

Faith in Action

***A study of holistic models care,
for highly disadvantaged people,
which have been established
in faith-based communities.***



**The final report from a Churchill Fellowship undertaken by
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the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and The Salvation Army**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Faith-based organisations right across the world are providing an invaluable role as social service providers with a capacity to reach and engage people significantly beyond that of government and private sector providers. In Australia, the vast majority of non-Government social welfare services are delivered by faith-based organisations, however there has been little local research into how the religious motivations of these organisations shape the character of service delivery.

This report brings together the experiences of staff and service users in almost 50 services across three countries: the US, UK and Kenya. It demonstrates that a critically important factor to the contribution of faith-based organisations is how the spiritual and religious dimensions shape the fundamental values and character of services provided. The capacity of social services to address spiritual issues which may be initiated by service users is an essential component that adds significantly to the range of benefits these organisations provide.

In addition to this, FBOs consistently demonstrated a number of characteristics which stemmed from an organisational orientation towards human values. These included ways of working with highly disadvantaged people that were more resilient, longer term and extended beyond the 'basics' to recognise the importance of 'quality of life' activities and experiences.

Furthermore, the life-changing and transformative potential which was seen in positive engagement with FBOs, was significantly enhanced when local faith communities were able to provide a network of support and care for socially isolated individuals. The combination of clinical and non-clinical care which was seen in the best examples of this allowed people a safe environment in which they could experience healing and wholeness. People also gained a vital sense of belonging and feeling valued when they were given the opportunity to make their own personal contributions to the lives of these communities.

Introduction

Studying holistic models of care, for highly disadvantaged people, which have been established in faith-based communities. An examination of the structures, features and benefits of social service networks which are directly connected to belonging communities of faith.

In Australia, the vast majority of non-Government social welfare services are delivered by faith-based organisations. As both State and Federal governments have increasingly divested the responsibility for the delivery of these services to non-government organisations, questions have arisen about the role and impact of religion in these services. Concerns about proselytisation of service users, equal access and discrimination in a multi-cultural and multi-faith society, as well as the constitutional separation of Church and State have heightened awareness of these issues. However, despite this situation, there has been comparatively little research to explore the various dimensions of this subject.

It is not difficult to find people associated with Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs) who will share a general sense and even perhaps some anecdotal evidence that FBOs have something distinctive and valuable to offer the social services sector. The purpose of this research has been to draw out some specific details about *what those distinctives are*; in what ways do FBOs offer a service that is different and how does the faith element of the organisation impact upon or shape the face of service delivery?

For the purposes of the current study, three different countries and three basic models of the relationship between faith and service were chosen. In the United States of America, Los Angeles, Washington DC and New York were chosen to represent different urban, political and cultural contexts. Most services visited in the US ran under a faith-based umbrella organisation, such as The Salvation Army or Catholic Charities, but were not necessarily directly connected to a particular faith community or local church.

Whilst the majority of services visited were Christian, which was representative of the relative frequency of structured social services amongst all faiths, Islamic and Jewish services also formed part of the research scope. Though the interfaith dimensions of this research were limited, they did serve to illustrate basic commonalities in the distinctives of FBOs across three of the major world faiths. As a member of a local Interfaith gathering, it is my experience that social justice and social welfare issues have regularly and positively presented common ground for Interfaith discussion and joint social action within communities that have a diverse cultural and religious composition. Furthermore, some of the basic theological presuppositions that act as motivators in the delivery of services to people in need have common roots across many of the mainstream faiths. Two key examples would be the idea that human beings reflect an aspect of divinity (for instance, in the Abrahamic religions we are created 'in the image of God') and the concept of the 'golden rule' (treat others as you would like to be treated yourself) which also exists across a number of religious traditions.

Before looking in detail at some of the distinctives which faith-based services share, it is important to address some common misconceptions about the operation of FBOs which were NOT supported by this research.

1. Despite frequent accusations from secular counterparts of proselytisation occurring in FBOs, there was no evidence that this was taking place in any of the services visited. Whilst undoubtedly this has happened in some places and times, it is far less common than people's fears would seem to suggest. Staff interviewed demonstrated a consistent awareness of professional boundaries and of the potential for misuse of power relationships in service contexts. In fact, in a few cases fear of crossing this boundary had led to overreactions in some services where removal of any spiritual or religious references probably diluted the positive impact of some of the FBO characteristics that we shall look at shortly. Where religious or spiritual activities were a part of the program, with only one exception, they were always emphasised as being a voluntary element and often service users were given a choice of interdenominational or interfaith options as well.

2. The level of professionalism within services was in no way diminished by the faith character of the organisation. Even where services had a distinct preference for employing staff with the same faith bias, professional qualifications and practical experience in the field were still primary in determining applicant suitability. One interviewee expressed this as "Just because we are part of the voluntary sector doesn't mean we are amateurs". In fact, the services visited consistently demonstrated the capacity to achieve the necessary standards for accreditation and licensing where this was required by legislation and a number of services had achieved or were pursuing accreditation above the standard required or where there was no legal requirement to do so because they believed that this would improve their service standards.

Pre-trip Survey

A survey was distributed to all participating services prior to visiting in order to gather some basic qualitative data from program staff. A copy of the survey questions with proportionally indicative responses is included as an appendix at the end of this document. Some of the initial findings included:

- 96% of respondents believe that there is a *qualitative* difference in services delivered by faith-based organisations
- 94% also say that faith-based organisations offer something significant for the more difficult service users – those with high and complex needs
- 87% believe that faith-based organisations are better able to take into account a holistic perspective of life
- 83% see faith-based organisations as primarily committed to serving the person, not just getting designated outcomes

Other themes that came through the survey were an appreciation of the values which directed FBOs and their long term commitment to working with people. Over 90% of program staff cited the faith-based character of the organisation as being an important factor in them seeking work there.

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

United States of America

Operating Context

Governmental Structures: In addition to vastly different cultural compositions, the social services contexts in different geographical areas in the US are variously impacted by at least 4 levels of Government (City, County, State and Federal). This can create significant distinctions from city to city, county to county and state to state. Furthermore, as these political contexts change and the climate for the homeless and vulnerable shifts, some people respond by moving to a more favourable local context which offers better social security benefits and a richer service mix for their needs. Unfortunately, this also encourages increased transience in the homeless population and destabilises their support networks.



Separation of Church and State: The issue of the Constitutional separation of Church and State has created palpable tension in many services. It is an issue that is regularly reflected in the media on television, radio and in the newspapers. In a notoriously litigious society, fear of legal ramifications has sometimes lead to kneejerk reactions which misinterpret the Constitutional intent. Every agency visited that received any level of Government funding was scrupulously careful to re-iterate that participation in religious or spiritual programs was entirely a voluntary matter for service users. Furthermore, some services had created a structural, sometimes physical, divide which meant that in certain places or with particular staff, if a client brought up spiritual issues they could not be addressed but were instead referred to another place or, if they existed, a staff member such as a chaplain or visiting pastor.

Economic considerations: For other reasons, whether they be higher levels of personal tithing in churches or more generous donations from the public, several FBOs had the capacity to run their own programs without any government funding at all - some with budgets over \$10m. This created far more flexibility with regard to religious content within the program, though in some cases these components were still optional for clients.

Adult Rehabilitation Centers (ARC) - Long Beach CA, Maryland/Washington DC, Manhattan NY

The Salvation Army has 119 Adult Rehabilitation Centers (ARCs) throughout the United States which provide a long-term, therapeutic program, primarily for people with drug and alcohol addictions. All programs have a variety of elements provided both internally and with external partners, with the dominant features being recovery, work therapy and spirituality.

The recovery program is 12-step based with a strong Christian flavour and includes both individual counselling and case management and groupwork. The ARCs are

typically linked to several second hand stores in the local area which, through their business, fully fund the work at the ARC, as well as sending additional money to the wider Salvation Army for other social programs. Working in the stores or the warehouse and truck fleet that supply the stores, as well as the kitchen and maintenance team that keep the ARC running make up the 40 hours work therapy required each week. All program components, including Chapel, devotions and Bible study are mandatory.

Aside from these common features, each of the ARCs was remarkably distinctive, likely due to differences in local cultures and management. Each center was managed by a Salvation Army officer with other staffing provided by a varying mix of social work professionals, student interns and volunteers, as well as people who had successfully completed the program themselves - some of whom continued to live on-site.



LOS ANGELES:

Alegria

The Salvation Army Alegria provides affordable housing and intensive support services for homeless and low-income families affected by HIV/AIDS. Alegria offers families 16 transitional living apartments, 28 townhouses for permanent housing, a licensed 65-place childcare facility and private outdoor playground. 24-hour staffing provides intensive services, including full meal services, transportation assistance, counselling, recreational and social activities, legal clinics, vocational services and adult education classes.

Working with a number of other Salvation Army programs and external partners, Alegria is able to provide a wide range of healthcare and support services to help people develop lifeskills and to live independently within a supportive community context without the stigma attached to HIV/AIDS diagnosis. The mission of Alegria is "to keep families together in health and in spirit".

Santa Fe Springs Transitional Living Center

The Salvation Army Santa Fe Springs Transitional Living Center (TLC) provides 24-hour comprehensive residential support services to 28 families (homeless women and their children), most of whom are victims of domestic violence and substance

abuse, with a capacity of 116 residents. TLC helps move families to permanent housing, increase their skill and income levels and achieve greater self-determination. At TLC, families receive residential care, literacy & job development services, General Education Diploma (GED) preparation, offsite vocational training, employment assistance, and case managed supports with counselling, 12-step groups, parenting education, life-skills classes and a licensed on-site childcare center.

The two-year program provides families with the tools they need to recover fully and achieve self-sufficiency through active participation and flexible but clear structures. Working together with local schools and government, businesses and other service providers, the TLC helps people to address their own physical, emotional, spiritual and financial needs as well as providing positive experiences through a range of community, recreational and cultural activities. A compulsory financial savings program builds up resources over the period of stay which also gives residents a useful headstart when they move on to independent living. Over 80% of TLC graduates find jobs averaging \$10/hour plus benefits and 90% move on to permanent, independent housing.

Bell Shelter

The Salvation Army Bell Shelter is located in a converted 40,000 square foot hangar southeast of downtown Los Angeles. Bell Shelter offers transitional care for up to 490 homeless men and women offering distinct programs for people with mental illness (including dual diagnoses), drug and alcohol addictions, veterans and people living with HIV/AIDS, including case management, vocational assistance, counselling, on-site health care & medical referrals, ESL classes, HIV/AIDS education, substance abuse recovery program, training in computers, GED and vocation specific courses as well as life skills classes. The goal of the program is to provide a one-stop solution to the homeless condition by addressing the problems and barriers that keep homeless men and women from achieving self-sufficiency.

Homeboy Industries

Homeboy Industries assists at-risk and former gang-involved youth through a range of community-based supports and services aimed at encouraging positive contributions to the community and instilling a sense of hope and future. Services include: Employment services (including external placement as well their own small businesses), legal assistance, education and training programs, tattoo removal, mental health counselling, an intensive post-incarceration release program and 12-step meetings.



Under the catchphrase 'Jobs not jails', Homeboy Industries runs a number of businesses aimed at giving vulnerable young people a safe, supportive work environment where they can learn practical jobskills and gain valuable on-the-job experience. The current suite of businesses include Homeboy Silkscreen and Embroidery, Homegirl Café and Homeboy Maintenance. A Homeboy Bakery and retail store are expected to open this year.

Catholic Charities of LA

Catholic Charities is one of the largest social service providers in Southern California. In the past year, the agency served over 242,000 people through emergency food and shelter services, low-cost before-and-after-school childcare, immigration and refugee assistance, counselling services, computer and jobs skills training, and other supportive services. All services are available regardless of a client's race, ethnicity, income, gender or religious belief.

Catholic Youth Organization (CYO)

CYO is an after-school and weekend athletic program for elementary and junior high schools throughout Los Angeles County. Currently 23,000 students from 168 different schools participate in CYO. The organization promotes and develops good sportsmanship, physical fitness, and ethical values. Numerous athletic activities are available through the program: football, basketball, track and field, volleyball for boys; football, basketball, volleyball, track and field, drill and cheer leading teams for girls.

Good Shepherd Center for Homeless Women and Children

The Good Shepherd Center assists 1,200 homeless women and children every year. Services include the entire spectrum of assistance from mobile outreach to women living in local parks, a drop-in center and emergency shelter to transitional and long-term housing. The Women's Village includes transitional housing for 30 women at the Hawkes Residence and 12 two-bedroom long-term apartments. A new extension of the site will provide an additional 21 one-bedroom transitional apartments as well as a job center for employment counselling, job placement and education services and a low-cost bakery serving the community and providing on-the-job training and experience.

WASHINGTON DC:

Harbor Light Center

The 136-bed Salvation Army Harbor Light Center provides government-certified and accredited residential, outpatient and transitional treatment programs for men and women struggling with drug and alcohol addiction. Treatment includes group and individual counselling, educational classes and vocational assistance.

Clients are primarily homeless, with limited or no access to other treatment programs, many have a dual diagnosis. Educational assistance along with classes such as relapse prevention, coping with grief and loss, money management and anger intervention/de-escalation prepare graduates for independence and meaningful employment. The extended 180 day program has a completion rate of up to 60% which has been shown to increase to 90% for those who choose the optional religious components.

Islamic American Zakat Foundation

The Islamic-American Zakat Foundation is a tax-exempt religious and charitable organization providing assistance with food, shelter, clothing, medical care and transportation for the poor and needy. Under Islamic law, Muslims have an obligation to purify their wealth by helping the poor and needy and others in special

circumstances. The Foundation was founded to further this aim by assessing, collecting and distributing obligatory and voluntary charity called zakat and sadaqa.

Whilst the primary objective is to serve poor and needy Muslims in the United States, eligible non-Muslims are also helped and some aid is sent abroad to help poor or needy orphans and other children. This has meant that activities have included helping the homeless in the Washington DC area, as well as ensuring that people in difficult circumstances are able to pay their rent and keep their utilities on and aiding the victims of natural disasters and manmade atrocities around the world.

