

Valuing and Supporting  
Alberta's Non-Profit Disability Organizations

# Challenges and Solutions



A joint project by:

Alberta Disabilities Forum  
Alberta Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health



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# **Challenges and Solutions**

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## FOREWORD

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This document has been developed by a joint working group of the Alberta Disabilities Forum (ADF) and the Alberta Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (AAMIMH). ADF is a partnership of 45 organizations that share information and speak with a united voice on issues of importance to Albertans with disabilities. AAMIMH is a consortium of 12 organizations that have come together to speak as one on issues of common concern around addictions and mental health.

Note: This document uses the global term Non-Profit Disability Organizations (NPDOs). While people with addictions and substance abuse issues and those with mental illness and related mental health concerns are rarely, if ever, referred to as having a disability, organizations that provide these services are included under the NPDOs umbrella, for the sake of brevity. Also, the terms 'contract', 'grants' and 'projects' are used interchangeably when referencing funding support.

This document has several purposes:

1. Assist funders and others to appreciate and understand the significant contribution NPDOs make and the daunting challenges they face when providing programs and services to persons with disabilities and their families.
2. Provide helpful suggestions and a useful guide for NPDOs to develop their own responses and strategies for those challenges that impact them.
3. Suggest workable strategies to address challenges that funders, NPDOs and their partners can discuss and adopt.
4. Enhance the value of services provided by funders, NPDOs and perhaps other voluntary non-profit organizations.
5. Enable NPDOs to speak to the challenges publicly in a consistent way. By speaking as one, messages are stronger and more consistent, and avoid confusion about the challenges NPDOs face.
6. Support NPDOs in making funding proposals.

## Companion Guide and Worksheet

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We recognize challenges listed in this document are not common to all NPDOs nor do they have the same level of impact. Individual NPDOs are encouraged to select, address and resolve those challenges that impact them using the Companion Guide and Worksheet provided in Appendix A.

**Note to reader:** NPDOs provide direct service delivery to people with disabilities and their families and:

- Work on behalf of the disability community to eliminate discrimination.
- Educate the public.
- Educate service provider professionals on what services a NPDO can offer.
- Educate key decision-makers on the needs of persons with disabilities.
- Provide information about disabilities to people with disabilities and their families.
- Educate people with disabilities and their families about the services and supports that are available to them and their rights to access them.
- Support people with disabilities and their families as they navigate the system to access services and programs.
- Advocate for needed services on behalf of people with disabilities and their families.
- Support people with disabilities to ensure that their rights are protected.
- Provide input to, and collaborate with, key decision-makers on effective public policy.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Non-Profit Disability Organizations (NPDOs) exist to serve without monetary benefit or reward. They are essential to service delivery in Alberta because they fill gaps left by governments and for-profit service providers. They give people with disabilities the support and services they need to live with dignity and a reasonable quality of life.

Yet the existence of many NPDOs is threatened by a multitude of challenges. Most are overwhelmed by demand, have dwindling volunteers and staff and struggle to meet more stringent accountability and reporting requirements. These pressures are compounded by changes in funding rules that no longer directly support general administration, office and equipment expenses. Most lack the ability to find new resources to make up funding shortfalls.

What's needed is a rethink of the role of NPDOs and their place in society. If NPDOs are to fulfill their mandates and be healthy organizations, there needs to be recognition that they have the same planning and operational needs as organizations in other industries. Just as medical staff in a hospital cannot function without proper supports, a NPDO cannot do adequate service delivery without proper management, planning, accounting, human resources, information services, training and, of course, funding support.

It is not necessarily a matter of finding a new way to 'do business' but rather being committed to address the challenges NPDOs face and how they may be resolved. For the most part, resolution requires a joint effort. Increased collaboration between NPDOs, government and funders on core needs like information and expectations is fundamental to overcoming NPDO limitations.

While insufficient or restricted funding is at the core of most challenges, other circumstances play a large role in undermining a NPDO's likelihood of success. These include unrealistic expectations about a NPDO's ability to fundraise or respond to changes in policies, funding requirements, evaluation and reporting, technology and changes in the economy and job market.

When a NPDO drops a program or reduces a service, it is persons with disabilities and their families that suffer. Unlike the for-profit sector, there is no one waiting in the wings to fill the gap. As Albertans, we cannot allow NPDOs to slowly descend into ineffective organizations. It is the service recipient that we must focus on when discussing challenges and implementing solutions.

This document offers a number of recommendations and strategies but a starting point must be:

- Recognize that the challenges are real and hamper the ability of NPDOs to be successful.
- Believe that the challenges cannot be overcome without collaboration.
- Be willing to change what does not work now.
- Realize NPDOs spend an inordinate amount of time and resources just keeping the doors open.
- Know that NPDOs are an essential service that cannot be replaced without great expense and hardship.

The overarching recommendations are made with the understanding that there is a partnership between a funder and a NPDO. This partnership requires a commitment and willingness to ensure persons with disabilities and their families are supported and served in a manner that provides maximum opportunity to enjoy the same quality of life that those without disabilities enjoy.

These recommendations are flexible and should be considered in light of the needs and views of individual NPDOs.

## Overarching Recommendations

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1. Develop strategies that will attract and keep required NPDO skill sets (both staff and volunteers).
2. Develop funding models that will enable NPDOs to do long range planning, meet administrative needs, eliminate cash flow problems and focus on service provision.
3. Reduce administrative expense and time by simplifying and standardizing grant, contract, evaluation and reporting tools and processes.
4. Support self-advocacy and other programs that give persons with disabilities meaningful input and involvement in their own care and support, and streamline access to appropriate services in the least difficult way.
5. Develop agreements and common policies/procedures on the sharing of information so that regional service availability, gaps and opportunities can be identified and decision-making is based on accurate information.
6. Vet policies and procedures through members of the disability community and their families to ensure they are workable and practical and meet the needs of the person with the disability.



# CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

## Valuing and Supporting Alberta's Non-Profit Disability Organizations: Challenges and Solutions

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A joint project by the Alberta Disabilities Forum and the Alberta Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health

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### Published and distributed by:

The Alberta Disabilities Forum  
106-10423 178 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T5S 1R5

Phone: 780-488-9088  
Fax: 780-488-3757  
Email: [adf@accd.net](mailto:adf@accd.net)  
Web: [www.adforum.ca](http://www.adforum.ca)

The Alberta Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health  
320-9707 110 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2L9

Phone: 780-482-4993  
Fax: 780-482-6348  
Email: [info@aamimh.ca](mailto:info@aamimh.ca)  
Web: [www.aamimh.ca](http://www.aamimh.ca)



## 1. ADVOCACY CHALLENGES

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All NPDOs are engaged to some degree in advocacy on behalf of persons with disabilities and their families. Advocacy may mean that a NPDO provides direct support by helping the individual or their family access appropriate health or social services - often on a case by case basis. It may also involve speaking to the 'system' so that policies and procedures are modified to reduce problems of access.

Advocacy may also mean working to educate the public about disabilities in an effort to combat stigma and discrimination and increase understanding. Finally, advocacy may also mean educating key decision-makers so that the decisions they make around reform of the system, legislation and funding can be done in an informed manner.

