About the 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. Between 2005 and 2010 the partners are undertaking a series of comparative research projects that address the following questions:

- How do religions 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 will provide knowledge and tools to enable dialogue between development partners and contribute to the achievement of development goals.

Aims of the Research Programme
The ultimate purpose of the research is to benefit poor people in developing countries. Our role as researchers in the programme 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.

Focus Countries & Partner Organisations Involved in the Programme
Research for the programme is being carried out primarily in four countries: India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Tanzania, with some work also being carried out in Bangladesh. The focus on these particular countries has 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 organisations, each of which has extensive links with policy makers, religious organisations and civil society groups. The partners will work with other researchers in the focus countries.

- University of Birmingham, UK
  - International Development Department, School of Public Policy; 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 for Dalit Studies, New Delhi
- Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, Ibadan
We are also linked to Islamic Relief, especially its Policy and Research Unit, with whom we share two Research Associates. A joint activity, UK Muslim NGOs talking, is underway.

**Research Components Underway**
The research programme explores the main research questions through a series of research projects. These projects are inter-linked and are being carried out at various times throughout the life of the programme. Currently, the following projects are underway:

- Relationships between belief systems and concepts of well-being (coordinators Joe Devine and Sarah White, University of Bath)
- Religions, politics and governance (coordinators Gurharpal Singh and Insa Nolte)
- Faith communities and the development process in Nigeria and Tanzania (coordinator Michael Taylor)
- Mapping the activities of faith-based organisations (FBOs) in development (coordinators Emma Tomalin, University of Leeds, and Robert Leurs)
- Faith-based service providers and their relationships with the state (coordinators Richard Batley and Masooda Bano, Oxford University)
- Religion, ethics and attitudes towards corruption (coordinators Heather Marquette and Insa Nolte)
- Relationships between values, religious teaching & development concepts (coordinators Lynne Brydon and Tamsin Bradley, London Metropolitan University)
- Faith communities and international institutions (Josef Boehle)

**Research Components to Begin in the Near Future**
The following research projects will begin in the next few months:

- The role of faith communities in contemporary social movements
- The role of faith communities in conflict transformation & long term development

**Publications: RaD Working Paper Series**
A number of disciplinary literature reviews have been published and can be downloaded from the programme’s website (see below) or a hard copy can be ordered. Further disciplinary and country literature reviews will be published shortly.

**Future Events**
- We are planning a one day seminar in January 2008 – details will be available on the website and in the next newsletter.
• We are keen to arrange a **meeting with development NGOs** interested in the issues with which the programme is dealing and hope to convene a meeting to explore common interests, including research questions and findings, and outputs such as training materials. Interested participants, please contact us.

**Programme Website**
The programme has its own website, [www.rad.bham.ac.uk](http://www.rad.bham.ac.uk), which was launched in October 2006. Our website is regularly updated and includes announcements of upcoming events and related activities. Further information about the programme, its activities and partners can also be found there. Please also get in touch if you want to share any news of related events or if you would like to take part in future events run by the programme.