2024 Non-Profit Survey Summary

Submitted by:

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Front cover image:
Courtesy of Empower Women of Color Project

This page:
Courtesy of Braided Seeds

September 2024

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to present highlights and key lessons from the 2024 Renton Regional Community Foundation survey, which was conducted in the summer of 2024.

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 2024 , there are several important themes that have emerged from conducting the survey over the past three years (2021-2024):

- In every year the survey has been conducted, the top three "greatest areas of need" have stayed consistent: rental assistance/housing security, food security, and mental health support.
- Non-profits continue to face challenges such as high demand for services, financial difficulties, and staffing issues. Despite these challenges, organizations have demonstrated creativity, resilience, and increased collaboration.
- Fundraising efforts have generally fallen short of expectations, and organizations are stretched in their ability to deliver programs.
- Organizations reported a need for more support in communications/marketing, advanced fundraising, strategic planning, and training in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).
- Organizations are focused on expanding services, securing sustainable funding, and enhancing staff and volunteer development. There is a priority on expanding diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, as well as increasing the number of people served.
- There is a continued emphasis on equity, community engagement, and long-term sustainability.

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 a total of 49 respondents from across 115 organizations.

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

BECU

Renton Regional Community Foundation

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Above: Participants at RRCF's "Trust-based Philanthropy in South King County" gathering

OVERVIEW

In 2024, 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 HIGHLIGHTS

Non-profits in South King County continue to face significant challenges, including high demand for services, financial difficulties, and staffing shortages. Despite this, organizations have creatively adapted to meet the moment, collaborated more with other organizations, and leveraged community assets.

The findings from the 2024 survey underscore the resourcefulness of the non-profits, while also highlighting the critical areas where additional support and resources are needed to meet the increasing demands of the communities they serve.

Themes

Key Areas of Service and Focus: The majority of non-profits focus on human services, education, housing, and food security. Black communities, youth, immigrants, and refugees being the primary populations served. The top areas of need identified were rental assistance/housing security, food security, and mental health support.

Changes in Organizational Operations: There has been an increase in the demand for services, government contract/grant writing, and volunteer participation, while funding from individual donors and overall revenue have seen a decrease. Many organizations reported making no significant changes to their programs despite financial pressures, focusing instead on maintaining core services and addressing immediate community needs.

Partnerships and Collaboration: A significant number of organizations have increased their partnerships, though this trend has slightly declined compared to previous years. Partnerships have been crucial in expanding service delivery and addressing community challenges. Organizations report that collaboration often involves resource sharing and referrals, helping to ensure that community members receive comprehensive support.

Financial Sustainability and Fundraising: Fundraising efforts have generally not met expectations and many organizations struggle to secure the necessary funds to sustain or expand their programs. There is a notable emphasis on the need for professional development in the areas of fundraising, strategic planning, and communications/marketing to help organizations become more sustainable.

Professional Development and Equity Efforts: Non-profits are investing in professional development,and particularly in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives, with many organizations working to increase BIPOC representation in leadership and service populations. There is a recognized need for ongoing training and resources in these areas to better address community needs and ensure equitable service delivery.

Community Engagement and Support: Non-profits have identified community engagement, financial contributions, and capacity building as critical areas where support is needed. Organizations expressed a strong commitment to equity, innovation, and long-term sustainability, with plans to expand services, strengthen partnerships, and improve internal operations.

Ongoing and Emerging Needs: The report highlights the growing complexity of community needs, including intersectional challenges such as housing, food security, mental health, and job training. Language barriers and cultural challenges, particularly for immigrant and refugee populations, remain significant issues that non-profits are striving to address.

Left: Image courtesy of Braided Seeds

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF NON-PROFIT STAKEHOLDERS

A total of 49 individuals from across 115 organizations completed the 2024 non-profit survey. The following are details related to the specific questions from the survey.

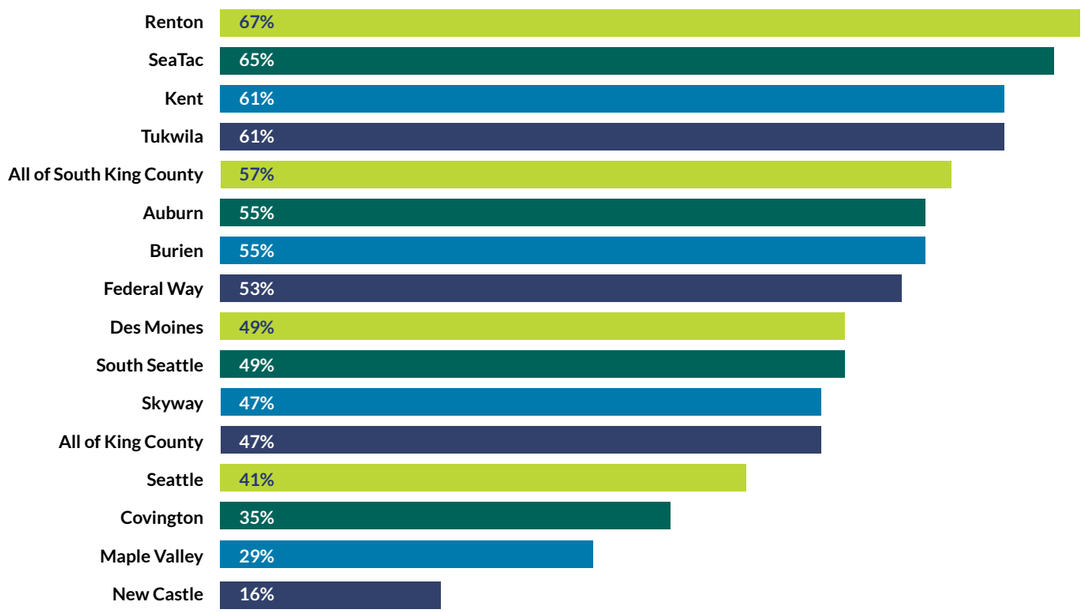
Non-Profit Status

Approximately 96% of survey respondents reported holding non-profit status and 4% reported that they are fiscally-sponsored organizations.

Location Served

Most non-profits indicated that they served the Renton area (67%); however, many also noted in the comments that they serve multiple areas. Beyond Renton, service areas with high representation of services included SeaTac (65%), followed by Tukwila (61%), Kent (61%), Burien (55%), and Auburn (55%). Several noted service in more than one county, state-wide and/or nation-wide. Locations with lower representation were Maple Valley (29%) and Newcastle (16%), which was also true in 2023.

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS THAT SERVE VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN WASHINGTON



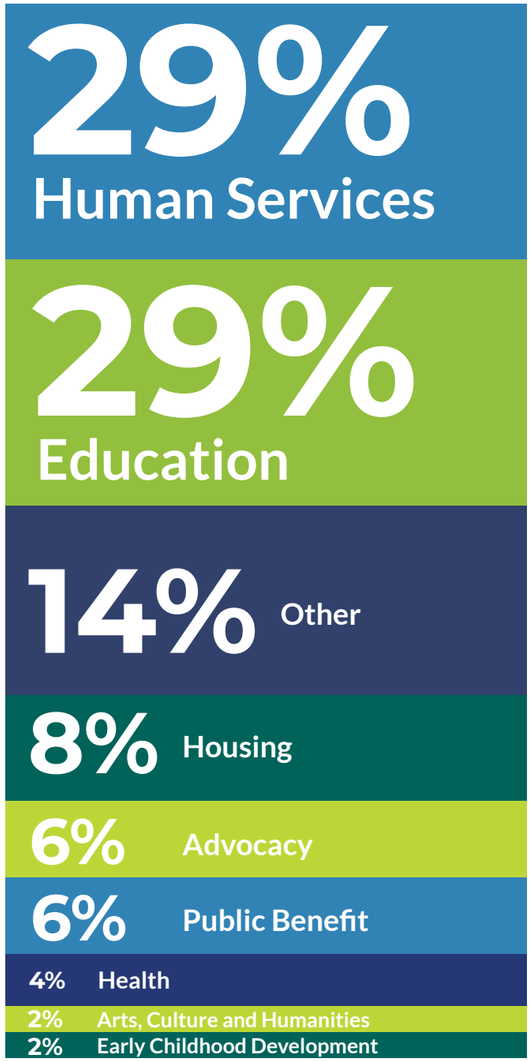
2024 Organization Budget Size

Roughly 59% of respondents came from organizations with budgets under $999,999, similar to reporting in the 2023 survey (58%). Of these, 20% came from organizations with budgets under $100,000. Additionally, 80% of respondents came from organizations with budgets under $3,000,000, and 12% reported budgets over $5,000,000. A few organizations noted in their comments that their budgets included in-kind services, goods, and rent.

Focus Area

Most noted their primary focus areas as “human service” (29%) and “education” (29%), “other” (14%), and “housing”(8%), which slightly differed from the information gathered for the 2023 report for which “human service” (44%) and “education” (16%), “public benefit” (9%) and “other” (9%), were the largest categories. The “other” category spoke to the multidisciplinary nature of several organizations, which spanned across answer options. Additionally, 37% respondents noted that they had a particular focus on food security, roughly equal to the 2023 report, where a focus on food security was noted by 35% of respondents.

