

WHAT'S NEXT
TIDES FOUNDATION'S SURVEY OF THE FIELD
ANALYSIS OF SURVEY FINDINGS

Tides Foundation has always tried reach out to listen to the field in shaping its vision and work. At this moment, Tides believes it to be especially important to work with the field in devising a way to build on the momentum generated in 2004. To this end, Tides conducted a survey of its 2004 grantees and Tides Center projects to gauge the current direction of the progressive movement. There is much work to do in 2005 and beyond as we work toward fairness, freedom and sustainability. We hope that the information from this survey will help us to do this work more strategically and effectively.

The findings in this report represent highlights from the analysis. A complete version will be available shortly. Some of the highlights from this analysis include:

- 463 organizations of various sized staffs and budgets completed most or all of the survey.
- Organizations representing 40 states and 34 countries completed the survey.
- Participating organizations serve a wide variety of communities ranging from low-income communities to women and youth, focus on a range of issues areas from Civic Participation to Violence Prevention, and pursue many organizing and educational strategies.
- Respondents consider themselves part of a larger social movement.
- Respondents identified working with non-traditional allies as a critical strategy to building a movement.
- Respondents pointed to base-building, policy development, and leadership training as skills that are lacking in the movement.
- Although only a small percentage of respondents engage in electoral organizing work, those that do it see an equal value in strengthening underrepresented communities' political voices and in building a broader civically engaged constituency.
- Most respondents are involved in some sort of grassroots organizing and see its value in raising awareness of important issues.
- Almost all respondents engage in some sort of collaboration and see it as valuable to the larger movement. They also identified a critical lack of resources available to collaborate, especially across issue areas.
- Respondents believe that progressive movements need to step back and re-frame their work. Although many organizations acknowledge a need for greater understanding of what this means, they feel that it would build a more cohesive and effective movement.

SAMPLE

The survey was distributed to approximately **1500 NGOs** and **463 organizations** completed most or all of the survey.

The majority of respondents are small, established NGOs. More than 86% of the responding organizations have fewer than 20 staff and more than 55% have fewer than 5 staff. Almost half (48%) of organizations have budgets of less than \$250,000 and 71% have been in existence for more than 6 years.

STAFF SIZE			
	# of orgs.	% of orgs.	Cum. %
0-5	253	55%	55%
6-20	145	31%	86%
21-50	40	9%	95%
51-100	13	3%	98%
101-250	9	2%	100%
>250	1	0.2%	100%

BUDGET SIZE			
	# of orgs.	% of orgs.	Cum. %
<\$100,000	106	22%	22%
\$100,000-\$250,000	122	25%	47%
\$250,000-\$500,000	80	17%	64%
\$500,000-\$1,000,000	67	14%	78%
\$1,000,000-\$5,000,000	74	16%	94%
>\$5,000,000	30	6%	100%

YEARS IN EXISTENCE			
	# of orgs.	% of orgs.	Cum. %
<1	10	2%	2%
1-3	53	11%	13%
3-6	78	16%	29%
6-15	163	34%	63%
>15	180	37%	100%

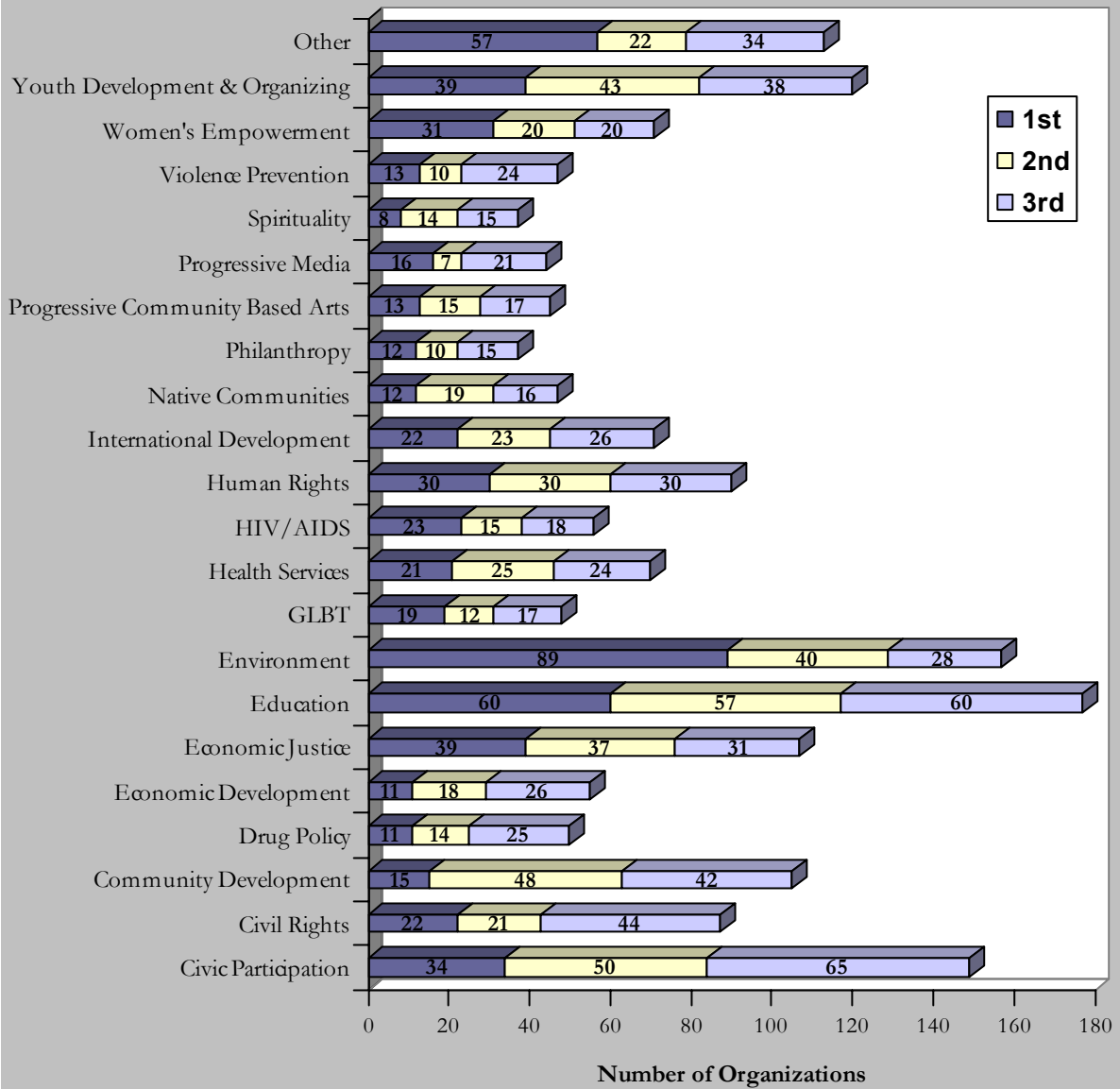
Of the responding organizations, 33% are in California, 9% in New York, and 6% in Washington, D.C. 37 other states and 34 countries are represented in smaller numbers. This distribution is relatively reflective of the national distribution of NGOs.

