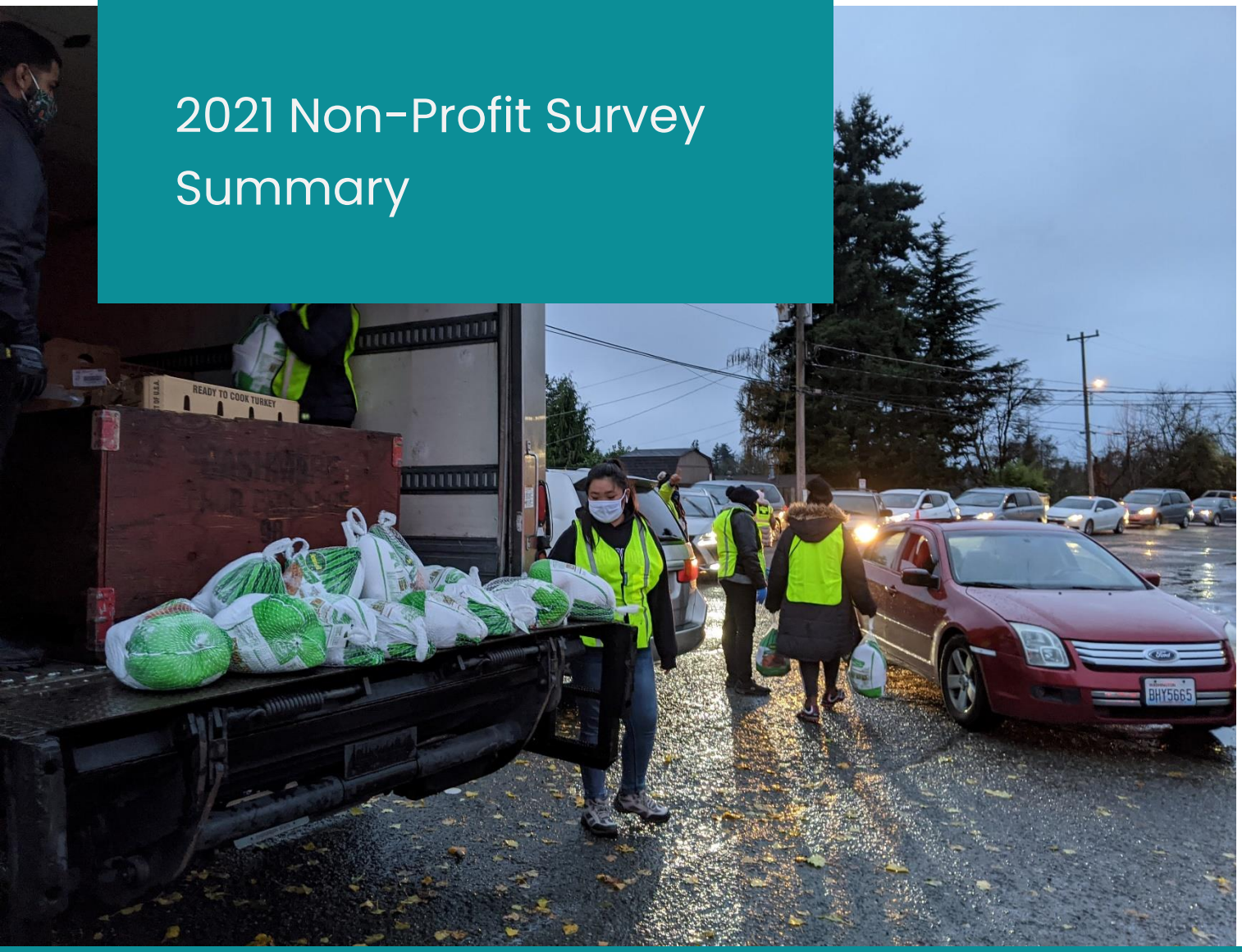
Renton Regional Community Foundation:

2021

2021 Non-Profit Survey Summary



THE GIVING PRACTICE

RENTON REGIONAL COMMUNITY Foundation

Renton

U-HAUL

October 2021

Dear Friends,

It is a great honor to present highlights and key lessons from the 2021 Renton Regional Community Foundation survey, which was conducted in May 2021.

As part of our continuing efforts to stay current on issues and trends in our local non-profit community, Renton Regional Community Foundation surveyed local non-profit leaders to better understand the challenges and opportunities facing individual organizations, the broader context in which they operate, and their evolving needs.

We were particularly interested in how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted organizations, how they have adapted to meet community needs, what they are learning, and how Renton Regional Community Foundation and the broader community can support their efforts. We focused our outreach on organizations working in the South King County region.

Please note the information contained in this report does not necessarily reflect the opinions of individual participating organizations; rather, the information represents common themes from the voices in the survey.

We are tremendously grateful to the non-profit leaders who participated in this survey. We had 59 out of 100 respondents!

We want to extend a very special thanks to the community leaders who provided input on the survey's questions: Sharon Bamage, Menka Soni, Mary Ellen Stone, Kate Ortiz, Erin Hood, Benita Horn, Melissa Gehrig, Diana Krishna, Hiroshi Nakano, and Dr. Linda Smith.

In gratitude,

LeAnne Moss
Executive Director

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Overview

In 2021, Renton Regional Community Foundation (RRCF) distributed an online survey to collect information from the non-profit community. This report synthesizes the results and provides a high-level summary and findings of key themes and issues across responses.

Overall Finding Highlights

The non-profit sector has experienced one of its most challenging periods ever. The combination of high demand for services, level of uncertainty and financial challenges have stretched the organizations and led to staff burnout and exhaustion. At the same time, these organizations have shown a unique ability to build on the richness and assets of their communities. They have worked to combat isolation for their clients and members, initiated new partnerships, and are using lessons learned to forge ahead.

Themes from findings highlighted in this report include the following:

The non-profit community in South King County is struggling to meet the high level of demand for services. There continues to be a large number of people who have an expanded level of needs. Seventy-seven percent of the respondents reported an increased demand in programs and services, and 63% reported that they could not meet the demand.

Help for basic needs continues to be high. According to our respondents, the top three needs from community members are rental assistance, food security and mental health. Fifty-seven percent of respondents reported community members are having transportation challenges.

Access to mental health services is lacking and needs immediate attention. This is especially true for access to culturally appropriate mental health services. In addition, normalizing asking for mental health support was also cited as a top priority.

Focus on equity and inclusion has been a priority. Seventy percent of the organizations have expanded their programmatic work in this area, and it was also the top focus of professional development for staff, with 60% reporting they invested in training and resources on DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion).

Non-profits have shown to be adaptable and collaborative. The majority of respondents reported changing their programs and services to meet COVID needs, and 61% reported partnering with other organizations to deliver services.

Organizations need extra financial and capacity-building support. While most organizations met or exceeded fundraising expectations in 2020, fundraising is still perceived as a significant challenge and concern when they look to the year ahead. In addition, the top professional development and capacity needs are advanced fundraising; marketing/communications; DEI; and Human Resources, including training of supervisors and managers.

Communities in School Renton-Tukwila (Tiffany Burke Photography)

General Overview of Non-Profit Stakeholders

A total of 59 (of 100) respondents completed the 2021 non-profit survey. For reference, the 2020 report was generated from 34 completed surveys. The following are details related to the specific questions from the survey.

Urban Family

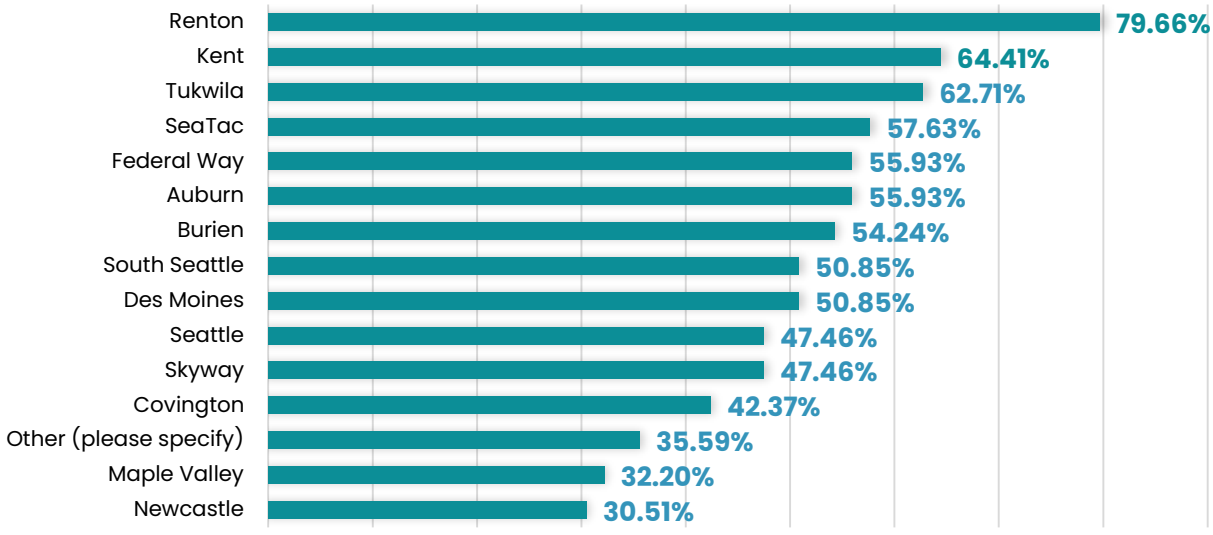
Non-Profit Status

About 90% of survey respondents reported holding non-profit status. Of the 10% of those who reported not holding non-profit status, 2/3 (or 67%) reported that they are fiscally-sponsored organizations.

Location Served

Most non-profits indicated that they served the Renton area (80%); however, many also noted in the comments that they serve multiple areas. Beyond Renton, service areas with high representation of services included Kent (64%), and Tukwila (63%), followed by SeaTac (58%), Auburn (56%) and Federal Way (56%). In the comments, many indicated that their work was county-wide, with several noting service in more than one county, and/or state-wide. Locations with lower representation were Maple Valley (32%) and Newcastle (31%).

Various Locations Served in Washington



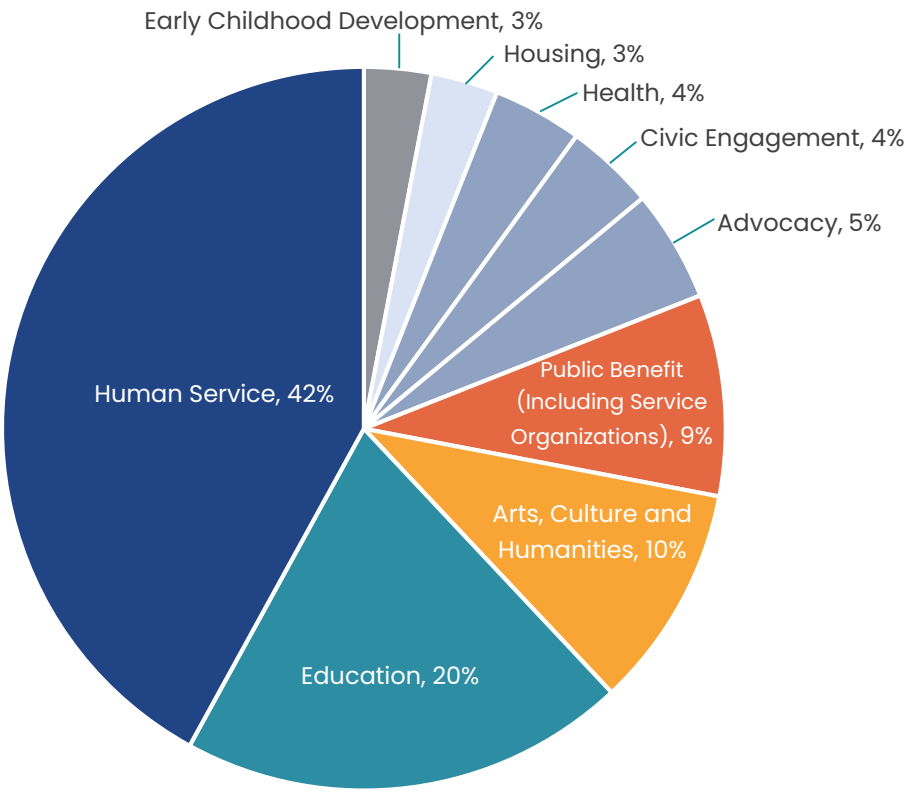
2021 Organization Budget Size

Roughly 53% of respondents came from organizations with budgets under $1,000,000. Answers indicated 18% (11 organizations) have budgets over $5,000,000 and the remainder had budgets between $1,000,000 and $5,000,000. For reference, in the 2020 report, 68% of respondents had budgets under $1,000,000.

Focus Area

Most noted their primary focus areas as "Human Services" (43%) and "Education" (20%), which mirrored the information gathered for the 2020 report. Comments included the mention of "legal services," "transportation/mobility services" and "employment services." Additionally, some respondents made mention that they were multi-disciplinary organizations that touched several of the answer options. Roughly 30% of respondents noted that they had a particular focus on food security.

