



RENTON REGIONAL
COMMUNITY
Foundation

2023 Non-Profit Survey Summary

Submitted by:

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September 2023



Front cover image:
Centro Rendu,
a program of St.
Vincent de Paul.

This page:
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Urban Family

September 2023

Dear Friends,

It is a great honor to present highlights and key lessons from the 2023 Renton Regional Community Foundation survey, which was conducted in the summer of 2023.

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 focused our outreach on organizations working in the South King County region.

We continue to be interested in how the challenges of the past three years have 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. While this report is focused on the results from responses in 2023, there are several important themes that have emerged from conducting the survey over the past three years (2020-2023):

- The non-profit community in South King County continues to work tirelessly to meet the high level of demand for services. Despite efforts to increase capacity, demand continues to outpace resources to meet the growing needs.
- Rental assistance/ housing, food security, and mental health have consistently been the top three needs facing community members each year of the survey.
- Non-profits report that their community members continue to experience significant transportation challenges.
- The level of collaboration among non-profits remains high.
- Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) continues to be a priority and area of expansion with a focus on reaching more populations to include more Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC).

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 survey responses.

We are tremendously grateful to the non-profit leaders who participated in this survey. We had 43 out of 120 respondents.

We are also grateful for the partnership of BECU which has provided financial support for this report. BECU has a prominent presence in South King County and is invested in the health and well-being of our community members.

In gratitude,

LeAnne Moss
Executive Director



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Centro Rendu,
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OVERVIEW

In 2023, Renton Regional Community Foundation (RRCF) distributed an online survey to collect information from the non-profit community located in South King County, Washington. 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 continued to experience a challenging period. The combination of uncertainty and a shifting environment combined with the high demand for services, financial challenges, and changes in staffing and volunteers have stretched organizations, leading to staff exhaustion and burnout.

At the same time, organizations have shown a unique ability to identify and build on the richness and assets of their communities. They have met these challenging times in creative and resourceful ways and found ways to partner and collaborate more than ever before.



Photo courtesy of Mother Africa

The non-profit community in South King County continues to struggle to meet the high level of demand for services. Ninety-two percent of respondents reported increased demand in programs and services, and 58% reported that they could not meet the demand for services. Despite efforts to increase capacity, respondents cited that the demand outpaced resources to meet the growing need and comments indicated that there is a lack of confidence that demands will ever be met. Primary challenges cited were the long-term impacts of COVID-19, lack of funding, staff capacity, and an insufficient number of staff.

Support for basic needs continues to be high. South King County residents are struggling with getting their basic needs met. Once again, respondents reported that rental assistance/housing, food security, and mental health are the top three needs facing community members. These are the same three greatest needs identified in the 2020, 2021, and 2022 surveys.

Non-profits' level of collaboration remains high. The majority of non-profit respondents (91%) reported partnering with other organizations to deliver services, and 74% of organizations reported increasing partnerships in the last year.

Organizations remain focused on delivery of services even while addressing the compounding effects of the lingering impacts of COVID-19, systemic racial inequities that impact the ability to thrive, and the prolonged hardships of the economic crisis. Organizations reported their focus for the coming year is on providing quality services, their reach, and their fundraising, citing their main priorities as “quality and depth of programs” (85%), “number of people served” (71%), and “fundraising activities” (71%). Respondents also noted a shift from the acute impact of COVID-19 to its long-term impact, including adapting to a changed environment through the ongoing virtual delivery of services and operating with limited capacity.

There continue to be significant barriers to mental health. The top three barriers to mental health are a lack of culturally appropriate mental health services, no capacity to serve clients' mental health needs, and a lack of availability of services and therapists. Additionally, over 50% of respondents reported the barriers of outside agencies that provide services are at capacity and the stigma related to mental health.

Transportation continues to be a significant issue to address. Approximately 76% of non-profits reported experiencing challenges with transportation for those with whom they work. The top two challenges noted were a lack of funds for public transportation or to pay for gas and the inability to drive, the same top two reasons reported in 2022. Organizations have had to find several ways to adapt to these challenges, which have ranged from developing partnerships to providing vehicle maintenance, gas gift cards, ride shares and bus passes. They have also moved to virtual appointments and/or services.

