

GIVING RESOURCE

How To *Evaluate a Ministry*

There are some key questions that should be asked when a donor evaluates a ministry prior to making a donation. These questions are designed to solicit sufficient information to develop answers to these two broad issues:

- ✓ Is this a ministry in which I am interested?
- ✓ Is it worthy of my support?

Several areas are not covered here, including research into the organization's legal status, membership in accrediting bodies, comparison with alternate entities, review of finances, operational audit, or compliance with various external standards. A philanthropic consultant can perform this type of due diligence, if necessary.

However, asking the following questions and listening closely to the answers will provide a good indication of whether a particular ministry is of interest and worthy of support. Further detailed analysis is necessary for a major gift.

WHAT DO YOU DO?

- ✓ What is the purpose of the ministry? What change in persons' lives do you seek to accomplish?
- ✓ Whom do you serve? Where do they live? What are their characteristics and needs?
- ✓ What are your goals for the next 1-3 years?

HOW DO YOU DO IT?

- ✓ What programs, products, or projects do you use to accomplish your purpose?
- ✓ How are your products or services distributed or marketed? How do the people you serve get to participate in your ministry?
- ✓ How are you organized to accomplish your purpose?

HOW ARE YOU OPERATED?

- ✓ What are the qualifications of senior management?
- ✓ Who is on your board? How often does it meet?
- ✓ Do you use standard business practices regarding your finances (budgeting, controls, reporting, audited statements, etc.)?

HOW EFFECTIVE ARE YOU?

- ✓ What outcomes or measures of effectiveness can you provide?
- ✓ What "smart money" have you attracted to support your cause?
- ✓ How is the organization growing? Income? Persons served? Measured outcomes?

CALVIN EDWARDS
& COMPANY
Maximizing the Good of Giving

Post Office Box 88472 Atlanta, GA 30356