The Poverty Alleviation System, the Role of NGOs and the Issues of Partnership: The Case of Yemen

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Publication: October
20 pages

In Yemen as in many other countries, the context of poverty alleviation has deeply changed in the recent years, especially since the country has engaged in structural adjustment reforms in 1995. A complete reorganisation of what is labelled “Social Safety Nets” is being implemented, involving a drastic reduction of subsidies and public expenses, and a growing role of other actors in poverty alleviation, in particular international organisations, local authorities and associations. The legal framework has been, or is being modified so as to fit the new requirements: the 1990 constitution markets provision for the freedom of association, a law on the status of associations is being discussed, and a decentralisation law has just been approved by the Parliament. The intervention of international organisations contributes to create a specialised field – poverty alleviation – endowed with its own justifications, discourses, logics, funding, institutions and specialised agents. In this context, the relationships between State and society for the purpose of poverty reduction appear as mediated, if not to a large extent determined by international organisations.

This paper will attempt to analyse the nature of these triangular relationships in the case of the Republic of Yemen, the stakes upon which they rest and the type of situation they generate as far as poverty alleviation is concerned.

Descriptors: Yemen, Poverty Alleviation, Social Participation, Central Government, Non-Governmental Organizations

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