

Charity begins at home

T&FN readers will be familiar with New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) from the introductory article in the March issue. Launched as a charity in 2001 by a group of senior figures from the financial services community, NPC has just completed the first in a series of research projects which examines an area of social need in depth and provides recommendations about specific charities for potential donors. Giles Goschen introduces their report on Domestic Violence, A guide for donors and grant-makers.

NPC's mission is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of charities in the UK and internationally. In order to assess the effectiveness of specific charities, NPC researches both the context within which charities operate and individual charities themselves. The exercise involves intensive research, interviews with charities, beneficiaries, academics, policy-makers and a synthesis of available data.

The sector research report *Charity begins at home – Domestic violence: A guide for donors and grant-makers* explores the role of charitable organisations which address domestic

violence by men against women. The report focuses on the scale and need for help and care, assessing the effectiveness of current and potential interventions, as well as analysing outcomes.

Considerable interest

This research report should be of considerable interest to grant-makers. By focusing on outcomes, NPC's research addresses an area of increasing interest to funders. By providing much detailed information to help funding decisions, NPC's research reports represent a new and valuable approach, filling a gap in the services available to grant-makers.

Domestic violence is both under-reported and under-recorded. Though widespread and affecting women across racial, socio-economic and geographic lines, the Government has not been able to develop a comprehensive and accurate picture of the number of domestic violence incidents that occur every year. A conservative estimate suggests that more than half a million women suffer serious incidents annually. Many incidents go unreported by women, often because of fear for their own safety.

Compounding the problem of under-reporting of domestic violence incidents is the relatively low prosecution rate. The statutory response to domestic violence has traditionally been weak. Just 20% of incidents involving the police result in arrests and no more than 15% of arrests

lead to prosecution. Successful prosecutions are considerably lower still.

Crucial role

While the legal system has been slow to respond to domestic violence, the charitable sector has long played a crucial role in supporting women and effecting change. Historically the emphasis has been placed on ensuring the safety of the woman and her children, often through access to a refuge or through outreach.

The voluntary sector provides essential services through traditional responses such as refuge provision and advice and support from helplines. These remain the cornerstone of support for women facing domestic violence. However, the traditional response effectively limits the woman's options to remaining with her violent partner or going to a refuge. The abuser has very often gone unpunished. New and innovative approaches, in particular 'direct advocacy', are offering greater protection to women.

Direct advocacy relies on greater support from police and the stronger statutory framework developed through legislative changes introduced in the past decade. Direct advocacy partnerships are able to achieve considerable improvement in combating domestic violence. With assistance from local organisations, women are assigned an advocate to navigate a path through the various agencies involved with domestic violence, often working in concert with statutory bodies. This provides a more engaged case worker approach to domestic violence and addresses the oft-heard complaint that women find it hard to get appropriate help. There is clear evidence of promising outcomes from this approach to domestic violence, both in terms of support for women and holding abusers accountable, as well as scope to reach more women.

Charity begins at home



Domestic violence
a guide for donors and
grant-makers

Increasing cooperation

With increasing cooperation between the statutory and voluntary sector, new and innovative approaches can complement the traditional services like refuges. The need for refuge spaces remains great, particularly for certain minority groups and women with particular needs. The fabric of many refuges is in poor repair, and services offered to the residents, and most particularly children, are too often limited by a lack of funds. Equally, the national helplines face an important funding challenge to continue to provide their essential services. A comprehensive approach to domestic violence must support both traditional and new interventions, each of which play an important role in addressing the problem.

Domestic violence poses a challenge

to donors, namely – where to start?

Through clearly targeted philanthropy, donors can make a difference and can accelerate the change in approach by bringing both the statutory and voluntary sectors together to provide a more even and effective response to domestic violence.

There is now a greater will and means to tackle domestic violence and private funding can play an important role in ensuring that society shifts to more equitable and just outcomes. NPC has identified charities which play essential and effective roles in supporting women facing domestic violence. Reports into these charities are complementary to Charity begins at home and NPC would be very happy to present their recommendations and findings to interested grant-makers and donors.

New Philanthropy Capital

Domestic violence is the first sector that NPC has examined in detail. A second sector report, Rhetoric to action – HIV/AIDS in South Africa: A guide for donors and grant-makers, was also released in August. As with domestic violence, there is a complementary series of charity reports providing donors with specific charity recommendations for projects addressing the pandemic of HIV/AIDS in South Africa.

NPC is committed to working with grant-making trusts and other donors to obtain the best charitable outcomes for their donations and grants. From domestic violence to HIV/AIDS in South Africa, NPC seeks to encourage higher levels of funding for outstanding charities. Through its research NPC helps answer the question, "Where will our funding make the greatest impact?" Through rigorous research and high quality information and analysis on sectors and individual charities, NPC seeks to inform donor decision-making and to improve the transparency of the voluntary sector.

A full research programme is under way with additional sector reports on special educational needs, early intervention, cancer, community based organisations, truancy and excluded children and HIV/AIDS in East Africa planned during the next six months.

For more information on New Philanthropy Capital or to obtain a copy of their reports, see their website www.philanthropycapital.org

Domestic Violence: an extended seminar

ACF will be running a seminar on Domestic Violence as a result of an initiative from the Northern Rock Foundation.

The Northern Rock Foundation commissioned research from the International Centre for the Study of Violence and Abuse at the University of Sunderland.

This new research reveals wide variations in how the criminal justice system responds to domestic violence cases. Less than a third of arrests for domestic violence incidents lead to criminal charges. Positive police action to pursue domestic violence cases results in more arrests and charges, but not more convictions.

Professor Marianne Hester from the University of Sunderland will present the findings of the work, and Fiona Ellis of Northern Rock Foundation will lead a discussion about the most effective ways for grant-makers to support victims of domestic violence.

Venue: Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, York
Date: 25th March 2004 (to be confirmed)
Time: 10.30 – 11.00: Coffee
11.00 – 12.00: Professor Marianne Hester
12.00 – 12.30: Discussion
12.30 – 1.30: Lunch
1.30 – 2.00: Fiona Ellis
2.00 – 3.00: Discussion

For further information or to book a place please contact Anja Hubrath at ACF on 020 7422 8603 or anja@acf.org.uk