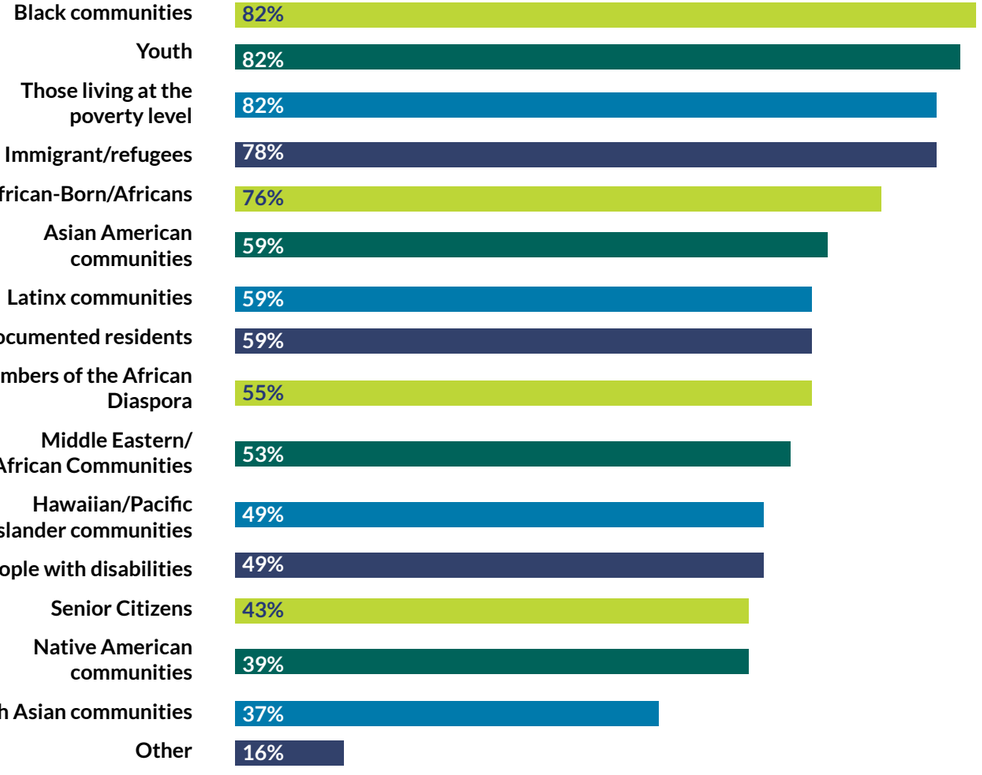
SOUTH KING COUNTY NON-PROFIT AREAS OF PRIMARY FOCUS:



Populations/Communities Worked with and/or Served

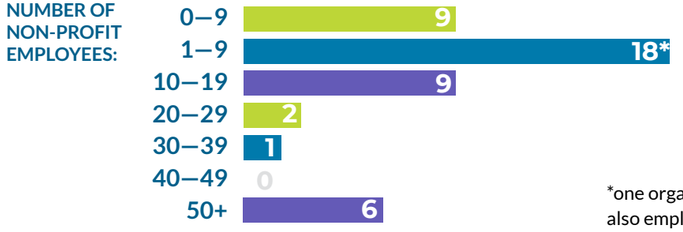
Respondents reported working primarily with Black communities (82%), youth (82%), immigrant/refugees (78%), and African-Born/Africans (75.51%), similar to the 2023 results. Respondents could select more than one population in their responses. In the comments section, several organizations noted that they served all populations listed. Populations least represented were South Asian communities and Native American communities, which differed from the 2022 and 2023 reports, where the least represented were senior citizens and people with disabilities. Additionally, 82% of organizations reported serving those at the poverty level, up from 77% from the 2023 report.

PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS THAT SERVED VARIOUS COMMUNITITES OR POPULATIONS



Number of Employees

Non-profits noted the number of employees, ranging from 0 to more than 300, with the majority having under 20 employees.



*one organization noted that they also employed 15 seasonal educators

Assets of the Communities and Populations Non-Profits Serve

Responses from non-profits included the following themes:

- **Resilience and Adaptability:** Many responses emphasize the resilience of the communities in facing economic challenges, systemic oppression, and other adversities. There's a strong emphasis on the ability to adapt and thrive despite these challenges.
- **Community and Family Support:** The importance of community bonds, mutual support, and family orientation is a recurring theme. Communities are seen as close-knit, with a strong sense of responsibility towards one another.
- **Cultural Richness and Diversity**: The communities are described as culturally rich, with diverse traditions, languages, and perspectives that contribute to the broader community's vibrancy.
- **Commitment to Education and Growth**: A strong commitment to education and personal growth is evident, with emphasis on the importance of educational systems, mentorship, and the role of education in community empowerment.
- **Entrepreneurial Spirit and Work Ethic:** There is a recognition of the strong work ethic and entrepreneurial spirit within the communities, with individuals eager to contribute economically through their skills and businesses.
- **Mental Health and Well-Being:** Mental health support and well-being are highlighted as critical needs, with an emphasis on culturally relevant practices and community-driven support systems.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** Diversity is celebrated, with recognition of the need for inclusive practices and the celebration of different abilities and perspectives within the community.
- **Economic and Social Capital:** The responses highlight the importance of building economic and social capital, addressing basic needs, and empowering communities to move beyond their current situations.
- **Communication and Information Sharing**: The role of effective communication, particularly through social media and word of mouth, is noted as a key asset in spreading information and mobilizing community efforts.

NEEDS AND CHALLENGES

Similar to previous years' survey results, respondents noted increased demand, funding and resource constraints, and need for capacity building. The critical service areas of housing, food security, and mental health were also frequently noted.

New concerns expressed in 2024 included the ongoing struggle of organizations to meet rising demands with limited resources while attempting to address complex issues within their communities. **Respondents noted that the problems faced by their clients and communities are often intersectional, with individuals needing support across multiple areas such as housing, food, mental health, and job training.** This complexity makes it challenging for organizations to address all needs adequately. Language barriers and cultural challenges were also noted, particularly for immigrant and refugee populations, which exacerbate the difficulty in providing comprehensive support.

Overall Needs and Challenges

Themes from respondent comments highlighted the ongoing struggles of organizations to balance increasing community needs with limited resources and funding, often impacting their ability to provide comprehensive and expanded services:

- **Funding Constraints:** Many organizations report that they lack the necessary funding and resources to fully meet the demand for their services. Funding limitations, including reduced public funding and fewer grant opportunities, are a significant concern. Many organizations rely heavily on grant funding, which often comes with restrictions. The reduction in individual donations has made them even more dependent on these grants, which are not always sufficient to cover all needs. Organizations noted that these constraints have forced them to prioritize spending and limit the scope of their services. This shortfall has affected their ability to expand programs, hire staff, and assist more clients.
- **Growing Need for Services:** There has been a noticeable increase in demand for various services, especially those related to housing assistance, food security, and mental health support, the same areas identified above as the greatest areas of need. The surge in demand has outpaced the resources available, forcing organizations to turn away clients or refer them to other agencies. Some noted in the comments that even in cases where organizations had received more funding in the past year due to a larger impact in the community, they were unable to meet the needs of the community entirely.
- **Capacity and Resource Challenges:** Many organizations report a lack of sufficient staff, which hinders their ability to fully meet the demand. This includes challenges in staffing key programs and providing comprehensive services. Due to resource constraints, organizations had to minimize program offerings, reduce service days, or limit the number of people they could serve.
- **Challenges with Program and Service Expansion:** Despite the growing need, organizations struggled to expand their programs or add new partner agencies. Organizations have had to reduce the scope of their services, including cutting program days, reducing staff, and prioritizing who receives assistance. Some organizations mentioned being able to meet the needs of current partners but were unable to add new programs or serve additional communities, indicating a barrier to growth. Others have had to turn away clients or refer them to other agencies.

Some noted in the comments that even in cases where organizations had received more funding in the past year due to a larger impact in the community, they were unable to meet the needs of the community entirely.

Left: Image courtesy of Braided Seeds

- **Long-Term Challenges with Sustainability:** Some organizations expressed concerns about long-term sustainability, particularly in light of staffing layoffs and the need to wear multiple hats due to reduced resources. Organizations are actively seeking additional funding and partnerships to bridge the gap between current resources and growing needs. Some noted the decrease in government contracts and/or grant opportunities. Decreased financial contributions from individuals, corporations, and private foundations had been a contributing factor to this challenge.
- **Adaptation and Resilience:** Despite the challenges, some responses reflect the organizations' adaptability and resilience in navigating changes, particularly through the use of technology and innovative approaches to service delivery.

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

Comments from respondents reflected the complex and multifaceted challenges faced by the organizations in serving their communities amidst changing economic, legal, and social landscapes and included the following:

External/Environmental Themes Having an Impact

- **Systemic Barriers and Policy Changes:** Several responses highlight the impact of systemic barriers such as changes in the legal and immigration systems, housing policies, and systemic racism. Examples that affect housing and employment for certain communities included the lifting of the eviction moratorium, the backlog of court cases, and challenges in the immigration system that affect housing and employment for certain communities.
- **Impact of Legislation and Government Policies:** The impact of state and federal legislation, such as the expansion of Medicaid and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), is noted, with both positive and negative effects on organizations' ability to provide services.
- **Challenges in Employment and Workforce:** The competitive employment market and workforce shortages, particularly in health services, were highlighted as challenges that affect the ability of organizations to maintain staff and meet growing demands.
- **Need for Data and Communication Improvements:** In responses, there was a call for better data disaggregation and communication within systems to address the specific needs of communities more effectively.
- **Economic Challenges:** Economic issues such as rising inflation, increasing rental fees, decreasing wages, and funding cuts were recurring themes in participant responses.

DEMAND FOR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Greatest Area(s) of Need from Community

Overall, the top three "greatest areas of need" reported in 2024 were rental assistance/ housing security, food security, and mental health support. These were the same top three "greatest areas of need" in the survey results from 2021, 2022, and 2023.

1 FIRST ranked greatest needs:

47%	Rental assistance/ housing security
24%	Food security
14%	Mental health support
8%	Support for undocumented people
4%	Safety: domestic violence support
0%	Relief from social isolation
0%	Other

2 SECOND ranked greatest needs:

33%	Food security
33%	Mental health support
20%	Rental assistance/ housing security
8%	Safety: domestic violence support
4%	Other
2%	Relief from social isolation
0%	Support for undocumented people

Ability to Fully Meet Demand for Services

Across those surveyed, 70% reported they were unable to meet demand for services. This is up from 58% in the 2023 survey. **Organizations also reported that the needs of their communities are outpacing their capacity to respond.**

As was reported in the 2022 and 2023 survey results, participants cited increased demand, funding and resource constraints, and need for capacity building. The critical service areas of housing, food security, and mental health were also frequently noted.

