

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant impacts on Durham Region's non-profit and charitable organization sector, changing how organizations conduct their daily operations, connect to Durham's residents, and collaborate as a sector. Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) conducted a survey to better understand what resources and supports will be needed to support non-profit organizations, with the intent of mapping the immediate and long-term effects of the pandemic.

Data from the survey highlights what most non-profit organizations and charities have known since their inception; the programs, services, and supports they provide are critical, essential, and life-saving for vulnerable people. The importance of the non-profit sector, as both the fabric of our social safety net and as a trusted intermediary for those in poverty, is showcased through the survey responses. Non-profit organizations know that without them, the effect of the pandemic would essentially wipe out our most vulnerable residents.

It should, therefore, come as no surprise that non-profit employees are nearly equally concerned about their employment, their ability to balance work and home responsibilities, and disruptions to programs and services. While organizations have tried to proactively address staff concerns, the reality is that not all organizations have the capacity to work remotely and/or can service clients who do not have access to the Internet or technology.

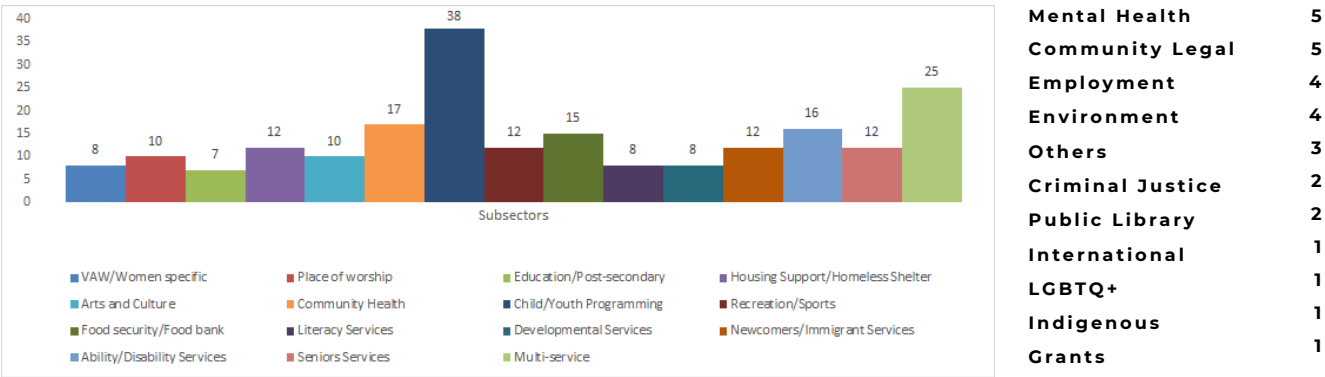
The survey also demonstrates the resilience, creativity, and connectivity of the sector. Despite the steep learning curves (and costs) associated with learning (or relearning) new technologies, setting up home or remote offices, and figuring out how to accommodate staff and client needs, most non-profits, regardless of subsector, have found ways to "stay open", providing services, programs, and supports virtually where possible. This is especially note-worthy as several organizations indicated that they anticipated decreased revenues or had to decrease their staff numbers. Even with those challenges, and ever-increasing uncertainty, Durham's non-profit and charitable members remain committed to their work.

The survey was open to Durham's non-profit and charitable organizations. The survey was aimed specifically at President, Board of Directors, Executive Directors and other senior management/leaders with knowledge of organizational finances. It was conducted between April 22 and April 29, 2020, and garnered 130 responses, representing 125 organizations, via an online tool.

KEY FINDINGS

THE NON-PROFIT AND CHARITABLE SECTOR IN DURHAM IS UNIQUE.

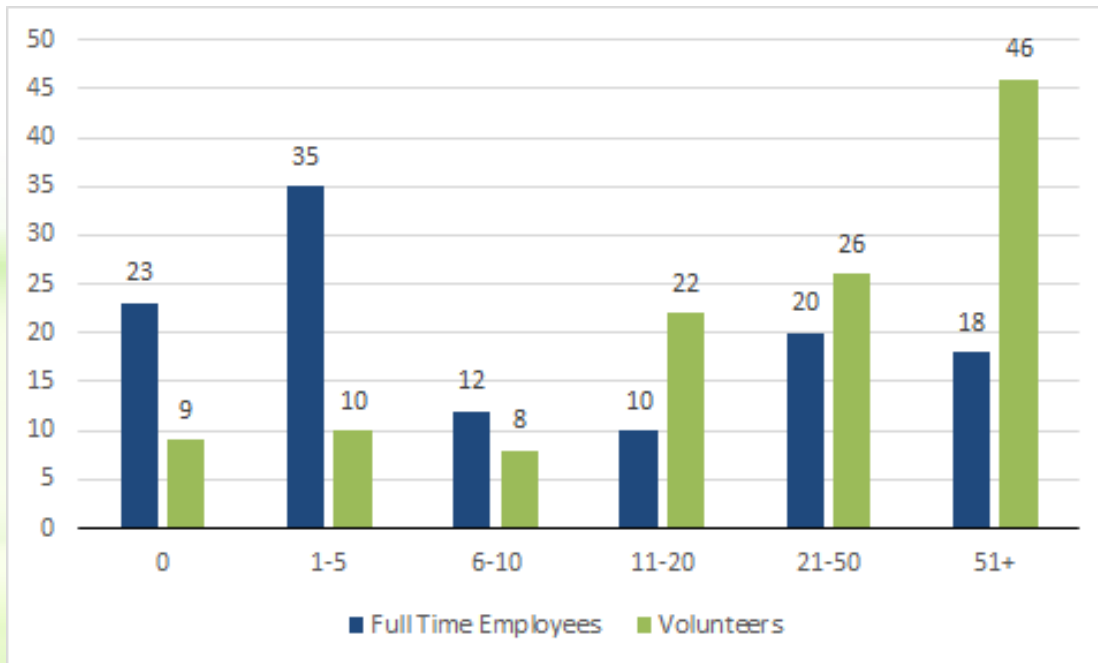
Nearly 50% of all respondents did not fit into the answer choices provided; their programs or services were a mixture of different subsectors.



Organizations are also distributed widely across the Region of Durham, with 71 respondents providing services throughout Durham Region. 33 organizations served Durham as part of a larger provincial or federal service area.

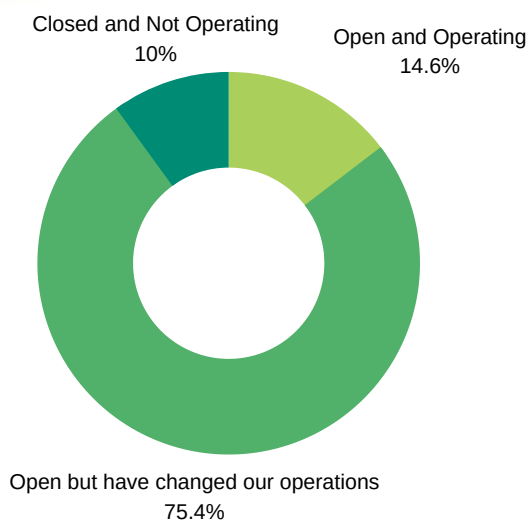
KEY FINDINGS

Volunteers are key contributors to the work of Durham's non-profit sector, with 37% of all respondents indicating that they have 51+ volunteers.



