



Coalition for Pay Equity
Coalition pour l'équité salariale
New Brunswick • Nouveau-Brunswick



Our Work Matters:

The reality of working in the community nonprofit sector



2026

© **New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity Inc.**

ISBN: 978-1-988868-44-8

Research and authoring

Cecilia Pérez Plancarte

Pan Yao

Editorial Committee

Johanne Perron



Coalition for Pay Equity

Coalition pour l'équité salariale

New Brunswick • Nouveau-Brunswick

New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity Inc.

412-236 St. George Street, Moncton, New Brunswick E1C 1W1

+ 1 506 855-0002

Acknowledgements

We are thankful for the people who made this research possible, including:

- Women and Gender Equality Canada for their financial support
- Members of the Sector Advisory Committee, for their guidance, expertise and collaboration:
 - Andrée-Anne Leblanc (Regroupement féministe du Nouveau-Brunswick)
 - Debbie McInnis (United Way Greater Moncton and Southeastern New Brunswick)
 - Haley Flaro (Ability New Brunswick)
 - José Poirier (New Brunswick Multicultural Council)
 - Martine Haché (Centre de bénévolat de la Péninsule Acadienne)
 - Maureen Levangie (Domestic Violence Association of New Brunswick)
 - Michèle Nadeau (YWCA)
 - Randy Hatfield (Human Development Council)
 - Valerie Roy-Lang (Réseau des services pour victimes de violence du Nouveau-Brunswick)
- Members of the Evaluation Committee for their support in developing and evaluating this study: Elda Savoie, Isabel Lanteigne, Lise Savoie, and Catherine MacIsaac from the Université de Moncton
- Pamela Uppal from the Ontario Nonprofit Network for her advice and her impactful work to promote decent work in nonprofits
- Every community nonprofit worker who shared their story with us

Executive Summary

The community nonprofit sector is a cornerstone of New Brunswick's social support ecosystem and a valuable contributor to the province's economy. It consists of organizations that:

- support vulnerable populations through social services;
- deliver community programs and services; and
- advocate for equity and social justice.

From food banks to transition houses, and from newcomer associations to accessibility organizations, the community nonprofit sector supports people in every stage of their lives.

Despite the immense value of their work, workers in the sector face distinctive challenges that impact their ability to adequately support communities. Chronic underfunding and precarious employment are common issues.

Because 66% of the workforce is made up of women, the sector's chronic underfunding and precarious conditions cannot be separated from the broader gendered undervaluation of care work. A gender-based lens is therefore essential for understanding the challenges workers face and for identifying adequate solutions.

It is in this context that the NB Coalition for Pay Equity created the *Our Work Matters* project and established a Sector Advisory Committee. As part of this project, the study presented in this report brought together community nonprofit workers and employers to share experiences, learn from one another, and explore solutions to build a fairer sector.

Through learning circles and a province-wide survey, more than 290 workers and managers from over 50 organizations and diverse backgrounds identified the following five major challenges of working in the sector:

1. This work is underpaid.

Despite the crucial nature of this type of work, the sector offers low wages, few benefits and limited protections to its workers. Community work is often challenging. It entails responsibilities that impact others' well-being, requires important skills and qualifications, and involves both physical, intellectual and emotional labour. Yet, it is not compensated accordingly. In addition, there are wage inequalities within the sector, and a culture of pay secrecy prevents workers from enforcing their rights.

2. The working conditions are precarious.

Even though workers care deeply about serving their communities, the sector's jobs are often precarious, contributing to a cycle of turnover. Job contracts are often short-term or part-time, with limited career advancement opportunities. There are constant pressures and expectations to fulfill the organization's mission, including working inconvenient hours and even doing unpaid work, when it is short-staffed or running on a small budget. Burnout is common among workers, continuing the cycle of turnover. Some workers experience discrimination, harassment and violence from clients, colleagues or leadership, but organizations do not always have policies or procedures to protect their workers.

3. Gendered dynamics further intensify these challenges.

Because most workers in the sector are women, their work is often undervalued. This leads to lower pay, less recognition, and extra intellectual and emotional work that

isn't acknowledged. Pay gaps, gendered expectations, and women taking on more responsibilities without being compensated happen often.

4. The funding is insufficient and unstable.

Most community nonprofits rely on 3 main funding sources:

- Membership fees and donations
- Provincial government funding
- Federal government funding

However, government funding tends to be short-term, restrictive, and unpredictable. It rarely covers living wages, and in some cases, it doesn't account for wages at all. Delays between funding cycles are common, and funding is often shaped by political will or priorities. Donations sometimes help with this lack of stable funding, but fundraising takes time away from organizations' missions, becoming an all-consuming and never-ending task.

That leaves organizations in ongoing instability and with limited resources to adequately pay the workers who keep crucial services running.

5. Workers care deeply about their communities.

Helping others, seeing positive change, and building meaningful relationships are the main reasons workers stay in the sector. They value seeing the direct impact of their work and feel fulfilled when clients grow, gain confidence, or reconnect with community supports.

While this sense of purpose keeps them engaged, workers are aware that caring about their work should not require sacrificing a living wage or enduring precarious working conditions.

These challenges aren't accidental.

They are part of a cycle that undervalues this type of work by:

- Treating this work as volunteer-based, not a serious paid profession
- Relying on low-paid, precarious jobs to deliver crucial services
- Reinforcing gender stereotypes that frame care work as “women’s work”
- Providing short-term, inadequate funding

Community nonprofit workers demand coordinated, sector-wide solutions.

To address this systemic issue, they recommend actions at all levels:

Organizational level

- Prioritize workers’ wellbeing so they can adequately support communities
- Develop clear and fair compensation practices
- Adopt equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies
- Offer professional development and training

Network level

- Strengthen sector coordination and collective voice
- Develop shared sector-wide benefits

Government level

- Provide stable and sustainable funding

These changes will require individual organization commitments, collective action, supportive public policy, and long-term investment from government.

A prosperous, sustainable, and resilient province depends on fully recognizing the value of work carried out in the nonprofit community sector, where the majority of workers are women. The people who support our communities every day deserve stability, respect, and fair compensation.

Table of Contents

- AcknowledgementsIII
- Executive SummaryIV
- Table of Contents..... IX
- Introduction1
- 1 Methodology and Methods 3
 - 1.1 Learning Circles 3
 - 1.2 Survey 5
 - 1.3 Analysis 6
 - 1.4 Participants’ Employment and Demographics Data..... 7
 - 1.5 Limitations 8
- 2 Findings 9
 - 2.1 Compensation..... 9
 - 2.1.1 Low wages..... 9
 - 2.1.2 Wage inequalities and pay secrecy 12
 - 2.1.3 Few benefits 14
 - 2.2 Working conditions 15
 - 2.2.1 Job insecurity and limited career advancement 15
 - 2.2.2 Workplace pressure, burnout, and turnover 16
 - 2.2.3 Unpaid hours and overtime 17
 - 2.2.4 Discrimination, harassment and violence 18
 - 2.2.5 Governance concerns..... 21
 - 2.3 Gendered dynamics..... 22
 - 2.4 Funding 23
 - 2.5 Motivations for working in the sector..... 25

3	Discussion.....	27
4	Recommendations from the sector	29
4.1	Organizational level	29
4.1.1	Prioritize workers’ wellbeing so they can adequately support communities	29
4.1.2	Develop clear and fair compensation practices.....	30
4.1.3	Adopt equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies	30
4.1.4	Offer professional development and training.....	31
4.2	Sector level.....	31
4.2.1	Strengthen sector coordination and collective voice	31
4.2.2	Develop shared sector-wide benefits.....	31
4.3	Government level	32
4.3.1	Provide stable and sustainable funding.....	32
	Conclusion.....	33
	Appendix A: Learning Circle Prompts	34
	Appendix B: Survey Questions	36

Introduction

Community nonprofit organizations are a cornerstone of New Brunswick’s social support ecosystem. They deliver essential services and programs for the population, addressing critical issues such as mental health, poverty and housing insecurity, accessibility, domestic violence, environmental health, family well-being, and social justice. These organizations are also a vital pillar of the province’s economy. In 2023, they contributed \$547 million to the province’s GDP¹ and provided employment for about 12,000 people across the province².

