

UNDERSTANDING SOCIOLOGICAL ISSUES: CONCEPTUALIZING THE DIVERSITIES

EDITOR
DR. A.H.M. ZEHADUL KARIM

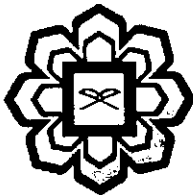
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Chapter 3

POVERTY, RESOURCE INEQUALITY AND GOVERNANCE IN THE MUSLIM WORLD: BUILDING BRIDGES ACROSS

Abdul-Mumin Abdulai

Abstract

The paper examines how successful poverty reduction in the individual Muslim countries can be improved by bridging the deepening poverty gaps among them. Using the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member countries as a proxy shows that many Muslim countries have been struggling to scale up livelihood opportunities for their people. Ironically this is happening in the midst of many others who are relatively better in sustaining livelihoods. Much attention needs to be drawn to the fact that the majority of the poverty-stricken Muslim countries lack certain essential resources (for instance, some essential natural resources, administrative acumen, technology, etc) to support their development needs. If that is true, then what responsibility is required of those member countries that are much better-off with vibrant economies and minimal poverty rates? This question is indicative of the need to work towards productive collaboration among these countries. In that light, the paper has addressed this pertinent question using largely secondary data. It has also proposed a multi-dimensional poverty reduction collaboration model, as part of a generic development collaboration octagon model (DeCOM).

Keywords: Resource inequality, Poverty, Governance, Muslim World, OIC, Collaboration, Octagon Model

INTRODUCTION

Poverty is basically taken to mean the lack of resources or the inability to maintain a minimal standard of living deemed humanly acceptable. In its multi-dimensionality, poverty in this chapter has been defined as “a state of economic, social, psychological [and political] deprivations occurring among people or countries lacking sufficient ownership, control of, or access to, resources to maintain minimal acceptable standard of living” (Chamhuri, et al., 2004 p. 2; Abdulai, 2010, p. 1). Poverty is abhorred in its totality because it is, in all probability, a dehumanizing phenomenon. It is an indictment on integrity and self-esteem. To a very large extent it is a root of many evil-doings in the society. In development context, poverty hampers full-fledge social