The Bermuda Community Foundation (the “foundation”) introduced Vital Signs® as an important step in identifying resident’s priorities related to their quality of life in Bermuda and the issues most important to them. The Vital Signs® programme has become a standard of excellence among community foundations around the world. It provides a methodology that evaluates community vitality and wellbeing and plays an important role in informing the allocation of resources. The reporting and prioritisation process is tailor-made to suit each jurisdiction’s needs.

In Bermuda, we conducted research on the community’s priorities, determined standardised outcomes based on that information and then sought further input from field experts in order to prioritise funding needs. This last step is carried out through convenings, known as “Vital Conversations”.

In Bermuda, we conducted research on the community’s priorities, determined standardised outcomes based on that information and then sought further input from field experts in order to prioritise funding needs. This last step is carried out through convenings, known as “Vital Conversations”.

The foundation is hosting the Vital Conversation Series to further refine the valuable information gathered from the community. In this phase, local stakeholders convene to access public opinion, local, and international data for each of the Vital Signs® areas and prioritize the top outcomes that will guide the foundation’s funding strategy.

THE FINDINGS

The 2017 Bermuda Vital Signs Report revealed that Bermuda’s performance on factors related to the economy and work were areas of concern for many residents. Indeed, residents generally perceived the Island’s performance as only fair in this regard. With respect to factors assessed in Bermuda’s quality of life, the perceived cost of living appeared to be the most problematic area. This was evidenced by the rate of inflation, as well as perceptions of unchanged household well-being and conditions for making a large purchase. Nearly two-thirds of residents reported unchanged conditions in their own household economic wellbeing over the past year (62%). That said, two in ten residents had experienced improvement (19%), while the same proportion reported that their economic well-being was worse than it was a year ago. Taking into consideration the impact of inflation on the purchasing power of the dollar, it was no surprise that the level of stress regarding household financial debt increased. At the time of the Vital Signs report, the Bermuda Debt Stress Index was at 33 points, up 13 points compared to a low point observed in 1999.

The Vital Signs Report also revealed that the employment situation on the Island was a source of concern for residents. The job market (total filled jobs) had declined for a seventh consecutive year, most notably within the public administration sector. The job market grew by half of one per cent in 2016, the first annual increase in eight years.
Residents report unchanged conditions in their own household economic wellbeing over the past year. Residents believe that conditions for making a major purchase have not changed compared with last year. Residents who are employed feel their employer has a high level of commitment to them as employer.

Nevertheless, the percentage of households in the lowest income band ($1 - $36,000) increased 4 percentage points during the 2010 to 2016 period while the highest income band ($144,000 and over) decreased by 4 percentage points over the same period. Interestingly, the Consumer Confidence Index had risen over the past four years, which suggested that positive opinions were gaining strength. Although residents were optimistic about the current and future state of the Island’s economy, they were less confident in their household well-being.

On July 20, 2018 the fourth in the series of Vital Conversations was convened with employment, cost of living and economy experts to examine the public opinion data from the Vital Signs® Report as well as relevant local and international data. The Bermuda Community Foundation selected a list of outcomes and indicators for the group to examine and prioritise. The result of this collaborative prioritisation effort yielded the following key outcomes and indicators that the foundation, and potentially other funders, can use to guide its funding decisions through 2021.
VITAL CONVERSATIONS
VITAL CONVERSATIONS PRIORITISED OUTCOMES & INDICATORS

