

**President's Advisory Council
on Faith-Based and Neighborhood
Partnerships**

**A New Era of Partnerships:
Report of Recommendations to the President**

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INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to overstate the generosity of the American spirit. From the rubble of Haitian neighborhoods to underserved communities across our own country, Americans are working to address the needs of the most vulnerable among us. The Government is often a partner in this critical work, collaborating with local groups to serve those in need.

Although partnerships between the Government and community-serving organizations have existed for centuries, until recently the United States Government had never formed a body comprised of grassroots leaders and other experts to assess and strengthen those partnerships. On February 5, 2009, President Barack Obama created the Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships to do this work. In an executive order, the President noted:

The Council shall bring together leaders and experts in fields related to the work of faith-based and neighborhood organizations in order to: identify best practices and successful modes of delivering social services; evaluate the need for improvements in the implementation and coordination of public policies relating to faith-based and other neighborhood organizations; and make recommendations to the President, through the Executive Director [of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships], for changes in policies, programs, and practices that affect the delivery of services by such organizations and the needs of low-income and other underserved persons in communities at home and around the world.

Within this report, the Advisory Council proposes a number of such recommendations, and it urges President Obama and his Administration to adopt them. As members of this Council, we are encouraged by the fact that the President and his Administration have made sustained dialogue with a diverse set of leaders a key part of this process, and we thank them for inviting the recommendations we present here.

President Obama asked the Council to focus its attention on making recommendations in the following priority areas:

- Economic Recovery and Domestic Poverty
- Environment and Climate Change
- Fatherhood and Healthy Families
- Global Poverty and Development
- Interreligious Cooperation
- Reform of the Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships

Each chapter of this report includes a number of recommendations in a specific issue area. No introduction could do justice to all of the recommendations, and this one certainly does not. We urge individuals to read the full report.

The recommendations often strike similar themes. We call for new “principles of partnerships” between the Government and community-serving organizations, ones recognizing that these organizations not only provide essential services but also deserve a seat at the table when reforms in policies affecting those partnerships are considered, designed, and implemented. To cite just a few examples, we urge the Federal Government to engage the nonprofit sector in its reviews of strategies for addressing global and domestic poverty and international adaptation to climate change.

The term “partnership” should be expanded in other ways. Too often, this term is understood as being limited to government grants for private voluntary organizations. It should be understood much more broadly. The Federal Government often forms nonfinancial partnerships with faith-based and neighborhood organizations. These partnerships are as valuable to government as financial partnerships, and they are preferred by many kinds of civil society organizations. The Government should highlight and develop these partnerships as much as partnerships involving financial collaboration.

And while partnerships in this area are now commonly understood to encompass joint efforts with secular and single-faith bodies, they should also be understood as involving relationships with multireligious or interfaith entities, both domestically and abroad. Multireligious or interfaith entities include religiously affiliated individuals or groups from more than one distinct denomination, tradition, religion, or spiritual movement, and they also may include individuals and groups identifying as secular. By partnering with organizations like these and others working across faith lines, the Government can build respect for religious pluralism and freedom of religion or belief. As President Obama has noted in several speeches, including his historic Cairo address, interfaith service initiatives are a particularly good way to build understanding between different communities and contribute to the common good. This report calls for the scaling and strengthening of such initiatives.

In recognition of America’s growing pluralism and diversity, the Federal Government also should take specific steps to reach out to religious and cultural groups that traditionally have not been involved in partnerships with government. Government officials should invite representatives from these groups to be among the participants in, for example, workshops, training sessions, and networking opportunities. Steps like these will help to make good on our commitment to a government that truly represents all citizens.

Reverberating through this report is a call for the concerns of people who are poor and vulnerable to be prioritized. “In our partnerships with government,” the report notes, “we will always seek to make sure that the question of the impact on the poor is being asked.”

Successful and innovative programs run by community-serving organizations that provide integrated job training and support services to disadvantaged job seekers should be expanded. Likewise, Federal agencies should ensure that low-income communities and workers with barriers to employment are targeted when creating green job training programs. They can often do so most effectively in collaboration with nonprofit groups.

In order to better serve those who are struggling, the Government should support the creation of more single-site multiple-benefit access programs, including those administered by religious and secular grassroots organizations. Far too many eligible families and individuals do not receive the benefits to which they are entitled. This discrepancy deepens the negative impacts of poverty on families and reduces the potential economic benefits

for low-income communities. The limited government funding that is available to support benefits outreach and access is typically focused on single benefits and single agencies. The Council recommends that the Government pool these funds and revise relevant program rules to allow single sites to offer multiple benefits. In that way, families can access benefits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit; SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps); medical benefits (including children's health insurance); and veterans' benefits in one place.

Similarly, Federal programs should eliminate restrictive rules prohibiting the integration of funds or erecting significant barriers to effective coordination in programs affecting our economic recovery. The Administration's development of comprehensive and cross-cutting programs for communities like Promise Neighborhoods and Choice Neighborhoods is a step in the right direction.

Cooperating across departments and levels of government is another essential step to bringing about better service. The Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and the Federal agency centers should continue to improve their communications with State, county, and city officials, who award up to 90 percent of Federal social service funds. Government agencies should create interdepartmental working groups to assess and address policies affecting fathers' involvement in the lives of children, for example, taking the "father factor" into account in the work they do. Interagency and intra-agency working groups that will equip agencies engaged in international affairs for engagement with interfaith as well as secular and single-faith groups are needed.

The Federal Government also should make strides toward ensuring that it provides clearer and more accessible information about programs and partnerships. To collect the resources that are available to faith-based and neighborhood groups on environmental issues and climate change, the recommendations urge the Administration to create a centralized Website with a name like Environment.gov.

The recommendations also call for Federal agencies and offices that carry out foreign aid programs, for example, to publish information on their Websites about what they are funding and where they are funding it. And the Council recommends that all bodies disbursing Federal social service funds be required to post online a list of entities receiving such aid and to do so in a timely manner.

Strengthened partnerships will require more emphasis on program evaluation. Evaluations help the Federal Government to identify and partner with the most effective organizations, whether they are secular or religious, large or small. Especially in new fields, the Government should invest in the development and assessment of new programs such as ones promoting responsible fatherhood. Also, the report notes that federally funded capacity-building programs, those operating both at home and abroad, need to be reviewed and strengthened.

A reassessment of current agency strategies is sometimes necessary to improve these partnerships. The Council would like to see, for example, a modification in Requests for Applications (RFAs) at the United States Agency for International Development that would emphasize and recognize the value of preexisting community relationships, long-term presence in-country, support for sustainable development, and commitment to local participation. RFAs should include more impact and outcome criteria that support and recognize organizations that are in development for the long haul and should be scored in a

way that values long-term engagement with a community and local investment. Change also is needed with regard to some services provided by health and human service professionals. Curricular materials used by these professionals should give more attention to the critical role fathers play in child, family, and community well-being.

The report urges the Obama administration to implement a number of the reforms across these partnerships that are aimed at honoring our country's commitment to religious freedom. The recommendations call, for example, for greater clarity in the church-state guidance given to social service providers so that tax funds are used appropriately and providers are not confused or sued. The recommendations also insist that beneficiaries be notified of their religious liberty rights, including their rights to alternative providers. And the recommendations urge the Administration to take steps to increase confidence that the rules applicable to federally funded partnerships are actually being observed and that decisions about government grants are made on the merits of proposals, not on political or religious considerations.

The Council began its work by assembling taskforces to develop recommendations in each priority area. Council members served on the various taskforces along with non-Council members who are experts in the issue areas. The taskforces provided settings in which small but diverse groups of experts could draft recommendations for subsequent consideration by the larger Council. Once the taskforces completed the draft recommendations, Council members reviewed the drafts, asking questions and offering suggestions. Based on these comments, the drafts were revised by the taskforces, and then the Council offered additional feedback. Through this process, the taskforce drafts were converted into one Council report.

In all of its work, the Council sought to identify recommendations that could bring about meaningful change and that all members could endorse. In the few instances in which we could not accomplish the second aim, we have described our differences over the relevant matters. The fact that Council members have principled disagreements on some issues discussed in the report highlights the importance of our agreement on others.

Governmental partnerships with nonprofits attest to the fact that government cannot do everything—it needs partners from the private sector to promote the public good. But we also recognize that the Government cannot even do everything in partnership with nongovernmental groups. Partnerships between nongovernmental organizations, including charities and businesses, are vital to our Nation's health. Further, some tasks are the sole responsibility of the private sector. These areas, however, are not the focus of our report. President Obama asked the Council to make recommendations to the Federal Government about partnerships between the Government and nonprofit nongovernmental organizations, secular and religious, to serve people in need. Even though other partnerships were not within the scope of our work, we recognize the importance of challenging our own communities to do more in those and other priority areas, and we gladly accept that responsibility as we call on government to do more.

If implemented, some of these recommendations will require substantial investments of government funds. At the same time, it is important to note that implementation of many of these recommendations will result in significant savings. Adequately addressing global climate change—through better and more extensive partnerships with nonprofits and other efforts—will result, for example, in less migration, fewer refugee crises, and greater food security. Implementing other recommendations would reduce inefficiencies in the

distribution of aid and would save money by bringing about greater coordination of federally funded programs. For example, the report calls for the extension of Fathering Courts, programs identifying barriers that prevent fathers from making child support payments and linking those men with services, including education, counseling, and employment opportunities, that help them to overcome those barriers. In one Kansas City Missouri Fathering Court, 281 graduates and current participants have become significantly more involved in the lives of their children. They have contributed more than \$2.6 million in child support, and as a result, the State has avoided more than \$2.8 million in incarceration costs.

The Council also acknowledges that President Obama has proposed a freeze on total nonsecurity discretionary spending for the next 3 years. We urge the President and Congress to recognize that effective programs aimed at helping people who are poor and vulnerable should be among our Nation's highest discretionary spending priorities. Our country faces difficult choices. But those burdened by poverty face even more difficult choices, and we dare not turn away from their needs.

In 2009, President Obama called us to work together, saying, "Instead of driving us apart, our varied beliefs can bring us together to feed the hungry and comfort the afflicted; to make peace where there is strife and rebuild what has broken; to lift up those who have fallen on hard times." It is rare, if not unprecedented, for a governmental body to ask such a diverse group to seek common ground on a wide range of issues through sustained dialogue and deliberation. This process has been an education for Council members and, if we may say so, a blessing. Our report is the fruit of that labor. The understanding and relationships that have been built across lines of faith, belief, and political affiliation are equally important products of this work.

We urge other governmental bodies to establish similar forums in which diverse groups of nonprofit experts can engage in long-term conversation. At a time when our political discourse is often dysfunctional because of bitter division and distrust, endeavors like these are absolutely essential. Governmental leaders and citizens alike should take action now to improve the conversation about our shared future, to protect the most vulnerable among us, and to form a more perfect union.

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Economic Recovery and Domestic Poverty

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Economic Recovery and Domestic Poverty

INTRODUCTION

Every day—in every part of America—faith-based and neighborhood organizations are serving the most vulnerable members of our Nation in both profound and ordinary ways.

Faith- and community-based social service providers are an integral part of our Nation's fabric. They provide warmth, food, housing, job training, mentoring, and hope to millions in every State, city, and town across America.

The impact of these organizations is enormous, whether funded by private or public dollars. For example, one of eight people living in poverty received services and support from Catholic Charities. The United Way has 1,279 offices located in every State and virtually every congressional district and works with 37,300 partner agencies across the country. The Jewish Federations of North America represent 157 Jewish Federations, which raise and distribute nearly \$3 billion annually for social welfare, social services, and educational needs, through a network of agencies that also receive over \$10 billion in governmental funds annually. Lutheran Services in America reports that its member agencies across the country worked with a budget of more than \$16 billion last year. Nonprofit networks, like Feeding America, serve more than 37 million people each year through some 61,000 local faith- and community-based charitable agencies.

Additionally, there are thousands of smaller nonprofits that are working at the community and neighborhood levels every day, whose combined impact cannot even be measured. But we know that without the compassion, innovation, and daring of these groups, this country would be a different place.

Faith- and community-based social service providers are serious, innovative, and—in fact, indispensable—partners for the U.S. Government in the economic recovery and in the fight against domestic poverty.

The principle behind our report underlines the assertion that the U.S. Government should see these capable institutions *as key partners in not only providing social services, but also in setting policy and helping model innovation to strengthen communities.*

Partnerships, especially during the economic recovery, that will protect those most in need are essential; *these partnerships need to be mutual and supportive.*

Nonprofits are being asked to deliver a higher level of services with fewer resources. For instance, Catholic Charities saw a 10-percent increase in demand for services in 2008; Feeding America saw an increase of more than 30 percent in just one year from the numbers

of those coming to their agencies for food assistance in 2008. 2-1-1, the health and human services information and referral line, operated in many states by United Way, saw more than a 40% increase in call volume during 2008 – the bulk of calls relating to basic human needs such as food assistance, utility assistance, and housing. At the same time, these and other charitable organizations are seeing income to provide their services decline from all avenues, private and public.

As nonprofit leaders, we realize that State and local governments also are facing tight budgets and funding shortfalls, and we are trying to do all that we can to help, however an assumption that nonprofits can meet the growing needs without greater government support is not feasible.

We were very heartened to learn that recent analysis by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities shows that provisions in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (hereinafter, the “Recovery Act”) are keeping more than 6 million Americans out of poverty and are reducing the severity of poverty for 33 million more.¹

But much more needs to be done.

We believe that this economic crisis gives those who serve the public—both government and nonprofit—an opportunity to work together and reinforce both the community fabric woven by our Nation’s nonprofit and faith-based groups and the social safety net held by health care, human services, and social service providers.

We also are committed to supporting the Administration in seeking an inclusive Economic Recovery that helps everyone, especially the most vulnerable and those most in need.

In this report, we suggest that *the commitment to prioritize the concerns of the poorest among us should become a principle of partnership between government and faith-based and neighborhood organizations.*

We would even go so far as to say that social policy must be made more accountable by practices and guidelines that would serve to *focus* our shared attention on those on the margins of society—those whom the 25th chapter of Matthew calls “the least of these,” and shared Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Scriptures often refer to as “the widow, the stranger, and orphan.” Rg Veda of the Hindu scriptures emphasizes the need “to strive at all times for the well-being of all the people” and many other sacred texts, and the moral traditions of our country share similar teachings about caring for the most vulnerable. In our partnerships with government, we will always seek to make sure that the question of the impact on the poor is being asked.

We stand ready to work with President Obama and his Administration toward a stable and inclusive Economic Recovery, toward the stated goal of cutting poverty in half by 2015, and toward ultimately building effective partnerships to end poverty in America.

¹ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, *State-Level Data Show Recovery Act Protecting Millions From Poverty Act; Also Saving and Creating Jobs, Boosting Economy*, December 17, 2009.



Three Areas of Recommendation

Acknowledging that there are many areas and topics we could have explored, the Council offers recommendations in three areas.

First, we recommend a set of **principles of partnership** for an inclusive economic recovery. These include building an accountable partnership with our Nation's faith-based communities and neighborhood organizations focused on the goal of reducing poverty in half by 2015 and continuing to seek an end to poverty in America; reexamining how the poverty level is measured; and common sense proposals to help strengthen the effectiveness of social service nonprofits during the economic recovery.

Second, we recommend a series of changes that would **increase access to income-enhancing benefits** for those most in need. Faith- and community-based organizations are on the frontlines, striving to not only fill emergency gaps in income, food, and shelter, but also support families in their efforts to adapt to the realities and opportunities of a post-recession economy. Our organizations work in partnership with government to help low-income people access income-enhancing government benefits, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit; SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps); and various child nutrition programs. Yet, far too many eligible families and individuals do not receive the benefits to which they are entitled,² reducing the potential economic benefits for low-income communities, deepening the negative impacts of poverty on families, and making the work of faith and community-based organizations all the more difficult.

Finally, we turn to **jobs and education**, two of the most important ingredients for pulling families and communities out of poverty and giving people the tools for success. The Economic Recovery will depend on the ability of people, especially our Nation's youth, to have access to post-secondary education and job training opportunities in order to prepare for a new economy. Faith- and community-based organizations have unique positions as trusted partners to the community, to local businesses, but most important, to the individuals they assist and support every day. Therefore, we can play a key role in providing a bridge, especially for disconnected and disadvantaged job seekers, to education, training, and ultimately jobs with dignity.

² Jennifer Miller, Frieda Molina, Lisa Matus-Grossman, and Susan Golonka, *Building Bridges to Self-Sufficiency: Improving Services for Low-Income Working Families* (MDRC and the National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices: March 2004), at 14-15. See also Sheila Zedlewski, Gina Adams, Lisa Dubay, and Genevieve Kennedy, *Is There a System Supporting Low-Income Working Families?* Low-Income Working Families, Paper 4 (The Urban Institute: February 2006); Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Reaching Those in Need: State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates in 2007*, November 2008; Food Research and Action Center, *Food Stamp Access in Urban America: A City-by-City Snapshot*, October 2008; Sandra Jamet with Laura Seidell, Ben Seigel, and Rebecca Ross, *Benefits and Low Wage Work* (Seedco: September 2003).

Overview of Recommendations

Principles of Partnership for an Inclusive Economic Recovery:

Recommendation 1: Build accountable partnerships between the Obama administration and faith- and community-based organizations directed toward the explicit and shared goal of significantly reducing and finally putting an end to poverty in America.

Recommendation 2: Utilize the knowledge, expertise, and on-the-ground experience of local faith- and community-based organizations to redefine the Federal poverty guideline so that it more accurately measures and responds to the needs of low-income people.

Recommendation 3: Provide greater flexibility for the coordination and integration of government funds designated for specific program activities.

Recommendation 4: Support faith- and community-based partnerships as a means to fill the gaps in providing essential services like transportation, housing, food assistance, job training, education, and health care for low-income families and individuals.

Recommendation 5: Ease the burden on nonprofit social service agencies by removing barriers to service provision such as matching fund requirements, burdensome reporting and regulations, and slow payments and reimbursements.

Strengthen Access to Benefits:

Recommendation 6: Create an interdepartmental taskforce to explore and oversee streamlining and consolidating the public benefits, eligibility, and application processes.

Recommendation 7: Expand single-site, multiple-benefit access programs, including those run through faith- and community-based organizations.

Recommendation 8: Invest in the development and distribution of software applications to facilitate access to multiple benefits through online applications.

Recommendation 9: Create incentives for State and local governments to maximize participation by eligible low-income families and individuals in income-enhancing benefits and to promote multiple-benefit access through faith- and community-based organizations.

Focus on Jobs and Education:

Recommendation 10: Incorporate supportive services with education and training opportunities, and ensure nonprofit accessibility and eligibility for Federal grant funding.

Recommendation 11: Focus partnerships between education and training institutions and faith- and community-based organizations to better serve disadvantaged, displaced, and disconnected job seekers and to align worker skills with employer needs.

Recommendation 12: Utilize faith- and community-based organizations to bridge the gap from secondary education to post-secondary institutions and job training programs with a particular focus on disconnected youth.

Recommendation 13: Encourage collaboration between faith- and community-based organizations, community colleges, and the private sector.

Principles of Partnership for an Inclusive Economic Recovery

Sustained economic recovery depends on the participation and prosperity of all citizens and the development of communities of opportunity. Low-income people and communities of color continue to be at the frontlines of the economic crisis. The Recovery Act presents a tremendous opportunity to maximize gains for those hit first and worst by the economic downturn and to put equity at the forefront of policy and resource decisions. This moment of unparalleled investment is also an opportunity to build stronger partnerships between the Federal Government and faith- and community-based organizations, to help speed economic recovery and set a new standard for the future.

Recommendation 1: Build accountable partnerships between the Obama administration and faith- and community-based organizations directed toward the explicit and shared goal of significantly reducing and finally putting an end to poverty in America.

Faith- and community-based organizations have for more than a century worked in successful partnerships with the Government to deliver social services and care to millions in need throughout our Nation.

We have partnered with government by providing high-quality care, services, and support to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of our society with a proven track record of success. However, our partnership with the Federal Government has not always been accountable to a long-term goal of permanent poverty reduction.

Our community is ready for a new accountable partnership with the Federal Government with the goal of not only providing high-quality services and care, but also toward the measurable outcome of significantly reducing poverty rates and finally putting an end to poverty in America.

Many in our community are committed to the goal, affirmed by President Obama, of cutting the poverty rate in half in 10 years. At the Compassion Forum on April 13, 2008, then candidate Barack Obama was asked whether, as President, he would commit to the goal of cutting poverty in half in 10 years. The President answered: *“I absolutely will make that commitment. Understand that when I make that commitment, I do so with great humility because it is a very ambitious goal. And we’re going to have to mobilize our society, not just to cut poverty, but to prevent more people from slipping into poverty.”*

We understand that government cannot—and should not—take up this task alone.

Our communities are committed to bringing our moral authority, financial resources, and networks of hundreds of thousands of experienced social service providers across America to this task. We seek to build a long-term and accountable partnership with the Obama administration to work together—and hold each other accountable—in taking steps to make poverty reduction a reality.

We invite the President and his Administration to work with our communities in establishing a new era of partnerships with faith- and community-based organizations dedicated to the measurable goal of reducing poverty by half in 10 years and ending childhood hunger by 2015.

Recommendation 2: Utilize the knowledge, expertise, and on-the-ground experience of local faith- and community-based organizations to redefine the Federal poverty guideline so that it more accurately measures and responds to the needs of low-income people.

Federal poverty measures shape our basic understanding of who lives in poverty in America. They compare an individual's or family's income with the amount believed necessary to meet a minimum standard of living. The official poverty measures, virtually unchanged since the 1960s, are deeply flawed. The standard is based on the cost of food and the assumption that individuals or families will spend one-third of all available income on food.

However, living costs and expenditures have changed dramatically since 1965. The modern American family spends just one-seventh of household income on food, whereas many other expenses, such as transportation, medical expenses, housing and childcare costs, have increased dramatically.

The inaccuracies of the Federal poverty levels have two major areas of impact on the work of faith- and community-based social service providers:

1. First, the Federal poverty guidelines impact the eligibility of those who can receive the social services our organizations provide. Poverty statistics directly affect the distribution of at least \$22 billion a year in Federal money, and over 50 federally assisted programs, for education, community development, basic nutrition and other purposes.³

We see the impact of the inaccuracies of these measures at our doorsteps, as our organizations are required to fill the gap to make up for the discrepancies of who is deemed eligible for benefits and who is in need of help. This is especially true in parts of the country where the cost of food, rent, and other basics are especially high, because the Federal poverty measures do not take these factors into consideration. For example, rents in Manhattan and in California are more than twice as high as rents in Southern and Plains States. But neither poverty index makes the distinction.

2. Second, the current poverty measures do not take into account the impacts of noncash benefits, like the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, known as SNAP (food stamps), the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), and childcare supports. Such noncash benefits encompass many of the services and benefits to which we help provide access. The current measures do not show a reduction in poverty when successful policies are expanded or an increase in poverty when they are contracted. Therefore, it is very difficult to measure the impact our programs and services are having on alleviating poverty in our communities. Without accurate understanding of the impact of policy and programmatic interventions, the social service sector is left without an accurate landscape to evaluate the effectiveness of our work and our partnership with the U.S. Government.

This second point takes on a new importance in the context of the Economic Recovery. New initiatives in the Recovery Act designed to help those most hurt by the recession, such as expansion of the EITC, child tax credits, or SNAP benefits, cannot be measured for their impact on poverty rates.

³ According to the Congressional Research Service's 2007 analysis, at least 57 federally assisted programs used poverty levels, typically determined under the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) poverty guidelines, in some way to determine program eligibility.



Changing the current poverty measures could be done through a new directive from the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

Considering the direct impact the Federal poverty measures have on the work of nonprofit social service providers, the Council recommends that the President direct OMB to meet with leading faith- and community-based social service leaders to discuss how to implement a more realistic measure of poverty utilizing the knowledge and expertise those organizations bring to the table.

Background and Explanation:

There are two main Federal poverty measures, both of which are seriously outdated and do not allow for an effective measurement of people’s basic needs. The poverty guidelines issued by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) are used to determine eligibility for most Federal income-tested programs. The Census Bureau also issues poverty “thresholds,” which are primarily used for statistical purposes. Both are based on the “Orshansky Poverty Thresholds,” which were first utilized in 1964 and adopted by the Bureau of the Budget (now OMB) for use in all Executive Departments in 1965. The Orshansky model is based on data on the cost of the “economy food plan” and the finding that families and individuals spend one-third of their after-tax income on food.

Living costs and expenditures have changed dramatically since 1965. Expenses such as transportation, medical expenses, housing, and childcare costs have increased dramatically. There are several ways to reevaluate the measurement of poverty. One would be to update the Orshansky model to account for more recent living costs. Another would be to look at “relative” poverty, as is the case in some European countries that measure poverty by setting it as a percentage of median income that reflects income inequality. Other approaches that adjust for geographical, in-kind benefits and other variations are part of the debate.

There have been a number of attempts to revise the definition (1969, 1972, 1976, and early 1990s) but without sufficient impact. Poverty measurement continues to be inaccurate. Reluctance to make the needed changes may, too often, have been based on political rather than policy considerations. There may be concern that the adoption of a new and more accurate measurement would show many more people in poverty than are found by the use of current measurements. These are not legitimate reasons for leaving this problem unaddressed. The current definition of poverty leaves true needs unanswered and leaves our Nation without the best policies to end poverty.

We hope the Administration will utilize the on-the-ground knowledge of faith- and community-based organizations to revise the inadequate current set of poverty guidelines.

Recommendation 3: Provide greater flexibility for the coordination and integration of government funds designated for specific program activities.

Federal agencies should develop rules and regulations to encourage and facilitate coordination and integration of programs and services. Agencies also should be mandated to be receptive to waiver requests or petitions for rulemaking changes that are aimed at facilitating coordination and integration.

A prime example of this integration of government funds designated for specific program activities is the resources available to community nonprofits and faith organizations to address the foreclosure crisis. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has encouraged partnership with faith- and community-based organizations through homeownership strategies, because they are often the best “early warning” system when families are facing financial difficulty. A number of Federal and State agencies and nonprofit organizations have developed foreclosure prevention programs to help homeowners who are having trouble with their home loans. Through this Federal funding, many families facing foreclosure get free housing counseling services by HUD-approved counselors, who have helped homeowners understand the law and their options, organize their finances, and represent borrowers in negotiations with their lenders. State Housing Finance Agencies have partnered with nonprofit counseling agencies, local governments, State housing departments, and lenders to provide comprehensive foreclosure prevention and mitigation strategies, such as MassHousing partnering with NeighborWorks.

Part of the Community Development Block Grant Program, the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), was established to stabilize communities that have suffered from foreclosures and abandonment. The NSP2 program includes \$1.93 billion authorized under the Recovery Act, to expand eligibility and provide grants to States, local governments, nonprofits, and a consortium of nonprofit entities on a competitive basis. This has been an important investment in positive steps to stanch the enormity of the impacts and challenges of the foreclosure crisis in communities across the country.



Background and Explanation:

In their efforts to improve the lives of low-income people and people of color, many faith-based organizations and community-based nonprofits take a comprehensive approach, offering an array of services and programs. This approach can include leveraging diverse resources from HUD, HHS, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Education, the Department of Labor (DOL), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and others. It can improve access, and frequently also improve outcomes as people are better able to access the services and programs they and their families need. However, rather than facilitating efficient coordination, Federal programs tend to include restrictive rules, either prohibiting integration of funds or erecting significant barriers to effective coordination.

The Administration's development of comprehensive and crosscutting programs in the community, such as Promise Neighborhoods and Choice Neighborhoods, is a step in the right direction. They offer a comprehensive solution to the issue of concentrated poverty in America—with revitalized housing, high-performing schools, robust social services, and employment opportunities. These programs are based on the realities of individual and community life and all their complexities. People do not live their lives in individual silos of housing, transportation, or health care.

Faith- and community-based partnerships' place-based efforts seek to reflect this reality. Instilling openness to needed adjustments for comprehensive efforts, to granting waiver requests, and to seeking to foster the engagement of faith- and community-based partnerships in comprehensive initiatives, holds the promise of decreasing poverty and advancing equity.

Recommendation 4: Support faith- and community-based organizations as a means to fill the gaps in providing essential services like transportation, housing, food assistance, job training, education, and health care for low-income families and individuals.

Faith- and community-based organizations provide critical supports and services for low-income families and individuals. Drawing on their knowledge of local community needs and cultures, faith- and community-based organizations provide a range of services including transportation, housing, health care, job assistance and job training. In order to provide these services, public (local, State, and Federal) resources are leveraged with additional funds from private, individual, and philanthropic sources. Despite their best efforts, particularly in the current economic climate, many faith- and community-based organizations cannot meet all the needs of low-income families and individuals, nor provide enough assistance to help change life circumstances.

Federal funding allows these organizations to provide essential services to those in need. For instance, faith- and community-based organizations rely on government support to run several important transportation programs, including Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program⁴ and Ways to Work that connect people to jobs outside transit services. These programs seek to fill the gap when public transit is not available. Without

⁴ JARC is a \$750 million program that was established to address the unique transportation challenges faced by welfare recipients and low-income persons seeking to obtain and maintain employment. Many new entry-level jobs are located in suburban areas, and low-income individuals have difficulty accessing these jobs from their inner city, urban, or rural neighborhoods. In addition, many entry level-jobs require working late at night or on weekends when conventional transit services are either reduced or do not exist. Many employment-related trips are complex and involve multiple destinations including reaching childcare facilities or other services. While States and public bodies are eligible designated recipients, subrecipients include nonprofit organizations. JARC provides capital planning and operating expenses for projects that transport low-income individuals to and from jobs and activities related to employment, and for reverse commute projects. See http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/grants_financing_3550.html and http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/FTA_JARC_Fact_Sheet_Sept05.pdf for more information.



public transit or the services provided by faith- and community-based organizations (with government support) low-income individuals and families will lose a critical link to connect them to jobs, job training, educational opportunities, and needed medical services. Additional Federal resources are needed to fill the gap for these and other essential services to ensure that the basic needs of low-income families and individuals can be met.

Background and Explanation:

Low-income families and individuals face a range of challenges in this economy. There is far greater need for essential services to meet basic needs and provide the tools to make longer-term improvements to life's outcomes. Although faith- and community-based organizations work diligently to combine and leverage resources from public, private, and philanthropic sources, more is needed. Resources are needed to provide essential services, create new jobs, and better connect low-income families and individuals to opportunity.

For instance, faith- and community-based organizations that offer specialized transportation services (e.g., vanpools and reverse commute programs) that help low-income people and people of color get to work, find new jobs, and receive services are being cut or severely scaled back. Resources are needed to mitigate these service cuts. By increasing operating funds for programs provided by many faith- and community-based nonprofits, such as JARC and the Ways to Work programs,⁵ we can create and save thousands of jobs and connect low-income families, welfare recipients, and residents to jobs, services, and economic opportunity.

Recommendation 5: Ease the burden on nonprofit social service agencies by removing barriers to service provision such as matching fund requirements, burdensome reporting and regulations, and slow payments and reimbursements.

Nonprofit social service agencies that are serving those most in need during the recession are also themselves under tremendous pressures as demand for their services rise and their income and fundraising decline.

⁵ The Ways to Work program began in the mid-1980s as a program to help single mothers in Minnesota move off and stay off welfare. It has evolved into the Nation's largest and most successful alternative to predatory auto loans for working poor families. Since the mid-1980s, Ways to Work has helped more than 26,000 families stabilize or improve their financial situation through over \$45 million in loan funds used for a variety of work-related purposes. About 95 percent of all Ways to Work loans are made for the purchase of used vehicles. For many low-income and poor families, a car is an earning asset, a critical piece of their family's operating equipment. The program and loan office is hosted by community-based human service nonprofits that are members of the Alliance for Children and Families. The local nonprofit plays an important role in informing and connecting with local residents, providing the staff, office space, and supervision, as well as operational and loss reserve funding. See http://www.waystowork.org/pages/Print%20Pages/pr_p_home.html for more information.

The economic recession has had a dramatic impact on our Nation's nonprofit service providers, forcing them to lay off thousands of staff and shutter entire programs—the very programs that the most vulnerable members of our society need more than ever.

Therefore, we recommend a series of measures to ease the burdens on nonprofit social service agencies:

A.) Where allowable, temporarily suspend matching funds for certain government grants.

The nonprofit sector employs over 9.4 million workers and 4.7 million full-time volunteers nationally, which constitutes roughly 11 percent of the American workforce. With this many employees, it is critical that the Federal Government provide an adequate response to keep these entities financially secure and functioning. In recent years, nonprofit agencies have had to raise more and more unrestricted private dollars to meet match requirements, administrative fees, and licensing and permit fees. Another way to characterize this situation is that while nonprofits are tax exempt, they are paying a “tax” to accept and administer government funds.

Nonprofit agencies that operate programs in partnership with Federal and State governments continue to experience dramatic cost increases to run these partnerships. In the wake of the current economic downturn, these escalating costs make it difficult to continue current services and extremely challenging to take advantage of funding opportunities. Many government contracts are structured with the assumption that small nonprofits will be able to identify local resources to cover and support the administration of these partnerships in an increasingly unstable economic climate.

Background and Explanation:

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B.) Eliminate burdensome reporting requirements.

The Federal Government should work to consolidate and simplify reporting requirements for funding under the Recovery Act. Recovery Act funds are urgently needed in local communities. However, nonprofits already managing multiple funding streams with competing requirements and multiple audits on different schedules are being required to produce additional documentation for the expenditure of these funds without any recognition of the increase in the administrative costs that are largely unfunded.



Background and Explanation:

With shrinking resources, too many nonprofits are being forced to cut staff and reduce programs all while attempting to satisfy burdensome reporting requirements. Nonprofits that do business with the Government have an exemplary track record of ensuring that funds go to people in need. However, government funding streams that do not recognize the cost to administer and deliver the services while simultaneously imposing significant requirements have placed agencies in a situation in which they are laying off staff in order to sustain the delivery of certain services.

The Government at all levels relies more and more on the “good will” of nonprofits in a continuing cost shift at a time when nonprofits are unable to raise sufficient funds to meet the demand.

C.) Ensure prompt payment to non-profits.

Federal funds, particularly Recovery Act funds, should include a “prompt pay” requirement from the States to their subcontractors. The Federal Government recognizes this requirement in its Federal contracting, and it is unreasonable that any organization should have to wait up to 9 months without payment. When payments are made, no interest is included. Many of these agencies use lines of credit that carry interest while waiting for payment. This interest then becomes an additional cost of doing business with the Government.

Background and Explanation:

As states continue to experience a budget crisis, more and more non-profits are bearing the brunt of the crisis. The effect on the non-profit community continues to be two-fold:

1. States and local municipalities are not paying current or recently ended contracts because of their own funding challenges, resulting in many nonprofits being owed substantial funds for services provided
2. Many nonprofits are experiencing significant reductions in State contracts for services that often result in the complete elimination of programs, especially prevention programs.

STRENGTHENING ACCESS TO BENEFITS

Faith- and community-based organizations are on the frontline striving to not only fill emergency gaps in income, food, and shelter, but also support families in their efforts to adapt to the realities and opportunities of a post-recession economy. Much of this work is undertaken in partnership with government including helping low-income people access income-enhancing government benefits, such as the EITC, SNAP (food stamps), veterans benefits, and various child nutrition programs.

Yet, far too many eligible families and individuals do not receive the benefits to which they are entitled,⁶ reducing the potential economic benefits for low-income communities, deepening the negative impacts of poverty on families, and making the work of faith- and community based organizations even more difficult. There are numerous barriers to access,⁷ including:

- Lack of information about who is eligible, the financial stakes, and how to apply;
- Complex and often inefficient application and enrollment procedures that are different for each benefit and require multiple visits to different government offices, long waits, and confusing eligibility documentation requirements;
- Stigma against public benefits as vestiges of welfare dependency; and
- Language and cultural barriers.

There is inadequate funding and capacity to meet the need for benefits, such as housing and child care subsidies outside of the three major entitlement programs (SNAP benefits, Medicaid, Medicare, and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP); and the EITC).



⁶ Jennifer Miller, Frieda Molina, Lisa Grossman, and Susan Golonka, *Building Bridges to Self-Sufficiency: Improving Services for Low-Income Families* (MDRC and the NGA Center for Best Practices: March 2004), at 14-15. See also Sheila Zedlewski, Gina Adams, Lisa Dubay, and Genevieve Kennedy, *Is There a System Supporting Low-Income Working Families? Low-Income Working Families*, Paper 4 (The Urban Institute: February 2006); Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Reaching Those in Need: State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates in 2007*, November 2008; Food Research and Action Center, *Food Stamp Access in Urban America: A City-by-City Snapshot*, October 2008; Sandra Jamet with Laura Seidell, Ben Seigel, and Rebecca Ross, *Benefits and Low Wage Work* (Seedco: September 2003).

⁷ Jamet, et al., 2003.

We urge the Administration to look to promising practices involving faith- and community-based organizations that are providing multiple-benefit access, and access to income support programs, through single-platform data collection, application, and benefit management technology, such as The Benefit Bank, EarnBenefits, eApp, and Single Stop USA programs.

The following recommendations are designed to enhance and facilitate the work of faith- and community-based organizations by increasing levels of access to existing income-enhancing government benefits for low-income families and individuals and capturing administrative efficiencies through the creation of a streamlined, people-centered multiple-benefit access system based in the community.

Recommendation 6: Create an interdepartmental taskforce to explore and oversee streamlining and consolidating the public benefits, eligibility, and application processes.

The overall structure of the benefits access system contributes to inadequate access and duplicative administrative costs. It is diffuse and generally designed to meet the short-term administrative needs of government bureaucracies – agency-centric rather than people-centric. The result is an overly complex system that is difficult to navigate for those most in need and on-the-ground faith and community organizations who serve them. In addition, many benefit eligibility rules exclude or severely limit the eligibility of non-custodial parents and single adults including legal immigrants, ex-offenders, returning veterans, and disconnected young adults.

We recommend the President establish an Inter-Departmental Task Force, including all the key agencies administering low income benefit programs such as Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Veterans Affairs, Treasury, and others, to explore opportunities for consolidating and simplifying benefits access. This could involve, for example, universal applications, multi-benefit access, and access to income support programs, through single platform data collection, application and benefits management technology, or administration through the income tax system.

EarnBenefits

<http://www.earnbenefits.org>

EarnBenefits uses a state-of-the-art technology tool, *EarnBenefits Online*, and facilitated enrollment services to connect low-income families and individuals to a range of income-enhancing public and private benefits, such as tax credits, food stamps, health insurance, and no-fee bank accounts. The program was initially launched in New York City in 2003 in partnership with the United Way of New York City and a network of over 20 faith- and community-based organizations.

EarnBenefits is now offered not only through local networks of community partners but through private employers, community colleges, local government agencies, and national intermediaries such as Catholic Charities USA.

In addition to New York, *EarnBenefits* is available in Connecticut, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Oklahoma, and Tennessee, with additional States scheduled for launch in 2010 and 2011. Since its inception, *EarnBenefits* has screened and connected low-income families to over 63,000 documented benefits totaling over \$69 million in value. *EarnBenefits* was developed and implemented by Seedco, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting economic opportunity for low-income people and communities.

The primary objective of *EarnBenefits* is to:

- Provide an online guide to both government and nongovernment programs that can help low-wage workers make ends meet and stay employed by connecting individuals and families to income-enhancing benefits.

EarnBenefits is specifically designed to work with clients in three stages:

- Marketing and education through user-friendly materials and a public Website, <http://www.earnbenefits.org>
- Eligibility screening and facilitated access
- Benefits management and coaching once clients access work supports.

The Benefit Bank

<http://www.thebenefitbank.com>

In Ohio, there is a statewide effort that empowers faith- and community-based organizations to connect low- and moderate-income families with tax credits, student financial aid, and other work supports. The Ohio Benefit Bank is a public-private partnership of the Ohio Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks, foundations, and multiple faith-based, nonprofit, governmental, and private-sector organizations. It provides low- to moderate-income Ohioans with free tax preparation, screens them for eligibility for supports, and helps them complete and submit applications electronically to public agencies.

The tool being used there is called The Benefit Bank (TBB). The tool has simplified the many complex tax and benefit forms, reducing them to simple questions written at a 4th-grade level. Once the information is entered, the TBB tool uses the information to assess the person's eligibility for about 20 work supports across 4 categories: medical assistance, tax assistance, food assistance, and community supports. The counselor then helps the client complete and submit the appropriate benefit applications and tax returns using TBB.

The primary objective of TBB is to:

- Simplify and centralize the process of applying for State and Federal income benefits for low- and moderate-income individuals and families in order to bring people closer to financial stability and self-sufficiency.

TBB ensures individuals and families are aware of State and Federal benefits at no cost to the client through its:

- Eligibility screening tool;
- "One-stop shop" reducing the amount of time needed to apply for benefits;
- Secure information storage; and
- Provision of counselor candidates, a computer, a printer, Internet access, and a telephone to any host organization that wishes to host TBB.

We further recommend the Inter-Departmental Task Force examine benefit eligibility and documentation requirements to achieve maximum alignment and consistency and ensure that certain key populations such as legal immigrants, non-custodial parents and disconnected young adults are not systematically excluded.

Recommendation 7: Expand single-site, multiple-benefit access programs, including those run through faith- and community-based organizations.

The limited government funding available to support benefits outreach and access initiatives is typically focused on specific single-benefit programs and does not promote multiple-benefit access.

We recommend the creation of a multiagency pooled fund to expand single-site, multiple-benefit access programs, including those run through faith- and community-based organizations. The pooled fund could represent agencies such as the Internal Revenue Service, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and USDA, as well as HHS and others. Funds would be used to:

1. Implement community programs providing application assistance for multiple-benefit and income supports through single-platform data collection technology; and
2. Build the necessary community-based volunteer and administrative infrastructure for single-site, multiple-benefit outreach and access programs.

