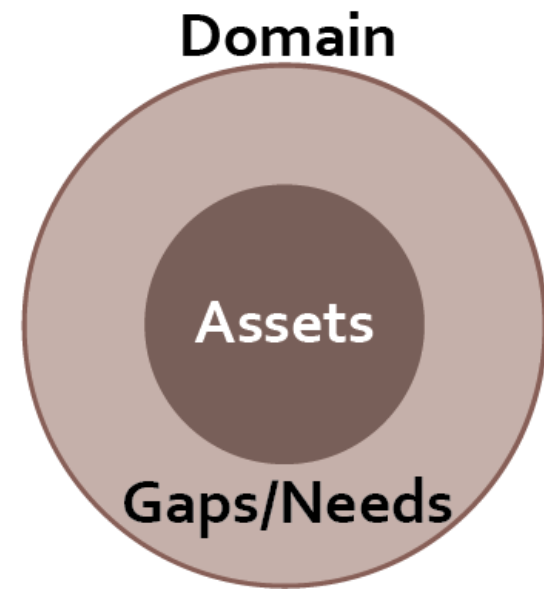


Asset Map Guide

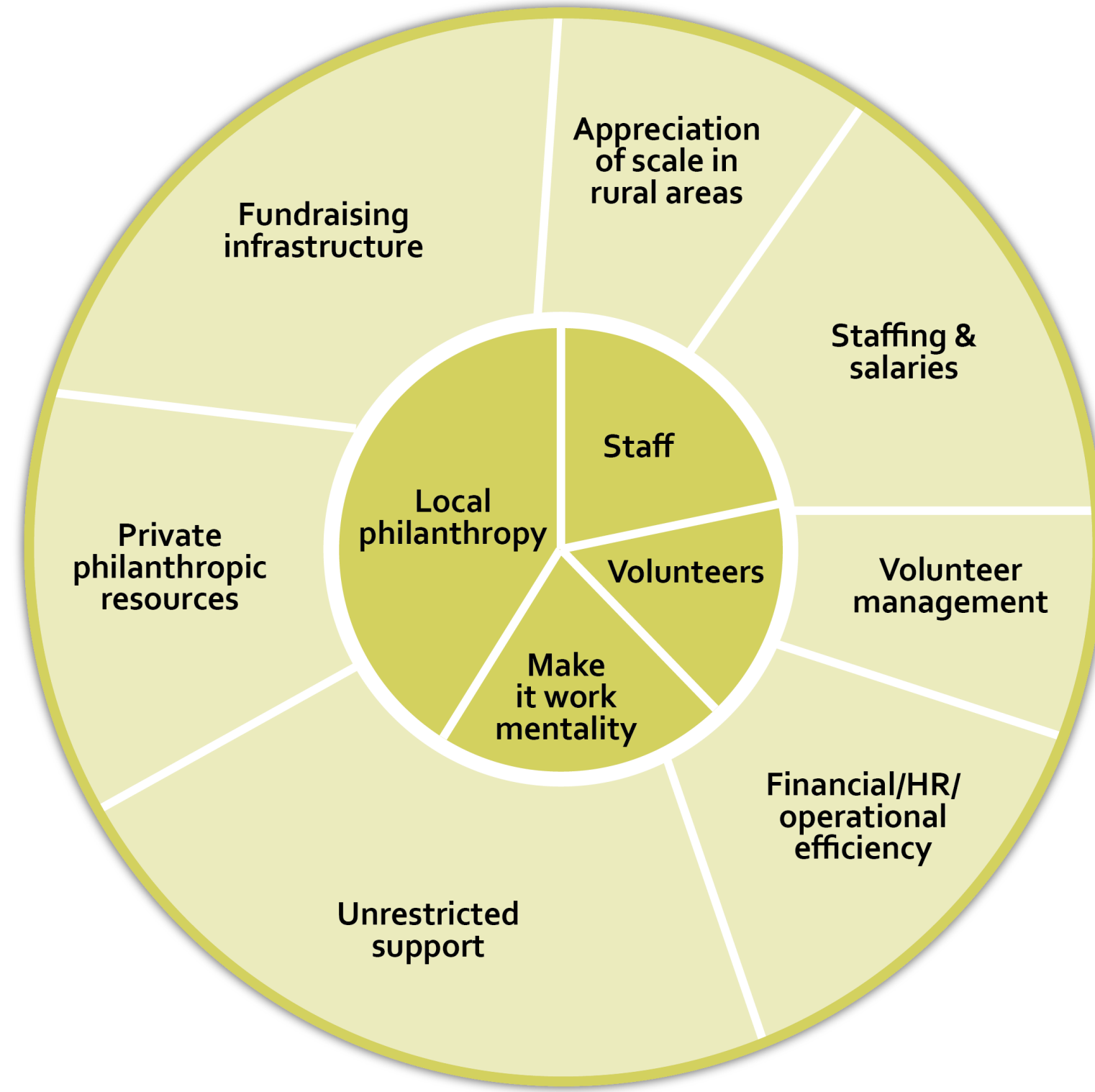
- The asset map on the following page maps the assets and gaps/needs for each of the six capacity building domains identified in the capacity building framework.
- For each domain, assets are on the inside of the circle; gaps/needs on the outside.
- The relative size of the gap/need space for each domain is reflective of the relative level of need expressed in the organizational survey.
- The relative size of individual assets and gap/needs captured on the map are also roughly reflective of their level of importance as expressed by study participants.
- If assets and gap/needs are related, every attempt has been made to place them next to each other on the map.
- The assets and gaps/needs described in the map represent the general responses over multiple counties; the degree to which each asset and gap/need is applicable in each county varies somewhat. The written report attempts to capture some of this variability.
- The map is interactive. Click on the individual assets and gaps/needs for a more detailed description of each.
- While this map is structured around the six domains, we have noted (in the individual asset and gap pages) where there were notable differences between urban and rural or small and large organizations' responses.

CNY ASSET AND GAPS/NEEDS MAP

Legend:



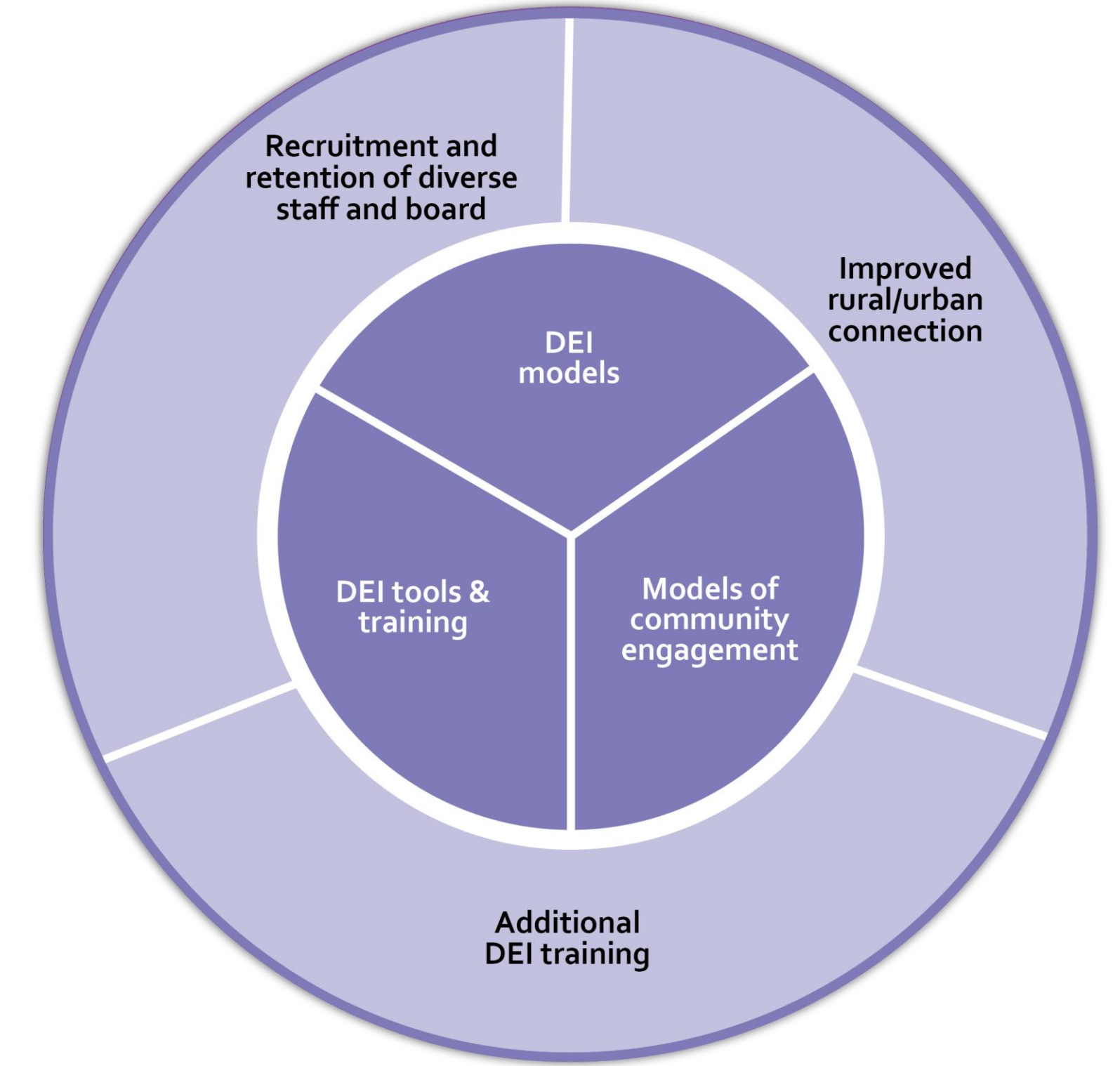
Resources



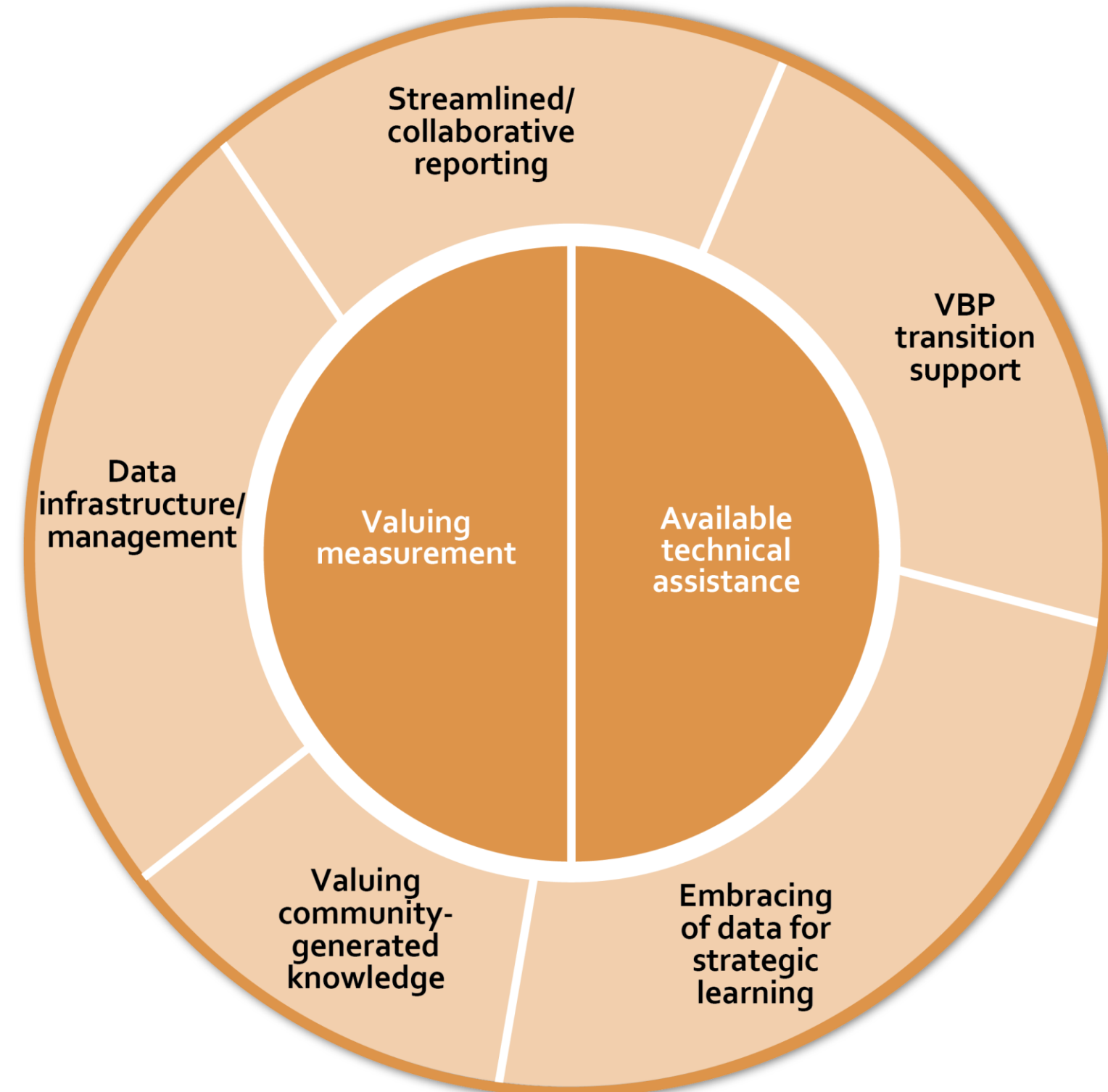
Leadership



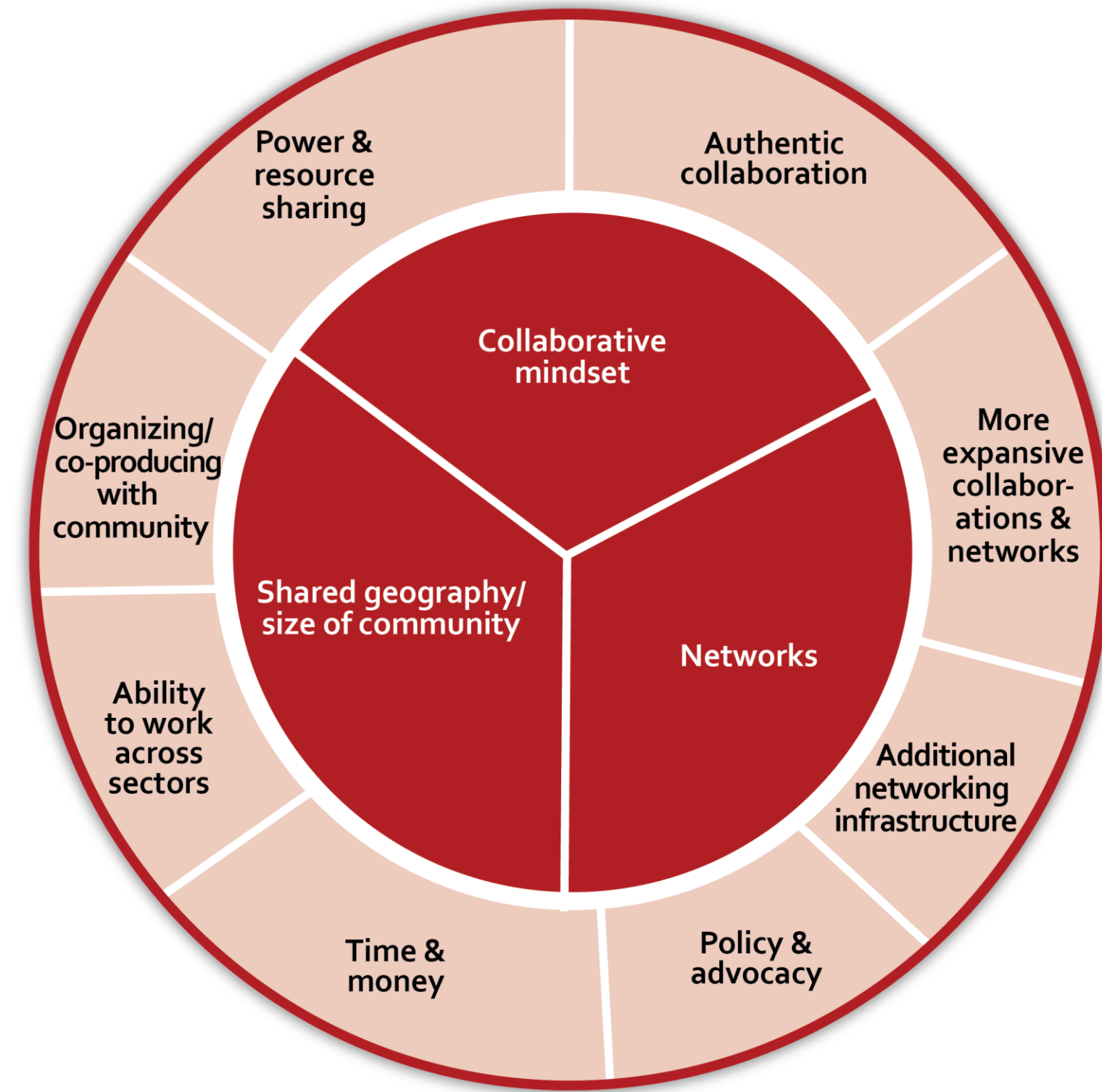
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)



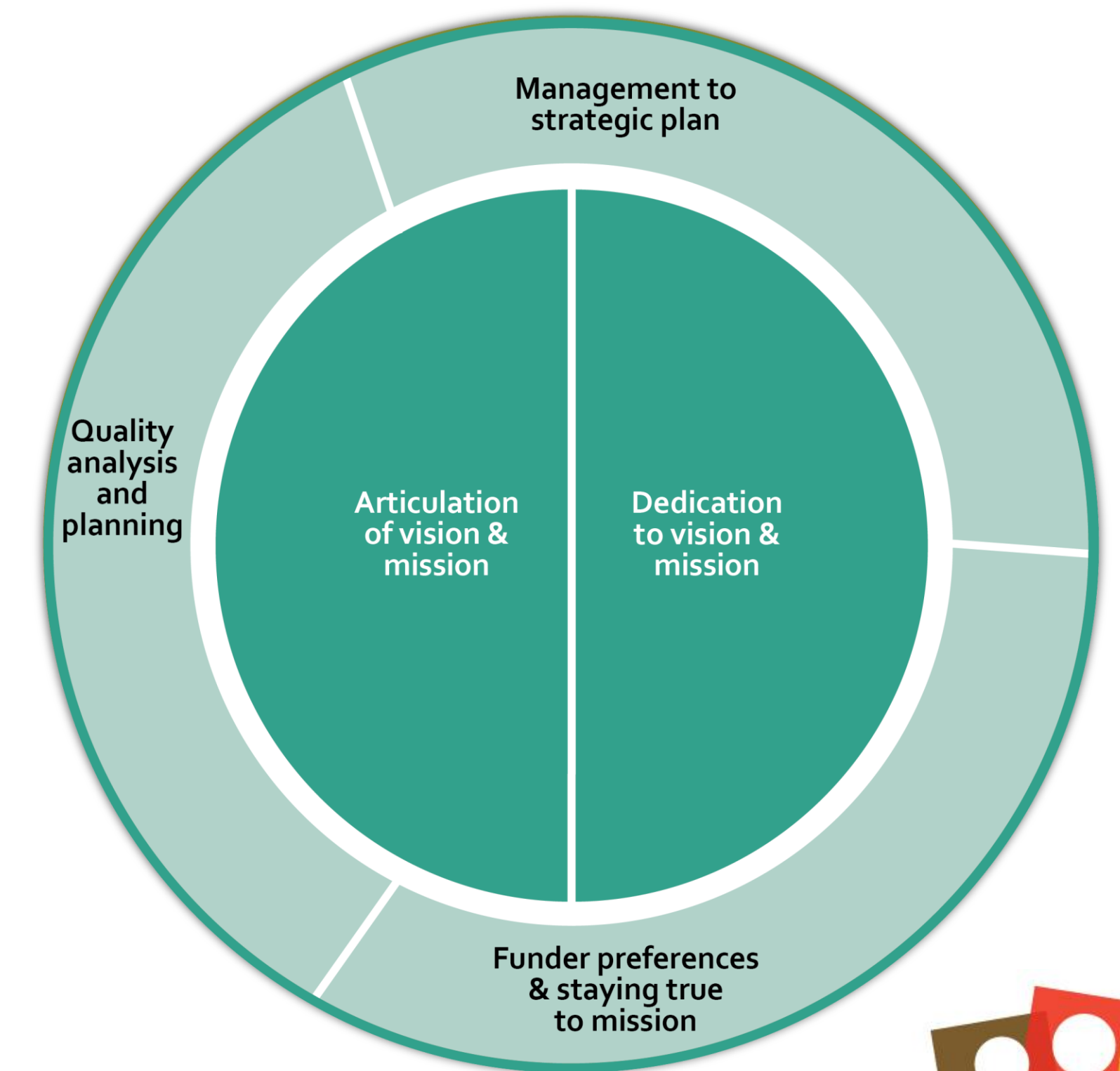
Research, Evaluation & Strategic Learning



Alignment and Collaboration

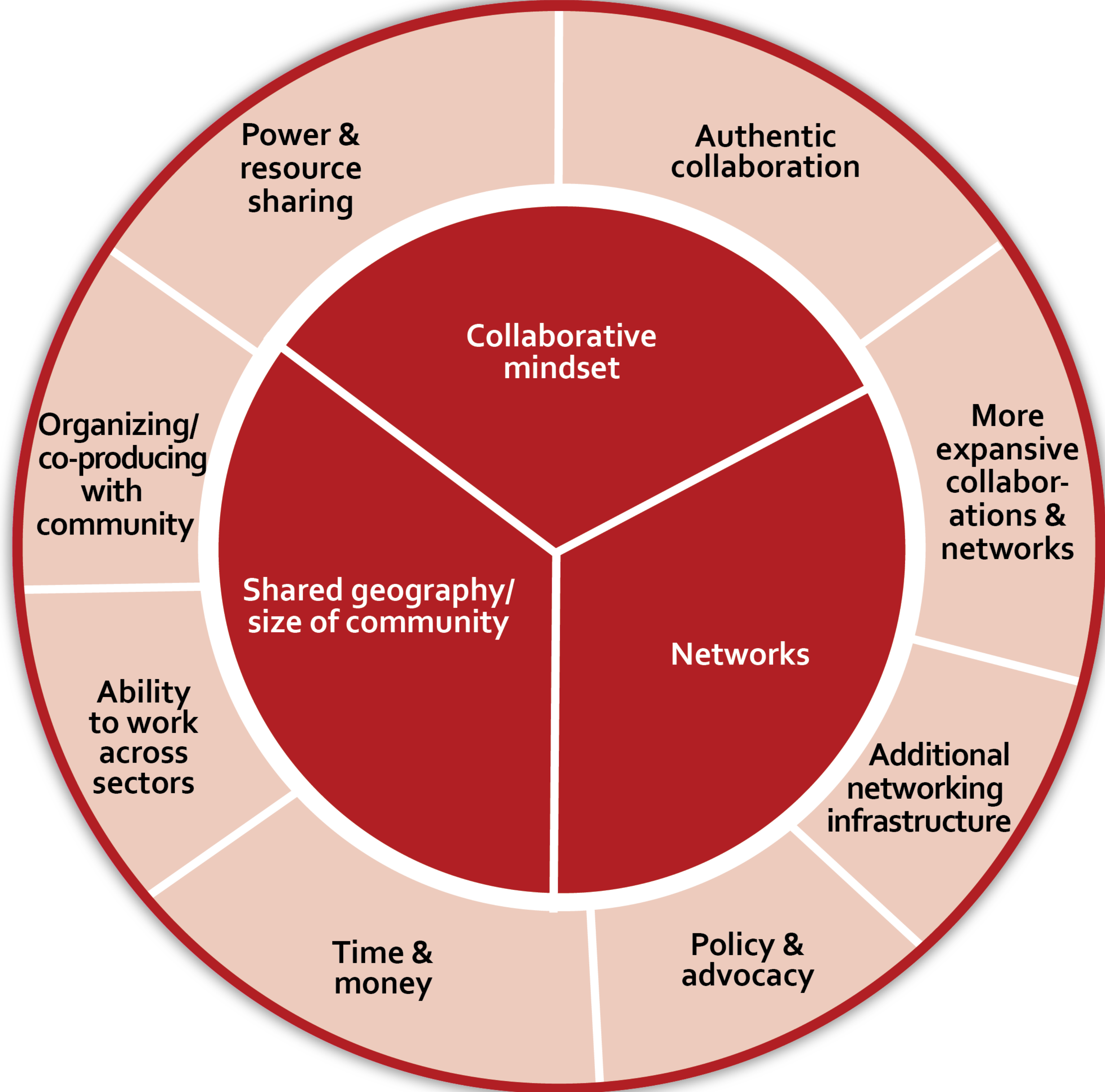


Vision and Mission



Alignment and Collaboration

Back to:
Full Map



Back to:
A&C

Asset: Networks

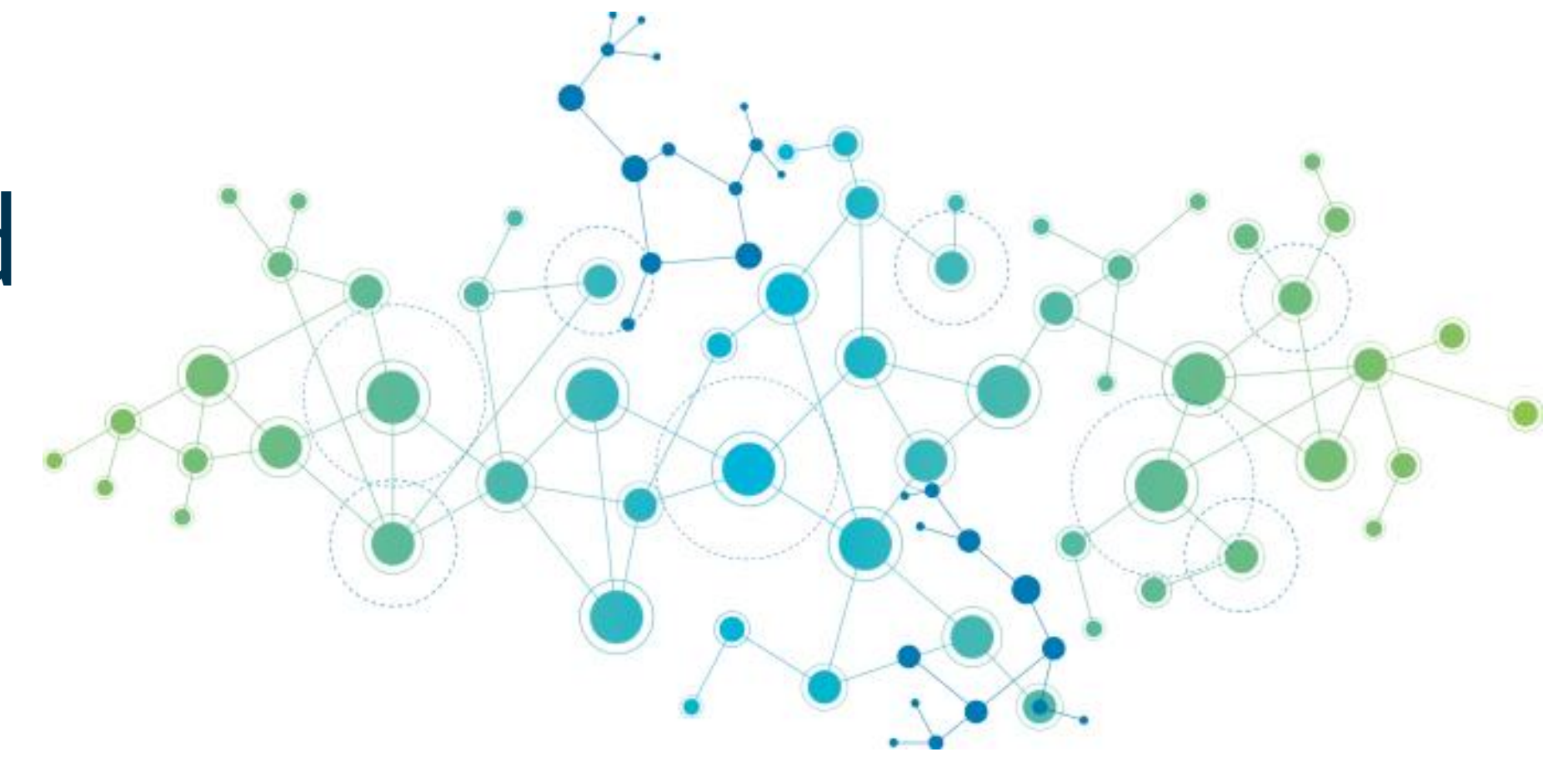
Nonprofits use networks, collaboratives, and committees of all kinds (both informal and formal) to get to know other nonprofits, to help stay abreast of critical industry issues, and to keep apprised of advocacy and funding opportunities.

Informal networks tend to be built on personal relationships or peer groups and connections and are critical to under-resourced communities in particular.

Formal networks vary in structure and size; examples include local councils and coalitions, and discipline-specific state and national associations.

"There are lots of networks, coalitions and groups to find collaboration opportunities."

"If we didn't have networks and alliances and each other we wouldn't get anything done."



Related Gap/Need

- Add'l networking infrastructure
- More expansive collaborations

Asset: Shared geography and size of community

Organizational leaders across the Central New York geography feel that the size of their communities makes it easier to collaborate.

"We have a good number of nonprofits, but we are not so huge that we don't know each other."

"We are big enough to have resources, but small enough that we can navigate relationships with many organizations."

"Auburn is small enough that we are serving the same people and have good working relationships with other organizations. It is fortunate that we have always worked together. Where we are geographically...it just happens."

"You run into the same people in the same places all the time. The community is small and intimate. That can be used to our advantage."



Related Gap/Need

- More expansive collaborations
- Ability to work across sectors
- Power & resource sharing

Asset: Collaborative mindset

Leaders highlighted that organizations understand the need to collaborate and feel that they do it fairly well. In the organizational survey, respondents ranked “collaborating with other organizations” and “sharing and learning from peers” as top areas of strength.

“Leaders come together very readily to talk about issues and what we can do, who should be handling it, and how we can help.”

“A lot of us find it easy to collaborate when you put aside competitiveness. Victory is augmenting and supporting other organizations.”

“We like and want to collaborate.”

“We respect each others’ expertise.”



Related Gap/Need

- Authentic collaboration
- Power & resource sharing
- More expansive collaborations

Back to:
A&C

Gap/Need: Time and money

Organizations often mentioned need for time and financial resources to make alignment and collaboration work well. Time is needed to establish relationships and funding, whether in the form of general operating funds or project specific funds needed to support the administrative costs associated with collaboration.

"Sometimes the mission/vision alignment is easy, but aligning the resources isn't – it often ends up being more costly. You can facilitate deep level relationships, but it's the real infrastructure creation that takes money. And, when you're putting out fires all day, it's hard to dedicate time to that real infrastructure creation."

"We are trying to be involved and know what others are doing. It doesn't work as well as I'd like – no one has time. Collaboration with our current program is fine, but trying to build something new requires more capacity."

"It is critical for us to collaborate given the nature of what we do, but good collaboration requires intentionality, resources and time – that's not always easy."

"People come and go in terms of leadership. New relationships have to be developed. The time and resources to do this are lacking."