New concerns expressed in 2024 included the complex nature of the issues communities face. Respondents noted that the problems faced by their clients and communities are often intersectional, with individuals needing support across multiple areas such as housing, food, mental health, and job training. This complexity makes it challenging for organizations to address all needs adequately. Language barriers and cultural challenges were also noted, particularly for immigrant and refugee populations, which exacerbate the difficulty in providing comprehensive support.

Respondents noted that the problems faced by their clients and communities are often intersectional, with individuals needing support across multiple areas such as housing, food, mental health, and job training.

Angolans in Community in Washington

PROGRAM CHANGES

Changes in Specific Areas of Organizations in the Past Year

In 2024, non-profits reported experiencing an **increase** primarily in the following areas:

- Demand for services (86%)
- Government contract/grant writing (52%)
- Number of individuals volunteering (44%)
- Total revenue (32%)

These results are somewhat similar to those in 2023, although percentages varied as shown in the table at right.

TOP RESPONSES FOR "INCREASE"

AREA	2023	2024
Demand for services	91%	86%
Government contract/grant writing	45%	52%
Number of individuals volunteering	41%	44%
Total revenue	45%	32%

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

- Funding from individual donors (46%)
- Total revenue (43%)
- Public foundation funding (41%)

The comparison to 2023 is at right.

TOP RESPONSES FOR "DECREASE"

AREA	2023	2024
Funding from individual donors	40%	46%
Total revenue	33%[1]	43%
Public foundation funding	36%	41%

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

Changes in Specific Areas of Organizations in the Past Year (cont.)

The leading areas where non-profits reported **no change** in 2024 :

- Funding from individual donors (37%)
- Program service revenue (37%)
- Number of individuals volunteering (33%)
- Public foundation funding (33%)

In 2023, the leading areas where non-profits reported no change were "public foundation funding" (38%), funding from individual donors (28%) and number of individuals volunteering (26%).

TOP RESPONSES FOR " NO CHANGE"		
AREA	2023	2024
Funding from individual donors	28%	37%
Program service revenue	N/A	37%
Number of individuals volunteering	26%	33%
Public foundation funding	33%	33%

Important to note is that year after year, non-profits have reported increases, decreases, and no change in the same areas though percentages have changed. Additionally, in the past two years, funding from individual donors and public foundations has either decreased or had no change.

Falis Community Services

Program Changes to Achieve New Sources of Revenue

Most non-profit organizations reported they "did not change any of our programs or services" to attract new revenue sources (67%); however, 30% said they "changed some of our programs or services," and 2% reported having "changed our programs and services completely." These results are considerably different from what was reported in the 2023, 2022, and 2021 surveys, in which organizations reported more significant changes in their programs and services to attract new revenue sources.

For those organizations that changed their programs and services, the reasons cited were to "address needs cited from your clients and/or community" (36%), "expand services"(26%), and achieve a new source of revenue" (15%). Comments exhibited organizations' resilience and dedication to serving their communities.

- **Service Adjustments Due to Funding and Capacity Limits:** Organizations had to adjust the flow, frequency, and scope of their services due to limitations in funding, product availability, volunteer hours, and staffing. This included reducing the number of operating days for shelters and adjusting the distribution of resources like food and diapers.
- **Focus on Equity in Resource Distribution:** There was a conscious effort to ensure equity in the distribution of resources, especially when demand outpaced supply. Organizations worked to balance the needs across all partner agencies and communities served.
- **Impact of Rising Community Needs and/or Increased Demand:** The growing demand for services, particularly in areas like food security and shelter, necessitated changes in how and when services were offered. This sometimes required pausing or reducing services due to resource constraints.
- **Incorporating Suggestions from Community Feedback:** Some organizations actively considered suggestions from the community and participants to better align their services with the needs and preferences of those they serve.
- **Maintaining Core Services Despite Challenges:** A few organizations were able to maintain their core services without major changes, though they acknowledged that they could have served more clients if additional financial resources were available.
- **Operational Modifications due to Resource Constraints:** Changes in operational hours or service offerings were made to cope with limited resources, such as reducing the number of days certain services were available or streamlining processes to handle increased demand efficiently.

Partnerships

The majority of non-profit respondents (74%) reported partnering with other organizations to deliver services. This is down slightly from the 2022 and 2023 reports, where 97% and 91% of organizations (respectively) 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, 54% of organizations reported increasing partnerships in the last year, down slightly from the 2023 (74%) and 2022 reports (79%).

Themes from participant comments highlight the importance of collaboration and partnerships in expanding the reach and impact of non-profit organizations, allowing them to provide more comprehensive and targeted support to the communities they serve. Non-profits frequently collaborate to address shared challenges, such as funding limitations and resource constraints.

Responses indicated a broad network of partnerships among non-profits, spanning various sectors, including housing, education, health, and social services. Organizations also mentioned being part of coalitions and networks that bring together multiple agencies to work towards common goals, such as removing systemic oppression, addressing racial and social injustice, and unifying communities.

Above: UTOPIA Washington

Left: Project Be Free.

