Alamgir Welfare Trust
- the Saylani Welfare Trust
- the Edhi Foundation
- the Behbud Association
- Caritas.

They were selected on the basis of their religious orientation, sources of funding, programmatic and geographical scope, and prominence. The research looked at the nature and activities of the organizations, as well as their varying relationships with religion. They were then placed within the wider context of the development sector by comparing them with four 'professional development organizations' (non-governmental organizations self-consciously engaged in 'development'), for which religion has no apparent role.

The main difference between the organizations studied relates to their source of funding, with some relying on local, individual sources of funding and some on institutional, national and international donors. The former, especially those that rely on religious donations, tend to focus on welfare and service delivery, with some also delivering 'religious services'. The four professional development organizations, in contrast, are largely funded by institutional donors and are focused on the achievement of long-term development goals such as social mobilization and empowerment, particularly of marginalized groups, and poverty reduction. All of the latter prioritize long-term development over immediate welfare, and none mention religion as being relevant in any aspect of

their work. Furthermore, the study found that there is little or no dialogue between charities and professional development organizations.

The findings confirm that 'FBO' is a problematic category in the Pakistani context, showing that religion operates in complex and varied ways within organizations. Religion is sometimes explicit but more often implicit in the values and functioning of Pakistani organizations that are charitable in nature, with the exception of minority religious organizations, which make their religious identity explicit because of the hegemonic status of Islam in Pakistan. In contrast, organizations that frame themselves as being part of the 'development sector' are generally non-religious or secular in nature. Caritas, which has links with the Catholic Church internationally and has been strongly influenced by its development discourse, is a partial exception.

Hence, the study finds that while religion often plays an important role in charitable giving and activities that respond to immediate needs and partially fill social service gaps, it does not play an explicit role in most organizations working on long-term development.

The findings indicate that in any organizational analysis, religion is one variable amongst many, including the social makeup of an organization, the political and ideological profiles of its members, its position within national and international networks, and its funding sources, all of which influence the identity and activities of organizations.

3.3 Values and beliefs and ideas about development in religious and non-religious organizations

Religious values and beliefs are important influences on individuals. It is likely that they shape people's interpretations of key development concepts, such as wealth, poverty and gender, and their attitudes towards common and sometimes controversial development tools intended to tackle poverty and inequality, such as microcredit and measures to improve girls' access to education. This research used a semi-ethnographic approach to study the links between people's religious beliefs and their ideas about aspects of development. It was conducted in Lahore and Peshawar amongst members, followers and students in various religious organizations. The research team also interviewed members of non-religious civil society organizations to assess whether their views on key

development concepts differ from those of people affiliated to religious organizations (Saigol and Ihsan, 2009).

The findings demonstrate that poverty is widely perceived as being material in nature, but some respondents affiliated to religious organizations also mentioned spiritual, intellectual and cultural aspects of poverty. Reasons put forward for the persistence of poverty included failures of the prevailing economic and political system and the lack of an 'Islamic system', with members of religious organizations emphasizing the latter. The main area of agreement between members of religious and secular organizations was a belief that US imperialism is one of the major causes of poverty in Pakistan, although the dynamics and symptoms of this imperialism were understood differently by the two groups. The main difference between the views of people associated with religious and non-religious organizations was the lack of religious explanations or proposed solutions for poverty offered by the latter.

Microcredit was generally viewed unfavourably by members of both religious and non-religious organizations, who see it as exploitative in nature. However, members of religious organizations emphasized the Islamic injunction against interest when voicing their opposition to microcredit, while members of non-religious organizations focused on the perception that it is both unfair and ineffective in alleviating poverty.

Women's education received universal approval, even in more religiously and socially conservative Peshawar. However, ideas varied as to what kind of education women should receive, depending on the religious orientation and gender of the respondent. Members of religious organizations, particularly male members, tended to emphasize the provision of education based on distinctive gender roles, with women's education geared towards the study of subjects expected to strengthen their ability to raise a family, including the study of Islam and 'domestic sciences'. Members of secular organizations, in contrast, stressed the importance of co-education and good quality education for all, rejecting the need for women to study domestic science.

