

# **Snapshot of Bow Valley Non-profits and Community Groups:**

## **A Status Report 2015**

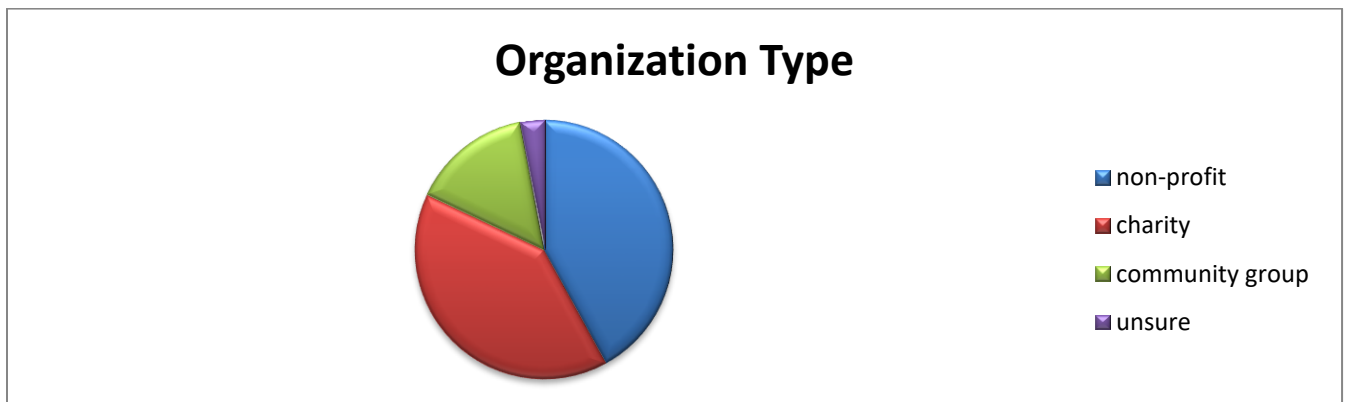
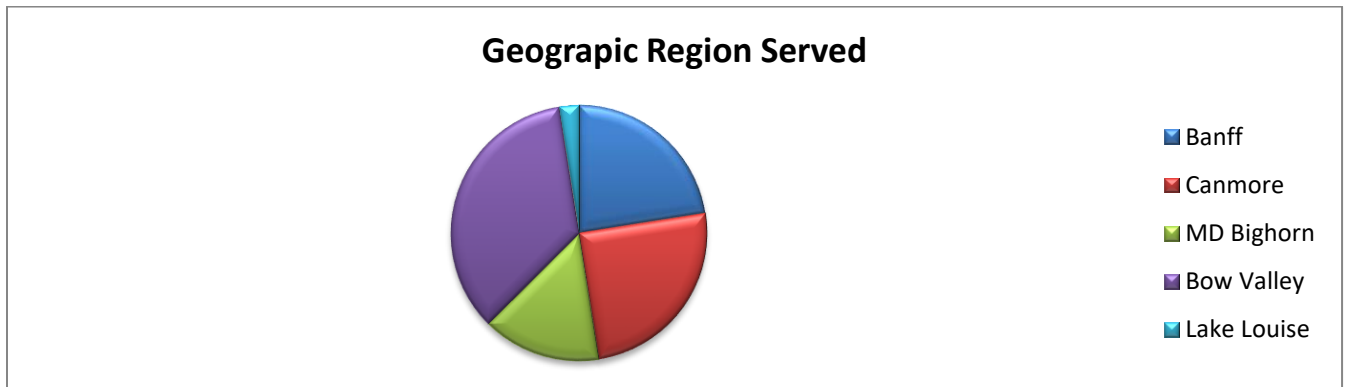
## Overview

