

Appendix D

Pan-Canadian Snapshot of Non-profit/Voluntary Sector - Government Relations by Province and Territory

Over the past two years, we have seen significant developments in a number of Canadian provinces and territories, with the emergence of task forces, ministerial appointments, policies, and special initiatives dedicated to strengthening the relationship between the non-profit/voluntary sector and government. This snapshot describes the current activity in each province and territory, captures the patterns and trends that have occurred, and identifies common themes.

In order to have a better appreciation for the landscape in each jurisdiction, we have also included information about related initiatives and drivers that have influenced the developments, including the emergence of several local networks, chambers, coalitions, federations, and councils, working at the community and municipal level. The primary sources of information have been the members of the Canadian Federation of Voluntary Sector Networks and their counterparts in the public sector. In addition to their answers to the questions below, we have reviewed numerous reports and included excerpts from various web-sites, public sector documents, as well as other research carried in this area.

1. Is there a deliberate relationship existing or proposed in your province or territory?
 - a. Is there an identified **lead Ministry** (unit, branch department) that interacts with the non-profit/voluntary sector?
 - b. How has the **sector organized** itself and what structures exist to provide leadership and co-ordination?
 - c. Is there a formal **policy framework** agreement that deals with the role of the sector or the relationship between the sector and government? If so, what is the status?
2. Are there other initiatives, **infrastructure organizations** or foundations dedicated to the sector?

While this snapshot focuses on the current situation, it is also interesting to note what has changed. When we compare our information to what existed five years ago, we see significant shifts in scope, location, and language used:

- From a focus on volunteers to a focus on the voluntary sector;
- From recognizing the value of volunteers to recognizing the value of non-profit/voluntary organizations;
- From increasing voluntary action to increasing the capacity of voluntary organizations; and
- From a bullet point in a planning document to the inclusion in the title of the unit, department, or ministry.

Patterns and Trends Observed from the Document Review:

By the beginning of the millennium, all provinces and territories had some form of volunteer services award that was administered by a ministry with a mandate for community or social services. This may have been spurred on by the International Year of Volunteers 2001. Some governments provided special funding for National Volunteer Week, held in April. Others had special initiatives to address issues related to the promotion, screening, or recognition of volunteers, with a focus on specific populations groups such as youth or new-comers. At the same time, several jurisdictions implemented community service hours as a high school graduation requirement, and other mandatory community services programs linked to social assistances or the justice system.

While it was understood that volunteers were largely engaged by non-profit and voluntary organizations and that these diverse organizations made up the non-profit and voluntary sector, it is only within the past few years that the scope has been broadened to deal with the organizations and the sector as a whole. Some provincial and territorial governments have become involved with such sector-wide issues as insurance and human resources.

In addition to the changes seen in communications material, from both governments and the non-profit and voluntary sector, there is a growing sense of optimism in many locales that the recognition of the importance of the sector and its relationship with government will be followed by the resources, structures, and profile to move forward in a sustainable way.

Policy Transfer:

It has been interesting to follow the cross-jurisdictional influences that have occurred, within regions, across the country, as well as from international experiences. There are many terms and phrases that have appeared in several documents describing a particular provincial or territorial initiative, policy, or framework agreements. For example, we have seen several references to “the critical role that the non-profit and voluntary sector plays in the quality of life of citizens, community vitality...” (**recognition of the value of the sector**) and “the importance of government and the non-profit and voluntary sector working together to carry out their complementary roles in providing services and building healthy communities...” (**acknowledgement of the value of collaboration**).

Limitations of the Snapshot:

This snapshot was based on documents and material that was publicly available at the time of the research in early December 2007, the access of which was facilitated by voluntary sector leaders actively involved with the Canadian Federation of Voluntary Sector Networks. We intentionally kept our descriptions brief and limited to a single page and realize that there are many more historic and current details available. Our hope is to regularly update this snapshot and to include more substantial information about Yukon, Prince Edward Island, and Nunavut, and welcome all feedback and new information.

British Columbia:

Many ministries in British Columbia interact with the non-profit/voluntary sector through grants, contributions and contracts for service and, over the past twenty years, there have been concentrated efforts made by the sector or senior officials to build a stronger relationship. In the 1990's there was **Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives & Volunteers**, which provided funding for voluntary organization development, demonstration and best practice models as well as promotion and research. It was closed in 2001, with the change in government. In 2005, the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts was given a portfolio for volunteers

*The **Sport, Recreation and Volunteers Branch** – Supports increased activity for all ages, through the development of an effective recreation and sport system, promotes enhanced opportunities for communities to host major sport events, coordinates Government's involvement with the voluntary sector, and works in partnership to enhance volunteer capacity. (From the Tourism, Recreation, and Arts Strategic Plan 2006-2009)*

In May 2007, the Centre for Non-Profit Management and the School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria, with the support of the CEO of the Vancouver Foundation and the Deputy Solicitor General of B.C., convened a **Round Table** with more than 85 participants from across the non-profit and voluntary sector and various provincial government departments.

***Their purpose:** To explore the strengths and challenges of the relationship between the non-profit sector and the government and to find ways to enhance this relationship to the benefit of the citizens of B.C. (An excerpt from the Round Table Report.)*

Leaders from the non-profit and voluntary sector and senior government officials have been planning follow-up steps to the round table. They are exploring various models for creating a joint mechanism or initiative to strengthen their relationship, including a framework agreement. The joint leads on this initiative are the **Vancouver Foundation** and the **Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General**. Updates are available on www.cnpm.com.

Other significant initiatives within the province include **LegaciesNow**, **LiteracyNOW**, **ActNOW**, and **VolunteersNOW**, all connected to the Olympics (www.2010legaciesnow.com). The **BC-211** initiative is being supported by the Ministry of Labour and Citizenship.

Within the province, there are a number of voluntary sector infrastructure organizations including, **Voluntary Organizations Consortium of BC (VOC-BC)**, **The Centre for Sustainability**, **Volunteer BC**, and the **Centre for Non-Profit Management**.

Alberta:

In July 2006, The Government of Alberta announced the establishment of **The Alberta Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector Initiative (ANVSI)**, through the Ministry of Community Development, later moved to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. The initiative has been guided by a Leadership Council, comprised of six leaders from the non-profit and voluntary sector and six senior government officials, with a co-chair from each sector. *The purpose of the ANVSI is to ensure a strong and sustainable non-profit and voluntary sector that has the ability to provide the services and supports that Albertans expect to be part of their communities.*

In August 2007, the framework agreement was signed and the Leaders Council developed a transition plan to establish a structure to guide and monitor the relationship between the Government of Alberta and the non-profit and voluntary sector.

Whereas the Government of Alberta (GOA) and the Non-profit/Voluntary Sector (NPVSO) share a common vision for Albertans achieving exceptional quality of life through healthy, active communities;

...share common interests and many areas of mutual concern

...each through their vital contributions to society, fulfill complementary roles in the development and delivery of public policy and services

...respect each other's autonomy and ability to act independently

...recognize that a collaborative partnership is essential to enable their working together to improve services to Albertans and to build vibrant communities.

(an excerpt from the Framework Agreement August 2007)

The **Wild Rose Foundation**, hosts the annual Vitalize conference, as well as workshops on leadership development and awareness and recognition events for volunteers. The **Muttart Foundation** is a key player in the province, as a funder, initiator, and knowledge broker of several voluntary sector capacity building programs. **Volunteer Alberta** undertakes province-wide volunteer promotion and recognition activities and actively connects with rural communities. The **Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (ECVO)** and the **Calgary Chamber of Voluntary Organizations (CCVO)** work with local voluntary organizations on cross-cutting sector-wide issues to strengthen policy, capacity, and public awareness, and to facilitate collaboration and collective action on issues of common concern.