These advocacy efforts are labour intensive and difficult to measure in terms of clear outcomes. Yet these outcomes must be provided to meet funding requirements, justify a request for increased funding or demonstrate an organization's success. It is difficult to make a clear and demonstrative link between meetings by NPDOs with senior government leaders and legislators that may have taken place over several years and the enacting of a major shift in policy or legislation. Yet the many years of hard work advocating for change likely had a major influence on the ultimate decision to make the shift, one that has a positive impact on people with disabilities.

The development of education packages, speaking to the media, participating in government consultations, distributing policy positions, writing letters to elected representatives and issuing press releases on policy issues are all important strategies to use. The outcomes are difficult to measure but they do form a critical part of the work that ultimately leads to system-level, positive change.

Effective advocacy requires skills to do it well. People with such skills enable NPDOs to develop media-ready material and information packages that better inform decision-makers about the challenges facing those with disabilities. It also requires the ability to communicate with, and obtain information from the disability community to ensure information NPDOs base their arguments upon is accurate and current.

### Strategies to address challenges

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- 1A. Recognize advocacy is an important component in a NPDO's efforts to encourage and support the system and society to better meet the needs of the disability community.
- 1B. Reflect advocacy strategies, where appropriate, in a NPDO's operational and budget planning.
- 1C. Support technology development and media staff training to help a NPDO carry out advocacy.
- 1D. Increase understanding that the scope of services NPDOs provide are broad and include direct service delivery, advocacy and education.

## 2. FUNDING CHALLENGES

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NPDOs may be self-funded, funded in part or funded totally by government. Most, however, face multiple challenges accessing adequate funding within the current environment. Many NPDOs acquire the majority of their funding through contracts, grant applications and project funding proposals. However, many funders, including government, are now changing how they distribute their funds. There is a movement away from providing grant funding for administrative support. Government and other funders prefer to only fund program delivery.

Even though the demand for service has not changed, a question that haunts many NPDOs is, “Will we be in existence next year?” In the past, NPDOs were confident that if they clearly identified the need for a program or service, it is likely the funder would provide funding dollars. This is changing. Funders must now demonstrate more accountability and in turn have placed increased pressure for the same accountability on NPDOs. Targets, goals, measurements and outcomes are now a major part of the funding application.

*“Stakeholder demands for transparency, public accountability and demonstration of impact are likely only to increase in the coming decade.”<sup>1</sup>*

For many NPDOs, shifting to this increased accountability challenges their ability to provide services. There may not be enough resources and staff with the needed skill sets to do both. Yet it is critical that this accountability be in the grant’s final report if subsequent grants are to be received. Funders are also moving towards a fee-for-service funding model (contracts) and are reluctant to provide long-term committed financing.

*“...organizations have raised concerns regarding reduced organizational capacity when funds do not cover the full cost of program delivery, including administrative costs.”<sup>2</sup>*

This means that NPDOs receive short-term funding. This is detrimental to long-term organizational planning since NPDOs are unable to build the full cost of administration into short-term funding proposals. A shrinking pool of funders (e.g. no more grant funding through the Wild Rose and Muttart Foundations, cancellation of the Community Spirit Grant Program) means NPDOs must compete for increasingly limited dollars.

When fee-for-service funding is in place, it is not uncommon for a NPDO to face complex funding or multiple reporting requirements. This requires NPDOs to commit more time and expertise to funding proposal development and reporting. This is almost always at the expense of resources needed for program development and service delivery. These multiple demands place great pressure on smaller organizations with a limited workforce, and challenge their ability to remain competitive with larger non-profit organizations.

Beyond the proposal development and reporting is the critical need for a NPDO to maintain a positive relationship with its funders. Changes in a funder’s personnel place an administrative burden on a NPDO to bring these new people up to speed.

Some NPDOs have limits on their funding which forbid carryover of funds into the next fiscal year. Others have had their government funding reduced by the amount they receive from donations or other sources. Particularly when there is a time lag before the next fiscal year’s funding ‘kicks in’, this can place a NPDO in financial crisis. Like government and private business, NPDOs need to have access to reserve funds to avoid a financial shortfall, if cash flow is affected or if they decide to close a program or operations.

It would be easier to design programs and services if the economic climate remained constant. However, that is not the case. Government and funders tend to respond to economic pressures by reducing the amount of available funds. However, the needs of people with disabilities served by NPDOs remain the same no matter how the economy performs, and for some NPDOs the need for the services they provide may increase in times of economic hardship. Reductions in donor and government funding multiply the financial stress on NPDOs. Government and funders need to realize the importance of continuing support during economic downturns.

The non-profit sector is an economic driver in the same way that other more lucrative or easily recognized industries are. As such, the non-profit sector should receive similar benefits to those offered industry in times of economic stress.

- *“In Canada, Non-profit institutions (NPI) continue to make a significant contribution to the economic and social well-being of Canadians”<sup>3</sup>*
- *“The broader non-profit sector, which includes hospitals, universities and colleges, exceeded by more than one-third the value added of the entire retail trade industry, and outpaced the value added of the mining, oil and gas extraction industry.”<sup>4</sup>*
- *“In 2007, the value added or gross domestic product (GDP) of the core non-profit sector amounted to \$35.6 billion, accounting for 2.5% of the total Canadian economy. This share increases to 7.0% when hospitals, universities and colleges are included, reaching \$100.7 billion in 2007.”<sup>5</sup>*
- *“As is the case across Canada, the non-profit and voluntary sector in Alberta is comprised of numerous organizations (19,356), has a significant presence in the economy (9.6 billion in annual revenue), is volunteer-based (2.5 million volunteers), is a major employer (176,000 paid staff), and the provider of a wide range of services and products that enrich the lives of Albertans.”<sup>6</sup>*

NPDOs need the confidence and stability of long-term funding to effectively do long-term service planning. Assurance of ongoing and continuous support enables NPDOs to focus on their critical role of meeting the needs of the recipients of its services. It also makes retention of staff easier if workers can plan a career in the sector rather than looking at employment in one-year segments. Stable staffing can result in staff having opportunity to feel more ownership and an increased propensity to do program development and improvement.

## Strategies to address challenges

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- 2A. Implement multi-year funding cycles for appropriate projects and programs to enable multi-year financial planning. This will enable NPDOs to have an adequate period of time to plan, evaluate and measure results.
- 2B. Assist NPDOs with funding applications so they all have an equal opportunity to obtain funding.
- 2C. Provide core funding where appropriate, especially to smaller NPDOs, so they can focus on delivering services.
- 2D. Enable funding to not only address traditional items such as staffing, capital expenses and programs but also research, advocacy, skill development and strategic planning, among others.
- 2E. Allow NPDOs to have reserves to enable bridge funding and address short-term cash flow issues.
- 2F. Assist NPDOs financially when contingencies arise.
- 2G. Develop strategies so demand for increased levels of accountability by a NPDO is achievable.

### 3. FUNDRAISING CHALLENGES

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*“What is notable is that more organizations are reporting increased fundraising activities. One of the implications of this, as competition for funding increases, is that organizations are expending more energy to raise the same revenues.”<sup>7</sup>*

Past funding sources are in decline. Yet, demand for services continues to increase. NPDOs must compete for these declining pools of funds with an increasing level of restrictions on the use of the dollars. Fundraising has become an almost impossible or overwhelming activity for many NPDOs. Gaming revenues (bingos, casinos) are in decline and others (lotteries) are risky. Accessing gaming dollars poses a philosophical dilemma for some organizations because they are aware some people and families they serve have been negatively impacted by the gaming industry.

NPDOs are markedly different in their organizational sizes, budgets, human resources and skill bases. Small NPDOs are faced with competition with their “big sisters and brothers”, while the service they provide is no less valuable. To mount an effective fund development strategy means other organizational capacities such as proposal writing, financial reporting, communication and leadership must be in place. NPDO boards and management must locate, develop and retain committed, competent staff in these skills in order to build a strong image (brand), and a strong case for funding support. Fundraising also requires increased expertise to demonstrate financial accountability, which small NPDOs do not have access to or cannot afford.

*“A 2009 survey of 75 non-profit organizations in Western Canada found that:*

- *Organizations that have experienced a decrease in donations and increase in demand are currently coping with this situation; however, their resources are being stretched to the maximum.*
- *A higher proportion of BC organizations report an increase in the amount they received in donations during Q1 of 2009 compared to a year ago than organizations located in Alberta.*
- *Organizations that have experienced an increase in donations in Q1 of 2009 more strongly agreed that their organizations have adopted effective fundraising characteristics that focus on their fundraising team and communication strategies.*
- *Five characteristics that best distinguish between organizations that have and have not been affected by the recent economic downturn include:*
  - *A strong and realistic Case for Support*
  - *Competitive staff salaries and benefits*
  - *A fundraising committee comprised of people seen as champions of the cause*
  - *An effective newsletter*
  - *A coordinated and active media communication program in place”<sup>8</sup>*

Funders need to be sensitive to the principles and values guiding the NPDO and take measures to ensure their demands on NPDOs do not place the NPDO in conflict with its own vision and mandate.

#### Strategies to address challenges

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Government and NPDOs collaborate on strategies that will:

- 3A. Provide sources of funding other than gaming dollars.
- 3B. Provide staff/volunteer training for those responsible for fund development.
- 3C. Provide a pool of funds for programs and services provided by smaller NPDOs, and assist small NPDOs to access these funds.

## 4. GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES CHALLENGES

*“There are increasing demands on the charitable and non-profit sector and many fear that greater demand may become a permanent fixture, particularly if government moves to eliminate or reduce programs and services.”<sup>9</sup>*

Persons with disabilities seeking support and assistance are often referred from one program to another and back again, and still do not receive the needed support. This is frustrating and confusing for the person seeking help, and disconcerting for the worker who directed the individual to what was thought to be an appropriate source of help.

**“We all need to understand the adjustments needed to live with a disability and appreciate the strength it takes to ask for help and the fact that these requests are made at some personal risk to one’s self-esteem. Failure to meet the person’s needs, or worse, a perceived disregard of the person’s identified needs, is damaging to the soul.”** President of an NPDO

Government ministries, programs and services must collaborate and coordinate with each other so there is common awareness of what is being provided in different areas of the government. By working collaboratively, government, government-funded service providers and NPDOs have a far greater chance of reaching their goals successfully. Coordinated oversight, system navigation, communication and cooperation across the service matrix can result in more effective service delivery. Duplication of services and resources would be reduced. Mandates that create barriers to service would be overcome. There would be less confusion by both people with disabilities and service providers regarding who will provide the needed services and how.

Just as critical is the need for government ministries and service providers to have clear and open communication with each other about the services they provide and the policies that guide them. Communication, collaboration and consultation are needed with persons with disabilities and NPDOs about the services that are needed and how they can best be delivered.

Canada’s signing of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol speaks to the principles and commitment Canada has made about sharing information and consultation:

*“2. The information collected in accordance with this article shall be disaggregated, as appropriate, and used to help assess the implementation of States Parties’ obligations under the present Convention and to identify and address the barriers faced by persons with disabilities in exercising their rights.”<sup>10</sup>*

*“3. States Parties shall assume responsibility for the dissemination of these statistics and ensure their accessibility to persons with disabilities and others.”<sup>11</sup>*

*“3. Civil society, in particular persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, shall be involved and participate fully in the monitoring process.”<sup>12</sup>*

A person with a disability may be required to travel as part of a program or services consultation process to provide input into a consultation. NPDOs often do not have sufficient funds to meet accessibility/accommodation needs for either the consultation participants or staff.

# 04

## GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES CHALLENGES

Strategies to address challenges

“This understanding [the importance of meeting the person’s needs] should clearly guide all parties to develop policies and procedures that encourage, welcome, accommodate and support the needs of people with disabilities. The collective wisdom of the service provider and the end user is critical in assisting government and not-for-profits to develop a system that is responsive and appropriate.” President of an NPDO

### Strategies to address challenges

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- 4A. Provide sufficient funds and supports to properly accommodate people with disabilities who work or volunteer for a NPDO.
- 4B. Ensure NPDOs have the ability to regularly share or acquire information from their membership.

## 5. SERVICES, GROWTH AND CHANGE CHALLENGES

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Government ministries, programs and services frequently change. What would seem to be a simple decision by government to realign some departments and services can have a profound impact on persons with disabilities and their families. For example, an available service is suddenly withdrawn or different procedures are put in place to access the same services. This is true for NPDOs too as they may choose to discontinue a service due to lack of funds, a shortage of knowledgeable staff or volunteers, or a philosophical shift.

Government and government-funded organizations are the most visible and recognized care and support providers for people with disabilities. But service delivery is not consistent across the province. Government changes in service delivery processes often lead to confusion about where and how services and programs will be provided after changes are made. Different rules and changed geographic boundaries impact how and where a person with a disability can access treatment and support. In addition, changing policies contribute to instability and uncertainty in service provision.

Unneeded anxiety is created for people with disabilities and their families each time there is failed access to services. Difficulties in achieving recovery are then compounded. They can be hampered by being forced to accept a support, service or solution that does not meet their needs, but meets the needs of service providers or the system.

It is important that NPDOs and other service providers quickly familiarize themselves with these changes so that they can appropriately support and direct the person with the disability. When service gaps are identified, measures need to be taken to address these shortfalls.

As well, organizations have complexities that make it difficult for their staff to know what other service providers do, and how they do it. Other service providers may establish a program or service already being delivered by another organization, leading to duplication and confusion. There is no oversight and no clearly defined system navigation.

Effective communication and collaboration between government and NPDOs, and between NPDOs themselves, creates opportunities for sharing of information, expertise and knowledge. This contributes to an economical, creative and effective use of resources.

For example, through communication and collaboration by the members of each organization, the ADF and the AAMIMH have been able to identify issues of common concern. These can be brought to government in a way that allows for informed discussion between government and involved NPDOs.

*“When collaborations are successful and sustained, they can lead to relationships of trust and lines of communication that fundamentally change partnerships from ones based on individual responsibility and attribution to ones based on mutual accountability and joint recognition of contributions”<sup>13</sup>*

Increasingly, persons with disabilities have more complex needs and require services which are outside of what many NPDOs can provide. Current funding levels do not allow for increased service provision. In rural areas, NPDOs may be the only service provider. Demand often exceeds the ability of the organization to respond.

This can lead to increased pressure to collaborate with other service providers. While it is a good thing to be efficient and share resources, this collaboration is time consuming for staff that are already stretched to the limit. Often this extra demand of time and resources is not recognized in reporting and accounting.

Finally, as government steps back from direct service provision, there is a growing demand for NPDO services. Without additional funding to meet the increased demand, NPDOs and their staff become quickly overwhelmed.