**EMPLOYMENT**

High quality employment, training and education within a healthy local economy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improved quality and availability of training that fits with the needs of employers</th>
<th>Improved recruitment of people with specific needs by businesses and institutions</th>
<th>Improved satisfaction and enjoyment of employment, training and education</th>
<th>Increase in the number of small and local businesses</th>
<th>Increase in the Bermuda job supply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Breadth of training opportunities available (eg. vocational instruction and interviewing skills, job-related technical skills, and emotional intelligence and soft skills)</td>
<td>- Number of businesses and institutions recruiting people with specific needs (eg. long-term unemployed, vulnerable young people, ex-offenders, people with a disability)</td>
<td>- Employee absence rate</td>
<td>- Number of small and local businesses facilitated (eg. through provision of office space, support)</td>
<td>- Increase in the Bermuda job supply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Number of apprenticeships and internships that convert into full-time jobs</td>
<td>- Number of positions created for people with specific needs</td>
<td>- National survey measuring employee satisfaction</td>
<td>- Number of permanent and temporary suspensions or expulsions</td>
<td>- Number of jobs created</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Number of job vacancies because of skills shortages</td>
<td>- Number of training opportunities available</td>
<td>- School absence rate</td>
<td>- Number of companies/start-ups created</td>
<td>- Number of jobs sustained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Unemployment and long-term unemployment rates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Public policy and expenditure that supports good quality employment, training and education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improved government investment, expenditure and procurement</th>
<th>Improved incentives to employment</th>
<th>Improvements in policy and legislation</th>
<th>Improved attitude and motivation to work</th>
<th>Improved IT skills</th>
<th>More people achieve relevant vocational qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Funding for public programmes/schemes that promote employability</td>
<td>- Availability and use of back to work programmes</td>
<td>- Changes in policy and legislation (eg. promoting long term stable employment)</td>
<td>- Scores on measures of meaningful participation in school</td>
<td>- Number of IT qualifications achieved</td>
<td>- Number of vocational qualifications achieved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Government expenditure on improving access to and quality of education</td>
<td>- Government support for flexible job schedules and for work-life balance</td>
<td>- Changes to regulation</td>
<td>- Score on measures of attitudes towards work</td>
<td>- Number of people able to use common IT software packages and the Internet</td>
<td>- Score achieved on vocational qualifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Government investment in employment, training and education</td>
<td>- Levels of minimum wage that incentivise people to start working</td>
<td>- Level of relevant parliamentary activity (eg. white papers published, committees formed, consultations or reviews conducted, citations made)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use of procurement practices and public sector contracts designed to improve social outcomes (eg. contracts that enable social enterprises and smaller SMEs to bid, outcomes-aligned contracts)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We are pleased to make more detailed outcome and indicators reporting available to BCF fund holders. Special terms and conditions apply. Contact info@bcf.bm
### Increased availability of, and incentives for, employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disadvantaged groups have increased access to relevant employment opportunities</th>
<th>Increased availability of suitable employment opportunities</th>
<th>Increased availability of, and incentives for, employment</th>
<th>Jobseekers have improved functional skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Number of disadvantaged groups (eg. young people, disabled people, etc.) in employment</td>
<td>• Number of employment opportunities by parish</td>
<td>• Number of job vacancies</td>
<td>• Number of jobseekers achieving functional skills qualification in literacy or equivalent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Jobseekers have improved interpersonal skills

| • Number of jobseekers with improved relationship building skills | • Number of jobseekers with improved verbal and non-verbal communication skills |

### Jobseekers have improved motivation, attitudes and behaviours

| • Number of jobseekers that demonstrate an improvement in reliable behaviours | • Number of jobseekers with an improved attitude to work |

### Jobseekers have improved skills for finding work

| • Number of jobseekers that improve the presentation of their skills to employers (i.e. through resume/CV, application and interview) |

### Jobseekers have increased incentives to seek employment

| • Number of jobseekers who would be better off in work and/or have increased disposable income |

### Strong corporate and institutional governance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improved corporate and institutional governance</th>
<th>Increase in equal employment, training and education practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Corporate giving</td>
<td>• Employee benefits: statutory sick leave/maternity leave/paternity leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives</td>
<td>• Fair and non-discriminatory pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Employee ownership</td>
<td>• Fair minimum standard and living wages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Evidence of quality and diversity on Boards</td>
<td>• Number of companies with recognized “Equal Employment” standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Evidence of transparency</td>
<td>• Percentage of ethnic groups in education or training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implementation of work-life balance programmes</td>
<td>• Percentage of ethnic groups in employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opportunities for collective bargaining and worker’s representation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHAT THE EXPERTS SAID

The Vital Conversation on Economy and Work was divided into two sessions focusing on Cost of Living and Employment. The majority of participants attended both topical sessions. The conversations benefited greatly from the diversity of representatives including business, government and non-profit sectors. One participant stated that "it was really important to hear inter-disciplinary and cross organizational perspectives on the employment outcomes."

With the diversity of sectoral perspective, there was still a healthy majority (68.42%) expressing confidence that the prioritised outcomes would lead to improved quality of life for Bermuda residents. Participants stressed that success was predicated on shared goals and sustained cooperative efforts. One participant stated, "many of the elements have to occur in collaboration - and stakeholders have to remain committed in the long-term."

