

Webinar: Pandemic & Protest: Perspectives from Nonprofit Leaders of Color

20 October 2020 #OnTheFrontlines

Presented by the [Building Movement Project](#) (BMP)

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Welcome and thanks for joining this webinar, we are talking about BMP's latest report [On The Frontlines](#), looking at the responses of nonprofit leaders of color and how they and their organizations are confronting COVID-19 and structural racism. This session is being recorded, and we will make the recording and other materials from the conversation today available on the BMP website. So please look out for more of that in the coming days. So, this report is a project of BMP and [Solidarity Is](#) and it gathers data from over 400 nonprofit leaders of color. And part of the reason that we decided to do this survey early on in the COVID crisis, was to really understand and unpack some of what we were hearing from colleagues around the country and to really have a better and deeper understanding of what organizations were facing. And so the key findings in the report really helped to illustrate some of the challenges that organizations, particularly nonprofit organizations, led by people of color are facing, and the real concerns that people have about the future of their organizations and their communities.

And in addition to rich and interesting data, there's also really important quotes and responses from organizational leaders, some of whom you'll be hearing from today. But we wanted to have this combination of both data, as well as qualitative findings from a set of interviews that our team did over the summer. And then just at the end of the report, there are some recommendations particularly geared to philanthropy, in part because we know that the investment in organizations that are led by people of color has been insufficient for many years, but also the sector broadly as well as government. On this next slide, just going to quickly go through who you'll be hearing from today. My name is Sean, I'm the co-director of the Building Movement Project. I'm joined by my colleague, Deepa Iyer, who's BMP's Director of Movement Building and Director of [Solidarity Is](#). In addition, the panel that we have today is Janeen Comenote, from the [National Urban Indian Family Coalition](#). Angela Lang, from [Black Leaders Organizing for Communities](#). And Kavita Mehra, from [Sakhi for South Asian Women](#).

And we're really appreciative that the three of them decided to join us for this conversation this afternoon. And really excited for you all to hear from them about what their organizations have been doing, but also what they're thinking about and looking to in the future for their organizations and communities. On this next slide, just some sort of welcoming notes. So this is a traditional webinar, meaning that attendees are not visible, but feel free to use the chat. Also, you can use the Q&A function to send questions to the panelists. If you're having any tech issues, please send those questions in the chat to the BMP admin, host of the webinar. As I said earlier, the webinar is being recorded. We will share a link and additional materials after the webinar is completed. And we're inviting all of you to tweet along. And the hashtags that we are using are #POCNnonprofits, and #OnTheFrontlines, which is the title of the report.

So to talk a little bit about who BMP is, we're a national organization that does research on the nonprofit sector, as well as tool development, capacity building, and convening to support but also push nonprofit organizations to be more focused on progressive social change. And you can see some of the reports as well as materials that we have developed over several years. We've been around for about 20 years. We have three main areas of focus; one is looking at what we call service and social change, how organizations that are providing direct and needed services in communities can also do social change

work, be involved in advocacy, and organizing for systemic change, and partner with other organizations to transform their communities. The next body of work relates to leadership. And I think many people know our leadership work, particularly based on the [Race to Lead](#) series of reports, looking at what we've called the racial leadership gap in the nonprofit sector.

And then the third bucket of work relates to movement building, where we particularly look at what it takes for organizations and individual movement activists to particularly build practices of solidarity, and work across lines of difference, like different methods of organizing different organizational issues and priorities to build more expansive and stronger movements for social justice. And so that's about building movement project. And we want now want to hear from all of you and find out some about who you are as the participants. And so the first question in this poll that's now popped up is where you're joining us from. Whether you're from the East Coast, West Coast, the South, the Midwest, possibly outside of the US, please just indicate that. And then the second question in the poll is about your own engagement in COVID-19 response. Are you a service provider? Are you providing funding support, research, documentation, organizing and advocacy? I see some people putting answers in the chat. I also welcome people to use the poll. Looks like we've gotten to about... 70% of you have voted.

So Catherine, maybe we can show the results. So it looks like a large share are from the East Coast, followed by the Midwest and the West Coast. And then also saw several people weigh in, in the chat indicating that they're from the Southwest. And then other folks are from the south, probably meaning the southeast. And then in terms of people's engagement in COVID-19 response. So funding support and service provision, and organizing and advocacy are remarkably similar in terms of percentages, which is always really interesting to see. So really excited to have all of you. Welcome to today's session and webinar, and I'm going to turn it over to my colleague, Deepa, to start talking about the findings from the report on the front lines. Deepa, take it away.

Deepa Iyer: Thanks so much, Sean. Welcome, everyone. I just want to thank you all for joining because I know that there are many Zoom calls, and appreciate you making time for this one. Also really want to thank Angela and Kavita, and Janeen, for joining us. I know how [inaudible 00:10:05] busy as you are, [inaudible 00:10:06] so thank you for [inaudible 00:10:07] to give us your perspectives as well. So Sean mentioned this a little bit earlier, but I wanted to kind of dive into why we did this report in the first place. I think that for some people, COVID-19 has been sort of a reveal of racial and social and economic inequities. But for all of us on this call, and many others, it has just been a reinforcement of a lot of the issues that have been for some time. The questions that we wanted to ask, or how our [PSD 00:10:40] with nonprofits are responding, first of all, through this crisis. We also wanted to ask the needs, are you anticipating over the next [inaudible 00:10:49] POC-led nonprofits. And then we wanted to ask via one-on-one interview, which we actually held a little bit later in the summer, how the 2020 uprisings against anti-black racism had affected POC-led nonprofits. And then, of course, lastly, what changes need to be made in order to move beyond crisis response and recovery. So these were our learning questions.

So I want to tell you a little bit now about whom we spoke with. So in terms of the nonprofit leaders of color, we spoke, as Sean mentioned, we surveyed 433 people, POC leaders of nonprofits, just here in the United States, all over the country. And as you can see from this slide, we had 39% of those who responded were black, followed by 23% who were Asian, and 20% who are Latinx, and then 5%, who are Native American. On the next slide, and the next couple of slides, we're going to show you a little bit about demographics, again, of the nonprofit groups. So as you can see from this particular slide, the nonprofit groups that we talked to engaged in many different service areas. But primarily, we heard

from groups who were engaging in service provision and system change advocacy, followed by grassroots organizing and civic engagement.

In the next slide, we share a little bit more about the staff and budget sizes of these organizations. Not surprisingly, many of the organizations that we spoke with are making do with very little. So we're talking about organizations here that half of whom employed less than 10 staff members, and over half are surviving on budgets of less than \$1 million to do the work that they do in their communities. So clearly under-resourced well before this pandemic even hits. So with that, I want to turn to our findings, and we make five key findings in the report. And I hope that everyone has had a chance to take a look at them, we'll drop the link into the chat again, just so you're able to see the landing page for the report [inaudible 00:13:01] and you're able to see testimonials, video testimonials and [inaudible 00:13:06] links as well. But the five key findings are that, and these are likely not surprising to many of you. The first, the crisis is about to get worse. We'll talk about that in detail in a bit.

We also learned that nonprofits are actually making up for government gaps and inefficiencies, doing the work that government is expected and intended to do. We asked, as Sean mentioned, about the toll on POC leaders, how are they leading right now? And we found that it is taking an immense toll, this climate, on POC leaders, particularly women of color, we'll hear more about that. And then lastly, that even though some nonprofits are stable at the moment, that the long term financial stability is at stake. And then finally, this is really a finding that comes from the uprisings of this year, that nonprofit leaders that we spoke to felt that there is no return to normal, obviously normal was not actually good for our communities anyway, but that there is an opportunity here for systemic change and solidarity.

So moving on then to the first finding that the crisis is about to get worse. What we heard is that organizations are surviving for now, but they're really concerned. And this was, again, back in March and April, about the needs affecting their communities. So on the next slides, we want to show you how communities that are being served by these POC-led nonprofits have been affected. And again, it's not surprising, right? That we talk to organizations whose constituents are actually facing the brunt of this pandemic. We already know that black indigenous and Latinx communities are three times more likely to contract the virus, two times as likely to die from the virus as white community members. And we found, again with the POC leaders we spoke with that their constituents have.... 61% told us that their constituents have increased worker safety concerns because they're essential workers. 58% are people who cannot maintain social distancing or are unable to shelter in place because they have to work or they have to attend to others. And 37% are working with individuals who have actually lost their lives due to the virus.

In addition to these effects, on the next slide, we also learned that the POC leaders we spoke with are working with community members who are dealing with the brunt of the economic impact of the pandemic. 81% told us that their constituents have lost employment, 41% health care benefits. We also learned, and I think everyone knows this by now, that housing instability and evictions are a huge issue in communities of color. So 62% of constituents are losing housing, and then 53% told us about their constituents who have lost access to just basic services all together. But it is not just the economic impact, and it is not just the community personal health care impact, we also learned that there has been a rise in COVID-19 related discrimination. So 55% of the POC leaders we spoke with, say that their communities are facing new concerns about discrimination in the wake of this pandemic. You can see from the quote that we put on the slide, one POC leader told us in the middle of responding to COVID. We're also dealing with racism, bigotry and Islamophobia. We found that these complaints of discrimination are most prominent among organizations that are serving Asian American and Latinx

communities. And Asian Americans in particular, were the most likely of the POC leaders that we spoke with, to talk about violence and harassment that their community members were being subjected to in this moment.

As the next slide shows, in the wake of all of these effects, it's not surprising, again, that the POC leaders that we spoke with identified mental health as an issue of concern. Three quarters of the leaders we spoke with said that they were observing mental health consequences in the wake of COVID-19. And as these quotes show, that the trauma that is happening in communities is something that has not yet been contended with fully.

So how are nonprofits that are working with these communities adapting and responding? So we asked a question around whether or not the programs and activities of nonprofits led by people of color have shifted and is so how. So what we found is that 51% of the organizations we spoke with are doing more direct service work. And this can mean, for example, creating new programs to deal with community needs that they did not deal with before, or even reshaping existing programs to make up for government inefficiencies and gaps. This range from organizations saying that they're serving as multilingual referral hubs, because information about health access and health care was not provided in language or in all languages. We learned that in other cases, 43% of organizations said that there is an increase in mutual aid. So whether these organizations are putting together grants and providing cash assistance for their constituents, or assisting undocumented people who are not covered in relief packages. These are examples of how that mutual aid increased in the wake of the pandemic.

We also found that advocacy work increased for about half, 48% of the survey respondents in the wake of this pandemic. And what was this advocacy about? Again, we found that it was really focused on ensuring that policymakers and government agencies are meeting the needs of communities of color, immigrants and refugees. Particularly with respect to crisis response and crisis recovery. Examples of this include a coalition of native groups that worked with companies and municipalities to ensure low cost internet for native communities, as well as Asian American and Pacific Islander organizations pushing for public health responses to be delivered in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. We also found, and again, I think you will know why this is the case. And we'll hear more from our panelists soon about this, that there was a decrease when it came to grassroots organizing. One third of organizations that tend to engage in grassroots organizing have had to decrease their efforts at a time when they're acutely needed.

So, as you know, social distancing has led to a market shift in the way that organizations are typically built community power. And so this is one of the results in which we have seen organizing shift decrease but also adapt and become a lot more creative. So, with that, I want to finally talk about some of the anticipated community needs. And we're going to ask you all about this too, in just a second. But when we asked organizations, what are the needs that you anticipate over the next three to six months? A few specific ones came to the top, which I'll just mention quickly. The first was really around food and security. And we know this, because we know that there are millions of people lining up for food pantries. But that was a top issue. Another was housing instability and homelessness. And still another was ongoing joblessness and lack of health insurance as a result of that. And then mental health and trauma. So these were just some, but you'll see others on this list, such as a wave of domestic violence, resurgence of COVID-19, and even surveillance and criminalization of communities of color.

So with that, I'm going to turn it back over to Sean. And as you'll see from this next slide, what we're going to talk about is how a quote like this resonate. We had one leader tell us, "I can't even foresee the

breadth and depth of continued suffering at the community level. So I'm going to turn it over to Sean to put out a poll for you all to take, and then to hear from community leaders. Right, Sean.

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Thanks so much, Deepa. Yeah, so obviously, you see this quote on the slide, and we're interested in hearing from you. What are you concerned about in terms of community needs over the next three to six months and just indicate, and you can select multiple options here. Some of the options are food, or housing instability, joblessness, and loss of health insurance, mental health programs and trauma, resurgent outbreaks of COVID, need for PPE and safe working conditions, domestic violence, voter disenfranchisement, education loss, small business closures, surveillance and criminalization of our communities. And we're now at roughly... 60% of you have participated in the poll. Let's at least get to two thirds. All right. And so, Catherine, if you can show the results.

So as Deepa showed, mental health problems and trauma certainly came through in the survey that we did of the 400 plus leaders of color, as did food and housing instability. So this poll with all of you is really reiterating some of the findings from the report. And it's a really great transition into the conversation with our panel of organizational leaders. I'm going to pose the same two questions to all of you, which is how has your organization adapted to meet community needs? And what community needs do you anticipate over the next three to six months? And Janine, why don't we start with you?

Janeen Comenote: Thank you, Sean. So again, my name is Janeen Comenote, and I am an enrolled member of the Quinalt Indian nation, which is on the west coast of Washington State. And I'm the Executive Director of the National Urban Indian Family Coalition. And we really had to change how we were thinking about our work pretty significantly at the onset of the pandemic, because we work with 45 American Indian nonprofits all over the country. And we very quickly realized that this is going to be big, and it's going to have a really big impact on our communities. So within the first 45 days of the pandemic, we actually launched a survey ourselves and wrote a paper on the impact of the pandemic 45 days in to it and came up, not surprisingly, with the exact same findings that the BMP paper did. So we know that these are universal, and we saw it just now in the poll you just put up. So we changed what we were doing by sort of immediately dropping everything in March and April and May and really tending to our nonprofit sector, and finding out what they were needing, what they were doing.

We found that between those 45 nonprofits in the first 45 days, they had lost \$9 million in revenue. And I think that that's not a small number. And I think that you'll see that replicated all over the country in nonprofits of every size. So how we really changed was providing information. We dropped a lot of the work we were doing to provide PPE to our organizations, we wrote the paper on the impact of the pandemic. And really, we provide grants to our organizations, to many of our orgs, and we worked with our funders and really allowed for these nonprofits to repurpose their funding to address the immediate needs within their communities, which are really, really large. I'll leave it at that so the others can talk.

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Thanks so much, Janeen. Angela, how about you? How did the work of your organization, BLOC, have to shift as a result of the pandemic?

Angela Lang: Yeah, so first of all, thanks for having me. And I'm glad to see so many people, almost 200 people participate and listen to this. BLOC is a year round civic engagement organization, where we are knocking on doors 24/7. And so we don't just knock on doors a couple weeks or a couple months before an election, like a lot of other folks, even campaigns and political parties. We wanted to take that lesson learned and really engage folks. There's a lot of times, we feel that we're having three separate conversations, trying to turn a non-voter into a voter, trying to educate them about things that they're

voting on, and not just showing up, but actually understand their role, and then ideally supporting the candidates that we're supporting. As an organization, we have these three separate conversations that need to be had. And ideally, they're year round, and they're in person. What was interesting, and I'd say some quick notes is that, we find ourselves not doing as much of the political side. So we have the C-3 and C-4 capabilities, where we're able to do partisan work and non partisan work, depending on the project and the year.

And we found ourselves, I thought 2020 would be this year where we're doing a lot of our partisan work, but given the pandemic, and for folks that may remember, Wisconsin had an in-person election on April 7, which was very just horrifying to watch. And still brings up a lot of emotions for a lot of us. And we find ourselves having to respond to what people are asking. There are folks that never received their ballot in April and are asking us, "How do I make sure that I can vote in November? Are there going to be more than five polling places opened?" Because in Milwaukee, at least, we typically have 180 or so and we only have five on Election Day, due to a lack of poll workers. So we found ourselves doing a lot of that case work. We're not a direct service organization, we like to think that we're advocacy and power building organization. We don't have the capacity to do direct service, but there are times we had to alternate how we reached out to folks. We weren't just talking about the election, and ignoring everything else that was going on. Because I think a lot of us say every year, "We need to be less transactional. We need to be less transactional of how we're improving and engaging with communities of color.

And this was a real opportunity to... If we're all texting and phone making and moving in a digital space now, this was also an opportunity for us to show up and not be transactional, and only show up and talking about the election. So there were times we were doing wellness checks on folks. It was [JLTV 00:28:43]. It was the last couple of days of the election. And it was very strange to not lead with, "Hey, don't forget to vote for this candidate." We were saying, "Hey, we're not going to lead with the election, what do you need? Do you need to be connected to resources?" And then also, we were able to have the political conversations, because people saw that we saw them as full people with these issues. So we've adapted in that way. And then, at least over the next like three to four months, a lot of what was in the audience poll, a big thing that we're really concerned about is domestic violence and mental health, both of which I think are side effects of COVID. I think everyone's really concerned about the economic piece and the health care piece. But there's so much other side effects and residual effects. And I think we need to be honest about that.

So when we talk about our needs over the next few months, I think we need to be having more of these conversations, talking about how folks are staying at home because there's stay-at-home orders, but that may not be a safe space for them. That may be domestic violence scenarios. And all of that has impacted our team internally, as well as our broader community. And I want to make sure that we're also just having these conversations and peeling back the layers that this COVID pandemic is a lot more traumatic outside of just healthcare and the economic angle of it.

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Thanks so much. And Kavita, how did Sakhi for South Asian Women respond? How did you shift, particularly, the service delivery that you do provide, given all of the things that Angela just raised regarding [crosstalk 00:30:12] violence.

Kavita Mehra: That was a great segue into the work that we do at Sakhi. So Sakhi for South Asian Women, we work with survivors of gender-based violence here in New York City. We believe that transformative change can manifest in three ways; through advocacy, community engagement, and

direct services. For the purposes of this conversation, though, I think it's important for me to focus on our direct services work. So in New York City, as most folks know, we were deeply impacted by the pandemic, for the month of March and April especially. Our team went remote March 12. And immediately, as soon as we went remote, I have to commend my colleagues, because they were on the phone with all of their active cases, doing a mere emergency safety planning. And what started to come up through those conversations was, many members of our community don't have access to health care and so they were uncomfortable leaving. As they continue to stay in touch with those cases, many of the survivors that we work with, were experiencing extreme forms of violence.

So there were cases that we had had where... in the month of March and April, we were able to provide private transportation as an option for survivors to leave the person who was inflicting harm. And even if us providing that private transportation was an option, survivors were not willing to leave. They didn't want to impact themselves or their children. So they continue to absorb that harm. But what also came up were the economic impacts of the pandemic. Immediately, community members were indicating to us that they were feeling fear around housing insecurity, food insecurity, and utility insecurity. And so it felt like our responsibility to be able to mobilize efforts and serve as a conduit between members of the community who had access to make transformative change, and distribute those funds nearly immediately to members of the community who needed it. So between the month of March and August, we had distributed a total of \$160,000 in emergency assistance. We had also started to engage deeper levels of food security work. So the way I describe it is we created our own version of FreshDirect.

And we distributed 16,000 pounds of food over the course of March and August to members of the community. And we're assuming that the rise of domestic violence that we're seeing or the intensity in which we've seen gender-based violence happen through the months of the pandemic here in New York City, that will continue. That will sustain in the months ahead, but also that's coupled with the anxiety and fear that survivors are experiencing as a result of the economic impact of the pandemic as well. We're preparing for that accordingly.

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Thanks so much. And we are getting some questions in both Q&A as well as in the chat. But I want to bring up the question about the sense that the philanthropic community is actually pulling back from some of the support that they made during the height of the pandemic, when it was clear that they needed to make investments in direct assistance. What are your organizations seeing related to that? Like are you also seeing that happen? But also, what thoughts do you have about what it's going to take to continue to put clear demands on philanthropy to keep funding direct assistance efforts, particularly direct assistance efforts that are being led by communities of color and led by organizations that are POC led? Feel free. Any of the three of you to jump in response? Janeen, do you have any thoughts on [crosstalk 00:34:04]?

Janeen Comenote: The three magic words, which are direct operating support. So I think unrestricted funding to these organizations on the ground. We know our communities, and we know what our community needs are. So one community may be really struggling with food insecurity, while another community might be struggling with employment insecurity. We're probably all struggling with all of it, but I think leaving the funding to the wisdom of the organization on the ground is a really crucial, crucially important step. And that's like the one thing I could tell philanthropy is, give more and make a general operating support so we can decide.

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Thanks so much. Any other thoughts from Kavita or Angela?

Angela Lang: I think the only other thing I would add, there has been some really, really great funders that are like, "We're not going to make you do a million grant reports, or we're not going to make you have all of these strings and have to check in with you on your metrics every week." There's some who have been really great. That have been like, "We just want to be helpful. We do trust you. So spend the money the way that you need to have it spent in your own community that can identify the needs more than a lot of times a lot of funders can." But then there's also folks who on one hand aren't getting that memo. I did have an organization, this was more for like political money and less of like a long term thing. But an organization sent me a 15 page, 11 point font grants to turn around in a couple weeks, with just extra information that wasn't even needed. Obviously, it will take several hours to do. It was like \$45,000.

Yet another organization was like, "Angela, we know you're really busy. At some point, can we get maybe three to five bullet points, and we'll give you \$40,000." And so I think there're some folks that definitely really, really understand and are trying to be helpful. And it's very clear that they're trying to be supportive. And then also think that there's a sliver of folks, I think this is more so in kind of like the business world, where people want to donate, and this I think also applies to some funders. That people want to donate so they can say that they're doing something for Black Lives Matter. I think people are trying to ride the wave at the moment. And some folks are throwing money just so they can say, "Yeah, we support Black Lives Matter. We gave money to this group," but actually aren't changing their internal culture and policies and whatnot. So I think it's something that we should just kind of be mindful that there's just different types of folks.

There're the folks that are really stepping up right now, that understand organizing. That were maybe former organizers themselves, so when they go back in our program directories building their portfolios, you don't need to explain what a campaign plan is, and why it's important. And then there are some folks that are just trying to ride the wave and throw money a particular way to add legitimacy to themselves. And I think there's a power dynamic that we could talk about you.

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Thanks so much. All right, I'm going to turn it back over to Deepa to keep us going in terms of the findings from the report and specifically looking at what the both survey and interviews revealed, in terms of the toll that the current moment is taking, particularly, on women of color leading nonprofit organizations in our communities. Deepa, take it away.

Deepa Iyer: Thank you. Yeah, thank you so much, Sean. And thank you everyone for talking about the effects on organizations and communities. But I wanted to now talk a little bit about the impact of this moment, both the pandemic but also the uprisings against anti-black racism, on POC leaders themselves, their staff and their long term sustainability. So of the 432 respondents that we spoke with, 70% were women of color. And we heard that women of color, in particular, although all executive directors, did this... Women of color, in particular express the sense of balancing too much. Sounds familiar? You know, more than they usually do, right? And so in addition to the ways in which the climate has affected these women of color individually, such as with childcare or remote work, they're also making decisions about organizational changes. They are trying to be there for their staff. They're also worried about financial sustainability. In this moment, though, we also recognize that there are many POC leaders who are making changes because of the current climate.

So these changes are big and small. So some of the ones I want to highlight. Let's put about a quarter of the POC leaders are making changes in terms of reducing the work day or the work week. About 67% are changing expectations around productivity, understanding that the same level of productivity is likely

not possible for staff and introducing more trauma-informed work. And then lastly, about 48% were providing resources for staff wellbeing, which is wellness stipends, for example. Even smaller intervention still are being made to create this culture of care and wellbeing within nonprofit organizations led by people of color. These ranged, POC leaders told us, from taking breaks more often, lessening the times of Zoom calls, doing check-ins to honor the organizational trauma that is manifested as a result of COVID-19 and so on and so forth.

So as the next slide shows, just wanted to highlight a couple of quotes from people that we spoke with that I think really bring this home, particularly, impact on women of color. "For women of color, there's an extra expectation that we show up not just as leaders, but like mom and sister," said one leader. And holding the organization even more [inaudible 00:39:56] another staff emotions, constant fundraising, worries about revenue and balancing childcare. Feel free to let us know in the chat if you resonate with some of this if you are leading organizations.

So beyond sort of the effect on one's own leadership and on the staff, I also wanted to talk now about the financial stability of POC-led nonprofit, which we heard about a little bit already. But we found that while most of the organizations that we surveyed are on somewhat stable ground due to what we just heard about flexibility from foundation funders, emergency funds, and of course, the loans that were created by the CARES Act. Many are concerned about their sustainability, one to two years down the line. And that sort of long term sustainability is what I want us to talk about, and we'll hear from our panelists as well about. So the next slide shows we did ask organizations, what has been sort of the effects of initial revenue? Has it decreased, increased or has there been no change? And one of the things I wanted to hone in on here is, obviously not surprising, and I think everyone knows that emergency revenue was on the rise, right? And that for 62% of organizations, it increased this emergency revenue, and it offset the operating revenue losses.

But the one part that we're monitoring and thinking about more closely is actually the income source of government funding. What we're finding, and we're already hearing reports about this is that if states lose tax revenues that they're beginning to cancel or withhold contracts, they are given to nonprofits to perform basic services. Particularly this month, Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we've been hearing more about losses of federal and state dollars given to domestic violence nonprofits, for example. So government funding is one thing to keep an eye on. And then of course, when it comes to [inaudible 00:41:54] income, we also saw that there was a decrease here because organizations are not able to do in-person galas for fundraisers.

Moving on then, we wanted to... As this slide shows, the next slide, just give you a sense of, again, some of what we heard from organizational leaders. And I'm going to turn it right back over to Sean, so that we can hear from you about the effects on your organization, your leadership, and then hear from our panelists, Sean.

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Yeah, so another poll, or set of polls, we're interested, particularly, if you're responsible for leading an organization in this climate, how are you feeling? But again, welcome everybody participating to weigh in here. Some people may be exhausted, scared about sustainability in the long run, cautiously optimistic, feeling supported by their own personal ecosystem, or just struggling to balance all the competing needs. The second question in the poll is, what changes are you actually seeing in your own workplace? And so you saw that slide earlier that Deepa showed, with all of the pie charts, but we wanted to hear from all of you about what you're seeing in your own organizations. Are you seeing work weeks being reduced? Are you seeing expectations for productivity being lowered in

recognition of everything else that's going on? Are organizations that you're working for investing in a culture of wellness, or providing more time off or regular check-ins about emotional well being? Are your organizations actually having to lay off, restructure or change activities and programs?

