



CAPACITY STRENGTHENING PROJECT REPORT

February 2004 – January 2007

New Zealand Federation of Family Budgeting Services Inc.

This information is **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL** to the NZ Federation of Family Budgeting Services Inc.

I. Introduction

The Capacity Strengthening Report 2007 is a report card on how well the Federation did in providing regional Field Officers in four of our seven regions between February 2004 and January 2007 for the purposes of supporting and assisting Member Budget Services to strengthen their capacities, improve their community budgeting services, and promote the Membership to other organisations.

This report will examine the results of the ten outcome areas the regional Field Officers provided support in highlighting achievements, successes and lessons learnt. A range of statistical indicators have been used to measure progress towards these outcomes. This report has been compiled from a wide range of sources including Field Officer monthly reporting statistics, Field Officer, CEO and Project Manager National Board reports, Membership satisfaction surveys, and annual stakeholder reports. This report will provide an overall measure of project performance and identify recommendations for proposed changes and future steps.

II. Background

The Capacity Strengthening Project was conceptualised as a result of trends and facts emerging from annual statistical analyses of Budgeting Services' operations, from the findings in 2003 of the social audit of the Federation and 21 of its Affiliated Services, and feedback from District Representatives and Management Committee workshops. This feedback indicated a continuous **decline in volunteer budget advisers** over the preceding 10 years; the **reliance on voluntary efforts** raised quality concerns, conflicts in auditing and advocacy; and service **viability issues** around recruitment, training and funding. To address these trends in budgeting and to increase support to community budgeting organisations the Strengthening Capacity Project, aka the Field Officer Project, was proposed.

The initial proposal was to engage three part-time employees who would travel extensively within zones to work with current Members and with organisations with the potential to offer budgeting. This was reduced to two Field Officers to accommodate funding secured. Specifically, these staff would offer hands-on help with:

- Access to training funding and training courses.
- Recruitment initiatives.
- Access to community funding.
- Support for the District Representatives elected by the Budget Services.
- Negotiation of localised accords.
- Profiling budgeting.
- Rationalisation of Services.
- Achievement of best practice.
- Support and coaching of Management Committees and Service Coordinators.

The proposal was approved and jointly funded by the Tindal Foundation and initially CYF, now FACs (MSD), plus Federation reserves and smaller funding grants. The various outcome areas reported on in this document were negotiated with both stakeholders. The contract was signed in November 2003.

The project commenced in February 2004 with the engagement of two Field Officers on 25 hours per week each: one for the Auckland Metropolitan region, the other for the Wellington/top of South Island region. In 2005 the Federation engaged a third Field Officer for the Midland region. A replacement Field Officer for the Wellington/Southern region was also employed. Restructuring in May 2006 resulted in the Auckland Field Officer employed as the dedicated Manager of the Project (0.25 FTE) and the replacement Auckland Field Officer has since branched into the Northern Region.

III. Highlights

Top 3 Significant Project Successes

Project Success	Factors That Supported Success
<p>Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 87 funding applications were assisted under affiliates' names. - \$216,279 was the total grants/funding approved from the \$425,250 sought through funding applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field Officers' knowledge and advice of funding opportunities and relationships with Funders. - Field Officers' hands-on, 1:1 approach. - Development and delivery of standardised funding seminar and workshop for Services.
<p>Recruitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 112 affiliates' recruitment plans were assisted - 279 new Budget Adviser trainees were recruited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field Officers' knowledge of effective recruitment methods. - Field Officers' coordination and campaigning skills. - Field Officers' ability to get people to work collaboratively.
<p>Coaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There was a 270% increase in demand for coaching across the 3 years. - The upward trend suggests a potential 100-105 coaching acceptances for the 2007/08 period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field Officers' building strong relationships. - Field Officers' knowledge on wide variety of topics and issues, both governance and service management. - Field Officers' ability to get people to work collaboratively

Other Notable Project Successes

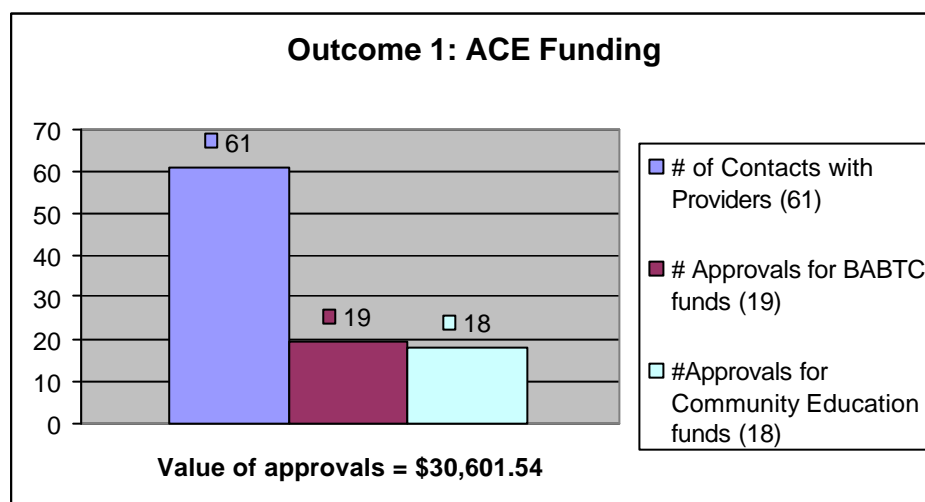
Project Success	Factors That Supported Success
<p>Service Reviews / Audits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 52 Service Reviews conducted 	Field Officers' knowledge on wide variety of topics and issues, both governance and service management.
<p>Supporting Services in crisis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Six Services rescued from impending closure. 	Field Officers' knowledge and advice of funding opportunities and relationships with funders. Field Officers' abilities to mentor, coach and guide services in crises
<p>Profiling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 755 articles carried in the media - 42 public meetings addressed 	Field Officers trying differing approaches, using proven media methods.