3.4 The role of madrasas in girls' education

As noted above, the number of madrasas in Pakistan has increased in recent years. In particular, the number of female madrasas has grown since the 1970s. A related study analyzed this trend, arguing that it reflects both demand from families, in response to decreasing educational and employment opportunities for girls, and a proactive response by the Islamic educational establishment to fill the gap (Bano, 2010).⁶

Conventional explanations for the growth of female madrasas attribute it to poverty and a lack of other educational options. Bano concludes that these explanations are inadequate, as many recently established madrasas provide education for girls (16+) who have already completed a secular education and most charge fees that are comparable to private, secular schools. Rather, she argues, parental decisions to send their daughters to madrasas are a response to the combination of increased aspirations amongst young women and anxieties triggered by globalization, which have led to a desire amongst many middle income groups to preserve what are perceived as traditional cultural values. People's sense of insecurity is heightened by the lack of available employment opportunities for young women from middle income families. This is leading to an increased reliance on the education provided by informal institutions such as madrasas, which is thought to improve the prospects of young women achieving social and economic security.

Findings from interviews with principals and teachers, members of the *wafaqs* (Muslim education boards), parents and students in female madrasas demonstrate that the Islamic education provided by female madrasas is regarded as complementary to rather than a substitute for secular education. Madrasas are perceived by both parents and daughters as encouraging piety and 'family-oriented values', such as being a good Muslim wife, daughter, and mother, and thus are seen as increasing family stability and girls' marriage prospects. Furthermore, a madrasa education can provide young women, especially those from remote areas, with useful social contacts and increased social status in their communities on their return. In addition, it can provide women from middle income families with increased earning opportunities as religious teachers in their own communities. Hence, the study attributes the increased reliance on informal religious institutions to heightened day-to-day anxieties triggered by modernization, combined with a lack of economic opportunities.

3.5 A religious political party's welfare work

The Jama'at-i-Islami is the largest and most influential religious political party in Pakistan. It has an extensive welfare wing, which was investigated in a study that explored the nature and purpose of its welfare-related work, asking why the party places such emphasis on providing services compared to other political parties in Pakistan (Bano, 2009).⁷

The Jama'at-i-Islami in Pakistan operates a wide range of specialized and multi-sectoral welfare and service delivery organizations. These undertake a range of charitable, welfare and service provision activities, including healthcare, education, emergency relief, water supply and orphan support. While there is a nominal charge for most services, users are generally willing to pay because of the perceived quality of the services provided. The party's ability to operate such a large network is attributed to its well organized structure, as well as its strong resource base. Furthermore, services can be provided at relatively low cost because the networks are comprised of voluntary organizations, which rely on managers who are party members and many volunteers rather than paid staff.

Bano argues that its engagement in the provision of welfare services demonstrates the party's commitment to its religious ideology, and especially to social justice, to its members, helping to foster cooperation and commitment amongst them, rather than being directly used as a means of gaining voter support during elections.

Implications of the findings from several studies of the role of religion in the nature and activities of non-state organizations include:

- *The term faith-based organization should generally be avoided in the Pakistan context because it is associated with radical religious organizations with extreme views.*
- *As well as their relationships with religion, voluntary organizations can be distinguished by whether their activities are charitable and welfare oriented or aimed at socio-economic transformation and long term development and their sources of funding.*
- *A broad distinction between local charities with philanthropic aims and professional development organizations is more appropriate than one between faith-based and non-religious organizations.*
- *Religious and non-religious organizations and their members both support education for girls, as do their parents, but their views on the purpose and content of schooling for girls and boys differ.*
- *Development partners' decisions about whether and how to engage with voluntary organizations must be made on a case-by-case basis, based on an understanding of individual organizations and their context – a general preference for those that are religiously inspired is not appropriate, any more than it is for secular NGOs.*

4 Conclusion: emerging themes and areas for future research

4.1 Emerging themes

Although the studies presented in this paper deal with different questions, several overlapping themes can be identified. These relate both to the relationships between the state and religion and the role of religion in non-state institutions involved in development.

