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## Who's Giving Non-Profits "Safety Net" Money While Economy Tanks *Report Reveals Bay Area Funders' Response in Economic Downturn*

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The Safety Net Funders Network has released a report, "Strengthening the Safety Net: Bay Area Philanthropy's Response and Early Lessons." The report details the recession's impact on families and individuals and offers strategies for collaboration and funding.

The report says the Bay Area will lose another 20,000 jobs this year, spiking unemployment to 10.5 percent, while housing foreclosures increase. The demand for safety net services continues to intensify, calling funders to action.

"Given the tumultuous economy, organizations are regrouping and rethinking how to continue mission-related services. This report identifies important trends and strategies so that funders can make the most of scarce resources," said **Denise Martin, Program Director, Public Policy, Advocacy, and Community Health at [The San Francisco Foundation](#)**. The full report is available at [www.sff.org/safetynetreport](http://www.sff.org/safetynetreport).

The report highlights a number of Bay Area grant making trends:

- Safety net grant making has increased in response to the recession.
- This reflects a shift in priorities in independent, community, and corporate foundations whose grant making budgets have overall decreased.
- \$170 million was granted to 1,500 safety net nonprofits from 2008 through November 2009. Safety net nonprofits are defined as providing human services, housing and shelter, agriculture and food, and mental health and crisis services.
- Grants mostly ranged from \$25,000 to \$50,000, with some \$100,000 grants, and a few of more than \$1 million.
- Community foundations granted the largest proportion of safety net grants in California, distinguishing the state from national trends, where independent foundations played a larger role.
- Of the safety net nonprofits, housing and shelter received the most funds, and mental health services and information and referral received the least.
- Funders mostly provided project funding and restricted support. Core operating support or grants that are given to organizations for general support was the second most common category of funding.

The Walter and Elise Haas Fund, the Y & H Soda Fund, the United Way of the Bay Area, and [The San Francisco Foundation](#) launched the Safety Net Funders Network in September 2009. Many other foundations participate in the network.

