

***Charitable Organizations in New Brunswick (Canada):  
Understanding the Landscape in Human Services Delivery***

Carmen Gill,  
Heather McTiernan and Luc Thériault

*University of New Brunswick, Canada*

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## **ABSTRACT**

*In Canada, the parameters of service provision between the nonprofit sector and the state have shifted with the emergence of the post welfare state era. While some recent national-level studies have contributed to our knowledge of this largely under-researched sector, less is known about these organizations at the regional and provincial levels. At this level, some basic questions about the nature and capacity of the sector must be answered before one can think about the proper role these agencies can or should play in the current mixed-economy of care. With New Brunswick as the study area, this research examines a specific sub-set of organizations engaged in the provision of services to individuals and populations in need: registered charitable organizations involved in human services (i.e., social services and non-hospital health services). The results are derived from a provincial survey of these organizations which explores key dimensions such as: activities, governance, accountability, location, financial resources, gender representation, and service delivery challenges. The initial results of a socio-geographic analysis of this data are also presented, which begin to provide a better understanding of the context and “landscape” of human service delivery in New Brunswick.*

## **SOMMAIRE**

*Au Canada, les paramètres de la livraison des services aux personnes sont en transition depuis l'émergence de la période post-providentialiste. Si des études nationales ont récemment nourri notre compréhension du rôle qu'y joue le tiers-secteur, nous avons peu d'études provinciales ou régionales sur la nature et la capacité du secteur. Des réponses sont nécessaires pour situer les agences bénévoles dans l'offre de services dans les différentes provinces. Notre étude examine spécifiquement les organisations charitables livrant des services sociaux ou de santé (hors des hôpitaux) au Nouveau-Brunswick. On y explore les résultats d'une enquête par questionnaire portant sur la gouvernance, la responsabilité, la localisation, la place des femmes, le financement et les principaux défis rencontrés par ces organisations. Des pistes d'analyse sociogéographique sont aussi présentées afin d'entreprendre une « cartographie » des agences livrant des services aux personnes du Nouveau-Brunswick.*

## **RESUMEN**

*En Canadá, los parámetros de provisión de servicios entre los sectores sin fines de lucro y el estado se han desplazado con la aparición de cambios que han sucedido después de la era del Estado de bienestar. Mientras que recientes estudios, al nivel nacional, han contribuido a nuestro conocimiento de este extenso y sub-investigado sector, aun menos se desconoce acerca de estas organizaciones a nivel regional y provincial. A este punto, preguntas básicas acerca de la naturaleza y capacidad de tal sector deben ser respondidas antes de poder pensar en el papel adecuado que estas agencias pueden o deben jugar en la presente economía mixta de servicios sociales. Tomando Nuevo Brunswick como el área de estudio, esta investigación examina una específica subdivisión de organizaciones involucradas en la provisión de servicios a individuales o a poblaciones necesitadas; organizaciones de caridad registradas envueltas en*

*servicios humanos (i.e. servicios sociales y servicios de salud no hospitalarios). Los resultados son derivados de una encuesta provincial de estas organizaciones los cuales exploran dimensiones claves como; actividades, gobierno, responsabilidad, localidad, recursos financieros, representación de los géneros, y retos en la entrega de servicios. Los resultados iniciales de un análisis socio-geográfico de estos datos son también presentados, lo cual comienza a dar una mejor interpretación del contexto y escenario de la provisión de servicios humanos en Nuevo Brunswick.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Canadian society has always had mechanisms for supporting disadvantaged populations and individuals in need; and charitable organizations have always played, and continue to play, a major role in holding up the social safety net which, in many ways, defines us as a nation that provides high quality of life for its citizens. However, the nature of the service delivery relationship, and the role of the state within it, has shifted over time; it has also been the subject of much debate.

The Keynesian-inspired modern welfare state which defined this relationship in the post-war years gave way to the “welfare state crisis” in the 1970’s, which was characterized by cutbacks at all levels of government through to the mid 1990’s. For over a decade now Canada has been in a period of transition characterized by the search for a new “social contract.” In this current post-welfare state period, a new debate has been taking place on the respective responsibilities and roles of different sectors, such as government, private businesses, nonprofit and voluntary agencies, and families, in the funding, regulation and delivery of human services.

Until about 10 years ago, relatively little was known in Canada about these organizations, but this has been shifting, as we have seen through the increase in research attention on the nonprofit sector (the recent funding of social economy research teams by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council is one example). We have also seen an increased institutional focus on the third sector at international, national, and regional levels. Some examples of this include the proclamation of 2001 as the International Year of Volunteers by the UN, and in Canada, the creation of the Voluntary Sector Initiative (VSI) in 2000, and the implementation of large national surveys (eg: National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations). In New Brunswick, which is the focus of this paper, a Community Task Force on the Nonprofit Sector was established in 2007.

Over the course of this study and debate, different provincial jurisdictions in Canada have proposed and implemented different configurations of the interface between the state and nonprofit and voluntary agencies; and the variations, from province to province and sub-sector to sub-sector, are significant. In the province of New Brunswick (NB) in particular, the knowledge and documentation of charitable human service organizations is scant. In an effort to contribute to a better understanding of the capacities and challenges of nonprofit organizations within specific regional contexts, this paper presents the results of a survey conducted in the province of New Brunswick.

The study focuses specifically on registered charitable organizations engaged in human services, and looks at service typology and the realities of service delivery for these organizations in terms of: financial and human resource capacity, governance, accountability, gender demographics, and the challenges of delivering human services. The New Brunswick results are considered in light of, and compared to, the trends identified in other Canadian regions (through national studies of the voluntary sector, for example). Within the province, we consider the geographic context of service delivery and examine such factors as the size of areas served, the urban-rural split, and the specific cultural geographies of this province.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The New Brunswick Charitable Human Service Sector Survey was conducted by mail in 2006. The sample population consisted of all human service organizations (i.e., health and welfare service provision organizations, excluding hospitals) in New Brunswick which held formal charitable status in the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) registry of charitable organizations. The parameters for inclusion of organizations in the sample were based primarily on the service category codes designated by the CRA, as well as categories of the International Classification of Non-profit Organizations (Salamon, L. and Anheier, 1997).<sup>1</sup>

The first step of survey implementation was to conduct focus groups with a selection of potential participants in order to gain feedback on survey clarity and content. Focus groups were held (in both English and French) with charitable organization leaders, and some adjustments to survey content were made based on their feedback. The survey was preceded by an introductory letter explaining the study, and accompanied by a letter that clarified respondent's voluntary participation and consent. The instrument consisted of a 19 page survey booklet containing four sections that covered questions on the main research themes (typology and service delivery, geography, challenges of service provision, funding, governance, and gender). The final sample consisted of 529 registered charities. From this, a response rate of 53% was obtained (279 surveys).

## 3. RESULTS

### **An Overview of the Sector: Structure and Services**

The most common area of service provision among New Brunswick organizations is social services (66% indicated that this is their primary areas of service), followed by health (16%) and development and housing (11%) (Table 1). In comparison, the *National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations* (NSNVO) also found social services to be the most common types

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<sup>1</sup> From the CRA service categories, certain omissions were made from the sample because they were deemed inappropriate to the research objective (of examining health and welfare based service organizations only). For example, recreation clubs and church congregations were excluded, unless they were shown to be providing health or welfare related services (i.e., soup kitchens etc.). Similarly, primary care hospitals were excluded from the sample, while ambulatory care and fire service organizations, clinics, nursing homes, hospital auxiliaries are included.

of service being provided by organizations nationally, after religion and sport which are not included in our study (Hall, deWit, Lasby, McIver, Johnson, McAuley, et al. 2004).<sup>2</sup>

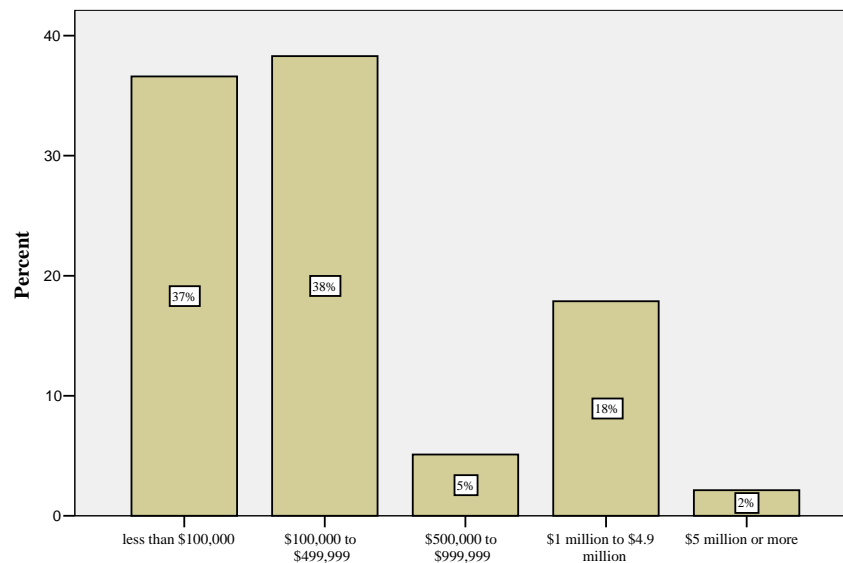
**Table 1: Primary Type of Service / Activities in NB and Canada**

Service/Activity Areas	NB charitable Organizations
Social Services	66.2%
Health	15.7%
Development and Housing	11.0%
Law and Advocacy	3.8%
Other services (not elsewhere classified)	2.9%
Grant-making / fundraising / volunteerism	0.4%

N=210

New Brunswick human service organizations vary widely in size, whether measured by the number of paid staff or by total funding. Although there are many organizations (20%) with a large staff base (i.e., more than 20 paid employees), most of them (55%) would be considered small and had fewer than 10 paid staff. Budgets for New Brunswick charitable organizations vary from as low as \$1,500 to just over \$9 million (see figure 1). The average budget for all responding organizations is \$660,000.

**Figure 1. Total Funding: NB Organizations (N= 235)**



<sup>2</sup> The NSNVO was a comprehensive examination of the characteristics of and challenges facing the Canadian voluntary sector. It covered *all* sub-sectors (including for example: sporting organizations, arts and culture, religious organizations, etc.) and was not limited to organizations with charitable status. Thus, any comparison of our results must be done with caution and with this difference in mind.

Most New Brunswick human service organizations are well established organizations, serving the general public. On average, the organizations that participated in our survey have been providing services in the province for 27 years. Organizations with larger budgets tended to be more established (Table 2), which appears to conform to the logic that organizations grow in capacity (financial and otherwise) over time. The survey showed that most organizations in New Brunswick (63%) do not have a membership option<sup>3</sup>, differing considerably from the results of NSNVO survey, which showed that on a national level, 80% of organizations have a formal membership.<sup>4</sup> Rowe (2006) also found that, compared to the rest of Canada, voluntary organizations in the Atlantic Provinces tend to serve a non-exclusive clientele (i.e., both members and non-members), and our results confirm that this is the case in New Brunswick.

**Table 2. Relationship of Budget to Number of Years in Service**

<b>Total budget</b>	<b>Years in service (average)</b>
Less than \$100,000	23
\$100,000 to \$499,999	25
\$500,000 to \$999,999	24
\$1 million to \$4.9 million	38
\$5 million or more	36
Total	27

N=227 f=4.71, p<.05

### **The Challenges of Human Service Provision in New Brunswick**

Funding is the greatest challenge facing New Brunswick human service organizations and was cited as the number one challenge by 61% of the respondents to our survey. It was one of the top three challenges for 80% of organizations. While one might expect organizations with small budgets to report more funding and financial challenges, this was not the case - the problem of funding seems to be universal across organizations of all sizes. The second most common set of challenges was related to human resources (ability to recruit, train, and retain skilled staff and/or volunteers). Other Canadian studies suggest that the problem in attracting and retaining staff is related in part to issues of low compensation and lack of benefits made available by many organizations in this sector (Thériault, 2003).

Even well-funded organizations struggle for human resources. In fact, the larger the budget of an organization, the more likely they were to state lack of staff/expertise as their primary challenge, suggesting that human resource/expertise problems are not necessarily rooted in financial capacity alone (Table 3). Staffing challenges may also be a reflection of the trend of organizations being increasingly reliant on project (i.e., short-term) funding, as has been

<sup>3</sup> Of those organizations in New Brunswick who have a membership option, 25% require membership for service provision. Primarily, these are senior and youth centers.

<sup>4</sup> This difference may be due in part to the different sampling between this study and the NSNVO survey. Two key differences are: 1) the NSNVO study sampled organizations from all sectors, and 2) NSNVO included not only registered charities, but incorporated nonprofit organizations as well, thereby including organizations that primarily serve private needs rather than the public at large (Hall et. al. 2004, p.64).

discovered in other studies (Scott, 2003); with this short-term funding structure likely leading to short-term employment offerings and problems with staff retention.

**Table 3. Relationship of Budget to Human Resource Challenges**

<b>Total budget</b>	<b>Staff capacity challenges: % of organizations</b>
Less than \$100,000	10
\$100,000 to \$499,999	38
\$500,000 to \$999,999	33
\$1 million to \$4.9 million	53
\$5 million or more	60

N=206,  $r=.36$ ,  $p<.05$

The fact that funding is the single most important challenge facing these charities is an alarming, though not surprising, trend which is supported by much of the literature on the voluntary sector. The immediacy of this challenge however, should not overshadow the fact that the struggle for human resources is also significant, even among large, well funded organizations. These challenges point to a struggle for sustainability, both within organizations and for the sector as a whole. The section that follows will examine how organizations govern and manage themselves within this climate.

### **Governance and Decision-Making**

Most responding organizations (68%) were independent (i.e., they did not belong to an umbrella organization), and administered through a board of directors structure, which necessitates close working relationships between volunteers (as board members) and paid staff. Within this however, there can be a great deal of variation among organizations in terms of how and by whom various administrative decisions are made. Respondents to our survey were asked to state the level of decision-making input that was held by their volunteers, staff, and funders.<sup>5</sup>

As outlined in table 4, there appears to be a relative balance in decision-making power between funders, volunteers, and staff in terms of the activities undertaken by an organization. However the staff, who in most organizations would be most involved in the day delivery of programs, have the greatest influence on what activities are carried out, and how. When it comes to fundraising activities, funders appear to have little influence; staff tend to have the most influence in this area, followed by volunteers (who are often the driving force behind fundraising campaigns, particularly for small organizations). Funders also tend to have little influence over who is on an organization's decision-making body.

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<sup>5</sup> This question was posed as a five point scale, where 1 = "no input considered" from that group and 5 = "completely determined" by that group. For ease of reporting, results have been condensed into high (4-5), medium (3) and low (1-2) levels of input.

**Table 4. Decision-Making Input Levels**

<b>Level of Input on:</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Volunteers</b>	<b>Funders</b>
What activities will be performed	High	Medium	Medium
How activities are carried out	High	Medium	Medium
Types of fundraising undertaken	High	Medium	Low
Who will be on the decision-making body	Medium	Medium	Low
Accountability measures	Medium	Medium	Medium

### **Evaluation and Accountability**

Our findings showed that both financial and program evaluations are common practice among charitable human service organizations in New Brunswick. Ninety percent (90%) reported conducting financial evaluations, 86% conducted program and/or service evaluations, and 78% also conducted other types of evaluations. Most organizations (57%) were evaluated both externally and internally, and thirty-eight percent (38%) stated that they found these to be extremely useful. Bugg and Dallhoff's (2006) survey on governance showed that only 48% of organizations conduct formal evaluations. Therefore, while these studies on evaluation practices may not be directly comparable, it does appear that New Brunswick is leading in this regard.

Most commonly, organizations reported that they were primarily accountable to a government body. In contrast, when asked to whom they felt their organization *should* be primarily accountable to, the most common response was patrons/members, followed by government. While most organizations (75%) are in agreement with who they are currently accountable to, the results seem to indicate that current accountability structures may not be centered enough on service users.