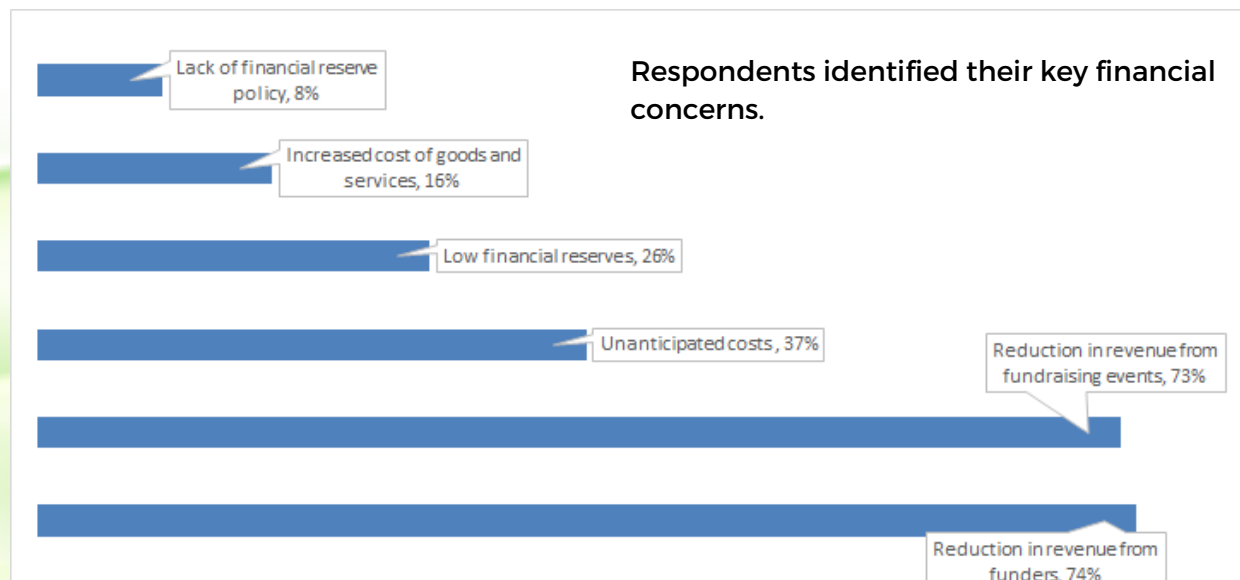
DURHAM'S NON-PROFITS ARE STRUGGLING TO STAY OPEN, BE RESPONSIVE, AND MEET THE NEEDS OF THEIR CLIENTS AND STAFF.

In response to whether they were open, closed, or open but have changed their operations, nearly 90% of all respondents indicated that they are open and operating. Several have made dramatic changes to their operations and staff compliments to continue to provide programs and services.



KEY FINDINGS

THE FINANCIAL FUTURE OF THE SECTOR IS VERY UNCERTAIN.



Only half of the respondents are confident that they will recover and return to their previous level of service.



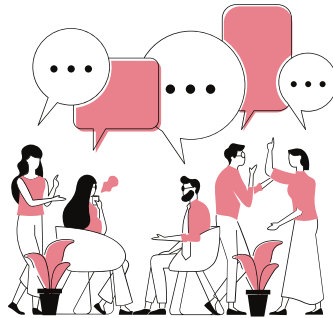
RECOMMENDATIONS

THERE ARE STEPS THAT FUNDERS AND THE REGION OF DURHAM CAN TAKE TO ENSURE THE FUTURE OF DURHAM'S NONPROFIT AND CHARITABLE SECTOR.

- Some of the supports needed include access to resources, information sharing, access to technology, and more flexibility. The overwhelming need is an **INCREASE** in **FUNDING**, with a specific emphasis on dollars allocated to **CORE** and **OPERATIONAL** support.
- The Region of Durham can also take a more active role in communicating non-profit events and initiatives, and developing networking opportunities as well as supporting sector planning and organizational development.

NEXT STEPS

1



Our first next step is to host **key informant interviews** and virtual focus groups to expand on what we've learned.

2



A **report** with analysis, strong recommendations and an **Action Plan** for our sector will be pulled together.

3



Lastly, we hope to **collaborate** and **advocate**, building working groups, presenting to key stakeholders and pushing for policy development and support.