UNDERSTANDING EFFECTIVE SOCIAL SERVICE

When American Islamic centers place an emphasis on community service, they become more than just places of prayer—they become hubs of hope.

CASE STUDY: SHARE Center
Lexington, Kentucky
A Muslim-run social service center open to all, with a special focus on former inmates

In the area around SHARE Center,
- 40% of individuals
- 31% of families
- 51% of children fall below the federal poverty line.

SHARE at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People Served</th>
<th>1% Muslim</th>
<th>99% Non-Muslim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014 Total Clients Served</td>
<td>3815</td>
<td>4853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 Total Clients Served</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 Free Lunches Served</td>
<td>131 hired</td>
<td>288 hired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 Increasingly Successful Job Placement</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>66%</td>
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</tbody>
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ISPU researchers asked: “What lessons can be learned from SHARE Center’s success?”

1. Have a Clear Mission/Vision
   and communicate them effectively. This helps ensure buy-in and consistent support from the community.

2. Include Diverse Perspectives
   Diverse actors—African American and first-generation immigrant Muslims—were key ingredients to SHARE Center’s success.

3. Assess Community Needs
   and direct services accordingly. SHARE’s services reflect the most urgent needs of its neighborhood.

4. Expertise Matters
   SHARE Center actively recruited community members who understood the needs of their target population.

5. Diversify Clientele
   while maintaining organization’s identity. SHARE Center is open to all but maintains its identifying link to the Muslim community.

6. Empower the Community
   SHARE Center provides a platform to support new service initiatives like the weekly free lunch and free medical clinic.

7. Hire at Least One Staff Member
   Having a paid executive director has been instrumental to SHARE’s success.

8. Cultivate a Strong Financial Base
   Transparent, consistent communication keeps donors aware of the center’s impact.

9. Build Partnerships
   All of SHARE’s most successful programs rely on effective partnerships.

Interested in turning your mosque into a hub of hope? Visit: www.ispu.org/RMS.