For more information, visit: www.municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/mc_volunteer_initiative.cfm

Saskatchewan:

In April 2002, **The Premier's Voluntary Sector Initiative** was launched with the purpose of *strengthening the relationship between the Government and Saskatchewan's voluntary sector so that voluntary organizations can operate as effectively as possible in fulfilling their individual mandates.*

The Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation has a mandate that supports and celebrates Saskatchewan as a great place to live and work. The Department serves as the secretariat for the Premier's Voluntary Sector Initiative.

*The specific objectives of the **Premier's Voluntary Sector Initiative** are:*

- *To build a formal relationship between the public sector (Government of Saskatchewan) and the voluntary sector.*
- *To build capacity within Saskatchewan's voluntary sector.*
- *To build awareness:*
 - *of the value of the voluntary sector and volunteers to our society;*
 - *of the ways in which voluntary sector organizations structure themselves; and*
 - *of the structure of the relationship between the public and voluntary sectors (an excerpt from the Press Release in April 2002)*

There was an advisory council established with representatives from the non-profit and voluntary sector and senior government officials that met sporadically, in the years following the launch, to develop an action plan to move forward with the initiative. Following the provincial elections in 2007, activities have been on hold, pending news regarding the status of the initiative.

The Centre for Collaboration (formerly Community Based Organizations of Regina) has been serving as a convener for the voluntary sector within the region. They are hosted by the United Way of Regina, which also serves as the focal point for many other voluntary sector activities.

Yukon and Nunavut:

The Yukon Department of Community Services provides funding for the Yukon Volunteer Bureau, building on the initiative in 2002 of the Executive Council of Cabinet. The Nunavut Premier is actively involved and supports Volunteer Nunavut, as does the Commissioner Peter Irniq. Culture, Languages, Elders and Youth is the key.¹

¹ Trent Gow, Scan of Existing Structures, Policies and Practices Related to Volunteerism within Provincial and Territorial Governments Across Canada Prepared For: Ontario Network, Canada Volunteerism Initiative

Manitoba:

In 2003, Manitoba Culture, Heritage, and Tourism, serving as the lead department for the Government of Manitoba, signed a **Declaration** with the non-profit and voluntary sector, along with their counterparts representing business and organized labour, at the provincial and municipal level. Work leading up to the development of this framework agreement was largely supported by the Manitoba Voluntary Sector Initiative, funded through the (federal) Voluntary Sector Initiative (VSI), through the Sector Involvement in Policy Development (SIDP). The initiative included some comprehensive research on the nature and scope of the non-profit and voluntary sector in Manitoba, a multi-sector policy summit, and a web-site, containing valuable resources and links.

Whereas the Government of Manitoba acknowledges and supports the vital contributions of volunteers and voluntary organizations to the quality of life in Manitoba's communities; and ...supports the voluntary sector through consultation, financial assistance, and legislation; and ...recognizes active citizenship, democracy, social justice and social inclusion as fundamental values to ensure opportunity for full participation shaping society ...will continue to engage in open, informed and sustained dialogue with the voluntary sector. (an excerpt for the Declaration signed in 2003)

While the Department of Heritage, Culture, and Tourism was the lead ministry for this initiative, other departments were more engaged with the voluntary and non-profit organizations through fee-for-service arrangements, grants, and contributions. **Healthy Child Manitoba**, established in 2004, works with eight key ministries and is currently providing some leadership around strengthening the relationship between the Government of Manitoba and the non-profit and voluntary sector.

Upon the conclusion of the Manitoba Voluntary Sector Initiative in 2004, the sector established an organization to serve as the focal point for coordinating its efforts and dialoguing with other sectors. **The Voluntary and Non-Profit Sector Organizations of Manitoba (VNPSOM)** has had cycles of various levels of activity, as it explores various financing models and develops new strategies for moving forward.

For more information, visit:

www.voluntarysector.mb.ca
www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/

Northwest Territories:

The **Department of Municipal and Community Affairs** has supported volunteers for many years through Outstanding Volunteer Awards, a volunteer development fund that provides limited funding to groups for training, and the Aurora College tuition subsidy for groups accessing education or training through the college.

In late 2003, **Volunteer NWT** was established as part of the federal Canada Volunteerism Initiative. It was the first territory-wide cross-sector network for the voluntary sector. It engaged the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs as a member. In late 2004, the department provided matching funds so Volunteer NWT could access funding from the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, through the Voluntary Sector Forum, for a Finance Action Group. Research was conducted into financing and relationship issues between the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and the voluntary sector. So far, the recommendations have not been acted upon, though the government has clarified its financing policies.

On March 2, 2005, the Government of the Northwest Territories adopted a **Volunteer Support Initiative**. The Initiative includes a declaration, vision, principles and goals, and an action plan that commits the GNWT to a stronger relationship with volunteers and volunteer groups. The Volunteer Support Initiative refers to voluntary sector, volunteers and voluntary organizations. The initiative has four goals: supporting volunteerism; building capacity; strengthening relationships; and, connecting NWT and federal initiatives that support the voluntary sector. Through this initiative a Declaration on Volunteering was developed.

The Government of the Northwest Territories recognizes that helping others is a shared tradition of northerners regardless of their cultural background;

...values, respect and appreciates the contributions of all volunteers and voluntary organizations to improving social, economic cultural and environmental conditions in the NWT; advocating for the marginalized or under-represented individuals, groups, and causes; and providing services to meet local needs;

...recognizes the importance of open, informed and sustained dialogue with the NWT voluntary sector in all its diversity. (an excerpt from the Declaration signed in 2005)

After the closing of the Canada Volunteerism Initiative, the department of Municipal and Community Affairs provided transitional funding to Volunteer NWT.

For more information, visit: www.volunteernwt.ca

Ontario:

There have been a number of initiatives within and between the Government of Ontario and the Ontario voluntary sector, beginning with a Voluntary Sector Task Force in 1997, which led to the forming of the **Coalition of Ontario Voluntary Organizations (1999)** and the **Premier's Voluntary Sector Round Table**, none of which are still in existence today. In 2006, group of leadership organizations began working together to create a broader and more sustainable mechanism through the Strengthening Voluntarism in Ontario Project, with Parks and Recreation Ontario serving as the administrative lead. Around this same time, the Metcalfe Foundation initiated exploration of the need, issues, and possible models for the voluntary sector in Ontario to work together.

The **Ontario Non-Profit Network** came together in 2007, engaging more than 90 organizations in efforts to co-ordinate their views on proposed amendments to the Ontario Corporations Act.

Within the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, Citizenship Branch, there is a newly named unit, The Voluntary Sector Relations Unit (formerly the Voluntarism Initiatives Unit), which has been identified as the lead for strengthening the government's relationship and building the capacity of the voluntary sector. This unit, under previous names has also supported the Ontario Screening Initiative, the Volunteer Action Online program, to help non-profits use technology more effectively, and an annual conference on voluntarism. The unit works within government to help ministries strengthen their non-profit stakeholder relationships and partners with key stakeholders to address non-profit challenges and opportunities. Current projects are designed to:

- Help non-profits plan collaborative responses to community and sector needs;
- Promote volunteering and newcomer participation and support effective governance, youth and senior engagement;and
- Help non-profits improve risk management and access appropriate insurance coverage (www.insuranceinfo.imaginecanada.ca).

Efforts and interest in creating a network for non-profit and voluntary organizations to work together have emerged elsewhere in the province. The Public Policy Committee, convened by the United Way of Greater Toronto has been discussing this, the Social Planning Councils of Ontario have been exploring ways to support the sector's efforts in organizing itself, and the Wellesley Institute has been addressing this issue through their work with the sector on collaboration. At the local level, there is Pillar Non-Profit Network in London, The Niagara Centre for Community Leadership, The Ottawa Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, and emerging networks in Thunder Bay and Windsor. The Ontario Trillium Foundation has been an active player in funding projects and networks to strengthen the capacity of the non-profit and voluntary sector.

For more information, visit: <http://www.strengthenvoluntarism.on.ca/>

Quebec:

The Quebec Government has the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale which serves as the lead ministry for relating to the non-profit and voluntary sector in the province. Since 1995, there has been **le Secrétariat à l'action communautaire autonome du Québec (The Secretariat for Autonomous Community Action)**, which represents the Government in discussions with the Sector and financially supports the Réseau québécois de l'action communautaire autonome (The Advisory Committee for Autonomous Community Action).

The Réseau québécois de l'action communautaire autonome (RQ-ACA) was established in 1996 with a mission *to co-ordinate and represent the movement on all questions related to autonomous community action*. They meet at least quarterly and bring together representatives from 20 key sub-sector and population-specific provincial organizations including, health, social services, women, voluntary action, education, refugees, youth, and the environment.

The RQ-ACA's activities include consultation around cross-sector issues, publications on themes of common interest, dialogue with government (liaison with the Secretariat for Autonomous Community Action), mobilizing organizations on shared issues, and negotiating with government around legislative and financing arrangements.

After extensive negotiations between the sector and government, the policy which outlined the Government of Quebec's strategy for working with the autonomous community sector, *L'Action communautaire: une contribution essentielle à l'exercice de la citoyenneté et au développement social du Québec* was adopted in 06-2001. The policy was comprised of four components; Volunteer Quebec Service Awards, Financial Support, and a Director of Government Programs Support Community Actions, and Publications.

Governmental Policy on Community Action:

The government's general objectives reflected in this policy are:

- *Acknowledging, promoting, and supporting community action in the broad sense;*
- *Acknowledging, promoting, and consolidating independent community action, more specifically, rights and advocacy organizations; and*
- *Ensuring the sustainability of community action through general operations and broad national guidelines that apply to all government departments and agencies (an excerpt from the Governmental Policy on Community Action, updated in July 2006).*

For more information, visit:

<http://www.comavis-aca.org/>

<http://www.mess.gouv.qc.ca/saca/>

New Brunswick:

On December 5, 2006, Premier Shawn Graham announced that Claudette Bradshaw would lead the newly established **Community Nonprofit Task Force**. The mandate of the task was to examine challenges facing the non-profit sector in New Brunswick and to engage community organizations in identifying emerging community needs, through a broad-based province-wide consultation process. The task force report was released in September 2007.

The report included recommendations on how to strengthen the non-profit sector and strategies to enhance relations between non-profits and government. Members of the task force outlined the importance of the non-profit sector in relation to quality of life, economic strength, and vitality of democratic institutions. (From the press release, September 2007)

In November 2007, the premier appointed Carmel Robichaud as **Minister responsible for the new portfolio of Community Non-Profit Organizations**. The announcement positioned the appointment as a response to one of the key recommendations in the task force report that called for *“a revitalized partnership between the provincial government and the voluntary sector.”*

PolicyLink New Brunswick was established in 2002, along with the Manitoba Voluntary Sector Initiative, through the Sector Involvement in Policy Development (SIDP) funding, as part of the (federal) Voluntary Sector Initiative. Through a multi-sector engagement process, it brought together a diverse range of non-profit and voluntary organizations, including an English, French and bilingual service-providers, provincial, regional, and federal public officials, and a range of leaders from business, labour, and the academic community.

Forging Links: Investing in New Brunswick, a policy forum hosted by PolicyLink in October 2004, brought together 150 practitioners and volunteers from the non-profit and voluntary sector, with federal and provincial policy-makers to identify and explore issues that impact on the quality of life for people of New Brunswick. This positioned PolicyLink as the connector and convener for numerous consultations, training, and networking sessions in the province. The Moncton Volunteer Centre, which had hosted the New Brunswick Canada Volunteerism Initiative Network, has also played an active role in building capacity of the voluntary sector in the province.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.policylink.nb.ca/>

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/promos/nptf/index-e.asp>

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/promos/nptf/index-f.asp>

Nova Scotia:

Nova Scotia's *Volunteer Protection Act*, received Royal Assent in May of 2002. It was designed to limit liability for those volunteers who meet certain conditions during the course of the volunteer activity.

