**NOTE TAKER TEMPLATE**

**Table Theme: Resilience and Public Policy (Table #1)**

**Issues and Opportunities**

1. Government funding programs are sometimes too rigid (e.g., reserve funding is not allowed, single-year/seasonal funding leads to cash flow problems, inability to adapt as you go can sap ingenuity, need ability to adapt programs to regional need).
2. Access to decision makers is limited, especially for organizations outside the Avalon Peninsula.
3. The community sector lacks awareness of support programs available across all departments, levels of government and private sources.
4. There is often a lack of communication about status of funding requests and there is a need for better/continuous relationships with departmental staff.
5. Government programs do not appear to regard funding as an investment but rather as an expenditure.
6. There is little opportunity for skills development and training on matters such as risk management, accountability, board governance and succession planning.
7. Incrementalism places pressure on organizations to do more or different things without the benefit of increased funding.
8. Short-term funding does not allow for long-term planning (e.g., succession and program planning, delivery of community services).
9. There is potential to share services and create hubs (e.g., administration, HR, IT) across small organizations.
10. Impact and results can be measured in terms of social return on investment.
11. Government programs and services may be delivered more efficiently and at less cost through partnership.

Other:

1. How policy is developed impacts organizations (identified by Group 2).
2. If the community sector understood the policy development process, they would be able to feed into the process (identified by Group 2).
3. Market access through public policy – procurement of services by government through social enterprise (identified by Group 3).
4. Current systems impede success of organizations – they do not function well given the mandate of many organizations (identified by Group 3).
5. Resilience cannot be built on one-year funding or pilot projects that do not go anywhere (identified by Group 4).

**Group 1**

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| **Issue/Opportunity** | **What action(s) must be taken to address the issue or seize the opportunity?** | **What barriers stand in the way of implementing these actions? What are they and what must be done to remove them?** |
| Issue/Opportunity #1:1. Government funding programs are sometimes too rigid (e.g., reserve funding is not allowed, single-year/seasonal funding leads to cash flow problems, inability to adapt as you go can sap ingenuity, need ability to adapt programs to regional need). | * Need long-term, year-over-year funding and investment. Some organizations have it – should be province-wide. Develop a policy to allow this.
* Funding streams/results need to be streamlined across departments. A single pot of funding with one method of reporting would reduce administrative time. A single application.
* More flexibility in the granting and grant-writing process to provide more than 10 percent for administration. Need more support for core costs and for staff needed to implement the programs.
* Volunteer effort should be quantified and given a monetary value. Should be considered an asset or collateral for the organization.
 | * N/A
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| Issue/Opportunity #2:6. There is little opportunity for skills development and training on matters such as risk management, accountability, board governance and succession planning. | * Rather than project-based, have workplace training-specific funding for organizational members and employees.
* Skills development increases management capability and accountability. There should be assessments by third parties.
* Core administrative fee built in at 20 percent would allow training (e.g., financial management and accountability) to occur. Cost of auditing etc., increases when organizations do projects; the more they do, the higher the fees are for statements, etc.
* Some training is required – i.e., workplace health and safety – some organizations need assistance.
* Create a centralized information hub regarding rules and requirements for not-for-profits. Organizations do not know what they do not know – a hub of information would allow for operation within guidelines.
* Set up an operational checklist within the information hub so groups know they are on track respecting regulations.
* Organizations can get bogged down with operational stuff – there are ways to fix it.
* Matching federal and provincial funds to help with administration.
 | * N/A
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**Group 2**

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| **Issue** | **What action(s) must be taken to address the issue or seize the opportunity?** | **What barriers stand in the way of implementing these actions? What are they and what must be done to remove them?** |
| Issue/Opportunity #1:3. The community sector lacks awareness of support programs available across all departments, levels of government and private sources. | * Put some support behind poverty reduction – cross departmental response to social services – needs legs.
* Provide a directory or information hub – really comprehensive with a navigator (person) in place. Ensure the directory is online and easy to update.
* Create a cross-department navigation system and a person dedicated to it.
* Access to benefits such as pensions, etc. (this is happening in Ontario).
* Training for boards – workshops, information sessions.
* Streamline contacts and programs – ensure someone can answer questions associated with programs.
* There is an opportunity for the government sector to use more community people as resource people – i.e., Community NL was a good example of how this can be done.
* Community experts should be leveraged more – expand the facilitator list for some programs such as Community Capacity Building.
 | * Program access is inefficient for outsiders to government.
* There is no key contact across programs.
* Lack of transparency – groups really have to dig to find information on programs.
* Many programs exist and could be utilized if better access was there.
* Smaller non-profits are hindered by the fact they are so small and do not have sufficient human resources. All have a reputation of doing more with less and sometimes this works to the community group’s disadvantage.
* The regulations around some organizations (i.e., childcare, etc.) are very expensive and require expertise.
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| Issue/Opportunity #2:8. Short-term funding does not allow for long-term planning (e.g., succession and program planning, delivery of community services). | * Needs to be understandable
* Long-term planning including funding is required to ensure community impact.
 | * Short-term funding can throw an organization off its mandate.
* Even when funding is secure, there are difficulties getting quarterly payments and staying on budget/making bill payments.
* Being on fiscal year requirements creates issues – creates panic in an organization.
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**Group 3**

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| **Issue** | **What action(s) must be taken to address the issue or seize the opportunity?** | **What barriers stand in the way of implementing these actions? What are they and what must be done to remove them?** |
| Issue/Opportunity #1:10. Impact and results can be measured in terms of social return on investment. | * A huge change in collection of data is needed. Analysis by a third party of results – this adds to validity of data – non-biased expertise.
* Data focus should be NL-focused, not based on anywhere else.
* Get someone – i.e., an economist – to measure the investment, results and leverage achieved.
* There is an opportunity to build on the economic impact of the entire sector – both funded and non-funded. There is a social, economic and environmental impact – a triple bottom line.
* Bring federal and provincial programming in line.
* Programs offered should be looked at not only in terms of financial outcomes.
* There is an opportunity to look at best practices internationally in developing tools – many other countries have likely been through this process.
 | * Massive reporting requirements in place hinder reporting on impact.
* Sometimes information provided is not rolled up and is asked for again.
* Rigidity of funding is a micro-view of outcomes.
* Need outcomes beyond election cycles and funding programs.
* Need to know who determines what success looks like.
* Organizations stuck in a financial conundrum – if they make a profit, they are are penalized and if they make a deficit, they are also penalized.
* Use of a use-it or lose-it time frame affects decision-making.
* Diversity of the sector and the multiple reporting requirements – difference in metrics across different organizations. Some differences in reporting are therefore required – hard to quantify the sector as a whole.
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| Issue/Opportunity #2:11. Government programs and services may be delivered more efficiently and at less cost through partnership. | * Be more innovative and have more tools to deliver on mandates and missions.
* Increase collaboration and building of trust with government.
* Willingness to try new ways of doing things (e.g., measurement).
* Partner across organizations and mandates to reduce staffing costs.
 | * Ticking boxes – system itself can get in the way of the innovation in the sector.
* Government is often not willing to look at new ways of doing things or new ways of increasing revenues.
* Constraints within programs – these are built-in and government workers want to help but often cannot.
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**Group 4**

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| **Issue** | **What action(s) must be taken to address the issue or seize the opportunity?** | **What barriers stand in the way of implementing these actions? What are they and what must be done to remove them?** |
| Issue/Opportunity #1:1. Government funding programs are sometimes too rigid (e.g., reserve funding is not allowed, single-year/seasonal funding leads to cash flow problems, inability to adapt as you go can sap ingenuity, need ability to adapt programs to regional need). | * There needs to be more flexibility (i.e., adaptation of policy).
* Develop common Questions and Answers.
* Create a user-friendly information base.
* Create a hot line – staffed by someone who is knowledgeable across all programs.
 | * Communicating the opportunities to powers that be.
* The person that a community group is meeting with is often not the decision-maker.
* Length of time for approvals/level of complication of paper work, etc.
* Current information hubs are not user-friendly.
* Community groups are not aware of the programs that are out there – this is an issue because organizations are not making the most of available programming.
* There is a lot of passing people on to other departments/people.
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| Issue/Opportunity #2:8. Short-term funding does not allow for long-term planning (e.g., succession and program planning, delivery of community services). | * Funders should look at investment as an investment in an organization and do it for three to five years.
* Develop something between short and long-term funding. A three-tier level of programming based on organizations’ experience and demonstrated ability to meet results.
* Develop programs not focused on year-end – cash flow in a reasonable manner across fiscal years so projects can be completed properly.
* Someone to help people complete applications and assist with the reporting process should be in place (i.e., a navigator) – also someone to be in contact with regarding timeframes.
 | * Issue around fiscal year end – end up losing money or being frantic in the spending of it.
* Short-term funding is not conducive to organizational efficiency.
* Policy and programs hinder success – or do not reward success – you are just getting there when the program ends or funding is pulled.
* The budgetary year is a government bubble but is not the reality of the community sector. This needs to be re-evaluated.
* Understanding of the volunteer and often unstaffed nature of organizations.
* Program rigidity can hamper an organization and sometimes be used as a way to leave an organization behind when their application is being processed – i.e., they did not quite meet one objective of many – now have a way out of doing the next round of funding rather than looking at the organization in a holistic manner.
* Often made to feel in competition with a government department (i.e., when the organization’s mandate is not a government priority).
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