Claiming civic space together with religious actors

How to engage religious actors

Our primary strategy recommendation is:

1. To engage with religious actors. This is a documented strategy to claim civic space. Leave no one behind.
2. Strengthening religious literacy as a professional competence in all humanitarian action and development cooperation:
3. Freedom of religion or belief literacy is needed:

To engage with religious actors. This is a documented strategy to claim civic space:
- Religious actors are a part of civil society and need to be included, not excluded.
- Religious actors are diverse and ambiguous. Some strongly support a justice agenda. Others don’t. But their profound influence on people’s values and action makes it necessary to engage with all.
- Religious actors exist under a different legal framework than other parts of Civil society in many countries. Faith actors are often among the last to be silenced and can provide protection for others. In other countries they are the ones discriminated and marginalized due to their religion.

Religious literacy is needed as a professional competence in all humanitarian action and development cooperation:
- State agencies need to assess religion and religious actors in context analysis. No new Danida program without including the role of religion in the context analysis.
- Civil society actors need to assess religion and religious actors in context analysis. No new CSO program without including the role of religion in the context analysis.
- Business sector needs to be skilled in ‘diversity management’ being able to include people of different religions, non-religious and beliefs.

Strengthening literacy on Freedom of thought, conscience and religion is also needed:
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion is the right that secures an open society where everyone can contribute based on their values.
- The right to freedom of religion or belief sets out a framework that protects people’s rights to have, hold or change their religion or belief.