IV. Impact and Outcomes achieved

Outcome # 1: That all approved secondary and tertiary institutions offering adult education are contacted and annual programmes for both Budget Adviser training (initial and refresher) and community budgeting education are approved with full funding.

This outcome has five different activity areas: contact with providers, number of approvals for Budget Advisor Basic Training Course (BABTC), approvals for ongoing, approvals for community education, and approval amounts.

3 year results



Field Officers have worked to develop and maintain strong relationships to ensure continued support from their Adult Community Education (ACE) Providers. One such relationship allowed for the flexible use of funding – the Field Officer was facing the prospect of having to return unused BABTC funds so negotiated with the Provider to use the funds to sponsor a local Budget Service staff member to conference. In the first year a Field Officer was successful in obtaining funding totaling \$4500.00 from the Tertiary Education Commission for four regional BABTCs.

An area not requiring Field Officer support was in assisting Services to obtain ongoing training course funds as it was identified that they were adequately able to meet these costs themselves.

The noticeable decline in funding for community education funds in 2005/06 was not as a result of an unavailability of funds, more a reflection of the difficulties of attracting learners to the course.

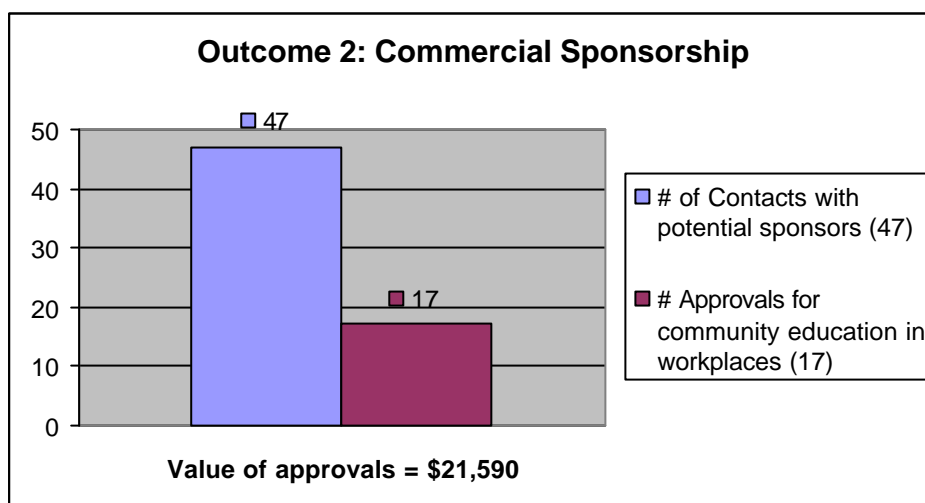
A valuable outcome and benefit was teaching, coaching and encouraging Services to apply for funding themselves directly from their ACE Providers. Another related outcome as a result of securing ACE funding was that this allowed for the Field Officers to provide better use and value for the funding obtained by developing and co-coordinating regional training calendars,

The success of this outcome can be attributed to Field Officers who are actively involved with the ACE networks in their regions. Through this they have secured a significant amount of funding which has directly benefited Services that otherwise would have had to meet these costs themselves.

Outcome # 2: That relevant commercial and industrial organisations are contacted for sponsorship of both on-site and community-based community budgeting education.

This outcome has three different activity areas: contacts with potential sponsors, number of approvals, and approval amounts.

3 year results



In 2004 potential sponsors included Interlock Industries offering budgeting for change as part of their redundancy packages. The Lions of Wellington and ANZ also provided sponsorship for community education.

In 2005 larger organisations including NZ Post, The Warehouse, Nestlé, and Hubbards showed some interest with NZ Post and Nestle paying to Services for one hour workshops.

In 2006 organisations included Ministry of Social Development Northern Debt Recovery Unit and Odyssey House.

This proved to be one of the more involved outcomes for Field Officers. As the project progressed it became apparent that these relationships take some time to build, nurture and coordinate and do not always eventuate in progressing through to this desired outcome.

It was evident from enquiries made that there is potential interest within the commercial and industrial sectors for our community education training which is yet to be explored.