Despite their importance to our communities, the sector’s labor force faces distinctive challenges that impact its ability to deliver essential services. As is often the case in women-dominated sectors³, wages are low and working conditions are precarious. In 2021, the average salary in the sector was \$33,772 – far below the provincial average of \$53,102⁴. However, there is a little documentation on worker’s experiences with these challenges in New Brunswick.

The *Our Work Matters* project aims to address these issues by promoting equitable wages and fair

66 %
of the sector
workforce are
women

¹ Statistics Canada. [Table 36-10-0616-01 Gross domestic product \(GDP\) of nonprofit institutions by sub-sector \(x 1,000,000\)](#)

² Statistics Canada. [Table 36-10-0617-01 Employment in nonprofit institutions by sub-sector \(x1,000\)](#)

³ Statistics Canada. [Table 36-10-0651-01 Employment in the nonprofit sector by demographic characteristic](#)

⁴ Statistics Canada. [Table 36-10-0650-01 Employment in the nonprofit sector by type of worker ;](#) Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0417-01 Employee wages by occupation, annual](#)

working conditions in the community nonprofit sector. Guided by a Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) framework, this study builds on this goal and centers the voices, experiences, and expertise of community nonprofit workers to understand the barriers to fair pay and just working conditions, with particular attention to the experiences of women and gender minorities.

As part of this study, we held two types of engagement activities in 2025 for community nonprofit workers⁵: a series of learning circles and a survey. This report reflects what we heard from the 200+ workers who participated, their perspectives, experiences, and opinions in their own voices.

We grouped their contributions into five themes: compensation, motivations for working in the sector, working conditions, gendered dynamics, and funding. We conclude with key recommendations from participants to address the systemic issues shaping the sector and collaboratively build a stronger, fairer sector.

⁵ In this report, the term community nonprofit worker or workers refers to any member of staff in community nonprofit organizations, including senior management positions. When relevant, the specific roles are indicated as front-line worker, middle management staff, or senior management staff.

1 Methodology and Methods

At the outset of the project, we established a sector advisory committee, composed of nine representatives from local, regional, and provincial community nonprofit organizations. The committee provided overarching guidance for the project’s design and implementation, ensuring that the perspectives and priorities of the community nonprofit sector were represented throughout. It played a key role in mobilizing participation from nonprofit workers, helping to anchor this study in the lived realities of the sector.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to gather information: learning circles as focus group interviews, and a survey. The activities took place between late March and July 2025. The learning circles highlighted personal experiences and stories, offering concrete examples of the reality of working in the sector, while the survey provided numerical data and statistical representations of the issues.

1.1 Learning Circles

Between late March and early May 2025, eleven learning circles were held across four New Brunswick cities—Moncton, Fredericton, Saint John, and Caraquet—as well as through Zoom.

They were called “learning circles” to highlight their purpose: fostering transformational exchanges where participants could both support and learn from one another’s personal experiences. The format was adapted from a similar initiative conducted by the Ontario Nonprofit Network in 2018.

Recruitment for the learning circles was carried out by the sector advisory committee, member organizations, and via public outreach on social media. Sessions were open

to anyone who self-identified as a woman or gender minority currently working in the sector.

A total of 53 participants took part, including 24 senior management staff across six sessions and 29 front-line workers across five sessions. Participants represented 33 organizations in social services, caregiving, and advocacy. The circles were facilitated in both official languages, with six sessions conducted in English and five in French. Front-line workers and senior management staff were in separate sessions to ensure they would speak more freely.

During the sessions, a semi-conversational method was used, guided by open-ended questions, prompts and probes. Efforts were made to foster a safe environment for collective storytelling while allowing flexibility to explore issues in greater depth. Consequently, the emphasis and time spent on specific questions varied across sessions. The questions used are available in Appendix A.

Sessions were not recorded. They were facilitated by the Community Development Coordinator, with two staff members responsible for note-taking. Prior to participation, individuals signed a consent form to ensure confidentiality. Front-line workers had access to honoraria. All participants were provided with promotional materials from the Coalition and mental health resources. At the conclusion of each session, participants completed evaluations of their learning circle experience to assess whether the activities were meeting intended goals and principles.

The learning circles created a valuable opportunity to capture sector realities across regions and organizational types. They also fostered connections among participants who rarely have opportunities to meet. Designed as spaces for dialogue, reflection, and mutual learning, the circles encouraged participants to share their daily work experiences, identify challenges, and collectively explore possible solutions.

1.2 Survey

The survey was available in both official languages and was administered online through Google Forms between June 23 and July 24, 2025. It was open to participants of all genders who were currently or had recently been employed in community nonprofit organizations. The survey required approximately 10 minutes to complete and included 36 questions: 35 mandatory multiple-choice items and one optional comment section for recommendations to improve salaries and working conditions. Prior to beginning the survey, all participants were required to review and sign a consent form authorizing data collection.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section gathered socio-demographic information about participants and their organizations. The second section focused on pay, benefits, and workplace experiences, including discrimination, harassment, and violence, as well as the human resources (HR) policies intended to address these issues. The third section was targeted specifically at senior management and concentrated on funding, human resources management, and relationships with boards. The survey was initially developed based on a similar survey used by the Ontario Nonprofit Network and was subsequently refined using preliminary findings from the learning circles. A complete list of survey questions is provided in Appendix B.

Recruitment and promotion were conducted through the networks of the sector advisory committee, learning circle participants, and Coalition member organizations via email. In addition, a staff email directory was compiled by systematically reviewing organizational websites to gather contact information.

In total, 200 responses were received, of which 198 were complete and valid. Among respondents, 55 identified as senior management and provided input for the third

section, while 142 held other positions. More than 100 respondents also provided comments and recommendations on improving wages and working conditions in the sector.

By including participants of all genders, the survey complemented the women- and gender-minority-focused learning circles, offering a broader perspective on sector realities. This combination allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of workplace conditions. Together, the two methods created a fuller picture of the issues facing New Brunswick's nonprofit sector and strengthened the evidence base for developing actionable solutions.

1.3 Analysis

Notes from learning circles were first categorized according to the key themes reflected in the guiding questions. Using Microsoft Excel, the notes were broken into segments, tagged, and coded. Each code was then grouped under themes and subthemes developed from both the notes and the literature review.

For the survey data, comment responses were coded by keywords and aligned with themes identified from the learning circles. Multiple-choice responses were summarized by question, and cross-tabulations were conducted by gender, minority identity (Immigrant, Indigenous, Visible Minority, LGBTQ2S+, Persons with Disabilities), and management position (senior vs. non-senior). Additional comparisons were made by position level, racial and ethnic background, and disability status. All analyses were conducted in Microsoft Excel.

The analytical plan was structured to address the study's primary objectives: to systematically describe low pay and limited benefits in the sector; workplace inequalities, including discrimination, harassment, and violence; the implementation

of human resources policies; and the ongoing funding crisis. The analysis proceeded in four parts: (1) demographic characteristics of the workforce; (2) pay and benefits challenges; (3) workplace conditions; and (4) funding issues and relationships with government.