Ensuring a high level of training and education to prepare Bermudians for the workforce is critical to improve quality of life for all Bermudians
- Nonprofit sector member

outcomes at an earlier age. From this perspective, public policy has a large role to play in supporting the development of blended learning institutions whether that be technical training centres or social enterprises that enable 'earn and learn' pathways from education to employment."

Participants were mindful of the direct correlation between employment and education, with many expressing the desire to find ways to improve student achievement. For example, one participant stated, "Ensuring a high level of training and education to prepare Bermudians for the workforce is critical to improve quality of life for all Bermudians."

Concurrently, another participant predicated their level of confidence, in the effectiveness of the prioritised outcomes, on improvements in the education system and student achievement. This participant stated, "My only concern, (which negates my ability to select ‘extremely confident’), is the end result of ‘improved academic success’ within the Employment session. Without the improved performance of our students, we will not be able to achieve or show positive growth in all of the other measurables…as one must be employable, regardless of career path chosen."

Another participant felt that the education system needed to provide more diverse avenues for student success, thus creating more opportunities for graduates to participate in the economy. "Our population should have the right skill set and ability to access service jobs. Education is a barrier to access. Vocational preparation is important and could have been higher [in outcome priorities] so that everyone can participate in the economy. We have a way to go in terms of offering more vocational opportunities like apprenticeships and intern placements. The essential economy is staffed with the people who hold vocational training and they are essential to our way of life."

In a related comment, another participant added that the educational system should ensure that all students, regardless of intended profession, graduate with a solid academic foundation but that there also needed to be more of a focus on technology. "Students need to be able to read and write when they graduate. Even essential service providers need these skills and everyone has to be able to use technology. Even service providers now
shift in the willingness to change the way Bermuda is led and managed, across the community, political and business [spheres].” Still others expressed that the main issue was economic inequality, as evidenced in the following statements: “Equality remains at the top because historical oppression of black Bermudians is the underlying issue. Equal access to education and opportunities are the problem” and “The elephant in the room that most of our social issues are related to is the extreme income gap, and those people are angry, disconnected, and disenfranchised…until we address that gap, we will continue to see what we see [economic inequality].”

In terms of the impact of the sessions on the participants, everyone reported that their understanding of the topics and outcomes was expanded. This was evidenced in many statements including: “Talking with representatives in their select fields of expertise was helpful in gaining insight. For me, an understanding of the economical climate as seen by those in finance or as economists, was particularly helpful. Looking at and discussing the specific indicators of success outlined the potential impact these outcomes could have on the island” and “I especially appreciated the diversity of voices in the room and the willingness of participants to take on broad divergent perspectives as we sought to assess what is best for Bermuda overall.”

Some participants were also pleased with the group examination of the outcomes and indicators, “it was interesting to see the range of metrics used to measure and evaluate the factors which enabled individuals to participate in the workplace.”

Participants also reported that the sessions had an impact on the goals and outcomes of their respective organisations. For example, one participant from the non-profit sector stated, “Refining our indicators for success and what programs/services are prioritized will be examined as a result of this think tank. The model, and means of facilitating these exercises, was greatly appreciated by my organisation and I was grateful to have had a seat at the table.”

Similarly, other participants stated that, “it [the conversation] challenged me to consider what we are doing as an organisation and whether we could be doing far more” and “There are...”
significant training opportunities in the field of ageing and long term care. I will now be mindful to consider the Vital Sign priorities as we work with relevant stakeholders that deliver training.*

The desired outcome of value-added conversation was accomplished in the sessions as expressed by this statement, “Yes, I realised that I needed to expand my view of what outcomes and factors support and promote someone being a productive member of society and evaluate my proposed programming against a wider range of factors.” Among those that did not believe that the sessions would impact their organisations, some expressed that “their outcomes were already aligned” and that the information shared would “figure into strategic and business planning for the coming years.”

