

Working with Faith- Based Actors for Sustainable Development

Martha Kapazoglou & Yannicke Goris

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

PHASE 1

KEY INSIGHTS ON
WORKING WITH
RELIGIOUS
ACTORS



PHASE 2:

FINDING THE
STORIES AND
LEARNING FROM
PRACTICE



PHASE 3:

FROM
KNOWLEDGE TO
PRACTICE

GUIDING QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

What are the features distinguishing faith-based development organizations (FBO) from secular organizations?

What are the obstacles, real or perceived, hindering faith-secular collaboration?

What is the added value of working with FBOs for sustainable development and what are the opportunities for increased cooperation?

MAIN FINDINGS

3 elements distinguish FBOs from their secular counterparts:

1. Holistic approach
2. Strong connection with local faith actors
3. Alternative sources of funding

MAIN FINDINGS

Barriers to faith-secular collaboration:

- Biases and prejudices play an important role in keeping barriers to effective collaboration in place
- FBOs are often pigeon-holed to work on issues of freedom of religion and health-care
- FBOs may be a repressive and restrictive force with regards to sensitive issues, but this is not necessarily the case.
- The assumption that FBOs' development activities entail a proselytising element should be critically reviewed

MAIN FINDINGS

Added value:

1. Greater trust and legitimacy
2. Access to alternative networks, resources and infrastructure.

Opportunities for increased collaboration:

1. Religious-sensitive and context specific development programming
2. FBOs can constitute a bridging function between secular organizations and local communities

REFLECTIONS ON THE PROJECT

- Challenges:
 - Safeguarding independence & neutrality
 - Addressing sensitive topics
 - Our own assumptions regarding FBOs
- What we learned (content):
 - Great variety in FBOs and their representatives
 - Biases both ways
 - Openness/willingness as well as reluctance/ignorance are present

Q&A SESSION

Contract information: martha@thebrokeronline.eu