About 45% of folks have weighed in, in the poll, and let's just see if we can get over the 50% mark? Okay, we have. So, not surprising, folks are feeling exhausted and struggling to balance competing needs. I think that that is a very widespread and universal feeling, particularly given everything that's been going on. In terms of changes that folks are seeing occur at your own workplaces, it looks like changes in activities and programs is in the lead, followed by organizations having more regular check-ins about the emotional well-being of their staff teams, which is a good thing. So we're going to move on to the next slide. Just to show what the question is for the panel. We're asking, how are you preparing at a personal leadership level, as well as organizational sustainability level to respond to this current climate? Kavita, let's start with you. And then we'll hear from Angela and Janeen.

Kavita Mehra: It's a great question. I'll start with the easy part of it first, which is the organization. We are essential workers at Sakhi, and that has ever been more evident as a result of the pandemic. And so our team has been tirelessly working with survivors through the course of it. And the way that I frame it out for folks is like, we are absorbing trauma-intensive conversations day in and day out. And so, especially in the New York area, it's really hard to have separation at home from one's working environment, and one's personal space. Many of us don't have home offices. I'm speaking from my kitchen table. And so we don't have that luxury of space. We're really cognizant of that at Sakhi. And so we decided pretty early on that one, we would make sure that everyone was fully equipped with whatever they need it. So everyone got cell phones to do whatever they need their separation between their personal life, professional life. Everyone has Wi-Fi hotspots in case they want to work outside during nice weather. Everyone has laptops, so they can also separate between personal and professional. In addition to that, we created a four day workweek and implemented an unlimited PTO policy, both of which have been utilized by the team.

And we also have clinical supervision for all staff members to help process the trauma that they're [inaudible 00:46:25] suffer experiencing through the course of this pandemic, either through their work or through their personal lives. And so we recognize that, as an organization that works with survivors, and also having survivors on staff, this is an incredibly intensive moment, and so we need to respond accordingly. From the funding perspective, we are just a sort of defining had indicated, we're not as concerned about this year or next year, but fiscal year '23 is when we're starting to get really nervous. We're also a grantee of the NoVo Foundation, and so are impacted by its decision to sunset. And we are educating all of our funders now to say, there's a chance that fiscal 23 will have catastrophic impact on our community, especially as it relates to government funding. And so how do we get out in front of that? I've been speaking with my board and creating an investment council to think about any [GOF 00:47:23] money that we get in that we can immediately use towards just capitalizing on that in some capacity.

So those are the guardrails that we're starting to think through. And we're also creating contingency planning around budgeting, which I know is not easy, but it's important to do, I think, just to help think through this process. On a personal level, I think unless I think of self-care for myself, and I had to learn this the hard way, I can't really support the staff in that that way. I'm someone who suffers from a high degree of anxiety. And so unless I put up those guardrails, and I model that for the team, I'm not going to be able to create the culture for the team where they feel supported. Self-love there.

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Thanks so much. And so Angela, turning to you, how are you preparing? And feel free to start with whether the personal leadership or organizational sustainability but how are you preparing the response to the climate?

Angela Lang: Yeah, I'll also start with the organization part because I feel like that's easier. We were always really, even pre-COVID, were very, I would say, intentional in how we talked about trauma and mental health. Folks have talked about our model being a form of trauma informed organizing. We haven't gotten formal training, I'm trying to do the best thing for our team. And people call it trauma informed organizing, So cool. But even before COVID, I noticed that my team was not taking, specifically the senior staff that have the bulk of the responsibility. They were not taking regular days off when they needed it. They were pushing through. And so probably over a year ago now, I was like, "Everyone has one free day off a month that you have to take, that does not eat into your PTO." Because I think also part of trauma is that you bank your PTO, either in hopes that they'll get paid out as an extra check at one point. Or people kind of save them in case of an emergency or something. And a lot of times we're pushing through grief, in order to do work.

We're pushing through our trauma for the sake of capitalism in some ways. And so that was like a pre-COVID thing that we instituted. And then shortly after the protests happen in Minnesota, we ended up taking a mental health day, because it was really... We all didn't sleep well that night, and we knew that we can focus. And shortly after that, we were like, these four day work weeks may not be bad. And so we also moved to a four day workweek, which everyone thought we were crazy. I think people respected it, but I think also people thought that we were crazy and ridiculous, given the nature of our work, given the nature of who we talk to. And in a presidential year, where we're talking to black voters in a swing state and we have the audacity to move to four day work weeks.

We stand behind that decision. We're also really, really bad at it as well. Like our team, I tell folks, "I will never schedule stuff for you. I will never expect anything from you. Your Fridays are what you want them to be. If you need to lay in bed and sleep all day and have your phone off, great. Or if you're like, "Hey, I'm not going to schedule calls, but I'm going to catch up on emails. Whatever your Friday looks like for you." And I had to actually put it on the calendar a couple weeks ago, because people kept forgetting that Fridays were off. So that's the easy stuff. I think personally, I'm having to establish boundaries. About a little over a year ago, when I got back into therapy, my therapist was like, "Stop working after eight o'clock. Don't check your emails after eight." And I was like, "What? That's ridiculous." But like the world didn't end. And so I took the email notifications off of my phone. I have the app, so I can go into it whenever. But I don't get that ding every two seconds every time I get an email, because that increases my anxiety, and feeling that always need to be on and always have to respond. And it's been difficult. There are times... just in the last couple of weeks, I got really, really overwhelmed.

It was a really, really bad week, and I had to turn my phone on airplane mode for the day. I'm on Zoom calls from morning to tonight anyways. So I'm not really missing much on my phone but it's hard. And I think there's a lot of times that as leaders, whether you're an executive director or you're leader in some way, we're expected to still lead, while also processing the same trauma and grief that everyone else kind of gets that opportunity to heal and to grieve and to process. But we're expected to not miss a beat. But we're also grieving as well. So there's a balance there that I think has been difficult to shrink. But trying to lean into that as much as possible for me.

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Thanks so much for sharing all of that, and for sharing the vulnerability, in terms of what it takes to actually create those boundaries. I think we're all imperfect, and it's hard to maintain boundaries, it's hard to not respond to email, it's hard to not work, work, work. Janeen, how about you? How have you been thinking about what it's going take to respond and prepare for the climate that we're in for both yourself and your organization?

Janeen Comenote: I'll start with myself on this one. So I think that the pandemic has been really traumatic, particularly for American Indian communities. This isn't the first time we've seen a pandemic, like this is genetic memory. This is historical trauma for us. In that, we look at this, and we're like infected smallpox blankets. So for our communities, this has been very traumatic. When you look at our relatives on the reservations and how much they've been suffering, particularly at Navajo, particularly in the upper Midwest, on some of those reservations in the pueblos in New Mexico. Those are all our relatives, and we see this just ravaging our communities. We know we're not the only one, so that has been very difficult for us. But personally, we look at this, and I always tell people, "We're still here." Like, "You tried to kill us all off, it didn't work. We're still here.

