

The Salvation Army
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GLOBAL CONVERSATION SESSION 2C
“How do we measure the impact of our work?”

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Introduction

In proposing the creation of a Taskforce on Impact Evaluation, The Salvation Army's International Programme Resources Department¹ has posed the following questions:

- How do we promote best practices in countries where normative influence is weak and we are more or less left to our own devices?
- How do we effectively build the capacity of our staff, officers and employees to be faithful to and effective in mission?
- How do we evaluate and measure the impact of our activities?
- How do we approach programme assessment in a holistic way in the light of our integrated mission?
- How are we being faithful to our One Army Mission focus in this respect?

This paper — presented as part of the global track in connection with the March 2014 USA Salvation Army Conference for Social Work and Emergency Disaster Services convened in Orlando, Florida — will share examples of current evaluation and impact measurement methods for possible application in a variety of Salvation Army settings.

The Army's Historic Approach to measuring ministry impact

William Booth founded The Salvation Army in 1865 to evangelize to the unchurched poor. It is a well-documented fact that the founder quickly realized that people preoccupied with survival needs for food and shelter were unable to focus on eternal matters, and he understood the necessity of meeting their temporal as well as spiritual needs. The founder's son and second General of The Salvation Army, Bramwell Booth, perhaps summarized our integrated mission and approach best by saying “It is incumbent upon the Army to imitate its Master, and go about doing good to the bodies as well as to the souls of men, and to do so in an effective and therefore systematic way.”² Over the years this has been the hallmark of the Salvation Army's holistic ministry.

¹ Gerrit Marseille, *One Army, How Do We Measure Its Impact*, January 2013

² Bramwell Booth, *Echoes and Memories*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1925)

Building on this solid foundation, the Army has maintained a spirit of humility and has recognized that any positive impact of our ministry is the result of God’s work and not our organizational efforts. When a public relations firm introduced the “Doing The Most Good” emphasis in the USA, many thought this to be a boastful departure from the Army’s more humble roots. This humble approach to serving exemplifies the spirit of Christ as expressed in Scripture³ and is of utmost importance, for after all is said and done the final verdict of the impact of our ministry will come from our Lord.

Donor Accountability

The Salvation Army has a long history of effective stewardship in delivering Christian programs and services. For over a century the Army has been recognized as one of the most respected organizations in the world. Over the years, we have adopted professional practices and strong internal financial audit systems, resulting in solid public trust. Indeed, we have been pretty successful in developing effective programs and sharing countless stories of transformation as a result of our programming and community work.

So, too, the Army has been reasonably effective in quantifying our activities through well-developed statistical reporting procedures, but we have not been very good at measuring the impact of our ministry except in areas where funders have specifically required more sophisticated evaluation. More often than not we have had a tendency to emphasize activities and outputs rather than outcomes. Yet, as the International Programme Resources Department has rightly noted, measuring the impact or specific outcomes of our programs and services is increasingly demanded by external donors and regulatory authorities. In response to these requirements the International Programme Resources Consultancy Group has concluded that there is a need for a unified approach to measuring ministry impact and efforts are underway to identify common tools and processes for impact measurement.⁴

Measuring Impact While Maintaining Mission Alignment

The Salvation Army’s “Vision for Caring” planning guide⁵, approved by the USA Commissioners’ Conference in 1998, ***emphasizes that quality services must be mission-based, comply with high standards, utilize competent and committed personnel, and provide for integrated ministry.***

³ “Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You? And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, as much as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’”, The Holy Bible NKJV, Matthew 25: 37-40

⁴ Gerrit Marseille, *One Army, How Do We Measure Its Impact*, January 2013

⁵ “Vision for Caring”, USA Commissioners’ Conference, 1998

The vision guide identifies the following “guiding principles” which may provide a useful framework for establishing a solid foundation to help measure the impact of the Army’s ministry while maintaining mission alignment. The best programs must include:

- Planned Program Development
- Community Involvement
- Finances Sufficient to Provide Services
- Physical Facilities and Equipment Appropriate for the Program
- Personnel Qualified to Perform Tasks
- Records that Report Program Services and Aid in Management Decisions
- Periodic Evaluation for Quality Control
- An Informed Public to Provide Future Funding

Examples of Current Evaluation/Measurement Approaches

Program Evaluation

Over the years, The Salvation Army has successfully utilized a program review process where representatives of the supervising headquarters have used a variety of approaches (most often quantitative analysis) to assess programs and services. Early in 2000, the Army in the USA developed national standards for social services and more recently national standards for the new Ray & Joan Kroc Corps Community Centers have been approved, against which programs are evaluated.

Accompanying these standards is a self-study tool designed for use of staff in assessing compliance and building capacity for quality programs. Evaluations have sought to ensure required levels of performance within sound operating conditions; provide accountability to The Salvation Army mission, the expectations of funders, ourselves, and those we serve; promote effective program services in a safe, clean, healthy, comfortable, supportive and nurturing environment; identify high risk/critical issues that may represent a potential liability for The Salvation Army; and help improve the linkage, connectivity and teamwork with headquarters. While not measuring ministry impact per se, the supposition is that maximum impact will result from quality programs and services.

