

Table 2:
Characteristics
of programs/
projects

	Faith-saturated	Faith-centered
Religious environment (building, name, religious symbols)	Usually	Usually
Religious content of program	In addition to acts of compassion and care, also includes explicitly religious, mandatory content integrated throughout the program; staff and participants are expected to take part in religious activities and discussions of faith	In addition to acts of compassion and care, also includes explicitly religious content that is usually integrated with social service provision, but may be segregated into separate components. Participants have the option not to take part in religious activities. Staff may initiate discussions of faith or invite participants to religious activities outside the program
Main form of integration of religious content with other program components *See Addendum	Integrated/mandatory (engagement with explicitly religious content is required of all participants)	Integrated/optional or invitational (engagement of participants with explicitly religious content is optional, or takes place in activities outside program parameters)
Expected connection between religious content and desired outcome	Expectation of explicitly religious experience or change, and belief that this is essential to desired outcome	Strong hope for explicitly religious experience or change, and belief that this significantly contributes to desired outcome

1 This Typology identifies the visibly expressive ways that religion may be present in a community-serving organization or program. The categories are not necessarily meant to be interpreted from left to right as being “more” to “less” religious. Some faiths express their religiosity in less visibly evident ways than others; faith-based organizations and programs that are deeply rooted in these traditions may be located more toward the center of the Typology, without diminishing their religious nature.

2 Few actual organizations or programs fit perfectly into any abstract type. Many organizations and programs will display characteristics from more than one type, but a few characteristics belong with another. Classifying an entity entails looking at its overall pattern of religious characteristics or identifying the type where its most significant characteristics fall.

Faith-related	Faith background	Faith-secular partnership	Secular
Often	Sometimes	Sometimes (program administration is usually located in a secular environment, while program activities may be located in a religious environment)	No
The religious component is primarily in acts of compassion and care. Little (entirely optional) or no explicitly religious activities or discussions of faith initiated by staff as part of the program. Staff may invite participants to religious activities outside program parameters, or hold informal religious conversations with participants	No explicitly religious content in program. Religious materials or resources may be available to participants who seek them out. The religious component is seen primarily in the motivation of individual staff members	No explicitly religious content in program activities designed by secular partners; faith partners sometimes supplement with optional religious resources and activities.	No religious content
Invitational or relational (virtually all engagement of participants with explicitly religious content takes place in optional activities outside the program, or in informal relationships cultivated with staff)	Implicit (participants only encounter religious content if they seek it out)	Implicit, invitational, or relational, depending on volunteers/staff of the faith partner	None
Little expectation that explicitly religious experience or change is necessary for desired outcome. Some believe that acts of compassion alone (without a verbal religious component) have a spiritual impact that contributes significantly to desired outcome	No expectation that explicitly religious experience or change is needed for desired outcome	No expectation that religious experience or change is needed for desired outcome, but the faith of volunteers from religious partners is expected to add value to the program	No expectation of religious change or experience

3 The Typology is divided into two sections: characteristics of organizations, and characteristics of programs/projects. The organizational section focuses on features related to administration, sponsorship, personnel, and resources; the program/project section focuses on the integration of religious content into service provision. This division reflects the fact that organizations may run programs that have a different set of faith characteristics. For example, a faith-centered organization may run a program that is faith-background in nature, or a secular organization such as a community hospital might operate a 12-step addiction treatment program (which courts have held to be religious in nature). An organization may also run several different programs, each falling into a different category.