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) continues to be a priority and area of expansion. Most organizations (84%) reported expanding in this area, including a focus on reaching more populations to include more Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC). Highest areas of DEI-related activity included conducting organizational training on diversity, equity, and inclusion, increasing service population to include more BIPOC, and integrating BIPOC into leadership positions.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF NON-PROFIT STAKEHOLDERS

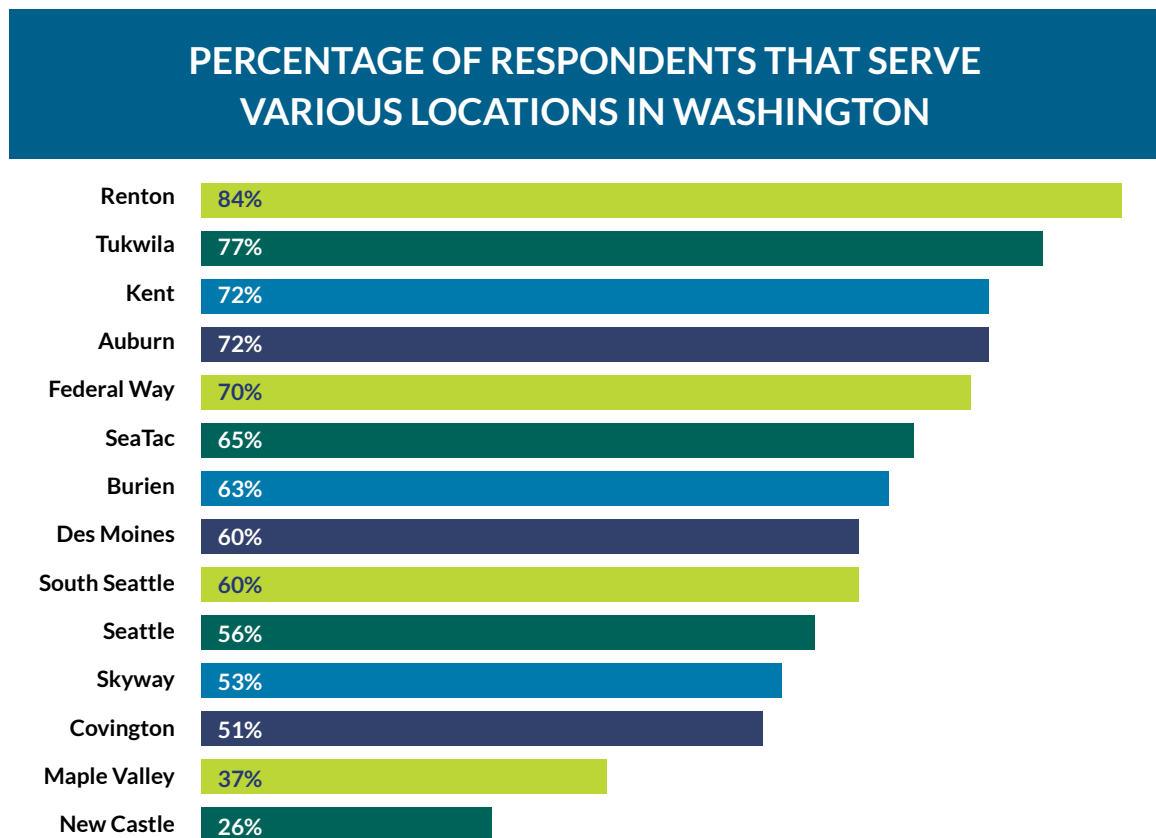
A total of 43 (of 120) respondents completed the 2023 non-profit survey. The following are details related to the specific questions from the survey.

Non-Profit Status

About 98% of survey respondents reported holding non-profit status and 2% reported that they are fiscally-sponsored organizations.

Location Served

Most non-profits indicated that they served the Renton area (84%); however, many also noted in the comments that they serve multiple areas. Beyond Renton, service areas with high representation of services included Tukwila (77%), followed by Auburn (72%), Kent (72%) and Federal Way (70%). 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 (37%) and Newcastle (26%).



**SOUTH KING COUNTY
NON-PROFIT AREAS
OF PRIMARY FOCUS:**

44%
Human Services

16% Education

9% Other

9% Public Benefit

7% Housing

7% Health

2% Arts, Culture and Humanities

2% Advocacy

2% Civic Engagement

**2023 Organization
Budget Size**

Roughly 58% of respondents came from organizations with budgets under \$999,000. Of these, 21% came from organizations with budgets under \$99,000. Additionally, 28% of respondents came from organizations with budgets between \$1,000,000 and \$2,999,000, and 9% reported budgets over \$5,000,000.

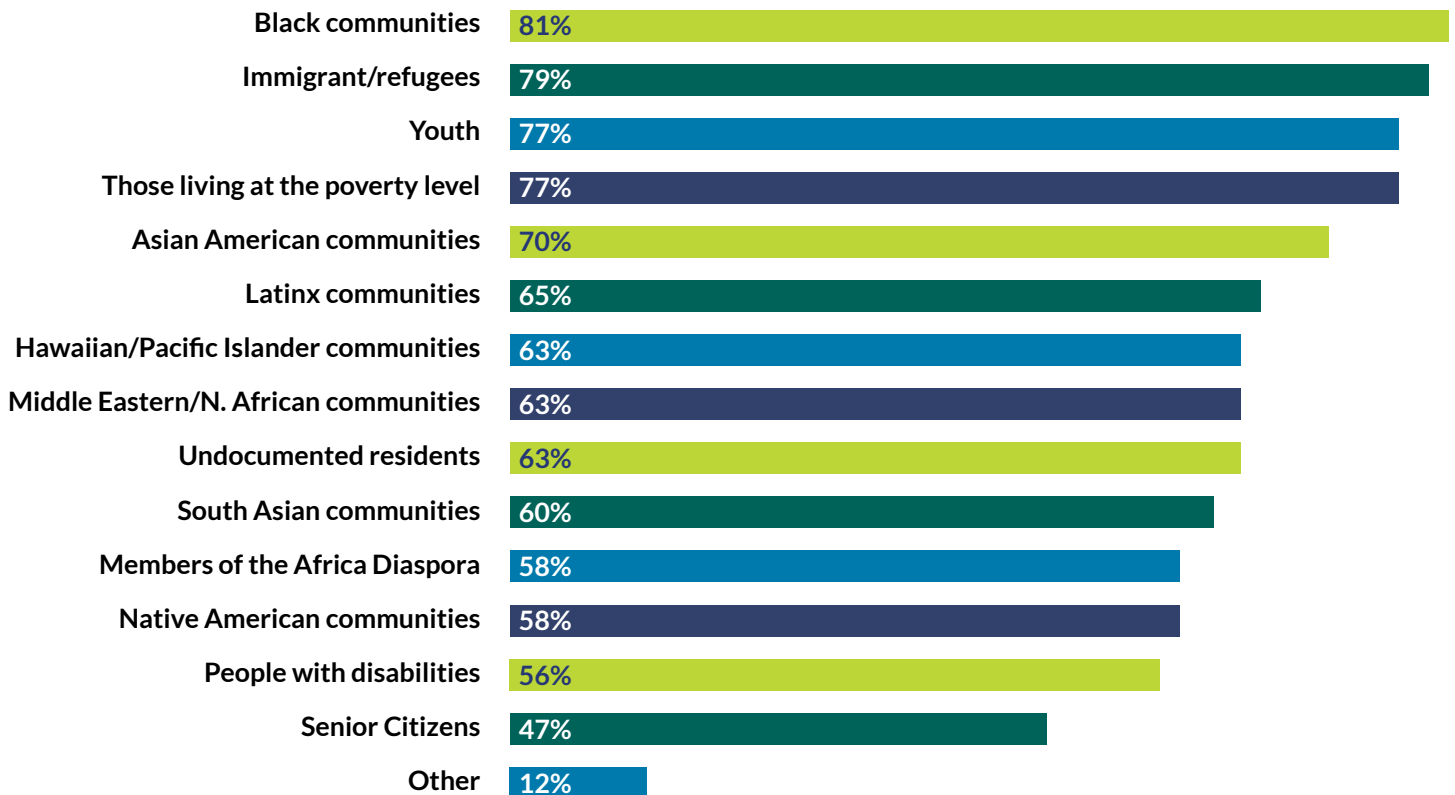
Focus Area

Most noted their primary focus areas as “human service” (44%) and “education” (16%), public benefit (9%) and “other” (9%), which slightly differed from the information gathered for the 2022 report for which “human services” (30%), “other” (14%), “education” (11%) and “health” (11%) were the largest categories. The “other” category spoke to the multi-disciplinary nature of several organizations, which span across several of the answer options. Additionally, 35% respondents noted that they had a particular focus on food security, considerably down from the 2022 report, where the focus on food security was noted by 50% of respondents and more in line with the 2021 report, where 30% noted focus on food security.

Populations/Communities Worked with and/or Served

Respondents reported working primarily with Black communities (81%), immigrant/refugees (79%), and youth (77%). For reference, in the 2022 report, organizations reported working primarily with Black communities (89%), youth (86%) and Latinx communities (84%). In the comments section, several organizations noted that they served all populations listed. Populations least represented were senior citizens and people with disabilities, the same populations least represented in the 2022 report. Additionally, 77% of organizations reported serving those at the poverty level.

PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS THAT SERVED VARIOUS COMMUNITITES OR POPULATIONS



VARIOUS COMMUNITIES/ POPULATIONS SERVED

Number of People Served by Organization

Non-profits noted the number of people served as ranging from 100 to 250,000.

0-499: 24%	10,000-19,999: 15%
500-999: 12%	20,000-99,999: 15%
1,000-4,999: 27%	100,000+: 6%
5,000-9,999: 3%	

Assets of the Communities and Populations Non-Profits Serve

Responses from non-profits included the depth of richness in diversity and culture (cultural roots, heritage, and lived experience); self-determination of communities; community and family resilience and adaptability; hope, determination, grit and perseverance; the strong sense of community, unity and “healing together”; the perspective of joy and abundance; creativity and innovation; community support and services; and grassroots organizers and advocates.

