Mythical Realities: Challenging the Government/Nonprofit Nexus in Community Services Procurement

The delivery of services and supports that fall under the heading of community services is one of the most important undertakings a community can pursue. Indeed, these services fulfill the social objectives of a nation and are the manifestation of our dreams and hopes for all. However, it is the vulnerable people at the heart of the system that are the shock absorbers for service failure. Often this failure is invisible and goes unobserved. Additionally, the myths built up surrounding the system—not just the nonprofits but the system—drive decision making and operational action that can drive service failure as an unintended consequence. This paper considers those hidden drivers of service failure and lays down a challenge to governments and sector providers in the context of building outcomes-based systems that support prioritisation and delivery in the context of a mature strategic horizon. It discusses the objective of dispelling the myths and building a true collaboration within the government/nonprofit nexus.