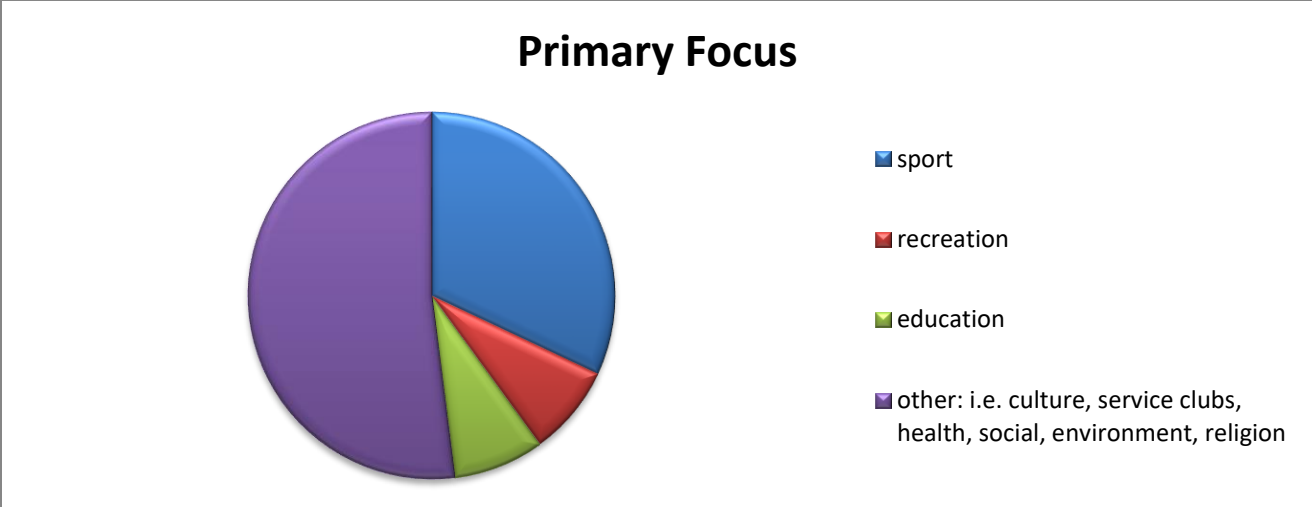
In October of 2015, Banff and Canmore-Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) invited 88 non-profit and community groups to complete an electronic survey. The intent of this survey was to increase our understanding of supports and resources that may be required as well as gaining a “snapshot in time” of the overall health of our non-profits and community groups in terms of current human, financial and operational resources. The importance of this information cannot be underestimated as it is the Bow Valley non-profits and community groups that provide essential supports, services and programs in our communities.

With a response rate of 45% or 40 completed surveys we believe the details gathered on the health and vitality of Bow Valley non-profit and community groups is valid and useful in understanding what is currently occurring and possible areas for support. The findings from the survey indicate a healthy non-profit environment in the Bow Valley with 79% of respondents indicating that the current condition of their organization was good or very good, 18% indicating fair and only 3% indicating poor.

## Respondents

The survey responses were well distributed across geographic region, primary focus, and type of organization. The data indicates a good cross-section of the number and type of non-profits and community groups active within the Bow Valley.





**Membership**

43% of respondents indicated that membership or participation in their organization increased, 37% stayed the same, and 20% decreased over the last year. Some of the key reasons identified for a decrease in participation levels were aging members, members leaving the Bow Valley and lack of marketing resources, while increased awareness was highlighted as the main reason for increased participation.

