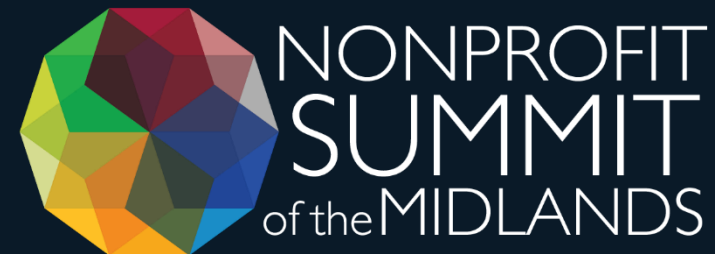


From Crisis to Clarity

Navigating Uncertainty through Scenario Planning

Steve Zimmerman

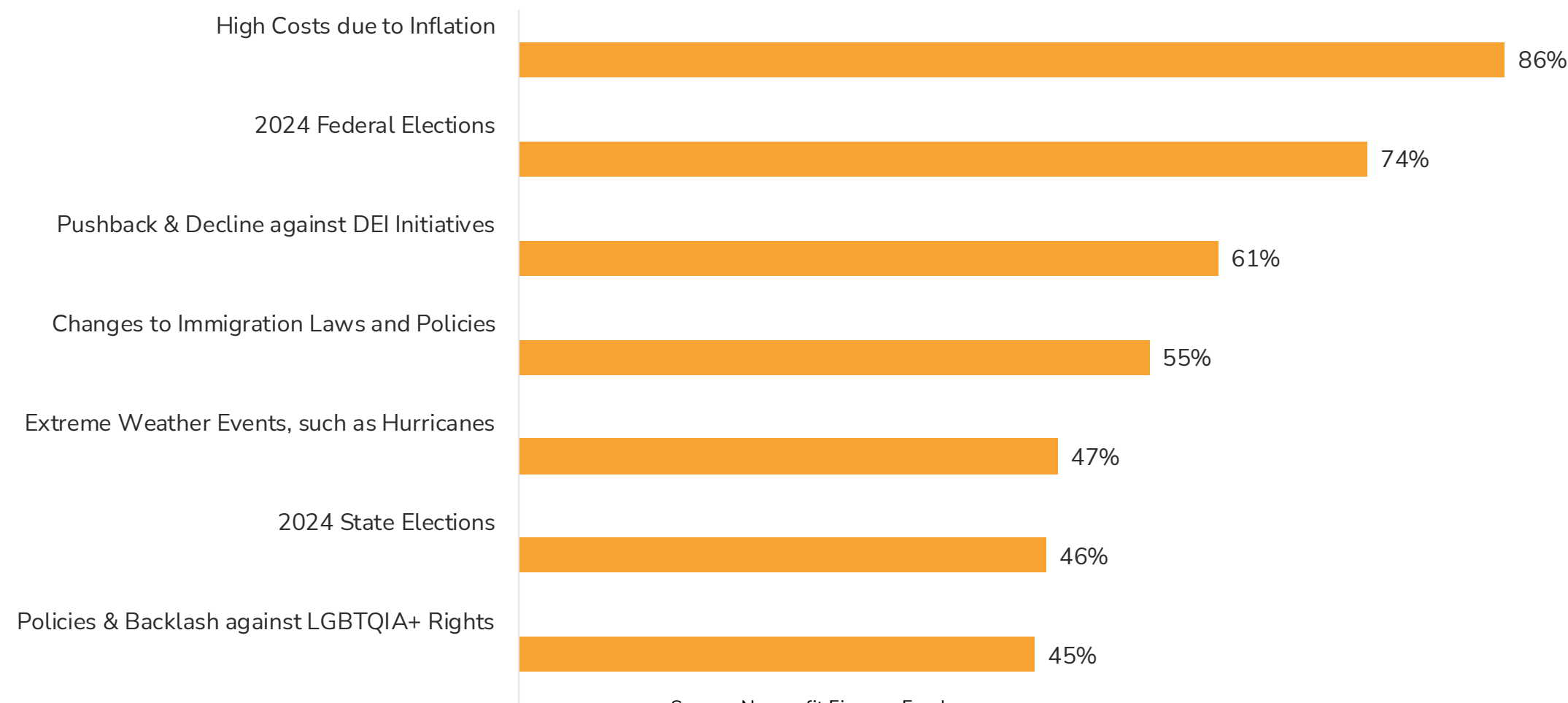
November 6, 2025





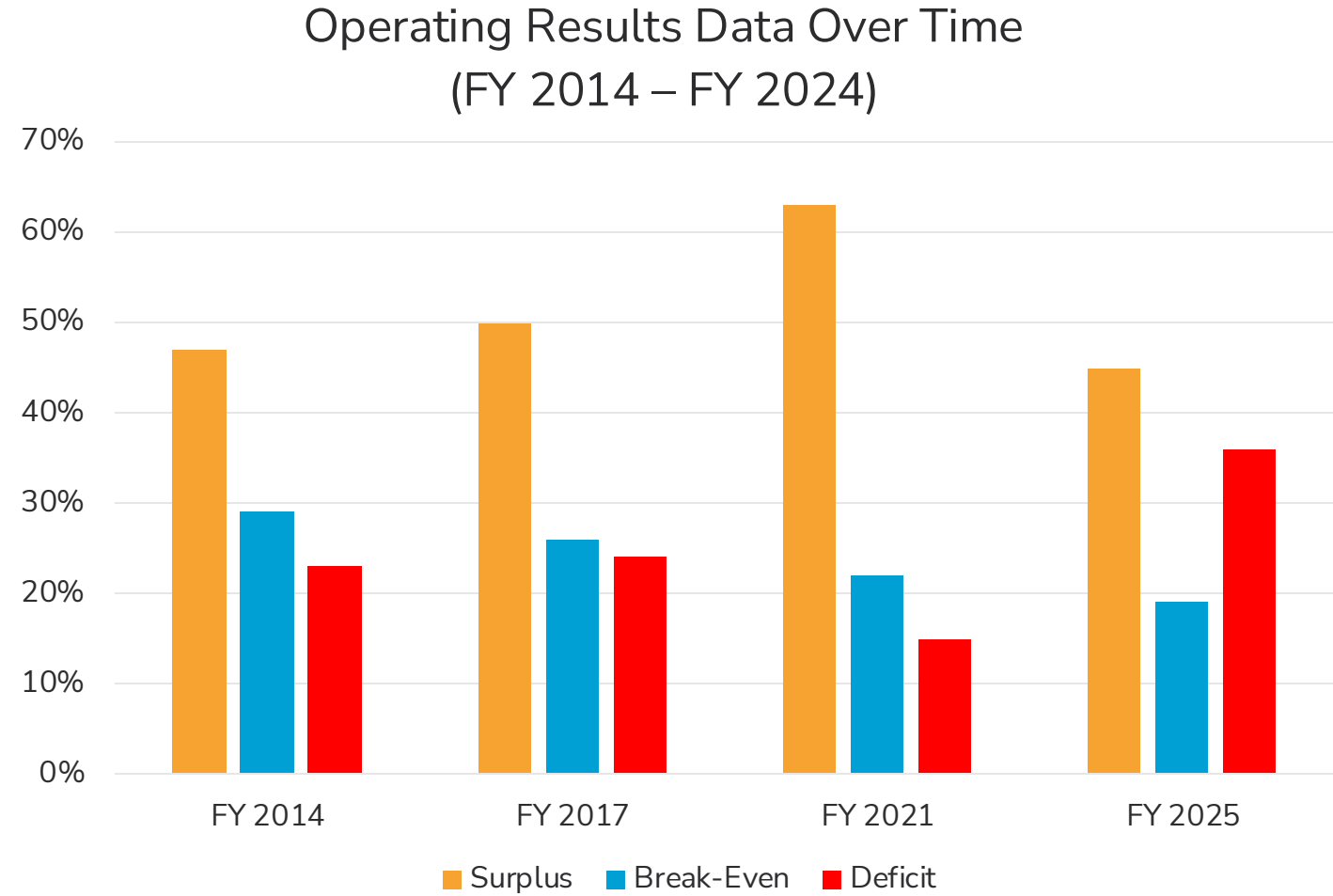
External Forces Impacting Nonprofits

Percentage of Nonprofits Report being Impacted by:



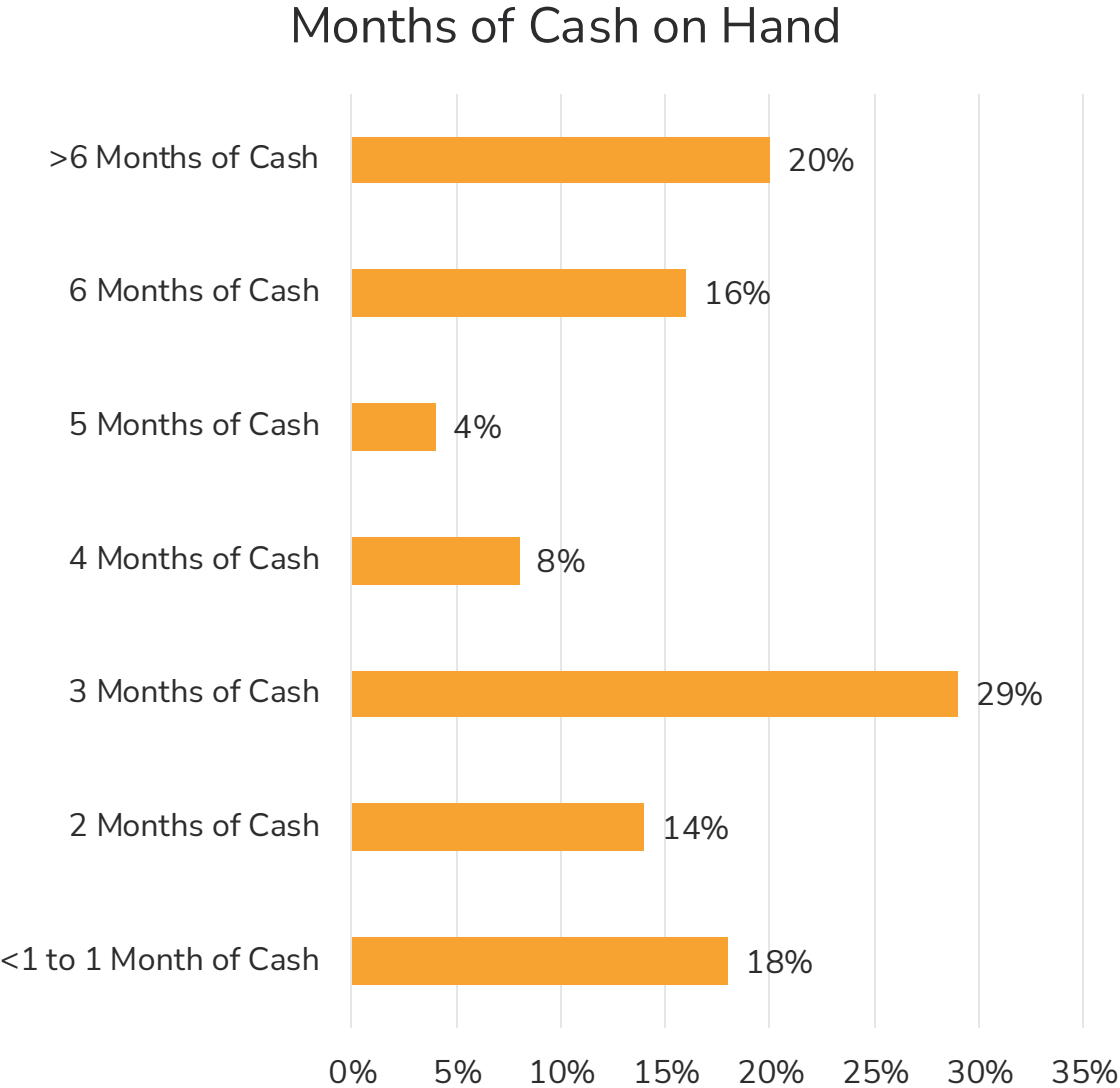
Source: Nonprofit Finance Fund

More Deficits . . .
More Instability



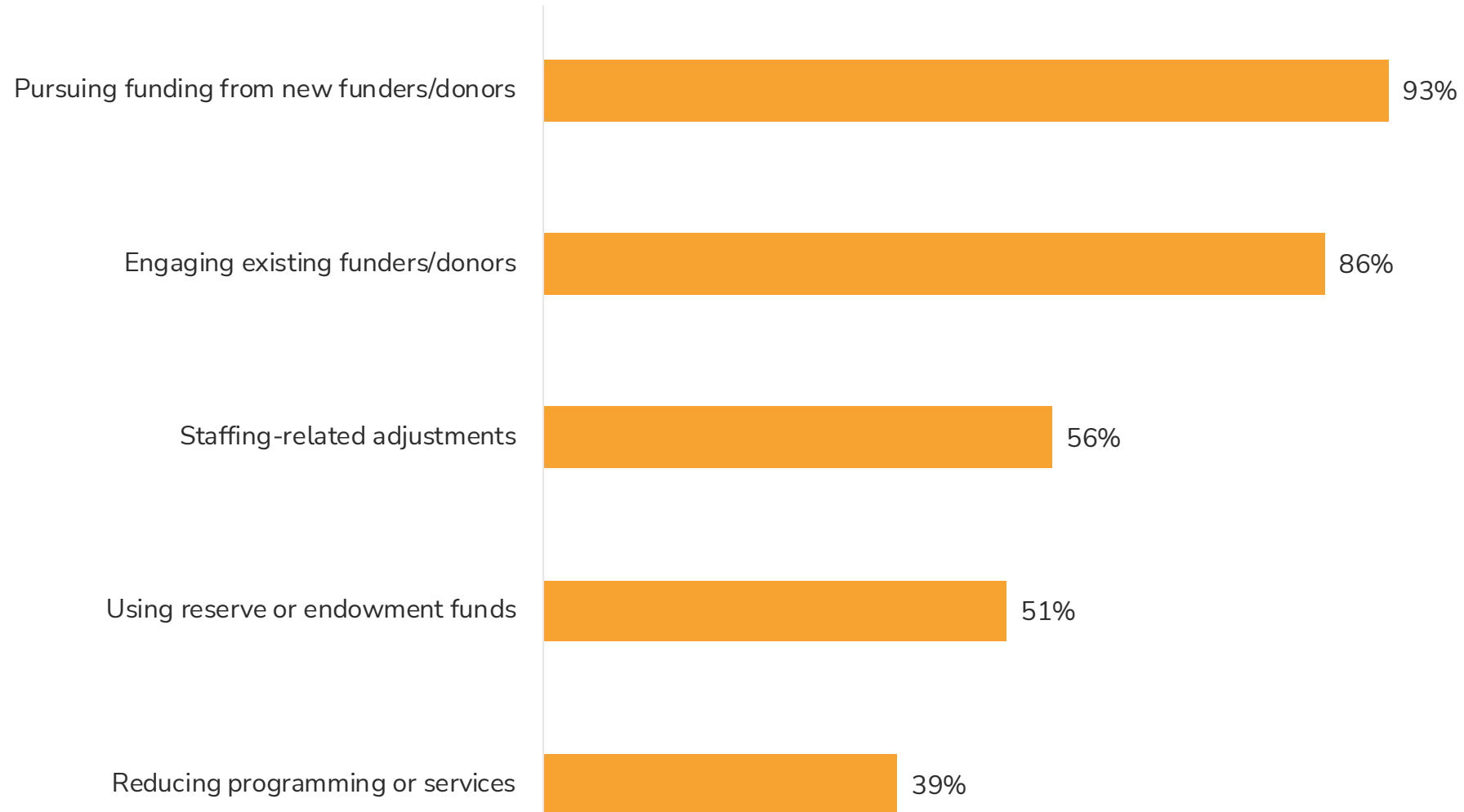
Source: Nonprofit Finance Fund

Diminishing Safety Net



Source: Nonprofit Finance Fund

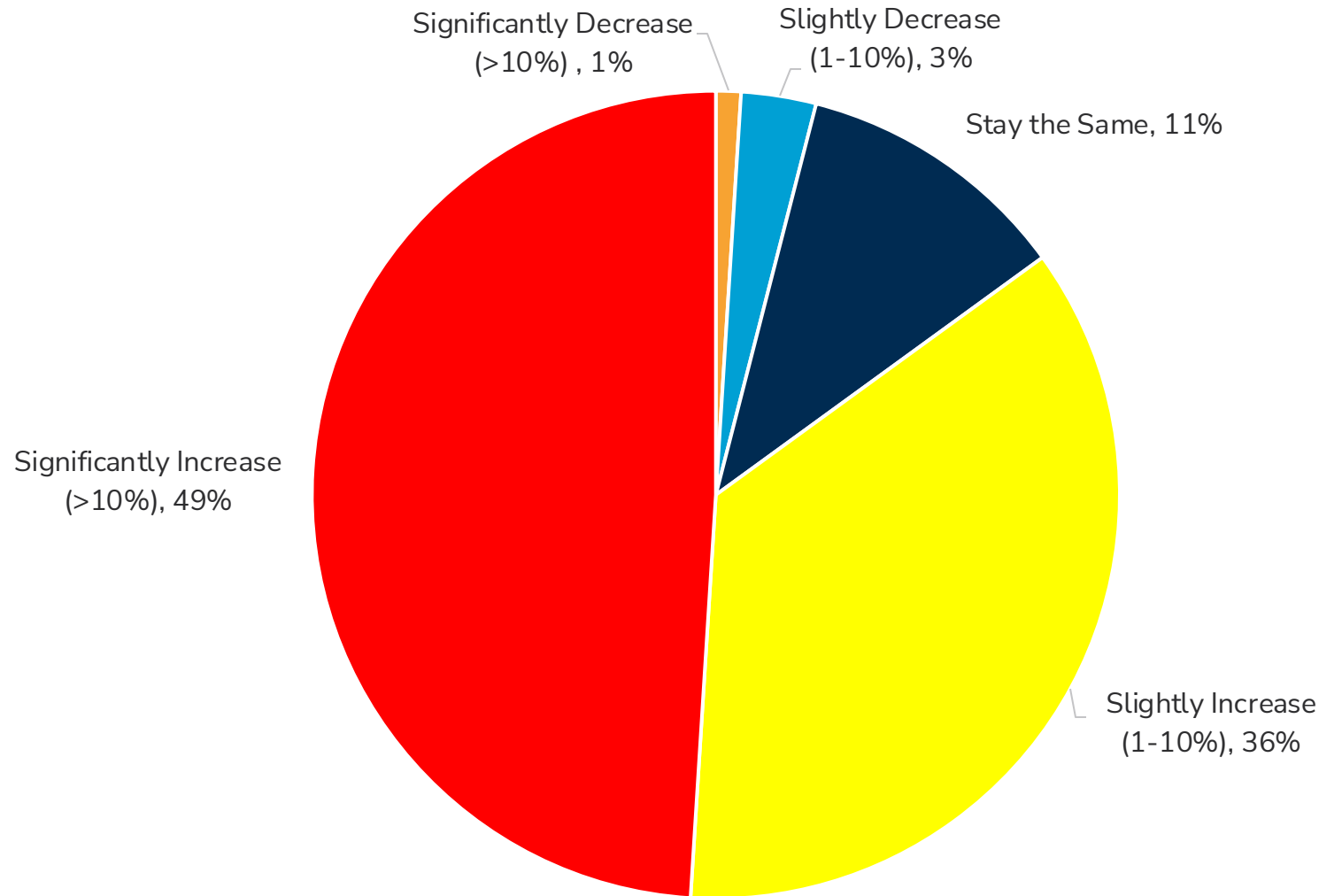
