

SPWB 2013 Organizational Capacity Assessment

Prepared by The O'Halloran Group, Nov. 2013



What is Capacity?

There are two core elements of capacity: ability and power. Ability is having the skills, knowledge and experience to achieve a task. Power is having access to resources and assets needed to complete the task, including: money, time, infrastructure and social capital. **To have capacity is to have both the ability and power to achieve a task.**

At the organizational level, **capacity refers to the overall strength of the organization to work towards its mission.** The current assessment focused on three domains: Leaders & Governance; Management & Operations; Adaptation & Innovation.

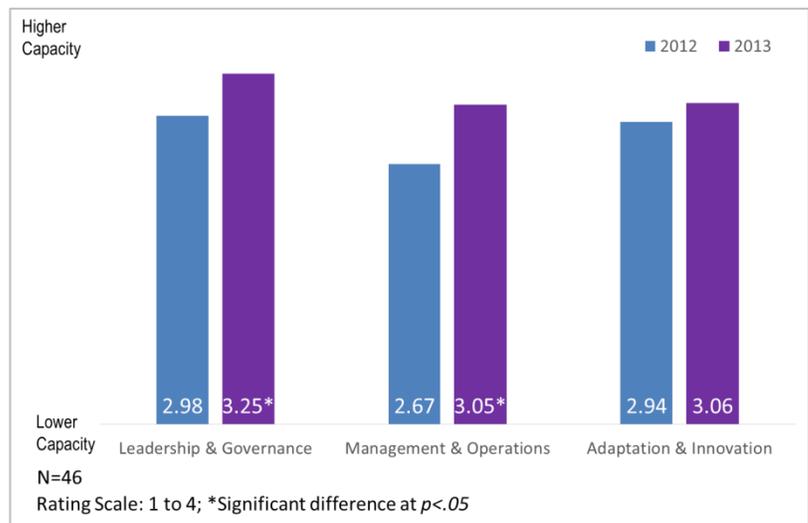
Why an Organizational Capacity Assessment for the Social Profit Sector?

The organizational capacity assessment was designed to gain a greater understanding of capacity within the social profit sector in Wood Buffalo. The learnings from the assessment are being used to support the design of initiatives to build capacity within the sector.

The 2013 survey builds on the results from the 2012 assessment, demonstrating where organizations are moving forward and where there still needs to be greater attention. Overall, 71 social profit organizations participated in this year's capacity assessment survey.

What Did We Learn?

- There was an increase in reported capacity for the 46 organizations that completed the survey in 2012 and 2013. These organizations reported significantly higher capacity in Leadership & Governance and in Management & Operations. There was no significant change in Adaptation & Innovation.
- The positive change in capacity is related to placing higher priority on building organizational capacity, the use of evaluation, as well as taking advantage of workshops and learning opportunities, including those offered by SPWB.
- Leadership stability was associated with higher capacity.
- Staff turnover was associated with lower capacity. Organizations that reported greater challenges with staff turnover reported significantly lower capacity in each of the three domains.



What are the Strengths and Challenges Overall?

Leadership & Governance Average rating 3.27/4; A Priority

Strengths:

- The organization has clear and actionable goals (3.45)
- Senior leadership has been able to show ability for achieving goals (3.48)

Challenges:

- Board provides strong direction and holds itself & ED accountable (3.05)
- Organization is connected to key decision and policy-makers (3.05)

Management & Operations Average rating 3.09/4; B Priority

Strengths:

- Staff bring a diverse range of complementary skills, providing a resource for effective and responses services (3.33)
- Clear and functional processes are in place to guide smooth and effective operations (3.21)

Challenges:

- Volunteer recruitment, training and coordination meet organizational needs. (2.66)
- The organization has programs and incentives for recruiting and retaining talented and experienced staff (2.60)

Adaptation & Innovation Average rating 3.09/4; B Priority

Strengths:

- Able to adapt to changes driven by the communities it serves (3.28)
- Actively participates in collaborations designed to enhance services and meet community needs (3.25)

Challenges:

- Evaluation and monitoring are used strategically to support organizational learning, planning and development (2.91)
- Information about the communities served is regularly collected and used to inform development & direction (2.74)

References

Lipson, B. & Hunt, M. (2008). Capacity Building Framework: A values-based programming guide. Produced for International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC).

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