The Foundation works closely with local faith communities (primarily mosques but also occasionally churches) to ensure that appropriate assessment, referral and follow up are able to take place on an individual basis.

Sojourners - Call to Renewal

Sojourners' mission is to articulate the biblical call to social justice, inspiring hope and building a movement to transform individuals, communities, the church, and the world.

Though not a direct service provider, Sojourners role as a public and political advocate demonstrates the significant part which faith-based organisations can play in the wider community. Working closely with organisations that have a presence 'on the ground' both locally and internationally, Sojourners represents a vital capacity to bring issues affecting the most disadvantaged and vulnerable members of society to both public and political attention.

Church of the Saviour - Christ House, Kairos House



Christ House is a 33-bed healthcare facility where homeless men and women may stay as long as their illness requires, getting plenty of rest, nutritious meals, 24-hour medical care and social services. The program evolved out of the recognition that there were significant numbers of people who were leaving hospitals that are homeless and without a place to stay while they recovered from their illness or injury.

The Kairos program is a next step after Christ House which provides a permanent home in a supportive community context for 37 formerly homeless men with chronic illnesses. As with Christ House, the men have 24-hour access to medical care. An expansion next year will offer an additional 15 places to the program.

The Salvation Army National Capital District Social Services

In addition to providing emergency assistance for rent, food, utility bills, clothing, furniture and transportation, the National Capital Social Services works in partnership with local businesses to run an annual coat drive which allows them to give out free coats and jackets over winter, and a Thanksgiving feast and job fair for thousands of needy district residents. At Christmas time, toys, clothing, food baskets and financial aid are distributed to families in need.

The Grate Patrol is a homeless outreach program that brings an evening meal with professional care and referral advice to over 3,000 people every month. The program runs 365 days a year.

Turning Point

The Turning Point Center for women and children seeks to break the cycle of chronic homelessness and joblessness for single mothers and their children. Families may stay up to two years in safe, furnished apartments while gaining the skills to become self sufficient.

Services including case management, crisis intervention, individual and family counselling, advocacy, and independent living skills classes prepare them for the road ahead.

East of the River Initiative

The Salvation Army East of the River Initiative (ERI) currently provides a range of emergency relief services including emergency food, food packs for children and older adults, access to a fuel fund for those who are in danger of having their utilities cut off and financial assistance to help out with rent/mortgage payments in emergency.

A new Community Center building represents the shared vision of The Salvation Army in consultation with a number of community stakeholders and will offer an even wider range of services including a licensed childcare facility, workforce skill development opportunities, a health and wellness center, meeting space for community activities as well as worship and retail space.

NEW YORK:

Queens Outreach Project

The Salvation Army Street Outreach Project works with up to 500 people each day in Queens, Brooklyn and lower Manhattan. An extensive bus run visits locations known to be frequented by homeless and vulnerable people, many of them illegal immigrants with no income support. In addition to food parcels, the workers from the Outreach Project also engage in assessment, referral and individual counselling.

When needed, they can arrange for transportation and escort homeless persons to support-based facilities including placement into shelters, detoxification, medical or drop-in center facilities. In addition, a bilingual paralegal visits sites to counsel illegal immigrants, conduct assessment and make referrals to local trustworthy law offices when requested.

Borden Avenue Veterans Residence

The Salvation Army Borden Avenue Veterans Residence (BAVR) is a shelter specifically for homeless veterans, who are disproportionately represented amongst the homeless in the US (up to one third of the single male homeless population). BAVR operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, is designed to house 410 men and has a service staff of 117. BAVR's drug and alcohol treatment program,

combined with a strong employment program, networking with local businesses and community groups and The Salvation Army's wide array of resources has made significant inroads in breaking the cycle of homelessness for many men.

Services provided include: Case Management, Employment Services, Sobriety Support Services (AA/NA Meetings), Clean & Sober Club, Medical and Mental Health support services, Financial Management, Housing Referral and Relocation Assistance, Individual and Family Counselling, Recreational Activities and Chaplaincy Services.



Briarwood and Bushwick Family Residences

As transitional housing programs, The Salvation Army's Briarwood and Bushwick Family Residences provide the resources and expertise to assist families in their quest for independent living. Programs are offered for parenting skills, budgeting, education and job training. Access to mental health services as well as recovery services for drug and alcohol abuse and domestic violence are also available. A medical office houses a team of nurses, dentists and a paediatrician.

The shelters provide specific programs to residents including child care/education, permanent housing assistance and recreation activities. They plan programming to meet the specific needs of children, adults and the families as a whole. Chaplains provide both practical and spiritual supports for individuals and for families, helping people to transition into belonging communities.

One of the goals of the programs is to provide a pleasant, safe and well-maintained environment that encourages families to use the available social service programs. This is achieved through a number of successful partnerships with local non-profit, government and corporate agencies.

Harlem Temple Corps

The Salvation Army Harlem Temple Corps is building a positive sense of community in Harlem, New York through the provision of a variety of programs aimed at youth and families. Youth sporting and recreational activities are complemented by parenting and vocational education and training classes for adults. Day Camps over the holidays provide opportunities for fun and social engagement for young people who might not be able to afford more expensive camping programs.

Roundtable on Religion and Social Welfare Policy Rockefeller Institute of Government

Formed in January 2002 with a grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts to the Research Foundation of the State University of New York, the Roundtable on Religion and Social Welfare Policy was created: *"To engage and inform government, religious and civic leaders about the role of faith-based organizations in our social welfare system by means of nonpartisan, evidence-based discussions on the potential and pitfalls of such involvement."*

Guided by an Advisory Council of prominent civic, media, religious, and academic leaders, the Roundtable has become the preeminent source of expert, unbiased information on policy and legal developments concerning the involvement of faith-based organizations in social services. Drawing on a wide range of experts from government, civic, religious and research organizations, the Roundtable's events and publications have helped to better define and measure the character of faith-based social services; to gauge private and public sector support for their work; and provide new views on their comparative effectiveness.

KENYA

Operating Context

Two issues dominate the context for service delivery in Kenya - poverty and HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, each serves to deepen the negative effects of the other: whilst poverty complicates efforts to educate and reduce behaviours which lead to HIV infection including prostitution, susceptibility to illness caused by the virus further effects peoples capacity to work and exacerbates their poverty.

More than 20 years on, AIDS education and awareness continues to be a vital part of any strategy that will effectively address this massive problem in Africa. However, in addition to a range of preventative measures there is also a desperate need to remove the stigma attached to those who are 'positive'. Still many people refuse to be tested - possibly assuming the worst and preferring not to know for sure. Despite the current availability of antiretroviral medicines which are being made free through the Kenyan government, some people choose to avoid public hospital clinics because of the feared association with the disease.



Poverty in Kenya is widespread and deeply entrenched. Full time employment is an unachievable dream for most people. The luckier ones might gain occasional unskilled labour on a casual basis or manage to survive through trading in one of the innumerable street market stalls. In rural areas, sustenance can be maintained through agriculture if one has land which is suitable and the health to care for it. In the slums of the cities, one has to survive by whatever means possible - recent increases in violent crimes may suggest that this is becoming more and more difficult.

