The added value of religion in poverty-to-work programs: A framework for analysis

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Abstract

What is the advantage of faith in faith-based poverty-to-work programs? My qualitative, field research sought to determine the key distinctions between faith-based and secular programs by comparing three faith-saturated programs with three secular programs: one
Participatory poverty work underlines the importance of vulnerability to economic, health, and personal shocks. So do the financial crises of the 1990s—not least in East Asia, the shining example of success in development and poverty reduction—and the sequence of devastating natural disasters. BRAZIL. That vulnerability can be addressed by community-based public work programs offering low-wage jobs and by unemployment insurance and assistance. The National Aid Fund (in charge of the government safety net) could identify other means of assistance by soliciting ideas from beneficiaries. What framework for action is needed to effectively reduce poverty in all its dimensions? National economic development is central to success in poverty reduction. To explore how the many possibilities could interact in decision making, the analysis synthesizes the disparate sources into a multi-dimensional decision-making framework depicted graphically as “the ethics landscape.” This framework shows differences in ethical decision making based on four bundles of variables, (cognitive development, grounding, normative basis, and saliency) across individuals, organizations, and situations. What is known or believed about moral values and behavioral norms is classified into six major sources in Table 1. These include: universals; cultural/social; rational, including analytic perspectives and cognitive processes; emotion and/or needs-based; religion; and professionalism and role. [Table 1 about here].