The Honourable Barry Bernet was appointed the first **Minister of Volunteerism** 2006, following the Government of Nova Scotia's recognition of "*the valuable contributions made by volunteers in all communities across Nova Scotia*", in the Speech from the Throne. The **Department of Health Promotion and Protection** serves as the lead department and is tasked with working with the non-profit sector to develop a strategy for working together. The Department of Health Promotion and Protection was asked to lead the volunteerism portfolio and includes volunteerism as one of the 11 responsibility centres under Health Promotion and Protection.

In May 2007, a meeting was held with representatives from a range of non-profit and voluntary organizations to explore a variety of models to create a structure or mechanism, through which the sector could co-ordinate its efforts. The recommendation that emerged was the establishment of a **Nova Scotia volunteer community advisory committee**, that would be comprised of 20-25 sector representatives, meet four times each year, with a portion of their meeting to be a forum with the Minister Responsible for Volunteerism.

Membership Recommendations for Provincial Structure/Mechanism:

Committee members would represent specifically targeted sectors, traditionally marginalized or population - based communities, and be based on the nine geographic regions of the District Health Authorities. Membership would also be based upon the eight voluntary sub sectors and the population-based communities. These communities include the Acadian, African Nova Scotian, Aboriginal, Immigrants, Persons with Disabilities, Seniors, and Youth. (an excerpt from the meeting report July 2007)

Within the province, there are a number of key leadership organizations in the non-profit and voluntary sector. Recreation Nova Scotia has taken the lead on a number of provincial initiatives, had served as host for the provincial network for the Canada Volunteerism Initiative, and provides training around volunteer resources management issues. The United Way of Halifax and Region has also served as a convener and incubator for several voluntary sector activities, consultations, and networks. The Federation of Community Organizations (FOCO, Halifax Region) was formed in 2005 to create cohesion within the non-profit and voluntary sector in the region. Their vision is a "*Unified, the voluntary sector is an influential player in sustaining communities, by taking a role as an equal partner with the private, public and business sectors*" and their mission is "*To connect and strengthen the voluntary sector in the Halifax Regional Municipality*".

For more information, visit:

www.foco.ca

www.nsvolunteerforum.ca

Newfoundland and Labrador:

In 2007, Premier Williams named a **Minister Responsible for the Volunteer and Non-Profit Sector** (also Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, thus placing responsibility within a central agency). The appointment flows from the 2005 Throne Speech. A Volunteer and Non-profit Sector Office will action items from the election platform, e.g:

- *Formalize a **policy and program framework** to strengthen and support the community-based sector and to enhance the development of social economy enterprises, especially in rural regions, as means of improving services, providing additional employment;*
- *Recognize and celebrate the work of **community volunteers**; and*
- *Through discussions with the Community Services Council and other community organizations in the volunteer sector, produce a scope of work document to set the terms for an initiative to **strengthen the relationship between the government and the volunteer sector**, to improve the grants process, and to identify opportunities for cooperation and collaboration (as previously cited in the 2005 Throne Speech).*

Numerous initiatives laid the foundation for this action. Since 1976, the **Community Services Council Newfoundland Labrador** (CSC) has been advocating the role of the voluntary sector and its relationship with governments. CSC brings the sector together through regional and provincial forums, consultations and research reports including *Values Added: Recommended Action Plans for a Flourishing Voluntary Community-based Sector* (1999); *the Values Added Provincial Forum* (2000) and the *Provincial Roundtable on the Social Economy and Social Enterprise* (2006). CSC promotes the role of the sector in presentations to Premiers and Social Policy Committee of Cabinet, and in 2001 launched www.enVision.ca building a voice for the voluntary sector.