Quotes throughout the report come from participants' responses in both the learning circles and the survey. They have been anonymized.

1.4 Participants' Employment and Demographics Data

Table 1 Participant's Employment and Demographics

	Learning Circles (53 respondents)	Survey (198 respondents)
Age	Unknown	20 to 29: 18% (n=35) 30 to 39: 27% (n=53) 40 to 49: 23% (n=46) 50 and over: 32% (n=64) Under 20: 1% (n=1) Prefer not to answer: 1% (n=1)
Position	Front-line or non-managerial: 55% (n=29) Middle or senior management: 45% (n=24)	Front-line or non-managerial: 47% (n=94) Administrative support: 8% (n=16) Middle management: 19% (n=37) Senior management: 26% (n=51)
Gender Identity	Women: 81% (n=43) Non-binary: 6% (n=3) Unknown: 13% (n=7)	Woman: 82% (n=163) Man: 15% (n=29) Non-binary: 4% (n=8)

Minority Group	LGBTQ2S+: 13% (n=7) Immigrant: 9% (n=5) Visible minority: 4% (n=2) Indigenous: 2% (n=1) Person with a disability: 8% (n=4) Unknown: 79% (n=42)	LGBTQ2S+: 14% (n=27) Immigrant: 10% (n=20) Visible minority: 4% (n=7) Indigenous: 2% (n=4) Person with a disability: 10% (n=19) None of the above: 72% (n=142)
Language	Unknown	Anglophone: 55% (n=109) Francophone: 32% (n=63) Bilingual: 7% (n=14) None of the above: 2% (n=3) Prefer not to answer: 5% (n=9)

1.5 Limitations

The research performed for this report considered the community nonprofit sector as those organizations that offered services or programs to vulnerable populations, as well as those who advocated for social justice. In other words, organizations of the arts and culture sub-sector were not considered. However, it is fair to assume that the realities of workers in the community nonprofit sector are similar to those in arts and culture nonprofits. It is also important to note that the participants of our study may not be representative of the whole community nonprofit sector.

2 Findings

With our consultations, we aimed to center workers' voices, especially women and gender-diverse individuals, in our analysis of the precarious situation of the community nonprofit sector. Their voices will be at the forefront of each of the five main themes of our findings: A) Compensation, B) Motivations for working in the sector, C) Working conditions, D) Gendered dynamics, and E) Funding.

2.1 Compensation

Community nonprofit workers consistently reported that compensation is both inadequate and inequitable. Many earn wages that fall well below the responsibilities required of their roles and the basic needs of their families, and they have minimal access to benefits. Some workers also described persistent wage inequalities across roles and identities, reinforced by a culture of pay secrecy that limits their ability to advocate for fairness. As mentioned later in this report, underlying these challenges is the unstable and insufficient financial support that nonprofits rely on, which constrains organizations' capacity to offer competitive compensation. Together, these conditions leave many workers feeling undervalued despite the essential nature of their contributions.

2.1.1 Low wages

"I have post-secondary education and almost 20 years of experience. Yet my son, who graduated high school last year, makes about as much as I do."

– Front-line worker

Low wages in the community nonprofit sector were a major concern across learning circles and the survey. Participants in the learning circles frequently described a

significant gap between the level of responsibility, skills and effort required in their roles and the wages they receive. Several participants noted that despite being highly qualified, having difficult working conditions, and carrying workloads comparable to positions in government, education, or healthcare, their pay does not reflect this reality.

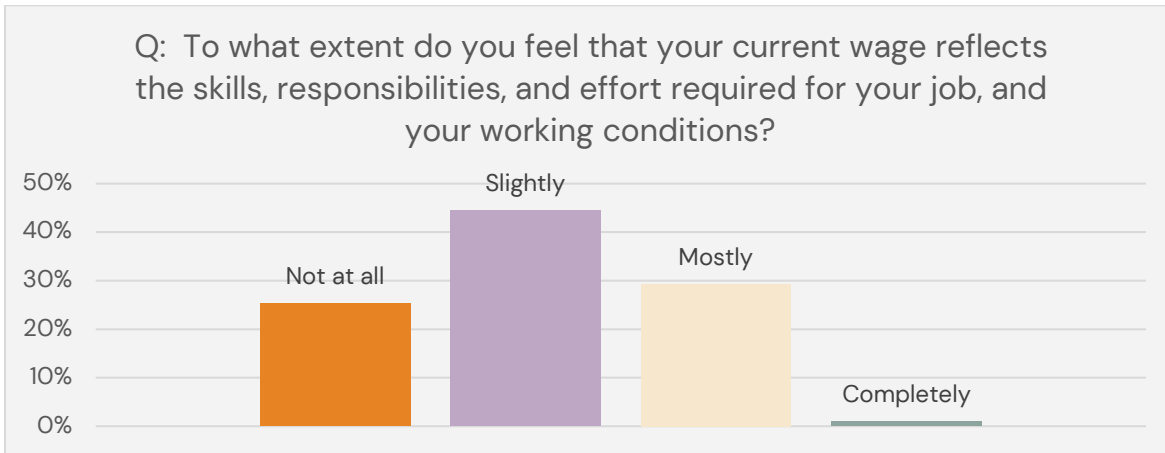
"I don't know anyone who would take a punch to the head or have their life threatened repeatedly for \$26 an hour. The staff at my house, specifically, risk their lives every day, and I think our pay should reflect that."

– Front-line worker

Many also emphasized that their work involves complex emotional, administrative, and professional responsibilities—caring for vulnerable populations, coordinating services, managing crises, and ensuring community support systems function effectively—yet their salaries do not reflect the weight of these duties. The sentiment was similar among survey participants (

). The majority felt that their wages do not reflect the reality of the work (25% Not at all; 44% Slightly), and only 1% of respondents indicated their wages completely reflect the reality of the job.

Figure 1 Survey responses on wage adequacy



Participants in both the learning circles and the survey indicated that wages in the sector are insufficient to cover personal or family needs. Only 3% of survey respondents mentioned that their salary completely covers their basic needs. Learning circle participants indicated that the situation is so dire that many workers are forced to take second jobs, use food banks, and rely on family or their partners for financial support.

“It is ironic that the people working to alleviate the issues caused by poverty are often living in poverty themselves.”

(Front-line worker)

Many participants noted that organizations try to compensate for low wages with flexible work arrangements, such as flexible working hours and 4-day workweeks. These arrangements are seen as valuable to many employees, especially people with disabilities or caregiving responsibilities. However, these arrangements have limits, especially when workloads remain high, and employees continue to struggle to meet basic financial needs.

The issue of inadequate pay was described not only as a financial concern but also as a matter of respect and recognition. One learning circle participant explained that during the COVID-19 pandemic, front-line workers in the nonprofit sector were expected to remain present and support communities through crisis, yet their compensation did not increase in line with this heightened responsibility. This sentiment was echoed across learning circles, where individuals described the frustration of demanding, emotionally taxing work combined with limited financial reward.

Some participants made comparisons with other sectors, noting that roles with lower levels of responsibility in other fields sometimes earn more than senior positions within nonprofit organizations. These inequities contributed to feelings of discouragement and reinforced the perception that community and social well-being are undervalued.

"I see many people who want to work in the community sector, but it is not accessible because of the low wages."

(Management staff)

This reality raises concerns about the sector's future. Many participants noted that low wages make it difficult to attract qualified staff, retain experienced workers, or support younger generations in building long-term careers in community-based work.

2.1.2 Wage inequalities and pay secrecy

"There is no consistency in salaries because of funding sources.