### **Organizational Capacity: Financial and Human Resources**

The nonprofit sector is a major contributor to the national economy, in fact the rate of economic growth in the nonprofit sector is exceeding that of economy as a whole (Statistics Canada, 2006). It could be speculated then, that many of the financial challenges highlighted by the voluntary sector literature (including this study) are attributable to 'growing pains' as the sector expands within a climate of reduced funding. The sections that follow provide some fodder for future discussion on this topic in the New Brunswick context.

As noted earlier, the budgets for New Brunswick organizations surveyed ranged from \$1,500 up to \$9 million, with an average of just under \$660,000.<sup>6</sup> By comparison, according to the NSNVO (Hall et. al., 2004), the average income for registered charitable organizations (of all

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<sup>6</sup> The NSNVO figures for New Brunswick show an average revenue for all organizations of \$794,331 (this figure applies to all sub-sectors and includes unregistered organizations). It is interesting to note however, that in the NSNVO, NB organizations are the third largest when financial figures are compared nationally (Hall et al, 2004.p29).



types) in Canada was \$786,094.<sup>7</sup> Most New Brunswick organizations in our sample would be considered small: three-quarters operated on budgets of less than \$500,000 (see table 5). The same pattern is seen in the sector at a national level, where approximately 90% of organizations had budgets of less than \$500,000 (Hall et. al., 2004).

**Table 5. Range of Budgets Among NB Respondents**

<b>Total budget</b>	<b>% of NB organizations</b>
less than \$100,000	37
\$100,000 to \$499,999	38
\$500,000 to \$999,999	5
\$1 million to \$4.9 million	18
\$5 million or more	2

N=235

Our data shows a relationship between the budget size and the human resource capacity of organizations in New Brunswick. Organizations with larger budgets tend to have the highest number of staff (table 6). The same pattern is also seen in the number of volunteers (though it is not statistically significant, in that case). Although (as previously noted) organizations with large budgets have the most staff, they are also more likely to identify staffing as a challenge of service provision. In other studies the same trend (i.e., staffing as a challenge is positively related to budget size) has been observed for the Atlantic Provinces and for Canada as a whole (Hall et al, 2004; Rowe, 2006).

**Table 6. Relationship Between Budget Size and Human Resource Capacity**

<b>Total funding</b>	<b>Average number of staff **</b>	<b>Average number of volunteers*</b>
less than \$100,000	2	27
\$100,000 to \$499,999	6	33
\$500,000 to \$999,999	19	97
\$1 million to \$4.9 million	55	302
\$5 million or more	187	143

\*N=215 f=1.2 p= .29

\*\*N=215 f=187.1 p=<.05

Survey data indicate that organizations with large budgets are under tighter control from funders, while decision-making in small organizations is heavily influenced by volunteers. Over 50% of organizations with budgets of less than \$100,000 stated that the organization's activities are completely determined by volunteers. The level of input staff has on organizational decision-making, however, was not related to budget size.

<sup>7</sup> Using NSNVO data to calculate the average budgets for only the six organization types that fall within our sample (health, social services, development and housing, law and advocacy, grant-making and volunteerism, and other), the figure does not change significantly (\$728,677, compared to the \$786,094 average for all registered charities). (Hall et al, 2004, p.22).

### **Funding: Source Matters**

As discussed in the research of Katherine Scott (2003), there have been shifts taking place in the way revenue is generated in the nonprofit sector. Cuts in government funding, as she points out, have led many organizations to a dependency on diverse sources of short-term, unstable funding. One of the most pronounced trends of this new funding regime has been the shift to targeted, project-based funding and a decrease in the amount of core funding available to run voluntary organizations on a day-to-day, year-to-year operational basis. Some of the questions in our survey shed some light on how local organizations in New Brunswick are being affected by this trend; in some instances, yielding surprisingly positive results.

Government is a key funder for New Brunswick organizations, but is in most cases, not the primary funder. Most respondents to our survey depend on government for at least a portion of their funding, but the majority (55%) receive less than half of their revenue from government sources (see table 7). Larger organizations rely on a higher proportion of government funds (table 7). The same pattern has been shown to exist at the national level (Hall et. al. 2004).

**Table 7. Percent of Funding from Government Sources, by Size of Budget and Percentage of New Brunswick Human Service Organizations**

<b>Percent of funding from government sources</b>	<b>% of organizations</b>	<b>Average budget</b>
0 – 25	40	\$252,553
25 – 49	15	\$274,018
50 – 74	13	\$882,598
75 – 100	31	\$1,304,574

N=223 f=10.73 p<.05

Government-funded organizations face fewer financial challenges (i.e., were less likely to report financed as their primary challenge), but are under tighter control by their funders. The level of input from funders on decision-making was positively related to the proportion of funding received from government sources (see table 8). Organizations that receive the majority of their funds from government were also more likely to report that their mandates were not respected by funders and slightly more likely to state that they had problems with the reporting requirements of funders.

However, organizations primarily funded by government are more likely to dedicate a high proportion of their budget to core operations (84% reported that two thirds or more of their budgets were allocated to core operations). The impression given by this data is that government-funded organizations are faring better financially but tend to have more problematic relationships with their funders.