We're very resilient. We're very strong people." So I always take hope in that. That we are strong people, all of us. All of us on this call, every nonprofit leader out there, we have resiliences that are unimaginable to people, because our communities have really gone through it. So that's sort of where I am personally. From an organizational perspective, we lead with our nonprofit. So I'm in constant communication with these nonprofits on the ground and what's happening and what I hear them echoing is a lot of what Angela and Kavita said. Is that, it's hard to maintain that strength when you're leading an organization and when the food that goes on your employees' tables comes from your work. What we're hearing a lot on the ground is that our organizations are really beginning to think more deeply about community organizing, and about civic engagement. Because as we move into this, as we all know, we shouldn't be solely reliant on philanthropic funding, particularly, for service organizations. And that's where working with your elected officials in your location become increasingly important and the ability for us to advocate for ourselves within what I call the civic arena.

We know the better you are at that, the more resources your community gets to improve the outcomes within your community. There's a lot of responsibility that's really falling on POC leadership all over the country right now. It's not just thinking about the pandemic and looming joblessness and homelessness and actual illness and hospitalizations. It's also what are we going to do in five years? How am I going to provide for my community and my employees in five years? So part of me is also always thinking about how can my organization work with our member nonprofits, to help think through how we do this all together?

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Thanks so much. And we did get a question about... That I think relates to the question of sustainability. The sort of language and model of social enterprise seem to have been gaining popularity in the sector. But the question is, are we hearing the term less, was it a failed organizational model? Particularly in response to the context. Curious if any of you have thoughts about social enterprise, earned income, those kinds of strategies, in contrast to relying on resources from funders, and grant makers and government? Any thoughts on that?

Angela Lang: I think for us trying to wrap my head around it all, I don't know if this will directly answer the question. I just think it's important that everyone [inaudible 00:56:33] have multiple streams of income, and we're actually going to be looking at... We feel like the time is right now. We didn't want to do this, when we first started almost three years ago. We're going to be switching to, or implementing a

membership, like dues paying model. So people can feel directly invested in the work that we are doing. For me, in addition to being an executive director, I'm communications director, I am development director. So there are times like these, right? I'm like, "Ooh, I don't say no to a speaking engagement," because you never know who is going to be seeing it, and who will maybe want to donate because they have some extra dollars. But seeing, I think, everything has an organizing opportunity, whether it's being on podcast and whatnot. And I think being able to rely on community members, and the support of folks individually, I think, is really helpful.

I do write a lot of grants, don't get me wrong. There's a lot of grant writing. But there's also a lot of just having one-on-one conversations with folks and getting them to support your work as an individual. In COVID, what a lot of folks are doing are having these Zoom virtual house parties, where people are like, "If I put a Zoom meeting together with 20, or 30 of my friends and family, can you come and present, and then hopefully, I can make a fundraising pitch. So there's a lot of that. If you're really lucky, you're able to get your work being noticed nationally, and then maybe having some influencers being able to amplify your work and say, "Hey, I'm giving \$1,000 or \$10,000. Match me for my birthday." And so there's different creative ways for that. I think for us, we don't kind of have a reliance on it. But it's something that we're focused on, because I think it's important to have that direct community and individual buy into.

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Thanks so much. And just so everyone knows, in the chat... Catherine, put the links to each of our panelists organization. So if you have the means and ability, I'd invite you and encourage you to make some donations to each of their organizations. I'm going to turn it back over to Deepa, to talk a little bit more about the demand and need for systemic change and solidarity, particularly right now.

Deepa Iyer: Yes, thank you so much. And just wanted to echo Sean's point about your vulnerability, and how you are sharing that, all three of you. And I wanted to kind of jump off of Janeen's point, actually, about what is happening right now, which I thought was so powerful. It's clear that the POC leaders that we spoke with are straddling the realities of this pandemic, while also building power for both policy solutions and systemic change. And the uprisings really provided a catalyst and momentum for that. Now, as we all know, during the spring of this year, in the wake of the murders of black people, including George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Merci Mack, and so many others, black people organized uprisings, to call for justice. When we talked to 41 of the POC leaders, in our survey, we asked a specific set of questions around how the uprisings were affecting the organization's work, and what kinds of systemic change recommendations they had?

So there were three calls to action that I wanted to highlight. On the next slide, you might recall, we spoke earlier about grant funding, particularly from philanthropy. We found that for 38% of respondents, there was a decrease in foundation grants. What was most alarming was to see that, particularly for black-led groups, there was a higher decrease. So for 46% of black-led groups, grant income had decreased. One of the calls to action that we heard time and again, in our interviews. Not just from black-led groups, but from non-black leaders as well is the importance of fully funding black-led organizations. And so I just wanted to highlight that again.

The second kind of call to action that I wanted to talk about is on the next slide, which is that the uprisings really reinforced and re-emphasized the importance of cross racial organizing, and solidarity. We heard particularly from non-black community leaders, non-black POC leaders, that there was a real desire to engage in political education, strategy development, and generative conversations with other

leaders of color, about anti-black racism and solidarity. There were a lot of very honest responses from organizations such as the one that you see here from leaders who said that they really needed to deepen their analysis, that they needed to confront anti-black racism within their own communities. I mean, you need to build a stronger relationship with black communities as well.

So I want to turn now to... And this is a great time to tell people, "Please go ahead and ask questions," because we are going to get into Q&A very shortly. So feel free to add those. But I wanted to turn as to... We talked about some of the findings, right? So what about the recommendations? Clearly, the organizational leaders we spoke to had recommendations and solutions because not only do they know what the needs are of their communities, they know how to address them. And so these [inaudible 01:01:54] recommendations fall into three categories. First, systemic and policy changes. A lot of these really come down to telling government to do its job effectively and properly and to ensure that people have access to basic services and benefits. Whether that is technology education, whether that is worker rights, or whether that is food and housing. There are more detailed recommendations that you can find in our report related to each of these. And I also wanted to identify that defunding and dismantling policing systems was also a recommendation again, because [inaudible 01:02:28] because of the uprising.

The second set of recommendations on the next slide are for philanthropy. Again, more detailed recommendations [inaudible 01:02:36] reports, but wanted to highlight four specific ones; committing to supporting black-led and POC-led organizations is very clear, but really asking philanthropy to give above the 5% payout requirements to make permanent some of the changes that have been put into place. Like simplified applications, verbal reporting, and the likes. They also, POC leaders, asked that philanthropy align its internal racial commitments to racial equity with its external grant making. So making sure that there is affirmative outreach to POC-led nonprofits, making sure that there is benchmarking in terms of how the external grant making is aligned [inaudible 01:03:18] internal commitment. And then balancing the rapid response funding with a decade's long strategy. Recognizing that it's not enough to just invest when there is a crisis. But that organizations will continue to be in a [inaudible 01:03:31] unless they get that infrastructure development and investment that they need.