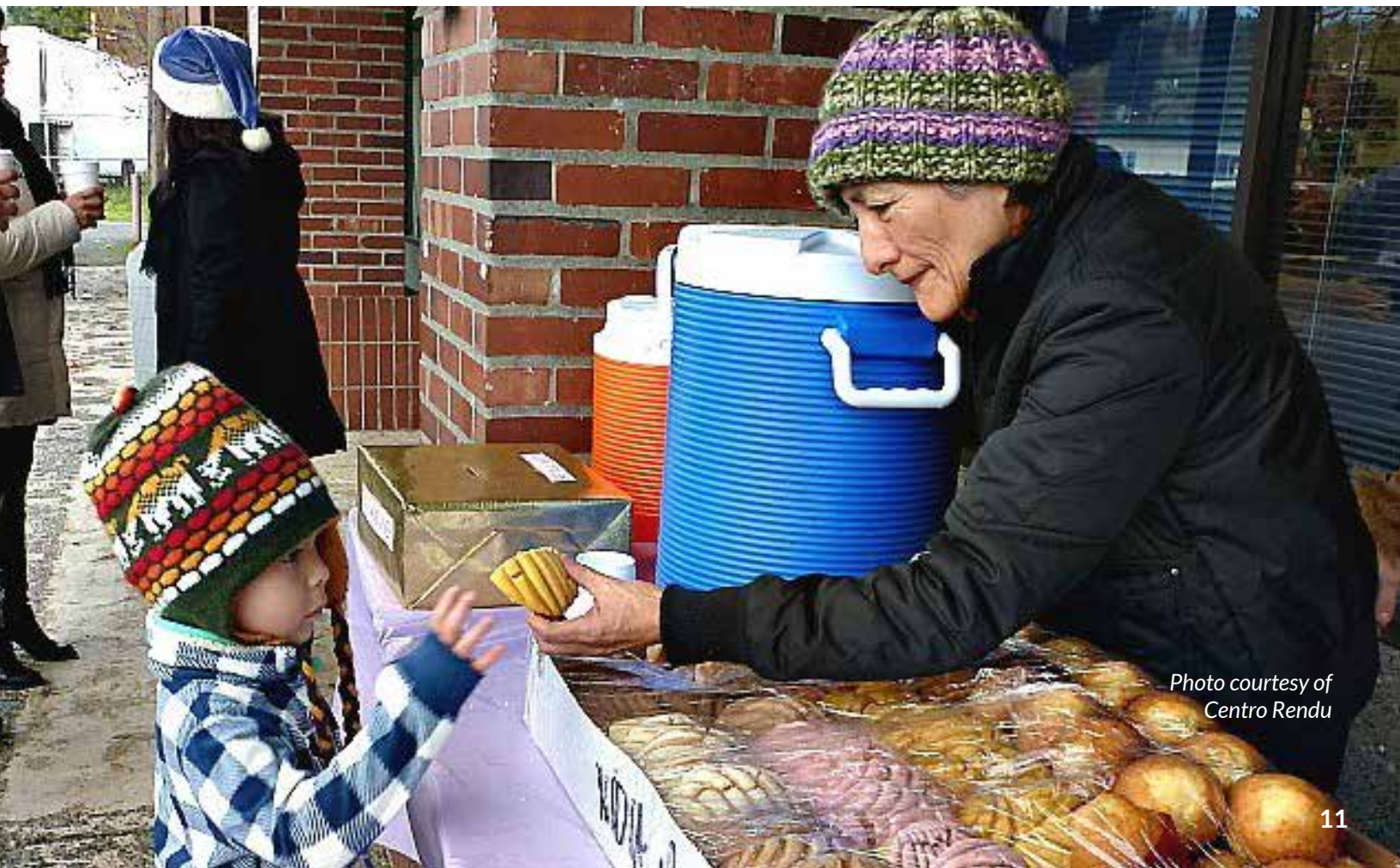


Photo courtesy of
Centro Rendu

CHANGES

Changes in Specific Areas in the Past Year

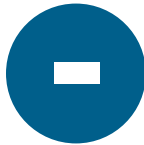
Non-profits experienced an **increase** primarily in the following areas:



- Demand for services (91%)
- Government contract/grant writing (45%)
- Total revenue (45%)
- Number of individuals volunteering (41%)

For reference, in 2022 the greatest areas of increase were “demand for services” (97%) “government contract/grant writing” (59%), “total revenue” (56%), and “funding from individual donors” (41%).

Non-profits reported the largest **decreases** in the following areas:



- Funding from individual donors (40%)
- Public foundation funding (36%)
- Total revenue (33%)¹



Alimentando al Pueblo
Photo: Michael B. Maine

¹Total revenue was also noted as an increase for the majority of organizations, suggesting the varied experiences non-profits had in this area.

Non-profits noted loss of pandemic funding and shifting focus for donors as some of the reasons for such decreases. For reference, in 2022, the largest decreases were in the “number of individuals volunteering” (56%), followed by “funding from individual donors” (34%), and “public foundation funding” (32%).

The leading areas where non-profits reported no change in 2023 were “public foundation funding” (38%), funding from individual donors (28%) and number of individuals volunteering (26%). For reference, in the 2022 report, most non-profits reported no change in the areas of “program service revenue” (25%) and “public foundation funding” (24%).

Program Changes to Achieve New Sources of Revenue

Most non-profit organizations reported they “changed some of our programs and services” (65%); however, 30% said they “did not change any of our programs or services,” and 5% reported having “changed our programs and services completely.” These results closely mirror what was reported in both 2022 and 2021.

Providing more information on the reason for the change in programs, 30% reported it was to address needs stemming from their clients, 13% reported it was to achieve a new source of revenue, and 33% reported changing services for both of these reasons. Additionally, 18% reported they did not change anything.

Participants’ comments on the changes included adjusting to meet needs of the community, working with new populations and expanding to new geographic locations, and cash flow issues.

Partnerships

The majority of non-profit respondents (91%) reported partnering with other organizations to deliver services. This is down slightly from the 2022 report, where 97% reported partnering, but up significantly from the 2021 and 2020 reports, where 61% and 41% of organizations (respectively) reported partnering with other organizations to deliver services. Additionally, 74% of organizations reported increasing partnerships in the last year, down slightly from the 2022 report (79%).