**Table 8. Areas in Which Funders Have High Levels of Decision-Making Input, by Percentage of Total Funds Received From Government**

Areas in which funders have high levels of decision-making	% of organizations	
	Less than 50% of total funds come from government	50% or more of total funds come from government
Types of activities*	16	48
How activities are carried out**	11	32
Accountability measures***	19	66

\* N=183 crv=.47 p<.05

\*\* N=182 crv=.381 p<.05

\*\*\*N=183 crv=.519 p<.05

### **Funding Stability: The Challenge of ‘Keeping up the Good Work’ in the Human Service Sector**

As we have found in this study, finances are by far the greatest challenge facing organizations in the human service sector. As other studies have shown (see Scott, 2003), it is often the nature of funding delivery that poses the greatest challenge, with many organizations relying on short-term funds and being unable to plan for long term program development. Here we compare the source of funding among organizations in New Brunswick with the stability and challenges of acquiring and using their service delivery dollars.

While Gumulka, Hay, and Lasby (2006) found that 61% of small and medium-sized organizations in Canada report an over-reliance on project funding, our study indicates that New Brunswick organizations operate on *relatively* stable funding. Generally, respondents to our survey are dedicating most of their resources to core operations (71% of the budget, on average, with the remaining portion to special projects). While we must be careful not to interpret this as an absence of struggle for core funding, it does tell us that most New Brunswick organizations devote the majority of their money to day-to-day operations. Our survey data also show that organizations who devote a lot more of their budgets to core operations tend to have larger budgets overall (table 9). This trend is related to the fact that these organizations also tend to have more paid staff (which is most likely their greatest budget expense).

**Table 9. Budget Allocated to Core Operations Relative to Revenue**

Percent of budget allocated to core operations	Average size of budget*	Average number of staff**
Low (0-33%)	\$182,265	3
Medium (34-65%)	\$370,679	15
High (66-100%)	\$796,038	21

\*N=187 f=4.03 p<.05

\*\*N=180 f=4.56 p<.05

Mission drift is problematic among human service organizations in New Brunswick, though not as prevalent as expected. Less than half of the respondents indicated that their organizations had ever shifted its focus (i.e., undergone “mission drift”<sup>8</sup>) in order to secure funding, and less than 1% experienced this on a regular basis. In her study, *Funding Matters*, Scott (2003) shows that 33% of organizations experience mission drift (p.150).<sup>9</sup>

The demands of funder reporting are something that has often been discussed as a problem in the nonprofit sector. Our survey asked organizations whether they had experienced problems with the reporting requirements of funding agencies, and found that less than 25% experience problems, with less than 5% stating that reporting was a serious problem. Respondents were also asked to rate the extent to which they felt their mandate was respected by their funders. Most organizations (54%) felt that their mandates were completely respected by the funders to whom they report, and less than 5% stated that their mandate was not at all respected. Such low incidents of problems with both reporting to, or having their mandates respected by, funders suggests that New Brunswick organizations may not be under the same pressure to conform as has been suggested, and/or that they may be coming to accept the reporting demands placed upon them.

### **Gender Demographics in New Brunswick’s Human Service Sector**

Although it is widely known that the Canadian voluntary sector as a whole is predominantly staffed by women, there has been little extensive research conducted on the gendered nature of the sector. The work of both Foster and Meinhard (2003 and 2005) is an exception to this, and has provided insight into women’s voluntary organizations specifically.

Others have speculated about the reasons for the high concentration of women in the voluntary sector as a whole; for example, regarding the traditional concentration of women in caring occupations, McMullen & Schellenberg (2002) have said that:

“...nonprofits may offer more flexible working arrangements that are attractive to women seeking to balance work and family-care responsibilities; or nonprofits may offer women greater opportunity to assume senior management roles than is the case for other sectors. It may also be the case that relatively fewer men are willing to accept the kind of work and working conditions that the sector is able to offer.” (2002, p.8)

While the reasons behind the gendered nature of the sector can be debated, our data shows indisputably that human service organizations in New Brunswick are predominantly female-staffed and female-led. Women made up the overwhelming majority of the employee base of the

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<sup>8</sup> Scott (2003) explains mission drift in the following way: “The emerging funding regime is calling into question how nonprofit and voluntary organizations define their mission and programs, how they structure themselves, and generate the resources necessary to sustain their activities. Many worry that organizations are being driven to take on programs or activities that dilute their missions, stretch their resources and erode their base of legitimacy.” (p.150).

<sup>9</sup> In our New Brunswick survey, the question of mission drift is asked on a 5-point scale (from often to never experiencing mission drift), while in Scott’s survey (2003), results are derived from a yes/no question on the subject; therefore a direct comparison of the data can not be made.

organizations that participated in our survey (80%, on average, with a median of 91%). The majority of volunteers, board members and leaders were also women.

### **Hierarchy and Inequity within a Gendered Sector**

It is interesting to note however, that there is also some hidden inequality within this demographic trend. While the sector is powered by women, their level of influence appears to decrease proportionately to the status of the positions within an organization. In this analysis we are assuming a hierarchy within organizations (with staff and volunteers at the lower end of the scale, and managers and board members at the higher end). As shown in table 10, the ratio of women to men is lower among leaders and board members than it is among volunteers and staff. Results from our survey also show that organizations with larger budgets tend to have (proportionately) fewer female board members than do organizations with small budgets (see Table 11). These trends further confirm a pattern that has been shown in previous studies; see for example, Prince (1988), and Dow (2001).

