In recent years, we have conducted periodic community needs assessment surveys to help us determine how we can focus our grantmaking. 2020 is different.

The coronavirus pandemic and the economic upheaval that it caused, along with the social justice protests and civil unrest in Kenosha, have challenged our community’s not-for-profit organizations – forcing changes to operations, strained budgets, and creating new processes of delivering services to their clients.

In November 2020, the Foundation partnered with the United Way of Kenosha County conducted an of our local not-for-profit organizations to better understand the impacts of 2020’s events on their operations.

We found that despite receiving various forms of aid – such as a loan from the Federal Payroll Protection Program, grants from state and local sources, and emergency appeals – the local needs remain great. Of the thirty-seven organizations that responded to the survey, we found 94% had canceled public, in-person events, including fundraisers, and 70% suspended programs.

Eighty-six percent of the organizations now need to operate remotely and 67% needed to increase their use of on-line and digital platforms.

As a result of these changes, nearly one fifth of the not-for-profit organizations surveyed stated that they were in need of funds to cover their day-to-day operations. About 25% of the organizations need to upgrade their information technology – such as laptop computers, WiFi hotspots, and use of digital platforms like Zoom – not only for their staff but also for the families who benefit from their programs.

Edited Responses from Organizations:

Question: What is the most pressing need of your organization's constituents?

Top responses (cited by 5 or more organizations):
- 48.6% (18 of 37) - Loss revenue from program fees
- 51.4% (19 of 37) - Need to improve office infrastructure
- 54.1% (20 of 37) - A decrease in donations not associated with a fundraising event
- 58.1% (21 of 37) - A decrease in communications/outreach with the public
- 61% (23 of 37) - Loss of major gifts

Question: What is your organization's most immediate needs?

Top responses (cited by 5 or more organizations):
- 66.2% (24 of 37) - Funds for general operations
- 42.1% (16 of 37) - IT equipment needs for beneficiaries (children, families, clients)
- 35.1% (13 of 37) - On-Line Access (e.g. WiFi Connectivity, Hot Spots, Computer Equipment)
- 35.1% (13 of 37) - Food/Meal Programs
- 35.1% (13 of 37) - Mental Health Services

Question: What type of support has your organization received since the pandemic began?

Top responses (cited by 5 or more organizations):
- 42.1% (16 of 37) - IT / equipment needs for beneficiaries (children, families, clients)
- 35.1% (13 of 37) - On-Line Access (e.g. WiFi Connectivity, Hot Spots, Computer Equipment)
- 35.1% (13 of 37) - Food/Meal Programs
- 35.1% (13 of 37) - Mental Health Services
- 48.6% (18 of 37) - Decrease in communications/outreach with the public

Question: If given an unrestricted grant of up to $5,000, what would your organization do to help fulfill a need and/or help it move forward on your mission?

Top responses (cited by 5 or more organizations):
- 67.6% (25 of 37) - Increased use of on-line and digital tools and platforms
- 51.4% (19 of 37) - Need to improve office infrastructure
- 54.1% (20 of 37) - A decrease in donations not associated with a fundraising event
- 45.9% (17 of 37 organizations) - Mental Health Services
- 48.6% (18 of 37) - Loss revenue from program fees

Edited Responses from Organizations:

Question: How has the COVID 19 pandemic and the events of 2020 impacted your organization? What types of business disruptions have occurred?

Top responses (cited by 5 or more organizations):
- 29.7% (11 of 37) - Information technology (IT) equipment infrastructure to support staff and operations
- 24.3% (9 of 37) - IT / equipment needs for beneficiaries (children, families, clients)
- 24.3% (9 of 37) - Project protective equipment (PPE), cleaning, sanitizing supplies/services
- 18.9% (7 of 37) - Volunteer needs
- 16.2% (6 of 37) - Food and personal supplies for families

Question: What type of support has your organization received since the pandemic began?

Edited Responses from Organizations:

Question: Have any restrictions been placed on your ability to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Top responses (cited by 5 or more organizations):
-10,000 (25 of 37 organizations) - Funds for general operations
- 42.1% (16 of 37) - IT / equipment needs for beneficiaries (children, families, clients)
- 35.1% (13 of 37) - On-Line Access (e.g. WiFi Connectivity, Hot Spots, Computer Equipment)
- 35.1% (13 of 37) - Food/Meal Programs
- 35.1% (13 of 37) - Mental Health Services

Question: What is the most pressing need of your clients/constituents?

Top responses (cited by 5 or more organizations):
- 45.9% (17 of 37 organizations) - Mental Health Services
- 43.2% (16 of 37) - Education-related Needs (e.g. more access to tutors, creating Learning Pods)
- 37.8% (14 of 37) - Housing / Shelter Assistance
- 35.1% (13 of 37) - On-Line Access (e.g. WiFi Connectivity, Hot Spots, Computer Equipment)
- 35.1% (13 of 37) - Food/Meal Programs

Question: How has the COVID 19 pandemic and the events of 2020 impacted your organization? What types of business disruptions have occurred?

Top responses (cited by 5 or more organizations):
- 29.7% (11 of 37) - Information technology (IT) equipment infrastructure to support staff and operations
- 24.3% (9 of 37) - IT / equipment needs for beneficiaries (children, families, clients)
- 24.3% (9 of 37) - Project protective equipment (PPE), cleaning, sanitizing supplies/services
- 18.9% (7 of 37) - Volunteer needs
- 16.2% (6 of 37) - Food and personal supplies for families

Question: What type of support has your organization received since the pandemic began?

Edited Responses from Organizations:

Question: If given an unrestricted grant of up to $5,000, what would your organization do to help fulfill a need and/or help it move forward on your mission?

Top responses (cited by 5 or more organizations):
- 67.6% (25 of 37) - Increased use of on-line and digital tools and platforms
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Edited Responses from Organizations: