Changemaker Needs Assessment Results

August 2022
In March 2022, Rotary Charities created and launched a survey to help us understand the needs and challenges facing those working to create a thriving region.

The survey was divided into several sections:
• State of the Nonprofit Sector
• Diversity Equity & Inclusion
• Collaboration & Systems Change
• Feedback on Rotary Charities Mission, Vision, Values & Strategies

We received a total of 215 responses from a variety of changemakers living and working across our 5-county region. Their responses are summarized in this report.
State of the Nonprofit Sector
Responses from those affiliated with nonprofit organizations were filtered in order to get a sense of the state of the sector and how it has been responding to the pandemic and resulting challenges. Nonprofit respondents represented a diversity of sectors, sizes and geographic scope.

128 Responses from Nonprofit Organizations

- 17% Arts, Culture & Humanities
- 17% Health & Human Services
- 14% Education
- 12% Environment
- 8% Recreation & Sports
- 6% Housing & Shelter
- 5% Mental Health & Crisis Intervention

*21% various other sectors
Most respondents were headquartered in Grand Traverse County, where 54% of the population in the region lives. The counties served by organizations represented were well distributed across the region.
Operating budgets of nonprofits were distributed across a wide range, with slightly more than half (58%) reporting budgets over $500,000/year. Organizations reported a range of years operating from 1 year to 150 years.
Nonprofits reported relying on a mix of revenue sources. Many nonprofits (44%) reported that their revenue mix has changed significantly over the last two years.
The majority (88%) of nonprofit respondents reported working for organizations with paid staff. Most (64%) have 10 or fewer employees. Half of respondents reported the size of their staff increased over the last year, most due to an increased need for services. For those reporting a decrease in staff size (14%), a lack of funding and COVID were the most frequently mentioned reasons for the change.
Many nonprofit leaders are new to their current positions. Fifty-five percent (55%) have been in their position five years or less; 21% two years or less. An additional 6% of organizations are expecting a leader transition in the next 12-18 months. The vast majority of organizations (67%) report that they do not have a succession plan in place.
Most respondents from nonprofit organizations (89%) reported using volunteers, for an average of 2,885 hours per organization. This is the equivalent of 1.39 full time staff members per organization.

- 222,168 total volunteer hours
- Average of 2,885 per organization or 1.39 FTE

Organizations engaged an average of 65 volunteers
Many nonprofit respondents reported a decline in volunteer hours over the last year, citing COVID restrictions or concerns as the primary reason.

40% report a decline in the overall volunteer hours contributed last year.
Despite challenges, most nonprofits offered more core programs or services last year. Many also improved, adapted or expanded offerings. Looking to the next year, nearly all anticipate an increase in demand, but only half predict an increase in revenue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Have Core Services or Programs Changed in the Last Year?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More offered</td>
<td>57%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Existing improved</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significantly adapted</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing expanded</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer offered</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>No change</td>
<td>9%</td>
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90% of nonprofit respondents predict the demand to increase for their core programs and services in the next year.

51% of nonprofit respondents predict revenue for core programs and services to increase.
The majority of organizations have participated in at least one learning activity in the last year, the most common being workshops/webinars (68%) and working with a consultant (68%). Only 62% report budgeting for professional development. Of those that do, the most common amount reported was $251-$500/year per employee.

### Learning Practices

#### Learning and Professional Development

- We have attended a skill building workshop or webinar: 68%
- We have worked with a consultant: 68%
- We have budgeted for professional development for our employees: 62%
- We have asked a peer from another organization to help us with something: 53%
- We have budgeted for outside consulting or coaching assistance: 51%
- We have received a grant or a scholarship to help with the cost of consulting or continuing education: 41%
- Our employees have professional development/learning plans: 28%
- We have worked with a leadership coach: 27%
- Our organization has a learning plan: 14%

38% of organizations do not budget for employee professional development.
The majority of nonprofits (65%) reported receiving some sort of COVID relief funding. COVID-19 continues to impact operations and programming for the majority of nonprofits. Respondents reported impacts to everything from how they deliver services, earn income, and fundraise, to the availability and health of staff and volunteers.

“To implement responsible social distancing, we limit participation - and that decreases our ability to reach people. Covid also forced us to revisit our business model, requiring us to add reservations, limit capacity at sessions and completely change how small parts and pieces are handled by guests within the building. It has required us to implement all sorts of new sanitization protocols that we will continue well beyond Covid.”
– Nonprofit Respondent
Nonprofit Challenges & Adaptations

Nonprofits reported significant human resource challenges and are actively adapting to meet those challenges in a variety of ways.

**Human Resources**

- 47% report difficulty in recruiting or retaining (27%) staff
- 52% report increased staff burnout
- 40% report declines in mental and/or physical (17%) health

**Adaptations**

- 67% increased flexibility
- 28% instituted a permanent work from home option
- 41% conducted surveys to better understand employee morale
- 36% made significant changes to payscale
- 36% made adjustments to workload
- 28% provided a new staff benefit
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
All 215 respondents were asked several questions about diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). A large majority (69%) reported that the entity they represent increased their focus on DEI in the last two years, many with outside help.
The most common DEI Related actions reported were learning (64%) and making organizational commitments addressing inequities by making changes to mission, vision, goals, etc. (56%). Several barriers to engaging more deeply with DEI were noted.

**Top Barriers to engaging more deeply with DEI:**
- Not a current priority for board (24%)
- Lack funding for assistance (20%)
- Don’t know where to start (15%)
- Not a priority for staff (11%)
- Not sure where to find help (4%)
Many respondents see a role for Rotary Charities in supporting DEI work in the region. The most common theme from open-ended responses relates to Rotary Charities leading by example.

### How Should Rotary Charities Support DEI Work? *Open-Ended Themes*

- **Lead by example**: 29%
- **Connect to resources**: 22%
- **Funding**: 18%
- **Educate**: 13%
- **Unsure**: 10%
- **Facilitate coalition/connections**: 7%

"Lead by example. Please don’t offer any corny cookie cutter strategies just to stay relevant. That always does more harm than good. Once Rotary Charities is an example of successful DEI work then it can consider supporting that work."

"Learning about the hidden diversity in our community and the history of why those groups remain invisible—Tribe, local immigrant and migrant communities, 2SLGBTQIA+, people with disabilities, etc. Talk about and learn the history of why this region "is so white"—acknowledging that it is white by design, unpacking the colonialism of this region, and finding a starting place by being honest about all of these things so we can heal and start working with one another."
Respondents were asked several questions about their experience collaborating and working to change the root causes of complex problems. The vast majority (76%) reported being involved in at least one network or coalition working together on a common goal, mentioning over 70 by name.
Respondents were asked to rate the extent their organization was already working differently to address complex community issues. While most organizations reported collaborating across sectors with other organizations working on the same issue, they were less often collaborating with those affected by the problem, or actively advocating for policies and practices that will improve the issue.

**To What Extent is your Organization Already Working Differently to Address Complex Community Issues?**

1 = Not at all  
5 = Great Extent

- **Collaborate with those working on the same issue**: 4.05
- **Collaborate with those in other sectors (government, nonprofit, business)**: 3.89
- **Try new things, experiment & learn**: 3.73
- **Change ourselves - our opinions, mindsets, ways of relating to others**: 3.68
- **Take time to consider the root causes of issues before taking action**: 3.68
- **Collaborate with those affected by the problem**: 3.66
- **Advocate for policies and practices that will improve the issue**: 3.43

**Top Barriers to Successful Collaboration:**

- Lack of funding for collaborative work (51%)
- Turfism, competition for resources (42%)
- Lack of responsibility/accountability for the additional work created by the collaborative (35%)
- Lack of “backbone support” for things like communications, convening, shared measurement, and administration (34%)
- Time spent away from my organization’s priorities (34%)
Direct Service vs. Systems Change

Respondents were asked to consider their work in two categories: direct service and upstream systems change. On average, the majority of respondents’ time (63%) was spent in direct service work to help those experiencing a problem cope or transcend the problem.
The majority of respondents (58%) reported wanting to work more on upstream causes of complex problems, or systems change. However, many cited several barriers that inhibit them from engaging more deeply including funding, training, and finding their best role.

58% of respondents would like to spend more time on systems change work.

### Barriers to Engaging More Deeply in Systems Change

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<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is difficult to find funding for systems change work</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We need more education and training on how to do engage in systems change work</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are not sure of our best role in systems change work</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is too difficult to see or measure progress</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It takes too long to see results</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We don't know where to begin</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have had negative experiences with similar collaborative work</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Our board is not supportive of staff spending time on systems change</td>
<td>8%</td>
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</table>
Changemakers envision a variety of ways Rotary Charities can support collaboration and systems change, most frequently mentioned were providing backbone funding for things like convening and administration and provide education and training to build collaborative skills.

“Provide different frameworks and approaches to how to make collaborative entities more effective. Support facilitators, conveners, and backbone organizations.”

“Provide blanket funding to allow networks to manage internal grant-making.”
Next Steps

KEY INSIGHTS → ADAPTATIONS

ADAPT & LEARN
APPENDICES

Appendix A: State of the Nonprofit Sector
  • Nonprofit Respondents
  • Nonprofit Staffing
  • Nonprofit Leadership
  • Nonprofit Volunteers
  • Core Programs & Services
  • Core Programs & Services – COVID 19
  • Nonprofit Challenges & Adaptations

Appendix B: Focus on DEI

Appendix C: Collaboration & Systems Change
  • Participation in Networks & Collaboration Around Complex Issues
Appendix A: State of the Nonprofit Sector

- Organizations with Paid Staff Members: Yes (88%), No (12%)
- Director Transitioning in the Next 12-18 Months: Yes (6%), No (71%), Not Sure (23%)
- Distribution of Number of Paid Staff:
  - 0 (13%)
  - 1 to 5 (33%)
  - 6 to 10 (19%)
  - 11 to 20 (13%)
  - 21 to 100 (13%)
  - 100+ (10%)
- Succession Plan in Place for Director:
  - Yes (17%)
  - No (67%)
  - Not Sure (17%)

98% of organizations have a paid director.
Appendix A: State of the Nonprofit Sector (continued)
Appendix A: State of the Nonprofit Sector (continued)
Appendix B: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

“We don’t understand how to pursue DEI authentically”

Barriers or Challenges to DEI Work:
- Other: 45%
- DEI is not a current priority for our board: 24%
- We don’t have the funding to get the assistance we need: 20%
- We don’t know where to start: 15%
- DEI is not a current priority for our staff: 11%
- We are not sure where to find help: 4%

Responses to “Other” Barriers:
- No barriers: 30%
- Already have diversity/Don’t think it is a problem: 16%
- Larger society not ready: 12%
- Don’t know how to pursue: 12%
- Already embracing effort: 8%
- Not a priority: 8%
- Don’t know where to find local help: 6%

How Could Rotary Charities Better Support DEI Efforts:
- Fund efforts/flexible funding: 22%
- Resources (sample policies, tools, etc): 19%
- Offer trainings (free, reduced cost): 19%
- Networking events, convenings, conversations: 8%
- Help define what it means in this area: 6%
- Facilitate peer support: 3%
- Board recruitment: 3%
- Meet with community (govt.) leaders: 3%
- Building partnerships among organizations: 1%

“We have attempted and done well with increasing representation by age and economics, but the reality is that Benzie is over 96% white”
Appendix C: Collaboration & Systems Change

- Barriers to Successful Collaboration:
  - Lack of funding for collaborative work: 51%
  - Turfism, competition for resources: 42%
  - Lack of responsibility/accountability: 35%
  - Lack of "backbone support": 34%
  - Time spent away from my organization's priorities: 34%
  - Roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined: 33%
  - Lack of clear, shared goals between parties: 30%
  - Everyone puts their organization first: 27%
  - Lack of leadership to move an agenda forward: 27%
  - Difficulty communicating across sectors: 26%
  - We are not invited to the table: 23%
  - Lack of trust among partners: 20%
  - Not sure who cares about the same things: 15%
  - Lack of board support for collaboration: 6%

- Organizations in a Network or Coalition:
  - Yes (76%)
  - No (17%)
  - Not Sure (7%)