STATE DISTRIBUTION					
State	# of orgs.	% of orgs.	State	# of orgs.	% of orgs.
AK	1	0.2%	MO	1	0.2%
AL	1	0.2%	MT	9	2%
AR	1	0.2%	NC	6	1%
AZ	2	0.5%	NH	2	0.5%
CA	156	33%	NJ	1	0.2%
CO	6	1%	NM	12	2.5%
CT	2	0.5%	NV	3	0.5%
DC	27	6%	NY	40	9%
FL	7	1.5%	OH	2	0.5%
GA	4	1%	OK	1	0.2%
HI	4	1%	OR	4	1%
IA	1	0.2%	PA	10	2%
ID	3	0.5%	SC	1	0.2%
IL	6	1%	TN	6	1%
IN	1	0.2%	TX	5	1%
MA	23	5%	UT	4	1%
MD	8	2%	VA	8	2%
ME	2	0.5%	VT	1	0.2%
MI	2	0.5%	WA	19	4%
MN	5	1%	WI	4	1%
			Outside US	62	13%

Issue Areas

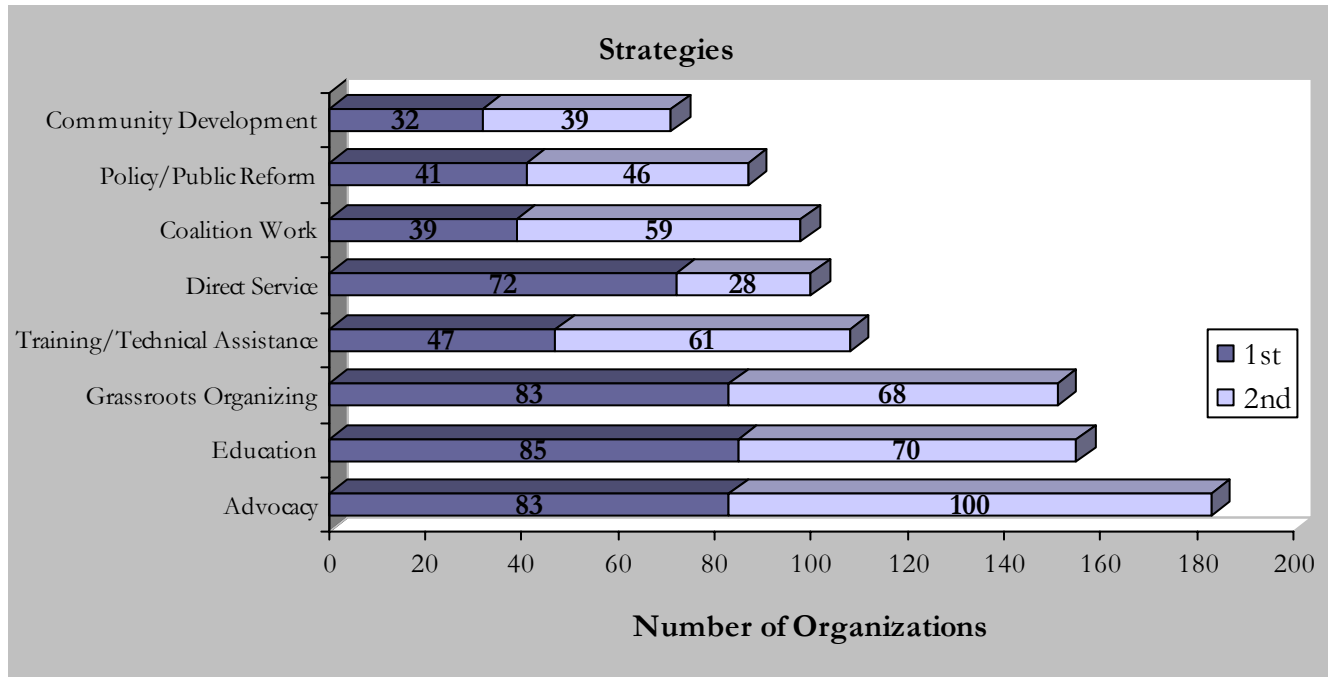
The organizations were relatively diverse in terms of their issue areas and strategies. There was significant representation from each of the identified issue areas. The most commonly identified issue areas were Education with 30% of organizations identifying it as a primary, secondary or tertiary issue area; Environment with 26% of respondents; Youth Development with 22% of respondents; and Economic Justice with 20%.

Issue Areas



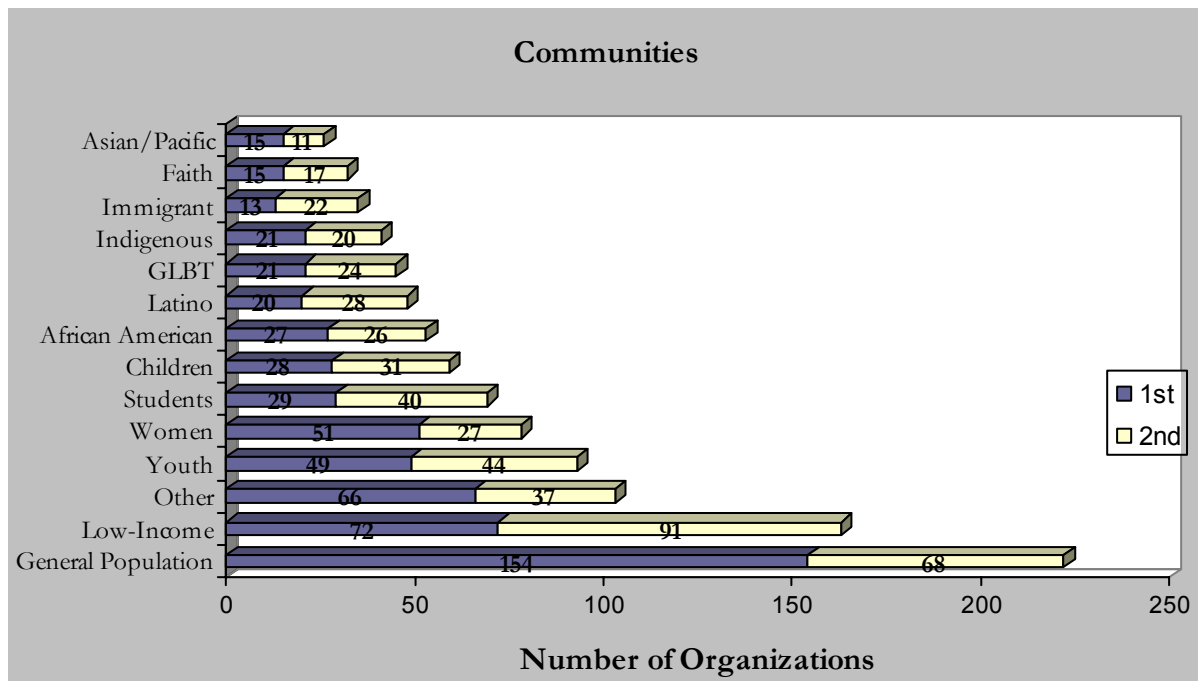
STRATEGIES

Respondents employ a range of strategies as well with advocacy, education and grassroots organizing being the most common strategies.



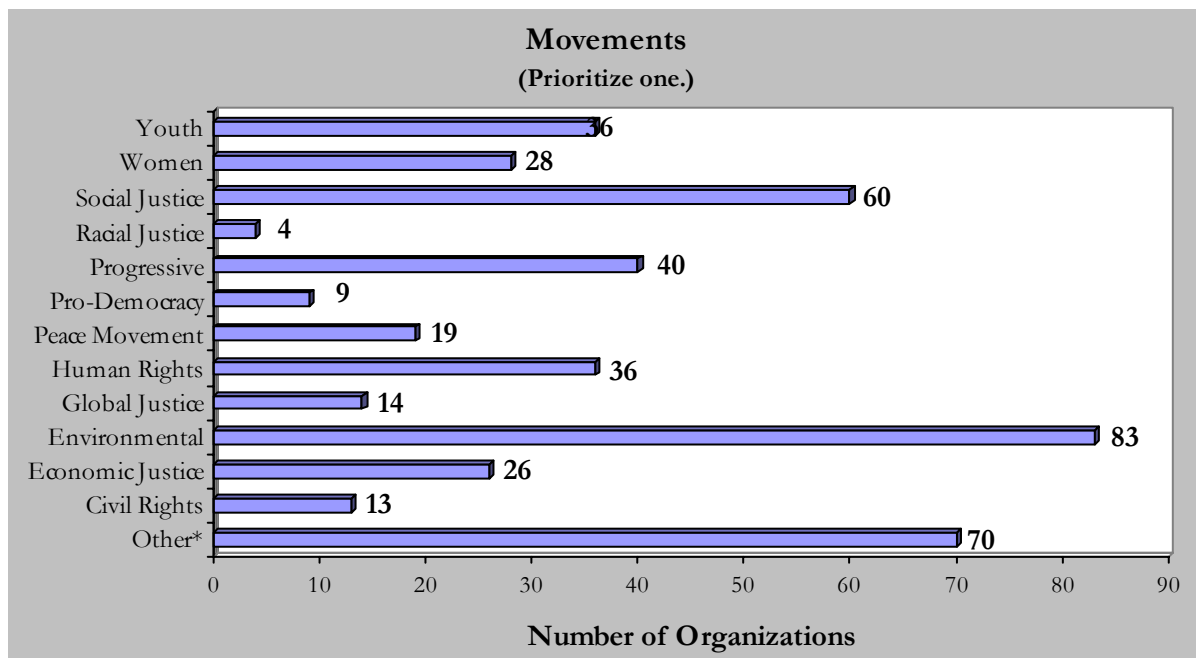
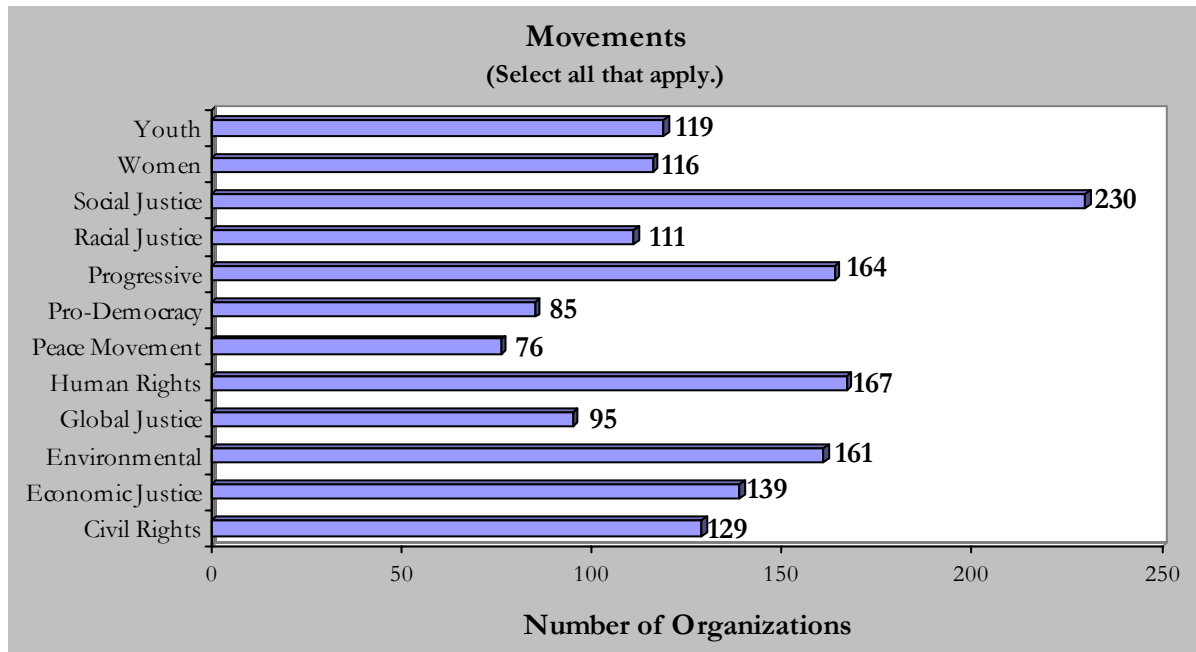
COMMUNITIES