Although one might have expected to see it, a similar significant trend is not present in our data when we examine leadership gender (i.e., CEO's and Executive Directors). Similarly, there were no significant differences between the relative budget size or staff size of organizations led by men and those led by women. This differs from the results of a study conducted by Thériault (2003), which found that organizations led by men tended to have larger budgets.<sup>10</sup>

**Table 10. Gender Representation Among Volunteers, Staff, Leaders, and Board**

<b>Positions within an organization</b>	<b>% female</b>	<b>% male</b>
Volunteers (median, n=279)	71	29
Staff (median, n=279)	91	9
Leaders (total responding leaders n=218)	69	31
Members of the board (median, n=279)	57	43

**Table 11. Gender of Board in Relation to Budget**

<b>Annual budget</b>	<b>% male board members</b>	<b>% female board members</b>
Less than \$100, 000	35	65
\$100, 000 to \$499,000	42	58
\$500,000 or more	48	52

N=223 f=4.85 p<.05

### **Gendered Governance and Leadership**

This New Brunswick survey tells us that organizations governed by women tend to draw on more female human resources. Among the responding organizations, those that had higher percentages of women on their boards tended, on average, to have more female staff, more female managers, and more female volunteers, than those with fewer women on the board (see

<sup>10</sup> Although not present among leadership, note that this trend was seen among boards (organizations with more males on the board tend to have higher budgets), as noted.

table 12). Organizations with female leaders (ie: chairs, CEO's, and executive directors) are also far more likely than those led by men to have high representation of women on board and on staff (table 13).

**Table 12. Gender of Governing Body in Relation to Gender of Workforce**

<b>Women on board</b>	<b>% of females on staff</b> (mean, n=190)	<b>% of females in management roles</b> (mean, n=224)	<b>% of female volunteers</b> (mean, n=176)
Less than 30% women	61	26	32
31-60% women	76	51	65
More than 60% women	90	79	78

**Table 13. Gender of Organization's Leader by Female Boards and Staff**

<b>Gender of Leader</b>	<b>Boards with more than 60% women</b>	<b>Staffed by more than 60% women</b>
Male	14%	22%
Female	86%	78%

It is clear from the results of this survey that the voluntary sector in New Brunswick, like that of the rest of Canada, is composed primarily of women. However, results also show some trends of inequity within the hierarchy of the sector. Other reports have pointed to the predominance of women in the sector as a manifestation of inequity, given the sectors tendency to demand high education and skills in return for pay and stability than is often less than that of other sectors (Mailloux et al., 2002; Carr et. al., 2004).

### **Geography: Human Services and Regionalism in New Brunswick**

As many studies have highlighted, the charitable sector in Canada seems as diverse as the country itself.<sup>11</sup> From province to province and from region to region, the charitable emphasis, level and nature of giving, challenges, and of course size, of the sector, are highly varied. This section provides a brief overview of the regional and geographical data for the New Brunswick charitable human service sector.

New Brunswick human service organizations tend to serve primarily their local area. Our data show that 70% of organizations serve only the local population (i.e., within the municipality or some other unincorporated local area in which they are located), and less than 5% serve outside of the province. Although the trend seems more pronounced in New Brunswick, it is also seen in Canada as a whole, where the majority of voluntary organizations (64%) serve only locally, and in the Atlantic Provinces (where 62% are serving locally).

The majority of the charitable human service organizations in New Brunswick are located in rural areas and small towns. There are three urban centres in New Brunswick with populations of over 40,000 (Fredericton, Moncton, and Saint John). Just under half of the organizations that participated to our survey are located in these cities, while 55% are located in less densely

<sup>11</sup> For discussions and data on regional variations (see, for example: Hall et al., 2003; Hall et al., 2006; Rowe, 2006.

populated areas. These figures correspond with the distribution of New Brunswick's population, which is split rather evenly between rural and urban areas.<sup>12</sup>