Nairobi Girls Training Centre

The Nairobi Girls Training Centre (established in 1968) currently offers a two year education program for young women aged between 16 and 25. Most students are provided room and board at the facility for a minimal fee as parents are usually low-

income families. There is a provision for sponsorship through The Salvation Army for girls who cannot afford this fee.

The education program is practically oriented and includes morning devotions and involvement in Sunday services at the on-site Salvation Army corps. An indicator of the success of the program is that employers specifically seek out prospective employees who are graduates of the school.

Kithituni

Kithituni, a rural community situated between Nairobi and Mombassa, has been a critical location in the development of The Salvation Army's model for Human Capacity Development. The model has been recognised internationally by UNAIDS (a joint global response to the problem of HIV/AIDS) and Chang Mai University in Malaysia. The key elements of the model are a recognition of the capacity in individuals and communities to determine and create their own desired changes and a commitment to mutual learning and sharing that allows for natural growth and knowledge transfer across communities.

Makindu

One of the strengths of The Salvation Army Local Facilitation Team in Makindu is its link to the local hospital. Community support teams regularly visit the hospital and are well known to the staff there. In addition to home visits throughout the area, sitting, listening, encouraging and praying with people in the various hospital wards has proven to be well received and the team's presence has been credited with numerous improvements in patient health.

Kibera

The Salvation Army in Kibera is situated in a slum district that houses up to a third of the population of Nairobi. Here the officers, along with other Corps members and volunteers from the local community (mostly from other churches), are involved in home visits, a HIV support group, parenting groups, bible studies and church services, as well as a kids club that attracts 300 orphans and vulnerable children.



UNITED KINGDOM

Operating Context

Poverty and disadvantage are mapped across the UK according to a Deprivation Index which takes into account a range of socio-economic data. This Index is utilised by government to identify areas in need of urban regeneration projects and also by some churches, who by creating an intentional local presence, live with and are part of transforming communities from within.

Homelessness data is notoriously difficult to assess, as people are counted only when sleeping rough in the same location on successive nights. Given the general transience of the population and the likelihood of people being moved on from public spaces, this system is substantially flawed.

Manchester Openshaw Eden Project

The Eden Project in Openshaw, East Manchester, like many other Salvation Army social centres and corps runs a variety of services and programs aimed at meeting the needs of the local community. These programs include family support and parenting classes, youth and after-school clubs and holiday programs. However, the distinctive essence of the project comes from the contribution of 25 volunteers who not only participate in the various programs, but who have chosen to relocate into and live in one of the poorest and most disadvantaged areas of England.



Preston Corps

The Salvation Army Preston Corps provide assistance to people in need including food parcels and help finding and accessing accommodation. Services focussing particularly on the homeless include a weekly soup kitchen and co-ordinating distribution of The Big Issue in the area. A new project is a suite of computers and software that will give the community access to training and the Internet.

Southwick Community Project

A new family and community centre made possible through a partnership between The Salvation Army and the government Sure Start program is continuing the work started by Shakespeare House in 1996, which has been accessed by 18,000 people a year.

The centre, which is located in one of the most disadvantaged council wards in the UK, provides a community café, a club for the elderly, adult education classes, leisure classes, a toy bank and a community shop. An extensive youth programme including vocational training, youth clubs, childcare, after school clubs and parent and toddlers groups are also available.

Offering the community a range of facilities and activities in a caring, healthy and safe environment, many local people view The Salvation Army community centre as a safe haven where they are comfortable to engage in activities, socialise and learn.

Norwich Pottergate ARC

The Salvation Army Pottergate Advice and Refreshment Centre (ARC) is visited by up to 100 homeless and vulnerable people every day who are assisted with food, shelter and clothing in a safe environment. Services have been tailored to meet the particular needs of the target population, so in addition to providing sleeping bags and blankets to those who are sleeping rough, hot showers and toiletries are also available.

Staff and volunteers are always available for a friendly chat and can give help and information on a variety of issues or referral to other services, including alcohol and drug counselling. Through local partnerships, medical services are provided through a nurse who is available daily and a doctor who visits 3 afternoons a week.

Oasis UK – Number 3 and Foyer

Oasis UK works in the heart of some of the poorest communities in the UK with the aim of bringing transformation – socially, spiritually, emotionally, educationally, physically and environmentally – and helping people to live life to its fullest.

Since its opening in 1990 Housing at No.3 has been a temporary home to over 100 young women between the ages of 16-25 who have found themselves homeless. As well as providing a vital refuge for these young women, Housing at No.3 ensures that each resident leaves with all they need for independent living at the end of their stay (usually between one year and eighteen months). Having identified each resident's needs at the start of their tenancy, staff work hard to develop a tailored program of support to meet these needs.



The Foyer at Croydon is based on a similar model, but provides accommodation for both young men and women aged 18-25. Each resident at the Foyer receives a tailored programme of support covering basic life skills such as cooking and budgeting as well as the opportunity to gain a number of skills for employment or education. The Foyer also has computer training facilities which are used by the wider community and allow for positive community interaction.

Church.co.uk

Church.co.uk, Waterloo is a part of the Oasis network and an affiliate member of Faithworks. The church sees its role as demonstrating the reality and relevance of Christian faith for the 21st century.

Current goals include being open 24/7 - providing a welcome to everyone whatever their situation, whatever the time, night or day and offering a holistic approach - a

breadth and depth of support, spiritually and socially, to the whole community and beyond.

Faithworks

The Faithworks Movement is based on partnership with many organisations, projects and churches working together to see transformation in local communities. With this objective in mind, Faithworks has produced a library of resources and a range of services that support individual Christians, local churches and other faith-based organisations as they engage in community development.

Faithworks has also sought to challenge and change the public perception of the Church by engaging both media and the government. In order to achieve this Faithworks regularly meets with influential decision-makers to ensure that faith-based community projects have a high priority in the setting of local and national governmental policy.

Jewish Care

Jewish Care is the largest health and social care charity for the Jewish community in the UK, caring directly for nearly 7,000 people every week. The charity provides a wide range of services for people who are elderly, mentally ill, physically disabled, visually impaired, as well as unemployed people, Holocaust survivors and refugees.

Jewish Care is committed to providing a comprehensive range of services for people who are experiencing mental health problems together with recognising and celebrating the Jewish way of life that helps maintain a strong sense of tradition in a culturally sensitive environment.

Jewish Care: Social Work Team

The social work team is often the first port of call for people who are experiencing difficulties with their mental health. They work together with clients to set individual goals that meet their specific needs and also provide support for clients' families. In addition to direct support, counselling and advocacy, they work in partnership with other statutory and health organisations to link people into other services and supports.

Jewish Care: Outreach Service

The outreach service works in conjunction with the social work service and provides practical and emotional support for people who are experiencing difficulty with their mental health. Outreach support is offered in the community and is aimed at people who need additional support and those who cannot or do not access other services. The service aims to help clients to develop skills and strategies that will give them more control over their life, as well as to encourage them to recognise and value their own strengths.

