Engaging development theory and practice with religious traditions

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Structure

- Beyond the case for engagement
- The questions of on what, how, when, with whom and with what to engage
- Focus on the how
- Insights from Sen’s capability approach
- Methods of engagement: Case studies from CAFOD
- Implications for FBOs in the UK
Does the case for engagement still need to be made?

*Development* is value-laden, and *religions* contribute to defining what constitutes ‘good’ social change.

Religions matter in many people’s lives, and this should be taken into account as part of respecting people’s values.
Director of UNFPA ‘argued repeatedly that social change in such highly personal and culture-specific areas as family planning and women’s rights was tightly tied to religion, and engagement with religious leadership and communities was therefore essential.’ (p. 130)

Pragmatic approach

‘Considering actual cases puts us on the spot in a way that abstract discussions of philosophical positions do not. It forces us to inspect our ethical values. And it forces us to consider what actions we ought to take. [...] Reflecting on actual cases of capability deficiencies may lead us to political conclusions.’

From Sayer, Andrew (2011), Why things matter to People: Social sciences, values and ethical life, CUP, p. 239
Key questions

- When?
- With whom?
- With what?
- How?
How?

- Methodology
- Dialogue
- Public reasoning
Experience from Colombia
(prophetic and radical)
Experience from Ethiopia
(reformist and gradual)
Experience from teachings

- Catholic Social Teaching enriches capability approach
- Capability approach enriches Catholic Social Teaching
Implications for FBOs in the UK

- Awareness
- Politics
- Energy
- Economics
- Lifestyles
- Spirituality
- Aid
- “Bilingualism”