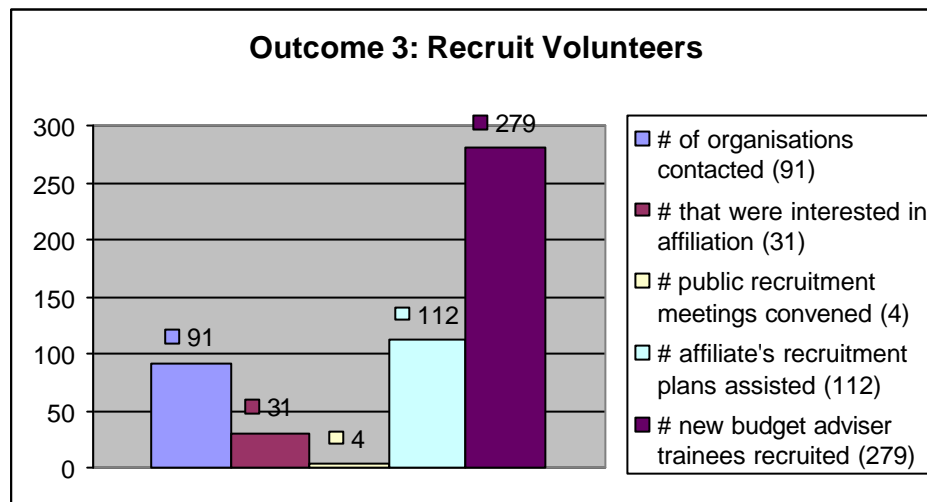
Factors that impacted on this outcome were the shortage and availability of experienced educators and course size, structure and timing issues. A future refocusing on the Federation's ability to better deliver community education training should produce further future results in this outcome area.

That said Field Officers have proven an ability to produce results. It is clear that there are still more potential sponsorship opportunities to be explored and captured. Generating \$21,000 of sponsored funding to support community budgeting education is a significant achievement as these funds would otherwise have filtered through to other community causes and courses.

Outcome # 3: That all community-based organisations with the potential to deliver free budgeting advice are canvassed for interest in affiliation or as a source of volunteers for existing budgeting Services.

This outcome has five different activity areas: organisations contacted, number interested in affiliation, number of public recruitment meetings, number of recruitment plans assisted, and number of Budget Adviser trainees recruited.

3 year results



In 2004 Field Officers got off to a flying start in their canvassing of organisations resulting in the highest number of interest in affiliation. Field Officers also nearly doubled the numbers of volunteers in the two metropolitan centres, the 107 volunteers who undertook BABTC increased our total Budget Adviser numbers by 18%.

In 2005 as the Field Officers' relationships with Services developed so did an increased need for support in developing recruitment plans. A recruitment campaign actioned in the Midland region was successful in producing results.

After the initial bulk recruitment campaigns in the previous two years it was appropriate in 2006 for the Field Officers to focus their efforts on assisting existing Services 1:1 to boost capacity by increasing volunteers as well as further development of recruitment plans.

In 2004 major recruitment campaigns were undertaken in Auckland using community television advertising and an 0800 free calling number, and in Wellington using extensive radio advertising. Both methods yielded excellent results to the extent that they were analysed and a working model developed and replicated for use by other Field Officers in successive years. The method of convening public recruitment meetings was initially explored, however, it was far less effective than the more common forms of attracting volunteers, eg, newspaper/media advertising.

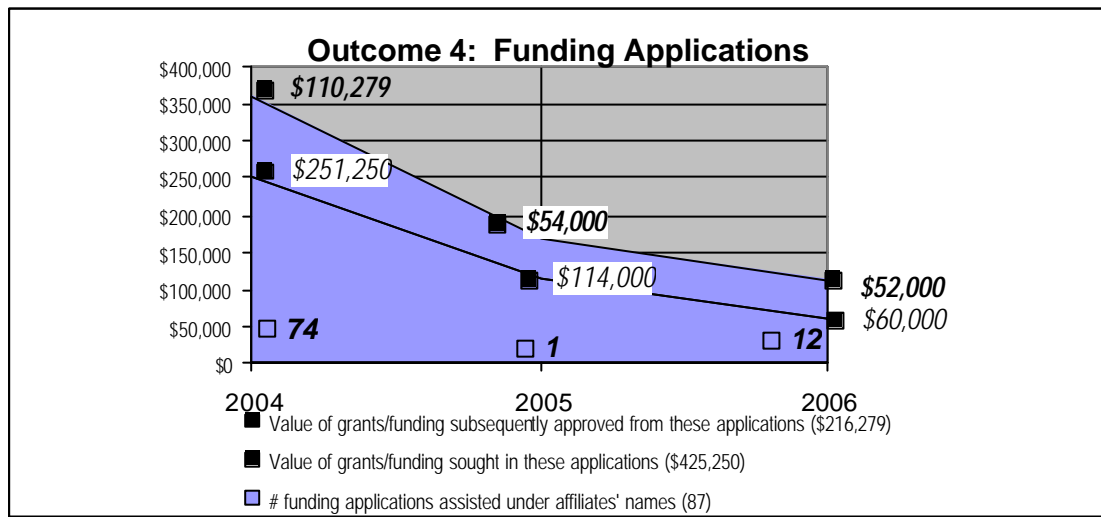
The results of the various recruitment initiatives have significantly benefited Budget Services by increasing total number of volunteers – an impressive 279 new Budget Adviser trainees recruited! It is clear from this result that this outcome has been successfully achieved.

Outcome # 4: That using the legal entity status of the NZ Federation of Family Budgeting Services Inc, applications are made to all relevant community and charitable trusts and local businesses for each district, region or zone for operational and specific project funding for all participating Budgeting Services.

This outcome has five different activity areas: contacts with potential funders, number of bulk funding applications, number of individual applications assisted, funding amounts sought, and funding amounts approved.

3 year results

- **48** contacts were made with potential funders.
- **2** bulk applications were lodged under NZFFBS Inc. status resulting in **\$8,800** approved.
- **87** funding applications were assisted under affiliates' names.
- **\$216,279** was the total grants/funding approved from the \$425,250 sought through funding applications.



In the first two years bulk funding applications was not the most practical way of securing funding for Services in the metropolitan areas. Of the 48 potential funders approached, only 2 applications totaling \$8,800 were approved. As a result no further application work was done on bulk funding in 2005 and 2006. However, after having a Field Officer in the more rural/provincial Midland region the area of bulk funding may need to be reviewed after feedback indicated potential benefits in centralising administration of funding away from individual Services.

The \$110,279 funding secured in 2004 means Field Officers procured previously unidentified funds for our Services amounting to 73% of the total Capacity Strengthening Project budget for that year.

When reading the graph and noting an apparent downward trend between 2004-2006 consider the important point that once taught, fundraising knowledge can be applied and self-replicated by Budget Services in future years. Funding was one of the areas initially expressed by the Membership as being an area of significant need, hence the tremendous amount of foundation work in 2004 when Field Officers imparted knowledge by teaching Services the methodology of funding, how to develop funding plans and resources, and identified and provided information and access to funding sources.

Notably, in 2005 and again in 2006 the need to enlist the support of Field Officers for funding applications became progressively less important as Services began to apply their acquired knowledge to create their own funding plans. The graph's downward trend is therefore a positive sign because it shows a decreasing need for Field Officer support after Services had received

funding coaching and teaching the previous year. Notwithstanding this decrease, the area of funding is still a critical need area for Services hence funding related activities continue. Field Officers provide information updates of new funders to Services, provide letters of support, deliver funding workshops and seminars, build relationships with local CYF and MSD funding contract advisers and other regional funders, and find start-up funding to assist new Members. The Field Officers also provide ongoing funding refresher support to Services with new governance members and staff.

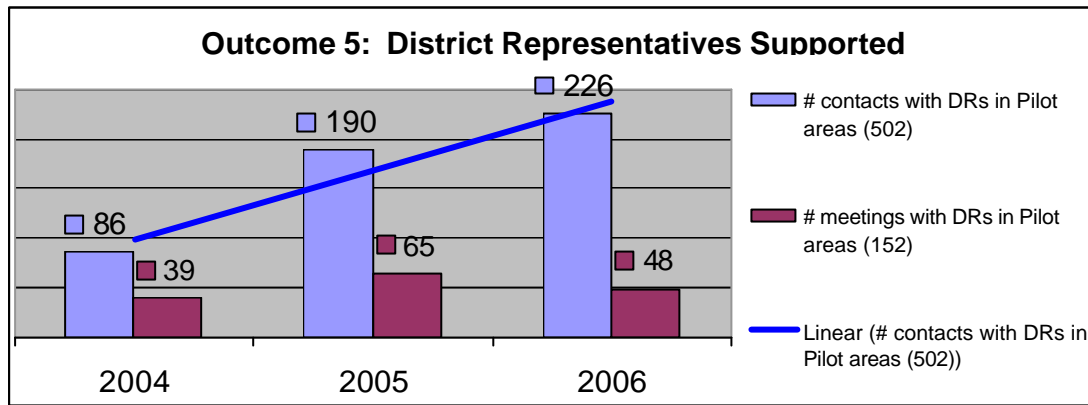
In addition to assisting Services in obtaining mainstream funding Field Officers also sourced and successfully secured \$27K emergency funding in the form of a Ministerial contingency fund to support Budget Services in crisis.

The success of this outcome has yielded a substantial amount of money to support Services in the delivery of budgeting and is an outstanding achievement.

Outcome # 5: That the elected District Representatives are given greater support and coordination to fulfil their roles as representatives and advocates of the Member Budgeting Services.

This outcome has two different activity areas: contacts with District Representatives, meetings with District Representatives.

3 year results



After a bumpy beginning and initial bedding-in period Field Officers succeeded in establishing productive working relationships with District Representatives. Initial resistance due to work overlapping and paid staff working in the districts was addressed and resolved. As in most relationships there were differences (of opinion, approach, culture, personality, style, viewpoint, and politics). The key to success involves open lines of communication, ongoing liaison, a positive attitude and a desire to strengthen relationships. Hence it is pleasing to see that Field Officer and District Representative relationships have generally strengthened over the entire course of the pilot.

As Field Officers' activities with Services increased so did their contacts and liaison with District Representatives. Field Officers and District Representatives interact on a number of different activities including new Membership contact, Service Reviews and Service issues. Field Officers get regular District Representative requests for support in terms of district meetings, coordination efforts, and for working on Service, district and regional issues.