Jewish Care: Jack Gardener House

Jack Gardener House is a residential care home for 18-50 year old people who are recovering from a serious mental illness and require a supportive and therapeutic environment. Residents are encouraged to maintain their independence and

participate in activities such as group discussions, social skills, cookery and art, as well as celebrating Jewish festivals and enjoying visits to the cinema and museums.

Jewish Care: The Shalom Centre

The Shalom Centre is a day care facility for people who identify themselves as Jewish, aged 18-65, who have had or are experiencing problems with their mental health. The day program consists of a variety of structured groups and activities which are devised in conjunction with service users. These may include groups such as Home Skills, Relaxation, Discussion Groups, Art and Creative Writing, and Jewish Cultural Group.

The Haven Community Centre

The Haven Community Centre has a large and diverse suite of community services which are run by and co-located with The Salvation Army Portsmouth Citadel Corps. Programmes include a Community Cafe, Charity shops, Good Neighbours befriending scheme for the elderly, affordable furniture project, Step Out mobility service for the frail and elderly, accredited 56 place full-time Childcare, Hairdressing, Conference and Training Facilities, Home shopper service, Parent and Toddlers, Ladies meeting and Over 50s club.

The Place Next Door

The Salvation Army Winton's community project called The Place Next Door aims to transform lives by loving and practical service. The centre offers a low-cost lunch five days a week and two charity shops which sell cheap clothes, furniture and bric-a-brac six days a week. Older people are offered hairdressing, chiropody and assisted bathing at very low prices. There are also numerous activity groups which aim to encourage and support their members including an all-day stroke club, a non-alcoholic bar for the youth, parent and toddler groups with special needs places, a support group for parents with learning disabilities and social groups for a variety of ages.

A weekly meal run is provided from the centre, for the homeless in Bournemouth using a specially adapted catering minibus. Informal counselling and practical services including clothing, blankets and footcare are an important part of the bus run.



Bristol—The Candle Centre

The Candle Centre is organised and offered by the Bristol Citadel Corps of The Salvation Army as a response to current social needs, problems and potential of inner city Bristol. The centre is building a sense of safety and community amongst the homeless population through a range of services delivered by friendly staff and volunteers. In addition to practical assistance such as free meals, clothing and shower facilities, the centre offers counselling and referral advice in conjunction with visiting outreach workers from other support services.

A growing Sunday kids club is part of a broader support and early intervention strategy which also includes parenting courses and a 'how to keep your kids drug free' course.

Poplar

On weekdays, The Salvation Army Poplar runs a Friendship Café giving opportunities for socially isolated people in the community to drop in for a chat. A low cost Luncheon Club which runs 4 days a week is a helpful follow up, particularly aimed at over 50's.

On the other end of the scale, the Poplar Corps has an active and lively youth program, particularly targeting hard-to-reach and disadvantaged youth from the local area. A strong approach to mentoring and volunteer leadership, combined with a purpose built facility (including a music rehearsal/recording studio and dedicated art room) provide a solid foundation for building positive relationships and working with young people to address their issues and move towards a brighter future.

ALOVE

ALOVE is a new sub-brand of The Salvation Army for young people and young adults in the UK and Republic of Ireland. It endeavours to express a new vision and strategy for youth ministry which is culturally relevant and spiritually vibrant.

In line with the early history of The Salvation Army, ALOVE has a strong mission focus that encourages young people to be involved in social action, to engage meaningfully with marginalised and socially excluded young people and to find ways to transform and renew local communities affected by high levels of deprivation.

FELLOWSHIP FINDINGS: SIGNIFICANT THEMES

The following themes are indicative of characteristics commonly seen amongst the wide variety of services visited. Though each service had its own strengths, and not all exhibited every theme, these distinctives came through again and again. Whilst it is acknowledged that many of these are not unique to FBOs, the relationship between the characteristics and the values-based motivation of FBOs does suggest that they are far more likely to occur in these contexts.

Theme 1 – Community

The opportunity for positive engagement with a faith community, such as a church, provides a range of potential benefits which are distinctive to this particular context. Whilst there has been a growing recognition of the importance of community in providing socialization and supportive networks, the significance of faith communities which intentionally gather around common values and have a sense of meaning and purpose in life is less likely to be mirrored in other community groups. Faith communities can offer a safe place for the marginalized and the vulnerable whose lives have too often been characterised by desperation and violence. They provide an environment where hope can be restored and resilience encouraged in the midst of the most difficult circumstances.



One of the defining and regularly recurring characteristics of the most disadvantaged social service clients is social isolation. Few have reliable family connections and friendships have been known to weaken when money or drugs are in short supply. The potential for building new, positive social networks through faith communities therefore offers essential support and hope.

For those who have been pushed to the margins, who are the victims of society, there is a vital need for authentic care and social healing. According to Father Greg Boyle of Homeboy Industries, "the necessary context for that attention is community - meaning a place that reminds you of your goodness and talent each day...Ideally it's not just a person who offers that, it's a community of feeling and connection and kinship that becomes a touchstone that you can return to when you hit life's inevitable difficulties." (*G-Dog and the Homeboys*)

Community: Best Practice

A precondition for successful engagement with those who live on the edges of society is a genuine attitude of acceptance and non-judgementalism within the faith community. Any guise which is inauthentic or fake will be quickly discerned and rejected, however real concern and care have significant transformative potential. Finally, the opportunity for everyone to contribute to the life of the community importantly demonstrates the inherent value which each person brings and provides something which is rare for the poor and disinherited.

Community Case Studies: Bushwick and Bristol Corps

In Brooklyn, New York, The Salvation Army provides supported accommodation for nearly 90 homeless families at the Bushwick Family Residence. In addition to a wide range of practical services which help to build lifeskills and independence, The Salvation Army's chaplains play a vital role in building long-term community connections. The chaplains assist with the daily running of the Residence, utilising their personal links to the wider Salvation Army that enable valuable additions to the program such as access to summer camps. Parents appreciate the role of the chaplains as examples and mentors to their children as well as a source of hope for themselves. Perhaps most importantly, the chaplains provide an accessible bridge to the faith community of the Bushwick Corps which has demonstrated acceptance, care and love to the residents. A sense of belonging at the Corps gives families the foundation within a supportive community that they need to re-establish their lives, so that when they move out of their transitional accommodation into independent living they already have a reliable support network.

At the Bristol Corps in the south-west of England, the Candle Community Centre is representative of the practical outreach which this Christian community is making to the poor and homeless of the inner city. The Candle Project meets the needs of

highly disadvantaged people from food and fellowship to clothing and counselling. For the volunteers from this Corps, and from other local faith communities, these social service activities are a direct expression of their faith commitment to share with those in need. However, a critical distinctive is the active engagement of those who have been recipients of some assistance in the life of the Centre: the opportunity to help out with routine maintenance tasks, for instance, gives people a different sense of worth and value which is based in a genuine mutuality otherwise rare in welfare services.

Theme 2 – More personal interactions

One of the common features of highly disadvantaged people is that most, if not all, of their relationships are defined by professional contacts (with their caseworker, their drug counsellor, their psychiatrist, their doctor). Most have suffered significantly from the effects of social isolation and marginalisation. In addition to, or sometimes as an intentional part of, their normal service delivery, many FBOs had program elements that provided opportunities to interact with the wider community and establish meaningful and positive social relationships. These included interactions with volunteers and interns, other non-profit organisations, clients from other welfare agencies, alumni from the program and communities of faith.