How Nonprofits Are Responding



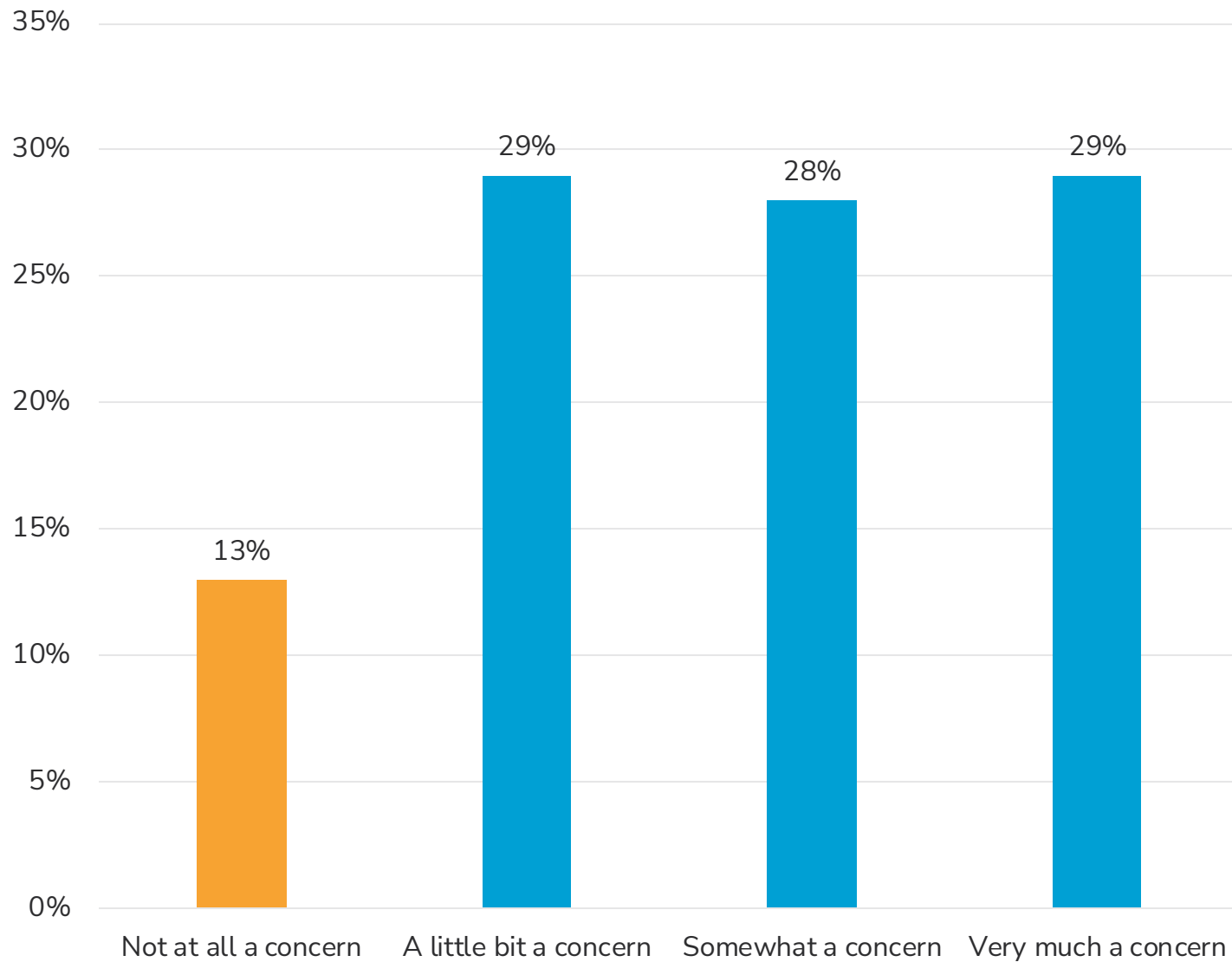
Source: Center for Effective Philanthropy