Targeted support for specific communities, such as African and immigrant communities and partnerships tailored to address the needs of specific vulnerable groups, such as families experiencing homelessness, low-income families, and those facing food insecurity were highlighted in participant comments.

Organizations stated that they partner with a diverse range of entities, including schools, housing authorities, health clinics, and food banks, to provide comprehensive services that address various aspects of community well-being. Partnerships are also rooted in a more holistic approach to resource sharing and referrals. Collaboration often involves sharing resources, such as food, diapers, and baby essentials, and making referrals to ensure that families receive the support they need from the most appropriate services.

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 2023 report (78%). Other primary barriers noted were "stigma related to mental health" (57%), "no capacity to serve mental health for clients" (41%), and "lack of availability of services and therapists; outside agencies that provide services are at capacity" (41%) . These were the same top barriers reported in 2022 and 2023.

TOP BARRIERS TO MENTAL HEALTH:

63% — Lack of culturally appropriate mental health services either in-house or through external partnerships

41% — No capacity to serve mental health for clients

41% — Lack of availability of services and therapists; Outside agencies at capacity

57% — Stigma related to mental health

Para los Niños de Highline

Transportation Challenges and Reasons for Such Challenges

Approximately 74% of non-profits reported challenges with transportation, down slightly from the 2023 (76%) and 2022 reports (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" (56%), "unable to drive" (54%), and "no bus route" (23%). These were the same top challenges noted in 2023.

Addressing the (Transportation) Challenges

Organizations employ a variety of creative methods to meet transportation needs, such as encouraging carpooling, using donated vehicles, or offering travel scholarships for students. Many organizations provide transportation options such as bus tickets, gas cards, Ubers, or even using organization vans to help clients access services and attend events. To address transportation challenges, some organizations offer delivery services for clients who cannot reach their facilities. They also work with school districts and community partners to facilitate transportation.

Some non-profits have flexible funding that allows them to provide transportation money as needed, helping clients overcome transportation barriers on a case-by-case basis. Several groups seek and utilize grant funding specifically to address transportation challenges, helping to cover the costs of fuel, vehicle maintenance, and delivery services. Despite efforts to secure grants, organizations continue to face difficulties in finding consistent funding to support transportation-related expenses, such as staff mileage for deliveries.

Respondents prioritize making their services accessible, offering multiple ways for clients to receive support, including delivery, pickup, and partnerships with local entities. Special efforts are made to ensure that vulnerable populations, such as women, children, and those experiencing homelessness, have access to transportation and, consequently, the services they need.

Mission Africa staff at RRCF's Celebrate event

FUNDRAISING AND CAPACITY

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

Fundraising in the Past Year

In 2024, 62% of organizations reported that their fundraising "did not meet expectations," and approximately 38% of organizations reported that fundraising "met expectations" or "exceeded expectations." This is quite different from 2023, where approximately 51% of organizations reported that fundraising "met expectations" or "exceeded expectations," and 49% reported that their fundraising "did not meet expectations". These results indicate that overall organizations' ability to meet their fundraising expectations continues to decline, something that has also been reported qualitatively.

Areas of Expansion and Reduction in the Past Year

Organizations have had to contend with expanding and/or reducing organizational and programmatic work.

In 2024, survey results showed the following patterns in organizational expansion: "Number of people served" (74%), "diversity, equity and inclusion" (64%), and "collaboration with non-profits" (51%). For reference, in 2023, "Diversity, equity and inclusion" was rated the highest (84%), followed by "number of people served" (77%), and "quality/depth of programs" (65%).

In terms of areas of reduction, the highest was "staff size"(18%), "fundraising activities" (18%), "advocacy" (16%), and "communications and marketing" (15%). In 2023, areas of greatest reduction were "number of volunteers" (27%) and then "staff size" (15%) and "fundraising activities" (12%).

TOP AREAS OF EXPANSION	
74%	Number of People Served
64%	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
51%	Collaboration with Non-Profits

TOP AREAS OF REDUCTION	
18%	Staff size
18%	Fundraising Activities
16%	Advocacy

AREAS THAT STAYED THE SAME	
51%	Service Area
47%	Quality/Depth of Programs
46%	Number of Programs

In terms of things having been kept the same as the previous year, in 2024 most reported "service area" (51%), "quality/depth of programs" (47%), and "number of programs" (46%). In 2023, these were "communications and marketing (55%), advocacy (44%), followed by "collaboration with non-profits" and "service area," (both at 38%).

It is important to note there was a majority of expansion reported in every area with the exception of "service area," "fundraising activities," and "staff size," where 51%, 41%, and 39% respectively in these areas reported no change. Perhaps worthy of note is that fundraising was reported as down generally across non-profits, which may be in part related to the significant reporting of "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" (86%), "fundraising activities" (83%), and "number of people served" (61%). In the 2023 report, 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 RRCF Grant

While not all respondents had received a grant from the Renton Regional Community Foundation, those who have been grantee partners reported many benefits, including support for emergency assistance and basic needs for vulnerable populations, community impact and program expansion and enhancement, capacity building, sustaining operations amidst funding gaps, and community recognition and trust.

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. They also noted the ease in working with Renton Regional Community Foundation.

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.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Professional Development

Fifty-eight percent of non-profits reported engaging in professional development and/or capacity building efforts in the past year, down slightly from last year (66%), but up slightly from 2022 (56%). Most cited were employee training and staff development. Organizations are heavily invested in professional development, offering and requiring various types of training, including DEIA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility), JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion), trauma-informed care, and mental health first aid. Several comments noted the need for funding and resources in this area. There is a focus on organizational development, with efforts to improve business strategies through financial counseling, board development, and strategic planning. Organizations are also working to develop fundraising capabilities and forming fund development teams to support their mission. Several comments noted the need for funding and resources in this area.

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

The data continue to show that BIPOC communities face greater disparities across the board. Therefore, we wanted to see how organizations were addressing these realities.

Top responses were "Increased service population to include more BIPOC" (45%), and "created or integrated BIPOC into leadership positions" (37%), and "conducted an organizational training on diversity, equity, and inclusion" (29%). These were the same three top responses in 2023, but with higher percentages. Twenty-seven percent of participants reported "non applicable."

TOP RESPONSES FOR "INCREASE"

AREA	2023	2024
Increased service population to include more BIPOC	25%	45%
Created or integrated BIPOC into leadership positions	16%	37%
Conducted an organizational training on DEI	28%	29%

Professional Development, Technical Assistance and Staff Training Needed

The top answer for professional development and/or technical assistance resources needed by non-profits was "communications/marketing (raising awareness about the organization's work" (61%). This was followed by "fundraising (advanced)" (58%), which was the top answer in 2023 (59%) and 2022 (70%). "Strategic planning" (47%) and "board development/governance" (47%) were the next top categories.

TOP PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL RESOURCES NEEDED

61%	Communications/Marketing
58%	Fundraising (Advanced)
47%	Strategic Planning
47%	Board Development/Governance
45%	Information Technology (IT)
42%	Program Evaluation
37%	Fundraising (Basics)
37%	Succession Planning
37%	Office Space

In terms of staff training, survey participants reported most satisfaction with "access to technology" (50% in "well" and "very well") and with "training of managers/supervisor" (49% in "well" and "very well").

LOOKING AHEAD

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

Long-standing Community Impact: Many organizations take pride in their long history of serving the community, with some operating for decades and providing essential services across various sectors like housing, food security, healthcare, education, and more. These organizations emphasize their reliability and consistency in fulfilling community needs, often serving a large number of clients and maintaining a strong reputation.

Growth and Expansion: Organizations are proud of their strong focus on expanding services and programs, including increasing and offering new services, and enhancing existing programs to meet growing community needs. Many organizations highlighted their growth in terms of staff, partnerships, and community outreach, which has strengthened their capacity to serve more people and address broader needs.

Commitment to Community and Equity: Organizations are deeply rooted in their communities, responding to local needs and building lasting partnerships to deliver services effectively. They emphasized their commitment to equity, justice, and inclusivity, particularly for marginalized groups and communities. Many organizations noted their focus on empowering their communities through education, professional development, and advocacy, helping individuals overcome barriers and achieve long-term success.

Impact and Success Stories: Organizations take pride in the direct, positive impact they have on individuals and families, such as transforming lives, solving housing barriers, and improving mental health and well-being.

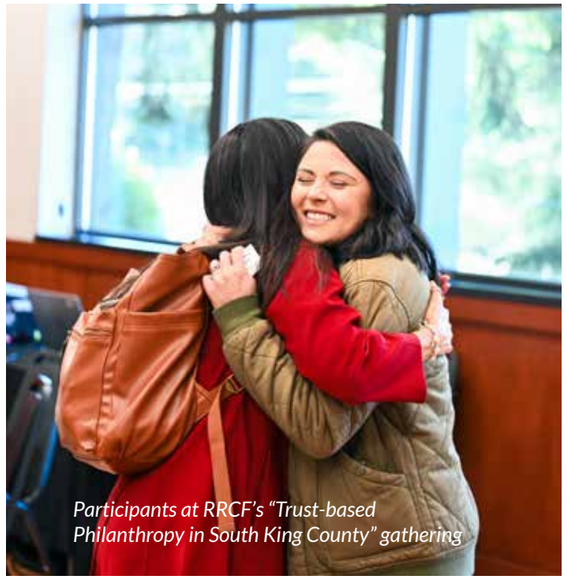
Collaboration and Partnerships: Collaboration with other non-profits, government agencies, and community stakeholders was a key theme, with organizations leveraging these partnerships to expand their reach and improve service delivery. Some organizations have positioned themselves as hubs or go-to resources for specific communities, facilitating access to services and acting as bridges between communities and service providers.

Resilience: Despite challenges like leadership transitions, fundraising declines, and increasing demand, organizations have shown resilience, maintaining or even expanding their service levels and responding to emergency needs. The dedication of staff and volunteers is frequently highlighted, with many organizations attributing their success to the hard work and commitment of their teams.

Priorities in the Next Year

Organizational priorities in the coming year reflect the organizations' dedication to growth, sustainability, and community impact, while also addressing challenges related to funding, capacity, and equity.

