

# WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH IN THE NON-PROFIT SECTOR





## What are the mental health challenges in the non-profit sector?

- Highly stressful environment due to emotional demands leads to **compassion fatigue** (Bride et al., 2007)
- Limited funding leads to fewer mental health resources causing **burnout and stress** in the workplace (Mhungu, 2024)
- Less desirable salary and high workload further exacerbate the problem

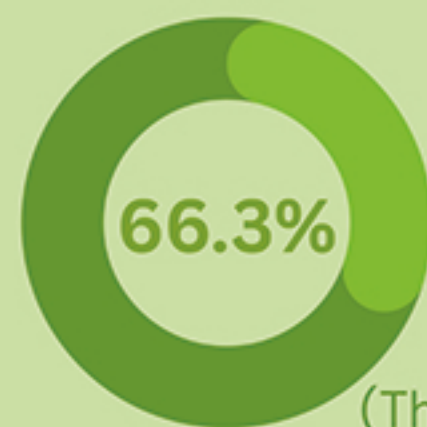
## Key Concepts

- Workplace Well-Being:** safe and healthy working environment where employees feel supported mentally and physically (WHO, 2024)
- Burnout:** chronic workplace stress leading to overwhelming exhaustion and lack of accomplishment (Maslach & Leiter, 2016)
- Compassion fatigue:** reduced empathy and emotional exhaustion resulting from prolonged exposure to others' suffering (Bride et al., 2007)

## Statistics



of nonprofit employees report stress and burnout



of nonprofit organizations suffer from budget constraints/insufficient funds

(The National Council of Nonprofits, 2023)

## Impact of Mental Health Challenges in the Non-Profit Sector

- Reduction in productivity:** burnout and stress lead to **erosion of team morale** and **decreased productivity** (Landa, 2024)
- Operational costs:** **12 billion working days** are **lost** every year to depression and anxiety (WHO, 2022)
- Decreased service quality:** compassion fatigue causes **decreased empathy** in nonprofit employees leading to reduction in service quality (Figley, 1995)

### Impact of Mental Health Challenges on SPCA employees



SPCA  
愛護動物協會

Issue of compassion fatigue due to handling of animal cruelty cases, especially among veterinary surgeons

## How to improve Employee Well-Being?

This proposals are based on our research into the topic and observations in SPCA

- Implementation of mindfulness programs:** mindfulness-based interventions in the workplace allow employees to seek mental health help in the workplace and reduce risk of burnout (Chin et al., 2019)
- Flexible work arrangements:** flexible working policies such as allowing employees to work from home improve job satisfaction and reduce burnout in employees (Almer & Kaplan, 2002)

### What is SPCA doing?

**Bring your dog to work initiative:** promotes a dog-friendly workplace culture in SPCA (Chan, 2023)  
**Presence of a dog in the office** has been shown to **reduce stress and improve focus** (Beaphar, n.d.)



Target 3.4: promote mental health and well-being

How does this relate to SDG 3?

## What are the benefits of these policies?

- Improved image of the organization** as stress-free, healthy working environment
- Improved mental health will **decrease operational costs** related to mental health challenges
- Reduction in compassion fatigue will **increase service quality**
- Job satisfaction will **boost employee morale and improve productivity**



## Call for Action

Workplace mental health challenges don't just impair the full potential of employees, but damage the mission of the organization. Investing in employee well-being is critical to ensure the prosperity of the operation.

References:  
Bride, B. E., Radey, M., & Figley, C. R. (2007, August). Measuring compassion fatigue. ResearchGate. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226997803\\_Measuring\\_Compassion\\_Fatigue](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226997803_Measuring_Compassion_Fatigue)  
The nonprofit workforce shortage crisis. National Council of Nonprofits. (2023). <https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/nonprofit-workforce-shortage-crisis>  
Mhungu, N. (2024, November 27). ASU Lodestar Center Blog. Burnout and Compassion Fatigue in the Nonprofit Sector. <https://lodestar.asu.edu/blog/2024/11/burnout-and-compassion-fatigue-nonprofit-sector>  
WHO. (2024, September 2). Mental health at work. World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-at-work>  
Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (2016, June). Understanding the burnout experience: Recent research and its implications for psychiatry. World psychiatry: official journal of the World Psychiatric Association (WPA). <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4911781/>  
World Health Organization. (2022, September 28). Mental health at work: Policy brief. World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240057944>  
Landa, K. (2024, December 4). How to cope with Nonprofit Burnout. How to Cope With Nonprofit Burnout. <https://blog.dickersonbakker.com/nonprofit-burnout#:~:text=Left%20unaddressed%2C%20burnout%20can%20erode,the%20early%20signs%20of%20burnout.>  
Figley, C. R. (1995, July). Compassion Fatigue as secondary traumatic stress disorder: An overview. ResearchGate. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/245720535\\_Compassion\\_fatigue\\_as\\_secondary\\_traumatic\\_stress\\_disorder\\_An\\_overview](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/245720535_Compassion_fatigue_as_secondary_traumatic_stress_disorder_An_overview)  
Chin, B., Slutsky, J., Raye, J., & Creswell, J. D. (2019, April). Mindfulness training reduces stress at work: A randomized controlled trial. Mindfulness. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6433409/>  
Almer, E. D., & Kaplan, S. E. (2002, February). The effects of flexible work arrangements on stressors, Burnout, and Behavioral Job Outcomes in public accounting. ResearchGate. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240303158\\_The\\_Effects\\_of\\_Flexible\\_Work\\_Arrangements\\_on\\_Stressors\\_Burnout\\_and\\_Behavioral\\_Job\\_Outcomes\\_in\\_Public\\_Accounting](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240303158_The_Effects_of_Flexible_Work_Arrangements_on_Stressors_Burnout_and_Behavioral_Job_Outcomes_in_Public_Accounting)  
Chan, C. (2023, October 13). The SPCA presents 'bring your dog to work' promoting a dog-friendly workplace culture throughout Hong Kong. SPCA. <https://www.sPCA.org.hk/the-sPCA-presents-bring-your-dog-to-work-09-2023/>  
Beaphar. (n.d.). How dogs can help relieve stress in the workplace. <https://www.beaphar.com/blog/how-dogs-can-help-relieve-stress-in-the-workplace/#:~:text=However%2C%20the%20presence%20of%20dogs,and%20concentrate%20on%20their%20tasks.>



SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT

GOALS