### Strategies to address challenges

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- 5A. Develop an inventory of services provided by all providers to people with disabilities to identify gaps and opportunities.
- 5B. Identify where services are provided to meet specific disability needs. This will allow for better consultation and collaboration. Funding proposals can then be scripted to better support these needed services.



## 6. INFORMATION AND REFERRAL CHALLENGES

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We make decisions based on information available to us. Inaccurate or patchy information can lead to incorrect assumptions and ultimately poor decision-making. NPDOs can only be effective if the information on which they base their decisions is accurate and current.

Currently, there is no centralized information pool to support the development of a comprehensive picture of the programs and services available to people with disabilities. This impairs the ability to develop a response. Both government and NPDOs have a responsibility to acquire and share information.

Governments and NPDOs need to develop an understanding of how each contributes to the health of people with disabilities. More importantly, they need to support one another to carry out those activities. This can be as simple as prompt and complete information exchange between organizations. Government is frequently the organization that can best gather relevant and helpful information. The exchange of statistical information between government and NPDOs goes a long way to help more effectively plan for and provide services to the people that need them. Some examples of information that is vital to share are:

- Incidence of the illness
- Geographical distribution
- Use of needed services
- Costs
- Service availability

Appropriate referral and support comes from understanding what services are available and how those services can be accessed. It is also important to have an appreciation of the impact that a disability has on the person with the disability. Information needs to be shared so relevant organizations can develop an understanding of the extent of the issues faced by those with disabilities. Accurate and timely information about services that are needed and available, and the extent of the issues facing those with disabilities, allow NPDOs to design, modify or enhance existing services to meet determined needs.

Knowledge of the impact of the disability and the resources available allow NPDOs, government and other service providers to develop services in a coordinated fashion. If this sharing of information does not take place, organizations often resolve the situation on their own. This can lead to inappropriate or duplicated services, wasted dollars and a confusing maze of services that the person with the disability must navigate.

In addition, gaps in services may not be identified. Therefore, the opportunity to either fill the gaps or provide an alternative service may be lost.

For some people with disabilities and their families, openly discussing the issues they face in coping with their disabilities is difficult. Informed organizations sensitive to this reality increases the opportunity of engaging the person and their family, identifying issues and concerns and making the proper referral. Effective referral and support requires NPDOs and service providers, including government to:

- Have an understanding and appreciation of disability issues and the impact they have on people with disabilities and their families.
- Have knowledge of where the needed services are located and how they can be accessed.
- Be prepared to provide ongoing support as people work their way through the system and access the needed services.

## Strategies to address challenges

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- 6A. Have reciprocal agreements with government and other NPDOs when service delivery changes occur to minimize the negative impact on the recipient of the services.
- 6B. Use a collaborative approach to quickly address issues for people with disabilities and match people with resources.

## 7. OUTCOME AND EVALUATION CHALLENGES

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Funders need to have confidence that the funds provided are used according to the terms in the funding agreement. To make this determination, funders look at the intent of the proposal, what service will be provided, what problem will be addressed, what the intended goals are and how the achievement of those goals will be measured and evaluated. Funders look for outcomes in terms of impact on the recipients of the services and programs, and what has changed and improved.

NPDOs need to clearly demonstrate the need for the program or service with a set of goals and outcomes in mind, which may mean having to engage in surveys and other measurements before the proposal is submitted. This requires NPDOs to have expertise in program planning, evaluation, surveying and outcomes measurement.

It is difficult to clearly identify or provide a performance evaluation when the goals are not tangible or clearly defined. Setting clear, measurable goals can be a daunting task for NPDOs because they may not have staff with skill sets, knowledge or expertise.

### Strategies to address challenges

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- 7A. Develop strategies that enable NPDOs to better meet the needs of the people it serves, as well as the needs of the funder, its terms of measuring impact and outcomes.
- 7B. Investigate government or other organizations to see if they have mentorship opportunities that can assist NPDOs to develop evaluative staff skill sets.
- 7C. Approach learning institutions (universities, colleges) to see if student practicums can be arranged to give NPDOs in-house research knowledge and skills.

## 8. PEER SUPPORT CHALLENGES

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Some NPDOs utilize peer support in the services they provide. It is sometimes known as self-help, mutual aid, co-counselling or mutual support. Peer support enables people with disabilities to be included as equal partners in providing information and direction to an action or plan. Lived experience with a disability brings an added dimension to a support service that cannot be gained any other way. It adds to the legitimacy of programs and services and demonstrates how those services can best be delivered.

Persons overwhelmed with their own disability have the opportunity to view their disability in a different light if they witness others with similar challenges providing support. Persons with disabilities receive positive benefits, such as learning new skills and receiving personal satisfaction, when providing peer support or contributing to program design. They often gain meaningful insight and encouragement when associating, collaborating and working with others with disabilities.

Professionals and students working towards a professional designation and working with a NPDO have the opportunity to see persons with a disability in a different light than they see persons with a disability providing peer support to others or working for the organization in program design. This broadens their appreciation of people with disabilities that they can in turn pass on in their professional lives.

**"Peer support provides the encouragement before, during and after professional involvement, and helps enhance adjustment to the disability while providing the support needed to undergo the changes and treatments necessary to live successfully. The most profound and deepest recovery can come from using a combination of professional and peer supports." Person who provides peer support.**

Canada's signing of the United Nations, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol speaks to the recognition that Canada has made about the importance of peer support:

*"3 (a) Facilitating ... peer support and mentoring;"<sup>14</sup>*

### Strategies to address challenges

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- 8A. Provide opportunities for persons with disabilities to become meaningfully engaged in the development of supports, services and programs that will affect their lives.
- 8B. Engage persons with disabilities or seek their input in the development of disability-related programs and services.
- 8C. Assist NPDOs to develop the capacity to encourage and support people with disabilities to design, develop, govern and deliver their own programs.

## 9. PUBLIC OPINION AND REPUTATION CHALLENGES

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NPDOs are not immune to negative public perception. When an NPDO acts in a fiscally or ethically irresponsible manner, all NPDOs are affected through association. NPDOs have a responsibility to ensure that their reputations are positive. Staff and volunteer leadership need to ensure that the ethical operating principles of the organization are known to all within the organization, and that they are adhered to.

When organizations conduct themselves in an ethical and businesslike manner, it instills greater confidence in funders and other organizations that may want to do business with it. In addition, having a positive public image instills confidence in those that have need of their services.

### Strategy to address challenges

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- 9A. Encourage NPDO management staff and volunteer leadership to take leadership/management/ethics courses and engage in discussions with funders to see how funding strategies can be used to support these activities.

# 10.

### 10. REPORTING CHALLENGES

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*“Stakeholder demands for transparency, public accountability and demonstration of impact are likely only to increase in the coming decade.*

*Key to meeting these demands will be increased organizational emphasis on appropriate financial control and evaluation systems and effective, timely communication of results to stakeholders. Particularly challenging for the sector is that these supplementary costs of delivering on mission are significant and increasing without commitments from funders to cover them. However, these expenditures are increasingly seen as prerequisites for continuing to attract funding and support. The vicious cycle of not having enough resources and expertise to capture impact that will attract more financial support must be replaced with a virtuous cycle of mutual investment in and commitment to, efforts to document and learn from previous projects and efforts.”<sup>15</sup>*

In all partnerships, finance and its management can frequently be one of the major stumbling blocks to a successful relationship. Funders expect NPDOs to carry out the goals and expectations set out in a funding agreement. NPDOs have the obligation to provide the necessary information so the funder can confirm a grant was used for its intended purpose.

