

## The golden rules of faith-based community development

- ✓ Good development work is only possible once you have earned the trust and respect of the community, or group you are working with.
- ✓ Get to know the neighbourhood in which you are working. A community worker needs an informed understanding of the make-up and geography of the community, its issues and infrastructure.
- ✓ When working with minority ethnic and faith communities, workers should have some insights into cultural norms, practices and language. However, all learning is acquired, so make a start by introducing yourself to local groups and organisations; and ask questions. This process needs to be repeated when working with new communities, or in new neighbourhoods, no matter how experienced the worker is.
- ✓ Observe equal opportunity principles: do not discriminate against people on the basis of race, class, gender, religion, disability, culture, or sexual orientation.
- ✓ It is both common and desirable for community workers to develop friendships within the communities they support. It is also important to maintain professional boundaries, and some degree of professional distance.
- ✓ Be clear about your aims and objectives, but avoid making promises.
- ✓ Paid workers need to be aware of their limitations, as they usually have to work within defined parameters.
- ✓ Communities, even those that have high levels of needs, may not want your involvement. Do not insist on trying to help them.