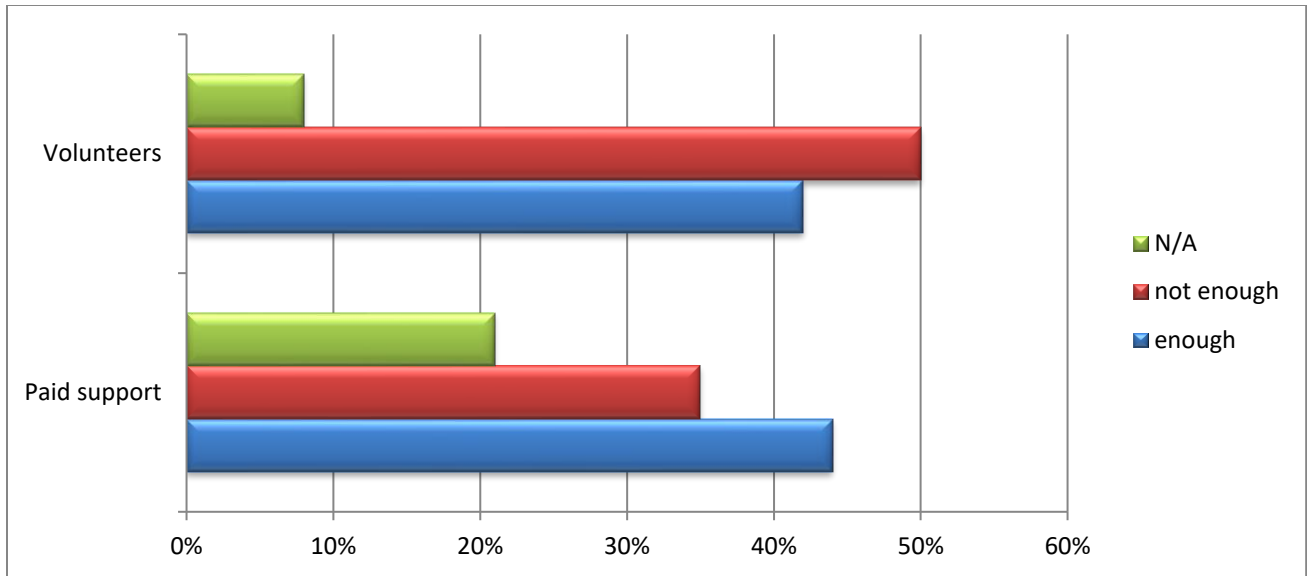
**Staff/Volunteers**

Of the 40 organizations that responded to the survey, 72% have paid staff while 28% rely solely on volunteers. Those organizations that have paid staff, whether full or part time, primarily function with 1-3 staff members. 30% of respondents indicated that they require contracted staff at certain times, the most frequently contracted service at 75% was financial support followed by communication services at 33%, less frequently required services included cleaning, maintenance, and coaching.

All respondents indicated that they required some volunteer support to get the work of their organization done. 40% of respondents indicated that 80-100% of the work in their organization was completed by volunteers, with another 30% indicating between 21-80% of the work was completed by volunteers.

A very small number of both staff and volunteers were identified as foreign born. 40% of groups reported 0% of their volunteers were foreign born and 65% of organizations reported 0% of paid staff were foreign born.

The results highlight an identified need for increased volunteer and staff support by numerous organizations. The greater number of volunteers required is indicative of the number of organizations that rely solely or heavily on volunteers.

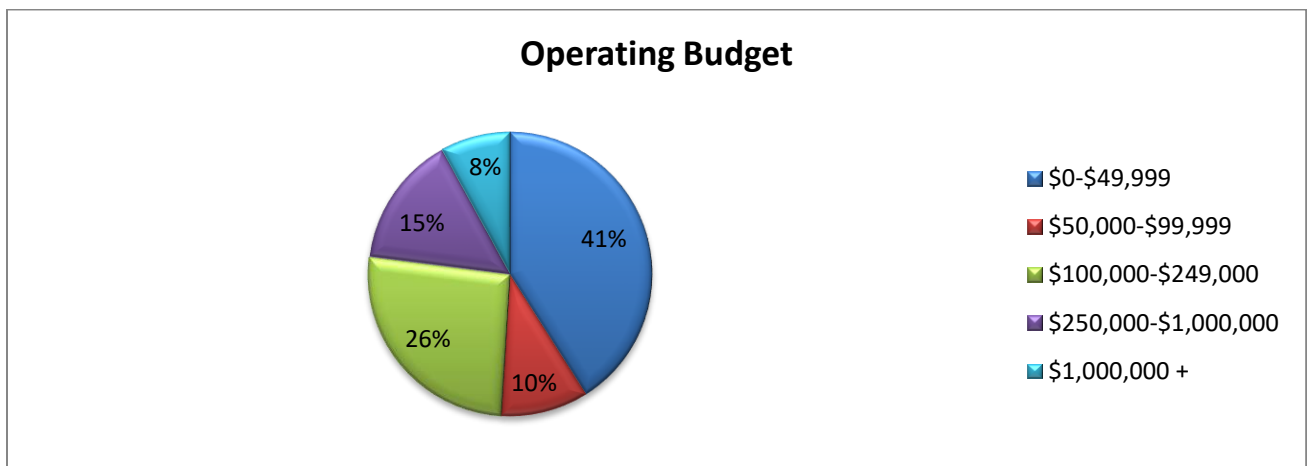


There were a multitude of reasons listed as to why groups lacked enough human resources, most frequently cited were: insufficient financial resources to hire or create a strong volunteer program, burnout, lack of time available and an administrative burden preventing staff and volunteers from focusing on the operations of the organization. Even groups who felt they had enough volunteers felt that with more there would be the opportunity to broaden events and activities.

**Finances**

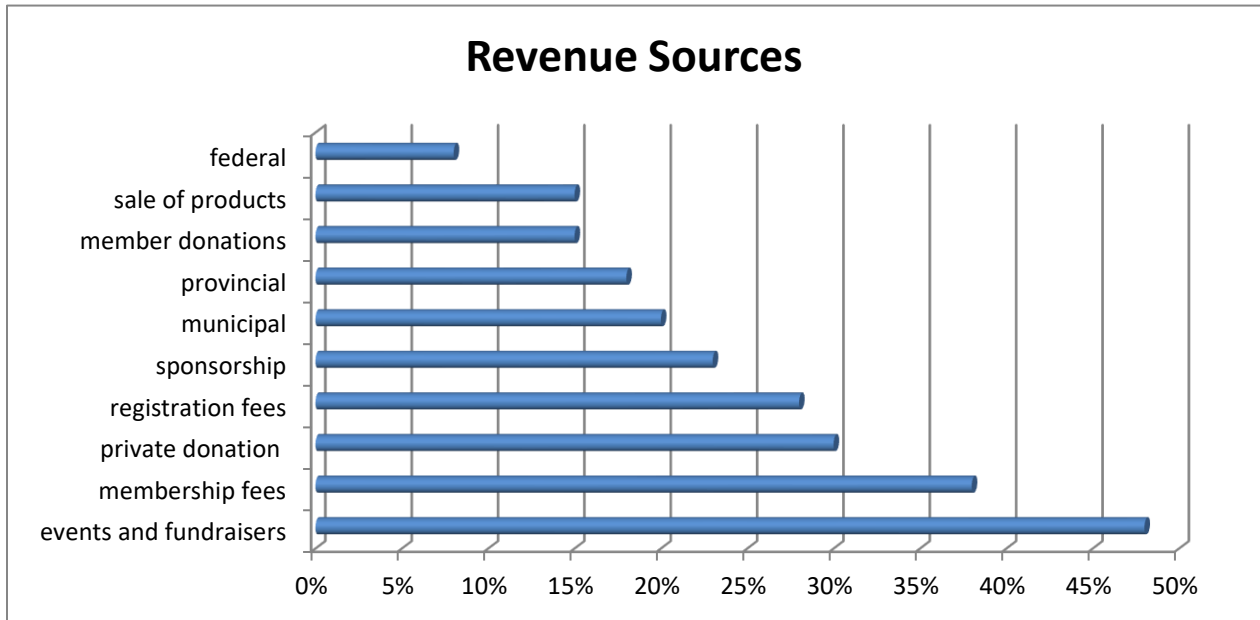
55% of respondents felt their organization was financially stable while another 35% felt they were somewhat stable. Those organizations that reported financial instability indicated that reliance on fundraising, donations and volatile government grants were contributing factors to their instability.

Total operating budgets for survey participants are outlined in the chart below.



The top three expenses identified by respondents were: staff and volunteer compensation at 72%, operations (including rent and equipment) at 50% and capital expenses at 22%. Other key expenses included insurance, fundraising expenses and communication costs.

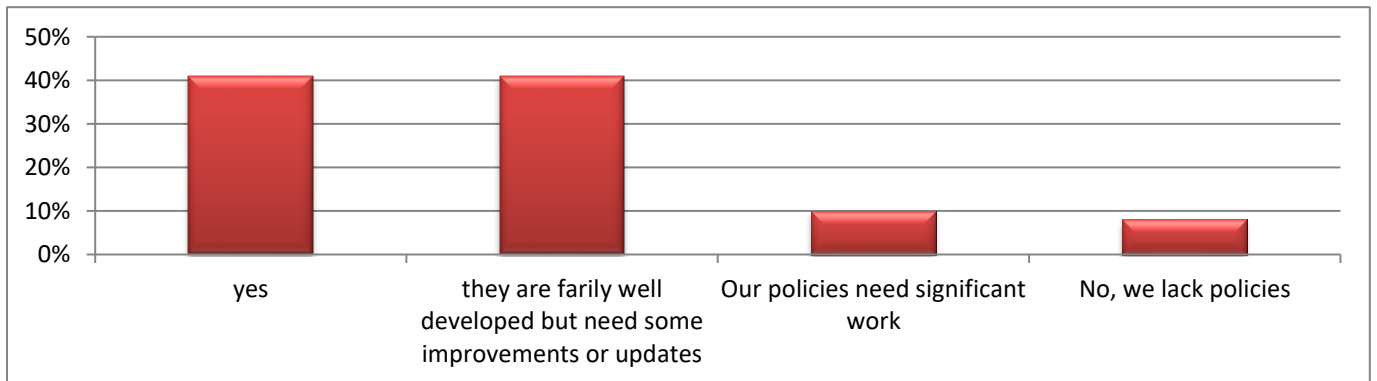
Organizations were also asked to share their top three revenue sources which are outlined in the table below.



When comparing respondents current funding to last year's funding, 90% reported that their funding had either increased or stayed the same. The same question was asked in anticipation of the coming year's funding with identical results, 90% reported they anticipated receiving increased or the same funding.

**Policies and Procedures**

Many organizations have well-developed or fairly well developed policies and procedures as indicated in the graph below.