Respondents served relatively diverse communities. Most organizations identified the general public as their primary or secondary constituency, at 38% and 28% of respondents identified Low-Income communities as their primary or secondary constituency.



MOVEMENTS

89% of respondents feel that their organization is part of a larger social movement. When asked to identify all of the movements that apply to their organization, there were no overwhelming leaders but the Social Justice movement was the most common response. When asked to identify only one movement, the more narrowly defined movements received more responses. This suggests that although organizations do identify with more broadly defined movements, their primary associations are still with issue related movements.



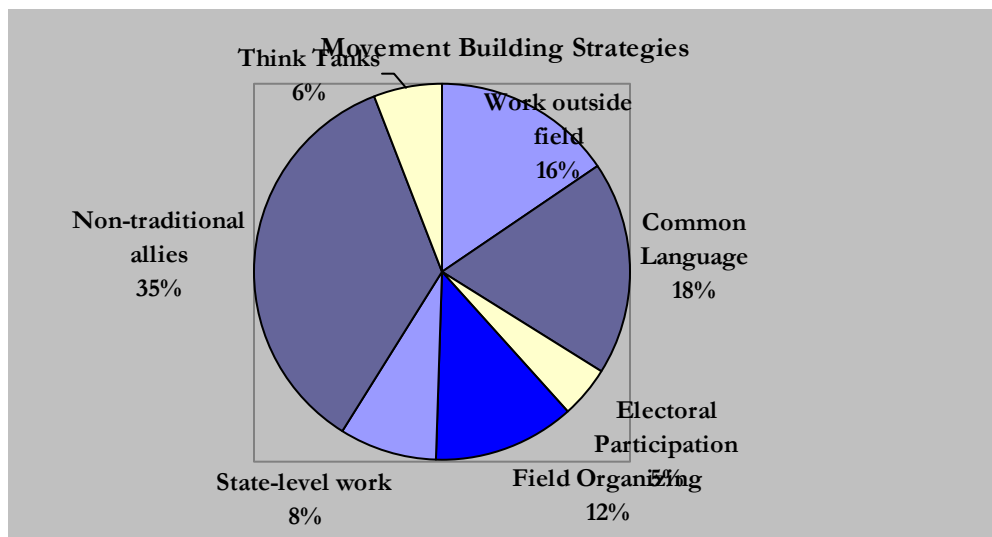
**Most of the other responses are issue specific movements.*