Primary Focus Areas of Non-Profits

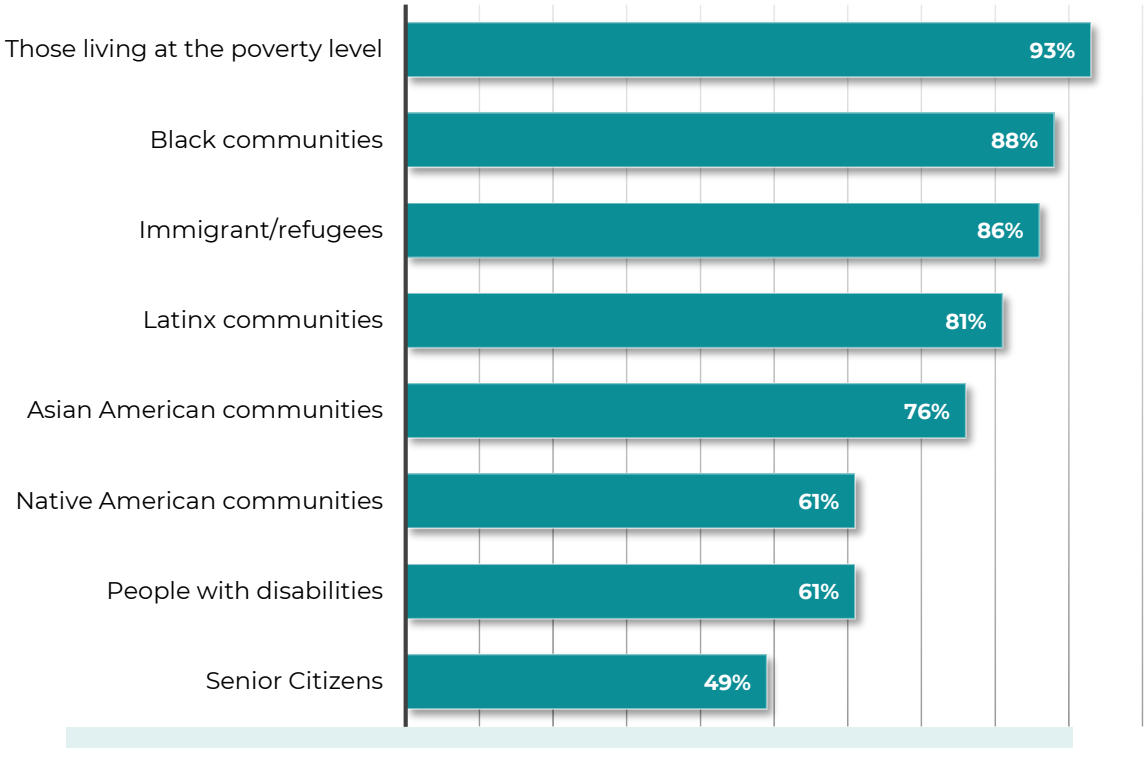


Populations/Communities Worked With and/or Served

Many respondents noted serving several of the groups listed. Overall, **those living at the poverty level (93%)**, **Black communities (88%)**, and **immigrants/refugees (86%)** had the highest percentage of responses. In the comments section, several organizations noted that they served all populations listed. Additionally, several mentioned working with/serving those who are homeless and the LBGTQIA+ community. Populations least represented were Senior citizens (49%), Native American Communities (61%) and People with disabilities (61%).

Renton School District

Various Communities or Populations Served



Various Communities or Populations Served

Non-profits noted ranges of number of people from 80 served to over 550,000:

0-499: 25%
500-1,000: 16%
1,000-4,999: 20%
5,000-10,000: 11%
10,000-20,000: 11%
20,000+: 11%

Afghan Health Initiative

There is a wide range of numbers of people supported in the organizations Renton Regional Foundation serves. Of these, **61% of organizations serve 4,999 people or less.**

Percentage of Those Served with Annual Household Income of $74,360

Approximately 50% of respondents reported "I don't know" to this question, some noting this was not a metric that was tracked. Approximately 25% reported that 10% or less of their population had annual household income of $74,360, and about 15% reported having 70% or more of their population had this income level.

Percentage of Those Served with Annual Household Income of $27,510

Approximately 50% of respondents reported "I don't know" to this question, some noting this was not a metric that was tracked. Approximately 20% reported that 75% or more of their population had an annual household income of $27,510, about 14% reported having 50-75% of their population at this income level, and about 11% reported that 30% or less of their population had an annual Household Income of $27,510.

Assets of Communities and Populations Served

Responses from non-profits included richness in diversity, culture ("cultural wealth," heritage, and lived experience); strength, resilience and perseverance; creativity and innovation; collaboration, connection and partnership; hard work and grit; hope and joy; adaptability; support from community (volunteers), networks of support and service; and grass roots organizing.

Ways in Which Staff and Board Are Ensuring Connection and Rootedness in Community

Most organizations reported maintaining staff and board rootedness and connectedness by having relationships/partnerships with other organizations in areas served (86%), by living in neighborhoods they service (82%), and by board leadership and staff reflecting and understanding those served (77%).

Changes

Changes in Specific Areas as a Result of COVID-19

Non-profits experienced an increase primarily in the areas of "demand for services" (77%) "government contract/grant writing" (67%), "public foundation funding" (63%), "funding from individual donors" (51%) and "total revenue" (51%).

They also reported the largest decreases in the areas of "number of individuals volunteering" (50%) followed by "program service revenue" (31%) as well as by "funding from individual donors" (31%), and "total revenue" (30%), two areas where there was also an increase noted (see above) for the majority of organizations, suggesting the varied experiences non-profits had in these areas.

Sustainable Renton (Free Grocery Store)

Program Changes to Achieve New Sources of Revenue

Most non-profit organizations reported they "changed some of our programs and services" (56%); however, 31% said they "did not change any of our programs or services" and 13% reported having "changed our programs and services completely."

Participants' comments on the changes included moving online and/or to a completely virtual model (including the challenged associated with that); providing more direct services; adding new programs and/or pausing programs; and integrating diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts.

Purpose of Change of Programs

Providing more information on the reason for the change in programs, 75% of non-profits said they changed programs to address needs stemming from clients due to COVID-19, 21% reported it was both to address needs stemming from clients due to COVID-19 and to achieve a new source of revenue, and 4% said it was only to achieve a new source of revenue.

Changes to Programs That Will Continue

Themes from non-profit responses included workplace flexibility, more frequent all staff meetings, continuation with remote/virtual options, use of telehealth/telemedicine, translation and interpretation services, growing and/or expansion of food delivery and transportation services, more "in community" time and approaches.

Partnerships

The majority (61%) of non-profit respondents reported partnering with other organizations to deliver services. Comments reflected expressions of the benefit of partnership, describing such partnerships as "integral," "essential" and the reason for "lasting, positive outcomes."

Responding to increases in partnerships in 2020, slightly more non-profits (41%) reported an increase in partnerships in 2020 than no increase in partnerships (39%). Non-profits reported an increase in partnerships as the pandemic continued as well as a change in partnerships based on need.

Information collected on Desired Partnerships indicated that non-profits want to partner with mission-aligned organizations with the goal of achieving greater impact and improved outcomes. Some of the themes mentioned included employee giving programs, organizations that reach BIPOC youth and families, education-focused organizations, housing rights and housing assistance organizations and organizations focused on mental health.

Demand for Programs and Services

Non-profits have been very adaptive. Respondents shared their strategies such as launching and deepening partnerships, being more responsive to community needs, building and re-building programs to be more racially-just and sustainable, prioritizing and ensuring access to basic needs, working remotely, being flexible with scheduling, moving to all-volunteer staff, expanding staff and volunteer base to meet increasing demand for services, learning as things unfolded and problem solving, and finding new ways to create community and combat isolation.

Ability to Fully Meet Demand for Services in 2020

Across those surveyed, 63% reported they were unable to meet demand for services. Respondents cited that the demand outpaced resources to meet the growing need even with support from the government and philanthropic community. They experienced lengthy waiting lists and a lack of funds and volunteers. Some also expressed challenges with infrastructure and technology with moving services to online.