Back to:
A&C

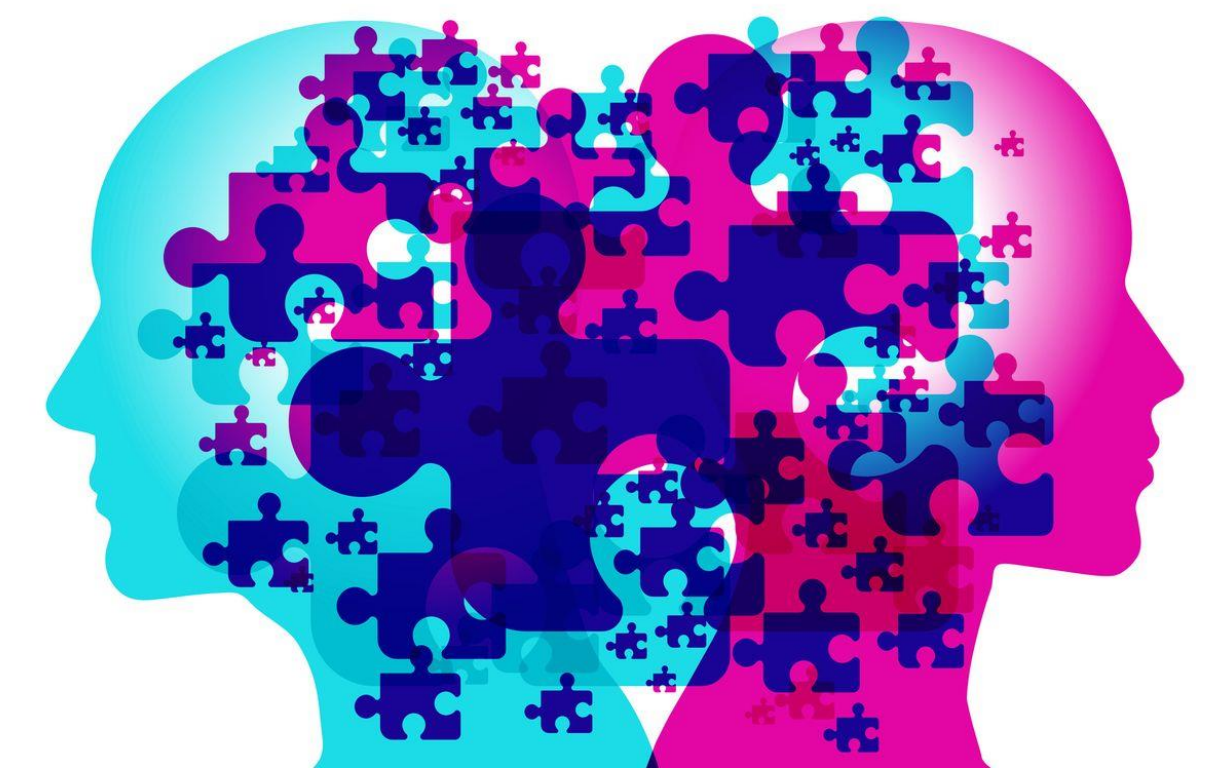
Gap/Need: Authentic collaboration

While organizations see the value of collaboration and alignment, and many are already engaged in collaborative efforts, they struggle with territoriality and with collaborative funding requirements that can feel like “forced collaboration” when there is insufficient trust among the partners.

“Organizations can be territorial. Coming together is not easy. We started partnership in another location but it didn’t work out because it turned out to be a one-sided relationship.”

“Sometimes we have to be forced to come to these meetings.”

“One challenge is the really quick turn-around time for collaborative grants. We could be going for a big five-year grant that requires collaboration and we have a month to complete the proposal. That’s not really collaboration, that’s coordination. We need to have those relationships before the opportunity. Funders could foster that relationship building through more face to face planning time.”



Related Asset

- Collaborative mindset

Gap/Need: Power & resource sharing

Nonprofits identified the need to be mindful of how power and resources are shared in collaborations and partnerships, stating that often the larger, more well-known, mainstream organizations often control the work and that territorialism can be an issue.

"We don't automatically say yes when someone calls with a collaboration opportunity, even if we want the visibility. We have to discuss how we will work together. We are equal – it's a Venn Diagram – we both have objectives."

"Size does matter in collaborations – it's harder for large organizations to see the value of smaller organizations."

"Small, new activist organizations are seen as disruptive."

"The competitive funding climate can make collaboration difficult."



Related Asset

- Networks

Related Gap/Need

- Authentic collaboration
- More expansive collaborations

Back to:
A&C

Gap/Need: More expansive collaborations and networks

While organizations feel collaboration is one of their strengths, some leaders felt that there is room to be more expansive and inclusive in finding and working with potential networks and partners.

"The library is always willing to partner, but is not seen as a potential partner organization. We are invisible. How do I get to that larger community of nonprofits?"

"People from grass-roots organizations don't often have opportunities to be heard or to partner."

"There are too many siloed coalitions."

"Get the churches involved. Ministers are trying to bring people together and create spaces for people to build relationships and work together. Why not tap into that?"

Related Assets

- Networks
- Shared geography
- Power & resource sharing



Back to:
A&C

Gap/Need: Additional networking infrastructure

Some nonprofit leaders highlighted the need for more infrastructure to help foster deeper relationships and collaborations.

“There used to be a nonprofit services council in the past. That would have the potential for fostering partnerships.” (Auburn/Cayuga County)

“We need a local nonprofit council. We should get together more frequently. We are in need of more networking...even informal networking opportunities. More gets done in those sometimes than in formal meetings.” (Cortland County)

“Communications support across sectors, organizations and funders is needed.” (Syracuse)



Related Asset

- Networks

Related Gap/Need

- More expansive collaborations

Back to:
A&C

Gap/Need: Ability to work across sectors



While seen as important and strategic, non-profit organizations identified the challenges in working with other sectors:

"Our various systems make it hard to collaborate, even if individuals are willing."

"We struggle with the school district. The academic schedule is so tight, so you can't get any extra services in".

"The hospital and the college are really disinterested and uninvolved. They don't see what we as a community have to do with what they do."

"Collaborating with government and private industry is more difficult than partnering within the nonprofit sector."

Related Gap/Need

- Authentic collaboration

Back to:
A&C

Gap/Need: Organizing and co-producing with community

Nonprofit leaders highlighted that levels of community engagement vary and indicated that few organizations are authentically co-producing with their local communities and clients. For more aligned and collaborative work, deeper relationships need to be built.

"We are relatively new to community engagement. We do focus groups, host dinners with communities, have resident advisory committees. But it's hard to fund the community engagement component."

"Could do better with working with local community groups. We had a project get killed because we did not engage fully. We hadn't done our homework and we paid the price. Lesson learned."

"Let people that understand and are closer to the people being affected be a part of that work and give them capacity to do it."



Related Asset

- Models of community engagement (DEI)

Back to:
A&C

Gap/Need: Policy & advocacy

While organizations tend to rely on professional networks for policy and advocacy, several leaders talked about the need for additional advocacy for the local sector at the state level.

"We are weak on advocacy. You have to be a big organization to get noticed."

"Downstate folks have advocacy particularly on the legislative side."

"You always hear that people in the Hudson Valley are getting funded, but the ones getting funded are the ones that are connected."

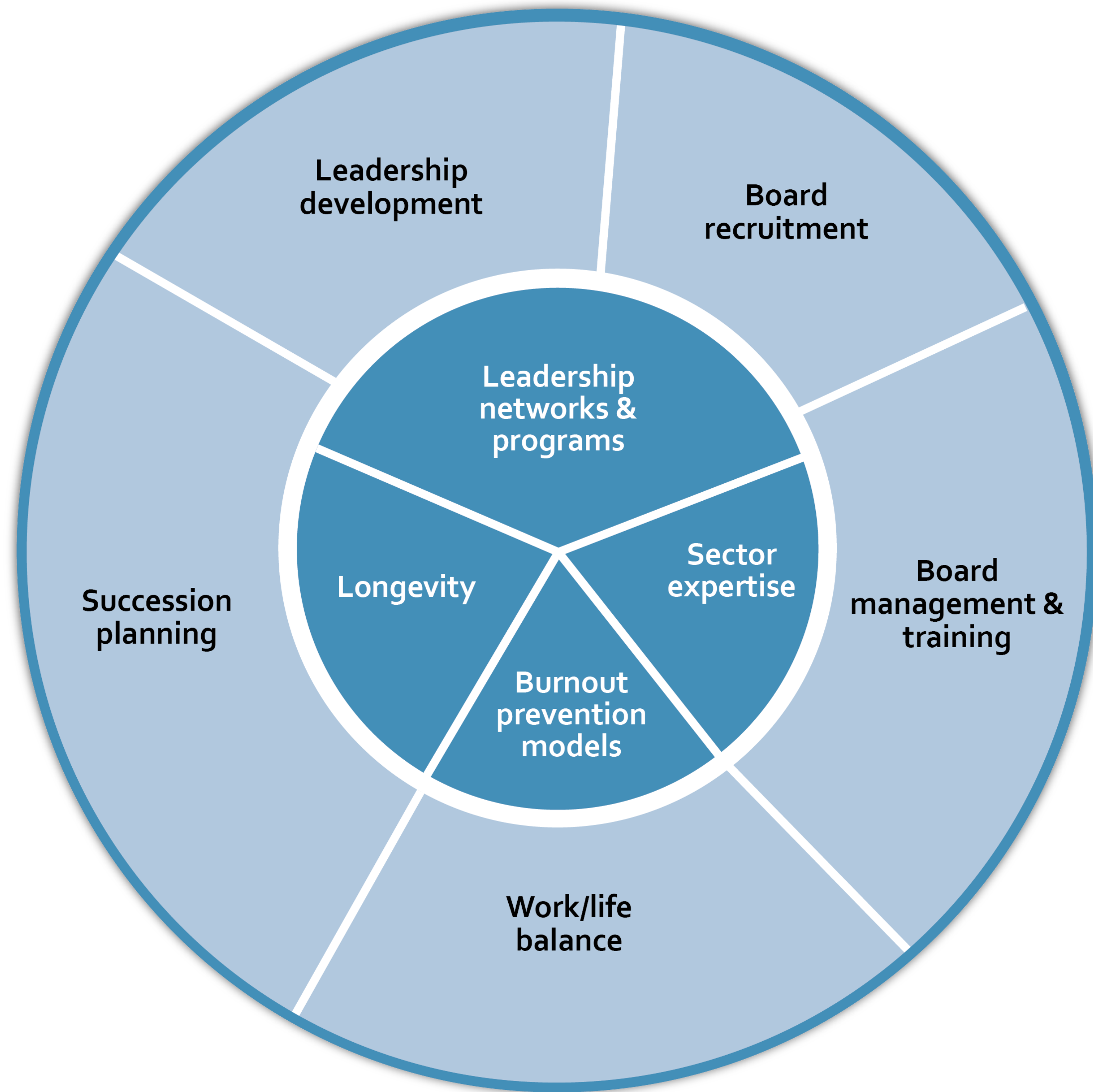
"Nonprofits try to advocate for ourselves. We have such a heavy compliance load from government funders and it keeps increasing. There is zero room for error. It's an extremely hard space to be in. Foundations could advocate for us."



Related Gap/Need

- Unrestricted support (RES)

Leadership



Back to:
Full Map

Asset: Sector expertise

On the whole, the nonprofit sector is comprised of leaders with deep expertise in their fields and in running nonprofit organizations.



"We have highly experienced leaders that are experts in project and organizational management, finances, fundraising, etc."

"There is a bit of a view among external people that nonprofit leaders are all do-gooders. Actually, the people here are excellent managers. Our nonprofits are run by professionals. We don't acknowledge that enough."

"We have a very, very smart group of nonprofit leaders."



Related Gap/Need

- Succession planning
- Leadership development

Asset: Longevity



Nonprofit leaders noted that CNY is home to many committed professionals who have worked in CNY for a long period of time, allowing for relationships to bloom and trust to be built.

"Most of us have been doing this for so long – we can reach out when we need to and know who to reach out to."

"We have long-standing relationships with each other and with decision-makers. When you are around long enough, you know the mayor and other decision-makers by their first names and how to get to them."

Related Gap/Need

- Succession planning
- Leadership development
- More expansive collaboratives (A&C)



Asset: Leadership networks/programs

Nonprofit leaders identified the value of leadership program networks, both formal and informal, in making connections, sharing lessons, and preparing new leaders.

"A number of local foundations offer or support leadership programs for emerging and mid-level managers."

"We have some good training programs here that have helped people understand how to run a nonprofit."



Related Gap/Need

- Leadership development

Asset: Burnout prevention models

CNY is home to a few model programs designed to promote work/life balance and prevent burnout that could offer lessons for others dealing with these issues.

"We have a wellness committee. There are strict rules about checking emails and working from home that are modeled and reinforced. We have two staff retreat days a year. The work is still stressful, but there isn't a lot of turnover."

"As a leader, I have my own self-care practices, like not working from home, that I deliberately model."



Related Gap/Need

- Work/life balance

Gap/Need: Succession planning

Nonprofit leaders noted that many organizations are aware of impending turnover at the leadership level and are concerned about succession planning and the talent pipeline.

"I have concerns about leadership for mission-driven agencies. A lot of CEOs will be retiring and I'm not sure that organizations are doing what they need to do for succession planning. When I look at our organization's leadership team, we are all within 10 years of each other...a lot of human brain power that will leave in a relatively short time-span."

"We've seen some organizations start to do some succession planning. In a small county like ours, there aren't a lot of middle-management positions, so it's hard to get those executive skills on the way up."

"There are two huge organizations that have original executive directors that will be retiring soon and it is not clear who would take their place. The acquisition of talent is challenging. If we have to recruit from private sector, we won't be able to pay a competitive wage. There are five colleges in this area, but graduates are not staying."

Rural distinction

Rural organizations highlighted that they have particular challenges with their leadership pipeline.

Related Asset

- Longevity
- Leadership programs



Back to:
Leadership

Gap/Need: Leadership development



Organizations take advantage of local leadership development programs when they have the time and funds, but identified a need for more strategic and systemic leadership development efforts within their organizations.

"I feel a need to touch up on some of my skills like project management or fund development, but as a small organization I often don't have the time. Even finding the time to look up to see where you are at and what your needs are is difficult."

"We used to do a lot more leadership training, but we are so busy training for the value based payment changes and other industry changes we have less time for leadership training."

"It is difficult to find development opportunities for seasoned executives, which affects our ability to lead and find new ways of thinking. We need our batteries recharged too."

"Figuring out how to sustain a coordinated and sustained leadership program is overwhelming. Some government grants will support training on how to implement a specific program but will not allow us to use funds on general leadership training and how to move up. The market for unrestricted funds is tough. We need support for helping people to grow professionally."

Related Asset

- Sector expertise
- Longevity
- Leadership programs

Gap/Need: Work/life balance

Nonprofit leaders identified the danger of burnout among executive and front line staff. Some organizations offer non-monetary supports or implement policies to help enforce self-care, but leaders acknowledged the difficulty in managing self-care and work/life balance, especially when it came to themselves.

"We are passionate, but at risk for overwork and burnout."

"Overwork in the nonprofit sector is normalized to some extent. We are conditioned to do more with less. We don't have the money or manpower, and the hours can be crazy. The work can be heavier, too. The mission is with you all the time."



Related Asset

- Burnout prevention models

Gap/Need: Board recruitment

Recruiting board members from diverse backgrounds and with needed skill sets is a significant challenge for many organizations, particularly small and rural organizations.

"We have term limits, which works, but we still have a hard time recruiting diverse members. As a self-perpetuating board, they recruit who they know. You can lead them to other potential board members but at the end of the day, they select the members."

"We are focused on diversifying our board, but it is not working as well as we'd like. Our board tends to be white women of a certain age given our mission. We are seeking younger people, people of color, and refugees. Often the issue is time--people are in school, at work, or involved in their communities. We need to look at our accessibility."

"We struggle to find board members that want to fundraise or market."

"Board recruitment in rural areas is a challenge. It's a small pool to begin with and some don't show up. Meetings in the evening and the back roads in winter make it hard to get here. We did add call-in capability which has helped in getting a quorum, but it is not same as getting in the room together."

Rural/organizational distinction

Board recruitment challenges were highlighted more often by smaller and rural organizations.

Related Gap/Need

- Board management/training
- Recruitment/retention of diverse staff & board (DEI)



Gap/Need: Board management & training

Many leaders held up board training and management as a continued need and a willingness for board members to attend training as a challenge.

"Boards can change so fast with addition of one or two people. There is a constant need for new board members, and even seasoned ones, to understand what their role is."

"You constantly have to educate the board on their role vs. the executive director's role. Currently, the board feels a lot of trust in me, but sometimes that can convert to complacency."

"Getting my board to show up for a training is a challenge, as are the resources to provide the training. You always have a few on the board that do everything, and some that are just there."

Related Asset

- Sector expertise

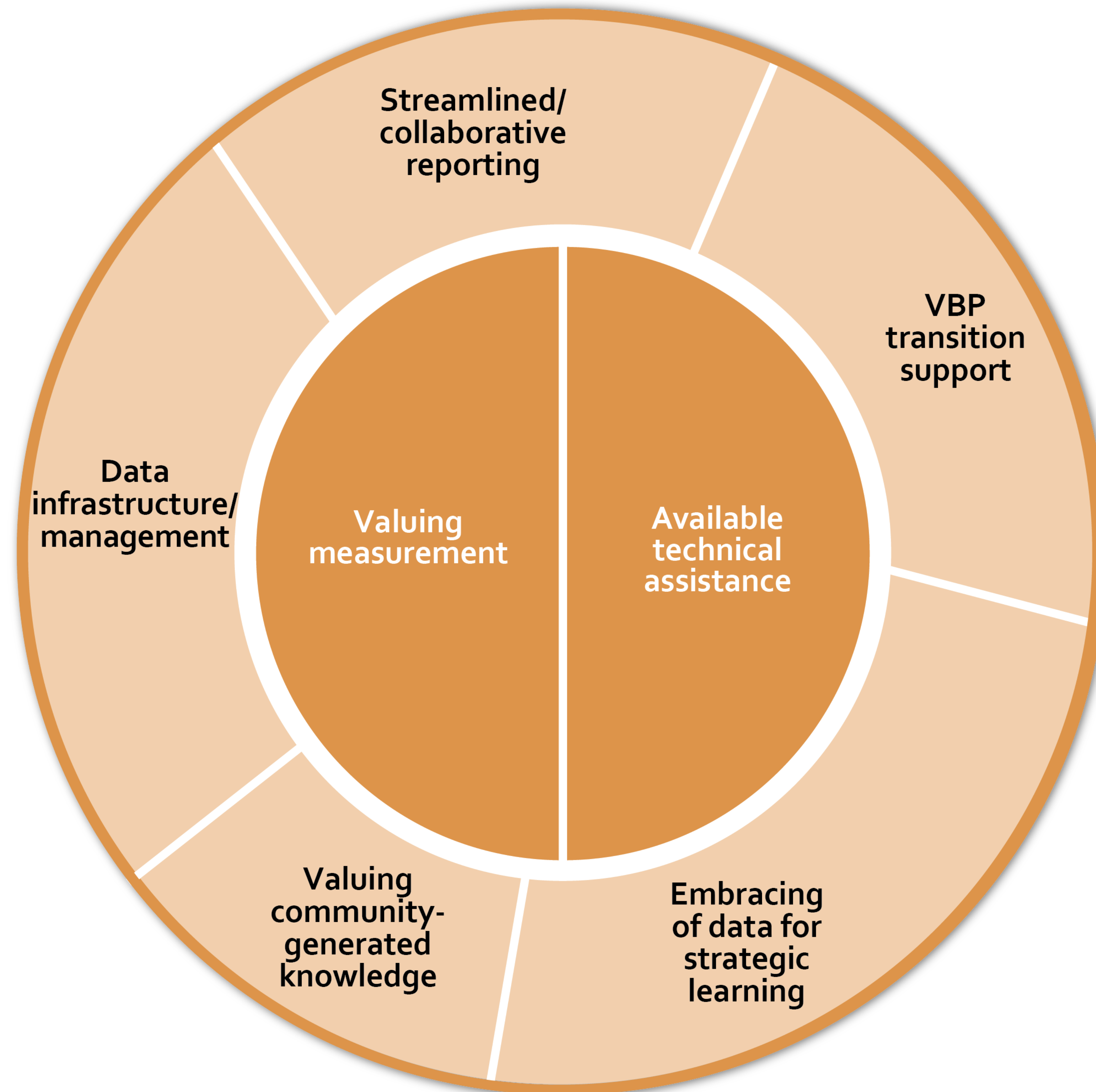
Related Gap/Need

- Board recruitment



Research, Evaluation & Strategic Learning

Back to:
Full Map



Back to:
R/E/SL

Asset: Valuing measurement



Organizations understand the value in collecting data to help make their case and inform funder priorities.

"People get the idea of outcomes vs outputs and how outcomes lift the community. It's more than just numbers served."



Related Gap/Need

- Embracing data for strategic learning
- Data infrastructure/management
- Streamlined/collaborative reporting

Asset: Available Technical Assistance (TA)

Study participants acknowledge that there are quality technical assistance resources available to help organizations with their research, evaluation and strategic learning needs, particularly the local universities.

“The universities and colleges in the area do a good job partnering, especially if it is project-based work like data collection, analysis and interns.”

“The Central New York Community Foundation started the performance management community. The program helps organizations improve their ability to measure impact and inform their programming and sustainability.”



Related Gap/Need

- Embracing data for strategic learning
- VBP transition support

Back to:
R/E/SL

Gap/Need: Valuing community-generated knowledge

Nonprofit leaders emphasized that community experience and knowledge was often devalued while “best practices” and “evidence-based” models from other communities were held up as the gold standard. Leaders shared their frustration with being required to take on models from elsewhere that had been published (which often then need to be adapted for the local context) rather than being supported in establishing a local evidence base of successful practices and programs that built on local programs’ innovation and adaptability.

“I think that we are good at innovation but that our local systems and foundations are quasi-traditional. They are starting to see that traditional doesn’t work. I don’t like the over-reliance on ‘evidence-based’ models. Evidence-informed or research-based...sure...but not research-driven. There is some real innovation in this community that is leading to some shifts in some outcomes.”



Back to:
R/E/SL

Gap/Need: Data infrastructure/management

Nonprofit leaders highlighted that many organizations struggle with and need support in the areas of data management and infrastructure before they are ready to engage in higher-level outcome tracking or evaluation and that this is an area ripe for investment.

"Evaluation and learning is a challenge. Everyone wants it, but no one pays for it."

"Results reporting is a big issue, even for big organizations. Coming from the business world, I appreciate the underinvestment in data collection and analysis capacity across the sector."

"We capture data in separate databases for different programs. We don't have the resources to get it to work together and sometimes we are entering data multiple times. We use interns to pull things together on an ad hoc basis. We don't have money for a strong IT person."

"I think this is a big area of opportunity for a public/private partnership. Having a shared resource would require funders to collectively have a conversation about how might we tackle this...like an equivalent of the Green Deal for IT. I don't think organizations are afraid of data. It's practical issue of implementation. Who can help see it and get there? Who can guide me without breaking the bank? "

Organizational distinction

Data infrastructure was held up as a particular challenge for smaller organizations where staff wear many hats and have less specialization.

Related Asset

- Valuing measurement

Back to:
R/E/SL

Gap/Need: Streamlined/collaborative reporting

Nonprofit leaders shared that required funder reporting, particularly government funders, use up much of their current organizational capacity in terms of data analysis, tracking, and evaluation. They noted that there is a lack of consistent measures used in the community and this also creates less clarity in terms of a shared understanding of success.

If community funder reporting was more streamlined across funders and organizations, organizations would have additional capacity to dedicate to deeper engagement in research, evaluation, and strategic learning.

"We do the evaluations that the funders ask for. We just measure what we are told to. We don't have the time to step back and look at our data and our services strategically."

"Having consistent reporting with one another would help us be consistent and look at our services holistically. For example, we do home visits. Head Start also does home visits. Could we coordinate our data more?"

Related Asset

- Valuing measurement



Back to:
R/E/SL

Gap/Need: Embracing data for strategic learning



While organizational leaders appreciate the need to collect and use data to show impact and make their case, many feel that the sector needs more assistance with embracing and using data for strategic learning and continuous quality improvement, including using data to make decisions, change their operations, and inform planning and program management activities.

"The sector is getting there technically, but we need to work in capacity to analyze and think critically about that data. Data isn't just for compliance; rather, it can help us make decisions and tell our story. It's a cultural shift."

"We keep data and measure outcomes, but teaching our leaders how to use data for making decisions is a challenge. We are starting to sit with directors and starting to ask how the data will inform what we are doing and are we getting all the right data."

"It seems to me that looking at how we do the work continues to be a constant and that we can continue to improve quality. We need to build expertise in demonstrating how we create change. This points to a need for us become more comfortable with data and information... where we are successful, where we struggle and why and how we can retool."



Related Asset

- Valuing measurement

Back to:
R/E/SL

Gap/Need: VBP transition support

Nonprofit leaders noted that shifting to new funding systems, including managed care and Value-Based Payments (VBP) strained organizational resources and capacities. Even organizations that have received technical assistance to support the transition noted that they were still working on their ability to evaluate and measure their impact.



“When we went through strategic planning three years ago, we tended to be anecdotal about our impact. That won’t work with managed care. We worked hard to create logic models, benchmarking and setting goals, but now what? What do we do with this information? We started by creating a dashboard for the board so they can see the data and aid them in making decisions. It’s all still new to us, and like others similar to us, we are just getting comfortable with data.”

“Oswego County has essentially been left out so far in discussions of VBP and DISRIP. Smaller agencies can’t do all of the criteria. They don’t have enough people and the internal systems to do what they are asking.”

Related Asset

- Available TA

Resources



Back to:
Full Map

Asset: Make-it-work mentality

Nonprofit leaders pride themselves on their adaptability and creativity in providing services in the face of limited funding and constantly changing circumstances.

"You make it work with what you've got. With more resources we could do more, but today we can manage it."

"We figure it out. It's not easy, but we get it done."

"We are a small organization that has the agility and creativity to get things done."



Related Gap/Need

- Private philanthropic resources
- Financial management/operational efficiency

Asset: Staff

Nonprofit leaders identified their dedicated and passionate staff members as valuable assets to getting the work done and “going above and beyond.”

“Our staff are committed to nonprofit work – we are all in!”



Related Gap/Need

- Staffing & salaries
- Recruitment/retention of diverse staff & board (DEI)

Asset: Volunteers

Nonprofit leaders also identified the time and talents of volunteers of all kinds as a key asset that helps increase the capacity of organizations and their staffs to get their work done and to fulfill their missions.

“Community volunteerism is an asset.”

“Senior volunteers are an underutilized asset. They are active and involved and have more time than most others.”



Related Gap/Need

- Volunteer management

Asset: Local philanthropy

Nonprofit leaders realize that Central New York is home to several foundations leading the way in providing capacity-building support through both their direct funding and through sponsored programs. Foundations called out for their work in this area included the Allyn Family Foundation, CNY Community Foundation, Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties, and the Gifford Foundation.

"Having worked in other communities, it's very rare to find the number of foundations in this area that are willing to support infrastructure costs and capacity building support."

"Many of our local foundations are willing to listen and to partner with you. They structure the support to be helpful."

"Allyn and Emmerson use the same portal / format. This Helps to streamline our work."

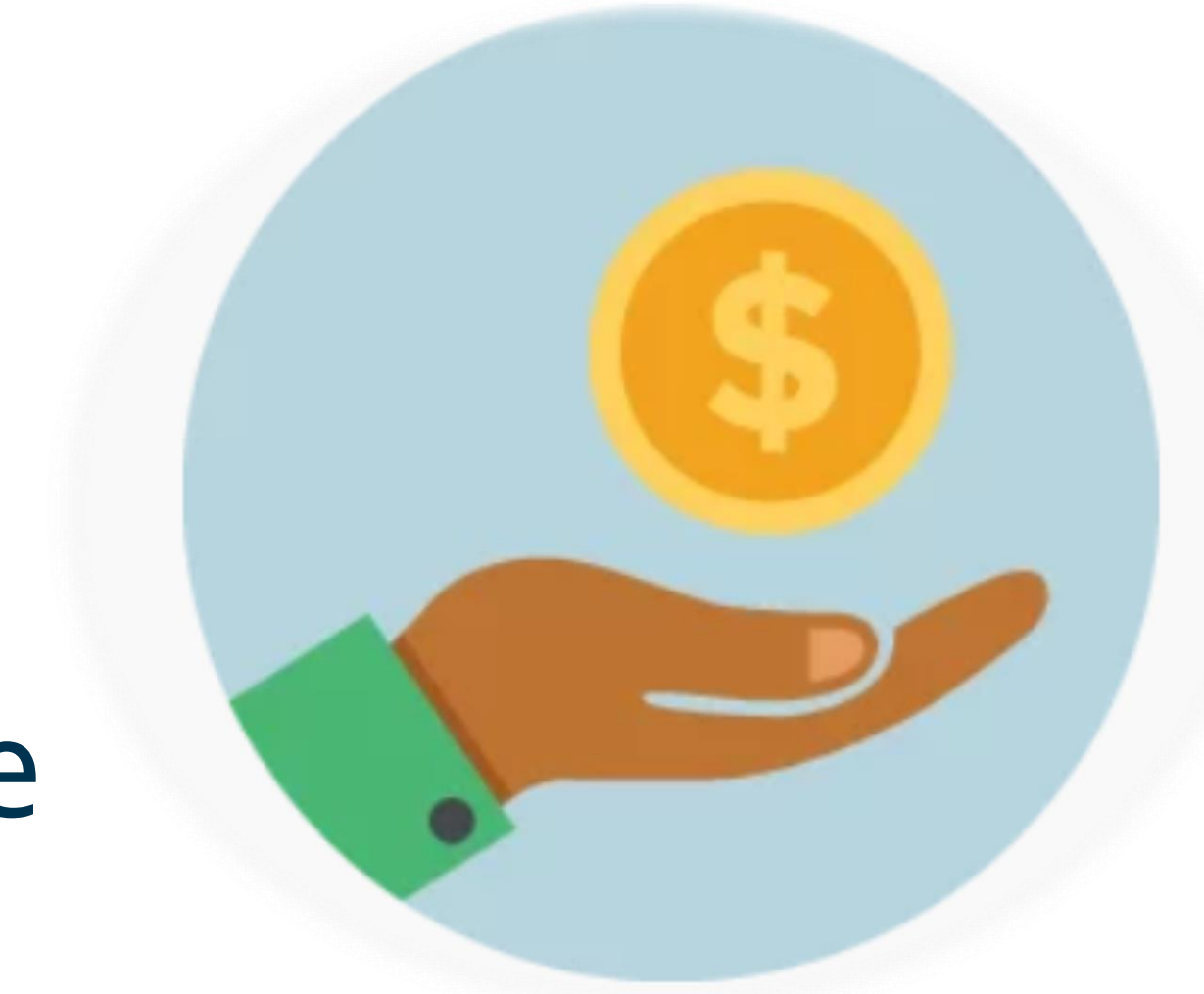


Related Gap/Need

- Private philanthropic resources

Back to:
Resources

Gap/Need: Private philanthropic resources



While nonprofit leaders acknowledged the great work that foundations are doing to build the capacity of nonprofits, they acknowledge that foundations cannot do everything and that the region is experiencing a contraction of financial support, that some geographies have less access to philanthropic support than others, and that competition for funding exists.

"Our area is not home to major corporations to invest in community efforts. We struggle to raise corporate funding more so than many other communities and geographies in New York."

"Individual donations are down."

"The new tax laws are going to affect individual giving as well."

"While many foundations are very generous, they tend to either serve a small region or a statewide catchment. The Health Foundation for Western and Central NY crosses over, but others are more limited or more broad. As a result there is high competition in places like Cortland County for funding."

