



Individual Advanced Research Opportunities Program

Final Research Report

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Title:

*For the Love of God: Faith-Based Nonprofit Service Providers in the
Context of Religious Violence*

Title of Research Proposal

For the Love of God: Faith-Based Nonprofit Service Providers in Contexts of Violence

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*This study of faith-based services in Bosnia and Herzegovina contributed to a larger dissertation on the same topic. I am happy to share chapters of the dissertation, or the dissertation as a whole, with anyone who is interested. I can be contacted at shawnflanigan@yahoo.com.

Topic of Research

The study examines the role of religious identity for nonprofit organizations providing services in communities that have experienced religious violence, exploring the ways in which service providers may either reinforce or ameliorate existing religious tensions. I hypothesize that if an organization shares the same religion as a party involved in violent religious conflict, then religious identity will have a stronger influence on the organization's behavior and the organization will be less inclusive of community members of different religions due to boundary activation and increased awareness of across-boundary interactions. I analyzed these hypotheses

by conducting interviews with staff of faith-based nonprofits in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lebanon, and Sri Lanka.

Relevance and Contribution to Field

The results of the study make several contributions to both research/theory and policy/practice. Perhaps most interesting theoretically is that, in a field often dominated by theories of altruism and positive social capital, this study demonstrates the utility of using concepts from the literature on collective violence as a lens for examining behavior in the nonprofit sector. Another important aspect of this study is the evidence it provides to answer questions regarding the influence of religious identity on the service provision of faith-based organizations (FBOs). These questions are widely debated within the field of nonprofit research by scholars from a variety of academic disciplines, and this study provides empirical evidence of how faith identity may influence to whom services are provided, the ways in which religious belief and connections to religious communities draw people to become involved in the NGO sector, and how religious faith influences the ways employees conceptualize their services and service provision. A third important contribution of this study is the expansion of nonprofit research to a context outside the United States, particularly to a context of conflict. Theory regarding the nonprofit sector has been developed through a western lens; information on the nonprofit sector outside the United States is limited, and what little detailed information exists is usually in regard to economically developed countries such as those in Western Europe and Japan. This study provides us with evidence that the nonprofit organizations operate differently outside the context of the United States, and are influenced by the specific historical contexts in which their NGO sector evolved. Finally, in addition to providing information about NGOs operating in a non-Western context, this study provides preliminary information on the behavior of FBOs of non-Christian faiths.

I will discuss policy recommendations in greater detail later in the report; however, the research results provide a number of steps that nonprofit managers and government and private donors and contractors can take to ensure inclusive service provision by NGOs in contexts of conflict. These include encouraging relationships between local and international FBOs, increasing outreach and referrals among different ethnic and religious groups, initiating joint service provision by FBOs of multiple faiths, providing services in “neutral” locations with approval from “neutral” officials, and creating fair and balanced restrictions on proselytization.

Summary of Approach and Research Methodology

Scholars assert that certain mechanisms promote, inhibit, or channel collective violence. Among these mechanisms are polarization and boundary activation. Polarization involves a widening of social or political space between claimants in a contentious episode, and promotes collective violence by making us-them boundaries more salient. As boundaries between groups become more salient, social interactions increasingly organize around these boundaries, and actors increasingly differentiate between within-boundary and across-boundary interactions. Tilly (2003) calls this process “boundary activation” (p. 21). I argue that the same boundary activation that promotes collective violence will also influence the behavior of FBOs operating in communities that have experienced violent religious conflict. My hypotheses are as follows:

H₁ : If an FBO shares the same ethnic and/or religious identity as one of the groups involved in violent religious conflict, then ethno-religious identity will be highly salient and have a

strong influence on staff member attitudes regarding service recipients and service provision.

H₂: If an FBO shares the same ethnic and/or religious identity as one of the groups involved in violent religious conflict, then fewer community members with a different ethno-religious identity will seek services from and/or be provided services by the FBO.

