BUILDING MORE EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND FAITH GROUPS

CONTENTS

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The contents of this report have been drawn from 40 interviews with senior development professionals held during February and March 2015. A small number of members of faith-based organisations (FBOs) also took part. The exercise was commissioned by the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities[1] (JLIF&LC) to understand the key opportunities and challenges that could be addressed through the forthcoming conference on public sector partnering with FBOs. The conference will take place on 8th and 9th July 2015 in Washington, DC and will be co-hosted by the World Bank Group, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in collaboration with JLIF&LC and others.

The goals of the conference are to:

- *Connect frontline policymakers to knowledge, experience, research, methods and experts to support more effective partnerships with faith groups*

- *Develop specific recommendations for actions to strengthen effective partnerships between the public sector and faith groups*

- *Obtain leadership commitment to follow on activities, including country working groups, recommended next steps, information exchange and working meetings.*

The key themes that have emerged are reflected in the design of the conference itself, which provides a forum to bring together a diverse group of leaders to work on these issues and to develop ideas and corresponding actionable recommendations.

[1] www.jliflc.com

DEFINITIONS, CAVEATS AND LIMITATIONS

This paper uses the terms "faith groups" and "faith communities" expansively for entities that are self-defined by common religiously informed profession (faith) and practice (ethics and/or worship), their leaders and congregational and community infrastructures, as well as for faith-linked healthcare providers and NGOs. The term "FBOs" is used interchangeably with faith groups. While this paper argues for fuller partnerships between faith groups and public sector entities, it does not suggest that all faith groups are interested in such partnerships, or that all would be effective partners.

By "public sector" we refer to bodies charged under rule of law with governance of society at international, national, regional and local levels. Our focus is this – usually secular – public sector, especially as it concerns public health and health services provision. Yet we recognise that states can also be faith-based institutions guided by religious law. For the purpose of this report with its unavoidable over-simplification, when we refer to the public sector, we focus on governmental agencies operating for the benefit of public health or broader goals of well-being and promoting public good.

The examples in this report stem primarily from partnerships with Christian and Muslim groups, as these still make up the majority of formal partnerships with multi-lateral donors, and so were most accessible to be explored through interviews.

This report focuses on partnerships between multilateral and bilateral donors, including, for example, the World Bank and national governments as well as local faith-based groups.

The findings are derived from a limited sample of 40 interviews, drawn largely from development Policymakers in public sector institutions. They will therefore reflect the experiences and biases of that population. The interviews include both HQ and regional or field office leaders and focus primarily on Africa and Asia, and to a lesser extent on the Middle East and Latin America.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FBOs are widely recognised as a positive force in development and humanitarian relief, and there are many instances of successful partnerships. However, international development organisations and governments do not always know how best to engage with FBOs, or how to do so in a consistent manner. This report describes the opportunities and some of the key challenges to building more effective partnerships between government, development organisations and FBOs. Based on these findings, we recommend the following next steps:

1) Develop a practical framework for deciding when it is most effective to partner with FBOs

2) Where a partnership is likely to be beneficial, identify shared values and encourage dialogue and understanding by increasing faith and development knowledge (e.g., through training)

3) Address some of the structural challenges of forming partnerships between the public sector and what is often a fragmented landscape of FBOs

4) Learn from efforts to develop partnerships and monitor the impact to create a stronger evidence base for what works

1

PARTNERSHIPS WITH FBOS MAKE
VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT
AND HUMANITARIAN PROJECTS

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Development professionals have been debating whether to engage with FBOs, and how best to do so, for many years. Although sceptics remain, interviews point to a consensus that engagement and partnerships positively contribute to furthering development goals and delivering humanitarian services in crisis situations. In particular, partnerships are assumed to have the following benefits:

- Leveraging the reach, access and trust enjoyed by FBOs

- Recognising the important role of FBOs in service delivery, advocacy and behavioural change – and utilising it

- Addressing funding and innovation challenges faced by FBOs

Interviews consistently highlighted that religious groups are valued for their reach, access and trust. For example, in Myanmar, in the midst of conflict between Buddhist and Christian groups, members of religious groups have relative freedom of movement and can access otherwise isolated groups. In Lebanon, UNHCR was struggling to identify Syrian refugees, as there were no camps in which they could congregate. Consequently, they worked with faith groups to identify people in need and provide support. Particularly where foreign organisations are regarded with suspicion, organisations that have deep roots in local communities enjoy significantly more trust than international development organisations.

These findings are consistent with those of the Devex 2014 Development Influencers Survey, conducted in conjunction with Lutheran World Relief, drawing on insights from nearly 1,000 development professionals. The survey found that FBOs are viewed positively for their impact focus and genuine care. In comparison with non-faith-based actors, they are perceived as being more responsive to the needs of beneficiaries and to have greater ability to associate with local networks.

FBOs play a prominent role in service delivery, advocacy and influence on attitude and behavioural change, making them valuable partners. Faith groups play a significant part in delivering health and education services in particular. Indeed, the proportion of health services delivered by FBOs nationally is thought to be as high as 50% in Zambia and 80% in DRC. Local faith groups also stand out for their longevity: many have been providing services for many years, regardless of swings in national or international agendas. In humanitarian crises in particular, faith groups are typically the first on the ground and the last to leave (if they leave at all).

Religious groups play a critical role in advocacy as they get a lot of attention from their congregations or communities. Recognising this, UNICEF sensitised religious leaders in Iran to child rights and child abuse to encourage them to take a clearer stand on violence against children.

FBOS PLAY A PROMINENT ROLE IN SERVICE DELIVERY, ADVOCACY AND INFLUENCE ON ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE, MAKING THEM VALUABLE PARTNERS. FAITH GROUPS PLAY A SIGNIFICANT PART IN DELIVERING HEALTH AND EDUCATION SERVICES IN PARTICULAR.

POLICYMAKERS ARE WELL AWARE OF THE NEGATIVE IMPACT THAT FAITH GROUPS CAN HAVE ON DEVELOPMENT GOALS (E.G., VACCINE REFUSAL, SUPPORT OF FGM), AND OF THE RESULTING CHALLENGES TO PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAITH GROUPS.

Religious groups are particularly effective in bringing about behavioural change through their ability to link developmental interventions to underlying values and beliefs. Behaviours are driven by motivations, thoughts and feelings and ultimately by underlying values and beliefs. Thus, faith leaders, who have strong moral authority and credibility when speaking about beliefs, can strongly influence values in a population. For example, in Somalia and Ethiopia, UNFPA worked with Muslim leaders to address early marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM), recognising the high regard in which religious leaders are held.

Despite numerous examples of partnerships, the impact of these collaborations is often not well understood or documented.

Partnering with development organisations can address funding and innovation challenges faced by FBOs. The findings of the Devex Survey suggested that FBOs are not generally viewed as innovative or thought leaders. Partnering with large development players could address this concern by either giving them access to technical expertise and new approaches to work or simply by addressing a perception gap. In parallel, the increasing secularisation across donor countries is putting pressure on traditional sources of funding, driving some FBOs to search for alternative sources. Well-resourced development agencies can be a part of this funding structure.

Policymakers are well aware of the negative impact that faith groups can have on development goals (e.g., vaccine refusal, support of FGM), and of the resulting challenges to partnerships with faith groups.

Development policymakers for the most part value the potential of faith assets to accelerate the achievement of development goals, but they also identify challenges to partnerships and are keen to explore ways to collaborate more effectively.

2

DESPITE GREATER COLLABORATION BEING WIDELY CONSIDERED AS DESIRABLE, IT IS ONLY HAPPENING ON A LIMITED BASIS BECAUSE OF PERCEIVED AND REAL CHALLENGES

CHAPTER SUMMARY

There are numerous examples of successful partnerships between international development organisations and FBOs. However, given that collaborating with FBOs is widely acknowledged as being helpful, it is perhaps surprising that such partnerships are still rather rare. Interviews highlighted four reasons for this:

1. There is no defined set of criteria outlining when partnerships between development organisations and FBOs are most appropriate and likely to deliver most value.

2. Lack of knowledge and understanding hinders greater engagement and negatively affects attitudes towards partnerships at FBOs and international development organisations.

3. There are structural challenges to large international bodies partnering and cooperating with small, local groups.

4. There is a lack of evidence regarding the impact of working with FBOs.

1) There is no defined set of criteria outlining when partnerships between development organisations and FBOs are most appropriate and likely to deliver most value

Different people choose to set different parameters. For example, it is only worth partnering for programmes requiring behavioural change, or in situations where a government's effectiveness is limited, but there is no generally agreed framework for such engagements. The implication is that currently partnerships are highly dependent on individual leaders; either strong supporters who drive them forward or indeed sceptics who might block them, without a clear methodology for defining when it is appropriate to use partnerships.

2) Lack of knowledge and understanding hinders greater engagement and negatively affects attitudes towards partnerships at FBOs and international development organisations

Although development organisations and faith groups often agree on goals for poverty alleviation – and the well-being of communities – they have very different missions and modi operandi. For example, development organisations regard the reduction of extreme poverty as primarily an economic objective. Faith groups, by contrast, interpret this "bias for the poor" as a social, spiritual and community objective. Hence, there is a need to broaden definitions of goals in recognition of the multiple factors influencing people's lives and behaviours.

Acute awareness of areas of discord between development organisations and faith groups (e.g., contraception, attitudes towards FGM, concerns about proselytising) results in the thinking that finding a common ground for dialogue will be impossible. Thus, limited understanding on the part of staff at public sector bodies of the views or objections of religious groups can hinder a productive discussion about collaboration. Similarly, a lack of insight into the work of development organisations on the part of faith groups means they cannot develop joint programme plans.

This lack of knowledge and understanding influences attitudes on both sides of a potential partnership: development organisations are frustrated by the perceived lack of rigour in programme management on the part of FBOs. FBOs, on the other hand, feel that development organisations apply a very narrow definition of impact and success. This means that development partners continue to make plans without involving FBOs, only using them as delivery organisations or contractors rather than true partners. This reinforces the attitude across FBOs that development partners wish to leverage the assets of religious groups (networks and trust) to further their own objectives, which are often not aligned with the core values of the FBOs. FBOs may also feel distrustful

of development organisations because despite their local knowledge and reach, they are sometimes treated as "second-class citizens" by the development partners. For example, in Jordan, some Muslim groups who had worked with international NGOs complained of being treated as incompetent. And in some cases, when they followed the NGOs' strategy, it was rejected by the community and they lost credibility and trust.

3) There are structural challenges to large international bodies attempting to cooperate with diverse small, local faith groups

Governments and large institutions naturally seek large organisations – like themselves – with which to partner to deliver great impact on a large scale, often believing they will achieve economies of scale and greater consistency. However, faith groups generally consist of many local entities and communities. Advocates of partnering with FBOs would say that the small scale and local roots are the very source of the dynamism and influence of local faith groups, and that trying to consolidate or aggregate them (e.g., regionally or nationally) could put the benefit of a cooperation at risk.

This structural mismatch presents a challenge in working together. In addition, government departments and international organisations tend to have narrow programmatic remits with a broad geographic coverage, such as focusing on a specific issue (e.g., malaria or HIV) across an entire region or country. This contrasts with the holistic remit and narrow geographic coverage of faith groups. Consequently, faith groups need to partner with multiple development organisations to match the breadth of their scope, whilst international development organisations need to collaborate with multiple local faith groups to achieve their national objectives. This can cause considerable transaction costs and makes partnerships difficult and costly to establish.
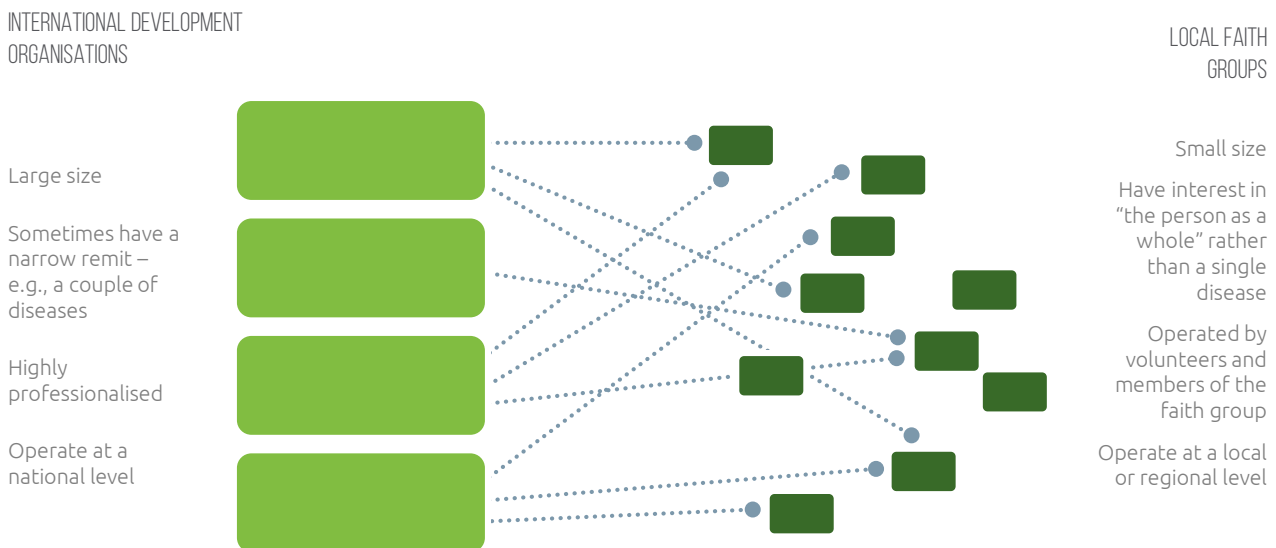
GOVERNMENTS AND LARGE INSTITUTIONS NATURALLY SEEK LARGE ORGANISATIONS – LIKE THEMSELVES – WITH WHICH TO PARTNER TO DELIVER GREAT IMPACT ON A LARGE SCALE, OFTEN BELIEVING THAT THEY WILL ACHIEVE ECONOMIES OF SCALE AND GREATER CONSISTENCY.

FAITH GROUPS NEED TO PARTNER WITH MULTIPLE DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS TO MATCH THE BREADTH OF THEIR SCOPE, WHILST INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS NEED TO COLLABORATE WITH MULTIPLE LOCAL FAITH GROUPS TO ACHIEVE THEIR NATIONAL OBJECTIVES.

These high transaction costs can lead to development partners deciding to partner only with those local FBOs that have the lowest transaction costs, rather than with those that have the greatest reach of services. For example, in Amman, Jordan, 28 local faith-based organisations were suitable for a potential partnership with development agencies. However, development partners only worked with the two largest organisations, which had the poorest reach but were the easiest to work with. Furthermore, development partners usually opt to administer fewer but larger grants rather than manage the many small grants that would be necessary to work with FBOs. Although some large FBOs such as Catholic Relief Services have the capacity to handle large grants and sub-grants to smaller groups, the minimum grant size is typically too high for most FBOs to be received.

Figure 1 illustrates the high transaction costs resulting from fragmentation.

Figure 1

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS

Large size

Sometimes have a narrow remit – e.g., a couple of diseases

Highly professionalised

Operate at a national level

LOCAL FAITH GROUPS

Small size

Have interest in "the person as a whole" rather than a single disease

Operated by volunteers and members of the faith group

Operate at a local or regional level

An additional challenge exists in the contracting agreements between faith groups and the public sector. Government subsidies and agreements with faith groups often take the form of non-binding MoUs, and there is a history of parties breaking agreements without consequence. Due to this, faith groups may perceive partnerships with the public sector as unstable or untrustworthy. On the other hand, FBOs are hesitant to enter into legally binding contracts with the public sector because they are uncertain of their ability to meet the terms of performance-based contracts.

Finally, by virtue of their small scale, faith groups will typically lack support staff such as accountants and project managers. The voluntary nature of faith networks in particular means they lack the professional skills expected by development organisations. This affects the ability of faith groups to provide the accountability and transparency that development organisations and governments expect.

4) There is a lack of evidence regarding the impact of working with FBOs

Lack of evidence is often cited as a barrier to embarking on partnerships. In fact, many people say that a broad and growing evidence base does exist across organisations, and that the challenges are more on dissemination, communication as well as the nature and quality of the evidence.

With regard to dissemination, many organisations, including UNHCR, UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNFPA, World Vision and Tearfund, have captured their experiences of working with faith groups. However, sharing these more broadly within the public sector is not yet the norm. JLIF&LC was established to help address this, plugging the knowledge gap and improving the quality and consistency of the evidence of impact.

The nature of the evidence gathered presents a tougher problem. Governments and development institutions have a preference for focusing on interventions where impact can be easily measured (e.g., the number of children immunised or the number of schools built). Topics with a direct link between cause and effect are favoured at the expense of subtler interventions which may have a multiplicity of influencing factors. This is at odds with the evidence faith groups can generate, which will typically be more qualitative. This means that results will be harder to attribute and to measure, in part because the objective of their work is more complex (e.g., strengthening community cohesion, influencing attitudes and behaviours).

3

THERE ARE FOUR ACTIONS WHICH COULD BE
TAKEN TO SUPPORT MORE EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS
BETWEEN THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND FAITH GROUPS

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The four challenges highlighted in the previous chapter can be addressed through the following set of actions and mechanisms:

1. Develop a practical framework for deciding when it is most effective to partner with FBOs

2. Where a partnership is likely to be beneficial, identify shared values and encourage dialogue as well as understanding by increasing faith and development knowledge (e.g., through training)

3. Address some of the structural challenges of forming partnerships between the public sector and what is often a fragmented landscape of FBOs

4. Learn from efforts to develop partnerships and monitor impact

1) Develop a practical framework for deciding when it is most effective to partner with faith groups

Having an agreed approach for determining whether a partnership is appropriate in a given situation will enable development organisations and FBOs alike to focus their efforts on areas that will deliver the greatest benefit. Figure 2 illustrates a framework which could be applied to support decision-making in these areas. The framework has four tests of suitability:

- *Need for behavioural change at scale*

- *Need for service delivery through a local network*

- *Appropriate level of engagement*

- *Appropriate parties to the partnership*

Such a framework would be adapted to any given organisation and must draw on expertise at both country level and internationally. It should also build on existing staff guidance regarding collaboration with faith groups.

HAVING AN AGREED APPROACH FOR DETERMINING WHETHER A PARTNERSHIP IS APPROPRIATE IN A GIVEN SITUATION WILL ENABLE DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS AND FBOS ALIKE TO FOCUS THEIR EFFORTS ON AREAS THAT WILL DELIVER THE GREATEST BENEFIT.

Figure 2
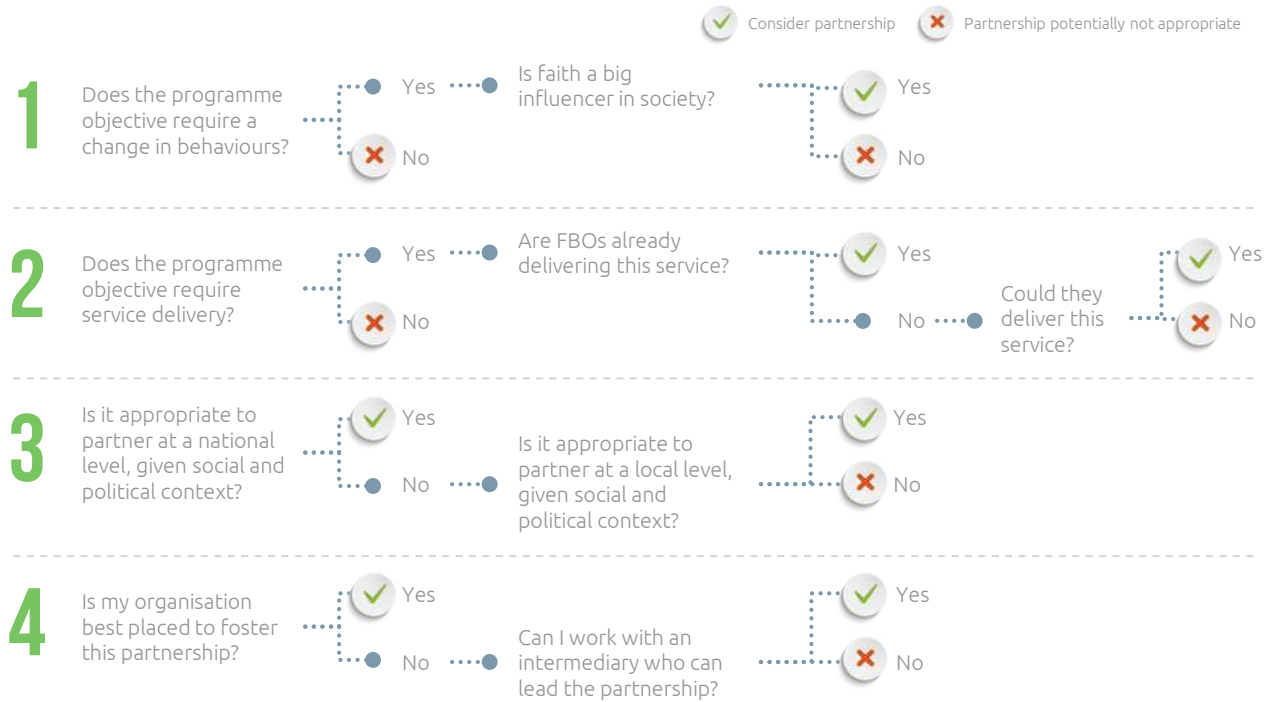
- *If a programme requires behavioural change or changes based on beliefs: in this case, FBOs are uniquely positioned to drive this given their authority and influence on underlying beliefs and values.*

- *If the programme requires service delivery – e.g., providing refuge and food distribution in a humanitarian crisis, or providing health services: here it is efficient to use what is already established, which may be a faith network. This is more difficult where there is limited government infrastructure and therefore fewer alternatives to working with FBOs.*

- *Appropriateness of engagement: whilst in some countries, working with religious organisations would in fact be expected (e.g., in many Latin American countries), in others, it would be inappropriate. A proper understanding of the context, the public role of religious leaders and the potential risks of engagement is essential in deciding whether to partner.*

- *Appropriateness of development organisations as leader of a partnership: in cases where development organisations are poorly regarded or seen as an extended arm of "Western imperialism" by the public, partnering directly with religious organisations or faith groups can be challenging. Working with a third party to drive the partnership might be a solution.*

Based on these ideas, the simple flow diagram below shows how a practical framework and decision guide might be developed.

2) Where a partnership is likely to be beneficial, identify shared values and encourage dialogue as well as understanding by increasing faith and development knowledge (e.g., through training)

Finding common ground between potential partners is an essential first step towards effective cooperation. A lack of insight into what drives the other party can lead to a breakdown in understanding. Being open and explicit about the values of each organisation is therefore critical. Clear articulation of values will enable FBOs, faith groups and development organisations to identify common ground, or at least some mutual benefit, which can then form the basis for developing partnerships. Even where there is no apparent overlap, it can still be beneficial to take account of the faith context, provided that it is explicitly agreed how partners will act.

Once values are clear, it is necessary to promote dialogue, a common language and mutual understanding. This was the intention of UNHCR's document Welcoming the Stranger – Affirmation of Faith Leaders. FBOs need to understand how development partners operate, what their key goals are and how programmes and projects are set up and run. FBOs also need to understand the importance of reporting impact and evidence back to funding organisations and the general public in a meaningful way. This may require the FBOs to accept and adopt a different "currency" of impact.

Development agencies need to be literate in understanding the foundational beliefs which underpin a religion and how those have been interpreted into rules and customs for daily living. Agencies should also know that, in some cases, practices that appear to be core to a religious faith are in fact cultural practices that have not been derived from religion but are nonetheless handed down over generations. These beliefs and customs form the fabric of society and guide people's behaviour. For example, UNFPA in Kenya has engaged Muslim religious leaders on the issue of family planning. The agency has facilitated a dialogue among religious leaders to understand population management as a development agenda, but also to demystify misconceptions on family planning and Islam. Culture and religion are intertwined in a complex way, and one cannot expect the disentanglement to happen quickly. Relationships of trust must be built, and appropriate religious authorities must be engaged to challenge religious justifications while recognising that those authorities will differ from case to case.

The dialogue should continue beyond the implementation and results monitoring and faith groups should be involved in the creation of solutions to ensure local organisations are influencing the development of solutions to local issues. In religious communities, local religious values should be integrated into the development, framing and messaging of a development project.

HOW THIS HAS BEEN ACHIEVED

Establishing shared values

- *UNFPA in Kenya identified protecting the well-being of mothers as an area of common ground with local religious groups. They began working together on a joint programme with the objective of reducing maternal mortality. Contributing factors to maternal mortality, such as FGM and SGBV, were not explicitly part of the common ground between UNFPA and local religious groups. Recognising this potential for friction, UNFPA provided an evidence base for the impact of these practices on maternal mortality to increase awareness of the issue among religious leaders and sparking a debate within the religious community – without promoting a specific viewpoint.*

- *UNAIDs, working in the Middle East, has managed to build relationships between religious leaders and governments to promote a health strategy by focusing on the common value of the individual's health rather than the cause of the disease.*

Creating a dialogue

- *UNHCR developed a staff training programme that included religious leaders. The programme focused on sharing perspectives on issues such as human rights from both the UN point of view and the religious point of view. The aim was to improve cooperation between UNHCR and faith actors.*

Developing projects from local religious values

- *Islamic Relief appreciates the importance of religious narrative in driving behaviour change. In an effort to promote health-seeking behaviour around HIV – as well as to address gender relations – Islamic Relief drew from its understanding of Islamic values to focus the message on married women getting HIV because their husbands are unfaithful, rather on adolescents and young adults contracting HIV out of wedlock.*

- *Islamic Relief has also attempted to address climate change using Islamic values. Foreign NGOs had been trying for years to teach farmers conservation methods. However, these were based on scientific principles which the farmers could not relate to. The Eco-Islam initiative drew on the Koran to promote water conservation, which helped farmers adopt new methods.*

3) Address some of the structural challenges of forming partnerships between the public sector and what is oftena fragmented landscape of FBOs

The small scale and fragmented nature of local faith organisations is the very attribute that makes them valuable partners. This can therefore be considered either an obstacle or an opportunity for impact. Development organisations can improve their working relationships with dispersed, fragmented religious groups by taking ownership of the challenge and putting solutions in place. For example, development players could support the creation of faith alliances at national and regional level, thereby reducing the complexity of the interfaces that development organisations need to deal with, and the associated transaction costs. An alliance brings together leaders from different faith groups and denominations to address a broad range of development challenges together. It effectively transfers the ownership of solving the interaction problem from the donor to the beneficiary and therefore aligns incentives.

Local faith communities should be engaged in more self-planned, small-scale projects in contrast to developing pre-planned projects externally and then finding local partners with capacity to implement. FBOs and religious leaders should be brought to the table and involved in planning and development from the beginning or as early as possible. Projects that have been driven locally by the FBO and religious communities and are technically/financially supported by the development partners are generally very successful. Development partners, FBOs and religious leaders can start by looking at their shared values and decide on development objectives together.

DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS CAN IMPROVE THEIR WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH DISPERSED, FRAGMENTED RELIGIOUS GROUPS BY TAKING OWNERSHIP OF THE CHALLENGE AND PUTTING SOLUTIONS IN PLACE. FOR EXAMPLE, DEVELOPMENT PLAYERS COULD SUPPORT THE CREATION OF FAITH ALLIANCES AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL, THEREBY REDUCING THE COMPLEXITY OF THE INTERFACES THAT DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS NEED TO DEAL WITH, AND THE ASSOCIATED TRANSACTION COSTS. AN ALLIANCE BRINGS TOGETHER LEADERS FROM DIFFERENT FAITH GROUPS AND DENOMINATIONS TO ADDRESS A BROAD RANGE OF DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES TOGETHER.

HOW THIS HAS BEEN ACHIEVED

Strengthening financing and accountability mechanisms

- *Recognising concerns of development organisations around delivery and efficiency, IMA engaged in performance-based contracts with the Ministry of Health of Southern Sudan and the World Bank subcontracting the delivery of health services to approximately 200 health institutions, including hospitals and health centres. The performance-based contract had 5% of fees at risk, which translated into bonuses for health facility staff. This approach provided incentives for monitoring and reporting activities and defined clear accountability for delivery of contracts.*

- *Contracts between governments and FBOs often take the form of non-binding MoUs that are often broken with no legal consequence. Advocacy for legal contacts between faith groups and governments could be a solution for strengthening the accountability to commitments. However, it should be noted that faith groups can be reluctant to enter into legal contracts as they are uncertain of their ability to fulfill the terms of performance-based contracts. This is partially a result of another structural challenge of FBOs: poor accounting mechanisms.*

- *Minimum grant sizes of development partners are currently too high for most FBOs to be eligible. As a consequence, USAID works with FBOs by donating to larger organisations, which can then sub-grant to FBOs.*

Local ownership of projects by FBOs and religious communities

- *In Ethiopia, UNFPA recognized that both political and traditional power was held by the orthodox leaders. UNFPA worked with archbishops to create a "Development Bible" containing messages on development issues that the clergy could incorporate into their daily sermons, such as gender issues, sexual and reproductive health, and HIV. The Bible was developed by the bishops themselves as part of a community conversation. UNFPA did not initiate the implementation of the Bible, but was instead driven by the local agenda and facilitated the development of the Bible.*

- *In Madagascar and Burundi, UNFPA worked with the development arm of the Catholic Church to fund clinics. The religious leaders were invited into the programme design phase where content and strategies were explained to them. They were also involved in the assessment of implementation partners, based on criteria of capacity and reach.*

"FAITH GROUPS SOMETIMES SAY THEY WOULD BE HAPPIER WITH LESS MONEY BUT WITH THE FREEDOM TO DECIDE HOW TO SPEND IT"

—Perspective from an FBO

Mapping and accessing faith partners, local faith leader and congregation networks and faith-based service providers

- *The coordinated UN response to Ebola in Sierra Leone encountered early delays in implementing response plans due to a lack of transparency in services delivered by FBOs across the country. Before the UN could engage with faith groups, a mapping exercise of local faith networks was necessary to identify how they could be mobilised to help fight the epidemic.*

Strengthening existing faith-based coordinating bodies (e.g., Christian Health Associations) and scaling up multireligious coordination mechanisms

- *The Nigerian Inter-Faith Action Alliance (NIFAA), the largest collaboration between Christian and Muslim leaders on a public health issue, was set up with support from the World Bank and is active in bed net delivery. It effectively created an extensive distribution network by turning a problem (fragmentation) into an asset (scale and local delivery). Once established, this alliance was expanding the scope of service delivery to include additional interventions such as immunisation or HIV/AIDS treatment.*

- *To support them in their battle against vaccination rejection, UNICEF in Pakistan supported the convening of an International Islamic Conference. The conference brought together a broad range of religious leaders to develop a religious edict on immunisation. UNICEF then worked through the International Islamic University in Islamabad to engage religious leaders and madrassas at a more local level to address their concerns about immunisation (e.g., mistrust of polio campaign teams, lack of clarity on the composition of vaccines).*

4) Learn from efforts to develop partnerships and monitor impact

Evidence of impact is needed as a basis for trust in building relationships with governments and development agencies. This needs to be a clear task of the partnership with defined measures, collection and reporting methods. Impact monitoring should include the best of approaches from both development organisations and FBOs. Development organisations have significant expertise in collating data-driven evidence of impact on specific parameters (e.g., number of children immunised). FBOs tend to take a broader view of their impact, taking into consideration social cohesion, acquisition of values and holistic well-being. These parameters require more qualitative approaches to monitoring impact, such as surveying or ethnographic studies, and they rely on tools such as participatory data collection. However, these are often underutilised as multilateral donors tend to prefer quantitative data.

HOW THIS HAS BEEN ACHIEVED

Strengthening the evidence framework to guide policy and practice on what works in partnerships between the public sector and faith groups

USAID in Nigeria ran a youth programme aimed at bringing together young people of different religions through basketball. The effect of the programme was observed when two of the communities involved were attacked: participants in the programme refused to engage in violence, which helped de-escalate the situation. This example demonstrates that even the impact of relatively simple programmes can be both profound and hard to measure, but just because something is hard to measure does not mean it is not worth doing. Difficulty in measuring activities and outcomes should not deter governments and development organisations from engaging in complex activities.

DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS HAVE SIGNIFICANT EXPERTISE IN COLLATING DATA-DRIVEN EVIDENCE OF IMPACT ON SPECIFIC PARAMETERS (E.G., NUMBER OF CHILDREN IMMUNISED).
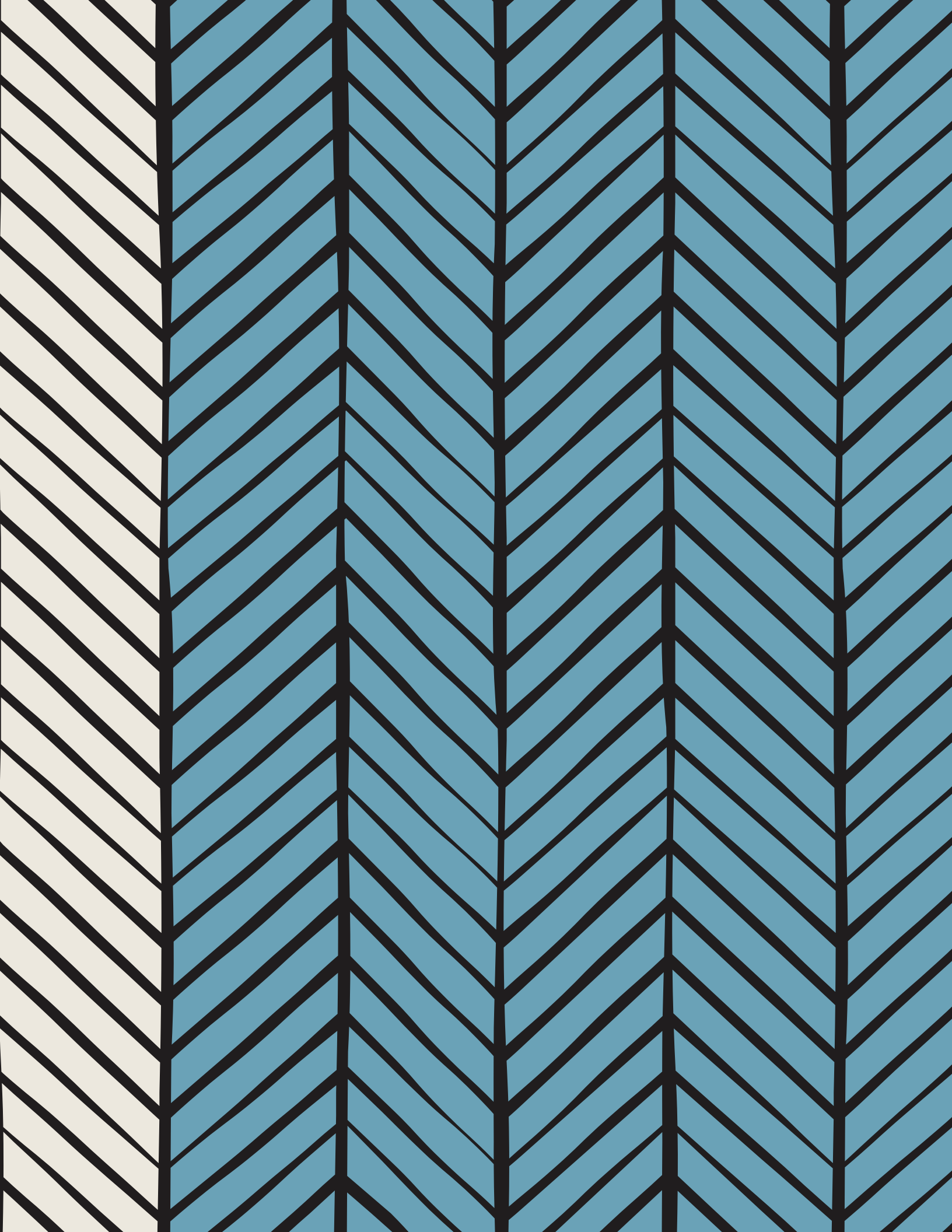
CONCLUSION

Four key actions have emerged, which development organisations should pursue. A coherent and consistent methodology will have significant impact on furthering development goals, including:

- *Ensuring partnerships are used where they have the greatest impact*

- *Improving understanding of local issues on the part of development organisations (applicable to work beyond faith-related matters)*

- *Increasing sustainability of programmes by ensuring local support and ownership*

- *Enhancing the effectiveness of existing structures (e.g., health delivery structures)*

- *Improving evidence collection and joint learning from initiatives implemented across multiple contexts.*

Where collaboration has been used effectively, the results have been dramatic. It is hoped that by further embracing partnerships, development agencies can accelerate the achievement of their development goals, improving lives and well-being for all affected.
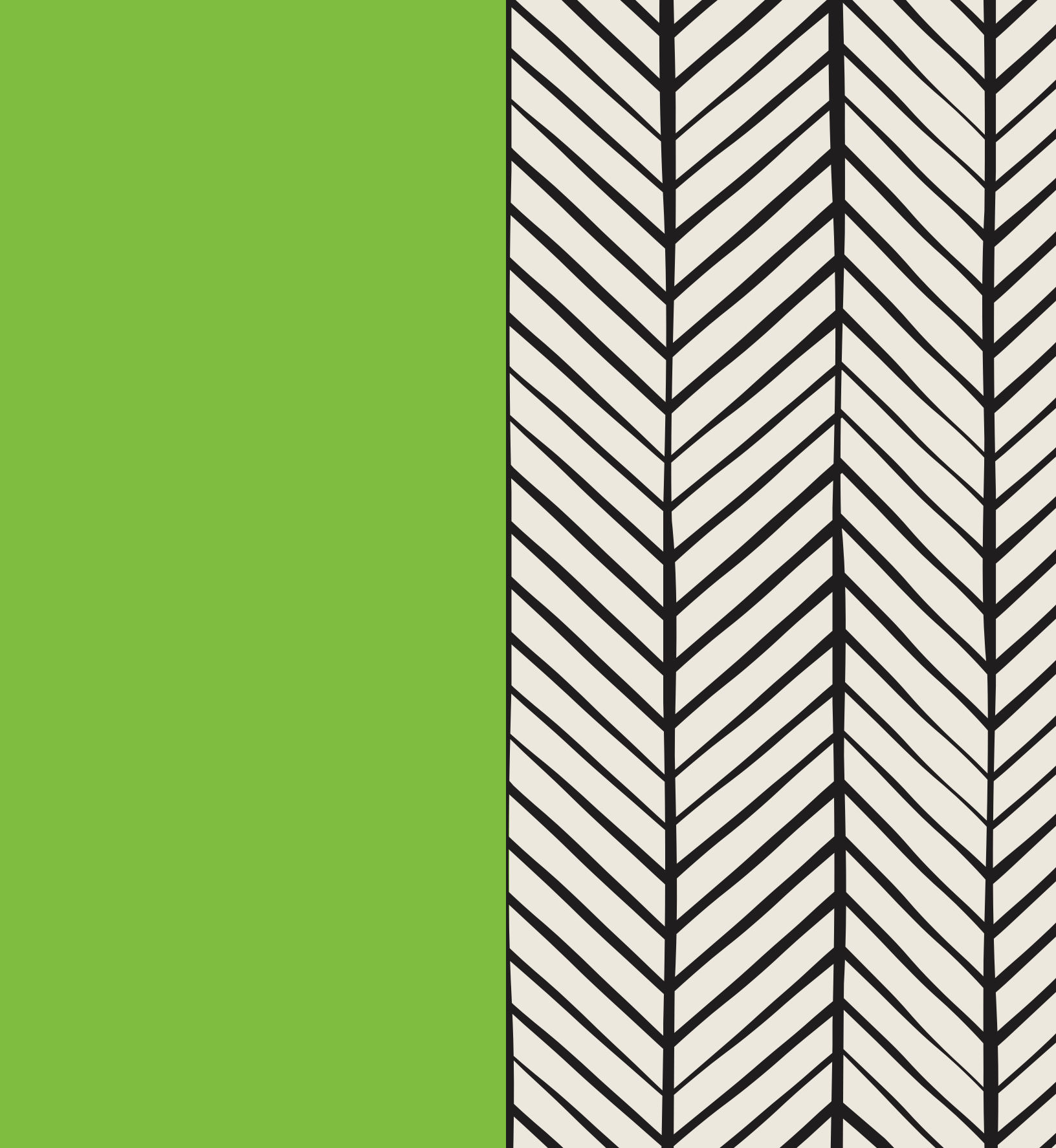
IMPLICATIONS FOR JULY CONFERENCE

The purpose of this effort was to inform the design of the JLI F&LC/World Bank conference in July 2015. Based on the four key activities, the following challenges emerge which could be explored and developed further during the conference:

1. Framing the case: how can we create a common framework and methodology to identify when a faith-based partnership will be most valuable and why?

2. Values and understanding: how can we get better at – and more open to – finding common ground in values and beliefs, and how can we use that to deliver better outcomes?

3. Complexity: how do we resolve the structural challenge of interacting with what are often complex, small and diverse faith communities, and whose problem is it to solve?

4. Evidence: how do we increase the quality and dissemination of evidence? How can we better understand the contribution of local faith groups and FBOs to community development?

LIST OF ORGANISATIONS WITH WHICH INTERVIEWEES ARE AFFILIATED

- Anglican Alliance
- Berkley Center at Georgetown University
- German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
- Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health
- Department for International Development (DFID), UK
- Episcopal Relief & Development
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
- International Ministerial Association
- International Care Ministries
- Islamic Relief Worldwide
- Presbyterian Mission Agency
- Salvation Army World Service Office (SAWSO)
- Tearfund
- UN SOE Health-related MDG
- UNAIDS
- UNFPA
- UNHCR
- UNICEF
- US Department of State
- USAID
- Wake Forest University
- World Bank