This results in wage disparities."

– Executive Director

In addition to limited compensation offered in the sector, there were reports of disparities in compensation practices. Many participants in the learning circles

reported being paid the same as new hires despite their seniority within the organization.

“Our organization offers the same wages for new employees and for me with my 8 years of experience. I do more work than the new staff, I train her and make the same amount.”
 – Front-line worker

It is important to note that Statistics Canada also reports wage disparities across marginalized workers in the sector in New Brunswick³ (Table 2). In 2021, women earned an average of \$30,827, compared with \$39,511 for men. Visible minorities earned \$30,450 while those not belonging to a visible minority earned \$34,046; Indigenous workers earned \$31,343, while non-Indigenous workers earned \$33,873.

Table 2 Wage Gap by Demographic Characteristic (2021)

Demographic Characteristic	Average Annual Salary	Wage Gap
Sex		
Male	\$39,511	22%
Female	\$30,827	
Indigenous Identity		
Non-Indigenous	\$33,873	7%
Indigenous	\$31,343	
Immigrant Status		
Non-immigrant	\$33,792	1%
Immigrant	\$33,471	
Visible or not a visible minority		
Not a visible minority	\$34,046	11%

Visible minority	\$30,450	
------------------	----------	--

Because of funding restrictions or the absence of standardized pay scales, organizations often compensate employees at different rates. This inconsistency can leave workers feeling undervalued and contributes significantly to ongoing turnover.

Participants also mentioned that, due to a lack of transparency, they discreetly seek information about wages from their colleagues. However, even when they uncover wage disparities, they often hesitate to discuss them openly with their employers for fear of being penalized.

2.1.3 Few benefits

“I am working at 72 years old because I have always worked in NPOs and as a result, I can’t live on CPP and old age pension.”

– Front-line worker

In addition to concerns about wages, participants highlighted significant gaps in employer-provided benefits, noting the absence of basic supports such as health coverage, retirement plans, paid sick leave, and paid time off. For some, particularly those working in front-line positions, the lack of benefits created ongoing financial and personal insecurity, adding to the stress of emotionally demanding jobs.

Several participants noted that without health or dental coverage, they often delay or avoid essential care. Others described relying on personal savings to manage medical expenses, which added to feelings of stress and instability. Participants also emphasized that benefits are common in comparable public-sector roles, reinforcing the perception that work in the nonprofit sector is undervalued.

The lack of benefits was described as contributing directly to burnout and turnover. Without paid sick leave, individuals reported coming to work even when unwell, especially during periods of peak demand, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Others mentioned carrying a high emotional workload – regularly handling crises, trauma, and grief – without access to mental health supports.

Participants also expressed frustration at the expectation that personal passion should compensate for the absence of institutional support. Some described staying in roles despite limited benefits only because they care deeply about the work and the people they serve. However, they stressed that long-term commitment becomes increasingly difficult when employment lacks protections. Several spoke about witnessing colleagues leave the sector for positions offering reliable benefits, particularly younger workers who cannot sustain a future without adequate protections.

2.2 Working conditions

Besides limited compensation, workers described the sector as characterized by various degrees of precarious working conditions:

- 1) Due to the lack of financial resources, the sector offers job insecurity and limited career advancement to their employees.
- 2) There is a cycle of turnover influenced not only by the limited compensation, but also by workplace pressures that lead to burn-out
- 3) Many employees also feel responsible to work while unpaid and do overtime, either due to vocation to help their communities, because of the limited human resources, or pressure from their peers.

2.2.1 Job insecurity and limited career advancement

Participants frequently described employment in the nonprofit sector as unstable and precarious. Many reported working under short-term contracts, uncertain funding cycles, or part-time arrangements that offered little long-term security. This instability affected not only their financial well-being but also their ability to plan for the future, including housing, retirement, and family responsibilities. Several participants explained that even after years of service, their employment future remained uncertain and precarious.

Personally, I have experienced food and housing insecurity, even while employed. Why? Because each new contract comes with its share of financial delays, and you have to continually make up for the losses accumulated during periods of job hunting. This cycle is exhausting and prevents you from building long-term stability, both professionally and personally."

– Middle management staff

The lack of stable employment was closely linked to funding insecurity. Participants noted that positions often depend on time-limited grants or project-based funding, leaving workers unsure whether their roles will continue beyond the current funding period. This uncertainty creates ongoing stress and makes it difficult for organizations to retain experienced staff. Some participants described cycles of layoffs and rehiring, which disrupted service continuity and increased workload pressures on remaining staff.

Participants also emphasized that employment instability disproportionately affects those in lower-paid positions, exacerbating existing inequalities within the sector. Workers expressed concern that younger staff and new entrants may be discouraged from staying in the field due to uncertainty and limited career progression. As a result,

organizations face challenges building institutional memory and maintaining consistent, high-quality services.

2.2.2 Workplace pressure, burnout, and turnover

Because of limited resources and constant turnover, many workers perform tasks outside their job descriptions to keep essential services running.

“There is a lack of resources on a bunch of different levels. It feels like doing three jobs. We can’t hire someone to do that, so we should do it internally.”

– Front-line worker

This work pressure was present across all roles. For senior management staff, in particular, the responsibilities range from human resources and administrative tasks, dealing with government and board relations, to sometimes performing the role of a project coordinator when organizations are short-staffed.

“It forces executive directors to ‘wear a lot of hats’ [...] You need lots of abilities: communications, HR, etc., to do all the tasks for all the people. Especially in a small organization, where you have to be HR and deal with government relationships.”

– Executive Director

Limited compensation and unstable employment perpetuate a cycle of turnover, in which employees feel pressured to take on additional responsibilities, increasing their workload and eventually leading to burnout. Many of these employees then leave the organization, and the cycle of turnover continues, impacting the organization’s mission and delivery of crucial services.

“I once burned-out cause there were too many people to help. We don’t get what we need to provide the services we give.”

– Front-line worker

2.2.3 Unpaid hours and overtime

Due to the essential nature of community work, many employees work overtime or, at times, volunteer at inconvenient hours because of the responsibility they feel to support their community or because of unspoken expectations in community work.

“We work way too much. The organization owes me money, but it’s such a large amount that it would be hard to pay me all at once.”

– Executive Director

“Workdays don’t have clear boundaries: they don’t end at 5 p.m. It’s hard to switch off.”

– Front-line worker

In the learning circles, many participants indicated that they felt a moral obligation to perform extraneous tasks because that work benefited the community, and because of it, they had difficulty asking for more money or better working conditions. Some also indicated that they feel the pressure from the work culture to perform their duties without pay.

“Even outside work hours, people volunteer their time, so I should volunteer mine.”

– Front-line worker

In the survey, participants reinforced this sentiment, with 41.4% indicating that they have been expected to work without pay. Of this group, 11.6% indicated that they are expected to volunteer in their workplace once every few months or less, 16.7% said 1 to 3 times a month, and 13.1% said at least once a week. This resulted in participants feeling they were taken advantage of or exploited, which eventually contributes to the cycle of burnout and turnover in the sector.