The contribution of volunteer and broader community interaction has a dual effect that is invaluable. Firstly, it demonstrates to a person that someone cares for them who is not just doing their job – negating the unjust accusation that professional staff just demonstrate care because they are getting paid to do so. In reality, many of the professionals that work in the social services sector are being remunerated well below levels that they have previously had or could

be currently receiving in other sectors. Secondly, it extends the capacity of the organisation to do good beyond its own boundaries in ways that may be more natural within the community. "A faith-based organisation such as The Salvation Army has special links to communities: church congregation members may understand the needs of their local community better than those who are in "community-based" organisations that are not of the community. Church members who become involved in a community issue start from the same point as their fellow community members. A response to a community problem, thus, starts from the community" (*Community, Care, Change and Hope*)

Personal Interactions: Best Practice

The best services not only used good, well trained volunteers but also drew on current and past program clients to bring their experiences to help their peers. By intentionally encouraging this facilitation relationship within the community, natural flow-on effects occurred which saw the positive effects of peer assistance continuing outside the organisation and even from community to community.

Personal Interactions Case Study: Makindu, Kenya

In Makindu, The Salvation Army work through a local facilitation team of trained volunteers to reach out to people in need in the community. The use of volunteers from the local community has been effective, particularly where clinical facilities may be avoided because of the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS. The team engage in ongoing training, development and shared reflection on their experience as they learn from one another and from those to whom they are ministering. Within their community, they provide education, pastoral counselling and practical care in peoples' homes however their work becomes increasingly effective as the people with whom they are sharing in turn become active within their own communities. The positive multiplication effect of this work is due to a framework which emphasises accompaniment and mutual learning over provision and paternalistic power structures.



Theme 3 – Extensive Community Partnerships

Even though the idea of working through partnerships and community networks has become increasingly accepted as foundational throughout social service sectors, FBOs often appeared to be at a distinct advantage in the size, scope and variety of their partnerships. For some, this was due to the longstanding presence of the faith community within the local area. For others, it was because of individuals associated with the FBO or faith community who had personal networks which complemented the professional networks accessible to everyone else.

Community Partnerships: Best Practice

Effective FBOs utilised a wide range of partners in the community including other denominations and other faiths, as well as secular and government agencies. Recognising common goals and values, they utilised existing community resources more effectively by pooling them and working together.

Incarnational Existence: Churches and other faith communities have often had an extensive history of active social engagement and helping those in need long before social institutions and programs were in existence. In some instances, people involved with faith communities had intentionally relocated into deprived areas to live amongst the poor, to learn from them and to work with them towards a better, common future. This incarnational principle stems from the essential understanding that we are God's hands in the world – that for God to be most effective, human beings must play their own part in transforming the world into what it should be. Living in a community which is characterised by poverty and deprivation demonstrates a markedly different level of engagement to those who commute into the community to work and then leave again at the end of the day.

Community Partnerships Case Study: Church of the Saviour, Openshaw Eden Project

The Church of the Saviour has been active in Adams Morgan, a poor neighbourhood of Washington DC, for over 60 years. It has effectively drawn together an interdenominational response to local needs which has seen a number of successful projects initiated and had a measurable positive impact upon the local community. A range of services, loosely connected under the umbrella of Jubilee Ministries, has

developed as the needs of the local community became apparent: affordable housing led to accessible healthcare and subsequently employment and training programs. The organic nature of this evolution 'by the community, for the community' has renewed hope in an area which once held only bleak futures.

Since August 2000, the Eden Project in Openshaw, Manchester has seen dozens of volunteers intentionally relocate to live in one of the most deprived areas of the UK. Using The Salvation Army hall as a base, these volunteers are committed to living and working with the poor, understanding their situation by fully sharing the context of their local community. Currently with 5 paid staff and 25 volunteers living scattered throughout the community, the Eden Project is proving the transformational potential of what they see as 'incarnational mission' – demonstrating God's concern for the poor by living amongst them and working with them to build a better world.



Theme 4 - Holistic approach

All programs demonstrated an awareness and commitment to looking after the whole person, not just a single segment of their lives. This holistic perspective recognises the need to begin at the point that clients find themselves when they come to the program. Thus, service plans are tailored individually *with* the client (as far as the program is able to cater for this) and revised on a periodic basis. Where spiritual elements were included in the program (Bible study, devotions, chapel), these were nearly always an optional component which clients could opt in and out of at their own discretion.

A number of interviewees commented that being part of an FBO allowed them to be more authentically present at work without having to hide the spiritual dimensions of their own personality. Particularly in the United States, the tension around the division of church and state often resulted in complete removal of any religious elements from government funded programs - and thereby the failure to effectively address client issues in a holistic manner because spiritual concerns cannot be discussed or taken into account.

The artificial removal of the spiritual dimension from programs and staff that are attempting to help address deep and complex life issues only acts to sabotage attempts to work holistically with people. The Salvation Army's International Health Services have learnt through 20 years of work in clinics, hospitals, congregations and communities that "communities do not organise in compartmentalised ways, unless organisations and funding pushes them to do so. The normal response is integrated and 'systems thinking' comes more or less naturally, as all of life is understood to be interrelated." The reality of life is that people who are experiencing crisis and significant life moments often have questions of a spiritual nature that can assist their

progress towards improved social integration and being able to make positive community contributions.

Holistic Approach: Best Practice

Working in a holistic manner does not mean that every FBO had to be able to address every human need, but by recognising the interconnectedness of human life, the idea that individual elements might be addressed without impact upon and by others is eschewed for a broader understanding and readiness to address multiple factors as people are ready to do so.

Good practice included the provision of a range of internal services in close cooperation with other external partners who may have access to even wider and more diverse supports. However, those agencies that demonstrated best practice acknowledged that beyond the 'essentials' (shelter, food, physical health, maybe even employment) there are other vital factors which contribute towards a full life such as recreation, culture, spirituality, music, art, socialising and having fun! These 'added extras' made a discernable difference to the impact of the programs and services on the lives of people for whom they would be otherwise inaccessible.

Holistic Approach Case Study: Bell Shelter



In Los Angeles, where the homeless population has been estimated to be up to 90,000 people, it is perhaps not surprising to find large scale solutions. In addition to having a nightly capacity of nearly 500 people, Bell Shelter also took in large numbers of families who had lost homes as a result of Hurricane Katrina. However, the size of this centre has not meant that the important details of individual care have been sacrificed. On the contrary, the shelter demonstrated an impressive range of

services provided both internally and with a number of external partners. Core housing support services included case management, individual and group counselling, vocational assistance and training and specialised programs for veterans and people with alcohol, drug or mental health issues. They are currently developing additional capacity to assist people who have been discharged from hospital medical care but are not well enough to live independently.

