



Press Release
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Discovery, argument and action: how civil society responds to changing needs
by Julie Caulier-Grice, Geoff Mulgan and Dan Vale

A new report released today by the Young Foundation launches a major 18 month study on Britain's changing and emerging needs, supported by ten foundations, including the ESRC and the Big Lottery Fund. New data included in the report shows that family and friends remain the most important source of support – but are largely ignored by policy makers – and that a million people in Britain have no one to turn to in a crisis.

The report, published today with support from Carnegie UK Trust, examines how civil society responds to changing needs and is part of the launch of a major survey of Britain's needs which will be underway over the next 18 months.

The survey has been designed to look at changing and emerging needs, including psychological as well as material needs, and the needs of people not included in official registers and statistics. The survey will include forecasts of which needs are likely to become more pressing over the next 5-10 years.

This represents a unique collaboration between a large number of foundations and will provide an independent view of who's falling behind, in line with the great British tradition of surveys from Booth and Rowntree a century ago to the work of Peter Townsend and Michael Young in the twentieth century. Its senior advisers include Lord Moser, Karen Dunnell (Head of the Office of National Statistics) and Norman Glass.

In parallel *Discovery, argument and action: how civil society responds to changing needs* provides an analysis of the different roles of civil society organizations in discovering needs, campaigning, innovating new solutions and delivering services. The report includes data from an Ipsos/MORI survey showing that by a long margin the most important support for meeting needs comes from friends and family, not from the state, or organized religion. The people most at risk are those without strong networks of support – yet informal support has been a blind spot for policy-makers. The survey shows that over the course of a year, 9 million people experienced feeling lonely at weekends and 18% of people aged 55 and over admitted going a full day without speaking to anyone. And around a million (2%) said they had no one to turn to in a personal crisis.

The report also warns that civil society organisations, and their assets, can sometimes become frozen around past needs rather than current ones – and argues that the new

public benefit test needs to be vigorously used to spur charities and foundations to focus on the contemporary needs that matter most.

Notes to Editors:

- This independent report was commissioned by the **Carnegie UK Trust**, but does not necessarily reflect the views of the Trust, its staff or Trustees or of the Inquiry into the Future of Civil Society in the UK and Ireland.
- The full report is available in PDF format from the **Young Foundation website** (www.youngfoundation.org).
- The **Mapping Unmet and Emerging Needs research programme** is funded by a unique consortium of twelve major foundations: Baring Foundation; Barrow Cadbury Trust; Bedford Charity; Big Lottery Fund; City Bridge Trust; City Parochial foundation; Comic Relief; ESRC; John Lyons' charity; Joseph Rowntree Foundation; Northern Rock Foundation, and Wates Foundation.
- Members of the programme's Academic Advisory Board include Lord Moser, Karen Dunnell, Norman Glass, Prof Ian Gough, Prof Roger Jowell, Prof Ruth Lister, Prof Danny Dorling, Prof Suzanne Fitzpatrick, Prof Peter-Taylor-Gooby and Prof Mike Savage.
- For further information please contact Natalia Chan at the Young Foundation on 020 8709 9265 or natalia.chan@youngfoundation.org.