

## **Redressing the balance of civil society discourse in the context of Bangladesh: an Islamic perspective**

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### **Key research questions, hypotheses and methods**

(i) to pursue a debate about ideas surrounding the concept of civil society in poverty alleviation and welfare strategies from within a global perspective whilst complementing the discussion by looking more closely at specific local manifestations of that debate in the context of Bangladesh; (ii) to challenge the development arena and its current measures for the promotion of civil society within a development policy network where multiple international and local actors take part; (iii) to analyse the 'crowding out' effects of a predominantly secular development framework and practice on indigenous forms of associational life; and finally, (iv) to explore possibilities of Islamic forms of civil societies.

Related to the last objective, minimal fieldwork has been proposed mainly to provide micro-empirical data regarding the emergence of a more institutional form of an Islamic welfare system in Bangladesh, based on community models resourced by Islamic charitable giving. I will rely on my current 'key informants' to gain access to the project areas, undertake semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and analyse secondary quantitative and qualitative data.

### **Relation to the programme**

Overall this research relates to strand C of the NGPA programme as it analyses well-established ideas on civil society within global development processes and attempts to redress the balance by arguing that Islamic sources can also make powerful and positive contributions to development discourse and practice in a welfarist, non-governmental action term. More specifically it locates itself within the more specified targeted area of 'Religion and NGPA: Impacts and Conceptions of Different Faith-Based NGPA'.

### **Relevance of this research to user groups**

Aside from academics, specific set of users of this research would be non-governmental organisations (secular and faith-based) as well as bilateral and multilateral donor agencies concerned primarily with poverty alleviation and welfare strategies.

### **Contact**

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