2005 saw a marked increase in contacts with District Representatives correlating with the new Field Officer starting in the Midland region.

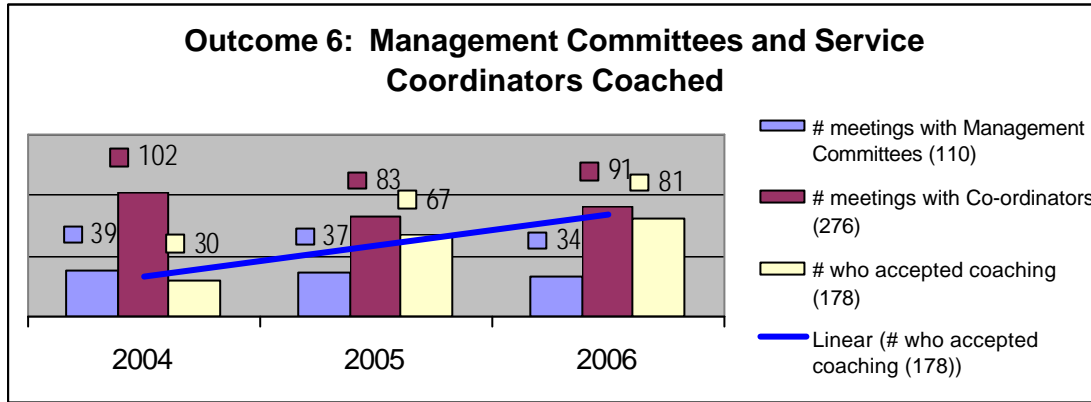
The increase in contacts in 2006 was due to Field Officers then becoming far more involved in Service Reviews as well as working closely with newly elected District Representatives to help support and guide them in their new role.

The success of this outcome is a testament to the efforts of both District Representative and Field Officer Groups who continue to build collaborative relationships for the benefit of the Services they serve, **together**.

Outcome # 6: That by sharing of knowledge and observations all Budgeting Services' Management Committees and Service Coordinators are offered coaching or material on proved systems and procedures.

This outcome has three different activity areas: meetings with Management Committees, meetings with Service Coordinators, and numbers who accepted coaching,

3 year results



This outcome is about strengthening capacity with Services by sharing and imparting knowledge of best practice models through coaching Service Coordinators and Management Committees.

The coaching process is a very important aspect of capacity strengthening. Field Officers convened coaching sessions on one or more of the issues of governance, employer issues, funding, recruiting and profiling.

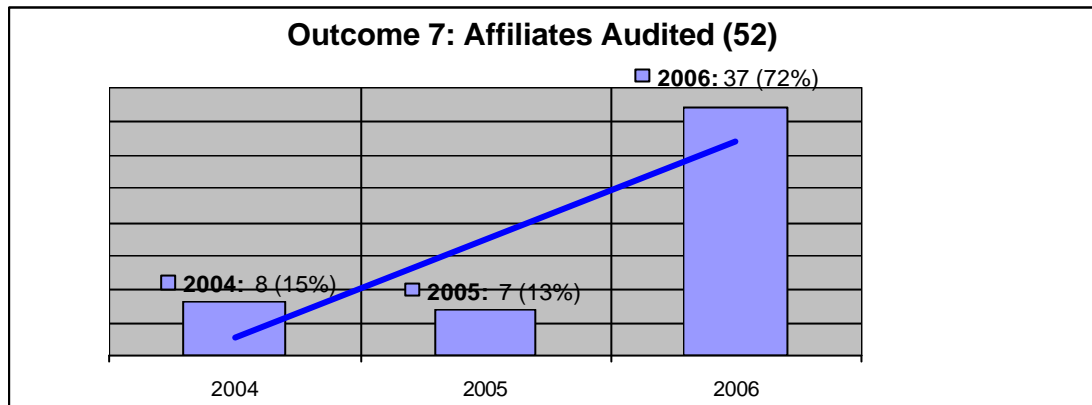
The range of coaching methods used varied from formalised seminars and workshops through to 1:1, in-person and situational support. Coaching resources provided include Service information fact sheets, action plans, profiling information for newspaper advertising, draft memoranda of understanding, etc.

There was a 270% increase in demand for coaching across the three years. The increase in coaching in 2006 was as a result of Field Officers conducting Service Reviews. The upward trend forecasts a potential 100-105 coaching acceptances for the 2007/08 period.

The achievement in this outcome is clear evidence that providing coaching has real benefits for Service Coordinators and Management Committees. Results highlight an increasing future demand for coaching and support by the Field Officers. This is further endorsed by the results of the customer satisfaction surveys as detailed in chapter VI of this report.

Outcome # 7: That at least two-yearly every Budgeting Services' processes, systems and records are sampled to ensure that the Budgeting Service is offering assistance that is consistent with the Federation's affiliation criteria and policies so that the Federation's efforts to promote budgeting and offer a safe service are not compromised.