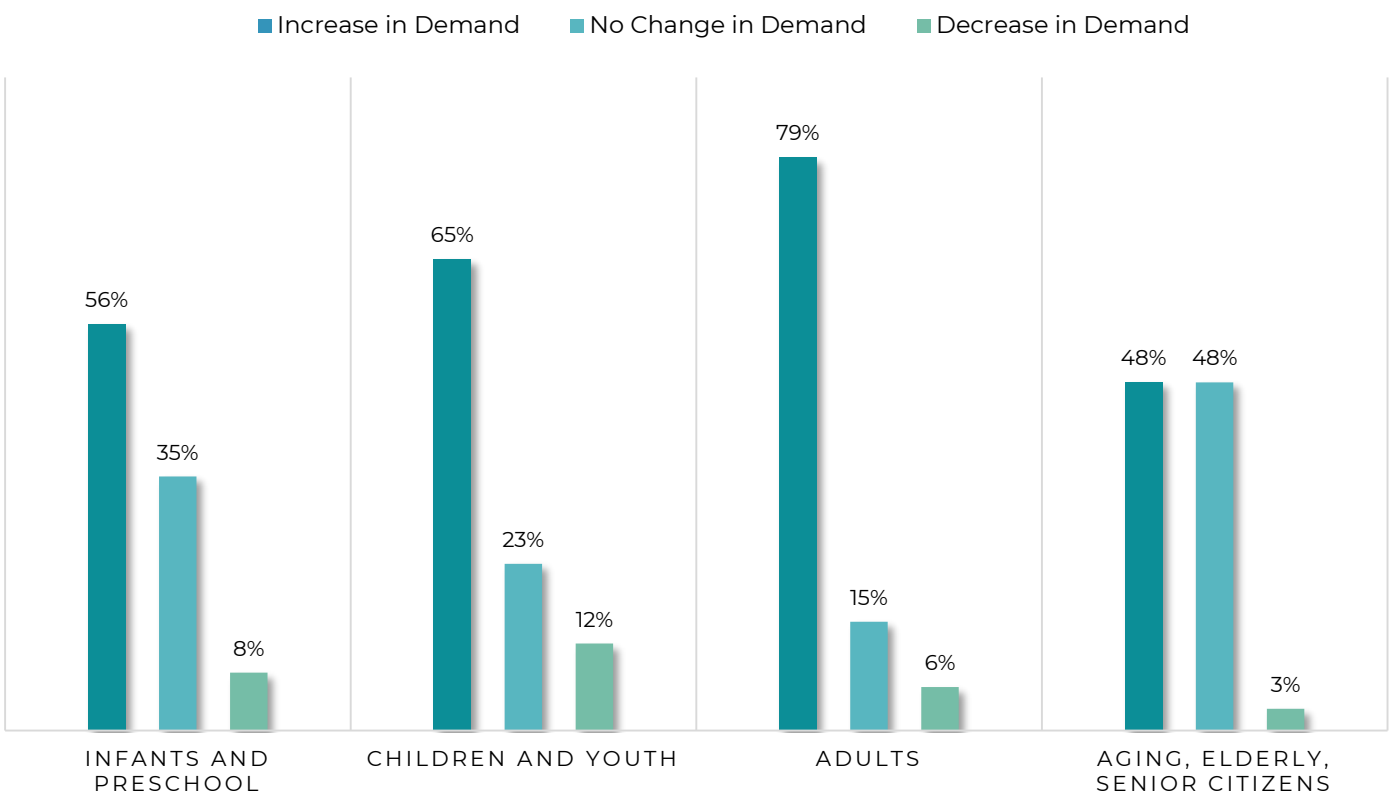
Renton Innovation Zone Partnership

Increase and Decrease in Demand for Programs and Services by Age

Survey results showed an increase in demand across the board for all age groups with the exception of "Aging, elderly, senior citizens," where an equal number of respondents noted "no change in demand" and an "increase in demand." The top group noted for increase in demand was "Adults" followed by "K-12 (5-19 years)."

Comments highlighted that while demand for services initially dropped with the uncertainty of COVID-19 and the required development and adherence to safety protocols, overall, there has been a marked increase in demand. Some anticipate that demand will continue given identified needs and the lasting impact of the pandemic. Finally, comments suggested that it is important to note that not all programs saw the same increase in demand; some programs saw steep drops in enrollment and demand.

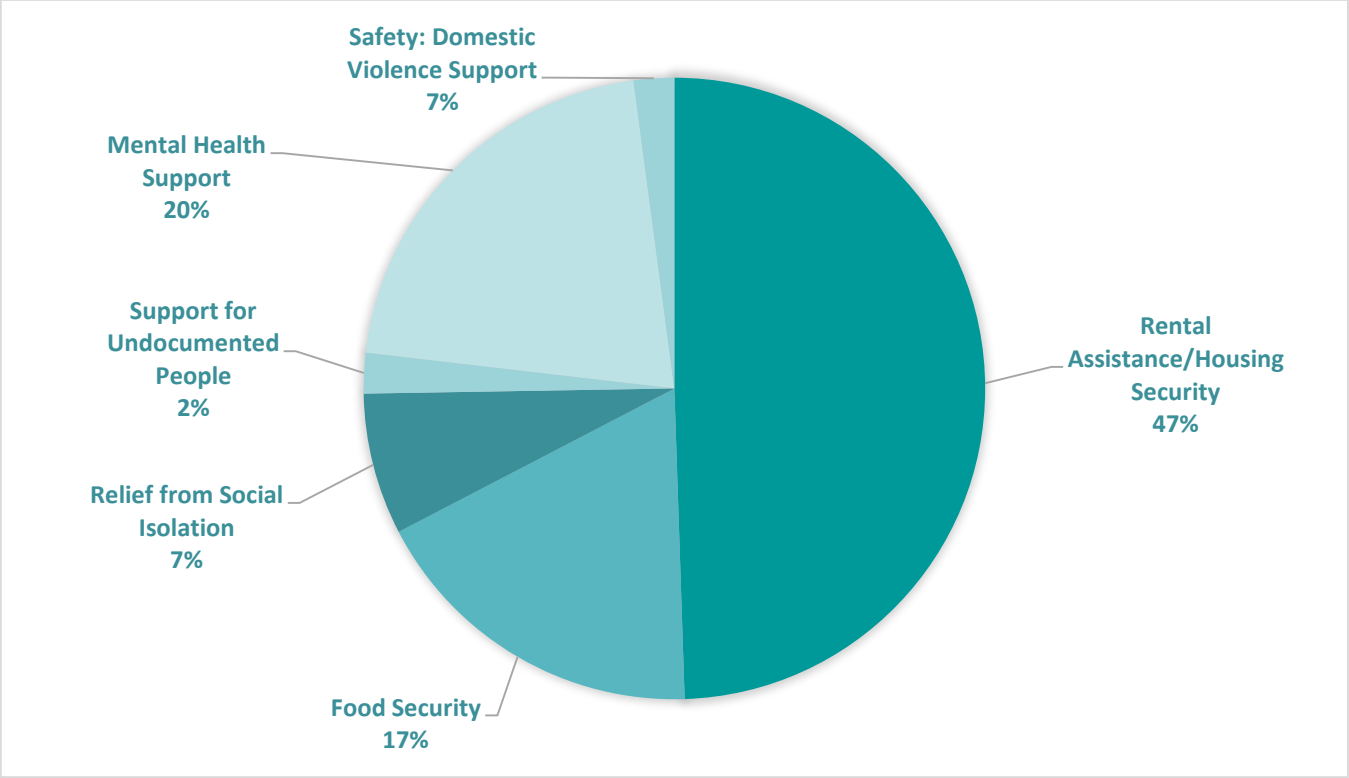
Demand for Programs and Services



Greatest Area(s) of Need from Community (with "1" as highest priority")

Overall, the top three "greatest areas of need" were "Rental assistance/housing security"; "Mental health support"; and "Food Security." These were the same top categories in the 2020 survey.

Greatest area of need



What Needs Are You Seeing that You Cannot Meet?

Notable in responses was the expansiveness of needs and the large number of people who require services at this time, ranging from economic support to food, baby essentials, housing, rental assistance and transportation to mental health, support for students, and the inability to reach those who need services and/or vaccines.

Impact by Age Group

Overall, in terms of impact on program changes, "Family Economic Uncertainty," "Mental Health Challenges" and "Food Insecurity" and "Isolation" were the highest ranked categories across all age groups. Top impact on program changes by age category was also examined.

Age Category	Top Areas
Infants to preschool (under age 5)	• Food Insecurity • Family Economic Uncertainty
Children and youth	• Family Economic Uncertainty • Mental Health Challenges • Food Insecurity • Isolation
Adults	• Job Insecurity • Family Economic Uncertainty • Food Insecurity • Mental Health Challenges
Aging, elderly, senior citizens	• Isolation • Food Insecurity • Family Economic Uncertainty • Mental Health Challenges

Additional Highlights

Across age groups, "Mental Health Challenges" impacted programs for "Children and youth" (with adolescents in particular called out) and "Adults" roughly equally. The reported impact was slightly less for "Aging, elderly, senior citizens" and for "Infants to preschool (under age 5)."

"Family Economic Uncertainty," "Food Insecurity" and "Isolation" impacted age groups roughly equally, with a slightly smaller impact reported for "Infants to preschool (under age 5)" in the area of "Isolation" and for "Aging, elderly, senior citizens" in the area of "Family Economic Uncertainty."

"Isolation" was reported as most significant for "Aging, elderly, senior citizens" and for "Children and youth"; however, it was noted as an important impact across age groups. As one survey participant commented: "isolation affected many from all backgrounds and age groups which in turn affected their mental health."

The impact of "Job Insecurity" and "Family Economic Insecurity" on programs and services were highest for adults, but this was followed closely by "Children and Youth." As one participant rightly noted: "children are impacted by the whole family's economic situation."

In particular, the impact of COVID-19 on education, including remote schooling and lack of access to reliable internet, was noted as challenge that impacted whole family systems. Comments included "Students who were already at risk for poor school attendance got lost in the online approach" and "Many families suffered from lack of internet services and could not support their children with school engagement."

Family First Community Center Foundation

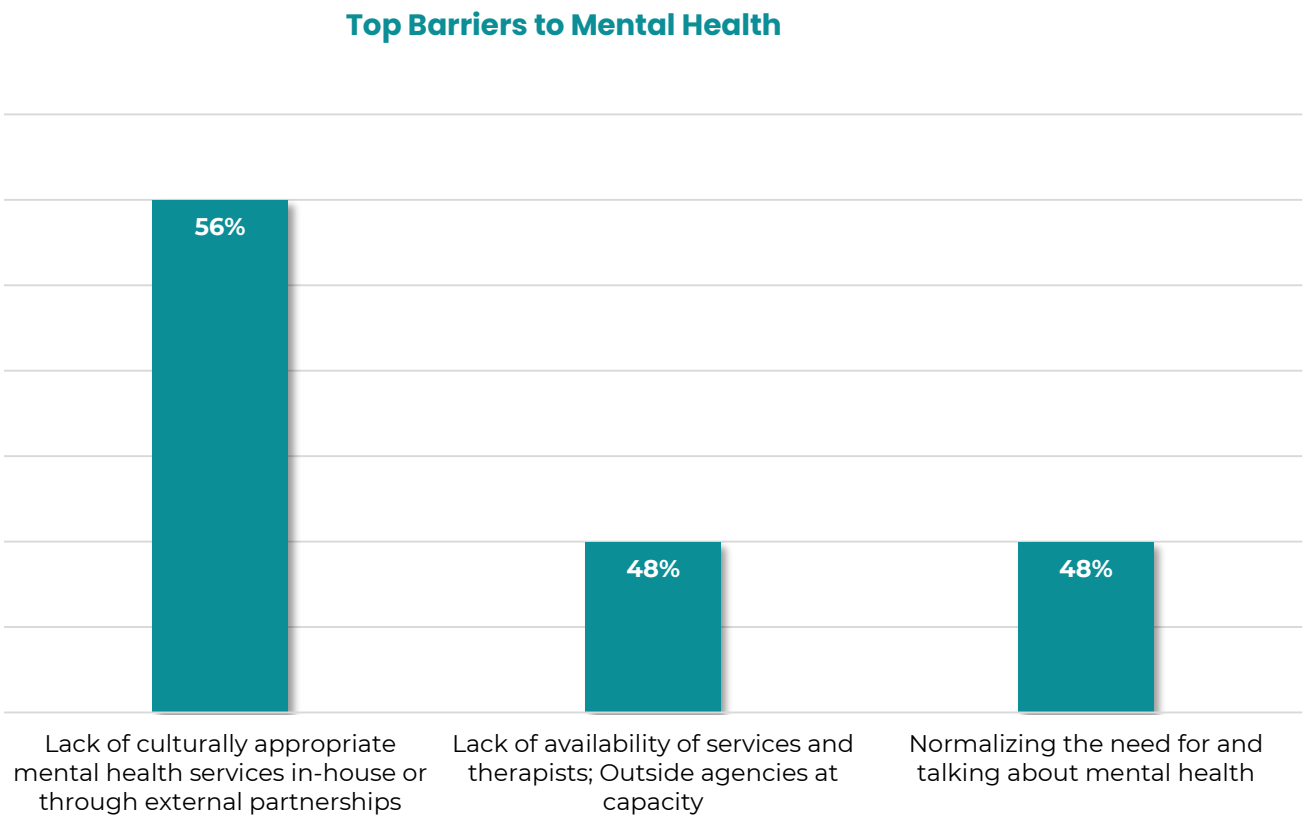
Babies of Homelessness

Challenges to Constituents

Respondents reported on a variety of challenges that they are addressing, which are explained below.

Barriers to Mental Health for Staff and Community

A little more than half of respondents reported the top three barriers as "Lack of culturally appropriate mental health services either in-house or through external partnerships" (54%), followed by "Normalizing the need for and talking about mental health" (48%) and "Lack of availability of services and therapists; Outside agencies that provide services are at capacity" (48%).



How Changes in Systems Have and Will Affect Work

Themes that emerged from responses related to the manner in which changes in systems have and will impact the work of non-profits included the end of the eviction moratorium, encampment sweeps, unemployment, impact on the education system (including challenges with hybrid learning, teachers leaving the profession, families leaving districts), transportation cuts, backlog of court cases, release of prisoners early due to COVID-19, reduced or altered services, the pace of work, high need but reduced mental health services, and the trauma of loss and isolation.

Transportation Challenges and Reasons for Such Challenges

Approximately 57% of non-profits reported challenges with transportation. Of those who reported an issue, the top three reasons were "Unable to drive" (55%), "No funds to use public transportation or pay for gas" (48%) and "Health issues (scared to come out)" (39%).

