

# Planning and Infrastructure Challenges of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations



The ability to plan for the future and adapt to change are key components of success for any organization, as is having adequate infrastructure to carry out activities. The 2003 National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations (NSNVO) found that more than half (58%) of Canada's 161,000 nonprofit and voluntary organizations report problems planning for the future, making this the most common problem reported. Fifteen percent of organizations said that planning for the future is a serious problem for them.

Fewer organizations report difficulty adapting to change, but 41% still said that this is a problem for them (5% said that the problem is serious). Thirty-nine percent of organizations reported that lack

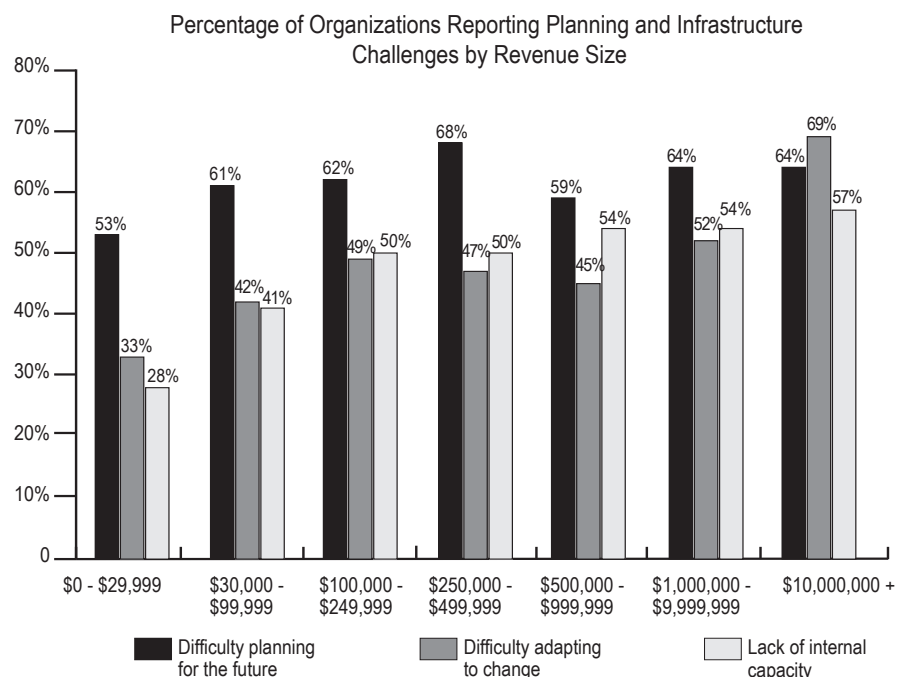
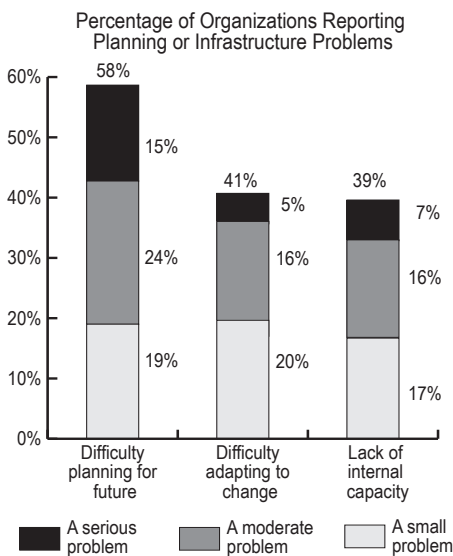
of internal capacity (e.g., internal administrative systems, information technology, software, databases) is a problem for them (7% said that it is a serious problem).

## Annual Revenues

The proportion of organizations reporting planning and infrastructure problems tends to increase as annual revenues increase. This pattern is clearest for internal capacity problems. The proportion of organizations saying that lack of internal capacity is a problem for them increases from 28% among organizations with annual revenues under \$30,000 to 57%

among organizations with revenues of \$10 million or more.

The proportion of organizations that report difficulty planning for the future peaks at 68% among organizations with annual revenues between \$250,000 and \$499,999. It then declines before increasing again to 64% among organizations with annual revenues of \$1 million or more. The proportion of organizations that said they have difficulty adapting to change rises to 49% among organizations with annual revenues between \$100,000 and \$249,999, declines, then increases to 69% among organizations with \$10 million or more in annual revenues.



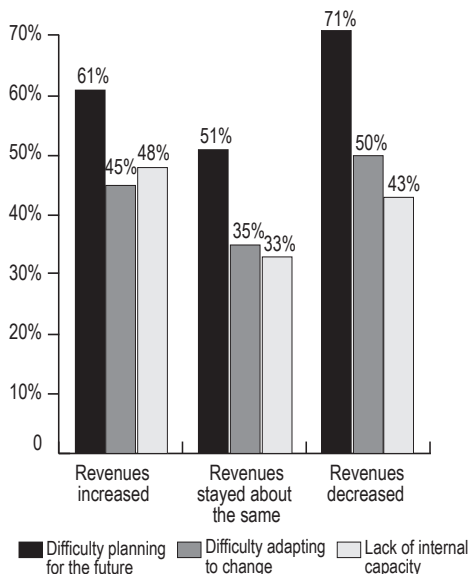
Note: Percentages may not add to totals due to rounding.

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## Changes in Revenues

Organizations that experienced either an increase or a decrease in their revenues between 2000 and 2003 were more likely than those with stable revenues to report planning and infrastructure problems.

Percentage of Organizations Reporting Planning and Infrastructure Challenges by Changes in Revenue



Organizations whose revenues had decreased were more likely than organizations whose revenues had increased to report problems planning for the future (71% vs. 61%) and adapting to change (50% vs. 45%). In contrast, organizations

whose revenues increased were more likely than those whose revenues had decreased to report internal capacity problems (48% vs. 43%). Organizations with stable revenues were the least likely to report all three problems.

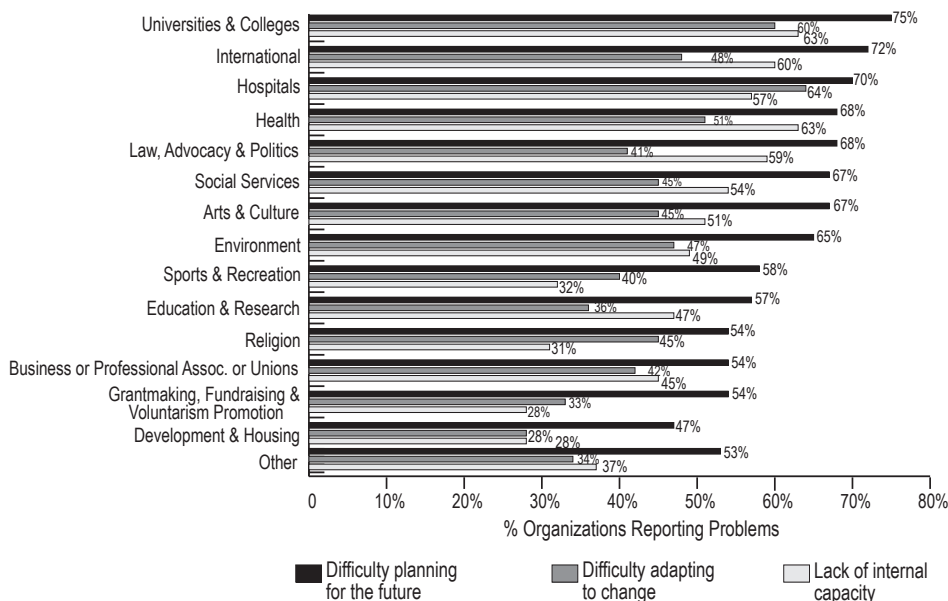
## Activity Area

Interestingly, the largest and wealthiest types of nonprofit and voluntary organizations are among the most likely to report planning and infrastructure problems. Seventy-five percent of Universities

and Colleges report difficulty planning for the future, as do 70% of Hospitals. Sixty-four percent of Hospitals and 60% of Universities and Colleges say that they have difficulty adapting to change. Finally, 63% of Universities and Colleges and 57% of Hospitals say that lack of internal capacity is a problem for them.

Organizations working in the areas of Development and Housing, and Grantmaking, Fundraising and Voluntarism Promotion are the least likely to report planning and infrastructure problems.  $\triangle$

Percentage of Organizations Reporting Planning and Infrastructure Challenges by Activity Area



The National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations (NSNVO) was conducted by a consortium of organizations consisting of Imagine Canada (formerly the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy), l'Alliance de recherche universités-communautés en économie sociale à l'Université du Québec à Montréal, the Canada West Foundation, the Canadian Council on Social Development, the Capacity Development Network at the University of Victoria, the Community Services Council of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Voluntary and Non-profit Sector Organization of Manitoba, Queen's University School of Policy Studies, and Statistics Canada.

A summary of the survey findings may be found in *Cornerstones of Community: Highlights of the National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations*, available at [www.nonprofitscan.ca](http://www.nonprofitscan.ca).



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