

*Precarious Undertakings:
Nonprofit Work, Funding and
Communities at Risk*

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- ‘lived experience’ of service providers in the nonprofit sector
- “It is a precarious sector and we are really in danger of becoming ... cheap government services with all the accountability of government and none of the infrastructure and stability.” (Toronto non-profit sector manager)
- precarity as a ‘permanent state of temporariness’

Funding Insecurity and Nonprofit Precariousness

- “We are always insecure. We are always losing funding and having to lay off.” (senior manager, multi-service agency)
- Short term program based funding model –‘just-in-time’ financing

Organizational Precarity

- Nonprofit organizations as public assets (supporting nonprofit organizations and their infrastructure are public investments in communities)
- A sector under stress

Supporting Communities

- “The value that you get back, the benefits that you see in the community is the biggest reward in itself.” (female nonprofit worker)
- “... the funding has also impacted the residents in the sense that there’s no more accommodation ... for them. ... That affects their willingness to wanna be in the programme because, yes, they’re there to learn ... but those two foundational—transportation and food— was one of the things that encouraged them ...” (female nonprofit worker)

Conclusion

- Nonprofit community-based services are far more than ‘just the service.’ They are about a holistic approach to caring that engages with the community to assess and address needs and represent communities.