Firstly, several studies highlight the strategic cooptation of religious discourses and actors by the state historically and point to the harmful impact this has had on the country's development. Waseem and Mufti (2009) demonstrate the state's increasing efforts to manage and control religious ideologies and institutions, in order to manipulate them to serve its own interests. This, they argue, had a detrimental effect, particularly on the rights of women and minorities. Bano's (2007) study of the limited implementation of the 2002 Madrasa Reform Programme, which has promoted the teaching of non-religious subjects in madrasas, also analyzes the state's relationship with religious institutions. She finds that government attempts to direct and streamline the workings of religious institutions, in this case madrasas, have largely failed because of poor mutual understanding between the state and religious establishments. At the same time, the state's attempts to co-opt religion have actually contributed to strengthening the symbolic and political power of certain religious actors and institutions.

These studies reveal the intertwined nature of religious discourses and actors and the state apparatus. Several studies highlight the alliances between religious actors and the state, particularly during the period of Zia-ul-Haq's rule (see Waseem and Mufti, 2009). The dangers are highlighted in the study of the sectarian conflicts in Jhang and Gilgit, where the state's involvement in Gilgit in particular and its lack of careful management of the violence in Jhang have stoked the flames of sectarian conflict. While the violence has subsided in recent years, the state's lack of a proactive strategy to promote peace and its failure to act in an impartial and balanced manner leaves the wounds of conflict open (Waseem, 2010).

Studies of the relationships between religious actors and both the state and non-state sectors religion reveal low levels of trust between all the actors concerned. Waseem and Mufti (2009) argue that the state is unable to control religious institutions, which remain powerful. Bano's (2007) study of the Madrasa Reform Programme also demonstrates mutual mistrust, which has blocked efforts to reform

madrassa curricula. Furthermore, many of the studies of non-state organizations highlight the mutual mistrust between organizations that identify themselves as 'religious' and those that identify themselves as 'secular' or non-religious (Kirmani and Zaidi, 2010; Saigol and Ihsan, 2009). The research highlights the divisions that exist in Pakistan between both state and non-state actors which are perceived as 'religious' and 'secular' and the difficulties of bridging these divides.

At the same time, some strategic alliance-building takes place between actors on both sides of the religious/secular divide, particularly between the state and religious actors. Waseem and Mufti's (2009) study of the MMA demonstrates that the initial success of this coalition can be attributed to its anti-American rhetoric and criticism of the Musharraf government, although it strategically cooperated with external donors and the central government once in power. Similarly, Bano's (2007) research identifies limited partnerships between some madrasa leaders and members of the *ulema* and the government. However, such partnerships were not found to exist between religious and secular organizations, between which there was very little dialogue or interaction (Kirmani and Zaidi, 2010; Saigol and Ihsan, 2009).

Research on non-state actors also highlighted some common themes. First, several studies pointed to the problematic nature of the term 'faith-based organization' in Pakistan. Iqbal and Siddiqui (2008) and Kirmani and Zaidi (2010) point out that it is difficult to identify an organization as 'faith-based' because religion is implicit in many organizations, particularly those engaged in charitable activities. Furthermore, many organizations prefer not to be labelled 'faith-based' because of the negative connotations this term has accrued in recent years. Many organizations do not identify themselves as either 'religious' or 'secular', although religion may inform their activities, motivations and sources of funding. In contrast, the status of organizations associated with religious minorities is less ambiguous because of their exceptional status.