Addressing the Challenges

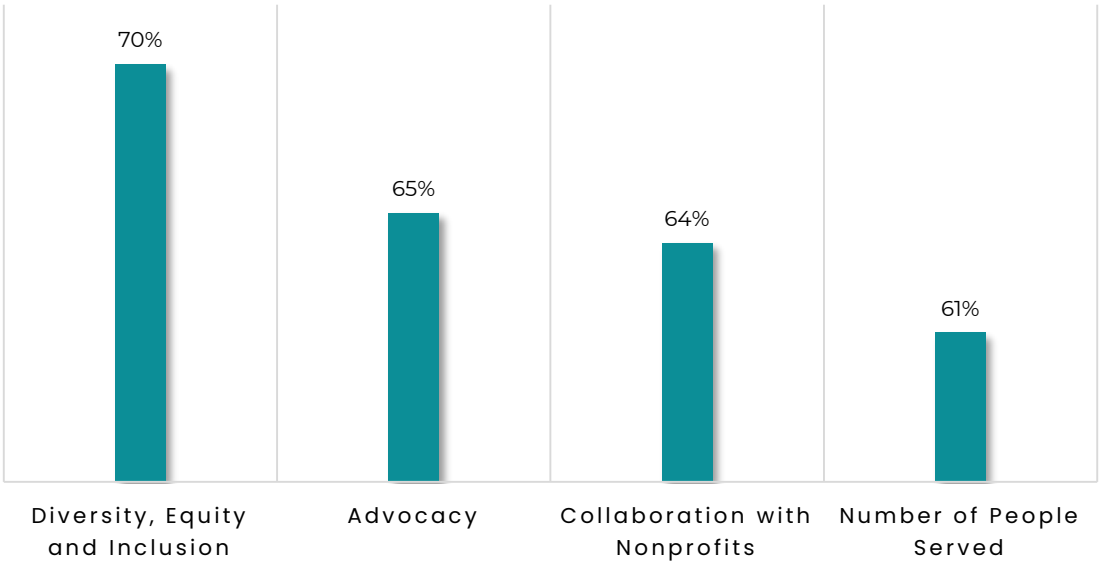
Non-profits have been creative in addressing this last year's challenges. Strategies include delivering services and basic need support directly to families, organizing events in convenient locations for their communities, virtual programming, offering transportation and/or partnering with services to provide transportation.

Renton Innovation Zone Partnership

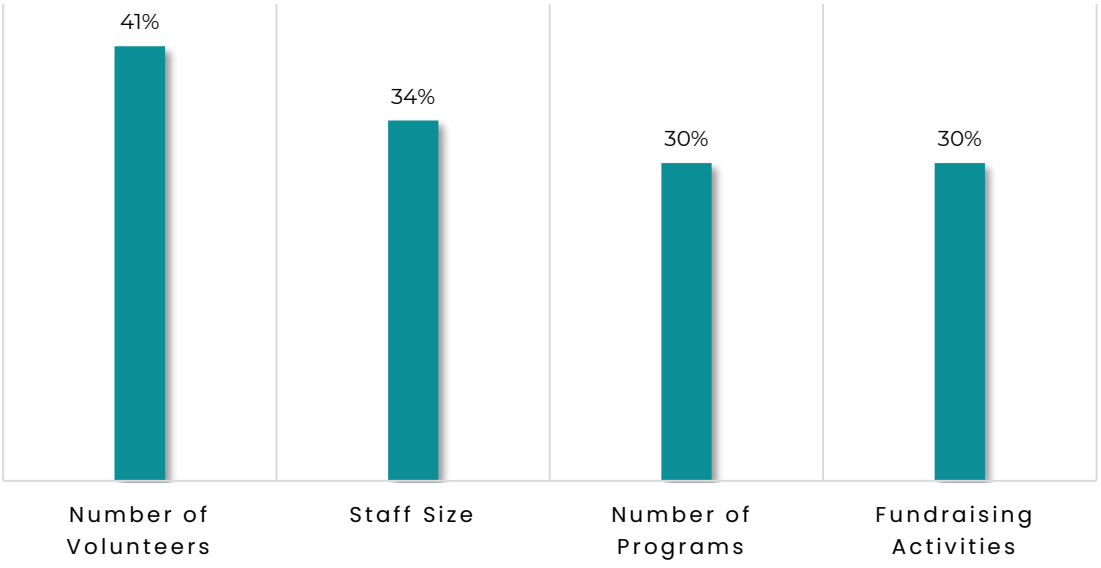
Fundraising and Capacity

In the last 18 months, organizations have been extremely stretched in their ability to raise funds and continue to have the capacity to deliver programs. One of the things they have had to contend with is expanding or reducing organizational and programmatic work. Survey results showed the following patterns in organizational expansion: "Diversity, equity and inclusion" was rated the highest (70%), followed by "Advocacy" (65%), "Collaboration with Non-Profits" (64%) and "Number of People Served" (61%). In terms of areas of reduction, the highest was "Number of Volunteers" (41%) and then "Staff Size" (34%) and "Number of Programs" (30%) and "Fundraising Activities" (30% tie).

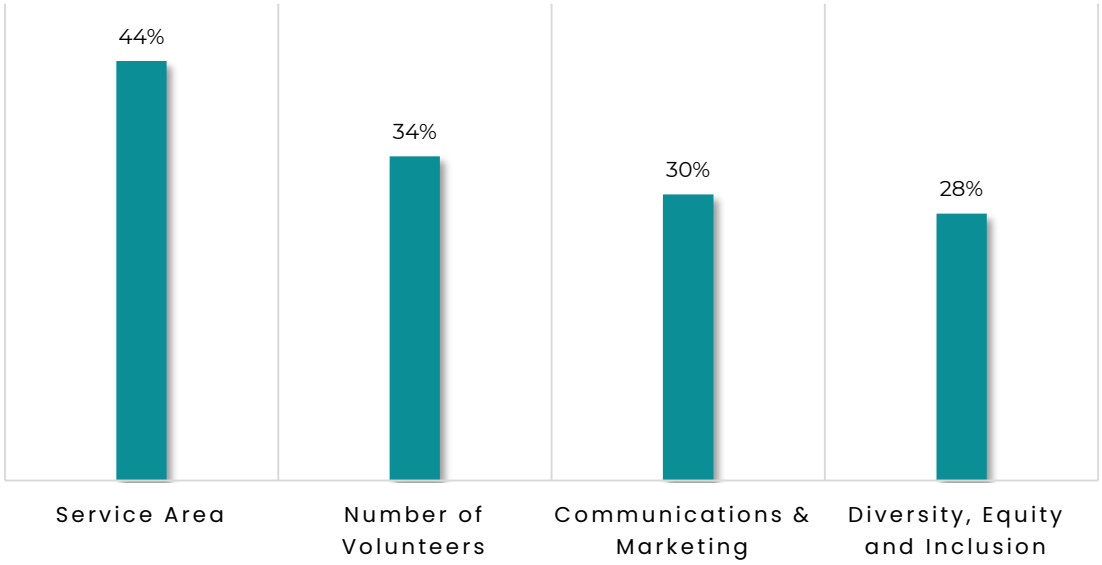
Top Areas of Expansion



Top Areas of Reduction



Top Areas that Remained the Same



Elements Helpful in Response to COVID-19

Most respondents reported it was "low operating costs" (64%) that was helpful in their response to COVID-19, followed by "organizational reserves" (54%) and "other" (53%). The comments related to "Other" included partnering, flexibility, resourcefulness and the ability to adapt and utilize tools to function virtually.

Those non-profits that received grants from the RRCF COVID-19 Response Fund expressed gratitude for such grants, citing the ease of application and the helpfulness of flexible/ unrestricted funding for general operating support, including hiring and supporting staff, technology, and sharing resources and information. Some non-profits noted not having received a grant.

