

APPENDIX A:

International research and initiatives

Governments have identified nonprofit organisations as a valuable mechanism for enhancing overall levels of community ICT access and skills through their networks and their position as established social focal points within communities. Below is a summary of some of the relevant research and initiatives in selected countries.

World Summit for the Information Society (WSIS)

www.itu.int/wsis

The WSIS Declaration of Principles and Action Plan identified the important role for civil society in development of a global information society.

Europe

European Commission

europa.eu.int/comm/civil_society/index.htm

The European Commission has recognised the importance of voluntary nonprofit organisations in the evolution of the information society.

Community Application of Information Technology Initiative (CAIT)

www.pobail.ie/en/CAIT

Through CAIT the Irish Government provided funding over 2001–2002 to harness the experience, local knowledge and relationships of the community and voluntary sector to implement innovative ICT demonstration projects that benefit local communities.

United Kingdom

United Kingdom Government

www.e-envoy.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/00/08/28/04000828.pdf

The UK Government has recognised the importance of the nonprofit sector by its release in 2001 of the major report *E-enabling the Voluntary and Community Sectors* and establishment of a voluntary and community sector (VCS) Internet task force to help the sector get online. This has resulted in development of the

Policy Framework for a Mixed Economy in the Supply of e-Government Services: Implementation Guidelines available at www.e-envoy.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/00/59/68/04005968.pdf

The UK Government recognised that the voluntary and community sector had a mutual interest in building the capacity of its organisations and ensuring they have the ICT skills, knowledge, structures and resources to realise their full potential. In response, the Government produced the *Implementation Guidelines* (see above) and announced it would make available £6.25 million 'Early Spend' revenue to support the development of an infrastructure strategy for the VCS. See www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs2/earllyspend_exempdevfunds.html

Citizens Online

www.citizensonline.org.uk

Citizens Online is a registered charity established to explore the social and cultural impact of the Internet on society. Citizens Online believes that access to the Internet and all of its riches is essential for every citizen in the 21st century and is committed to universal access and tackling the issues of the digital divide.

National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) ICT project

www.ncvo-vol.org.uk

NCVO is the umbrella body for the voluntary sector in England. It has identified the Internet and ICT as being essential to its sector for carrying out trading, marketing and managing contacts and fundraising activities.

IT4Communities

www.it4communities.org.uk/default.asp

IT 4 Communities is an initiative to encourage companies, employees and individuals with professional IT skills to volunteer these skills for the benefit of local charities and community groups. IT 4 Communities is a joint initiative between Intellect (the UK's premier ICT industry body), the British Computer Society, the Worshipful Company of Information Technologists, Business in the Community and Citizens Online.

Sustain IT: delivering eWell-being

www.sustainit.org

SustainIT is an initiative of the UK Centre for Economic and Environmental Development, a nonprofit research centre. It conducts research on and provides best practice examples of synergies between ICT and sustainable development. It is supported by British Telecom's Campaign for Digital Inclusion.

WorkwithUS.org (Scotland's Voluntary Sector)

www.workwithus.org

Workwithus.org is Scotland's portal for the voluntary sector. It is supported by government and corporates such as Microsoft and BT Scotland.

Canada

VolNet: Connecting Voluntary Organisations to the Internet

www.volnet.org

The Canadian Government's Voluntary Sector Network Support Program (VolNet) ran from February 1999 to 31 March 2002. The \$20 million program connected 10 000 voluntary organisations to the Internet while at the same time training more than 17 000 staff and volunteers. A report on the outcomes is available at www.volnet.org/e/final_report_e.asp

The Voluntary Sector Initiative (VSI)

www.vsi-isbc.ca

VSI is an undertaking between the Government of Canada and the voluntary sector to enhance their relationship and strengthen the sector's capacity. The five year initiative has involved working together to address issues such as funding practice, policy dialogue, technology, volunteering and research.