MOVEMENT STRATEGIES

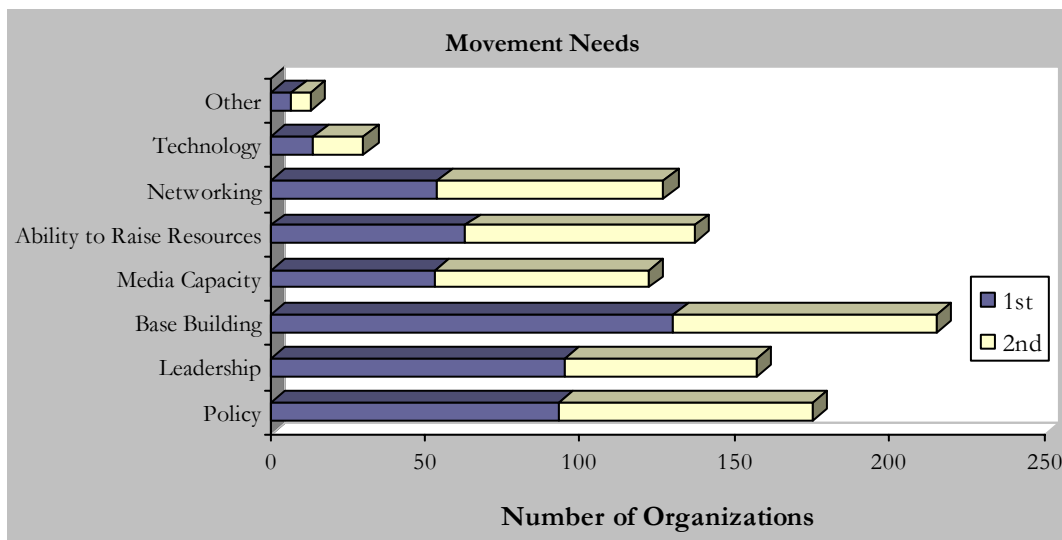
In our research, we have found that organizations are discussing several strategies as critical approaches to continue advancing the progressive movement. The survey proposed the following strategies to gauge what resonated most with the organizations in the field.

- ◆ Organizations should work with other organizations outside of their specific field.
- ◆ Organizations should communicate with a common language that is based on values shared across organizations.
- ◆ Organizations should incorporate electoral participation into their work as a principal means to gain access to power.
- ◆ Organizations should use field organizing as a way to reach their long-term goals.
- ◆ Organizations should work to affect change on a state-level.
- ◆ Organizations should work with non-traditional allies, businesses, public officials, state and local agencies, students, etc.
- ◆ Organizations should work in concert with progressive think tanks.

Respondents identified working with non-traditional allies as the strategy that contributes most effectively to movement building.



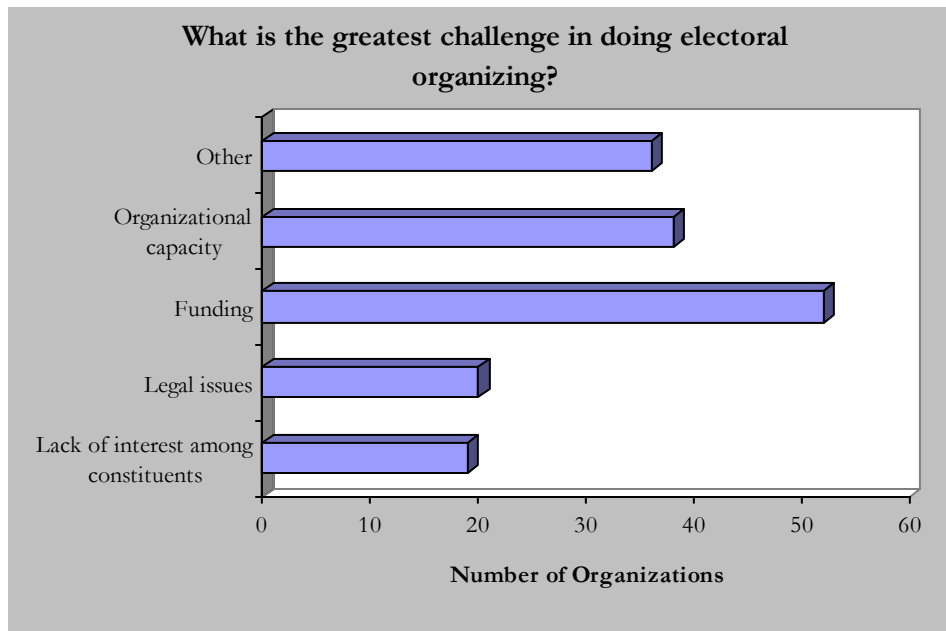
The survey also asked organizations to identify specific skill areas that organizations need to develop further in order to propel a movement forward. Base building, making policy connections, and leadership development were the most commonly identified areas.



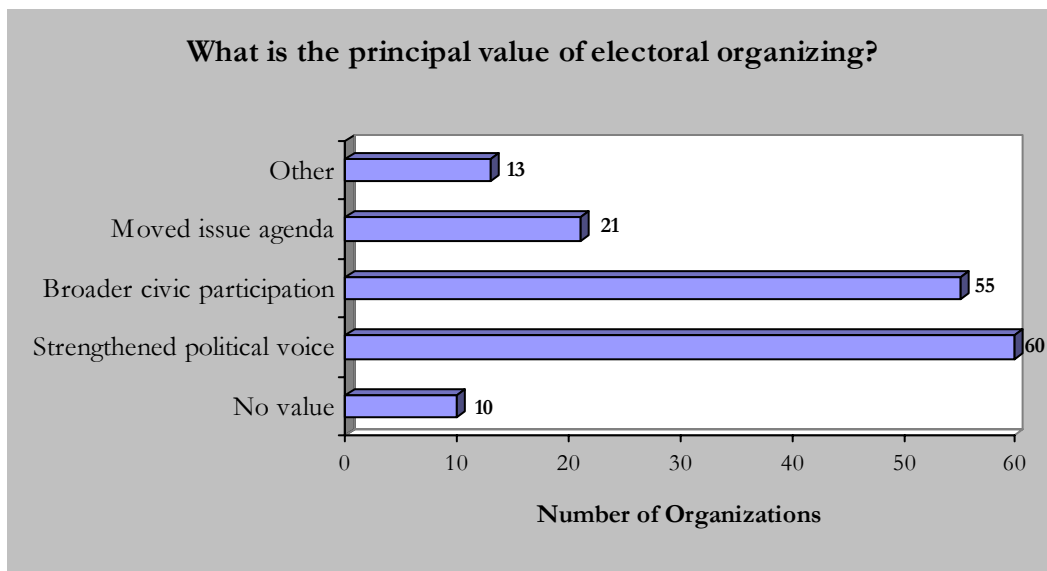
ELECTORAL ORGANIZING

Leaders in the social change movement agree that incorporating an electoral participation strategy in their everyday work—be it advocacy, direct service or organizing—has a long-lasting effect on its members and on its organizational capacity to make change. Electoral organizing is a core activity for only 14% of respondents but 45% have engaged in some electoral organizing over time. Most of the organizations that do not engage in electoral organizing don't do it because of a lack of relevance to the work they do.

For those organizations that do electoral organizing, they identified resources – funding and organizational capacity – as the primary challenge to doing the work.



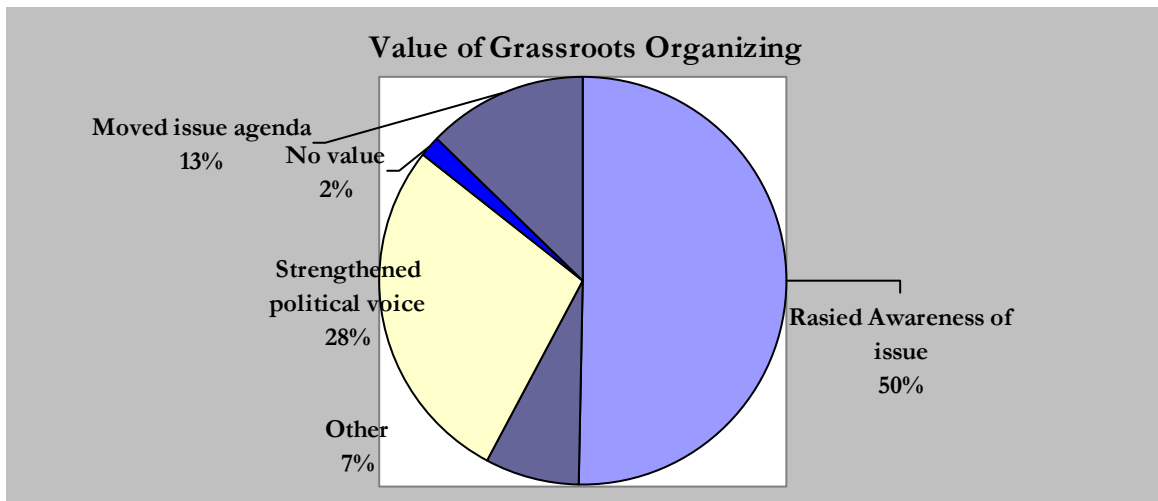
The principal value of this work that they identified was evenly split between strengthening the political voice of their community and creating an entry point for broader civic participation.



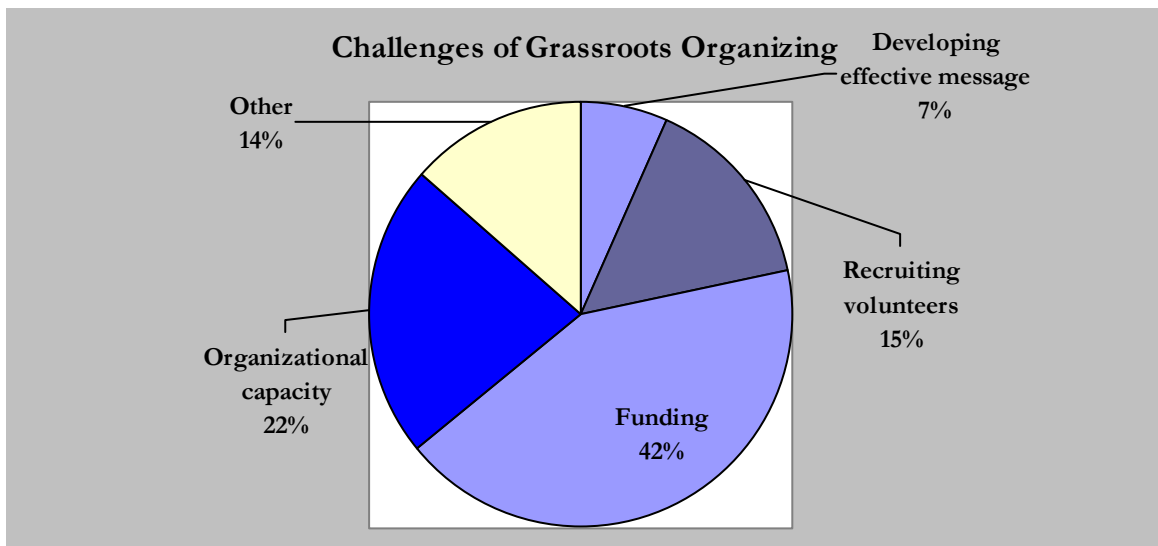
GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING

Organizations have found that effective grassroots organizing, building capacity to mobilize a base, and connecting its work to larger policy issues enables them to leverage power more effectively and to meet their long-term goals. 59% of respondents employ grassroots organizing as a core activity and 78% of respondents had engaged in some form of grassroots organizing. The greatest challenges for those doing grassroots organizing were around securing funding and organizational capacity.

The principal value identified was that grassroots organizing created visibility and increased awareness of an important issue.

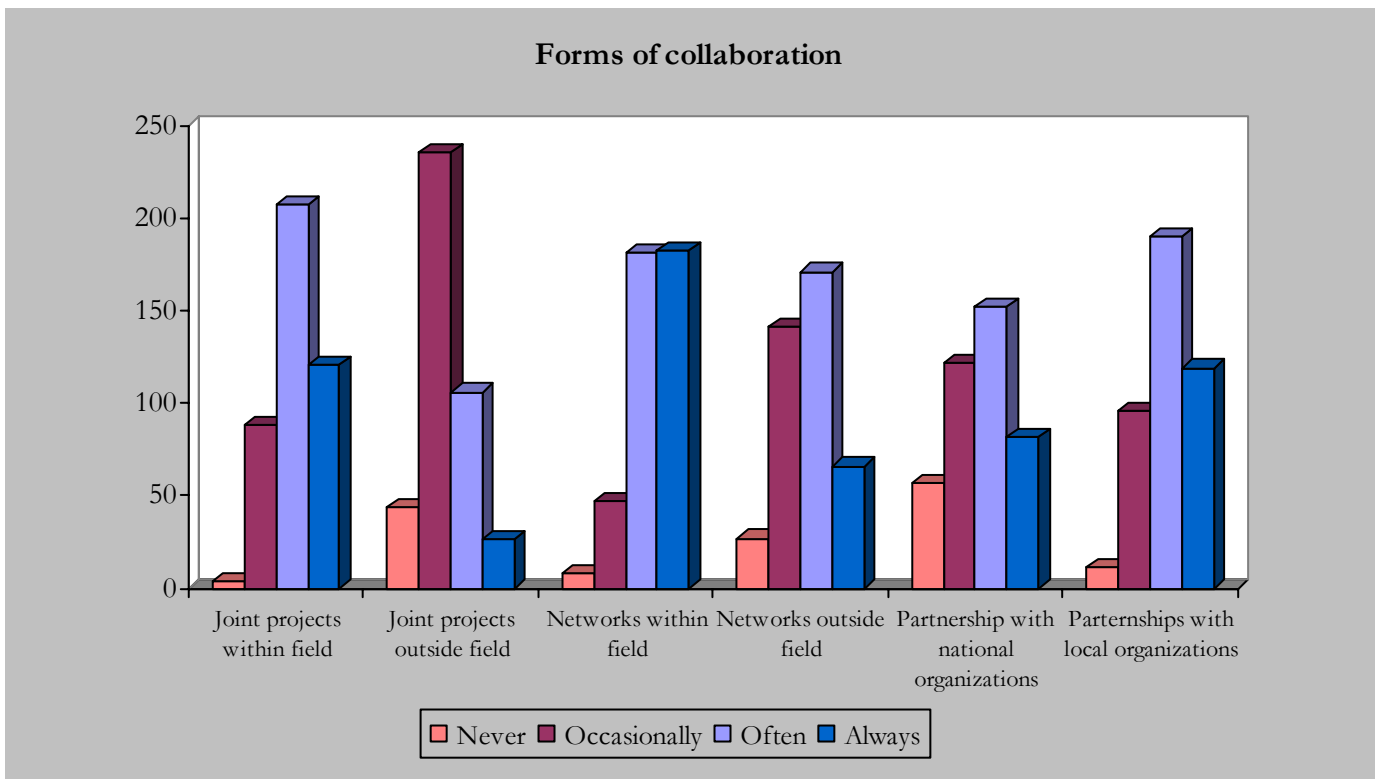


Respondents identified resources – funding, volunteers and organizational capacity – as the greatest challenges to grassroots organizing.