CARES Act Assistance

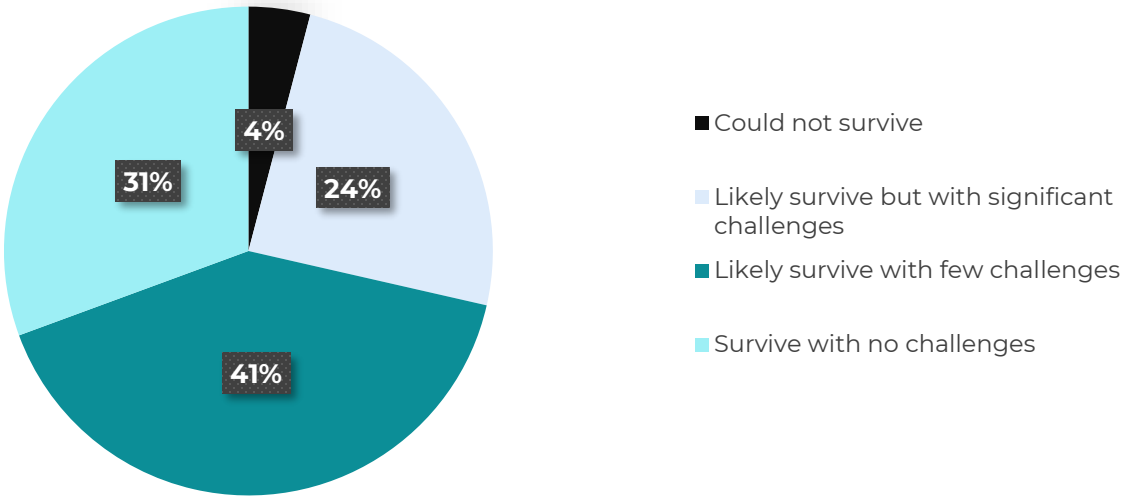
Responses indicated 67% applied and received CARES Act assistance, 8% applied but did not receive it, and 25% reported they did not apply for assistance. Of those who applied, some noted that they received the first round of the support but not the second.

UTOPIA Washington

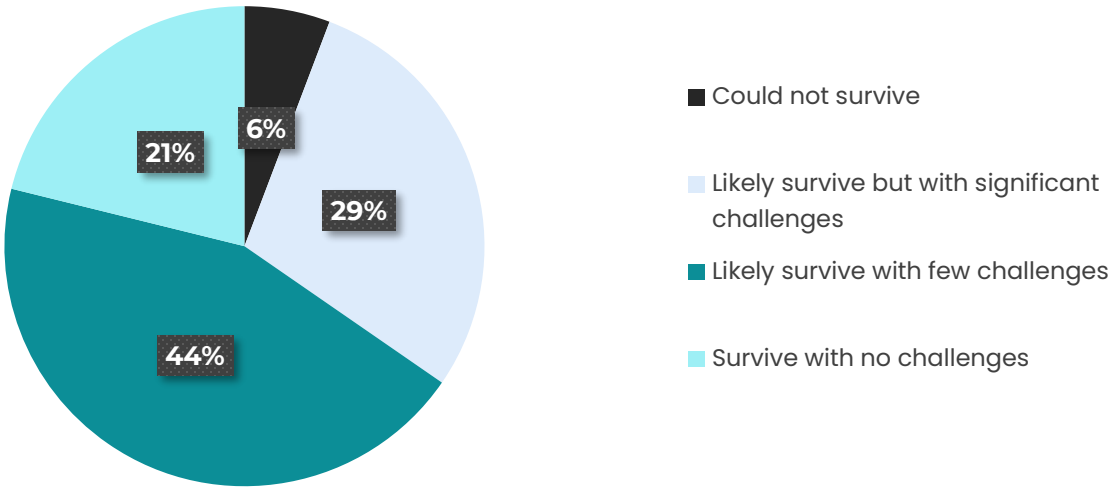
Likeliness of Organization to Survive in Continued COVID-19 Restricted Environment

We asked respondents to anticipate their likelihood of survival if things don't get better for them, and we asked them to comment what might contribute to their inability to survive. In the comments, organizations noted staffing (with burn-out and exhaustion of staff mentioned frequently), lack of funding and difficult fundraising in a virtual environment, the ongoing challenge of reaching audiences during COVID-19, and lack of volunteers as the main factors related to the challenges they face.

Through September 2021



Through December 2021



Fundraising and Revenue

Total Contributed (Donated) Income for 2020

Answers from non-profits varied widely, ranging from $1,000 in annual contributed income to $25,000,000. The median contributed income was $324,000.

Approximately 21% of non-profits reported contributed income of up to $100,000. Another 19% reported contributed income between $100,000 and $500,000, and 30% reported contributed income of more than $500,000. Approximately 19 % reported not knowing this information.

Fundraising in the Past Year

Non-profits were relatively evenly split across the three categories of exceeding fundraising expectations (28%), meeting expectations (26%) and not meeting expectations (26%). Those who exceeded expectations described such things as budgeting conservatively for donations, but receiving more funds than planned from individuals, corporations and philanthropy. This said, there was concern expressed about these levels dropping in 2021 when the need is still there given the level of investment in 2020.

Professional Development and Capacity Building

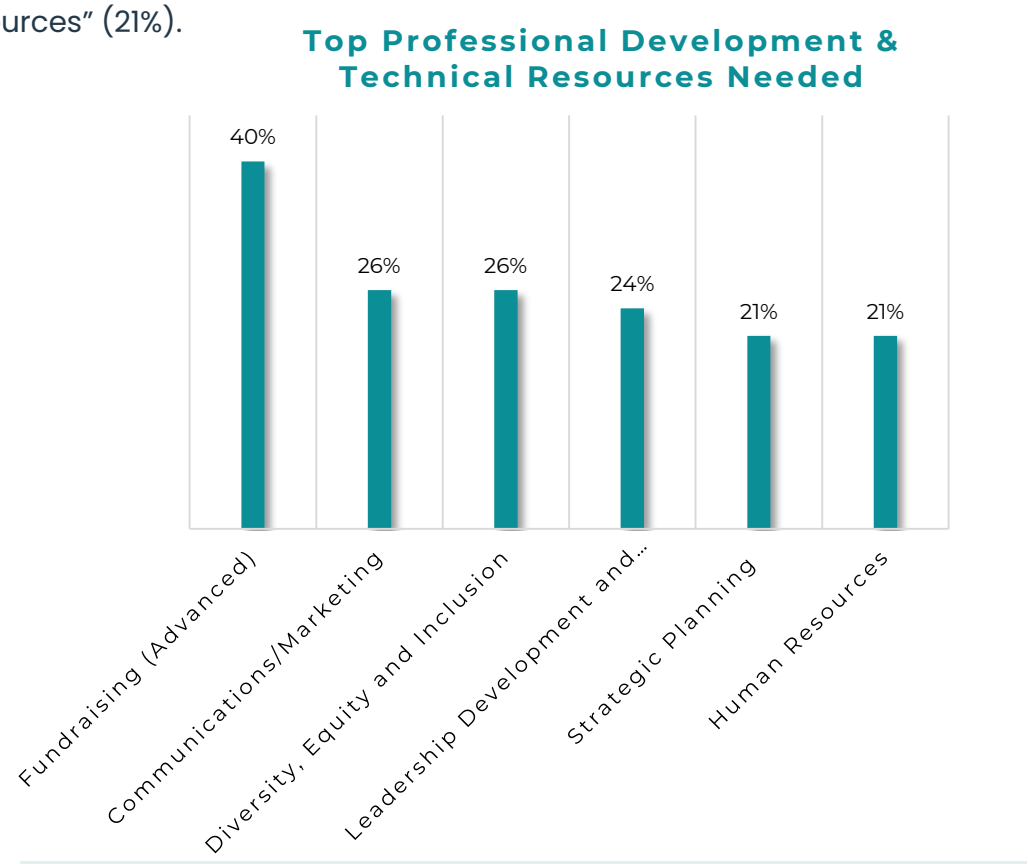
Sixty percent of non-profits reported engaging in professional development and/or capacity building efforts in the past year. Most cited were racial equity/DEI/anti-racism trainings, board training and development efforts, and efforts to support operations. The majority of participants (55%) reported these efforts had been productive and effective, though 43% reported not yet knowing the impact of such efforts.