The study *The Capacity to Serve: A Qualitative Study of the Challenges Facing Canada's Nonprofit and Voluntary Organisations* is at www.vsi-isbc.ca/eng/knowledge/pdf/capacity_to_serve.pdf

Volunteer@ction.Online (V@O) program

www.gov.on.ca/MCZCR/english/citdiv/voluntar/vao-brochure.htm

In order to respond to the growing need for technology funding for Ontario's voluntary sector, the provincial government through its Ministry of Citizenship launched the Volunteer@ction.Online (V@O) program in 1998. From 1998 to 2002, V@O invested \$11.5 million to fund over 110 innovative Internet-based projects that enhanced the voluntary sector's work. V@O projects resulted in training for over 3000 volunteers and staff and online recruitment of 85 000 volunteers. The program helped create over 3500 resources, including community directories, and benefited over 10 000 voluntary organisations.

Making IT Work for Volunteers (MITW)

www.volunteersonline.ca

MITW is a collaborative, cross-sector initiative that encourages and supports the effective use of ICT by charities and nonprofits. It creates opportunities for the high tech and voluntary sectors to assist one another in bridging and ultimately closing the digital divide.

New Zealand

Connecting Communities Strategy

www.ceg.govt.nz/DOCs/connecting_comms.pdf

The NZ Government's *Connecting Communities: A Strategy for Government Support of Community Access to ICT* (2002) recognised the relationship between government and community and voluntary organisations as an essential element for building an inclusive information society.

United States of America

Connections for Tomorrow (C4T)

www.ctcnet.org/c4t

C4T is a government-funded project that supports nonprofit organisations in capacity building and best practices development. It provides grants and technical assistance to startup community technology programs, expanding and improving services to better equip them in the provision of assistance to at-risk youth or homeless.

Technology Opportunities Program (TOP)

www.ntia.doc.gov/top

TOP is a competitive, merit-based grant program that brings the benefits of digital network technologies to communities throughout the US. It awards matching grants to public and nonprofit organisations that demonstrate practical applications of telecommunications and information technologies.

US community and private sector initiatives

CompuMentor

CompuMentor is a nonprofit organisation specialising in technology assistance for community-based organisations and schools. It offers technology planning, implementation and support services. CompuMentor is also the home of TechSoup.org, the technology website for the nonprofit sector.

IT Resource Center

www.itresourcecenter.org

The IT Resource Center enables nonprofit organisations to achieve their goals through effective use of technology. Its services include planning and implementing technology that supports nonprofit activities, technology consulting and training and advocacy on the importance of technology to nonprofits.

Nonprofit Technology Enterprise Network (N-TEN)

www.nten.org

N-TEN helps nonprofits make more effective use of technology to advance their missions. It supports the people who provide technology to the sector by helping to identify peers and develop professional support networks that can share information and resources and work together on projects. N-TEN operates as a member-based association of nonprofit staff, technology support organisations, circuit riders and independent consultants.

Npower

www.npower.org

NPower is a network of independent, locally based nonprofits dedicated to putting technology know-how in the hands of nonprofits. Its mission is to ensure all nonprofits can use technology to expand the reach and impact of their work.

ONE/Northwest ('Online Networking for the Environment')

www.onenw.org

ONE/Northwest is a nonprofit organisation based in Seattle, providing technology assistance to conservation activists and organisations in Alaska, British Columbia, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington. It offers environmental groups a range of services and resources aimed at improving clients' capacity to achieve their missions.

TechFoundation

www.techfoundation.org

TechFoundation is a nonprofit organisation that delivers technology, expertise and capital to help nonprofit organisations serve humanity. It envisions a world where nonprofit organisations can access the same resources to serve humanity that businesses use to create wealth.

Techsoup

www.techsoup.org

Powered by CompuMentor, one of the US's oldest and largest nonprofit technology assistance agencies, TechSoup.org offers nonprofits a one-stop resource for technology needs. It provides free information, resources and support. TechSoup also works with its technology partners to provide nonprofits with access to donated and discounted technology products through its DiscounTech service.

