



## HAWAI'I COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

### **CHANGE Community Convenings Summary**

*The following summary shares key results from three virtual meetings held in mid-2022 to gather input from nonprofit organizations and community leaders across the state about the six sectors of the CHANGE Framework.*

#### Background

In 2021, the Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF) initiated a major new statewide grant program based on the CHANGE Framework<sup>1</sup>. 509 nonprofit organizations applied for a CHANGE grant. A total of \$7.05 Million in grant funding was distributed to 194 organizations serving communities on all islands across all six CHANGE sectors.<sup>2</sup> In mid-2022, HCF convened a series of three virtual statewide community meetings to help HCF staff better understand current challenges, opportunities, inequities, and data capacity in each CHANGE sector, and to explore HCF's potential roles to support each sector.

Nonprofits and community leaders across the state were invited to participate in the virtual convenings. Convenings were held on three separate dates in May and June 2022 to accommodate schedules and encourage participation. A total of 383 people registered to participate. No statewide discussion at this scale had ever been attempted by HCF previously. Each meeting started with a review of the CHANGE Framework by HCF leadership, a discussion about data by HCF partner Hawai'i Data Collaborative, and an overview of the purpose of the convening. Participants were divided into separate virtual breakout groups for each CHANGE sector, based on self-selection during the registration process. Each breakout group discussion was facilitated by HCF staff. The convenings and breakouts were not recorded to encourage open dialogue. After the convenings concluded, HCF staff in each sector team compiled reports of what they observed and learned during the breakout sessions. The remainder of this report is an overall summary of those sector reports.

#### Cross-sector Common Themes

Several common themes arose from the breakout session discussions across most or all the sectors. This was interesting because each sector is very different, not just in subject matter content, but also in unity of vision, how data is regarded and used, the level of shared action (networking and collaboration), and the degree of common understanding about the sector's systems and needs for system change. HCF

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<sup>1</sup> The vision of the CHANGE Framework is that by engaging stakeholders around common data and shared goals, we can achieve collective action on systemic issues to improve the overall well-being of Hawai'i's islands and people. For more information about the CHANGE Framework, please go to:  
<https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/change>

<sup>2</sup> The six CHANGE sectors are **C** – Community & Economy; **H** – Health & Wellness; **A** – Arts & Culture; **N** – Natural Environment; **G** – Government & Civics; and **E** – Education.

staff facilitators for each sector breakout group were given a set of standard questions<sup>3</sup> with the ability to adapt questions to the circumstances of each sector. As a result, questions in some sector breakout sessions were different than others. Nevertheless, the following common themes appeared in 3 or more sectors:

➤ HCF's role

- All sectors want HCF to support convening, networking, collaboration (including multi-island and cross-sector), data usage and evaluation. Organizations want HCF to be a partner or catalyst for systems change.
- HCF should be an advocate for the sector (for policy change or to increase funding) and help bring policy makers to the table. HCF needs to be bold and brave, take risks to create bigger impacts for the community, and lead by example.
- HCF should support training, technical assistance, capacity building, and professional development for nonprofit staff.

➤ Major challenges

- A major challenge is lack of sufficient funding to do the work and address urgent community needs, especially long-term stable unrestricted funding to enable long-term planning, staff retention, and continuity, and to keep up with rising costs.
- A major challenge is workforce limitations, both internally for nonprofits as employers and in the community at large (low pay, lack of qualified job candidates, prolonged vacancies, retention).
- A major challenge is leadership's fear of change and risk, and the community's lack of trust in leadership due to intimidation, fear, or skepticism.

➤ Prevalent factors contributing to inequity

- The most prevalent factor contributing to inequity in the community is socioeconomic status. High costs prohibit access and participation. In other words, a common major challenge is the high cost of living and its disparate impact on different communities.
- Negative impacts are greatest for Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, first generation immigrants, English language learners, communities of color, and other marginalized groups.
- The digital divide (lack of access to the internet, cellular networks, virtual meeting platforms (Zoom), and other digital technology).

➤ Key opportunities and strengths in community

- The inclusion of indigenous practices and knowledge, and connection to place.
- Collaborative partnerships between organizations, including with public institutions.
- Passionate, committed individuals working together to make things better.

➤ Data usage and reporting

While all other themes listed above are important, the volume and intensity of feedback about data was notable. The input about data can be generally characterized as follows:

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<sup>3</sup> Standard questions addressed the sector's hopes in the next 10 years, greatest challenges and threats, key opportunities and strengths, factors causing inequities in the sector, data (how well data helps to understand the sector and the need for systems change), and how HCF can best support the sector.

- Most organizations understand the concept of data as a tool to understand community needs, measure progress, evolve and improve programs, and hold themselves accountable to achieve impactful results. However, their ability and capacity to do these things vary widely.
- In general, sectors C – Community & Economy, H – Health & Wellness, N – Natural Environment, and E - Education already embrace data as a tool and are using data in many important ways to help achieve their goals, often in collaboration with others in their sector. Their needs related to data center on improving how they access, collect, analyze, and use data effectively with others in the sector to further the sector’s goals.
- In general, data usage in sectors A – Arts & Culture and G – Government & Civics is less developed, with many organizations needing technical assistance on data collection and analysis, training on how to use data strategically, and capacity building for data systems to become an integral part of program operations. Some organizations within these sectors are using data well for their own purposes but would like to see broader collaborative use of data to support collective action.
- All sectors need resources and training to support capacity building for effective data usage (data collection, access to publicly available data, data analysis, using data effectively), especially for small grassroots organizations.
- All sectors want more focus on meaningful data that measures long-term impact, not data collected just to satisfy different funders’ requirements. Quality, accessible data collection systems and networks with the most current data are needed to support community efforts, not data collection requirements that stifle efforts. There is a strong desire not to waste time and resources on collecting and reporting data that is not meaningful to achieving the organization’s goals.
- Some sectors cited the need for better workable access to state data and reducing data disconnects between government and nonprofits.
- Some sectors provided feedback about data related to ownership: data obtained from a community belongs to that community, and therefore that community should be told what their data has revealed and should be included in planning for how their data is used to support systems change.

#### HCF Staff Experience

Many HCF staff members participating in planning and facilitating the community convenings. We sincerely appreciated the opportunity to engage with many community organizations throughout the state. The meetings energized and inspired us! By listening to so many who are committed to improving the well-being of Hawai’i and its people, we are learning how to do better in our work and how to be better partners with community.

#### Next steps

As mentioned during the community convenings, HCF sector teams are going to engage at a deeper level with organizations and thought leaders to better understand each sector, through meetings, focus groups, surveys, and other activities. These community engagements will start in late 2022 but the timing will vary for each sector. The information learned from the sector breakout groups in the community convenings will inform these discussions. With the knowledge gained from these

engagements, HCF staff will develop theories of change<sup>4</sup> within each sector to guide HCF's initiatives, capacity building opportunities, and philanthropic activities for 2023 and beyond.

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<sup>4</sup> A "theory of change" articulates system improvements that are needed, how the improvements will happen, what impacts are expected, and how impacts will be measured. Theories of change will help HCF plan how to invest time and philanthropic resources to contribute to needed changes.