The UK Voluntary Sector Almanac 2002



The UK Voluntary Sector Almanac

2002

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Foreword

It is six years since the publication of the first *UK Voluntary Sector Almanac* in 1996 – a period during which both the sector and the environment within which it operates have changed considerably. Two changes have been of particular significance. First, the financial and human-resource base of the sector has expanded, although not all organisations have benefited. Second, the Labour government's awareness of the unique social and economic contribution of voluntary organisations has been accompanied by a more central role in the development and implementation of public policy. The information presented in this Almanac helps us to understand the implications of these changes. It also provides the basis for an understanding of the voluntary sector's potential future role.

Looking ahead, there is likely to be further change. Government reviews of the regulatory environment and of the role of the sector in relation to the delivery of public services are under way. These could both result in significant changes in the scope and role of the sector. At the same time, a less benign economic environment will place pressure on the sector and its stakeholders.

As the sector enters a period characterised by increased uncertainty, NCVO is committed to long-term research that helps us to understand the impact of these changes upon the voluntary sector. With our partners in the UK Voluntary Sector Research Group, we welcome the continued support of the Community Fund for the Almanac and its associated research programme.

Stuart Etherington

Threat Shy h

Chief Executive, National Council for Voluntary Organisations

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WCVA: Lynda Garfield www.wcva.org.uk

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Summary

Policy context

- The evolution of UK public policy has led to a focus on partnership mechanisms, opening
 up more opportunities for the voluntary sector to be involved in delivery.
- The Compact between government and the voluntary sector has been furthered in the last two years with the publication of four of the five codes of practice and local Compact guidelines. With 70% of the sector operating at local level, the success of the Compact ultimately hangs on the development of effective local Compacts.

The UK voluntary sector

• There are 140,964 general charities in the UK.

Income

- The gross income for general charities in 2001 was £15.6 billion, representing a real increase of 4.2% since 1999.
- The largest single income category, at £3.3 billion, was income on investments (21.3%). Donations from the general public accounted for £3.1 billion (19.7%), and grants and donations from other voluntary organisations accounted for £1.2 billion (7.6%).
- Income from business comprised £755 million (4.9%). Although this represents an increase since 1999, in real terms this income source has reduced since 1991.
- The balance of different income streams in the funding mix has not changed considerably since 1999. There was a slight shift from voluntary income to earned income. The relative contribution from government, the general public and voluntary organisations all slightly reduced, whereas the share of internally generated income slightly increased.
- In 2000, 67.5% of the general public donated a total of £6.58 billion to charity. This translates as an average donation of £11.82 per month across the whole adult population of Great Britain.

Workforce

- The voluntary sector paid workforce numbered 563,000 in 2000, accounting for 2% of the total UK workforce. 63% of these worked full-time, 37% worked part-time. 65.8% of the work force was female, 34.2% male.
- In the last 5 years the voluntary sector created 85,000 jobs.
- The most important shortages of skills identified in the sector were management skills, strategic use of IT and strategic planning.

Assets

• Total assets of general charities were worth £74.4 billion in 2001. With liabilities of £6.2 billion, total funds stood at £68.2 billion. This accounted for 4.6 times the total operating costs of the sector.

Expenditure

- Total current expenditure of general charities was £14.9 billion, equivalent to 96% of total income.
- Staff costs accounted for £5.2 billion (35.2%) of expenditure; £4.8 billion (32.3%) was spent on goods and services; £3.5 billion (23.8%) was spent on grants and donations; £819 million (5.5%) was spent on fundraising and publicity.

Contribution

- The voluntary sector's contribution to GDP was £5.4 billion.
- It is estimated that the activities of volunteers contributed the equivalent of £15.4 billion to the sector.

The need for future research

- The black and minority ethnic voluntary sector remains relatively under-researched. The CEMVO database, which is still being developed, contains details of 10,000 BME voluntary organisations across the UK.
- Although the impact of devolution on the UK voluntary sector is still unclear, it is apparent
 that the forces shaping the sector in the regions and nations are diverging, necessitating
 continuing research to enable accurate comparisons between nations and other parts of the
 sector.

Measuring impact

• Traditionally, performance measurement has been associated with the private sector and has been primarily financial and quantitative. Recent developments in the voluntary sector have led to the demand for a new approach to measuring the sector's impact. The 'systems approach' takes account of interactions with other organisations and sectors, and the way in which organisations can work together to deliver collective impact.

Future change

• The main driver shaping change in the voluntary sector's operating environment in the medium term is the volatility of the economy. The two main agents for change in the short

term are the PIU review, examining the regulatory framework covering the wider voluntary sector, and the Treasury's Spending Review 2002, part of which will look at the role of the voluntary sector in providing public services.

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