In both 2022 and 2023, information collected on desired partnerships indicated that non-profits want to partner with mission-aligned and values-aligned organizations with the goal of expanding reach and achieving greater impact and improved outcomes. Some of the areas mentioned included systemic racism, BIPOC-led organizations, food shortage and food waste, mental health, mass incarceration, capacity building, schools, funders, and other cities.

DEMAND FOR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Non-profits have continued to be very adaptive. Similar to 2022, non-profits shared that their strategies to meet the demands of the times have included the following:

- Launching and deepening partnerships
- Listening and 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
- Expanding staff and volunteer base to meet increasing demand for services
- Remaining flexible and learning as things unfold and problem solving

Greatest Area(s) of Need from Community

Overall, the top three “greatest areas of need” for 2023 were rental assistance/housing security, food security, and mental health support. These were the same top three “greatest areas of need” in 2020, 2021, and 2022.

1 FIRST ranked greatest needs:

- 37%** Rental assistance/housing security
- 23%** Mental health support
- 21%** Food security
- 7%** Safety: domestic violence support
- 7%** Support for undocumented people
- 5%** Relief from social isolation

2 SECOND ranked greatest needs:

- 35%** Food security
- 23%** Rental assistance/housing security
- 23%** Mental health support
- 12%** Safety: domestic violence support
- 0%** Support for undocumented people
- 7%** Relief from social isolation

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. The top group noted for an increase in demand was ages 6-12 (74%) followed by adults (69%) and adolescents ages 13-19 (66%). For reference, in 2022, the groups noted with most increase in demand were adults (81%) followed by adolescents (71%) and aging, elderly, senior citizens (64%).

Ability to Fully Meet Demand for Services

Across those surveyed, 58% reported they were unable to meet demand for services. **Despite efforts to increase capacity, respondents cited that the demand outpaced resources to meet the growing need and comments indicated that there is a lack of confidence that demands will ever be met.** Primary challenges cited were the long-term impacts of COVID-19, lack of funding, staff capacity, and an insufficient number of staff, all of which were also mentioned in the 2022 and 2021 survey responses.

Unmet Needs

As was also reported in the 2022 survey, organizations noted their own staffing limitations, including staff capacity and recruitment of qualified staff, especially relative to the need for expansion of services given the large number of people who require services. Other responses included concerns about housing, food security, and transportation; mental health; culturally-appropriate services and responses; and funding.



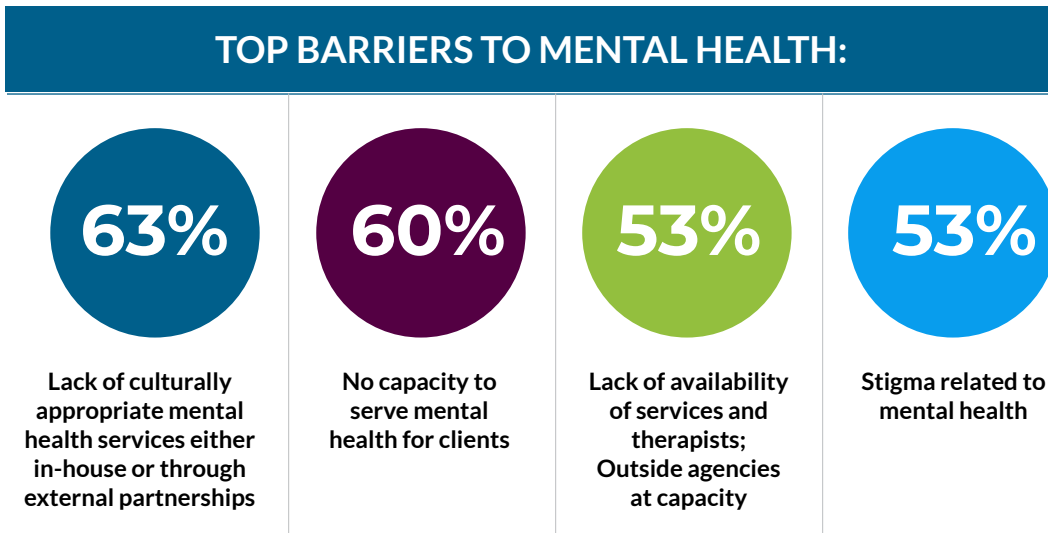
Photo courtesy of
AMPowering

CHALLENGES TO CONSTITUENTS

Respondents reported on a variety of challenges they are both facing and addressing, which are explained below.