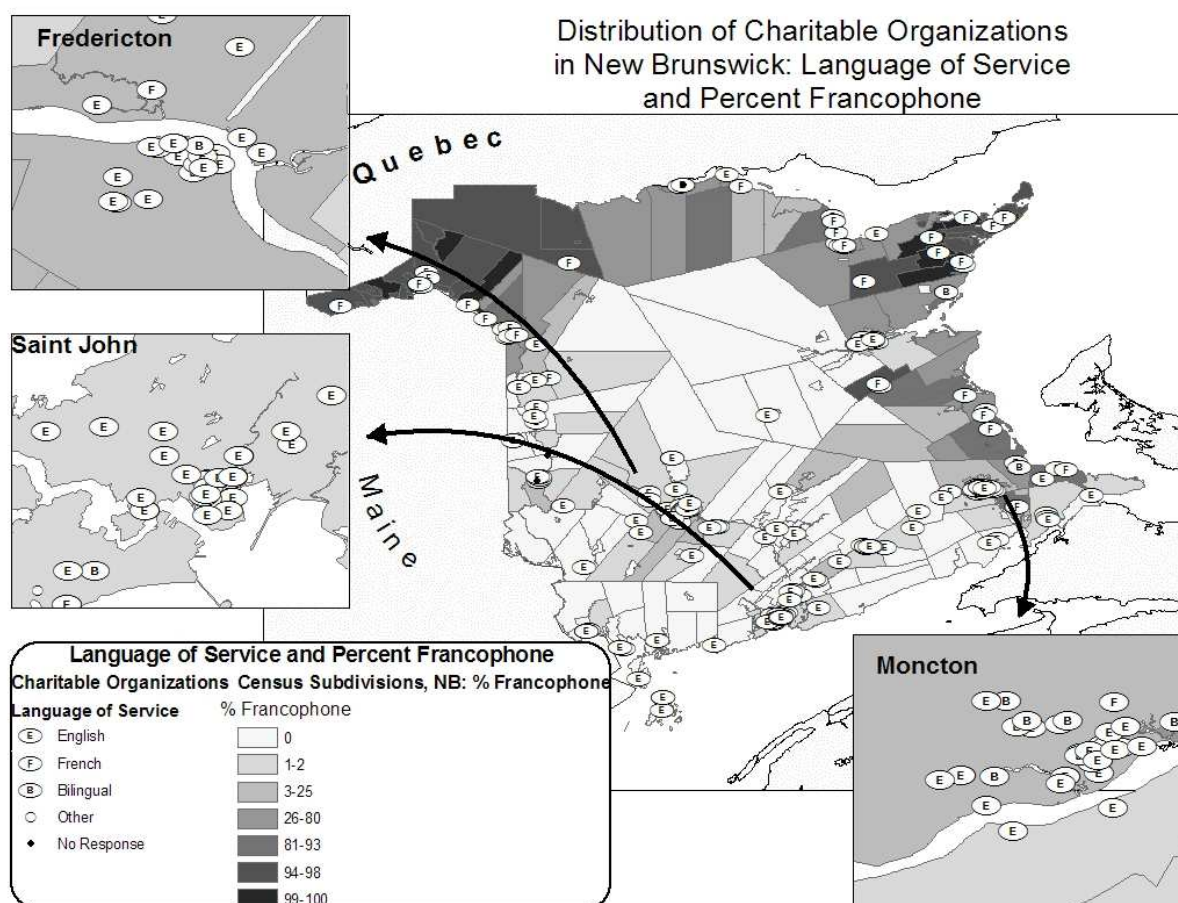
Fifteen percent (15%) of responding organizations reported geography as a challenge of service provision, and 6% identified it as their primary challenge. This challenge was most commonly expressed in terms of distance to their patrons and the challenges of covering of a wide service area with minimal resources and/or staff. The rural location of organizations has been highlighted as a significant challenge in other provincial studies (Carr, Carr, Hanna, Rockwood, & Rodgers-Sturgeon, 2004), in which rural organizations have stated that isolation limits their capacity (in terms of training opportunities, connections to government, and the inability to be self-sufficient, etc.).

### **Cultural Geography and Rural Isolation in New Brunswick**

New Brunswick's linguistic geography is comprised of two official languages (French and English). In this province, in addition to the challenge of physical isolation (manifest in access to and provision of service in rural areas), there is the potential for challenges of linguistic isolation (manifest in access to and provision of services in one's first language). Carr et. al. (2004) have noted this challenge in regard to its north-eastern region, which is predominantly Francophone and rural. The map below provides a visual demonstration of the location of organizations serving primarily French-speaking clientele, with a background showing the percentage of people who are French-speaking in each census subdivision.

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<sup>12</sup> Source: Statistics Canada population tables: "Population urban and rural, by province and territory." Results are not directly comparable, as this table defines the rural/urban split according to population density (over 400 persons per km<sup>2</sup>).



Our survey data confirms that Francophone organizations are far more likely to be located outside of a major centre and therefore experience greater problems with geographical isolation in addition to possible linguistic barriers (Table 14).

**Table 14. Primary Language of Service Relative to Geographical Location**

Primary language of majority of clients	Organizations located in an urban centre (pop >40,000)	Organizations located outside of an urban centre (pop. <40,000)
English	80%	60%
French	5%	33%
Both	14%	7%
Other	1%	0%

N=256 crv=.354 p<.05

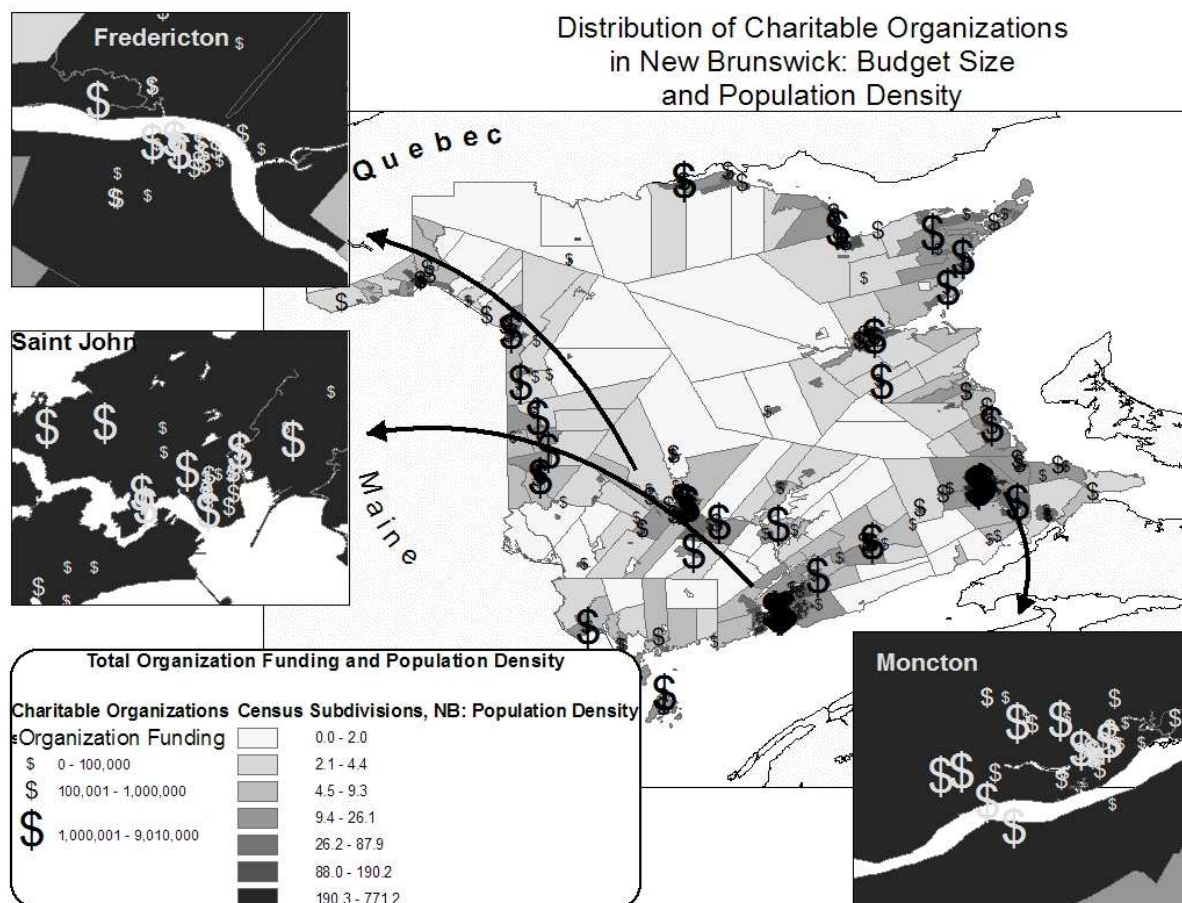
Urban Organizations are more institutionally connected and serve wider areas. They are twice as likely to operate under, or be part of an umbrella organization as those located in rural areas.<sup>13</sup> They are also more likely to serve wider catchment areas (beyond their immediate location), suggesting that many rural areas are dependent on service providers in the three major