In 1996 Government formed the Social Policy Advisory Committee (chaired by the CSC's Executive Director) to conduct public consultations and submit recommendations. The Committee's report, *Investing In People and Communities - A Framework for Social Development* (1997), highlighted the voluntary, community-based sector. In response, in 1998 the Government launched the **Strategic Social Plan** (SSP) noting complementary roles for government and the voluntary sector. The Premier's Council on Social Development (a component of the SSP) was requested to give advice "on the specific actions government could take to support the further development of the voluntary sector and to strengthen its links with government.. *Building Community Partnerships: Recommendations of the Premier's Council on Social Development to Support and Strengthen the Community Based Sector in Newfoundland and Labrador* (2002) led to the formation of a joint government - sector committee co-chaired by a senior official and CEO of CSC. With the advent of a new administration in 2003, the SSP was replaced by the **Rural Secretariat**, comprising nine regional councils of individuals from all sectors acting in a volunteer capacity. Their mandate is to create a long term vision for the province. They have placed considerable focus on the voluntary sector. Representatives from each council along with leaders from education, culture, business, labour and CSC form a Provincial Council to advise on policy matters.

In 2004, discussions with the Premier's Deputy Minister and representatives of the sector culminated in the CSC report *The Nonprofit Sector as a Force for Sustainability and Renewal in Newfoundland and Labrador* which laid out recommendations to maximize the role of the sector, including the appointment of a Minister.

For more information, visit: www.envision.ca/

Prince Edward Island:

The **Access PEI Concept** is an important tool of PEI's Department of Development and *Technology to strengthen communities*. **Multi-level, single window service delivery in local communities:** *connects the community to a range of government services; makes government services at all levels accessible; facilitates successful efforts to utilize government services; eliminates red-tape barriers to business and social development; keeps people in home communities and encourages investment in those communities; and provides a centre for community development efforts.*²

Canada – The Voluntary Sector Initiative

The Voluntary Sector Initiative was a joint undertaking to build a deliberate relationship between the Government of Canada and the voluntary sector. Much of the impetus for this relationship building came from the Voluntary Sector Roundtable (VSR), a coalition of 13 national organizations that, among them, reflected most of the sector in Canada. The VSR was formed in 1995 and with the support of a private foundation, lobbied the federal government to undertake action in the areas of capacity building, legal and regulatory reform for the sector and to create a deliberate and productive relationship with the whole of the voluntary sector. The VSR moved its work forward by creating an arms-length, high profile Panel to study the needs of the voluntary sector and make recommendations for its future growth and stability.

The Voluntary Sector Initiative was launched in June 2000, with \$95 million to be invested over five years in the three areas identified above. The initiative was conducted jointly with a series of working groups co-chaired by sector and government representatives. A framework agreement, the Accord, was developed and signed setting out the principles to govern the relationship, along with codes of good practice outlining how the principles of the Accord could be applied to the fields of funding and policy dialogue. Steps were taken to improve the legal and regulatory framework including the issue of liability. Work was undertaken to strengthen capacities in the sector in the fields of policy involvement, human resources, knowledge, technology, financing, awareness and understanding. The system of Satellite Accounts that measures the economic output of the sector on a regular basis, the National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations, the organizations strengthened through the SIDPD, the Human Resources Council on the Voluntary Sector and the Canada Volunteerism Initiative – these any much more are the legacies of the VSI.

The VSI engaged most parts of the sector in most parts of the country. Over 5000 were involved in discussions and consultations. These contacts have proved to be one of the most enduring legacies of the VSI since they constituted the starting point for many other coalitions across the country. The relationship built through the VSI has not endured to any degree beyond the five years of the building period. A large evaluation of the VSI and what can be learned from it is nearing completion. Further information about the VSI and lists of its many available products, tools and resources can be found at www.vsi-isbc.org/

² Trent Gow

For More Information:

We have attempted to provide web-sites where you can find more information, download reports and press releases, check for updated information, or contact those involved with the various initiatives. If you are not able to find what or who you are looking for, please get in touch with us, at the contact information below.

Keeping this Snapshot Current:

As noted, the information contained in this snapshot was based on publically available material at the time of this research, in early December 2007. We apologize for any information that was incorrect or outdated. We hope to keep this snapshot current by updating it periodically. Please send us any feedback, corrections, or new information, as it becomes available.

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