The Strengthening Communities Fund administered by HHS represents one model targeted to small faith- and community-based groups. However, additional resources, such as a multiagency fund, will be needed for larger social service providers to expand single-site, multiple-benefit access.



Recommendation 8: Invest in the development and distribution of software applications to facilitate access to multiple benefits through online applications.

We recommend that the President encourage investment in the further development, evaluation, enhancement, and distribution of multiple-benefit and service access software technology appropriate for use by faith- and community-based counselors and the people they serve. Investment could be through the proposed Social Innovation Fund and other vehicles and should involve providing easier access to Federal, State, local, and private benefits.⁸ Innovation and improvements in technology are crucial for expanding benefit access. The current benefit access system is characterized by:

- Limited capacity for electronic submission of applications;
- Often duplicative collection of eligibility information;
- Single-benefit focus. (While impressive efforts have been made by Federal agencies to support outreach and enrollment efforts and to create incentives for State and local governments—such as the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) contingency fund—many of these are designed for single benefits and do not encourage multiple-benefit access initiatives);
- Limited auto-enrollment for individuals and families clearly eligible for benefits and services; and
- Limited funding for technology support for faith and community-based organizations prepared to help low income families and individuals navigate these complex systems.

Examples of existing software technology include The Benefit Bank, EarnBenefits, RealBenefits, and eAPP.

We also recommend that Federal agencies build and strengthen the capacity of and create incentives for State agencies administering Federal entitlement benefits to accept electronic and online applications, both directly from individuals and families as well as through faith- and community-based organizations and other entities on behalf of families and individuals. Examples of existing Web-based portals are found in New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. In order to maximize the receipt of applications, we further recommend that these Web-based portals allow for transfer of data from other benefit access software systems that meet certain technical specifications, similar to the Internal Revenue Service specifications for receipt of online tax returns.

⁸ Examples of private benefits are utility and pharmaceutical discounts.

Recommendation 9: Create incentives for State and local governments to maximize participation by eligible low-income families and individuals in income-enhancing benefits and to promote multiple-benefit access through faith- and community-based organizations.

Although it is appropriate for all levels of government to take necessary steps to avoid fraudulent receipt of benefits, it is equally appropriate, but far less prevalent, for government to proactively pursue enrollment in multiple benefits among those who are eligible.

We recommend that Federal agencies reexamine existing regulations and eligibility rules and, where appropriate, enact regulatory changes that create flexibility for States to simplify the application and eligibility process for Federal entitlement benefits. For example, Arkansas now uses information it captures in SNAP applications to process applications for Medicaid. Wisconsin automatically transfers information from online applications into a State database that allows agencies to expedite additional benefits. We further recommend creation of incentives, similar to TANF Contingency Fund, and provision of technical support to States for engaging faith- and community-based organizations in the work of achieving increased levels of benefit participation as well as multiple-benefit access.



FOCUS ON JOBS AND EDUCATION

In the area of Education and Job Preparedness, employment training and secondary education are key and largely carried out by community colleges, training institutions, and unions. However, nonprofit partners like faith- and community-based organizations also serve significant roles in providing education and training of “hard” skills like those vital in providing case management and “soft” skills (also called “people” skills). Soft skills training is often the element that ensures the individual successfully completes a related program and sustains employment after placement.

Recommendation 10: Incorporate supportive services with education and training opportunities, and ensure nonprofit accessibility and eligibility for Federal grant funding.

The United States is currently experiencing the most severe and pervasive economic downturn since the Great Depression. Today’s students will have 10 to 14 different jobs by age 38. One in four workers have been at their place of employment less than a year and one in two have been at their job less than 5 years. Through 2014, more than half of all new jobs will require more than a high school diploma and 22 of the 30 fastest growing career fields will require some post-secondary education. The top ten “in-demand” jobs of 2010 did not exist in 2004.

These figures, coupled with national high school graduation rates that see only one in four entering freshmen graduating with a diploma, are of high concern for the future U.S. workforce. Now, more than ever, the key to attaining jobs, moving people out of poverty, and competing in a rapidly changing global market is post-secondary education and specialized job training. In 2005, before the recession, the National Association of Manufacturers reported that 90 percent of manufacturers were experiencing a shortage of qualified skilled production employees, but only 53 percent of Americans earn some degree or credential after high school and for low-income people that number drops to 25.

Supportive services are not only critical to an individual learning a new skill, but also to sustaining employment. Nonprofits offer a continuum of services, including case management, which increases the stability of the individual to sustain employment. Faith- and community-based organizations have existing relationships with low-income working individuals and families.

Therefore, the Council makes the following recommendations:

1. Federal grants should include funding for education and training opportunities that mandate the provision of supportive services and explicitly specify the eligibility of faith- and community-based organizations in grant guidelines, particularly those related to DOL One-Stop Career Centers.
2. Support for faith- and community-based organizations should be increased to serve specific populations, such as the disabled and disconnected youth and young adults, that are not typically engaged in technical or vocational training, post-secondary education, or the job market.

Recommendation 11: Focus partnerships between education and training institutions and faith- and community-based organizations to better serve disadvantaged, displaced, and disconnected job seekers and to align worker skills with employer needs.

The Federal Government should mandate the alignment of resources and partnerships between:

1. Faith and community nonprofits (who are closest to those who need job training and access to work opportunities);
2. Education and training institutions; and
3. Public and private employers.

These local collaborations can help to create jobs and connect and prepare workers, especially disadvantaged workers, with training and available job opportunities in both the public and private sectors.

At the same time that the Federal Government is testing a more comprehensive approach to reaching the disadvantaged with education and training for job readiness, it should strengthen partnerships between employers, community colleges, unions, and faith- and community-based organizations to create an accessible, integrated continuum of services and available opportunities. A comprehensive approach is far more likely to be successful because it can provide the myriad of services and supports that will best serve the disadvantaged throughout their education and training. To ensure an inclusive Economic Recovery, Federal programs that create jobs and support training must ensure that the most disadvantaged and disconnected are prepared for and placed in available workforce opportunities, particularly any new green jobs created and/or incentivized by economic stimulus funding.

We also recommend that the Administration direct DOL to increase the number of faith- and community-based organizations that are considered eligible training providers under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. We further recommend that the Administration direct DOL to ensure that eligibility extends to the provision of training and support services for green jobs.

Pathways Out Of Poverty:

A Department of Labor Grant Program
<http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/eta/eta20100039.htm>

The Pathways Out of Poverty program administered by the Department of Labor integrates training and supportive services into cohesive programs that help target populations find pathways out of poverty and into economic self-sufficiency through employment in the energy efficiency and renewable energy industries.

The program was appropriated a 2-year Recovery Act allocation of approximately \$150 million. Through the 38 grants awards, targeted populations receive recruitment and referral services; basic skills, work-readiness, and occupational skills training; supportive services to help overcome barriers to employment; and other services at times and locations that are easily accessible. Through these programs, unemployed individuals, high school dropouts, and other disadvantaged individuals receive certifications and on-the-job training that lead to employment.

In order to serve the specific populations targeted by these grants effectively, the Department of Labor encouraged applicants to focus project efforts in communities located within one or more contiguous Public Micro Data Areas (PUMAs) where poverty rates were 15 percent or higher. PUMAs are geographic areas designated by the Census Bureau. All applicants were required to have experience serving economically disadvantaged populations.

The purpose of the Pathways Out of Poverty grants is to:

- Support programs that help disadvantaged populations find ways out of poverty and into economic self-sufficiency through employment in energy efficiency and renewable energy industries.

There are two types of award recipients for these grants:

- National nonprofit entities with networks of local affiliates, coalition members, or other established partners; and
- Local entities including nonprofit organizations, such as faith- and community-based organizations, the public workforce investment system, the education and training community, labor organizations, and employer- and industry-related organizations.

Recommendation 12: Utilize faith- and community-based organizations to bridge the gap from secondary education to post-secondary institutions and job training programs with a particular focus on disconnected youth.

The Federal Government should encourage and utilize faith- and community-based organizations to build bridges between secondary education and youth employment programs, post-secondary institutions, and vocational training programs, with a particular focus on disconnected youth who need targeted support, services, and opportunities. Interventions should be designed to increase their options and access to post-secondary education, to ensure their completion in tailored programs, and to equip them to both connect to the job market and successfully pursue long-term career pathways.

Therefore, the Council makes the following recommendations:

1. Support the development or expansion of educational “bridge” programs for disconnected youth and low-literacy high school graduates, to be operated by qualifying faith- and community-based organizations, and designed to directly deliver the remedial education necessary for success in post-secondary institutions, including traditional degree-bearing institutions and specialized vocational training programs. Identify the faith- and community- based organizations that operate existing, successful educational programs such as primary, secondary, or post-secondary institutions, and/or remedial education programs, and determine measures of support that would allow expansion of these services.
2. Pilot a mentoring program for disconnected youth and young adults modeled after the successful Mentoring Children of Prisoners program. In this program, young people who often “age-out” of a majority of federally funded supportive programs and services can obtain vouchers to participate in mentoring relationships that encourage post-secondary education through community colleges or 4-year colleges and universities or selected apprenticeships with skilled tradesmen.

These local collaborations can help to create jobs and connect and prepare workers, especially disadvantaged workers, with training and available job opportunities in both the public and private sector.

At the same time that the federal government is testing a more comprehensive approach to reaching the disadvantaged with education and training for job readiness, it should strengthen partnerships between employers, community colleges, unions, and faith and community based organizations to create an accessible, integrated continuum of services and available opportunities. A comprehensive approach is far more likely to be successful since it can provide the myriad of services and supports that will best serve the disadvantaged throughout their education and training. To ensure an inclusive economic recovery, federal programs that create jobs and support training must ensure that the most disadvantaged and disconnected are prepared for and placed in available workforce opportunities, particularly any new green jobs created and/or incentivized by economic stimulus funding.

We also recommend that the Administration direct the Department of Labor to increase the number of faith and community-based organizations that are considered eligible training providers under Title 1 of the Workforce Investment Act and ensure that eligibility extends to the provision of training and support services for green jobs.

Esperanza Academy Charter High School: Mentoring At-Risk Youth

<http://www.esperanza.us>

Esperanza Academy Charter High School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was established in 2000, and serves 700 students per year through high-quality education that empowers them for success in post-secondary education and long-term careers. Esperanza Academy serves 100% minority students, 18% of whom have limited English proficiency and 81% of whom are low income. Despite these factors, Esperanza Academy boasts an attendance rate of 90%, a graduation rate of 95%, and a college acceptance rate of 93%.

Esperanza Academy's success is due in large part to its unique, individualized approach to each student's education. Curricula are designed with career-oriented "tracks" in entrepreneurship, technology, teacher education, journalism, and the arts. Additionally, to promote early connection to post-secondary education, Esperanza Academy students can be dually enrolled at Eastern University or Esperanza College. Also, intensive tutoring services and mentoring are targeted to youth at risk of dropping out.

Esperanza Academy began its Student Mentoring Program in 2006 to pair at-risk students with an adult mentor who provides support, resources, and guidance. At the beginning of each school year, students are identified for participation in the program based on low grades and demonstrated social and behavior issues. Adult mentors serve onsite within the school building to provide continuous one-on-one support and to help these students get back on track academically and socially. Based on the last exit survey conducted by the guidance department at the end of the 2007 to 2008 year, the mentoring program was deemed a success. Nearly all students believed the mentoring program added to their success as a student and helped them improve their grades. Students were also unanimous in responding that the mentoring program helped them make improvements behaviorally or socially and that they enjoyed the time spent with their mentors.

The primary objectives of Esperanza Academy's Student Mentoring Program are to:

- Ensure at-risk students successfully complete secondary school;
- Improve students' achievement in social, behavioral, and academic areas; and
- Help at-risk students explore career opportunities and successfully transition to post-secondary education.

The Student Mentoring Program achieves these goals through:

- Early identification of at-risk students for program participation;
- Individualized, one-on-one mentor support; and
- Continuous onsite mentor presence.

Esperanza College

Esperanza College is a 2-year, associate of arts degree-awarding institution, credited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, and the only federally recognized Hispanic-serving institution in Pennsylvania. Since its founding, Esperanza College has awarded over 200 graduates with an associate of arts degree in Business Administration, Early Childhood Education, or Community and Human Services.

The student body at Esperanza College is 100% first-generation college students, 96% low income, over 90% Hispanic, and over half are working single parents. Additionally, a significant portion of Esperanza College students have limited English proficiency. Despite these challenges, Esperanza College has a 92.7% retention rate and a 64.1% graduation rate, which is almost double the national graduation rate for 2-year college programs and far exceeds estimates for other Hispanic-serving institutions in the United States. Of its graduates, 60% transition to 4-year institutions.

The success of Esperanza College can be credited in part to intensive remedial education services provided concurrently with credit-bearing courses. A majority of Esperanza College students enroll at a 9th-grade reading level. To ensure their success, all students are required to take intensive academic English courses throughout their tenure, in addition to their regular coursework. All students must take math and computer literacy courses appropriate to their level of functioning. Tutors are onsite to provide additional individualized attention.



Recommendation 13: Encourage collaboration between faith- and community-based organizations, community colleges, and the private sector.

Collaboration between the Federal Government, faith- and community-based organizations, and local community colleges is necessary for increased enrollment rates, successful completion rates, and job placement. Faith- and community-based organizations bring the community and cultural knowledge, the credibility, and the relationships that can support the disadvantaged throughout the education and training process. Additionally, many organizations in the private sector, such as banks and corporations, have foundations and other programs that can be effectively leveraged for relevant job training and mentoring. The Federal Government can play a key role by convening relevant stakeholders and prioritizing collaborative projects in their funding sources.

Therefore, the Council makes the following recommendations:

1. Consider faith- and community-based organizations as truly equitable partners in all aspects of the Federal Government's strategy to increase the number of graduates from 2-year associate's degree programs, beyond the role of serving as community liaisons. Considering faith- and community-based organizations as partners is especially true as it relates to the President's American Graduation Initiative and Community College Challenge funding. Private nonprofits that have established successful 2-year associate's degree colleges should be included as equitable education providers and full partners, particularly when institutions established by private faith-based nonprofits and other private nonprofits are meeting all of the Administration's goals for strengthening post-secondary education. These organizations should be allowed to both participate in the arenas generally limited to community colleges and compete for funding opportunities made available to community colleges, despite the fact that they are not State entities.



2. Provide funding for mentoring programs that link leaders from faith- and community-based organizations with disadvantaged students seeking education and training. Funding should include resources for mentors to be able to provide some support for education and training costs. Make grants available to faith- and community-based organizations or community colleges to develop local taskforces that convene relevant stakeholders to develop and expand collaborative work focused on the recruitment and retention of disadvantaged students in post-secondary education.
3. Explore ways to encourage the private sector to volunteer and participate in community development, and connect the job seekers with employers, such as through Community Reinvestment Act recognition for banks and through matching fund programs in the private sector. Private sector employers could work with faith- and community-based organizations to provide knowledge of, and job training in, the growth-oriented sectors of the economy. They also could share knowledge and resources for education needed to encourage self-employment and self-reliance (such as microenterprise, wealth creation, debt reduction, and entrepreneurs⁹).

⁹ The National Business Incubation Association at <http://www.nbia.org> for more information.



Fatherhood and Healthy Families

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Fatherhood and Healthy Families

INTRODUCTION

The President's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships is proud to submit the following recommendations for advancing fatherhood in America. We do so in full recognition of the fact that when fathers are present in the lives of their children, the foundations of our families are stronger and our communities are more robust.

President Obama powerfully stated the mission in a memorable speech delivered from the White House on Father's Day 2009:

In many ways, I came to understand the importance of fatherhood through its absence—both in my life and in the lives of others. I came to understand that the hole a man leaves when he abandons his responsibility to his children is one that no government can fill. We can do everything possible to provide good jobs and good schools and safe streets for our kids, but it will never be enough to fully make up the difference. That is why we need fathers to step up, to realize that their job does not end at conception; that what makes you a man is not the ability to have a child but the courage to raise one.

The President has strongly advocated for both responsible behavior and responsible policies—a perspective the Council fully shares.

We believe this Nation must support the capacity of fathers to raise their children; to stay actively engaged with them; and to be steady, positive, and loving models of commitment and support throughout their children's lives. Through innovative, strategic partnerships—partnerships that work with fatherhood organizations, programs, and experts—the Administration can advance its commitment to helping fathers be beacons of hope, stability, and leadership in their own families and communities.

This report identifies a wide variety of opportunities in the public and private sectors for collaboration and action that can be promoted by the Federal Government to support responsible fatherhood. We highlight ideas for reducing violence in general and domestic violence, in particular. We advocate for better education, job training, and overall employment policies. We are in favor of programs that help fathers with parenting skills, financial skills, navigating the child support system, family planning,¹ and maintaining

¹ "Family planning" is a broad term, and to the extent it includes programs that would involve the Government in funding or otherwise promoting contraception, some Council members would be opposed.

healthy marriages and other strong, positive relationships. We encourage expanded opportunities for volunteering and community service and suggest that community partners that support fatherhood initiatives should include women’s organizations and children and family-center organizations as well. And we urge that influential sports figures and celebrities, among others, be enlisted to help.

The charge of the Council was to develop recommendations for partnership and program opportunities that will strengthen the Administration’s commitment to promote fatherhood and the role of fathers in supporting healthy families. As such, this report does not address or compare the unique needs of mothers in strengthening healthy families, and the recommendations presented here are not intended to disadvantage or diminish the funding and promotion of programs that serve women and mothers.

CORE CONCEPTS

A single overarching conviction shaped our deliberations: **Responsible, engaged fathers are critical to the financial, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual well-being of children**, and therefore to the strength and health of American families and communities. Fathers are not just nice to have around; they are profoundly valuable and often irreplaceable in the lives of their children.

Additionally, these recommendations are grounded in the clear understanding that children’s well-being is materially advanced by strong, high-quality relationships between their parents. Supporting such relationships—healthy marriages and other stable, supportive relationships—advances the well-being of children and families.²

These recommendations are also informed by the recognition that responsible fatherhood not only requires deep dedication to one’s children and family, but also the determination to postpone becoming a father until one is adequately prepared to accept the full responsibilities of fatherhood. This perspective can also include fathers choosing to postpone having *additional* children if they are struggling to meet their responsibilities to their current children and families.³

KEY DATA ON FATHER-ABSENCE CRISIS IN AMERICA

Many statistics underscore the importance of addressing fatherhood in America in new and powerful ways, especially the importance of men taking responsibility for the children they father.

For example:

- In 2007, 40 percent of all births in America were to single women. For women 20 to 24, the figure is 60 percent.⁴
- Over 24 million children live in father-absent homes. That is 1 out of every 3 (32.7%) children in America. Nearly 2 in 3 (64%) African American children live in

² “Other stable, supportive relationships” is a broad term, and to the extent it includes extramarital sexual relationships, some Council Members would be opposed.

³ Some Council members would be opposed, to the extent that this would involve the government in funding or otherwise promoting contraception.

⁴ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, *National Vital Statistics System* (Washington, DC: 2009).



National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse

<http://www.fatherhood.gov>

The National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse (NRFC) is a service of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Office of Family Assistance (OFA), Department of Health and Human Services. The NRFC captures information about policies, priorities, trends, research findings, promising practices, and emerging lessons from the field of Responsible Fatherhood and helps key audiences translate that knowledge into policies and practices that make a difference for fathers, children, families, and communities. The NRFC collects and shares information that promotes and supports the Responsible Fatherhood field, and this clearinghouse specifically supports Promoting Responsible Fatherhood grantees funded by ACF.

The NRFC promotes and supports responsible fatherhood in an effort to advance the fatherhood movement and to support fathers and families. The long-term goals of the NRFC are to have its efforts help support the emergence of more well-functioning, economically independent families and stronger communities in line with the long-term goals of OFA—family self-sufficiency and economic independence.

The primary objectives of the NRFC are to:

- Promote responsible, caring, and effective parenting;
- Enhance the abilities and commitment of unemployed or low-income fathers to provide material support for their families and to avoid or leave welfare programs;
- Improve fathers' ability to effectively manage family business affairs; and
- Encourage and support healthy marriages and married fatherhood.

father-absent homes. Nearly 4 in 10 (36%) Hispanic children, and nearly 1 in 4 (25%) white children live in father-absent homes.

- Children in father-absent homes are five times more likely to be poor. In 2002, 7.8 percent of children in married-couple families were living in poverty, compared with 38.4 percent of children in female-householder families.⁵
- Children who live in father-absent homes, on average, are at least two to three times more likely to use drugs; to experience educational, health, emotional, and behavioral problems; to be victims of child abuse; to become teen parents; and to engage in criminal behavior.⁶
- In America, 91 percent of fathers and 93 percent of mothers agree that there is a father-absence crisis here.⁷

CONTEXT

The Council recommendations are shaped by several key realities shaping fatherhood in America today. In particular, the current economic downturn directly compromises the essential role that fathers play in achieving economic stability for their children and families. It is especially hard for fathers who are trying to do the right thing to maintain their dignity and motivation in the face of both unemployment and underemployment.

Similarly, the pervasive and growing presence of poverty in America directly bears on the fatherhood area as both a cause and a consequence of disconnected or absent fathers. Efforts to support fathers and to engage them fully in their families' lives will make a major contribution to reducing poverty in America. Put another way, any comprehensive effort to combat poverty should include supporting responsible fatherhood.

In addition, it is essential to recognize that men's health challenges also have a direct impact on their

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, *Children's Living Arrangements and Characteristics: March 2002*, P20-547, Table C8. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2003).

⁶ Father Facts, Fifth Edition. National Fatherhood Initiative. Gaithersburg, MD: 2007

⁷ Norval Glenn, *Pop's Culture: A National Survey of Dads' Attitudes on Fathering*. National Fatherhood Initiative. Gaithersburg, MD: 2006, and Norval Glenn and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, *Mama Says: A National Survey of Mothers' Attitudes on Fathering*. National Fatherhood Initiative (Gaithersburg, MD: 2009).



ability to be good, present fathers and members of their families. This simple observation underscores the important connection between health care reform and fatherhood.

There are also a number of particular life circumstances that complicate the task of being a responsible father. For example, for men who have grown up fatherless or who did not have a positive male role model to teach them, responsible fatherhood doesn't just "happen." Some men need to be taught essential qualities and skills such as nurturing, patience, compassion, self-control, and respect for women. They need to reject domestic violence. In some cases, fathers can only fulfill their potential by receiving special support, education, and mentoring on these and other issues.

Military fathers are another group that merits special, focused help in order to stay well connected to their children and families while they are deployed. They also benefit from support when they rejoin their families upon their return.

In addition, noncustodial and incarcerated fathers benefit a great deal from special assistance—often provided by faith-based organizations—in staying constructively engaged in the lives of their children and families.

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Convene quarterly White House Partnership Roundtables to encourage a broad variety of sectors, including private foundations and corporations, to form partnerships with existing fatherhood groups and experts to address specific areas in which increased father involvement can strengthen the well-being of children in America.

Recommendation 2: Host an annual Father's Day Celebration at the White House to honor exemplary fathers and to highlight advances in father involvement resulting from the Government's interdepartmental working groups and the strategic partnerships formed at the quarterly roundtables.

Recommendation 3: Continue to personally affirm the important role of fathers, and continue to model the life of a committed husband and father.

Recommendation 4: Challenge government departments and agencies to cross departmental lines and create working groups to assess and address their policies that affect fathers' involvement in the lives of children.

Recommendation 5: Increase participation of Federal agencies in the funding of fatherhood programming, especially in areas of critical importance.

Recommendation 6: Invest in high-quality program evaluation in order to help the fatherhood field define and increase its impact on specific measures and in so doing, increase public understanding of and support for this critical work.

Recommendation 7: Develop fatherhood tools and products that are culturally and linguistically relevant.

Recommendation 8: Engage the academic community in developing curricula to train aspiring health and human service professionals to better meet the needs of fathers.

Recommendation 9: Ensure that programming for couples' employment training, job placement, and financial literacy are allowable activities under federally funded fatherhood, healthy relationship, and healthy marriage grants.



INCREASING FATHER INVOLVEMENT THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

These recommendations share a framing vision that encourages Federal Government agencies to be infused with responsible fatherhood as a means to more effectively achieve their respective missions. We believe that emphasizing responsible fathering as a core message of this Administration offers an opportunity to dramatically improve the impact of many of its policies and to create a legacy that will be felt for generations to come.

Recommendation 1: Convene quarterly White House Partnership Roundtables to encourage a broad variety of sectors, including private foundations and corporations, to form partnerships with existing fatherhood groups and experts to address specific areas in which increased father involvement can strengthen the well-being of children in America.

Background and Explanation:

For several decades, the field of responsible fathering has been developing, helped in part by the infusion of modest government investment beginning in the 1990s. However, much of this work has been done either in isolation or without the consistent and significant partnerships and revenue streams that lead to optimal long-term results. If the current Administration can help infuse “fathering” into other key sectors of American culture by encouraging the formation of strategic partnerships, it will brighten the futures of children, families, and our Nation.

As one example, the National Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) has been actively involving parents in their children’s education for more than 100 years; yet, the vast majority of their membership is women. Having seen the research and observed first-hand that dads have a significant impact on the educational outcomes of their children, PTA leadership recently reached out to existing fathering organizations and created the MORE (Men Organized to Raise Engagement) alliance. Working together, this partnership is engaging fathers—a committed, yet untapped resource—to help attain their ultimate goal of improving educational achievement.



A quarterly White House Partnership Roundtable would target sectors where addressing and involving fathers offers significant promise. The President and the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships should invite the key leaders of a given sector to meet at the White House, including representatives from private and corporate foundations. Participants would be briefed on the important role of fathers, have an opportunity to engage with their peers and fathering experts, and then be challenged to take action and report on their progress over time. Foundations, corporations, and others should be challenged to provide financial support for fathering initiatives. Some suggested sectors that could be convened along this model include:

- Education
- The Military
- Early Childhood
- Faith Communities
- Prisons and Re-entry
- Academia
- Medicine & the Health Professions
- Community, Family and Domestic Violence Organizations
- The Workplace and Workforce Development
- Women’s Organizations
- Private and Corporate Foundations
- The Sports and Entertainment World

The President can extend the reach and impact of these Partnership Roundtables throughout a given sector and more broadly by writing letters to other leaders that would challenge them to take action in order to encourage and support father involvement within their respective spheres of influence. Recipients may include, for example, leaders of religious denominations; the Fortune 500; the 100 Best Companies to Work for; top colleges and universities; members of the Council on Foundations; the 100 largest nonprofit organizations; women’s and fraternal organizations; community, family, and domestic violence organizations; and elected officials and civic leaders including Governors, Mayors, and State Legislators. Established fathering organizations would provide technical assistance to the partnerships.

Recommendation 2: Host an annual Father’s Day Celebration at the White House to honor exemplary fathers and to highlight advances in father involvement resulting from the Government’s interdepartmental working groups and the strategic partnerships formed at the quarterly roundtables.

Background and Explanation:

The President has established a personal tradition of using Father’s Day to build awareness of the important role of fathers and to call men to fulfill their responsibilities as fathers and father figures. By devoting a full day to the topic of fathering and by convening a White House gathering on the weekend of his first Father’s Day in office, the President signaled the importance of this topic to him personally and to his Administration. Continuing and expanding this tradition offers great potential to ensure that engaged fathering remains a high priority for fathers, sector leaders, the U.S. Government and the American public.

The annual Celebration of Fathers could include the following:

- Recognition of exemplary fathers, grandfathers, stepfathers, adoptive fathers, military fathers, and other father figures;

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- Recognition of important progress made toward goals that are influenced by the involvement of fathers (e.g., educational testing results and graduation rates, teen pregnancy rates, and children living with two parents);
 - White House recognition of the leaders of intradepartmental and interdepartmental working groups and the strategic partnerships formed at Sector Roundtables;
 - Letters, commendations, and proclamations that honor the leaders and teams of other exemplary efforts to improve the well-being of children by involving fathers;
 - A Presidential address to fathers about the joys of fatherhood and the importance of fulfilling their personal responsibilities; and
 - An invitation by the President to every father (through sectors identified above) to join him in making a formal commitment or pledge to be the father his children need; this step must include a method for counting the commitments made.

Recommendation 3: Continue to personally affirm the important role of fathers, and continue to model the life of a committed husband and father.

Background and Explanation:

The President's personal experience contributes significantly to his ability to speak deeply, credibly, and powerfully on the importance of fathering. Because he shares the wounds of father absence with many fathers who are currently disconnected from their children, the President can challenge them to "step up," even in the face of many barriers, to fulfill their responsibilities as fathers. With these credentials and his personal commitment, increasing the proportion of children growing up with engaged fathers may offer the President the single biggest opportunity for a legacy that will extend for generations.

The impact of the President's actions and words about his personal commitment to being a good husband and father has already demonstrated the value of his personal example. He should continue to capitalize on both informal and formal opportunities (e.g., the State of the Union Address and Prayer Breakfasts) to reinforce and model his commitment. Opportunities include the following:

- Modeling involved fatherhood by taking time to be with his daughters at home, school, and work and by participating in their activities;
- Highlighting the importance of fathers maintaining appropriate work-family balance and modeling it for White House staff, government employees, and the American people; and
- Using Public Service Announcements to challenge men to be involved fathers and grandfathers to their children, and to reach out and be father figures to children in their spheres of influence whose fathers are absent.

Given the important role of mothers in encouraging fathers, the First Lady should also be invited to speak out about how important good fathering is to her personally as well as to the success of her efforts to support military families, to help working women balance career and family, and to encourage national service.

Recommendation 4: Challenge government departments and agencies to cross departmental lines and create working groups to assess and address their policies that affect fathers' involvement in the lives of children.

Background and Explanation:

The vast majority of fathers want to be involved in the lives of their children, but many of them face obstacles to greater involvement.⁸ Some of the most common barriers include a lack of fathering skills, employment, stable housing, or access and visitation. Other critical obstacles facing some fathers who would like to be more involved dads include military service, child support, incarceration, and reentry. In addition, violence, particularly preventing and addressing family violence and abusive relationships, as well as exposure to community violence, presents a unique set of challenges. As such, fatherhood programming must be prepared to address these challenges in partnership with community, family, and domestic violence prevention and intervention programs and services. Helping families address these challenges requires strategies that bridge the responsibilities of multiple government agencies.

At the Federal level, the Office of Child Support Enforcement and the Departments of Justice and Labor might work together to connect fathers and children while increasing employment and child support collections. One innovative model of this kind of partnering across agency lines is Fathering Courts. Fathering Courts are programs that offer fathers who have not been making child support payments a chance to make a fresh start.

The program helps to increase child support payments through partnerships involving Child Support, the Courts, employment services, community colleges, health services, and other governmental and community-based support services. In Fathering Courts, the prosecutor agrees to defer prosecution while dads access services that result in gainful employment and a newfound ability to pay child support. Fathering classes inspire and equip the fathers to be effectively engaged in the lives of their children. This is one example of where a cross-sector approach, which requires engagement



Fathering Courts: A Program of the National Center for Fathering
<http://www.fathers.com>

Fathering Courts present a powerful family-strengthening alternative to the prosecution and incarceration of men with significant child support arrearages. Especially important in challenging economic times, it saves communities millions of dollars in actual expenditures. And especially important for our Nation's fabric and future, its programs strengthen fathers' capacity to play positive and steadfast roles in their children's lives. Fathering Courts promise better outcomes for two generations simultaneously. Fathers learn to develop lifelong skills such as better relationships with their children and children's mothers, how to maintain meaningful employment, and how to provide consistent financial support to their families through a 13-week fathering class. In the long term, Fathering Courts benefit the community by reducing financial costs typically associated with delinquent child-support payments.

The primary objectives of Fathering Courts are to:

- Increase the number of fathers who contribute financially and emotionally to their children; and
- Help men successfully overcome the challenges that have led to their nonpayment of child support through:
 - Needs assessment and skills development;
 - Case management;
 - Counseling and treatment;
 - Peer support and curriculum for fathers;
 - Health and education services for children;
 - Employment assistance; and
 - Connecting dads and moms to necessary resources.

⁸ Norval Glenn, *Pop's Culture: A National Survey of Dads' Attitudes on Fathering*. National Fatherhood Initiative (Gaithersburg, MD: 2006).

from different branches of government, is having a tremendous impact on the lives of fathers and their children.

Additional intradepartmental and interdepartmental working groups we suggest are listed below with proposed objectives:

- The Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs → Assist long-distance dads and reentering dads.
- The Departments of Justice, Labor, Housing and Urban Development and Child Support Enforcement → Ensure that reentering dads can find jobs in order to fulfill their child support orders and housing to provide stability.
- The Departments of Education and Commerce → Increase father involvement in education, and improve educational outcomes of the future working population.
- The Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education → Reduce the number of unintended pregnancies,⁹ and increase the number of children growing up with the support and involvement of both parents.
- The Department of Health and Human Services, the White House Council on Women and Girls, the White Office advisor on Violence against Women and the Department of Justice → Reduce family violence.

Each of these working groups would be challenged by the President to identify common goals and solutions to increase responsible father involvement in the lives of children. Progress toward these goals would be reported to the President regularly for accountability and recognition.

InsideOut Dad™: A Program of the National Fatherhood Initiative <http://www.fatherhood.org/insideoutdad>

InsideOut Dad™ is a reentry program for inmates who are fathers and has shown much success. The curriculum strives to connect inmates to their families and restore broken relationships by reaching out to men on the Inside while preparing them for life after incarceration on the Outside. Connecting inmates to their families is an essential part of the reentry process, and this program changes lives as it restores broken relationships. The curriculum includes a facilitator's guide, activities manual, CD-ROM with evaluation tools, and handbooks the dads are permitted to keep.

Two independent, third-party evaluations of National Fatherhood Initiative's InsideOut Dad™ program for incarcerated fathers (which is used in over 200 correctional facilities in all 50 States and has been standardized by 19 State departments of corrections) found that fathers significantly increased their knowledge of and improved attitudes about fathering. For example, fathers were more likely to report knowing how their children were doing in school and knowing with whom their children spend time than men who were not in the program. And many fathers increased the frequency of contact with their children. Moreover, preliminary data from the Indiana Department of Corrections indicate that the use of InsideOut Dad™ and 24/7 Dad™ (another National Fatherhood Initiative program) as part of a comprehensive reentry program has led to recidivism rates of 20% or lower.

The chief objective of InsideOut Dad™ is to:

- Connect inmates to their families to prepare them for release from incarceration and improve the attitudes of participants about fathering.

The InsideOut Dad™ curriculum carries out its mission by helping inmates:

- Explore and heal from their past;
- Develop healthy emotions;
- Reconnect with their families; and
- Plan for the future.

⁹ To the extent that this proposal would involve the government in funding or otherwise promoting contraception, some Council Members would be opposed.

Recommendation 5: Increase participation of federal agencies in the funding of fatherhood programming, especially in areas of critical importance.

First, the Council believes that it is critical that the fatherhood programming through the Administration for Children and Families continues. A report from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, “Emerging Findings from the Office of Family Assistance Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Grant Programs: A Review of Select Grantee Profiles and Promising Results” (September 2009), shows early signs that the fatherhood programming grantees are effectively serving fathers and families.

Also, other sources of funding for fatherhood programming, such as the Second Chance Act, Edward Byrne Memorial Competitive Grant Program, the 1115 waivers program through the Office of Child Support Enforcement, and the Administration for Children and Families Compassion Capital Fund, should also continue.

However, there is a lot of room for the other Federal agencies to use existing grant programs or to create new ones to expand the Federal Government’s role in funding fatherhood work.

The Council believes that there is an especially critical need for programming in the following areas:

- Promoting the involvement of dads in their children’s education;
- Employment services for men and fathers;
- Programming for military fathers and families; and
- Programming for incarcerated fathers and reentry;
- Programming for fathers involved in the Child Support System;
- Mentoring programs for boys, men, and fathers; and
- Programming and resources to reduce unintended pregnancies and promote responsible decision making by both men and women about when and whether to become a parent.

Please see APPENDIX for a further explanation of the importance of these areas of focus.

In each of these areas, the appropriate Federal agency or partnering agencies could do more to fund and promote programs that target the well-being of children and the role of their fathers.

For example, given the connection between involved fatherhood and reduced recidivism rates,¹⁰ the Department of Justice should do more to fund programs that serve incarcerated

¹⁰ This information is based on preliminary data from an evaluation of the National Fatherhood Initiative’s InsideOut Dad™ program being conducted by the Indiana Department of Corrections. See also Nancy La Vigne, Elizabeth Davies, Tobi Palmer, and Robin Halberstadt. *Release Planning for Successful Reentry: A Guide for Corrections, Service Providers, and Community Groups* (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute; The Annie E. Casey Foundation), 2008; also Jeremy Travis, Amy L. Solomon, and Michelle Waul, *From Prison to Home: The Dimensions and Consequences of Prisoner Reentry* (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 2001).

WATCH D.O.G.S.: A Program of
the National Center for Fathering
<http://www.fathers.com>

WATCH D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students) involves fathers and father figures in schools as an unobtrusive security presence and as adult male role models. In 2008 to 2009, more than 75,000 dads served at least 1 day as a Watch D.O.G., positively influencing the lives of over 400,000 children. WATCH D.O.G.S., a program of the National Center for Fathering and a partner in the National PTA's M.O.R.E. (Men Organized to Raise Engagement) alliance, currently has programs in more than 1,350 schools in 36 States. WATCH D.O.G.S. volunteers are given the opportunity to become more engaged in the lives of their children and/or students through unique involvement within the school system and, in turn, to become positive male examples to students.

The primary objective of WATCH D.O.G.S. is to:

- Help every school in America be positively influenced by the committed involvement of fathers and father figures in lives of their children and students.

WATCH D.O.G.S. carries out its mission specifically through:

- Inviting fathers, grandfathers, uncles, or other father figures to volunteer at least one full day at their child's school during the school year. WATCH D.O.G.S. volunteers are involved in a myriad of tasks while volunteering, including monitoring the school entrance, assisting with unloading and loading of buses and cars, monitoring the cafeteria, or helping in the classroom with a teacher's guidance by working with small groups of students on homework, flashcards, or spelling;
- Having father figures sign up at a kickoff event, such as a "Dads and Kids Pizza Night" or "Donuts with Dad," or in the office at any time throughout the school year; and
- Partnering a "Top Dog" volunteer with the school administrator to coordinate scheduling and identify opportunities for Watch D.O.G.S. to provide assistance at the school.

and reentering fathers. In light of the unique challenges facing military fathers and families, the Department of Defense can become more involved in funding programs to get resources and training to military fathers. In the Department of Labor, the proposed FY 2010 budget includes a measure that would create a dedicated funding stream to provide transitional job opportunities to noncustodial parents, among other target populations, who owe child support.

Groups such as the Interagency Working Group and the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention can convene meetings to discuss and recommend specifically how the agencies can use existing grant programs or create new ones to fund fatherhood.

The Centers for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the agencies can gather to discuss and recommend how both financial and nonfinancial mechanisms can be used or created to increase agency involvement in fatherhood.

The Office of Management and Budget also can be encouraged by the White House to identify opportunities for relevant grant programs to be administered in a way that allows fatherhood programs to compete for funding.

Finally, the White House can use directives to encourage the agencies to address the "father factor" in the work they do.

Recommendation 6: Invest in high-quality program evaluation in order to help the fatherhood field define and increase its impact on specific measures and in so doing, increase public understanding of and support for this critical work.

The White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships should encourage the investment of Federal funds in evaluating a range of fatherhood interventions so that the field can grow in its overall quality and impact. Evaluation should be structured in a manner that fosters collaboration among fatherhood practitioners and program evaluators, helping move the field toward even greater evidence-based programming.

Background and Explanation:

The fatherhood field is at a stage in its development in which it is critical for evidence to be provided about the effectiveness of its work. There is little doubt about the need to connect fathers with their children, but questions remain about the most effective approaches to fostering those connections.

Some preliminary data are encouraging. According to a report from the Department of Health and Human Services, “Emerging Findings from the Office of Family Assistance Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Grant Programs: A Review of Select Grantee Profiles and Promising Results” (September 2009), several Office of Family Assistance Responsible Fatherhood Grantees are showing positive results 3 years into their projects. For example, an evaluation of The South Carolina Center for Fathers and Families Promoting Responsible Fatherhood Project found, among other things, that 63 percent of participants unemployed at program intake obtained employment; 27 percent of those who were employed at intake increased their earnings; and 79 percent of participants who had child support arrearages decreased their arrearages. An evaluation of the Jefferson County Fatherhood Initiative found that participants reported and maintained statistically significant gains in effective communication skills, interpersonal skills, and relationship satisfaction.

Two independent, third-party evaluations of the National Fatherhood Initiative’s InsideOut Dad™ program for incarcerated fathers found that fathers significantly increased their knowledge of and improved attitudes about fathering. For example, fathers were more likely to report knowing how their children were doing in school and knowing with whom their children spend time than men who were not in the program. And many fathers increased the frequency of contact with their children. Moreover, preliminary data from the Indiana Department of Corrections indicates that the use of InsideOut Dad™ and 24/7 Dad™ as part of a comprehensive reentry program has led to recidivism rates of 20 percent or lower.

Men Engaged in Nonviolence, Inc.

<http://www.nonviolentmen.org>

Men Engaged in Nonviolence, Inc. (MEN), began in Taos, New Mexico, in 2004, as a grassroots movement in response to domestic, youth, and criminal violence in the Taos community—violence that was overwhelmingly perpetrated by males. A great need was identified to uplift the principle of males being able to value and practice nonviolence. MEN has discovered that it is much more effective to promote and model nonviolence rather than to “fight” violence. The program focuses on giving at-risk and high-risk boys what they greatly need in their lives, but do not have: a healthy male role model. This opportunity to fulfill a need gives grown men the chance to connect with the youth of today, to become trained in the critical issues, and to be of service. MEN strives to work with the boys over the long term so that they grow up to become healthy, productive, and nonviolent men, which in turn means that they can be responsible fathers.

