Training Solutions

An international perspective on training provision

for the Community and Voluntary Sector

A NICVA Research Unit report for

The Wheel

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Contents

About This Report

This brief report attempts to capture the breadth and scale of training that is provided for the community and voluntary sector across the world. This analysis of training provision is by no means exhaustive; rather, it is a snapshot of the different structures and methods by which the training is offered to the sector.

1. Canada

1.1 Introduction & Context Setting

Canada's Community Services Council (CSC) has identified training as the voluntary sector's highest priority[1]. The need to prioritise training emerged from a four year programme of research, including a 1998 survey of employees and volunteers from 329 organisations in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The research found that meaningful, relevant and accessible training opportunities were limited in the community and voluntary based sector. A wide gap existed between the need for human resources training in the voluntary sector and availability of programs to strengthen both generic and specific skills and to develop management and leadership capacity. The CSC noted that organisations faced growing difficulties finding qualified people to serve as board members or senior staff. The greatest training needs were identified as being in management and in volunteer recruitment and retention.

Many existing training programs were found to be irrelevant to the needs of voluntary organisations because of prohibitive costs and they geographically inaccessibility. Many organisations had no budget or only a small budget to finance training for staff and volunteers and lacked the resources or personnel to cover staff who attended training.

There was a serious lack of trainers able to provide the training specifically required by the voluntarily and community based sector. Similar problems to those noted in the Newfoundland and Labrador study were to be found across Canada.

This research recommended the establishment of resource centres with a mandate to provide training relevant to the needs of the voluntary sector (for example in management and leadership of voluntary organisations). It was recommended that these centres should provide training at minimal cost and deliver training in a workshop format spread over one to two days. Linkages between the resource centres and both the Community Services Council Volunteer Centre and the *envision.ca* virtual resource were also recommended. Finally it was recommended that training opportunities should be published in an on-line inventory, with sufficient resources to update information on an ongoing basis.

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[1] Training Opportunities for the Community and voluntary Based sector in Newfoundland and Labrador.

1.2 Snapshot Of Canadian Training Provision and Initiatives

1.2.1 The Capacity Joint Table

The Capacity Joint Table is one of seven "joint tables" established between the Canadian Government and the voluntary sector under the Voluntary Sector Initiative (VSI). The Capacity Joint Table works on three main capacity issues: Human Resources (i.e., knowledge and skills), Research and Information Sharing, and Policy Participation.

An initiative of the Capacity Joint Table, *Developing Human Resources in the Voluntary Sector* (HRVS) provides practical human resources tools and information related to paid employees in the sector. The HRVS Web site includes information on human resources management issues, strategies, policies and procedures and offers ideas for enhancing capacity to manage human resources in small organizations. The *National Learning Initiative for the Voluntary Sector* examines the skills and competencies that sector leaders require and the means to attain them. Resources include *A National Skills and Learning Framework for the Voluntary Sector* and *What Do Voluntary Sector Leaders Do?* [2]

1.2.2. Community Services Council Volunteer Centres

The Community Services Council's Volunteer Centres across Canada offer workshops on recruiting, managing and retaining volunteers. The Community Services Council has also established partnerships for delivering its *Making the Most of Volunteer Resources* program.

1.2.3 Canadian Volunteer Centre Training Network (CVCTN)

The Canadian Volunteer Centre Training Network is a network of facilitators, trainers and consultants affiliated with Volunteer Centres who offer their expertise, experience and services in communities across the country. These trainers receive tools, guidance and, in some cases, training from Volunteer Canada and its partners on nationally developed training resources. Volunteer Canada produces training curricula and Volunteer Centres across the country deliver training sessions, workshops and offer consultation services[3]

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[2] http://www.vsi-isbc.ca/eng/about/goals.cfm
[3] http://www.volunteer.ca/volcan/eng/content/vol-centres/training.php?display=4,0

1.2.4 Charity Village

Charity Village is a website for Canada's non-profit sector with 3,000 pages of news, jobs, training information and resources for executives, staffers, donors, and volunteers. It is a signpost for the sector and lists conferences, seminars, courses and upcoming events which are of interest to the community and voluntary sector.

1.2.5 Academic Programmes

There are a significant number of full time, part time and short courses offered in relevant areas by university and colleges across the Canada. For example:

- The College of the North Atlantic offers courses on managing volunteers but only within the context of fundraising. The average fees for these courses ranges from $125.00 to $250.00 with some courses taking place over a period of 45 hours.
- The British Columbia Institute of Technology, Burnaby offers an Associate Certificate in *Fundraising Management.* This course is held in the evenings and cost $256.00.
- The Simon Fraser University at Harbour Centre in Vancouver offers a course in *Non-Profit Sector Management* (Certificate Program). This course is full time and there is a $395 fee.
- The University of Victoria runs a *Cultural Resource Management Programme* (Diploma Programme and Non-Credit Courses). This course can be completed on campus, off campus and through distance learning. Co-operative program, condensed courses and workshops are also offered in this area. Duration of course and costs vary.
- St. May's University and the Atlantic CED Institute, Halifax also offer a Diploma in *Community and Economic Development* which consists of five modules which last one evening and two full days a week. The overall cost is $2,000.
- St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish offers a skill shop programme. This skill shop programme considers community based development tools, techniques and processes. The cost of this programme varies[4].

