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Money & Mission



Editorial

Transparency & Impact

According to the Muttant Foundation's most recent Talking About Charities Survey, 95% of Canadians feel that it is important for charities to provide information about their impact, but only 36% believe that charities are doing so well.

Some people confuse impact with output. However, there is an important distinction between the two. Impact is about outcomes, rather than outputs. Outputs are things like



Giving Hope Today

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IN THE NEWS:

STATISTICS CANADA RELEASES NEW DATA ON CHARITABLE GIVING ----

Statistics Canada has released new information on charitable giving in Canada, based on its analysis of 2012 income tax returns. Both the amount donated to charities and the number of people donating fell during the year. Donations were \$8.3 million, down 1.9% from 2011. The number of Canadians claiming donations decreased by 1.4% to 5.6 million. The number of people reporting donations declined in every province and territory except Nunavut (+1.8%) and Alberta (+0.5%). Only 22.4% of all tax filers claimed charitable donations, compared with 23.0% in 2011.

DID YOU KNOW?

National Volunteer Week 2014 was celebrated last week, April 6-12. While it's too late for you to plan for this year's celebrations, it's never too late to say 'thank you' to the Army

number of meals served, pounds of clothing distributed, numbers of clients processed, etc. Outcomes are results oriented. They are what happen as a result of the provision of service. Outputs are short-term in nature; outcomes are focused on the long-term.

But, we all know that it's easier to measure outputs than outcomes. The impact of what we do is often more difficult to identify using traditional measurement approaches. How do you measure the impact on a family when a father undergoes a treatment program for his addictions, is able to gain employment and provide for his family again and be an active participant in the rearing of children? How could you measure that?

That's one problem; another is that, in the move to measure impact, we are faced with the inescapable reality that some of the people we serve will not be successful. Despite the best programming and support services, they will relapse. If our funders, both public and private, want to focus on results, is there a danger that those who are the most vulnerable, but also potentially the least successful, will be left behind? Could a focus on impact result in service providers shifting their focus to work only with those who have the greatest chance of being successful?

behind the Army, over 200,000 strong at last count, who help The Salvation Army give hope to the most disadvantaged in our society. When was the last time you said 'thank you'?

Comments, Suggestions?

Do you have comments on any of the topics raised in this issue, or suggestions for a future issue? Write to us at:

Money&Mission@can.salvationarmy.org.

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There is little doubt that donors want more information about results, and we will have little choice but to make that information available. However, this is not a case where we will be able to cite raw numbers and consider the job done. We will have much work to do to tell the story in a way that will be totally transparent about the results we achieve, while explaining carefully and persuasively why it is not reasonable for donors to expect 100% success in every case.

Please click [here](#) for back issues of *Money & Mission* or to see our index by topic.

For more information about the Finance Department please see visit <http://salvationist.ca/departments/finance/>.



Charity Corner

Relief Measures to Offset Postage Rate Increase

Canada Post has announced a series of measures in response to widespread concern over recently announced postage rate hikes, which took effect on March 31, 2014. The relief measures, which include both temporary postage discounts and permanent changes to minimum volume thresholds, will provide some relief for charities and small businesses that are most affected by the rate increases.

Temporary discounts to be in place until

December 31, 2014:

- *Stamps:* Organizations that hold a [VentureOne card](#), Canada Post's free loyalty card, will receive a five per cent discount when they purchase a minimum of 300 stamps in coils of 100 or more in a single transaction. The discount on coils will automatically be given at point of purchase. If you don't have a VentureOne card already, you'll need to apply for one to get the discount.
- *Meters:* Organizations using postage meters will receive a five per cent rebate on their first-class postage purchases up to a maximum of \$250. The rebate is given automatically to those who use postage meters between March 31 and December 31, 2014. Canada Post will administer the rebate at the end of the year based on your usage, either in the form of a credit on your account or through cheque.

Canada Post has said that it will be announcing more details on these two temporary discounts, but this is what we can expect.

Permanent reductions to minimum volume requirements

- *Incentive Machineable Lettermail*: The minimum volume threshold to access Incentive Machineable Lettermail, a category of first-class mail reserved for bulk customers, will be reduced from 5,000 pieces to 1,000 pieces.
- *Addressed Admail*: The minimum volume threshold to access Machineable Addressed Admail, a category of mail reserved for promotional content, such as fundraising appeals, will be reduced from 1,000 pieces to 500 pieces.

Special Feature

Budgets, Budgets, and More Budgets

The finance department would like to thank everyone involved for the many hours committed to completing budgets for the 2014/15 fiscal year. Including the departmental budgets prepared by many units, more than 1,000 budgets were submitted on behalf on ministry units. Budgets totaled \$444 million dollars, up 1.3% from the prior year. As a percentage of total ministry unit budgets, divisional grants amounting to \$47 million remained relatively unchanged, decreasing slightly from 10.7% to 10.5%.

We saw several positive trends in this year's budgets. The total number of deficit budgets over \$1,000 decreased from 66 to 52. The average dollar value of these deficits also decreased slightly from \$49k to \$47k. Only 11 of the submitted deficit budgets were not approved and were returned for clarification. The remainder all had sufficient reserves to meet three months' operations, in accordance with territorial budget objectives. The number of units unable to meet the three month operating reserve decreased from 178 to 155.

One less positive trend is the decline in self-supporting corps whose numbers fell from 73% to 69% in the 2014/15 budget year. This means an increase in the number of corps looking for DHQ assistance that cannot be supported by community service work.

In prior year, many units have submitted adjustments to their budgets if conditions change during the year. The Finance department discourages the submission of amended budgets, and would prefer that results out of line to the original budgets be treated as explainable variances. Change in activity levels should be captured in next year's budget, unless there are inherent requirements by funders to provide an amended budget.

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