Teaching stress management, conflict resolution, and nonviolent communication, as well as helping fathers overcome alienation and anger, MEN empowers men and mobilizes fathers to leave behind physical and sexual violence by respecting themselves and connecting with their families, developing integrity, and pulling other men along with them in valuing the well-being of others in healthy communities.

The primary objective of MEN is to:

- Inspire, train, and empower men and boys to lead lives of nonviolence with the belief that boys who grow to be nonviolent men lay the essential foundation to become good fathers.

MEN carries out its mission through these programs:

- Teaching parenting skills (through National Fatherhood Initiative’s 24/7 Dad™, Siempre Papa™, and Doctor Dad™ programs)
- One-on-one mentoring to young fathers
- Therapeutic groups for fathers of all ages
- Mental health counseling
- Legal guidance
- Career development

P.E.A.C.E. Initiative

<http://www.peaceinitiativesatx.org>

The P.E.A.C.E. Initiative (Putting an End to Abuse through Community Efforts) is a San Antonio, Texas, coalition of public and private institutions, grassroots organizations, and individuals working collaboratively to end family violence. In 2004, they forged a partnership with the San Antonio Fatherhood Campaign that is a collaboration designed to teach males how to become better and more involved fathers through a combination of direct service programs and activities that support developing responsible nonviolent parenting skills, teaching about the dynamics of family violence, and connecting fathers and families to community-based support and resources.

In 2009, the P.E.A.C.E. Initiative began the White Ribbon Campaign San Antonio, which invites all men who are serious about taking a stand against violence toward women and girls to wear white ribbons. Men who wear a white ribbon make a personal pledge to never commit, condone, or remain silent about violence against women and girls. Wearing a white ribbon is a way of saying, "Our future has no violence against women."

The main objective of the P.E.A.C.E. Initiative is to:

- Educate the public about the extent and often deadly consequences of domestic violence and to respond effectively through collaborative efforts.

This organization works to end family violence through:

- Education trainings on domestic violence issues;
- Coalition building;
- Community organizing;
- Advocacy;
- Outreach; and
- Systems change work with the media, artists, policymakers, survivors, community leaders, and so on.

Additionally, fathers involved in the National Center for Fathering's WATCH D.O.G.S.® (Dads of Great Students) program showed significant gains in their involvement in their children's lives, according to an independent, third-party evaluation. Surveys taken at the beginning and end of the school year showed that WATCH D.O.G.S. dads increased their involvement in both educational activities as well as unrelated activities at home. A Department of Education study in 1997 suggests that increased paternal involvement in education will result in improved educational outcomes, but future studies will need to confirm this.

Given these promising early indications that a diverse set of approaches to reaching and serving fathers is working, additional evaluations should be aggressively funded in order to provide deeper, broader data on the most effective approaches that will positively connect fathers to their children and families.

The Federal Government can help to produce valuable evaluations of the fatherhood field by investing in high-quality program evaluations that examine the effectiveness of fatherhood programs and services across agencies and throughout the field. Program evaluations of current and future responsible fatherhood grants should be structured by the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation and other Department evaluators in a manner that fosters collaboration among practitioners and program evaluators.

These evaluations should not only identify effective programs but also best practices that can shape the future of the field. To facilitate this process, HHS, in conjunction with the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, can convene a series of discussions with leading fatherhood practitioners and researchers to identify research needs and barriers, address concerns of each party, and build trust and consensus among these distinct communities.

Additionally, program evaluations should be administered throughout the Federal Government for those agencies whose systems and programs serve or interact with a high quantity of men who may need fatherhood services. These programs may

be directly or indirectly focused on fatherhood and include Department of Labor workforce development programs, Department of Justice reentry and fathering court programs, and child support enforcement initiatives. The goal of these evaluations should not only be to assess the effectiveness of individual programs but should also be to identify the full range of service needs of fathers and to coordinate service delivery for fathers and their families.

Recommendation 7: Develop fatherhood tools and products that are culturally and linguistically relevant.

Cultural and linguistic challenges occur for many new Americans and people of color. According to an issue brief prepared by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, African American, Latino, and Native American children are more likely to live in single-parent families. The 2007 data show that 65 percent of non-Hispanic Black children, 49 percent of Native American children, and 37 percent of Hispanic children reside in single-parent homes. The same issue brief cites research indicating the tougher challenges that fathers of color face in being involved, responsible, and committed fathers.

Similarly, as President Obama pointed out, “new Americans and refugees still face language barriers and have significant challenges.”¹¹

As Fatherhood programming and resources are developed, the needs of all client populations need to be taken into consideration. Fathering resources, such as those promoted through www.fatherhood.gov should include culturally and linguistically relevant information, including resources that are translated into Spanish and other languages.

Recommendation 8: Engage the academic community in developing curricula to train aspiring health and human service professionals to better meet the needs of fathers.

We recommend that the White House, with involvement from HHS and the Department of Education, convene a series of meetings to engage the academic community to develop curricula to train aspiring health and human service professionals to better meet the needs of fathers. Invitees should include the American Medical Association, the National Association of Social Workers, the American Public Human Services Association, and educators from the top colleges and universities. The objective of these meetings should be to educate and encourage participants to cultivate the development of health and human service professionals who are fully cognizant of the importance of and the strategies required for meeting the needs of fathers.

Background and Explanation:

Historically, the services provided by health and human service professionals have been geared toward providing supports for mothers and their children. Although such work must continue, a growing body of research is showing the importance of providing complementary or comparable services to fathers in order to more fully engage them in the lives of their children and families. Therefore, “culture change” is necessary within the health and human services professions so that there is a broader recognition of the critical role that fathers play in child, family, and community well-being. This kind of change must start in the earliest stages of an aspiring professional’s education in the field.

In 2003, researchers from the Yeshiva University School of Social Work conducted an assessment of the degree to which academic social work literature addressed the social

¹¹ See *Remarks by the President at AAPI Initiative Executive Order Signing and Diwali Event* (available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-aapi-initiative-executive-order-signing-and-diwali-event>).

service needs of fathers and prepared social work students to respond to the needs of fathers through social service programs. The results of the review indicated that there is a significant research and information gap concerning the support service needs of fathers.

Lack of awareness among medical and social service practitioners about the needs of fathers may lead to service program designs that do not consider the impact of fathers in their psychosocial assessment of children or that are viewed by fathers as disparaging or apathetic. This perception might cause some fathers to be reluctant to seek support services.

To the potential detriment of fathers and families, social service programs have not been designed to address the emotional strain of divorced fathers separated from their children, emotional or resource support needs of single-parent fathers, engaging noncustodial and adolescent fathers in the lives of their children, or a range of other support needs particular to fathers.

Expanding health and social work education and training to include fathers is an important step in ensuring that service delivery programs are designed with the needs of fathers as well as mothers and children in mind. Schools of social work must develop and infuse father-focused curricula throughout all levels and areas of their programming as new generations of social service practitioners are trained.

Additionally, current physicians, social workers, and social service practitioners can be directed to learn about the role of fatherhood and needs of fathers through professional conferences and agency staff training sessions. An example of this is the Father Friendly Check-up™ workshop, developed by National Fatherhood Initiative. The workshop helps agencies and organizations improve their performance in leadership and organizational philosophy; policies and procedures; program, service, and product content; physical environment; staff orientation and training; social marketing strategies; and community service.

Recommendation 9: Ensure that programming for couples' employment training, job placement, and financial literacy are allowable activities under federally funded fatherhood, healthy relationship, and healthy marriage grants.

We recommend that the White House ensure that allowable activities of Federal responsible fatherhood and healthy relationships and healthy marriage funds include “couples employment programs.” These programs provide both partners in committed relationships with employment training, job placement, financial literacy, and other financial supports in conjunction with core responsible fatherhood and healthy relationships and marriage training.¹²

Background and Explanation:

Economic factors such as limited financial resources and unemployment can serve as barriers to both responsible fatherhood and healthy relationships/marriage for low-income

¹² Couples employment programs are designed to serve couples that are jointly raising a child and are dedicated to being in a committed relationship with each other, irrespective of whether they are married. Some Council Members would be opposed to such programs to the extent that people qualify to participate in such a program precisely because they are involved in “committed” sexual relationships other than marriage. Those Council Members further submit that, if, by contrast, the program defines its beneficiaries by their relationship to the children they share, rather than by their nonmarital relationship to each other, then there would be no objection. Similarly, if the program confers benefits based on the existence of nonmarital sexual relationship, but also has as its purpose to steer those participants toward marriage, then the concern raised by those Council Members would be alleviated. Other Council Members support the inclusion of non-married couples dedicated to (i) jointly raising their child and (ii) being in a committed relationship with each other, because that eligibility criteria allows the program to reach fragile families who have a great potential of being strengthened precisely because the couple is committed to each other and to raising their child together. These Council Members believe the inclusion of non-married couples in these programs is a commendable strategy for breaking the cycle of father-absence in America.

fathers and couples.¹³ An innovative method of addressing the intersection between economic instability and responsible fatherhood and healthy relationships/marriage is a “couples employment approach” that provides employment assistance and other means of financial support to each partner in a committed relationship.

From 1997 to 2000, the Department of Labor funded the Full Family Partnership (FFP) at Jobs for Youth/Chicago. In this unique program model, low-income partners in committed relationships simultaneously participated in a 2- to 3-week job readiness and job placement program. The participation and outcomes results of these couples were compared with those of participants in two other employment assistance programs that did not use the “couples employment approach.” Key findings reveal the following:¹⁴

- Both mothers and fathers participating in FFP were more likely than parents in the comparison groups to finish the program and be placed in a job.
- FFP mothers showed higher initial earning gains upon program completion than mothers in comparison groups.
- FFP mothers were 60 percent less likely to receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families upon program completion than they were before participating in the program.
- Earning outcomes for FFP fathers were comparable to those of fathers in one comparison group and surpassed those of fathers in the other comparison group.

¹³ William J. Doherty, Ph.D., Edward F. Kouneski, M.A., and Martha Farrell Erickson, Ph.D. of the University of Minnesota. September, 1996 Responsible Fathering: An Overview available at <http://fatherhood.hhs.gov/concept.htm> and Conceptual Framework and Center for Research on Child Well being (2003) *The Retreat from Marriage Among Low Income Families*. Fragile Families Research Brief No. 17. and Paula Roberts (2004) *I Can't Give You Anything But Love: Would Poor Couples With Children Be Better Off Economically If They Married?*.

¹⁴ Rachel Gordon and Carolyn Heinrich, “The Potential of a Couples Approach to Employment Assistance: Results of a Nonexperimental Evaluation,” *Review of Economics of the Household*, March 2009, and Kristin Abner, Rachel Gordon, and Carolyn Heinrich, *Utilizing a Couples Approach to Promote Employment Stability* (Institute of Government and Policy Affairs: 2009).



Couples Employment Program Model: A Program of the Center for Urban Families <http://www.cfuf.org>

With funds provided by the Administration for Children and Families, the Center for Urban Families (CFUF), a nonprofit organization in Baltimore, Maryland, operates a 6-month couples employment program that includes 3 months of active program participation and 3 months of follow-up services. CFUF designed its couples employment program to incorporate the expressed desire of clients to receive financial education and information while simultaneously developing their skills as couples to sustain healthy relationships and families.

With the help of employment specialist and facilitators trained in CFUF’s Exploring Relationships & Marriage Curriculum, participants develop a written family-focused employment plan, learn what is needed to compete in the job market, and attend couples-focused group sessions focusing on employment, financial literacy, gaining economic stability, and building healthier relationships. Specific workshops and trainings provided by the CFUF couples employment program include family-focused employment and financial supports such as budget development, credit management, financial literacy, home ownership, and entrepreneurship, as well as healthy relationship/marriage supports like conflict resolution, issues within blended families, family planning, and building trust within relationships.

The primary objective of the Couples Employment Program Model is to:

- **Help couples move toward stable relationships and family-friendly employment —for one or both partners—that improves their economic circumstances and provides support for lasting family units**

* See footnote 12 on page 44

- When both partners completed the program, couples experienced significantly higher earnings gains than couples in which only the mother completed the program (over \$4,000 per quarter gain vs. a \$1,300 per quarter gain).
- Program completion and earnings gains were associated with relationship stability.

These findings from the FFP program evaluation illustrate the potential of coupling employment assistance and other financial supports with the core services provided by responsible fatherhood and healthy relationships/marriage programs to enhance the Government's ability to help low-income couples and fathers overcome economic barriers to healthy relationships and responsible fatherhood involvement.



Christian Heritage: Fatherhood Initiative

<http://www.chchildrenshomes.org>

Christian Heritage is a nonprofit, faith-based organization founded in 1980 to serve Nebraska's abused and neglected children placed out of home by the Department of Health and Human Services. Christian Heritage's two specific goals are first, to reunify families in those situations in which children have been placed away from home and second, to prevent out-of-home placement of children considered at risk. Residential homes, foster homes, and transitional living apartments are being used to serve over 110 children daily.

After nearly 30 years of caring for at-risk children, Christian Heritage has concluded that fatherlessness is the number 1 contributing factor to children being placed in the foster care system. Consequently, in 2007, Christian Heritage launched a fatherhood initiative. This faith-based organization is committed to conveying the importance of the role of fathers and to providing dads with the encouragement and tools necessary to be successful in raising their children.

Christian Heritage's primary objective in implementing a fatherhood initiative is to:

- Convey the important role of fathers and provide dads with the encouragement and tools necessary to be successful in raising their children.

To carry out its mission to create a better future for dads and their children, Christian Heritage specifically:

- Facilitates Destination Dad, a program using a parenting curriculum, letters and prison visits, and coaching and support to create a better future for children of incarcerated fathers;
- Hosts a Celebration of Fatherhood luncheon and acknowledges a Nebraska Father of the Year, the week before Father's Day;
- Has created an in-house radio production studio and is producing programs for Furthering the Family, a statewide radio outreach to encourage dads to be involved in the lives of their children and to help strengthen and support marriages; and
- Is launching a new Family Coaching Program to engage dads with their families. Christian Heritage utilizes the InsideOut Dad™ and Doctor Dad™ programs to educate and equip fathers.

APPENDIX

Further explanation for programming areas of focus highlighted in Recommendation 5.

Develop and encourage programming that promotes the involvement of dads in their children's education:

A landmark study by the Department of Education in 1997 indicated that children in two-parent families with highly involved fathers were 42 percent more likely to get mostly A's, 55 percent more likely to enjoy school, and 28 percent less likely to repeat a grade than were children in two-parent families with fathers who had low involvement. This study found that these positive effects extend to the children of highly involved, nonresident fathers. Children of these fathers were 54 percent more likely to get mostly A's, 70 percent more likely to enjoy school, and 50 percent less likely to repeat a grade than were children whose nonresident fathers had no or low involvement.

Clearly, one important strategy for increasing our children's academic performance is to get their fathers more involved in their education. The National PTA has recognized this need by creating the MORE (Men Organized to Raise Engagement) alliance. Through this alliance, several father-serving organizations have come together to work with schools to increase the quantity and quality of services those schools offer to engage fathers.

One of the MORE partners, WATCH D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students), provided more than 75,000 dads with a volunteer experience in their child's school during the 2008 to 2009 school year. WATCH D.O.G.S. dads are enlisted to serve 1 day as an unobtrusive security presence and as adult male role models. Pre-testing and post-testing of dads who had served at least 1 day as a WatchDOG showed that they were significantly more involved on multiple measures of involvement at school and in the home. Principals indicate that WatchDOGS are contributing to a safer and more secure learning environment and to an increase in student achievement.

Discretionary grant programs from the Department of Education, such as the Fund for the Improvement of Education and the Parent Information and Resource Centers program, can be tweaked so that "fathers in schools" programs can more effectively compete for funds. The Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships can play a role in encouraging the Department of Education to make the necessary adjustments to allow fatherhood programs to compete more effectively.

The need for employment services:

Research supports the notion that unemployment can serve as a barrier to responsible fatherhood. A 2005 article in the *Journal of Family and Economic Issues* reported evidence suggesting that "men under financial strain or who have unstable employment have more problems being responsible fathers and establishing a household than do other fathers." Unemployment is also a major factor in non-custodial fathers' abilities to meet child support obligations. Additionally, there are a number of personal factors that can contribute to the "marriageability" of unmarried parents. Unemployment has been identified as a leading factor affecting one's ability to marry. In 2002, the *Journal of Applied Economics* published an article that found that being unemployed significantly reduced the chance of men being married. Employment is a key factor in maintaining the resources needed to sustain families and meet the socio-emotional needs of fathers. Therefore, it is constructive for programs

focusing on responsible fatherhood to incorporate programming that addresses the employment needs of fathers.

The Departments of Labor and Justice can create links between existing employment service programs and responsible fatherhood programs. They can create such links by using existing money to fund formal partnerships, creating new grant programs to fund formal partnerships, or rewording Requests for Proposals to help facilitate these connections.

The need for military fathers programming:

Research shows that military families face some of the toughest challenges to marital/relational stability and involved fatherhood. For example, rates of divorce and domestic violence among military families are high, and there is evidence from a 2009 report by the Defense Manpower Data Center that divorce rates in the military are increasing. Also, according to an issue brief prepared by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, deployment of military fathers is associated with increased behavioral problems by their children, especially boys. The brief also cites research that has found that children experience academic and adjustment problems, as well as depression and anxiety, as a result of the deployment of fathers.

Therefore, there is a need to serve military fathers before, during, and after deployment. Pre-deployment services should focus on helping families attend to the emotional, logistical, and legal issues that can cause stress during the fathers' absences. Services during deployment should be focused on providing fathers with practical strategies and tactics to help them stay connected to their children and families. Post-deployment services should be focused on family reunification; fathers should be educated about how to handle the changes that their families will have gone through during their absences so that they can make a smooth transition back into family life. All of these services should focus on fathering, relationship, and communications skills so that fathers can strengthen their relationships with their children and the mothers of their children.

The Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and the Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the Department of Veterans Affairs can work together to ensure that existing programs designed to improve quality of life for veterans, including veterans recently returned from deployment, include supports for fathers.

The First Lady's office, given its vocal support for military families, can encourage family policy leaders at the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide specific supports for military fathers in their existing services to military families.

Finally, the Department of Defense, through the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy, the Department of Defense Family Advocacy Program, and other offices within the Department can take steps to ensure that its family programs are inclusive of specific support for fathers. The five branches also can be directed by the Department of Defense and the White House to include specific fatherhood supports through the family service centers on bases.

The need for incarcerated fathers programming:

According to an issue brief prepared by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, "Fathering while in prison is not impossible, but it faces considerable obstacles. About six in ten incarcerated fathers have some kind of monthly contact with their children, but a majority does not

receive visits from their children throughout the time they are locked up. Yet, such contact is a key predictor of the father's ability to reenter the community once his time is served and not return to prison again." Additional research shows that the strongest predictor of whether a child will end up in prison is if they have a relative who has gone to prison. It is most common for this relative to be their father.

These two key factors—reducing recidivism and ending the intergenerational cycle of crime—speak to the need to provide services for fathers while they are in prison and while they are transitioning out of prison back into their communities.

While in prison, fathers should receive education to enhance their fathering, relationship, and communications skills and be given practical strategies to connect with their children while incarcerated. These supports can be combined with opportunities for enhanced child visitation, educational and job readiness programs, and substance abuse treatment.

Similar education can continue while a former inmate is transitioning back into his community so that he can successfully reintegrate into the lives of his children and families.

The Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, in its meetings, can specifically address how to better serve incarcerated fathers through existing Department of Justice (and other Federal agency) programs.

The Department of Justice (through the Bureau of Justice Assistance) can ensure that grant programs, such as the Edward Byrne Memorial Discretionary Grant Program, are "father friendly," allowing fatherhood programs to effectively compete for funding.

The Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the Department of Labor can ensure that its Prisoner Reentry Initiative includes adding specific supports for fathers into programs serving reentering prisoners. The Faith-Based Center at the Department of Justice can do the same thing.

The need for programming for fathers involved in the Child Support System

Low-income fathers represent a significant portion of fathers involved with the Office of Child Support Enforcement. As a result of their lack of employment or underemployment, history of incarceration, and other challenges, these fathers are often unable to meet their established child support orders or to reduce accumulated arrearages. Efforts to enforce these orders often result in distancing these fathers from their children. Fathering Courts and other programming for fathers involved in the child support system have shown promising results in reconnecting these fathers to their children, increasing child support payments, and helping these fathers become responsible citizens and taxpayers. In one Kansas City Missouri Fathering Court, 281 graduates and current participants have become significantly more involved in the lives of their children, contributed more than \$2.6 million in child support and avoided more than \$2.8 million in incarceration costs..

The need for mentoring:

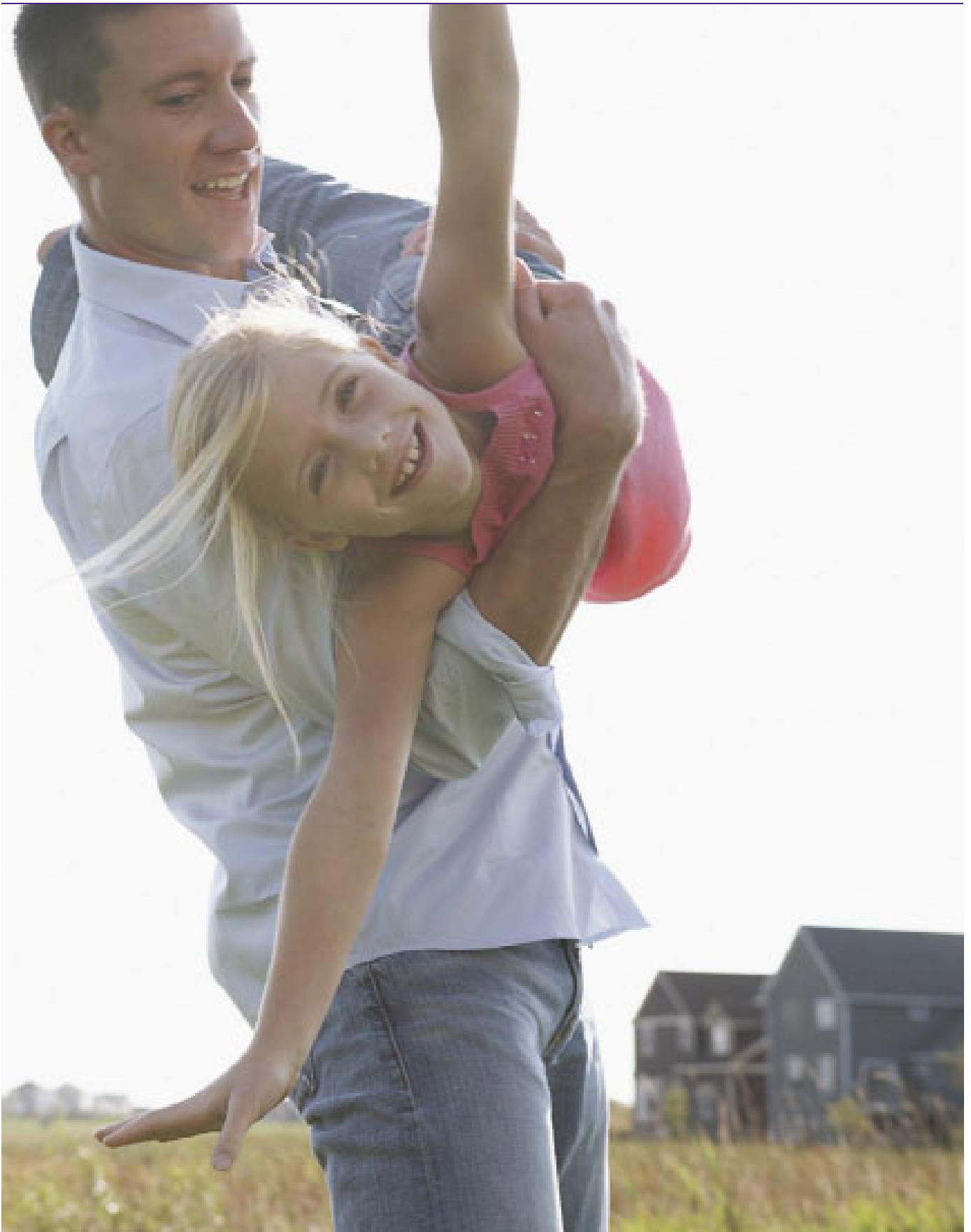
The National Mentoring Project estimates that there are 17 million children in the United States in need of a mentor. This estimate correlates closely with the number of children living without a father in the home. Who better to mentor our Nation's fatherless children than our Nation's good fathers? Good fathers are uniquely positioned and skilled to do "double duty" by becoming mentors to children in need. There are an estimated 64 million fathers in the United States. Given the extent of the father-absence crisis, it is likely that

many of these fathers can simply look into their own communities or families to find a child in need of a father's guidance. Additionally, there are many fathers who, having grown up in father-absent homes, are in need of help in their own fathering journeys. Again, our Nation's experienced fathers can do "double duty" by stepping into the gap to become mentors to these dads.

The Corporation for National and Community Service can start an initiative or program that specifically calls out fathers to become mentors to children in father-absent homes. Such a call has never been made.

The President, through his fatherhood messaging and his Call for National Service, can include a specific call to fathers to become mentors. The President can encourage private mentoring organizations and existing government programs focused on mentoring to begin including specific initiatives to engage fathers as mentors.







Environment and Climate Change

Members of the Taskforce

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The Reverend Canon Sally G. Bingham, President,
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Environment and Climate Change

INTRODUCTION

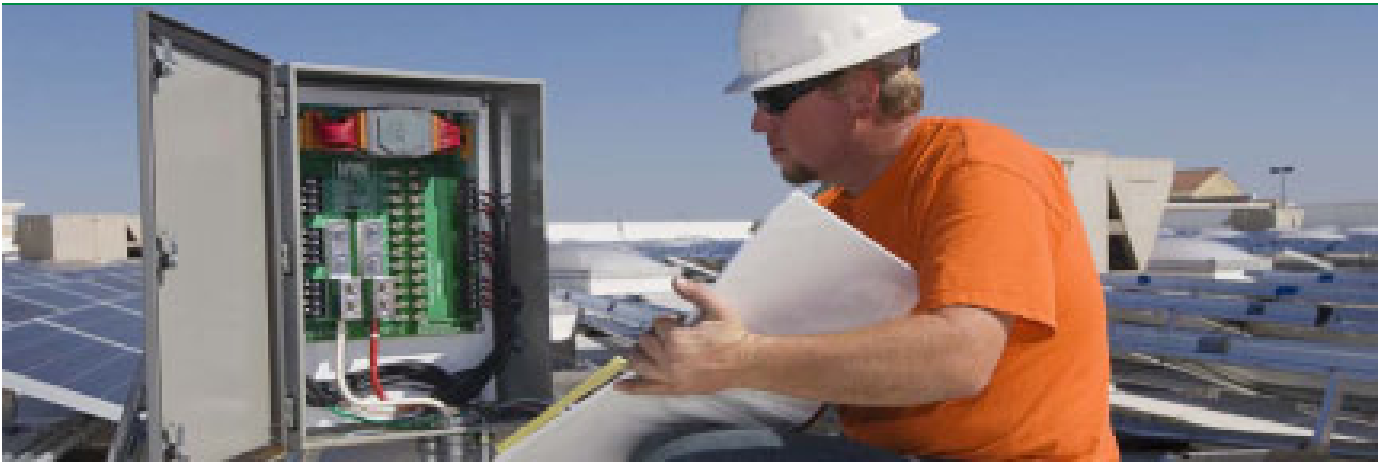
The charge from President Barack Obama to the President’s Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships is, in part, to focus on how those partnerships can benefit persons and families who often experience barriers to full participation in the Nation’s abundance. Keeping the President’s charge in view, the Council presents nine recommendations building on the great potential for engaging faith- and community-based groups in environmental stewardship, with a special focus on how to include those most disadvantaged in our communities.

The recommendations call for enhanced communication between government and small nonprofits on subjects related to environment and climate change. Some call for clearer information about what is available already through government agencies for faith-based and neighborhood organizations, as well as information on how such organizations can access what is available. Other recommendations propose the creation of channels for faith-based and nonprofit communities to communicate their on-the-ground knowledge back to government (especially on matters related to climate change adaptation). The recommendations address both domestic and global environmental concerns, appropriately acknowledging that such issues know no national borders.

Over the last 10 to 15 years, leaders in the political, environmental, scientific, and economic fields have recognized that environment and climate change will require cooperation across disciplines, and that the solutions are not only technical but also connect to our morality and values of America. The importance of engaging with religious organizations in addressing climate change and environmental concerns has become even clearer—as has the importance of faith-based organizations taking a prominent leadership role in influencing policy, education, and action in those areas. The more than 370,000¹ houses of worship alone provide locations for information to be shared, training to take place, and modeling of best environmental practices to occur.

This is a moment of great opportunity to engage the nonprofit sector in building a green economy that benefits all. The Council offers the following recommendations with a sense that enhanced communication and partnership among the Federal Government and the faith-based and neighborhood communities will go a long way to address a shared concern for the poor while claiming a shared responsibility for the wholeness of creation.

¹ This data is based on the most recent Commercial Building Energy Consumption Survey (CBECS) of the Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration (2003).



OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Energy Efficiency and Green Jobs:

Recommendation 1: Form an Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and assign Faith- and Community-Based Liaisons to EPA regional offices.

Recommendation 2: The Administration should provide guidance to State and local governments on how to partner with faith-based and nonprofit organizations to retrofit and green buildings.

Recommendation 3: Encourage the Department of Labor, Department of Housing and Urban Development, and other Federal agencies to work cooperatively with faith-based and neighborhood organizations to ensure that low-income communities and workers with barriers to employment are targeted when creating green job training programs.

Environmental Education and Communications:

Recommendation 4: The Administration should sponsor a public educational campaign on the environment, utilizing a centralized Website, such as Environment.gov.

Recommendation 5: The White House should sponsor regional conferences to mobilize faith- and community-based organizations to promote environment sustainability and energy efficiency.

Sustainable, Community Gardening and Small-Scale Agriculture:

Recommendation 6: Support partnerships and collaboration for sustainable, community gardening and small-scale agriculture.

Climate Change Adaptation:

Recommendation 7: Provide the opportunity for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs) to apply for funds to implement international adaptation objectives.

Recommendation 8: Set up a taskforce to study how emission offsets can maximize climate-resilient development and the participation of PVOs in such efforts.

Recommendation 9: Active engagement of the NGO sector in the review and design of domestic and international adaptation strategies.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND GREEN JOBS

Recommendation 1: Form an Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the EPA, and assign Faith- and Community-Based Liaisons to EPA regional offices.

In order to actualize the potential of faith-based and community groups and their networks across the country toward greening and retrofitting buildings, and other key environmental outcomes, the Council recommends that an Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships be formed at the EPA. We further recommend that the EPA assign or hire Faith- and Community-Based Liaisons at all of their regional offices.

There is a new and unprecedented wave of interest in the environmental sustainability and climate change among America's diverse religious communities and in neighborhoods across the country.

Faith- and other community-based nonprofit institutions are in the unique position of serving as visible examples to the community. Houses of worship can exert a powerful influence when they practice good energy stewardship and preaches and teaches about conservation as a moral value, it has a powerful influence. Similarly, actions taken by nonprofit organizations can serve as an important role model for their employees, volunteers, and beneficiaries. There is a multiplier effect as congregants and nonprofit participants adopt the energy-saving practices in their homes and businesses.

A coordinated effort staffed through an Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the EPA could help to unleash this potential and activate faith- and community-based networks to promote energy efficiency, environmental responsibility, and green jobs. With minimal personnel costs to the Government, massive partnerships could be scaled up through engaging religious and community leaders and organizations.

Regional staff in local EPA offices, working in close collaboration with the new Office of Faith-Based and

ENERGY STAR Congregations: A Program of the Environmental Protection Agency *<http://www.energystar.gov/partners>*

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ENERGY STAR Congregations is a program that helps congregations operate and build green, environmentally friendly facilities. The availability of the ENERGY STAR rating for worship facilities was announced by EPA on September 1, 2009. The ENERGY STAR label means that a rating of 75 or higher on a 1 to 100 scale has been achieved, indicating that the worship facility is within the upper 25% of energy efficiency. As a taxpayer-supported program to prevent pollution without regulation, there is no cost to participate or to be awarded the attractive bronze plaque for the achievement.

In addition, EPA ENERGY STAR Congregations hosts the ENERGY STAR National Building Competition, the first coast-to-coast contest to save energy and fight global warming in commercial buildings. ENERGY STAR partners are invited to nominate one or more of the facilities they own or manage from across the United States. Approximately a dozen contest participants are selected by EPA and "work off the waste" through improvements in energy efficiency with help from EPA's ENERGY STAR program. The building that reduces its energy use the most on a percentage basis is recognized by EPA as the winner. Contest participants take part in outreach activities, periodic "weigh-ins" to measure progress, and a final celebration to announce the winner.

Joining ENERGY STAR Congregations provides organizations with:

- Free, accurate, unbiased information;
- Technical support through an Ask a Technical Question service and technical resources;
- A "how-to" guide for analyzing and upgrading a facility;
- Availability of an even more detailed guide, the Building Upgrade Manual;
- Energy equipment and service contractors and utilities;
- Information about ENERGY STAR labeled products;
- National and local recognition;
- Public relations materials to promote energy efficiency efforts; and
- Marketing resources.

Neighborhood Partnerships, would work to help promote existing EPA resources for faith- and community-based groups around the country, such as ENERGY STAR Congregations. Regional staff would work to engage local faith- and community-based groups to help meet Obama administration targets for greening buildings and promoting environmental quality.

One of the biggest barriers for faith- and community-based groups in greening buildings is obtaining access to financing. These regional staff liaisons, working in partnership with programs like ENERGY STAR, could assist faith- and community-based groups in either establishing revolving loan programs or working with utility companies to help finance greening building projects. These kinds of financing options, whether through utilities or with local revolving loan programs, need to be fostered at the local and regional levels and would greatly benefit from the ongoing support of regional staff to help facilitate these partnerships.

Recommendation 2: The Administration should provide guidance to State and local governments on how to partner with faith-based and nonprofit organizations to retrofit and green buildings.

State and local governments, as well as other Federal grantees, have a unique opportunity to include faith-based and neighborhood organizations in their energy efficiency programs. However, these entities often lack the knowledge or expertise needed to identify and work with faith-based and neighborhood organizations. By providing basic information and instruction as well as encouragement, the Administration could enhance the overall energy efficiency work at the Federal, State, and local levels.

Guidance should therefore be provided that:

1. Makes explicit where Federal funds provided, through State or local government, to retrofit buildings for energy efficiency and environmental benefit, can be awarded to retrofit buildings owned and operated by nonprofit entities, including faith-based organizations; and
2. Describes how such programs should be structured to conform to relevant constitutional and legal parameters.²

The Department of Energy currently offers grants, provided through block grants to States, local governments, and tribal territories, for small businesses, commercial buildings, research, industrial efficiency, and residential efficiency. Only one opportunity, a loan guarantee program, is currently understood to be applicable to nonprofit, including faith-based, organizations. The Department should determine whether the legislation governing other

² Council members agree that the administration should provide guidance to federal, state and local government to promote partnerships with faith-based and non-profit organizations to retrofit and green buildings. They differ, however, over the kinds of aid that the government could or should make available to houses of worship (and, for some, parochial schools) for this purpose. Some Council members believe that under current law, it is constitutionally permissible for the government to provide houses of worship the kind of direct government retrofit grants described in this section, see *American Atheists v. City of Detroit*, 567 F.3d 278 (6th Cir. 2009) at <http://www.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/09a0188p-06.pdf> (upholding development program whereby city reimbursed up to 50% of the costs of refurbishing the exteriors of all buildings in downtown area, including church buildings) affirming 503 F. Supp. 2d 845 (E. D. Mich. 2007), and they also support the extension of such aid on policy grounds. Others would oppose direct cash aid for improvements to buildings used for religious purposes, including houses of worship, as a violation of the First Amendment's Establishment Clause, see *Tilton v. Richardson*, 403 U.S. 672 (1971) (upholding construction grants for buildings and facilities used exclusively for secular educational purposes), *Committee for Public Education v. Nyquist*, 413 U.S. 756 (1973) (prohibiting extension to parochial schools of unrestricted maintenance and repair grants for nonpublic schools). Even if direct cash aid to houses of worship were found to be constitutional, these Council members would oppose it on policy grounds. Some Council members in this latter category would support the flow of certain other forms of government aid -- such as loan guarantees -- to houses of worship (as well as to other religious and secular entities) to retrofit and green buildings. For further discussion of these issues, see the introductory section and Recommendation 12 of the Council's Reform of the Office report.

Adat Shalom's Green Building Process, 1997 to 2001

<http://www.adatshalom.net>

Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation in Bethesda, Maryland, is the second synagogue in the United States to receive the EPA ENERGY STAR Congregations award. As with every facet of the congregation's communal life, the building was a collaborative communal process. Virtually every aspect of its design, not to mention the campaign to raise the money for the building, was driven by members and involved a large cross-section of its membership. The congregation's Rabbi and numerous lay-leaders helped the community in its attempt "to walk lightly on the Earth" while building a permanent home. Energy conservation was a consistent concern.

A few of its major environmental accomplishments were:

- Passive solar heating through clerestory windows and a dark floor in the social hall;
- A ner tamid (eternal light) hooked up to a photovoltaic (solar energy) cell on the roof;
- A designated percentage of wood from certified sustainable forestry operations;
- A good zone-by-zone heating and lighting system implemented, with many settings and options;
- Compact fluorescent lamps, LED exit signs, and other low-energy fixtures installed throughout the building;
- Much material from the existing building saved or kept in place for new construction;
- Mostly local materials used; limited Jerusalem stone shipped from Israel for symbolism;
- The maximum number of trees onsite before construction saved by careful planning;
- Low-water use (xeriscaping), low-maintenance, low-chemical, native landscaping;
- Low-impact cork flooring used in lobby areas; recycled carpet used in the sanctuary and offices;
- Mostly-recycled or limestone composite "vinyl alternative" tile flooring in the social hall and classrooms;
- A permeable driveway and parking lot for groundwater recharge (gravel, then alternative paving); and
- Wide buy-in sought from the congregation on the environment as a key priority during the building process.

programs it currently operates can include nonprofit organizations. If so, the Department should issue appropriate regulations and guidance to implement such inclusion.

Congress is considering as part of new energy efficiency and climate change legislation the creation of a new program under which the Department of Energy will provide new funds to subsidize the retrofitting of residential and nonresidential buildings. As currently pending, the legislation would explicitly state that such subsidies are available to non-profit-owned buildings, including faith-based. But even while final action on this legislation is awaited, the Administration can undertake appropriate steps to accelerate the retrofitting of faith-based and neighborhood nonprofit buildings by making it clear to local and state governments how to legally partner with these groups.

There are over 370,000 houses of worship alone in the United States, not to mention thousands more nonprofit facilities. Many would participate in energy-saving programs if given the opportunity. Currently, only nonprofits with the means to raise capital and with adequate expertise have so far installed "greener" systems. Accelerating these efforts is good public policy.

Recommendation 3: Encourage the Department of Labor, the Department of Housing and Urban Development and other Federal agencies to work cooperatively with faith-based and neighborhood organizations to ensure that low-income communities and workers with barriers to employment are targeted when creating green job training programs.

One of the few areas where jobs are being created is the clean-energy sector. Most of these green-collar jobs are blue-collar jobs transformed to meet the needs of the economy.

A sound green jobs program should help ensure that green jobs put marginalized and low-income communities on a pathway to prosperity. Faith-based and neighborhood organizations are often in the best position to reach low-income, under-served, and marginalized communities.

A recent report released by the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts, commissioned by Green for All and The National Resources Defense Council documents the scale of jobs that will be created through the clean energy sector. Investments in clean energy of \$150 billion are projected to create 1.7 million net American jobs, lower the unemployment rate by 1 percentage point, and raise living standards for the working poor. Many of these green jobs will build pathways to prosperity for the poor. Almost 50 percent will be accessible to people with low levels of formal education, and include high potential for advancement.

For faith-based organizations and the nonprofit sector, there is a commitment to ensuring that this new economy provides quality jobs for those who have not traditionally benefited from employment opportunities. There are numerous barriers to employment facing low-income communities of color that include individuals with limited educational attainment or language proficiency, higher percentages of prison reentry, and minimal access to job centers.

Creative partnerships, financial and otherwise, should be developed to help promote job training and placement for these disadvantaged job seekers. Faith- and community-based groups can play a critical role in connecting government green job programs with those that need them most.



Solar Richmond

<http://www.solarrichmond.org>

Solar Richmond is a nonprofit organization that provides solar installation training and job placement services, and supports consumers who want to go solar in a way that creates jobs for underemployed local residents. The organization ushers low-income local residents into the green economy by providing them with hands-on solar installation training and job placement services. The solar training is a component of a 14-week program in partnership with RichmondBuild, which includes 7 weeks of pre-apprenticeship construction and 3 weeks of energy efficiency training. Solar Richmond also works with solar companies to meet their staffing needs and works with customers who want to go solar in a way that is socially sustainable.

The mission of Solar Richmond is to:

- Develop green-collar jobs, clean energy, and economic opportunity through solar installation training and innovative job creation to empower emerging leaders of the green economy.

Solar Richmond's major goals by 2010 were to:

- Create 100 new green-collar jobs for local residents;
- Install 50 solar installations on low-income homes in Richmond completed by Solar Richmond trainees; and
- Install 5 megawatts of solar power in Richmond.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

Recommendation 4: The Administration should sponsor public educational campaign on the environment, utilizing a centralized Website, such as Environment.gov.

There is a rising interest across the country in personal and collective environmental responsibility. However, government information and resources can be hard to locate across diverse Federal agencies. Traversing the information on grants and other support programs from the Department of Energy or other Federal agencies is difficult, particularly for faith-based and neighborhood organizations without the professional expertise in this area.

We believe that faith- and community-based groups, as well as the general American public, could be better mobilized toward environmental goals with a well-publicized and centralized educational campaign, housed and promoted through a central Website, such as Environment.gov.

We recommend the Administration coordinate a nationwide education and communication campaign on the environment that:

- Emphasizes addressing environmental issues and climate change as a moral issue. Highlights ways (such as educational resources and funding sources) the Federal Government can assist such organizations in addressing those issues;
- Develops a user-friendly Website, such as Environment.gov, that pulls together all the resources available for faith-based and community groups across government, including education and grant resources;
- Asks faith-based and neighborhood organizations to collaborate in developing these resources which should emphasize that environmental and climate change concerns are often closely connected to issues of justice and equity;
- Gears messaging around climate change toward specific regions, based on climate change's impacts within that region. Emphasizes the benefits of reducing carbon emissions in terms of decreasing pollution, improving health, creating green jobs, strengthening national security through reducing dependency on foreign oil, and so on; and
- Emphasizes areas in which individuals and communities can take action, such as:
 - Transportation choices;
 - Food choices; and
 - Home care and maintenance choices

It is clear that many faith-based and neighborhood organizations do not know what Federal Government resources are available to them. A centralized education campaign would meet a real need among diverse religious and community-based organizations to engage their members in environmental action.



Recommendation 5: White House should sponsor regional conferences to mobilize faith- and community-based organizations to preserve the environment and reduce the impact of climate change.

We recommend the White House, working with the EPA, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Department of Energy, convene regional conferences to bring together a diverse representation of leaders from a variety of fields to promote local and regional action on environmental sustainability and energy efficiency.

Among other things, these regional conferences would:

- Highlight innovative programs in areas like green jobs, access to and training for those jobs for low-income and minority groups, initiatives around location and building efficiency, and faith- and community-based gardening and local sustainable agricultural projects;
- Serve as an avenue through which faith-based and neighborhood organizations can find out about Federal resources available to them;
- Serve as an avenue through which government officials can discover effective programs and seek to replicate those around the country;
- Network leaders, government officials, and organizations within regions; and
- Serve as working meetings, not only conferences.

Along with White House officials, diverse community leaders should be invited to participate, such as:

- Recognized leaders and speakers from multiple faith traditions and local/regional neighborhood organizations;
- Scientific experts;
- Sustainable business owners and economists;
- Green building and urban design experts;
- International representatives, particularly from those countries already experiencing significant impacts from climate change; and
- Sustainable agriculture and gardening advocates and practitioners.

Regional HUD and EPA faith- and community-based liaison staff could help to facilitate these gatherings and provide the staff support to turn one-time conferences into ongoing sustained action toward environmental goals.

SUSTAINABLE, COMMUNITY GARDENING AND SMALL-SCALE AGRICULTURE

Recommendation 6: Support partnerships and collaboration for sustainable, community gardening and small-scale agriculture.

We recommend the Administration direct the EPA, the Department of Agriculture, and any other relevant agencies to find ways to facilitate collaboration and connections between faith-based organizations, community gardening advocates and educators, and small-scale, sustainable agricultural projects and practitioners, such as Community Supported Agriculture farms. Particular attention should be paid to incorporating the needs of low-income and minority neighborhoods in relation to their access to healthy food.

Community gardening groups seek opportunities to expand the amount of land in urban/suburban areas under cultivation. Many faith-based institutions have land available to them. And, more and more faith-based organizations see the connections between their values and sustainable food systems. Community and congregational gardens are sprouting up on religious institutions' property around the country. Furthermore, religious institutions provide a ready-made market for small-scale, sustainable farmers' produce.

The benefits of this type of gardening and farming are numerous: water and soil are protected, community connections are built and strengthened, healthy food can be provided to food pantries and neighborhoods with little access to such food, and local foods decrease carbon emissions associated with transporting food thousands of miles. Supported on a large enough scale, the Administration could provide opportunities for agricultural job creation and rural community revitalization, one more approach to creating green jobs.

Clean Greens Farm and Market *<http://www.cleangreensfarm.com>*

On 22 acres of leased land in Duvall, Washington, this innovative project was begun by the Black Dollar Days Task Force, an organization dedicated to creating economic opportunity and equity in Seattle's low-income communities. The Black Dollar Days Task Force recognized that African Americans are underrepresented in farming in Washington. Currently, there is no local market in King County that supplies the types of vegetables that are relevant to the African American and African immigrant food culture. Low-income communities frequently do not have access to fresh, wholesome produce and have higher rates of poor diet-related illnesses such as diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, and elevated cholesterol. The Task Force program, Clean Greens Farm and Market, operates as an agricultural producer engaged in the production of chemical-free collard, kale, mustard, turnip greens, relish, and spinach.

Fundamentally the Clean Greens Farm and Market in Seattle, Washington, strives to grow and deliver clean, healthy, and fair produce to everyone at reasonable prices.

Goals for the Clean Greens Farm and Market are the following:

- Promote a healthier cultural diet.
- Grow chemical-free, organic vegetables.
- Supply locally grown produce to the inner city market.
- Educate inner city community residents about the benefits of buying locally grown produce.
- Expose inner city youth to the growing and marketing of produce that is vital to their health.
- Collaborate with Ethiopian, Hmong, Latino, Sumatran, and other independent farmers to ensure the viability of small farms.
- Be good stewards of the environment.
- Participate in U.S. Department of Agriculture programs

Madison Christian Community: Ecumenical Garden

<http://www.madisonchristiancommunity.org>

Madison Christian Community Ecumenical Garden is a ministry that scatters seeds of hope for incarcerated people. Madison Christian Community, an ecumenical partnership between Advent Lutheran Church (a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and Community of Hope (a congregation of the United Church of Christ) in Madison, Wisconsin, works with a nearby correctional facility to offer a restorative justice-based horticulture program in its 6,000-square foot garden. The two congregations share a building, staff, and a piece of land that includes a restored prairie, a rain garden, a memorial garden, and the 6,000-square foot vegetable garden that fosters so many connections. "The garden ministry is one way to bridge the racial, economic, and social barriers that exist between people today," according to Rev. Jeff Wild, Pastor of Advent Lutheran Church.

The church facility and garden ministry are connected by water. Rainwater from the roof of the sanctuary fills four 300-gallon tanks. Water flows through underground tubing to the garden, where slow-drip irrigation hoses are placed among the vegetation.

The purpose of the Madison Christian Community Ecumenical Garden is to:

- Cultivate restorative justice through gardening.

The program is carried out in the following way:

- Inmates are part of a horticulture class in which they sow the seeds for the garden and tend them as they grow into seedlings.
- When the seedlings are ready for planting, the inmates in the class take a field trip to Madison Christian Community, where they spend a day tending the garden where their seedlings will be planted. Members from the church welcome them with homemade baked goods as well as shade-grown, fair-trade coffee.
- Money for the cost of seeds and other garden supplies is raised through the sale of Father Dom's Duck Doo, a locally produced compost consisting of "duck doo, cranberries, and other good stuff," according to Wild.

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

Religious communities and other nonprofits have a special concern for the well-being of the poor, including programs to help the poor here and abroad cope with the consequences that climate change will bring. It is in the common interest for the Federal Government to work with religious communities and other nonprofits in the areas of both domestic and international adaptation.

Several of these recommendations echo those from the Global Poverty Taskforce report because the need for international adaptation is consistent with and essential to achieving sustainable development. In fact, the Council believes that all U.S. foreign assistance should take climate adaptation and mitigation into consideration. At a minimum, programs should not lead to mal-adaptation. Instead, foreign assistance should seek to amplify and enhance the effectiveness of adaptation and mitigation efforts.

The new Federal funding and programs for adaptation represent an opportunity for Federal officials to work with religious community and other nonprofit representatives so that the programs are designed from the beginning to foster inclusion, cooperation, and ease of participation. This mutually beneficial partnership will enhance the successful delivery of adaptation services.

Recommendation 7: Provide the opportunity for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs) to apply for funds to implement international adaptation objectives.

Current climate change legislation proposes to set up an International Climate Change Adaptation Program, with USAID as the lead agency. This new program would potentially target funds to international adaptation objectives. As funds are allocated for international adaptation efforts, and agencies are tasked with administration of these funds, the U.S. Government should ensure that there are opportunities for non-profits and PVOs to apply to partner with government in implementation of adaptation programs.³

U.S. funding for international adaptation should strike a balance between multilateral and bilateral assistance, with opportunity provided for NGOs and PVOs to receive grants to implement international adaptation programs and objectives consistent with local community participation.

Funding for international adaptation will be new and additional to current levels of overseas development assistance, as stipulated by the Bali Action Plan. Therefore such funding represents an opportunity to create, from the beginning, programs and procedures for full engagement and participation of international development NGOs and PVOs.

Recommendation 8: Encourage the Administration to set up a taskforce to study how emission offsets can maximize climate-resilient development and the participation of PVOs in such efforts.

Proposed climate change legislation includes the opportunity for U.S. emitters to offset some of their emissions through the implementation of emissions reduction projects in developing countries. Such projects will enhance climate-resilient development and could be designed to enhance targeted adaptation efforts. However, additional study is



³ The Waxman-Markey American Clean Energy and Security Act, HR 2454, in Title IV, Subtitle E, Part 2, Sections 491-495 (pp. 1365f) sets up an International Climate Change Adaptation Program, with USAID as the lead agency. Section 495 (p. 1375f) describes how USAID could provide funds to NGOs/PVOs to help poor communities in developing countries adapt. We concur with the selection of USAID to be the administrative agency. If this program were to become law, we request that USAID work with NGOs/PVOs as it establishes the procedures for receiving funding to help ensure ease of participation and successful implementation



required to understand how this plan can be most effectively and efficiently accomplished, as well as how PVOs could participate in offset opportunities.

Recommendation 9: Active engagement of the NGO sector in the review and design of domestic and international adaptation strategies.

As the White House Council on Environmental Quality, the Department of State, and other Federal agencies begin to coordinate interagency action on domestic and international adaptation, we recommend that faith- and community-based organizations be engaged and consulted in decisions about funding, program design, and implementation of domestic and international adaptation strategies. In addition, faith- and community-based organizations can play an important role in helping to facilitate inclusive, collaborative planning processes—at all levels of government—that will address climate change impacts, especially on low-income and vulnerable populations.

Faith- and community-based groups, both at home and around the world, have firsthand experience and knowledge of the most vulnerable populations and the struggles they are facing because of climate change. They have capacity, knowledge, and networks that can be activated as valuable partners in climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts. The U.S. Government should utilize this vast knowledge to help shape public policy, program design, funding decisions, and delivery mechanisms.



Inter-Religious Cooperation

Members of the Taskforce

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Inter-Religious Cooperation

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Government seeks to treat all of its citizens equally and to honor the human rights of all persons around the world, religious and nonreligious. The U.S. Government currently partners with a wide range of secular entities to achieve its domestic and international objectives. The Federal Government also recognizes that religiously affiliated persons, communities, specialized agencies, and multireligious bodies can be vital partners in both domestic and international affairs.

In many areas of the world, religious communities have the best developed, largest, and most enduring social infrastructures. Further, they can be among the most credible and reliable partners.

A key to advancing productive partnerships between the U.S. Government and religious communities lies in respecting their different identities and clearly discerning their overlapping interests for advancing concrete action for the common good. Respecting both points can help greatly in the development of fruitful partnerships between the U.S. Government, religious groups, and other civil society partners.

The U.S. Government often employs a multistakeholder approach to partnerships, which can include partnerships among governmental, civil society, and business groups for common objectives. Multistakeholder partnerships can also include numerous distinct religious communities, their related specialized agencies, and interreligious organizations, willing to work together to address specific concrete challenges.

Major advantages of a multistakeholder approach to partnerships that involve religious communities, their specialized agencies, and multireligious organizations include: having a clear focus on the common good; conforming to constitutional, statutory, and regulatory frameworks; and drawing on the impulses for the common good anchored deeply in a variety of religious and or other civic philanthropic motivations.

When religiously affiliated persons, communities, their specialized agencies, and multireligious organizations work together in multistakeholder partnerships, they understand themselves as engaging in “interfaith service,” working for the common good, even while maintaining the unique religious identity of each participating partner.

This disciplined approach to multistakeholder partnerships that include these religiously affiliated actors—in addition to advancing concrete projects—can also greatly foster social cohesion and help transform sectarian tensions into habits of collaboration based on mutual respect.

All participants in multistakeholder approaches to the common good are important. As noted above, the Federal Government partners with a variety of secular entities in many effective multi-sector arrangements, and those partnerships certainly should continue. The focus of this report, however, is to explore some of the unique benefits and opportunities presented by partnerships between the U.S. Government and religiously affiliated actors.

For the purpose of this report, interreligious cooperation refers to activities and projects that draw participants from more than one faith tradition, denomination, spiritual movement, or religion and often include secular participants and organizations, as well. These efforts are aimed at increasing understanding and cooperation among such groups. This document uses the terms “interreligious,” “multifaith,” “interfaith,” and “multireligious” interchangeably.

It is important to note the emphasis President Barack Obama gave in his Cairo speech to improving U.S. relations with “the Muslim world.” This report has a section emphasizing this important goal, even while upholding and encouraging the overall objective of religious inclusivity and the broader goal of working across religious lines with all people—religious and nonreligious—to foster understanding and encourage cooperation. The ever-greater religious diversity within the United States is a national asset that can be coordinated by principled multireligious and multistakeholder partnerships with the U.S. Government to build a healthy culture of pluralism, marked by respect for distinct religious communities, active and positive relationships among them and nonreligious communities, and a commitment among all groups to build a healthy, diverse, and shared society. In addition, all proposals made in this report must be implemented in accordance with constitutional, statutory, and regulatory frameworks, including the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment.

Finally, it is recognized that all U.S. Government funding must be predicated on achieving secular results. Such funding must be awarded based on neutral performance-based criteria and must be open to faith-based and non-faith-based entities on equal terms. The recommendations below should be read in accord with these principles.



OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Role of Religion and Global Affairs:

Recommendation 1: Include multireligious partnerships among the partnerships in which the U.S. government engages, and equip U.S. agencies related to international affairs for those partnerships.

Recommendation 2: Partner with faith communities and other organizations that work across faith lines to expand respect for religious pluralism and freedom of religion or belief.

Advancing Multireligious Cooperation:

Recommendation 3: Increase partnerships with interreligious councils and women of faith networks to advance peace building and development.

Recommendation 4: Initiate a public campaign to scale and strengthen global and domestic program partnerships with Federal agencies that increase dialogue and service between people from diverse faith-based and secular groups to build understanding and serve the common good.

Recommendation 5: Host a White House roundtable to foster multireligious partnerships to advance interfaith service, peace building, and development.

Engaging Muslim Communities:

Recommendation 6: Establish ongoing communication between the White House and the Office of the Special Representative to Muslim Communities at the Department of State and Muslim American community groups on global Muslim engagement efforts.

Recommendation 7: Hold townhall meetings around the country including representatives from the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, and faith-based and community groups to discuss citizen concerns about civil liberties.

Recommendation 8: Utilize the expertise of faith- and community-based organizations to train education and media professionals on Islam and Muslim communities.

Integrating and Valuing America's Religious Diversity

Recommendation 9: Through the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and relevant Agency Centers, direct U.S. Government agencies to work to engage the rich diversity of American religious communities in partnerships to strengthen the common good in America.

Recommendation 10: Through the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and relevant Agency Centers, direct U.S. Government agencies to work to engage the rich diversity of American religious and cultural communities in partnerships to provide aid, development, and other services overseas to advance peace and justice abroad.

Recommendation 11: Help build social cohesion by supporting efforts to ensure that Americans have opportunities to understand America's increasingly diverse religious society.

THE ROLE OF RELIGION AND GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Religion is abused by extremists using religion to incite violence and hatred, by unscrupulous leaders manipulating sectarian differences for their own ends, by those seeking to exploit victims of poverty and to violate human rights, and by instances in which media scapegoats religion in situations of conflict.

Religious communities should be engaged to help achieve solutions for peace, security, human development, and respect for fundamental human rights that undergird these solutions. Multireligious cooperation is a useful method of engagement, because it builds public cooperation and focuses on the common good. In order for religious communities to work together, they must be able to operate freely in society. This report includes recommendations for both broadening multireligious cooperation and enlarging the region in which religious pluralism is permitted to exist freely.

No government, non-profit organization, or foundation can coordinate the assets of religious communities by itself. Religious communities must convene their own forums of multireligious cooperation to help unleash the potential of their respective and combined assets, which are spiritual, moral, and social. Although religious communities are the principal convenors of themselves, government may also serve as a convenor for certain purposes. In these engagements, the partners must guard against the manipulation of religion, the marginalization of those who decline to participate, and the undue expansion of the role of government in interfaith dialogue. To advance potential partnerships between the U.S. Government and religious communities, this document outlines a series of recommendations for U.S. Government agencies.

Two existing U.S. governmental entities with expertise and capacity that may be relevant to implementing these recommendations are the Department of State's Office of International Religious Freedom and the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.¹ The professional staff of these entities, the Commission's members and, when appointed, the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom have substantial knowledge of the role religion plays in societies around the world, the means of fostering interreligious cooperation in diverse cultures, and the U.S. Government's existing initiatives and infrastructure in the field. The required annual International Religious Freedom report has also nurtured a corps of foreign service officers who have developed strong connections with religious communities in countries across the globe.

Key Principles, Orientations, and Assumptions

The following working assumptions inform the recommendations below:

1. It is important to honor the distinction between the identities of religious communities and governmental agencies.²
2. Religious communities have significant experience, expertise, and capacity in peace building and development, including the delivery of health care, education, social service, and emergency assistance.³

¹ Both the Department of State's Office of International Religious Freedom and the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom were created by the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998.

² It is important to note that multireligious organizations are not technically religious in identity; they are public organizations with religious constituencies.

³ See footnote number 3 on page 75.

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3. Multireligious cooperation should focus on harnessing this experience, expertise, and capacity and, at the same time, respect the distinct roles of religious communities and governmental agencies.⁴
 4. All efforts should operate within established principles for multireligious cooperation that have garnered wide acceptance among the world's religious communities:
 - a. Respect religious differences, and act on deeply held and widely shared values.
 - b. Preserve the identity of each religious community.
 - c. Honor the different ways religious communities are organized.
 - d. Support locally led multireligious structures.

As the President seeks to scale up multireligious cooperation as a mode of action for the common good, we offer the following principles and orientations as a guide:

- Place a premium on multireligious engagements based on shared principles that can enable each participating religious community to work on common goals.
- Identify and evaluate existing multireligious organizations led by representatives of the religious communities as potential partners for action programs, and encourage new organizations to become involved in the field.⁵
- Consider building the capacity of established multireligious organizations, and similar organizations with relevant expertise and capacity, to implement needed projects.
- Seek partnerships with existing international multireligious organizations, and similar organizations with relevant expertise and capacity, if national multireligious organizations do not exist.
- Acknowledge the transnational character of many religious communities, and advance coherence in partnership objectives on the global, regional, national, and local levels.
- Advance multistate and multisectoral partnerships in support of multireligious cooperation for peace and sustainable development as a way to both advance the scale and maintain the independent identity of multireligious action.
- Focus on building multireligious partnerships as a priority in countries where religion is a major feature of social contract, is subject to misunderstanding, and has a significant potential to advance the common good.
- Ensure that all steps taken to promote multireligious cooperation are within the parameters of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment and other relevant constitutional and legal provisions.

³ Religious communities often have (1) a clear mission and message and a traditional orientation toward peace and the promotion of respectful human relations; (2) a permanent historic and widely spread presence in society at large and in local communities in particular; (3) legitimacy that enables them to make clear and courageous statements during crises and speak with authority to issues of common concern; (4) the largest social networks, reaching from the smallest village to capital cities and beyond; (5) trusted and integrated communication networks to help reach larger numbers of individual followers; and (6) moral and spiritual traditions that have great authority among their adherents and relevance for peace and human well-being.

⁴ Multireligious cooperation aligns diverse communities around common goals based on shared values, highlights complementarities for action among diverse communities, provides for efficiencies in training, and equips religious communities for public partnerships .

⁵ Religious communities should be engaged through their own representatives – leaders, outstanding persons, grassroots congregations, and other organizational manifestations – in the work of building interreligious structures on every level, local to global. In this approach, religious communities are acknowledged as the main agents of multi-religious cooperation, with each religious community maintaining its own voice and unique identity while working to achieve common goals.

Recommendation 1: Include multireligious partnerships among the partnerships in which the U.S. Government engages, and equip U.S. agencies related to international affairs for those partnerships.

The Administration should include multireligious partnerships among the partnerships in which the U.S. Government engages and should equip U.S. agencies related to international affairs for those partnerships.⁶ Toward this end, the Advisory Council recommends that the Administration request appointment of senior staff for multireligious engagement in each of the major agencies handling international affairs. It also urges President Obama to direct each agency to establish portfolios related to multireligious engagements and to call for the creation of both intra-agency and interagency working groups on multireligious engagement. Policy reviews should be open to an analysis of religious factors, including the potential impact of multireligious cooperation for key objectives and initiatives. And the Council urges the Administration to direct the Foreign Service Institute, military service academies, and chaplaincy training programs to adopt new curricula that systematically include course material about religions, relevant international laws that protect the rights of religious and nonreligious people, and methods of engaging multireligious partnerships in building the common good. Such government engagement with religious communities should be aimed at promoting secular goals such as achieving peace and security, not promoting either religion generally or particular religions.

A.) Appoint senior-level staff for multireligious engagement.

The President should request the appointment of senior staff for multireligious engagement in each of the major agencies tasked with international affairs, including the Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the National Security Council (NSC), and the Department of Defense. Internationally, Senior Officers for Multireligious Engagement and Community Partnerships should be assigned in key embassies (in accord with criteria above) in order to support field cooperation with religious partners.

To successfully engage multireligious partnerships in achieving peace, security, human development, and respect for fundamental human rights, dedicated staff needs to be in place in U.S. Government agencies. The potential for multireligious cooperation will not be systematically addressed unless appropriate agency staff is appointed to intentionally focus on the power of multireligious cooperation.

B.) Establish multireligious portfolios.

The President should direct each agency to establish portfolios related to multireligious engagements that span the work of policy development, through the implementation of diplomacy and development programs.

The intentional effort to further encourage multireligious engagement can be strategically successful only with staff being assigned, portfolioed, and interconnected in U.S. Government agencies.

⁶ References throughout this section of the report to “multireligious” partnerships presume that they will be one form of partnership among many partnerships, including those with secular entities, through which the Federal Government pursues its foreign policy interests. Also, the recommendation calling for the addition of staff and policy emphases on multireligious perspectives assumes that similar secular emphases are already present in these agencies and will be ongoing. For example, senior staff in Federal agencies focused on international affairs already is tasked with engaging with a wide variety of secular communities (see part A of Recommendation 1).



C.) Constitute intra-agency and interagency working groups for multireligious partnerships.

The President should call for the constitution of both intra-agency and interagency working groups on multireligious engagement. These working groups will recommend policy related to multireligious partnerships. They will facilitate the sharing of information, advance policy coherence across agencies, and foster synergy of action. A high-level interagency task force should be directly linked to the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

Cooperation within and between the staff of different agencies charged with multireligious engagement can facilitate a coordinated strategic advancement of multireligious partnerships. Linking the agencies with the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships through a high-level task force can advance coordinated policy and implementation of multireligious partnerships.

D.) Coordinate policy efforts with regards to multireligious perspectives.

The President should direct that policy reviews be open to an analysis of religious factors, including the potential impact of multireligious cooperation for implementing key objectives and initiatives. Public diplomacy strategies and protocols should be developed that promote engagement with religious communities and their leaders through multireligious coalitions.

Religious communities are integral to human societies. They are among the oldest and largest social networks, and their contributions in education, health, and social services represent a sizeable portion of all such efforts. Policy analyses that do not take into account multireligious capacities can risk missing the positive potentials for action of multireligious cooperation and—in the absence of positive engagement—enhance the risk that others will attempt to misuse religious communities for narrowly sectarian or political interests.

E.) Improve training on world religions and multireligious cooperation.

The President should direct the Foreign Service Institute, military service academies, and chaplaincy training programs to adopt new curricula that systematically include course material about religions, relevant international laws that protect the rights of religious and nonreligious people, and methods of engaging multireligious partnerships in building the common good.

Religion informs the values and actions of many people around the globe, and faith-based institutions make a significant contribution to the delivery of health care, education, and social services. Therefore, it is necessary that U.S. Government personnel understand the religious traditions of the people with whom they are interacting. Further, religious communities are potential partners for the delivery of basic services, brokering peace and creating stable societies. U.S. personnel must have a working knowledge of the best means to engage religious communities.

Recommendation 2: Partner with faith communities and other organizations that work across faith lines to expand respect for religious pluralism and freedom of religion or belief.

The President should direct U.S. Government agencies to identify and fund entities with expertise in both building respect for religious pluralism and expanding freedom of religion or belief as defined in international law.⁷

Further, the U.S. Government should partner with entities with relevant expertise, to analyze the effectiveness and possible means of improving current U.S. efforts to expand freedom of religion or belief.

Background and Explanation:

President Obama raised religious freedom as one of his priorities in the Cairo speech, stating “[f]reedom of religion is central to the ability of peoples to live together.” Similarly, Secretary Clinton stated on October 26, 2009, that “[r]eligious freedom provides a cornerstone for every healthy society. It empowers faith-based service. It fosters tolerance and respect among different communities. And it allows nations that uphold it to become more stable, secure and prosperous.”

One reason to promote multireligious cooperation is to lessen tensions among religious communities and thereby reduce religiously motivated violence. But a number of societies that present serious security threats to American interests are also societies in which religious repression functionally prevents significant multifaith cooperation.⁸

The first step in executing significant multireligious projects in repressive nations is, therefore, working with partners to ensure respect for the existing religious diversity within those societies and to advance religious pluralism. Religious pluralism is defined as respect for distinct religious and nonreligious identities, active and positive relationships between different religious and nonreligious communities, and a commitment across religious lines to building a healthy, diverse, and shared society.

While freedom of religion or belief is a necessary precursor to robust religious pluralism, and while robust pluralism is necessary before substantial multireligious cooperation is possible, there is significant interplay among the three. Multireligious cooperation is a substantial means through which societies achieve religious pluralism and religious freedom. A high level of religious pluralism and religious freedom is a central component of a stable civil society. It minimizes tensions among religious communities, reduces religiously motivated violence, and increases the stability of diverse societies.

Research shows that creating networks of engagement among different religious communities in civil society is a factor in preventing violence among those communities during times of tension.⁹ It also prevents religious prejudices from turning into violence that can impact geopolitical relations. Therefore, multireligious approaches are essential to expanding religious freedom and to building respect for religious pluralism, which are both necessary in order to achieve substantial multifaith cooperation.

⁷ See Article 18 of the *United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Article 18 of the *United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, and the *United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief*.

⁸ See U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, *Countries of Particular Concern*, http://www.uscirf.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1456&Itemid=59, and the Department of State, *2009 Report on International Religious Freedom* (available at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2009/index.htm>).

⁹ For example, see Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India* (Yale University Press, 2003).

ADVANCING MULTIRELIGIOUS COOPERATION

Interfaith¹⁰ coalitions and organizations provide unique capacity to achieve critical U.S. objectives in three principal ways:

- First, by bringing together people of faith and of goodwill, individuals and entities can build knowledge and respect for one another. This multireligious cooperation builds social cohesion and helps replace sectarian tensions with mutual respect.
- Second, there is a moral and social imperative in religious and civic traditions to help others. Building on this impetus to help achieve U.S. Government objectives in the fields of aid, development, health care, and other social infrastructure goals makes functional sense.
- Third, as in many areas of the world, where religious communities have well-developed social infrastructures already in place and the credibility and reliability to partner effectively with government, they should be invited to work with government, just as similarly situated secular communities would be.

Recommendation 3: Increase partnerships with interreligious councils and women of faith networks to advance peace building and development.

The Department of State, USAID, and the NSC should engage in consultations with representatives of religious communities, multireligious organizations, and other community organizations to discern relevant religious factors and contributions in relationship to conflict resolution and peace building. Particular attention should be given to those areas shaped by religious legacies and having special importance for regional and global security, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Nigeria, Northern Ireland, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Israel and Palestine. Consistent with the President’s aspiration, expressed in his Cairo speech, to move beyond stalemate, the Middle East conflict is one in which cooperation between diverse religious leaders, particularly Muslim, Jewish, and Christian religious leaders, can play a vital role in constructively moving that conflict toward resolution.

The Department of State and USAID should develop partnerships with national, regional, and global interreligious councils and new multireligious organizations to engage in peace building, ranging from conflict prevention, to conflict transformation, to social reconstruction. They also should engage regional, national, and global interreligious women’s networks on these issues, as well as on the issues of trauma healing and gender equality. The capacity building and resourcing relevant to these partnerships should be a priority.

U.S. Government agencies, such as USAID, the Department of State, and others that undertake critical global development issues—including specifically eradicating malaria and addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic—should scale up partnerships with national, regional, and global interreligious councils and women of faith networks.

The Federal efforts that focus on women—such as the White House Council on Women and Girls, the Department of State’s Office of Global Women’s Issues, the USAID Global Partnership Initiative, and others—should engage regional, national, and global interreligious women’s networks to advance development on all fronts, particularly poverty

¹⁰ For this report, “interfaith” refers to activities and projects that draw participants from more than one faith tradition, denomination, spiritual movement, or religion and that often include secular participants and organizations. These efforts are aimed at increasing understanding and cooperation among such groups. This document uses the terms “interreligious,” “multifaith,” “interfaith,” and “multireligious” interchangeably.

alleviation, including microfinance; education of female children; maternal and child health; and addressing forms of violence against women.

Background and explanation:

Religious communities and multireligious organizations are too often sidelined or altogether dismissed as potential partners in development and peace-building initiatives. As long as relevant constitutional and legal rules are respected, the separate roles and identities of religious communities and governments are upheld, and clear expectations are outlined about the functional role of religious communities in the delivery of services, religious communities can then offer tremendous social, moral, and physical assets to efforts in development and peace building.

Women are disproportionately affected by issues related to the development and peace building. They also possess unrealized and unrecognized potential to affect change for the common good in these arenas. One of the most common ways that women already substantively contribute is through religious communities and multireligious alliances.

Hindu American Seva Charities

<http://www.hinduamericanseva.org>

Hindu American Seva Charities (HASC) was formed in May 2009 to mobilize Hindu Americans, temples, ashrams, and spiritual centers to expand their ongoing community service, promote development of sustainable service centers, and mobilize the first national services participation in President Obama's United We Serve Summer of Service Campaign. Over 120 Seva Centers in temples and ashrams responded to the President's clarion call to serve. Thousands of volunteers undertook over 1,300 humanitarian seva projects, and almost all were interfaith.

The primary objectives of HASC are to:

- Support and encourage millions of Hindu Americans to volunteer to build and strengthen all American Communities through seva/community service programs nationally and at grassroots levels; and
- Provide broader exposure and promote development of coalitions and partnerships of Seva Centers (Community Service Centers that are standalone or part of temples) to accomplish common goals and address community needs.

The primary focus of the seva projects conducted coast to coast during the summer of 2009 was:

- Poverty reduction (622 events) through soup kitchens in local churches, fundraising walk-a-thons, holiday meals, building homes, shoes and clothing drives, care packages and free hotel/motel rooms for U.S. soldiers, prison correspondence outreach, educational forums on home foreclosures and stimulus package strategies for survival, and other activities;
- Coordination of 407 health events for uninsured Americans held primarily on August 1 and 2, 2009. This comprehensive health fair offered medical screening provided by physicians, nurses, and individuals. It also included health awareness presentations developed for the service campaign by medical students;
- Environment and greening projects by youth who cleaned and cleared roadsides, beaches, and parks and planted trees in the community;
- Education development efforts including filling backpacks with school supplies for low-income children; and
- Interfaith dialogues to improve understanding. For example, the Siva Vishnu Temple in Washington, D.C., hosted a discussion in which each faith (Christian—Presbyterian, Orthodox, Baptist, Methodist, and Quaker; Jewish, Sikh, Jain, Muslim, Buddhist, Baha'i, and Hindu) addressed its role on fasting and feasting.

Recommendation 4: Initiate a public campaign to scale and strengthen global and domestic program partnerships with federal agencies that increase dialogue and service between people from a diversity of faith-based and secular groups to build understanding and serve the common good.¹¹

The Council proposes that the administration seek to achieve the following goals by the end of 2012:

On 500 U.S. college campuses:

- The President should allocate already appropriated funds within the Department of Education or Department of Health & Human Services, to provide the necessary financial incentive to stimulate campus/community partnerships through service projects that bring people together across different religious and secular lines.
- The White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships should convene a gathering of senior university officials and members of the private/philanthropic sector to make concrete commitments to advance university/community interfaith service partnerships.¹²
- The Department of Education with the Department of Housing and Urban Development should create a joint fund to implement innovative student programming focused on cultivating service partnerships between people from a diversity of faith-based and secular groups with organizations that have a strong track record of service initiatives (e.g., Habitat for Humanity) to increase dialogue and service.

The Secretary of Education should undertake a major initiative, including financial incentives, to promote policies on university campuses that specifically encourage respect for religious diversity and multi-religious cooperation. Such policies should address all aspects of institutional life including mission, housing, student life, and staffing.



Muslim Americans Answer the Call

<http://www.muslimserve.org>

Muslim Americans Answer the Call (MAAC) was launched June 2009 in response to President Obama's call for interfaith service projects as a part of the United We Serve Initiative. Muslim Americans are "Answering the Call" by responding to the President's challenge to all Americans to help our Nation recover from the economic crisis. MAAC also means responding to the millions of Americans in need, who have been hit hard by layoffs and foreclosures or who do not have affordable health care and education. Finally, "Answering the Call" refers to responding to what Muslims believe is their faith's call to serve God by serving others. After a summer of hard work, the campaign achieved more than 3,600 individual days of service, 93% of which were completed in cooperation with another faith-based community. The result of this national effort, MAAC, was more than 3,600 individual daylong service projects, touching the lives of thousands of Americans in need.

The primary objective of MAAC is to:

- Encourage and empower every Muslim American to serve humanity, especially the millions of Americans in need.

To facilitate Muslim Americans' full participation in this important effort, MAAC responded by:

- Creating www.MuslimServe.org to call all Muslim Americans to serve their country by setting a goal of 1,000 service projects nationally; and
- Participating in volunteer projects centered on health care, for example, community health care screenings; education (e.g., Life In Books); the environment, such as Green Ramadan; and community renewal, such as Day of Dignity.

¹¹ From here on, these programs will be referred to as "interfaith service projects."

¹² As their name suggests, these public-private partnerships are focused on community service, such as spending time with senior citizens in a nursing home, painting the walls of a YMCA, and making blankets for refugee children. These partnerships are not aimed at promoting either religion generally or particular religions, but rather at building understanding and cooperation between diverse groups.

Project Downtown

<http://www.projectdowntown.org/chapters/orlando/>

Organized in partnership with the Corporation for National Community Service, Project Downtown in Orlando, Florida, was launched in response to President Obama's call for interfaith service projects as a part of the United We Serve Initiative.

Project Downtown is an effort in which the Muslim Students Association joined with evangelical college students from Northland Church, a local Hillel, and the Hindu Students Association to serve the homeless. Students distributed weekly food and clothes and provided housing assistance and job facilitation while spending time with and learning about one another. Students worked together to sort clothes, assemble hygiene kits, and pack brown bag lunches for the homeless in Orlando on September 6, 2009. Approximately 150 homeless people were provided clothing, hygiene kits, and food.



In 40 U.S. cities:

- The White House and the Corporation for National and Community Service should coordinate a gathering of city-based religious leaders, community foundations, and Federal and State Faith-Based Directors to launch scaled interfaith service programs in 40 cities that will be operational by the end of 2012.
- Program directors at the relevant service initiatives should incorporate program components that increase involvement of faith-based groups in existing national service initiatives such as AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America programs to leverage the social capital that exists within these communities.

At 25 U.S. Embassies:

- The Department of State should conduct international speaking tours through the Department's Office of Public Diplomacy with cohorts of diverse American college students focusing on America's example of religious pluralism and cross-cultural understanding. These programs should be used to create forums for interreligious dialogue, while inspiring grassroots support of interfaith service.
- The Department of State's Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs (ECA) should develop a robust international exchange and training program focused on young people. This program will provide emerging leaders with the understanding and skills needed to implement and/or create projects that increase dialogue and service between people from a diversity of faith-based and secular groups for building understanding and serving the common good. ECA should further network young interfaith leaders globally through social networking tools and conferences to reinforce successes and share best practices.

- The President should ask Congress to increase levels of government funding for Embassies and Consulates to sponsor international interfaith service programs and coordinate programs that strategically align with foreign policy goals.
- USAID should instigate and coordinate meaningful service initiatives that bring together diverse constituencies in areas where religious conflict is a concern, such as interfaith Habitat for Humanity builds.
- The President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, and other high-level representatives should visit and host high-profile interfaith service projects, which would provide both symbolic meaning and a demonstration of concrete action.

Background and Explanation:

In Cairo, President Obama laid out a vision for a new beginning with Muslim communities around the world, one based on mutual respect and common action on shared goals. Currently, interfaith service initiatives that exist in Federal agencies are ad hoc and scattered. It is imperative to have a coherent and scaled strategy in which the U.S. Government makes a concrete commitment to catalyzing and strengthening interfaith service programs through Federal agencies.

The President and other senior Administration officials should emphasize the importance of both interfaith engagement and service, two important priorities of his Administration. An emphasis on these two important priorities also would also provide a model of action and engagement for others to follow.

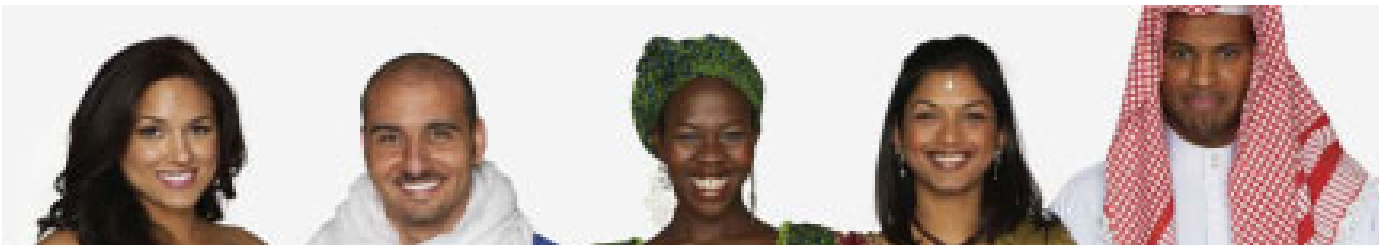


Recommendation 5: Host a White House roundtable to foster multireligious partnerships to advance interfaith service, peace building, and development.

The President should direct the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships to host a conference to draw attention to the emerging field of multireligious cooperation and the unique potential for new partnerships—between government, multireligious organizations, and the secular and religious private and philanthropic sectors—in order to advance the common good.

Background and Explanation:

The President has the unique ability to raise awareness of the importance of interfaith cooperation, both in society in general and in efforts to achieve specific U.S. goals at home and abroad. Bringing together faith leaders, secular civil society leaders, and government leaders and underscoring the important role that interfaith cooperation plays in achieving these goals will encourage those leaders to form bonds and begin talking about how they can work together. Further, a high-profile roundtable could underline that interfaith proposals, including joint proposals between secular NGOs and faith-based NGOs, are welcome. The net result of the event will likely be a significant rise in proposals by interfaith groups, which, in turn, will likely result in more funding of qualified interfaith projects.



Interfaith Youth Core

<http://www.ifyc.org>

Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC) seeks to make interfaith cooperation a social norm—a world where individuals have positive relationships across the lines of faith and an appreciative understanding of the diverse traditions in our society; mosques, churches, and synagogues have regular interfaith exchanges and engagements; college campuses support interfaith student councils; and cities have annual days of interfaith service. Too often, religion is a barrier of division or a bomb of destruction. IFYC believes faith can be a bridge to cooperation, strengthening our civil society and promoting the common good for all.

Civil rights leaders and environmentalists built transformative movements in the 20th century. IFYC believes that interfaith leaders will build the movement for interfaith cooperation in the 21st century.

Since 2002, IFYC has worked on 5 continents and over 150 college and university campuses, reached over 75,000 people with the message of interfaith cooperation, trained 10,000 interfaith leaders, and worked with partners including the White House and Her Majesty Queen Rania of Jordan.

The primary objectives of IFYC are to:

- Change the public discourse about religion from one of inevitable conflict to one of cooperation and religious pluralism;
- Nurture and network a critical mass of emerging interfaith leaders; and
- Partner with cities and college campuses to become models of interfaith cooperation.

ENGAGING MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

President Obama identified improving U.S. relations with “the Muslim world” as a key foreign policy imperative during his Presidential campaign. He reaffirmed this commitment during his inauguration address when he said, “To the Muslim world, we seek a new way forward, based on mutual interest and mutual respect.”

Fulfilling a campaign promise, President Obama gave a historic address to Muslims around the world in June 2009 when he launched a new phase in U.S.-Muslim relations from Cairo, Egypt. President Obama received the Nobel Peace Prize in October 2009 for these and other diplomatic efforts, demonstrating the impact of his outreach efforts on America’s international image.

Several important initiatives, led by the White House, are underway across government to move this key Presidential agenda item forward. These include programs to promote entrepreneurship, student and scholarly exchange, partnerships to eradicate disease, as well as programs to increase women’s education in Muslim majority societies. We fully support these vital efforts.

What follows are areas in which faith- and community-based organizations can make the biggest contribution to the efforts already underway. The outcomes within these recommendations will signal, both domestically and internationally, the highest ambitions of a society, where Muslims are welcomed as equal actors in the shared national life. It is critical to note that these goals are part of an overall objective of protecting the equal rights of people of all faiths and no faiths and working across religious lines to foster understanding and encourage cooperation.

As recognized above, those who work in the U.S. Foreign Service must be informed about religious communities and ideas as well as nonreligious communities and ideas. We simply cannot understand our Nation or our world without understanding religion. Because religion has sometimes been overlooked in this sphere, we call for it to be given greater consideration. More specifically, in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, it has become clear that Muslim communities and ideas have not been given adequate attention in foreign service work. Thus, we call for providing Foreign Service Officers with more information on Islamic traditions and for fostering increased engagement with Muslim communities as well as implementing other efforts to ensure that the increasing religious and cultural diversity present in America is appropriately recognized and valued.

Finally, it is also important to note that the Council recognizes the debate within U.S. foreign policy regarding whether to strengthen some religious groups (and their expressions) that reject the efforts of other religious groups to offer a religious justification for violence and terrorism. Such policy agendas and related actions raise controversial and complex constitutional issues, ones that courts have only rarely addressed and the Supreme Court of the United States has never considered.¹³ This set of recommendations does not join those issues. Where these recommendations propose that the Government undertake educational efforts about religion, for example, they are limited to proposals that call for objective teaching about religious groups and their ideas, not efforts to promote acceptance of theological precepts or to press for adherence to any faith.

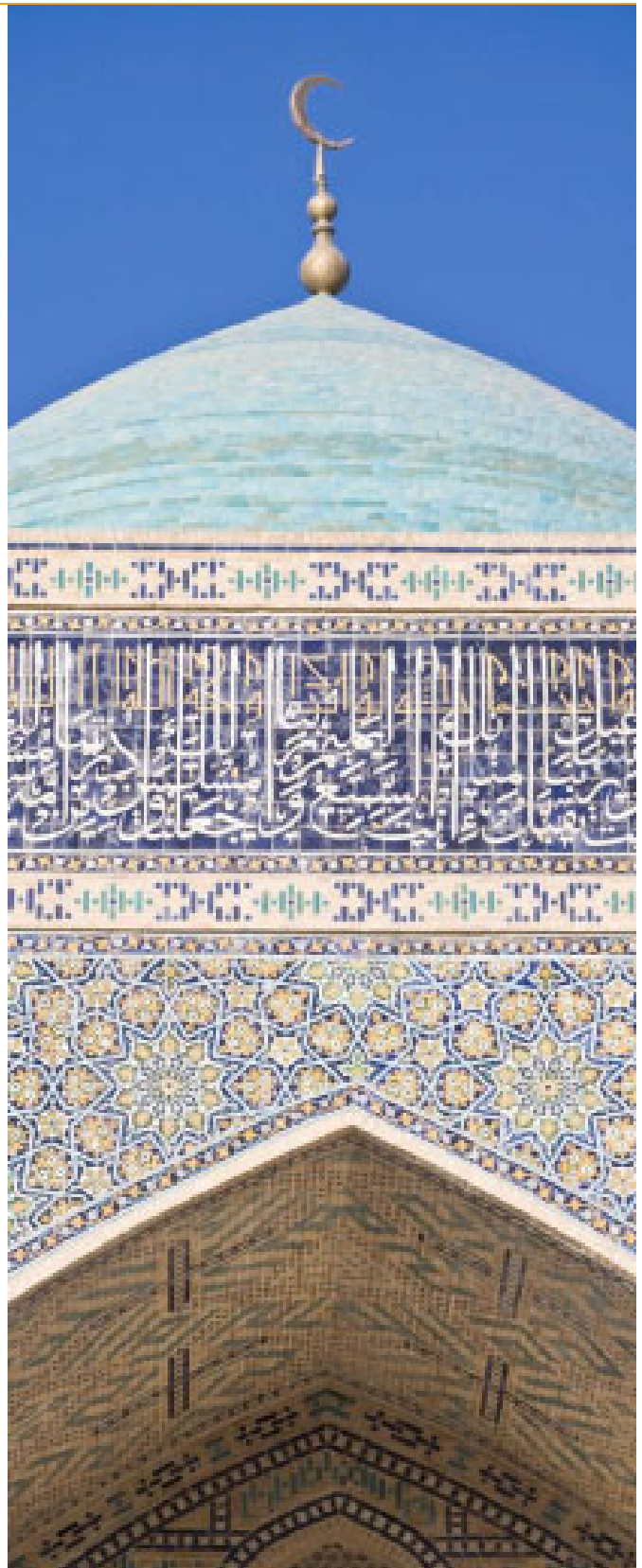
¹³ See *Lamont v. Woods*, 948 F.2d 825 (2d Cir. 1991).

Recommendation 6: Establish ongoing communication between the White House and the Office of the Special Representative to Muslim Communities at the Department of State and Muslim American community groups on global Muslim engagement efforts.

As one of the country's most diverse and educated faith communities,¹⁴ Muslim Americans offer policymakers an invaluable cultural and religious brain trust on which to draw when engaging Muslims globally. Muslim Americans model a concept President Obama has repeatedly emphasized: Islam and America are mutually enriching, not mutually exclusive.¹⁵ Like many other Americans, the majority of U.S. followers of Islam say religion is an important part of their daily life. At the same time, Muslim Americans are actively engaged in public life with others who largely do not share their faith. Their active participation in the United We Serve summer of service, with more than 3,500 Muslim-led multifaith service projects,¹⁶ is but one example.

President Obama has also committed to working for women's literacy and education, another area in which Muslim Americans can be especially helpful. Muslim American women are among the most educated women in America, and Muslim Americans are unique in boasting no gender gap in the number of people with a college education.¹⁷ This achievement offers an example to other global communities that may struggle with women's education and stands as an example of faith reconciled with modern life.

Policymakers are urged to make full use of this valuable national resource. The Federal Government has a long and rich tradition of reaching out to a variety of religious and nonreligious communities to tap their best ideas, engage them in public service, and listen to their concerns. As part of this process, it should ensure that it reaches out to American Muslim communities.



¹⁴ President Barack Obama, Cairo, June 4th 2009

¹⁵ www.MuslimServe.org

¹⁶ *Muslim Americans: A National Portrait*, Gallup March 2009

¹⁷ Pew Research Center

Recommendation 7: Hold townhall meetings around the country including representatives from the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, and faith-based and community groups to discuss citizen concerns about civil liberties.

Engaging Muslim communities around the world will necessarily include engaging the millions of Muslims who are also Americans.

According to surveys,¹⁸ the majority of Muslim Americans (53%) say that being a Muslim in the United States since 9/11 has been more difficult.¹⁹ When asked to identify the most important problems facing the group, respondents identified discrimination and “being viewed as a terrorist” near the top. One in four say they have been victims of discrimination as a Muslim in the United States.²⁰ In addition, research shows that Muslim American young people (ages 18 to 29) in particular are significantly less likely than their peers to be classified as “thriving” despite a relative economic advantage,²¹ though the data are not conclusive on the cause of this disparity.

Prejudice is like a cancer, it spreads, negatively impacting other groups and endangering America’s civic fabric. For example, a recent Gallup survey shows important links between anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.

This research also shows that 43 percent of the American public admits to feeling at least some “prejudice” toward Muslims—9 percent say they have a “great deal of prejudice,” significantly more than was expressed toward any other faith group studied.²² Moreover, though self-reported anti-Muslim prejudice is more common, self-reports of prejudice toward Jews is the variable most strongly associated with expression of “a great deal” of prejudice toward Muslims.²³ Though some see Muslims and Jews as representing competing loyalties in the Middle East conflict, prejudice toward Jews predicts not solidarity with, but disdain for Muslims, again underscoring the importance of multifaith partnership.

While self-reported prejudice does not equal discrimination, these data suggest that to engage Muslim Americans, government agencies and Muslim Americans, in partnership with other faith communities, must engage in greater dialogue.

By aggressively seeking to reduce bias against Muslim Americans, Federal agencies are not simply protecting the freedom and dignity of one group of Americans but ensuring freedom and dignity for all Americans.

Some non-Muslim Americans, including Hindu, Jain, Sikh and Buddhist Americans, also have experienced civil rights violations in the wake of the 9/11 attacks.²⁴ After September 2001, the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice noted that Arab, Muslim, Sikh, and South-Asian Americans, as well as people who were perceived to be members of those groups, had been the victims of “increased numbers of bias-related assaults, threats, vandalism and arson.” Accordingly, the Civil Rights Division launched an initiative “to work proactively to combat violations of civil rights laws” against these Americans. Its initiative is aimed at reducing the incidence of these bias-related assaults, threats, vandalism, and arson as well as prioritizing cases involving discrimination against these Americans in

¹⁸ Pew Research Center

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ *Id.*

²¹ Gallup and the Muslim West Facts Project, *Muslim Americans: A National Portrait*, March 2009.

²² Gallup and the Muslim West Facts Project, *Religious Perceptions in America: With an In-Depth Analysis of American Attitudes Toward Muslims and Islam*, January 2010.

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ Khyati Joshi, *The Racialization of Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism in the United States*

employment, housing, education, access to public accommodations and facilities, and other areas. After September 2001, the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice noted that Arab, Muslim, Sikh, and South-Asian Americans, as well as people who were perceived to be members of those groups, had been the victims of “increased numbers of bias-related assaults, threats, vandalism and arson.”²⁵ Accordingly, the Civil Rights Division launched an initiative “to work proactively to combat violations of civil rights laws” against these Americans.²⁶ Its initiative is aimed at reducing the incidence of these bias-related assaults, threats, vandalism, and arson as well as prioritizing cases involving discrimination against these Americans in employment, housing, education, access to public accommodations and facilities, and other areas.

The Council recommends that the Department of Justice continue this emphasis and work with the Department of Homeland Security as well as faith-based and community groups to hold townhall meetings to discuss citizen concerns on civil liberties.

Recommendation 8: Utilize the expertise of faith- and community-based organizations to train education and media professionals on Islam and Muslim communities.

In a historic speech in Cairo last summer, President Obama stated, “The interests we share as human beings are far more powerful than the forces that drive us apart.” The Cairo speech, intended to begin a new phase in U.S.-Muslim relations, emphasized the need for mutual respect and understanding. The President’s statement reflects that studies have shown what Muslims around the world most want from the West in order to improve relations—to be respected as equals. Likewise, similar studies have shown that Americans also say that to improve relations with Muslim communities, the latter must better understand and accept Americans.²⁷

Bridge building across communities will therefore require a range of efforts not only from heads of state, but also from citizens. We believe that citizen education—initiated and implemented by citizens—is the first step to engagement. Muslims around the world have a great deal to learn about America. The Department of State’s Public Diplomacy efforts and exchange programs are vital to addressing this need. Where American faith-based and community groups can best contribute is by educating their own constituents. The majority of Americans say they know little or nothing about Islam.²⁸

To move forward on the President’s goal to forge a new relationship with Muslim communities around the world based on mutual respect and mutual interests, the National Endowment for the Humanities,²⁹ as well as other government agencies, should invest in and support programs that utilize the reach and expertise of faith and community-based organizations in educating our own citizens about Muslim societies.

²⁵ U.S. Department of Justice’s Civil Rights Division, *Initiative to Combat Post-9/11 Discriminatory Backlash* (available at http://www.justice.gov/crt/legalinfo/nordwg_mission.php).

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ John Esposito and Dalia Mogahed, *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think* (Gallup Press, 2008).

²⁸ Gallup and the Muslim West Facts Project, *Religious Perceptions in America: With an In-Depth Analysis of American Attitudes Toward Muslims and Islam* (forthcoming November 3, 2009).

²⁹ One such example is the “Bridging Cultures” program being introduced by the National Endowment for the Humanities, referenced by Chairman Jim Leach in a speech at the Press Club in November 2009: “I have proposed that the NEH in concert with the state humanities councils initiate a ‘Bridging Cultures’ program aimed at enlarging our understanding of America’s diverse cultural heritage and the history, language, and art of other societies.”



INTEGRATING AND VALUING AMERICA'S RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

In his inauguration speech, President Obama acknowledged the growing religious diversity of the American people,³⁰ and recognized their contributions to our society. President Obama said: "We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus, and non-believers. We are shaped by every language and culture, drawn from every end of this Earth. ..."³¹

The patterns of immigration in the past several decades have brought many new peoples of faith into the United States. This immigration has broadened and deepened America's already rich religious and cultural diversity. New communities of the world's religions have established themselves with greater numbers, and many of them are developing social structures that could be valuably engaged in the service of the common good. As an example, the Dharmic traditions (Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, and Sikhism) have been an appreciable part of the American religious landscape since the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act.³² As another example, religious communities rooted in Africa, South and Central America, the Middle East, and the Pacific have also grown substantially in the United States in the last four decades.³³

All American religious communities are in principle welcome to engage in partnerships with the American government to advance the common good, if they meet the related requirements of doing so. Some faith communities have a long history of partnerships with governmental agencies and have acquired a broad knowledge of the opportunities and requirements for these partnerships. Other religious communities that desire partnerships do not yet have such experience and knowledge. Many of these communities have deep reservoirs of personal commitment, significant expertise, and economic and social capital for advancing the common good.

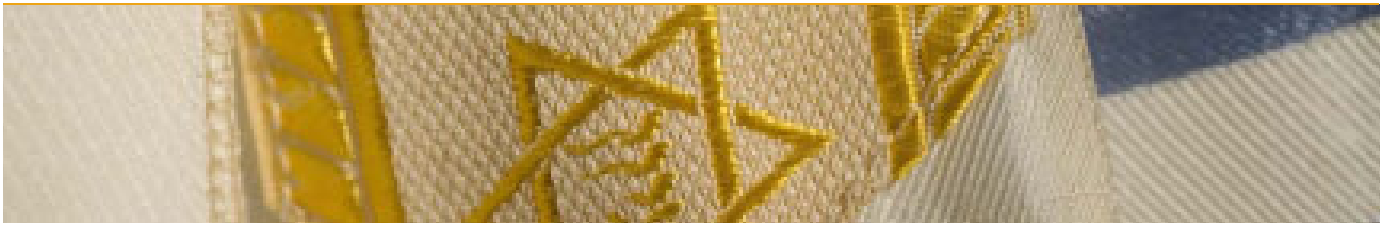
It is in the U.S. national interest to ensure that the diversity of American religious communities is fully participating in civic life and engaged in partnerships that deliver social services in America and abroad. Efforts to help the growing diversity of religious communities to engage in partnerships can help to advance the common good.

³⁰ President Barack Obama's Inaugural Address, January 21, 2009.

³¹ *Id.*

³² Anju Bhargava, "U.S. Community-Building in a Dharmic Environment," *Wall Street Journal*, July 28, 2009, World section (available at <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124875466922186053.html>).

³³ Harvard University, *The Pluralism Project* (available at <http://www.pluralism.org>).



Recommendation 9: Through the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and relevant Agency Centers, direct U.S. Government agencies to work to engage the rich diversity of American religious communities in partnerships to strengthen the common good in America.

Therefore, the Advisory Council makes the following recommendations:

1. Provide education and training on America's evolving religious and cultural diversity and its relevance to advancing the common good in America to U.S. Government Offices of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, for example in the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Education, and the Corporation for National and Community Service.³⁴

This effort would include arranging for major conferences and follow-on activities focused on helping relevant U.S. Government agencies and officials to understand the diversity of American religious and cultural communities and to map out their potentials for partnerships in serving the common good.

2. Take concrete steps to advance partnerships that can utilize the expertise and resources in America's diverse religious communities in partnerships designed to enhance civic participation in America. These efforts should include appropriate outreach and technical assistance and capacity-building support to new groups who do not yet have established partnerships with the U.S. Government.
3. Encourage community-building through interfaith collaboration with intermediaries to leverage the talent of the religious communities currently not participating in service opportunities.
4. Work to ensure that governmental chaplaincy services employ personnel who reflect the religious diversity of the men and women they are charged with serving.
5. Encourage institutions of higher learning to document and communicate the growing American religious and cultural diversity and related social service capacities.

Background and Explanation:

Immigration, particularly in the last four decades, has significantly broadened and deepened America's already rich religious and cultural diversity. When properly engaged in partnerships through increased civic outreach, these diverse communities can provide valuable services and add considerable value to the U.S. society.

³⁴ Federal agencies can reference the following report, a case study on teaching about religious diversity in an American public school (available at <http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/about.aspx?id=16863>><http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/about.aspx?id=16863>).



Recommendation 10: Through the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and relevant Agency Centers, direct U.S. Government agencies to work to engage the rich diversity of American religious and cultural communities in partnerships to provide aid, development, and other services overseas to advance peace and justice abroad.

Therefore, the Advisory Council makes the following recommendations:

1. Provide education and training on America’s evolving religious and cultural diversity and its relevance to advancing the common good abroad to Offices of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, for example, in the Department of State, USAID, and consulates/embassies across the world.

This effort would include arranging for major conferences and follow-on activities focused on helping relevant U.S. Government agencies and officials to understand the diversity of American religious groups and to map out their potentials for partnerships in serving the common good beyond America’s shores.

2. Take concrete steps to advance partnerships that can utilize the expertise, resources, and transnational connections in America’s diverse religious and cultural communities in partnerships designed to advance peace and development. These efforts should include appropriate outreach and technical assistance and capacity-building support to new groups who do not yet have established partnerships with the U.S. Government.

Background and Explanation:

In order to further U.S. foreign policy objectives, specifically in the areas of global diplomacy and development, particular attention should be given to advance partnerships utilizing the cultural and faith-based expertise of Americans with global ties. This effort should include forming partnerships with interreligious, intercultural, women’s,³⁵ and youth networks, particularly where they have a transnational character.

The existing expertise, resources, and talents in communities with cultural, language, and religious ties to other nations can be engaged in peace building and development. USAID’s Global Partnership Initiative states, “Although Diaspora community engagement with home countries is sizeable, the developmental potential for this group remains largely untapped. USAID recognizes that by not engaging with this community, we are missing out [on] an opportunity to increase our development impact significantly.”³⁶

³⁵ USAID, Women in Development (available at http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/wid/).

³⁶ USAID, Diaspora Engagement: Remittances & Beyond (available at http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_partnerships/gda/remittances.html).



Recommendation 11: Help build social cohesion by supporting efforts to ensure that Americans have opportunities to understand America’s increasingly religiously diverse society.

Therefore, the Advisory Council makes the following recommendations:

1. As part of this effort, the National Endowment for the Humanities³⁷ should increase funding opportunities through its “Bridging Cultures” program for faith and community-based groups to train American educators and media professionals about world religions in a respectful way. The “Bridge Builders” program is aimed at enlarging understanding of America’s diverse cultural heritage and the history, language, and art of other societies.
2. In addition, the Administration should find other avenues to encourage community building and interfaith collaboration at the grassroots level with faith- and community-based organizations to foster social cohesion.³⁸

Background and Explanation:

A major virtue of American society is its respect for religious differences. Thus, it is important for the American public to increase its basic literacy about the religious communities. Interfaith and cross-cultural awareness and collaboration at the grassroots level build healthy communities and reduce incidence of prejudice, bias, and conflict. Bridge building across communities will require a range of efforts and must be based on mutual respect and interests. The “Bridging Cultures” program is aimed at enlarging understanding of America’s diverse cultural heritage and the history, language, and art of other societies.

³⁷ Chairman Jim Leach’s speech on “Bridging Cultures” (available at <http://www.neh.gov/whoweare/speeches/11202009.html>).

³⁸ Julie Teresa Quiroz, *Together in Our Differences: How Newcomers and Established Residents are Rebuilding American Communities*. Washington, DC: National Immigration Forum, 1995 (available at <http://www.gcir.org/node/400>).





Global Poverty and Development

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Global Poverty and Development

INTRODUCTION

A deep commitment to reduce global poverty and promote sustainable development characterizes the work around the world of many U.S. faith-based and civil society organizations. Many members of the Council, as well as the organizations and institutions to which we are connected, are a vibrant part of this sector. Supported by generous donors from across the political spectrum and connected to well-informed policy advocates at home, these efforts and perspectives are based on long-term relationships with poverty-affected communities, their organizations, and leaders abroad. U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), also known as PVOs (Private Voluntary Organizations), represent many millions of Americans who want to make a positive difference in the world and who give significant time, energy, and financial resources to do so.¹

The U.S. NGO community has a largely privately funded infrastructure of staff and programs. The well-established, multifaceted architecture effectively weds financial aid to community development programs that are driven by poor people themselves with a goal of creating enduring social change. Working with these groups, we show the world the direct public face of American aid, which is respectful, culturally sensitive, and trusted by local partners.

The NGO community includes development, humanitarian, and other organizations that span the diversity of America.² We may be focused on specific development themes or on a particular geographic region or on issues of gender; we may be religious or secular. In all cases, the collective weight of this sector's response to global poverty is significant. For example, in 2006, members of InterAction, the largest coalition of U.S.-based international NGOs managed \$2.8 billion in U.S. overseas development assistance and \$6 billion in private funds. That year, 13.4 million donor groups—including schools, religious institutions, civic groups, foundations, and American citizens from all walks of life—contributed funds through InterAction members that went to fund development and humanitarian work around the world

¹ The Council recommendations were jointly reviewed and endorsed by InterAction, which was also a member of the Taskforce. InterAction has 193 members working in every country around the world. InterAction is the largest coalition of U.S.-based international NGOs focused on the world's poor and most vulnerable people. www.interaction.org

² Since 9/11 the overall aid landscape has changed dramatically: a raft of new players has emerged who bypass traditional (government and multilateral) channels. In addition to middle-income countries (Brazil, China, India, and Russia) as donors, the American public, and celebrities, there is the private aid sector led by foundations, U.S. NGOs, social entrepreneurs, and other nonprofits. Source: Karas, Homi, "The New Reality of Aid" in *Global Development 2.0* (Brookings Institution: 2008)

There are additional scores of religious bodies, thousands of local religious congregations, and millions of Americans who are engaged in developing countries—not just by supporting their religiously affiliated development organizations, but also through prayer, learning, advocacy, missionary work, and personal visits. Every year, 1.6 million Americans travel to developing countries on short-term mission trips, often to paint a school or help out at a clinic. Civil society institutions involved in global development also include many schools and universities; foundations; and unions, farmer organizations, women’s groups, and other associations that connect to similar groups around the world.

Networks of new Americans who are establishing themselves in the United States typically maintain ties and often help people in their home countries as individuals and through their own community organizations. The existing expertise, resources, and talents in communities with cultural, language, and religious ties to other nations are an invaluable asset to increasing America’s development impact.³ The U.S. Government has an opportunity to increase our development impact significantly by proactively engaging these “Diaspora” communities.⁴

The NGO community works every day in countries and communities around the world to reduce poverty and promote sustainable development. Because this has been our work for decades, we have successful and proven methods of designing programs, building relationships, and leveraging resources that are separate from and could be instructive for current and future U.S. Government efforts.

With our privately raised funds, U.S. NGOs are exploring best practices, advancing crucial partnerships with local and international NGOs and with donor governments and local communities that are often not reached by official U.S. development assistance. We often engage with smaller organizations in-country that directly represent people in need and that help to carry out the work.

³ One such example is the American India Foundation.

See: <http://www.aif.org>

⁴ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), (available at http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_partnerships/gda/remittances.html).



NGOs are key implementers in the fight against global poverty, and key results (as measured against the Millennium Development Goals) have been achieved:

- Primary school enrollment has reached 90% globally, and the world is on target to achieve the 2015 goal of 100% in all but 2 out of 10 regions.
- Since 1990, 1.6 billion people have gained access to safer water.
- Girls’ primary school enrollment increased more than that for boys in all developing regions from 2000 to 2006.
- The number of people using improved sanitation facilities has increased by 1.1 billion since 1990.
- Of the nearly 650 million people at risk of malaria in Africa, the portion covered by insecticide-treated bed nets rose from 3% in 2001 to 39% in 2007.
- The Measles Initiative has vaccinated over 600 million children, helping to reduce global measles mortality by 74% globally from 2000 to 2007. During the same period, measles deaths plunged by 89% in Africa alone.
- Since 1990, the global child mortality rate has declined from 90 deaths per 1,000 live births to 65 per 1,000 live births, which means approximately 10,000 fewer children are dying each day.

Source: MDG Info Kit www.millenniumpromise.org

We have unique abilities to recognize and support effective local solutions to development challenges and can bring to the U.S. Government relationships, skills, tools, and knowledge that are often not fully accessed or used.

The most enduring and strongest relationship of our NGO community is with the individual Americans who support and sustain thousands of programs across the globe through their private donations. We are entrusted by millions of private donors to educate children, help families improve their livelihoods, and provide clean water to villages. These effective, successful private-sector nonprofit programs, built and sustained over time by millions of Americans, deserve greater recognition from the U.S. Government and more robust collaboration with that government.⁵

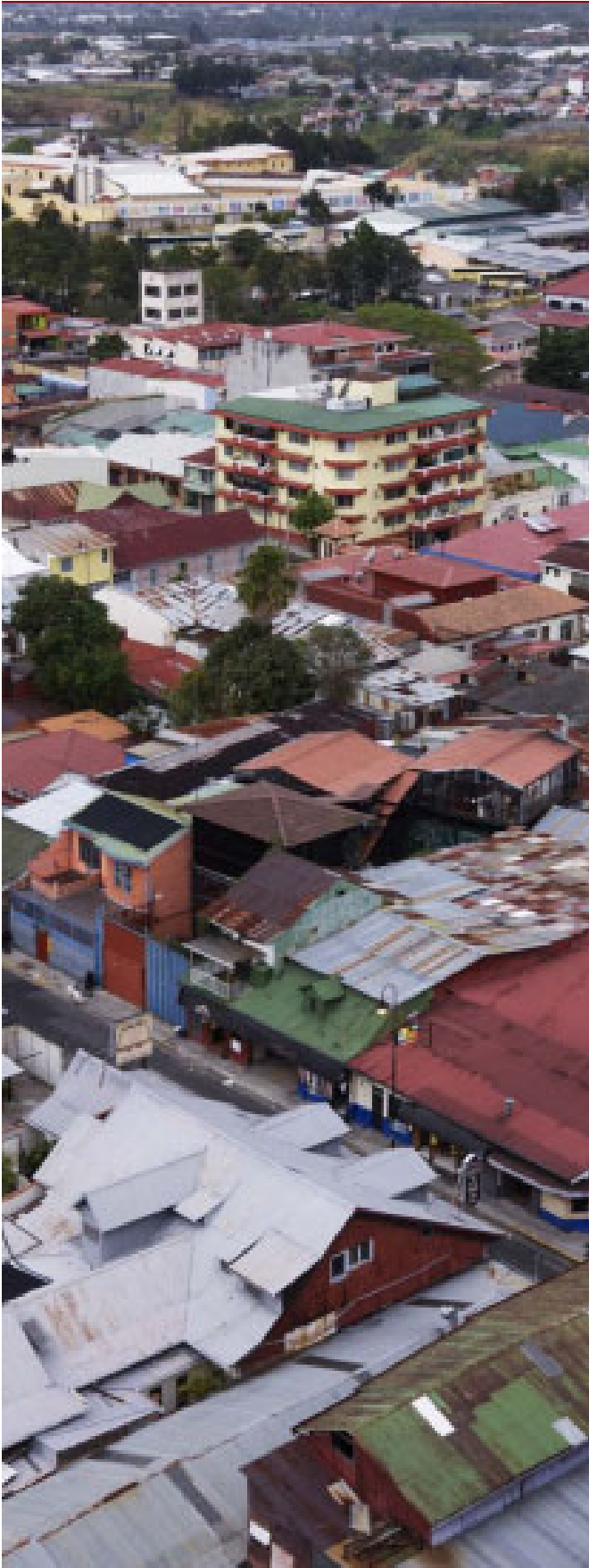
The President's Advisory Council lays out recommendations that seek to help the U.S. Government build a constituency for development aid and seek a more balanced relationship with the U.S. Government. Our organizations should be recognized as significant actors with decades of experience in both aid and sustainable development work; pertinent knowledge and skill in the design and implementation of programs; thoughtful perspectives on how programs should be structured to maximize their effectiveness and make the wisest possible use of U.S. tax dollars; and well-informed opinions on critical development-related policy issues.

We envision a future foreign policy that includes a greater engagement with and support of these civilian-led efforts. The American people, our foreign policy, and our relationship with the world's poor would benefit from a new strategic partnership of the U.S. Government with U.S. civil society groups that are engaged in sustainable development efforts and easily able to involve the in-country groups that work with those in greatest need.

The Council recommendations articulated in this report seek a new era of collaborative partnership between the U.S. Government and community-based U.S. NGOs toward our shared goal of global development.



⁵ InterAction, *The Other Partner: NGOs and Private Sector funding for International Relief and Development*, February 2009 (available at <http://www.interaction.org>).



OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Launch a public campaign to promote a new era of engagement with the American public to end global poverty and promote sustainable development.

Recommendation 2: Engage the U.S. NGO sector actively in review and design of development strategy to strengthen global poverty reduction efforts.

Recommendation 3: Emphasize long-term development goals and local engagement in USAID grants and cooperative agreements.

Recommendation 4: Take concrete steps to increase share of U.S. development assistance awarded through partnerships with civil society organizations that have demonstrated commitment and competence to work with poor communities.

Recommendation 5: Place Faith-Based and Civil Society Engagement Officers in USAID missions.

Recommendation 6: Strengthen the capacity for local civil society engagement in development, and encourage gender-sensitive development models.

Recommendation 7: Revive capacity-building support for U.S. development NGOs.

Recommendation 8: Review and set limits on role of the Department of Defense in development work.

Recommendation 9: Ensure that the Partner Vetting System (PVS), as currently designed, is not implemented, and enter into more detailed discussions with U.S. PVOs to create an effective system that addresses their concerns that PVS as currently designed would significantly harm partnerships with local communities and compromises the safety of U.S. PVO personnel. Ensure that the Department of Defense's Synchronized Pre-deployment and Operational Tracker (SPOT) database authority is not expanded and that it is not applied to grants and cooperative agreements.

Recommendation 10: Use the Obama administration's Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative as a model for new partnerships between the Administration and civil society.



Recommendation 1: Launch a public campaign to promote a new era of engagement with the American public to end global poverty and promote sustainable development.

Millions of Americans have already demonstrated a commitment to end global poverty through financial and political support of U.S.-based civil society organizations that work with the world's poor. This is a powerful base on which the Administration can build a meaningful, effective, and comprehensive public information and education campaign to build on and encourage public engagement in development and share information about the U.S. Government's development assistance programs and policies. President Obama and other senior officials have called for a reengagement of the United States with the world community and the creation of a "21st century development agency" that is transparent and accountable. A sustained public campaign would make that promise real.

The White House Office of Public Liaison, working with USAID, could lead a new effort to engage the public in this campaign, using new technology as appropriate to maximize effectiveness. Simple and quick steps might be to link the Websites of the White House and the Department of State to a USAID Website that would invite Americans (and people around the world) to contribute to international development and poverty reduction. The USAID Website, in turn, could direct people to the Web sites of organizations, private development organizations, universities, and faith groups that work for development and offer individuals and local groups ways to get involved.

We also encourage the U.S. Government to revive the Biden-Pell grant program in support of civil society development education programs. The countries with publicly funded development education programs have achieved a better level of public knowledge and support for international development and poverty reduction.

Finally, all the many U.S. Government agencies and offices that carry out foreign aid programs should publish on their Websites information about what they are funding and where. They should each have a monitoring and evaluation system that is transparent for public viewing. The campaign would be a compelling opportunity for the U.S. Government to model the kinds of partnerships it advocates, making clear in each instance how the work is conceived, planned, executed, and evaluated.

Recommendation 2: Engage the U.S. NGO sector actively in review and design of development strategy to strengthen global poverty reduction efforts.

U.S. civil society organizations involved in international development and our partners in poor countries are generally convinced that U.S. Government efforts to reduce poverty and promote development around the world are overdue for reform. U.S. programs and policies do good, but they are hobbled by mixed motives, weak and fragmented institutions, and excessive control from Washington.

We applaud the Administration's decisions to review U.S. development policy and reform U.S. foreign assistance through the Presidential Study Directive⁶ on National Development Strategy and the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR).⁷ We appreciate what the Administration has done to engage U.S. civil society in these processes and urge that there be a section in the final reports of each that focuses on the role of the U.S. NGO community. U.S. civil society is also very much involved in parallel work in Congress, notably in the Senate Foreign Relations and House Foreign Affairs Committees. We request that there be mechanisms put in place for continuing dialogue between the U.S. NGO/PVO community and the U.S. Government and that there continue to be opportunities for public comment and transparency within both strategic efforts.

There is broad agreement among the civil society groups involved that the United States should give higher priority in its foreign assistance programs and other policies to reducing poverty and saving lives in poor parts of the world and that the United States needs a stronger international development agency, distinct from the Department of State. More U.S. assistance should support programs that reach and involve poor communities in developing countries. Many civil society groups have supported earmarks for various programs focused on poverty, but are open to working together with policymakers to reduce detailed, top-down restrictions so that U.S. development assistance can be more responsive to the people and leaders of the countries we are assisting.

Tens of millions of Americans and U.S. institutions of all kinds—charities, religious bodies, foundations, businesses, and universities—are actively involved in international poverty reduction and development. Broad reforms in foreign assistance could set the stage for much more extensive partnerships with the rest of U.S. society and with people in developing countries.

Going forward, for the U.S. Government to conduct thorough and effective reviews and assessments of its approach to development, the U.S. NGO community ought to be respected as a key actor in the development of U.S. foreign assistance strategy. We would hope that future U.S. Federal agency guidance documents might also recognize and outline this same understanding. Despite having decades of experience at the grassroots level in countries throughout the world, our expertise and knowledge—and that of our partners in poor countries—are not consistently consulted as the U.S. Government assesses and evaluates its strategic interventions in response to global poverty.

⁶ The September 1, 2009, Presidential Study Directive (PSD) (an order to initiate policy review procedures) authorized National Security Advisor Jim Jones and Chairman of the National Economic Council Larry Summers to lead a whole-of-government review of U.S. global development policy. White House leadership of the exercise is important given the convening power necessary to secure high-level participation by the more than two dozen government entities currently responsible for portions of U.S. development policy.

⁷ In July 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced the first-ever QDDR. Patterned on the Department of Defense's Quadrennial Defense Review, according to Defense's press release, the QDDR will: "Provide the short-, medium-, and long-term blueprint for our diplomatic and development efforts. Our goal is to use this process to guide us to agile, responsive, and effective institutions of diplomacy and development, including how to transition from approaches no longer commensurate with current challenges. It will offer guidance on how we develop policies; how we allocate our resources; how we deploy our staff; and how we exercise our authorities."

Recommendation 3: Emphasize long-term development goals and local engagement in USAID grants and cooperative agreements.

We would like to see a modification in Requests for Applications (RFAs) at USAID that would emphasize and recognize the value of preexisting community relationships, long-term presence in-country, support for sustainable development, and commitment to local participation. RFAs should include more impact and outcome criteria that support and recognize organizations that are in development for the long haul and should be scored in a way that values long-term engagement with a community and local investment. Additionally, we believe there is a need for much greater transparency in the contracting process for all parties affected: contractors, NGOs and faith-based groups, recipient countries, communities, and local groups.

There are substantial regulatory and practical barriers to NGO and faith-based organization participation in development funded by the U.S. Government. There seems to be a strong preference across all government agencies to fund development for-profit contractors rather than not-for-profit NGOs despite evidence that not-for-profit NGOs are both effective and efficient at delivering programs. It is estimated that in 2006, one-third of USAID funds were channeled to for-profit contractors.⁸ Measured as a percentage of US government assistance dollars that are spent through PVOs, the role of US PVOs is small. A review of various sources indicates that the spending of US foreign assistance through PVOs is around 10% of the total. This role has declined significantly while at the same time the American public continues to invest billions in the work of U.S. non-profits overseas.⁹ Moreover, we have perceived an apparent inflexibility in the funding and contracting structures of the Government to build on programs NGOs are implementing with privately raised funds.

Learning From Past Successes

Highlights of positive engagement between USAID and NGOs in the past can provide a useful guide for ways to establish a multifaceted and robust partnership with the U.S. Government in the future.

For example, in the past, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s, several USAID missions in Asia supported large NGO programs, which included numerous points of contact with frequent consultations between NGOs and USAID missions, regional and technical bureaus, and offices. At that time, the Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation (PVC) was a strong voice for NGOs within the agency. Its Matching Grants program provided resources that enabled many NGOs to develop new and innovative approaches—some of the pioneering work on microenterprise development was supported out of this office. From 1984 to 1988, the PVC Office invested significant resources in matching grants to NGOs for building the capacity of local NGOs. A seminal evaluation of the program in the late 1980s was the focus of Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid deliberations on capacity building, learning from success of the past in an attempt to build on them.

Another success to examine and build on comes from the 1990s, when the USAID administrator initiated an extensive consultation process aimed at maximizing USAID-civil society engagement, bringing in the NGO community. A number of USAID-NGO taskforces were formed, each focusing on a different region or technical area; these taskforces met every Friday for 6 months with participation of USAID staff required by the administrator. During this period, USAID supported efforts for service delivery organizations to broaden into democracy and governance work. Consultations also were convened around procurement issues; one concrete outcome was a simplification of the process for Cooperative Agreements. These efforts culminated in the adoption of the “USAID-PVO Partnership” in 1995, which was subsequently revised in 2002. See: <http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/200/200mau.pdf>.

⁸ According to Rachel McCleary's book *Global Compassion: Private Voluntary Organizations and U.S. Foreign Policy Since 1939* (Oxford University Press: 2009).

⁹ USAID 2009 VOLAG, Report of Voluntary Agencies states the USG collectively spent \$4.231 billion through 569 U.S. non-profit organizations (\$4.021 through PVOs and \$210 million through Cooperatives). The total from USAID through PVOs was \$2.654 billion. According to the OECD DAC total US ODA in 2008 was \$26.842 billion and the total international affairs budget was \$42.714 billion. The percentage shares can be broken down in a number of ways:

- 15.7% - of all USG funds to VOLAG report groups as a percentage of US ODA
- 10% - of all USG funds to VOLAG report groups as a percentage of the total international affairs budget
- 11.6% - of all USG funds to 'private PVOs' as a percentage of US ODA
- 7.3% - of all USG funds to 'private PVOs' as a percentage of the total international affairs budget
- 9.9% - of all USAID funds to PVO as a percentage of US ODA
- 6.5% - of all USAID funds to 'private PVOs' as a percentage of US ODA
- 4.1% - of all USAID funds to 'private PVOs' as a percentage of the total international affairs budget

The U.S. Government funding and contracting structures should promote a greater recognition that NGOs and Diaspora community organizations are already working in-country. Many NGOs have multiple successful long-term programs being carried out in the field. Additionally, a renewed U.S. Government funding structure ought to allow and even encourage the U.S. Government to build on work already being done in-country by NGOs. Finally, umbrella grants should be PVO-based and focus on organizations already working on the ground in partnership with local NGOs, rather than turn to contractors who receive umbrella grants and then distribute funds to non-profit locals.

We see an opportunity here for USAID to provide additional training and guidance to its staff on selecting the appropriate instrument based on the nature of the relationship being created and the intended purpose of the award in an effort to deter decisions being made based on personal preferences or misconceptions.

Examples of regulations that hinder partnership abound. The Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) registration and licensing guidelines/procedures are complex and cause delays in programming by subjecting common technology items (e.g. laptop computers loaded with Microsoft Windows software) to a requirement of prior licensing. This prior licensing requirement involves time-consuming multi-agency review before the technology can be deployed to certain countries where foreign assistance is being rendered. For example, in a recent emergency food aid program funded by USAID in North Korea, grantees had to wait nearly a month for an OFAC license covering ubiquitous technology items including simple flash drives and Microsoft Office, Microsoft SQL Server, and Adobe Acrobat software. Providers needed these items to enable the Commodity Tracking System that was essential to the administration of the emergency food aid program.

In addition, these procedures hinder disaster response efforts, which typically last for one to five years. Often OFAC licenses have to be renewed every three months and typically are not approved until the last minute. Therefore NGO organizations have



Humanitarian Assistance

Currently, there is a strong and comprehensive relationship between USAID and NGOs in the humanitarian area. USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) works closely with humanitarian NGOs both in the field and in Washington. Using its "notwithstanding authority" and Disaster Assistance Response Teams, OFDA often is able to make grants to NGOs within several days of a sudden onset emergency. In Washington, OFDA meets with NGOs responding to disasters abroad to exchange information about conditions on the ground as well as OFDA's funding priorities. NGOs use their influence with Congress to advocate adequate funding of the U.S. Government's emergency accounts, including that which finances USAID's humanitarian programs.

OFDA also supports the humanitarian NGO sector in several ways. It funds convening (through InterAction) of its implementing partners and other disaster-response NGOs. Responses to particular crises and evolution of the sector are discussed and debated. OFDA funds programs that foster better practices, such as the Sphere Project's Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response, and also the course entitled "Health in Complex Emergencies," currently offered by a consortium that includes the International Rescue Committee and Columbia University. The USAID office also has encouraged development and dissemination of good/best practices through workshops on shelter, livelihoods, and public health threats.

OFDA has been attentive to the growing threat to NGOs' security as their personnel have lost their immunity and become targets of criminals and political actors prone to pay more attention to opportunities for theft and intimidation than to respect for humanitarian law and principles.

The positive relationship developed between the humanitarian community and USAID and the Department of State should serve as a case study to build on and apply to other areas—including the development community.

to prepare both to close down the program and to keep it going at the same time.

Similarly, the Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security licensing requirements are geared toward commercial transactions and not to organizations conducting humanitarian programs. They fail, therefore, to take into account the unique characteristics of NGOs.

Recommendation 4: Take concrete steps to increase share of U.S. development assistance awarded through partnerships with civil society organizations that have demonstrated commitment and competence to work with poor communities.