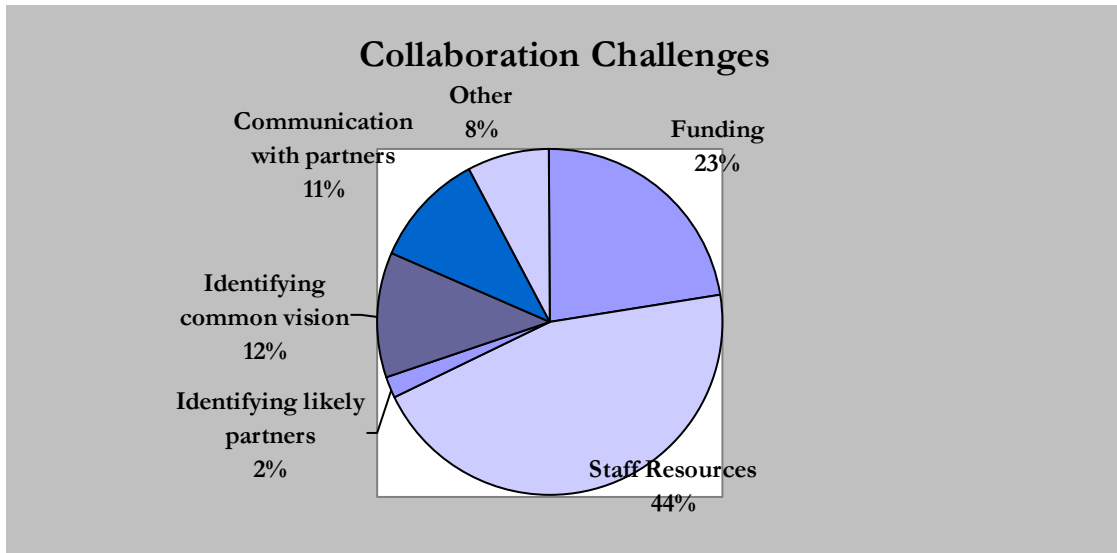


COLLABORATION & COORDINATION

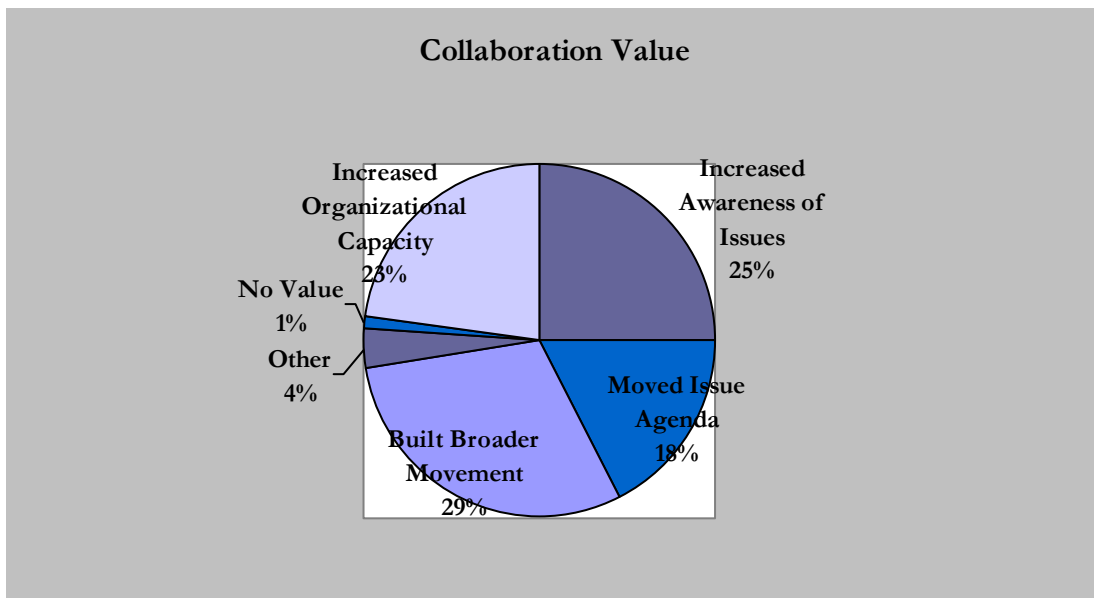
Recent mobilization has demonstrated how thoughtful and responsive collaboration or coordination of activities between organizations working on different issue areas and with different constituencies can strengthen the movement as a whole and further the goals of the individual organizations. Almost all respondents have collaborated in some way within their issue area. Less than a third of respondents have done a joint project outside of their issue area with any regularity.



Respondents do not think it is a lack of knowledge but a lack of resources that prevents them from collaborating. It also suggests a greater need for resources when organizations are working to collaborate across issue boundaries.



Respondents identified several different primary values to this work but almost all do think it has value. 66% of respondents identified the greatest value as something that can address the individual organization’s issue-based concerns or its own capacity.

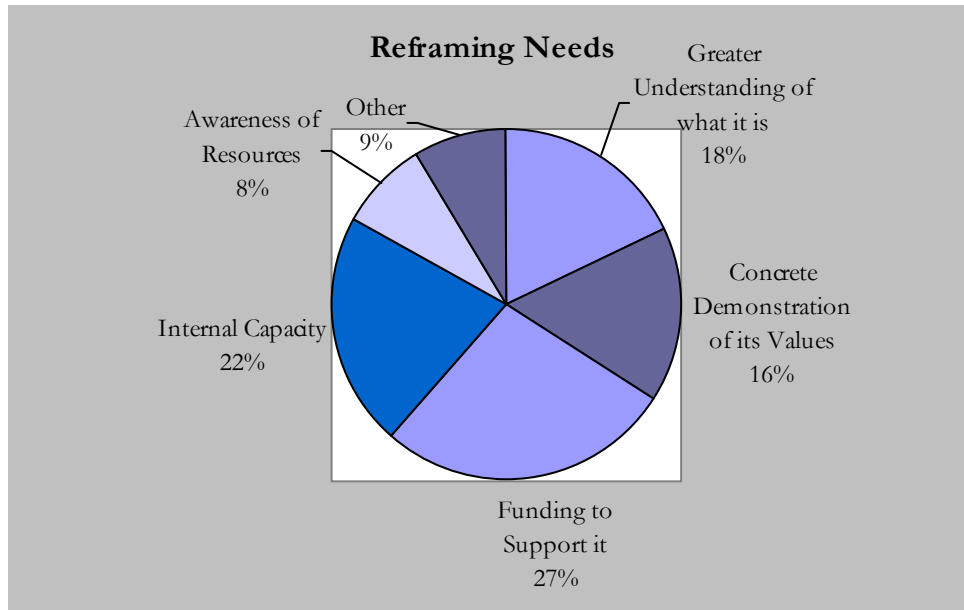


VISION, VALUES & FRAMING

Many believe that progressive movements need to take a step back to re-frame their work. This shift would include promoting a more positive and constructive vision of the world we want to build, rather than taking reactive or defensive stance against a rising conservative tide. It also includes a conceptual think towards values, rather than a promotion of issues - for instance, promoting “fairness” rather than “economic justice.” This is not just about communications and messaging – that specific work would be the expression or outcome of this re-framing process. This is about a fundamental shift in the way that we approach our work, communicate about our work, and succeed. 69% of respondents are actively engaged in some kind of reframing work.

- 94% of respondents strongly agree or agree that Progressive movements would greatly benefit from a process of re-framing, moving towards a positive, constructive vision based on a broader set of values.
- 83% do not think this kind of work is an abstract distraction from the nuts and bolts work of my organization and other organizations in my field/issue area.
- 85% think this kind of work has value, but is difficult for organizations to find the resources to engage in it.
- 70% disagree or strongly disagree that this kind of work has value but it should be done by think tanks.

They selected needs evenly across the board for what they need to do this kind of reframing. The responses demonstrate a need for organizations to have more training on what collaboration is, how it happens, and what the value of it is.



Responding organizations identified the creation of more effective social change movements as the greatest value of reframing. This was the strongest response of all of the strategies, demonstrating that organizations believe reframing work can build more effective and cohesive social change movements.