Above and beyond these vital services, Bell Shelter demonstrates a commitment to 'quality of life' care which is commendable. An extensive library is available to residents, as well as a 'beauty shop', gymnasium and clothing room. There is a regular schedule of recreation activities and the dining room is transformed into an auditorium for special events such as graduation ceremonies, talent and fashion shows. A special room even houses 'therapy bunnies' which are cared for and appreciated by residents. Chaplaincy services were seen as an indispensable aspect of the program by both staff and residents who valued the unique dimension that the Chaplain brought personally and through religious program elements.

Theme 5 - Commitment to the most disadvantaged

The various target groups which were identified for all services consistently articulated a commitment to people with high and complex needs, commonly dual or multiple diagnoses - most often mental illness and drug addiction. Despite the difficulties that these clients often present, most programs tried to work from positive reinforcement rather than a punitive basis to deal with negative behaviours. When removal from the program was considered necessary for the good of the client or others in the program, attempts were made to refer to other programs and at times re-entry into the program was possible at a later date.

This theme correlates with previous findings in other studies which have noted that programs run by FBOs "have stamina to stick with clients when others might give up." (*Belief Systems in Faith-Based Human Services Programs*) In fact, in the USA some local governments have recognised this to the extent that they are "increasingly looking to congregations for help in dealing with especially thorny welfare cases...in California and Ohio, churches are being asked to find needy people who have fallen through the cracks." (*Charitable Choice Executive Summary*) Naturally, FBOs have been wary of becoming government tools to deal with 'hard to reach' people. Their motivation is generated from religious values which dictate an accountability that goes beyond government policies. According to Garland, "Because they are accountable to God for serving and less focussed on being able to show effective outcomes, they may be willing to take on more difficult problems that don't show immediate outcomes. Faith-based organisations bring a tenacity that perhaps no other partner in a collaboration can bring, and that needs to be underscored and appreciated." (*Belief Systems in Faith-Based Human Services Programs*)

Client Commitment: Best Practice

Government programs often fail to engage people with high and complex needs because they invariably have criteria, rules and requirements which this group are unable to meet for consistent periods. The FBOs that managed to reach people who had been pushed to the margins of society had minimal (though clear) rules, low requirements/criteria for access to programs (including the ability to remain anonymous) and in the rare cases that people had cause to be banned, there was clear communication, referrals where possible and often a clear pathway for re-entry and re-engagement.

FBOs demonstrated impressive resilience, despite a range of challenging behaviours, treading the balance between firmness and flexibility in favour of their clients.

Grace-based practice: Although this theme did not occur universally in all services visited, it certainly did feature consistently in the best services, and particularly in those achieving the best results with the most difficult clients. The description 'grace based' refers to an essential value of some FBOs which explicitly begins with a positive view of those who have come for assistance and suspends any judgemental attitudes. Grace based services continued to work positively with people despite being "conned", "ripped off" and betrayed on numerous occasions. Because their essential desire is to help people regardless of their situation, they avoid the temptation to become 'guardians' of resources.

Client Commitment Case Study: Homeboy Industries



The consequences of the seemingly unstoppable gang culture in LA are obvious: violence, crime, an overcrowded prison system and a tragically long list of victims. In the midst of this apparent hopelessness, Father Greg Boyle and a group of ex-gang members give new reason for hope through Homeboy Industries. Following the motto 'Jobs not Jails', Homeboy Industries has spawned a variety of vocational opportunities and related services to offer an alternative to the gang lifestyle. In addition to practically oriented services, such as counselling and tattoo removal, Homeboy has a feeling of genuine community which is immediately tangible. There is a positive sense about the frenetic activity which characterises their office and which clearly provides

much needed social bonding for those who have left the gangs behind.

Theme 6 - Long term commitments

In the devastating wake of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, "faith-based organisations - many of them victims themselves - [were] already on the frontlines offering relief...[they] had not only immediately helpful supplies to offer, but also experience in longer-range community rebuilding efforts based on their work in previous emergencies." (*Being There – Faith on the Frontlines*) Monsignor Gregory Cox, Executive Director of Catholic Charities of LA, reported that even now long after most agencies have concluded their work with the victims of the hurricane, it is the faith-based organisations that are still working co-operatively to clean up the mess and help rebuild the lives of individuals and the community. This is consistent with previous investigations which have noted that on the whole, "services provided by FBOs are more likely to be longer in duration than comparable secular organisations" (*Comparative Views on the Role and Effect of Faith in Social Services*)

This longitudinal support offered is also critical to seeing positive transformation in the most difficult situations. An ex-gang member involved with Homeboy Industries makes this comment:

"Obviously it takes some people caring about you. But unfortunately, when people are as messed up as we were, the caring can't be short-term. That's why a lot of gang intervention doesn't work. Real caring requires commitment. And most people don't really want to commit that kind of time to a gang member. Fortunately for me, Father Greg, and some of the people around him were really committed." (*G-Dog and the Homeboys*)

Long Term Commitments: Best Practice

FBOs that were able to maintain long term contact with people typically had to do so outside the boundaries of government-sponsored programs which typically mandate shorter periods of engagement. This usually meant finding independent funding or staffing that was not bound to government contracts (such as ministers, volunteers or church youth workers). An open door policy meant that people knew that they could always return to the FBO – in good times and bad. The experience of FBOs showed that this often occurred, sometimes after many years, as people came back to an

organisation they trusted if they had fallen into trouble again, or came to celebrate their successes with those who had helped them along the way.

Long Term Commitments Case Study: Number 3 (Oasis)

Housing at No. 3 has provided accommodation for young homeless women for nearly 18 years. More than 100 residents have passed through the doors of this place which has been both a refuge and training ground for future independent living. Staying between 12 and 18 months, residents develop not only practical life skills but renewed trust and hope for the future. Like many similar programs when people leave, they are grateful to staff who have 'been there for them' over the long term and feel safe knowing that help will continue to be there if needed in the future.

No 3. is one of many examples of FBOs who consistently took on the added financial burden of working longer with people and with lower staff to client ratios because they knew that this would ultimately provide much better results for the clientele. This principle of extensive, practical commitment to those in need directly contrasts with increasing patterns in government that expect higher outcomes under more restrictive guidelines and with less funding.

Theme 7 – Respect of personhood

An essential value which characterises the work of FBOs is the recognition of all human beings as divine creations. For some this was clearly articulated as a social justice precept which mandated high regard and excellent service for all those 'created in the image of God'. This sense of equality inherently deconstructs paternalistic models of welfare in favour of capacity-oriented approaches.

Respect of Personhood Best Practice

The outworking of this theme is seen through the practice of accompaniment and a sense of mutuality; *working with* not just *helping out*. People are seen as having the capacity to make the changes that they want to see in their own lives, not just individually but as part of a community. Resources are shared rather than distributed and mutual learning occurs in place of transactional welfare.

Respect of Personhood Case Study: Kithituni, Kenya



In Kithituni, The Salvation Army have established a community development model that has been recognised internationally. Working extensively with people in their homes, the team demonstrate and articulate a belief in the capacity of every human being to make the changes they desire in their own lives. In doing so, there is a renewed sense of hope in people which is borne from this mutual positive engagement.