We strongly believe that the U.S. Government should spend more of its development assistance budget supporting programs that work directly with poor communities in developing countries. We think this is best done by increasing the share of U.S. Government development assistance that goes through grants and cooperative agreements with PVOs. As noted in Recommendation 3, in recent years, there has been a trend in favor of development dollars traveling toward for-profit vendors.¹⁰

For better development outcomes, we also urge that the U.S. Government be more creative in all of its funding decisions. We further urge that the U.S. Government carefully examine which development actors in any given setting (local governments, local NGOs, international NGOs that do local capacity building, and diverse religious bodies) are best suited to achieve development outcomes that truly serve the needs and concerns of the poorest people while recognizing and respecting the diverse cultural and religious landscape of the country.¹¹ This effort might also include engaging new and smaller development groups that are not currently in partnership with the U.S. Government, including faith-based groups representing America's pluralism, Diaspora community organizations and others.

Our recommendation here is not to favor a particular set of political constituents, nor to favor organizations that are already contracting with the U.S. Government, but to build up a broad and diverse spectrum of civil society organizations as partners in development.

Too often, for-profit contractors are hired and then measured on their capacity to achieve short-term objectives; NGOs and community-based organizations know that effective and sustainable development is founded on multiyear efforts that demand collaboration with affected communities. A greater share of U.S. Government support going through grants and cooperative agreements would ensure more effective partnerships to achieve development outcomes.¹²

We would like to see the U.S. Government move toward the goal of one-third of development assistance across government being spent in partnership with PVOs. By increasing the share of development assistance flowing through PVOs, the U.S. Government would be affirming and supporting the choices of the millions of American citizens who are donating their dollars to these same trusted charities and non-profits. Short of that, we would request an alternative quantifiable measure of the extent to which development assistance delivered through private for-profit contractors is building up partner organizations and working with poor communities in developing countries.

¹⁰ USAID, *Analysis and Recommendations of Trends in USAID Implementation Mechanisms*, July 2007 (available at http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/acvfa/im_recommendations.pdf).

¹¹ The Council notes existing USAID regulations that state: "Organizations that receive direct financial assistance from USAID under any USAID program may not engage in inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization, as part of the programs or services directly funded with direct financial assistance from USAID." See 22 C.F.R. Section 205.1(b) (2010).

¹² For the realization of this goal, USAID staff capacity and training are key, and we support efforts to improve USAID capacity in this regard. Ideally, USAID should be able to collaborate with a full range and mix of partner institutions that are selected based on a fair and open process with the needs of the communities served being the paramount consideration.

We support an assessment and review of the contract-type mechanisms, which would lead to a revision of regulations and accounting structures at the Office of Management and Budget to take into account the benefits of building up civil society institutions as long-term partners in development. We would similarly support an assessment and review of the Treasury guidelines, and the Commerce licensing requirements, which would lead to a revision of regulations and accounting structures.

Recommendation 5: Place Faith-Based and Civil Society Engagement Officers in USAID missions.

As USAID makes plans to scale up staff, the Council recommends that USAID appoint a Faith-Based and Civil Society Engagement Officer at every USAID mission to reach out to and partner with organizations on the ground. Ideally, these staff positions will reflect not only the diversity of the countries they serve, but also the diversity and pluralism of America.

These staff positions would report directly to the Chief of Mission for that country, would work across U.S. Government agencies working in-country, would create opportunities for ongoing dialogue between in-country civil society and NGOs, and would facilitate the creation of joint programs between the U.S. Government and NGOs based on locally identified needs. This effort should also include engagement of a broad spectrum of actors, including diverse local religious leaders and faith-based and secular non-profits, as well as engaging members of the Diaspora from each country living in the United States in development work impacting their country of origin.

Engaging NGO staffs (both in Washington and in the field) and their in-country partners on a range of issues regarding specific countries and sectors would strengthen and deepen the effectiveness of U.S. Government in-country programs. Possible approaches might include the following:

- With the leadership of the Department of State and USAID, the U.S. Government could institute a monthly consultation, sector or country-specific, with the U.S. NGO community to solicit feedback and guidance on U.S. Government programs and interventions.
- The Chief of Mission in all countries could be given a clear mandate to consult with multiple U.S. and local NGOs through a regular and ongoing dialogue. The Chief of Mission should regularly collaborate and communicate with those U.S.-based NGOs that work in-country and with their local partners and develop mechanisms for accountability to this dialogue.
- Where USAID mission directors are not already engaged in such meetings, they might be expected to conduct monthly meetings with NGO country directors.



Recommendation 6: Strengthen the capacity for local civil society engagement in development, and encourage gender-sensitive development models.

Strong civil society organizations, especially organizations that include or represent poor people, are important to successful development and poverty reduction. Communities and concerned individuals organize themselves to meet social needs directly and to urge their governments and aid agencies to respond to social needs and to use public funds effectively. Civil society organizations include faith groups, local development NGOs, advocacy groups (on the environment, for example, or on gender justice issues), and organizations that include many poor people (such as farmer associations, labor unions, and low-income community organizations). Gender equality is fundamental to development effectiveness, and investments in women and girls have proven successful toward reducing global poverty and improving the lives of the world's poorest individuals; therefore, gender-sensitive development models should be encouraged. In many countries, families of civil society organizations have grouped themselves together, partly to facilitate their interaction with government and external assistance agencies. The U.S. Government can play a key role in solving problems locally by being even more open to dialogue with and support for civil society organizations.

We suggest that the U.S. Government's development assistance programs publish data on their grant funding to local civil society organizations and set targets for increased support.

A strong civil society is critical to providing the checks and balances to ensure that governments are responsive to their people, that both donor and government-funded development activities are participatory and reflect the needs of the national population, and that they have clear accountability for outcomes. An effective and functioning civil society is a crucial factor that will allow countries to graduate from assistance.

We would like to see the U.S. Government pay particular attention to the potential of civil society partners in developing countries to:

- Organize and carry out *services* of benefit to the community by including resources to build the operational capacity of local organizations in every USAID-funded program;
- Create opportunities for *organization* and create *channels*, including *meeting places* for collaboration, through which individuals and groups who are poor and discriminated against can make their voices heard, raise demands for the realization of their human rights, and influence the development of society;
- Act as *proposers of ideas* and *watchdogs* of those in power;
- In general terms, and particularly under authoritarian regimes, act as a *counterweight* to and *force for democratization* regarding the state; and
- Offer *adult education* to strengthen the capacity of individuals and groups who are poor and discriminated against to change their lives.

NGO platforms, which serve as umbrella organizations for local and international NGOs in-country, support civil society organizations and provide an effective link to national governments and donors. We strongly encourage USAID and the Department of State to develop a structure that creates a positive working relationship with these national NGO

platforms. There are currently 86 countries with established national NGO platforms, or coordinating mechanisms. The U.S. Government can strengthen the capacity of the national platforms and its own ability to partner effectively with NGOs in-country through increased funding for capacity building and technical assistance as well as strategic support for the institutional and operational strengthening of NGO platforms. These efforts, coupled with support of local civil society organizations, will yield a more vibrant sector that can support effective development efforts.



Recommendation 7: Revive capacity-building support for U.S. development NGOs.

There is a strong public policy benefit to connect the U.S. Government with the full range of U.S. civil society organizations interested in international development both to engage broader sectors of the U.S. public and to remove barriers to groups that can deliver services. Recognizing the diversity of U.S. civil society organizations involved in development, we suggest that USAID improve its great work by providing ready and meaningful access to resources, networks, and information to smaller and even larger NGOs and faith groups that have limited experience working with the U.S. Government. Where larger NGOs are concerned, the U.S. Government might consider focusing on leveraging their substantial investments by providing opportunities for robust collaborations and building capacity to work with the U.S. Government.

Our sense is that the U.S. Government has room to further develop its partnerships with the NGO community by paying more attention to smaller, faith-based, and more “grassroots” NGOs, including those representing America’s pluralism and Diaspora communities. USAID disbanded its office that supported private voluntary organizations through capacity-building grants. This program’s demise put smaller and medium-sized NGOs at a disadvantage and limited the U.S. Government’s relationships with the established NGO community.

Small- to mid-sized organizations, especially those that are not currently partnering with the U.S. Government, are in need of support in establishing a relationship. One idea for a helpful mechanism to meet this need would be to establish a fund for small- to mid-sized NGOs to build their capacity to operate in this and other countries. This fund could be supplemented by an increased small grants program for mid-sized NGOs and local NGOs, to help them initiate partnerships with the U.S. Government through its various funding structures.

As USAID focuses on increasing its capacity and hiring new staff, we recommend specific training that highlights the powerful contributions to development made by NGOs and Diasporas in the United States and in the field and encourages partnerships with these sectors. The U.S. Government would help solve development challenges by strengthening local (in-country) NGOs with targeted funding. We also would encourage the creation of a transition fund intended to help “pass the baton,” from NGOs carrying out U.S.-funded development programs to host governments or local NGOs. As we have said in the Reform of the Office report, in awarding capacity-building grants (as with all grants), the Government should make decisions on the basis of merit, not political or religious considerations.





Recommendation 8: Review and set limits on the role of the Department of Defense in development work

Since 1998, the Department of Defense's share of U.S. Official Development Assistance increased from 3.5 percent to 22 percent. The Department of Defense has dramatically expanded its relief, development, and reconstruction assistance through programs such as Section 1207, the Commanders' Emergency Response Program (CERP), and the Combatant Commanders' Initiative Fund, as well as through the activities of the regional combatant commands, particularly AFRICOM and SOUTHCOM, and the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs).

Yet, the Department of Defense does not appear to have a methodology for measuring the effectiveness of its development and humanitarian activities. In light of the fact that these are not its core competencies, but those of USAID, we think it would be particularly appropriate and helpful for the Department of Defense to measure its development effectiveness in close coordination with experts at USAID.

As a general rule, experienced civilian agencies, especially USAID, seem to us to be best placed to support effective development, humanitarian assistance, and reconstruction activities that address the needs of the poor. Similarly, the Department of Defense is uniquely suited to a wide range of military and defense purposes. In light of the increased development and reconstruction work being done under the auspices of the Department of Defense in recent years, we recommend a U.S. Government requirement for the Department of Defense to demonstrate the utility of specific development, humanitarian, and reconstruction activities it undertakes to advance security interests.

At the same time, it should monitor and evaluate development and humanitarian activities according to international standards and best practices, including how such activities impact local communities and their relationship with U.S. PVOs.

The kinds of short-term, "quick-impact" projects that are typically implemented for security purposes tend to be unsustainable because they address the symptoms of poverty, as opposed to its underlying causes. Such projects do not usually encourage community ownership and participation, which are essential for addressing the long-term needs of beneficiaries. In our experience, these projects often restrict the access of PVOs, undermine the development process by failing to promote sustainability, and even hinder the mission of preventing further conflict.

Last, we have found that the blurring of boundaries between civilian and military actors in the field has heightened insecurity for PVO staff, local partners, and beneficiaries and has thus restricted access to the communities served.

Recommendation 9: Ensure that the Partner Vetting System (PVS), as currently designed, is not implemented, and enter into more detailed discussions with U.S. PVOs to create an effective system that addresses their concerns that PVS as currently designed would significantly harm partnerships with local communities and compromises the safety of U.S. PVO personnel. Ensure that the Department of Defense's Synchronized Pre-deployment and Operational Tracker (SPOT) database authority is not expanded and that it is not applied to grants and cooperative agreements.

The U.S. Government has a number of procedures in place to help minimize the risk that taxpayer-funded assistance could be diverted for terrorist purposes. These include restrictive clauses in solicitations, contracts, and grant agreements; NGO certifications prior to award of assistance instruments; and mandatory checks of OFAC and other public lists of designated terrorists.

While some of these procedures are justified and effective, others directly hinder the ability of faith-based and nonprofit groups to function with the independence and neutrality needed to build the trust of a local population. In fact, such procedures can put the lives of their staff at risk.

To complement existing procedures, USAID has been developing a capability known as the Partner Vetting System (PVS). PVS is a program under which USAID will screen applicants for funding by comparing data collected from them against data in secure terrorism databases maintained by the U.S. Government law enforcement and intelligence communities. A vetting program separate from the proposed PVS has been implemented in Gaza. The U.S. Agency for International Development implemented in 2004 a worldwide anti-terrorism certification rule that requires the vetting of all U.S. PVO personnel. It was implemented after 3-years of extensive negotiations with U.S. non-profits, foundations, and other members of U.S. civil society. This vetting system has been implemented worldwide by the U.S. PVO community at a cost often exceeding \$100,000 per organization.

Prior to awarding assistance funds, USAID's PVS would screen all principal individuals, officers, or other officials of a potential recipient, as well as first-tier subrecipients of assistance and recipients of scholarships. USAID would screen principal individuals of organizations applying for USAID registration as PVOs.

On April 1, 2009, USAID issued an Acquisition and Assistance Policy Directive (AAPD), requiring the addition of a contract clause and assistance provision to new solicitations and existing awards in Iraq valued over \$100,000. The clause or provision requires contractors and award recipients to enter employee information into the SPOT database monitored by the Department of Defense. The AAPD results from section 861 of the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act. Section 861 directs the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of State, and USAID to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) related to contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the MOU, the three agencies agreed that the Department of Defense's SPOT database will record contract and contract personnel information *required* by section 861. The three agencies also agreed *voluntarily* to apply these same requirements to grants and cooperative agreements in Iraq and Afghanistan. At this time, the AAPD only applies to contracts, cooperative agreements, and grant awards in Iraq. The authority from section 861 could be expanded.

Grounded in many years of trust building and partnership, the critical relationship between PVOs and their in-country local partners will be seriously damaged if we are forced to subject our local partners to the PVS, SPOT, or another similar process. In a country such as Lebanon, for example, U.S. PVOs work with a range of credible local groups to deliver badly needed services to people across sectarian lines. This work advances U.S. national interests by strengthening nonviolent groups, demonstrating that basic living conditions can improve in the absence of fighting, and indirectly undermining the appeal of violent elements of society. Should U.S. PVOs be required to comply with the PVS or similar process, Lebanese local partners would distance themselves from U.S. PVOs, who would inevitably be perceived as too closely tied to U.S. security and intelligence interests. As these partners severed their relationship with PVOs, extremist groups would also perceive that U.S. PVOs were connected with the U.S. security structure and would target PVO staff and their local partners.

Recommendation 10: Use the Obama Administration’s Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative as a Model for new partnerships between the Administration and civil society.

In order to demonstrate how the recommendations listed above would translate into practice, we have decided to apply many of the key principles and suggestions to the specific case of the Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative. We are aware that we could create a similar list for other areas. In the box below, we have outlined a blueprint for our vision and specific ideas to create, enhance, and innovate partnerships between U.S. Government and faith-based and community groups. Our sector’s extensive knowledge about and experience with fighting hunger in the developing world make this a particularly constructive area for us to use as a template to explore practical applications of our recommendations. The interagency planning team has been open to suggestions from interested NGOs, and these recommendations are made with that in mind, with the goal of creating a model for such partnerships in all sectors of global development work.



Recommendations Applied to the Obama Administration's World Hunger Initiative

1. **Launch a public engagement campaign.**

The President's announcement of a hunger and food security initiative is an important and welcome step in reinvigorating U.S. standing in the world and addressing the needs of hungry and poor people.

The Administration could start the expanded program of public engagement we recommend with its hunger initiative. In keeping with President Obama's call for transparency and accountability in government, a hunger initiative Website can serve as a model and first step for a more thorough Web portal that provides information about U.S. programs and policies in support of global development and poverty reduction. The Website should link with USAID, inform people about Global Hunger and Food Security and poverty, and provide information about what our government is doing. It should also explain how individuals can help to reduce world hunger and link to the Websites of U.S. NGOs that are active on agriculture, hunger, and food and nutrition security programs. The name of the Administration's initiative should clearly reflect its compelling purpose: to reduce hunger, mainly by strengthening agriculture among the world's poor.

2. **Reform foreign assistance and engage civil society in the process.**

The Department of State has led an interagency team in planning the hunger and food security initiative, and they have done a commendable job in seeking input from civil society. NGOs have urged a comprehensive approach that includes agriculture, nutrition, safety nets, and emergency assistance. The engagement of NGOs should be continued, especially as the Administration decides how to manage this initiative in a way that will contribute to the broader reform of development policy and foreign assistance.

3. **Emphasize long-term development goals and local engagement**

Secretary Clinton has repeatedly stressed that this initiative will be grounded in country consultations that bring the host government, official donors, and diverse civil society organizations together to consider local needs and coordinate efforts. This is an excellent strategy. Special efforts will be required to strengthen the participation of farmer organizations and organizations that represent women, extremely poor groups, and the environment. The U.S. Government should support U.S. NGOs with relationships with these local groups to help them contribute meaningfully to the consultation process and followup actions.

During the implementation of the hunger initiative, RFAs should stress the importance of preexisting community relationships, long-term presence in-country, and commitment to local participation.

4. **Increase the share of U.S. development assistance awarded through partnerships with civil society organizations that have demonstrated commitment to working with poor communities.**

To get the hunger initiative started quickly, the U.S. Government should support an expansion of U.S. NGO projects in agriculture and food security that are already underway.

On an ongoing basis, the Administration's hunger and food security initiative can be a model of an expanded partnership between the U.S. Government and civil society organizations. U.S. and local civil society organizations should also be involved in monitoring

implementation and results, including surveys to check whether the initiative is resulting in improvements in child nutrition.

5. Place religion and civil society engagement officers in USAID missions.

The initial countries of focus for this initiative should also be among the first countries with civil society engagement officers at USAID.

6. Strengthen the capacity for local civil society organizations.

The effectiveness of food and nutrition security programs will depend in part heavily on civil society groups, many of them faith and community based, that have direct contact with farmers and hungry people. Building the capacity of these groups will allow them to participate in planning and implementing the hunger initiative. Only through full implementation of this recommendation will the perspectives of women who are often the smallest subsistence farmers, the experience of farmer cooperatives, and the real issues of environmental sustainability be reflected and acted on.

7. Revive capacity-building support for U.S. development NGOs.

We specifically recommend support for smaller U.S.-based NGOs that are doing food and nutrition security work in developing countries. They often do solid development work, complement public funds with private contributions, and mobilize millions of concerned Americans.

CONCLUSION

President Obama has issued a clarion call for a new era of U.S. engagement with the world. Tangible action must follow that call. The recommendations contained in this document represent the best and most considered thinking from an underused resource of development experts who have honed over decades successful and proven methods of designing programs, building relationships, and leveraging resources. Reinvigorating and leveraging the relationship of the U.S. Government and the U.S. NGO community is essential to more effective U.S. engagement in the world and renewed progress toward overcoming global poverty.







Reform of the Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships

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Reform of the Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships

INTRODUCTION

President Obama has asked the Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships to make recommendations for improving the operations of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and Agency Centers and for strengthening the social service partnerships the Government forms with nongovernmental providers, including strengthening the constitutional and legal footing of these partnerships. The following recommendations address some of the legal and nonlegal issues that cut across a wide range of these partnerships. At the Administration's direction, the Council did not address the issue of religion-based employment decisions regarding jobs partially or fully subsidized by Federal funds.

A number of the reforms advocated in these recommendations are aimed at honoring our country's commitment to religious freedom. The recommendations call, for example, for greater clarity in the church-state guidance given to social service providers so that tax funds are used appropriately and providers are not confused or sued. The recommendations also insist that beneficiaries must be notified of their religious liberty rights, including their rights to alternative providers. And the recommendations urge the Administration to take steps to increase confidence that the rules applicable to federally funded partnerships are actually being observed and that decisions about government grants are made on the merits of proposals, not on political or religious considerations.

Other reforms call for the development of more nearly seamless and transparent networks among Federal, State, county, and city officials and the creation of additional tools to help providers identify the partnerships—financial or nonfinancial—that would best suit them. The recommendations also emphasize that progress in this area will depend in part on fostering greater public understanding of these partnerships, including the roles of the White House Office and Agency Centers in them. Further, the recommendations urge the White House Office to lead a strategic review of government-supported training, technical assistance, and capacity building for service providers and to encourage more information sharing on best practices in the delivery of federally funded social services.

The Council's recommendations call for several different kinds of actions by the Obama administration to further these and other goals. Some of the recommendations urge the Administration to amend a 2002 Executive Order (Executive Order 13279) that sets forth fundamental rules for federally funded partnerships with religious and secular providers. Other recommendations call for governmental agencies to revise some of the regulations and guidance associated with the distribution of Federal social service funds. Still other recommendations advocate changes in governmental communications strategies or intergovernmental relations.

The Council's diversity has been an asset in the development of these recommendations. The Council includes members who are critics of "charitable choice" and those who are supporters.¹ Some of us believe the Government must or should refrain from directing cash aid (including social service aid) to certain kinds of religious entities,² whereas others of us believe that, although the Constitution limits the use of direct government aid for religious *activities*, it allows such aid for secular *activities*, regardless of the character of the *provider*.³ As the recommendations note, Council members continue to differ over these and other important issues. But members have come to an agreement on 12 recommendations presented here. As far as we know, this is the first time a governmental entity has convened individuals with serious differences on some church-state issues and asked them to seek common ground in this area. It should not be the last time a government body does so. Policies that enjoy broad support are more durable. And finding common ground on church-state issues frees up more time and energy to focus on the needs of people who are struggling.

If adopted, these recommendations would improve social services delivery and strengthen religious liberty. They also would reduce litigation, enhance public understanding of these partnerships, and otherwise advance the common good. Accordingly, the Council urges the Administration to implement these proposals.

¹ Then-Senator John Ashcroft introduced the first "charitable choice" provision in 1995, and it ultimately became part of the welfare reform package signed by President Bill Clinton in 1996, although Clinton expressed certain reservations about the provision. See 42 U.S.C. Section 604a (2010). Similar provisions have been added to a few other laws, but legislative efforts to extend charitable choice beyond these contexts have failed. When legislative efforts to extend charitable choice failed, the Administration of President George W. Bush adopted and widely extended the basic charitable choice model through executive action.

² See, e.g., *Rosenberger v. Rectors and Visitors*, 515 U.S. 819, 842 (1995) (noting that a lower court was "correct to extract from our decisions the principle that we have recognized special Establishment Clause dangers where the government makes direct money payments to sectarian institutions" in a case upholding the payment of outside contractors for the printing costs of a variety of student publications, including student religious publications); *Mitchell v. Helms*, 530 U.S. 843-844 (O'Connor & Breyer, JJ., concurring in the judgment) (noting that the Court's "concern with direct monetary aid is based on more than just diversion [of the aid to religious use]" and that "the most important reason for according special treatment to direct money grants is that this form of aid falls precariously close to the original object of the Establishment Clause's prohibition."); *Roemer v. Board of Public Works*, 426 U.S. 736, 755 (1976) (aid may flow only to institutions that can separate secular activities from "sectarian" ones, and "that if secular activities can be separated out, they alone may be funded"). See also David Saperstein, *Public Values in an Era of Privatization: Public Accountability and Faith-Based Organizations: A Problem Best Avoided*, 116 Harv. L. Rev. 1353 (2003). For other views on these issues, see Melissa Rogers and E.J. Dionne, *Serving People in Need, Safeguarding Religious Freedom*, at 42-44, and Melissa Rogers, *Appendix: Legal and Policy Background #2* (2008), available at http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2008/12_religion_dionne/12_religion_dionne.pdf. Recommendation 12 discusses these views in more detail.

³ See *Mitchell v. Helms*, 530 U.S. 793, 827 (plurality opinion) (rejecting the "pervasively sectarian" test and arguing that "the religious nature of a recipient should not matter to the constitutional analysis, so long as the recipient adequately furthers the government's secular purpose"); *Id.* at 857 (O'Connor & Breyer, JJ., concurring in the judgment) (saying Court had rejected "a presumption of indoctrination" when government aid flows to religious schools "because it constitutes an absolute bar to the aid in question regardless of the religious school's ability to separate that aid from its religious mission . . ."); *Colo. Christian Univ. v. Weaver*, 534 F.3d 1245 (10th Cir. 2008) (McConnell, J.) (finding exclusion of "pervasively sectarian" school from funding violates First Amendment principles against religious intrusion and discrimination by government). See also Douglas Laycock, *Theology Scholarships, the Pledge of Allegiance, and Religious Liberty: Avoiding the Extremes but Missing the Liberty*, 118 Harv. L. Rev. 156 (2004). Michael McConnell, *Religious Participation in Public Programs - Religious Freedom at a Crossroads*, 59 U. Chi. L. Rev. 115 (1992). Recommendation 12 discusses these views in more detail.

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengthening the Effectiveness of Partnerships

Recommendation 1: Perform a strategic review of government-supported technical assistance and capacity building.

Recommendation 2: Convene and encourage learning communities of social service programs and providers.

Recommendation 3: Develop a strategy to partner with State, county, and city officials.

Strengthening Constitutional and Legal Footing of Partnerships

Recommendation 4: Strengthen constitutional and legal footing of partnerships, and improve communications regarding White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and Agency Centers.

Recommendation 5: Clarify prohibited uses of direct Federal financial assistance.

Recommendation 6: Equally emphasize separation requirements and protections for religious identity.

Recommendation 7: State more clearly the distinction between “direct” and “indirect” aid.

Recommendation 8: Increase transparency regarding federally funded partnerships.

Recommendation 9: Improve monitoring of constitutional, statutory, and regulatory requirements that accompany Federal social service funds.

Recommendation 10: Assure the religious liberty rights of the clients and beneficiaries of federally funded programs by strengthening appropriate protections.

Recommendation 11: Reduce barriers to obtaining 501(c)(3) recognition.

Recommendation 12: Promote other means of protecting religious liberty in the delivery of government-funded social services.



STRENGTHENING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PARTNERSHIPS

Recommendation 1: Perform a strategic review of government-supported technical assistance and capacity building.

The Council recommends that the Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships lead an administration-wide strategic review of government-supported training, technical assistance, and capacity building for social service providers. This strategic review would focus on four components: avoiding duplication of services; focusing increased attention on supporting only the most effective providers; seizing more opportunities to use the Government's convening power to encourage stronger collaboration among providers; and reaching out to as broad a range of qualified providers as possible.

Background and Explanation:

The Council recognizes the value of many different kinds of community providers, ranging from innovative fledgling organizations to established mature agencies. It also recognizes that effective providers across the spectrum need and deserve training and support. Some need basic training, technical assistance, and capacity building, such as grant-writing training, skill building in organizational development, and financial management. At the other end of the spectrum, more mature providers need skill building related to program enhancement and training for community organizational leadership.

Currently, government-funded training, technical assistance, and capacity-building requirements in grant and contract programs typically are aimed at providing basic skills in areas such as grant writing or marketing or intermediate-level training in organizational or leadership development. These types of educational opportunities are designed for religious and secular providers that range from start-up organizations to those that are growing toward maturity. In our experience, opportunities like these are often offered by nongovernmental as well as governmental sources at the local level.

Especially given the renewed emphasis on funding effective organizations—whether those providers are new groups or well-established organizations—a strategic review is needed to determine the best contributions government can make in this area. Government should not offer duplicative services, and it must ensure that its funding only supports effective interventions. Sometimes, for example, it would be appropriate for the Government to leave basic training to others and focus on more sophisticated training, technical assistance, and capacity building that will enable agencies and provider groups to take effective programs to scale and meet community needs in a more comprehensive manner. The Government also often can and should do more to develop collaborative partnerships that will foster more comprehensive responses to social service issues, forge a shared vision among diverse organizations and populations and better coordinate responses that can harvest the most effective approaches for local needs.

Given the difficult economic circumstances currently facing our Nation, thinking strategically about government's role in this area is particularly important. The Council, therefore, urges the Administration to engage in this kind of strategic review.



Recommendation 2: Convene and encourage learning communities of social service programs and providers.

The Council recommends that the Administration encourage Federal agencies to share information about federally funded projects with the larger community of those who are working on or interested in social service partnerships. This exchange could be accomplished in a number of ways. For example, each grantee could be required to complete a short Web-based form that could be accessed by providers and the public through a virtual library. The Council further recommends that the Administration do more to convene actual and virtual information-sharing sessions among representatives of State, local, and county governments; secular and faith-based providers; intermediaries; and the philanthropic sector.

Background and Explanation:

Government funding already requires a reporting component for its own reviews. By creating a virtual library of funded programs, the value of the funding moves beyond the services provided in individual grants to a more systemic level. Shared knowledge can assist social service partnerships in developing new programs or enhancing existing efforts. By sharing information regarding program content, goals, objectives, and outcomes, other providers may benefit from shared learning and enhance their social service programs and delivery. This mechanism also creates greater transparency and enables State and local governments, academics, and the general public to learn how funds are spent and the results that are achieved.

The Council further recommends that the Administration do more to convene information-sharing sessions among representatives of State, local, and county governments; secular and faith-based providers; intermediaries⁴; and the philanthropic sector. These sessions should include sharing details about best practices that relate to specific social service programs. Another element that could be addressed in these sessions would be discussions of best practices in complying with applicable constitutional or legal principles. These information-sharing sessions could be in person or rely on other methods of communication like Webinars. In these ways, the Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and the Agency Centers can promote effective partnerships and develop comprehensive strategies to meet community needs.

It is important to note that governmental bodies are not the only ones that play convening roles in these areas—nongovernmental organizations do, too. When the Government seeks to convene partners and potential partners, it should always work to ensure that it is not duplicating existing effective efforts and that it is otherwise playing a complementary rather than competing role in the joint effort to serve those in need.

⁴ An intermediary is an organization that accepts government funds and distributes those funds to a network of other organizations that in turn provide government-funded social services. See Recommendations 5, 6, and 9.

Recommendation 3: Develop a strategy to partner with State, county, and city officials.

The Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and the Agency Centers should develop a strategy to communicate to State, county, and city officials the church-state standards that accompany the Federal funds that State and local governments award to nongovernmental organizations. The Office and Centers for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships should assist Federal officials who interact with State and local officials to understand and communicate the standards; collaborate with organizations of State and local officials (such as the National Governors Association and the National Association of Counties) to communicate the goals and rules of the Federal initiative; and expand and systematize their collaboration with State and local faith-based and neighborhood partnership offices and assist them in educating their government colleagues.

An important part of the Office's and the Centers' communications and training strategy with secular and faith-based organizations should be to clarify that State and local officials award most Federal social service funding and to help those organizations connect with those State and local officials. Outreach and training events and publicity and guidance documents should stress that church-state standards accompany the Federal funds, and these efforts also help community groups identify and connect with State and local agencies that award Federal funds.

Background and Explanation:

Up to 90 percent of Federal funds designated for social services are distributed to State, county, or city governments rather than being directly expended by Federal agencies.⁵ Thus, most Federal funds awarded to secular and faith-based organizations are awarded not by Federal officials but by State or local officials. Federal church-state rules accompany the money,⁶ but those awarding the money are at a considerable distance from the Federal Government and the Federal faith-based and neighborhood partnership initiative.

This distance has two serious consequences. First, State and local officials do not always fully understand the Federal rules that should guide their award decisions.⁷ This factor can lead to wrongly limited eligibility or to inadequate implementation of important standards. Second, secular and faith-based organizations that become aware, because of the Federal faith-based and neighborhood partnership initiative, of their eligibility to partner with the Government too often simply presume that they must go to Federal agencies to seek funding, overlooking the closer city, county, and State agencies that actually award the majority of the Federal funding. Outreach and educational efforts such as Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnership conferences and guidance documents that do not specifically

⁵ *Unlevel Playing Field: Barriers to Participation by Faith-Based and Community Organizations in Federal Social Service Programs* (White House, August 2001), for example, includes a table showing that in FY 2001 91 percent of Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants were formula grants to State and local agencies and only 9 percent of the grants were discretionary grants awarded by HUD officials to organizations to provide services (p. 4).

⁶ The Supremacy Clause of Article VI of the Constitution says Federal law is the supreme law of the land. Thus, where there is a conflict between Federal and State law, Federal law prevails. This is the well-settled rule with regard to conditions on Federal funds that are imposed by Congress. However, if the Federal executive branch imposes conditions on Federal funds that States believe would cause them to violate their constitutions, and States challenge such conditions, it is not clear whether courts would uphold the conditions or whether they would find that such conditions do not trump State constitutional law unless they are imposed by Congress. See Ira C. Lupu and Robert W. Tuttle, *The State of the Law 2005: Legal Developments Affecting Partnerships Between Government and Faith-Based Organizations* (The Roundtable on Religion and Social Welfare Policy) at 99-101. It is also important to note that in order for Federal law to preempt contrary State law, there must be a clear expression of intent to do so. Federal authorities may choose not to preempt contrary State law or to preempt it only with respect to the use of Federal funds, not State funds. See *id.* 93-98. For more information on these complex issues, see, e.g., James T. O'Reilly, *Federal Preemption of State and Local Law: Legislation, Regulation and Litigation* (American Bar Association 2006); University of North Carolina First Amendment Law Review Symposium Issue: *Separation of Church and States: An Examination of State Constitutional Limits on Government Funding for Religious Institutions* (Volume 2, Winter 2003).

⁷ See, e.g., Jonathan Jacobson, et al., *State and Local Contracting for Social Services Under Charitable Choice* (Mathematica Policy Research: August 2005), for HHS (available at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/05/CharitableChoice/index.htm>).

discuss this Federal, State, and local partnership and help nongovernmental organizations to identify State and local programs that expend Federal funds may inadvertently confirm the mistaken view. Such outreach and educational efforts may mislead those novice organizations to ignore more accessible funding and instead focus on the highly competitive Federal discretionary grant competitions.

To counter these problems, the Council recommends that the Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships develop and implement a set of countervailing actions such as the following:

- a. The Office should work with the Centers for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships to train, encourage, and help Federal officials who interact with State and local officials to accurately communicate church-state rules and the Administration's intent to expand and strengthen financial and nonfinancial partnerships with faith- and community-based organizations. HUD, for example, has an extensive network of regional offices and officials to interact with and assist State and local officials who use HUD funding. In recent years, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) undertook specific efforts to help regional Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) officials to understand applicable rules and to assist State and local authorities in their respective regions to comply with those rules. The Bush administration published materials to guide State and local officials.⁸ Existing efforts should be evaluated, and then expanded and improved as needed.
- b. The Office and Centers should collaborate with organizations of State and local officials to discuss and communicate the Federal initiative and its goals and rules, for example, with the National Governors Association, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National Council of State Legislators, the National Association of Counties, the National Association of State Procurement Officials, and the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing.⁹ It appears that the least formal outreach and collaboration so far has been accomplished with county governments and officials, despite the crucial role that county agencies and programs play in the delivery of federally funded social services.
- c. The Office might expand and systematize its collaboration with State faith-based and neighborhood partnership offices or officials, with mayors' liaison officials, and with county officials or liaisons that are created. The Office should ensure that its State and local partners understand the rules and goals of the Federal initiative and should encourage them to work with program, legal, and other officials in their own governments to help them understand and apply the Federal rules.¹⁰
- d. Outreach and training offered by the Office and the Centers to nongovernmental organizations should always stress that church-state rules are attached to the Federal funds and that most of the Federal funds are awarded to nongovernmental organizations by State or local, not Federal, agencies. Ways to communicate this

⁸ See, e.g., the HHS study, *Partnering with Faith-Based and Community Organizations: A Guide for State and Local Officials Administering Federal Block and Formula Grant Funds* (available at <http://www.hhs.gov/fbci/For%20State%20and%20Local%20Officials/partneringpub.html>).

⁹ Note that during the last year or so of the previous Administration, outreach and training conferences offered by the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives typically included a day of discussions and other events with State and local officials to work collaboratively on how the various government agencies might better connect with faith- and community-based organizations.

¹⁰ Pamela Winston, et al., *The Role of State Faith Community Liaisons in Charitable Choice Implementation: Final Report* (Mathematica Policy Research: December 2008), for HHS (available at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/08/RoleFCL/index.shtml>).



dimension include providing information about State and local contacts to which organizations can turn (e.g., the State faith-based and neighborhood partnership offices) and, when possible, co-sponsoring the outreach and training sessions with the respective State and local liaisons and offices. The Centers' Websites should clearly explain that most of their respective departments' funding goes first to State or local agencies before being awarded to nongovernmental organizations.

- e. Publicity and guidance documents from the Federal initiatives should stress and explain the Federal, State, and local partnership dimension of Federal social service funding and should provide information to direct the readers to State and local sources of information and help. For example, a revised version of the Bush administration's *Guidance to Faith-Based and Community Organizations on Partnering with the Federal Government*¹¹ might better be entitled *Guidance... on Partnering with Federal, State, or Local Agencies to Provide Federally Funded Social Assistance* and contain specific sections on the use by State, county, and city agencies of Federal funds and how readers can find out more about those agencies and their federally funded programs.

¹¹ See http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/government/fbci/guidance_document_01-06.pdf for this guidance document.

STRENGTHENING CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FOOTING OF PARTNERSHIPS

Recommendation 4: Strengthen constitutional and legal footing of partnerships, and improve communications regarding White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and Agency Centers.

The Council recommends that the Administration amend Executive Order 13279¹² to make it clear that fidelity to constitutional principles is an objective that is as important as the goal of distributing Federal financial assistance in the most effective and efficient manner possible. Likewise, in all their communications, the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and Agency Centers should highlight this principle.

We also recommend that this executive order be amended to emphasize that grant-making decisions must be free from political interference or even the appearance of such interference, and that White House and agency activities must abide by applicable constitutional and statutory restrictions, including the Hatch Act's limits on the use of government resources for partisan political activities. Toward this end, participants in grant-making decisions—whether they are governmental employees or nongovernmental peer reviewers—should be specifically instructed in and required to abide by these principles. Similarly, government officials should instruct these individuals to refrain from taking religious affiliations or lack thereof into account in this process.

When selecting peer reviewers, the government should never ask about religious affiliation or lack thereof or take such matters into account. But it should encourage religious, political, and professional diversity among peer reviewers by advertising for these positions in a wide variety of venues.

The Council further urges the White House Office and Agency Centers to continue to emphasize the role of the Government as a convenor of diverse communities as well as a funder of certain social services. We applaud the effort to promote realistic expectations among potential grantees about financial partnerships, better match nongovernmental organizations with appropriate opportunities, and further underscore the value of nonfinancial partnerships between the Government and nongovernmental organizations.

Likewise, we recommend that the White House and Agency Centers continue to promote a more accurate understanding of what they do and do not do. For example, it should be emphasized that while the White House Office and Agency Centers often notify neighborhood groups—religious and secular—about a variety of opportunities to partner with government, the Office and Centers play no role in decision making about which nongovernmental organizations receive Federal social service funds.

Background and Explanation:

The Council recommends that the Administration make clear that keeping faith with constitutional principles is an objective that is as important as the goal of distributing Federal financial assistance in the most effective and efficient manner possible. Toward this end, the Council recommends that the Administration amend Executive Order 13279 to underscore the fact that fidelity to the Constitution is a fundamental and overarching goal

¹² Executive Order 13279, *Equal Protection of the Laws for Faith-Based and Community Organizations* (December 12, 2002) (“Executive Order 13279”). See, e.g., 45 C.F.R. Part 87.2(c).

in this area.¹³ This message also should be an essential part of all communications of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and the Agency Centers.

Additionally, we recommend that Executive Order 13279 be amended to reflect the commitment to nonpartisanship set forth in a September 2009 memorandum for White House staff and for agency and department heads.¹⁴ The executive order should be revised to make clear that all agency funding decisions must be “free of political interference or even the appearance thereof,” and that White House and agency activities must abide by applicable constitutional and statutory restrictions, including the Hatch Act’s limits on the use of government resources for partisan political activities.¹⁵ Also, participants in grant-making decisions—whether they are governmental employees or nongovernmental peer reviewers—should be specifically instructed in and required to abide by these principles.

Likewise, governmental officials should instruct participants in the grant-making process to refrain from taking religious affiliations or lack thereof into account in this process. In other words, an organization should not receive favorable or unfavorable marks merely because it is affiliated or unaffiliated with a religious body, or related or unrelated to a specific religion.

When selecting peer reviewers, the government should never ask about religious affiliation or lack thereof or take such matters into account. But it should encourage religious, political, and professional diversity among peer reviewers by advertising for these positions in a wide variety of venues.¹⁶

The White House Office and Agency Centers should continue to stress the role of the Government as a convenor as much as a funder of social services. The power of government at all levels to bring together diverse communities to share information and network is a critical but sometimes overlooked asset. Likewise, the White House should continue to seek to promote realistic expectations among potential grantees about financial partnerships. Sometimes, this goal will require the Administration and other governmental bodies to develop more targeted communications that better match organizations with appropriate opportunities. It is also important to emphasize that financial partnerships with government are not the right option for every community organization -- other kinds of collaboration may be more suitable. For this and other reasons, nonfinancial partnerships between the Government and nongovernmental organizations should be emphasized as much as financial partnerships.

Finally, the White House Office should continue to promote a more accurate understanding of what it and the Centers for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships in various Federal agencies do and do not do.¹⁷ For example, it should be emphasized that while the White House

¹³ Section Two: Fundamental Principles and Policymaking Criteria, Executive Order 13279. This executive order discusses some constitutional principles, but it does so only in reference to particular issues rather than as an overarching commitment. Also, while distributing assistance in the most effective and efficient manner possible is listed as the first principle—principle (a)—in this section of the executive order, the Establishment, Free Exercise, and Free Speech Clauses of the First Amendment are not specifically mentioned until principles (e) and (f). Another reason to describe constitutional commitments early in this section and to identify the Establishment, Free Exercise, and Free Speech Clauses jointly is that the commands of these clauses sometimes overlap and often reinforce one another. See also Recommendations 5 to 12 that seek to strengthen the constitutional and legal footing of social service partnerships between the Government and nongovernmental organizations.

¹⁴ Gregory Craig and Norman Eisen, *Memorandum for White House Staff and for Agency and Department Heads on Guidelines for Public Outreach Meetings*, September 22, 2009 (available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/assets/documents/WH_COUNSEL_MEMO_GUIDELINES_FOR_PUBLIC_OUTREACH_MEETINGS.pdf).