Expansion and Growth: Organizations are focused on expanding their reach, increasing the number of clients they serve, and extending their service areas. This includes efforts to grow programs, add new services, and enhance existing ones. There is a strong emphasis on increasing organizational capacity, including finding new office spaces, acquiring more resources, and developing systems to manage growth effectively.



Participants at RRCF's "Trust-based Philanthropy in South King County" gathering

Fundraising and Financial Sustainability: Many organizations are prioritizing fundraising efforts, aiming to diversify their funding streams, increase donations, and secure more grants, all noted as crucial to support their growth and maintain financial stability. Some groups are preparing for potential reductions in government funding by increasing their focus on private fundraising and donor relations.

Staff and Volunteer Development: A key priority is providing training and professional development opportunities for staff and board members. This includes equipping them with skills in areas like disability education, equity, and technology integration. Organizations also noted a focus on recruiting and training board members, particularly in DEI, fundraising, and leadership responsibilities.

Strategic Planning and Systems Improvement: Organizations are engaged in strategic planning to guide their growth and ensure their programs and services remain relevant and effective. This includes succession planning, operational sustainability, and service integration. Undergoing systems and operational improvements was also a theme. Organizations noted that improving internal systems, updating technology, and enhancing operational efficiency are important for sustaining growth and maintaining high service quality.

Equity and Community Engagement: Focusing on and centering equity in services, particularly in underserved and marginalized communities, was noted as

a priority. This includes providing culturally responsive services and addressing systemic barriers. Building and strengthening partnerships with community organizations, engaging volunteers, and fostering donor relations were also noted as key strategies to enhance impact and reach.

UTOPIA Washington

Innovation and New Initiatives: Organizations are looking to develop new programs, such as online training modules and expanded youth empowerment activities, to address emerging needs and enhance their service offerings. There is a focus on adapting to the evolving needs of the communities served, such as increasing access to public spaces for immigrant and refugee youth, and addressing mental health and digital literacy challenges.

Long-Term Vision and Sustainability: Ensuring long-term operational sustainability is a major concern, with organizations seeking to secure stable funding, strengthen internal systems, and create lasting impact. Some organizations are focusing on infrastructure development, looking to develop or acquire new office spaces to better accommodate their growing teams and provide comprehensive services in one location.

How Can the Community Help You in Being Successful?

Respondents indicated the critical role of community engagement, financial support, and capacity building in ensuring the long-term growth and sustainability of their organizations. Collaboration, advocacy, and continuous improvement were also noted as key to organization's ability to achieve a broader impact.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this report underscores the multifaceted challenges and evolving dynamics faced by non-profits as they navigate the growing demands of their communities. The survey findings highlight a consistent and pressing need for rental assistance, food security, and mental health support, underscoring the ongoing challenges faced by non-profits in these critical areas.

Despite high demand, financial difficulties, and staffing issues, organizations have shown remarkable resilience, creativity, and collaboration. However, fundraising efforts have often fallen short, stretching non-profit organizations' capacity to deliver essential programs. There is a clear demand for more support in communications, advanced fundraising, and strategic planning, along with an ongoing emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. The findings call for continued focus on equity, strategic partnerships, and sustainable funding to ensure that non-profits can effectively meet the diverse and evolving needs of their communities.

Again, we extend a very special thank you to those who participated in and supported this year's survey. We hope this report will spark deeper conversation and actions to come together to address South King County's greatest challenges while also celebrating our region's greatest assets.

The findings call for continued focus on equity, strategic partnerships, and sustainable funding to ensure that non-profits can effectively meet the diverse and evolving needs of their communities.

We are so grateful to these organizations that participated in the 2024 survey.

thank you

- After-School All-Stars Puget Sound
- Babies of Homelessness
- Black Equality Coalition
- BRAVE- *Building Resilience Awareness & Variations of Excellence*
- Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking (BEST)
- Cedar River Clinics
- Children's Institute for Learning Differences
- Domestic Abuse Women's Network
- Dominion Faith Center
- Emergency Assistance Shared Bread *(Under Kent United Methodist Church)*
- Environmental Science Center
- Fanikia Foundation
- First Five Years & Beyond
- Freedom Church of Seattle
- Golden Heart Cancer Support
- The IDEA Project
- Integration Family Services (IFS)
- King County Sexual Assault Resource Center
- Living Well Kent Collaborative
- Mission Africa
- Multi-Service Center
- Neighborhood House
- New Walk Christian Church and Outreach Ministry
- New Beginnings Christian Fellowship
- Para Los Niños de Highline
- Project Be Free, NPC
- Puget Sound Training Center
- Rainier Valley Birth & Health Center
- REACH Renton
- Renton Innovation Zone Partnership
- The Silent Task Force
- SKY Urban Institute
- Skyway Tutoring and Rites of Passage
- Tukwila Pantry
- United Territories of Pacific Islanders Alliance — Washington *(UTOPIA Washington)*
- Vision House
- Wakulima USA
- Washington DECA
- Washington State Coalition of African Community Leaders
- Way Back Inn
- WestSide Baby

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