

South King County Collaboration

“We were able to negotiate with our funders and advocate for unspent program funds and piece them together, so we could meet both families' needs and funders' requirements. We are proud of our passionate bilingual/bicultural direct service staff for their dedication, energy and time to provide desperately needed COVID-19 basic needs support to more than 700 families within 2 -1/2 months of time.”- Open Doors for Multicultural Families

“People are stepping up - it isn't perfect, but the connections have been made and I think will be longer lasting to support other efforts in the community.” – City of Kent

County Highlights

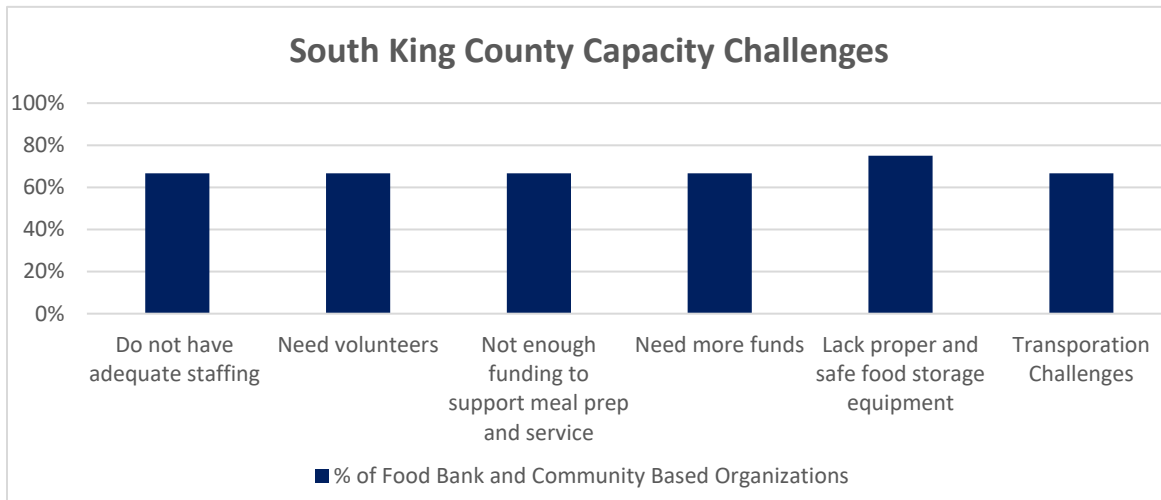
South King County is a highly coordinated region of Washington State. Survey respondents spanned community-based organizations, food banks, funders, schools, and local government indicating a high level of local and multi-sector collaboration. A number of organizations took on new programs and changed their operations in response to COVID-19 indicating a high level of flexibility and collaboration.

Coordination Opportunities

There are two main areas to focus upcoming collaboration efforts in King County.

“We are operating primarily using volunteers, funding is short to have enough staff. Funding is also short to provide enough food to our community, we often turn people away after distributing 300 boxes/week. Because of reasons above, don't have enough capacity to deliver to everyone who needs.” – Afghan Health Initiative

1. Low-Barrier Funding Opportunities: There is a consistent theme that funding should be provided directly to **community-based organizations** to have the most equitable impact on the many and diverse populations living in South King County. Respondents also reference that **funding needs to have less restrictions**, less paperwork, and to broaden eligibility requirements, all of which pose barriers to individuals and organizations.
2. Equity in Service: Some programs elevated the concern that traditional funding models or the current funding and food distribution systems are not equitable and that **entire communities face increasing challenges** to accessing the resources they need. Programs specifically referenced that **non-English speaking communities and homebound seniors** are two populations that are not being adequately served.

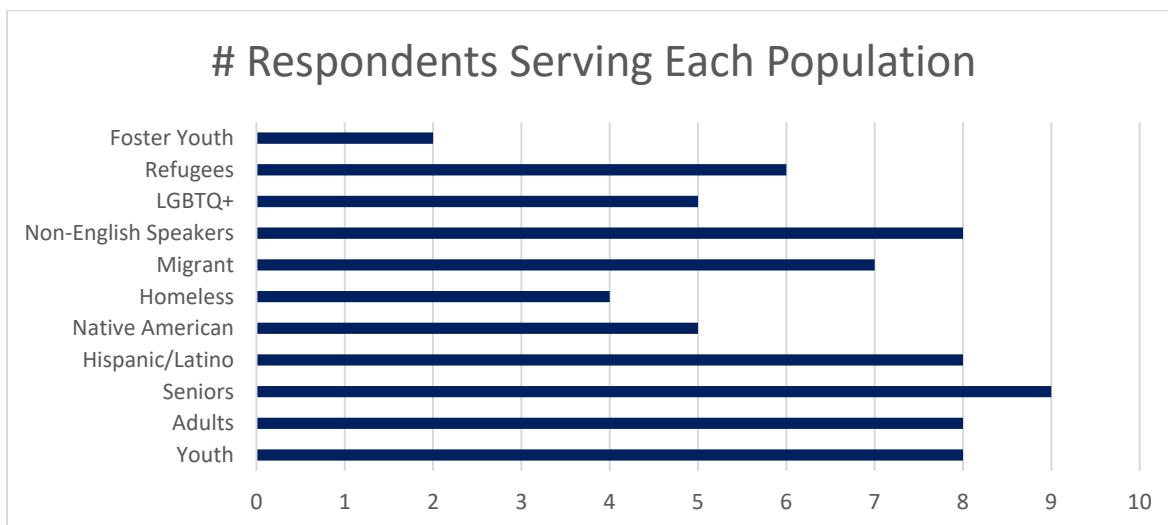


About The Data

24 organizations responded to the Coordinated Community Food Insecurity Survey. Four of the 24 respondents were schools, five were city government, one funder, and 12 organizations that identified as either food banks, meal or food providers, or community organizations. South King County has a high overlap rate of programs providing food even if they identified as a community organization. It is unknown how many programs provided food prior to COVID-19.

When asked to rate the level of need from 1 to 5, the food banks and community organizations had an average rating of 3.25 compared to an average of 2.66 for all other sectors.

Interestingly, the discrepancy between the two rates is much narrower than in other counties indicating higher levels of awareness and multi-sector collaboration.



Contact Information for Coordination

For more information, contact Christina Wong at christinaw@northwestharvest.org.