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[4] http://www.uc411.com/searchv2/search.asp

1.2.6 Leadership Programmes

Leadership building programmes are offered through post secondary institutions across Canada. For example in the Newfoundland and Labrador province the Memorial University of Newfoundland offers workshops on board development relevant to the sector, which includes special events planning and proposal development. Duration of courses range between 15 and 45 hours and can cost up to $250.00.

2. England

2.1 Introduction And Context Setting

In recent years there has been a growing recognition of the vital role played by the English community and voluntary sector in delivering high quality services and in contributing to civil renewal. It has also become clear that the capacity of the sector to continue to fulfill these functions in the future depends on the existence of strong and effective voluntary sector infrastructure.

A key challenge for the sector is the development of new skills, knowledge, practices and networks of support. There is evidence of significant skill gaps among some third sector organisations in the areas of leadership, ICT, management of volunteers and business support and administration[5]. These skills, experiences and knowledge can be gathered from many organisations both inside and outside the English community and voluntary sector and can be charged at a low cost.

Organisations engaged in service delivery tend to require improved skills levels, particularly in leadership, management, performance improvement, financial planning human resources and partnership working. The need is greatest for small and medium sized organisations, which struggle to invest time and money in skills development and good employment practice. These organisations need affordable, accessible and flexible forms of support and guidance. Advice on employment law and practice for trustees, managers and all staff is key – disputes and tribunals are currently a considerable drain on the sector.

2.2 Recent Reform

The structure of skills training for all sectors is changing in the UK. The Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) now funds, supports and champions the new UK-wide network of influential employer-led Sector Skills Councils.

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[5] Exploring the role of the third sector in public delivery and reform: A discussion.

The Skills for Business network comprises the SSDA and Sector Skills Councils. The SSDA is a company limited by guarantee and a non-departmental public body. The role of the SSDA is to underpin and develop Sector Skills Councils.

Sector Skills Councils are independent, UK wide organisations developed by groups of influential employers in industry or business sectors of economic or strategic significance. Sector Skills Councils are employer-led and actively involve trade unions, professional bodies and other stakeholders in the sector. S Sector Skills Councils are licensed by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, in consultation with Ministers in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, to tackle the skills and productivity needs of their sector throughout the UK[6].

Each Sector Skills Council agrees sector priorities and targets with its employers and partners to address four key goals one of which is to reduce the skills gap and shortages. A memorandum of Understanding between the UK Voluntary Sector Partner Organisations and the Sector Skills Development Agency specified strategic aims to promote skills development and good employment practices in order to support the recruitment, retention and development of staff, volunteers and trustees and board or committee members in the community and voluntary sector through new effective working relationships between Sector for Business and the UK partner organisations[7].

At present plans have been submitted to the SSDA for the Workforce Development Hub which is due to commence some time 2005. The hub's aim is to lead and facilitate action that makes it easier for community and voluntary organisations to be great places to work, be good employers and embrace a culture of learning and development. The hub has two main objectives.

1. The first objective is for community and voluntary organisations to have easy access to information and resources to support a culture of learning and development, underpinned by good management and employment practice. To delivery this the Workforce Development Hub needs to:

    •   Develop a website that signposts resource information and tool guides
    •   Commission a dedicated resource to identify, influence and signpost resources to develop leadership

[6] http://www.ssda.org.uk/ssda/default.aspx?page=1
[7] Memorandum of Understanding
http://www.ssda.org.uk/ssda/PDF/041213%20PM%20MOU%20Final%20Draft%20VS%20with %20sigs.pdf

- Work with mainstream providers of information, advice and guidance to enable them to identify and meet the needs of community and voluntary organisations.
- Work with infrastructure organisations, to identify existing best practice materials, develop Amazon and E-bay style mechanisms for web-based user feedback on materials and develop a competency framework for advisers and development officers in local infrastructure organisations.
- Update, publish and commission tools and guides to good practice, in print as well as providing downloadable documents on the website.
- Work with the Cranfield Trust and other pro bono sources to develop support on good employment practice from volunteer experts that can be delivered locally via web and telephone.
- Work with infrastructure organisations to promote and support ways to share learning and good practice, such as action learning, coaching and mentoring.
- Promote the benchmarking of human resources activity in community and voluntary organisations.
- Build on the national Charity Trainers and Personnel Networks to develop regional networks of practitioners, in collaboration with regional learning leaders.
- Work with the Learning and Skills Council and Sector Skills Councils to ensure that colleges and universities meet the needs of small and medium community and voluntary organisations.
- Work with other Hubs to develop a shared strategy for working with funders to develop a strategic approach to investing in the development of sector.

2. The second objective is that community and voluntary organisations are able to recruit and retain a skilled workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities they work in[8]. To deliver this the Workforce Development Hub intend to support community and voluntary organisations to recruit and retain a diverse workforce by:

- Promoting *Working for A Charity*, now located within the NCVO (see point 2.3.1), to deliver its courses and charity placements for potential workers and volunteers to a larger audience, building on links already developed

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[8] Summary of The Workforce Development Hub Business Plan,
http://www.voluntarysectorskills.org.uk/shared_asp_files/uploadedfiles/3803864E-8143-4077-98C3-FF7E5317937F_SummaryoftheBusinessPlan.doc

with government departments, recruitment and advice and recruitment agencies, including those focussing on graduates.

