

● LATEST NEWS FROM THE FOUNDATION

Faith in the Marketplace?



The Tony Blair Faith Foundation, DFID, Islamic Relief, World Vision and Oxfam are working together in association with the RSA to host 6 groundbreaking seminars to discuss the new perspectives emerging on Faith and Development.



credit Amio Ascesion/World Vision

" Economics is too important to be left to economists" said Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams recently. The global recession has caused us all to reflect our current economic system and ask: Have our financial markets suffered from a lack of values? Can the solution to reforming these be found within the teachings of faith traditions?

Furthermore the global economic crisis is putting disproportionate pressure on the world's poorest: An estimated 55-90 million more people will be living in extreme poverty than anticipated before the crisis and there could be as much as a £2.9 billion shortfall in funding to tackle humanitarian crises in the world's poorest countries warns the UN in their Millennium Development Goals Report 09. In light of this can - and should - faith communities be putting the world's poorest and most vulnerable back on the agenda?



credit Hendro Suwito/World Vision

"Faith in the Marketplace?" took place on Wednesday 30 September. This seminar provided an opportunity for an open discussion around these key questions. Ken Costa, who has worked in investment banking for 30 years and is now Chairman of Lazard International and Tariq Ramadan, Professor of Islamic Studies at Oxford University gave key note addresses with Steve Chalke, founder of the Oasis Trust ,as chair and Reverend Giles Fraser Canon Chancellor, St Paul's Cathedral and John Reynolds Church of England Ethical Investment Advisory Group as discussants.

The next 4 seminars will explore the role faith communities play in conflict resolution, as healthcare and education service providers and as stewards of the environment. Douglas Alexander, Secretary of State for International Development, senior advisor to the World Bank Katherine Marshall and Joel Edwards, commissioner to the Equality and Human Rights Commission will be joining a prestigious line up of academics, development workers, journalists, and government, business and faith leaders. The series ends with a closing keynote from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams chaired by Rabbi David Rosen. We are incredibly excited to have such an inspirational line up discussing some of the huge questions facing policy makers as they grapple with an increasingly interconnected world. This debate is not taking place in the abstract but in front of the people carrying out these ideas on the ground and making policy in government and we hope will produce concrete outcomes.

The Guardian is hosting the discussion online on 'Comment is free: belief', where you can find edited versions of the speeches and lively discussion about them [click here](#) to become part of the debate.