Barriers to Mental Health for Staff and Community

A significant number of respondents reported the top barrier to mental health as “lack of culturally appropriate mental health services either in-house or through external partnerships” (63%), though down slightly from the 2022 report (78%). Other primary barriers noted were “no capacity to serve mental health for clients” (60%) followed by “lack of availability of services and therapists; outside agencies that provide services are at capacity” (53%) and “stigma related to mental health” (53%). These were the same top barriers reported in 2022.



Afghan Health Initiative
Photo: Michael B. Maine

How Changes in Systems Have Impacted and/or Will Impact Non-Profit Work

Responses related to how changes in systems have impacted and/or will impact the work of non-profits and included the following:

- End of the eviction moratorium and housing security
- Lack of housing security
- Non-profit funding security
- Backlog of clients in need/demand for services outpacing available services
- Requirements related to eligibility for services requirements
- Inadequate behavioral health services/Access to behavioral health services

Transportation Challenges and Reasons for Such Challenges

Approximately 76% of non-profits reported challenges with transportation, down slightly from the 2022 report (79%), but still up considerably from 2021, where 57% of non-profits reported such challenges. Of those who reported an issue, the top three reasons were “no funds to use public transportation or pay for gas” (65%), “unable to drive” (41%), and “no bus route” (21%). As was the case in 2022, respondents noted driver shortages as a significant challenge. The reasons of “no funds to use public transportation or pay for gas” and “unable to drive” were the top two challenges reported in both 2022 and 2023.

Addressing the Transportation Challenges

Some of the ways in which organizations have attempted to address these transportation challenges have included developing partnerships (including with rideshare services and food delivery services); providing vehicle maintenance, gas gift cards, ride shares and bus passes; recruiting drivers; allocating operating funds to transportation; securing grants and/or private funding; and moving to virtual appointments and/or services.



*Photos courtesy of
Renton Schools
Foundation*

FUNDRAISING AND CAPACITY

As has been shared in previous reports, organizations have been stretched in their ability to raise funds and to continue to have the capacity to deliver programs.

Fundraising in the Past Year

Approximately 51% of organizations reported that fundraising “met expectations” or “exceeded expectations,” and 49% reported that their fundraising “did not meet expectations”. For those not able to meet expectations, reasons included recovery from COVID-19, rising operational costs, and issues with staff capacity. The non-profits that reported exceeding fundraising expectations (9%) credited lower costs for virtual fundraising events, programmatic innovations, and increasing grants and major gifts.

Areas of Expansion and Reduction in the Past Year

Organizations have had to contend with expanding and/or reducing organizational and programmatic work. Survey results showed the following patterns in organizational expansion: “Diversity, equity and inclusion” was rated the highest (84%), followed by “number of people served” (77%), and “quality/depth of programs” (65%). In 2022, the top three areas of organizational expansion were as follows: “Diversity, equity and inclusion” was rated the highest (83%), followed by “collaboration with non-profits” (72%) and “number of people served” (72%).

In terms of areas of reduction, the highest was “number of volunteers” (27%) and then “staff size” (15%) and “fundraising activities” (12%). In 2022, these were the same three top areas of reduction though with larger percentages: “number of volunteers” (46%), “fundraising activities” (28%), and “staff size” (21%).

TOP AREAS OF EXPANSION

84%	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
77%	Number of People Served
65%	Quality/Depth of Programs

TOP AREAS OF REDUCTION

27%	Number of Volunteers
15%	Staff Size
12%	Fundraising Activities

AREAS THAT STAYED THE SAME

55%	Communications/Marketing
44%	Advocacy
38%	Collaboration w/non-profits Service Area

Things that have been kept the same as the previous year included: “communications and marketing (55%), advocacy (44%), followed by “collaboration with non-profits” and “service area,” both at 38%. In 2022, these areas were “number of programs” (37%) followed by a tie between the following, each at 35%: “quality and depth of programs”; “service area” and “advocacy.” Also important to note is there was a majority of expansion reported in every area with the exception of “fundraising activities” and “communications and marketing,” for which more respondents (50% and 55% respectively) reported no change from the previous year.

