

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RECOGNIZING THE INTEGRAL ROLE of New Mexico nonprofits in ensuring the well-being of the state, The Building Movement Project and several organizations worked together to develop the 2014 New Mexico Nonprofit Survey. The goal of the survey was to learn more about the key issues that organizations are working on, the opportunities and challenges they face, and how they can continue to work together to advance the common good. The survey, which expanded on a similar effort the year before that focused on direct service providers, was completed by a total of 232 nonprofits. In *Working Towards the Common Good: Findings from the 2014 New Mexico Nonprofit Survey*, we present results from the survey.

Overview of New Mexico Nonprofits

The nonprofits that participated in the survey are a diverse set of organizations. Key characteristics include:

- **Nonprofit type.** The vast majority of organizations identify as direct service organizations. Advocacy organizations are the second most common nonprofit type, followed by community organizing groups and other organizations such as funders, technical assistance providers, and media groups.
 - **Geographic scope.** Surveyed organizations most commonly serve Bernalillo County and tend to be located in the city of Albuquerque, though many describe their work as spanning multiple counties, the entire state of New Mexico, or even multiple states.
 - **Populations served.** Organizations tend to support a multi-racial client base and focus on the state's most vulnerable populations, such as individuals living at or below the poverty line and children, youth, and families.
- **Annual budget.** Organizations are distributed fairly equally across three budget ranges—(1) under \$250,001, (2) \$250,001–\$1 million, and (3) over \$1 million—though budgets tend to vary by nonprofit type, with community organizing groups clustering toward the lowest range.
 - **Issue areas.** Surveyed organizations report working on over 35 different issue areas, with the top three issue areas being education, health, and youth development.

Figure 1. Types of Nonprofits

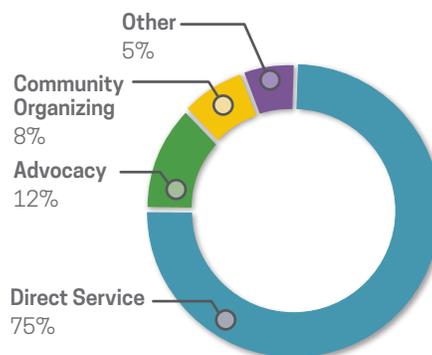
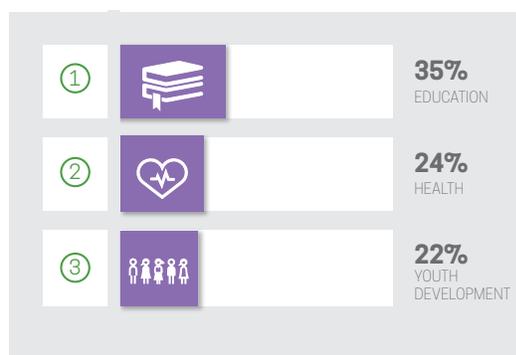


Figure 2. Top Issue Areas



Key Findings

In learning about surveyed organizations' experiences over the past year, several findings emerged:

- **While New Mexico nonprofits tackle a diverse array of issues and serve many different populations, they also face a number of significant challenges.** Top challenges include: decreased and unstable funding; increased demand for services; limited resources for staff training and development; limited opportunities to engage in long-term and strategic planning; and limited management capacity.
- **One way that nonprofits are addressing organizational challenges is by working in coalitions and alliances.** Nearly three-fourths of surveyed organizations report participating in one or more coalitions in 2014, and they most commonly collaborate with coalition partners on issues regarding education, health, behavioral/mental health, and housing.
- **Nonprofits have also responded to challenges facing their communities and organizations by working to advance broader change.** More than half of all surveyed nonprofits report taking part in advocacy over the past year, engaging staff and community members in activities such as education on policy issues affecting their communities and trainings on how to engage in advocacy.
- **New Mexico nonprofits are beginning to weave an emerging network of nonprofits working together to advance the common good in the state.** A social network analysis of over 600 organizations in the state reveals that a substantial number of organizations have already begun to coalesce and could serve as the foundation for a more robust network. Even more encouraging is that these organizations tend to collaborate across nonprofit type (i.e., direct service, advocacy, community organizing), as well as across issue areas (i.e., education, health, youth development).

Figure 3. Issue Areas Addressed in New Mexico Coalitions



Recommendations

We offer three recommendations for supporting New Mexico nonprofits moving forward:

1. **Foster collaboration among organizations.** There is great potential to build upon the emerging network of nonprofits committed to promoting the common good in New Mexico. As networks require ongoing coordination and dedicated staff time, increasing investment in intentionally fostering collaboration is key to growing a network (or multiple networks) in the state. Towards this end, an important first step is to support interested organizations and intermediaries in the state to convene and explore opportunities for collaboration.
2. **Support organizations to expand capacity.** Surveyed New Mexico nonprofits are eager to expand their capacity, particularly in terms of hiring and training staff, developing leadership, and/or strengthening financial management skills. Because organizational capacity building comes in many forms (i.e., grants, intermediaries, consultants, peer learning initiatives), it is important to ask groups what type of capacity building works best for them.
3. **Increase investments in organizations.** The lynchpin in the overall success and sustainability of New Mexico nonprofits is more funding. Surveyed organizations, most of whom have now been responding to the effects of the Great Recession for several years without reprieve, consistently spoke about challenges stemming from inadequate or unstable funding. To ensure the well-being of these vital organizations, more funding—particularly multi-year funding—is needed.

Figure 4. Connections Among New Mexico Nonprofits