2.2.4 Discrimination, harassment and violence

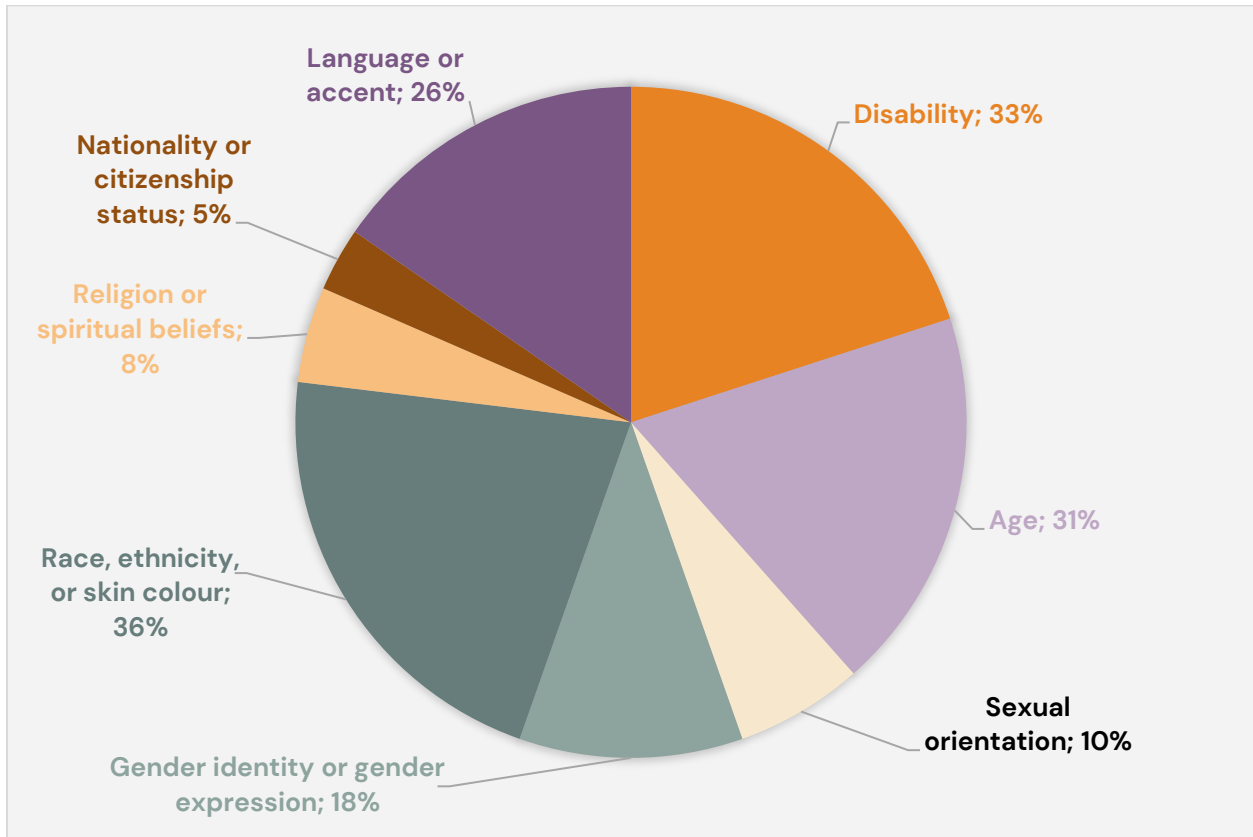
According to consultations with workers, discrimination in the workplace remains present in the sector. In the survey, 20% of participants reported having experienced or witnessed discriminatory behaviour. Among the types of discrimination identified (Figure 2), the most common was based on race, ethnicity, and skin colour, cited by 36% of those who had experienced or observed discrimination. The second most frequently reported type was discrimination based on disability (33%), followed by age (31%). The graph below illustrates the distribution of the different forms of discrimination reported by survey participants.

Among those who discussed discrimination in the learning circles, many referred specifically to gender-based and age-based discrimination in the form of different treatments, stereotypes and disadvantages.

“As young women, we have to deal with sexism and ageism: we aren’t taken seriously, and we constantly have to prove ourselves.”

– Front-line worker

Figure 2 Types of discrimination reported by survey participants



Some learning circle participants with an immigrant background reported experiencing barriers in having their skills and credentials recognized, influencing compensation and limiting career opportunities and advancement. In the survey, some participants echoed this sentiment, showcasing the systemic barriers that immigrant workers continue to face in the job market.

“I am an immigrant with over 20 years of international professional experience. I have been in New Brunswick for a year and a half, and I see a big gap between what I contribute on a daily basis in my job and how my experience is recognized, particularly in terms of salary. I was given a salary equivalent to that of a recent graduate, without taking into account my years of expertise.”

– Front-line worker

While learning circle participants indicated an absence of diversity, equity and inclusion policies in their organizations, some survey participants (n=89) reported that these policies were in place but often not implemented.

“We don’t have an HR [department], and though we have policies, they are not enforced, or no actions are taken when transgressed.”

– Front-line worker

When asked about experiences regarding harassment or violence, 20% of survey participants reported having experienced at least one of them. Some learning circle participants confirmed that harassment and violence remain a significant concern in nonprofits. Participants indicated that these behaviours typically originate from clients and pointed to a lack of formal protections for workers.

“One client started to harass me and sent inappropriate texts. I showed them to my ED, but he was surprised and unsupportive. Many men in my organization realized that women are not treated the same way as men.”

– Front-line worker

2.2.5 Governance concerns

Participants raised concerns about governance structures and leadership practices within nonprofit organizations, particularly the challenges with board relationships, the limited interaction between staff and boards of directors, and the lack of HR policies to address grievances with management.

Participants working in management positions mentioned that working with board members is challenging at times. Learning circle participants acknowledged board members' commitment as volunteers but noted that limited time, capacity, or sector knowledge can affect the quality of governance. Some also reported experiencing skepticism or questioning from boards regarding their professional judgment, which

undermined trust and morale. In these situations, staff felt they had to repeatedly justify their work, even when they had extensive experience and expertise. This dynamic reinforced perception that governance structures prioritize oversight and control over collaboration and mutual respect.

Many described governance arrangements in community organizations as distant and segmented, noting that board members are often removed from day-to-day operations and front-line realities. This separation contributed to feelings that staff perspectives and lived experiences are not fully understood or valued in organizational decision-making.

“There is no one policing the working conditions of the not-for-profit sector. If there are issues, there is only a board, who we are discouraged to speak with. If we have an issue, we are all equal aside from our boss, but if there is an issue with the boss, we have no one.”

– Front-line worker

Furthermore, our consultations show that limited funding in the nonprofit sector frequently prevents organizations from establishing proper administrative structures—such as HR functions, formal policies, and standardized procedures. As a result, learning circle participants often felt unsure about where to bring work-related grievances. Many described a sense of disconnect from board members and discomfort raising sensitive issues with their supervisors or leadership, leaving them without a clear or safe avenue for support.

2.3 Gendered dynamics

Participants frequently described the nonprofit sector as deeply gendered, noting that women make up the majority of the workforce while simultaneously experiencing

lower pay, limited recognition, and heightened responsibilities and emotional labour. Many participants explicitly linked compensation inequities to the feminized nature of the sector, stating that work traditionally associated with care, support, and community wellbeing is consistently undervalued. Several participants questioned why their wages remain low despite high responsibility levels, attributing this to broader societal assumptions about “women’s work”.

The gender pay gap emerged as a recurring concern. Participants shared experiences of earning less than their male counterparts or encountering resistance when advocating for higher wages. Some noted that men are less likely to accept the low salaries commonly offered in the sector, which reinforces both wage stagnation and gender segregation. This dynamic contributes to a cycle in which positions remain underpaid because they are primarily filled by women who feel compelled to accept lower compensation due to limited alternatives or a strong commitment to their organization’s mission.

“This is the second time I’ve taken over a position from a man, and I can see that I’m making a lot less than they did. I tell myself: ‘Bite your tongue, do the work, and ask for a raise later.’”

