

NORP SURVEY SERIES #2

SUMMER 2016



NORPanel.org

Nonprofit Organization Research Panel (NORP) Project
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NORP was initially developed and housed in University of Missouri. It is now housed in George Mason University.



About the Survey

This report presents the summary results of NORP survey on the current state of performance measurement practices in human services nonprofit organizations.

Of the NORP as of May 2016, a total of 479 nonprofit human services organizations with gross receipts of over \$500K received an invitation to participate in this survey. The initial invitation was sent out on June 22, followed by the first reminder on July 05 and the final reminder on July 19. When the survey closed on July 24, a total of 226 responses were received, a 47.2% response rate.

About the Panel

The Nonprofit Organization Research Panel, NORPanel, is an online community of nonprofit leaders who were *invited* to sign up to participate in occasional web-based surveys and studies about the organizations they lead and the important work their organizations do. Researchers using the NORP data apply sampling weights to take account of unequal sample selection probabilities and to frame coverage errors and nonresponses.

For more information, visit www.norpanel.org or email norpanel@missouri.edu

Comparison of the responding nonprofits to all IRS registered nonprofits (Fiscal year 2013)

		Total expenses		Total revenue	
		Average	50th	Average	50th
		(mean)	percentile	(mean)	percentile
		(median)	(median)	(median)	(median)
Human services 501c3 nonprofits with gross receipts at least \$500K or more	Responding nonprofits	\$ 4,028,197	\$ 1,576,995	\$ 4,283,015	\$ 1,644,543
	All nonprofits registered with the IRS	\$ 5,051,104	\$ 1,349,649	\$ 5,244,101	\$ 1,426,518

Generalizability

Although no statistical difference was found for total expenses and revenue at the 10% significance level, the panel organizations are not a random sample, and thus the descriptive results reported here are not generalizable to a larger population of nonprofit organizations. To produce more analytic results, data will be weighted using sampling weights based on an organization's size, type, age, and location.

Looking ahead 5 years, do you expect that ORG_NAME's programs will grow...

Answer	Bar	Response	%
a great deal		50	22%
a fair amount		91	41%
some		64	29%
only a little		15	7%
not at all		4	2%
Total		224	

How frequently does ORG_NAME conduct the following activities?

Question	Never	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Semi-Annually	Annually	Total Responses
Developing performance measures	8	2	23	38	40	117	228
Analyzing data	6	30	85	62	21	29	233
Developing action plan (a tool developed after analyzing performance data)	13	4	39	55	34	87	232
Implement action plan	12	37	46	42	28	66	231
Manage action plan	13	37	76	55	14	38	233
Evaluate action plan	16	8	34	69	44	60	231

The majority of human services nonprofits (57%) develop performance measures annually or semi-annually. About 27% of the responding organizations develop performance measures more frequently such as quarterly, monthly, or even weekly. Less than 5% of the responding organizations said they never develop performance measures.

To what extent, if at all, do you agree with the following statements as they relate to ORG_NAME? "We have performance measures that tell us about or a system to keep track of ..."

Question	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Total Responses
...the resources used to provide goods or services.	6	19	18	104	74	221
...how many things we produce or services we provide.	3	4	12	74	130	223
...how well we are achieving our mission.	1	9	22	109	80	221
...how satisfied our clients are.	1	14	25	105	78	223
...how many people we serve at a given time.	1	3	12	49	157	222
...the quality of our products or services.	4	11	33	117	58	223
...if we are operating efficiently.	6	24	39	104	48	221

Over 70% organizations strongly agree that they have performance measures to keep track of how many people they serve at a given time. Of those responding organizations, 35% strongly agree, and 47% somewhat agree, that they have performance measures to keep track of how well they are achieving their mission.

During the past 12 months, which individual(s) has been mainly responsible for the following performance management activities? (multiple choices were allowed)

Question	Senior Manager	Program Manager	Employee Delivering Service	Board of Directors	Others	No one	Total Responses
Developing performance measures	170	100	36	56	14	5	381
Analyzing data	164	122	40	45	24	5	400
Developing action plan	166	120	54	50	13	9	412
Implement action plan	120	142	102	11	12	11	398
Manage action plan	128	144	47	14	7	12	352
Evaluate action plan	169	118	43	72	21	16	439

To what extent, if at all, do you believe the following factors have been the challenge for your organization's performance measurement?

Question	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Total Responses
Determining meaningful measures	14	32	17	116	45	224
Obtaining valid or reliable data	15	50	20	94	43	222
Existing technology or systems not capable of collecting needed data	16	46	31	73	59	225
Difficulty determining how to use performance information to improve the program(s)	25	58	43	85	14	225
Lack of tangible incentives (e.g., rewards or recognition)	12	40	58	76	39	225
Lack of staff who can spend time on measuring and analyzing performance data	7	21	20	90	85	223
Lack of knowledge about collecting performance data	20	63	40	84	16	223
Lack of knowledge about analyzing performance data	22	63	32	86	20	223
Lack of ongoing support from the board of directors for collecting performance data	50	57	65	35	18	225

The majority of responding organizations strongly or somewhat agree that "determining meaningful measures (71.9%)" and "the lack of staff who can spend time on measuring and analyzing performance data (78.5%)" have been the challenges for their performance measurement.

Notable Comments

“Our Board wants to activate a program evaluation task force and I would like to support it, but our greatest challenge is having staff resources. Our schedule is beholden to aggressive and demanding government funding timelines.”

“Although we are working hard toward creating tools for measuring performance, we are always interested in finding tools that are easy to use and affordable.”

“We are successful at what we do, as evidenced by membership and program growth over the last 10 years, but do not have time or staff or the funding to get scientific or academic about it.”

“We have realized that in the past we have not had the ability to implement the change needed from analysis of our data. We hired a strategic consultant outside the non for profit realm (successful business entrepreneur to change this. We are in the midst of this process but it is proceeding well.”

“In working with organizations that provide Human Services and community revitalization activities, collecting data is an important factor to measure the tangible, to assist with determining geography, demographics and other program logistics. However, ours is a labor of love. We assist people develop their personal and professional skills, build their personal relationships and manage services and systems that benefit their well-being and quality of life. Our agencies promote cultural sensitivity, practice diversity, and are always respectful of our differences as we make evident our similarities. Therefore, our work reflects improvements and growth within the communities we serve. We need to keep a balance between scientific data and valuable life experiences that provide measurable content.”