One of the key mechanisms to demonstrate, measure and evaluate program and operational success is through effective reporting. Meeting this reporting obligation builds confidence in funders and often results in subsequent grants to the NPDO. If expectations are not reached, a collaborative rather than punitive approach should be taken to see what can be done to improve reporting.

However, funders have limitations. Expectations must be realistic. Reporting requires high skill sets in measurement, design, evaluation and data entry. These skill sets are not easily acquired by NPDOs. As greater accountability increases, so does the demand for the human resources that can provide adequate reporting. To cope, reporting resource and technology needs may need to be built into future funding proposals.

**“Sometimes we receive requests from our funders which require us to review the funding policies that are placed on the funder to ensure that we in turn as the recipient are complying with the policies. The problem is that I have no one to pass this review request on to. I have to do it myself – which means that my other work in support of my organization gets put to the side.**

**To use a sports analogy – having access to others to assist or take on tasks during high demands is referred to as ‘Bench Strength’. For most NPDO’s, there is no bench.” Financial Officer of NPDO**

During periods of high work demands, the inability of a NPDO to access or acquire additional or appropriate staff for reporting often results in the Executive Director or Supervisor doing the job. Lack of lower paid staff to do the work means the cost to the organization is higher in both dollars and time.

#### Strategies to address challenges

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- 10A. Work with government to provide staff training opportunities so staff can acquire the skills to effectively produce the required reports.
- 10B. Develop standard measurement and reporting tools to ease the burden of meeting reporting requirements.
- 10C. Provide sufficient funding for NPDOs to obtain the staff, training and technology needed to provide the level of reporting required.

## 11. SELF-ADVOCACY PROGRAM CHALLENGES

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*“Self-advocacy is defined by experts as an individual’s ability to effectively communicate, convey, negotiate or assert his or her interests, desires, needs, and rights.”<sup>16</sup>*

Self-advocacy programs are invaluable to various disability organizations and should be supported because of the significant impact they can have on people with disabilities and the programs and services that support them. Organizations that work with people with developmental disabilities, learning disabilities, or mental health disabilities, among others, are strong supporters of self-advocacy programs.

Self-advocacy programs’ main purpose is to provide an authentic voice from the lived experience of a person with a disability. With the right supports in place, people with disabilities are given the opportunity to express an opinion in a safe place.

*“Self-advocacy programs educate people with disabilities about how to speak for themselves to get their needs met. To do this, program participants must have the ability to communicate, have knowledge of how to engage in government processes, and understand the importance of supporting one another in areas of common concern. Self-advocacy must also include speaking up about alternatives to offered choices.”<sup>17</sup>*

Self-advocacy presentations give decision-makers an informed voice from those who understand the issues and can explain them in plain language. This helps determine what programs and services for persons with disabilities are appropriate.

### Strategies to address challenges

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- 11A. Recognize self-advocacy programs as legitimate, worthwhile programs offered by NPDOs to meet the needs of the disability community.
- 11B. Help NPDOs to provide self-advocacy programs by supporting and funding adequate staff support and training.
- 11C. Help NPDOs to build the capacity to support people with disabilities who want to become involved in self-advocacy programs.



# 12.

## STAFFING CHALLENGES Strategies to address challenges

### 12. STAFFING CHALLENGES

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*“Charitable and non-profit leaders are increasingly concerned about the sector’s ability to recruit and retain the paid staff required to fulfill their organizations’ missions. ...there is a widespread perception that the new generation of recruits are less inclined to commit to significant unpaid overtime and insufficient compensation which undermine the well-being of their families or their ability to support themselves in retirement.”<sup>18</sup>*

A major impending crisis for NPDOs revolves around staffing. In the past, many NPDO staff transitioned from volunteer roles to employment. Full-time volunteers who were knowledgeable in the day-to-day operations of the organization were ideal candidates for transition into employment positions. However, volunteerism patterns are changing; ‘full-time’ volunteers are no longer the norm and the numbers are declining.

At the same time, increased financial demands on NPDOs have limited the ability of the NPDO to provide salary increases for staff, which have not kept pace with government and private sectors. Existing workloads for NPDO staff have increased dramatically and budget constraints do not allow for professional development. In light of these factors, NPDOs are faced with the challenges of staff retention and attracting qualified employees.

*“However, many organizations expressed concerns about their inability to pay competitive salaries and the increased workforce challenges this has created for them. One respondent lamented that, not only could their organization not afford to give raises to its employees, but it couldn’t even give them hope of raises in the future.”<sup>19</sup>*

The nature of the work in NPDOs is moving from full time stable jobs to project part-time. This is often seen as ‘precarious work’. Staff that are contracted from year to year do not have the same opportunity to ‘buy-in’ to the development of longer term programs. Persons in these positions are often underpaid, may feel undervalued, and most importantly experience the insecure nature of the type of work they do. In addition, the overwhelming majority of this type of work is done by women, who are often supporting families themselves. The importance of longer funding contracts (as noted under the Funding section) is a way to stabilize human resources within NPDOs.

For many NPDOs, staff who are getting close to retirement present a distinct challenge. Where will they find staff to replace the lost knowledge and experience? The same issue applies to volunteers that have worked long and hard for the NPDO. Hiring and grooming staff to replace senior staff would resolve the problem but hiring and retaining staff is a major challenge.

The issue of staff and volunteer safety is an important consideration for any employer. Even understaffed, NPDOs are obligated by its contract to provide for staff and volunteer safety. A NPDO should continually monitor this issue and speak to its funder should additional funds be required to ensure staff safety.

Many staffing positions within the NPDO sector may be hired through contract or by project, which lack the protection and security provided by other industries. In addition, for those NPDOs that employ persons with disabilities, staffing decisions that result in letting people go can have disastrous implications.



**“Unfortunately, due to the economic downturn, the NGO supporting my primary contract had to lay me off suddenly in January 2009. Seeking new employment, always a challenge for someone in my situation is almost impossible during a recession. I heard from one NGO after another—their funding has not come through or has been cut as the government cuts corners to meet its bailout promises. As a consultant without unemployment benefits, the difficulty of my job search is compounded by my struggle to provide shelter and food for my sons as I face poverty, potential homelessness, and loss of medical supports and medications.” Consultant with a disability.**

Investing in continuing education for front-line staff is important, not just because it directly impacts the quality of service they provide, but because it is an investment in the staff member and is beneficial to them beyond the given contract/position. Government offers many types of educational opportunities for free such as ‘how to write a funding proposal’ and board development sessions.

### Strategies to address challenges

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- 12A. Work collaboratively with funders, government and other NPDOs to make available increased professional development opportunities for NPDO boards and staff.
- 12B. Identify staff and board development resources through government departments like Alberta Labour Standards, Alberta Human Services and others.
- 12C. Help staff retention by having competitive salaries and employee benefits provided for in grant funding.
- 12D. Examine the merits with government of developing a joint staff benefit plan that NPDOs can access as a means to provide a staff retention incentive.
- 12E. Develop with government strategies that promote the benefits of working in the NPDO sector.
- 12F. Work with government to address NPDO worker and safety concerns.

