



COVID-19: NONPROFIT AND COMMUNITY NEEDS AND RESPONSES

INFORMATION GATHERED MARCH TO OCTOBER 2020 BY
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR MONTEREY COUNTY AND
MONTEREY PENINSULA FOUNDATION FOR
MONTEREY COUNTY'S COVID-19 RELIEF SUPPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In total, 207 organizations were surveyed through both the Monterey Peninsula Foundation survey of grantees (MPF) and information requested in the Community Foundation for Monterey County (CFMC)'s COVID-19 Relief Fund grant application. Of those 207 organizations, 107 were unique to the MPF survey, 69 were unique to the CFMC survey, and 31 responded to both surveys (see chart 1).

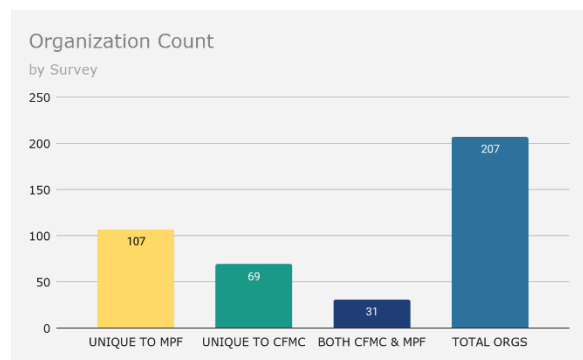


Chart 1: Organization count by survey

The distribution across program areas for the organizations that responded to either the MPF survey, CFMC survey, or both surveys is as follows (see chart 2):

- 3 animal welfare,
- 23 arts and culture,
- 47 education,
- 11 environmental,
- 41 health,
- 67 human services,
- and 15 public service.

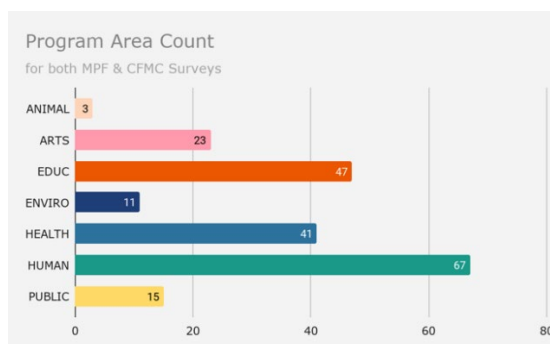


Chart 2: Program area count for MPF & CFMC surveys

Responses

The MPF survey had a total of 142 responses with 2 organizations replying twice. The CFMC survey had 134 responses with 26 organizations replying more than one time:

- 22 organizations x 2 responses,
- 3 organizations x 3 responses,
- and 1 organization x four responses

Program Areas

The MPF survey included responses from organizations across all program areas with the majority in education or human services, while the CFMC survey had responses mostly from organizations in human services and did not receive any responses from animal organizations.

Dates of Survey Responses

In the MPF survey, the data was analyzed for two time periods:

- Phase 1 (May - June)
- Phase 2 (July - September)

The CFMC survey data was analyzed for three time periods:

- Early Phase (March - April)
- Phase 1 (May - June)
- Phase 2 (July - October)

Themes & Actions

Themes that have emerged from both data sets are **adaptability, partnerships, and commitment to the community** with at least 30 examples of **resiliency** identified. In terms of finances, the MPF data showed that most organizations that applied for CARES Act or other stimulus relief received it. Of those that received it, 63 mentioned that the stimulus funds allowed them to either maintain or increase staff hours or otherwise address funding gaps (see charts 3 & 4). Additionally, more organizations reported a loss of funding in Phase 1 versus Phase 2 (see chart 5), and 40 organizations described steps taken for financial stewardship. With all the uncertainty surrounding next steps and the future, planning was a priority as many organizations looked for ways to sustain their operations (see charts 8 & 9). The CFMC data revealed that most program operation changes, loss of revenue, and staffing changes were mentioned in the “Early Phase” (March-April) (see chart 9).

Organizational Need

The most urgent need identified across all program areas was funding. Health and human services organizations also named temporary support staff, sanitizing and cleaning supplies, and technology (e.g., computers, hardware/software to edit and publish high quality videos, improved Wi-Fi speed, virtual communication/meeting tools and equipment, etc.) as priorities. Most of the organizational needs were named during ‘Early Phase’ in the CFMC COVID-19 Relief Fund survey (see chart 10).

Community Need

The most urgent community needs identified from the CFMC COVID-19 Relief Fund survey were during ‘Early Phase’ and included money (e.g., rental assistance, childcare expenses, basic/essential living expenses), food, technology, access to health services, and information related COVID-19 (e.g., education, guidance, CDC guidelines in languages other than English) (see chart 10).

Lessons Learned

One of the main lessons learned from both the MPF and CFMC data sets was that cash flow has been impacted by many external forces and circumstances all at once. Therefore, as time progresses and the pandemic stretches on, financial challenges have been and will be compounded for many organizations.

A further lesson learned is that many organizations realized the benefit of offering online services; many reported higher attendance and engagement. However, because many services were moved online, organizations became more aware of challenges surrounding access to technology. In addition, there was a realization that transportation is more of an accessibility challenge than previously thought as without access to

transportation people are not able to get medical care or access resources such as banks, food, etc. Lack of transportation also prevents people from attending in-person events which became clear when virtual events had greater attendance.

Organizations identified that it was important to help people meet their basic needs as food access and supply became an issue. Also, an important realization was that beyond basic needs such as food and shelter, people's mental and emotional needs must also be met. Thus, during 'Phase 1' considerable effort went into supplying and connecting people to resources.

Finally, organizations had an increased awareness for which populations in the community were the most vulnerable and recognized that the pandemic has disproportionately affected communities of color and low-income families. A potentially hidden need that was identified was unreported cases of domestic and child abuse which could create an increase in need in the future. Moreover, there was awareness that many individuals and families who had gained stability prior to the pandemic are now losing ground due to loss of employment, housing, childcare, etc. Additionally, a nonprofit SBA lender that responded to the MPF survey observed that small businesses, including small farmers and particularly women and business owners of color, were "excluded from PPP stimulus resources due to systemic barriers and an inequitable landscape."

Conclusion

In summary, the data showed that the COVID-19 pandemic created severe funding needs for these organizations. With no playbook or knowledge of how long the crisis would last, nonprofits faced programmatic and operational challenges head-on and kept the community's broader well-being in focus. Board members remained engaged, and there were many examples of nonprofits planning, stewarding resources and activating creative partnerships. More data is needed to understand the impact on nonprofits in the areas of Animals, Environment and Public Service.

LIMITATIONS

Since the data in this study are qualitative and cannot be independently verified as such, we have taken the responses at face value. In addition, since the data are self-reported, there is the possibility for different types of response bias including cultural, attribution, and exaggeration. There is also potential researcher bias from the individuals who coded and analyzed the data sets. Furthermore, since the MPF and CFMC data sets asked different questions, it was not always possible to extract the same type of data from each set. Thus, direct comparisons between the data sets could not always be made. The data sets were studied according to phases and program areas which created further limitations. The MPF survey was organized into two phases, while the CFMC data set

was organized into three phases. We aligned them where we could. Another important note is that the number of organizations per program area varies. Thus, it can appear that certain program areas had higher numbers since normalization was not applied; there is no ratio equivalency across class, so the values are not proportional.

EMERGING THEMES

Adaptability

Ability to adapt to changing circumstances quickly through program transitions and restructuring while considering finances

“When other organizations closed or severely reduced their hours, we remained open 5 days a week. We were able to engage with people who needed our services in several different ways. We reached out to churches, other organizations...We added our name to any resource list we could find. We handed out flyers at the unemployment line, put up signs at the free clinics, and upped our social media presences.”
- Participant 85

“The board, along with the staff have been working to re-imagine what it means to be an educational institute with limited options. Working together, we created and presented our first pop-up exhibit...As the situation progresses, we intend to continue to change, grow, and adjust to remain relevant and vital to the future of our community.” – Participant 115

Partnerships

Creating partnerships to support each other and continue operations

“Surprisingly, our community partnerships have flourished; in six months, we built a bridge with [nonprofit] organization, began rural transit project needs in Soledad...and assisted Senior Day Resource Fair committee in distributing 1800+ resource bags to seniors throughout the county in lieu of the annual event held each year at the Monterey County Fair.” – Participant 137

“The lack of income has caused a major change. We have sold our facility and formed a new partnership with [organization]. Our school will merge with theirs. Staff will teach...as employees of [organization]. The nonprofit will now focus on our virtual...projects and performances.” – Participant 123

“We plan to continue working in our focus communities as before: Gonzales, Greenfield, King City, and San Lucas. To increase our impact, we have partnered with [university]. Having more boots on the ground will enable us to work with larger numbers of students while maintaining team sizes of 7 youth.” - Participant 9

Commitment

Commitment of organizations and the community to support each other

“We were surprised how popular our CSA program was this year, selling out quickly.

We were surprised that phone and online social work meetings were as successful as they were, and that new social work interns felt strongly that they wanted to be on site. Adapted our trainee hiring process.

We were surprised and humbled by the generosity of the community, coming forward to offer whatever they could--sewing masks, cooking a meal for trainees and delivering to the farm, kind words of appreciation for our work.”

- Participant 138

“We have been pleasantly surprised by the commitment and creativity of the majority of our... community and volunteers to keep the program for youth relevant and stimulating while they shelter in place...Our 17 full time staff members are making daily phone calls to each of our 10,000 families to check in and offer support. This has yielded discovery of talent and desire to help pivot our program to bring skill development and character building to youth regardless of the situational or environmental limitations. - Participant 76

RESILIENCY

There were at least 30 examples of resiliency that stood out from the MPF data. The following are a few examples:

“We're moved and inspired by our resilient arts community in the wake of COVID-19. From online maker fairs and film debuts to virtual art lessons and living room concerts, artists and arts organizations are rallying to keep creativity alive and to sustain themselves.” - Participant 108

“Cash reserves remain limited. Cash flow is good while we have the PPP funds, which will be expended in October. We have several State, federal, County, and private grant requests out. We laid off our Development Director who was focused on events and marketing and hired a grant consultant to support most of our fundraising efforts this year. Meanwhile, I work on rate increases in our contracts, advocating on a local and State level. Even though shelter in place will continue, we are prepared for this contingency through June 30 2021, with business continuity plans, strong staff support, and fundraising. Our risk management, insurance, management information systems, and Telehealth infrastructure are all in place to weather this pandemic. This has been my focus the past 5 months.” - Participant 102

“We are trying to see the good that has occurred during this time. We have been surprised that temporarily closing our office has in some ways brought us closer to our long-term goals. This period has helped us to quickly transition from relying solely on the low fees that we charge clients for direct services to turning more to outside funding...We let go of two full-time [staff positions] and were lucky enough to hire another [staff position] who has more experience. The new [staff position] is able to handle the same caseload that the other two were handling together while only working part-time because she can work more efficiently with her years of experience and efficient way of operating.” - Participant 72

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Question 3 of MPF's survey asked, "did you apply for CARES Act or other stimulus relief? Did you receive it? If so, how has it made a difference in your agency?"

From the 110 organizations that applied for stimulus funding, 6 were denied or considered ineligible for funding. Of those that applied, a total of 18 were either still waiting for funding, got funding but did not find the funding useful, or received funding and lost staff positions anyway.

A total of 63 mentioned that stimulus funds allowed them to either maintain or increase staff hours or otherwise address funding gaps.