<sup>13</sup> Cross tabulation (crv=.208, p<.05)



centres.<sup>14</sup> The average distance to furthest area served for urban organizations is 137km compared to 62km for rural organizations.<sup>15</sup>

Organizations located in urban areas have significantly larger budgets, on average, than those in more rural regions. The size difference is not as pronounced however, when we compare the number of paid staff, which suggests that rural organizations may be doing more with less or, at least, paying (almost) as many people with fewer dollars (Table 19). The map below also provides a visual representation of the budget size of organizations relative to the population density in New Brunswick census subdivisions.



<sup>14</sup> Cross tabulation ( $\chi^2=.297$ ,  $p<.05$ ) shows 43% of urban-based and 16% of rural-based organizations serve areas beyond their immediate municipality/area (i.e., a sub-provincial region or larger).

<sup>15</sup> Comparison of means ( $f= 29.34$ ,  $p>.05$ )

**Table 19. Budget and Staff Size Relative to Geographical Location**

<b>Rural /Urban</b>	<b>Average budget*</b>	<b>Average staff size**</b>
Urban Center (pop >40,000)	\$845,202	19
Rural / Outside Urban Centre (pop <40,000)	\$491,432	15

\*N=23 f=4.09 p=.05      \*\*N= 237 f= .827 p=.364

Geographically speaking, the charitable sector in particular in New Brunswick has several distinct attributes. The large proportion of the population living in rural areas and its unique regional language specificity are two examples. The data emerging from this survey have highlighted the potential impact of these differences and raised some interesting questions about the capacity of rural organization and about the capacity or urban-based organizations to support rural areas.

#### **4. DISCUSSION**

In order to inform public policy and ensure the provision of services for populations and individuals in need in this province into the future, there must be a clearer understanding of not only the people and groups who utilise human services, but also of the charitable organizations providing them. Understanding this means examining their needs, their capabilities, and their limitations; moreover it means developing a better picture of their role in the social economy in this post-welfare state era.

Until very recently there has been little attempt to study and understand the charitable sector in New Brunswick. This survey, together with the establishment of the Premiers Community Nonprofit Taskforce, represents one of the early steps toward understanding the needs and realities facing nonprofits in this province (and in the case of this study, of understanding the realities specific to charitable human service nonprofits).

For example, this study has contributed to this need for understanding by establishing that New Brunswick human service charities tend to be providing services across great distances, and providing them non-exclusively (i.e., services are open the public, not by a membership structure). For the most part, they are diligent about evaluation and reporting, and are steadfast in their missions despite the need to chase funding from year to year. Still, our results show that most of these organizations are seriously lacking financial resources, which is likely contributing to their demonstrated difficulty in finding and retaining staff and volunteers.

As the percentage of the population in need expands (and the trends of growing income disparity and an aging population dictate that it will), we can not expect everything from a sector that is in dire need of additional resources. The question on the table today is not whether the state will continue to operate some form of collaboration in service delivery with the many charitable organizations of the province, but rather the question of whether or not the state is ready to enter into a true partnership with these nonprofit and charitable agencies to allow them to improve and expend the benefits they provide to the people of New Brunswick.

Following from this are the questions of what that partnership will look like, and whether the structure that emerges will adequately address the unique challenges facing the charitable human service sector in this province. Its financial challenges, localized structure, rural populations, and unique cultural geography are a few of the examples highlighted in this paper. Currently, it seems that New Brunswick is on the brink of asking and answering these very important questions. The answers that are negotiated may in effect dictate what the future holds for charitable human service organizations in this province, its nonprofit sector as a whole, and the populations these serve.

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