# 13.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING CHALLENGES

Strategies to address challenges

### 13. STRATEGIC PLANNING CHALLENGES

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While both government and NPDOs need to be clear about their strengths and weaknesses, simply knowing what the other can and cannot do does not mean that gaps and needs are being addressed.

NPDOs need to engage in strategic planning to address organizational mandates, how to carry out that mandate and the needs of the disability population being served. Long-term strategic planning is critical to long-term success. However, devoting limited resources to a strategic planning process can be costly for a NPDO. People that can assist in designing and leading the strategic planning exercise must be identified and engaged.

#### Strategies to address challenges

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- 13A. Build funding envelopes specifically for strategic planning.
- 13B. Consult with government regarding programs that can assist NPDOs to engage in strategic planning and leadership exercises.
- 13C. Designate funding for strategic planning and project evaluation within every project.

## 14. TECHNOLOGY CHALLENGES

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*“While charities have long been skilled networkers and integrators, many charities and non-profits are concerned about their ability to effectively use emerging technologically mediated forms of networking for engagement. Although these technologies are seen as having tremendous potential, they do pose a number of challenges for organizations.*

*Among other challenges are:*

- *the need to develop the technical capacity;*
- *increased virtual competition for mind share and resources with organizations that have not traditionally been direct real space competitors;*
- *meeting audience expectations of continually providing real time communications tailored to a range of audiences; and*
- *ensuring that engagement is strategic and meaningful rather than superficial.*

*Opportunities for organizations to learn from early adopters and experiment with a safety net will be critical to ensure that charities and non-profits can maximize their benefit from these new technologies”<sup>20</sup>*

The effective use of technology is key to conducting business in today’s world. NPDOs require current technology to communicate with other NPDOs, their funding partners and to provide financial accountability. To accomplish this, NPDOs must use current software, have the hardware that can meet the software requirements, and have staff skilled and proficient in their use. Unfortunately for many NPDOs, this standard is beyond their capabilities, often because the ability to apply for a grant to do a complete upgrade of technology is no longer available. This makes it difficult to keep pace with funders, government and other NPDOs.

NPDOs must have the means to upgrade their technological capacities on an ongoing basis. This may need to be planned over several years. NPDOs must also have a plan to ensure that staff skills are upgraded. However, training costs are often prohibitive for organizations with limited budgets.

While the use of technology to communicate is important, it does not guarantee that a NPDO can communicate with those who are unwilling or unable to use technology. Other ways are needed to communicate with people who do not have the ability, skill or wish to use the latest technology.

### Strategies to address challenges

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- 14A. Assist NPDOs to develop strategies and solutions to address their long-term technological needs.
- 14B. Work with funders so that the acquisition of skills, hardware and software are part of the on-going program, operational budget and planning processes.
- 14C. Assist NPDOs to train staff on the use and implementation of new technologies, including web management, social media and social networking.
- 14D. Remember and perhaps use other strategies than the latest technology to seek input from target audiences.

## 15. VOLUNTEER CHALLENGES

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*“Charities’ and nonprofits’ ability to mobilize volunteers to fulfill their missions is a defining characteristic of the sector. Although volunteers are often strongly motivated, the volunteer supply is not infinite and volunteers’ expectations may be changing in ways that make them a potentially more challenging (though also more valuable) resource in coming years.*

*Although just under half of Canadians volunteer, over three-quarters of total volunteer hours come from just 12 per cent of the population. This heavy dependence on a small part of the Canadian population for volunteer labour has been unchanged for at least a decade and it is doubtful that it can be sustained in the context of an aging society.”<sup>21</sup>*

*“The strength of many small NPDO organizations has been its core of dedicated volunteers. In fact Imagine Canada indicates that “just over 50% of charities are entirely dependent on volunteers for their HR needs.”<sup>22</sup>*

NPDOs have accomplished much at little cost through the use of a knowledgeable and committed volunteer workforce. It has even resulted in the perception that NPDOs can provide a service at much less cost than larger service providers, including government. While this may have been true in the past, that is changing.

The core of life-long, dedicated volunteers that NPDOs have had at their disposal is aging. Many are no longer willing or able to commit the time and energy that they did previously. In addition, there is a cultural shift in attitude towards volunteering. Many volunteers now look for project or short-term volunteer roles. This means that long-term volunteers, knowledgeable about the organization and the disability it serves, are not being replaced.

Volunteering for many is seen as a way to acquire skills and experience as stepping stones for employment. Often that job may not be with the NPDO they volunteered for. This means the NPDO provides the time, support, training and experience to equip the volunteer to find employment with another organization. In these cases, there is no long-term benefit to the NPDO from the investment made into the volunteer.

Short-term volunteers require greater staffing to support and guide them. New volunteers require training and supervision. Both situations are an additional cost to a NPDO. Many NPDOs have turned to the educational system to acquire volunteers through field placement experiences for high school and post-secondary education – this also requires additional staffing support. For persons with disabilities that wish to volunteer it is often necessary for a NPDO to provide travel subsidies and disability accommodation. Persons with disabilities are often unable to afford these costs.

### Strategies to address challenges:

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- 15A. Provide financial support to develop and sustain a strong, committed, and knowledgeable volunteer base.
- 15B. Build job creation into volunteer strategies to retain those who want gainful employment.
- 15C. Ensure funding decisions recognize volunteer efforts and the investments NPDOs make in volunteer time and talent.
- 15D. Develop human resource packages to attract and retain volunteers.
- 15E. Profile volunteer opportunities at schools and post-secondary learning institutions.

# CONCLUSION

Alberta's non-profit disability organizations provide a rich array of valuable services which add incredible value to the quality of life for all Albertans. However, ongoing challenges threaten the sustainability of many of these organizations.

We believe that it would be in the best interest of the people of Alberta, government and NPDOs if the Government of Alberta were to collaborate more effectively with, and better support NPDOs and the services they provide.

This paper, endorsed by ADF and AAMIMH, provides many suggestions in this regard. We hope that it opens a dialogue that will enhance the relationship between funders, government and NPDOs and sustain and build upon the work already done that is an essential component of the fabric of our society.

1. Imagine Canada, A Framework for Action for the Non-profit Sector, December 2010, p 3.
2. Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, CCVO Economic Climate Survey of Alberta's Nonprofits and Charities, April 2011, p 6.
3. Statistics Canada, 2009, Satellite Account of Non-profit Institutions and Volunteering (Catalogue no. 13-015X, ISSN 170-9264, Dec 2009, 09.
4. Statistics Canada, Satellite Account of Non-profit Institutions and Volunteering (Catalogue no. 13-015-X, ISSN 1710-9264; aussi disponible en français, ISSN 1710-9884), Dec 2009, p 9.
5. Statistics Canada, Satellite Account of Non-profit Institutions and Volunteering (Catalogue no. 13-015-X, ISSN 1710-9264; aussi disponible en français, ISSN 1710-9884), Dec 2009, p 11.
6. Roach, Robert, The Non-Profit Voluntary Sector in Alberta, Regional Highlights of the National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations, 2006, p 1.
7. Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, CCVO Economic Climate Survey of Alberta's Non-profits and Charities – Spring 2011, p 3.
8. The Goldie Company, The Current State of Non-Profit Charitable Organizations in Western Canada – Survey Report by the Goldie Company, June 2009, p 6.
9. Imagine Canada, A Framework for Action for the Non-profit Sector, December 2010, p 1.
10. United Nations, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol, Article 31, p 23.
11. United Nations, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol, Article 31, p 24.
12. United Nations, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol, Article 33, p 25.
13. Imagine Canada, A Framework for Action for the Non-profit Sector, December 2010, p 4.
14. United Nations, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol, Article 24, p 17.
15. Imagine Canada, A Framework for Action for the Non-profit Sector, December 2010, p 3.
16. Van Reusen A., The Self-Advocacy Strategy for Education and Transition Planning, Intervention in School and Clinic 1996 32: 49.
17. Aspis S., Self-advocacy for People with Learning Difficulties: does it have a future?, Disability & Society, Volume 12, Number 4, 1 September 1997, pp. 647-654(8).