Service Demand Continues to Rise

Anticipated Service Demand in FY 2025



Source: Nonprofit Finance Fund



Leadership's Concern over Staff Burnout

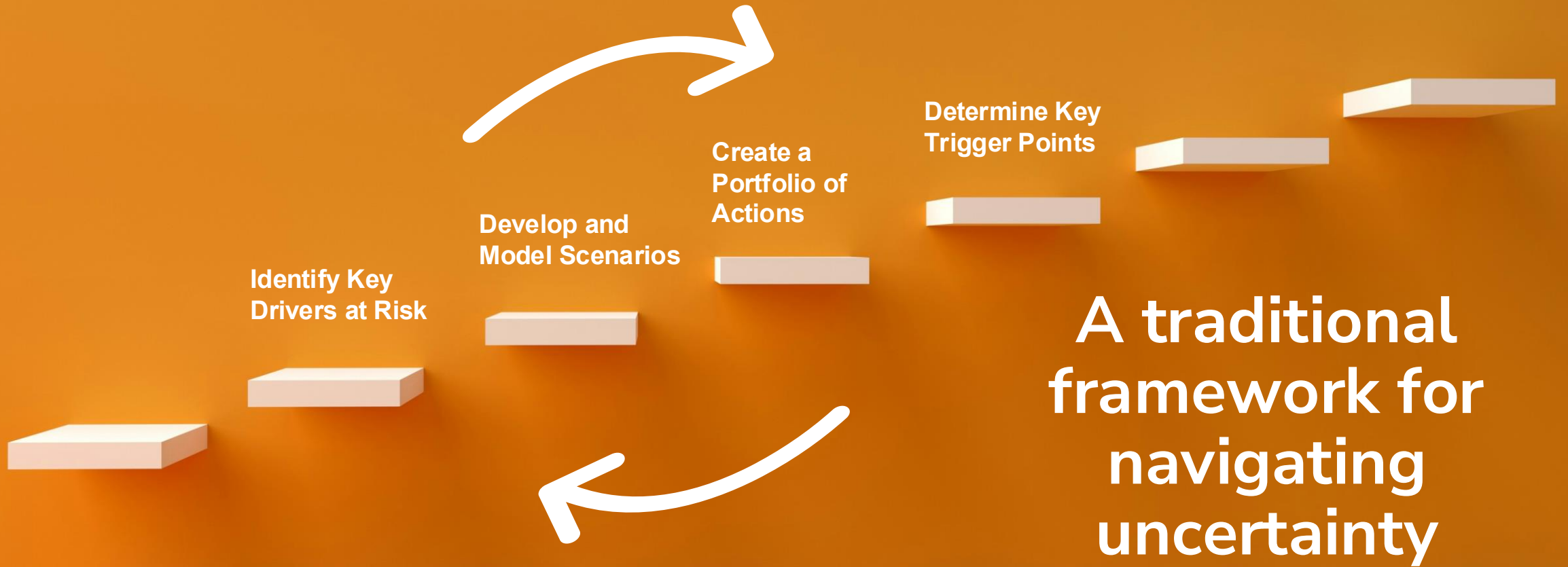
Source: Center for Effective Philanthropy



How do we move forward?



Scenario Planning



“This method works best for foreseen risks and stable uncertainties like inflation rate forecasts, the likelihood of a new competitor, or a substitute product entering the market. It often fails spectacularly when firms are hit by shocks outside of leaders’ field of vision. And today, leaders are increasingly confronted with significant, and sometimes existential, events that would not have contemplated even six months earlier.”



“When Scenario Planning Fails” by Kalle Heikkinen, William Kerr, Mika Malin, Panu Routila and Eemil Rupponen – Harvard Business Review, April 21, 2023

Introducing Scenario Positioning

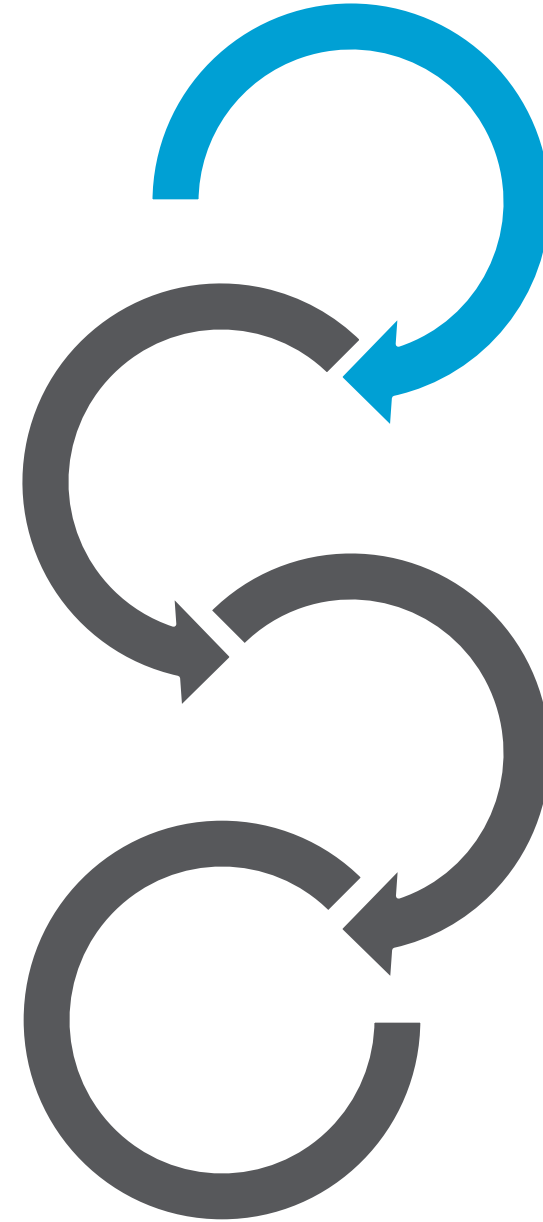


Photo by [Jamie Street](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Scenario Positioning Framework



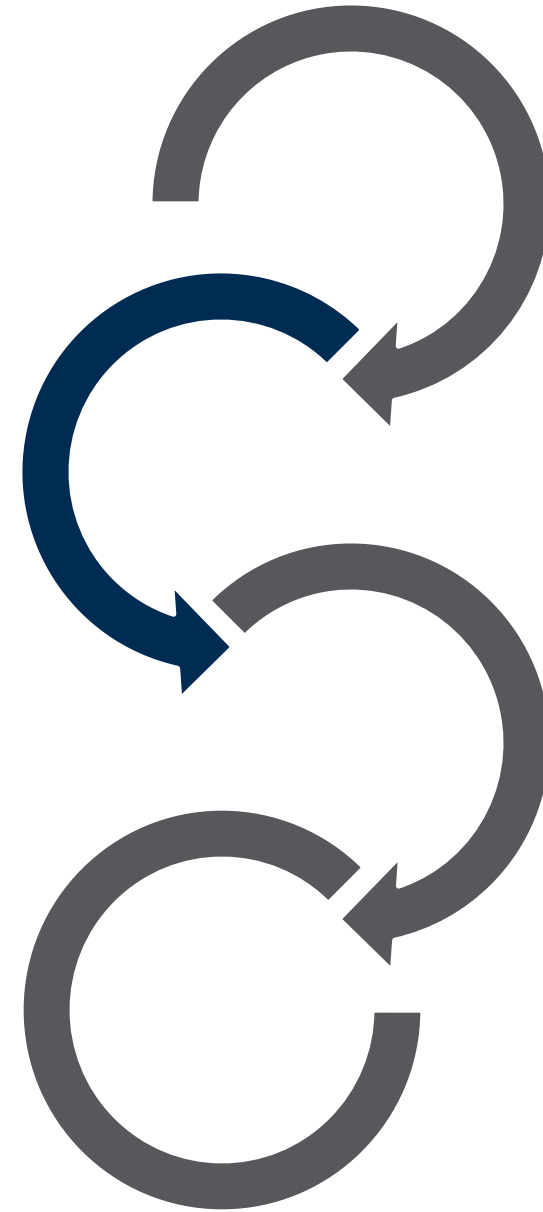
Analyze the
Organization's
Current Context

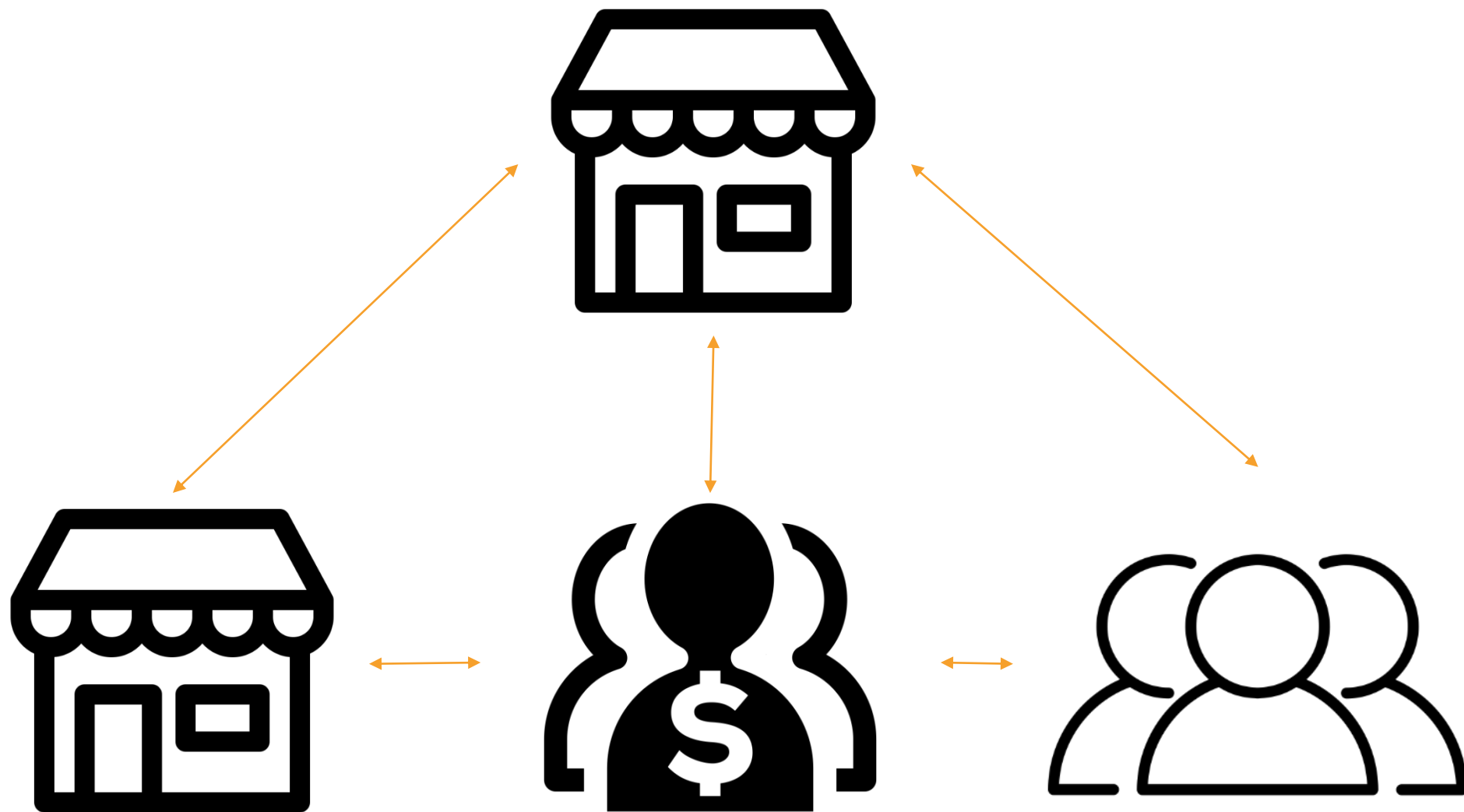


Components of your Financial Context

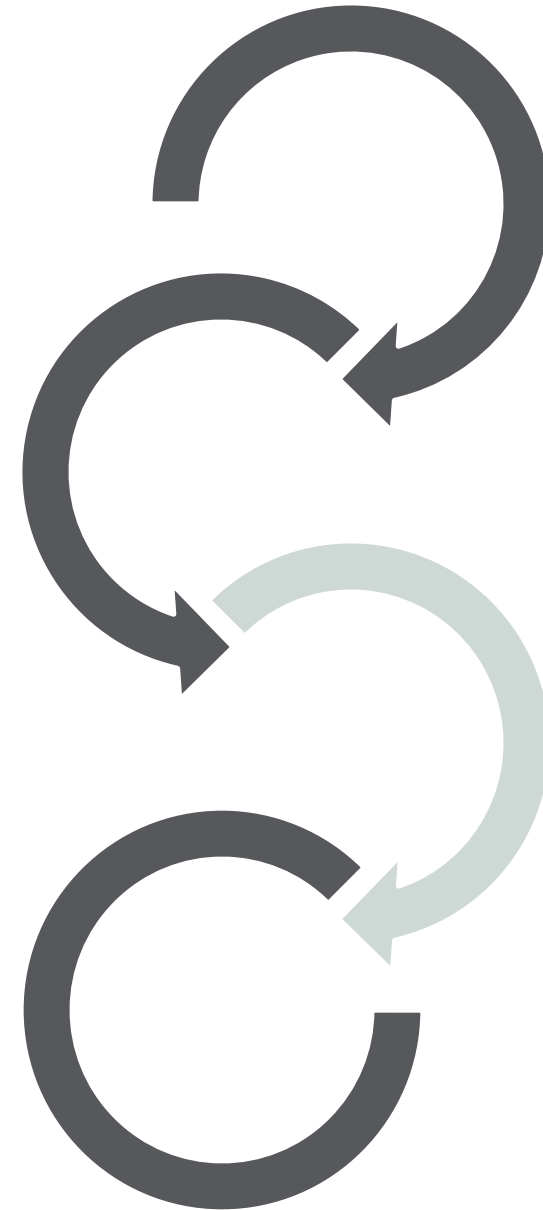


Understand Community Supply and Demand





Identify Levers to Activate



Understanding your Levers

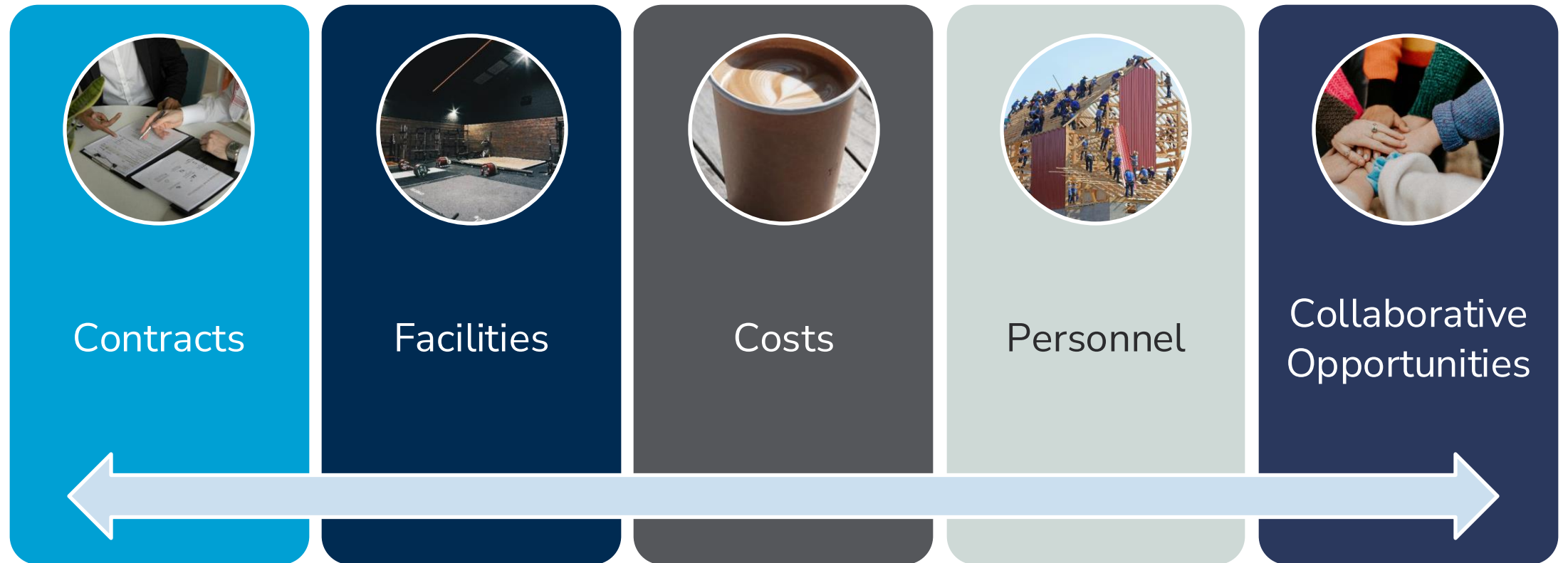


Photo by [Amira Alar](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Photo by [Hannah Busing](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Photo by [Randy Fath](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Photo by [Ambitious