– Executive Director

Participants also highlighted gendered expectations in day-to-day work. Women described carrying disproportionate emotional labour, including relationship-building with clients, managing crises, and providing informal emotional support beyond formal job descriptions. In some cases, client preferences further reinforced these expectations. Participants noted that female clients may feel more comfortable working with female staff, particularly in sensitive service areas, increasing demand on women workers without corresponding adjustments in pay or workload.

These gendered dynamics were described as both normalized and rarely challenged. Participants explained that emotional availability, flexibility, and self-sacrifice are often treated as inherent qualities rather than skilled labour. As a result, women's contributions are frequently overlooked in organizational decision-making and funding structures.

2.4 Funding

Participants overwhelmingly identified current funding models as the main structural challenge for community organizations to offer equitable wages and decent working conditions to their employees, as well as to ensure the continuity of service delivery. Participants stressed that current funding models rarely support core operations and living wages. Instead, funding is frequently tied to specific projects, leaving organizations without adequate resources to cover administrative costs, staffing, or daily operations. This lack of core funding limits organizations' ability to hire sufficient staff, resulting in understaffing and increased workload for existing employees. Participants explained that even when community needs grow, funding constraints prevent organizations from expanding services or stabilizing positions.

"When you apply for projects, they never give you anything for salaries: 'Pay for it yourself'."

– Middle management staff

Participants also indicated that delays between funding cycles are common and that funding is often shaped by political will or priorities. Many described the ongoing pressure to secure funding through grants, donations, and fundraising events, often on an annual or project-by-project basis. This constant need to renew and retain funding created uncertainty and limited organizations' ability to plan beyond the short

term. Participants emphasized that the cycle of applying, reporting, and reapplying for funding is exhausting and diverts time from direct service delivery.

“The lack of core funding and the short duration of projects (often linked to election cycles) lead to constant instability. Organizations spend too much time seeking funding simply to secure their jobs, instead of focusing on their mission.”
– Front-line worker

Fundraising responsibilities were described as particularly burdensome and shared across roles regardless of position, adding to already heavy workloads. While fundraising events can generate a sense of accomplishment, participants expressed frustration that success is often short-lived, as it does not translate into stable, long-term funding. Several highlighted the emotional toll of repeatedly having to justify their organization’s value and compete with other community organizations for limited resources.

The short-term nature of funding was repeatedly cited as a barrier to sustainability. Participants described difficulty with strategic thinking or with investing in long-term solutions to community needs when funding must be renewed each year. This uncertainty affects not only organizational planning but also staff retention, as positions remain insecure and tied to funding timelines. Several participants expressed that the current funding environment prioritizes short-term outputs over lasting community impact.

2.5 Motivations for working in the sector

“You get to see that your work matters, that it makes a difference.”
– Front-line worker

Across the learning circles, participants consistently emphasized that their work is driven by a genuine passion for people and for strengthening their communities. Many spoke about feeling most fulfilled when they can provide support directly, witness clients' growth, and contribute to positive change. Helping others was frequently described as the core reason they chose to stay in the sector. Participants described moments such as seeing newcomers settle into their new environment, watching clients gain skills and confidence, or reconnecting isolated individuals with community resources as deeply meaningful experiences. They noted that even small improvements in someone's life reinforced their commitment to their roles.

"You see families at the mall, and they recognize you. They tell you the solutions you proposed worked. It is rewarding."

– Executive Director

"My favourite part is to give a voice to people who wouldn't have a voice."

– Front-line worker

Participants also highlighted the importance of being able to see the impact of their work. They appreciated that, unlike in many other fields, the results of their efforts are often visible and immediate. Whether through a client's progress, a successful community event, or positive feedback from families, these moments served as reminders that their work contributes to meaningful change. The sense of making a difference—both at the individual and community levels—was a powerful source of intrinsic motivation.

"My passion is people. Nonprofit and working in community allows me to work directly with people, and see the great work being done."

– Executive Director

Relationships emerged as an important source of motivation. Participants expressed that they enjoy meeting diverse individuals, hearing their stories, and forming connections. This relational aspect provided daily inspiration and a sense of shared humanity. The opportunity to work alongside colleagues who share similar values and who care deeply about the well-being of their communities strengthened their sense of belonging within their organizations and the sector more broadly. Many described the sector as a supportive environment where compassion and community-mindedness are shared priorities.

“While I truly value my position and take great pride in the work I do, the reality is that I’m falling behind financially each month. It’s becoming increasingly difficult to sustain this work long-term at my current rate of pay, despite how much I enjoy the role.”

– Front-line worker

However, participants noted that while their commitment to the work motivates them to remain in the sector despite the challenges, passion alone cannot compensate indefinitely for financial insecurity, particularly as cost-of-living pressures increase.

“Many employees in this sector are in it because they want to help and do good. That doesn’t mean they don’t deserve a salary that would allow them to be able to live and adapt to the rising cost of living.”

– Front-line worker

3 Discussion

The findings of this study reveal a strained community nonprofit sector workforce that is mostly composed of women. These workers have a strong commitment to fulfill their community needs, yet they are constrained by multiple systemic and structural

challenges that undervalue this type of work and limit the delivery of essential services.

Low wages and limited benefits emerged as central and persistent concerns. Participants repeatedly emphasized the disconnect between the complexity and responsibility of their roles and the compensation they receive. This misalignment was experienced not only as financial hardship but also as a lack of recognition for the professional expertise, responsibilities and emotional labour required in community-based work. The absence of benefits such as health coverage, pensions, and paid leave further compounds job insecurity, particularly for long-term workers and those approaching retirement. These conditions contribute directly to burnout, turnover, and difficulties in recruiting and retaining skilled staff.

Employment precarity—shaped by short-term contracts and funding uncertainty—was another defining feature of community work in New Brunswick. The reliance on project-based and time-limited funding restricts organizations' ability to offer stable employment and engage in long-term planning. As a result, workers are often left navigating ongoing uncertainty about job continuity, while organizations struggle to maintain institutional knowledge and service consistency. This instability disproportionately affects front-line and lower-paid workers, reinforcing existing inequalities within the sector.

Gendered inequities were woven throughout participants' experiences. The feminized nature of community work was closely linked to wage stagnation, limited advancement opportunities, and normalized expectations of emotional availability and self-sacrifice. Participants articulated how care-oriented labour is routinely undervalued, both culturally and economically, and how gendered assumptions continue to shape pay structures, workload distribution, and recognition. These

findings align with broader feminist labour research that identifies care work as essential yet systematically undercompensated.

The lack of core, long-term funding forces organizations into continuous fundraising cycles, diverting time and energy away from service delivery, organizational development and capacity-building. This funding environment prioritizes short-term outputs over long-term impact and contributes to chronic organizational fragility.

Taken together, these findings suggest that challenges faced by community nonprofit workers are not the result of individual organizations, workers, or government officials, but of a broader structural undervaluation of this type of work underscored through:

- treating this work as volunteer-based, not a serious paid profession;
- relying on low-paid, precarious jobs to deliver crucial services;
- reinforcing gender stereotypes that frame care work as “women’s work”; and
- providing short-term, inadequate funding.

The gendered nature of the community sector underpins its chronic underfunding and undervaluing, and must be considered when developing solutions to overcome this systemic issue.

4 Recommendations from the sector

Throughout our consultations, community nonprofit workers identified several key actions needed to address the systemic challenges facing the sector.

At the core is the need for a coordinated multi-level approach to recognize the value of community work, improve working conditions, stabilize essential community services, and strengthen the long-term sustainability of New Brunswick’s community nonprofit sector.

Their recommendations, outlined below, call for change at every level: organizational, sector, and government, with each one reinforcing the other.

4.1 Organizational level

Individual organizations can form the foundation for broader sector-wide change by implementing decent work policies and practices in their workplaces.

4.1.1 Prioritize workers' wellbeing so they can adequately support communities

Organizations can strengthen service quality and reduce burnout and turnover by:

- ensuring access to paid sick leave, health insurance, retirement security, and wellness supports
- shifting away from a culture that relies on personal sacrifice to sustain essential services

4.1.2 Develop clear and fair compensation practices

Organizations can take meaningful steps toward equitable compensation by establishing transparent, consistent, and fair pay practices. This includes:

- reviewing compensation practices and developing clear internal pay scales
- implementing pay equity through job evaluations based on the skills, responsibilities, effort and working conditions required for each role
- preparing for upcoming pay transparency legislation in New Brunswick⁶:
 - post pay bands for a job opportunity
 - refrain from asking a candidate about their previous salary

⁶ In March 2026, the Holt government introduced Bill 24, the Pay Transparency Act.

- allow employees to talk about their wages with colleagues
- start gathering information on wage gaps in your organization

These actions lay the groundwork for sector-wide implementation of fair compensation practices and help ensure that workers are paid equitably for the value of their work.

4.1.3 Adopt equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies

Organizations can strengthen workplace safety and respect by:

- implementing clear anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, and anti-violence policies
- ensuring consistent enforcement and accountability
- providing training for staff and leadership

4.1.4 Offer professional development and training

Organizations can enable a shift from crisis-driven operations to long-term planning by:

- allocating resources and time for ongoing training
- supporting leadership development and management preparation

4.2 Sector level

These actions require collaboration across organizations:

4.2.1 Strengthen sector coordination and collective voice

To address the current lack of unified representation, organizations can work together to:

- establish a sector association or strengthen existing regional networks

- align practices and standards across organizations
- coordinate communication and advocacy for stable and sustainable funding

Increasing collaboration across organizations will help build a collective voice capable of influencing policy and funding decisions.

4.2.2 Develop shared sector-wide benefits

When individual organizations cannot provide comprehensive benefits on their own, sector-wide solutions offer an effective way to ensure consistent protections for the essential community nonprofit workforce. Collective initiatives could include:

- creating a sector-wide retirement plan
- developing a sector-wide health benefits plan
- coordinating EDI policy frameworks
- offering sector-wide professional development programs

4.3 Government level

Finally, the actions listed above will also require commitment from governments through policy reform and sustained investment. The sector calls on the government to:

4.3.1 Provide stable and sustainable funding

To ensure continuity of essential services and improve working conditions, the government should review its funding models for community nonprofits so that they:

- prioritize long-term, stable core funding programs rather than project-based funding
- ensure equitable wages for its workforce

→ respect organizational autonomy to adapt to evolving community needs

Conclusion

A prosperous, sustainable, and resilient province depends on fully recognizing the value of work carried out in the nonprofit community sector, where the majority of workers are women. This sector plays an essential role in economic development, social cohesion, and the quality of life in New Brunswick communities. Yet it continues to face structural precarity driven by chronic underfunding, low wages, and inadequate working conditions, underscoring a systemic undervaluation of this type of work.

Improving conditions in the community nonprofit sector demands sector-wide actions across all levels that ensure real policy change, long-term funding, and a commitment to decent work across the board. The people who support our communities every day deserve stability, respect, and fair compensation.

This work matters, and it's time the systems reflected that truth through real, lasting change.

Let's get to work.

Appendix A: Learning Circle Prompts

OPENING QUESTION (1 min)

1. What are your first names, pronouns and what kind of work do you do?

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS (9 min)

2. Think back to when you first started working in the community nonprofit sector. Why did you choose to join the sector?
3. What do you like the most about your work in the nonprofit sector?
4. What do you like the least about your work in the sector?

KEY QUESTIONS

5. Can you share your thoughts on how your work is perceived or valued? (5 min)
 - a. Prompt: By your employer/ your board (for EDs)
 - b. Prompt: By the people you serve
 - c. Prompt: By society
6. In your opinion, how do your current wages and benefits reflect the value of your work? (10min)
 - a. What makes you feel that way?
 - b. Why is this the case?
 - c. How does this impact you?
 - d. How does this impact your organisation?
7. *(transition statement)* **We want to know how gender might impact wages in the non-profit sector. (20 min)**
 - a. We know that this sector is women-dominated. Why is it this way?
 - i. What differences have you observed in **wages** between women and men at work (sector)?
 1. Prompt: Do you think that women and gender diverse people get different wages than men in the sector?)
 - ii. What differences have you noticed at work (sector) in the type of **roles** given to men and women?
 - iii. What **barriers**, if any, have you experienced when it comes to promotion and leadership?

8. *(transition statement)* **We want to apply an intersectional lens to understanding the situation of the sector.**
- a. Do you see any diverse groups of people working in the sector (racialized people, immigrants, LGBTQ2S+ people, people with disabilities, etc.)?
 - b. Do you know if they experience any barriers or difficulties to access the jobs?

ENDING QUESTIONS (10 min)

9. Having heard all of the issues brought up in the discussion, what kind of changes would make a difference for women working in the sector regarding salaries and wages?
10. What is one thing you appreciated or learned from this learning circle.

Appendix B: Survey Questions

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

We are collecting socio-demographic information to help fill a gap in knowledge about the labour force in the community non-profit sector in New Brunswick, and to explore whether certain socio-demographic characteristics are linked to unfair employment situations.

1. What is your gender identity?

- A. Woman
- B. Man
- C. Non-binary
- D. Other (please specify): _____
- E. I prefer not to answer.

2. Identify as: (Select all that apply.)

- A. Anglophone
- B. Francophone
- C. Immigrant
- D. Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit)
- E. Visible Minority (non-white and non-Indigenous)
- F. LGBTQ2S+
- G. Person with disability
- H. None of the above
- I. I prefer not to answer.

3. What is your age group?

- A. Under 20 years old
- B. 20 to 29 years old
- C. 30 to 39 years old
- D. 40 to 49 years old
- E. 50 years old and over
- F. I prefer not to answer.

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- A. No formal education
- B. High school diploma or equivalent (e.g., GED)
- C. College or CEGEP diploma

- D. Bachelor's degree
- E. Post-graduate degree (e.g., master's, PhD, MD, JD)
- F. Other (please specify): _____

5. What is your current employment status in the community sector? (Select all that apply.)

- A. Full-time
- B. Part-time
- C. Permanent
- D. Contractual

6. How long have you been working in your organization?

- A. Less than 1 year
- B. 1 to less than 3 years
- C. 3 to less than 5 years
- D. 5 to less than 10 years
- E. 10 years or more

7. Which category best describes your position?

- A. Front-line Staff/Non-Managerial
- B. Administrative support staff
- C. Middle Management
- D. Senior Management

8. What kind of work does your organization perform?

- A. Community services or community-based interventions
- B. Advocacy and political action
- C. Other (please specify): _____

9. In which region does your organization work?

- A. Northeast
- B. Northwest
- C. Capital Region
- D. Kent-Miramichi
- E. Southeast
- F. Southwest
- G. Whole province of NB
- H. Other (please specify): _____

10. In which language does your organization provide services? (Select all that apply.)

- A. French
- B. English
- C. Other (please specify): _____

11. How many employees work in your organization?

- A. 1 to 4 employees
- B. 5 to 19 employees
- C. 20 to 99 employees
- D. 100 or more employees

WAGES

12. To what extent do you feel that your current wage reflects the skills, responsibilities, and effort required for your job, and your working conditions?

- A. Not at all
- B. Slightly
- C. Mostly
- D. Completely

13. To what extent does your current wage allow you to meet your personal and family needs?

- A. Not at all
- B. Slightly
- C. Mostly
- D. Completely

14. Are you ever expected to perform work without pay (e.g., unpaid overtime or work-related communication during off-hours)?

- A. No, I have never been expected to work without pay.
- B. Yes, rarely, about once every few months or less.
- C. Yes, occasionally, around 1 to 3 times a month.
- D. Yes, frequently, at least once a week.

15. In 2024, the cost of living in New Brunswick rose by about 2.2%, based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which measures price increases for essentials like housing, groceries, and transportation. In the past year, did your wages increase enough to keep up with this rise in living costs?

- A. No, I did not receive a wage increase.
- B. No, the wage increase **was less than** the 2.2% rise in the cost of living.
- C. Yes, the wage increase was **about the same** as the 2.2% rise in the cost of living.
- D. Yes, the wage increase was **more than** the 2.2% rise in the cost of living.

16. Does your organization use a formal pay scale or salary range system to determine employee compensation?

- A. Yes, there is a clear pay scale, with salary ranges and steps based on experience, performance, or years of service.
- B. Yes, but it's applied only in some cases or not used consistently across all roles.
- C. No, salaries are decided individually without a formal structure.
- D. Not sure.
- E. Not applicable.

17. Have you ever negotiated your salary while working in the non-profit sector?

- A. Yes, I negotiated and received a higher salary.
- B. Yes, I attempted to negotiate, but it was unsuccessful.
- C. No, I have never attempted to negotiate.

18. Are you aware of your colleagues' salaries?

- A. Yes, I know because we have openly discussed it.
- B. Yes, I know because salary information is available internally.
- C. No, I don't know because I have not discussed it with my colleagues.
- D. No, I don't know because we are discouraged from or not allowed to discuss salaries.

19. Have you personally experienced a gender pay gap while working in the nonprofit sector—for example, being paid less than a colleague of a different gender with similar experience doing similar work?

- A. Yes, I have been paid less.
- B. No, I have been paid the same.
- C. No, I have been paid more.
- D. I don't have enough information to say.

20. What is your current hourly wage (before taxes and deductions)?

- A. Less than \$20 per hour
- B. \$20 - \$24.99 per hour

- C. \$25 – \$29.99 per hour
- D. \$30 – \$34.99 per hour
- E. \$35 – \$39.99 per hour
- F. \$40 – \$44.99 per hour
- G. \$45 – \$49.99 per hour
- H. \$50 or more per hour

CONDITIONS OF WORK

21. Does your organization provide any of the following benefits? (Select all that apply.)

- A. Paid vacation time above the minimum requirements set by the [Employment Standards Act](#).
- B. Pension plan other than Canada Pension Plan
- C. Paid sick leave
- D. Health and dental benefits (e.g., vision care, prescription drugs, enhanced hospital coverage – co-paid or fully covered)
- E. Mental health support (e.g., mental health days, access to Employee Assistance Program)
- F. Flexible working arrangements (e.g., flexible hours or remote work)
- G. Maternity/parental leave top-up (additional pay from your employer on top of Employment Insurance)
- H. None of the above
- I. Other (please specify): _____

22. Have you ever experienced or witnessed discrimination in your organization based on any of the following? (Select all that apply.)

- A. Disability
- B. Age
- C. Sexual orientation
- D. Gender identity or gender expression
- E. Race, ethnicity, or skin colour
- F. Religion or spiritual beliefs
- G. Nationality or citizenship status
- H. Language or accent
- I. Other (please specify): _____
- J. No, I have not experienced or witnessed discrimination

23. Have you experienced any of the following in your organization? (Select all that apply.)

- A. Harassment (e.g., bullying, intimidation, verbal abuse)
- B. Sexual harassment (e.g., unwanted sexual comments, gestures, or advances)
- C. Violence (e.g., threats, physical aggression)
- D. Sexual violence (e.g., coerced or forced sexual acts)
- E. Other (please specify): _____
- F. No, I have not experienced any of the above.

24. Which of the following formal HR policies does your organization have in place? (Select all that apply.)

- A. Policies that promote gender equality, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)
- B. Workplace safety policies
- C. Policies to prevent and address harassment and workplace violence
- D. Clear, accessible, and confidential grievance procedures to support conflict resolution with co-workers or supervisors
- E. Other (please specify): _____
- F. None of the above
- G. I am not sure.

25. To what extent are the following HR policies actively implemented and enforced in your organization? (Select one response per row.)

Policy Area	Not at all	Slightly	Neutral	Mostly	Completely	Not applicable
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worker safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prevention of harassment/violence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conflict resolution and grievance procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

26. How did you first learn about your organization’s HR policies (e.g., diversity and inclusion, workplace safety, harassment prevention, conflict resolution)?

- A. I was informed during onboarding (e.g., first day or orientation).

- B. I learned about them from a colleague informally.
- C. I became aware of them when addressing a workplace issue.
- D. I don't know if these policies exist.

27. What recommendations would you make to improve salaries and working conditions in the non-profit sector?

QUESTIONS FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

28. What is the primary source of funding for your organization? (Select all that apply.)

- A. Federal government grants
- B. Provincial government grants
- C. Local government grants
- D. Individual donations
- E. Corporate donations
- F. Sales of goods and services
- G. Investment income
- H. Grants from foundations and other institutions
- I. Other (please specify): _____
- J. This does not apply to my organization.

29. What type(s) of government funding does your organization currently receive? (Select all that apply.)

- A. Project-based grants
- B. Program-specific grants
- C. Core or operating grants
- D. Purchase of service agreements (contracts with government agencies to deliver specific services on their behalf)
- E. Other (please specify): _____
- F. We do not receive any government funding.

30. Does any of your funding come with requirements around employee wages, such as minimum or maximum wage levels?

- A. Yes, funders impose minimum wage requirements only.
- B. Yes, funders impose maximum wage limits only.
- C. Yes, funders impose both minimum and maximum wage requirements.
- D. No, funders do not impose any wage requirements.
- E. This does not apply to my organization.

31. Do you believe your organization has sufficient resources to achieve its mission and goals?

- A. Yes, it is fully resourced.
- B. It is partially resourced.
- C. No, it is critically underfunded.

32. How often does your Board formally review and update key governance policies (e.g., human resources, equity, workplace safety)?

- A. At least once every year.
- B. Every 2 to 3 years.
- C. Every 4 years or more.
- D. Only in response to specific issues or incidents.

33. Does your Board actively support fair wages and employee benefits within your organization?

- A. Yes – the Board has clear policies and takes active steps to ensure fair wages and benefits.
- B. Yes – the Board is generally supportive, but policies or action plans are limited.
- C. Somewhat – the Board discusses fair wages and benefits, but there is little formal support or follow-through.
- D. No – the Board has not shown support or involvement in this area.

34. Over the past two years, approximately what percentage of staff has your organization retained?

- A. 90% or more retained.
- B. 70 – 89% retained.
- C. 50% – 69 % retained.
- D. Less than 50 % retained.
- E. Not applicable.

35. What are your top challenges in human resources management? (Select the 3 most urgent issues)

- A. Recruitment
- B. Compensation and benefits
- C. Conflict resolution or team dynamics
- D. Managing hybrid or remote teams
- E. Burnout and workload

- F. Staff retention
- G. Other (please specify): _____

36. Which of the following would make the biggest difference in your ability to offer adequate wages and benefits?

- A. Increased core funding
- B. Better HR tools and capacity
- C. Stronger board support
- D. Other (please specify): _____