18. Imagine Canada, A Framework for Action for the Non-profit Sector, December 2010, p 2 & 3.
19. Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, CCVO Economic Climate Survey of Alberta's Non-profits and Charities – April 2011, p 5.
20. Imagine Canada, A Framework for Action for the Non-profit Sector, December 2010, p 4.
21. Imagine Canada, A Framework for Action for the Non-profit Sector, December 2010, p 3.
22. Imagine Canada, A Framework for Action for the Non-profit Sector, December 2010, p 3.

## APPENDIX A: Companion Guide & Worksheet

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Not all NPDOs will have identical challenges. Even if they do, the challenges may not pose the same level of problem. Each organization will have to develop its own specific responses. You can use the following suggestions and worksheet to help organize a review of the challenges, planning, discussions, etc., in this document or others you may have.

We suggest:

1. Review the document.
2. Identify those challenges that apply to your organization.
3. Rank the challenges identified in terms of priority.
4. Review what has been done on the priority to date.
5. Identify what you would like to do to address the challenge.
6. Consult with other NPDOs if they have addressed this challenge and how.
7. Open discussions with the stakeholders that have a bearing on responding to this challenge. (Your funder, government, other government funded and private service providers are examples of who you should be speaking to.)

Discussions could include what suggestions they have for you in terms of their perception of the problem, what they may or may not be prepared to do to help you, or whether they will collaborate with you to address the identified challenge.

### Worksheet to Review Challenges of NPDOs in Alberta and to Develop Responses

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The following is offered as a worksheet organizations can use to assess its issues/challenges and determine possible strategies to address them. After the blank form, two examples are given.

Challenge	Current Issues	Actions to Resolve / improve issue
1.		
2.		



## Form to Review Challenges of NPDO's in Alberta & Develop Responses

The following is offered as a possible example of an organization's assessment of the challenges it has identified to its operation and suggestion of possible strategies to address them. The challenges and the issues NPDOs face will vary from organization to organization.

### NPDO "A"

Challenge	Current Issues	Actions to Resolve / Improve Issue
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship with the funder</li>   <li>• Complex funding requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build in regular meetings throughout the year with the funder to identify concerns and review progress</li>   <li>• Other actions?</li>   <li>• Work with funder to develop strategies to simplify reporting while still meeting funder needs</li>   <li>• Consult with other NPDOs to see if other reporting measures are used and determine if they may be applicable</li>   <li>• Do a cost analysis to see what the operational costs are to complete required funding reports so funder can have a better appreciation of true costs of NPDO to do its business</li>   <li>• Other actions?</li> </ul>
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability to recruit/retain qualified staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPDO to consult with other NPDOs that have been successful with their respective staff recruitment and retention strategies to see if any strategies can be transferred</li>   <li>• Greater promotion and publicity about career in the sector</li>   <li>• Share / pool resources among NDPO's on staffing drives/career fairs</li> </ul>

Challenge	Current Issues	Actions to Resolve / Improve Issue
Staffing (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability to recruit/retain qualified staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPDO develops strategy in collaboration with Government to enable its staff to access programs around professional / board development</li> <li>• NPDO builds within its grant proposals the need to enable staff development go better deliver the services needed</li> <li>• Other actions?</li> </ul>

Challenge	Current Issues	Actions to Resolve / Improve Issue
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current funding levels generated by the NPDO do not cover adequate provision of services</li> <li>• The demand for services exceeds the supply</li> <li>• Growing complexity of client needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPDO reviews its mandate and considers if there are services that can be reduced but still allow it to fulfill the mandate.</li> <li>• NPDO opens discussions with funder to examine funding strategies that can allow the NPDO to continue its needed services</li> <li>• Other actions?</li> <li>• NPDO collaborates with Government and other NPDOs on strategies to address the complex needs client</li> <li>• Other Actions?</li> </ul>
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computers outdated, not able to handle the new programs required to effectively communicate with funders (financial reporting programs, etc.).</li> <li>• Computers costly to upgrade and maintain and funders reluctant to provide funding just for technological upgrades</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPDO works with funders to develop strategies and solutions to address long term technological needs such as: business case for acquisition of skills, hardware and software and integrate into ongoing operational programing and grant proposals</li> <li>• Other Actions?</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX B: Resources

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*(A small sampling of organizations that may assist you or direct you to where you can find assistance is offered below)*

### **A Workforce Strategy for Alberta's Non-profit and Voluntary Sector**

[www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/wia/wia-betw\\_nonprofit\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.employment.alberta.ca/documents/wia/wia-betw_nonprofit_strategy.pdf)

### **Alberta Culture**

[www.culture.alberta.ca/bdp/default.aspx](http://www.culture.alberta.ca/bdp/default.aspx)

### **Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations**

[www.calgarycvo.org/aboutccvo/](http://www.calgarycvo.org/aboutccvo/)

### **Challenges and Opportunities Facing Nonprofit Organizations**

[www.zencaroline.blogspot.ca/2010/11/challenges-and-opportunities-facing.html](http://www.zencaroline.blogspot.ca/2010/11/challenges-and-opportunities-facing.html)

### **Charity Village**

[www.charityvillage.com/directories/organizations-i-z.aspx](http://www.charityvillage.com/directories/organizations-i-z.aspx)

### **Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations**

[www.ecvo.ca/](http://www.ecvo.ca/)

### **Financial Challenges of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations**

[www.imaginecanada.ca/files/www/en/nsnvo/n\\_financial\\_challenges\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.imaginecanada.ca/files/www/en/nsnvo/n_financial_challenges_factsheet.pdf)

### **Five Challenges Facing Not-for-Profits**

[www.cowangroup.ca/cigl/pages/products-services/industry-programs/pdf/FiveChallengesFacingNF-Ps\\_0210.pdf](http://www.cowangroup.ca/cigl/pages/products-services/industry-programs/pdf/FiveChallengesFacingNF-Ps_0210.pdf)

### **IMAGINE Canada**

[www.imaginecanada.ca/](http://www.imaginecanada.ca/)

### **Resource Centre for Voluntary Organizations**

<http://volunteeralberta.ab.ca/tag/resource-centre-for-voluntary-organizations>

### **The Capacity Challenges of Nonprofit & Voluntary Organizations**

[www.library.imaginecanada.ca/files/nonprofitscan/en/rural/rcsi\\_report\\_phase\\_2.pdf](http://www.library.imaginecanada.ca/files/nonprofitscan/en/rural/rcsi_report_phase_2.pdf)

### **The Muttart Foundation**

[www.muttart.org/](http://www.muttart.org/)

### **Volunteer Alberta**

[www.volunteeralberta.ab.ca/](http://www.volunteeralberta.ab.ca/)

## APPENDIX C: Alberta Disabilities Forum Membership

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**Accessible Housing Society**

[www.ahscalgary.ca](http://www.ahscalgary.ca)

**Alberta Abilities Lodges Society**

[www.aals.ca](http://www.aals.ca)

**Alberta Association for Community Living**

[www.aacl.org](http://www.aacl.org)

**Alberta Association of the Deaf**

[www.aadnews.ca](http://www.aadnews.ca)

**Alberta Caregivers Association**

[www.albertacaregiversassociation.org](http://www.albertacaregiversassociation.org)

**Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities**

[www.accd.net](http://www.accd.net)

**Alberta Council of Disability Services**

[www.acds.ca](http://www.acds.ca)

**Alberta Network for Mental Health**

[www.anmhf.ca](http://www.anmhf.ca)

**The Arthritis Society, Alberta and Northwest Territories**

[www.arthritis.ca](http://www.arthritis.ca)

**Autism Calgary Association**

[www.autismcalgary.com](http://www.autismcalgary.com)

**Autism Society of Alberta**

[www.autismsocietyalberta.org](http://www.autismsocietyalberta.org)

**Autism Society of Edmonton and Area**

[www.autismedmonton.org](http://www.autismedmonton.org)

**Brain Care Centre**

[www.braincarecentre.com](http://www.braincarecentre.com)

**Brain Injury Association of Alberta**

[www.biaa.ca](http://www.biaa.ca)

**CNIB, Alberta Division**

[www.ccbnational.net](http://www.ccbnational.net)

## APPENDIX C: Alberta Disabilities Forum Membership

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**Canadian DeafBlind Association**

[www.deafblindalberta.ca](http://www.deafblindalberta.ca)

**Canadian Down Syndrome Society**

[www.cdss.ca](http://www.cdss.ca)

**Canadian Mental Health Association, Alberta**

[www.alberta.cmha.ca](http://www.alberta.cmha.ca)

**Canadian Paraplegic Association, Alberta**

[www.cpa-ab.org](http://www.cpa-ab.org)

**Catholic Social Services, Alberta**

[www.catholicsocialservices.ab.ca](http://www.catholicsocialservices.ab.ca)

**Centra Cam Vocational Training Association**

[www.centracam.ca](http://www.centracam.ca)

**Cerebral Palsy Association in Alberta**

[www.cpalberta.com](http://www.cpalberta.com)

**Champions Career Centre**

[www.championscareercentre.org](http://www.championscareercentre.org)

**Chrysalis, an Alberta Society for Citizens with Disabilities**

[www.chrysalis.ab.ca](http://www.chrysalis.ab.ca)

**Connect Society of Edmonton**

[www.connectsociety.org](http://www.connectsociety.org)

**Distinctive Employment Counseling Services of Alberta**

[www.decsa.com](http://www.decsa.com)

**Easter Seals Alberta**

[www.easterseals.ab.ca](http://www.easterseals.ab.ca)

**EmployAbilities**

[www.employabilities.ab.ca](http://www.employabilities.ab.ca)

**Fetal Alcohol Support Society**

[www.fasd.typepad.com](http://www.fasd.typepad.com)

**Goodwill Industries of Alberta**

[www.goodwill.ab.ca](http://www.goodwill.ab.ca)

## APPENDIX C: Alberta Disabilities Forum Membership

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**Grande Prairie Residential Society**

[www.gpresidentialsociety.com](http://www.gpresidentialsociety.com)

**Independent Living Resource Centre of Calgary**

[www.ilrcc.ab.ca](http://www.ilrcc.ab.ca)

**Kidney Foundation of Canada - Northern Alberta & the Territories Branch**

[www.kidney.ca](http://www.kidney.ca)

**Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta**

[www.ldalberta.ca](http://www.ldalberta.ca)

**Lupus Society of Alberta**

[www.lupus.ab.ca](http://www.lupus.ab.ca)

**Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, Alberta**

[www.mssociety.ca/alberta](http://www.mssociety.ca/alberta)

**Muscular Dystrophy Canada**

[www.muscle.ca](http://www.muscle.ca)

**On Site Placement Services**

[www.osp.ab.ca](http://www.osp.ab.ca)

**Opportunity Works Calgary Inc.**

[www.opportunityworks.ca](http://www.opportunityworks.ca)

**Paralympic Sports Association**

[www.parasports.net](http://www.parasports.net)

**Parkinson Alberta Society**

[www.parkinsonalberta.ca](http://www.parkinsonalberta.ca)

**PLAN Edmonton**

[www.planedmonton.ca](http://www.planedmonton.ca)

**Schizophrenia Society of Alberta**

[www.schizophrenia.ab.ca](http://www.schizophrenia.ab.ca)

**Spina Bifida Association of Northern Alberta**

[www.sbhana.org](http://www.sbhana.org)

**The Steadward Centre for Personal & Physical Achievement**

[www.ualberta.ca/~stdward](http://www.ualberta.ca/~stdward)

## APPENDIX D: Alberta Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health Membership

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**Alberta Association of Services for Children and Families**

[www.aascf.com](http://www.aascf.com)

**Alberta College of Social Workers**

[www.acsw.ab.ca](http://www.acsw.ab.ca)

**Alberta Network for Mental Health**

[www.anmhf.ca](http://www.anmhf.ca)

**Alberta Pharmacists Association**

[www.rxa.ca](http://www.rxa.ca)

**Alberta Psychiatric Association**

[www.albertapsych.org](http://www.albertapsych.org)

**Canadian Mental Health Association, Alberta Division**

[www.cmha.ab.ca](http://www.cmha.ab.ca)

**CASA Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health**

[www.casaservices.org](http://www.casaservices.org)

**College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Alberta**

[www.crpna.ab.ca](http://www.crpna.ab.ca)

**The Organization for Bipolar Affective Disorders Society**

[www.obad.ca](http://www.obad.ca)

**Psychologists' Association of Alberta**

[www.psychologistsassociation.ab.ca](http://www.psychologistsassociation.ab.ca)

**Schizophrenia Society of Alberta**

[www.schizophrenia.ab.ca](http://www.schizophrenia.ab.ca)

**Society of Alberta Occupational Therapists**

[www.crpna.ab.ca](http://www.crpna.ab.ca)

### Associate Member Organizations

**Distress Centre Calgary**

[www.distresscentre.com](http://www.distresscentre.com)

**John Howard Society of Alberta**

[www.johnhoward.ab.ca](http://www.johnhoward.ab.ca)



## APPENDIX D: Alberta Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health Membership

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### **Parents Empowering Parents Society**

*[www.pepsociety.ca](http://www.pepsociety.ca)*

### **Prosper Place Clubhouse**

*Phone: (780) 426-7861*

### **Support Network**

*[www.supportnetwork.com](http://www.supportnetwork.com)*



The Alberta Disabilities Forum  
106-10423 178 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T5S 1R5  
P. 780.488.9088  
F. 780.488.3757  
E. [adf@accd.net](mailto:adf@accd.net)  
[www.adforum.ca](http://www.adforum.ca)



The Alberta Alliance on Mental  
Illness and Mental Health  
320-9707 110 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2L9  
P. 780.482.4993  
F. 780.482.6348  
E. [info@aamimh.ca](mailto:info@aamimh.ca)  
[www.aamimh.ca](http://www.aamimh.ca)