Addressing Concerns about Equity for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)

Because of the collective increased awareness of racial injustice, we wanted to learn what non-profits were doing to address equity for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) . Top responses were "Conducted an organizational training on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion", "Increased service population to include more BIPOC" and "Created or integrated BIPOC into leadership positions." In the comments, several noted that more than one answer was applicable.

Professional Development, Technical Assistance and Staff Training Needed

Top answers for professional development and/or technical assistance resources needed by non-profits were "Fundraising (Advanced)" (40%), "Communications/Marketing (raising awareness about the organization's work)" (26%), "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion" (26%), followed closely by "Leadership Development and Recruitment" (24%), Strategic Planning" (21%) and "Human Resources" (21%).



In terms of staff training, survey participants reported most satisfaction with "access to technology" (62% in "Well" and "Very Well"). With regard to whether they feel like their teams have "skills in technology," most fell in the "Neutral" (40%) and "Well" (26%) categories.

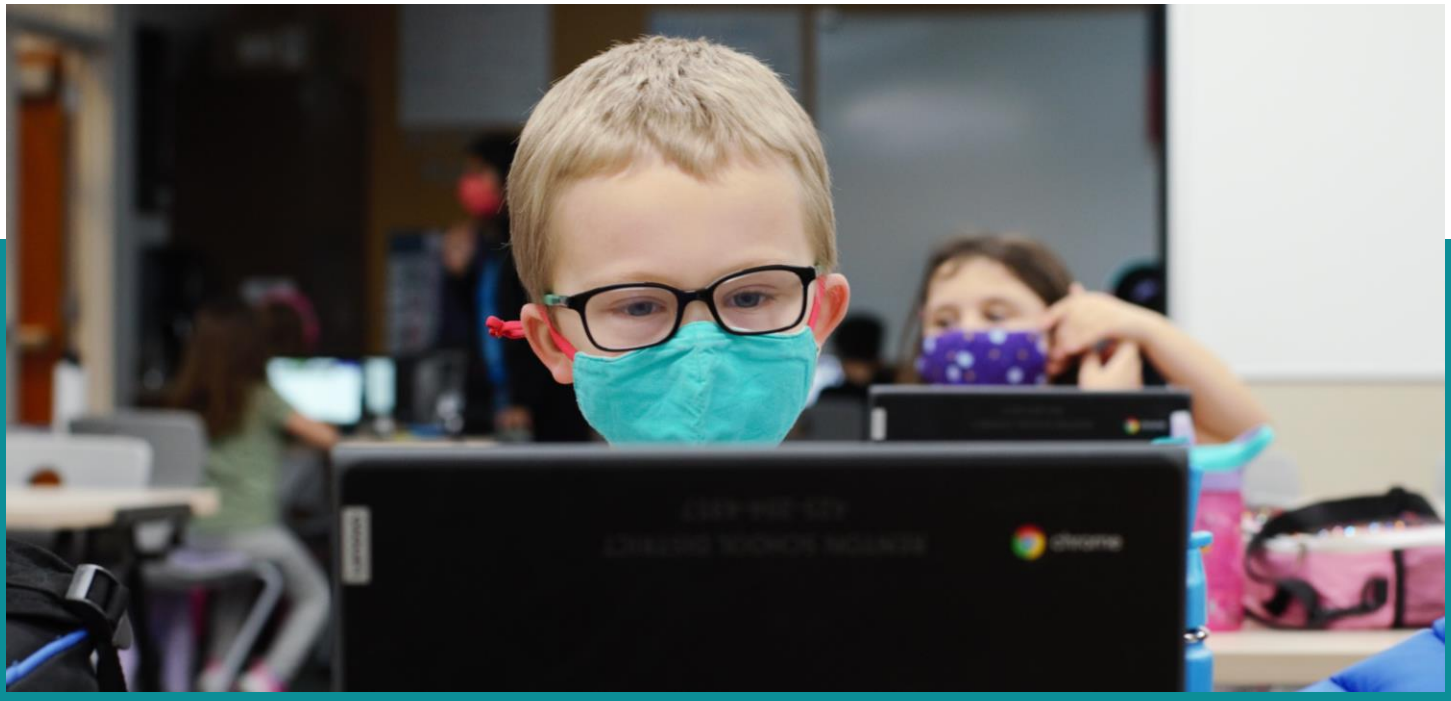
Non-profits expressed most dissatisfaction with the "training of managers/supervisors," where 43% of respondents fell into the categories of "Not Well" (17%) or "Somewhat Well" (26%) with 24% as "Neutral." Comments included needing more capacity and training in technology as well as that management trainings would prove helpful in supporting organizations.

Salary and Benefits

Most non-profits (52%) reported believing their salary and benefits package was helpful in hiring and retaining qualified employees; however, 29% reported believing the organization's salary and benefits package was not helpful and 19% reported being unsure. Comments included the desire to offer better packages but the inability to do so due to funding limitations.

Thirty-three percent of survey participants reported not offering health insurance for employees. Of those organizations that do offer health insurance, 24% offer it to all employees, 22% offer it to only full-time employees, and 12% offer it to full-time employees and those who work more than 20 hours per week. Comments indicated that some organizations are comprised solely or primarily of volunteers and/or too small to offer health insurance through the organization, even to full-time employees. Also mentioned were healthcare stipends and reimbursements for those on spouse's insurance plans.

Renton School District



Looking Ahead

Continued Pride in Work and Community

As we look ahead, it's important to take time to appreciate all that we have done together. In this spirit, non-profit respondents expressed pride in their work and communities in a wide variety of areas, including the trust, relationships and rapport built with the communities they serve; the ability to be resilient, to pivot and to be adaptable and flexible in the face of challenges; partnering with families, communities, funders and other providers; working at the grass roots level; ability to rise up, ramp up, work hard and meet the moment in the face of the pandemic; managing the shift to a virtual environment; the impact on those served and reached; and the length of time serving the community.

They also reflected on the meaning of "impact", of which there were a range of definitions. Themes included Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), such as numbers served and number of those benefitting from programs and the extent to which needs are met at 30, 60 and 90-day intervals. Others described access, the ways in which trust is built, how community feels they belong, if the community is reflected in staff and board composition, and the building of relationships.

Priorities in Next Year

In general, non-profits shared varying priorities for the coming year, ranging from strengthening their own strategy, capacity, fiscal sustainability, internal processes and infrastructure to supporting recovery efforts related to the impact of the pandemic on their communities. Many reported a desire to integrate and implement their learnings from 2020, including how best to continue to meet the growing needs and demands for services. Several also mentioned the need to hire more staff to better serve the community.

Specifically, the majority of non-profits reported their top areas of highest priority to be the "Quality/depth of programs" (86%), "Diversity, equity and inclusion" (64%), "Fundraising activities" (55%), "Number of people served" (55%), "Collaboration with nonprofits" (52%) and "Advocacy" (50%).

How can the community help you in being successful?

Respondents indicated that community members could help create awareness around specific issues (mental health, workforce development, housing stability, etc.); learn more about the organization and its work; donate to the organization; volunteer; identify, engage in and support creative partnerships; educate funders; and identify and share community needs and gaps in systems.

Other Comments or Feedback

Non-profits expressed gratitude for the ability to participate in the survey and for the Renton Regional Community Foundation's efforts to learn and understand more about the non-profit community.

African Community Housing & Development

Museum of Flight

rentonfoundation.org

THANK YOU