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SOCIAL WORK OF CHARITY ORGANIZATIONS FOR THE HOMELESS IN SILESIA (POLAND)

Abstract. Despite the entry of humanity into the next millennium and the visible progress of civilization in many areas, the basic existential problems of the world population not only could not be solved, but their dynamic development was revealed. One of them turns out to be the housing issue, where millions of people in the world continue to vegetate without shelter. According to the data of the Iusticia et Pax commission, at the end of the last century, nearly a fifth of the world's population was deprived of decent housing conditions. According to the data of the Iusticia et Pax commission, at the end of the last century, nearly a fifth of the world's population was deprived of decent housing conditions, and almost half of the world's population vegetated in slums or ghettos of big cities in conditions unworthy of man (Głod, 2008). Nowadays, homelessness has become an important social problem, mutually intertwining in cause and effect with unemployment, poverty and many other social pathologies, such as alcoholism, drug addiction, venereal diseases and HIV, family breakdown and crime. On a global scale, the problem is exacerbated by epidemics (Covid-19), war cataclysms and mass displacement of people. The phenomenon of homelessness occurs both in poor and rich societies, being the subject of research interest in such disciplines as sociology, economics, law, psychology, social policy or social work. Experts from various disciplines try to name this problem in various ways, but the dozen of the presented definitions do not change the fact that the concept of homelessness is generally legible in the social perception, which is why the author decided to omit numerous definitions and typologies of the phenomenon, as not very useful in the framework of the assumptions of this study, accepting homelessness as a negation of the basic human right, i.e. the right to have a stable and safe place of existence. The main assumption here is an attempt to show and evaluate the work of social services in specific Polish conditions.

The main research problem for the author is the answer to the question whether and how three selected charities cope with the current socio-political and economic situation.

Key words: charity organization; client; homelessness; social assistance; social contract; social work; streetworking; volunteers.

Introduction

The subject of social welfare are people who, in the vast majority of cases, often without their own will or for external reasons, create the population of the homeless. At the turn of the last century and the present, in Poland the scale of homelessness increased. A serious social problem arose, more broadly - a humanitarian one. The optics of the issue have also changed:

whereas previously the homeless group was traditionally composed of mainly alcoholics, former prisoners, the sick and mentally handicapped people, nowadays the ranks of the homeless are also joined by unpunished people, without addictions, without pathological burdens and relatively young. The causes of the phenomenon are believed to be the systemic transformations in the country taking place at that time. In the second decade of this century, the number of homeless people in Poland is estimated at around 100,000, in the Silesia Voivodeship alone nearly 5,000 were disclosed, and almost 700 in the city of Katowice. In total, around 100 organizations in the country are involved in helping the homeless, including well-known organizations such as the Polish Red Cross, Monar, Caritas Poland or the Brother Albert Aid Society. One should recall here a definition that describes an organization as a separate whole of human activity, with a specific structure, directed at achieving a certain goal. A distinction is made between: the attribute-based approach (valuing each organization in terms of goals, the way it is organized and related to the environment), the material approach (organization as an institution, e.g. Caritas) and functional understanding - that is the act of organizing something. (Enciclopedia, 1981).

Research methodology

The research problem posed was focused on the issue of the functioning and prospects of charity organizations, so the research methodology was focused on a rich theoretical (literature) and practical source material, in the form of numerous conversations and discussions with social workers and environmental interviews in shelters. Useful for generalizations of assessments and diagnoses turned out to be a SWOT analysis.

Study of the problem and its assessment

In this analysis, the author decided to focus on three organizations in the attribute sense (i.e. without going into the details of their structure or management method). These are organizations, the common feature of which is, in a broad sense, multifaceted charitable activities, and each of them also provides social work in the environment of the homeless. These are: (1) Municipal Social Assistance Center (MSAC) in Katowice, (2) Caritas of the Katowice Archdiocese (CKA), (3) Brother Albert's Aid Society (BAS).

Municipal Social Assistance Center-Katowice offers a wide range of social assistance in such areas as: - preparing a good start for children and young people staying in the so-called foster care, - family benefits and housing allowances, - affairs of disabled people (adjudication of disability, parking cards, care allowances), psychological and legal counseling).

MSAC projects are implemented on the basis of European Funds. Social work with the homeless is dealt with by a separate department, where, on the basis of many years of

observation, the population of the homeless in Katowice was divided into four groups for practical reasons: A / People for whom homelessness is the result of a fatal coincidence in life; B / Homeless people who owe their status to falling into social pathologies - mainly alcoholism; C / homeless people of their own choice, thanks to their characteristics; D / Foreigners. The above gradation turned out to be very useful in making decisions about providing emergency aid and undertaking social work with the client in order to overcome homelessness.

It turns out that group "A", about 20% of the homeless community in Katowice, is basically the only one that can be permanently collaborated with, hoping for positive results. Starting from providing shelter at the elementary level - 4 temporary shelters and heating rooms, bathhouses, free meals in special eateries, through 24-hour care in 3 shelters for homeless men, women and women with children, with the provision of an assistant service, cooperation with the client is carried out on the basis of a social contract. The assumption is that the client gradually becomes independent and further social work in support groups. Social work aimed at this environment must be well planned and selective, because the effect of social policy should be a permanent exit from homelessness. The priority task of social work is to focus on micro-environments of homeless families. Obtaining a flat, even a substitute one, is a milestone towards leaving homelessness. Parallel to this, the MSAC works to take up gainful employment. The results achieved in the second decade of this century are encouraging, as on average around 40 families have been able to say goodbye to homelessness annually.

In relation to other groups of the "A" group, following the example of the centers of social policy in Germany and Benelux, on the basis of a social experiment in Katowice, the so-called collective housing for single men, because they constitute nearly 9/10 of the homeless population. Several years of experience have unfortunately shown that still 1/3 are cases of non-compliance with the norms of social life. However, thanks to this lifetime chance, 200 people emerged from the state of homelessness. The positive aspects of MSAC's work include successful attempts to involve the homeless in the broadly understood educational process.

The aforementioned groups: "B", "C" and "D", as not very susceptible to cooperation with social assistance, can also count on some support from the MSAC through access to emergency centers and social work - streetworking services. (Ratajczak, 2015).

Social welfare centers, as discussed above, operate in cities and municipalities throughout Poland, while remaining under the direct authority of local government bodies (in the absence of a centralized structure), they are functionally supervised by the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Policy.

Caritas of the Katowice Archdiocese - is a charitable organization of the Catholic Church, which covers the area of the Archdiocese and operates within the framework of Caritas Polska on a national scale. Caritas P. is supervised by the Polish Bishops' Conference. Despite the area of activity similar to MSAC, CKA focuses in exenso on charity issues, extending it to pastoral work with charges and educational work with children and youth from pathological families, working in poverty enclaves. The point is that in a socially and physically degenerated environment, the scarcity should not be transferred to the next generation in the period of its adolescence and result in poverty

in the next generation. For this purpose, 5 community centers were established in Katowice, where schoolchildren whose parents are unable to provide them with basic existential needs. Care is also provided to children with behavioral disorders, coming from dysfunctional families, with pathologies of the family system, such as poverty, unemployment or alcoholism. This profile of Caritas differs from the broader subject in which the aforementioned MSAG specializes, however, similarly to him, he deals with social work among the homeless. An environmental self-help house operates in this field, as a support center for day stay and social activation of adults with intellectual disabilities. In addition, there are 2 day nursing homes providing basic food (or rehabilitation) for the elderly, the lonely, the sick and the disabled, as well as allowing 25 people to stay 24 hours a day. Regardless of this, there is a shelter for 50 homeless men all year round (Caritas, 2020).

Here it is appropriate to refer to the social encyclical of Benedict XVI of 2009 "Caritas in Veritate", where "Love is the royal way of the Church's social doctrine" in relation to every person, especially the unfortunate one.

Brother Albert's Aid Society - is a Catholic charity organization, which in 1981 - as the first non-governmental structure in Poland, set its goal to help the homeless and the poor. In addition, he is committed to helping single mothers, victims of violence, children from poor families, and people.

It is a public benefit organization based in Wrocław. It has 66 field clubs, has 900 members, 2,000 volunteers and numerous institutions throughout the country. (Sledzianowski 2006) The extensive logistic facilities of BAS in Poland include 42 shelters and 9 adaptive flats, a shelter with night shelters, 15 night shelters, 2 night shelters with heating rooms, 8 heating rooms (for women and mothers with children), 1 night shelter, 7 houses for the elderly and the sick, 1 orphanage with a sheltered apartment for adult foster children, 13 kitchens and eateries, 22 clothing dispensing points, 8 bathhouses, 2 social integration centers, 10 children's clubs and 1 for adults. The Society provides legal, psychological and medical assistance as well as religious service to its charges. It is worth emphasizing that an average of 3.5 thousand people stay in its houses and night shelters a day (Brother Albert's Aid Society, 2022).

At the end of the last century, there was a dynamic increase in the number of the homeless, causing a significant concentration in shelters in large cities, then the first psychologists, social workers and addiction therapists appeared in shelters. As a result of their social work, a group of people emerged who, after treatment, often with modest incomes, still stayed in these shelters. Another initiative towards independence was the creation of hostels and sheltered flats for them. The three above-mentioned organizations: MSAC - local government, CKA and BAS - Catholic are characterized by the fact that they are public benefit organizations in terms of their legal status and operate in the field of social assistance, performing de facto charitable functions. Their common feature is also the fact that a significant part of their goals - each of them - are achieved through social work for the environment of the homeless. In this work, the primary, target task is to lead the clients' wards to a full-fledged return to life in the society. It is a highly complex activity, extended in time and dependent on numerous factors, because homelessness and its inherent pathologies intertwine, being both a cause and a result for each other. Due to similar goals, methods and forms of operation,

there is a clear convergence in the functioning of the entities in question. There is no significant difference with regard to the territorial scope of the activities of MSAC and CKA (centers in Katowice), compared to the national work area of BAS, where several dozen field offices have recently been granted legal personality, for greater flexibility and effectiveness.

For the aforementioned reasons, the author did not see any purposefulness in the separate characteristics of each of these organizations and therefore made an en bloc assessment. From the perspective of the potential results of social work, it is worth returning to the above-mentioned division of the homeless population into 4 groups.

Group "A" - homeless people, as a result of an unfavorable coincidence, turn out to be the most susceptible to social work and it is in this community that the positive effects of this work are achieved. It is worth recalling here an analogy to the biologism of Herbert Spencer, where rehabilitation after traumas should be relatively quick in order to be effective. Many years of observations and research confirm the thesis that the earlier the stage of homelessness the social rehabilitation process begins, the sooner positive results can be expected, counting on the return after "recycling" to an open society of marginalized outsiders. A contrario, rehabilitation with "unrepentant" homeless people with many years of experience is slow and usually ends with a failure.

There is little chance for positive results of social work in the long-term, working with people, "B", who have fallen into social pathologies (alcoholism), "C" - are homeless by their own choice (personal characteristics), or with "D" - are foreigners "without shelter". The "B" and "C" subgroups do not show interest in a permanent change of the current status, while "D" - foreigners treat Poland as a transit country to Western or Northern Europe. There is a common belief in society that in order to restore the homeless to normal life, simple solutions should be used: it is enough to provide them with jobs and housing and the problem will disappear. However, life shows that in such cases the medical maxim "sublata causa, tollitur effectus" often fails. Experience often teaches that, incidentally, there are individuals who can make a den of the obtained place, and with a demanding attitude towards the world, they do not intend to do any work because it requires effort. The reasons should be sought much deeper, in the mental sphere of many homeless people, in their personality traits. It turns out that satisfying existential needs is by no means a sine qua non condition for further positive effects of resocialization (Glod, 2008).

In previous considerations, the majority of attention was devoted to positive (generally) work results, somehow organic, discussed three public benefit organizations. Currently, the right time has come to look at them from an attribute and material perspective. The most important of organizational factors is the human factor, i.e. intellectual potential that allows organization to function properly and develop. Appropriate infrastructure that resists the conditions of activity is also of great importance. A popular saying probably sounds right: "There is no man - there is an organization" (i.e. the way the whole is organized), where all components, through their own communication formulas, with the awareness of goals, carry out the goals and tasks of the organization as a system. These general truths refer to all organizations, regardless of the sphere of activity. SWOT analysis, usually used in the early stages of marketing planning or in the decision making process, may be useful for certain

assessments and forecasts. Adopting this analysis to other fields, indicating the areas of life: client/group/community, allows you to get to know the client better, make him aware of his resources and restrictions and provide effective help (as part of coaching). This understood diagnosis already bears all prerequisites for therapy.

Although the characterized organizations: MSAC, CKA and BAS already have a long-term period of activity behind them, to assess their potential, place now and in the future, you can, no less, with a certain degree of tolerance, be tempted to make a descriptive analysis in the aspect of strong pages (S), weak (W), opportunities (O) and threats (T) (Slownik, 2007).

(S) Strengths of these entities - this is accumulated for decades, their huge organizational potential, which consists primarily of: highly-specified and professionally prepared staff, numerous hosts involved in the work of volunteers, an efficient organizational structure adapted to goals and tasks, innovation-innovation-trends in EU social policy (creating collective apartments for homeless men, substitute flats for homeless families, protected readaptation apartments or hostels for people after rehabilitation therapy, educational and pastoral work with socially excluded people, preventive work with young people from the margins).

Unlike production or commercial companies, charity organizations as non-profit units ex definitione depend on external financial power. In the case of the above-mentioned revenues and subsidies from the central and local government budget different levels are > 90% of revenues. The remaining 1/10 part consists of donations and targeted subsidies, as well as minor revenues from paid activities. In this situation, there is a strong addiction to financial factors, which, despite being external -they include development opportunities and hence -as uncertain -were included in the weak pages (W) This should be supplemented that in recent years a clear policy of central authorities must be observed to gradually shift the burden of social activities to local government structures, while reducing revenues to local budgets. Local authorities often lack the causative force in the battle for financial resources. The subject of Benedict XVI is in the subject, who stated: "In the era of globalization, social protection and social care systems are struggling with financial problems, which puts into questioning the fulfillment of fulfilling their statutory tasks" (Benedykt, 2010).

(O) In a group of opportunities, all achievements in the field of organic work with exclusion and marginalization in the homeless environment through therapeutic, educational and pastoral work should be placed. As a result, a certain percentage of people excluded from life in society manages to return to his womb permanently. Based on experience, it can be assumed that it bodes well for the future and allows you to have reasonable hope that these opportunities will grow. Unfortunately, there are still threats (W), which is systematically growing of alienated and homeless people, and this population are subgroups: "B", "C" and "D". As we know, as we know, un susceptible to cooperation with social assistance and they undergo a small extent the process of social rehabilitation.

Conclusion

In the assessment of the achievements of the Municipal Social Welfare Center in Katowice, Caritas of the Archdiocese of Katowice and Brother Albert Aid Society A

rather optimistic conclusion appears as a research paradigm and strictly pragmatic. In the basis of empirical obtained, it can be assumed that a certain part of the homeless qualifies to return to the mainstream of life in society. The basis turns out to be evolutionary out of homelessness and in parallel capture maintenance measures, i.e. the order - first work, and only then the benefits.

The positive role that Caritas plays in the field of educational work with children and young people from poor, pathological environments preventing the growth of the next generations of the homeless deserves clearly (Ratajczak, 2015).

In conclusion : these considerations, the author allows himself to express the assumption that he managed to achieve the assumed research problem by presenting the results of the work of charitable organizations and by assessing them in terms of their achievements and in the perspective of threats.

Finishing thoughts, the author proposes to end them with a certain English life motto, probably current timeless, the author proposes to end them with a certain English life motto, probably timeless, and even more so in the field of difficult social work: "If we can't do as we would, we must do as we can". For the sake of completeness: This type of research generally boils down to an axiological approach to the presented subject of research, which can sometimes be difficult, when due to the lack of sufficient data, not all features can be quantified. For this reason, in the given task, the author abandoned quantitative analysis in favor of qualitative research.

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СОЦІАЛЬНА РОБОТА БЛАГОДІЙНИХ ОРГАНІЗАЦІЙ ДЛЯ БЕЗДОМНИХ У СИЛЕЗІЇ (ПОЛЬЩА)

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Анотація. Незважаючи на вступ людства в наступне тисячоліття і помітний прогрес цивілізації в багатьох сферах, основні екзистенціальні проблеми населення світу не тільки не вдалося вирішити, але виявилось їх динамічний розвиток. Однією з них виявляється житлова проблема, коли мільйони людей у світі продовжують вегетувати без житла. За даними комісії *Iustitia et Pax*, наприкінці минулого століття майже п'ята частина населення світу була позбавлена гідних житлових умов і майже половина населення світу жила в нетрях або гетто великих міст в умовах, негідних людини. У наш час безпритульність стала важливою соціальною проблемою, яка причинно-наслідково переплітається з безробіттям, бідністю та багатьма іншими патологіями, такими як алкоголізм, наркоманія, венеричні захворювання та ВІЛ, розпад сімей і злочинність. У глобальному масштабі проблему загострюють епідемії (Covid-19), воєнні катаклізми та масове переміщення людей. Феномен бездомності зустрічається як у бідних, так і в багатих суспільствах, будучи предметом дослідницького інтересу в таких дисциплінах, як соціологія, економіка, право, психологія, соціальна політика або соціальна робота. Фахівці з різних дисциплін намагаються називати цю проблему по-різному, але десятки представлених визначень не змінюють того факту, що поняття бездомності загалом є зрозумілим у соціальному сприйнятті, тому автор вирішив опустити численні визначення та типології бездомності. Явище, як не дуже корисне в припущенні цього дослідження, сприйняття бездомності як заперечення основних прав людини, тобто. права мати стабільне та безпечне місце існування.

Основним припущенням тут є спроба показати та оцінити роботу соціальних служб у конкретних польських умовах. Основною проблемою дослідження для автора є відповідь на питання, чи справляються три вибрані благодійні організації з поточною соціально-політичною та економічною ситуацією.

Ключові слова: благодійна організація; клієнт; бездомність; соціальна допомога; соціальна робота; волонтери; контракт соціальний.

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