Related Gap/Need

- Fundraising infrastructure
- Policy & advocacy (A&C)

Related Asset

- Make it work mentality

Gap/Need: Unrestricted support



Nonprofit leaders overwhelmingly identified the need for unrestricted support, multi-year funding, and appropriate support for overhead. They noted that their financial restrictions were often the limiting factor for organizational growth, innovation, and capacity building across all domains.

"They want to see and feel the money they give to you. If it's in collaborative efforts or back-office operations, it's hard for them to see the impact of their funds."

"Funding is program-specific. We try to squeeze in admin and IT needs. We've stopped going after anything less than \$5,000 because it's not worth it."

"Foundations don't want to fund what organizations really need. They want new programs or collaborations, but we need operational support."

"Foundations prefer not to do ongoing expenses, but they could help fill the gaps that government funding won't cover like outfitting our new conference room when we moved offices, leadership training, things that are restricted by government support."

"We need a form of venture capital to try new approaches."

Related Gap/Need

- Fundraising infrastructure
- Policy & advocacy (A&C)

Related Asset

- Make it work mentality

Gap/Need: Fundraising infrastructure

Nonprofits, particularly smaller and minority-serving organizations and those historically dependent on government funding, cited challenges in their ability to sufficiently build out their fundraising and development functions. Fundraising and development to support organizational priorities was the number one organizational challenge listed by all survey participants.

“There are some positions that no one wants to fund – like HR and fundraising. Without fundraising, we would be dead. They are the glue. It ends up falling on me. Have a hundred other things to do, and I can’t afford a dedicated person.”

“We need some help moving from fundraising to fund development.”

“The sector has been asking for grant-writing support. Their needs range from wanting to build grant-writing capacity within an organization to indicating a willingness to share a grant writer. We need to find creative ways to get grant-writing resources into the hands of organizations at a low cost.”



Back to:
Resources

Gap/Need: Finance / HR / organizational efficiency



Nonprofit leaders also lifted up a need for assistance with financial management, human resources, and organizational efficiency citing lack of funds and difficulty in finding skilled employees in these areas.

"I think that finances are a real problem. There is a lack of skilled finance people here. We are in talks with local community college to see if there's the potential to collaborate."

"Human resources for us is big. We do have Paychex consult for us which is expensive, but dealing with issues like benefits, short-term disability, sexual harassment training is complicated and complex for smaller agencies. It's a drain on resources."

"I don't think there is much capacity within organizations to really step back and look at organizational structure and systems – that's usually not the same skill set that draws people to nonprofits."

Related Asset

- Make it work mentality

Gap/Need: Staffing & salaries



While deeply appreciative of the efforts of their staff, nonprofit leaders are keenly aware of and sensitive to issues around the ability to find qualified staff, and pay a competitive wage. Additionally, leaders noted that higher minimum wage laws along with fairly flat grant amounts are putting further pressure on their ability to pay and retain staff.

"We struggle with people having the credentials they need because they keep changing the criteria at the state level. "

"It's hard to keep up with the minimum wage when our funding is not going up."

"There are a lot of entry level jobs open right now, but they are high-skill, high-demand jobs that are not being filled due to the lack of educational opportunities in this area."

"Workforce/staffing is in crisis in all healthcare organizations. We can't compete for qualified staff."

"Hiring is tough with salaries we offer. Some are harder than others...like a fiscal director...they have to be in it for the mission, not for the money. Being rural/local does make it a bit harder to find folks that live here or that are willing to drive out here."

Rural distinction

Finding qualified staff is even more challenging for organizations in rural areas.

Related Gap/Need

- Recruitment/retention of diverse staff & board (DEI)

Related Asset

- Staff

Gap/Need: Volunteer management

Nonprofit leaders are extremely grateful for their volunteers but cite challenges including being taken seriously, overuse and over-reliance on volunteers, as well as difficulty optimally deploying them.

"You are not taken seriously as a professional organization without paid staff. You can't get some grants as a volunteer organization."

"We are always relying on the same 10 volunteers, especially with no paid staff. What if they don't show?"

"College interns can be an asset, but it takes a lot of time and energy to bring them up to speed. How can I better utilize volunteers to free up program funds?"

"I need a professional to manage our volunteers."



Related Asset

- Dedicated volunteers

Back to:
Resources

Gap/Need: Appreciation of scale in rural areas



Nonprofit leaders in rural areas identified a challenge in communicating the differences in scale to urban funders and attracting their interest in working in their communities. In particular, they highlighted that low population density, decentralization of services, and lack of transportation often result in higher program costs per person to achieve impact.

“There is a push for regionalization, but I think rural areas lose a lot. It costs more to work in rural areas – regionalization doesn’t address this. The most effective way organizations can do our work is to be a part of their communities, and that means the fire halls, libraries, civic clubs, etc. It’s a time-intensive effort. You can’t just hold an event at library and everyone will come. You won’t get those kinds of economies of scale.”

“We struggle with getting state grants. We are limited in terms of the number of people that we serve, so we are not competitive with big urban regions.”

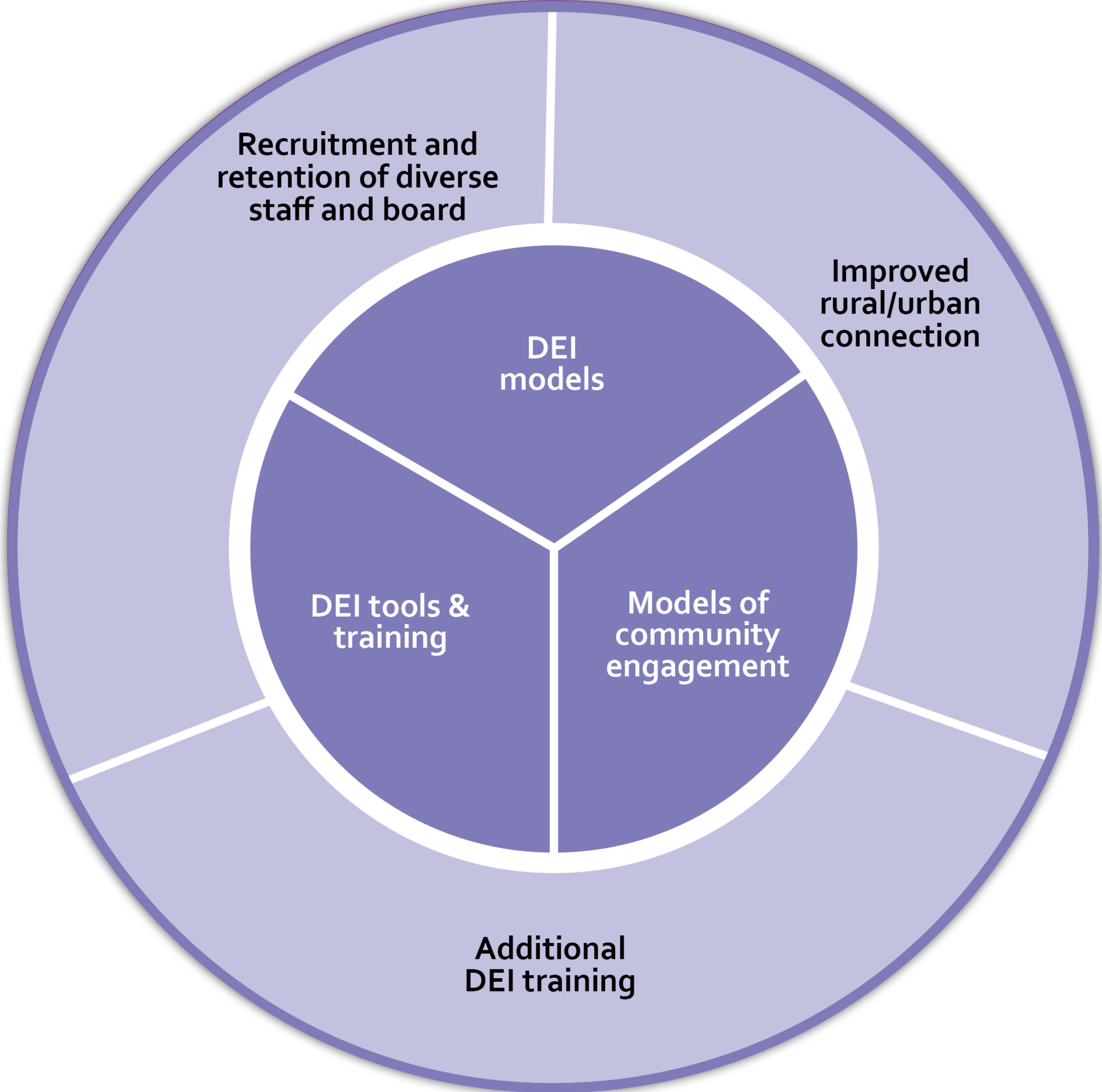
“We need funders to see rural areas as testing grounds for new programs. It shouldn’t be just about numbers, but about impact.”

Related Gap/Need

- Improved rural/urban connection (DEI)

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)

Back to:
Full Map



Asset: DEI models



While more needs to be done to address structural racism in society and within nonprofit organizations themselves, some nonprofits are implementing policies and tools to help address cultural competency and diversity, equity and inclusion within their organizations that can be held up as models to learn from.

"Most of our board are vested in or work in our community. The board wanted a director from the community and hired the one who can knock on every door in this neighborhood. If we get additional funds, we want to continue to hire from within the neighborhood and build their individual capacity."

"We do well with hiring those with lived experience (teen parents, low income, past clients). We have been intentional in providing staff with DEI training. We did an internal survey of our materials and are trying to be inclusive as possible in the language we use. One-time staff retreats are good and fundable, but they are only one-shots. You need to be fully committed."

"One of our employees was transgender. We consider ourselves a welcoming place. He was transitioning and we found that our insurance doesn't pay for that. We are self-insured and had to look to see what message we are sending. We are now looking at our policies."

"We brought in a consultant to help us with staff diversity. She helped us realize that we were creating a barrier by listing the need for a Bachelors degree for a home visitor position when a 4-year degree wasn't really needed. Once we removed that, our pool of candidates was much more diverse".

Related Gap/Need

- Additional DEI trainings & support
- Recruiting diverse board & staff

Back to:
DEI

Asset: DEI tools and trainings

Nonprofit leaders acknowledge that there are resources and trainings available to help organizations address the way they approach DEI.

In fact, organizational survey respondents listed delivering culturally responsive services and developing policies/practices for cultural competence, diversity, equity, and inclusion as two of the most common professional services they as organizations provide to others.

"Tompkins County Diversity Consortium provides workforce and board diversity training."

"There are lots of diversity trainings available...several large organizations have their own—Hillside, Catholic Charities."

"The Human Services Leadership Council is working to get a baseline of DEI among leaders of member organizations. The idea is to get a baseline of where human service organizations are and develop a toolbox for mid-sized and smaller organizations. This came directly out of an organizational-needs survey."