The capacity-based framework which shapes the work of The Salvation Army in Kenya has a lot to offer in the context of working with the poor and marginalised in Australia. There is a natural fit for FBOs to this framework which gives deep respect for human personhood and is also inherently hopeful – it gives people an increased confidence in themselves and their own futures.

Theme 8 - Flexible funding arrangements

Another common feature was a reluctance to accept gaps in programs and a desire to find new and innovative responses to client needs despite existing funding limitations. A range of solutions to this difficulty existed including help from advisory boards, corporate partnerships, community fundraising and entrepreneurial activities in addition to applying for government and philanthropic grants.

In many cases, it appeared that FBOs were actually significantly subsidising government programs which had been grossly underfunded. There were frequent stories about promised increases from government officials that never happened as well as occasions of funding cuts where there was still an expectation or requirement for similar or even increased outputs on significantly less funding.

Flexible Funding: Best Practice

FBOs that had demonstrated a long-term capacity to sustain work with highly disadvantaged people were rarely exclusively dependant on periodic government funding. Though some received government funding that had enabled them to expand a program or introduce new program elements or additional staffing, many had been established before that funding was available and had shown the ability to withstand the inconsistencies of the political arena. This was usually achieved by a combination of financing from a wider organisation (such as The Salvation Army's Red Shield Appeal) and/or from their own fundraising within the local community and the corporate sector. The ideal solution may be a combination of all three sources in an equal ratio.

Flexible Funding Case Study: Maryland and Washington DC ARC

The network of more than 100 Salvation Army Adult Rehabilitation Centres across the USA is entirely self-funded through hundreds of retail shops which rely on the generous donations of the general public. Participants in the program engage in 'work therapy' which has the dual benefit of giving a sense of value and structure in their lives as well as providing a workforce for the centres. In addition to funding the buildings, staffing, maintenance and feeding thousands of residents, the ARCs send a surplus to a central Command for other social services.

The Maryland and Washington DC ARC has a positive vibe which comes from the 150 men who sense that this is an opportunity to turn their lives around. They are deeply engaged in the program which includes work, individual and group counselling around a 12 step model. The self-funding model which brings in \$10 million per annum allows the program to be overtly Christian and include mandatory spiritual components. Instead of detracting from the service, both the work and religious elements are seen as beneficial from the participants who are attracted in higher numbers than equivalent secular services and who consistently demonstrate better outcomes.

CONCLUSIONS

Faith-based organisations right across the world are providing an invaluable role as service providers with a capacity to reach and engage people significantly beyond that of government and private sector providers. In the US and UK, a growing body of research on this subject exists both within and outside FBOs. This research has provided data to inform increasingly critical conversations between governments and FBOs as they seek to work together for the welfare of those people who struggle to access the most basic benefits of society.

Critically important to this contribution are the spiritual and religious dimensions of these organisations which shape the fundamental values and character of services provided. Contrary to some current streams of thought, the capacity of FBOs to address spiritual issues which may be initiated by service users is an essential component that adds significantly to the range of benefits these organisations provide.

In addition to this, FBOs consistently demonstrated a number of characteristics which stemmed from an organisational orientation towards human values. These included ways of working with highly disadvantaged people that were more resilient, longer term and extended beyond the 'basics' to recognise the importance of 'quality of life' activities and experiences.

Furthermore, the life-changing and transformative potential which was seen in positive engagement with FBOs, was significantly enhanced when local faith communities were able to provide a network of support and care for socially isolated individuals. The combination of clinical and non-clinical care which was seen in the best examples of this allowed people a safe environment in which they could experience healing and wholeness. People also gained a vital sense of belonging and feeling valued when they were given the opportunity to make their own personal contributions to the lives of these communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- That further and ongoing research be undertaken on the distinctive contributions of FBOs into the Australian social service sector. That consideration is given to the establishment of a body which has the capacity to advocate and be a credible political voice to represent all FBOs in the manner of Sojourners in the US and Faithworks in the UK.
- That all external funding bodies working with FBOs recognise the multitude of benefits that they bring to the community, acknowledging the importance of expression of spiritual and religious dimensions for service users who are in critical life transitions.
- That governments and other funding bodies recognise, resource and encourage the capacity of FBOs to work with hard-to-reach people over extended periods. This will include the introduction of longer term contracts and additional capacity to support lower staff/client ratios for high-needs service users.
- That overarching bodies of FBOs support local communities of faith where funding shortages or lack of expertise threatens the continuation of local initiatives which have the capacity to connect people readily into their communities.
- That FBOs develop more broadly a capacity-based framework which inherently recognises human dignity as a base value and creates hope in individuals and communities.
- That resources are developed and applied so that faith communities are increasingly able to successfully engage with and retain people who are on the margins of society.
- That recognition occurs and resources be directed towards additional 'quality of life' services that provide vital cultural, spiritual, social and developmental experiences for the most disadvantaged.

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Appendix 1: Churchill Fellowship Preliminary Survey

1. Do you think there is a *qualitative* difference in services delivered by faith-based organisations (FBOs)? YES 96%/NO 4%
If you answered YES to the previous question, what are some of the differences that you perceive (tick as many as you think are applicable)
 - FBOs tend to spend more time with people (63%)
 - FBOs are less rigid/more personable in their service delivery (60%)
 - FBOs are committed to serving the person, not just getting the outcomes (83%)
 - FBOs are better able to take into account a holistic perspective of life (87%)
 - FBOs achieve better physical, psychological and social outcomes for people *because* they incorporate a spiritual dimension as well (77%)
 - Other (please specify)
2. What part does spirituality play in your part of the organisation?
 - There is no overt spiritual component to our program/service (10%)
 - There is a specific person(s) whose role is to handle spiritual matters (25%)
 - There are a number of people who can informally handle spiritual questions (58%)
 - There is an explicit, but optional spiritual component in our program/service (37%)
 - There is an explicit, obligatory spiritual component in our program/service (19%)
3. What is your personal view on spirituality and the service you are involved in?
 - I don't see spirituality as important at all (0%)
 - Spirituality is important to me, but I don't discuss it with service users (8%)
 - If spiritual issues come up, I refer someone to a professional (eg. chaplain) (15%)
 - If they ask about it, I am comfortable discussing spiritual issues with anyone (73%)
 - I intentionally seek out opportunities to discuss spiritual issues with service users (33%)
4. What do you think are other significant differentiators for FBOs involved in social service delivery?
 - They are values-based rather than outcome or voter-based (71%)
 - They have an important voice which can keep governments accountable (37%)
 - They are a comfortable option for service users who share the same faith (35%)
5. Do you think that FBOs offer something significant for the more difficult service users – those with high and complex needs? YES 94%/NO 6%
If you answered YES to the previous question, what are some of the differences that you perceive (tick as many as you think are applicable)
 - There is a long-term commitment to the person (54%)
 - There is a greater ability to see the person as distinct from their behaviours (71%)
 - There is a greater understanding that outcomes may occur over much longer periods of time (67%)
 - Other (please specify)
6. Was the faith-based character of this organisation an important factor in you seeking work there? YES (92%)/NO (8%)

* Note that several questions allowed for multiple responses, therefore not all answers add up to 100%

Appendix 2: References and Further Reading

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