I examined these hypotheses using a comparative case study approach known as Most Different Systems Design, using the cases of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lebanon, and Sri Lanka. In analyzing the behavior of FBOs, I hypothesized that in spite of their vast differences in culture, economics, politics, and demographics, FBOs in Lebanon, Sri Lanka, and Bosnia and Herzegovina would share key characteristics due to the presence of religious conflict. I hypothesized that in all three polarization and boundary activation will cause ethno-religious identity to be highly salient, and this increase in identity salience in turn would cause ethno-religious identity to have a stronger influence on service provision. I expected that boundary activation would lead to a lack of inclusion of clientele of other ethnicities and religions in all three countries. I gathered my data through interviews with more than 100 staff members from 70 faith-based and secular NGOs providing health and social services to low-income communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lebanon, and Sri Lanka.

Summary of Research Findings and Preliminary Conclusions

Due to IREX's geographical interest in south-eastern Europe, in discussing the results of my study I will focus primarily on the results from my data collection in Bosnia and Herzegovina, making reference to the cases of Lebanon and Sri Lanka as warranted.

Evidence of Inclusion and Exclusion in the Three Country Cases

When looking at the interview responses in the aggregate for all three countries, we find that overall the data do offer support for the hypotheses. Based on answers to the interview questions, I coded whether interview participants indicated that ethnic or religious identity influenced their attitudes regarding service recipients and service provision. I also made note of whether interview participants indicated that they primarily served recipients of their same (or of a single) ethnic or religious group, or if they reported serving an ethnically and/or religiously mixed group. The data offer support for the hypothesis that if an NGO shares its identity with one of the groups involved in the conflict under consideration, staff members will indicate during their interview that the conflict-associated identity has a strong influence on their attitudes toward service provision. Of those participants whose NGO shares its identity with one of the groups involved in the conflict, 64.3% provided information demonstrating that the conflict-associated identity had a strong influence on their attitudes toward service provision, while 35.7% did not provide such information. Of those participants whose NGO does not share its identity with one of the groups involved in the conflict, only 13% provided information demonstrating that the conflict-associated identity had a strong influence on their attitudes toward service provision, while 87% did not provide such information. While it may seem illogical that individuals who did not share a conflict-associated identity were still influenced by the identity of the NGO, this figure accounts for international FBO staff. For example, while a Dutch staff member from an international Christian FBO would not share the same identity as

Maronite Christians who were heavily involved in the Lebanese civil war, he or she might still be highly influenced by his or her Christian identity.

The influence of identity is most visible if we remove secular NGOs and international FBOs from the sample, and examine only local FBOs. While it seems clear that we would expect staff from FBOs to be more influenced by religious identity than staff from secular organizations, we also would expect to find staff from local FBOs to be more influenced by the conflict-associated identity than staff of international FBOs. Interview participants from international FBOs, while not *always* foreign nationals, were more likely to be from a country other than the one where the research was conducted, and therefore typically had not been affected personally by the conflict under consideration. Second, participants from international FBOs were more likely to report that their organization had become secular over time, thereby likely neutralizing the influence of religious identity on staff members. When looking only at interview participants from local FBOs, of those participants whose FBO shares its identity with one of the groups involved in the conflict, 69% provided information demonstrating that the conflict-associated identity had a strong influence on their attitudes toward service provision. Thirty-one percent did not provide such information. One hundred percent of those participants whose FBO did not share its identity with one of the groups involved in the conflict failed to provide provided information demonstrating that the conflict-associated identity had a strong influence on their attitudes toward service provision.

The data also offer support for the hypothesis that if an NGO shares its identity with one of the groups involved in the conflict under consideration, then interview participants will indicate that their organization provides services primarily to their own ethno-religious group. Of those participants whose NGO shares its identity with one of the groups involved in the conflict, 55.4% provided information demonstrating that their organization provides services primarily to their own ethno-religious group, while 44.6% indicated that their organization provides services to an ethnically or religiously mixed group. Of those participants whose NGO does not share its identity with one of the groups involved in the conflict, 19.6% indicated that their organization provides services primarily to their own (or a single) ethno-religious group, while 80.4% indicated that their organization provides services to an ethnically or religiously mixed group. Once again, we see that the influence of identity on inclusion in service provision is more visible if we remove secular NGOs and international FBOs from the sample, and examine only local FBOs. The data demonstrate that identity is closely tied to exclusive service provision; of those participants whose FBO shares its identity with one of the groups involved in the conflict, 71.4% provided information demonstrating that their organization provides services primarily to their own ethno-religious group, while 28.6% indicated that their organization provides services to an ethnically or religiously mixed group. Of those participants whose NGO does not share its identity with one of the groups involved in the conflict, 100% indicated that their organization provides services to an ethnically or religiously mixed group of recipients.

These data, particularly when examining local FBOs specifically, give strong support to the hypotheses that the identity salience of FBO staff will be high in contexts of violence, and FBO service provision in contexts of violence will be exclusive based on ethno-religious identity. It is reasonable to assume that participants who chose to be dishonest in their interviews would be more likely to overstate the inclusiveness of their organization, rather than to claim their behavior is more exclusionary than it actually is. Therefore, if the research data were to be inaccurate due to dishonesty, it probably would result in what statisticians would call a “Type II”

error. In other words, if the data are inaccurate due to dishonesty, reality probably provides even greater support to hypothesis 2 than is apparent in the data presented above.

Inclusion and Exclusion in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The data collected for the Bosnia and Herzegovina portion of the study present an interesting pattern: local FBOs from Bosnia and Herzegovina's three primary faith communities provide services primarily to those of their own ethno-religious group, whereas international FBOs and secular NGOs are more inclusive in their service provision. The fact that secular NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina serve a mixed group of recipients stands in contrast to Lebanon, where many secular NGOs indicated they served a single religious group due to their geographic location and the general geographic segregation of religious communities. Most of the interview participants who indicated that their FBOs serve primarily members of the same religious group stated that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, service recipients are most familiar with the service organization of their own religion and therefore feel most comfortable approaching those organizations for help. However, the majority of the interview participants who indicated that their FBOs serve primarily members of the same religious group indicated that they were open to serving all people in need regardless of their ethnoreligious identity.

These data give strong support to the hypothesis that an FBO sharing the same ethnic and/or religious identity as one of the groups involved in violent conflict will serve fewer community members with a different ethnoreligious identity. As we see here, the local FBOs whose ethnoreligious groups were involved in the war primarily serve members of their own group, if not by their own intention then because the local community only approaches FBOs of their own faith. In contrast, international FBOs serve a more diverse group of service recipients. This is likely due to the fact that they were not personally involved in the conflict; if they do not have the sense that their community was personally affected by the war, they may feel more open to serving others. On the other hand, if service recipients see these FBOs as impartial "outsiders", they may be more comfortable approaching the organization for help.

The data from the interview participants indicate that access to NGOs' social services in Bosnia and Herzegovina is largely inclusive, with only 22% of interview participants indicating they provided services primarily to their own ethnoreligious group. For local FBOs from Bosnia and Herzegovina's three predominant religious communities, service provision is structured in a manner where the existing religious and ethnic divisions in Bosnian society are duplicated by the NGO social service system. While this dynamic is quite similar to that found among NGO service providers in Lebanon, the risk of exclusion is tempered by the large number of international NGOs and local secular NGOs that provide services in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

While interview data showed that referrals from other religiously identified organizations were one means by which NGOs select who they will serve, religious referrals seem to play a much lower role in Bosnia and Herzegovina than they do in Lebanon and Sri Lanka. One interview participant from a Catholic FBO and three participants from Orthodox FBOs indicated that they used religious referrals as one way of selecting service recipients, with all of them accepting referrals from local churches within their own denomination. It is interesting to note that in all three countries, Christian FBOs seem to be more likely to rely on religious referrals than FBOs of other faiths.