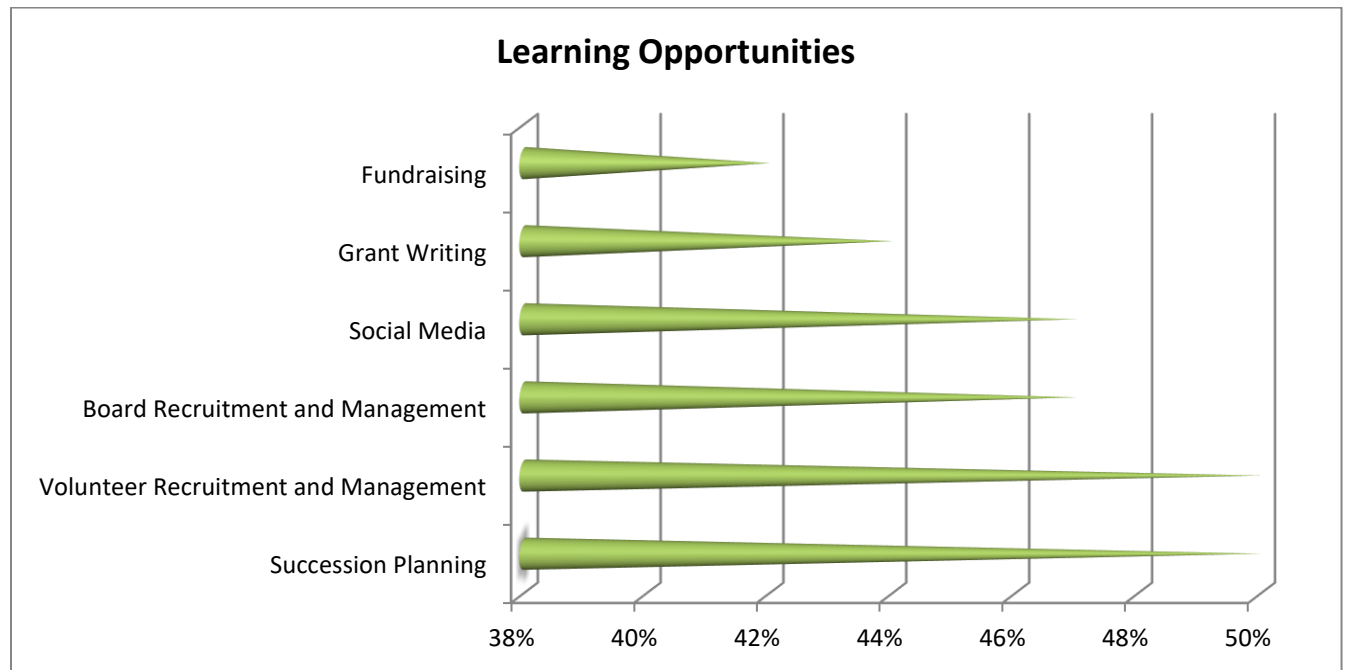


## Resources

70% of respondents felt they had the facilities necessary to do the work of their organization. Of those 70% only 63% felt that the facilities would be adequate for long term sustainability, 37% felt their facilities were not sustainable. Those that reported not having sustainable facilities indicated old buildings with maintenance issues, growth in demand for programs and rental cost increases as concerns for future facility sustainability. 28% indicated that they did not have the necessary facilities to do their work. For those groups storage, meeting space and office space were the areas of deficiency.

In terms of sufficient work tools (training resources, software, internet access, computers, equipment) 42% indicated that they had what they needed to be effective with 44% feeling that while their work tools were good, some improvement was desirable. Improvements were largely in the area of computer and software upgrades. Of the 13% that indicated that they did not have what they needed, computers/software, website support and filing/storage systems were the main shortfalls. The community, businesses, municipalities, provincial government, other non-profits and granting bodies were the main places that organizations look to when they are in need of support.

A menu of possible topics related to non-profit and community group development were provided in the survey to determine interest, the graph below highlights the top six areas.



Other areas that also held interest included: sponsorships, policy and procedure development, marketing and communications, special event management and resource/information sharing opportunities with other community groups and organizations.

68% of respondents would like to receive training on key topics via workshops, with 50% interested in accessing website resources. 39% would prefer accessing learning opportunities at a lunch and learn or through written guides or short briefing documents.

Organizations were asked if they had participated in a board development workshop, 42% had participated, while 58% had not participated. Numerous sources for board development were cited by those who had attended a session including municipal and provincial resources and via sports associations. Of those that had participated in board development 73% indicated it was helpful, 20% indicated somewhat helpful and 7% indicated that the workshop was not helpful.

The final portion of the survey was intended to ask organizations to dream big. Imagine a windfall of funds and what your organization would do with it. A significant number of responses to this question were related to the development or re-development of facilities or the hiring of staff.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the data collected and the themes identified through the survey, key recommendations include:

- Increase training workshops and website resources related to priority areas identified: grant writing, volunteer and board recruitment and management, succession planning, social media.
- Create online and “guide type” resources related to topics of interest.
- Investigate options for the sharing of contractors for financial services and other types of required services.
- Create opportunities and vehicles for nonprofits and community groups to connect for information sharing purposes.
- Ensure those non-profits and community groups who require “significant work” on their policies and procedures receive the necessary supports to identify and develop these.
- Given the large percentage of organizations dependent upon fundraising for their operations, identify key supports to this activity including sharing of fundraising ideas, access to upcoming grant information and other funding opportunities.
- Research further the specific types of space and equipment required by non-profits and community groups.

### **Need More Information?**

If you have any questions about this survey or the data provided please feel free to contact Nancy Lewis, Community Development Coordinator- Town of Banff- [nancy.lewis@banff.ca](mailto:nancy.lewis@banff.ca) or Tara Gilchrist, FCSS Supervisor-Town of Canmore- [tgilchrist@canmore.ca](mailto:tgilchrist@canmore.ca)