Highest Priority for Organization in the Coming Year

Non-profits noted their priority areas for the coming year as “quality and depth of programs” (85%), “number of people served” (71%), and “fundraising activities” (71%). In 2022, the top three areas were “quality and depth of programs” (86%), “number of people served” (83%), and “diversity, equity and inclusion” (76%).

Positive Impact of a Renton Regional Community Foundation Grant

Non-profits reported many benefits from receiving a grant from Renton Regional Community Foundation, ranging from covering rising operational and program costs to addressing shortfalls and increasing capacity to expand services to meet increasing demand. Appreciation for the flexible nature of the funding and for the ease of application and reporting was frequently mentioned in responses. Respondents also reported that they find Renton Regional Community Foundation’s commitment to and support for community inspiring.



*Ubumwe Women’s Association
Photo: Michael B. Maine*

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Professional Development

Sixty-six percent of non-profits reported engaging in professional development and/or capacity building efforts in the past year, up slightly from 56% last year. Most cited were employee training and staff development. Several comments noted the need for funding and resources in this area. Fifty-six percent of participants reported these efforts had been effective with the positive impact of increased capacity, operational effectiveness, improved morale, and decreased burnout cited most often.

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

In light of the collective increased awareness of racial injustice, we wanted to learn how non-profits continue to address equity for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). Top responses were “conducted an organizational training on diversity, equity, and inclusion” (28%), “Increased service population to include more BIPOC” (25%), and “created or integrated BIPOC into leadership positions” (16%).



Photo courtesy of Domestic Abuse Women's Network (DAWN)

TOP PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL RESOURCES NEEDED	
59%	Fundraising (advanced)
53%	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
50%	Board Development/Governance
47%	Communications/Marketing
44%	Strategic Planning
41%	Leadership Recruitment and Development

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)” (59%), the same top answer as in 2022 though down slightly from the 2022 reporting, which was 70%. “Diversity, equity and inclusion” (53%), “board development/governance” (50%), and “communications/marketing (raising awareness about the organization’s work)” (47%) were the next three highest categories. These were the same as in the 2022 report, but with slightly different percentage results: “Communications/marketing (raising awareness about the organization’s work)” (63%), “board development/governance” (63%), and “diversity, equity and inclusion” (52%).

In terms of staff training, survey participants reported most satisfaction with “access to technology” (68% in “well” and “very well”). With regard to whether they feel like their teams have “skills in technology,” most fell in the “neutral” (47%) and “well” (27%) categories.

Reporting on the “training of managers/supervisors” improved over 2022 with 32% responding “well” and 13% responding “very well.” Thirty-six responded “neutral”, 13% responded “somewhat well”, and 6% responded “not well.” There were no responses of “well” or “very well” in 2022.

LOOKING AHEAD

Continued Pride in Work and Community
(What Non-profits are Most Proud Of)

Non-profits
reported
being
proud of
numerous
things.

- Meeting people where they are
- Cultural diversity and cultural competency
- Intentionality
- Impact
- Relationships
- Building new systems and supports
- Providing options
- Shared goals
- Collaboration, coordination, and partnerships
- Providing opportunities and addressing needs
- Resilient organizations and communities
- Sustaining through the challenging environment of the last three years
- Listening to community
- Witnessing change
- Working at the grassroots level
- Dedicated, caring, committed, and hard working staff

Priorities in the Next Year

In general, non-profits shared varying priorities for the coming year, ranging from strengthening fundraising and fiscal sustainability (cited most often) to developing improved internal processes, infrastructure, and leadership to expanding outreach, services, and impact. Several also mentioned the need to hire more staff and to grow staff capacity.

How Can the Community Help You in Being Successful?

Respondents indicated that community members could help by volunteering and donating; by sharing opportunities for connection, collaboration and partnership; and by learning more about the organization, raising awareness about needs and services, and making referrals.

Other Comments and Feedback

Non-profits expressed gratitude for the ability to participate in the survey and for the Renton Regional Community Foundation's efforts to support non-profits and communities.



*Alimentando al Pueblo
Photo: Michael B. Maine*



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