- Developing/commissioning a range of careers guidance materials and case studies for different target groups of potential workers, in consultation with recruitment agencies, Connexions and other careers guidance services.
- Promoting the sector to people at particular points on their career paths.
- Supporting community and voluntary organisations to attract and interest young people in the sector through offering well-structured placements and internships for school children and students.
- Making it easier for community and voluntary organisations to reach potential recruits
- Promoting collaboration amongst community and voluntary organisations working in the same field to develop a career path to potential recruits
- Promoting and signposting to organisations that enable people, who may face discrimination or barriers, to obtain employment e.g. Mencap, Stonewall, Women like Us, so that community and voluntary organisations find it easier to recruit a diverse workforce

2.3 Snapshot Of English Training Provision and Initiatives

2.3.1 National Council Of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)

NCVO is an umbrella body for the voluntary sector in England, with sister councils in Wales, Scotland and N. Ireland. Its role is to represent the voluntary sector and serve its diverse membership and to provide a collective voice. It has a membership of over 1,000 voluntary organisations. NCVO provides information and advice to voluntary organisations, through its Helpdesk, publications, NCVO News, events and information networks. NCVO's Helpdesk is a free telephone, email or text phone service for anyone involved in the sector, whether as a volunteer, paid worker or trustee.

2.3.2 Volunteering England

Volunteering England works to promote volunteering as a powerful force for change, both for those who volunteer and for the wider community. Their web site offers a range of resources for anyone who works with or manages volunteers as well as to those who want to volunteer. Volunteer Development Agencies provide support at a local level for individual volunteers and volunteer involving organisations. They have six core functions one of which is to promote good practice in working with volunteers to all volunteer

involving organisations. They deliver training and accreditation for potential volunteers, volunteers, volunteer managers and the volunteering infrastructure.

2.3.3 Government Initiatives

The Home Office Communities Group is responsible for policy advice on issues affecting the citizen and the community, including policy on the voluntary sector and charities. It consists of ten units including the Charities Unit, Civil Renewal Unit and the Community Cohesion Unit which work closely in the community and voluntary sector.

Although it is not an initiative directed specifically towards the community and voluntary sector, Learn Direct is a government initiative that signposts information for people interested in doing any course. Staff and volunteers in the sector use this signpost to gain information on course relevant to their sector such as management courses and courses on working in teams

2.3.4 Local Initiatives

A sample of some initiatives by English local authoirities and agencies to support the skills needs of community and voluntary organisation is as follows:

- The London Voluntary Service Council (LVSC) offers various managements and other relevant courses to the sector. For example the Chairing a Voluntary Organisations Course runs for one day and gives an introduction to the range of duties of those who chair a voluntary organisation and who wish to be efficient, innovative and comfortable in the changing demands of the voluntary sector[9]. LVSC strengthens voluntary organisations by providing services and a strong voice on policy issues that affect Londoner.
- Voluntary Action Manchester is a Council for Voluntary Service, offering advice, information and support to community and voluntary groups in Manchester. It offers training to committee members, volunteers or a worker responsible for fundraising for a group. It provides training and workshops in areas of funding, and management committee training. Courses are free for community and voluntary groups based in, or operating in, the City of Manchester. For organisations operating outside or based outside of the City of Manchester, statutory organisations or non-

[9] **http://www.actionlink.org.uk/home/actionlink_viewitem.cfm?section=courses&CourseID=614**

charitable companies' charges are £30 for half day training sessions £55 for full day training sessions.

- Hounslow Borough's Community Development and Regeneration Unit provides direct support and funding to community and voluntary organisations in the Hounslow Borough. It has a 'Voluntary Sector Training Strategy', which summarises its training support for the local voluntary sector. A Training Needs Analysis of the local voluntary sector is undertaken each year, taking in information from various sources. This information (along with other feedback) is used to run a widely publicised programme of training courses, usually consisting of five one-day courses, held at the Hounslow Civic Centre between February and March each year. The Council also publicises, administesr & distributes a 'Training Bursary' fund.

- Wandsworth Borough Council also provides support to the community and voluntary sector in its area. It produces a quarterly newsletter with the latest information and news for the voluntary sector in the area. It also provides telephone information and advice for the sector and a training room which can be hired for voluntary sector events and meetings and assists in developing partnerships and networks.

- The Council for Voluntary Services for Sedgefield Borough (CAVOS) is an organisation established by Sedgefield Borough to inform the community and voluntary groups in the borough of relevant news and information. It aims to develop the community and voluntary sector of Sedgefield, strengthen resource bases and promote the inclusion, co-ordination and capacity of the sector to enable effective regeneration and sustainability across the Borough. It can offer training opportunities, support and advice sessions and access to a large resource library.

2.3.5 Management Development Network

The Management Development Network is a network of experienced freelance management consultants and trainers based in the UK who work primarily or exclusively with voluntary organisations. MDN currently has members in England, Scotland and Wales. The Directory of its members is a resource for anyone who arranges management training for their own or other organisations, or who is involved in "buying in" management consultancy or facilitation for their organisation.

2.3.6 3rd Sector Skills

3rd Sector Skills is an independent consultancy providing practical solutions and business skills training to the community and voluntary sectors. 3rd Sector Skills specialises in project management and business planning and the things that go with them, such as computing and IT advice quality systems & time management[10]. It provides training courses on Introduction to Project Management in the Voluntary Sector, Time Management and also on training the trainer on how to deliver effective training courses.