3 year results



This outcome consists of one activity area: auditing affiliate Members. The auditing process was historically a District Representative responsibility. District Representatives discovered in 2004 that they can use the Field Officers during the Review process to work alongside them for support. Accordingly **eight** District Representative supported / observational Service Reviews occurred across two regions.

In 2005 the Field Officers assisted the District Representatives by actually conducting **seven** Service Reviews in both regions. These included in some cases the District Representative's own Service or identified problem sites.

In 2006 a review and subsequent overhaul of the auditing process was completed resulting in the development of a more thorough and robust Service Capability Review process. The Field Officers were allocated **37** complex Reviews including Total Money Management Services to audit. This was volunteered and supported by the District Representatives.

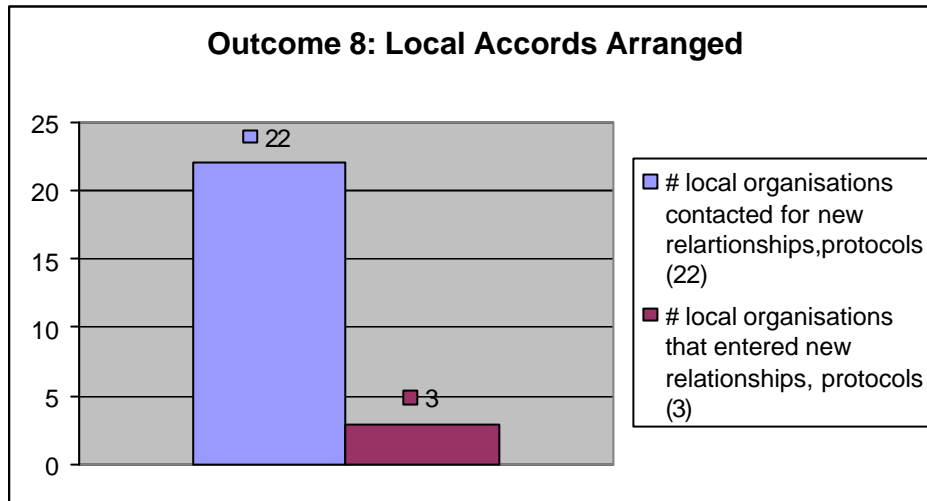
The results of this process were exceptional and have opened the way for Field Officers conducting more reviews in the future. Doing this was particularly effective because it provided valuable insights for the auditing Field Officer into the precise needs of Services ie, hands-on, advisory, sign posting, planning, leadership, management, etc. Early intervention opportunities became instantly apparent and overall Services have responded positively to the whole process and felt better supported and able to plan more effectively for their future service delivery. Service Coordinators now have a better understanding of the link between identifying issues within their Service and having a Field Officer on hand to work through those issues well before the reaffiliation round occurs.

As auditors Field Officer's found it particularly worthwhile having the full attention of Committee Chair people at the Review, some of who were not fully aware of the extent of some of the issues until the Review discussions and presentation of evidence.

The success of Field Officers involvement in previous Service Reviews is identified by the graph's upward trend which correctly predicts the 40 Service Reviews which Field Officers will be conducting and observing in the 2007/08 round of Reviews. The achievement in this outcome is fantastic because strengthening capacity and ensuring quality and sustainability for Services is one of the primary success indicators of the whole project.

Outcome # 8: That issues that cannot be attended to by nationally negotiated accords are approached on a district, regional or zone basis as is appropriate, with a view to localised working relationships, protocols and accords.

3 year results



This outcome is about relationship building and liaison whereby the Field Officers promote the Federation at regional forums and liaise with key stakeholders to explore the potential of negotiating accords that will benefit member Services in the region.

This is time-intensive work that sometimes does not culminate in a tangible outcome. What is key is the reliance on the Field Officers being actively involved with their regional networks and awareness of what they do in order to identify possible mutually beneficial arrangements.

The Field Officers were successful in negotiating regional accords with the Peoples Resource Centre, Housing NZ, and the Problem Gambling Foundation. Another example of beneficial localised working relationships involved a regional funder looking more favourably at funding applications from our Members that carried an endorsement letter from the Field Officer.

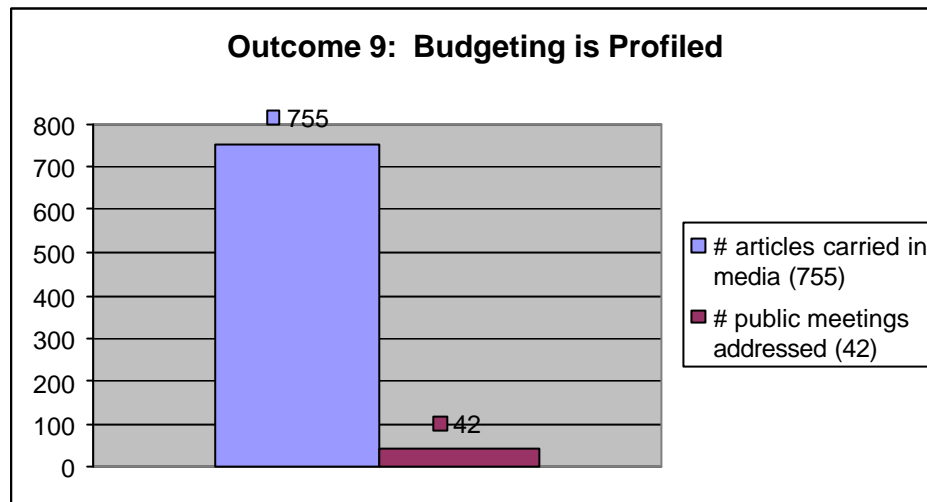
Other organisations the Field Officers are continuing exploration with include Habitat for Humanity, ACE networks, local schools, private training establishments, and credit unions.