Much like Sri Lanka, Bosnia and Herzegovina seems to have a large number of organizations that are the sole providers of services, with 80.5% of interview participants indicating that they were the sole providers of certain services in some communities. This

included interview participants from Catholic, unidentified other Christian, interfaith, and Muslim FBOs, as well as participants from secular NGOs. Like in Sri Lanka, some staff mentioned that this was due to a coordinated and concerted effort on the part of the NGO community to avoid duplicating the services of other NGOs. This coordination seems to have begun in large part during the war when international NGOs began providing humanitarian aid

However, the fact that a large percentage of NGOs are sole service providers may have few implications for exclusion from services. The only interview participants who indicated they serve primarily their own religious group and are also the sole providers of certain services are the four interview participants from Muslim FBOs. The other interview participants from FBOs who indicated their organizations were sole providers of some services were from international FBOs that reportedly are inclusive in their service provision. Admittedly, if Muslim FBOs are the sole providers of a highly needed service, this could present problems for exclusion from services. However, interview participants from Muslim FBOs reported that they are open to providing services to other groups, and offered examples of how they try to avoid promoting Islam in their service provision in an effort to make others comfortable. In addition, interview participants both from the Muslim FBOs themselves and from the rest of sample indicated that the local Muslim FBOs have a high degree of collaboration with other NGOs, including FBOs of other faiths. In fact, most of the FBOs included in the sample cooperate with FBOs of other faiths, with fifteen out of eighteen interview participants reporting collaboration with other FBOs. This high degree of cooperation would seem to suggest a genuine willingness to work with and serve other communities.

Given the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina has a relatively inclusive and highly secular NGO sector, it seems that the risks of exclusion in service provision are comparatively low, particularly when compared to the case of Lebanon. In addition, while there are anecdotal reports of evangelism by FBO workers in Bosnia and Herzegovina, my data did not produce any evidence of this, and public discourse certainly lacks the anti-conversion fervor that exists in Sri Lanka. Therefore, it seems that the risk of coercion in service provision is low as well.

If anything, Bosnia and Herzegovina may have lessons to offer the NGO sector and particularly the FBO sector in other parts of the world. Naturally, it is important to note that Bosnia and Herzegovina's NGO sector is the product of a unique history of communism and war; NGO sectors in other countries would have neither the ability nor the desire to duplicate these specific conditions. However, the presence of and mentoring by international NGOs, and particularly international FBOs, seems to have had a positive influence both on public opinion and local NGO behavior. The Bosnian public has a positive impression of international Christian FBOs, and hopefully this positive impression can spill over into good will toward the Christian population in general. Perhaps more importantly, in spite of its initial reluctance, the local Catholic FBO in Bosnia and Herzegovina has become the most inclusive of the local FBOs from the country's three dominant faiths, thanks in no small part to pressure from its international Catholic FBO partners. While Orthodox and Muslim FBOs' service recipients are upward of 90% from their own faith communities, the local Catholic FBO's service recipients are between 60-70% Catholic.

In spite of the picture painted above, this does not mean that the NGO sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not at risk for exclusion in service provision. While inclusion has been protected by a highly secularized NGO sector and an active international NGO community, these are not necessarily permanent features of Bosnian society. In particular, international political, military, and humanitarian presence in Bosnian society is waning. Many international NGOs and

FBOs have left Bosnia and Herzegovina or are planning to leave in the near future, both due to growing stability in the country and the needs presented by disasters in other parts of the world. Meanwhile, local secular NGOs are highly dependent on an international donor community whose interests increasingly are being pulled elsewhere in the world. Secular NGOs need to become more self-sustainable if the sector is to remain vibrant, and in the absence of foreign donors, unfortunately many secular NGOs and FBOs will cease to exist. While we hope Bosnia and Herzegovina's NGO sector continue to be large and strong, in difficult times the local FBOs from the three dominant faiths may prove to be most resilient by virtue of their strong local roots and local institutional support.

Other Information from Bosnia and Herzegovina's NGO Sector

Less than half of all interview participants in Bosnia and Herzegovina indicated that their professional training and/or past professional experience in health and social services was one factor that led them to work for their NGO. This figure included all of the interview participants from Catholic and other undefined Christian FBOs, and just over half of interview participants from secular NGOs. This stands in contrast to the cases of Lebanon and Sri Lanka, where 76.7% and 80% of interview participants came to their work due to past professional training or experience, respectively. However, much as in Lebanon and Sri Lanka, personal ties within particular religious communities played an important role in leading many interview participants to work for their organization. Just over 60% all the interview participants from FBOs mentioned that their personal ties within a particular religious community had led them to work for their FBO. These personal ties typically involved a member of their religious congregation informing them of the availability of the job and referring them to the individual responsible for hiring. Interview participants from Muslim FBOs were most likely to indicate that religious belief or religious inspiration was one of the factors that drew the individual to work for the organization.

Another interesting pattern that emerged is that many interview participants came to work for their NGO as a result of the aftermath of the war. Fifteen out of the 41 individuals interviewed indicated that this was one reason they began working for their NGO, with many indicating they had been professionally trained in fields not typically associated with health and social services, such as engineering or chemistry. The path that led them to work in the NGO sector normally took one of two forms. Some began working for NGOs as a result of high unemployment and an inability to find work in their own field, in contrast to the newly-present NGO sector, which was hiring with more frequency. Others began their work due to their own war experiences, particularly as refugees.

Thirteen of the 18 interview participants from FBOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina felt that the religious orientation of their NGO added value to the services that they provide. The interview participants who indicated there was an added value to their work included all participants from Catholic, interfaith, and Muslim FBOs, and two out of three interview participants from unidentified other Christian FBOs. The added value that interview participants perceived faith as bringing to their organizations' work included more individualized and compassionate service provision, more highly committed and motivated workers, more effective service provision due to church networks, more secure funding/ more flexible use of funding, ability to promote reconciliation through service provision.

Some of these benefits, such as more individualized and compassionate service provision, and more highly committed and motivated workers, are often mentioned in the literature on FBOs in the United States, and were also mentioned by interview participants from FBOs in

Lebanon. More effective service provision due to church networks, while not commonly mentioned in the U.S. literature, was also mentioned by interview participants from FBOs in Sri Lanka. Two of these benefits were mentioned only by FBOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina: more secure funding and more flexibility in use of funds, and the ability to promote reconciliation between ethno-religious groups through service provision.

Suggestions for Future Research

It is important to note that the cases used for this study represent, in a sense, a “worst case scenario” for FBO service provision; because of a context of religious violence, I suggested that religious identity salience in Lebanon, Sri Lanka, and Bosnia and Herzegovina is high and that this high identity salience leads to exclusion in service provision. However, it is not within the realm of this study to establish an actual causal relationship between high identity salience and exclusion in service provision. It could be the case that service provision is structured along ethno-religious lines in other societies as well, even in societies that have not experienced ethno-religious violence. Future research on inclusion and exclusion in service provision in non-conflict affected countries is needed in order to explore this possibility, and may provide findings that would be more easily generalized to the developing world as a whole.

Another interesting direction for future research would be to explore whether faith identity results in any difference in the quality of services provided. In particular, do the benefits that FBO staff members perceive their organizations as deriving from faith actually translate into higher quality services and better outcomes for service recipients? While research has examined this question in the United States with conflicting results (Chaves & Tsitsos 2001; Ebaugh, Saltzman Chafetz & Pipes, 2005; Frumkin, 2002; Monsma, 1996; Sherman, 1995; Singletary & Collins, 2004), the participants in this study identified a number of perceived benefits of their faith orientation that typically are not mentioned in research on the U.S. FBO sector. Future research exploring the true influence of these perceived benefits on service provision can provide information that may be even more valuable in an international context.

Another very important future direction for research is to examine questions similar to those posed by this study not from the perspective of NGO workers, but from the perspectives of service recipients and potential service recipients. While the results of this study provide evidence that religious identity is salient for many FBO workers, and service provision is often provided in an exclusive manner that is structured along ethno-religious lines, most FBO staff indicated that they would be willing to serve members of other ethno-religious groups. Research from the perspective of service recipients can help us understand whether this exclusivity in service provision is the result of the behavior of staff or of service recipients themselves, and can suggest steps that might improve the inclusiveness of service provision.

Other suggestions for future research stem primarily from the limitations of this study, and in particular the limitations of qualitative research. A future study examining the similarities and differences among FBO services providers of different faiths would be quite interesting and could be conducted using a sample that is more representative of non-Christian faiths. As reliable quantitative data on the NGO sector in the developing world become more available, a large sample statistical study of NGO and FBO behavior could provide results that would have greater external validity than the results of this study.

Recommendations for the US Policy Community

I would like to conclude by discussing the implications that my research findings have for practice, particularly for nonprofit managers and for public and private contractors and donors. It is common practice for western governments to provide humanitarian assistance through FBOs in countries worldwide (Nichols, 1988), and President George W. Bush's first executive order expanded FBO's access to federal funds. The power imbalance for service recipients and possibilities for exclusion from services are exacerbated by sole service provision by nonprofit organizations, which is a common occurrence in the developing world (van Tuijl, 1999), as well as in the countries included in this study. Such social exclusion can be the impetus for contentious politics and collective violence (Gurr, 2000), including religious violence (Juergensmeyer, 2003). Particularly interesting is a recent survey of 3,000 respondents from predominantly Muslim countries, which found that individuals who believed the U.S. has a policy aim of promoting Christianity abroad were significantly more supporting of terrorist attacks against the United States and jihadist movements in general (Weber, 2006). Recent reports in newspapers such as the Boston Globe suggest that question "Is foreign aid Christian?" cannot be answered with a resounding "No."¹

However, because Soss' (1999) research indicates that the experiences citizens have while receiving social services can have important repercussions for how they perceive and participate in government, there is reason to believe that inclusive service provision can have positive implications for recipients, even outside the service environment. Based on the specific findings from the three country cases, I have several suggestions for ways in which nonprofit managers and public and private donors/contractors can encourage more inclusive service provision by NGOs in the developing world.

Encourage Relationships with International FBOs

The evidence from the Bosnia and Herzegovina case seems to indicate that the international NGO community has benefited the local NGO sector by providing models of professional, inclusive service provision and assisting with local NGO capacity building. In particular, the inclusive message sent by the international Catholic FBO community to local Catholic FBOs has helped to increase inclusion in the local FBO sector. Continued and increased cooperation with international NGOs and particularly international FBOs may help to institutionalize a culture of inclusive service provision among local FBOs. These cooperative ties can be developed by both local and international nonprofit managers, and can be encouraged with financial incentives in contracts and donors' grant agreements. Being that local church networks were one of the important faith-related benefits espoused by international FBO staff, local NGOs undoubtedly will benefit international NGOs as well with their grassroots connections and invaluable local knowledge.

Increase Outreach and Referrals among Different Ethnic and Religious Groups

Most of the interview participants in all three countries, even from those NGOs that were exclusive in their service provision, indicated that their NGO would welcome service recipients of other ethnic and religious groups. If this indeed is true, one strategy to decrease the risk of exclusion from services would be to encourage NGOs to conduct outreach to members of other ethnic and religious groups and refer clients to NGOs from different groups, particularly if these

¹ A week-long series of articles in the Boston Globe published October 8-11, 2006 explored the role of Christianity in US foreign aid and described the sometimes evangelistic and exclusionary actions of staff members of Christian FBOs.

NGOs are sole or unique service providers. Such activities could help correct for the comparative disadvantage of some ethnic and religious groups as service providers, as well as reduce the potential coercive power of sole service provision.

Nonprofit managers could undertake increasing outreach and referrals in a variety of low-cost ways. One would simply be informing NGOs of other ethno-religious groups of the services they have available and encouraging referrals among the different NGOs; since many NGOs of different faiths belong to local and national NGO councils that meet on a regular basis, these councils could serve as a venue for initiating such an outreach and referral process. Outreach also could be conducted through public awareness campaigns, though this might involve some cost to the organization. While already overstretched NGOs may be leery of increasing their financial burden by including new service recipients from other sects, these costs as well as the costs of public awareness campaigns could be offset by incentives from private and public sector donors and contractors.

Initiate Joint Service Provision by FBOs of Multiple Faiths

Another strategy to encourage inclusion in FBOs would be to encourage cooperative service provision by FBOs of multiple faiths. This may have a number of practical advantages, such as allowing FBOs to pool resources and share in each others' expertise. However, the specific advantages for increasing inclusion and decreasing coercion in service provision are three-fold. First, seeing providers of different faiths working together might make potential service recipients feel more assured that services are being provided regardless of religion, and therefore feel more comfortable seeking services from the FBOs. Secondly, such measures may have the potential to increase inter-group understanding and reconciliation by improving public perceptions of the different groups involved and providing a valuable example of interfaith cooperation. Third, providing services in the same physical location might create an environment of self-monitoring that could protect service recipients from coercion and evangelism, as staff from one faith may be less prone to proselytize under the watchful eye of their colleagues from another faith. Once again, these measures could be encouraged by donors and contractors.

Provide Services in "Neutral" Locations with Approval from "Neutral" Officials

Particularly in the case of Sri Lanka, the research data demonstrated that services were often provided in houses of worship, and service recipients' claims that they needed assistance were deemed valid by local religious leaders. Both of these dynamics seem to create an obvious risk of self-exclusion for those who are not members of the FBOs' religious group. Potential service recipients may be particularly fearful of exclusion from services or evangelization if they must seek services in a house of worship different than their own, and if their claims are subject to the approval of religious leaders from other groups. Moving service provision to a location other than a church or other house of worship would ease the minds of individuals seeking assistance who may believe services are only available to members of the congregation, who are apprehensive about asking another religious group for assistance, or who are fearful of attempts at conversion. Admittedly, for smaller FBOs that lack the resource of alternative physical space, this is a change that may not be realistic.

Meanwhile, because religious congregations often have intimate knowledge of their own communities and who is in need, it seems unreasonable to ask FBOs not to accept referrals from religious leaders. However, removing the final power of approval from the hands of religious leaders would reduce the potential for exclusion and coercion when providing aid. Especially in

contexts of past religious conflict, potential service recipients may be fearful that religious leaders from other groups will deny their claims in retribution for the past acts of their fellow adherents. Since most programs select their recipients based on predetermined needs-based criteria, it seems reasonable to request that an FBO staff member who is not a member of the clergy make a final determination of the validity of individuals' service needs.

Creating Fair and Balanced Restrictions on Proselytization

A final strategy that nonprofit managers can undertake to decrease self-exclusion and coercion in service provision is to create unambiguous organizational guidelines and prohibitions on proselytization, with clear consequences for violations of these guidelines. Obviously, FBOs that have an organizational goal of evangelism would not be interested in enacting such guidelines; as such, this suggestion is not aimed at those NGOs. However, past research on child welfare NGOs in Romania presented evidence that frontline NGO staff are often much more actively engaged in evangelism than nonprofit managers indicate is permitted within the organization (Flanigan, 2004). For those FBOs that genuinely desire to provide services in a non-coercive manner, clear guidelines on proselytization and regular reminders of these guidelines to frontline staff are essential for promoting an inclusive service environment.