And then lastly, sustainability. That it is really important for foundations to invest in POC leaders in terms of sabbaticals, wellness, stipends, fellowships, and also even in cultivating young people of color, and middle management as well. And then the third set of recommendations are really about the nonprofit sector as a whole, all of us who belong to it. About the importance of being honest about the effects of trauma and burnout and fatigue right now. Talking about sustainability more openly and recognizing the effects of this current climate, so that this becomes a standard practice for us and not something to hide. And then, obviously, listening to and following the knowledge and experiences of POC leaders, which I think is more easier said than done. So I will turn it over to Sean to hear a little bit more from our community leaders. And again, would encourage folks to put more questions into the chat.

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Yeah, thanks so much. And so the question, just to get this round of Q&A started. And again, feel free to put other questions for me to ask in the Q&A or the chat. But just to get the conversation and dialogue started, how have the uprising affected your organizations, and your organizations' work on issues of justice, your solidarity work, et cetera. And Angela, can we start with you? What's been the impact for BLOC?

Angela Lang: It's hard to kind of just simplify the impact, right? I think every time that there's a tragedy, it deeply impacts our organization. Our team is rather large right now. We have 73 people that would normally be knocking in the fields, in our texting and phone banking. In addition to our 10 full time staff, we have a large team. And anytime that there's a tragedy in [Milwaukee 01:05:35], whether it's a high profile domestic violence incident, it is gun violence, it's an overdose. Anytime where there's a black person killed or injured, nine times out of 10, somebody on my team is directly connected to them. It seems like we start a lot of our conversations, and this was even pre-COVID. We always try to provide that space for folks. If they need to heal, they need to process, they need extra support.

I think for a lot of us, what happened in Kenosha really messed us up. Kenosha is only 40 miles south of where I'm sitting right now. You drive through Kenosha to go to Chicago all the time. So it's not far. People go there all the time. It's one thing to hear and to see what happened to Jacob Blake, who is... Essentially we saw an attempted murder on video. That was difficult to process. And then a few days later, to see this 17 year old, whose name I refuse to say, get driven across state lines, and murder two protesters who were saying that our lives matter and injured another. I think that shook us all in knowing that we're not living in a time where there's just a healthy disagreement, and we can grab a beer later. If we disagree, or heaven forbid, there are conspiracy theories that are attached to the organization, or to our community, that is dangerous. People are no longer talking at all. People are literally murdering people. I know for me, the last couple of months, I felt a personal threat to my safety.

I have a to go bag in the trunk of my car, with almost two weeks of clothes, birth certificate, first aid kit and whatnot, in case anything needs to happen. In case, I get doxxed for whatever reason. And so, I think a lot of us realize the targets on our backs in a lot of ways when you're trying to empower a community that is disenfranchised. It's a threat to the status quo, and people don't like that. And people interpret that as a direct attack on them personally. So it's hard. To try and end on a happy note, when people ask me what gives me hope? It's the fact that we go through all of this as a team. And yet, for some reason, they still show up to work every day. We did an event in person recently for the first time in forever. Our team was like, "Nope, Angela, I'm good. Leave me alone, I'm in my element." Right? Our team is so much in their element when they're able to talk to our own community. And to know that we have all these challenges. We're carrying all of this, we're carrying this weight, we're carrying the stress, and depression and anxiety. But yet, they still find the resilience to wake up every day and to go super hard for our team in our community.

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Thank you so much for sharing that. In addition to everything, in terms of the fear and the danger, and also being able to find the beauty and joy in organizing and building power with our communities. Janeen, how about you? How's your organization been affected? Have you been affected?

Janeen Comenote: It's been an intense summer. I mean, yeah, really, it's been an intense lifetime. When you're born of color, this is what you live. One of the things I've been really thinking of, in the last few months, really since the beginning of the pandemic, is this story that an elder once told me about the Indian wars. And what he was saying was that one of the biggest leadership decisions, our native elders had to decide during the Indian wars when the cavalry was literally coming to kill us all, was who was going to take away the guns, and who was going to treat the wounded. And I think we all know what that feels like. I think some of our organizations are really treating the wounded. And some of our organizations are really taking away the guns. And some of our organizations because of who they are and where they are, particularly where they are in the United States means they have to do both. So

they are simultaneously sort of doing broad level policy work and community organizing and political advocacy, while they're still providing direct services on the ground to communities.

That's such an immense burden for our organizations and for individuals. So for me, when I look at all of this, I think, on the powerful level, on the more sort of deeply visceral emotional level for me, I think, when I see what's happening in the United States right now, and I see the racial animus and the actual just murdering of people on camera, like we've all seen it. I think part of it is as a native community, I think we need to learn how to center black lives, and how to center that conversation. And I think we all need to do that. And I think that this also provides an opportunity for our communities to really... I'm such a staunch, staunch believer in that we are all more powerful together. If we can reliably and build these coalitions of all people of color together. We're literally unstoppable people. Like, they have to listen to us. It's so easy to divide and conquer us, and pit us against each other. And we see that playing out in our various communities of color around the country. I've seen it in native communities. I've seen it in Asian communities. I've seen it in all communities. This moment in history, I think provides us an opportunity. What's that old saying? That every threat is actually an opportunity.

I think this actually does provide us an opportunity to be creative about how we can work together in real ways, moving into the future. I'm not sure what that looks like. So I don't have any answers. I'm hoping you all do so you could tell us. But I think it starts with stories. If I know your story and you know my story, then that's where we begin? We have to know each other's stories. So I'll leave it there.

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Thanks so much. And thanks for posing that question about sort of this inspiration of what might be possible in this moment of crisis. Kavita, both curious in terms of your own reflections on the response to this summer of uprisings, but also both Angela and Janeen brought up really core solidarity practices, and just curious how you're seeing that, in terms of your work, as well as with other organizations here in New York.

Kavita Mehra: Yeah. So we at Sakhi are deeply concerned about the rise of anti-blackness throughout the country, the murder of black folks across the country, starting in May. And seeing this play out again and again. So we decided internally to do a few things. One is fairly immediately, we made a small donation to a black-led organization from our own funds, because we wanted to be able to demonstrate to the community that we have to invest in black communities. And for the philanthropists on this call, that is critical, in trying to level the playing field of power. The second is really trying to educate the South Asian diaspora of how they hold anti-blackness. And that's our responsibility at Sakhi, that we cannot espouse intersectionality, we cannot espouse postcolonial feminist theory without recognizing that we hold a level of anti-blackness in our community, and we need to be able to address it. So we've been through our communication, really trying to push our community in learning about how we hold this and try to come with a new frame of reference.

Internally, we've also been trying to do a lot of work. So starting in May, I was doing weekly sessions with a few key members of our team. We call them building solidarity conversations, where we were talking about South Asian hegemony and how that was showing up in our work. Whether that be through regionalism, capitalism, religious politics, class politics, sexual identity, gender identity. Because as much as we want to talk about allyship too, we need to talk and self-reflect on how we're also creating systems of power, and creating a place of equity for all team members. So that was really important to me, and actually, that was probably one of the most energizing things that I've been able to engage in all year, because it helped ground me into why I got into this work, right? I think for a lot of

us leaders, we're still sticking the, "I got to raise this money. I got to do this financial report. I got to do this, this and this."

Why did we come into this work? And being able to go back to read people like Chandra Mohanty or Angela Davis, or Bell Hooks, and go back to the roots of where I really wanted to get into this work was refreshing. So that's what we've been doing on a systems level at Sakhi too. So we've tried to take a multi-faceted approach. We are continuing these conversations actually, and starting next month, we're going to do monthly self-reflective conversations about all of the forms of South Asian hegemony, how that shows up into our work. We're shutting down the office, and really thinking about this because we need to build that cultureship, right? And I keep telling our team, "We are building this organization together, and we have the opportunity to build something better."

And I think that from the uprisings, that's what we're taking away from it. Like how do we build something better for our community and model something better? On a personal level, I worked in [Newark 01:16:41] for three years. And I think it is the responsibility of philanthropy to invest in black communities right now. I know that my organization can triple in three and a half years because I come from a level of privilege as a South Asian, and I'm doing this work, right? And so like organizations that have been in black communities are not getting that same level of exposure. And it is the responsibility of philanthropy. And so the conversations that I can have personally with philanthropists to also engage them about that work, I'm trying to do.

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Thanks so much. Angela and Janeen, any other sort of pushes that you would make to philanthropy, and particularly since we did have a sense that there were several people from foundations who had signed up for the webinar, what sort of other, either requests or demands, tips, would you make? Particularly given the current moment, but real concerns about sustainability of our organizations into the future?

Angela Lang: I'm going to say what I've been trying to say for the last like year or so, is one, year-round support is super important. Our issues are not going to go away after an election. Our issues are not going to go away at the beginning of the year. COVID is still going to be a thing. And we need folks to show up for the long run, and not just when something is popular, or there's a hashtag. And I think, a big thing that seems very radical, but shouldn't be is multi year grants for general operating support. To know that we are able to sustain for multiple years, and not feel like I need to constantly hustle. And there's also like a dynamic too of women of color. I know for me, I had a hard time adjusting to fundraising, because of how I was conditioned. As a young child, you don't ask for help. You don't ask for money. You specifically don't ask white men for money. And that's a lot of what the donor world can be sometimes.

There's so much time and effort that I personally do to try and finesse these relationships, squeeze out every dollar and dime, but I'm like, "How much work productive could I be, if I didn't have to spend two hours writing this grant at eight o'clock at night?" Because I was on Zoom calls all day and can only get to it at eight o'clock at night, and thus have worked from 8am to 10pm. True story, like that happens all the time. Right? And what does it look like to be just given the trust to know of how we know how to manage the funds and how to do what's best with it for our community? It's a pain. I'm going through this right now. I'm having conversations with funders like, "Hey, 2020 was a dumpster fire. Can I get an extension of when I need to spend these funds down? Because we have to shift focus. A lot of that and a little bit of that chase that I have to do, that if someone just gave us general operating funds for multiple years. I shouldn't have to chase and get permission and try to finesse and do stuff like that.

And so, I think the easiest, and again, I hope it's not radical. This is something I hope folks are thinking about is that if we actually care about people and organizations the way that we claim to, then we need to make sure that they're invested in the long haul, and not just election cycles, or in times of crisis.

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Thanks. Go ahead, Janeen.

Janeen Comenote: I would basically echo what Angela just said, and also for my community, is to remind funders that indigenous projects and organizations get one tenth, of 1% of all philanthropic funding in the country. And that one tenth of 1%, is going to places like the Smithsonian for the National Museum of the American Indian. Not that they shouldn't get the funding, but for our grassroots organizations on the ground, we can take a \$10,000 grant, and make it look like \$100,000 grant. Our people, unfortunately, know how to do a lot with a very, very little bit of money. So my recommendation is to find, for philanthropy, if there's an organization on the ground, go find it. Take the time to find who the grantee should be. If you're funding in a certain city, you can come to us, we can tell you who to fund on the ground.

Part of what we're really invested in, is really investing in American Indians, because we see so little of it for our community, and we are more often the invisible minority. We get left out of pretty much every report. I was so excited, that BMP actually included us in this. So often, you don't even see American Indians in the list of POCs. So we're still here. Like birthday, we're still the first people of America. So reach out, find out who those indigenous... Put the 'I' back in BIPOC. So I'll just leave it at that. Yeah.

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld: Thanks so much, to all three of you. Really appreciated, the time you spent this afternoon having this conversation. We're going to start transitioning into wrapping things up. And so just going to show again, a reminder about what the findings of the report were. The first thing is just the crisis is about to get worse, as you heard. There's a lot of concern about the financial stability of organizations, particularly related to, which I think is connected to this second finding around government. But some of the government inefficiency also relates to the resourcing of organizations to do this critical work in communities. And there's a lot of concern about where that funding is going to come from in the future. For the past several months, nonprofits have been making up for stuffing into the gap created by government inefficiencies. And obviously, there's an election coming up, the stakes have never been... Well, the stakes are always high, the stakes are particularly high right now.

And so really just speaks to the importance of addressing some of these problems of government. The climate and the work is taking a real toll on leaders. And I just want to, again, acknowledge that the vast majority of the respondents to the survey were women of color. Nonprofit leadership is primarily women. And so the combination of the demands in terms of the professional side of things, as well as the emotional toll and labor is really hitting women of color leading organizations particularly hard. The real concerns about long term financial stability of organizations led by nonprofits. We have a real worry that if things don't turn around financially, in terms of the support that goes to organizations, that in five years you'd actually see fewer organizations with leaders of color. And that there would just be fewer organizations, but that some organizations might end up being acquired or merged with larger more established, more traditionally white-led organizations. That has happened before anecdotally. We heard that that's part of what happened after the recession in the late 2000s.

And so we're just really worried that that same pattern is going to repeat. And just again, this is the time for systemic change and solidarity. And it's never been more clear what kinds of changes are needed. So thanks again to everyone for joining the session. I want to again thank my colleague, Deepa Iyer, who's

BMP's director of Movement Building, and the director of the Solidarity Is project. Janeen Comenote, who's the executive director of the National Urban Indian Family Coalition; Angela Lange, who's the executive director of Black Leaders Organizing for Communities; and Kavita Mehra, who is the executive director of Sakhi for South Asian Women. Thanks to all of you for having this conversation this afternoon. And thanks to the roughly 200 people who joined today.

Want to encourage everyone to not just download the report, but please share it. The link was shared in the chat. You'll get another link in follow up, please make sure that the report gets around and we'll also share with you this recording. Please use this as an opportunity to start conversations with peer organizations, funders, etc. Because the changes that are needed are significant. Thanks again to everybody for joining us this afternoon.