Studio](#) / [Rick Barrett](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Prepare a Process



Educate Internal Stakeholders

Board



Staff



Create a Rapid Response Team



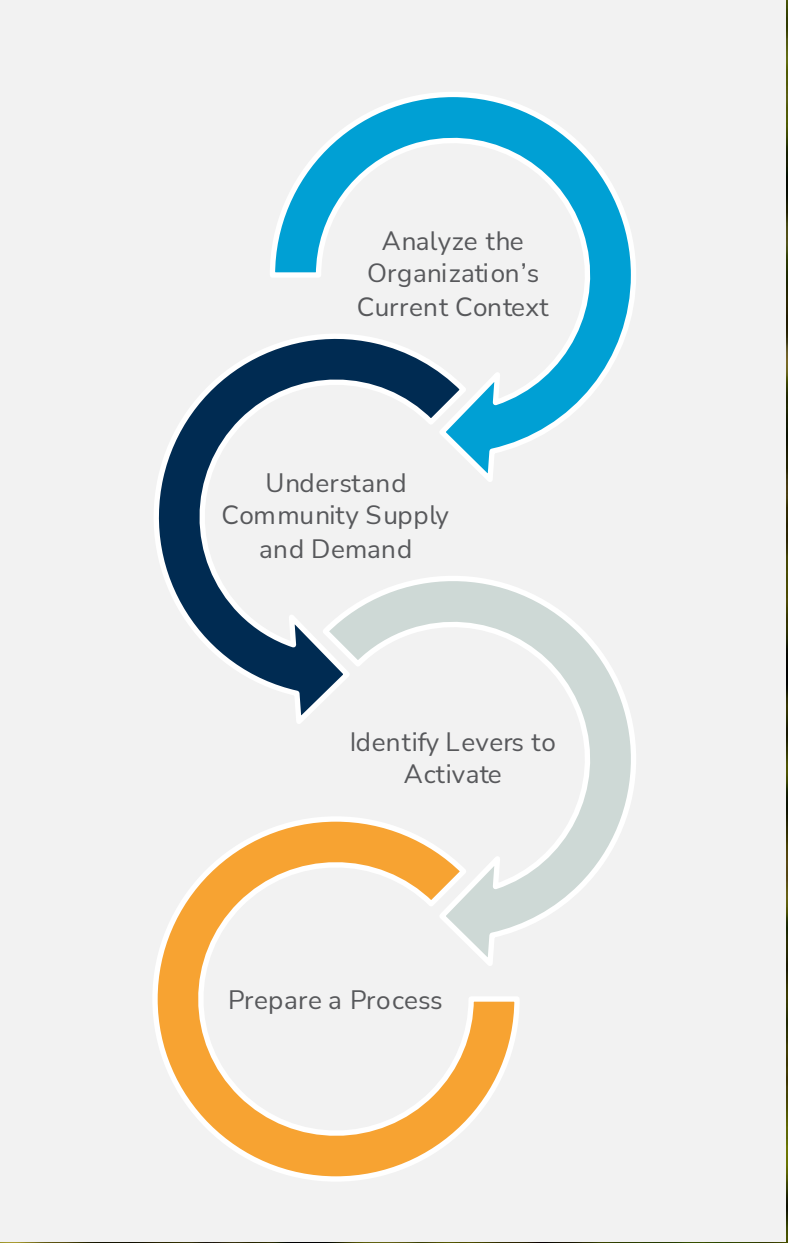
Communicate
&
Utilize Social
Capital!

Scenario Positioning Framework





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Understanding your Current Context



Understanding your Community





Understanding The Process to Implement







Thank You!

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