Work with the Problem Gambling Foundation progressed very well and a national training strategy was trialled and as a result a national accord has been developed between NZFFBS and PGF.

Although the Field Officers have had some success with this outcome this is an area which could be further explored for untapped potential. While relationship building and identifying synergies for organisations to complement and benefit each other are two of the key ingredients Field Officer resources may well be better utilised in the development of national accords such as the PGF accord which has a nationwide appeal.

Outcome # 9: That budgeting receives high profiling in communities through media and personal appearances so that people know to seek budgeting advice before or immediately they see a need and people are attracted to budgeting as voluntary Budget Advisers or in some support capacity.

This outcome has two different activity areas: articles carried in the media, and public meetings addressed.



This outcome relates to the raising of community awareness of Federation Budgeting Services through profiling. Field Officers have succeeded in raising our profile at the grass roots level.

Budgeting received extensive media profiling during 2004 and 2005 in a number of different formats: community newspapers, radio station community notices and Triangle TV were used extensively especially during recruitment campaigns and to carry stories about budgeting in the regions.

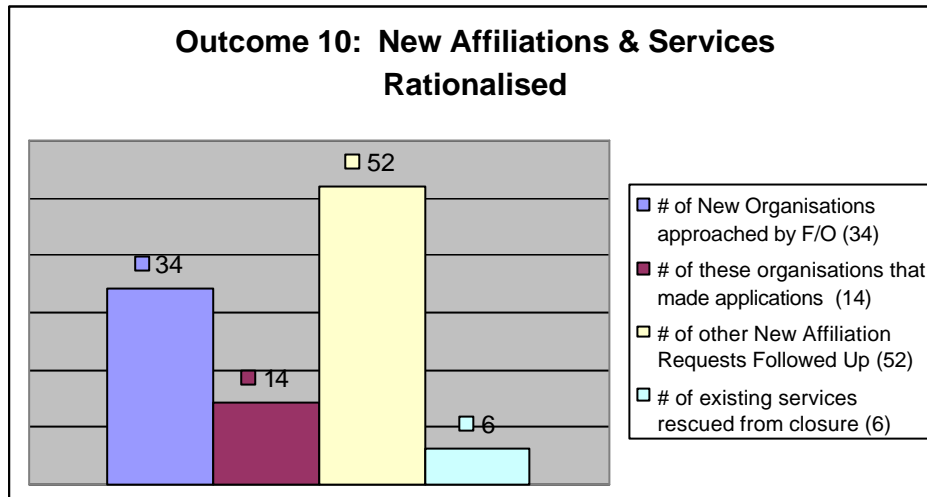
In 2006 Field Officers focused more on addressing public meetings, 22 in total, where they presented the Federation and profiled Budget Services in New Zealand. Field Officers also raised the profile of budgeting by active involvement in their regional networks and by attending various expos, seminars, and conferences in all regions.

Another initiative developed by the Field Officers were the three regional newsletters that carry a regional flavour with contributions from Representatives and Services forecasting relevant training and workshop dates, etc. There have also been a number of opportunities for national television and print exposure where Field Officers have linked Budget Services with producers and reporters to raise awareness of family budgeting including news items for the Asian community on Sky TV's *Asia Down Under*, and financial topics featured on *My House My Castle*, *The Money Show*, *Sunday Star Times*, *Fair Go*, *Close Up* and *Target*.

Profiling is ongoing work in progress. The Field Officers have successfully demonstrated the ability to produce results in this area. Future focus is the development and design of regional press releases.

Outcome # 10: That communities that do not have access to budgeting advisory services are encouraged to establish a service and communities that have a duplication of Services, or have minimally resourced Services, are encouraged to look at options for rationalisation and strengthening the delivery of budgeting assistance.

3 year results



This outcome has four different activity areas: number of new organisations approached by Field Officer, number of organisations that made application, number of other new affiliation requests, and number of Services rescued from closure.

This outcome involves the Field Officer identifying, analysing and deciding on priority areas for budgeting within their regions where there is little/no access to budgeting yet an identified need exists. Once identified it is about researching existing community groups with a view to encouraging them to establish budgeting. The Field Officers use District Representatives and other existing Federation members, their own networks, key stake holders and local and central government agencies as sources of information. Across the project **34** organisations were approached by the Field Officers for rationalisation purposes. In total **14** affiliation applications were made. Various other activities were involved in this process in terms of supervision and support given to organisations by the Field Officers.

In addition to the generated leads Field Officers have consistently followed up a remarkable **52** other New Affiliation Requests over the three years.

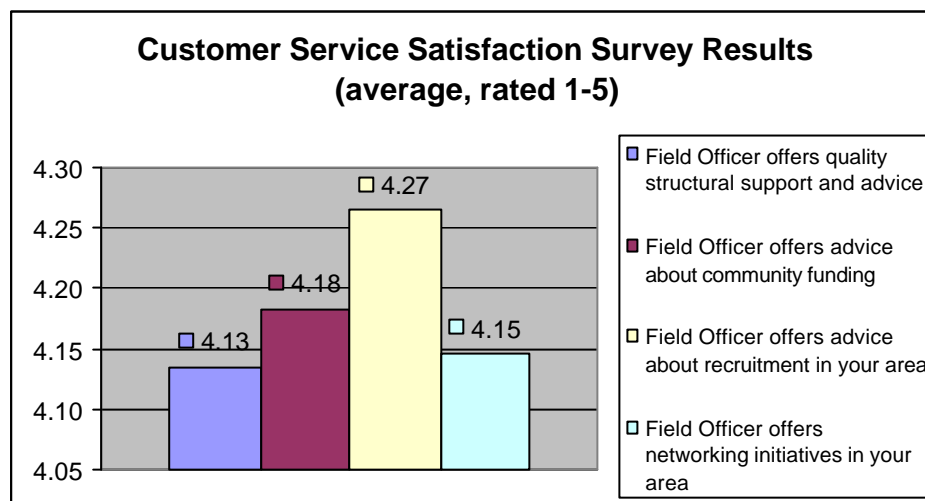
Another part of this outcome was the Field Officer assisting in the rescuing Services from impending closure. This is a process that previously, without adequate regional resources, the Federation has been unable to offer hands-on assistance for. Field Officers are now able to provide hands on assistance and support to Services in crisis.

Field Officers have been successful in assisting **six** Services faced with wide ranging issues including critical funding shortages, staff/governance issues, lack/loss of key personnel, and crises over premises/accommodation. What has benefited Services in this area is the Field Officers' knowledge of contingency funding and application processes, their relationships with local Funders, and their abilities to react effectively during crises of any kind. Without this critical support the impact on the clients and their communities as a result of Budget Services closing would be devastating. The results of this outcome highlight another significant achievement attained by the Field Officers.

V. Feedback from Key Informants

The Membership: Customer satisfaction survey findings

In 2004 as part of the Federation's ongoing social audit process four new questions were added to the annual customer satisfaction survey to gauge feedback from the Membership within Field Officer regions.



The following is a sample of comments made by Services:

- Field Officer is excellent addition to the region, accessible & helpful.
- Our Field Officer has been supportive and active in areas of funding and recruitment.
- Our Field Officer is a resource we would not wish to lose.
- Our Field Officer is a hard worker, always going the extra mile for our Service.
- Our Field Officer provides an excellent service to us and is always available by phone & email.
- We enjoy our Field Officer's vibrancy and "get-up-and-go" attitude
- X has been a wonderful Field Officer and has supported our Service at different times. A very approachable/supportive person.
- Our Field Officer is an asset to the region, enthusiastic and knowledgeable.

In 2006 more Services were surveyed because of the expansion into the Midland region, however, many of these Services had not at the time of the survey tested the Field Officer services.

The results showed conclusively that the Field Officers have been accepted by the Membership and indeed have become integral to their continuing improvement.

VI. Overall Performance

The project outcomes have now been measured over the 36 month period from February 2004 to January 2007.

The results achieved combined with the feedback from key informants clearly identifies that the **Capacity Strengthening Project has proven to be successful in addressing and reversing the declining trends in budgeting** by providing our Membership with hands-on support to help improve their Services and ultimately, their communities.

The fact the two Field Officer positions increased from an initial 25 hours each in the first year to three positions averaging 31.5 hours each in the second and third years demonstrate how great the needs are in communities for Budget Services to strengthen their capacities.

Additional to the set outcomes other unmeasured outcomes achieved include:

- Enhanced regional liaison opportunities and representation for the Federation.
- Heightened profile due to increased regional presence within communities.
- Establishment of strong relationships, credibility and networks with key agencies across public, private and community sectors.

The work achieved by Field Officers has been quite extraordinary and they must be commended for their hard working, passionate and diligent efforts to date, sometimes in demanding circumstances.

In many ways the results have exceeded our expectations. That being said, however, there are still areas in which further achievements can be realised and our efforts to date consolidated.

The Federation's overall three year performance of the Project and the fundamental development work accomplished places us in good stead to further build on these foundations by expanding and rolling out the Field Officers into all regions throughout NZ.

VII. Recommendations

On the strength of the results achieved during this project as outlined in this report the following recommendations are hereby submitted for further consideration by the Board.

1. **Roll over of the Project in its current form.** To ensure continuity of the successes to date a further three years is recommended commencing 1 July 2007. This option would be entirely dependent on the successful securing of funding. There is also a distinct possibility of the need to review and rationalise the regions where Field Officers will be provided.
2. **Roll over the Project and expand into other regions.** This option is as above but with the additional expansion to provide a national coverage means it is even more entirely dependent on the successful securing of funding.