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ Other issues linked to the peer review process deserve further examination, including the application process for positions as peer reviewers and notification of peer reviewers about opportunities to report any violations of laws, rules, and regulations that occur during these processes. Because of time constraints, the Council did not address these issues. Council members believe, however, that governmental bodies and nongovernmental researchers and entities could profitably explore these issues and perhaps offer suggestions for improving the transparency, fairness, and effectiveness of the peer review process.

¹⁷ The White House Office and Agency Centers also should emphasize the large role State and local governments play in the delivery of federally funded social services. See Recommendation 3.

Office and Agency Centers often notify neighborhood groups—religious and secular—about a variety of opportunities to partner with government, the Office and Centers play no role in decision making about which organizations receive Federal social service funds.

Recommendation 5: Clarify prohibited uses of direct Federal financial assistance.

Existing Federal regulations and an executive order prohibit the use of direct government aid (e.g., government grants, contracts, subgrants, and subcontracts) for “inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction, and proselytization.” The Council recommends that the Administration replace the words “inherently religious activities” with “explicitly religious activities” in these regulations and in the relevant executive order, as well as in associated guidance materials. The Council also recommends that the Administration provide additional examples of activities that constitute “explicitly religious activities” in regulatory or guidance materials.

Background and Explanation:

Existing regulations and an executive order prohibit nongovernmental organizations from using direct government aid (e.g., government grants, contracts, subgrants, and subcontracts)¹⁸ for “inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction, and proselytization.”¹⁹ The term “inherently religious” is confusing. In 2006, for example, the General Accounting Office (GAO) found that all 26 of the religious social service providers it interviewed said they understood the prohibition on using direct government aid for “inherently religious activities,” but it also found that four of the providers acted in ways that appeared to violate that rule.²⁰

Further, while the Supreme Court has sometimes used the term “inherently religious,” it has not used it to indicate the boundary of what the Government may subsidize with direct aid.²¹ If the term is interpreted narrowly, it could permit some things the Constitution prohibits.²² On the other hand, one could also argue that the term “inherently religious” is too broad rather than too narrow. For example, some might consider the provision of a hot meal to a needy person an “inherently religious” act when it is undertaken from a sense of religious motivation or obligation, even though it has no overt religious content.

The Court has determined that the Government cannot subsidize “a specifically religious activity in an otherwise substantially secular setting.”²³ It has also said a direct aid program impermissibly advances religion when the aid results in governmental indoctrination of religion.²⁴ This terminology is fairly interpreted to prohibit the Government from directly subsidizing any explicitly religious activity, meaning any activities that involve overt religious content.²⁵ Thus, direct Federal aid should not be used to pay for activities such as

¹⁸ When the term “direct aid” is used in these recommendations, it includes aid in the form of federally funded grants and contracts as well as the federally funded subgrants and subcontracts that an intermediary (whether governmental or nongovernmental) awards to nongovernmental organizations. See Recommendations 7 and 9.

¹⁹ Executive Order 13279. See, e.g., 45 C.F.R. Part 87.2(c).

²⁰ GAO, *Faith-Based and Community Initiative: Improvements in Monitoring Grantees and Measuring Performance Could Enhance Accountability* (GAO-06-616), June 2006 (“GAO Report”), 34-35.

²¹ See Ira C. Lupu and Robert W. Tuttle, *The Faith-Based Initiative and The Constitution*, 55 DePaul L. Rev. 1, 79 (2005).

²² “If understood too narrowly,” Lupu and Tuttle have said, “the regulatory proscription on direct government financing of religious instruction significantly understates [the relevant constitutional principle]. . . .” Ira C. Lupu and Robert W. Tuttle, *Constitutional Change and Responsibilities of Governance Pertaining to the Faith-based and Community Initiative, Conference on Innovations in Effective Compassion* (June 2008), 269.

²³ *Hunt v. McNair*, 413 U.S. 734, 743 (1973).

²⁴ *Mitchell v. Helms*, 530 U.S. 793 (2000).

²⁵ As Professors Lupu and Tuttle noted in 2005, “Almost all of the lawsuits challenging aid to [faith-based organizations] have involved faith-intensive social services, and each decision in these cases has reaffirmed the principle that direct public aid may not be used for social services with that character.” Lupu and Tuttle, *The Faith-Based Initiative and The Constitution*, 55 DePaul L. Rev. at 86 (2005).



religious instruction, devotional exercises, worship, proselytizing or evangelism; production or dissemination of devotional guides or other religious materials; or counseling in which counselors introduce religious content.²⁶ Similarly, grant or contract funds may not be used to pay for equipment or supplies to the extent they are allocated to such activities. The term “explicitly religious activities” would not include, however, activities that may be the result of religious motivation like serving meals to the needy or using a nonreligious text to teach someone to read. From the standpoint of the Government, these activities lack religious content.

Likewise, it is important to emphasize that the restrictions on explicit religious content apply to content generated by the administrators of the federally funded program, not to spontaneous comments made by individual beneficiaries about their personal lives in the context of these programs. For example, if a person administering a federally funded job skills program asks beneficiaries to describe how they gain the motivation necessary for their job searches and some beneficiaries refer to their faith or membership in a faith community, these kinds of comments do not violate the restrictions and should not be censored. In this context, it is clear that those administering the government program are not orchestrating or encouraging such comments.

The Administration, therefore, should amend regulations and the relevant executive order to prohibit the use of direct aid to subsidize “explicitly religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction, and proselytization.” Associated guidance materials should also be revised to reflect this change in language.²⁷ Regulatory or guidance materials should offer additional examples or brief case studies to explain the meaning of the term “explicitly religious” and note that any explicit religious content must be privately subsidized and offered separate in time or location from programs funded by direct government aid.²⁸ This change in language will provide greater clarity and more closely match constitutional standards.

²⁶ These activities and items, however, may be privately funded and offered in a program that is voluntary for beneficiaries and separate in time or location from the program that is funded by direct aid. See Executive Order 13279. See also Recommendation 6.

²⁷ Current guidance sometimes uses the terms “inherently religious activities” and “religious activities” interchangeably. For example, a guide entitled *Designing Sub-Award Programs* states:

Support of only non-religious social services — A subawardee cannot use any part of a direct Federal grant to fund “inherently religious” activities which can include religious worship, instruction or proselytization. Instead, organizations may use government funds only to support the non-religious social services they provide. This doesn’t mean the organization cannot have religious activities. However, they cannot use taxpayer dollars to fund them.

Lisa Lampman, *Designing Sub-Award Programs at 18*, Intermediary Development Series, Compassion Capital Fund National Resource Center.

²⁸ As noted in the Introduction, Council members differ over the issue of whether the Government must or should refrain from directing cash aid to certain kinds of religious entities. See also Recommendation 12.

Recommendation 6: Equally emphasize separation requirements and protections for religious identity.

Regulations and guidance regarding the use of Federal social service funds should give prominent and equal emphasis to the following requirements: (1) when the Government directly funds a program, any explicitly religious activities offered by a provider must be privately funded, separate in time or location from the government-funded program, and voluntary for beneficiaries; and (2) nongovernmental providers that receive Federal grant or contract funds may maintain their institutional religious identity in the ways described below.

Especially because providers often lack specific guidance about how to create a meaningful and workable separation between a program funded by a government grant or contract and a privately funded religious one, the Administration should provide more extensive guidance on this matter. Accordingly, the Council sets forth guidelines articulated by the last Administration in a particular case and urges the present Administration to adapt them for general use. For example, we urge the Administration to include these basic principles in regulations and guidance that accompany Federal social service funds.

At the same time, the Administration should give equal emphasis to the fact that religious organizations receiving direct Federal aid may maintain their institutional religious identity. They may use religious terms in their organizational names, select board members on a religious basis, and include religious references in mission statements and other organizational documents.

Members of the Council disagree, however, about whether the Government should allow social services subsidized by Federal grant or contract funds to be provided in rooms that contain religious art, scripture, messages, or symbols. A majority of the Council (16 members) believe the Administration should neither require nor encourage the removal of religious symbols where services subsidized by Federal grant or contract funds are provided, but instead should encourage all providers to be sensitive to, and to accommodate where feasible, those beneficiaries who may object to the presence of religious symbols. These members also affirm that, if these voluntary measures do not meet the objections of the beneficiaries, those beneficiaries must have access to an alternative provider to which they do not object.

A minority of the Council differs. Seven Council members believe that revisions should be made to these documents to allow federally funded programming in areas with these religious items only when there is no available space in the organizations' offices without these items and when removing or covering such displays would be infeasible (e.g., where it would take great effort to remove or cover a religious icon mounted high on a wall or remove or cover a large statute). Two Council members believe the Administration should amend existing regulations, guidance, and an executive order to permit nongovernmental organizations to offer federally funded programming only in areas devoid of such items.

Nevertheless, all Council members agree that the Government should permit providers to retain other aspects of their religious identities while providing federally funded social services.

Background and Explanation:

An executive order and associated regulations properly indicate that the Government must ensure that any religious activities offered by a nongovernmental provider are privately

funded, separate in time or location from programs funded by direct government aid,²⁹ and purely voluntary for beneficiaries.³⁰ Further, some of the past Administration's guidance on these separation requirements has been quite good, but it has not been made standard across Federal agencies, and it could bear greater emphasis.³¹

As part of the settlement of a case, HHS produced a guidance document entitled *Safeguards Required*.³² The document articulates a number of principles for separating programs with explicit religious content from programs supported by direct federal aid. A copy of the *Safeguards Required* document is attached to this recommendation. We urge the Administration to adapt the principles set forth in this document for general use. It should ensure that these principles are reflected in regulations and guidance accompanying Federal social service funds. Especially because providers often lack specific instructions about how to create a meaningful and workable separation between a federally funded program and a privately funded religious one, it is critical that providers receive practical and specific guidance.

These materials also should outline with equal prominence and clarity the protections for a religious organization's identity when that organization receives direct government funds. Religious organizations may use religious terms in their organizational names, select board members on a religious basis,³³ and include religious references in mission statements and other organizational documents. Simply because an organization's mission is overtly religious, for example, does not mean it cannot separate (and privately pay for) explicitly religious activities from activities funded by a federal grant.

Members of the Council disagree, however, about whether the Government should allow nongovernmental providers of federally funded social services to provide those services in rooms that contain religious art, scripture, messages, or symbols.

A majority of the Council (16 members) believe that the Administration should neither require nor encourage the removal of religious symbols where services subsidized by Federal grant or contract funds are provided, but instead should encourage all providers to be sensitive to, and to accommodate where feasible, those beneficiaries who may object to the presence of religious symbols.³⁴ These members also affirm that, if these voluntary measures do not meet the objections of the beneficiaries, those beneficiaries must have access to an alternative provider to which they do not object.

A minority of the Council differs. Seven Council members believe that revisions should be made to these documents to allow federally funded programming in areas with these

²⁹ See *supra* n.18 for a description of some of the forms of aid that are included within the definition of direct government aid. See also Recommendations 7 and 9.

³⁰ Executive Order 13279. See, e.g., 45 C.F.R. Part 87.2(c). See also Recommendation 5 (recommending substitution of "explicitly religious activities" for "inherently religious activities").

³¹ These requirements have not been well understood by some providers. In 2006, for example, the General Accounting Office (GAO) found that all 26 of the religious social service providers it interviewed said they understood the requirements, but it also found that four of the providers acted in ways that appeared to violate the rules. GAO, *Faith-Based and Community Initiative: Improvements in Monitoring Grantees and Measuring Performance Could Enhance Accountability* (GAO-06-616), June 2006 ("GAO Report"), 34-35. Further, as Professors Lupu and Tuttle noted in 2005, "Almost all of the lawsuits challenging aid to [faith-based organizations] have involved faith-intensive services, and each decision in these cases has reaffirmed the principle that direct public aid may not be used for social services with that character." Lupu and Tuttle, *The Faith-Based Initiative and the Constitution*, 55 DePaul L. Rev. at 86.

³² Letter from Jeffrey S. Trimboth, Director, Abstinence Education, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, to Denny Pattyn, Silver Ring Thing (September 20, 2005).

³³ Council members differ on what is required if board members are paid with government funds.

³⁴ These Council members are Diane Baillargeon, Charles Blake, Noel Castellanos, Arturo Chavez, Nathan Diamant, Joel Hunter, Vashti McKenzie, Dalia Mogahed, Otis Moss, Frank Page, Anthony Picarello, Melissa Rogers, Richard Stearns, Larry Snyder, Judy Vredenburg, and Jim Wallis.

religious items only when there is no available space in the organizations' offices without these items and when removing or covering such displays would be infeasible (e.g., where it would take great effort to remove or cover a religious icon mounted high on a wall or remove or cover a large statute).³⁵ Two Council members believe the Administration should amend existing regulations, guidance, and an executive order to permit nongovernmental organizations to offer federally funded programming only in areas devoid of such items.³⁶

Nevertheless, all Council members agree that the Government should permit providers to retain other aspects of their religious identities while providing federally funded social services. These aspects include using religious terms in their organizational names, selecting board members on a religious basis, and incorporating religious references in mission statements and other organizational documents. These protections for religious identity are important, and they have been greatly emphasized in recent years. By emphasizing the separation and maintenance of religious identity requirements on an equal footing, the Administration will strike a more appropriate balance.

Recommendation 7: State more clearly the distinction between “direct” and “indirect” aid.

The Council recommends that the Administration, in its guidance to Federal employees, service providers, and the broader public, state with greater clarity the distinction between direct and indirect forms of government aid to religious institutions. Similarly, the Administration should clearly label each program it offers as involving direct or indirect aid, so that providers can better assess, sooner rather than later in the process, whether a program might suit their particular institutional commitments and structure. Members of the Council differ sharply on many other questions surrounding indirect aid, and so prescind from them in these recommendations.

Background and Explanation:

Federal regulations state that direct social service funding “means that the government or an intermediate organization. . . selects the provider and purchases the needed services straight from the provider (e.g., via a contract or cooperative agreement).”³⁷ Direct aid includes federally funded grants and contracts as well as the federally funded subgrants and subcontracts that an intermediary³⁸ awards to nongovernmental organizations. Thus, the restrictions that bind direct Federal aid (e.g., such funds may not be used to pay for explicitly religious activities) apply to all of these funds. The vast majority of federally funded social service programs are funded by direct aid.

Federal regulations classify other social service programs as ones funded by indirect aid. The regulations state that indirect social service funding is funding “an organization receives as the result of the genuine and independent private choice of a beneficiary”³⁹ through a voucher, certificate, or similar mechanism.⁴⁰

Under current U.S. Supreme Court jurisprudence, indirect financial aid to religious service providers is treated differently from direct financial aid. The distinction has great practical significance, but it is not generally well understood except among religious freedom specialists.

³⁵ These Council members are Anju Bhargava, Peg Chamberlin, Harry Knox, Eboo Patel, David Saperstein, Bill Shaw, and Sharon Watkins.

³⁶ These Council members are Fred Davie and Nancy Ratzan.

³⁷ 45 C.F.R. Part 260.34(1) (2010). See also 42 C.F.R. Part 96 n.1 (2010).

³⁸ See *supra* n.4 for definition of an intermediary.

³⁹ 42 C.F. R. Part 96 n.1 (2010). See also *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, 536 U.S. 639 (2002).

⁴⁰ 45 C.F.R. Part 360.34(2) (2010).



Members of the Council disagree about *what the law should be* regarding the definition and consequences of direct and indirect aid, and indeed, regarding many other questions surrounding the direct/indirect distinction. Among others, these questions include: whether any program outside the precise factual context of *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, 536 U.S. 639, 652 (2002), qualifies as “indirect” aid; if any aid may ever qualify as “indirect,” how the applicable constitutional standards or other requirements⁴¹ would differ from the direct aid standards; whether it would be good or bad policy, apart from constitutional standards, to apply the standards governing direct aid to indirect aid programs; and whether it would be good or bad policy, apart from constitutional standards, to alter the number of existing programs employing an indirect funding mechanism.⁴² Because of constraints of time and page length, as well as to avoid needless contention, the Council does not offer recommendations on these questions.

Members of the Council nonetheless agree that it would be beneficial if the Administration—not the Council—stated clearly *its operative understanding of the existing law* in this area, especially in ways accessible to nonlegal and otherwise broader audiences. The Council also believes that it would have practical value to make this distinction and its consequences better known and understood by Federal employees, service providers, and beneficiaries. That additional measure of clarity would promote better communication and collaboration, and correspondingly reduce confusion and potential litigation.

For example, if service providers are told clearly which existing programs involve direct and which involve indirect aid, providers that are unwilling to separate religious and secular components of their programming are likelier to self-select out of direct aid programs. This, in turn, would reduce the filing of grant applications that would either fail or, if granted, result in needless legal risk for both the provider and its government partner.

⁴¹ Among Council members, there is disagreement over whether the beneficiaries’ protections set forth in Recommendation 10 are required in the case of programs using “indirect” funding mechanisms (e.g., vouchers for substance abuse counseling). Some Council members believe that in programs in which the eligible beneficiary may take the Federal service voucher to the provider of his or her choice, it is the provision of notice prior to entering a particular program, and the availability of several alternative service providers, which afford the protection for the beneficiary’s religious liberty rights. Thus, the extensive beneficiaries’ protections set forth in Recommendation 10 for direct aid programs need not be required in indirect funding contexts. Other Council members believe that the beneficiaries’ protections prescribed in Recommendation 10 are also required in indirect funding contexts in order to assure proper protections.

⁴² Council members also disagree about the issue of whether the Government must or should refrain from directing cash aid to certain kinds of religious entities. See Introduction and Recommendation 12.

Recommendation 8: Increase transparency regarding federally funded partnerships.

The Council recommends that the Administration require governmental bodies that disburse Federal social service funds to post online all guidance documents for nongovernmental organizations that provide those services as well as other documents needed to receive and maintain Federal funding, including requests for proposals, grants, contracts, and assurances. It also recommends that the Administration require governmental bodies to post online a list of entities that receive such aid and to do so in a timely manner.

Background and Explanation:

At present, there is great variation among government agencies, and sometimes within them, regarding the accessibility of the guidance and grant documents relating to the provision of federally funded services by nongovernmental organizations. Even as members of this Council, it has not been easy for us to locate and access information such as standard grant documents and certificates of assurance as well as PowerPoint presentations and other materials given to potential and actual government grantees. Equally important, lists of the names of entities that receive Federal social service funds (e.g., through grants or contracts) are not routinely made available to the public.

We have found no evidence of an intentional effort by past Administrations to limit the accessibility of these materials. Indeed, past Administrations have often disseminated guidance materials at various conferences, workshops, and meetings, and lists of government grantees and contractors have sometimes been made publicly available. However, past Administrations have not made it a priority to provide wider and more routine access to this information.

Although some of this information may be publicly available through actions like Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, the public will be much better served by making it available on the Web. As President Obama said in January 2009, "Executive departments and agencies should harness new technologies to put information about their operations and decisions online and readily available to the public."⁴³ We propose, therefore, that the Administration require governmental agencies that partner with nongovernmental organizations to provide federally funded social services to post online all guidance documents for nongovernmental organizations that provide (or seek to provide) those services. We also propose that the Administration require such governmental agencies to post documents needed to access or maintain Federal social service funds, including requests for proposals, grant agreements, assurances, and other materials.

Likewise, we recommend that the Administration require governmental bodies to post online a list of entities that receive such aid and to do so in a timely manner (e.g., within 30 days of making a decision about an award or as part of a routine quarterly report on a grant program). This transparency obligation would include posting the names of all entities receiving Federal social service funding through decisions made by nongovernmental intermediaries.⁴⁴ These intermediaries should promptly report the names of such entities to the relevant governmental body (e.g., within 30 days of making a decision about an award or as part of a routine quarterly report to the Government). The governmental body should then make this list public in a timely manner (e.g., within 30 days of receiving

⁴³ President Barack Obama, *Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies on Transparency and Open Government*, January 21, 2009 (available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Transparency_and_Open_Government/).

⁴⁴ See *supra* n.4 for definition of an intermediary.

the information from the intermediary or as part of a routine quarterly report on a grant program involving intermediaries).

There is often much confusion about the nature of the partnerships the Government forms with nongovernmental organizations and the rules that apply to those partnerships. All those who are interested in these relationships, including the taxpayers who fund them, will be better served by being able to access guidance and grant materials, even when they cannot attend a conference or a workshop or find the right government employee to ask for copies of these materials. Posting these materials on governmental Websites will increase public understanding of and confidence in these partnerships. Similarly, ensuring that governmental bodies that disburse Federal social service funds post online a list of entities that receive such aid, whether those entities receive the aid from the Government or from nongovernmental intermediaries, will help interested Americans to gain a better understanding of how their tax money is spent.

We are also aware that not everyone has high-speed Internet access, and that even those who do would sometimes appreciate other forms of assistance. Thus, the Council considered recommending that the Administration establish a toll-free telephone number that citizens could call to inquire about potential or ongoing partnerships with government. We learned, however, that the previous Administration had tried such a system and found that it was unproductive. We encourage the present Administration to continue to search for new ways to connect with those who may lack high-speed Internet service and those who need different kinds of help in understanding the Government's role in the delivery of social services.

Recommendation 9: Improve monitoring of constitutional, statutory, and regulatory requirements that accompany Federal social service funds.

The Council recommends that Executive Order 13279 be amended to describe the Government's obligation to monitor and enforce constitutional, statutory, and regulatory requirements relating to the use of Federal social service funds, including the constitutional obligation to monitor and enforce church-state standards in ways that avoid excessive entanglement between religion and government. The Council further recommends that associated regulations and guidance materials be similarly revised. All grants and contracts involving federally funded social services should set forth applicable responsibilities and restrictions following those funds, and organizations that are awarded such funds should undergo training about these responsibilities and restrictions.

The Administration also should ensure that church-state safeguards are included in the monitoring tools used in the audit required of non-Federal entities expending \$500,000 or more annually in Federal funds and in all other audits of non-Federal entities receiving Federal social service funds. Each governmental body disbursing Federal funds must have a mechanism in place to allow that body to take necessary enforcement actions for noncompliance with church-state standards as well as other applicable standards.

Nongovernmental organizations receiving government subgrants or subcontracts from intermediaries are subject to the same church-state standards that apply to the nongovernmental organizations receiving the primary government grants or contracts.⁴⁵ For example, subgrantees and subcontractors must separate any explicitly religious activities from programs funded by direct government aid just as grantees and contractors must

⁴⁵ See Recommendation 7.



do. Additionally, the Council urges the Administration to develop specific guidance for nongovernmental intermediaries to instruct them in their obligations regarding monitoring of subgrantees and subcontractors.

Background and Explanation:

To guard against inappropriate uses of Federal funds, the Government must monitor and enforce the constitutional, statutory, and regulatory standards that follow social service funds. The obligation to monitor and enforce these standards applies to all such funds, whether they flow to religious or secular organizations, and the Government should not assume that one class of providers is more apt to violate applicable standards than another. There is, however, a component of the Government’s monitoring obligation that is constitutionally mandated and specifically focused on religion-related issues. The First Amendment requires the Government to monitor the activities and programs it funds to ensure that they comply with church-state requirements, including the prohibition against the use of direct aid in a manner that results in governmental indoctrination on religious matters.⁴⁶

At the same time, the Government must respect the constitutional command against excessive entanglement between government and religion.⁴⁷ So, for example, the Government need not and should not engage in “pervasive monitoring” of religious bodies,⁴⁸ and its oversight need not constitute a “failsafe mechanism capable of detecting any instance of diversion” of government aid to religious use.⁴⁹ But the Government clearly fails to discharge its responsibilities if its safeguards “exist in theory only”⁵⁰ or “only on paper.”⁵¹ In several cases involving government funds administered by nongovernmental organizations, including religious institutions, the Supreme Court has found that a variety of methods of monitoring meet these standards.⁵²

⁴⁶ *Committee for Public Education & Religious Liberty v. Nyquist*, 413 U.S. 756, 780 (1973) (“In the absence of an effective means of guaranteeing that the state aid derived from public funds will be used exclusively for secular, neutral, and nonideological purposes, it is clear from our cases that direct aid in whatever form is invalid.”); *Bowen v. Kendrick*, 487 U.S. 589, 615 (1988) (“[t]here is no doubt that the monitoring of [government] grants is necessary if the [government] is to ensure that public money is to be spent in the way that Congress intended and in a way that comports with the Establishment Clause.”).

⁴⁷ *Lemon v. Kurtzman*, 403 U.S. 602 (1971).

⁴⁸ *Id.* The Supreme Court has said that excessive entanglement includes “comprehensive, discriminating, and continuing state surveillance. . . .” *Id.* at 619.

⁴⁹ *Mitchell v. Helms*, 530 U.S. at 861 (O’Connor & Breyer, JJ., concurring in the judgment).

⁵⁰ *Freedom From Religion Foundation v. McCallum*, 179 F. Supp. 2d 950, 976 (W.D. Wisc. 2002).

⁵¹ *Id.* at 977.

⁵² For example, the Supreme Court has upheld an educational aid program in which various levels of government engaged in monitoring activities such as (1) requiring participating nonpublic schools to sign assurances that they would use Federal funds only for “secular, neutral and nonideological purposes” and retaining the power to cut off aid in the event of failure to abide by these promises; (2) requiring nonpublic schools to submit applications with project plans for approval; (3) visiting nonpublic schools once a year and conducting followup visits when necessary; and (4) conducting random reviews of materials used in the government-funded programs. *Mitchell v. Helms*, 530 U.S. at 861-863 (O’Connor & Breyer, JJ., concurring in the judgment). In another case, the Court upheld an aid program in which governmental supervisors made unannounced monthly visits to nongovernmental organizations providing government-funded services. *Agostini v. Felton*, 521 U.S. 203, 234 (1997). The Court has also determined that government review of educational materials and programs coupled with periodic site visits is another way of meeting constitutional requirements in this area. *Bowen v. Kendrick*, 487 U.S. at 615-617. In 1976, the Court upheld a program that required nongovernmental educational institutions to promise that the aid they received would not be used for sectarian purposes. See *Roemer v. Board of Public Works*, 426 U.S. 736, 742-743 (1976). These nongovernmental bodies also were required to describe specific nonsectarian uses of government funds and to file reports itemizing the use of such funds. *Id.*

Monitoring and enforcement obligations are not specifically discussed in Executive Order 13279.⁵³ And while current Federal policy requires non-Federal entities that expend \$500,000 or more in a given year in Federal money to undergo “a single or program-specific audit,”⁵⁴ a June 2006 GAO report found that “the single audit...generally does not include checks for church-state safeguards.”⁵⁵ The June 2006 GAO report also noted that many non-Federal entities that receive Federal funds may not be subject to the single-audit requirement.⁵⁶ The GAO report concluded that, without some meaningful monitoring of these safeguards, “the government has little assurance that the safeguards are protecting beneficiaries, government agencies, and religious organizations as intended.”⁵⁷ It recommended that all Federal agencies include information on relevant church-state safeguards in grant documents, refer to these safeguards in monitoring tools that agencies use to oversee federally funded grantees, and “ensure that program-specific single audit supplements, where appropriate, include a reference to these safeguards.”⁵⁸

The Council recommends that Executive Order 13279 be amended to discuss the general obligation to monitor and enforce constitutional, statutory, and regulatory requirements relating to the use of Federal social service funds, whether those funds flow to secular or religious organizations. It also should cite the constitutional obligation to monitor and enforce church-state standards in ways that avoid excessive entanglement between religion and government. The Council further recommends that associated regulations and guidance materials be similarly revised. Agreements involving federally funded social services should set forth the restrictions and responsibilities following those funds,⁵⁹ and organizations that are awarded such funds should undergo training about these responsibilities and restrictions. The Administration should also ensure that church-state safeguards are included in the monitoring tools used in the audit required of all non-Federal entities expending \$500,000 or more annually in Federal funds and all other audits of non-Federal entities receiving Federal funds.⁶⁰

With respect to direct Federal aid, we believe policies like the following ones would fulfill the relevant constitutional requirements:

⁵³ Executive Order 13279.

⁵⁴ See Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A-133, *Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations*, at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a133/a133.html>

⁵⁵ GAO, *Faith-Based and Community Initiative: Improvements in Monitoring Grantees and Measuring Performance Could Enhance Accountability* (GAO-06-616), June 2006 (“GAO Report”), 29. See also *infra* n.60.

⁵⁶ GAO Report at 36.

⁵⁷ *Id.* at 52.

⁵⁸ *Id.* at 53.

⁵⁹ A summary and status report on the recommendations in the 2006 GAO Report indicates that, since the issuance of the 2006 report, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has implemented the GAO’s recommendation that OMB “ensure that all agencies [with centers for faith-based and community initiatives] include information on [church-state] safeguards in program grant documents for which faith-based organizations are eligible.” See Summary of Recommendations for Executive Action and Status of Those Recommendations at <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-06-616>. This recommendation is broader—it calls for the inclusion of information about all relevant restrictions and responsibilities that accompany Federal social service funds in all agreements with nongovernmental organizations involving those funds.

⁶⁰ A summary and status report on the recommendations in the 2006 GAO Report indicates that, since the issuance of the 2006 report, the OMB has directed “federal agencies and, where appropriate, state agencies, to include a reference to [church-state] safeguards in the[] monitoring tools the agencies use to oversee federally funded grantees.” See Summary of Recommendations for Executive Action and Status of Those Recommendations at <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-06-616>. This report says, “Agencies must know 1) which office will be responsible for monitoring; 2) what means of monitoring will be used (site visits, spot checks by phone); 3) whether equal treatment regulations need to be added to existing compliance checklists; 4) and must work with appropriate offices within a specific agency to address issues when monitoring efforts uncover a violation.” *Id.* But this report also notes that OMB has not yet implemented GAO’s recommendation that OMB ensure that “program-specific single audit supplements, where appropriate, include a reference to these safeguards.” See Summary of Recommendations for Executive Action and Status of Those Recommendations at <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-06-616>.

- Grant and contract documents that spell out applicable constitutional, legal, and regulatory standards, including church-state safeguards, and requirements that all grantees and contractors sign assurances reflecting their agreement to abide by these standards.
- Reporting documents that ask grantees and contractors questions such as whether they offer any explicitly religious activities that are privately funded. If providers do offer such activities, reporting documents should ask them to describe the method by which they separate privately funded religious content from the government-funded program; steps they have taken to ensure that beneficiaries understand they are not in any way required to participate in any privately funded religious activities; and steps providers have taken to help beneficiaries understand that they have the right to obtain benefits from an alternate provider if they object to the character of their current provider.⁶¹ These reporting documents also should ask such grantees and contractors about the uses of government funds and means of tracking the use of those funds. These questions should appear on reporting forms required of all providers. If these questions are inapplicable because a provider does not offer privately funded religious activities, the provider would so note.
- Follow up on these reporting documents with telephone calls or onsite visits as necessary.

Some obligation to monitor and enforce applicable constitutional, statutory, or regulatory standards applies to every entity that disburses Federal social service funds, whether it is a Federal agency, a State or local governmental body, or a governmental or nongovernmental intermediary.⁶² An intermediary is an organization that accepts government funds and distributes those funds to a network of other organizations that in turn provide government-funded social services.⁶³ The Federal Government must take special care to ensure that intermediaries understand and carry out the oversight responsibilities assigned to them. Accordingly, the Council also recommends that the Administration develop guidance for intermediaries concerning their obligations to monitor subgrantees and subcontractors.

Likewise, nongovernmental organizations receiving federally funded subgrants or subcontracts from nongovernmental or governmental intermediaries must understand that they are subject to the same church-state standards that apply to the nongovernmental organizations receiving the primary government grants or contracts.⁶⁴ For example, subgrantees and subcontractors must separate explicitly religious content from programs funded by direct government aid just as grantees and contractors must do. The Council recommends that every federally funded program utilizing nongovernmental intermediaries make this point clear in relevant regulations and guidance materials as well as in contracts and grant agreements.

⁶¹ See Recommendation 10.

⁶² *Bowen v. Kendrick*, 487 U.S. 589, 620 n.16 (1988).

⁶³ See, e.g., 45 C.F.R. Part 1050.2 (2010). Some programs, including substance abuse prevention and treatment services programs, provide that the Government may enter into agreements with nongovernmental intermediaries authorizing those intermediaries to select nongovernmental subgrantees or subcontractors. See, e.g., 42 C.F.R. Part 54.12 (2010) (“If a nongovernmental organization (referred to here as an ‘intermediate organization’), acting under a contract or other agreement with the Federal Government or a State or local government, is given the authority under the contract or agreement to select nongovernmental organizations to provide services under any applicable program, the intermediate organization shall have the same duties under this part as the government.”)

⁶⁴ See Recommendation 7.

Finally, the Council believes the Administration should ensure that each governmental body that disburses Federal funds has a mechanism in place to allow that body to take necessary enforcement actions for noncompliance with church-state standards as well as other applicable standards.⁶⁵

Recommendation 10: Assure the religious liberty rights of the clients and beneficiaries of federally funded programs by strengthening appropriate protections.

Existing statutes and Federal executive branch regulations, an executive order, and guidance materials provide that all organizations that receive Federal funds for the purpose of delivering social welfare services are prohibited from discriminating against beneficiaries or potential beneficiaries of those programs on the basis of religion or religious belief. There is variance among these authorities about the specifics of the protections, but the principle they seek to uphold is uniform.

The Council recommends that such requirements and protections continue to be clearly stated in all Requests for Proposals (RFPs), contracts and guidance materials, and monitoring guidelines.

The Council further recommends that the Administration take certain additional steps to bolster the protections of beneficiaries' rights and make the protections uniform across Federal programs.

These steps include:

1. Amending Executive Order 13279⁶⁶ to apply the protections codified in the legislation and regulations of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) program,⁶⁷ with appropriate modifications, to all service provision program partnerships that receive direct Federal funding⁶⁸, including three modifications recommended by the Council:

⁶⁵ See, e.g., 41 C.F.R. Part 60 (describing purview of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs in the Department of Labor).

⁶⁶ Executive Order 13279.

⁶⁷ Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 290kk-1, et seq., and 42 U.S.C. 300x-65, et seq., regulations were promulgated at 42 C.F.R. Part 54 (and Part 54a similarly) that provide:

§54.7 Nondiscrimination requirement.

A religious organization that is a program participant shall not, in providing program services or engaging in outreach activities under applicable programs, discriminate against a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion, a religious belief, a refusal to hold a religious belief, or a refusal to actively participate in a religious practice.

§54.8 Right to services from an alternative provider.

(a) General requirements. If an otherwise eligible program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary objects to the religious character of a program participant, within a reasonable period of time after the date of such objection, such program beneficiary shall have rights to notice, referral, and alternative services, as outlined in subsections 54.8(b)-(d) below.

(b) Notice. Program participants that refer an individual to alternative service providers, and the State government that administers the applicable programs, shall ensure that notice of the individual's right to services from an alternative provider is provided to all program beneficiaries or prospective beneficiaries. The notice must clearly articulate the program beneficiary's right to a referral and to services that reasonably meet the requirements of timeliness, capacity, accessibility, and equivalency as discussed in this section. A model notice is set out in Appendix A to Part 54a.

(c) Referral to an Alternative Provider. If a program beneficiary or prospective program beneficiary objects to the religious character of a program participant that is a religious organization, that participating religious organization shall, within a reasonable time after the date of such objection, refer such individual to an alternative provider. The State shall have a system in place to ensure that referrals are made to an alternative provider. That system shall ensure that the following occurs:

(1) the religious organization that is a program participant shall, within a reasonable time after the date of such objection, refer the beneficiary to an alternative provider;

(2) in making such referral, the program participant shall consider any list that the State or local government makes available to entities in the geographic area that provide program services, which may include utilizing any treatment locator system developed by SAMHSA;

(3) all referrals shall be made in a manner consistent with all applicable confidentiality laws, including, but not limited to, 42 C.F.R. Part 2 ("Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Patient Records");

(4) upon referring a program beneficiary to an alternative provider, the program participant shall notify the State or responsible unit of government of such referral; and

(continued on page 141)

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- a. The protections clearly require, and state in all relevant documents, that program providers must give beneficiaries notice of their rights in writing at the time the beneficiary enters or joins the program.
 - b. The protections clarify that the protected refusal to “actively participate” in a religious practice includes the refusal to even attend such a practice.
 - c. The protections clearly affirm that a beneficiary who requests an alternative service provider, due to that beneficiary’s objection to the religious character of the initial service provider, shall have his or her objection redressed either by referral to an alternative provider which is religiously acceptable to the beneficiary, or an alternative provider which is secular.
2. Amending agency regulations and revise guidance to reflect these changes.

Background and Explanation:

There is clear precedent and consensus for the vigorous protection of the religious liberties of beneficiaries of federally funded programs. The “Welfare Reform” statute, for example, contains explicit provisions on this matter.⁶⁹ Similarly, the legislation proposed in 2001 during the Bush administration to expand and codify “charitable choice” across the universe of Federal social welfare programs contained not only the protections previously enacted in TANF and three other program statutes, but went further to assure the right of an eligible beneficiary to demand a secular alternative program and would have placed the obligation on the Federal or State agency to assure its provision.⁷⁰

One cannot assume that those who are seeking aid through the array of federally funded social welfare programs would be aware of their religious liberty rights. Thus, a notice requirement of those rights to program beneficiaries is essential and should be provided at the outset of the person’s participation in the federally funded program.

But notice alone may be insufficient to protect the rights of an eligible beneficiary without the actual availability of an alternate means of receiving the service delivery. It is also essential that grantee agencies, particularly their staff and volunteers who interact directly with beneficiaries, are educated and trained with regard to these parameters. As discussed in Recommendation 9, granting agencies should have such training as a component of their work with grantees once awards are made and prior to implementation.

The Council understands that implementing this recommendation could result in significant costs for the government. Nonetheless, Council members believe the government must take these steps in order to provide adequate protection for the fundamental religious liberty rights of social service beneficiaries.

(5) the program participant shall ensure that the program beneficiary makes contact with the alternative provider to which he or she is referred.

(d) Provision and Funding of Alternative Services. If an otherwise eligible applicant or recipient objects to the religious character of a SAMHSA-funded service provider, the recipient is entitled to receive services from an alternative provider. In such cases, the State or local agency must provide the individual with alternative services within a reasonable period of time, as defined by the State agency. That alternative provider must be reasonably accessible and have the capacity to provide comparable services to the individual. Such services shall have a value that is not less than the value of the services that the individual would have received from the program participant to which the individual had such objection, as defined by the State agency. The alternative provider need not be a secular organization. It must simply be a provider to which the recipient has no religious objection. States may define and apply the terms “reasonably accessible,” “a reasonable period of time,” “comparable,” “capacity,” and “value that is not less than.” The appropriate State or local governments that administer SAMHSA-funded programs shall ensure that notice of their right to alternative services is provided to applicants or recipients. The notice must clearly articulate the recipient’s right to a referral and to services that reasonably meet the timeliness, capacity, accessibility, and equivalency requirements discussed above.

⁶⁸ See Recommendation 7 and accompanying footnote 41.

⁶⁹ 42 U.S.C. Section 604a(e) (2010).

⁷⁰ See HR7, Community Solutions Act of 2001, Section 1994a.

Recommendation 11: Reduce barriers to obtaining 501(c)(3) recognition.

The Council recommends that the Administration reduce some of the administrative burdens and other costs associated with obtaining formal recognition of 501(c)(3) status, because this reduction would facilitate the voluntary pursuit of that formal recognition and the creation of separate 501(c)(3) entities.

Background and Explanation:

In general, religious organizations may be formally recognized as exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) in two ways: (1) under an individual exemption determination letter issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) (i.e., by individual request), or (2) by coverage as a subordinate organization under a group tax exemption issued by IRS to a church or religious denomination (i.e., by “group ruling”).

In addition, under section 508(c)(1)(A) of the IRC, certain religious organizations—namely, churches,⁷¹ integrated auxiliaries of a church,⁷² and conventions or associations of churches (hereinafter, “Self-Declared 501(c)(3)s”)—may qualify for exemption under section 501(c)(3) *without* obtaining either an exemption determination letter or inclusion in a church group ruling. In other words, the IRS *automatically* considers these entities to be 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organizations; they are not required to apply for and obtain *formal* recognition of that status from the IRS.⁷³

Council members agree that, where a government program requires private providers to be 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organizations,⁷⁴ it is advisable for Self-Declared 501(c)(3)s that want to participate either (1) to obtain one of the two types of formal recognition of its own 501(c)(3) status or (2) to create a separate entity and obtain formal recognition of its 501(c)(3) status. Council members agree that the formal recognition associated with either course would provide valuable proof of a provider’s 501(c)(3) status.

Council members also agree that the process for the formal recognition of 501(c)(3) status should be streamlined. The cost and administrative burden of these processes deter even willing Self-Declared 501(c)(3)s from undertaking them. Among the concrete steps the Administration could take would be to have the IRS create an “EZ application form” for 501(c)(3) status, waive existing filing fees, expedite processing, and take other steps to help smaller organizations to form separate 501(c)(3) organizations.⁷⁵

⁷¹ The IRS uses the word “church” as a generic term for all houses of worship. This recommendation does the same.

⁷² An integrated auxiliary of a church is an organization that is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Code, other than a private foundation, is affiliated with a church, and is qualified as “internally supported.” An organization is considered internally supported *unless* it both:

- (1) Offers admissions, goods, services, or facilities for sale, other than on an incidental basis, to the general public (except goods, services, or facilities sold at a nominal charge or substantially below cost), *and*
- (2) Normally receives more than 50 percent of its support from a combination of governmental sources; public solicitation of contributions (such as through a community fund drive); and receipts from the sale of admissions, goods, performance of services, or furnishing of facilities in activities that are not unrelated trades or businesses.

See IRC § 6033(a)(3)(A)(i); Treas. Reg. § 1.6033-2(h).

⁷³ See “IRS Tax Guide for Churches and Other Religious Organizations,” IRS Publ. 1828 (Rev. 6-2008) at 3 (available at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1828.pdf>).

⁷⁴ Government programs are sometimes implemented by for-profit providers, or nonprofit providers that need not be 501(c)(3)s. In those cases, this rationale for seeking some type of formal recognition would not apply.

⁷⁵ See, e.g., The Care Act of 2003 (S.476), Section 304 (“Expedited Review Process for Certain Tax-Exemption Applications”) (available at http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=108_cong_bills&docid=f:s476rs.txt.pdf). This Act was introduced in the Senate in 2003, but it was never subject to a vote. See also Harris Wofford, et al., “Finding Common Ground,” at 22 (January 2002) (available at <http://www.sfcg.org/programmes/us/report.pdf>).

Recommendation 12: Promote other means of protecting religious liberty in the delivery of government-funded social services.

The Council recommends that the Administration comprehensively gather existing, successful means of keeping direct aid separate from explicitly religious activities and promote those means to faith-based providers that may receive such aid. In consultation with nongovernmental providers that receive (or have received) direct Federal social service funds, the Administration should develop a list of best practices regarding accounting procedures and tracking mechanisms that help facilitate and demonstrate the constitutional use of those funds. The Administration should then promote those methods among faith-based providers, which at once informs them of their constitutional obligations and offers them various means to meet those obligations.

Council members are almost evenly divided over the issue of whether the government should also require houses of worship that would receive direct Federal social service funds to form separate corporations to receive those funds. A narrow majority of the Council (13 members) believe the federal government should take such a step as a necessary means for achieving church-state separation and protecting religious autonomy, while also urging States to reduce any unnecessary administrative costs and burdens associated with attaining this status. A minority of the Council (12 members) believe separate incorporation is sometimes, but not always, the best means to achieve these goals and should not be required because it may be prohibitively costly and would disrupt or deter other successful and constitutionally permissible relationships.

Background and Explanation:

The Council believes that the Administration could very effectively promote compliance with constitutional requirements regarding the handling of direct aid—which have implications for church autonomy, church-state entanglement, and other important First Amendment principles—by providing faith-based providers with the full range of tools to achieve that compliance.

In particular, the Administration could develop a list of best practices regarding accounting procedures and tracking mechanisms that help nongovernmental social service providers to implement and demonstrate proper use of Federal direct aid. Of course, the Administration should develop this list in consultation with nongovernmental providers that have received Federal social service funds and have established exemplary records in terms of compliance and effectiveness.

One example of such a practice could be the creation and maintenance of a separate bank account for direct grant or contract funds. This step could make it easier for both the provider and the Government to ensure that direct aid is used only for constitutionally authorized purposes. It also would make it easier for the Government to identify the money it needs to scrutinize and regulate. Thus, this kind of practice would promote compliance with the constitutional principles prohibiting the use of direct aid for explicitly religious activities and prohibiting excessive church-state entanglement.

Council members are almost evenly divided over the issue of whether the government should also require houses of worship that would receive direct Federal social service funds to form separate corporations to receive those funds. A narrow majority of the Council (13

members) believe that, for the good of both church and state, the Government should also require houses of worship that would receive direct federal social service funds to form separate corporations to receive those funds.⁷⁶ They believe forming a separate corporation is a uniquely valuable and indispensable method for achieving the goals of church-state separation, church autonomy, accountability and transparency, and insulation from liability. At the same time, these Council members would also urge the Obama administration to call on States to explore whether their incorporation requirements place unnecessary burdens on bodies that would be required to form separate corporations.

A minority of the Council (12 members) believe that although separate incorporation is sometimes the best way to achieve these same goals, it should not be imposed as a one-size-fits all solution.⁷⁷ Depending on the provider's size, the type of program, and many other factors, the costs of separate incorporation may be prohibitive, the benefits may be slim or none, and the alternatives may be more effective. These members believe that it suffices for the Administration to provide guidance that fleshes out for faith-based providers, as thoroughly as is feasible, the full range of effective alternatives, including separate incorporation, so that faith-based providers can choose the methods that are best suited to their religious beliefs and polity, their proposed project with the Government, and their risk tolerance.

What follows is a summary of the deliberations among Council members surrounding the particular issue of separate incorporation.

* * *

Some Council members believe the Government should require churches and conventions or associations of churches to form separate corporations to receive direct Federal social service funds, while also urging States to reduce any unnecessary administrative costs and burdens associated with attaining this status.

The desire to maintain a separation between the institutions of church and state counsels in favor of interposing an additional corporate entity between the two. Allowing government funds to flow directly to houses of worship will inevitably result in government regulation and oversight of the activities of these core religious bodies. For example, if there are warning signs about possible misuse of tax funds by an organization, the Government may search beyond an account the organization would deem to be the separate one holding government funds. If the organization is a house of worship, this search could raise profound concerns about governmental intrusion into church autonomy. If the house of worship forms a separate corporation, however, it would be much more difficult for the Government to assert a legitimate basis for looking into church records. These Council members believe there is value for both church and state in ensuring that this core sector of the religious community—houses of worship—is free from government subsidies and corresponding oversight.⁷⁸

Likewise, the formation of a separate corporation would help shield the church from liability. In the event successful claims are made against the separate corporation, a court would generally limit recovery of claims to the assets of the separate entity.

⁷⁶ These Council members are Diane Baillargeon, Anju Bhargava, Charles Blake, Fred Davie, Harry Knox, Vashti McKenzie, Otis Moss, Nancy Ratzan, Melissa Rogers, David Saperstein, Bill Shaw, Jim Wallis, and Sharon Watkins.

⁷⁷ These Council members are Noel Castellanos, Arturo Chavez, Peg Chamberlin, Nathan Diament, Joel Hunter, Dalia Mogahed, Frank Page, Eboo Patel, Anthony Picarello, Larry Snyder, Richard Stearns, and Judy Vredenburg.

⁷⁸ And, as described in Recommendation 6, entities receiving government grants or contracts would need to separate any privately funded religious activities from taxpayer-funded activities. Entities that would not agree to such a separation should not receive direct government aid. ⁷⁹ See *supra* n.2 and associated text in the body of this report.

Some Council members believe it is not only prudent to require this separation, they also believe constitutional concerns are implicated here, at least with regard to monetary aid that the Government directs to houses of worship.⁷⁹ The Supreme Court has said it is “correct to extract from our decisions the principle that we have recognized special Establishment Clause dangers where the government makes direct money payments to sectarian institutions.”⁸⁰ And some justices have noted that the Court’s “concern with direct monetary aid is based on more than just diversion of the aid to religious use” and that “the most important reason for according special treatment to direct money grants is that this form of aid falls precariously close to the original object of the Establishment Clause’s prohibition.”⁸¹ These Council members believe that prohibiting the Government from directing monetary aid to houses of worship is an essential step in maintaining our Nation’s proud tradition of church-state separation, a tradition that has helped to foster a strong and independent religious sector.

Even if requiring separate incorporation were not constitutionally required, it is good public policy for all the reasons described above. It is quite legitimate—and necessary, these Council members believe—for the Government to require houses of worship that wish to receive direct government funds to form separate corporate entities as a way to avoid intrusions into these core religious bodies, maintaining a clear distinction between the institutions of church and state, and avoiding some of the most difficult church-state conflicts.

And while these Council members recognize there is no perfect symmetry between exemption and limitation in this area, they believe requiring congregations to form separate corporations to receive direct government funds would be in line with other special legal protections for churches. For example, churches and conventions or associations of churches benefit from special restrictions on IRS inquiries and examinations into their operations.⁸² These bodies also are exempt from registration under the Lobby Disclosure Act.⁸³ If the Government treats churches specially with regard to their eligibility for government funding (requiring congregations that wish to seek direct government funds to form separate corporations), some Council members believe this will help safeguard special treatment on the other side of the coin—special protections for congregational autonomy.⁸⁴

It is also worth noting that some congregations have joined together to form a corporation collectively to receive and administer government social service funds. This entity is separate from the congregations. Congregations may do this on an interfaith basis or in partnership with secular groups. Alternatively, congregations of the same faith group may unite to form a corporation separate from all of their respective houses of worship. These arrangements can make it possible for small congregations to play a role in administering government social service programs without having to bear the full burden of establishing

⁷⁹ See, *supra* n.2 and associated text in the body of this report

⁸⁰ See, e.g., *Rosenberger v. Rectors and Visitors of Univ. of Va.*, 515 U.S. 819, 842 (1995).

⁸¹ *Mitchell v. Helms*, 530 U.S. 793, 856 (O’Connor & Breyer, JJ., concurring in the judgment).

⁸² See IRC Section 7611.

⁸³ The Lobbying Disclosure Act provides that “[t]he term ‘lobbying contact’ does not include a communication” that is made by “a church, its integrated auxiliary, or a convention or association of churches that is exempt from filing a Federal income tax return under paragraph 2(A)(i) of section 6033(a) of title 26,” 2 U.S.C. § 1602(8)(B)(xviii)(2010).

⁸⁴ See Melissa Rogers and E.J. Dionne, *Serving People in Need, Safeguarding Religious Freedom*, at 39 (2008) (“A strong case can be made that the more equitable and consistent position is to recognize there is a rough symmetry of exemption and limitation under First Amendment principles”), available at http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2008/12_religion_dionne/12_religion_dionne.pdf. ⁸⁵ National Congregations Study available at <http://www.soc.duke.edu/natcong/explore.html>.

their own separate corporation. Also, when a church creates a separate corporation, that corporation would be free to use physical space in church buildings to provide government-funded social services, assuming the church agrees to such use.

Many religiously affiliated organizations receive government funding, but National Congregations Study data from 1998 and 2006 to 2007 show that only 4 percent of congregations receive government funding.⁸⁵ Likewise, a 2007 study found that “government grant activity was rare among congregations...”⁸⁶ Still, because some houses of worship currently receive government funding for some of their social service work, we think it makes sense to ensure that the provision of service under current arrangements is not disrupted and to carefully consider the impact of new requirements on the effective delivery of services to beneficiaries.

Toward this end, these Council members urge the Obama administration to call on States to explore whether their incorporation requirements place unnecessary burdens on bodies that would be required to form separate corporations.⁸⁷ The integrity of the incorporation process must be maintained. But, as with the system by which an organization obtains formal status as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt entity, State laws on incorporation may sometimes place burdens on these providers that are onerous and yet serve no significant purpose.⁸⁸ The Administration should urge each State to explore this issue. One way it could do so is to create a taskforce composed of State and Federal governmental officials, as well as representatives of small social service providers, to examine this issue and propose solutions where problems are identified. The Administration also could urge the National Association of Governors and other appropriate State bodies to put this item on their agendas for consideration. The Government can and should promote church-state separation and religious liberty while being sensitive and responsive to the practical challenges providers face and the urgent needs of beneficiaries.

In sum, for the reasons described above, we believe the Government should move toward a system that requires houses of worship to form separate corporations to receive direct government funding. But we recognize that this must be done carefully, and perhaps incrementally, and only in a way that recognizes and addresses any unnecessary burdens this might place on these providers and any disruptions this would cause in the delivery of needed social services.

* * *

Other Council members share the same basic goals—assuring compliance with separation requirements, protecting church autonomy, limiting liability, and promoting public accountability and transparency—but differ on the best means of achieving them. Forming a separate corporation is surely the best solution in some cases, but it is just as surely not the best—and may be the worst—in other cases. These members are particularly concerned that a blanket requirement of separate incorporation would disrupt some very

⁸⁵ National Congregations Study, available at <http://www.soc.duke.edu/natcong/explore.html>

⁸⁶ John C. Green, *American Congregations and Social Service Programs: Results of a Survey* (Rockefeller Institute of Government, December 2007) at 41 (random sample of 1,800 congregations taken from the lists of congregations provided by American Church Lists).

⁸⁷ State law generally governs the requirements for incorporation.

⁸⁸ See Recommendation 11.

effective, longstanding, and existing relationships with faith-based service providers. Such a requirement also would deter new ones from forming, all with little or no upside benefit, because the same goals can be achieved by less restrictive means.

Consider the example of protecting church autonomy. Many, if not all, Council members are keenly aware that accepting government funds may pose certain risks to religious institutional autonomy. But the risks vary in many ways—some risks are more likely to materialize than others; some risks have greater impact if they materialize than others; and the probability and impact of some risks can be reduced more easily than others. Risks also vary among providers, with different institutional structures; among religious traditions, with different levels of comfort in working with the Government; and among government programs, with different funding mechanisms and relationships with providers.

Not only might these risks to church autonomy be small in particular cases, they must be balanced against the administrative burdens of establishing the separate organization and maintaining that separate form consistent with generally accepted accounting rules and IRS requirements. These burdens would weigh more heavily on smaller religious 501(c)(3)s, and so would likely deter many of them from entering or continuing a financial relationship with the Government.

In addition, some Council members emphasize that the Government should not decide—least of all categorically by a blanket rule—how much risk to a church’s institutional integrity is too much and which institutional forms best mitigate those risks. The church autonomy concerns that all Council members share may well prompt many churches to decide *for themselves* that they are better off establishing a separate corporation to accept government funds. But it is quite another thing for the *Government* to make that decision on *churches’* behalf. Church-state separation is eroded, not reinforced, when government acts with the purpose of protecting churches from themselves. That separation is further eroded when the government action is a requirement to change the church’s institutional form.

The example of church autonomy illustrates the breadth of the variables and the complexity in weighing them, which counsels in favor of allowing a fact-specific, case-by-case assessment of whether to form a separate corporation and against a blanket rule requiring it.

Speaking more broadly, in relation to all the goals Council members hope to achieve, key variables include the number, size, and duration of anticipated grants or contracts relative to the size, budget, and capacity of the Self-Declared 501(c)(3).⁸⁹ Imagine, for example, a large church that decides to bid on Federal funding that would represent a very small proportion of the church’s budget and that would provide secular job training services to the neighborhood surrounding the church for a fixed term of 2 years.

Is it really the case that such a small amount of money for such a short period of time warrants the formation of an entirely separate corporation and that no other method of segregating the funds will do? That the church’s receipt of these funds for this project “will inevitably result in government regulation and oversight of the activities” of the church, apart from the particular program? That participation in a terminal program will meaningfully tempt the church not to speak out prophetically against the Government when it otherwise might? That the terms of the Government’s grant or service contract—which may require segregation of funds, the ability to audit relevant accounts and program performance, and whatever other measures would provide the Government sufficient

⁸⁹ See *Id*



transparency and accountability in its dealings with any other provider—would somehow prove insufficient for such a faith-based provider? That insurance would be unavailable to cover any liability risks associated with the program?

These Council members think not—or more precisely, think that reasonable religious institutions might think not, and so should not be compelled to alter their corporate structure as a condition of participating in a program like the one described above. In fact, many Self-Declared 501(c)(3)s have chosen *not* to create a separate corporation under circumstances like these, and have provided human services with government funds effectively, efficiently, and within constitutional bounds. These relationships would be disrupted (and similar, future relationships would be deterred) by any blanket rule requiring all churches and conventions or associations of churches to form a separate corporation.

These Council members also do not believe that the First Amendment categorically forbids churches or other Self-Declared 501(c)(3)s from receiving government funds. To be sure, these entities must take care to assure that government funds pay only for secular services, but this task is—to understate the point—at least possible for at least some Self-Declared 501(c)(3); establishment of a distinct corporation is not the only way to achieve the requisite separation. If, for example, a church offers job training in Microsoft Office in its basement, and the training serves secular purposes, has no religious content, and the supporting government funds are properly segregated and accounted for, the bare fact that the service provider happens to be a church or convention or associations of churches should be irrelevant under the Establishment Clause.⁹⁰ Indeed, to disqualify a service provider simply because it is “too religious” generates, rather than alleviates, First Amendment concerns.

Some Council members also question whether the formation of a separate corporation is an effective remedy to separationist concerns. Forming a separate corporation is not a panacea—nothing prevents that corporation from becoming just as religious as the original Self-Declared 501(c)(3) from which it derives. In contrast, by taking other steps more closely tailored to the problem—such as creating segregated bank accounts, accounting, and auditing systems, or even other noncorporate entities, such as trusts or single-member LLCs—a Self-Declared 501(c)(3) could achieve a *more* effective separation. Accordingly, these members believe that the Administration would do more to promote constitutional

⁹⁰ The controlling opinion in *Mitchell v. Helms*, 530 U.S. 793, 836-67 (2000)—the concurrence of Justice O’Connor, joined by Justice Breyer—underscored that the mere *potential* for direct aid to be diverted to religious indoctrination does not violate the Establishment Clause, and that instead, a plaintiff must *prove* that the aid was *actually* diverted in order to prevail. *Id.* at 857-58. Organizations with an adequate system of internal safeguards are presumed to follow them in good faith, and so to comply with Establishment Clause requirements, unless proven otherwise. *Id.* at 863. See also *supra* n.3 and associated text in the body of this report.

compliance by providing faith-based providers with more nearly comprehensive guidance regarding the various ways they might achieve that goal—by identifying all of the tools in the toolbox, rather than insisting on the use of just one.

APPENDIX

Safeguards Required

1. Separate and Distinct Programs

Any abstinence education program with religious content must be a separate and distinct program from the federally funded abstinence education program, and the distinction must be completely clear to the consumer. Some of the ways in which this may be accomplished include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Creating separate and distinct names for the programs;
- Creating separate and distinct looks for the promotional materials used to promote each program; and
- Promoting *only* the federally funded abstinence education program in materials, websites, or commercials purchased with *any portion* of the federal funds.

45 CFR 87.1(c). ("Organizations that receive direct financial assistance from the Department under any Department program may not engage in inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization, as part of the programs or services funded with direct financial assistance from the Department."). 69 Fed. Reg. 42586, 42593 (2004).

2. Separate Presentations

Completely separate the presentation of any abstinence education program with religious content from the presentation of the federally funded abstinence education program by time or location *in such a way that it is clear that the two programs are separate and distinct*. If separating the two programs by time but presenting them in the same location, one program must *completely* end before the other program begins.

Some of the ways in which separation of presentations may be accomplished include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- **The programs are held in completely different sites or on completely different days.**
- **The programs are held at the same site at completely different times.**
Separation may be accomplished through such means as:
 - Have sufficient time between the two programs to vacate the room, turn down the lights, leave the stage, etc. in order to reasonably conclude the first program before beginning the second;
 - Completely dismiss the participants of the first program;
 - The second program could follow in the same room or, where feasible, in a different room to further distinguish the difference between the programs.

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- **The programs are held in different locations of the same site at the same time.** Separation may be accomplished through such means as:
 - Completely separate registration locations; and
 - Completely separate areas where programs are held such as by room, hallway, or floor, etc.

45 CFR 87.1(c). ("If an organization conducts [inherently religious] activities, the activities must be offered separately, in time or location, from the programs or services funded with direct financial assistance from the Department...."). 69 Fed. Reg. 42586, 42593 (2004).

Note: federal guidelines that have been drafted for situations where a federal grantee also provides religious programming use examples where an organization offered programs that are completely different from each other such as a soup kitchen and a prayer meeting. Because the SRT organization offers two programs that both promote abstinence until marriage and because the clients served are children, it is very important that the separation between the programs be accentuated.

3. **Religious Materials**

Eliminate all religious materials from the presentation of the federally funded abstinence education program. This includes:

- Rings with religious messages;
- Bibles;
- Abstinence vows with religious references;
- Registration materials that include religious inquiries or references;
- Follow up activities that include or lead to religious outreach; and
- Religious content in parent materials.

45 CFR 87.1. (c). ("If an organization conducts [inherently religious] activities, the activities must be offered separately, in time or location, from the programs or services funded with direct financial assistance from the Department....") 69 Fed. Reg. 42586, 42593 (2004).

4. **Cost Allocation**

Demonstrate that federal funds are only being used for the federally funded abstinence education program. Some of the ways in which separation of funds may be accomplished include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Implement the use of time sheets that keep track of all staff hours charged to the federally funded grant, whether the staff work in other programs or not.
- Require any staff working in both federally funded programs and other programs to clearly indicate how many hours are spent on each program.
- If any staff work on both a federally funded program and a non-federally funded

program at the same site on the same day, require the staff to clearly indicate not only how many hours are spent on the federal program but also which specific hours are spent on the federal program. The hours should reflect that time spent on any abstinence education program with religious content have been completely separated from hours spent on the federally funded abstinence education program.

- Show cost allocations for all items and activities that involve both programs such as staff time, equipment, or other expenses such as travel to event sites.

This may be accomplished through such means as:

- Example: if transportation is used to go to a site where a federally funded abstinence education program is conducted and a religious or non-religious program funded through other means is also conducted by the grantee at the same site, one half of the travel costs (gas, lodging, etc.) should be charged to the federal program. If *three* separate and distinct programs are conducted at a site by a federally funded grantee and one of them is the federally funded program, only one third of the travel costs should be charged to the federal program, etc.
- Example: if an electronic device is used 30% of the time for federally funded abstinence education program, this should be demonstrated through clear record keeping. Only 30% of the cost of the electronic device should be charged to the program.

OMB Circular A-122, Attachment A. Section A.4.a.(2); 45 C.F.R.. 87.1.

5. Advertisements

Federally funded programs cannot limit advertising the grant program services to only religious target populations.

45 CFR 87.1 (e). ("An organization that participates in programs funded by direct financial assistance from the department shall not, in providing services, discriminate against a program beneficiary or prospective beneficiary on the basis of religion or religious belief.")

6. Invitation to Religious Program

At the end of the federally funded abstinence education program, grantee may provide a brief and non-coercive invitation to attend the religious abstinence education program.

The invitation should make it very clear that this is a separate program from the federally funded abstinence education program, that participants are not required to attend, and that participation in federally funded programs are not contingent on participation in other programs sponsored by the grantee organization.

Religious materials, such as the Silver Ring Thing Bible, a ring with religious elements, and registration that includes religious follow-up may only be provided in the privately funded program rather than the federally funded program.

45 CFR 87.1 (c). ("participation [in any privately funded inherently religious activities] must be voluntary for beneficiaries of the programs or services funded with [direct federal financial] assistance.") 69 Fed. Reg. 42586, 42593 (2004).

BIOS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Diane Baillargeon

Diane Baillargeon is President/CEO of Seedco, a national nonprofit organization that supports low-income people and communities in their efforts to move toward economic prosperity. In partnership with community and faith-based organizations, Seedco operates workforce development, benefits access and small business assistance programs in fifteen states and the District of Columbia. She recently served as a member of the NYC Mayor's Commission on Economic Opportunity. Prior to joining Seedco, Ms. Baillargeon served as Deputy Commissioner for Policy Management of the NYS Department of Social Services and as Deputy Administrator for Program Development in NYC's Human Resources Administration.

Anju Bhargava

Anju Bhargava is a Credit Risk and Strategic Business Transformation senior professional. A change catalyst pioneer and social entrepreneur, she has worked to build healthy communities in corporate and community arenas in U.S. and India. A former Community Builder Fellow, she has provided thought leadership in the public and private sectors, published papers and received many awards. Her distinctive research based approach leverages best practices from many spheres - education, government, civic, social, faith based, and corporate. Early in her tenure on the Council she formed Hindu American Seva Charities to mobilize Hindu Americans to volunteer and develop sustainable faith based Seva Centers which could address priority social service needs of the community and strengthen America.

Bishop Charles Blake

Bishop Charles E. Blake serves as Presiding Bishop of the Church of God in Christ. Founder and CEO of Save Africa's Children, Bishop Blake oversees the support of more than 100,000 children, in 340 orphan care programs, throughout more than 23 nations on the continent of Africa. Bishop Blake was also the founding Chairman of the Board of Directors for C.H. Mason Theological Seminary. In 2006 he served on the Los Angeles Board of the Azusa Centennial Celebration. He serves as the Chairman and Founder of the Los Angeles Ecumenical Congress (LAEC), an interdenominational coalition of religious leaders and pastors.

Noel Castellanos

Noel serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Christian Community Development Association based in Chicago, IL, which works to inspire, train and connect Christian leaders and their organizations to restore under-resourced communities. CCDCA currently works with over 5000 faith-based organizations throughout the world. He is the author of *A Heart for the Community, New Models for Urban and Suburban Ministry*, and has contributed to various other books and publications, including *Deep Justice in a Broken World*. He currently serves on President Obama's Council for Faith and Neighborhood Partnerships.

Dr. Arturo Chávez

Dr. Arturo Chávez is the President of the Mexican American Catholic College in San Antonio, Texas. He has worked for over 28 years as a teacher, youth minister, a chaplain to the incarcerated, and a community organizer. He has been instrumental in establishing faith-based partnerships in Texas to address the urgent needs of families who are poor and disenfranchised. His commitment to community-based activism, education, and peace-building continues through his ministry as a teacher, facilitator, and international speaker. Dr. Chávez holds a Masters degree from Oblate School of Theology of the Southwest, and a Ph.D. in Religious and Theological Studies, from the University of Denver and the Iliff School of Theology, with a focus on religion and social change.

The Reverend Canon Peggy Chamberlin

The Rev. Canon Peg Chamberlin is the president of the National Council of Churches of Christ. The NCC has 35 member judicatories and more than 45 million constituents. She is the first person elected from a state council of churches position. Chamberlin leads the Minnesota Council of Churches, and has galvanized the relationships of its constituent members, brought the council to be a predominate actor for the faith community in other sectors, and increased its budget more than five-fold. Chamberlin graduated from United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, where she was awarded the academic prize for historical theology.

Frederick A. Davie

Frederick (Fred) Davie is Senior Director of the Arcus Foundation, which supports social justice that is inclusive of sexual orientation, gender identity, religion and values and race, and ensures conservation of the habitats of great apes. Fred is the immediate past President and CEO of Public/Private Ventures. Also an ordained Presbyterian minister and former NYC public official, Fred has deep knowledge and expertise in social justice, community development, and successful programming for formerly incarcerated individuals. Fred is a graduate of Yale Divinity School and Greensboro College.

Nathan J. Diament

Nathan J. Diament is the Washington DC-based director of public policy for the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America. An honors graduate of Yeshiva University and Harvard Law School, Diament has worked closely with members of both political parties to craft congressional legislation and administration policies addressing religious liberty issues, education reform, family friendly fiscal policies and life issues. Diament has been described in the press as “the face of Orthodox Judaism in Washington” and was named to The Forward’s list of the 50 most influential Jews. He resides in Maryland with his wife, Elizabeth, and their four children.

Dr. Joel C. Hunter

Joel C. Hunter, M.Div., D.Min. is senior pastor of Northland, A Church Distributed. This pioneering congregation of 12,000 meets at four locations in Metro Orlando and worldwide via the Web. An internationally respected evangelical leader, he serves on the boards of the World Evangelical Alliance (420 million constituents) and the National Association of Evangelicals (30 million members). He is a participant in the United Nation's Alliance of Civilizations, the U.S.-Islamic World Forum, and the Parliament of World Religions—and has been interviewed by most major media on “Compassion Issues,” including immigration reform, nuclear proliferation, pro-life concerns and creation care.

Harry Knox

Harry Knox is director of the Religion and Faith Program of the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, which seeks to amplify the voices of LGBT-affirming clergy and to help LGBT people of faith and their allies use faith language in advocacy. A former executive director of Georgia Equality and program director at Freedom to Marry, Harry is a graduate of Lancaster Theological Seminary and a former pastor of a United Methodist church in Georgia. He was the recipient of the 2000 Cordle Award for Promotion of God's Diversity and Lancaster Theological Seminary's 2005 Robert V. Moss Medal for Excellence in Ministry.

Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie

Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie serves as the 117th elected and consecrated bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Currently she is the presiding prelate of the 13th Episcopal District which includes the State of Tennessee and the Commonwealth of Kentucky. She has done extensive work and expanded services to children orphaned or affected by HIV/Aids in regions throughout Africa. Bishop McKenzie is also the author of *Not without a Struggle*, *Strength in the Struggle*, *Journey to the Well* and *Swapping Housewives*. Bishop McKenzie is a graduate of the University of Maryland; holds a Master of Divinity from Howard University School of Divinity and earned her Doctor of Ministry from the United Theological Seminary in Ohio.

Dalia Mogahed

Dalia Mogahed is a Senior Analyst and Executive Director of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies. With John L. Esposito, Ph.D., she is coauthor of the book *Who Speaks for Islam?: What a Billion Muslims Really Think*. Mogahed also serves on the boards of Freedom House, Women in International Security (WIIS) and Soliya. Her analysis has appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Foreign Policy* magazine, the *Harvard International Review*, the *Middle East Policy* journal, and many other academic and popular journals. In 2009, The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre identified Mogahed as one of the 500 most influential Muslims in the world.

The Reverend Otis Moss, Jr.

Dr. Otis Moss, Jr. is the Pastor Emeritus of Olivet Institutional Baptist Church in Cleveland Ohio where he served for thirty-three years. He is a graduate of Morehouse College, and the Inter-denominational Theological Center. His doctor of ministry degree is from the United Theological Seminary. Dr. Moss has long been an active advocate for human rights and social justice. He was a leader in the student movement of the 60's and worked with Martin Luther King, Jr. for more than a decade. His ministry is recognized worldwide. He has served as advisor to former Presidents Carter and Clinton. He is former chairman of the Board of Trustees of Morehouse College.

Dr. Frank Page

Dr. Frank Page is serving as Vice President for the Evangelization Group at the North American Mission Board (NAMB) which oversees the work of more than 5,600 missionaries. Dr. Page is a graduate of Gardner-Webb University and received his Master of Divinity Degree and his Ph.D. from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Most recently, Dr. Page served as Pastor for Taylors First Baptist Church, Taylors, South Carolina. Dr. Page served as President for the Southern Baptist Convention from 2006-2008, and is serving as a member of the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force of the Southern Baptist Convention, 2009-2010.

Dr. Eboo Patel

Dr. Eboo Patel is the founder and executive director of Interfaith Youth Core, a Chicago-based institution building the global interfaith youth movement. He serves on the Religious Advisory Committee of the Council on Foreign Relations, the National Committee of the Aga Khan Foundation USA and is a Young Global Leader of the World Economic Forum. Dr. Patel is an Ashoka Fellow and was named by *US News and World Report* as One of America's Best Leaders in 2009. He is author of the award-winning book *Acts of Faith* and writes a featured blog on religion for the *Washington Post*.

Anthony R. Picarello, Jr.

Anthony R. Picarello, Jr. is the General Counsel for United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington, DC. Previously, Anthony spent seven years litigating First Amendment cases at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, and three years as an associate at Covington & Burling, following a federal district court clerkship. In January 2007, he was named to The American Lawyer's list of the top 50 litigators under age 45. Anthony earned his J.D. from the University of Virginia, an A.M. in Religious Studies from the University of Chicago, and an A.B. in Social Anthropology and Comparative Religion from Harvard University.

Nancy Ratzan

Nancy Ratzan is president of the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), a grassroots organization of volunteers and advocates at the forefront of social justice for over a century. Nancy, an attorney by profession, has spent the last two decades mobilizing progressive Jewish women to create social change, locally, nationally and in Israel, though grassroots engagement around issues effecting women, children, families and civil rights. Nancy was the second women to serve as president of a large reform congregation in Miami Beach and founding chair of The Open Tent, creating diverse partnerships, outreach and innovative initiatives in the Jewish world.

Melissa Rogers

Melissa Rogers serves as director of the Center for Religion and Public Affairs at Wake Forest University Divinity School and as a nonresident senior scholar in the Governance Studies program of The Brookings Institution. Rogers previously served as the executive director of the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life and as general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee on Religious Liberty. In 2008 Baylor University Press published a casebook co-authored by Rogers, *Religious Freedom and the Supreme Court*. Rogers earned her law degree from the University of Pennsylvania Law School, and she graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Baylor University.

Rabbi David Saperstein

Rabbi David Saperstein represents the Reform Jewish Movement to Congress and the Administration as the Director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC). During his over three-decade tenure at the helm of the RAC, Rabbi Saperstein has headed several national religious coalitions, including the Coalition to Protect Religious Liberty. He serves on the board of numerous national organizations including the NAACP, People For the American Way, Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life and the World Bank's "World Faith Development Dialogue." In 1999, Rabbi Saperstein was elected as the first Chair of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. Also an attorney, Rabbi Saperstein teaches seminars in First Amendment Church-State Law and in Jewish Law at Georgetown University Law School.

The Reverend William J. Shaw

Reverend Dr. William J. Shaw has served as Pastor of the historic White Rock Baptist Church in West Philadelphia since 1956. Reverend Dr. Shaw graduated from Bishop College in 1954 and has also received a master of divinity and doctor of ministry. His current affiliations include Chairman of the Trustee Board for the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and is a member *ex officio* on the Board of Penn Medicine. He chaired the hospital's Human Resources Subcommittee and served on its Long-Range Planning Committee and the Martin Luther King, Jr., Fellows in Black Church Studies. Dr. Shaw served as President of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. from 1999-2009.

The Reverend Larry J. Snyder

As its president since 2005, Rev. Larry Snyder leads Catholic Charities USA—the national office of over 1,700 local Catholic Charities agencies and institutions nationwide. Working to reduce poverty in America, Catholic Charities nationwide serve more than 8.5 million people of all faiths a year. Father Snyder served more than 14 years at Catholic Charities of St. Paul-Minneapolis, including five years as its executive director. He is a member of the President's Council of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships. *The Nonprofit Times* has recognized Father in its annual "Power and Influence Top 50." Pope Benedict XVI named him to the Pontifical Council Cor Unum, which oversees the Catholic Church's worldwide charitable activities.

Richard E. Stearns

Since 1998, Mr. Stearns has served as president of World Vision U.S., one of the largest NGOs in the United States. Prior to joining World Vision, Mr. Stearns held CEO positions for two corporations. He chronicles his journey from the for-profit sector to the non-profit sector in his book, "The Hole in Our Gospel", published last year. He has served on the boards of InterAction, the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, and USAID's Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid, among others. He holds degrees from Cornell University and The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

Judith Vredenburg

Judy Vredenburg is a seasoned executive, having held executive leadership positions in the nonprofit as well as private sector. Most recently, Judy served as President and CEO of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, a \$300 million organization. Under her leadership, the organization doubled its capacity, expanded evidence based programs serving at risk youth, created an innovative technology system to measure performance and outcomes, and developed extensive public-private partnerships. Prior to this, Judy served as Senior VP of Strategic Marketing and Revenue Development for the March of Dimes Foundation. Judy received her B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania, her M.B.A. from SUNY, Buffalo and holds honorary doctorates from Philadelphia University and Lynchburg College.

Jim Wallis

Jim Wallis is a bestselling author, public theologian, and frequent speaker on faith and public life. He is the author of *God's Politics*, and his latest book is *Rediscovering Values: On Wall Street, Main Street, and Your Street*. He is President and CEO of Sojourners and editor-in-chief of Sojourners magazine, whose combined print and electronic media have a readership of more than 250,000 people. His columns appear in major newspapers and blogs, and he regularly appears as a television and radio commentator. He is a husband, father of two young boys, and a Little League baseball coach.

The Reverend Dr. Sharon E. Watkins

Rev. Dr. Sharon E. Watkins serves as General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. Dr. Watkins is a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches and serves on the WCC's Permanent Committee for Consensus and Collaboration. She also serves on the National Council of Church's Governing Board. Dr. Watkins holds a Doctor of Ministry degree from Phillips Theological Seminary in Tulsa, Oklahoma, a Master of Divinity from Yale Divinity School, and a Bachelor's Degree in French and Economics from Butler University in Indianapolis, Indiana.





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Page 1- **Photo Credit: United Way Worldwide**

Page 9- **Photo Credit: United Way Worldwide**

Page 10- **Photo Credit: Laura Sikes for Catholic Charities USA**

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Page 25- Students at Esperanza Academy Charter High School gather for a special event during graduation week. Reverend Luis Cortés, Jr., President and founder of Esperanza, opened the charter high school in 2002; currently, it provides high-quality education to 700 minority and low-income inner city students per year. **Photo Credit: Esperanza Inc.**

Page 26- Fatherhood Initiative picnic in 2009. Seedco's Fatherhood Initiative celebrates the successes of fathers working to further connections with their children with a picnic on Father's Day. **Photo Credit: Seedco**

Page 32- **Photo Credit: Marshall Clarke for Center for Urban Families**

Pg. 66 – Agronomist Mariela Zamora, LEFT, examines the health of coffee trees with coffee farmer Rosa Amelia Centano Centano (cq), 52. Centano is one of five members of Fundacion Entre Mujeres/Foundation Among Women (FEM) a collective group of women formed in 1999 to pool their knowledge, resources and land to produce crops in a quantity that gives them more power in the marketplace. FEM is made up of five families, four of which are women-run households who share the workload and profits from their efforts growing coffee, corn, beans and jamaica. ACORDAR which began in 2007, is providing assistance in increasing the amount of land already owned by FEM that will be producing coffee. ACORDAR will also provide the collective with a more modern and efficient wetmill to process the coffee cherries into the coffee beans. **Photo Credit: Photo by Rick D'Elia for Catholic Relief Services**

Page 68- *Leadership Consultation on Interfaith Action on Malaria*, December 12, 2008, hosted by the Center for Interfaith Action on Global Poverty (CIFA) and the Berkeley Center for

Religion, Peace, and World Affairs. **Photo Credit: Donovan Marks**

Page 72- Dr. Williams F. Vendley, Secretary General, Religions for Peace, working with His Eminence The Archbishop of Canterbury and other religious leaders on the formation of multireligious partnerships. **Photo Credit: Religions for Peace**

Page 81- **Photo Credit: Dr. Ingrid Mattson, Islamic Society of North America**

Page 92 - The opening ceremony at the Indonesia-US Interfaith Cooperation Forum, a key follow-up to President Obama's Cairo speech. From right to left: Dr. Williams F. Vendley, Secretary General of Religions for Peace; Dr. Din Syamsuddin, President of Muhammadiyah and an Honorary President of Religions for Peace; K.H. Hasyim Muzadi, General Chairman, Nahdlatul Ulama and a Co-President of Religions for Peace; U.S. Ambassador Cameron Hume; H.E. Dr. Marty Natalegawa, Indonesian. **Photo Credit: Religions for Peace**

Page 93- Nigerian Interfaith Action Association (NIFAA) Co-Chairs Archbishop John Onaiyekan and Sultan of Sokoto Muhammad Sa'adu Abubakar at the *Faiths United for Health* Launch in Abuja, December 2009. NIFAA will train and mobilize over 300,000 Muslim and Christian faith leaders to partner with the national malaria campaign. **Photo Credit: CIFA 2009/ Sarah Day**

Pg. 94 – Across rural villages in mountainous Afghanistan, children can be seen making their way to pre-school with their young mothers and older sisters, also carrying books for their own accelerated learning courses. Just five or six years ago, education was something experienced only by brothers, husbands and fathers, and only if the family had the means to send them to a government school possibly several miles away. Since 2003, Catholic Relief Services has been working with local partners in rural, marginalized Afghan communities to strengthen access to schools and quality education for boys, girls and young adult women who missed out on

education during the formal rule of the Taliban. This photo shows students on the first day of the opening of their new school outside of the city of Herat, moments after they received their new school supplies and materials. **Photo Credit: Agustinus Wibowo for Catholic Relief Services**

Pg. 96 -Emerendino Dias Torres (orange shirt), works with son-in-law Ferreira Edmilson De Almeida on the younger man's farm in Santa Barbara, Brazil. It is common for family and community members to join forces to quickly accomplish a needed task on each others farms. The family has been trained in better farming and irrigation techniques, learning to care for their soil and plant crops in addition to the traditional manioc (cassava) to have success even during the dry times. Receiving assistance through the Family Agriculture Empowerment and Gender programs of Movimento de Organizao Comunitaria/ Movement of Community Organization (MOC), they have learned to plant a variety of crops, including lettuce, onions, oranges and beans, among others to keep the soil healthy, provide a more balanced diet and to earn some additional income. In the past many farmers only planted the manioc which caused the deterioration of the soil on many farms across the region. To make matters worse, the Semi-Arid region often suffers through seasons of erratic rainfall making it difficult to grow certain crops consistently without the new techniques.

Photo Credit: Rick D'Elia for Catholic Relief Services

Page 98-**Photo Credit: Jon Warren for World Relief**

Page 99-**Photo Credit: World Vision**

Page 101- Women attending the launch of the *Faiths United for Health Campaign* hosted by the Nigerian Inter-faith Action Association in Abuja, Nigeria December 2009. **Photo Credit: CIFA 2009/Sarah Day**

Page 104- **Photo Credit: American Jewish World Service**

Page 108- **Photo Credit: Jon Warren for World Relief**

Page 109- **Photo Credit: Church World Service**

Page 110- **Photo Credit: Sam Worthington, InterAction**

Pg. 112 - Ysidro de Jesus Torrez Laguna waters tomato seedlings in an ACORDAR-funded greenhouse in La Sirena, Esteli, Nicaragua. The Association of Social Development in Nicaragua (ASDENIC) works with farmers in the La Sirena area to improve farming techniques. After being held in a planting house for four days to germinate, the plants are laid out in the greenhouse to grow for 15-20 days before being planted in the farmers fields. The greenhouse can produce 200,000 plants at a time with a loss of about five percent of the plants.

Photo Credit: Photo by Rick D'Elia for Catholic Relief Services

Pg. 114 - Community president Edwin Roblero Barios prepares rations of oil for a Catholic Relief Services and Catholic Relief Services partner CARITAS Guatemala food distribution in the Sanajaba community in the Northern highlands of San Marcos, Guatemala. Expectant mothers and mothers with children under three years of age receive the supplemental food rations as well as educational workshops in order to promote proper childhood development. Guatemala has the highest levels of malnutrition in Latin America. The infant mortality rate is 33 percent higher than the regional average. **Photo Credit: Photo by Sara A. Fajardo/Catholic Relief Services**

Pg. 115- Girls gather at a spot on the edge of the village to play together. Boys and girls fall into their traditional roles at early ages in rural India, which leaves little time for idleness and play.

Photo credit: David Snyder/Catholic Relief Services

Pg. 159- **Photo Credit: United Way Worldwide**

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