Related Gap/Need

- Additional DEI training

Asset: Models of community engagement

Nonprofit leaders, especially in grass-roots organizations, held up their ability to authentically engage and co-create with their community as a critical asset in their ability to be equitable, diverse, and inclusive in their work.

"For example, youth should have a say in things that are targeting them. There is a drug-free coalition and the youth are taking charge of it. It is in the process of being implemented. We need the kids to do it for us."

"Grass-roots organizations are closest to the work and the impacted populations."



Related Gap/Need

- Organizing and co-producing with community (A&C)

Gap/Need: Recruitment and retention of diverse staff and board

Nonprofit leaders acknowledged a need to get better at recruiting and retaining diverse staff and leadership (including their boards). Of survey participants, 76% listed diverse recruiting as a challenge for their organization and is named the second highest priority area in need of support.

"Diversity in general continues to be a challenge for us. Direct-care staff is diverse. Senior management is diverse on gender and race, but the board is homogenous. It's hard to find people of diverse backgrounds to serve on a board. And if they are known in the community, they serve on many boards. We've tried to look at nontraditional board members, but it's often their first board experience and that's hard for us."

"The Board is all white, and 40s and 50s, predominately white women. Women tend to be attracted to this work. I look around see more diversity in Cayuga and Auburn, but I don't know how to go about it. I don't know where I would go to get help."



Related Asset

- DEI models

Related Gap/Need

- Board recruitment (Leadership)
- Staffing (RES)

Gap/Need: Additional DEI training and support

While DEI trainings are available, nonprofit leaders see a need for more organizations and funders to engage in additional diversity, equity and inclusion training and to further deepen their knowledge base in this domain.

“There is a huge need for cultural training. We are not a safe community. LGBTQ issues are still not talked about a lot in this community.”

“We could use more diversity training and assistance. We want a diverse staff, but we don’t really have a policy. We talk about it a lot as an executive team, but we don’t know what to do...what policies should we put in place? Some program staff is more diverse than others and I don’t know why.”



Related Asset

- Available DEI trainings

Back to:
DEI

Gap/Need: Improved rural/urban connection

Nonprofit leaders lifted up the need to re-frame why funders should be committed to working with rural communities and addressing their issues.

“We need funders to shift away from the focus on numbers served in rural areas and to see it as a diversity, equity and inclusion issue. What does it look like to build regional collaboratives that include rural and urban partners?”

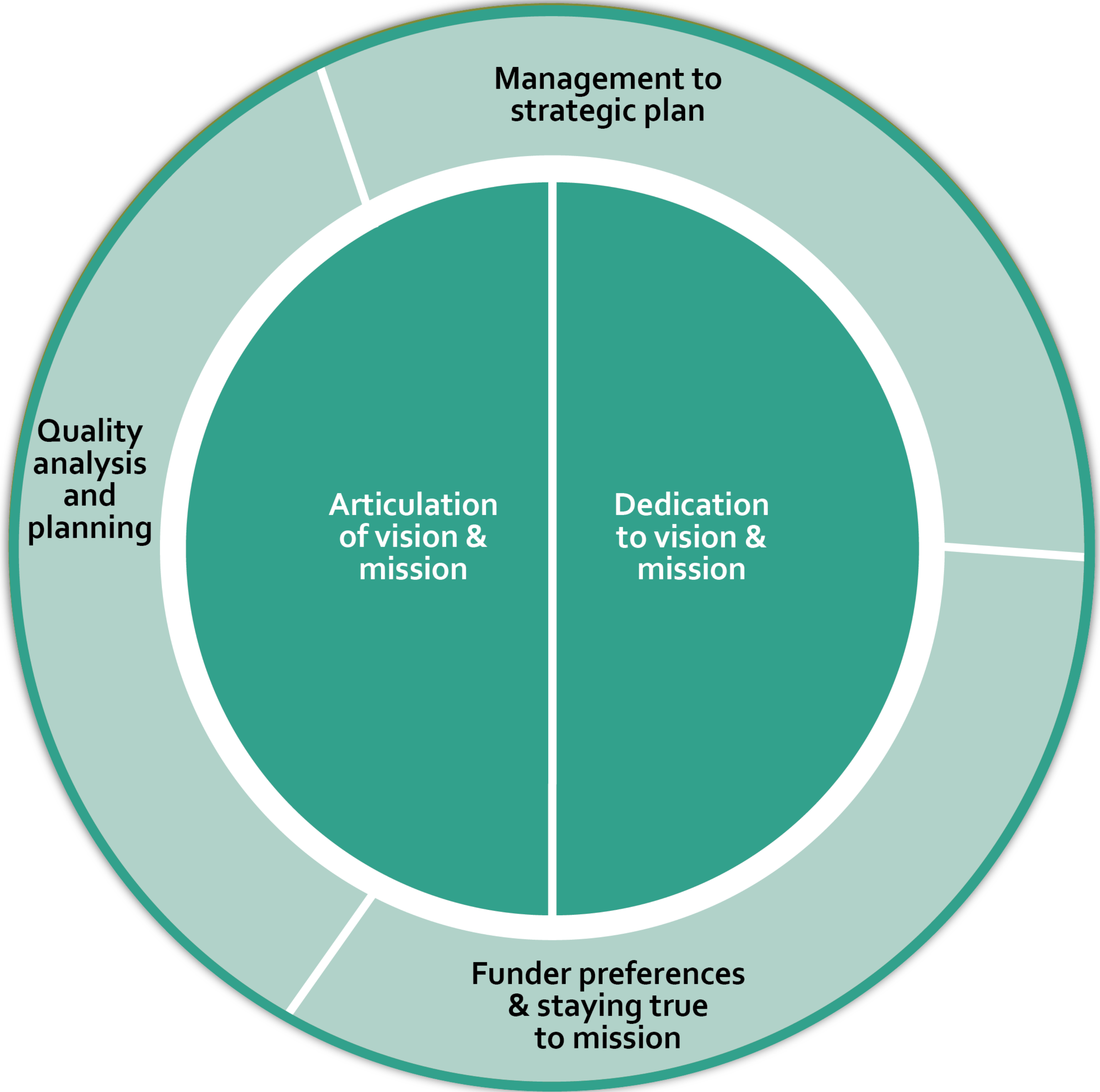


Related Gap/Need

- Appreciation of rural scale (Res.)

Vision and Mission

Back to:
Full Map



Asset: Articulation of vision & mission

Overall, nonprofit leaders feel fairly confident in their ability to articulate their vision and mission. It was the second most commonly identified organizational strength on the organizational survey (35% of respondents).



Organizational distinction

Smaller and younger organizations were more likely to lift up challenges with vision and mission articulation.

Back to:
V&M

Asset: Dedication to vision & mission

Nonprofit leaders described the sector's overall commitment and dedication to the mission and vision of their organizations as an asset to creating community change.

"Those who are working in nonprofits are driven by the mission."

"We are a very passionate group. We care about the mission."

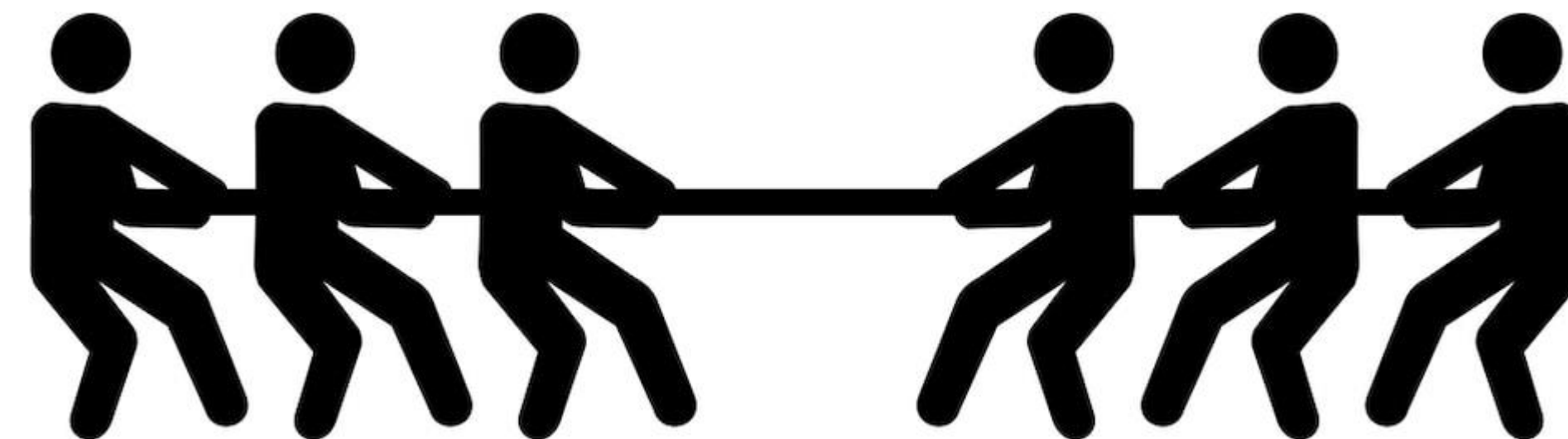
"Staff could make more money elsewhere and have shorter days, but ultimately this work is different. There is joy in it."



Gap/Need: Mission vs funder preferences

Nonprofit leaders expressed concern about funders preferring to support more appealing missions and resisting specific funding opportunities that are off-mission in order to access financial resources.

“Housing, drug advocacy, victim services are not as attractive to businesses to give to than a focus on youth, but you have to stay true to your mission.”



Gap/Need: Quality analysis and planning

Nonprofit leaders discussed the risk of poor strategic planning services and strategic planning with no real analysis of what it will take to get the work done.

"Consultants are fine if you have funds to outsource it. It's better to go outside if you can, but you need to be careful to do your due diligence. Need to spend time to do due diligence but it pays off."

"The problem is that the strategic planning process includes very little about 'what is our capacity to do this?' Strategic plans are often created in a vacuum. When an organization has a work plan and timeline, it's easier to grasp on to these things as opposed to generalized strategic planning."



Gap/Need: Management to strategic plan

Nonprofit leaders acknowledged that it can be a challenge to find the time and financial resources to engage in strategic planning and ensure that their strategic plans remain a “living document” rather than sitting on a shelf. Leaders can easily become consumed by the day-to-day operations and management of organizations due to stretched resources and limited staffing.

“It’s hard to keep the planning process alive. People have to worry about their own program goals at the same time. For example, Head Start is a monster with huge regulatory requirements at the state and federal level. It takes time to respond to that, but they also want them to engage in this internal process too.”

“It’s rough...it’s hard to afford strategic planning assistance and that’s not even counting the time. We cobbled together the funds, but finding the time is a real struggle. In the for-profit world, when you hit a certain size, things work differently. Here, I am involved in everything due to our size and that takes up time.”

