

Community sector

From “Understanding the Landscape of Auckland & Northland: An Evidence Review”

Written by the Centre for Social Impact (July 2018)

This topic extract is taken from the above report which summarises the key findings of an evidence review completed by the Centre for Social Impact to inform the implementation of Foundation North’s 2018 Strategic Plan. These key findings have been used to inform the development of funding priorities for the Foundation alongside the development of a broader range of positive outcomes that best contribute to the Foundation’s overall vision.

Key Findings

There are 10 topic-specific extracts from the full report.

All extracts and the full report are available at www.foundationnorth.org.nz/how-we-work/resources

1. Population profile | 2. Population change | 3. Income inequality and deprivation | 4. Economic wellbeing | 5. Social cohesion | 6. Education | 7. Children and young people | 8. Housing | 9. Environmental wellbeing | **10. Community sector**

(i) Why is the health of the community sector an important indicator?

- 1) A strong and sustainable community sector can be an important support mechanism for a region’s communities, providing long-term activities, events and services that enhance community vibrancy and wellbeing and address social inequalities.
(Treasury, 2017).
- 2) The community and social sector landscape in New Zealand is in a period of change driven by new social investment approaches. If the sector is not positioned to overcome key barriers in responding to these changes, there is a greater likelihood of community needs and aspirations being unmet.
(Treasury, 2017; Deloitte 2016).

(ii) What are the regional trends and issues?

1) The government is pursuing a social investment approach, which involves a stronger focus on results and measuring impact. Service providers will need to overcome challenges to meet this approach effectively, including their capacity to define measurable outcomes and collect good evaluation data. <i>Sources: Treasury, 2017; Deloitte, 2016.</i>	Social investment principles
	Targeted funding to high-risk populations
	Early intervention approach
	Increased focused on evidence
2) The community sector is facing significant challenges that relate to financial viability, including funding shortfalls, government contracting shifts, over-reliance on grants and increased compliance costs. Foundation North grantees (2015-16) identified funding and resources as their top two community challenges. <i>Sources: ComVoices, 2016; Foundation North, 2016, 2017.</i>	Issues raised by interviewees:
	- Outcomes diluted if funding is too broad
	Top challenges identified by grantees:
3) Wider community trends are also affecting the sector’s capacity and capability to deliver impact – especially increased community inequalities that are driving an increased demand for services, and changing community diversity requiring new approaches and competencies across the sector. <i>Sources: Foundation North, 2016, 2017.</i>	- Funding and resources were the two challenges most consistently identified by grantees
	Issues raised by interviewees:
	- Increasing inequity in communities
	- Increasing diversity brings complexity
	- Unable to meet needs
Top challenges identified by grantees:	
- Poverty was the most identified challenge for grantees in the Far North and Manukau.	

<p>4) Foundation North stakeholders identified capacity and capability development as critical to supporting better outcomes. Locally-led initiatives were also seen as important – along with building local capability to increase impact. Source: <i>Foundation North, 2017.</i></p>	<p>Issues raised by interviewees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of capacity and capability - The need to support stronger capability for Pacific organisations - Lack of training opportunities - Lack of support for volunteers - Measuring impact is still a key challenge for most groups
<p>5) Foundation North grantees identified their ability to engage communities, and the services/support that they provide as being their key strengths. Source: <i>Foundation North, 2016</i></p>	<p>Top strengths identified by grantees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support provided - Services available - Engagement with/by community - Cultural strengths
<p>6) Key stakeholders interviewed by Foundation North highlighted the importance of addressing sector fragmentation through convening and collaboration. Source: <i>Foundation North, 2017.</i></p>	<p>Interview quotes</p> <p><i>“Foundation North have a role in bringing groups together.”</i></p> <p><i>“Support collaboration across sectors”</i></p>
<p>7) Key stakeholders interviewed by Foundation North highlighted the importance of funding with a focus on need, and investing over the longer term to achieve transformational change. Source: <i>Foundation North, 2017.</i></p>	<p>Interview quotes</p> <p><i>“Funders need to be in for the long term – ongoing support and engagement is important.”</i></p> <p><i>“[Prioritise] longer term initiatives, focused on transformational change.”</i></p>

References

Deloitte (2016). State of the state, New Zealand 2016: Social investment for our future.
Retrieved from: <http://datafutures.co.nz/assets/Uploads/state-of-the-state-nz-final-v-1.pdf>

The Treasury (2017). Social investment.
Retrieved from: <http://www.treasury.govt.nz/statesector/socialinvestment>

ComVoices (2016). 2016 State of the community sector survey: Snapshot.
Retrieved from: <https://comvoicesdotwordpressdotcom.files.wordpress.com/2016/10/comvoices-2016-state-of-the-sector-survey-snapshot-final-25-oct.pdf>

Foundation North (2016). Impact report data collected in 2015 and 2016.
Impact Reports asked funding recipients to identify the major strengths and challenges for their organisations and/or wider communities. Foundation North staff were able to assess the data provided by grantees (in open text format) and code it to create a list of the most commonly identified strengths (16 categories) and challenges (20 categories).

Foundation North (2017). Stakeholder interviews August-September 2017.
Key findings from stakeholder interviews completed by Foundation North staff.