2.3.7 Directory of Social Changes

The Directory of Social Changes (DSC) provides information and support to community and voluntary sectors worldwide. DSC runs over 300 high quality, low cost courses and training events every year throughout the UK especially for the voluntary sector. DSC holds many courses and training events at venues across the UK as well as at its Charity Centre in London. DSC runs over 70 conferences, master classes and briefings a year. Bringing together experts in their field, they are a chance to catch important updates, as well as networking opportunities.

2.3.8 Community Development Foundation

The Community Development Foundation (CDF) runs a range of one or two day courses with particular interest in community development. For example courses such as applying community development in management & professional practice with the fee of £160. Another course is the Reflecting on community development practices courses again costing £160.

2.3.9 Centre for Strategy and Communication

The Centre for Strategy and Communication currently offers non-accredited training but is currently pursuing accreditation for all its courses and has achieved ILM (Institute for Leadership and Management) accreditation for Moving into Management course. The centre runs a Managing Volunteers course which lasts one day and covers topics such as the purpose of supervision, volunteer motivation and support, supervision models,

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[10] **http://www.3rdsectorskills.com/index.html**

appraising volunteers' performance and giving and receiving feedback[11]. Costs vary from £185 to £295.

2.3.10 Action Learning for Managers

Action Learning for Managers (ALM) was a very successful partnership project that ran from September 2001 to December 2004. The project brought managers together from across the community and voluntary sector to learn with and from each other. The aim of the project was capacity building the community and voluntary sector infrastructure through action learning and skills development in the community and voluntary sector.

2.3.11 Voluntary Sector Initiative for Professional Development

Voluntary Sector Initiative for Professional Development (VSIPD) is an organisation which came into being in November 2002 with the aim of promoting and supporting Continuing Professional Development (CPD) across the community and voluntary sector in Norfolk (however it does run courses in other areas of the country).

2.3.12 Academic Programs

As is the case of Canada and Ireland universities and colleges in England provide courses which provide relevant training for the community and voluntary sector. These courses vary in length, cost and accreditation.

There are a number of short courses, for example:

- The Quality Assurance for Voluntary Organisations (Credit Bearing) courses offered by the University of Manchester. It is a 6 weeks course costing £42. This course enables the members of voluntary organisations to select, design and implement the appropriate quality assurances system for their own organisations. If completed participants gain 3HE credits towards a Continuing Education Certificate.
- The Community Development programme is offered in three different venues, namely the University Centre Hastings, New Friends Centre in Morley Street, Brighton and in Crawley College. The course lasts three years and is £700 a year. It gives an insight into the world of business and permits participants to gain an understanding of the characteristics and variety of organisations within the statutory, business, community

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[11] **http://www.the-centre.co.uk/viewcsc.do?id=100**

and voluntary sector within the UK and analyse practical approaches for communities to take when engaging with them or developing them.

- NVQ Level 3 in Management. This course focuses on communication and leadership skills. It is organised by the VSIPD (Voluntary Sector Initiative for Professional Development) and cost approximately £95.

Other courses that are available include:

- A 'Certificate in Volunteering and the Voluntary Sector' has been developed by the University of Derby. It is available online with any start date. The 30-credit module fee is currently£300, and includes a minimum of 70 hours volunteering in a voluntary or community organisation[12].

- Roehampton University offers an MSc/PGDip in Voluntary Action Management lasts 12 months full time with fees of £3,204. This course can be completed on a part time basis also.

- The University of Bristol, School of for Policy Studies also offers a MSc in Management Development and Social Responsibility which integrates concern with social values in its content and learning processes, and is intended to equip students with the knowledge, skills and awareness necessary for them to operate as reflective, competent and socially informed managers in a changing environment. It is a two year part time course.

- Warwick School of Business offers a Masters in Public Administration. It is the public and voluntary sectors equivalent to an MBA. It costs £18,000 a year full time and £6,000 part time.

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[12] volunteering@derby.ac.uk

3. New Zealand

3.1. Introduction and Context Setting

As in most other countries the community and volntary sector in New Zealand also faces training problems namely, access, length and cost of training, a lack of resources and personnel to replace staff members on training and a lack of sign posting of information on training courses and workshops. There are also barriers with volunteering. This could be as a result of limited time, uncertainly about available opportunities, limited reimbursement of expenses and burnout[13]. Training structures for the community and voluntary sector exist in New Zealand through the government, community and voluntary organisations themselves, training centres and academic institutions.

The Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector, part of Ministry of Social Development has an integral relationship with the community and voluntary sector. The office was established to help promote strong and vibrant communities, social inclusion and cohesion. It provides a central policy contact point in the government for community and voluntary organisations and provides advice on how to promote the role of the community and voluntary sector.

A key role for the Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector (OCVS) is supporting sector-led initiatives to strengthen community and voluntary sector capability. The office also provides expert advice on sector concerns. One of these concerns is training and the office works with the government and community and voluntary organisations to address this issue.

The OCVS is currently hosting a series of workshop on managing risk and liability. These workshops are being held so community and voluntary organisations can come

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[13] "Briefing to the Incoming Minister Responsible for Community & Voluntary Sector". December 1999
http://www.dia.govt.nz/Pubforms.nsf/URL/BriefComVol99.pdf/$file/BriefComVol99.pdf

together with government officials and talk about the problems relating to managing risk and liability of community organisations and to develop some solutions[14].

3.2 Snapshot Of New Zealand Training Provision And Initiatives

3.2.1 New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations

The New Zealand Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations is a national umbrella group for voluntary social service agencies. It carries out a number of duties one of which is to provide information and training in the voluntary sector. It makes all of its members aware of training (approximately 147 member organisations) by sign posting training opportunities in its newsletter. It also provides and promotes training within the sector and compiles and publishes management support and development manuals, useful for those organisations that may be unable to attend training courses or workshops due to various reasons such as financial or geographical constraints.

3.2.2 ANGOA

ANGOA is a unique network of organisations from across the range of NGO's in Aotearoa New Zealand including national, regional and local groups. ANGOA facilitates the 'Community Sector Roundtable' which is a monthly forum for the exchange of issues and concerns within the sector. With the Office of the Community and Voluntary Sector it hosts the Community Sector Research Forum which brings together researchers from universities, the community sector and government who are engaged in research related activities relevant to the community sector. ANGOA has conducted an extensive series of workshops around New Zealand as part of the Community- Government Relationship Steering Group work programme discussing key issues and trends within the community and voluntary sector in Aotearoa New Zealand.

3.2.3 Volunteering Canterbury

Volunteering Canterbury is an incorporated charitable trust that supports and promotes volunteering. It provides low cost learning workshops, support sessions with volunteers and supervisions for volunteer co-coordinators and managers of Not-for-Profit organisations. Workshops include teaching individuals on how to keep financial records for a voluntary organisation - budgets, receipts, payments, bank reconciliations, monthly

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[14] http://www.converge.org.nz/anago/home.php

reporting, petty cash, wages, PAYE, sales tax, tagged funds, preparing for end of year and also teaching individuals skills on how to set up a new volunteering project. The course offered here such as the 'Skills for Supervisors' and Supporting Volunteers' cost $60 (or $35 for members).

3.2.4 Change Training Consultants

Change Training Consultants Ltd. (CHANGE) was established in 1987 and is recognised as the leading public sector training specialist. It provides training and e-Learning to a range of public sector organisations throughout New Zealand. Some of their courses are relevant to the community and voluntary sector also. For example it's *Basic Economics for Policy Analysts* is a one day course which provides participants with a practical understanding of economics, equips them to think critically about economic analysis and offers practical applications. Staff and volunteers from the community and voluntary sector have taken part in this course.

3.2.5 Wellington Community Law Centre

The Wellington Community Law Centre runs Legal Education for Community Workers, with training sessions held one morning a week for approximately two months. The course is designed to give community workers a working knowledge of everyday areas of law and how to access legal information.

3.2.6 Academic programmes

As in other countries, in New Zealand courses have been created and provided by academic institutions to provide training in areas specific relevant to the community and voluntary sector. For example, the Manukau Institute of Technology is currently running a course for a *Certificate of Achievement Introducing Health Promotion.* The Unitec of New Zealand is currently running a range of courses relevant to the sector including a *Graduate Diploma in Cultures and Values of the Not-For-Profit Sector* and a *Master of Social Practice*. Another popular course is the *Bachelor of Social Practice* which is an interdisciplinary programme offering professional qualifications in counselling, social work and community development. This course is run by the Unitec New Zealand. The above are just a few of the full time and part time courses available which are relevant to the community and voluntary sector across New Zealand.

Many of the courses offering the necessary training for community and voluntary sector staff and volunteers are short term courses which last only a few days. For example the

Not-for-Profit Accounting and Financial Management programme last 5 days. The
Culture and Values of the Not-For-Profit Sector course last 2.5 days. Both courses are
run by Unitec New Zealand. These courses are reasonably priced and short so are less
of a financial and staff burden on organisations with limited finances and few
personnel[15].

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[15] **http://www.community.net.nz/communitycentre/training/national/legal-issues.htm**

4. Northern Ireland

4.1 Introduction and Context Setting

As in England it has become clear that changes need to occur in the provision of training in the community and voluntary sector in Northern Ireland. In its report *Investing Together,* the Taskforce on Resourcing the Voluntary and Community Sector highlighted a specific gap in generic skills such as strategic and business planning, planning and organisation skills and project and management skills. It also mentions that some community and voluntary organisations lack fundraising skills and that there is a need for a more strategic approach to the development of skills within the sector based on identified skill needs. In the *Positive Steps* report the government also highlighted the training needs of the community and voluntary sector and discussed ways to address these needs[16]. This included encouraging community and voluntary organisations to invest in development of their staff and volunteers so they have the necessary skills and expertise.

The Taskforce on Resourcing the Voluntary and Community Sector recommended that a skills strategy for the community and voluntary sector should be developed.[17] Government responded by saying its contribution would be co-ordinating input on joint training initiatives between government and community and voluntary sector[18]. The Government also mentioned financial support for this training on a case to case basis or via routine funding provisions in as part of a grant or included within the overhead costs of service delivery contracts

The Voluntary and Community Unit (in the Northern Ireland Executive) provides a focus within government on community and voluntary activity[19]. As part of its work, the unit works in partnership with the community and voluntary sector through the Joint

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[16] **http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/publications/documents/Positive_Steps.pdf**
[17] Page 37 Investing Together. Report of the Task Force on Resourcing the Voluntary and Community Sector, October 2004, **http://www.taskforcevcsni.gov.uk/PDF/investing%20together.pdf**
[18] Positive Steps: The Government's Response to *Investing Together,* Report of the Taskforce on Resourcing the Voluntary and Community Sector.
http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/publications/documents/Positive_Steps.pdf
[19] **http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/voluntary_and_community.htm**

Government/ Voluntary and Community Sector Forum and researches issues affecting the community and voluntary sector

On 14 October 2002 the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland suspended devolved government in Northern Ireland. It is unclear when the devolved institutions will be restored and for the present Northern Ireland will be governed by direct rule from Westminster. The discussion in section 2.2 about how the Sector Skills Development Agency affects the English community and voluntary sector also applies to Northern Ireland.

4.2 Snapshot Of Northern Ireland Training Provision And Initiatives

4.2.1 Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action

The Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA) is an umbrella body for voluntary, community and charitable groups in Northern Ireland. It provides over 1000 affiliated members with information, advice and training on a wide range of issues from management consultancy and finance, through to policy development and lobbying.

NIVCA provides training in the area of management development across the sector. The aim of NICVA's Management Development Programme is to help managers develop skills and competencies and so see their organisation, and the sector, improved and changed. The MDP provides both accredited and non-accredited courses that range in length from two days to two years. More recently the MDP has introduced an MSc in Voluntary Sector Management with CASS Business School, City University, London. NICVA provided all participating individuals with 75% of the total fee for the MDP. In some cases organisations were saving up to £1350 and in the case of the master's it's a saving of £6,000.

NICVA runs a Charity Advice Service (CAS) to help and advise community and voluntary groups seeking charitable status. The service will help an organisation choose the right legal structure and also prepare charitable constitutions. CAS can also advise on other aspects of the law relating to charities in Northern Ireland including the lawful functions of a charity, tax and VAT, rates, insurance and the role of trustees of a voluntary organisation to name but a few.

On a consultancy basis NICVA also gives out advice on Finance, Human Resources and research. For example community and voluntary organisations who need advice on payroll - processes and management, accounting packages, pensions, give as you earn

(GAYE), cheques for charity and gift aid or have specialist questions on VAT can contact NICVA's finance department.

NICVA has a dedicated Funding Advice Service that provides the community and voluntary sector with support and practical information on how to identify and successfully apply for funding. Services include resources for researching and writing funding applications including Grant Tracker, Trustfunding website, trust and corporate directories, as well as annual reports, grantmakers guidelines and publications funding bulletins, published monthly in NICVA News, training courses and information seminars and assistance with applications to grantmakers.

The *Community NI* website, which was developed by NICVA and funded by Invest NI, invites charitable organisations to publish their information - be it news, events, publications, campaigns or services on this 'portal' website.

4.2.2 Community Evaluation Northern Ireland

Community Evaluation Northern Ireland (CENI) was established in 1995 as an independent not-for-profit organisation providing a range of services in monitoring and evaluation to the voluntary, community and statutory sectors. Prior to 1995 CENI existed as a branch of Charities Evaluation Services UK (1991-95). CENI has extensive experience of delivering training and customised support within the voluntary, community and statutory sectors.

Over the years more than 300 individuals have attended CENI's standard training courses including volunteers, project staff, managers and funders of community and voluntary organisations. These introductory courses provide a first point of entry for many to begin thinking about more effective ways of using evaluation within their various contexts. These often lead to further customised training and support. Almost 50 separate organisations have commissioned CENI to provide customised training varying from one-day tailored training with staff and management committees to more in-depth training and support programmes over a period of months.

CENI has gained particular expertise in working within the statutory health sector including for example customised training and support in self-evaluation to Craigavon and Banbridge Community Health and Social Services Trust as detailed in the *Improving Practice* report. CENI has also provided extensive support with monitoring and evaluation training to programmes funded under EU Peace funding and the Active

Community Initiative. CENI's one-day introductory training courses cover two key themes, 'Introducing Self-Evaluation' and 'Getting the most from External Evaluation'[20].

4.2.3 Volunteer Development Agency

The Volunteer Development Agency provides support, training and information on volunteering, volunteer management, child protection and voluntary management committees. The Volunteer Development Agency has an excellent reputation for delivering high quality, interactive training courses. Their programmes include some accredited training courses, many of which are delivered in local areas[21]. Courses cover the full range of their project areas, which includes Volunteer, Volunteer Management, Child Protection and Volunteer Management Committees.

4.2.4 Community Work Education & Training Network (CWETN)

Community Work Education & Training Network (CWETN) works with training providers from across Northern Ireland to collect and provide information about educational programmes that are of direct relevance and benefit to community development groups and workers. CWETN was established in 1996 as a direct response to a common view that Northern Ireland had a range of community and voluntary organisations providing a plethora of training and education programmes, with very little or no co-ordination between learning programmes or indeed the providing organisations themselves[22].

4.2.5 North West Community Network

North West Community Network is a source of support and advice for groups and helps pioneer new developments and approaches to enhance community participation and capacity building within the North-West of Northern Ireland. It gives practical face-to-face advice & assistance to community organisations on issues such as:

- Group formation
- Organisational development
- Committee Roles & responsibilities
- Project development & Strategic Planning
- Management & Employing staff
- Monitoring & evaluation
- Funding opportunities

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[20] http://www.ceni.org/tra_cou.htm
[21] http://www.volunteering-ni.org/volunteers.asp#training
[22] http://www.cwetn.org/CWETN%20Aims%20and%20Objectives.htm

4.2.6 Academic Programmes

Northern Ireland has only two universities - Queens University Belfast and the University of Ulster (3 campuses). Although these universities offer excellent courses in Management, most courses relevant to the sector are offered by universities in England, Scotland and Wales. For example:

- Roehampton University offers an MSc/PGDip in *Voluntary Action Management* which lasts 12 months full time with fees of £3,204. This course can be completed on a part time basis also.
- Open University has a multitude of courses on volunteer management, business management, and leadership courses all of which are relevant to the sector.
- BSc (Hon) *Community Development* is a three year courses based one day a week at the University of Ulster, Jordanstown. The aim of this course is to provide participants with the opportunity to gain a systematic understanding of theoretical knowledge, problem-solving approaches and underpinning values for effective work and employment in the community development sector.
- The Belfast Institute of Further & Higher Education (BIFHE) provides a Diploma in *Community Development and Community Education*. This is a two year course which aims to provide participants with the opportunity to develop the theoretical knowledge and practical skills of Community Development and Community Education
- Queens University Belfast offers a Masters in *Social and Community Development*. This is a three year course target specifically at members of the voluntary, community and public sector. Its aim is to explore current issues relevant to both the public and voluntary sectors, to encourage cross sectoral understanding.

5. USA

5.1 Introduction and Context Setting

In recent years public trust in non-profit organisations has declined, in part, because of recent scandals in the charitable sector. There has also been wide spread reductions in funding across the sector. Increased competition, expanding community needs, and decreased federal funding are leading a growing number of non-profit social service organisations to form strategic alliances.

Nonprofits entering alliances often hope the new arrangements will decrease administrative costs, increase management quality, better integrate services, and better position the organisation as competition intensifies. However, those considering alliances have limited information available to them on similar arrangements that could serve as models, and there is little knowledge about the current and potential effects of such partnerships on nonprofits and social service provision[23] . Nonprofits today face increased and often conflicting demands for reform in the name of accountability, efficiency and effectiveness.

Technology is also an issue in the community and voluntary sector in the United States. Even though an array of new technologies is becoming available and their cost is rapidly declining, all too many non profits have yet to take advantage of them[24]. A greater use of technology in the sector would help organisations increase their own efficiency and effectiveness, improve the quality of services that non-profit groups deliver, and give non commercial interests greater influence in policy debates. Expanding use of these technologies could revolutionize the way non-profit organisations operate, offering ways to broaden constituencies and reach far larger audiences than previously thought possible.

23 A Study of Strategic Alliances Among Non-profit Social Service Organisations in the US, http://www.nonprofitresearch.org/newsletter1525/newsletter_show.htm?doc_id=18143

24 Examples from North America http://www.partnerships.org.uk/itf/volsec.html

5.2 Snapshot of USA Training Provision and Initiatives

5.2.1 Corporation for National and Community Service

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has announced the availability of more than $12 million in funds to support national providers of training and technical assistance for community service programs. The Corporation expects to make the grants in 16 areas of training and technical assistance. Funding amounts range from approximately $100,000 to $1,540,000 annually for cooperative agreements of up to three years[25].

For more than a decade, the Corporation for National and Community Service—through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs—has mobilized a new generation of engaged citizens. This year, more than 1.6 million individuals of all ages and backgrounds will serve through those programs to help thousands of national and community non-profit organizations, faith-based groups, schools, and local agencies meet local needs in education, the environment, public safety, homeland security, and other critical areas. National and community service programs work closely with traditional volunteer organizations to broaden, deepen, and strengthen the ability of America's volunteers to contribute not only to their communities, but also to their nation[26].

5.2.2 Association for Volunteer Administration

Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA) has developed a curriculum which incorporates the basics of volunteer management in one integrated set of eight 90-minute workshops in a small-group, interactive learning environment. The AVA Academy is designed for those individuals who have less than three years experience in the field, those who have received some of the basics but not a comprehensive curriculum, and those who need a refresher course in basic volunteer resources management. Participants will learn how to assess needs, design meaningful volunteer positions, target recruiting, screen & interview applicants, and place volunteers successfully. Other topics include volunteer orientation, training, evaluation, discipline and recognition. Academy participants receive a notebook containing the academy text and lots of additional resource information and an AVA certificate of completion upon completion of all sessions. Workshop sessions are taught by a variety of skilled professionals who have spent years on the job and are recognised trainers in volunteer resources management.

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[25] **http://www.vaservice.org/index.html**
[26] **http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/index.html**

5.2.3 Citizen Corps

Citizen Corps Affiliate Programs and Organisations offer communities resources for public education, outreach, and training; represent volunteers interested in helping to make their community safer; or offer volunteer service opportunities to support first responders, disaster relief activities, and community safety efforts[27].

5.2.4 Points of Light Foundation and the Volunteer Centre National Network

The Points of Light Foundation and the Volunteer Centre National Network seek to engage more people more effectively in volunteer service to help solve serious social problems.. With 450 active Volunteer Centres, this network reaches millions of people in thousands of communities to help recruit, train, deploy, and monitor volunteers to deliver solutions that address community problems. Through a variety of programs and services, the Foundation encourages people from all walks of life - businesses, government agencies, nonprofits, faith-based organisations, low-income communities, families, youth, and older adults - to volunteer.

5.2.5 Peace Brigades International

Peace Brigades International have a Volunteering for a Team initiative. Potential volunteers first take a general weekend training in their home country (where such trainings exist), and then participate in a one-week intensive project-specific training. There may also be ongoing "homework" which must be completed before the intensive training[28].