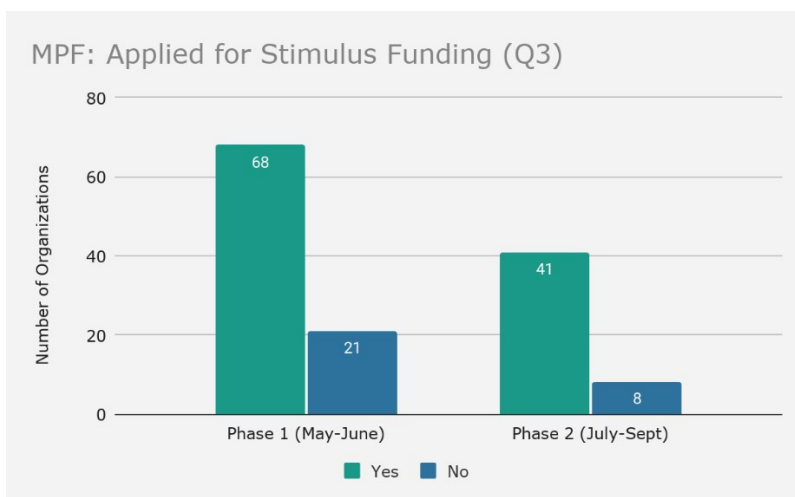


Chart 3: Number of organizations by phase that applied for stimulus funding

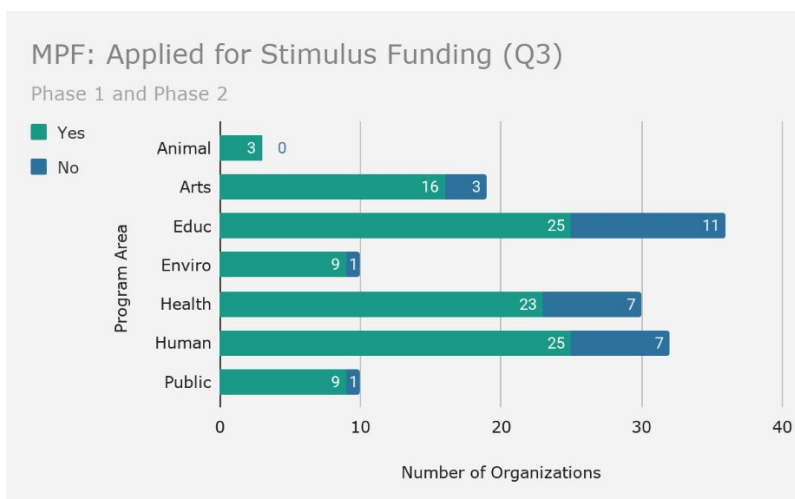


Chart 4: Number of organizations by program area that applied for stimulus funding

EFFORTS TAKEN TO SUSTAIN ORGANIZATIONS

Question 5 of MPF's survey asked, "what does your cash reserve look like at this juncture? What will happen in two months if shelter-in-place continues?"

21 of the organizations responded that they had strong reserves. 35 organizations responded that reserves were low, and these organizations faced potential cuts in programs or staff.

In addition, the data showed that 54 organizations cited lost revenue, more in Phase 1 than Phase 2.

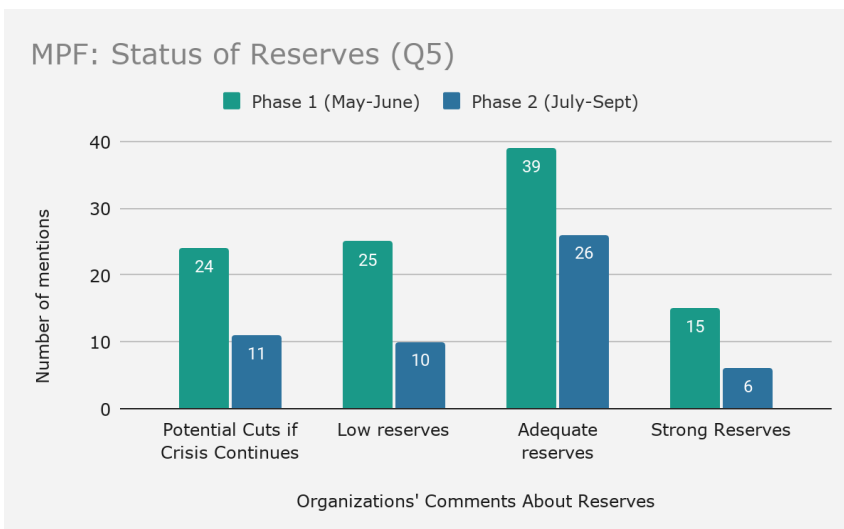


Chart 5: Status of reserves for MPF respondents

CHANGES TO ORGANIZATIONS

The CFMC COVID-19 Relief Fund asked grant applicants to “describe your situation. How has the pandemic affected your daily operations?”

60 organizations mentioned that program or operation changes took place during ‘Early Phase’ (see chart 6), with the majority of changes to programs or operations taking place in human services (see chart 7).

21 organizations mentioned a loss in revenue during ‘Early Phase’ (see chart 6) with human services organizations reporting the most financial losses (see chart 7).

In addition, the majority of staffing changes were mentioned during ‘Early Phase’ (see chart 6).

CFMC: Organizational Changes by Phase

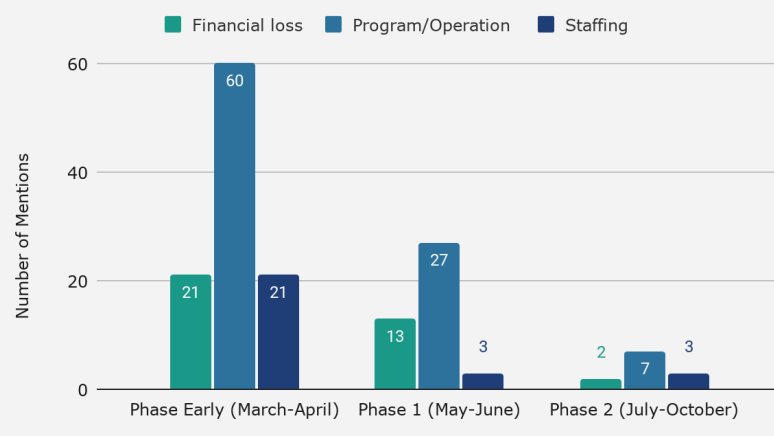


Chart 6: Number of organizational changes mentioned by phase

CFMC: Organizational Changes by Program Area

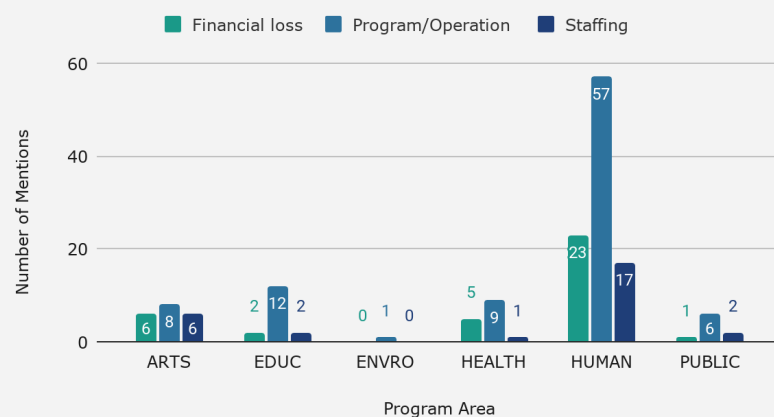


Chart 7: Number of organizational changes mentioned by program area

ORGANIZATIONAL PLANNING

Question 4 of the MPF survey asked: “tell us about how your board has been engaged in the planning for your agency during the pandemic. What are the plans for the next few months?”

All organizations mentioned some type of planning which included financial, contingency, or strategic/long-term planning. The education sector had the most mentions of planning with 24.

Most planning was mentioned during ‘Phase 1’ with 26 organizations naming financial planning, 36 contingency planning, and 17 organizations working on strategic/long-term planning.

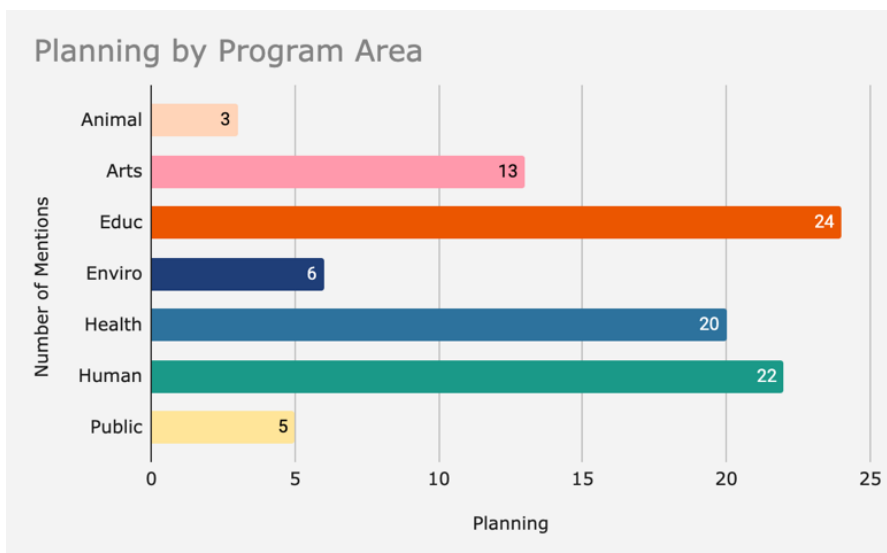


Chart 8: Number of mentions of planning by program area

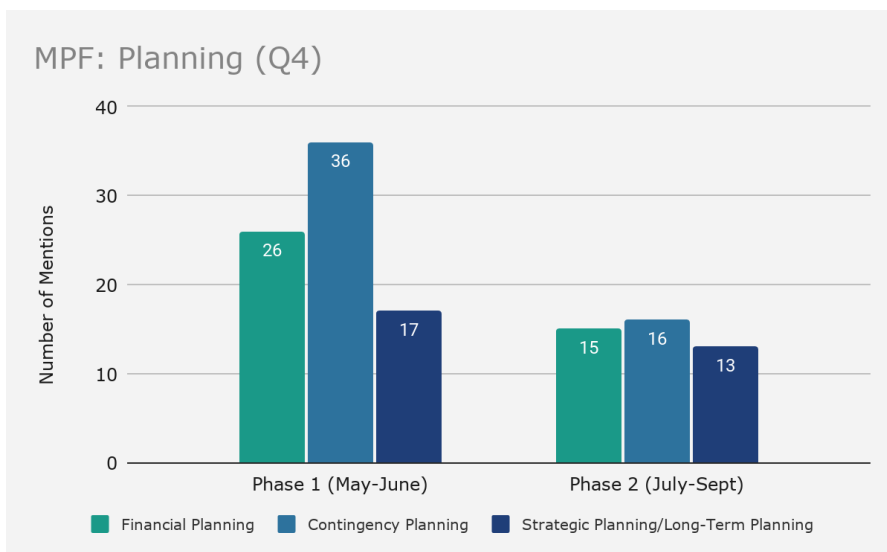


Chart 9: Number of mentions of financial, contingency, and strategic/long-term planning by phase

Organization and Community Needs

The CFMC COVID-19 Relief Fund asked grant applicants to “describe your situation How has the pandemic affected your daily operations?”

The majority of organizations mentioned either organizational or community needs during ‘Early Phase’ with the majority of need mentioned by human services organizations.

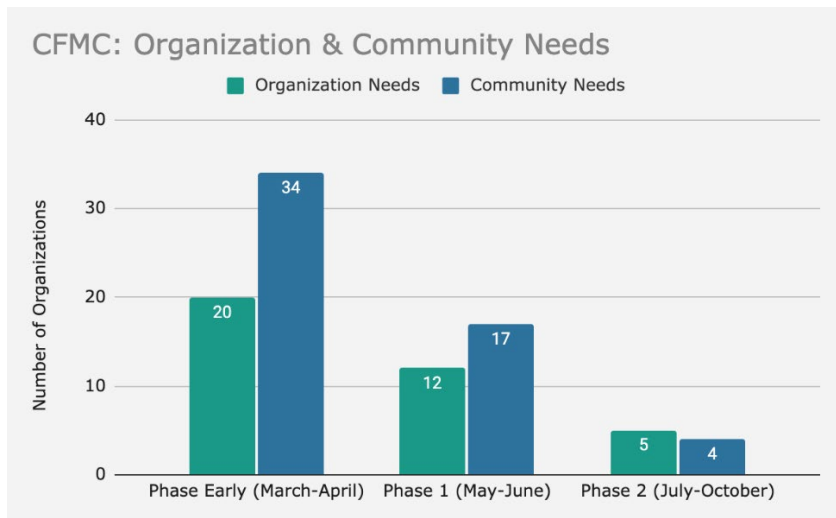


Chart 10: Number of organizations that mentioned organization or community needs

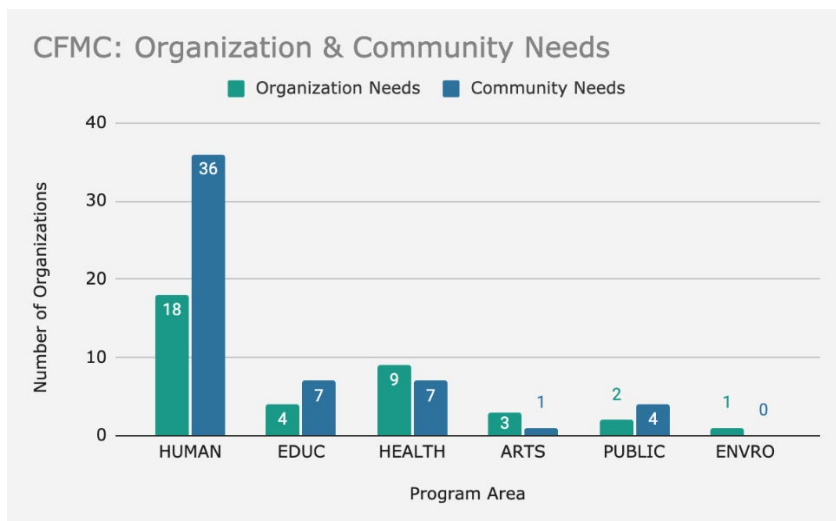


Chart 11: Number of organizations that mentioned organization or community need by program area

ORGANIZATION NEED

There were 20 organizations that mentioned organizational need during 'Early Phase'.

"We are requesting a one-time Community Foundation Grant to help offset the cost of transitioning these...services to via telephone service and to offset the salary costs of staffing these services without available volunteers and students for a period of 60 days from March 15 through May 15." - Participant 77

"Still, an overriding concern is for our two operational support staff. They are critical to the overall operation of our agency. The purpose of this grant – should it be approved – would be to provide funding support for those positions and to provide emergency food and shelter funds for those laid off parents of students in our [program]." - Participant 124

"Like many other nonprofits and cultural organizations in Monterey County and across the nation, securing the necessary operating support now will determine our ability to sustain as an organization at this critical point in time—as well as our ability to build our organizational capacity when we are finally allowed to open our doors to the public again. Further staff reductions could mean the ceasing of [nonprofit's] services to the community."
– Participant 83

COMMUNITY NEEDS

There were 34 organizations that mentioned community needs during 'Early Phase.'

“...community education, including linguistically and culturally competent training on COVID-19 prevention per the CDC guidelines, social distancing guidelines and when and how to seek medical care for COVID symptoms; and the provision of face coverings as recommended by the CDC. – Participant 89

“[Agency] has responded by shifting resources to support basic needs...staff and partners deliver over 1,000 bags of staples and fresh produce every week. To close the digital divide, we have handed out approximately 2,000 Chromebooks and have deployed mobile Wi-Fi through parking Wi-Fi equipped buses in our communities...that supports our distance learning efforts. We have invested in and deployed mental health supports through internal counselors, a partnership with Monterey County Behavioral Health, and contracting with the Mindful Life Project. In short, COVID 19 has altered just about every normal practice within the school system and has shifted our resources, priorities, and focus to fulfill the basic needs our families experience on a daily basis”. – Participant 85

This new shelter-in-place order is further increasing our numbers. In the past two days, we have distributed over 300,000 pounds of food. At this time last year, we distributed 100,000 pounds. Now that the shelter-in place order was enacted, more families are out of work, unable to work and uncertain as to when they will be able to resume work or find new jobs. Meanwhile, they are struggling to cover high rents and basic living costs with significantly less income, as well as cope with unexpected child expenses. – Participant 52

COMMUNITY NEEDS

– ‘Phase 2’

There were 4 organizations that mentioned community needs during ‘Phase 2’

“12 weeks ago, we began assessing how the pandemic was affecting our families and started designing actions and programs that could be adapted to our new reality. In order to do that, we started contacting families individually and elaborated a database documenting their individual circumstances, their technological needs, willingness to be trained in the use of videoconferencing tools and ability to participate in our online programs. In the course of establishing that database, it became clear that many of our families welcomed the continued arts, music and dance classes, but required much more: they were facing desperate situations.

Every situation is different, but they all share one common element: these children and families are in an incredibly vulnerable predicament. Most of our families are resilient and proud, but they are also afraid because they do not know how they will be able to pay for essentials moving forward.

- Participant 98 (from ‘phase 2’)