There are, however, sharp divisions between self-identified religious and secular organizations in terms of their approaches to development, their ideological foundations, their motivations, their attitudes about social issues, especially gender, the types of activities in which they are engaged and their funding sources. First, those organizations that identify themselves as 'religious' are generally engaged in education and welfare activities rather than advocacy, long-term development, or peace-

building. This may be partially attributable to their reliance on religious forms of charity, such as *zakat*, the uses of which are clearly stipulated in the religious texts. This was demonstrated in several studies (Bano, 2007; Iqbal and Siddiqui, 2008; Kirmani and Zaidi, 2010; Saigol and Ihsan, 2009; Waseem, 2010). Professional development organizations, in contrast, claim that they are secular and are more likely to engage in long-term development activities, advocacy and women's empowerment. These organizations generally do not rely on religious forms of funding and are more likely to receive institutional support from international donor agencies (Kirmani and Zaidi, 2010). Saigol and Ihsan's (2009) research also reveals differences between the analyses of and proposed solutions for poverty advanced by members of religious and secular organizations in Lahore and Peshawar.

However, there are some commonalities between religious and secular organizations engaged in development activities. Firstly, while the approaches they adopt may be different in terms of whether they focus on welfare or long-term development, they all aim to alleviate poverty and improve society according to their respective visions, and most stress the importance of education in this process (Kirmani and Zaidi, 2010; Saigol and Ihsan, 2009). Furthermore, they all serve to fill gaps in the provision of social welfare by the state (Iqbal and Siddiqui, 2008; Kirmani and Zaidi, 2010). As well, many of the organizations are critical of the Pakistani state's management of development issues and of U.S. involvement in Pakistan (Saigol and Ihsan, 2009). Hence, while there may be differences in the understandings and approaches of religious and secular organizations, there is general agreement about the need to alleviate and address the causes of poverty, along with a critique of the state.

4.2 Areas for further research

The research conducted by the RaD programme in Pakistan has begun to answer some questions about the links between religion and a range of development-related issues, but much remains to be done. Many of the studies highlight the steady Islamization of the state and society in Pakistan, but there is a need to take this analysis further, to understand how this process has impacted on various aspects of society including gender relations, the position of religious minorities and the growth of religious extremism.

Many studies mention the passage of the Hudood Ordinances and their negative impact on women's rights. However, there is a need to look more deeply at the ways in which the state's co-optation of

religion has affected women in different contexts and to move beyond the level of the state. Shaheed (2010, p 851), for example, argues that the operation of gendered power structures cannot be fully understood by focusing on the state:

The interface of religion, politics and gender illustrates the impossibility of separating out the realms of the social from the political, the public from the private, for everyday life is not neatly packaged into self-contained spaces but flows freely, affecting different dimensions simultaneously.

Therefore, particularly in regard to gender dynamics, but also in terms of the operation of power in general, it is essential to move beyond a focus on the state and civil society institutions in order to understand the impact of religion on everyday life.

The question of religious minorities was explored by several studies, particularly the analysis of sectarian conflict in Gilgit and Jhang. Iqbal and Siddiqui (2008) and Kirmani and Zaidi (2010) also draw attention to the decline of religious organizations associated with minority religious communities, in particular Parsi and Hindu organizations. However, there is a need for more systematic research on the impact of Islamization on various religious minorities, both Muslim and non-Muslim, in terms of their access to the resources necessary to achieve wellbeing and broader development goals. This is particularly relevant in the light of the recent controversy over the reform of the blasphemy laws, which have frequently been used to target members of religious minorities (see Malik, 2002).⁸ There is also a need to understand the changing relationships between members of various religious communities as a result of the increasing polarization caused by Islamization and to explore the implications for the achievement of development-related goals, particularly for marginalized groups.

Finally, several studies highlight the growth of Islamic extremism in Pakistan, particularly since the Afghan War. Apart from creating a general situation of insecurity and fear in the country, religious extremism has had a harmful impact on the rights of women and minorities, has led to a growth in sectarian conflict, and has contributed to an atmosphere of mistrust between state and non-state actors and between religious and secular organizations. However, more research is necessary to understand the impact of growing religious extremism on the achievement of development goals, in terms of the allocation of state resources, the operation of development organizations, and access to resources by marginalized groups. Finally, little is known about how Islamist groups, many of which have been involved in activities such as humanitarian relief and education, envision 'development'.

Notes

- ¹ All published working papers, with short summaries, can be downloaded from <http://www.religionsanddevelopment.org/index.php?section=47>
- ² Conferences and policy workshops held in Pakistan:
Religion and Politics in South Asia (24-25 April, 2008, Lahore)
The Madrasa Reform Programme in Pakistan (9th October, 2008, Islamabad)
http://www.religionsanddevelopment.org/files/resourcesmodule/@random454f80f60b3f4/1237552979_madrasa_reform.pdf
Religion, Politics and Society in Pakistan (11-12th February, 2010, Lahore)
http://www.religionsanddevelopment.org/files/resourcesmodule/@random454f80f60b3f4/1272442598_Pak_conf_Feb_10_report.pdf
The Role of Faith in the Non-profit Sector in Pakistan (28th April, 2010, Karachi)
http://www.religionsanddevelopment.org/files/resourcesmodule/@random454f80f60b3f4/1274707838_Karachi_Seminar_Report_April_2010.pdf
Policy Implications, Formulation and Implementation (13th May, 2010, Islamabad)
http://www.religionsanddevelopment.org/files/resourcesmodule/@random454f80f60b3f4/1288780999_RaD_Islambad_workshop_13_May_2010.pdf
- ³ The numbers of madrasas and enrolment figures are uncertain and contested (Bano, 2008). Net school enrolment rates at primary and secondary levels were only 66 per cent and 33 per cent respectively in 2008 http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/TableViewer/document.aspx?ReportId=121&IF_Language=eng&BR_Country=5860
- ⁴ For example, the growth in girls' enrolment in madrasas, given the low school attendance rates of girls in Pakistan (60 per cent nationally, compared to 72 per cent for boys in 2008), especially in rural areas (see also Bano, 2010 and below).
- ⁵ Ahmadis and Ismailis are Muslim sects, but because in Pakistan these are generally considered to be 'minority communities', the report includes them in this category. Islamic FBOs refer mainly to Sunni and Shia organizations.
- ⁶ This study was carried out by a researcher participating in the Religions and Development Research Programme, and its results published as a working paper, although it was separately funded.
- ⁷ The study also examines the Jama'at-i-Islami in Bangladesh and its welfare wing, identifying and explaining the similarities and differences between activities and organizational arrangements adopted by the two parties (Bano, 2009).
- ⁸ This occurred most recently in the case of Asia Bibi, a Christian woman who was sentenced to death in December 2010 in rural Punjab for allegedly insulting the Prophet. Her case sparked a national controversy that is continuing. It has already resulted in the assassination of the governor of Punjab, Salman Taseer (in January 2011) and the Minister of Minority Affairs, Shahbaz Bhatti (in March 2011), who both spoke publicly in defence of Asia Bibi and in favour of reforming the blasphemy laws.

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All the Religions and Development Working Papers can be downloaded from

<http://www.religionsanddevelopment.org/index.php?section=47>

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Appendix 1

List of research projects

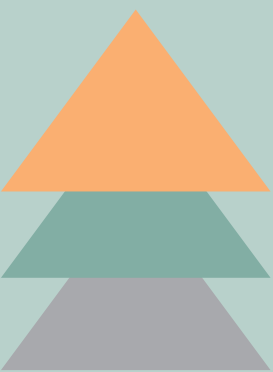
- 1 Religions, politics and governance
Main researchers: Mohammad Waseem, Mariam Mufti, LUMS
- 2 Faith-based service providers and their changing relationships with the state
Researcher: Masooda Bano, Wolfson College, University of Oxford
- 3 The role of faith communities in conflict transformation and long-term development
Main researcher: Mohammad Waseem, LUMS
- 4 Relationships between religious values and development concepts and practices
Main researchers: Rubina Saigol, independent researcher; Fatimah Ihsan, Quaid-i-Azam University
- 5 Mapping the terrain: the activities of faith-based organizations in development
Asif Iqbal, Saima Siddiqui, Social Policy Development Centre
- 6 The development activities, values and performance of faith-based organizations and non-governmental organizations
Main researchers: Nida Kirmani, Research Fellow, International Development Department, University of Birmingham; Sarah Zaidi, independent researcher

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