5.3.6 Volunteers for Social Sector

Volunteers for Social Sector is a non-profit international agency empowering people through self-development and community building projects. Its volunteers are committed to helping people everywhere develop their full potential. Besides motivating and placing volunteers to projects all over the world, Volunteers for Social Sector gives special emphasis on a holistic approach by helping people in their personal growth through interactive games, rites of passage, spiritual warrior, Tai-chi, yoga and meditation programs[29].

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[27] **http://www.citizencorps.gov/programs/affiliate.shtm**
[28] **http://www.peacebrigades.org/volunteer.html#trainingcontent**
[29] **http://www.vssnet.org/#training**

5.2.7 Civic Network Television

Civic Network Television (CNT) is a non-profit organisation that provides equipment and support to enable local non-profit groups to participate electronically through satellite teleconferences in courses, forums, and town meetings.

5.2.8 Rural Assistance Centre

A product of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Rural Initiative, the Rural Assistance Centre (RAC) was established in December 2002 as a rural health and human services "information portal." RAC helps rural communities and other rural stakeholders access the full range of available programs, funding, and research that can enable them to provide quality health and human services to rural residents[30]. RAC users include anyone seeking to maintain and improve the access, quality, and financial viability of rural health and human service delivery systems. For example:

- Local providers of health and human services
- Community-based organizations
- Local government officials or representatives of their national organisations
- Rural community advocates
- State government offices
- State and national organizations dedicated to improving rural health and human services
- Private foundation representatives
- Researchers
- Congressional offices
- Others interested in rural health and human services issues

5.2.9 Maryland Nonprofits

Maryland Nonprofits strives to maintain a membership, as well as a Board of Directors, that is broadly representative of the diversity of Maryland's non-profit community. The organisation offers a wide range of training packages specifically in areas of

- Board Excellence,
- Innovative Board Recruitment and Management
- Fundraising Readiness

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[30] http://www.raconline.org/about/

- Fundraising Basics for Boards

Maryland Nonprofits also has a consultancy service which aims to provide non-profit board members and staff with access to high quality professional resources and services to meet their organisation's consulting and technical support needs, including services tailored to critical stages in the organisations' lifecycles (e.g. leadership transition). It also offer a comprehensive training and technical assistance programme to support existing and new non-profit board members, executives and staff, enabling them to demonstrate the impact and accomplishments of their organisations and to achieve excellence in governance, executive leadership, financial and human resources management, legal and regulatory compliance, and resource development.

5.2.10 American Safety & Health Institute

American Safety & Health Institute is a non-profit association of professional educators providing nationally recognized health and safety training programs through more than 4,000 approved Training Centres across the United States and in several foreign countries. ASHI's training centres include: hospitals, fire departments, EMS agencies, state and federal agencies, as well as colleges and schools. With a strong history of support of local, state and federal agencies, ASHI programs are currently used for training state correctional and law enforcement officers, and employees of federal agencies including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Border Patrol, U.S. Customs Service, Federal Air Marshals and U.S. Coast Guard.

5.2.11 Academic Programmes

There is a wide number of degrees, courses and programme (long term and short term) through a range of university, colleges and voluntary organisation across the USA. For example:

- School of Public and Non-profit Administration, Grand Valley State University's Graduate Certificate in *Non-profit Leadership* provides an opportunity to pursue a theoretically based and practically oriented education in leadership for non-profit professional throughout West Michigan. The programme offers local non-profit managers the current professional skills and perspectives required to do their work more effectively in the rapidly changing non-profit sector of society.
- Milano Graduate School and New School University offer a course in *Theory and Practice of Non-Profit Management*. This course provides an overview of the principal management functions applied in non-profit organisations. Topics include principles of

financial management, human resources management and development, strategic and programme planning, and the marketing of non-profit services. The functions of, and relationships among, volunteer boards of trustees, professional non-profit managers, and fundraising, public relations, and programme personnel are analysed, and the complex environments within which non-profit organisations function are explored.

- Milano Graduate School and New School University also offers a course in *Community Development*. This course provides an overview of the history of community development as a field, current debates over strategies and practice, and significant policy initiatives. Students are introduced to current approaches to the revitalizing of distressed communities. Topics covered include the theoretical basis for community development, the history of the field, community development as economic development, community organizing, and the role of the federal government and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in community development. Students have the opportunity to work with local community organisations through class projects.

- Milano Graduate School and New School University offers a course in *Training and Development in Organisations*. The need to accomplish more with less demands that organisations give paramount consideration to the training and development of their current and future employees. Such topics as adult learning processes, identifying training needs, developing effective training programs, and evaluating the training effort are discussed from the point of view of the training specialist, the manager, and the employee.

- *Fundraising and Development.* An overview of the history and current scope of philanthropy in the United States, this course examines the types of organisations served by fundraising, the major sources of funds, and the fundraising manager's role in planning and implementing fundraising strategies and techniques. The use of volunteers and consultants versus in-house staff is analysed, as are the effects on fundraising of changes in the economic and legal environments of non-profit organisations[31].

- SIT's (School for International Training) Master of Science in *Organisational Management* gives practitioners theoretical and practical competencies, as well as a thorough understanding of cultural, organisational, and economic contexts in management. Students develop the skills sought after by non-profit, civil society/NGO, and for-profit organisations, including expertise in human and financial resources management, strategic management, information technology, fundraising, marketing, and social entrepreneurship[32].

[31] **http://www.milanomix.org/research.cfm?sort=researchers&cat=1&top=3**
[32] **http://www.sit.edu/graduate/msom/index.html**