Overall, many participants subscribed to the notion that the quality of life would improve for Bermuda residents by safeguarding the economy, creating employment opportunities, and controlling, if not lowering, the cost of living for Bermuda residents. There was also the sentiment that these items were also imperative to broader efforts to facilitate economic equality on the island. One participant expressed that, “income equality would improve the lives of not only individuals, but the overall community, with less dependency on financial assistance, and also the empowerment of the historically disenfranchised. Policy and legislative changes that support financial inclusion, and a living wage would reduce the income gap and provide access to opportunities that are not currently available.”

WHO NEEDED TO BE IN THE ROOM

Representatives of key government entities, policy influencers and makers, nonprofits, vendors and service providers in the relevant field were invited to participate in the convening. They were also encouraged to nominate additional participants we may not have considered. The purpose was to ensure that the convening outcome would reflect input from those with the greatest experience and knowledge of the topic under review. This would include senior civil servants, nonprofit executives, industry leaders and community experts in their respective fields. At the convening, participants were asked to step aside from their individual affiliations and participate in the discussions as policy influencers, programme and service providers, researchers and other professionals for the benefit of Bermuda.
WHO WAS THERE – EMPLOYMENT SESSION

Barbara Shaughnessy Chair
Calvin White Visitor Industry Partnership Chairman
Donna Daniels Committee Representative My Future Bermuda Executive Director
Erica Smith Bermuda Economic Development Corporation Executive Director
Jennifer Mahoney The Eliza Doolittle Society Executive Director
Judy Teart Government of Bermuda - Workforce Development Acting Director / Vocational Officer
Kelly Hunt Coalition for the Protection of Children Executive Director
Kendaree Burgess Bermuda Chamber of Commerce Executive Director
Kerry Judd BermudaFirst Executive Director
Llewellyn Trott Impact Mentoring Academy Programme Representative
Margot Shane Youth Employment Initiative Director
Marissa Stones Department of ICT & Policy Innovation (E-Commerce) Permanent Secretary
Nathan Kowalski Anchor Investment Management Ltd. Chief Financial Officer
Robert Stubbs, CFA G-Mass Head of Research
Rochelle Simons Bermuda Housing Trust Trustee
Sharon Smith Bermuda Housing Trust Office Administrator
Sheelagh Cooper Habitat for Humanity Chair
Tawana Flood Bermuda College Director of Professional and Career Education (PACE)
Trace White Impact Mentoring Academy Director of Development

*Regrets = Confirmed but not in attendance

The Vial Signs Convenings are facilitated with the support of the BCF Vital Signs team: Research Coordinator, Dr. Tamara Gathright Fritz of Strategic Evaluation Consulting; BCF Managing Director, Dr. Myra Virgil; BCF Programme Associate, Michelle Grant; and BCF Intern Raequan Rochester.

AN EVOLVING PROCESS

We strive to inform these convenings with high-level field and content area expertise. We ask participants to use their knowledge to inform this work at a national level. We appreciate the participation of the attendees of this convening. Also considered for participation, and therefore, potential community resources on this issue are:

COST OF LIVING
Banking and Financial Services reps
Bermuda Government - Home Affairs
BELCO
Bermuda Industrial Union
Bermuda Housing Corporation
Bermuda Public Services Union
Caribcash or similar
Centre for Justice
Coalition for Protection of Children
Consumer Affairs and Rent Commission
Eliza Doolittle Society (The)
Ministry/Department of Energy
Financial Assistance - Bermuda Government
Habitat for Humanity
Legal Aid Office
Meals on Wheels
Pension Commission
Price Control Commission
Rent Increases Advisory Panel
Salvation Army
Social Insurance Department – Bermuda
Government
Western Union or other financial services company

EMPLOYMENT
Banking and Financial Services representatives
Bermuda Business Development Agency
Bermuda Career Centre
Bermuda College
Bermuda College (PACE)
Bermuda Economic Development Corp.
Department of Corrections representatives
Education and Workforce Development
Financial Assistance – Bermuda Government
Department of Immigration
Ministry of Public Works
National Training Board
Technology Leadership Forum
Uptown Market Association
Workforce Development (Bermuda Government)

THE ECONOMY
Adult Education School
Age Concern (Bermuda)
Association of Bermuda International Companies (The)
Atlantic Institute for Policy Research
Banks and Financial Services Institutions
Bermuda Government - Ministry of Finance
Bermuda Chamber of Commerce

THE BERMUDA VITAL SIGNS® ARE ALIGNED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

PREVENTED SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PROTECTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL