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NADO
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

SCENARIO-BASED THINK TANK

June 2 & 4, 2018



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

SCENARIO-BASED THINK TANK WORKSHOP

Washington, D.C.

This report summarizes the scenario planning sessions held in La Jolla, California, on June 2 & 4, 2018. Approximately 60 Board Members, and Staff from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) participated in the Think Tank and developed the scenarios presented in this report. This report has been produced as part of the National Association of Development Organizations Strategic Plan process, which aims to produce a strategic plan that will guide organizational activities for the next five years.

REPORT PREPARED BY:

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The strategic planning process will allow NADO stakeholders to examine the implications of choices about future direction.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The scenario planning work presented in this report was conducted as part of the strategic planning project of the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) to create a five-year strategic plan for the organization and its foundation. NADO has not recently had a strategic plan in place and its Board and Executive Committee are using this opportunity to reassess the vision and future direction of the organization. This commitment to the strategic planning process is a testament to the dedication and strong leadership of NADO Board Members and staff and should be commended.

Future iQ has been contracted to facilitate the strategic planning process from May 2018 through Spring 2019, including the Think Tank, data visualization and membership engagement at the Annual Training Conference in October 2018, and the Washington Policy Conference in March 2019.

The components of the Think Tank planning work included pre-Think Tank surveys, long-term Scenario Planning, discussion about preferred futures, strategic pillar and big idea development.

- **Pre-Think Tank Surveys** – A survey was sent to invited participants of the Think Tank before the workshop. This input, along with assistance from NADO's senior staff, helped to create the axes of the scenario matrix and guide the Think Tank discussions.
- **NADO Future Think Tank** – The scenario-based planning Think Tank held on June 2 & 4, 2018, provided an important opportunity to engage approximately 60 Board Members and Staff in a critical dialogue about the future and changing organizational dynamics of the National Association of Development Organizations and its foundation.





The results from the stakeholder survey helps create the axes of the scenario matrix used in the Think Tank and guide the workshop discussions.

2.0 STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS

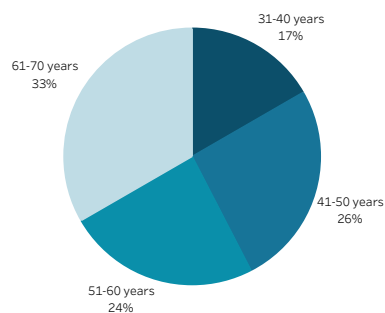
Prior to the scenario-planning Think Tank, surveys were conducted. Think Tank participants were asked about their views on both the current status and the future of NADO.

2.1 STAKEHOLDER PROFILE INFORMATION

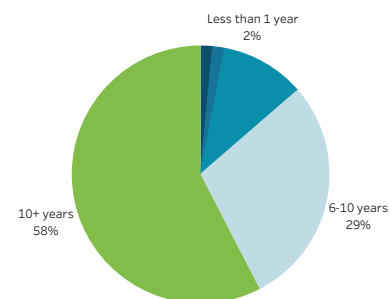
In terms of demographics, approximately 33% of respondents were female and 67% were male. A majority of respondents were in the 51-70 age range, with 43% in the 31-50 age range. Respondents were asked how they are affiliated with NADO, as well as how long they have been involved with the organization. 83% of the respondents were NADO Board Members and 87% of the respondents had been involved for more than 6 years.

Stakeholder Profile Information

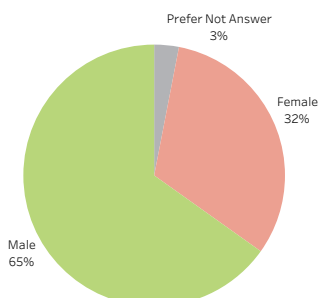
Age Distribution



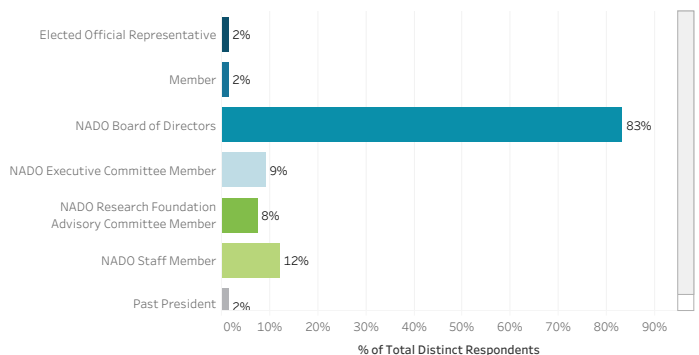
How Long Involved with NADO



Gender Distribution



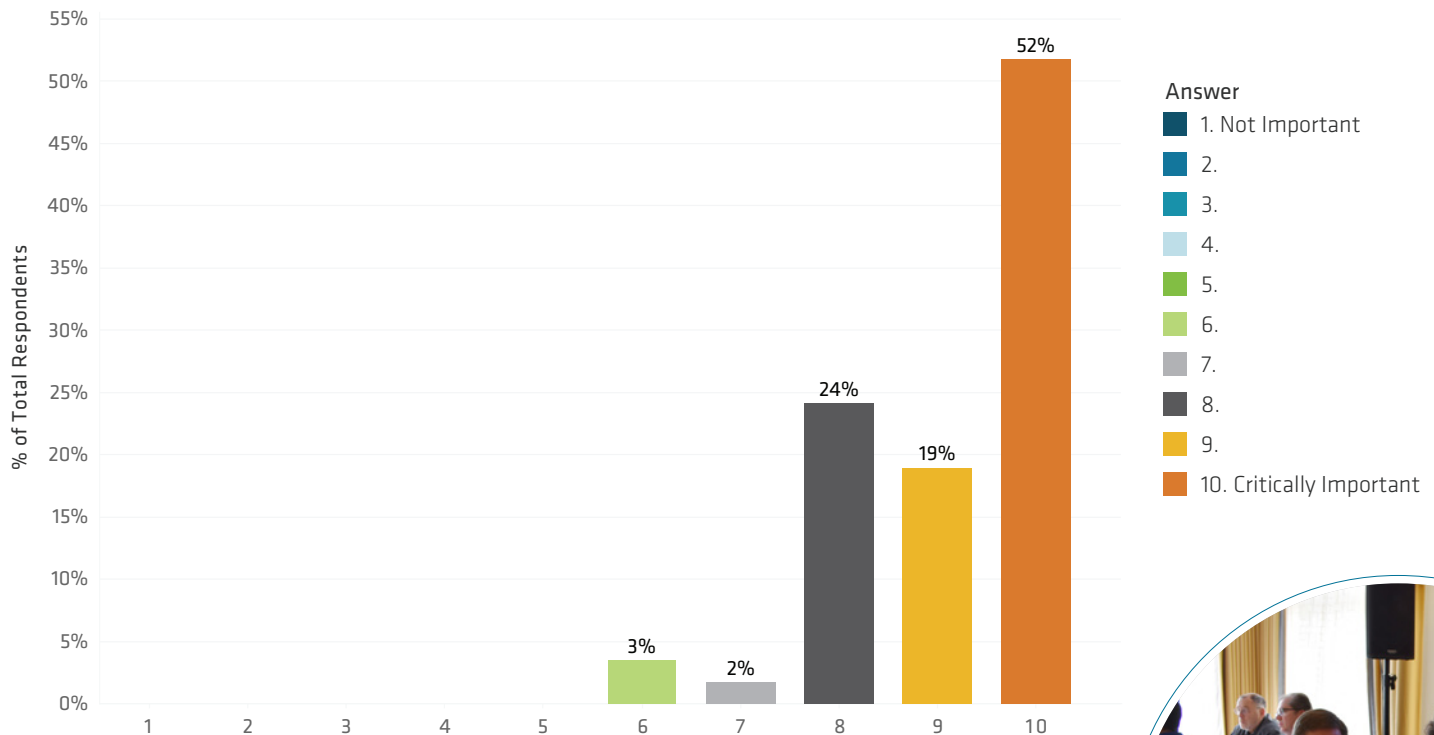
Affiliation to NADO



2.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF SHARED VISION

Two survey questions were asked about the importance of having a shared vision. The first question asked about the importance of a shared vision for the future of NADO, the second about the importance of a shared vision for NADO in relation to decision-making for the respondent's organization or department.

How important do you think it is to have a shared vision for the future of NADO? (n = 58)



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KEY POINTS TO NOTE:

- Having a shared vision was identified by as important not only for the future of NADO, but for making decisions for respondents' organizations.
- This agreement on the importance of aligning perspectives and striving for points of consensus will help the NADO board with decision-making.



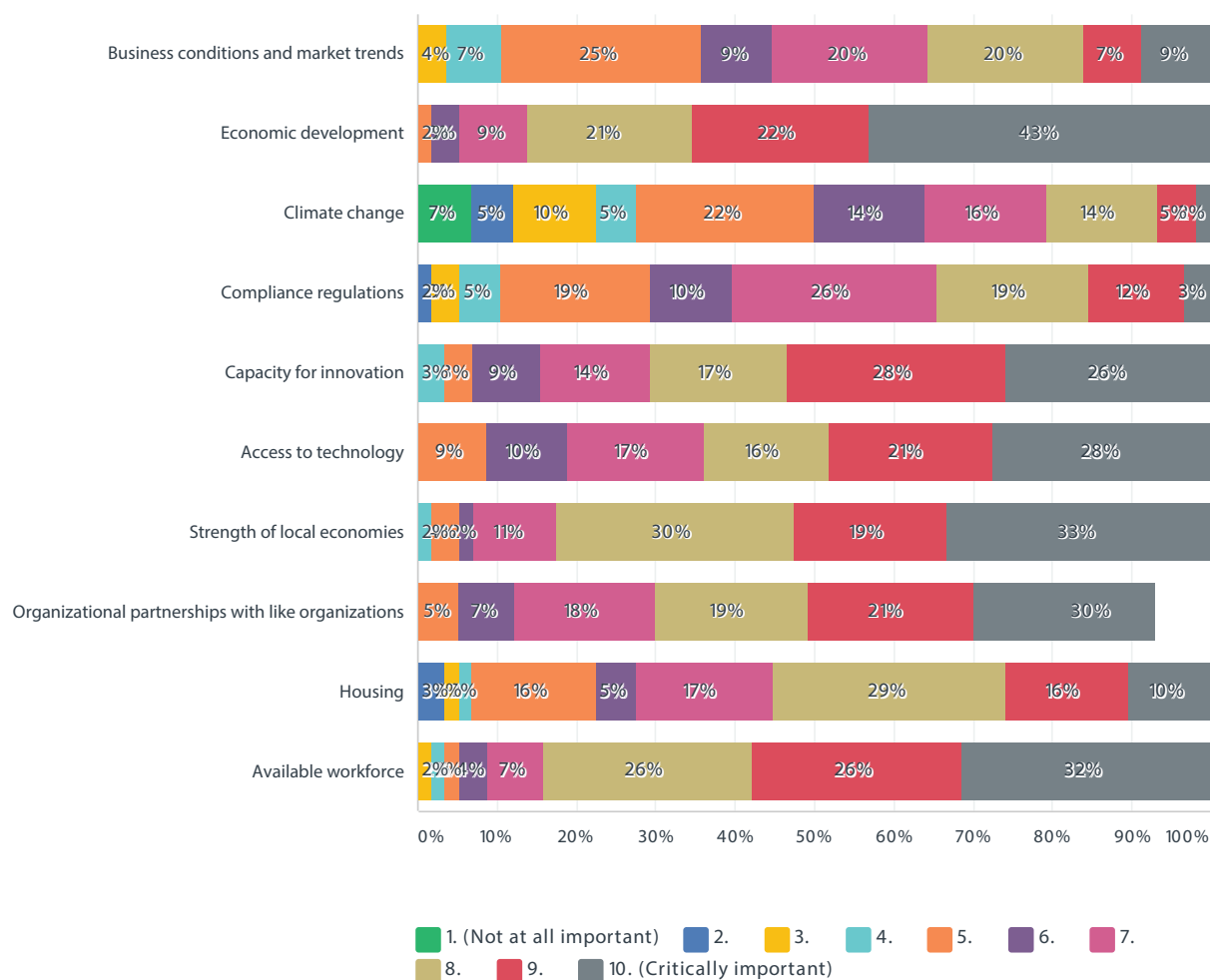
2.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF CHANGE AND ASSETS

To determine perceived drivers and influences on NADO, survey participants were asked about the importance of changes in some topic areas over time, as well as the importance of certain assets to the organization.

2.3.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF CHANGES IN ISSUES AND SECTORS

To gauge the importance of the inevitable impact of change over time, respondents were asked how important changes in the following issues and sectors will be to NADO over the next 5 years.

How important will changes in the following issues and sectors be to NADO over the next 5 years? (n = 58)



DataInsight

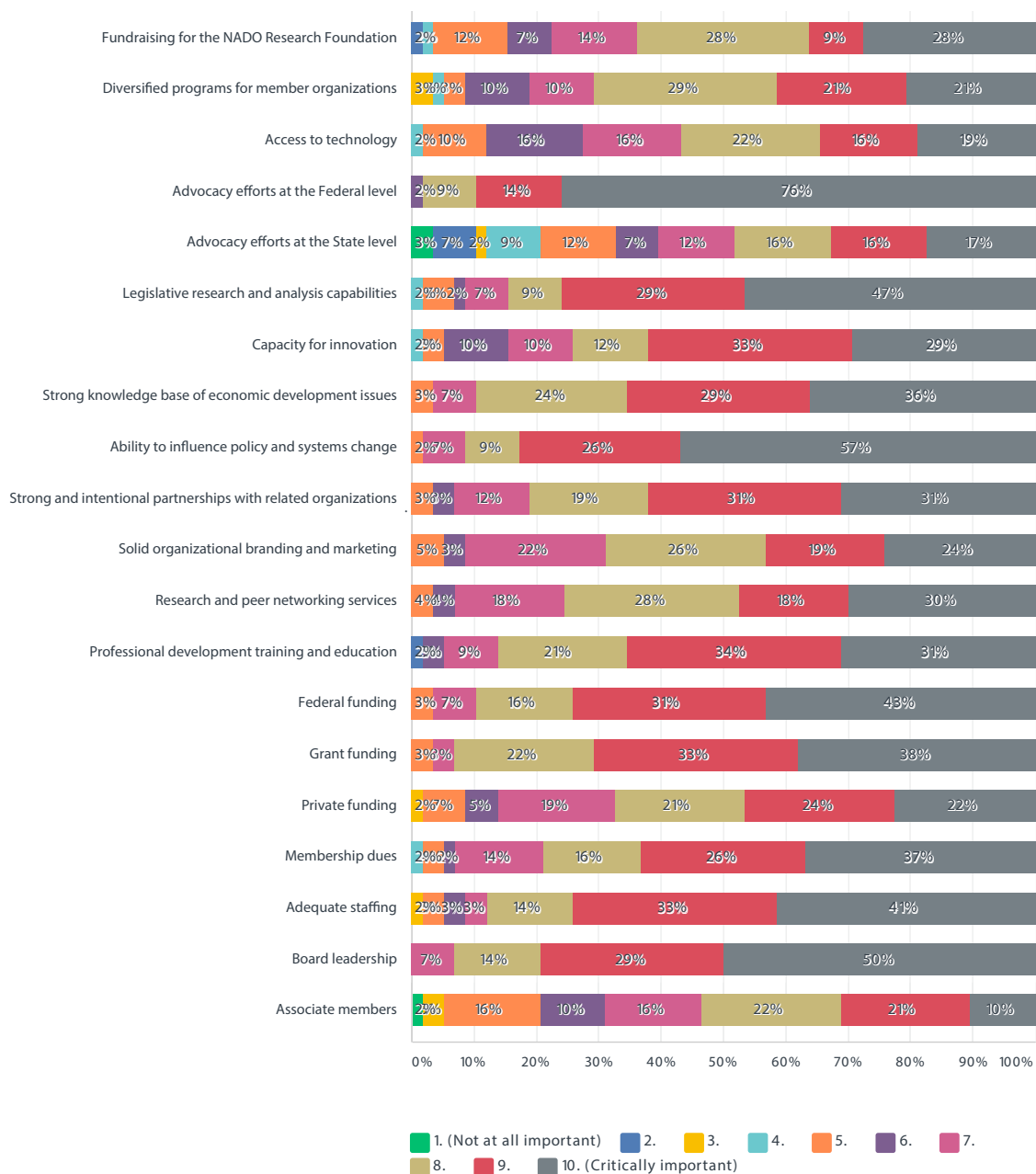
KEY POINTS TO NOTE:

- Survey respondents considered changes in economic development and the strength of local economies as most important for NADO.
- Close third and fourth topic areas were available workforce and organizational partnerships with like organizations, indicating a need for NADO to develop an outward facing orientation to maintain its leadership position in the development field.

2.3.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF CERTAIN ASSETS TO THE FUTURE OF NADO

To build a more complete picture of those assets impacting NADO, respondents were asked to indicate how important they thought the following assets are to the future of NADO.

Please indicate how important you think the following assets are to the future of NADO. (n = 58)



KEY POINTS TO NOTE:

- Measuring and assessing assets considered important to an organization are key to determining those organizational values and priorities that set the stage for strategic planning and action areas.
- Advocacy, policy and systems change, board leadership and legislative research and analysis capabilities led in importance for survey respondents.

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2.4 OPEN-ENDED NARRATIVE RESPONSES

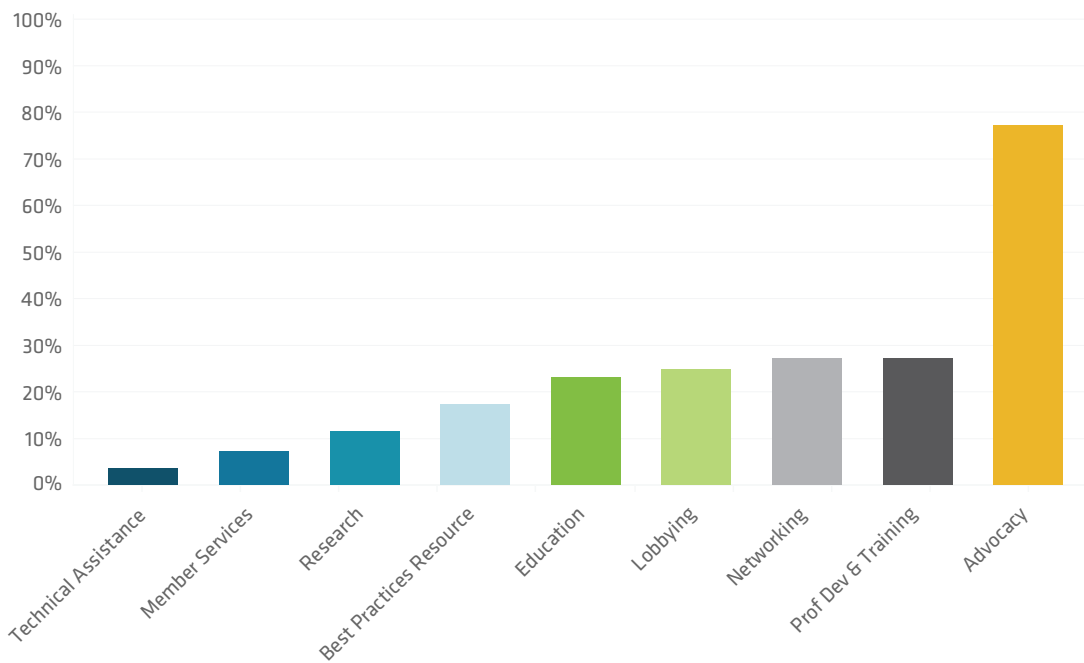
The pre-Think Tank survey also included questions with open-ended narrative responses allowing for a closer glimpse into participant perspectives. Below are the categorized responses from the open-ended questions.

2.4.1 MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTIONS OF NADO

To discover what functions of NADO were considered most important for the organization, survey respondents were asked what they thought were its most important functions.

NADO Functions – Categorized Responses

What do you think are the most important functions of NADO? (n = 56)



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KEY POINTS TO NOTE:

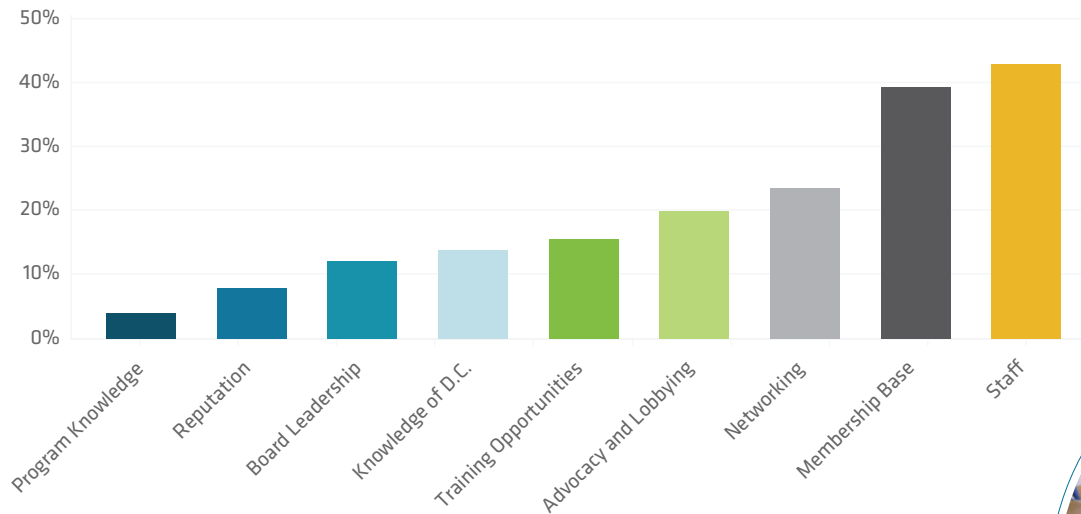
- Advocacy at the federal level was overwhelmingly cited as the most important function of NADO. Board members can use this function as a foundational pillar to inform the organization's focus and capacity for innovation.

2.4.2 NADO'S GREATEST STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

NADO's perceived strengths and weaknesses help to identify gaps and strengths that may be used as avenues for changing the organization's programs and services.

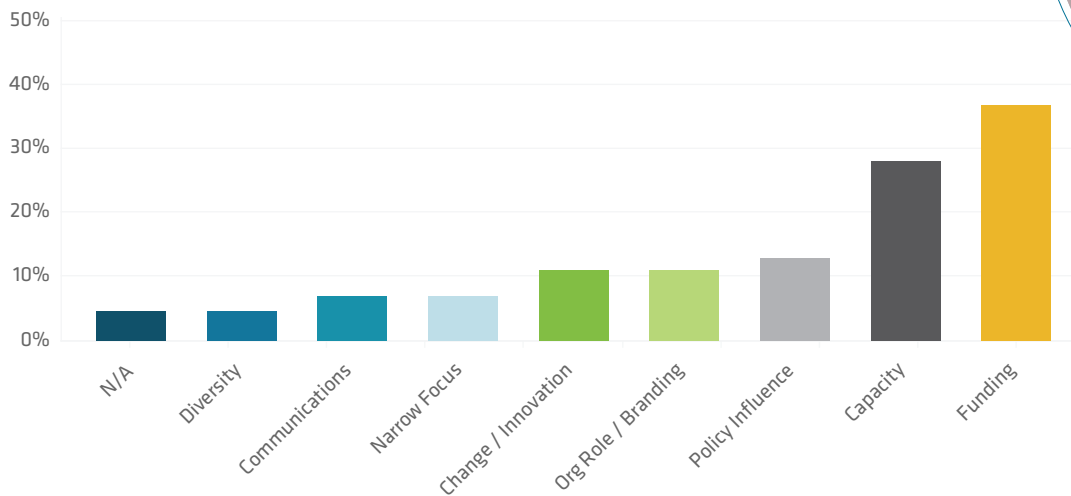
NADO's Greatest Strengths – Categorized Responses

What do you think are NADO's greatest strengths? (n = 51)



NADO's Greatest Weaknesses – Categorized Responses

What do you think are NADO's greatest weaknesses? (n = 46)



DataInsight

KEY POINTS TO NOTE:

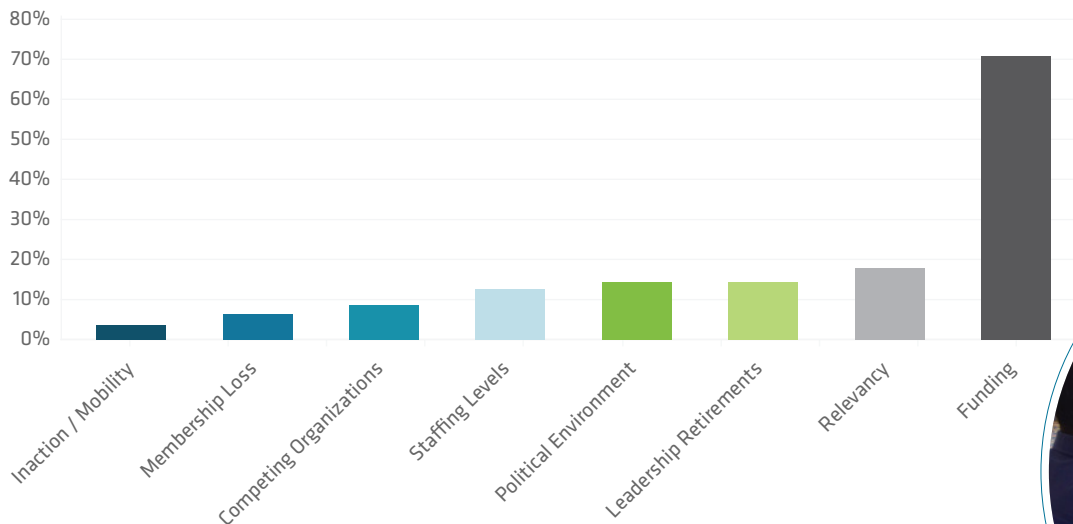
- With extremely capable staff identified as its greatest organizational strength, the issue of capacity as one of its greatest weaknesses will require exploration by the board when considering strategic direction and planning.

2.4.3 MOST SIGNIFICANT THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Where strengths and weaknesses identify current situational status of an organization, threats and opportunities are anticipatory. Thinking ahead to the next 5 years, survey respondents were asked what they thought were the most significant threats and opportunities to NADO.

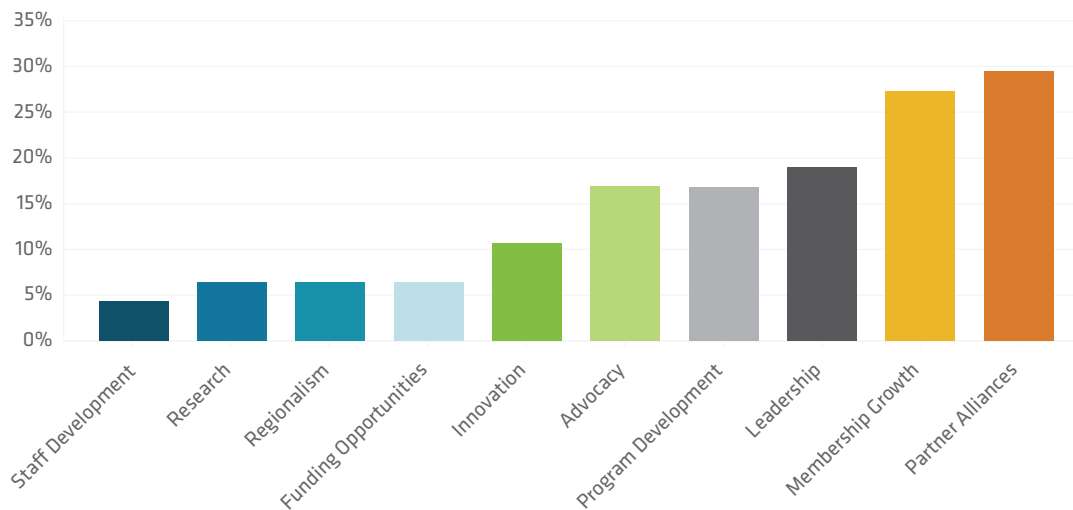
Most Significant Threats to NADO – Response Categorization

What do you think are the most significant threats to NADO in the next 5 years? (n = 50)



Most Significant Opportunities for NADO – Response Categorization

What do you think are the most significant opportunities for NADO in the next 5 years? (n = 48)



KEY POINTS TO NOTE:

- Outside organizations and funding sources were considered both potential threats and opportunities for NADO in the next 5 years.
- NADO board members will need to carefully assess the potential implications of actions taken in these two areas to be sure positive change occurs.

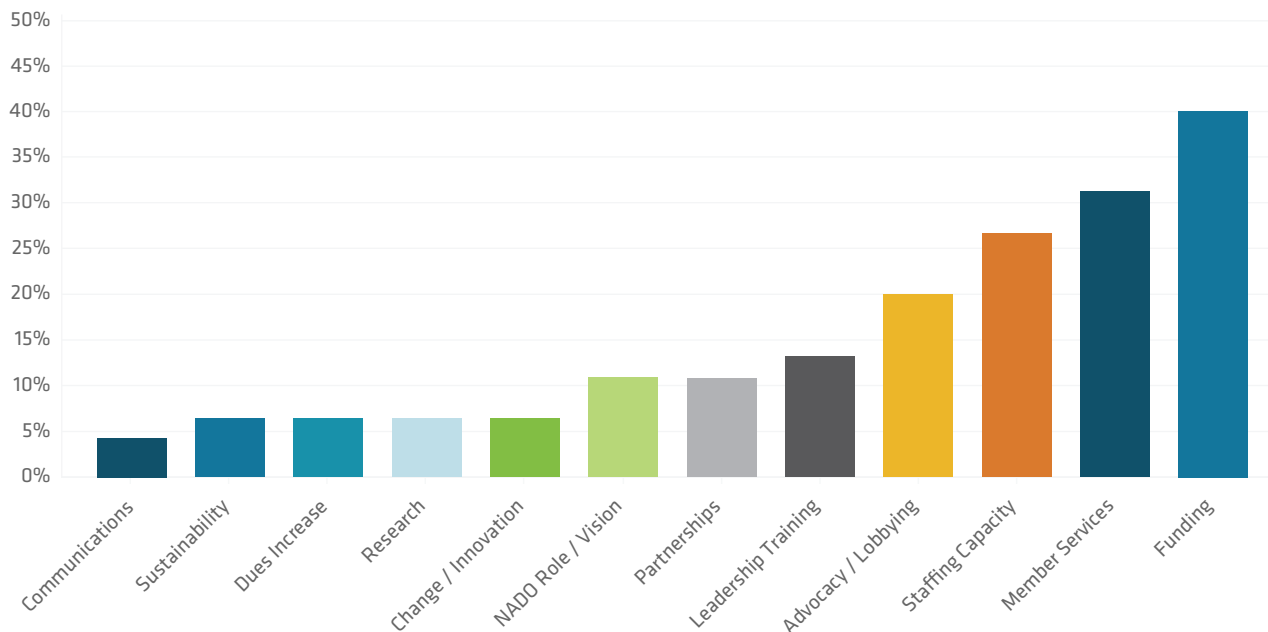
DataInsight

2.4.4 MOST IMPORTANT DISCUSSION ITEMS

To get a better idea of the exact topics NADO board members would like to see made part of the strategic planning process, respondents were asked what they thought are the 3 most important items to be discussed when considering the future of NADO.

Most Important Items for the Future of NADO – Response Categorization

As we draft the NADO Strategic Plan, what do you think are the 3 most important items to be discussed when considering the future of NADO? (n = 45)



KEY POINTS TO NOTE:

- Funding, member services and staffing capacity were cited as the three most important items to be discussed when considering the future of NADO.
- These topics give NADO the opportunity to reshape the orientation of organizational activities depending on the alignment of views.

DataInsight





The Think Tank was conducted to create an awareness of plausible futures, which would then assist with the decision-making for NADO.

3.0 SCENARIO PLANNING

The scenario-based Think-Tank workshop was conducted on June 2 & 4, 2018, and included NADO Board Members, National Office staff and NADO's local staff member in California. Approximately sixty people attended this all-day Think Tank. The Think Tank was intended to build coherency around a sustainable strategic plan that will guide the organization and foundation over the next five years and beyond.

3.1 SCENARIO-BASED FUTURE THINK-TANK

The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) contracted Future iQ to design and facilitate a future orientated 'Think Tank' to build support for a comprehensive and inclusive strategic plan for the organization. Future iQ's Scenario Planning process, provides a method to explore plausible futures, and consider the implications of various future scenarios. This workshop aimed to:

- Deepen the understanding and examination of how external events and local conditions could shape decision-making.
- Identify and understand the key influences, trends, and dynamics that will shape NADO over the next 10 to 20 years.
- Create and describe four plausible long-term scenarios for the organization.
- Begin exploring alignment around a shared future vision.

The scenarios developed during this Scenario Planning process, and outlined in this report are important to provide a framework to discuss future possible outcomes and implications. In addition, the Think Tank deliberations can assist in identifying key actions for NADO and assist in identifying how various groups might best contribute to future developments. The design of the Think Tank included a presentation and discussion about key forces shaping the future, at a global and local level. These exercises and work were aimed to build a robust basis for the scenario formulation.



The participants were then guided through a Scenario Planning process to develop four plausible scenarios for the future of NADO. The process involved exploration and discussion of global, regional, and local trends and forces of change; development of a scenario matrix defining four plausible scenarios spaces for the future; and, the development of descriptive narratives of each scenario. The event concluded with discussion of the scenarios, selection of a preferred scenario and first steps to determine the strategic actions required to create the preferred scenario.

3.2 DEVELOPING FOUR PLAUSIBLE SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE

NADO Think Tank participants explored the future and developed plausible future scenarios, looking out as far as 2030.

3.2.1 DRIVERS SHAPING THE FUTURE

With the background of the global, national, and regional forces and how they relate to the organization, the participants were invited to respond to a survey prior to the workshop. The survey sought to gain insight into what participants believe to be the key drivers of NADO's future, the organization's weaknesses, strengths and the importance of certain assets to NADO's future.

Creating scenario spaces – four plausible scenarios for the future

Based on the Pre-Think Tank responses and key input from NADO's leadership staff, themes were identified to become the basis for two axes on the scenario matrix that define four scenario 'spaces', with quadrants either towards or away for each driver cluster. These quadrants were used to formulate four plausible scenarios.

The two axes identified were **Capacity for Innovation** and **Organizational Focus**.

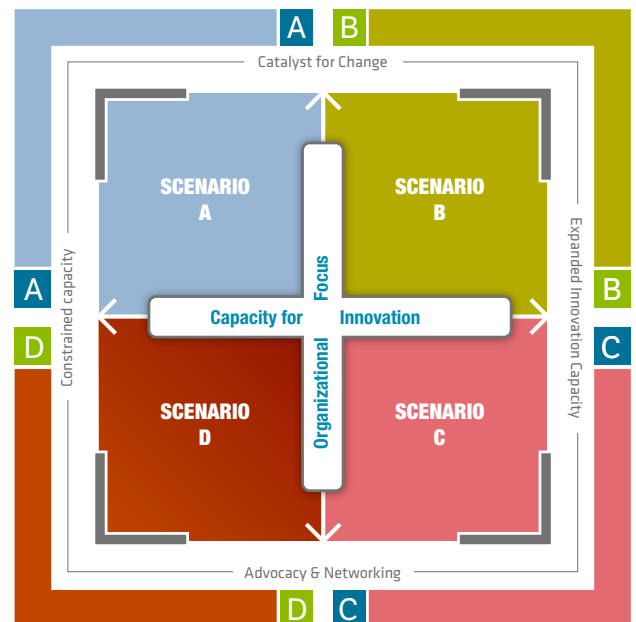
Think Tank participants were presented with the scenario matrix, defined by the two major axes of 'Capacity for Innovation' and 'Organizational Focus' (see diagram). Brief descriptions were also attached to the end points of each driver axis. While these end points do not necessarily represent two extremes on a linear continuum, they are distinct enough to suggest some degree of separation and a plausible range of outcomes between them. The four quadrants (scenario spaces) based on different combinations of the two cluster themes, were reviewed and discussed with the workshop participants. This discussion explored the description of the end points included in each scenario space, the possible interaction between these drivers, and how they formed the axes that defined the four scenario spaces. The participants were asked to consider the main attributes of each of the quadrants and to begin to speculate about how NADO's capacity to innovate and its organizational focus would look in a future based on each of the quadrants.



3.2.2 SCENARIO MATRIX – VIEWS OF THE FUTURE

Think Tank participants were assigned to one of four groups and asked to formulate a scenario for their respective quadrant. Each group was asked to describe characteristics including but not limited to the following dimensions of NADO in 2030 under the conditions of the scenario quadrant that they had been given:

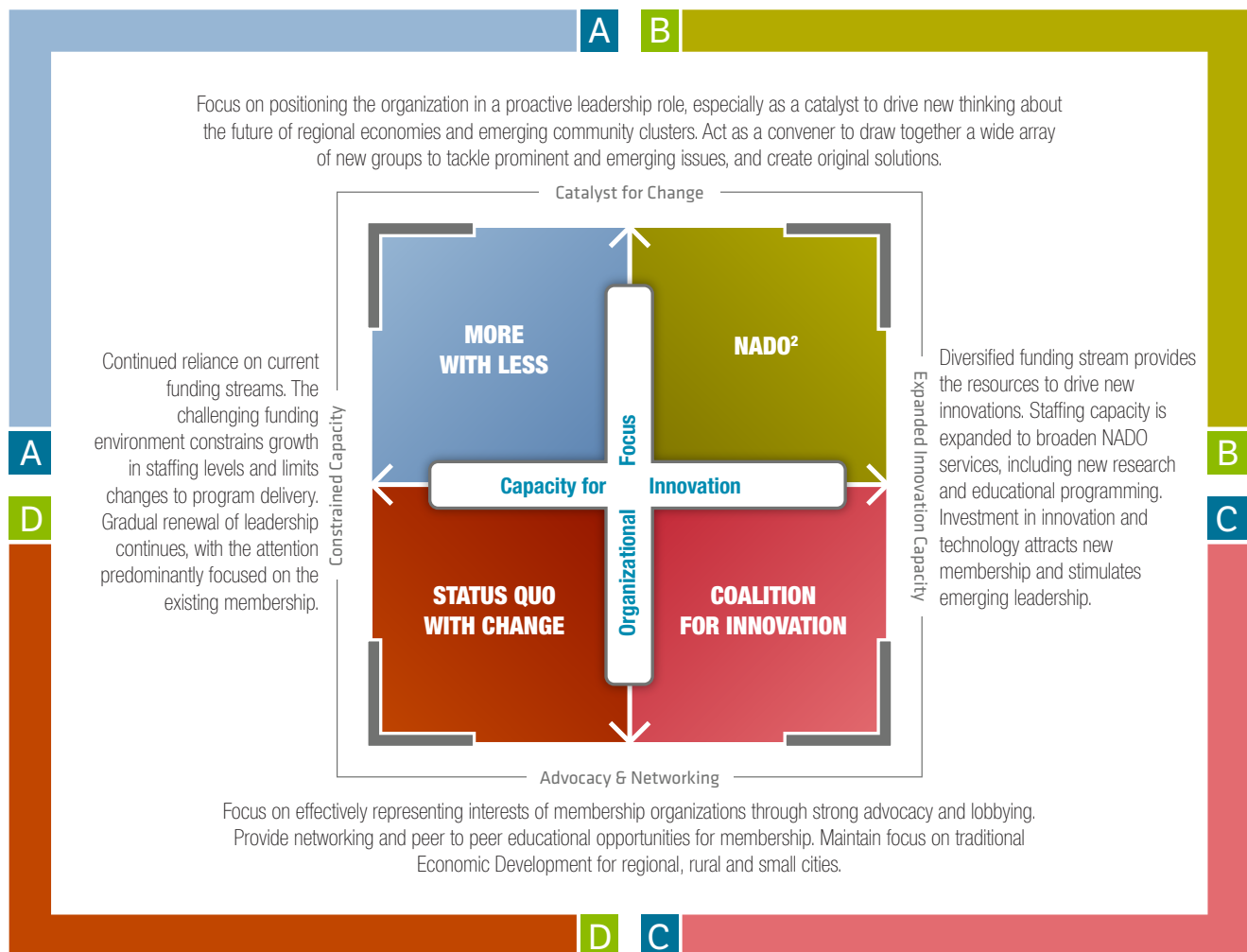
- Organizational Focus
 - Role within the nationwide eco-system
 - Ability to lead and create cutting-edge programs and services
 - Impact on organizational mission
- Funding Levels and Sources
 - NADO staff size, distribution and skill sets
 - Flexibility and capacity to innovate
 - Funding goals and funding source mix
- Services and Membership
 - Reputation of NADO and membership in funding circles
 - Impact on membership mix and communities served
 - Program and services depth and mix



Additionally, they were asked to devise major events or headlines of how the scenario occurred using the years 2020, 2025, and 2030 and to give their scenario a descriptive name. Once the scenarios had been developed, each group reported back, describing their scenario to the other workshop participants. Each group's notes for their scenario and the description were used to produce the detailed narrative for each scenario. Below is the scenario matrix showing the names of each scenario as described by the workshop participants.



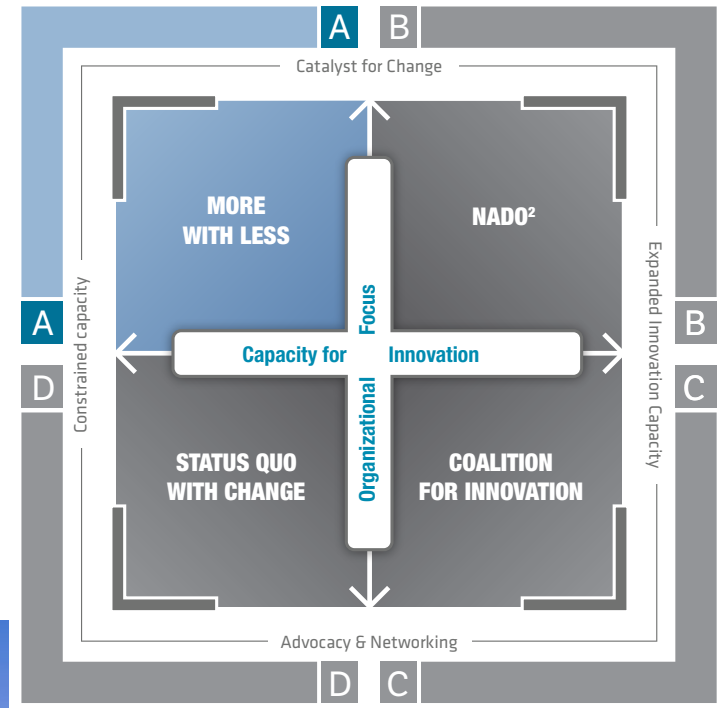
These four scenarios paint very different plausible futures for NADO. The workshop participants considered them all as largely plausible futures, as in, they could actually happen. Narratives and descriptions of each scenario, as developed by the workshop participants, are included in the following section. Each scenario has its subsequent consequences and impacts on NADO – impacting the organizational fabric, services offered, funding, and regional partners in different ways. No one future is the ‘perfect’ future, as each comes with its attendant challenges and implications. The process, however, does provide a way to tease out the future scenarios and examine them from a speculative standpoint. They represent different possibilities for the future, and are not predictions.





3.3 SCENARIO A – MORE WITH LESS

NADO assumes a leadership role in convening innovative programs and forums for its members. Continued reliance on federal grants and a limited membership base creates a challenging funding environment restricting the ability of NADO to take on additional staff to support new programs and research projects. The organization relies on its members to provide input on program topics pertaining to regional economic development. NADO builds its already strong reputation by becoming more of a specialty issue advocacy organization focused on serving the immediate needs of its membership.





SCENARIO CHARACTERISTICS - 2030

Organizational Focus / Characteristics

- Convener rather than a doer; rely on membership rather than NADO staff
- Lead on programs and services and understand innovative program and services
- Carve out the niche to ensure the focus and emphasis of the organization is explicit because there is a small staff

Funding Levels and Sources / Characteristics

- Rather than focus on same programs, target additional innovative topics
- Increase convener/facilitation on site staffing – possibly DC based
- If it's DC based, we need DC based staff – potential to tap into universities

Services and Memberships / Characteristics

- Reputation; NADO has a great reputation – we need to stay on top of innovation to keep and build members
- Bring city and county leaders together; if we can bring value, we will keep members
- Reach out more and ask members to provide input into program topics
- Use the caucuses to drive programming



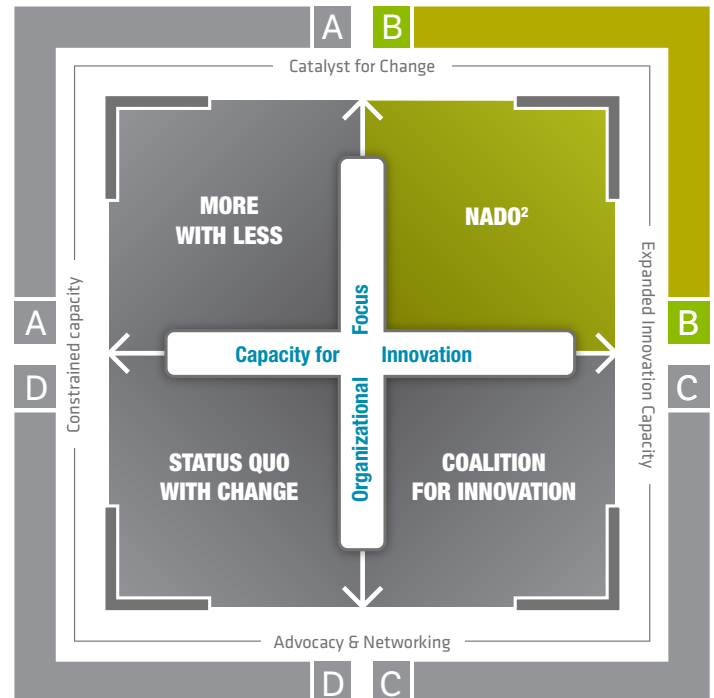
MORE WITH LESS – HEADLINE NEWS

	2020	2025	2030
Organizational Focus	<i>NADO convenes on public land issues in the West; in South for flood; in East and Midwest...</i>	<i>Urban areas struggle to keep up with regional economies / Webster redefines Rural</i>	<i>NADO membership reaches 2000</i>
Funding Levels and Sources	<i>NADO pools lobbying resources with counties and others</i>	<i>Congress develops sustainable funding for regional areas / Funding crisis causes merger of NADO and NACO</i>	<i>Congress reaches out to NADO for help</i>
Services and Membership	<i>NADO partners with John Deere for AG innovation</i>	<i>Microsoft donates to NADO for innovation projects</i>	<i>NADO membership expands to include associate nonprofit members</i>



3.4 SCENARIO B – NADO²

NADO propels itself into an international leadership role in the field of economic development by convening national summits. A diversified funding stream including fee for service options increases monies available to hire new staff. NADO hires an innovation officer that leads efforts to forge new alliances with expanded partnerships and connections for potential programming. Additional organizational funding enhances NADO's ability to provide access to subject matter experts and cutting-edge technical assistance for its membership. Driven by its added capacity for innovative research and educational programming, NADO attracts new membership and stimulates emerging leadership. A concerted effort to market and brand the organization brings new recognition to NADO's strong advocacy and lobbying capacity.





SCENARIO CHARACTERISTICS - 2030

Organizational Focus / Characteristics

- Value of rural America
- National Association Alliance
- Convener and connector of partners (business, educational institutions, etc)
- Research and education
- International capacity and staff
- Consider rebranding, marketing, national advertising – sell it
- Technology, environmental, land use/ planning, education, lobbying, urban connection, AG (or consultant)

Funding Levels and Sources / Characteristics

- Corporate partnerships to diversify revenue streams
- Workforce development partnerships; national partnerships w/other partners / alliances - coordination models
- Foundations
- Fee for services
- National summits (around subjects)
- More awards, focus on community, better and best practices

Services and Memberships / Characteristics

- Subject matter experts
- NADO providing technical assistance to members
- Incubate implementation in regions
- International scale research and program implementation
- Trends lab



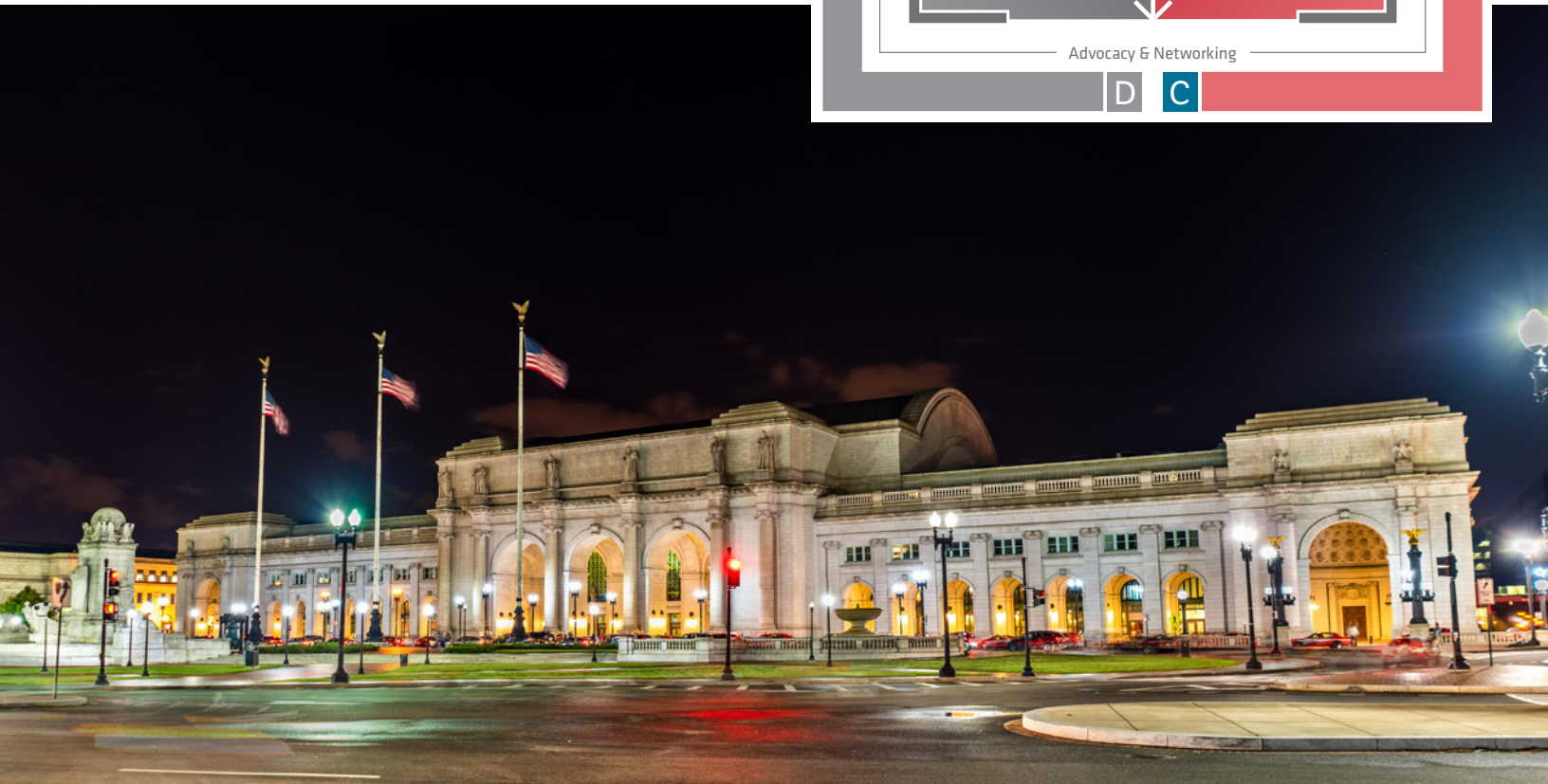
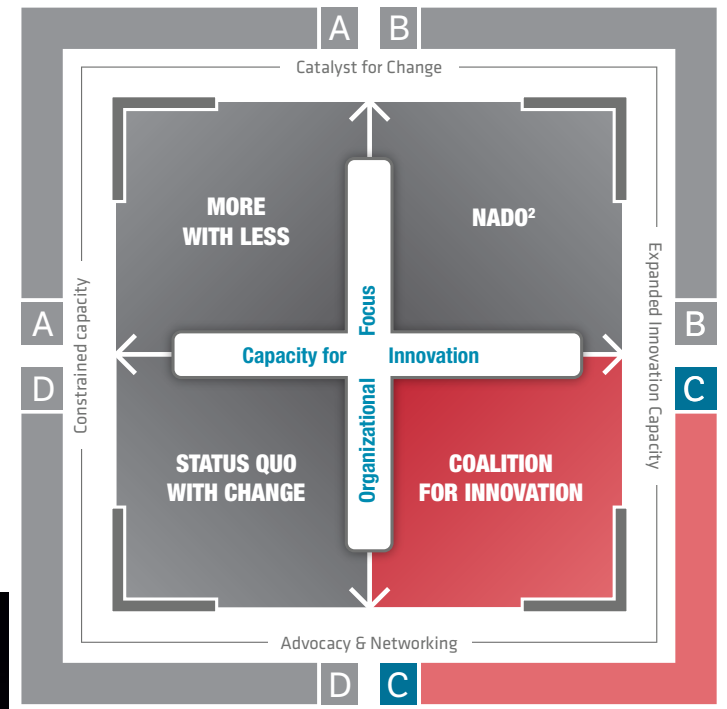
NADO² – HEADLINE NEWS

	2020	2025	2030
Organizational Focus	<i>NADO forms National Association Alliance</i>	<i>NADO builds partnership with Fortune 500 companies</i>	<i>NADO forms global partnership</i>
Funding Levels and Sources	<i>NADO launches fee for service portfolio</i>	<i>Corporations invest significant \$ in NADO</i>	<i>US Mint funds NADO</i>
Services and Membership	<i>NADO expands subject matter export capacity</i>	<i>NADO re-innovates best practice portal</i>	<i>NADO brings global best practices to U.S.</i>



3.5 SCENARIO C – COALITION FOR INNOVATION

NADO builds its strong focus on serving the economic development needs of its regional, rural and small city membership through advocacy and lobbying efforts. A diversified funding stream allows the organization to expand these strengths by stepping into new policy areas and roles and by building new alliances and partnerships with outside groups. NADO leverages its networking capacities and provides innovative peer-to-peer educational opportunities and services. NADO adopts a fee-for-service approach to support services for its membership base.





SCENARIO CHARACTERISTICS - 2030

Organizational Structure and Role / Characteristics

- Building our advocacy and networking with expanded definition of RDOs/ partnership base
- Broadband, rural healthcare, education, impacts of opioid crisis and RDD role in addressing major drivers in our region
- Bringing information and knowledge about growing trends
- Program shift to policy advocacy while preserving advocacy to keep funding
- Willingness to step into new areas and roles; building alliances/coalitions to address emerging issues
- Drives the size and capacity of staff and board, membership organization
- Embrace diversity of members; push out beyond staff work to support greater outreach to broader agencies

Funding Levels and Sources / Characteristics

- Opportunity to diversify and increase funding and resources
- New federal partners, memberships, service model for members
- Leads to greater exposure on federally supported programs

Services and Membership / Characteristics

- Services for fee to members; market analysis products, research/projects, information sharing
- Regional training for members
- Strategies to organize at State level to strengthen capacity
- Leverage NADO network for technical capacity
- Offer contracts and services through membership benefits
- Brokering enhanced relationships with other organizations (EDA as an example)



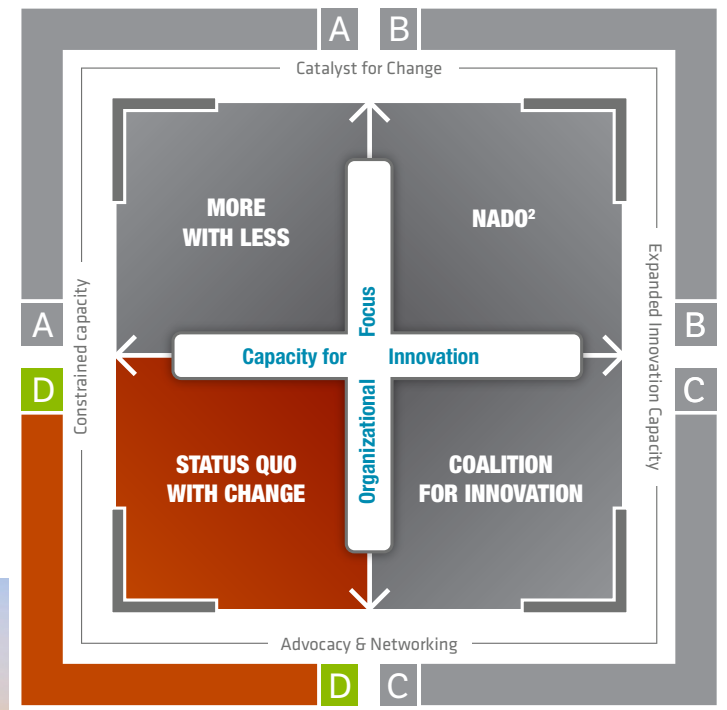
COALITION FOR INNOVATION – HEADLINE NEWS

	2020	2025	2030
Organizational Focus	NADO expands membership, partnership base	NADO 2020: Adopts New Initiative to expand membership and align with new partners	President recognizes NADO as the National Convener on Regional Economic Innovation
Funding Levels and Sources	NADO expands menu of services available to members	NADO announces menu of services available to external buyers/NextGen membership	NADO moves to K Street!
Services and Membership	NADO recognized by National Funders Coalition as Partner of the Year	NADO recognized for superior membership services	NADO doubles membership since 2020



3.6 SCENARIO D – STATUS QUO WITH CHANGE

NADO continues to focus on the immediate needs of existing membership and relies on current funding streams to support its advocacy and lobbying efforts. The organization maintains its exemplary relationship with Federal agencies and seeks to partner with other organizations to increase the effectiveness of its advocacy efforts. The restricted funding environment limits NADO's capacity to provide innovative programming that would attract new members. Staff levels remain consistent and leadership adopts a fee-for-service approach to help pay for member services.





SCENARIO CHARACTERISTICS - 2030

Organizational Focus / Characteristics

- Focus on the needs of members
- Utilizing members in working group format
- Smaller membership base because of rural focus and the rural population decline
- Maintain great federal agency relationships
- Partner with other organizations to increase advocacy impact
- Fee for service with members to assist with federal agencies and legislative visits

Funding Levels and Sources / Characteristics

- Need staff that can vision projects, broker network and execute big opportunity projects for NADO and members
- Staff that has previous federal agency experience
- Growth of Associate members because RDO member growth potential is limited
- Double budget to be effective in this scenario

Services and Memberships / Characteristics

- NADO focus on increasing capacity for members to succeed so they can reinvest in NADO
- Fee for service that includes NADO staff, plus NADO members to help members get projects/initiative started
- Maintain great Federal agency relationships
- Partner with other organizations to increase advocacy impact
- Fee for service with members to assist with federal agencies and legislative visits



STATUS QUO WITH CHANGE – HEADLINE NEWS

	2020	2025	2030
Organizational Focus	<i>NADO adopts strategic plan</i>	<i>NADO launches new associate member initiative</i>	<i>NADO launches new fee for service program</i>
Funding Levels and Sources	<i>NADO convenes national rural organization summit</i>	<i>NADO doubles associate member numbers</i>	<i>NADO hosts national summit on rural prosperity</i>
Services and Membership	<i>NADO drives the rural agenda</i>	<i>NADO membership receives record funding to advance rural communities</i>	<i>NADO President elected Chair of President's Rural Task Force</i>



4.0 EXPECTED AND PREFERRED FUTURES

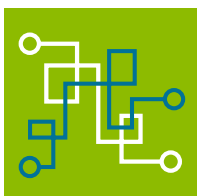
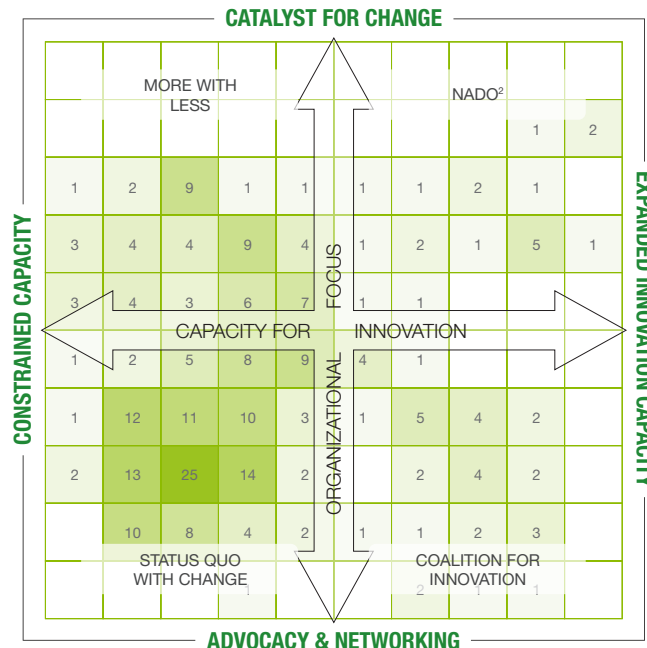
4.1 EXPECTED FUTURE: SCENARIO D – STATUS QUO WITH CHANGE

The four scenarios presented represent a range of plausible outcomes for NADO. Think Tank participants were asked a series of questions regarding their views of the preferred and expected future. The expected future is the one they deemed most likely to happen if there is no change in the current trajectory. Workshop participants indicated that Scenario D – Status Quo with Change - is the scenario they believed most represented the current direction of the organization.



NADO SCENARIO PLANNING THINK TANK

EXPECTED FUTURE – 2030



FutureInsight

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS:

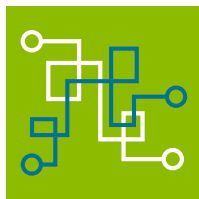
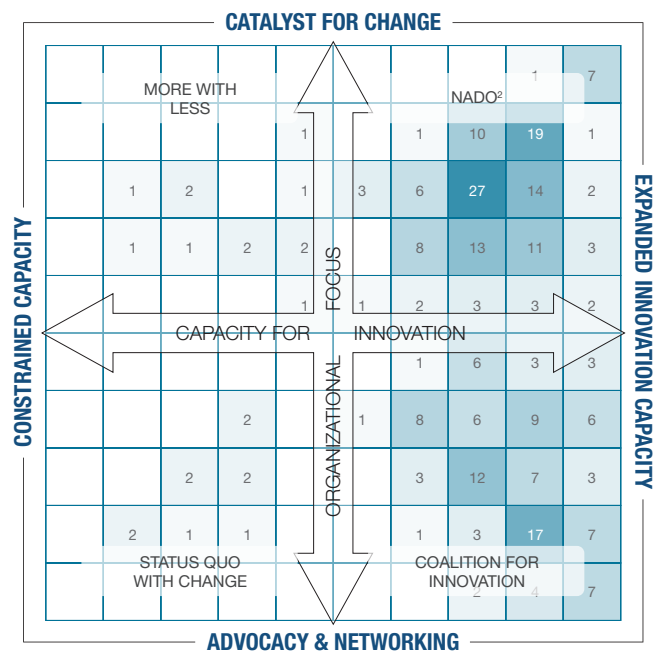
- The relatively high concentration of color in Scenario D, Status Quo with Change, indicates a strong alignment of views with respect to where the organization is headed.
- Significant changes in NADO's current planning will be needed to move in a different trajectory.

4.2 PREFERRED FUTURE: SCENARIO B – NADO²

While each of the scenarios were viewed as plausible, Think Tank participants expressed a preference for one of the presented outcomes, Scenario B, “NADO²”. Considerable discussion occurred about the bifurcated nature of the heat map results, and emphasis was made that movement from Scenario D to B would need to evolve through Scenario C to be sure to not lose NADO’s traditional strengths in advocacy and networking capacities. With this progression, there was agreement by those in the lower right quadrant to move upwards if the advocacy role was kept and the vertical scale was considered additive, not in replacement.



NADO SCENARIO PLANNING THINK TANK
EXPECTED FUTURE – 2030



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FUTURE IMPLICATIONS:

- The heavy concentration of color responses in Scenario B indicates significant alignment among stakeholders.
- The movement on the part of some stakeholders from Scenario C to B as a preferred future indicates a willingness on the part of NADO stakeholders to listen and to collaborate on the production of a successful strategic plan.



5.0 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

5.1 STRATEGIC PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT

With the Preferred Future scenario of “NADO²” as a backdrop, Think Tank participants were asked to collectively develop strategic priorities. These strategic priorities are what NADO needs to address as it moves from its “Expected Future” (one that would effectuate if no change happens within the network) to its “Preferred Future.”

In small groups, participants developed strategic priorities and each group reported its top priorities. Once all groups had a chance to report, the participants as a whole discussed the need to add or merge some priorities.

The six NADO Strategic Priorities developed by the Think Tank Participants are:

1. Create New Partnerships
2. Membership Base
3. Staff and Organization Capacity
4. Expanding Foundation Dollars
5. Advocacy and Networking
6. Institutional Innovation

NADO's aligned vision of the Preferred Future will guide the organization's strategic priority development as it builds the foundation for the strategic plan.



5.2 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES - BIG IDEAS

Participants self-selected into groups that would discuss big ideas relating to each of the six strategic priorities. The big ideas developed by the groups are outlined below.

5.2.1 CREATE NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Membership

- Tribal partnerships (also external) for work and as members
- Counties, municipalities, etc.
- Develop larger associate member base and how to retain them

External

- Philanthropy – Invite to participate in NADO activities
- Look at and shop ideas around to foundations instead of responding to RFPs
- Look at missions of specific foundations and where there is overlap
- How does philanthropy affect civic engagement?
- Regional foundations, RDOs, National NADO to National Foundations
- National rural cooperatives and others, trade associations
- Help organizations that don't have the capacity to help with rural development
- Academic institutions – EDA University Centers

Programs

- Work more with aging programs, specifically in advocacy
 - Inventory of existing partners/Inventory of potential partners
 - Partnerships on specific topic areas and then ID key partners advancing and issue (food, water, health, education, housing)
-



5.2.2 MEMBERSHIP BASE

Create value proposition to increase membership base

- Market the value proposition

Actively reach out to new board members and/or board chair when leadership changes occur

Better differentiation between NADO and other organizations

Review of Association membership benefits vs. individual memberships

- Reduce the number of organizations that are taking advantage of association membership
-

5.2.3 STAFF AND ORGANIZATION CAPACITY

Internal skills assessment of current NADO staff and our members

Service inventory

Relationships inventory

Steps to take place as they relate to staff:

- Staff needs to reflect on what their needs are
 - Strategic locations of staff
-

Hard to offer assistance to other regions and that's why some join NADO



5.2.4 EXPANDING FOUNDATION DOLLARS

Relaunch Foundation – to also become a development branch for NADO membership

Discover what membership wants and needs

Determine what product NADO provides and how to market it

Possible Product:

- Healthcare
 - Housing
 - Workforce
-

Marketing tools to use at NADO level; and our local level

Develop foundation products for membership: market and offer to outside funding groups as well – this could be assisted by regions

Regions assist Foundation in caucus meeting to establish priorities for development

Include international network or expansion



5.2.5 ADVOCACY / NETWORKING

Good reputation/foundation in key issues at National level agencies and elected officials: transportation, rural America

Market easy access for members to suggest trends and sections to advocate for to agencies

Communication to members/recap agency visits; advocacy

- Distribute notes from caucus meeting
 - Have monthly phone calls with members to solicit concerns and information regarding each agency (FEMA, USDA, etc.) – they need to be speakers at trainings in addition to NADO news
 - We are not just EDA agency supporters; what about others?
 - All the outreach to members sent by Laurie is great. Would love to see stats/results
-

Need to figure out how to make NADO members benefit MORE than non-members

Need more visibility of NADO outside our membership – we should be inviting NADO members to present at IEDC, NAEC, etc.

How to be part of policy decisions

5.2.6 INSTITUTIONAL INNOVATION

Have a ‘Innovator’ as a keynote at each conference

Hire a Chief Innovation Officer at NADO

Convene innovator staff from other like-minded groups to brainstorm

Change mission statement and all marketing materials and insert ‘innovation’ into all things

Offer our regions as laboratories for research. Our skills then complement the missions of funders

Re-brand current NADO Innovation Awards to things that are really innovation

Recognition of outside Innovation agents by offering an Awards Program “Best Practices”

Staff reaches out to innovators – Google, etc.

5.3 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES - PRIORITIZATION

Once the strategic priorities ‘big ideas’ had been shared, Think Tank participants were asked to prioritize each strategic priority over the next five years. In a hypothetical exercise, each participant was given ten dots worth \$250,000 each and asked to assign two to each year. The goal of this exercise is to understand what Think Tank participants viewed as immediate priorities for NADO as it moves towards its Preferred Future of ‘NADO².’



Pillars	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Create New Partnerships	24	17	22	22	11	96
Membership Base	16	8	7	7	3	41
Staff and Organizational Capacity	28	19	16	13	8	84
Expanding Foundation Dollars	10	15	10	8	8	51
Advocacy / Networking	11	13	9	17	13	63
Institutional Innovation	14	21	20	27	29	111

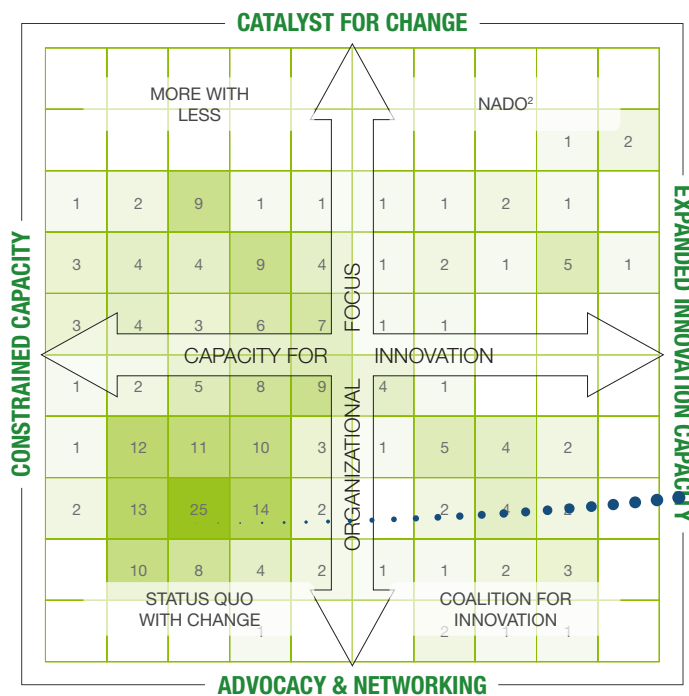


6.0 NEXT STEPS – GETTING TO THE PREFERRED FUTURE

The Think Tank participants discussed the ramifications and implications of failing to achieve the preferred future. There was strong alignment among participants that ‘NADO²’ represented the preferred future scenario, with only one participant voicing that was not a realistic trajectory.

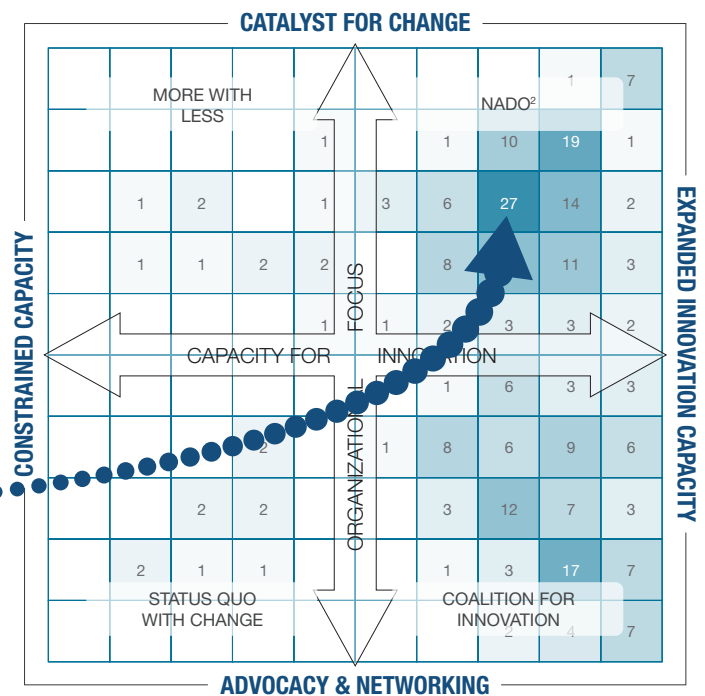
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EXPECTED FUTURE – 2030



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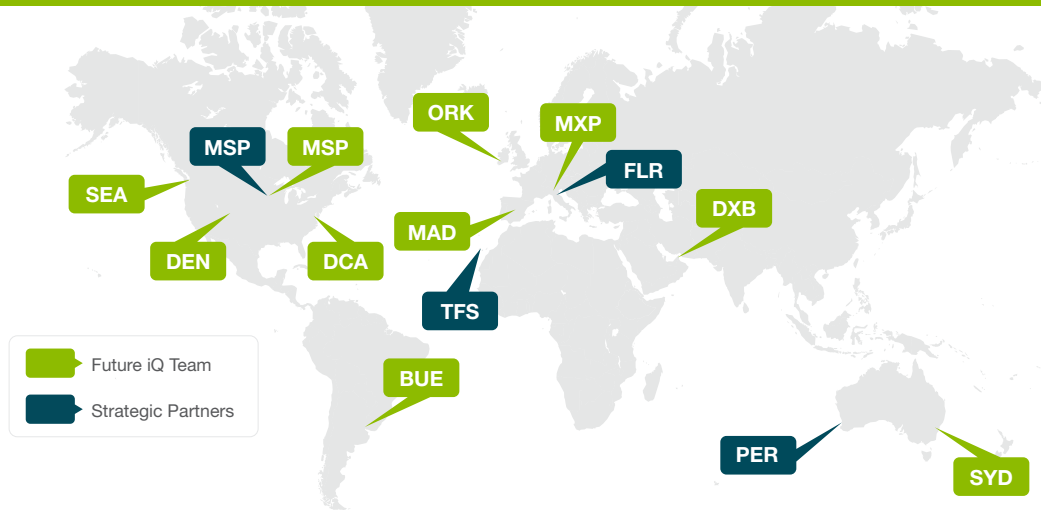
The preferred future ‘NADO²’ outlines the basis of a shared vision for NADO. In addition, it gives an indication of the focus areas of action that will be needed for this vision become a reality. Think Tank participants discussed what they believed the next steps should be, and how they could move forward through the development and prioritization of strategic priorities and sourcing of big ideas.

Because of the long-term nature of the Scenario Planning methodology, stakeholders often see the ‘distant future vision (2030)’ as unattainable and unrealistic. However, this underestimates the progress that can be made of the intervening years, and the cumulative positive impacts of change. The scenario framework also can help guide additional actions to inform the future, especially in the importance of branding, membership services, changes in the organizational model, partner coordination, and staff capacity.

NADO has invaluable staff members, committed board members and impressive service capabilities. The challenge will be to optimize the use of these resources, by aligning the organization's efforts to the stated preferred future.

This report lays the foundation for creating a progressive organizational strategic plan. The next phase will include extensive engagement with membership to obtain feedback on the Think Tank findings and to encourage input on the plan. The preferred future “NADO²” outlines the basis of a shared vision for organizational direction. The scenario framework helps identify organizational priorities and focus on areas of action that will help this vision become a reality.





7.0 ABOUT FUTURE IQ

Future iQ specializes in applying innovative tools and approaches to assist organizations, regions and industries shape their economic and community futures. With over a decade of business experience, the company has grown to have a global clientele spanning three continents.

To learn more about Future iQ, and our recent projects visit www.future-iq.com or by email at info@future-iq.com

NADO SCENARIO-BASED WORKSHOP AND THINK TANK REPORT PREPARED BY:



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As CEO of Future iQ, David specializes in creating future planning approaches for the use in regional, community and organizational settings. David has worked in the field of organizational and regional economic and community planning for over 20 years. His work in community and economic development has earned his work international, national and state awards.



HEATHER BRANIGIN, VICE-PRESIDENT, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Heather has worked in the fields of Development and Education for over 20 years. She has extensive experience in local government and growing small business and organizations, and is Past President and current Advisory Council Member of the United Nations Association of Minnesota. Heather researched and co-produced Future iQ's publications *The Next Industrial Revolution* and *The Future of Food*.



8.0 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS (NADO)

Founded in 1967, the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) provides advocacy, education, research, and training for regional development organizations in the United States. The association and its members promote regional strategies, partnerships, and solutions to strengthen the economic competitiveness and quality of life across America's local communities. The NADO Research Foundation is the 501(c)(3) nonprofit affiliate of NADO that provides professional development training, research and peer networking services. Future iQ has been engaged to provide strategic visioning and planning guidance that will serve to strengthen and build existing nationwide capacity of the organization as well as provide a roadmap to new opportunities for growth in the future. The new Strategic Plan will aim to drive organization-wide consensus on collaborative strategic initiatives that will guide decision-making for NADO and the NADO Research Foundation for the next five years.

For more information on the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) please contact:



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9.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Future iQ would like to thank NADO staff Joe McKinney, NADO's Executive Director, and Laurie Thompson, Deputy Executive Director, Vicki Glass, Brett Schwartz, and Josh Shumaker for the significant time and effort put into the planning and execution of this Think Tank. Future iQ would also like to thank workshop participants who dedicated a full day and a half to have a sincere and transparent conversation about the future of NADO. We sincerely appreciate your contributions and look forward to the continuation of a successful project.