Walk-Throughs

Walk-Throughs provide a structured learning process to assist program leadership and staff in strengthening the ongoing work and culture of a program and are never stand-alone events used to “showcase” or “evaluate” the work of staff. To be effective, this process needs to be part of the regular routine of a program — not a special event. The feedback is for program improvement — not for evaluation of individual staff or the program as a whole. This approach is intended to result in concrete feedback to staff coupled with reflection, discussion and commitment to specific actions that will enhance and sustain the richness of the program. The process may be completed by program leaders, staff and volunteers, or could be expanded to others who are affiliated with the program. Programs using the Walk-Through learning process

believe that an active, self-study approach to professional growth and program improvement will produce results that are sustained over time. Walk-Throughs provide an ongoing means of engaging program staff in dialogue and reflection on their own practices and the program goals as a whole. The learning is grounded in the real experience of program leaders and can assist in aligning performance within an activity area as well as across a variety of activities. It provides a specific reason for the program leaders to be viewing activities and encourages their role as coach and support to help staff improve performance. The process creates a mutual ground for discussing program activities and practice. With Walk-Throughs, like Program Evaluations, impact is inferred as a result of quality programs and services.

Outcome Evaluations

Funders are increasingly requiring Outcome Evaluations as an evidence-based method of measuring the impact of program services. Outcome evaluation measures how program participants have benefited/changed through participating in program services. This evaluation/measurement approach includes ongoing monitoring as well as a more formal review/analysis of results of program participation. It includes feedback on program services from members/participants on a regular basis. Changes to be measured may include knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, motivation, decisions and conditions. Outcome evaluation assesses the extent to which a program service is successful in achieving its desired essential goals, objectives and desired outcomes. Effective Outcome Evaluation typically uses a **logic model** that clearly identifies program inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators.

A recent example of the use of Outcome Evaluations as a method of measuring the impact of program services is the development of a Fit Kids Project for new Ray & Joan Kroc Corps Community Centers in the USA. The “Kroc Fit Kids Project” is a comprehensive endeavor which approaches health and wellness from a holistic perspective using the programs and services provided by Kroc Centers. In order for a person to live a vital and healthy life, they must be healthy or “fit” in spirit, mind, and body. The Salvation Army has long been committed to this philosophy. This same philosophy has been highlighted by the World Health Organization which defines Health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” The “Kroc Fit Kids Project,” while addressing a specific focus, will nevertheless include comprehensive programming that helps build up participants in each of these critical areas. This project will assess changes in physical activity and dietary patterns using a **logic model**. Please see Appendix A for an example of specific measurement factors used for evaluation.

Surveys

Another evidence-based method of measuring the impact of program services includes surveying of participants, family members, community constituents and staff. In 2010 The Salvation Army in the USA launched a National Youth Asset Development Initiative (YADI) in partnership with Search Institute, authors of the 40 Developmental Assets®, which are cited as necessary building blocks for healthy development of young people.

The Youth Asset Development Initiative, beginning in Kroc Centers throughout the country, embodies Joan Kroc’s emphasis on tapping youths’ potential by providing opportunities for

them to nurture the gifts God has given them, for the betterment of others as well as themselves. The Army is keenly aware of the magnitude of Joan Kroc's gift, and of the responsibility for wise use of the gift for Kroc Centers. An important component of the YADI endeavor includes the use of a survey known as Developmental Assets & Life Experiences Profile (DALEP) specifically designed for The Salvation Army. Staff and Adult feedback questionnaires have also been developed by Search Institute and used in this initiative. This very significant evidence-based project, beginning in Kroc Centers, is being recognized as an important resource in documenting positive outcomes in service to youth and families throughout The Salvation Army. The initiative — now in phase 3 — is viewed as an early step in accountability for programming focused on positive youth development as an outcome of all programs, rather than merely delivering quality programs. Please see Appendix B for more detailed information describing Search Institute's research work including the DALEP Survey used in YADI.

Economic Impact Studies

In measuring the impact of our program services, consideration might be given to use of an economic impact study. In yet another opportunity stemming from the new Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Centers in the USA, at the time of this writing the Army is exploring the development of a national economic impact study. We are working with a group called Partners for Sacred Places, a non-profit organization dedicated to the sound stewardship and active community use of sacred places across America.

Backed by the reputations of Partners for Sacred Places and the University of Pennsylvania, the proposed study will provide the Salvation Army with hard data – quantitative proof of the value and impact of the Kroc Centers. The study report will also outline strategies for weaving this data into a compelling case statement for the Kroc Centers, one that balances statistics with stories of the lives they represent. Additionally, the report will include analysis and recommendations for how Kroc Centers can increase their value and return on investment by leveraging existing resources in new ways.

Working closely with the Kroc Center of Philadelphia, Partners for Sacred Places has developed a customized research methodology to ensure that the study fully captures the broad spectrum and unique combination of services provided at and through the centers. In contrast to other existing economic valuation methodologies, Partners methodology addresses both of the core functions of the Kroc Center – community center and congregation. Study analysis will include the following components:

- Direct Spending
- Schools and Day Cares
- Open Spaces
- Magnet Effect
- Individual Impact
- Invisible Safety Net

Building Capacity for Mission Effectiveness

This paper is presented with the hope that it may contribute in some small way to a clearer view of evaluation and impact measurement. Perhaps the examples of current approaches measuring impact which have been shared will result in the further development of useful evaluation tools to help the Army assess its mission effectiveness.

Each of the foregoing examples of current evaluation/measurement approaches includes an emphasis on self-regulation or assessment designed to build capacity among staff to target specific improvement goals and concrete action steps. Of course, self-regulation and assessment is critically important because we may be the most important **source of information** about our own performance; no one knows the work, the thought behind it, and personal goals better than ourselves.⁶ Each evaluation/measurement approach also includes assessment in a holistic manner consistent with the Army's integrated mission.

To further encourage building capacity for mission effectiveness, the development of "learning hubs" designed to test, store and share knowledge of new innovations in evaluation/measurement approaches seems to be promising and should be pursued by The Salvation Army.

⁶ Wilson, P. F., & Pearson, R. D. (1995). *Performance-based assessments: External, internal, and self-assessment tools for total quality management*. Milwaukee, WI: ASQC Quality Press.

**Appendix A
The Salvation Army
Kroc Fit Kids Project**

Logic Model: Measuring Program Impact

RESOURCES	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	INDICATORS
Organizational History and Experience Qualified & Experienced Staffing Resources World-Class Kroc Center Facilities --Sports & Recreation --Fitness --Arts & Education Kroc Centers location in underserved areas with member scholarships Partnerships and Collaborations --Public Schools --Search Institute Program	Monthly School Assemblies Regular Desk-Side Physical Activities Monthly Guided Fitness-Focused Kroc Center Field Trips	Kids will participate in fitness-focused assemblies at schools led by trained Kroc Center fitness staff 30 minutes per month Kids will participate in ten minute desk-side physical activities led by their classroom teacher five days per week Kids will participate in Guided Fitness-Focused Kroc Center Field Trips one-hour per month	Increased physical fitness test scores Increased levels of consistent physical activity --within required class curriculum --outside class Maintained or improved Body Mass Index (BMI) Increased consumption of regular fresh fruits and vegetables Reduced total daily “screen time”	50% of Participants demonstrate an increased ability to perform 2 or more tasks over baseline⁷ The number of minutes of physical activity kids engage in each month will increase by an average of 150 minutes⁷ 60% of kids will show maintained or improved Body Mass Index (BMI) 50% of kid’s diets will show increase in regular fresh fruits & vegetables⁸ 45% of participants will

⁷ As measured by the administration of four key elements of the State Physical Fitness Test (one mile run, curl ups, pushups, shoulder stretch)

⁸ As measured by Pre/Post Lifestyle Questionnaires and Kroc Fit Kids Healthy Lifestyle Journals

RESOURCES	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	INDICATORS
Resources --The Forty Developmental Assets --Organ Wise Guys Desk-Side Curriculum	allowing participation in Kroc Center after-school and weekend drop-in sports/fitness activities	Kids/parents will participate in FREE Family Fun Nights 1.5 hours per month Kids/parents will access Kroc Center Facilities and Professional Staff	Increased and maintained healthy living behaviors	reduce total screen time by at least 1 hour per day 60% of families improve healthy living scores on the Family Nutrition & Physical Activity Screening (FNPA)

Appendix B
The Salvation Army/Search Institute
Youth Asset Development Initiative
The Developmental Assets & Life Experiences Profile (DALEP)

Search Institute is an independent nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide catalytic leadership, breakthrough knowledge, and innovative resources to advance the health of children, families, and communities. To accomplish this mission, Search Institute conducts research, develops publications and practical tools, and provides training and technical assistance. The Institute collaborates with others to promote long-term organizational and cultural change that supports the healthy development of all children and adolescents

Developmental Assets represent the positive relationships, opportunities, skills and values that promote the positive development of all children and adolescents. The Developmental Assets framework grew out of Search Institute’s research over the past decade. The theoretical underpinnings of the framework reside in the research pertaining to risk and resiliency, prevention, and health promotion.

Search Institute’s Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) was developed in 2004. It is a 58-item survey (plus a handful of demographic questions) for 6th-12th graders that measures eight principal **asset categories**: support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity. The items can also be re-grouped to reflect youths’ asset experience in several environmental **contexts**: personal, social, family, school, and community. The survey was designed to be usable both for individual youth, for clinical purposes, and as an aggregate tool

for use with groups of young people. It also was expressly intended to be used in pre-post, change-over-time, and program evaluation settings. For these purposes, a 3-month minimum time between survey administrations is required.

The Developmental Assets & Life Experiences Profile (DALEP) used in the Salvation Army Youth Asset Development Initiative is comprised of the original 58-item DAP, with items slightly adapted for 4th-6th graders, and additional measures of five key outcomes identified by Salvation Army national and territorial leaders: school success, hopeful purpose, positive emotions, citizenship/civic engagement, and avoiding violence.