



Toolkit Items

Tool Name: Contributions of Faith-Based Organizations

Definition: This handout highlights key findings of nearly 700 studies citing benefits of FBOs. It includes statistics on charitable giving, volunteer service, and positive impacts on health, safety, and well-being measures.

Purpose: This can be used as a fact-sheet to demonstrate the importance of increasing capacity of community organizations (secular and faith-based).

Contributions of FBOs to a Civil Society, Building Social Capital, Mobilizing Volunteers, and Solving Community Problems

Establishing the Connection Between Faith-Based Services and CNCS goals:

Faith-based organizations provide a range of services in three broad categories of 1) social services, 2) community economic and housing development, and 3) community organizing.¹ Each of these areas supports CNCS efforts to reduce poverty; enhance the environment, public safety, and public health; and provide disaster preparedness and relief services; and improve academic and educational achievement.

Financial Contributions of FBOs to Social Service Delivery:

- FBOs provide \$20 billion of privately contributed funds to social service delivery for over 70 million Americans Annually.²

The contributions of religious involvement to civil and healthy lifestyles

(based on the review of 669 studies)³:

- Higher levels of religious involvement make for an important protective factor that buffers or insulates individuals from deleterious outcomes:

Health and Safety Impacts:

- Reduced hypertension
- Longer survival
- Less depression
- Lower levels of drug and alcohol use and abuse
- Less promiscuous sexual behaviors
- Reduced likelihood of suicide
- Lower rates of delinquency among youth
- Reduced criminal activity among adults

Increased Well-being Measures:

- Positive mental health
- Hope
- Purpose
- Meaning in life
- Educational attainment

¹ Scott, Jason D., "The Scope and Scale of Faith-based Social Welfare Services," Roundtable on Religion and Social Welfare Policy, Sept. 2002.

² Johnson, Byron R., "Objective Hope, Assessing the Effectiveness of Faith-Based Organizations: A Review of the Literature," Center for Research on Religion and Urban Civil Society, 2002.

³ Scott, Jason D., "The Scope and Scale of Faith-based Social Welfare Services," Roundtable on Religion and Social Welfare Policy, Sept. 2002.

Scope and Value of Volunteer Support:⁴

- 74% of congregations provide volunteers to at least one FBO involved in service provision.⁵
- 59% of individual congregants reported that they volunteered to provide social services at least a “few times a year.”⁶
- 54% of people who regularly attend religious services volunteer, compared to only 32% of people who don’t.⁷
- Half of all congregations support some social services by providing volunteers.⁸
- The average number of volunteer hours per faith-based social program per month was approximately 148 hours.⁹
- 76% of congregations provided their buildings for use.¹⁰
- Based on the value of paid and volunteer labor, use of the building and services, as well as monetary contributions, the average congregation sponsored program in Philadelphia was worth \$4,113/month.¹¹
- Congregations in Philadelphia provide \$246 million worth of social services annually.¹²
- Congregations are predominantly involved in providing emergency assistance to individuals and families through financial, food, clothing, and housing assistance.¹³
- Congregations typically provide long-term assistance through indirect financial and volunteer support of interfaith or other agencies that are equipped to provide these services.¹⁴
- FBOs involved in HUD’s Section 202 program have produced an estimated 215,000 units of housing for the elderly and handicapped.¹⁵

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ammerman(2001)

⁶ Ibid

⁷ *Faith and Philanthropy: The Connection between Charitable Behavior and Giving to Religion*, Independent Sector, 2002.

⁸ (Chaves and Tsitsos, 2001)

⁹ (Cnaan, 1998)

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ (Cnaan and Boddie, 2001)

¹² Ibid

¹³ (Ammerman, 2001)

¹⁴ (Ammerman, 2002; Hodgkinson & Weitzman, 1993)

¹⁵ (Vidal, 2001)